LOS ANGELES CORRAL
WESTERNERS
The Branding Iron
J. GOODMAN

MARCH 1974 LOS ANGELES CORRAL NUMBER 113

LINCOLN AND THE INDIANS

By HARRY KELSEY

Most Lincoln biographers assume the Great Emancipator had no interest in Indian problems. Numerous scholars have managed to discuss the life of Lincoln without ever mentioning the word Indian. One writer, who spent years studying the Lincoln phenomenon, concluded that Lincoln never saw an Indian dead or alive as a boy and perhaps never saw a live Indian at all before 1861. The actual record differs considerably from this general assumption. Lincoln's acquaintance with Indians was much more extensive than most historians seem to think. Lincoln saw Indians and heard about them frequently on

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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.

THE MONTHLY ROUNDUP

DECEMBER

The 1973 Corral year ended with a big bang as new Active Member Thomas F. Andrews spoke on "Errant Scribbler or Accurate Scribe: L. W. Hastings, as Promotor and Emigrant Guide." Andrews, an Associate Professor of History at Azusa Pacific College, has been interested in the travels of the pioneers in the early West. He has published many articles relating to emigrant guide books and travels. Corral members will remember his fine feature "Western Guidebooks" appearing in the December 1972 issue of *The Branding Iron.*

Sheriff John Urabec's badge of office glows from the magnetism created by the January speaker Don Carlos Dentzel.
— Iron Eyes Cody photograph

JANUARY

"The West of Alfred Jacob Miller" was the subject of the whiz-bang slide narration of Active Member Carl S. Dentzel. Corral members got a close look at the West before it was opened to the white man. Miller came West at the age of 27 when Sir William Drummond Stewart

asked him to accompany his expedition into the far reaches of the West. Under candlelight Miller painted the first western scenes of Indian gatherings and traced Indian scenes featuring hunting, family life, etc. Dentzel presented colored slides of many of the 90 watercolor sketches made on the trip West.

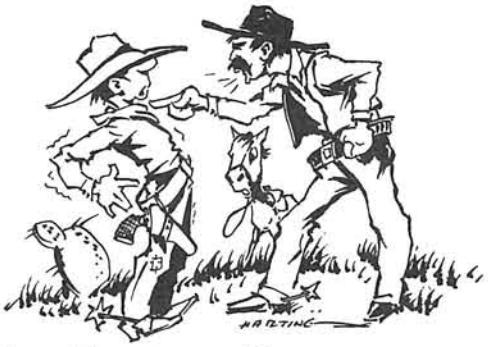
Scene at the February Corral Meeting with Father Peter J. Powell (center) with Deputy Sheriff Ray Billington (left) and Sheriff John Urabec. — *Iron Eyes Cody photograph*

FEBRUARY

The Corral was favored to have Father Peter J. Powell, Spiritual Director of St. Augustine's Center for American Indians, and former Sheriff of the Chicago Corral at the February gathering at Taix. Father Powell, author of the two volume work *Sweet Medicine,* presented a slide lecture entitled "They Drew for Power: An Introduction to Northern Cheyenne Warrior Society." The program included some 80 color slides of Little Wolf's Ledger Book Art painted between 1869 and 1880. Many of the pictographs shown appeared on clothing and tepees at one time. Father Powell, an adopted member of the Northern Cheyenne, told of the Sacred Arrows, the Sun Dance, and culture of his tribe.

MARCH

"Fort Custer on the Big Horn" was the subject of the March Corral Meeting. Corresponding Member Richard Upton shared his years of digging into its history, using sources as varied as local reminiscences and official records from the National Archives. Slides were used to illustrate life as it was at this frontier outpost. The speaker's years of research have resulted in his book *Fort Custer on the Big Horn, 1877-1898,* recently published by the Arthur Clark Company.



The Foreman Sez . . .

Some time back a request was made for articles, features, etc., and many of you came through with flying colors. Some of you are wondering how come your article has not appeared? The answer is simple, it just did not fit space limitations the time a specific issue was put together. Your contribution will appear in time – for sure. We also try to have a variety in each issue. At present we have a huge backlog of material on Indians. There was more to the American West than Indians. We could use some articles on stage and rail transportation, mining, the cattle industry, the cowboy, a town, western art, etc.

Corral Chips

Westerners are well represented as authors in the latest Book Club of California series of keepsakes on the Indians of California. *Carl Dentzel* covers "The Mission Indians," *Don Meadows* describes "The Luisenos and Dieguenos," and C.M. *Ardis Walker* narrates the story of "Steven Mi-

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the Indiana-Illinois frontier, and his opinions about Indians are in some ways surprisingly at variance with ordinary frontier attitudes.

Evenings during Lincoln's boyhood were enlivened with family stories. After his death relatives committed the stories to writing, probably with the usual embellishments, although a few have the ring of basic truth. Little Abe doubtless heard his father tell how Grandfather Abraham was killed by Indians while young Thomas watched. Probably Thomas also told his son about the occasion of his father's first visit in 1780 to Kentucky, where he was captured by Indians and forced to run the gauntlet. Nancy Hanks Lincoln apparently lived with a cousin, Sarah Mitchell, who was for several years an Indian captive, and Sarah's stories had countless retellings in the Lincoln home. Most Indians had been ejected from Indiana by the time the Lincolns arrived, but a few stragglers still remained, and many local people were heavily engaged in the Indian trade. So, while it may well be true that the boy Lincoln was not personally acquainted with any Indians, he at least knew a lot about them.

The Blackhawk War saw young Lincoln elected as captain of volunteers in the Illinois militia. His only extended public comment on this service came in 1848, when he discovered that Lewis Cass, the Democratic nominee for President, was campaigning as a hero of the War of 1812. Cass' credentials as a war hero and Indian fighter failed to impress Congressman Lincoln, and he said so in a speech to the House of Representatives that went something like this:

> Mr. Speaker, did you know I am a military hero? Yes sir; in the days of the Black Hawk War I fought, bled, and came away. If General Cass. . . . saw any live, fighting Indians it was more than I did; but I had a good many bloody struggles with the mosquitoes, . . . although I never fainted from loss of blood.

Lincoln might have added – but didn't – that he also saved the life of an ancient warrior who stumbled into camp one day. Anxious for at least one Indian scalp, a few militiamen decided to execute the feeble old man. Lincoln announced that any attack on the Indian would have to be over his dead body, saying that even barbarians do not kill prisoners. Some men, muttering that Lincoln was a coward, were shamed into silence when the frontier strong man said, "Try me." So the old Indian's life was spared. Anyway, that's the story William G. Green told a campaign interviewer in 1860.

Historians have generally ignored Green's account, although it shows a Lincoln concerned that Indians be treated with the same principles of justice and humanity he sought for Negroes. Indian rights were certainly not a burning issue in the fifties. Nevertheless, there is evidence to indicate that Lincoln gave the matter serious thought. His Democratic rival, Stephen A. Douglas, went to some pains to put Lincoln on record with a public statement of his Indian views. In the debate at Ottawa, Illinois, August 21, 1858, Douglas told the crowd that Lincoln wanted to confer citizenship "upon Negroes, Indians and other inferior races." Hoping to keep the debates centered on Negro slavery, Lincoln ignored the Indian issue. At Jonesboro on September 15, Douglas repeated the charge, and Lincoln again decided not to reply. Later at Alton, Illinois, Douglas asserted that the signers of the Declaration of Independence "when they declared all men to be created equal. . . . did not mean Negro, nor the savage Indians, nor the Fejee Islanders, nor any other barbarous race," and challenged Lincoln to reply. No longer able to ignore the Indian issue, Lincoln repeated a stand he had taken in Springfield some months earlier. "The authors of that notable instrument intended to include *all* men," he said. "They meant to set up a standard maxim for free socciety" applicable "to all people, of all colors, everywhere." Slavery was the issue in the debates with Douglas, but Lincoln, with some prodding from Douglas, served public notice that he was just as interested in securing basic rights for Indians and other people as he was in establishing the rights of the Negro.

When Lincoln became President, he appointed William P. Dole as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Dole was an old friend from Illinois, and if he had any prior experience with Indians, that fact has escaped notice to this day. However, Dole was a frequent – almost daily – visitor to

the White House during Lincoln's term of office, and a mass of evidence shows the two men discussed Indian problems at great length on many occasions. Although there are discouragingly few written records of these discussions, the reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs give a pretty good idea of the conclusions reached by Dole and Lincoln on Indian matters. Both Lincoln and Dole emerge as men concerned about fair treatment for Indians and laboring to discover a way to blend them into general American society.

Still, the Lincoln administration devoted most of its effort toward fighting the war and was only peripherally concerned with Indian problems. For the most part Lincoln's Indian Bureau followed practices and policies tried and proven in previous administrations. One of the traditional techniques for dealing with Indians was to bring a delegation of chiefs to Washington, where they could be suitably impressed with the superiority of white society. On these trips all expenses were paid, both for the Indians and the Indian agents. Ostensibly planned as treaty conferences, these junkets were in fact used as rewards for well-behaved agents and chiefs and as bribes to bring trouble-makers into line. Naturally, everybody wanted to go, and some sort of record must have been set in the spring of 1863, when literally dozens of Indians visited the Capitol, including a few hereditary enemies, like the Utes, Comanches, and Apaches. This particular combination, by the way, very nearly resulted in an Indian war right on Pennsylvania Avenue. So the Commissioner dispatched special instructions to the agencies forbidding any trips to Washington without advance clearance from the Bureau.

Regardless of administrative problems, the Indian visits were great entertainment for the public and a soothing balm for the egos of chiefs and politicians. Commissioner Dole invited all his friends and their wives to the ceremonial receptions held at bureau headquarters in the Patent Office Building. A man not unduly burdened with humility, Dole told the chiefs at one ceremony they would be allowed to address him as "Father." Although Secretary of Interior Caleb Smith walked in on one reception and was grudgingly introduced as the "Bigger Father," this was Dole's party, and generally the Secretary was not invited to attend. Of course, the "Great White Father" had his own separate ceremonies at the White House.

As Buffalo Bill would soon discover, Indians always gave a good show. By 1860 few Indians wore anything that could be readily identified as a native costume, but usually some chiefs in each group managed to deck themselves out in feathers and buckskins to impress the people they met. One party from Arizona and New Mexico went around in breechclout and beads, to the great delight of the fair sex promenading on Pennsylvania Avenue, who turned out in record numbers to be frightened and scandalized by the naked savages.

The Indians found similar amusements of their own. A group of thirty Chippewas from Lake Superior and Northern Minnesota apparently spent a good deal of time studying female anatomy at Washington burlesque shows, on the principle "that the more you see of the natural figure the better for the observer."

Noah Brooks, Washington correspondent for the Sacramento *Union*, filed a long dispatch about an Indian visit to the Washington office of the Indian Bureau in March, 1863. The Brooks account is worth reading, as it has several important things to say about relations between the Lincoln administration and the Indians.

> The rooms of William P. Dole, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, were crowded yesterday afternoon by the curious public, which wanted to look in security upon the deputation of red rascals who were but a short time ago plundering and robbing every white man upon whom they could lay hands, but who were now amicably hobnobbing with the veteran Commissioner, preparatory to a full and fair understanding as to their future. These 'plumed riders of the desert' appeared in the levee with all their glory on, being gay in paint, feathers and beadwork, albeit some of the party had been coaxed into hiding their nakedness in dingy garments of civilization, in which they looked about as comfortable as bears in moccasins. The majority of the party, fine-looking fellows, wore blankets embroidered with colored quills and made of skins of animals. Their legs were encased in buckskin leggings, gaudily decorated with beadwork. They squatted on the floor of the room in a semi-circle, in the midst of which a spokesman for each tribe—six in all—seated himself uncomfortably and had his say,

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which was interpreted by their 'guide philosopher, and friend,' who accompanies them, and the reply of the Commissioner was then translated to the crowd, who manifested their approbation by a unanimous howling grunt of applause, or 'You Bet.' The chief spokesman of the deputation is 'Ten Bears,' a spendid looking and intelligent Comanche, who can speak a very tolerable Mexican *patois*. He informed the Commissioner that he considered himself a highly respectable Indian, and the Commissioner a nice old man; that the party had a big disgust at the noise, confusion and crowd of the city; that they longed for their prairies and dog soup; that they were much obliged for their fare at the hotel, and that they preferred, like sensible Indians, to settle up affairs, promise to be 'heap good Indian,' and go back to their hunting ground; all of which the Commissioner promised, in the most approved style of white man's Indian highfalutin lingo, should be done. They are to see the President before they go, and have a small palaver with their Great White Father.

The Brooks report illustrates several of the problems that plagued Indian-White relations. For one thing, neither party took the other very seriously. The conferences were usually occasions for long, windy speeches and tired old jokes. One lusty young warrior, pining for the solaces of the flesh, announced his regret that the customs of the white man would not allow him to kiss all the ladies in the room, and though a few dowager bosoms fluttered, all the man got for his gallantry was a big laugh and some hearty applause.

Each party in these conferences assumed that the other had to be addressed in a sort of special language which neither could really comprehend. Moreover, both Indian and white were manacled by a cultural arrogance that made it impossible for either to understand or appreciate an alien way of life.

John Hay's record of a meeting between Lincoln and three Potawatomi chiefs at the White House in 1861 shows how grossly deficient was Lincoln's own appreciation of Indian culture. Apparently assuming all Indians spoke the same language, the President baffled his visitors by airing the two or three Indian words he knew, none of which happened to be Potawatomi. Then, even though one chief spoke excellent English, Lincoln resorted to the universal method for conversation with foreigners. That is, eliminate all unnessary words and raise the voice level correspondingly. The result was something like this: "Where live now? When go back Iowa?" The astonished chiefs hardly knew whether to laugh or run for cover. Thereafter, Lincoln's aides saw to it that notes were provided in advance by the Office of Indian Affairs and that an interpreter was always at hand.

So far as I know there is only one recorded address by Lincoln to a group of Indians. This curious account shows that the man who had great compassion for the downtrodden found it surprisingly difficult to fathom the Indian mind. The speech was made at the White House late in March, 1863, when a group of Plains chiefs visited the President. Here is what they heard:

> You have all spoken of the strange sights you see here, among your pale-faced brethren; the very great number of people that you see; the big wigwams; the difference between our people and your own. But you have seen but a very small part of the pale-faced people. You may wonder when I tell you that there are people here in this wigwam, now looking at you, who have come from other countries a great deal farther off than you have come.
>
> We pale-faced people think that this world is a great, round ball, and we have people here of the pale-faced family who have come almost from the other side of it to represent their nations here and conduct their friendly intercourse with us, as you now come from your part of the round ball.

Here Lincoln stopped while servants brought in a world globe, giving the crowd a chance to consider his clear distinction between sovereign foreign nations with ambassadors in Washington and the Indians who were subject to the directions of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. In a very roundabout way Lincoln was warning the chiefs that Washington no longer considered them to be heads of independent nations. His message was clear to Dole, to some senators, and to a few other people in the room who had discussed the treaty question for some time. It was certainly not clear to the Indians, but it would become painfully obvious to them in a few years when Congress would finally put an end to the treaty system.

Then, laying his hand on the globe, the President continued: "One of our learned men will now explain to you our notions about this great ball, and show you where

you live." With this introduction, Professor Joseph Henry of the Smithsonian Institution presented a brief lecture on the basic elements of geography, while a glazed look spread over the faces of the uncomprehending Indians. Before the professor's marvelous cosmography could elicit even a faint glimmer of comprehension, Lincoln was back at center stage, with the next act of his extraordinary performance:

> We have people now present from all parts of the globe – here, and here, and here. There is a great difference between this pale-faced people and their red brethren, both as to numbers and the way in which they live. We know not whether your own situation is best for your race, but this is what has made the difference in our way of living. The pale-faced people are numerous and prosperous because they cultivate the earth, produce bread, and depend upon the products of the earth rather than wild game for a subsistence.
>
> This is the chief reason for the difference; but there is another. Although we are now engaged in a great war between one another, we are not, as a race, so much disposed to fight and kill one another as our red brethren.

Lincoln here defined an aspect of Indian relations that still puzzles people who prefer to think of Indians as a single nation and a single culture, united in opposition to European invasion. As Lincoln said to the chiefs, Indians consistently gave the appearance of being more interested in fighting among themselves than in presenting a united front to the American government. This was true from the time of Cortez' conquest of Mexico in the 1520's, through the European struggles for control of North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and on down to Lincoln's own day.

The President then commented on the bleak future that seemed to be in store for the Indians.

> You have asked for my advice. I really am not capable of advising you whether, in the providence of the Great Spirit, who is the great Father of us all, it is best for you to maintain the habits and customs of your race, or adopt a new mode of life.
>
> I can only say that I can see no way in which your race is to become as numerous and prosperous as the white race except by living as they do, by the cultivation of the earth.

Lincoln's reference to agriculture as a suitable way of life for Indians reflected the new reservation policies that were taking shape in his own Indian Bureau. Inspired by the relative success of the California missions, the Bureau aimed for a repeat performance, but this time with secular establishments in the harsh environment of the Great Plains. Sad to say, nothing much came of this grand project to make instant farmers out of hunters and warriors.

Lincoln continued with a final comment on the precarious benefits of the treaty system.

> It is the object of this Government to be on terms of peace with you, and with all our red brethren. We constantly endeavor to be so. We make treaties with you, and will try to observe them; and if our children should sometimes behave badly, and violate these treaties, it is against our wish.
>
> You know it is not always possible for any father to have his children do precisely as he wishes them to do.

Finally, responding to questions from some of the chiefs who were getting homesick, Lincoln concluded:

> In regard to being sent back to your own country, we have an officer, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who will take charge of that matter, and make the necessary arrangements.

It is unfortunate for the whole country – not just the Indians – that Lincoln and his administration could not devote more time to Indian affairs. Winning the war was the main concern, and Indian problems were shelved for the duration – even Indian war problems. When the Confederates invaded Indian Territory, the Federal government told the Indians in effect to defend themselves. This policy helped drive thousands of slave-holding Indians into an alliance with the Confederacy and left loyal Indians to the mercy of Confederate troops and of scheming Indians and whites on the border of the Indian country. In addition, the alleged disloyalty of many tribes led to the nullification of their treaties and created the excuse for moving many of the Plains tribes into Indian Territory after the war.

During most of his administration, Lincoln was unable to give much personal attention to Indian matters – but he tried. When important negotiations were pending with Indian tribes, Lincoln dispatched special emissaries to conferences in the West, including Commissioner Dole and John Nicolay, Lincoln's own secretary.

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When the Minnesota Sioux took the warpath in 1862 and slaughtered hundreds of whites, the army moved in to suppress the uprising, then condemned 300 Indian prisoners to die on the scaffold. When Lincoln heard the results, he quickly revoked the sentences of all Indians except those guilty of atrocities, and directed that the others be treated as ordinary prisoners of war.[16]

It seems obvious now that Lincoln was more than casually interested in Indian matters – that he had the right humanitarian impulses, but that unfortunate circumstances kept him from giving much attention to Indian affairs. The Civil War, the problem of slavery, and the restoration of the Union made insistent demands on his attention and kept him from dealing effectively with the legitimate concerns of the Indians. If he had been able to acquire the same grasp of Indian relations that he had for military affairs, the present condition of the American Indian might be vastly different. That other events conspired to keep this from happening is one of the major tragedies of the nineteenth century.

BULL TEAMS

From RALPH MIRACLE

The following text and poetry was taken from a copy of *The River Press* published by Collins and Stevens in Fort Benton, Montana, in 1881. . . .

THE MONTANA BULL TRAIN
Done up in Rhyme by a Correspondent of the "River Press."

The bull team is an institution in Montana. In fact it has since time immemorial been one of man's most important helpers. We have it from divine history that the patriarchs whacked bulls, and all the way along the track of the centuries since that time we find the bull team a valuable assistant to the human family. In these latter days the bull team is a precursor of civilization. It is chiefly useful apart from railroads and navigable streams and has taken an important part in opening up the wilds of the Great West. In short, man owes a debt of gratitude to the bull team and is rather slow about paying for it. The poet has sung the praises of the locomotive, the steamboat, the horse, and even the mule – but the most patient and useful of all "common carriers," the bull team, has rarely been made the subject of his verse. Our correspondent, recognizing this neglect, seeks to do justice to the broncho steers of Montana in the subjoined stanzas:

A full-sized Montana bull team is eighteen bronco steers,
They're armed with horns upon their heads like mules are armed with ears;
The hind ends are protected by heels instead of horns,
And woe unto the driver when he steps upon their corns.

I've watched them through a field glass – the bodies long and lank,
And minus their dinner are no thicker than a plank.
They stand on legs like bean poles, of spider shape and queer,
And their horns, O Lord! would shame an elk – 'bout eight feet in the clear.

Times are kind of lively when these critters take a run;
No use trying to catch them, for the thing it can't be done;
Our best white-eyed cayuses are left far in the rear –
For lightning can't run crooked and catch a bronco steer.

When a steer once gets his back up, he's right dead on the fight;
They often pitch the driver up higher than a kite;
They show a man no quarter, and never give him bail;
And you ought to see a steer hop when one gets on his trail.

They will keep a dozen good-sized boys
suspended in the air;
A woman, too, with all her traps, her pin-
back and false hair;
And if the steer is in good fix, and neither
blind nor lame,
We'll have just lots of time to spare to hunt
up smaller game.

Had the South a thousand of these steers
to help them at Bull Run,
They'd never given up the chase till they
took Washington;
And when they placed their banners o'er
the ruins and the dead,
They'd have painted there a broncho steer
beside the copperhead.

The man who drives a bull team, he must
be pretty smart,
And he does a heap of cussing before he
makes them start;
He must tend the brake, before and aft,
sometimes on the off side,
With "Get up, Buck! Stand up there, Ben!
Together Turk and Tige!"

It's hard on those pilgrims who believe in
church and prayer,
For you can't make a bull team pull unless
you cuss and swear;
And before they drive bulls a month they
all of them agree
That you cannot work a bull team by the
double rule of three.

They do not use a lash whip in driving of
these steers,
For the lash would tangle 'mongst their
horns, and lap around their ears;
It's sure to work into a knot you never can
untie,
And if the driver has good sense he will
surely never try.

They drive them with a goad stick, like the
handle of a broom.
The main thing I see in driving is to give
'em plenty room;
But for the smaller items, I never stopped
to see,
For fear the critters might break loose and
then take after me.

I get on top the cabin when a bull train is
in sight,
Armed with a Winchester rifle when they
turn them loose at night;
Then you bet that I feel tickled to think
how safe I be,
For a steer he cannot climb a house, though
he can climb a tree.

I wouldn't drive a bull team on the Helena
and Benton road
For all the bullion taken from the mam-
moth Comstock lode,
Nor take the desperate chances, while
drouth is at its worst,
Enveloped ever in a cloud of alkali and
dust.

You may think that I've been joking, my
veracity may doubt,
But if it's not an honest fact my names not
Johnny Stout;
And if you think it somewhat mixed, 'twill
settle all your fears
When you have seen a bull team of full-
blooded broncho steers.

Corresponding Members Welcomed by Corral

The Los Angeles Corral of The Westerners extends the big paw of friendship to the following new Corresponding Members.

They are: Glen W. Adams, Glendale; G. W. Ned Blake, Fullerton; John Bugel, Manhattan Beach; Margaret Cassidy, Los Angeles; Daniel B. Esterly, Pasadena; George Fronval (France); Don Franklin, Santa Ana; Mo Goodman, Anaheim; Alexander Guthrie, Canoga Park; Clarence A. Halm, Oceanside; William J. Hartill, Canoga Park; John H. Heflin, Inyokern; Jack Horton, Inyokern; Perry L. Hunsaker, Victorville; Allen Klein, Beverly Hills; Russell A. MacCachman, Woodland Hills; Alan F. Moore, Los Angeles; A. M. Morico, Fullerton; Jackson Norwood, Pasadena; Urdine T. Pittsford, Newbury Park; M. Purkiss, Fullerton; Stewart J. Rogers, San Pedro; James W. Stovall, Arcadia; Edwin L. Swartz, Playa del Rey; Michael Thurman, San Diego; and James W. Stovall, Arcadia.

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XAVIER TIZOC MARTINEZ

. . . *A Gift from Guadalajara*

By JOHN E. BRUNT

We, as Americans, can be justly proud to live in a country with so rich a cultural heritage. All too often we accept this only as ours, not thinking of the influences of nations, societies and individuals who have played such a great part in the foundation of this proud heritage. Perhaps this present "revolutionary" generation has done more to arouse interest in such ethnic influences than any generation preceding.

Being a very young nation we have, of necessity, been greatly influenced by the many different cultures represented in our pioneer stock. This is especially true in the area of the "Fine Arts." Not only have we gone to other parts of the world to enrich our learning, but we also have been blessed by many who have chosen to come to us and share artistic abilities.

One such person, who so unselfishly gave of himself to teach our own California youth, was Xavier Martinez. Born Xavier Tizoc Martinez, of Aztec parents, in Guadalajara, Mexico, February 7, 1869, "Marty" as his many friends remember him, was destined to become a great artist and teacher.

Fortunately he had a very understanding father who, early in his schooling, saw that the architectural career dad had planned was not going to work out; mathematics just wasn't son Xavier's thing. It was then that he was allowed to switch to art .

His early training was in Mexico, after which he studied under Jerome and Carriere in Paris and graduated there from the Ecole Nationale et Speciale des Beau Arts.

In 1908 Martinez was made professor of painting at the College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, California, where he served faithfully until his retirement in 1942, a year before his death. Many close friends were made during those years of teaching. Not only was he loved as a teacher, but also for the beautiful, simple, philosophy of life which he imparted to his students and associates.

Martinez was a true lover of the California landscape and the low tones of his work, influenced by Whistler and Carriere, were especially appropriate and well adapted in this phase of his painting. Despite this influence he was also very tolerant of modern expression. "So long as it is based upon truth."

Whenever he was asked what he considered the most important quality of an artist, he never failed to state that sincerity was that one quality to be most desired. He believed that if an artist was sincere there would be "something of a living quality in his paintings."

In his later years clouds became his chief interest as a motif of expression. Many of his later paintings proved his perfection in this area, and many of his students owe their success with landscape painting to his ability to pass this technique on to them.

One of the highlights of Martinez' life, and one in which he justly took great pride, was his inclusion as one of the two Californians represented in the "World of Tomorrow" Hall of Fame in New York where he shared a niche with the venerable Father Junipero Serra.

It is always easy to give tribute to someone who has passed on, but Martinez received many fine tributes while he was yet living. Several of these sincere expressions are given in the words of his former students who profited greatly from his teachings. "Xavier Tizoc Martinez has been, since my first acquaintance with him about 20 odd years ago, a constant source of inspiration. He started me thinking about art, guided my first reading, and gave me my first insight into esthetic principles; hence he is largely responsible for whatever I have built upon the basis he gave me as a questioning student." – Glenn Wessels. And in the words of Hamilton Wolf, another very successful artist and former student, "We know him as 'Marty', you and I, which is rather familiar. But this familiarity breeds respect and a feeling of love for this man. He has the fire of the Aztec race in his blood, but a great sense of humor is intermingled with this dynamic force. No great man has ever been lacking in either one of these precious elements."

Probably one of his best known students is the famous artist and illustrator, Harold Von Schmidt, though many more can trace their success to Marty's classes at the College of Arts and Crafts.

Perhaps one of the most widely known events in Martinez' life was the building of his first studio in Piedmont, California, where he moved following the great San Francisco Fire of 1906. This house he built himself with the help of his artist and writer friends, among whom were Jack London, Herman Whitaker, Ambrose Bierce, and George Sterling. These men were all very successful in their respective fields, none of which included designing and building houses. The house was built without bracing, on eucalyptus stilts on a very steep hillside. The first night after its completion, a dance was held to celebrate the event. In the words of F. H. Meyer, President of the College of Arts and Crafts, "Providence must have had a very special care for Marty and his friends for the house did not roll down the hill."

His second house and studio were designed by F. H. Meyer, and although constructed more skillfully, certainly never held the close spot of the one his friends had helped him build. For many years this studio was the gathering place of the prominent artists, writers and musicians in the San Francisco area. Since he read equally as well in French and Spanish, his library contained many carefully selected works in these languages as well as in English. His love for literature, poetry and music made him, in the fullest sense of the word, a member of San Francisco's famous Bohemian Club.

Because he was so widely known and loved, many people sensed a great loss when his death was announced, following a lingering illness, on January 13, 1943, at Carmel, California. On January 19, 1943, the State Assembly adjourned out of respect to the late Xavier Martinez. This tribute followed the introduction and unanimous adoption of House Resolution No. 55 honoring the famous artist, for truly he had achieved fame in exhibitions throughout the world.

The influence of his life will never be completely known nor fully appreciated, since it would need to be traced through many of his students who have since become teachers themselves and retained much of his philosophy and also his superior knowledge of art; they, in turn, passed this on to their students.

Of the many tributes received at the time of his death, I think this one from Marshall Potter, one of his students, is perhaps the most outstanding: "I was greatly upset upon hearing of Marty's passing. To me he exemplified a high standard of creative living that will be before me the rest of my life. He loved his subject, he loved his teaching and we loved him. In fact, he taught us a lesson in love. Until a man has achieved love he is in bondage to himself, and his living consists of drawing to himself everything in the world which appeals to him instead of releasing into the world everything that is his. Through the efforts of Marty, my education has taught me to appreciate and love creative things, to contribute as far as I am able to society. What finer education can there be than that?"

Reference materials were obtained from articles published by the Oakland *Tribune* of January 14 and 19, 1943, and from *Arts and Crafts Affairs*, May, 1943, Oakland, California. The picture of Xavier Martinez is from a photograph taken by Beatrice E. Boffinger, a student in Marty's life drawing class in September 1942.

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OLD INDIANS

By HARRY W. PAIGE

If you want to know a people – really *know* them – go first to the old among them. The ones with the lived-in faces and long memories. The ones who know the stories and songs. The ones who straddle the fragile edge, with one foot in eternity. The ones who have come far enough to want to turn and look back, not in anger but in wonder. The ones who have returned to a childhood of faith. The ones who have endured.

Yes, old people have a beauty of their own and nowhere is this more apparent than among American Indians.

Take a walk through any of the dusty, sun-baked reservation towns on the prairie and study the old people. Study the deep lines in their faces and trace the history of grief. Study the dark flame in their eyes and see the fires of hope kept burning for their grandchildren. Listen to the soft, lyric run of Indian words. Hear their memories rise to the surface on a tide of yesterdays. Hear their gentle laughter. Feel their strength in having survived. Know their faith in what lies beyond time.

A pulse throb from eternity and yet he walks two miles under a prairie sun to buy his grandson an ice cream bar. The boy's free hand is lost in his. And the boy's imagination leaps to the bait of the legend that the old man spins from memory. The old values are passed down this way – disguised in tears or laughter or wide-eyed attention. Education is a walk in the sun. Security is a dark hand bound and raised in purple veins.

In a tribal society the old are the repositories of knowledge and wisdom. In a society that changes slowly knowledge does not become obsolete in a generation or two. The things that are necessary to sustain life and spirit take years to learn and are not finally written down in books. The fragile legacies of dreams are held in the memories of the old until they are handed

down lovingly to the young. The old become the living link between the past and the future.

Drive out across the open prairie, carefully dodging ruts and high centers. Climb a butte to a tar paper shack that squats forlornly on the edge of the empty miles. The children will scatter when you pull up to the house, their dark eyes flashing *stranger*. The chickens, scratching bare islands in the stubbed grass, will scatter too in a flurry of feathers that waft back to earth in waltz time. Wait in your car a few minutes and you will see the burlap curtain at the single window drawn back. You won't see the hand that drew it or the dark eyes that peered out to fix you in a glance.

After a few more minutes the door swings slowly open and an old woman is framed in the doorway. Her plain, coarse dress is long, almost to her ankles. Two stockinged, pipestem legs run into canvas tennis shoes, adorned with Indian beadwork. A dark shawl is draped around thin shoulders. Her black hair is laid back tightly from her high forehead and then spills in a waterfall down her back. Her high cheek bones are a gun-metal blue and set deep are liquid eyes with the surprised look of a startled fawn.

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She seems to float as she walks toward you shyly. She holds out a thin and boney hand—fragile, almost transparent like delicate glass. The single word *hau* falls from the tight purse of her lips. It means *hello* and *welcome.* She says it with the ghost of a smile. Then she talks *WasincuN,* English, with a kind of rural lyricism. But it is important to her that the greeting be in Lakota.

The children drift back like something blown by the prairie wind that whispers over the grass. They pull on her dress and hang on to the sticks of her wrists. She ignores them in patience, talking to you about the hail storm that destroyed her garden. Her fingers move to her words as though she were a puppet as well as puppeteer. You wonder how many holes those fingers have darned, how many beads they have sorted before they became stiff and claw-like. You wonder how many dreams they have mended; how many stories they have drawn on air.

The old woman explains that she cares for the children. The parents, her son and daughter-in-law, are picking potatoes in Nebraska and won't be back until the work is over. It is better than welfare, she explains: it gives a man pride. And pride is important to the poor, a badge worn on dusty jeans.

The old woman works hard – cooking, sewing, mending, fixing and taking care of her grandchildren. She does it alone since her husband returned to the earth. She is fiercely independent, clinging like a scrub pine to a lonely butte, a tree that draws just enough sustenance from the dry, flinty soil. She cares for the bodies of the children but she also nourishes the spirit. She knows the old stories, myths and legends of the Sioux. They are tucked away in her memory like jewels on dark velvet. At night she brings them out and sorts them with a jeweler's eye. There are *Iktomi,* the trickster-spider stories, that hide a lesson in their humor. There are the legends of places and how they got their names – Porcupine Butte, Potato Creek, Grass Mountain and Wounded Knee. There are animal stories. How the mudhen got red eyes. How *Mastincala,* the rabbit, got his short tail. The woman who lived with the wolves. There is the story of Indian Summer and the story of *Wakinyan,* the Thunderbird. And there are her own stories of her childhood in the far-away times – stories to draw a tear from the teller.

Nights are long on the prairie and her cabin has no electricity to feed a television or even a radio. Smoking kerosene lamps hang from nails in the beams and draw a cloud of insects. There is no running water: it is hauled from a creek over a mile away. The nights are long and the stories fill them with light and laughter. They are not for entertainment only, nor for teaching. They are for survival.

The old woman has a young heart. She loves and she is loved. She needs and is needed. She is entrusted with the real wealth of the people – their children. She is lonely since her husband's death, but she has no time to brood or wear her heart on a calico sleeve for everyone to see.

Once she went to Rapid City to visit one of her white friends in a nursing home. When she walked through the antiseptic halls and the sterile sameness of the place a cold fist closed on her heart. When she saw the old and the feeble sitting around idly and staring into yesterday, she wanted to cry. When she saw the starched and rustling nurses, paid money to be kind, she wanted to cry out: "Where are your families?" And when she heard no laughter in the place – only the echoes of silence – she wanted to cry out: "Where are the children?" She had known hunger and she had known pain but that was the only time in her long life that she had known *terror.* And when she returned to her prairie shack, she threw her arms around her grandchildren and wept.

The children never knew why.

Old Indians are as patient as time. The little children pull on them, climb on them and dash about the house like whirlwinds. A kind of festive anarchy seems to prevail.

Yet there are no sharp words, no raised voices, no quick slaps. You ask one of the old people about the lack of discipline, the "permissiveness". There is a tolerant, easy smile, a shrug of the shoulders. "The white man beats his child and pets his horse. That is *witko,* crazy. Nothing is ever spoiled by love."

End of discussion.

In the summer old Indians are seen frequently in the treeless border towns ad-

jacent to the reservations. They come to shop or window-shop or visit. They sit on the worn wooden benches in front of the stores, searching out the thin slices of shade. They sit on the cement steps and the curbing. They seem to be waiting, like city people waiting for a bus. But there is no bus. There is only time. Time passing.

Old women walk in the unpaved streets of the town, their sneakers kicking up puffs of dust behind them. Their shawls are drawn around their shoulders; their black umbrellas raised against the sun so that they appear to walk in a moving pool of shade. Their shadows follow, stretching in the sand. Some of the old women smoke cigarettes – hand-rolled, flat and loose. They carry them in nicotine-stained fingers or dangling loosely from their lips so that they jump to the words that are spoken. In a society in which smoking is a ritual of prayer, the habit dies hard.

The old men smoke too, sitting in the shade and rubbing gnarled fingers around the sweatbands of their Western hats. The men suffer more from idleness. Many have not worked in years. They have lost the symbols of prestige they once had in the old hunter-warrior days, in the free life on the Plains. Now the women have quietly taken over and the men are left with their dreams. The women would not admit this: it is a point of honor and pride. They still defer to the men but they know and their hearts are sad watching their men wasting away like autumn leaves, waiting for the final breath of wind to set them free.

Some of the old men buy a brief trip to oblivion for less than a dollar. Others sit before a polished bar, staring beyond the pyramid of bottles into the mirror of no return. Or else their heads are bowed over a glass, staring into a pool of wine abstractly, like a priest of sorrows. These are the ones for whom the present is too heavy a burden. They are lost somewhere between the fact and the fragile dream. They do not joke or laugh: they are deadly serious about their escape from the moment.

The old look into the store windows and, beyond their own images, see the things that are new – electric can openers, color televisions, calendar watches and long-stemmed crystal. They stare at them like archaeologists who have unearthed a find. And most of the items are just as strange as Grecian urns or the time-frozen paw tracks of something extinct. In a prairie home far from the transmitting station and without electricity, a color television is just a Cyclops, a giant, blinded eye staring back from across the room. Yet there are some older people who, through ignorance or some strange desire to be a part of affluence, buy the symbols of success. One old woman bought a new refrigerator and had it delivered to her prairie shack, a shack far beyond the web of power lines. It still sits on an earthen floor, pale and impotent, a storage space for kitchen utensils and home-made quilts. When asked why she made the unlikely purchase, the old woman replied candidly: "So the whites would like me better and buy my quilts."

But there are delightful things to buy too. Things for the grandchildren. A new pocket knife. The strange yo-yo toy that comes back when you throw it away. A new pair of jeans. Plastic beads to decorate a dance costume. A square of ice cream on a stick. A bottle of *kapopop,* the white man's soda. Colored, tourist postcards of familiar places to tack on bare walls. The women dig into worn, leather purses with stiff fingers and come up with the dime to satisfy a boy's thirst. An old man grapples in tight jeans for the price of a candy bar. These are the good things because they beg a smile from a child's eyes.

The summer is the time for them – the old ones. When the sun bakes the pain from welded joints. And the prairie is the place for them, a place as full of yesterdays as memory. It is not like the city where the old Indians are drawn to the green of tiny parks, hoping for a chance to hope. For the old ones have a special relationship with the open land. A mystical, spiritual relationship. The Sioux call it *wakaN* – holy or mysterious. You can feel it in the way they look at a hawk sliding down the air columns of the sky. There is a kinship in those looks: the distance in between is shrunken to a sigh. You can feel the communion in the way their eyes wander over the hills, the breasted hills that nurse an ancient dream. You can see it in the way they touch the sage or wear it in their hair. God is as close as that look, that touch.

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Yes, summer is the time to quit the stuffy cabin and set up the tent or tipi in the yard where the evening breeze blows cool and the stars are close and bright. Summer is the time of the sweet return. A time for reunions. A time for rodeo, fair, picnic, pow wow and Sun Dance. A time for old men to strut in the dance circle, feathered and flying. And a time for old women to do the slow, kneebending dance to the strict pulse of the drum. A time to take pride in the grandchildren learning the old dances, spinning circles in the dust. It is a time when the blood flows warm again and the old people almost forget their winter hibernation and the loneliness of the snowfolds draping the cold.

Summer is the time for the annual Sun Dance, their oldest and most vital native ceremony. Indians come from all over the country in ragged caravans to watch and participate, giving thanks to *WakaNtaNka*, the Great Spirit, through his burning eye, the Sun. The old ones are honored guests, frequently advisors in conducting the rites that go back to the beginnings of the plains culture. There is pain in it too when they see the old ways treated carelessly or neglected. There is pain when the sacred ceremony threatens to become a tourist attraction or a hand shaking time for politicians or a carnival. When the hot dog stands outnumber the purification lodges and the cheap souvenir booths spring up like puff balls on the prairie. There is a pain, but it is tempered with a patient resignation to such changes. The old ones shrug and say: "Such a Sun Dance is better than no Sun Dance."

The old people age like the prairie itself, a furrow at a time. They seem to erode, almost geologically, and their features grow sharper, chiseled by the wind and sand, until they resemble predatory birds perching on a barren tree. They age as the hills age. As a canyon ages. Yet the eyes stay young, mirroring the inner fires — the pride of having endured and the hunger for immortality in an ageless land.

Perhaps it is because they are so close to death that makes them burn so brightly. Like a candle's flaring up before it sputters out. Perhaps because they are already at home in eternity, feeling it as a prairie without horizons.

The sun too is never so beautiful as when it sets.

Some of the old still sing their death songs — a last, keening affirmation of the life that is ending and a trembling anticipation of what lies beyond the spirit trail.

I heard such a song once, coming from a bed that had been moved out of doors so that an old woman could look out on the swell of the prairie for the last time. It started as a whisper lost on a prairie wind and then rose, pumped by some frail bellows of the heart, to a tuneless chant:

Let me look again.
Only the hills last forever!

And it was not death that brought the tears to my eyes. It was life.

New Active and Associate Members Welcomed Into Corral

The trail to Active and Associate Membership in the Los Angeles Corral is long and hard. Many, searching for this more meaningful and enduring classification, have dropped by the wayside chocking from the dust. Others, searching for the summit, have paused by the dry stream bed in search of water. A few continued to persevere the long trail to the top of the mountain and have provided the Corral their talents in writing, art, graphics, features for the The Brand Book and The Branding Iron, assisted at the "Fandango" or the annual "Rendezvous." These men who made it to the summit, found their membership had more meaning in active participation. Their reward is their advancement along the trail to the summit. The Los Angeles Corral of The Westerners welcomes those who offer the Corral new blood and life. A place at the brass rail has been provided for:

Active Membership — Thomas F. Andrews, Andy Dagosta, Elwood "Dutch" Holland, Anthony "Tony" Kroll, Edward L. Parker, and Henry Welcome.

Associate Membership — Dr. Charles Heiskell and William J. Warren.

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randa," a member of the Tubatulabal tribe of Kern County.

C.M. *Todd Berens* has organized a group of young history buffs at Walker Junior High School into the Explorers Club, an organization which has already been given an award of merit for its historical research by the American Association for State and Local History.

"A Portrait of the Hermit-Artist as a Greek God" is the title of a lavish and fascinating feature article in the *Los Angeles Times* on C.M. *Jirayr Zorthian.* But thank goodness Jerry is a bit more modest than the exuberant newspaperman who penned the piece.

The lecture circuit has been amply filled with Los Angeles Corral members of late. Our own Roundup Foreman *Don Duke* shares his expertise on the old Pacific Electric "Big Red Cars" with the San Marino Historical Society; C.M. *John Weaver* talks about his newest book, *El Pueblo Grande,* to the Los Angeles Library Association; and *Ray Billington* discusses with the members of the Friends of the Huntington Library the social, economic, and ecological impact of the disappearance of the American frontier. Ray, incidentally, has received a singular honor by his appointment as a consultant to the Library of Congress.

Two Westerner historians inaugurate the Spring lecture series of the California Historical Society at El Moline Viejo, co-sponsored by CHS and the Friends of the Old Mill. C.M. *Victor R. Plukas,* historian for the Security Pacific National Bank, spoke on "On California's Trails," a visual exhibit of the bank's extensive historical collection. Former Sheriff *Earl C. Adams,* noted collector of Western Americana, discussed "Some Reflections on Western Art and Artists." More than 180 works of art from the Adam's collection of the Old West were exhibited last year under CHS auspices at the opening of the Old Mint in San Francisco and at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

"The Original Humorist of California" is the topic of Associate Member *Henry Welcome's* address to the Arcadia Historical Society on the life of 19th century wit George H. Derby, while *Dudley Gordon* speaks, naturally enough, on Charles Fletcher Lummis to the Little Landers Historical Society out in Tujunga. Associate Member *Dwight Cushman* describes "A Private's View of the American Revolution" for the San Fernando Valley Chapter of the D.A.R. And, out in the San Gabriel Valley, *Doyce Nunis* headlines the annual dinner meeting of the Pomona Historical Society with an important look at "Historic Preservation and Historic Integrity, El Pueblo de Los Angeles: A Case Study."

Cited for "distinctive contributions to Nevada history, including his book *History of Nevada,*" C.M. *Russell Elliot* is another recipient of a 1973 Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History.

Well-deserved kudos are lavished on *Paul Galleher,* who is described by the mayor of Glendale during the festivities marking "Paul Galleher Recognition Day" as "a positive force in the City of Glendale and instrumental in its growth."

Having sold his Eagle Rock Ranch in Ukiah, C.M. *George Chalfant* of the Redwood Outpost of the Westerners moves to Los Angeles. Welcome to our own bailiwick, George.

The Southwest Museum hosts a "Fiesta de los Libros" that features *Robert Weinstein,* co-author of *Dwellers at the Source: Southwestern Indian Photographs of A. C. Vroman,* and *Doyce B. Nunis,* head of the project that compiled the monumental bibliography of *Los Angeles and Its Environs in the Twentieth Century.*

Other books by Corral members that have come to our attention include C.M. *Abraham Hoffman's Unwanted Mexican-Americans in the Great Depression: Repatriation Pressures 1929-1939,* published by the University of Arizona Press, and C.M. *Ed Carpenter's* volume on the *Early Cemeteries of the City of Los Angeles,* published by *Glen Dawson* as the second title in the series Los Angeles Miscellany.

Lastly, we recommend for sheer fun *Jack Jeffrey's* "Perils of Pauline Farm Style: The Law in the Bible Belt," a highly amusing look at several court cases involving "bovine trespass" (the result of an amorous bull taking advantage of a downed fence to visit a neighboring farm's unsuspecting cows). This little pamphlet also features numerous hand-colored illustrations from Jack's talented brush.