



DECEMBER 1970

LOS ANGELES CORRAL

NUMBER 99



#### "RIDIN' HARD T' FETCH YOU SUM CHRISTMAS CHEER"

Each o' us here at th' Ranch House, includin' yore Roundup Foreman — hiz hired hands (meanin' o' course hiz nurses) — th crew o' *Branding Iron* wish you an' yours a right Jolly Holiday Season.

— Photo Courtesy Iron Eyes Cody.

## ANNUAL MEETING NOW HISTORY

How does one describe the nostalgia of driving up the freeway only to get lost trying to find Alden Miller's home in spite of the excellent map that was prepared. The most appropriate Western setting with the horses and training yard next door to the clanking horseshoes, the beautiful and nostalgic home where the Westerners have held their rendezvous under the auspices and with the gracious hospitality of Alden Miller. The greeting from an old-timer to a newer member of the group as one walks

up the driveway past Iron Eyes' Teepee and noting with a streak of jealousy the beautiful horse drawn cab that is parked at the end of the driveway. Dr. Miller running around and greeting everyone personally and making sure that everyone feels at home including those who are awed by the famous old-timers in the group and some of the old-timers who are uncomfortable because of their rheumatism and arthritis. The great drinks served by our own Sheriff,

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# The Branding Iron

OF THE LOS ANGELES CORRAL OF  
THE WESTERNERS

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THE BRANDING IRON solicits articles of 1500 words  
or less, dealing with every phase of the Old West.  
Contributions from members and friends welcomed.

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## The Foreman Sez...

A lot has been said around the sage and chip fires while sipping boiled coffee laced with whiskey (if you were lucky) about the growth of the LA Corral in the past few years.

Inexorably, the well-worn spurs and bridles are hung up as Westerners depart to their reward and new ones attempt to fill their boots — sometimes the fit is poor and

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the new owner squeaks a little — but this dynamic organization continues — while the cowboys "riding point" does his best to keep the herd in top shape.

Your Roundup Foreman doffs his Stetson to this year's "bunch" and especially to the "boss," Sheriff William Newbro, for their leadership, and trusts that next year's "drive" will be just as successful.

The BI fills many roles — house organ — minutes of meetings — and publisher of original manuscripts that have been supplied by members and friends. Fortunately, it does not compete with that excellent sister production — the Brand Book. Manuscripts have even gone from the BI to later editions of the *Brand Book*.

All scientific publications demand good research and documentation. Sometimes papers of this nature have not been included in the BI because of lack of space. As of January 1971, your Roundup Foreman will include all appropriate documentation and footnotes and insist on them, where appropriate, so that those who come after us will be better able to judge our work.

## THE MONTHLY ROUNDUP

### OCTOBER MEETING

The October 14th meeting started with a very excellent presentation by Westerner Earl Adams on his Moscow trip. Earl entertained us with some interesting vignettes of the trip and told us of some of his impressions of the country.

Tom McNeil and the two other Westerners who brought Ross Santee items were thanked by the Deputy Sheriff, Alden Miller. Westerner Tom McNeil has provided the basis for the display for the past three years. He has worked exceptionally hard at this project and has added greatly to the meetings of the Corral by those most beautiful presentations. The Corral owes Tom McNeil a real bit for his great contribution.

Deputy Sheriff, Alden Miller, in one of his more irrepressible moods, threw down a challenge to Iron Eyes Cody that his crew could put up an 18-foot tepee faster than Iron Eyes could put up a 25-foot tepee. This means that Deputy Sheriff Alden's crew will have to work hard during this next

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Bud Mars, one of the early pioneers and his wife in an early Curtiss biplane.

Glen Curtiss was an early aviation pioneer and backed by Alexander Bell, had developed a light-weight, eight cylinder motor for motorcycles which he successfully used to power his plane. In 1909—only four years after the Wright's first sustained flight—he shipped his plane to France to an international air meet and whipped the cream of Europe's pilots and planes. The Wright brothers and Curtiss now joined together and introduced the first so called, Flying Circus. These pioneer flyers created quite a stir in Europe and the U.S.A. but failed to sell many military planes. The military was satisfied with it's fleet of observation balloons and showed little interest in this new-fangled plaything.

One of these adventurous flyers was Bud Mars. He flew one of the Curtiss pusher type planes powered with a four-cylinder motor that kicked up 40 horse power in all directions but the right one. It's wing spread was 28 feet, and the tail piece was cloth stretched over a wood frame and hooked to the body of the machine by four bamboo poles. There was no such thing as a fuselage. The pilot sat out in front, pushing the wheel backward and forward to work the elevators and turning the wheel to work the rudder. He would move his body to right or left to help stabilize the plane. The engine was back of him. This unhandy feature was responsible for the high mortality in crashes, for the motor invariably fell on top of the aviator.

In San Francisco, Lincoln Beachey, who had been pairing with Roy Knabenshue in flying dirigibles, decided to try flying airplanes and in 1910 entered the Curtiss aviation school. He smashed three of Glen Cur-

tiss' planes and Glen was convinced Beachey would not make a flyer. However, in 1911 Glen Curtiss was facing a financial crisis and hired Lincoln Beachey—the fellow who at one time he had wished would go home—to tour the country giving flying exhibitions. Lincoln Beachey soon had earned over \$65,000 for Curtiss and impressed one of the greatest promoters of spectacular exhibits—William H. Pickens,\* who then and there took over the Air Circus, with Lincoln Beachey as his star attraction.

The threat of war became the topic of the day and Bill Pickens moved to cash in with a ballyhoo of "Preparedness Now!" Pickens and Beachey were in San Diego for an exhibition and one morning Beachey witnessed two army pilots killed in an air crash on North Island. Later, that same day, in the afternoon, Beachey looped the loop for the first time in this country. Bill Pickens moved in immediately on the city editor and on November 25, 1913 the *San Diego Sun* quoted Beachey as saying: "That while France had spent 7 million dollars on airplanes in 1912, the U.S.A. had expended only \$125,000 on military planes." This front page story was the beginning of Lincoln Beachey's propaganda and ballyhoo of "Preparedness" with other aviators joining in the exhibitions.

One of Beachey's most thrilling "Military-Preparedness" exhibitions was his sinking of the Battleship *Oregon* in San Francisco bay in 1914 at the beginning of the Panama-Pacific Exposition. The Ballyhoo proclaimed that Beachey would show how vulnerable our Navy was to an attack by air.

The replica of the *Oregon*, which was to be sunk, was a framework of wood and painted canvas about 200 feet long and mounted on two barges. It was complete

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\*\*William Hickman Pickens was a prodigy of Tex Richard and one of the great promoters and ballyhoo artists of the early twentieth century. His balloon races, dirigible flights, automobile and airplane races, locomotive crashes and flying circuses were the life-blood of the expositions and fairs of the early 1900s. Bill and I were friends for many years and the Lincoln Beachey and the De Lloyd Thompson episodes are from his conversation and news-scrapbook which I cherish. From the time we met at Ellington field until his death, I designed and even printed many wild and exaggerated billboards and posters for his spectacular shows.

with funnels, masts and mounted cannon and was towed to a position a mile from shore. About a hundred sailors, borrowed from the Naval training ship at Goat Island, manned the vessel, with six sailors high up in the crow's nest, adding drama to this air spectacle.

Eighty thousand people on the Exposition grounds watched in amazement as Beachey bombed and sank this battleship. As Beachey flew over the ship, which he had nicknamed the "Gorgonzola," a puff of smoke came from his plane, indicating he had released his bomb. There was an answering explosion on the deck of the "Gorgonzola" and many spectators went into a faint. Beachey was a real sharpshooter that day — he dropped fifty bombs in quick succession and made fifty direct hits on the battleship. The crowd was in a panic — what about those poor sailors? The witnesses left in a daze but the morning papers explained everything.

When the smoke from the well placed smoke-pots hid the wreck, a tugboat took the crew off after they had lit the smoke-bombs. The fire bombs, dynamite and mortars were hooked up by electric wires to switches on a tug-boat behind the doomed ship. Each time Beachey passed overhead and released a puff of smoke, a switch was thrown and fire-bombs and fireworks exploded all over the "Gorgonzola." Even when Beachey was two miles away from the ship he was still making direct hits.

About this time Glen Curtiss was having trouble with the army in qualifying six of his planes. These planes were about to be turned back to Curtiss because the army pilots failed to climb to 5000 feet in five minutes. Curtiss called Beachey back to Washington to prove the worthiness of his planes.

Beachey flew each of these six planes to 5000 feet in less than four minutes. However, as he came down in the last plane, Beachey couldn't resist an impulse for showmanship and he put the plane through a series of evolutions and gymnastics. His most outrageous stunt was to dance a jig with his landing wheels on the flat roof of a hangar. The Army Brass thought this too demoralizing for the young army aviators and the official word was passed along to bar Beachey from any more demonstra-

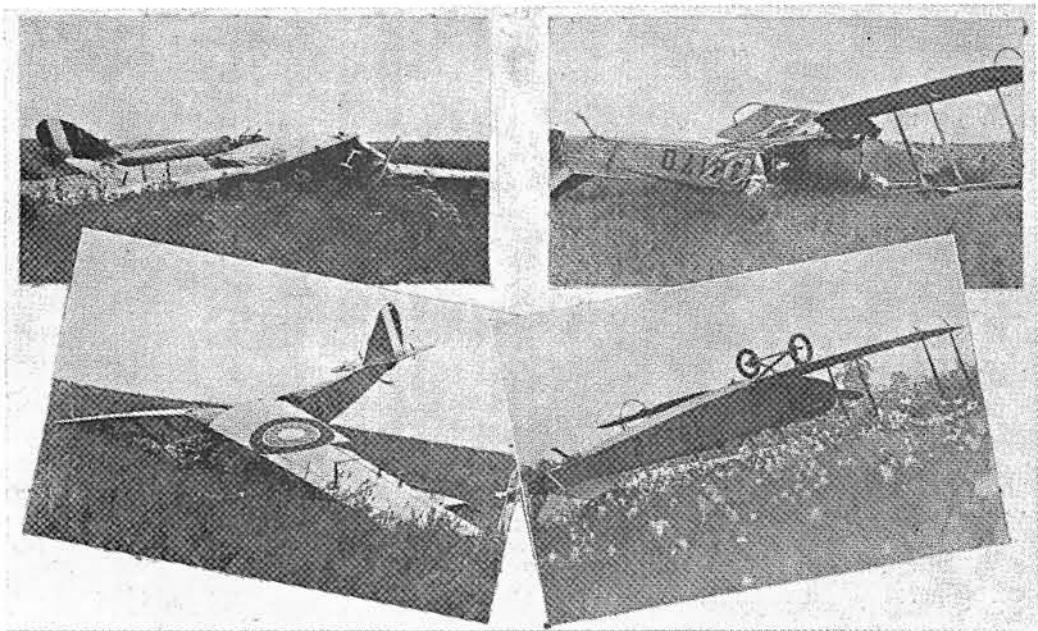
tions. Newspapers, however, immediately took up the torch for Beachey and demanded that Beachey give a special demonstration for President Wilson so on September 28, 1914 Beachey took off before the President and his staff at the Polo Field from which he had lately been barred. He made two flights; the first was for the members of Congress and government VIPs and then he put on a special demonstration for President Wilson. He looped the loop, flew upside-down, tore off sizzling vertical dives and tailspins and went into numerous barrel rolls as he passed over the reviewing stand. It was an amazing demonstration of flying skill only ten years after the first flight by the Wright brothers at Kitty Hawk where they flew a distance of less than the wing-spread of a B-52 bomber.

Beachey was front page news and the public became air-minded and enthusiastic through the ballyhoo of "Military-Preparedness" demonstrations. On March 14, 1915 at the Panama-Pacific Exposition, in San Francisco, Beachey was ready to make an exhibition flight in a Monoplane, of his own making, copied after the German Taube which was making news over the war front of Europe. It's wing spread was only 18 feet. Beachey got off the ground within fifty feet and flew out over the bay to come back at an altitude of about 6000 feet. When he was over the crowd of 50,000 people he began to loop the loop, then dropping down in a long almost vertical dive to turn over for his spectacular upside down flight over the bay.

For once his keen sense of distance must have failed him. He must have realized he was too close to the water for he suddenly tried to whip out of his inverted position. This terrific strain on the wings caused the left wing to break off and dangle by its supporting wires. Then the right wing snapped and the plane dropped into San Francisco bay like an anvil. The plane embedded itself in the mud under thirty feet of water. Lincoln Beachey was found still firmly held in his seat by the safety straps in the first and only plane with a fuselage that he had flown.

During the years 1910 through 1914 the Flying Circus was the main attraction at all fairs and celebrations under the guiding hand of Bill Pickens. In 1912 his stable of





## I KEPT TELLING WILBER AND ORVILLE IT WOULDN'T FLY\*

By HOMER H. BOELTER

*(When your Roundup Foreman saw a copy of the SCARAB, he couldn't resist asking Westerner Homer Boelter to prepare something for the BI that would reflect some aspect of his varied and extensive interests. The following is an outgrowth of that request. This admired westerner, who prepared this paper while convalescing from a heart attack, published the SCARAB as a house organ during his years as one of the West's foremost lithographers and typographers. Those of you old timers who have copies of the SCARAB — hang on to them.)*

Within the span of a normal lifetime, man has solved the secrets of Supersonic flight and probed deep into the mystery of outer-space. On July 16, 1969, Astronauts Neil Armstrong and John Aldrin walked on the surface of the moon. In 1903 the Wright brothers flew a heavier than air machine off the sands at Kitty Hawk. In 1905 they thrilled the world with a controlled, sustained flight above Daytona Beach.

Within the past sixty-five years, man has made such gigantic strides in his quest towards super-sonic flight and astronomical probings that he is no longer amazed or held spellbound by the spectacular discoveries we experience today. Thus a sense of nostalgia nudges me to relate some interest-

ing experiences and record a few bits of exciting air history made by a few intrepid pioneer flyers during the first years of aviation (1905-1920) when just the roar of an airplane gave everyone a thrill and a kink-in-the-neck. Most of these aviators were young adventurers who chose to fly — more for the romance than the money — and each of them made a great contribution to science.

The successful flights by the Wright brothers, encouraged inventors and aspiring aviators in America and Europe to build their bamboo and linen kites. Soon there were a great many odd contraptions hedge-hopping over the landscape. The motive power was the big problem and the Wright brothers began concentrating on motors and developed the Wright Whirlwind of World War I.

As there were no government subsidies in those days towards experimenting, the Wright brothers employed adventurous pioneer flyers to make exhibition flights at county fairs, hoping to sell a few planes to the government and collecting enough admissions to defray their expenses.

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\*This was the usual cynical remark made by a pilot as he left his near-fatal wrecked plane.

## Annual Meeting . . .

Bill Newbro, and John Urebec. The hearty laugh when someone is telling the same joke that he told last year to the same group and everybody laughs at it anyway. The deep and profound feeling for the comradeship of men gathered together for a common purpose. The reflections on the past "growth pains" of the Los Angeles Corral and how they were overcome by the loyalty of everyone present. The crazy, wacky auction sale which always seems to raise considerable sums of money that are put to such good use by the Publication Fund. The glee and laughter of delight when someone finds an item for sale for which they have looked for years.

And how can one fail to mention the great generosity of members who bring items for sale — items that are a gift of love from their own personal collections that are very valuable but yet donated to the purpose of the Corral. The smell of fried bread being produced by Ken Manskar's wife and her fascinating and lovely assistant. How would a rendezvous be complete without Loring Campbell and his bolo ties. Old old-timers are missed and for a moment one realizes that the Corral changes its picture from year to year. The passing of Ex-Sheriff Erv Strong has left a post out of the Corral fence. Other members are merely away on trips and cannot be present — but they are missed. How can one forget the great California wine that was provided by our own John Urebec and the buffet that this year seemed to be especially good. Or was it the comradeship between ones dinner mates that made it seem especially enjoyable. The presentation of the artists who have always played a unique role in our Corral and have given some "spit and polish" to those of us who do not understand or speak their language but yet appreciate their talent. Is there any way possible to repay the debt that the Corral owes to Don Percival for his great contributions through the years to the development of our Corral. Some of you younger bucks will have to look through the old *Branding Irons* and *Brand Books* to realize the contribution that this artist of the West has made to our Corral. One also has an uncanny feeling when recalling the fascinating presentation by Don

Percival, his great candor in dealing with artists, his suggestions for judging western art, and the fascinating sidelights on the development of western art to its present day including all its foibles and phonies. The gesture of Allen Willett in presenting to our host, Dr. Miller, a signed Don Percival lithograph from his book *Navaho Sketch Book*. How does one say thank you to Mrs. Miller for allowing us to invade her lovely home and gardens for an evening? We are secretly aware of her contribution in this regard and even though the Westerners is a stag organization, we can surely say a very heartfelt and warm thank you to you Mrs. Miller for letting us make a mess of your gracious home and to you Dr. Miller for your invitation and hospitality.

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## Loring Campbell Honored in Article

Ex-Sheriff Loring Campbell has again been honored — this time in *The Craftsman*, Volume 14, No. 6, in an article written by Mr. Burt Griffin entitled "What About The Leather Wearers of the Old West." Mr. Griffin outlines in detail the new library that Loring Campbell is building and mentions the acquisition of the University of Arizona of his last library of some 7,000 books. In this well written article other Los Angeles Westerners are mentioned such as Mr. Paul Gallaher of the Arthur H. Clark Company and Dick Moore of the International Book Finders in Beverly Hills. Also mentioned in some detail is Loring's own list of 101 western books that deal especially about the cattle industry. In case some of you tender foots do not know who Loring is, he has not missed a Westerners meeting in many a moon and always has a great yarn to spin or at least some beautiful turquoise and silver bolo ties.

Loring is one of these fellows that seems to always be around when he is needed. The Los Angeles Corral is proud and happy of its members accomplishments.

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The Cultural Heritage Board of the City of Los Angeles added the Charles Lummis residence, 200 E. Avenue 43, to its list of declared historic-cultural monuments, bringing the total to 68.

## *In Remembrance*

ERVIN R. STRONG

1901-1970

The inexorable hand of time has again rested upon and called from our midst a stalwart Westerner and friend. On Sunday, August 16, 1970, ex-Sheriff Ervin R. Strong joined that distinguished company of Westerners who have traveled the long trail which leads to that haven of no return. Yes, Erv Strong—he of that warm and friendly nature, who was ever ready to serve and bring comfort to a friend in distress, as well as to share in all the pleasures of that companionship—leaves a host of friends in the Westerners, the Death Valley 49'ers and the E Clampus Vitus.

Erv Strong became an Active member of the Los Angeles Corral of the Westerners in 1959. He immediately entered into the spirit and activities of the Corral. He served on many committees and was elected to serve as Deputy Sheriff in 1964. Erv was elected Sheriff of the Westerners in 1965—an honor he well deserved.

Erv was always sensitive to the needs and efforts of the Corral—only two months before his untimely death and against his Doctors wishes, he loaded his car with as many fine Navaho blankets from his collection as the car would hold and put them up on display at our June 10, 1970 meeting to brighten and complement the discussion of that evening, "The Navaho Rug, Its History and Development."

In the early 1920s, Erv and his mother left their home in Chicago, Illinois, planning to spend a leisurely vacation through the Southwest to end up in Los Angeles. As happens to many Easterners and Mid-westerners, who venture to California, they settled and took root in Southern California. For the first twenty-five years of Erv's indoctrination as a Westerner, he worked for the Union Oil Co. In 1947, he and his wife Dorrie opened and operated a hardware store in Rosemead; later moving the store to West Covina.

Erv was an eager student of the American West and surrounded himself with a well chosen and valuable library of Western Americana. Both Erv and his wife enjoyed collecting fine examples of the arts and



ERV STRONG

crafts of the Southwest Indians. This interest complemented their love for the paintings of Remington, Russell, Farney, Schreyvogel and many of the later Taos group. On a birthday, just as Erv and Dorrie were moving into their new home, Erv brought home a Russell bronze, "Smoking Up," for Dorrie. Dorrie tells of this gift influencing her planning and furnishing of their home where they were surrounded with their collections of Indian arts and crafts, their Navaho blankets, Pueblo pottery, baskets and the wonderful original watercolors and paintings of the Southwest Indians. Those of us who attended the 1962 August meeting at Erv's home will long remember these wonderful creations of Indian paintings and artifacts.

On their many trips to the various reservations and Pueblos in search for the best Arts and Crafts of these artists Erv and Dorrie made many friends and worthwhile acquaintances among the talented Indians. They looked forward and enjoyed their visits with Maria Martinez, the famous potter of San Ildefonso, and also with Ro-povi-da Maria's son and through these friends were able to acquire many pieces of their fam-

*(Continued on Next Page)*

## Erv Strong...

ous "Blackware," as well as the handiwork of other artists of the village. They became acquainted with Stanley Stubbs of Santa Fe who guided them to many fine pieces of pottery from various villages to add to their growing collection. Most of these wonderful finds were purchased direct from the artist before it reached the trader or Indian store. They made many interesting journeys from Window Rock through Ganado to Chinle, or from Zuni in the south to the Hopi villages on the three mesas, searching and finding beautiful silver work, baskets, blankets and pottery. The Pueblo villages between Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Taos knew them well.

Erv and Dorrie visited with Clara Lee Tanner in Tucson and at the time she was working on her outstanding book, *Southwest Indian Painting*. Erv was able to chose and purchase many of the watercolors and drawings that Mrs. Tanner did not use in the book because of lack of space. Many of the artists represented in his collection were by students of Dorothy Dunn, whose influence and efforts, when she was instructor of art at the Santa Fe Indian School, did so much to keep alive the art traditions of the tribes, as well as emphasize the rich heritage of these Indians of the Southwest.

Erv Strong, through his quiet ways, built a special niche in the hearts of all who knew him and shall always be honored and remembered.

— HOMER H. BOELTER.

## Monthly Roundup...

year in order to meet this challenge which was accepted by Iron Eyes.

Thanks from Alden Miller and the Corral to Westerner Dwight Vance and CM member Ken Manskar who worked so hard on the plaque which was presented to Don Percival at the last rendezvous. The buffalo head was created in a cast by Dwight Vance and the buffalo robe which was ultimately made in bronze background was produced

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by Ken Manskar. Thank you gentlemen for your contribution to the Corral.

For the railroad buffs in the crowd, the presentation was especially appropriate. Glenn W. Adams, Ph.D., the Professor of History at the Azusa Pacific College, spoke on "Intrigue and Ingenuity of the Southern Pacific Railroad of Arizona." One has a hard time visualizing Westerner Chris Mason cutting railroad ties in the forest of New Hampshire but he states this was his job when he was younger. Come to think of it, there probably is not much difference between chopping out a railroad tie and tending to a broken hip!

Guests included Edward S. Harnagel, M.D., a guest of Chris Mason, who is working on the history of Dr. Linlay, one of the founders of the California Hospital. Mr. E. F. Baldwin is interested in genealogy. James F. Dickason who is Executive Vice-President of the Newhall Land and Farming Company was introduced as a prospective member of the Westerners. Mr. Dickason is a native Californian. Charles S. LaMonk, an artist, was also a guest of the Corral. He is especially interested in pictograph writings and petroglyphs. Mr. LaMonk has a studio at the old Tropic Mine in Rosemond.

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We are right proud to be able to use for page one of this issue of *Branding Iron*, the pen and ink sketch done by the late Westerner Clarence Ellsworth shortly before he rode up the trail to the High Range, in the sky. Our thanks to member Iron Eyes Cody for his kindness in making it available for our enjoyment. No doubt but what Clarence will be right happy knowing we appreciate it, especially at this Holiday Season.

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Westerner Dudley Gordon, the erudite authority on the life of Charles F. Lummis spoke at the Fall meeting of the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society on October 13th. Westerner Gordon brings a great background of knowledge to this subject having been acknowledged as the expert on the life of Lummis and having worked on many aspects of the great contribution that Lummis made to life in the Southwest.



his pants and he put on a one-man show that was a real thriller — he made the S.E.2 do everything in the books. He dove, he stalled, he side-slipped, he barrel-rolled over the crowd and looped within inches of the ground and made many R.M.A.s hold their breath until Pete was rightside up again. He led a group of planes in a figure eight routine around the two water towers but lost them when he detoured through one of the hangars. As for the ladies, God bless them, they had heard so many breath taking stories by their shavetail dates that they were not as impressed as their escorts. One of these ladies of the tight split skirts coined a phrase that lived long after on the flying stages. She was heard to comment after one of Pete's close to the ground loops: "That's nothing, he was only ten feet off the ground when he finished that one; look at those daredevils doing the same stunt 5000 feet in the air."

Erick Nelson,\* who later was to gain fame as one of the "Douglas first round the World Flyer," was doing his bit that day flying in a race of D.H.4's, powered by the famous 490 horsepower Liberty motor just skimming the ground at a 50-foot altitude. These planes (the pride of the army), sometimes made better than 130 miles per hour with the wind and close to 100 mph against the wind.

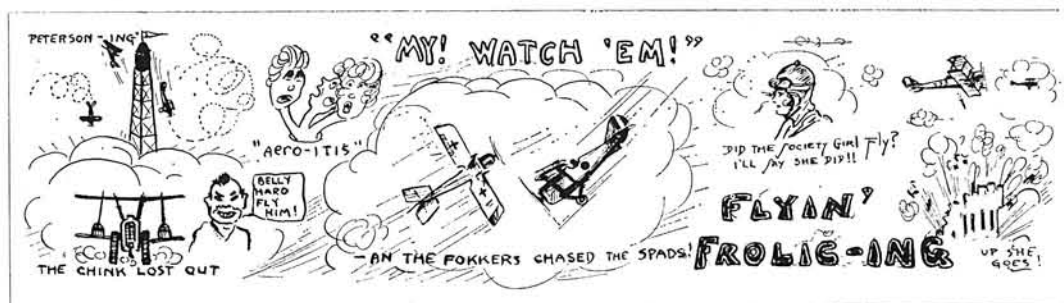
To rest the weary spectators who had developed stiff necks and needed a respite

\*Air Force Brigadier General, Ret. Erick Nelson, 81, was among the first aviators to circumnavigate the globe. He died Saturday May 9, 1970. Los Angeles *Herald Examiner*, May 15, 1970.

from sky gazing; Lt. "Red" Early and his corps of cadets put on a carnival with a Midway between two hangars. Here the barkers extolled the glamour and beauty of "Fatima and a harem of a Sultan's favorites." Jojo, the dogfaced boy, Harry Hannah, Lolypop Lill and all the other possible and impossible freaks of a side show. The knees of some of these beauties may have seemed knotty along with the "five o'clock shadow" on the faces, chests, arms and legs but you can be sure that every cadet had a better time than their audience.

After a meal, purchased if you wished from the Chinese cooks of the P.X., YMCA, KC, Mother's Club, or salvaged from ones own picnic hamper, the guests were entertained with some spectacular night flying. Ships outlined with lights from wing-tip to wing-tip and from cockpit to tail-piece were all over the night sky either in formation or doing acrobatics through the streaks of light from the hugh searchlights stabbing and searching for a target in the sky. A fort was bombed with flaming bombs and machine-gunned with tracer bullets. The grand climax to this day, so filled with air thrills, was a night sky crowded with as many planes as could be mustered, every plane dropping flares and shooting off signal pistols while weaving through a maze of silver streamers from the giant searchlights.

It was a real super-dupper "going home" and "victory" party for a group of fledglings as well as another stepping stone to greater developments in the future of aviation which was then only fifteen years old.





## MARCO ANTONIO GOMEZ

By MARY LIVINGSTON

*(Your Roundup Foreman is happy to occasionally offer manuscripts from the distaff side of the world. Miss Mary Livingstone has completed at least two separate and distinct careers and now has established herself in a small, petite, personal, and most friendly gallery — Little Gallery 2 — in Santa Ana. Accompanied by her magnificent Texas graciousness, coupled with excellent California Champagne, her small (invitation only) shows are becoming highlights of the Southern California art Scene.)*

Long roads do have a turning and that juncture for Marco Antonio Gomez came with Dr. Harold McCracken's acceptance of his work for a May to October 1971 loan exhibit at the Whitney Museum of Western Art, Cody, Wyoming. Five of the paintings to be shown were loaned by Santa Ana collectors and four are from the extensive Gomez collection of the late Edwin C. Nelson of Reno, Nevada and Scottsdale, Arizona.

With paintings in the Archives and Historical Department of the State of Wyoming, Old State Building in Cheyenne; Kuschare Museum, LaJunta, Colorado; Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado; and in

collections across the country on into France and Germany, Gomez has steadily worked towards a goal he set for himself as a young boy in the State of Jalisco, Mexico, and continued to foster in what was to become his home, indeed, the States of Arizona and California.

Not enough has been written about this artist; there have been no paeans proclaiming his work. Rather it has been the nuance of judgment by the critical eye of the collector that brought him at long last to the turning point of his career.

Artists are legion. Ask one when or how he began to paint. The responses will crowd a biographical scrapbook with revelations of the 'compelling artistic urge' for self-expression, or provide most of the answers on how to succeed in the world of art. Ask "Tony" Gomez the same question and more than likely you will be treated to a refreshing chuckle. He remembers the time and place well, indeed. He was born in the midst of cluttering paint-pots and can-

vases and his artist father gave him a paint brush for a pacifier.

Marco Antonio Gomez recalls precisely his Moment of Truth for he capriciously daubed over one of his father's canvases. Because of the economy of times, canvas and paint were dearly bought; religious paintings with cathedral spires were financially important to the family larder. His first use of the brush was also his first brush with the provoked parental authority and Gomez has a total recall of the incident and the thinness of his cotton breeches.

He remembers with loving clarity that he was no longer permitted to sit on the footstool at Sr. Gomez's feet observing the flashes of vibrant color taking shape and form on his canvases. He was given his own little easel and admonished with considerable forthrightness to "paint his own pictures." The poverty of the times was a hardship for the family head but for young Gomez it came as a blessing in disguise: he learned from his father how to mix his own pigments; the value of vibrant and clear colors; and he has, indeed, continued to "paint his own pictures."

Much of this artist's work derives from his early background in mountainous Arizona where he came with his family when nine years old. His canvases are partly retinal memories of its terrain, its people, the early cowboy, the Indian and that segment of our country where the Old West lingered beyond the periphery of its time. He grew up in proximity to the Indians, witnessed many of their now forgotten rituals, and adopted much of their philosophy. He absorbed the feeling, the texture and colors of a country while it was still a land of rough and vibrant contrasts and character. The memory tract of his youth became an endless reel of sights and segments of a way of life that is today only a part of legendary lore. His strongly positive brush portrays a purpose and tells a story with a recording of integrity of a time and its place in history. Today the luminous colors of a Gomez painting proclaim his work without signature.

But, he followed the long road before its turning. Recognized today by western art critics as an outstanding artist and colorist, Tony Gomez came to California during the penetrative period of the "Great Depres-

sion." There was little encouragement for the young artist for there were no buyers of art. There was, even, little enough of the bread and never a surplus of canvas. But the born artist must paint and hedging their chances of monetary survival, Gomez joined forces with two other young men. The trio rented a downtown Los Angeles apartment of highly debatable quality and shared their paints, the communal soup bowl and the tins of beans.

This period proved to be his testing ground; a burning place for the true soul of an artist. It was a time and place to learn that patience and fortitude is a head-right. But it was a fortunate period, in a way, for some of the greatest, like N. Fechin, also had the liesure and compassion to visit, counsel and whet the young artists' faith and strengthen their courage.

His career, however, was interrupted by the blasting guns of Pearl Harbor. Like thousands and thousands of other young men, he rushed to join the rank of the fighting men. Acting as his squadron's artist he saw the war from Australia through the South Pacific. He was on Ernie Pyle's island of Ieshima and witnessed the surrender of the great Japanese army. But, it was when he had returned to his homeland that he received what he says was his greatest honor, the dream of his life . . . he was given his American citizenship.

Citizen Gomez did not, though, immediately become Artist Gomez. Once again the turn in the road was still over the hill. He met and married Margery, his lovely wife of twenty years. Marriage brought the obligation, he thought, of a steady job and income. He worked long hours, he painted under night lights. He studied and researched, following the pattern of his early training. After some years of this dual existence he came to the decision to turn his back on everything except his art career.

Margery Gomez always takes over the conversation at this point in any discussion of it because, she says, Tony was so very reluctant to tell her what he had done that he stopped in every bar he could stagger in and out of to get the courage to go home and tell her that 'beans' would be in short supply around their house. He was shocked into cold soberness when he finally arrived,

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delivered his declaration of independence, and was joined by his wife in a toast to their future.

From that day forward, Margery and Tony criss-crossed the lands of his youth; weeks and months were spent in the Indian reservations among its people. Always sketching, painting, researching . . . from the great Southwest into the Plains Country.

On one of their field trips the Gomezes grew weary of the seeming commercialism of several of their public ceremonial events and decided to head northward. Coincidental travel conditions fortuitously brought them into Denver, Colorado, just hours before Mr. Lemon Saks of Saks Galleries was to have left his place of business for his annual European vacation.

Here was the juncture, the turn in the long road, for M. A. Gomez's paintings have been continuously exhibited and sold in this gallery from that time. Mr. Saks became not only a friend, but something of a mentor. Uniquely the only contract the two men have had between them was the handshake of their first meeting . . . a gentleman's agreement that has long been honored. But, that is the fiber of the character of both.

Encouraged now, Gomez set up his paintings in Death Valley during the meeting of the famous 49'ers, an annual encampment attended by large numbers of Western Art collectors. He was as yet an outsider and his approach was timorous. Looking back, Tony says one of his strongest recollections of this experience was the kindness of the great desert painter, Mr. John Hilton.

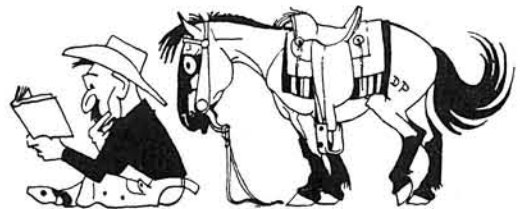
It was here, too, that one of the Southland's most enthusiastic western collectors, William H. Riffle, saw his work and invited him to exhibit at the then new Saddleback Western Art Gallery.

Gomez is not a cowboy artist in the fullest connotation of today's usage of the word. Neither is he an historical painter but he joins the great spirit of these times in subjects of his own creation. Today his paintings somehow reflect the recorded memory of his younger years. The strong, raw colors flowing from his brush seem to communicate the vibrancy in the scene of a campfire under a new moon cutting silver slivers in the dark blueness of the night; or in the centaur-like quality of a regal, proud old

Indian Chieftan. There is a Gomez quality, inimitable, a quality that caused Dr. Harold McCracken, Director of the Whitney Gallery of Western Art, to write: "The fact that I have asked to show some of your paintings is sufficient evidence that I think highly of your work."

Marco Antonio Gomez is a proud man, but he remembers that he was on one occasion humbled by his father when he dusted his britches for presuming to be a great artist, too early. He is deeply critical of his own work and he has a built-in jury with Margery sitting in the box. Another of her joyful stories about her husband is an occasion when he was taken down a peg or two. Tony has a loving heart where young artists are concerned and has given free advice and training to a legion of them. Once when he was earnestly asked "what an artist thinks" when he is painting, Gomez went into a lengthy dissertation of the "soul of the man;" "putting something of one's self into everything one paints," etc.

It was a beautiful speech, she says, but when he turned back to the easel, much to her secret amusement, he discovered what he had momentarily forgotten . . . his subject was that of the lowly Jackass. And so he has reason to remember. She never lets him forget or get carried away with any false sense of accomplishment. She reminds him of the days of the Jackasses.



## DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL...

THE STRANGE STORY OF WAYNE BRAZEL by Robert N. Mullin. Frontispiece by Jose Cisneros, portrait drawing of Pat Garrett by Olive V. Bugbee, and an introduction to the author by J. Evetts Haley. A map and 12 photographs. A separate publication from *Panhandle Plains Historical Review*, case-

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pilots and planes was larger than the United States Air Corps. When the War in Europe spread and the United States became involved, most of these pioneer aviators either joined the Army or were hired as Civilian instructors. One of these pioneer airmen was De Lloyd Thompson who initiated Eddie Rickenbacker, the future American Ace, in his first flight. He had become famous for one of his Preparedness stunts — the bombing of Washington, D.C.

The war college had installed a powerful searchlight to protect the Capitol against enemy night raiders. Under Bill Pickens' shrewd guidance, Thomson suggested to the War College that he would fly over the city at night and thus the light could be tested. He even promised to fly into the light should the ground crew fail to find him. Here was a great opportunity for ballyhoo and Pickens made the most of it. Thompson hid out from the light until the late theater crowds were on the street. He then dove low over the city and dropped a fiery bomb which made a brilliant and echo-cracking blast. He then dropped many magnesium flares over the Washington Monument and left a bewildered populous and a chagrined searchlight crew, for they never found their mark. Thus on April 15, 1916 an American city was first bombed from the air.

In the morning, when the people of Washington went to their doors to collect the paper or the milk they found an unexploded paper bomb with this message printed on it: "This bomb is harmless. Suppose it had contained nitroglycerin and been dropped by an enemy. Fortunately it was dropped last night by De Lloyd Thompson who flies the American flag. WAKE UP and BE PREPARED."

The Government officials and agencies who were now plugging for a prepared nation were enthusiastic and contracted for Thompson to bomb New York and then Chicago in quick succession. Preparedness at last became the hue and cry across the nation.

Katherine Stinson was one of the first women aviators. She flew her own Wright pusher plane when she joined the Flying Circus in 1915. She was ballyhooed as "the School Girl Who Out-flies the Men." She more than lived up to this ballyhoo for she was the first woman to loop the loop which



Katherine Stinson delivers a Red Cross War Fund report. Washington 1917.

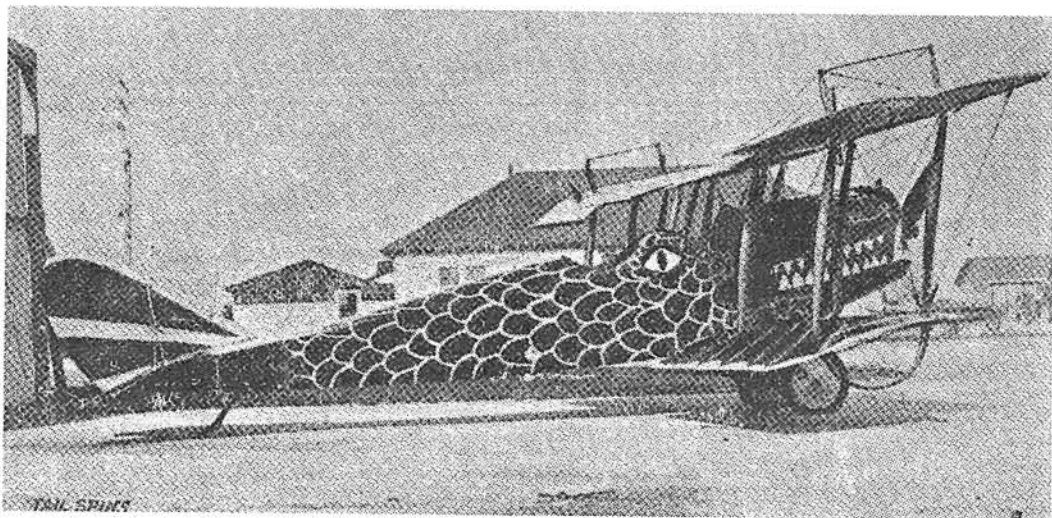
— *Courtesy Underwood-Underwood.*

she did in a plane she designed herself, and had built by Elmer Partridge. It was powered by the Gnome rotary motor that was salvaged from Lincoln Beachey's ill-fated Taube, that fell in San Francisco bay.

On December 4, 1915, Katherine made a night flight from the Aviation field in Griffith Park, Los Angeles, and with magnesium flares wrote the letters C A L against the night sky. She could only carry enough flares for the C A L but it was another first for the ladies. She taught both her brother and sister to fly. Her brother was the builder of the Stinson-Detroit planes that made history in the mid-1920's.

When the United States entered the war, Katherine offered her services to the Army but was turned down. She then opened a flying school in San Antonio and trained many hundreds of aviators for the Allies. She was refused permission to fly an Army combat plane so she flew her own planes at her own expense all over the United

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The Dragon, one of the JN4H decorated for the Flying Frolics.

States to promote the sale of Liberty Bonds. On one tour she picked up and delivered over \$2,000,000 to Secretary McAdoo.

We neophytes of the air at Ellington Field in 1918 were thrilled when Katherine Stinson visited us after her record breaking flight of 601.763 miles in 10 hours and 10 minutes from Chicago to Binghamton, New York on May 23, 1918. I have always felt that her visit had something to do with Ellington Field's Flying Frolics that were staged a few months later to demonstrate our own progress in the courses of flying, as well as to raise money during a Liberty Loan Drive.

A flurry of excitement enveloped Ellington Field when the Commanding Officer suggested that a "Flying Frolic" be staged in the interest of a Liberty Loan drive and as a free demonstration of aeronautics to our friends of Houston, and the surrounding area. This announcement came shortly after the great news that an armistice had been signed and to many of us in the corps, it would be a sort of farewell party. Although many mythical hours of cross-country and acrobatic flying had been added to logbooks and described in the lounge or on the dance floor of the Rice Hotel, or better still, during a stroll on the shady paths of the city park, no "Belle of the Moment" had seen her Shavetail Ace take off and fly in a D.H.4 or even a Curtiss trainer with a Hispano-Suiza motor. Here was the chance to clinch the fact and the flying stages were crowded while the Officer's club displayed

a maze of diagrams and doodlings evolving new aerial stunts. Even the Cadets, their schooling cut short by the armistice made elaborate plans for their part in the party. The newspapers gave us plenty of publicity but my crew of sign painters, who I assigned to paint our invitation to the party on every plate glass window on Main Street and Texas Ave. in Houston, Texas. In this way the first and greatest "Flying Frolic," ever to be staged free on an Army base to all and everyone in the city of Houston was ballyhooed.

We showed no mercy for the window washers or clean-up crews.

The day and the crowd arrived before all the arrangements and preparations had been completed but what a show was put on. Perfect formations flew over the crowd with scout planes diving into the V or looping through it before going into barrel-rolls, falling leafs or Immelman turns. The crowd was thrilled by the upside down spins, the power dives, loops and tailspins. One of the flyers executed an outside spiral in a Spad for the first time at Ellington field. Many R.M.A.'s entered a looping contest and two pilots broke the existing record by looping continuously for over one hundred loops. A simulated German fort, not wired like the *Oregon*, was bombed from about 5000 feet and some lucky bomber made a bullseye which thrilled the crowd and saved our ego.

Lieutenant Peterson was one of those fellows *who really could fly by the seat of*

bound. Canyon, Texas, 1970. \$6.00.

To fully appreciate this item, it will perhaps be helpful to know something of its author. Bob Mullin is a Westerner's Westerner. His name appears on membership rosters of many American historical-oriented groups, including various Corrals of the Westerners. Anyone having had the pleasure of visiting with him will understand what J. Evetts Haley means when, in his introduction, he characterizes Mullin as "an unusual example of that type of American who has lived with an eager heart, eye and ear, for the frontier life that he has sampled as a boy, rushing to savor its flavor and substance while it was passing." Since 1908, Mullin has been gathering information and opinion on this subject. It started as a high school theme. He had a speaking acquaintance with Garrett and some of the others who were involved in the affair. Ever since, he has been digging, eliminating, sorting and cataloging for a wider range of information, discarding the worthless, until some sixty years later, this documented, well-structured and reasonable analysis seems to lead to the logical conclusion — Brazel did not pull the trigger that ended the life of Pat Garrett.

In detective-like fashion, he programs the events of his subject's life, beginning with Wayne's family and childhood, his early cow-hand experiences on the Cox ranch, and through the story of the Garrett affair, carefully channeling each piece of evidence into its proper place. Lincoln County, New Mexico, has been one of the great passions of Bob Mullin's life. He has studied, written and lectured about all of its aspects, including the greats and near-greats who had anything to do with its history, and he presents his work with convincing authority.

Good reading; the pictures are excellent.

— PAUL GALLEHER.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Mullin has long been a corresponding member of the Los Angeles Corral.



WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN: GOLD RUSH BANKER, by Dwight L. Clarke. California Historical Society, 1969. 446 pp. \$9.95.

The exciting story of banking in California — especially in San Francisco — during the Gold Rush years is disclosed in a cache

of hitherto unpublished letters written by the Civil War general whose fame has rested largely on his march through Georgia and his announcement that "War is hell."

Westerner, western historian, and banker Dwight L. Clarke came upon photostats of these extraordinary letters in the New York Public Library and has made important use of them. The discovery was the result of research done by Clarke in preparation of his biography of Stephen Watts Kearny. He was directed to the journals of Major Henry Smith Turner, a participant with Kearny — and in them was reference to "a great batch of letters" between Turner and his banking partner and lifelong friend William Tecumseh Sherman. Clarke found the "batch."

Sherman, a career Army officer, went into banking, a field in which he was inexperienced and successfully headed the San Francisco firm of Lucas, Turner & Co. during the pre-Civil War, 1853-1857 period. Sherman, resident partner, is revealed through his letters to have been not only a keen observer, but possessed of common sense, innate integrity, a man able to evaluate a turbulent period in which there was practically no governmental regulation of banking procedures.

This book is primarily a story of banking and financial problems, though Sherman is shown to have found time for family and civic duties and for opposition to the Vigilance Committee of 1856. "The student of economics," writes Clarke, "would be hard put to find a better example of unrestrained laissez-faire than the financial structure of California in the 1850's." Accordingly, the account is filled with bank runs, crashes, panics, and even a "Black Friday." If any Angeleno is unhappy about not finding his hometown playing a part in the story, he should remember that good old L.A. was still without a bank at this time.

No man could be better qualified to evaluate the Sherman epistles than Dwight Clarke who as a banker has had decades of experience in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and other California cities and who as historian has helped to re-write California history in his distinguished *Stephen Watts Kearny — Soldier of The West*.

— W. W. ROBINSON.





## **"PACKAGE OF COFFEE" HOW HE GOT HIS NAME**

Just yesterday, I received from my old friend Harry C. James, a copy of his new book for children titled *Ovada: An Indian Boy Of the Grand Canyon*, illustrated in his usual beautiful style by another friend of many years, Don Perceval. In his letter sending the book to me, Harry mentioned the name Package of Coffee which served to bring back to mind, the Havasupai Indians I knew 50 years ago, for Package of Coffee is the name of an Indian I knew back in those days.

I guess the population of this tribe has remained fairly constant over the years — about 200, living in a most beautiful arm of the Grand Canyon itself, and until comparatively recent years known only to those hardy souls who made the trip down from Hilltop in the Great Thumb Country. In any event, some of the names borne by the Havasupai — or Supais as they were called locally — were Checkapanyega, Spoonhead, Burro, Paya, Crook, Sinyella, Watahomigie, Manakaja, Big Jim, Crook Jim and there was even a Mark Hanna. However, there was one Supai who received his Sears-Roebuck and "Monkey" Ward catalogues in the name of Package of Coffee. Here is the story as it was told to me.

Many years ago, a surveying crew was doing a job of work either on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon or down at Havasupai — I have forgotten which — and a crew had been hired to brush out ahead of the transit. One of the crew bore the name Pah-ka-chah-kah-ba. When it came that time of the month when the timekeeper on the job had to send in proper time slips so the crew could be paid, he just couldn't cope with Pah-ka-chah-kah-ba, so he put down Package of Coffee and from that day to the day he died, he was known — to the whites at least — by that name.

MICHAEL HARRISON.

A grand book about a grand gentleman, our own CM Horace M. Albright has been published this year by the University of Chicago Press. It is entitled *Wilderness Defender*.

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## **And we get letters too!**

Dear Tad:

Have you seen the "Buckeye Bulletin" printed in Tucson, Arizona by the outfit that several years ago tried to herd the L.A. Corral into their spread of mavericks but were told to get lost? I guess that was before your time. Anyway, it has a good story about John Neihardt who wrote some good stuff on Jed. Smith, and is the man you were asking me about some time ago. If you haven't got the publication I'll give you mine. It is a propaganda sheet issued by the "Westerners International" to which the L.A. gang does not belong. Also the L.A. Corral is relegated to fourth place in the list of corrals when it should be third. Only Chicago and Denver are older. Also a lousy certificate of membership in the WI is printed and typographically doesn't do the organization any good, though it is signed by three damn good Westerners: Russell, Billington and Dykes. The mavericks have even swiped the drawing of our buffalo skull for a trade mark.

DON MEADOWS.

(EDITOR'S COMMENT: Don will probably assassinate me when he sees this in print, but what the hell, wasn't horse stealing a serious offense in the old west? And even worse, they didn't even give us credit for the buffalo skull — and then went ahead and had this "Trade Mark" registered!)

The October issue of *Out West*, printed in Georgetown, California, contains an article, "Random Observations of a Desert Bibliographer," by Ex-Sheriff Eddie Edwards; and coincidentally, in the same issue of *Out West* is an article, "His Books Open Doors on California Deserts," by Lucile Weight, a pretty good authority on the desert herself, in which she describes several of Eddie's books and winds up with this complimentary statement — "Western Book collectors, instead of putting their faith in diamonds, are investing in such enduring stuff as has come from the head and heart of Eddie Edwards."