

WATKINS: Of What Earthly Use Is History? MUIR: A Geologist's
Winter Walk. RIGNEY: Bird Banding on the Eastern Slope.
JOHNSTON: The Cosmopolitan Saloon.

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A Landscape Fantasy

A Landscape Fantasy

Tim Palmer

Photographs by William Neill

Editor's note: *The following article is excerpted from the newly-published Yosemite – The Promise of Wildness, with photographs by William Neill. This beautiful, large format, full-color volume includes two photographic portfolios and an incisive essay, and is the latest publication from the Yosemite Association.*

Yosemite National Park

may be the scenic highlight of America, and Yosemite Valley is the highlight of the Park. The Valley is the elegant climax to the entire Sierra, and for that matter, to anything. Cliffs rise skyward. Waterfalls leap over the rim to be pushed aside by winds and then to smash onto rocks and hiss outward as riffling rivers, bubbling, glistening, perfectly clear.

Ponderosa pines put on the weight of cambium easily and achieve a statuesque thickness in shady groves at meadow edges. And the meadows, they stretch up and down. From their centers the world of cliffs, waterfalls, and forests seems to revolve as in the kaleidoscope of childhood dreams, pure landscape fantasy, the kinds of dreams one might choose to die with given adequate presence of mind. Put simply, Yosemite Valley is for many a vision of Eden, of heaven, of paradise.

This is Yosemite Valley as it

once was and as it remains in sites of isolation. In my visits to the Valley, I always seek out those epicenters of scenery: the utterly sacred Leidig Meadow, the precipitous cliffs above Yosemite Falls, the wind-blessed base of Bridalveil Fall, the open elegance of El Capitan Meadow, the tranquil Merced

ing city, with one, two, and sometimes three cars per site, is Curry Village, a complex of 628 overnight units and related facilities stretching for half a mile beneath the splendid granite apron of Glacier Point.

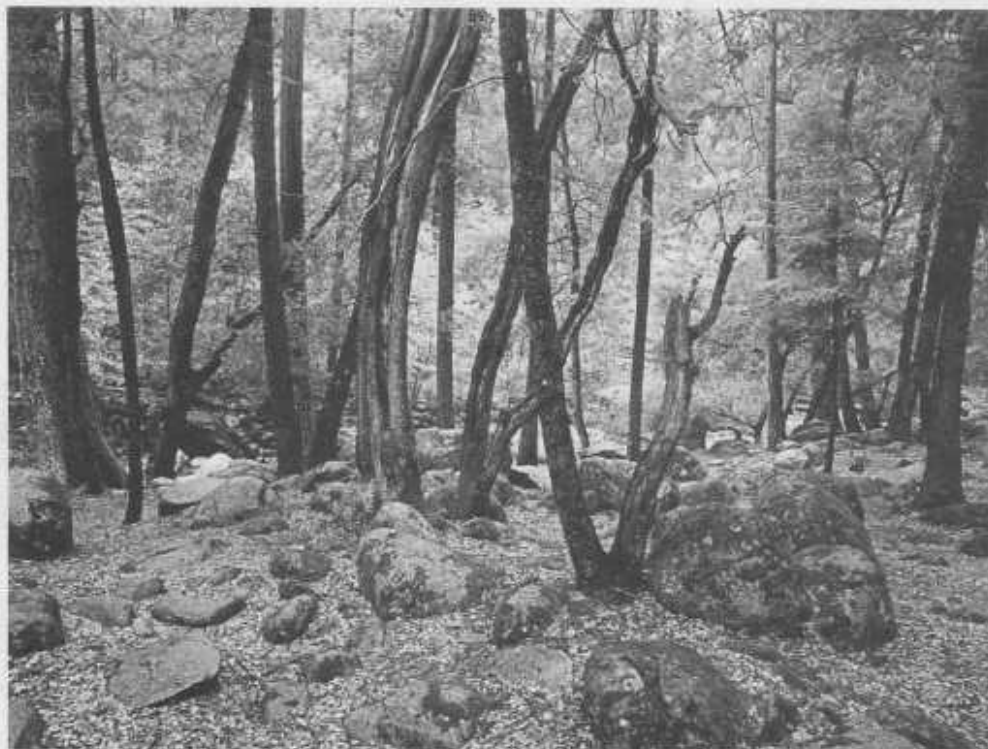
Nearby, Stoneman Meadow beckons as a grassy enclave, a quarter-mile long. Just down-

across the river and to the north, a stately 99-room luxury facility with 24 cottage units sprinkled in the nearby woods of fir and pine. Guests at the hotel enjoy views of spectacular cliffs just outside the windows. To the southwest lies the Camp 6 complex of tents, house trailers, chain-link fences, a construction material-boneyard, and parked semi-truck trailers, from which the view to Half Dome is spectacular.

Ahwahnee Meadow runs for a quarter mile, bordered by frame houses and an apartment complex for the concessionaire's full-time staff. This neighborhood is adjoined by a bus garage and fire department, and then by a grocery and general store, gift shop, hamburger stand, deli, pizza and ice cream store, post office, Park Service visitor center, Park Service office build-

ings, warehouses, heavy equipment parking areas, school, and ranger housing, the total agglomeration of Yosemite Village and related infrastructure continuing for nearly a mile. Much of this can be avoided by adhering to the riverfront or to strips of meadows, though roads flank the river and the meadows on either side, and the loudspeaker of an open-air tram regularly announces scenery that I prefer to identify on my own or leave unnamed.

Sunset from the summit of Mount Hoffmann, 1986.



Riparian forest, Happy Isles, 1983.

at Cathedral Rocks. But the Valley is much more than what I see in my carefully selected views. This time, I wanted to see the whole thing.

Striving to overlook nothing, I spend a day walking through the place from end to end. At the Valley's uppermost reach, the Happy Isles Nature Center is a building reached only by shuttle bus, uncompromised by other traffic. My path soon enters Upper Pines, the first of five campgrounds that run back-to-back for about three miles of meandering Merced River frontage. Near this camp-

river from the campgrounds is Housekeeping Camp, 280 overnight units that consist of tent fabric attached to concrete walls. The lower row of these semi-permanent tents almost reaches the Merced River's bank, which has been ripped with rocks like those streams declared nuisances in urban areas. In deference to the tent-cabins, boulders have been dumped here to prevent the Merced's natural claim to its flood plain.

The Ahwahnee Hotel lies



Following Yosemite Village, I cross Yosemite Creek, and just beyond I walk through the Yosemite Lodge complex. Here, 495 overnight units can be found in motels and cabins, along with employee housing, a swimming pool, and other amenities. This half-mile-long improved site culminates in a 15-pump gas station.

The lower four miles of the Valley are mostly undeveloped and include the splendor of Leidig Meadow with its views to Yosemite Falls, Half Dome, and Sentinel Rock. Farther down the Valley lie the granite monolith of El Capitan and the framed beauty of Bridalveil Fall. Two roads, however, run the length of the Valley, which is only half a mile wide. The greatest distance a person may escape from a paved roadway is 1,000 feet, less than one-fifth of a mile,

or the length of a city block. A one-way road enters the Valley on the south side, the other road exits the Valley on the north side. The paralleling roads each carry heavy loads of cars and busses in a constant stream of traffic. Thus, any walk across Yosemite Valley requires two busy road crossings. It is dangerous to claim superlatives for any landscape, but it seems safe to say that Yosemite Valley is, indeed, the most beautiful median strip in the world.

There are two ways of looking at all this. The first is to appreciate that the scenery

captures the eye as some of the most breathtaking in the world. One's view can overtop the roads and the buildings and see the cliffs and the falls. One can walk off the roads and the bike paths and onto trails that cross the meadows.

The second approach is to observe that almost any view in

For a more satisfying view of the Valley, I sought out one of the spots most distant from roads or development. On Sunday afternoon, while latecomers still entered and other visitors began their return to California cities, the sounds of traffic were loud on both sides of the Valley. But I focused on

and gleaming, regarded as the largest exposed mass of granite in the world. I felt incredibly good inside, both shielded and excited by what lay around me.

Here, I may be convinced that Yosemite has been preserved and managed for its highest intrinsic values, for the

effect that its natural features have on the human spirit. But I was puzzled by the question: Is Yosemite Valley regarded as a revered place, or is it simply used as a better backdrop for recreation and tourism? Is this a place of pilgrimage, or just a backdrop of cliffs and waterfalls, a scenic resort like those we find at Tahoe, Mammoth, or Monterey?

While many people no longer come to Yosemite because of the crowds and development, the Valley

remains a place of reverence even to them. All the while, the numbers of visitors grow and the management of the park is adjusted to serve them.

Now that I had seen Yosemite in all its seasons, from its remote landforms and from its most popular asphalt strips, I stopped to wonder. Can this Valley accommodate the crowds of the future and still survive as a sacred and special place?



Alder, lichen and granite in Yosemite Valley, 1984.

the scene, on the abridged version of beauty before me.

The river ruffled past, as peaceful as in the paradise of my mind's eye. The Merced's sibilance marked an interlude between its crashing drops from the Sierra high country and its tumultuous rush down the gorge below. A ponderosa pine grew rigidly out of that fertile soil to shelter me as I leaned against its great, golden-barked trunk and stared at the soaring rise of El Capitan, white

the Valley includes at least some evidence of roads or buildings or both. Through the middle third of the Valley, the section most gifted with scenic wonders, it is only by gazing at details on the ground or by telescoping our vision outward to sublime landmarks that we are afforded a view lacking the cars, pavement, and buildings that typify the cities that people have abandoned. To enjoy the natural scene only, we must crop off the foreground, or the left, or the right, and usually all three, as we create our contrived frame of reference.

Black oaks along the Merced River against El Capitan, 1985.



A Geologist's Winter Walk

John Muir
Illustrated by Fiona King

Editor's note: This story, which originally appeared in *Muir's Steep Trails* (1998), is excerpted from *The Wild Muir - Twenty-two of John Muir's Greatest Adventures*, a recent publication of the Yosemite Association. The stories, covering Muir's entire life, were selected and introduced by Lee Stetson, and illustrated with scratchboard drawings by Fiona King.

In the winter of 1872, John Muir spent two weeks in San Francisco, "terribly dazed and confused with the dust and din and heavy sticky air of that low region." Fleeing the lowlands, he returned to the Yosemite Valley in late December and decided to explore the full length of the Tenaya Canyon, which had never been done before. Muir's reaction to his fall on the canyon wall — his humorous address to his wayward feet and subsequent self-punishment — is reminiscent of a similar response when he nearly drowned as a boy at Fountain Lake. This event was first described in a letter to Muir's good friend, Mrs. Jeanne Carr. — LEE STETSON

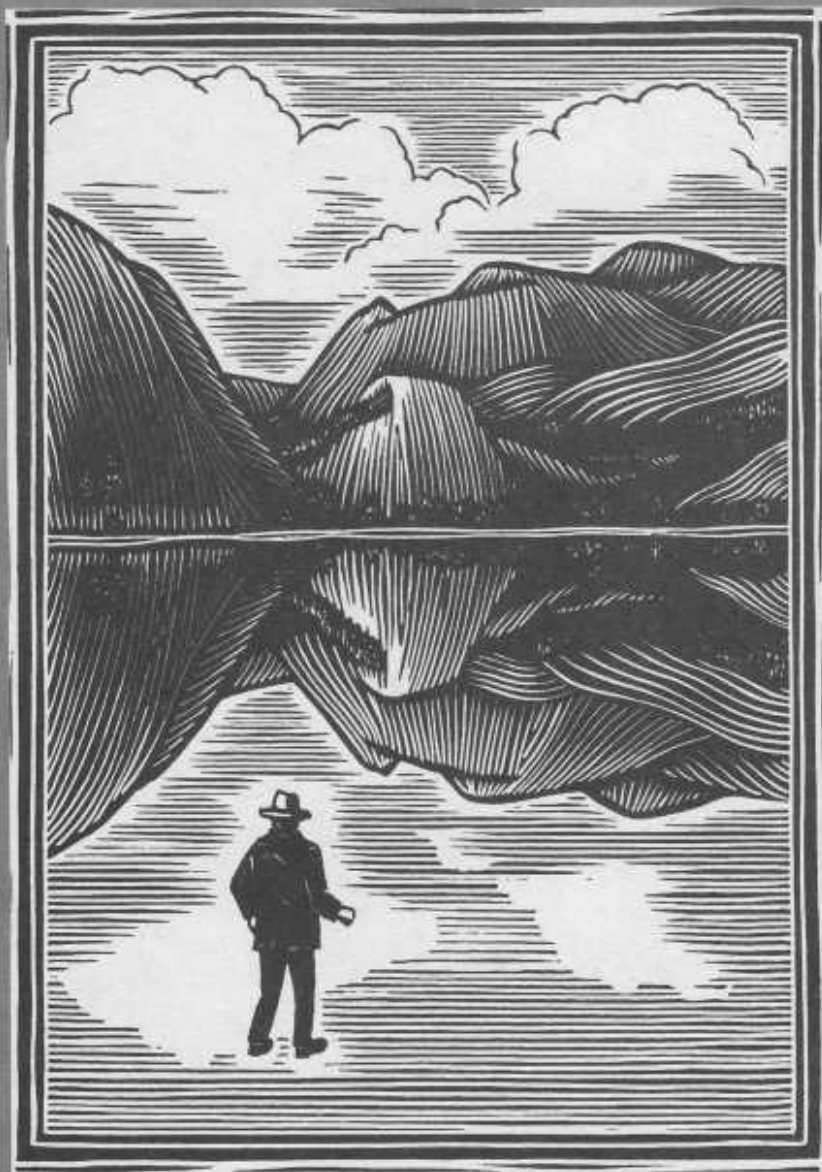
Winter Walk

After reaching Turlock, I sped afoot over the stubble fields and through miles of brown hemizonia and purple edigeron, to Hopeton, conscious of little more than that the town was behind and beneath me, and the mountains

above and before me; on through the oaks and chaparral of the foothills to Couiterville, and then ascended the first great mountain step upon which grows the sugar pine. Here I slackened pace, for I drank the spicy, resinous wind, and beneath the arms of this noble tree I felt that I was safely home. Never did pine trees seem so dear. How sweet was their breath and their song, and how grandly they winnowed the sky! I tingled my fingers among their tassels, and rustled my feet among their

brown needles and burrs, and was exhilarated and joyful beyond all I can write.

When I reached Yosemite, all the rocks seemed talkative, and more telling and lovable than ever. They are dear friends, and seemed to have warm blood gushing through their granite flesh; and I love them with a love intensified by long and close companionship. After I had bathed in the bright river, sauntered over the meadows, conversed with the domes, and played with the pines, I still felt blurred and weary, as if



tainted in some way with the sky of your streets. I determined, therefore, to run out for a while to say my prayers in the higher mountain temples. "The days are sunful," I said, "and, though now winter, no great danger need be encountered, and no sudden storm will block my return, if I am watchful."

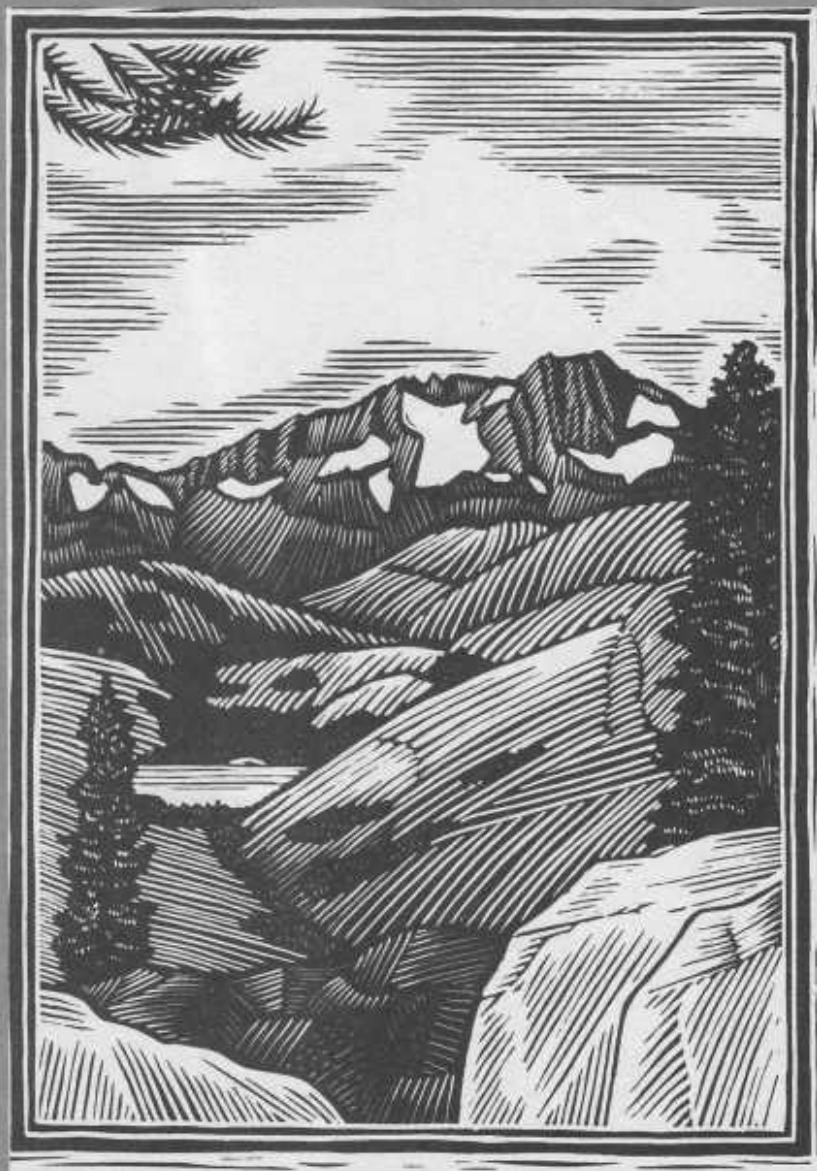
The morning after this decision, I started up the cañon of Tenaya, caring little about the quantity of bread I carried; for, I thought, a fast and a storm and a difficult cañon were just the medicine I needed. When I passed Mirror Lake, I scarcely noticed it, for I was absorbed in the great Tissiack — her crown a mile away in the hushed azure; her purple granite drapery flowing in soft and graceful folds down to my feet, embroidered gloriously around with deep, shadowy forest. I have gazed on Tissiack a thousand times — in days of solemn storms, and when her form shone divine with the jewelry of winter, or when veiled in living clouds; and I have heard her voice of winds, and snowy, tuneful waters when floods were falling; yet never did her soul reveal itself more impressively than now. I hung about her skirts, lingering timidly, until the higher mountains and glaciers compelled me to push up the cañon.

This cañon is accessible only to mountaineers, and I was anxious to carry my barometer and clinometer through it, to obtain sections and altitudes, so I chose it as the most attractive highway. After

I had passed the tall groves that stretch a mile above Mirror Lake, and scrambled around the Tenaya Fall, which is just at the head of the lake groves, I crept through the dense and spiny chaparral that plushes the roots of the mountains here for miles in warm green, and was ascending a precipitous rock-front, smoothed by glacial action, when I suddenly fell — for the first time since I touched foot to Sierra rocks. After several somersaults, I became insensible from the shock, and when consciousness returned I found myself wedged among short, stiff bushes, trembling as if cold, not injured in the slightest.

Judging by the sun, I could not have been insensible very long; probably not a minute, possibly an hour, and I could not remember what made me fall, or where I had fallen from; but I saw that if I had rolled a little further, my mountain-climbing would have been finished, for just beyond the bushes the cañon

wall steepened and I might have fallen to the bottom. "There," said I, addressing my feet, to whose separate skill I had learned to trust night and day on any mountain, "that is what you get by intercourse with stupid town stairs, and dead pavements." I felt degraded and worthless. I had not yet reached the most difficult portion of the cañon, but I determined to guide my humbled body over the most nerve-trying places I could find; for I was now awake, and felt confident that the last of the town fog



had been shaken from both head and feet.

I camped at the mouth of a narrow gorge which is cut into the bottom of the main cañon, determined to take earnest exercise next day. No plushy boughs did my ill-behaved bones enjoy that night, nor did my bumped head get a spicy cedar plume pillow mixed with flowers. I slept on a naked boulder, and when I awoke all my nervous trembling was gone.

The gorged portion of the cañon, in which I spent all the

next day, is about a mile and a half in length; and I passed the time in tracing the action of the forces that determined this peculiar bottom gorge, which is an abrupt, ragged-walled, narrow-throated cañon, formed in the bottom of the wide-mouthed, smooth, and beveled main cañon. I will not stop now to tell you more; some day you may see it, like a shadowy line, from Cloud's Rest. In high water, the stream occupies all the bottom of the gorge, surging and chafing in

glorious power from wall to wall. But the sound of the grinding was low as I entered the gorge, scarcely hoping to be able to pass through its entire length. By cool efforts, along glassy, ice-worn slopes, I reached the upper end in a little over a day, but was compelled to pass the second night in the gorge, and in the moonlight I wrote you this short pencil-letter in my notebook: —

The moon is looking down into the cañon, and how marvelously the great rocks kindle to her light! Every dome, and brow, and swelling boss touched by her white rays, glows as if lighted with snow. I am now only a mile from last night's camp, and have been climbing and sketching all day in this difficult but instructive gorge. It is formed in the bottom of the main cañon, among the roots of Cloud's Rest. It begins at the filled-up lake-basin where I camped last night, and ends a few hundred yards above, in another basin of the same kind. The walls everywhere are craggy and vertical, and in some places they overlean. It

is only from twenty to sixty feet wide, and not, though black and broken enough, the thin, crooked mouth of some mysterious abyss; but it was eroded, for in many places I saw its solid, seamless floor.

I am sitting on a big stone, against which the stream divides, and goes brawling by in rapids on both sides; half of my rock is white in the light, half in shadow. As I look from the opening jaws of this shadowy gorge, South Dome is immediately in front — high in the stars, her face turned from the

moon, with the rest of her body gloriously muffled in waved folds of granite. On the left, sculptured from the main Cloud's Rest ridge, are three magnificent rocks, sisters of the great South Dome. On the right is the massive, moonlit front of Mount Watkins, and between, low down in the furthest distance, is Sentinel Dome, griddled and darkened with forest. In the near foreground Tenaya Creek is singing against boulders that are white with snow and moonbeams. Now look back twenty yards, and you will see a waterfall fair as a spirit; the moonlight just touches it, bringing it into relief against a dark background of shadow. A little to the left, and a dozen steps this side of the fall, flickering light marks my camp — and a precious camp it is. A huge, glacier-polished slab, falling from the smooth, glossy flank of Cloud's Rest, happened to settle on edge against the wall of the gorge. I did not know that this slab was glacier-polished until I lighted my fire. Judge of my delight. I think it was sent here by an earthquake. It is about twelve feet square. I wish I could take it home for a hearthstone. Beneath this slab is the only place in this torrent-swept gorge where I could find sand sufficient for a bed.

I expected to sleep on the boulders, for I spent most of the afternoon on the slippery wall of the cañon, endeavoring to get around this difficult part of the gorge, and was compelled instead to hasten down here before dark. I shall sleep soundly on this sand; half of it is mica. Here, wonderful to behold, are a few green stems of prickly rubus, and a tiny grass. They are here to meet us. Ay, even here in this darksome gorge, "frightened and terrified" with raging torrents and choking avalanches of snow. Can it be? As if rubus and the grass leaf were not enough of God's tender prattle words of love, which we so much need in these mighty temples of

power, yonder in the "benmost bore" are two blessed adiantums. Listen to them! How wholly infused with God is this one big word of love that we call the world! Good-night. Do you see the fire-glow on my ice-smoothed slab, and on my two ferns and the rubus and grass panicles? And do you hear how sweet a sleep song the fall and cascades are singing?

Little Yosemite Valley

The water-ground chips and knots that I found fastened between the rocks kept my fire alive all through the night. Next morning I rose nerved and ready for another day of sketching and noting, and any form of climbing. I escaped from the gorge about noon, after accomplishing some of the most delicate feats of mountaineering I ever attempted; and here the cañon is all broadly open again — the floor luxuriantly forested with pine, and spruce, and silver fir, and brown-trunked libocedrus. The walls rise in Yosemite forms, and Tenaya Creek comes down seven hundred feet in a white brush of foam. This is a little Yosemite valley. It is about two thousand feet above the level of the main Yosemite, and about twenty-four hundred below Lake Tenaya.

I found the lake frozen, and the ice was so clear and unruffled that the surrounding mountains and the groves that look down upon it were reflected almost as perfectly as I ever beheld them in the calm evening mirrors of summer. At a little distance, it was difficult to believe the lake frozen at all; and when I walked out on it, cautiously stamping at short intervals to test the strength of the ice, I seemed to walk mysteriously, without adequate

faith, on the surface of the water. The ice was so transparent that I could see through it the beautifully wave-rippled, sandy bottom, and the scales of mica glinting back the down-pouring light. When I knelt down with my face close to the ice, through which the sunbeams were pouring, I was delighted to discover myriads of Tyndall's six-rayed water flowers, magnificently colored.

A grand old mountain mansion is this Tenaya region! In the glacier period it was a *mer de glace*, far grander than the *mer de glace* of Switzerland, which is only about half a mile broad. The Tenaya *mer de glace* was not less than two miles broad, late in the glacier epoch, when all the principal dividing crests were bare; and its depth was not less than fifteen hundred feet. Ice-streams from Mounts Lyell and Dana, and all the mountains between, and from the nearer Cathedral Peak, flowed hither, welded into one, and worked together. After eroding this Tenaya Lake basin, and all the splendidly sculptured rocks and mountains that surround and adorn it, and the great Tenaya Cañon, with its wealth of all that makes mountains sublime, they were welded with the vast South, Lyell, and Illilouette glaciers on one side, and with those of Hoffman on the other — thus forming a portion of a yet grander *mer de glace* in Yosemite Valley.

I reached the Tenaya Cañon, on my way home, by coming in from the northeast, rambling down over the shoulders of Mount Watkins, touching bottom a mile above Mirror Lake. From thence home was but a saunter in the moonlight.

After resting one day, and the weather continuing calm, I ran up over the left shoulder of

South Dome and down in front of its grand split face to make some measurements, completed my work, climbed to the right shoulder, struck off along the ridge for Cloud's Rest, and reached the topmost heave of her sunny wave in ample time to see the sunset.

Cloud's Rest is a thousand feet higher than Tissiack. It is a wavelike crest upon a ridge, which begins at Yosemite with Tissiack, and runs continuously eastward to the thicket of peaks and crests around Lake Tenaya. This lofty granite wall is bent this way and that by the restless and weariless action of glaciers just as if it had been made of dough. But the grand circumference of mountains and forests are coming from far and near, densing into one close assemblage; for the sun, their god and father, with love ineffable, is glowing a sunset farewell. Not one of all the assembled rocks or trees seemed remote. How impressively their faces shone with responsive love!

I ran home in the moonlight with firm strides; for the sun-love made me strong. Down through the junipers; down through the firs; now in jet shadows; now in white light; over sandy moraines and bare, clanking rocks; past the huge ghost of South Dome rising weird through the firs; past the glorious fall of Nevada, the groves of Illilouette; through the pines of the valley; beneath the bright crystal sky blazing with stars. All of this mountain wealth in one day! — one of the rich ripe days that enlarge one's life; so much of the sun upon one side of it, so much of the moon and stars on the other.

The Cosmopolitan – Yosemite's Nonpareil Bathhouse and Saloon

Hank Johnston

During the early spring of 1870, the disquieting sounds of saw and hammer became commonplace in the Yosemite Grant. Three new hotels — Leidig and Davanay's, Black's New Sentinel, and Snow's La Casa Nevada — were being rushed to completion (all opened for business that summer); James Hutchings was in

ite buildings" by one admiring tourist, the Cosmopolitan was the creation of John C. Smith, a resourceful, energetic California tavern owner of high reputation. Born in Ohio, Smith emigrated to San Francisco by way of Panama in 1850. After a period of mining and tavern-keeping at various places, he came to Yosemite in 1870 from the Riffle Saloon in Sonora and set about building a deluxe bathhouse

complaints of travelers with regard to the accommodations and the absence of those refinements which are inseparable to celebrated watering places . . ."

Smith embarked on his project without prior approval from the Yosemite Board of Commissioners, who voted on July 30, 1870, "to allow no further leases until it has been legally decided that the Commissioners have exclusive con-

filed pre-emption claims in the Valley prior to the establishment of the Yosemite Grant by the Federal Government in 1864.)

On August 3, 1870, the Board instructed Guardian Galen Clark to "destroy any buildings in Yosemite Valley erected without permission, especially a certain billiard saloon said to be in the process of construction by one John



the process of adding two attractive cottages to his Hutchings House facilities (finished in 1871); a 110-foot-long, truss-type toll bridge spanning the Merced River was under construction by Philip Coulter a half-mile west of the Lower Village; and the Cosmopolitan bathhouse and saloon, an edifice whose amenities equaled its worldly name, began taking shape along the south side of the Merced River just west of Hutchings' premises in the Upper Village.

Called the "wonder of Yosemite

and barroom in the upper Valley. The enterprise was hailed as "filling a great civic need, with the promise of a more abundant life for Yosemite visitors and residents alike."

"One of the great necessities of Yosemite Valley during the past ten years has been a saloon such as will be owned and conducted there by Mr. John C. Smith and opened on or before the 1st of May next for the reception of visitors," said the *Sonora Union Democrat* in its issue of November 5, 1870. "Each year we hear of the

The Cosmopolitan functioned as a deluxe saloon and bathhouse in the Upper Village from 1871 through 1884, at which time it became the Guardian's Office and residence. The Cosmopolitan advertised a "barber shop, boot black stand, swings, quoits, shuffle boards, and a fine shooting gallery" in addition to its baths, liquors, billiard tables, cigars, and a "good supply of opera glasses" for the accommodation of visitors.

control of the Grant." (Between 1867 and 1872 a lengthy legal battle ensued between the Yosemite Commissioners and several early settlers who had

Smith." Smith then belatedly applied to the State for a lease, which the Board refused to grant until the court decision was final. The Commissioners ultimately allowed Smith to pay an annual use fee, an arrangement that continued until January 23, 1875, soon after the state took over all Valley claims, when he received a ten-year lease to his premises at \$250 a year.

The Cosmopolitan's main building was 80 by 25 feet, with a 10-foot-wide covered porch along the sides and front.



In her book *Bits of Travel at Home*, noted author Helen Hunt Jackson described the structure as it appeared in 1872: "A long, low, dark-brown house, with a piazza on two sides . . . [It] consists of nine rooms. A billiard room, where are two fine billiard tables; a reading room, where are the California newspapers, and a long writing table, with stationery ready to one's hand; a small sitting room, furnished with sofas and comfortable easy chairs, and intended exclusively for the use of ladies; and five small bathrooms, perfectly appointed in all respects and kept with the most marvelous neatness. A small storeroom at the end completes the list of rooms.

"The bathtubs shine; the floors of the bathrooms are carpeted; Turkish towels hang on the racks; soaps, bottles of cologne, and bay rum are kept in each room; a pincushion stands under each glass, and on the pincushion are not only pins, but scissors, needles, thread, and buttons of several kinds. Has anybody ever seen public bathrooms of this order? And Mr. Smith mentions, apologetically, that the buttonhooks for which he has sent have not yet arrived."

Hot water for the baths was heated by circulation in iron pipes running through a firebox stoked with wood. The billiard room contained a long, ornate bar, from which proprietor Smith dispensed a remarkable assortment of "gin slings, mint juleps, brandy cocktails, eye-openers, corpse-revivers, and other potent combinations" in elaborate glasses. High quality wines and cigars were also stocked in abundance. For his visitors' further comfort, Smith built a half-mile-long walkway of four-foot planks from Black's

J. J. REILLY / YOSEMITE RESEARCH LIBRARY



The Cosmopolitan "Grand Register," twenty-four inches long, eighteen inches wide, and eight inches thick, was made especially for John C. Smith by the H. S. Crocker Company of San Francisco at a cost of \$500. Morocco bound and silver plated, the weighty register contains more than 18,600 signatures on its 800 pages. Five presidents — Garfield, Theodore Roosevelt, Taft, Grant, and Hayes — signed it, along with many governors and other famous persons such as John Muir, Luther Burbank, Buffalo Bill Cody, Lily Langtry, General William T. Sherman, and Duke Alexander of Russia. Not all the noted autographs were obtained in Yosemite Valley, as E. S. Utter and his descendants later took the book around the state to get additional signatures. The "Grand Register" occupied a position of honor on the front porch of the Cosmopolitan. Tourists came to see the signatures of famous people and to inscribe their own.

Hotel in the Lower Village to his establishment. The boardwalk stood four feet off the ground to provide a dry pathway during occasional high water and had benches at several places for weary pedestrians to rest.

The Cosmopolitan's grandeur was all the more remarkable in that at least some of the building material (Smith may have

purchased lumber from Hutchings, whose water-powered sawmill was being operated by John Muir at the time), and all the equipment, furnishings, and supplies for the saloon had to be carried on the backs of mules from the terminus of the Big Oak Flat Road, at that time a distance of perhaps fifteen miles. Ornate doors, full-length mirrors, even the billiard tables came down the steep cliffside trail without mishap, although many of the bulky loads no doubt taxed the ingenuity of the packers.

The Cosmopolitan opened for business in the spring of 1871 to the delight of exhausted travelers recovering from the long, dusty ride to the Valley. The saloon's comforts drew high praise from patrons ("A hot bath, shave, haircut, billiards, and fancy drinks — what more could anyone ask?"), and so did owner Smith, who quickly became a popular and well respected member of the community. On June 12, 1875, the *Mariposa Gazette* printed these laudatory words: "John C. Smith has won the distinction of being the most tasteful and expert saloon-keeper and

bartender in California. He is now located at Yo Semite, and has established there the brag saloon of the State . . . 'See Paris and die' has passed into a proverb, but a better one is 'Visit Yo Semite and take a drink at Johnny Smith's saloon!'"

On November 18, 1874, Smith married Susan E. Hayes, a capable young Oakland woman who was employed as a telegraph operator in the Valley. Soon after the wedding, while Susan was helping her new husband close up the Cosmopolitan for the winter, a kerosene lamp exploded, catching her dress on fire and burning her severely. Although she slowly began to recover from her injuries, she could not be moved before the first big storm would close the roads until spring. Susan finally persuaded John to leave her behind and get out to Merced where he was sorely needed at his other saloon, also called the Cosmopolitan, in that city.

Full-time residents of the Valley such as Belle Leidig looked after Susan, who continued to mend over the winter. The following March, four burly men led by John Conway, Yosemite's pioneer road and trail builder, managed to pull her down the Valley to the Cascades, where the snow ended, on a specially made sled. Here she was met by her husband with horses. From then on, the Smiths made their permanent home in Merced. Although they both loved Yosemite, too much physical and mental anguish had occurred there for them to ever return.

In 1875 Smith turned over active management of the Cosmopolitan to brother-in-law Ben Hayes, who successfully operated the business for the next six seasons. According to

the Yosemite Board of Commissioners' records, Hayes grossed between \$4,000 and \$5,000 a year in revenue during the period, hired two employees, paid \$250 annually for rent, and made his own repairs to the building (the bathtubs and fixtures were not State property). On May 21, 1881, the *Mariposa Gazette* reported that "the Cosmopolitan saloon and bathhouse has been sold to Capt. E. S. Utter, and the firm heretofore known as Smith and Hayes will hereafter be known as Smith [the leaseholder of record] and Utter." Smith and Hayes' reasons for selling were not stated.

Eliakim Stannards Utter, a former ship captain, came to Yosemite about 1875 and worked with Alexander Black at his New Sentinel Hotel until Black sold out to Walter B. Cooke and George Wright in the fall of 1880. Sometime during this interval, Utter married Elizabeth Coffman, stepdaughter of William Coffman, a one-time associate of Henry Washburn's and after 1878 the proprietor of the Valley stable in the Lower Village. From 1881 through the fall of 1884, Captain Utter expertly provided fancy cocktails, hot baths, and other delectations to his Cosmopolitan patrons in the same grand manner as Smith and Hayes before him.

On November 18, 1884, newly appointed Yosemite Guardian Walter Dennison told the Commissioners that "Mr. Utter, who has been occupying the Cosmopolitan, has sold out and decamped. The new parties, a Mr. Contreras and a Mr. Baker, are now in occupancy and unwilling to pay any rent due." Dennison recommended that the saloon be permanently closed, and the premises utilized for the Guardian's Office



NPS PHOTO

and residence. The Commissioners approved Dennison's suggestion by a vote of seven to one, giving the reason that "a saloon not run in conjunction with a hotel is not a good thing in Yosemite Valley." Some local critics accused the Board of succumbing to pressure from Valley hotel owners who wanted guests to buy liquor at their own bars rather than at the Cosmopolitan. Others charged that the State had arbitrarily taken over the building for its own purposes. In any event, Johnny Smith's remarkable, one-of-a-kind establishment had served its last customer.

Later History

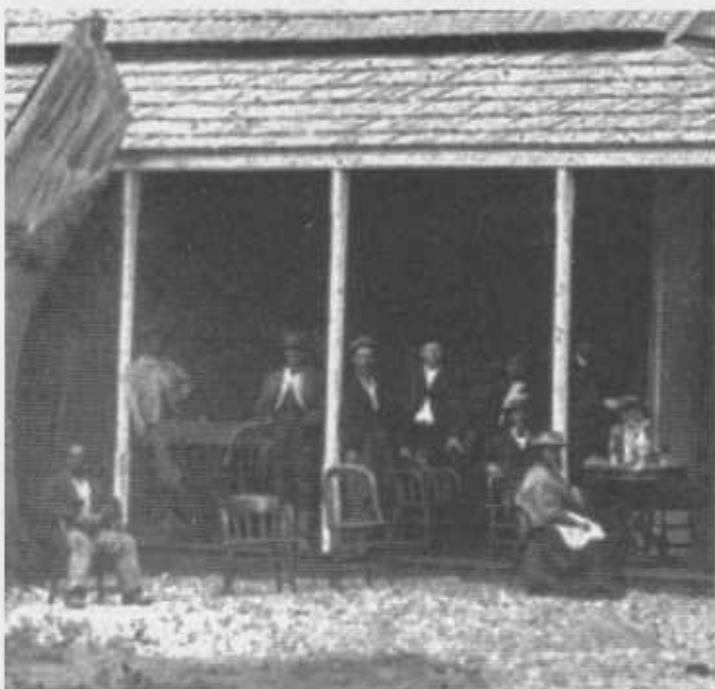
From 1885 until 1897, the

front section of the Cosmopolitan functioned as the Guardian's Office. The large main room near the center of the structure became a community meeting hall (even in Smith's time the saloon had often been the site of local gatherings). In 1885-86, artist Charles Dorman Robinson rented two rooms next to Dennison's office as a residence-studio. In the spring of 1887, Robinson was evicted and the Post Office and Wells Fargo office were installed in his former quarters, where they remained until 1897. Dennison utilized the remainder of the premises as his family residence during his Yosemite tenure (1884-1887).

According to Laurence Deg-

nan, who lived nearby, after Galen Clark resumed the Guardian's position in June, 1889, "his office, in the large, bright, cheery front room of the departed saloon, with its glass doors, became a sort of club or lounging room, well patronized by the men of the Village and by visitors. Clark had a large table there, covered with newspapers and magazines, while a huge stove in the middle of the room was a popular attraction on cold winter evenings."

The space formerly occupied by Dennison and his successor Mark McCord in the rear of the building (Clark had his own residence) was turned into a bunkhouse for workmen, a barroom, and a barbershop — "Collar and Elbow." In 1897, following the destruction of the spacious State-owned Stoneman House by fire, the Commissioners extensively remodeled the Cosmopolitan into a fourteen-bedroom sleeping unit called Locust Cottage to provide additional accommodations for the Sentinel Hotel, the only hotel remaining in Yosemite Valley. The building was later used as offices by the Yosemite National Park Company and the Yosemite Park and Curry Co. (concessionaires). On December 8, 1932, the rickety old structure burned to the ground.



This article is an excerpt (minus footnotes) from Hank Johnston's forthcoming pictorial history of the Yosemite Grant (1864-1906), to be published by the Yosemite Association. Hank Johnston, a 20-year resident of Yosemite, is the author of 13 books on California history. His most recent works are Yosemite's Yesterdays and Yosemite's Yesterdays, Vol II.

Of What Earthly Use Is History?

T. H. Watkins
Engravings by Thomas Moran

If I have written anything that has been worth anyone's attention at all, it has been in the realms of history and conservation, and most of that had



to do with the people and the land of the American West — in spite of the fact that I have now been living east of the Mississippi for more than eighteen years.

My passion for history began with a dapper man called Ellis Spackman, who taught just about every history course there was at San Bernardino Valley College. Spackman, who possessed a striking resemblance to the actor Clifton Webb, was small, quiet, and wryly funny. He loved history, and taught it with as much passion as his temperament would allow him — not only in his many classrooms but in the regular newspaper column he wrote for the *San Bernardino Sun*. From him, I learned that history was a living presence in the land all around me, and in my own people.

It was Ellis Spackman who inspired me to pull the stories out of Ira, my paternal grandfather, who had been a prepubescent mucker in an Iowa coal mine, had run away from home to become a cowboy in Texas and Wyoming, then in more or less chronological order a hard-rock miner, mining town gambler, teamster, railroad tramp, migrant farm laborer, semi-pro baseball player, professional boxer, and conductor on the cars of the "Big Red Line" of the Los Angeles Interurban Railway System before settling down in San Bernardino in 1913.

Slowly, I acquired the history of my place and my people. But it took another teacher to make it clear to me that the history I was learning was also stories. The University of Redlands' Ralph Hone, a gentle-mannered former minister and biographer of mystery novelist Dorothy Sayre, was a Miltonian scholar of great reputation. He was hardly a western history buff,

but he had a tremendous regard for the revelations of human character that could be discovered in the materials of history. He not only encouraged me in my fevered pursuit of the word, but one day suggested that I take a look at the work of one of the great storytellers of our century, the novelist Kenneth Roberts. I plunged into *Anndel*, then *Rabble in Arms*, then everything else I could get my hands on, up through and beyond *Northwest Passage* and *Oliver Weswell*. I was hooked, and immediately began a historical novel of my own, based on the life of John Charles Fremont, the colorful peripatetic explorer of the West. It was, as they say, derivative. It was also awful.

This failure did not keep me from the seductions of fiction. After graduation from Redlands I wrote and wrote and wrote between shifts at my night job as a pressman's apprentice at Acme Colorprint Company in San Bernardino — two novels and mounds of short stories were ripped a page at a time from my sturdy old Underwood "Goldentouch" and shipped off to oblivion, first class, SASE enclosed. When I reached the age of reason — in my case, twenty-four — I, with a wife, two children, and one dog by now, packed up and moved north, where I continued to pound on my hapless typewriter between shifts in the mailroom of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, producing yet another novel and even more short stories, all of them unpublishable by any known standards.

Over time, I began to suspect that the rejection slips I received even more regularly than the monthly bills might become a lifetime collection. I sprang into action immediately: I went back to school, taking graduate work

in history at San Francisco State College (as it was then known) on the theory that if I could not acquire fame I could possibly achieve tenure. But one of the guest professors during a summer course I was taking turned out to be W. H. Hutchinson, even then one of the best-known and respected western historians in the trade, a former cowhand himself, as well as a prolific writer, literary executor for the state of western novelist and short story writer Eugene Manlove Rhodes, and author of a regular column called "One Man's West" that had appeared in the *Chronicle's* Sunday "Book World" section ever since Joseph Henry Jackson had ruled over that territory in the 1940s.

Hutch, as he was known to one and all until the day of his death, took a liking to some writing I did for his course. On the strength of this, I asked him to recommend me as a book reviewer to William Hogan, Jackson's successor as Book Editor for the *Chronicle*. Hutch did so, Hogan took a chance, and I was given Anthony J. Caruso's biography, *The World and William Walker*, for review. My review was a pretty puerile effort, but I will never willingly forget that epiphanous moment when on page 4 of the Sunday "Book World" on a morning in October, 1963 my name leaped from the page and struck me between the eyes. I spent the rest of my shift in the mailroom of the *Chronicle* that night in the kind of daze that in modern times would cause a person to be forced to take a drug test.

Twenty-some-odd books and no one wants to know how many book reviews and articles later, I have no reason to regret the direction my life



AND I AM TALKING, FINALLY, ABOUT THINGS WE DON'T LIKE TO TALK ABOUT MUCH WHEN WE TALK ABOUT THE WEST. I MEAN, FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT WE DID TO ALL THOSE FIRST PEOPLES WHEN WE CHOSE CONQUEST OVER COMPREHENSION.

has taken. From graduate school, through a process of luck, circumstance, and friendship too complicated for sane description, I ended up the managing editor, then editor, of a little magazine called *The American West*, which attempted to do for western history what *American Heritage* was doing for American history in general — bring literary respectability to the telling of popular history. This goal was enhanced immeasurably by the presence of Wallace Stegner as editor-in-chief of the magazine. Stegner, whom I already venerated and imitated slavishly, swiftly became yet another of the teachers who guided me as I reluctantly and then with a kind of relief abandoned the shaky platform of fiction and used the pages of *The American West* magazine to tell and help others tell the lives and stories that had flourished in the several million square miles of geography we called the Great West.

I am not talking here about myths, or even legends, however necessary they may be to a people, no matter how deeply they may satisfy unspoken dreams. I am speaking about real lives acted out in a real landscape whose challenge and complexity and beauty has had no equal in human history.

I am talking about all the First Peoples, from the Anasazi, the vanished ones, whose story we can only imagine, to the Plains Indians, whose story the white-eyes tried to end at Wounded Knee, and failed.

I am talking of the mountain men, those first American anti-heroes, free market specialists in the taking and trading of furs, following then learning the twists of all the hidden rivers, testing their strength against the beckoning sky,

turning their faces into the wind that came down off the Front Range of the Rockies crying, "Come and find me, come and find me."

I am talking about the fifty or sixty thousand crazy young men — with a few crazy young women among them — who staggered across all the rocks and hard places of the trans-Mississippi West or survived the ghastly sea journey around the Horn during the California Gold Rush of 1849,



exercising simpleminded greed with such frenzied enthusiasm that the whole adventure acquired a kind of innocent charm. And if virtually all of them failed in their greedy quest, the dream of possibility they both reflected and perpetuated became a permanent part of the Western legacy.

I am talking about the families who came after the gold-seekers, following the same dusty highways and crossing the same rivers and mountains — but this time to settle and

civilize the land with farms and towns and schools and churches, building islands of dullness, normality, and endurance.

I am talking about the bankers and promoters and entrepreneurs who turned the Great West into an enormous chessboard of unfettered capitalism, building railroads and cattle kingdoms and mining empires and farms the size of small European countries — and of those working men and women who did all the real

now, not the pallid joke our legends have created, but rather a man of grit and gump-tion, of a quiet, sweaty competence, of humor and stoicism and a species of bravery that had nothing to do with six-guns and saloon fights, but everything to do with how one conducted his life in that difficult arena where human character is tested.

And I am talking, finally, about things we don't like to talk about much when we talk about the West. I mean, for example, what we did to all those First Peoples when we chose conquest over comprehension, when we rejected the gift of understanding they might have given us — and gave them in turn the sordid gifts of chicanery, shame, poverty, and death.

Or the unremittingly brutal clash between Capital and Labor in all the industrialized mining towns — the Cripple Creeks and Leadvilles, Goldfields and Coeur d'Alenes — where men were shot and dynamited, where martial law shredded the Bill of Rights for the sake of expedience and the profit margin, in all as ugly an expression of class warfare as anything the degenerate old American East could offer.

Or the Chinatowns, Jimtowns, and Niggertowns to which we relegated those whom we decided were just not worthy to participate in the West's dream of possibility, of the grisly lynchings and riots that erupted too often and with too much terror for the West to be entirely comfortable in its self-assumed role as the heartland of democracy.

All of this, all of the shame and glory, adventure and degradation, heroism and cowardice, provided the stuff out of which I learned to build my own life as a writer. And along the way I

building: the Chinese and Irish immigrant laborers who laid the track, the hardrock miners from all quarters of the globe — Italians and Mexicans and Cornishmen and Welshmen and Hungarians — who went down into those dangerous pits, the Mexican-American and Anglo-American migrant workers who did — and still do — make agribusiness possible, and yes, the cowboy, black, white, and brown (for he was all of these), the hired man on horseback. The *real* critter,

MUCH OF *THIS* STORY HAS BEEN PLAYED OUT IN THE PUBLIC LANDS OF THE UNITED STATES. THAT IS STILL WHERE THE STRUGGLE TAKES PLACE, AND I AM PRIVILEGED TO BE BOTH PARTICIPANT AND SPECTATOR.

learned, I think, some measure of wisdom about some important things. Things like why history itself should have importance to us.

It's a question worth thinking about. We live in accelerated times, when the witchery of bytes and bits and megabits and all the other paraphernalia of electronic communication enable us to make mistakes faster than we can correct them. Fashions in clothing, music, books, theatre, diets, and psychotherapy come and go at a dizzying pace. Politicians erect careers on the assumption that the attention span of the electorate has been reduced to the few minutes required to read an airline magazine article. Nations are convulsed overnight, ideologies die in hours and others rise up to take their places, walls come down and walls are built in the space of time it takes to write about it.

In such a world, it might well be asked, of what earthly use is history? How can we indulge the luxury of time and thought it takes to comprehend the weft of any past more distant than yesterday afternoon when it seems that all the psychic and intellectual energy we possess must be reserved just to maintain our present equilibrium — especially when we continue to live in so dangerous a world that the future may never arrive at all?

In answer, I would dip into the memory of how my old teachers might have explained it, what I learned from them still echoing in my mind: From the unrecorded eons of its beginnings to the over-recorded moments of its present living, they might have said, humankind has been sustained not merely by its intelligence, but by its capacity to hope. It was hope that drove the first neo-

lithic peoples to follow the climate south from the bitter descending edge of the last Ice Age, hope that brought the first settlers to the brave new world of the North American continent, hope that enabled thousands to survive even the Holocaust, surely the most fetid demonstration we have yet been given that savagery is as singular a human characteristic as charity — or hope.

Unlike intelligence, however, the quality of hope is



not genetically programmed into the species; it is a learned characteristic. Like any acquired trait, it can be lost, and without hope we are left with the arid uselessness of nihilism, the darkest corner of an existential state that sees neither value nor possibility in the future. In these days when the shadow of ruin falls on us, it is good to remember that ours is not the first generation to face the omens of economic uncertainty and potential war or the constant testing of the strengths

that were designed to make ours the first nation in history to be truly "of the people." In that history there is hope, and in that hope there is a shield against fate and its consequences that can serve us now just as faithfully as it has in the past.

So they might have said, my teachers.

Perhaps I did gain a hint of wisdom, then, in my long walk with history. But there was something more, something else that we don't much

like to talk about when we talk about the West. And that is what we have done to the land and all the life within it with our careless enthusiasms, with our dams and mines and sheep and cattle and roads and logging and the kind of untrammeled growth that is born in the fevered dreams of real estate speculators, the kind of growth, as Edward Abbey reminded us, that is the etiology of the cancer cell.

Bernard DeVoto, almost certainly the greatest historian of

the West since Francis Parkman, called the region the Plundered Province, and what I learned at the same time I was learning all the stories of the West is that the plunder has never really stopped. Except for those few enclaves we have had the rare wit to set aside — like the hundred million plus acres of designated wilderness we will have when the California Desert Protection Act is finally passed by Congress. Except for this, the West is still subject to the worst that greed and expedience can do to it. And it can do a great deal.

So I began to write about this, too, angry polemics that earned me a very small — but I hope fully deserved — reputation as a gadfly, or, as some might put it, that of a skunk at a garden party. The anger, I believe, was and is necessary, for its passion comes out of the bitter truth suggested by a question every bit as valid as my belief that there is hope in history: Is it true that what we learn from history is that we learn nothing from history?

Much of *this* story has been played out in the public lands of the United States. That is still where the struggle takes place, and I am privileged to be both participant and spectator. *Wilderness*, the magazine I have edited since 1982, is the house organ of The Wilderness Society, a group which since 1935 has been devoted to the protection and preservation of the wild country of those public lands — the national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and Bureau of Land Management lands that are the common property of all our citizens. They embrace 634 million acres, nearly a million square miles of plains and deserts and mountains and rivers and lakes and seashores and all the wildlife they contain. This is all we

WE MUST LEARN, FINALLY, THAT WILDERNESS IS NOT, AS OUR HISTORY HAS INSISTED, A THREAT TO BE CONQUERED BUT IN FACT A PROTECTION TO BE EMBRACED.

have left of the wild and nearly wild continent that presented itself to the first Europeans half a millennium ago. Unfortunately, their awe and admiration was not enough to stifle the impulses that would destroy most of the beauty before them.

However little is left, there still is no legacy like it anywhere else on the planet, and even as I continue to honor the history of the West, I now spend most of my time asking us to turn our backs on much of it — to reject that portion of it that would have us continue the old dangerous game of killing the future for the sake of present gain. We must learn, finally, that wilderness is not, as our history has insisted, a threat to be conquered but in fact a protection to be embraced.

For in wilderness there is another history, a history my teachers could not know, a history all my own diligent gardening in the Edens of my past and present could not discover, a history we humans can so far only guess at. It begins beyond human time, somewhere out on that distant curve where the universe bends. I would like to tell this story, too, but I can't. I can't know the story, can't tell it. But sometimes I think I can feel it and take strength from it.

Just about 450 miles to the east-by-southeast of here there is a narrow secret place in southern Utah called the Escalante Canyons. I first encountered the canyons several years ago, and have come to love them as I once loved the Mojave of my youth. Carved out of the Colorado Plateau's Navajo sandstone, Wingate shale, and all the other layered, twisted rocks of that country by the Escalante River and its tributaries big and small, the canyons are a place whose complex beauty and sudden surprises of life can



only be discovered after sweat and patience. I have made that effort and have found much of that beauty, but the history of the place remains hidden from me — or at least hidden from my present ability to comprehend it. The history is there, I know, time written in a library of stone, whispered by the wind that trembles the glimmering leaves of a summer cottonwood tree, caroled in the tumbling Mozartian notes of a canyon wren's song, recited by the laughter of the river.

And sometimes told in other ways. A few years ago, up a narrow, twisting, slickwalled side canyon, just above a little stream that tumbles down to the Escalante River, I found a large boulder that had fallen from the face of the wall of Navajo sandstone that curved over the stream like a bandshell. On it was incised a petroglyph, the depiction of the antic, dancing figure of Kokopeli, the humpbacked, flute-playing god of the Anasazi. The horned, faceless figure, with a clearly delineated erection nearly as long

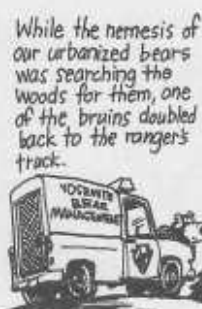
as the flute in its mouth, was bent over, playing directly into the face of the split-tongued image of a rattlesnake. Were they enemies? Was the god propitiating the creature, staving off the strike of death? Or were they locked in a dance, some intricate saraband of life I would never be privileged to understand? Was there a sharing here whose meaning was lost to me and my time forever?

I don't know, but I photographed the image, and a print of that photograph resides above my desk where I can see it at all times. Whatever its precise message may be, I know that it speaks also of time, true time. I look at it and know that I will return to this place again and again as something as central to my knowledge now as all the memories of my life and my family's life, all the history I have learned, all the books I may have read or all the words I may have written.

When I do, I will touch the stone . . . and dream of stars.

T. H. Watkins is the Editor of Wilderness, the quarterly magazine of The Wilderness Society. This essay was excerpted from Watkins's speech at the 19th Annual Members' Meeting of the Yosemite Association, held in Wawona on September 10. A full text of the speech is available to those who request it from the YA office.

FARLEY Phil Frank



Bird Banding on the Eastern Slope

Michael Rigney
Photos by Penny Delevoryas

The cry of "Dipper in the net" echoes off the steep granite slopes of Lundy Canyon as Yosemite Association instructor Bob Yutzy rushes to retrieve the entangled bird. He must walk a tightrope path across a fallen log suspended above the frigid waters of Mill Creek to reach the dipper which is caught in one of 15 "mist nets" used by him and the author to capture birds. As he carefully extracts the dipper (so named because of its characteristic bobbing motion while perched on rocks or limbs near fast-flowing mountain streams) he notes that it bears an identification band which had been placed on its leg in a previous year by class members. On careful examination of the band he realizes that the bird is "Ole 401," first captured and banded on August 2, 1988. Because we have records for this bird of its original capture, he can now determine that it is at least seven years old (since it was at least one year old when first captured in 1988). All of the 16 students, assistants and instructors rejoice as the bird is released back into the wild with the added



Two Clark's nutcrackers are displayed for photographs after banding. The birds were released unharmed after banding and data-taking.

knowledge that "Ole 401" is now the oldest known American dipper on record!

For the past seven years Bob Yutzy and I have taught a course entitled "Birds Up Close - A Bird Banding Workshop" for Yosemite Association at Lundy Canyon (elevation 8,500 feet) northeast of Lee Vining. The three-day course introduces students from all walks of life, to the art and science of bird banding. The course gives students a rare opportunity to experience "up close and personal" the secret lives of birds

Idyllic setting in Lundy Canyon for summer Bird Banding Workshop.

in the wild. It also provides us, longtime students of bird conservation, with much needed information on avian populations of the Eastern Sierra. Although the course is of short duration, by capturing and closely examining birds during the process of attaching a small individually numbered band harmlessly to one leg, we gain valuable insight into population dynamics of resident and migratory birds.

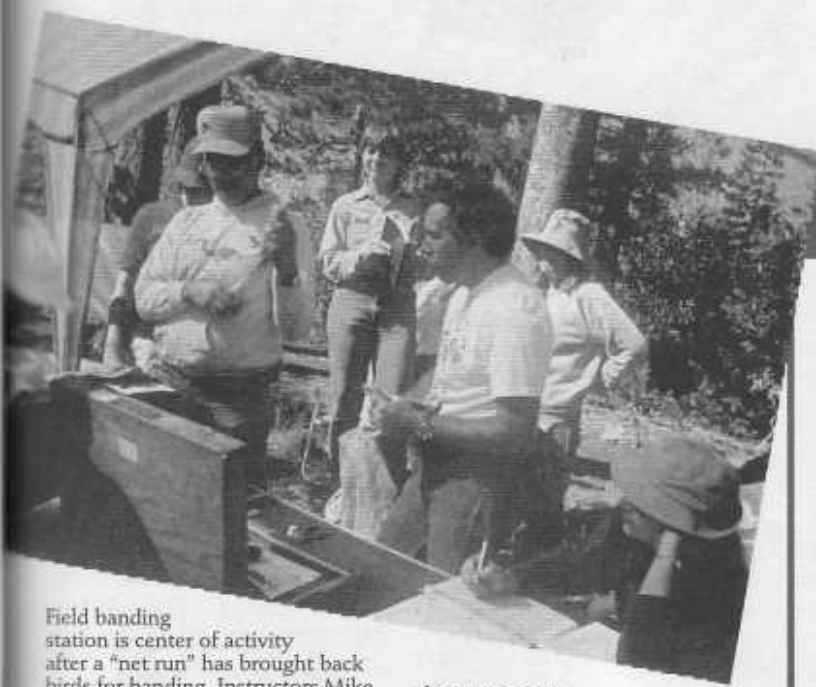
Over these past seven years we have combined the education of students on bird biology and conservation issues with collecting data on nearly 600 birds of 42 different species. Many of these birds are strongly migratory, spending the winter in the "neo" or new tropics of Central and South America, returning to the forests of North America in the spring to nest and raise young. Many scientists investigating these neotropical migrants (which include warblers, vireos, flycatchers, orioles, tanagers and some species of sparrows) have noted alarming population declines within the last twenty years. As a result of these declines, many professional and amateur bird groups are beginning intensive efforts to understand these processes of decline.

One important tool that researchers use is bird banding. By capturing and placing a uniquely numbered band on a bird's leg, we have the chance to understand more about how long birds live, where they go, and what

their habitat requirements are. If done correctly, the banding process does not harm the birds (witness the fact that "Ole 401," whose full number is 942-48401, is still around and raising young after at least seven years). Although individually tagging a bird is important for future encounters, it is not the sole purpose for banding. While the bird is "in the hand" we also examine it for indications of disease or parasitism, we weigh it, measure it, and determine its age and sex. We also take information on its breeding status and its preparation for migration — important information on how that species is maintaining its population level and how likely it is to survive the stresses of a 2,000 mile migratory flight. Many of these birds weigh only 10 to 20 grams (less than one ounce) and need to build up large quantities of fat in order to fly long distances at night aided only by innate navigational cues.

We also capture and band many other resident species besides the American Dipper, which probably moves down into the Mono Valley during the extremely cold months. During one special year we managed to capture three beautiful Clark's nutcrackers, denizens of high pine forests





Field banding station is center of activity after a "net run" has brought back birds for banding. Instructors Mike Rigney (standing in center) and Bob Yutzy (standing on left with bird in hand) have a combined 30 years of experience in banding birds.

(and high Sierra campgrounds). A large flock happened to be feeding on the prickly fruit of bush chinquapin (*Chrysolepis sempervirens*) on a talus slope above our banding site. Ever up for a challenge, Bob and several adventurous students clambered up to cut net lanes and placed three nets. These nets promptly caught three nutcrackers. Being social animals and highly intelligent, the rest of the flock was duly warned by the protesting behavior of the three unfortunate prisoners. After banding and being photographed by a small impromptu press corps, the birds rejoined their flock, undoubtedly to show off their new leg attire.

During the many years Bob and I have taught this workshop, we have had students from the National Park Service, the National Forest Service, professional biological consultants, rodeo cowboys, telephone operators, deputy sheriffs, attorneys, and doctors. Several people have taken the course

three or more times. A common desire to understand the secrets of the natural world, a love of wildlife and a concern for the habitats on which these beautiful yet fragile species exist, are the only prerequisites for the course. Most workshop participants come away with a new sense of respect for how well-adapted birds are to their particular environment and a new sense of responsibility for protecting that environment. If you are interested, reserve the last weekend in August (25-27) and contact the Yosemite Association for details on registration. Who knows what we'll catch this next year!

Michael Rigney is the Managing Director of the Coyote Creek Riparian Station near San Jose. He has been actively involved in bird research and banding for over twenty years.

In Memoriam

Everett E. Harwell

Long-time Yosemite Association member and supporter, Everett Harwell died recently at the age of 75. The son of Yosemite naturalist Bert Harwell, "Ev" spent many years as a youth in the park, and returned with his wife Helen for his honeymoon. His interest in Yosemite continued throughout his life.

Mr. Harwell was a retired Dean of Boys and Adult Education in the Fresno Unified School District, and active in teacher and education organizations. He and Helen recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in Wawona. He is survived by his wife, four children, and four grandchildren.

At the request of the Harwell family, a memorial fund has been established in Everett Harwell's name at the Yosemite Association.

George H. Keims

Following a year-long battle with cancer, engineer and Yosemite-phile George Keims died in early September. Following his graduation from the University of Colorado in 1952, Keims moved with his family to California, where he came to love Yosemite. His first backpack trip was over Donahue Pass in 1964, and with his wife Johanna and their six children, he made annual summer visits to Yosemite Valley and Tuolumne Meadows.

George and Johanna, life members of the Yosemite Association, were regulars at Y.A.'s annual meetings and other events. An amateur photographer, George's photographs illustrate the book he published with his wife entitled *The Cone Connection*, a natural history guide to the cone-bearing trees of California.

Johanna Keims points out that John Muir's words suit George's life and passing: "This good tough mountain-climbing flesh is not my final home, and one day I shall creep out of it, and fly free, and grow."

Friends of George Keims may make remembrances to the Yosemite Association.

Reflections of a YA Intern



Padraic Durkin

Editor's note: Each year, the Yosemite Association funds a scholarship program for students to serve as summer interns to the National Park Service. Interns are placed in naturalist and backcountry positions where they both augment NPS staffing and gain valuable experience.

I was sure it would never happen to me.

Yosemite wilderness ranger Laurel Boyers had warned me and the rest of the new wilderness management interns during training last June that many of us would come down with the "Yosemite bug." From what I had heard, "Yosemite bug" is some sort of incurable disease which compels people to find whatever way they can to live and work in Yosemite.

I didn't take the warning very seriously. Sure, even as someone from Wisconsin who had never even visited the park before, I already could see Yosemite was an extraordinary place. Still, I felt my life had become confused enough since I quit my career in 1993 as a newspaper reporter. I had come to Yosemite for the life experience, but was ready to head back to school in Minnesota and get a master's degree in something or other. Bit by bit, it infected me until I suddenly realized I had succumbed. Life always happens while you're making other plans.

I should have recognized the symptoms. The outrage I felt when I visited Laurel Lake and found trash and illegal firerings everywhere. The pride I felt whenever a visitor mistakenly referred to me as a "ranger." The satisfaction I felt when a visitor from France promised to help someone else in need after I gave him some of my engine

coolant for his overheated car. The serenity I felt whenever I went to Inspiration Point overlooking Poopenaut Valley to watch the sun set. The fun I had with the staff at Big Oak Flat Information Station where I worked or with the group at Hetch Hetchy where I live.

Then, after the symptoms hit, I went into a state of delirium, called the university in Minnesota I was planning to attend this fall and told them I wasn't coming until winter, and told the landlord of the apartment I already leased that I wouldn't actually be moving in until late October.

When I think about how I caught the bug, I realize that working in Yosemite was the most fun job I ever had. How can you beat living in one of the Earth's most beautiful spots alongside fantastic people doing meaningful work? I can't remember the last time I've learned so much in such a short time.

I have to admit that I didn't quite understand the need for the seven Yosemite Association wilderness management interns until I actually started issuing permits and patrolling the trails. I wondered why Yosemite needs people to tell backpackers to store their food properly, to pack out everything they carry in and choose a campsite with minimum impact. Doesn't everyone who backpacks know this stuff already?

The answer I received was a big NO. Some people who come to the wilderness permit window are experts about treading lightly and keeping food away from bears and other wildlife. Many aren't.

One middle-aged man who came to Big Oak Flat Information Station for a permit proudly proclaimed that he had gone backpacking for years and

didn't need to listen to wilderness regulations from me. I then asked him how he planned to store his food. "I know EXACTLY what to do when bears come around," he said. "I let them have my food."

I informed him that his expertise was a bit out of date. Without wilderness management interns, many backpackers would be unaware of Yosemite's wilderness regulations. Most importantly, the interns are there to help people understand why it is important to do things like camp away from water, refrain from starting a wood campfire above 9,600 feet and keep food away from bears. On my first backcountry patrol in the Hetch Hetchy area, I spotted a group of backpackers at Lake Vernon doing everything wrong. Their campsite was about 15 feet from water. Their food was in a bag, simply tossed over a tree limb and tied off the trunk of another tree instead of being counterbalanced. Other food items weren't stored at all.

I took a few breaths, swallowed my indignation, checked my radio to make sure it worked and walked over to the camp to have a "little talk" with the group. Once I got to the tents, I could see the group consisted of two middle-aged men and two youths, apparently two father-son pairs on an outing.

"That's just great," I thought. No parent likes to receive any reprimand, no matter how tactful, in front of their children.

I started some small talk with the two men, got them a little way from their children, then said, "I couldn't help but notice that your campsite is far too close to the water. You need to camp at least 100 feet away from any water source."

Their maturity was surprising. One of them said, "Really?

Please tell us the right way to camp. We want to do the right thing." I offered to show them a legal campsite I had seen, and they immediately started to move. On our way to their new campsite, I deliberately led the group past the place where their food was stored, and I mentioned that their food was not stored legally.

With surprised looks on their faces, the men asked me what was wrong with their food storage method. After all, their bags of food were about 25 feet high. How can a bear jump 25 feet?

I pointed to the place where the rope suspending the food was tied to the tree trunk, and made a sweeping motion with my arm. A bear paw making that motion against that waist-high rope is all it would have taken to knock that food down, I explained. After that demonstration, they willingly listened as I showed them trees on which they could legally hang food

continued on page 23

Association Dates

December 1, 1994: Grant deadline

March 25, 1995: YA Spring Forum, Yosemite Valley

September 15, 1995: Annual members meeting, Tuolumne Meadows

209-379-2317

If you're planning a trip to Yosemite and have questions, give our Members' phone line a call between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. We don't make reservations, but we can give the appropriate phone numbers and usually lots of helpful advice.

02457 Yosemite - The Promise of Wildness

with photographs by William Neill and an essay by Tim Palmer. This fine new gift book combines the breathtaking and inimitable imagery of William Neill with the insightful optimism of essayist Tim Palmer to present a unique study of Yosemite's meaning and prospect for humankind today and for coming generations.

The selection of photographs (a total of 70 in full color) includes a variety of striking images, from close-up renderings of details of natural objects to monumental portraits of Yosemite's world-famous landmarks. These are the finest examples from Neill's body of work assembled over his many years in Yosemite. The images are faithfully reproduced on rich Japanese matte art paper, many of them in very large format. To enhance the reader's appreciation of his work, Neill has contributed lengthy "Photographic Notes," providing fascinating observations and technical data.

Tim Palmer's essay grew from his many experiences at Yosemite, which have provided him a deep knowledge of the park. He visited during all seasons of the

Yosemite

C A T A L O G

year to better understand the many faces that Yosemite assumes. In two parts, the essay comprises an appreciation of the park's uniqueness as well as a plea for the continued well-being of this amazing natural wonderland.

The blending of Palmer's words with Neill's photographs has resulted in a work that has strong impact and that evokes powerful personal response. With grace and beauty, *Yosemite - The Promise of Wildness* provides convincing evidence that the preservation of Yosemite for the singular values it offers our society should be the foremost goal in our relationship with this astonishing but small piece of Earth.

Published by the Yosemite Association. 120 pages, 10" x 12", 70 full-color photographs. Clothbound, \$29.95

02255 The Wild Muir - 22 of John Muir's Greatest Adventures

selected and introduced by Lee Stetson, illustrated by Fiona King. Here is an entertaining collection of John Muir's most exciting adventures, representing some of his finest writing. Each included adventure has been selected to show the extent to which Muir courted and faced danger, i.e. lived "wildly," throughout his life. From the famous avalanche ride off the rim of Yosemite Valley to his night spent riding out a windstorm at the top of a tree to death-defying falls on Alaskan glaciers, the renowned outdoorsman's exploits are related in passages that are by turns exhilarating, unnerving, dizzying and outrageous.

Lee Stetson has carefully cho-

sen episodes from every stage of Muir's life, prepared short introductions to place each in context, then arranged them chronologically so that the reader can vicariously enjoy one man's life of adventure. The text is nicely complemented with striking black and white scratchboard drawings by Fiona King, a talented illustrator. 216 pages, 6" x 8". Yosemite Association, 1994. Paper, \$9.95

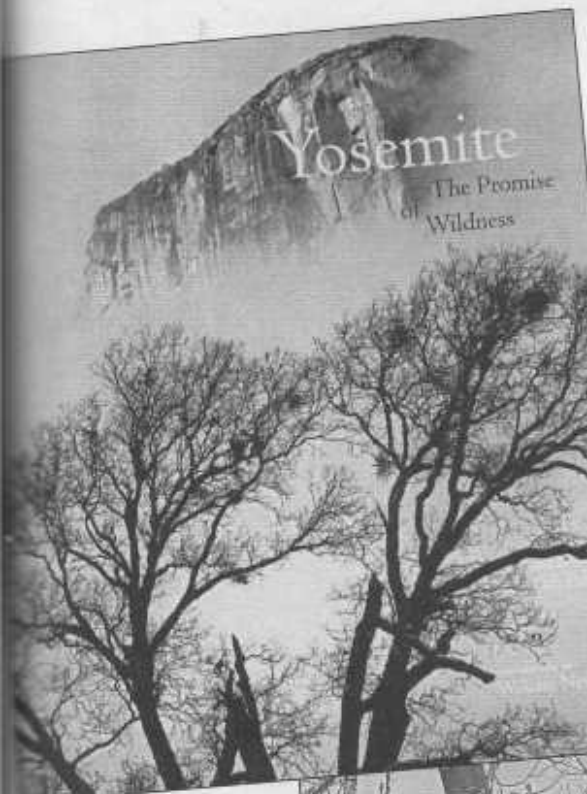
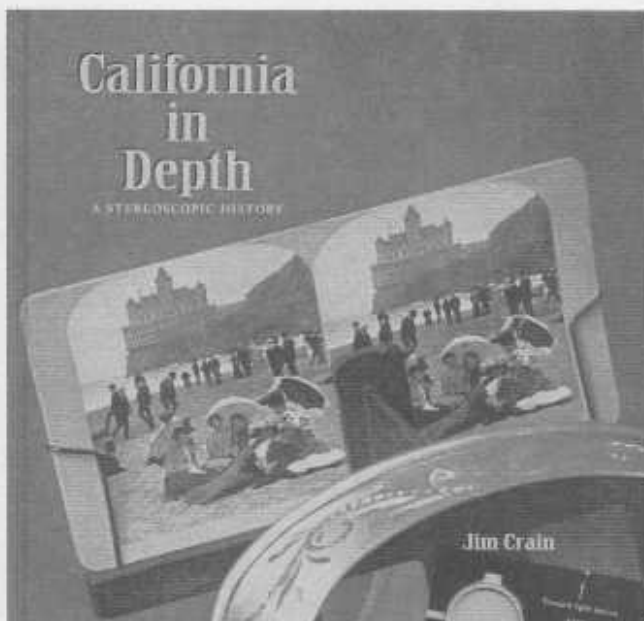


Illustration by Fiona King

02469/02468 Yosemite and the Mariposa Grove: A Preliminary Report, 1865 by Frederick Law Olmsted, with an introduction by Victoria Post Ranney. This is a finely printed edition of landscape architect Olmsted's landmark report to the State of California providing recommendations for management of the newly established Yosemite Grant. Most historians agree that Olmsted formulated for the first time within the report a philosophic base for the creation of state and national parks.

Astonishingly, the report was suppressed until 1982, and has never before been published in separate book form. To commemorate that fact, the edition was printed letter press on Rives Heavyweight paper, then hand-bound. Three illustrations by noted California artist, Wayne Thiebaud, are included. The handsome and lavish volume was limited to 400 copies, of which 100 were signed by Mr. Thiebaud and Ms. Ranney. 56 pages, 5" x 9". Yosemite Association, 1993.

Clothbound; signed copies, \$125; unsigned copies, \$85



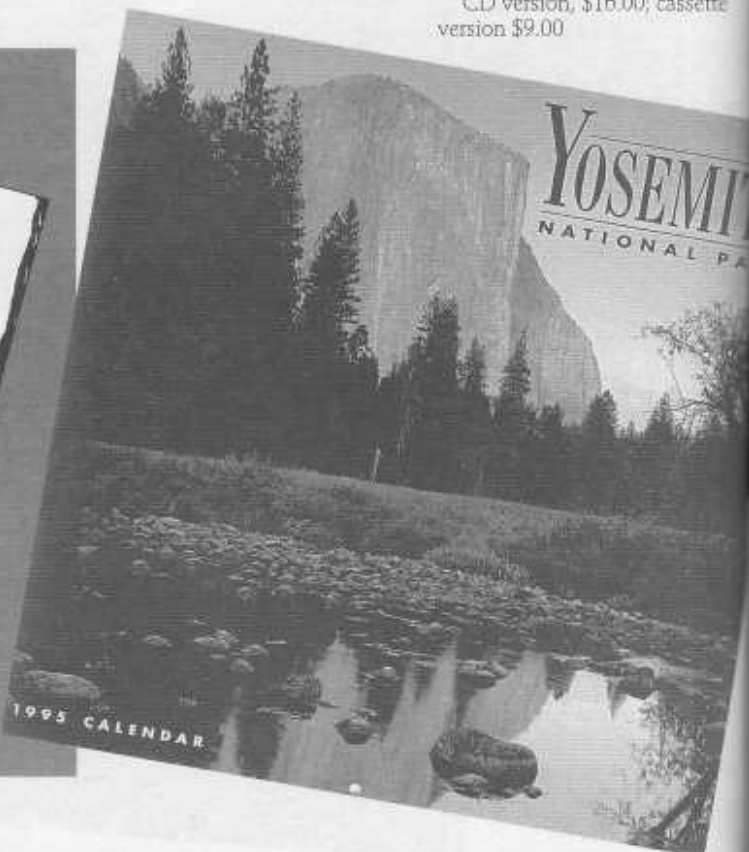
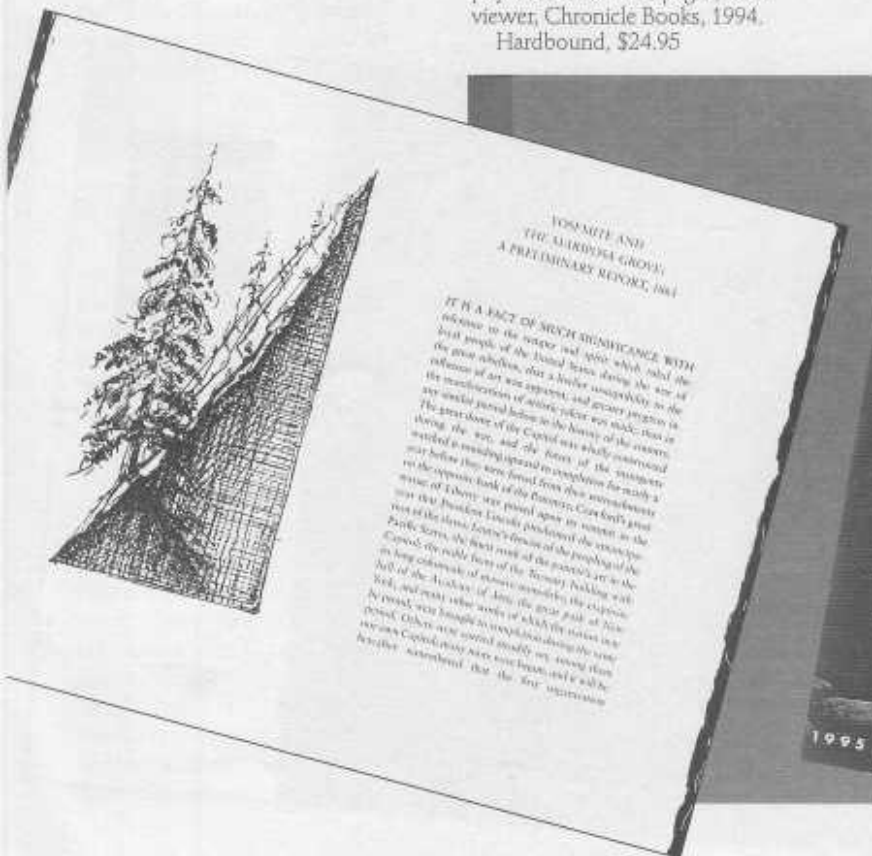
16045 California in Depth - A Stereoscopic History by Jim Crain. Complete with a 3-D viewer and 170 stereoview illustrations, this new book offers a three-dimensional glimpse into the world of nineteenth-century California. With vivid images of the westward migration, the building of the Pacific Railroad, gold mining, San Francisco, the Modoc War, and the natural glories of Yosemite Valley, it's a stunning portrait of the state at its pivotal point in history. This exciting, interactive book is sure to please history and photography buffs alike. 112 pages, with viewer, Chronicle Books, 1994. Hardbound, \$24.95



11700 1995 Calendar - Yosemite National Park by Golden Turtle Press. Here's a new year full of stunning full-color images by some of Yosemite's best photographers. A long-time favorite of park visitors and Y.A. members, the calendar is now in its tenth year. As usual, the calendar features a remarkable photograph of a Yosemite landmark for each month, plus historical information about the park and notations of holidays and moon phases. There's even a John Muir article about the fight for Hetch Hetchy Valley. A great gift and a great way to remember Yosemite all year long. \$10.99

13065 (CD)/13066 (cassette) The Music of Yosemite by Rick Erlie. Written while traveling the back country of Yosemite with a keyboard strapped to his pack, these dramatic solo piano compositions capture the indelible images and grandeur of the park. Performed as part of the 1990 Yosemite National Park centennial celebration, the work is arranged in three parts: "The High Country," "Tuolumne Meadows," and "Yosemite Valley." Erlie is a fine pianist and is donating 10% of his proceeds from the sale of his Yosemite music to the Yosemite Association. The compact disc includes 9 different selections with a running time of 48 minutes. Real Music, 1994.

CD version, \$16.00; cassette version \$9.00



23700 Muir of the Mountains

by William O. Douglas, illustrations by Daniel San Souci. This new edition of William O. Douglas's classic children's biography of John Muir reveals the events and ideas that shaped America's pioneer conservationist and founder of the Sierra Club. Illustrated with superb new drawings by Daniel San Souci, this slightly abridged edition is tailored for today's young audience. Interweaving Muir's dramatic accounts of his adventures and his observations on the natural world, Douglas offers fascinating glimpses of Muir's remarkable personality. With this reissue of a fine biography, Muir's exciting, purposeful life will inspire a new generation of young readers. 105 pages, 12 pencil illustrations, Sierra Club Books.

Clothbound, \$16.95

06010 Ben Kudo Note Cards

Talented watercolor painter Ben Kudo provided the Yosemite Association with four of his finest Yosemite works for reproduction as note cards. Printed on a slightly textured, watercolor-style paper, the cards capture the subtleties, delicate color,

and beauty of Kudo's moody paintings. Included are views of Sentinel Rock, Half Dome at sunset, Cathedral Spires and Rocks, and Tenaya Lake. Two cards of each image plus eight envelopes made from recycled paper.

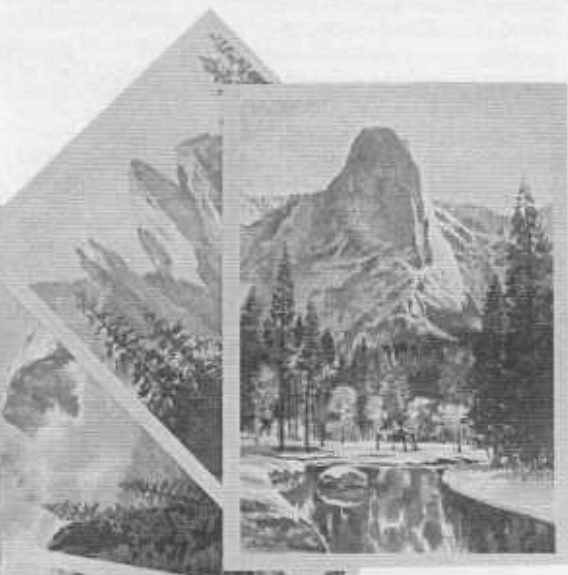
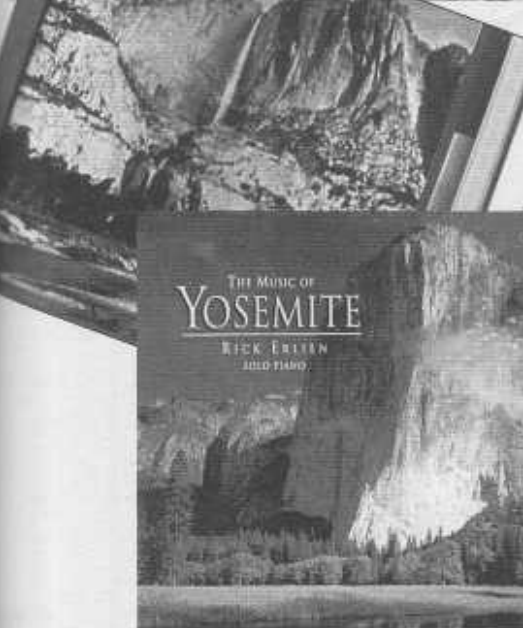
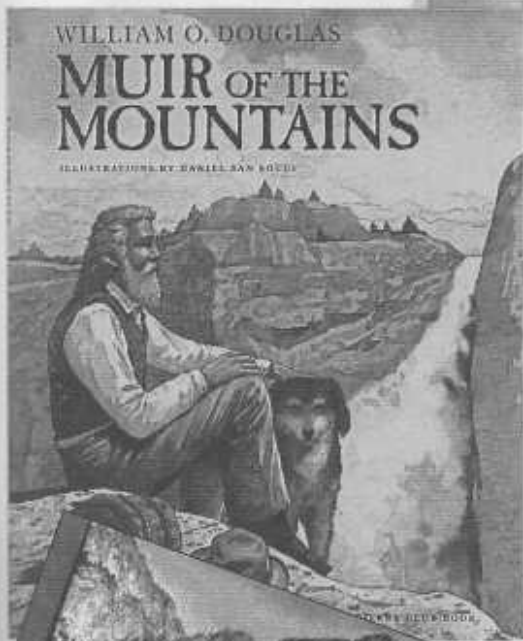
Boxed set of eight cards, \$7.50

01990 The Tree of Time - A Story of a Special Sequoia

written and illustrated by Kathy Baron. Children will be delighted by this picture book that follows the life of a giant sequoia that lived for over 2,000 years. Illustrated with lovely watercolor paintings, the volume pairs the progressive stages of development of the tree with notable events in world history. This technique helps children to better appreciate the past and its significant milestones while it allows them to more fully grasp the remarkable age of these unusual trees. For further emphasis, a time line of world history runs throughout the book.

When the "Tree of Time" is only a seedling, Hannibal and his elephants are crossing the Alps. While the sequoia grows, human-kind progresses from wooden-wheeled chariots and rock painting to space ships on the moon and computers. The author describes the tree's development, weaving in natural history information, while holding the reader's attention through the use of exciting incidents and the uncertainty of the tree's final destiny. For children ages 5 and up. 40 pages, 7" x 11". Yosemite Association, 1994.

Paper, \$7.95



07516 Yosemite Association Patch.

Our Association logo is embroidered on colorful, sturdy fabric for placement on daypacks, shirts, blue jeans, jackets, or wherever! The newly designed patch is available in three attractive colors: dark blue, forest green, and maroon.

\$3.00 (please specify color)

**07700 Pelican Pouch, Wilderness Belt Bag.**

The Pelican Pouch is not only perfect for carrying field guides, but also offers instant access to all the small items that are usually buried in your pack — pocket camera, lenses, maps, or your favorite trail mix! The pouch is designed with front snap fasteners on the straps. This allows comfortable positioning on your belt — even between belt loops; no need to take your belt off first. The material is high quality Cordura pack cloth with a waterproof coating on one side. Beige with the dark brown and white Yo-



semit Association patch, the Pelican Pouch measures 8 x 5 x 2 1/2 inches.

\$9.95

07510 Yosemite Association Mug.

This distinctive and functional heavy ceramic mug feels good with your hand wrapped around it. Available in two colors (green and maroon), it's imprinted with our logo and name in black and white. Holds 12 ounces of your favorite beverage.

\$6.50.

**07505 Yosemite Association Baseball-Style Cap.**

Our YA caps are made of corduroy with an adjustable strap at the back so that one size fits all. The cap is adorned with a YA logo patch and comes in dark blue, forest green and maroon colors. The cap is stylish and comfortable, and wearing it is a good way to demonstrate your support for Yosemite.

\$9.95 (please specify color).

07800 Yosemite Wilderness Pin.

Here's a beautiful enamel pin commemorating Yosemite's unparalleled wilderness. The latest in the series of pins for all of California's wilderness areas, it's circular in shape with a beautiful high country scene rendered in blues, grays, and greens. A real treasure for collectors. Approx. 1 inch in diameter.

\$4.95

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07720 Yosemite Bookstore Book Bag.

Here's YA's handy new book bag made from durable 100% cotton fabric with a sturdy web handle. Cream-colored, it's imprinted in blue with the Yosemite Bookstore

logo. Fine craftsmanship and generous oversized design make this a bag you'll want to take everywhere. Conserve resources with a reusable book bag. Approximately 17" x 16".

\$8.95





New Members

We would like to welcome to the Yosemite Association the following fine persons who became members within the past three months. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Regular Members

James Alterton, Ron Anderson, Ann Tobey, Cynthia Atherton, Donna R Aveda, Ronald Morgan Salin, Ginger Bate, Dana Behr, Kevin Bennett, Jeneale Bergstrom, Mr & Mrs Robert Bostrom, James Lewis Boynton, Michael D Brennan, Nell Brown, Richard Bruce, Bonita Bryant, Patricia Burg, Ben & Shizue Butler, Norman Cantor, Gail Cardaropal, Olaf Carmel, Patrick Carter, Jennie Chin, Margaret Chobanian, Jeffrey T Clayton, Alice L Courter, Doug Croll, Peter J Davis, Kathy Divel, Cristina M Dockter, Vicky Dornbush, Michael DuBois, D Sykes & N Edwards, Frank English, Bernice Ericksmon, Kahanah & Ron Farnsworth, Janet Rothman Felix, Greg Ferguson, Pat Fitzsimmons, Theresa D Gabel, Miriam Garland, Cindy Gates, Mike Glennon, David L Graham, G Fay & L Gray, Melissa Guerrero, Joanne Hanik, Susan Hart, Debra & Jim Heaphy, April Hejka-Elkins, Roy R Hendrickson, Suzan Hewitt, Gwen Hill, Oliver Hemmann & B Holstein, Jack Hourigan, Dennis Howard, Harold & Gale Humes, Ted Ito, Ruth L Jennings, Deborah Jessun, Opal Jones, Brent & Cathy Kelley, William A Kelly, William & Ruby King, Jason B Kirby, Kelley S Knapp, Jim Krause, Donna J Kublick, Judith Kunofsky, Mrs Pamela Langwell, Jean Lee, Patricia Lee, Karen Leffler, Paul Lehman, Stephen Lewis, Bruce Lockwitz, Monica Lowell, Theodore Lyman, Louise Ma, Elena G Macias, Llana Madison, Christie Marks, Phyllis Mattson, Malcolm McGregor, Nisan McLeod, Nancy F McPhee, J Meserow, Erica Miller, Paul Minault, Xenon N Moniodis, Dudley A Moore, Ruth Moore, Doris Moorhead, June A Morris, Karl T Mosher, Dan Nass, Donald L Nelson, Mary Jo Norman, Gordon R Norris, Howard W Oliver, Eileen & Alan Paredes, Deborah Parks, Pauline Paulin, Pamela S Peniston, George Perle, Douglas Perry, Patricia A Putnam, Fred Quarterman, Robert Quinn-O'Connor, Janet Rall, Jonathan Raven, John Reger, Mike Reid, Edna Rey, George Hall & D Rivera, George H Robertson, Dr Georgiana Robiger, Catherine R Russell, Greg B & Shawna Russell, Rita Sabbadini, Sve & Neal Safran, Mr & Mrs Robert Schlesinger, Connie Ellen Shearer, William & Marie Silbermann, Cherie & Brooks Smith, Martha & Ken Smith, Mrs Larry A Smith, Valarie Smith, Stanley & Jennifer Smiff, Elisa A Solorzano, Richard S Stahl, MD, Deborah Taylor, Timothy V Tinknell, Willy Tompkins, Andrea

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In Memory of George Keims: Ev & Jean Beuerman, Laura Everett, David & Susan Grether, Ann Jordan, Lockheed Missiles & Space Company Inc, Don S Sanfilippo

YA Intern

continued from page 18

by the counterbalance method. Throughout my conversation with the two men, I had tried to draw them away from their children to save them any embarrassment, but they would have none of it. The men in-

Nevada falls. At first, I wasn't looking forward to the crush of visitors I was certain to meet on the last few miles of my hike. I was dirty, tired and carrying a plastic bag full of trash, so I didn't look or feel very good.

As I headed down the trail around the two waterfalls, I realized I was the only one in uni-

form around. Visitors bombarded me with questions every few feet of my descent, many of them telling me I was the only ranger they had seen on the trails. Their smiles as they saw me go by gave me the extra motivation to be polite, helpful and energetic, no matter



WILLIAM NEILL

how tired I felt. How they insisted on having their two young boys present so that they, too, could learn from me. And as I turned to leave, one of the men asked for my name and THANKED me for my time and information.

In other instances as well, I found it just helps to have extra people in uniform around the park. On Sunday of Labor Day weekend, I was finishing a hike from Tuolumne Meadows to Yosemite Valley. On my way out, I passed through the popular day use areas of Vernal and

how tired I felt.

Maybe answering general questions and showing the colors of the National Park Service isn't quite in my job description. Still, if my presence on that trail enhanced some visitors' trip to Yosemite, then I'm glad I was able to be there for them.

Pad Durkin is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and worked as a reporter before his backcountry internship this past summer.



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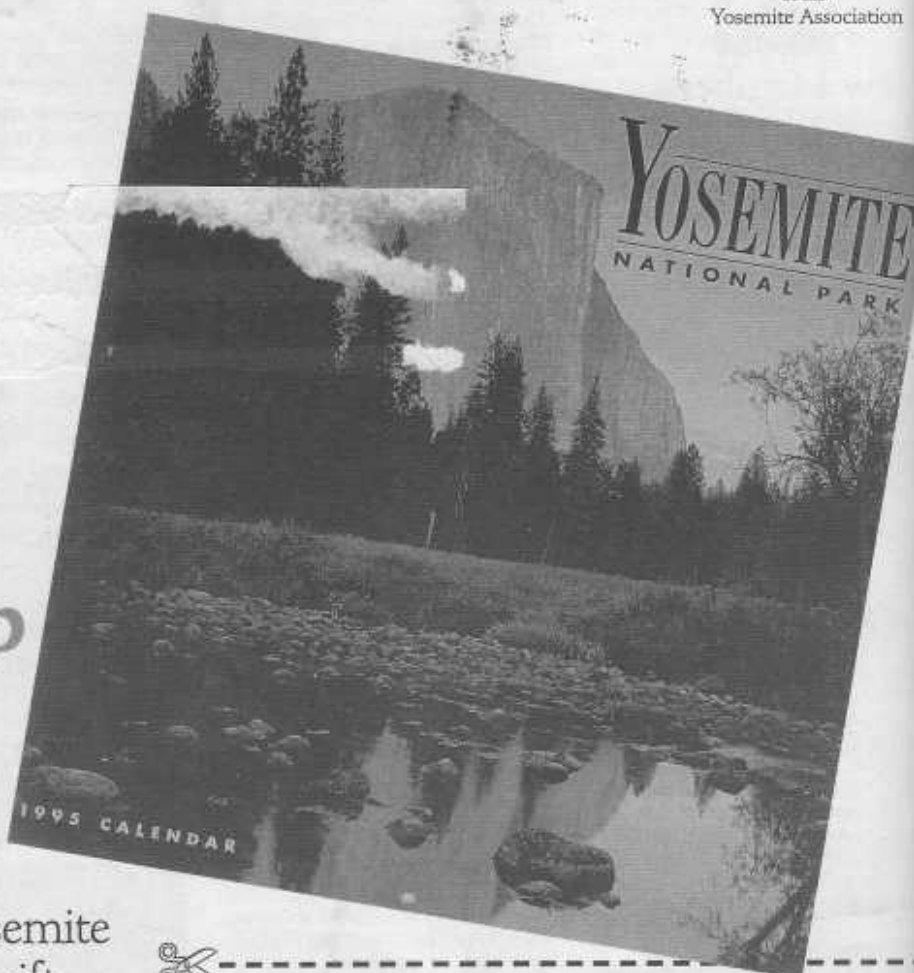
Give a YA Membership for the Holidays!

A membership in the Yosemite Association is a thoughtful gift and a year-long reminder of the park and its beauty.

Along with the membership, we will send a handsome 1995 Yosemite calendar as a *free gift*. The calendar features 13 full color 12" x 12" photographs and sells at the bookstore for \$10.99. (For more description of the gift calendar, please see page 20.)

Every membership counts in contributing to the care, well-being, and protection of America's foremost park — Yosemite!

Membership Levels: Regular \$25, Supporting \$35, Contributing \$50, Centennial \$100, Life \$500, Participating Life \$1,000 (with spouse add \$5).



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