

The background of the cover is a color photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, a wooden fence runs diagonally across the bottom. Below the fence is a small town with a prominent church featuring a tall, ornate steeple. The town is surrounded by arid, hilly terrain with sparse vegetation. In the distance, more mountain ranges are visible under a blue sky with some clouds. The top left corner of the image shows some green leaves and branches.

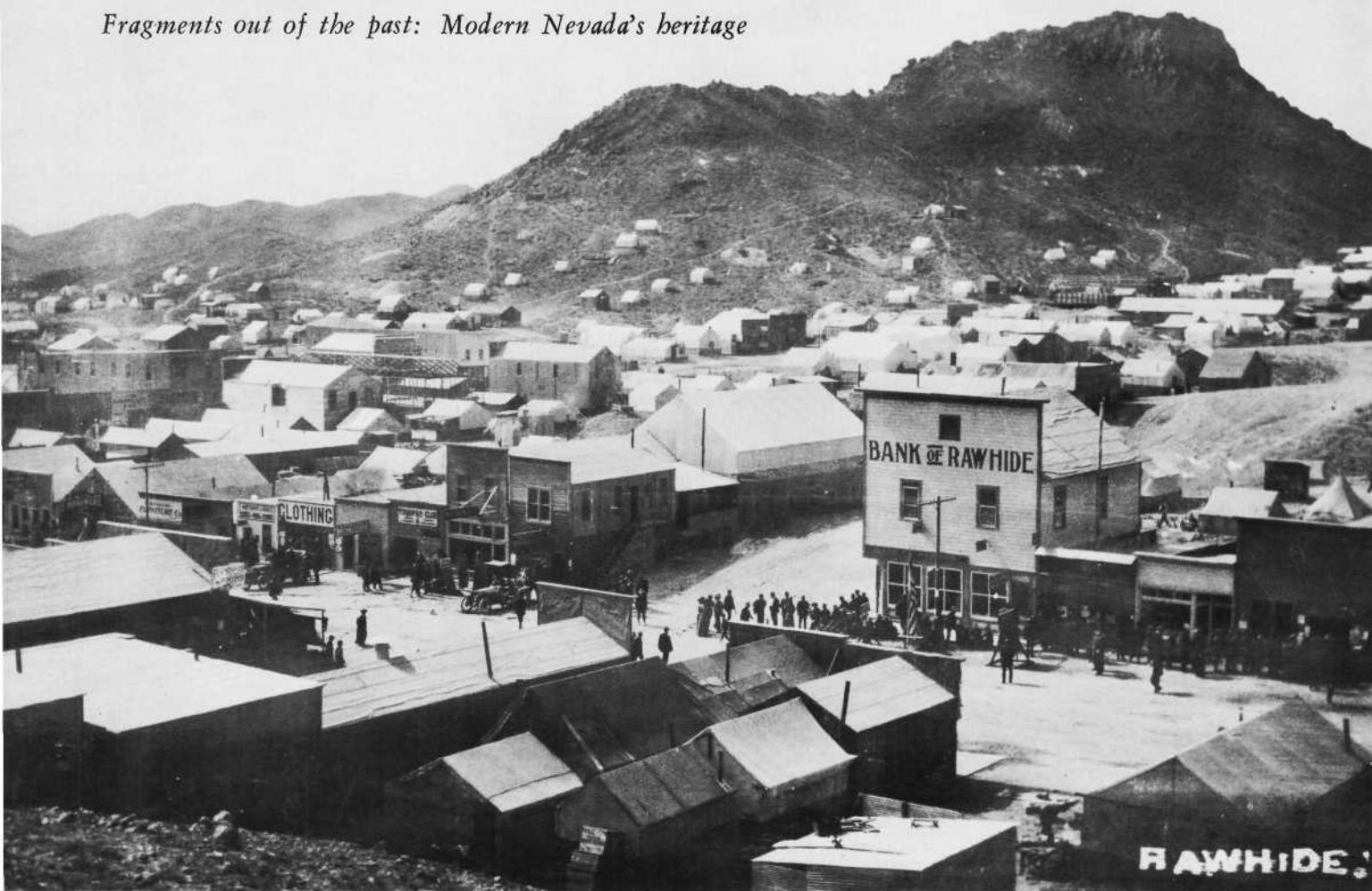
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# Desert

**MAGAZINE of the OUTDOOR SOUTHWEST**

**July, 1961 40 cents**





Rawhide in 1908. People lined-up on main street are waiting for post office (out of sight at right) to open.

## A SINGULAR BANK DEPOSIT

### FIRE! RAWHIDE'S CACHED CASK

**W**HILE I worked in the Bank of Rawhide, an incident occurred which I believe has no parallel in banking history.

Across the road about a block from the bank, the Grutt brothers were working in a mine shaft. One morning, an extra heavy charge of dynamite was set off in this shaft, throwing rocks in every direction.

One chunk of rock—about the size of a

fist—went through the plate glass window of the bank.

We didn't sue. There was enough gold in that rock to pay for the broken window, with \$50 left over, which was accordingly deposited to the credit of the Grutt brothers.

On September 4, 1908, Rawhide was swept by a disastrous fire. It was reported that the curtain in the rear of the drug store on the corner of Main Street across from the Bank,

blew across the flame of a stove. The drug store, some folks said, was the only insured building in town.

The entire downtown section and a major part of the residential district was destroyed—and another gold camp was started on its way to oblivion.

At the time of the fire, R. W. Thaler, otherwise known as "The Gumshoe Kid," was operating a prospect at Bovard. He had four tents in Rawhide that were occupied by his cronies and associates. On the day of the fire, every establishment on Main Street and Rawhide Avenue threw open their doors and told all comers to help themselves to food, liquor, clothing or whatever else was handy, because the stores were doomed.

Thaler and his friends took only whiskey—several barrels of it. Days later, when this windfall was rapidly reduced to but one barrel, Thaler rolled his treasure into a nearby prospect hole—not very deep—and covered it up.

Seventeen years later, Thaler returned to Rawhide and tried to locate the barrel of whiskey—but as in all lost mine stories—the unfortunate prospector failed.

Thus, a barrel of Yellowstone Whiskey, vintage of '04, lies buried not far from what was once Rawhide Avenue—from the unpublished memoirs of Frank P. Tondel of Fresno, Calif.



RAWHIDE BURNS ON SEPTEMBER 4, 1908.

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## ABOUT THIS MONTH'S COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS . . .

The three double-page color photographs in this issue of Desert Magazine (wrap-around cover; Ruby Mountain scene on pages 18-19; and Wheeler Peak lake photograph on pages 22-23) were made available through the courtesy of the Nevada State Department of Highways.

The Highway Department publishes a magazine which Desert Magazine readers may obtain free of charge by writing to: Donald L. Bowers, editor; Nevada Highways and Parks Magazine; Carson City, Nevada.



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24

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## LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

### An 1877 Visit to Zuni . . .

To the Editor: A long-time friend, who has known of my warm interest in, and affection for the Zuni Indians, is to be thanked for sending me the May number of *Desert Magazine* containing the thrilling (to me) article by Hope Gilbert on the "1882 Zuni Pilgrimage to the Atlantic Ocean."

Frank Hamilton Cushing, the man who escorted the Zunis East, arrived at Zuni a year after my parents and their three children (including me—I am 91 years of age) spent the terrible winter of 1877-78 trying against fearful odds to keep a school and hospital going in the village. Bancroft's *History of New Mexico and Arizona*, in a

column of listed "efforts to civilize the Indians of the Southwest," holds this terse statement regarding the efforts of my missionary-doctor father: "Zuni School, by Rev. H. K. Palmer and wife, was closed."

In my father's journal is this description of our Zuni home:

"... the dwellings in our village are built around a square presenting the appearance of an unbroken wall as high as a two-story building, but is divided into two or three stories. One or two openings in the roofs, easily closed, give entrance in, and exit from the courtyard. But the ground floor rooms have neither windows nor doors in their exterior walls. Ladders are placed against the wall inside, and the Puebloans—and even the numerous dogs—run up and down them with the agility of monkeys. So, it was a great concession to us that the Cacique permitted me to cut a ground floor entrance in our dwelling, for my wife's convenience. Incidentally, that same door was never closed to our friends, the Zunis, during famine, cold and small-pox."

ISABEL M. WISTER  
Long Beach, Calif.

### Preventing Vapor Lock . . .

To the Editor: I have just finished reading the article you have in the current June issue on "Auto Breakdown." Thought it might be of interest to suggest that the easy way to avoid having a vapor lock in hot weather is to add a little kerosene to your gas supply. For a full tank add a quart of kerosene.

GEORGE H. LARK  
La Canada, Calif.

### What Are Belly Flowers? . . .

To the Editor: In the June issue, artist Henry Mockel mentions the "belly flower" in his article. Can you tell me the botanical name for this plant?

WINNIE E. JONES  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

(The term "belly flower" refers to no specific plant. It is a name given to plants of low stature that are best viewed by getting the eye close to the ground. Dr. Edmund Jaeger describes the term as being "unfortunate and inelegant." It was invented, says Jaeger, to call attention to the host of small desert flowers that require close scrutiny if we are to realize their true beauty. "Personally," he adds, "I shun the use of the term, preferring to call such ground-hugging wildflowers 'flower midgets'."—Ed.)

### Snake Catcher's Errors . . .

To the Editor: I am sure that many readers were pleased, as was I, to find your lead article in the June issue by S. H. Walker on his experiences catching and exhibiting rattlesnakes in Southern California. Yet, as is so often the case when the subject is snakes, fact and fiction become so liberally mixed that only by careful sifting and attention to detail can the one be separated from the other. I found no less than 10 statements in the Walker article to be inaccurate. Space allows a discussion of but a few.

Walker states that "... in those years (1930-39) I captured nearly 10,000 diamondbacks ... to 1949 ... at least 15,000 ..." Laurence Klauber, in his definitive

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work on rattlesnakes, credits Walker with the capture of "over 7000 rattlesnakes in the Coachella Valley in 20 years," apparently halving Walker's own estimate. But, it is still a fantastic number of snakes!

I question Walker's conclusion drawn from his statement that his recovery from arteriosclerosis and attendant heart trouble immediately following his only serious snakebite, in 1938 (prior, that is, to his fatal bite in 1949). That you can "tell by the tongue when a snake is going to strike" is not borne out in the experience of many other herpetologists; nor is Walker's remark that "now, a rattlesnake knows I am not afraid, and will run from me."

Walker's first snake-hunting companion, called in the article, "Dr. Mauser, professor of herpetology at the University of Southern California" was Dr. Walter Mosauer, at that time not at U.S.C., but at U.C.L.A. While the "Dr. Cole, who took Dr. Mau-

ser's place" refers to Dr. Raymond B. Cowles, just recently retired from U.C.L.A., and for over 30 years one of the foremost authorities on reptiles in the United States.

The inaccuracies cited in no way detract from the interest of the article, nor did they diminish my pleasure in reading it. Mr. Walker's snake collecting experiences make interesting reading for the professional scientist and general reader alike.

JOHN D. GOODMAN  
Associate Professor of Biology  
University of Redlands, Calif.

### Snake-Pit Memoirs . . .

To the Editor: I am a great admirer of *Desert Magazine* and have read it for many years. This is my first adverse comment: "Memoirs of a Snake-Pit Operator" in the June issue was a misfit; this story was not in keeping with the general style of *Desert Magazine*. I found this article gruesome and colored opposite to what most of your articles bring out. *Desert Magazine's* standard has been far above the Snake-Pit Memoirs story.

JAMES C. CASSELL, JR.  
Yucca Valley, Calif.

### Charm, Vitality, Beauty . . .

To the Editor: For years I have thoroughly enjoyed your magazine, and nothing more so than the Laura Adams Armer series just concluded.

On a recent visit to Taos, New Mexico, I saw a painting by Dorothy Brett titled, "Foot Race." Instantly this work of art seemed the perfect illustration for the spirit of Mrs. Armer's Indianland stories.

I hope that Mrs. Armer has seen Miss Brett's painting, and that Miss Brett has read Mrs. Armer's articles. Perhaps, by the long arm of coincidence, this has happened, and each has recognized in the work of the other the same charm and vitality and beauty.

JEAN WHITTIER  
Redondo Beach, Calif.

### Ghost Ranch Museum . . .

To the Editor: We are all delighted with the fine article on our Ghost Ranch Museum in your June issue. There is just one correction. William H. Woodin has been Director of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum for the past six years. It was stated in the article that I remained Director until I built the museum at Ghost Ranch. Actually, I did establish the Desert Museum and was its first Director until I became very ill. At that point I suggested Mr. Woodin as Director and have never had cause to regret it. On the contrary, he has proved a splendid person in every way and the Desert Museum has prospered under his leadership.

WILLIAM H. CARR  
Abiquiu, New Mexico

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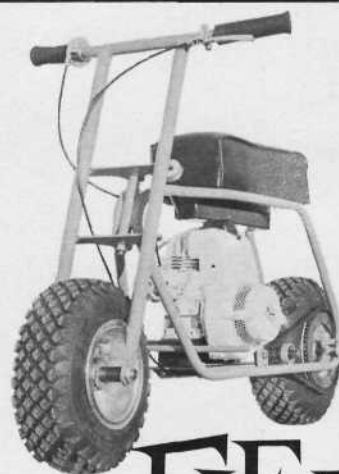
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# Nevada's Past, Present, and Future:



GRANT SAWYER, GOVERNOR OF NEVADA

**T**HE VERY fact that Nevadans have always been friendly, informal, and hospitable people creates an atmosphere conducive to relaxation in visitors to our state. They will see that Nevada has much more to interest them than gaming."

These words come from Nevada's first citizen, friendly, informal, and hospitable Grant Sawyer — the young

governor of a state with an eternally young outlook on life.

The state's future is bright — especially that facet of it concerning tourism. From the days when Comstock silver created the grandeur of San Francisco, to the recent Winter Olympics in the Sierras a few miles from the state line, Nevada has had a close cultural as well as geographic tie with

California. And now, as California rushes headlong toward becoming the nation's most populous state (conservative estimates place California's population by 1975 at 25 to 30 million persons), Nevada realizes that its great stretches of wilderness will take on new dimensions of importance to a California double or even triple its present population.

"To meet the requirements of those who come to Nevada for outdoor relaxation and recreation, it has been agreed that by 1975 our state should provide half a million acres of parks and recreational areas," declares Gov. Sawyer.

Of the 110,000 square miles comprising Nevada, 65% is in public domain status which all Nevadans regard as their own and strenuously protest any effort by the government to withdraw. Four years ago, for example, the Navy's request for withdrawal of three million acres of public lands in Humboldt, Pershing, and Washoe counties raised such a storm of protest that, after a year of negotiation, the land-grab was scaled down to 900,000 acres with concessions that hunting be allowed on certain of those lands. Similar concessions have been made by the Air Force on other withdrawals in southern Nevada. According to Gov. Sawyer, this attitude on the part of Nevadans is based on their belief that Nevada's vast land area will be required to meet the ever-increasing demand for more and more outdoor recreation. They desire to have it preserved for that purpose.

There are desert and mountain expanses in practically every county in Nevada. And few people realize that Nevada offers a varied outdoor fare: superb mountain scenery and excellent fishing around the once-famous mining town of Jarbidge in northern Nevada; the great Fish Lake Valley in Esmeralda County, a rich farming district, beautiful and quiet, hemmed-in by majestic mountains; the Toiyabe Range in central Nevada, noted for its ghost towns, mountain trails, fishing and sight seeing areas; Mead, Walker, Tahoe, Pyramid and several smaller lakes for water sports; the entire spectrum of yesterday's mining boom can be sampled in Nevada's roster of deposed queen cities: Virginia City, Dayton, Candelaria, Delamar, Hamilton, Rhyolite, Belmont, Manhattan, Goldfield.

Abundant sunshine, open spaces,



# Mining, Gambling, Outdoor Recreation

remnants to remind one and all of the rigors of the frontier and the courage of the early settlers—these are the “singular attributes of the Nevada landscape,” according to Gov. Sawyer. What is the state doing to meet the public’s increasing demand for these attractions? Here is Gov. Sawyer’s answer:

“Funds have been made available to begin development of facilities in the present units of the state park system, including campgrounds and road construction at Valley of Fire State Park near Overton and Cathedral Gorge State Park near Caliente. Improvement work on facilities is planned at Beaver Dam State Park, Kershaw-Ryan Recreation Area, Sand Harbor State Beach on Lake Tahoe, Mormon Station Historic State Monument at Genoa, Fort Churchill Historic State Monument, Ward Ovens Historic State Monument and Ichthyosaur Scientific State Monument east of Gabbs.

“The plan envisages the addition of 11 new areas aggregating some 96,000 acres by 1966, including such

high-value areas as Red Rock Canyon, Clark County; Pyramid Lake, Washoe County; High Rock Canyon, Washoe County; Gravelly Ford, Eureka County; and Cold Springs, Churchill County. The Commission has also recommended thirteen additional sites for addition to the state park system by 1971 in such spectacular areas as Goodsprings-Potosi, Walker Lake, Blue Lakes and Goldfield. The Nevada State Department of Highways has constructed over thirty roadside parks and is expanding its program of roadside park development.

“The state facilities, when considered in combination with National Forests, wildlife refuges, and locally-operated areas, should provide for a well balanced experience for all visitors to Nevada.”

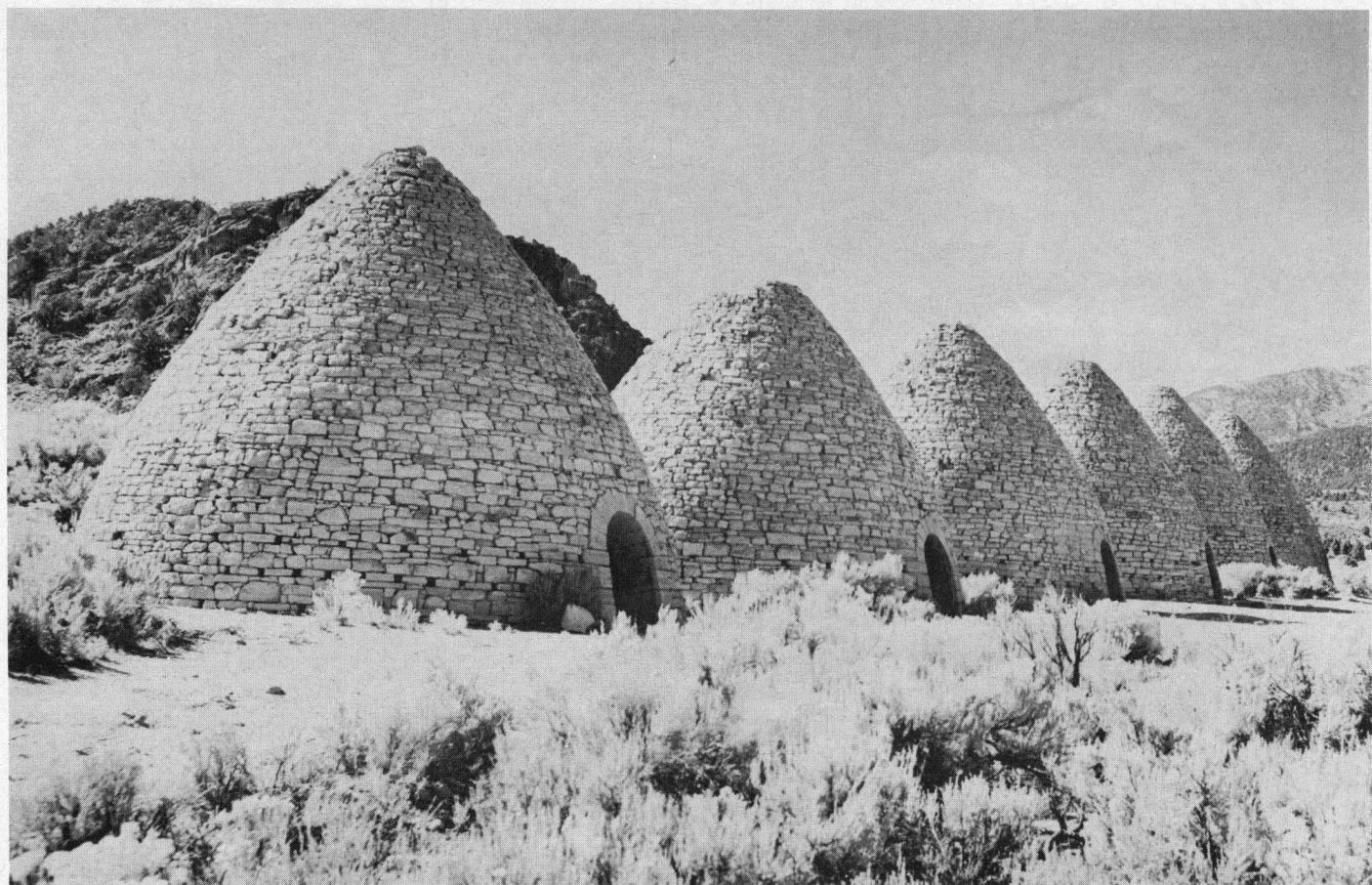
The Nevada Fish and Game Commission also is planning for the future’s accelerated demand for Nevada elbow-room. Among the wildlife and game in Nevada are 250,000 mule deer under the ‘management’ of herd experts. Chukar partridge

abound. In 1959, the Commission sent one of its upland game specialists to India on a two-and-a-half year assignment to trap exotics other than chukar partridges. Five thousand birds were shipped back to Nevada. They included gray Francolin partridge, black Francolin, and sand grouse. The reproduction by the grays and blacks in their new home is encouraging; the number of Gambel’s quail, sagehen, and waterfowl has materially increased in the state.

Grant Sawyer knows that in tomorrow’s Southwest, the backcountry will be an increasingly important factor in determining the quality of the citizen’s life.

“I believe that inborn in every individual,” said the Nevada governor, “is a need for occasional solitude where through nature he can commune with himself and his Creator. He also needs recreation and relief from the stress and strain of modern life. Nevada’s deserts, mountains, and parks for many years to come should be able to satisfy those needs.”

///



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# My Nevada!

By NELL MURBARGER

"Roving Reporter of the Southwest" whose magazine articles and books have established her as a leading authority on the Great Basin's past and present

**F**RIENDS OFTEN ASK why I go to Nevada each summer; what I find there that my home state of California doesn't offer? It is a natural question, but I usually sidestep it with some flippant remark. Who can explain why he is *that way* about a certain person—or state? Certainly, my liking for Nevada is not a matter of scenery, or climate, or friends, or freedom, or any single thing on which I can put a finger. It's just a *good*, deep down, over-all feeling—like that which comes when you step across the threshold of your own home after a harrowing day. You remove your tight shoes, loosen your clothing, bathe your face in cold water, lie back in your favorite easy chair, and close your eyes.

That's how I feel when I return to Nevada—as though I have come home where there's no need to pretend I'm rich, or virtuous, or young, or clever, or anything I am not. Even my faults and failures no longer seem very important, for Nevada is almost as tolerant and forgiving as my own mother.

This Nevada I call my own is not symbolized by the playboy capitals of Reno and Las Vegas, with their glittering multi-million-dollar resort hotels and block-long neon signs. Not that I have any quarrel with this make-believe world—for a night or two I even find it exciting and colorful; a lot of fun. But soon as I have had my little fling it seems as if I can't get rolling fast enough toward my real, unvarnished, unalloyed, Simon-pure Nevada of rushing streams and high blue lakes, and cool, dim gorges.

That this side of Nevada should be almost unknown except to a few cattlemen, prospectors and sportsmen, is not too difficult to understand, for Nevada's hinterlands have always been considered an obstacle, rather than a goal.

Dazzled by the magic name of California, the gold-seekers of 1849 had only curses for this sparsely-peopled wilderness that delayed their progress, and in their blind hastening toward Coloma and its ephemeral treasure, they passed almost within shouting distance of a mountain where men of the next decade would begin harvesting \$500,000,000 from Nevada's Comstock Lode. Same was true of the covered-wagon emigrants. In following the sinuous 600-mile course of the Humboldt River, they passed—and left behind—thousands of acres as level and free and fertile as most of them would ever gain in the Promised Land beyond the Sierra.

But man learns slowly—if at all—and long after the explorers and gold-seekers and emigrants had gone their unseeing ways, there came the era of the automobile tourist and the diabolical dogma of traveling by night to escape the "monotony" of the desert.

By reason of this more-than-a-century-long tendency to regard Nevada as only an annoying land-bridge between Salt

Lake City and California, today finds our sixth largest state still the least-known and most misunderstood in the Union—and one of the most sparsely-settled areas on earth.

It is a state with thousands of miles of good paved highways, but with scarcely a dozen incorporated towns and cities; a state without a street car, but with 20,000,000 acres of public domain; a state nearly twice the size of all New England, but with a total population less than that of San Diego, California!

True, the 1960 census shows that during the past 10 years, Nevada's population has increased by some 75 percent—second-greatest percentage increase of any state. But this means only that a few towns and cities are increasing in size and importance. It doesn't mean that the saw-tooth summits of the Rubies are growing crowded, that there is no longer room to pitch your tent or park your trailer along the shores of Wild Horse Lake, or that any more persons have come to live in the Virgin Valley. All these miles—and 10,000 others—remain open and unspoiled, uncrowded by people.

This is *Big Country*—high, wide and handsome—as anyone who takes a little time to examine it will discover. Happily, this may be done with surprising ease since good paved roads lead to countless scenes of splendor—to Walker and Pyramid lakes, to matchless Tahoe, and Lakes Mead and Mohave. Paved roads take you to ski runs, trout streams, pine-shaded campgrounds, through thousands of acres of National Forest, to state parks, and picturesque old mining camps by the dozen.

As in any other state, however, he who would see Nevada's *very best* must leave the asphalt; must take to the graveled roads or to those dim narrow lines designated on highway maps as "semi-improved."

To the experienced motorist with adequate gasoline, a five-gallon can of water, and a measure of common sense, there's nothing fearful about these little roads that lead into the high country. They're slow—sure! But in places of this sort, reduced speed is a blessing, not a curse. As the late Don Blanding wrote, "I may not go so far or fast, but I see more along the road."

Make no mistake about it—there's plenty to see on these little roads, for they are the magic carpets that lead into the majestic Rubies, the Whites, the Toiyabes, and other cardboard-cutout mountains ranged tier upon purple tier. Here are 16 peaks between 10,000 and 14,000 feet in height—one with a living glacier!—while the statewide average elevation of 5500 feet is greater than the *maximum* height of land in three-fourths of the states of the Union!

Explore the Jarbidge Craters, High Rock Canyon, the headwaters of the Humboldt, or the Owyhee, and you'll carry back to civilization memories of a Nevada that not



one tourist in 10,000 ever sees! You'll look on towering crags and wild sandstone canyons and great forests of pine and fir; on jagged rimrock where the mule deer feed, and high rocky mesas pounded by the hooves of wild mustangs. You'll see clear, cold, tumultuous streams leaping with rainbow trout; deep, dark gorges where the cougar screams, and green mountain valleys blanketed with wild iris and shoulder-high columbines and woodferns. You'll see July snowfields fringed with the brilliant scarlet of snowplants, and aspen glades transformed to flaming gold by September's first frost.

Other great expanses of Nevada, like some women, are beautiful only to those who love them. This is the desert, a land of brilliant sunrises and sunsets, spectacular skylines, precipitous cliffs and canyons, and severe brown hills, high and mighty and arid. Whether this vastness frightens, thrills, or bores the beholder depends on the eyes through which it is viewed. But, even those who see nothing lovely in this harsh land should never be guilty of calling it "worthless," for not a hill in Nevada truly merits that stigma. Even though fit only for enhancing the beauty of the sunrise and bringing peace to man's troubled soul, these great jagged-topped desert ranges still would justify their existence—and don't ever regard them with contempt!

Remember that in the bare 100 years since 1860, when Nevada's mining industry began to flower, such hills as these have yielded close to *two thousand million dollars* worth of mineral!

In the course of this prodigious harvesting many mines have been worked out—just as any treasure chest, long drawn upon and not replenished, is eventually emptied. In such cases, the camps originally supported by such mines have become ghost towns.

How many of these old camps there are in the Sagebrush State is impossible to say, but I have collected historical material on more than 1600 of them, and every summer brings me the knowledge of scores more ghost towns previously unknown to me. Seeking out these phantom camps, exploring and photographing them, and hunting relics lost amid their caving cellars and trash heaps and fallen walls, has been one of the major "fringe benefits" of every summer I have spent in Nevada.

Displayed on the walls of my den are hundreds of mementos from such towns. These, when I am through with them, are to go to the Nevada Historical Society; but until that time I find a rich pleasure from looking at them and remembering the joy of that particular day which brought each into my possession.

A section of hand-riveted buffalo-hide fire hose from the old town of Yankee Blade, recalls to mind a day spent in the hills near Austin with my wonderful friends, Doc and Irene Tagert.

A brass powderhorn and splintered pack saddle bring memories of a day passed on the Forty-Mile Desert with Ed Green.

An old meat cleaver, an iron kettle, door locks, a Bowie knife, an old "pepper-box" revolver, mule shoes and ox shoes, sun-purpled glass, Chinese brandy jugs—almost every ghost-town memento on my walls—awake memories of Nevada's high-country sun, of rain falling gently on the sage,

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"... a state nearly twice the size of all New England; but with a total population less than that of San Diego, Calif!"

LOOKING EAST FROM THE SUMMIT OF HARRISON PASS IN THE RUBY MOUNTAINS. THIS PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN IN JUNE—YET SNOW LIES UPON THE GROUND.



THE VIEW FROM THE AUBURN MINE NEAR DUN GLEN

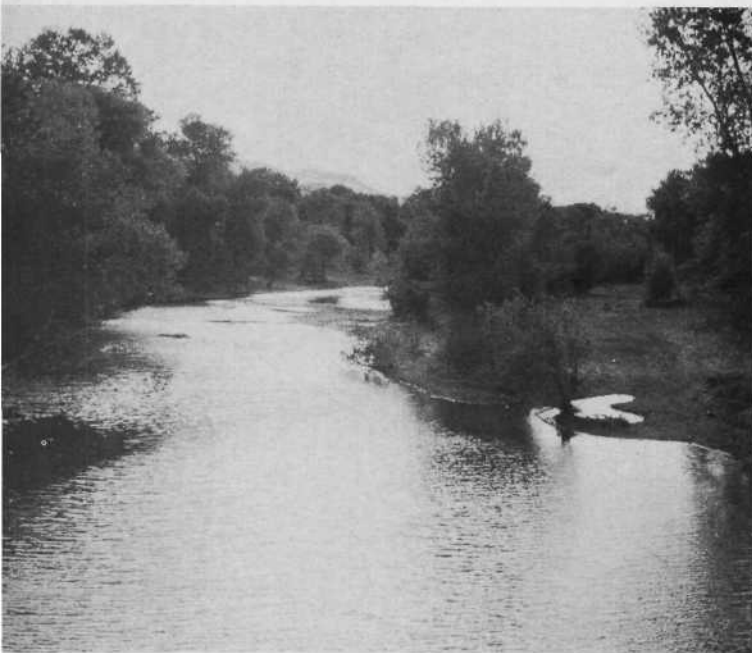


OLD LOG CABIN IN RUBY VALLEY

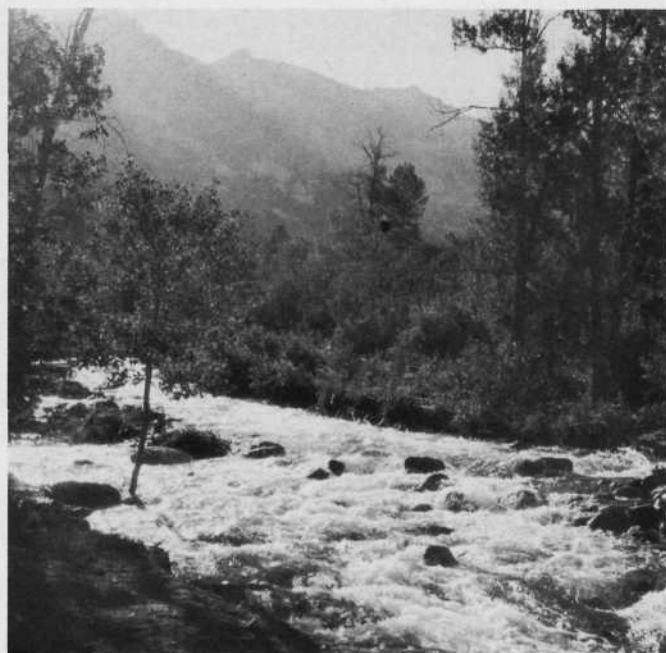


# My Nevada: "You'll see clear, cold, tumultuous streams . . ."

(continued)



THE TRUCKEE RIVER AT NIXON



LAMOILLE CREEK IN THE RUBY MOUNTAINS



THE RUSHING WATERS OF LEHMAN CREEK

of pinyon incense in the clear, sharp air, and campfires crackling in the soft dark.

One of the reasons I like Nevada is that there is always something for which to *seek*.

Whether I am in Tonopah, or Ely, or Lovelock, or Goldfield, I can always spend an idle afternoon—or a week—looking for lost mines, or for mines yet to be found. I can look for relics in every old mining camp, or Pony Express station, every abandoned Army fort; I can look for geodes and crystals on every hill, can hunt arrowheads on every dry lake bed. True, I may not find any of these things—but *finding* is beside the point. The big thing is the quest, the *seeking*.

It gives me a reason—an excuse—for being out in the hills; and all the while I'm seeking whatever it is that I may not find, my body is absorbing the dry warmth and sunshine. I'm filling my lungs with clean, dry air, and the wind is sweeping the cobwebs from my brain and clearing the veil of doubt from before my eyes.

Occasionally, such trips lead me to the lonely cabin of some old timer and a pleasant chat on any subject from "cabbages to kings." One time I dropped in quite accidentally at the Copper Basin cabin of Lee Hand and in less than an hour learned more about the history of turquoise mining than I had ever known before! Just as accidentally I called on the late Senator Wiley, at Gold Point, and heard a treasury of stories drawn from his near-50 years of mining in Esmeralda County.

Another of the reasons I like Nevada is because of the courage and determination of her old timers—rugged individualists such as Ed Smith who, at the age of 88, was still working a small mine in Mineral County and hoping to find a better one so that he might leave a "nice" legacy to a home for crippled children; and Charlie Hawkinson of Elko County, also close to 90 and still fiercely loyal to his town of Jarbidge, confident that gold mining will soon come back into its own.

In every county—almost every mountain range—live such men and women, strong, courageous souls, who ask only to work out their own destiny in their own way. Furthermore, I like Nevada because its people and officials will permit such oldsters to continue living as they wish to live, in the hills they love, doing the work they want most to do.

When the editor of *Desert Magazine* asked me to tell folks why I like Nevada, and why I go there each summer, he also asked me to name my favorite Nevada county. Loving every part of the state as I do, I cannot possibly name any county as my "favorite"—any more than a mother should be guilty of naming her "favorite" child. So I'll say that in addition to Nevada's other 16 counties, I have a *passing fondness* for Elko.



It seems to me Elko County has just about everything anyone could ask in a summer vacation spot! For fishermen there are half-a-dozen ice-cold lakes and 2800 miles of trout streams. For the mountain climber there are peaks so high that snow may fall on them 10 months out of every year. There are baronial-sized cattle ranches and hard-riding buckaroos, grassy meadows smothered in wildflowers, shady campgrounds in the National Forest, historic ghost towns, great herds of deer and antelope—even a few wild mustangs—and thousands of miles of friendly little back-country roads, each one prickling with adventure!

Stretching across the northeast corner of Nevada for 150 miles east to west, and 135 miles north to south, Elko exceeds in acreage the combined area of New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware, and three Rhode Islands; yet, in all this immense territory there reside but 12,000 persons—an average of about one to each one-and-one-half square miles. With two-thirds of the county's entire population concentrated in the towns of Elko, Wells, and Carlin, it adds up to a scad of land without any human inhabitants at all!

More than 8,000,000 acres in the county is designated "public domain," meaning Uncle Sam still owns it. Humboldt National Forest, lying almost entirely within the county, embraces some of the finest hunting and fishing in the United States. Of the dozen-or-so improved free campgrounds, practically all are situated adjacent to good trout and bass fishing.

Last June, while driving out Lamoille Canyon to Thomas Canyon Forest Camp, in the Rubies, I counted 22 waterfalls in five miles—some of them appearing to be at least 500 feet high! On the same stretch of road I tallied 19 deer in 15 minutes, and once I had to brake the truck nearly to a stop while a couple of beautiful does and a big buck decided whether to trot up the road ahead of me, or scramble down the canyon side. All the hunting I do is with a camera, but I happen to know that Elko is famous for her fine deer herds, estimated at 25,000 animals.

Along with these deer graze thousands of Hereford cattle—sleek, fat and wild. This Old West atmosphere is another reason I like Elko County—and all of Nevada, so far as that goes. It is not a synthetic atmosphere, but the real McCoy. Buckaroos, mounted on good cow-ponies, wear cowboy boots and chaps, and Stetson hats—not because they think these accoutrements make them look like Guy Madison, but because such articles are comfortable to wear and suited to ranch work.

There's still scads of open range in Nevada, and anyone like myself, who grew up on Zane Grey's Wild West thrillers, and *Chip of the Flying U*, can get a whale of a bang out of round-up time, when riders gather the great herds, cut out the unmarked calves and rope and brand them, exactly as it was being done in days of the Chisholm Trail.

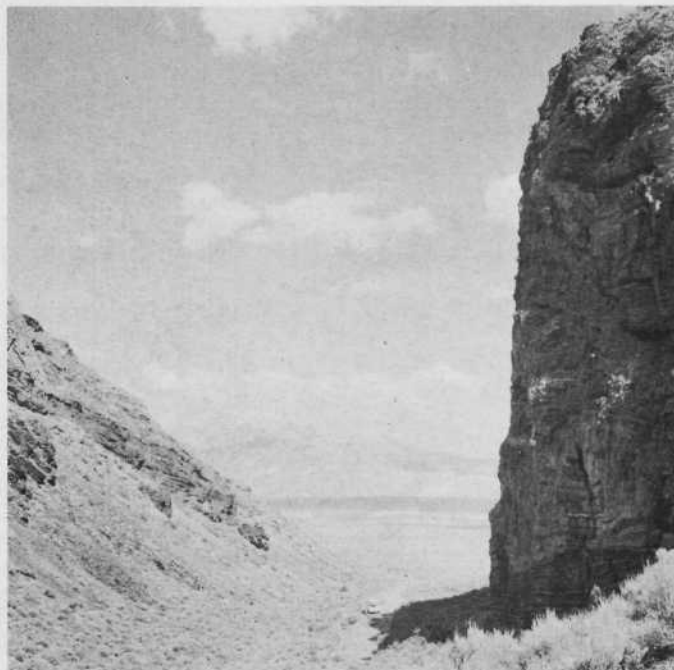
With a large percentage of her livelihood stemming from cattle, Nevada takes to rodeos like a duck to water. Half-a-dozen towns and cities over the state hold annual contests in which national champions take part. But, better still, to my way of thinking, are the small town rodeos where partici-

"... he who would see Nevada's very best must leave the asphalt; must take to the graveled roads or to those dim narrow lines designated on highway maps as 'semi-improved'."

THE DIRT ROAD PASSES IN FRONT OF TREASURE CITY'S LONG-ABANDONED BANK BUILDING



ON CHARLESTON MOUNTAIN IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE STATE



A PICKUP TRUCK ENTERS THE MOUTH OF WALL CANYON, NYE COUNTY



*My Nevada:* “. . . just as any treasure chest, long drawn upon and not replenished, is eventually emptied.”  
(continued)



THESE DESERTED STORE BUILDINGS ONCE SERVED THE MINERS OF GOLD POINT



A MINE HEADFRAME AT GALENA



THE OLD NYE COUNTY COURTHOUSE AT BELMONT OUT-LIVED THE MINING BOOM

pants are all local boys and girls drawn from ranches over a radius of 100 miles. The City of Reno, each Fourth of July, is the scene of an outstanding parade and professional rodeo; yet, on several occasions, I have left that place on the morning of the Fourth and have driven 176 miles to Austin in order to attend the amateur rodeo staged on the open flat at the mouth of Pony Canyon. There is no grandstand, no ticket office — but there's an unlimited amount of fun and small town sociability. Many of those attending and participating are Indians from the Reese River

country to the south, and during the two or three days of the celebration the old camp of Austin looks like something lifted bodily out of a Technicolor Western.

During all the summers and the more than 50,000 miles I have spent rambling over the mountains, hills, and deserts of Nevada, it is inevitable that many unusual experiences should have come my way. Some of these have been amusing, some mystifying, some dramatic. Most have been good, none has been really bad. My camps have been rained upon, snowed under, blown to pieces, and trampled by wild range cattle. I have been lost and tired and thirsty and hot. My car has been stuck in sand, in mud, and in streams swollen by flash floods. But, actually, such happenings are no more than inconveniences of the moment—a day or two, at most. None is a real calamity, unless one chooses to make it so.

Weighing these passing unpleasanties on the scales of memory, it seems to me that the whole motley lot of them, rolled into one ragged bundle, would not counterbalance the exhilaration, the joy, the utter delight that has been mine on any one of several hundreds of priceless days I have spent in Nevada.

What flat tire or dust storm, what minor inconvenience, could possibly outweigh the delightful thrill of first seeing wild antelopes bounding across a desert plain, or a band of wild burros feeding in a rocky canyon? What onerous piece of road is more important than the consummate joy of standing at timberline on a windswept mountain, with half a world of gorges and foothills and plains spread out below? What discomfort of the moment could ever be more important to me than my treasured memories of sagebrush campfires flickering in the dark of silent old ghost towns, where I was the only person in scores of lonely miles, and the nights were big and black and terribly still, and all the marching legions of the dead seemed closer to me and more real than the living?



All the inconveniences and unpleasanties experienced during 15 summers in Nevada are not as important to me, today, as the memory of one afternoon I spent with the late Louis Lamaire, of Battle Mountain. Mr. Lamaire, at that time, had dealt in general merchandise in the same building in this small desert town for more than 70 years. For having known this fine old gentleman, and for having heard his recollections of pioneer merchandising, I feel immeasurably richer—just as I feel richer for having spent a day in the hills of Elko County with “Uncle” Hugh Martin, born in Mountain City 85 years before, and then still a resident of that little town. I feel enriched for having known “Grandpa” and “Grandma” Leonard, almost lifelong residents of the ghost town of Unionville in Pershing County. Nearly 500 friends and well-wishers gathered in this old camp last September to help the Leonards celebrate the 75th anniversary of their marriage. And, of course, I feel the richer for having known Josie Pearl.

Josie lives in a mining claim cabin near the rim of the Black Rock Desert in northwestern Humboldt County. Her front yard is surrounded by 10,000 square miles of highland desert. The nearest town is Winnemucca, 110 miles distant.

I first met Josie in 1951. She had spent the major portion of her life looking for mines, working them and selling them, and battling to defend them. Every one of those mines had left its indelible stamp in her face; yet, at 80 years, she stood straight and proud, her eyes shrewd, coldly appraising, completely inscrutable and steady as the eyes of a gunfighter.

It was plain to see that self-sufficiency had been this woman's way of life. I felt instinctively that if she should decide to move one of the nearby hills to the other side of the ravine, she would attack the job calmly and deliberately, some evening after supper, perhaps; and she would move the hill, every stick and stone of it, without asking the help of anyone—or the permission of God, man or the government.

Josie was not especially friendly to me at first. Not that she was openly discourteous; she simply was withholding judgment. I was on probation until she could size me up and decide if I merited her friendship. Whether she actually decided in my favor, or whether she let down the bars only because she was starved-hungry for another woman to talk to, I never knew; but she eventually invited me inside her cabin and asked me to sit down. Rattling the grate and poking some life into the fire in her old wood-burning cookstove, she sat the coffeepot on to heat and began paring a pan of potatoes to fry.

All afternoon dark clouds had been collecting over the desert hills to the northwest, and by the time Josie and I finished eating, a biting wind was roaring through the ravine and the air had turned bitterly cold. With our supper dishes washed and a kerosene lamp lighted, this strange desert woman and I drew our chair close to the glowing stove and talked half the night away.

Josie told me of her mines, past, present and future. She told what it meant for a woman to play a man's part in a hard demanding game that is no sinecure even for men. She told of loneliness; of packing grub on her back through winter gales with the mercury in the thermometer sulking at 20 and 30 below zero. She told of wading snow, and sharpening drill steel, and loading shots, and of defending her

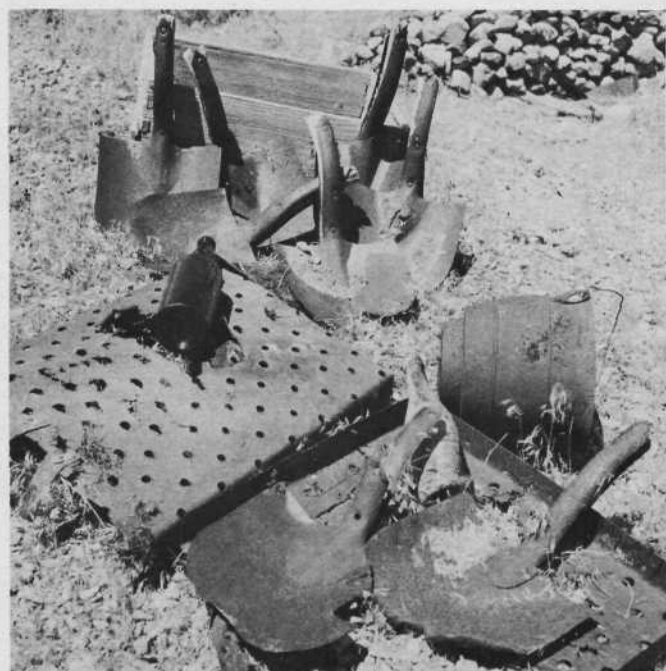
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“One of the reasons I like Nevada is that there is always something for which to seek.”

AN OLD BELLOWS USED AT AURORA



BABY SEAGULLS ON ANAHO ISLAND

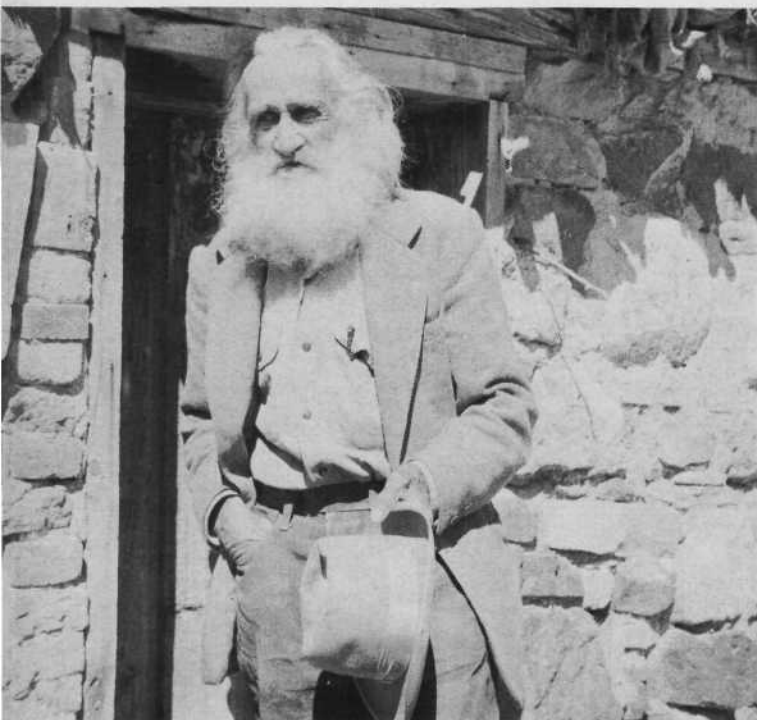


RELICS FROM THE CHINESE OCCUPATION OF AMERICAN CANYON

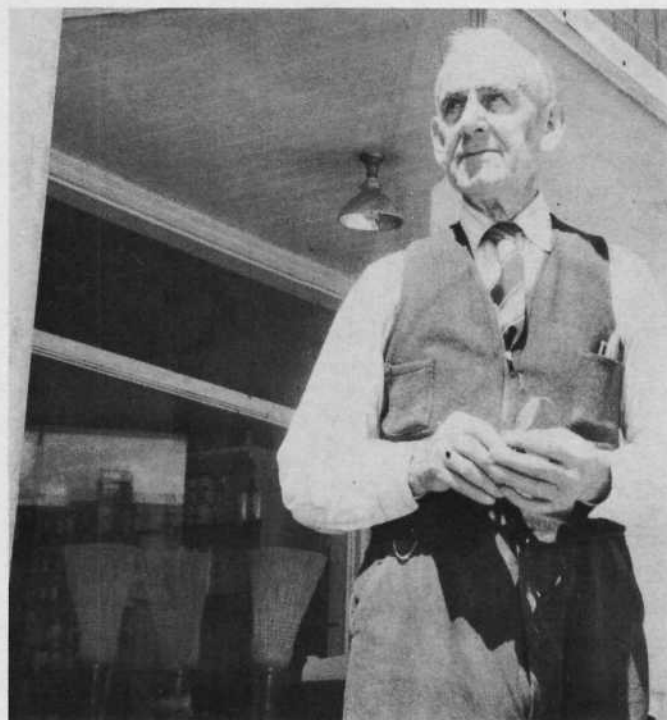


*My Nevada:* "Another of the reasons I like Nevada is because of the courage and determination of her old timers . . ."

(continued)



THOMAS MULLINER OF SCHELLBOURNE



BATTLE MOUNTAIN STOREKEEPER LOUIS LAMAIRE



JOSIE PEARL OF NEVADA'S BLACK ROCK DESERT

successive mines against high-graders and claim jumpers and faithless partners, and of spending long cold nights huddled in a mine tunnel with a rifle across her knees.

Late that night, long after Josie and I had retired and the fire in the cookstove had died to gray embers, I lay wakefully in the darkness, listening to the desert gale as it pounded at the doors and windows and whistled down the stovepipe, and flung loose gravel against the tar-papered side

of the cabin. Jagged flashes of lightning periodically split the dark sky, and thunder rolled and rumbled across the ranges.

Lying there in the blackness of that stormy night, I was thinking that in another day or two I would return to Winnemucca—and Josie Pearl would be left alone. Alone she would face the spectre of bad roads, and drouth, and failing springs, and heat, the prospect of illness and accident, even death. It was impossible for me to imagine a stranger sort of existence for a woman who had put behind her so many years. Yet, even then, I felt certain that as long as Josie Pearl retained her good health she would stand fiercely proud, and would face each new dawn with hope and courage and a wonderful enthusiasm for whatever the day might bring.

That first meeting with Josie Pearl was ten years ago this summer. Josie, now close to 90, is still living on her desert mining claim, still facing the trials, tribulations and problems of each new day; still rejoicing in the wonderful challenge of life. Is it any wonder I should feel that knowing this woman has strengthened my character, given me added courage and determination, and enriched my years?

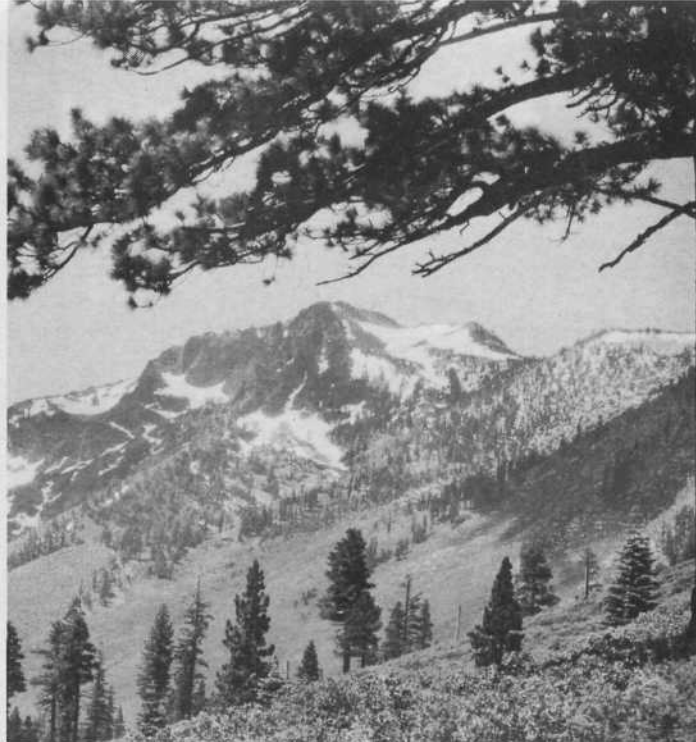
Possibly these paragraphs have revealed a bit of my feeling for the Sagebrush State and its people; have explained, in part, why I must go there each year as soon as dark patches of bare ground are appearing on the hills, the meadowlarks of another spring are nesting, and the bluebells and johnny-jump-ups are bursting into flower.

Ranging my eyes over Nevada's terrifying immensity of broken mountains and purple-shadowed gorges, her vastness of sage and sun and sky and infinite space, I want to throw back my shoulders and stand tall, and shout into the teeth of the highcountry wind, "This is my land! *I have come home . . .*"

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# THE MOUNTAINS OF NEVADA



MOUNT ROSE NEAR RENO—A SIERRA SUMMIT

By WILLIAM J. HART

Director of the Nevada State Park Commission



COMMUNITY OF ROUND MOUNTAIN, WITH THE SNOW-CLAD TOIYABES IN DISTANCE. NOTE PLAYA AT FOOT OF THIS TYPICAL GREAT BASIN RANGE.

**I**T IS OFTEN difficult to convince people that Nevada is a mountain state. The Sagebrush State seems to be judged by a mid-summer dash along the route of the Overland Trail (U. S. 40) or along the Spanish Trail (U. S. 91) rather than from pursuit of quiet trails wending through alpine meadows in one of Nevada's 120 named mountain ranges. Fate has determined, by the relation in time of Nevada's colorful mining frontier to the rising importance of modern highways, that the fine state highway system speeds travelers rapidly from border to border with only occasional glimpses of peaks that rise 10,000, 11,000 and 12,000 feet above sea level.

One of the best descriptions of the Nevada topography compares the state's mountain chains to a herd of

giant caterpillars headed north. The analogy is true if it is explained that the caterpillars are of varying sizes, and the plateau they are crawling on is 3500 to 6000 feet above sea level.

Although the mountains of southern Nevada demonstrate the buttelike characteristics of the Colorado River drainage, and the ranges along the state's northern border the Snake River Plateau characteristics; the great majority of Nevada mountains have a family similarity. They are part of the Great Basin where all streams flow into closed basins, and evaporation is greater than surface flow. The basins most often are in long broad valleys whose floors slope upward on alluvial material to fault block mountains jutting 3500 to 9000 feet above the lowlands.

Geologists explain that the Basin

SOUTHERN NEVADA MOUNTAINS HAVE THE BUTTELIKE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLORADO RIVER DRAINAGE. PHOTO AT RIGHT SHOWS THE SPRING MOUNTAINS NEAR PAHRUMP.



and Range Province land forms have been caused by a giant squeeze on the earth's crust which gave rise to a series of fault blocks pushed up from the once smooth surface. Of more importance to the traveler are the cliffs, canyons, peaks and other forms that have eroded out of the massive uplifts. Then too, the vegetation varies directly with altitude—from salt grass and saltbrush along the margins of the playas to greasewood, blackbrush, sagebrush and pinyon-juniper zones in regularly layered belts, with some local distortion according to slope exposure. If the mountain range is high enough, ponderosa pine, aspen, engelmann spruce, bristlecone pine and limber pine occur. In some ranges, such as the Ruby and the Snake, there is an arctic-alpine zone extending above timberline. Many canyon bottoms sport flowing streams lined with willows and other broadleaved species. Sixteen ranges have been judged to have sufficient timber and watershed values to be included in two national forests. The Toquima, Toiyabe and Monitor ranges blanket the dead-center portion of the state.

The abrupt changes in land form and vegetation, as modified by latitude, gives each person a chance to find a location with just the right combination of satisfaction regardless of the time of year. The variety and contrast make possible the very real thrill of being in the coolness of a giant fir and looking off across a

valley floor shimmering in July sunshine.

In the south, the most popular area is the Spring Mountain Range capped by lofty Mount Charleston at 11,910 feet. Major campground facilities are operated by the U. S. Forest Service and are accessible via N. 39 and N. 52. The visitor will find trails, one of which winds to Charleston Peak through a fine stand of bristlecone pine. The Spring Mountain area stands a chance of becoming one of the outstanding recreation complexes in the nation. In addition to the high elevation facilities in the National Forest (including winter skiing), a new Red Rock Canyon State Park is proposed on the southeastern flank of the range to preserve and interpret colorful, vertical cliffs, pictographs and ecological oddities. To the northwest an extensive area is to be retained in primitive condition by the U. S. Bureau of Refuges and Bureau of Land Management.

Additional spring-summer-fall enjoyment can be found in the undeveloped canyons of mountain areas like Potosi Mountain (proposed for inclusion in the State Park System as part of a 10-year expansion program) and the Sheep Mountains (part of the Desert Game Range). Information about these areas can be secured at Goodsprings, north of U. S. 91 below Las Vegas, and at Corn Creek Station, on U. S. 95 north of Las Vegas.

Farther to the north, just east of

Tonopah, N. 8A passes through the Big Smokey Valley. On the west are the Toiyabes, dominated by Arc Dome at 11,775; to the east is the Toquima Range. N. 8A can be used as a base for side-trips to mining camps like Round Mountain or Manhattan. The route can also serve as the start of two loop trips. The first would swing west on U.S. 50 to Austin and then up the Reese River valley on N. 21 to Ione. From there it's a short hop to the old Stokes mining camp of Berlin and Ichthyosaur Scientific State Monument. A dusty N. 91 leads west to Gabbs and pavement on N. 23 for the return to U. S. 95. The second trip leaves N. 8A before reaching U. S. 50 and travels south-eastward on a Forest Service road to N. 82 in Monitor Valley near Diana's Punch Bowl. The gravel road wends southward in the shadow of Monitor Peak, 10,856 feet through historic Belmont, proposed for partial restoration as part of the State Park System, and back to N. 8A. Each of the roads provides access to numerous well-marked side-roads that lead into the steep lush canyons. Areas such as Kingston Canyon are singularly beautiful and provide fishable water. Remnants of old towns, springs, campgrounds and other surprises await the visitor to these openings in the mountain fastness. Others will be interested in hiking the Toiyabe Trail from Kingston Ranger Station to Mahogany Mountain.

On U. S. 93, a traveler can use one of three State Park units between Pioche and Caliente as a base for trips into little-known mountain areas such as the Wilson Creek Range. Local advice on routes and road conditions should be sought.

Farther north a whole range of alternatives confronts those who would enjoy the mountains of Nevada. Some of the most magnificent desert mountain landscape is found in the Snake Range which flanks U. S. 6 east of Ely. The best known features are Lehman Caves National Monument and Wheeler Peak with its glacier. There are top-notch camping facilities in Lehman Creek plus little known areas, such as Lincoln Canyon on the west-side of the range, to poke around in. Other developed facilities are found in the Duck Creek area of the Schell Creek Range north of Ely. More primitive conditions are to be found on mountain trips to the site of the old town of Hamilton in the White Pine Mountains or in the Timber Mountains west of Sunnyside. And wild country with no improvements will be found in the Mount Grafton Country just west of



AN ANCIENT BRISTLECONE PINE TREE ON MT. WASHINGTON IN THE SNAKE RANGE





MAIN STREET OF LAMOILLE AT THE BASE OF THE RUBY MOUNTAINS

U. S. 93, 50 miles south of Ely. (Again, inquire locally about conditions.)

Another highland worth visiting is the Ruby Range, most closely associated with Elko on U. S. 40. These

mountains are dominated by Ruby Dome which holds its head 11,349 feet in the clear desert air. Delicate mountain lakes and spectacular scenery can be reached by ascending Lamoille Canyon. A good campground is located in the canyon at Thomas Creek and a gravel road ends at a glacial lake. Good trails connect with other lakes in the high country. New camping facilities are being built on the east-side of Harrison Pass, overlooking Ruby Valley and the migratory waterfowl refuge. Some picturesque pioneer cattle headquarter spreads are strung along the east foot of the Rubys (see color photo on next page), and it is well to remember that the present road was once a major wagon route running through Secret Pass to the Humboldt River.

Nevada Highway 11 turns north from U. S. 40 on the west edge of Elko. Both N. 11 and N. 43 probe the mountains which form the south edge of the Snake River drainage. The south shoulder of the mountains has a gradual slope, but the north face drops off sharply. Racing streams, like the Jarbidge and Bruneau rivers, have carved startling canyons through these sheer mountain faces. Following the signs to Charleston and Jarbidge canyon is the most spectacular way to visit the old mining town on the floor of Jarbidge Canyon, but another interesting route leaves N. 43 at Wildhorse Reservoir (where the fishing is darn good) and proceeds via Copper Mountain Ranger Station and the head of the Bruneau to the remote community of Jarbidge. Small Forest Service campgrounds provide limited facilities, although a new facility has been opened at Pine Creek just off N. 11. If desire takes the visitor to the west-side of the Independence Mountains, a visit to Tuscarora and Earl Phillip's place is a must. Many stories are available about the fabled Pedro Altube and the Spanish Ranch

empire he built in Independence Valley.

Further west is the Santa Rosa Range overlooking the great open plateaus of northwestern Nevada. Traveling north from Winnemucca on U. S. 95, N. 83 takes off to the east and leads to Paradise Ranger Station and a little-known loop-road through the Santa Rosas, complete with startling vistas, and back to U. S. 95 14 miles from the Oregon state line.

These ranges provide some of the most interesting and enjoyable summer travel in the American outdoors. And one should not overlook the many other desert mountains in Nevada: spring-fall trips to the Humboldt Mountains, the Stillwater Mountains overlooking the Carson Sink, the Wassuk Range above Walker Lake, the Destoya Mountains, the Simpson Park Mountains (named for the military explorer who surveyed the telegraph and wagon route from Camp Floyd, Utah, to Genoa, Nevada).

Each Nevada mountain range has its own boomtown—Unionville, Junco, Rawhide, Aurora and a host of others. Some of the peaks are truly majestic. For instance, there are two Mount Grants — both above 11,000 feet. One towers directly above Walker Lake, the other is 30 miles north of Eastgate overlooking the Humboldt Salt Marsh. With a land surface that is 50 percent mountain, there should be little trouble in turning to the mountains in Nevada — from Pilot

COLOR PHOTO ON NEXT PAGE: CATTLE GRAZING ON THE RUBY MOUNTAIN SLOPES—A LITTLE-KNOWN PARADISE NEAR ELKO. PHOTO BY LENARD SMITH.

Peak to Boundary Peak — at any season of the year.

Perhaps it is fortunate that the tide of civilization has ebbed from the Nevada landscape. The broad valley, the raw mountain, the clear sun-filled air are available to meet the needs of a society which increasingly needs to re-establish rapport with the outdoors. Nevada and her mountains are places where the deer and the antelope — and man — play — a use which, over time, may be the highest and best this amazing landscape can be put to.

Of course, there are parts of the Sierra Nevada Mountains that someone thoughtlessly allowed to be included in Nevada. But these are mountain-mountains, rapidly filling with crowds. The charm of Nevada is best characterized by the desert mountains. ///

*Poem of the Month:*

## Mining Camp, Mining Town

Mining camp, mining town,  
Perched on the mountain's  
bones,

Picking at the carcass,  
Pecking at the stones.

Rhyolite, gray Osceola,  
Battle Mountain, Lane,  
Gold Hill and Hamilton—  
How unlovely plain  
Gape their marrow-seeking  
wounds.

But, these marks of man's  
assaults

Are doomed, as cloud shadows  
are doomed

That pass over ancient faults.

Man rushes through bonanzas,  
Unmindful that the stones will  
flow

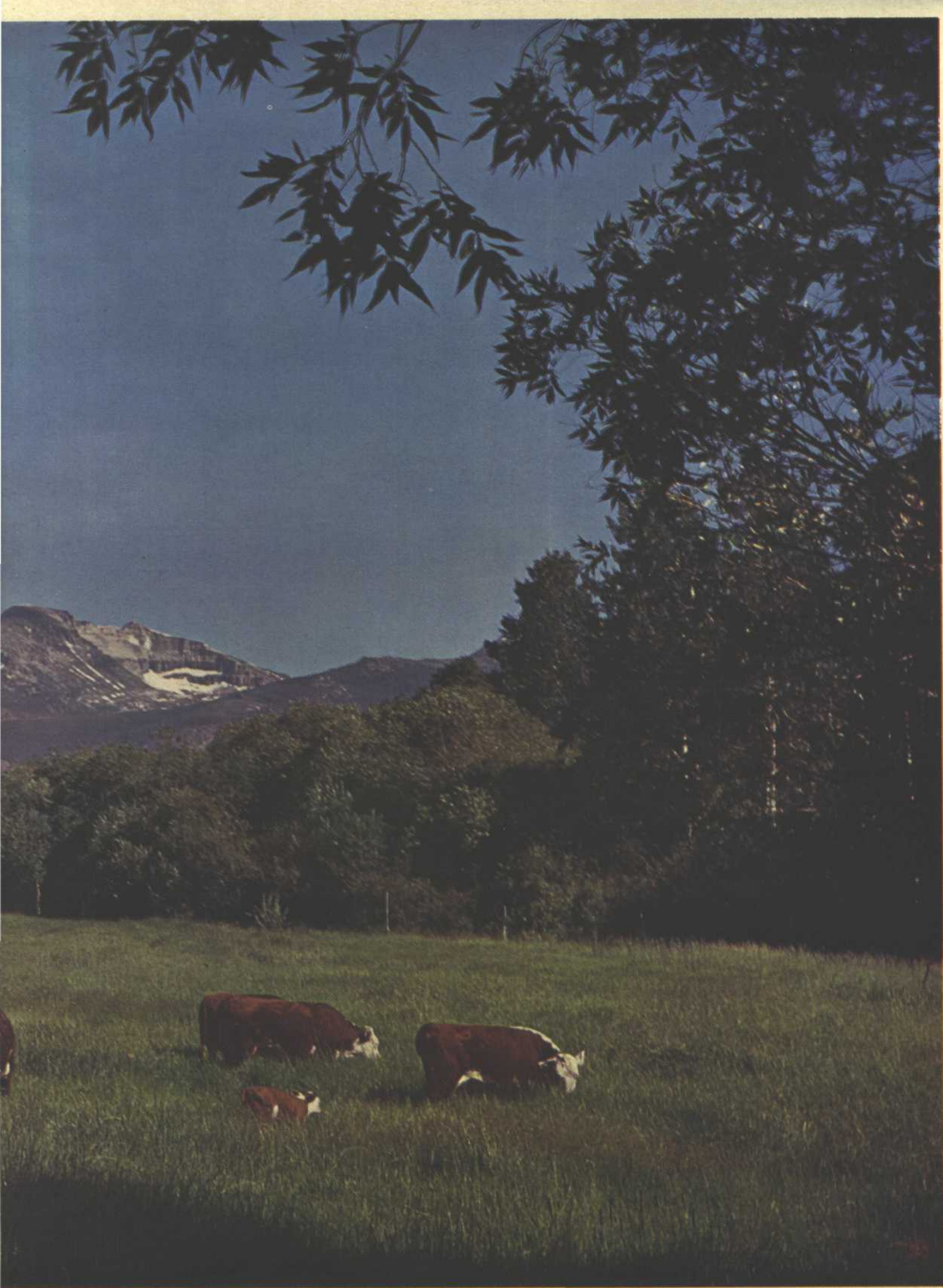
Or that earth can wait: the  
mountains

Wait for us to go.

MARGARET E. ROWE  
Ely, Nevada









# A Mighty Nevada Mountain Nears National Park Status

By WELDON F. HEALD

**E**ASTERN NEVADA is a stimulating high desert country built on a heroic scale. In all directions are hundred-mile panoramas into the blue distance, sweeping over broad sagebrush valleys and uplands dotted with pinyon and juniper to long forested mountain ranges on the horizon.

But in all this king-sized Western realm, nothing is bigger, taller or grander than the Snake Range. Stretching north and south for 80 miles, just west of the Utah line, this gigantic mountain mass soars abruptly 6000 to 8000 feet above the wide treeless valleys on its flanks. Culminating the lofty row of rocky crests is Wheeler Peak, 13,063 feet, the Silver State's second highest point.

Deep canyons gash the mountains' flanks and lead back to hidden recesses under the rugged snow-streaked summit ridges. There, unsuspected from below, is an exhilarating sky-land oasis of pine, fir, spruce and aspen forests, cascading streams, jewel-like alpine lakes, and green flower-spread meadows. It is as if a piece of the Rockies had dropped down in the midst of the Nevada desert.

The range is included in a detached section of Humboldt National Forest, and at Wheeler Peak's east base is Lehman Caves National Monument. Administered by the United States National Park Service, the latter is a 640-acre government reservation created in 1922 to preserve a singularly beautiful limestone cavern. Sixty-eight miles east of Ely, the caves are easily reached via transcontinental U. S. Highway 6-50, and are visited by thousands of people each year.

But, the great peak to the west

THE  
NORTH  
FACE  
OF  
WHEELER  
PEAK



remained aloof and little known until recently, and the superlative mountain country flanking its high shoulders was seldom visited except by local people. Then suddenly the Snake Range hit the news. Five years ago a vigorous campaign was launched to preserve this unique area in a new national park. Since then publicity has been widespread, and these mountains have been increasingly explored, written about, photographed and discussed. Public reaction has been generally favorable, and there is good reason to hope that Wheeler Peak will soon be the center of Great Basin National Park—the nation's thirtieth and Nevada's first.

Headquarters would be at Lehman Caves, and those who want a preview of the proposed park should start

from there. U. S. 6-50 crosses the Snake Range through a wide gap, 7163 feet elevation, known as Sacramento Pass. At the east portal of this pass, paved State 73 branches south to Baker, five miles. This little ranching community is situated at 5350 feet altitude among green irrigated fields on the edge of broad Snake Valley, with the snow-flecked summits of Wheeler Peak and its satellites soaring grandly above it. Here are motel, restaurant, service station and garage, and a general store with limited supplies. From the town, a hard-surfaced spur road heads directly west for the mountains, gradually ascending Lehman Creek to the caves, six miles. The road ends at Monument Headquarters at an elevation of 6825 feet, among pinyons and junipers on the lower slopes of the range. Cabin accommodations and meals are available, and nearby is a shady picnic ground.

Guided walks into the lighted cave are made over an easy half-mile trail. The temperature is always a chilly 52 degrees. Although comparatively small, these caverns excel in

In 1955 Weldon Heald and Albert Marshall discovered that an icefield in Wheeler Peak's north cirque was a true glacier—probably the only one in the whole Great Basin region. In a report of the discovery, Heald suggested that a large part of the highly scenic Snake Range be made a national park or included in an enlarged Lehman Caves National Monument. The idea was enthusiastically received in Nevada and endorsed by national conservation organizations. Since 1957, a vigorous campaign has been spearheaded by the Great Basin National Park Association. President and indefatigable leader of the park movement is Darwin Lambert, editor of the Ely "Daily Times." On May 3 of this year, Senator Alan Bible of Nevada introduced a bill in Congress to establish a 121,000-acre Great Basin National Park in the Snake Range. Although there is some opposition, chances now appear favorable for passage during this session.



bristling stalactites, stalagmites, helictites, curtainlike stone formations, fluted columns, thin pillars, and dripping basins rimmed with terraced dikes. Tiny needle-sharp crystals, peculiar mushroom-shaped nodules, and infinitely varied frosty incrustations adorn the larger formations; and shades of buff, chocolate, and white color some of the rooms. It is a fantastic subterranean world of pitch blackness where the only sound is the dripping of water, which for many thousands of years has slowly formed the caves and furnished the soluble limes and minerals for the weird Stygian decorations.

The Monument is located between two eastside canyons which lead up to the high country around Wheeler Peak. In both are Forest Service improved campgrounds reached by fair dirt roads. Lehman Creek, to the north, is the most popular approach, and the large campground, with 14 trailer spaces, is three miles from Monument Headquarters, at an elevation of 8000 feet. This is the starting point of the eight-mile Wheeler Peak Trail.

A more delightful and varied hike would be hard to find. The route ascends the canyon beside foaming Lehman Creek, passing through aspen groves alternating with shady woods of white and Douglas firs, and grassy openings bright with Indian paintbrush, lupines and other wildflowers. Now and then the trail loops up sunny south-facing slopes of pinyon, manzanita and mountain mahogany. Some of the latter are giants 40 feet high with trunks two feet or more in diameter. In about four miles the high glacial basin is reached, and the scenery becomes alpine. Here the precipitous north face of Wheeler Peak rises impres-

sively 4000 feet above gently sloping meadows bordered by tall pointed Engelmann spruce. On the rocky slopes above are fine stands of shaggy veteran bristlecone pines, and aspen groves sweep to timberline, where they form mat-like thickets not more than a foot high.

At Stella Lake, 10,800 feet—largest of the three moraine lakes at the head of Lehman Creek—the trail tackles the head-wall and surmounts the crest of the Snake Range. Beyond the last wind-whipped spruces and limber pines, it follows the bleak arctic ridge upward to the steep summit cone. On both sides the slopes plunge down to the desert thousands of feet below, and range after range of mountains recede to the distant horizon. But even here miniature alpine gardens bloom amidst the waste of rocks, and the cheery blue blossoms of polemonium brighten the way almost to the top.

The view from the wedge-shaped Wheeler summit is magnificent. It commands a 360-degree panorama embracing thousands of square miles of deserts, valleys, hills and mountains in eastern Nevada and western Utah. But perhaps most impressive is the close-up of peaks, ridges, cirques, basins and canyons of the Snake Range itself, stretching north and south in jumbled confusion.

This huge piled-up mountain mass is a typical Great Basin fault-block range, and the peak is a vast arch of ancient quartzite a mile thick. However, other rocks are present, with limestone and granite forming some of the southern summits. Like many fault blocks, it is tilted so that the crest rises directly in a steep escarpment on the west, while the more gradual eastern slope has been eroded

into a series of transverse ridges separated by deep canyons.

The finest view of Wheeler Peak is from Baldy, 11,750 feet, on the north-side of Lehman Creek basin. Prominent are the precipitous walls and jagged rim of the gigantic cirque gouged-out of the mountain's northeast face by Pleistocene glaciers. Hidden deep within this recess is the Matthes Glacier, probably the only remaining body of moving ice between California's High Sierra and the Rockies. The rough trail-less scramble into the cirque is very much worth doing. It is an awesome place,

**COLOR PHOTO ON NEXT PAGE: TREASURE LAKE—ONE OF SEVERAL JEWEL-LIKE BODIES OF WATER IN THE WHEELER PEAK AREA. IRWIN FEHR PHOTO.**

lonely as the moon, enclosed by sheer cliffs rising 1200 to 1800 feet, with the peak soaring impressively at its head in an almost unbroken rock face. Cradled in this tremendous basin lies the glacier. True, this is no giant river of ice, and its greatest dimension doesn't exceed a half mile. But the wonder is that a permanent icefield exists at all in the midst of the vast Great Basin desert.

Baker Creek Canyon, to the south of Lehman Caves, penetrates the range to the divide just south of Wheeler Peak. The country has greater variety than Lehman Creek and is perhaps even more scenic. A two-mile dirt road leads to a small campground in an aspen grove, starting point of the trail. In the lower canyon are scattered stands of ponderosa pines, and at the so-called Narrows are undeveloped limestone caves, recently explored by speleologists. The creek heads in two huge cirques, divided by the jutting prow of Baker Peak, 12,298 feet elevation, with the sweeping southern slopes of Wheeler Peak to the north and symmetrical Pyramid Peak, 11,921 feet, to the south. Embedded in the southern cirque, eight miles from the campground, is spruce-fringed Treasure Lake, 10,600 feet, backed by a semi-circle of thousand-foot cliffs (see color photograph next page). From here the trail continues above timberline over the ridge south to Johnson Lake at the head of Snake Creek Canyon. This, too, is in a glacial cirque amidst grand alpine surroundings. Past mining activity is evident around the lake, with the remains of excavations, tramways and cabins of the old Johnson workings. The Snake Range is highly mineralized, and gold, silver, tungsten, beryllium and

*—Text Continues on Page 24*



**JOHNSON LAKE AT THE HEAD OF SNAKE CREEK**











# GREAT BASIN NATIONAL PARK . . .

(Continued from Page 21)

other metals have been found. But realization never equalled expectations, except in the 1870s at the booming gold camp of Oceola, now a ghost town, near Sacramento Pass.

Johnson Lake also can be reached by a scenic dirt road up Snake Creek Canyon, ending one to four miles below, depending on whether passenger car, truck or four-wheel-drive is used. But all cars can easily make Johnson Cabin in a beautiful location, 8,250 feet elevation, and there are two improved Forest Service campgrounds on the way. The upper one is a good base for exploring the forests, meadows and peaks at the head of Johnson Creek. The stream also provides fair trout fishing, as does Lehman and Baker creeks.

Further south, the Snake Range declines in altitude, although still well above timberline. However, some of the most spectacular canyons and rock formations are in this southern section. The vaulting limestone precipices lining Big Wash, south of

Johnson Creek, and Lincoln Canyon, on the west slope, are outstanding, as is the Lexington Arch. This huge natural stone bridge, large enough to span a six-story building, was recently rediscovered and publicized by a party inspecting the mountains as a potential national park. Alluring high-line trails also traverse the southern section and reach superb stands of bristlecone pines near the summits of Mount Washington, 11,678 feet, and Lincoln Peak, a few feet lower.

Almost everyone who visits the Snake Range becomes an ardent enthusiast, and one authority stated emphatically that "the Wheeler Peak area has a greater variety of outstanding scenery than any existing national park." In fact, such an amazing combination of desert and high mountain features in such close association is hardly duplicated anywhere else. From base to summit the climate ranges from arid Upper Sonoran to frigid Arctic-Alpine, and on the west side of Wheeler Peak are telescoped

in the space of five miles all the climatic conditions one would encounter on a 2600-mile trip from the Mexican border to northern Alaska.

Wildlife is also abundant and includes herds of antelope in the valleys, deer, elk, cougars, and numerous other species, with possibly a band of bighorn sheep on the remotest peaks. As yet little disturbed by man, the area is a natural zoo, aviary and botanical garden where animals, birds and plants of the Southwestern deserts, Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountains meet and mingle with rare varieties found only locally. A study of the scrambled and kaleidoscopic ecologies of the Snake Range would be a fascinating enterprise.

Our once magnificent wilderness heritage is being recklessly squandered. Not much longer will we have the opportunity to preserve the last few remaining examples in their original state. But by rare good fortune, in Nevada today we do have such an opportunity. Let us not throw away this chance to save one more superlative example of original America for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of generations to come. ///



NATURAL ARCH IN LEXINGTON CANYON, WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE PROPOSED GREAT BASIN NATIONAL PARK. THE ARCH IS HIGHER THAN A SIX-STORY BUILDING.



**O**NLY A couple of thousand years ago, much of Nevada was one grand lake, Lahontan by name. Only a century ago, emigrants cursed the alkali dust of Lahontan's dry beds. Nevada, they said, was a waterless land.

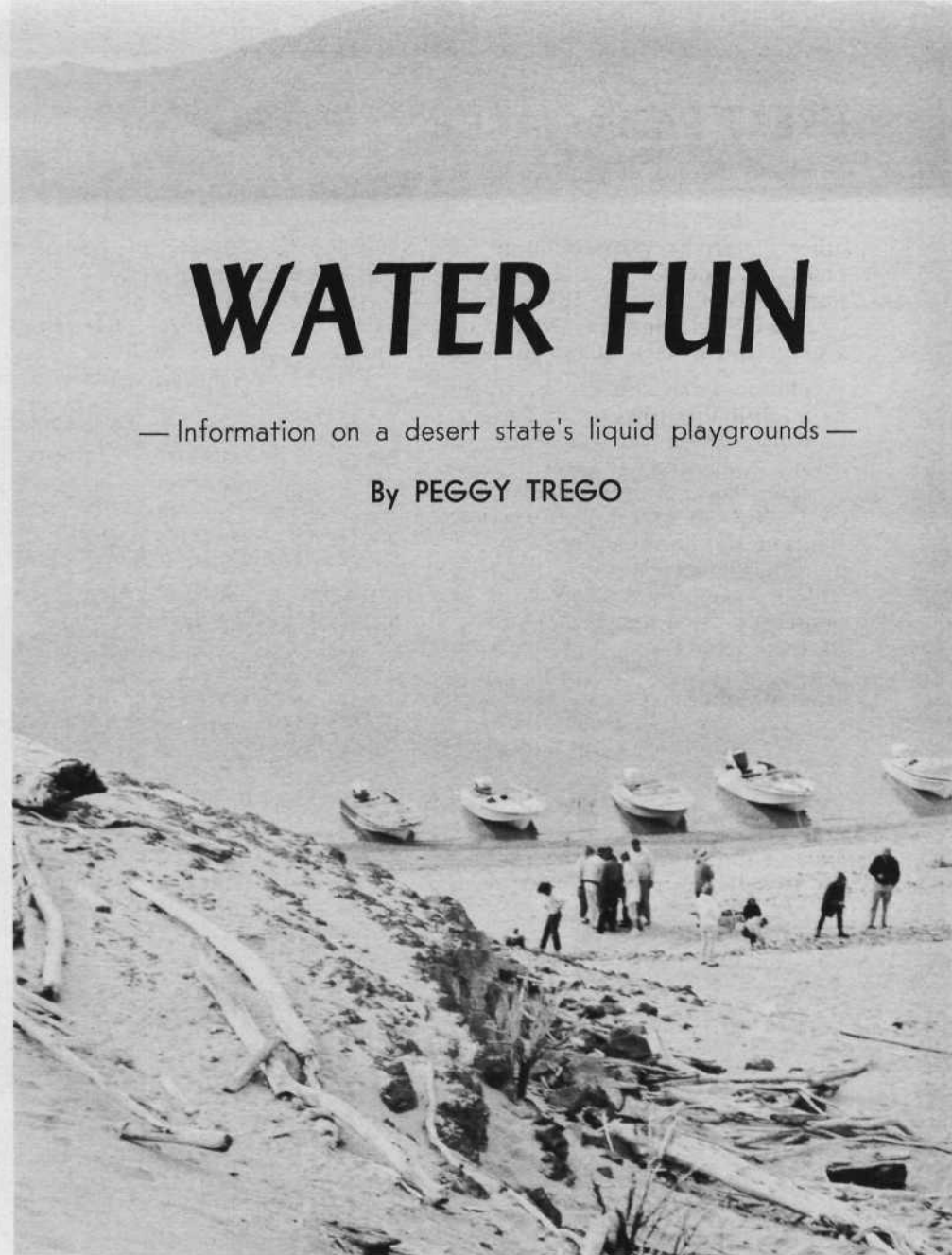
Nowadays man has combined ingenuity with Lake Lahontan's legacy. Alkali flats bloom with boats being towed to nearby water sports areas, and summer is a glorious time for getting wet under the desert sun. So come on in — the water's fine in Nevada!

The state's true desert lakes are the two great fragments of ancient Lahontan — Pyramid and Walker. Man-made are four others ranging from huge to merely large — Rye Patch and Lahontan reservoirs, and Lakes Mead and Mohave. (Of course half of Lake Tahoe has been in Nevada all the time, but Tahoe is a Sierran lake of no kin to the desert except by proximity.)

Pyramid Lake is Nevada's own. Thirty-three miles north of Reno by Nevada's paved Route 33, it is 30 miles long, 12 miles at its widest. Pyramid has a peculiar lure of its own — a lost, weird loveliness that belongs with Indian legend and the miracle of water in the desert. Its shores belong to the Paiute Indians, who have plans in progress for resorts and marinas. As yet, there is only one boat launching area near Sutcliffe on the west shore; the only commercial establishments are the Sutcliffe Ranch sandwich - and - drink stand, and a coffee shop and stores at the Indian village of Nixon at the southerly end of the lake.

Any boating, water-skiing or fishing on Pyramid needs a permit from the Paiutes, but these are easily obtained at small cost. Once out on the lake, civilization fades away and the world seems to be contained within that wild shoreline of twisted tufa against the mottled brown folds of the Dogskin and Virginia ranges. Two islands are interesting to see up close by boat. At the base of the Pyramid that gives the lake its name are spouting hot springs, remnants of those that built the tufa towers 10,000 years ago. Anaho Island is the nesting center for hundreds of pelicans. Human landings are prohibited on the islands, and it's just as well; both are infested with rattlesnakes.

Swimming is pleasant in Pyramid's slightly brackish water, and there are many areas around the lake where sandy beaches invite camping and bathing primitive style. Dirt roads



FINDING WOOD FOR A CAMPFIRE IS SELDOM A PROBLEM ON THE LAKE MEAD SHORELINE

lead to the Needles at the lake's northerly end, and around behind the Pyramid on the south—but watch for sandtraps if you travel these trails in a low-slung car.

Walker Lake is in the south-central part of Nevada, just north of Hawthorne. U.S. Highway 95 skirts its westerly edge for some miles, and off the highway are several excellent small beaches where boats can be launched and swimming enjoyed. These, too, are "primitive"—which means without facilities other than willows and tamarisks. Walker extends nearly 30 miles along the eastern escarpment of the Wassuk Range, and though it is narrower than Pyramid, it offers plenty of room to visitors. Near the southern end are places where boats can be rented, and nearby Hawthorne provides creature comforts of all kinds. One of Walker's great charms (besides its magnificent

fishing) is its unspoiled remoteness so close to a town.

In northern Nevada, only a mile off U.S. 40, 22 miles north of Lovelock, is Rye Patch Reservoir on the Humboldt River. Rye Patch in normal years extends several miles upstream between dramatic bare cliffs. The water skiing is exciting here. Near the dam is a curving beach for boat launching and swimming; on the other side of the dam is a picnic ground with shade trees and tables. There is no charge for boating, though visitors are asked to obtain permits at the caretaker's house. Rye Patch's only drawback occurs in dry years when the water level drops during summer months; 1960-61 have been dry so far.

A very different reservoir is Lahontan, namesake of the great ancient

—Text Continues on Page 28

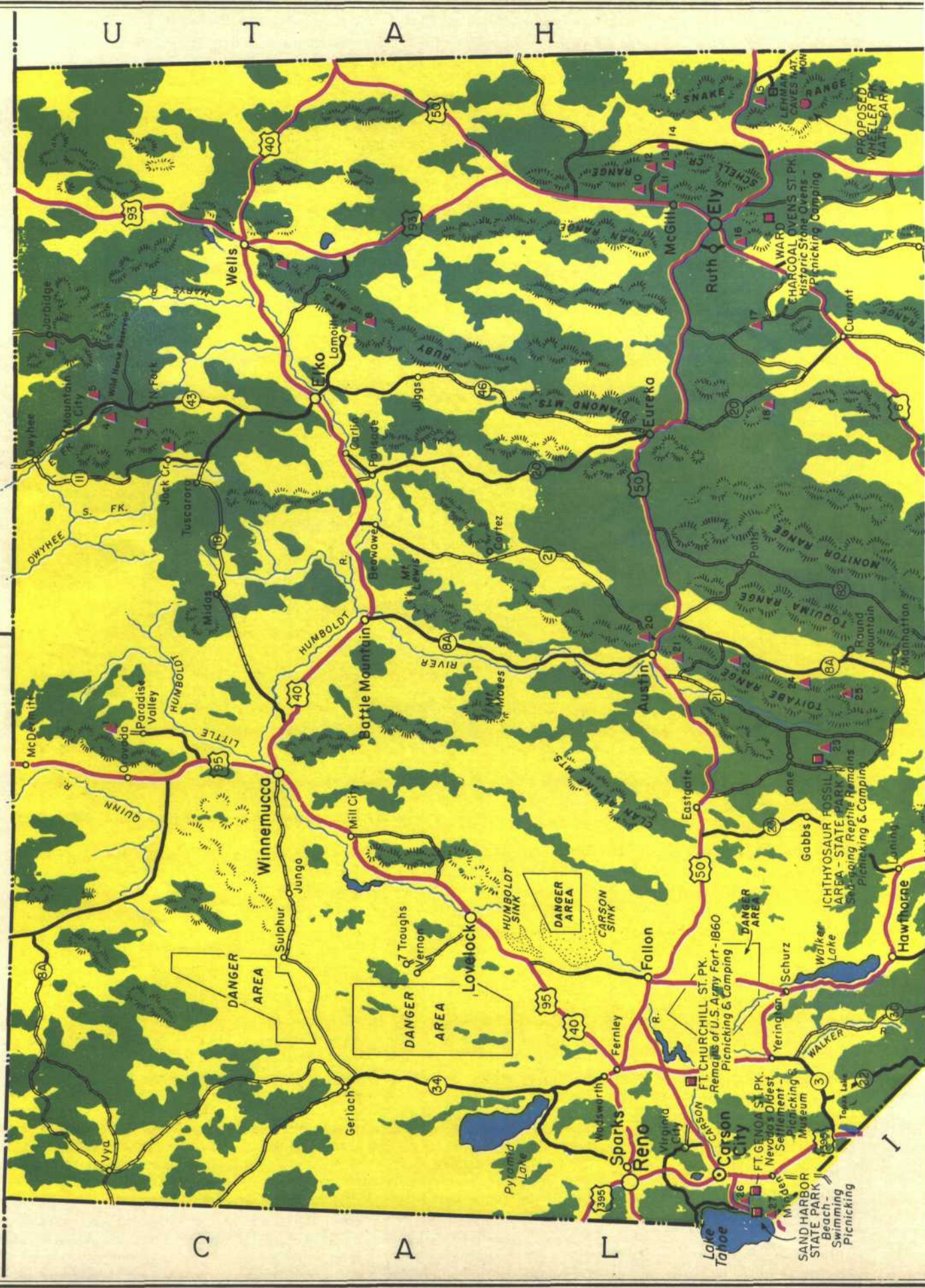
# WATER FUN

— Information on a desert state's liquid playgrounds —

By PEGGY TREGO



O R E G O N I D A H O





[illegible]

**Legend:**

- Picnic only
- Picnic only
- Picnic only
- Playground
- Misc. Facil.
- Playground

**National Park Service Facilities In the Lake Mead Recreation Area**

Free public campgrounds are maintained by the National Park Service at six locations in the Lake Mead-Mohave area. (Note: although the Boulder Beach Campground on Lake Mead is highly developed with planting, water, rest rooms, tables and fireplaces, the other campgrounds are primitive. Further information may be obtained by writing to the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, Boulder City.)

Campground	May-Oct.	Nov.-Oct.	Nov.-Dec.
Big Creek	15	8	35
Boulder Beach	15	4	35
Clear Creek	15	4	35
Deer Creek	15	4	35
Kyle Canyon*	15	4	35
Pinon Creek	15	4	35
Riverbank	15	4	35
Sagehen	15	4	35
Shoshone	15	4	35
Tule Valley	15	4	35
Valley View	15	4	35
Village Green	15	4	35
Washburne	15	4	35
Wild Horse	15	4	35
Yucca Valley	15	4	35

\* indicates no fishing

**Lake Mead Campgrounds**

Boulder Beach (U.S. Hwy. 93) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces  
 Cottonwood Cove (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces  
 Silver Point (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces  
 Stewart Point (State Hwy. 12) 50 cars 10 trailer spaces

**Eldorado Canyon Campgrounds**

Cottonwood Cove (State Hwy. 60) 20 cars 20 trailer spaces  
 Cottonwood Cove (State Hwy. 60) 20 cars 15 trailer spaces  
 Temple Bar on the Arizona side of Lake Mead, and at Katherine Landing and Willow Beach, on the Arizona side of Lake Mohave. Camping is permitted on the more remote sections of the Mead-Mohave area. The only requirements being that no fires be made and that no swimming be observed. No motor vehicles or campfires are permitted on beaches near boat harbors, or on swimming beaches.)

[illegible]

**Legend:**

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- Picnic only
- Picnic only
- Playground

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Location	Season	Facilities
Big Creek	May-Oct. 15	Playground
Dier Creek	May-Oct. 8	Playground
Kyle Canyon	May-Oct. 4	Playground
Pine Creek	May-Oct. 15	Store
Paria	May-Oct. 15	Store
Clear Creek	May-Oct. 10	Store
Nevada Beach	June-Oct. 200	Store, playground, boating, horsing, swimming
Lee Canyon	May-Oct. 35	Store, swimming
Dier Creek	May-Oct. 65	Store, swimming
Kyle Canyon	May-Oct. 143	Store, swimming
Hilltop	May-Oct. 70	Store, swimming

**Lake Mead Campgrounds**

- Boulder Beach (U.S. Hwy. 93) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces
- Overton (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces
- Boulder Beach (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces
- Stewart Point (State Hwy. 12) 50 cars 10 trailer spaces
- Eldorado Canyon (State Hwy. 60) 20 cars 20 trailer spaces
- Coltonwood Cove (State Hwy. 60) 20 cars 15 trailer spaces

(Note: Boulder Beach has a 15-day use limit; all other camps 90 days. Improved facilities are available at Temple Bar on the Arizona side of Lake Mead, and at Katherine Landing and Willow Beach, on the Arizona side of Lake Mohave. Camping is permitted on the more remote sections of the Mead-Mohave area. The only requirements being that no fire, no swimming, no collecting be observed. The area is open to all. No camping is permitted within 200 feet of the water, and no campfires are permitted on beaches near boat harbors, or on swimming beaches.)

**Legend:**

- Picnic only
- Picnic only
- Picnic only
- Playground

**National Park Service Facilities in the Lake Mead Recreation Area**

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Kyle Canyon	May-Oct. 4	Playground
Pine Creek	May-Oct. 15	Store
Paria	May-Oct. 15	Store
Clear Creek	May-Oct. 10	Store
Nevada Beach	June-Oct. 20	Store, playground, boating, horsing, swimming
Lee Canyon	May-Oct. 35	Store, swimming
Dier Creek	May-Oct. 65	Store, swimming
Kyle Canyon	May-Oct. 143	Store, swimming
Hilltop	May-Oct. 70	Store, swimming

**Lake Mead Campgrounds**

- Boulder Beach (U.S. Hwy. 93) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces
- Vermon Canyon (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces
- Boulder Beach (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces
- Vermon Canyon (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces
- Vermon Canyon (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces
- Vermon Canyon (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces

**Rules for Rockhounds Who Search Lake Mead's Shores**

The gravelly shores of Lake Mead are strewn with beach pebbles (up to boulder size) of good quality agate and jasper specimens, tumbled smooth and semi-polished since the beginning of time by the Colorado River. The main collecting area is on the north shore of the lake between Las Vegas Wash and Calville Bay. This has long been a popular field for those who do their gem prospecting by boat. The Lake Mead National Recreation Area—unlike National Parks and National Monuments—allows limited rock collecting within its boundaries, with the following restrictions: there shall be no digging or other marring of the landscape unless a regular mineral prospect is being conducted; no collecting is allowed within 200 feet of a public road or public utility (electric transmission lines, telephone lines, etc.); collecting is allowed within a quarter-mile of any land containing a spring; and there can be no rock gathering in the immediate vicinity of Hoover Dam or any of the campgrounds or boat launching sites.

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

**Legend:**

- Picnic only
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Campground	May-Oct.	Nov.-Oct.	Nov.-Dec.
Big Creek	15	8	35
Boulder Beach	15	4	35
Clear Creek	15	4	35
Deer Creek	15	4	35
Kyle Canyon	15	4	35
Pinon	15	4	35
River	15	4	35
Sagehen	15	4	35
Shoshone	15	4	35
Tahoe	15	4	35
Truckee	15	4	35
Yukon	15	4	35

\* indicates no fishing

**Lake Mead Campgrounds**

Boulder Beach (U.S. Hwy. 93) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces  
 Deerpark (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces  
 Sagehen (State Hwy. 12) 70 cars 57 trailer spaces  
 Stewart Point (State Hwy. 12) 50 cars 10 trailer spaces

**Lake Mohave Campgrounds**

Eldorado Canyon (State Hwy. 60) 20 cars 20 trailer spaces  
 Cottonwood Cove (State Hwy. 60) 20 cars 15 trailer spaces  
 (Note: Boulder Beach has a 15-day use limit; all other camps, 90 days. Improved facilities are available at Temple Bar on the Arizona side of Lake Mead, and at Katherine Landing and Willow Beach, on the Arizona side of Lake Mohave. Camping is permitted on the more remote sections of the Mead-Mohave area. The only requirements being that no alcohol or firearms be used, and that no fires be made. No swimming is permitted within 200 feet of the shore, and no campfires are permitted on beaches near boat harbors, or on swimming beaches.)



# NEVADA WATER SPORTS . . .

(Continued from page 25)

lake. Created by damming the Carson River near Fallon, Lahontan Reservoir winds charmingly through gentle hilly country with trees and brush on its shoreline. Its public areas are just off U.S. 50, 14 miles west of Fallon, and they include places to picnic, boat and swim. Like Rye Patch it has no commercial development, but welcomes visitors.

The world of Lakes Mead and Mohave in the southern end of Nevada is one unto itself when it comes to all-year enjoyment of every kind of water sport. Both are under the benevolent care of the National Park Service and both extend into other states—Mead into Arizona, Mohave into California.

In Nevada, Lake Mead has three main recreational centers. The northernmost is near Overton, the south-

of Lake Mead, but north of the immense dam and the Lake Mead Marina by some miles. You get to the Bay by traveling 10 miles of Nevada's Route 41 which turns easterly from U.S. 95 at Henderson. Free of charge are its picnic and campgrounds, swimming beach (with lifeguards) and boat ramp. Nearby, the Las Vegas Boat Harbor has boat and motor rentals, gasoline and refreshments.

The largest installation on Lake Mead is in the Marina and Boulder Beach district, roughly six miles north of Boulder City and not far above Hoover Dam itself. Boulder Beach is a mile or so above the Marina proper, and is one of the most attractive "for free" areas in the Southwest. There are picnic and camping areas, dock and ramp for boats, a fine bath-

Eldorado Canyon and Cottonwood Cove. Eldorado Canyon is the northernmost of the two; you get there from U.S. 95 by turning east on Nevada's Route 60. It is 32 miles south of Boulder City, 46 miles north of the Nevada-California line. Eldorado Canyon is still a-building as to public facilities, but there is a place to camp and a boat ramp free of charge. The small resort nearby offers boat rentals, food, a trailer park and cabins.

South of Eldorado Canyon (13 miles by shoreline, 37 miles by road) is Cottonwood Cove which has much the same facilities, free and otherwise. Whichever you choose, you'll find Lake Mohave a haunting desert waterway to travel, much of it keeping the feeling of its original river course under a rugged, towered shore.

Fishing is, of course, good on both Lakes Mead and Mohave.

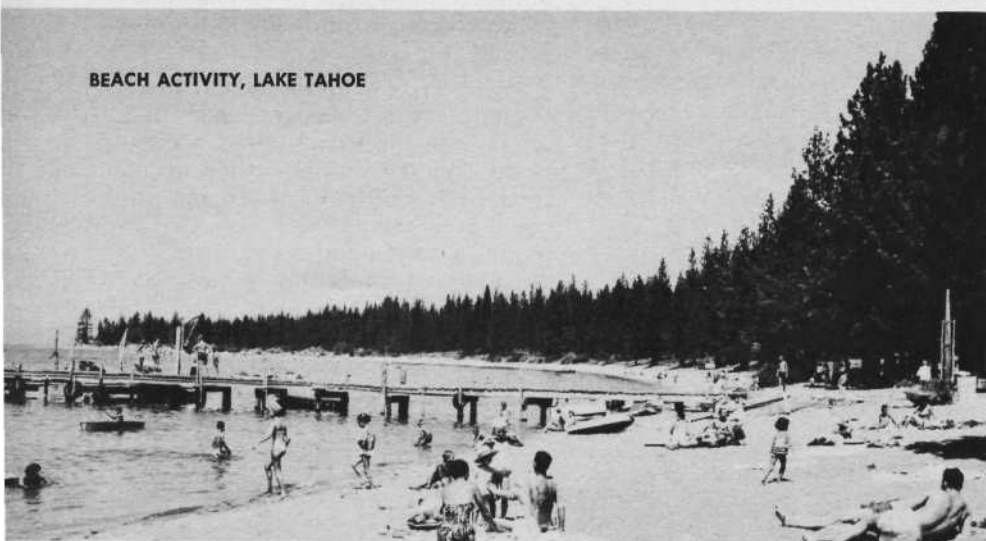
Besides the six big water bodies I've mentioned, Nevada has a number of smaller lakes and reservoirs. Most of them offer pretty good fishing, some are pleasant for "slow-boating" or swimming, though the reservoirs vary as they must in dry years. I'll mention only three of the better-known: Topaz Lake, Angel Lake and Wild Horse Reservoir.

Topaz is definitely a Nevada lake, even though a little bit of it lies across the California border 25 miles south of Gardnerville. U.S. 395 goes along its edge on a steep slope above the water, but there are roads leading down to the lakeshore and plenty of room to launch a boat. There is a good-sized resort on the highway, with food and rooms, and a tract development is in progress nearby.

Angel Lake is an anomaly—a cold glacier pool only 20 miles from hot, flat U.S. 40 at Wells. High in the East Humboldt Range, Angel is set like a jewel in a craggy rock basin; the road up is dirt and narrow in places, not quite suitable for trailers. Angel has known rowboats and fishermen and swimmers for a long time, and there is a small camping and picnic area at road's end.

Wild Horse Reservoir is far up in northern Nevada, a manmade lake on Nevada's Route 43, 60 miles north of Elko. As with Angel Lake, it isn't quite big enough for motorboating, although an occasional fisherman may supplement his oars with a small outboard. Wild Horse is a lonely place in a vast, lovely land of rocky hills and wide valleys. Perhaps, after the more civilized environments of Lake Mead, it will be just what you want in the way of primitive outing. ///

BEACH ACTIVITY, LAKE TAHOE



ernmost is near Boulder City and not far above Hoover Dam itself. Closer to Henderson is Las Vegas Bay, roughly equidistant from Las Vegas and Boulder City.

You reach Overton Beach and Echo Bay from U. S. 91, 50 miles north of Las Vegas, by turning southeasterly on Nevada's Route 12. Overton Beach is 24 miles from the turn-off; it has places to eat and stay, a trailer park, boat rentals and moorings. Another eight miles south is Echo Bay with a public campground and launching ramps. Across the Overton Arm of Lake Mead, which fills a wide canyon here, rise the fine rugged hills of the Virgin Range, and Echo Bay seems farther away from the civilized world than it actually is.

Las Vegas Bay (also known as Las Vegas Wash) is on the southern end

ing beach—and trees and bushes add to the setting. Just to the north is Lake Mead Lodge, a trailer park, store, and beach house. South of Boulder Beach is the Marina itself, where you can rent anything from a rowboat to a cruiser fully equipped for overnight trips.

Much has been written about Lake Mead—its sapphire blue against the tawny shoreline, dotted with islands; the gaiety of hundreds of boats, joyful swimmers, and water skiers. It still has to be seen and felt to be believed; Mead is miles of secret places, silent coves, great expanses of shining, empty water. All it takes is a boat to find your own special place far away from the rest of the world.

Lake Mohave, chillier, slimmer and less commercialized than Mead, has two Nevada centers of recreation at





OLD CARRIAGE SHOP AND, BEHIND IT, THE PAINTSHOP

# In Tuscarora...

By CHRIS JENSEN

**9** KNOW THE gas station attendant at Elko thought I was crazy.

"What do you want to go over to Tuscarora for?" he asked. "There's nothing over there but a lot of fallen-down buildings."

But, go I did, and as I headed west and north on Nevada Highway 11, I tried to analyze why I should be so excited about wandering about an almost deserted mining town, looking for painting subjects. No logical answer came to me. I could only paraphrase that famous statement by a mountain climber: I wanted to paint the buildings because they were there.

The few remaining evidences of man's handiwork in Tuscarora are certainly unorthodox: abandoned homes with porch railings in tic-tac-toe formation; walls leaning heavily against the memories of the past; gnarled fingers of neglected fruit trees clawing at the thin mountain air; mill smokestacks holding up fingers of silence.

Haphazardly terracing one of the hills is the ruin of an old stamp mill. The broken irregular masonry has weathered to a soft powder-blue, contrasting sharply with the warm orange tones of the earth. This color scheme is augmented by clumps of sagebrush with their delicate gray-green hues. The whole scene abounds with interesting shapes, textures and colors in harmony and contrast. This scene became my first drawing.

Next, I turned to a large barnlike

structure near the "main" highway. Years ago this building was a repair shed for wagons and stage coaches. At the rear is a smaller building — the paint shop. This is an entirely different scene from the old stamp mill. The buildings are weathered to a dark brown — almost black in places. The roof is a very light gray. The ground unevenly covered with a thin sprinkling of cheat grass. Near here the sage grows small and sparse. In the background, contrasting with the dark boards of the buildings, are hills of light blue-violet.



RUINS OF THE STAMP MILL AT TUSCARORA

It has always been a wonder to me why doctors recommend that patients suffering from nervous disorders should take up painting. For one thing, most of the artists I know need help for their nervous disorders. Outdoor painting often produces the physical exertion of manual labor (though not always the monetary rewards), the compulsion of the dope habit, and the frustration of golf.

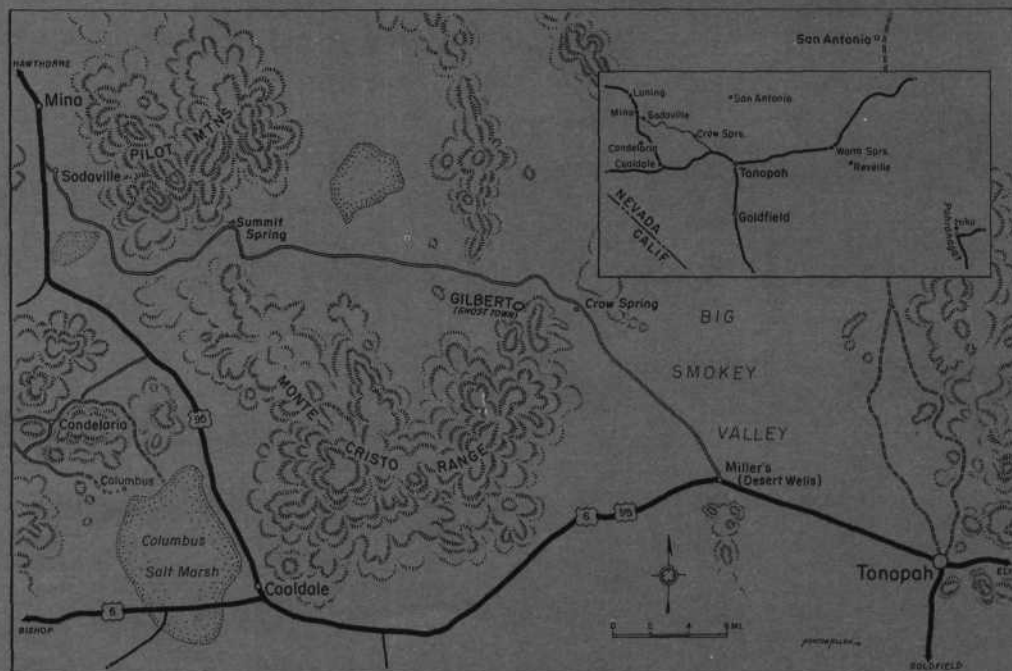
The old stamp mill is located some distance from the road. The hike is up a gradual grade of loose earth. I carried a drawing-board, paint-box, two sketch pads, a folding stool, one gallon of water in a jug, my easel, and a camera. On the way the wind began to blow and I was forced to resort to a sort of tacking maneuver to keep the drawing board from being torn out of my hands. The pages of my drawing pads were roughly blown open and the wind kept riffling them. My camera slid around and bounced against my thighs. By the time I reached the spot for setting up my equipment, I was puffing wildly, my eyes were running and my nose itching.

When I was painting the old shops, a family of tourists screeched their station wagon to a halt—in a cloud of dust, most of which settled on my easel. The children jumped out and ran toward me. Under such circumstances I feel a bit embarrassed, for my painting procedure is not very spectacular.

Eventually they tired of watching. Dashing back to the car, one of the boys yelled, "Ah, he's only painting that old shed." ///

# MONTE CRISTO GOLD

A Nevada Lost Mine Story by Harold O. Weight



**C**ROW SPRINGS, in the Monte Cristo Mountains, is lonely and almost forgotten now. Few modern maps even admit that it exists. But at the beginning of this century it played an important role in the history of southern Nevada.

When Jim Butler made his spectacular silver strike at Tonopah Springs in 1900, the Carson & Colorado was the only railroad anywhere in that part of the country. Old Sodaville, on the C&C 60 miles northwest of Butler's discovery, became the gateway to the Tonopah boom and remained so until completion of a narrow-gauge to the silver camp in July, 1904. And Crow Springs—dinner stop and change station for the Concord stages, half-way camp for the freighters, on the newly created Sodaville-Tonopah road—was thronged day and night through those years.

But, though the freight road was new, the trail past Crow Springs was not. It was an ancient Indian way, and the springs had long been a camping spot for white travelers between Pahrnagat Valley and the old silver camp of Candelaria, a dozen miles south of Sodaville.

One of the most frequent travelers along that earlier trail was Charles Lampson, who lived in Pahrnagat and whose sister and brother-in-law—Owen Owens—lived in Candelaria. And in June of 1896, somewhere near Crow Springs and somewhere near the old trail, Lampson discovered gold ore that assayed \$86,000 to the ton.

A dozen tons of that fabulous rock and he would be a millionaire!

But there was a catch. The ore he found was float. There was less than a dozen pounds of it. He was never able to locate its source, the ledge from which it had eroded. Nor has anyone since, among all the hundreds who have sought it.

I learned the story of Lampson's gold from Fred and Logan Gilbert, now of Luning, Nevada. The Gilbert brothers know that Lampson's gold exists. Fred saw it, 65 years ago.

The Gilberts know ore, too. And mining. Their strike in the Monte Cristos in 1924 precipitated Nevada's last substantial gold rush and the short-lived camp of Gilbert. "Born in a prospect hole," they have been

prospectors and miners all their lives. Environment may have been to blame. Their father, John Benton Gilbert, crossed the plains in 1865 and spent the rest of his life prospecting and mining. And wherever he followed the booms or labored at isolated mines, his family went with him.

"He took \$30,000 out of Spruce Mountain," Fred says. "He was a pioneer at Tintic, Utah. He mined silver at Pioche. He made three fortunes in lead-silver and lost them all. But my mother always encouraged him. 'You'll strike it again,' she said."

In the middle 1890s, Gilbert was mining lead-silver on Mt. Irish at Pahrnagat. His partner was Homer P. Thompson, and the Gilbert family lived on Thompson's ranch in Pahrnagat Valley.

Charles Lampson also lived in Pahrnagat at that time. After the Gilberts came he "was sweet on" Fred's 17-year-old sister, Flora Iola, and the family got to know him well. Fred remembers Lampson as "a sort of free-lancer, a tramp fellow who



played the fiddle at all the valley dances."

But restless John Gilbert did not remain in Pahrnatag long. To the north and west of the valley (about 60 miles due east of present Tonopah) was an old silver camp, Reveille, first discovered in 1866. One of the original finders was M. D. Fairchild of the family then owning and operating Austin's famed newspaper, the *Reese River Reveille*. (Hence the camp's name.) By the end of the '60s, Reveille had two stores, a blacksmith shop, post office, boarding house and a population of 150, with 50 mines under development. By 1880 no mines were operating and the population was down to 30. There was another explosive boom in the early 1900s. Between times, the camp roller-coasted up and down. It was on an upswing in 1896 when Gilbert took his family there.

Reveille was on the route Charles Lampson followed when he visited his relatives at Candelaria. With the Gilberts there, it became part of his schedule to stop, coming and going, to see Flora—and, incidentally, the rest of the family.

He stayed with the Gilberts overnight on one such trip in 1896—probably late in May. When he continued toward Candelaria he told them he would be back within two weeks. But he did not return for more than a month, and then he was a disturbed and obviously disappointed man.

"Well, I have found gold," he told the elder Gilbert. "But I've had to give it up. I can't find where it came from."

He showed them the ore he had discovered. Fred was only six at the time, but he has never forgotten that rock. "It looked like head cheese," he says. It weighed about eight or nine pounds—clear quartz crowded with gold nuggets strung together with golden threads.

Then Lampson told them his story. But as it would seem there were some confusions in his mind even then, the exact and correct details of his strike can never be known.

Lampson traveled alone on his trips, and prospected along the way. This time, near Crow Springs, he found promising mineral showings. His brother-in-law, Owen Owens, came back to the springs with him to investigate them. These discoveries were copper and lead, and while there were a number of veins, they proved to be small and unlikely to pay off.

But in re-prospecting around the springs, Lampson stumbled upon that

chunk of incredibly gold-rich head cheese rock. Everything else was forgotten for two weeks while he and Owens searched and hammered and panned. But no more of the precious rock could they find. Owens gave up and returned to Candelaria. Lampson reluctantly headed back for Pahrnatag.

"You are my friends," he told Gilbert. "I'd rather have you find it than anyone else. You go to San Antone station. Old Man Bell at San Antone will point out Crow Springs to you. It's about 30 miles away, due west. When you get to Crow Springs, go to that little hill about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles southeast. I picked up this ore right on the saddle on that hill. But I couldn't find any more. I've panned all around it and couldn't find a color."

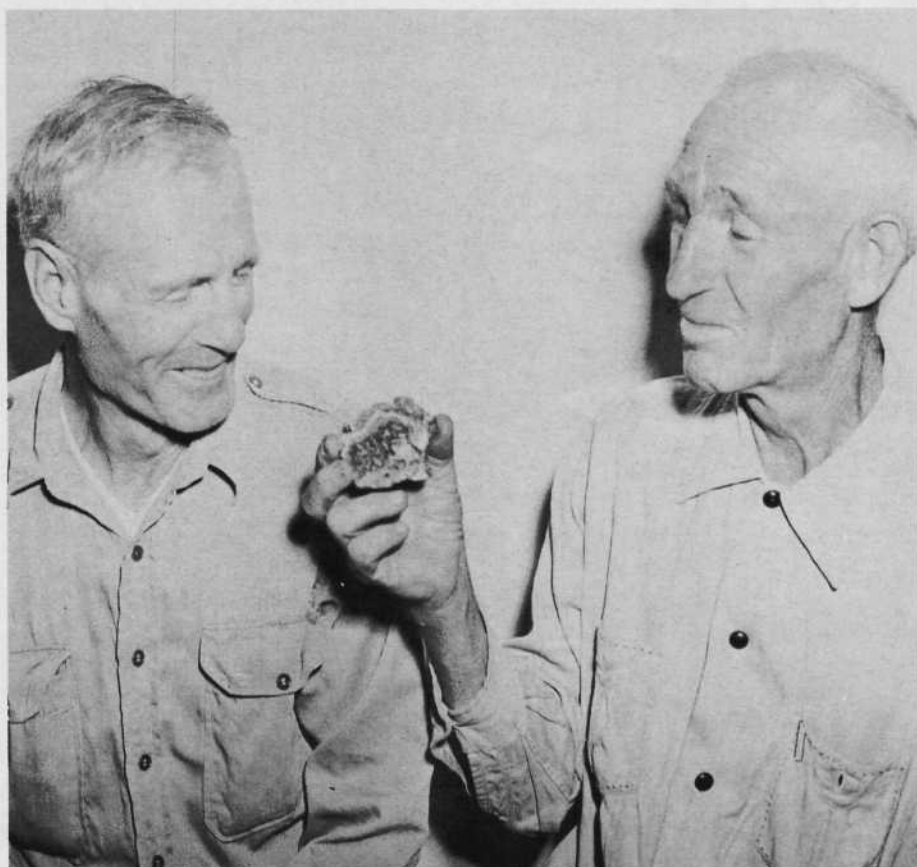
Lampson then went on from Reveille to Pahrnatag. The Gilberts did not see him again for many years.

But John Gilbert and his partner, Thompson, headed for Crow Springs as soon as they could get outfitted. Gilbert took his portable assay outfit along. They had no trouble finding the hill Lampson had described. But the best rock they located on it ran only \$7 to the ton—and in silver, not gold.

They camped at Crow Springs and searched the country around in widening circles. There was no sign of Lampson's gold, or any gold. But about eight miles to the southwest, in the Monte Cristos, they found traces of old workings. Searching further they discovered the silver-lead outcrop which became the Carrie Mine. Later, Gilbert learned that during the Candelaria boom, "Spaniards" with pack trains of silver ore came to that camp from the direction of the Monte Cristos.

Gilbert moved his family from Reveille to the Monte Cristos, arriving at the Carrie outcrop on August 20, 1897. From then on he worked at developing the Carrie. But he never gave up on Lampson's gold—that was one reason he moved to the Monte Cristos—and from time to time would camp at Crow Springs and hunt the elusive ledge. The Gilberts were still living at the Carrie when Butler discovered silver. They moved to Tonopah in 1901 as the big rush got under way.

Crow Springs and the Monte Cristos changed astoundingly as Tonopah grew. In the beginning there was no direct road from Sodaville station to Tonopah Springs. But in those days highway construction did not involve commissions, engineers, long range



LOGAN (LEFT) AND FRED O. GILBERT WITH A SAMPLE OF THE FABULOUS BLACK MAMMOTH ORE FROM GILBERT, IN THE MONTE CRISTOS. SELECTED ROCK FROM THIS MINE—WHICH IS ONLY A FEW MILES FROM THE SUPPOSED LOCATION OF LAMPSON'S LOST GOLD, RAN \$96,000 TO THE TON.



POST OFFICE BUILDING IN GILBERT

planning, rights of way, heavy equipment and millions in funds. Legend has it that Bob Stewart—big mine, mill and hotel man of Sodaville—set off for Tonopah Springs in a buckboard. Freighters followed the tracks he made, and the new road was in operation.

It led from Sodaville up past Summit Springs, at the southern end of the Pilot Mountains, and on across the open country just north of the main mass of the Monte Cristos, to Crow Springs. From the springs, in a pass in the Monte Cristos, it angled southeast across the great sweep of Big Smokey Valley to Desert (later Miller's) Wells. From that watering place it led up the long slope to Tonopah.

During those early years, dust scarcely had time to settle along the Sodaville-Tonopah road, so cluttered was it with stages and lumbering freight outfits and hundreds of boomers "hoofing it" between the deepening ruts. Stewart's Well was opened about half-way between Sodaville and Crow Springs, but the springs remained the important way station along the road. According to Byrd Wall Sawyer (*The Gold and Silver Rushes of Nevada—1900-1910*), Mr. and Mrs. Humphrey, who ran Crow Springs, often served as many as 200 people a day there at 50c a meal.

And as the story of Lampson's gold

filtered through Nevada, as lost gold stories always do, more and more of the prospectors and boomers along the Crow Springs road paused for at least a few days to hunt the phantom ledge. And more and more of those who heard the story in Tonopah turned back to try their luck. Lampson himself came back at least once to look for it. He walked in from Miller's, almost starved to death, and again found nothing.

In 1918, when the Gilbert brothers were in Tonopah with time on their hands, they and a friend decided to take another look for the lost gold. This time, just about a mile from Crow Springs on a little reddish-pink quartz hill with twin peaks, Fred noticed two old location monuments. Curious, he investigated, and in a rusted old baking powder can in one he found a location notice. It was dated June 6, 1896, and signed by Charles Lampson and Owen Owens. But that was all they found.

The next year Charles Lampson turned up in Tonopah.

"He was getting pretty old," Fred said. "But of course we couldn't talk long without bringing up his gold. Remembering the monuments I had found, we asked Lampson if he would go with us and show us exactly where he found the gold."

It was early morning when they reached Crow Springs. The sunlight glistened on the hill where Fred had

found the monuments. Lampson pointed to it.

"You see those two little peaks over there? My brother-in-law was driving the wagon that day, and I was walking off to the side of the road looking for float. It was either just below those hills or to the right."

They walked over to the hill. Lampson stuck his pick in the ground. "This is the spot where I found that ore," he said. "My monuments ought to be right around here somewhere." Wordlessly Fred showed him the old monuments.

"That completely puzzled us," Fred told me. "Lampson told Father definitely that he had picked up the ore 3½ miles from the spring. That's where we and all the others had concentrated the search for that gold through all the years. But it was a new lease on the old story. The ground there was covered with brecciated rock—coarse-grained, tannish, mixed with quartz. We panned tons of it with rock crushers and hand pans—and didn't get a color."

Through all the years the only real evidence that there might be rich gold in the Monte Cristos lay in the chunk of rock Charles Lampson found. But its existence was proved in September 1924 when the Gilberts—Fred, Logan and a third brother, Herman—made the strike which became Gilbert (*Desert Magazine*, May, 1951). And while Gilbert did not



OLD MILL AT SODAVILLE. ROAD TO CROW SPRINGS AND TONOPAH LEFT THIS POINT.





THE AUTHOR IN THE MONTE CRISTOS UNDER THE ELABORATE CLAIM MARKER FOR THE SUNNY ROSE. PROSPECTORS, LOOKING FOR THE LEGENDARY GOLD LEDGE, HAVE WORKED A NETWORK OF ROADS THROUGH THESE MOUNTAINS. CLAIMS AND PROSPECT HOLES ARE EVERYWHERE.

have a long life, and the vein of its principal mine, the Black Mammoth, was lost through faulting, selected ore from the Black Mammoth ran \$96,000 to the ton. That is \$10,000 per ton higher than Lampson's find. But, the Gilberts were quick to explain, the Black Mammoth was not the ledge from which Lampson's ore came. His ore was entirely different in character.

"What gets us, though," Fred went on, "is that thousands of people walked right over Gilbert during the Tonopah and Goldfield booms. But nobody would pan that quartz!"

What is also to the point, for Lampson lost ledge hunters, is that even before those thousands came, John Gilbert and Homer Thompson, believing that such ore did exist and prospecting this very ground — only miles from the Carrie — were also unable to find that rich ledge. If the Monte Cristos can hide fabulous gold ore in one place for 30 years, why not even longer in another?

Where, then is Lampson's gold? Is it in the area where he thought it was — another unlikely-looking ledge that no one has ever been willing to pan? Is it miles away from Crow

Springs? Was he even confused about the spring?

Apparently he was confused when he first told the Gilberts how far his strike was from the springs. And he was when he told them Crow Springs were due west of San Antonio. By U. S. Geological Survey map they lie directly southwest of that old station in Big Smokey Valley, and closer to 20 than 30 miles distant.

One thing is certain to my mind after years of intermittent prowling through the fantastic and beautiful Monte Cristo Mountains. Barring a stroke of luck, if anyone ever does discover Lampson's ledge it will only be after weeks or months of careful and openminded prospecting over an area vastly greater than the little hill where Lampson built his monuments.

The Gilbert brothers have finally come to the conclusion that the golden ore Charles Lampson found must have been dropped on the hill where he found it by some Indian traveling through.

But this simply raises other questions.

And the most baffling of them for lost mine hunters is: Where did the Indian find the \$86,000 ore? ///

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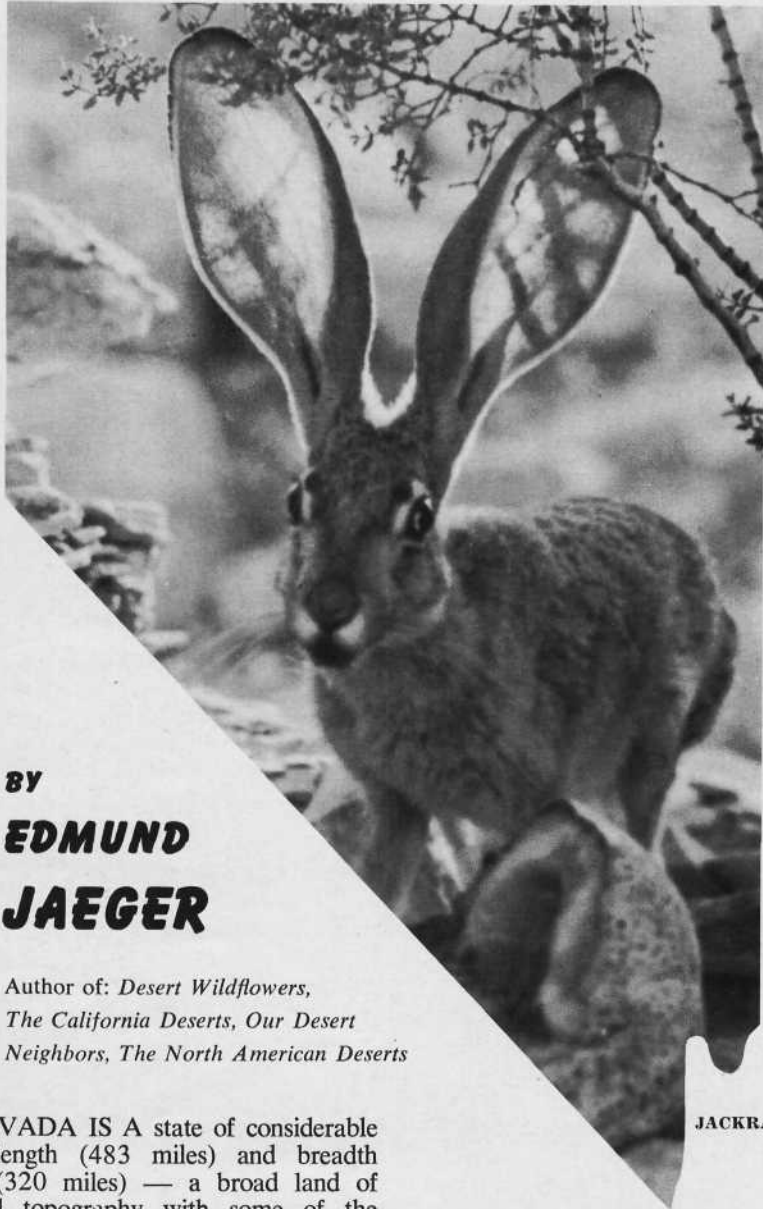
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# WILDLIFE OF NEVADA



JACKRABBIT

BY

**EDMUND  
JAEGER**

Author of: *Desert Wildflowers*,  
*The California Deserts*, *Our Desert  
Neighbors*, *The North American Deserts*

**N**EVADA IS A state of considerable length (483 miles) and breadth (320 miles) — a broad land of varied topography with some of the highest mountains in continental United States, and scores of them of lesser altitude. Most all of these more or less parallel mountain chains run in a north-south direction. Between are numerous broad, often level-floored, shrub-covered basins and valleys of an average altitude of 3000 to 5000 feet above sea level. Some of the areas near the Colorado River in the southern part of the state comprise low-altitude hot creosotebush desert with comparatively warm climate the year around.

This combination of features makes possible the existence of a very varied and interesting fauna and flora living under every condition from those prevailing in the arctic to those of arid Sonoran-zone lands much farther south.

E. Raymond Hall, who wrote *The Mammals of Nevada*, estimated a few years ago that the average mammal pop-

ulation for the State was about 20 per acre. Nevada, with its 109,740 square miles, would therefore have about a billion and a half mammals!

Of these, the small rodents (Mice, Gophers and Kangaroo Rats) outnumber all others many times over. Few rodents are seen by persons traveling about in the daytime, for these small creatures are active only at night. They comprise the main food supply for most of the larger carnivores such as Coyotes, Foxes, Skunks, and even certain of the Snakes and Owls.

The smallest of these rodents is the rare-to-abundant nocturnal Dwarf Kangaroo Rat (*Microdipodops*, two species), a half dozen of which could huddle together in the open hand. The tail is unusual in that it is swollen in the middle: it is used as a balancing organ.

Few people have ever seen these creatures. Sandy greasewood (*Sarcobatus*) and sagebrush (*Artemisia*) areas of far west-central Nevada or gravelly mixed desert scrublands of central and northern Nevada are its haunts. The few I have seen I came upon in colorful Fish Lake Valley while wandering about fine wind-blown sand with a flashlight at night. One I caught in a harmless trap proved to be unusually gentle and unafraid; in fact, I was able to hold it in my open hand for some moments. This supreme gentleness is a characteristic this soft-furred rodent shares with many of the kangaroo rats.

In many parts of Nevada the cunning nocturnal (and therefore largely unnoticed) Deer or White-footed Mice (*Peromyscus*) are the most plentiful of all mammals. They occur almost everywhere but especially are they abundant in rocky or brushy areas. They are for the most part harmless wild-seed and insect eaters.

I have seen these mice nosing about my pots and pans and pack boxes, or felt them running over my sleeping bag at night. One little mother built her nest in the upholstery of my automobile, and gave birth to her babies there. A second one which I failed to dislodge before I left my summer camp in the Charleston Mountains, traveled with me across Utah and Arizona and down into Baja California before running down my coat sleeve one early morning and jumping out of the open car window into the brush so far away from her original home. A well traveled mouse, that!

Nevada's old-timers still tell of the 1907-1908 plague of Field Mice (*Microtus montanus*). The small-eared ever-hungry rodents suddenly appeared in such numbers it was estimated in certain areas of Humboldt and Carson valleys that there were 8000 to 12,000 on every acre! Carnivorous mammals (Coyotes, Foxes, Skunks) and raptorial birds (Hawks, Eagles, Vultures, Owls) came in from far and wide to feast upon them, but even they were not able to exterminate any large proportion.

Such population explosions are usually only temporary. They are made possible when a peculiar favorable complex of conditions ensue. When we remember that female Meadow Mice become sexually mature when only three weeks old, and after another three weeks give birth to litters of six to eight young, and may have more than one litter per year, it is easy to understand how the yearly increase can be astounding. Natural enemies, ranging from predators to disease and eventual lack of food, all come in to finally reduce their numbers to seeming near extinction. However, population build-ups soon begin again.

The rather rare, stouter-bodied Grasshopper Mice (*Onychomys*) are especially unique and interesting because of their peculiar high-pitched, far-sounding "voice." Many a camper has been mystified by it. According to an observer who had several in captivity, these mice stand on their rear feet with front feet resting on something higher when issuing their call. They point the nose skyward and emit a shrill clear little "wolf's howl" from an open mouth. Another sound made when angry or scolding, sounds like the barking of a miniature terrier. These mice eat insects and seeds.

Kangaroo rats (*Dipodomys*), those remarkable soft-furred efficient leapers, are well represented in Nevada's wildlands. There are at least five species and untold numbers of individuals. About all they seem to ask is loose soil or sand where they can make their burrows, and a few shrubs and annual plants to supply their food. The smallest is Merriam's Kangaroo Rat, weighing only 43 grams, the largest is the big Desert Kangaroo Rat, weighing almost four times as much. All are creatures of the night spending their days curled up in their deep underground burrows where temperatures are nearly unvariable. They form the chief fare of the Kit Foxes, who dig them out or slyly catch them while out playing or foraging.

Like the Mice, burrowing Pocket Gophers (in Nevada, at least 29 kinds) occur almost everywhere in the state where there is loose, deep and fertile soils. In the southernmost arid parts of the state they work in quite dry, thin soils; loose sandy soils are wholly avoided. These seemingly dull-witted animals are unique in being able to run backwards in their tunnels as readily as they run forwards. Such movements are facilitated by the sense of touch of the highly sensitive nose and surrounding stiff vibrissae, and equally sensitive tail tip.

For rapid digging, Pocket Gophers have developed unusually heavy muscular and bony parts of both head and shoulders, and very large and strong clawed forefeet. They are surly little creatures and only one adult ever occupies a single burrow. One of their great enemies are owls. Some years ago on a very bright moonlit night I luckily witnessed a Long-eared Owl snatch one as it slightly exposed itself at the entrance to its burrow. Other animals Pocket Gophers must watch out for are Gopher Snakes and the quick-witted, slender-bodied Weasels that dig into the tunnels and soon kill their victims.

The rather rare Townsend White-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus townsendii*) occurs mostly in the northeastern quarter of the state among the junipers, pinyons

and yellow pines, but the Black-Tailed Hare (*Lepus californicus*), so common in Southern California, is found almost everywhere from low hot desert to high mountain slopes. Tularemia often cuts down their numbers to apparent near extinction; but due to their high fertility they soon reappear in great and surprising numbers. When decrease in numbers is due to poison efforts by man, predators are forced to seek other sources of food, and then there is an outcry to get rid of Coyotes, Foxes and Wildcats. Many a Nevada rancher has found that by welcoming a certain number of Rabbits for the Coyotes to eat, he restores nature's balance and suffers unduly neither from Rabbits or Coyotes.

In my travels in Nevada I have come upon two kinds of Coyotes, the "Big Barker" Coyote (*Canis latrans lestes*) in the central and northern parts of the state, and the smaller more reddish kind in the southern arid sections. Both animals were once quite plentiful. They were always interesting to see, and on the whole beneficial since they kept down the numbers of grass destroying rodents. Among these animals were always some that preyed upon sheep. Instead of eliminating the guilty individuals as recommended by the enlightened Missouri predator-control plan, stock-

men as a whole called for wholesale destruction of all Coyotes. Paid federal poison squads were soon at work.

Because of their destruction of rodents, which are their chief food, Badgers may be considered one of Nevada's most valuable animal citizens—yet they suffer persecution on every hand. Especially great and unfortunate is the toll of Badgers taken when poison is set out for other animals such as Coyotes.

Nevada's natural heritage of wildlife is all too valuable to be so thoughtlessly wiped out. Once sacrificed, it can never be restored. Wiser future generations will wonder why we have not been more careful guardians of the rich heritage of wildlife placed here by nature for our enjoyment, welfare and economic good.

On several occasions I have found Badgers hopelessly caught in traps set for Coyotes. Thankfully, I have been able to free many of them. One Badger in its efforts to free itself had almost gnawed off a foot caught in the trap.

The Pronghorn Antelope (*Antilocapra americana*), in my estimation the most beautiful of Nevada's larger animals, once roamed in small to large herds over most of the non-mountainous parts of the state. Place names such as Antelope Spring, Antelope Valley, Antelope Mine



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and others were given because of the impressive prevalence of this fine alert and graceful animal. Conservationists saved this beautiful animal from extinction in the Sagebrush State. Through their generous monetary interest and other efforts, a large refuge was created in northwestern Nevada, and here, protected from hunting and with ample winter and summer feeding range, the antelope is perpetuating its kind.

While I recognize that Nevada's vast Deer population comprise no part of the desert fauna in the strictest sense, I cannot feel that I am going too far astray to mention these fine creatures of the high mountains. In mid-summer the Deer herds inhabit the pine forests, but when cool autumn, and later, cold winter, arrive, deer come down into the sunny pinyon forests and even at times wander into the warmer brush-covered hillsides and basins. Areas heavily grazed by domestic Sheep have the least Deer, for Sheep are the Deer's greatest food competitors; Sheep not only eat the grasses and wildflowers, but browse on the shrubs which comprise the deer's chief food.

And of course where Deer are there also are Puma (also called Cougars and Mountain Lions), one of nature's chief natural checks on deer over-population and her wise means of weeding out the weak, the sick and otherwise undesirable individuals. How unfortunate that the clever and beautiful Puma is all too often considered dangerous (which it is not) and is persistently the victim of persecution by man, his dogs, his rifle, his cruel steel traps and poisons. The number of Cougars, never great, is gradually diminishing.

One April night when I camped in a narrow pine gulch in the Sheep Mountains of Clark County, it began to snow and by morning the rocky ground was covered with a white mantle eight inches deep. When we got up to rebuild our campfire and get breakfast, we found all about us—actually within three feet of where we slept—the numerous big tracks of a cougar which out of curiosity had walked all about our camp. Later we tracked this big cat over a mile as it went along a rocky ridge and down into the thick brush below.

There are several of Nevada's birds and mammals very much dependent on the sagebrush (Nevada's state flower) for food and shelter; among them are the Sage Sparrow, the Sage Hen, the Sage Thrasher, the Sagebrush Vole and the Sagebrush Chipmunk. The Sage Sparrow is common on the sagebrush flats during the breeding season and onwards until autumn. It builds its nest in the sagebrush. In spring the sage-

brush-covered valleys fairly ring with the sweet songs of the males.

The small, very agile and bright-eyed Sagebrush Chipmunk loves to climb into the sagebrush and find an observation post at the summit of some high branch when it gives its scolding notes or chirps as we pass by. At times it is a greedy and exemplary feeder on the larvae and pupa of the Sagebrush Webworm; at other times it subsists largely on the seeds of wild thistles and grasses. It avoids the more sterile southern desert areas, confining itself to the northern-half of the state.

Among the most frequently seen birds of Nevada's wastelands are the Horned Larks which are often observed in flocks flying low or running and feeding on the ground. Then there is the Roadrunner whose presence always thrills the traveler, the sweet-voiced Gambel Sparrow, the Western Mourning Dove, the Western Lark Sparrow, the Pinyon Jay, the Say Phoebe, the Raven and Turkey Vulture. Occasionally I still see a Burrowing Owl or hear the Western Horned Owl's deep flute-like notes.

Rising like islands from the sands of the hot low desert of southern Nevada are the Charleston and Sheep mountains. Both are high enough to support a cover of beautiful yellow pines, firs, pinyons and junipers. In the 1920s I spent a number of summers exploring for plants on these wild steep slopes, at the same time studying the birds and mammals. I published the first list of plants and the first annotated list of birds from the Charleston Mountains; also I made early observations and collected information on the Desert Bighorn Sheep living in the Sheep Mountains. The latter place is now a federal game refuge and has the largest concentration of Desert Bighorn in the United States. Persons qualified and properly endorsed can sometimes get permission to visit the closely supervised refuge to see at close range these beautiful noble creatures. It is a hard journey over poor rocky roads to get to their haunts, but great is the reward to him who seeks knowledge of Bighorn ways. In these same highlands one may perhaps glimpse Pumas even as I have, and witness the work of Porcupines. If you delve in the rocks of talus slopes of the lime rocks, you will uncover the shells of rarely seen Land Snails. You will doubtless find numerous marine fossils (echinoderms, brachiopods and trilobites) in the Charleston Mountain limestones of Carboniferous Age. Insect collecting can be a rewarding experience in these highlands.

There are other mountain ranges in Nevada equally wild and appealing to the naturalist. They await the reverent explorer.

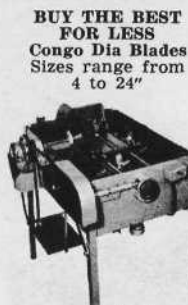
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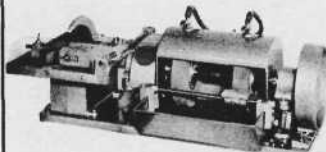


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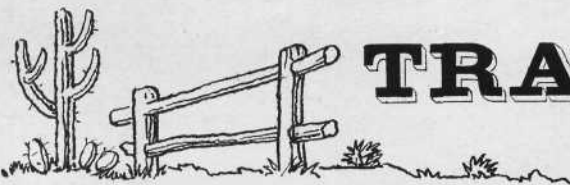
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# OWENS VALLEY CENTENNIAL

By LUCILE WEIGHT

*Desert Magazine's California Travel Correspondent*

**O**WENS VALLEY, a 110-mile trough between the Sierra Nevada and the Inyo-White Mountains, yearly attracts thousands of fishermen, campers and other vacationers seeking the high canyons, streams and lakes above the flatlands.

This year the Valley is spotlighted for an added reason—1961 marks its centennial. Celebrations have already started, with the Lone Pine Stampede held May 27, Big Pine Fandango June 16-18. The Independence Day event will be at the town of Independence, followed by the Tri-County Fair in August and Labor Day celebration September 4, both at Bishop.

July 4th at Independence will include a parade and historical pageant, portraying the town's early days. The day will start with a Lions Club breakfast in Dehy Park. There will be little leaguer ballgames, skydivers, quarter midget races, gymkhana, archery, barbecue in the park at 4:30, pageant at the ballpark 6 p.m., fireworks at the airport, 8 p.m. There will be exhibits of art, Indian artifacts, rocks and minerals, coins.

A special program will be given by Owens Valley Indians, including authentic tribal dances, Paiute skills and crafts demonstrations. No tape recorders or cameras will be allowed.

While settlement in Owens Valley started in 1861, white men came through possibly as early as 1825, including Joe Walker in 1833 and part of Fremont's party in 1845. Discovery of gold near Mono Lake to the north, in 1859, brought prospectors from Los Angeles. Soon, Aurora gold drew more travelers. Then stockmen moved in to supply mine camps with beef, grain and hay.

Independence had its roots in the stone cabin trading post on Little Pine Creek started in August, 1861, by Charles Putnam. Actual townsite is said to be on land patented to Thomas Edwards and named for Camp Independence which had been established July 4, 1862, on Oak Creek, 2½ miles north. Independence was made the county seat when Inyo was created in 1866.

White settlement was virtually dependent upon the military from 1862 to 1877, when the Camp was abandoned, for trouble inevitably followed the white men's prospecting and ranching on Indian land. A peace treaty concluded in October, 1862, celebrated by the Indians with a fandango, was short-lived. Mining strikes, with subsequent arrival of more miners, renewed Indian trouble. In March, 1863, more cavalry moved in, this time giving Indians no quarter. Plans for an Indian reservation in Owens Valley did not materialize, although the boundaries were defined. Instead, on July 11, 1863, soldiers started for a reservation near Fort Tejon with 908 Indians, 50 of whom escaped and returned to Owens Valley.

As the Valley became a vital corridor for travel and a supply point for mines, ranches increased and towns grew. Independence, which had one dwelling in January, 1866, had a population of 100 next year. By 1870 it became a city with a

newspaper, the *Inyo Independent*, founded by Chalfant and Parker.

Many a piece of highgrade ore was exhibited in the streets of Independence, where prospectors who had made a strike came to record their claims. Cerro Gordo in the Inyo Mountains was the greatest of the mines affecting Owens Valley. Its silver, lead and zinc paid about 17 million. Others were Panamint City, Waucoba, Ubehebe, Saline Valley, Darwin mines; then in the 1880s, soda and other salts from Owens Lake, and borax in Death Valley. Just when the old mines had declined, discovery of Nevada bonanzas at Tonopah in 1900, followed by Goldfield, Bullfrog, Skidoo, and Greenwater, brought new business to Owens Valley, especially a demand for produce.

A promising agricultural future in the Valley vanished when the Owens River water was taken by Los Angeles. The Valley was further doomed by Bureau of Reclamation withdrawal of land from settlement for "forestry conservation," Valleyites claiming that much of this land was already in crops and that the only "forests" involved were trees planted by the settlers. The 233¼-mile aqueduct to Los Angeles was completed in October, 1913. Five years later, the Owens surface water was not enough, so Los Angeles started sinking wells for the underground water.

Towns and schools were annihilated, families abandoned their homes.

It may have been the end of the trail for agriculture, but it was by no means the end for those catering to vacationers. Each year more people make Owens Valley headquarters for Sierra pack trips, for reaching boating, water skiing, fishing, swimming, and hunting spots.

For those who plan their vacation around July 4 this year, the celebration at Independence can be an extra treat. If there is time, a pack trip will be an exhilarating experience. Operating out of Independence are the High Sierra Pack Train, Parker Pack Train and Sequoia Kings Pack Train. These and over 20 others are members of High Sierra Packers Assn., Rt. 1, Box 16, Bishop, Calif., which will send complete informa-

tion upon request. Trips are one day to several weeks. Costs vary according to service required, size of party, amount of gear, length of trip. The packer will supply food and equipment, or a suggested list. Sports stores in the Valley also will advise you, and some rent equipment.

For the camper, there are about 65 public campgrounds, accessible by car, in Inyo National Forest, those nearest Independence being at Gray's Meadow six miles west of town, at 6500 feet elevation; at Onion Valley, also west, at 9000 feet; and Oak Creek, north fork, four miles west of Fort Independence, at 4500 feet.

To enjoy a vacation in Owens Valley,

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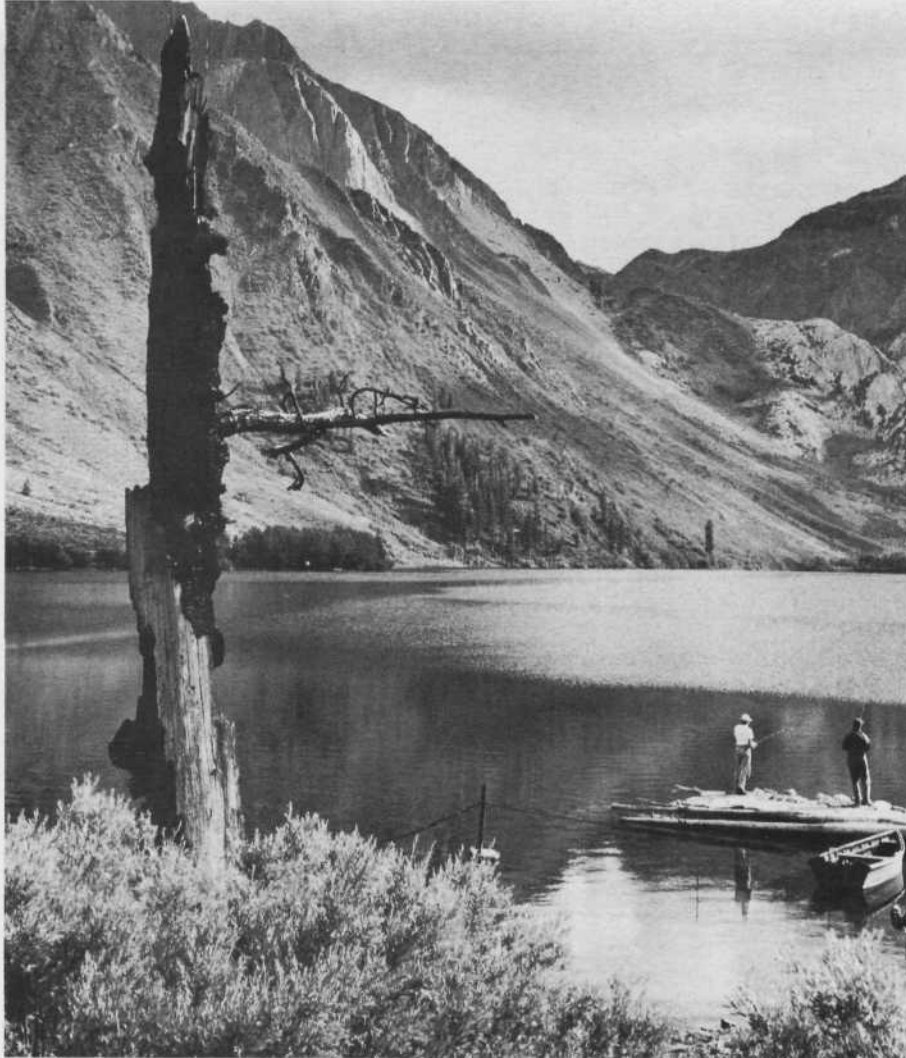
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you don't have to be the outdoor type. There are many comfortable motels, and points of interest are easily accessible for short day trips.

At Independence, a recommended motel costs as little as \$6 for two. From here you can visit the site of Camp Independence north of town, Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery about two miles northwest, abandoned mines — or visit landmarks in the town itself. These include the home of

Mary Austin, who did much of her writing here, including *Land of Little Rain* and *Lost Borders*. Another landmark is the Dorothy Cragen residence, once the Commander's house at Camp Independence. (Dorothy is the pageant chairman.) Also moved here from the Camp is the Drew home, once the military hospital. Pleasant Dehy Park includes Narrow Gauge Engine No. 18, a museum exhibit.

In addition, the Eastern California Mu-

seum, in the basement of the Court House, has fascinating mementos and records. Visitors will learn that Owens Valley's past is far older than the span of 100 years being celebrated this July. These collections are but one facet of the ECM Association.

Founded in 1928, it has been active in both locating and preserving the historic and prehistoric heritage of eastern California and southwest Nevada. It obtained presidential withdrawal of 10,000 acres of Inyo and Mono counties and part of Esmeralda County in Nevada for research purposes. In 1930 the Association invited the Southwest Archeological Federation to cooperate in locating and collecting artifacts. One of its big jobs in this field is its effort at educating the public to the importance of exactly marking sites, taking pictures if possible, and reporting finds to the Association. The president, Dorothy Cragen, recently compared thoughtless picking-up of artifacts, or defacing of petroglyphs, with the act of a person who would tear out the page of a rare book, thus destroying a link in the story of the past.

The Association sponsors archeological workshops at which young people and adults who have collected arrowheads and other artifacts receive instruction under qualified archeologists. Guests are welcome during part of this period to hear lectures. The Association during other months conducts public tours for those interested in geology, mines and minerals, botany and history. Information on the trips is available from Eastern California Museum Assn., Court-house, Independence.

**CALIFORNIA JULY EVENTS:** July 22-23: Air Show and Indian Pow-Wow, Mojave.

**NEVADA JULY EVENTS:** July 4: Independence Day celebrations at Caliente, Ely, Eureka, Lovelock, Tonopah; Boulder Damboree at Boulder City.

**ARIZONA JULY EVENTS:** July 1-4: Hopi Craftsmen Annual exhibition of pottery, basketry, weaving and silver, Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff. July 2-4: All-Indian Pow-Wow, Flagstaff; Annual Frontier Days, Prescott. July 3-4: Hashknife Stampede, Holbrook. July 4: Annual Fourth of July Celebration, coaster race down Tombstone Canyon, fireworks, Bisbee. July 4 Fireworks at Williams, Clarkdale and Payson. July 21: 100th anniversary of the Burning of Ft. Buchanan at Patagonia. July 23-30: Navajo Craftsmen exhibition, Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff. July 24: Annual Mormon Pioneer Day at Pine.

**UTAH JULY EVENTS:** July 4: World Championship Rodeo, Tooele; Parades and celebrations at Bountiful, Centerville, and Woodruff. Annual Reata Days at Layton. July 8-9: Weber Valley Air Fair at Ogden. July 13-15: 28th annual performance of Ute Stampede at Nephi; Black Diamond Stampede at Price. July 14-16: Pioneer pageant "All Faces West," Ogden. July 19-24: Horse show, rodeo, Pioneer Days Celebration, Ogden. July 20-22: Flora Festival, Centennial Celebration, Orem. July 21-22: 50th Annual hike to the top of 12,000-foot Mount Timpanogos, Aspen Grove. Special pre-hike program on the evening of the 21st. July 22-24: Re-enactment of evacuation of Federal troops from Camp Floyd (Fort Crittenden). July 24 (week of): Pioneer Day Celebrations at most Utah communities. July 27-29: Annual Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo at Vernal.

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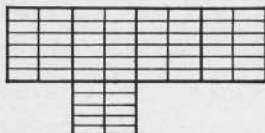


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By RANDALL HENDERSON

THE 1960 CENSUS reveals that over four million Americans are now making their homes in the Desert Southwest. This does not include another million or two who come here during the winter season for health and recreation. The population of this region has more than doubled since the *Desert Magazine* was started in 1937.

The increase has been mainly in the cities. During the 10 years from 1950 to 1960 Phoenix grew from 106,000 to 439,000 persons, Tucson from 45,000 to 212,000, Las Vegas from 24,000 to 64,000, and Albuquerque from 96,000 to 201,000.

Recently a public relations man from an Eastern city who was about to retire, asked me where in the Southwest he would find a town which would qualify as follows: "I am fed up with the over-crowded city. My wife and I would like to spend our late years in a small community where there is no smog, no traffic congestion, no high pressure salesmen. We would like to find a place with a moderate climate where there is lots of space and the neighbors call each other by their first names—and there is a bit of the camaraderie of the old frontier, if it still exists."

I suggested that he start his quest in Nevada. This is one of the few states which has not yet become over-crowded with people. Although it is the 7th largest state in the Union, there are fewer people in its 110,000-square-miles than in the factory town of Akron, Ohio.

If you will spread out a map of Nevada you will find it has more blank space than any other portion of the country. Like the other desert states, much of it is arid, and yet there are many fertile valleys where pioneering Mormon families and other thrifty farmers have created for themselves a wholesome way of life and an ample economy.

Nevada's main contribution to the wealth of the nation has been its minerals. The gold, silver and copper which came from Virginia City, Tonopah, Goldfield, Rhyolite and scores of other rich mining camps in the past have been depleted. But Nevada is by no means a has-been state insofar as mineral resources are concerned. The day is approaching when Americans, having skimmed the cream of their mineral deposits, will be going back to the old mine workings for the low-grade ores they scorned during the years when high-assay materials were available.

Today Americans are consuming more minerals than are being produced in this country. As population expands, it is inevitable that the deficit gap will increase. So far it has been possible to make up the shortage by importations from other lands. But the under-developed countries from which much of this mineral supply is coming are aspiring to their own industrialization—and even the world supply is not unlimited. Hence my con-

clusion that sooner or later Nevada will see a revival of its mining industry. When we have to recover our copper, tin, antimony, aluminum, lead and zinc from low grade ores, the cost of everything from kitchenware to automobiles will be much higher. But our grandchildren will be thankful that in Nevada there will still be a vast underground storehouse of such ores.

\* \* \*

Nevada is the only state west of the Rockies which does not have a national park within or adjacent to its boundaries. But there are good reasons to believe this omission will be corrected. During the last eight years there has been increasing support for a proposal to set aside 28-square-miles in the Snake Range of eastern Nevada, including the Lehman Caves, Mt. Wheeler (El. 13,061) and Matthes Glacier as a new recreational park for Americans.

Interest in the Snake Range as a potential national park has developed in recent years after Weldon Heald of Tucson and Albert Marshall of Three Rivers, California, during an ascent of Mt. Wheeler, ascertained that a glacier on the east slope of the mountain, first reported by the U.S. Geological Survey in 1883, is still alive. This is believed to be the only living glacier in the Great Basin between the Sierra of California and the Rocky Mountains.

The proposal to set aside the Snake Range area as a public recreational area, to be known as the Great Basin National Park, not only is sponsored by many Nevada organizations, but is receiving widespread support from conservation groups all across the nation.

In the years since World War II there has been very little expansion of the national park system. But Stewart Udall, new Secretary of Interior, has indicated it will be the policy of the present administration in Washington to seek congressional approval of many new park, monument and recreational areas both east and west. Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Yosemite and other western parks are becoming more crowded each year, and the need for increased park facilities is widely recognized.

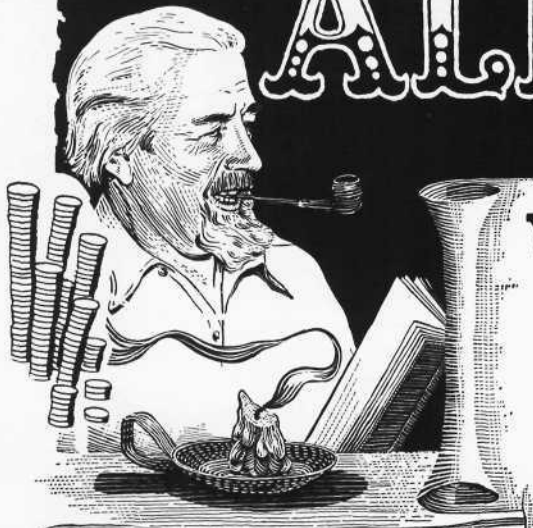
The support which proponents of the Great Basin National Park may expect from the national administration was made clear in a recent address in which Secretary Udall said: "Each generation has its challenges. It was easy in the earlier period of this century for Presidents by merely a stroke of the pen to set aside land for public use and to conserve it. Now we must, in some instances, buy back the land in order to maintain tracts of it for public use.

"But it does seem to me that in the next few years there will be a last opportunity to engage in a major work of conservation, to round out our park system, and for this administration to provide the leadership needed in this field."

# DESERT RAT HARRY OLIVER'S

## ALMANAC

1888 · 1999



You can bet on the **JULY** weather  
in Good Old **NEVADA**

*There's more freedom in Nevada than a body  
can find in a bronc buster's 12-year-old union suit.  
That's why I love the state and its people.*



On the left is a portrait of Slim Law of Silver Peak in the heart of Esmeralda County, Nevada. Slim told me about a wonderful echo in the Monte Cristo Range near his place. "When folks camp here," says Slim, "they go to their beds, give a good shout and the echo wakes them up in the morning." The only sound that doesn't echo is a good old "hiss." A Hollywood actor bought a ranch near the canyon

on the strength of this hisssless echo. So far he's heard only two "hisses"—one from a gopher snake, the other from a flat tire.

Red-headed Shorty O'Brien (pictured at the right), prospector of Fish Lake Valley (also in Esmeralda County, Nevada) discovered gold while building a short-cut to his shack. He figured to watch his pennies on this one by cutting all corners. He economized on everything except a name for the mine: "O'Brien, O'Brien and O'Brien Short-Cut Bonanza Irish Diggings." Everything was going smooth until Shorty went broke on some letterheads and envelopes he had printed with his mine's name on them in fancy hand-lettered type.



Reno is the city of opportunities. I got a letter from a fellow who was dead-broke when he pulled into town two weeks ago. Now he owes \$21,000.



ity bath is now occupied by the Nevada State Prison.

\* \* \*

Eastern Nevada is cowboy country. Fellow from Elko I know complimented his neighbor on his 10-gallon hat. "Yeah," says the neighbor. "I bought this hat five years ago; had it cleaned three times; changed it twice in a restaurant; and it's still just as good as new."

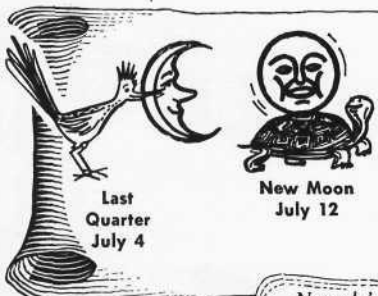
\* \* \*

Propaganda Dept.: I wrote to one of the big Las Vegas casinos to find out why it is beginners are sure to win in a poker game. "Confidentially speaking," wrote back the casino owner, "this is not true, but we encourage this superstition because it gets the tenderfeet interested."

\* \* \*

The only non-human thing bad about Virginia City is its Washoe Zephyr. This wind is so strong, in the old days kids used iron doors for kites. The Air Force won't allow this kind of kite flying today.

In 1859 there were no bath houses in Carson, so the population went to Curry's Hot Springs. The site of this commun-



*Nevada's real gamblers are its gold miners. They are betting on the politicians in Washington giving the gold industry a fair shake. The miners don't like impossible odds—but in this case they are stuck with them.*

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