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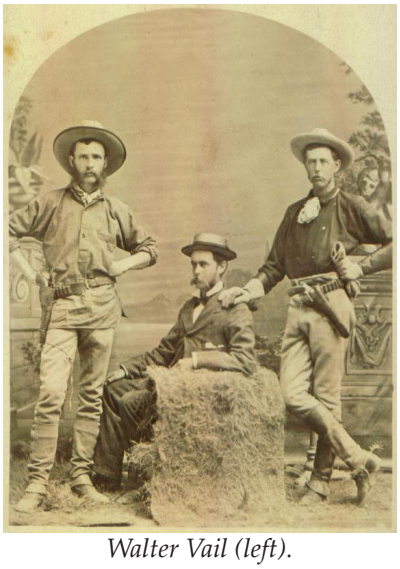
The Vails Before Coming to Temecula

Two greenhorns from the East with good business savvy cashed in on adventure and made their fortures in frontier Arizona

Rebecca Marshall Farnbach

Walter Lennox Vail was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1852, the same year Indians gathered at Apis' adobe by Temecula Creek to sign the Treaty of Peace and Friendship. By Walter's sixth birthday, he and his family moved to New Jersey where his father owned grain farms and a mill. Although Walter agreed to someday take over the family business, he dreamed of venturing to the West. When profits fell, Walter's father sold the grain business, freeing Walter from obligation to family business, so, on the day he turned twenty-one, he bade his family goodbye, and with one hundred dollars in his pocket, he left to seek his fame and fortune in the West.



Walter Vail (left). Photo courtesy Temecula Valley History Museum

Walter's story is not just about success. In fact, his first venture didn't go well at all. He traveled to Virginia City, Nevada, hoping to strike it rich in the silver mines. He was a timekeeper in the silver mines, but he didn't like the gambling and drinking, and he didn't make a fortune. When his savings were stolen, he asked Nathan Vail for help. Uncle Nathan urged him to buy a ranch near Tucson, Arizona to start a cattle raising enterprise. The rest of his story is legendary.

Walter made his first trip to the Arizona ranch in 1876 with a prospective investor. They traveled south from Tucson on mud roads

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The Branding Iron is always seeking articles of 2,500 words or less dealing with every phase of the history of the Old West and California. Contributions from both members and friends are always welcome.

Editor's Corner . . .

Welcome to the Fall, 2014 edition of the Branding Iron. We have two articles in this issue that I think you're going to find fascinating. First, Rebecca Farnbach, a long-time researcher into the history of Temecula and the greater Temecula region brings to light Walter Vail, who played an instrumental role in later years in the building of a cattle empire in Temecula. What we hear about in this issue is the Vails before Temeucla, and their work in New Mexico and Arizona.

Next, Phil Brigandi once again steps up to the plate to tell us the story behind the Pacific Coast Trail, most often referred to as the PCT, and shows us some wonderful shots taken along that majestic trail.

On October 25, the L.A. Corral held its annual Rendezvous, and thanks to "Terry" Terrell and Peggy Lee Hartwell, we have some wonderful pictures of the fun times had by all on that day. Thanks Terry and Peggy Lee!!

Finally, a word about the format of the Branding Iron. Since the Branding Iron is now also available on-line, I am making two versions - one for print, which will continue to have black-and-white photos, and a color version that will be available on-line. If you would like to see some of our photos in color, especially the ones from the monthly Roundup, Fandango, and Rendezvous, you will now be able to by accessing the Branding Iron on-line: www.lawesterners.org! So, take a look and let us know what you think. I don't think you'll be disappointed!

As always, please feel free to contact me regarding ideas for articles. I'm always looking for material to put in the Branding Iron. Luckily, several of you have come forward already and I appreciate it - but there's always room for more! Please consider putting something together that you think may interest the greater Corral as a whole.

Happy Trails!

Steve Lech
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and arrived at a tumbledown adobe house surrounded by a few cattle. The wild country with few conveniences and reports of recent Indian raids on white settlers frightened the prospective partner, who was immediately disinterested.

Uncle Nathan then contacted Herbert Hislop, a young man he met in London, where Nathan had made a fortune installing the city's first streetcars. In 1876 Walter Vail and Herbert Hislop, two twenty-four-year-old greenhorns, purchased Fish Ranch. A month later they bought an adjacent ranch property that came complete with sheep, cattle and a yellow dog named Billy.

When an Englishman named John Harvey joined the venture a few months later, the locals to dubbed the enterprise "The English Boys Outfit," despite the fact that Walter was an American.

They soon bought more cattle and sold the sheep. The ranchers built a corral, attaching the only gate to the wall their adobe house so they could vigilantly guard against Apache raiders and animal predators.

While the two Englishmen preferred to stay at the ranch, Walter eagerly traveled into New Mexico to buy more cattle. Walter wrote of his adventures in the "Wild West," to his older brother Edward in New York City. In one letter, Walter told about camping with some of the ranch cowboys along the San Pedro River in New Mexico during a cattle buying trip. Apaches came within 50 yards of them and stole the cowboys' horses, plus a large number of wild horses the cowboys had rounded up. The cowboys thought they would track the Apaches and steal the horses back, but after seeing how badly they were outnumbered, the cowboys gave up pursuit.

Walter's letter didn't say how they got home with the cattle after they were stranded without horses 200 miles from home, but he did mention that the same Indians headed immediately to the ranch, killing three neighbors and stealing horses from every ranch except for theirs.

Another adventure is described in a later letter, "I left the ranch to be gone one day and was gone seven. I have been in the saddle from daylight to dark, and part of the time I have ridden half the night as well. I found after I left home that some of the cattle that we bought from Mr. Miller had gone back to the San Pedro River, so I went right after them."

Walter told how he almost lost his life trying to defend his dog Billy. Billy always ran under the tongue of Walter's butcher wagon, between the mules. One day, a big dog "jumped on Billy and was chewing him up. I picked up a stock and was beating the big dog off of Billy when the owner of the dog came up and pulled out a gun. In a minute several men with six shooters drawn were facing each other and I was in the middle. But some way, although I was scared, I felt most anxious to prevent a fight. I think I said, 'You men are all friends of mine; don't kill each other over a yellow dog.' One of them laughed and I said: 'Come with me,' and we all went into George's saloon and I paid for the drinks and that ended the trouble."

By 1879, after just three years of ranching, both Englishmen sold out to Walter. Walter's brother Edward, working south of New York's Wall Street as a ship chandler selling supplies to outfit ships, wanted Western adventures and left his job to take part in the ranching enterprise.

While in New York Edward had a hobby that paid good dividends later for the two brothers. Assaying, determining the value of precious metals in rock, fascinated him, and he frequently visited an assay office, assisting with calculations.

Business at the ranch took off when Edward joined Walter in Arizona. The two had a plan, and it worked. They bought all available acreage in the area, especially property that gave controlling water rights.

They held offices in every organization dealing with the cattle industry. Walter served on the Arizona Territorial Legislature, and they each served as Pima County Supervisors. While Walter presided over the Livestock Ranchman's Association he authored several regulations that were to their own advantage, including fencing regulations to curb cattle rustling.

The two brothers maintained strict control of every aspect of their ranching

enterprise, never relinquishing management of operations to anyone else.

Although Walter didn't get rich from his first experience with silver mines, something happened one day at the ranch that changed his fortune. His friend Jerry Dillon looked up at the hillside and said, "There's a big ledge, and the whole damned hill is a total wreck with quartz boulders of ore."

They filed a claim and called it the Total Wreck Mine. They set up a stamp mill to extract the silver, and built a house for the mill man nearby. Edward, the assayer, wrote about the mill man later, "He said he slept fine as long as the mill was running, but if for any reason it stopped he was up there in a minute – anyone who has ever heard a quartz mill running would not consider it a lullaby to induce sleep."

A town grew around the mine. It boasted of fifty houses, three stores, three hotels, four saloons, a brewery, butcher shop and a lumberyard. The Vail, Arizona post office building sat on Vail Road. The Southern Pacific put rails to the new town. It brought supplies in and carried ore out.

The mine produced up to $2000 worth of silver daily, with a total production of $500,000. The Vails used capital from the Total Wreck mine to expand their ranch land holdings and to improve the herd. They bred Herefords at the Empire Ranch and shipped them out to fatten elsewhere before selling. By maintaining a superior quality of cattle, they could command higher prices.

In 1881, Walter Vail married his longtime sweetheart Margaret Newhall in New Jersey and took her to their Empire Ranch home. He had improved it from the bare adobe with dirt floor and no windows or doors, to one habitable by a civilized lady.

Walter and Edward founded the Empire Land and Cattle Company in 1886. Three years later California entrepreneur Carroll W. Gates bought a half interest in the company. When the Arizona markets for beef collapsed in the mid-1880s, the company found new markets in Kansas City and Los Angeles, and expanded to new grasslands in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and California.

Walter faced death in 1890 after he shot a beautifully marked Gila monster and slung

Empire Land and Cattle Company cowboys, circa 1895.
Photo courtesy Temecula Valley History Museum

Walter Vail inspecting cattle in his later years.
Photo courtesy Temecula Valley History Museum

it over the saddlebag behind him. After riding a distance, he reached backward, and the reptile that Walter thought was dead bit him. He hurried back to the ranch and someone sent a message for the Southern Pacific Railroad to rush an engine to the mine to take him to Tucson for medical treatment. Walter was seriously ill for several weeks, but eventually recovered from the potentially deadly bite.

Shortly afterward, Walter and Edward led a protest against the same rail line that had saved his life. The Vails needed to get cattle from Arizona to pastures in California. Southern Pacific had sharply raised shipping fees, so the Vails boycotted the railroad and took the stock by cattle drive. Edward, Empire Ranch foreman Tom Turner and eight Mexican ranch hands drove 917 steers from the Empire Ranch in Arizona to the Warner Ranch pastures in California.

They survived a stampede and a perilous crossing of the Colorado River. They recaptured 110 runaway steers, and were detained in Yuma by a sheriff who demanded taxes. After intervention by their Tucson attorney, they followed the old Butterfield Stage Trail and encountered a challenge by Indians. After appeasing the Indians with sugar and coffee beans, they passed through a valley full of rattlesnakes. They traveled the desert at night with a lantern hung on the tailboard of a wagon, which the steers followed "like soldiers." They stumbled on cattle bones, a broken-down wagon and a human skull. A sheriff approached and shot and killed a young man who had joined them, and took his brother into custody.

After two months and ten days of adventure, the desert drive ended at the Warner Ranch pasturelands. They had lost only two head of cattle while crossing the Colorado River. When the cowboys returned to Arizona, they met with other ranchers to identify a safe route for driving cattle to California. The route was never established, because a Southern Pacific representative attended the meeting and shipping fees were reduced to the previous rates.

The Vails developed one of Arizona's largest and most influential livestock operations of one million acres and 40,000 cattle, a success mainly attributable to Walter's business genius and constant supervision. Walter constantly analyzed breeding patterns and sales, and adapted ranch practices to capitalize on trends.

The one room adobe with a dirt floor was transformed into a 22-room home with electricity and indoor plumbing. Walter and Margaret raised seven children there before it was sold in 1928. The house is now listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

The United States Bureau of Land Management manages the ranch as a conservation area, and allows cattle to graze, by special permit. The Empire Ranch Foundation, a non-profit historical group, presents educational programs at the ranch.

Two young men from the city came west, seeking adventure. They found it and amassed a

fortune, too. None of the dangers of frontier life killed them, not Apaches, Gila monsters or fights over a yellow dog.

At age fifty-seven, with his empire at its zenith, Walter was fatally crushed between two streetcars in Los Angeles.

Edward Vail never married. He stayed in Arizona where he regaled listeners with stories of his early life in the Arizona Territory. He served as president of the Arizona Pioneer Historical Society and died in 1936 at the age of 87.

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View looking into Chino Canyon near Palm Springs, late 1940s, before the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. Photo courtesy of Steve Lech.

Poetry Roundup

by
Loren Wendt

Turnip In The Stew

Cookie, you ain't gonna cut up that turnip
and put it in the stew?
Yep, Clyde, that's exactly what I'm planning
to do
You drovers have had your fill of peach cob-
bler and beans
And soon you'll be bustin' out of your tight
fittin' jeans

Well, Cookie, I'll be danged if I'll try that
kind of stew
And the rest of the boys are gonna' tell you
that too
Now hold on a minute, Clyde, and just try a
little taste
If you don't like it, we'll let the whole batch
go to waste

Well, I'll be danged, Cookie, that stew ain't
at all bad
Fact is these are some of the best vittles this
cowboys ever had
That durn turnip really added a darn nice
touch or two
And this whole dinner is really good and
really new

Tell you what, tomorrow we'll go lookin' for
this winner
Searchin' for turnips to add to another great
stew dinner
Dang, Cookie, guess I just have to let you
know
Them there turnips are sure the "Best Of
Show"

The Farmers Wife

I had bin' ridin' hard all day
And I was really, really beat
When I rode up to that front porch
And she said, "climb down n' take a seat"

She served up coffee, beans and steak
And was as cheerful as could be
And I had to wonder about her
Cuz' there wasn't any happiness to see

But this lady kept on a-talkin'
And chirped just like a bird
She had to be one of the happiest
I had ever seen or heard

How anyone could be that happy
In that miserable three room shack
With dirt floors, no window coverings
And an out-house way out back

She showed me her proud pantry
Filled with jars and jars of stuff
Then she kept on sevin' me
Until I really had enough

She told me she and the kids
Were goin' blackberry pickin' tonight
And she worshipped every part of nature
And she loved everything in sight

She said the barn dance was Tuesday
And she and her husband loved to go
Why that woman could be that happy
Is some thing I'll never, ever know

But I rode away from that ranch
And marveled at that farmer's wife
Cuz' her perspective, her happiness
Had changed this cowboy's life

Now whenever I'm down in the dumps
And feelin' really, really sad
I think about that farmer's wife
And I know things can't be that bad

Hiking through Strawberry Cienega, San Jacinto Mountains, 2010.

From Horizon To Horizon

The Story of the Pacific Crest Trail

Phil Brigandi

The trail climbs slowly but steadily, clinging to the contours of the hillside. The chaparral is low, still recovering from a fire a dozen years back, offering sweeping views of the surrounding country. Off on the horizon stands the dark gray bulk of Mt. San Jacinto and the Desert Divide. The trail leads towards it, up it, and down the other side, where another mountain awaits.

I have been hiking the Pacific Crest Trail in bits and pieces for more than 35 years now, and since 2008 have been slowly working away at hiking all of it through San Diego and Riverside counties – section hiking, as the PCT'ers call it, as opposed to through hikers, who cover the whole trail in a single trip. I have now walked every foot of the trail from the Mexican border to the San Gorgonio Pass, nearly 220 miles.

If that figure seems impressive, consider this – that's only about 8% of the total trail. From Campo, on the Mexican Border, to Manning Provincial Park in Canada, the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail stretches some 2,650 miles of rock and ridge and mountain. Sticking doggedly to the high country whenever possible, the PCT crosses 33 Wilderness Areas, 23 National Forests,

seven National Parks, five State Parks, and three states. The highest point on the trail is Forester Pass, 13,180 feet above sea level.

The idea of long-distance, recreational hiking and backpacking was born in the early 1900s. Before then, it was simply how some people got around. The "Great Hiking Era" in Southern California saw thousands of visitors trekking into the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto mountains. The first major long-distance trail in the United States was the Appalachian Trail – 2,100 miles between Maine and Georgia.

"To me, this is just beautiful country. I know in some trail guides and journals the southern end of the trail gets sort of a bad rap. My guess is these are all people aching for the Sierra Nevada. But there's really no point in comparing the brush country and the high country. The chaparral and the Sierra both deserve to be enjoyed on their own terms. C.S. Lewis says somewhere that we have to learn to see everything in its own kind; that the finest glass of wine or a perfect slice of bread can both be enjoyed for what they are.

"If what you love is the outdoors, you should be able to love all of it. Or at least appreciate it for what it is. And when you look at all of the outdoors – even the wilderness – you discover very quickly that some of it is breathtaking and some of it is plain. Or that some of it is more easily enjoyed when the weather is nice, or you got the perfect campsite, or you're with good companions. The brush country may be an acquired taste, but you can't demand that it be something it is not."
– from my PCT journal

In 1932, about the time the first stage of the AT was being completed (trail acronyms seem endemic among hikers), Clinton C. Clarke, a Pasadena oilman and civic leader, first proposed a trail from Mexico to Canada. Unlike the Appalachian Trail – which passes many communities and even offers overnight huts in many places – the Pacific Crest Trail would seek out the wildest areas, and choose dramatic scenery over short-cuts.

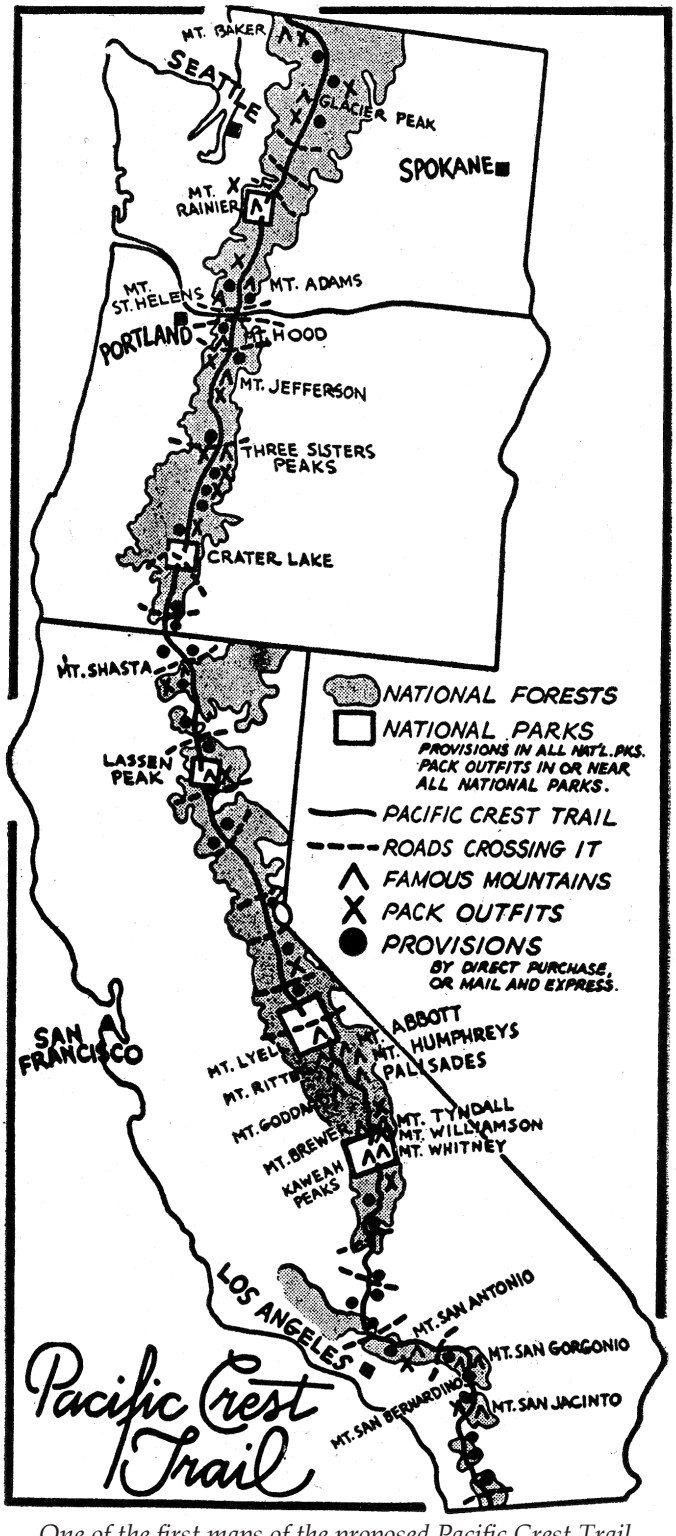
"In our hurry-scurry world of machines, noise and distractions, the mind becomes confused and our sense of values is lost," Clarke wrote in 1935. "Throw down your sleeping-bag beneath a pine high on a mountain side, and get acquainted with that vast world of God's creatures that are more and more being banished from our consciousness. Peace and contentment come, events that yesterday seemed so vital shrink to their true worth, and we return to the slavery of our inhuman world with enlightened mind and revivified soul."

Clarke (1873-1957) founded the Pacific Crest Trail System Conference to promote his idea, and he soon found an important ally in Warren Rogers, a YMCA secretary from Santa Ana, who served as Executive Secretary of the Conference until 1957, and remained active in promoting the trail until his death in 1992. Rogers was an avid hiker and backpacker, and loved exploring the potential routes.

During the summers of 1935 to 1938, more than three dozen groups of YMCA boys backpacked tag team style from Mexico to Canada, using existing trails, back roads, and cross-country clambering, and making notes all along the way. The Muir Trail, the Tahoe-Yosemite Trail, and the Cascade Crest Trail already covered much of the Sierra Nevada and the Cascades, but in places, the PCT would eventually seek out an even wilder route through the mountains.

Clarke compiled the first guidebook to the PCT in 1935, followed a decade later by *The Pacific Crest Trailway*. It offered only scant descriptions of the route, and was arranged from north to south. (Most through hikers today go south to north, beginning in mid-April in an attempt to cross the southern, more desert sections early, cross the Sierra after the snow melt, and cross Washington before the first snows of fall.) Clarke's 1945 guidebook is now available online at *www.pcttrailway.pctplanner.com*. His introduction reflects some of the ideals of the "Great Hiking Era":

"The Pacific Crest Trailway is not a recreational project for the casual camper or hiker; it is a serious educational



One of the first maps of the proposed Pacific Crest Trail (Sunset, July 1936).

program for building sturdy bodies, sound minds, and active patriotic citizenship…. Already the wilderness everywhere is under savage attack by commercialization programs and mechanization projects. May this little book, which is simply a guide or catalogue to some of the treasures of Mother Earth, be helpful in preserving their protection and eternalness."

Not surprisingly, Clarke was also involved with another organization that professed similar ideals – the Boy Scouts of America. He even provided a chapter on "Backpacking on the Pacific Crest Trail" for the 1942 older Scout handbook, *Adventuring for Senior Scouts* (where it is followed by a chapter on the Appalachian Trail).

He measured the route as 2,265 miles (about 400 less than today), bragging that "so well planned is it that only 125 miles are over roads and only 225 miles are through developed areas." He offers a number of hints for prospective backpackers – some of which are still common today, such as what he called "food depots" every 75 miles to resupply. With 18 pounds of food a week and plenty of gear (including aluminum cookware, sunglasses, a canvas water bucket, mosquito netting, and a camera) he estimates a 55-pound pack after each pick up. He encouraged Scouts to camp on durable surfaces (bare ground, not grass), to build fires in holes lined with rocks that can be refilled later, and to beware of glare in the snow.

Some modern necessities are conspicuously absent, however. Water purification (in those days usually by boiling or iodine drops) is never mentioned, nor

any restrictions on fishing for more food along the way.

Just who was the first through hiker to complete the PCT is still a debated point. In 1971, *National Geographic* magazine credited Eric Rybak as first through hiker the year before. His account of his journey – *The High Adventure of Eric Ryback* (Chronicle Books, 1971) – had just been published, and became a national bestseller. But in 1973, the first Wilderness Press PCT guidebook questioned Ryback's claim. He threatened to sue, but when the guidebook authors showed they had letters from people who had given him rides, and other information, the suit was dropped.

You don't have to be much of a backpacker to see why some people questioned Ryback – an 18-year-old alone with an 80-pound pack on a poorly defined trail, who on his very first day watched a pack of coyotes devour a deer and then careened 300 feet backwards down a frozen snowbank. And by the end of his book his account skips along so fast that his route and chronology begin to blur.

If nothing else, Ryback's book helped prompt a number of other through hikers to finish the trail. The current Wilderness Press guidebook credits Richard Watson as the first to finish that year, but notes that Martin Papendick had completed the entire route in sections as early as 1952. The authors are kinder to Ryback now, admitting "he hiked *most* of the route" going north to south.

"From the top, we turned right (south) and went over Apache Peak to the turn for Apache Spring, where we followed another steep and at times dim trail half a mile down the desert side of the divide. There was good water in the box at the spring, and also a big ol' rattlesnake guarding it! I stepped over him without even seeing him, and John was so flustered he couldn't even think of the word "snake." He just said, "come back, come back," so I did. The snake never coiled, and never really rattled; he just turned and slid away, leaving us to dip out some water."

In 1968, a National Trails System was authorized by Congress. It included both historic and scenic trails – and the Pacific Crest Trail was one of them.

The official, federally approved route was adopted in 1973, and work on land acquisition and construction began. Private property along the proposed route presented a problem in several areas. In some places the trail had to be extended to wind around private property, or other inaccessible areas, such as Indian Reservations. The biggest stumbling block was the 270,000-acre Tejon Ranch, which controls most of the Tehachapi Range. A long detour had to the built along the east side of the ranch, dipping deep into the Mojave Desert. (Only recently, an agreement has been announced which will allow the PCT to cross the Tejon, but it will be years before it is opened up.)

Much of the new construction in the 1970s and '80s was done by volunteers, or contractors hired by the government. Small crews worked on short sections using hand tools, dynamite, and small earth-moving equipment. Where there was no existing trail to be followed and improved, the end of the contract meant the end of the trail, and hikers were left to push on as best they could.

The government insisted on strict construction standards for width (generally 18-24 inches), trail tread (a fairly smooth surface), and grade (hopefully no more than 15%). In some places, the grade requirement forces the "perpetually curving trail" to wrap in and out of every side canyon, rather than dropping down and climbing back up from ridge to ridge. It can be frustrating, but it makes the trail accessible to even more hikers and backpackers (and horseback riders, who are also welcome on the PCT).

By 1978, nearly $10 million had already been spent on trail construction and improvement in California alone – and there was still plenty left to do. Some rocky stretches cost as much as $40,000 a mile to build, but the average was more like $8,000 a mile.

Much of the early work was done on the northern stretches of the trail, where a number of existing trails were incorporated

Looking back along the Desert Divide, south of Mt. San Jacinto, 2010.

into the PCT. It is interesting to note that the Pacific Crest Trail is not even listed in the index to the first edition (1971) of John W.Robinson's San Gabriel Mountains guidebook, *Trails of the Angeles*. He touts the California Riding and Hiking Trail instead as a route along the range.

(The CRHT – to give it its acronym – was first authorized by the State Legislature in 1945 and was designed to cross the state from north to south. Existing roads and trails and new construction eventually opened a route, but with the rise of the PCT, the CRHT has been largely forgotten, and current maps and guidebooks are unavailable. Some hikers still cling to the old trail, though, and continue to push for its restoration.)

As construction on the PCT dragged on in the 1980s, interest in the trail seemed to fade. By the late 1980s, only a handful of through hikers were finishing the trail each year. Today hundreds (sometimes 1,500 or more) set off on their own PCT adventure – though not all of them finish it in one trip (or even plan to). Some high-speed hikers finish the trail in less than four months; most take more like four or five months to make the journey.

More than six decades after Clinton Clarke's first proposal, on June 5, 1993, a formal dedication ceremony for the Pacific Crest Trail was held in Soledad Canyon near Acton, California, marking the completion of a continuous route from border to border. But the trail continues to be reworked and sometimes relocated all along the way. That means hikers must always keep up to date.

"The weather was starting to turn on us, and we had our first smattering of hail just as we were starting to set up our tents. Luckily it stopped long enough for us to cook dinner in a little niche up in the rocks, but the temperature (and the hail) both keep dropping, and by 5:30 we had crawled into our tents and didn't come out until the next

morning when we found the hail had turned to snow overnight, and there was a light dusting on everything, and tiny drifts around our tents. But we'd both slept well and warm. It does give you a satisfying feeling to be so self-contained out on the trail."

The U.S. Forest Service put out a series of maps of the route as it then existed in 1972. Warren Rogers also published a series of strip maps in the early 1970s. A variety of guidebooks to all or part of the trail have since appeared, but the gold standard remains the Wildness Press series, *The Pacific Crest Trail.*

Volume 1, covering all of California, was first released in 1973. It was the work of four authors/outdoorsmen – Jeffery Schaffer, Ben Schifrin, Thomas Winnett, and J.C. Jenkins (after Jenkins was killed in a highway accident in 1979 his parents, Ruby and Bill, continued to update his portions of the guidebook). Their ten ounce guidebook took the place of seven pounds of topographical maps.

Volume 2, covering Oregon and Washington, made its appearance in 1974, written by Schaffer and Bev and Fred Hartline. Both volumes have gone through multiple editions and many printings. Along the way, California has been divided into two separate volumes, from the Mexican border to Tuolumne Meadows, and then north to Oregon.

Beginning with Ryback, there have also been a number of descriptive books and personal accounts published. Another early example is William R. Gray, *The Pacific Crest Trail* (National Geographical Society, 1975). Rees Hughes and Corey Lee Lewis have compiled a variety of modern and historic trail accounts in their *Pacific Crest Trailside Reader* (Mountaineers Books, 2011) – again, with separate volumes for California and Oregon/Washington.

As for me, I have no plans to ever get that far north. But when I began my effort to hike even a portion of the PCT, John Robinson warned me that once I started, I'd want to do even more. My original goal was the San Gorgonio Pass, but now that I've reached it, I've been looking more and more at the next 45 miles up to Onyx Summit (or down from the summit, rather, since one of the advantages of section hiking is that you can choose your ups and downs a little more strategically). Maybe there'll be time for that this fall. And the stretch across the backbone of the San Gabriels looks interesting, too. Who knows? I might have a few more PCT miles left in me yet.

The author on the trail in the Anza-Borrego Desert, with Granite Mountain the distance, 2008.

Down the Western Book Trail . . .

INDIAN RESILIENCE AND REBUILDING: Indigenous Nations in the Modern American West, by Donald L. Fixico. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013. 284 pp. Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Paper, $30. Reviewed by Jerry Selmer

This book covers a perspective of American Indian history from the early days of the Indian Wars up to the present. It concerns itself with what white people thought was going to happen to Indians and what has actually happened.

When the United States began to implement its policy of Manifest Destiny and expand to the West, it was obvious to settlers that Indians were in the way and they could be dangerous to "civilization." Thus, in order to protect the interests of the majority population, the Army was sent west to assist the white settlers by killing or relocating Indians and securing Indian homelands for private use by white Americans. By the time the late 1800's and early 1900's rolled around, most whites were convinced that the Indians of the West would be exterminated. Realizing that something should be salvaged, efforts were made across the country to establish museums dedicated to preserving Indian arts, crafts and artifacts.

The Indians proved to be more resilient than the whites thought and they survived. This book is an excellent exposition of the many things which have happened to America's aboriginal people and how they have managed to adapt and come back from oblivion.

The author is himself an American Indian (Shawnee, Sac and Fox, Muscogee Creek and Seminole). He writes from a personal and an academic point of view. He has done a huge amount of research on the subject and presents his findings in a very readable style. He tells the story of the bitter hardships of early reservation days with a paternalistic Bureau of Indian Affairs usually operating to the contrary of Indian interests. As each generation of Indians has come and gone, adaptability in order to survive became the requirement for all.

The author begins with the terrible conditions on so many reservations which were sectioned off for Indian use. Initially, many of these reservations consisted of huge parcels of land. As the white population grew, the Federal government appropriated more and more Indian land for use by white settlers. In some cases, as much as 90% of the original allotment was taken back. Following this discussion, there are further accounts of boarding schools, relocation to urban settings, the rise of Indian activism and various re-definitions of Indian life to conform to the white man's world.

With the discovery of natural resources on certain Indian lands, the majority population took a new interest by seizing those riches wherever possible. Fortunately, the Indians were able to hold onto a good part of it in recent times. I found the story of how Indian gaming came about and the struggles to bring it to many reservations fascinating. It has proven to be a new financial resource, however it has not always been the pathway to wealth which many outsiders think it is.

Dr. Fixico has presented a worthwhile study of the many trials and tribulations of the American Indian nations. His writings reveal a wealth of detail as to how American Indians struggled to overcome the attempts of others to remove them from "the path of progress." I recommend the book most highly to those who have an interest in this important subject.

KIT CARSON: The Life of an American Border Man, by David Remley. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011. 289pp. Maps, Illustrations, Bibliographical Essay, Index. Paper, $19.95. Reviewed by Sam Lingrosso.

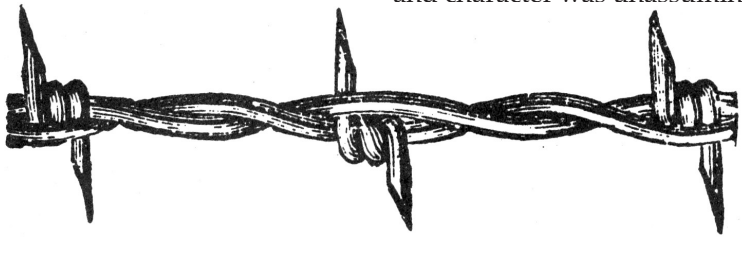
There is no shortage of biographical works highlighting the western expansion of the United States and the bigger than life characters who captured the imagination of a young nation. So it is no surprise that Kit Carson, among these colorful western personalities, is one of the most written about men of his time. In Kit Carson: The Life of an American Border Man, David Remley brings the reader along a journey of a man living on the fringed edge of a changing nation, lured by an insatiable attraction to adventure into an early life on the untamed western trails; but at the same time tethered by a personal dedication of duties to both his family and his country.

For those accustomed with writings of the American West and/or Kit Carson, this work provides the familiar backdrop of harsh living conditions, tenuous political wrangling and sobering accounts of "trail justice". What the author has added with this work is a revealing insight into the contrast between Kit Carson the man and what most have come to know as the mythical legend.

The work is loosely chronological, punctuated by historical, political, and economic events that provide both back-story to Carson's motivations and texture to the overreaching story of the peripheral characters. The first chapter dedicates itself to the Scots-Irish heritage from which Carson hailed. It offers a unique perspective into the nomadic and combative temperament that that was imported from the "old country." It transitions quickly into the early childhood of Carson, and the journey embarks without haste.

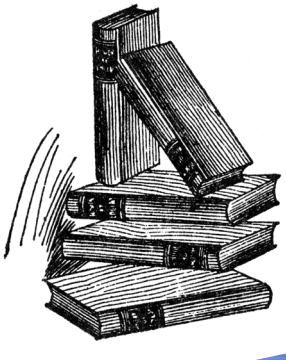
The reader is not only reacquainted with Kit Carson the dime novel character, but also introduced to Christopher Carson the man trying to provide for his family in a gritty and turbulent time; and Cristobol Carson the romantic, soft spoken and mostly absent husband trying to hold onto his young third wife. Remley unearths a trinity of Carsons, each being pulled by competing "duties" to self and family and his allegiance to his government. Along the journey we are introduced to an A list lineup of those who "won" the American west; most notably John C. Fremont, Robert Stockton, and Lucien Maxwell; each providing an account of the times that cast an illumination onto the inner voice of Carson. We are able to glean from Carson's relationships what he valued, honored, cherished, and despised. Remley skillfully paints a portrait of Carson's accomplishments from a model of what seems to have been rudimentary cave paintings. He is transparent with us in his speculations where there is no confirmed public (or private) record, and offers these important editorials to smoothly interlace hard researched facts with the myths of what is left of the oral histories.

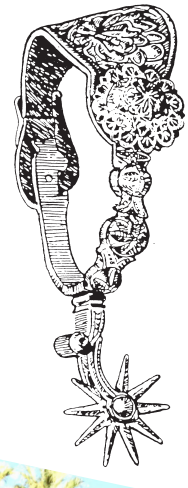
As we are left with limited historical evidence in the form of original documents from Carson, due to his lack of reading and writing ability, it is important to rely on historical construction for completing his story. This work is artfully stitched together much as a mountain man would a trail-worn point blanket missing some pieces. It weaves the original base of the familiar western backstory with a conspicuous colorful patchwork of creative speculation firmly grounded in well documented historical foundations. This approach is certainly appropriate in documenting a man whose formal education was limited, temperament was soft spoken, and character was unassuming and humble.



LA Corral of Westerners Rendezvous

October 25, 2014





Thanks to "Terry" Terrell and Peggy Lee Hartwell for these pictures!

Monthly Roundup . . .

September 2014

Mark Landis

Mark Landis, correspondent for the San Bernardino County *Sun* newspaper, chronicled some the fascinating 150-year saga of the Arrowhead Springs Resort in the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains. Named for the huge natural arrowhead landmark emblazoned on a mountainside, Arrowhead Springs is a beautifully-preserved oasis of hot and cold flowing mineral springs.

The site has housed sanitariums, hotels, and resort facilities. The hotels were a favorite haven for Hollywood's greatest stars, as well as politicians and tycoons of industry. The 1939 luxury hotel and many other facilities remain on the property today, standing as amazing reminders of the resort's long and colorful history.

In 1962, Campus Crusade for Christ bought the property and added facilities; in 1991 they moved their headquarters to Florida and put the property on the market where it has sat unsold ever since.

The Arrowhead Mountain Spring Water Company formed in 1909 and still draws water from the springs and sells their water products.

~Paul McClure

November 2014

Mark Hall-Patton

Mark Hall-Patton is the administrator of the Clark County Heritage Museum and the Howard W. Cannon Aviation Museum. An expert in 20th century history and artifacts, he often appears on the hit TV Show Pawn Stars.

Mark explained about the ever changing borders of Clark County in Nevada. The area had originally been owned by Mexico, and came under the United States' possession following the Mexican-American War. Nevada became a state in 1864, which helped to President Lincoln's victory in the election of 1864.

Clark County was originally a part of New Mexico Territory, which then split, making Clark County in Arizona. Then in 1867 Nevada increased its borders down alongside California to the Colorado River, encompassing Clark County into Nevada. The residences of the area were not initially told this and in 1870 the area was surveyed and Clark County was now a part of Nevada. However an older survey in 1860 was done incorrectly so another survey in 1873 had to be done. But this survey had a bend in it putting Clark County outside of Nevada. Another survey was done in 1890 to fix this.

Since land ownership was based on the 1873 boundary, some land was not in both California and Nevada. This went to the Supreme Court in the 1970s and ruled the 1873 boundary would be used. Finally in 1982 the Nevada Constitution was changed to include Clark County as a part of Nevada.

~Patrick Mulvey

FROM OUR FILES

50 Years Ago
#71 December 1964

In September, Hugh Tolford "spoke of the glory of Goldfield, Rhyolite, Ryan and other goldfields, now Ghost Towns, his many slides from the boom times brought back many memories."

Publication of Brand Book #11 was announced. It was the first to have a single theme – "The California Deserts: their people, their history and their legends." It was edited by Russ Leadabrand and produced by the Ward Ritchie Press, after ten issues by founding member Homer Boelter. Price was $20 or $15 for corral members.

25 Years Ago
#178 Winter 1989-90

In November, member Norman Neuerburg gave an illustrated talk on 19th century California mission artist Henry Chapman Ford.

The Historical Society of Southern California had launched a new award for excellence in the writing of local history, to be named in honor of corral member Donald Pflueger.

Katherine Ainsworth, longtime corral member and widow of Los Angeles Times columnist Ed Ainsworth, died September 7, 1989.

THE WESTERNERS

Glen Dawson in 1948

Founding member, Sheriff in 1959
(from the LA Corral's archives)