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The Terrors of Tombstone as Seen First-Hand

by Earl F. Nation, M.D.

Arizona Territory in the late seventies and eighties means Tombstone to most people. Legend and fiction have created this image of the Southwestern frontier. It incorporates excitement and terror.

The Tombstone newspapers of the day, particularly the *Nugget* and the *Epitaph*, have been the chief sources of contemporary local information. Much of these early files were destroyed by fire, however. There is another source which has been little utilized but which gives a daily view of occurrences through the eyes of an astute, involved observer who was on the scene throughout this tempestuous period. This is the diary of George Whitwell Parsons.

Parsons arrived from San Francisco in this silver mining town which was just beginning to boom early in 1880. He had turned 30 years of age the preceding August. He remained until 1887 when he moved to Los Angeles where he became a leading citizen and died at age 82 in 1933.

Less than a year before leaving San Francisco to seek his fortune in the mines of Tombstone, Parsons began a diary. He continued this until four years before his death. The fifty volumes of this pocket diary are now in the Arizona Pioneers Library in

Tucson. The portions covering the seven years Parsons lived in Tombstone provide a lucid, colorful account of most of the noteworthy happenings. It is interesting to read of these events as recorded day-by-day, particularly in view of the many subsequent glamorized and fictionalized versions. Parsons was on hand for most of the shootings and street battles. He recorded the events and community reactions in readable fashion and legible script.

In addition to the many ordinary, honorable citizens of Tombstone the silver fever attracted other good and bad elements. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the two. There were the Earps, Bat Masterson, Doc Holiday, John Ringo, "Curly Bill" Brosius, Frank Leslie, Luke Short, Charlie Storms, Sheriff Behan, the Clantons, the McLowries and a host of others whose names are less well known. Many of them met their violent demise in Tombstone, and Parsons described these events and editorialized about them.

The warring factions soon became categorized as good guys and bad guys. The law and order faction, and this did not always include the public officials, according to Parsons, were, of course, the good guys. The

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The Branding Iron

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THE MONTHLY ROUNDUP

June

At the annual Fandango, Westerners and their ladies gathered on the veranda and lawn of Los Cerritos Adobe to enjoy each others' friendly company while imbibing cool and refreshing liquid sustenance. The day was a grand one, warm and clear, and the euphonious sounds of guitar, accordion, and bass, skillfully played by a trio of pulchritudinous ladies, wafted across the pleasant scene. Melodies from yesteryear, a perfect complement to the beautiful old dwelling, grounds, and gardens, gave rise to pleasurable nostalgia. A fine repast of barbecued chicken and ribs, accompanied by a good wine, climaxed this halcyon occasion.

July

There once was a time not too long ago when summer travel across the Mojave Desert was usually a nighttime adventure. Even then, quite often the midnight temperatures would crack 100°. A glowing oasis in this lightless furnace—a place where fuel, a cold drink and "refrigerated" air were available to all for a price—was the now seldom visited wide spot known as Amboy.

Richard Logan, who has made a career studying the relationship between man and the desert environment, traced the movement of man from the Colorado River westward via the New York and Providence mountains to this memorable bit of real estate. The Indians along the Colorado led the way with their annual trek by way of Piute Springs to the high country in search of pinon nuts.

CARL SCHAEFER DENTZEL

A Remembrance

by Art Clark



Lonnie Hull Photograph

Carl at Westerners meeting - January 1962.

On August 21 the Los Angeles Corral lost one of its longest-standing and most faithful members in the death of Carl Dentzel. Though making an apparently successful battle with cancer, it was an unexpected heart attack which took him from us.

With a true sense of, and devotion to, many aspects of the West, Carl had served our Corral as Sheriff in 1952, and Deputy Sheriff in 1951. In many other ways, without official title, Carl evidenced his concern and assistance to the Corral and to many of its members. On several occasions he hosted enjoyable summer meetings at the Casa de Adobe of the Southwest Museum, with Spanish-California dinners reflecting Carl's gourmet tastes. And it was during his term as Sheriff that the Publication Fund Grub-Stake Certificate plan was established to provide a revolving fund for the costs of publication of the Brand Books.

Carl's interest in Western art was evi-

denced by an extensive and choice collection, and the many shelves of his library held an important collection of literature, not only on our West but on Latin America as well. Though few of the Westerners were privileged to view his collections, we are aware of Carl's discerning approach to their assembly.

At the Southwest Museum, taking over the reins from another beloved Westerner, Frederick W. Hodge, Carl served twenty-five years as the Museum's Director, during which time this oldest of Southern California's museums grew greatly in its collections and library, and in breadth of recognition by both scholars and the public. Among those Westerners serving with Carl at the Museum were Iron Eyes Cody, Henry Clifford, Dudley Gordon, Bruce Bryan, and the late Mark Harrington, Bertha Cody and W.W. Robinson.

Other interests of Carl included serving several terms as president of the Cultural Heritage Board of the City of Los Angeles; as a member of the California Heritage Preservation Commission; and as special representative of the commission of the Californias. Los Angeles and Southern California owe much to Carl's determined support of our area's heritage projects and preservation of its historic sites and buildings. And it was Carl who coined the name "Northridge" for his home locality when its name was changed from North Los Angeles in 1937.

Widely known as a speaker and lecturer, and author of numerous articles, Carl was also a contributor to both the Brand Books and Branding Irons of our Corral. His presence at our meetings will be greatly missed, and there are few who can replace his forceful and oratorically persuasive comments and announcements at the meetings.

Carl leaves his wife, Elizabeth, his sons Dana Carl and Paul A., and his brother William H., all of whom share at least some of the interests which were dear to Carl.

In early October a gathering is being planned in the form of a memorial celebration to Carl, to be held in the outdoor patio facing the beautiful new Braun Research Library of the Museum. The family has suggested that memorials to Carl may be made to the Southwest Museum, designated for a planned gallery wing of the Museum to house the Dentzel art collection.

Their trail was generally followed by Edward Fitzgerald Beale's government road. The railroad, building eastward across the desert, recognized a good thing and beginning with Amboy, established a series of alphabetically named towns which again generally followed this traditional route to the Colorado.

These towns, in addition to being jumping off points for various mining activities in the mountains, provided periodic punctuation for the auto traveler as the first highway paralleled the railroad bed. Thus the Amboy of recent memory was born. Few are the motorists who have not welcomed this gaudy bit of civilization straddling Route 66.

Though not as spectacular as the Sodom of the Sands approximately 75 miles to the

Photograph by - Iron Eyes Cody



Deputy Sheriff Bill Hendricks, speaker Dick Logan and Sheriff Donald Duke.

northeast, Amboy did have, if not a flamboyant existence, at least one that was somewhat unusual. It had no high school—kids went elsewhere and came home on the weekends; it was principally owned by two groups—one for each side of the highway; its drinking and bathing water came in by rail—one restaurant used two tank cars per day; and signs warned visitors not to drink water out of the toilets—it was alkaline.

"Progress" doomed Amboy. Interstate 40 bypassed the town and its reason for being disappeared. Its population of 200 dropped to 20 almost overnight. Today the Amboy of old exists only in memory, and for the Westerners on this warm summer evening, Richard Logan evoked nostalgic visions of a bygone time when desert travel was a "happening."

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Corral Chips

With this, his last Corral Chips column, former Sheriff *Tony Lehman* turns himself out to pasture after many years of chronicling the doings of his compadres in the Los Angeles Corral. Tony is now living in Northern California, rediscovering fresh air, and serving as Principal of Anderson Valley Secondary School in Mendocino County.

Henry Clifford holds forth on "The Lure of Gold" before an audience at the Sherman Foundation in Corona del Mar.

The Pasadena *Star-News* runs a fascinating feature article on C.M. "Jerry" Zorthian describing how he has been at work for 15 years building a home out of telephone poles set in place with his own hands, steps of railroad ties, recycled redwood siding, and thousands of colored glass telephone pole insulators that stud the exterior.

On the occasion of San Francisco's 204th birthday, C.M. *Al Shumate* receives the Laura Bride Powers Memorial Award in recognition of "service enhancing the historical renown" of the city by the Golden Gate.

Bill Kimes gets a special Father's Day present from son C.M. *David Kimes* when David telephones from Black Canyon Range, Phoenix, Arizona, to say that he had just won first place on the U.S. Olympic Rifle Team, shooting a stunning 1785 points out of a possible score of 1800.

On hand in San Juan Capistrano for the twenty-sixth annual meeting of the Conference of California Historical Societies are *Dwight Cushman*, Deputy Sheriff *Bill Hendricks*, *Dutch Holland*; Associate Mem-

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bad guys were known as "cowboys," or sometimes as "the wild bunch." In his diary entry for September 30th, 1881, Parsons defined his use of the term: "Cow-boy is a rustler at times, be it understood in this journal, and rustler is a synonym for desperado, bandit, outlaw, and horsethief."

Arriving in Tombstone the evening of Tuesday, February 17, 1880, after a twelve-hour stage ride from Tucson at breakneck speed, with twelve other passengers, Parsons immediately described the sprawling shanty town as "a rough place."

His diary entry for the following day left no doubt about there being rough men in town. "Shooting this a.m. Two fellows tried to go after one another with guns and six shooters—but friends interposed. No law other than miner's and that doesn't sit and deliberate but acts at once. . . . Mingled with the hardy miners tonight. Talk of killing indulged in again tonight. Everyone goes heeled. Jumping claims great cause for trouble."

The next day Parsons got a better look at Tombstone and his diary reflected another aspect of the town and its inhabitants. He wrote: "Very lively camp. Two thousand population. Fine broad street. Good restaurant. Good square meal four bits.—Business good. Money is here.—Water 3 cents a gallon.—Six shooter part of a man's dress here.—Saw Schefflein original discoverer of Tombstone today. Rough looking customer."

By April 6, 1880, Parsons could observe: "Several more shooting scrapes but they are of such frequent occurrence that their novelty has ceased."

On Saturday, July 24, 1880, Parsons editorialized a bit in his diary about these frivolous shootings. He wrote, "Another man killed night before last. Too much loose pistol practice. Bradshaw killed Waters because Waters resented with his fists being teased about a shirt."

On August 9th, he made further observations: "About 25 men in town who wouldn't hesitate to cut a man's throat for \$2 1/2.—Tombstone is getting a pretty bad name. Men killed, shot, stabbed, suiciding, etc. every day or two. This thing must be stopped." He added that one must carry a pistol at night to avoid being robbed.



George Whitwell Parsons at Tombstone

On Sunday, September 12th, the fur was flying again. Parsons' diary says: "Price and George H. nearly shot this a.m. Some of the boys will have to be boxed and sent home yet if they don't behave themselves. Faro, whiskey and bad women will beat anyone."

Parson's first reference to the cowboys appears in his entry for October 28th. The preceding evening he and a friend had gone to town but left early because trouble was impending. The somber note that followed recorded an important and much-written-about Tombstone event. It said, "The Marshall (Fred White) was shot last night by one of the Texas cowboys and will probably die. Bad state of things."

There were ever present risks to innocent bystanders also. On the evening of November 9, as he was writing his diary and deploring some of the "shenanigans of the mayor and his cronies" he parenthetically inserted in

his journal one threat: "Great rush and noise in saloon next door and I just moved and turned down the light to escape any stray bullets."

Soon after, on Saturday, December 4th, another example of how trouble erupted was described. Clark and Gray of the Clark Gray Company, with whom the Mayor was said to be allied, and some of their men, in Judge Reilley's absence from town, pulled down his fence and moved his house into the street, claiming that it occupied land belonging to them. A group of citizens, including Parsons, all well armed, intervened, occupied the house overnight and in the morning moved it back again. The journal discloses that for a time open warfare threatened to erupt. Ten men with loaded shotguns vowed to string Clark and Gray up if they weren't shot first. The two kept out of the way and nothing came of the threat this time.

Three days later Parsons could record with humor that, "Some pleasantries were exchanged on the street tonight between 'Shot Gun Collins' and 'Scotty' (but) none of the bullets took effect." Parsons was amazed that this often was the case. On December 10th, he reported that the town remained "very lively." He said that there was a shooting almost every night. "Strange no one is killed," he mused.

Toward the end of his first year in Tombstone Parsons could see progress. On December 20, 1880, he noted that Tombstone was forging ahead. "Half a million in buildings already," he bragged. He also was becoming very civic-minded. Being a church-going man he started a drive to get businesses shut down on Sunday morning after 11. He was thwarted by "bull-headed old block heads" who simply said, "It can't be done."

The usual troubles continued. On Wednesday, December 22nd, Parsons again recorded that, "Shooting was on a rampage." "Red Mike shot last night and another man reported killed tonight."

Early in the new year the cowboys were on another rampage also. On January 10, 1881, Parsons described this:

"Some more bullying by the cowboys. Curly Bill (Brosius) and others captured Charleston the other night and played the devil generally,

breaking up a religious meeting by chasing the minister out of the house, putting out lights with pistol balls and going through the town.... tonight they captured the Alhambra Saloon here and raced through the town firing pistols."

The excitement seemed never to stop. Just four days later, on Friday, January 14th, Parsons and a friend, while talking business on the main street, were caught up in "terrible excitement." "A gambler called 'Johnny Behind the Deuce,' his favorite way at Faro, rode into town followed by mounted men who chased him from Charleston he having shot and killed Schneider, engineer on T.M.&M. Co. The officers sought to protect him and swore in deputies—themselves gambling men—(the deputies that is) to help. Many of the miners armed themselves and tried to get at the murderer. Several times, yes a number of times, rushes were made and rifles leveled causing Mr. Stanley and me to get behind the most available shelter. Terrible excitement, but the officers got through finally and out of town with the man bound for Tucson." Parsons evidently echoed the citizens' sentiments. He wrote, "This man should have been killed in his tracks. Too much of this kind of business is going on. I believe in killing such men as one would a wild animal. The law must be carried out by citizens, or should be, when it fails in its performance as it has lately done."

Things remained relatively serene for a brief spell. Then, on Friday, February 25th, 1881, Parsons decided an occurrence which has been written about and is still reenacted in Helldorado Days Celebrations in Tombstone. It both reflects the turbulence of the frontier and the relative lack of concern about such matters. Parsons recorded it as follows: "Quite peacable times lately, but today the monotony was broken by the shooting of Chas. Storms by Luke Short on cor. of Oriental. Shots—the first two were so deliberate I didn't think anything much was out of the way, but at next shot I seized my hat and ran out into the street just in time to see Storms die—shot through the heart. Both gamblers. L.S. (Luke Short) running game at Oriental. Trouble brewing during night and morning and S. (Short) was probably ag-

gressor though very drunk. He was game to the last and after being shot through the heart by a desperate effort, steadying revolver with both hands fired—4 shots in all, I believe. Doc Goodfellow bro't bullet into my room and showed it to me. 45 caliber and slightly flattened. Also showed me a bloody handkerchief, part of which was carried into wound by pistol. Short very unconcerned after shooting—probably a case of kill or be killed.... Fargo games went right on as though nothing had happened after body was carried to Storm's room at the San Jose House."

The following night, February 26, Parsons reported that the stage was held up but only \$135 was taken from the Wells Fargo box since it was an off night. "The passengers were undisturbed," Parsons added.

Only three days later he wrote of the 4 a.m. shooting of "One Armed" Kelly by McAllister. "Oriental (Saloon) a regular slaughter house now," he added.

Parsons' own conditioning to the frontier violence was illustrated by his encounter with armed mine jumpers described in the entry for March 14, 1881. Parsons wrote, "—I would have covered him in a second—having my hand on my self cocker all of the time—I should have shot and killed him for I don't take chances with anyone." He probably would have too; Parsons was an excellent marksman.

The very next day's entry details another stage holdup in which the driver and one passenger were shot. The shotgun messenger on the stage refused to stop and it escaped with \$26,000 of specie.

Dr. Goodfellow, Mayor Clum and others joined the posse in pursuit. Parsons recorded that "Men and horses were flying about in different directions—." Later he lamented, "Our birds have flown," although one of them was thought to have been wounded by the man riding shotgun.

No mention was made of a capture. However, the entry for March 28, two weeks later, states: "King the stage robber escaped to-night—." Parsons editorialized, "Some of our officials should be hanged. They're a bad lot."

Despite all of this excitement Parsons

could confide to his journal only five days later, on April 2nd, 1881: "Nothing startling or new. Too much sameness to things now-a-days."

A week later there was a little excitement to break the ennui: "Trouble with horse thieves. Had a shot at one."

On April 21, after a lengthy entry relating to Parsons' part in raising money to start the Episcopal Church, and other matters, he added, almost as an afterthought, that two men had been killed at Charleston for robbery. He added, "I'm glad of it. Time a lesson was taught the cowboys..."

On May 12, partly to escape the clouds of dust that were "enough to kill anyone" Parsons packed up and departed for the mountains. Outfitted with rifle, revolver, canteen, saddle bags, etc., he remarked that he must have "resembled a veritable cowboy."

In the mountains he shot no game but encountered a man who had gotten a 20 pound turkey. This proved to be a Mr. McKane, the minister on whom "Curly Bill" and his boys had preyed. Parsons described him as a "rough, uncouth character." He added that McKane told some strange stories for a minister. He added, "Is a good specimen I suppose of a frontier minister."

If there was shooting and similar violence during the latter part of June and early July 1881 little notice was taken of it. This was the time that a large portion of Tombstone was destroyed by fire. This started in the Arcade Saloon, three doors from the Oriental, when a freshly opened barrel of whiskey exploded. Parsons was injured, almost critically, in fighting the fire. His bravery, injuries and subsequent plastic surgery on his nose, performed by Dr. Goodfellow, without anesthesia, received much newspaper and journal space.

The Epitaph reported that, "... the brave, good-looking gentleman will not be disfigured to any great extent."

Parsons journal entries for July 2nd and 3rd, 1881, lamented the shooting of President Garfield and on Sunday evening the shooting on the streets of Tombstone of a man by the name of Diss who was shot by a man named Carleton. Parsons blamed this shooting on Mrs. Carleton. They were all "bad eggs," he

wrote.

There was often Apache trouble around Tombstone and near the Mexican border at this time. Some of this worried Parsons because of possible damage to mines in which he had an interest. The cowboys also caused trouble along the border. Parsons expressed himself as glad on August 17th, that several cowboys had been killed by Mexicans on whom they had been preying. Among these cowboys were "the notorious Crane" and "Dick Gray, 'the lame one'."

On October 4, Parsons described an encounter that a friend by the name of Nick had had with a cowboy who tried to rob him of his horse. Parsons described Nick as a "Bad Man" when aroused and expected soon to hear of several more slain cowboys.

The Journal entries for October 5 through 7 comprise a lengthy, colorful and exciting account of the pursuit by a posse composed of 20 Tombstone citizens of a band of marauding Indians. The group captain was Sheriff Behan and the first lieutenant was Wyatt Earp.

Much of the pursuit took place in a deluge of rain. The Indians were too clever and wily and eluded their pursuers, while sometimes taunting them from mountain strongholds.

In the course of the chase Parsons described an interesting encounter with "Curly Bill" Brosius and two of his cowboy cronies. Parsons referred to "Curly Bill" as "Arizona's most famous outlaw." The journal recounts an interesting bit of frontier irony: "He (Curly Bill) killed one of our former Marshalls (Fred White, the first town Marshall) and to show how we do things in Arizona I will say that our present Marshall (Wyatt Earp) and said 'C. Bill' shook each other warmly by the hand and hobnobbed together some time, when said 'C.B.' mounted his horse and with his two satellites rode off—first though stealing a pair of spurs belonging to one of our party as they couldn't be found after their departure."

The latter part of October, 1881, Parsons went to the mountains for some prospecting. He returned to Tombstone on the evening of Thursday, October 27th. He discovered on returning that there was much excitement in town. People were "apprehensive and scary."

He explained the cause, the episode which did more than any other to create the Tombstone legend, as follows:

"A bad time yesterday when Wyatt, Virgil and Morgan Earp with Doc Holliday had a street fight with the two McLowreys and Bill Clanton and Ike, all but the latter being killed and W. and M. Earp wounded. Desperate men and a desperate encounter. Bad blood has been brewing some time and I was not surprised at this outbreak. It is only a wonder it has not happened before. A raid is feared upon the town by the cowboys and measures have been taken to protect life and property. The 'Stranglers' were out in force and showed sand. My cowboy appearance and attire was not in keeping with the excited mind. Loud talking or talking in groups was tho't out of place. Had a laugh at some of the nervousness. It has been a bad scare and the worse is not yet over some think."

This was the fabled "Gunfight at the O.K. Corral," referred to by some historians as murder.

The following Monday Parsons described being taken by Wyatt Earp to visit the wounded Virgil and Morgan. He found them to be getting along well but reported that it, "... looked bad for them all thus far."

In the ensuing days much of the journal was taken up with accounts of Parsons' nose operation to repair damage done during the big fire and his post-operative problems. During his convalescence he lived in his friend's, Dr. Goodfellow, office above the Palace Saloon. He was constantly worried lest a stray bullet might come through the floor. It was often "quite a circus" below. The fun sometimes was closer at hand. For example, on Saturday, December 10th, Dr. Goodfellow was said to be feeling "uninhibited" in the evening. He snuffed out the light in his office with his revolver. Parsons added, "... about 500 people were on hand in a minute. Great excitement. Done for devilment."

On the following Monday, as Parsons was passing the barbershop where he had recently been shaved "Benson took a shot at Billy Crayton." Unfortunately the shot missed and Parsons wrote that Benson was "pretty



Gunfight at the O.K. Corral

well used up" by Crayton afterwards.

On December 14th, the stage again was held up four miles from town. The bandits escaped in a hail of bullets.

Repercussions of the "O.K. Corral" fight began on Wednesday, December 28, 1881. That evening Virgil Earp was ambushed. Dr. Goodfellow had just left Parsons who was still living in Goodfellow's office at 11:30 p.m. when there was a fusillade of shots from heavily loaded weapons outside. Parsons thought Goodfellow had been ambushed but discovered that it was Virgil Earp instead. He had been passing on 5th Street opposite Parsons' window. Parsons quickly got equipment from the hospital and took it to the hotel room where Earp had been taken. Earp's arm was shattered and he had a flesh wound in the thigh, both from buckshot. When Parsons commiserated with Earp the latter replied, "It's hell isn't it." To his troubled wife Virgil said, "Never mind, I've got one arm left to hug you with," Parsons reported.

After getting to bed at 2 a.m. after the shooting Parsons elaborated in the following day's entry, December 29, 1881, on subsequent events: "... longitudinal fracture, so elbow joint had to be taken out today and we've got that and some of the shattered bone in room. Patient doing well. It is surmised that Ike Clanton, 'Curly Bill' and McLowry did the

shooting."

On Sunday, January 15, 1882, Parsons reported in grisly detail on other happenings. He first described assisting Dr. Goodfellow with autopsies on the bodies of two victims of a mine explosion. These men described as little more than "boots, bones and flesh mixed with hair and pieces of clothing." Next, they did an autopsy on a man whose body was "quite a lead mine." He had lived for several days despite having six or eight bullets in him.

Two days later, January 17th, there was "much blood in the air." Ringo and Doc Holliday squared off against one another with pistols but were separated before a shot was fired. Meantime Parsons reported that Ben Maynard and Rickabaugh "tried to kick each others lungs out."

Wednesday, the 25th of January, was a "dark, dismal day." In addition, "bad doings" matched the day. At 4 a.m. a posse was off to Charleston to re-arrest Ringo. Parsons expressed the hope, however, that salvation was on the way. The U.S. government was sending Marshall Dake with special orders.

On February 28th, Parsons listed his own arsenal, with the serial numbers of the guns. These consisted of a Winchester carbine and rifle; three Smith & Wesson handguns: a 44 six-shooter, a 38 five-shooter, and a small, old 22 caliber pistol. In addition, he had a

Colt's Frontier 44-40 single action gun.

On Friday, March 3rd, Parsons so feared doing violence himself to people who had swindled him on a mine deal that he locked himself in. The fact that he was down to his last \$25 didn't help matters much either.

On Sunday, March 19, 1882, yet another reprisal for the "O.K. Corral" fight was described by Parsons. Morgan Earp was shot in the back through the alley window of Campbell and Hatch's pool hall while playing pool with Hatch. Parsons reported that Morgan Earp lived about forty minutes and "died without a murmur." The spent ball lodged in the thigh of a bystander by the name of Geo. Berry, "causing a flesh wound." It has been reported elsewhere that Berry died of fright but Parsons makes no mention of this making it seem unlikely. A second bullet was fired, according to Parsons, evidently aimed at Wyatt Earp, but failed to find its mark.

The following day Virgil Earl and his wife departed under heavy guard for Colton, California, where Morgan's body was taken, according to Parsons' entry for Monday, March 20th. This day's entry also mentioned the finding of the bullet-riddled body of Frank Stillwell. Parsons' comment was, "a quick vengeance and a bad character sent to hell where he will be the chief attraction until a few more accompany him."

When the Earp party returned Sheriff Behan tried to arrest them. They refused arrest and retired from town. Parsons' reaction to this was that "Behan (is) awoke now that one of his friends (has been) killed. Things are rotten in that office. Fine reputation we're getting abroad."

There was more the next day, all duly recorded by Parsons. The sheriff took a posse, which included the recently re-arrested John Ringo, out to try again to arrest the Earp party. Parsons was sure that even though Sheriff Behan was strongly backed by the cowboy element he would not succeed. Parsons' entry for the day ended with, "Went to church tonight. Took home Miss S. (Santee)."

The journal entry for the following day, Thursday, March 23, 1882, again showed where Parsons' sympathies lay. He wrote,

"More killing by Earp party. Hope they'll keep it up." He obviously considered Sheriff Behan's gang the "bad guys." "Behan will get it yet," he concluded.

The next day, Friday, March 24th, Parsons relieved the tension by applauding the act of the legislature in approving the Chinese bill. There had been much resentment of and ill will toward the numerous Chinese in Tombstone and other mining camps. He included a story that a Miss Pridham, a Tombstone friend, had told of the local Chinese. She said that one Mongolian, discovering that Christian Chinese—so called—were preferred, had called to his Caucasian employer, "You give me four bitee more, me heap love Jesus."

The following day, Saturday, March 25th, the account of the local war was resumed. Rumors had it that four members of the Earp party had been killed. These rumors were discounted. Parsons wrote that he had a private report that the Earps had eliminated "Curly Bill." Parsons wrote that Behan had turned the cowboys loose on the Earps. He reported that local feeling was rising against Sheriff Behan and the cowboys and that he expected a necktie party some morning.

On Sunday when "an upright, respectable, thoroughly law-abiding citizen" by the name of Peel was shot by two masked gunmen the community was truly aroused.

The next day, March 27, 1882, the governor arrived on the scene for the first time. Parsons and his friend Milton Clapp met the governor on his arrival. The day's entry also recorded the news that the Earps had "left the country."

The pattern had not changed, however. On Wednesday, March 29, 1882, Parsons' journal entry starts with, "Another killing this a.m.—this time of one of the Deputy Sheriff's possee—by cow-boys—'Brek,' Allen and another wounded and Gillespie killed. Hunt and 'Curly Bill's Kid' the ones they were after—probably mortally wounded. They are tho't to be poor Peel's murderers."

The following day's entry elaborates on the "desparate fight" of the preceding day. "Hats in office today with bullet holes through them. A most singular and very remarkable thing happened in the fact that one large buckshot from the Breck's gun lodged in the

'Kids' silk handkerchief not going through it. Quite a curiosity to look at. Silk seems to be bullet proof from that. Another similar case happened awhile ago—the handkerchief being forced into the wound by the bullet (Charlie Storms'). If tight would probably have kept bullet from entering the skin. Caulky times very. Fourteen murders and assassinations in ten days. More than one a day. A hanging bee anticipated tonight—but not carried out. Cow-boy raid on town expected tonight. Things quiet thus far. The two cow-boys shot—Hunt and Grounds, were taken first to the undertakers and kept awhile—but not dying quick enough were removed to hospital. No time to waste now. First come first served. A regular epidemic of murder is upon us. What and when the end will be—God knows."

The remainder of this rather long entry dealt with preparations by Parsons and his friend Redfern for a trip to the Huachucas and Sonora. They planned to go heavily armed and to avoid the main roads and open country, traveling over rough trails, to try to avoid Indians and rustlers. Redfern was outfitted with a new Colt's Frontier 6-shot-44 caliber pistol for the trip.

This 200 mile trip on horseback into beautiful mountain country where game was plentiful consumed a week. Many interesting events and encounters were described. Returning to Tombstone on April 7th, 1882, Parsons noted that the "killing business" was over for the present.

In mid-April Parsons, in the company of Endicott Peabody, the Episcopal minister, and others, made a trip to Camp Huachuca. The description of the Indian scouts and ensuing events is colorful, humorous and very readable. He was particularly taken with one scout who was called Tom Thumb. Parsons described him as a "queer specimen," an impression enhanced by the derby hat which he wore.

During the latter part of April and first part of May, 1882, there was a great deal of "Indian trouble, creating a constant state of nervousness among the citizens of South-eastern Arizona. This apprehension was quieted somewhat in early May by the news of the killing of 78 Indians by the Mexicans

and of 20 more by the U.S. Cavalry, under Major Tupper.

The next Tombstone killing was recorded by Parsons on May 10th. He wrote that the Marshall took a Mexican "on the fly after he had wounded and possibly killed Boynton, a policeman." He added, "Little excitement over such things though now-a-days."

The journal entry for Friday, May 12, records some pistol-play of another sort. Parsons wrote, "Pistol went off accidentally this a.m. as I was practicing some cowboyisms. (I) Always look out for direction at such times, so no damage done but hole through side of house."

The latter part of May Parsons took another trip in connection with moving the mill. After a hectic 75 mile return trip alone, in the course of which he became lost in the Mule Mountains he arrived back in Tombstone, "much lacerated by the chaparral" on the afternoon of Monday, May 29th, 1882. He described himself as an "awful sight." Tombstone was worse. The journal entry was as follows: "Such a scene of ruin and desolation I was hardly prepared for. The business portion of the city seems to have been entirely swept away, nothing but ruins standing."

Another great fire had consumed the town on the afternoon of May 25th. Some of the buildings, including the post office, had been blown up with giant powder to try to block the path of the fire. Parsons estimated the damage at \$350,000, with only \$250,000 worth of insurance.

By the summer of 1882, the street-fighting and gun-play for which Tombstone had become famous had become more sporadic and less newsworthy. As Parsons noted, there was very little excitement over such occurrences any more. Tombstone had grown. The better elements of the population more and more outnumbered and diluted the troublemakers. Some of the silver-boom fever had abated and many adventurers were seeking greener pastures.

Parsons' journal entries thereafter became more prosaic. There continued to be excitement, however, such as one of the last entries transcribed by the W.P.A. for Tuesday, June 13th, 1882. On this day there was a false fire alarm. Parsons reported it as follows: "I took

hold and ran with (the) machine and so did fat Mrs. Young. Funny sight. She's honorary member."

Parsons was to remain in Tombstone for another five years. He was often bored with the "inactivity" but by this time he was thoroughly Westernized. When his father wrote him from Brooklyn of an opportunity to earn \$200 a month there Parsons responded in his journal as follows, on June 17th:

"I wrote stating my dislike of people and things East and how I preferred the West—the Far West—if I could make it pay."

Monthly Roundup...

Photograph by - Iron Eyes Cody



Standing, Deputy Sheriff Bill Hendricks, Dudley Gordon and Sheriff Donald Duke, sitting is Keith Lummis.

August

Westerners have all heard many a tale of the life and friendships of Charles F. Lummis, told to us by his biographers and avid researchers of the topic. Nevertheless, the speaker, Keith Lummis, kept his audience fascinated as he presented the great man from the point of view of his progeny. Youngest son of Charles Lummis, born at El Alisal, Keith showed slides of pages from his father's house book, adorned by poems, remarks, sketches, and signatures of Lummis' friends, who ranged from common folk to famous personalities and came from all over the world. They included the "greats" of the time in art, literature, and music, as well as royalty, adventurers, politicians, attorneys, and movie stars. At one time or another, all

of them gathered at El Alisal for lively conversation or even to defend themselves against Charles Lummis' accusation that they were guilty of "not knowing a good time in California when they saw it." Keith's anecdotes about many of these colorful people and the parties they attended made members of his audience wish they could have been among the fortunate individuals who partook of his father's cordial and entertaining hospitality.

Corral Chips...

ber *Bill Burkhart* (who is installed as the new President of the Conference); and C.M.'s *Joe Doctor, Bob Hattem, Joe Northrup, and Norman Neuerberg.*

Associate member *Victor R. Plukas* is elected Vice-Chairman of the City of Santa Monica Historical Landmarks Commission and appointed Regional Vice President of the Conference of California Historical Societies. He also becomes a television celebrity when he is interviewed by KTLA Channel 5 reporter *Tony Valdez* in connection with the Los Angeles 200 Celebration.

Numerous members of the Los Angeles Corral attend the Association of the Californias Baja Symposium at Loreto: Deputy Sheriff *Bill Hendricks, Walt Wheelock, Henry Welcome, Bob Scherrer, Glen Dawson, and Jim Currie*; Associate members *Bill Lorenz and John Swingle*; and Corresponding members *Joe Northrup, Mary Gormly, and Katie Ainsworth.*

Roundup Foreman *Ernest Marquez* decorates Adam's, the new restaurant on Ventura Boulevard in Encino, with over 400 photographs of the San Fernando Valley and Los Angeles. Ernest also collects and prepares the photographs for the recently-opened permanent exhibit on the Santa Monica Pier, depicting the history of the Pier from 1875 until the 1950's. In his spare time, he designs and installs in Santa Monica Canyon a bronze plaque commemorating the sale to a developer of the last portion of Rancho Boca de Santa Monica, land lived on continuously by members of the Marquez family for over 140 years.

C.M. Scott McMillan has been busier than usual the first half of 1980. In addition to moving the editorial offices of *Far West* magazine to 1820 E. Gary Ave., Santa Ana, Lieutenant McMillan has been assigned as a Public Affairs Officer, 3rd Brigade, CSRM at Los Alamitos Armed Forces Reserve Center. Additionally, he has been elected Vice-President of the Western Writers of America, and along with the members of his Cavalry Troop attended the 100th anniversary of the Royal Tournament in London.

"A New Look at the Old West" is the subject of Associate Member *Martin Ridge's* talk before the annual meeting of the Friends of the Old Mill at San Marino's El Molino Viejo.

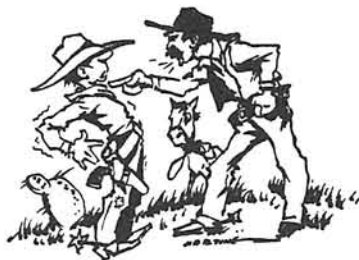
Associate Member *John Robinson* has an autograph party at Vroman's in Pasadena where he inscribes copies of his fine book on *The San Gabriels: Southern California Mountain Country*.

A fine crew of Westerners is mustered for the spring meeting of the Pacific Maritime History Society to hear *Bob Weinstein's* delightfully salty slide talk on "Some Sailing Vessels Along the Pacific Coast." On board are *Jim Currie*, Sheriff *Donald Duke*, *John Goodman*, *Everett Hager*, Deputy Sheriff *Bill Hendricks*, *Dutch Holland*, *John Kemble*, and Associate Member *Dick Cunningham*.

Finally, we are deeply grieved over the death of *Carl Dentzel*, a former Sheriff of our Corral and devoted member. His charm, his erudition, and his sense of camaraderie will be long remembered by his friends. Vaya con Dios, Don Carlos.

New Corral Chips Editor

Beginning with this issue, Abe Hoffman's name and address will appear at the bottom of the "Request for News" sheet that accompanies *The Branding Iron*. Abe, an excellent and prolific writer, has kindly agreed to compile and edit the Corral Chips column from now on. Please give him your support by making use of the "Request for News" sheet to keep him up to date on your own achievements and activities, as well as any newsworthy items about your fellow Westerners.



The Foreman Sez . . .

Westerners owe Tony Lehman a tremendous debt of gratitude for his many contributions to the Los Angeles Corral. Tony is one of those rare and invaluable individuals who takes on a responsibility, follows through, and carries it out with intelligence, enthusiasm, and a fine sense of humor. As Sheriff in 1979, he gave an outstanding performance, and his hard work and perseverance produced *Brand Book XV*. For many a year before that, however, as Assistant Roundup Foreman, he helped Donald Duke immeasurably with *The Branding Iron* by writing both articles and book reviews to fill in when other members failed to produce. Even more important, from bits and pieces of news you submitted, he compiled the Corral Chips column, bringing it to life with his inimitable writing style.

When this writer took over the job of Roundup Foreman, Tony not only agreed to continue preparing the Corral Chips, but also maintained his high level of assistance by submitting both reviews and a superb article about Paul Bailey, along with portions of much-needed advice and heartening encouragement.

Unfortunately for us, Tony has opted for cooler climes, clearer skies, and an uncrowded environment. He has moved to Mendocino County in northern California, where he will serve as principal of Anderson Valley Secondary School. It seems only fitting that *The Branding Iron* should carry a heartfelt message to him there: Tony, thank you very very much on behalf of the many Westerners who benefited from your involvement with the Los Angeles Corral, and from the bottom of this Roundup Foreman's heart. We shall miss you enormously!

—Ernest Marquez—Roundup Foreman

DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL ...

Adam Was a Clamper. An Abridged History of Clamperdom from the Garden of Eden via Hangtown and Platrix Chapter No. 2. Conceived, written and illustrated by Don Louis Perceval. Edited by Henry H. Clifford and Ernest E. Sloman. Pasadena: Grant Dahlstrom, Inc., at the Castle Press, 1980. 500 copies only at \$32.50.

Don Louis Perceval, as artist, writer, book designer, and lusty and fascinating creative genius, has left behind him a body of work and accomplishment that assures him a special kind of immortality among the host of mortal friends and associates who have been privileged to outlive him. As a wry, pixy, gifted Englishman who loved America to the point of artistic obsession, Don is certain to be remembered considerably longer in a strange and new kind of legendry, after this *tour de force*.

In the odd manner this artist possessed of keeping even his closest friends eternally guessing, he now—either by accident or design—leaves a special posthumous creation to glorify and set apart that most questionable literary and historical brotherhood known to its initiates as the ancient Order of E Clampus Vitus. No man to this day can claim for certainty whether it is an historical drinking society, a drinking historical society, or, as it claims to be, the custodian of the deepest secrets known to man, of such inchoate antiquity that the cardinal tenets of E.C.V. were actually carried out of the Garden of Eden, under the anxious direction of Father Adam, and safely concealed beneath the fig leaves which Mother Eve used for the first skirt to cover her shapely fundament.

Don't let the title which Don Perceval gave to this monumental tribute to E Clampus Vitus—*Adam Was a Clamper*—lull you into thinking it is just small talk about the Big Daddy who messed up Paradise over the singing commercial Mother Eve voiced for the winesap apples that grew in Eden. To

sample the book is to realize that here indeed is the coatl history of the world, tapping all the infinite sources of knowledge which heretofore have been privy only to the practicing brethren of this ancient order.

As Don Louis Perceval explains in the book's *Credo Quia Absurdum*: "As a student of the history of the world, as well as the wonders of Clamperdom, I have been dismayed that so much of history has been corrupted by unenlightened historians, and that the antiquity and importance of E Clampus Vitus seems to have been deliberately overlooked. To correct these grave errors of omission this Clamphistory has been compiled."

And, since such stellar world-movers as Noah, Joseph, Moses, Romulus, Remus, Julius Caesar, Paulinus, of the Old World, and Alfred the Great, Eric the Red, Richard the Lionhearted, and even Marco Polo, and Geoffrey Chaucer, and Cristobal Colon, of the awakened Renaissance, were all lusty and practicing brethren of that most ancient of orders—E Clampus Vitus—it is not surprising that their sober and even idiotic actions in history can be traced to the influences which E.C.V. prompted or controlled in the moving drama of time. All this is surprisingly explained in the text of this remarkable book, and made vividly real by the illustrative artistry of its author.

Of examples there are many to sustain the thorough, though sometimes erotic compulsion of the author to rely on source documents to sustain the historicity of his text. Some of the items chosen out of the rich and abundant store of E.C.V. supportive documents, many of them made known and quoted for the first time in this work, are bound to shake some scholarly foundations. All are bound to raise some surprise, and doubtless to send historians never before privy to these rich sources, into new shock waves of controversy.

But no matter, truth is truth, where one finds it. And never was there a more incredible find than the document recently discovered tucked away in the Library of the British Museum, where it had been filed among Chaucer's preliminary notes for his *Canterbury Tales*. It will be obvious to the reader that Geoffrey Chaucer not only was as true a Clamper as Father Adam and later

prophets, but that his experience on the Clamptrek of 1387 formed the basis upon which Chaucer wove his *Canterbury Tales* the following year. At least the document sustains one of the basic tenets of the order—to take care of the widows.

“So rid they forthe and each a love-
knott wore,
Ther was the Frankeleyn and the man
of Lawe.
Laden were they wyth bottels ful of
wyne,
Yet stopped they al bye every hostel
syne.
The Dyere, Webb, and Dertemouth
Shipman tall,
The Doctour, Cook, the Squyer were
Clampers all.

“In time they cam t’was manye days
went bye,
To Canterb’ry where they had that to
lye.
And that they did unsparingly and well,
Recorded is as Kentysh wydowes tell.
For when they lefte in al the Kentysh
vale,
No wydowe lyved with resown for to
wayle.”

In this noble compulsion to rush to the relief of the widows of the world, there could be no stopping or even slowing down the stalwart Clampers of history from moving their Order, their Efforts, and their compulsions into the New World.

It speaks for the virility of E Clampus Vitus that its practitioners had to more than three times penetrate the North American Continent before enough widows were relieved to consider it a complete and worthy conquest. Not the least of these Clamper Proselytes was Cristobal Colon. In A.D. 1492, after finding the widows of Lisbon few and hard to come by, Christobal persuaded the king and queen of Spain to outfit him with ships and crews, to seek new lands where more willing women abounded.

“It is oft ben writ of how Colon sayled
and found hidd in the Carib Sea those
lushe and jade-coloured ylands called
the Yndies. Butte of the Clampractices
and sporte that was hadde in the Newe

Worlde by the brethren, and of the
copper boddies of the Carib wommen,
there is no mention. Mayhap it is beste
thatte thes pleasures are not recorded
. . . lest this fare prove too riche for
youthful readeres who have not as yett
beene tolde of the ineffable and astound-
ing teachyngs of Clamperdom.”

The penetration of the New World by Cristobal Colon, was by no means the first of such sampling by peregrinating Clampers anxious to try their mysteries in new and strange places. But it was by far the most effective in galvanizing the zealots of the ancient order into the necessity of moving the more bibilous and libidinous of the Clampers into another world of boundless opportunity.

According to one account it was none other than the Noble Grand Humbug of Hispanola Chapter No. 3, Hernando Cortes, who proclaimed “Get thee hence wythe an companye of the brethren and seeke ye out the lande to the westwarde wher mayhap ther are wydowes grievously in need of our ministrations!”

What came out of this royal proclamation, insofar as it pertains to another penetration of the New World, is for the first time revealed in truthful historical redundancy.

In this book are the citations from E.C.V. documents which removes the last lingering doubt as to whether Sir Francis Drake, E.C.V., actually and truthfully nailed Ye Plate of Brasse to a wooden post on San Francisco Bay, circa 1579, thereby laying just claim to a rich area of California to the joint ownership of England and the Noble Grand Widow of E Clampus Vitus, Queen Bess. And, since the time of Drake and his brass plate, Clampers down to this very day have busied themselves nailing brass plates, bronze plates, and upper plates, to most any post they can find in California.

The truth of Drake’s claim? Check it out for yourself from this book. Use the cited original documents revealed for the first time as the Wapping Papers.

Not be be undone or upstaged by Sir Francis Drake, that other enterprising Clamper, Sir Walter Raleigh, made 1585 stand out by landing a party of horny

brethren on the east coast of North America, called the New Found Land of Virginia. The colony, known as Roanoac, begun with such hope, vanished eventually without a trace, simply because of the over-eager attitude of the Clampers of which it was predominantly composed. To begin with, they found the willing bodies of the native women far more than equal to the brethren who had come to relieve them. Then there was that strange native ale, supplied the colonists in limitless quantities, which proved far more than a match for the gargantuan thirsts of these public-spirited Clampers from another land. Little wonder that Roanoac colony, so nobly conceived, established under the most ideal conditions, should totally vanish without a trace.

William Shakespeare, of Stratford Chapter E.C.V., departed his native town with rather unseemly haste in 1584. It was recorded that he got into trouble through poaching on the preserves of Sir Thomas Lucy, though it is thought that a lusty young Clamper of twenty years must have encroached upon Sir Thomas's demesne in more than a matter of a few pheasants.

Since Shakespeare, by 1587 had risen to Grand Noble Recorder of a wandering chapter made up almost entirely of actors and players, and at the Grand Meeting of Clamp-officials in southern England, held at Guildford in Surrey, February 1588, it was decided that the brethren should come out solidly in support of the Queen and Grand Widow against the Spanish. Because he was a dabbler at writing, willing Will was honored and happy to write the inflammatory hand-bill and tract.

The original copy, lost for centuries, is said to have been only recently found between the leaves of an ancient book on Pharmacopolia, in a second-hand bookshop on Shaftsbury Lane, London, by Glen Dawson.

"To Clampers al,

*"If thou hast never in thy life show'd
thy dear Queen any courtesy; Then do it
now,*

*"And she—poor hen—fond of no other
brood can cluck thee to the wars, and
safely home loaden with honour.*

"Bethinketh vile Philip that we are

made of stuff so fat and dull that we can let our beard be shook and think on it as pastime? These Spanish pranks have been too broad to bear with.

"So have at them; and if 'tis pranks they wish, let them dance on lengths of Sheffield steel. And henceforth shall we command the seas, the earth, and know this emerald isle true seat of Clamperdom."

Seated or sotted, E.C.V. traveled with history, or labored with history until, as this opus fearlessly declares, it had traveled out of the emerald isle, out of Gaul, out of the Holy Land and the Holy Roman Empire until, by way of Jamestown, Hangtown, Boston Tea, Injun Corn Likker, and Taos Lightnin', it had made the New America as porous as a corncob by its countless penetrations.

Clampers, either hunting widows to administer relief, or to spread the secrets of their illustrious order with every devise of inspired history, appear always to have been on hand for the happenings. Not until now has the part E.C.V. played in the affairs of man been penetratingly chronicled or adequately recorded.

No one but Don Louis Perceval seemed to possess the needle-point sagacity, the droll wit, and the delightful artistry to attempt this exuberant moment of truth.

He brings the ancient order of E Clampus Vitus down and out of the Garden of Eden, to Yerba Buena, the Argonauts, Clamper's Bar, the Blowing of the Last Anvil, and even the order's rededication in the less hysterical and historical times of today.

He ends it with Platrix Chapter No. 2—which is exactly where he started on this unique hegira in the first place.

So, if you like your history served up in a way that will confound your most annoying critics. If you want a book that will eventually be worth its weight in gold as a collector's item. If you want to be—well—erudite, happy, satisfied, and different, all at the same time. Then grab your copy of Perceval's *Adam Was a Clamper*—while you can—and where you can. There has never been a book like it. With Don Perceval no longer among us, there never will be another book like it.

—Paul Bailey, XNGH, Platrix.