WESTERNERS
LOS ANGELES CORRAL
The Branding Iron

JUNE 1960 LOS ANGELES CORRAL NUMBER 53

AVERTED EYES — GLASSY EYES — IRON EYES

Speaker Dillon glances modestly away as he discusses pants at the May meeting; Speaker Carpenter makes like a corpse as he speaks on military dead at the June meeting. *Photos by Iron Eyes Cody.*

Recent Meetings

At the March meeting, held on the second Thursday, Otis H. Chidester of Tucson spoke at length on the Seri Indians, with whom he has spent a good deal of time. He had an excellent series of ethnologic photographs, and a display of tribal handicrafts.

Nothing was laid out for display by April's speaker, Edwin Carpenter of the Huntington Library, who gave an off-beat talk on the Army's method of disposing of the dead in the Mexican and Indian wars.

"The Pants That Won the West"—Levis, of course,—were the subject of May's talk, by Richard H. Dillon of the Sutro Library, San Francisco. He gave us some of the material he is gathering for a company history of Levi Strauss Co. He didn't have any Levis, but he did have his information in a notebook bound in blue denim with a copper-riveted pocket on the front cover.

Future Meetings

Plans are being made for three outdoor meetings, July, August, and September. The date for September has been set: the 24th. Our host says that if that turns out to be the afternoon of a good game, he'll have plenty of radios and TVs available. Keep the date.

Harry Lawton (left), author of *Willie Boy,* and CM Harry James, author of *The Cahuilla Indians,* visit at a recent meeting.

THE BRANDING IRON
OF THE LOS ANGELES CORRAL OF
THE WESTERNERS

Published Quarterly in
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OFFICERS—1960

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639 S. Spring St., Los Angeles 14, Calif.

GEORGE FULLERTON . . . . . *Deputy Sheriff*
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Brand Book Committee: HENRY H. CLIFFORD, *Editor;* ROBERT L. DOHRMANN, *Asst. Editor;* JAMES ALGAR, *Art Editor;* PAUL GALLEHER, *Sales and Distribution.*

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

Welcome, New CM's

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A CM for over a year now, but apparently never welcomed in the pages of the *Branding Iron,* is

Arnold J. Rojas, 1212 18th St., Bakersfield, Calif.

CORRAL CHIPS . . .

James S. Hutchins' essay on Custer's remains, published as an introduction to a recent catalogue of Jack Reynolds, was reprinted in the May, 1960, issue of the Potomac Corral's *Corral Dust.*

With the end of the recent school year Don Meadows retired—a few years ahead of the required age, in order to have some time to do research and write.

Word has been received through Iron Eyes Cody of the death last November 11 of A. C. Newton of Cody, Wyoming, an old friend of Billy Dodson's and a CM of this corral for several years.

Carl Dentzel played his part in entertaining the Scandinavian princesses when they visited the Southwest Museum on June 7.

Paul Bailey, Jack Reynolds, and Art Woodward made their annual spring trek to Tucson in May.

Lonnie Hull is at home and improving, but he is still not able to resume attendance at meetings.

Glen Dawson and others attended the annual meeting of the Conference of California Historical Societies in Bakersfield recently.

Members who have missed a meeting or two may not yet have seen CM Frank A. Schilling's recent publication, a map, "Military Posts of the Old Frontier, 1850-1890," covering Arizona and New Mexico and a little of the adjoining states. It is based on several years' research and study, and shows the location of 75 or more installations of the Civil and Indian Wars in this region. The scale is about 40 miles to the inch, and the size about 15 x 20. Copies can be obtained from Frank (23701 Western Avenue, No. 179, Torrance, Calif.) for $2.00, plus tax.

DEPARTMENT OF AMPLIFICATION (with apologies to the *New Yorker*). To be added to the bibliography of the writings of Mark R. Harrington in the June, 1959, *Branding Iron,* turned up by Charlie Rudkin:

1925

"The Thunder Power of Rumbling Wings" (story). In *American Indian Life,* by several of its students, ed. by Elsie Clews Parsons, ill. by C. Grant Lafarge. New York: Viking Press, 1925. Pp. 107-125.

BY THE WAY

A STAGE STATION KEEPER'S GOSSIP COLUMN, 1869

By ARTHUR WOODWARD

In the library of the Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society in Tucson is an interesting document, a running fire of comment made by William Whelan. He was born in Canada in 1843 and landed in Arizona in 1869. From 1869 to 1872 he was keeper of the stage station—or at least lived there—a Point of Mountain Station, which was about a quarter of a mile northeast of the present Rillito railroad station, and eighteen miles northwest of Tucson. It was twenty-two miles of dusty travel by the trail to the next station west, and thence to the Blue Water station the road crossed the desert for fourteen miles. That station was approximately three miles east of the place known as Toltec, on the railroad.

The young Canadian's log book, which he kept daily, is brief and to the point. His spelling, especially of Spanish words, is a bit erratic. He would have made a good gossip columnist for a modern newspaper. He often made several entries a day, most of them one or two lines. I have extracted only a few; here are some of Whelan's remarks, not always elegant, but to the point, and frequently unpunctuated.

1869

Mar. 1—6 Mexicans on foot for the Gila..
Mar. 4—Charlev Rise and One Dutshman on Horseback for B.W. [Blue Water].
Mar. 5—2 discharged Soldiers with Mail for B.W.
Mar. 8—A little white sore-eyed dog. Solo for Blue Water.
Mar. 11—Texas train of 7 waggons and families for Cal. 5 Mexicans on Horses going through the stole something for B.W.
Mar. 12—at 2 o'clock. One greaser and white mule for Tucson
Mar. 12—Mr. Plate the Liar Whipple and Johnson with 2 light Buggies for B.W.
Mar. 12—2 soldiers Desserters, Caught here by 2 cav men from Tucson.
Mar. 13—Ox cart and 5 Mexicans for Tucson
Mar. 14—One Ambulanche and 2 Six Mule Teams for Tucson. [Ambulance, probably U. S. Army vehicle. Such conveyances were often called "avalanches" or "ambulanches" on the frontier.]
Mar. 16—One Mexican riding the bones of an old Horse. Bound for Tucson.
Mar. 16—Night of the 16 Johnson drove back by the Apatchies at the Pecatch (wounded). [Picacho Station.]
Mar. 16—Steve broke down to Hell and gone.
Mar. 17—A Wole lot of Greasers came back in dread of Indians at the Pecatch. Men & Women.
Mar. 17—The Apatchies Selebrated St. Patricks day. At the pecatch by Killing 2 Mexicans and eating 4 Government mules for [Fort] McDowell.
Mar. 20—Lt. Winters and 23 soldiers for Tucson
Mar. 20—Hooper's teams for the Wells.
April 19—One American Bummer on foot—for Tucson. Teressa. Her Cub & Ox-cart 4 Bucks and 2 Chilly Skinners—Gila. [By the latter he apparently means two Mexican drivers.]
Apr. 23—The Preacher on Horseback and leading one Horse for Tucson 1 American on foot for Gila.
Apr. 25—Preacher Flemming. Set fire to the grass at point-of-Mountain and Burned up our Hay. Dam Him.
May 10—Tully & Ochors Train jumped by 300 Indians at Canyon de Ora and all the Mules taken and Waggons Burned 5 men killed and Several wounded. [This was only one of several misfortunes that befell the firm of Tully & Ochoa of Tucson, but this attack at Cañon de Oro, northwest of Tucson, was one of the most disastrous.]
May 18—new trough put up.
May 25—Sergt. and 6 men as Escort for Govt. Train B.W.
May 26—Com—to dig the new well the Old one caving by degrees.
Aug. 26—one drove of Sheep of Gila
Aug. 26—Major Duffield and wife for Tucson. [Milton Duffield was a prominent character in Arizona during the 1870s. Formerly of Sonora, California, he was noted for his hair-trigger temper and deadliness with rifle and pistol. Originally from Virginia, he had served in the Union army during the Civil War. On leaving the service he became U. S. Marshal at Tucson. He was reputedly a heavy drinker and quarrelsome when drunk. After his commission as Marshal expired in the late '60s, he went into the mining game. On June 5, 1874, Duffield faced a man by the name of Holmes at a disputed mining claim on the San Pedro River, and was riddled at close range by a charge of buckshot. Mortally wounded, he died about fifteen minutes later. An editor commenting on Duffield's life said, "It is claimed by some good men that he had redeeming qualities, and such may have been the case, but we are free to confess that we could never find them."]
Aug. 27—14 Cavalry came out here in Serch of the Indians that Stole the Greasers cows and went back again to Tucson.
Otc. 26—Two clapps of thunder and some rain.
Oct. 26—Solitary and alone the ball still rides in Moshian. *No Greasers* or *Indians* in Sight.

1870

Feb. 1st—Capt. Barry and His party got Jumped by Indians about 11 oclock of the Same day. He left—Here. Himself & family got away with amb. to B.W. the Mail picked up a wounded man about 9 miles from Here and brought Him to the Point all the Mules of 3 teams were taken there all 3 Men missing. one officer returned with the Mail to report to the Gen'l and get ast.
June 16—Arthur C Kenaday of the Arizona Mining Co. for Tucson (10) men in all 1 wag Bal on horseback the Greasers, dam them, stole some of their horses near the mill no catch them.
June 21—5 greasres and one splittail horseback with the freed man's buro
Aug. 15—At Allens ranch 7 miles from here about 9 oclock at night a party of Indians actacked the Mexicans and shooting on both sides was mightly lively for a little while. Noboddy hurt. My team was passing at the time the Meres [mares] got skared and turned around went back a mile and came back again and succeeded in making the Point. No harm done on the greaser side. Cin savy on Los. [*Quien sabe* on Lo's. The use of the word Lo for the Apache was common in Arizona in those days—from "Lo! the poor Indian."]
Aug. 21—Perkins got his ars up on his back and went with it towards Yuma. He left a colt for Fish.
Sept. 13—the hell loving gas pip Brown the (Buro) miner and U. S. ma. B.W. [This is one of Whelan's almost incomprehensible entries. He may have meant

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By Their Cans Ye Shall Know Them

In connection with last issue's article on dating old tin cans and bottles, Art Woodward has sent in the following anecdote, drawn from the *Esmeralda* (Nevada) *Herald,* Nov. 29, 1879:

When Mark Twain lived in Aurora in 1861 with his partner, Bob Howland, things were a bit rough at times and mining didn't pay too well. In November, 1879, Howland revisited Aurora and secured permission of the then owner of the shack in which Twain and Howland had lived to take down a twenty-foot tamarack flagpole. He had it sawed into canes, one of which he said he was going to have silver-mounted and sent to Twain as a souvenir.

In relating some of their experiences in the old mining camp, Howland said that in those days it was the custom of miners who were flush to eat a great deal of canned goods, especially fruits, oysters, jellies, jams, etc., all of which were luxuries to beans-and-bacon prospectors. The empty cans would then be tossed into piles, which accumulated in front of the cabins. These piles of cans indicated to passersby the social status of the inmates of the cabins, and one was taken as a sign that they were doing right well.

Now, as I have intimated, Mark and Bob were not among the elite. They were well down in the social scale and Mark grew despondent over their ill luck. One night, however, he came home bearing a bulging gunny sack. It was filled with stolen empty cans which had contained the most expensive food. These he carefully heaped in front of their cabin door.

"Now," he said, "I dare any of them to say we aren't eating well."

By the Way

(Continued from Previous Page)

to say "The hell-loving gas pipe (Browny the Burro miner) and U. S. mail for Blue Water," meaning perhaps some acquaintance who was always "gassing" or talking a great deal. As he would say, *cin savy.*]

1872

Feb. 16—1 Mex & his Dulce Gila. [One Mexican and his sweetie for the Gila.]

Feb'y 17—5 Americans 1 Mex mohere 3 wagons Sonora. [This was Whelan's usual way of spelling *mujer,* Spanish for "woman."]

These are but a few of the Canadian tenderfoot's entries. Most of them were uninteresting and monotonous, indicating by their brevity and dullness the dreary lethargy that settled on such desert outposts. Had he been writing today undoubtedly some of our magazines would have reprinted some of his choicer terms as bits contributing to "a more picturesque speech"—for Whelan was picturesque if nothing more.

Westerners Group For West Germany

Although it was organized in 1958, the West German Corral is just getting into full swing, and has issued the first number of its monthly publication, *Morgen Begann Gestern.* (This means "Tomorrow began yesterday," and, whether intentionally or not, is the same as the motto of the Southwest Museum, "Mañana flor de sus ayeres.") The new corral claims 200 active members and a large number of corresponding members, including nearly all those who write on Western topics in the German language. They are anxious to have American CMs, especially those who can contribute articles or reviews in German. The annual fee is $3.50, payable through the Dresdner Bank A.-G., Filiale Porz am Rhein, West Germany 22c. Sheriff and editor is H. J. Stammel, whose address is Porz-Urbach, Am Tambourskreuz 9, West Germany 22c. He corresponds in English, but the publications are in German. A roster is not yet available, but will be soon.

The first issue of *Morgen Begann Gestern* consists of twelve pages and contains an article on the Westerners movement, an introductory editorial, an article on Western fiction in German, an article on the weapons of the American West, an article on Harry Tracy ("Revolvermann"), and book reviews.

News of Other Outfits

The Stockton Corral (c/o College of the Pacific) has created a Corresponding Membership, at $3.00 a year.

The Westerners Foundation (c/o College of the Pacific) put out Volume I, Number 1, of its *Buckskin Bulletin.* In addition to a history of the movement, a set of standard range rules, and a list of corrals (17 to date), it includes an account of the formation of a Phoenix Corral in March.

Custer addicts will want to watch for Vol. 5, No. 1 of the Kansas City Posse's *Trail Guide,* with Tal Luther's article on "Reno, Benteen, and the Battle of the Little Bighorn."

Dudley Gordon had an enjoyable visit with the English Corral on his European trip this spring. One of the members of that group, John Hawgood, is doing research in this country this spring and summer, and it is hoped he can visit us at a meeting. He is a professor at the University of Birmingham, and gives the only regularly-offered course in Western American history in an English university.

PLATTSMOUTH FERRY

By CM HON. OTHA D. WEARIN

The chuckling wheels of a prairie schooner sucked to a halt in the sticky mud at a point on the Iowa side of the Missouri River opposite the thriving site of Plattsmouth, Nebraska, early in 1848. A bewhiskered pioneer clambered down from his seat and strode along the shore to a point where a wagon tire swung from a limb of a willow tree. He began beating it with a hammer. The bell-like tones that resulted echoed across the river and the ferryman's "hallou" boomed back to the westward bound "ox-driver" and a long flat-boat put out into the water.

The great rivers of America were among the most serious obstacles in the pathway of American migration to the West. Not the least of these was the Big Muddy, the Missouri. At flood stage it was a hazardous stream to cross. Many a freighter met disaster on its muddy banks or in its murky waters.

Early in the history of the Westward movement, enterprising pioneers saw the economic advantage of establishing ferries at the major points where migrant travel touched its shores. Plattsmouth, Nebraska, on the western side of the stream, was a strategic point for which western migration aimed the tracks of its wagons. The term Plattsmouth Ferry began to be common phraseology in early western writings as far back as 1848. In this year the Mormons moved their caravans across the river on flatboats. At about the same time, Libeus T. Coon began to facilitate traffic across the Missouri with the same type of conveyance, the eastern terminus being approximately two miles southwest of Pacific Junction, Iowa. He continued to operate, providing regular service whenever the stream was free of ice, until 1852, when Samuel Martin and James O'Neill bought him out.

There was a constant struggle among settlements along the river to swing pioneer travel through their particular community. Plattsmouth was a strong contender for the trade of the pioneer wagon trains. Outfitters were ready to provide the travelers with the equipment necessary for their journey across the plains. It is not difficult to visualize the respective beehives of activity. Chief among the enterprises were blacksmiths who made shoes for oxen and horses, set wagon tires, and created items of wrought iron that were necessary equipment for a covered wagon or a freighter, and there were wheelwrights, who repaired and manufactured the wooden parts of the new wheels from hub to felloe for the ships of the prairie. Great heaps of brownish yellow clay could generally be found outside a low, one storied building where experts at the potters wheel plied their art with specific emphasis on the needs of the trail. There were jugs for storing water and liquors and jars with flanged lids that could be sealed with wax, within which the courageous wives of the trail sought to preserve the fruits of the prairie. The rich distinctive aroma of leather emanated from harness shops along the muddy streets of Plattsmouth and every river town. The vendors of food dealt largely in dry products that would stand the heat, cold, and dampness of the trail. Business was good.

Realizing the importance of profits from such enterprises, the city council of Plattsmouth, Nebraska, was determined to preserve ferry service from the Iowa side to the outskirts of their thriving little city. In 1868 it bought from Martin and O'Neill the ferry franchise and their boat, the *Paul Wilcox,* a side-wheeler, for $9,000. This venture was short-lived, as a few months later the ferry struck a snag and went to the bottom of the river, and the entire investment was lost. The disaster, temporarily at least, set back the hope of the city of diverting western emigration through Plattsmouth.

There were other privately owned ferries built and used to take freight and passengers across the river at this point. When the iron horse reached the shores of the Missouri, it, like man, found itself confronted with a tremendous obstacle. Ferries large enough to transport the railroad engines of the time and the cars they trailed behind them were constructed for use across the Missouri in order that they might continue on their western journey. This type of service faded away in 1881 when the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad completed construction of a bridge across the Missouri.

Competition in the ferry business was keen; and at different times in the history of Plattsmouth a number of ferries extended service to the traveler. Such names as the *Emma, Survivor, Paul Wilcox,* and the *Mary McGee* adorned the humble hulks that offered service to the weary traveler. The extent of the traffic across the Big Muddy in the early days of Iowa and Nebraska is strikingly illustrated by the fact that the *Paul Wilcox* transported 125 teams across on May 9, 1865. In that same month of May, 2360 wagons were conveyed across the stream, where they made ready for the dusty trek to Fort Kearny, to Laramie, and points west. At Plattsmouth, the ferrymen exacted a charge of one dollar for a team and wagon. A single horse or mule and buggy were parted from seventy-five cents before they could cross. People and cattle were charged ten cents each for crossing; while hogs and sheep were charged five cents per head.

Cable ferries put in their appearance on the Plattsmouth Route around the turn of the twen-

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DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL . . .

PAT GARRETT, by Richard O'Connor. (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1960, 286 pp. $3.95.)

It is a curious fact that the biographer of an obscure politician or soldier will spend years doing research in order to achieve a detailed and well-balanced evaluation of his subject, whereas the average biographer of a person prominent in Southwestern history feels that he has done his duty if he hastily culls—and the word is carefully chosen—a few items from secondary sources written by people who knew little of the subject, stirs them together, slaps the mixture between covers, and sets it before the reader. Whatever the reason for this difference in approach, it is responsible for the fact that most of the books written about Southwestern characters have little or no value as history.

This alleged life of Pat Garrett is a case in point. It requires no more than a glance at the bibliography to determine that the writer has done only the most superficial kind of research. The result does not deserve the attention of a serious review. About half of the book is devoted to Billy the Kid; to even enumerate and correct the obvious errors in this section would fill up this entire page. The rest of the book is not much better. It tells the reader little that is not already known by all who have read the usual book on Lincoln County, and a great deal of what it does tell him is wrong.

The book has no index, no pictures, and very little value.

PHILIP J. RASCH.

Plattsmouth Ferry

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tieth century. John Richardson, and later his son Claude, operated the last of the cable ferries across the Missouri between Plattsmouth and the Iowa landing in Mills County.

The Plattsmouth Highway Bridge was opened in the fall of 1929. The Richardson Ferry continued to operate for a few months after the opening of the bridge, but apparently discovered that the business was no longer profitable, even though they held their tolls to the same figure as that of the bridge. By 1930 this picturesque form of transportation disappeared from the shores of the Missouri, whose ribbon of muddy waters divides the states of Nebraska and Iowa.

THE BLOND RANCHERO, MEMORIES OF JUAN FRANCISCO DANA—As told to Rocky Dana and Marie Harrington. 500 copies by Westernlore Press for Dawson's Book Shop. 133 pages, illustrated, cloth. $6.00.

In *Blond Ranchero* the searcher for the nostalgic, poignant and yet every-day "down-to-earth" memoirs will find an exceptionally fine nugget of Californiana.

Marie Harrington, wife of Westerner Dr. Mark R. Harrington, in collaboration with Rocky Dana, grandson of the "Blond Ranchero," has by means of personal interviews, visits to the Nipomo Rancho, and searching of various periodicals of the counties of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara brought together a charming and expressive book, a splendid memento of an interesting life that spanned the years 1838-1936.

"El Huero," the Fair Haired One, so named by John C. Fremont when the American troops camped overnight at the Nipomo Rancho on their way southward in claiming California for the United States, was the son of Yankee Captain William Goodwin Dana and a daughter of Don Carlos Antonio Carrillo, one-time provisional governor of California.

Don Juan Francisco Dana was favored with a keen and retentive memory and an ability to scrutinize the surroundings about him. The book is enriched with detailed descriptions of the cattle and sheep trade, outlaws, politics, transportation, customs, and folklore of the San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties as encountered in the course of his long life.

Not only will the searcher be rewarded with material covering the pastoral life of Central California but an additional bonanza will be his in the pictures of "los tiempos viejos"—the old times—of the many small townships dotting these two counties, notably Guadalupe, Arroyo Grande, Pismo, Los Alamos, Piru, Nipomo, Los Olivos, and Santa Maria, and of the prominent Missions as well. Personal acquaintances included Don Isaac Sparks, Don Francisco Branch, Juan Miguel Price, Don "Julian" Foxen, and Captain Alpheus B. Thompson.

Of particular interest to this reviewer was the material to be found regarding the building of "La Fama;" the construction of that most necessary of vehicles of Mexican California, the carreta; and descriptions of Port Harford and Cave Landing.

The entire book as printed by Westerner Paul Bailey is most pleasing and a true find to add to an all-too-small file of reliable and well edited memoirs of a day long since faded away.

Marie Harrington is to be congratulated upon achieving throughout the book a feeling of warmth and personal interest seldom achieved in so short an autobiographical study of this nature and it is to be hoped that further stud-

ies of this type will be forthcoming to add their precious pieces of information to the incomplete but slowly growing picture of the transition period of California.

EVERETT GORDON HAGER, CM.

GRANDPA WAS A POLYGAMIST, a Candid Remembrance by Paul Bailey. Los Angeles, Calif.: Westernlore Press: 1960: $5.50.

Another Westerner rings the bell again. Paul Bailey's books about Utah, its Indians and the Mormons, biographical, historical or fiction, are growing into a modest bookshelf valuable, even the fiction, for scholarly accuracy as well as entertainment.

And now he has come up with a piece of autobiography which goes far toward explaining the uncanny way he has of getting at the true inwardness of the Utah story.

"Grandpa" is very real. His part in the story furnishes the gentile with a picture, better than merely good, of what polygamy really meant to the men and women who lived, willingly or not, with "the principle." But Grandma Forbes and Aunt Jane and Ma, and Pa who unfortunately wasn't a Forbes, and the brothers and sisters and neighbor kids of American Fork also all contribute to make a vivid and lovable picture of life in a small Utah town in the early years of the nineteenth century.

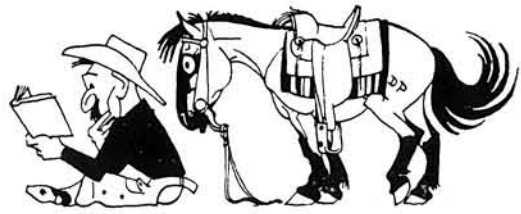
There is also brought out the business promotion efforts of the Church Elders, the difficulties which might attend them, and the effect these difficulties might have on a not too prosperous Mormon family involved in them. Parenthetically, the Church having only recently sold out its controlling stock in a bank, President McKay asserted his intention of holding on to certain commercial investments, among them the Utah-Idaho Sugar Co., whose early struggles during World War I made matters very difficult for the Bailey-not-Forbes family.

While all Westerners will wish to own and read this personal account by their ex-Sheriff, the book will not only appeal to those who know Paul or know of him, but should appeal to all scholars who are interested in sociology, Mormon Church history, the polygamy experiment, and in general how people live or lived in a part of the United States not too well known to most.

Although comparisons are supposed to be odious, perhaps I may be forgiven for noting the strong resemblance between Paul Bailey's book and *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn,* in their non-didactic, non-pedagogic, gently humorous analyses of life in a relatively primitive American small town.

Don Perceval's jacket, illustrations, and end papers contribute much to maintaining the distinctive spirit of the narrative.

C. N. RUDKIN.



HANDCARTS TO ZION, LeRoy Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, Arthur H. Clark Co., Glendale. Volume 14, Far West and Rockies Series. $9.50.

Born of Mormon parentage, indoctrinated from childhood in both the oddity and the majesty of the great Mormon "plan," every phase of that church's great western movement was as familiar and real to me as though I had actually lived it. The world may appraise the handcart epic as a piece of fanatic stupidity, or at the least a gross error in judgment on the part of Brigham Young. From my sabbath lessons, and from grandparents who had been both wagon pioneers and handcart pioneers, I learned differently. To us it was a magnificent lesson in obedience, a time of testing, an epic of steadfastness and courage. Those years of my early recollections are gone but, strangely, the reading of this sympathetic study of the handcart pioneers, by those versatile historians, the Hafens, unleashed the floodgates of my own memory; turned me back again to the faith of my fathers; brought me once more to the knee of my little English paternal grandmother who had walked with those rickety carts.

Perhaps I am overly enthusiastic. Perhaps, because of my own Mormon background, I have drawn far more from the book than will the more objective reader. But with all things discounted, I am still of the mind that LeRoy and Ann Hafen have penned a solid, scholarly, and highly readable account of this unique, though tragic, experiment in westward migration.

The importance of this book is its overall study of every phase of the handcart movement. That many companies, over a period of years, made the journey from Iowa to Salt Lake Valley without mishap, is a fact little known to historians. Those pushing their ungainly carts made far better time in prairie travel than did those who used the ox-team—but with far less comfort. It was the great tragedy of 1856 which spelled doom to the movement, as it did to its participants. Eleven hundred of these courageous prairie travelers, because of a late start westward, were trapped on the Sweetwater, not far from South Pass, by heavy snows, and howling blizzards. Death by starvation and freezing claimed 220 of that luckless company.

The Clarks and the Hafens have united their skills and efforts to make this a true compendium of information on the subject. Of great importance are the name-lists of the various companies; handcart songs; contemporary illustrations; and a useful index.

PAUL BAILEY.

A FABLE IN BRONZE

by DON MEADOWS

When old timers get together sooner or later the conversation turns to the mis-information that is current in southern California. One night on the Colorado Desert while a group of week-end desert rats were gathered around a camp fire of mesquite roots the subject of Olvera Street in Los Angeles was mentioned, and George Schweikhard, who was born in San Fernando Valley more than seventy years ago, chuckled and said he had helped make that street picturesque. Of course, we wanted to know why, and he told the following yarn.

"When I was a kid of ten or twelve, it was in 1897 I think, the rains played one of their frequent tricks and only showed up in a casual sort of way. My father was raising stock in the San Fernando Valley, over on the west end where the Chatsworth reservoir now covers the ground, and we had a hard time to find forage for them. Dad took up a homestead out there in the late eighties. Well, we knew the pigs liked acorns because we would see them under the oak trees enjoying themselves, so Dad had the idea that the horses would eat them too if the shells were broken. We tried out the idea and it worked fine. Then Dad got the idea that a feeding basin of rock would be the easiest way to break up the acorns, so we found a big hunk of sandstone—there's lots of it out there—and with a dull hatchet we cut out a nice big trough in the horse corral. We kids would gather up the acorns in buckets and put them in the trough and mash them up for the stock.

"In 1912 the City of Los Angeles bought our ranch for the site of the Chatsworth reservoir, and we all moved into town. Roy Tucker—that's my brother-in-law—was working for the city on the reservoir and one day a truck came up to the construction camp and the driver wanted to know where the old Indian watering trough was located. Roy didn't know anything about a watering trough but he did steer the crew to our old feed rock. The boys in the truck said that was what they were looking for, and with a lot of trouble they got the rock loaded to carry away. Roy asked what was going to be done with the rock, and they said they had orders to take it into town because it was of historical importance. Roy told them what the thing was, but they said it didn't make any difference, they had been told to get it, and that was all there was to it. Next thing any of us knew we saw our old feeding trough at the north end of Olvera Street with a sign on it saying it had been made by the Indians more than a hundred years ago. I've been called a lot of things, but never an Indian before. Of course, if people get a kick out of looking at the thing and thinking how wonderful the aborigines could work in stone, it's O.K. with me. I guess I did do a pretty good job on it, but maybe I ought to get some credit for the sweat I put out. You can't always believe in signs."

Back in civilization we went over to Olvera Street to see how good a job George had done. The trough was there all right, cut out of a yellow sandstone rock that weighed perhaps a couple of tons. George had nothing to be ashamed of, but the persons who were responsible for the fable in bronze should feel rather embarrassed when they learn the truth. The bronze marker reads:

WATER TROUGH HEWN BY THE MISSION INDIANS IN THE YEAR EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY. PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES. 1930.

(Below) THE FAMOUS "MISSION INDIAN" TROUGH, OLVERA STREET, LOS ANGELES