LOS ANGELES WESTERNERS CORRAL

The Branding Iron

J. GOODMAN

JUNE 1983 LOS ANGELES CORRAL NUMBER 151

# THE HACKAMORE

By P. L. Bonebrake

The period of which I write was during the nineties in California. I make no pretense of knowing everything there is to know about horses or everything about handling them. I simply write as I remember the men, the horses, their equipment and their methods. I will admit, however, that I have spent a lifetime in the stock business.

The general opinion, nowadays, is that the horses used in the cow business, at that time were the old California mustangs. Nothing is further from the truth. As a matter of fact the *remudas* on the large ranches almost all, were from one- to seven-eighths thoroughbred horses. Big, fine nervy, upstanding horses that could really run. However, I shall not go into detail at this time, regarding their origin, or breeding and history as that is a story in itself.

The old ranchmen rarely broke a horse before he was four or five and sometimes older. They believed, and rightly so, that a horse was too soft, too young for use before that age. As a result they were remarkable for their endurance and ability to stand hard knocks without injury and it was not unusual to find cow-horses that had reached a great age with legs "as clean as a whistle," with not a blemish on them.

The horse-breakers, as a rule, were native Californians, a few were Indians and a few were Americans. The latter mostly born in California.

At that time a sort of benevolent peonage still existed on most of the large grants and families were bred, born, lived and died on the same ranch. In many instances, a grandfather and a father and a son would all be employed at the same time. Occasionally you could find a man working as a *vaquero* on a ranch that had once belonged to his father, or even to himself.

The bronco-riders were the younger men, generally assisted by an older man. Nearly every ranch had some old fellow who was a master hand at reining horses, some of them being fifty and even seventy years old. Many of these old fellows had more than a local reputation for reining horses and enjoyed considerable fame on that account. Some owners would often send a colt many miles to one of these men to rein. They would rarely accept a horse to handle for less than six months and so well thought of were these

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THE WESTERNERS
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*Published Quarterly in*
March, June, September, December





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**24213 Hamlin St., Canoga Park, Ca. 91307**

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# Corral Chips

"Tapping the Well: Local History Drawn from Local Resources," the theme of the Southern Symposium of the Conference of California Historical Societies, proves one of the finer programs presented to a gathering of local historians. Noted among those attending the meeting held in Riverside February 25-26, 1983, are *Bill Burkhart, Dutch Holland, Frank Newton,* and *Don Pflueger,* and C.M.'s *Joe Doctor* and *Joe Northrop* . . . A.M. *Dick Logan* conducts a series of tours for foreign professors and researchers exchanged under the Fulbright program. Two trips have been to Joshua Tree National Monument. Another took the visitors to San Francisco, Sacramento, Sutter's Mill, Yosemite, and Sequoia; it was composed almost entirely of Iron Curtain and Mainland Chinese professors, giving a very unusual aspect to everything and requiring a different approach . . . C.M. *Jeff Nathan* reviews Western books in the Spring 1983 *Montana* and pretty regularly in *Book Week,* published by the Los Angeles *Herald-Examiner* . . .

C.M. *Michael Harrison's* extensive library of Western Americana, 15,000 books and periodicals, government documents, reports, and other sources, is now a part of the University of California, Davis, Library. The collection includes a catalogue of half a million cards indexing and cross-referencing the materials . . . *Abe Hoffman* finds one of his research topics, the career of journalist-editor Samuel Travers Clover, has attracted the interest of several history groups. He addresses the San Fernando Valley His-

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men, that it was the custom, in speaking of the qualities of a horse, to say, "he was reined by So and So."

### Slow and Easy Way

These older men seemed to have a deep understanding of horse nature. They were very patient, even-tempered, quiet and unhurried in their movements, slow and easy-going in their ways and never excited or ever got mad. I do not recall that I ever saw one "fight" a horse. They did not seem to find it necessary to jerk, spur or beat one. Just a sort of slow and easy did it. Nor do I recall that I ever saw a colt buck with one of them. They would spend hours cleaning and rubbing them, talking and petting them. The idea seemed to be to establish confidence in the colt and as a result they were not afraid.

Now about the hackamore. The nose piece might be just a piece of an old four-strand *riata,* with the ends tied together, or again it might be a fancy braided affair from six to thirty-two strands, with strands carefully cut and beautifully braided as smooth and shiny as a snake's skin, with wonderfully turned slides and buttons while the end would be a beautifully braided ball perhaps two inches in diameter and perfectly round, a most intricate and difficult piece of work.

The hackamore was big enough to go around the nose, well up, and leave about six inches between the end and the lower jaw. Two pieces of raw hide or a string of leather run over the top of the head. It was about 3/8 inches wide and was made adjustable by a loop cut in one end of the side of the head and the other piece tied in. They had a brow band and throat latch only rarely, the head of sash-cord had not then made its appearance.

The reins were a *macate* or hair rope made especially for horse breakers. It was about an inch and a half in diameter and from 16 to 24 feet in length and generally made from mane hair as that was softer than tail hair. It was often of different colors. A section being black, another white, and a third sorrel.

The *macate* was first tied around the neck, then run through the hackamore and tied close up to the ball on it, then it was wound tightly around the shank of the hackamore until it fitted snugly around the nose, then tied and carried back to one side of the neck and around the horn of the saddle and back on the other side to the underside of the nose piece, then tied tightly and the remainder left for a lead rope or to stuff in the rider's belt, the first few saddles. Of course, the manner of tying and the length of the *macate* and reins varied with the individual ideas of the rider.

The hackamore was not placed low on the soft part of the nose, nor up under the eyes either. It was placed just about where the bone on the lower part of the nose begins. If placed too low on the soft part, sometimes a line of white hairs would grow where it got tender or perhaps a permanent enlargement would remain. It also had a tendency to shut off their wind a little and frightened nervous colts and made them hard to handle.

I recall that at one period, some hackamores were used that had two large braided rolls, one on each side of the nose. These rolls were about 2 inches in diameter and about 3 inches long. These hackamores were worn low down, the idea being that the rolls would bear down on each nostril and shut off the horse's wind. But they did not work very satisfactorily and did not come into general use.

Great care was taken to have the hackamore tied tight up under the jaw and the reins tied up close as well.

It does not make any difference how tight the nose piece is tied if the reins are tied out at the end of it, you have not got much control over your horse. He just bows his head until the reins are pulling across the front of his neck, with no pressure on his nose or under his jaw and he does about as he pleases.

We used to think and still do, that the important thing was to get the under part of the jaw tender, and when you did that, you could begin to teach your horse something. That part seems to be more tender or sensitive than the nose.

Great care was taken not to hurt or frighten a colt. The idea being to teach, not break him. They were rarely ever hurried out of a walk. Cow trails and open country was preferred to roads. The colt was not just permitted to follow the meanderings of the trail. At each

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curve of the trail, the rider took pains to rein him around it so that with his natural inclination to follow the trail, he soon got the hang of it without any trouble.

There was none of this spurring a horse to a run, then setting him up, pulling him around, quirting his neck to "limber it up." Such methods would never have been tolerated. Gentleness, patience, kindness, firmness with horse sense were the essentials of a good horseman.

When the colt learned to turn by neck pressure, his rider would be very apt to follow a cow around on the range, not chasing it, just driving it from place to place and never hurrying it, and the first thing you knew the colt began to grasp the idea, he was learning to rein by the neck and also to follow a cow.

About this time they began to teach him to stop. There was none of this wild hauling, pulling on the reins and crow hopping to a stop. These old-timers gave a horse some warning, a noise made with the mouth just audible to the colt and it is surprising how quickly they learn. In just a few lessons they know they are to stop and with just a slight pull will halt. Soon they had a colt so he could be brought to a stop from a full gallop, easily and quickly, and without any fighting of his head or fussing around. He just stopped. As great pains were taken to teach him to stop as to rein. A rider trying to show off, whose horse jammed his head up in the air, opened his mouth and crow hopped to a stop would be laughed at, even by the girls.

### Hind Feet Were Breaks

Horses were taught to slide to stop with their hind feet on the ground and sliding all the way. To do this they were taken to a slick grassy place, sometimes slightly down hill, or sometimes a slick place without grass, or the ground might even be wet a little.

The horses of those days, I mean those on the big ranches, were rarely shod and they soon learned to sit down like a dog and slide to a stop. The distances they would do were so amazing. We used to have a game we played to see who could start at a given mark, run up to another mark and slide. We did this in turn and the one that made the longest marks without a break won. Crow hops disqualified you. Sometimes, we all threw in a certain amount and the winner took the pot. I have seen old gray-haired *rancheros* enter their favorite horses with their best riders on them and bet considerable sums on them. The amount was usually in steers though paid in cash. If steers were worth $25 a head and he wanted to bet $50, he would say "I bet two steers on my horse." If you wanted to buy a horse, these old-timers would price him in steers rather than money or dollars.

As late as 1910, I went to Capistrano to see a horse Domingo had for sale. Steers were worth $50 and when I asked the price he said "six steers" which meant three hundred dollars.

The principal of the hackamore was that the pull away came at the same place, on the front of the nose, not off to one side, regardless to which side he was turned, therefore he quickly learned to respond to neck pressure.

In teaching the colt to turn, the spur played an important part. They were very dull pointed so as not to prick the skin and but one at a time was used, that is to say, both were worn but the spur on the same side to which he was turned was held against him. If he was turning to right, the right spur only was used and the colt naturally turned his hindquarters away. Some learned at the slightest pressure on his neck and the feel of the spur, to turn quickly and smoothly.

In from three to six months the colt would be working well and then the bit would be put on.

The bits generally used were of three kinds. The spade bit with loose jaws, now generally known as a Santa Barbara bit, and the ring bit which came from Chile to Mexico, then here, and a great many of the old U.S. Army cavalry bits. There was, of course, a sprinkling of other types of bits. The half-breed was just beginning to make its appearance and also a few solid jawed spade bits with a bar across the lower end of the sides.

The Santa Barbara type was the favorite and most generally used. The reason of the spade was because it pried a horse's mouth open a little and he could not "take" the bit in his teeth and run away with his rider as with a straight bar and no spade or curb in the bit.

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Some horses learned to grasp the bit in the first set of back teeth and away they went.

It must be remembered that the old Californian used a very long rope, the standard *riata* being fifty feet long, and many much longer. This made a big handful of rope and left only three fingers to stop a horse, consequently a severe bit was necessary.

The jaws of the old-time spade bits were very much looser than the ones of today and a horse "took the bit" much more quickly.

The ring bit was not common, yet many were used and no matter how hard mouthed a horse was, he would always "ante" with one. In the hands of a lighthanded man, an otherwise useless runaway horse was made into a very useful one.

Do not understand by this that every horse of that period was an excellently reined one. The percentage was about as today. Just about as many good ones, fair ones, and about as many dummies as today.

Nor were all well-reined horses, good cowhorses. Some just lacked cow sense. Neither were all good rope horses or good cutting horses well reined.

And just to confuse you more in the hackamore business, I shipped steers out of Western Texas for two winters and I lived in Arizona and New Mexico many years and I saw just as good rope horses and cutting horses there as I ever saw here in California and those horses never saw a hackamore. They were ridden from their first saddle with a snaffle, or as commonly called broken bit, and in comparatively few weeks a grazing bit was put on them and, believe me, they surely could get around a cow.

*The Hackamore by P.L. Bonebrake is reprinted verbatim from the September 1948 issue of the Los Angeles Corral Branding Iron.*

# WESTERN WORDS

By ART WOODWARD

After reading Percy Bonebrake's article on the hackamore (and enjoying it) I feel the urge to sit down at the typewriter and bang out a few notes on some of the terms used in the west which came in with the Spanish horsemen. I know that what I am going to say is not new but these few paragraphs may be a refresher course to those of us who have made western history a hobby and to the tenderfoot it may be an eye opener.

Since the introduction of horse culture into the Southwest and West was primarily the work of the Spaniards, it falls quite naturally that the terms they used were also retained, albeit at times, in most unrecognizable forms.

For example Percy's hackamore was the Spanish jaquima (hah-kee-mah) which in turn was derived from the Arabic. On the other hand his "macate" which he has defined as a hair rope, is the Hispanized *mecate* derived from the Aztec *mecatl,* meaning a cord or rope made out of the fibers of maguey. Generally speaking whenever we see a Spanish word or rather a Mexican word ending in *te* it is usually derived from a Hispanized Aztec word. Thus, coyote—coyotl; chocolate—chocolatl; metate—metatl, etc.

Among cow punchers the word "cavvy" or "cavvyard" meaning a herd of horses, is derived from the word *caballada* which means just that. In this case the Texans who didn't understand Spanish caught the general phonetic meaning of the word, hence the Anglecized version.

The well known "buckaroo" of our western fiction writers is of course, the Spanish *vaquero,* or literally cow man. Since the *b* and *v* in Spanish sound much alike when slurred rapidly it is no wonder that the unlettered cow boys of American ancestry slid from one to the other in their attempts to pronounce the Spanish terms. One frequently encounters this interchange of letters in old Spanish documents and books.

Similarly when a buckaroo spoke of eating

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some jerkey he really meant *charque* or *charqui* (sun dried beef) and coming from the verb *charquear* to dry beef in the sun, in other words "to jerk it."

Again when a cowman spoke of his riata, he was merely contracting "lariat," which in turn was his version of *la reata* or "the rope." This was generally made of maguey fiber, or as Don Carlos Rincon Gallardo states in his book "El Charro Mexicano" (The Mexican Horseman): "In some regions of the country (Mexico) because of the climate they use *sogas* (also a term for rope) of raw hide, made of three or four strands." Another term which we have adopted is "lasso" from *lazo* (verb *lazar,* meaning to catch with a rope). As Don Luis G. Inclan wrote in his little book "Reglas Para Colear y Lazar" way back in 1860, when describing "Rules for Tailing and Lassoing," and referring to the reatas: "There are a multitude of them; but those that have acquired the most fame are the Floridenas, Palpenas, Posenas, Queretanas and above all the Sanluisenas. Their difference in quality consists in the kind of mezote (maguey plant) used, the manner in which they are twisted and the number of strands employed." Each of these terms referred to a particular locality in Mexico, Don Carlos believes that the best ones today come from the hacienda of Santa Ana. Other good ones are made at Tule and in Arandas de Jalisco.

A "quirt" is derived from "la cuarta", meaning a short whip.

Of course "chaps" or "shaps" is merely a contraction of chaparreras which mean leg covering for use in the chaparral or thickets of thorny brambles or evergreen oaks. The word chaparra means a species of oak but has been colloquialized in Mexico and the Americas to mean any bramble thicket. Before chaps were used in Mexico there were the *defensas* or *armas;* these were made of dressed cow hide or goat skins (the latter to be worn in wet weather). The armas were tied to the saddle horn and the rider slipped his legs under them and then fastened them around his waist by a thin leather thong. When he dismounted he left them hanging from the saddle. Following the use of the armas (which are still used in the wilder parts of Mexico and Baja California as well as the Argentine) the armitas or little armas (armor) came into being. These were shorter pieces of dressed hide which were fastened to a belt and this was tied to the vaquero's waist. To keep them from flapping he tied the armitas just above the knee at the rear. This type of leg covering is known in certain parts of the United States as "chinks." Chaparreras were worn in Mexico and known by that name as early as the 1840s-1850s but I do not believe they were used or known in this country until around the 1870s, perhaps later.

The word dally, meaning to take a turn of the reata around the horn of the saddle, is derived from the Mexican expression dar la vuelta or the imperative "da la vuelta" to take or give a turn or "give it a turn." I suspect that some Tejano heard a Mexican vaquero say "Da le, da le" (take it, take it!" during the heat of some fast bit of roping and to the Texan's ear it sounded like one word "dale! dale!" hence it became "dally," or "dolly welter."

On the border the word "hoosegow" became synonymous with jail house and this too is derived from a Spanish word, *"juzgado"* which may be the word "judged" but as it is used in Spanish means a court of justice. Hence, anyone going up for sentence went to the *juzgado.* Here again the law of phonetics steps in. Spanish when spoken by certain classes is badly slurred thus, the *d* in many words may be eliminated and the word then sounds like this *juzga'o* or if you prefer hoose-gaow.

Our term calaboose, slang for jail is of course the Spanish *calabozo,* meaning a dungeon or cell.

In Spanish California the following terms were used to describe the colors of horses. This was given by H. E. Hill of Oak Knoll in the Daily Alta California of February 25, 1860.

"blanco ..... white
prieto ..... black (negro not being used)
moro ..... grey
tordillo ....white with small black spots
pinto .....calico
alazan .....sorrel
alazan tostado .....chestnut sorrel

asaino ..... bay
bayo ..... clay bank
palomino ..... cream colored
grulla ..... mouse colored
retinto ..... brown
castano ..... chestnut
bayo blanco ..... light cream colored
canela ..... cinnamon roan
roseo ..... strawberry roan
moro prieto ..... iron grey
saunado ..... black with white nose
cuatro alba ..... four white feet and nose
poche ..... short tailed
mocho ..... crop eared."

Of course it must be admitted that many of these translations are quite free, "grulla" for example means a certain kind of a crane and not a mouse although the bird itself is greyish blue like a mouse. "Roseo" means rosy; *bayo* inclines toward chestnut or brown, etc.

In Mexico today there are an infinite variety of color terms. I could quote you over one hundred and twenty such definitions of every possible combination of color and marking but this is not the place for it.

Now, a final term or two and I'm gonna go sit in the corner ans wait for repercussions.

Everyone knows we have ranches of all kinds in the west. There are cattle ranches, hay ranches, sheep ranches, rabbit ranches, fruit ranches, chicken ranches, turkey ranches, horse ranches and dude ranches. Everyone also knows that the word is derived from *rancho* but it might surprise every rancher who has one of these places to know that the word rancho doesn't actually mean what he thinks it does.

Many years ago, in Spain when the crown didn't waste much money on care upon the convicts or soldiers, the ingredients for the daily stew were frequently bad or *rancio.* Out of this word came the term *rancho* denoting a mess for a group of men. The man who rustled the ingredients for the meal was the *ranchero.* In time the term *rancho* was applied to the room or place where the members of the mess gathered. The word was taken up by the herdsmen in Spain and it also went on ship board. Today, on a Spanish vessel, the mess is the *rancho* and the steward is the ranchero. Hence the place where vaqueros might gather to eat would actually be the mess or rancho but not the land itself. However in Mexico and in California the word has come to mean a small farm or ranch although in Mexico proper one hears the word *hacienda,* meaning landed property, estate or wealth as being the term for large land holdings. The word *milpa* to denote a small farm or cultivated field is used in Mexico. There are other terms also in vogue in our sister republic denoting small holdings of land but we seldom hear them in the United States.

Our common word barbecue is derived from the word barbacoa which the Spanish picked up in Cuba en route to Mexico in the 16th century. Originally, I believe, this was a Taino or possibly Carib Indian word as was the term *cacique* the latter meaning a chief or leader. The term *barbacoa* meant a small low platform upon which to smoke meat. The Spaniards gave an added meaning to it when they referred to the low wooden platforms used as sleeping benches by the Indians in the southern part of the United States, as *barbacoas.* So, today we have barbecues, Bar B Qs, and the BQ, all derived from the Taino or Carib word. Likewise the Spaniards took the word *cacique* with them into Mexico and later into New Mexico and Arizona and applied it to the head men of the Pueblo tribes. It stuck and in our anthropological literature it is still used. Similarly we have the Carib word for club, *macana* carried by the Spanish explorers to Mexico and thence to our own Southwest where ethnologists have applied it to the curved throwing sticks used by the Hopi and Luiseno and Diegueno Indians.

*Western Words by Art Woodward is reprinted verbatim from the December 1948 issue of the Los Angeles Corral Branding Iron.*

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torical Society in February, the Huntington Corral in March, and the San Dimas Corral in April on the topic, "Samuel T. Clover: Western Journalist, Author, and Editor" . . . C.M. *Gene Bear* addresses the Simi Valley B-Western Film Festivel on how musical content contributed to the success of B-Western motion pictures . . .

*Phil Kovinick* reports that Corral members who belong to the Collegium of Western Art are guests of the Maritime Museum in San Pedro on May 20 to view paintings and films on water color paintings by Arthur Beaumont and to hear a talk on the famous marine artist by his son, Dean Beaumont . . . C.M. *Msgr. Francis J. Weber* publishes another miniature book, this one called *The Spruce Goose.* It deals with the famed Howard Hughes H-4 Hercules airplane which is now publicly displayed adjacent to the Queen Mary in Long Beach. Msgr. Weber has also completed thirteen of the contemplated 22 books which he is preparing on the California Missions. Presently he is finishing a book on Fray Junipero Serra which will be issued in 1984 as part of the bicentennial ceremonies commemorating the friar's demise . . . C.M. *Richard Upton* is a speaker at a week-long seminar at the Custer Battlefield National Monument in Montana and conducts a tour of old Fort Custer, June 19-27. He is also the author of *The Indian as a Soldier at Fort Custer, Montana,* published in June . . .

The next publication in *Glen Dawson's* Los Angeles Miscellany Series promises to be one of the finest — a full-length biography of the wood-engraving artist Paul Landacre, written by *Tony Lehman.* Lavishly illustrated and sensitively written, the volume received high praise from C.M. *Jake Zeitlin* after he read the galley proofs, calling the book "remarkably true in fact and, more of a wonder, true in spirit" . . . *Doyce Nunis* is the receipient of the Albert S. Raubenheimer Distinguished Faculty Award of the Division of Social Sciences and Communication at U.S.C. in May. The award is presented by the President's Circle "in recognition of outstanding contributions to the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences in the areas of Teaching, Research, and Service." Additionally, on May 20 the Historical Society of Southern California honors Doyce for his twenty years as editor of *Southern California Quarterly.* He is presented with a bound set of those issues of his editorship. Citations from Mayor Bradley and the County Board of Supervisors are also presented . . .

The 36th California History Institute held at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, April 15-16, presented a fine program at the Holt-Atherton Pacific Center for Western Studies under the directorship of Westerners International President John Porter Bloom. Corral members present at the meeting include *Bill Burkhart, Dutch Holland, Ray Wood,* and C.M.'s *Joe Doctor* and *Al Shumate.* The Jedediah Smith Society, holding its annual breakfast in conjunction with the Institute, hears *Ray Wood* report on his nationwide search for monuments to Smith . . .


# THE MONTHLY ROUNDUP

## APRIL MEETING

Associate Member Robert Blew addressed the Corral on "Vigilantism in Los Angeles, 1835-1874." Los Angeles during this period had a murder rate of 25 per 1,000, and murders were routinely reported in the newspapers. As a frontier town, Los Angeles invited violence; transients, neer-do-wells, and filibusters passed through and made trouble. The local newspapers, which often as not incited violence as well as reported it, wrote of drunken Indians, cowardly Mexicans, and heathen Chinese as perpetrators

Photograph - Frank Newton

From left, Phil Nadler, speaker Robert Blew, Deputy Sheriff Bill Warren and Sheriff Powell Greenland at the April meeting.

and victims of serious crimes. During this period Los Angeles experienced at least 40 legal hangings, 30 lynchings, and other capital punishments, with all figures unreliable because of poor record-keeping. To modern researchers it is sometimes hard to differentiate between a legal hanging, vigilante action, and just plain mob lynching.

The first local vigilante action occurred in 1835, long before the San Francisco committees of the gold rush era. In the American period, violence was so common it became a dull routine at which honest people despaired. Those who deplored such action usually conceded it was necessary. Supporters claimed lax law enforcement was their justification for vigilante action. Blew recounted many of the more colorful and controversial episodes during this era of "popular tribunals." He concluded that unlike San Francisco, no formal vigilante organization existed in Los Angeles. Each crisis created its own committee, with seemingly no one aware of the historical consequences of the actions taken.

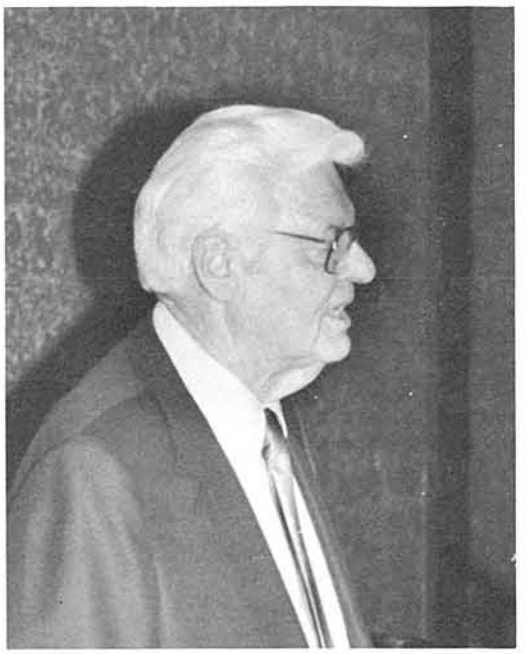
Also at the meeting, Ben Abril and Orley E. Laird were advanced to Active Member status.

## MAY MEETING

Member Bill Lorenz addressed the Corral on "Two Men from Missouri" who came to the Imperial Valley — William Franklin Holt and Harold Bell Wright. In his time Wright as a best-selling novelist, coldly received by the critics but popular with readers. A sometime minister, artist, and rancher, Wright made a major career decision in 1909. He resigned from the ministry, burned his paintings, and started writing stories. Wright's novels were romances with a message of social justice. Among his works were an autobiography and *The Winning of Barbara Worth,* describing the struggle for power in the Imperial Valley. A best-seller in its time, *Barbara Worth* sold over 1½ million copies.

Lorenz noted that one of the characters in *Barbara Worth,* Jefferson Worth, was modeled on entrepreneur William Franklin Holt, and the rest of his presentation centered on the accomplishments of this remarkable businessman. Holt came to California after several business ventures. Unexpected asthma attacks led to his making Redlands his home, and he saw possibilities in agricultural promotions in the Imperial Valley. But Holt's vision involved more than merely selling land; he wanted to build entire towns. Holt started a telephone company servicing Imperial Valley's towns, began local newspapers, an electric power company, an ice

Photograph - Frank Newton



Bill Lorenz addressing the Corral at the May Meeting.

plant, a brickyard, a creamery, etc. He started the town of Holtville on 17,000 acres. In 17 years Holt built no less than 800 buildings in the valley. By 1905 he was supplying electric power to all the valley towns as well as Mexicali, and offering farmland on generous terms to prospective settlers.

Holt's methods aroused the opposition of the California Development Company, but this did not stop Holt from carrying out his plans. To irriage the farmland he built 50 miles of canals to bring in water. As a strong supporter of community development Holt opened banks, served as justice of the peace, postmaster, and school director, and even built an opera house in El Centro. When the U.S. Reclamation Service said a third of the Imperial Valley was unfit for cultivation, Holt kept faith and proved the Reclamation Service wrong. A second crisis occurred when the Colorado River broke its banks and flooded settlements. Again, Holt remained optimistic about the future of the valley. In 1917 he sold out his holdings for a well-earned profit and retired to the San Fernando Valley. William Franklin Holt was a rarity in his own or any other time — not only an outstanding businessman, but a man of honesty and integrity.

Bill supplemented his presentation with a series of slides depicting the Imperial Valley and Holt's real estate and community promotions.

## JUNE MEETING

The notorious "marine layer" with its gray mantle obscuring the sun did not prevent the Corral from enjoying its annual Fandango on June 11. Despite the cloudiness, the weather was mild, and Corral members and their wives and guests were entertained at the Casa de Adobe at the foot of the Southwest Museum in Highland Park. The *feliz hora* was accompanied by Spanish-Mexican music and dancers, and a delicious dinner was served at the scheduled time.

Bill Warren's number-out-of-a-hat system calling tables to the buffet line met with approval from all but the last tables which objected to losing out to Number 7¼, which turned out to be Bill's hat size. Katie Ainsworth's raffle ticket came out the winner in the drawing for the Andy Dagosta painting, but she graciously deferred to another selection, insisting her collection of paintings already had its quota of Dagosta works. Patrick Houlihan, director of the Southwest Museum, described the restoration work being done on Casa de Adobe and plans for the future.

Photograph - Frank Newton

Westerners and their guests at the Annual Fandango. In the foreground, two infamous outlaws, Everett Hager and Donald Duke gesticulate at the photographer.

# TWO LONG-LOST RUSSELL SCULPTURES

*by Peter Meyers*

On September 17, 1961, an article in the *Los Angeles Times'* Sunday art section announced that "two art works of major importance by Charles M. Russell (1865-1926), foremost painter-sculptor of Western Americana, have been discovered here. Hitherto unknown to the art world, the two pieces, a horse and a buffalo, were modeled in wax by Russell in 1901. They recently came to light in the settling of the estate of Leroy Fogle."

The article went on to mention that the Fogle family had authorized a first edition of 12 bronze castings each to be made of the wax sculptures, and that Irving Myers, Pacific Palisades writer and art collector, had purchased eight of them. Mr. Myers passed away in 1963, leaving them to his wife Jeannette, who passed away in 1982, leaving the remaining unsold bronzes to her son, Peter Myers, who is currently offering them for sale at $3000.00 each.

But the history of the creation of the waxes by Russell and their discovery years later is an interesting one, and begins in the year 1901, in Great Falls, Montana. As George Fogle wrote, in a letter to the Montana Historical Society:

". . . I am writing to give you some of the facts in connection with the two beeswax originals by Charles Marion Russell—namely, the *Standing Buffalo* and the *Bessie B.*

These beeswax figures were given to my father by Russell in 1901. We lived in Great Falls, Montana and my father, Leroy Fogle, and Charlie Russell were very close friends. Charlie Russell was my godfather.

When Charlie brought the Standing Buffalo to my father, he said, "How do you like that, Fog?" My father replied that it was beautiful. "But Charlie," he said, "I don't remember you working on this."

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"Oh," said Charlie, "I just worked on it off and on. But do you know, Fog, I thought I never would get that goddamned board sawed straight!" (The board to which he referred, of course, was the one on which the buffalo stands.)

The eyes in the beeswax figure of the horse's head (Bessie B.) are actually buttons cut from one of my mother's high button shoes."

As for George's father, Leroy—he had come West as a salesman for Grieggs-Cooper Co. of St. Paul, Minnesota; and, as such, he covered the Montana Territory. He and Charlie Russell were cronies in the late 1890's and early 1900's. They would hang around their favorite bars together, Fogle would visit Russell's studio, and Charlie and his wife, Nancy, were also frequent guests at the Fogle home. George Fogle recalled one occasion, in fact, when he was four or five years old: One evening the Fogle family had a houseful of guests, including Charlie Russell. Since Charlie had had too much to drink, the Fogles had him stay the night—but the only place for him to sleep was to share George's bed. In his sleep during the night, the little boy somehow scraped his toenail down Russell's leg. Russell woke up and yelled, "For God' s sake, kid, when yo go to bed, take off your spurs!"

During this period, Russell would stay at the Fogle home for days at a time, often sketching the surrounding scene or memories of his cowboy days. The elder Fogle wound up buying 14 paintings as well as some pen and ink sketches and sculptures done by Russell. But there was an informality to their friendship as well, for once when Fogle was setting place cards for a dinner party at the Park Hotel in Great Falls, Russell chatted with him while drawing a sketch on each place card which Fogle set down on the table.

As to the sculptures, the Bessie B. is one of a small series of horse portraits executed by Russell, and this is believed to be among his earliest and largest pieces. Interestingly enough, Leroy Fogle and Charles Russell owned, together, a 25% interest in an actual horse called Bessie B., which was a famous racing trotter in the West at the turn of the century. Russell's late godson, George Fogle, was not certain, but Russell may have given both the buffalo and horse sculptures to George's father, Leroy, in exchange for Leroy's putting up the cash to buy Russell's 12½% interest in the Bessie B. At that time, Bessie B. was racing at tracks in Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and North Dakota; and Russell and Fogle were paying their quarter share for feed, grooming, transportation, and stable care. George said of his father's

and Russell's venture: They didn't make "a helluva lot of money," but they had a good time.

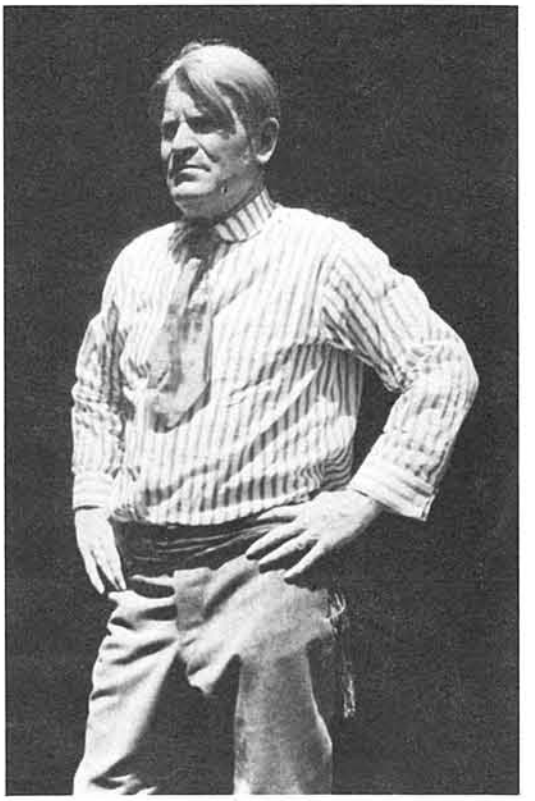
As for "The Last of the Herd" (or "Standing Buffalo"), it depicts an old bull buffalo with one horn maimed, his head lowered and turned to his right, glowering with fading belligerence. The sculpture is done with great warmth and understanding—keynotes to all of Russell's works. Russell may have had the passing of the great buffalo herds in mind when he made the piece. Indeed, the fate of the buffalo is something that symbolized the passing of the Old West. As Russell once said, "The West is dead, you may lose a sweetheart, but you won't forget her."

In more recent times, when the waxes were discovered in the settling of Leroy Fogle's estate in Ojai, California, the Fogle family arranged with Peter Myers' father, Irving Myers, to have the first edition cast from them. A short time later, Dr. Frederic G. Renner (the nationally known authority on Russell's works) heard about the discovery of the waxes and went to examine them. In a letter of authentication to Peter Myers, Renner wrote of the waxes: "Both models were signed, "C M R (skull) 1901" and in my judgement were unquestionably original works by Charles Marion Russell." Of Mr. Myers' posthumous casts, Renner also wrote: ". . . I would have no reason to question but that these bronzes were a part of the edition of twelve cast from the original models executed by Charles Marion Russell."

A further note on the castings is that the first edition of twelve of the horse's head—of which Peter Myers retains six castings—was done by the late Augustin Rodrigues, who had a foundry in Los Angeles. Rodrigues was unable, however, to handle the casting of the buffalo; so, on a trip to Mexico, Peter's father, Irving Myers, took the moulds to his old friend, Francisco Zuniga, the famous painter-sculptor, and Zuniga supervised the casting of the first edition of 12 buffalos with his foundryman, Moises Del Aguila, in Mexico City. Myers still owns 4 of these castings.

In later years, a second edition of 17 was cast from each wax sculpture through Leonard Lombardo in New York. The original waxes done by Russell are currently on display in the Rockwell Museum in Corning, New York. The founder of the museum, Robert Rockwell, has written to Mr. Myers regarding these pieces: "We do not plan to have any more cast . . ."

Anyone interested in purchasing one of the bronzes may call Peter Myers at (213) 506-0332, or write him at: 11434 Ventura Blvd., #4, Studio City, California 91604.



Charles M. Russell

# HEADS AND TAILS

*by W. I. (Bob) Robertson*

*Heads and Tails by W.I. (Bob) Robertson is reprinted verbatim from the March 1959 issue of the Los Angeles Corral Branding Iron.*

The judging of horses is a practice which runs all the way from art to science. As an *art* horse judging is concerned mostly with the outward appearances of the animals. Good looks and that performance which is tritely called "spirited" seem to be the chief bases

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for judging parade and show steeds.

The science of judging horses varies between the practical appraisals of experienced horsemen and the technical examinations of veterinaries.

The practical and technical judges are not too much concerned with such matters as colors, marcelled manes, "set" tails or whether the saddle or harness should be black with silver or robin-egg blue with gold. Their concern is whether or not the outside of a horse is any indicator of what he may be inside.

Weight and build they consider in relation to the purpose for which a horse may be suited. Condition is determined by inspection of mouth, eyes, ears, neck, shoulders, back, hips, legs, feet — and tail.

It might seem that a horse's tail is too far from his head to be considered in the matters of his intelligence, disposition and condition, but no real horseman passes that caudal part without notice.

A horse's head, with size, shape and set of ears; position, color and luster of eyes; form and proportion of nose and jaw and condition of mouth and teeth, are all important points to consider in judging, but the tail, too, can answer questions in the minds of horse-wise judges.

When the first gringos went into the cow business in the range country of the West, they borrowed many tools, methods and customs from their Spanish and Mexican neighbors who had been in the business for more than three hundred years before the first long-horned cattle were trailed north out of Texas.

Among the borrowings of the newcomers were Spanish and Mexican words and names. Those words and names were hard to pronounce by flat Anglo-Saxon tongues and the initial Anglos soon coined terms of their own to supplement the — to them — strange language.

*Cola* and *rabo* are Spanish words that mean "tail" of an animal. The words were used in many combinations to describe various types of horses' tails.

*La cola pegada* or *rabo pegado* described what *norteamericanos* came to call the "tucked" tail, and tail held tightly down and not switched nor raised in an arch. The horse that kept his tail tucked was admired for that virtue. If he kept his tail down and his ears up, he was considered to be wide awake and on the job.

On the other hand, the switch-tail, called *un rabeoso* (*una rabeosa* if a mare) or "wringtail" was despised, first, for the damnable habit of "wringing" or incessantly switching the tail and, secondly for the reason that tail switching is a good indication of other faults.

A wringing tail may be the hallmark of the "spirited" charger of "horse opera," the archnecked "western" horse of street parades and the blue ribbon winner of the tanbark ring, but, on ranch, range and in the cavalry it was a vice with which horsemen had no patience.

Another sort of tail which aroused doubt and suspicion in the minds of range men was that of the *rabilargo* or *coludo* ("broom-tailed") horse. In open-range times the "broom-tail," also called "fuzztail" and "willowtail," too often was likely to be a *loco* horse or one of degenerate breeding. The *coludos* seen in silk-and-silver outfits today would have made the old-timers' eyes "bug out" as if they were looking at a pretty calf in a black silk stocking.

Those old-time range riders "pulled" their saddlehorses' tails by drawing a sharp knife through the hair until it thinned and shortened to a point just above the hocks. "Pulling" left the tail cleaned of "stickers" (burs or thorns) and dirt without snarls or tangles. The *campiranos* called their horses with thinned tails *coliralos* or *rabiralos*.

Some horses have naturally thin tails on which the hair is sparse. In the case of a very thin tail, it was called *una cola pobre* by the Spanish-speaking *jinetes* and a "rat tail" by Anglo cowmen. Rat tails were a characteristic of the cayuses of the Northwest that came to be called "appaloosies."

Another practice on the old horse ranges was to "bang" the tails of colts when they were branded and altered. The hair was banged off to leave a short, square end to the tail as a temporary mark to show at a distance that a colt has been branded and cut. The "bang-tails" were called *rabicortos*

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by *rancheros.*

In some parts of the range country it was the custom to "dock" a joint or two of the vertebras from the end of the tail of a colt when he had his tail pulled at a time he was first ridden. The docking shortened the tail and soreness from the operation helped to prevent the development of the vice of tail switching.

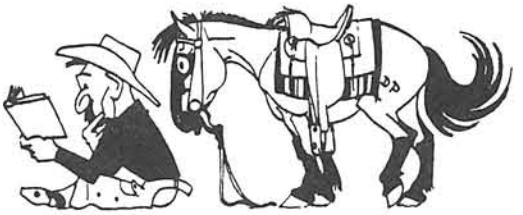
Neither among gringos nor *jinetes* of Spanish America was *el rabon,* the bob-tailed horse, desirable. The bob-tails, sometimes called "siskiyous" in the Northwest, were held in disdain along with people who practiced docking horses' tails to ugly stumps.

Since Spanish nouns and adjectives have gender and must agree, the masculine names *colimocho, culudo, rabeoso, rabon,* etc., when applied to mare or filly, become *colimocha, coluda, rabeosa, rabona,* and so forth. *Rabona* and the anglicism, "split-tail," also had derogatory connotations which expressed the old range men's contempt for mares for any use except producing colts or occasionally acting as *caponeras* or "bell mares" to lead *caballadas* (bands of saddlehorses) or "strings" of pack horses or mules. Mares are inveterate switch-tails and, like their sisters of other species, have the faculty of stirring up confusion and strife of males.

Thus, head or tail, when judging a horse it is well to remember that the one may give a clue to some characteristic of the other; an oversized, malformed, "jug" head may be matched with a sloppy broom tail or the broom tail may indicate locoweed poisoning or a mongrel ancestry (long tailed, hothouse parade horses, of course, may be exceptions); a too-white eye and laid-back ears may be signs of a wring-tail or that switching tail may be the typical mark of a biting, kicking, squealing, cranky, or nymphomanic mare.

But, when you find the horse with a small head, alert ears, bright eyes, sound teeth, tender mouth, strong neck, high withers, sloped shoulders, short back, stout quarters, good legs, hard feet — and *la cola pegada,* you shall have found the first of the three requisites for a happy *caballero:*

*Caballo que llene las piernas,*
*gallo que llene la mano*
*y mujer que llene los brazos.*



# DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL ...

*Sarah Winnemucca Of The Northern Paiutes* by Gae Whitney Canfield. 38 illustrations, 2 maps, notes, bibliography, index. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma 1983. 306 pages. $19.95.

In proportion to the Indian population, there have been few soundly researched biographies of outstanding Indian men. For Indian women the record is truly bleak. Few people can think of more than two important Indian women in the history of this country — Pocahontas and Sacajawea. Now biographer Gae Whitney Canfield improves that situation fifty percent by giving us an account of the life of Sarah Winnemucca.

Born about 1844 in the vicinity of Humboldt Lake in what is now north-central Nevada, Sarah began life with the Paiute name of Thocmetony, or Shell Flower. Her father was Chief Winnemucca, later known as "Old Winnemucca" to distinguish him from a nephew with the same name.

Old Winnemucca, whose name translates to "the Giver" or "one who looks after the people", was a man of superior intelligence who early recognized the futility of fighting to hold back the movement of whites into Indian territory. During all of his later life he sought to have the white government set aside land to which his band would receive title and on which they could live in peaceful dignity as farmers — just like the whites. He never realized his dream in his lifetime, despite dedicated efforts of his daughter to bring it about.

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As was the practice of the times for Indian girls, in the 1850s Sarah began to work as a servant in the households of central California white families; her status sometimes being euphemistically labeled as "adopted." It is believed that during these years she was given the name of Sarah. During this time Sarah learned English, a language in which she became not only fluent but eloquent. The record of this eloquence is in the form of letters to officials of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of the Interior, and in the writing — in 1883 — of her autobiography *Life Among the Norther Piute: Their Wrongs and Claims.* She also learned Spanish and two additional Indian dialects. This knowledge of languages made her a much sought-after interpreter for the United States Army during the Modoc war and the Bannock War.

Sarah was at home in the two worlds of whites and Indians. While in the world of whites, this short, slightly plump attractive woman dressed and lived like a member of that world, with only her darker complexion as a difference. She did not pretend to be white, but proudly presented herself as an Indian. In the Indian world she was looked up to because of her superior education, and she was the constant dedicated spokesperson for that world. She experienced firsthand the many tragedies that the white world inflicted on the Indian world, and she worked relentlessly to bring about better conditions for her people and right continuously occurring wrongs.

She shared her father's wisdom in seeing the futility of waring against larger and better equipped white forces to correct wrongs. She persuaded her father not to take part in the Modoc and Bannock wars, when chiefs of those tribes asked him to do so, despite the fact that white treatment of the Paiutes gave him and his followers ample reason to participate.

Sarah was not content to present Indian grievances to Washington through the medium of letters alone. She decided to go to the nation's Capitol and talk to officials in person. To raise money for the trip she went to San Francisco and gave a series of very successful lectures on Indian matters. Wearing a colorful "Indian" costume of her own design and billing herself as "The Princess Sarah", she swayed audiences, and even some local newspaper reporters, to her cause. She was so successful that her reputation preceded her to Washington. There politicians, who had much to lose if the true state of Indian affairs was the subject of a thorough investigation, maneuvered her away from more than a few seconds meetings with the President. She left Washington with politicians' promises for improvement of Indian conditions, promises that were later denied even though they had been given in writing. The shabby treatment of her people continued. And, in order to protect themselves from an investigation, some politicians began a character assassination of Sarah.

Although guided by unusual intelligence in her work to improve conditions for her people, Sarah acted without intelligence in marriage. She had three marriages, all to white men, all ended in divorce. Her last marriage was to a complete scoundrel who gambled away the considerable amount of money she made from the sale of her autobiography. In the publishing of that book Sarah was helped by two influential Boston women — Elizabeth Peabody and Mrs. Horace Mann. These women also helped her finance her Peabody Indian School near Lovelock, Nevada, the first school for Indian children operated by Indians.

Sarah Winnemucca's life makes for interesting reading. In writing about her subject, biographer Canfield often lets source material do the talking, and keeps her theories and opinions to a scant minimum. With this restraint and clear, direct writing a colorful person comes to life to impress the reader. The only adverse criticism that one might have of the book is that in the first half it jumps about a bit and does not present the life of its subject in an easy to follow order. But this is forgiveable in that it comes about through Canfield using Sarah's life to also give an account of the problems experienced by the Northern Paiutes during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Siegfried Demke