



DECEMBER 1958

LOS ANGELES CORRAL

NUMBER 47



#### OCTOBER MEETING—"A HELLUVA LOT OF GHOSTS IN NEVADA"

Corral dignitaries pause after hearing about Nevada's ghost towns. From left: CM Burr Belden, from San Bernardino; Col. Charles Hoffmann, Deputy Sheriff; speaker of the evening Don Ashbaugh, direct from the Nevada ghost town of Las Vegas; and Sheriff Art Woodward.

—Lonnie Hull Photo.

## YEAR OF ACTIVITY FOR L.A. CORRAL

AS 1958 draws to its close, Westerners of Los Angeles Corral can look back to an eventful year—of good speakers, well-packed meetings, high-caloried dinners, and a fraternity of men dedicated to a single ideal. The year saw complete sell-out of our latest Brand Book and, although not quite managing to get another book into print, progress in that direction points to an early appearance of another of those publishing triumphs which have marked the Corral's efforts in making history come to life. 1958 saw also the wordy battle waged over the jurisdiction of our California rangeland when invaded by nesters from the beef city. But even this has been

taken in stride in true Westerner fashion. All in all, fate has been kind to our close-knit little circle this past year, in staying that hand which seemed so relentless for a time—that of the Grim Reaper. For many things we can be thankful.

Art Woodward and his fellow range-bosses have turned in an exceptionally fine year, and the high health of the Corral in these closing months attest to the excellent managing done by the Sheriff and his able posse. For dedicated men like these we are also thankful.

Throughout the year the *Branding Iron* has chronicled the high merit of the meetings held

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# THE BRANDING IRON OF THE LOS ANGELES CORRAL OF THE WESTERNERS

\* \* \*

*Published Quarterly in*  
March, June, September, December

## OFFICERS — 1958

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*Address Exchanges and Publication Material*  
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PAUL BAILEY  
P. O. Box 41073, Los Angeles 41, California

## New Corresponding Members

The following new Corresponding Members have recently been added to the membership roster of Los Angeles Corral:

Ike Blasingame, Star Route 2, Box 84, Avenal, California.

Helen L. Card, The Latendorf Bookshop, 714 Madison Ave., New York 21, N.Y.

Joseph H. Feiling, M.D., 475 Buena Vista St., San Marino 9, Calif.

Al Hammond, 4409 3/4 Kingswell Ave., Hollywood 27, Calif.

Russ Leadabrand, 1505 Topeka St., Pasadena 7, California.

Alan Le May, 237 Toyopa Drive, Pacific Palisades, California.

Ralph L. Milliken, RFD Box 427, Los Banos, Calif.

Mrs. Arrie E. Reynolds, P.O. Box 186, French Camp, Calif.

Lee Ryers, 505 South Mesquite, Carlsbad, New Mexico.

Zack Saifres, 5730 Elm Ave., Long Beach 7, Calif.

Herbert N. Stark, M.D., 350 N. Alta Vista Blvd., Los Angeles 56, California.

Clara T. Woody (Mrs.), 401 Indiana Ave., Miami, Arizona.

William L. Wright, 1410 Graynold Ave., Glendale 2, California.

## 1958, a Good Year

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by our Corral. The Fall and Winter gatherings showed no letdown in spirit, attendance and the exceptional caliber of the speakers. September's outdoor meeting at the home of Dr. Harvey Johnson, brought 11 corresponding members to the table with us, and 17 honored guests. The corresponding members who made the trek for this outstanding event were L. Burr Belden, Joseph Boyer, Brooks Currey, Emory Ellingson, E. W. Foundray, Jim Mourning, Dean Painter, Ernest Richardson, August Schatra, Ervin Strong and Fred Vaile. Guests included Conrad Buff, Tony Clifford, Joe H. Failing, Neil Fergus, George W. Harper, Ernie Hovard, Lyman Johnson, Charles Kellogg, Bob LaRue, Russ Leadabrand, Alan LeMay, Harry Lindersmith, Tyler McVay, Robert B. Pekson, Howard M. Rowe, Price Walker and Palmer Wheaton.

October's meeting was held back at Costa's Grill and proved one of the largest indoor meetings in point of attendance ever held by Los Angeles Corral. Speaker was Don Ashbaugh, editor of the Sunday *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, and his subject was "There Are a Helluva Lot of Ghosts In Nevada." It was clear, as this most interesting talk progressed, that he meant all kinds of ghosts—towns, people, critters and events. As proof of the high interest this discourse engendered, Don was kept an hour after his talk just answering questions and umpiring the discussions of the members who were loath to leave. Guests included Al Barney, Ed Castagna, Ernie Hovard, Martin Stornie, Ervin Strong, William Val Landi, Sam Orchard, Bob LaRue, Lyman Johnson and Sam Walters. Among the many CM's present we noted L. Burr Belden and Bob Chadil.

At November's meeting William A. Hildemann discussed "Weapons of the Civil War and the Winning of the West." To make his points and prove them, Mr. Hildemann brought with him a veritable arsenal of rare guns and historical weapons. While the various gun collectors of the Corral sat and drooled over the fabulous assemblage of guns before their eyes, the speaker delighted his audience with an informative and at times humorous account of the weapons which made American strong, and the vagaries of gun collecting in general. Again the meeting was well attended. Honored guests were Al Hammond, Ralph Lovendale, Herbert Stark, M.D., Johnny Johnson and Alan LeMay. CM John Hilton was up from Twentynine Palms.

Final meeting of the year, scheduled as the BI goes to press, will also be held at Costa's, and will feature CM John Gilchriese. John has chosen a subject over which he has spent years of research: "Gunfighters in Fact and Fiction." Annual election of officers will also be held.

# Pierre Theodore Sicard . . . The One-Eyed Frenchman

By MERRELL KITCHEN

PIERRE THEODORE SICARD, one of the founders of Marysville, California, was born in France. He left France in 1831, probably as a sailor, for he was in the French Navy as an ordinary seaman at one time. He had married young, and his wife had died. He lost an eye at the Battle of Navarino. This occurred in 1827, when the Turkish and Egyptian fleets were defeated. What he did from 1831 to 1833, when he landed upon the California coast, is not definitely known. Perhaps he remained in the French Navy. At any rate he is reported to have deserted a Man o' War, for he landed in Monterey February 3, 1833, after sailing around Cape Horn. That this date is correct may be assumed from the fact that when he applied for naturalization papers in 1840 he claimed a residence of seven years in California. Hittell also states he was one of the immigrants of 1833. There is little record of his activities from 1833 to 1840, the time of his naturalization. Apparently he worked for a time in Monterey, then went up to the San Pablo Rancho. Duffot de Mofras, in his *Travels on the Pacific Coast*, states that two French carpenters, M. Sicard and M. Leroy (Joseph Leroy was a young Frenchman who came to California in 1836; little is known of his life), "They are exploiting these woods to good profit, the magnificent red pines, *palos colorados*, in the range of hills east of what is now Oakland." Most of the wood was sent to Yerba Buena which had no wood for building purposes.

Though one source states Sicard received his naturalization papers at San Pablo, it is probable they were granted at Monterey, April 25, 1840. After working variously at Monterey and San Pablo Sicard next turned up at Sutter's Hock Farm in 1842. Much of his work there was carpentering. He sawed cottonwood logs by hand into what were probably the first boards and joists used north of New Helvetia. In 1844 he obtained from the Mexican government a grant of the Nemshas Rancho on the south bank of the Bear River opposite Johnson's. Here he must have done a little ranching or farming also at various times for Sutter. In his *New Helvetia Diary, A Record of Events kept by Sutter and his clerks from Sept. 9, 1845 to May 25, 1848*, mention is repeatedly made of the arrivals and departures of Sicard. Nothing of consequence is stated.

A short time after Marshall's discovery of gold, the precious metal was found in many other places, among them the Yuba River area. Sicard mined at a place which still bears his name—Sicard Flat.

In 1847 Claude Chana had purchased the Nemsha grant from Sicard. The first miners on

the Yuba in 1848 hired Indians to do the actual mining. Chana, Covillaud and Sicard as well as many others used Indian labor until the natives became cognizant of the value of the gold they were extracting from the earth. Then they began to mine independently. Shopkeepers made large profits trading their merchandise to the Indians for gold. Theodore Sicard not only made good profits for some time by the use of Indian labor but it is also traditionally told that he became the lover of the daughter of an influential tribal chief. The chief was fond of Sicard and arranged—just how, is not known—for Sicard to acquire \$70,000 in gold from the tribe.

\* \* \*

Theodor Cordua had landed in Monterey in May 1842. He intended to settle in the Sacramento Valley near Sutter's Fort but first, sailing on the bark *Don Quijote*, he visited "all harbors from San Diego to the Bay of San Francisco going and returning." In the fall of 1842 he secured a grant from Sutter within the fork of the Yuba and Feather rivers where Marysville now stands. Cordua called the settlement New-Mecklenburg (he was from Mecklenburg, Germany). In October 1848 Charles Covillaud purchased one-half of Cordua's interest. In the spring of 1849 M. C. Nye and Wm. Forster bought the remaining half. In the fall of the same year Nye and Forster sold their share to Covillaud who was now sole owner. Later in 1849 Covillaud sold three-fourths' interest to John Sampson, J. M. Ramirez and Theodore Sicard.

Early in January 1850 the townsite that was to become Marysville was laid out by the four owners under the name of C. Covillaud & Co. Various names were considered for the new town. Yubaville—though this was too similar to Yuba City—Norwich, Sicardora, Circumdora (surrounded by gold) and others were proposed, but no unanimity was reached until Rev. Wadsworth suggested Marysville in honor of Mary Murphy Covillaud, the beautiful wife of Charles Covillaud, and the only lady present. She was a survivor of the Donner party.

As Covillaud had more interests than he could handle, with posts at Sicard Flat, Nye's Rancho and Sacramento, he sold in October 1849 a half interest to Ramirez and Sampson. In the same month he sold a fourth interest to Sicard for \$12,500, retaining the remaining fourth. Stephen J. Field was engaged to draw up a conveyance which would place the proprietors in possession of that equity which Sutter claimed in the townsite. January 18, 1850, Sutter came and signed the document by which "John A. Sutter, Captain of Hock Farm" sold to Charles Covillaud, José

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## One-Eyed Frenchman

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Manuel Ramirez, Theodore Sicard and John Sampson, all of Jubaville for \$10,000, being all the tract of land included in the territory granted to him by the governor of California, north of "a Stream called Juba River, east of the Feather, south of 39° 35' 45" and west of an indefinite line" which depended upon an exact survey of Cordua's Honcut grant. The word Juba was popular for a while. Sutter had spelled it Juba.

February 19, 1850 Theodore Sicard sold to R. B. Buchanan and G. N. Swezy his entire share of the townsite (52 lots) and grant for \$12,500, exactly the amount he had paid Covillaud five months earlier. Sicard's only profit was one-fourth of all cash received for the town lots.

\* \* \*

W. C. S. Smith in his very scarce pamphlet *A Journey to California in 1849* mentions meeting Sicard on a boat trip down-river to San Francisco. Sicard had \$60,000 in gold, carried in buckskin bags. Having been an adventurer in his earlier days what then followed, as related by Smith, was in all probability a desire to recapture some of the carefree days of his youth. In San Francisco Sicard met up with some friends and they proceeded to do the town. As he had been a sailor and long familiar with the forecandle, Sicard and his cronies bought a ship, took on abundant stores, shipped a crew, took on as passengers bosom friends including women. Sicard and his motley crew sailed to China, Australia, the Islands of the Pacific, and Valparaiso, Chile, and returned to San Francisco in about a year. Since the vessel had not been paid for it was seized and sold on bottomry bonds and Sicard was penniless. Smith says he met the old man afterwards on Parks Bar, where he was again living with the Indians, but this time in poverty. No more adventures are accorded him, and he is believed to have died before 1879.

References to Pierre Theodore Sicard are found in the following:

Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. V.

*New Helvetia Diary, A Record of Events Kept by John A. Sutter and his Clerks at New Helvetia, California, from Sept. 9, 1845 to May 25, 1848.* San Francisco, 1939.

Ramey, Earl. *The Beginnings of Marysville*, 1938.

*A Memorial and Biographical History of Northern California*, Chicago, 1891.

*Marysville Pioneer Social Register*, 1869.

Larkin, Vol. II.

Gilbert. *Butte County History*.

*Yuba County History*.

*Plumas County History*.

Field, Stephen J., *Personal Reminiscences of Early Days in California*. San Francisco, 1880.

Smith, W. C. S. *A Journey to California in 1849*.

Hittell, Theodore H. *History of California*. Vol. II.

Duflot de Mofras. *Travels on the Pacific Coast*, translated, edited and annotated by Marguerite Ayer Wilbur, foreword by Frederick Webb Hodge, 2 Vols., Santa Ana, Calif., 1937.

## Los Angeles In 1858

By DUDLEY C. GORDON

At the end of the last century Charles F. Lummis, then editor of the informative California magazine *The Land of Sunshine*, maintained correspondence with a number of Old Timers. Each of these old boys had had interesting pioneering experiences and Lummis encouraged them to put their exploits in writing—for he saw the development of the Southwest as a unique mosaic, a valuable historical record contributed by a host of "on the spot" participants. A historian and author himself, he recognized that the experiences of these pioneers was the raw material from which history and literature would be made in the future. He felt duty bound to see to it that the ephemeral accounts of the adventures of these seekers of the western shores be documented and thus available in permanent form for scholars for all times.

One of these Old Timers who did put his experiences into print wrote to Lummis over a period of thirty years. He was Thaddeus Stevens Kenderdine of Newton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. He had been born in 1836 and came to California by way of Salt Lake City and San Bernardino in December 1858. His account of the sixty mile hike he made from San Bernardino to Los Angeles and another twenty-five miles to San Pedro is of interest today. In it he vividly records scenes that markedly contrast with those extant today, a century later.

While searching the Lummis files at the Southwest Museum I came upon a letter from Kenderdine dated 1919. In it he says, in part, "I have always liked California although my first visit was full of tribulations. I often think of my journey with the Mormon freighters from Salt Lake to dismantled San Bernardino, my lonely walk to the sea, passing through Los Angeles when it was little more than an adobe town, and my arrival in San Francisco with but two bits in my pocket, and not knowing a soul in the city or state. I think that I had the greatest risk of my life when one night on my way to Los Angeles a herd of stampeded wild cattle crossed my path. And what a change there is over the whole scene today! The then wild plain just west of San Bernardino is now covered with cities, town and thriving fields, groves and orchards, and L.A. such a wonderful city, its limits extending even to the sea over the route which 'Dutch Joe' and I took our lonely night walk, the cold December air making the title of California as a Land of Sunshine a mockery; as we shiveringly breasted the cold wind."

Scenting the possibility of a description of Los Angeles of 100 years ago, I looked up Kenderdine's book *A California Tramp*, which he published in Newton, Penn. in 1888. In it I found

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# W. W. ROBINSON, Author . . . a Bibliography

*Editor's Note—This is the first of a series of bibliographies on our Westerner writers.*

W. W. Robinson was born in Trinidad, Colorado, at an early enough date to see Dick Wootton in the flesh. He is the son of William Henry and Mary Wilcox Robinson. Schooling in Riverside, California, USC and UC. From the latter he graduated in 1916. With U. S. Army (Ordnance Corps) in World War I, 18 months, of which 12 were in France. Married Irene Bowen in 1923. (She is a painter and illustrator and has contributed to the creation and production of practically everything listed below.) He spent many years in the title business, writing the meanwhile, and for eleven years was vice president of Title Insurance and Trust Company in charge of advertising and publications.

## I. In the Field of California History

- THE STORY OF PERSHING SQUARE (1931; Title Guarantee and Trust Company). One printing of 8,000 paper-bound copies and 500 in boards.
- RANCHOS BECOME CITIES (1939; San Pasqual Press). One printing of 2500 copies (two styles of cloth binding).
- THE ISLAND OF SANTA CATALINA (1941; Title Guarantee and Trust Company).
- WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT THE ANGELS (1942; Val Trefz Press).
- THE FOREST AND THE PEOPLE (1946; Title Insurance and Trust Company). Five printings.
- LAND IN CALIFORNIA (1948; University of California Press). One printing of 2500 copies.
- THE STORY OF RANCHO LA BREA (1948; Title Insurance and Trust Co.). Eight-page pamphlet.
- THE INDIANS OF LOS ANGELES (1952; Glen Dawson).
- PANORAMA: A PICTURE HISTORY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (1953; Title Insurance and Trust Company). Three printings, totaling 150,000 copies, including 10,000 bound in cloth.
- THE WESTERNERS BRAND BOOK (*As editor of*) (1957; Los Angeles Corral).
- THE MALIBU (1958; Glen Dawson). Joint authorship with Lawrence Clark Powell. 300 copies printed. Illustrated by Irene Robinson.
- THE STORY OF THE SOUTHWEST MUSEUM (in press; The Ward Ritchie Press).
- LAWYERS OF LOS ANGELES—A History of the Los Angeles Bar Association and of the Bar of Los Angeles County (in preparation, for Los Angeles Bar Association).
- LOS ANGELES FROM PUEBLO DAYS (in preparation, for California Historical Society).
- THE EAR OF THE GOVERNOR (in extremely slow preparation, for David Magee).

## (County Histories)

- THE OLD SPANISH AND MEXICAN RANCHOS OF ORANGE COUNTY (1950; 1952; 1953; 1954; 1955; 1956; 1957; Title Insurance and Trust Company).
- THE STORY OF TULARE COUNTY AND VISALIA (1952; 1955; Title Insurance and Trust Company).

- THE STORY OF VENTURA COUNTY (1955; 1957; Title Insurance and Trust Company).
- THE STORY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY (1957; Title Insurance and Trust Company).
- THE STORY OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY (1957; Title Insurance and Trust Company).
- THE STORY OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY (1958; Pioneer Title Insurance Company).

## (Community Histories)

- LAND TITLES IN LONG BEACH (1935; Title Guarantee and Trust Company).
- LONG BEACH—A Calendar of Events in the Making of a City (1942; 1948; 1954; 1957; the first edition published by Title Guarantee and Trust Company, later ones by Title Insurance and Trust Company).
- SANTA MONICA—A Calendar of Events in the Making of a City (1935; 1942; 1950; 1955). The first two editions published by Title Guarantee and Trust Company. The 1950 edition had two types of cover, one bearing the dates of the city's 75th anniversary.
- PASADENA—A Calendar of Events in the Making of a City (1935 and 1942 by Title Guarantee and Trust Company; 1949 and 1955 by Title Insurance and Trust Company).
- POMONA—A Calendar of Events in the Making of a City (1936; 1942; Title Guarantee and Trust Co.).
- MONROVIA—A Calendar of Events in the Making of a City (1936—two printings, one with a gold cover—and 1942; Title Guarantee and Trust Co.).
- INGLEWOOD—A Calendar of Events in the Making of a City (1937 and 1942, by Title Guarantee and Trust Company; 1947; 1955; and 1958, by Title Insurance and Trust Company).
- SAN PEDRO AND WILMINGTON—A Calendar of Events in the Making of Two Cities and the Los Angeles Harbor (1937 and 1942, Title Guarantee and Trust Company).
- BEVERLY HILLS—A Calendar of Events in the Making of a City (1938; 1942; Title Guarantee and Trust Company).
- SAN FERNANDO VALLEY—A Calendar of Events (1938 and 1942, by Title Guarantee and Trust Company; and a third edition in 1951, by Title Insurance and Trust Company, with several re-printings).
- CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA—A Calendar of Events (1939; 1942; Title Guarantee and Trust Co.).
- GLENDALE—A Calendar of Events in the Making of a City (1942; Title Guarantee and Trust Company).
- WHITTIER—A Calendar of Events in the Making of a City (1942, by Title Guarantee and Trust Company; 1947 and 1955, by Title Insurance and Trust Company).

## II. In the Juvenile Field (First editions listed only.) (All illustrated by Irene Robinson.)

- BEASTS OF THE TAR PITS (1932, Macmillan; carried on in 1949 by The Ward Ritchie Press).
- ANCIENT ANIMALS (1934, Macmillan).
- ANIMALS IN THE SUN (1934, Harper).
- ELEPHANTS (1935, Harper).
- LIONS (1936, Harper).
- THE BOOK OF BIBLE ANIMALS (1938, Harper).
- ON THE FARM (1939, Macmillan).
- AT THE ZOO (1940, Macmillan).
- AT THE SEASHORE (1942, Macmillan).
- BIG BOY (1944, Macmillan).

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## W. W. Robinson, Author

(Continued from Preceding Page)

BOOK OF ANIMAL BABIES (1947, Macmillan).  
THEN AND NOW—In American Life (1956, Melmont Publishers, Inc.).

### III. Miscellaneous

(Manuals for title searchers, examiners, escrow men)

LAND TITLES (1928, Title Guarantee and Trust Co.).

CALIFORNIA LAND TITLES (1930; 1936; 1940; Title Guarantee and Trust Company).

HANDBOOK FOR TITLE MEN (1948; 1954; Title Insurance and Trust Company).

(Verse)

URGENT SHAPES (1930, Troubadour Press, San Diego).

(Magazines edited)

HOJA VOLANTE (1949 through 1951, for Zamorano Club). T'n'T (1945 to 1956, for Title Insurance and Trust Company).

The foregoing list does not include magazine contributions, reprinted selections from books, introductions and prefaces, or book reviews.

## Los Angeles In 1858

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what was, to me, a most interesting account of what he saw and experienced in the City of the Angels during the period when it was losing its Mexican characteristics and began assuming the dubious qualities of an American frontier town.

According to this volume, Kenderdine had been an ox-team driver for General Johnston, who was transporting army supplies in anticipation of forthcoming trouble with the Mormons. When Johnston reached his destination the trouble had been settled. Kenderdine and a number of other ox-drivers were paid off in Salt Lake. They decided to go on to California. Too small a party to venture into the Indian country, they approached a band of Mormon freighters who were about to leave for the West. The Mormons agreed, for a fee, to permit them to join the party. In due time they reached San Bernardino, where the freighters announced that they had reached the end of the line. Kenderdine protested, "I contracted with you for protection until we reached the Coast." "No," was the reply. "We agreed to take you to California. This is California. We have kept our bargain." "But where is the ocean?" asked Kenderdine. "It is ninety miles to the West" was the reply.

In September the *Washington Reporter* brought out its Sesquicentennial Edition. Those who have examined this fat, solid and beautiful piece of work are unanimously in agreement that it is truly a monument to the skill and industry of CM Earle Forrest, under whose supervision and direction it was created and produced.

## Corral Chips . . .

Prof. Dudley C. Gordon, of Los Angeles City College, was the subject of a feature story appearing in the *Los Angeles Collegian* October 10. Dudley became newsworthy by thumbing his way to New Mexico during summer vacation, but the article concerned itself with considerably more than just a dignified professor's hitch-hiking experiences. Our fellow Westerner was also recognized for his solid writing attainments, along with a preview of his forthcoming biography of Charles Lummis, which he hopes to complete in 1959—the Lummis centennial.

An almost certain nomination for an Academy Award is *White Wilderness*, released by Walt Disney Studios, and written and directed by our own James Algar. The entire production, filmed in the Arctic, with animals, birds, and whales as actors, against a breathtaking backdrop of glaciers, icebergs and the grind and thunder of relentless nature, is a photographic masterpiece. All the mystery and beauty of this little-known part of the world becomes a living reality through the magic of the camera, the enterprise and courage of the Disney crews, and the skillful writing and direction of James Algar. Among other film triumphs master-minded by Jim, in Disney's True Life Adventure Series, are *The Living Desert*, *The Vanishing Prairie*, and *The African Lion*.

In September Henry Clifford allowed his famed collection of early California express and postal covers to go on display at the Pasadena Public Library. Included in the showing were many of Henry's other treasured letters and mementoes of the days when the West was young, and stagecoaches and pony express riders beat primitive paths to the pioneer settlements and gold camps.

High interest in the Clifford collection was shown by the many hundreds of visitors who viewed the interesting relics of California's earliest days, and the press took special cognizance of its historical value by featuring a special coverage of the event. In the Pasadena *Independent Star-News* for Sunday, September 7, an entire section was devoted to the exhibit, to the history and background of Hank's most interesting hobby, and how it grew into the superb collection now owned by him.

In the *Los Angeles Times* of October 7, Hank and his collection again received public mention, in connection with the Butterfield Centennial. Featured was one of his original Butterfield covers, postmarked at San Jose in 1859, and, as with the previous interview, a picture of Hank.

# OLD FRIENDS AT THE BAUER BOOK SALE

Parke-Bernet Galleries  
New York, Dec. 2, 3, 1958

Genial Charlie Retz climbed up onto the rostrum, mumbled a few words about conditions of sale and that he was selling the books of Lester Bauer, M.D. of Detroit, by his order. Auctioneer Retz then peered at the room and said, "I see some old friends in the audience. Welcome," and with those brief words he began selling the first of 525 lots.

Not since the sale of W. J. Holliday in April 1954\* had so many of the old friends been gathered to compete against each other for the Western Americana being offered. Before that was the Auerbach sale (1947), the Littell sale (1945), and the Barber sale (1941), and before that a series of sales extending back to the greatest of them all, the Brinley sales of the nineteenth century.

Probably the bookseller with the longest record at Americana sales is Mike Walsh of Goodspeed's in his fiftieth year of bookselling. Other veterans present included Wright Howes of Chicago and Ernie Wesson of the Midland Rare Book Co. From across the river in New Jersey came by bus, Bill Kelleher, from Providence, Douglass Dana, and from Detroit, Charlie Boesen, from Chicago the newcomer, Kenneth Nebenzahl and a continent away in California the planes brought David Magee, Warren Howell and Glen Dawson. From New York were Peter Decker, Roland Tree, Forrest Bowe, Harold Graves of Scribners. Attending parts of the sale were John Fleming, David Kirchenbaum of Carnegie, Walter Schatzki, Frances Hamill and other dealers as well as a number of librarians and collectors including the placid Dr. Bauer himself.

Missing among the old friends was Edward Eberstadt, the most fabulous character in the business, who passed away just this year, but his two sons Lin and Charles Eberstadt greeted everyone and cheerfully paid new record prices.

Charlie Retz has a clerk beside him to record bids and buyers as the books themselves are exhibited on a lighted stage. The greatest showmanship is provided by Harold Stevens and Tom Clarke who spot bidders with great accuracy. When Charlie, Tom and Harold are all intoning bids at the same time and the bids are coming from all over the room at a hundred dollars a crack there is greater drama for the bidder than any Broadway show or TV program. Then Arthur Swann, the venerable patriarch who directs the book auctions, leans back and without speak-

\*See *Branding Iron* No. 25, June, 1954.



HIGH PRIEST OF THE NEW YORK BOOK AUCTIONS  
Center: Charles Retz, famous auctioneer. Harold Stevens, left; Tom Clarke, right.

ing you know he is saying, "I told you so. I said the prices would be high." The highest price of the two day sale was paid by the Eberstadts—\$5100 for Thomas and Wild's *Valley of the Mississippi* and Warren Howell paid \$4700 for *Has'ings' Emigrant's Guide* of 1845. The identical copy of Clayton's *Guide* 1848, which brought \$1150 at the Auerbach sale and \$1050 at the Holliday, brought \$1700; Callot's *Journey in North America* brought \$3600; Maxmillian's *Travels* \$3000. Bell's *Reminiscences* brought \$10, and there were also many lots in the more modest range. A lot of six of the Los Angeles Brand books brought \$130. Dawson's Book Shop bought the *Articles of the Ohio Company*, 1786, for \$1700. The sale was especially rich in midwest books and early Michigan imprints.

The dealers represented not only themselves but collectors and librarians throughout the country. After each successful bid the buyer's name or initials are called out. If bought by bids sent in to the auction house the word ORDER is called. If the buyer is unknown to Tom or Harold they call out CARD and shortly present the new buyer with a card to sign. Charlie Retz good naturedly held his post to the last item, *The Adventures of Charles Youngblood* 1882, knocked down at \$160. The sale was over, bringing a total of \$75,980.

The old friends scattered into the New York rain to their separate ways, to regret the books that slipped past them, and rejoice on their successful purchases. The Bauer sale takes its place in the history and folklore of the great auction sales of Western Americana.

GLEN DAWSON.

# DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL . . .

DAKOTA COWBOY, My Life in the Old Days, by Ike Blasingame. 317 pp. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$5.00.

Fifty-four years ago the British-owned Matador outfit from Texas shipped 3000 cattle to the Cheyenne Indian Reservation in Dakota. Ike Blasingame came north with those cattle, and for eight adventurous years he rode with one of the most romantic cow outfits of the West. In this remarkable book, loaded with gusty humor and a frankness that is a delight to the reader, a real cowboy unloads—for real.

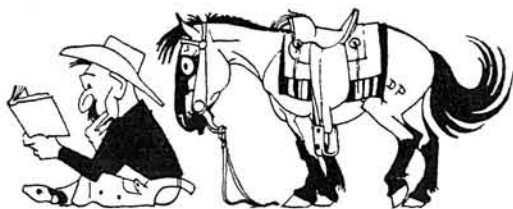
Ike Blasingame was born in Ellis County, Texas, in 1884, and at present lives in Avenal, California, where he is still foreman of a fair-sized cattle spread. As time allows, he does an occasional piece for magazines and newspapers, but it is *Dakota Cowboy* which will establish him as a writer in the great pattern and easy style of Wister and James. For this book is the salt and savor of the West that was, and, among the phoneyisms written by panty-waists who never in their collective lifetimes ever laid hold of a saddle girth, it stands out like a western testament and a pillar of truth. Westerners, who long have championed the voice of western fact, will instantly recognize the authenticity of this book.

Blasingame, in a style as free and easy as the drawl of his native state, recalls, apparently without pre-arrangement or any defined pattern, the days when he rode and sweated out his time with the hard-riding crews of the Matador outfit. He recalls the many horses his long legs have straddled—from flesh-chewing outlaws, to nimble-footed roping mounts—by name, and loving memory, and his chapter on "Horses" alone is worth the price of the book. "Storm and Stampede" is another section as electrifying to the reader as the awesome Dakota lightning storms which made sizzling carcasses of frightened steers, and sent the great herds into frenzied runs. The book is crammed with one man's experiences, and told with a happy freedom that is a delight to any reader who wants facts with fiction, and prefers truth to flourishes.

Because Ike Blasingame was an authentic cowhand before and after his years with the Matador, and because he now amply proves he is a gifted writer, one can hope that another book or two will not be too long in coming out of his rich recollection of the West that was.

PAUL BAILEY.

In the Spring of 1959, the University of Arizona will publish its first number of a quarterly



journal in the field of history. Subsequent numbers will appear in the Summer, Fall, and Winter. The title of the new Journal is *Arizona and the West*. It is planned to be traditional in format, printed on fine stock, and occasionally illustrated. It will be suitable for binding in sets of four to make a volume. Each number will carry approximately 100 pages.

*Arizona and the West* will be devoted specifically to the History of Arizona from earliest times to the recent past. As a secondary feature, material of general significance in the History of the West will be included. A blending of State and Regional History, it is felt, will enrich the Journal. Such a combination will make *Arizona and the West* unique among publications.

The Editor wishes to solicit materials in any of these six categories from professional scholars in History and related fields, from writers either experienced or not, from librarians and archivists, from Arizona Pioneers, and from all those who cherish the heritage of the West and have something to say that will interest others. Inquiries are invited and the Editor assures prompt and careful consideration of all materials.

Annual subscription to *Arizona and the West* is \$5.00. Individual numbers for \$1.50.

A number of Westerners participated in the Death Valley 49ers encampment on October 30 to September 2. Ed Ainsworth, Sheriff Arthur Woodward, Ex-Sheriff Paul Bailey, and CM John Hilton were speakers at the Author's Breakfast, and served in various capacities at the Jackass Derby at Stovepipe Wells. Present also were Ex-Sheriff Paul Galleher, CM Sid Platford, and CM L. Burr Belden. John Hilton and Burr Belden are prominent officials of the Association.

Westerner Glen Dawson was the honored speaker at the annual Christmas meeting of the School Library Association, held at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, Beverly Hills, on December 6. His talk, on the quest for books, was a highlight of this meeting. Honored guests were Western book printers, and among them Ex-Sheriff Paul Bailey, representing his Westernlore Press.

Jim Fassero's trick knee, a holdover from more youthful days, finally landed him in Huntington Memorial Hospital late in October. Surgery was performed, the old injury repaired, and Jim has now thrown away his crutches.