Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

Shirley Sargent

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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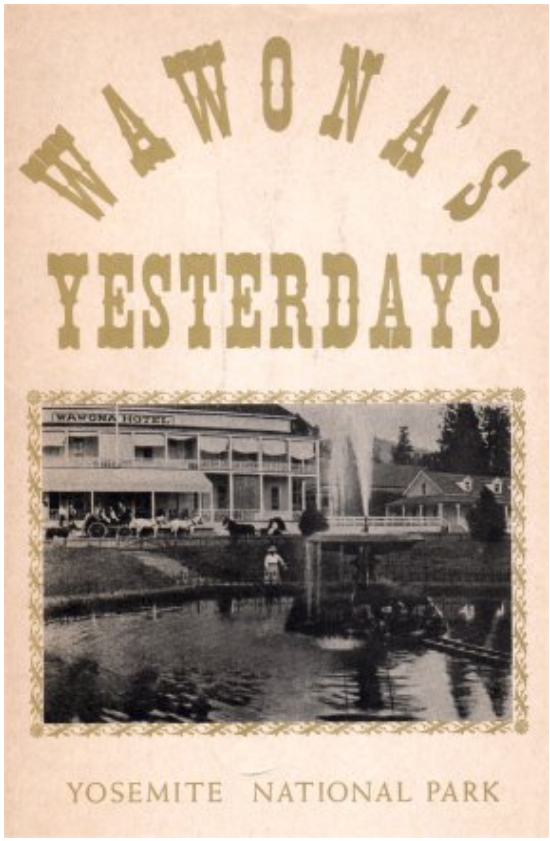

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- Homesteaders

r
- Indians

r
- Camp A. E. Wood

r
- Arboretum

r
- Roads and Trails

r
- Stages and Drivers

r
- Culture

r
- “Pike”

r
- Steve Cunningham

r
- Thomas Hill

r
- Famous Visitors

r
- First Ranger

r
- Stella Lake

r
- Logging

r
- CCC Camp

r
- Camp Hoyle

r
- Wildlife

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About the Author

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r Shirley Sargent was born July 12, 1927 in Pasadena, California.r Her father, jobless because of the Depression, moved to Yosemite in 1936r to work as a surveyor helping rebuild the Tioga Road.r So she had the good fortune of spending her childhood as a self-describedr “tomboy” in Yosemite.r A rare crippling

disease kept her to a wheelchair from age 14, but thatr didn't stop her.r Sargent received a AA from Pasadena City College in 1947 and worked as a nursery school teacher in Pasadena.r In 1961 she moved to Foresta, near Yosemite Valley.r

r r

r After writing *Wawona's Yesterdays,*r Sargent went on to write several other Yosemite History books,r focusing on stories about people—making them come alive.r Her most authoritative book is *Galen Clark: Yosemite Guardian.*r Shirley self-published most of her books, with printer and historianr Hank Johnson, under the name Flying Spur Press,r and later under her own imprint Ponderosa Press.r Other popular books of hers includer *Pioneers in Petticoats,*r *John Muir in Yosemite National Park,*r *Yosemite & Its Innkeepers,*r and *Yosemite Chapel 1879-1989*.r

r

r In 1961 she bought and built on Theodore Solomon's homesite in Foresta,r which had only a fireplace surviving from a 1936 fire.r She called her home Flying Spur, but it burned in the 1990 A-Rock Fire,r which also destroyed her historical papers.r She rebuilt her home, but before her death she had to mover to her parents' old home in Mariposa, due to her illness.r She died at her home in Mariposa, California December 3, 2004.r

r r

r
- Fernando Peñalosa, "In Memoriam: Shirley Sargent, Yosemite Historian,"r *Yosemite* 67:1, pp. 6-7 (Winter 2005).r

r
- Obituary, Fresno *Bee*, December 7, 2004.

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- Obituary, Los Angeles *Times*, December 8, 2004.

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- Obituary, New York *Times*, December 13, 2004.

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Bibliographical Information

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r Shirley Sargent (1927 - 2004),r *Wawona's Yesterdays*r (Yosemite: Yosemite Natural History Association, 1961).r First published as *Yosemite* 40(4) (November 30, 1961),r pp. 64 - 105.r 48 pages. Illustrated. 24 cm. Paper wrappers. Saddle stitched.r

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r r

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r r r

r Next: Forewordr •r Contentsr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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r COVER — **Wawona Hotel about 1908**r

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r In cooperation with the National Park Service.r

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r Yosemiter **Volume 40, Number 4, November 30, 1961**r

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r Yosemiter is published by the Yosemite Natural History Association, Inc, inr cooperation withr tbe Naturalist Division, Yosemite National Park, John C. Preston,r Superinterintendent; Douglass H. Hubbard,r Chief Park Naturalist. Subscriptions are to be discontinued with Vol. 40, No. 16. Price of back issues uponr request. The comments of this publication are not official in nature and dor not necessarily reflect policy ofr the National Park Service. Address all correspondence to Editor, Yosemite, Boxr 545, Yosemite Nationalr Park, California.r

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r WAWONA'Sr
r YESTERDAYSr

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r byr
r SHIRLEY SARGENTr

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r Next: Forewordr •r Contentsr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Foreword >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Contentsr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Title Pager

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

r r r

FOREWORD

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r For years, I have driven by Wawona on frequent trips to Yosemiter Valley, Big Meadows and Tuolumne Meadows with only brief, passingr twinges of curiosity. In 1960, I began asking questions of Yosemiter old-timers and learned that, in the stagecoach days which ended in 1916,r Wawona was almost as remote and unknown to them as Bankok.r

r r

r I began reading then, and in the literally hundreds of books, articlesr and pamphlets on Yosemite, few words were devoted to "Bankok" —r adjectives and verbage from the 1850's to date were spent prodigallyr on Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees. Wawona wasr just an overnight stop. Just? I was challenged and began a quest forr information by prowling around Wawona, interviewing residents, writingr old-timers, consulting official records, tape recordings, newspapers andr written manuscripts, finding photographs, letters, and poems.r

r r

r The results of this quest were a fascinating hodge-podge of history,r anecdote and colorful personalities which I have sorted, sifted and setr down in this history. There are omissions — possible errors — that mayr cause someone to bring in further, relevant data on Yosemite's Bangkokr Wawona. The present study deals primarily with the period 1851 tor 1932. I hope that a later writer will complete and expand the story.r

r r

r Usually, a research writer is imagined as a lonely figure slumped et ar table in a library, museum or courthouse reading books, newspapers,r ledgers, manuscripts, letters — random words in elusive search of ar few pertinent ones. For me, this picture hasn't been completely true.r There have been friendly people to suggest sources, find old photos,r answer questions and give me encouragement.r

r r

r My special thanks go to Ruth Glass, Doug Hubbard and Keith Trexlerr of the Yosemite Museum; Mary Isabel Fry, Rita Thurman andr Carey Bliss of the Huntington Library; Ruth Allen of the Pasadenar Public Library; Bertha Schroeder, Mariposa researcher;r Yvonne Robinson Solomons, Mary and Bill Hood, fellow Yosemite devotees; Carl P.r Russell, Yosemite historian; Virginia Alexander, typist extraordinary;r Tim Smith, young mapmaker, and Laurence Degnan, Hattie Bruce Harris,r Jay C. Bruce and Clarence Washburn, Yosemite settlers.r

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r S. S.r

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r Next: Contentsr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Title Pager

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Contents >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Mapr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Forewordr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

r r r

CONTENTS

r r r

r r r r r

r r

r Next: Mapr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Forewordr

r r r

r

r r

r

r r

r http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/wawonas_yesterdays/contents.htmlr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Map of Wawona and Vicinity >r

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r r r

r Next: Yosemite Historyr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Contentsr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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Wawona and Vicinity

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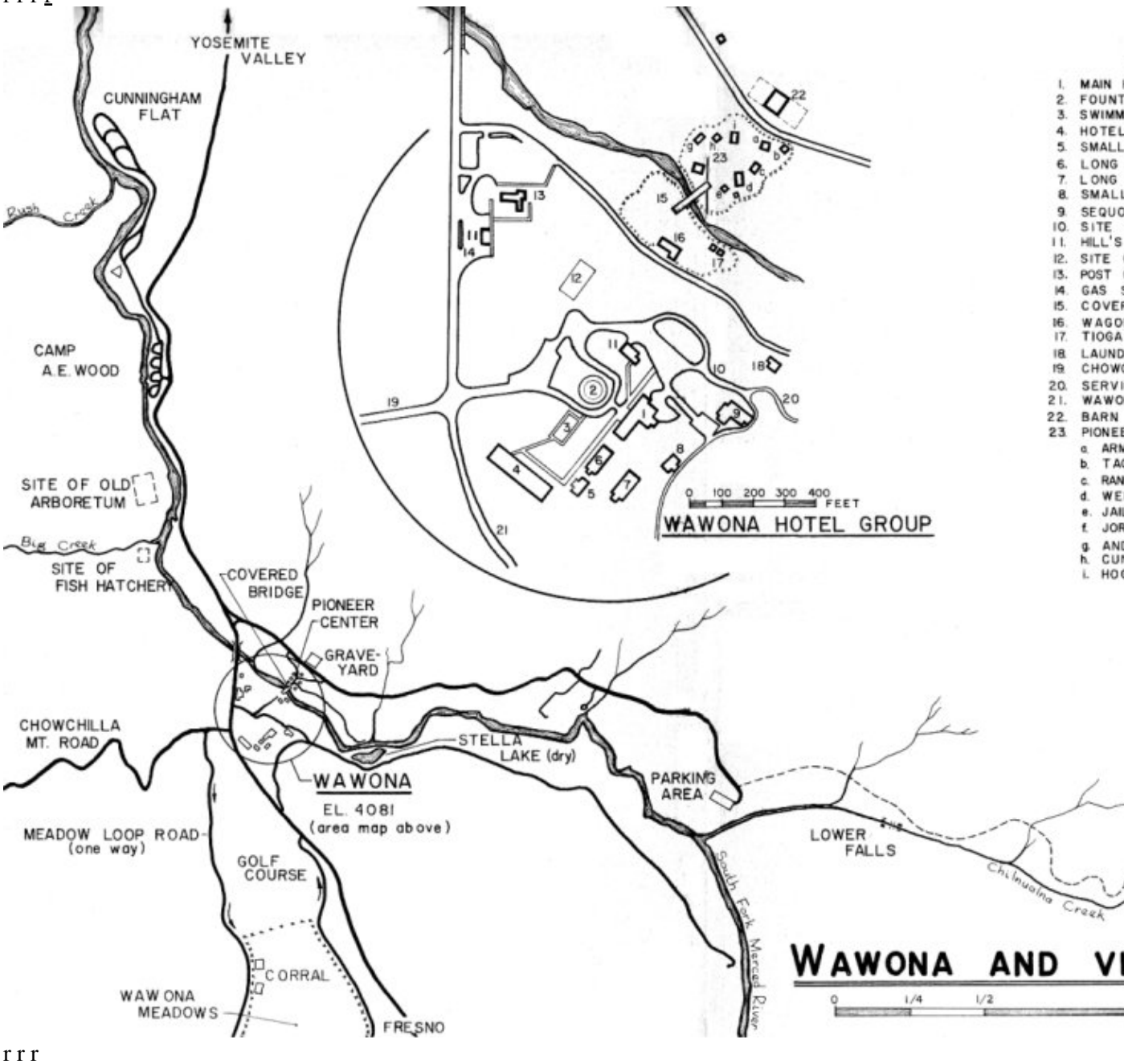

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r [Credit: N.P.S. (from an original map by Y. R. Solomons).]r

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r Next: Yosemite Historyr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Contentsr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r A Short History of Yosemite National Park >r

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r r r

r Next: First Settlerr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Mapr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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A Short History of YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

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r **THE FRAMEWORK**r

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r A Short History ofr
r YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARKr

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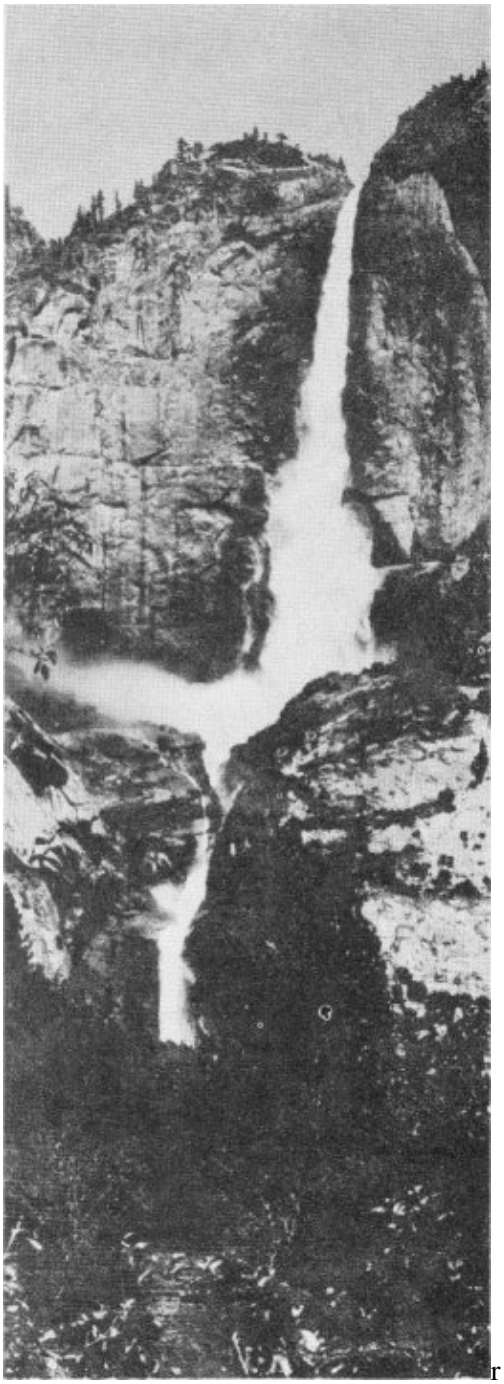

r r r **Yosemite Falls**r

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r Until recently, the established dater for the discovery of Yosemite Valleyr by the Mariposa Battalion was Marchr 25, 1851.r This group, in angry pursuitr of marauding Indians, included Dr.r Lafayette Bunnell, who chose the namer Yosemite for the then unknownr wonder. A diary kept by Pvt. Robertr Eccleston of the Battalion re-establishedr the discovery date as March 27,r 1851,r [1]r but even that has been replacedr significantly bye date two years earlierr found in the diary of William Pennr Abrams, a gold-seeker.r

r r

r Sometime between October 7 andr 17, 1849, Abrams, with his friend,r U. N. Reamer, first saw Yosemiter Valley, probably from a spot near ther old Inspiration Point. The two men,r working out from the Savage tradingr post on the South Fork of the Merced,r were tracking a grizzly, became lostr and, abruptly, came upon the stupendousr sight of Bridalveil Foil, Cathedralr Racks and Half Dome, which theyr called "The Rock of Ages."r

r r

r Evidently, their discovery was recordedr in Abrams' diaryr [2],r and not withr any notable impression upon others,r because the 1851 date has been widelyr recognized as the first sighting of ther Valley; although historians quarrelr endlessly as to whether the Walkerr party looked down into it in theirr 1833 crossing of the Sierra.r

r r

r Dates and disputes aside, Yosemiter r Valley with its magnificent graniter cliffs and domes, grassy meadows andr adjective deserving waterfalls receivedr scant attention until James Hutchingsr visited it in 1855 and began to writer and speak of its wonders in truer Chamber of Commerce style.r

r r

r Attracted by his rhapsodic descriptions,r rugged visitors came on footr and horseback. They stopped overnightr at Clark's Station (Wawona) which,r travel-wise, was about halfway fromr Mariposa on the only trail into ther Valley from the south.r

r r

r By 1864, the Valley's uniquer grandeur and that of the sequoias inr the Mariposa Grove, became a publicr trust of the State of California. Fromr 1864 to 1905, these two valuable areasr 35 miles apart and containing somer 20,000 acres, were administered andr protected as the Yosemite Grant — ar California State Park.r [3]r

r r

r Galen Clark of Clark's Stationr served as oble guardian of ther Grant for thirteen years. One of hisr first and thorniest problems was tor clear Yosemite Valley of the privater holdings of James Hutchings and otherr pioneer homesteaders.r

r r

r Thanks largely to the inspired andr intelligent efforts of John Muir, Yosemiter was made a National Park inr 1890.r [4]r Conservation of scenic, scientificr and historical features was assuredr forever. California, however,r r r r continued to manage the Mariposar Grove and Yosemite Valley while ther remainder of the new park was governedr by the U. S. Department of ther Interior with the help of Army cavalryr units. Despite the conflicting dualr control of a park within a park, conservingr strides were made in no longerr allowing sheep, cattle or hunters withinr the boundaries.r

r r

r Wawona, which was private propertyr surrounded by State and Nationalr Park lands, became Army headquarters.r From there troopers patrolledr extensively, exploring, building trailsr and mapping the rough scenic terrainsr California re-ceded the Mariposar Grove and Yosemite Valley to ther nation in 1905,r [5]r but

coherent, trulyr progressive administration was notr possible until 1916 when civilian rangersr succeeded Uncle Som's soldiersr on a year-round basis.r [6]r

r r

r The Army left in 1914 and until ther National Park Service was organizedr in 1916, Yosemite was under the summerr jurisdiction of a handful of colleger boys and the watchful winter eyesr of two reliable forest rangers.r [7]r

r r

r After 1916 the congressionally designatedr National Park Service tookr over its job, to conserve, interpet, explorer and administer all of Yosemite'sr approximately 1200 square miles forr the fullest enjoyment of its millions ofr owners.r

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r 1. See Sources P. 100r

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r Next: First Settlerr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Mapr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona's Yesterdays >r Wawona's First Settler >r

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Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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WAWONA'S FIRST SETTLER

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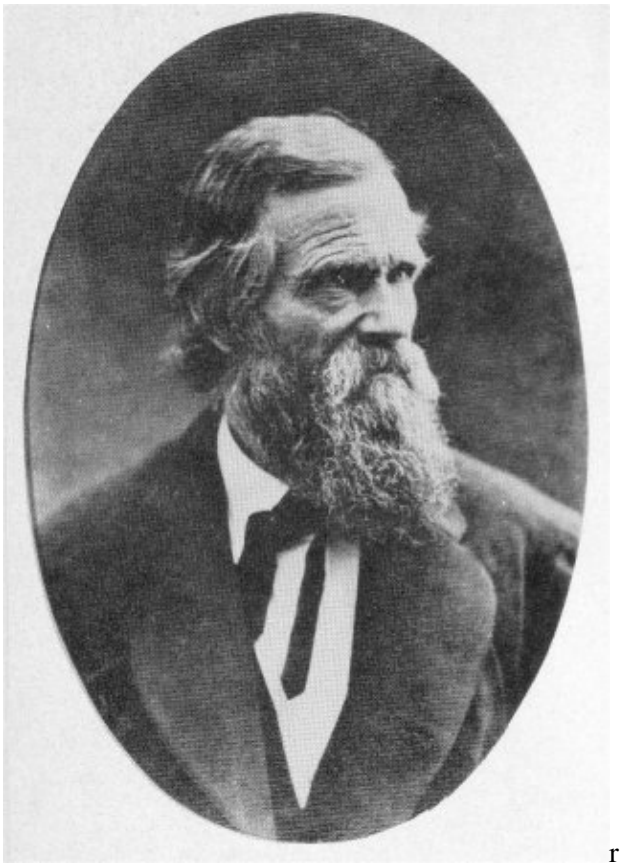

r r r

r Galen Clarkr

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r Galen Clark was the grand old manr of Yosemite and the founder of Wawona,r which he called Clark's Station.r There are two famous (true) often-toldr stories about him. One, that he camer to Wawona to homestead in 1856 becauser a doctor had told him he did notr have long to live because of consumption.r He was then 43 and lived to ber 96.r

r r

r At his ranch he went about bare-footedr and bareheaded in a determinedr search for health. However,r although his lungs healed, Clark wasr far from robust, and, in 1870, wrote ar niece he couldn't repay a debt to herr father due to fourteen years of sicknessr and financial reverses.r [8]r

r r

r The other popular story about Clarkr r is his twenty years of preparation forr his burial. Early-day Yosemite visitor,r Pinkie Ross, wrote, “I was riding . . .r by the (Yosemite Valley) graveyard . . .r and I found Galen digging a grave . . .r We stopped and asked him who hadr died. He said, “I’m digging this forr myself for then I will be sure of beingr buried here.”r [8]r

r r

r Later, Galen dug trenches aroundr the grave and scattered pieces ofr broken glass on its edges to discourager rodents. About 1896 he planted sixr sequoias around his eventual burialr place. Next he dug a well, built a handr pump to water the trees, (four of whichr survive) then selected a granite rockr as a marker and carved his name uponr it.r

r r

r An anecdote about Clark illustratesr his quiet, but humorous nature. Assaultedr with questions from a womanr visitor, he told her that his way withr words was “not of the artesian type,”r presumably referring to the vocal Johnr Muir, but that he “could be pumped.”r [9]r

r r

r Although biographers argue whetherr Clark’s birthplace was Dublin,r New Hampshire or Shipton, Canada,r he, himself, wrote in 1880 in ar reminiscence for the Bancroft Library, thatr he had been born in Massachusetts.r

r r

r His early personal life was tragic.r His marriage to Rebecca Marie McCoyr of Missouri ended when she died inr Philadelphia, February 16, 1848, afterr having had three sons and two daughters.r None of the boys lived to ber thirty. Solon McCoy Clark drowned,r Joseph Locke Clark was killed at Bullr Run, and Galen Alonzo Clark, whor came to California to be near his fatherr died in 1873 while studying forr r r r the law in San Francisco. Alonzo diedr at Wawona but was buried inr Mariposa.r [10]r

r r

r In 1853, gold fever seized Clarkr and he left his children with Easternr relatives to go to the gold fields. Clarkr came to California by steamer. Intendingr to work at his trade of chair makerr he instead headed for the Mariposar area where he worked variously as ar miner, packer, camp-keeper and hunter.r He camped at the meadows inr Wawona in 1855 and returned there inr 1856. Clark wrote that, after a hemorrhager of the lungs, he went to Wawonar for his health and “spent the firstr season in leisure.”r

r r

r His idea of “leisure” was to homesteadr a 160-acre ranch and buildr Clark’s Station, a rough overnightr lodging place for tourists. His ranchr was a logical stopping place forr travelers as it was about halfway betweenr Mariposa and Yosemite Valley.r The Indians called Clark’s Stationr “Pallahchun,” meaning “A good placer to stop.”r

r r

r Travelers thought so too and oner Charles Loring Brace described Clark’sr Station and its owner thus: “This ranchr is a long, rambling, low house, builtr under enormous sugar-pines, wherer travelers find excellent

quarters andr rest in their journey to the Valley.r Clark himself is evidently a character;r one of those men one frequently meetsr in California — the modern anchoriter r r — a hater of civilization and a loverr of the forest — handsome, thoughtful,r interesting, and slovenly. In his cabinr were some of the choicest modernr books and scientific surveys; the wallsr were lined with beautiful photographsr of the Yosemite; he knew more thanr any of his guests of the fauna, flora,r and geology of the State; he conversedr well on any subject, and was at oncer philosopher, savant, chambermaid,r cook, and landlord."r [3]r

r r

r Brace was among many notable,r early, horseback tourists to Yosemiter Valley who stopped at Clark's Station.r William Brewer, Clarence King andr Josiah Whitney of the State Geologicalr Survey visited there as did I. W. Raymond,r Jessie and John Fremont. Theser educated, far seeing people recognizedr the need of preserving Yosemite forr the public and had a great deal to dor with its creation as a State Grant inr 1864 and a National Park in 1890.r

r r

r Clark was well loved for his erudition,r gentleness, integrity, independence,r modesty and devotion to ther wonders of Yosemite. He was the secondr white man to see the Mariposar Grove of Big Treesr [4]r and publicized itr to an amazed world. There are overr 600 mature sequoias in the Grove,r several of them, almost incredibly,r over 3500 years old!r

r r

r At the Grove, which was eight milesr from his ranch, Clark built a smallr cabin where he stayed while guidingr r r r r

r **Clark's Station about 1867**r

r r  r

r r r r r awed tourists through the big trees.r Today's Mariposa Grove Museum occupiesr the old cabin site.rr r

r At first the self-assigned godfatherr of the Grove, Clark become, in 1864,r the state appointed guardian of bothr Yosemite Valley and the Mariposar Grove.r

r r

r For all his many virtues, Clark wasr not a businessman and, in 1869, wasr forced to take in “Deacon” Edwin Moorer as a full partner. The followingr year they mortgaged their ranch forr $6000 at 2% interest to pay for ar sawmill and defray $12,000 Clarkr had sunk into the building of ther r Chowchilla Mountain stagecoachr road.r [7]r Clark was concerned about hisr debt, but optimistic that the next touristr season would pull him out of hisr financial hole.r

r r

r The improvements, partnership andr “woman’s touch” of Mrs. Moorer helped business, but in Decemberr 1874 Clark and Moore sold out lock,r lodging house and good will.r [13]r

r r

r Clark’s part in Wawona’s developmentr was at an end, but he had fortyr years more of vigorous service, asr guardian, author, interpreter andr friend of Yosemite before his death inr 1910, at a venerable 96.r [14]r

r r r r

r **Wawona Hotel about 1890 — (L to R) Main Building, built 1879;r The Long White; The Small White or Manager’s Cottage, built 1885.r The cupoled structure was called the Small Brownr and was constructed in 1886.**r

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r Next: Washburnsr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Yosemite Historyr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r The Washburns >r

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r Next: Homesteadersr •r Contentsr •r Previous: First Settlerr

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Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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THE WASHBURNS

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r There were fourteen Washburn brothers and half brothers in Putney, Vermont.r Three of them came to California to seek their fortunes and found modestr ones in a mine and general store at Mormon Bar, two miles from Mariposa.r Edward, John and Henry Washburn were stalwart, bearded men with pioneering,r adventurous spirits. Their mine andr store weren't challenging enough sor they improved the Chowchilla Mountainr Road from Mariposa to Wawonar and, on December 26,1874, purchasedr the stopping place then known as Clarkr and Moore's.r [15]r

r r

r Wawona was called Clark's Station,r Clark and Moore's, and Big Tree Station,r but was named permanently Wawona,r the Indian word for Big Tree, byr Jean Bruce (Mrs. Henry) Washburn inr 1884.r [16]r [Editor's note:r this is not true.r *Wawō'na* is the Indian word forr Evening Primrose (*Boisduvalia densiflora*).r Seer Barrett & Gifford *Miwok Material Culture*, p. 152.r —dea]r r

r r

r The Washburns bought the lodgingr house itself, the open bridge whichr they covered, irrigation ditch, sawmill,r barn and 160 forested acres. Ther original hotel burned to the ground inr 1878, but, undaunted, the brothersr proceeded to erect in 1879 a newr 140- by 32-foot hotel building, called ther Long White. By the time U.S. Grantr visited later that year, cedar trees hadr been planted and a large fountain installed.r [17]r

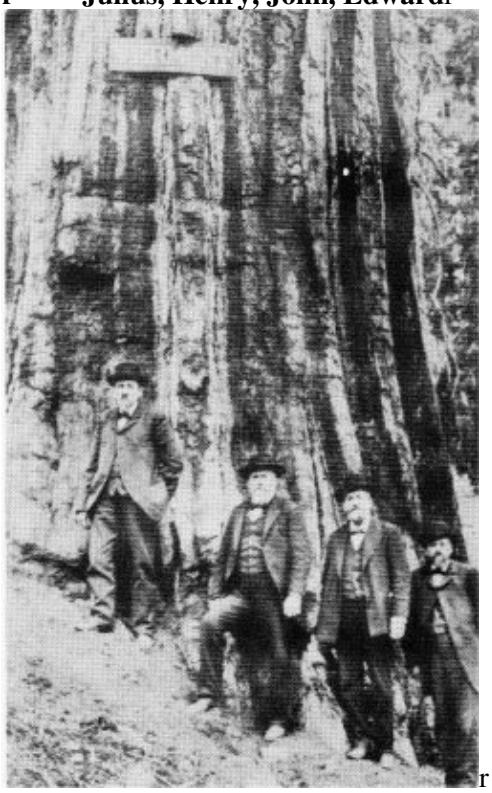
r r

r Partnerships with Wm. Coffman,r E. W. Chapman, Charles and John Brucer were short-lived as the threer brothers made a good, ambitious team.r They not only ran the hotel, but alsor operated a winter ranch near Madera,r the Wawona Road, which they built tor Yosemite Valley in 1875, and ther Yosemite Stage and Turnpike Companyr which they formed in 1882.r [15]r

r r

r Because of its isolated location, ther hotel had to be self-sufficient. A postr office was established about 1886;r telephones came soon after 1905,r electricity in 1908. Springs, wells, ar large irrigation ditch supplying waterr for cattle, hogs, sheep, horses as wellr as crops of hay and timothy in ther r r r

r **The Washburn Brothers—r**
r Julius, Henry, John, Edwardr



r r r r extensive meadows were developed.r There was a store, a saloon, a truckr garden, an apple orchard and a bearr cage that was used occasionally for ar jail!r [15]rr r

r In his 1886 book,r *In the Heart of Sierras*,r James Hutchings described ther r r r Wawona scene eloquently. "The veryr instant the bridge is crossed, on ther way to the hotel, the whole place seemsr bristling with business, and businessr energy. Conveyances of all kinds, fromr a sulky to whole rows of passengerr coaches, capable of carrying from oner to eighteen or twenty persons each, atr a load, come into sight. From somer the horses are just being taken out,r while others are being hitched up. Hayr and grain wagons; freight wagons comingr and going; horses with or withoutr harness; stables for a hundred animals;r blacksmiths' shops, carriage andr paint shops, laundries and other buildings,r look at us from as many differentr stand-points."r

r r

r The Washburn brothers superintendedr all of this together, but eachr had a few specific jobs. Henry ran ther stage lines and was the contact man,r making frequent business trips and arrangingr publicity. Edward P., the bachelorr brother, kept the books and superintendedr the help, meals and roomsr in such a way as to make guests happy,r comfortable and eager to come backr another time. John S., who greatly resembledr General Grant, did the bookingsr and ran the outside—gardens,r ice, water, firewood. etc. Clarence Washburn,r John's son, remembers thatr the brothers "all pulled together as ar team and each could and did handler any hotel job."r [15]r

r r

r Wawona was their main money-makingr concern, but the brothers hadr a financial finger in Glacier Point, almostr all public transportation, andr owned the Wawona stage road whichr was a toll road. By their energy andr vision, they helped put Wawona, asr well as Yosemite, on the map and inr people's hearts and minds.r

r r

r The Washburns were considerater employers with loyal help includingr some who worked for them over fiftyr years. When the hotel was at its peakr in the early 1900's, twenty Chineser worked in the kitchen, garden andr laundry.r

r r

r Ah You was chef for half a centuryr and was famed for his delicious pies.r Most of the Chinese help lived up-stairsr in a building near the smokehouse.r At first when they were movedr r to a larger, newer building, with ar bathtub, near the laundry, Ah You,r Ah Louie, Ah Wee and the others complainedr of its large windows andr spaciousness.r [15]r

r r

r Noted as fine, generous hosts ther Washburns gave turkeys to their numerousr employees at Thanksgiving,r Christmas and New Year's. Hattier Bruce Harris remembers, "We smokedr our own ham, and bacon from a hogr given each family, scraped and readyr for pickling down, and along with thisr were big boxes of tenderloin and milkr cans full of sausage. I spent weeksr gathering oak bark for ther smokehouse."r [18]r

r r

r Charlotte Bruce Gibner wrote inr 1955 that, "Wawona was famous forr its food. It had its own garden fromr which all its vegetables came; theyr killed their own meat; they fished ther rivers; milk came from their own dairyr and, in game season, there was venison.r A typical Wawona breakfast consistedr of fruit in season, beefsteak,r ham and eggs, hot cakes and corn-breadr with home-made preserves. Thisr was not to give the diner a choice, butr to be eaten in its entirety. The rate forr room and board was $4.00 a day."r [19]r

r r

r For years, fresh trout was served atr dinners. In the early days Indiansr caught them in the nearby river andr streams; then Jay Bruce accounted forr 32,000 of them in two seasons. But ther biggest, most consistent fisherman ofr all was young Clarence Washburn. Her was so busy catching from 75 to 300r fish a day he didn't have time to thinkr up fish stories. Several years he wentr back to college with $400 clear afterr paying for his horse's summer feed.r [15]r

r r

r The Wawona operation was a greatr family enterprise. The superintendingr Washburn brothers were related byr marriage to the Bruces who were activer various hotel concerns. Albert O. Brucer ran the saloon and store,r daughter Hattie worked first as ar chambermaid in the hotel and later asr a skilled telegraph operator in Sanr Francisco, son Bert became a more orr less official hotel photographer withr his sister Hattie assisting in the darkr room. Other Bruces worked in variousr capacities.r

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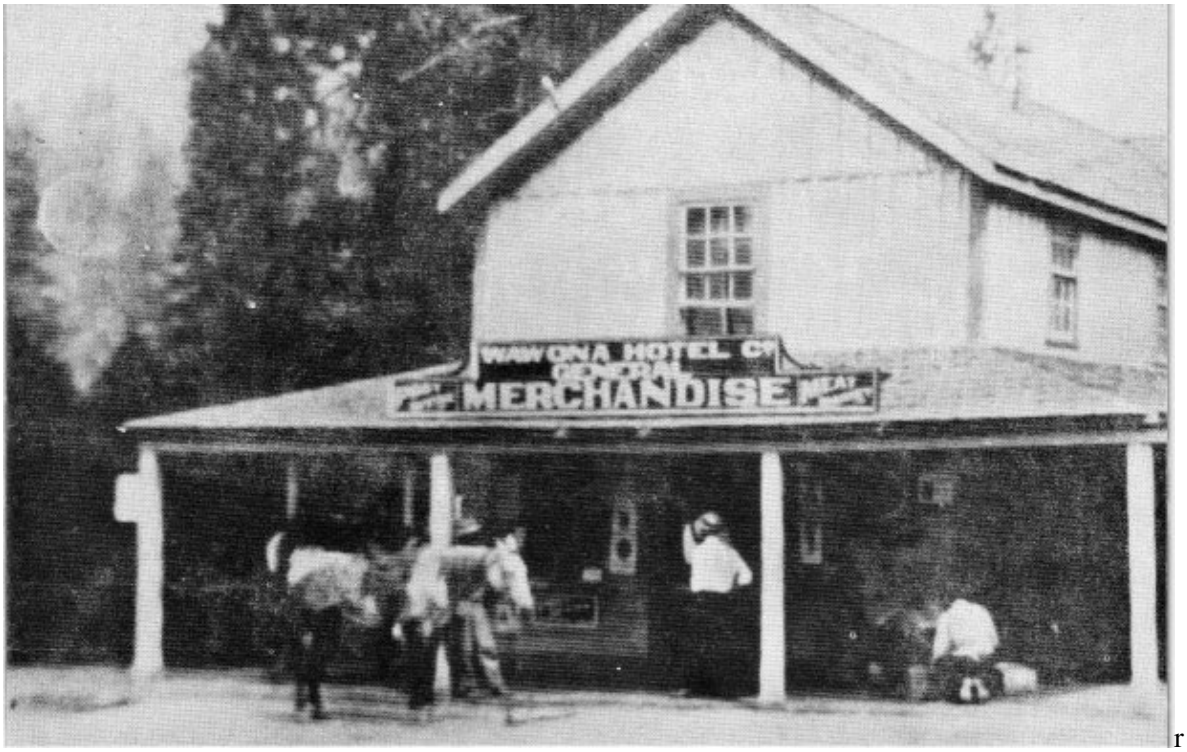
r r 

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r **Wawona Hotel Store in 1914. The building at one time housed a saloon**r

r r

r The Bruces were intermarried withr the Leitchs, Bruce M. Leitch wasr justice of the peace; and to the Baxters,r in whose family was Ed Baxter, ar State Assemblyman. Both Leitch andr Baxter were friends of the Washburnsr and worked in the curio shop atr Mariposa Grove.r

r r

r Thomas Hill was closely associatedr with the hotel from 1885, when hisr daughter married John Washburn,r until his death in 1908.r

r r

r Aside from such family connections,r the Washburns employed many Mariposansr and Chinese for their hotel andr turnpike company.r

r r

r Tourist season — April to Novemberr — was hotel season; during ther winter, when their own operation wasr snowbound, the Washburns spent ar month or so at San Francisco's Palacer Hotel. In season, they lived on ther main building's second floor.r [15]r

r r

r The hotel had charm, atmospherer and luxury. There were three fountainsr spaced across the grounds, oner in front of Hill's studio, another whichr still cascades in front of the mainr building and a third in back of ther main hotel building.r

r r

r Most of the hotel buildings front onr the lovely, serene meadows which appearr today much as they did in 1856 orr 1910, although the golf course hasr tamed the lower end. In his bookr r *Yosemite Trails*r published in 1911,r J. Smeaton Chase wrote that ther "Wawona Meadows themselves might ber called the Sleepy Hollow of the West.r It is the most peaceful place that Ir know in America, and comes near beingr the most idyllic spot I hove seenr anywhere . . . Here is unbrokenr meadow, green as heaven, a mile long,r wing knee-high with all deliciousr grasses and threaded with brookletsr of crystal water. It is surrounded withr a rail-fence that rambles in and outr and around about and hither andr thither in that sauntering way thatr makes a rail-fence such a companionabler thing . . ."r

r r

r All the hotel buildings had names.r The Long White, just to the right ofr the present main hotel building, wasr built by the Washburns soon after anr 1879 fire destroyed the original lodgingr house they had bought from Clarkr and Moore.r

r r

r About 1885, the Main Hotel buildingr r r r was built on the site of Clark'sr original home and rude hotel. Today,r it is a gingerbreaded, wide-parched,r many-windowed building little changedr appearance from the 1880's. Ar high-ceilinged dining room and kitchenr were added to it in 1917 and ther Washburn's apartments upstairs haver been turned into guest rooms. Ther building may not possess any particularr architectural merit, but its old-fashionedr "western resort" style lendsr a kind of charming elegance andr character unmatched in more modernr hotels.r

r r

r The Pavilion, Hill's Studio, was builtr in 1884 and stands now as recreationr building. In 1900 the Small White,r now called the Manager's Cottage,r [20]r was built and, for years,r rented summers at a handsome pricer to a family from Los Angeles.r

r r

r Hutchings wrote that the Washburnsr gave a true "New England welcome"r to their guests and it is a matterr of record that many of them camer back season after season.r

r r

r One satisfied visitor in 1911 wasr Jackson A. Graves, who wrote later,r "Wawona Hotel is pleasantly located.r It is an ideal place to rest in. Therer inertia creeps into your system. Your avoid all unnecessary exercise. Your are ever ready to drop into a chair andr listen to the wind sighing through ther trees and the river singing its neverr ending song . . ."r [21]r

r r

r Over the years, the hotel grew fromr one building to eight, from 160 acresr to 4,000. Arrivals ranged from a fewr horse-drawn stages a day to many usingr over 700 horses and then, in 1916,r motor stages, principally Thomas Fliersr and Pierce-Arrows.r

r r

r Henry Washburn died 1902,r Edward in 1911, John in 1917. Clarence,r who had been assistant managerr and active in the hotel managementr since 1907, became general manager.r In 1917, he added the Hotel Annexr and the Sequoia building, a swimmingr pool, a 3,035 yard golf course in oner end of the meadow and a landing fieldr in the other.r [15]r He could and did accommodater 300 guests, half of themr “repeaters.” At peak times, tents werer used for the overflow.r

r r

r In the first, tire-blowing years ofr automobile travel, Huffman’s Garager at Wawona and Miami Lodge did ar busy trade. They repaired cars so theyr could chug on into Yosemite Valley;r then, if they made it back to Wawona,r fixed them again for the onerous tripr to Fresno. The hotel of course benefitedr by the enforced overnight stopsr of the cars’ passengers.r [15]r

r r

r Two Army pilots mode the first aircraftr landing at Wawona December 8,r 1925. Soon after that, Frank Gallison,r a Mariposa native, made daily flightsr from Merced and hotel guests hadr mail and the San Francisco papersr with their breakfast coffee. Also, Gallisonr flew guests over Yosemite Valleyr for $7.50, giving them thrills forbiddenr now by law.r [15]r

r r

r Clarence Washburn married Grace Brinkopr in 1913, and their daughter,r Wawona, was born at the hotel ther following year. An only son died inr youth, leaving no one to take over ther family business. For that and otherr reasons, Clarence sold the Washburnr holdings — lock, stock, hotel goodr name and 3,724 acres — to the Parkr Service in 1932.r

r r

r The hotel furniture and fixtures werer purchased by the Yosemite Park andr Curry Company for whom Clarencer managed the hotel in ’33 and ’34.r After that he moved to Indio where her became a leading citizen and in 1961,r at a vigorous 75, was managing ther Hotel Potter as he has since 1936.r [15]r

r r

r An era had ended at Wawona. Sincer 1934 the hotel and its facilities haver been managed by the Yosemite Parkr and Curry Company. Tennis courtsr have replaced the garage, two of ther fountains are gone, Stella Lake is nor more — yet the old time atmosphere isr still there. The Company has restoredr a tiny bar downstairs in the main hotelr and has always kept one room furnishedr in the grand old style.r

r r

r The charm, compounded of sunnyr meadow, surrounding forest and timelessr peace remains, the hotelr as it was in Galen Clark’s time, Pallahchunr — a good place to stop!r

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Homesteaders >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Indiansr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Washburnsr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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HOMESTEADERS

r r r

r Galen Clark was NOT the first homesteader in the Wawona basin, althoughr he was the on one to prove up on his land and have it patented. His 160r acres was claimed "for agricultural and grazing purposes" March 19th, 1856.r William H. Leeper, Davis Potts, James D. May and Hiram Cartwright had all filedr 160-acre claims earlier that same month. Excepting Cartwright, the other menr had surveyed the Wawona basin andr filed a land plot in the Mariposar County Recorder's office.r [22]r

r r

r John T. Banton claimed a quarterr section in 1862, and in 1868 Jarvisr Kiel filed for another 160 acres "nearr Galen Clark's house."r [22]r

r r

r Hundreds of acres were homesteadedr and patented in the 1880's andr '90's. The Albert Bruces,r Van Campens and Washburns accountedr for most of it, but Bruce Leitch, Roscoe Greeley,r John E. Hammond, Archibald C. Stoddart,r John Green and othersr received patents. An Emily V. Dodger had 480 acres patented to her in 1891r while both Thomas Hill and his wife,r Willeta, homesteaded 160 acresr r apiece, for which patents were issuedr in 1891.r [22]r

r r

r Homesteaders had to be hardy inr Wawona's winter wilderness, and ther Albert Brutes were. Hattie Bruce Harris,r of eight children, remembersr that the good old days were rough.r Her parents "fenced and cross-fenced,r plowed, sowed and reaped . . . Motherr Bruce raked hay and canned everythingr she could. The winter of 1888r the snow piled six feet on the level,r the hay gave out in the barn and itr took from four o'clock in the morningr till ten at night to get the team to ther Washburn barn" about a mile and ar half distant.r [23]r

r r

r The Bruces raised wheat and childrenr on their 320-acre homestead. Ther r r r

r **The Bruce Homestead about 1900 — Destroyed by fire in 1950**r

r r r r wheat grew ten feet high, and a heavily-headedr shock of it stood in ther Bruce parlor for years as a symbol ofr strength and fertility and ownership.rr r

r All the Bruces who were able workedr on the homestead. One time a groupr of Scottish and English men passed byr on their way to Chilnualna Falls andr saw the toiling family. On their wayr back to the hotel, a horrified Scotchman toldr Albert Bruce, who had finishedr haying for the day, “I saw whatr I never thought I would see inr Americar a brute of a mon out in a field,r his bonny wife raking hay.” Brucer muttered something, but did not acknowledger that he was the “brute of ar mon.”r [23]r

r r

r The Bruce homestead, patentedr April 1884, six years before Yosemiter became a national park, had ar boundary line in common with ther Park.r

r r

r Year after year, the superintendent’sr report to the Secretary of ther Interior stressed that all private landsr in Yosemite, especially at Wawona,r should be purchased.r [5]r Year after year,r Congress failed to appropriate fundsr for this purpose, and administration ofr the lands became more difficult.r

r r

r Fire was the most dreaded problemr with water rights and sanitation becomingr increasingly critical as ther original homesteads were subdividedr into numerous small lots. Privatelyr owned acres still exist at Wawona, andr independent commercialism is representedr by motels, guest cabins, smallr grocery stores and a gas station.r

r r

r In August, 1932, 8,785 acres werer added to the Park. The Washburnr Hotel Company sold their 3,724 acresr and 5,061 of public domain acres werer acquired for a total cost of $376,600,r half of it donated and

half appropriatedr by Congress.r [24]r

r r

r To the Park Service, the remainingr private property constitutes “an everr present source of trouble,” since policingr responsibility falls to the County,r and there are no local County officersr stationed at Wawona.r

r r r r r

r r r **Wawona — When Haying and Logging were the Main Industries**r

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r r

r Next: Indiansr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Washburnsr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Indians >r

r r

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r r r

r Next: Camp A. E. Woodr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Homesteadersr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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INDIANS

r r r r

r r  r

r **Susan (Sukie) and John Lawrence and Sally Ann and Johnny Dick.r**
r Both Couples are brother and sister. "Sukie" married Archie Leonard.r

r r r r

r The Nutchu Indians were camped peacefully at Wawona when they werer "surprised and captured," in March, 1851, by the Mariposa Battalion led byr James D. Savage.r [3]r Partly because the various tribes of the Yosemite regionr showed their natural resentment of the white gold seeker's intrusion into theirr lands by plundering and killing, andr partly because the whites coveted theirr lands, the Mariposa Battalion was organizedr to subdue, capture and herdr the Indians to the reservation on ther Fresno River.r

r r

r The Nutchu's, however, escapedr en route to the reservation, but were capturedr again, 1852.r [3]r Numerousr campsites, marked by potholed granite,r attest to their long occupancy ofr the Wawona area.r

r r

r Samuel Kneeland, zoologist, reportedr his Yosemite trips inr r *The Wonders of the Yosemiter Valley and California.*r Her described an Indian sweat house observedr in Wawona in 1871 asr ". . . about eight feet long and twor feet deep; over this a heavily-thatchedr dome-shaped roof, plasteredr with mud and leaves; on the mud floorr is placed a circle of rounded stones . . .r r which when highly heated, water isr poured raising an abundance ofr very hot steam a primitive butr effective Russian bath."r

r r

r A handful of Chowchilla Indiansr lived at Wawona during its developmentr as a resort. They were half breedsr with such Americanized names asr One-eyed Bullock, Short and Dirty andr Bush-headed Tom.r

r r

r Galen Clark wrote that the Indiansr Wawona and Yosemite Valleyr ". . . caused very little trouble."r [11]r There was the much-discussed case inr June 1889 when a white man causedr trouble and justice was not done. Thatr was when Jimmy Lawrence, a squaw-man,r shot and killed Bush-head Tom Habridger at Wawona yet was dischargedr for lack of "sufficient evidence"r the following week in ther Mariposa Court.r

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r r

r Next: Camp A. E. Woodr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Homesteadersr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona's Yesterdays >r Camp A. E. Wood >r

r r

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r r r

r Next: Arboretumr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Indiansr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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Camp A. E. Wood

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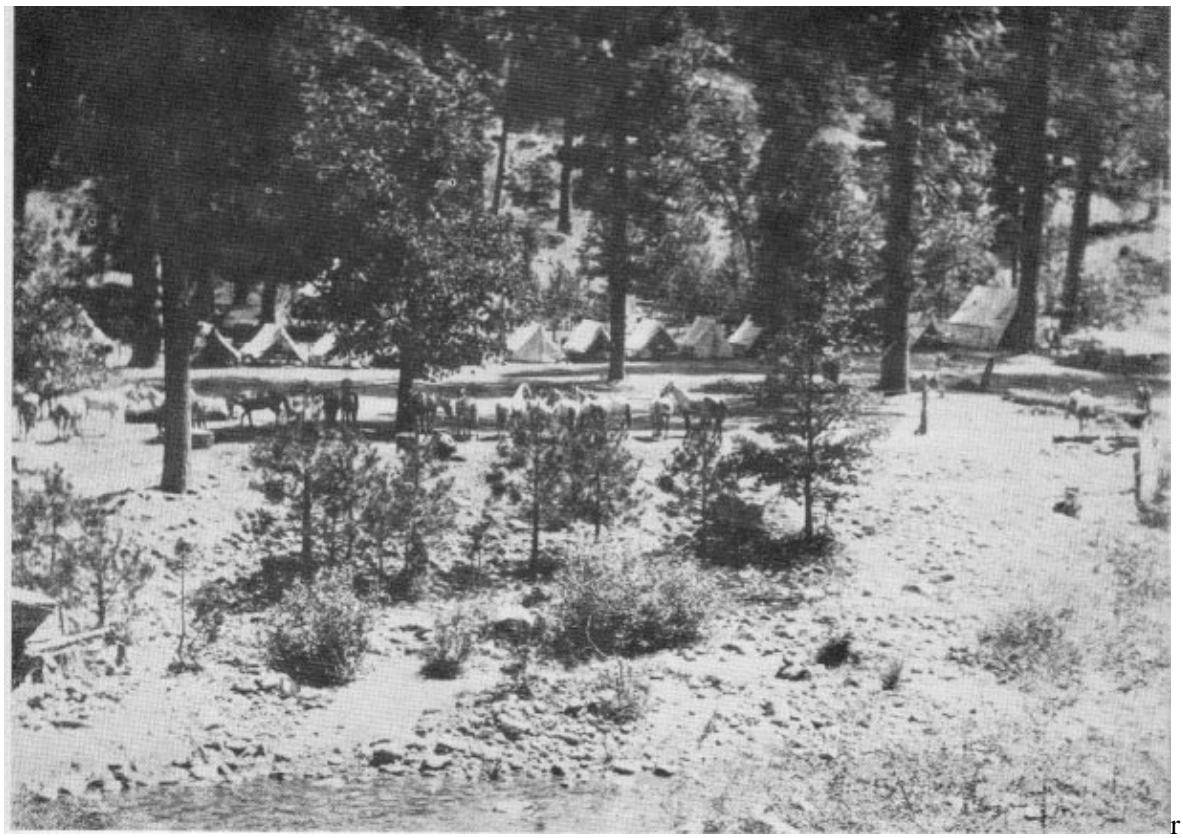
r r  r

r **Camp A. E. Wood in 1891**r r

r r

r For sixteen summers, sleep-shatteringr sounds of a bugle playing reveiller resounded at what is now the publicr camp ground at Wawona. From 1891r till 1905, the level ground betweenr the Wawona road and the South Fork,r now filled in summer with campers'r tents and trailers, was an Army encampment,r Camp A. E. Wood.r

r r

r When Yosemite was created a Nationalr Park in 1890, Congress orderedr the U. S. Army to administer it. Thisr control was complicated from the firstr because it was not complete. Yosemiter Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Bigr Trees, areas 35 miles apart, were administeredr by a board of commissionersr as a California State Park and,r r after 1890, became a Park within ar Park.r [3]r

r r

r There were other frustrating pointsr to hamper smooth-running supervision.r The Cavalry units assigned to Campr A. E. Wood from the Presidio in Sanr Francisco were there only from May tor October most years and were not givenr funds for developments.r

r r

r Despite handicaps, the Army mappedr and built miles of trails still inr use, stocked remote lakes and rivers,r eventually rid the Park of trespassingr cattle and “hoofed locusts” that persistentr sheepherders brought in, andr were responsible for such physicalr r r improvements as telephone lines,r roads and trails. Many lakes in ther Sierra were named for Army personnel.r

r r

r Camp A. E. Wood was the well-orderedr hub for all these activities. Captainr Abram Epperson Wood was ther first acting superintendent of Yosemiter National Park, serving in this responsibler post from 1891 to 1894. His efficiencyr was undermined by a painful,r debilitating cancer of the tongue whichr killed him in 1894.r [24]r

r r

r The camp had its gay times, notablyr the Field Day of August 7, 1896, whenr Companies B and K of the 4th Cavalryr put on minstrel shows, military exercisesr and many track and fieldr events.r [27]r

r r

r Over the years, there were e fewr untoward incidents at the Camp, ar couple of accidental shootings, a desertion,r a prowler and a drowning, butr the overall discipline record was consistentlyr good, and the cavalrymenr were liked by their Wawona neighbors.r Mr. and Mrs. Albert Bruce were knownr as the “Father and Mother” of ther Troops thanks to their generosity withr food and entertainment.r

r r

r Major John Bigelow was actingr superintendent in 1904 and ambitiouslyr began an arboretum, a museum andr a library. He succeeded also in havingr a small superintendent’s office builtr which now stands at the Wawona Pioneerr Center.r

r r

r Camp A. E. Wood was abandonedr in August 1906 when the Army unitsr were moved to Yosemite Valley. Californiar had receded its twin grants ofr Yosemite Valley and the Mariposar Grove to the United States in 1905.r Yosemite National Park was now administeredr as a single, cohesive whole;r by the Army until 1914, civilian rangersr until 1916, and thereafter by ther National Park Service.r [5]r

r r

r The sounds of the deserted campr after 1906 were no longer of bugler and marching feet, but of river andr wind. In 1922, Camp Hoyle was establishedr on the site and remainedr until 1932.r [32]r

r r

r The Hoyle site was used as a publicr camp ground from 1933, but was extended,r improved and modernized inr 1951 when it regained the name Campr A. E. Wood.r

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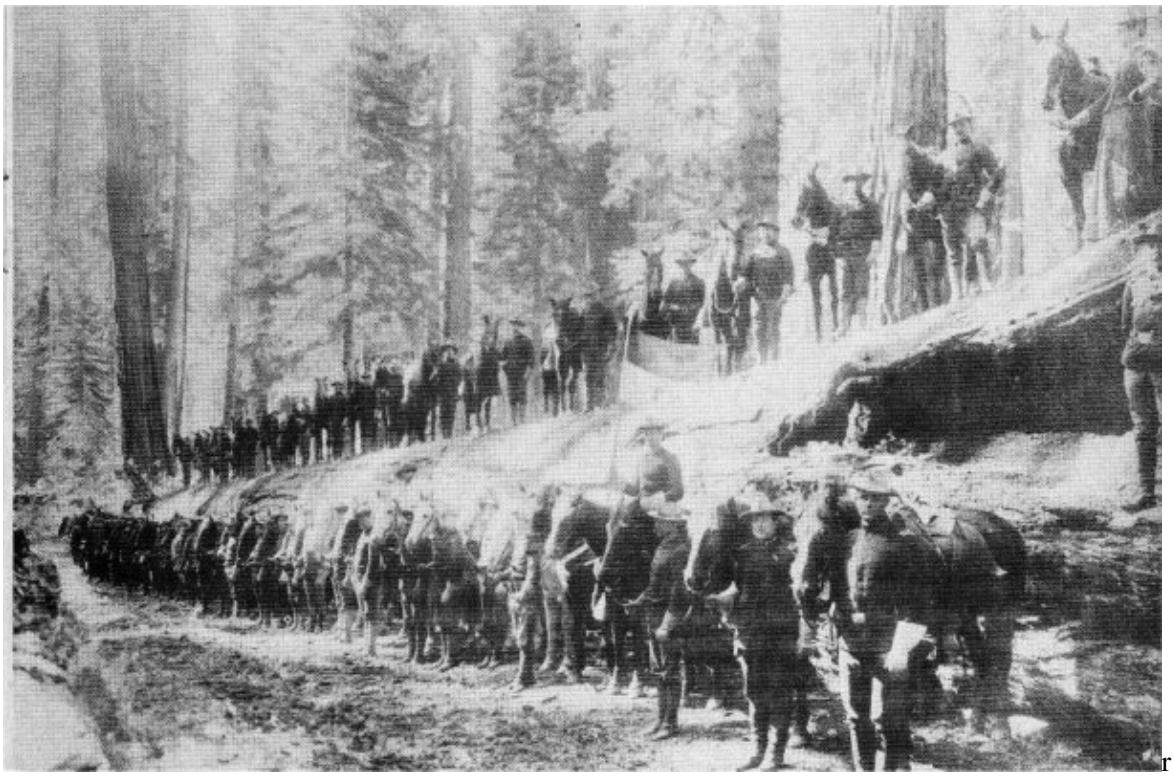

r r r

r Troop F, 6h Cavalry on Fallen Monarch, Mariposa Grover r

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r r

r Next: Arboretumr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Indiansr

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Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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ARBORETUM

r r r

r Yosemite was an odd place for ar couple of troops of cavalry and a handfulr of officers to be stationed eachr summer. The Army's "war" withr the sheepherders and their grass-eatingr "troops," but aside from thatr military-like action, the Army servedr in a caretaker-role.r

r r

r Perhaps the strongest of all actionsr taken by the Army was the establishmentr of an arboretum across ther river from Camp A. E. Wood in 1904.r

r r

r Major John E. Bigelow, Jr., Ninthr Cavalry, was acting superintendentr from May until September of that yearr when he retired.r [29]r During his fiver months' command at Wawona, he attackedr his trail-building, sheep-chasing,r Park protecting duties vigorouslyr but still had time to worry about ther trees and flowers of the region.r

r r

r Under his ambitious direction, 75 tor 100 "timbered, hilly acres," almostr directly across the South Fork of ther Merced River from the camp, werer developed as on arboretum. A newr foot bridge to cross the river was builtr under Bigelow's supervision. Trailsr were constructed, rustic benches werer built, sixteen native trees were labeledr in English and Latin on wide, plankr boards; photographs were taken;r plants identified and a careful list ofr nineteen additional trees and plantsr to be transplanted made. The actualr work was done by First Lieutenantr Henry R. Pipes who was the Assistantr Surgeon and an enthusiastic amateurr botanist, with the help of a non-commissionedr officer and a private.r

r r

r Bigelow and Pipes went to painstakingr lengths to preserve the naturalr features of their arboretum. The inchr thick 9 - by 11-inch plank signs werer painted buff to blend with the treer trunks and nails attaching them werer r recessed so that their heads could notr cause rust stains. Two Indian mortarr rocks were present already and werer duly labeled.r

r r

r The fledgling arboretum was abandoned,r as quickly as it had begun byr Captain H. C. Benson, acting superintendentr from 1905 to 1908. In hisr annual report to the Secretary of Interiorr in 1905, he reported that ther arboretum had been started on patentedr land that had been thrown outr of the Park by the boundary revisionr of 1905 and, furthermore, surveyorsr an electric railroad (never built)r had knocked down many of

the identifyingr signs. These were good officialr reasons, but it could have been thatr Benson, a notably relentless and ultimatelyr successful foe of the sheepmen,r had little sympathy for such anr un-military project.r

r r

r For a soldier, Bigelow showed remarkabler naturalist vision. He wroter that Yosemite should:r

r r

r ". . .. provide a great museum of naturer for the general public free of cost.r to preserve . . . trees . . . florar and fauna . . . animal life, and ther mineral and geological features of ther country comprised in the Park."r

r r

r His short-lived arboretum anticipatedr by 16 years the first guidedr nature walks in any National Park.r Bigelow felt, too, that Yosemite shouldr have a museum and library.r [29]r

r r

r The arboretum acreage was returnedr to the Park in 1932, and whiler the Army footbridges across the riverr exist only in memory and on film, anyr interested visitor can roll up his pantsr legs and wade the river in mid-summer.r Once across from Camp A. E. Wood,r turn slightly to the left and look forr weathered signs identifying the treesr first labeled in 1904.r

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r Next: Roads & Trailsr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Camp A. E. Woodr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona's Yesterdays >r Roads and Trails >r

r r

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r r r

r Next: Stages & Driversr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Arboretumr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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ROADS and TRAILS

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r r  r

r **Wawona Supply Wagon**r

r r

r Soon after enthusiast James Hutchings began escorting sightseers to viewr Yosemite Valley in 1855, Andrew, Milton and Houston Mann built a 45-miler toll horse trail from Mariposa to the already-famous Valley via the South Fork.r Mainly, they followed the old Indian trails. It was opened August 1, 1856, andr operated as a toll route until 1862r when Mariposa County purchased it,r declaring it a "Public Highway." Untilr then, tolls were: ["]Man and horse eachr way, $2.00; pack mule or horse, eachr way, $2.00; Footman, $1.00."r [31]r

r r

r In 1869, Galen Clark organized ar stock company of eight men to build ar wagon and stage road from Mariposar as far as Clark'sr [22]r (Wawona) whichr was used as a toll road from 1870r until 1917. As early as 1870, Clarkr had a survey made for a wagon roadr from his lodging at Wawona to Yosemiter Valley. This road was begunr by Chinese laborers, under the directionr r of John Conway and Edwin Moorer and finished by Washburn, Chapmanr & Company in July, 1875.r [32]r Most ofr the 16-foot-wide road was constructedr during severe winter weather. The erar of the stagecoach, which was to continue,r in jolting, dusty fashion forr

forty years, began for Yosemite-boundr visitors.r

r r

r By mid-April, 1875, the rough roadr was passable for stagecoaches exceptr for a narrow, 300-yard section stillr under construction near the oldr Inspiration Point. To the passengers'r temporary inconvenience and amusement,r r r r they walked the unfinished stretchr while their quickly-dismantled stager was carried in pieces by hand, thenr reassembled, harnessed up, reboardedr and driven off with considerabler aplomb.r [32]r

r r

r The Yosemite Stage & Turnpiker Company (Washburn brothers), ranr stages from Merced to Wawona viar Mariposa where they had a liveryr stable.r

r r

r The road from Raymond to Wawonar generally followed the route of presentr State Highway 41, while the stager route from Mariposa, called ther Chowchilla Mountain Road, exists today,r rutty, dusty and little-changed from itsr 1870 route.r

r r

r The Wawona Hotel was a logicalr and popular overnight stop for stager travelers, and the Yosemite Stage &r Turnpike Company, operating twor stage schedules and 700 horses, sawr to it that their passengers traveledr speedily and safely, though dustily.r

r r

r In 1865, 369 hardy, saddle-sorer travelers visited Yosemite. In 1875,r mostly in stagecoaches, the Park hadr 2,423 visitors; 2,590 in 1885; 8,023r in 1902; and in 1914, when automobilesr were allowed on the Wawonar Road, 15,154. Travel doubled in 1915r when 31,546 visitors chugged in;r 209,166 came in 1925 and 498,289r in 1932,r [33]r the last year of Washburnr ownership.r

r r

r The Wawona Road accounted for ar number of Yosemite "firsts." The firstr automobile to enter the Valley traveledr it in 1900, and 32 miles of it had ther honor of being the first paved road inr the Yosemite region in June, 1902r [34]r Mud and dust were tamed!r

r r

r Soon increased automobile trafficr made oiled roads a necessity and, inr 1932, the new, modern Wawona Roadr was completed from the South (Fresno)r Entrance to Yosemite Valley.r

r r

r After 1932, one South Entrancer Station replaced the three stops maintainedr by the Turnpike Company.r Tolls had been abolished in 1917, butr traffic in and out of the Park fromr the Washburn domain had beenr checked until it became part of ther Park.r

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r r  r

r **Stage and Four Approaching Wawona**r

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r Next: Stages & Driversr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Arboretumr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Stages and Drivers >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Culturer •r Contentsr •r Previous: Roads & Trailsr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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r r r

STAGES and DRIVERS

r r r

r The jingle of harness bells, the stomp of hooves, the whopping noise of ar whip, grinding wheels and a all-enveloping cloud of dust were the familiarr sounds and sights for forty galloping years as stagecoaches rolled to and fromr Wawona.r

r r

r The mountain stage coaches, firstr with leather springs and later withr steel, were of local design and construction.r Excellent examples can ber seen by the covered bridge and in ther Wagon Shop of the Pioneer Yosemiter History Center. The early traveler alsor saw freight, spring and "mud" wagonsr and even a classy buggy or two.r

r r

r The Yosemite Stage and Turnpiker Company employed twenty to fortyr drivers and had some forty stagecoachesr and buggies that were pulledr by 700 horses.r [15]r In the height of ther summer season, as many as elevenr stages a day ran from the Raymondr train station to Wawona, Yosemiter Valley, Glacier Point and the Mariposar Grove. The teams had to be changedr every few miles, so the Washburnsr kept stage stations at nine places betweenr Raymond and Kennyville nowr the site of the Ahwahnee Hotel).r [15]r Ar great deal of hay and other provisionsr were hauled in by lumbering freightr wagons with five-ton capacities pulledr by a ten-mule team. The mules werer driven by jerkline — one line — by ar man riding one of the wheel animals.r One man who did that was calledr simply "Jerkline Jones."r [36]r

r r

r The trip from Raymond to Wawona,r 44 dusty miles, took ten hours, includingr a lunch stop at Ahwahnee.r [37]r Afterr passengers had rested overnight atr Wawona, they spent six more joltingr hours on the 20 miles tor Yosemite Valley.r

r r

r Dusters or shielding coats of somer kind were more of a necessity than ar convenience to stage passengers. Summerr dust was thick, cloying and sor covered passengers that vigorous user of feather dusters at hotel stops wasr needed before they could be recognizedr as to race or sometimes evenr sex.r

r r

r The swift trips were frightening, occasionallyr injurious and usually hardr r on nerves and soft muscles. At all regularr stops, the stagecoach was drawnr up expertly to a wooden platform sor that passengers could mount and dismountr their high seats with relativer ease. The stages were said to lookr like boats on the

outside, sardine cansr on the inside with passengers jammedr together.r [38]r

r r

r This fantastically smooth-runningr operation was remarkably safe. Therer were few accidents and no fatalities tor passengers during the Washburn tenure.r There were holdups, though.r

r r

r Ther *Mariposa Gazette*r reported sixr stage robberies between 1883 andr 1906. After one robbery, a group ofr passengers told their exciting experiencer when safely back at the hotel.r An office employee asked a little oldr lady how much the robber had takenr from her.r

r r

r “Twenty-five dollars,” she replied.r

r r

r “Oh, that’s a shame,” the clerkr sympathized.r

r r

r The lady spoke spiritedly. “I wouldn’tr have missed it for a hundred!”r [39]r

r r

r Former stage driver Eddie Gordonr tells of the time a robber foiled pursuers,r looking for horse tracks, byr escaping on crude walking boards.r (These “trackers” may be seen in ther Wagon Shop at the Pioneer Yosemiter History Center).r

r r

r Gordon drove his team, “a mightyr good one,” from Wawona Point, abover the Mariposa Grove, to the Hotel inr 45 minutes and, once, by changingr horses, galloped the 29 miles fromr Glacier Point to the Wawona Hotelr in three hours!r [40]r

r r

r The stage drivers were the envy ofr small boys and admired by most ofr their passengers. They lived in ther men’s bunkhouse, where the Sequoiar Building is now, and had a specialr table in the back dining room. Payr earned was $60 a month plus roomr and board.r

r r r r r

r Most drivers were natives of Mariposa;r Tom Gordon, Henry Hedges,r Sam Uren, James Warner, John Stevens,r C. K. Salmon, J. K. Ashworth,r the Skelton brothers, E. W. Church,r “Bright” Gillespie, Hy Rapelje,r Johnny White, Ernest Stevens and Charlesr Fobes.r

r r

r Some stagecoach drivers were deservedlyr famous. In article calledr “The Passing of the Sierra Knight,” inr the July 1903 *Overland Monthly,*r Ben C. Truman wrote that “After on experiencer of nearly 40 years, and havingr never known another such all-roundr reinsman as George Monroe. Just asr there are the greatest of soldiers andr sailors, artists and mechanics at times,r so there are greater stage drivers thanr their fellows and George Monroer was the greatest of all. He was a wonderr in every way. He had names for allr his horses, and they all knew theirr name. Sometimes he spoke sharply tor one or more of them, but generally her addressed them pleasantly. He seldomr never used a whip, except to crackr it over their heads.”r

r r

r Although automobiles were in commonr r usage from about 1905 on, Yosemiter officials didn’t seem to thinkr they were here to stay. They weren’tr permitted in the Park at all until 1913,r on the Wawona Road until 1914, andr were not given general use of the roadsr until 1916.r

r r

r There were some 60, annoying regulationsr protecting horses that driversr had to obey. Until August 8, 1914,r automobile owners had to leave theirr at the Wawona Hotel and continuer to Yosemite Valley by stage.r [41]r One frustrated motorist who moder the trip in 1911, wrote angrily, “Onr July 16th, we took our places withr some other victims of this piece ofr transportation idiocy, on an open four-horser stage to Yosemite (Valley). Ther going was very slow. It was hot andr dusty and we soon got irritable andr uncomfortable. Why the traveling publicr should be subjected to this outrager is beyond me.”r [31]r

r r

r In May 1916, “Stonewall Jackson”r Ashworth “cracked the last whip” asr he drove the final Washburn stagecoachr from the Valley to Wawona.r [12]r

r r

r The automobile was here to stay,r replacing the horse and ending the romanticr but rugged era of the stagecoach.r

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r Next: Culturer •r Contentsr •r Previous: Roads & Trailsr

r r r

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r r r r r r r r r r r r r r

r

r r

r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Culture >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Piker •r Contentsr •r Previous: Stages & Driversr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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CULTURE

r r

r Wawona was a veritable culturalr oasis from the time Galen Clark, hisr educated mind and library, settledr there in 1856. From 1875 on, whenr the Washburns began running ther then-small hotel, culture pursuits developedr naturally. There was ar Big Tree Literary Society that, amongr other topics, debated Thomas Painer [42]r

r r

r The hotel supplied no regular entertainment,r but often there werer impromptu musicales or ploys. Therer was always lively conversation amongr the guests, most of whom were well-educated.r

r r

r The Washburn brothers had beenr educated ably in Vermont and hadr wide interests John Washburn hadr married Estella Hill, who was a practicedr soprano.r

r r

r Azelia Von Campen Bruce, who hadr a homestead with her husband acrossr the river from the hotel, was an excellentr organist and former singer withr the San Francisco Opera Company inr the old Mission House.r [36]r

r r

r Thomas Hill's studio was a regularr meeting place for various vocal andr inquiring residents. Two of the Brucer sisters were accomplished, publishedr poetesses. One poem by Fannie Brucer Cook appears in Hutching'sr *In the Heart of Sierras.*r Several of Jeanr Bruce Washburn's poems were printedr in the *Mariposa Gazette,* and some of herr work appeared in a slim book,r r r r *Yosemite and Other Poems*,r issued by a San Franciscor publisher in 1887.r

r r

r When Galen Clark was in his ninetiesr and a resident of Yosemite Valley,r he wrote two books on Yosemite:r r *[Indians of the] Yosemite Valley and Vicinity,*r 1904, andr r *The Yosemite Valley, Its History,*r 1910.r

r r

r In May, 1891, Mariposa Countyr created the Wawona School District,r although the eight-grade grammarr school did not open until May ofr 1892.r [44.]r [45]r It ran through the summerr and was held near the men's roomingr house where the Sequoia Building ofr the Wawona Hotel now stands.r

r r

r The Washburns wanted the schoolr on the grounds so that their childrenr and those of employees and visitorsr could attend. The first schoolroom wasr separated by a thin partition from ther stagecoach drivers' quarters. Readin',r writin' and oaths could be learned[.]'r

r r

r Gertrude ("Cosie") Hutchings, 25,r was the first teacher. Cosie was ther daughter of James Hutchings and ther second white girl to be born in Yosemiter Valley. Among the early studentsr were Bert and Jay Bruce, ther Leonard twins, Mary Ellen Degnan,r Clarence Washburn, an Indian boyr named Joe Ann, the Bruce dog andr frequently the hotel peacocks.r [45]r

r r

r The parents of these children werer making Yosemite history. Azelia andr Albert O. Bruce were homesteadingr 320 acres under pioneer hardships,r Archie Leonard served notably as ther first Yosemite ranger, the John Degnansr ran a Yosemite Valley bakeryr and delicatessen that their daughter,r Mary Ellen, is active in today, and ther Washburns were running the Wawonar Hotel.r

r r

r The session lengthened from Mayr 1st until November 1st and the studentr body expanded to 38. After 20 years,r the school had a building to itselfr which stood until 1960 to the right ofr the road just above the coveredr bridge.r [45]r

r r

r School keeps today in a brown shingledr building on Chilnualna Road.r Readin', writin' and 'rithmetic andr other jetaged subjects are learned byr its handful of students.r

r r

r But no peacocks!r

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r Next: Piker •r Contentsr •r Previous: Stages & Driversr

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r http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/wawonas_yesterdays/culture.htmlr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r “Pike” >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Steve Cunninghamr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Culturer

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

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"PIKE"

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r r r **"Pike" — on his San Francisco Trip**r

r r

r Pike was the town character of Wawonar in the 1890's. It was supposedr that Nathan Bennett Phillips earnedr his nickname from references to Piker County, Missouri, but he was bornr 1839 in Tennessee and there isr record of his having lived in Missouri.r [48]r He was known simply andr widely as Pike gained a reputationr r r r as a colorful character from his actions,r stories and looks.r

r r

r He had long, yellowish hair, a mustacher and a chin-enveloping beard ofr the same yellowish hue. Customarily,r he wore boots, Levis, a heavy bluer shirt with white buttons and a brood,r white cowboy hat. Phillips drank heavily,r swore frequently and had a unique,r gruff whispering voice. An attack ofr diphtheria had so injured his vocalr cords that he could speak only in ar hoarse, guttural whisper. No one hadr any trouble understanding him thoughr and his favorite reply, when questionedr as to how he had lost his voice, was ar husky, offhand, “telling lies to ther tourists.”r [48]r

r r

r His “lies” were repeated, even inr 1882 San Francisco newspaper, by andr to appreciative listeners. There was ther one about a bear that chased Pike upr a pine tree and out on a limb. At ther top of his damaged vocal chords, Piker whispered fiercely, “Get back you foolr or we’ll both be killed!”r

r r

r Pike lived in Yosemite Valley forr years, but when asked how long byr tourists, he replied that he had livedr there ever since “they were hauling inr the dirt to build it.”r [46]r

r r

r On bear story Pike liked to tell onr himself was about the time he was onr foot, without a gun and being chasedr by a bear. “That bear had the downhillr pull on and soon caught up andr was about to grab me.” As open-mouthedr as his pursuer, Pike’s listenersr would ask breathlessly, “What did your do to save yourself?” “Why, I turnedr around right quick, shoved my armr down the bear’s throat, grabbed hisr tail and turned him inside out.”r [37]r

r r

r Still another story was of the timer an Englishman found the guide playingr cards in the hotel saloon and askedr him to take him on a grizzly bear hunt.r Pike refused with his characteristicr growl. The Englishman told him tor name his price and again the guider refused.r

r r

r Unhappily, the Englishman asked,r “Why won’t you go?”r

r r

r With verbal embellishments, Piker told the saloon audience that the lastr time he hunted grizzlies with an Englishman,r he had been armed with anr old musket with which he had woundedr a grizzly. When the enraged bearr turned toward Pike, “John Bull” droppedr his own high-powered rifle andr raced for the nearest tree.r

r r

r Pike threw himself on the ground,r feigning death because it was thoughtr that grizzlies would not harm a deadr man. The bear come over anyway,r rolled the guide over a few times, thenr whispered, “Pike, don’t you ever gor hunting with an Englishmen again.”r

r r

r After all that, Pike agreed to guider the spellbound “John Bull” an ar grizzly hunt.r [37]r

r r

r One memorable time he stayed inr San Francisco’s Palace Hotel as ther guest of a Southern Pacific officialr whom he had met at Wawona. A bell-boyr took him to the top floor in onr elevator, then showed him to his roomr and the button to push if he neededr anything.r

r r

r No sooner had the helpful bellboyr left when Pike pressed the service buttonr and upon the boy’s return askedr for a hatchet.r

r r

r “A hatchet?” The boy looked atr Pike in his cowboy hat, Levis, outdoorsmanr shirt and boots withr bewilderment.r

r r

r “Yes,” Pike rasped. “I want tor blaze a trail out of here.”r [37]r

r r

r For years, Pike guided early horsebackr visitors to Yosemite Valley andr Glacier Point. He was always over-solicitousr to any pretty woman ridingr in his party, having them ride backr of him at the head of the line. This didr not set well with the men or plainr women.r

r r

r One dusty trip, a snooty, plainr woman who was a member of the Britishr nobility became annoyed at Pike’sr inattention to her and called imperiously,r “Guide, there is somethingr wrong with my stirrup. It hurts myr foot.”r

r r

r Pike dismounted dutifully, examinedr the stirrup carefully; then announcedr in his gruff, carrying whisper,r “Lady, there ain’t nothing wrong withr that stirrup — yer blasted foot is toor big.”r

r r

r That same day, he had a uniquer chance to redeem himself with “Ladyr Bigfoot.” When the party was dismountingr r r r for lunch at Peregoy Meadow,r Pike was predictably assisting ar pretty girl from her sidesaddle. Ladyr Bigfoot became impatient, slid off herr horse unaided, and her skirt which hadr been draped around the sidesaddle,r caught on the curved saddle horn andr there she stood with her back to ther horse, her skirt up to her neck, exposedr to wind, weather and eyes.r

r r

r Quickly, Pike ran to her side, gallantlyr swept off his brood-brimmedr hat and shielded her embarrassingr state with it, at the same time unhookingr her skirt from the saddle horn.r There is no memory of what Lady Bigfootr said, if anything, as her skirt fellr into place and Pike clapped his hatr back on, but later her grateful husbandr gave the guide twenty dollarsr for his presence of mind and hat.r [37]r

r r

r It was said that Pike made morer money than any other guide of thatr time and, once, received a tip of $40.r From early tourists he had learned ther names of many plants and wildflowersr and for later parties he interspersedr that information with his tall tales.r [38]r

r r

r Besides guiding, story-telling, drinking,r chewing tobacco and caring forr his mule, Brigham, Pike had a numberr of useful talents. He hunted deer,r bear and grouse, trapped, fished, didr roadwork with a pick and shovel andr played a mean, memorable fiddle.r Even this he did with an individualr flair, using a homemade willow bowr strung with black hair pulled from ther stage horses' tails. One of his favoriter pieces was "Ten Little Injuns and Oner Old Squaw."r [39]r

r r

r Pike and his eccentricities delightedr Wawona's small boys. Jay Bruce, laterr State trapper, was an impressionable,r ambitious youngster who skinned rattlersr and sold skin and rattles tor Thomas Hill, the famous artist, forr resale in his studio. Hill paid him onlyr a dollar per skin, rattles and unpleasantr work; so Jay watched Pike speculativelyr as he spliced broken sets ofr rattles together to make one trulyr impressive string.r

r r

r Pike confided hoarsely that he wasr "fixing up some rattles for John Bull."r He fixed up stories to match his rattlesr and, once, Jay witnessed him selling ar long string to a credulous Englishmanr for a twenty dollar gold piece. Thenr Pike proceeded to treat all the barroomr loungers to "a drink on John Bull!"r

r r

r Jay "fixed up" rattles too until hisr indignant mother discovered Pike's influencer was corrupting her son.r [39]r

r r

r When he was about fifty-five, Piker died as he had lived — colorfully. Inr the summer of 1894, he took Jay'sr brother fishing and spent most of ar day wading in the river. That night hisr ankles began to swell and later he wasr treated at the Mariposa hospital. Ther *Mariposa Gazette*r for August 11, 1894,r reported that he was "threatened withr paralysis from too much exposure inr the cold water."r

r r

r He was such an outdoorsman that,r after his return to Wawona, he refusedr to move inside to the store attic, stubbornlyr insisting on sleeping as usualr in his bed on the west porch. Evenr during the cold nights of October,r though he became sicker, Pike continuedr to sleep outside, announcing onr October 30 that he felt much betterr and would soon go back to work withr the road crew. But suddenly, that afternoon,r he died.r [40]r

r r

r An inquest was held the next dayr and the official findings were “thatr the cause of death was neuralgia of ther heart, resulting from a sickness ofr about two months’ duration.”r [41]r

r r

r Pike was buried in the Wawonar graveyard in a marked grave. Ther story goes that a young couple paidr for the tombstone because once ther guide had done something chivalrousr for them.r [42]r Presumably, the wife wasr pretty! However, one Wawona old-timerr remembers that the generousr couple were Lady Bigfoot and herr husband.r [40]r [*]r

r r

r *r *Folktales are invariably clouded in obscurity, and disagreements arise as to original sourcesr and content. Some 20 Yosemite stories are told in Laurence Degnan and Douglass Hubbard’sr* r r Yosemite Yarns,r *r available from the Yosemite Natural History Association.*r

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r r

r Next: Steve Cunninghamr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Culturer

r r r

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r r r r r r r r r r r r r r

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r r

r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Steve Cunningham >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Thomas Hillr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Piker

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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STEVE CUNNINGHAM

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r r r r

r History is not always made up ofr notable events and people, but oftenr of misadventures and wanderers. Stephenr Mandeville Cunningham was onr adventurer who claimed to be the secondr white man in Yosemite Valley.r Born in New York state in 1820, her sailed around the Horn in 1849, prospectedr for gold, taught school, servedr as Justice of the Peace for Mariposar in 1852 and was associated in businessr with James Savage.r [48]r [49]r

r r

r Whether he was the second non-Indianr in Yosemite Valley or not, Cunninghamr was there in 1857 when her was “hotel-keeping and trading inr blue tent while preparing the timbersr for the building.”r [50]r Besides the pioneerr building, Cunningham built the first,r steep ladders at Vernal Fall andr helped construct the trail to the Fall.r

r r

r During the Civil War, he served forr ten months with the California Infantryr and then returned to Yosemite Valleyr and later the Mariposa Grover where he served as guide, guardianr and curio seller. Frequently, when visitorsr stayed overnight to marvel at ther Sequoias, he would give them his cabinr and sleep in a hollow tree.r [48]r

r r

r That Cunningham was intimatelyr associated with the Wawona area isr attested by the fact that he wasr Grand Marshall for a parade held Julyr 22, 1875, to celebrate the opening ofr the Wawona Road.r [51]r

r r

r In the 1870’s he filed many miningr and grazing claims in Yosemite Valley,r r r r Little Yosemite and above Bridalveilr Fall. He homesteaded land at ther mouth of Rush Creek which emptiesr into the South Fork near Cunninghamr Flat in the present public campground.r

r r

r Cunningham built a fairly-large,r 18- by 21-foot cabin there in the 1860’sr which was about 85 yards from ther South Fork of the Merced. It was constructedr with neatly-notched yellowr pine logs, had a shake roof and ar granite fireplace. He had a wood lather in it and spent his spore time using itr to make curios to sell at Mariposar Grove.r [53]r

r r

r After Cunningham’s death, ther Washburns bought his and and held itr until 1932. The rotting remains of ther cabin were cleared from the ground inr the 1940’s for the Cunningham Flatr campground.r 54r

r r

r Jack Leidig, Yosemite old-timer,r liked to tell a story about the timer Cunningham came into Mariposa forr his winter’s supply of groceries, amongr them a large slab of bacon, chunk ofr cheese, a ten pound box of crackersr and a five gallon jug of whiskey. Drivingr down the Cold Springs grade onr the old Chowchilla Mountain Road, her hit a chuckhole and the demijohnr broke.r

r r

r Moaned Cunningham, as her watched he whiskey pouring onto ther ground, “There goes half my winterr provisions!”r [12]r

r r

r In 1883, a *Mariposa Gazette* columnistr reported that Cunningham, then sixty-three,r was working on repairing ther road between Wawona and ther Mariposa Grove.r

r r

r He never married and his early enterpriser and energy deteriorated to anr old age that included drinking and anr Indian woman called “Short andr Dirty.”r [48]r

r r

r On October 5, 1898, he entered ther Sawtelle Veterans’ Hospital in Southern California.r He died July 3, 1899,r and was buried there, far from ther pines and granite of Wawona.r [55]r

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r r

r Next: Thomas Hillr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Piker

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Thomas Hill >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Famous Visitorsr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Steve Cunninghamr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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THOMAS HILL

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r Thomas Hill was not only a Western artist of world renown, he wasr Wawona's own! His daughter, Estella, married John Washburn in 1885 and Hill hadr a studio, now the recreation building, at the hotel from the year of their marriager until his death. A gushing fountain in front of a long porch made Hill's Studio ar popular place for hotel guests tor lounge as well as browse and buy.r

r r

r In addition to paintings, Hill soldr such curios as squirrel pelts, driedr flowers and rattlesnake skins. His vine-coveredr studio was crowded with ar splendid collection of Indian warr implements, bear skins and wasps'r nests.r [58]r He liked to dine on quail andr smoked cigars incessantly. He hadr studied under Paul Mayerheim inr Paris, mainly used browns and yellowsr in his paintings and did some of hisr best work when his studio was crowdedr with friends.r [59]r He was a hard andr prolific worker and thanks, partly, tor the fact that hotel guests were ther elite of the tourist trade, many of hisr Yosemite landscapes were carried tor England and Europe.r

r r

r According tor Hutchings,r Hill wasr ". . . a very genial gentleman, who hasr been everywhere, almost — if not ar little beyond — seen about as much asr most men, and can tell what he hasr seen pleasantly, including haps andr mishaps . . ."r [50]r

r r

r He was born in England September 11, 1829,r came to Massachusetts inr 1841 and moved to California for hisr health in 1861; and, later, establishedr his summer studio at Wawona and hisr winter quarters in Raymond.r

r r

r His wife, after years of invalidism,r died in the early 1900's. They had fourr r r r children and he was noted as a familyr man. He sought commercial success,r gained it, but invested his moneyr poorly and lost several small fortunes.r [15]r From 1900 on, Hill wasr constant ill health, and he died inr Raymond on June 30, 1908.r [60]r

r r

r Hill's most famous paintingr "Driving the Last Spike," had nothing tor do with Yosemite, but pictures ther driving of the last spike to unite ther transcontinental railway at Promontory, Utah,r in 1869. Not even paintersr were safe from politics, Hill found tor his dismay long before he finished ther huge painting.r

r r

r Leland Stanford, of California'sr famous Big Four, had commissioned itr for $50,000, Hill said, but he keptr having Hill rearrange the recognizabler personages in it. Of some 400 peopler pictured witnessing the union of ther two railroads, seventy were the VIP'sr of the 1860's and Stanford decreedr r who should and shouldn't be displayedr prominently.r

r r

r When a powerful opponent objectedr to Stanford's own showy place in ther painting, the rail magnate abruptlyr refused to pay for it. Hill was sick atr heart, out of four years' and pocket onr large expenditures for the canvas.r [63]r He fled east, but his health sufferedr anew in the rigorous climate and her was forced to return to the land ofr sunshine.r

r r

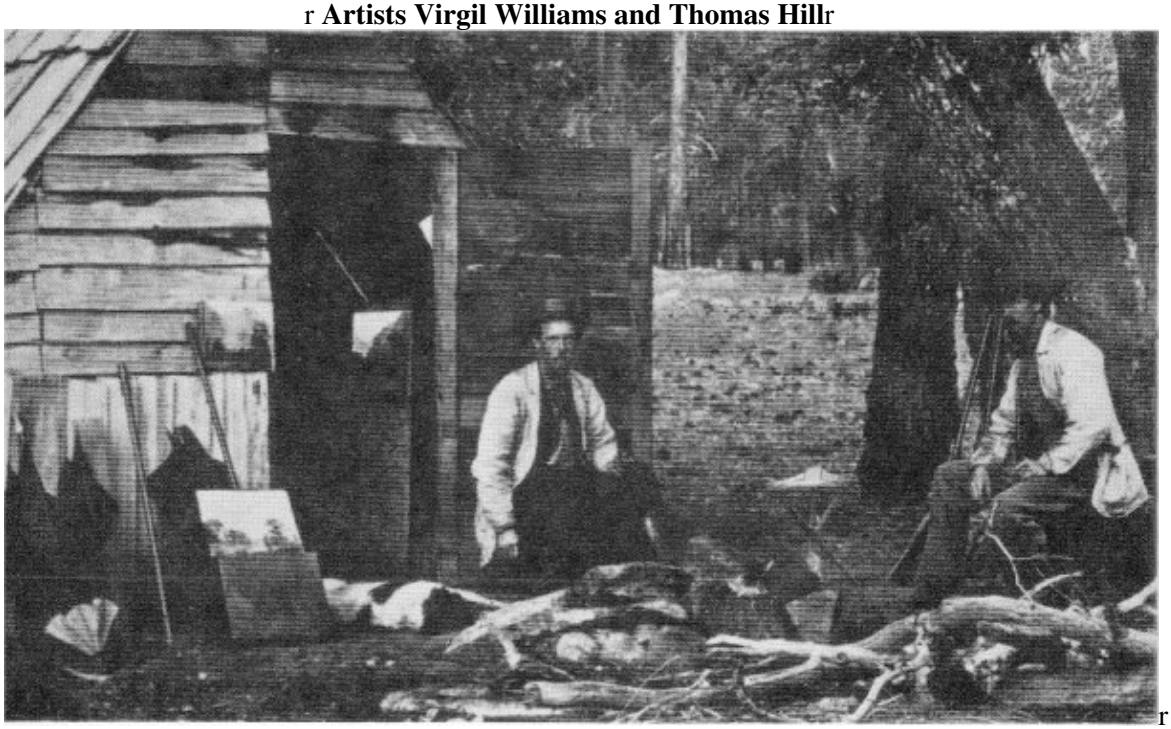
r Because of its historical significance,r the disputed painting was purchasedr for $10,000 after Hill's deathr by the E. B. Crocker Gallery of Sacramentor and hangs now in the Californiar capitol building.r

r r

r Deservedly, his fine landscapes wonr 36 medals and prizes as well as world-wider sale and written praise.r [62]r Somer of them can be viewed at the Yosemiter Museum, the Wawona Hotel and ther restored Jorgenson's Studio in ther Pioneer History Center at Wawona.r

r r r

r **Artists Virgil Williams and Thomas Hill**r



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r Next: Famous Visitorsr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Steve Cunninghamr

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r r r r r r r r r r r r r

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r r

r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Famous Visitors >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: First Rangerr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Thomas Hillr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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FAMOUS VISITORS

r r r r r

r r r **President Theodore Roosevelt arriving at the Wawona Hotel, 1903.**r r

r r r r

r George Washington didn't sleep atr the Wawona Hotel, but U. S. Grantr and Rutherford Hayes did.r [46]r

r r

r James Garfield visited Yosemite and.r Wawona as a congressman in 1875,r six years before he became Presidentr of the United States.r

r r

r Grant visited, as an ex-President, inr 1879 at the end of a world tour. Ther Mariposa brass band accompanied himr to the Wawona Hotel where he spentr the night of October 7, 1879, beforer visiting the Mariposa Grove of Bigr Trees and Yosemite Valley.r [47]r

r r

r Rutherford Hayes visited Yosemiter with a party of twelve in 1883, twor r years after his presidential term expired.r [46]r He spent one night at ther Wawona Hotel before visiting the Mariposar Grove of Big Trees.r

r r

r Hattie Bruce Harris told an amusingr story in connection with the visit ofr the William Jennings Bryan party tor the Hotel. Mrs. Bryan wanted to gor horseback riding but didn't have ther proper clothes. Jean Bruce Washburnr (Mrs. A. H.) presented the problem tor her sister-in-law, Azelia VanCampen Bruce,r who took a new skirt of herr daughter Hattie's and seamed it up,r making one of the first pair of culottes.r [36]r

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r Next: First Rangerr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Thomas Hillr

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r r r r r r r r r r r r r r

r

r r

r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona's Yesterdays >r First Ranger >r

r r

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r r r

r Next: Stella Laker •r Contentsr •r Previous: Famous Visitorsr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

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FIRST RANGER

r r r

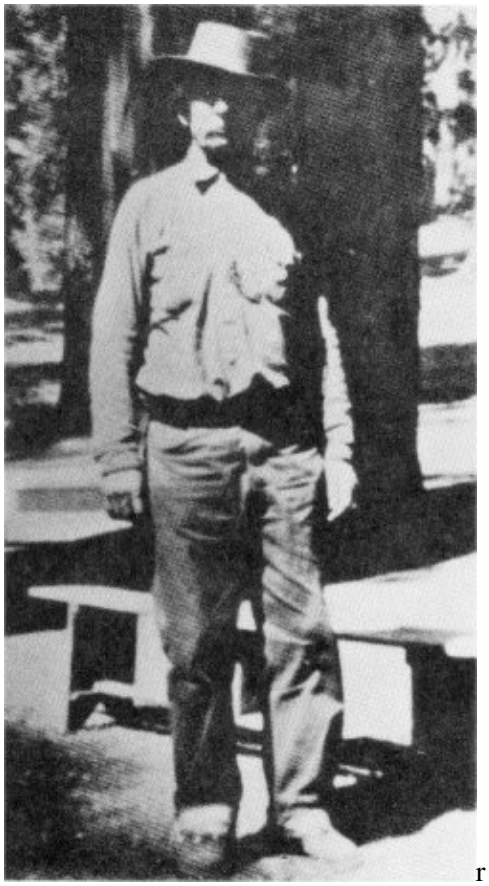
r Archie Leonard's claim to Yosemiter fame lies in the fact that he was oner the first two civilian rangers to protectr the area from fire, sheepherders,r poachers and all enemies—natural orr otherwise.r

r r

r He was an early guide in the regionr and, in 1881, had run a ten-horse packr train between Lundy and Yosemite forr a day and a half trip that cost $8.00r one way.r [3]r After 1875, he was foremanr of the Washburn road gang until ther Spanish-American War called awayr many of the troopers from their summerr Camp A. E. Wood.r [70]r

r r

r In 1899, Leonard and Charlie Leidig,r first white boy born in Yosemiter Valley, were appointed forest rangersr by the Government. During the winter,r r r r

r r  r r

r r they patrolled and guarded the vast,r forested acres of Yosemite Nationalr Park and, summers, guided andr helped patrolling troopers.r [71]rr r

r Leonard's efforts were appreciatedr and praised by different Army Actingr Superintendents in their yearly reportsr to the Secretary of Interior, and her continued to serve as a Ranger afterr 1916 when the National Park Servicer took over administration of the Park.r

r r

r Between 1914, when the soldiersr left to guard the Mexican border, andr 1916, when the NPS took over,r Leonard, Leidig and seven summerr "college boy" rangers guarded ther Park. Alan Sproul, later president ofr the Federal Reserve Bank in New Yorkr went straight to patrolling the Mariposar Grove of Big Trees from his highr school graduation and saw a lot ofr Leonard.r

r r

r In hisr r article published in the April,r 1952, issue of *Yosemite Nature Notes,*r Sproul remembered, ". . . Leonard wasr not very communicative. He was alwaysr pleasant, and I should say tolerantr of the 'college boy rangers' . . . Her knew the Park by long association andr by years of travel over its trails, butr he was too diffident, too inarticulate,r too old to share much of his knowledger with us . . . His hair was gray andr rather long, and his mustache drooped.r His uniform was a dirty slouch hat,r distinguished in its slouchiness, ar grayish-colored shirt which wouldn'tr show the dirt of a season, and overallsr (now called jeans) worn low on ther belt. He spoke in a soft, indistinctr voice, surrounded by a pleasant smile.r His badge couldn't lend him authority,r but his recognized knowledge of ther whole region did."r

r r

r A Wawona old-timer says thatr Leonard lived in a rough, board houser near the Indian camp with his half-Indian wife,r twin sons and two daughters.r [70]r He died at Stockton, Calif., onr June 19, 1921 after a career whichr added immeasurably to the preservationr of Yosemite National Park.r [72]r

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r r

r Next: Stella Laker •r Contentsr •r Previous: Famous Visitorsr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Stella Lake >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Loggingr •r Contentsr •r Previous: First Rangerr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

r r r

STELLA LAKE

r r r r r

r r  r

r **Stella Lake — Persian Wheel in Operation**r

r r r

r To the left of Forest Drive, about ar quarter mile up from the coveredr bridge are the remains of what looksr like ancient reservoir. This wasr called Stella Lake after Estella Hillr Washburn who was John Washburn'sr wife. It was a popular spot for walking,r picnicking, swimming, boating and,r at the eastern secluded end, lovers. Itr was stocked with fish, too.r

r r

r Actually, Stella Lake had been builtr by damming and diverting the riverr for an extremely practical purpose. Itr was an ice pond and summer recreationalr pleasures were incidental. Ther Washburn brothers had to have tons ofr ice to supply their hotel. By temperaturer tests, they found the coldest placer in the river and proceeded to dig ar ice pond, roughly 100 to 180 feet wider and 1,000 feet long, about 1886.r [63]r By early January, the ice on the stillr lake water would be about four and ar half inches thick. Cutting began thenr and lasted a week or so and, by thatr time, the ice would be six inchesr thick.r [64]r

r r

r The ice cut by hand into larger floating blocks, poled to the dock andr then lifted by an endless belt out ofr the lake, up and over the earth damr and into the nearby ice house. Ther belt was moved by a horse operatedr "Persian wheel" whose principle hasr been known and used for over 2,000r years.r

r r

r The horse walked around a verticalr axis which was converted by gear to ar horizontal axis. A wheel at the end ofr this ran the chain on two sprocketsr that carried the ice blocks.r [64]r

r r

r The ice house had walls eight inchesr thick, stuffed with sawdust insulation.r [64]r Sawdust can still be found onr the site of the building just below ther dam. During summers, the stored icer was used by the hotel.r

r r

r John Conway, pioneer Yosemite trailr builder, manufactured charcoal forr the blacksmith shop in a pit near ther lake.r [36]r

r r

r For years, Stella Lake was bothr pretty and practical, but after 1934,r when the Yosemite Park and Curryr Company began running the hotel, refrigerationr replaced “homemade” ice,r the lake’s banks were allowed tor crumble and, sadly, after the flood ofr 1955 it became the wreck it is today.r

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r r

r Next: Loggingr •r Contentsr •r Previous: First Rangerr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Logging >r

r r

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r r r

r Next: CCC Campr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Stella Laker

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

r r r

Logging

r r r r r

r r r **Logging Operations Near Wawona — Note "Donkey" Engines**r

r r r r

r "Timber!" was a familiar cry in ther Wawona basin area from Galenr Clark's day on, yet a surprisingly fine,r though too-thick forest has grown upr the first denuding. Extensiver since logging was done legally as the entirer Wawona area was privately ownedr until 1932.r

r r

r The Washburns sold timber rights tor their many acres to the Madera Sugarpiner Company which was responsibler for most of the logging, operating fromr the spring of 1897 until the 1930's.r They had a large mill at Sugarpine,r three miles south of Fish Camp, andr literally miles of narrow-gauge railwayr trucks. Logs were hauled to this millr on flat cars pulled by locomotivesr having geared drive wheels.r

r r

r When large lumber camps werer moved, the wooden houses were loadedr atop flat cars and rolled to newr locations.r [48]r

r r

r From the Sugarpine mill, roughr milled lumber was carried seventyr miles to Madera in an open flume.r

r r

r Such logging accounted for the destructionr of much of the fine sugarpiner stands around Wawona and for a timer severely damaged the watershed.r

r r

r The Wawona Hotel itself consumedr a great deal of lumber for buildings,r stables and shops. In 1874, along withr the lodging house, blacksmith shopr and bridge, the Washburns had purchasedr a small sawmill from Clarkr r r r and Moore.r [65]r Soon after, Albert Brucer built a water power sawmill for ther Washburns which was crushed in ther heavy snows of 1888. In the 1900'sr several Wawona homesteaders establishedr small mills and most of theirr production was sold to the Washburnsr for new buildings.r [66]r

r r

r Four of the Bruce brothers took partr in sawmill operations and aroundr Wawona. Bert Bruce did the first selectiver cutting there, taking only maturer timber and big trees on 60 acresr of the Bruce homestead. He loggedr over two million board feet and almostr all of it went into building Campr Curry.r [67]r

r r

r Bert and his brother Joy built a circularr sawmill which was powered byr r undershot Pelton water wheel withr water from Chilnualna Creek. In 1913,r Jay built another mill which furnishedr $4,000 worth of lumber which wentr into the building of an addition to ther Wawona Hotel's dining room andr kitchen. This mill was totally destroyedr by fire in 1915.r [48]r

r r

r Bill and Robert Bruce ran the sawmillr built by their older brothers inr 1912. Their lumber production wasr sold mainly to Camp Curry, althoughr some of it went into the building ofr Camp Hoyle and some to Sierra Lodger which was on the Scroggs property atr Wawona.r [68]r

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r Next: CCC Campr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Stella Laker

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r http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/wawonas_yesterdays/logging.htmlr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r CCC Camp >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Camp Hoyler •r Contentsr •r Previous: Loggingr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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C.C.C's

r r

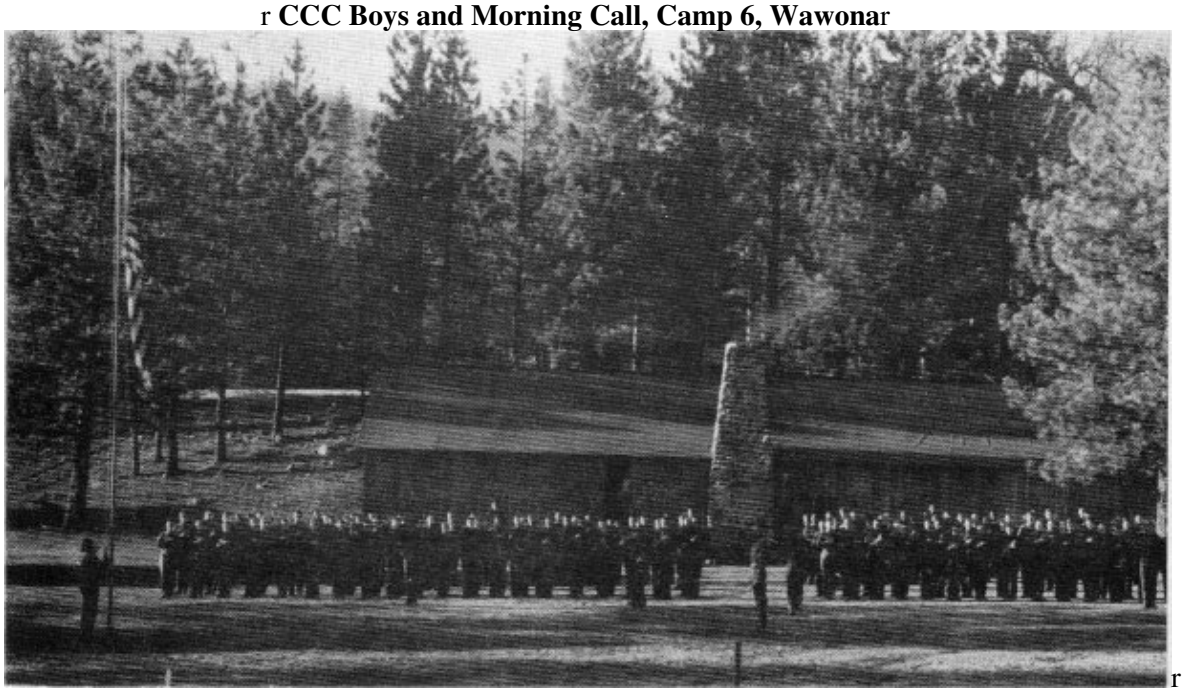
r The depression-born Civilian Conservation Corpsr benefited joblessr young men and the places theyr camped. From 1933 to 1942 the three-Cr m at Wawona built roads andr trails, removed stumps, dead trees andr debris from the forest, particularlyr r along roads in the Mariposa Grove,r and worked on control of blister rust.r

r r

r There were three CCC camps atr Wawona, two at the far end of ther meadows and a large, well-ordered oner above the Pioneer Center.r

r r r r

r **CCC Boys and Morning Call, Camp 6, Wawonar**

r r  r

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r Next: Camp Hoyler •r Contentsr •r Previous: Loggingr

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r r r r r r r r r r r r r

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Camp Hoyle >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Wildliferr •r Contentsr •r Previous: CCC Campr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

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Camp Hoyle

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r **Camp Hoyle — the Only Known Photo**r r

r r r

r Camp Hoyle was established on ther site of Camp A. E. Wood in 1922 byr Bert Hoyle who filed three miningr claims there.r [73]r He carried a flask ofr gold in his pocket to substantiate hisr claim, but Yosemite officials tried tor make him prove there was gold or silverr on it. Hoyle explained then that her had filed a claim for a granite quarryr and, since literally thousands of graniter rocks were part of the landscape,r the officials let him be.r [70]r

r r

r Hoyle's "gold"—what there was ofr it—came from tourists' wallets. Hisr up-to-date camp afforded a diningr room, fountain, store, six tents, sixr cabins and a gas station at rates belowr those of the Wawona Hotel.r [28]r

r r

r The camp catered to touring familiesr who couldn't afford hotel lodging,r fishermen, and — oddly enough —r dogs.r [74]r Dogs were not allowed in ther Park and there we no special kennelsr for them at that time so they werer left in custody of the Hoyles whiler their owners "did" the Park.r

r r

r The Park Service bought Hoyle's interestr in 1932 and demolished ther buildings in 1933. Hoyle, his wife andr two sons, moved to Long Barnr Tuolumne County where he "mined"r more tourist gold with a hotel therer until his death in 1937.r [28]r His formerr Wawona campsite became a publicr campground—now Camp A. E. Wood.r

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r Next: Wildliferr •r Contentsr •r Previous: CCC Campr

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r r r r r r r r r r r r r

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona's Yesterdays >r Wildlife >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Cemeteryr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Camp Hoyler

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

r r

WILDLIFE

r r r

r Today's Wawona campers probablyr will see deer and squirrels, maybe ar porcupine, raccoon, fox, wildcat, bear,r coyote, or beaver and, rarely, a mountainr lion.r

r r

r Frequently beavers have been observedr building dams in the smallr creek that cuts through the golf courser only yards distant from the presentr highway.r

r r r r r

r The Wawona area was a privater "island" in Yosemite until 1932, andr as such was good hunting grounds forr Indians and white men. Jay C. Bruce,r son of a Wawona settler and Stater Lion Hunter for 28 years, estimatesr that he shot 40 mountain lions, 40r wildcats and 11 black bears aroundr Wawona between 1915 and 1932.r [39]r

r r

r Two grizzly bears were killed nearr Wawona in the late 1800's. One skin,r roughly eight by five, hung in Hill'sr Studio from 1887 until 1918 when ther Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at ther University of California purchased it.r [44]r

r r

r Now, it is kept in a refrigeratedr room for "long time preservation."r [45]r

r r

r Many men visiting Yosemite are interested,r almost obsessively, in oner thing—fishing! John L. Murphy, early-dayr guide, was the first to anticipater this popular, recreational demand byr stocking Tenaya Lake in 1878.r [31]r

r r

r In 1895, the Washburns establishedr fish hatcheryr [3]r at Wawona wherer a Big Creek empties into the South Forkr of the Merced. It was operated by ther State and, each spring for ten years,r Army troopers distributed thousandsr of trout in the streams, rivers and lakesr of Yosemite National Park.r

r r

r The hatchery was torn down in 1933r by the CCCr [46]r after it had been succeededr by a larger one in Yosemiter Valley which in turn was superseded inr 1957 by the fish hatcheries atr Moccasin Creek and the San Joaquin.r [47]r

r r

r Today's fishermen owe thanks tor these State Hatcheries that plant overr a million fingerlings a year in Yosemite,r and to the tireless troopers whor first distributed the breeding stockr which has had much to do with ther present fish population in the Yosemiter back country.r

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r Next: Cemeteryr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Camp Hoyler

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r http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/wawonas_yesterdays/wildlife.htmlr

r r r r r r r r r r r r r r

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona's Yesterdays >r The Cemetery >r

r r

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r r r

r Next: Chilnualna Fallsr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Wildliferr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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THE CEMETERY

r r

r Wawona's Boot Hill lies on the lowr hill a tenth of a mile north of ther Pioneer Center, behind and above ther stables. There are two parts to thisr rude, unremembered graveyard, bothr surrounded by neat, brown fences.r Their are no memories or markers forr the smaller plot, just pine-needledr ground and the mysterious fence.r

r r

r When ranger-naturalist Jack F. Fryr began putting frustrating weeksr interviewing old-timers and searchingr Mariposa County records, he couldn'tr "find enough people to fill the gravesr that were obviously there." Afterr checking "various accounts of who isr buried there, I have too many peopler for the graves!"r [56]r

r r

r Three of the graves have woodenr markers. Nathan B. Phillips (see Pike),r r H. R. Sargent and John L. Yates arer so remembered. Reportedly, Sargentr was either a carpenter or a stage driverr who died in 1878 or 1879.r [42]r Yatesr was an Army private, stationed atr Camp A. E. Wood, who drowned Augustr 2, 1905, in the Merced River tryingr to save Mary Garrigan who drownedr too.r [57]r

r r

r Presumably, Bush-head Tom (seer Indians) is buried in one of the unmarkedr graves, as are two suicide victimsr and possibly John Hammond andr Homer or Jim Snedecker.r [42]r

r r

r It is hoped that some of the confusionr and mystery that mark thisr graveyard's history may be cleared upr by readers of this brief account sor that the occupants may rest inr remembered peace.r

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r r

r Next: Chilnualna Fallsr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Wildliferr

r r r

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r r r r r r r r r r r r r

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Chilnualna Falls >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Pioneer Yosemite History Centerr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Cemeteryr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

r r r

CHILNUALNA FALLS

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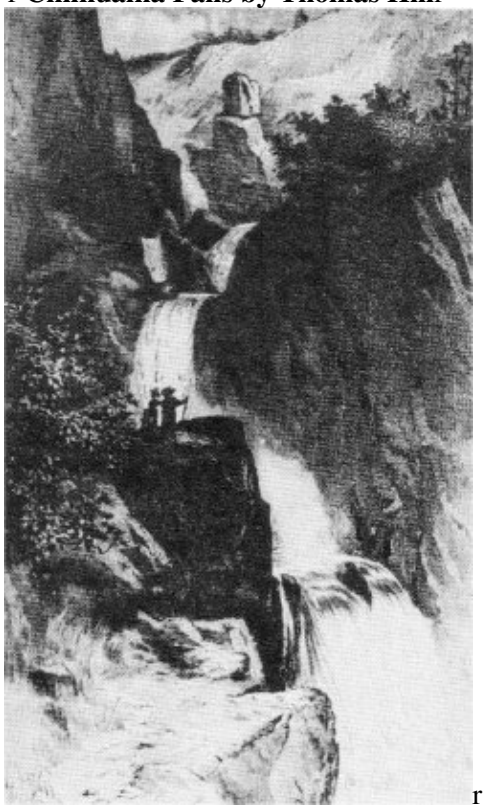
r Yosemite visitors admire Yosemiter Falls, Bridalveil, Ribbon, Vernal andr Nevada Falls. Even if they do not hiker up to see the latter two, they can viewr them from Glacier Point or on a "livingr color" postcard.r

r r

r Lovely, little-known Chilnualna Fallsr (pronounced Chilnoo-al-na) cannot ber seen from an automobile nor is it picturedr on a card, but those willing andr able to take the 4.1 mile trail will ber awed by the boisterous foaming seriesr of cascades and cataracts that formr the falls during the spring of the year.r r r

r **Chilnualna Falls by Thomas Hill**r

r r  r

r r r The upper trail, built by John Conwayr for Washburns in 1895,r [69]r starts fromr the Chilnualna Park road, 1.6 milesr east of the main road (see map.)rr r

r Another short foot trail to the baser of the lower falls takes off from ther parking place 1.9 miles east of Wawonar Road. This was built in 1870 byr Albert Bruce, John Washburn and twor Chinese on land that is still privater todayr [60]r The view, while well-worthr seeing, is ordinary compared to ther spectacular one

afforded from ther longer, steeper trail to the upper falls.r

r r

r According to one source Chilnualnar means “leaping waters” and was so-namedr by the Piute Indians.r [69]r Anotherr Wawona native insists that on Indianr told him that Chilnualna means “manyr rocks” because the falls are in a veryr rocky canyon.r [66]r [Editor’s note:r the origin of the word *Chilnualna*r is unknown.—dea]r

r r

r Thomas Hill did a pen and ink drawingr of the falls in 1886 to illustrater James Hutchings’ bookr *In the Heart of the Sierras,*r and later painted them.r

r r

r John Washburn had a preemptionr claim on the lower falls prior to 1885.r There he had tables, benches and ar picnic ground, built a foot bridge outr onto a large rock, and made the arear a regular stage stop for visitors. Thousandsr knew the lower fall and otherr thousands received postcards of it,r then sold at the Wawona Hotel.r

r r

r After Albert Bruce homesteaded ther area which included the lower Falls inr 1885, they were no longer a stoppingr place. People have so desecrated fernsr and woodwardia there that the Brucesr have posted no tresspassing signs andr wrathily stop unwelcome, would-ber visitors.r [69]r

r r

r The longer, upper fall trail is onr Park property and the falls and cascadesr splash unconcernedly down, appreciatedr only by the exploring hikerr or photographer, but remembered byr all who have observed their singular,r neglected beauties.r

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r Next: Pioneer Yosemite History Centerr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Cemeteryr

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r r

r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Pioneer Yosemite History Center >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Sourcesr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Chilnualna Fallsr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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PIONEER YOSEMITE HISTORY CENTER

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r r r **The Original Wawona Bridge — Photo Taken in 1866**r

r r r

r For 103 years the covered bridge hasr spanned the South Fork of the Mercedr River at Wawona. From 1857 whenr Galen Clark built it, "it existed ar simple, open structure (see cut) untilr 1875 when the Washburn brothers rebuiltr it as a covered bridge reminiscentr of their native Vermont. It carriedr all traffic—foot, horse, stage andr car—until 1931 when modern concreter bridge on the new Wawona roadr replaced it.[”]r

r r

r After its back was broken by ther damaging floods of 1955, the coveredr bridge was restored authentically andr painstakingly, even to using squarer nails,r [75]r by the National Park Servicer under its ambitious Mission 66 program.r

r r

r It stands now as the only coveredr bridge left in any National Park andr one of the few in the West. It is usedr r daily by horses and visitors as the central feature of ther Pioneer Yosemite History Center.r On the south sider of the river in the old wagon shop arer historical exhibits showing the transportationr used by early pioneers. Onr the north side is a collection of authentic,r historic buildings, furnished tor show the type of housing the pioneersr had—including the fieldstone jail.r

r r

r Ther Pioneer Centerr which openedr officially in 1961, attracts many visitorsr who appreciate its unique historicalr values. It is significant that theser old buildings are gathered together atr Wawona where the first pioneer activityr of any magnitude took place in ther early 1850's. Exhibits, self-guidingr pamphlets and tape recordings in eachr building assure visitors of sharing ther history of Yosemite and its humanr builders.r

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r Next: Sourcesr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Chilnualna Fallsr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona's Yesterdays >r Sources >r

r r

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r r r

r Next: Bibliographyr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Pioneer Yosemite History Centerr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

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r *MG — Mariposa Gazette*r
r a.c. — author's collectionr
r YNP Yosemite National Parkr
r Unless otherwise noted all materials are in Yosemite Museum collections.r

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r r 48.r (p. 85, 86) Degnan letter, Jan. 19,r 1961, a.c.r (p. 88, 94, 95) Driscoll Mss., Julyr 13, 1936r r
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r r 50.r *In the Heart of Sierras,* Hutchings,r 1886r r
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r r 52.r Land Claims, 1870, Mariposar Countyr r
r r 53.r r *YNN,* Sept., 1956r r
r r 54.r Russell letter, Feb., 1961, a.c.r r
r r 55.r Sawtelle letter, Feb. 4, 1952r r
r r 56.r Fry letter, Feb. 15, 1961r r
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r r r r

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r r

r Next: Bibliographyr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Pioneer Yosemite History Centerr

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r http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/wawonas_yesterdays/sources.htmlr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Bibliography >r

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r r r

r Next: Indexr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Bibliographyr

r r r

r r r r r

r r r

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r r

r Next: Indexr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Bibliographyr

r r r

r

r r

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r http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/wawonas_yesterdays/bibliography.htmlr

r r r r r r r r r r r r r

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Photo Credits >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Chronologyr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Indexr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

r r r

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r r r r

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r r

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r Page 65: r Anderson, N.P.S.r r
r Page 66: r Watkinsr r
r Page 67: r Watkins (orig. at Stanford U.)r r
r Page 68: r Boysen (Stereo)r r
r Page 69: r Boysenr r
r Page 71: r Unknownr r
r Page 73: r H. B. Harrisr r
r Page 74: r Pidgeonr r
r Page 75: r Fiske (courtesy L. Degnan)r r
r Page 76: r U. S. Armyr r
r Page 77: U. S. Armyr r
r Page 79: Pidgeonr r
r Page 80: Unknownr r
r Page 82-83: r N.P.S. (From an original map by Y. R Solomons)r r
r Page 85: r Bradey and Rulofsonr r
r Page 88: r Fisker r
r Page 90: r Watkins (Stereo)r r
r Page 91: r Boysenr r
r Page 92: r Unknownr r
r Page 93: r Anderson, N.P.S.r r
r Page 94: r Pidgeonr r
r Page 95: r N.P.S.r r
r Page 96: r E. Hoyle, Long Barn, Calif.r r
r Page 98: r Hill (From Hutchings,r r **In The Heart Of the Sierras**)r r r
r Page 99: Watkins (Stanford U.)r r
r Back Cover: Hubbard, N.P.S.r

r r r r

r r

r Next: Chronologyr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Indexr

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r http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/wawonas_yesterdays/photo_credits.htmlr

r r r r r r r r r r r r r

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Chronology >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Back Coverr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Photo Creditsr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

r r r

WAWONA CHRONOLOGY

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r 1851 Nutchu Indian camp at Wawona "surprised and captured" byr Mariposa Battalion led by Major James D. Savage.r r
r 1855 Mann brothers built toll horse trail from Wawona to Yosemite Valley.r Finished in 1856.r r
r 1856 Galen Clark homesteaded, established crude overnight lodging-houser at Wawona.r r
r 1857 Clark built an open bridge over South Fork of Merced River.r r
r 1864 Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove of Big Trees granted to Californiar as public trust. Administered by Board of Commissioners.r r
r 1869 Edwin Moore acquired half interest in Clark's Station.r r
r 1874 Washburn, Coffman and Chapman bought hotel, blacksmith shop,r sawmill and open bridge from Clark and Moore, December 26.r r
r 1875 Stephen M. Cunningham grand marshal for parade celebrating openingr of Wawona stage road from Wawona to Yosemite Valley, June 12.r r
r 1882 Washburn brothers formed Yosemite Stage & Turnpike Co.r r
r 1885 Artist Thomas Hill established studio at Wawona Hotel.r r
r 1888 Six feet of snow.r r
r 1890 Yosemite created a National Park.r r
r 1891 Army headquarters — Camp A. E. Wood — established of Wawona.r r
r 1892 Wawona school opened in May with James Hutchings' daughter firstr teacher.r r
r 1895 State fish hatchery erected.r r
r 1904 Army began arboretum across river from Camp A. E. Wood.r r
r 1905 Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove re-ceded to US to become partr of Yosemite National Park.r
r Camp A. E. Wood abandoned as troops move to Yosemite Valley.r r
r 1914 Army withdrawal. Replaced by civilian rangers.r r
r 1916 Yosemite under jurisdiction of newly-created Notional Park Service.r Last Washburn stagecoach driven by J. K. Ashworth in May.r r
r 1917 Nine-hole golf course, air strip and hotel building added.r r
r 1922 Camp Hoyle built on site of Army camp.r r
r 1925 Airplane landed on Wawona field, December 8.r r
r 1932 Wawona basin, 8,785 acres, bought by National Park Service.r
r Wawona Hotel operated by Yosemite Park and Curry Co.r r
r 1933 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camps established upper endr Wawona Meadows.r r
r 1937 Flood.r r
r 1942 CCC discontinued.r r
r 1955 Flood wrecked Stella Lake and badly damaged covered bridge.r r
r 1957 Covered bridge authentically reconstructed.r r
r 1959 Old Yosemite buildings moved to Yosemite Pioneer Center at Wawona.r r
r 1961 Pioneer Center officially opened.r

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r Next: Back Coverr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Photo Creditsr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Back Cover >r

r r

r

r r r

r Contentsr •r Previous: Chronologyr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

r r r

Back Cover

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r An Open Door To Adventurer

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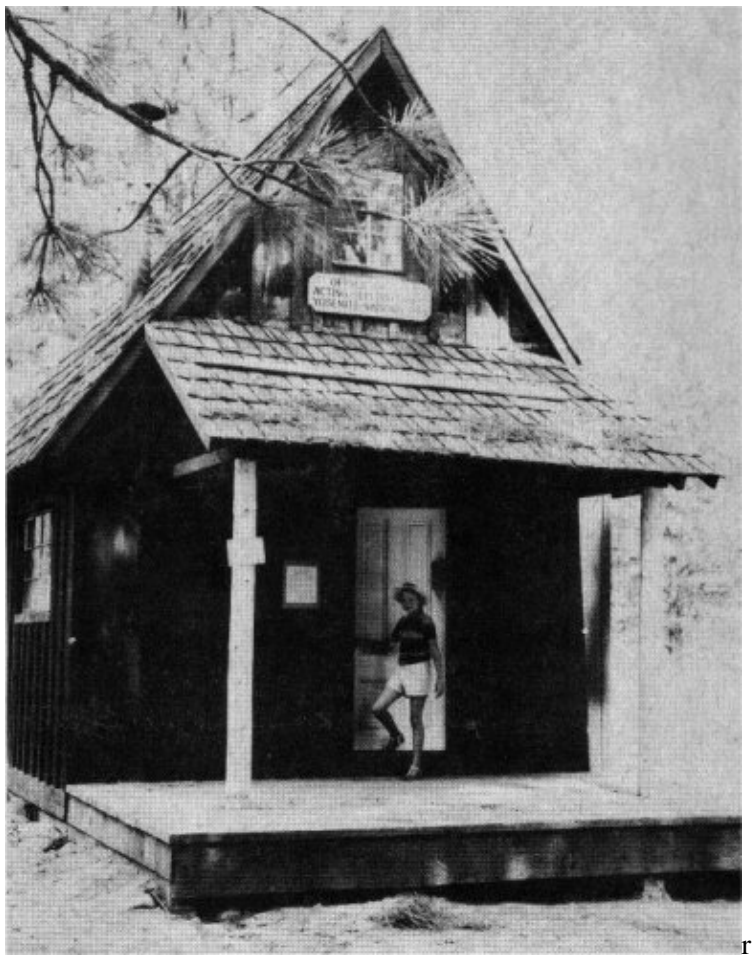

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r PIONEER YOSEMITE HISTORY CENTERr

r Wawonar

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r r

r Contentsr •r Previous: Chronologyr

r r r

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r

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r http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/wawonas_yesterdays/back_cover.htmlr

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r Index >r

r r

r

r r r

r Next: Photo Creditsr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Bibliographyr

r r r

Wawona's Yesterdays (1961) by Shirley Sargent

r r r r r

r r r

INDEX

r r r r

A

r r

r r r

B

r r

r r

C

r r

r r

D

r r

r r

E

r r

r r

F

r r

r r

G

r r

r r

H

r r

r r

I

r r

r Indians 75r

r r r r r

K

r r

r Kiel, Jarvis 73r
r King, Clarence 67r
r Kneeland, Samuuel 75r

r r

L

r r

r Lawrence, Jimmy 75r
r Leidig, Chas. 92r
r Leidig, Jack 89r
r Leeper, William H. 73r
r Leitch, Bruce M. 71, 73r
r Leonard, Archie 85, 92r

r r

M

r r

r Madera Sugarpine Co. 94r
r Mann Brothers 79r
r Mariposa Battalion 64, 75r
r Mariposa Grove 64, 65, 67-68, 76r 77, 81, 88, 89r 91, 92, 95r
r Mariposa (Town) 67, 69, 71, 72r 75, 79, 80, 89, 91r
r May, James D. 73r
r Miami Lodge 72r
r Mission 66 99r
r Monroe, George 84r
r Moore, Edwin 68, 79r
r Mormon Bar 69r
r Muir, John 64’ 66r
r Murphy, John 97r

r r

N

r r

r r

P

r r

r r

R

r r

r r

S

r r

T

U

V

W

Y

r r

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r r

r Next: Photo Creditsr •r Contentsr •r Previous: Bibliographyr

r r r

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r Yosemite > Library >r Wawona’s Yesterdays >r

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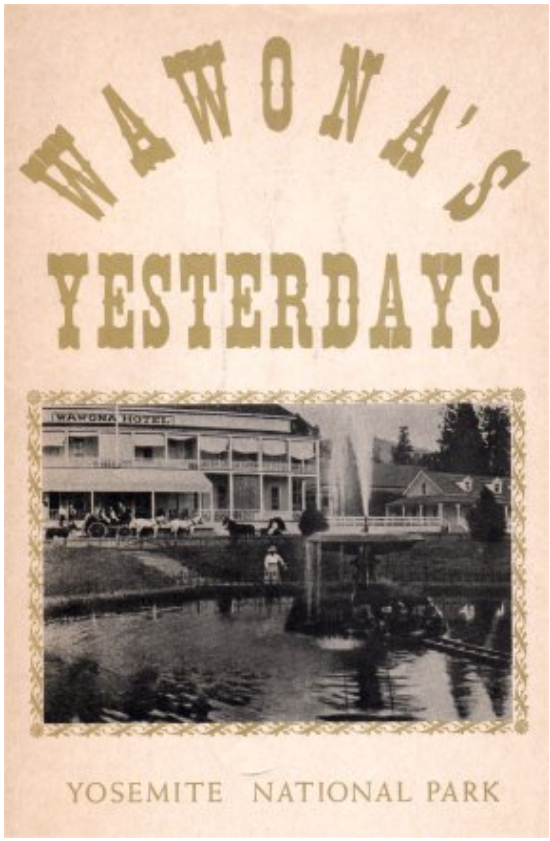

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- Homesteaders

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- Indians

r
- Camp A. E. Wood

r
- Arboretum

r
- Roads and Trails

r
- Stages and Drivers

r
- Culture

r
- “Pike”

r
- Steve Cunningham

r
- Thomas Hill

r
- Famous Visitors

r
- First Ranger

r
- Stella Lake

r
- Logging

r
- CCC Camp

r
- Camp Hoyle

r
- Wildlife

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About the Author

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r Shirley Sargent was born July 12, 1927 in Pasadena, California.r Her father, jobless because of the Depression, moved to Yosemite in 1936r to work as a surveyor helping rebuild the Tioga Road.r So she had the good fortune of spending her childhood as a self-describedr “tomboy” in Yosemite.r A rare crippling

disease kept her to a wheelchair from age 14, but thatr didn't stop her.r Sargent received a AA from Pasadena City College in 1947 and worked as a nursery school teacher in Pasadena.r In 1961 she moved to Foresta, near Yosemite Valley.r

r r

r After writing *Wawona's Yesterdays,*r Sargent went on to write several other Yosemite History books,r focusing on stories about people—making them come alive.r Her most authoritative book is *Galen Clark: Yosemite Guardian.*r Shirley self-published most of her books, with printer and historianr Hank Johnson, under the name Flying Spur Press,r and later under her own imprint Ponderosa Press.r Other popular books of hers includer *Pioneers in Petticoats,*r *John Muir in Yosemite National Park,*r *Yosemite & Its Innkeepers,*r and *Yosemite Chapel 1879-1989*.r

r

r In 1961 she bought and built on Theodore Solomon's homesite in Foresta,r which had only a fireplace surviving from a 1936 fire.r She called her home Flying Spur, but it burned in the 1990 A-Rock Fire,r which also destroyed her historical papers.r She rebuilt her home, but before her death she had to mover to her parents' old home in Mariposa, due to her illness.r She died at her home in Mariposa, California December 3, 2004.r

r r

r
- Fernando Peñalosa, "In Memoriam: Shirley Sargent, Yosemite Historian,"r *Yosemite* 67:1, pp. 6-7 (Winter 2005).r

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