LOS ANGELES WESTERNERS
The Branding Iron
CORRAL
J. GOODMAN

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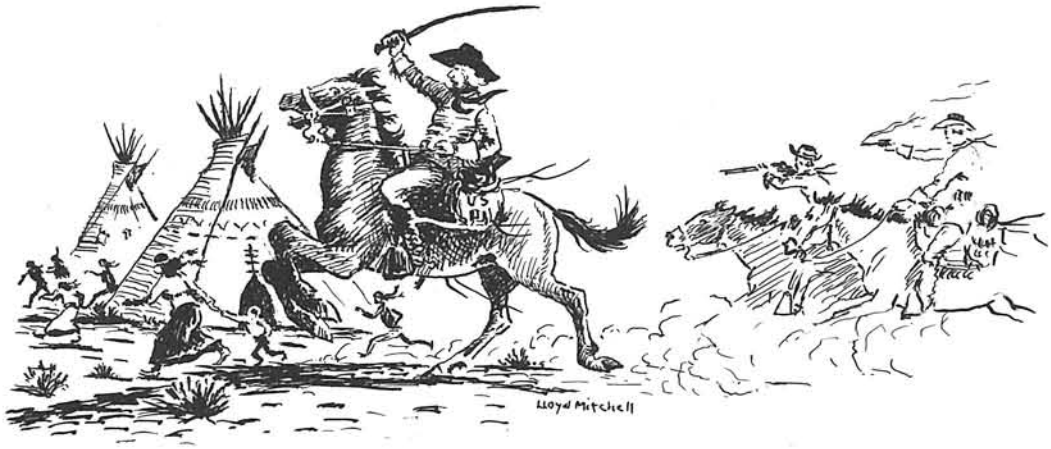

THE TRAIL TO TOTAL DISASTER

By WILLIS BLENKINSOP

It is remarkable that almost a century after Custer's last stand on the Little Big Horn, the battle still rages in fact, fiction and famous paintings. Pro and anti-Custer factions are still locked in heated controversy. Custer's final disaster is not surprising, however, to those who know that far to the south in then unnamed Oklahoma Indian Territory, he commanded an orgy of blood and bullets that would one day rise up to haunt him on a strange and ghostly trail.

It was on a frigid morning in November, 1868, eight years before his ultimate demise, that George Armstrong Custer awoke with a start when he noticed an unusual sagging in the roof of his tent. The canvas was heavy with snow. Excitement raced through his wiry frame. He bounced out of his buffalo robe bed covers and, poking his nose through the opening in the tent flaps, drew in a deep breath of the snow-laden air.

"Good!" he said to his adjutant. "Just what we've been waiting for!"

The mantle of snow covering the ground around his base at Camp Supply near the northern boundary of today's Oklahoma, was the answer to Custer's hope for a winter campaign against the tribes of the southern plains. The plan to fight Indians during the winter was an innovation of Custer's long-time sponsor and advocate,

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THE WESTERNERS
LOS ANGELES CORRAL

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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.

CORRAL HONORS GEORGE FULLERTON

George E. Fullerton, charter member of Los Angeles Corral of Westerners, and its Sheriff for the year 1961, was made an Honorary Member of the Corral he so long has faithfully served, at the meeting night of August 14. The entire membership present rendered to this distinguished Westerner a standing ovation in gratitude for the years of fraternal association.

The affair was singularly impressive in view of the fact that George has been grievously ill and hospitalized through many past months, and the fact that his slow and painful recovery has brought him back among his fellow Westerners once again. It was a rare occasion to have him present and in person to receive the highest honor which the Corral can confer.

Through the years George has been a contributor to the Corral publications, as well as serving in officerial capacity. He helped greatly in fashioning Brand Book No. 7 as one of the most beautiful in the Corral's famous collection. His article, gracing that volume, "The Fabulous Greathouse Brothers," is a scholarly and well-written contribution to the annals of the West.

In the world of books George Fullerton is known as one of the outstanding authorities on the Southwest. His magnificent collection of West and Southwest books is the envy of every man who collects books. He is a member of the Zamorano Club, and many historical societies.

It is fitting that this great bookman, great Westerner who has been a loyal and living part of the Corral since its inception, and a cherished friend to every member, should be lifted to the supreme roster of Los Angeles Corral – Honorary Member.

THE MONTHLY ROUNDUP

Those on vacation during the summer months have missed some outstanding presentations of local history. The Deputy Sheriff, Ray Allen Billington, has been most select in his choice for program material presented to the Corral.

JULY

Our energetic former Sheriff Doyce Nunis presented an illustrated program entitled "Fact and Fantasy – An Historian's View of Life in Early Los Angeles." Professor Nunis told of the many changes that had taken place in the Pueblo of Los Angeles during the early years. He backed up all changes with maps and illustrations to show how the Plaza church had changed in structure, the plaza, and look of Olvera Street, etc. Nunis, Professor of History at the University of Southern California, is well known as one of the foremost historians of the Southern California scene.

Laughing at a good joke are L-R Deputy Sheriff Ray Billington, Sheriff John Urabec, and speaker Doyce Nunis.

— Iron Eyes Cody Photograph

AUGUST

"Los Angeles – The 7th Crisis" was the topic of John Caughey's August program to the Corral. Caughey, long acclaimed as one of the deans of California history gave a breakdown of local history as based on seven changes. They are: 1. Coming of the Spanish; 2. Americanization of California; 3. Boom of the 1880's – the coming of health seekers, development of the citrus industry, real estate sales, etc.; 4. Turn of the Century – growth, monopoly, coming of good transportation; 5. Depression – happenings such as Long Beach earthquake; 6. World War II – Industrialization; 7. Population Explosion – side effects, etc.

Scene at the August meeting with John Caughey (center) and Deputy Sheriff Ray Billington (left) and Sheriff John Urabec.

— Iron Eyes Cody Photograph

Corral Chips

Bill Kimes appears before the California Academy of Sciences for a screening of "Earth, Planet, Universe – John Muir," a Public Broadcasting System film on which Bill worked closely with the writer, director, and camera crew when the filming was done in Yosemite and elsewhere in Mariposa County.

(Continued on Page Sixteen)

General Phil Sheridan. The idea was Sheridan's, but to locate Indians at this time of the year he needed an officer with backsides tough enough to endure endless hours in the saddle, insides durable enough to survive on skimpy rations and, withal, a man starchy enough to stiffen the sagging morale of the Seventh Cavalry. He knew Custer was his man. He knew, too, that he had a built-in bonus: Custer, recently reinstated after a humiliating court-martial for being A W O L, was bucking for the return of his rank and removal of the stain on his illustrious record acquired during the Civil War.

Now Custer dressed hurriedly and went out through the curtain of falling snow to confer with his scouts. "I'll give an extra hundred dollars to the first man that leads us to an Indian village," he said, gingerly rubbing his hands to ward off the bone-cracking cold.

It sounded like a generous offer. Tracking would be easier now with a snow cover on the ground. Indians would not be on the move. With only cottonwood bark for forage, their ponies would be weak. But Custer knew what he was doing, and he wanted no repetition of his experience in General Hancock's campaign. In that hapless affair he had chased the Cheyennes and the Arapahoes across what had seemed like a half a continent only to be outwitted and out-maneuvered at every turn. Now, with their taunts still gnawing at his pride, he prepared to march on Black Kettle's band of peaceful Cheyennes.

Only a few days earlier Black Kettle had been told by his friend and military Indian Agent, General Hazen, that in the wild, remote Washita River country the Cheyennes might find safety. What Black Kettle didn't know was that in the white man's councils Indian Agents had no voice in military decisions; certainly no restraint on the tactics of ambitious officers. Now Custer's officers, scouts, supply wagons and 800 troopers were a dark line snaking through the white immensity toward the Washita about a hundred miles southward where Black Kettle's people were holed up for the winter.

Darkness had long since closed in when the column reached one of the clumps of low hills bordering the river. Custer followed two of his Osage scouts up to the crest of a ridge. Below lay Black Kettle's slumbering village of peaceful Indians. From their vantage point, the terrain and the layout was much the same as it would be eight years hence at Little Big Horn. Custer's deployment of his command would be strikingly similar. His ignorance of the enemy's strength would be just as appalling. And soon he would prove that the lives of men, both white and red, meant little so long as they burnished the Custer legend.

He went back down the slope to meet with his officers. The battle plan was clear. Four separate units would attack simultaneously from four different sides. The band playing the old barrack-room ballad, "Garyowen," would be the signal to move in.

"We'll attack at dawn," Custer concluded.

To a man as dynamic as Custer, waiting was always worse than fighting. The cold hours dragged. The moon disappeared. Finally the morning star began burning brightly. Custer looked up at the sallow eastern sky. His order, "Pass the word to mount," rustled down the sets. A sudden gust of wind honed the air to a cutting edge as Custer signalled the band leader. The blare of the rowdy ballad split the frosty air and then the bugles shrilled the order, "Charge!"

Chaos exploded in the village. Before Black Kettle could raise a flag of truce, the rumble of pounding hooves thundered through the village. Sleepy Indian women and children floundered out of the tipis. Black Kettle's men tried to cover them as they fled toward the larger Comanche and Kiowa camps downriver, but they were shot down in a merciless barrage of fire. The Osage scouts cut off their heads as fast as they could get to them. The pony herd, now wild with fright, stampeded through the village. Indians bounded between them trying to use them as a shield. Some fell and were trampled in the snow. Others hid in sink holes along the river bottom or opened fire from behind the larger trees.

"Clean them out!" Custer screamed at Lieutenant Cook's sharpshooters.

Gunsmoke filled the air. The stench of

burned powder hung heavily along the river bank. Black Kettle, the life-long champion of peace with the white man, lay sprawled, face down, in the ice-rimmed edge of the stream. His wife lay dead beside him.

By ten o'clock in the morning the carnage was almost over. The homes of Black Kettle's people were a mass of burning rubble. The troopers used the dogs that swarmed through the village for pistol practice. Large stores of food, clothing, implements and more than a thousand buffalo robes were destroyed after Custer appropriated some of the best for himself. Knowing that loss of their horses would humiliate as well as immobilize the Cheyennes, Custer ordered the slaughter of the Indians' remuda – 875 of some of the finest buffalo horses on the plains.

Earlier in the battle, shots had been heard coming from the direction of the camps downriver which Custer's haphazard reconnaissance had failed to locate. Major Joel Elliott and eighteen of his men had last been seen pursuing the fleeing Cheyennes in that direction. Suddenly the firing had ceased. Custer's first impulse was to rush a detachment down to relieve Elliott, but one of his white scouts, Ben Clark, restrained him. With a nod toward the larger camps downstream, Ben indicated that the place might now be swarming with hostiles. It appeared to be good advice.

As Custer prepared to leave, an undercurrent of protest against abandoning Elliott and his men sputtered through the ranks. "The hostiles from downriver will soon be up this far," Custer explained. "We'll be hopelessly outnumbered."

The corpses of Major Elliott and his men were found two weeks later when an inspection of the battleground was made. They had been left where they had fallen, obviously surrounded and killed to the last man. Custer, busy with the disposition of Indian captives, didn't realize he had completed a dress rehearsal for the greatest debacle in the annals of his country's longest war.

Significantly, there was not a male Indian over ten years of age among the fifty-three prisoners who started on the long trek back to the compound at Camp Supply. All of the captives, ragged, hungry and barefoot, walked over the snow-covered prairie. All, that is, except the young Indian girls selected as partners for the officers. They rode in style. Custer's choice was Black Kettle's niece, Monahaseetah, a young woman in the bloom of youth to whom Custer later referred in his book as extremely beautiful and charming.

As the long line of blue-coated troopers and their captives approached the base at Camp Supply, Custer could no longer stifle his flair for the spectacular. In a parade not unlike the Wild West shows of the future, the Osage scouts led the column in to the base chanting a song of victory, brown faces daubed with war paint.

Custer, inherently as flamboyant as Wild Bill Hickock or Buffalo Bill Cody, had already begun to ape the long-haired frontier dandies. When he passed in review before General Sheridan, "Little Phil" touched his hat in a "That's my boy!" salute to his boy wonder of the western plains. The Osage scouts, age-old enemies of the Cheyennes, danced all night to the scalps they had taken, the band got stuck on the strains of Garyowen again, and Custer began making out his official report.

Shored up by years of expert tutelage in the art of making reports and his desire to regain the glory of the days when, at 23, he had been the Boy General of the Civil War, Custer listed the Indian casualties as 103 warriors. The number of women prisoners taken shrank to sixteen. Later, the Department of the Interior decided it might be advisable to investigate. Neither the Army nor the Department of the Interior ever exhumed the real motives for the massacre.

* * *

As the years slipped by, many of the surviving Cheyenne families migrated up the ladder of east-flowing rivers that cross the great central trough of the continent. Far to the north in the valley of the Little Big Horn river, they joined a Sioux chieftain who was becoming known to the Army as a notorious troublemaker. To his own Hunkpapa tribesmen he was a powerful medicine man. To most of the other tribes he was known as a wise and influential leader. His name was Sitting Bull.

During the summer of 1876 many of the northern plains tribes began to assemble at Sitting Bull's encampment in the valley

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the Indians sometimes called the Greasy Grass. The time had come, they decided, to take a mass stand against the iron horse, the talking wire, and all of the other weapons the horse soldiers used to despoil their beloved hunting grounds – land the white man had promised would belong only to the Indian for "so long as the grass shall grow."

Custer, now a 36-year old and somewhat faded version of his former self, was still a battle-hungry Indian fighter looking for another victory to sharpen his public image. And once again, as he looked down from the tablelands above the Little Big Horn, he grossly underestimated the strength of his enemy. Perhaps remembering the Washita, his own estimate of 1500 hostiles was the highest among any of his officers. There were at least four thousand not including women and children. Four thousand fighting warriors dedicated to revenge compounded by more than eight years of treachery, humiliation and degredation. The Brules, the Mineconjous, the Hunkpapas, the Cheyennes and others; all were there guided by the wisdom of Sitting Bull and eager to follow the fighting genius of Crazy Horse.

From his lookout above the valley, Custer could see only a few women and children moving about in the vast assemblage of tipis. "We've caught them napping!" he said, turning to one of his Crow scouts for confirmation. The Indian was painting stripes of whitened clay down the sides of his face. "What are you doing?" Custer demanded. The Indian mixed more paint and looked passively at Custer.

"You and I," he said, "are going home today by a trail that is strange to both of us."

The color drained from Custer's face. Confronted with the Indian's ghastly prophecy, he may have felt alone – alone and knowing now that he was armed with only his own egotism against the chance to take good advice in a moment of crisis. He turned in his saddle, signalled his troops to advance and late in the afternoon of that fate-filled June 26, 1876, he rode down the strange new trail just as his scout had promised.

SMOKE SIGNALS

My wife and I had the pleasure of renewing an old friendship with Maria Martinez, world famous San Ildefonso black pottery maker and her family, at the opening of an exhibit of her work and that of Susan Peterson, renowned ceramist of the University of California, at the California Museum of Science and Industry in August. Quite a few Westerners were present also.

We have known Maria and Rose Gonzales, also a famous San Ildefonso pottery maker, for many years and used to visit them in New Mexico when our boys were small and we were photographing and taking in the local ceremonials. They always appreciated the framed 8x10 pictures I would send them.

I am fortunate to possess a few pieces of Maria's black pots and candle stick holders and several of Rose's creations. Matter of fact, I think I have the only black pottery peace pipe in existence, which I made from some of Rose's clay mixture when she was down here visiting and which she took back and fired especially for me.

We took many pictures of Maria and her son Adam and his family and we had Maria autograph an old picture we had taken of her when her grandchildren were small with our two boys. She signed it Maria Poveka, her Indian name.

– Iron Eyes Cody.

Gathering at the California Museum of Science and Industry are Maria Martinex "Poveka" (left) a relative and Iron Eyes Cody.

— Iron Eyes Cody Photograph

PALOMINO PONIES...SAVED AND RESTORED

By TOM MCNEILL

An important local public building mural has been saved and renewed. A painted outdoor view portraying a ranch scene now remains to enrich the lives of those who live in the west San Fernando Valley.

Thumbing through *Westways* magazine for March 1972, one finds color reproductions of several typical post office murals in the greater Los Angeles area. Most such wall decorations were painted in the Depression and post Depression years. One of these, with the title "Palomino Ponies," covers the east wall of the lobby of the Canoga Park Post Office. It was rendered by the notable California painter, Maynard Dixon. Five swift moving ponies, matched in speed by a galloping vaquero-type rider, is the subject of the oil on canvas mural.

Recently, the future of the mural was in question. Should the possibility of a sale or demolition of the building transpire, what would become of the colorful mural? It was reported that Brigham Young University was most interested in acquiring the canvas.

Last year, Edith Hamlin, widow of Maynard Dixon, began a movement to save "Palamino Ponies." Mrs. Hamlin is one who believes murals should remain on the walls for which they were designed. Herself an accomplished painter and muralist, she offered to clean and restore the impressive wall painting. After 32 years of dirt and grime, strong light and dust, the surface of the paint needed attention. Consulting with local Postmaster Harold O'Neal, the General Services Administration in Washington, D.C. agreed to finance the project. Mrs. Hamlin was awarded the commission.

Corresponding Member Joseph O'Malley well known Los Angeles painter, offered to examine the mural to determine the extent of the work needed. He found some yellowish varnish-like streaks, a few scratches, and a small hole in the canvas and supporting wall where a lighting fixture had been removed. This information helped Mrs. Hamlin in her plans for restoration. With her young assistant, Bob Grossman, U.C.L.A. student and grandson of Dorothy and the late Duncan Gleason, the work went forward. Cleaning the surface a square foot at a time with a wax solution followed by matte varnish, the mural was completely rejuvenated the first week in November 1973. A strip of wood molding was added to the bottom of the canvas to hold it securely to the wall.

Asked how Dixon was prompted to choose horses as subjects for the painting, Edith Hamlin relates the following story: "Maynard and I were staying at a large fig ranch nearby (Canoga Park) while he was recuperating from a surgical operation performed in Los Angeles. This was in 1937. Of the many horses on the ranch, Maynard chose to sketch palominos." Five years later, Dixon completed the "Palomino Ponies" mural in his Tucson studio.

The post office building is now a branch, and quite busy according to reports. The galloping fawn-and-white colored ponies on the wall will hopefully please the residents of Canoga Park for at least another 32 years.

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A LADY WESTERN NOVELIST

(PRE-WOMEN'S LIBERATION)

By Art Clark

Among the most popular and certainly most prolific of the Western novelists of the first half of our century was B. M. Bower – *nee* Bertha W. Sinclair, and Mrs. Robert E. "Bud" Cowan.

In a 62-page booklet just issued, a Bower aficionado, Orrin A. Engen, gives an interesting account of the details of her life and of her many writings, with a chapter of comment on the content of her novels. Mrs. Bower-Sinclair-Cowan was born in frontier Minnesota in 1871, but in her teens became a ranch resident of Big Sandy, Montana, to live many years there. Later she camped in the mountains near Monterey, California; lived in Idaho; built a mountain home at Quincy, California; served as president of her cowboy-husband Cowan's mine near Las Vegas, Nevada; lived at De Poe, Oregon; and spent her last years in Los Angeles where death came in 1940.

All this provided wide background for her experience as a lady Westerner, and fruit for the creation of her novels. The list of her books runs to 68 titles, issued between 1904 and 1952 – the last two being published after her death. Her first novel *Chip of the Flying U* appeared in four silver-screen versions.

Of her magazine stories, there were at least 129 pieces in 175 issues (1904-1938) principally in *Popular Magazine,* and *Short Stories Magazine,* but with others in *Lippincott's Magazine, Redbook, Ainslee's Stories, McClure's, Western Story, Woman's World, Adventure, West Magazine, Argosy* (all detailed by Mr. Engen), and possibly in other periodicals.

Illustrators of Bower's work included a number of prominent artists of the period. The work of her friend and neighbor, Charley Russell, appears in color in four of her earlier books. Other volumes or editions include illustrations by Frank Tenny Johnson, Remington Schuyler, Frank E. Schoonover, H. Western Taylor, Anton Otto Fisher, Monte Crews, Douglas Duer, Clarence Rowe, and others.

Mr. Engen, in his booklet (Los Angeles, 1973, $5.00), gives a detailed bibliography of Bower's books and magazine articles. His listing of the novels is alphabetically by titles. Since it may also be of use to Bower collectors, the list is presented here in chronological sequence, with indication of the many reprint issues (not detailed by Mr. Eugen). This list is as complete and accurate as present sources will permit.

Publishers of Bower's books and their reprints in the English language (only the date of the publisher's first reprint is indicated):

Blak Blakiston Co: Phila. (Triangle Books, 1938-42)

BR Blue Ribbon Books, Inc: Garden City, N.Y., and Toronto (Triangle Books before 1938)

B&C Bouregy & Curl: N.Y.C. (now Thomas Bouregy & Co.)

Burt A .L. Burt Co: N.Y.C.

Coll William Collins Sons & Co: N.Y.C.

Dill G. W. Dillingham Co: N.Y.C.

GC Garden City Publishing Co: Garden City, N.Y.

G&D Grosset & Dunlap, Inc: N.Y.C.

H&S Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd: London

L,B Little, Brown & Co: Boston

McCl McClelland & Stewart, Ltd: Toronto

Meth Methuen & Co., Ltd: London

Nash Eveleigh Nash Co., Ltd: London

Nels T. Nelson & Sons, Ltd: London
Newn George Newnes, Ltd: London
Paul Stanley Paul & Co: London
S&S Street & Smith: N.Y.C.
World World Book Co: N.Y.C.
W&B Wright & Brown, Ltd: London

1904 CHIP OF THE FLYING U. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1904) S&S; Dill, 1906; G&D, 1913; Nels, 1920

1904 LONESOME TRAIL. (from *Popular Mag.* 1904) S&S; Dill, 1909; G&D, before 1918; Nels, 1920

1906 RANGE DWELLERS. (from *Ainslee's Stories*, ? date) S&S; Dill, 1907; G&D, before 1918; Nels, 1920

1907 LURE OF THE DIM TRAILS. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1905) Dill; G&D, 1913; Nels, 1921

1907 THE HAPPY FAMILY. S&S; Dill, 1907; G&D, before 1918; Nels, 1920

1908 THE LONG SHADOW. (condensed in *Popular Mag.*, 1909) S&S; Dill, 1909; G&D, 1913; Nels, 1921

1908 HER PRAIRIE KNIGHT (and) ROWDY OF THE CROSS L (in 1 vol.) S&S; Nels, 1921 HER PRAIRIE KNIGHT. G&D, before 1918

1911 LONESOME LAND. (from *Popular Mag.* 1910-11) L,B; Paul, 1912; Burt, 1914; H&S, 1924; GC, 1924

1912 THE FLYING U RANCH. (from *Popular Mar.*, 1912) S&S; G&D, 1915; Nels, 1921

1912 GOOD INDIAN. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1912) L,B; G&D, 1914: Meth, 1919

1913 THE UPHILL CLIMB. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1912) L,B; G&D, 1915; Meth, 1923

1914 THE RANCH AT THE WOLVERINE. (from *Popular Mag.*, ? date, as "Fortune's Football") L,B; Burt, 1915; Nash, 1916; H&S, 1923; BR, 1941

1915 THE FLYING U'S LAST STAND. (from *Popular Mar.*, 1915, as "Last Stand") L,B; G&D, before 1918; H&S, 1922

1915 JEAN OF THE LAZY A. L,B; G&D, 1917; Meth, 1918

1916 HERITAGE OF THE SIOUX. L,B; G&D, 1918; H&S, 1923

1916 THE PHANTOM HERD. L,B; G&D, 1918; H&S, 1922

1917 THE LOOKOUT MAN. L,B; G&D, 1919

1917 STARR OF THE DESERT. L,B; G&D, 1919; H&S, 1923

1918 CABIN FEVER. L,B; Burt, 1920; Blak, 194

1918 SKYRIDER. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1918) L,B; G&D, 1920; Meth, 1920

1919 RIM O' THE WORLD. L,B; H&S, 1922; G&D, 1922

1919 THUNDERBIRD. L,B; G&D, 1921; H&S, 1923

1920 THE QUIRT. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1920) L,B; Meth, 1921, as "Sawtooh Ranch"; G&D, 1922

1921 CASEY RYAN. L,B; G&D, 1921; H&S, 1922

1921 COW COUNTRY. L,B; H&S, 1921, G&D, 1923; BR, 1944

1922 TRAIL OF THE WHITE MULE. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1922, as "Joshua Palm") L,B; G&D, 1922; H&S, 1923

1923 PAROWAN BONANZA. L,B; H&S, 1924; G&D, 1925

1923 THE VOICE AT JOHNNY WATER. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1922, as "The Pinto Cat") L,B; H&S, 1923; G&D, 1925

1924 BELLEHELEN MINE. L,B; G&D, 1924; H&S, 1925

1924 DESERT BREW. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1924) L,B; H&S, 1925; G&D, 1925

1924 THE EAGLE'S WING. (from *Short Stories Mag.*, 1923, as "Power") L,B; H&S, 1924; G&D, 1926

1925 BLACK THUNDER. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1925) L,B; H&S, 1926; G&D, 1928; Blak, 1947

1925 MEADOWLARK BASIN. L,B; H&S, 1926; G&D, 1927

1926 VAN PATTEN. L,B; H&S, 1927, as "Outlaw Paradise"); G&D, 1928

1927 THE ADAM CHASERS. (from *Poplar Mag.*, 1925) L,B; H&S, 1927; G&D, 1929

1927 WHITE WOLVES. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1926, as "The White Wolf Pack") L,B; H&S, 1927; G&D, 1929; Blak, 1946; BR, 1946

1928 HAYWIRE. L,B; H&S, 1928; G&D, 1930

1928 POINTS WEST. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1927) L,B; H&S, 1928; G&D, 1930

1928 RODEO. L,B;McCl, 1929; H&S, 1929; G&D, 1931; GC, 1943; BR, 1943

1929 THE SWALLOWFORK BULLS. from *Short Stories* Mag., 1928-29) L,B; H&S, 1930; G&D, 1931

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1929 TIGER EYE. L,B; H&S, 1930; G&D, 1932

1930 FOOL'S GOAL. L,B; McCl, 1930; H&S, 1930; G&D, 1932; GC, 1947; BR, 1947

1931 DARK HORSE. L,B; H&S, 1931; G&D, 1933; Newn, 1937; Blak, 1943; BR, 1943

1931 THE LONG LOOP. L,B; H&S, 1932

1932 LAUGHING WATER. L,B; H&S, 1932; G&D, 1933; Newn, 1936

1932 ROCKING ARROW. L,B; H&S, 1932; G&D, 1935; Newn, 1936

1933 THE FLYING U STRIKES. L,B; H&S, 1933; McCl, 1933; G&D, 1936; BR, 1941

1933 OPEN LAND. L,B; H&S, 1933; G&D, 1935; Newn, 1936

1933 TRAILS MEET. L,B; H&S, 1933; G&D, 1935; Newn, 1936

1933 WHOOP-UP TRAIL. (from *Short Stories Mag.*, .1933) L,B; H&S, 1933; McCl, 1933; G&D, 1936; BR, 1942

1934 THE HAUNTED HILLS. L,B; H&S, 1934; G&D, 1936; GC, 1942; BR, 1942; McCl, 1944

1935 THE DRY RIDGE GANG. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1910) L,B; McCl, 1935; Coll, 1936; G&D, 1937; GC, 1944; BR, 1944

1935 TROUBLE RIDES THE WIND. L,B; Coll, 1937; G&D, 1937; GC, 1943

1936 THE FIVE FURIES OF LEANING LADDER. L,B; McCl, 1936; Coll, 1936, as "Five Furies"; G&D, 1937; Avon, 1951, as "Gunfight at Horsethief Range"

1936 SHADOW MOUNTAIN. L,B; McCl, 1936, Coll, 1937; G&D, 1938; BR, 1942

1937 THE NORTH WIND DO BLOW. L,B; Coll, 1937; as "North Wind"; G&D, 1938

1937 PIRATES OF THE RANGE. (from condensation in *Popular Mag.*, 1908) L,B; Coll, 1937; G&D, 1939; BR, 1941

1938 THE WIND BLOWS WEST. L,B; Coll, 1940; G&D, 1940

1939 THE SINGING HILL. L,B; Coll, 1940; G&D, 1941

1939 A STARRY NIGHT. L,B; Coll, 1940; G&D, 1940

1940 MAN ON HORSEBACK. L,B; Coll, 1940

1940 THE SPIRIT OF THE RANGE. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1906) L,B; Coll, 1940; G&D, 1942

1940 SWEET GRASS. L,B; Coll, 1940; G&D, 1941

1941 THE FAMILY FAILING. (from *Popular Mag.*, 1906) L,B; McCl, 1941; Coll, 1941, as "Kings of the Prairie"; G&D, 1943

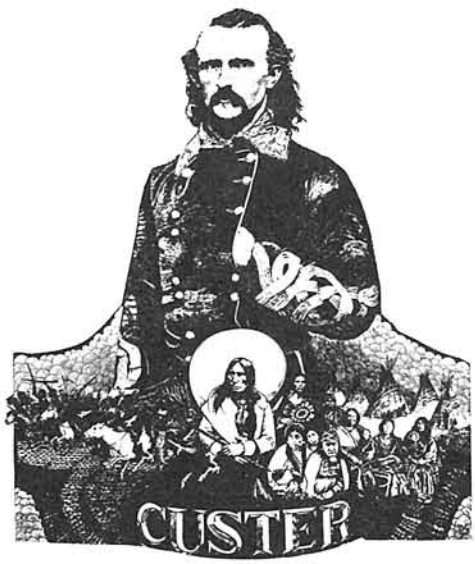
1951 BORDER VENGEANCE. (published posthumously) B&C; 1971

1952 OUTLAW MOON. (published posthumously B&C; W&B, 1954; B&C, 1971

Collections:

1933 BIG BOOK OF WESTERN STORIES: Four rousing novels of the West, complete in one volume. G&D

1936 FLYING U OMNIBUS (Chip, Ranch; Last Stand). G&D



Is Custer Alive?

By AL HAMMOND

It's unbelievable the numerous tales and stories that have been told about those who have passed on. Time and time again such tales of being alive were told about Jesse James. The same claims of being alive were made of Adolph Hitler. Orchestra leader Glenn Miller, after being lost at sea, was reported as having been seen in many places in Europe. This list is endless and even General George Armstrong Custer, victim at the Little Big Horn, has not escaped these stories being told about him.

There was little doubt in most people's minds that Custer lost his life at the Battle of Little Big Horn. Yet the *Sheridan News* at a late date of Wednesday December 8, 1937, carried the story of his being alive. To many it was to become a convincing tale and it did result in a big conversation piece at that time.

An attorney by the name of George Layman started it all with his talk given before the Sheridan Lions Club in which he asserted, "I am convinced that Mr. R. E. McNally, a brother attorney, talked to General Custer a few days before the 1936 Hardin Custer Celebration." According to Layman the elderly man visited McNally in his office before the celebration and asked if he were on the Custer celebration committee. When told that he was, the old gentleman introduced himself as Mr. Lindsay.

When Lindsay asked, "Will Mrs. Custer be there?" he was told a representative had been sent to New York with an invitation for her. It was thought that she might accept. McNally asked him, "Do you know Mrs. Custer?" "Yes, I know her," he replied. He went on to tell about the Custer family reunion held before General Custer started on his last campaign. Lindsay was remarkably well acquainted with nicknames and individual traits of those who were present. He listed all who were there at that time.

McNally excitedly asked, "You must know something of the battle?" "Yes I was there just a few days after the battle. There was some talk that the soldiers crossed the river but that was not true. They went nearly to it and then turned back." But little could be learned about Lindsay's own personal history. He had taken a squatter's claim about 60 miles from the battlefield a short time after the fight. Later he sold the place to the railroad for a right-of-way, and left for California.

An offer was made to Lindsay by the Sheridan attorney through which he would be able to attend the celebration and again have the opportunity to see Mrs. Custer. "No!" he replied. "I don't want to meet her personally, but would just like to see her." McNally tried but was not successful in getting Lindsay to join him in meeting Mrs. Custer. Lindsay did say, "I'll be there." However, after Lindsay left McNally's office he was never heard from again. He did not appear at the celebration. Intriguingly, everything that he had said was later verified.

Layman told of the Indians saying that one soldier escaped but their young warriers chased and killed him. An army party came upon a dead cavalry horse about 60 miles from the battlefield just about where Lindsay had settled. The horse had been shot through the eyes. On the horse was the regulation army saddle, bridle, blanket, and carbine. Had Indians killed the horse it is certain they would have taken the gun, saddle, and bridle. Layman pointed out that had Custer escaped he would have faced disgrace and likely a court martial. Appearing from the "dead" would have been very difficult.

Lindsay would have been the same age as Custer had the latter been living. His looks, build, and hair were like those of Custer. He was not a publicity seeker and tried to avoid any contact with the Custer family. From the information given it was easy to understand that anyone might suspect he was Custer. Certainly the way Layman had presented the story many were convinced it was indeed Custer.

Mrs. Custer died April 15, 1933, which was over three years before the 60th Anniversary of the Battle of Little Big Horn. It evidently was unknown to Layman and the supposed Custer. Layman was easily taken in and there is little doubt that he wanted to believe Lindsay was actually Custer. With the numerous "return from the dead tales" that are so prevalent we all should take care should we meet on the street young Billy the Kid with gun in hand.

Corresponding Members Welcomed by Corral

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

They are: J. O. Gillette, Long Beach; Joseph Kohnen, Canoga Park; Rick Ohlson, San Marino; Mrs. John H. Poole, San Marino; Dan Post, Arcadia; John H. Robinson, Jr., Pasadena; Marvin Smith, Claremont; and Robert N. Trautner of San Lorenzo.

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A BRIDGE to NOWHERE

By ABRAHAM HOFFMAN

Every few years a severe rainstorm will hit Southern California with such intensity that citizens long afterward will recall the mudslides, flooded streets, and property damage. Such storms have long been a part of local history. During the Gold Rush period the town of Helldorado flourished briefly in San Gabriel Canyon, only to vanish in a flood of water generated by a rainstorm in the early 1860's.

In recent years engineers have attempted to prevent the watershed of the San Gabriel Mountains from shedding its water. Check-dams, cribbing, and concrete channels have controlled much of the problem. However, a striking example of the San Gabriel River's potential for damage is still evident. Six miles up the East Fork of the San Gabriel River, quite literally in the middle of nowhere, stands an abandoned concrete bridge.

The bridge, constructed in the 1930's as a W.P.A. project, spanned a particularly rugged portion of the East Fork known as The Narrows. It represented the culmination of an ambitious project to connect the San Gabriel Canyon to Wrightwood. In the early 1930's Los Angeles County, with convict labor, commenced the construction of a paved road paralleling the East Fork of the San Gabriel River. As a project for prisoners it was ideal: there was certainly plenty to do in building a road along the steep canyon.

Perseverance paid, and by 1938 the road reached as far as The Narrows. At this point the sheer cliffs on both sides of the gorge necessitated the building of a bridge across the chasm, plus a tunnel through a portion of the mountain on the other side, before continuing the road.

Constructed at a cost (in great Depression monetary values) of $19,000, the bridge was some 90 feet long, 60 feet high, and wide enough for the two-way passage of motor vehicles. Concrete provided the basic ingredient, and its planners built it to last for ages. Fulfillment of this intention has exceeded all expectations.

Looking down the narrows.
— *Abraham Hoffman*

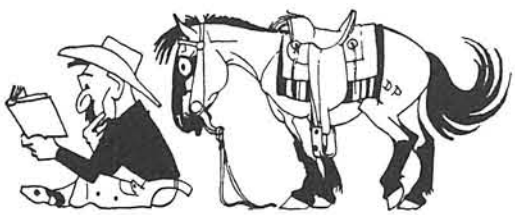
A view of the road showing where the force of the river cut into it. Note where the stream normally runs.
— *Abraham Hoffman*

The county's plan to continue the road past The Narrows came to an abrupt end early in March 1938. A tremendous rainstorm struck Southern California, and water literally poured out of the mountains. Walls of water descended down the

outer canyons, and none was more destructive in its force than the flood which coursed down the East Fork of the San Gabriel River. The water chopped the asphalt road into pieces, undercut the roadbed, and rendered the road completely unusable short of complete reconstruction.

The planners of the road weighed the cost of rebuilding it and decided against doing so. The uncompleted tunnel was dynamited and surviving portions of the road were permitted to deteriorate. Since 1938 the bridge has stood alone, giving mute testimony of the power of San Gabriel mountain water.

Today the bridge serves as a target for Boy Scouts, backpackers, and knowledgeable hikers. The U.S. Forest Service has provided primitive campsite facilities in the area. Hikers to the bridge find they must cross the stream half a dozen times, on logs placed across the river by earlier hikers. At certain times of year, such as in the spring, the turbulence of the water makes the hike virtually impossible. Along the way it is possible to see bits and pieces of the asphalt road, stark reminders of the stream's force. In the early 1960's the Boy Scouts placed a plaque at the bridge; vandals, perhaps more adventurous than is usual for their breed, have since removed it. In any case; the bridge still stands.



DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL . . .

DEATH VALLEY SCOTTY: THE MAN AND THE MYTH, by Hank Johnston. Flying Spur Press, Yosemite, California, 48 pp., 1972. $1.50

This well-illustrated booklet, which is basically a condensation of the author's more complete and detailed forthcoming volume on Walter Scott, nonetheless provides an interesting and infinitely readable overview of the life and colorful career of that remarkable flim flam man known as Death Valley Scotty.

Learning his promotional skills from "Major" John Burke, who served as press agent for Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show during the period he was with this group, Scotty parlayed his flair for fast talking and headline grabbing into a singular lifetime by any standard: cowboy, showman, desert prospector, con-artist, friend of millionaires, national celebrity, bum, and enduring legend.

The whole fantastic story is narrated here with a keen eye for distinguishing fact from fantasy, but when we are dealing with Death Valley Scotty even the truth has an incredible ring to it. Who else, for example, could convince two shrewd businessmen (Julian Gerard and Albert M. Johnson) to grubstake him year after year for a share in a mythical gold mine? Who else could stage the comic-opera Battle of Wingate Pass? Who else could capture America's imagination by a fantastic race against time on a chartered train to Chicago dubbed the "Coyote Special," and then a few years later play a sordid part in a stock swindle for a mere $200 and endure the humiliation of a confession in open court? And, finally, who else could pose with aplomb as the proprietor of the opulent castle in the desert when, in fact, he was living on the charity of his benefactor?

It is a great story, and whether we consider Death Valley Scotty a showman, a shyster, or just a plain thief, our fascination with him will undoubtedly continue.

—TONY LEHMAN.

ADVANCED ROCKCRAFT, by Royal Robbins, illustrated by Sheridan Anderson. La Siesta Press, Glendale, 96 pp., 1973. $2.95

A very technical treatise on rock climbing, another area of interest in the West. Not many of us will wish to follow Robbins example by making a solo-ascent of El Capitan, but this is a landmark book for several reasons.

For Walt Wheelock's prolific La Siesta Press, the advance printing is a new record: seven thousand copies.

. . . *Page Thirteen*

Advanced Rockcraft is a direct descendant of the writings of Robert L. M. Underhill and Richard Leonard of forty years ago, yet the new sophisticated techniques are almost beyond the comprehension of the pioneers.

The use of pitons is discouraged and the advantages of chocks are explained. The section on Values is especially good. A rock climb is compared to a dance, chockcraft is called an art, rules of the game and ethics are discussed, as well as protection of the rock itself.

"... just getting up a route is nothing, the way it is done is everything."

— GLEN DAWSON.

HIPPOCRATES IN A RED VEST, by Barron B. Beshoar. American West Publishing Co., Palo Alto, California, 352 pp., 1973. $9.95

While no great shakes as biography, this vividly written, anecdotal life a frontier doctor in Pueblo and in Trinidad, Colorado, during the violent days of the 1870's until the end of the century, should be read by all who want a first hand account of daily life in those raw frontier days. Trinidad at one time had more saloons, gambling halls, and houses of prostitution than it had decent homes; coal barons and railroad magnates bought and sold the governorship of the state, and almost all other political offices, at will; and voters who might have had some thoughts about voting the rascals out of office quickly changed their minds when confronted by a ring of bullies armed with shotguns surrounding each polling booth that was not already believed to be safely in the pocket of "the Gang."

It was in this milieu that Dr. Michael Beshoar, whose biography is now being written by his grandson, began his career in the West, first at Pueblo and later at Trinidad, where he opened up a combination of drug store and medical practice on August 16, 1867. Dr. Beshoar was by this time 34 years of age, and he had been a regimental surgeon of the 7th Arkansas Regiment, even though he was not by birth a Southerner. Grandson Barron is rather chary of biographical details about the early life of the doctor, omitting the date of his birth, and giving only the barest indication of his paternal and maternal ancestry. He was born, it appears, on a farm in Dry Valley, near Lewiston, Pennsylvania, about 1932 or 1833. He attended the University of Michigan, obtaining a medical diploma from there, presumably in 1853. He first went to St. Louis, where he was informed of a medical practice for sale by a retiring doctor in the small town of Pocahontas, Randolph County, Arkansas. In Randolph County he married his first wife, by whom he shortly had a son, also named Michael, but the young mother died soon afterwards of consumption. He married a second time, but this second wife also died within a year of their marriage, leaving the unhappy doctor still with the problem of caring for a two-year old child. This problem he solved by placing young Mike with a family of friends, while he gave himself up to the practice of medicine, riding many miles to visit the sick and dying. He was rewarded for his devotion to the people of Arkansas by being elected County Judge of Randolph County; he also had a drug store in town, as well as owning a local newspaper. When the war came he therefore considered himself an Arkansan, and he joined the 7th Arkansas Regiment when it was mustered in at Camp Shaver on June 16, 1861. The author of the book gives the doctor's age as "twenty-nine" on April 15, 1862, and he was therefore born in 1832 or 1833. However, on October 20, 1863, after the Union forces overran Arkansas, Doctor Beshoar was allowed to take an oath of allegiance to the Union, and the document gives his age as being then 33, which would make him born in 1830. It is to be regretted that the biographer is not precise in giving an exact birth date.

After the war he opened a practice in St. Louis for a short while, where his professional cards advertised that he was a specialist in "private diseases, viz., gonorrhea, syphilis, etc." He had thought of also mentioning on his cards that he was a specialist in childbirth, but, as the author says, "he dropped this on the assumption that not too many babies would be born to the kind of women who had been drawn into St. Louis by the big Army payroll."

Disgust with this sort of medical practice induced him to seek once more an

Army post, this time with the Union army, at Fort Kearny. After a few years there, and also at the nearby civilian establishment, Dobytown, Dr. Beshoar, still wearing the red vest that had been much admired while he was practicing in St. Louis, moved west at the head of a wagon train, arriving in Denver in January 1867. His reception there, as a known Confederate, was far from warm, and he promptly moved to the politically more congenial climate of Pueblo, and from there still further south to Trinidad, which was to be his home until his death in 1907.

The author includes in his vivid narrative descriptions of several pioneer "characters" in Trinidad – among them a poker-playing whiskey-priest, who might have stepped straight from the pages of a Graham Greene novel, and who was accused, unjustly it seems, of having murdered a fellow priest. Another was a tough old mountain man who, to impress some tenderfeet, one time tossed off a proferred drink at a bar, chewing up the glass as well. Fortunately Dr. Beshoar was at hand to suture up the inside of his mouth. Another character was Sam McBride, who had been associated with the Doctor in one of his newspaper ventures. Since the paper was not a financial success, the partnership was dissolved, but Sam, through the many friends he had made, managed to get a position as Treasurer of the Pueblo school district. In 1876 he was entrusted with $14,000 which the district had voted for a new school building. Sam went east with the money to negotiate with contractors. Everyone kept quiet when he was not heard from for some time. Finally the story broke in the newspaper, under the heading "Have You Seen Sam?". No one had, and no one ever did again.

Dr. Beshoar was a convert to Catholicism early in life, though this does not seem to have prevented his continuing to be a Mason until his death. His son Mike was sent to the Christian Brothers' boarding school in St. Louis, a confinement he disliked, and he was glad to be able to rejoin his father in Trinidad at the age of fifteen. But in that almost womanless town the doctor had no decent home in which to place him, and to protect the lad from the too open temptations of the saloons and the brothels he finally sent him to work on one of the ranches in which he had an interest. This was too much for the youngster's temperament, and after many attempts to establish himself as a cowboy he sought solace for his loneliness in drink, which eventually brought him to an early grave, much to his father's grief.

Dr. Beshoar married a third time in 1872, while young Mike was away from Trinidad trying to make his own way in the world. The young lady was Annie Elizabeth Maupin, whom he had once met in Tronton, Missouri, when she was but fifteen years old; the doctor had been called in to treat her younger sister, who had contracted typhoid fever. Now fortuitously renewing his acquaintance with Annie, he persuaded her to marry him, the wedding taking place in Trinidad on November 13, 1872. Six children were born of this marriage, of whom five survived to maturity, five of the six being named so that their initials were all identically B. B. B. The good doctor must have had a thing about the letter B, and the first four children were named Beatrice Bonaventura, Blanche Bazelia (who died in infancy), Benedicta Burnett, and Benjamin Bernardin. Only John Maupin Beshoar, named for his grandparents, escaped. The sixth child was again B. B. B., Bertram Bruno Beshoar.

Michael Beshoar ran for Lieutenant Governor of the state in 1876, and for State Senator in 1904, each time as a Democrat. But each time he was defeated by the well-entrenched Republican machine, in a series of election frauds that were little short of scandalous.

Doctor Beshoar died peacefully in his bed in 1907, the result, it seems, of a mild food poisoning which even his doctor-son Benjamin could do nothing to remedy. His widow remained faithful to his memory for twenty-seven more years, assiduously collecting his papers, medical records, letters, journals, and other memorabilia. It is from these, and from newspapers, military records, and other standard sources that his grandson has compiled this fascinating story of a medical man whose life, better than a hundred histories, mirrored all of the good and bad qualities of life in the pioneer west.

– Raymond F. Wood.

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Corral Chips . . .

Acting as M.C. during ceremonies honoring the 90th birthday of Ex-Supervisor John Anson Ford is *Dudley Gordon,* who will also serve with *Doyce Nunis* as members of the Mayor's Bicentennial Committee.

C.M. *Russ Leadabrand* is an adjunct professor in the Journalism Department at U.S.C. conducting seminars on "Writing the Non-Fiction Book" in the University's inter-departmental Writers Program. His book *Tall Tales of Western Badmen* is scheduled for winter publication by Comstock/Ballantine.

Guest speaker at the Women Artists of the American West's second annual exhibition and dinner is C.M. *Phil Kovinick,* whose topic, "The Neglected West," deals with many of the unknown and little-known artists and illustrators whose contributions to documenting the West have nonetheless been significant.

Westerners at the Twentieth Annual Meeting of the Conference of California Historical Societies include Associate Member *Dwight Cushman,* Members *Everett Hager, Earl Adams, Sid Platford, Dutch Holland,* C.M. *Jim Gulbransen,* and C.M. *R. Coke Wood,* who was elected Conference First Vice-President.

On display at San Francisco's Old Mint during the summer was *Henry Clifford's* outstanding and unique collection of pioneer gold coins and other related material. Many Westerners attended the reception that accompanied the opening of the exhibit.

Dick Bunnell serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the Orange County Indian Center and has a guiding hand in their recent and highly successful Annual Pow-Wow held in Capistrano.

Starting a two-year term as Vice-President for Region IX of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers is Associate Member *Bill Warren,* who will now represent some 8,000 engineers in Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Nevada, Arizona, and Hawaii.

Honorary Member *Art Woodward* is off to Europe again, with a scheduled stay in Dublin to inquire into the origin of the "Calathumpians," an Irish wine-drinking organization that appeared in New York in the 1830's and in the mid-1860's at Prescott, Arizona. Art likewise intends to investigate the "nail" which is referred to in the Seventh Cavalry song "Garryowen." Captain Keogh, one of Custer's company commanders who was reared around Limerick, Ireland, is generally credited with introducing this rollicking song into the cavalry. The original "nail" is apparently in the museum in Limerick, but there are other "nails" in existence – four in Bristol, England, for example. All were used to conclude bargains at the markets where cattle, sheep, goats, etc. were sold. Hence the phrase, "Instead of spa we'll drink brown ale and pay the reckoning on the nail." After he recovers from the Octoberfest in Munich, Germany, our wonderful and dedicatedly bibulous friend has indicated a willingness to share the fruit of his abstruse research via the *Branding Iron.*

Retiring as Chairman of the Board of Contract Appeals of the Atomic Energy Commission is C.M. *Paul Gantt.*

Among those attending the Commission of the Californias and the Baja California Symposium, meeting in La Paz and Cabo San Lucas respectively, are *Carl Dentzel* and *Glen Dawson* – who arrived by air – and *Bill Hendricks* and *Walt Wheelock* – who have now tallied their second overland trek to La Paz this year. It must be getting to be almost a milk-run for this pair.

Scheduled for fall publication is *Custer in Texas* by C.M. *John M. Carroll.* And at long last the University of Arizona has put to press a work by C.M. *Harry James* entitled *Pages from Hopi History.*

Our illustrious Roundup Foreman and Editor of *The Branding Iron* is in the news again. He was interviewed by *Wall Street Journal* staff Editor Lewis M. Phelps and appeared on the front page of the August 14, 1974 issue in an article entitled "Troubled Transit – The Interurbans, Streetcars of Yesterday Provide Models for New Systems."

Finally, in the area of fine printing C.M. *Bill Rasmussen* has utilized hand-set type on a small book he wrote himself called *The Goldbeaters of Orange, California.* This history of the only goldbeaters west of Chicago who furnished bookbinders with gold leaf is issued in a limited edition of 125 copies that have been bound by the Dragon Bindery.