

Pub #4



SEPTEMBER, 1948 LOS ANGELES CORRAL SEPTEMBER, 1948



GUESTS ATTEND THE BIG POW-WOW IN BRYANT-SUTTON PASTURE

Guests present at the July Westerners Round-Up, held in the combined expansiveness of Messers Dan Bryant and Ernest Sutton's back pastures (for the benefit of those who were not fortunate enough to be there, the two gentlemen were hosts and their back yards adjoin), included the following:

H. V. Soper, 1770 No. Vermont; R. B. Merrell, 1621 Wayne Ave., So. Pasadena; Don Baker, 150 So. Bonnie, Pasadena; Carlton Guellow, 4624 Camellia St., North Hollywood; Robert Gilmore, 7950 Sunset, Los Angeles; James P. Westerfield, 10515 Ayres Ave.

Harry A. Levinson, 141 East 47th, New York City, a corresponding member, also was present. The hosts live in Pasadena.

JULY ROUND-UP BASED ON HISTORY OF THE HOPI INDIAN

Assisted by Dan Bryant in the role of host, Ernest Sutton furnished the program for the July Round-Up which again saw the Westerners in an outdoor summer meeting. Sutton's program was implemented by a slide movie, and was based on the Hopi Indians, their customs, beliefs, economics, and their recent history.

Sutton took the pictures himself. He is an adopted son of the tribal chieftain, and has lived among them.

Historical notes of the Hopi Indian:

(1) Coronado's men were the first to visit the Hopi pueblos.

(2) The Hopi, stubborn and determined, most successfully of all Indian tribes resisted the intrusion of the white man's religion and the white man's economics.

(3) The Hopi were able to withdraw to themselves and progressed with little interference from the white man until the termination of the Civil War.

Sutton's lecture illustrated costumes, ceremonies, food, and customs.

The July meeting was held in the combined expansiveness of the Sutton-Bryant backyards, which adjoin. Locale was Pasadena. It was a meeting characterized by mobility. Drinks were served almost on the border line between the two homes. Dinner was served on Bryant ground, while the program was given near Sutton's house.

A full paper on this meeting will be published in the 1948 issue of The Los Angeles BRAND BOOK.

AUGUST ROUND-UP

Dr. Marcus E. Crahan spoke to the Los Angeles Westerners at their August Round-Up in the Redwood House, with his topic entitled, "California And It's Place Among The Wine Nations." Dr. Crahan first traced the philosophy and the romance of wine, then delved into California's history with wines.

His discussion covered the transporting of

(Continued on page 15)

DOWN THE BOOK TRAIL


By GLEN DAWSON

Lindley "Pinky" Bynum is the latest Westerner to appear in print. The reminiscences of John Bidwell have been printed by the Ward Ritchie Press and edited by Bynum with the title *In California Before the Gold Rush*. This material first appeared in the Century Magazine, later in pamphlet form printed in Chico, and then combined with a work by John Steele in the Lakeside Classics. The Bynum edition is the first separate edition in book form. This new publication is uniform with the dormant Kovach California Centennial Series. Another related book has been edited by Arthur Woodward, *The Autobiography of a Mountain Man, 1805-1889*, by Stephen Hall Meek. It is possible another volume published by Kovach may appear before Christmas, *A Trip Across the Plains* by George Keller, with an introduction by J. Gregg Layne.

The books mentioned above are all in limited editions; limited by the number the publisher thinks he can sell. Ed and Robert Grabhorn in San Francisco have been successful not only in printing fine books but selling out almost immediately. Their edition of *Soldiers of the Overland* was recently remaindered at above published price which is some kind of record. The Grabhorn edition of *Mosses* by Bret Harte may become a landmark in the history of graphic arts. The illustrations were printed with scraps of sandpaper, burlap, cloth, wood and linoleum. The latest Grabhorn was distributed by Joseph Sullivan who operates under the name Biobooks. The book is *The Pioneer Press of California* by Carl I. Wheat.

The two recent Grabhorns will cost you twenty-five dollars for the pair if you can still find them at published price. Some interesting items can be secured at such low prices that booksellers do not attempt to handle them. For example, Frank Parcher's *Panamint Valley* is available postpaid for the sum of fifteen cents in stamps or coin from the author at 505 Franklin St., Boise, Idaho. Panamint City, west of Death Valley was from 1873 to 1875 one of the wildest mining camps in the West.

Since the July issue of the *Branding Iron*, the University of California Press has changed the names of two books. John W. Caughey's book is now *Gold is the Cornerstone* and Westerner W. W. Robinson's book is *Land in California* with the sub-title, the story of mission lands, Spanish and Mexican ranchos, squatter rights, mining claims, railroad grants, land scrip, homesteads, tidelands. Robinson even has his portrait on the dust jacket. The *Chronicles of California* is a series of new up-to-date books, rather than reprints and with the backing of



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 Dan Gann, Editor
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the University of California should be a very notable series.

The fall book which is probably of greatest interest to Westerners is *Fighting Indians of the West* by Martin F. Schmitt and Dee Brown. This covers the period from the Civil War to 1890 with about 270 illustrations. It is published by Scribners and uniform with their earlier book *Picture Maker of the Old West, William H. Jackson*.

Those interested in new books will do well to watch the columns of Larry Powell in the *Westways* published monthly by the Automobile Club of Southern California and of Joseph Henry Jackson five or six times a week in the *Los Angeles Times*. Both these critics know what they are writing about and specialize in western books.



JUST OUT OF THE MAIL BAG

The best news is a letter from a friend. Here are two letters pulled out of the mail bags of a recent date. They are either from a friend, or the friend of a friend. BRANDING IRON wants to publish more. If you have one which should be printed, send it to us.

(Ed's Note: The following letter was received by Merrell Kitchen from a member of the Denver Westerners.)

Dear Mr. Kitchen:

Please accept my belated thanks for your kindness in sending me the material requested for our May issue of the Westerners Brand Book. I would have acknowledged your courtesy sooner except that I have been away on a vacation. In the meantime your copy of The Brand Book has been mailed to you and I hope that you will find it worthwhile reading.

In regard to the activities of the Denver Corral we have had the following programs this year:

- January: Colorado Fur Trade, Old and New—
John S. Hart
- February: Doctoring in the Early West—
Dr. Wilford Barber
- March: Radstone on the Crystal River—
Vaughn Mechau
- April: Private Coinage in the Old West—
Dr. Phillip Whitely
- May: Influence of British Capital on the
Western Livestock Industry—
Herbert O. Brayer

Our June program will be a talk on General Sibley's contributions to the West. For July we plan an all-day trip to the ghost town of Apex, the meeting to be held in the old opera house there. If we can get to the place over a boulder-strewn narrow canyon road we should have a most outstanding program. Other meetings will feature the Villaseur Expedition in southern Colorado and Madames of the Old West. Our corral now has its limit of 40 members and about 125 corresponding members, including such personages as Struthers Burt, Bernard DeVoto, Leo Margulies and Fanny Ellsworth. Present officers are:

Sheriff..... Arthur H. Carhart
Deputy Sheriff..... Henry Toll
Round-up Foreman..... Paul Harrison
Registrar of Marks
and Brands..... Dabney Otis Collins

I might add that our bound volumes for 1946 and 1947 are about all sold.

Thank you again for your wonderful help and fine spirit, and with kindest personal regards,

(Signed) D. O. COLLINS

(Ed's Note: The following letter has been received by our corresponding secretary, Merrell Kitchen, from a member of the Chicago chapter.)

Dear Merrell:

Your letter arrived just as I was doing some work for the Brand Book, so I got out a Los Angeles item recognizing the new Branding Iron. Looks like a good idea, and one way of solving a problem. Our own is to provide binding for the printed issues, so we are now about taking orders for Vol. IV in that form—\$2.50 for members who turn in their files, otherwise, \$5. We are not contemplating another Brand Book at present, but maybe when the kitty will stand it, will get out another one entirely made up of reprints of Western items of interest.

Your program for the year looks very good. We are at a point now of improvising from month to month, although generally we have come through with pretty good ones. However, you will find the problem becomes more difficult as the chapter grows older, and most of your members have said their pieces.

As to other chapters—Mannel Hahan, contacted a group in St. Louis, which is based somewhat along the lines of local history. Their decision was not to throw in with us. I can't recall the name the group gives itself, but it is in being. There was some activity in New York, also San Francisco and Washington, but have heard no results recently. Maurice Fulton and a colleague are considering a New Mexico-Texas chapter. That is about all that is in motion at present and Denver and Los Angeles are the only ones actually carrying on.

Sincerely,

(Signed)

DON RUSSELL
191 Clinton Ave.,
Elmhurst, Ill.

P.S. Whenever you head West, and I hope it is this summer, be sure to look me up at the above address and plan to attend one of our meetings, which are held on the last Wednesday in each month.

A LETTER FROM WILL CRAWFORD TO CHARLIE RUSSELL

*(Editor's Note: This is the first of a series of letters to C. M. Russell which will be published in **BRANDING IRON**. It is contributed by the author of the note below, which is self explanatory.)*

Notes By H. E. BRITZMAN

Will Crawford, one of America's top-hand book illustrators and pen and ink artists, was a long-time friend of Charles M. Russell—the cowboy artist of Montana. They met, due to a mutuality of interests, early in the 1900's.

Will was at that time at the peak of his career, doing work for book publishers, for *Life*, *Judge*, *Puck* and other magazines. A series of "Historical Bits," Will's humorous interpretations of events in U. S. History, appeared in the old *Life* magazine of that period. Anyone who has studied Will's pen and ink drawings must admit he was foremost in his craft. Will lived for years in Free Acres, Scotch Plains, New Jersey—a sort of artist's and writer's colony.

When in New York (certainly not more frequently than was absolutely necessary) Charlie Russell made the studio of Will Crawford and J. N. Marchand (another illustrator of that era) his headquarters. Charlie dubbed Will by the title *Seldom Write* (see *Good Medicine*). There is one letter I have from Will to Charlie that took over a year to complete—believe it or not!

In later years (he died in 1943) Will lived in Hollywood at the Highland Hotel on Highland Ave. It was through my interest in Russell that I became acquainted with him. To have known him was an enriching experience indeed. He had, even in his 70's, an alert, brilliant mind—full of curiosity about people and things—a warm, friendly fellow who was extremely modest and kind.

The letter herewith reproduced, written in 1904, is full of the humorous spirit of Old Will; even the envelope is a work of art.

The photo, which Will inscribed (Will said it was the best ever made of him—the flatterer), gives one bit of his character, and the inscription rather well expresses a bit of Will's philosophy. If I were a writer-guy, it would be easy to tell a lot about this BIG little chap, who laughed as long as he lived and who loved life and people.

Ask Westerners Dwight Franklin and Arthur Woodward about Old Will; they knew him.



WILL CRAWFORD

Shown here in what he insisted was the best photograph ever taken of him, Will Crawford smiled for Homer Britzman (serving as photographer) and later inscribed the photo: "Dear Britz—Remembering the good times we've had and threatening to have more if nobody heads us off." Crawford passed away in 1943.



*Ernie Sutton (left) and Iron Eyes Cody, photographed by Lonnie Hull at recent Westerners Round-Up, make small talk prior to the program. Cody was featured recently in a *SatEvePost* article on Indian tribal and ceremonial dancing.*

This letter, written by Will Crawford to Charles Russell in 1904, saw the four seasons come and go before it finally was mailed. Crawford signs his letter as "Champion B. L. W." (Bum Letter Writer), and contests the spelling of the word "amateur."

My Dear Russ: -

you may contend that the mere fact of my sending this letter should compel me to forfeit my medal -

Nay! Say not so - In the first place these sketches have been laying around the room for three weeks, and it is only through Marsh's tearful entreaties "Why in h - don't you send them?" - that you ever get them at all

And then again, Lew. has been passing out insulting remarks about the way I spell "amateur" - but as he does not mention the right way, it goes as it lays

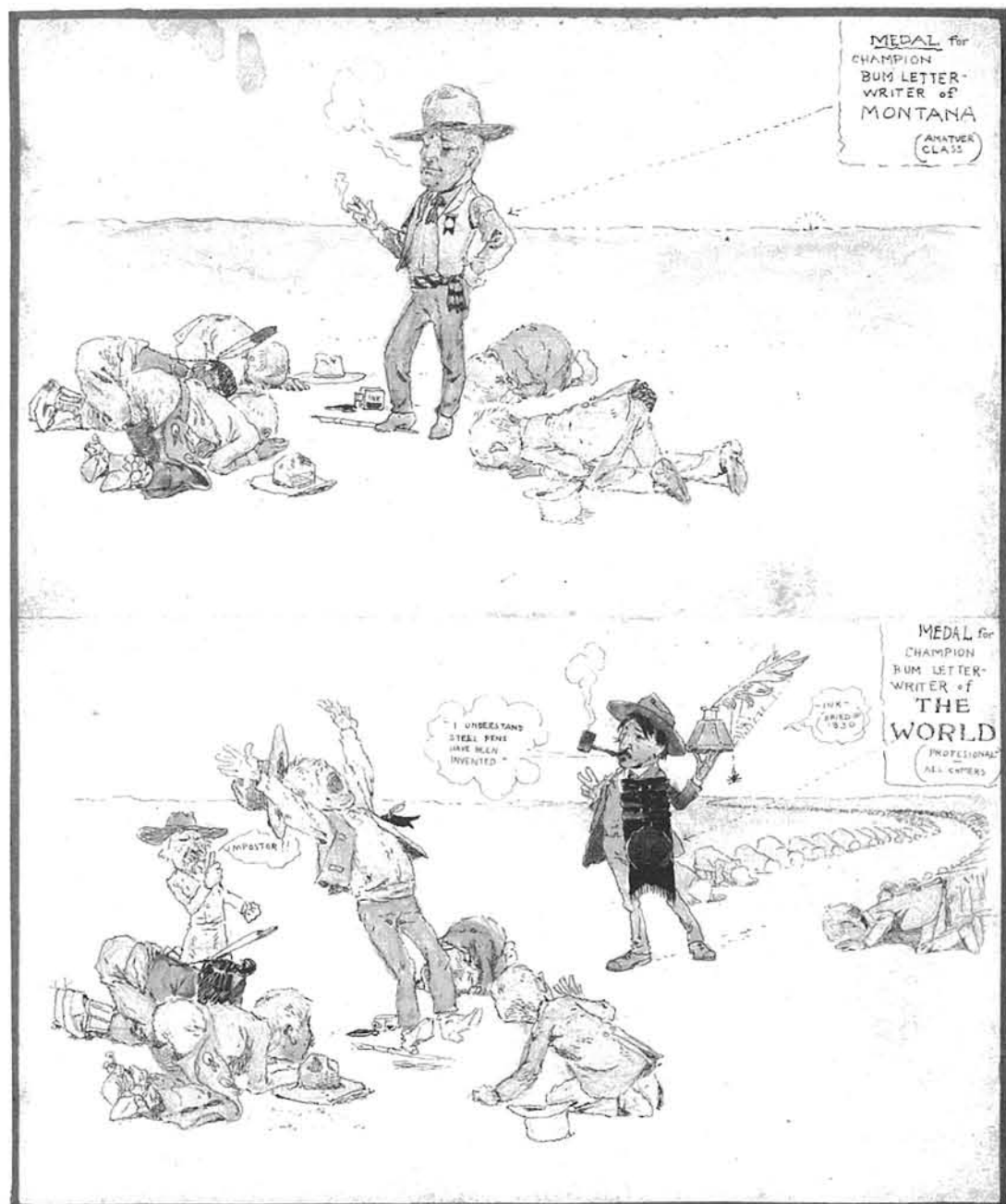
Yes sir, I still claim that all other contestants are but puny rivals, and not in my class - otherwise I would challenge you ~~to~~ to a contest of not-letter writing

Very Sincerely Yours

Will Crawford

CHAMPION
B. L. W.





These are the sketches accompanying Crawford's letter to Russell. In top panel, Russell is shown receiving adoration of natives of Montana simply by virtue of his having been awarded Bum Letter Writing championship of Montana. In bottom panel, Crawford shows Russell's consternation at being visited by Crawford, who is champion B. L. W. of the world. Crawford depicts himself as saying, "I understand steel pins have been invented." Behind quill-pen he holds in his hand are words, "Ink—dried up 1830."

The Hackamore

By

P. L. BONEBRAKE

THE period of which I write was during the late eighties and early nineties in California. I make no pretense of knowing everything there is to know about horses or everything about handling them. I simply write as I remember the men, the horses, their equipment and their methods. I will admit, however, that I have spent a lifetime in the stock business.

The general opinion, nowadays, is that the horses used in the cow business, at that time were the old California mustangs. Nothing is further from the truth. As a matter of fact the *remudas* on the large ranches almost all, were from one- to seven-eighths thoroughbred horses. Big, fine nerved, upstanding horses that could really run. However, I shall not go into detail at this time, regarding their origin, or breeding and history as that is a story in itself.

The old ranchmen rarely broke a horse before he was four or five and sometimes older. They believed, and rightly so, that a horse was too soft, too young for use before that age. As a result they were remarkable for their endurance and ability to stand hard knocks without injury and it was not unusual to find cow-horses that had reached a great age with legs "as clean as a whistle," with not a blemish on them.

The horse-breakers, as a rule, were native Californians a few were Indians and a few were Americans. The latter mostly born in California.

At that time a sort of benevolent peonage still existed on most of the large grants and families were bred, born, lived and died on the same ranch. In many instances, a grandfather and a father and a son would all be employed at the same time. Occasionally you could find a man working as a *vaquero* on a ranch that had once belonged to his father, or even to himself.

The bronco-riders were the younger men, generally assisted by an older man. Nearly every ranch had some old fellow who was a master hand at reining horses, some of them being fifty and even seventy years old. Many of these old fellows had more than a local reputation for reining horses and enjoyed considerable fame on that account. Some owners would often send a colt many miles to one of these men to rein. They would rarely accept a horse to handle for less than six months and so well thought of were these men, that it was the custom, in speaking of the qualities of a horse, to say, "he was reined by So and So."



Slow and Easy Way

These older men seemed to have a deep understanding of horse nature. They were very patient, even-tempered, quiet and unhurried in their movements, slow and easy-going in their ways and never excited or ever got mad. I do not recall that I ever saw one "fight" a horse. They did not seem to find it necessary to jerk, spur or beat one. Just a sort of slow and easy did it. Nor do I recall that I ever saw a colt buck with one of them. They would spend hours cleaning and rubbing them, talking and petting them. The idea seemed to be to establish confidence in the colt and as a result they were not afraid.

Now about the hackamore. The nose piece might be just a piece of an old four-strand *riata*, with the ends tied together, or again it might be a fancy braided affair from six to thirty-two strands, with strands carefully cut and beautifully braided as smooth and shiny as a snake's skin, with wonderfully turned slides and buttons while the end would be a beautifully braided ball perhaps two inches in diameter and perfectly round, a most intricate and difficult piece of work.

The hackamore was big enough to go around the nose, well up, and leave about six inches between the end and the lower jaw. Two pieces of raw hide or a string of leather run over the top of the head. It was about $\frac{3}{8}$ inches wide and was made adjustable by a loop cut in one end on the side of the head and the other piece tied in. They had a brow band or throat latch only rarely, the head of sash-cord had not then made its appearance.

The reins were a *macate* or hair rope made especially for horse breakers. It was about an inch and a half in diameter and from 16 to 24 feet in length and generally made from mane hair as that was softer than tail hair. It was often of different colors. A section being black, another white, and a third sorrel.

The *macate* was first tied around the neck, then run through the hackamore and tied close up to the ball on it, then it was wound tightly around the shank of the hackamore until it fitted snugly around the nose, then tied and carried back on one side of the neck and around the horn of the saddle and back on the other side to the underside of the nose piece, then tied tightly and the remainder left for a lead rope or to stuff in the rider's belt, the first few saddles. Of course, the manner of tying and the length of the *macate* and reins varied with the individual ideas of the rider.

The hackamore was not placed low on the soft part of the nose, nor up under the eyes either. It was placed just about where the bone on the lower part of the nose begins. If placed too low on the soft part, sometimes a line of white hairs would grow where it got tender or perhaps a permanent enlargement would remain. It also had a tendency to shut off their wind a little and frightened nervous colts and made them hard to handle.

I recall that at one period, some hackamores were used that had two large braided rolls, one on each side of the nose. These rolls were about 2 inches in diameter and about 3 inches long. These hackamores were worn low down, the idea being that the rolls would bear down on each nostril and shut off the horse's wind. But they did not work very satisfactorily and did not come into general use.

Great care was taken to have the hackamore tied tight up under the jaw and the reins tied up close as well.

It does not make any difference how tight the nose piece is tied if the reins are tied out at the end of it, you have not got much control over your horse. He just bows his head until the reins are pulling across the front of his neck, with no pressure on his nose or under his jaw and he does about as he pleases.

We used to think and still do, that the important thing was to get the under part of the jaw tender, and when you did that, you could begin to teach your horse something. That part seems to be more tender or sensitive than the nose.

Great care was taken not to hurt or frighten a colt. The idea being to teach, not break him. They were rarely ever hurried out of a walk. Cow trails and open country was preferred to roads.

The colt was not just permitted to follow the meanderings of the trail. At each curve of the trail, the rider took pains to rein him around it so that with his natural inclination to follow the trail, he soon got the hang of it without any trouble.

There was none of this spurring a horse to a run, then setting him up, pulling him around, quiring his neck to "limber it up." Such methods would never have been tolerated. Gentleness, patience, kindness, firmness with horse sense were the essentials of a good horseman.

When the colt learned to turn by neck pressure, his rider would be very apt to follow a cow around on the range, not chasing it, just driving it from place to place and never hurrying it, and the first thing you knew the colt began to grasp the idea, he was learning to rein by the neck and also to follow a cow.

About this time they began to teach him to stop. There was none of this wild hauling, pulling on the reins and crow hopping to a stop. These old-timers gave a horse some warning, a noise made with the mouth just audible to the colt and it is surprising how quickly they learn. In just a few lessons they know they are to stop and with just a slight pull will halt. Soon they had a colt so he could be brought to a stop from a full gallop, easily and quickly, and without any fighting of his head or fussing around. He just stopped. As great pains were taken to teach him to stop as to rein. A rider trying to show off, whose horse jammed his head up in the air, opened his mouth and crow hopped to a stop would be laughed at, even by the girls.

Hind Feet Were Breaks

Horses were taught to slide to stop with their hind feet on the ground and sliding all the way. To do this they were taken to a slick grassy place, sometimes slightly down hill, or sometimes a slick place without grass, or the ground might even be wet a little.

The horses of those days, I mean those on the big ranches, were rarely shod and they soon learned to sit down like a dog and slide to a stop. The distances they would do were so amazing. We used to have a game we played to see who could start at a given mark, run up to another mark and slide. We did this in turn and the one that made the longest marks without a break won. Crow hops disqualified you. Sometimes, we all threw in a certain amount and the winner took the pot. I have seen old gray-haired *rancheros* enter their favorite horses with their best riders on them and bet considerable sums on them. The amount was usually in steers though paid in cash. If steers were worth \$25 a head and he wanted to bet \$50, he would say "I bet two steers on my horse." If you wanted to buy a horse,

these old-timers would price him in steers rather than money or dollars.

As late as 1910, I went to Capistrano to see a horse Domingo had for sale. Steers were worth \$50 and when I asked the price he said "six steers" which meant three hundred dollars.

The principal of the hackamore was that the pull always came at the same place, on the front of the nose, not off to one side, regardless to which side he was turned, therefore he quickly learned to respond to neck pressure.

In teaching the colt to turn, the spur played an important part. They were very dull pointed so as not to prick the skin and but one at a time was used, that is to say, both were worn but the spur on the same side to which he was turned was held against him. If he was turning to right, the right spur only was used and the colt naturally turned his hindquarters away. Some learned at the slightest pressure on his neck and the feel of the spur, to turn quickly and smoothly.

In from three to six months the colt would be working well and then the bit would be put on.

The bits generally used were of three kinds. The spade bit with loose jaws, now generally known as a Santa Barbara bit, and the ring bit which came from Chile to Mexico, then here, and a great many of the old U. S. Army cavalry bits. There was, of course, a sprinkling of other types of bits. The half-breed was just beginning to make its appearance and also a few solid jawed spade bits with a bar across the lower end of the sides.

The Santa Barbara type was the favorite and most generally used. The reason of the spade was because it pried a horse's mouth open a little and he could not "take" the bit in his teeth and run

away with his rider as with a straight bar and no spade or curb in the bit. Some horses learned to grasp the bit in the first set of back teeth and away they went.

It must be remembered that the old Californian used a very long rope, the standard *riata* being fifty feet long, and many much longer. This made a big handful of rope and left only three fingers to stop a horse, consequently a severe bit was necessary.

The jaws of the old-time spade bits were very much looser than the ones of today and a horse "took the bit" much more quickly.

The ring bit was not common, yet many were used and no matter how hard mouthed a horse was, he would always "ante" with one. In the hands of a light-handed man, an otherwise useless runaway horse was made into a very useful one.

Do not understand by this that every horse of that period was an excellently reined one. The percentage was about as today. Just about as many good ones, fair ones, and about as many dummies as today.

Nor were all well-reined horses, good cow-horses. Some just lacked cow sense. Neither were all good rope horses or good cutting horses well reined.

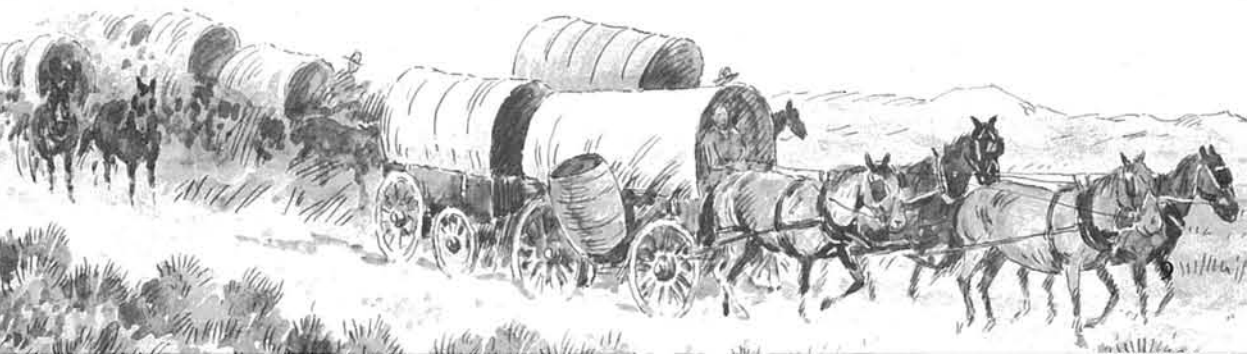
And just to confuse you more in the hackamore business, I shipped steers out of Western Texas for two winters and I lived in Arizona and New Mexico many years and I saw just as good rope horses and cutting horses there as I ever saw here in California and those horses never saw a hackamore. They were ridden from their first saddle with a snaffle, or as commonly called broken bit, and in comparatively few weeks a grazing bit was put on them and, believe me, they surely could get around a cow.

ORIGINAL PONY EXPRESS STABLE UP FOR PUBLIC SALE

Noah Beery Jr. has mailed The **BRANDING IRON** a short newspaper clipping relating to the original Pony Express stable which has been

put on sale in St. Joseph, Missouri. Now owned by the St. Joe chamber of commerce, they offered it for sale for \$442.34, with no takers.

This was the first stable established in 1860, when the Pony Express began its historic service between the Western rail head and the Pacific Coast.



COLLECTING MODERN WESTERN FICTION

By MERRELL KITCHEN

It is generally assumed today that all western fiction being written is of the pulp magazine variety and not to be considered by anyone interested in literary quality; that it is not worth reading much less having enough merit to warrant collecting it. This is certainly true in the great majority of cases but I think there are a few exceptions.

General interest centers in the early west of the cowboy and miner and most collectors want authentic interpretations of such an era, as in diaries or personal records. However there are probably many like myself who like a good western story of fiction now and then without desiring to question whether every incident portrayed actually happened or every date is historically accurate. The thing is, if it could have happened, if the author knows what he is writing about and writes it well, has a good plot and good characterization in keeping with the times of which he writes, then it should make a good story.

Unfortunately there are very few who write ably in all these categories. Most western fiction of today (as well as in the past) is of such innocuous and implausible nature as to require no consideration from a discerning reader.

There are some writers, such as Zane Grey, who wrote several good westerns and followed up with trivial horse-operas. *Riders of the Purple Sage*, *The Rainbow Trail*, *Wildfire*, *The Heritage of the Desert*, and a few others can, I think, be considered Zane Grey's best, and very adequate westerns. But if one has read, for instance, *Thunder Mountain*, he will know what I mean by a western that should be relegated to the waste basket.

Critical opinion seems to be quite prevalent that Eugene Manlove Rhodes is the only exception to the premise that there have been no good western writers. Perhaps this is a case where the recognition of worth does not come until the author has passed from the scene. I do not intend to belittle the works of Eugene Manlove Rhodes who should certainly be at or near the top of the list of anyone collecting western fiction. But critics sometimes play a favorite only to the exclusion of others who may be deserving.

It is debatable how many western books of fiction will eventually be considered "classic." Of one it can surely be said that if it has not reached that superior plane, it is at least the nearest approach. This is *The Ox-Bow Incident* by Walter van Tilburg Clark. It is a work of remarkable craftsmanship especially for an author so young and for his first work. It is even conceded that he will probably never again

produce a book to measure up to it. Certainly he did not in *The City Of Trembling Leaves*, which is a much better than average novel, but it is in a sense not western fiction, but a romantic novel in a western setting.

The Ox-Bow Incident was published in an advance copy with paper wrappers and is very scarce. The regular first edition can usually be obtained for four or five dollars.

There was also an advance copy of *The City Of Trembling Leaves* in two volumes with paper wrappers; the regular trade edition was in one cloth bound volume.

Other than Walter van Tilburg Clark there are in my opinion only two writers of westerns whose work is of sufficient quality to recommend collecting. These two are Ernest Haycox and Luke Short.

Ernest Haycox has some twenty-two books to his credit. The first, *Free Grass*, appeared in 1929. *Chaffee Of Roaring Horse* came in 1930 and also in the same year, *Whispering Range*. Thereafter *Starlight Rider*, *Riders West*, *Rough Air* and others. These early books were above average but it was not until *Man In The Saddle* (1938), *The Border Trumpet* (1939) and *Saddle And Ride* (1939) came upon the western literary horizon that a writer of superior westerns became generally recognized.

Haycox's writing shows improvement all along the line. He achieved a fine effortless style, a tight intensity of plot and characterization, and so authentic a western atmosphere that the locale of his books became known as the "Haycox country."

Trail Town (1941) I consider one of his best, but perhaps the high-spot of his works to date is *Bugles In The Afternoon*. This fictionized account of Custer's sojourn at Fort Abraham Lincoln, the march to the Little Big Horn, and the Battle, make it one of the best of all westerns. Due to the literary license sometimes necessary in a work of fiction there may be some minor discrepancies; but Haycox spent a great deal of research in collecting material and wrote a book of dramatic intensity.

The last published work of Haycox is *Long Storm*. Being comparatively young, we may expect much more from him.

Luke Short was absolutely unknown to me until there was published serially in the Saturday Evening Post his "*Blood on the Moon*." Doing a little research I found he had already written *The Feud At Singleshoot*, *Raiders Of The Rimrock* (1939), *Hard Money* (1940) *War On The Cimarron* (1940) and *Dead Freight For Piute* (1940).

The only copy I have ever seen of his first book *The Feud At Singleshoot* is in the Los Angeles Public Library. I have hunted for a fine copy for seven years and it is still missing from my library. His other early books are becoming scarce and so are those of Ernest Haycox.

(Continued on page 11)

COLLECTING MODERN WESTERN FICTION

(Continued from page 10)

Editions are much smaller now than the decade of the 1920's when a new book by Zane Grey reached the best seller list immediately.

Although it was *Blood On The Moon* in the Post the book title became *Gunman's Chance*. Later works which followed are *Hardcase*, *Sunset Graze*, *Ride The Man Down*, *Ramrod*, *And The Wind Blows Free*, *Coroner Creek*, *Station West* and *High Vermilion*.

Interesting as they are Short's books seem to give more of an indication of what he could do than what he has thus far accomplished. Though he is most adept at plot development, character delineation, and dialogue, his books seem too short. I believe he could include more description, enlarge upon the western scene, without detracting from the force of the story.

Undoubtedly Mr. Short's best work is still to come. But he has done well for a man as young as he is, and the promise of good work to come.

There are probably some worthwhile westerns I have missed. The number of such writers is very large but the difficulty is to find the good among the mass of triviality. But anyone wishing to start on today's western fiction wouldn't go far wrong in choosing the works of Walter van Tilburg Clark, Luke Short or Ernest Haycox.

MERRELL KITCHEN

Los Angeles, California
May 13, 1948

The following reproduction of a printed piece was furnished by Ernest Sutton, and supplements other information concerning the Custer-battle history which already has been furnished Los Angeles Westerners.

Custer Burial

Sam told me that on the return trip from the Missouri, Yellowstone, and Little Big Horn they brought out the remains of General Custer.

"Yes, we brought the remains of General Custer and some of his men and officers. The remains were in rough board boxes and they put them on our steamboat. (I don't know just how many there was.) We had six or eight steamboats in our outfit, and Father brought them down as far as Bismarck, where the remains were transferred to the railroad. That was as far west as the railroad was built at that time—1877. The battle of the Little Big Horn was fought the year before."

At this point Bancroft Hill, who was a guest at the Davis home at the time, spoke up and said, "Custer is buried at West Point, New York. I am very well acquainted with the undertaker who got the remains of Custer ready for burial there. He is a Poughkeepsie man by the name of Frost, and he told me he just had a curiosity to know what was in that box—Custer's remains—so he opened it and found it stuffed full of prairie grass and a handful of bones, that there was not a complete skeleton, and that it was that which is buried at West Point as the remains of General Custer."

BIOGRAPHIES

PAUL D. BAILEY

Bailey was born July 12, 1906, at American Fork, Utah. Ancestors Mormon pioneers (both grandpas in penitentiary at same time for "plurality" of wives). At age 12, moved with parents to Oregon, then Washington, and finally back again to Utah, where Bailey attended his final years at school.

Author of seven books:

Type-High (Novel) 1937; *For This My Glory* (Novel) 1940; *Sam Brannan and the California Mormons* (Biography) 1942; *The Gay Saint* (Novel) 1944; *Deliver Me From Eva* (Horror Thriller) 1945; *Song Everlasting* (Novel) 1946; *Jacob Hamblin, Buckskin Apostle* (Biography) 1948.

Hobbies:

Prodding out the lore from the old west.

Reading about it.

Writing about it.

Editor's Note: The following article is drawn from Mr. Hauberg's interviews with Samuel Sharp Davis of Rock Island, Illinois in 1929 and 1932. Mr. Davis and Professor William Bancroft Hill of Vassar College, mentioned toward the end of the article, were sons-in-law of Fred Weyerhaeuser, the "Lumber King". Mr. Hauberg is the son-in-law of F.C.A. Denkman, Mr. Weyerhaeuser's partner in the well-known lumber firm of Weyerhaeuser & Denkmann. Mr. Hauberg's sisters, Mrs. John E. Furland and Mrs. R. H. Furland now live in Mitchell, South Dakota.

I was astonished at Sam's saying that his father ran steamboats way up the Missouri, the Yellowstone, and the Little Big Horn. I had supposed the Missouri alone was difficult so far up that the other two would be impossible, but he says that the steamboats they used were even as big as those on the Mississippi, but that they had to run as soon as navigation opened and be back on the Mississippi by the time winter began. He said:

"We carried material to build Fort Custer, and Fort Keough. The last named is where Miles City is now: We called it the Tongue River Post. There was absolutely nothing there at that time." It is on the Yellowstone River, in Custer County, Montana. Fort Custer was built on the Big Horn River in Montana.

"It was in 1877, one year after the Custer massacre. My father was in charge of the job of transporting the material up there. He was paid at the rate of sixteen cents per hundred pounds per hundred miles on the Missouri River, and at the rate of fifty-seven cents per hundred pounds per hundred miles on the Yellowstone, and at the rate of ninety-six cents per hundred pounds per hundred miles on the Little Big Horn River.



CAPT. RUSSELL V. STEELE

(Ed's Note: The following letter has been received by our most distant corresponding member of the Westerners, Captain Russell V. Steele, London, England.)

Dear Col. Benton:

It was indeed cheering to receive your kind letter of welcome to the Los Angeles corral of Westerners. Your writing paper is cheering in itself and your address "Sunset Boulevard" reminds me that I have a view of the sunset out of my consulting window . . .

I am in medical practice here with my brother. We are the 4th and 5th in the line of general practitioners. My father, grandfather and great grandfather were country doctors, two of my great uncles emigrated to U. S. A. and practiced medicine in the Old West in the 50's. One of my uncles lived for many years in Oakland and San Francisco, so I suppose I have a sort of a connection in the West! I feel it a great honor to be asked to join your Corral. Saludas o Todos!

I am a member of the Chicago Corral and have been long corresponding with my good pen friend Don Russell . . .

My brother and I were busy visiting shelters and doing St. Johns Ambulance work. I served in World War I as a regimental M. O. in a field ambulance, in Belgium, 1915, near Ypres, then in France and finally in Egypt and Macedonia with Lasavika Army where we went back to

horses and mules, and hit the trail cold in winter and hot in summer.

I came back sick via Malta on a stretcher and was invalided out in 1918.

I am interested in the old West, pioneers, Indians, old army history and uniforms and have a collection of colored costume plates on my walls, some of American uniforms, including a head of General Custer in a black felt hat taken from Brady's photo. Also in my office I have quite a number of Charles Russell prints.

I visited the U. S. A. (Eastern States) July and August, 1939, and Canada scenes of the French and Indian wars . . . My old school friend, Capt. R. Archer Taylor, has a turkey and fruit ranch in Van Nuys. He is a great horseman and has hit the trail in Australia and Transylvania. Another friend, Col. R. E. Dupuy, F. A., Ret'd, of Virginia, who wrote a book on West Point, "Where They Have Trod," is a fine soldier and a good friend; likewise, his son, Col. Trevor Dupuy, D. S. O.

Another good friend is Col. M. S. Crummins, of San Antonio, Texas, late of Roosevelt's Rough Riders. He is an encyclopedia on the West! I was introduced to him by Prof. Webb, who wrote, "The Great Plains."

Through Westerners, I contacted that great scout, Colonel Burnham, D. S. O., just before he died. I also had letters from that grand author and artist, Col. Thomason, author of "Jeb Stuart." His passing was a great loss.

Here, we live under a Socialist boot who now seem to wish to nationalize medicine, which to me, an individualist, is a tragedy.

I send you (here) an article I wrote, "Backwoods Warfare," which appeared in the Fort Ticonderoga Bulletin. Probably it is far enough west for you.

I was born in 1888 but don't feel the years too much. I often could do with a . . . of beef steak as food is still severely rationed here and so is all clothing, etc. etc. . .

One of my uncles was an artist in New Zealand and painted the natives. My friend and associate, Co. Harwood Steele, M.D., of Montreal, is a son of the late Sir Sam Steele of the N. W. Mounted Police who was an original Mountie of 1874 and shepherded Sitting Bull across the border. I talked with a patient, Sir . . . Whitaker, last week, whose eldest brother fought on the Confederate side at Chancellorsville. Col. . . . (?) father was born in 1810 and took part in the Franco-Prussian War at the age of 60. I'm afraid this is much about myself but you asked for details.

I should be glad to hear from other members of the Corral interested in mutual matters of the West. If any one comes to town will they please phone me up and come along to tea?

With all good wishes,

(Signed)

RUSSELL V. STEELE

(Editor's Note: The following letter was received by Jack Harden. It is self explanatory. As much as possible, the spelling, punctuation and rhetoric has been copied exactly as it was found in the letter. The sketches accompanying the letter were drawn at the top of each page. Note the date line to the letter.)

Dear Harden:

I had a letter from David.

He's skinning deer, elk and bear for the pilgrims.

Seems like there slaughtering all game.

I'd lost your address. David sent me your sign. I'm workin on a big cow spread 50 miles up old Tounge River from Miles City. This is a new Texas spread. There startin out a roundup on trail wagon next spring. Say, you ain't seen no big range countries until you see these regions. Here you see virgin ranges all directions hundreds of miles. She's all wild, rugged territories—from Wolfe Point on the Big Missou she stretches east into Dakota west to the P N cow. on the Judith's west to the snowies on south across the big dry across the yellow on across the tongue the Mespah, the Powder, on across the Little Missou on across half of South Dakota across the Cheyenne the old Diamond

Man 500 miles of solid range east, west, north, south, she's rugged. This spread I'm workin' for ain't no good. Them Texas oil men ration the grub to us like they do her in the army. This outfit is a Texas oil man's spread an she's haywire. — ? wages are 100 a moon an scant eats. Plenty of rugged work. I don't think I'll stick here long. I've been gere goin' on 2 moons. We're building corralls galore an building her up. These range stretches east an west 30 miles. I'm at the main camp with another cow hand an the foreman. At the line camp 15 miles away there's 3 riders batchin. I'm ridin Snakes, a pin-eyed pinto. Fights me an swaps ends all day. They have no winter horses for me. All snakes. A no good outfit to ride for.

This old rammy here is Charlie Rogers, old trail boss. I hadn't seen him in 25 summers. I rode rough string for him on a 5-week trail drive that spring. We trailed T G cattle. This old waddy still hangs his coat in the old T. G headquarters on Pumkin Creek. He owns the old spread. I seen him in Miles City. He tells me that the big drought in '33 took most of his range an all cattle. He still retains about 20,000 acres of the old T. G. range, an says he rides herd on some 400 critters.

I was glad to see Old Charlie. He looks weather beaten. Good old feller. Some times I tell about the bronks I rode on that trail.

Big game abounds in all this vast empire.

"Whaa." She's the home of coyote, cat, deer, antelope, (?)..... bison elk. Some



prarie chick, pheasant, an sage hen. They ain't no farmers hoe men sod pelters an that sort of varmints here. Oh there's an off pelter here and there. These pilgrims all live on game the year round they are no good these yaps on these creeks an rivers ceptin a few old timers with whiskers a foot long they are all right.

The foreman on this spread is a pilgrim. He tries to be a little wild an when we make a long ride he makes cut offs an jumps us off the river bank into the icy cold deep water with plenty of quick sand all over.

Will say, would you send me a picture of each one that you taken this last summer of us all.

Tell me how much they cost an I'll send you the difference. You savvy. I don't think I'll stay here long. Tell that other feller hello an the rest in your camp.

I'm your leppy pardner.

(Signed)

SHORTY WALLIN.



Glen Dawson and Carl Dentzel, members of the Los Angeles Westerners, photographed in Dawson's book store. Both men have been active in the Los Angeles chapter. Dawson's paper, "Collectors of Western Americana," at the home of Jack Harden, in Brentwood, and Carl Dentzel's paper, "The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo," will be high spots of the 1948 BRAND BOOK.

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AUGUST ROUND-UP

(Continued from page 1)

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