

Desert

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Desert Magazine Book Shop

THE NORTH AMERICAN DESERTS by Edmund C. Jaeger. A long-time authority on all phases of desert areas and life, Dr. Jaeger's book on the North American Deserts should be carried wherever you travel. It not only describes each of the individual desert areas, but has illustrated sections on desert insects, reptiles, birds, mammals and plants. 315 pages, illustrated photographs, line drawings and maps. Hardcover. \$5.95.

OVERLAND STAGE TO CALIFORNIA AND THE PONY EXPRESS by Frank A. Root. A first-hand account of a mail agent who lived and fought with the men who settled the West through their efforts to establish communication across the wilderness during the 1800's. First published in 1901 and just republished. Heavy stock and hardcover, original artist illustrations, two 1800 maps, 645 pages, this is a book for history buffs, \$15.00.

GHOST TOWNS OF THE NORTHWEST by Norman D. Weis. The ghost-town country of the Pacific Northwest including trips to many little-known areas, is explored in this first-hand factual and interesting book. Excellent photography. Best book to date on ghost towns of the Northwest. Maps. Hardcover, heavy slick paper, 319 pages. \$6.95.

GOLD RUSH COUNTRY by the Editors of Sunset Books. A revised and up-dated practical guide to California's Mother Lode country. Divided into geographical areas for easy weekend trips, the 8x11 heavy paperback new edition is profusely illustrated with photos and maps. Special features and anecdotes of historical and present day activities. 4-color cover 96 pages. \$1.95.



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WESTERN CAMPSITE DIRECTORY by the Editors of Sunset Books. Just published, this book lists more than 5000 private and public campgrounds in the 11 western states and British Columbia and Western Alberta, including hundreds of new campsites to care for the ever increasing amount of people taking to the open road. Just right for planning a vacation. Large format, slick paperback, illustrated, 128 pages, \$1.95.

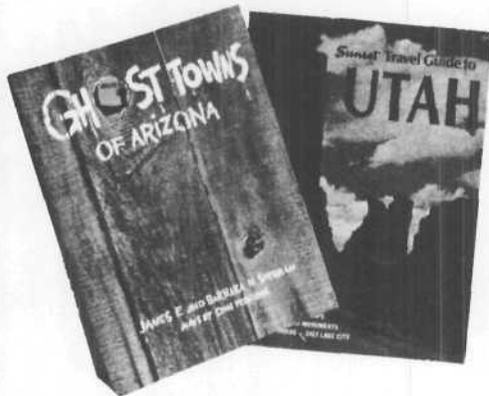
UNCLE SAM'S CAMELS, edited by Lewis Burt Lesley. This book is the actual journal of May Humphreys Stacey, a young man who was part of the "camel corps" under leadership of Lt. Edward Beale. First published in 1929 this is a fascinating account of attempts by the U.S. government to import camels from Asia to provide transportation across the deserts of the Southwest. Stacey later became a colonel in the U.S. Army. A good description of how the camels were purchased; and Beale's report to the Secretary of War. Hardcover, 298 pages, \$8.00.

GUIDEBOOK TO THE COLORADO DESERT OF CALIFORNIA by Choral Pepper. Editor of Desert Magazine for six years, the author has used her research knowledge and first-hand experiences to compile this detailed and informative guide to the Colorado Desert. Trips also include historical background. Slick paperback, illustrated, 128 pages, \$1.95.

GUIDE FOR INSULATOR COLLECTORS by John C. Tibbitts. This is the third and final book on insulators by veteran bottle collector John Tibbitts. This third book has a revised price list and index to insulators described in the previous two volumes. However, each volume describes insulators not shown in the other books, so for a complete roundup of all insulators, all three volumes are needed. Books are paperback, averaging 120 pages, illustrated with artists drawings, \$3.00 EACH. WHEN ORDERING BE SURE TO STATE VOLUME NUMBER: ONE, TWO or THREE.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA by the Editors of Sunset Books. An illustrated guide to Southern California, this is another in Sunset Books series. It presents in capsule form most of the interesting places to visit in the Southland. Heavy paperback, 8 x 11 format, 128 pages, \$1.95.

THE CALIFORNIA DESERTS by Edmund C. Jaeger. Revised 4th edition is standard guide to Mohave and Colorado deserts with new chapters on desert conservation and aborigines. Hardcover. \$4.95.

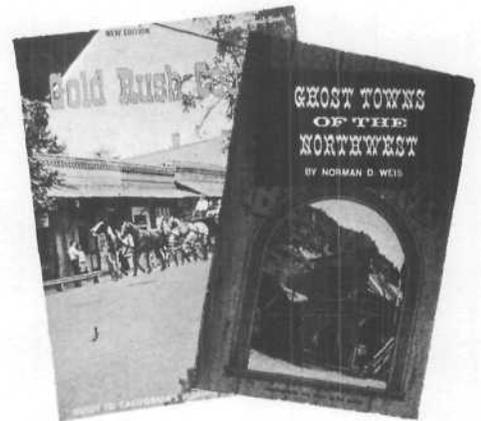


LOWER CALIFORNIA GUIDE BOOK by Gerhard and Gulick. The authors have revised the third edition to bring it up to date. Veteran travelers in Baja California would not venture south of the border without this authoritative volume. It combines the fascinating history of every location, whether it be a town, mission or abandoned ranch, with detailed mileage maps and locations of gasoline supplies, water and other needed information on Baja. 243 pages with three-color folded map, 16 detailed route maps, 4 city maps, 22 illustrations. Hardcover \$6.50.

MAPS OF BAJA CALIFORNIA from the Lower California Guidebook by Gerhard and Gulick. Slightly smaller than those in the book but convenient to carry in glove compartment. \$1 when purchased with the book; \$1.50 when purchased separately.

TRAVEL GUIDE TO UTAH by the Editors of Sunset Books. Like their other guide books, this is a concise, factual, illustrated and well-mapped guide to Utah. Anyone planning a vacation or tour through the Beehive State should have this along. Large 8x11 format, heavy paperback, 80 pages, \$1.95.

GHOST TOWNS OF ARIZONA by James and Barbara Sherman. If you are looking for a ghost town in Arizona this is your waybill. Illustrated, maps, township, range, coordinates, history, and other details make this one of the best ghost town books ever published. Large 9x11 format, heavy paperback, 208 pages, \$3.95.



LOST MINES AND HIDDEN TREASURES by Leland Lovelace. Authoritative and exact accounts give locations and fascinating data about a lost lake of gold in California, buried Aztec ingots in Arizona, kegs of coins, and all sorts of exciting booty for treasure seekers. Hardcover, \$4.95.

LOST MINES OF DEATH VALLEY by Harold Weight. This is a new approach to the enigma of Death Valley Scotty's life and legends and gives additional insight into the Lost Gunsight and Breyfogle bonanzas, plus other Death Valley mysteries. Paperback, historic photographs, reference material, 86 pages \$2.50.

TRAVEL GUIDES TO BAJA CALIFORNIA by Ken and Caroline Bates. Published the Editors of Sunset Books, this is a useful book on Baja and should be a companion piece to Gerhard and Gulick's Lower California Handbook and Cliff Cross's Baja by Road, Airplane and Boat. The Bates' book takes the reader to the people with text, photographs and maps. Anyone going to Baja should have all three books. Large 8x10 format, heavy paperback, 80 pages, \$1.95.

ROAD MAP TO CALIFORNIA'S LOST MINES AND BURIED TREASURES and **ROADMAP TO CALIFORNIA'S PIONEER TOWNS, GHOST TOWNS AND MINING CAMPS** compiled by Varna Enterprises. Both roadmaps are 38" by 25" and scaled. Southern California on one side and Northern California on the other. Both contain detailed location of place names, many of which are not on regular maps. Treasure Map is \$4.00 and Ghost Town Map is \$2.95. When ordering, be certain to state which map, or both.

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Volume 36, Number 3

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THE COVER.

This unusual photo of the Rhinoceros beetle was shot in Arizona by Ed Cooper of Seattle, Washington.

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A Peek in the Publisher's Poke

THIS MONTH'S cover is a startling departure from our usual scenic shots of beautiful areas in the Southwest. At the same time, we should not lose sight of the fact that this region is inhabited by a myriad of animal life and it is my feeling that we should be aware of *all* of the beauty that is the Southwest. The beetle on the cover is one of the largest in America, growing to a length of 2½ inches and roams the southland from Arizona east. That fact will undoubtedly make a lot of Californians happy. Other readers will be cheered by the fact that

only the male has this ferocious appearance which is responsible for him being named the Rhinoceros Beetle. They are basically scavengers, with the grubs feeding on rotting wood, especially tree roots, although they occasionally invade healthy plants. As we here at the Magazine are staunch advocates of anti-litter, it is encouraging to know that Rhino is on our side.

A walk in the desert sunshine with good friends, a rare opportunity to observe some botanical oddities, breathtaking views of some of California's most unusual scenery—all these and more await those who join the Anza-Borrego Committee for its Third Annual Walk for Desert Gardens, at 11:00 a.m. on March 18. This year the walk will be held in the elephant trees area to give garden club members and the public a chance to view first-hand some areas where their donations are at work.

A committee of the Desert Protective Council, the Anza-Borrego Committee was formed by a volunteer group to buy up the pockets of private land isolated inside the boundaries when the park was established in 1933. The five-year-old

committee has been responsible for acquiring and deeding to the state over two square miles of these "inholdings". To finance the campaign, the committee accepts donations and designates areas as Desert Gardens—two acres of choice land. Contributions are made in any amount, and those of \$55 or more are acknowledged with a certificate.

Those participating in the Walk should wear comfortable shoes for the short walk from the parking area to the elephant trees. Bring your own sack lunches and drinking water; shutter-bugs will certainly want their cameras. A tour of the Elephant Trees Area will be led by park personnel. To find the Walk for Desert Gardens, take Split Mountain Road south from Ocotillo Wells for about nine miles. Signs will direct the visitors to the Elephant Trees Area.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

In the January issue of DESERT Magazine an article entitled "The Lure of Camp Rock Road" by Lyle E. Fournier, directed the readership to an area that is private property and permission to use this property is expressly forbidden by the owners, Flying-M-Associates. All pictures portrayed in the layout are on two sections belonging to the above named company. DESERT apologizes to the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Don Mulligan and hopes the readers will respect their inalienable right to post their property!

William Kump

Book Reviews

All books reviewed are available through
Desert Magazine Book Shop

GUIDEBOOK TO THE FEATHER RIVER COUNTRY

By
Jim Martin



Another western travel book from Ward Ritchie Press to better acquaint visitors with this colorful and historical part of California.

Discovery of gold on the Middle Fork of the Feather River in 1848 attracted an avalanche of argonauts. Today the area abounds with outdoor recreation enthusiasts who are eager to sample its offerings from gold panning, fishing, boating, hiking to ice angling. This is a "must" book for anyone contemplating a trip to Feather River country.

Slick paperback, illustrated, 128 pages, \$1.95.

THE GOLD HEX

By
Ken Marquiss



An avid lost mine hunter, whose works have appeared in *Desert* for many years, Ken has compiled 20 of his treasure hunts in book form. From gold panning to hard-rock, from gold dredging to electronic metal detecting, he has done it all.

Through the hardships and frustrations that were his companions on most of his searches, the reader will get the feeling that here is a man who truly has enjoyed a lifetime of "doing his thing."

Ken's failure to hit the "jackpot" does not mean that he is treasureless, for he reveals to all in the "hindward": "The pervading peace of night fires beneath brittle stars, the constant rock formation

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95	4.00 mm	1/8 inch	9.00

Prices on request for larger drills
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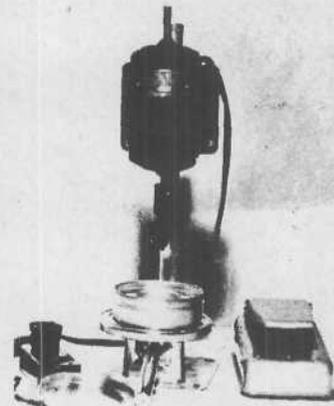
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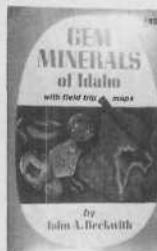
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Slick paperback, well illustrated with photos and maps, 146 pages, \$5.00.

GEM MINERALS OF IDAHO

By
John A. Beckwith

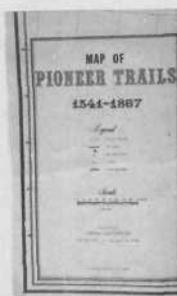


Idaho conceals a dazzling mineral wealth, as yet untouched by the gem hunter. This book contains information on the physical and optical characteristics of minerals, facts concerning the history, lore, and fashioning of many of the gems, and eleven varied and rewarding field trips to every sort of collecting area, accompanied by guidelines for recovering the gems once you are there.

Slick paperback, illustrated with maps and photographs, 23 pages, \$2.95.

MAP OF PIONEER TRAILS

Compiled
by
*Varna
Enterprises*



Varna Enterprises, who publish the popular maps on lost mines and ghost towns in California, have just released a new and fascinating large map on pioneer trails which were blazed from 1541 through 1867 throughout the western half of the United States.

Superimposed in red on the black and white 1867 map the trails include the Coronado, Portola, Anza, Santa Fe, Arkansas Route, Comanche, Colonel Johnson, Lt. Michler, Colonel Pope, Overland Mail Route, Pony Express, Captain Fremont, Hastings, Stansbury Route, Mormon Trail, Los Angeles to Great Salt Lake

Route, Canby Trail, Macombs Routes, Simpson's Trail, Sawyer's Wagon Road, Cole, Conner, Mullins, New Emigrant Road, Landers Cutoff, Applegate, and others.

The large map is 37 by 45 inches, folded, \$4.00.

THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTHWEST

By the
*Editors of
Sunset Books*



This is a pictorial presentation of the scenic and tourist attractions of the Southwest. The brief text which describes the photographs also relates the history of the areas covered.

The editors have also attempted to compare the past with the present by showing modern-day activities of cities such as Phoenix, El Paso, Albuquerque, Taos, and communities below the Mexican border.

States covered include California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and West Texas. Major scenic areas include the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, Canyonlands National Park and the Sonoran Desert. There are 240 photographs of which 47 are four-color scenes.

Large format, 223 pages, hardcover, slick paper, \$10.95.

INDIAN SILVERWORK OF THE SOUTHWEST, ILLUSTRATED, VOLUME I

By
Harry P. Mera

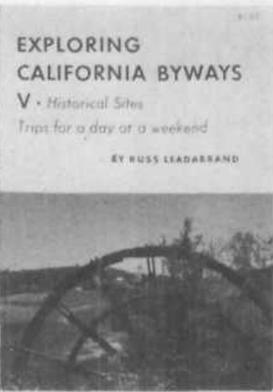
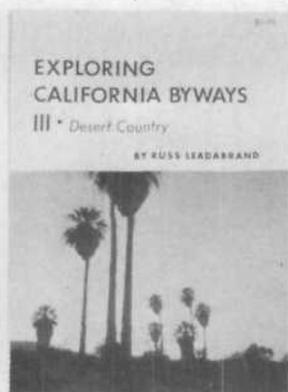
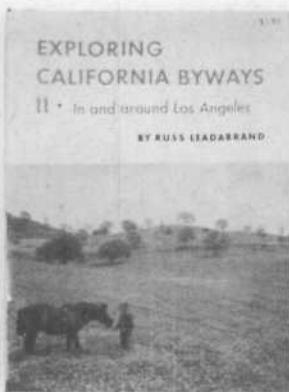
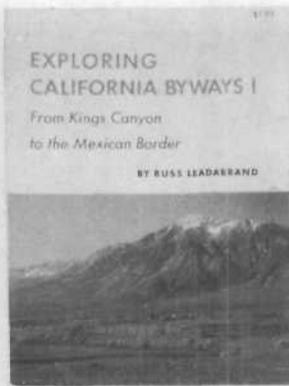


An illustrated analysis of Indian Silverwork including bridles, bracelets, conchas, earrings and necklaces.

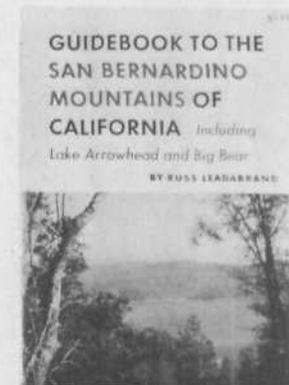
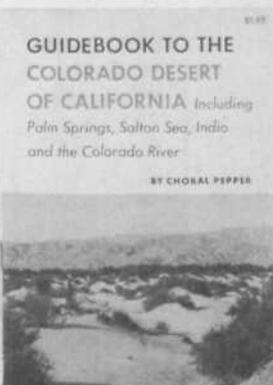
Each category of silverwork is introduced with a brief history. Excellent photos accompany the descriptive text and make it easy to identify the various methods and styles of workmanship.

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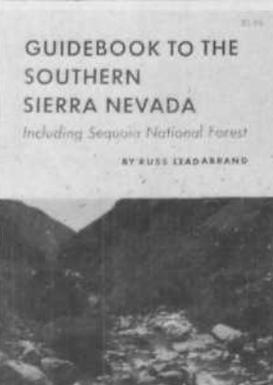
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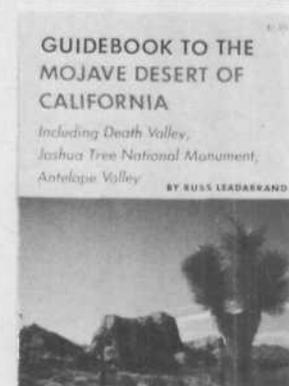
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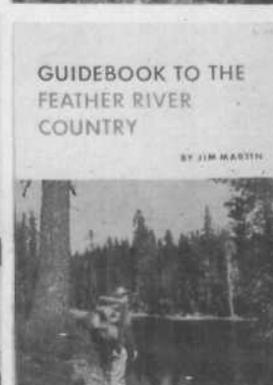
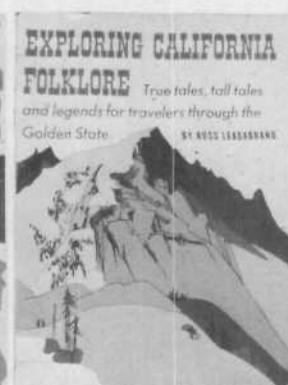
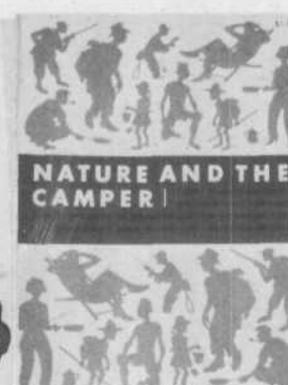
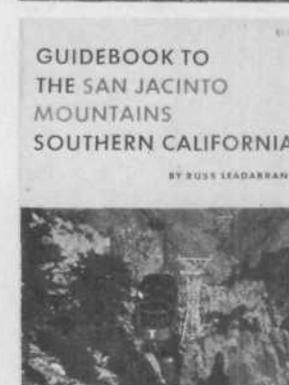
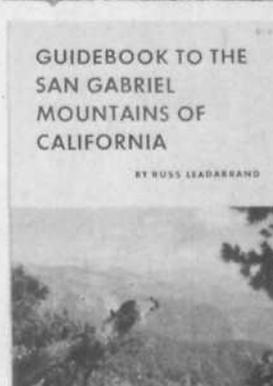
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A Refuge for Man



by
Mary
Frances
Strong

EVERY WEEKEND, more and more people take to the road in an attempt to escape the pressures of daily urban living. They seek short-time refuges in the peace and quiet of mountain and desert back-country. A few days spent in a natural setting will soon calm taut nerves and bring tranquility to the spirit.

A little-known San Bernardino County recreational site, the Mojave Narrows Regional Park, offers a kinship with nature and will more than provide "refreshment for the inner man." Located in high desert country, four miles southeast of Victorville, California, the park is less than a two-hour drive from the heavily populated Los Angeles Basin.

Mojave Narrows Park is being developed to provide recreational activities yet preserve the natural environment along the old flood plains of the Mojave River. It is an unusual desert setting of small lakes, marshy sloughs and grassy meadows, which are a result of the river's confinement by its Upper Narrows.

Here, the river has cut a deep, narrow channel through solid granite. Geologically, this is not a common procedure when softer alluvium is readily available. Encountering bedrock, a river will usually change its course and follow the route of least resistance. It is assumed that during the initial period of channel cutting, alluvium completely covered the spurs of the granite hills. When bedrock was en-





*Above left: Horseshoe Lake in the Mojave Narrows Park provides a tranquil setting for man and wildlife. Above right: It is easy to make new friends. A large group of resident ducks and geese have learned to "panhandle" treats from park visitors. Opposite page: Good fishing the year around, lures the young, as well as long-time enthusiasts. Below: Fun for the kids—
an unusual log swing.*

countered, the river was able to gradually cut through the granite and form the present canyon.

During the periods of heavy snow and rain at the river's headquarters, great volumes of sand, gravel and boulders are carried along its course. Watching the Mojave during a flood stage (as in 1969) you can almost hear the "scouring action" as the water rushes through the Narrows. Literally, you can see and hear a river at work.

Mojave Narrows Park offers a variety of things to do besides the important ones of resting and relaxing. A large picnic area lies along the eastern bank of Horseshoe Lake. Tables and grills offer facilities for simple or lavish meals. A children's play area provides two unusual activities—a 10-foot log swing and a huge stump to climb. Rowboats, pedalboats and canoes may be rented. Private boats are not allowed, nor is swimming permitted at the present time.

Fishing from the banks is reportedly excellent in the early morning and late afternoon hours. There is a limit of five fish. No fee is charged but a California license is required. Catfish, bass and bluegill may be caught the year 'round. Trout are available only is December and January.

An interesting side-trip may be taken to the Mojave River Fish Hatchery, a mile east of the park. The hatchery covers 18

**Photos
by
Jerry
Strong**



acres and has 40 ponds which annually produce a million Rainbow trout. They are used to stock 70 streams and lakes in five Southern California counties. For a nickel, a dispenser will supply visitors with a handful of trout feed. They are a hungry lot and will quickly "boil" to the surface after food.

A 45-unit campground is under construction along the western banks of Horseshoe Lake. Plans include tables, grills, restrooms and water; but hookups will not be available. Overnight camping is currently allowed for \$2.00 per night. Picknicking is 50¢ per car.

Two nature trails give access to a protected wildlife area along the Mojave River. While not yet "signed," the trails offer a chance to see numerous birds and animals in their native habitat. Audubon Society members frequent the park for bird-sightings and photography.

Bicycling is a popular pastime and there are several trails to enjoy. Motorcycle and trailbike riding is not permitted within park boundaries except on the main road

to and from the campground. A working ranch occupies land east of the picnic grounds. Visitors are welcome to tour the area and see the animals.

Modern-day campers and outdoor enthusiasts are only the latest in a long series of visitors who have found the Narrows a welcome refuge. Petroglyphs and artifacts found indicate prehistoric Indians regularly visited the region. A well-established Indian trail crossed the Mojave Desert from the Colorado River, north of present-day Needles, to the coastal plain. It followed the Mojave River's course from the southern end of Soda Lake, passed through the Narrows and climbed over Cajon Pass to San Bernardino Valley. It is believed to have been in use since prehistoric time.

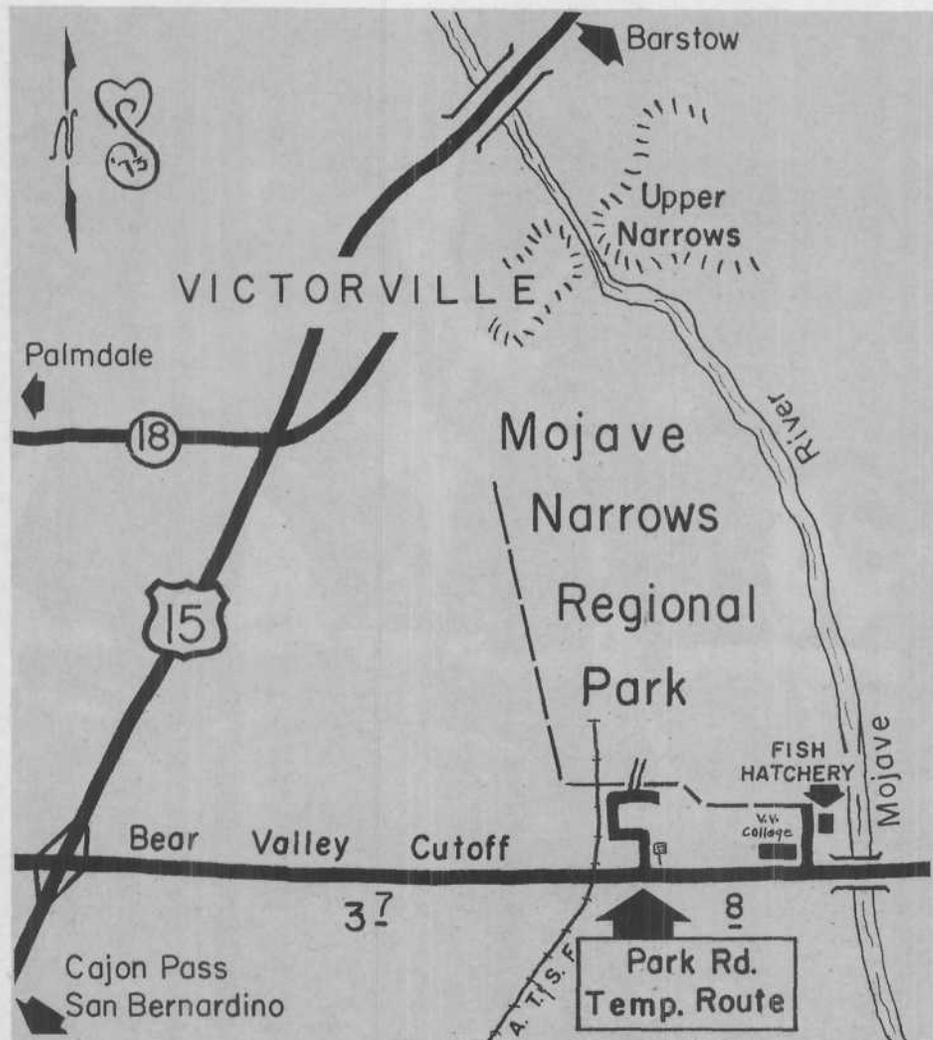
When Padre Francisco Garces traveled over the Indian trail in 1776, becoming the first white man to cross the Great Mojave Desert, he found it was regularly being used by the Mohave Indians on trading trips to the San Gabriel Mission. Jedediah Smith, famed scout, stopped at



the Narrows during a journey in 1826. He was followed three years later by Kit Carson and a group of trappers.

These explorations of an unknown land blazed the way for a new commercial trade route between New Mexico and California. The first of many packtrains, making the journey to exchange blankets and manufactured goods for the highly-prized California horses, arrived in January 1830. A decade later, annual caravans from Santa Fe were using what had become the old Spanish Trail—the southernmost leg of which joined the Mojave Indian Trail. Travelers and stock, making this arduous journey across the desert, found the Mojave Narrows a welcome stopping place.

John C. Fremont, America's Pathfinder, was searching for the Spanish Trail when he crossed the Tehachapi Mountains in 1844 enroute home from his second expedition to Oregon and California. His party traveled south across the Antelope Valley, then journeyed east along the base of the San Gabriel Mountains. They joined the Spanish Trail north of Cajon Pass. Fremont wrote in his journal, "after a difficult march of 18 days, we have struck the object of our search—the Spanish Trail—which was running directly north. In 15 miles we reached a considerable river, timbered with cottonwood and willow, where we found a bottom of





The campground is under construction and will eventually have 45 units with tables and grills. Camping is currently allowed at the site. Bicycling is one of the most popular pastimes in the park.

summer '73), extensive nature trails, evening programs and a model farm. Congratulations are in order for the foresightedness of San Bernardino County's Regional Park system and its Board of Directors. They have seen the need for people to commune with nature and yet are well aware of the importance of protecting the ecology of the given area.

The Mojave Narrows Park allows visitors an opportunity to relax and enjoy a desert water-habitat, camp along the old Spanish Trail and fry a freshly-caught trout over an open grill. As it has been since time immemorial, the Upper Narrows on the Mojave River is a refuge for man from the frantic pace of a hectic world. □

tolerable grass." Fremont's party remained an extra day at the Narrows to allow their animals an opportunity to feed and rest. Fremont also observed that the trail showed signs of having considerable travel over it, although little was known about the actual route.

March of 1851 ushered a historic march, beginning at Salt Lake City. Nearly 500 Mormons embarked on a trip over the Spanish Trail to found a colony in San Bernardino Valley. After their epic journey, travel on the trail began to increase.

Indians were the only inhabitants in the Narrows region at this time. They wintered their stock on the abundant grass and ample water. This was to change when John Brown, Sr., homesteaded at the Narrows in 1867 and established the Verde Rancho—the first major ranch in the Mojave River Valley. A large ranch house was completed in 1870 and served as a hotel and stopover for travelers along the Spanish Trail. Its 4,000 acres were used primarily for the production of cattle, horses, and alfalfa.

The precedent of the Mojave Narrows as a refuge for weary travelers began in antiquity and continues today. The Mojave Narrows Regional Park occupies 800 acres of the original Verde Rancho.

Future plans for the Park include a swimming lake (which may be open by March, 1973

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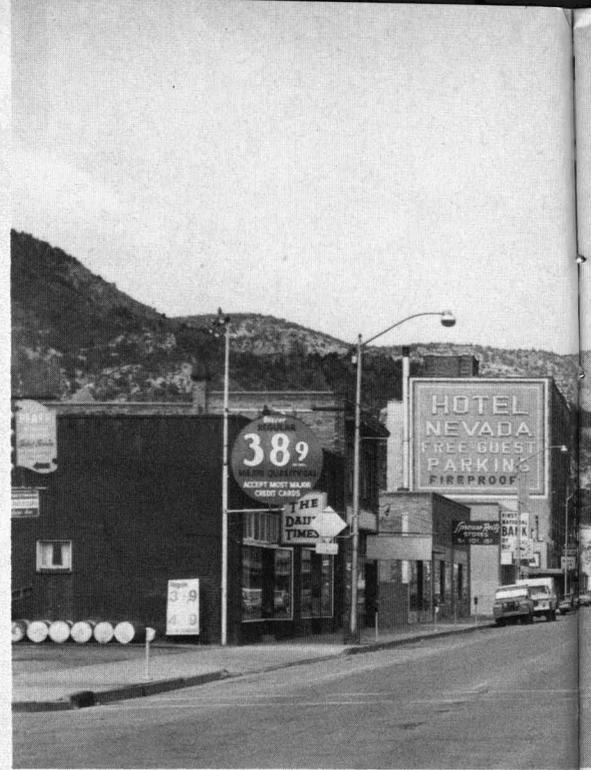
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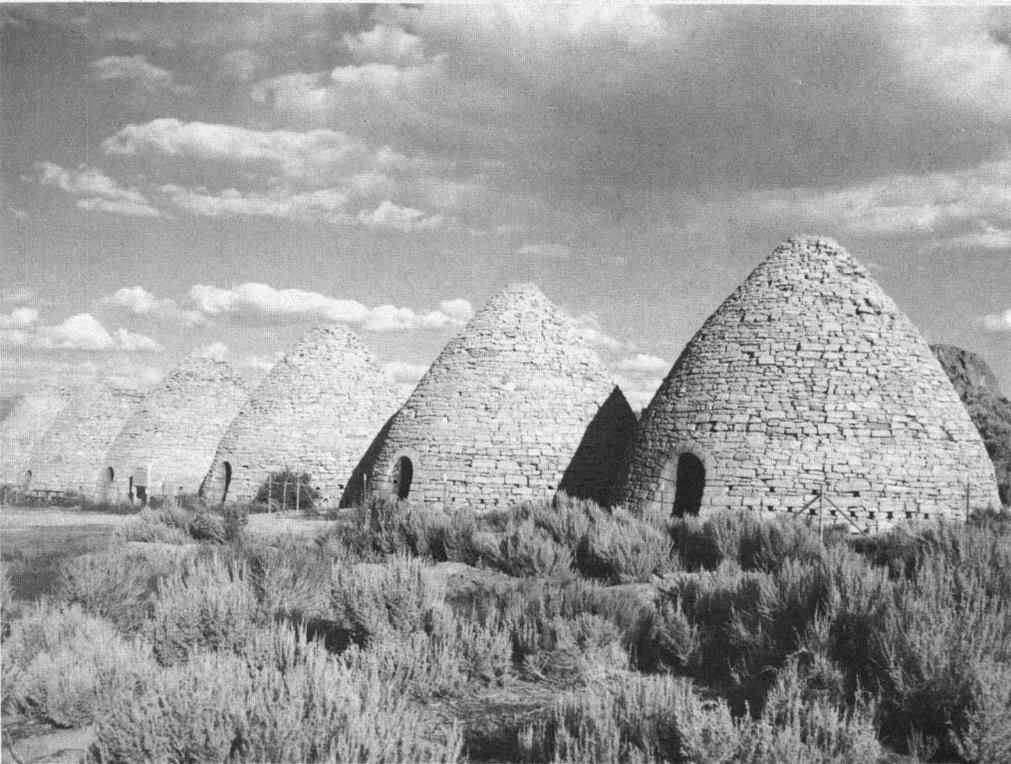
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GARNETS for



Above right: The route to Garnet Hill heads west through Ely, winds up through the canyon in the background, and then takes off on a dirt road to right—and up to the top of the hill. Above: You should really sandwich your garnet hunting in with some local sightseeing; like these wonderfully preserved old charcoal ovens at Ward, a few miles south of Ely. The old-time miners needed the high heat of the charcoal to smelt out the silver from the very rich ore they found in the nearby mountains. Opposite page: Some Nevada garnets are pretty enough to wear. Shown here is a garnet tie-tack.

12

THE TROUBLE with generous people is that they make me feel guilty about my delicately-honed, coyote-type chiseling talents; and I've got enough burdens in that department already! In addition to the generosity flaw in his nature, the *real* author of this waybill for garnet grabbers — 'Gene' Stoddart — is painfully modest. About himself, that is—but NOT about his rockhound hobby, his Indian cronies, and the Nevada-Idaho-Utah country that he roams and loves so much.

Even worse, he is a rockhound purist; and loves to share his information and swap rock dope with other people similarly afflicted—he has a regular rocky "Chamber of Commerce Itch!" All of which casts a slightly shoddy shadow on my strictly money-oriented interest in the mineral kingdom. I'll probably never make a really kosher rockhound!

I first met Gene a number of years ago when — on a lost mine hunt — I phoned home from Ely, Nevada, and after several tries contacted my wife working late at the grammar school office. She was officially the secretary there, but I suspect she was really more of a combined multi-armed troubleshooter, two-bit con-



by
Ken
Marquiss

"Yes Sir, Mister—if you're looking for garnets, this little city of Ely, Nevada, is right in the middle of some prime garnet hunting country. The nearest spot—and a good one—is on Garnet Hill, which is only five mile from Ely. I'll mark it site 'A' on the map.

"You take Highway 50 west out of town, and go up through the canyon to the Ruth road junction on your left. Slow down here and look for a dirt road leading up to your right. If you have a four-wheel-drive you can ride to the top of the hill, otherwise you may have to walk about 1/4 mile.

"Garnet Hill is unique in some ways—sort of a rock 'berry patch.' People first looked for stones up here way back in the '80s—but each year there is a new 'crop,' exposed by erosion. I've seen some real beauties found there—genuine ruby reds. I found three or four topaz crystals up on Garnet Hill, too, but they were very small. Most of the small garnets you'll spot on the surface are very dark red—they look black until held up to the light.

"The best stones are found down below frost line in the little sand-filled gullies on the crown of Garnet Hill. So, 'for

GRABS!

INTRODUCTION

flict umpire, and mother-hen-type mender of small broken hearts.

After the usual greetings and check-in report, she gently reminded me of the lingering menace of a long string of cold skimpy meals waiting for me if I "forgot again" to bring home "a lot of rocks for the collection" of her host of noisy little pets!

So, next day I took my problem to an Ely friend, Casey Fisher, and he suggested Gene—"a real rock knocker"—down at the fine Ely Old West Museum in the Chamber of Commerce building where Gene worked as a sort of spare time volunteer curator—and I hit a multi-veined paystreak.

My mooching produced not only the "lots of rocks" for the school kids—but also some dandy garnets-in-matrix samples, and some small, glittering, Utah topaz crystals for my own catch box collection, PLUS some gorgeous peacock copper ore specimens for desk paperweights!

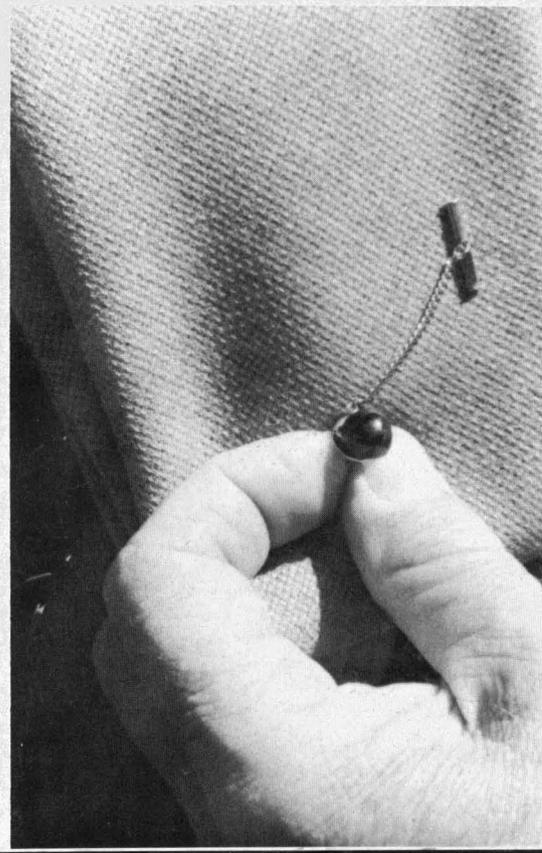
But garnets are his real passion! In an unwary moment, I had mentioned a very casual interest in the stones, so he loaded me down with maps and written directions of places to hunt them, and more directions had followed me home in letters.

Then, during a subsequent Christmas season, the mails brought a beautiful glow-edged, plum-red cabochon tie-tack he had made for me from one of his garnets!

At first I had tried to get him to write up all the directions in an article himself. I was sure there would be a lot of *Desert Magazine*-reading-rockhounds who would appreciate his information and really enjoy such a hunt in the fascinating Nevada-Utah borderland country—but he wouldn't go for it. The modesty problem again. And he said, just the thoughts of his written material lying helpless under the critical scrutiny "of some hawk-eyed editor, really gives me the goose-pimple willies!" And then he generously suggested I use the material for an article of my own!

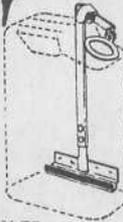
So what do you do with a good-hearted bird like that? When the Boy Scouts he has worked with so long can stop to give him one of those Silver Beaver things, then the least I can do is write up this waybill for him—so he can share his dope with fellow rock knockers who also suffer from the outdoor malady of "GARNETITIS"!

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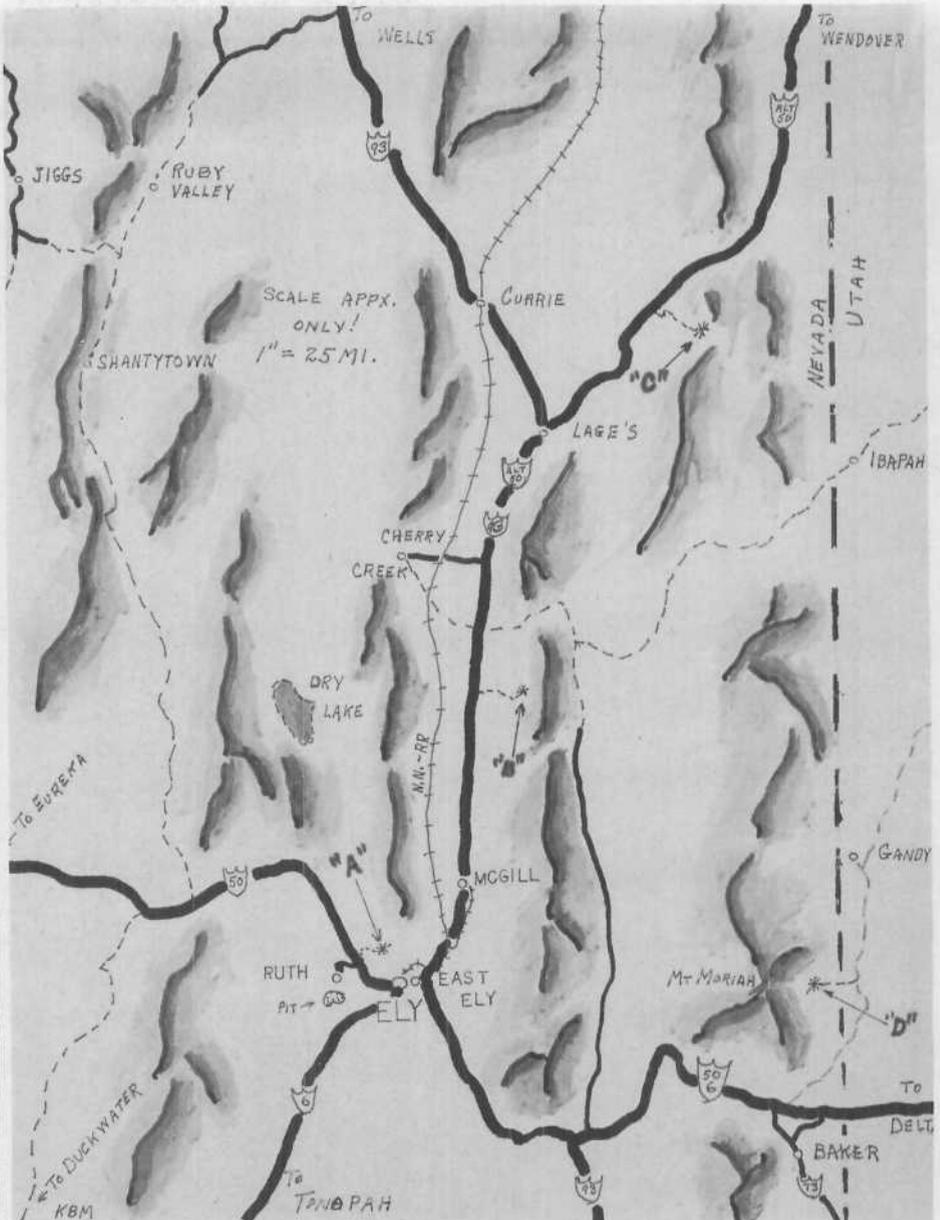
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luck, wear a wide hat, sturdy boots, and work clothes; and take along your rock pick, a folding, surplus, trenching shovel (or big garden trowel) and a sturdy sifting screen—one that is a little coarser than window screen.

"Another real good spot to look for garnets is out on Ruby Hill, and I'll mark it site 'B' on the map for you. The search area on Ruby Hill is a little smaller than Garnet Hill, but the stones there are generally larger when you find them. It will be an all-day trip, so take a lunch. Like the ones on Garnet Hill, the crystals here are the spessartite (manganese-aluminum) variety.

"To get to Ruby Hill, you take Highway 93 north out of Ely, past McGill, until you come to the intersection of the small road that goes west to the Warm Springs station on the Nevada Northern

continued on page 36

Desert Magazine

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UTAH'S Ghost GOLD

by George Thompson

DO YOU believe in ghosts? How about ghosts that hide gold from mortals? Some Mormons around the ghost town of Holt in southern Utah do! Many there today still believe that nearly one hundred years ago one of the Three Nephites, a sort of Mormon ghost, kept a ledge of gold hidden from all who have searched for it then or since.

The little pioneer settlement named Holt was established in 1874 on Meadow Valley Creek, in the northwest corner of Washington County. James Holt led a small band of Mormon pioneers to Meadow Creek with high hopes of building a permanent farming community there,

but farms weren't part of nature's plan for the Escalante Desert country.

Drought or farmers at the settlement of Hamblin further upstream often caused Meadow Creek to run dry before it reached Holt. And, just as disastrous as droughts, were the years when the stream ran bank-full with red silt-laden water that washed away homes and flooded hard-won farm land.

A few old-timers still recall how the Holt family stayed on, even after their neighbors moved to "greener pastures," raising a few head of cattle in the vermilion-colored foothills which line the southern edge of the Escalante Desert.

They tell how one day James Holt was searching for stray cattle in the foothills between his nearly abandoned town and the edge of the desert, a few miles to the north, when he came upon an out-cropping ledge of "pretty looking red rock." Holt picked up several pieces of the heavy rock, noting well the place where he had found it. Later, when a friend of his who had been an assayer examined them, Holt learned that the strange red rock was heavy with gold!

Now, Holt knew that it was against orders of his church leaders to seek for treasures in the earth, for hadn't Brigham Young himself said, "We cannot eat sil-



*Ruins of the
iron smelter
at old Irontown.*



*Historical marker
at the ghost town
of Pinto,
built from rock
used in the original
church house.*

ver and gold, neither do we want to bring to our peaceful settlements a rough frontier population to violate the morals of our youth, overwhelm us by numbers, and drive us from our hard-earned homes. The minerals and treasures of the earth are carefully watched by angelic beings, that just as soon as the prospector's shovel touches the edge of a precious deposit, the spirits whisk it away, while the deluded treasure seeker is left with enough hope to sweat away the rest of his life in vain. If you see mineral ore, cover it up!"

But, despite the Mormon phophet's warning against seeking precious metals, Holt determined to develop his find and was preparing to take his sons to the golden ledge when he met the Nephite!

The supernatural Nephites are mentioned in the Book of Mormon, according to which, after Christ's crucifixion He visited the New World and founded a church among a race of fair-skinned people. Three of their number requested the gift granted John The Beloved, that they be allowed to tarry on earth until His return. Their wish was granted, and thus was born the legend of the Three Nephites.

Strange stories are still told in Mormon households how one of the Nephites, always an old man with long white hair and beard, but with the blue eyes and unlined face of a saint, would suddenly appear at a poor home and ask for food or lodging. Often they would appear at the home of a widow, whose last cup of flour must be used to feed the stranger, or at the home of a farmer whose meal sack was

nearly empty.

Not everyone would welcome the uninvited stranger, but those who did later told wonderful stories of how after resting, their strange guest would mysteriously disappear, leaving no tracks in the new fallen snow of winter, or the deep dust of summer, or how they would suddenly vanish as they walked down a long open road which had no turning. And always those who shared their meager store with the strange old men would find that their flour bin would never get empty, or that their sacks of meal were multiplied!

Holt later told that it was early morning as he and his sons were preparing to leave for the place where he had found the golden ledge when the stranger approached his door. He was an old man with a white beard, dressed in clean but ragged clothing, and riding an ancient looking mule. The stranger asked for something to eat, and, although Holt was anxious to leave, he invited the old man into his home. The stranger was no sooner inside the house when, to Holt's amazement, he said, "Forget what you have found and that you ever saw it, or it will be the ruin of both you and your family!"

Wondering at the old man's strange warning, Holt stepped from the room to see to the preparation of his breakfast, and although he was gone for only a moment, when he turned around not only had the old man disappeared, but the mule which had been left in the yard outside was gone also. And not only was there no trace of either, but, to add to the mystery there were no tracks of man or mule in

the deep dust of the roadway!

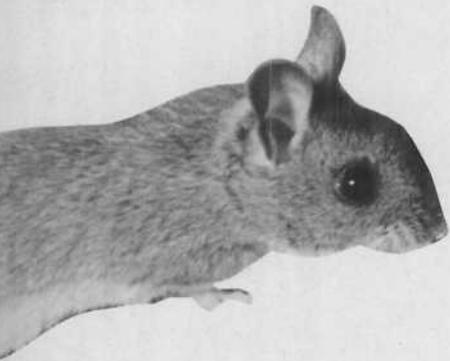
Convinced that the mysterious stranger was one of the Three Nephites of Mormon legend, Holt recalled Brigham Young's admonition against seeking treasures, and never again went near the golden ledge, nor would he even discuss it with his sons or family. His fabulous find was known to all of the settlers in the area, for he had not tried to keep it a secret, but none were ever able to locate it, although many searched through the rugged-red-colored foothills. The story of his find died slowly, for many had seen the rich samples from the golden ledge.

Today, the site of old Holt can be reached by traveling west from Cedar City on Utah State 56 for 17 miles to where a dirt road turns to the southwest. Five miles along this road brings the traveler to the ruins of old Irontown, a ghost dating back to 1852.

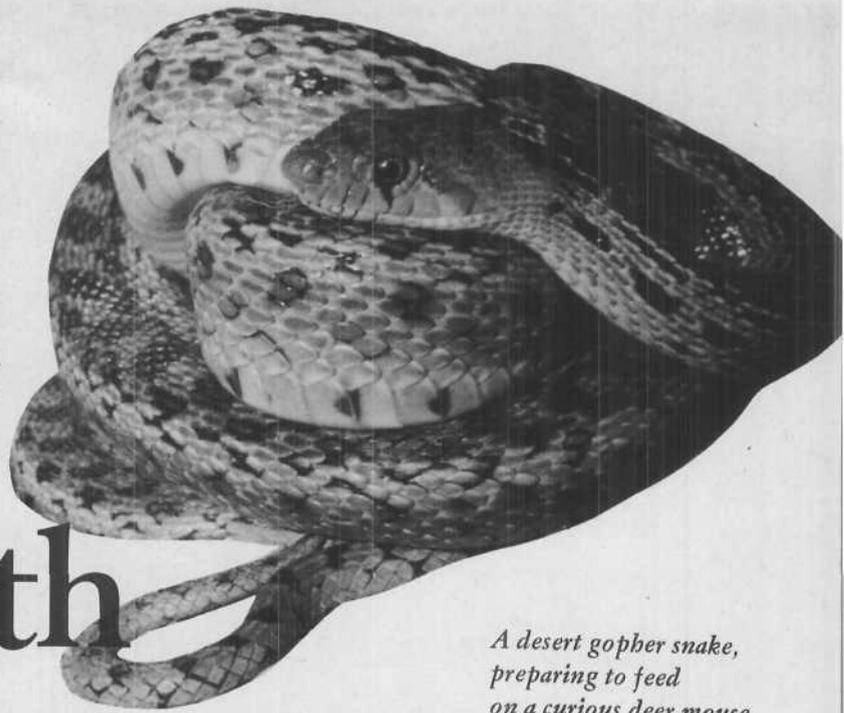
Six miles further is Pinto, a fascinating old ghost town, where century-old Mormon houses still stand. Six miles beyond Pinto a poor dirt road goes to the right, climbing steeply over a rocky ridge on top of which is the old Hamblin cemetery. It is four miles further to Holt, however, little remains to mark its site.

So, if you should just happen to be ghost-towning around the site of old Holt on Washington County's Meadow Valley Creek, keep a close watch for an outcropping of "pretty red rock." But if you should see an old white-haired man, riding a broken down old mule, don't stop to pick up any samples, for they say that Nephites live forever! □

Violence



with



*A desert gopher snake,
preparing to feed
on a curious deer mouse.*

Dignity

by Al Pearce



SUDDENLY, ALMOST as though a signal had sounded, life stopped. The desert iguana froze in its track; the small antelope ground squirrel plunged into its hole; the birds ceased chattering, and for a moment, all was still. Even the breeze died. The tiny leaves on desert plants hung motionless. Quail stopped calling and huddled together beneath a large mesquite.

Only one thing moved. A huge red-tail hawk soared high above, caught by the air currents which carried it gracefully over the desert. The hawk was hunting. Soon a careless lizard, or squirrel, or quail would forget caution for a moment and reveal its presence to the hawk overhead.

But the stillness, like an air-raid siren, was all most animals needed in the way of warning. Not a creature moved. It was like death.

Moments earlier, the desert iguana had been basking in the morning sun, trying to absorb enough heat to get its cold-natured body in motion. The antelope ground squirrel, commonly called desert chipmunk, had been nervously scurrying from plant to plant, gathering food it

Daylight photo of bobcat. Opposite page: Majestic desert bighorn sheep.

would store in its underground house for later use. The birds, which were originally hushed by the frantic stillness, now resumed their duties. They had no fear of the hungry red-tail hawk. Even as fast as the great bird is, its huge wings, adapted for soaring, could not carry the hawk so swiftly as flashing wings carried the oriole, or the woodpecker.

It's only the quail, or a dove that must remain hidden as the hawk flies overhead with eyes sharpened by a hungry stomach. Sometimes, unknowingly however, the disturbing of the silence by these smaller birds, creates an air of false security.

A young rabbit, only weeks old, saw the smaller birds fly. The woodpecker resumed its rat-a-tat-tat quest for insects in the slender stem of a nearby agave. During those moments of hiding, its young mind was torn between fear and the seemingly plush bush nearby. It's gnawing stomach gnashed at the trigger in its brain and it hopped from its place of concealment and bounced the short distance towards a mouthful of tender vegetation.

The sharp-eyed hawk—a veteran hunter—caught the movement. He pulled his wings against his body and aimed his head at the ground. Like a dive bomber, the great bird dropped from the sky. Twenty — thirty — forty miles per hour, he plunged. Then abruptly, only a few feet above the rabbit, it spread its wings and cast a huge shadow over its prey.

The tender vegetation was forgotten. A scream of fear shattered the stillness. Even the birds stopped for a moment. The scream was short-lived. The talons of the hawk closed over the young rabbit and it died instantly as the experienced hawk tightened its grip.

And even as the rabbit died, a roadrunner was cautiously sneaking up behind a small zebra tail lizard. Then, with skill that comes from months of surviving on the desert, the roadrunner made its attack.

A short distance away, a gopher snake lunged at a small mouse that had been hiding from the red-tail hawk. Nearby, a small, funnel-shaped hole in the ground was violently disturbed. An ant had strayed too close to its crumbling sides and had slid to the bottom of the "funnel" where it was quickly attacked by an ant lion, a small insect that makes its "living" by trapping ants in this fashion.

And all this time, a violent sun was pounding upon the desert, scorching the

earth. Only the desert iguana begged for more. This rare lizard will withstand more heat than any living animal. The hotter it gets, the better he likes it.

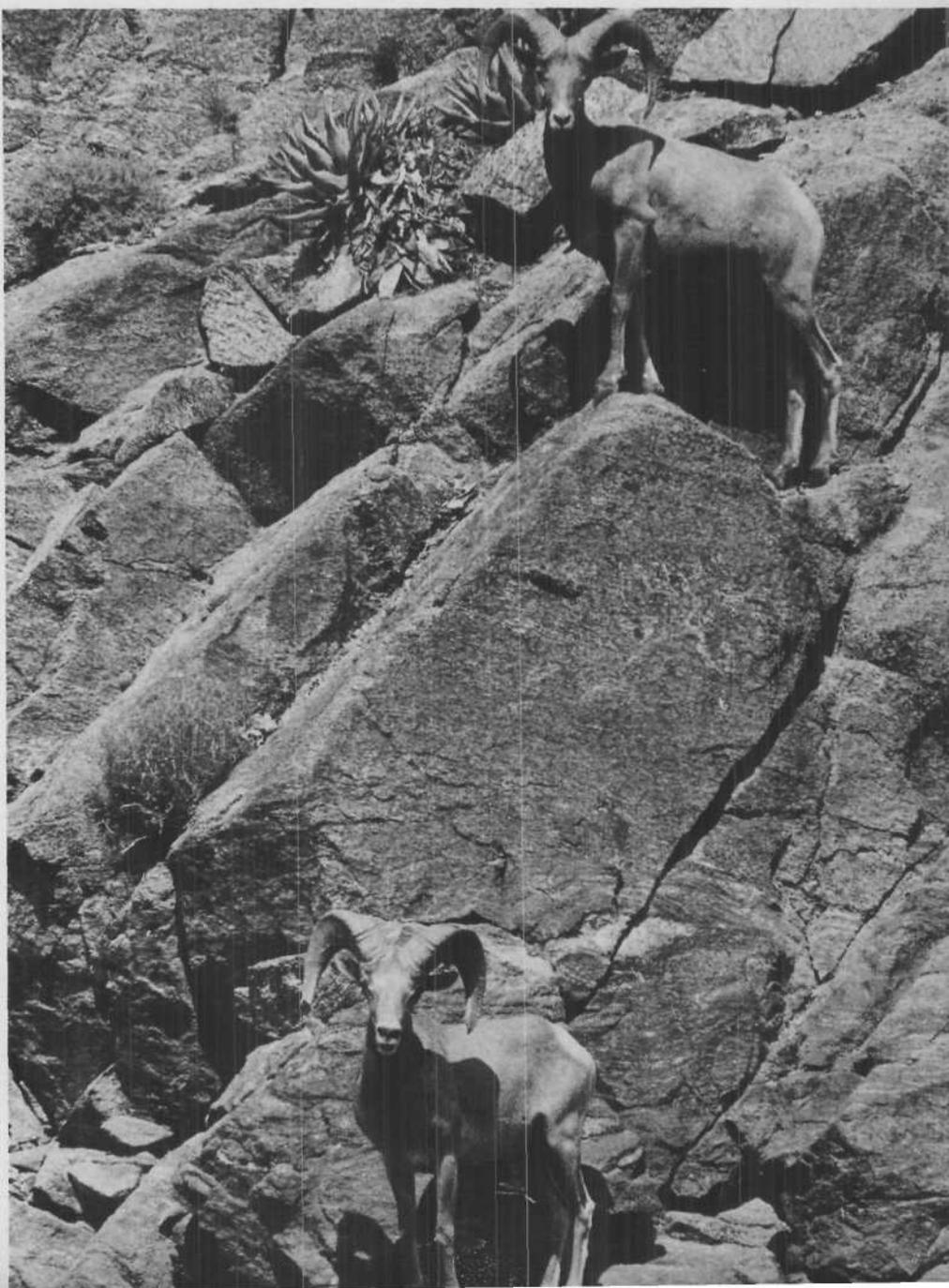
It's another matter with most desert animals, however. The blistering sun is too much for them. They wait, holed up beneath the ground; wait until the sun has given up for the day and darkness falls. When the sun fades, however, the rules are unchanged; only the players are different. Instead of the red-tail hawk, it's the coyote, or the bobcat, which stealthily creeps across the desert.

Only on the rarest occasions will these two predators hunt the same range. Throughout the southwest desert regions, the bobcat confines its activities to the

higher desert. It prefers a Joshua tree background, particularly where it backs up against boulder-covered mountains.

As the hawk wings its way back to its carefully concealed nest, the bobcat lifts himself from slumber, yawns and stretches its powerful muscles. It may stretch and yawn many times before slowly emerging from its den. Unlike the coyote, the cat will perch before its "home" and gaze deliberately across the open country below. Its keen mind will take note of every movement.

Unseen by its prey, the rabbits, quails, and mice will scurry homeward, trying to get themselves quietly tucked away before total darkness engulfs them. This is like waving a menu before the eyes of a hun-



gry tramp. A decision must be difficult. But the darkness falls, the decision must be made. The bobcat must eat if it is to survive on the harsh desert.

Finally, when the sun completely fades and the sky is sprinkled with stars, the bobcat drops slowly from its lofty hillside. Sometimes it may go first to water; depending on how hot the day has been. Generally, however, it works its way gradually — sometimes taking as long as a couple of hours—towards where it had observed a smaller animal bed down for the night.

Unlike most cats, the bobcat generally stays close to home. Unless food has become scarce, the bobcat will rarely range more than a mile from its den. With some luck, the cat may catch a quail, its favorite food; or maybe a rabbit which spent the day holed up in the shade and is now seeking to fill its stomach. If food is bountiful, the bobcat will soon have had its fill and, after drinking, will turn to its seemingly endless task of thoroughly exploring its range, reestablishing its boundaries and guaranteeing that no trespasser is attempting to encroach upon his land.

During these same hours of darkness, the coyote, too, is on the prowl. The coyote's behavior patterns are entirely different. It gets up, stretches, walks outside its den and, after gazing around for a couple of minutes, begins its nightly boundary check.

El Coyote is more a creature of habit than the bobcat. Usually traveling by pair, the male and female are ever cautious, but can be seen day after day at the same place and generally at about the same time. Working as a pair, the team are excellent hunters. Sometimes the male, or the female, will start digging at the front door of a rat's home while the other waits patiently at the back door for the occupant to attempt an escape.

In other parts of the country, or during the winter months when it's cooler, coyotes are frequently seen during the day. When they are seen in broad daylight during the summer, it's probably because they are generally hungry, or thirsty. Survival for El Coyote can sometimes be particularly difficult. This is one of the desert's most fascinating animals to watch. A male and female will generally join together for life. They are excel-

lent parents, considered best in the animal kingdom by many wildlife biologists.

The coyote's distant cousin, the small desert kit fox, sometimes called a desert swift, also hunts at night. It's chief prey, is small rodents. But it will feed on quail and smaller rabbits. The swift is considered rare and endangered. But it is suspected that its chief reason for being classified thusly is because of its timid nature which keeps it from being seen.

Timid on one hand, but friendly towards man on the other. A group of campers once spotted the small animal at the edge of their campfire. They fed it bits of hamburger meat and within an hour it was snuggled against one of the campers, enjoying the warmth of the fire. For the most part, however, the kit fox is rarely seen. It comes out after dark and is usually back in hiding long before sunup.

As the swift rambles home after a night of feeding and playing, the most majestic of all animals begins to awaken. The beautiful bighorn sheep slowly rises to its feet and peers cautiously over its steep mountainside home. Its eyes, the equivalent of a pair of eight-power binoculars, are quick to pick up any movement.

It may watch the night animals tumble into their homes before its gnawing stomach sends it forth in quest of food. A vegetarian—the biggest plant eater found on the desert—the bighorn sheep prefers the steep mountain sides and perilous rocky crags. Here, it can outmaneuver any animal easily; and is, thereby, safe from the carnivores which would like to feed on its tender flesh.

There probably are more tales and half-truths involving these sheep than there are concerning all the other desert animals combined. The bighorns are tremendous animals, often attaining weights of more than 200 pounds; but despite this size, it is rarely seen, therefore leading to stories of mystery that began to generate when man first spotted this magnificent animal.

Once plentiful throughout the California Desert, the bighorn sheep is now confined to small patches of land spotted here and there throughout the mountain ranges. But even here he is gradually losing ground as more and more land turns beneath the developer's bulldozer.



*Author on the side of a hill,
photographing desert bighorn sheep.*

The habits of these animals are controlled by the availability of water. When they arise early in the morning, they browse slowly, but generally towards a desert waterhole. After cautiously approaching the waterhole and drinking their fill, the sheep will find a shady place to lie down and pass away the hot mid-day hours. But always cautious, even while resting, sentries will be posted which are relieved periodically.

Life on the desert is often violent. It goes on 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, even though many desert animals cannot survive that long. If it's not a water shortage, it's inadequate food, or a blistering run, or bigger, hungrier animals.

All life on the desert is constantly fighting for survival and the various, unique adaptations these animals have made to live in a harsh land are both phenomenal and too little understood.

The kangaroo rat, for example, never drinks water; the desert iguana has built its body temperature so high that it can hardly move if the temperature is under 100 degrees. Many animals burrow into the earth and fill the hole behind them during the hot daylight hours. Some liz-



Unusual photo of chuckwalla lizard and antelope ground squirrel. Their proximity is puzzling, but not nearly so odd as the fact that both animals are diurnal and this photo was taken with an electronic flash camera after dark.

ards turn loose of their tail when it's grabbed by an enemy. The chuckwalla lizard can wedge itself so tightly between rocks that it can sometimes be pulled apart before being dislodged.

The animals, like the desert itself, are a phenomena; sometimes seemingly independent, but actually an inherent part of a delicate and fragile ecology.

It has often been repeated that a man's love of the great outdoors can be judged by the number of bobcats he has seen. Understanding desert wildlife, however, takes more than just a glimpse of a particular animal; it requires a thing called human dignity that generates an honest respect for all living things — and their environment. □



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CLASSIC PUEBLOS of the SOUTHWEST

by Enid C. Howard

THE GREAT Kiva of Aztec! A feeling of reverence and respect overwhelmed me as I stood in the center of that silent ceremonial house, created in simple beauty by the vanished people who labored to its ultimate completion. I like to think that a simple faith in the goodness and beauty of all life forms were practiced there by those original Americans.

The Great Kiva of Aztec is a complete restoration of one of the great kivas of the Four Corners Country—the area surrounding the point where New Mexico, Colorado, Utah and Arizona meet in a common boundary at right angles. It is located in Aztec National Monument on the outskirts of Aztec, New Mexico, where the builders of the pueblo settled along the Animas River, a permanent source of water, which was the life-blood of the pueblo dwellers, just as it is for today's farmers who cultivate nearby fields.

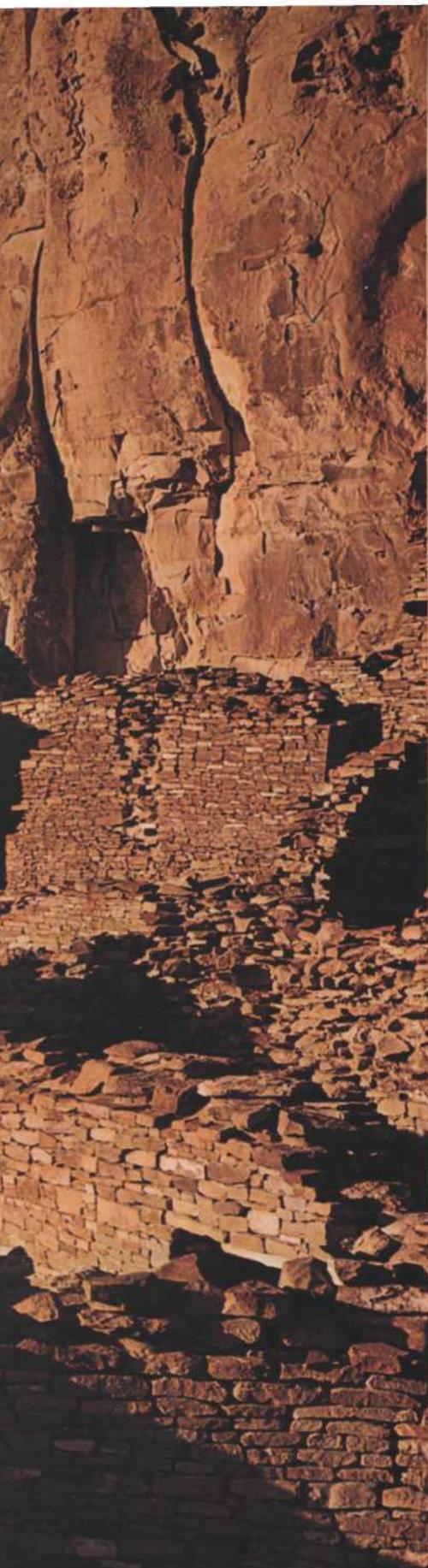
Aztec Ruin has no connection with the Aztec Indians. It acquired its name because early settlers in the late 1800s had been exposed to considerable publicity about the warlike Aztec and Toltec Indians of Mexico, and assumed all things Indian were derived from that country.

The story of ancient man in the San Juan River Valley in southeastern Utah and the regions surrounding that vast drainage basin is still somewhat clothed in mystery. Where did they come from—what were they like—how did they live—why did they vanish? Some questions have been partially answered, some not at all.

Archeologists are revising many theories, to venture a supposition that man existed on the land now called the United States as long ago as 24,000 years, perhaps longer. They have uncovered a primitive type of corn which was grown at least several thousand years B. C.

For the practical purpose of placing man as an identifiable working member of any type of organized society within the Southwest Archeological Area, we should begin with the Basketmakers of the San Juan Basin, for they are, according to research, excavation, and study by trained technicians, the ancestors of the pueblo builders of the Four Corners location, where the Great Pueblo period reached its apex about 1100 to 1200 A. D.

A generally accepted theory is, that while early man and his scattered small cave shelters, stone tools and baskets in the San Juan and Colorado Plateau date



The high walls of Pueblo Bonito appear to be a part of the bright sandstone cliffs in the late afternoon sun.

from the time of Christ, nothing has been discovered to indicate the occupancy of the Great Pueblo sites earlier than about A. D. 700, so it is deduced from refuse heap strata excavation, that the Basket-makers of the San Juan Basin slowly migrated to the pueblo sites and became a part of their earlier cultures.

According to archeological data available, the three centers of the Great Classic Period of the Pueblos—Mesa Verde, Colorado, Chaco Canyon in northwest New Mexico, and the Kayenta, Arizona location, had been abandoned by the year 1300 A. D., and their inhabitants seemingly migrated toward the Rio Grande Valley, and the Hopi Mesas in Arizona.

The Navajo Indians, whose reservation encompasses much of this area today, did not enter the Four Corners Country until about two hundred and fifty years ago, and are not related to the Anasazi, "The Ancient Ones," their name for the vanished people.

To visit the Great Kivas and major Pueblo Ruins of the Four Corners Country, all one needs is passenger car or back-country vehicle, a good map, and a consuming curiosity. Major highways lead into the Southwest Archeological Area from all directions, and in addition to the ruins, the visitor will pass through some of the most scenic country in the world. A loop tour of six or seven days allows enough time to visit all the following ruin sites.

Let us begin at Mesa Verde National

Park, located atop a soaring plateau that rises abruptly from the semi-arid plains in the southwest corner of Colorado. From Park Point, six mountain ranges in four states can be seen; 30,000 square miles of America sweep out in a magnificent panorama.

Entrance to the park is ten miles east of Cortez on U. S. Highway 160. Overnight accommodations on the mesa top are available at the Motor Lodge, cottages or campgrounds, but reservations should be made during the summer season. Write to Mesa Verde Company, Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado, 81330.

There is an interpretive center at park headquarters, and ranger-archeologists conduct tours into Cliff House, the largest ruin, and Balcony House. Nearby is Spruce Tree Ruin, third largest and best preserved of the pueblos. A museum features the highlights of the Indians who lived in the cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde. Information brochures and interpretive services available at the park will help the visitor to better understand the story of the ancient culture which flourished within the Four Corners circle as you visit each ruin group.

Leaving Mesa Verde, travel east to Cortez, Colorado, then on U. S. 666 to Pleasant View, half way between Cortez and Dove Creek. The turn-off to Hovenweep National Monument is signed, and the dirt road is fine except in stormy weather.

I traveled to Hovenweep on a mild

mid-February day, when wispy white clouds drew brush marks across a water-color blue sky, and the winter sun warmed a landscape spattered with small isolated patches of snow.

As I followed the road through rolling, winter dormant bean fields, a massive mountain dominated the southwestern horizon. It is called, "The Sleeping Ute," and is considered sacred ground by the Ute Indians. They say it is the profile of a great Ute Chief who was angry with his people, and gathering the rain clouds into his pockets lay down upon the land and turned to stone. Sometimes, it is said, rain clouds slip from his pockets and rise into the sky.

The surprise of sighting the Hovenweep towers above the undulating, treeless, blackbrush-covered land, has the rather dreamy quality of a mirage on the horizon. It is only when one has walked to the rim of Ruin Canyon and realizes the extent of this group of pueblo ruins, that the mirage becomes reality.

The self-guided trail winds down into Ruin Canyon, and is a pleasant 30 minute stroll. While not as extensive as Mesa Verde, I personally felt the setting was of much value for close inspection of the structures.

Most of the ruins are square, oval, circular, or D-shaped towers, and incorporate any boulders which happened to be in the path of the masons. The period of construction must have been contemporary with Mesa Verde and Chaco Canyon, as the masonry is of the Mesa Verde stacked block type or like the neatly coursed and layered Chaco Canyon group. Undoubtedly there was close contact between the cultural centers, or perhaps migration of an entire clan.

William H. Jackson, famous "Pioneer Photographer," visited Utah in 1874 to photograph the ruins of Hovenweep, then unnamed. His Ute Indian guide told him repeatedly that the place he wanted to see was, "Hovenweep, hovenweep, (meaning, 'deserted valley') and why go there? Much more to see other places." It was Jackson who named the ruins.

There are well equipped campgrounds at the Monument; trailers are welcome, no hook-ups. If you are driving a passenger car you should return to U. S. Highway 666 and travel on to Monticello, Utah, for comfortable motel accommodations, restaurants, also trailer parks. This route is

Some of the Hovenweep structures were built around large boulders.



suggested for all vehicles because the road south from the Monument is sometimes in poor condition, and the Montezuma Creek crossing is hazardous.

The small farming community of Monticello, Utah is located at the hub of the Canyonlands Country, and but an hour's drive from Canyonlands National Park. Take time out from ruin exploring to visit this unique concentration of nature's lavish mounds of "slick-rock." Within the park are several small ruin sites of the early Basketmaker Culture. A jeep is needed to visit these in Horse Creek Canyon and Salt Creek. Guided tours are available. Inquire at the Westerner Trailer Park, U. S. 163, south edge of town for information.

Resume your circle tour by driving south on U. S. 163 from Monticello to Blanding, Utah, to visit Edge of the Cedars Archeological Site, now being excavated. Small signs at strategic cross streets will direct you through town to the outskirts where the ruins are located. This is an opportunity to observe a "dig" in progress, and, during the summer, university students excavate at the Cedars site for credits in related subjects.

To date, several homes have been dug to sterile soil, and one kiva has been restored. Corner walls of the buried village are located and cleared to estimate the size of the ruins. Travelers are encouraged to visit and inspect the work in progress.

Three hours drive south from Blanding on U. S. 163, and you will be in Kayenta, Arizona, within the Navajo Reservation, where there are excellent tourist facilities and it makes an interesting overnight stop. To visit the pueblo ruins at Navaio National Monument, drive south on U. S. 160 twenty-two miles where a paved road leads to the Monument headquarters.

The three ruins of the Monument are not as accessible as some you have visited, because only one can be viewed at the present time from the main Monument area. Mith binoculars, you can see Betatakin Ruin, (Navajo word meaning, "ledge house") from the viewpoint at the end of a thirty minute walk along Sandal Trail. Hiking to the ruins is a strenuous three hour hike, and you must have a Navajo guide.

Inscription House Ruin has been closed due to vandalism and it is uncertain just when it will be re-opened. Keet Seel Ruin,

March, 1973

("broken pottery," in Navajo) is the largest cliff dwelling site in Arizona but only for those who care to hike the eight miles to it, or hire a Navajo guide and horse. A guide is needed for the hike also. It contains 160 rooms of living quarters, storage rooms, and five or six kivas. It is well preserved, and for those rugged enough for the full day's trip a rewarding experience.

There are campgrounds and a picnic area at Betatakin for the convenience of visitors to this truly great group of pueblos, in a fabulous setting of space and canyons.

To continue your circle tour, leave Kayenta via U. S. 160 east to Shiprock and Farmington, New Mexico, then take U. S. 550 to Aztec. Here you will see your first great kiva at the Aztec Ruins National Monument.

The Great Kiva was restored in 1934 under the direction of Earl H. Morris, of the American Museum of Natural History, with extreme care to preserve its authenticity. The pueblo ruins are adjacent to the visitor center where a fine museum interprets the story of artifacts

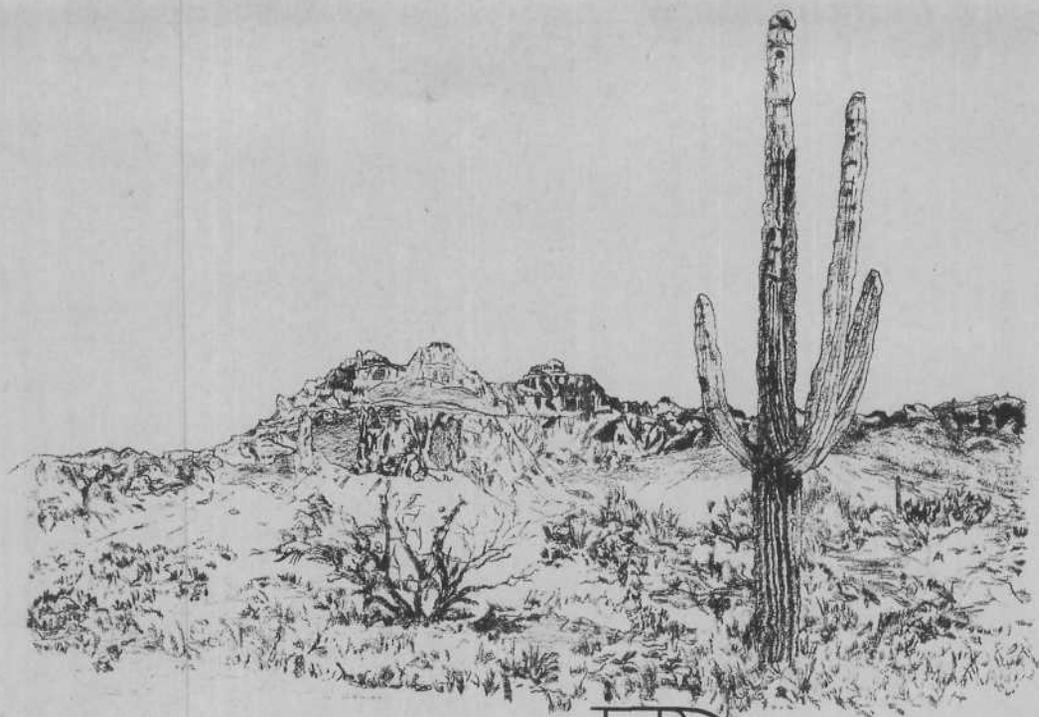
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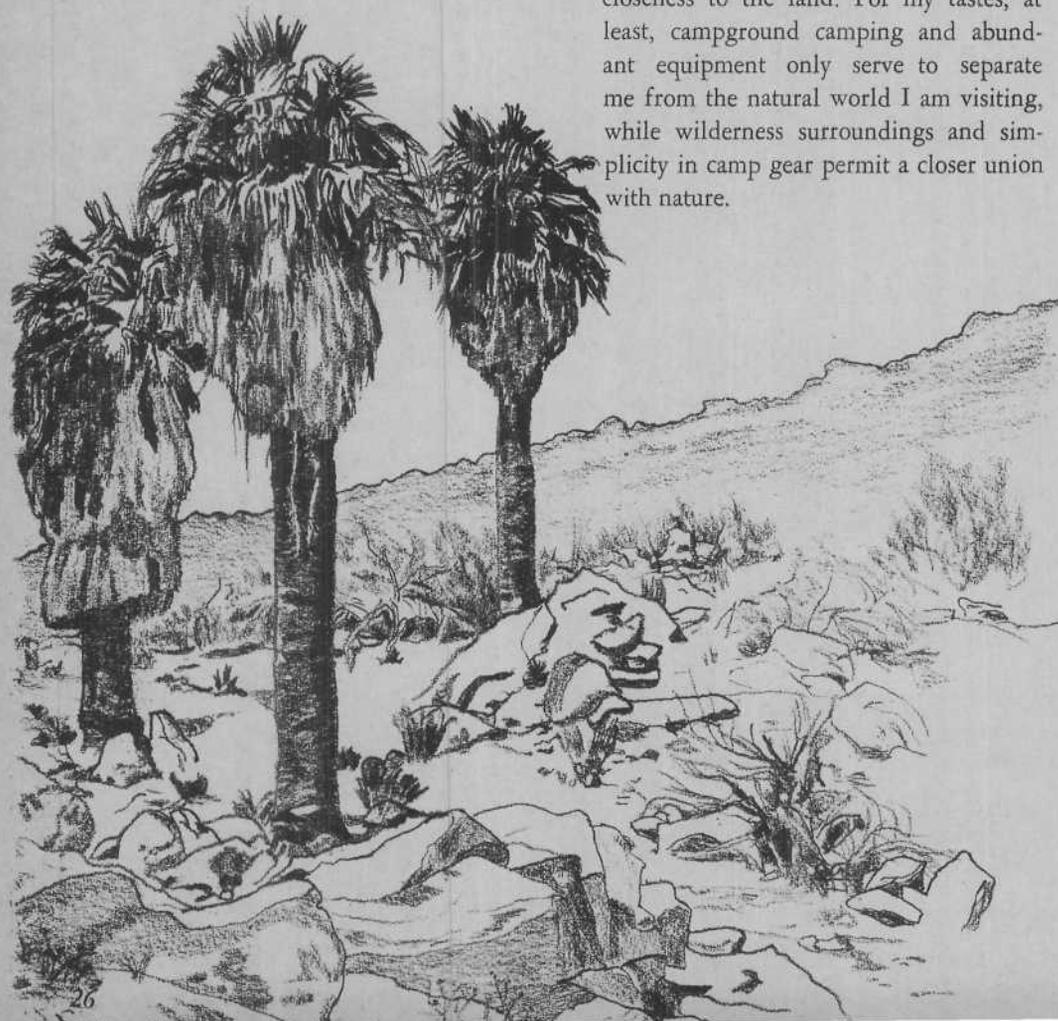
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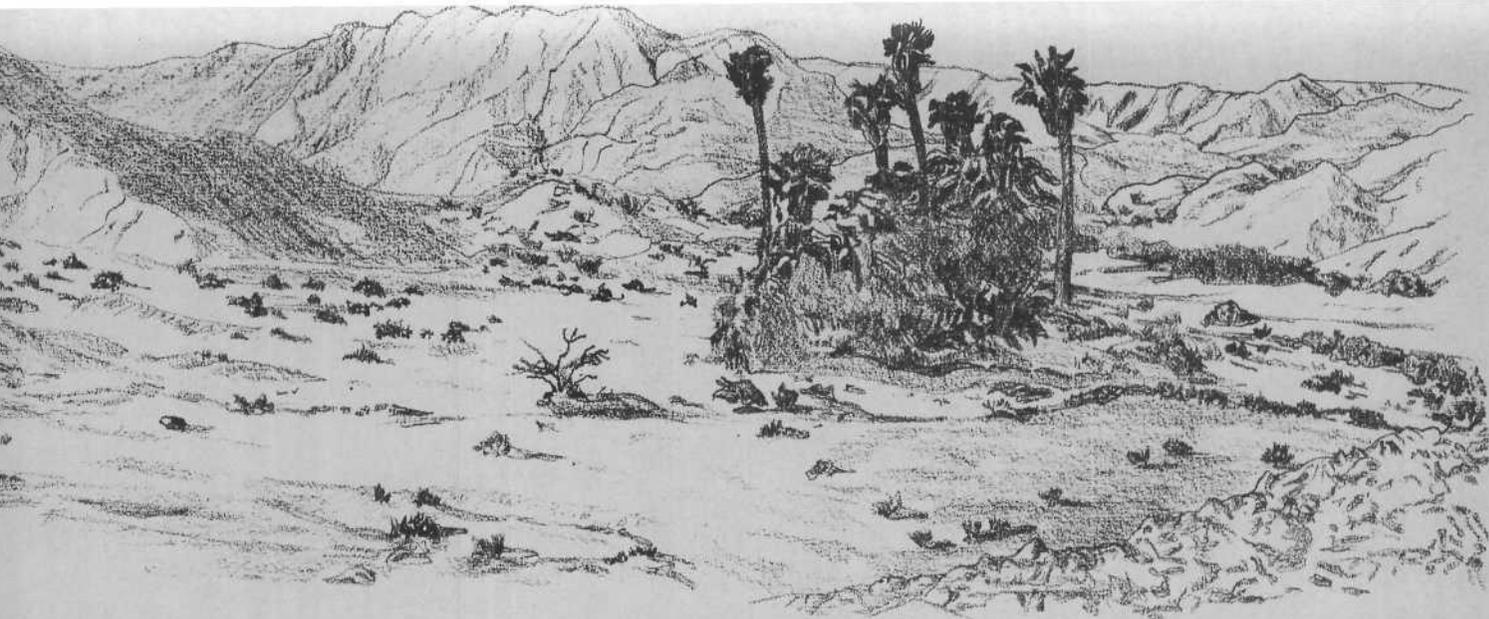
TO ME, ONE of the first goals of a desert camping trip is a feeling of closeness to the land. For my tastes, at least, campground camping and abundant equipment only serve to separate me from the natural world I am visiting, while wilderness surroundings and simplicity in camp gear permit a closer union with nature.

With a grub box and bedroll, plus a few miscellaneous implements, I have all I need to camp in a way which is both comfortable and satisfying. It is not my wish to change the habits of others in this regard, for one of the pleasures of backcountry desert travel lies in the freedom of choice it offers. Yet, by describing some techniques, I may be able to furnish a few ideas for those campers, or future campers, whose tastes run along similar lines.

First of all, the campfire. With a shovel I scoop a small hole in the sand—seven or eight inches deep and about a foot wide—and place a metal grill on top. (In rougher country two flat rocks placed a few inches apart, with perhaps a third larger one to act as a reflector, serve equally well.) I build small campfires, and always find more than enough deadwood scattered about the desert floor to cook a meal and keep the fire going well into the night. This is true even in barren badlands. It takes only a small amount of wood—just a few handfuls—to prepare a complete meal. Before breaking camp I fill in the campfire hole with sand. The only man-made signs left behind are footprints and tire tracks in the arroyo.

Most of my desert camping trips are short ones, lasting only two or three days. Therefore, fresh meats such as steak,





Camping

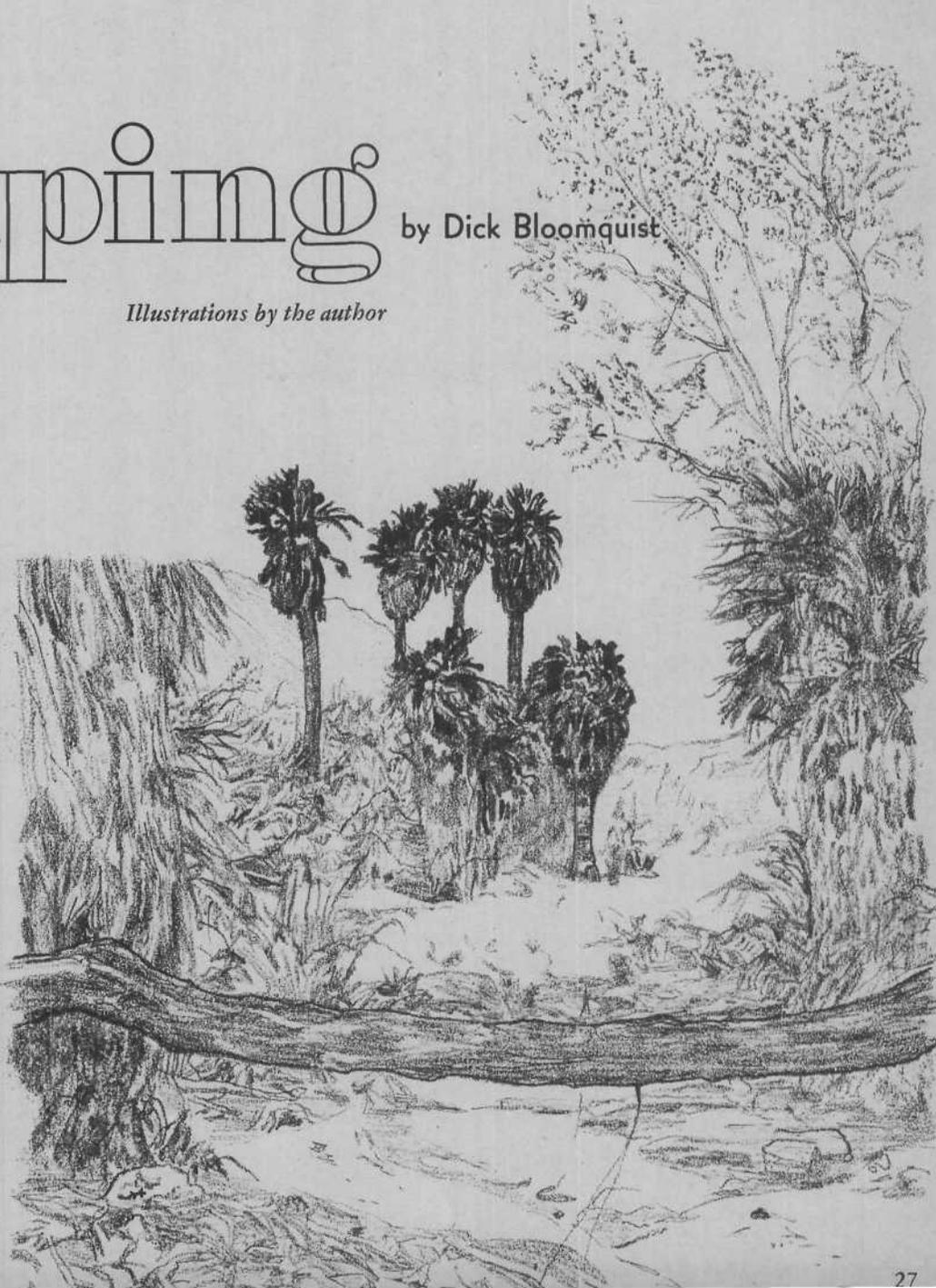
by Dick Bloomquist

Illustrations by the author

frankfurters, and bacon, wrapped in foil, can be brought along without refrigeration. A typical menu for the first night out might consist of sirloin steak, canned chili, a fresh tomato, a fresh orange and boiled coffee. I like to carry fresh fruits and vegetables, since they taste better than the canned versions, are easy to carry, and don't require cooking. Those with large amounts of juice in them, such as tomatoes and oranges, are especially valuable in the desert.

I put the steak on the grill, open the can of chili and place it on the same grill. When they are ready I transfer the steak to an aluminum pie plate and remove the can of chili from the fire with a pair of pliers applied to the open lid. The chili is eaten from the can. The "cowboy" coffee is boiled in a coffee can, then poured into a paper cup. Most of the grounds stay in the bottom of the can; a few get into the cup, but settle to the bottom there, also. After dinner I flatten the chili can and place it in a trash sack along with the used aluminum plate. The paper coffee cup is either burned in the fire or rinsed out and saved for the next meal. The only utensils to be cleaned are a knife, fork, and spoon.

In the morning a breakfast of bacon and eggs, coffee, fresh fruit, and bread



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FRANCIS P. MORLEY

A smoke tree frames this view of a broad desert wash in Borrego country. Along the base of the dark ridge in the enter, desert willows and more smoke trees provide shade for camping.

and jelly is equally simple to prepare. I use aluminum plates to cook and serve the bacon and eggs in, throwing the plates out afterward.

Canned foods are useful on longer trips and for adding variety to the shorter ones. Bacon, black bread, potato salad, frankfurters, roast beef, and Salisbury steak are available in cans, for example. Canned tomatoes and tomato juice are a good source of liquids. Cheese, hard-boiled eggs, dried fruit, and dates are non-canned foods which keep well.

For snacks a favorite of mine is "land-jaeger," a small smoked sausage which can be bought here and there in butcher shops. It's a spiced, very chewy sausage which I often find hanging down from the ceiling in John Stanley's Meat Market in Julian (San Diego County).

A few other articles complete my list of basic camping gear. I sleep on the ground in an Army surplus, down-filled bedroll. It's warm in any kind of desert weather, and, spread on a bed of soft arroyo sand, allows me a comfortable night's sleep. The danger from wildlife while asleep on the ground has been much exaggerated, with many denizens of the desert having bad reputations which are undeserved. The tarantula, for example, is harmless, and the sting of a California scorpion is hardly more serious than a bee sting. The only potentially deadly reptile in the desert country of California is the rattlesnake, and it tries to avoid man whenever possible.

To calculate my water supply I estimate how much water I'd need if my truck broke down at the most remote point along the projected route. Then I double this amount. One-gallon plastic jugs make excellent water containers, and can be handled more easily than the five-gallon jeep cans. A wooden fruit lug holds four jugs and keeps them from tipping over while travelling. I also bring two canteens, in one-quart and gallon sizes. The gallon model would be valuable in case it becomes necessary to walk out to the paved highway after getting stuck or suffering a breakdown.



A natural desert campsite is a special place. With a four-wheel-drive pickup to carry my gear, I am free to seek out the spots which are at once remote and inviting. For their beauty, shelter, shade, accessibility, supply of down wood, and for the level, soft surfaces they provide for campfire and bedroll, I prefer the sandy washes as camping locations.

Occasionally you will encounter an old-timer who advises against camping in a wash under any circumstances because of the danger of flash floods. Yet it is only during times of summer thunderstorms and, rarely, during heavy winter rains, that the arroyos can be dangerous. When skies are clear the dry stream beds of the California deserts make safe and pleasant overnight stops, and many veteran outdoorsmen—including Edmund C. Jaeger, dean of desert naturalists—name them among their favorite camping areas.

I can recall many pleasant journeys in which camp was made in a clean desert arroyo. Once, late in the afternoon, while travelling along the old Bradshaw stage trail in northern Imperial County, I crossed an attractive shallow wash. Putting the truck in four-wheel-drive, I headed north up the nameless arroyo and after a little over a mile came to an ideal camping



site. Because the spot was near the base of the Little Chuckawalla Range I named it "Little Chuckawalla Camp." A memorable stop on a trip to the Turtle Mountains was "Chemehuevi Wash Camp," with its abundant palo verdes. Still another, in the Borrego country, was "San Felipe Wash," where a desert willow provided the shade.

These camps, and all the others, too, have meaning for me because they were so close to the desert's heart. Established campgrounds and extensive equipment have their place; both have value, depending upon taste and circumstances. But to lovers of wilderness, a simple camp in a remote arroyo has its own special reward, the reward of seeing and feeling the desert in its purest form. □

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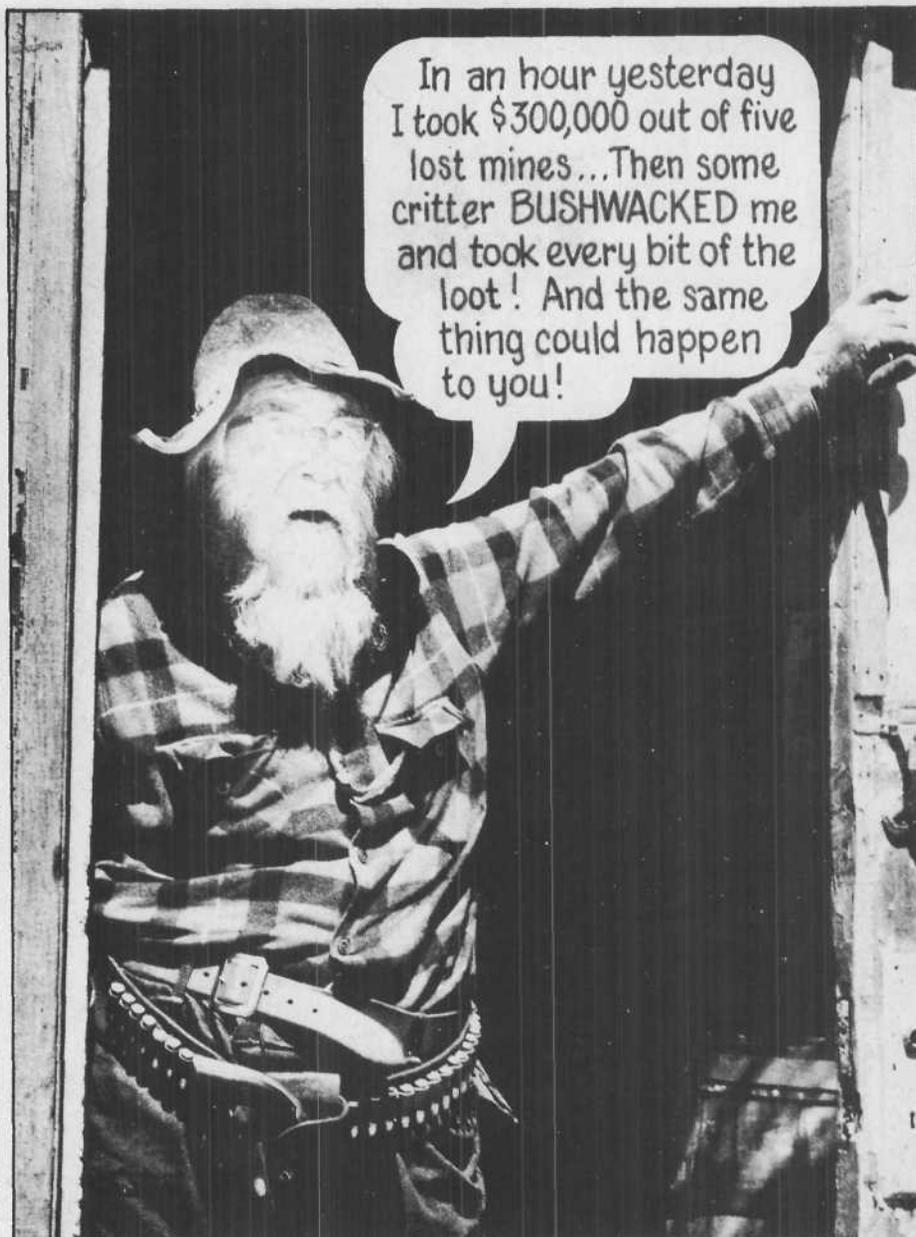
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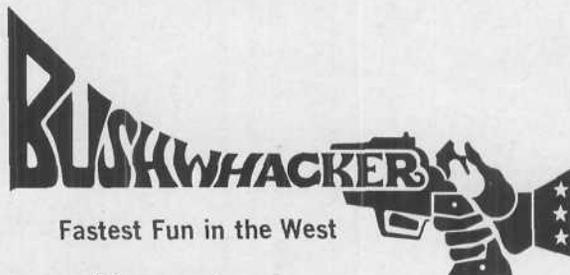
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CLASSIC PUEBLOS OF THE S'WEST

continued from page 25

recovered from the site. The rangers on duty answer questions, and supply folders for your self-guided tour through the ruins compounds.

If you were disappointed at not getting close to the group at Kayenta, Aztec will more than satisfy. You can stroll through rooms, peer into small windows, and walk through half-size doorways. You may take close-up photos of the green sandstone

band around an outside wall, wander around the central courtyard and into the "House of the Great Kiva," as Professor Morris called it.

I have purposely left the Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, visit for the last. The ruins within the canyon are so extensive a full day should be allowed to enjoy the panorama of ancient man and his achievements in Chaco.

From Aztec to Chaco National Monument is approximately 59 miles. Drive south on State 44 to Blanco, 36 miles, then State 57 to the Monument entrance 23 miles. Be sure to fill tanks with gas, carry water and lunch supplies as there are no services available. The Park Service maintains a campground one mile from the visitor center. Tables, fireplaces, water, and a restroom are provided, with turn-outs for small trailers (not over 28 feet), no hook-ups, no firewood.

If driving a passenger car I would advise returning to Farmington, where there are many fine motels and restaurants. The 64 miles south from Chaco to Thoreau in late day is tricky for lack of directional signs, and the road is under construction.

The Chaco Canyon National Monument of 21,500 acres was established March 11, 1907, and contains 12 large ruins and more than 400 smaller ones in an area eight miles long and two miles wide. There you will find museum exhibits which will add to your understanding of the occupation of Chaco Canyon. The trail booklets with numbered text corresponding to the numbered points of interest at each pueblo, and are a must-have item for your walking tour.

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Detail on Pueblo Bonito wall showing how timbers were set in recesses to support the floors and roofs of the 5-story high construction. Note the doorway on the right wall that has been sealed off. These walls are approximately 2 1/2 to 3 feet thick with shaped stones on the outside courses.

ecture, pottery, and jewelry skills is evident over the entire Four Corners area. Skilled masons erected flat-roofed houses of mud, shaped rocks and poles, entirely above ground, sometimes five stories high. Potters created a variety of designs that show artistic expression, most of them painted with strong bold patterns of black on white.

It would appear that the greatest architectural achievement of the Chacoans were the great kivas, the largest of these, Casa Rinconada, (house without corners) is 64 feet in diameter, and 25 feet in depth. The great kivas in Chaco have been excavated to the below ground level floor, but are without roofs, and it is interesting to study the precise masonry which resulted in a perfect circle regardless of the size.

The dedication of the work of building the great kivas could be compared to the construction of Egypt's pyramids. To sup-

port the enormous arching roof of logs, four central columns a yard square were built up layer after layer of alternating wood and stone blocks set in mud mortar. Each column at the base rested on four huge discs of sandstone four feet across, fifteen inches thick and weighing about a thousand pounds.

Archeologists have never excavated any type of tools resembling a block and tackle arrangement, so how did those determined and tireless builders manage to move and set the stones and heavy roof logs? Such questions tease historians when they try to complete the picture of the Chacoans.

Pueblo Bonito, (beautiful village) is the largest group of ruins in the United States. Chetro Keti Ruin, adjacent to Bonito, has two great kivas, the largest measuring 62 feet in diameter. Each ruin complex is similar, but some show careful workmanship while others appear to have been erected rather hurriedly.

When I visited Chaco Canyon, I set up my overnight camp in the clean and well arranged camping area, where one other party was camped that late February evening. It was quiet and peaceful as dusk settled over the glowing high-walled canyon, and I thought of the people who had been involved in building a civilization of importance to them. It seemed that their struggles should bring forth enormous words of wisdom and admiration for me, but I could think only of the quote we all know so well. "There is a time to sow, and a time to reap—a time to live, and a time to die."

Chaco Canyon, to me, is somewhat like the legendary Phoenix Bird who rose to renewed beauty from its own ashes. It possesses the timeless beauty of man's labor, and that is enough! □

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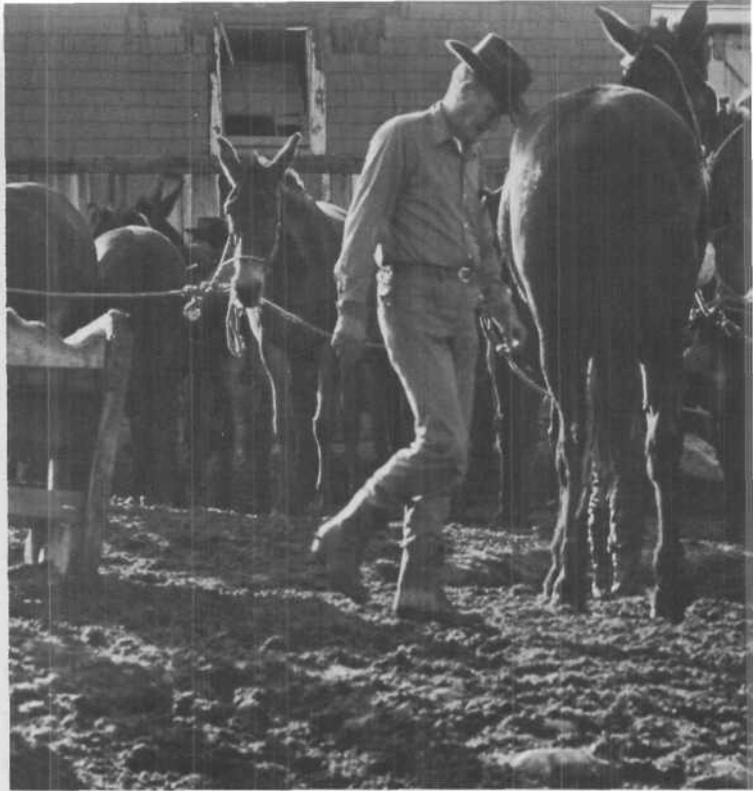


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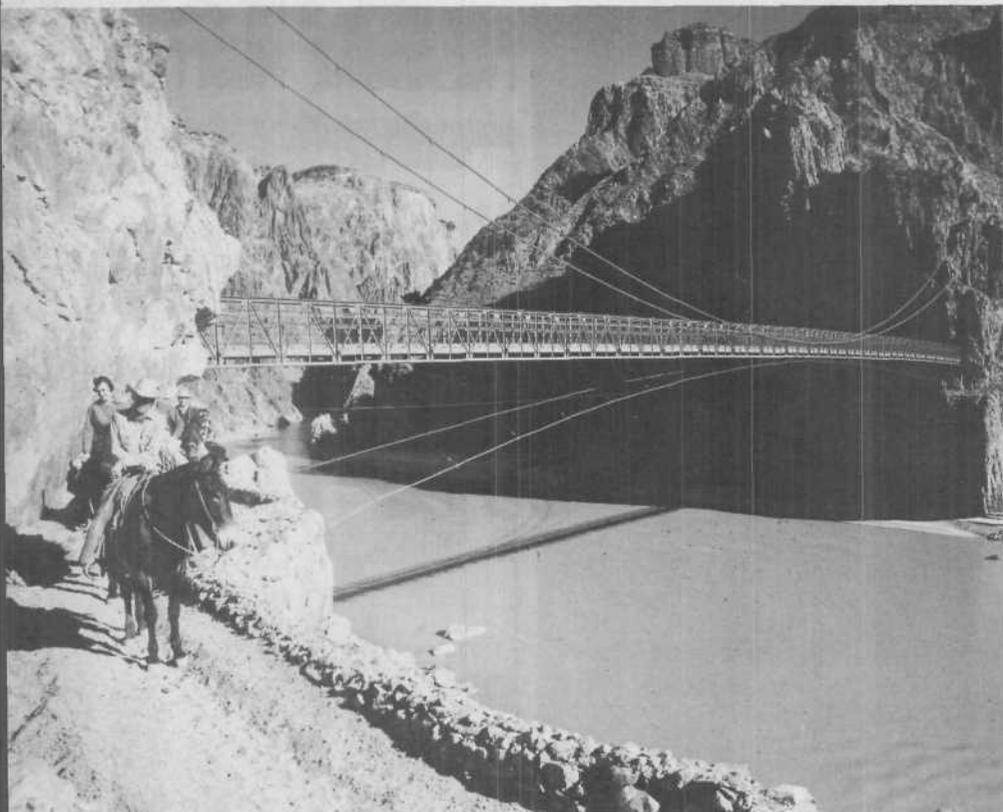
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ETHYL AND ME

by Robert Cronin



Down at the bottom of the canyon the suspension bridge connects the Kaibab Trail to the north side of the canyon. The river now appears to be very real as compared to the thin ribbon winding through the canyon at the outset.

THE DRIVE from Tucson, to Grand Canyon Village, cross-sections the entire spectrum of Arizona landscape—flat desert areas, roads seemingly carved through rock, snow-capped mountains on the horizon, unexpected areas of pine trees. Little did I dream on that leisurely, scenic drive that this trip was leading me to a rendezvous with Ethyl.

How do you describe your first sight of the Grand Canyon—a dazzling, yawning chasm washed simultaneously with shimmering shades of pink, blending to rose and red, and ultimately to blue and purple and black? A first-time visitor is never prepared for the sheer massiveness that confronts him. What worried me as I viewed the sheer rock walls was the fact that, in a moment of sheer lunacy, I had scheduled a trip down into the Canyon—on muleback!

The next morning, burying all doubts beneath layers of protective clothing, I arrived at the corral to discover I was not alone in my apprehension; many of the assembled group of 25 affected a nonchalance reminiscent of Susan Hayward in her celebrated, "I Want to Live"

Desert Magazine



Wrangler prepares the mules for their journey to the Grand Canyon.

Below: The guide and a party on the head section of the Bright Angel Trail.

Photos courtesy Fred Harvey's

sit erect in the saddle, especially on the turns. Again the reason came. A sudden shift of weight might throw the mule off balance and he failed to conclude the statement—I think. By now, my circulation had slowed to freezing and I was entertaining thoughts of the will I had never prepared in order to distribute the money I never had a chance to make.

The first inkling of what was to come arrived when I noticed the absence of guardrails or any protective barrier along the edge of the trail which appeared to be no more than three feet wide and hardly ample for these cumbersome animals. Our guide did not dispel my fear with his jovial, "Don't worry, we haven't lost one yet!" He never did clarify whether he meant mule or rider.

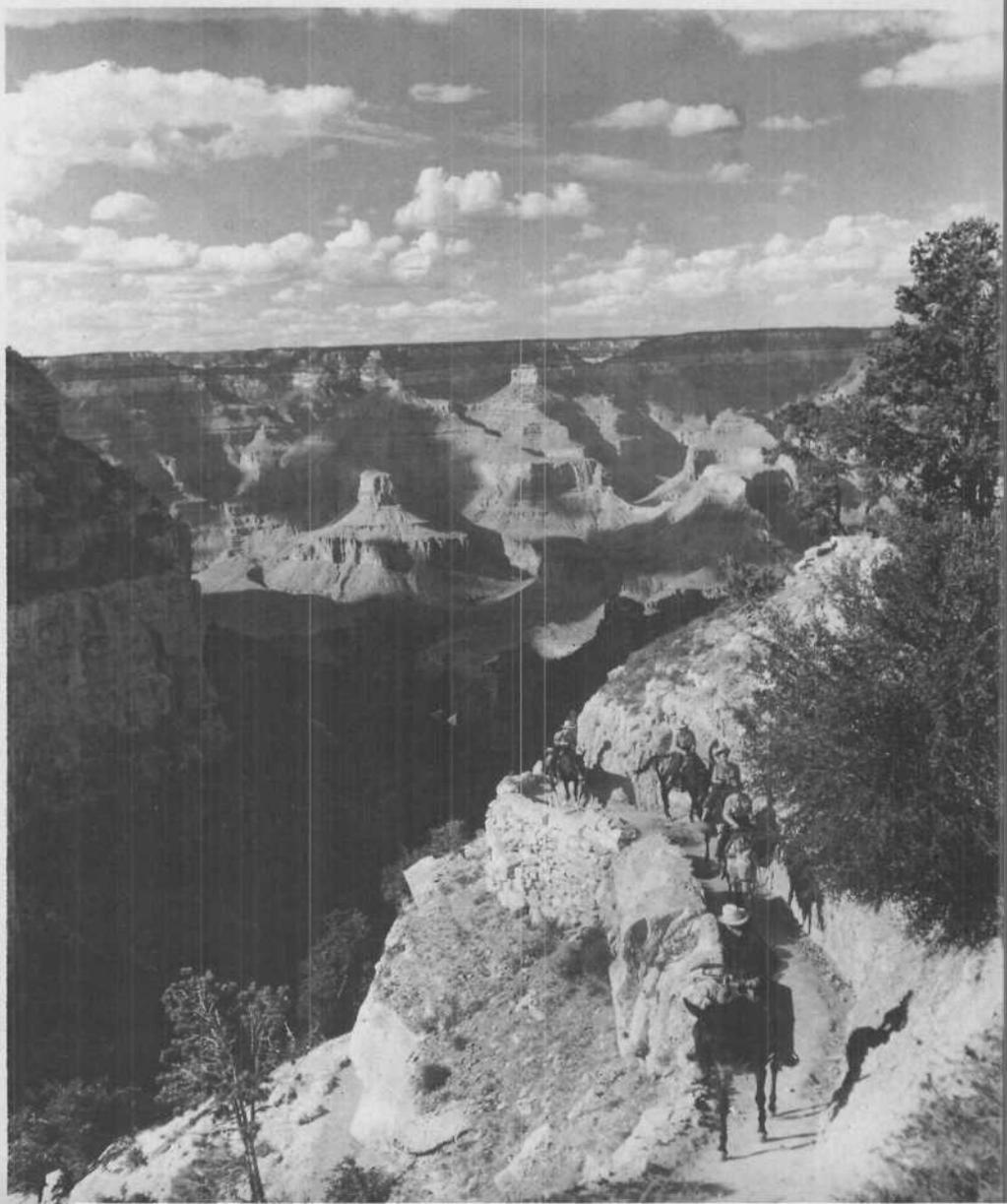
Some twenty feet or so later the brush and shrubs which lined the outer edge broke away and we thrilled to the dazzling spectacle of a sheer, 3,000-foot drop. My

role. The riders were ready, but the mules were nowhere to be seen. Soon, however, an endless line of broad-boned, sway-backed creatures arrived.

From that moment activity increased. The group was divided into three sections, and the members of the first party were assigned mules, a decision determined by the weight of the rider. Then they were off, across the road and out of sight. Our party entered next, and with the same efficiency, mounted. I watched with some misgivings as each of my companions were matched with a mule. Then I was escorted across the corral to what appeared to be a very reluctant animal. The guide finally persuaded her to face me and we were introduced. Her name—Ethyl. I should have known.

With little dexterity, and less aplomb, I mounted her, deciding at the same time to drop my "know-it-all" facade. While the guide adjusted the stirrups, I casually informed him that I had never ridden a mule (or anything else for that matter) and hoped he might offer some general guidelines. He did and they were succinct. First, he instructed me to drive her as I would a car. (I thought it best not to reveal that folly at the moment.) Second, to be sure that she faced into the canyon at all times. The reason, which I didn't solicit, is that the mule will not be inclined to step over the edge if it is constantly aware of the drop. And third, to

March, 1973



heart reverberated on the bottom, for it certainly escaped my body. I looked ahead, searching for my wife who rode near the head of the train along with the rest of the women, thankful at the same time that I didn't have to adopt a guise of bravery to calm her fear. Then we stopped.

One last commercial venture awaited us—a group picture in which Ethyl smiled for both of us. A last-minute check followed the portrait. Those who felt faint or faint of heart were urged to turn back. Since no woman or child, and especially my wife, accepted the offer, I, too, declined. My spirit dismounted; my body remained.

We were off again, on a trail that suddenly seemed to evaporate. It turned. A hair-pin S curve and beyond that another and another. It didn't matter that all those other mules maneuvered the turns; I was sure Ethyl was incapable of it and I knew I could never direct her. Thus, when we reached the edge of the first turn, I did the only sensible thing. If Ethyl and I were to see the Grand Canyon via a 7,000-foot plunge, she could look. I'd seen enough.

A few seconds later the already familiar bone-ache of straddling Ethyl signaled our success. We were plodding along with the rest, the third to last member of the party, but still breathing. At least, Ethyl was still breathing. Another curve loomed ahead and I sat erect in my saddle; all my confidence rested on Ethyl, all my prayers, and most assuredly, my life. Again, she maneuvered the turn, which shouldn't have surprised me. Although the turns became more frequent and Ethyl's footing more secure, I still doubted. My eyes opened and shut with a will of their own for I had succumbed to reflex action long ago.

We continued the descent although I preferred not to look and settled for boring a hole into the head of the man in front of me—one Mr. Greene who was riding on an awkward-looking beast named Buford. He had apparently decided that the way to handle the mule was to reassure Buford (and himself) with a running commentary of praise. So I listened to "Nice Buford—good boy, Buford, you're doing fine, Buford" as we proceeded down the trail.

Since the mules require frequent rest stops, we soon halted and then I understood why the mule must face into the

canyon at all times. Ethyl and her cohorts were always hungry, and any stop meant time to gnaw and devour the tufts of grass along the trail. Unfortunately, these grew next to the canyon wall, and in order for the mule to graze, it had to face away from the edge. I succeeded in forcing Ethyl to look into the canyon, and we lined up with everyone else, gazing directly into space.

The rest stop was brief. Time enough for a cigarette to be sure, but I was not about to release those reins. Why I had the idea Ethyl might mistake this for a signal to go forward I don't know, but I wasn't going to test her. We proceeded, then, through a rock tunnel and out again, along the narrow trail which had ruts in two places, one on the extreme edge, the other snuggling the wall. Ethyl invariably chose the more hair-raising alternative.

TRIP INFORMATION

Reservations are a must as the number of mules available are strictly limited.

One-day trip leaves at 8:30 A.M., down Bright Angel Trail.

Luncheon, which is included in the \$17.50 per person trip, is enjoyed at the oasis-like Indian Gardens.

The two-day ride to the Phantom Ranch at the bottom of the canyon, for an overnight stay is a Grand Canyon highlight. Central ranch-house accommodates up to 55 guests and serves family-style meals.

By now, I could feel some life returning. And then I noticed that the distance between Ethyl and Buford was widening. The guide noticed also, for he shouted back to keep the ranks closed, that we were going down together. Somehow "giddyap" seemed out of place, and I desperately combed my memory for the right phase. I was content with the slow, plodding pace we were maintaining for although the distance between turns was increasing, I certainly didn't want her to lunge forward anywhere near those curves. The guide again urged me to move Ethyl up behind the mule in front. Since Ethyl and I were now close acquaintances, I tried the intimate approach. She failed to respond when I casually urged her to move along. I then spoke louder—to no avail.

I resorted to reason. After all, we were detaining two others behind us and there was no need for that. Still no response. "Kick her," the guide urged. Kick her! I could now endure a trot, but a kick was a sure invitation to a gallop and for someone who had just opened his eyes for the first time going around the fifteenth turn, this was definitely rash.

I pleaded further, assuming a harsh note. I threatened — with my fingers crossed. I cajoled. I demanded. Still no response from Ethyl. The gap by now was embarrassing and the patience of the guide exhausted. We stopped once more while he dismounted and approached her. "What's her name?" he demanded. "Ethyl," I volunteered. He nodded, took the reins, and led us to the back of the line. There couldn't have been enough room on that trail for two mules to pass but he maneuvered it. Then he cut a switch, advising me to use it liberally to keep her moving, and abruptly departed. For a reason that seemed inexplicable at the time, he didn't bother to look back again. His shouted admonitions to "get that mule in gear" ceased altogether.

Ethyl seemed to enjoy this favored position and I was glad to have another head to scrutinize. She even kept up for about thirty paces before she resumed her trudging. Again, I counseled her. Again, she ignored me. There was the switch, of course, but that was a last resort. We were not inconveniencing anyone, I reasoned, so there was no need now to close the gap. In addition, I correctly surmised that there was only one path down, and what difference if we were slower than the rest. Since we had descended about mid-way into the Canyon, the terror of the fall was diminishing away. I settled back in the saddle, finally able to relax somewhat and enjoy the view. Fright had vanished to the point where I began to have visions of myself—the lonely pioneer—setting out to explore new territory (we were now completely detached from the others,) although a more realistic image of Don Quixote kept surfacing in my consciousness to dispel that particular dream.

Occasionally, I could hear the others farther below and even caught a glimpse of them as we simultaneously, if not altogether, descended. What I hadn't expected or anticipated was the third party behind us. They, too, were rapidly descending, but the many turns and drops

concealed them from view. As Ethyl and I leisurely plodded along, they were catching up. The guide for the third party left his group when he spotted us, and with haste, was upon us.

Ethyl's reputation must have been well-known. I heard only the crashing hooves as the guide approached and a thundering, "Get moving, Ethyl!" and we were off! At a gallop I was sure, although now I know it was only a fast trot. We took the turns faster than I thought possible and certainly faster than safety seemed to dictate. Ethyl summoned the energy from some vast depth for she kept that pace for the entire distance, separating us from our group. Then she plodded again, but only until she sensed the intruder behind.

While all the other mule-riders maintained a steady, almost relaxing trot, Ethyl and I followed a bone-racked gallop and plod for the remaining descent to Plateau Point.

Once we reached the plateau, a blissfully level area overlooked the Colorado River, I assumed that Ethyl would behave herself. Not Ethyl. The grassy area divided into two sections as it neared the lookout — one leading to a guard-railed area for viewing the majestic Colorado River, and the other leading to a sheer drop-off into that same river. Seemingly possessed with suicide, Ethyl took off for the cliff edge. At this point, Don Quixote turned into Sancho Panza. A loud shout alerted the guides who urged their mounts until they succeeded in turning Ethyl into the opposite and safe direction.

Because of the early dusk, all three parties combined for the ascent. Ethyl had no chance to lag behind with the razor-voiced guide riding directly behind us. So, I finally got a chance to see the Canyon with its ever-changing vegetation, starting at the bottom with cactus, then mesquite and pine, and ending with a fantastic display of rock formations at the top. With the late afternoon sun filtering down the Canyon walls, the view from the top of the trail was spectacular — a tapestry of reds and greens and lavenders that finally changed into a monochromatic scheme of beige, then white, then black.

As the newly-christened "dudes" brushed the red dust from every inch of clothes and skin, we were handed our official Master Mule-Skinner Certificate, attesting to our prowess and bravery on a

March, 1973

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Ethyl twitched an ear when I dismounted as if relieved to be rid of this pesky nuisance who had annoyed her all day. For my part, I know I'll never forget that high-powered, low-octane mule with a mind of "her" own. Who knows, I might just request her next time—for old time's sake.

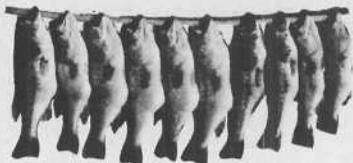


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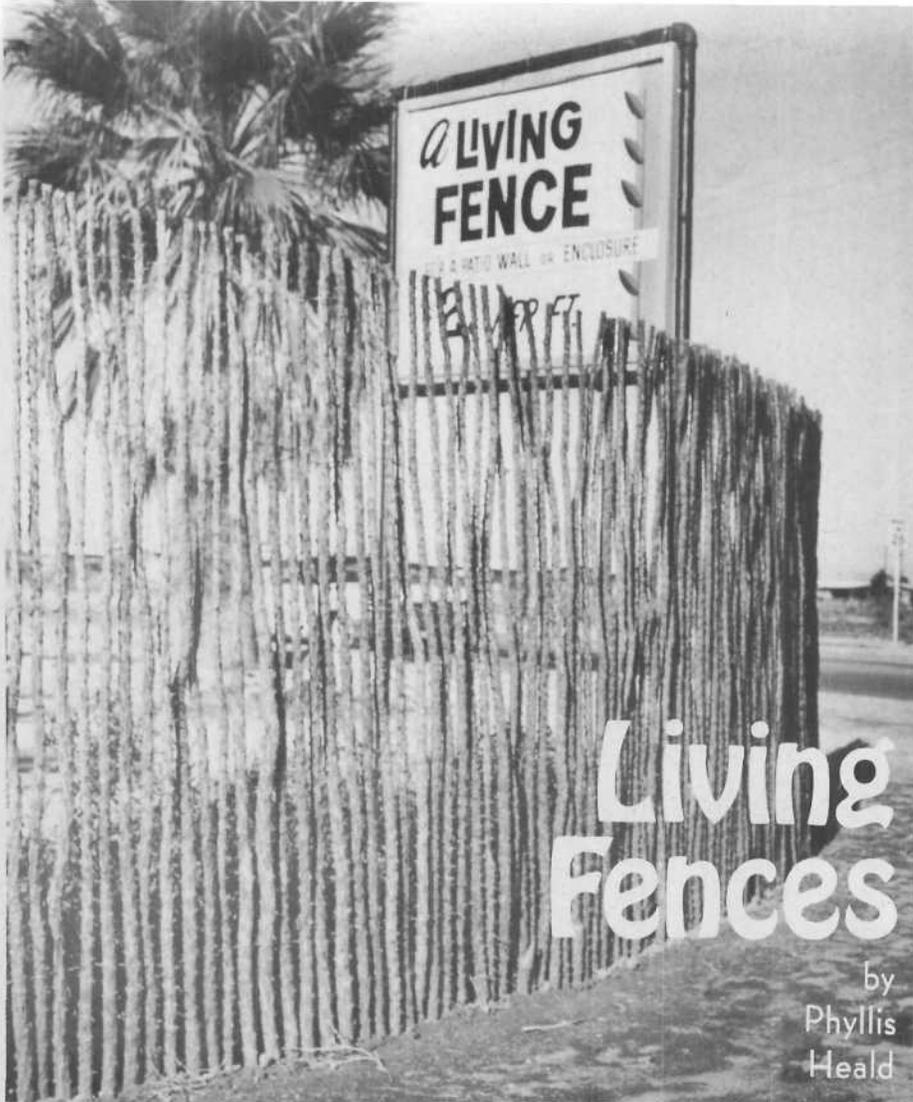
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IN THE desert areas of Arizona, California and New Mexico, "live fences" are an interesting eye-catcher. They can be seen almost anywhere—surrounding neat adobe houses, forming corrals at ranches, as patio enclosures in suburban subdivisions, or even as walls of remote Indian ramadas.

Made from the canes of the ocotillo plant, these fences are amusing, enchanting and definitely exclusive of the Southwest. They possess many practical qualities—as well as the unique one of being alive. They grow up to 15 feet and can be kept cut to any desired height. They act as an impregnable defense against snakes, coyotes, rabbits or humans, because of their short, sharp thorns. One of their charms is their inexpensiveness. Only posts, nails and wire (all of which can be second-hand material) are required.

True, it takes a certain amount of effort to obtain the stalks and plant them, but once this is accomplished, the fence can be forgotten as a responsibility for Nature will take over. Incidentally, the parent plant is not harmed by cutting off several

of its branches. However, it is wisest to obtain these from private property, with, naturally, the owner's consent.

For fence making, the stalks are literally stuck in the ground in rows and kept well aligned by two or more strands of wire that are stretched tauntly from post to post. The ocotillo appears to be dead during the dry season, but the first rains bring forth tiny green leaves which cover each spindly stick from its base to the tip that bursts out as a brilliantly red tassel.

This colorful top of the plant is responsible for its numerous nicknames. Best known as "candlewood" and "coach-whip," it is also called "vine-cactus," "Jacob's staff" and, most amusing of all, "manicured fingers of the desert."

Irrigation isn't essential except to keep the fence in leaf, year round. To accomplish this requires a good soaking at least once a week. So, in planning a drive especially to see live fences, it is best to go soon after a rain. Then Nature is in charge, and even those fences that are owned by desert residents, who cannot spare water, will appear in living color. □

railroad. This junction is about 31 miles out of Ely. You turn right here (east) and go about a mile; then angle slightly S. E. on a dirt road and follow Big Indian Creek up to Ruby Hill. That's where I found the garnet I made into that tie tack. Just the view to the west from the top of Ruby Hill, out over the expanses of Steptoe Valley, makes the climb worthwhile—and there is always the bonus of possibly picking up some choice arrowheads, as this was ancient Indian country.

"If you have a four-wheel rig and camp outfit—and want to make a two- or three-day garnet trip out of it—you ought to include the almandite garnets up on White Horse Mountain, which is up north of Ruby Hill. I'll mark the location as site 'C' on the map.

About 59 miles north of Ely, the combined highway of Number 93 and Alternate Number 50 divides, and Number 93 heads N. W. towards Wells, Nevada; while Alternate 50 continues N. E. to Wendover, Utah. About 21 miles north of this junction, in a wide valley known as Dolly Varden Flat, you will see, to your left, a ranch road close by an abandoned airstrip. About a mile beyond the airstrip, a dirt road takes off to your right, and heads up to White Horse Mountain. Follow this road eastward four or five miles until you come to some abandoned mine workings, and start looking around. You may be surprised, because the garnet here comes in a massive dyke about four miles long, and varies in width from a couple of feet to as wide as fifty! So you can hunt and peck to your heart's delight.

"If you like to hike, you can follow the vein for almost three miles S. E. over a pass, and down on to the east side of White Horse Mountain. You will notice that the garnet changes from brown to red as you follow the vein—then back to brown again on the east side. There are other rockhound materials, too—some unusual marble selections and quartz crystals. The quartz is both smokey and clear—so you take your choice. And, of course, more Indian relics, as this was old Goshute hunting grounds.

"A fourth good place to hunt garnets is over on Hampton Creek, in Snake Valley, up on the east side of Mount Moriah,

near the Utah border. I'll mark it site 'D' on the map—and it's a two or three day project, too, if you want to do a lot of garnet grabbing.

"They are the type of garnet used for garnet paper; of different color shades and the size varies from pinhead to as big as a small fingernail. There is water in Hampton Creek, and you can pan for the garnets like panning gold, or you can scoop the sand and garnets out of shallow places in the creek and screen them wet.

"To get there, take Highway 6 south and east for 54 miles, to the junction of Highway 73 that goes to Baker, Nevada. To your left at this junction, a graded road goes N. E. About 18 miles on this road you will see ranch buildings on your left, and just beyond them is the road up Hampton Creek. This is a beautiful canyon and a good road most of the way. There is a lovely meadow where you first cross the creek, and this is an ideal place to park your trailer or pitch your camp tent. In early morning it is not unusual to see deer or antelope grazing in the area.

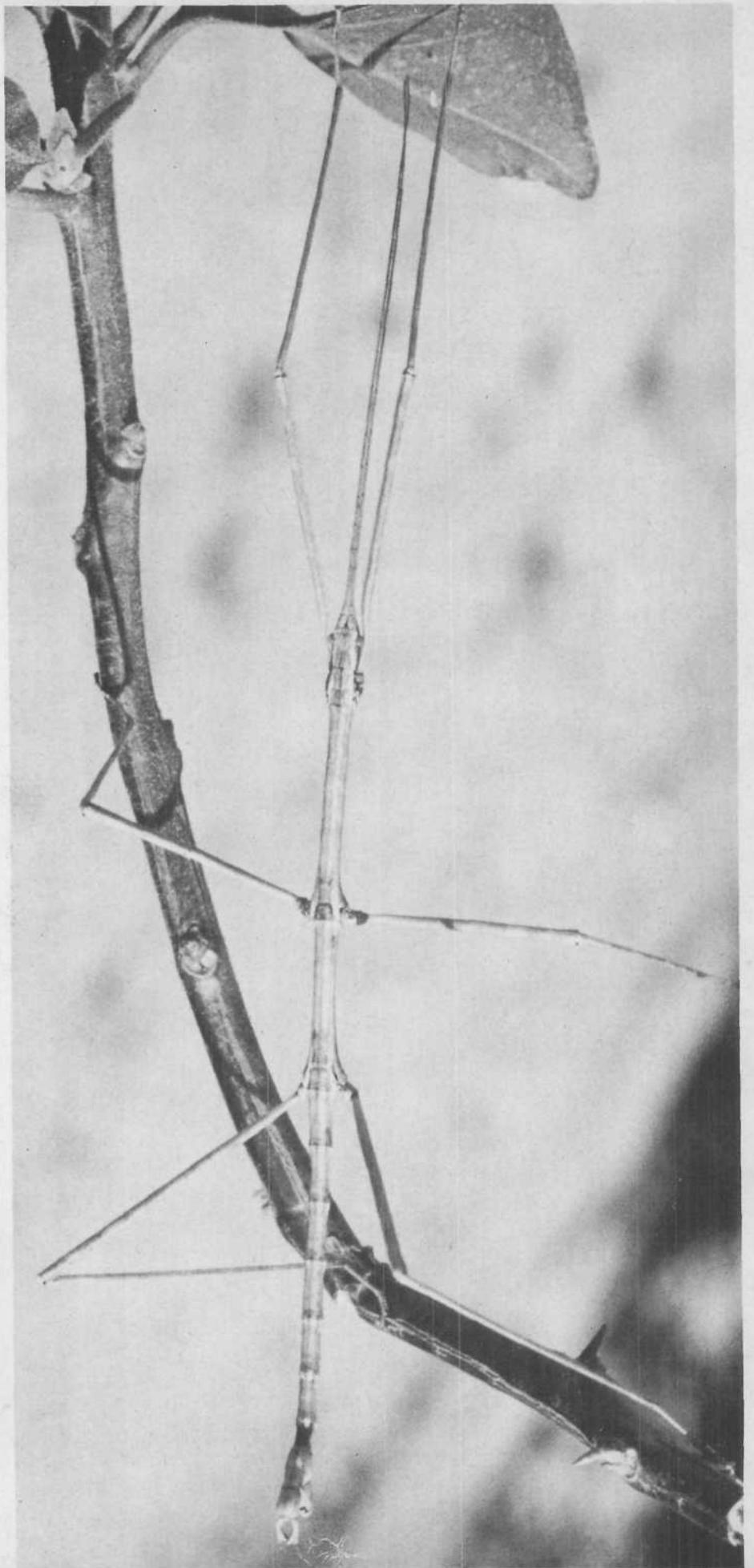
"These four locations should keep the most avid garnet buff busy for a while. Anyway, this is such good tourist and rockhound 'stomping grounds' you really should sandwich in some sight-seeing between garnet and rock hunts. There is the amazing open-pit copper mine at Ruth, the smelter at McGill, abandoned mines, ghost towns like Hamilton, the lunar craters, and old relics of the past that seem to stand out on the edge of nowhere, all within one gas tank range of Ely.

"If you need any more dope on this wonderful part of the West—and garnets—look me up at the Ely Museum—I'd sure like to meet you. After all, the kind of people who love the deep rosy glow of a good garnet—they gotta be something *special!*" □

Desert Life

by Hans Baerwald

An unusual and hard to spot desert dweller is the walking stick who are only about 2 inches overall.



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Rambling on Rocks

by
Glenn
and
Martha Vargas

DUNES:

More Than Just Piles Of Sand

THE ONE GEOLOGICAL feature that nearly everyone associates with the desert is dunes. Many think that the desert is one endless stretch of them. In actuality, the percentage of the desert surface that is dunes is very small, less than 2%.

The word dune is from the French, meaning a pile of sand. Thus we should correctly say dune, and not sand dune. It is certainly logical that our word came from the French, as they, during their colonial days in North Africa, had much experience with dunes.

Even though there are not many dunes in our desert southwest, they are an important part of the desert's ecological picture, and many plants and animals are specifically adapted to life within them. This helps to set them apart as something special, and removes them from the category of simply piles of sand.

There are different types of dunes, each contributing its part toward the landscape. The best known is what is called a marching or wandering dune; we prefer the former name. This type of dune faithfully fulfills either name; it is on the move. A marching dune must be lying in a wind belt, for wind is its motive power.

In most areas, marching dunes are complex, with a number of them so joined that any one of them cannot be completely seen. In a few areas, they are to be found solitary; and are in the shape of the letter C, with the opening facing away from the wind. The ends of the curve are known as horns, which might be likened

to tentacles reaching out across the desert, the horns are the foremost of the advance of the dune.

The forces and effects of the advance of a marching dune are interesting. A dune is an obstacle in the face of the wind, and thus the wind is deflected. The dune really began around some small obstacle, such as a rock, that set in motion the following events. When the wind strikes an obstacle, it is deflected around it. Most of the moving air is deflected to the sides, with only a small part being deflected upward. Whichever way it is deflected, its velocity is increased (and sand may easily be picked up). As soon as the wind passes the obstacle, the velocity suddenly decreases, and the air moves back into its original path. With the decrease in velocity, any sand that was carried is left behind.

The air that was deflected over the obstacle now drops the sand immediately on the other side. The air that was forced sideways drops the sand to the sides and slightly to the front. In the beginning, the embryonic dune takes on the shape of a C, and this continues throughout its period of movement.

As soon as sand is deposited, this now becomes an obstruction. The sand in the dune can also be picked up, moved upward or sideways and be redeposited. The original obstruction is usually left behind, and may become the progenitor of other dunes. Some obstructions have been the beginning of a line of marching dunes.

A dune of one hundred feet or more across may be a formidable thing. It may entirely engulf trees, buildings, or other features of the landscape. A tree can be killed by being engulfed, but usually its leaves are removed first by the scouring effect of the moving sand. Buildings have been completely covered, then uncovered as wrecks after the dune moved on years later.

The movement of sand within a dune is worthy of note. The wind picks up the sand at the back, near the base. The sand is blown around and over it, and deposited at the front. That which moves over the top is dropped at the top part of the C-shaped ridge. Below this ridge is a steep incline of about 60 degrees. The deposited sand flows down this incline to the bottom, and covers part of the desert floor. That sand which moved to the side will also come to rest on the

desert floor, but it will be at the tip or sides of the horns.

How rapid is this movement? This will depend upon a number of factors. The greatest will be the velocity of the wind. An area of strong winds will have relatively fast-marching dunes. Regions of lesser winds will produce slow-moving dunes. The movement may depend on the size of the dune; with a larger dune moving slower than a small one. If the wind is predominantly from a single direction, the movement will be more rapid than if the wind frequently changes directions. In any event, a movement of a very few feet per year is usually greatest.

Sometimes dunes will move into protected areas where wind velocity is low and movement will nearly stop. In other cases, a dune or a group of dunes will become so large, that isolated pockets of little or no movement will develop. Whenever a dune stops moving, plants will begin to grow around and on them. This will effectively stop any further movement, and we now have what is known as an anchored dune.

An anchored dune may gather more sand around it, even though the wind velocity is reduced. When plant life moves onto the new portion, the anchored dune increases in size. The plant most common on anchored dunes is the mesquite. These trees must reach down below the dune, however, for their supply of water. Mesquite roots have been known to go to depths greater than 100 feet, through sand to the water in the desert floor beneath.

If a dune moves up to a mountain, it has a tendency to climb over and now becomes what is known as a climbing dune. The same forces of wind deflection again operate in assisting the dune over the mountain, except that the deflection is almost entirely upward. The dune moves over the mountain in a shapeless mass, without horns. The actual shape of the part of the enclosing mountain, usually a ravine, dictates the shape of the dune.

After the body of sand reaches the top, it now spills over much as the sand spilled over the face of the marching dune, but now the sand is trapped in the region of low velocity on the lee side of the mountain. A trapped dune may reach huge proportions, being a composite of a number of dunes. Finally, there is a

large enough mass of sand to reach the bottom of the mountain with the possibility of the marching process beginning again.

One feature of the surface of active dunes, is the ripple marks that cover the face on the gently-sloping windward side. These are really small dunes upon a large one, and are caused by small obstructions. One will appear, deflect the wind slightly and help to cause others. These are known as Eolian ripple marks. The word is from the Greek—*Eolas*, the god of the wind. The almost infinite pattern of these ripple marks, swirling in graceful lines across the windward face, is one of dune's most intriguing features.

Most dunes are made of sand derived from many types of rocks. Actually most of the sand is quartz, as it is the most common mineral. Besides being common, it is quite highly resistant to abrasion, and is much lighter than many other minerals.

There is at least one notable example of an exception to this. The dunes found in White Sands National Monument, New Mexico are made entirely of the crystalline form of gypsum, called selenite. These are very extensive, covering over 200 square miles, and must be considered as one of our desert's largest dune areas.

Where are other dunes in our desert? The most famous ones are in the central portion of Death Valley, but they are not the largest. The Algodones Dunes bordering the eastern side of Imperial Valley are very large. They stretch from well below the Baja California border, northward to nearly the southern end of the Coachella Valley. The word *algodon* is Spanish for cotton.

A large group of dunes are in the Mojave Desert near the town of Kelso, and are known as the Kelso Dunes. These lie at the southwest border of Soda Lake (dry) and are the result of thousands of years of wind across the lake. The sand was deposited by the Mojave River which terminates in the lake.

For smaller dunes, we can again go to Death Valley. At the southern end are some excellent samples. The southwestern end of the Coachella Valley, near Salton City, has some excellent examples of marching dunes. A few other isolated small dunes are to be found in other areas, and that is the extent of them.

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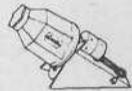
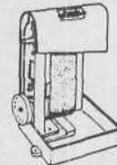


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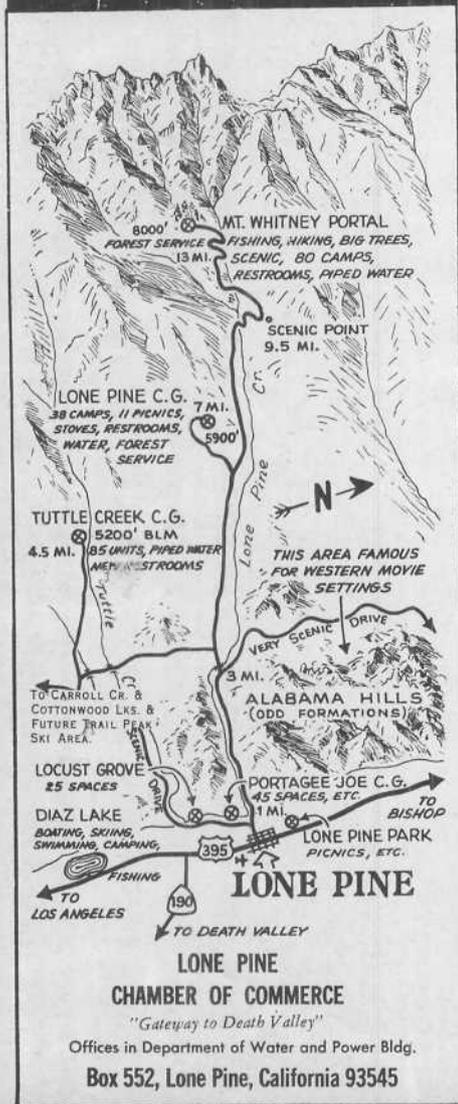
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Notes From The Field

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Traveling back-country desert roads can be hazardous if car trouble develops or an accident occurs. Many RVs now have CB (Citizens Band) radios, but you can sel-



dom reach anyone if you are in a remote area.

For those of you who enjoy exploring the Cady and Bristol Mountain regions there is now help, should you need it. Call KMX-3353 in Ludlow, on Channel 9, day or night. Don Schinckel, Town Manager, told us nearly everyone in town has a CB radio and Channel 9 is constantly monitored. "You can be sure of help, if your signal reaches Ludlow," he stated.

Let's hope other small desert communities will follow suit. Such a project would be a two-way street—help for those who need it and business for the town.

Cady Mountains

There have been thousands of rockhounds in the Southern Cadys during the last two decades and a great deal of fine material has been collected. We recently checked out Agate Canyon and found cutting material mighty scarce. The collector now must explore the hills and canyons away from the beaten track.

So many holes have been dug in Jasper Hill, it resembles a well-used bombing target. We also found rather "lean pickings" at the sagenite area in the Northern Cadys. The road is now very well-defined and in good shape. O.K. for stock cars.

A Reminder

In February of this year, a new California law went into effect. It requires a dry-chemical or carbon-dioxide fire extinguisher in all recreational vehicles with cooking appliances.

BORON

Borax Mine

A permit to collect mineral specimens at the U. S. Borax Company Mine must be obtained at the Security Office. Collecting is restricted to certain areas during daylight hours when the mine is not in operation.

NEVADA

Swartz Ranch, Fernley

Last year a rock club bulletin ran a short item about the wood location on the Swartz Ranch, reporting it was open to collecting. Since this locale has been

closed for several years, I advised the editor of its status. However, the item has been picked up by other bulletins and a great deal of confusion has arisen.

In November of 1972, I stopped at the ranch (as I do every year) and found it is still closed to all collecting. I was advised that no exceptions are made.

Rockhounds, inquiring at the ranch for permission to collect, are directed to railroad property adjoining the Swartz Ranch. Mr. Swartz permits access to it through a corner of the ranch, though he makes it clear that the diggings are not on his property. Some collectors do not seem to understand this situation, which, perhaps is the reason for all the confusion.

Mr. Swartz does not have the authority to grant permission for collecting on railroad property. Since this is private land, permission must be obtained. The various railroads have been very co-operative in the past. However, groups and individuals scheduling trips to private property without permission are certainly not being helpful to the rockhound image.

This same activity is also occurring at the Blue Wonderstone deposit in the Monte Cristo Mountains—trips scheduled to a private claim without permission. The Wonderstone claim is well-posted and regular assessment work is obvious. A large sign at the quarry has been torn down. The absence of a sign is not an excuse for trespassing. There are a few abandoned mines in Nevada and they are mighty darn tough on trespassers!

Monte Cristo Mountains Agate Cove

When we were in Tonopah, during our annual fall safari for *Desert*, our "next door neighbor" was a rock collector from Idaho. He returned from a trip to Agate Cove and showed us a specimen of several pounds that he had found. It was some of the nicest agate we have ever seen from this locale (Desert, Dec. '70). If you think deposits such as this one are worked out—don't you believe it!

Items of interest for this column are welcome. Send to the address below. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have regarding back-country trips. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for my reply.

Mary Frances Strong
Field Trip Editor
Desert Magazine
Valyermo, Calif. 93563

Letters to the Editor

Raking among rotted tin cans my wife found a pair of silver tongs. They are five inches long, with 1847 Roger Bros. A1. stamped inside, also in larger letters is MOUNT LOWE RY. as the enclosed photo shows.

We enjoy *Desert Magazine* very much, but on your cover for January the building by David Muench is on the wrong side of the street. You must have reversed the negative.

DUKE AND DOROTHY CANNELL,
Jerome, Arizona.

Editor's Note: The tongs were probably sold as souvenir items at the Chalet atop Mt. Lowe. Perhaps one of our readers can verify this. Yes, the January cover was reversed and we knew some sharp-eyed Desert fan would catch it.

DESERT Helps In Boot Camp . . .

Just a card to express my thanks for a job well done. Your magazine has helped me through many a bad day here at Fort Gordon.

Pfc. DAVID J. MILLER,
Fort Gordon, GA.

Tumbler Fumbler . . .

Just a small thing, but the October, '72 issue carried a method for basic tumbling with the amount of grit to be used not made clear. I recently got a barrel tumbler and want to try your method.

JAMES K. CLINDININ,
Whittier, California.

Editor's Note: The quantity should have been six heaping tablespoons of grit to be used in Steps 1, 2 and 3.

Tongs from Mt. Lowe . . .

Your article "A Cable Car In The Clouds," December, '72, was of special interest to my wife and I. About ten years ago we were scratching around an old deserted mine a few miles outside Jerome, which old-timers said was in operation shortly after the turn of the century.

When They Return . . .

As a subscriber to your magazine I would like to congratulate you on your format, content and originality on the desert and its environment. Especially interesting are your field trips to obscure parts of the desert, complete with history, legend and photographs. I particularly like your articles on wildlife and lost mines.

I am a former Southern California desert region resident. But, at the present time, I am incarcerated in prison in the east. However, I definitely plan on returning upon my release someday. Each month, when I receive *Desert Magazine*, it is passed around to all the other inmates who are also interested in the desert.

Speaking for all of us who do enjoy your magazine, we are all behind you and your stand on the ecology of the desert. We would all eventually like to come home and find the deserts like we left them. Thank you.

Name of writer and
prison withheld at
his request.

Editor's Note: We who are free should be as concerned about the preservation of the deserts as those who someday hope to pay their debts and return to the open skies.

Calendar of Western Events

FEBRUARY 17 & 18, 5th ANNUAL SAN FERNANDO VALLEY GEM FAIR, Devonshire Downs, 18000 Devonshire Blvd., Northridge, Calif. Write P. O. Box 286, Reseda, CA. 91335.

FEBRUARY 17-19, WESTERN WORLD OF GEMS sponsored by the Scottsdale Gem & Mineral Club, Mall Fashion Square, Scottsdale, Arizona. Free parking and admission. Write Eleanor Morrison, 4753 North 33rd Place, Scottsdale, AZ. 85018.

MARCH 2-4, WONDERFUL WORLD OF LAPIDARY sponsored by the Maricopa Lapidary Society, Inc., State Fairgrounds, Phoenix, Ariz. Overnight camper parking. Field trip. Write 10637 Crosby Dr., Sun City, AZ. 85351.

MARCH 2-11, IMPERIAL VALLEY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY'S 26th annual show, California Mid-Winter Fairgrounds, Imperial, Calif. Field trips to Mexico. Write Ken Skillman, 707 C Street, Brawley, CA. 92227.

MARCH 3 & 4, VENTURA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY'S 11th annual show, Ventura County Fairgrounds, Ventura, Calif. Write Ed Turner, P. O. Box 405, Santa Paula, CA. 93060.

MARCH 3 & 4, MONROVIA ROCKHOUNDS 14TH ANNUAL GEM & MINERAL SHOW, Masonic Temple, 204 West Foothill Blvd., Monrovia, Calif. Write Jeff Joy, 5526 Dods-worth Ave., Glendora, CA. 91740.

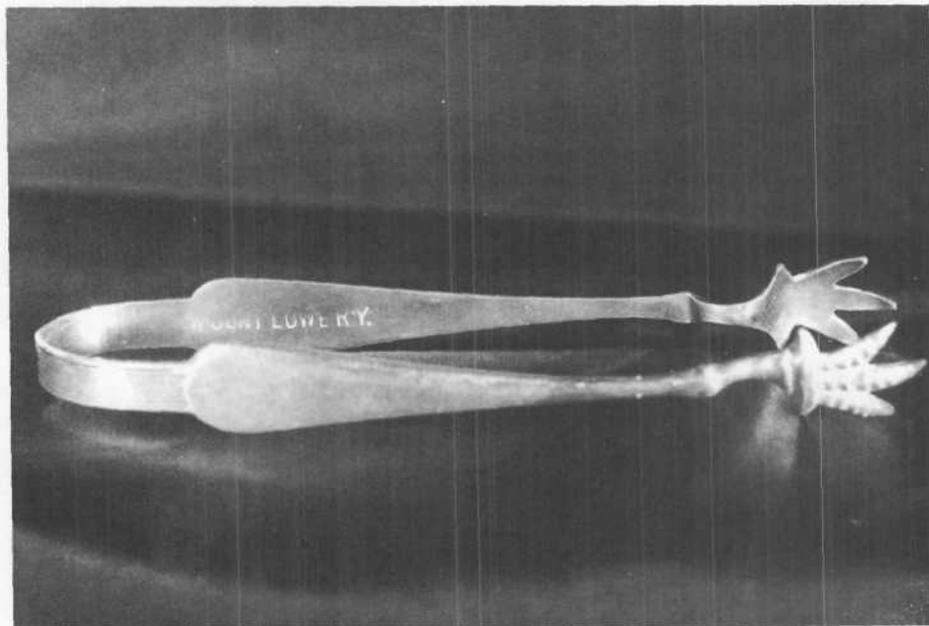
MARCH 10 & 11, SPRING PARADE OF GEMS sponsored by Needles Gem & Mineral Club, High School Gymnasium. Free Admission. Blue agate field trip. Write C. W. Kerr, P. O. Box 762, Needles, CA. 92363.

MARCH 16 - 18, SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES Convention and Show. 401 Villita Street San Antonio, Texas.

MARCH 18 & 19, GEM ROUNDUP sponsored by the Sequoia Mineral Society, Dinuba (Fresno County), Calif. Free parking and admission. Write Bill Butler, Box 195, Orosi, CA. 93467.

MARCH 24, TRIBE OF TAHQUITZ SCOUTS' annual Spring Ceremonial featuring Sioux Indian dances and costumes. Lakewood High School, Lakewood, CA., 7:30 P. M.

MONTHLY MEETING of the Los Angeles Cactus & Succulent Society meets first Sunday of each month at California State College where San Bernardino and Long Beach Freeways meet, Room 144, Science Building. "Bragging Table," Cultural Table, plant prizes, etc. Write J. A. De Fussi, 23456 Ottawa Rd., Space 23, Apple Valley, CA. 92307.



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