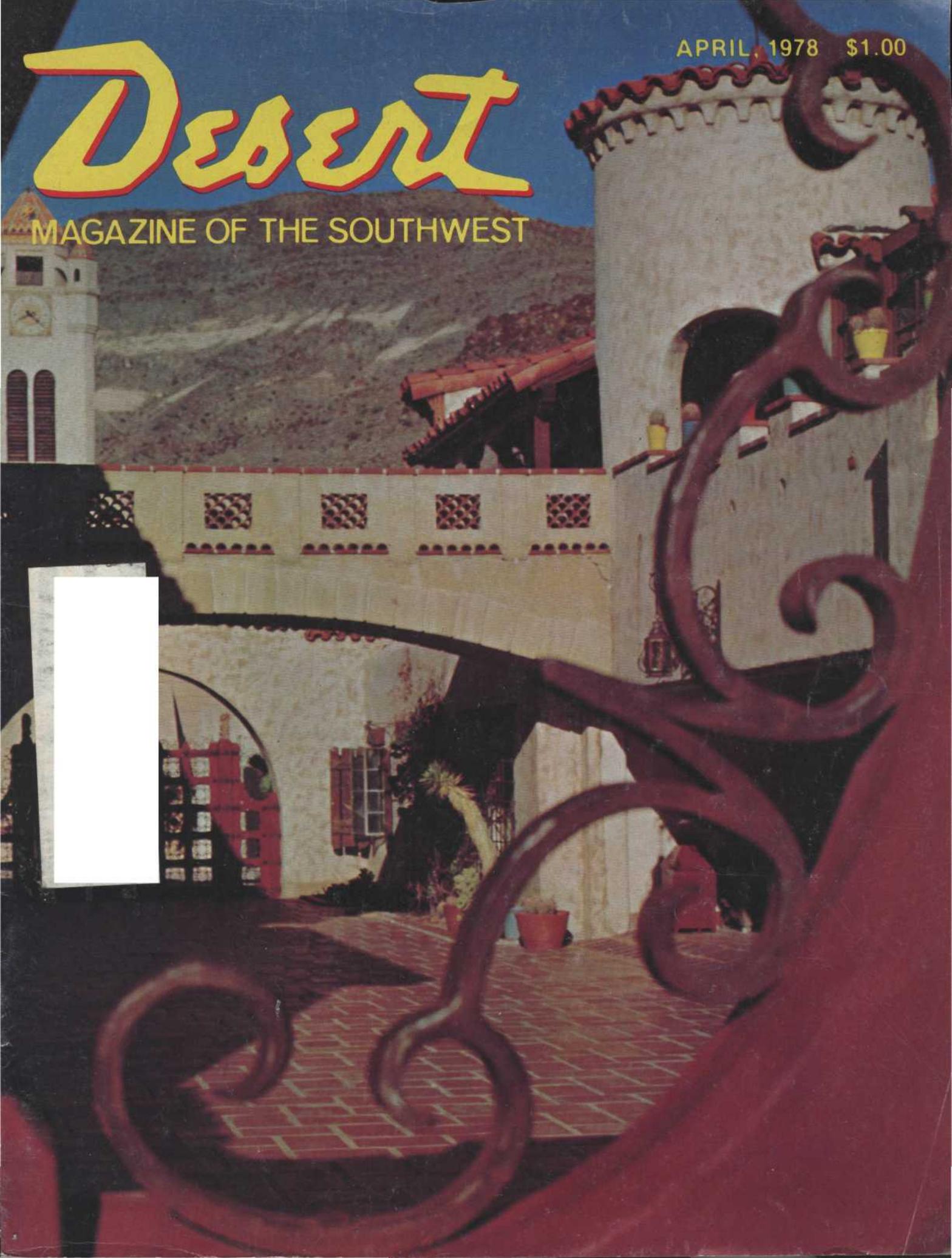


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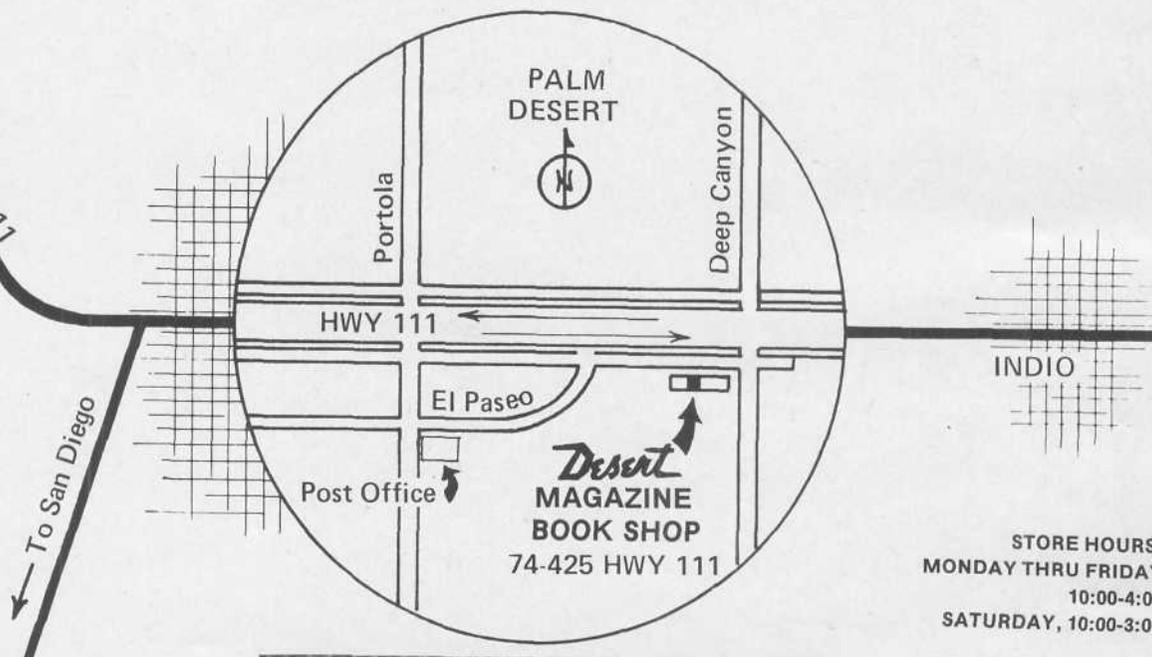
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APRIL 1978

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THE COVER:
Dramatic photo of Scotty's Castle, in Death Valley, Calif., through the huge wrought iron gates. Photo by George Service, Palm Desert, California. See related article on Page 20.

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A Peek in the Publisher's Poke

LAST MONTH I mentioned briefly the anticipated wildflower display that the winter rains could produce, and many of our readers asked just what areas might be best to visit. A phone call to the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park headquarters, in Borrego Springs, California, revealed that they are prepared for a spectacular wildflower explosion which could peak from mid-March to well into April.

Two other popular California areas expecting a rainbow of colors are the Lancaster-Palmdale area (being of a higher elevation, the blooming period will be later than the lower desert), and Death Valley.

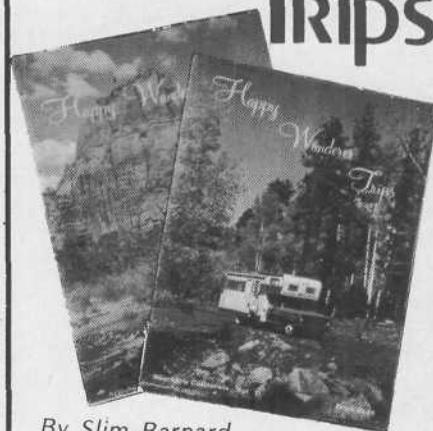
Over in Arizona, the pattern is repeating itself with Organ Pipe National Monument reporting a massive carpet of greenery and buds.

A call to the Chamber of Commerce in the area you wish to visit, or Park Headquarters will assure you of being at the right spot at the right time.

But color in the Southwest is not limited to flowers. Take Southern Utah, for example, and Cedar Breaks National Monument in particular. Mary Frances Strong visited this spectacular area last fall and found a locale for agate as a bonus! Jerry Strong captured it on film for this issue so we could all enjoy its beauty.

And how about that colorful character portrayed in the work of Norberto Reyes this month. Norberto is a member of the American Indian & Cowboy Artists Society and we are proud to feature him in *DESERT Magazine*. Be sure to make a note to attend the American Indian & Cowboy Artists Western Art Exhibit and Sale in San Dimas, California on April 28, 29 and 30. Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, it is a "must" show for lovers of fine Western Art. □

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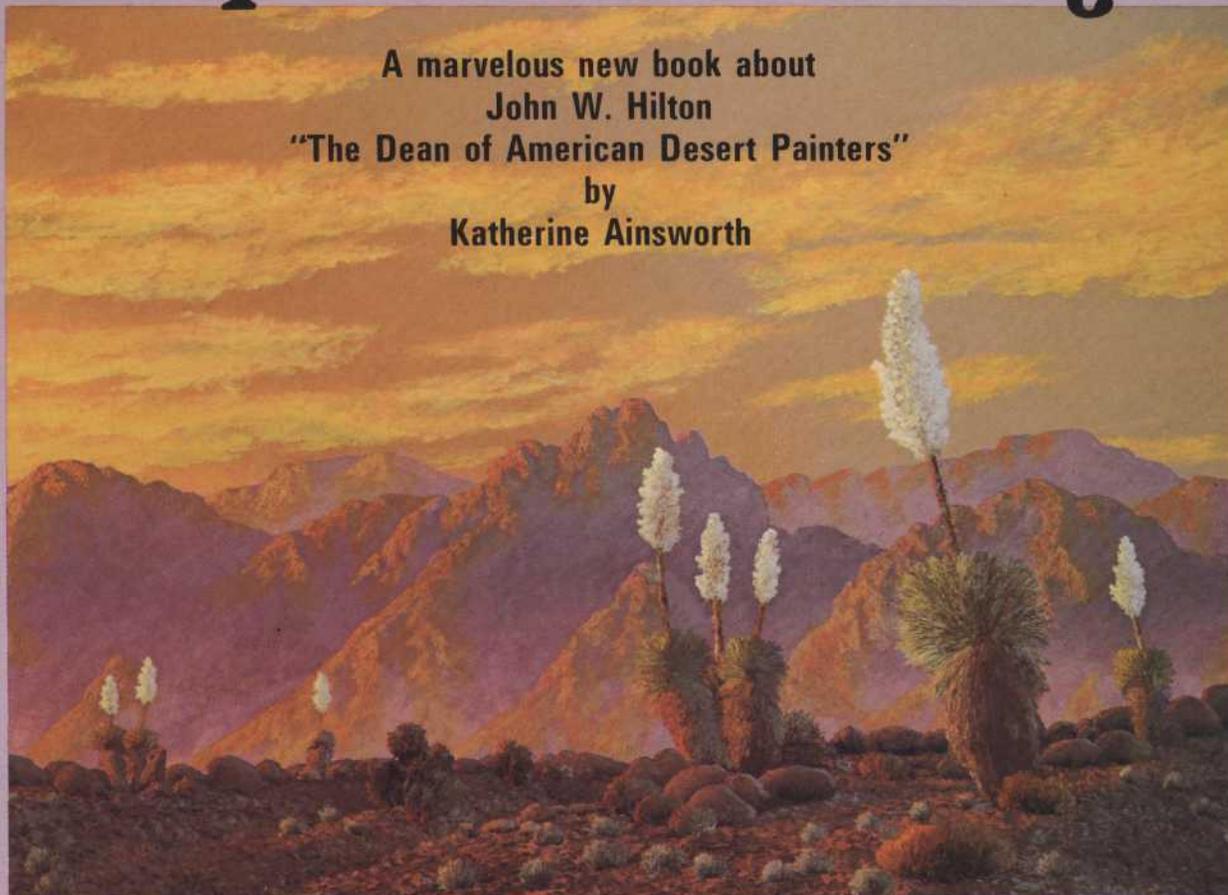
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The Man Who Captured Sunshine

A marvelous new book about
John W. Hilton
"The Dean of American Desert Painters"
by
Katherine Ainsworth



Just one of the many beautifully reproduced Hilton paintings included in the book.

The Man Who Captured Sunshine is a biography of a remarkable, modern day, Renaissance Man — John W. Hilton. Though John Hilton is best known as the "Dean of American Desert Painters," he is also a distinguished botanist, gemologist, and zoologist. Hilton also is a noted writer and linguist, a guitarist and singer.

The Man Who Captured Sunshine is inspirational . . . a book which inspires one to overcome adversity, to achieve excellence, to strive for a genuine joy of living. The reader will cry, but more often will find himself/herself enjoying the pleasure of hearty laughter, of grand adventure. The significance of this book, above all else, lies in an impelling force which inspires the reader to live a fuller, more meaningful, more joyous life . . . to be a doer, a creator, a giver.

The author, Katherine Ainsworth, makes no apology for the "lack of objectivity" in writing this book . . . she has been a friend and admirer of John Hilton for over thirty years. Katie's late husband, Ed Ainsworth, was John Hilton's best friend for almost as many years. This "labor of love" has resulted in a magnificent book about a magnificent man.

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THE MAN WHO CAPTURED SUNSHINE

By Katherine Ainsworth
Foreword by James Cagney

If you want to read a book that is so entertaining you will not be able to put it down, then Katherine Ainsworth's "The Man Who Captured Sunshine" is the answer. It is the engaging biography of John W. Hilton, one of America's foremost desert artists and a man of many accomplishments. In addition to his artistic talents, he is an accomplished botanist, gemologist, musicologist and linguist.

Hilton's adventures began early in his life in China with his missionary parents. There, John began to paint with a Chinese master. He saw his father nearly killed by a Chinese bandit, and later saw his father kill a tiger which was terrorizing the village where he and his family lived.

Hilton's experiences in the gem business, his close association with the Pala and Cahuilla Indians, his struggle as an artist during the Depression, and

finally recognition through the help of Nellie Coffman is vividly described.

An "untold" side of General George Patton is also revealed in the account of his friendship with Patton. Hilton was largely responsible for the selection of the WWII training grounds near Indio where Patton trained his forces for the invasion of North Africa. John, at great personal sacrifice, supplied our nation with calcite used in precision gun sights during the war.

Readers will vicariously experience grand adventures with Hilton and his friends in California and Mexico. An intimate glimpse into the lives of celebrities and his life with his cherished wife, Barbara, are told. You will roar with laughter at tales of a mummified Indian, a magnetic rock, giant sloths, and of roisterous pranks and "mistake Burnings." In short, you will thrill to the grand adventure of a man who really knows how to live life to the fullest.

If the fine story telling is not enough, eight of Hilton's finest paintings, reproduced in full color in this book, should be. Highly recommended reading!

Hardcover, 274 pages, \$12.95.



THE CROOKED ARROW By Franklin Barnett

Civil engineer, Army officer, writer, archaeologist are all part of what makes up the life of Franklin Barnett. No stranger to Desert readers, Mr. Barnett authored "Dictionary of Prehistoric Indian Artifacts of the American Southwest," which has been invaluable since 1973 to archaeologists and historians of the Southwest, as well as a textbook in many colleges and universities.

All of the author's experiences and professions came into play with his latest book, a factual novel of a prehistoric Indian hunter of the Southwest. The book, "Crooked Arrow," is based on three ruins which the author excavated. The

reports of these excavations, written by Mr. Barnett, have all been published by the Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff. The artifacts recovered became the bases for the Indians' style of life, as did the recorded history of the early Spanish chroniclers when they arrived in the Southwest. So the locale, the way of life, their artifacts, are all factual—only the characters are fictitious during this period of the mid-1200s. It could be called a love story. You might think of it as an adventure story. Love, hate, trust, distrust, bravery, fear—all are found in this fast moving story which makes fascinating reading amid an authentic setting for a hunter living during this time when life was cruel, hard and basic.

There has been much interest among educators in the Southwest to make "Crooked Arrow" a textbook in high school and college level classes in anthropology—an easy, clear, delightful, factual way of exploring and learning Southwestern archaeology in a new way.

Paperback, 152 pages, \$4.95.



HOUSE IN THE SUN

By George Olin

Knowledgeable desert devotees know the byline "By George Olin" insures high quality, accuracy and readability in any volume. His previous works covered mammals of the desert region and general interest knowledge about life in the desert mountains and mesas.

As his earlier efforts, "House in the Sun," is distinguished by outstanding color photography, most of it from his own camera.

This book attempts, successfully, to describe the peculiarities of desert life, plant and animal, particularly in the so-called Sonoran Desert, which covers most of the southeastern California, much of Arizona and the Mexican states of Sonora and two Baja California—

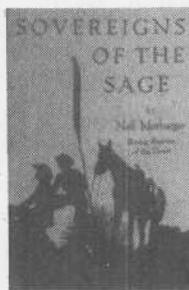
Norte and Sur. Olin tells the reader what is distinctive about the Sonoran and what desert characteristics it shares with the other great North American arid zones.

"House in the Sun" doesn't explore new ground, but rather attempts to explain to the average reader what desert is all about. Significantly, Olin credits another desert naturalist with his own inspiration, namely Dr. Edmund C. Jaeger of Riverside, California, who by now at the age of 91 ranks as the dean of all desert writers.

Naturally, because of his own long-time connection with Organ Pipe National Monument in southern Arizona, Olin tends to concentrate his pictures and text on Arizona areas, but those interested in Southern California's famed Colorado Desert will not be short changed.

The book is an ideal hiking companion for any desert denizen and also makes a good coffee table conversation piece due to the uniform excellence of the author's handsome color photographs.

Paperback, 234 pages, \$6.00.



GHOSTS OF THE ADOBE WALLS
and
SOVEREIGNS OF THE SAGE

By Nell Murbarger

Readers of *Desert Magazine* can rejoice! Two of Nell Murbarger's oldtime favorites are back in print.

Known to our readers for nigh on to 30 years as "the roving reporter of the desert," Miss Murbarger has long specialized in human interest stories about real people, the residents of those old mining camps and ghost towns whose lives are shared vicariously by the armchair reader without any of the hardships. Unlike many writers of desert themes, the Costa Mesa, California, authoress has a newspaper reporter's eye for detail, accuracy and the turn of a phrase that sets her material ahead of others.

These two well-packed paperbacks are filled with her own photographs, many of them now irreplaceable because their subjects, both human and material are long gone.

"Ghosts of the Adobe Walls" is a collection of vignettes gleaned during Miss Murbarger's repeated visits to old ranching and mining communities in Arizona. For the uninitiated, she has headed each chapter with a small place map showing the location of the sites she is writing about. That's a real help. "Ghosts" was first published in 1964 and the original, expensive hard cover edition has long been out of print.

This book is an authority in many diverse areas, including the famed Colorado River stern and sidewheeler steamboats, long forgotten Army posts and fabulous gold, copper and silver mines.

Miss Murbarger acknowledges "borrowing" material from other sources, which is no crime; all writers do, but few have the courtesy to say so, or to improve on the original by better writing, as she does.

"Sovereigns of the Sage," has a title reminiscent of the late Zane Grey, but unlike the famous cowboy-theme author, her material is not fiction. It is composed of more than 50 true-life anecdotes, biographies and reports of actual people and places, from Utah to the Colorado Desert of southeastern California. The book is blessed also with a series of ex-

cellent Norton Allen maps from the back issues of *Desert Magazine*, and the volume is dedicated to the late Randall Henderson, whom Miss Murbarger recalls as the "dean of desert publishers," whose interest and support helped her get started.

If, as the writer of this report, you have to choose between these two fine reprints for your library, you'll be hard put to make an intelligent decision, but the price is right, so maybe you can buy both, one this month and the other, next time. In either case, which ever one you add to your collection will give you thousands of hours of enjoyable reading, and, if you are more than an armchair type, will lead you into countless byways of the American Southwest where you can savor some of the adventures the authoress herself had two decades or more ago.

Both paperback, "Sovereigns of the Sage," 342 pages, 70 photographs, eight maps; "Ghosts of the Adobe Walls," 398 pages, 55 photos. Each book priced at \$7.95

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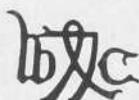
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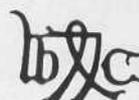
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Lone tree near eastern edge of the Willow Hole. Beards or dead fronds on most of the isolated trees are unburned. Brush in foreground was washed away in heavy rains of midwinter.

WILLOW HOLE OASIS AN ALMOST PARKSITE

HISTORIC PALM GROVE HIDDEN ALONG OLD DESERT HIGHWAY

by **BILL JENNINGS**

HUCKED INTO A windswept corner of California's upper Coachella Valley is an unlikely oasis of palm, arrowweed and mesquite, an almost forgotten park site known as the Willow Hole.

The name might make you think primarily of thickets of the water-guzzling desert trees, and you would be partially right. It would seem more logical, however, to name the little cienega for its clump of 36 palms, in various stages of maturity and decline, or its soldierly ranks of the dusty, gray-green arrowweed or even the surprising stands of young mesquite growing on the charred stumps of their burned-out elders.

Unlikely as an oasis because Willow Hole is surrounded by sand dunes and well-cobbled rock hills, four miles southeast of Desert Hot Springs, at the junction of old Highways 60-70-99, now known as Varner Road, and Mountain View Road.

The marsh contains a slow-running

stream much of the winter and alkaline water is available the year-round by digging just a few feet near the roots of several of the palm clusters. Several trees have died in recent years but new ones are emerging to their their place and the total count is little different than when J. Smeaton Chase visited the place when he was writing his desert classic, *California Desert Trails*, in 1918. The other great biographer of the arid region of southeastern California, George Wharton James, almost certainly passed the Willow Hole in 1906, but his book, *The Wonders of the Colorado Desert*, fails to mention his visit.

Willow Hole was proposed as a community park in the early 1960s by the Desert Hot Springs Park and Recreation District. While the funding campaign failed, it at least accomplished one purpose — it prevented Willow Hole becoming a Riverside County dump!

That use had been described in the late 1950s by the county when a need for

a new landfill to serve the Palm Springs-Desert Hot Springs area became apparent in the wake of growing population and less room in the existing dumpsite.

Desert Hot Springs residents rallied behind Mrs. Evelyn Knudsen, then the head of an organization called the Desert Hot Springs Improvement Association. The late Ed Walker, then Riverside County parks director, offered to help by making Willow Hole an adjunct of the 400-acre parksite he planned at the north end of the Indio Hills.

Willow Hole had been proposed as a parksite long before, by the late Herb Ecclestone, then a Desert Hot Springs resident and a leader in the old Riverside County Association of Chambers of Commerce. Neither Ecclestone, the improvement association or the county park agency made much headway, however, until a Palm Springs resident, Mrs. Alberta Wagner, provided funds for a preliminary feasibility survey made by a Riverside architect, Jack Burg.

Old rockhouse cafe and service station near the Willow Hole along former State and U.S. Highways 60-70-99 have been frequently used as movie sets but are now rapidly melting into the landscape. Old rest stop was abandoned in about 1950 before Interstate 10 replaced the old two-lane highway.





Slope on right [above] is littered with potsherds uncovered during midwinter rains. Federal and state laws prohibit removal of manmade material without a special permit. Overall view [below] of Willow Hole, looking toward stormswept Little San Bernardino Mountains. Area is along branch of San Andreas Fault, which may account for the abundant, if slightly saline waters that often surface here.



Burg's document, coupled with spirited support from two Indian organizations, the Malki Museum of Morongo Reservation, and the American Indian Historical Society of San Francisco, apparently awakened the interest of the landlord, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. But the park never materialized.

Willow Hole, it turned out, had been a traditional resting place for the Cahuilla, the Chemehuevi and possibly the Serano Indians on their periodic migrations between the San Gorgonio Pass, the Coachella Valley and the High Desert beyond. Certainly there remains ample evidence of this occupation, in litters of broken potsherds, stone tools, grinding holes and perhaps even the stumps of old burned mesquite.

In any case, BLM listened, assured the park district that the land would not become a cut and cover dumpsite, but apparently never approved the architectural design for a park. Now, 10 years later, the land is still reserved for park use and may eventually be so designated on the final version of the BLM Desert Plan and developed by the federal agency. New state laws protect the site also, because of the known aboriginal land uses and the earlier opposition to sale or dump use from the two Indian organizations.

Willow Hole is also protected by Mother Nature, with inhospitable surroundings and its own windy microclimate. Seldom does the wind let up for more than a few days and as a little extra protection against private land development, the area is astride the desert branch of the San Andreas Fault.

The county moved the landfill site two miles to the southeast, where the Edom Hill dump now serves the upper Coachella Valley — but the proximity of that site has posed another problem in recent years.

The entire north end of the Indio Hills, a sandy subrange of the Little San Bernardino that flanks the faultline from Desert Hot Springs southeast to the Salton Sea, has become an unauthorized but apparently permitted recreational area, peopled primarily on weekends by hordes of motorcyclists, a growing number of hang glider enthusiasts, plinkers and plain old picnickers.

On a recent visit, the writer found Willow Hole pockmarked with target



Willow Hole, looking north toward Desert Hot Springs, showing vehicle tracks leading toward heart of the marsh. Palms and mesquite appear on banks of canyon.

shooters' leavings, shotgun shells, 'cycle tracks and old beer cans. Maybe the BLM is not permitting its development for housing or trash disposal but neither is there any apparent patrol to protect the wildlife and aboriginal area.

The nearby rock house service station, long an oasis for boiling radiators at the summit of the long grade out of the valley, is gradually falling into total ruin, its stone and block walls marked with graffiti, unauthorized trash dumping filling the three small buildings. The wooden ceilings and roofs long ago became campfire fuel and the eerie quality that made the old place a natural movie set for several film companies two decades ago has been heightened.

Across the highway, Willow Hole still offers the haven for wildlife it did before the visitors. Bobcat tracks, quail, many migratory birds and a resident population of lizards, rodents and butterflies attest to the potential the area has as a wildlife reserve even today.

Entry into the central marshlands is difficult, even for motorcyclists, due to the arrowweed and willow thickets and ordinary passenger cars should approach

no closer than the shoulders of the old highway or Mountain View Road. Four-wheel-drive and dune buggies can penetrate a little closer but the "Hole" itself is probably safe from all motor vehicles. Horsemen occasionally visit the area but presumably have learned the marshy areas are akin to quicksand and stay away from the heart of the little natural park.

Most of the surface aboriginal materials have been removed time and again by pothunters, but each fresh wind or rain storm, as occurred repeatedly during the Christmas-New Year's holiday period and into January this year, turns up dozens more artifacts.

The initial parksite proposal of 1966 indicated development for family picnicking, with minimal recreational facilities, might cost as much as a million dollars over a 40-year period.

Twelve years of inflation, plus the increasing depredations of casual visitors might well result in a development bill costing twice that much today, but the million-dollar Willow Hole park still appears as an inviting prospect. And 40 years from now, who knows? □

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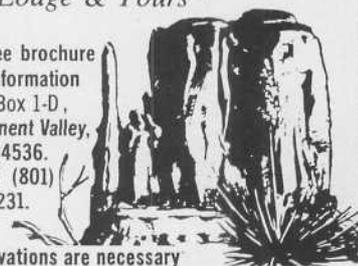
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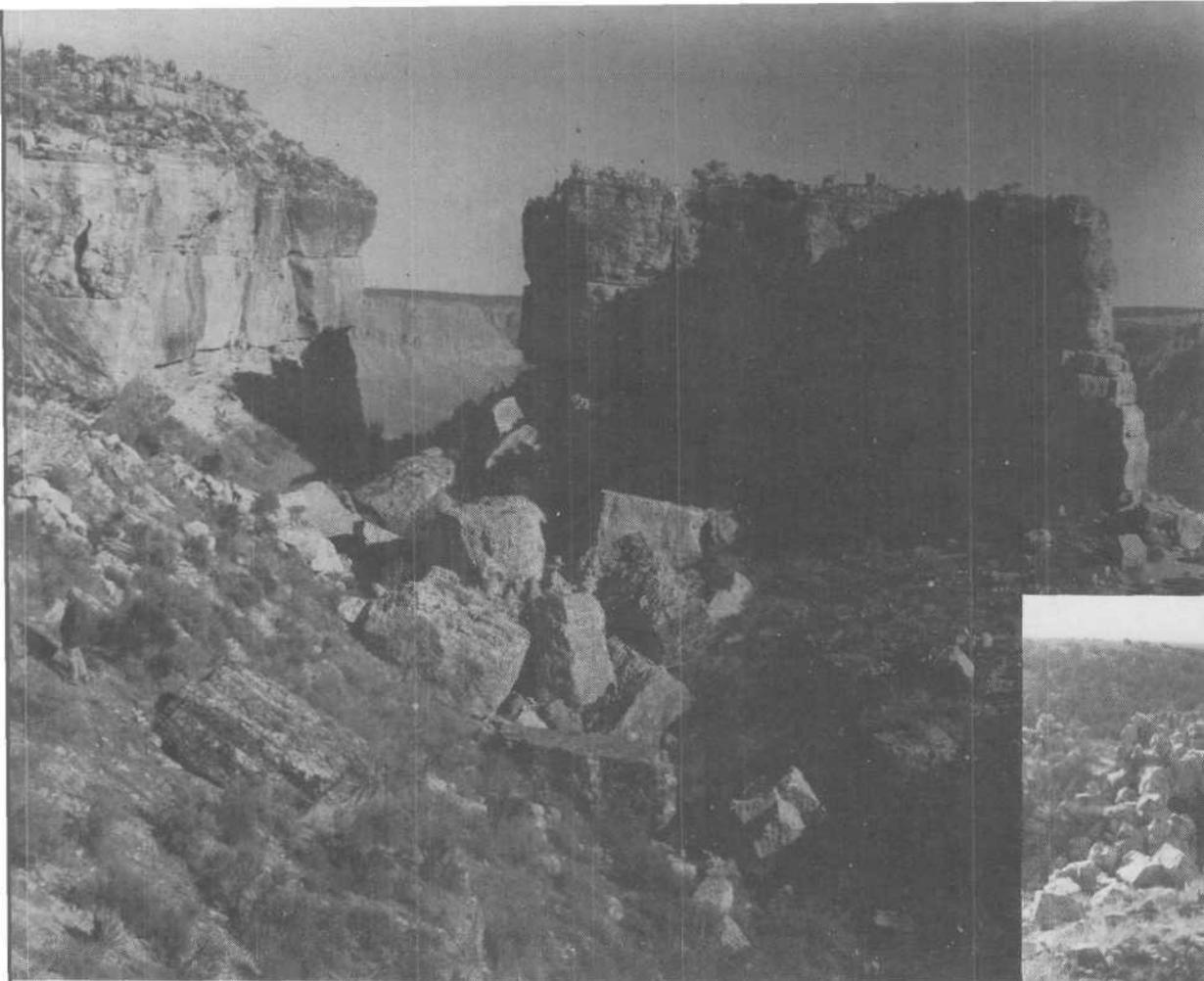
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Above and right: Two views of the jumbled pieces that at one time formed a five-foot-high wall.

HERE IS A remote and isolated promontory on the south rim of the Grand Canyon where an archeological mystery waits to be unraveled. Here, on a massive block of limestone, detached from the canyon's main rim, is found a strange block wall dating back to the dawn of antiquity. Who built the wall? When was it made? What was its purpose? All these questions remain unanswered. The National Park Service has had archeologists look at the site but they have come to no firm conclusions.

Through eons of geologic time a piece of Kaibab limestone became separated from the Coconino Plateau. The split created an island of rock nearly 100 yards long by some 10 to 20 yards wide. The distance between this block and the canyon rim is only 40 to 50 yards. The canyon rim is slightly higher than the block and is at an elevation of approximately 6,000 feet. While there is nothing larger than an occasional ephedra bush growing on the block, the vegetation on the nearby rim is a pinyon-juniper forest. Today the nearest source of water is a spring, some four miles away.

The curious rock wall was built along the length of this "island of rock," but

only on the side that faces the Coconino Plateau. There is no wall on the edge that overlooks Grand Canyon proper and the Colorado River some 4,000 feet below. The wall is made out of blocks of Kaibab limestone which is found everywhere in the vicinity and readily available. Some of the blocks weigh several hundred pounds and in places they have been stacked on top of each other three or four rows high. It is difficult to guess how high the wall was originally, perhaps five feet or more. Judging from the rock debris at the bottom of the cliff, the wall must have been at least partially eroded away over the centuries since it was built. In some places today there is just a basal row of rock perhaps a foot or two high, in other places the wall is still three or four feet high. One thing is certain, however, the wall is man-made; it is not some geologic oddity of nature.

In the center part of the island, where the block is the widest, the remains of a half a dozen enclosed walls suggest that building structures were incorporated into the wall. Nearby is a narrow crack deep in the island which goes down 30 feet to the base of the island. If the trunk of a pinyon tree were to be placed in this fissure, the slot would be just wide enough for a person to climb through to gain access to the top of the island. There is only one other route to climb to the top; and it is not very easy.

Mysterious Walls of the Grand Canyon

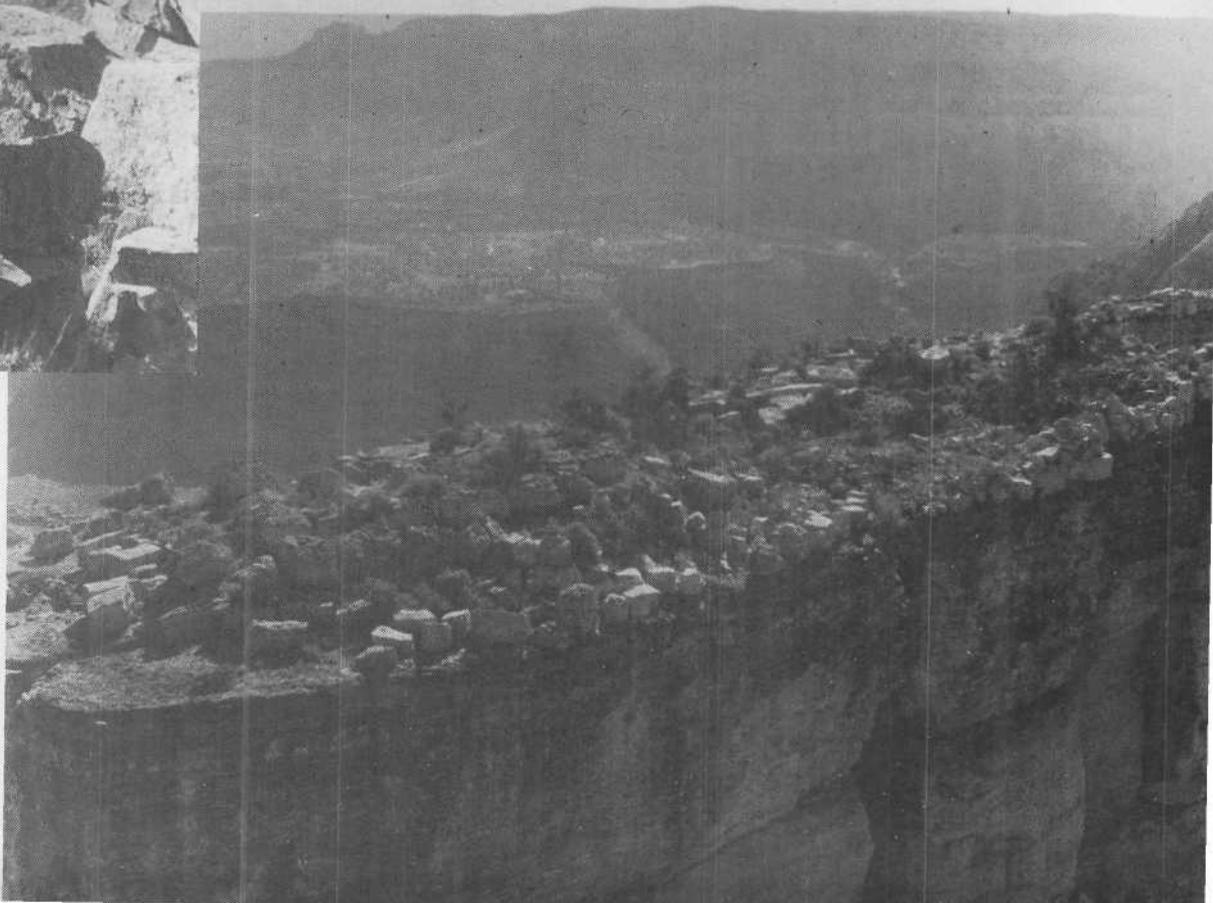
by ROGER MITCHELL

Anyone on top of the island would certainly have the advantage if he were defending this little "kingdom" from attack. The walls are perpendicular all the way around. An invader would have a precarious and exposed climb of only two routes. A few defenders could repel and hold off an army of hundreds. All

they would have to do is drop heavy rocks on those trying to climb up, or push them away with a long stick. Those on the island would be vulnerable only to spears, arrows, or rocks, launched from the main plateau rim. Of course, the block wall faces the main rim and would shield the defender from these missiles.



An aerial view shows the huge stones stacked right to the edge of the limestone promontory in the vastness of the Grand Canyon.



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For this reason it seems logical to think the wall was built for defensive purposes.

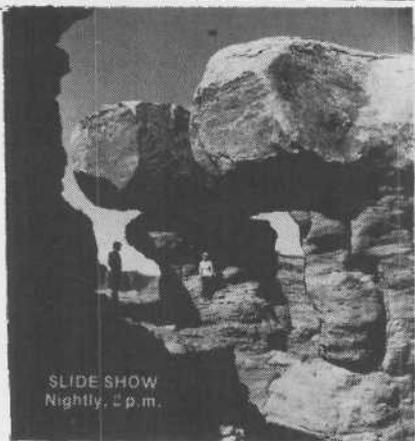
There are still many questions to be answered. Was this complex built by the Anasazi of the Colorado Plateau Country who inhabited parts of the Grand Canyon for 2,000 years and later built the village at Tusayan? Or was it built by the Patayan or Cohonina peoples who moved north onto the Coconino Plateau between 700 A.D. and 900 A.D.? If the wall was indeed a defensive fortification, who were the invaders and why would they choose this particular place to make a stand?

Other than the wall itself, and ruins of several structures, there are few other artifacts to be found on the surface. This might suggest that the site was not used very much, or was not used over a long period of time. Perhaps this is because there is no water in the immediate vicinity. At the base of the island there is one small cavity which looks like it might have once been enclosed with a mud wall forming a rodent-free storage compartment. Other fissures in the fractured limestone might also have been used as granaries, but there is no physi-



cal evidence left today to prove this theory. But if this was a defensive fortification, and if these were granaries, why would they be situated at the base of the cliff? There the foodstuffs would not be readily accessible to either attacker or defender. Either side could prevent the other from getting to them. Under a siege situation the defenders of the island must have made provisions to store food and water on top, although the length of time they could hold out in their stronghold seems very limited.

The evidence seems to suggest that the island fortress was built somewhere in the two century span beginning around 900 A.D. and ending around 1100 A.D. It was during this period that the Cohonina culture, like their neighbors to the west, the Cerbat peoples, moved north onto the south rim of the Grand Canyon. The Cohonina culture is known for its houses associated with walls which form a patio or courtyard. Some of these ruins do resemble forts in appearance, although the Cohoninas were not thought to be war-like, or have any particular enemies. The archeological record does not reveal any evidence of warfare. It is possible that some Cohonina family simply chose this block of



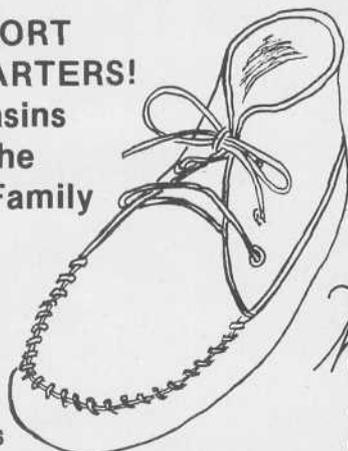
Walking Rocks in Canyonlands

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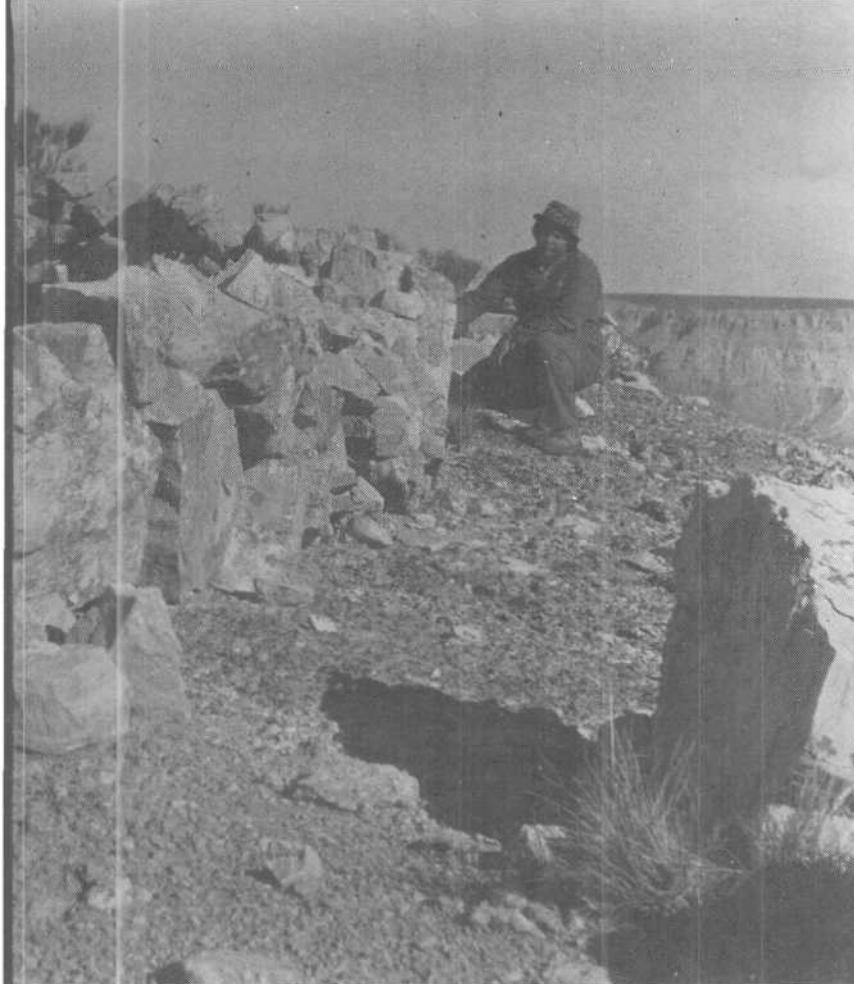
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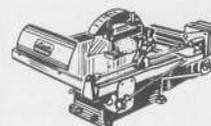
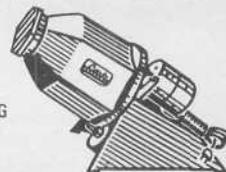
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Author examines mystery wall.

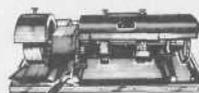
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limestone to live on with no particular thought of defense. The Cohoninas did enjoy their privacy, choosing to live scattered about, rather than clustered together in villages as the Anasazi did. And even to the Cohonina, the view of the canyon and the mighty Colorado River far below must have been every bit as awe-inspiring and magnificent as it is to us today. It would certainly be a spectacular place to live, even if it was a bit of a walk for water.

Nobody is really certain what happened to the Cohonina people. About 1150 A.D. they seem to have moved on. Some think they were displaced by the Cerbat peoples who slowly expanded eastward. A certain number apparently moved down into the canyon, particularly nearby Havasu Canyon, where their direct descendants, the Havasupai, still live today.

Because these ruins would be susceptible to complete destruction by vandalism, I will not disclose the site. But this ruin, like many others, awaits the explorer willing to get off the beaten path, and out of his car. This mysterious wall is but one of the many riddles in the Southwest which waits to be solved.

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CEDAR BREAKS

by MARY FRANCES STRONG

photos by Jerry Strong

WHEN THE hot winds of summer scorch the lowlands and broil the desert regions, it is time for a vacation in the high country. In Utah, they call their southwest corner "Color Country." Never was a name more appropriate! Rising abruptly from the high plains, nine- to eleven-thousand-foot peaks reach skyward — their shoulders mantled with fine stands of quaking aspen, fir, spruce and pine.

Though the vegetation adds greatly to the beauty of the scene, it is the land itself that gives rise to the name "Color Country." Here, tremendous forces of erosion have sculptured massive sedimentary deposits into an artistry that is magnificent to behold. Red, brown, vermillion, white and pink are but a few of the multitudinous colors to be seen in the dazzling array of picturesque geological formations.

Color Country's three National Parks — Capitol Reef, Bryce and Zion — as well as the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area — are well known, even to those who have not yet visited the region. A fifth outstanding area is Cedar Breaks National Monument. It is lesser known and often by-passed by vacationers hurrying to see "all the sights" possible.

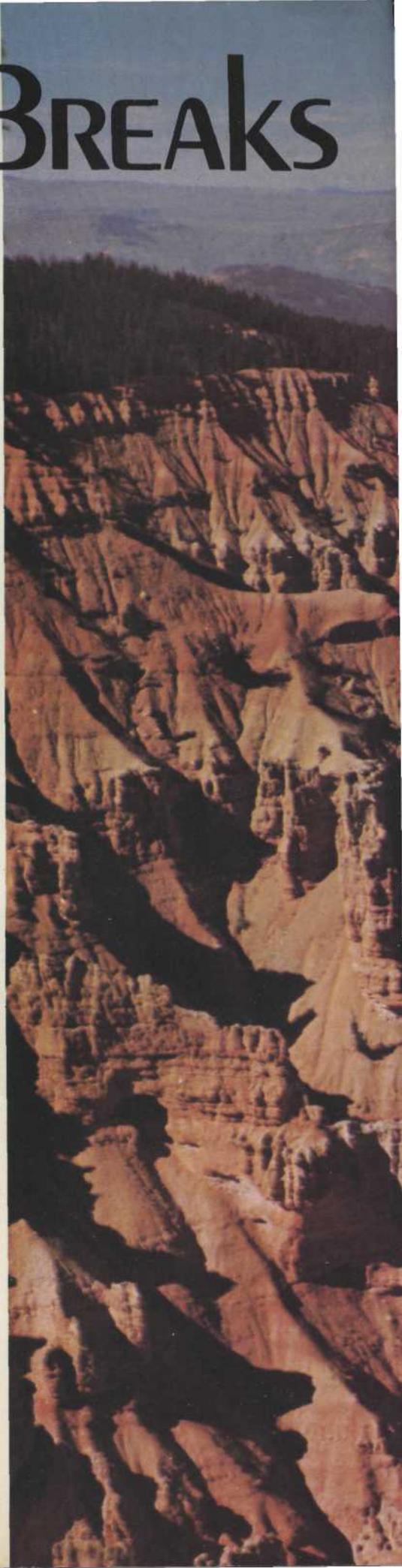
No two of these parks are alike. Each has its own unique formations, color and charm. While Cedar Breaks is the smallest in size, it can take the honors for being the highest with an elevation of 10,400 feet at the rim. The travel season is from early June to late October.

This is dependent upon the weather, as early fall storms frequently close the Monument.

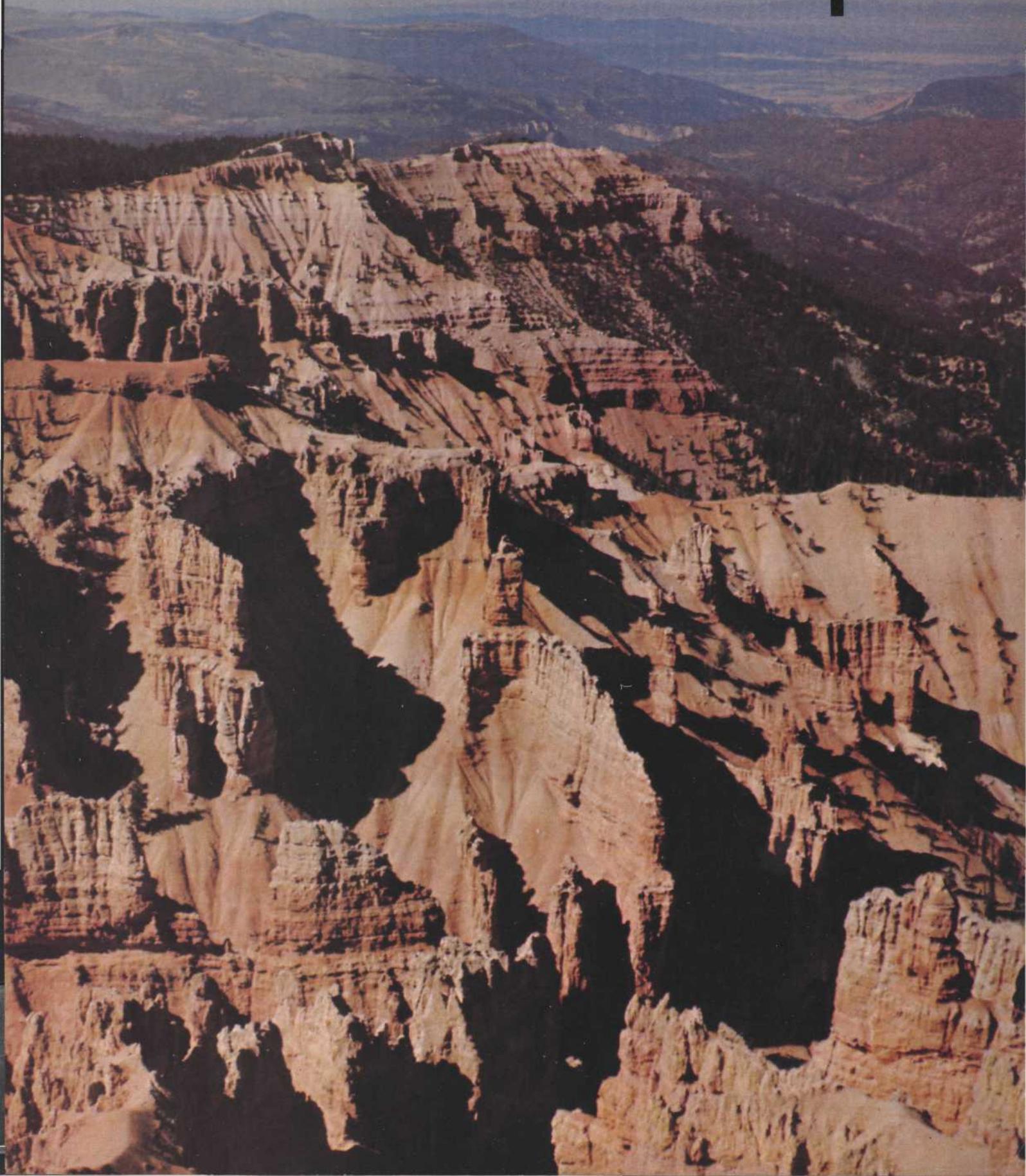
Jerry and I had been looking forward to visiting Cedar Breaks Monument and the Brianhead Agate locale. We had lingered longer in Nevada than planned, so it was near the end of October when we arrived in Cedar City, Utah. High, thin clouds told of storms in the north and the local weatherman predicted one was due to reach Cedar City. Our luck held and the next morning clear, blue skies greeted us, though high, thin clouds still remained on the western horizon. All was "go" for Cedar Breaks and Brianhead.

We headed east on Highway 14 through the vermillion gates formed by Hurricane Ridge. Cedar Canyon quickly narrowed and high walls towered far above us. Just below the road, Coal Creek rushed toward the plains. Along its banks, the golden leaves of quaking aspen shimmered in the first rays of the morning sun. We soon passed the Cedar City Steam Plant. It is located on the site of coal deposits, the presence of which led to the original settlement at the canyon's mouth. The plant is used to provide additional power at peak demand time.

A variety of landscapes were enjoyed as the highway snaked its way up the mountains. We drove through deep canyons, then out on high mountain shoulders where the view was endless. Far below, we could often see the road we had just traveled.



AND BRIANHEAD AGATE





Left: Brianhead Agate will be found in this small creek and along its banks. Just below the trees, are large outcrops of vein agate. Below: It is fun to collect in the creek where the water "shows" the colors. The chunk Jerry is removing proved to be a beautiful combination of red, yellow and black jasper in the basic agate.

The 17-mile drive from Cedar City to the Markagunt Plateau climbs over 4,100 feet and we found it one of the most scenic ever taken. We were too late for the glorious aspen color in the higher elevations but there was the beauty of prime trees and luxuriant undergrowth to admire.

Prior to the summit, we stopped at Zion Viewpoint. All one can say to describe the scene is "magnificent — breathtaking." Looking south across miles and miles of unspoiled wilderness, the massive rock formations of Zion stand out boldly on the skyline. We enjoyed a coffee break and tried to assimilate

late the beauty with our eyes.

From the viewpoint, it was a little over a mile to Markagunt Plateau where scattered patches of snow lay among the trees. We junctioned with Highway 143 — the Cedar Breaks Road — and followed it north. Vegetation began to change as our altimeter rose to over 10,000 feet. Open, grassy meadows now appeared between stands of Englemann Spruce and Alpine Fir.

Enroute to the Visitor's Center, Jerry spotted an interesting bird's nest. He guessed it to be that of a Goshawk and advised me to keep the old eyes open. His guess was confirmed when we sighted one of these beautiful raptors. Generally, I do not mention such sightings in order to prevent any possible nest-robbing or capture of immature birds for use in falconry. Since they are protected in the Monument, I can share with you the thrill of seeing one of the elusive, proud birds. The Goshawk appears to be diminishing and may soon be removed from the list of birds that may be taken for use in falconry.

The Visitor Center is open from June through Labor Day and a Park Ranger is on duty daily to answer questions and suggest places of interest. The center has exhibits explaining the formation of the colorful escarpment, as well as information about the monument's animal and plant life.

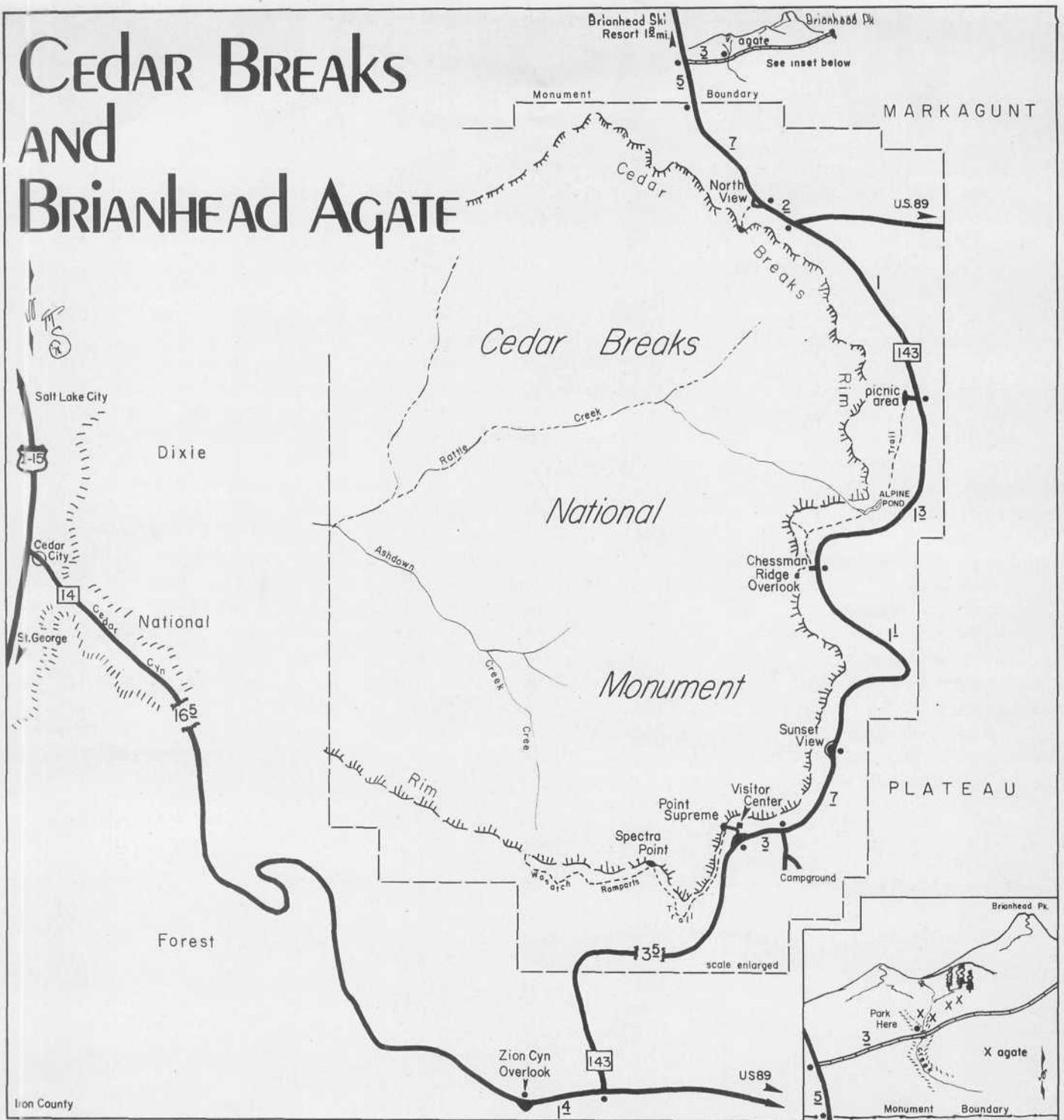
From the Center, at Point Supreme, a short walk leads to the rim where, far below, the picturesque formations are exposed in all their magnificence. Like a kaleidoscope, the color and form is ever changing with varying light and associated shadows. Brilliant in the noonday sun, this natural amphitheater appears dark and forboding when storm clouds gather overhead. The name "Cedar Breaks" was given the formation by early Mormon settlers. They referred to broken country as "breaks" and mistakenly called the large junipers "cedars."

A two-mile hike along the Wasatch Ramparts Trail (it begins at the Center) will take visitors to Spectra Point and a stand of Bristlecone Pines at the trail's end. The oldest tree here is believed to be about 3,000 years of age.

A short distance east of the Center there is a very nice campground and picnic area among the pines. The campground has 30 units (trailers o.k.) and a



CEDAR BREAKS AND BRIANHEAD AGATE



daily fee of \$2.00 is charged. Water and sanitary facilities are provided. The campground is open from June 15th to September 15th. Keep in mind the elevation here is 10,400 feet. Take it easy until you become acclimated.

Be sure to take the five-mile rim drive and stop at all the viewpoints. Each will give you a different perspective of the Cedar Breaks formation. Watch for the Monument's wildlife — there is plenty. You will recognize ground squirrels, chipmunks and red squirrels. Marmots

and conies (pika) will be seen scampering on the rocky slopes. Weasels, badgers and coyotes are not uncommon. Occasionally, a mountain lion will be observed. Mule deer can generally be seen grazing along the rim during early morning and late afternoon.

There are many interesting birds in the Monument — White-throated Swift, Stellar's Jay, Violet-green Swallow, Blue Grouse, Golden and Bald Eagles. One, Clark's Nutcracker, is truly a bird of the very high country. They are seldom seen

below 6,000 feet elevation. You can't miss these jaunty, handsome birds with light grey bodies and large, white patches on their black wings and tail. They are friendly birds and will often be regular guests at your camp table.

A stop at Sunset View will reward you with a spectacular vista of the amphitheater and an almost endless panorama of the wilderness area to the west. The forests appear dense and lush. Not a road mars the scene. It is land primeval

Continued on Page 39

WONDERS OF

IT WAS A STILL, warmish, late evening in Mid Easter Week at Death Valley National Monument. I had just conducted a double-feature slide talk at the Stove Pipe Wells Hotel lobby and was enjoying the quiet walk back to my trailer. For the past several days, ripping winds and stinging sands had kept most activities to a minimum, and this new stillness was only punctuated by songs and laughter from the crowded campground. Small groups of people were lounging on the porches of the motel units enjoying the sight of the mysterious sand dunes bathed in moonbeams.

Out of the quietness suddenly came, "Oh, Mr. Gebhardt, Mr. Gebhardt — could you please come talk to us?"

"Yes, ma'am," I replied, and made my way through the parked cars to the small group of men and women on the motel porch.

A question came from a lady in the center of the group, "We were just discussing your first slide talk tonight —

what did you call it?"

"The title was 'Death Valley Oddities,' a collection of strange sights and scenes most visitors don't get to see.

"That's exactly what we were discussing, Chuck," said one dignified-looking gentlemen. "My wife and I have been coming here to Death Valley for over 30 years now, and many of the things you showed in the slides were not the least familiar to us!"

Having been through this many times before, I politely explained that I had recognized the fact that all visitors did not spend large amounts of time exploring the Valley as I did, and the "Death Valley Oddities" talk was one way to share these experiences.

"That aspect we understood, young man, but what we meant were the contrasts of changes you had illustrated; the changing scene with respect to time, weather, and man. It just seemed to us that these were common, if not altogether obvious, influences on the Valley's makeup."

"What you say is true, sir, but very few visitors have your insight, and these changes should be understood to be appreciated. My talk usually passes over the causes of change lightly, but the effects are illustrated as they are more real to the visitor; they can be felt, seen, or heard."

My last remark seemed to hang there in the air, empty and unattended, and I was concerned that I might have committed some offense to their intelligence. I added, "In other words, my slides draw attention to what happens as a result of a road change, or a campground closure, or perhaps extra heavy fall rains."

"In other words, Mr. Gebhardt," said the lady who had first called me over to the group, "we were paying attention to the obvious causes of change, and overlooking the details of the effects so that what you illustrated appeared new to us — right?"

"Right, ma'am. And if you people could join us tomorrow on a short hike to Hole-in-the-Rock Spring, we can show

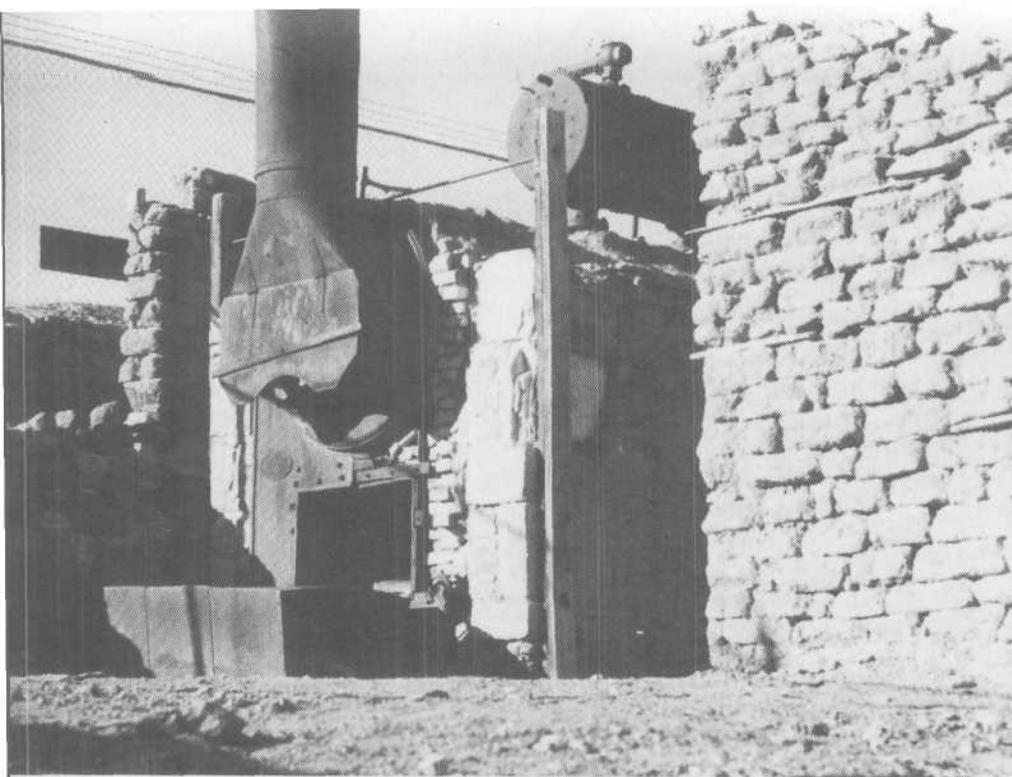


DEATH VALLEY

by
**CHUCK
GEBHARDT**

A scene in old Mosaic Canyon [right] prior to the last few years of heavy rainfall which filled in areas such as this with gravel. The mysterious moving rocks of Racetrack Playa [opposite page] leave their trail but barely scrape the surface soil layer.





Old Harmony Borax Works site, the first successful borax operation in Death Valley.

you in real life what you have seen on the slides."

The entire group indicated an excited interest in seeing first-hand some of the "Oddities" that had been shown at the slide talk and, following belated introductions, we finally bid each other goodnight.

Rarely are changes of any sort subtle and undetectable in Death Valley. For example, if you have not been to the Valley since prior to the fall of 1976, the boardwalk surrounding Salt Creek will be a new experience. The primary purpose of the wooden walkway was to prevent further extension of the waters into separate tributaries. People traffic over the years, back and forth across the creek banks, caused many new paths for the water which in turn threatened to reduce the main creek level. Since this is one of the homes of the Desert Pupfish, their survival was dependent on the water level and that survival was being jeopardized. The boardwalk now directs the foot traffic along the best parts of the creek, and permits the visitor to view the pupfish without any hazard to their already tenuous existence.

The above-average rainfall in the past two years (three to four inches) has created some new washes, expanded larger washes into minor canyons, and resulted in spectacular spring flower displays. The summer rains of 1976 were heavy enough to close the Park to in-

coming and outgoing traffic for two days, but also brought about premature blooming of plants in lower canyons during the month of November. This 1977-1978 winter has already appeared to break the California drought in most parts of the state, and the spring visitor to Death Valley this season will be the recipient of an outstanding flower show. A fringe benefit of good snows in the surrounding mountain areas is the increased water table level allowing blooms to remain on the plants a little longer than normal.

The only permanent road closure that comes to mind is the Trail Canyon Road — once upon a time the most beautiful offroad adventure in the Monument. For several years, heavy rains accompanied by severe runoff from the upper canyon drove all manner of debris down-canyon to create a monstrous alluvial fan of rubble. A couple of years ago, a hardy group of offroad drivers from the California Association of 4WD Clubs cut a road in almost 10 miles before rain, snow and time forced a halt. The scars of the canyon debris can easily be seen from the main highway, and Trail Canyon remains closed to this day.

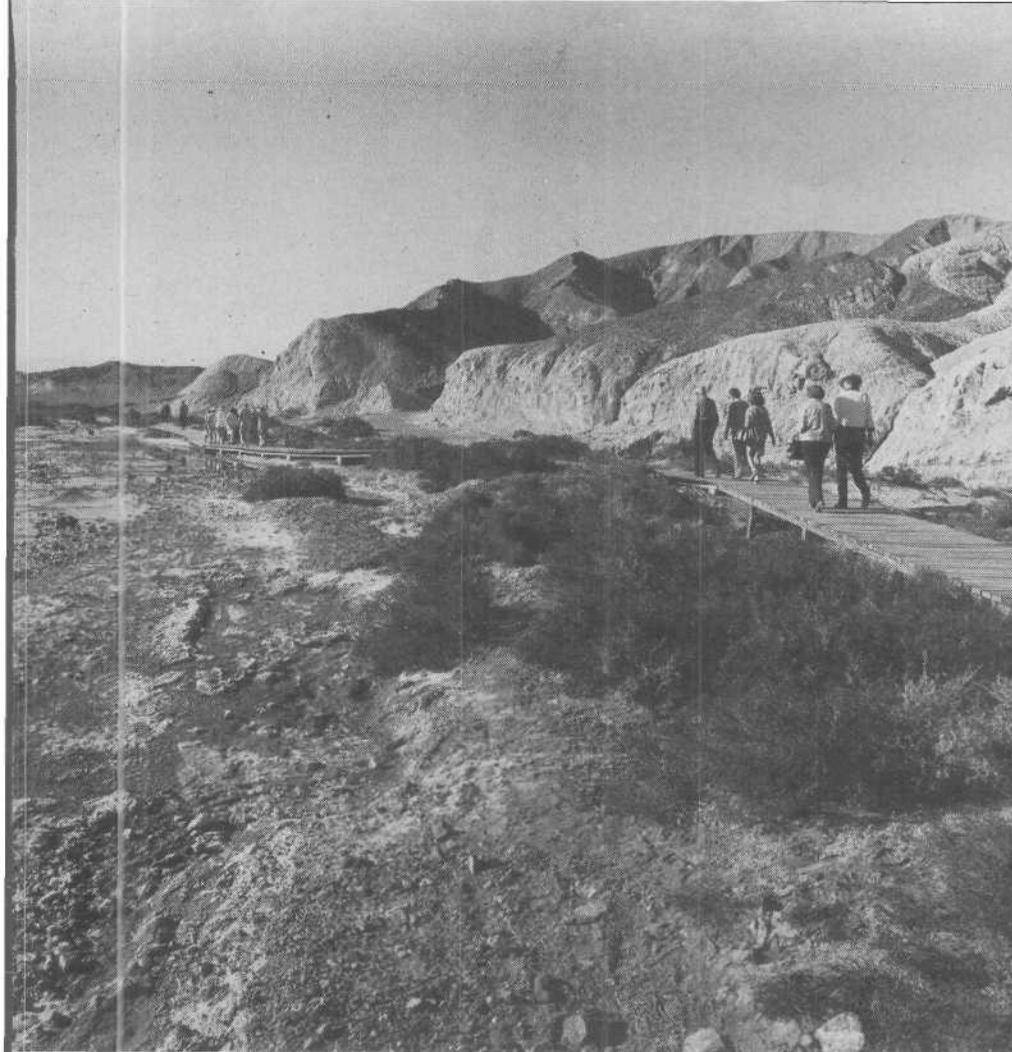
Should you venture in and around the sand dunes east of Stove Pipe Wells Village, you will see the effects of the rains of the past couple of years in the scars of lakes. Following a particularly heavy downpour in September, one

could count at least five minor lakes amid the dunes when viewing the scene from the Grotto Canyon road. In areas of clay-laden soils, the lake beds are sheets of cracked and jagged mud blocks. Where the soil material is predominantly sand with just a trace of clay, the ground surface has formed into fine curls of dried mud as delicate as the wood curls from a well-adjusted carpenter's plane. To see these areas best, drive a short distance up the Grotto Canyon road to look down upon the dunes and the sites where lakes once stood.

Changes to accommodations and services in general throughout the Monument have been few except for gasoline and food prices. The campgrounds in the Furnace Creek and Stove Pipe Wells areas have been enlarged and improved slightly in the past few years, but during the peak visitor periods, these changes are hardly discernible. Speaking of peak visitor periods, the energy crisis of late 1973 and early 1974 greatly reduced visitor population in the Valley overall. Due to a record visitation over the Easter Week period, the 1973 population topped 600,000 for the first time in Park history. By the end of 1974, the number dropped to 384,000. Evidently, this was a temporary slowdown and the magnetism of Death Valley won out. The recent visitor population statistics indicate the figure to be back over the 600,000 mark, so we should all be prepared to get back in line for gas, food, and Scotty's Castle tickets! By the way, in case you hadn't heard, the service station at Furnace Creek Ranch has switched from Arco to Chevron.

The Park Service at Death Valley has undergone somewhat of an organizational facelifting resulting in divisions for the various functions they perform. Of most benefit to the visitor was the formation of the Interpretive Division. From this talented group of Service employees emanates the walks and talks conducted throughout the Monument. Even though their schedule of events from years past was impressive, the latest schedules appear to have more in-depth walks and talks which are carefully planned and interestingly executed.

Knowing of these changes, whether man-made or natural, is of little consequence to the visitor unless they can be experienced first-hand. Regardless of your age, sex, or size, take advantage of



A late afternoon stroll on the boardwalk along the west side of Salt Creek.

the many opportunities to accompany a Park Ranger or myself on a brief exploration of an historical site, a natural phenomenon, or a colorful panorama. Then, and only then, you will witness . . .

The first rays of the morning sun wash the western side of the Panamints with strong tones of pink and red. Far out on the Devil's Golfcourse, the salt pinnacles begin to glisten and sparkle like a field of grotesquely-shaped diamonds. The silence is gently nudged by the sunrise symphony of the salt crystals — faintly at first light — but clearer and more definitive as the sun's gradual rising sends warmer rays for the crystals to absorb.

A rainbow of color dances across the Salt Creek Hills when the sun reflects its beauty off the surface of the moving waters of Salt Creek. The prominent spike of Manly Beacon rises above the still-darkened Badlands much like a golden finger pointing up at the softly colored morning clouds, dressed now in pastel shades. Red Cathedral has justified its naming as the eastern wall turns a brilliant red and its sculptured surface accented by shadows.

Desolation is replaced with beauty as the sand dunes spread their shadows across Mesquite Flat, and their contours appear to alter and exaggerate with each five degree rise of the sun. The neighboring field of arrowweed shocks cast lengthy shadows towards the dunes while their opposite sides are drenched in pink light.

Soon, the morning must move on to be replaced by the harsh light of mid-day. There is little of real beauty at this time except for remote canyons and mountain retreats where such beauty is timeless and enjoyed by the dedicated lovers of Death Valley. As midday gives in to late afternoon, one seeks the wonders of colors in the eastern Valley bejeweled by the red light of the waning sun.

These are the wonders of Death Valley change. There is much more here to fill your every hour today while tomorrow stands by awaiting your presence and attention. Rise early to follow the sun; see, touch, smell, and hear everything within your range, and Death Valley will be yours forever! □

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New Western Artist

Norberto Reyes
AICA

by D. A. WETTERBERG



"Loving Care"
oil,
30"x40"

Norberto A. Reyes,
AICA



THE PAINTINGS are enchanting scenes of the Southwest; old leather boots, sweat-stained felt hats, faces of Indians, old miners and ranch hands. The artist stands among them, smiling as he talks.

"They see my long black hair, the shape of my eyes, my cheekbones, and they ask very seriously what tribe I am from." Norberto Reyes is not an Indian, nor a cowboy, either. His heritage is Filipino, but he proudly refers to himself as "an American artist—an artist who loves to paint the West."



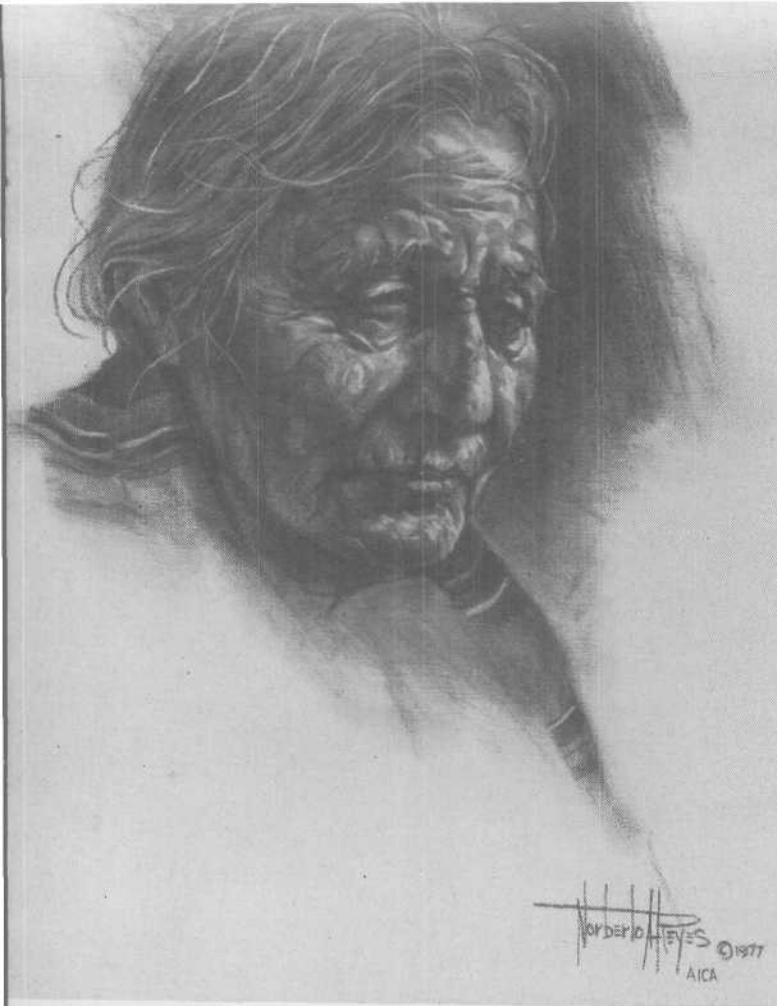
His love for Western themes started when he was a boy in the Philippines. His parents filled his entire childhood with plans to live in the United States someday. His dreams turned to visions of the deserts and the sagebrush of Arizona, California and Nevada, of cowboys and Indians. Western fantasies were played out on grandpa's farm amid a natural setting of horses and cows. As

an older boy he read intensely about Western lore in the library of the United States Information Service.

After a taste of success as an artist in the Philippines (today his paintings hang in the Manila Museum of Art), he began his plan to come to the United States, in his words, "to partake of what is good in America, to expand, to grow."

Carrying out the plan became

complicated by the United States quota system for immigrants to the United States. Reyes had fine credentials as a successful artist, architect, television director and production designer. But these were openings filled many times over by United States citizens. The only open avenue to the United States was as a tourist. So, with ten dollars in his pocket and 15 days on a tourist pass,



Left: -
"Indian Study"
Charcoal,
16"x20"

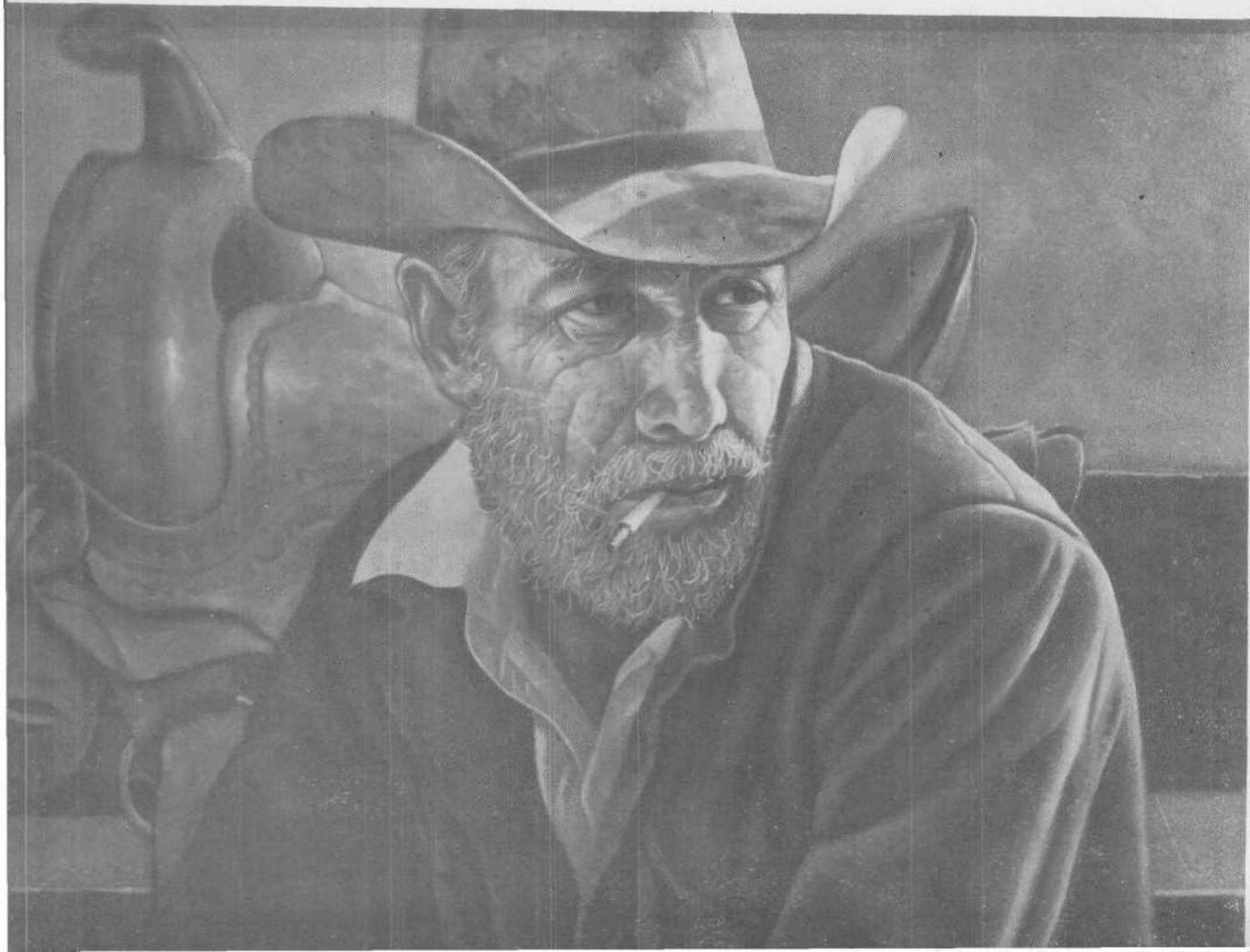
Below:
"Ranch Hand"
Oil,
16"x24"

Reyes arrived at Los Angeles International Airport in 1967, determined to stay.

He managed a series of legal delays for his return to the Philippines and filled them with furious energy. This energy, a firm dedication to purpose, and unflagging hope overcame each obstacle. During this period he painted for various tastes: seascapes, snow scenes, barns, animals, children, old people, nudes. Art galleries noticed Reyes' work and featured it. Famous collectors—Cornell Wilde, Baron Hilton, Dennis Weaver—bought his canvasses.

Good fortune reached a peak with two paintings which became instantly famous. In 1968 his portrait of Martin Luther King won first prize over the entries of hundreds of other established artists in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's Memorial Contest. In 1969 his portrait honoring Apollo astronauts Collins, Aldren and Armstrong became nationally popular. It was displayed in major cities throughout the United States, shown on television, in newspapers and in magazines.

Secure in his United States



citizenship, granted in 1973, Reyes now paints at his studio in Canoga Park, California. His Hawaiian wife resembles an Indian princess. His handsome little boy and his sprightly baby girl color and sketch alongside Dad as he works. They appear, often as Indian children, in dozens of sketches and paintings throughout the house.

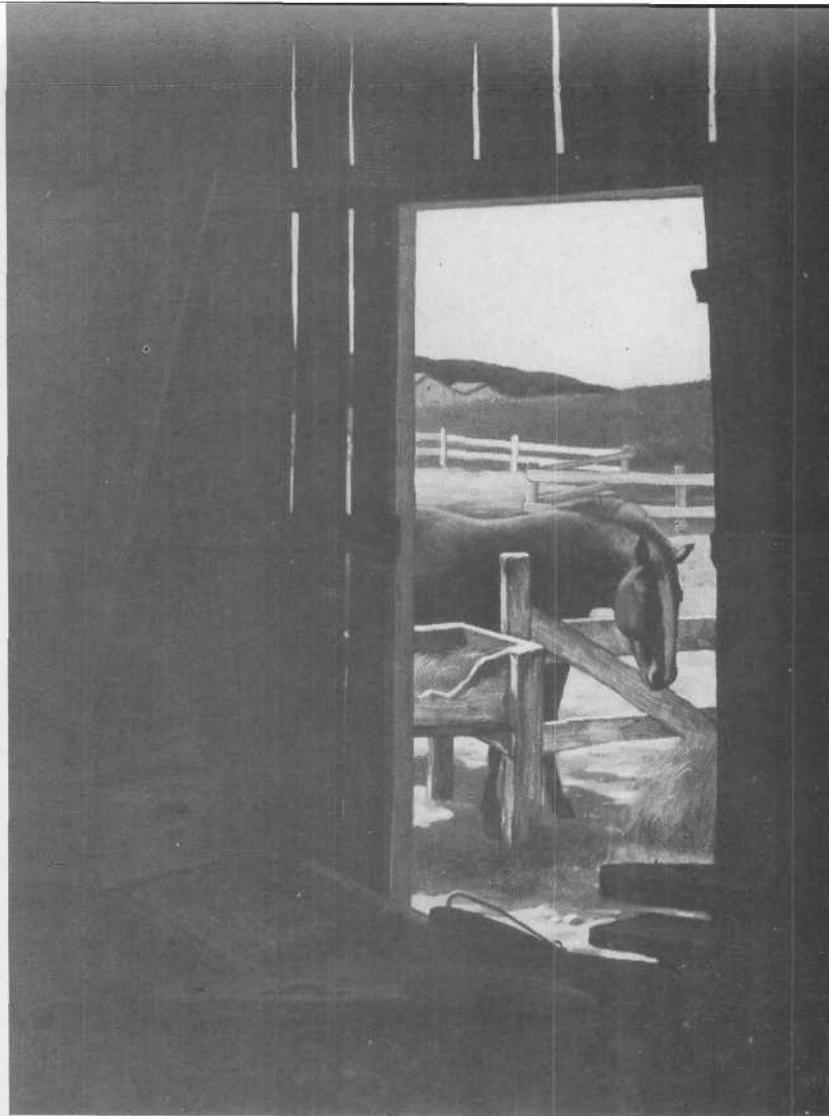
His new, hard-earned reputation as a Western artist charms him, and he is grateful for the popularity of his Western paintings. These themes are his fascination, and he devotes himself entirely to them. Hitching posts, horses, corrals are done with subtleties of light and detail which bring out their magic, their strength, their beauty.

Last year Norberto Reyes celebrated his tenth year in the United States by winning seven awards in Western Art shows, among them the Gold Medal, AICA competition; First Prize, May Art Festival, Chriswood Gallery, Temecula, California; and First Prize and Best of Show, FFP Western Art Exhibit.

His paintings can be seen at the coming American Indian and Cowboy Artists Society's annual art exhibition in San Dimas, California, April 28, 29 and 30, as well as the Desert Magazine Art Gallery in Palm Desert. □

Right:
*"Through
the Barn
Door"*
*Oil,
30"x40"*

Below:
*"First
Born"*
*Oil,
24"x36"*



HE DREAMED of TRAILS UNTRAMMELED

by JEAN CROWL



Jim London, ?—1968.

*When grub is on the boards, me lad,
The diamond hitch is thrown.
You walk around it, check it up,
Then it's time to get you goin'!*

*You're heading out into the space
All filled with rock and sand,
A kind of heavenly hell on earth —
The prospector's promised land.*



These lines from Jim London's poem, *Runty's Advice to Others*, caught my eye, and prompted me to decipher pages of cramped scribbles on the back of old topo maps, and charts from the California Division of Mines. To me his poems well express the philosophy of a vanished species, the single-blanket prospector of the American West. Jim, who died in 1968, was one of the last of that breed.

I started out with a very different plan for writing this story — but Jim sort of painted his own picture. When we first met him, he was an elderly, wiry little man; frail in appearance, erect in carriage. Steel-rimmed spectacles perched on his nose, and an old base-

ball cap on his long, sparse grey hair. He wore a neat beard, and pretty scruffy clothes. First impression was not imposing, but the smile in his eyes and his soft-spoken manner made it clear that here was a gentleman. He was a mild man, never profane, never noisy; but never, never meek!

Jim first saw the western desert as a child, traveling with his peddler father, whom he described as a tinker. They traveled the mining camps from Tonopah, Goldfield and Rhyolite to the Dale mining district east of Twentynine Palms, and on to Barstow and San Bernardino for merchandise.

In the '30s, Jim was one of a small group of desert dwellers who congregated at Valerie Jean, in the Coachella Valley. At that time he was eking out a living selling desert agates and jaspers polished by gasoline-powered lapidary equipment and a primitive tumbler. The tumbler was two old tires, filled with stones and abrasives, rotated by a gas engine. He sold the results to ranchers and homesteaders, who had no idea that the rocks Jim picked up on their land could be so pretty! Apparently he sold enough to keep body and soul together and pay for an occasional prospecting trip.

Even then, the pattern seemed to be set; in packrat fashion, Jim would meet

his needs by prevailing on someone to accept a service or product that was really neither needed nor wanted, in exchange for funds he needed. Sometime after the Valerie Jean era, he drifted north to Twentynine Palms. It was there, 22 years ago, that we "acquired" Jim as an elderly handyman-dependent; inheriting him, as it were, from another small businessman. Our adoptive relationship developed in the same fashion that people acquire cats. He adopted us! We were one more in the long succession of his adopted families.

To give Jim due credit, he worked willingly in exchange for money received. Of course, by the time we met him the work was usually "made" work; totally unneeded by the sponsor, a kind of privately operated WPA leaf-raking project, to give Jim some light work to justify the handouts he accepted as his due.

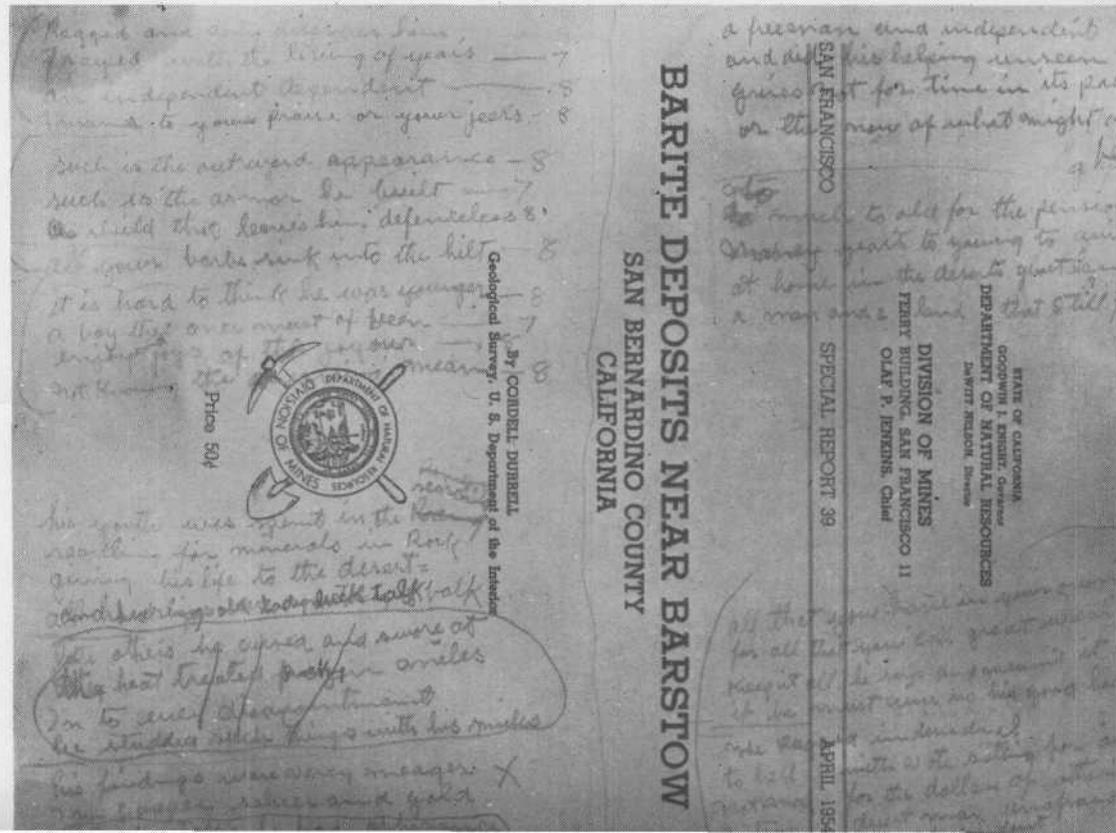
He might well have been the author of "Please, Uncle Sam, I'd rather do it myself!" No government pension for Jim! To apply for that would be accepting charity. Occasional hesitant suggestions that he apply for a pension were met with righteous indignation. However, accepting gifts of money, lodging, cigarettes and other amenities of life from his friends did not seem like charity to Jim.

Self-educated, his formal education ended with second grade. He was an extremely fine mineralogist, an excellent lapidarist and a mighty fine conversationalist. He read everyone's old magazines and newspapers. One of my early memories of Jim is seeing him frequently at the local greasy spoon, nursing an hour's old cup of coffee and studying intently a borrowed high school chemistry or physics text.

When we first knew Jim he was living in his old truck, sleeping in it wherever his day ended. But the Law came to '29 about the same time we did, and Jim was terrified of being picked up as a vagrant. Could he please park his truck behind our veterinary hospital and live in it there? He'd be glad to act as night watchman for our hospital and home — in an era when no one in '29 ever locked their doors!

Well, of course he could. But then came the problem of this rather dirty, disreputable old man hanging around the place. So matters progressed to where the shower in the hospital became Jim's. Cast-off and barely-used clothing became his, and he taught me mineralogy and lapidary skills. For years, I would check Jim's statements against authoritative books; he was always right and usually easier to understand than the books.

Original draft for London's poetry was written on old mining reports.



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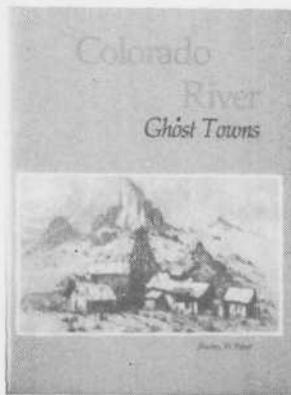
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Once Jim even got a job! In the late '50s, he was hired as a watchman for the movie company making a Disney film in the Joshua Tree National Monument. He almost didn't take that job. He had to have a Social Security card, and not only was that government interference with his independence, but something else surfaced. He confided to the friend he was adopting at the time that he could

relaxed. He had been positively poised for flight from the moment he sent in the application. Later, when the job was over, he willingly accepted unemployment pay. He had enjoyed the job and could feel he had earned that benefit.

As a long-time desert dweller, who understood and loved his environment, he had worried about the confined wild animals who made up the movie cast. But he approved and appreciated the manner in which they were pensioned off. Jim was instructed to remain at the site for at least six months, continuing to feed the coyotes, kit foxes, rabbits, snakes and others who had played their roles in the movie; but to leave their pen doors open. Only when a month had passed without any coming back for their food could Jim consider his job completed.

While living on the movie set, Jim had developed an interest in painting. With a steady income, he bought painting supplies and equipment, and set out to be an artist. He returned to living in his truck in our back yard and attempted to sell his paintings, some of which were appealing. A number of '29ers still own a "Calcite" painting (his chosen *nom de plume*), silent testimony to Jim's friends helping him out again.

But sales were not too good in '29. There were too many professional artists in the area. So Jim decided to try his luck selling along the highway. He hit the road, setting up along U.S. 66 in the Cadiz area. traveling much as he had years before. He was far too old to go back to living in his truck, and he worried!

And indeed, old age and "soft living" at the movie set made Jim realize that he could no longer go on that way. The old age of the truck had a bit to do with that decision, too.

So — back to our hospital at Pill Hill. Jim well knew we had a five-acre homestead with a tiny cabin on it. After a few days of hints too broad to be ignored, we offered the cabin (pretty primitive housing, but housing) to Jim for his temporary use. Temporary turned out to be the last 11 years of his life. He spent those years painting and, finally, writing his poems, while a succession of friends continued to provide most of his basic needs, from flu shots to cast-off brushes and half-used oil paints.

After his death in the winter of 1968-

IN HIS STEPS

By Jim London

*Holes he dug in the mountains,
Some shallow, some narrow and deep.*

*Blisters were most of his findings,
Little of ore worth a keep.*

*Cold that chills to the marrow —
Not zero, not even a freeze —
But the kind that jells the thinking,
That stiffens the ankles and knees.*

*He has seen the joys of the desert,
Enjoyed the pleasures of night,
Reveled in warmth of sunshine,
Knew the gods of his desert were right.*

*He lone-wolfed life in its living,
Yet he had no hermit's degree.
He wished no crowds around him;
The lone wolf alone is free.*

*Now come the years in their closing;
No regrets for the wins, or the loss
Of a lifetime spent in the seeking.
No word of bearing a cross.*

*A man whose steps you now follow,
But follow in high powered cars.
He dreamed of trails untrammelled.
You dream of a highway to Mars.*

never go into San Bernardino. He had done "something" years before, and if the authorities ever caught him, he would go to prison. He also admitted that London was "not exactly" his real name.

He was finally prevailed upon to apply for the Social Security card. He applied as G.C. London, and knocked about 10 years off his real age on the application. When the card arrived, Jim visibly

1969, when we cleaned out the cabin — its contents mostly *Desert Magazine*, *Arizona Highways*, and California Division of Mines publications — we found his poems. Among them *Old Runty*, clearly autobiographical, caught at our hearts the most:

*Ragged and dirty describes him,
Frayed with the living of years.
An independent dependent
Immune to your praise or your jeers.
Such is the outward appearance,
Such is the shield that he built:
A shield that leaves him defenseless—
Your barbs all sink in to the hilt.*

*It's hard to think he was younger,
A boy that once must have been,
Enjoying the joys of the joyous,
Not knowing the meaning of mean.
His youth was spent in the searching,
Seeking for minerals in rock.
Giving his life to the desert,
And hearing old Lady Luck talk.*

*His findings were very meager
In copper and silver and gold.
Yet his living of life was freedom,
A wealth that seldom is sold.
He made the rush to the Klondike,
Surrendered to bugs that bite.
Rushed to the hills of Goldfield
And the calling of Rhyolite.*

*Took part in the booms of the
boomtowns
And the booms took part of him.
He pulled himself up the ladder
And fell well over the rim.
Broken and hungry and weary,
A grin on his face to the sun;
A hundred ventures and failures;
The goal, the winning of one.*

*The song now comes to its ending,
Old eyes still seeking the hills.
The find is yours for the taking —
His profit, the prospector's thrills.*

Reading that poem, a local art dealer who had helped Jim a great deal said, with tears in her eyes, "It makes me feel badly about the time I told him I wouldn't handle his paintings."

A lot of us wept a bit about our "independent dependent," and shared a few guilt feelings. "We should have done more," or "We should have done it

more graciously."

But, somehow, I think Jim understood and was pretty satisfied with his life as he lived it. He never surrendered his precious independence until his final ambulance ride to the county hospital.

And true to his packrat philosophy, he always gave something in exchange for what he received. Looking back, I incline to Jim's belief: Since in so many ways he gave us more than we gave him, there was, truly, no charity involved. □

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MONITOR'S MOR

STATE ROUTE 89 over Monitor Pass wasn't built for those in a hurry. It packs a lot of climbing and an even steeper descent into 17 kinky miles. But it is uncrowded and passes through some of California's most rugged, unspoiled scenery.

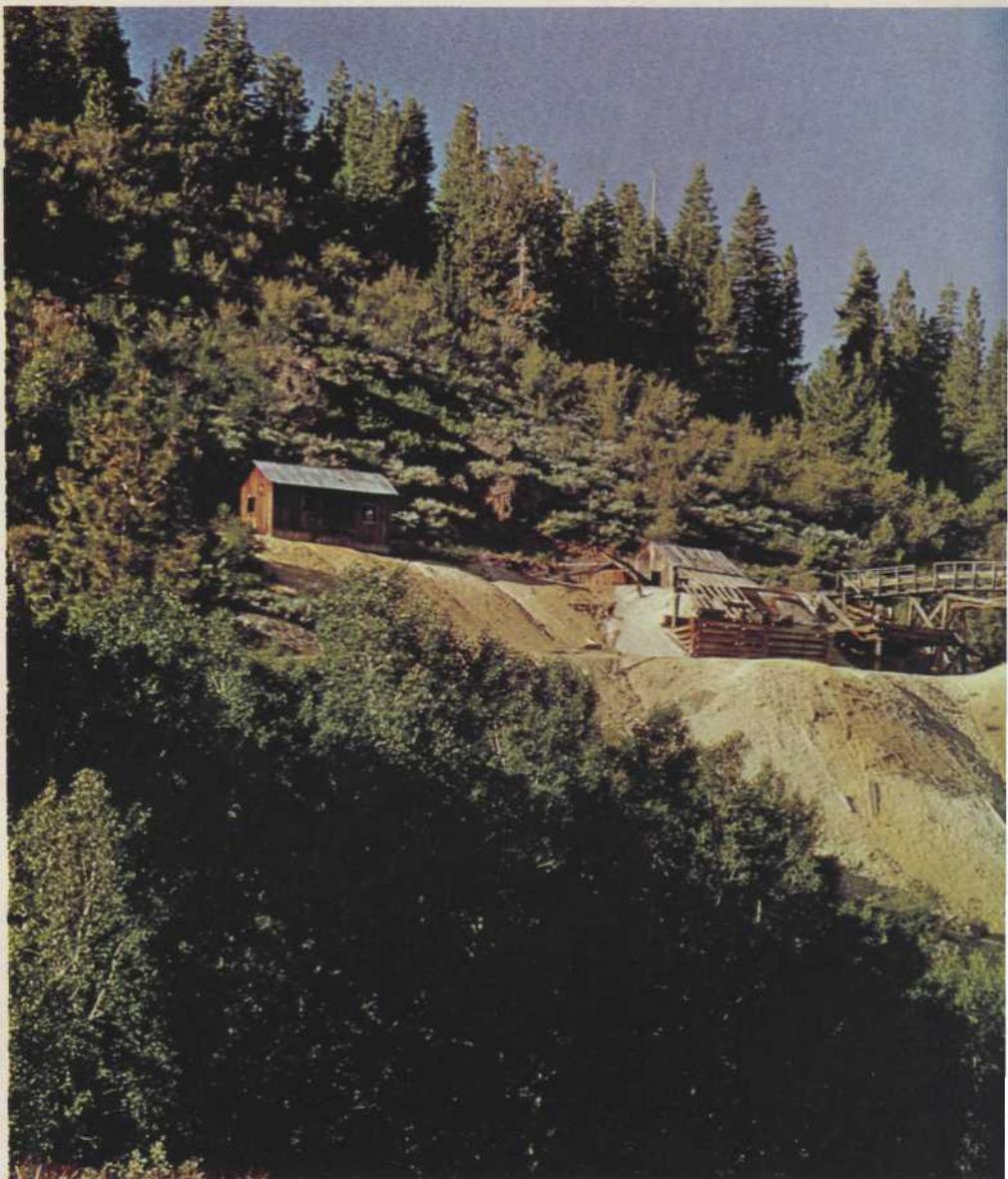
Completed in 1954, the Monitor Pass route closed a gap in California's highway system. It provided a direct link between Markleeville, the tiny hamlet that serves as Alpine County's seat of government, with Bridgeport, the only slightly larger seat of Mono County, without the necessity of traveling out of the state. Weather providing, that is. For Alpine County is aptly named. This is high country with the actual pass at 8,314 feet. Winter comes early and frequently lingers until late spring.

But once the snow has melted a massive carpet of wildflowers tints the hillsides and meadows. Lavender larkspur, sunny yellow buttercups, and wild onions, shading from a delicate pink to creamy white, are but a few of the many species which mingle in a palette of rainbow colors.

Although the highway offers a good glimpse at nature's spectacular display, the show off the road is even better. To reach the back country you can take either the Morning Star or the Leviathan Road. Both are dirt roads which join together north of the highway to form a loop drive through Toiyabe National Forest lands. In addition to scenery and wildflowers, the loop winds through some of Alpine County's colorful mineralized mountains and past the sites of early day mining operations.

Both roads are graded from time to time, but it is advisable to check on current conditions at the Markleeville Ranger Station. One stretch of the Morning Star Road is especially rough and rocky, and at times not recommended for ordinary passenger vehicles. Even our Jeep once bogged down in a snowdrift, preventing us from making the entire loop during a 4th of July outing.

Six miles south of Markleeville, State Route 89 turns east and begins its as-



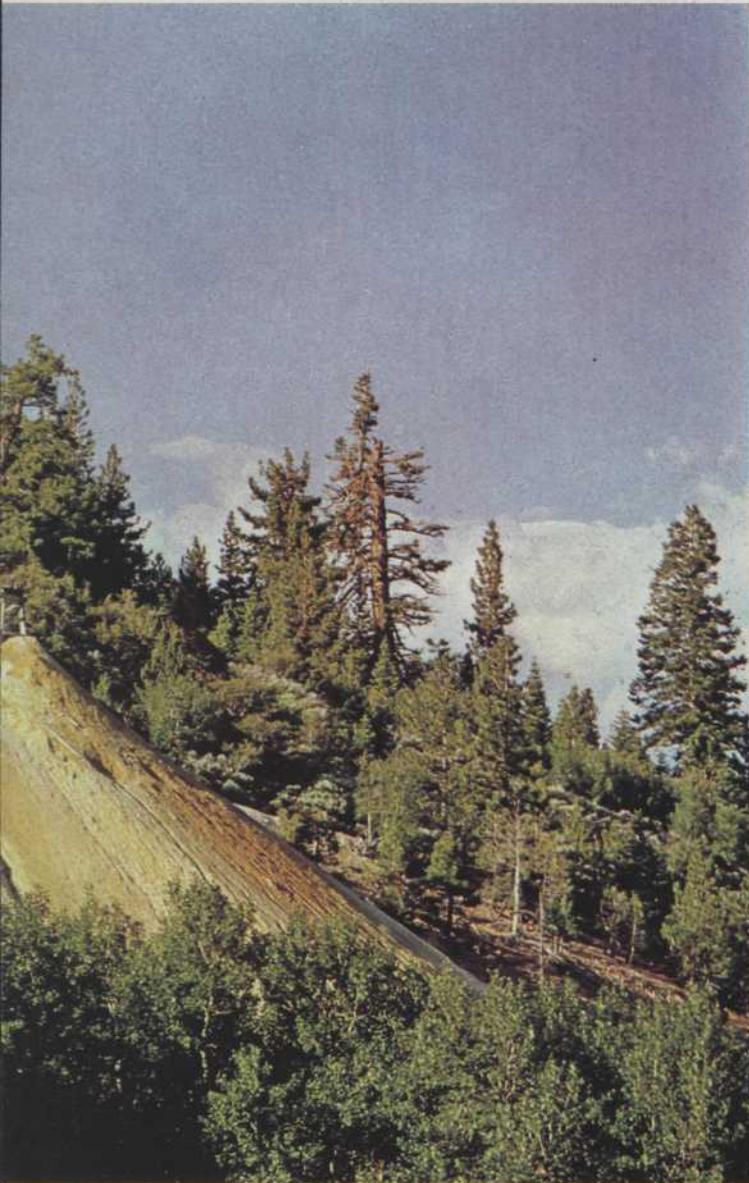
cent of Monitor Canyon. During the first few miles the highway closely parallels the waters of Monitor Creek. The Morning Star Road takes off from the highway approximately two miles up the canyon and is indicated by a Forest Service sign.

This spot was also the location of the once bustling mining camp of Monitor, although it now teases the imagination to picture a two-story hotel, a saloon, a newspaper office, and a dozen or so other buildings squeezed into the narrow confines of Monitor Canyon. Established in 1862, the town was named for the

famous ironclad ship which had been victorious in the Civil War battle of Hampton Roads.

The camp thrived during the 60s and 70s, its economy bolstered by activity in the Monitor-Mogul mining districts. Communications to the outside world were established via a telegraph line from Genoa, Nevada, and for a while there was a daily stage line, again weather permitting. The editor of its weekly newspaper, the *Monitor Argus*, boasted that Monitor was the best behaved town in the state, his opinion based on the fact that there had been no

MORNING STAR LOOP



by
**BETTY
SHANNON**

A frozen cascade of brightly colored tailings marks one of Alpine County's richest mines, the Morning Star.

fighths, no fires, no horse races, and no drunks during a 4th of July celebration. Indeed, a unique achievement for a frontier mining camp!

After 25 years of development, unresolved difficulties with ore reduction and red ink on the books caused most mining operations to grind to a halt. Although gold and silver had been found throughout both districts, much of it occurred in a complex copper arsenic ore which defied traditional milling methods.

With the exception of several properties most of the ore discoveries had also

proved to be of a low grade. Although lumber was readily at hand and there was plenty of water power to drive the stamps, drills, concentrators, and hoisting works, the abundance of these resources barely compensated for the metallurgical problems with the ore, the arctic winters, and the rugged landscape.

Monitor's population drifted away during the 1880s and the post office closed in 1888. A decade later, however, a Dr. Loope, representing a group of eastern investors, brought new money to Monitor Canyon. The town was revitalized briefly, and renamed Loope in

honor of its new benefactor. Two hotels were still standing in 1920, but during the ensuing years practically all evidence of Monitor has disappeared.

Several miles from the site of Monitor, on a steep hillside above the Morning Star Road, a frozen cascade of brightly colored tailings marks the location of the Mogul District's richest mine, the Morning Star. A weathered structure that once housed the blacksmith shop stands in front of the tunnel entrance.

Work began on the Morning Star in 1863. Initially it was developed by a 225-foot shaft and the 1,200-foot tunnel. However, the ore deposit, which yielded copper, silver, and a little gold, like other deposits in the district, was difficult and expensive to work. Some of the richest ore was shipped half way around the world to Swansea, Wales for processing, and in spite of the high cost of transportation this tactic proved profitable to the Morning Star's owners for several seasons. The Morning Star has been credited with a total production of \$600,000 during the first quarter century that it was worked.

However, it and adjacent properties have continued to attract attention periodically up to the present time. Ore from the nearby Alpine Mine was sent to the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco in 1915 where it assayed over \$100 a ton in gold and silver. A new tunnel had been driven on the Morning Star claim in 1914 and additional tunnel work was done there in the 1920s. Curtz Consolidated, which owned the claims on Morning Star Hill at that time, erected several new buildings, including a bunk house for 35 men, an office, and a mill of 50 tons capacity. A company owned power plant on the east fork of the Carson River provided power for the mining and milling operations.

A few years back we camped overnight at the Morning Star. It turned out to be a delightful spot to enjoy the wonders of nature. Hummingbirds hovered at arm's length, drinking the nectar of Sierra Forget-me-nots. At sunset we watched a huge buck browse in the mea-



Left: A swallowtail butterfly sips nectar from a Snow Plant.

Right: The ore car trestle and tailings dump at the Morning Star Mine.

Below: The Morning Star's blacksmith shop.



dow below. With the onset of dusk a Poorwill swooped down from the hillside above, hungrily scooping up the mosquitoes which buzzed above our heads. And long after the stars had appeared the flying insect trap continued to serenade us with its soft "Poor-will-o" call. But since that memorable summer evening there has been a renewed interest in the minerals still within Morning Star Hill and several years ago a new No Trespassing sign appeared on the property.

Beyond the mine the road climbs sharply and within the brief course of five or six miles it meanders through a patchwork of three distinct plant com-

munities. The open slopes are typical of the Nevadan or Great Basin biotic zone where sagebrush is the predominant plant. But for a few brief weeks the drab hillsides are transformed into a million dots of brilliant color by masses of sulphur flowers, Indian paintbrush, Sego lilies, and at least a half dozen other species.

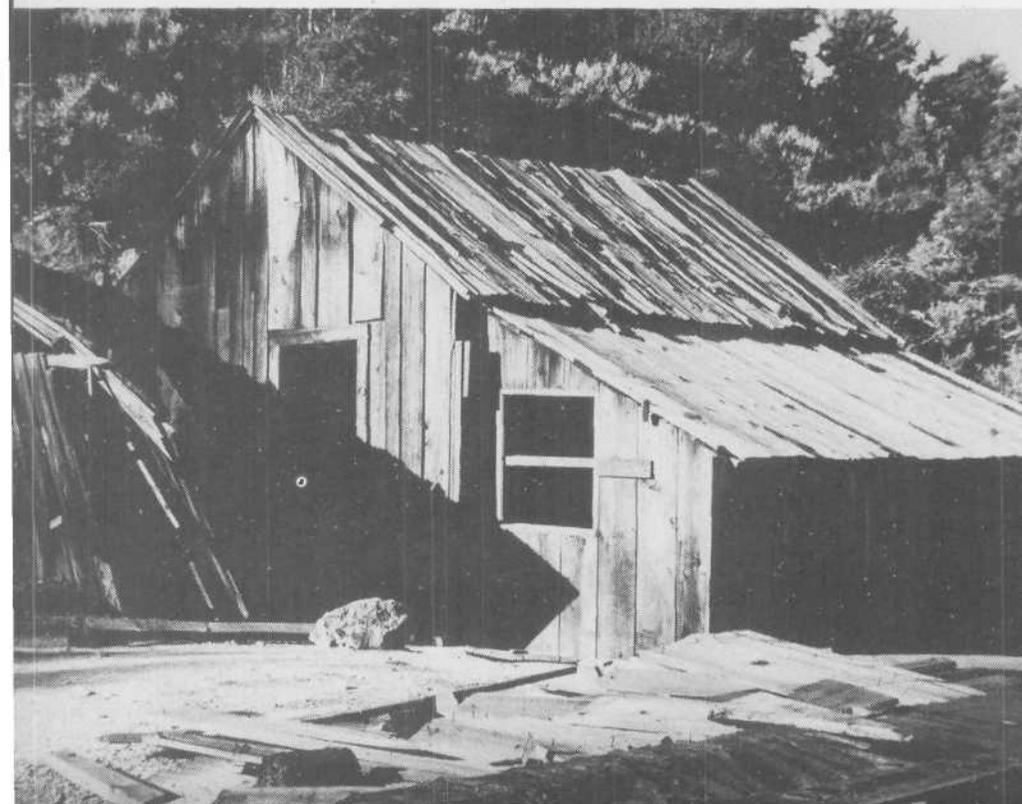
Groundsel, Western wallflower, and the leathery wild peony are a few of the neighbors found in the shadows of the

forested areas. One of the west's most unusual and probably its most dramatic plant, the saprophytic Snow Plant pushes up through the humus of the forest floor much like a stalk of asparagus. But there the resemblance ends. The all scarlet plant produces no chlorophyll, but lives entirely on decaying matter. Since its numbers are relatively limited and it is so easy to spot among its somber forest surroundings, it is protected from picking and wanton destruction by a state law.

Wild iris, pungent wild onions, buttercups, and shooting stars are among the flowers which compete for every inch of growing space along several small streams and in the meadows. On one trip over the Morning Star Road I counted 27 different species of wildflowers in bloom, all within several yards of the road.

At the junction of the Morning Star Road with the Leviathan Road a right turn will take you back to the highway. That's a distance of about three miles. A left turn leads to the Leviathan Mine. A sign indicates that the road to the mine is a private road, but on our most recent outing the road was open to the public.

The Leviathan Mine was first worked as a copper mine in the 1860s. A little gold was also recovered from the copper ore. Two tunnels, one 600 feet, the other 1,000 feet in length, marked the initial development of the mine.





In 1931, after years of lying idle, the Leviathan was reopened. Only this time interest in the mine shifted to its deposits of sulphur. The Leviathan Sulphur Company extracted moderate amounts of the yellow mineral during 1933 and 1934. In 1952 Anaconda Copper Company acquired the property. A year later the big copper company began mining in earnest, converting to an open pit operation. The sulphur was trucked to Anaconda's plant at nearby Yerington, Nevada, where it was used in the manufacture of sulphuric acid needed for the treatment of low-grade copper ores.

Once again the Leviathan is silent, a gigantic, gaping wound in the earth. Perhaps, in time, the scar will heal. But for now its ocher walls are barren and sterile, the devastation a mute contrast to the living forest on the rim above.

The Morning Star loop drive offers a delightful opportunity to enjoy several hours in the back country. For a longer stay there are some good, but unimproved campsites in the wooded areas. The wildflowers are usually at their best the last week in June or the first week in July. But should you miss the flowers, Mother Nature puts on another spectacular show in the fall. Stands of quaking aspen wind up the season with a last glorious blaze of color. Then the Monitor Pass country goes to sleep for the long, long winter. □

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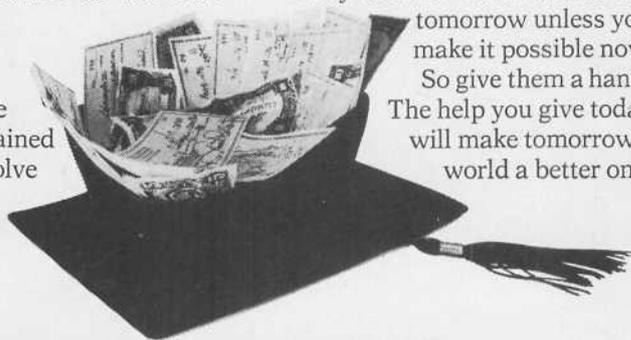
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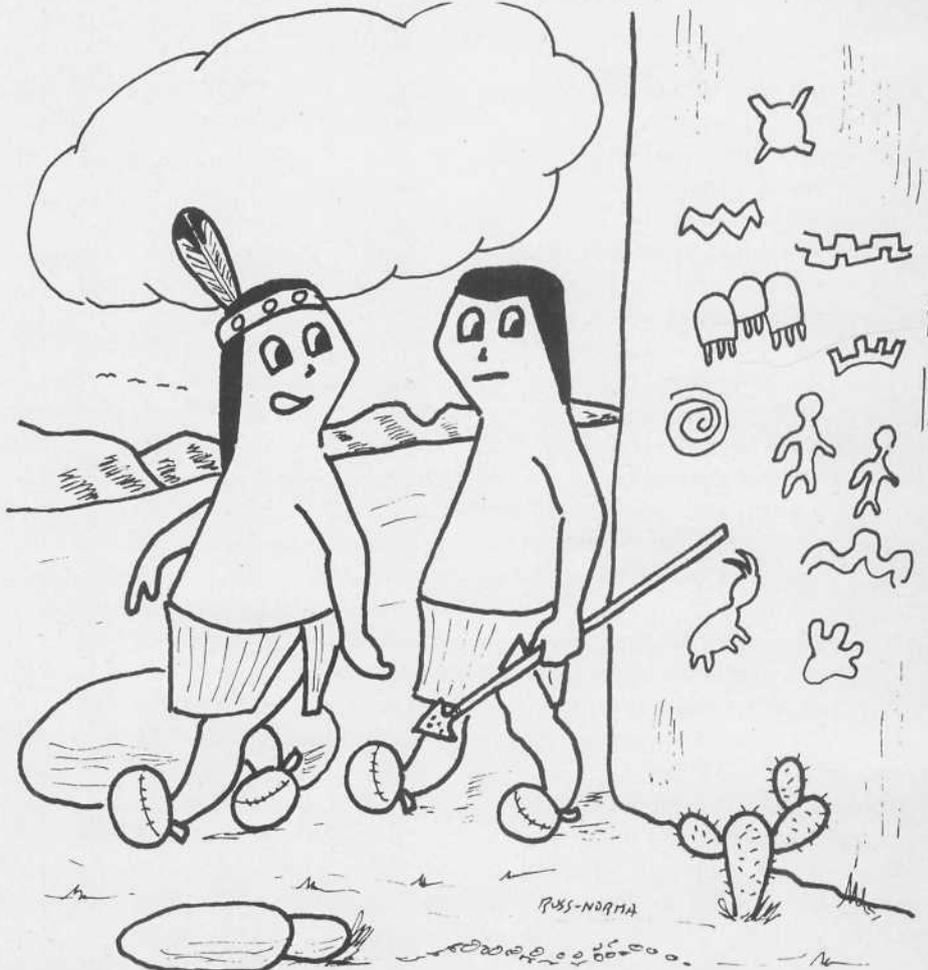


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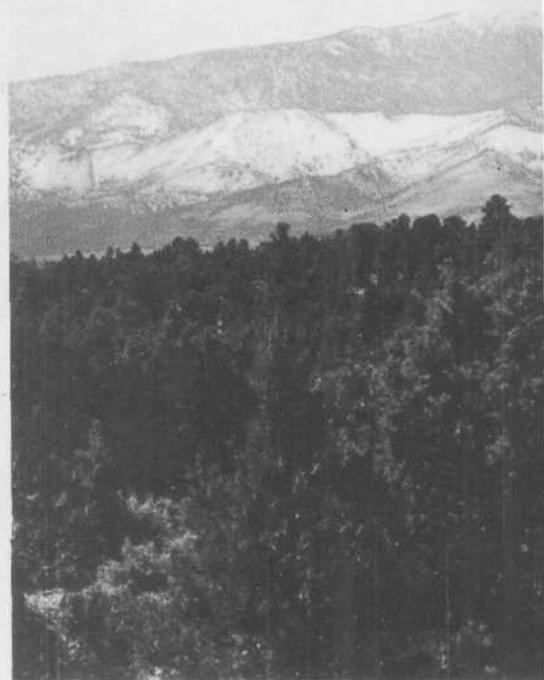
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"SURE, HE'S GOOD ON SKIES AND TREES. BUT, HOW ABOUT HIS WILD GOATS AND MANY MOONS?"

Rescue by Pine Nuts

by RONALD M. LANNER



WAST WOODLANDS of low pines and junipers are scattered across the mountains and mesas of the American Southwest. The pines are called pinon pines, because of their large edible seeds or nuts, *pinones* in Spanish. The common pine of the southern Rockies and the Colorado Plateau is known to botanists as *Pinus edulis*, or the pinon. Further west in the Great Basin is found *Pinus monophylla*, the singleleaf pinon. Pinon nuts are large — up to a half inch in length — and soft-shelled. They are tasty and nutritious, and were an important source of food to the Indians for thousands of years before the arrival of the white man.

But these nutritious pine nuts have also played a part in the history of white exploration in the West, and may have saved the lives of some prominent early travelers.

The first Europeans to taste the nut of the pinon pine were also the first white visitors to the Southwest. They were Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca and his three companions, who from 1528 to 1536 wandered westwards across the continent from their shipwreck on the Gulf of Mexico.

In his book, *Naufragios y Comentarios* Cabeza de Vaca later told of the Indians of southern New Mexico:

They ate prickly-pear fruits and pine nuts: there are in that country small pine trees and their cones are like little eggs, but the nuts are better than those of Castile because they have very thin shells."

The Castilian pine nuts that Cabeza de Vaca mentions came from the Italian stone pine, a tree of southern Europe. They are a rich protein source and a delicious confection of Mediterranean cuisines, but their shells are extremely thick and cannot be cracked in the teeth.

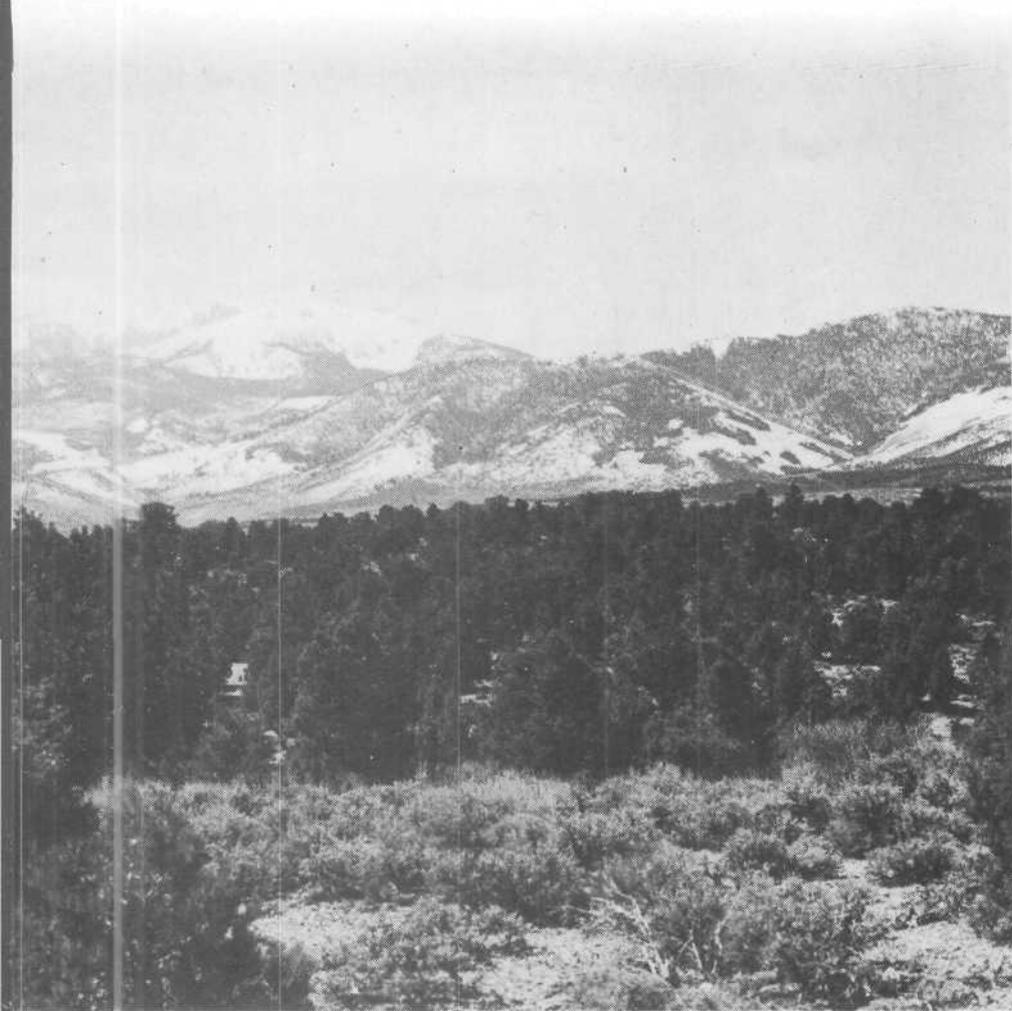
When the Spanish adventurers came upon the nut-gathering Indians, they were hungry and exhausted, and at least one historian has credited the availability of pine nuts with their very survival.

Almost two and a half centuries later, another party of Spaniards was nourished by the nuts of *Pinus edulis*. In 1776 the Franciscans Fray Francisco Atanasio Dominguez and Fray Silvestre Velez de Escalante struck north from Santa Fe in search of a safe route to the California missions. Their route, as described in

Escalante's journal, led into western Colorado, across Utah, and (in abandonment of their original plan) south and east into Arizona and back to Santa Fe.

On September 4, 1776, the explorers accepted chokecherries and pinon nuts from three Ute women and a child. Later they met other Indians gathering pine nuts along the edge of the Great Basin in Utah, but the friars had little interest in these tribes and repeatedly inquired about other tribes that grew corn for their subsistence. Corn-planters were considered more civilized and thus more easily converted to the Faith.

But by mid-October the Spaniards were low on food and were suffering discomfort from the cold. They had to concentrate on salvation of the body as well as the soul. On the nineteenth, Indians, who called themselves the Yabuincariris, brought the hungry aliens many bags of pine nuts as well as grass seeds and cactus fruits. Even this good luck had its costs, if we can credit Escalante's diagnosis, for a few days later Lorenzo Olivares, having become uncontrollably thirsty from eating too many pine nuts, stayed out of camp all one night in search of water, causing his companions



Pinon-juniper woodlands commonly clothe the slopes of Nevada's Mountain ranges.

"much worry."

By October 23, the party was sick from grass seed and weak from hunger, but was able to buy a few days' supply of pine nuts from local Indians. Escalante's journal for October 29, written while he was camped on the Colorado River, poignantly expresses the plight of his party:

Not knowing when we might leave this place, and having consumed all the flesh of the first horse, and the pinon nuts and other things we had purchased, we ordered another horse killed.

Eventually, partly on the strength they derived from further supplies of pine nuts, Escalante's party arrived safely back in Santa Fe.

Their familiarity with pine nuts stood the Spaniards in good stead, as shown also by the experience of Juan Cristobal, a boy of 10 or 12, in 1808. Juan's village in New Mexico had been attacked by Apaches, and the boy taken captive. For a month he lived as a prisoner, but was finally able to make his escape. It was early October. For almost a week he wandered furtively through the woodlands, subsisting on ripe pinons. On Oc-

tober 7 he was found by a column of Spanish soldiers under Captain Francisco Amangual. The soldiers were not a search party. They were exploring a route from San Antonio, Texas, to Santa Fe, and came upon the boy purely by chance.

Pine nuts have not saved Spaniards only, but Anglos further north as well. The history of the settlement of California might well be very different if not for the nut of the singleleaf pinon, *Pinus monophylla*. Here are the words of John Bidwell, who led the first emigrant wagon train to California in 1840:

We were now camped on Walker River, at the very eastern base of the Sierra Nevadas, and had only two oxen left . . . Looking back on the plains we saw something coming . . . To make a long story short, it was the eight men who had left us nine days before. They had gone farther south than we, and had come to a lake, probably Carson Lake, and there had found Indians, who supplied them plentifully with fish and pine nuts . . . The men had eaten heartily of fish and pine nuts and had got something akin to cholera morbus. We ran out to meet them and shook hands, and put our

frying pans on and gave them the best supper we could. Captain Bartleson, who when we started from Missouri was a portly man, was reduced to half his former girth. He said, "Boys, if ever I get back to Missouri I will never leave that country. I would gladly eat out of the troughs with my hogs."

History does not record whether Captain Bartleson ever got his wish, but if he did, he had pine nuts to thank for the opportunity.

The most dramatic rescue attributed to pine nuts occurred in the mountainous area of northern California.

Winter came early to the Sierra Nevada in 1846. On October 28 of that year, five feet of snow was hindering the climb of a beleaguered group of California-bound emigrants — the Donner-Reed party. Already weak from hunger and plagued by deaths, these pioneers were soon to be halted by the early storms and forced into winter quarters at Donner Lake. The tragic story of this band has often been told, but historians have failed to emphasize that the ultimate rescue of the survivors — more than 40 men, women, and children — was by the grace of a half-a-cup of pine nuts.

On December 16, 1846, 15 of the party, calling themselves the "Forlorn Hope," made a desperate final attempt to cross the Sierra for help from the California settlements. Carrying only six days' supply of food they blundered through the deep drifts on improvised snowshoes until they came upon an Indian village on the tenth of January. Several of them had perished on the way. For a week they rested under the care of the friendly Indians. But even a week's rest and their diet of acorn bread brought scant improvement to men and women half-dead of hunger and exposure. The leader of the Forlorn

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Hope, William H. Eddy, was sickened by acorn bread and unable to keep it down. Years later Eliza P. Donner Houghton told how Eddy gained back his strength on January 17, 1847:

... the chief with much difficulty procured for Mr. Eddy, a gill of pine nuts which the latter found so nutritious that the following morning, on resuming travel, he was able to walk without support.

After leaving the village, Eddy alone of the party was able to continue with In-

dian guides. He covered 18 miles that day to reach the cabin of Colonel H.D. Richey, and for six of those miles the trail was marked with his blood. A relief party was immediately formed which next day rescued the six surviving members of the Forlorn Hope. A later relief party penetrated the snows of Donner Lake the following month. The success of the rescue efforts can be attributed to the nutritive value of a handful of pine nuts. The Donner party may have been saved by the nuts of local digger pines (*Pinus sabiniana*), or of singleleaf pinon traded from the nearby Washo.

Why didn't these hard-pressed emigrants collect pinon nuts along their route through Nevada? During the height of the pinon season they passed Pilot Peak, the Ruby Mountains, Battle Mountain, and the Humboldts. On October 19 they were at Wadsworth, at the foot of the Virginia Range. At any of these places they could have gathered a stock of pinon nuts that would have seen them through the winter, but they did not try. Their journals never mention pinons. Were they ignorant of the value of pine nuts, despite the experiences of earlier travelers? Did their hostility to the Indians they encountered along their route discourage the Indians from offering pinons in trade, as they had done with Bartleson and Fremont? We can only speculate on their failure to live off the bounty of the nut pines.

What about today? In this era of ultra-processed, plastic-wrapped, hydrogenated, homogenized and synthesized foods, is there a place for wild nuts gathered from the cones of little desert pines? Can the Indian's staff of life still save westerners *in extremis*?

Kelly Warren would say yes, with emphasis. Kelly was a 14-year-old deer hunter who got lost on the San Carlos Indian Reservation in Arizona. It was the fall of 1974. For four days he wandered in the woodlands, like Juan Cristobal 166 years before. And, like Juan Cristobal, he lived on the pinon nuts he was able to shake from the cones until he was reunited — not with the Spanish cavalry — but with his parents.

So the hungry traveler who happens to be in the Southwestern woodlands during the nut season can join 400 years' good company when he tastes the fruit of the pine. Raw or roasted, it can be a life-saver. □



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CEDAR BREAKS

Continued from Page 19

— much as it was over a century ago when exploration of the region began and Mormons settled Parowan and Cedar City.

The Wheeler-Powell Surveys of 1872, directed attention to the colorful, geologic formation now known as Cedar Breaks. Extensive topographic records of the region were made along with detailed reports on wildlife, flora and geological observations. In 1905, the region became part of the Dixie National Forest and, on August 22, 1933, Cedar Breaks became a National Monument. It is now protected and will remain a place of beauty for all to enjoy.

Under discussion at the present time is a proposal to declare 75 percent (4,830 acres) of the Monument a Wilderness Area. A final environmental statement has been completed by the National Park Service. Land already developed for visitor use and the rim area will not be affected. The geological nature of the Monument and its location make it a good candidate for a wilderness designation. This would prevent any future development or commercial use of its still pristine grandeur.

To really enjoy and "see the Breaks" you will need to walk the easy trails and visit all the points of interest. This cannot be done in just one day. Yet, Park Ranger Kevin Mansor told us most visitors do make Cedar Breaks a one-day trip and seldom stay overnight. Unfortunately, vacationers try to "cram too much" into their trip and only have fleeting glimpses of the places they visit.

Stay and relax a while at uncrowded Cedar Breaks where there is unlimited beauty to behold. Enjoy the magnificent scenery from Sunset View and Chessman Ridge Overlook. Park at Alpine Pond Picnic Area and hike the easy trail to the little lake. Leaflets for a self-guided tour are available here. You can expect the wildflowers to be blooming along the trail during July and August. View the Cedar Breaks amphitheater from North View — it is unusually colorful in the late afternoon. You can also drive to the top of Brianhead Peak (11,305 el.) for an aerial view of the entire region.

Rock collectors will find an added

bonus at Cedar Breaks — beautiful Brianhead agate. The locale is less than a mile from the Monument's northern boundary. (See map.) The agate occurs on the "whitish" hills and slopes as float as well as in veins.

Never was a collecting area easier to reach or good material easier to obtain. Park on the left just before crossing a small creek. In the creek and along its banks, colorful jasp-agate is waiting to be collected. The basic agate is clear to milky white and it contains inclusions of jasper in varying shades of red, purple, black, yellow, pink, white and brown. Patterns include moss and picture types.

Large chunks of material will be found weathering out of the white hill about 300 feet northeast of the creek. Actually, agate can be found on most of the whitish ground throughout the region but the best material occurs in the locales indicated on the map.

Creek collecting is fun as the specimens are "washed" and the colors easy to see. The white ground is a clay and very soft and slippery when wet. It will stick to your boots until your height has been raised a couple of inches!

This locale is outside of the Monument but within the Dixie National Forest. The area was not posted and there was no indication of any claim. Collecting is for hobby use only. Please limit the amount of material you collect. We were quite impressed by the lack of litter in this area and hope our readers will do their part to keep it this way.

We found the magnificent scenery at Cedar Breaks more than rewarding. The rainbow of color and form is ever changing, as sun and clouds spotlight the amphitheater in varying light and shadow. Along the trails, the quiet hush of the forest was soothing to the soul, while the occasional chatter of "little animals" and pleasant sounds of the birds let us know we were among friends.

Our fall trip to Cedar Breaks had been a first but others will follow. We must see the golden aspen groves in all their glory; and what about the summer wildflowers? Cedar Breaks can easily cast a spell on those of us who love the wild, unspoiled beauty of the land. We can rejoice that, due to careful management by the National Park Service, our progeny will find Cedar Breaks a quiet refuge for man. □

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Palm Wash

by DICK BLOOMQUIST

*Two of the nine living
Washingtonias found in
or near Palm Wash today.*

*These trees are at
the mouth of a tributary
arroyo three miles up
Palm Wash from the
Highway 86 bridge.*

FROM TRAVERTINE PALMS our trail swings southward, rounding the Santa Rosas and entering an austere but bewitching sector of the desert — the Borrego Badlands. Viewed from the paved highway, the Badlands appear desolate and uninviting. Lying south of the Santa Rosa Mountains and west of

the Salton Sea, these barren sedimentary hills veined with sandy arroyos and deep barrancas form one of the driest and roughest regions within the Colorado Desert. Yet this country holds great fascination for the hiker and Jeeper, for within its borders are found fossils, concretions, calcite and gypsum crystals, petrified wood, the shoreline of old Lake Cahuilla, Indian trails and campsites, the lore of Pegleg Smith's lost black hills of gold, remote springs and tinajas (natural tanks or rock basins containing water), and several palm oases. Palm Wash, Four Palm Spring, Lone Palm, Seventeen Palms, Five Palms, Una Palma — these are the places where we'll pause on our Badlands ramble.

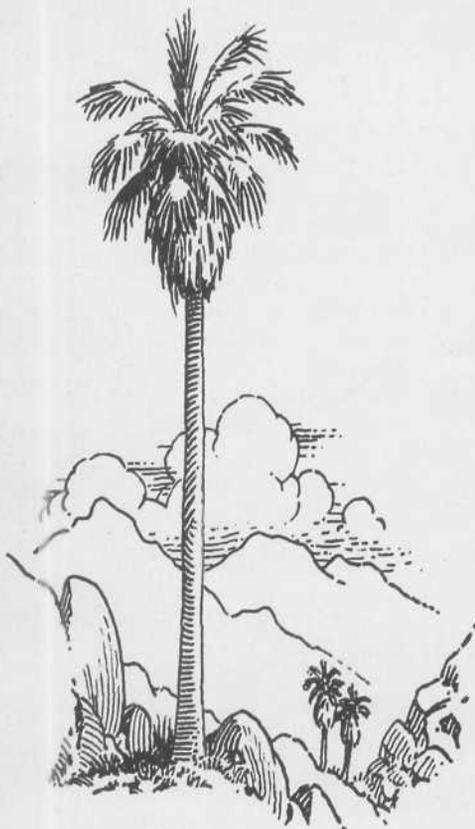
Palm Wash courses through the Borrego Badlands from west to east, discharging its infrequent storm waters into the Salton Sea. Only nine Washingtonias now grow in or near the arroyo. In the 1930s the total was nearly 30, but there is less moisture today and the oasis is dying. Several dead trunks — some prone, two still erect — can be seen in the main watercourse and a short distance south of it.

Three miles up sandy Palm Wash, and a few yards to the left in a tributary,

stand the first two Washingtonias. Water sometimes surfaces in a shallow hole between the trees. One night in 1962, while camped at this oasis, I awoke to find a desert mouse looking over at me from inside one of my shoes, which I had placed on the ground a few feet from my bedroll. Even today, when I think of the Palm Wash country, this is the first incident that comes to mind. Four Palm Spring lies out of sight behind a ridge less than one mile southeast of this point.

Concretions, those peculiar sandstone formations scattered over much of the Badlands, litter the ground near the palms. Dumbbells, donuts, sausages, and animals such as long-necked geese and coiled rattlesnakes are among the many forms concretions may assume. In some places the land casts up rounded shapes ranging from marble-size to huge spheres larger than pumpkins, whereas in other areas "abstract" configurations are the rule.

Three-quarters of a mile beyond the first palms, one dead trunk survives along the right side of the arroyo. This tree was still alive in 1962 when I first explored Palm Wash. Off to the southwest along a pole line stand four living Wash-



ingtonias, one a stoop-shouldered veteran. South of this tree, and to the left of the pole line road, the old Truckhaven Trail (impassable here) climbs the mesa. Borrego homesteader A.A. ("Doc") Beaty pushed this route through the Badlands between Borrego Valley and Truckhaven near the Salton Sea in 1929.

Returning to Palm Wash and continuing upstream, we come to a seventh living Washingtonia, the only one growing in the arroyo itself. This weather-beaten sentinel, with three feet of its roots exposed by erosion, is one and one-half miles west of the first group of

Mileage Log

- 0.0 Junction of State Highway 86 and Imperial County Road S22 (Borrego-Salton Seaway) on west side of Salton Sea. Drive north toward Indio on 86.
- 2.1 Highway bridge #58-46 over Palm Wash. Turn left (west) up the wash. **Four-wheel-drive normally required.**
- 5.3 First palms (two) in tributary on left. Elevation roughly 150 feet above sea level.
- 6.0 One standing dead palm trunk in the main wash. Four living Washingtonias grow a short distance to the southwest along a pole line.
- 6.8 One living palm in wash. There are two other palms one-half mile north of this point.
- 7.2 Tributary arroyo comes in on left. One standing dead trunk is located a few yards up this watercourse.

palms. Two other veteran trees are located about one-half mile to the north beyond a low ridge.

An upper cluster once graced Palm Wash, also. Several dead trunks, one of them still standing, can be seen near the mouth of a small tributary which enters the main watercourse from the left four-tenths of a mile above the last living tree.

Despite the fact that Palm Wash is becoming a ghost oasis, this region is still one of exceptional interest. Fragments of petrified wood are sometimes found near the arroyo, and concretions abound almost everywhere. To the west, within the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, are Sheep Tank — a tinaja frequented by bighorn sheep — and the now-abandoned calcite claims where calcite crystals were mined for gunsights during World War II. All this, and more, lies within the "Badlands" of Borrego, a good land of mystery and silence and enchanted distance. □

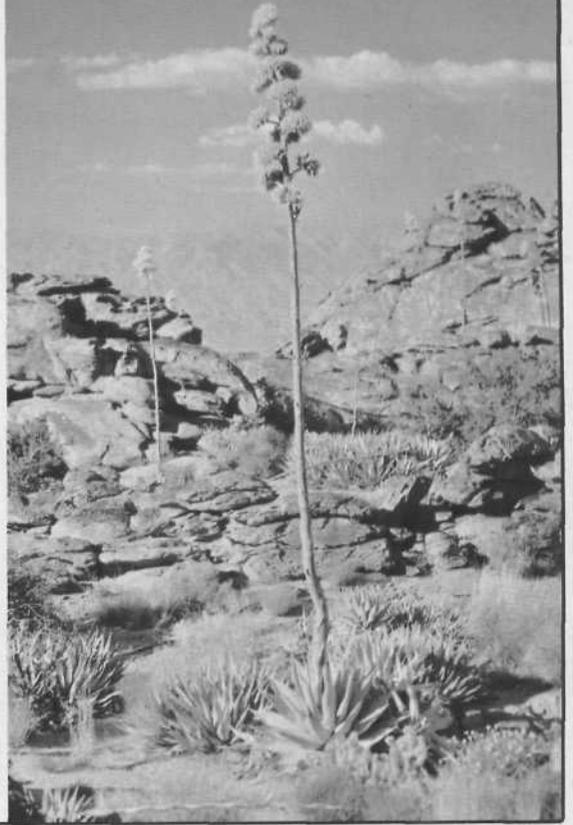
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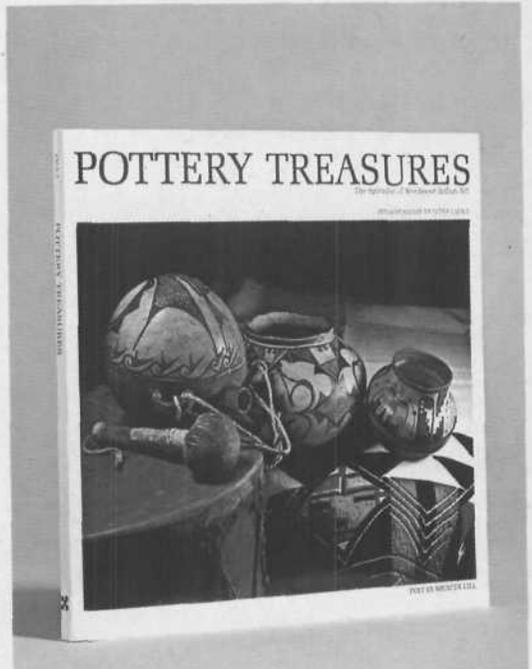
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HISTORICAL ATLAS OF CALIFORNIA by Warren A. Beck and Ynez D. Haase. Extensive documentation and pertinent detail make this atlas a valuable aid to the student, scholar and everyone interested in the Golden State. 101 excellent maps present information on the major faults, early Spanish explorations, Mexican land grants, routes to gold fields, the Butterfield and Pony Express routes, CCC camps, World War II installations, etc. Hardcover, extensive index, highly recommended, \$9.95.

THE SEA OF CORTEZ, The Gulf of California, Baja, and Mexico's Mainland Coast by Ray Cannon and the Sunset Editors. A rich and colorful text acquaints the traveler and outdoorsman with the history, people, climate and travel opportunities of this exciting wonderland. Each of the 12 regions that make up the Gulf of California is covered in a separate chapter with a special section on how to catch "Cortez fishes." Large format, hardcover, 272 pages, \$14.95.

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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, illus., \$3.00 each. Please state WHICH VOLUME when ordering.

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THE CAHUILLA INDIANS OF THE COLORADO DESERT: ETHNOHISTORY AND PREHISTORY. Ballena Press Anthropological Papers No. 3. Part I: Early Observations on the Cultural Geography of Coachella Valley by Philip J. Wilke and Harry W. Lawton, is an analysis of Cahuilla oral tradition of ancestral occupation at Lake Cahuilla and the transition from lakeside to desert adaptation around 400 years ago, and an analysis of early ethnohistoric records prior to the mid-1850s. Part II: Aboriginal Occupation at Tahquitz Canyon: Ethnohistory and Archaeology by Philip J. Wilke, Thomas F. King and Stephen Hammond, reconstructs Cahuilla settlement adaptation at Tahquitz Canyon, near Palm Springs. Paperback, references, 13 figures, 73 pages, \$4.95.

MEXICO'S WEST COAST BEACHES by Al and Mildred Fischer is an up-to-date guide covering the El Golfo de Santa Clara to the end of the highway at Manzanillo. Excellent reference for the out-of-the-way beaches, in addition to the popular resorts such as Mazatlan and Puerto Vallarta. Although traveling by motorhome, the Fischers also give suggestions for air, auto, ferry and train travel as well. Paperback, well illustrated, 138 pages, \$3.00.

HOPI KACHINA DOLLS [With a Key to Their Identification], by Harold S. Colton. Kachina dolls are neither toys nor idols, but aids to teaching religion and tradition. This is a definitive work on the subject, describing the meaning, the making and the principal features of 166 varieties of Kachina dolls. Line drawings of each variety, plus color and b/w photos make it a complete guide to learn more of the richness of American Indian culture. Paperback, 150 pages, \$4.50.

LAS VEGAS [As It Began — As It Grew] by Stanley W. Paher. Here is the first general history of early Las Vegas ever to be published. The author was born and raised there in what, to many is considered a town synonymous with lavish gambling and unabashed night life. Newcomers to the area, and even natives themselves will be surprised by the facts they did not know about their town. Western Americana book lovers will appreciate the usefulness of this book. You don't have to gamble on this one! Hardcover, large format, loaded with historical photos, 180 pages, \$12.50.

THE WEST

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HELLDORADOS, GHOSTS AND CAMPS OF THE OLD SOUTHWEST by Norman D. Wels. The author takes you on a 7,000-mile tour of the Old Southwest, visiting some 67 ghost towns and abandoned mining camps, one never before mentioned in written history. 285 excellent photos. Hardcover, 320 pages, \$9.95.

THE ETHNO-BOTANY OF THE COAHUILLA INDIANS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA by David Prescott Barrows. Although basically a study of plants used by the Cahuilla Indians, Barrows' fascinating work is rich in material of interest to the historian, anthropologist, botanist, geographer and lay reader. Special Introductory Material by Harry W. Lawton, Lowell John Bean and William Bright. Paperback, 129 pages, \$5.95.

THE LIVES OF DESERT ANIMALS IN JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL MONUMENT by Alden H. Miller and Robert C. Stebbins. An indispensable source and guide for everyone with an interest in the desert life of Southern California. In addition to the actual faunal analysis of 141 resident animals of the desert, there are 149 illustrations including 74 photographs, 58 black and white drawings, 9 maps and 8 color plates. Hardcover, 452 pages, \$28.50.

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TURQUOISE, The Gem of the Centuries by Oscar T. Branson. The most complete and lavishly illustrated all color book on turquoise. Identifies 43 localities, treated and stabilized material, gives brief history of the gem and details the individual techniques of the Southwest Indian Tribes. Heavy paperback, large format, 68 pages, \$7.95.

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WESTERN GEM HUNTERS ATLAS by Cy Johnson and son. A helpful book of detailed maps showing gem and mineral locations, from California to the Dakotas and British Columbia to Texas. Markings note private claims, gem claims (fee charged) and rock and gem locations. Also suggested reading for more detail on areas included and other rich areas not included in this publication. Paperback, maps galore, collector's library, 79 pages, \$4.00.

INDIAN JEWELRY MAKING by Oscar T. Branson. This book is intended as a step-by-step how-to-do-it method of making jewelry. An intriguing all-color publication that is an asset to the consumer as well as to the producer of Indian jewelry today because it provides the basic knowledge of how jewelry is made so one can judge if it is well made and basically good design. Paperback, large format, \$7.95.

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BAJA CALIFORNIA GUIDEBOOK by Walt Wheelock and Howard E. Gulick, formerly Gerhard and Gulick's Lower California Guidebook. This totally revised fifth edition is up-to-the-minute for the Transpeninsular paved highway, with new detailed mileages and descriptive text. Corrections and additions are shown for the many side roads. ORV routes, trails and little-known byways to desert, mountain, beach and bay recesses. Folding route maps are color and newly revised for current accuracy. Indispensable reference guide, hardcover, \$10.50.

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, \$7.95.

WM. B. ROOD & RANCHO DE LOS YUMAS by Harold and Lucile Weight. For the first time the three adventurous lives of this man from Illinois are correlated. He was a Death Valley 49er Jayhawker; he mined in California and ranched south of Tucson; became a legendary figure after his stand-off of a circle of Apaches. He finally built his adobe on the huge Colorado River ranch. Photos, maps, portrait. Paperback, \$1.50.

Letters to the Editor

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope

Liked the February Issue . . .

I have been a faithful subscriber to *Desert Magazine* since 1970, and I have truly enjoyed "every" issue. I have just finished reading the February issue, and feel it is the "best" ever.

The 16-page supplement on the Living Desert Reserve is better than excellent. I have not been down to the Palm Desert area for three years. This issue made me realize how much I miss the desert.

There are truly some fine things going on in your area. (I have saved every issue since 1970.)

MARK DEVINCENZI,
So. San Francisco, California.

That February issue of *Desert* is the one I've been waiting for. I have tried to explain to my folks back East just what the desert is and why I love it, but never could really convey my thoughts in words. This issue says it all. Do you have copies I can obtain to send back East?

MRS. RALPH SCOTT,
Needles, California.

Editor's Note: Copies of this issue may be obtained by writing to our office at P. O. Box 1318, Palm Desert, Calif. 92260. Please include \$1.00 per issue.

Mohave Rattlesnake . . .

The article on the Mohave Rattlesnake "Male Combat Dance" in the February issue is of particular interest to us.

In March, 1976 we were camped just above Brown's Crossing near Lake Alamo State Park in Mohave County, Arizona. My wife, Edith, and I were walking some distance from the campsite when we came upon two rattlesnakes performing the same rite as described in the article.

We watched them for about five minutes when they sensed our presence and turned to look at us. Then they started to glide away. At that time we called them Western Diamond-back snakes, but after reading the article and seeing the photo, we are not sure. They probably were the Mohave Rattlesnake version.

Did we have a camera with us? Nope!

F. G. WILSON,
Dolan Springs, Arizona.

Calendar of Events

This column is a public service and there is no charge for listing your event or meeting—so take advantage of the space by sending in your announcement. We must receive the information at least three months prior to the event.

APRIL 1, Third Annual Revival of the Pegleg Liars Contest, Pegleg Monument, Borrego Valley, California. 7:30 P.M. Free admission. Contestant's entry fee, 10 rocks.

APRIL 8 & 9, Amador County Gem and Mineral Society's 13th Annual "Gold Dust Days," County Fairgrounds in Plymouth, Calif. Displays, dealers, demonstrations, field trips. Plenty of camping space right on the grounds with limited electrical hook-ups.

APRIL 8 & 9, Paradise Gem & Mineral Club's 24th Annual Show, "Paradise of Gems." Veterans Memorial Hall, Skyway at Elliot Road, Paradise, Calif. Dealer space filled. Chairman: Cliff Kerns, P. O. Box 692, Paradise, Calif. 95969.

APRIL 8 & 9, the Waco Gem & Mineral Club's 18th Annual Show, Waco Convention Center, 201 Washington Ave., Waco, Texas 76701.

Indian Artifact Identified? . . .

In reference to Mary Frances Strong's article, "Valley of Little Smokes," in the February issue, and the unidentified article of Indian make in the photo on page 45, I am wondering if it could be the remains of a rabbit skin blanket. I have never seen one, but have heard, and actually have read about them. I have a 1950 California State book written by Irmgard Richards, entitled "Early California" in which is the following:

"In making a blanket of rabbit skins, an Indian cuts skins in narrow strips. All the strips had to be cut with a strong knife. He fastened the strips together to make one long strip. Two poles were stuck in the ground about four feet apart. The long strip of rabbit skin was passed around one pole and then around the other, back and forth. Then the worker took cords and wove them in and out of the furry strips from top to bottom, close together. In this way he made a warm strong blanket. It was hard work to make such a blanket. All the strips had to be cut with a stone knife. The strips had to be sewed together with a bone awl. The cords had to be knotted into the fur strips. It took a long time to make such a blanket."

This may not be of any help, and I have no idea how much of the quoted school book is more than supposition, but the fact that "Early California" is a text book and the list of references is very long leads me to believe the above description must be accurate.

MRS. LENORA P. GILKEY,
Corcoran, California.

APRIL 15 & 16, Northside Gem and Hobby Club's Annual Show. Demonstrations, exhibits. Wendell High School Gymnasium, Wendell, Idaho. Chairwoman: Mary Morlan, 826 Oregon St., Gooding, Idaho 83330.

APRIL 28-30, 24th Annual Fast Camel Cruise. For information write P. O. Box 526, Indio, Calif. 92201. 714-347-9210 or 714-398-5773.

APRIL 29 & 30, Desert Gem Roundup of Antelope Valley. Annual Spring Show sponsored by Antelope Valley and Palmdale Gem and Mineral Clubs. Fair Center Hall, A. V. Fairgrounds, corner of Division St. and Ave. "I," Lancaster, Calif. Dealer spaces filled. Parking and admission free. Field Trips 9 AM daily.

May 6 & 7, Delvers Gem and Mineral Society's 28th Annual Show. Cerritos College Student Center, 11110 Alondra Blvd., Norwalk, California.

MAY 6 & 7, 18th Annual Flower Show of the Yucca Valley Garden Club, Yucca Valley Community Center, 57090 29 Palms Highway, Yucca Valley, California.

MAY 6 & 7, Canyon City Lapidary Society, El Monte Gem and Mineral Club, Inc., La Puente Gem and Mineral Club, "Million \$ Gem Show." Building 22, Los Angeles County Fairgrounds, Pomona, California.

MAY 13 & 14, Searchers Gem and Mineral Society, Inc., 19th Annual Show, "Searchers Gem Roundup." Retail Clerks Auditorium, 8550 Stanton Ave., Buena Park, California. Free admission and parking.

MAY 20 & 21, Yucaipa Valley Gem & Mineral Society's 13th annual show, "The Rockhound's Delight in '78," Yucaipa Valley Community Center, First Street & Avenue B, Yucaipa, Calif. Free admission and parking.

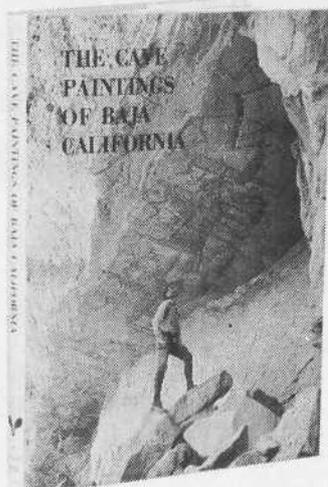
MAY 20 & 21, Norwalk Rockhounds's 14th annual Gem and Mineral Show for 1978, Masonic Lodge, 12345 Rosecrans, Norwalk, Calif. Free parking and admission.

MAY 20 & 21, May Festival of Gems sponsored by the Glendale Lapidary and Gem Society, Glendale Civic Auditorium, 1401 N. Verdugo Rd., Glendale, Calif. Admission 50c; parking free.

MAY 20 & 21, World of Gems presented by Berkeley Gem & Mineral Society, Contra Costa College Student Activities Bldg., San Pablo, Calif. Admission, adults \$1.00; children (6-12) 25c. Free parking.

MAY 25, "Symphony in Flowers," sponsored by the Reno-Sparks Garden Clubs, Centennial Coliseum, Reno, Nv. Admission free.

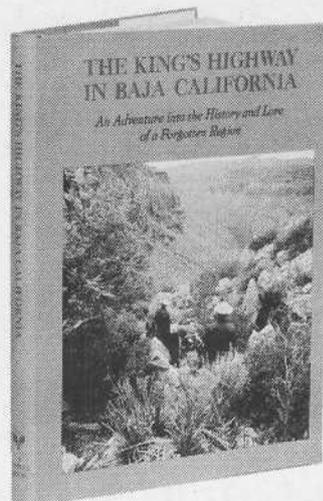
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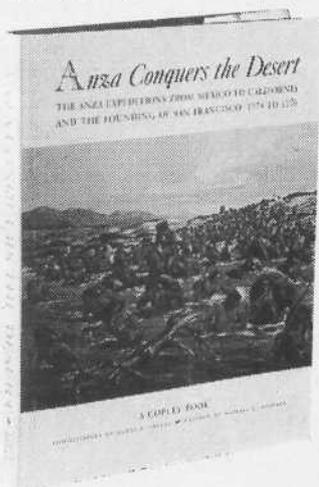
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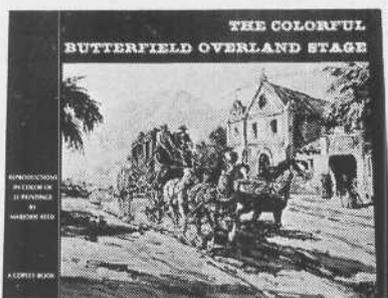
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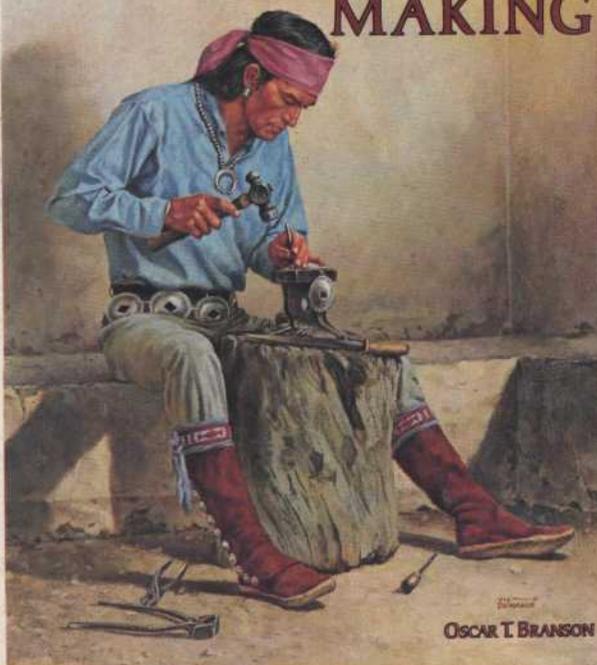
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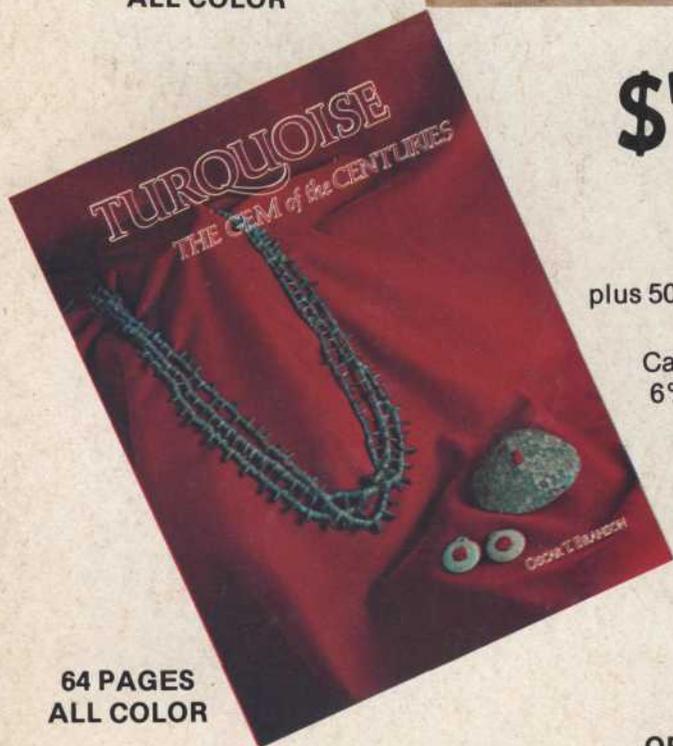


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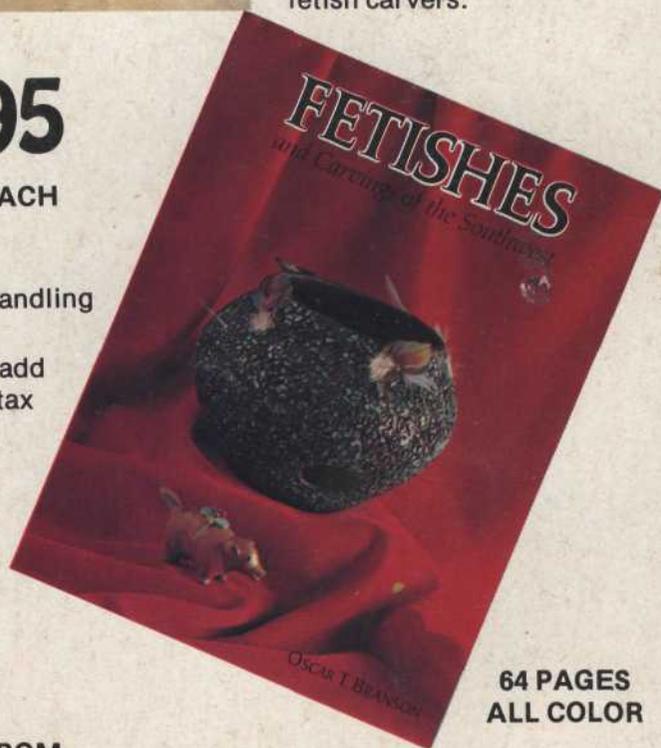


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