LOS ANGELES WESTERNERS CORRAL
The Branding Iron
J. GOODMAN

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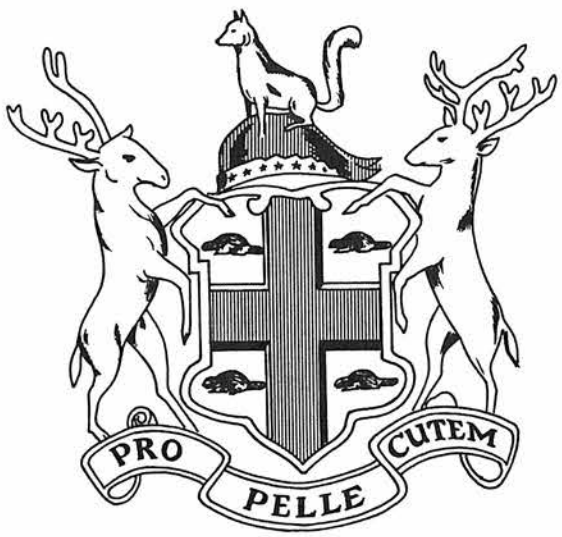

Hudson's Bay Company
Coat of Arms

The Hudson's Bay Company in the San Francisco Bay Area

by Siegfried G. Demke

One of the few times that the world's oldest, and still in existence, private company failed to experience success was when it established a branch of its business in California.

Chartered May 2, 1670 by King Charles II of England, *The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England Trading Into Hudson Bay*—known during most of its existence as *Hudson's Bay Company,* and now operating modern department stores with the name of *The Bay*—established a trading post in 1841 in San Francisco, then known as Yerba Buena. Not only was the venture unsuccessful, but it ended with the tragedy of the trader in charge committing suicide.

From the establishment of its first trading post on the southwest shore of Hudson Bay in 1684, the HBC traded and expanded its way north and west across Canada until it reached the shores of the Pacific Ocean. The HBC was not the first fur trading company to reach the Pacific shores, however, as two competitors were already there. John Jacob

(Continued on Page Twelve)

The Branding Iron

THE WESTERNERS
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THE BRANDING IRON solicits articles of 2,500 words or less, dealing with every phase of the Old West. Contributions from members and friends welcomed.

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Los Angeles Corral

THE MONTHLY ROUNDUP

NOVEMBER 1994 MEETING

Norman Neuerburg, the Corral's resident art and architecture expert, used the November meeting to present a talk titled "Carlton E. Watkins' Mammoth Views of the California Missions." This turned out to be a program richly verbal and visual as Neuerburg showed slides of the Watkins photographs of missions, while supplying information about the life of the photographer.


Photograph by - Frank Q. Newton

November meeting speaker Norman Neuerburg.

Watkins was born, in 1829, in Oneonta, New York, that was also the birthplace of Collis P. Huntington and a town in which Henry E. Huntington spent quite a bit of time. Thus it is only natural that the Huntington Library has what may be the best collection and record of Watkins' work.

The camera used by Watkins was a large plate format style, and he usually took several photographs, each from a different angle. Although there had been a few paintings of a few missions

before Watkins' work, he was the first person to record images of seventeen of the twenty-one missions chain. It is believed that his first mission photograph—of Mission Dolores—was taken as early as 1856, two years after Watkins arrived in California. In 1878 Watkins and etcher/artist Henry Chapman Ford met, and Ford bought some Watkins photographs. Later artists and etchers used the Watkins photographs extensively as guides for their work.

Working his way from south to north, Watkins photographed the missions in their real environment, showing some of them with parts of the buildings in ruin. The distant views of the missions showed them standing isolated in a lot of open space. What a contrast with today's settings, with the missions crowded closely by later building activity.

Watkins was not a good businessman. In 1875 he took on partners, to whom he subsequently lost many of his negatives. In the San Francisco fire of 1906 Watkins lost most of the work he had with him at that time. This was not the last of his misfortunes, as he died insane not long afterward. Fortúnately, the Huntington Library holdings of the Watkins work still record the real appearance of the California missions in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

DECEMBER 1994 MEETING

With the title of his talk consisting of "Restoration of Provincial Buildings," Dr. Jarrel Jackman, Executive Director of the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, presented an interesting account of Santa Barbara's Royal Presidio. With words, maps, and slides, Dr. Jackman told of the presidio beginning in 1782, four years before the mission's beginning in 1786, and its considerable destruction due to several severe earthquakes during its more than 200 years' existence, and its partial restoration at present.

Of the original quadrangle of buildings inside protective outer walls, only the chapel and a small living quarters building, called *El Cuartel,* remain. It is these buildings on which restoration work has been done, at times with the consulting help of the Corral's resident expert on historic art and architecture, Norman Neuerburg. In the process of researching presidio facts in the Archives of the Indies (described by Monsignor Weber in his California History Vignettes in the Fall issue of *The Branding Iron)* a fortunate byproduct was the discovery of new information about Ortega de Neve, Commandant of the Presidio who was responsible for the construction of its palisade and aqueduct.

Photograph by - Frank Q. Newton

December meeting speaker Dr. Jarrel Jackson.

A special restoration problem of the whole Presidio area—now designated a State Historic Park—is that it straddles, and at an angle, the intersection of two modern day streets. Some interest is developing in Santa Barbara for a possible realignment of the streets.

Earthquakes, more than wear through time, damaged the presidio buildings. The 1812 earthquake that damaged San Juan Capistrano and San Gabriel Missions also damaged the presidio. In the 1920s, restoration work was in progress when the damaging earthquake of 1925 hit Santa Barbara.

Despite the difficulties facing present-day restorers, their accomplishments are very impressive, as shown by Dr. Jackman's slides. ■

Santa Barbara Mission.

A Visit to Aimee's Temple

by Wade E. Kittell

EDITOR'S NOTE: Beginning in the middle 1950s, Wade Kittell developed a routine of writing, in longhand, a one-page essay each week of a place he had visited, what he had seen, or what he felt. He kept up this routine for almost thirty years. In the middle 1960s he began to type some of his essays. In 1984 he stopped writing the essays because he felt that the many changes in the Los Angeles area made them less interesting.

On March 26, 1991, he started again. Usually, the essays were complete on one page. A few were longer. The subjects were of all kinds, whatever struck him as interesting. Some examples are: hay fever; observing author Graham Greene in a restaurant; popcorn; an Orange County history tour; the chimes of Riverside; jury duty. His last essay is dated October 17, 1992, telling of his slide illustrated talk about the mother lode country that he presented over the years to different groups. By his count, he gave his talk 604 times to a total of 32,897 people.

Wade kept most of the essays in loose-leaf binder notebooks and the balance in typing paper boxes. His writings total an estimated equivalent of seventeen notebooks. Apparently, he never planned to bother with having any essays published. His good friend and estate executor, Ray Nicholson, made the notebooks available for examination with the thought that something in them might be published in the Branding Iron. Reading many of the essays caused one to think of Wade as a kind of modern day Samuel Pepys. Among all this material was an essay of eleven handwritten pages—but no information as to when it was written—about attending an Angelus Temple service during a 1936 vacation trip from Harlan, Iowa, to the Los Angeles area, many years before Wade and his mother settled in Long Beach. This article has historic interest about a landmark that many of us have seen but never entered, and the performance of its flamboyant director, Aimee Semple McPherson.

All of what we had done and seen up to now was a prelude to the event I was looking forward to—Aimee's Temple.

Coming out of Lucca's Restaurant it was late in the day, so we headed over towards Angelus Temple. Now the services do not begin until 7:30 PM but by the time we arrived in the area, at 5:00 PM, traffic was real busy. We had to drive around a bit, and then parked several blocks away.

The temple is a very large building some four or five stories high. There is a domed roof with a lighted cross on top. It faces a pretty little park, across the street, which has a lake for boating. This is Echo Park and is nice and handy, as there were many churchgoers having a picnic supper in it. The doors to the temple were already open and people were pouring in. I was reminded of my experience at the Paramount theater a short time before, when I went to see Eddy Cantor. Angelus Temple is just like a theater.

As we entered, an usher asked if we were first nighters. We said no because of past experiences. Had we been first nighters we would have been ushered down to the front of the main floor. As it was, we were directed to the balcony because space was rapidly filling up.

At least an hour before services were to begin the place was full. This meant that there were over five thousand people filling that many seats. For a while there was only the chattering and buzzing of the audience; I can't call them congregation.

I looked around and noticed that this was an interesting space, constructed to focus attention on just one spot. To begin, the ceiling was dome-shaped with stained glass around the entire circumference at the rim beneath it. Sunlight was still lighting the glass. I would say that the steep gallery and the great balcony arched about halfway around the circle of the interior, all facing the stage. At the front of the balcony was a projection booth. In it the lighting director, the sound engineer, and assistants were housed. The main floor had at least five aisles, and the seating was at a steep pitch.

All this faces the complex front. There is an orchestra pit, and the pipe organ console is at the center of the pit. Above it is the huge complex of the stage with the organ and the choir loft. There was no pulpit, just a microphone. Across the back of the platform is a row of chairs; the center chair is a white throne with a bank of pushbuttons on the left arm. Behind the chair is a curtain and behind

Angelus Temple interior, looking from the stage to the congregation, with sister Aimee in the left foreground. — *Security Pacific Collection / Los Angeles Public Library.*

the curtain is a completely equipped theater stage. Above this is the pipe organ loft. On both sides of the stage are the quite unique, identical choir lofts, each having seating for about a hundred people. The lofts are arranged in a semi-circle stadium idea. Doors to the loft are high above the seats, and there is a ramp down which the choir comes when it enters.

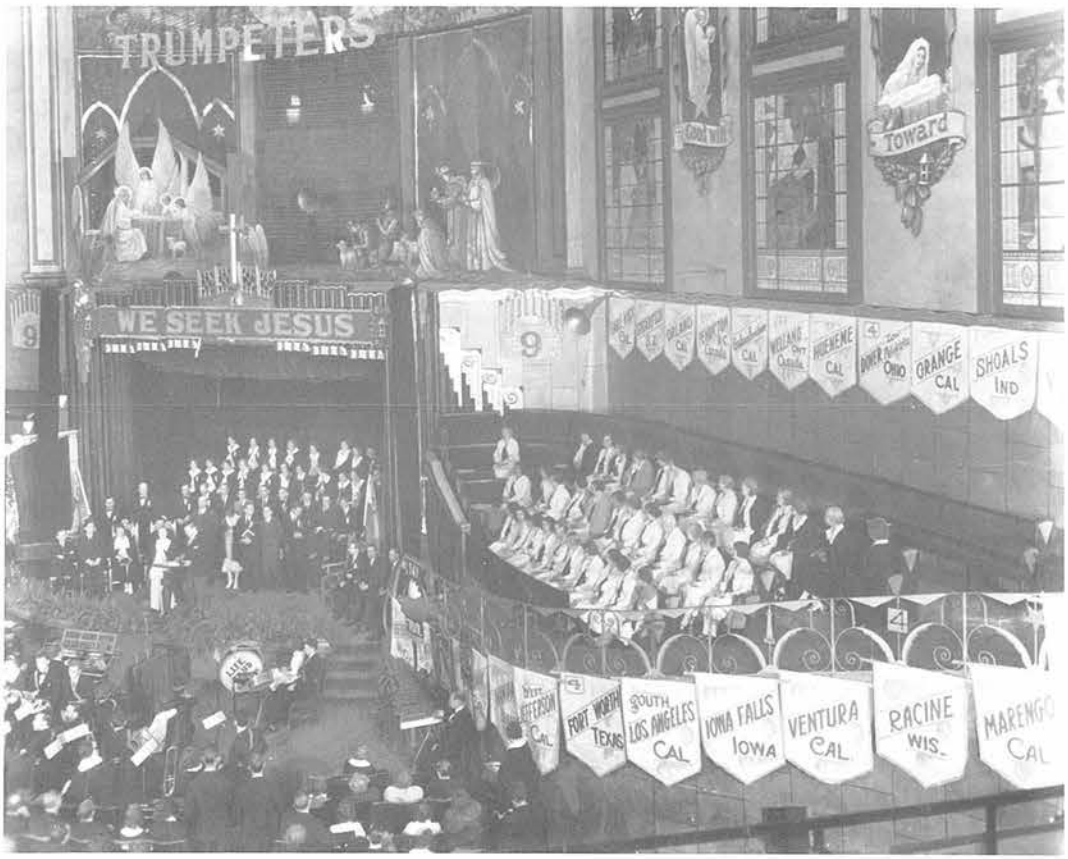
So this is what we could see while we were waiting for time to pass. At half past six the Angelus Temple Band filed into the pit. The members of the band were dressed in red uniforms, not unlike those of a circus band. I suppose there were about thirty in the group. For half an hour they played music designed to keep the audience busy, and at the same time to set the mood of the evening. Most of their numbers were either church revival songs or pieces written by Aimee herself.

In looking back on the evening, I can now realize that everything that was done, from the first note of music to the final benediction, had a reason and that reason was to create excitement in the audience, not unlike a primitive war chant.

At seven the organist began to play. The organ is a large four keyboard Wurlitzer theater type, and when this joined the band in playing toe-tapping music it was just like the good old days of vaudeville. After a while we had solo organ music as the band took a rest.

About a quarter after seven there began to be some activity on the stage. It was in darkness, for the spotlight was on the organ console; so there was hope that the testing of the microphone and arranging of chairs meant that something was about to happen. I sort of felt like being at a circus just before the show begins, while the last fixing of wires and ropes is going on.

Right at half past seven, on the dot, the pipe organ and the band blared into a loud, and circus type, march. Lights came on around the stage and the choir lofts. From doors on both sides of the stage came the choir. The women were dressed in



Angelus Temple interior, looking at stage from right side of first balcony. — *Security Pacific Collection / Los Angeles Public Library.*

pastel shaded gowns or robes and the men wore black robes. It seemed as though they would never stop coming. I'm sure there were at least a hundred on each side. All sorts of preachers, high officials of the temple, and the choir leader came onto the stage and sat on either side of the center throne.

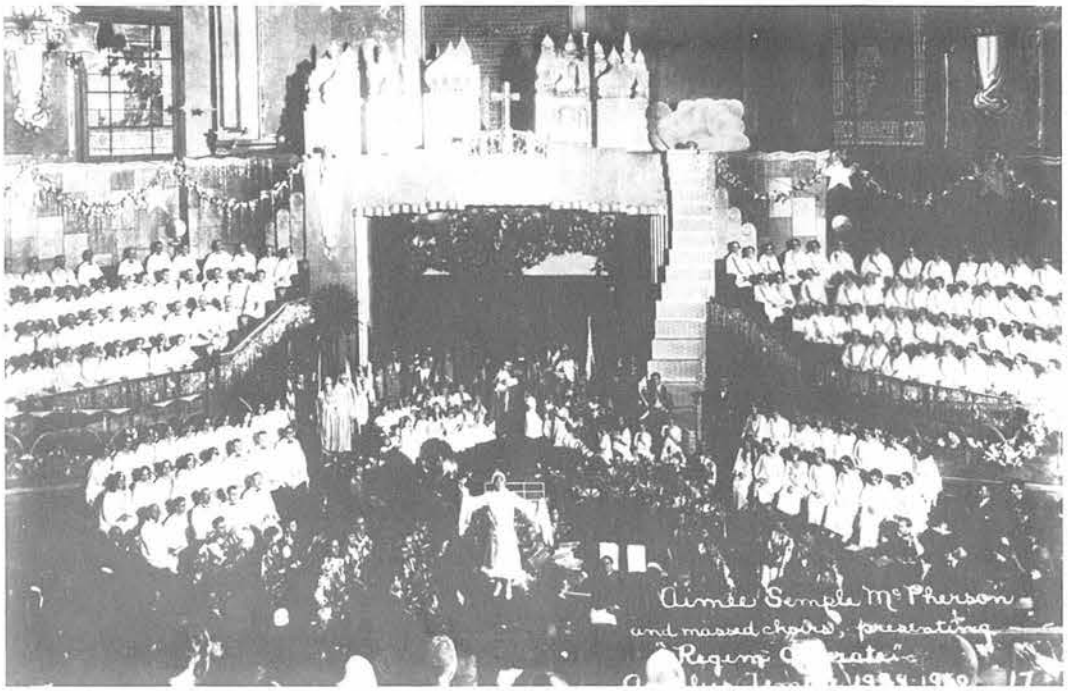
Down the aisles came the temple guards. These were women in white dresses, red capes, and red military type hats. They were a bunch of Amazons who seemed to be well able to live up to their name of guards. They stationed themselves along the aisles several rows apart. At that time I was not able to ascertain their purpose, or duties.

The song leader announced a hymn number and the congregation rose and sang all four verses of *I'm Looking For My Lord and Savior* to the accompaniment of the pipe organ, the band, and the choir. Immediately upon completion of the last note, instead of the "Amen," there was a great blast of fanfare from the trumpets and brass section of the band, the drums pounded, and the pipe organ blasted out. All lights in the place went out as a white spotlight swung over to the right choir door. There, standing in all her glory was Aimee Semple McPherson. Blond hair high on her head, all in a pure white robe with full sleeves which looked like wings as she raised her arms to wave at the audience. By her side, in white, was her son Rolf McPherson.

The audience went into all sorts of cheering. It was as thought there was a charge of electric current in the air. People clapped, shouted "Praise our Sister" and the like. She waved and smiled at th4e crowd.

Slowly, on the arm of Rolf, she walked down the ramp to the front of the stage. She greeted those on the stage, handed her bouquet to Rolf, came to the edge of the stage and called out, "Praise the Lord! Does everyone here love Jesus?" There was a roar of "Amen" from the audience.

Everything up to now had been in a subdued key, but Aimee changed all that. The stage lights were up bright, the house lights seemed brighter,



Angelus Temple interior, looking from center of the first balcony to the stage. Sister Aimee is wearing the white dress with sleeves like wings described by the author. — *Security Pacific Collection / Los Angeles Public Library.*

and the spotlight followed her wherever she went, and she was busy going here and there.

She put snap into the hymns, had the people feeling happy, and the air seemed full of sparks. Much has been said about Aimee, but to have seen her in action is to know that she had "that something" at the moment. She can cure and heal all the tired old men just by putting her arm around them. She has that elusive something which is given to a few. It seems to me that she is to be commended for at least giving joy and comfort to the many of her church congregation.

Anyhow, be that as it may, there wasn't a moment without excitement and action. There were times of singing and clapping and shouting, with Sister Aimee acting sort of like a cheerleader.

There were more sober moments when one of the assistants took care of the evening's prayer. But Aimee, herself, took care of the offering. She made the announcements of events to come during the week. She said also that there were new and expensive carpets on the floor so she didn't want anyone putting gum, or anything else, on the floor. If they were caught doing that, she would, herself, supervise their cleaning it off. Then she announced that the evening's offering would be taken. While this was taking place, she did not want to hear the tinkle or clatter of one solitary coin in any of the collection plates. What she wanted was the silent folding kind of money that had that beautiful green color. When the collection plate passed us, it was almost overflowing with one, five, and ten dollar bills. Just for the heck of it, I put a five cent coin in to see if the roof would fall in. It didn't.

As the collection was being taken, there was a musical spectacle going on down in front. Aimee was seated in her chair, watching, pressing buttons on the chair arm, in constant contact with her sound and light men.

Next item on the program was a short prayer just before the sermon. Everyone was to bow his head and close his eyes. I suppose everyone else may have, but I didn't. I was watching Sister, and she was busy. She was touching her makeup, looking at her hair, making last minute adjustments here and there as would an actress waiting to step on stage.

Now it was all hers. House lights dimmed and the spotlight was on her.

Her sermon had to do with "Airmail From Heaven." It was easy to hear that her education did not include a lot of time with books. But she follows the way of the old time street corner preachers, and sounds like a hundred other revivalists. There the similarity ended, because all along she used the typical movie actress type of sex appeal. From the moment she began telling of the good news that comes down by airmail from heaven, she had them in the palm of her hand.

During her sermon she illustrated her remarks. Just behind her, at the back of the stage, were curtains. These curtains were in front of a theater stage, complete down to the last theatrical detail. This stage within a stage could hold a play by itself. Now and then the curtains opened and we saw scenes acted out as we heard her tell of them. One scene was Moses and the burning bush, with a dry bush actually catching fire.

Aimee talked for a good forty-five minutes. Her timing was perfect, because about the time one became a bit tired of her talking there would come another of the acted scenes.

Along the way her theme was leading to the question as to how many people had received an airmail letter from heaven. As the grand climax arrived, that everyone should receive the spirit and message from heaven, there came the roar of a motor throughout the auditorium. Down from the ceiling, from the rear of the hall, on a wire was a small airplane. As it came down, it showered us with letters. The plane model looked borrowed from an airline, or plane manufacturer. As it reached the stage Aimee stood by it, inviting all to join her for a ride up to heaven, while the musical aggregation sang and played *When I Take My Vacation In Heaven.*

There came the usual evangelistic invitation to come forward and be on that heavenly plane. A few went down in front, but not enough to the liking of

Exterior of Angelus Temple, circa early 1930s, with congregation leaving after the service. — *Security Pacific Collection / Los Angeles Public Library.*

Sister Aimee. Without any preamble, she picked up her armful of red roses, that she had carried when she made her grand entrance, and said that she would give a rose to first timers until she ran out of roses.

Aimee asked how many were at the temple for the first time. Would they please stand up. Of course all the people sitting in the first timers section stood up, as well as a sprinkling here and there throughout the audience. "These people are here for the first time," said Aimee, "so they have never really been saved. Come, workers, gather in the lost sheep. Bring them forward and I will give them a rose."

New people sat down fast. This was the time for the temple guards to go into action. They went to work going through the aisles doing their best to get newcomers up and down the aisle to the front. It worked pretty good because by the time Aimee had finished there were converts all the front and back up into the aisles.

Almost before we realized it, her workers were left bringing in the sheep.

The band and pipe organ struck up a military tune as the choir marched out. Stage lights went off, and the audience began to file out.

In due time we were down in the lobby and had a few moments to look around. Souvenirs of Aimee and the temple were available for a price. In one place there was a collection of casts, braces, and crutches, all of which had been discarded by those whom Sister Aimee had healed.

Outside the police were directing traffic to keep things from becoming snarled. It was a little while before we started out. ■

New Officers

For the year 1995 the Corral will be guided by a new set of officers, installed during the December meeting, consisting of: Msgr. Francis Weber, Sheriff; Thomas Bent, Deputy Sheriff; Glenn Thornhill, Registrar of Marks and Brands; Robert Blew, Publications Editor; Ray Peter, Keeper of the Chips. The two remaining votes of seven Trail Bosses are Past Sheriffs Michael Nunn and Ernest Marquez.

Corral Chips

by Donald Duke

This will be my final "Corral Chips" column. While it has been fun for the past several years, it is time to pass the "hat" along to someone else.

When I became editor of the *Branding Iron* years ago, I asked Tony Lehman to handle the column, which he did with taste and a bit of humor. When I brought the *Branding Iron* up to date, the second time around, Tony jumped in and wrote the "Corral Chips." He often said it was like pulling teeth to get any information out of you clots, and I second the motion. One might think you fellows would jump at the chance to "blow your own horn," but not so. It is a tough search to find the stuff to

(Continued on Page Nineteen)

Rendezvous October 1994

On a clear October afternoon the Rendezvous was held a second year in the Tom Bent gardens in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. All who attended were able to enjoy the spacious and attractive grounds. If being in the sun became too warm for the thinning hair heads, it was possible to move into the shade of the large, striped canvas canopy that had been rented for the occasion. The canopy was large enough to accommodate all the tables and chairs that were used by the peanuts and pretzels chewing bidders and watchers during the lengthy auction of donated items.

The reason for a longer than usual auction was that the first hour and a half was taken up by the auctioning of an unusual collection of artifacts that our late friend Henry Clifford's family had donated. To say the least, the collection was unique. It contained old pocket watches, hunting knives, railroad spikes, Henry's Corral Grubstake Certificate, Indian baskets, four large buffalo hide baskets for use on packhorses or packmules, and many, many more items. The successful auctioning of the whole collection added a substantial sum of money to the operations reserve of the corral.

The book auction also took a long time. There were some very desirable items that successful bidders took home. But it must be said that some items should not have taken space on the display tables; they were not western, not interesting, not important, and would have been ignored at a common, Saturday morning driveway garage sale.

Auctioning the work of three artist members—Ben Abril, Andy Dagosta, and Jirayr Zorthian, to list them in alphabetical order to avoid any indication of art preference— was a high point of the Rendezvous. Abril and Dagosta created more color for the surroundings by displaying other pieces of their work and offering them for sale. Unfortunately, their works had to be set up in a corner where they could not be viewed at their best. If these, and other artist members, are willing to display their work at future Rendezvous, better viewing arrangements should be planned.

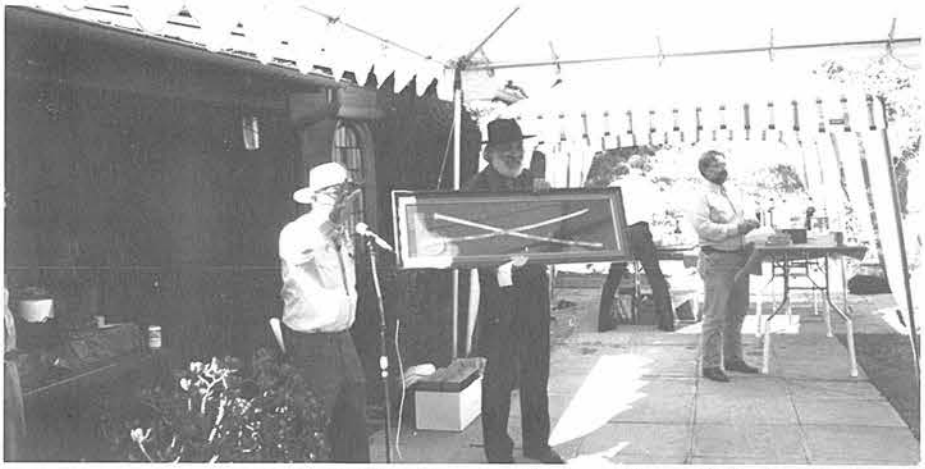
This year there were three members selected to be honored. The three members who had their minutes of glory were William H. Newbro, Raymond J. Nicholson, and Siegfried G. Demke. All demonstrated that their minds were in the real world by first squinting, in the evening darkness, at the presented plaques to see if their names had been spelled correctly. It can be said that there is some reason for the selection of this trio. Newbro, in addition to being a past Sheriff, is the man on whom all subsequent Sheriffs have relied for help to get things done. Nicholson, as is well known, is the man on whom the Corral has relied whenever something electrical was to be done, including decades—literally—of setting up a microphone, and sometimes a projection machine, at all Corral functions. The possible explanations for why the third honoree was chosen is on the lower part of page thirty-two of the Fall 1994 issue of *The Branding Iron.*

The tasty and generous amount of food for dinner was, again, served by George Pelonis of Chris' and Pitts.

Despite the length of the auction, those hard working auctioneers, Hugh Tolford and Loren Wendt, survived to the end.

As has been said in other reports, it takes a lot of work to plan and manage a successful Rendezvous. The men who were responsible for this one are being thanked, and they should be reassured that the criticism voiced above is intended solely as helpful observations. In addition to Sheriff Mike Nunn, Deputy Sheriff Msgr. Francis Weber, Registrar of Marks and Brands Tom Bent, Keeper of the Chips Bob Blew, this year's Rendezvous was worked by Wrangler Boss Mike Gallucci and a long list of Wranglers. The Wranglers were: Steve Born, Perry Deters, Bob Ebinger, Larry Johnston, Eric Nelson, Ray Peter, Bob Schwemmer, Pat Smith, Warren Thomas, and Glenn Thornhill.

The Editor



Photograph by - Frank Q. Newton

Hugh Tolford and Sheriff Mike Nunn auctioning a Henry Clifford artifact while Pat Smith looks for more drinking fountain customers.

Photograph by - Frank Q. Newton

Honorees William Newbro, Raymond Nicholson, and Siegfried Demke (from left to right) holding plaques, while Registrar Tom Bent and Sheriff Nunn beam with approval.

Photograph by - Frank Q. Newton

Art of anonymous artist at auction attracts attention of the Editor.

Astor's Pacific Fur Company, an offshoot of the American Fur Company, had established Fort Astoria in 1811 and was trying to supply it by ship around Cape Horn. A few months after the construction of Fort Astoria, a hardy advance overland party of the Montreal headquartered North West Company reached the coast and was received and sheltered by the Astorians.

Fort Astoria had a very short life. The War of 1812 made it a prime takeover goal of the British ships plying the Pacific. But before it could be captured, the resident trader, Duncan McDougall, who had been a North West man before he went to work for Astor, sold the fort and its inventory at a bargain price to the North West Company in October 1813. A shrewd maneuver to save something of a doomed enterprise. By the time that the first British ship arrived, the fort was owned by British subjects.

The North West Company was the toughest competition the HBC experienced in its entire history. The aggressive North West Company men, despite having a longer route to transport trading goods from, and furs to, home base, outmaneuvered the HBC men at almost every turn. Finally, in 1821, the HBC practiced that old adage: "If you can't beat them, join them." With its greater resources, the HBC bought out the North Wet Company. The takeover, usually called an "amalgamation" by the HBC, enabled that company to acquire the aggressive North West Company leaders in the field and have them working for the advancement of HBC interests. Many historians feel that this brought about a great change in the operations of HBC. Robert E. Pinkerton, in his book *Hudson's Bay Company,* even states that the infusion of the North Westers changed the HBC so much that it was not a case of the HBC taking over the North West Company, but the other way around. Because of this feeling, his detailed part of the history of the HBC ends with the takeover.

After a few years, the bad weather and the remote location helped to bring about the abandonment of Fort Astoria, which had been renamed to Fort George by the North West Company. George Simpson, appointed Governor of HBC Northern Department—and later HBC Governor of all Overseas Operations—moved the headquarters of Columbia Department seventy miles up the Columbia River and to the north bank. There he built the more practically located fort, officially dedicated in 1825 and named after the British explorer of the northwest coast, George Vancouver. Simpson's main reason for choosing this location was that it was a better position from which to resist future migrations of Americans to the area north of the Columbia River.

Sir George Simpson.

In 1824 Simpson had made another radical move. Over the heads of HBC factors, he appointed Dr. John McLoughlin, aggressive former North West Company factor, who was licensed to practice medicine in 1803, to Chief Factor of the Columbia Department. McLoughlin's able management from 1824 to 1845 earned him the label of "Father of Oregon."

Unable to move farther west and north, the HBC looked to the south and Mexican California as a potential trapping area. To learn more about the region, Dr. McLoughlin sent several exploring and trapping expeditions south. The first of these was led by Peter Skene Ogden, who in 1826-1827 explored as far as the Pit River region in northern California. In the years 1829-1830 Ogden led another expedition in a circuitous route through Nevada, Mojave Desert, to the Gulf of California, with a return up the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys. Other exploring and trapping expeditions were led by Alexander McCleod 1829, Michel La Fromboise 1831-1833, John Work 1832, and Francis Ermatinger 1841-42.

What the expedition leaders, especially Ermatinger, learned was that the Sacramento

River and its tributaries were not beaver country to the equal of northern and eastern lakes and rivers. Although some profit was made on a couple of the expeditions, trapping into California was recognized as not a worthwhile HBC activity. Nevertheless—according to Peter Newman in his *Empire of the Bay*—George Simpson ordered continued trapping, to the point of trapping the area clean. His order was in anticipation of Oregon and northern California one day being claimed by the United States, and he did not want anything left to cause American mountain men to migrate to the area and make trouble for the HBC. But it was Ermatinger, who was a Chief Trader in the HBC management, who recognized that the lower Sacramento River and San Francisco Bay areas could develop into general goods trading areas as more people moved into the region.

The lower Sacramento River and San Francisco Bay areas were cattle raising land, with huge herds belonging to the missions and ranchos. Dr. McLoughlin realized that here was the source for beef to feed the growing Columbia River region and hides for the leather industry of eastern Canada and England, to supplement the meager fur trade activity. With the approval of Simpson, by then the governor of all HBC operations, McLoughlin put into action the plan to expand HBC trading into California.

James Douglas, second in command to Dr. McLoughlin, in the early part of 1841 took the ship *Columbia* to San Francisco Bay with trade goods. The objective was to trade for sheep and cattle to be driven overland to Oregon. Also, Douglas was to discuss with California authorities the establishment of mercantile operations and to arrange for a license to trap. Considering the amount of trapping already done by the HBC up to that time, the request for a license was purely a public relations action. John Sutter, from his Fort New Helvetia headquarters near the junction of the American and Sacramento rivers, claimed authority to exclude all other trapping parties, and had been trying to rid the region of the stealthy HBC trapping groups. Bypassing Sutter, Douglas talked to Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado, who looked favorably on HBC activities provided that the laws of Mexico were observed.

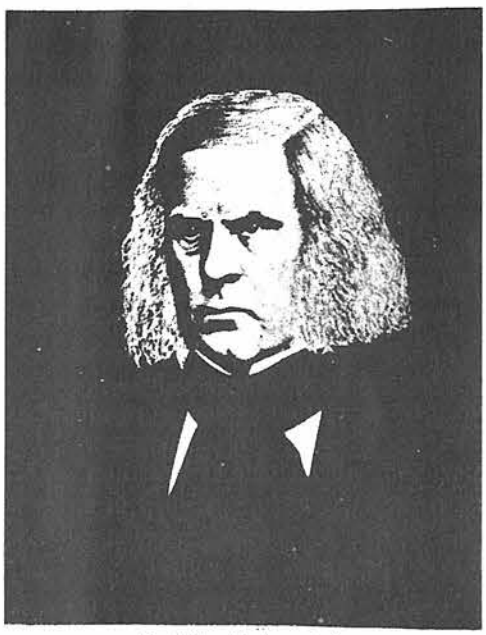
Alvarado's conditions for the trapping license were that no more than thirty hunters could operate in California at any time, their hunting and trapping would have to be a great distance from central California settled areas, and those hunters who were not already Mexican citizens would have to become such. For the HBC mercantile operations agreement Alvarado asked that the company put one or more vessels under the Mexican flag and their commanders were to become Mexican citizens. In Bancroft's works it is reported that Douglas answered Alvarado that "...the wishes of the government when communicated to us will be attended to in this and every particular." Fortunately for the HBC, California politics being in almost constant turmoil at that time, Alvarado had little time to check on whether or not HBC was living up to Douglas' glib answer.

Douglas explored the San Francisco Bay area thoroughly and made a report to Dr. McLoughlin that contained specific recommendations concerning the trading activities. He recommended that HBC not set up retail operations, but confine itself to supplying goods at wholesale to merchants and receiving payment in hides, tallow, and grain. His reason for preferring wholesale over retail was that the latter faced problems consisting of language unfamiliarity, unavailability of competent help, and competition from established local retailers. Also, he recommended that the trading post be located in the area of the lower part of San Francisco Bay, at the Santa Clara embarcadero, in order to be closer to the grain farmers and the cattle ranchers. Of these recommendations, the one not acted upon was location of the trading post.

The arrangements made by Douglas with Alvarado were the beginning of the strained relationship between HBC and Sutter, although, with the former as supplier and the latter as consumer, business deals were made. With Sutter's chronic habit on non-payment for goods purchased, these deals were not a success for the HBC. At first, Sutter ran up debts with the HBC totaling $4,000 that were never paid.

The man whom Dr. McLoughlin chose to establish and manage the HBC trading post in Yerba Buena, the small cluster of homes that was to become the city of San Francisco in January 1847, was William Glen Rae, who had been promoted to chief trader in 1839. Rae, who began his career with the HBC in 1827, was the successful suitor of Dr. McLoughlin's younger daughter Eloisa, resulting in marriage in 1838. In the far west frontier region there were extremely few marriageable white women. Add to that the fact that Eloisa was the boss's daughter and it is under-

standable that she had many suitors, Francis Ermatinger among them. Two facts in Rae's career with HBC that probably favored him in Dr. McLoughlin's eyes were that Rae had distinguished himself in a trading expedition into British Columbia and he was not known to have had an Indian wife. It was fairly common practice of some HBC traders, posted most of their lives in remote Indian country, to take an Indian wife. If such traders survived to retirement age, it was the practice of some of them to pay off and leave their Indian wives before retiring to the developed and civilized southeastern part of Canada.



Dr. John McLoughlin.

In August 1841 Rae, accompanied by his clerk Robert Birnie, sailed from Fort Vancouver to Yerba Buena on the barque *Cowlitz* with a cargo of spars, planks, and salted salmon. But first the ship had to call at the Port of Monterey, the seat of the California government and customs house. And there occurred the first of many problems that blighted the HBC enterprise. Rae had to pay duty on the whole cargo carried by the ship, despite the fact that only part of it was to be off-loaded in California and most of it was destined for the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). In a letter to Dr. McLoughlin dated October 14, Rae wrote that he had landed at Monterey on August 10 and was charged duty so high that he had to sign a note for $2,000. So Rae started his trading for HBC in California with an indebtedness. This experience caused Rae to advise that in the future HBC ships land with only cargo for California.

On August 24, Rae left Monterey and arrived at Yerba Buena on August 27. There, for the sum of $4,800 (according to Davis, $4,600 according to Bancroft), half in coin and half in goods, he purchased title to land and the "establishment" of Jacob P. Leese. The land, as described by Rae's intimate friend William Heath Davis, was the equivalent of today's city block "...bounded by Montgomery Street [Davis meant to write Kearny Street] on the west, Sacramento on the south, Clay on the north, on the east coming near to the water mark [this was also Montgomery Street] of the bay." The "establishment" consisted of a two-story frame and adobe house measuring thirty feet by eighty feet in which the Rae family lived when Mrs. Rae joined her husband at the end of the year. Another, smaller, building on the property, near Kearny and Montgomery Streets served as the HBC trading room and warehouse.

In time, Rae became one of the two leading residents of Yerba Buena, the other being Nathan Spear, a prosperous merchant and the uncle of William Heath Davis. The small village had no hotels, so important visitors were put up by Rae or Spear. Rae, who was described by his friend Davis as a tall handsome man weighing about 230 pounds, entertained lavishly. But the business of his HBC trading outpost never fared well. Unpaid debts of customers, politics, and even the San Francisco Bay area weather contributed to preventing the success of the enterprise.

Although Sutter was not the only person owing money to HBC, he was the prominent one. According to his biographers, Sutter had a history of business difficulties, and sometimes failures, in Switzerland, Missouri, Santa Fe, and Sacramento. His business career life began with bankruptcy and ended with bankruptcy, usually due to overexpansion as with the purchase of Fort Ross, the Russian settlement on the coast sixty-five miles north of San Francisco. Procrastinating on paying his debts to the HBC was not the result of desiring to make things difficult for Rae, despite the fact that in later years Rae sued Sutter, on behalf of HBC, for $3,322. In his biography of Sutter, Zollinger states that in 1845 Sutter owed HBC "about $4,000," Russians $31,000, United States Consul Thomas Larkin $2,000, William Leidesdorff (a Danish sea captain who arrived in Yerba

Buena in 1841) $1,000, Antonio Sunol (a wealthy rancher) $500, and many others to a possible total of $80,000 to $100,000. By 1849 HBC was still trying to collect from Sutter, and in that year James Douglas went to Sacramento in person to present a claim for $7,000 to Sutter.

Stereotype of Captain John A. Sutter, courtesy California State Library out of Richard Dillon book Fools Gold. The subscript, in German, reads: "Capitain A Sutter, founder of Fort New Helvetia by Sacramento & the Harmoni by Feather River, also owner of Fort Ross by Harbor of Bodega in Upper California."

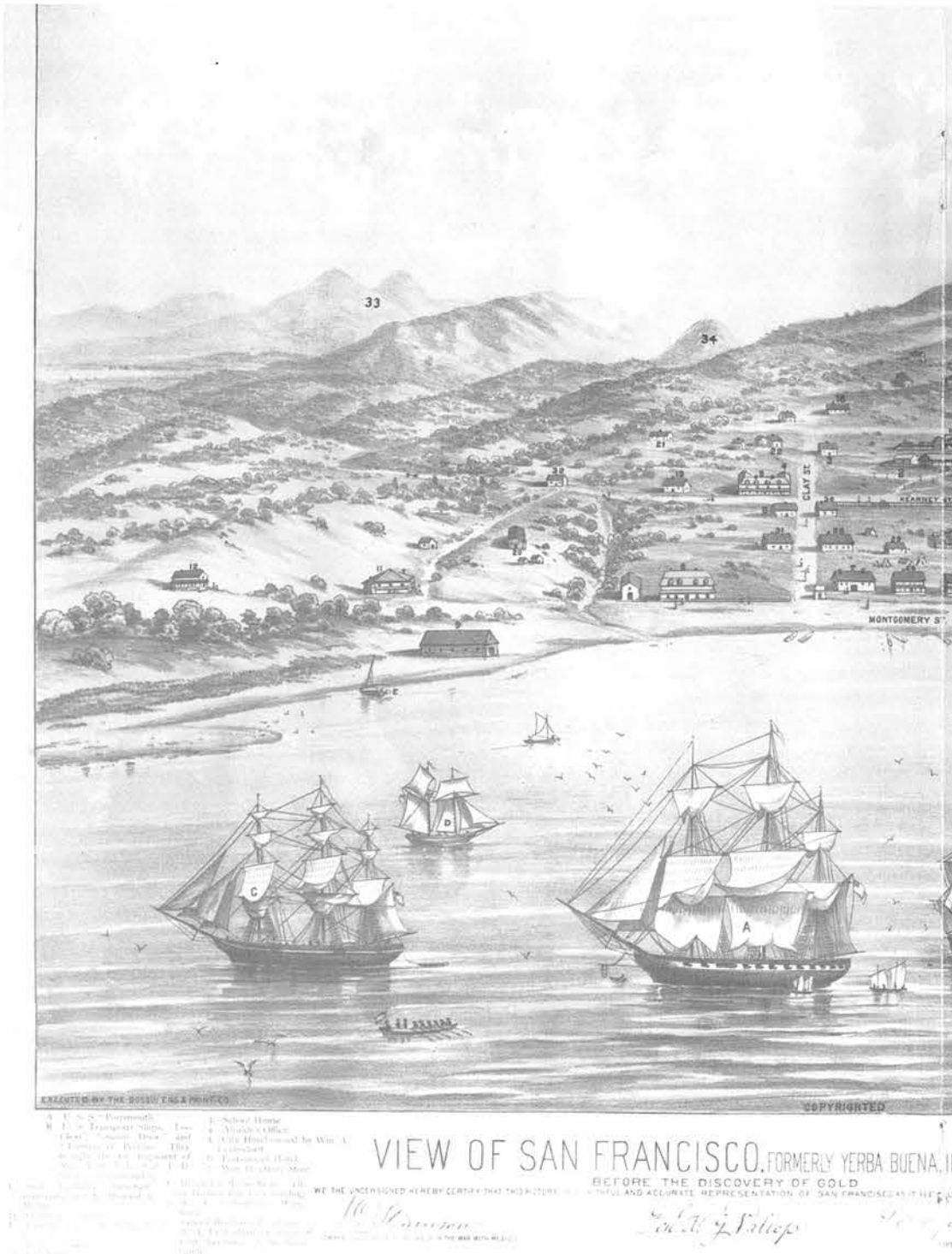
California politics of the 1830s and 1840s can be described as being an almost constant change of power. The principals at different times were Alvarado, Manuel Micheltorena, Pio Pico, Sutter, Mariano Vallejo. Taking sides in California politics was risky. Dealing successfully with the strong person at one time was a liability at another time when another person became the dominant strongman. In later years it was alleged that Rae had aided Micheltorena—supposedly sold arms to him—and Alvarado and Vallejo gave little cooperation to Rae because of these allegations. Rae is not to be blamed for having run afoul of California politics. To be able to conduct business he had to make contacts and friends, or to work with the man in charge.

San Francisco weather is known for its unusualness, however during some of the HBC years in the area it was more than unusual. In one letter to Dr. McLoughlin, Rae wrote that the natives could not remember a time of so little rain. Cattle lost so much weight for lack of feed that they were only good for hides, and Rae could not send wheat to Dr. McLoughlin as farmers were keeping much of it as "...reserve in case of need." At other times fogs and damp weather in San Francisco Bay area were so intense that Rae could not dry hides and salt them down, and was forced to buy processed hides from the Russian American Fur Company at Bodega, near Fort Ross. A cargo of "thin shoes" assigned to Rae became so rotten from damp weather that he had them thrown overboard rather than pay duty on them.

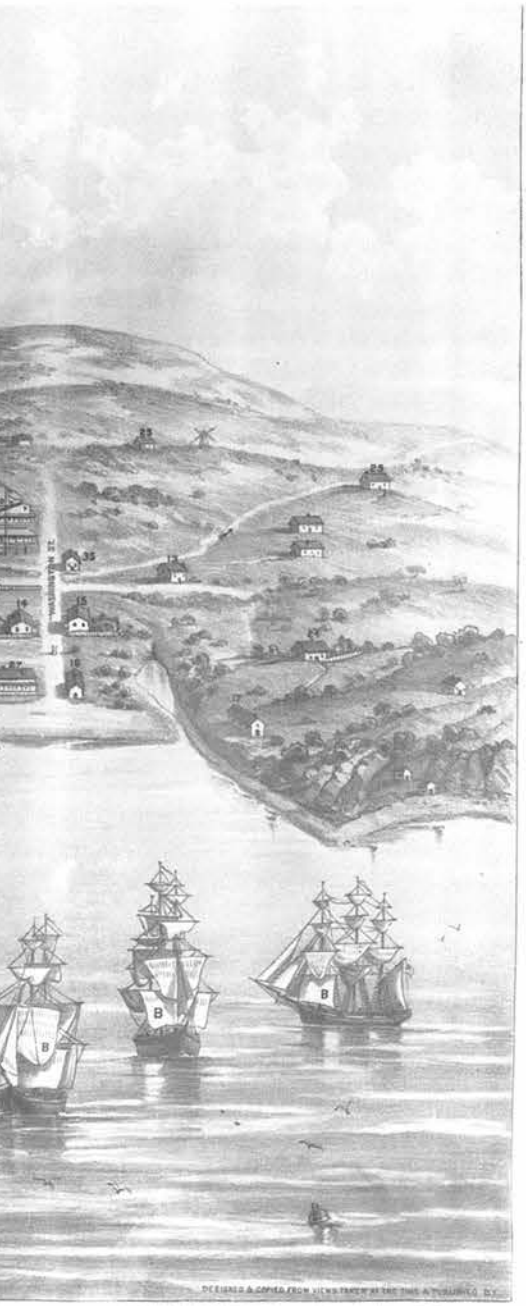
After an inspection trip of California, Sandwich Islands, and Oregon trade, Simpson became aware that the California operation was not profitable. Discussions on that subject began between Simpson and Dr. McLoughlin as early as 1843, with Simpson voicing thoughts about closing the California operation and Dr. McLoughlin asking that it be continued because he thought it would improve. It is probable that Dr. McLoughlin was arguing for more time on the operation in order to give his son-in-law a final chance to bring some success out of the venture.

But money owed the company could not be collected, and the number of competing ships bringing trade goods into the area increased. Then in a letter of April 1, 1844, Simpson ordered Dr. McLoughlin to close the Yerba Buena operation. Because of the length of time it took for mail from HBC headquarters to reach one of the company's most remote outposts, Dr. McLoughlin received the letter on November 21, 1844. Surely reluctantly, he sent word to Rae to close the operation. On the morning of January 19, 1845, William Glen Rae put a pistol to his head and committed suicide.

In the history of a company that existed several hundred years and that had thousands of employees during that time, the suicide of one man does not make a big impression. Historians of the HBC have had so much ground to cover just reporting the activities of the company principals, that not much space could be allotted to details of the life of a person of lesser importance. Consequently, where Rae's suicide is mentioned at all, it is usually a sentence or two; and then the reason sometimes given for the action takes an easy way out. Often it



Item 8, in the above listing, identifies the two story building, in left center, on Montgomery Street to the left of Clay Street, as the "Howard & Mellus Store. The old Hudson Bay Co's building." — *Courtesy Wells Fargo Bank History Department.*



is reported that Rae had been found to have been unfaithful to his wife, having had a liaison with a "California lady," and took the honorable way out. His friend, William Heath Davis, was among those who presented shame of committing adultery as the reason for the suicide. Bancroft even supplied the lurid information—that nobody else did—that Rae committed his act of suicide in the presence of his wife.

But this explanation does not fit the mores of the time, and ignores the fact that HBC men had an intense loyalty to the company and business failure was the big disgrace. Newman reports that Simpson showed no concern over liaisons HBC men had; to him success of the company outweighed all other matters. In two suicide notes left by Rae—strangely dated before and after the action—Rae does not ask forgiveness of his wife, but dwells mainly on the business failure.

The two notes, verbatim, are:

> Yerba Buena, 18th January 1845, to all whom it may concern I hereby declare that I have got myself into difficulty through the intrigue and malice of others, but that I have never intentionally wronged the Hudson's Bay Coy. a single farthing, that their property will be squandered, books destroyed, and no outstanding debts appearing, after I am no more I am satisfied of, but this the company ought to blame themselves for as they have entirely neglected the Calefa. trade in not sending vessels here to receive the Returns at the time they were collected. This is truth, so help me God.
>
> (Sg) W.G. Rae

The amount of property I should estimate in Furs, Hides & Tallow at	$24,000
Cash and goods eight thousand	8,000
House & Debts sixteen thousand	16,000
Total forty eight thousand dollars	$48,000

I am certain the amount is greater than this, but the whole will be lost to the Hudson's Bay Coy. through the intrigue of Mr. Ridley, Mr. Hinkly, Mr. Spear, and I believe the foreigners [Sutter?] in this country. Let them take care of my unfortunate (or unhappy) family till they are sent to the Columbia to their friends that is all I ask—may God bless and protect them sincerely wishes

(Sg.) W.G. Rae Yerba Buena

Ridley was an English sailor and clerk who commanded Sutter's Sacramento River launch in 1841 and later sometimes acted as clerk for Spear and Rae.

William Sturgis Hinkley, a sometimes shipmaster, supercargo, and trader between Honolulu and Yerba Buena, was popular with the Californians and became a Mexican citizen in 1842. He was appointed Captain of the Port 1845-1846. He had business dealings with Spear and Rae.

Even after death Rae's problems were not ended. As part of Mexico, California was a Catholic country, and the Church would not allow a suicide to be buried in Mission Dolores cemetery. So, he was buried on the HBC property. John Sandoval, the writer for the Hayward Daily Review, who in early 1971 looked up information on Rae's suicide, found an interesting item in the August 27, 1854, issue of the San Francisco newspaper *Alta Californian*. Workmen digging a sewer on Commercial Street between Montgomery and Kearny Streets unearthed a coffin on which was a nameplate bearing Rae's name. This coffin was reintered in Yerba Buena cemetery, a few days later.

The HBC land, and improvements, was sold to Mellus & Howard for $5,000, who used the building as a store. In 1849-1850 the building was converted into the United States Hotel, which prospered because of the gold rush trade.

Eloisa Rae returned to her father's house in Oregon. In 1850 she married Daniel Harvey, also an HBC man, who managed her father's woolen mills. She had three children by Rae and three by Harvey.

In 1846 the Oregon Treaty established the boundary between American and British territories along the 49th parallel. In 1849 Sir George Simpson closed Fort Vancouver and moved the HBC western headquarters to Fort Victoria, founded in 1843, the site that is now the Capital of the Canadian Province of British Columbia.

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place into the "Corral Chips." This is where the fun stops. I am sure Mike Torguson, that scholar and "Honor" student of Broken Arrow University in Oregon will be most pleased to see me take that long trail into the sunset!

Iron Eyes Cody appeared in the Rose Parade once again! I had bet last year this would be his final ride, but Iron Eyes never gives up. This year he rode in a cart along with American Indian Tribal leaders who were on horseback.

The legendary *Glen Dawson* had a surprise triple bypass surgery on December 8th. The surgery was taken care of at the Huntington Hospital. He is now up and moving around.

C.M. *Russ Leadabrand,* once a very active member of the Los Angeles Corral, passed away of congestive heart failure at his Cambria home last month. He was just 74. Russ was editor of Brand Book No. 11, one of the best of the series in my estimation. Leadabrand was a reporter, columnist, and best known for his "Let's Explore the Byways" series in the auto club *Westways Magazine.* I met Russ years ago when I wrote and corrected an error he made in an article on the Mount Lowe Railway. We had been friends since that time and kept in touch.

Ron Woolsey seems to be smokin along with awards and articles lately. He received a distinguished teaching award from the Historical Society of Southern California last year. He also presented a session at the November National Conference for Social Studies entitled "Publishing and the Social Studies Teacher." To top all this off he even had an article in *True West* magazine. It was entitled "L.A. Law 1856 Vigilante Wars: Ethnic tensions erupt in violence and anarchy."

C.M. Michael Harrison had to blow out 97 candles on his birthday cake last December 13, 1994. The cake was so covered with candles it burned the hairs on his chin as he bent down to blow them out. It must have been a huge cake to hold 97 candles. On February 27th he will receive the Oscar Lewis Award for contributions to Western History. It will be awarded by the Book Club of California.

Bill Escherich and *Mike Gallucci* have joined the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Huntington Library. Do you suppose Hugh Tolford had some6thing to do with this? Bill and Mary Escherich traveled to Gran Chaco of Paraguay to see the total solar eclipse of the sun. The next total eclipse will be at Paris and Vienna in 1998. It would have been much cheaper if Mary had hit William over the head with a frying pan. I am sure he would have seen the total eclipse!

Donald Duke, that loveable rail enthusiast, and writer of this column, presented a slide lecture to the Southern California Chapter-Railway & Locomotive Historical Society on January 3rd. His topic was the Carson & Colorado Railroad, which later became the Southern Pacific's narrow-gauge line in the Owens Valley.

Are you aware that Past Sheriff *Bill Warren* is a free-lance writer from Pasadena? That is what Fedco Newsletter says. I was surprised to find a short article entitled "The Island of California" in the Fedco Reporter. After giving an informative talk to the Corral a year ago on old maps and California as an island, I am not surprised he turned it into something else.

Past Sheriff *Robert Clark* is also an author as well as a publisher. In the current *Pacific Northwesterner,* the organ of the Spokane Corral, he has an article about Mission Spokane. It was in existence in the region between 1838 and 1847. Was not aware that the missions were so far inland? Bob was diagnosed with prostate cancer in early December and had his prostate removed on December 27th. The surgery results were excellent and he is currently on the mend.

C.M. *Nicholas Curry,* a distant relative of Saint Nicholas (aka S. Claus), presented the Archival Center of the San Fernando mission with two bibliophilic treasures—one entitled *Edward L. Doheny: A Family Genealogy,* and the other *Charles A. Canfield: A Family History.* Both men were associated in the mining and oil industry.

Past Sheriff Powell Greenland, now retired to Port Hueneme, found that watching the waves roll upon the beach was not all that it was cracked up to be for a retired person. Powell had visited Hueneme many times during his youth so decided to roll up his sleeves and produced a wonderful history of the port city. A review is in this issue of the *Branding Iron.*

Sheriff Monsignor *Francis Weber* presented a background history of San Fernando Mission to the San Marino Historical Society last November. *Associate Larry Arnold* found the note about the meeting in the *Pasadena Star-News,* so decided he needed some support from the purple haired matrons. ■

A.W. Von Schmidt, Early California Engineer

by John Southworth

Look at any U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic quadrangle map that includes a portion of the oblique boundary between California and Nevada and you will find not one but two well marked, almost parallel boundary lines less than one mile apart. One is the official state boundary established in 1893-1899 by the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey (USC & GS, which would later become the USGS). The other is labeled as the "von Schmidt line of 1873."

The von Schmidt line is not maintained on modern maps as an example of faulty early surveying but more as a memorial to a prominent California engineer whose opportunity for public remembrance was obliterated by the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906. His death in Alameda less than six weeks after that disaster went largely unnoticed by a badly shaken public.

Von Schmidt's 1873 survey of the oblique portion of the eastern boundary of California cannot be described as faulty. It was in fact an extremely accurate solution to an incredibly difficult problem which was almost beyond any technology available at the time.

Although latitude determinations were fairly easily accomplished in 1873 using astronomical observations, the determination of longitude still depended wholly upon accurate time signals (hours, minutes, seconds and fractions of seconds west of the Greenwich zero meridian). Von Schmidt had to rely entirely on time signals transmitted over busy railroad telegraph lines at Verdi on the Truckee River to establish his starting point as a basis for bringing the 120th degree of west longitude, the decreed boundary in that district between the states of California and Nevada, due south to Lake Tahoe.

Since one second in time difference would create an error of 1173 on the ground in the Verdi areas, von Schmidt's time signal must have been close to 1½ seconds late since his determination of the boundary between California and Nevada, the one today officially recognized by both states is, on the north shore of Lake Tahoe, some 1727 feet too far west, thereby creating just barely enough Nevada land to squeeze in a few gambling casinos at Stateline Point.

To compound von Schmidt's problems, the required starting point of his oblique boundary survey, where the 39th degree of north latitude crossed the 120th degree of west longitude as mandated by the United States Congress in 1850, could not be physically occupied since it fell near the center of Lake Tahoe. Further, the longitude of record of the mandated end point of that survey, where the 35th degree of north latitude crossed the centerline of the Colorado River, depended just as much on the stability of a fickle river channel as on the accuracy of five chronometers transported by mule and camel train to the Colorado River crossing by Lieutenant Joseph C. Ives, United States Topographical Engineer, first in 1858 and again in 1861.

To move the starting point of his oblique boundary survey onto solid ground, von Schmidt ran an offset north-south line down the eastern shore of Lake Tahoe. Using spherical trigonometry computations without benefit of modern electronic aids, he established his critical on-shore and on-line beginning point along with the angular direction of the oblique eastern boundary as it headed southeast. Setting a sight on a heavily timbered ridge some five miles distant, von Schmidt and his crew of men proceeded to extend that first short segment across high mountains and dry deserts toward Lt. Ives' published global coordinates more than four hundred miles away at the Colorado River crossing.

The von Schmidt survey line ended up surprisingly close to the global coordinates of the river crossing as determined by Lieutenant Ives in 1861. However, it missed the actual 1873 river crossing by 1.48 miles. Not only were Lieutenant Ives' published coordinates of longitude 114 degrees, 36 minutes in error but also, through the intervening years, the river channel had substantially changed its position at 35 degrees north latitude.

In spite of all the inherent basic problems, the oblique boundary line as first run by von Schmidt in 1873 started 0.35 miles southwest of the final 1893 USC & GS line which by then was tied into a nationwide triangulation net of extreme accuracy and ended up, some four hundred miles later, only 0.45 miles southwest of the theoretical (but erroneous) target coordinates as established by Lieutenant Ives, a difference of one tenth of a mile. Five hundred feet in four hundred miles! Surveying in 1873 could get no more accurate than that!

Von Schmidt corrected his line by 1.48 miles to end at the then existing river crossing at the 35th parallel and reset his line markers for approximately 140 miles back toward Lake Tahoe. The final result was a somewhat bent line which twice crossed the now recognized USC & GS line but was nowhere more than 0.65 mile therefrom.

For the entire boundary survey, which required the close participation of a team of men, including two of his three sons for the greater part of two whole years, working from the Oregon border to Lake Tahoe and then southeast to the Colorado River, von Schmidt billed the State of California in the total amount of $40,750.32.

Colonel Allexey Waldemar von Schmidt (the title was honorary) was an old hand at running and correcting land surveys. In 1855, as deputy U.S. Land Surveyor, he ran the eastern extension of the Mount Diablo Base Line from the San Joaquin Valley over the Sierra Nevada into Nevada and later ran government land surveys down Owens Valley for seventy miles south of Mono Lake. He had learned his trade well from his father who was a civil engineer and surveyor in major east coast cities for many years.

His father, Christian Peter von Schmidt, at the head of a volunteer regiment of 400 men that he had equipped at his own expense, fought against Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815 and participated in the capture of Paris that followed. Shunning political repressions and seeking personal liberty, he emigrated to the United States in 1827 along with his young family which included six year old Allexey.

At the age of twenty-eight, after attending several eastern engineering schools, Allexey sailed for gold rush California in the schooner Pleiades, transshipping at Mazatlan, Mexico, to the Holland barque *Fanny* and arriving in San Francisco on May 24, 1849. He immediately began to practice his profession of civil engineer and surveyor.

Colonel Allexey W. von Schmidt. The fancy chain of gold nuggets protects an expensive engraved watch given him by Wells Fargo after he foiled a stage holdup near Quincy, California, in 1875. — *Courtesy Wells Fargo Bank History Department.*

During those first several years on the west coast, he worked for numerous California and Nevada mining companies designing and building flumes, ditch systems and pumping plants. He was the first engineer for the then infant Spring Valley Water Company, supplier of water to the burgeoning city of San Francisco.

He conceived the idea and obtained financial backing for a dry dock to service the many clipper ships regularly visiting California from east coast ports by way of Cape Horn. His original Hunter Point drydock, completed in 1868, saw regular use until it was replaced by a larger facility during World War I.

The scourge of those same clipper ships, the notorious and barely submerged 180 by 90 foot Blossom Rock situated square in the ship channel just west of Alcatraz Island, was Colonel von Schmidt's new target. He proposed to remove that dangerous obstruction to navigation for a price of $75,000. U.S. Government agencies agreed to a "full performance or no payment" contract and von Schmidt undertook the hazardous adventure at

his own expense. On August 23, 1870, in a highly publicized and much watched mini-volcano of rock and water, Blossom Rock was totally destroyed, blown out of existence to a depth of some forty feet below low tide.

In order to get that efficient job done, Colonel von Schmidt had sunk a sand-loaded steel scow midway on the flat topped rock. That scow, fitted with an open-bottom, central caisson which extended slightly below the scow and well above water level served as a work platform and mining access to the submerged rock. An irregular cavern some 50 by 140 feet was excavated within Blossom Rock, filled with 43,000 pounds of black powder in sealed casks, each cask with its own waterproof detonator and electrical connection to the surface, all connected to a single, distant power switch. (Common today, electrical detonation was an innovation in 1870.)

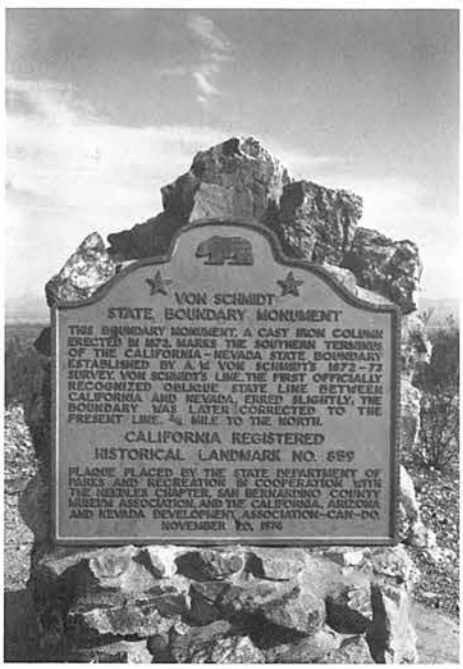
The long awaited explosion went off without a hitch to the great delight of thousands of local citizens gathered on the many hills of San Francisco to personally experience the spectacle. Not a single accident had marred the smooth progress of the well planned operation and in due time von Schmidt collected his full fee from the government.

A giant floating suction dredge was the next von Schmidt project. Designed and built by Allexey and his brother Julius who was also an engineer and designer, the new von Schmidt dredge went into operation along the river levees above Antioch in 1876 and, after several major improvements, operated for many years under government contract in the Oakland estuary. Certainly the first suction dredge on the Pacific Coast, there is reason to believe it was also the first successful dredge of its type in the entire world.

However, the great plan of von Schmidt's life, his dream to bring Lake Tahoe water through a long tunnel onto the western slope of the Sierra for mining and irrigation purposes and as a perpetual water supply for San Francisco and nearby cities, never came to fruition. Although many surveys were made and a dam was built on the Truckee River (remnants remain), his estimated cost seemed too high for the diverse group of private, corporate, and public entities that would profit from the completion of such a project. His great dream died with him in 1906.

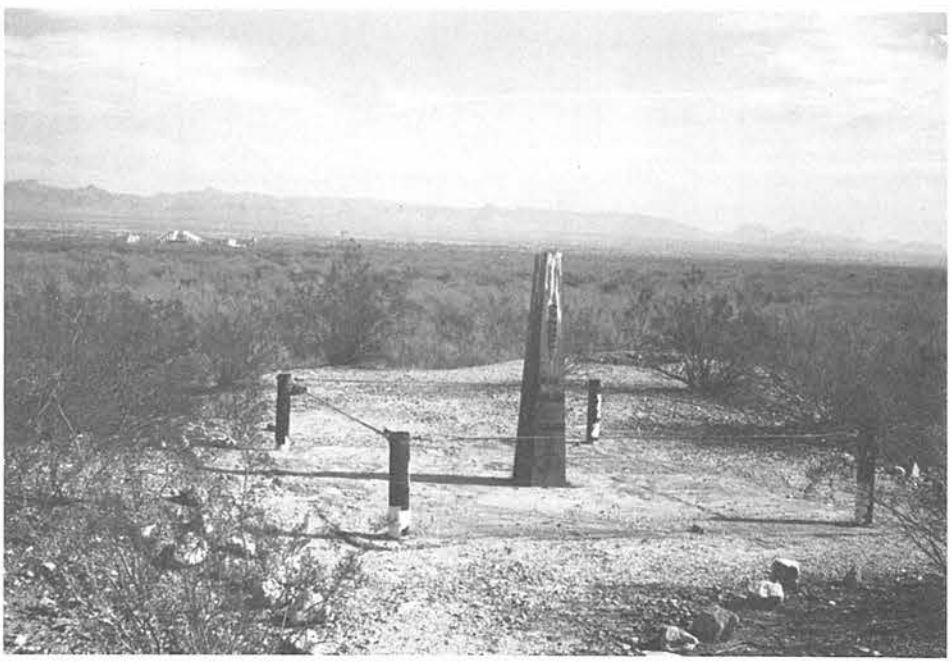
It is ironic that the Colorado River had temporarily shifted its channel so far afield when von Schmidt reached there in 1873. Had it maintained somewhere near the same channel as Lt. Ives had mapped in 1858, or as it keeps today, there is little doubt that the final von Schmidt line, as corrected to meet the river channel at 35 degrees north latitude, would have been so close to the finally accepted USC & GS line that the name von Schmidt would not appear on modern maps at all. Allexey Waldemar von Schmidt would be just another capable, but almost entirely forgotten, California pioneer.

Author's Note: Information concerning the von Schmidt boundary surveys, along with two photographs used by permission herein, can be found in *Chaining the Land* by F.D. Uzes, Sacramento, 1977. All personal information comes from a biographical sketch by Glenn B. Ashcroft as published in the *Society of Engineers Year Book,* San Francisco, 1928, and graciously provided to this author by F.D. Uzes, California Licensed Land Surveyor and retired supervising boundary determination officer of the California state lands division.

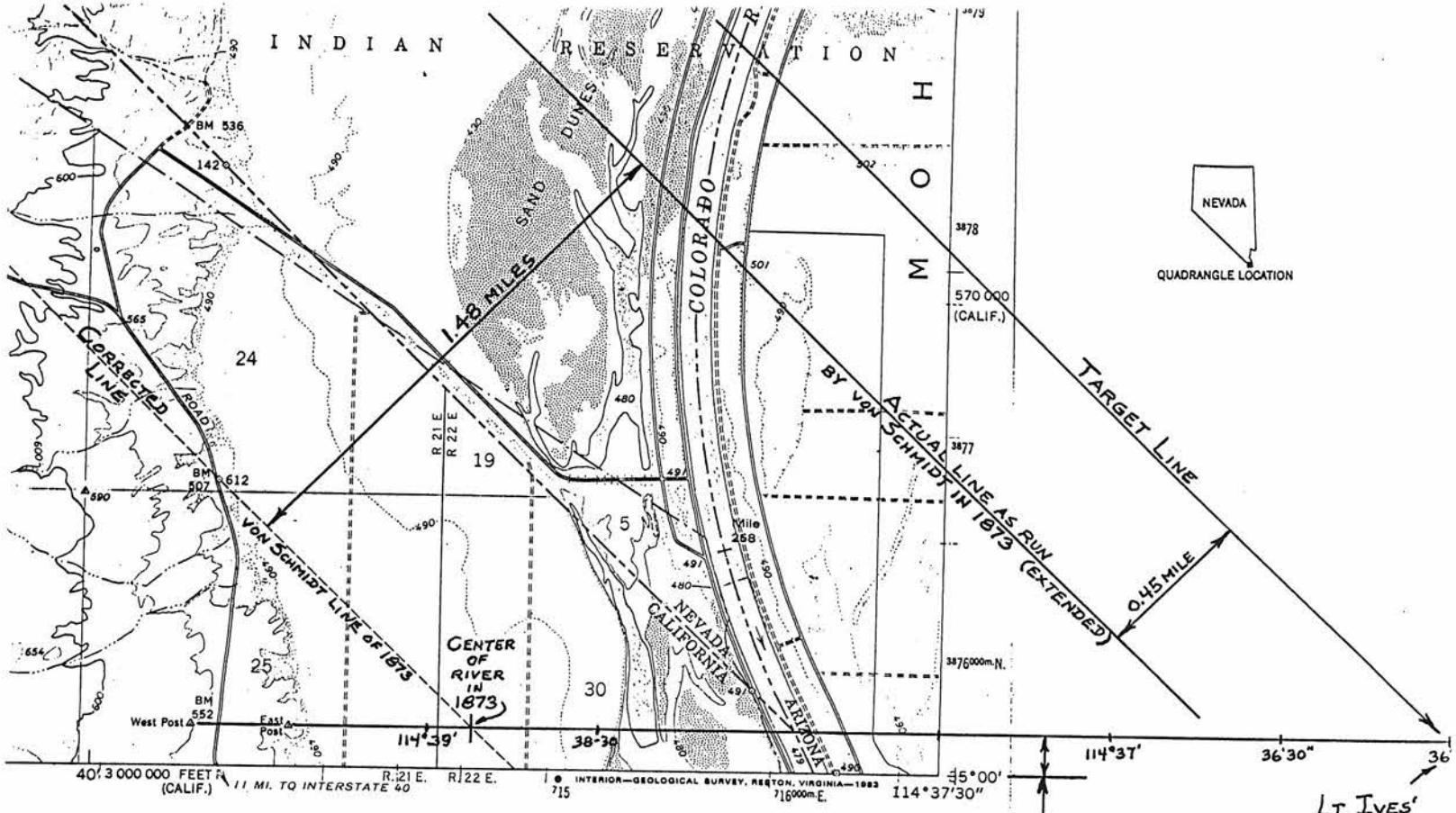


Historical marker erected by California Parks and Recreation Department November 20, 1974. — Photo by author.

This approximately six foot high, hollow cast iron, boundary marker claims to be 612 miles from Oregon. A raised inscription on the side facing right reads CALIFORNIA, on the left NEVADA, on the back A W VON SCHMIDT 1873. — *Photo by author.*



The 1873 von Schmidt survey marker, about twelve miles north of Needles, California, on the river road to Laughlin, Nevada. The mountains on the horizon are in Arizona. — *Photo by author.*



Von Schmidt's survey lines overlayed on portion of modern (1970) USGS topographic map showing the Colorado River intersection at 35 degrees 00 minutes north latitude. The 1.48 mile dimension is the distance von Schmidt corrected his original line to meet the 1873 river crossing at 35 degrees 00 minutes north latitude. The target line is a theoretical line aimed at Lt. Ives' erroneous coordinates. The 0.45 mile dimension is scaled. — *Overlay by author.*

NOTE DIFFERENCE IN ASTRONOMICAL AND GEODETIC POSITIONS FOR 35°00' NORTH LATITUDE.

LT. IVES' PUBLISHED TARGET COORDINATES

Photograph by - Frank Q. Newton

Donald Howard Pflueger 1923-1994

Don Pflueger was taken from us too early. At age seventy-one he had more years to give to history, more contributions to make to Southern California and the State. And Don had more meetings of The Westerners, the Clampers, and the Historical Society of Southern California to enjoy and in which to participate.

There were more articles and reviews to write, a history of Cal Poly, Pomona, to publish, more historical landmarks to recognize, and more questions about history to answer. In the words of the Neil Diamond song, "he was done too soon!"

Don was teacher, editor, author, reviewer, Westerner, Clamper, and in general—minister plenipotentiary to the cause of local history in Southern California. The welcome of his presence was a special blessing to each of us Westerners as it was to the larger Southern California community.

It was an honor for this Los Angeles Corral of Westerners to have Don Pflueger as our Sheriff. His warmth and friendliness were contagious. He enthusiastically shared himself with other Westerners. His self-assessment revealed both humility and pride, modesty and self respect. He knew his strengths as well as his weaknesses. He viewed his history and his world in true proportions.

More than anyone else I know, Don Pflueger paid his dies on behalf of Southern California local history. Therefore, it was an easy choice for the Historical Society to name its local history award after Don. He knew the value of hard work, imagination, and courage. His research and writing in local history possessed integrity.

Don was dedicated to fairness, open to change, was courteous towards opposing views, demonstrated a tolerance of others, and reached for mastery without arrogance. He was buoyant, unsinkable and ever optimistic.

Don's first book, *Glendora, The Annals of a Southern California Community,* was printed by the Saunders Press of Claremont and published in 1951, after an earlier draft had been written as an undergraduate paper at Pomona College under the direction of the late John Kemble. The foreword of the book was written by Robert Glass Cleland of the Huntington Library. A decade later, 1964, Don's second local history, *Covina: Sunflowers, Citrus, Subdivisions* was published, printed by The Castle Press of Pasadena and containing a foreword by John Caughey of UCLA. Other books included a textbook on California government and, in 1976, a biography of Charles C. Chapman, a pioneer citrus grower for whom Chapman College is named. The Chapman book was designed by Ward Ritchie and printed at the Ward Ritchie Press.

As Doyce Nunis, editor of the *Southern California Quarterly* wrote in 1988, the Pflueger volumes established "the benchmark for judging outstanding local histories which are achievements of historical excellence and quality." Hence, it is no accident that the Donald H. Pflueger Local History Award exists today. I am grateful that Don had the opportunity to see the award being given out to fifteen worthy recipients. He got to experience the excitement that the award in his name generated among those being honored.

His comments at the close of the first Pflueger Awards Luncheon measure the man—and with them I will close:

"Needless to say, this is a great honor and I thank the Board of Directors for so-naming the Award. In the recesses of my mind, however, I can't help but think that an enormous mistake has been made.

"The Award, however, will serve its purpose if it not only recognizes sound research and skillful

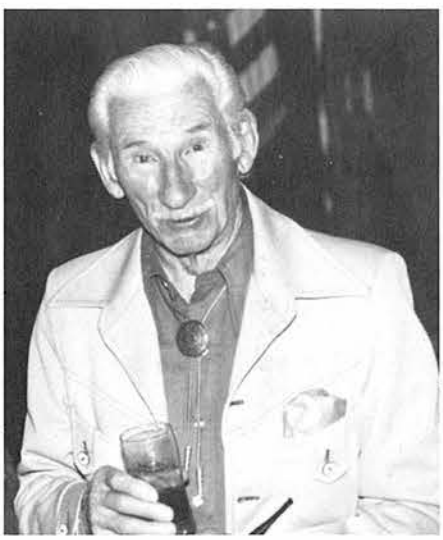
writing, but additionally stimulates others to explore the endless possibilities in the area of local history. The principal beneficiaries will be those citizens who come to realize that they have deeper roots than they ever thought possible.

"However, in this Lotus Land, replete with its Oscars, Emmys, and Tonys, I just hope that this Award never becomes a Donnie...

"I extend my congratulations to the awardees and assure them that I would be even more honored to receive an award named after any one of them. Thank you very much."

Vaya con Dios, Amigo.

Thomas F. Andrews



Photograph by - Frank O. Newton

Donald C. Meadows 1897-1994

Missing the century mark by only three years, our long-time Westerner, Don, died in November at Yuba City, California, where he and his much-beloved Frances had moved in 1985 to be near their son Don Jr., a retired professor of English and German at Yuba Community College. In Yuba City, Frances had preceded Don in death by only a few years.

Don was a prime authority on the history of Orange County where he had lived for 82 years, and avidly collected books, pamphlets and ephemera on its mission and rancho eras and its settlement years. His interests also included early affairs in Baja California. Among books authored by Don were *Historic Place Names of Orange County* (over 650 such names), and *Cattle Drives of Joseph Pleasants from Baja California, 1867-68.* These in addition to many articles for the *Westerners Brand Books, Branding Irons,* and for various Orange County historical societies all of which claimed Don as a member.

As a founding member of the Friends of UC Irvine Library, Don in 1972 sold his widely sought-after 4000-item library collection to the UC Irvine Library.

A native of Indiana, Don became a Californian in 1902, and a 1905 visit to Mission San Juan Capistrano stimulated his fascination with the local history, which continued enthusiastically for a lifetime.

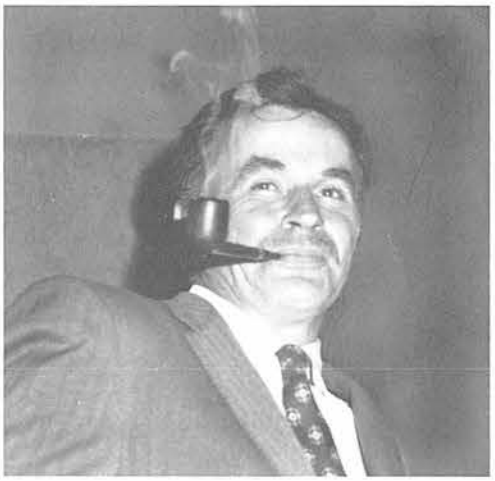
As an L.A. Corral Westerner, Don joined in 1950 and became an active participant, becoming our Sheriff in 1956, *Branding Iron* editor 1953-55, editor of *Brand Book* #8 in 1959, and author of articles included in *Brand Books* #5, 7 and 10. Book reviews by Don in the *Branding Iron* numbered over 30 in addition to obituaries of Ed Ainsworth and Sky Dunlap. In August 1961 Don and Frances hosted the Corral meeting at their home on the hill high above Orange and Tustin. On at least two occasions Don was the featured speaker at Corral meetings, and at the 1979 Rendezvous he was recognized as an Honorary Member of the Corral.

In the 1920s and early '30s Don was a newspaper reporter in San Pedro and Long Beach. Then began a teaching career with the Long Beach School District which included several years teaching in Avalon, Catalina Island. Don was also a scientist as an entomologist for the California Department of Agriculture, and as naturalist at several California state parks.

Possibly Don's last Corral attendance was at the December 1983 meeting where he was one of the speakers on the early years of the Corral and its meetings.

Sincere Westerner condolences go to Don's son, his two grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Orange County and all California have benefitted greatly by the years Don Meadows spent with us.

Art Clark



Noah Beery, Jr. 1913-1994

Noah Beery, Jr., born August 10, 1913, was a Charter Member of The Westerners Los Angeles Corral, and was an enthusiastic participant in bringing western history alive. He was the Corral's first Wrangler. Most of the time, "Pidge"—as he was known to his Westerners friends—attended outdoor meetings in western costume. Sometimes he was dressed as a soldier of the U.S. Army in the west of the 1860s-1880s, sometimes he was dressed as a working cowboy on a trail herding job.

On October 21, 1954, Pidge gave a meeting talk titled, "They Went That-a-Way, or the West and the Motion Picture Industry," that was a benchmark talk on that subject.

Pidge had a long motion picture career that started when he was a child seven years of age. His debut was in the 1920 silent film "The Mark of Zoro" that starred his father, Noah Beery, Sr., and Douglas Fairbanks (Senior). Another relative famous in films was his uncle, the versatile Wallace Beery.

In all, Pidge had a sixty year film and television career. He played a retired trucker, "Rockey" in the detective television series, "The Rockford Files" that featured James Garner. That series ran from 1974 to 1980, and is still enjoyed by many through reruns. His film credits include the 1940 version of John Steinbeck's classic "Of Mice and Men" and the 1960 courtroom drama "Inherit the Wind." In 1983 Noah Beery, Jr., had a supporting role with Burt Reynolds in "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas."

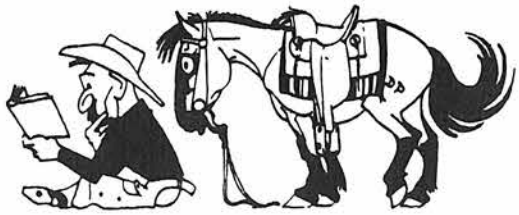
About ten years ago, Pidge retired to his Tehachapi ranch. There he enjoyed his menagerie of farm animals and birds. Pidge died at his ranch November 1, 1994. The Westerners send their condolences to his wife, Lisa Beery.

Glen Dawson

Edwin H. Carpenter
In Memoriam

Edwin H. Carpenter, an early member of the Los Angeles Corral of Westerners, died January 12th. Ed first introduced me to the Corral when it met years ago at the Mona Lisa restaurant. I first met Ed when he was a librarian at the New York Public Library. I was hunting down some railroad artifacts and he was most helpful. He said that his mother lived in South Pasadena, and we kept in touch. He joined the staff of the Huntington as Western Historian, and he gave me a call. We were immediate friends. Ed served as a librarian, Western Historian, and Assistant Curator of Rare Books. He had two Ph.D. degrees, one from UCLA School of Library Science and another in English, I believe Columbia. He was an inveterate in English grammar and proof reading. Nothing passed by Ed's eye. His interests centered around gravestone rubbings, military hand presses, southwestern history and book collecting. His father, a Cadillac dealer, brought his family west in a Cadillac in 1919 and it took 16 days to make the journey from Iowa to California due to muddy roads. For all his educational background, Ed was not much at writing, but put a quarter in him he would talk for hours. He was a living legend on the life and times of Henry E. Huntington. In fact many called him Henry Edwards Huntington Carpenter. Uncle Ed, you will certainly be missed.

Donald Duke



DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL . . .

PORT HUENEME, *A History,* by Powell Greenland. Ventura County Maritime Museum, 1994. 174 pp., 180 illustrations, 11 maps, appendix, bibliography, index. $44.95, order from Ventura County Maritime Museum, 2731 S. Victoria Ave., Oxnard, CA 93055.

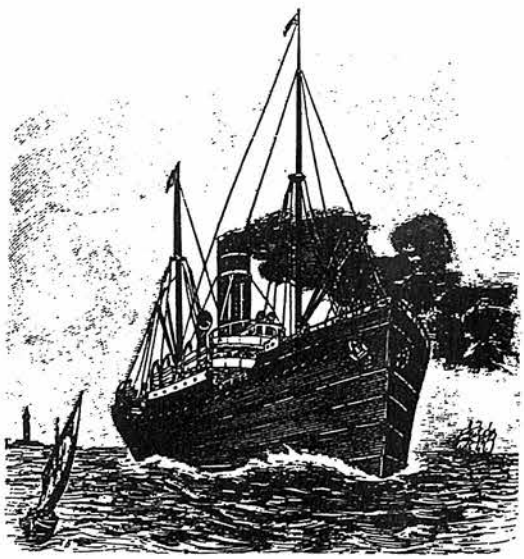
This is a book that has much to recommend it, and not just because a fellow Los Angeles Corral Westerner wrote it and three other Corral members had a part in its production. To take care of mentioning the three: Richard Cunningham, Curator Ventura County Maritime Museum, wrote the foreword and drew a harbor map and the dust jacket and title page drawings; Andrew Dagosta designed the dust jacket; Donald Duke did the design, layout, and paste-up of the whole book.

It is a book, in an easy to read style with many photographs, that tells the history of the interesting struggles of a little town that has been bypassed by the railroad and modern highways so completely that few people know where it is and fewer people know how to pronounce its name;. (Huhneme or Wyneme.)

After moving to the town, at the time of his retirement a few years ago, Greenland learned there was no complete, definitive, history of the place; so he went to work and researched and wrote one. It is a pleasure to read new history written in these days when some subjects reappear often with only different authors. The word "revisited" seems to appear in titles with greater frequency.

To indulge in a bit of alliteration, the history of Port Hueneme was effected by beets, beans, boats, BMWs, and bananas. In its development from the rancho period, the growing of sugar beets was the mainstay of the area, with the next door town of Oxnard having one of the largest beet processing plants in the nation. As the Spreckels plant near Salinas, in Monterey County, developed a dominance in beets processing, the Huaneme and Oxnard area moved into growing lima beans, and became the "lima bean capital" of the nation. Because the beet processing plant was in Oxnard, the Southern Pacific Company had built its rail line directly to a stop in Oxnard and by-passed Hueneme. In later years the major north and south highway also took a shortcut to Oxnard, and Hueneme was doomed to be a little backwater town.

But the little town refused to lay down and die, and in time the boats period of its life came about when the Navy began to enlarge and use the little harbor next door. During the years of World War II it became the second largest shipping port of war materiel on the Pacific coast, and the Seabees, the Navy structural engineers unit, made the port its Pacific Coast headquarters. Intense activity at the port continued for several years after the war as unused supplies were returned.



All this activity did increase the population of Port Hueneme, mainly among the young workers, but did little to increase the city's income. Surrounded by the city of Oxnard, to which many Port Hueneme residents went to shop, and with sixty percent of the area occupied by the Navy, there

was very little income from sales taxes. The low amount of income has continued to plague Port Hueneme to this day, causing the city leaders to try all kinds of means to increase the contents of the city coffers. Greenland tells of a current inspiration that is still being contested in the courts, with the whole nation watching the outcome. The idea is to have a higher, graduated, assessment for those homeowners close to the beach and the city's new parks and recreation areas. Opponents call this potential assessment the "view tax"

In time, the United States Government permitted the Oxnard Harbor District to buy some of the Navy occupied land on which existing facilities were expanded to enable the Channel Islands Harbor—its official name—to develop commercial shipping activities involving being the west coast importation point of foreign made automobiles, specifically BMW, Jaguar, and Mazda. The Del Monte company soon followed in the use of the port for its bananas importation.

Exporting is also an increasing port activity. Sunkist uses the port to ship out its oranges to the world. The agricultural products of the Santa Clara Valley, that backs up behind the port, head out to a world market from there.

All this shipping activity has increased work in the harbor and income for Port Hueneme. Modernizing and beautifying keeps apace in this little town that is still little known. But Greenland's book should change knowledge about Port Hueneme considerably.

Siegfried G. Demke

LAWMEN & DESPERADOES: *A Compendium of Noted Early California Peace Officers, Badmen, and Outlaws 1850-1900,* by William B. Secrest. Arthur H. Clark Company, Spokane, 1994. 344 pp. 200 photographs, bibliography, index. Cloth $37.50, order from Arthur H. Clark Company, 1-800-842-9286.

Information available on California law enforcers and law breakers is vastly improved by western history author Secrest with his latest book. The fifty-four brief biographies supply the important facts of the high points of the careers of well-known persons—such as badmen Black Bard and Tiburcio Vasquez and fearless law enforcers Sheriffs Isaiah Wrigley Lees and Benjamin Kent Thorn—and many not well known, almost obscure, bad guys and good guys.

Although information of prominent personages is a repetition, for this reviewer most of the book is about previously unknown and interesting bandits, sheriffs, and Wells Fargo detectives. There was the lone holdup man, never caught, who created a veritable traffic jam of victims. In one night, at the same site, one after the other and only minutes apart, he held up two stages and three wagons—one of the wagons was driven by two soldiers and in another wagon fifteen Chinese laborers were riding. Then there were two holdup men who rode bicycles to the site of their intended train holdup. And there was the brave Sheriff who, after he was disarmed by his escape attempting prisoner, stuck his index finger into the villains nose and disabled him until help came.

A large amount of photographs, and excerpts from contemporary newspaper accounts bring the times of the subjects alive. A breezy style of writing that is lightly sprinkled with slang expressions makes reading the book an enjoyable, as well as informative, pastime. At the end of each chapter, or biography, the author lists all of his sources for that particular subject or person. The author tries for quantity, along with adherence to quality, and

succeeds admirably. There is some repetition in that the author reports a few events twice, once from the participation of lawbreaker and again, later in the book, from the participation of the law enforcer. (The author writes about his fifty-four subjects in alphabetical order by the best known surname.) Despite the event being reported a second time, the author continues to hold the readers interest because of the retelling from a different angle.

Reading a book reporting so many criminal events may be depressing to some. After awhile one gets the impression that murder and robbery were principal industries in California in the second half of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, this is a book that belongs on the shelf of everyone seriously interested in California history.

Felix Buchleser

REGULARS IN THE REDWOODS, THE U.S. ARMY IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, 1852-1861, by William F. Strobridge. 283 pp., map, illustrations, appendices, bibliography, index. The Arthur H. Clark Company, Spokane, 1994. $29.95, order from Arthur Clark Co., P.O. Box 14707, Spokane, WA 99214.

In this, the seventeenth volume of the Arthur H. Clark Company's fine Frontier Military Series, William Strobridge describes the role of the U.S. Army in the northern counties of California during the decade preceding the Civil War. Using as his sources letters and other documents written by more than fifty Army officers posted to that remote and turbulent frontier, he paints a surprisingly non-stereotypical picture of the role of the Regulars in the conflicts between settlers and Indians. This is not an easy task. Operations were spread over a wide geographical area and more than eight military establishments—Forts Jones and Bragg survive as place names—with constantly changing complements of officers and men. If a complex and somewhat ambiguous situation could be reduced to simplified terms, it might be cast as a struggle between settlers, backed by a State government actively seeking the extermination of the indigenous population, and the Indians, often defended by the U.S. Army. Although official Army policy seems principally to have been to keep the settlers and Indians separated to avoid conflict, the opinion expressed repeatedly in these letters is that the Indians needed protection from the whites and the state-organized volunteer forces far more often than the reverse. Complicating the situation was the Bureau of Indian Affairs, whose often corrupt agents expected the Regulars to escort the Indians to their reservations and to garrison them to protect the agents and their charges, a duty that the Army undertook only reluctantly.

In documenting this neglected corner of California history, the author mines a rich vein of previously unused material. Although the letters and other reports are not presented in their original forms, the book is closely tied to its sources. Rigidly chronological, and rich in detail about personnel and troop movements down to the level of individual infantry and cavalry companies, the book is less successful in providing a coherent overview of the Army's experience in northern California and its wider context during the pre-Civil War decade.

Regrettably, the author's writing style—short sentences of relatively unvarying structure—detracts from the pleasure that this beautifully printed and bound book might otherwise provide. On balance, though, it is a valuable addition to the California history bookshelf for its wealth of detail and the sense that it imparts of the difficulties, natural and social, facing soldiers keeping order on a remote frontier experiencing rapid and turbulent settlement.

Warren M. Thomas

TREASURE TRAILS OF THE SOUTHWEST, by Marc Simmons. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994. 163 pp., illustrations, maps, appendixes, selected references. Cloth, $25; paper, $13.95. Order from University of New Mexico Press, 1720 Lomas Blvd., NE, Albuquerque, NM 87131-1591.

Marc Simmons is a distinguished scholar of the Southwest, having produced some 25 books, including *New Mexico: An Interpretive History.* Now he tries his hand at a more informal work, a tale of lost mines and buried treasures, mostly in New Mexico with a few in Arizona and southern Colorado.

Simmons tells us that he was strongly influenced by J. Frank Dobie's *Coronado's Children,* possibly the best book ever written on Southwestern mines and treasure lore. Over the years, Simmons, while writing mostly scholarly works, kept a file on mysterious gold and silver yarns. Finally, he accumulated enough of them to write a book.

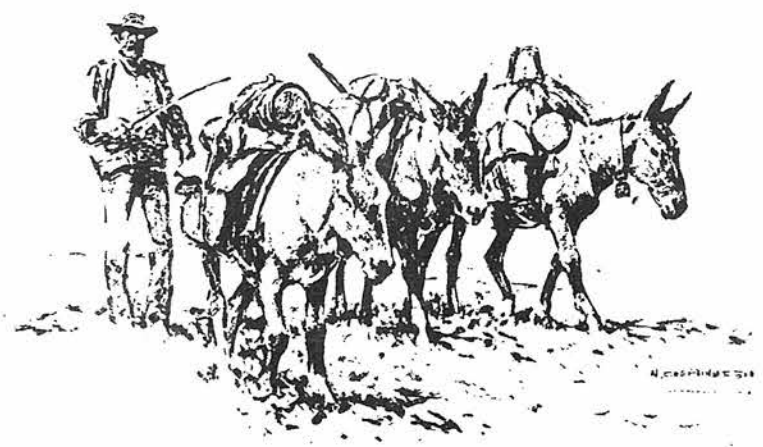
Common to almost all these stories is a familiar feature: someone makes a discovery, then loses the location and spends the rest of his life looking for it. Some of these tales involve treasure maps, often spirited out of Mexico, which give general but vague directions on locating hidden riches.

Simmons has put 27 of these lost mines and buried treasures stories in his latest volume, dating from the days of Coronado to the present century. We read of the fabled Cerro de Oro, or Hill of Gold, northeast of Santa Fe, first sought by a Spanish highwayman known as El Chato, or Pug Nose; of the lost gold of San Rafael; of the fabulous bonanza of Pinos Altos, or Tall Pines, near Silver City. Awaiting rediscovery today is the Lost Josephine Mine somewhere in southwestern Colorado, from which nuggets have allegedly been recovered in recent years.

These yarns almost prompt the reader, in Simmons' words, "to load up your burro with pick, shovel, gold pan, and canteen and set forth with me on wispy trails in pursuit of adventure and fortune."

Don't be fooled; this is not your ordinary tome of the "lost mines and buried treasure" genre. Simmons writes with grace and style this tale of gold and silver awaiting the diligent searcher, almost to the point that the reader is ready to start out on his own in quest of these elusive buried bonanzas.

John Robinson



TO RECLAIM A DIVIDED WEST; *Water, Law, and Public Policy, 1848-1902,* by Donald J. Pisani. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992. 487 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth $40.00, paper $19.95. Order from University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, NM 87131-1591.

When the Histories of the American Frontiers series started, each volume, with its distinctive orange and black cover, was 230-260 pages long and covered a broad topic such as the colonial, mining, farming or Canadian frontier. Today's volumes are twice as long and study a narrower, more esoteric topic. However, some things remain constant. Each volume is written by an expert in the field, the information is accurate, and each volume is well designed and presented.

People forget that water is not just wet stuff that comes out of a tap. It is also law, usage, in some cases violent battles, and the necessary element to make an area inhabitable and profitable. In humid areas, riparian law works well. One is entitled to the water on which your land fronts. One may use as much water as wished as long as the flow or quality of the water is not diminished, to allow those further downstream the water to which they are entitled. In less watered places which are usually used for grazing, appropriation proves adequate. The first person in time or space claims the water and has complete rights to it. Under riparian rights, water is a resource that belongs to all; but as a result of the changes wrought in the west, it became personal property.

The California Gold Rush brought the water issue to a head. There was insufficient water to follow riparian law; not to mention it precluded those miners who were not directly on the banks of a stream from acquiring water to function. Likewise, appropriation denied all late comers water. Since the military government and later State Legislature both abolished Mexican mining laws and failed to provide new laws and solutions, the miners established their own mining and water laws. Like mining law, many western water laws are based on the California experience.

Pisani, who holds that most Americans want nothing from the government except to be left alone unless you need something and then the government should provide it, studies attitudes toward government as well as the development of water law. He begins his work with an account of the legal contest of the water issue, divided into two periods, 1846-1866 and 1866 to 1902. Although much water law is drawn from a common experience, each state developed its own law and attitudes.

California led the way in experimentation. At first the state provided for personal control and diversion of the water. Because of the huge expenses required, private financing proved inadequate and the legislature by the Webb Act provided for creating special districts to finance irrigation projects.

After a complete survey of California's water policies, Pisani makes a state by state survey of other attempts to solve the water problem. At first there was a tendency to turn to the federal government, but after John Wesley Powell's recommendations sectionalism became the dominant force.

Each solution had problems—some were too expensive, others failed to deliver water, others provided for one group but not another. Gradually, westerners turned to the federal government once again to finance the irrigation of the region. At first, the eastern interests stopped the western desire, until the westerners learned to attack the major pork barrel legislation, the Rivers and Harbors bill. With their own interests endangered, the eastern legislatures became more understanding of the western needs and desires.

Several persons led the campaign to have reclamation financed by the federal government; one of the most important was George H. Maxwell. At first, the Corps of Engineers did not wish to become involved in the water controversy, but they were finally converted. At last, an unlikely champion, Francis G. Newlands of Nevada, was able to pull all the forces together and shepherded a reclamation law through Congress. Of course, the law did not satisfy everyone, and the west is still split about what is the correct way to provide water to all.

Pisani has done an excellent job of tracing the ins and outs of an extremely complicated issue. He analyzes the many issues, presents the various actors and agencies, and in the end synthesizes all into a meaningful pattern. Anyone interested in water law, the development of western attitudes, the development of the west, or the creation of the modern west will find this an useful and interesting book.

Robert W. Blew