WESTERNERS
LOS ANGELES CORRAL
The Branding Iron
J. GOODMAN

SEPTEMBER 1971 LOS ANGELES CORRAL NUMBER 102

SOUTH FORK COUNTRY

By ROBERT POWERS

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Robert Powers, a long time resident of the Kernville area, has recently completed a book which is soon going to be published by our own Paul Bailey at Westernlore Press. Some of Bob Powers' writing sounds almost like J. Frank Dobie. Because of its widespread appeal and interest, Bob Powers and Paul Bailey have consented to let us use a portion of this book in the Branding Iron. I hope that you enjoy it as much as I do.]

LEFT TO RIGHT: Claude and Clifford Cross as they rode for the Landers in 1916.

The summer camps were at an elevation of approximately 8,000 feet. The nights were cold and the days were glorious. When the cattle first came into the mountains in the spring, the snow was almost entirely melted, with just a patch or two remaining in heavily timbered areas. The growing season was short at this elevation but it seemed that Mother Nature made allowances for this by accelerating the cycle to the point where one could almost see the grass and flowers grow. A hundred varieties of flowers bloomed in the mountain meadows, their fragrance mingling with the spicy scent of the pines.

The fishing done by the younger generation at the South Fork camp was insignificant when compared with the thrill of catching the wary golden trout of the high country. The streams were small and in some spots almost overgrown. Most originated from springs some distance on up the mountain. The fish were small, being normally only six to eight inches – just frying-pan size. They were usually hungry, too. One fish per cast was almost a guarantee.

All the horses were kept at Stanley Smith's field until the other men could repair their fences, then they were moved to the individual pastures. The men lucky enough to go early with the horses would quickly patch up the fence around the horse pasture or wrangling field, then grab a fishing pole and head for the creek. It was considered an honor to bring in the first limit of trout for the year. Soon the rest of the outfit arrived, and moved on to their individual camps. By sundown there would be fish in each camp. The aroma of trout

(Continued on Page Three)

The Branding Iron

OF THE LOS ANGELES CORRAL OF
THE WESTERNERS
Published Quarterly in
March, June, September, December

Address for Exchanges
and Material Submitted for Publication:

The Roundup Foreman

TAD LONERGAN

12911 Olympia Way, Santa Ana, Calif., 92705

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

The Foreman Sez . . .

The Los Angeles and San Diego Corrals have enjoyed a long and significant friendship. Many of us in Los Angeles take great pride in the fact that there are people in both metropolitan areas who are members of both Corrals.

"Cactus Jack" Jeffries, the Roundup Foreman for the San Diego Corral sent along a water color depicting the tasks facing all Foremen.

Page Two . . .

THE MONTHLY ROUNDUP

MAY MEETING

The Los Angeles Corral is proud to have among its members Ray Billington who has a vast and significant background in academia. He is one of these guys that has the amazing ability to hobnob with not only his fellow professional historians, but all of us amateurs that are involved in the ongoing work of the Corral. For years attempts have been made to get Ray to speak to the Corral and finally he agreed to do this – in what turned out to be a memorable evening.

Ray's erudite and expertly prepared speech on Frederick Jackson Turner was listened to with a great deal of interest – and secret admiration. I only noticed one head bobbing up and down during the presentation – and that is a rare occurrence for the Corral!

Turner's thesis and thinking are too well known to be rehashed here. Much of his files and ephemera are located at the Huntington Library and Dr. Billington – being a long time student of Turner has gone over a lot of his personal papers that apparently very few other historians have had access to. I hope that his presentation can be printed by the *Branding Iron* or the *Brand Book*. It surely deserves wide publication. Thank you very much Ray.

JULY MEETING

The meeting on Wednesday, July 14, 1971, at the Taix Restaurant was entitled "Argonauts on a Southern Route to California." Howard Roberts Lamar, The William Robertson Co., a Professor of American History at Yale University, this happens to be a Huntington Library grantee for the Sum-

(Continued on Page Six)

fried in bacon grease would drift from each cooking fire the next morning.

The ranchers pooled their manpower in order to get their fences repaired as quickly as possible. This usually took four or five days, giving the cattle time to reach the meadows and rest up for the spring branding. Branding time was the highlight of the year for most of those involved, and particularly for the younger folks Many of the kids would rather rope than eat and never seemed to get enough of it during the rest of the year. Branding corrals were set up at various locations on the range so that the scattered cattle would not have to be driven any great distance.

Seven o'clock in the morning found all hands assembled at Stanley Smith's camp. Stanley, the Rodeo Boss, would then inform them of the plans for the day. If the branding was to take place at Beck Meadows, for instance, Stanley might have said something like this:

"Bill and Leonard, go through Corral Meadows and work the country around Little Bull Meadows. Come out at the head of Beck and meet us at the rodeo ground. Marvin, you take your boys and work Lost Meadow – pushing them down Lost Creek to Beck. Jim, you and your family work the country around Swallow Point and along the drift fence. I'll take my outfit and ride through the Inyo County cattle on the other side of Monache drift fence. We'll pick up any of the cattle that might have gotten through the fence."

Usually the instructions were not even as lengthy as this. Everyone knew what was expected when riding a certain part of the country. Any of the others could have made these decisions, but Stanley had been chosen and he did a good job.

The work generally followed the same pattern, year after year. Seven days were needed to complete the branding, one day being spent at each of the following meadows: Albanita, Broder, Beck, Smith, Jackass, and Troy. Each location had it's branding corral built of logs. The seventh day was pick-up day, when men would scatter over the range and drive any unbranded calves and their mothers back to Fish Creek. They would be branded at Smith Meadow and turned loose.

Each rider or group of riders would complete his circle by ten or eleven o'clock and begin arriving at the rodeo ground. When all riders were accounted for, one of the permittees would begin to cut out his cows and calves. The cattle were maintained in a loose bunch as the cattlemen cut out their cows and unmarked calves. Each moved his stock in a different direction away from the main herd and kept them separate to await their turn in the branding corral. Cutting from the herd was over by noon, and the branding fire was started.

A mule loaded with brands, medicine, and lunch was usually led out to the branding site. This was one of the few times when the cattlemen ate lunch when out riding. A coffee pot on the branding fire would produce the brew to accompany anything from bean sandwiches to cold trout or steak, cold biscuits, canned tomatoes or peaches, and big squares of Hershey's chocolate.

Now branding began. The smallest group of calves was taken to the branding corral first in order to free the men holding them. As soon as their cut or bunch was branded and turned loose, they helped with the others.

There was something intriguing about calf branding that was hard to explain. In a setting of pine-fringed meadows and crystal clear streams, the age-old ritual was even more fascinating. Picture, if you will, the milling, bawling cattle held a short distance away, a log corral full of calves, cowboys and cowgirls doing the jobs they came to do. Smoke from the branding fire ascended high in the unbelievably clear sky. A calf was marked with its owner's brand, a puff of pungent smoke, and the calf ran bawling to its mother. Each phase of the operation combined to create a scene that was eagerly anticipated by even old-timers who had taken part in the annual event all their lives.

Two to four men worked in the corral on horseback, roping the calves. When two men worked together, the one who caught the last calf by the hind feet would give his partner the first throw at the next calf. If he missed his first throw, either man was free to try. Some of the top ropers have roped for hours at a time and never missed catching both hind feet with every loop that left their hand. However, it was ob-

(Continued on Next Page)

served that no matter how fast a man could get another loop built, or how good a roper his partner was, he would give the other man first shot at the hind feet if he had caught the last one. This was part of the unwritten code of the West.

As one man caught the calf by the hind feet and dragged it to the fire, the second man roped the animal by the head. If the calf was very small, the second rope was not used until reaching the fire – at which time the calf would be flanked or thrown. A rope was put on its front feet and the animal stretched out. That is, each horse maintained enough tension on the rope to prevent the calf from kicking loose.

In working cattle, the horse was all-important. Whether in or out of the corral, a good roping horse put a rider in the best position to make his throw and kept the rope taut at all times after the catch had been made. A good cow horse did many small but important details on his own. It was a joy to ride such a good horse or to watch him perform. A good roper became infinitely better on a horse with enough savvy to give his rider every advantage.

The branding fire was located inside the gate of the larger corrals and outside the smaller ones. When a calf reached the fire, a crew of four or five men, women, and kids went to work. Most difficult of the chores was to flank the calf or tail it down. A great deal of teamwork was required to get a big, ten-month old calf to the ground. If the heeler caught both hind feet, the header would put his loop on the head and the calf would be pulled to the ground by the tail. But if only one foot was caught, one man would grab the tail and another would pull the rope to the hind foot from the opposite side. In other words, if the rope was on the left foot, the cowboy would pull from the right side.

Pulling the tail and rope at the same time jerked the calf's free leg out from under it. The ropers would let a little slack in the rope and the calf was jerked down. The man who had the tail jumped to the shoulder of the calf and pulled its front foot back and upward, bracing his knees against the calf's neck and shoulders. The other flanker pulled the calf's tail between its legs and, maintaining a steady pull, reached forward with one hand to remove the rope from the hind foot. Crossing the hind feet, he put the loop back on and then held it tight until the roper had taken his turns on the horn with his rope – or "dallied," as it is called – and backed his horse. The man who held the front foot took the rope off the head, crossed the front feet, slipped the loop around them, and the calf was ready to work on.

Registered brands are generally placed on the left side of the animal, so the calf is stretched out on its right side. Each family usually handled the branding and earmarking of its own calves. By the time a child was twelve or thirteen years old, he could do all of the tasks involved in branding – and do them well.

First shot at the grounded calf went to the man who did the ear-marking and castrating. It takes about one minute to castrate a bull calf. The by-products of the procedure, called "mountain oysters," were collected by one of the kids. They were then cooked on the coals at the edge of the branding fire and eaten on the spot. A roper who had a spare minute would ride over to get his share. They were consumed, as is, unsalted and unseasoned. The taste is similar to frog legs or chicken.

The earmark is a great deal more important than the brand as it can be seen and recognized at a distance of up to a quarter of a mile. In the winter when the hair on the hide is fairly long, a brand is relatively difficult to read. But a well-made earmark is easily decernable.

While the marker worked on the head, the calf was vaccinated against Black Leg Fever and branded. Each brand was usually placed correctly, but occasionally one of the kids would slip and the brand was positioned too high or too low. Whoever misplaced the brand would be reminded of it every time that particular animal showed up on the range. As the brand was put on with a rocking motion the smoke turned from brown to blue. This indicated that the hair was burned through, hide had been reached, and a good brand achieved.

Stanley Smith always dehorned his calves as he earmarked. He felt that they were easier to feed in winter and would bring a little more at market without horns. The others claimed that the cows could more readily keep the coyotes away from small

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calves if allowed to keep their horns. Pine tar was applied to the open cut on the bull calves and to the head if the calf had been dehorned. This was done to keep flies away. In years when the screw worms were bad, even the earmark was dabbed and the calves had to be watched closely all summer. Many times they had to be roped and doctored out on the range if they showed signs of having worms. A calf seen shaking his head or wringing his tail was most likely needing attention. This is where experience was most valuable, as a cowhand could usually tell the condition of cattle simply by observing them as he rode past.

Branding proceeded at a fast clip and, although nobody seemed to be rushing, there was no lost motion as on most branding days, there was a long ride back to camp afterwards. At Beck Meadows, this involved about a ten-mile ride. The youngsters used to slip off in the lead and race down through the timbered slopes, jumping logs and dodging limbs. This was not a very safe sport and not the best thing in the world for the horses, some of which were spoiled in this way. They became so inclined that they would always want to run to camp. No one was ever seriously injured, though. A little hide taken off was considered to be part of the game.

A good horse under a cowboy makes a good cowhand even better. Every cattleman had his favorite horses that he has owned during his lifetime. Bill Aleck's favorites were Buck, Johnny, and Sleepy. Jim swore by Butch and Baldy. With Marvin it was Frenchy, Cowboy, and Cedar. Stanley's many favorites included Pedro, Frank, Joker, Sheik, Smokey, Napoleon, and Chico. These horses never won prizes at the County Fair, but many of them could have. They were top working horses which could carry a man all day. Sometimes on the fall trips one horse would be ridden every day for a week. This really showed how much stamina a horse had. Those horses that did win ribbons were good at one thing. The working cow horses, however, never specialized but most were equally skilled at roping, cutting, and carrying the cowboy at any speed through rough country as he made his daily ride. The South Fork cattlemen were blessed with many fine riders who worked with them over the years. It would be impossible to name all of them, but a few outstanding men come to mind.

Brock Cole worked for all of the cattlemen at one time or another. Brock had a lot of tall tales to tell. He had the gift of gab and kept up a constant chatter. He was well liked by all as there was never a dull moment when he was around. Tough as a hickory nut, Brock would make the fall trip into the mountains wearing a light shirt and old jumper. Most of the others would have long underwear, chaps and heavy coats, yet still seem to feel the cold more than Brock. Brock was always getting off his horse and setting a sagebrush afire – which was the only thing that indicated he might be cold.

After the branding had been finished at all locations, everyone would take a few days off in camp. This gave time to check over clothing that needed washing. Most of the cattle people dressed about the same. Levis were usually worn, along with blue cotton workshirts. Long handled underwear was substituted for the conventional type much of the time for extra warmth. Unlined Levi jackets were popular and, when not being worn, were tied behind the saddle. The cowman's hat had as much personality as the man himself and was discarded only when completely worn out. Everyone who rode on the Fish Creek range remembers how Bill Aleck put his hat on and then pulled it down around as if he were screwing it on so that the front always faced a little to the side.

More money was put into boots than any other item of clothing. Most of the riders ordered through Western or Bloocher Boot Companies where their measurements were kept on record. Some of the men wore a small silk scarf around their neck. When water had to be carried from the creek, heated on a wood stove, and clothes hand scrubbed, shirts were not changed every time a bit of mud got on them. The Levi pants seldom got as much washing as other articles of clothing. Some of the younger cowboys actually preferred to wear them without washing until they were almost completely worn out. They could step out of them and the pants would stand by themselves. As long as they didn't try to walk off by themselves they were not considered too dirty. Although seldom washed, they were *dry cleaned* almost daily. This

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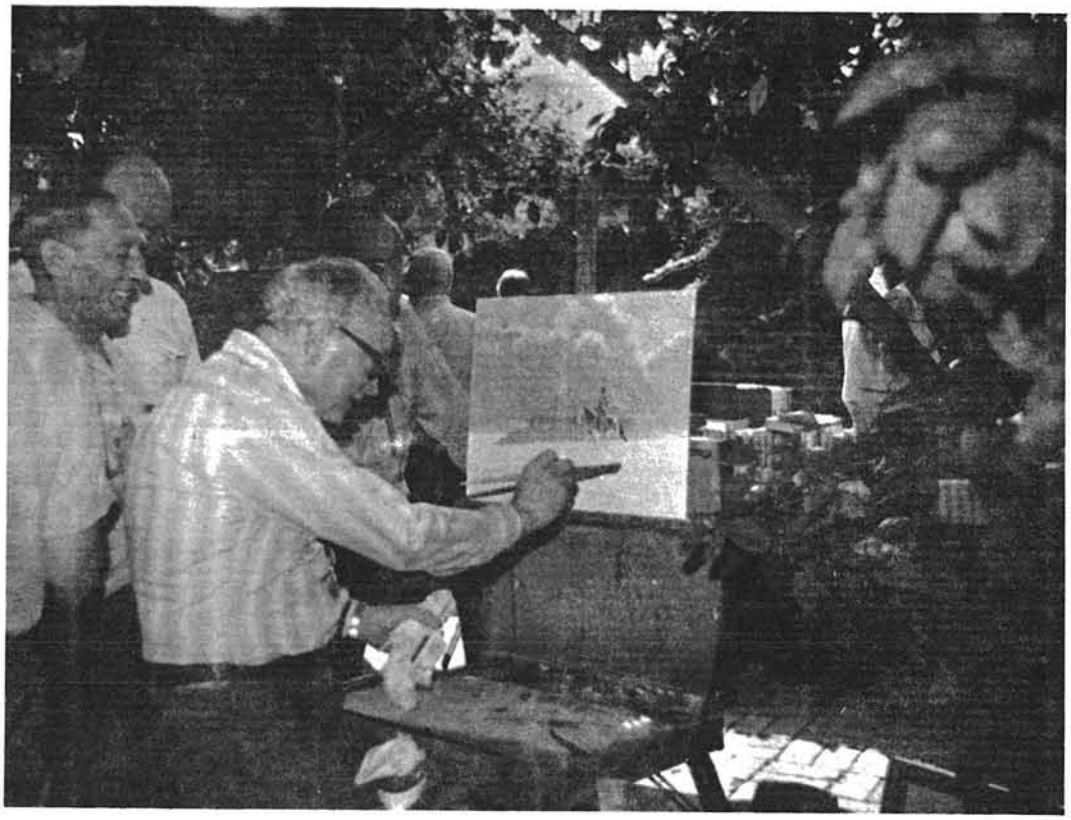


Westerners Augie Schatra and Bill Newbro watch CM Lloyd Mitchell work on his oil at the Rendezvous at Sheriff Alden Miller's home. — *Photo courtesy Iron Eyes Cody.*

SEPTEMBER RENDEZVOUS

For another year the rather traditional September Rendezvous of the Los Angeles Corral of the Westerners was hosted by our genial Sheriff Alden Miller. To review all of the great events is simply too much for our limited space. Suffice it to say that those of the Westerners who attended and the Corresponding Members who were invited remember an evening of warm, congenial fellowship made more impressive by the mixing of the drinks that was so ably accomplished by John Urabec and the Wranglers under his direction. The Corral owes Westerner John a vote of thanks also for the great California wine which he provided at dinner.

It seemed like everybody had a chance at the auction either as an auctioneer or a buyer. Such action the Corral has never seen before and the enthusiasm is manifested by the fact that money was raised for the Corral's fund during this auction. The art work that was especially contributed by Homer Boelter, Bill Bender, Andrew Dagosta, Lord Harting, Anthony Kroll, Ted Littlefield, Kenneth Mansker, Lloyd Mtichell, Burt Procter, Joseph J. Shebl and

(Continued on Page Thirteen)

Monthly Roundup . . .

mer of 1971. It was perfectly natural that Westerner Ray Billington of the Huntington Library would meet Dr. Lamar and escort him over to the meeting of this fascinating group of men we call the Los Angeles Corral of the Westerners. It is of no little importance that Dr. Lamar is also the Vice-President of the Western History Association.

Dr. Lamar's presentation specifically concerned itself with the theme that travel along the Southern route to California was somewhat different from that over the Central Overland Trail. Ray, thanks for introducing Dr. Lamar to our Corral and we hope he returns soon.

(Continued on Page Thirteen)

In Remembrance

DWIGHT L. CLARKE

1885-1971

The official publication of the Occidental Life Insurance Company carried these lines as a heading on its front page, "Thirty-five years of distinguished and devoted service to Occidental Life came to a close on Sunday evening, February 7 with the death of Dwight L. Clarke, a Director of the company and its President from 1944 through 1950."

But this is not all. He was born in Berkeley, California, some fifteen years before the turn of the century, and educated at the University of California at Berkeley and Hastings Law School. After ten years of banking experience in San Francisco, he moved to Bakersfield where he joined a bank which was later absorbed by The Bank of Italy – now Bank of America. This brought him in contact with and under the watchful eyes of A. P. Giannini, his brother, Dr. Giannini, and son, L. M. Giannini. Within that organization, he became Executive Vice President in charge of all of the banks in southern California, some ninety branches.

In the middle of the 1930's when L. M. Giannini was searching for an able and trusted man to manage Occidental Life, he selected Dwight, who got the job in spite of the reluctance of A. P. Giannini, who valued his services in the bank and disliked losing him.

His record at Occidental can best be summed up by the statistics which reflect that when he came to Occidental in 1936 the company operated in twenty-three states and territories and six Canadian provinces, had $10 million of life insurance in force and assets of $24 million and was the 48th largest of American and Canadian companies in terms of insurance in force. At his retirement, it was operating in eighteen additional jurisdictions, had $2.7 billion of life insurance in force and assets of $278 million and was the 17th largest.

While achieving distinction as a life insurance executive, he devoted his time and

DWIGHT L. CLARKE

talent to a host of civic, cultural, charitable, and educational enterprises such as Occidental College, Loyola University, Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, American Cancer Society, The Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles, and others. A second generation Californian, he had an enthusiastic and intense interest in his native state and in the American West, as evidenced by the fact that he was a member of Zamorano Club, Sierra Club, California Historical Society, and other similar groups. Among the distinguished offices he held was that of Trustee of the California Historical Society.

During his retirement years, he devoted much time to these interests and offered works such as *General Stephen Watts Kearny, Soldier of the West; William Tecumseh Sherman, Gold Rush Banker;* and the *Original Journals of Henry Smith Turner.* Each of these works is a scholarly piece evidencing exhaustive research and documentation. The latest of his writings, published in the *California Historical Society Quarterly,* is entitled "The Gianninis, Men of the Renaissance," which is a valuable addition to the printed knowledge of the great California business leaders of that name. During these retirement years, with his eyesight failing, he persistently pursued his research through the aid of Mrs. Clarke, who was his seeing eye, and as she read to him from the records, he made his notes.

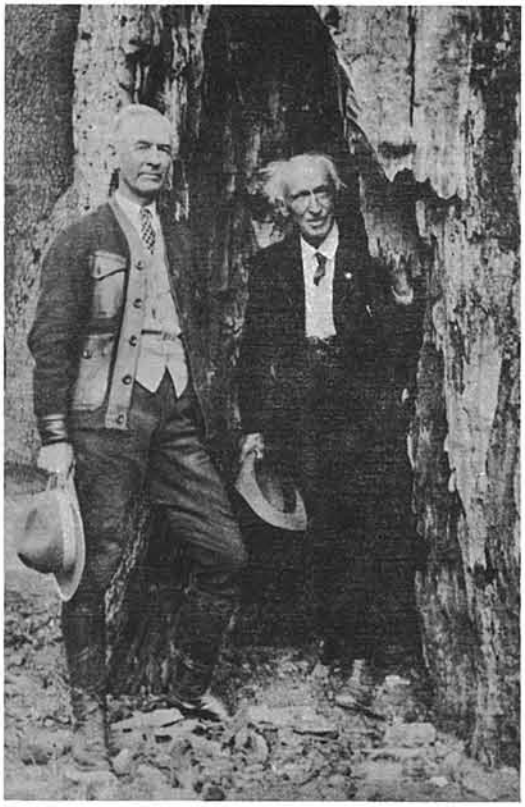
(Continued on Page Thirteen)

Lummis and Maynard Dixon: Patron and Protege

By DUDLEY GORDON

A notice in his *Land of Sunshine* magazine in April 1898 expresses Lummis' evaluation of the talents of a young illustrator he had "discovered" in San Francisco. The artist was Maynard Dixon, and throughout the more than thirty years of their close association he was grateful to Lummis for having given him his first job and for the advice and encouragement that were available to him whenever he was in need of it. The notice read:

L. Maynard Dixon, though but 22 years of age, is one of the most promising illustrators of the West. Earnest, sympathetic, with a vein of genuine poetry in his nature, and at the same time practicing tireless patience in study, he shows in his work not only feeling, but growth. He has a peculiar aptitude in types, an intimate touch for Western subjects; and the rapidity with which his technique improves augurs very handsomely for his future as an illustrator.



Lummis and Earl Brininstool, author and early member of Los Angeles Corral.

During the Winter of 1940 it was my privilege to interview Dixon at his camp on the beach at the Salton Sea where he and his wife, the former Edith Hamlin, were stopping with the hope that Maynard might enjoy relief from the ravages of asthma. At the time he looked quite well, though his face was drawn and somewhat haggard. Mrs. Dixon exemplified Maynard's expert skill in selecting a fine example of beautiful womanhood – and she could cook, too.

While my wife, Jean, and Mrs. Dixon were busy with woman talk in the cottage, Maynard and I strolled down to the water's edge where we sun-bathed *au naturel*. As we lolled on the smooth sand, Dixon recalled that when he was a striving young artist under the wing of his mother, and trying to earn his living in San Francisco, he was visited by Charlie Lummis. Lummis was a foremost Southwestern author, editor-poet-athlete who had walked from Cincinnati to Los Angeles and became the first City Editor of the Los Angeles *Times* in 1885. Now, some ten years later, he was the editor of a quality regional magazine, the *Land of Sunshine*, and had come to offer young Dixon an illustrating job for the publication.

The young artist stated that Lummis was the first man to give him counsel, advice and encouragement. Thereafter Dixon admired Lummis greatly and adopted Lummis' hat style (Stetson sombrero) as his own.

In the course of their early friendship, the young painter was the guest of Lummis at El Alisal, his rock castle home, for a period of a month. Ties of friendship established during that month remained strong until Lummis' death in 1928.

Concerning Lummis' characteristics, Dixon remembered his as having been domineering and inconsiderate of Mrs. Lummis. Also, that he had a great ego, and that he went out of his way to encourage young talent, so long as that talent did not compete with him. He cited the example of Mary Austin who sought to become an atuhority on New Mexico, which Lummis considered to be his private preserve.

(Continued on Next Page)

Lummis and Dixon . . .

He also recalled that Lummis worked hard and long; that he was completely honest and of impeccable integrity. He possessed the Yankee virtues, taught thrift and insisted upon "getting his money's worth." He entertained a great number of celebrities to whom he served simple meals with great flare, to the tune of California and Spanish songs.

He recalled El Alisal with its different levels and inadequate windows as a symbol of Lummis' individuality, and that it was not in the Hopi style (it was part Spanish, part Indian and part Lummis). He doubted if it should be preserved. (It is now a State Historical Monument and has been cited by the Cultural Heritage Board of Los Angeles.)

Dixon stated that Lummis possessed much of the Indians' mysticism, that he understood the Indian better than many white people did, and that he got along with them splendidly. He mentioned Alexander Harmer had introduced Lummis to many California families, and that Don Carlos esteemed people of wealth and talent and gave his friendship with Mrs. Leland Stanford as an example.

Dixon stated that once, when he was in New Mexico at Lummis' invitation, Don Carlos cut him cold. It hurt. It was Dixon's opinion that Lummis' period of "blindness" was bunk. He said that Lummis was acting all the while; that he capitalized on his eccentricities.

As to the many activities of Lummis, Dixon said that it was not a matter of glands – it was the power of mind over fatigue. That Lummis' type was normal, and that we are not.

During a visit to El Alisal, Dixon handicrafted a clothes closet and decorated its door with pyrograph ornaments. He also designed the iron Lummis monograph which may be seen on the main entrance door of El Alisal. The fabrication of the design may have been the work of Dixon's brother who was skilled in iron work.

The first of a series of letters to be exchanged between Lummis and Dr. Herbert E. Bolton was a request in 1904 for the use of a half-tone drawing by Dixon. It was an illustration for George Parker Winship's *The Story of Coronado* and bore the caption "Quivira Was Always Just Beyond." It may be seen on page fifty-two of the *Land of Sunshine*, July 1898. In the same article Dixon had a lively sketch depicting "The Fight at Zuñi." In 1905 Dixon and Lillian Tobey were married under the enormous sycamore in the patio of the Lummis home. At another time Ed Borein and his lovely Lucille were married on the same spot.

An understanding of the camanaderie shared by Lummis and Dixon may be ascertained through the reading of the following sample letters from a considerable correspondence.

Dec. 6, 1907

Dear Kid:

Sorry to see you go to New York. It is like a peach – not that you are one – going from its own free twig to the cannery. You are old enough to have acquired permanently in your bones the need of freedom.

Seriously, I am sorry to see you go, but I can understand your point of view. Only, don't let them swamp you. Don't forget that everybody knows more than you about something; but that you know more than all the world about your own. The trouble with any such alleged metropolitan center is that it wants to use you. Don't be used. Go hungry first. Don't let any of them buy you. Don't sell anything that isn't in you. Don't forget your backbone.

CFL

2/28/1912

Dear Kid:

Glad to hear from you, but sorry that you are unstrung and overworked. Get a set of boxing gloves, and take it out on one another; or, come out here and rest yourselves up watching the deliberate motions of a wise old man! . . . You and the infants can come and camp here and go meandering from these headquarters as far as you darn please . . . or you might take in my Jib-O-Jib at San Pedro if you want to flock together by yourselves. You can put the baby there in the sand with the salt air all around her, and keep house for yourselves.

Love to the little wife and the baby and your own worthless self.

CFL

Oct. 29-16

Dear Pop –

The main reason you have not heard

(Continued on Next Page)

Lummis and Dixon . . .

from me is that the report has been mostly bad. Too much – I can't write you all about it here – But this much I can say – that experience has taught me the futility of further effort along lines I had chosen, and the absolute necessity of freedom, cost what it may. This is essential – the one essential – as conditions have brought me to an absolute standstill.

I have produced practically nothing in a year – I am paralyzed in my work and powerless to do anything in this state for L. or little C. – much less for myself. January will probably see the matter decided.

. . . I'm glad you are contented and going ahead – continue. But I'd rather see you writing books than patching up old walls: – the Great Eliminator, perhaps, knows best about them. But this intangible stuff that floats from one to another of us – the stuff we think – somehow I believe that never dies.

With affection and best wishes,
Maynard D –

June 27, 1918

Dear Maynard:

. . . I am glad that you are "beginning to come back." If you were an athlete or a bull I would not feel as I do; for it is hard for me personally to conceive that any sorrow or bother should cut a man out of his work. On the other hand, I never was an artist; and my dull work can go ahead anyhow, no matter what happens.

But I hope you get "interested in painting again." You may remember that I detected in you very many years ago an uncommon capacity to do a valuable thing in an uncommon way. You have grown enormously in these years, not only in your technique but in your Soul. And I want to see you go ahead and grow up to your full stature! These are days when art has become almost a by-word. You have the old chastity of feeling towards it; you have a chance now that you never had before – if you will buckle down and work like hell, and keep wroking your very best. You are young yet, you have an uncommon natural talent, you have developed it in a way which has pleased me very deeply. Keep it up!

Don't let any sorrow or worry or sickness or drawback cut you out from being the really great artist that it is in you to be. You have thirty years to go yet, growing. That was one of the wonderful things about Keith and very few other artists I have known – that instead of getting stale or stagnating, they did better work the longer they worked.

I can understand from your temperament something of the meaning of what you say about dreams and socialism etc. and nothing seeming real. But that isn't the real Dixon that I have watched and been proud of these many years. That is simply a sick mind that you must cure yourself of – since no other doctor can do it. Never mind about the government or the war or socialism or dreams or anything else. Hogtie your mind and your attention and your intention, and turn out paintings. And between painting, do poems. You are really about as much a poet as artist – and that is one reason your pictures are what they are. I don't know that you will ever sell your poems much; but it will do you good not merely to get them off your mind, but through your mind. Every poem you write is a help to a picture you are to paint.

Don't ask me about the war. It isn't legal. I think we have got to win it. And that is all there is to be said.

All serene here, and Busted, and working, and trying to live as we go.

Always your friend,
Charles F. Lummis

Oct. 1, 1918

Dear Boss:

Please rush along your stuff so I can sandwich it in with my other work. And how about a cover design for December in three colors? Figure of "The New West" looking out against the sun – wind blowing her skirts back – "Los paisos del sol, etc." To be done in blue, buff and brown. If you want it, please send in your lettering reduced to a minimum and I will submit a color sketch. Or if you have any other idea – something simple – you'd rather have, let's hear it.

I have several things under way for the exhibition. I want to get them all along together. Keep me going so I won't have time to think how tired I am.

Your friend
Dixon

Steps going to the front porch of Charlie Russel's cabin. — *Photo by Author.*

Charles Russell Country

By Bert Olson

In 1906 James Sherwood came to Great Falls, Montana. In later years he became head of the Royal Milling Company of Great Falls and connected with the Washburn Crosby Company of Minneapolis. Eventually these companies were formed into General Mills in Minneapolis.

His son James Sherwood Jr. was born in 1908 and in the fall and winter of 1919 his father had constructed a two story log cabin on the west shore of Lake McDonald in Glacier Park, Montana, one of the few private homes on this beautiful lake. The family started to visit their summer home which was called Sherwood Lodge, and James Sherwood Jr. always spent his summers there.

Charlie Russell's log cabin and studio was a short distance away and when James Jr. was eleven years old he would go over to visit with him. Charlie Russell always kept a high chair in his studio so James could sit and watch him sketch and paint. He took James down to the lake shore and showed him how to dig out clay from the water's edge. This he used to make his models for castings into his bronzes. For years they were always together during the summer months and in those years James grew to love and respect the painter he knew so well. He was always kind and patient with James and there was a warm friendship between them.

James Sherwood Sr. was often over to Charlie Russell's cabin and many times Russell came over to the Sherwood cabin and they sat and talked out on the front porch in the evenings.

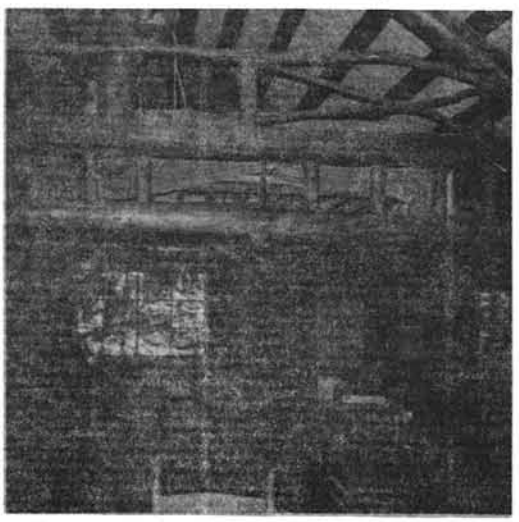
Charlie Russell's works were shown in many Eastern cities from 1903 to 1925. In 1912 he was invited to exhibit his work at the Calgary Stampede in Calgary, Canada. A special showing was arranged in Saskatchawan, Canada, in honor of the Prince of Wales, who was in the country to dedicate the new Prince of Wales Hotel on Waterton Lake, Canada. As a result of this showing in the college halls of Saskatoon, the Prince of Wales purchased one of Russell's paintings depicting the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

In August of this year we visited the Sherwood Lodge and visited with our old friend James Sherwood Jr. and his family. We spent three days of wonderful hospitality with them in the picturesque surroundings of their cabin, which was situated just above the lake shore and in a setting of tall timber.

As they knew the present owners of the Charlie Russell cabin and studio we were invited to go over and visit them. We walked up the many hand hewn log steps to the front door of the cabin and entered the living room.

The famous Buffalo skull hung over the cabin fireplace and the many etchings and paintings on the three sides of the fireplace

(Continued on Next Page)



View taken opposite the fireplace in the Russell cabin showing the balcony with steps for guests. — *Photo by Author.*

South Fork Country . . .

consisted of scraping off everything, including corral dirt, with one's pocket knife. More than one young bride found herself in hot water by deciding her cowboy husband needed to have all his Levis washed.

The time spent in camp was also used to care for any horses needing shoeing, although this was done many times when the men came back to camp early from a regular day's ride. The horses had to be reshod every six weeks or so, and each rancher took care of his own horses. Most had learned to shoe horses as boys watching their dads. Often there would be some genuine excitement around camp when a colt or one of the broke horses was being shod that did not quite like the idea. None were too tough to handle, and, although gentleness was the rule, it was considered okay to attract their attention by whacking them along the ribs with a shoing rasp. A hind foot might have to be tied up or an animal thrown to the ground to get shoes on him, but this was the exception. If the horse was started right, he usually accepted the shoeing process as part of the routine.

The few days off were also used to wash saddle blankets and make repairs on their riding gear. Great care was taken with the horse's back. Saddles were not only bought to fit well, but clean saddle blankets were a must. Many cattlemen used a two-fold Navajo blanket next to the saddle and a three-fold wool blanket next to his back. This was turned and re-folded as it got dirty. Two sets of blankets were generally on hand so that one could be washed while the other was in use. Prior to being saddled, the animals always received a good brushing on the back and other parts covered by the saddle. On a long, hot pull, the men would get off and, after loosening the cinch, prop the back of their saddle up by resting an elbow on the horse's back. This allowed a little air onto the mount's back.

Although many types of bits were used, many of the riders favored the Spanish or spade bit. Most popular were those made by Abe Hunt, a pioneer Kern County bit maker. These bits may look inhumane, but if made and used right a horse gets used to the feel of one in his mouth and can be kept with a "light mouth" all his life. Split leather reins were used to a good degree, but some leaned toward the use of braided rawhide or leather reins with romel attached Rawhide riatas were carried by most of the old timers in lieu of the newer grass or nylon ropes. But as it became harder to get good rawhide work done, they gradually switched over. Jim Robertson, the last old-timer to pack a rawhide riata on the Fish Creek range, used this type of rope until his retirement. Willie Nicoll was remembered as being an artist with a riata. Carrying a 50-footer, he would swing an 8-foot loop and reach out for an unbelievably long distance, seldom missing.

Some of the hands occasionally broke down and took a bath. One such event that took place at Smith's camp will be long remembered. The men were butchering beef. After letting the men know in which direction they were headed, a couple of young school teachers and some of the other young ladies headed up the creek.

(If you you want to know what happened to the young school teachers, you just have to get Bob Powers South Fork Country.*)*

Russell Country . . .

were just as they were when Charlie Russell lived there. In the studio in the rear of the main cabin the fireplace took in most of the West wall. This was the room were Jim Sherwood Jr. used to sit and watch the painter at his work. He remembered the corner well. The Russell cabin and studio are in fine repair and one can see it has been well cared for.

Out on the front porch Charlie and his friends spent many hours together looking over the placid waters of Lake Macdonald, reminiscing of happy times together. Oft times they would wander over to Sherwood Lodge and visit with Mr. Sherwood Sr. Irving Cobb and Charlie and Mr. Sherwood were great friends and when Irving Cobb came up to Lake MacDonald to visit Charlie, they usually came over to the Sherwood's to spent the evening on the Sherwood porch.

It was good to see the old cabin home and studio of Charlie Russell where so many memorable events took place in years gone by, and to know that it looked just like it was when he was there spending his summer days on Lake Macdonald, Montana.

Dwight Clarke . . .

Although he was a man of strong conviction, I never heard him utter an unkind word about anyone, regardless of how heated the discussion. Dwight was a man for all seasons and his leaving creates a void in the business, civic, and intellectual communities that will be difficult to fill. All of us share in the loss of this good, able, and dedicated man who leaves so much of himself with those who knew him.

And now I close with those few Spanish words so meaningful and beautiful, *adios, hasta la vista*—good-bye, till we meet again.

EARL C. ADAMS.

Monthly Roundup . . .

AUGUST MEETING

"The William M. Stewart-John W. North Feud on the Comstock: Good Guys vs. Bad Guys?" does not really represent the erudite and fascinating presentation by Russell R. Elliott, Professor of History at the University of Nevada. The present day confrontation between the Liberal Wing and the Conservative Wing are insignificant compared to the use of wholesale purchase of votes, large scale blackmail and occasionally the use of a 45. Dr. Elliott's presentation was interesting and factual. He seemed to hold the attention of all elements of the Corral: all the way from those interested in "Bad Guys of the West" to those interested in the local and sometimes provincial history of Nevada.

September Rendezvous . . .

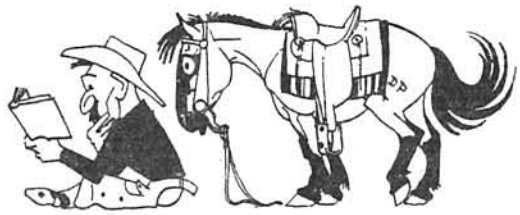
Robert Wagoner were especially appreciated.

The highlight of the afternoon was the presentation of the year's honors to two great authors within the Corral—Paul D. Bailey and W. W. Robinson. For the past few years artists have been honored by the Rendezvous and this year two of our finest western authors who also just happen to be members of the Los Angeles Corral were elected to this honor. The fraternal statements and warm fellowship which was manifested by their short presentations were enhanced by memories of long association on the part of the old-timers within the Corral.

Corral Chips

Sid Platford continues to supply the Roundup Foreman with an unending stream of intelligence and helpfulness without which it would be difficult to make the *Branding Iron.* At the meeting on May 12, 1971, he presented to each member a photograph of Lucky Baldwin's Oakwood Hotel in Arcadia—a picture taken about 1895. Thank you Sid. This versatile gentleman played the part of Father Serra at the bicentennial celebration of the founding of San Gabriel at the San Gabriel Auditorium Thursday evening, May 20, 1971. He has prepared an article for the *Branding Iron* on the 1914 Los Angeles flood which will appear soon. Sid—thanks a million.

In the *Westerner* magazine for June 1971, there is a most interesting article by C.M. member Eddie Rankin concerning the "Firing of the Anvils." Apparently, corresponding member Al Ferris and Westerner Sid Platford got involved in furnishing the anvils for the Jackass Mail Centennial in San Diego on August 31, 1957. The well known Uncle Ben Dickson from San Diego (a fellow member of the E Clampus Vitas) was also involved in this interesting bit of combination Halloween and 4th of July. One can imagine that it took a lot of power and made a lot of noise to lift a 40-pound anvil ten feet into the air when it was fired with the appropriate charge of black powder. Sid—is there anything else that you get involved with?



DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL . . .

CURLERS AND CAMPING, by Betty Tucker, La Siesta Press, 1971.

For you Westerners who have wanted to send your wife away camping on her own – *Curlers and Camping* is the answer. Mrs. Betty Tucker, a mother of three children, obviously likes to camp and is not afraid to be alone. This manual contains an amazing amount of information for the stronger sex, it also is written in an informal breezy manner that is easy to digest.

For those males who want to interest their wives in camping, this should be their first purchase. For females who are anxious to go-it-alone, be they single or married, this manual would prove most helpful.

– TAD LONERGAN.

SKETCHES OF A JOURNEY ON THE TWO OCEANS AND TO THE INTERIOR OF AMERICA, AND OF A CIVIL WAR IN NORTHERN LOWER CALIFORNIA, by Abbé Henry J. A. Alric. Translated from the French by Norah E. Jones. Edited, introduced and annotated by Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. 216 pp., 8 illustrations, index, end sheet maps, cloth. Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop. $20.00. Baja California Travels Series No. 24.

This most interesting and candid narrative of a French priest's wanderings through the American West, and down into Baja California and the Mexican mainland has reposed in cold storage for many years waiting for the historical sleuthing of Dr. Nunis to bring it back to life and publication. In spite of this historian-author's apology for the book's prose – "ghastly" in the original French – this reviewer found it most interesting and absorbing. The volume has been improved by the excellent translation by Norah E. Jones. Perhaps it is the facile editing of the three known editions and versions of the book into one single and sustaining journal, by Westerner Nunis. Definitely it does emerge as a work of readability and importance.

The first version, under Mexican imprint, was issued in 1866. Another version, in French, was issued in 1867. Two years later, another enlarged printing was circulated in France, and a copy of this edition, from the Bibliothèque Nationale, along with the two other versions from the Huntington Library, all were translated by Norah E. Jones, from the University Research Library at U.C.L.A. The skill and talents of Doyce Nunis were responsible for the shaping of these three books into the Narrative which Glen Dawson has published as volume 24 of his Baja California Travels Series. This could well be one of the finest items on this timely venture in publishing.

Abbé Alric was the French priest who arrived in California on the *Anne Louise*, on April 25, 1851. Alric was chaplain of a California-bound communal company of French miners, called the "La Ruche d'Or," or the Golden Hive. If the company was an odd one, the crew of the ship was one of the strangest ever to set sail from LeHavre. Alric chronicles that the *Anne Louise*, after touching port in the Canaries, was sailed away by the drunken crew, leaving all its filled water casks on the wharf. The omission was not discovered until it was too late to turn back. The tale of this thirsty and ill-begotten voyage around the Horn to San Francisco is a minor classic in itself.

As with most mining stock companies, the French group of the Golden Hive fell apart the moment its members faced the exigencies of panning out the gold of California. Father Alric, released of the necessity of serving as its chaplain, presented himself to Monsiegnor Alemany, Bishop of San Francisco, for some useful assignment in the Church. He was sent to Sonora, in Tuolumne County, in the roughest area of the mining district, to build his own church, and carve out his own pastorate. He served faithfully as resident priest – though appalled at the violence of the American frontier and the killings and hangings to which he was forced to officiate in last rites. He did not leave the diggings until 1856.

From there he traveled into Baja California, and from 1856 to 1860, found himself in the center of a scene of violence, intrigue and revolution equal to or surpassing the

one from which he had fled. During this time Father Alric did grant himself a year's absence from Lower California, when in 1858, he served a year as military chaplain at Fort Yuma, in Arizona. However, he returned to his beloved Santo Tomás, and strove until 1861 to bring some semblance of order to a land torn by strife – revolutionists, filibusters, and governmental terrorists. Finally, outraged by the revolts, the complete confiscation of church and private property, he journeyed north again to serve in Temecula, California.

But this sojourn in the United States was short lived. He returned to Mexico – this time to Mexico City – where he served the French forces during the Maximilian period. With final defeat and ouster of the French, he returned to France in 1867.

The value of this narrative is its candid portrayal of one of the most dramatic periods of Mexican history. What he tells of Baja California during the hectic and turbulent '50s and '60s, fills the chronological gaps of events that for many students has been riddle and conjecture.

This is a significant, beautifully annotated Baja California item. But more than that, it is a delightful adventure story, cram-packed with action, anger, and dramatics. Westerners owe their fellow historian, Doyce Nunis, a vote of thanks for bringing Father Alric back to historic view. They owe an equal debt to Glen Dawson for publishing it in his popular and wanted Baja California series.

Good reading. Fresh; thoroughly enjoyable. And, as a bonus, it is most handsomely printed by Westerner Grant Dahlstrom.

– Paul Bailey.

The Rough and the Righteous of the Kern River Diggins, by Ardis M. Walker, Paisano Press Inc., Balboa Island, Calif. 92662. $15.00

A host of Clampers, and members of local and farther afield historical societies, know Ardis Walker and cherish his friendship. As a Corresponding Member of the Los Angeles Corral, it is always a pleasure when he graces our meetings by his presence.

He is a grandnephew of Joseph Reddeford Walker whose place in the history of the West and the Southwest looms bright. Ardis' grandfather came to the Kern River region when gold was discovered there in 1850.

Ardis was born in 1901 at Keysville, and both of his parents were born a bit to the north and east at Whiskey Flat, later renamed Kernville.

Ardis graduated from U.S.C., and then went to New York City to join the technical staff of the Bell Telephone Laboratories. While here, he had a volume of quatrains published in England. Today it is a much sought for item commanding a fabulous price when found.

Sierra Sonnets, illustrated by Kirk Martin of Yucca Valley, was declared to be by Martin Bush, Curator of the Manuscript Collections at the Syracuse University Cultural Center as "the most beautiful book in print that I have handled in many years." Get a copy if you can. An Ardis Walker Room has been established at Syracuse University where every published item is being preserved, plus the manuscripts of the author. One can only ask, "Why wasn't this honor given by an educational institution here in the West?"

This latest book, I consider a literary gem. It consists of a prologue and an epilogue enclosing thirty-five vignettes of two to eight pages in length, each introduced by a full page illustration of remarkable merit created by Katherine F. Clarke.

Each vignette conveys the role played by some personality in the Kern River region in bygone years. Facts of history, human nature, biography, and events are skillfully blended to send a shaft of light on each portraiture.

You will know a bit more about Joseph Reddeford Walker; James Capen Adams, hunter of grizzlies; Asbury Harpending, founder of Kern County and later of the notorious Diamond Mine swindle; William H. Brewer of the California State Geological Survey; and the cherokee gold seekers from the vicinity of Fort Gibson, Lovely Rogers and Hamp Williams. The former discovered the Big Blue Bonanza between Keysville and Kernville, while the latter made a fortune out of the silver strike at Randsberg.

I thoroughly enjoyed "The Rough and the Righteous." I consider it a classic – a sound literary production with a meaning for local history.

– Harvey Starr.