

The Pacific Historian

*Quarterly Bulletin of the California History Foundation
and the Jedediah Smith Society*

COLLEGE OF THE PACIFIC • STOCKTON 4, CALIFORNIA

Volume II

NOVEMBER 1958

Number 4

More Thind Against Than Sinning

By DR. HAROLD S. JACOBY

The year 1907 marked the beginning of East Indian migration to the United States. It also marked the beginning of the controversy over the eligibility of these natives of India to American citizenship, for in January of that year, a Sikh, Veer Singh by name, applied for first papers at the office of the County Clerk of Alameda County, California. It was an unsuccessful venture for the applicant, but for reasons quite unrelated to citizenship law. Applicant Singh, in accordance with Sikh religious principles, refused to doff his turban while being sworn, and his application was thereupon rejected.

Later that year, the United States Attorney General issued an opinion that natives of British India were not eligible for United States citizenship, but neither this nor the persistent opposition of the Federal Immigration and Naturalization Service prevented two Moslem Indians—Abdul Hamid and Bellal Houssain—from being granted citizenship by the U. S. District Court in New Orleans in March, 1908. Between that date and 1923, at least sixty-seven other natives of India acquired citizenship by action of no less than thirty-two courts in seventeen different states. How many applications were denied during this same period is not known—and probably there were a great many—but the sizable number of successful petitioners seemingly would have indicated that the issue was fairly well settled. Such, however, was not to be the case.

The basis for the opposition of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and some private groups to the granting of citizenship to East Indians lay in the disputed interpretation of the Naturalization Law of 1790, which limited naturalization to "free white persons" and of an amendment, passed in 1870, which extended citizenship privileges to "aliens of African nativity or persons of African descent." Lower court decisions in 1894 and 1895 clearly spelled out the ineligibility of persons of Japanese and Chinese nationality to citizenship under this law, but the status of East Indians remained in doubt. The opponents of their naturalization looked upon them as "orientals" and hence not "white" persons. The East Indians and their supporters, on the other hand, pointed out that in the main, they were of the same racial classification as Europeans—namely "Caucasians"—and their status, therefore, should not be the same as orientals classified as "mongoloid."

Numerous lower court decisions accepted this second line of reasoning in granting citizenship over the opposition of those holding to the opposite interpretation. Judge

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The Questions Jedediah Smith Asked

By GLENN PRICE

The scientist in the laboratory "puts nature to the question" and extorts an answer which contributes to the body of knowledge. In the 1820's Jedediah Smith revolutionized the knowledge of the geography of the American West by putting the question to the unknown region between the Great Salt Lake and the Pacific Coast. Extracting the answer was difficult, laborious, painful, and dangerous, but Smith saw a question which needed answering and persevered until it was done.

He was of course a trapper and a partner in a trapping enterprise and his explorations were also in search of beaver country. Near the end of his life he is reported to have said:

I started into the mountains with the determination of becoming a first-rate hunter, of making myself thoroughly acquainted with the character and habits of the Indians, of tracing out the sources of the Columbia River, and following it to its mouth; and of making the whole profitable to me.

Jedediah Smith was the first American overland to California and the first white man to cross the Sierra Nevada because as a trapper he was looking for beaver in that *tierra incognita* and because he simply wanted to know what *was* there.

The historian is interested in the kind of questions which a man asks. Light is thrown upon the character of a man by an inquiry into the problems which bother him, the unresolved questions with which he lives, which engage his concern at moments of reflection. One may, in fact, know a man by the dilemmas he keeps. To evaluate a man, examine the questions which he asks of life. This is a better touchstone to the size and quality of his spirit than is provided by the solutions which he finds. The experienced teacher says, "Go beyond the answers. Does he ask the important questions?"

Two experiences in the Spring of 1828 in the central valley of California are interesting in the light they throw upon Smith's interests and concerns. They involved two problems which every mountain man had to face—grizzlies and Indians. This California land was a great country for both. He noted in his journal that "the creator has scattered a more than ordinary share of his bounties" in the region and he added that it was a country which was "calculated to expand . . . the energies of man."

On April 7 the party ran into some grizzlies and in attempting to rout one out of the brush Smith rode in close. There was a sudden rush, and, as he wrote in his journal:

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California Local or Localized History?

By DR. CLARENCE F. McINTOSH

Local history as an aspect of systematic research and study by professionally trained historians has been in disrepute in the United States since at least the turn of the century. Seemingly overwhelmed by the significance of national events, a large majority of the professionals left the field of amateurs and struggling local societies. Only in the past fifteen years have a few professional historians of significant reputation again devoted research in local fields. The consensus that comes from the writings of this small group is that the study of local events is valuable and appropriate if these events are interpreted from a broad perspective. The term that is applied to this type of local study is "localized" history. In brief, this point of view asserts simply that historians who deal with local events should view them as localized aspects of widespread phenomena.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine why local history fell from grace in the eyes of professional historians. Nor is this the occasion to emphasize the point that historians of the nation are now being tarred with the same brush they have used against historians of the locality, for international events have shown the limitations of interpreting events from the national point of view. In addition, this is not the place to explore the fact that all events are, in one sense, local since they occur in a specific locality. Also, it merely need be pointed out that some professional historians—particularly frontier and southern regional historians—have long been doing what the local historians are now being asked to do. The essential fact is that the interpretation of local events—the types of events individuals and local historical societies deal with—could be vastly improved if seen from within as broad a setting as is possible.

I

A few examples first from the state level of history and then from local history will illustrate the meaning of this assertion. From state history, the Bear Flag Revolt, the overland emigrant parties, and the election of 1916 in California, all events of relative familiarity, will serve the purpose of illustration. A murder case and the history of a church, drawn from Butte county history, are relevant local samples.

The Bear Flag Revolt offers the best example since its widely held interpretation is the result of gross misinterpretation and of provincial, limited romanticism of an extreme form. It was quite an interesting experience for the author, as an emigrant from Iowa, to learn how many Californians view the Bear Flag incident. Being an

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How the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta was Settled

By DR. JOHN THOMPSON

The drainage from more than one-third of California arises in the basins of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. The floodplains of these arterial streams merge about 50 miles northeast of San Francisco, and the rivers pass through a complex network of interconnecting channels before discharging into the easternmost of the chain of bays which breaches the Coast Ranges. The segment of the Central Valley where the rivers merge and enter Suisun Bay is the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Roughly delimiting the region of tidal and river overflowed swamp are the cities of Sacramento, Stockton, Tracy, and Antioch. Over half of this region's 535,000 acres is at or below sea level; the remainder of the delta, where elevations do not exceed 10 feet, was subject to river overflow.

Before man started working in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta it had the surface features generally associated with deltas developed by low gradient rivers upon entering tidal water. There were meandering distributary channels, flanking banks or natural levees that diminished in breadth and height seaward, and island or mainland tracts of tidal marsh. The delta is unusual compared to others in that an exceptionally large volume of indigenous organic fill, peat, occupies its core. Most deltas are built up by the deposition of fine rock particles. Here the rock particles have shared delta building with plants.

The peat is a capping layer to the delta; it is 50-60 feet thick in the west central areas and thins out to the north, east, and south. This peat and the ample water supply of the delta are the basic resources. The peat makes exceptionally rich soil.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta differs from most great deltas in that here the river channels converge toward a narrow outlet whereas other deltas and delta channels spread out toward the sea.

THE DELTA AND THE FRONTIER

Exploration

In the late 18th century, when the Spanish were first exploring this part of the interior, the delta center and northwestern and southwestern margins were sparsely populated compared to the wooded valleys and plains that extended eastward toward the Sierra Nevada. The less populated areas, predominantly tule or grassland, offered less rich and varied food-procuring opportunities to the Indians. The islands and eastern

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The Beginnings of the Modoc War

By KEN McLEOD*

The Modoc War of 1873 is one of the important highlights in the history of the Klamath Highlands; it is also one of the last important conflicts between the whites and the Indians during the four centuries of contact in North America. It is a difficult subject to deal with; so much has been written on the Modoc War which is not true and these distortions have been continuously repeated by writers who have accepted them without question because they provide a dramatic flare that can be used to heighten prejudice or to divert attention from human weakness as a defense against contemporary censure.

This and other so-called "Indian wars" of the past have obtained prominent mention in our history books because from the earliest times in the occupation of the new land of America, there was conflict between the white man and the Indian. During the early period of the birth of our Nation, there were occasions when some great Indian leader sought to check the advance of the frontier which so ruthlessly crushed Indian culture. These outbreaks against the progression of the culture of the white man produced periods of systematic raids against the frontier and the assaults met resistance from the army.

In every case when the army took a hand in the action, the Indian lost the war, but usually he extracted more blood from the whites than he gave up. This fact held true from the first to the last and the Modoc War was one of the ending incidents of this great struggle between two cultures.

One point that history books mention but seldom make clear in convincing fashion, is the intricate relationship which existed between the red man and the white. Particular note should be taken of the fact that during the colonial period in the new world, France, England and Spain were intermittently at war over the possession of the new country, and as a consequence some of the Indian wars we read about were only fringes of European-inspired conflicts.

We find the Indian tribes of the Ohio and Great Lakes region being urged to support the banner of France and encouraged to burn and murder on the English frontier. This

*This paper was delivered by Mr. Ken McLeod at the Symposium of Historical Societies of Southern Oregon and Northern California on October 3, 1959, in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Mr. McLeod is a native of the Klamath Falls area; his grandfather, Donald McLeod, was the closest white neighbor to Captain Jack's Modoc group on Lost River when hostilities began in 1872. Ken McLeod has made a life-long study of the history, prehistory and natural history of the Klamath Highlands and has an extensive museum collection of cultural material of the Indians of the Highlands, as well as of plants, animals, insects and geology of the region.

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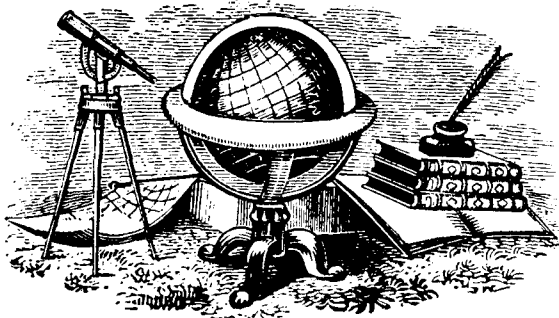
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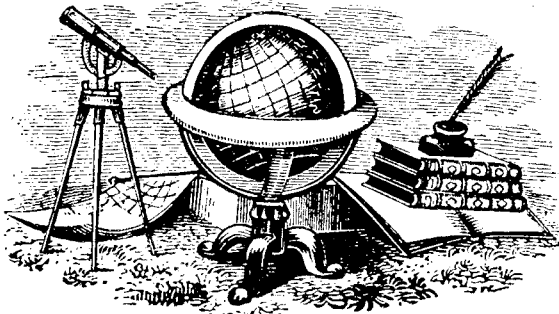
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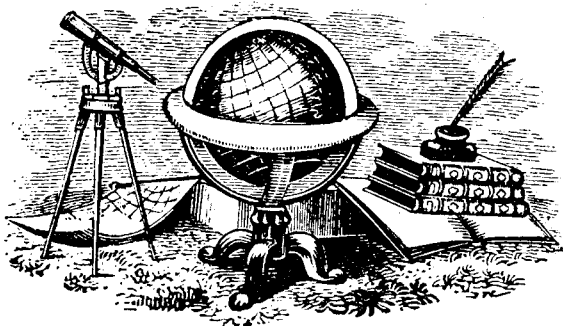
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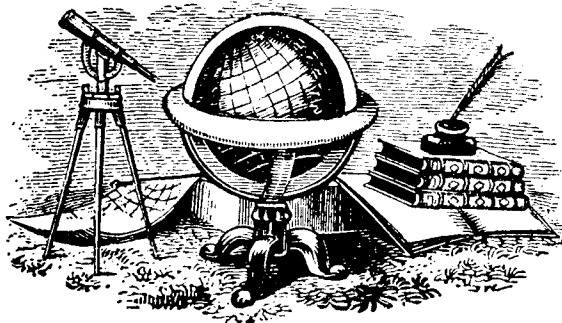
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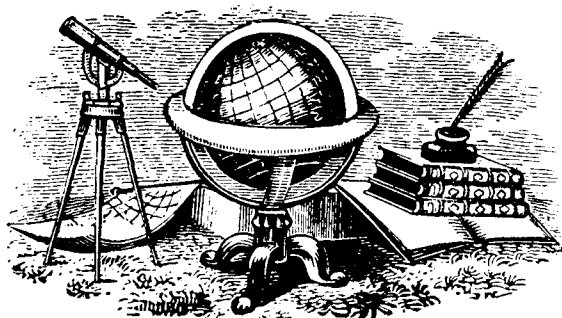
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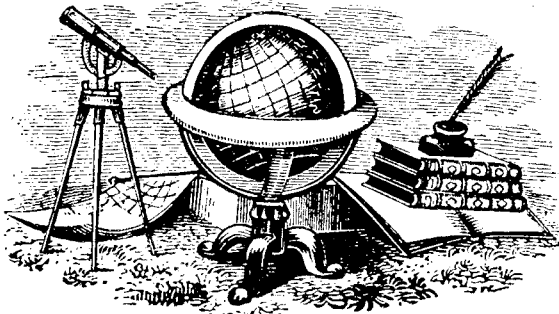
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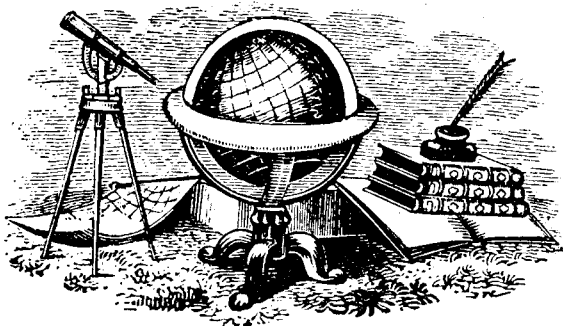
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The Pacific Historian



QUARTERLY BULLETIN

OF THE

CALIFORNIA HISTORY FOUNDATION

AND THE

JEDEDIAH SMITH SOCIETY

August 1965

UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC

STOCKTON 4, CALIFORNIA

THE PACIFIC HISTORIAN

Editors: Reginald R. Stuart, Grace D. Stuart, Glenn W. Price

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QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE
CALIFORNIA HISTORY FOUNDATION,
THE JEDEDIAH SMITH SOCIETY,
AND THE
WESTERNERS FOUNDATION

November 1965

UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC
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Associates: Reginald R. Stuart, Grace D. Stuart

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A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE / from the University of the Pacific / SUMMER ISSUE 1966



Der getäuschte Goldgräber.

1966 Summer Issue/Vol. X, No. 3

Der Getäuschte Goldgräber

Cover

This engraving of *The Disappointed Gold Miner* aptly illustrates the three articles in this issue, each of which gives perceptive insights into lives of ordinary men in California in 1849 and the early 50s. Even in the *Cogswell Journal*, despite the author's obvious effort to be objective, there is indication that for most miners, rosy visions of wealth soon turned dun and dour. *Der Getäuschte Goldgräber* is from the rare *Amerikanisch Deutsche Encyclopädie*, Columbus, Ohio, 1862.

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By DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE

JEDEDIAH SMITH—*Trailmaker Extraordinary*

1966 Autumn Issue/Vol. X, No. 4

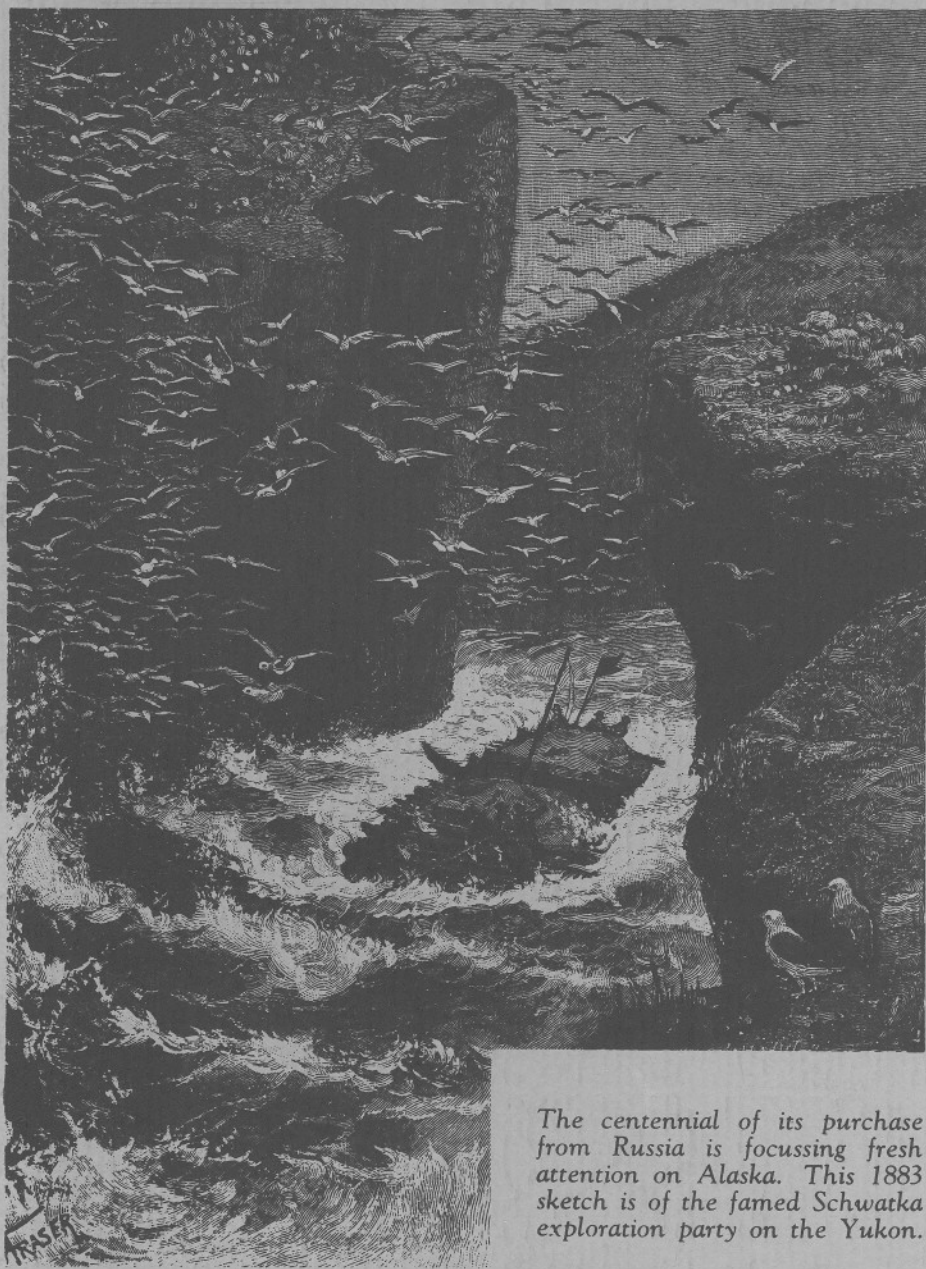
Jedediah Smith Crossing South Dakota Bad Lands, 1823 Cover

Harvey Dunn (1884-1952) was reared on the prairies of South Dakota. A protege of the great Howard Pyle, he became America's foremost illustrator. Himself a vigorous man, Dunn was an admirer of Jedediah Smith and produced this painting, which may be his greatest. It is at South Dakota State University, Brookings, So. Dak.

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The centennial of its purchase from Russia is focussing fresh attention on Alaska. This 1883 sketch is of the famed Schwatka exploration party on the Yukon.

A LONG LOST REPORT ON RUSSIANS IN CALIFORNIA

1967 Winter Issue/Vol. XII, No. 1

In the Rink Rapids, Upper Yukon

Cover

Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka led a military mission through Alaska in 1883 to get military information on the Indians and Eskimos — and for geographical exploration. It was a dangerous and exciting adventure, and his magazine articles and book **A Summer in Alaska** (1891) were eagerly read by Americans whose curiosity had never been satisfied since Alaska was purchased from Russia in 1867. The cover sketch first appeared in **The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine**, September, 1885.

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*A Quarterly from the
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1967
Spring



Richard H. Dillon
tells about
Grizzly Adams,
California's
most fabulous
Mountain Man.

Spring, 1967

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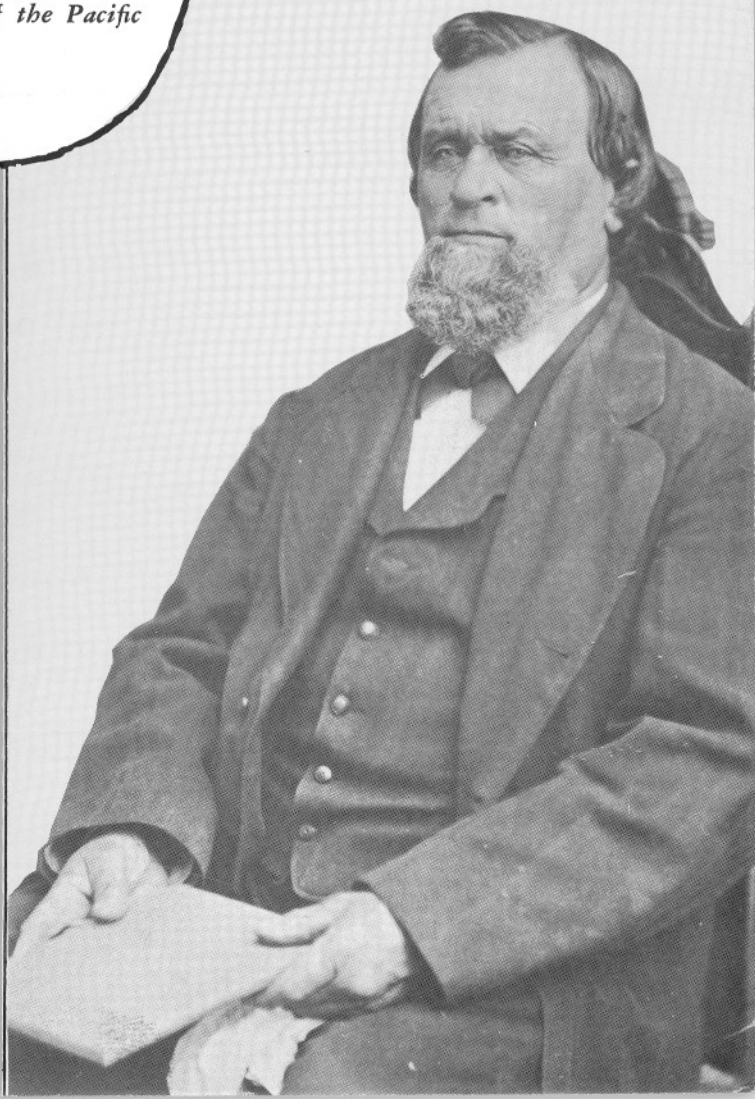
Manuscripts: It is this magazine's policy to be hospitable to young aspiring historians as well as the professionals. Well-written and deeply researched MSS. are welcomed—especially when accompanied by stamps for return postage. But the prudent author will first query the Editor, providing not only a description of the manuscript but a brief run-down on his own experiences including a *précis* of achievements in academe.

1967
Summer

The Pacific Historian

*A Quarterly from the
University of the Pacific*

Charles M. Weber,
the man Stockton
remembers fondly.



Summer, 1967

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The Pacific Historian

*A Quarterly from the
University of the Pacific*

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Lost Custer canvas
is found in Arizona.

Fall, 1967

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The Pacific Historian

*A Quarterly from the
University of the Pacific*

Descending The
Mountain To The
Yo Semite Valley



1968
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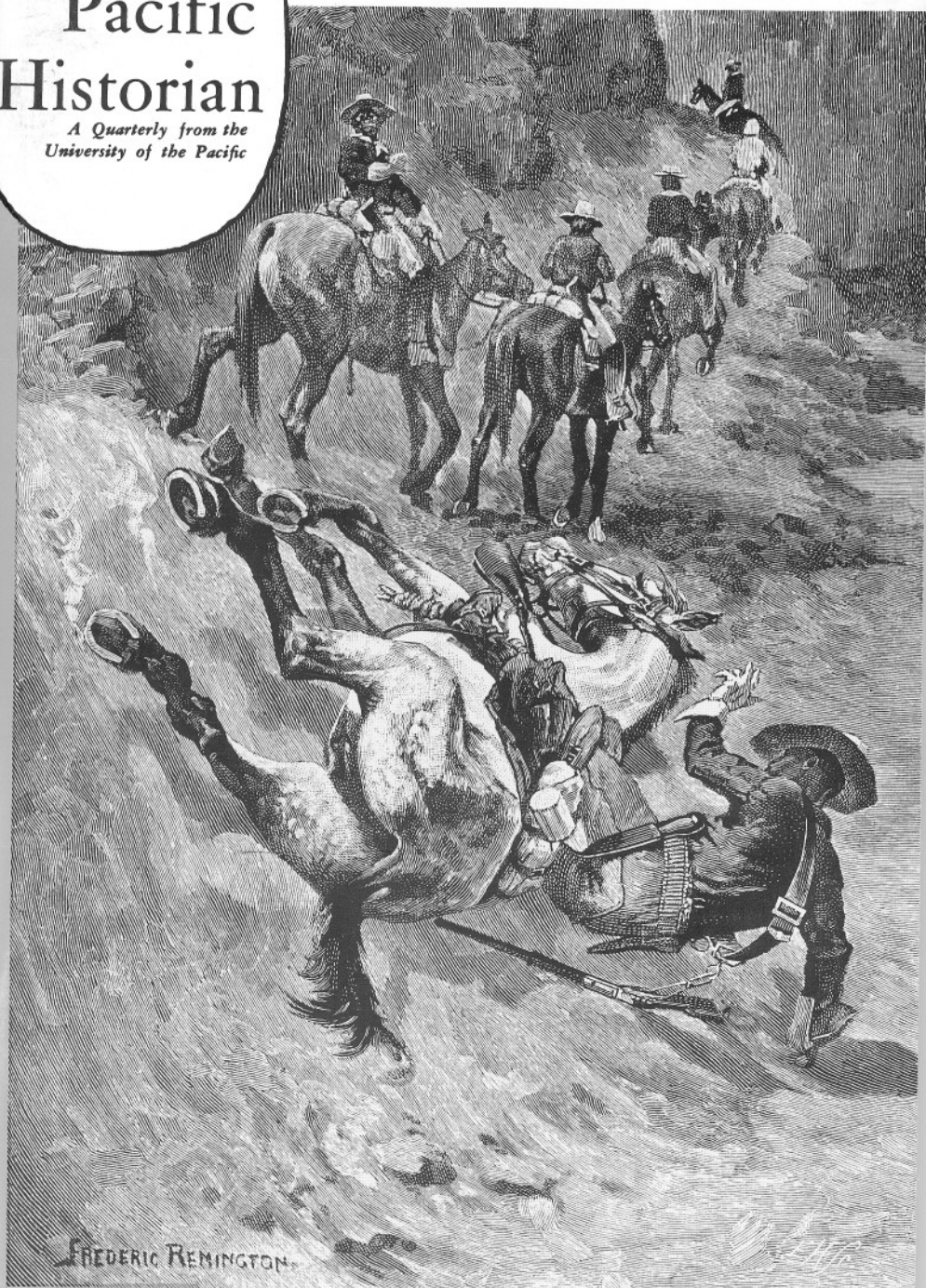
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The Pacific Historian

A Quarterly from the
University of the Pacific

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'A Tumble from the Trail' from *A Scout with the Buffalo Soldiers*—Frederic Remington



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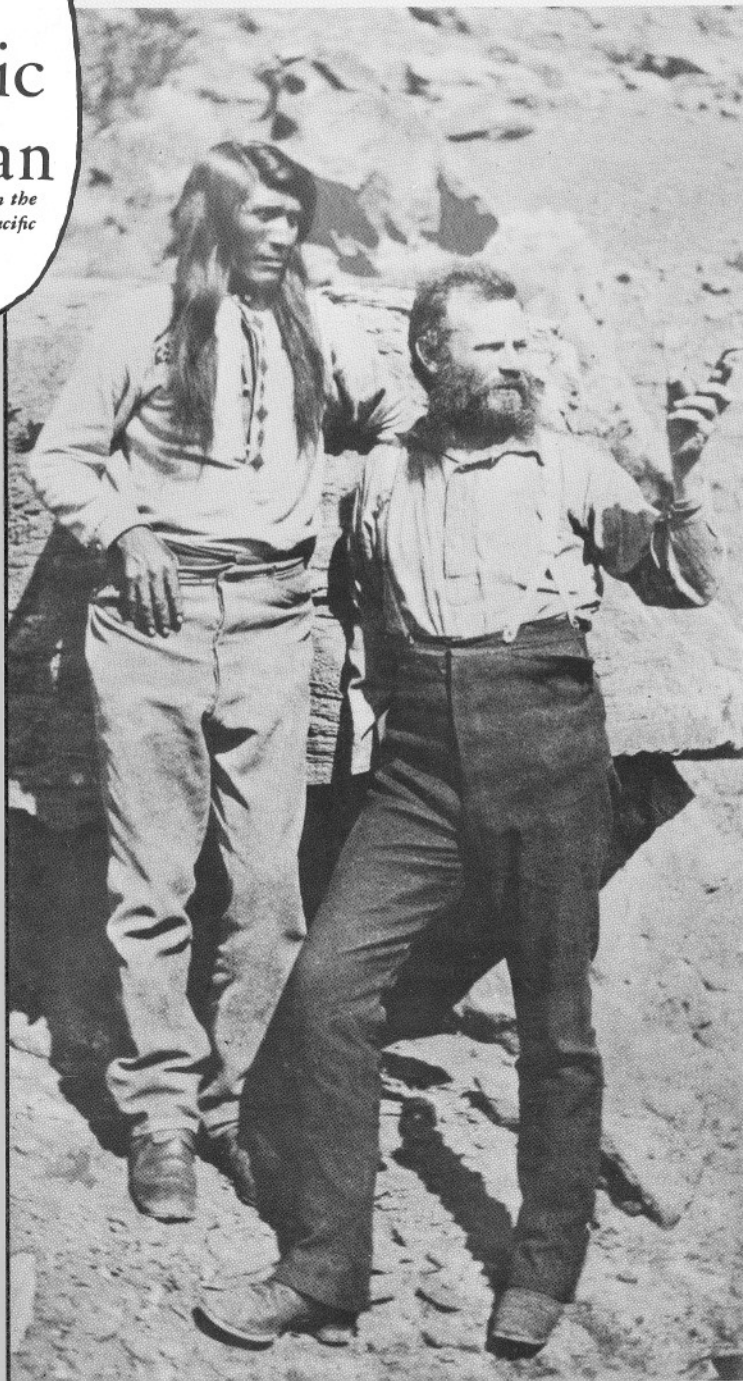
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*Summer
1968*

The Pacific Historian

*A Quarterly from the
University of the Pacific*



Tau-gu with one-armed John Wesley Powell in the vicinity of the Rio Virgin, Grand Canyon, 1873.

From original Hillers negative, Smithsonian Institution.

Summer, 1968

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THE
PACIFIC HISTORIAN

Volume 12 No. 4

FALL 1968



DR. RICHARD COKE WOOD

Director of The Pacific Center for Western Historical Studies

THE PACIFIC HISTORIAN

Volume 12 no. 4

Fall, 1968

ROBERT E. BURNS

President University of The Pacific

R. COKE WOOD

*Director Pacific Center for
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All correspondence to

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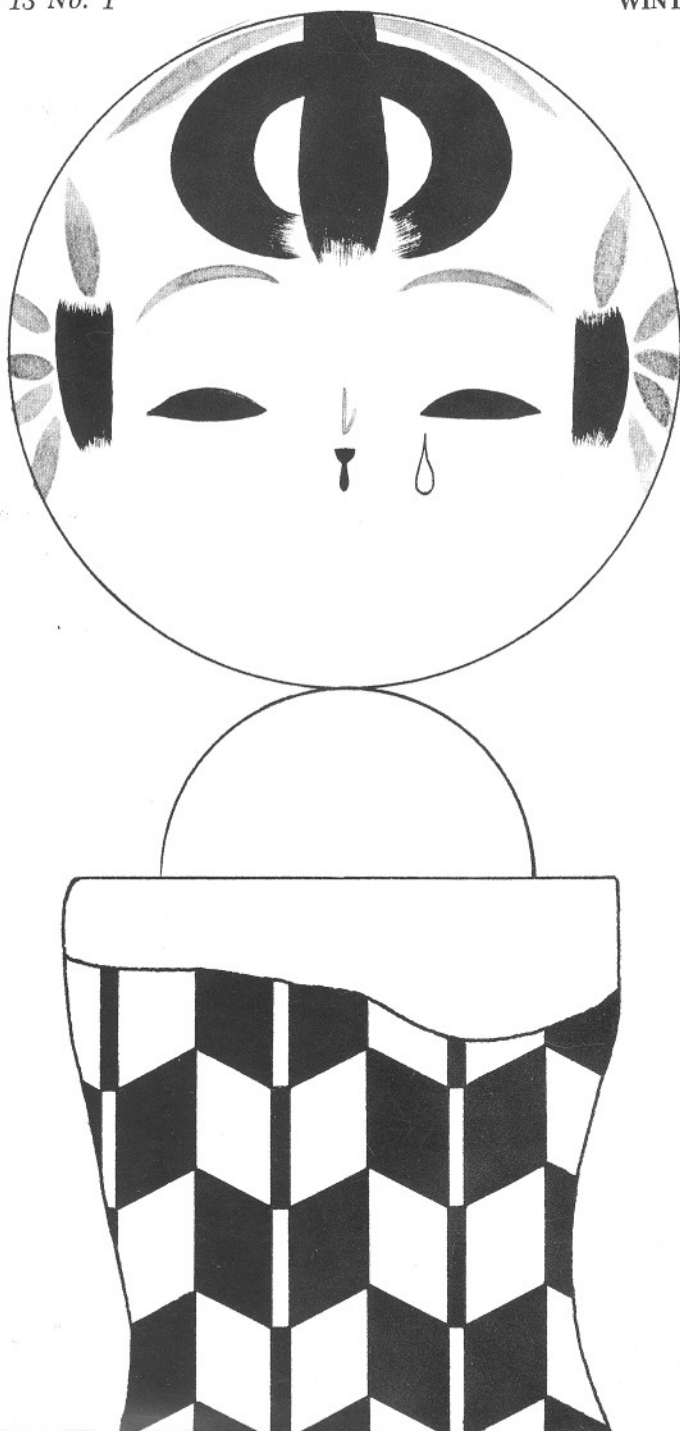
The Cover — Leonard Covello

Dr. R. Coke Wood, Director of the Pacific
Center for Western Historical Studies and
Professor of Western History, U.O.P.

THE
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WINTER 1969



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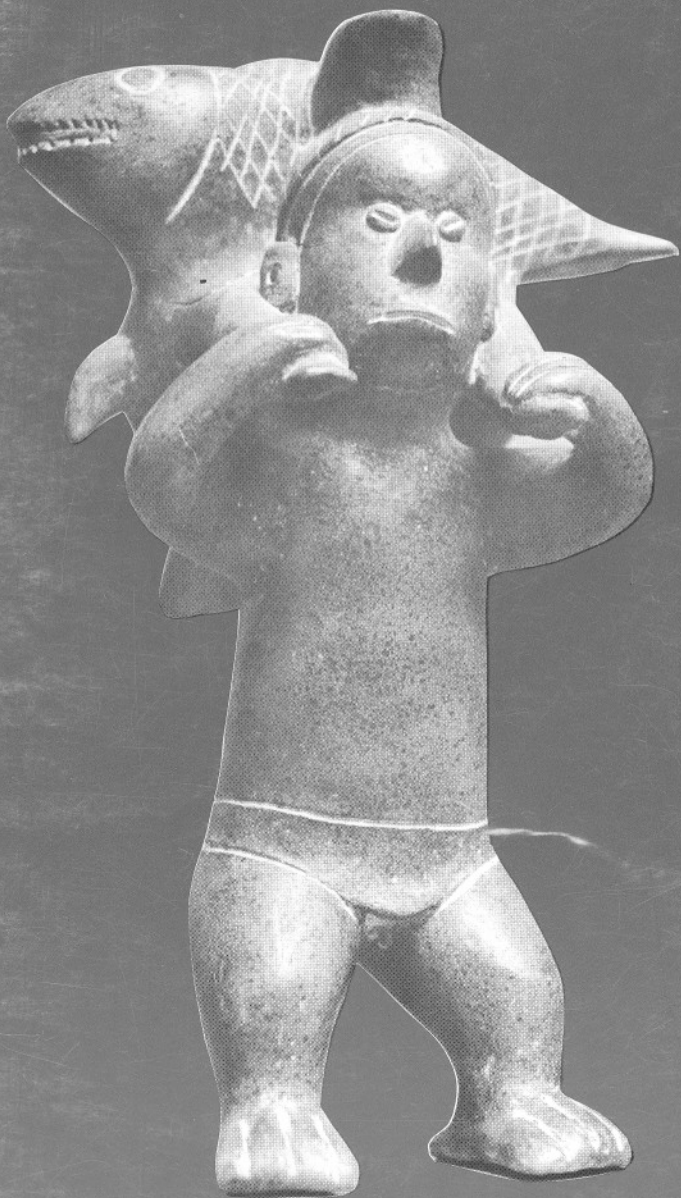
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