

# Desert

WESTERN TRAVEL / ADVENTURE / LIVING

JUNE 1967

50c

A photograph of two young children, a boy and a girl, holding hands and standing in a vast, arid desert landscape. The ground is covered in low-lying, scrubby vegetation in shades of purple, brown, and yellow. In the background, a large, rounded hill rises under a clear blue sky. The children are positioned in the lower right quadrant of the frame, looking towards the left.

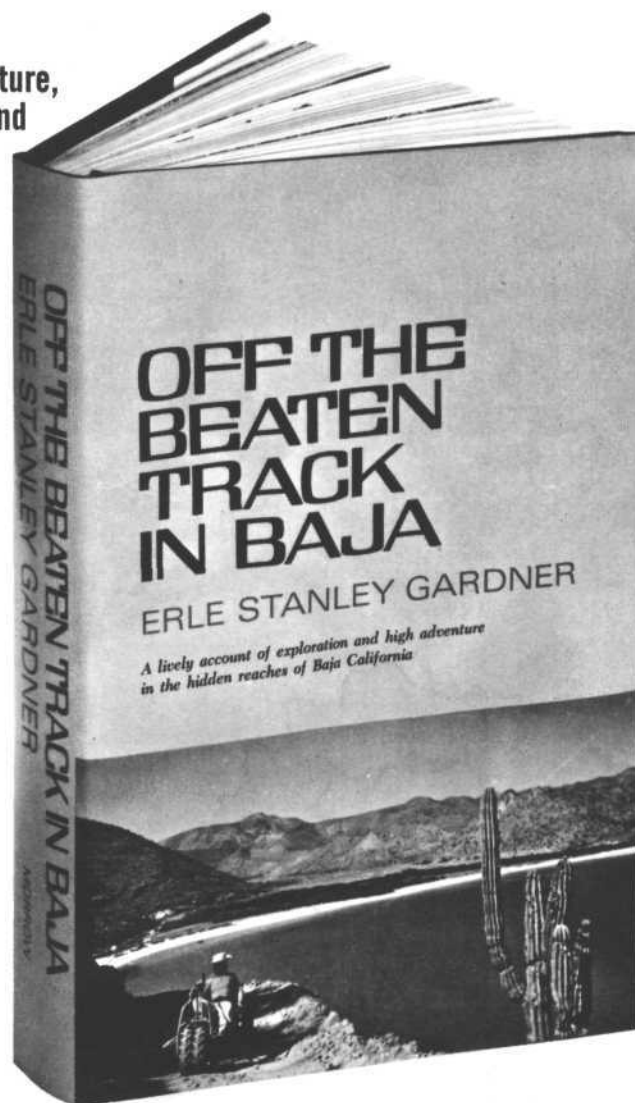
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DIAMOND MINE MYSTERY**



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# OFF THE BEATEN TRACK IN BAJA

by  
**ERLE STANLEY  
GARDNER**



When Choral Pepper, Editor of *DESERT MAGAZINE*, joined the latest Erle Stanley Gardner expedition into Baja California, she little realized she would be flying in helicopters over literally unexplored country. Nor did she realize that readers would demand far more material on the expedition than she could possibly crowd into five instalments in the magazine. Here is a book that is a detailed account of these modern-day adventures—the story of the first helicopter ever to be seen in Santa Rosalia, in Mulege, in San Ignacio . . . the story of exploring hidden canyons where no human has set foot to ground in modern times.

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### THE COVER

With Old Man Winter refusing to leave the desert areas we are beginning to wonder if there will be any wildflowers this year. Just to remind you what they look like, however, the cover is Wild Heliotrope and Poppies by Chuck Abbott, Tucson, Arizona. Chuck took the photograph near Clifton, Arizona last spring.

## New Books for Desert Readers

Books reviewed may be ordered from the DESERT Magazine Book Order Department, Palm Desert, California 92260. Please include 25c for handling. California residents must add 4% sales tax. Enclose payment with order.

### OFF THE BEATEN TRACK IN BAJA By Erle Stanley Gardner

Books written by Erle Stanley Gardner have outsold those written by any other author in the world today. His Perry Mason mysteries and those written under the pen name of A. A. Fair have been translated into almost every foreign language. Less well-known are the non-fiction books in which he recounts his personal adventures in the exploration of Baja California and western desert regions. *Off the Beaten Track in Baja* comes as the eighth in this series.

All Gardner adventure books feature the same cast as far as the writer's traveling companions are concerned, although in this book they play a minor role. Long, rangy Sam Hicks is along with his back-country know-how, pretty Jean Bethell is there with her steno pad and typewriter, J. W. Black has invented a new vehicle already introduced to readers of DESERT Magazine who followed editor Choral Pepper's account of the adventure on these pages, and Ricardo Castillo, Bruce Barron and Doug Allen, also familiar names to DESERT readers, were party to the latest Baja Adventure.

Gardner writes of his camps with genuine feeling. Smoke from mesquite literally scents the pages and, as you read, you will find yourself unwinding and relaxing with "Uncle Erle". How he loves to camp! This account is written with such a sense of intimacy that you feel Gardner's great personality and warmth as strongly as though you were there. It is a wonderful book—one you wish wouldn't end when you turn the last page.

Traveling by 4-wheel drive vehicles, Grasshopper and helicopter, Gardner and his friends intrude upon remote ranches which never before have been visited by an outsider. They meet children and adults who never before have seen a stranger. Yet always Gardner and his companions are greeted by their astonished hosts with dignity and made to feel welcome.

Accompanying the expedition is Mexico's foremost archaeologist, Dr. Carlos Margain of Mexico City. With him Gardner revisits the fantastic painted caves he discovered and wrote about in *The Hidden Heart of Baja* as well as new ones, all of

which are illustrated in both full color and black and white so the reader, too, can try to solve the mystery of these unique Baja pictographs.

The country covered in the book isn't entirely remote, however. Gardner writes of the better known resorts of northern and central Baja, including Dixon Collin's magnificent new hotel at Punta Chivato north of Mulege. This is one of the reasons why *Off the Beaten Track in Baja* will be the most popular of Gardner's Baja books. In spite of the fact Gardner did much of his exploring by helicopter, a craft not available to the average Baja traveler, most of the country was covered in land vehicles and his base camps were usually located near towns served by Captain Francisco Munoz' Baja Airlines—spots which may be reached by anyone who accepts the challenge of back-country travel.

This is a book that will make you want to go out and adventure a bit on your own. Gardner has blazed a trail for you, introduced you to trustworthy people you are bound to meet, and has given you a broad hint about what to expect. The next move is up to you! Baja is much too wonderful to remain unexploited for long. Readers who do not learn all they can about it and make the trip now will regret it later.

This reviewer was along on several of the expeditions included in the book and wrote articles about them for DESERT Magazine. It is truly remarkable that Gardner could have written these 368 pages and hardly repeated an incident covered in the DESERT stories. Hardcover, profusely illustrated, \$8.95. C.P.

### THE BUTTERFIELD OVERLAND MAIL

By Waterman L. Ormsby  
Edited by Lyle Wright and  
Josephine Bynum

Written by a New York newspaper reporter who was the only through passenger on the first westbound Butterfield Overland Mail stage from east to west, the author's account is lively and exciting. He describes other passengers, the country they passed through, accommodations

and the dangers to which early stage passengers were exposed. Having traveled from St. Louis to San Francisco, they arrived at their destination an hour ahead of contract time—23 days and 23½ hours, a feat never before equalled in overland travel. Their average speed, including detentions, stoppages, changing horses, meals, etc., was a fraction over five miles per hour.

The Butterfield Stage passed through Tucson, Arizona to Fort Yuma, where it crossed the Colorado River into California, and hence to Fort Tejon via Los Angeles and on to San Francisco. The author tells about the devastating sights they saw while crossing the desert between Yuma and the Vallecito stage stop along the immigrant trail.

This is not a new book. Its fifth printing was issued in 1962, but it is a worthwhile book for collectors of early Western Americana and one many readers may have missed on publication. Hardcover, 177 pages, \$4.50.

### THE LIFE OF THE DESERT By Ann and Myron Sutton

Published in cooperation with the World Book Encyclopedia, this beautifully illustrated volume covers life on the desert from four different aspects—daytime and nocturnal activities of typical desert creatures, perennial problems of water and the ingenious methods used by animals to obtain it, survival problems and how animals and plants solve them, and the differences and similarities among major North American desert regions. In addition, the appendices give a guide to National Parks and Monuments on American deserts and special features on endangered species of lizards and poisonous desert animals. As a reference, the book gives once-over-lightly coverage with a slick format. Profound desert aficionados might consider it somewhat shallow—resembling a glorified park department brochure with warmed over photos they have seen before—but it is still one of the most attractive books to be produced on nature in the desert from a broad point of view. Hard cover, full color, 231 pages, \$4.95.



*Are hunters for the elusive treasure of this old Jesuit Mission in Baja jinxed, or were the obstacles that the author and his companions encountered merely coincidence?*

# The Mystery of Santa Maria

by Morlin Childers



IT HAS BEEN said that \$3000 in gold was found at the turn of the century by a Mexican goat herder who slept in the shadows of the old Santa

Maria Mission ruins. As the sun rose, its rays shone on a partially exposed earthen pot. Upon excavating the pot, the goat herder discovered it was filled with the yellow metal. Since that time, treasure hunters have prodded and dug without discretion. Greed for buried gold or valuables, supposedly hidden when the Spanish Government abruptly evicted the Black Robes in 1769, has destroyed forever portions of structures which documented the work of this religious order.

Santa Maria was only partially completed at the time the Jesuits were ordered to Spain and many have supposed this to be the most logical mission in which to search for items the fathers wished to secret. Possibly the Black Robes anticipated that a change in policy might occur so they could return to their dedicated work and recover valuable articles left buried for safekeeping, but nothing of substance has been reported yet by treasure finders.

Ruins of a storage and warehouse for freight bound for Santa Maria still bake under the Baja California sun on the west side of San Luis Gonzaga Bay, separated from the mission by 35 miles of rugged mountain inland trails.

We were camped at Gonzaga Bay one late summer evening several years ago when a stranger stopped by our camp. He was worried. Three of his friends had taken off early in the day on trail bikes and were long overdue. We decided that nothing could be done to aid the missing men at this later hour, but if by morning they had not returned every effort would be made to locate and give them whatever help they might need.

Our decision to wait had been a wise



*The remaining ruins of the Santa Maria de los Angeles Mission.*

one, for when we awakened and saw their motor bikes, we knew they had returned. Curious to learn what had delayed them, we joined them around the coffee pot on their fire and listened to an intriguing story. They had reached the Santa Maria Mission. Inside its front door and midway between its roofless side walls there was a hole some earlier visitor had dug. The hole was a couple of feet square and about 14 inches deep. When they put a metal detector into it, the indicator needle traveled completely across the face of the instrument and the ear phones buzzed emphatically, both indications of the presence of metal. Unaware of the passing time, they spent the remainder of the day attempting to deepen the hole, but their tools were inadequate for moving the compact earth.

Armed with a shovel and the blessings of the "tale tellers," my companions and I departed that same morning—destination, Santa Maria de Los Angeles Mission; objective, to excavate and salvage the metallic substance indicated by the metal finder.

It is a difficult climb from the desert floor up the boulder-filled canyon. Water

that roared between the steep canyon walls during infrequent storms had worn smooth the granite lining of the canyon floor and there were few places to ascend the precipitous cliffs. We cooled off in some of the water-filled depressions, sometimes forcibly when passage was precluded to swimming. After crossing one water-filled sump, we found it necessary to shinnie up a cirio log to gain access to the upper canyon floor, 25 feet above our heads. Both the log and rocks were slippery, making it a dangerous climb.

As the sun bore down, the canyon widened and the summit of the mountain was visible. According to our informants, this was the clue that designated the location of this most inaccessible of all Baja missions. Lying mid-way between the Gulf of California to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west, from either direction the access is formidable.

While making our way up the canyon, we noted several white crosses etched on prominent boulders with arrows pointing in the direction of the mission. With each succeeding cross, the markers became larger. At last, directly in our path, was scrawled "MIS" and an arrow pointed

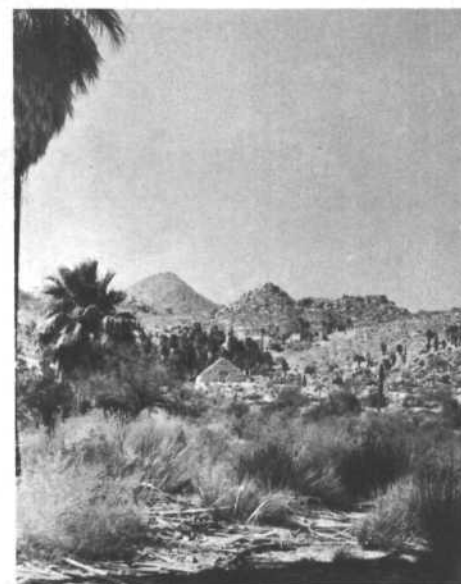
to the south, up and out of the canyon floor. We knew the mission was near.

Unfortunately, our shovel, too, proved inadequate. Resigned to the fact that a pick and bars would be required to break the cement-like earth, we decided to hide the shovel in a bush and return at a later date with better equipment for digging.

During the next couple of months, anytime two or more of us got together our conversation turned to the mission and conjecture as to what was secreted beneath the hardened earth. Three months later Ed Popejoy of El Centro, California, and I proceeded in a pickup truck, towing my sand buggy. Jim Adkins and Don Brook, also of El Centro, were to follow in Jim's small airplane and after Ed and I had hiked to the mission, they were to air-drop sleeping bags and other hard goods to an area north of the ruins. This way supplies and equipment would be available to accomplish our goal. After the

air-drop, Jim and Don were to fly back to Gonzaga Bay where they could land and then, in the pickup, follow our trail as far as possible to the mission, bringing with them two metal detectors. Everything proceeded as planned until, without warning, the engine of the sand bug stopped. After some minutes of investigation we found that the battery post had been fractured on the rough trail and was now broken off completely. The two of us loaded our 60-pound packs and continued on foot. It was mid-morning when we arrived at the mission to start the project of unearthing whatever was buried in this lonely, remote site. A pick we carried was the answer and though it was difficult, slow work, we were able to inch our way downward. The compact ground did not become softer as the hole deepened. Some four or five hours later we were working deeper at a depth of about five feet. Convinced that we had by-passed the

*The first view of the old mission when approached from the east side of the peninsula.*

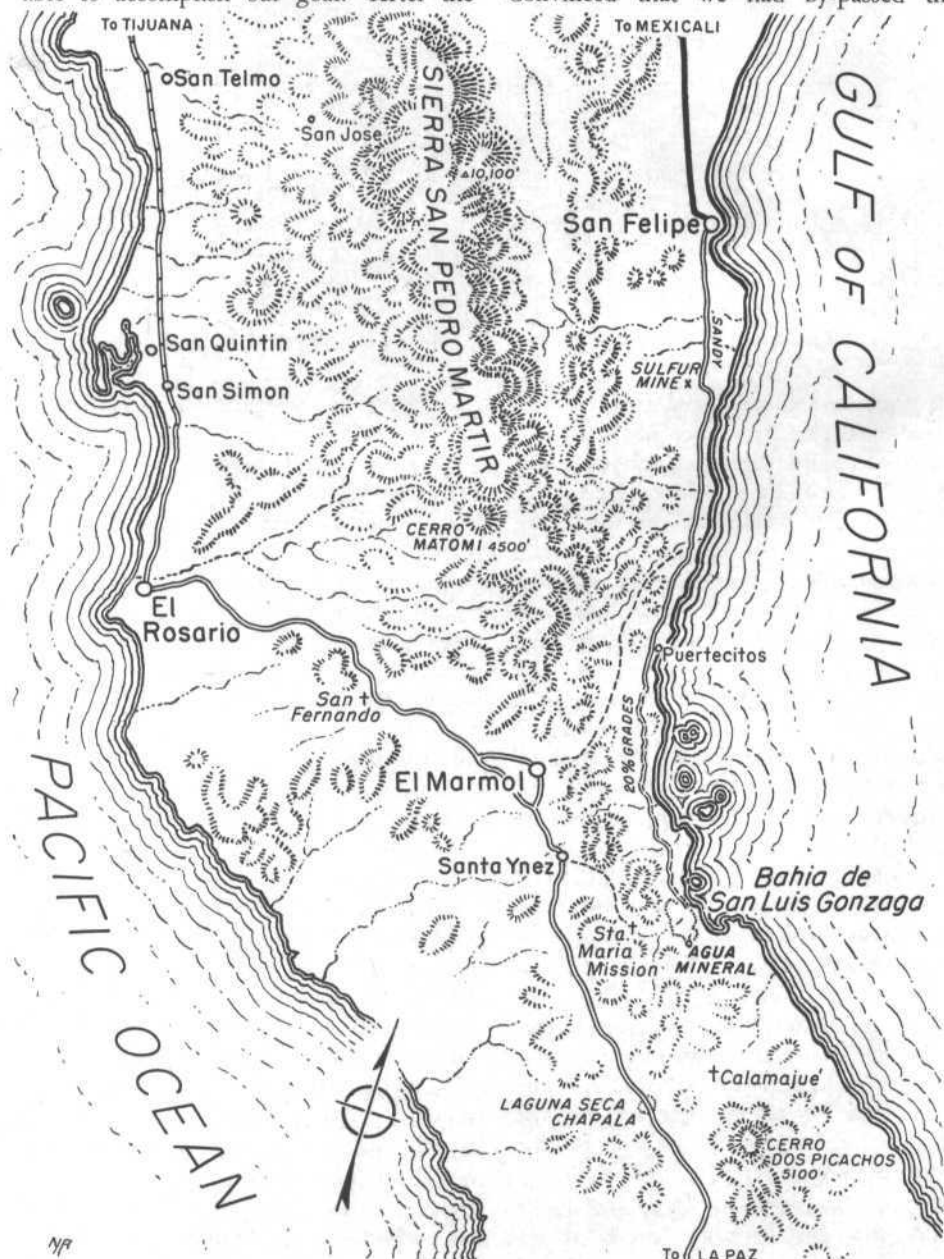


buried object, we reproached ourselves for leaving the metal detectors for Jim and Don to bring. At about this time we heard the engine of Jim's small plane.

The air drop was completed successfully and Ed and I were congratulating ourselves and looking forward to our friends joining us with the metal detector when they circled us again and dropped one more item—a small can. Inside of it was a note that read like this: "We cannot come to mission. Business in El Centro makes it necessary to return first thing in the morning. We will spend the night at Gonzaga Bay. Tomorrow morning early before we depart we will fly over and check on you. If at that time you plan to spend a second night at the mission you will both lie down on the ground."

With this message they departed. We felt very much alone. Further digging was futile without the metal detector, but it wasn't until sometime later that the full consequences of our plight struck us. We both remembered at the same time about our stalled sand buggy. Without a battery, our troubles were multiplied. Gloom prevailed until after refreshments were served and a good steak was under our belts.

The light of the next day sharpened our awareness of our predicament. Using the white lining from one of our sleeping bags, we ripped it into long strips, and laid them on the flat ground to the north of the ruins, spelling out the words, HELP CAR. Soon Jim and Don appeared overhead. They had difficulty deciding what CAR stood for and at first thought we were abbreviating some-





thing. After several passes they dropped another can with this message: "If there is something wrong with your car, both of you lay on the ground."

In less time than you can imagine, we were in a prone position. Our airborne friends dipped a wing and we knew they realized our situation. We then decided to bury the canned food and supplies, hide our digging equipment and sleeping bags and depart at once. If we made good time climbing up the canyon, our record was shattered by the descent. Jim and Don awaited us at the stalled sand buggy. Our efforts to expose the evasive object buried at the mission had failed again.

Fourteen months later, George Brockamp, J. L. Love and I decided to make a five-day sojourn to Baja. This time we would approach the challenging mission from the Pacific side of the peninsula.

Late in the afternoon we left the famous Baja highway and started east up the canyon toward the mission. Soon it was pitch dark and we had run out of

enough of an engineer to master its secret.

This was our fourth attempt to unearth the metallic object from its elusive grave. It gave me an eerie feeling—as though destiny prohibited us from completing our search. Nevertheless, we continued up the beautiful palm-studded canyon. The walking distance was about half as long as it was on the eastern slope and the climb less rugged. When we reached the mission site everything appeared as Ed and I had left it. We pulled our shovel from its hiding place and uncovered the canned food we had buried. Our desire to know what was beneath the old structure was still intense, but it took only a few strokes of the pick in the compact earth to quench our inquisitive thirst, especially when we had no metal detector to guide the dig.

Another year passed, but the mystery of the mission was not forgotten. Jim Adkins and Don Brock scheduled a trip to Gonzaga Bay to make another attempt to learn the secret of the ruins. A short distance from the place where the mountain trail departs the canyon, they were

*The author looks into the hole he dug on a previous trip and wishes he had a metal detector.*



*The eastern slope near the desert floor where we entered into the canyon is only one of the beautiful spots we came upon.*

trail. We decided to camp where we were for the night.

Early the following morning, George suggested we give the metal detector a final check before completing our hike to the mission. I removed the device from the pouch it was stored in and assembled the parts. After completing the project, I realized something was missing. The headgear, or earphones, were not in the pouch with the rest of the parts. We searched the sand bug and the camp box, to no avail. The earphones simply were not there, even though I was sure they had been stored with the rest of the device when it was placed in the vehicle. I tried to make the detector operate without the headgear, but was not

forced to abandon their trail bikes and forge ahead on foot. It was an interesting, if not a scenic trip. They saw a mountain sheep and, strangely, near a petroglyph on a rock depicting a snake, a six-foot-long live one blocked their trail. Was it a coincidence, or a warning out of the past? Finally arriving at the mission, the tired hikers retrieved the sleeping bags Ed and I had left and turned in early. Morning came and rays of light pierced the palm grove where they slept. With the light came new hope that at last the mystery of this loneliest Baja mission would be solved.

Imagine their chagrin when absolutely no indication of metal resounded from their detectors! Even a check of excava-

ted earth around the hole revealed nothing. What had happened? The identical metal detector that had registered so vigorously on the occasion of the first trip now refused to be disturbed at any point in or near the mission. Frustrated and sick at heart, the fellows climbed down the canyon trail and back to El Centro to report their failure.

Jim and Don had not seen the hole after Ed and I dug it and could not determine whether or not further excavation had taken place. It is possible someone had heard of our interest in the old ruin and, with a metal detector, had located and unearthed the treasure after our last attempt. If so, I hope that someone reads this story and tells us what was found. I will not feel cheated, for I think that every man should participate in the search for a buried or lost treasure sometime during his lifetime. Even should his effort prove unfruitful, he will be enriched with the spirit of adventure.

One thing I would like to add. Throughout our search for the secret of the Santa Maria, we carefully avoided digging into or under the few remaining adobe walls of the mission. To find this last Baja mission built by the Jesuits was a big part of our excitement. Treasure or no treasure, that part of the adventure remains intact for you. □

# SOMETHING NEW IN BISON

by Heather Smith Thomas



THE AMERICAN bison, popularly known as the buffalo, can be seen today in many parks, zoos, and on some ranches. His numbers were depleted dangerously during the past century, but now he is no longer in danger of becoming extinct.

Bison have roamed North America for

and sheep, but the name is now too firmly fixed to ever be changed.

Early explorers regarded the buffalo as a fearsome curiosity, but to Western Indians the buffalo meant life itself. Before the coming of the white men, they followed the buffalo herd and lived as hunters and warriors instead of agriculturists like the Indians east of the Mississippi. Sioux, Cheyennes, Comanches, Ari-

karas, Kiowas and other Plains Indians all depended on the buffalo.

Their natural roving was increased during the 1600s when Spanish explorers and traders supplied them with horses and they developed their remarkable skill in horsemanship. Before that, they hunted buffalo on foot. One method was the "buffalo jump." Here the Indians took advantage of the natural lay of the land and the mass confusion and fright of a stampeding herd. The "buffalo jump" was usually a steep cliff or bank over which the animals were driven to their deaths. By the time the herd leaders got to the cliff it was too late to turn back the onrushing herds behind would push a good number over before the stampede slackened.

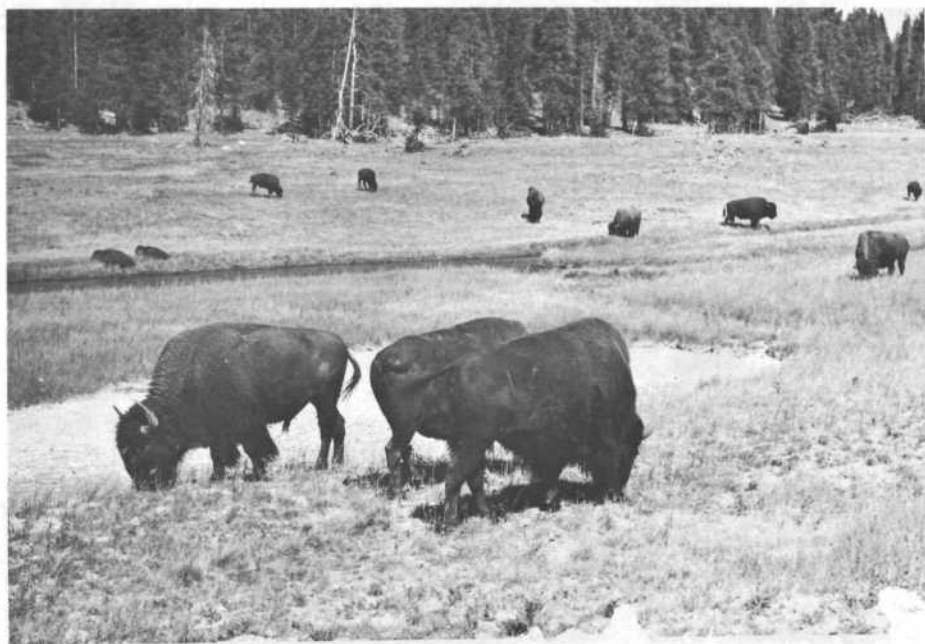
There is one such jump in the Tongue River country near Hardin, Montana. Here, piles of rock form a corridor stretching for more than half a mile which leads to a cliff. Buffalo robes on poles centered in the rock piles flapped in the wind and kept the running buffalo from breaking out of the corridor. The barrier on the other side is a steep downhill slope. The buffalo were driven along the edge



Jim Burnett, Montana rancher, is experimenting with cross-bred buffalo and cattle. Photo above is one result. Below is a herd of American bison that thrills tourists in Yellowstone National Park.

centuries. They crossed the land bridge between Asia and America and came into Alaska during the middle Pleistocene period (about 400,000 years ago). From Alaska they drifted southward, spreading from Canada to Mexico and from Pennsylvania to the Blue Mountains of Oregon. The prehistoric bison was larger than its modern descendant and had horns measuring five feet or more, as we can tell from its fossil remains.

The name "buffalo" probably came from the early French explorers who called the bison *le boeuf*. As English-speaking traders and settlers came into North America, the name became "buff" and "buffler" and finally ended up as "buffalo." Actually, the name applies scientifically only to the African buffalo and the water buffalo. The American bison is not a buffalo at all, being of the Bovidae family which includes cattle





of this steep hill until they came to the end and were forced over a 40-foot cliff. Animals not killed outright by the fall were slain by hunters below, then butchered. The shallowest layer of bones at this location is a foot below the present surface of the ground. There are other layers below; the fourth lying 10 feet underground. Teepee rings clearly show one campsite, and petroglyphs (rock drawings) on the jump cliff itself indicate a continued presence of Indians.

With horses the usual method of hunting buffalo was the "surround." A herd would be encircled by warriors on swift horses who galloped alongside and cut down stragglers with arrows and lances. Women, children and older men followed on foot to skin the slain beasts and cut up the meat.

Unlike the later white hunters, the Indians used nearly every part of the buffalo and got from these animals nearly all the necessities of life. The fresh meat was eaten raw, roasted, or boiled in a rawhide-lined earthen pot with water heated by hot rocks. Whatever meat was not eaten on the spot was preserved by drying or jerking, or by cooking, shredding and mixing with wild berries and fat to be stored in rawhide bags as "pemmican." The buffalo hides, after being fleshed and scraped, were treated with mixtures of fat and brains until ready to use for clothing. The tanned hides were then made into moccasins and leggings, dresses and shirts, and summer coverings for beds. Thick robes with hair still on them made warm beds for winter. Scraped hides were stitched together to cover teepees. Water buckets were made from the lining of the paunch. Rawhide was used for trunks, cooking pots, ropes, arrow quivers and saddles. The thick tough hide of the bull's neck was used for shields. Hoofs were boiled to make glue. Scraped and polished horns provided spoons, ladles and ornaments; rib bones made runners for small dog-drawn sleds and other bones served as tools. Sinews made thread and bowstrings. Thick wooly hair was used to stuff medicine balls and the beard decorated bows and lances. Even the stones found in the gall bladder were used for "medicine paint." Not much was wasted—even the tail provided a whip or fly swatter.

Then the white men came west to fence and cultivate the land and build military posts. The railroads crept westward through buffalo land; shooting stampeding buffalo was a popular passenger sport. Great herds crossing the tracks stopped trains for hours at a time. Buf-

falo Bill Cody started his ride to fortune as a hunter for the Kansas Pacific Railroad, killing 4,120 buffalo in 18 months.

Professional hide hunters fanned out over the plains, killing buffalo by the millions. Buffalo hides sold for \$1.25 apiece. Tongues, the greatest delicacy, were 25c, and hindquarters went begging at 1c per pound. By 1879, only a few scattered bands of buffalo remained in the Southwest.

By 1884 no more than several hundred wild and wary buffalo survived in the entire world. Not even these few were safe. Ten years later more than a hundred were killed in the Yellowstone wilderness. At last public feelings were outraged. President Cleveland signed a bill protecting the 21 buffalo remaining in the park. Others were protected in zoos and fenced areas. Slowly they began to increase again, but never would great herds roam the plains. And the going of the buffalo marked the end of a culture; life for the Plains Indians would never be the same.

Today there are about 10,000 buffalo in the United States. About a thousand of these are in Yellowstone Park, and another thousand roam the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. The largest herd in the U.S. now is in the South Dakota Custer State Park near Pierre, South Dakota, where there are 1200 head. Some of the buffalo at the National Bison Range (at Moiese, Montana, north of Missoula) were recently sold to ranchers and other individuals. Today there are more than a few ranchers raising buffalo, either for fun or for profit. There has been some experimentation with crossbreeding buffalo with cattle. Jim Burnett, rancher near Luther, Montana, has successfully raised a large number of half-buffalo animals, crossing buffalo with Hereford and Angus cows. The resulting hybrid is not sterile. Mr. Burnett has successfully raised a sizeable number of second-cross animals, one-fourth buffalo.

The cross-bred animals make good beef, and a lot of it. There is also a market for buffalo meat in gourmet wild game restaurants where it is a delicacy. Steaks, roasts, and sausage dinners are a specialty in South Dakota's Mt. Rushmore restaurant. Roadside stands in the Black Hills offer "buffalo burgers" to travelers and tourists.

Nearly extinct 80 years ago, the buffalo has made a remarkable comeback under the protection of national parks and interested individuals. Today it is one of our most fascinating remnants of the Old West. □

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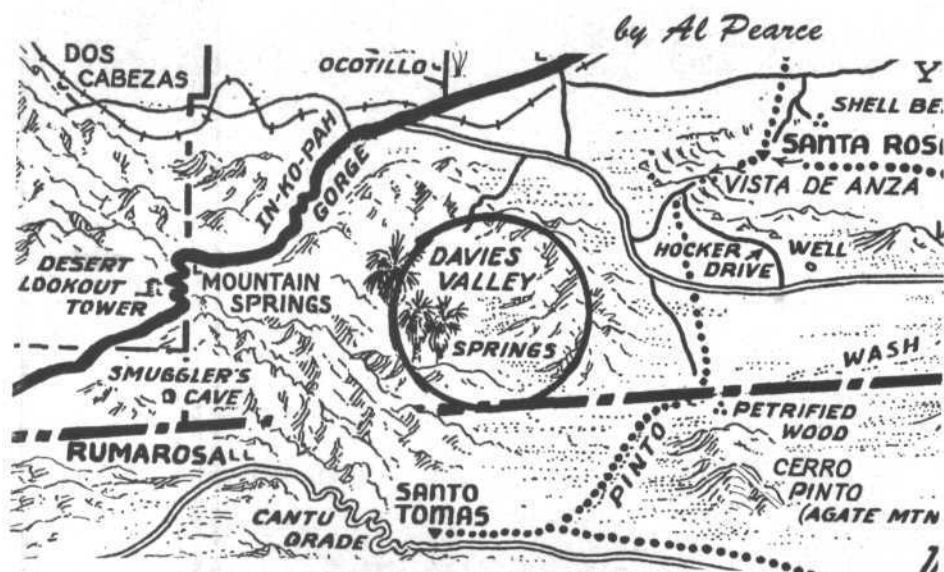
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*The finder is the keeper, if you can locate this --*

## TREASURE IN GUNS



He found it! Two of his prize horses were gone. Horse thieves had visited him during the night.

Like most early ranchers, he was a good tracker. In a matter of minutes, he was mounted and riding slowly towards Mexico, about 50 miles away.

During those early years, it was not uncommon for bandits from below the border to occasionally work their way north to what was considered "better pickings." This was Murietta's stomping grounds, to mention one of many. Early ranchers were constantly harrassed, their cattle rustled, their horses stolen and, in some instances, their wives taken along as part of the booty. Usually the rancher cursed a little, damning the world in general, while he promised himself to be more on guard in the future. But the hero of our story had not lost two ordinary horses. These were two prized thoroughbreds; the only two of their kind within several hundred miles. He wanted them back.

As the story goes, he followed the bandit trail deep into Sonora, Mexico. His anger increased as he thought of the many things he had to do back home and of his wife and family, whose descendants now keep his name alive around Jacumba. In later years, he confessed to friends that he fully intended to hang the bandits when he caught them. Instead, he "mercifully shot 'em both." Then he started the long trip home. It is a hard trip, even today with air-conditioned automobiles. It must have been tough astride a slow-moving horse and guiding several others.

The custom at that time—started 150 years earlier by immigrants from Mexico, led by DeAnza—was to skirt the Davies Mountains and follow the easier desert trails, but for some reason, the rancher decided to take the shorter route through the rugged Davies Mountains. After many days of traveling he was probably tired, hungry, and eager to rejoin his family. Late in the evening, just as the sun was getting ready to disappear, the rancher realized he had taken a wrong turn and entered a blind canyon. Rather than retreat he decided to camp there for the night. Later he described the area



HE DAVIES Mountains in Southern California, near Jacumba, are probably the loneliest in the West. It is one of the few places I know where you can spend a weekend alone.

We've been there several times; not looking for gold, nor silver, nor lost jewels, but for a cache of guns. Any one of which would be worth a fortune on today's market.

The guns are there someplace; carefully hidden in a cave among many canyons. People have seen them. An early settler carried two of them for years. In Jacumba, you mention guns and the old timers smile. They'll tell you the story; but the telling is saturated with their own experiences. They've been there; they've searched the mysterious, unfriendly Davies Mountains.

The guns were first discovered before World War I. They were found by accident and the finder, although he searched for many years, was never able to find them again.

The story begins early one morning on a ranch northwest of Ocotillo Wells Junction, about 25 miles east of Jacumba. A rancher awakened and sleepily began his daily chores. He walked slowly to the corral, probably unconscious of the first rays of the morning sun that were creeping slowly over the nearby mountains. He was wishing possibly for a little excitement to give him an excuse to escape the boredom of ranch routine.



as a deep canyon bordered by rock strewn mountains filled with caves. Palm trees dotted its floor. He moved into one of the caves for shelter and was surprised to see it stacked to the ceiling with crates. These crates were the guns. According to the story he later told, most of the guns were new. They were still packed in cosmoline.

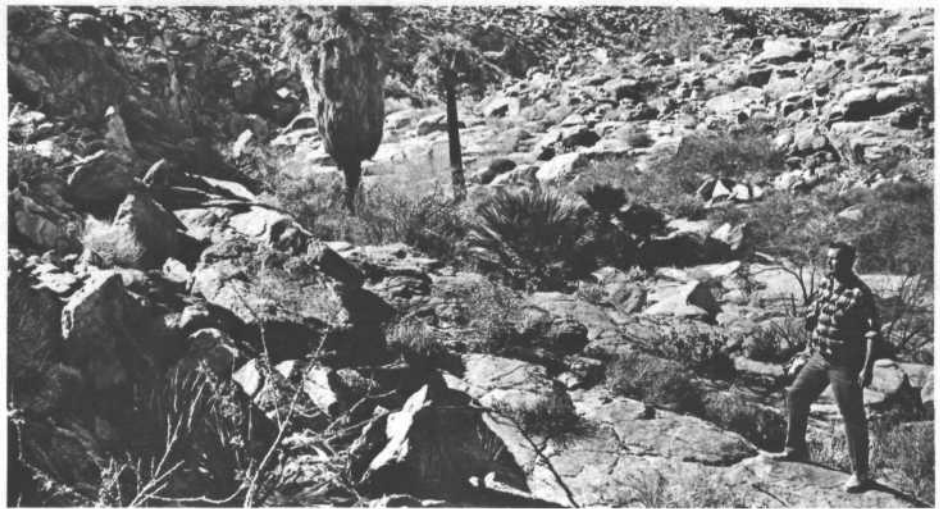
There were rifles and hand guns. He picked one of each to take home, obviously figuring he could return for the remainder whenever he had time. There was no hurry. Items stored in the desert do not decay quickly.

The hand gun was a converted '61 Colt worth from \$300 to \$500 on today's market, depending upon its condition. The rifle was a Henry repeater. A similar rifle sold for \$3,500 about six months ago. At that time, of course, their value was far less. The Colt was worth only \$10 to \$15 and the rifle about \$50.

The rancher, although he searched for years, was never able to relocate that particular cave. His descendants also searched, but they, too, finally gave up.

When I heard the story 10 years ago, I shrugged it off as a typical yarn spread by an old man, but subsequently, things began to happen. A San Diegan found

*The canyon was such a jumble of rocks we hardly knew where to begin our search.*



a rusty '61 Colt buried in the desert sand. A TV commentator found an old Henry repeater also buried in the sand.

How did they get there? I began to read about the area. I wasn't too serious at first, but the history was interesting.

The first settlers into California passed near the Davies Mountains; a troop of cavalry was massacred by Indians less than 10 miles away. An Indian killed a white settler, a relative of the rancher who found the guns. In retaliation, angry

settlers slaughtered 19 Indians as they lay sleeping. The area had a violent history, as evidenced by a number of skulls found in different areas throughout the mountains.

The Davies Mountains had been a hide out for Murietta. He reportedly used the rugged canyons as an escape route from the United States into Mexico, as did many other bandits. It was also a route for smugglers. There are still several caves in the area named "Smuggler's Cave."



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U. S. PATENT NO. 2879103

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What really started me on a search for the guns was a chance meeting with an old Mexican in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico. His name was Francisco Hernandez Martinez and he was as old as his name was long. His eyes were weary and his mouth curled at the edges, joining the wrinkles that crisscrossed his face like lines on a heavily used highway map. My wife and I had been talking to some friends when the discussion turned to Mexico's struggle for Independence. Soon I found myself talking about the lost guns. I told them everything I knew, which wasn't much, at that point.

As I was telling the tale, our host smiled at his wife. When I concluded, he said, "There is a man who fought in the war. He often talks about going to the United States after guns for the revolutionists."

He told us more about the old warrior. The ancient veteran was popular with children; his tales of the war were something of a legend among the poor, hero-seeking children of Hermosillo.

The next day he took us to meet the soldier. Francisco was old; every line in his battered face could have been the result of another phase in his long life. He was an Indian. His ideas of freedom were grandiose and he was proud of the part he had played in the Mexican revolution. When we questioned him about his trips to the border, his weary eyes took on the puzzled expression of a man struggling to remember.

"Yes!" he said at length. "Many, many years ago when our poor, ragged army fought with ancient weapons, we often went northwest of here to bring back wagon loads of guns and bullets."

"Where did you go?" I asked.

"To the mountains west of the great river," he replied.

These would be the Davies Mountains. The river he mentioned would be the Colorado River.

"We went many times," he said. "Sometimes there would be many guns, sometimes we'd return with nothing."

"Where would you find the guns?" I asked.

"They were hidden in the mountains, in large caves."

"Were they always in the same place?"

"No, Senor," he answered quickly. "We would meet a guide by the big pointed mountain and he would lead us to the guns."

The pointed mountain he mentioned must have been Signal Mountain, about

15 miles from the Davies Mountains where the rancher found the guns.

"Sometimes, there was no one there to meet us," he said.

This was the part of his story that nagged my consciousness. If sometimes there had not been someone there to meet them, this would indicate that perhaps the guns hidden carefully in a remote cave had never been taken. What happened to the guide is hard to tell. During those troubled days along the border, any number of things could have stopped him from making the scheduled rendezvous. Perhaps his was one of the skulls later exposed by blowing sand.

My wife and I talked to Hernandez at length, but he could remember little more, other than the fact that sometimes they had entered canyons spotted with palm trees. This convinced me he had been there. The rancher had also mentioned palm trees.

Two weeks later I was flying over the Davies Mountains with Roy Davis, a friend from San Diego. From the air, the area consists primarily of steep, rolling mountains scarred with short canyons, many with palm trees. We covered the mountains systematically by air, carefully planning a ground search. A week later Shirley and Jerry Jenkins from Escondido accompanied us and we invaded the Davies Mountains. With trail bikes,



*The hiding place is probably in or under a chamber like this, changed by landfalls during intervening years.*

we started inspecting the canyons. Some were impassable; others were difficult.

Just above the border, a wide canyon curls west, aiming straight into the heart of the rugged mountains. Its floor was too sandy for wheels, so we abandoned our trail bikes and continued on foot. The canyon matched the rancher's description perfectly. There were palm trees and a blind end. There were hundreds of caves. Sitting on the side of a hill overlooking the canyon floor, we surveyed the scene before us. The canyon and the caves provided a perfect hideout for smugglers.

It was that afternoon—our third in the Davies Mountains—when we learned why the rancher had never been able to find the guns. And, maybe, why they will never be found, unless by accident.

Jerry and I were walking slowly along the canyon bottom when he noticed a narrow crevice between two huge boulders.

He pointed and I shook my head. "You'd have to crawl on your hands and knees through there," I said. "It would be hard to carry crates of rifles in and out."

"Let's look anyway," he said.

The narrow crevice, about five feet off the floor of the canyon, was just barely wide enough to squeeze through. The cave behind the boulders was tiny. We were getting ready to leave when we noticed another opening among the huge boulders. It was towards the top of the cave we were in.

"Might as well," I said, "we've come this far."

Together, we climbed to the opening. It was even tighter than the one leading outside, but with a little stretching we forced our way into a room about 25 feet deep and 10 feet wide.

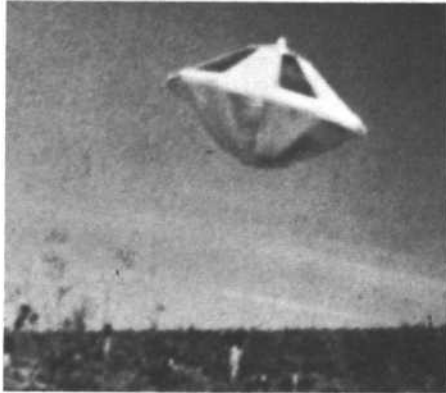
For a moment we stared in silence, both thinking the same thing. How many other caves were there like this one? How many caves had been completely hidden by falling rocks?

Later, as we stood outside in the bright afternoon sun, the full significance of our discovery became apparent. The banks of the canyon were covered by thousands of boulders that had fallen down the steep mountainsides. New caves had been formed, old caves had been covered. Undaunted, however, we systematically continued until darkness covered the Davies Mountains and we were forced to give up the search. We'll return though, unless in the meantime someone with enough patience to look for a cave behind each boulder retrieves the loot. □



# IS IT OR ISN'T IT A **UFO?**

BY STANLEY B. DEMES



*The above photographs were provided by the Amalgamated Flying Saucer Society of America and all were taken by Dr. Daniel Fry. The one in center was taken near his home in Merlin, Oregon; other sightings occurred near Joshua Tree National Monument.*



LIKE THAT glowing television set in your front room, the UFO is finding a secure place in American life. Annually there are thousands of columns of newsprint devoted to UFO sightings. What is a UFO? It is an unfamiliar object flying in peculiar (if not impossible) aerodynamic fashion above our earth. A UFO may be cigar-shaped, saucer shaped, or completely round. It may be multicolored like the cathode ray tube of an operating color TV, or it may shine like an effulgent coin.

Before launching into a sympathetic, yet slightly skeptical, probe of California Mohave desert sauceriana, certain questions and theories must be presented. Unfortunately, no question can be answered; no theory proven.

Are flying saucers real, fakes, or just games Nature plays? Wernher Von Braun, the famous German-American missile man, feels that about two percent of the 6,000 flying saucer sightings occurring in the last 10 years have not been explained away as balloons, meteorites, planets, jet planes, swamp gas or hoaxes. Von Braun states, however, that two percent unexplained sightings is no reason for him to believe in flying saucers. The Air Force is quite enigmatic about flying saucers. They talk around the subject. Air Force reports put out by Project Bluebook

(their UFO analysis group in Dayton, Ohio) merely states they are not a threat to our national security.

Many important people take the other side—they are convinced that UFOs are real. The famous German rocket scientist, Herman Oberth, says they are real. Further, Barry Goldwater, former senator from Arizona, is quoted in a publication put out by the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena as saying, "Flying saucers — Unidentified Flying Objects — or whatever you call them, are real."

Let's imagine for a moment that UFOs are real—where do they come from? Saucer enthusiasts primarily think they come from Mars or Venus. A few think that there are saucer bases on the moon. The recent discovery by Lunar Orbiter II of a geometrical arrangement of lunar pillars seems to strengthen this argument. Other saucer devotees maintain that flying saucers are spacecraft from distant planets far from our solar system. This supposition is supported by recent astronomical and statistical findings. Planetary systems have been discovered adjacent to Tau Ceti and Epsilon Eridani, two stars thought to be similar to our sun.

As interesting, was a discovery by Carl Sagan, a Stanford geneticist. In 1962, using complicated statistical techniques, he proved that "Earth was visited by an extra-terrestrial civilization at least once during historical times." Another fas-

cinating reflection on extra-terrestrial life is presented by Stephen Dole of the Rand Corporation. He believes that the habitable planets of other galaxies would look like ours—they would have mountains, deserts, rivers, oceans, glaciers, and the like—but they would not have human creatures on them. Such beings would in all probability be intelligent, but they would have evolved differently from man as we know him.

Contrary to popular opinion, flying saucers are not a modern day phenomenon. Peaks of flying saucer activity were discernible in the 1882-1886 period, as well as in 1887, 1906 and 1909. Modern times arrived for our supposed space vehicles in 1947. In that year Kenneth Arnold sighted 10 circular discs spinning along at speeds up to 1000 miles an hour in and out of the peaks of Mt. Rainier. Later, our fabulous Mohave desert became a prominent arena for these real or imaginary craft. Here is the Mohave's saucer drama as told by the people who saw these strange objects in the desert sky or, in rare cases, communicated face-to-face with interplanetary crew members.

A sinister Mohave flying saucer story occurred around 1955 at Edwards Air Force Base during the dead of night. One of the base guards saw a small group of saucers sporting multi-colored lights land and get speedily ushered into a hanger that the guard had never seen open be-

fore. Disturbed, the man went to base authorities and told them what he had seen. On every occasion he was greeted with inscrutable faces and terse replies of "you have seen nothing." Finally, the agitated man resigned his job and left the base muttering in a uncomplimentary fashion about secrecy in government. This saucer encounter was told to me by an ex-intelligence officer. He seemed serious when he spoke to me, but most intelligence officers have a keen sense of humor. Was he kidding?

The *Proceedings* of the College of Universal Wisdom (located in Yucca Valley) of 1956 tells us of a memorable saucer experience. On Friday, June 29, thousands of people from Yucca Valley to Claremont, California, saw a doughnut-shaped object hovering at an altitude of 25,000 feet. Gene Miller, who operated the Banning, California airport, said he had intercepted a radio communication from Norton Air Force Base giving pilots the go-ahead to shoot the object down.

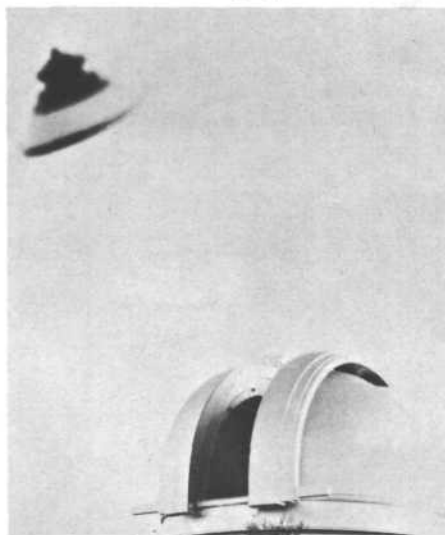
The *Los Angeles Times* of June 28, 1960, recounts the saucer story of Captain E. L. Remlin and First Officer, David Stewart, both United Airliner pilots. Eight miles north of Baker they spied a cylindrical object flying at 20,000 feet, its speed much exceeding that of the aircraft. The two pilots were dazzled by the brilliant colors of the spacecraft—a bluish center surrounded by a bright orange.

The *Santa Ana Register* of May 1, 1964, carries a saucer announcement with a Las Vegas byline. Mr. and Mrs. Gus Biggs and Mrs. Lorene Ayres of Fontana watched from their moving car a smooth, brownish, dome-shaped object land in the desert 10 miles west of Baker. Mr. Biggs stopped the car and they raced to catch a closer view. However, the saucer vanished into thin air leaving only a large depression in the ground.

From the *Los Angeles Times* of August 3, 1952 comes this incredible story. Pauline Watts, the supervisor of the Indian Ground Observation Post, saw two bright metallic objects. They were incredibly fast and appeared smaller than Air Force bombers. The two objects darted around for awhile but streaked away in a straight up direction when a bomber threatened too close.

Typical flying saucer fare is hashed up by the *North Bay Nugget* of April 17, 1952. An Air Force Technical Sergeant is quoted as seeing near Nellis Air Force Base 18 circular, dull-white objects flying in zig-zag fashion at 40,000 feet. The sergeant estimated that they were speeding at 1200 miles an hour. Base officials

*This impressive UFO sailing over Mt. Palomar was homemade by Sam Hicks and created in his photographic darkroom. See his explanation on this month's Letters page.*



confirmed that no balloons had gone up that day.

George Van Tassel, owner of Giant Rock Airport, tells of this UFO incident which occurred in the latter part of April, 1956 on the Twentynine Palms Marine Artillery Range. A marine private was doing guard duty at an ammunition dump when he spied a brilliant white light hovering over the dump. The marine reported this event to the commander of the guard, who personally confirmed the sighting. The commander and several enlisted men watched the light for about two hours. During an interim when they turned their heads to greet another curious marine comrade, the light vanished without a trace.

Added piquancy to the Saucer pudding comes from those who claim they have chatted with disc personnel. I recently interviewed Carl Anderson, a Fullerton resident, regarding his claim. Carl is a short, pleasant man employed as an electrician in the Navy Yard at Terminal Island. His face is honest appearing and glows, like his beloved saucers, both from conviction and merriment. Carl climbed aboard a 200-foot Saucer the night of February 14, 1960, only 7½ miles north of Giant Rock. Visit authorization came from Carl's good friend (and outerspace-man), Kumar, who incidentally and literally is Carl's favorite Martian. For approximately two hours and 20 minutes the two creatures—one human, the other extro-human, conversed within the saucer. For the first two hours the Fullerton resident bombed the saucer pilot with questions. Carl was especially concerned with the propulsion system, a nuclear reactor

which transformed an exotic fuel into powerful electromagnetic forces. Kumar showed his Fullerton friend the lever which controlled the polarity of the spacecraft. A shift to the positive pole would send the ship careening into space; a movement toward the negative would send the ship earthward. The final 20 minutes of the earthman's stay, Kumar developed a message he wished Carl to deliver to scientists at Heidelberg University. Just what the message is Carl would not disclose.

A pleasant interlude occurred during the interval when the two friends were talking. Nirvana, a lovely Venusian Princess seven feet tall and wearing gossamer booties, served Carl and his friend nectar in a sparkling crystal goblet. So graphic was my interviewee's description of this maiden from outerspace that I became all but intoxicated with nectar and cheesecake.

Some may doubt Carl's story, but even the skeptical must turn green with envy at the good fortune Carl's interplanetary encounter brought him. For one thing, it brough him a trip to Europe; for another, it brought him temporary fame as a guest speaker at an international UFO convention in Wiesbaden, Germany. German newspapers gave Carl lots of publicity. It was obvious, as Carl noted, that Europeans are far more sympathetic to UFOs than Americans.

George Van Tassel, Yucca Valley's dean of flying saucer worshippers, mentions this saucer landing in his book, *The Council of Seven Lights*. It occurred in the wee morning hours at Giant Rock airport. A spaceman routed George out of his warm bed to give him a tour of his spaceship. George tried to tell his wife of his singular good fortune, but apparently the interplanetary visitor had placed a spell over her; she couldn't be awakened. For 20 minutes George and his visitor chatted in friendly fashion in the glowing interior of the space craft. Only a few questions had been asked and answered before the pilot seized George by the arm and told him he must leave. This the intrepid airport owner did reluctantly. Hardly had George stepped from the saucer when the reason for his speedy exit was made clear. The roar of jet planes sounded like thunder in the distance.

I have since learned that George has actually flown in a flying saucer to our neighboring planets. More power to him!

UFO enthusiasts almost universally proclaim the Adamski Interplanetary contact at Desert Center as the most spectacular. It is vividly described in *Flying*



*Saucers Have Landed*, a book co-authored by George Adamski, Southern California's famous saucer expert. Adamski's adventure came as a glorious addendum to a picnic served up about 10 miles from Desert Center. George and his guests, Betty Bailey and Dr. and Mrs. Williamson, first saw a cigar-shaped craft. It was orange on top, the rest was gleaming silver. Later, George wandered into the desert captive of a telepathic command transmitted by the space people. A few minutes of walking brought the dynamic mortal to the foot of a low hill. He could barely distinguish the small scout saucer, the top of which peered down at him from a saddle connecting two adjoining hills. Then Adamski saw him, a blond humanoid type, almost saintlike in demeanor. The blond pilot told his marveling companion that he was from Venus. He further revealed that the people of his home planet were much concerned with Terra's promiscuous nuclear testing. The Venusian also explained to Adamski why so few saucers had landed. The space vessels rarely landed because they did not wish to frighten earth people who might, in their hysteria, wreak vengeance on the saucer-nauts. When Adamski pressed his benevolent visitor to let him photograph him, his request was disallowed. A request to take a ride in the spacecraft was similarly denied. In his eagerness to climb aboard Adamski had touched the outer rim of the airship's forcefield. His right arm showed scars from this encounter with electromagnetic might four months later. The spaceman then took off, leaving behind a set of footprints which bore an undecipherable message.

Any discussion of flying saucers in the Mohave must, of course, have something to say about Giant Rock and its attendant airport. (DESERT, March, 1967.) Why? Because in the shadow of this huge boulder many saucers have cavorted in the past and will probably cavort again in the future. At Giant Rock friendly George Van Tassel daily manages his private airport and two days a year, usually in October, hosts a giant rally of saucer enthusiasts within the confines of his airport. The faithful joyfully sit on desert boulders and listen avidly to such guest speakers as the inimitable chief Standing Horse who relates the story of his trip Alpha Centauri, and Carl Anderson's stirring (if a little weird) "I was teleported into a flying saucer." This interesting free convention lasts two days, during which time George Van Tassel wends his way through a maze of trailers

from his restaurant to his 7-story hollow rock, loving every minute of it.

Most people who follow desert trails do not see flying saucers. Ken Harris, who has hunted Indian relics all the way from Joshua Tree to Twentynine Palms has never seen one. Tom Hutchenson, who has a cabin in Joshua Tree and a penchant for running there when the smog gets bad, has never seen one. The editor and publisher of *Desert Magazine*, Choral and Jack Pepper, who do a lot of desert wandering, have never seen one either. Personally, I have tripped across the desert pavement off and on for 15 years and I haven't seen a saucer. This doesn't mean I don't want to see one. I do, if there are any to be seen.

If, however, you are lucky enough to see a saucer-like object in the desert sky, don't panic—just rush to the nearest Air Force base and tell them your story. They will fill out a form and send it to Major Quintanella, Commandant of Project Bluebook at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. The major and his staff will try to determine what you have seen. If it puzzles them, they will send your report to the University of Colorado where a team of scientists led by Dr. Hynek, an astronomer professor pilfered from Northwestern, will re-examine your facts in an attempt to find an answer. Perhaps your incident will go down in history as one of the 2% that cannot be explained by natural means. □

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## Diamond Dilemma in California

by Ben Traywick



IN THE PROXIMITY of Round Mountain, a few miles from Chico, California, lies the ghost town of Cherokee and the remains of the once famous Cherokee Mine. Through the now crumbling walls of Cherokee's old assay office, \$10 million worth of gold was poured into shiny bars of precious yellow metal and shipped down to Oroville. And here, today, on the side of an extinct Butte County volcano, amid the decaying remains of a Gold Rush ghost town, lies the only diamond mine in California.

Not only did Cherokee have the distinction of being a real boom town; it was here the first diamond found in California was discovered.

In 1866, while cleaning his sluice box at the mouth of the great Cherokee hydraulic wash, Mike Maher discovered a perfect blue diamond. A year later William Brandreth found a diamond at Cherokee which cut into a stone of one and a third carats. The year following that, John Moore found a gem that weighed six carats. And yet another miner, named Slissman, later picked up a total of 20 diamonds from the Cherokee placers.

In the late 1870s, Cherokee was the largest and most famous hydraulic mine in America. In a short period of 25 years, miners grubbed \$50 million in raw gold from its vast treasure house, not to mention a sizeable fortune in glittering diamonds which compared in quality with the best stones of Africa and South America.

At the Cherokee wash huge nozzles, called monitors, shot high pressure streams of water against the earth, crumbling and washing hundreds of tons of earth an hour through enormous sluice boxes. This mining method was perfectly adapted for separating the heavier gold from gravel, but it will never be known how many millions in diamonds it washed away with the tailings.

By 1870, Cherokee consisted of some 7000 persons. The gravel and mud tailings were becoming a problem as they flowed down to farms in the valley, covering everything in their wake. Dams were built to retain the muddy mass, but when it built up to capacity, the dams gave way. After a break, mine representative would ride through the newly flooded areas, their pockets bulging with \$20 gold pieces. At each flooded area they would ask the owner his losses and pay the damages in gold—with no argument.

Gradually resentment against hydraulic mining developed. Millions of tons of rock and earth had clogged streams, filled rivers and covered vast areas of agricultural land. By 1893 pressure exerted on the California Legislature caused the anti-hydraulic mining law to be passed, thus ending hydraulic mining.

Under the new mining restrictions, owners felt they could not operate with a desired profit so in 1906 organized mining ceased in Cherokee and the town died. Individual miners and prospectors began to drift in to grub through the rocks and bluffs in search of gold and occasionally picked up a diamond, but it wasn't until a man named Cooney appeared, who claimed to have worked in the South African diamond fields, that the United States Diamond Mining Company in Oroville was formed. Confident that the Oroville area abounded in kimberlite, a blue volcanic clay in which diamonds are discovered, Cooney and his partners secured an option on 40 acres of land and incorporated the company under the laws of Arizona for 2,500,000 shares at \$1.00 per share. Five blocks of stock were reserved for the five partners and the remainder put up for sale to the citizens of Oroville, Chico and Marysville.

Advertisements were issued in local papers and in a very few days a long list of people had invested their money in purchase of the stock. With the new

money, Cooney got the operation underway and three shifts went to work. Stock values showed a substantial increase and sales went up in proportion when, in 1908, a woman found a two carat diamond in the craw of her Christmas turkey. This particular bird had been raised in the vicinity of Oroville.

As the cost of operations increased, the partners ran short of ready cash. From somewhere Cooney came up with the needed funds and accepted a portion of his partners' stocks in return. Unnoticed by the others, Cooney slowly began to gain control of the company.

On a March Saturday in 1909, Henry Vail, vice president of the company, washed some disintegrated blue clay taken from the 180 foot level and recovered three blue, perfectly formed diamonds all in the same lump. At about this time a representative of the DeBeers syndicate arrived in Oroville. DeBeers was the greatest producer of diamonds in the world and wanted controlling interest in the United States Diamond Mining Company. Americans were paying DeBeers \$40 million a year for diamonds produced from their South African properties, so from an economic viewpoint they could tolerate no competition in America. DeBeer's syndicate had set aside a fund of \$500 million to be used only for obtaining the controlling interest of every new diamond discovery in the world. Their representative attempted to get a man named Sweetman, who was the City Assessor of Chico and a stockholder, to purchase a controlling share of stock, offering him a position with DeBeers and promising to make him a rich man. Sweetman refused because of the mining interests held by friends.

On May 8, 1909, two miners, working off a drift from the 200 foot level, dug out a big chunk of soft blue material. Their lamps picked up blazing lights in the clay. The miners grabbed all the clay they could hold in their hands and rushed out of the mine. In the sunshine,



the muddy stones reflected sunlight with a dazzling brilliance. Lorbeer, one of Cooney's original partners, washed the gems clean of mud and found there were over 100 of them!

Lorbeer and the two miners rushed into Oroville shouting, "Diamonds! Real diamonds! We found diamonds." A large crowd gathered in the street to inspect the newly found diamonds.

Cooney was in Butte, Montana when the strike was made, but upon his return, Lorbeer rushed to meet him, his hat filled with the muddy, greasy, and glistening stones. After one glance, Cooney remark-

directorship and the two strangers voted in. Then the new group of directors turned and voted Lorbeer out. This business completed, the two strangers departed. They were never seen again. Cooney boarded the mine so no one could enter. As far as is known, no one has been down inside the mine since the day the two miners came clambering out with their hands full of diamonds.

Although Cooney already controlled the company without question; he offered his former partners \$2500 each for the stocks they still retained. Panicky, they sold without question. Two investors in San Francisco, who held large blocks of stock, became suspicious, however, and sent a diamond expert to Oroville to examine the 200 gems that had been taken from the mine. Cooney flatly refused to let him see the stones or even tell him where they were.

Some weeks passed, then Cooney's agent appeared in San Francisco and offered to buy all the stocks owned by the investors. Disgusted with Cooney's method and attitude, and afraid they might lose all they had invested, the two men sold their stock for several thousand dollars. It is still a mystery as to where Cooney obtained the enormous amount of cash he used to purchase absolute control of the mine.

Stranger still, Cooney did not resume operations as everyone had expected. Instead he left the mine closed, shut down all operations, and even sold off the mining equipment. He remained in the Oroville area for approximately three more years, living in comfortable circumstances. And yet another mystery is the fact that Cooney died 20 years later, on November 18, 1929, in Salem, Oregon at the age of 90. At the time of his death he was a pauper. With him in death he took the unanswered questions to the puzzle: did he sell out to De-Beer's syndicate; did he salt the mine and then change his mind; were the diamonds real; why did he close the mine; why has it never been opened?

The mine has never been reopened and the answers will never be known or the secret unfolded until miners again pursue the discovery of the glittering stones in the old shafts of this diamond mine, abandoned many years ago. Meanwhile, Round Mountain stands silent and the town of Cherokee and its once famous mine lie forgotten in the vastness of the Sierras. □



*This cliff marks the Cherokee diamond mine. The mine is now covered with a concrete slab and several feet of dirt, but diamonds may still be inside.*

ed, "These are nothing but rocks!" With that he took the hatful of stones and rushed Lorbeer to his room in the hotel, where the two remained for over an hour. When they emerged, Cooney said, "Those stones were no good. I threw them away!"

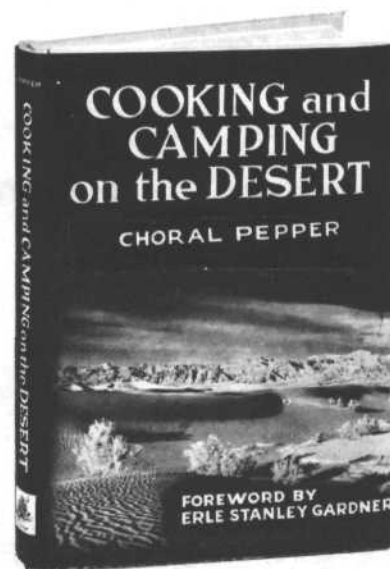
He and Lorbeer then went to the Chamber of Commerce to look at the other stones. Cooney carefully examined them and shook his head. The stones were poor quality he said, fit only for industrial use as drill points and cutting tools.

The following Monday Cooney unexpectedly suspended all operations in the mine. Immediately thereafter he caught the train for San Francisco. Two days later he returned, accompanied by two strangers. A meeting with his partners was called. At once a fierce argument developed between Moss, McMullen, Christie, and Cooney over the closing of the mine. Lorbeer sided with Cooney, however, obviously thinking this was his most advantageous move. Moss, McMullen, and Christie were voted out of the

## Cooking and Camping on the Desert

by Choral Pepper  
with a chapter on  
Driving and Surviving  
on the Desert

by Jack Pepper



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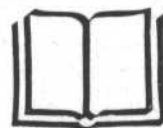
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# BAJA



# by BLIMP

by Choral Pepper *Editor of DESERT Magazine*



**A**N ENERGETIC VOICE barked over the telephone. "Get ready to go to Baja on the Goodyear blimp," it said. I didn't have to ask who was calling. Only Erle Stanley Gardner would launch a Baja expedition by blimp.

Like most other people of the world, I had never been aboard a dirigible. My

hairdresser, Darian, worried about it. "Remember the Hindenburg," he said. I remembered it, but it was a rigid airship—a zeppelin. The Columbia, the Goodyear blimp we were to adventure in below the Mexican border of Baja California, is a non-rigid airship, its cigar-shaped contour maintained entirely by the internal pressure of helium. Unlike a zeppelin, when a blimp springs a

leak it simply goes "poof" and flattens into a neoprene-coated Dacron blob. This had happened recently to the Columbia, but its body assumed the shape of a parachute and the crew floated safely to the ground. Now it was completely overhauled. Of more concern to me at that moment was what does a lady wear to go blimping?

"Uncle" Erle's purpose for this expe-





**An exclusive report on the Erle  
Stanley Gardner expedition  
below the border in the  
Goodyear blimp.**

dition was to gather material for a new book by getting better acquainted with our Mexican neighbors in the populated areas of Tijuana and Ensenada, closely below the border, and to photograph the region from the air. In a fast flying plane it is impossible to get the intimate, close-up kind of pictures he desired. The Goodyear blimp provided an ideal vehicle. It cruises at about 30-miles-per-hour and maneuvers effectively at altitudes around 1000 feet. It also attracts a lot of attention. If you ever want to sneak into Tijuana unobserved, don't arrive in a blimp.

To accomplish this mission was quite a feat. First, it is illegal to transport helium out of the United States, so permission had to be granted through the chain of command in Washington, D.C. Then there is the thing about getting working permits from the Mexican government to bring the blimp's crew into the country. This kind of government red tape on both sides of the border occupied about two weeks of tenacious effort in advance of our departure. The cooperation of Senor Wulfrano Ruiz, former Mexican ambassador to France and vast land-owner in Tijuana and Ensenada, worked miracles, but even with that we met snafus.

Always the blimp is accompanied by a land vehicle—a 10-ton closed truck which carries some of the crew along with a two-way aviation radio, electrical power, spare parts and landing equipment. It is impossible for the lighter-than-air craft to land without this ground crew to catch the ropes which dangle from its belly and tie them to stakes anchored firmly in the ground. So, when we arrived on the Columbia's maiden voyage into Baja and for three hours circled over the heads of a welcoming committee bearing the key to the city of Tijuana, it was evident something was wrong.

And something was. The crew members following us by land in the truck were detained at the border, trying desperately to explain to Mexican immigration officers that a tape punched with coded letters was nothing more subversive than a message for the airship night sign which later would be relayed to an electric translator and transferred to a panel



*A good buy below the border is the fancy wrought iron work.*



*Senor Wulfrano Ruiz and his beautiful Senora present Erle Stanley Gardner with a valuable plaque from the city of Tijuana.*



*Our favorite restaurant in Tijuana is Pollo de Castillo where hosts Ricardo (right) and his brother (left) put chicken on the spit for Uncle Erle, Jean Bethell, Peggy Downs and Sam Hicks.*

of 182 incandescent white lights along the sides of the blimp. These night messages expressed our genuine regard for the people of Baja California as well as a public information announcement calling attention to the forthcoming Olympic Games to be held in Mexico City. Unfortunately, the one man who could have explained the whole thing, Senor Ruiz, was stranded with us in the blimp.

Under normal circumstances, however, the legendary hazards which accompany a trek to Tijuana actually exist no more. If you have an automobile accident you may be held overnight in Tijuana's famous jail, as both parties are guilty until one is proven innocent, but the jail house is slightly less sordid than it used to be and with the cities' currently enlarged police force and stricter traffic regulations, accidents are less likely to occur. Those who find trouble in Tijuana today are usually those who make it for themselves.

Often called the "City of Glorified Vice," Tijuana is gradually losing its iniquitous reputation. Its hardworking mayor, Francisco Lopez, isn't very popular with the sponsors of organized vice—nor disorganized either, for that matter. His is a beautiful city with rolling hills, a Utopian climate, splendid people, excellent shops, recreational facilities and fine restaurants. The chief problem comes in sorting out the assets from the debris. New taxes imposed upon business firms have gone into funds designed to attract a high calibre of tourist. Streets are cleaned regularly, attractive fronts have rejuvenated old buildings, restrictions have limited the number of bars and obscene entertainment is outlawed. The usual cheap souvenirs are hawked along the streets or sold from stalls, but Tijuana is a free port and fine import shops carry French perfumes and European watches and cameras, as well as wrought iron, hand carved furniture, beautiful Mexican tile, leather goods, baskets and silver jewelry manufactured in Mexico. Guitars here are also a good buy, although many are imported from Japan. (Look on the back of the neck for the small tell-tale stamp.)

There is a new Bureau of Tourist Information managed by Alfredo Lopez, handsome brother to the Mayor. Here you can obtain information relative to the opening season at the Agua Caliente race track, make arrangements for a guest card to play golf at the private Tijuana Country Club, or obtain a schedule for the bull fights. The Jai a-lai games at the Fronton Palace, also, you won't want to miss.

Tijuana now has a number of first rate motor lodges with double rooms averaging around \$8.00. We stayed at the Country Club Motel. Bottled water is in every room and the table water served in better restaurants is safe. Very often the off-season vegetables you eat at home were grown on the modern farms which stretch along the highway south of Ensenada, so here it isn't necessary to eat only that which can be boiled or peeled, as is advisable on the Mexican mainland.

Our favorite restaurant in Tijuana is Pollo de Castillo at 130 Constitucion Avenue. This restaurant is owned by the Castillo brothers and was recently completely remodeled and is very attractive. Ricardo is well known to readers of DESERT who have followed our adventures to Baja with Erle Stanley Gardner. Ricardo is the amateur archaeologist who has contributed so much to them. He speaks excellent English, is almost always there to greet you, cooks the best barbecued chicken found *anywhere* in the world and is one on DESERT's most valued friends. If you are camping and headed south, you can also order his succulent chicken barbecued over a huge wood fire "to go" and enjoy your feast on the beach.

As an unofficial ambassador sponsoring friendship below the border, Uncle Erle is our country's best. His appreciation for the people of Mexico is sincere and through the years he has demonstrated it at every level. The Mexicans of Baja

seized upon this opportunity to respond and honors were heaped upon him at every stop. Basking in reflected glory, the rest of us moved with him from Tijuana to Ensenada, where again we were met with throngs of his admirers and warm testimonies of friendship.

As far as exploration is concerned, the blimp has limitations. The expedition was confined to the lower slopes of the ranges that rise toward the peninsula's gigantic spine. Looking down into water so blue and clear we could tail the fish, we floated along the curve of Bahia de Todos Santos over Estero Beach, a fine family resort with both motel and camper accommodations, and on south to the sandy spit where an elaborate hotel sponsored by the Mexican government ran into financial trouble for some reason and now stands half-finished and abandoned. No doubt it will be picked up for a song and completed in the future. After crossing over the mountainous peninsula of Punta Banda, we drifted further along the wild coast where the foamy white surf threshes against the jagged black cliffs with such fury it takes your breath away.

Beside me in the blimp sat our wonderful friend Wulfrano Ruiz, mentioned earlier. It was Senor Ruiz' great-great grandfather, a sailor named Jose Manuel Ruiz, who in 1804 was granted the land surrounding Todos Santo Bay. This early Ruiz operated a prosperous cattle ranch which continued until well after 1870, when gold was discovered at nearby Real del Castillo and the town of Ensenada was

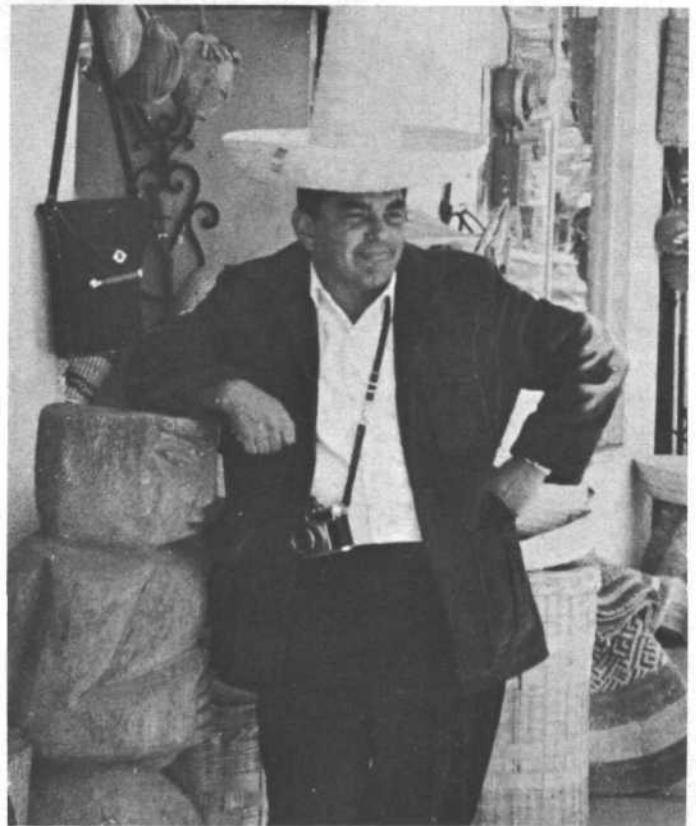


*There is now a camping ground near the "blow hole" at the end of Punta Banda on the peninsula south of Ensenada.*





*Basking in Uncle Erle's reflected glory, I was presented with this beautiful spray of flowers. I felt like a prima donna.*



*U.P.I. photographer Carlos Schiebeck, who accompanied the expedition, thought he would surprise his wife by wearing this hat back to Los Angeles. We imagine she was surprised!*

established as a supply base for the mines. A decade later, when the seat of government of the northern frontier was moved to Ensenada, the town achieved even more importance, as did the holdings of the Ruiz family. Avenue Ruiz, the main shopping and business street of Ensenada, honors this distinguished family name. As a result of the Mexican Revolution in 1914, the seat of government was moved again, this time to Mexicali. Ensenada then declined into a sleepy fishing village, but during recent years has experienced a brilliant revival based upon tourism.

From the coast we next moved inland, drifting over ranches and corrals framed with neat fences. Everywhere the blimp created excitement. Jack rabbits popped out of holes, coyotes sprang into action, dogs, horses, children, cows—everything and everybody took off on the run. We were low enough to study the startled reactions of those below who wondered if we were friend or foe.

Our own reactions were less dramatic. There is almost no sensation while flying in a blimp. Rather, hanging in the little cage under the belly of the big friendly monster struck me as somewhat hilarious. In addition to the pilot, a blimp can only accommodate six passengers—less if it carries excess weight. If the weather is

turbulent, the crew does not take off, so nobody ever has a rough ride. Moving through the air at 30-miles-per-hour seems like standing still, as there isn't a changing perspective of scenery shooting by beside you. It is a wonderful way to travel if you wish to see a lot and if you aren't in a hurry, but Jules Verne could never have made it around the world in 80 days in a blimp.

By the time our party reached Ensenada everything was under control as far as official red tape was concerned, but Gringos that we were, we managed to run headlong into Mexico's "manana complex." Bob Masson, Goodyear's public relations man, became obsessed with the idea of a colored photograph featuring Uncle Erle amid a band of colorfully costumed Mariachis, all posed alongside the Goodyear blimp. Uncle Erle looked at his watch and finally consented to devote half-an-hour of our busy schedule to the project. While we waited in the chilly air at the airport, Ricardo was dispatched in one of our three available cars to go into town and gather up the mariachis.

No sooner had Ricardo driven away than Sam Hicks, Gardner's right-hand man, started to speculate on the logistics involved in fitting eight Mariachis with a bass viol, three violins and four guitars

into one car, along with Ricardo. At that, a second car was dispatched to catch up with Ricardo and help with the transportation.

After six half-hour periods had elapsed, Uncle Erle began to get nervous. Even if the Mariachis had been asleep and unshaven, they should have arrived by now. Had there been an accident? Finally Sam, Bob Masson and Terry Elms of Goodyear, and I were appointed as a posse of four to hunt them down. We departed in the remaining car.

First we stopped at Hussong's Cantina. This place has quite a history (DESERT, June 1965). In 1882 a grand colonizing scheme fostered by a group of Americans was launched in Ensenada. Streets were laid out, lots were sold and the "city of the future" grew rich in promise. Then money ran short and the project was sold to a British syndicate which was developing a mining industry at El Alamo. The British proceeded to build an elaborate hotel called Hotel Iturbide on the side of the hill overlooking the present yacht basin, but what really made history was the first golf course on the North American continent, which they established near where the present hospital stands.

*(Continued on page 36)*

# When It's Hot -- go where it's not . . .

PART ONE OF A THREE-PART SERIES  
COVERING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BEACH RESORTS

by Jack Delaney



KAY, GO out with the boys and have fun, but be sure to bring home a few clams!" This ultimatum of a wife to her husband replaces the old "bring home the bacon" demand, and applies to a specific locality. In fact, in this community, wives are happy to let their husbands stay home while they go out and bring home a few clams! Reference is made to Pismo Beach, where residents dig for dinners and vacationers dig for fun.

When the brave thermometers on the Western deserts begin to perspire, it is time to switch your footprints from the sandy desert to the sandy beach. The crunch of sand underfoot may be the same, but similarity ends there. The Pacific Ocean may be ever-changing in some respects, but it is never-changing in its sandy beaches to walk on, its refreshing surf to play in, its clean breezes to fill your lungs, and its inspiring beauty to satisfy your soul.

There are a number of charming beach resorts along the Pacific Coast, each with its own attractions. You might want to visit the *Year 'Round Vacationland*, or *California's Longest, Widest, and Safest Beach*, or perhaps the *Recreational Center of the Pacific*, or *California's Gem of the Pacific*. Certainly you should consider the beach *Where It's Summer All Winter*, or *The Clam Capital of the World*. Brace yourself for a surprise. All of these slogans refer to Pismo Beach, the "sloganest" beach on the Pacific coast.

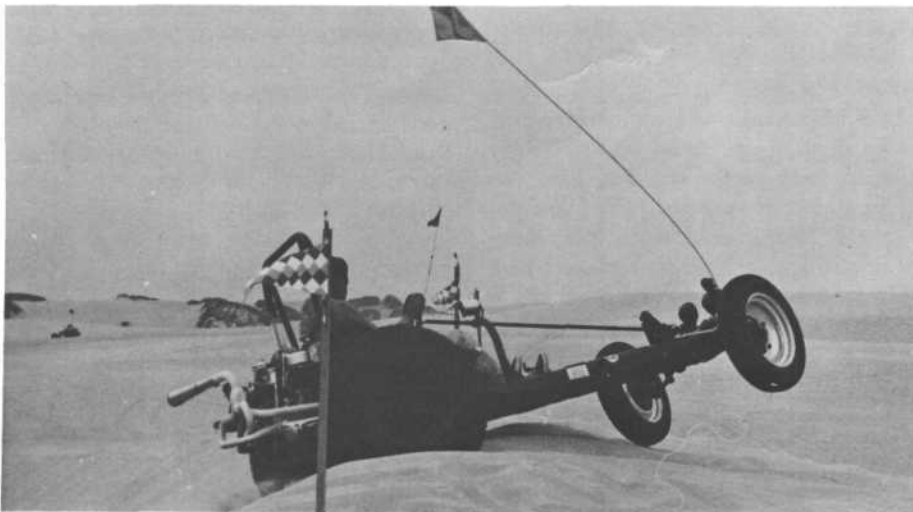
The trend started during the roaring '20s with a brochure featuring, in voluptuous color, a bevy of bathing beauties (in those days they always used be vies) which carried the caption, *Come Play With Us at Pismo Beach!* Later, other slogans were needed to lure visitors disinterested in the be vies. Pismo Beach is located on Highway 101 about midway between







*From the surf to the sand, Pismo Beach has something for everyone.*



Los Angeles and San Francisco. It has just about everything needed for the comfort, enjoyment, and amusement of visitors and vacationers.

This may be the world's most publicized town in relation to population because of radio, television and comic strip mention over the past 40 years. It started during prohibition days, when rumor has it that the town was a bit lively. Old-timers tell interesting tales about getting "the real stuff, fresh off the boat." Fortunately, the old speakeasy days were only a small, unimportant episode in the history of this resort.

Pismo Beach is part of the original 8838 acre *Rancho Pismo* which the Mexican Government granted to Jose Ortega in 1840. The town itself was founded in 1891 when the Southern Pacific Railroad completed the last link of the coast route. Originally known as *El Pismo* and later as Pismo, in 1904 it became officially Pismo Beach. *Pismo* is taken from the Indian word *pismu* meaning "tar." Evidently deposits of asphalt or bitumen were found in the area around that time.

In recent years, the community's progressive attitude has produced positive results in tourist and residential appeal. Present accommodations include apart-

ments and motels ranging from ultra-swank to modest and an ocean front trailer park is situated within the town. Also, there are two State parks and a couple of trailer parks a few miles to the south. Pismo State Park, which includes five-and-one-half miles of shore land, has hot water showers and laundry facilities. The rental rate for regular campsites with tables, cupboards, and stoves is \$2.00 per car, per night.

A wide selection of eating places offer everything from gourmet dinners to plain garden variety food, with a heavy accent on seafood, naturally. Pismo Beach has grown from what might have been called "early miscellaneous" to a pleasant combination of modern conveniences and old-fashioned resort charm.

Recreational attractions include bowling, billiards, roller-skating, dancing, kiddie rides, arcade amusement, skin-diving, surfing, sunbathing, swimming, fishing, boating and souvenir shopping. The pedestrian pier extends into the Pacific Ocean 1680 feet and is well-lighted. It is open all year for fishing, strolling or just looking. Plans are underway to lengthen and widen it in order to provide additional fishing space. The plans also include construction of novelty shops,

top-flight restaurants, bait and tackle facilities and possibly an art shop.

Fishing licenses are required of all persons 16 years of age or over for the taking of any fish, mollusk, or crustacean from the surf. (No license is needed on any public pier in ocean waters.) Frequently, 30 to 40 pound white sea bass are caught from the pier and surf fishermen catch barred perch from the sandy beach. Other fish are available in this area and at times the surf is black with anchovy. Skindivers find abalone, lobster, clams, fish, underwater gems and, if lucky, maybe an old galleon or two.

The beach provides clean white sand with picnic tables, lifeguard service and beach equipment rentals. To the south are mammoth sand dunes, to the north are ocean palisades, caverns, and rock exhibits, and inland are commercial floral fields and panoramic scenic views. The beach slopes gently into the ocean, furnishing shallow wading for children and timid adults, and swimming is safe here for the entire family. There is a blessed absence of oil in the water and hot dog wrappers and miscellaneous litter on the beach.

Pismo Beach is the only seashore area



in California upon which you may actually drive your car. Three public automobile ramps enable you to get your car past the dry, soft sand and onto the damp, smooth pack left by the previous high tide. Here, you may drive on the sand for 20 miles with an ordinary passenger car.

The slogan, *Clam Capital of the World*, cannot be challenged. Pismo clams are present only on the Pacific Coast of North America from San Francisco to Baja California, with the greatest concentration in the Pismo Beach area. The average legal Pismo clam weighs about 1½ pounds, including the thick, strong shell. It has a muscular foot for burrowing in the sand, which enables it to cling to rocks or move from place to place. However, these creatures move very little. When they find a spot in the sand that offers the comforts of home, they settle down for a long stay.

During high tide, when the Pismo clam is covered by water, it may be found just beneath the surface of the sand with its siphon extended to the surface. Water taken in through its incurrent siphon passes over the gills, where food particles are removed, and then passes out the excurrent siphon. It has been estimated that a three-inch clam filters an average 16

gallons of sea water daily in search of food. This amounts to approximately 6000 gallons of water per year going through these undersea Jacuzzis!

The popular time for clamming in this mollusk manor is at low tide. Clammers then grab their pitchforks (called clam forks here) and follow the outgoing tide in search of the buried treasure. So eager are they that they sometimes ignore the tide and are caught with their mid-sections under water. Veteran clammers wear "wet suits" (foam neoprene) with a front zipper. The average-sized man can put a limit of clams in the top front of his suit, thus saving the trouble of carrying a sack, or bucket. You should be warned that the water is cold both summer and winter.

As a visitor, you will want to try your luck at digging up buried bivalves. Residents are cooperative and will lend you a clam fork (or you may rent one for 75 cents). Instructions for cooking clams and tide tables, more important here than the Dow Jones Averages, are available at all motels and most business houses free of charge. Also, fishing licenses may be obtained at Pismo Beach. All that remains for your full enjoyment of the sport is a knowledge of the rules. These you will find listed below.

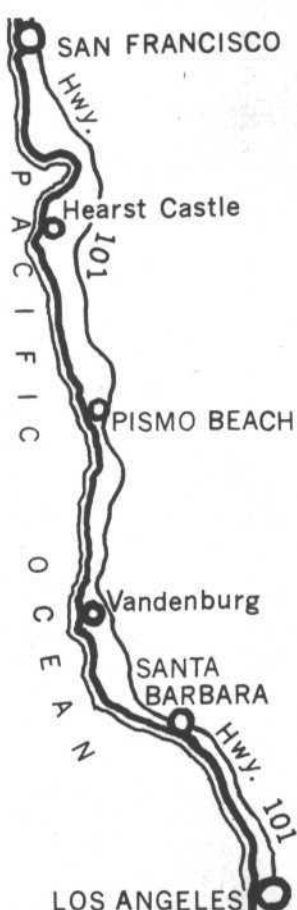
Clams may be taken one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset every day of the year. A fishing license is required. The limit in quantity is 10 per day per person and the limit in size is 4½ inches in diameter or over. Should you dig up an undersized clam, you must return it to its hole, right side up, give it a loving pat and gently recover it with sand in order to protect it from the seagulls. (We observed seagulls picking up innocent clams, carrying them high into the air, dropping them to break their shells and swooping down for the meat!)

The 22nd Annual Clam Festival in Pismo Beach will run three days, starting November 3, 1967. During the Festival, prizes of \$100, \$50 and \$25 will be awarded for the three largest clams registered during the past year. Then a new Clam Derby will start and run until next year's Festival. The largest clam ever recorded, 7¾ inches in diameter, was taken from the sand just south of the Pismo pier. In 1965, the winner found a clam which measured 6 15/16 inches. It is now on display at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. During the Festival, thousands of bowls of clam chowder are passed out, on the house. This is one time, on the house, when the recipients don't pass out!

Progressive Pismo recently annexed a significant portion of the ocean front to the north, including the resort town of Shell Beach, where abalone measuring up to 11 inches have been found. This might call for a new slogan; *The Clam and Abalone Capital of the World!* A well-known local businessman, who is not inclined to take chances, has a standing offer of a \$500 award for anyone who brings in a 13-inch abalone or an 8-inch Pismo Clam.

Pismo Beach has a year around permanent population of slightly over 5300, augmented during the Annual Clam Festival and mid-summer week-ends by about 8,000 happy visitors. Some enjoy clamming, others watch and gather clam shells to use as ash-trays, walk the beach, seek recreational activities, or just relax in the sun.

In your search for relief from summer heat, turn your thoughts toward the Pacific Ocean where a wide variety of interesting vacation spots all have one great feature in common—the surf. For a summer vacation with action, try a "bivalve bivouac" on Pismo Beach. Thousands of clams are waiting in the sand for you to "Come Play With Them." If you're old enough, you might see a few "bebies" there, too! □



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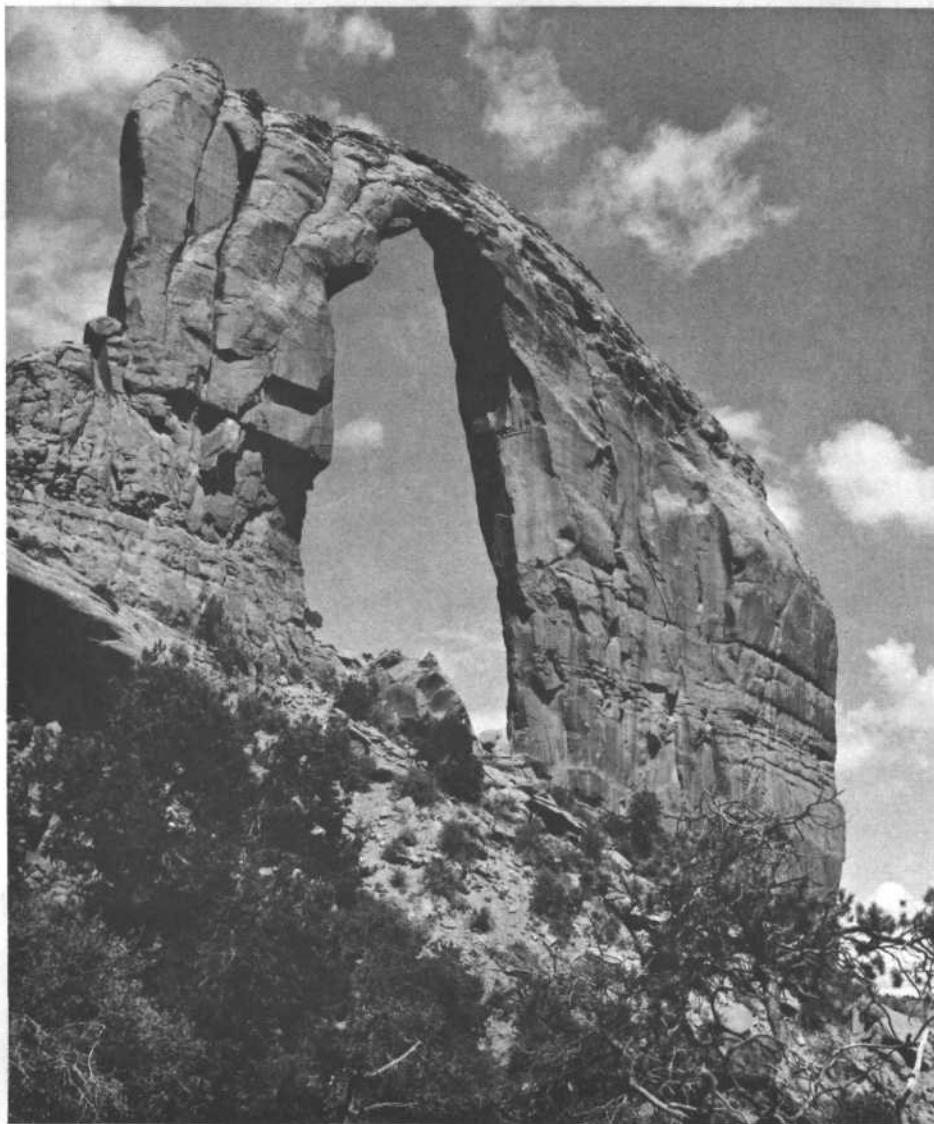
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## **VAGRANT HOLIDAY**

**by Mel Lewis**



**M**OST OF Western America is very prolific in frontier history. There are the Sutters Forts, the Dodge Cities, the Roaring Camps, all symbols of the lusty and boisterous growth of an intrepid young nation. But the student of human antiquity is acutely aware of a much deeper reaching segment of Western Americana that might well hold the key to the dawn of civilization in the Western hemisphere.

The country West and South of the continental divide had for thousands of years been inhabited by a people of re-

markably civil stature. They emerged out of the diffusion of pre-history, built great pueblos, developed irrigated farms, practiced superb arts and crafts, worshipped their gods and drifted back into misty time as intangibly as they came. They left no written record, so who they were, where they came from and where they have gone is still largely a matter of conjecture.

All of this was staged in a region that has been colored and carved in such magnificence by the patient tools of nature that it defies all but spiritual description. It was in this setting that we chose to ordain our "Vagrant Holiday."

True to our adopted identity as "vagrants," we loaded sleeping bags, cooking utensils and a few staples into our compact station wagon and took to the open road. Our idea was to maintain enough self sufficiency to spend as much time as desired in any locale without dependency upon commercial facilities.

By late evening of the first day out we were within the boundary of the Acoma Indian reservation in northwestern New Mexico, and comfortably situated in an abandoned mud and wattle hogan. The basic design and construction of an Indian hogan has not changed in 2000 years, yet it remains one of the

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## Magazine of the Golden Circle

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CANYONLANDS, LAKE POWELL,  
AND THE FOUR CORNERS AREA.

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Summer issue, featuring

- Swinging around Four Corners  
by Weldon Heald
- The Golden Circle Concept
- Gallup Indian Ceremonial
- Mesa Verde, pit to pueblo

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most efficient refuges from summer heat  
or winter chill ever devised by man. This  
one was no exception and we were smug  
with satisfaction as we relished a deli-  
cious but simple Dutch oven meal of  
Polish sausages smothered in butter-  
steamed cabbage.

It was nearly a race between us and the  
early morning sun as we climbed a steep  
foot path to the mesa top, where Acoma  
Pueblo, The Sky City, as it is called, lay  
in its lofty berth. But the sun was al-  
ready there, casting slanting rays across  
the face of the great Acoma Mission, dis-  
playing in strong texture the imprints of  
thousands of laboring brown hands that  
patiently patted clay plaster to the stone  
walls in years past. The design was ex-  
emplified and echoed in the dozens of  
multi-storied dwellings that crowded the  
mesa top.

Acoma Pueblo, with the exception of  
the mission, stands today much like it  
did in pre-Columbian times, and much  
like it did when Coronado's captains  
came this way in 1539 in search of the  
fabled Seven Cities of Cibola. No man  
can say just when Acoma was built on its  
natural stronghold and Indian tradition  
offers no clue. Historians agree though,  
that The Sky City is the oldest continu-  
ously inhabited settlement in North Am-  
erica.

Ancestors of the Indians now living at  
Acoma were subjected to brutality and  
enslavement at the hands of the Spanish  
conquistadores, and the next hundred  
years of their history was written in blood.  
Later arrivals were the Franciscan Fathers,  
the mission builders, who through gentle  
persuasion pacified the rebellious Indians  
and, outwardly at least, brought them in-  
to the fold of Christianity. Today, nearly  
five centuries later, the conquerors have  
vanished. Even the Franciscan Fathers  
have disappeared. But the Acoma Indian  
remains a living symbol of dedication to  
purpose and of human dignity.

Our third day closed with the riotous  
profusion of color characteristic of desert  
sunsets. Against this backdrop the enor-  
mity of Shiprock stood as an elevated  
guide post, easily seen from over a hun-  
dred miles away. And now, by the light  
of a full moon, we were cautiously work-  
ing our little station wagon along the  
faintest suggestion of a road that would  
eventually terminate near the base of  
Shiprock.

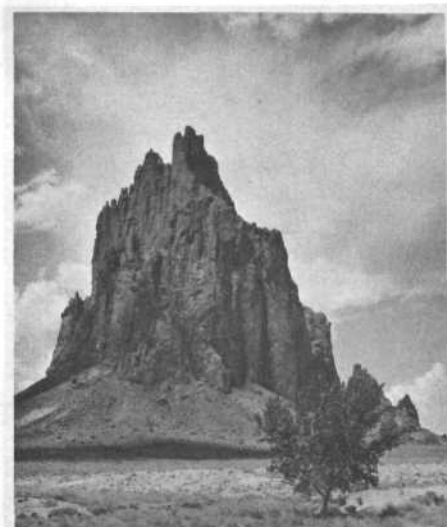
The night was friendly, so we used no  
shelter for our camp. We prepared our  
evening meal by broiling thick double  
lamb chops against a bank of charcoal  
coals. The lamb chops were prepared by

piercing them several times with a fork,  
sprinkling them with salt and coarse  
black pepper on one side only and allow-  
ing to lay salted side up for a few min-  
utes until the salt had dissolved into the  
meat. The chops were then placed in an  
old fashioned wire toaster and propped,  
with the salted side against the bank of  
hot coals. They were allowed to broil in  
this position until the juices began to  
ooze from the fork perforations on the  
other side. They were then turned and  
broiled until brown. The chops were  
complimented with fresh tomatoes and  
cool mugs of buttermilk. No king, va-  
grant nor royal ever had it so good.

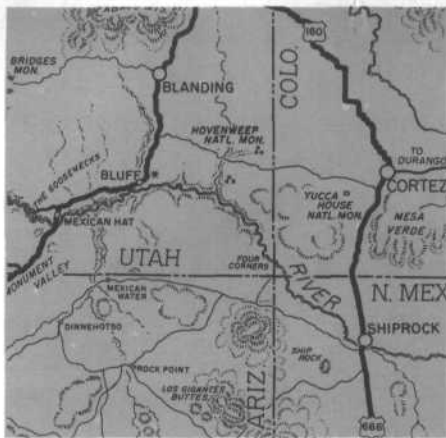
On the morning of the fourth day we  
explored and photographed Shiprock.  
By the use of an uncertain aneroid and  
some primitive triangulation, we deter-  
mined the base of Shiprock to be 7,200  
ft. above sea level and its jagged peak to  
rise 1,700 ft. above the desert floor—  
Sa-bit-tai-e (The Rock With Wings) the  
Navajo call it. Their legend says that  
this was the Great Bird that brought  
their ancestors down from the north, and  
then nested here to guard over them and  
their descendants for all time and eternity.



*Stronghold House in Hovenweep  
Canyon. Its occupants vanished long before  
white man sighted American shores.  
Below: The Navajo Indians call Shiprock  
"The Rock With Wings."*







It's difficult to visualize a towering pillar of stone as having once been the throat of a super hot volcano. Geologists, though, tell us that this is exactly how Shiprock was formed. As the volcano becomes inactive, the molten lava in its throat cools to a solid state. The cone, composed of ash and minute particles of lava, erodes away to leave the solidified core standing as a monument to the processes of nature. These formations are called volcanic plugs, and are quite often common through the Four Corners country. Such is the stature of Shiprock, New Mexico.

We had heard sporadic tales of a magnificent natural arch lying in the Kah Bighi Valley, somewhere south and west of Shiprock. This arch, we were told, dwarfed the fabulous Delicate Arch of Arches National Monument and rivaled in size any known arch in all the Canyonlands country. In search of it, we were soon pounding along a dirt road toward the distant Carrizo Mountains.

Somewhere we crossed the unmarked Arizona-New Mexico border and came upon two Navajo lads playing in an old sheep corral. Our questions concerning the location of the arch, which by now we had learned was called Window Arch, were met with the brevity of a pointed finger and a grunt. The lads, perplexed at our inability to comprehend their directions, climbed into our car and again pointed. Following the pointing fingers, we thumped over stones, dragged through dry washes and climbed embankments that thoroughly taxed our faith in the pluck of the little station wagon. Our relief was audible when the boys signaled a halt. Before us, in astonishing grandeur, stood Window Arch. All that had been said of it was true!

Window Arch stands in what is geologically known as the Morrison Formation, a sandstone formation of pastel reds, oranges and yellows, which collides abruptly with the blue sky. Window Arch

was formed by the slow process of erosion—a grain of sand, a pebble, a gust of wind, a drop of rain, until eons had passed and the colossus of nature's handwork was on exhibition.

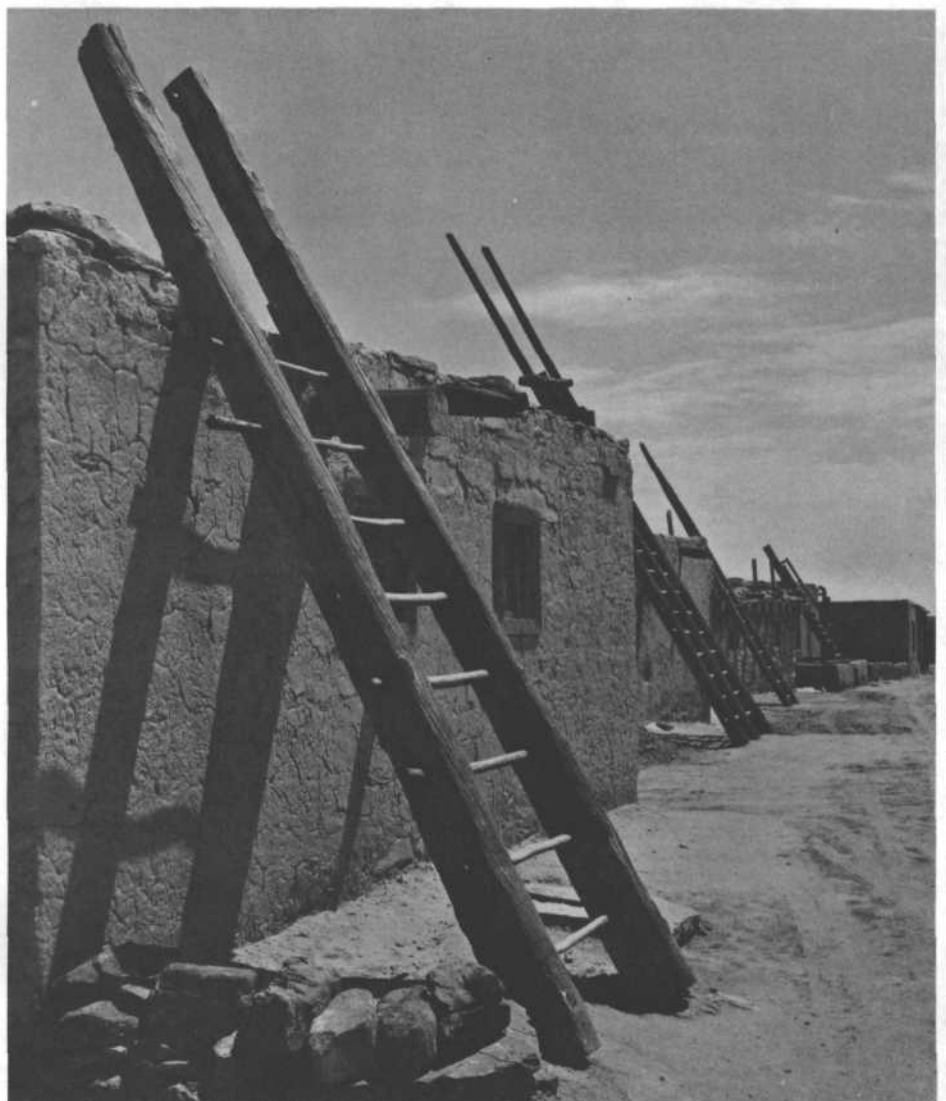
If "Deserted Valley" were translated into the Ute Indian tongue, a word like "Hovenweep" would be derived. Hovenweep, then, is the Ute name applied to the deserted canyons west of Cortez, Colorado and north of the San Juan River. Within the confines of these canyons lie some of the most spectacular archeological remains in all the Southwest. It was here, on our fifth day, that we felt ourselves standing upon the threshold of yesterday. We explored and photographed the pre-historic ruins, some of which had been built as early as 400 A.D. and others as late as 1250 A.D. There were round towers, square towers and D-shaped towers, all strategically located to guard canyon approaches to the main dwellings. There were secondary towers,

located in defensible sites near the precious springs, and there were rooms built in the cool shade of overhanging shelves of sandstone. Most spectacular of all, though, were the multi-storied pueblos perched upon the very brink of the sandstone cliffs. Frontally located loop holes commanded a panoramic view of hundreds of square miles of indescribable desert scenery. Indeed, from here we could see Shiprock, over 75 miles away, like the prow of a giant ship bearing towards us over the distant horizon.

Standing amidst such eloquent monuments to a vanished civilization, we were in unanimous agreement that Hovenweep was the high light of our trip.

When the day was ended and we pointed our station wagon toward our air-conditioned life with comfortable beds and clean clothes, we were ready to go home, but each of us knew in our hearts that another Vagrant Holiday awaited in the not too distant future. □

*Acoma Pueblo, a settlement with a continuity of habitation longer than the memory of man.*



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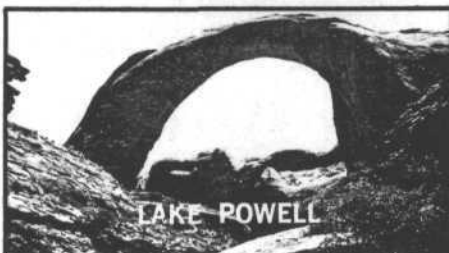
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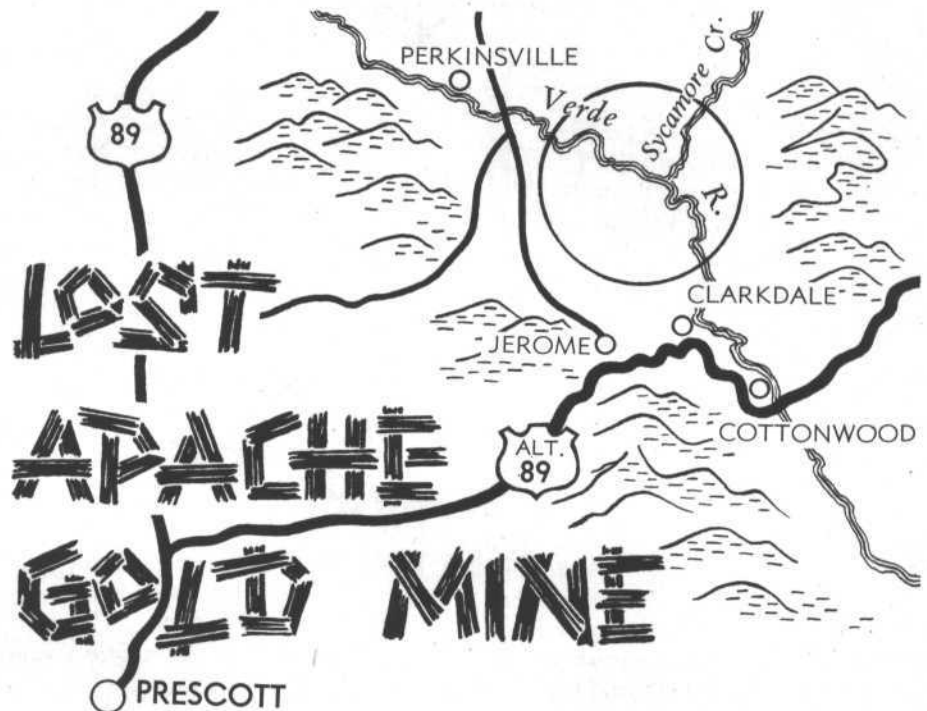
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By reader request DESERT Magazine will reprint a series of articles written by the dean of lost mine yarns, John Mitchell, which appeared originally in 1940 and 1941.



by John Mitchell



WHEN THE notorious Apache outlaw Geronimo died in 1909 he carried with him to the happy hunting ground the secret of a rich gold mine that many white men would be glad to possess.

It is believed that certain Apaches still living know the approximate location of the mine, but since it is not on their reservation and it is unlikely they would profit from the disclosure, they prefer to remain silent.

After being captured in 1886, Geronimo used his knowledge of the gold mine in an effort to secure his release from Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he was virtually a prisoner of the United States government. However, the plot was discovered before the wily old Indian with the aid of his conspirators could make his escape.

While Geronimo steadfastly refused to reveal the exact location of the vein, he told a friend at the Fort it was located in the wild and picturesque Verde river country, not far from Jerome.

According to rumor, the rich vein first was discovered by the Apaches, but was later taken from them by Spanish soldiers who were on their way from Son-

ora to the Zuni villages in New Mexico. This was in the latter part of the 18th century.

Attracted by the amazing richness of the quartz vein, six of the Spaniards remained behind to work the mine. An arrastre was built near the outcrop where a spring of water broke from under a large boulder at the foot of a high cliff. The ore body was so close to an arroyo it was found necessary to construct a rock wall to protect the workings from the flood waters that rushed down the narrow canyon during the rainy season.

After a rock house had been constructed and the mining operations were well under way, a small adobe furnace was built and used to smelt the gold into heavy bars suitable to be transported on muleback.

The Apaches resented the intrusion of the Spaniards and lost no opportunity to harass them either by direct attack or by rolling large stones down on the workings from the high canyon walls.

The adventurers were heavily armed and were forced to fight as well as mine, but the ore was so rich they were reluctant to leave it. As the tunnel penetrated farther into the mountain the ore increased in richness until it was almost



half gold and was taken directly to the smelter instead of the arrastre.

When operations had been carried on for a year or more and a large number of gold bars had been run and stored away in the tunnel it was decided to load the gold on the backs of the packmules and return to Mexico for reinforcements in order to work the mine with more safety.

In their hurry to get away the Spaniards neglected to guard the narrow entrance to the canyon in which the mine was located and as a result of this neglect they were attacked by a party of Apache warriors. In the fight that ensued many Apaches were either killed or wounded by the Spaniards who retreated to the rock wall and nearby house. However, four out of the six Spaniards were so badly wounded they died shortly after the Indians withdrew to the surrounding hills.

The two surviving Spaniards decided to hide the gold in the tunnel and make their escape as best they could. After burying their dead they mounted two saddle mules that had not been stolen by the Indians and under cover of darkness headed south. Ten days later the two Spaniards arrived at Tubac on the Santa Cruz river.

It was then 1767 and King Charles the Third had just issued his edict that all Jesuits should be expelled from Spain and all its possessions. As a result the mines were closed and the missions abandoned and either destroyed by the Indians or fell into ruins from neglect.

The two old miners eventually made their way back to Mexico, but they were never able to return to work the mine or recover the buried gold. They did however, leave a map of the country in which the mine was located and a record of their operations.

Legendary lost mines are invariably richest where the Indians are wildest—and this one is no exception. Like most lost mine stories there are several versions and many "true" maps. In this case the most likely story is the one coming from the City of Mexico, which places the mine in the Sycamore canyon country between Jerome and Perkinsville, Yavapai county, Arizona. There are numerous small side canyons that empty their flood waters into the Sycamore and at least one of them answers the description set forth in the old document.

The old map shows the profile of an Indian's head sculptured by nature on a high cliff just above the mine opening. The nose of this rock Indian is very large

and as the story goes the mine is located directly under the Indian's nose.

It is said there is such a cliff overlooking a narrow box canyon up in that part of the country and the foundations of an old adobe or rock house are still visible. The rock fence or wall at the foot of the high cliff which was known to many old time cowmen who ranged their cattle in that part of the country, is now completely covered by a slide of rock broken from the canyon wall above.

A stream of water breaks under a

large boulder near the canyon wall and the ruins of an old *vaso* (adobe smelter) and the grinding stones of an arrastre may still be seen there. Not far away under the trees are several old graves all marked by piles of stone.

The deer and the bear, the wild picturesque canyon and the small stream of water are there. Also a deposit of rose quartz. But the blood-thirsty Apaches are now missing from the scene. Nor has the golden treasure ever been rediscovered, if in fact it ever existed. □

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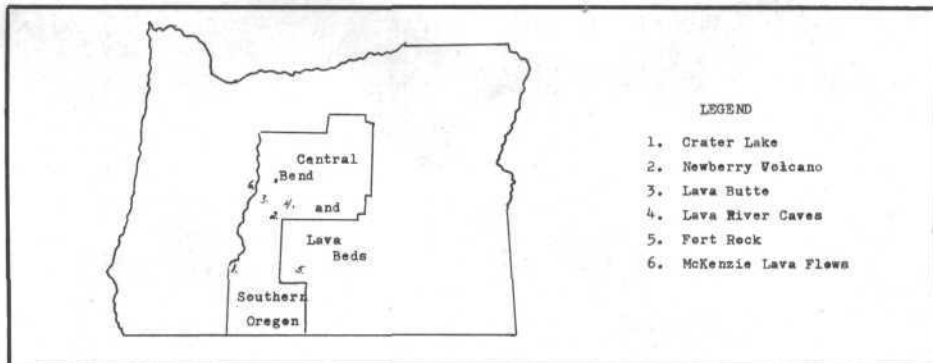
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# OREGON'S MOON COUNTRY

by Corene Hemphill



IT IS A LITTLE past noon and the temperature sizzles near the 120-degree mark. Clothed from the top of his hooded helmet to the bottom of

his heavy boots in the bulky Apollo moon-suit—an oxygen tank strapped to his shoulders—Astronaut Walter Cunningham has just "landed."

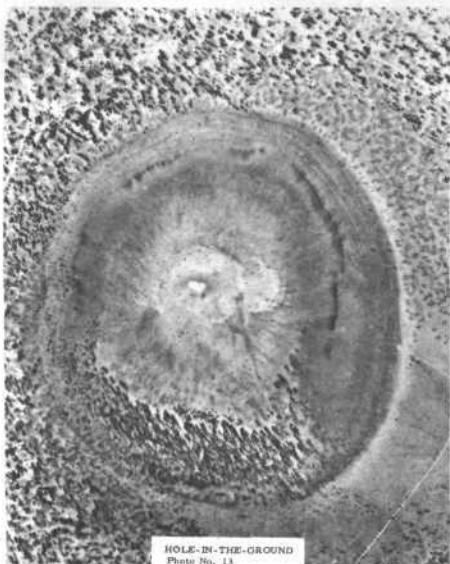
He peers downward through the tiny triangular windshield at jagged black rocks under his feet. He stumbles, but regains his balance with the aid of a special staff gripped in his right hand. Then slowly, cautiously, the intrepid spaceman begins to pick and prod his way over the sharp treacherous terrain.

If the first astronaut to reach the

moon finds the landscape somewhat familiar, citizens of Bend, Oregon, are certain to claim a share of credit. The region long considered comparatively unimportant may prove to be Oregon's most spectacular asset. Geologists, miners, rock-hounds and a few tourists appreciated



FORT ROCK TUFF RING



central Oregon's mountains of black rocks, piles of "pummy-stone," huge craters, and volcanic ash, but no one ever dreamed this interior part of the state would become known as Moon Country; not until recently.

For the past three summers, American astronauts have been studying, handling and crawling over the volcanic lava rock of this region because scientists believe part of the moon's rugged surface is the result of volcanic activity and a surprising variety of volcanic activity is evident in this area near Bend. Some of it may be less than 2,000 years old. These formations, ranging from small lava flows to world-famous Crater Lake, are the earth's best substitute for the harsh landing conditions astronauts will encounter when they eventually arrive on the moon's surface.

The Newberry Volcano, 25 miles south of Bend, is perhaps the most important. It has a caldera, obsidian flows, fissures, pumice cones, and on its flanks are the fresh lava flows that include the Lava Cast Forest. Hole-in-the-Ground, a crater formed by a violent volcanic steam eruption is another nearby geologic point. In addition, there are such premises as Lava Butte, a symmetrical barren cinder cone adjacent to Bend, the Lava River and Ice Caves to the east, Fort Rock—a remnant of an ancient volcano rising 325 feet above the desert plain—to the south near Silver Lake, and the McKenzie Lava Flows high in the Cascade Mountain Range west of Bend.

A former smoke-jumper asserted he'd hate to land in this rugged mess, much less walk out of it, but this is what astronauts and space officials are figuring on doing. When, in the future, they orbit the moon seven miles above its surface looking for a smooth landing spot, their

lives may depend on today's analysis of surfaces like Oregon's moon country.

Engineers at Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation in New York are in charge of building the LEM (Lunar Excursion Module) which might be the vehicle to make the first manned landing on the moon. The full-scale model of the LEM is something like 22 feet high, 10 feet wide and weighs more than 20,000 pounds.

Many problems confront engineers as they devise the moon landings of the future, both the practicing and the real thing. Ash flows can look smooth from the air, but when an astronaut in his moonmobile approaches the surface, he may see unusually rough terrain and be able to hover only a minute or so to pick a more suitable place to land. He'll not have much fuel to search for alternate landings.

The moon's gravity is one-sixth that of the earth, so the moonship has to be designed to fire retrorockets above the moon's surface, proportionately to that of the earth's surface, to check the huge module's descent. In addition to the problem of landing, the base of the LEM is being constructed to serve as a miniature Cape Kennedy to launch the ascent section back into orbit in order to rendezvous with the command capsule for a return to Earth.

The astronaut whose job it is to bring the awkward, grotesque four-legged LEM in for a moon landing will probably have learned his geology and practiced his landings in the rough, severe volcanic craters or in the pitted, deeply furrowed jumble of Oregon's lava beds. His first words as he lands on the moon's surface might very well be, "This sure looks like Oregon!" □

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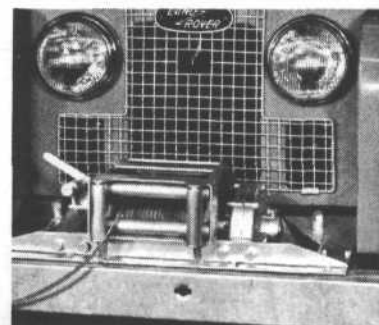


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# Our 50th State Also Has a Desert -- with All the Mystery and Intrigue of Any Desert in the Southwest

## FOOTPRINTS IN THE LAVA

by Winifred Bell Fletcher



IN THE LEEWARD ridge of Hawaii's "tame volcano," from the crater's rim to the sea, sprawls the Kau Desert, a weird and fantastic land as dif-

ferent from our Southwestern deserts as can be imagined. Here are no golden sands, no clumps of green mesquite, no eroded red cliffs. No sidewinder twists over its barren breast, no roadrunner livens its desolate wastes, no plumey tamarisk softens its bleak gray face. Yet, it casts a similar spell upon those who seek inspiration from solitude.

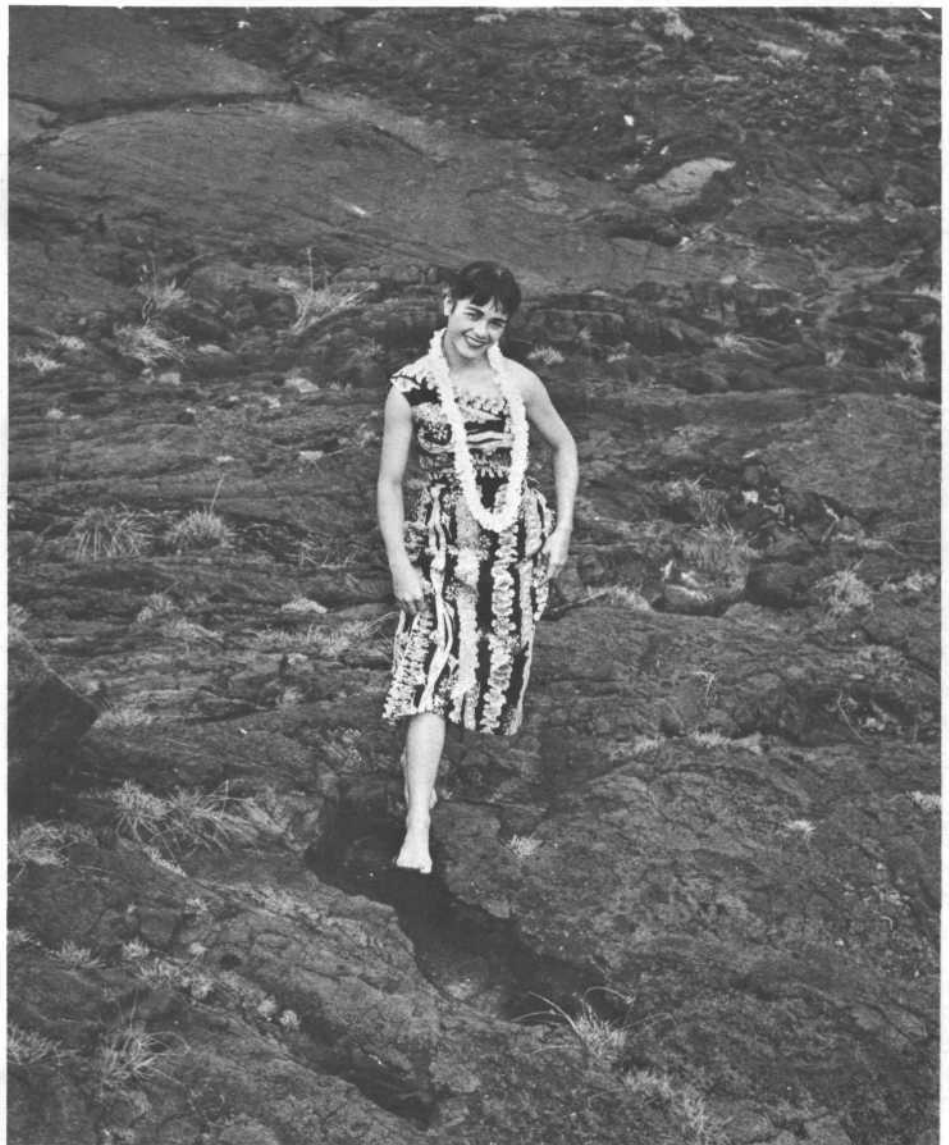
How is it different? In what lies its lure for you who are desert lovers?

First of all, Kau (pronounced (Kah-oo)) is unique because of its location on the opposite side of the mountain from the current Puna flow. What other American desert lies on the flank of a live volcano? Situated southwest of Kilauea's crater, at 4000 feet, on the largest island of our 50th state, this eerie wonderland slopes gently from the Mamalahoa Highway to the coast.

Blown over by the sulphurous breath of the pit, its meagre vegetation is poisoned and stunted. Its very character is unlike your conventional idea of a desert. In place of sand, there are dunes of shifting, wind-tossed ash and the frozen froth of pumice, one time lava fountains. Instead of eroded, rusty outcroppings of rock, Kau is a collection of lava flows piled one on top of the other, too new for erosion to have begun its work. Barren stretches of black *aa* (rough) lava rubble extend for miles, flaunting fantastic shapes that might people a witch's haunt. This desert covers the first part of the 55-mile distance from Hawaii National Park to Manuka Park in South Kona.

Chemical analyses by scientists at the observatory on the crater's rim show the

*On the Big Island of Hawaii in the lava flows from Mauna Loa are found weird remains of the tempestuous Goddess Pele (goddess of volcanoes). The pretty girl below hold her foot over a giant footprint dubbed Kamehameha's footprint, after the island conqueror.*



hardened Kilauea lavas to be of olivine basalt. If you search in the loose ash, you who are rockhounds may find olivine crystals. Labradorite, containing much lime, constitutes almost half of these congealed lavas. Augite, iron oxide and titanium-iron oxide are also found, along with

traces of silica, magnesium and other minerals. Mr. Jack Murata, distinguished geo-chemist, has been conducting experiments in reducing to their pure forms these minerals, such as potassium, alum, aluminum, gypsum and sulphuric acid, in the volcanic lavas.

For the geologist, there is a bonanza. As you follow the road south from the rim of the crater, at the left you will find the Great Crack, a fissure that opened on the flank of the mountain during the 1823 flow. It runs parallel to the highway almost to Pahala, where cracks that once crossed the road extend to the sea. It began in the Maua Iki Lava Cone in Hawaii National Park adjoining the desert on the north. You will note many fault scarps along the Hilina Pali, and in a flow from Mauna Loa is the Giant Footprint, exactly like a real one!

To the right rises the majestic blue slope of Mauna Loa, Kilauea's big sister volcano, whose myriad flows reach like sprawling fingers over the lower end of the island. Far to the south, beyond endless barren miles, lies Pahala's carpet of pale green sugarcane, for which volcanic ash is well adapted. Picturesque Punaluu village dozes on the shore, peaceful again after a fierce battering by the high seas of Hurricane Dot. Save for rare storms, no rain falls here.

If you are adventurous, you can turn off from the Chain of Craters Road that circles the south rim of Kilauea onto the Hilina Pali (cliff) Road and its trails. Here again, you will find it different from our Southwestern deserts. Kau's colors are black and bluish gray, reaching down to an indigo sea. Stunted gray-green *ohia* trees with their small rounded leaves sooty black on the under side flaunt fringey blossoms like bright red thistles. Yellow *ohelo* berries, sacred to Pele, the legendary fire goddess of the volcano, cluster on low-growing shrubs near the crater. Scrubby plants struggle to gain a root hold in soil ravished by sulphur fumes, and the red *maumau* fern fights for life in the black lava cracks.

In one spot a lonely cocoanut palm grows in the centre of a lava flow. What a moving sight! Strangely, coconuts have actually matured in the crown of the tree. Not another living thing is visible in that desolate, burned-out place.

Birds, so numerous in the Kapuka Bird Park farther north, have forsaken this black terrain. Only the rare white-tailed *koae*, a tropic bird that nests in the crater rim, makes a snowy flash against a smoke-blue sky. Occasionally a soaring Hawaiian hawk or owl wings over in quest of mice. But if you are there from August to May, you may see an abundance of Pacific golden plover.

If you are a hiker, there are several long foot trails you may explore, turning off from the Hilina Pali Road. But you should not set out before obtaining information about water and distances.

Six miles southwest of the vast Kilauea caldera, on a well-marked trail, you halt. Can those be prints of bare feet in the crusted volcanic ash? Yes, here are human tracks, distinct as the day they were made in the still wet surface when their terrified owners, fleeing the great steam and rock eruption from Kilauea in 1790, were overwhelmed by the hot cinder blast. On that fearful day a whole division of a native king's warriors met fearful death on the march.

The story is written there, in those splayed toe impressions; tracks of frantic feet running, sliding, footprints crossing and recrossing in a tortured scramble. Here a foot had slipped; there, spraddling trails fanned out in all directions, vainly trying to outrun Pele's wrath! A bit of this pathetic evidence is preserved in Honolulu's Bishop Museum in specimens lifted from the lava.

Going down to the shore, where the black desert sand meets the curling white surf, you may hunt for "breeding stones," fabled rocks full of holes secreting small pebbles. Old Hawaiians believed these stones had the power to reproduce and they revered them as idols. This belief undoubtedly arose when they saw small pebbles roll out of the holes.

"I might take them home to plant on my ranch and grow a stone wall," Jack London jokingly suggested.


To the south, at Honoapo Landing, is a deserted wharf once used to carry sugar from nearby mills. And not far from it is the legendary Manilo Inlet which, in the 1920s, was used as a postoffice for lovelorn swains. A peculiarity of the current constantly deposited flotsam here where dusky Romeos sent flower leis enclosed in calabashes to their sweethearts.

In 1920 molten lava from Halemaumau, the volcanic pit, flowed underground for six miles and burst out through cracks, forming the Mauna Iki Cone (little mountain) and spread over the desert. In 1924 occurred a steam blast eruption, throwing rocks and gravel over into this Sahara of the Islands. What other desert can boast so dramatic a record in recent years?

Lastly, Hawaii's desert is different because it has, in at least one instance, turned the course of history. In 1790 Keoua, king of that island, engaged in a bitter civil war with Kamehameha I, then a powerful chief. He sent a division of his army over from Hilo on the east side to meet Kamehameha's force on west Hawaii. It passed through Kau safely, but the second division was destroyed by the

eruption mentioned before. Had this not occurred, Keoua might have defeated his foe and Kamehameha never would have conquered the eight islands. Keoua was less ambitious as a ruler; Hawaii's development might have been slower. As it was, the bodies of the warriors were thrown over the low cliffs into the sea and Keoua, handicapped by this tragic loss, was murdered through an act of treachery.

As you scramble over the sharp *aa* lava, you come here and there on a spot in which the flow is smooth, resembling hardened molasses. This is called *pahoehoe* (pah-hoy-hoy), and was formed by a slow oozing progress of a past flow. You are now approaching sea level and the air is warm and oppressive. There are no trade winds here to bring you the smell of the ocean as you trudge doggedly on, threading your way among grotesque lava shapes that cast gnomelike shadows across your path. The sudden whish of a mongoose may break the weird silence of this dead world—dead, yet still in the making. But when you climb over low bluffs to the shore where the dry desert meets the limitless blue of the sea, you truly appreciate the unique, little-known western desert of our fabulous 50th state! □



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For three weeks "killer" Ralph Lopez stood alone against hundreds, then he disappeared . . .

# The Search for Lopez

by Lawrence P. James



INGHAM, UTAH, 30 miles southwest of Salt Lake City, is the state's greatest mining camp, with a production record of over \$4 billion in nonferrous metals. Today most of the old town has been buried or excavated by operations at the Utah Copper open pit mine.

Bingham's population reached its peak in the early decades of this century when dozens of underground mines were operating. Five miles long and one street wide, the town filled the narrow canyon in the Oquirrh Mountains. The camp was a racial melting pot, with sizeable colonies of Finns, Mexicans, Serbians, Japanese, Greeks and French. Many of the miners were young and single, earning considerable money and spending it freely. Residents often carried six-shooters and knew how to use them. These rough conditions provided the setting for the Ralph Lopez manhunt of 1913, an event long-remembered by Utah residents of that time.

Ralph Lopez came to Bingham during the 1912 strike of the Western Federation of Miners and promptly found employment as a strikebreaker. After the abortive labor dispute ended, the handsome young Mexican remained at Bingham, rapidly acquiring a reputation as an honest, hard worker. Residents knew him as a ladies' man, and also as an excellent marksman. He was light-skinned, and spoke excellent English. In the fall of 1913, he and Julius Correlli leased part of the upper workings of the Apex mine. By taking ore from abandoned stopes, the pair often netted \$40 per day.

No one knew much about Lopez' past. He was about 25 when he came to Bingham and had spent some time in other mining camps. Acquaintances claimed he was an American citizen by birth. He had experience as a range rider and was said to have ridden with Wild Bill Cody's show for a year. Some claimed he had owned a small ranch in Wyoming before being jailed for shooting a man in a fight.

During his stay in Bingham, Lopez had developed a dislike for the local police

force, especially deputy Julius Sorenson. Sorenson had arrested him for disturbing the peace, for which he was sentenced to 30 days' imprisonment. Friends claimed that Lopez was arrested and mistreated because of his nationality; that when arrested, he was actually protecting two girls from a pair of Greeks who threatened them. After a later brush with the law, Lopez warned the officers to leave him alone.

On the evening of November 20, 1913, Lopez and another Mexican were walking down the trail from the mine, arguing Mexican politics. A third man, Juan Valdez, joined the group. At the height of the argument, Lopez lost his temper and pointed his gun at the first Mexican. Drawing his knife, Valdez called him a coward. Lopez turned on Valdez and fired, killing him instantly. The *Salt Lake Tribune* claimed that Lopez never drew his gun, but fired through his coat pocket. He then hurried to the house where he boarded. Taking his rifle, cartridges, clothing, and food, he set out over the snow-covered mountains to the southeast.

Two Mexicans, one of whom claimed to have been employed years before by the Lopez family, told a widely accepted story about the killer's motive. Lopez' older brother had married a girl that Juan Valdez had also desired. Shortly afterwards, the brother had disappeared; his charred bones were found later. Upon finding Valdez at Bingham, Lopez had waited for a chance to kill him. Others said that both men were in love with Olvida Ocariz, a young girl who lived where Lopez boarded.

Since it occurred the day after a shooting in Bingham's Japanese colony, the murder did not create much excitement at first, but the next morning a four-man posse, led by Police Chief J. W. Grant, began following the Mexican's tracks. The steep, rough trail led south into Utah County near the northwest side of Utah Lake. At dusk, the party began searching the underbrush at the E. B. Jones ranch, more than 20 miles from Bingham. Suddenly three shots rang out. Chief Grant, deputy Otto Witbeck, and special deputy Nephi

S. Jensen fell from their horses. Grant died instantly; the two deputies lived only for a short time. Lopez' rifle evidently jammed on the fourth shot. He had been using an auxiliary chamber to fire smaller caliber ammunition. As he hurriedly removed this device and reloaded with standard cartridges, deputy Sorenson, fourth in the party, escaped.

The news spread rapidly. Salt Lake County Sheriff Andrew J. Smith set up headquarters in the hotel at Mosida, a farming community that has since become a ghost town. Residents of Utah County locked their doors and prayed. In Salt Lake City police arrested 54 Mexicans on the streets and jailed them for vagrancy. A small army of police officers, local residents, newspaper reporters, and volunteer searchers descended upon the area.

A pursuit party was organized the next morning, and spent the day trying to find the killer's trail. Bitter cold and the thought of Lopez' deadly rifle made everyone hesitant to enter the thick brush. Some deputies remained in their automobiles, searching only with binoculars.

The author of *Utah's Greatest Manhunt* was present and observed several amusing incidents that occurred when search parties thought they had stumbled upon Lopez. His own party quit the search after such an occurrence. The man leading the group had raised his rifle, aiming at a rabbit. The men at his side, thinking he had spotted Lopez, dived for cover. One fell backward over a rock, striking himself in the mouth with his rifle butt and loosening several teeth. Seconds later those at the rear came upon the leader, who was still aiming his rifle at the rabbit. "Shall I shoot him?" he asked. When no one answered, the leader turned around and saw his comrades fleeing through the oak brush. Assuming they had spotted Lopez, he ran after them. The rabbit escaped!

At nightfall, the searchers found the fugitive's trail. The next morning, they dived for cover when they were suddenly showered with gunfire while climbing a rocky ridge, but they did manage to return a few shots. They remained hidden



throughout the day, however, while they awaited additional men who did not arrive until almost nightfall. Sheriff Smith then announced he had Lopez surrounded and called off the hunt for the night. The next morning the deputies carefully climbed to the top of the ridge, but found only some empty pistol cart-ridges.

About a week later, Mike Stefano, who lived near the portal of the Minnie Tunnel of the Apex Mine at Bingham, reluctantly told mine foreman Tom Hoskins a strange tale. Lopez, whom he had known well, had come to his home the night before. He had been friendly, but had warned Stefano to tell no one of his visit. The fugitive had taken groceries and bedding and had exchanged his rifle for Stefano's 30-30 and 40 rounds of ammunition. Stefano stated one of Lopez' feet was frostbitten and swollen to nearly twice its natural size.

Guards were posted at the eleven entrances to the Apex upper workings after Lopez' tracks were found to lead there. The sheriff then announced that Lopez was "hopelessly trapped."

The workings of the Apex mine virtually honeycombed the hill between Carr Fork and Cottonwood Gulch. Tunnels entered at various elevations and connected with other levels through stopes and shafts. Lopez, in his leasing operations, had come to know the workings better than almost anyone else. If the fugitive was indeed cornered, capturing him was another matter. Hiding in the dark, he was more than equal to any number of men sent in after him.

After much discussion, the officers decided to smoke him out. Bales of hay were placed at strategic points. Four men volunteered to enter the mine to set a fire part way up the Andy incline; perhaps the smoke would trap Lopez above this level. As they dragged a hay bale up an ore chute three shots rang out in the darkness. Tom Manderich, an Austrian miner, died almost instantly. J. Douglas Hulsey, who had replaced Otto Witbeck as deputy, fell groaning with a bullet in one lung. The other two men fled, joining a group on the tunnel level. Lopez continued to shoot from the incline, trapping these men in the mine. After shooting out the mine candles and waiting for two hours, they were able to walk out quietly.

There was great excitement throughout Utah. A gigantic funeral procession was held in Salt Lake City. Sheriff Smith was severely criticized. Lopez, it was declared, could drive the law officers back to Salt

Lake, capture the population, and burn the city. If one Mexican could defy the State of Utah, the United States would be foolish to declare war on Mexico.

The authorities decided to fill the Apex mine so full of smoke that Lopez could not survive. Large quantities of hay, cayenne pepper, oil, tar, formaldehyde, coal, and sulfur were set afire in the mine to burn until extinguished by lack of oxygen. Some gases would rise, others would sink, filling all of the workings and killing anyone inside.

Miners working on the lower levels were laid off and heavy guards and searchlights were placed at all entrances. Lopez' former partner, Corelli, who had been under arrest since the shooting, was taken to the mine to beg Lopez to surrender.

The fires burned lower. Large crowds gathered in front of Salt Lake City newspaper offices to follow the story as it was telephoned from the mine. At Bingham, betting was heavy at first that Lopez would not be found in the mine; the trend later reversed. Mining and police officials fully expected to find their quarry underground.

The fires finally extinguished themselves. After bulkheads were removed and the suffocating fumes had poured out of the mine, a slow search commenced. Many felt Lopez was still alive somewhere in the mine. Noises, possibly just creaking timbers and dripping water, were heard. Searchers found the fugitive's coat and bedding in the Number Five stope of the Andy incline. At one point, footprints in the soot led from a bulkhead to a dark stope. Sheriff Smith obtained a dynamite bomb and stood at the stope entrance shouting for Lopez to surrender. After repeating his dramatic call twice without an answer, the sheriff threw in the bomb. The stope caved in with a terrific roar. Several days later, when miners finished excavating the rubble, no trace of the Mexican could be found.

Guarding the large area that had been searched proved difficult. Every noise frightened the officers and miners who had returned to work. One guard, equipped with an automatic repeating shotgun, pulled the trigger in a moment of fright and fired three shots into an empty tunnel. The roar reverberated throughout the mine and everyone ran for cover. One man injured himself when he leaped into a hole that turned out to be the shaft leading to the engine room.

Tom Karos, a miner, aroused new interest when he claimed that Lopez had held him up in the mine, although men

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nearby had seen no one. The Mexican Consul offered to enter the mine with Olvida Ocariz to plead with Lopez to surrender. Governor William Spry offered a \$1000 reward for Lopez, dead or alive. On December 12, Apex shift boss Sam Rogers announced that he was leaving Bingham because he feared for his life. He claimed he had stumbled upon Lopez underground, and had unsuccessfully tried to capture him. Authorities carefully questioned both Karos and Rogers, but could not change their stories. Later, a crew of 25 Greeks was frightened out of the mine, allegedly by Lopez.

Others were equally certain that Lopez had escaped the night after the shooting in the incline. The Phoenix Tunnel had been unwatched for an hour that night. The lower tunnels, although accessible only by a ladderless 150-foot shaft, had been unguarded for two days. James Larson, who had known Lopez well, and O. E. Radtke both claimed to have seen him, heavily clad and his hand thrust threatening in his pocket, sneaking down toward the Bingham and Garfield Railway depot. In the Boston Consolidated Number Two boarding house, a collection was taken for the widow of a miner killed in the Frisco Tunnel. Contributors later learned that no miner had died; it was claimed the money helped Lopez escape the country. Julius Correlli received a letter signed "Ralph Lopez" that many believed genuine. A carpenter repairing a roof at Garfield suddenly went insane and leaped to the ground, shouting that Lopez had just demanded his tobacco. The Mexican was reported in Los Angeles, St. Louis and other parts of the country.

Sheriff Smith announced that the first smoking attempt had not been thorough enough and planned to start the fires again. The Apex Company, which had lost thousands of dollars because of the manhunt, objected. Newspapers, after carrying the story in the headlines for more than two weeks, began to lose interest. When the sheriff announced that he would starve Lopez out by Christmas, no one paid much attention. On December 18, the story left the headlines.

Lopez was a household word in Utah for years afterwards. Old timers from Bingham still argue whether his bones lie under tons of rock in some obscure caved area of the Apex, or whether he escaped and began a new life under an assumed name. The tragedy and comedy of the manhunt are all but forgotten, but the indomitable will of Ralph Lopez, who stood alone against hundreds, deserves a place in the history of the West. □

Hussong's Cantina is one of the few remaining landmarks of this "British Concession" and it hasn't changed a whit since the last limey quaffed his grog at its long bar.

A rather unphotogenic quintette of troubadors strummed their instruments there, but one look at Bob Masson's face told me they weren't the colorful type he required. Thus we continued our search, determined to find exactly the right cast to play his photogenic role; whether it could play a fandango mattered not.

Lunch time had long passed. One motley band after another competed for our prize, which by this time had reached astronomical proportions. Troubadors serenaded at each corner, but none wore the striking costumes of the famous Mariachi vaqueros of Jalisco. Pausing at our hotel, the Bahia, for a bite to eat, we decided that the only thing to do was admit defeat. We had found no Mariachis, nor had we found Uncle Erle's other scouts.

As we entered through the airport gate, lively music met our ears; silver buckles blinded our eyes. There they stood, Mariachis with concho belts, sombreros and all, lined up alongside the blimp. And there stood Uncle Erle, wearing the gay red serape presented to him at the airport in Tijuana. But he wasn't wearing the same smile. The cold wind blew. His voice sounded hoarse. "Where in the hell have you been?" he roared.

It was a difficult thing to explain. But, as Bob Masson later remarked, not any

more difficult than it would be to explain to a Goodyear executive back in Ohio an expense account notation reading "Mariachi band . . . \$40."

The floor show at the Bahia that night warmed up the atmosphere. Hosted by the Ensenada Chamber of Commerce, a lively party introduced us to many new friends.

We had little time for shopping, but I would like to make a return trip to investigate the below-the-border market for DESERT readers. It is easier to shop in Ensenada than in Tijuana because within a few blocks you can see everything available. Less junk clutters the shops here, but there is less variety in merchandise, too. Other than primitive carved wood figures (DESERT, June, 1965), leather goods and baskets, nothing is manufactured locally. Italian knits for both men and women are popular on the import market, but among them were no startling bargains that I found. French perfumes, of course, are always a good buy in a free port.

Although this Gardner expedition was less adventurous than our former ones, it was different and we had a lot of fun. We recommend a trip to the border area highly to those who have not yet been initiated into the wonders of Baja California. It is a particularly nice summer trip because the weather there is never hot. Don't just dash in and out of the country, though. Stay overnight and take time to search out the good things. You'll have a lot of fun. □



Maestro Uncle Erle conducts Ensenada's famous Mariachi band in an airport serenade.



# Mowry, Arizona

BY LAMBERT FLORIN



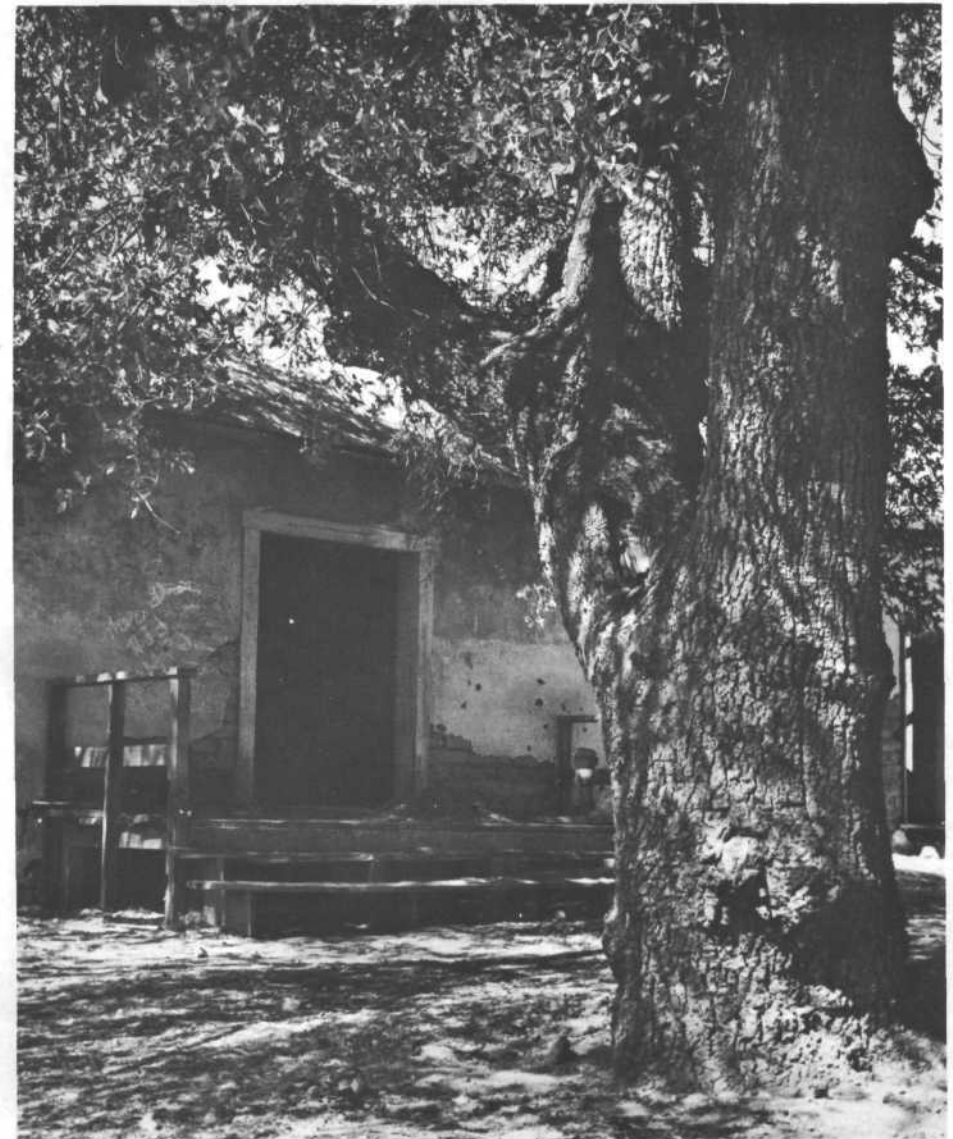
OWRY is one of a string of defunct mining camps ranging south from Patagonia to the nearby Mexican border at Lochiel. Several historians state that the mines were operated by the Jesuits before the 1850s. That Queen of Ghost Towns, Nell Murbarger, doubts this story, but she does agree that the mine there, originally called the Patagonia, was worked by Mexicans in the late 50s.

Another conflicting story about the indubitable old camp is that the Mexicans sold out to Sylvester Mowry and a group of army officers at Fort Crittenden. The actual facts, again quoting Miss Murbarger, and her *Ghosts of the Adobe Walls*, are that a group of officers (not including Mowry) did buy the workings, but failing to make a go of the mine they sold out to Mowry for \$25,000, this in 1859.

Mowry then changed the name of the Patagonia to Mowry and gave up his commission in the army. He expended his whole energy in deepening the shafts and connecting them to the old Mexican workings. In no time, his Mexican peons were carrying up enormous amounts of galena, rich in silver. There was, as usual, considerable lead in the ore. It was this fact that got Mowry into serious trouble during the Civil War.

Sylvester Mowry, long suspected of harboring sympathies for the Confederate cause, was arrested in 1862, charged with aiding and comforting the enemy by supplying lead for bullets. He was incarcerated in the notorious Territorial Prison at Yuma and his properties confiscated by federal authorities.

Eventually he was released from strict and sometimes solitary confinement at



Yuma. Mowry then determined to regain the mines rightfully his, since no charges had been proven against him. He struggled long and hard, but he lost his suits, although he received a token payment from the government. He died in London, a broken man.

During the hundred years or so that followed Mowry's operation of the mines, the town died and revived several times. At the time of this author's visit he found an amazingly well preserved complex, though some of the adobe buildings dated back among the oldest in Arizona. The several frame structures are in ruins, though offering beautiful studies in wood textures. Up on a small hill above the town are several frame shacks of much later vintage, some even containing such anachronisms as a kitchen sink.

Nearby is the old cemetery, as fascinating as any in the state. The discovery was

made too late to be included in my recent book, *Boot Hill*, but hopefully will appear in a future volume. Of 17 burials there, it is said that 15 were the victims of violence. Two of these, J. B. Mills and Edward Stevens, had been doing some mining at the San Antonio mines across the Mexican border. Ambushed by local Indians, the two were hanged upside down from the limb of an oak tree. The Indians then kindled a slow fire under their struggling victims, slowly roasting them to death. When discovered by friends, the bodies were carried to Mowry for burial.

Our photo shows the doorway of what must have been a store. It has two large rooms with remains of apparent shelves and fixtures. Sheltering the porch is one of the many magnificent specimens of Live Oak in the area, this one about 70 feet high. □





# BACK COUNTRY

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## Western Events

## FOUR WHEEL CHATTER...

by Bill Bryan

*Information on Western Events must be received at DESERT six weeks prior to scheduled date.*

**JULIAN WILDFLOWER SHOW**, May 13-28, Julian, Calif. One of the best wildflower shows in the West. Art show along with flower show. Write Box 333, Julian, California for information.

**CONVAIR ROCKHOUND'S Annual Gem Show**, Convaire Recreation Auditorium, 5001 Kearny Villa Rd., San Diego, Calif.

**SACRAMENTO JEEPERS 3rd Annual 4WD Gold Country Classic**, May 27-29, Georgetown, California.

**CORPUS CHRISTI FIESTA**, May 28, Pala, Calif. 152nd consecutive year of colorful Indian celebration at the Mission San Antonio de Pala.

**AMERICAN SOCIETY OF DOWSERS**, California Chapter's semi-annual meeting, May 28, Brand Park Lodge Bldg., Glendale, Calif. Speaker and classes. Donations.

**BLUFF, UTAH 2nd Annual All-Tribes Indian Day**, June 10. Colorful native Americans in scenic red-rock country, Indian dancing, Navajo games, fry bread contest.

**INDIAN DANCERS**, June 16-25, Mission San Luis Rey, San Diego County, Calif. Navajo, Papago and Pima Indians from Arizona performing seldom seen tribal dances. Five performances daily. Free.

**OCEANSIDE HARBOR DAYS**, June 17-18, Oceanside, Calif., boat parades, races, festivities in connection with Miss Southern California contest.

**PIKES PEAK 4WD Club's annual Khana**, June 29 through July 4. Write to P.O. Box 4192, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

**NATIONAL 4WD ANNUAL CONVENTION**, July 1-2, Yakima, Wash. Write to Route Eight, Box 572, Yakima, Wash.

**CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA'S Cactus and Succulent Show**, July 1-4, Los Angeles State and Country Arboretum, Arcadia, Calif. Write Box 167, Reseda, Calif. 90335.

**7TH ANNUAL NATIONAL JEEP-ORAMA**, July 29-30, Denver Colorado. Write Jeep-Orama, 1148 California St., Denver, Colo. 80204.

*Publisher's Note: On both the state and national levels, Bill Bryan is one of the most active and popular leaders in the field of 4-Wheel Drive clubs. Whenever they can take time away from running their refrigeration and rental equipment business in Indio, California, Bill and his attractive wife, Carol, are out exploring the back country or participating in club activities in the West. Bill was one of the seven organizers of the National Four Wheel Drive Association, past president of the Indio Sareea Al Jamel 4WD Club, director of the National 4WD Grand Prix and former conservation chairman of the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs. It is through the efforts of dedicated leaders like Bill Bryant that the politicians, legislators and conservationists are beginning to realize the importance of 4-WD groups and individual enthusiasts. We are pleased Bill has accepted our invitation to write a monthly column for DESERT. He will not pull punches and will call them as he sees them. This month is a bit of chit-chat, but next month he takes on the proposed development of the Imperial County sand dunes by the California Division of Beaches and Parks.*

The month of March was filled with exciting four wheel drive events to whet the palate of any four wheel drive enthusiast. The month started off on March 10, 11 and 12th with the National Four Wheel Drive Grand Prix. This event consists of an obstacle race through mud, water, sand and most any other type of terrain or obstacle you can think of. The 4WD now in its 3rd year has become the "500" of four wheel drive events and fills a void which has existed several years for the four wheel drive enthusiast. Any sport involving vehicles, eventually grows to the point where rules and events must be formulated. The races this year were won by a young (27) man from Hemet, Calif., Carl Jackson. Carl won for his efforts a 1967 Ford Bronco.

The second big event during March was the Phoenix Jeep Jamboree sponsored by the Phoenix Arizona Jeep Club.

This Jamboree was held in the area of Congress Junction, Arizona and attracted almost 1000 people. The Jamboree lasted a full week and was highlighted by visits to the ghost town of Stanton, Arizona and the hundreds of surrounding mines. The Main event consisted of the members of the Phoenix club leading the many visitors from Calif., Arizona, Nevada, Washington, Oregon and Colorado on a well-planned cross-country trip which was in the opinion of the writer well-planned and policed, or a better choice of words may be "no litter was left on the trail."

The central campsite was well located with plenty of restrooms, a source of water, and a large central campfire for all in attendance to enjoy. Congratulations are in order to the Phoenix Jeep Club for a well-planned weekend of back country travel. The Bar-B-Que was very tasty (plenty of hot sauce) and enjoyed by over 375 people. It was only \$2.50 a head and consisted of beef, beans, salad, bread and coffee.

Sunday after we left the Phoenix trip we journeyed to the Vulture Mine which is a few miles northwest of Wickenburg, only a short hop from the Jamboree. This Vulture Mine is something which we could write 10 pages about. It was founded in 1863 by Henry Wickenburg and worked continuously until 1942 when war broke out and the owner was forced to switch to a different variety of minerals, copper, which he did by purchasing the copper mine at Bagdad, Arizona. The tour of the Vulture Mine led by Russ Quinn cost \$1.00 and is worth every penny of the small fee. Mr. Quinn leads you through all of the old buildings which are mostly intact, including the assay office, which is built of gold bearing ore and explains the total operation, the loves and heartbreaks of this early mining camp. If you are a nut on exploring as we are, this trip will be most enlightening as you soon learn what to recognize and appreciate the work involved in building those tumble-down shacks you have passed

# TRAVEL



## TRAILER TIRE TIPS

If you plan to pull a boat trailer, U-Haul-It, or other type of passenger car trailer this spring or summer, the Rubber Manufacturers Association offers some lifesaving tire tips for motorists. Trailer tires need a lot more air pressure than car tires, the Association warns, in some cases double and even triple the amount. Most of the 24 sizes of trailer tires on the market require pressures of 50 pounds or more. Several are in the 90 to 100 pound range.

The Association notes that some service station attendants unwittingly inflate trailer tires to the same pressure as automobile tires, unless instructed otherwise. It termed this a dangerous practice which can ruin tires in a hurry through fast, uneven tread wear, which can cause blow-outs. RMA also cautions motorists to watch for overloading. Trailer tires

should be of the proper size to carry the maximum anticipated load, including the weight of the boat or other cargo, plus motor, camping gear, accessories, etc. If you plan to get a bigger boat this year, be sure your tires can take the load.

On the subject of speed, the tire manufacturers caution the motorist not to be guided only by the speedometer. Some trailer tires, RMA says, travel up to 82 per cent faster than the automobile pulling them. It cites a typical case of a car with 7.50/7.75-14 tires travelling at 50 mph, whose trailer tires of 4.80/4.00-8 size will make 67 per cent more revolutions, or the equivalent of 83.4 mph in terms of treadwear. For maximum safety and tire wear for all types of trailer tires, follow the load and inflation recommendations detailed below:

Tire Size	Ply Rating	Maximum Load	Maximum Inflation
4.10/3.50- 6	4	360	65
4.80/4.00- 7	4	520	65
4.80/4.00- 8	2	380	30
4.80/4.00- 8	4	600	65
4.80/4.00- 8	6	725	90
4.80/4.00- 9	2	410	30
4.80/4.00- 9	4	645	65
4.80/4.00-12	4	790	65
4.80/4.00-12	6	960	90
5.30/4.50- 6	2	355	25
5.30/4.50- 6	4	565	55
5.30/4.50- 7	2	385	25
5.30/4.50- 7	4	620	55
5.30/4.50-12	4	915	55
5.70/5.00- 8	4	710	50
5.70/5.00- 8	6	900	75
5.70/5.00- 8	8	1030	95
6.90/6.00- 9	4	850	40
6.90/6.00- 9	6	1080	60
6.90/6.00- 9	10	1450	100
6.90/6.00-12	4	1010	40
6.90/6.00-12	6	1290	60
7.50-10	10	1780	75
9.00-10	10	2200	65

many times while beating the back-country. So, if you are ever down Wickenburg way, don't pass up the Vulture Mine road. Take your lunch as he has a beautiful picnic ground available right next to one of the first school houses in Arizona.

For you Baja lovers I heard today "Uncle" Erle Stanley Gardner has a fresh

book coming off the presses on his latest adventures in Baja. So crack open the piggy bank and get your copy at the Desert Magazine Book Shop.

See Western Events for forthcoming 4WD meets. Any comments or subjects you would like to hear more about just write to me: Bill Bryan, Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, Calif. 92260.

## Sound Off!

Do you have any information you want to share with other Back Country Travelers? Do you have any questions about how or where to obtain an item, how to get somewhere, condition of terrain, is a certain area restricted? Then write to SOUND OFF. Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, Calif. 92260.

Your article on vandalism and littering in our wildlands was well put and timely. Efforts like yours can go a long way in helping to curb this increasing blight to our nation's out-of-doors.

Thanks for doing more than your part to help keep this land of ours a decent and enjoyable one in which to live, work and play.

LARRY HENDERSON,  
Grand Canyon National Park,  
Arizona 86023.

Sorry, but I disagree with you in your publicizing the Vandal of the Month.

You'll have 'em trying for the dishonor.

I agree wholeheartedly with your campaign, but am afraid your publicity of the vandalism would excite more despicable acts.

W. A. REEFF,  
Box 656, Page, Ariz.

I would like written permission to copy your article "Educate and Prosecute" on page 38 in the April 1967 issue. The inclosed issue of the ARTIFACT will explain why. See marked Editorial.

This site was literally torn to pieces with everyone who could get there grabbing and snatching everything they could lay their hands on. Our chairman, Dr. Charles E. Dills had in our local paper a request for persons who had collected some of the artifacts to bring them to our meeting to be photographed. We got an unexpected response and got some good pictures. But that did not correct the destruction.

MRS. ETHEL MUIR,  
1557 Palm Street,  
San Luis Obispo, Calif.

*Mrs. Muir is referring to a site at Avila Beach in San Luis Obispo County, California which, according to Artifact, was destroyed by county bulldozers and then picked clean by souvenir hunters.*

I would like to hear from anyone who would be interested in forming a "Treasure hunting and prospectors club" in the San Fernando Valley.

D. A. FITZGERALD,  
14152 1/4 Sylvan St.,  
Van Nuys, Calif. 91401.

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ARIZONA TREASURE Hunters Ghost Town Guide. Large folded map 1881, small early map, 1200 place name glossary, mines, camps, Indian reservations, etc. \$1.50. Theron Fox, 1296-E Yosemite, San Jose, California.

SURVIVAL BOOKS! Guerrilla Warfare, Wilderness Living, Medical, Guns, Self Defense, Nature. Books—Vital, Fascinating, Extraordinary; Catalog free. Adobe Hacienda, Route 3, Box 517A, Glendale, Arizona 85301.

GUIDE TO MEXICO'S gems and minerals: localities, mines, maps, directions, contacts. English-Spanish glossary, too. \$2.00 postpaid. Gemac, Mentone, Calif. 92359.

NEW 7TH EDITION: "Ghost Town Bottle Price Guide"—redesigned, revised, enlarged. Leading western price guide on antique bottles, \$3 postpaid to Wes Bressie, Rt. 1, Box 582, Eagle Point, Oregon 97524.

TREASURE BOOKS and maps for ghosttowners, treasure hunters, bottle, rock, arrowhead collectors, gold panners. Free brochure. Pierce Publishing, Box 5221, Dept. A-9, Abilene, Texas 79605.

NINETEEN YEARS of Desert Magazine in binders, like new, beginning with Volume 1, No. 1, through 1956 except April 1956 missing. \$105.00. Gale Bell, 1570—12th Ave., Sacramento, Calif. 95818.

BEAT-FREQUENCY METAL Detector Handbook, very descriptive, \$2.00. Beat-frequency metal detectors of our design, not popular copies. #BFMD2 plans \$2—five transistors, speaker, phones. #BFMD3 plans \$2—three transistors, phones. Completed \$49.50. A. H. Electronics, Dept. 3A, P.O. Box 45144, Chicago, Ill. 60645.

DESERT MAGAZINES, 29 years from beginning. Some in yearly binders. \$200 or make offer. Jay Wilson, 1300 Weeburn Road, Apt. 30-G, Seal Beach, Calif. 90704. Phone (213) 596-1210.

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BOTTLE COLLECTORS, treasure hunters, prospectors and explorers—this is the book for you! "California Nevada Ghost Town Atlas". Modern highway maps that lead to the fabulous camps of yesterday. Complete with photos and historical background for 400 sites. Price \$2.00 postpaid. Cy Johnson, Box 288, Susanville, Calif. 96130.

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A BOTTLE COLLECTOR'S Book and "The Past In Glass" by Pat and Bob Ferraro—two most complete sources available for novice and advanced bottle collectors. Illustrations, checklists, explanations. \$3.25 each postpaid. The Little Glass Shack, 3161-B 56th St., Sacramento, Calif. 95820.

NEVADA TREASURE Hunters Ghost Town Guide. Large folded map. 800 place name glossary. Railroads, towns, camps, camel trail. \$1.50. Theron Fox, 1296-C Yosemite, San Jose 26, California.

"GEMS & MINERALS," the monthly guide to gems, minerals, and rock hobby fun. \$4.00 year. Sample 25c. Gems & Minerals, Mentone, Calif. 92359.

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GHOST TOWN GUIDE: Complete guide to over 100 ghost towns in California, only \$1.95. W. Abbott, 1513 West Romneya Drive, Anaheim, California.

FRANK FISH—Treasure Hunter—said Gold is where you find it. His book "Buried Treasure & Lost Mines" tells how and where to look, 93 locations, photos and maps. 19x24 colored map pinpointing book locations. Book \$1.50. Map \$1.50. Special: both \$2.50 postpaid. Publisher, Erie Schaefer, 14728 Peyton Drive, Chino, Calif. 91710.

GHOST TOWN MAPS—New book titled "California Ghost Town Trails" has pictures, maps to California ghost towns. \$2.95. A. Abbott, 1513 West Romneya Drive, Anaheim, Calif.

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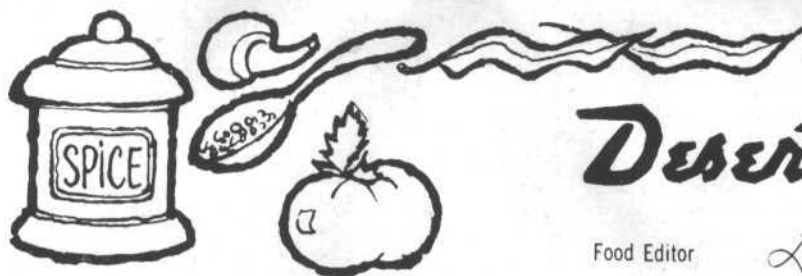
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# Desert COOKERY

Food Editor

*Lucille Inedale Carlsson*

## PEACH CHIFFON CHEESE CAKE

For graham cracker crust use 10 crushed graham crackers,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon sugar and  $\frac{1}{3}$  stick of butter, melted. Stir together and press into pie pan.

Filling:

- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups diced peaches, which have been drained
- 1 tablespoon gelatin
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cold water
- 1 egg separated
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup peach syrup
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 8-oz. package of cream cheese

I prefer to bake the crumb crust about 10 minutes at 350 degrees, but you may use it unbaked. Soften gelatin in cold water. Combine peach syrup, egg yolk and sugar in sauce pan. Stir over medium heat for 5 minutes, then add gelatin which has been soaked in cold water. Stir until dissolved, remove from heat. Place with cheese which has been softened in blender until blended. Beat white of egg until stiff and fold into cheese mixture along with the diced peaches and lemon juice. Pour into crust and refrigerate until firm. You may cover with whipped cream and garnish with peach slices.

## DAINTY TEA COOKIES

- 1 egg beaten until thick
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup soft margarine
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar
- 1 cup sifted flour
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Beat well after adding each ingredient. Drop by teaspoon in small balls. Place on buttered cookie sheet far enough apart that they may spread. Top each cookie with a pecan half or a half candied cherry. Bake at 350 degrees for about 15 minutes.

## MINCE-APPLE CRISP

Pare, core and slice enough cooking apples to make a thick layer in 8x8 x2 inch baking dish or round dish of similar size.

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon nutmeg

Mix together and sprinkle over the apples, dot with butter and sprinkle 2 teaspoons lemon juice over this.

- 1 cup mincemeat
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup honey
- 2 tablespoons rum or rum flavoring

Mix and spread a layer over apples.

Mix together:

- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup firmly packed brown sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sifted flour

Spread this crumbly mixture over top. Bake 45 to 50 minutes or until apples are tender in 375 degree oven. Serve hot with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

## STRAWBERRY CAPRICE

- 1 box strawberries
- 2 envelopes plain gelatin
- 1 can pink lemonade concentrate
- 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups boiling water
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup orange juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whipping cream

Wash berries, save a few for garnishing, slice the remainder and lightly sugar. Soften gelatin in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cold water and dissolve in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup boiling water. Add to the 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups boiling water, stirring well. Add orange juice, lemon juice and salt, and the pink lemonade concentrate. Set aside 1 cup of the gelatin mixture. Chill remainder until it mounds, then fold in the strawberries and half fill sherbet glasses. Chill remaining gelatin until it mounds and then fold into cream which has been whipped stiff. Fill the sherbet glasses with this and garnish with a strawberry on top.

## LEMON FROSTING

- 2  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups powdered sugar
  - 1 egg
  - Pinch of salt
  - 1 tablespoon light corn syrup
  - $\frac{1}{4}$  cup melted butter
  - 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
  - 1 tablespoon grated lemon rind
- Mix sugar, salt and egg; blend in corn syrup; add shortening, lemon juice and peel. Mix well; if too thin to spread, add more powdered sugar. If too thick, add a little more melted butter.

## MOCHA CREAM

- 1 tablespoon plain gelatin soaked in  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cold water for min.
  - 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups strong hot coffee
  - $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar
  - 1 pint vanilla ice cream
- Dissolve gelatin in hot coffee. Stir in sugar. Cool until it begins to set, then combine with the ice cream. Sprinkle grated sweet chocolate curls or nut meats over top.

## CREAMY CAKE FILLING

- One 3-oz. package of cream cheese
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon cream or milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cocoanut
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped nuts, walnuts or pecans

Have cheese in warm place to soften. Blend sugar into cheese with fork. Add vanilla, cocoanut and nuts, mixing well. If too stiff to spread, add a little cream. This is delicious between layers of a cake, or will cover a square cake.

# LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope

## Re Military Garden . . .

*To the Editor:* Although I can not speak for the Marines or Navy, and won't even go to the trouble of speaking officially for the Air Force, I nevertheless feel Lee Dufur's article on "The War Department's Private Garden" in the April issue should receive some comment.

The opening statement about a Pentagon official flying over this area has been of great interest to our historian here, inasmuch as it had always been our belief that in 1933 it was General Hap Arnold who sent a party to the desert to find a barren area suitable for a bombing and gunnery range. Sergeant Harley Fogleman was the man who found this place, and we thought he'd done it on foot. We also have had no record of fences here at Edwards, and there certainly isn't one now, much less resplendent with barbed wire. As a matter of fact, there is a state highway that runs through the center of the base; most people accelerate when they see our "Garden".

Maybe Dufur should meet folks like Effie Corum Pelton. Our large hangar sits on the property her family homesteaded here in the early 1900s. Effie likes us, probably because she took the trouble to visit Edwards before forming her opinions. It's a shame more people don't do the same.

WILLIAM P. CAMPBELL, Captain, USAF  
Chief, Public Information Division,  
Office of Information,  
Air Force Flight Test Center

*Editor's comment:* *The Western desert lover appreciates the protection provided by our armed services and certainly does not resent any military installation being actively used and occupied. What we do resent are the vast areas closed to the public which are not being used for military purposes today, but have not yet been declared safe for civilians because there may still be live shells in the area. We believe this land should be cleaned up and released so smog-bound citizens of certain metropolitan areas will have more room for week-end sojourning in uninhabited, natural areas. Edwards Air Force Base, obviously, does not number among the regions tied up by the War Department and not currently occupied nor used by it. C.P.*

## Wee Folk for Wee Horses . . .

*To the Editor:* The article by Choral Pepper about those little horses is true, no doubt, but, "dammit", they belong to the "wee folk" so why not let them alone? They need these horses. I anger every time I read or hear of such outrageous action of humans toward the wee folks.

I've spent years amongst them. I know of what I speak. How come you never have anything in your magazine about these wee ones? There's a big group of them at Bullhead and another right here in Joshua Tree. They are as real as we humans are. For over 20 years I've lived with them. I'll aid you as I may if you are brave enough to believe this and bold enough to write about them. I've met groups all over California.

MYRTLE REES,  
Joshua Tree, California.

*Editor's Note:* *This is a story I've gotta do!*

## Happy . . .

*To the Editor:* I have had occasion to read the stories on Lake Powell and on Yuma in the Desert Magazine for April and find them most interesting and worthwhile. Right now, as you know, Reclamation is in controversy with some preservationist organizations who seem to have a habit of damning all dams and all dam builders without consideration of the merits of water conservation and utilization for the future of the West. Your stories offer a refreshing rebuttal and will be most valuable among the wide circle of readers of Desert.

FLOYD E. DOMINY,  
Commissioner,  
United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation,  
Washington, D.C.

## Unhappy . . .

*To the Editor:* Since you are so fond of Lake Powell, I suggest that you make a trip to the upper end of Lake Mead where you can enjoy camping amidst the silt, mud, and unesthetic effects of the draw down in that area. This ultimately will occur on Lake Powell. Articles like yours extolling this type of reservoir make it harder for those of us who are working very hard to prevent the same catastrophe from occurring in the Grand Canyon of the Colorado.

F. T. DARVILL, M.D.,  
Mount Vernon, Washington

## Barking up the Wrong Fig Tree . . .

*To the Editor:* I read the article in the March issue about Fig Tree John. It suggests that he lived at Palm Springs the last years of his life, but how could he be in two places? I was postmaster at the town nearest to the Indian reservation and saw him coming to town regularly in his buckboard for supplies. According to my information, he was 116 when he died. We were told then that his uniform was one he had from the days when he served as a scout for General Fremont. I appreciate the very good picture of him in your magazine. I remember seeing him dressed like that.

I was well acquainted with his son John and until recently I possessed two basket trays and a large olla, which had belonged to Fig Tree John. His son climbed up Santa Rosa Mt. to their summer home where these things were buried, and brought them to me. He made two trips to get them. I valued these things very much. Several years ago I offered them to a museum, but they were not interested, so I gave them to two people who appreciate them.

MRS. SUSIE K. FRY,  
Leucadia, California.

## Do-It-Yourself UFO . . .

*To the Editor:* An interesting letter for UFO watchers appeared in your April issue of DESERT. Hence, I would like to offer the following information: How to make your own UFO.

An attractive do-it-yourself kit for making flying saucers can be assembled for practically nothing, and the parts are readily available. The basic kit can be improved upon in so many ways that a little ingenuity and imagination can

make almost anyone a recognized authority in this particular field of flight.

I first began making flying saucers about 10 years ago. When I made my first one, I had no real conception of what they were like, other than vague newspaper and magazine stories with pictures of airborne blobs and blips. So I consulted a friend who had made an exhaustive study of UFOs and who had acquired a remarkable collection of photographs. After close scrutiny of his pictures, I felt sure that much could be accomplished—at least in the field of photography—to capture more clarity and detail of these elusive subjects.

I began with a common electric light fixture of the type which fits flush against the ceiling. The rim of the bowl was enclosed in a bright, brass ring. I inverted the fixture so the opaque bowl was above the brass rim, then fastened the ventilated top of a Coleman gasoline lantern to the top of the bowl. This was done by running a one-quarter inch bolt, eight inches long, through the fixture and the lantern top, then tightening the nut until both were clamped solidly together. Next, I drilled a small hole through the ornamental nut which originally fastened the ventilated top to the lantern, and suspended the unit from the end of a bamboo pole with a fine, steel wire. A ranch hand swung the object about vigorously for me while I photographed it from various angles.

This type of flying saucer does not cause the headlights of an automobile to dim, nor make magnetic compasses misbehave. Also, it makes no noticeable difference in desert mineral deposits, radios, or the performance of transmission lines. Further, I've yet to receive the first report of one causing unusual, radioactive depressions.

But after years of witnessing the results of hypo droplets and developer stains carelessly slopped on photographic paper, and seeing most of these darkroom misadventures labelled as UFOs, I've decided the above method of creating flying saucers is a more educational and enjoyable pastime. I'm also convinced that swinging a home-made flying saucer from a bamboo pole is every bit as invigorative and healthful as swishing around with a butterfly net.

SAM HICKS,  
Temecula, California.

*Editor's Note:* *Because of his work as Erle Stanley Gardner's ranch foreman and as owner of a Wyoming ranch of his own, Sam Hicks probably sees more of the night skies than 90% of our population. He is a trained observer and has spent all of his life out-of-doors. Sam Hicks has never seen a flying saucer. Like most of us, he is understandably skeptical. C.P.*

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