Spike Van Cleve from Big Timber, Montana, was a rancher, top horse hand and natural-born yarn spinner who personified the American West and all it ever stood for. Spike not only was western, but he also looked and talked it. And he employed a conversational manner of swearing that was colorfully poetic. As Spike might have said, “If you are going to, by God, appreciate the West, then you had better, by God, learn the language.” Here, then is a sampling of colloquialisms and witticisms that have been excerpted from his best-selling books.

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Available at $14.95 per copy

The LOWELL PRESS
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bedded down: thrown from a horse, bucked off
blow the plug: to buck
boogery: touchy, spooky, flighty
brave-maker: one who instills courage in others
build to it: to start, to begin
bunch- Quitter: an animal that bolts from the herd
button: an infant, a youngster

chesty: self-confident, cocky
civilized booze: store-bought liquor
cross-grained: ill-tempered, out of sorts
cut out of the same leather: identical

devil: to tease, to make fun of
dropped in a good grass year: physically large

fitting a ride: riding a bronc well
forty years’ gatherin’s: a ranch hand’s worldly possessions
full of vinegar: confident, cocky, spirited

gunsel: an inexperienced youngster

hand for booze: a heavy drinker
hang fire: pending, hung up
hard customer: a tough individual
have the bark on: rough and tough
**have a shingle out:** to boast, to make claims

**hell of a whoa:** an abrupt stop

**homesteaded:** thrown from a horse, bucked off

**high-centered:** caught up on something

**jackpot:** a predicament

**little for big, but hell for stout:** physically small, but long on courage, spirit and tenacity

**let your full weight down:** relax, be at ease

**long in the tooth:** past the prime, old

**loud bucker:** a gas-passing bucking horse

**make it to green grass:** survive a trying experience

**oiled:** drunk

**on the fight:** looking for trouble

**on the front tit:** to have the best of any situation, doing fine

**owly:** grouchy, cranky, irritable

**packing a leg:** limping

**painted for war:** mad, angry

**pure quill:** authentic, real, through and through

**purchase:** a firm hold, a stabilized position
rollicky: mean, dangerous
sand: courage
stove up: crippled
salty: tough
set back like a borrowed dog: reluctant, apprehensive
Southdowns: mountain people from Appalachia
seam squirrels: lice
some pumpkins: someone or something special

than whom there was no whomer: the best of all
twosing: necking, petting

warbag: a sack holding a change of clothes and other items
webs: snowshoes
weedy: crazy, loco
wreck: a fall taken by horse and/or rider
windies: far-fetched, long-winded stories
whiskey courage: a false bravado derived from drinking liquor
working on a real good mad: getting angry
As Spike Would Say

“as serious as a tree full of owls”
“as gant as gutted snakes”
“as proud as an old gelding with a first-spring colt”

“as independent as a hog on roller skates”
“mad enough to fight a buzz saw and give it ten turns head start”

“as busy as birddogs in a stubblefield”
“as forlorn as a kicked pup”
“as happy as a hog in a potato patch”
“as warm as a crowbar on a January morning”

“If God had wanted man to walk, He’d have given him four feet, but He gave him two—one to put on each side of a horse.”

“Poverty depends an awful lot on a man’s state of mind, not just what he’s got.”

“Horses can’t do what machines can, but, dammit, they keep you company.”

“I believe in letting sleeping, by God, dogs lie!”
Rodeo Lingo
(Continued from page 22)

EATING GRAVEL—Being thrown from a bucking bronc or wild steer.

FOUR FOOTING—Catching an animal by the feet with a rope in order to throw same for handling.

FUZZ-TAIL—A wild horse.

GENTLING—Breaking a horse.

GLASS-EYE—A white-eyed horse.

GRABBIN’ THE APPLE—When a bronc rider grabs the horn of a saddle to keep from being thrown.

HACKAMORE—Same as brido.

HAMMERHEAD—A type of inbred horse.

HAZER—Bull-dogger’s assistant. After bull-dogger has leaped from pony to steer, the hazer, mounted, picks up former’s mount and also protects him from being gored when he releases steer.

HIGH ROLLER—Horse that leaps high when bucking.

HOBBLED STIRRUPS—When tied down under a horse’s belly.

HONDO or HONDA—Eyelet or ring through which rope passes to make lasso.

HULL—A saddle.

HURRICANE DECK—The saddle seat on a bucking horse.

IRON—To brand.

JERK-LINE—A single, continuous line or rein, attached only to the lead animal, by which a jerk-line string is driven.

JUGHEAD—Foolish horse.

LARIAT—Rope, out of the Spanish “la riata.”

LINE RIDERS—Punchers who patrol prescribed boundaries of a large ranch.

LOCO—Crazy.

LOGGERING—Holding to saddle horn.

LONG HORSE—A saddle horse capable of great distance and speed.

MARKS—Guts made on ears or additional proof of ownership.

MAIL ORDER COWBOY—A tenderfoot in custom-made cowboy regular and devoid of range experience.

MAVERICK—An unbranded animal more than one year old. (The term is said to be derived from a Texas rancher Samuel Maverick, who refused to brand his cattle.)

MUSTANG—A type of small range horse.

OPEN BRAND—A brand design not framed or boxed.

OUTRIDING—Inspecting parts of range distant from headquarters.

PALAMIDO, PALAMINO—A cream-colored horse with flaxen mane and tail.

PEG HORSE—Saddle horse proficient in stopping suddenly in his tracks, changing direction and starting again quickly.

PICK-UP MAN—A necessary rodeo arena cowboy who rides along side the bronc after the 10-second whistle, grabs the animal and helps the contestant off.

PINTO—A spotted horse.

PITCHING—Same as “bucking,” or “buck jumping.”

POTHOOKS—Spurs.

PULLING LEATHER—Holding on to saddle with the hand while riding a bucking animal, prohibited by the rules of all contests and scorned by all real cowboys.

RIATA—A rawhide rope; lasso; rope; lariat.

RODEO—An exhibition of riding, roping, etc.

RODERA—A round up.

ROUGH STRING—Unbroken horses.

ROSADERO—A wide, leathern shield sewn to back of a stirrup-leather.

ROUND-UP—To herd to a single point all animals within territory over which operation extends.

RUNNING IRON—A branding iron in the shape of a poker, or with a small cross bar at hot end. Often used by rustlers to change brands.

RUSTLE—To steal horses or cattle.

SADDLE STRING—Riding horses.

SCRATCHING—The act of keeping the feet moving in a kicking position in riding bucking animals, and one of the acts necessary to win at any real contest.

SCREWING DOWN—The act of sinking the spurs into the cinch while riding a bucking horse and failing to move feet in a kicking motion as provided in the rules.

SEEING DAYLIGHT—When daylight can be seen between rider and saddle during bronc ride.

SIDE-LINING—To hobble a horse by connecting a front and a rear leg.

SINGLE-RIG—Saddle with one cinch.

“SOLD HIS SADDLE”—Said of one who has become financially or morally insolvent.

SUN-FISHER—A bucker that twists his body in the air so that sunlight hits his belly.

TAILING—Throwing an animal by grasping tail and pulling to one side.

TALLY-MAN—One who keeps mathematical check on animals being branded.

TENDERFOOT—That’s who you are if you did not know the meaning of these words.

TIGHT LEGGING—When rider holds legs tight against horse and does not scratch.

TO TAKE LEATHER—Being forced to take a hand hold on any part of horse or saddle while riding.

WADDIES—Cowboy rodeo or experienced range riders.

WRANGLING—Rounding up, saddling and riding range horses.

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DID YOU EVER in your dreams see an Appaloosa walking? Or a Bosal, a Blab, or a Doughbelly?

Perhaps at some stage of your nocturnal tossings, you have been pursued by a Fuzz-tail, or a Dogie wearing a Rosadero and Chinks?

No, reader, this is not the sputtering of a broken phonograph record, but is real talk—cowboy lingo of Western range and rodeo. In the heyday of the open plains the cowboy was more often called a cow-puncher than a cowboy. The West knew him as both whether his charges were horses or cattle. One thing is certain—he never was called a horseboy. And practically no one seems to know where the “puncher” part of it came from; it’s just one of those things that sprung up with other words and expressions these men of the range still use.

COMMONLY HEARD

One would be a rash person, indeed, to say arbitrarily that such-and-such a word is still commonly heard throughout the Western cattle country, but that another word is entirely obsolete. Moreover, the use of words varies considerably and any attempt to set either geographic or idiomatic limitations might well bring on trouble.

It is obvious that a great many of the words employed every day by cowhands were derived from the Spanish and crossed the Rio Grande with those early vaqueros who were the first horsemen to appear in North America from the time the ice age died away completely with the prehistoric horse.

OUT FROM “MEX”

It is also obvious that the further the original terms traveled from Mexico, the less of Spanish and the more of American they contained. By the time what had been “vaquero” came a long way to the West, it had become “baxquero,” “buckaroo” and “buckhara.” Either that or the pretense of Spanish was entirely abandoned and the cowboy was known as a “waddie” or “wrangler.”

The cowboys of fiction magazines and moving pictures, who often speak a language that would not even be Greek to the genuine cowhand, have not been consulted in collecting and defining the words contained in the accompanying glossary. Nor have radio singers of cowboy songs. The glossary given below is not complete, but it should, however, be fairly accurate, as accuracy is understood when defining words that have no academic standing:

APPALOOSIE—A spotted, glass-eyed horse.
BLAB—A thin board, attached to a calf’s nose to wean it.
BICYCLING—The act of scratching with first one foot and then the other in the manner of riding a bicycle.
BITING THE DUST—Being thrown from a horse.
BLOWING A STIRRUP—Losing a stirrup, which disqualifies rider.
BOGGING THEM IN—When the rider fails to scratch horse.
BOSAL—A type of bridle used for breaking horses.
BRAND—A design burned on an animal for identification.
BROOMTAIL—Wild mares.
BRONCHO, BRONK—Mexican word for “mean,” shortened to bronc or “brunk,” in cowboy parlance; a vicious, unbroken horse.
BRONCHO PEELER OR BUSTER—One who breaks or gentles or busts horses.
BRONK BUSTERS—Cowboy who “breaks” bronks.
BUCKEROO—A cowboy.
BUCKING, BUCK-JUMPING—The gyrations of a bronk in trying to unseat rider.
BULLDOGGER—A steer wrestler.
BULLDOGGING—Throwing an animal by grasping its head and neck, or horns. Originally it meant throwing an animal by biting its lip. Common reference in rodeo lingo—to steer wrestling.
CHINKS—A type of leather pants protectors; a cross between chaps and a blacksmith’s apron.
CHUCK WAGON—Food and equipment wagon used on range.
CINCH—Strap or belt which holds a saddle in place.
CINCH HOOKS—Spurs.
COMMUNITY LOOP—Large extra long loop thrown by roper.
COW-PONY—A highly trained horse ridden when stock is being tended.
CROW-HOPS—A term contemptuously applied to mild bucking motions.
CUTTING OUT—Segregating an animal from the herd.
DOG-FALL—Putting a steer down with its feet under him. The throw is not complete until steer is flat on side with all four feet out.
DOGY, OR DOGIE—A range calf.
DOUBLE-RIG—Saddle with two cinches.
DOUGHBELLY—A hand or pull-fed calf.
DRIFT—The act of livestock marching in large numbers away from particular locality.

(Continued on page 42)

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jawed” to describe a horse with a very dominant jaw line. Unlike most cowboy metaphors, these terms no longer serve to forefront language and vivify meaning but remain in the language merely as short cuts in describing livestock. Others, such as “bear trap” retain their vividness in spite of the fact that the same term is applied by other groups, for instance, skiers, to designate dangerous bindings, perhaps because in both groups the peril associated with the term sustains the linguistic tension necessary to keep the metaphor fresh. Distinguishing the vitality of a metaphor is largely a matter of attention to context—the speaker’s tone and animation—and some consciousness of the incongruity inherent in the metaphor. Playfulness and deliberate emphasis that calls attention to terms and phrases signals the use of living metaphor. Staler terms get little stress or expressive attention.

“Ground tie” and “dog out” are particularly good examples of cowboy metaphors that retain their linguistic energy because of incongruity or particular aptness. The literal impossibility of tying a horse to the ground, and the degree of training and dominance over the animal necessary to teach it to stand without being tied, create logical tension since horses generally do need to be tied when standing, and tied to something above the ground. The likelihood of dropping a horse’s reins and having it stand as if tied is slim in cowboy experience, thus the incongruity and unlikelihood combine to make the metaphor sharp with tension. To describe a horse as “dogging out” reveals the deep familiarity that cowboys have with dogs (dogs are used to herd cattle and many cowboys take great pride in their dogs). In this metaphor “dog” is short for “dog-trot,” a relaxed, casual, inattentive canine gait that, when used to describe a horse that is not concentrating on its rider’s command for speed and attention, is instantly appreciated.

A great many cowboy metaphors are conceptually concerned with controlling (or failing to control) and dominating animals. In many cases, the secondary domain of reference in such metaphors is a vehicle; “blowing a pedal” and “going down the road” are just two of dozens. Among them are:

“Still in the buggy”: describing a rider who keeps his seat in spite of a very rough maneuver by a bucking bull.
“Power steering”: a reference to using spurs to control a horse.
“She ain’t got very good wheels”: describing a mare with bad feet.
“No brakes”: describing a horse that will not stop.

“GOT A HOLE IN YOUR TRAILER?”

“It’s either nine-o or stop”: referring to a horse that either runs or won’t go at all.
“Has he got any gas?”: asking whether a horse has got speed.
“Get run over”: referring to any incident in which an animal knocks down or tramples over a cowboy, as in a bulldogging event in rodeos when a rider fails to fell the steer and it gallops over him.
“Vapor lock”: referring to a bucking horse that refuses to exit the stock chute and enter the arena.
“Tuning”: riding hell out of a horse that hasn’t been ridden for awhile, or refining the training of a horse’s performance. This term relates to fine-tuning an engine or car for peak performance.
“Stall”: any horse that won’t enter the arena or in other locations, hesitates before moving out to perform a task.
“Wreck”: any accident on a bull or horse that injures stock or rider or throws the rider to the ground.
“Pilot error”: mis-cuing a horse or any error by the rider that interferes with proper performance by the horse.
“Wind drag”: riding a saddle bronc without the required raking with spurs, just riding out the eight second time limit in the rodeo arena.
“Bail out”: push off and away from a bull or horse to avoid injury or the animal falling on the rider.

That cowboy language should draw on similarities between livestock and vehicles is not surprising since vehicles are part of every cowboy’s life, in many cases replacing horses for ranch work. Pick-up trucks, livestock transports, ATCs, and even aircraft are commonly used in modern day ranching.10 Even the buggy is not beyond memory to some old-timers and is known through story and film to younger cowboys.

10. Cowboys are a particularly mobile occupational group, covering countless miles herding cattle, driving pick-up trucks and other vehicles to complete ranching chores and to make trips to town, hauling livestock, following the rodeo and horse show circuits, etc. Rodeo cowboys particularly tend to chalk up miles, often competing in several rodeos on one weekend. In her study of rodeo, Elizabeth Atwood Lawrence observes that traditionally the announcer “pays homage to the place he [the rider] has declared to be his hometown,” though he may not have been there for years. She goes on to note that the practice of announcing home towns symbolically relates “each contestant to the land, as the cowboy is “physically related to it” (1982:86). It would be that to the members of the community to whom many of the rodeo entrants are known, the hometown announcements actually serve to remind them that cowboying is still a drifter’s life, and to the general populace, announcements of hometowns emphasize how far cowboys travel to enter rodeo events.
WESTERN FOLKLORE

“Clean break”: a rope around the calf’s neck while it is in the chute prior to being released into the arena releases the rider’s barrier rope, so a clean exit from the chute by the calf equals a clean rider exit from the “box” parallel to the chute.

“Breakaway”: a rope used in roping practice that has a loop that snaps loose when tension is applied so the calf or steer can escape and the roper does not have to take time to unloop the rope from the animal; often used to train a young horse to get the feel of the jerk but not the full weight of the calf.

“Setting the Trap”: throwing a stiff, vertical loop to catch a calf’s hind feet.

“Catch”: succeed in roping an animal.

“Slack”: the rodeo events that are not part of the public performance and are held in the arena early in the morning or after the public performance to allow all the entrants to compete without making the public rodeo overly long; it is much less formal than the public performance and usually all competitors stay in the arena, mounted but out of the way; the tone is less tense and overtly cooperative among competitors; also refers to the looseness in the rope between the catch and the calf hitting the end of the rope when the horse “gets into the ground” and pulls the rope taut.

“Bail out”: which, as cited earlier, means to push off and away from an animal, not only suggests jumping out of an airplane but refers to getting someone out of jail.

“In a bind”: a bronc rider packs his glove into the bareback rigging; if he gets bucked off the opposite side of the horse, he may not be able to release himself from the bucking animal because the glove is reined and the hand is tightly secured.

“Hung up”: same as above, or more generally, at any time, to get caught in the tack used on a horse or bull and thus be put in jeopardy of being dragged by the animal or trampled.

All of these metaphors there is some sense of violence or peril; anything that confines or binds is dangerous and escaping confinement brings well-being. These metaphors support attitudes common among members of the cowboy culture. Not a few of them have spent bit of time in jail and see it as the antithesis of the roaming free life the range. Their way of life threatened in the modern age, cow-

“GOT A HOLE IN YOUR TRAILER?”

boys hang on to the frontier values of personal independence and a close relationship with the natural world, willing to sacrifice the luxuries of an easier way of life for the satisfactions of direct interaction with livestock and the land. Their language reflects two extremes of life as they see them—confinement as negative and freedom as positive.

Though tradition has it that cowboys do not care much about anything but their independence and their horses, the metaphors they use suggest that women play on the minds and in the language of cowboys now and again. Along with the “cheating” metaphor cited earlier, there are others that suggest female anatomy, attire, or activity:

“Soft in the Face” or “Light in the Face”: describes a horse that is sensitive to the bit and responsive to reining signals, a positive quality particularly in show events where minimal cueing is desirable.

“Jewelry”: describes particularly fancy tack, usually embossed with silver, used for special events, parades, and horse shows but not used for ranch work.

“Panty-hose”: refers to rope that catches high on the back legs of a calf, up around the middle of the legs rather than down near the hooves.

“Run a nylon down her leg”: describes swinging a nylon halter rope at a horse’s front legs to get the animal to move in the desired direction.

“Hooker”: refers to a steer that tries to gore a horse or rider in a bulldogging or roping event.

The last example, like many metaphors is both literal (in that the steer tries to hook its horn into the rider or horse) and allusive (in that it suggests self-interest and an urge to control).

There are also hundreds of cowboy metaphors that resist categories. In the working cattle horse event at quarter horse shows, “dry work” refers to the patterns riders must perform to demonstrate the obedience and agility of their horses, but it also suggests that performance of the patterns is dull; working livestock is more exciting. A “union bull” is one that stops bucking when the eight-second whistle that marks the end of the scored ride sounds in the rodeo arena, and to arenas. Quinlan uses this metaphor to argue his case that the cowboy has always been an anachronism in American society, that his era had passed before it even began. While the mystic trail-driving cowboy is gone forever, cowboys have adjusted to their changing circumstances and sustained their unique identity.
“Got a Hole in Your Trailer?”

“He dogs out every time”: referring to a calf that comes out of the chute too slowly, interfering with the roper’s timing.

“Getting in the ground”: describing a horse that gets good traction, really digging into the arena surface as it runs after the steer or calf in a roping and bulldogging event or around the barrels in a barrel racing event. Barrel racing horses are called “tin can chasers” because their event calls for running a pattern around three equidistant metal drums.

“Get on the uphill side”: a bucking horse that is nervous in the chute makes it difficult for the rider to mount and requires that he ease himself onto the top of the animal.

“You can ground tie that horse”: the horse will stand as though tied when the reins are dropped to the ground, a characteristic of only extremely well-trained horses.

To “get in a storm with a horse”: refers to fighting for control with a horse that is acting up.

“Wind-splitters”: horses that can run exceptionally fast.

“Goosey”: refers to a nervous, poorly behaved horse and carries the echo of the familiar simile “silly as a goose,” suggesting no apparent cause for the agitated behavior.

“Ewe necked”: refers to a conformation problem in which the horse has a U-shaped dip in the upper side of its neck.

“Star gazer”: another term for a horse that holds its head too high.

“Pig eyed”: describing a horse with little eyes.

“Hog backed”: a horse with a round back, no withers.

“Bird wings”: saddle swells, the broad, raised part of the saddle on which the horn is mounted that bends back toward the rider’s thighs.

“Bear trap”: a saddle with swells that hold the rider in the seat and are dangerous because the rider might get “hung up,” caught in the “rigging.”

“Down in the well”: describing a rider down on a bull or bronc’s back while still in the chute or being thrown off an animal to the inside of the bronc or bull’s spin and being hung up in the rigging, thus vulnerable to trampling or other injury.

The application of characteristics of other animals to horses is a particularly common occurrence in cowboy language, so common that several of the above examples are clichés, as is the term “roman nosed” to describe a horse with a long, unrefined face, or “lantern
The Vocabulary of Social Life on the American Frontier

C. MERTON BABCOCK

LANGUAGE has ever supplied a most useful index to the social traditions of the human race. The unforgettable idiom secures in the very words we employ an invaluable record of our multiplex accomplishments. The nature of the frontiersman’s conquest of the American wilderness can best be learned by acquaintance with frontier language. The present study constitutes an inquiry concerning the social customs of the advancing American frontier as revealed by pioneer expressions. The basic assumption is: that a more intimate account of a social culture is obtained by a linguistic survey than by any other method.

I

Frontier abodes were, for the most part, crude and unassuming. A common type of dwelling place of pioneer Americans was the sod house, familiarly called a soddy. Alternative designations included mud house and sod shack. A house built partly or wholly into the bank of earth was known as a dugout (1860). A large and ambitiously built sod house was called a sod mansion. Adobe or simply adobe (1848) houses made of mud bricks were common in the Southwest and in sections of the country inhabited by Spanish-speaking people. Dirt floor dates from 1796. Brick houses were known in 1845, mansion in 1846, and country homes in 1852. Shanty, cabin, and clapboard shanty were names given to temporary semipermanent dwellings. The expression homestead (1830) often referred to a dwelling place on which a settler’s claim was staked.

The term settlement to designate a neighborhood of dwellings in close proximity dates from 1675. Some of the pioneer settlements were made up of brush shanties and canvas tents. The expression camp dates from 1819, cow camp from 1885, and mining camp from 1866. The cow camp was first.

II

A man’s property or possessions were called boodle (1839) and caboodle or kit and caboodle (1848). A trapper referred to his possessions as possibles (1841). The pioneer’s household and personal equipage was characteristically simple and crude. When the pioneers did not have regular beds, they built bunks or bunkers along the sides of the walls of the cabin or house. Hay covered with blankets made up the usual mattress. The cattlemen sometimes made a mattress by stretching rawhide across a bed frame. Bedsteads were made of poles. Often, however, a bed sack (1661) had to suffice. The cowboy called his bedroll a bunk, dream sack, or flea trap. Crazy quilts made of scraps of cloth were known in 1886.

Chairs, tables, and other furniture were made of poles from the forest. Chairs were sometimes seated with hay rope. Raw hides served for carpets. Willow-twig brooms sufficed for sweeping the dirt floor. Dish pan dates from 1813; dish rag, from 1830; knitting pin, from 1805.

Early stoves or hay-burners were made from an iron drum or an ordinary wash boiler. Hay or sagebrush was used for fuel. Another common fuel was buffalo chips (1840). Bull chips or cow chips were called simply chips (the dried droppings of cattle). Basket of chips dates from 1800. Prairie fuel and surface fuel, as the chips were sometimes called, were kept in a chip box or piled in the corner of a room. When cobs were used as fuel, the box was called a cob box.

Many pioneers had no lamps or candles. They made grease lamps by putting land or some other sort of melted fat into a dish or pan and then inserting a piece of rag or string for a wick. Coal-oil lamps were a luxury.

Two prime necessities of every pioneer household were a rifle and an ax. Hunters used various kinds of guns. The needle gun was a three-barreled rifle sometimes used by soldiers. Professional hunters used a buffalo gun, a sharp rifle of .50 or .55 caliber weighing fourteen pounds, which fired a heavy charge and killed at fifteen hundred yards. The old flintlock rifle of
legend and history was in use from 1700 until as late as 1850. The cowboy’s six-shooter speaks a language universally understood. Familiar epithets for the revolver were equalizer, shootin’ iron, big fisty, blue lightning, black-eyed Susan, blow pipe, flame thrower, flip cock, hardwood, iron, rod, lead pusher, man stopper, meat in the pot, Old Reliable, one-eyed Scribe, peace- maker, persuader, sow handle, smoke wagon, talkin’ iron, thumb buster, Mr. Speaker, pilibox, unconverted friend, and artillery.

III

The pioneer adapted his dress to the conditions under which he had to live. Conventional dress worn by men in and near towns came under the general designation store clothes. The backwoodsman was forced to make his own wearing apparel. Blanket coats made from Indian blankets were called Mckinaws (1842) a term derived from the Ojibway Indians’ receipt of annual payments and presents from the government on the island of Mackinae. The Indians called their blankets mantu (1829). Blanket shawls are dated 1834.

Hunting shirts, styled after the fashion of Daniel Boone, were made of deerskin abundantly covered with fringe and stitching, adaptable for all seasons, and so eminently serviceable as to be adopted by hunters, explorers, and travelers generally. Leggings and moccasins (1612), made of deerskin, protected the pioneer’s feet and legs. Overalls dates from 1850; jeans from 1868.

The making of clothing was one of the principal duties of the pioneer woman. Every pioneer woman could spin, weave, knit, and sew for the members of her family. Dry goods (1777) was a term which designated clothing material obtainable from ships and stores. Clothes were made of linen, cotton, wool, hides, and furs. Cotton textiles became abundant around 1800. Boughten suits (ready to wear) were an unknown luxury to the frontiersman.

Calico was used for dressmaking as early as 1779. A common everyday dress for women was called a Mother Hubbard dress (1884). When a woman tired of wearing a particular dress she often gave it to her husband to use as a night shirt. In 1860 a close-fitting vest was called a hug me tight and fashionable women wore hoop skirts (1857). Weather skirts were worn for protection from severe weather.

Calico societies were organized in the early days. Members of such societies promised to appear at church, balls, and on the street in calico dresses. Calico became so popular as a dress material that the word calico came to denote a woman.

In sharp contrast to the interest shown by pioneer women toward feminine finery, the hard-boiled miners and cowboys wore clothing suited to their pan
dele occupations. A cowboy referred to his best attire as Sunday go to meetin’ clothes (1857), and to gaudy finery or fancy dress as faradiddle or fumadiddle.

IV

The diet of the frontiersman was simple and coarse. The forest supplied many foods as did the rivers and streams. A fire outside the cabin cooked the food. Bread, the most staple article of modern diets, was a rare commodity on the frontier. Indian corn was the most valuable single article of food known to the settlers. From Indian corn meal, they made no cake (1694), pearlash, johnnie cake (1739), hoe cake (1774), corn dodger (1834), and corn pone (1859).

Johnnie cake was named after the Shawnee Indians: Shawnee cake. Corn meal, sometimes mixed with boiled beans and baked in cakes under ashes, was called ash cake (1839). Rye and Indian bread made from rye and Indian meal was called Ryandinjun (1805). Succotash made by mixing corn and beans dates from 1751. Corn bread is dated 1796; corn coffee, 1844; corn pudding, 1848; and corn molasses, 1825. Corn meal mush was called samp. Bean porridge dates from 1828; roasting ears, from 1705.

Hog and hominy was another standard dish. For hominy the hulls of corn kernels were peeled off by soaking them until they became soft in a strong leach made by running water through wood ashes. A piece of meat, whether of beef, buffalo, elk, or deer, was a jerk or jerky, both to the hunter and to the housewife. Bear steak (1788) and sow belly (1867) were common meat dishes.

Cracker, commonly called a biscuit by the English, is traced by the Dictionary of American English to 1739. The term biscuit in America (1818) refers to hot bread made from sour dough without yeast, baking powder, or soda. Egg bread dates from 1864. Biscuits were sometimes called sinkers or doughgods.

Pancakes were everywhere known as flapjacks or slipjacks. Other names listed by Wentworth include fritter, hotcake, griddle cake, flannel cake, jump- over, splatterdab, flippum jack, battercake, stackcake, and leather bread. A pone of bread was a thick pancake baked in a covered skillet and often served to sandwich bacon. Hardtack referred to stale bread.

Grub, chuck, and loblolly (1657) were common words for food in pioneer days. Grustake (1879) was a phrase used to designate a supply of food. Cut straw and molasses was a term used to depreciate poor grub. The cowboy said he was padding out his belly when he was eating.

Characteristic frontier names for common foods include Mexican strawberries for dried beans, trapper’s butter for buffalo marrow, Charlie Taylor for a butter made of sorghum and bacon grease, fluff duff for any fancy dish, horse thief special for boiled rice and raisins, Kansas City fish for salt pork, and poosh for tomatoes, sugar, and bread.

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Among table delicacies enjoyed by pioneers were *sheep-shower pie* and *plum soup* made of jerk and wild plums. *Pot pie* dates from 1792; *pandowdy* from 1846; *pumpkin pie* from 1654; and *chicken pie* from 1733. A *square meal* is as old as 1850, and a *feast* as 1791. *Cook book* dates from 1809, and *can opener* from 1874.

An old recipe book of 1790 in Pennsylvania contains recipes neatly written out for potato pudding, Sally Lunn tea cakes, bread and butter pudding, plum pudding, gingerbread, hard wafers, yellow cocoanut puffs, blancmange, sauer kraut, puncan chips, clam soup, and wonders (doughnuts). There are also recipes for puddings made with carrots, with rice, with almonds, and with apricots, as well as for such delightful sounding confections as whipped syllabub, cream chips, apple fancie, quince cream, gooseberry fool, floating island, and snowballs.*

*Taffy* was known in 1848 and *jude* in 1897. *Cookie* dates from 1786 and *molasses cake* from 1896. Cake was generally called *sweet bread*. Molasses was called *long sweetening* and cane sugar *short sweetening*. A *sugar eat* (1850) of sugar *lick* was a gathering of young people in maple groves or sugar orchards to eat the warm sugar which was cooled on snow. *Cane pole* (1816) was a term used to designate a stalk of sugar cane from which one sucked the sweetness.

Beverages were little used at meals on the frontier; water was looked upon with distaste; and whiskey became a regular item on the household list. Coffee was not always plentiful, and tea was unknown in the present sense. The frontiersman boiled the tea leaves, poured off the liquid, and ate the leaves. A substitute for coffee made from bread crumbs and called *rust coffee* was known in 1863.

Whiskey was made from whatever ingredients were available. *Rockalonym* (1624) was a homemade whiskey, as was *carlobogus* (1758), made from spruce beer, rum, and molasses. Intoxicating concoctions familiar to the pioneer included: *apple brandy* (1780), *corn juice* (1846), *cider royal* (1758), *corn whiskey* (1843), *egg nog* (1882), *mint julep* (1809), and *rock and rye* (1808). *Flip* was a liquor made of rum, beer, and sugar, with a hot poker put into the mug to stir it. *Choc* was a low-grade beer originally made by the Choctaw Indians. Other special drinks were *swankey* and *switchel*.

Western names for *straight whiskey* (1862) included: *tarantula juice*, *snakehead whiskey*, *sambor juice*, *wild mare’s milk*, *coffin varnish*, *conversation fluid*, *snake medicine*, *fire water*, *Taos lightning*, *gut varnish*, *neck oil*, *new paint*, *red ink*, *snake poison*, *tonsil varnish*, *tornado juice*, *panther sweat*, .32 caliber whiskey, sheeppiep, bug juice, joy water, and hard liquor.

Cheap whiskey was called *turpentine whiskey* (1869), *dynamite*, *rifle whiskey*, and *rot gut*. *Moonshine* dates from 1886. Very few of the early western...

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*A division of society into classes or grades was contrary to the frontiersman’s concept of democracy. In the backwoods, every man felt himself to be as good as any other. Whatever distinction was made became based on the silent assumption that the first comers should receive more respect and deference than the newcomer. The term *old timer* (1866) was used as a designation of distinction. *High-muck-a-muck* was an apporpriate term useed to define sharp deviations from the accepted norm of *just folks*. The so-called elite in society were variously called *first folks*, *blue bloods*, and *Montebanks*. The term *half-way strainer* referred to a person who tried to live above his “proper” station in life.

When the pioneer wanted to get something done in a hurry, he organized a *bee* (1769) and invited all the neighbors in the vicinity to come and help with the work. Examples of such bees were *building bees* and *raisin’ bees* (to set up the frame or the logs of a house or barn), *choppin’ bees* (to clear timber land or to make a clearing), *stone bees* (to clear a piece of ground of stones), *huskin’ bees* (to husk a corn crop for storage), and *quiltin’ bees* (to make bed coverings). There were *apple bees* (1807) at apple-picking time, *knitting bees* (1853), *spelling bees*, and even *kissing bees* (1853). The alternative term *frolic* represented the more social aspects of the gatherings. Quilting *frolics* date from 1819; *turtle frolic*, from 1759.

*Small talk* came to be one of the characteristic features of these gatherings, often called *talk meetin’s* and *gab fests*. Small talk consisted of *swapping stories* (1887) or telling lies. Frontier cowboys amused themselves by means of the *circular story* by which the old hands tested the gullibility of the tenderfoot. Outdoor amusements not associated with work included *basket meetin’s* (1850), *bear hunts* (1803), *bush meetings*, *deer hunts* (1834), *fire hunts* (1788),...

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* Wright and Corbett, op. cit., p. 62.
fish fries (1830), still hunts (1858), and fall hunts (1823). Joy riding, sleighing, huckleberrying, were familiar types of diversion. Barbecues were held as early as 1741. Camp meetings, canoe clubs, skating parties, and clam bakes were all known long before 1880, the usually accepted date for the closing of the frontier.

Among the favorite amusements of frontier men were trials of skill. Shooting matches (1807) varied from turkey shoots (1835) to treacherous shooting games called driving the nail, threading the needle, and William Tell in which a tin cup full of whiskey poised on a man's head served as target.

Parties for men only were called gander parties or stag parties (1856). Parties for women only were called hen parties. Men engaged in gambling and in active sports; whereas the women attended pink teas (1820) or pink parties, which were for the most part gal fests. A calico party (1855) was a woman's affair, as were surprise parties (1859), and church socials (1876). Youth parties included candy pulls (1854), sugar parties (1871), and waffle parties (1868).

Among the celebrations attended by every member of the family was the auction sale (1820) with its free lunch. This was as much a social affair as it was commercial. Moving day (1832) was also a social affair patterned after the bee. Annual festivals and red-letter days included the country fair (1856).

The word dance appeared as early as 1820 and constituted the most universal of American entertainments. The square dance (1878) was a popular dance in pioneer days. Dances in general have been called shindigs (1859). Individual dances included bran dance (1839), cake walk (1879), green corn dance (1723), hoedown or hoedig (1849), quadrille (1822) or lancers, set out dance (1791), show down (1884), turkey dance (1800), rope dance (1734), Virginia reel (1817), walk-along-Joe (1862), and walk around (1861). A riotous dance was called a breakdown or a shakedown (1827). The cowboys called the dance a jamboree.

This partial listing of the social and cultural idiom of the American frontiersman is sufficient to establish the verity of the contention that language provides an enduring record of significant characteristics of a civilization. As compared with locations current in the more conventional New England settlements during a hundred-year period between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the language of the frontiersman and trail blazer may be characterized as individualistic, eccentric, antagonistic toward restraint, godless, coarse, and sincere. These qualities were the essential social attitudes of the men who reflected the wildness of the environment they conquered. Judging solely from linguistic evidence, the backwoodsman may be said to combine courage, enterprise, and ingenuity. His words ring with the echoes of his exuberant shouts and boasts and testify to his rough but sincere hospitality and his intuitive sense of justice. The cooperative and democratic attitudes of the

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A GLOSSARY OF RANGE WORDS AND MEANINGS

1. Broomtail---------------------Any kind of a horse.
2. Bull-whacker-----------------Driver of a bull team.
3. Bronc------------------------Mean, unridden horse.
4. Buck ------------Bad, bucking horse.
6. Gold-deck-------------------Fool or surprise someone, to trick.
7. Cow-critter------------------Any cow.
8. Freezing--------------------Just travelling, nowhere in particular.
11. Chuck-wagon-----------------Camp cook's kitchen.
13. Dude-------------------------An eastern visitor to a western ranch.
15. Dry-gulcher-----------------One who shoots from ambush, hidden sniper.
16. Fuzzytail--------------------Any horse.
17. Green-horn------------------New cowhand on ranch.
18. Hemp------------------------A lariat or cowboys rope.
19. Hone------------------------Long for, wish.
20. Hankering-------------------Longing for or wishing for.
21. Injun Joe--------------------Any Indian.
22. Lead-poisoning---------------Sound from a revolver or rifle.
23. Leaders----------------------Front yoke or team.
24. Loco------------------------Crazy, pertaining to cattle, horses and sheep.
25. Larruping-time-------------Swell or wonderful time.

(cont.?)
26. Lagger-----------------Staying behind, pertaining to sheep or cattle.
27. Lucre-----------------Change.
28. Lingo-----------------Talk, language.
29. Makins-----------------Tobacco and papers.
30. Mag-----------------Name given to old horses.
31. Nestor-----------------Name given to homesteaders.
32. Norther-----------------Strong, wind.
33. Pilgrim-----------------A tenderfoot.
34. Peler-----------------A rider of broncs and wild steers.
35. Porker-----------------Swine
36. Rag-house--------------A tent. Poss. ref.: "you nag-house lads..."
37. Remuda, remutha--------A band of horses, used during roundups.
38. Rakers-----------------Spurs.
39. Sow-belly---------------Side pork or bacon.
40. Six-gun-----------------Revolver.
41. Skinner-----------------Driver of a freight wagon.
42. Slick-ear---------------Stray calf, undecided ownership.
43. Squatter-----------------Homesteader.
44. Tenderfoot--------------One learning to become a cowboy.
45. Tolerable--------------Word meaning, well known.
46. Top-hand-----------------Foreman of a ranch.
47. Tinhorn-----------------Name given to gamblers.
48. Tick-harbor-------------Cowman's name for sheep.
49. Tote-------------------To carry, as a gun or rifle.
50. Wrinkle-withers--------Cowman's name for sheep.
51. Woolies-----------------Sheep.
52. Wrangler-----------------One who gathers up the horse herd.
53. Maverick-----------------A wild horse or steer.
   (con't.)
A GLOSSARY OF RANGE WORDS AND MEANINGS

54. Spread--------------------Cowboy's name for the home ranch.
55. Rep-rider------------------Man trusted to represent the home ranch during the roundup season.
56. Fork-----------------------Straddle.

SOME PHRASES USED BY COWPENS AND SHEEPHERDS

1. Fork your saddle-----------------Get on your horse.
2. Ride hell for leather-----------To ride very fast.
3. Come and get it-----------------Cook's call to cowboys.
4. Hang your hat on the floor-----Make yourself at home.
5. Rest your saddle----------------Get off your horse and visit.
6. Pull leather---------------------Grab the saddle horn.
7. Scratch him---------------------Use your spurs.
8. Burn his hide--------------------Put the branding iron on him.
9. Bit the dust---------------------Pertaining to a thrown rider.
10. Grab some chuck----------------Have something to eat.
11. Sit a spell--------------------Stay and visit awhile.
12. Fan him------------------------A shout to a rider to take his hat off and wave it near the bronc's head, to get more action.
13. Toss on your gear-------------Saddle and bridle your horse.
14. Hit the hay--------------------Go to bed.
15. Give me the makings-----------Give me a smoke.

(These words and their meanings, together with the phrases, were given through interviews on this subject, by Bill Burnett, Ed. Silverthorne, Tom Gregory, Tommy Murray, and Sam Richards. These persons are all old-timers of Fergus County and all good authorities.)
RANGE JARGON

Bedding Ground -- Sheltered place where stock bed down at night; usually a ravine or near a clump of trees or brush.

Between Hay and Grass -- Period when winter hay that has been stored is gone and grass has not yet come up.

Biddy -- Aged and toothless ewes.

Biddy Bridle -- Old-fashioned bridle with blinders.

Brand Blotting -- Making a brand indistinct and alterable by applying heat through a wet blanket or sack.

Bronc -- Unbroken horse; broken, but still wild.

Bronc Buster -- Rider who specializes in breaking wild horses.

Broomtail -- Range or scrub horse of doubtful value.

Bucking Rolls -- Leather pads on the pommel of the saddle that enable a rider to clump his knees to the saddle.

Buffalo Chips -- Dried buffalo or livestock manure used for fuel.

Bulldog -- To throw a steer by leaping from the saddle, grasping its horns and twisting its neck.

Bullwhacker -- Driver of oxen.

Bum Lamb -- Lamb which has lost its mother and wanders about trying to get milk from other ewes.

Buzzard Head -- Mean tempered range horse.

Cavy -- herd of horses (from Spanish caballos).

Cedar Breaks -- Broken land overgrown with scrub cedar.
Chaps -- Leather or goatskin riding pants worn for protection from cold, or for riding through brush. Originally chaparajos.

Chinook -- a warm southwest wind that melts snow in winter.

Circle -- Area a roundup rider must inspect in a day.

Close herdin' -- cheek to cheek dancing.

Corral -- livestock pen enclosed by poles or boards.

Cowpuncher -- Ranch hand.

Crazy as a Sheep Herder -- A cattleman's expression of deep contempt.

Cutting Horse -- Quick horse at cutting out.

Cut Out -- To separate an animal from a herd.

Ditch Rider -- Irrigation district partolman.

Dogies -- Cattle; sometimes motherless calves.

Drift Fence -- Crude fence set up to prevent straying of stock.

Drop Band -- Band of ewes being lambed in the spring.

Dry Band -- Band of sheep having no ewes with lambs.

Fan the Hammer -- To fire a revolver rapidly by holding the gun in the right hand with the hammer drawn back and released by the heel of the left hand; single action revolvers are used and the trigger catch has been filed down.

Father up the Herd -- Bed down a herd at night.

Fool -- Person of more than ordinary aptitude; as a "ridin' fool", for an uncommonly good rider.

Fool brand -- A brand too complicated to be briefly named.

Fork a Horse -- To ride a horse.

Hell-for-Leather -- To ride with great speed.
Hog Leg -- A revolver in a holster.

Kack -- Saddle.

Lamb Licker -- Sheepmen (derisive); from a ewe's habit of licking a new-born lamb.

Lariat -- Light, strong rope with a running noose, used for catching and tying livestock.

Line Fence -- Dividing fence between range outfits.

Larrup -- To strike.

Larrupin' truck -- Extra good food.

Lasso -- Lariat.

Loco -- Poisonous weed that destroys muscular control; also (adj.) crazy, and (verb) to go insane.

Loose Herdin' -- Dancing with decorous space between partners.

Nester -- Homesteader.

On the Prod -- Out of sorts; as a cow ready to use her horns.

Peel Broncs -- To ride, drive, or break horses by means of the liberal use of the whip.

Pile -- To throw, as, "that horse piled me."

Pool Camp -- Roundup camp of several ranches, each ranch being represented by a "rep" (agent).

Pull Freight -- To go away; move along.

Pull Leather -- To hold onto the saddle in riding a bucking horse; in rodeos it disqualifies a rider.

Put a Loop on -- To lasso.

Rattle the Hocks -- To move along; to move rapidly.
Rep -- Representative or agent of a ranch at a roundup conducted by several cattle outfits.

Spread -- A cattle ranch.

Riding the Owlhoot Trail -- To ride as an outlaw at night.

Ridin' Herd on -- Courting a woman.

Ridge Runner -- Wild horse which keeps to the high ridges to watch for danger so as to warn the herd.

Roll your Bed -- "You're fired."

Roundup -- Periodic gathering of cattle for branding and shipping.

Running Iron -- Straight iron without brand design with which any brand can be applied.

Rustle -- To make one's own way; to obtain food, water, wood, or even ask for a job; to steal livestock.

Sack out -- To break a shying horse by tying him up and throwing sacks at him until he no longer shies.

Salivate -- To shoot full of holes.

Show Daylight -- To let light show between the saddle and the rider; a usual preliminary to being "piled."

Slick ear -- Animal without earmarks.

Slow Elk -- Beef butchered without owners' consent.

Sodbuster -- Homesteader.

Soogan -- A quilt.

Sourdough -- Bread leavened from dough of previous baking.

Stampede -- Properly, the running away of cattle in wild disorder; any confused activity.

Stray -- Animal that wanders off the home range; a stranger.
String -- Saddle horses kept for use of a single rider.
Sunfish -- To buck with a sidewise, writhing motion, or by rapidly lowering and lifting the shoulders.
Swing Team -- Any pair of horses between the leaders and the wheelers of a multiple team.

→ Throw a Wide Loop -- To be careless as to whose stock is roped; to take more than one's share of anything.
Top a Horse -- To ride an unbroken horse, partially taming him.
Top Hand -- First-rate cowpuncher.

→ Top Railer -- Person who sits on top rail of corral and gives advice to those who are taking the chances; the "back-seat driver" and "kabitzer" of rangeland.

Vented Brand -- Brand blotted out before witnesses when an animal is sold.
War Bag -- Bag containing cowpuncher's personal effects.
Wrangler -- Herder in charge of saddle horses.
Coming home
California writer makes peace in Montana

By Cyra McFadden

Home isn’t a place; it’s a state of mind. Having lived in the same house in Mill Valley, Calif., for nineteen years, so long that friends on the move used my address as a mail-drop, I’ve since lived on the eastern tip of Long Island, Manhattan, and for four months, London. As soon as I unpacked my family photos in each of these places, I’d settled in. I call San Francisco home now. A few months ago, I would have told you that I’d leave my Noe Valley house when the grim reaper made a lucky sweep of the scythe. That was before I came back to Missoula, Montana, where I grew up and where I’ve learned that I’m still a Westerner at heart. While I’m not in any hurry, I know that if I have my druthers, I’ll die in the Big Sky state, where I was born.

Alex Haley had Roots. I had boots, the only footgear I wore during my formative years. They molded my psyche as well as my feet.

Missoula is a pleasant, shade-tree-lined town of 68,000. It seems smaller; the figure includes the outlying areas. When I was growing up here, it was half its present size, but much about it is as familiar to me as my own face.

Spring still comes to frozen Montana like a gift, from a God who’s decided that people have suffered enough. When I drove up here to teach at the University of Montana for a quarter, Missoula was still numb from a winter so brutal, the national press took note of it. I missed the sub-sub-zero temperatures but arrived for the last of the snow and ice. Even with front-wheel drive, my car couldn’t make it up the road to the house that the University rented for me, seven miles out of town. Used to the moderate Bay Area, I shivered beneath so many layers of clothes. I walked like someone wearing a gorilla suit. Hostile memories of Montana winters came back. They’re way up there on the list of reasons why I left, at eighteen. When a pale sun melted the snow, my hideaway warmed up just enough to thaw out its other tenants, millipedes.

Sinuous black wall crawlers, these things made me consider heading back to the land of crack dealers, burglars and muggers—acceptable risks. Classes began. Having not taught for a decade I’d forgotten how much I like it. In easy-going Missoula, no social barriers exist between teachers and students. Although I’d be grading mine, and they’d be filling out evaluation forms on me, we went to each others’ parties and schmoozed in the funky East Gate Lounge, over pitchers of beer, after my Thursday night seminar.

Cyra McFadden relaxes on campus. She taught two creative writing classes spring quarter—“The Voice of the West” and a fiction workshop.
all the qualities that compose a great human being. His intellectual stature was great, but because he had wit, humor, great kindness and true tolerance, he had a place in his life for us lesser ones. To have had his friendship for more than a quarter of a century was one of my life's great privileges."

UM President E.O. Melby was quoted as saying, "Few men in American academic circles have been held in higher esteem and deeper affection. He built a well-known school of journalism. He not only built it on the University campus—he built it so firmly in the hearts of his students

‘...he had a place in his life for us lesser ones.’

that they have carried its influence to the four corners of the world....His humility, sincerity of purpose, and warm-hearted interest in his fellow men, all combined to give him a spiritual quality most dynamic and inspirational."

Daily Missoulian reporter Evelyn Mayer King ’43 said, "Hundreds of students were guided by the teachings of Dean Stone—and throughout the years he never forgot a one of them—no matter how unimportant they may have thought themselves to be. But the dean was more than a great teacher—he was a regular fellow—one of the best friends a student could ever have."

For years, senior men honored the dean by wearing a Windsor tie to the Dean Stone Night celebrations. The Dean Stone Night tradition, begun in 1919 as a picnic outing with games, music and storytelling around a campfire, continues today as the annual scholarship awards banquet.

In 1946 the school was dedicated to Dean Stone, and in 1947 a 6,100-foot peak in the Sapphire Range, south of Missoula, was dedicated Mount Dean Stone.

Journalism firsts

1911—An English department professor began supervising credit in journalism for writing for The Weekly Kaimin as an experiment.

1913—President Edwin B. Craighead helped create the Department of Journalism and the Bureau of Public Information, in which students handled the Kaimin, then a weekly, and general publicity for the school and the state. The bureau was supervised by English professor Carl Holliday.

1914—Journalism school begins in tents. It was the third actual School of Journalism, established after the University of Missouri in 1908 and the Columbia University Graduate (Pulitzer) School of Journalism, 1912.

1914—Journalism school offered reporting and editing at night so members of the public could take them. It also offered three correspondence courses: newswriting, producing and marketing the short story, and photoplay or “motion picture scenario.”

1917—The Montana School of Journalism was rated one of the top ten journalism programs nationwide and given charter membership in the Association of American Schools and Departments of Journalism.

1919—First Dean Stone Night held. Dean Stone Night, the suggestion of Burly Miller, dean of the law school, began as picnics in a park with softball, songs around a campfire and a senior farewell to the dean.

1926—90 percent of journalism graduates were working in their chosen field.

1926—The J-School had the largest enrollment of any special department on campus, with 180 students registered.

1931—The Kaimin was printed in the journalism school for the first time, made possible from the donation of a two-revolution cylinder press donated by O.S. Warden, publisher of the Great Falls Tribune, and the Anaconda Company.

1937—New Journalism Building dedicated, the result of a Public Works Administration loan.

1947—Mount Dean Stone, a 6,100-foot peak in the Sapphire Range, south of Missoula, dedicated.

1957—Dean Stone Night was revived after a lapse.

1965—KUFM takes to the air.

1970—The Radio-Television Department was established by UM President Robert Pantzner.

1974—KUFM becomes a public radio station.

1985—Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center completed.

Tara Gallagher is a graduate student in journalism.
White-tail deer grazed in the meadow in front of my house. My dog, a twitchy Afghan, became a fearless Montana mountain hound. Old grade school and high school friends turned up to say “welcome back,” seeming much the same, only taller. Although I’m behind in my correspondence and don’t keep track of these people, they loyally keep track of me. A sweaty-palmed public speaker anywhere, I’ve never had a worse case of nerves than I did the night I gave a reading in the University’s Main Hall, now dwarfed by newer buildings that don’t have the old brick buildings’ charm. Half-remembered faces filled the room. What was that peculiar girl, the one who’d wanted to be an actress, up to now? This audience listened benignly while I stammered through a chapter of the book I wrote about my father, a rodeo announcer and Western legend.

Time must have passed Missoula by. People still practice good manners. No transaction takes place without a “visit” with the clerk or the gas station attendant. At Western Federal Savings’ drive-through window, you get a “How are you today?” and your dog gets a Milkbone on the house. No one asks for your driver’s license when you write a check at the hardware store or supermarket. Montanans assume that most people are honest.

Although they let “er rip on the highways, drivers stop for red lights and stick to the speed limit in town. Nobody screams obscenities, a constant of San Francisco life that I didn’t miss. Even the railroad bums are polite. Numbers of them pass through Missoula this time of year. I’m told the locals don’t bother to lock their cars and the back doors of their houses for a couple of months. Yet the two drifters on the wind who approached me one evening would have passed muster with Miss Manners. They were “trying to raise eighty-four cents,” one explained, through widely scattered teeth. I handed over a dollar bill. Both men apologized because they couldn’t make change.

Visiting houseguests from Chicago teased me about my Montana drawl. I don’t think it’s back. I’m not sure that I ever had one. Yet I heard myself uttering such regionalisms as “Looks like we’re in for some weather.”

What industry there is in the state’s depressed economy, mainly wheat farming, lumbering and cattle raising, hinges on weather. Montanans have permanent cricks in their necks from keeping an eye on the heavens. Only a visitor would have exclaimed readily, as I did, about the beauty of the mountains after a blizzard. “We’ve seen snow before,” one of my colleagues in the English department said, sounding bone-weary. “The white stuff, right?”

It didn’t take me long to slip back into my Montana skin. Having made other trips to Missoula over the years, I’ve got the map printed on my brain; remember where all my friends lived and still think of various houses as “the Steinbrenner place” or “the Whaley’s,” although they’ve long since changed hands; can’t call the fanciest downtown department store The Bon, short for The Bon Marche. It’s forever The Merc, as in The Missoula Mercantile. Since I wasn’t around when the reaper harvested them, high school friends who have died are still alive to me. I kept thinking that I saw them on the street or the baseball fields, forever panting, forever young. Their ghosts delighted me rather than making me wistful: memory is a warmer mausoleum than most.

My mother also died here, in a small rest home on Rattlesnake Drive. I waved at her ghost, too, as I drove past the place, whose kind, young staff I remember with gratitude, and past one of my favorite street signs, “No Parking on Rattlesnake.” Springtime finally came to the Rockies. I filled my house with armloads of lilacs, which need a cold winter to thrive, and took turns on the one-lane bridge over the Bitterroot River on my route to and from the school, tracking the water level by means of a sandbar that emerged and disappeared. After a month, I felt as if I’d never been away from the high mountains and the sound of rushing water. It amazed me that you can miss a landscape so much and not know that you’re missing it at all. Being back reminded me that I’m middle-aged. That’s fine. As the joke recommends, “Consider the alternative.”

The campus thronged with kids so clean-cut, they looked like extras in a Dobie Gillis movie. But nothing could induce me to turn back the clock, if such a thing were possible, and be one of their number again.

An idyllic place to grow up, by all objective measurements, Missoula was the setting for some early misery of mine. I had to make my life elsewhere and let go of painful ties before I could make peace with the place. Coming back was a way of finding out whether I’d succeeded. I can’t talk politics with some of the people I’ve known for so many years. They’re serenely conservative, while I figure out my views on how the world ought to work each day. To use a Western metaphor, we lock horns. Montana xenophobia sometimes rankles. Historically, outsiders have plundered the state, shipping its resources elsewhere for profit, and they’re viewed with deep-rooted suspicion. A “them” and “us” mentality prevails. While it’s understandable, I got tired of hearing that Californians are all nuts and flakes, brain-damaged from inadequate beef consumption. “Cowboy,” I muttered darkly, when some Montana male demonstrated, by word or deed, that he wasn’t an Alan Alda wannabe. “I know you ol’ boys.” And I do, complete with high pain threshold, low flash point and out-of-fashion gallantry. My father was one. My two half-brothers are cowboys. Chalk it up to heredity, but I don’t mind having a car door opened for me or somebody with more muscle shoulder my heavy book bag.

Fleeing an especially aggressive invasion of millipedes, I spent the last week of my stay in Ovando, fifty miles out of Missoula. It’s a tiny place, and quiet. With a heavy last-minute work load, I holed up in a friend’s log cabin, getting up from the pine table I used as a desk only to throw more wood in the stove. Through a rear window, I had a view of more mountains, their ridgetop a sharp blue line etched against emptiness. I wrote a few postcards to Bay Area friends, whom I sorely missed. For the first time in weeks, I wondered if my San Francisco house were still standing, or if an earthquake had done it in. Not quite a matter of indifference, this possibility didn’t alarm me. I could always come back to Montana, which is so large that barring nuclear holocaust, a sizeable chunk of it will remain. You can’t take the country out of the cowgirl.

Cyra McFadden is the author of The Serial and Rain or Shine. She was a visiting professor in the English department spring quarter and is a regular columnist for the San Francisco Examiner. This article is reprinted courtesy of the Examiner.
Making his mark Down Under

“Wildlife are very adaptable, particularly when they know they’re not going to be harmed,” said environmental planner Tom Riggert, shown here feeding an Australian kangaroo.

By Carol Susan Woodruff

As graduation day drew near in 1962, UM wildlife technology student Tom Riggert began to feel boxed in. “It looked like my life would be cut out to get a job and be in some wildlife park and raise a family and die,” he recalls. “The path was just too obvious, and I really wanted something that would be challenging.”

For some people, challenge might mean leaving cloistered Missoula for the hustle and bustle of New York City. For Riggert, it meant considerably more.

Diploma in hand, Riggert—a native of the small town of Mitchell, S.D.—hit out for New Zealand. “I thought I’d be back in two years,” he says with wonder. Actually, he’d embarked on a nearly thirty-year odyssey that would carry him to New Zealand, Antarctica, Australia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Uganda, England, Germany and Canada. Now an Australian citizen, he’s lived in the land down under for twenty-five years.

The first leg of his journey was New Zealand, where for one and a half years he researched rare and endangered birds for the New Zealand Wildlife Research Division. Then in 1963, as a biologist with the New Zealand Antarctic Research Division, he explored the Balleny Islands, just off the coast of Antarctica. Moving through uncharted waters, he recorded penguin colonies, whale sightings and bird life.

The next year, Riggert became the first wildlife research officer in sprawling Western Australia, a state covering more than a million square miles, or a third of the Australian continent. At the time, no restrictions existed for waterfowl hunting, and 90 percent of the wetlands around the city of Perth had been drained or filled. Based on his research, Riggert drew up the state’s first plan for managing wetlands and waterfowl.

Many Australians couldn’t grasp his determination to preserve what they viewed as mosquito-infested swamps. “The kindest thing that was said was that I was eccentric,” he says with a laugh. “Now I’m looked upon as being farsighted.”

Riggert, never one to avoid a struggle over wetlands use, later locked horns with Perth’s city council when it voted to turn the banks of nearby Swan River and Herdsman Lake into waste-disposal sites. He peppers his description of the incidents with words like “fought,” “war” and “battle.”

The council eventually reversed its earlier decisions. But Riggert paid a price for his activism in the battle over the Swan River; the council fired him from an unrelated consulting job. “I still think it was well worth it because today you can still eat the fish and prawns out of the river,” he says.

Besides wetlands and waterfowl, Riggert researched cranes, crocodiles, kangaroos, emus and magpie geese during his thirteen-year government career. His work took him to remote areas where he was among the first whites allowed to visit aboriginal missions. The Australian natives’ tribal customs still thrived then. Now, he says, “A lot of that is history; it has gone forever.”

Riggert has documented his travels with photographs, some of which have appeared in exhibits, National Geographic magazine and Qantas Airways publicity.

In 1969 he earned a doctorate in zoology at the University of Western Australia, a degree that helped prepare him for wildlife film making. Beginning in the early 1970s, he appeared on 155 television shows, in which he introduced Australians to their native wildlife.

“The interesting thing about the television programs was that when we’d say we had a rare animal that was near extinction, lots of farmers and people in the rural areas would ring up and say, ‘I’ve got those on my farm,’” he says. Sure enough, his follow-up trips would confirm the reports. “It was great. We learned a lot from doing that.”

Riggert believes the future of film making lies in inexpensive television documentaries that bring home to people the importance of their environment. “Instead of preaching to the converted, we now must reach the masses with low-budget films that concern their life, their agriculture, their environment,” he says. Once people are educated about the value of their environment, he adds, they may be more willing to protect it.

In 1976, Riggert produced and directed two fifty-minute films about the life cycle of the mountain duck, which inhabits Australia’s Rottnest Island. The films, bought by the British Broadcasting Corp. for its “World About Us” series, earned him a prestigious Winston Churchill Fellowship for Wildlife Film Making. The fellowship allowed him to spend five months studying film making in Germany, England, Scotland, Canada and the United States.
A magpie takes to the air with a morsel of food.

A horse grazes in the warm afternoon sun.

Spring snow partially covers a pasture near Millarville.

A light cloud spreads across the western sky above the rolling prairies near Millarville.

Springtime
By Jan Tyson — ASCAP
It's black surrounds — CANC

Bald eagles back in the cottonwood tree.
The old brown hills are just about bare.
Springtime. Splitting all along the creek.Maggies gang up everywhere.Snowshoe hares on the eastern slopes.
March came in like a lamb for a change.
Gary's pulling calves at the old farmhouse.
We made it through another on the northerns range.
Leon's pulling calves at the top of the world.
We made it through another on the northern range.
Well the big black blow in last week.
Warm and rising from the western sea.
Pretty soon water running everywhere.
It can't run fast enough for me.
Roodman's sleeping in the afternoon sun.
She's shedding hair everywhere.

Time for a Change.

George's pulling calves at the VV.
We made it through another on the northern range.
Walter's pulling calves at the Little E.
We made it through another on the northern range.
Bald eagles back in the cottonwood tree.
The old brown hills are just about bare.
Springtime. Splitting all along the creek.
Maggies gang up everywhere.

March came in like a lamb for a change.
Larry's pulling calves at the Quarters Circle.
We made it through another on the northerns range.
Allan's pulling calves at the B & G Outlook.
We made it through another on the northerns range.
Larry's pulling calves at the Broomhead Bar.
We made it through another on the northern range.

Water runs over fences posts near Okotoks.

A horse grazes in the warm afternoon sun.

Time for a Change

The legendary Alberta singer-songwriter Ian Tyson works one of his cutting horses on his ranch south of Calgary.

Water runs over fences posts near Okotoks.

The seasonal mures. Harold photographer Grant Black paints pictures to the words Ian Tyson wrote with his guitar on spring in early country.
Black has been singing to the hills between late March and June is when he asked the photographer of Tyson working his cutting horse. But as for much near Okotoks.

Singer-songwriter Ian Tyson works one of his cutting horses on his ranch south of Calgary.

Photos by Grant Black,
Calgary Herald.
Well
done,
grads!

ALEXANDRA BURROUGHS
THIRD EIGHTS

The Alberta Adolescent Recovery Centre held its annual graduation and celebrated the suc-
cess of its graduates who have overcome their addictions to drugs and alcohol. More than 2,000
people came out to support their loved ones and witness the triumph of former addicts.

The event raised an outstanding amount of money for AARC, with the proceeds going to
the Albertan Association of Drug and Alcohol Services and the Calgary Community Health
Centre.

The graduation ceremony included a speech by Executive Director Max Lachute, who
expressed his pride in the achievements of the graduates. The keynote speaker was
Lauren Hooper, a recovery advocate who had overcome her addiction to substances.

Among those in attendance were successful entrepreneurs Donnie Vasse and his wife
Joanna Vasse, as well as former Calgary mayor Cliff Cuddy. The event was attended by
several community leaders, including Calgary Stampeder CEO John Rooney and
Calgary Flames owner, Bruce Crozier.

The Calgary Stampers, a popular soccer team in the city, also had a presence at the
event, with players and staff members running the graduation ceremony.

The Calgary Stampers made a play for the CSL championship when they took on a local
team at a stadium named after the team's owner, Bruce Crozier. The event was
attended by thousands of fans and supporters.

John Rooney, the CEO of the Calgary Stampers, expressed his pride in the
achievements of the graduates and the work of the AARC.

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Calgary Stampers coach Jim Barker presented the AARC's annual award to Anna McCall, a
graduate who has shown remarkable progress since completing the program.

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What you want is what you need.
How to feed an acrobat

Cirque du Soleil's gourmet contortions under the big top

ALEXANDRA BURROWS
Calgary Sun

By 5 a.m. each morning, when local pastry chef Manuel Latruche arrives at the door of his bakery, the specialty shop has been open for two hours. He works quickly to prepare pastries of gourmet nut and fruit breads, delicate pastries and hearty croissant rolls.

By 8 a.m., Piana Potter will be at the Cirque du Soleil's Blue Fish, which is destined for the bulging boxes of catering meals, two constructions and a separate rump of high-flying acrobats.

"We try and see ALSO SEE local suppliers..." Anna Brown, director of operations at Cirque du Soleil's Blue Fish, which plays at Centre Bell in Downtown Montreal.

When the 48-year-old chef learned the Angélique tour was going to Calgary, she researched the city's best suppliers on the Internet. After doing this, she was able to select her confections and gourmet breads from local suppliers.

"We're trying to find a balance. We're trying to find a balance so that we can feed our customers. We're trying to find a balance that's sustainable, but also with a little bit of luxury."

Cirque du Soleil is a worldwide organization that works to support sustainability and chemical-free food products.

"Our commitment to Slow food is impressive," former executive director of the World Forum on Slow Food and co-founder of Caffè Thé Chérie. "They feed a lot of people of food in a day. It's not as easy to be sustainable or slow down, given the kind of business they're in, but they're not willing to do that."""
HEARD AROUND THE WEST

“Maybe it wouldn’t have been so bad if he recycled the newspapers,” deadpans the San Jose Mercury News. But Tom Bates, candidate for mayor of Berkeley, Calif., was so angry when the Daily Californian endorsed his opponent that he threw 1,000 copies of the free newspaper into the trash. Almost as embarrassing as being caught in an act of vandalism was the fact that Bates handily won the election with 55 percent of the vote. Bates apologized without mentioning those First Amendment guarantees of free press and free speech; then, he had to pony up. This January, he reimbursed $500 to the daily paper, which is published by the University California, Berkeley, and paid a $100 fine for committing petty theft. “He’s working to make amends and be the best mayor he can be,” said his chief of staff.

The way a lawyer told it to a federal judge in Boise, Idaho, the small town of Hailey is practicing discrimination because it won’t let its client land his private jet. But the jet owned by California millionaire Ronald N. Tutor is no ordinary plane. The Associated Press says it carries more than 120 passengers with ease, weighs as much as 170,000 pounds and is really a customized version of a Boeing 737 jetliner. Nonetheless, the lawyer says Hailey’s stubbornness violates his constitutional right to travel freely, and he wants the town, which is close to Sun Valley, to pay $75,000 in damages.

A bouquet of sadness crept into Dick Kreck’s column in the Denver Post about the annual get-together of ranchers and wannabes at the National Western Stock Show. Sure, there was the guy selling bull semen from Great Falls, Mont., and his company’s slogan was unchanged: “We stand behind every cow we service.” But conversations overheard in crowded hallways focused on drought and selling off cattle. What was worse, said Kreck, was seeing more visitors hover around kitchen gear than farm equipment. The paper also shared some cowboy jargon you don’t hear every day: “Rooch killers” are extra-pointy cowboy boots and “realizers” are cattle so played out that “ranchers realize it is better just to put them down.” The words also work to describe a relationship that’s doomed: “That girl or guy is a realizer.”

Hats off to Helen Klein, an 80-year-old great-grandmother from Sacramento, Calif., who environmentalist in Portland, “I expect we’ll see a lot more.” Two years ago, Portland approved a regulation that allows developers to expand their buildings if they include an ecoroof, making it the only city in North America to offer the incentive. Living roofs, common in Germany, Holland and Switzerland, have their drawbacks: They cost about twice as much as hard coverings and require a steady interest in gardening.

There’s more than camouflage in Cabela’s, the catalog for outdoors fanatics. You can also purchase toys, such as the foot-high action figures “Big Game Hunter” and his buddy, “Hunter Dan.” If you match up these buff boys with the tiny Trophy Whitetail Buck and then add an equally tiny all-terrain vehicle, possibilities for backcountry fun abound. Debra McKinney, writing in the Anchorage Daily News, was enthralled she ordered the full complement but was taken aback by the blank gaze of her hero. Big Game Hunter’s face had a “diminished-capacity quality about it, as if he’d just come from the dentist,” she said. As colleague Zaz Hollander discovered, the action heroes are also anatomically vacant. Yet the newsroom quickly found ways to play well with the figures, impaling one on the deer’s antlers and putting the other’s clothes onto a giant praying mantis.

An advertising agency in New York must have thought its commercial for Metamucil, an over-the-counter laxative, was a laugh riot: Just show a park ranger pouring a glass of it into Old Faithful, and then take credit for the guy’s amazing ability to stay “regular.” After she saw the ad, the word “dismay” probably doesn’t adequately describe the reaction of Suzanne Lewis, the superintendent of Yellowstone National Park. “My eyes got bigger, and my jaw dropped,” she told the New York Times. She wrote to the ad agency, D’Arcy Masius Benton & Bowles, as well as Metamucil maker Proctor & Gamble, to complain about the commercial, even though it wasn’t actually filmed inside the park. Lewis said it encouraged vandalism of thermal features and implied that Old Faithful couldn’t possibly keep erupting without an over-the-counter medication. The ad, however, continues to run in several cities.

Betsy Marston is the editor of Writers on the Range, a service of High Country News in Paonia, Colorado (betsy@hcnc.org). She appreciates tips and photos of quirky Western doings.
Tears at Injustice: Mourners weep as a hearse passes carrying one of four victims of a shooting in Rifle, Colorado (Ed Kosmicki photo)

Living on the sharp edge of diversity

Essay by Paolo Bacigalupi

Blake told us about the killings when we returned from vacation. As we pulled away from Denver International Airport's gleaming tent terminal, he Market. Bundle up.

"I hate hearing things like that," Anjula said. "Yeah." There wasn't much more to say. Anjula said, "You're doing the grocery shopping. feathers — but more often than not, she was mistaken for a Mexican.

Migrant Mexican farmworkers support our agricultural economy and more..."
Cabin fever adds fire to word search

U.S. Sen. Slade Gorton shows all the signs of being a close philologist. Practicing this passion, fortunately, is neither shameful nor immoral, though nothing you might want to brag about at election time.

Those of us afflicted know the last — the yen to understand words, how they came to be, how they landed into terms and phrases, how they have been used, how they now mean what they mean.

Ordinarily senators, not to mention other politicians, shy from exhibiting pastimes intellectual. Gorton is no exception, cerebral though he is.

But, his curiosity whetted, he could not resist using the powers of his office to help run down the origins of the term “cabin fever” after I had written that it’s hard to find citations showing how and when “cabin fever” became a common term in American speech.

Researchers at the University of Washington law library had found a citation taking the term back to 1924, when “cabin fever” popped up in a book about Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox. A dictionary on Western words said it was cowboy lingo, but gave no dates for its written use.

Trail led overseas

The term describes the malaise of being cooped up. In acute forms cabin fever results in morose, angry and dangerous behaviors. One suspect that it arises out of the setting of the North American landscape, when families and companions would find themselves winterbound or stormbound in a tiny dwelling that seems to be pressing its walls upon one’s body and brain.

Sen. Gorton asked the excellent Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress to see what the national records show about cabin fever. The trail led overseas to the hallowed precincts of Oxford but then looped back to these shores.

The dictionary of the English language is The OED, the Oxford English Dictionary. Its unabridged form fills huge volumes. The OED attempts to record and describe all the words in English, an impossible task, always well behind times, but one absolutely necessary and worthy.

When Sen. Gorton made his inquiry to the Library of Congress, Nanette Gibbs there said the library’s staff could not document “cabin fever” back beyond 1924.

But, she said, she had referred the question to Adriana Orr, a researcher for the OED who regularly works at the Library of Congress on the origins and histories of words that might be included in the OED’s constant updates.

Orr referred the matter to the top of English lexicography, to the home office of the Oxford Dictionary at Oxford University Press. There reside immense files on words, and word usages, from researchers around the world. From those erudite offices returned the word — their citations for “cabin fever” also went only west back to 1924, to the book on Paul Bunyan.

Meanwhile Orr had discovered an earlier literary use, by R.N. Bower (Bertha Sinclair) in her 1918 novel, set in California, called “Cabin Fever.”

Sen. Gorton sent all this information to me, including copies of the delightful correspondence engendered by the word search, with note that he suspects the information “will still leave you somewhat frustrated.”

Frustrated, no. Captivated, yes.

A quick check determined that the University of Washington’s Northwest collection of special and rare books boasts one copy of Sinclair’s otherwise forgotten “Cabin Fever.”

“Cabin Fever” opens with two long paragraphs describing “a certain malady of the mind induced by too much or too little…a sort of insidious mental ailment” which the West calls “cabin fever.”

It drives men crazy

You can get it anywhere, writes Sinclair. It makes you sensitive, irritable, glum, revealing your character. To test a friend, “take him into the wilderness and rub his eyes, with him for five months!” One of three things will surely happen: You will hate each other afterward with that enlightened hatred which it seasoned with contempt…You will emerge with the contempt tinged…with a pitying toleration, or you will be close, unquestioning friends for the last six feet of earth — and beyond.

“…(Cabin fever) has committed murder…It has driven men crazy. It has warped and distorted character…It has sweetened and killed love…”

Sinclair obviously knows the malady. And obviously the term cabin fever predates 1918 and her woody-orchard.

So, thanks to Sen. Gorton, some new knowledge gained. Now can we find a citation from before 1924?

De Yonge is a P-I staff columnist.

JOHN DE YONGE

Publisher: Virgil Fassio
Managing Editor: James S. Rempe
Executive Editor: John V. Reistrep
Editorial Page Editor: Charles J. Dunsmire
Business Manager: William R. Cobb

De Yonge is a P-I staff columnist.

John De Yonge
Baptists vote age

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (UPI) — The Southern Baptist Convention went on record yesterday against ordination of women to the ministry.

Women's subservient role, it said, is because of their responsibility for bringing sin into the world. But the resolution does not bind the denomination's 36,000 local churches, which have the power to ordain.

Less than half the registered delegates, known as messengers, voted on the resolution. The tally was 4,786 to 3,469.

The resolution, part of the fundamentalist juggernaut that has dominated the three-day meeting of 17,000 messengers, cites Scripture in holding that women should not be placed in a position of authority over men in churches.

The issue has deeply divided the 14-million-member church, the na-
Rural Traditions of the Snake River Valley

LOUIE ATTERBEY

From the 1870's and '80's through the late 1930's in the Snake River Valley of Idaho and Oregon, any piece of ranch and farm work requiring several—a half dozen, fifteen—hands inevitably provided the occasion for the practice of certain skills that have nearly disappeared, and for the demonstration of a certain kind of rural humor whose viability depended upon a group of men working as a community. From the shared experiences of the group have come characteristic, though perhaps not unique, actions and expressions which might be collected by both the folklorist and the anthropologist and interpreted according to their respective lights. This collection treats of certain customs, terminology, and superstitions of the group-oriented life of an earlier time. It attempts to function folklogically; if it appears to incline in the direction of ethnology, perhaps folklore and ethnology function under a common rubric at a point of common concern. Specifically, working cattle, butchering, haying, and harvesting are the group activities treated of in these remarks.

After the Mormon derrick was developed, the care of hay, usually alfalfa after the late 1880's, became a highly developed skill, perhaps, indeed, even an art, handed down from father to son. First, the hay was mowed and many small boys got their initiation into the man's world of work and profession by way of sharpening machine sickles on the grindstone and cursing manfully at the blisters it distributed.

After the cut hay had cured slightly, and here the judgment of the farmer was the only criterion in determining how much cure to allow, it was raked into windrows, with enough space between them to accommodate a wagon. Next came the shocking, that is, the dividing of the windrows into small piles of hay by the skillful use of the pitchfork. Each shock could be lifted by a man with a pitchfork.

After the layfield was dotted with these small mounds of hay, the process of stacking began. When the first wagonloads of hay were brought in, the stacker,
traditionally the highest paid man in the crew (often earning $1.50 to $3.00 a day) outlined his stack. The wagon man would seize the Jackson fork, sink its deeply into the hay at the front or the back of the wagon (always with the fork frame toward the center of the wagon), and call for the boy or girl driving the derrick to “Take r up!” The derrick team, customarily slow but dependable, would take up the slack in the cable and slowly raise the first forkful of hay to the lever of the stacker’s upraised pitchfork. The stacker then pushed and tugged until he got the forkload where he wanted it at which time he yelled “Dump r!” or “Trip.” The wagon man then yanked at the trip rope and pulled the now empty fork away from the stacker. As the fork came around, the sweep moved in its pivot until it stood over the wagon. Then the derrick driver backed his team and lowered the fork.

A good wagon man brought in a load of hay that was high, wide, and square off at the corners. He could clean his wagon in five or six forkfuls, and he rarely left much spilled hay to be cleaned up. His forkloads of hay were big, and he always had a quick hand on the trip rope. If he was not quick on the rope, he might send a curving three-foot steel tine into his stacker.

In addition to the wagon man and the stacker, there was a third important worker. This was the pitcher. A good pitcher was hard to find. Ideally, he was tall and strong and ought to have served an apprenticeship on a wagon. The pitcher usually was a two to a wagon, walked down the windows of shocked hay and at the wagon approached lifted the shocks onto it.

Although this operation sounds simple, hay pitching was demanding. If the pitcher was strong, he could pick up the entire shock at once. If he were a weak footer, he could continue to lift the shocks even when the wagon load of hay grew to ten or twelve feet or higher. The good pitcher always pitched his shock so that it landed in one piece in an upside down position, almost exactly where the wagon man wanted that particular shock, for the man on the ground had previously served his apprenticeship on the wagon.

Nearly all farmers bale their hay now, and soon the making of long hay will be a vanished craft. No longer is there a community of men at work in the field for two now do the work formerly requiring a crew. The disappearance of traditional pranks emerging from this group activity, detailed in this paper following the discussion of harvesting, another group activity, cannot but further impoverish American folklore as machines displace men working together.

Harvesting grain, like haying, was the occasion for playing traditional pranks. And like haying, harvesting merits description because it involved traditional skills that have by now disappeared. Through at least the twenties of this century much of the grain was cut by a machine called a header and hauled to the threshing machine (“thrasher”), or to a stackyard to await threshing, in header wagons or “boxes.” Driving a header around a steep hill required considerable ability. To
Braggarts were seldom tolerated, and threshing crews were not noted for indulgence. In Indian Valley, north of Weiser, Idaho, one particularly affable individual had spent more time boasting about his strenth and skill than in proving them. One night he was asleep in his bedroll when the rest of the crew came quietly into the room, tied the lariat, tied the lariat to a horse on the far side of the haystack, and then dragged him right up onto the stack. This joke-narrative is typical of the kind of physical reaction which custom allowed a masculine society.

The rabies motif appears throughout the area, and the degree to which gullible were frightened by someone pretending to be rabid bespeaks a deep-seated fear of this disease. The motif appears in the antics of some young men in a threshing crew working in the Manns Creek area near Weiser. My father was involved in this skylarking. Two men entered into a conspiracy to pull a joke on an especially susceptible member of the crew. While the wagon men and the hired puncher were harnessing their horses one morning, a driver of one of the wagons stumbled, staggered, and let his jaw drop. His partner rushed over to him and reassured that everything was all right. Then the actor pulled out a bottle known to contain turpentine and lard, a medication used on the shoulders and necks of harness-galled horses, and pretended to drink from it. The other spiralor seized the bottle and warned the other men, among whom I was the intended victim of the gag, that these might be the symptoms of that dreaded disease, hydrophobia!

At dinner (that is, the noon meal), the actor seized his plate and bit into it, drooled but quickly regained his composure so that he could spend the afternoon in the intense toil of harvest under a scorching Idaho sun.

That night, as the men crawled into their bedrolls in the stackyard, the man began his antics again. This time he tried to crawl into his victim’s bed. The worker put the rabid one back into bed where he belonged, and in the course of this bit of business, the victim moved his bedroll. Again it happened, and the bedroll was moved, this time out of the stackyard. After another attempt, the rabid harvester, the victim moved his bed about a quarter of a mile out into stubble of the grain field. But he was pursued, and by this time nearly all the men were out, some trying to protect Billy the Victim and some trying to capture the Rabid.

All this nonsense continued until about 2 a.m., at which time everything was explained to Billy who observed that he “didn’t think it was very damn funny” and so it might seem to us if the intrusive humor of the situation were what concerned us. Rather, it is the necessity for laughter which pricks our interest. Laughter.

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2 Collected from Ellis Hartley, 8-28-58. Mr. Hartley, a native of the region, was born in... 3 Motif is used in its humanities and fine arts sense, not its technical folkloristic sense. 4 Between two haystacks was a choice spot for a bedroll. The tall stacks created a draft, made sleeping cool and comfortable. Besides, there was abundant hay to use for a mattress.
missed, then dived through a window. He got on his horse and disappeared over a hill, spurring and quiring as though his life depended on it. The horse was tied according to this narrative, actually ridden to death, but Bill was never seen again.

Another fairly common hoax among the cowboys was the use of sheep manure as pills, which, if successful, yielded a particularly poetic dénouement because of the antipathy of cowboys toward sheep. Old Jesse Newton told of such an attitude made upon an overly crusty Malheur cowpuncher. This gag seems to us, in the age of quality-controlled, precision-made, and highly colorful pills, absurd. We are not strongly asserting this is anything but a good story, I should like, nevertheless, to suggest that its circumstances are at least plausible. It must be remembered that in the time spoken of here, around 1897, many, if not most, doctors made their own pills, after breaking the ingredients with mortar and pestle, before adding their hands. Such pills were frequently misshapen and had no colorful coating. Frankly, some of them looked like sheep manure. And at any rate, some of the boys got hold of a medicine bottle and some sheep manure and proceeded with their gag, pursuing the line that these pills were a good preventive for the coming epidemic of typhoid. The short tempered rider was almost, but not quite, too stupid. If the trick had been successful, the humiliation of the victim might have brought him down a peg or two. However, he was not fooled, and when somebody mumbled "Baa" at dinner one day, trying to salvage some humor from the situation, an angry cowpuncher pulled his gun and put two bullet holes in the joker's tin plate.

"Whistle or sing / Or show your thing," Tom Parks said as he, my father and I were discussing such things as the behavior of men in crews. Tom explained that when there was a breakdown in some machine or when it was raining, the crew would get together and entertain themselves while waiting for better weather.

The idle crew usually assembled in a barn or bunkhouse and each man in the barn was challenged to "Whistle or sing / Or show your thing." Each man then had to provide something of entertainment, which was not nearly as limited as the trio of suggested activities. Some men would recite verse, "Most

8 8-11-59. Mr. Newton was born in 1881 and has spent all his life as a cattleman in the Lower Snake River Valley. He made it clear that much of the success of the practical joke was the elaborate buildup which would have convinced a stately. Sometimes the groundwork would be laid a week ahead with a casual reference to an outbreak of, say, typhoid or smallpox. A day or two later another report dealing with "the plaguey bill" would circulate. Then someone would leave the cow camp, in the trick reported by Mr. Newton, saying that he was going to see the doctor. And who would suspect trickery when the ride would take all day? Then the cow would return with the latest nostrum, all except the victim would want to take their pills, the same would be offered him.

During a breakdown or whenever there was occasion to lay the hoe down, we are led to believe that there was occasion also for dancing and merrymaking.

9 For instance, an old sentimental piece. Another might sing. A third might perform a feat of strength and challenge the rest to try to duplicate it. The bull wheel off a header was heavy and provided a challenge to all local strong men. Wrestling was quite common, both grappling and "sidehold." Almost all the men responded to the challenge in some way, lest he have to pay the penalty.

It seems unlikely that "show your thing" meant actually exposing to public view the male sex organ. Neither of my informants gave any indication that such personal exposure was required. Rather, if one "showed his thing" he failed to respond as any man ought to in a given situation. He showed his true colors. He was less than honest or brave or discriminating. He "couldn't take it." Or he "couldn't get the job done." I suspect that underlying this reliance upon sexuality to convey moral meaning is a vestigial puritan notion that the integrity of the individual is wrapped in physical modesty. The exposure of those areas of the body genteelly covered the private parts somehow robbed a person of his pride, his spiritual energy, and his moral strength. The immodest person, therefore, would have little or no moral strength.

One example of fanatic puritan modesty is the account of a fight between two brothers, one of whom, just prior to entering the house of the other, stopped to pull his trouser leg up midway to the calf to pick a bothersome barley beard out of his long underwear. The other brother, right in front of the rest of the crew, who were going to dinner, attacked him, shouting, "By God, no man can show his leg in front of my wife!"

As the emphasis of this study shifts from group behavior to group beliefs, an observation made by Arthur L. Campa seems to me to be an accurate statement of the role of superstition in the Snake River Valley: "Many a superstition is deeply recognized without being... actually believed in."

In the matter of augury, for instance, at every hog butchering I have ever attended or participated in, one or two men who were thought able to do so looked for the "melt," that is, the spleen, to see whether its appearance foretold a light or severe winter. This is not to say the sign was explicitly believed in, but the gesture was nonetheless made.

Again, the winnowing of a Wilson snipe (jacksnipe or rain crow) was thought to build a rainstorm. And when the smoke from a chimney rose in a straight line down the steeple, the prospect was fair weather. On the other hand, if the smoke
declined and kept close to the ground, a storm was imminent. A circle around the moon foretold a storm; the number of stars within the circle indicated the number of days to elapse before the storm broke. It was further believed that a carefree person could cause bad luck. For instance, turning a chair around on one leg was a source of bad luck as was carrying any implement, axe, shovel, post hole digger into a house. A hunter who washed his face before going out would have bad luck.

Customarily, much, if not most, animal surgery was done only after consultation with the almanac to see whether the “sign was right.” Certain zodiacal signs were thought to control or influence certain parts of the body, and castration, for instance, would not be attempted if the sign pointed to the heart. Some stockmen, still, in 1965, follow the almanac, not because they believe in astrology but because of the precedent supplied by their empirical knowledge. Having inherited a set of usually successful responses, the rancher is unwilling to break with tradition. Indeed, why should he?

So it is with the practice of sticking cutting knives into raw potatoes cut in half, not because the early stockmen knew that this custom kept instruments of bacterial contamination but because this had been done before and proved successful.

The empirical precedents for the beliefs that “peart,” frisky animal behavior tells a change in the weather (any experienced elementary or high school teacher can tell when a storm is coming) and that a horse that rolls clear over is more valuable than one that does not undoubtedly rest in the unwritten history of an Indo-European community.¹

No better conditions existed under which to observe certain practices of Western American rural humor and the application of work skills than conditions prevailing for the efforts of a crew. In the face of cultural change, the customs and traditional ways of doing things are disappearing from the Snake River Valley. Modernization and technology are displacing the haying crew and the almanac, although no rational observer of man would wish to see superstition rampant on the farm. Science, still there is material for sober reflection in the fact that technology is denuding cutting man off from his human heritage of thousands of years’ response to the rhythms of nature as those rhythms have been discerned empirically. It is a conviction that the study of the customs, superstitions, and terminology of a restricted geographical area and its restricted possibilities of employment yields material both delightful in itself and revelatory of human nature at a time reckoned just yesterday, yet separated from us by aeons of change... and perhaps everything.

THE COLLEGE OF IDAHO
Caldwell, Idaho

¹ The undocumented matter was available to me by my birthright, for I grew up hearing these anecdotes and working with these sorts of crews.
He may be a scholar, but he speaks Western

By William E. Schmidt
New York Times

SALT LAKE CITY — If Don D. Walker has his way, someday there will be a dictionary in which “git” is a verb, as in “git me some grub”; “bushwhacker” is a noun as in one who ambushes; and “leavin’ Cheyenne” is just another way to say goodbye, as in the old cowboy ballad, “Goodbye, Old Paint, I’m leavin’ Cheyenne.”

This is because Walker, who has a doctorate in American studies and is a professor of English at the University of Utah here, is gathering material and references for what he describes as a dictionary of Westernisms. That is, a scholarly compilation of those distinctive expressions and words and slang that were, and in some places still are, part of the vernacular of the American frontier.

“By learning more about Western speech, we will ultimately come to learn more about Western society and people and history,” says Walker, who has a sign in his office that reads: “Western spoken here.” The son of a southern Utah rancher, Walker, who is 65 years old, has spent much of his life around cattle and cowboys.

Besides, he says, with the rapid changes now under way in the West as a result of population growth and development of oil, gas and energy resources, he believes there is a growing urgency about recording the vernacular before it fades away. “Because of our isolation, Westerners have been able to resist the kind of homogenization of language we have seen in other places,” says Dr. Walker. “Now that, too, is changing quickly.”

So far, Walker and a team of student assistants have compiled 30,000 references to individual words and phrases drawn from a careful reading of Western novels, newspapers, cowboy diaries, songs, letters and ballads. Walker says there is at present no dictionary that deals exclusively with Western words and phrases.

Take the letter B, for example. There are biscuit roller (a cook) and bobtail guard (the first guard of the night on a cattle drive), buffalo tea (what’s left in a water hole after a buffalo has wallowed there), bug juice (whiskey) and bullwhacker (driver of a bull train).

In addition to cowboy, there are cowjuice, cowpap, cowpuncher, cowtown, cowpoke and cowthief. A farmer can be a plow chaser, a churn twister and a sod buster. Prairie schooners are covered wagons, prairie coal is buffalo chips used as fuel, prairie strawberries is another name for beans and prairie wolf is a coyote.

And “tailor-mades” are commercially made cigarettes, as in this reference from an early Western novel called Hell on Horses and Women: “Give me some tailor-mades,” he croaked. I’ve had nothing but Bull Durham to smoke for the last three days.”

In some instances, Walker says, Western lingo can be traced to Spanish words common among Mexicans in the Southwest. Buckaroo, for example, comes from the Spanish “vaquero,” or “cowboy,” and “lariat” is drawn from “la reata,” which means rope.

Similarly, the word “cahoots,” a term Walker said was in common usage on the frontier, probably had its origin among the mountain men and French fur trappers of the Rocky Mountains and is derived from the French noun “cahorte,” which means a gang.

Other Western phrases have worked their way into common usage today. “Riding herd” is one example. Another is the slang phrase “to rub out.” Walker has traced it to the mountain men, who adapted it from Indian languages, where it had the same meaning it does in movies today.

But recording and preserving all of this is no easy task and has already involved five years of labor by Walker and an associate, Thomas E. Toon, a former University of Utah lexicographer who is now at the University of Michigan.

Walker, who is supported in his research by an $11,000 grant from the University of Utah, says he is modeling his book upon the Oxford English Dictionary. Each word or phrase will be identified along with its etymology, meaning and context.

For example, Walker has already gathered 27 written references to “chaps” or, as Theodore Roosevelt used to write, “shaps,” the leather leggings worn by cowboys. In any event, the word is drawn from “chaparejos,” the Spanish word for leather leggings.
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The winter of 1919-20 was a very severe long winter in Western Montana and many former stockmen went broke that winter because of the scarcity and resultant high price of hay. There was probably a shortage of hay that year to begin with as not so much was grown in Western Montana then as later during the twenties. However, directly caused by the severe weather and deep snows stock feeding was not only costly but it was long.

Mr. Watson conducted sales that winter on the reservation, and recalls one in particular where there was a small "pile of hay that you could spit over" supposed to be approximately one ton put up at auction. According to Mr. Watson the tops had been previously cut off this hay and about all that was left was the stalks. Regardless of this, this hay went under the hammer to the high bid of Sixty-Six dollars ($66.00).

Mr. Watson saw and sold some hay that had been shipped in from Minnesota that he terms as a poor grade of slough grass, looking a "lot like the stuff that they use to stuff around stalks of bananas" which sold for $35.00 per ton.

Stanley Scearce, Ronan merchant shipped in a great deal of fairly good baled hay which sold on the tracks at Ronan for $50.00 and $55.00 per ton.
RAVALLI COUNTY

Allis B. Stuart

Hamilton, Montana

Date: June 16, 1941

Words: 750 words

Hay In Montana 1919, 1920

Source:

The summer of 1919 was very dry and the ranges was badly burned out. Cattle men had overstocked because of the demand for beef for the Army and at the close of the World War I prices fell to a figure where they could not afford to sell. In fact cattle was a drag on the market. You couldn't sell at all. In the western part of the State the situation was not so desperate. There was more hay land, more irrigation. In the Big Hole and Rosses Hole the summer pasture was badly burned out but in the valley there was hay. Their losses came from buying cattle at an extremely high figure and then not being able to sell them for what the animals had cost. Many of the Big Hole Ranchers was buying cattle with borrowed money at a high rate of interest.

In Ross Hole there was less borrowed money plenty of hay the entire loss was in the falling market which of course was very severe, but not disastrous.

William Wetzstone of Sula told me that "We still have our ranches but we worked five years for nothing at all and that took about all we had saved." His ex-
Allis B. Stuart

June 16, 1941

Experiences was just about that of the whole valley.

In the Bitter Root proper ranchers had gone into Dairying extensively and had but few beef cattle. They depended on their alfalfa hay for feeding the year around as all pasture lands was burned and eaten out with grasshoppers, they needed more hay and used about all they had here at home. There was a few carloads shipped to Eastern Montana. Hay sold in 1919 at $14 a ton baled on your ranch. It was first class alfalfa hay.

I shipped from the ranch here to the E. C. Abbott ranch at Gilt Edge two car loads of alfalfa hay. This was a family arrangement to help Abbott (Mr. Stuart's son-in-law) to feed milch cows. I cannot remember what we paid in freight. Of course I made no charge for the hay but could have sold it on the ranch for $14.

I went to Gilt Edge and conditions over there was deplorable.

Everybody was out of hay, had borrowed money to buy cattle, were all overstocked with high priced cattle. The ranges were dry as powder and swarmed with grasshoppers. Water holes that had never been dry before was bone dry. The dry land farmers were rightly named. They had ploughed up every acre of bunch grass and all they had was Canadian thistle.

The state wouldn't allow them to ship in hay from Utah because of bollweevil in the Utah alfalfa. There was nothing to do but get hay from the Dakotas. The
The disaster to the cattle business in Eastern Montana was as great as it had been in 1886-1887.

I went out to the G. P. Burnett Ranche (that was the old D-6 headquarters ranche) and went with Burnett to feed his stock. He was buying hay from Dakota paying $40 a ton for it laid down in Lewistown and then had to haul it twenty two miles to his ranche. What hay he got was not even good straw. It was old rotten slough grass weeds old bones and rocks as big as my head baled and sold for hay. The cattle eat it and died. I am not over drawing this picture. I am writing just what I saw with my own eyes. Every cattle man in Eastern Montana was wiped out and the whole country desolate. After the winter of 1887 the men that remained on the range bought land and prepared for winter feeding and had from to year added to their holdings as they could. The Droughts and grasshoppers shortened the hay crops and brought the same disaster the blizzards had accomplished in 1886.

In the article by W. C. Burnett you will find what he says about Dakota Hay.

Allis B. Stuart
Title: Hay in Montana, 1919, 1920.

Informant: Observations by Allis B. Stuart.

Subject: Livestock History

Res. Wkr.: Allis B. Stuart, Hamilton, Mont.

Date: June 16, 1941.

Wordage: 750 Pages: 3

Contents: Range conditions the summer of 1919. Low prices for high-priced cattle. Shipping hay from the Bitterroot to eastern Montana. Deplorable conditions around Gilt Edge. Importation of foreign hay. The poor quality and high price of Dakota hay and its affect on cattle.
RANGE LANGUAGE

Among the people who lived on the ranges of eastern Montana a distinctive parlance developed which is often incorrectly imitated in so-called Western stories and novels. Cowboys were called "punchers," "riders," or "wranglers" according to their duties. A canvas sheet was a "tarp"; a quilt, a "soogan." A "bronce" a "horse", and a "cayuse" were separate and distinct classes of the equine family. A raincoat was a "slicker." If a man courted a woman he was said to be "riding herd on her." Styles in dancing were expressed by such terms as "close herdin'" and "loose herdin'." The word "ornery" is used much more in Montana than it is in the East and Middle-West. Many Montanans pronounce it as if it were spelled "onnery." When applied to an individual the word means that such a person is ill-tempered, or has a disagreeable personality. Peculiar not only to Montana, but also to much of the region west of the Mississippi, is the custom of old residents to refer to the eastern part of the United States as "back in the States."
"Made their pile" -- Became Rich
"Chuck House" -- Where they ate.
"Dunk" -- Where the men slept.
"Stray" -- Stranger
"Maverick" -- Unclaimed animal
"Tracking all over" -- Traveling a lot.
"Red-skins" -- Like an Indian
"Shack" -- House
"Buffalo Wallows" -- Muddy water.
"Buffalo trails" -- Paths the buffalo made
"Young buck" -- young man.
"Crossing the divide" -- dying
"Chinooking" -- Looking for a warm place
"Chinook" -- Warm wave or wind
"Red blooded" -- ambitious person.
"Thorough-bred" -- Boss they liked.
"Cayuse" -- horse or pony.
"Stampede" -- going in a hurry.
"Milling" -- Running round and round.
"Trail boss" -- One who took charge of the outfit on the trail
"Conchos" -- On bridles or spurs.
"Rustle wood or water" -- To get the wood or water.
"Rep" -- One who represented an outfit on the roundup.
"Dogie" -- Cattle from the east.
"Fathering up the herd" -- Getting them ready for night.
"Out-fit" -- Concern they work for.
"Brand" -- Mark on cattle.
"Trails" -- Roads
"Skim-milkers" -- Given fed by hand
"Close herd them" -- Keep watch on them.
"Corral" -- an enclosed place for livestock
"Nester" -- homesteader
"Longhorns" -- Texas steer.
"Cow-punchers" -- Men who ride the range
"Grizzled veterans" -- old cowboys
"Mess wagon" -- Wagon that carried the food on the roundup
"Bed" -- Carried Cowboy's bedding.
"Tarps" -- Large canvas covering
"Horse wrangler" -- Generally a young boy who took care of horses
"Swing riders" -- Men who took long rides for cattle on the roundup.
"Drag Drivers" -- Men who stayed in the rear.
"Bronk" -- unborken horse.
"Hit their trail" -- Hunting for some one, or traveling from place to place.

"Touched the high spots" -- riding fast.
"Get my gaine" -- getting the other fellow job
"Get up and git" -- Rely on oneself.
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Definitions: goddam, an Indian term for a white man, based on the white's frequent expression; chop suey, a genuine American Westernism meaning "odds and ends" or "hash," reportedly unknown in China; mind your hair, a trapper's farewell meaning "take care," or literally, "watch your scalp;" stogie, a cheap cigar, so named because it was transported West in Conestoga wagons.

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--Alistair Cooke

THE DICTIONARY OF THE AMERICAN WEST
5,000 Terms and Expressions, from "a-going and a-coming" to Zuni

Endorsed by the Western Writers of America

Dear Friend,

As a lover of the American West, you probably know that a cowboy could be *hell on wheels* when he rode into a frontier town, but did you realize that whether he rode a *ripper*, a *cinch-binder*, a *saddler*, or *crow bait* could mean the difference between heading for *grub* and *cashing in his chips* at the bottom of a ravine?

Anyone interested in the vibrant culture of the American frontier will find a lexical *bonanza* in Win Blevins' *Dictionary of the American West*. In it you will discover over 5,000 terms from prairie culture that read more like social histories than definitions; through them, Blevins narrates the colorful development of a uniquely American language and tradition.

Words like *palaver*, *gringo*, and *papoose* have become as common in American parlance as *greenhorn*, *stampede*, and *ditty*. The *Dictionary of the American West* shows how Western speech developed not only from cowboy slang, but also from a riotous gumbo of French, Spanish, Pidgin English, and Chinook jargon. Take a crack at these. You may find their meanings (and origins!) surprising:

* goddam
* chop suey
* mind your hair
* stogie

(You can find their definitions at the end of this letter).

In addition, this handsome and easy-to-read volume includes rare nineteenth-century photographs of frontier life, scale diagrams of cattle trails, maps of Indian territories, and illustrations of native plant life. And, perhaps for the first time ever, the *Dictionary of the American West* includes all the voices of the frontier's diverse population—women, Mormons, Native Americans, Chinese immigrants and African Americans. From *homestead* to *hacienda*, Win Blevins catalogues the diverse, if often dangerous, society of the Wild West.

over, please...
Juan,

Christa and I thoroughly enjoyed your reading last evening. It makes such a whole of a difference to hear the creator read his own material (though we also love reading your material by ourselves). I'm having a great time reading Bukows.

Juan, I need to apologize to you for publicly contradicting you last night. That was in extremely poor taste and totally uncalled for. I could have (should have) mentioned the coverage of hangover in the *An Actor's Book of Regional English* in private rather than publicly. Please forgive my PO-Pa (I know, that's not spelled right)

I checked that word again this morning in the S&G library, and it is listed under the spelling "hungyak, with hangyack (or)"

May 15
as a variant. And you were right or in your explanation of that word and how it is used.

Thanks again for the reading—and for sharing your marvelous talents (reading and writing) with all of us.

I couldn’t wait around to have you sign my copy of the book, but perhaps I can catch you another time.

Best Regards,

Belden
The Real Thing for Cowboys

By Joan Chatfield-Taylor

In the high desert between the Sierra Nevada and the Rockies, cowboys call themselves buckaroos and consider themselves a breed apart from ranch hands who prefer a pickup truck to a horse and think that a visor cap is as good as a hat. The buckaroos see themselves as part of a historical tradition that stretches back to the vaqueros who herded the Spaniards’ cattle through California in the 1700s, and they’ve earned a reputation for flashy dressing, thanks to their wide-brimmed black hats, knee-high tooled-leather boots and belts flecked with silver.

The unofficial capital of the high desert is Elko, Nev., where buckaroos are tamed by employment possibilities on nearby cattle ranches, the bright lights of the town’s casinos and legalized brothels and the J.M. Capriola Company.

Capriola’s, occupying a two-story wood building by the railroad tracks that run through the center of town, sells everything for the cowboy and his horse, from a box of horseshoe nails to a $3,500 saddle.

Capturing for men, women and children, starting in infant sizes, is on the first floor.

Paula Wright, one of Capriola’s owners, shapes hat on steam machine.

Among the basics are snap-fastened shirts, usually plaid, and jeans, mainly the cowboys’ favorites, straight-leg Wranglers and Levi’s 501’s. Some old-time cowboys buy their 501’s to fit, not to shrink to fit, and wear them without washing until they fall apart.

Travelers from other parts of the country, seeking an authentic souvenir of the West, like the tooled leather belts ($25 to $125), wallets ($45) and checkbook covers ($25 for small size, $125 for business size) and engraved belt buckles (three-piece sets of buckle, tip and keeper start at $35) and money clips ($69 in sterling silver). Many of these items are made by Capriola’s, so they can be ordered with names or initials.

One way to tell where a cowboy’s from is the shape of his hat (some Nevada and Idaho cowboys tend to retain the high crown and the wide brim; elsewhere cowboys may prefer a deep crowning in the crown and a high roll to the brim). The salespeople at Capriola’s are experts at shaping new hats on a steam machine, gently curving up the brim and crowning the crown. Hat prices depend mostly on the amount of rabbit fur in the felt, indicated by a code stamped on the inside band. The finest and softest generally available is a 15X, priced at $215.

Less costly ($17.50 each) are wild range, 33-inch-square silk scarves, which cowboys knot around their necks for warmth and style, in dark colors for the range, bright for town.

Upstairs are the leather goods and tack that account for 75 per cent of Capriola’s business. Saddles, bridles and chaps are made and repaired in a spacious, sunny workshop. When the saddlemaker and rancher Joe Capriola opened the store in 1929, it cost a cowboy about three months’ salary — $60 — to buy a custom-made saddle.

Today the typical price is $2,200, still about three months’ salary.

In 1988, the ranchers Paul and Betty Bear bought Capriola’s. Two of their children are now operating the business.

“I’m a history nut,” says Bill Bear, the 34-year-old president of the business. In his office, the walls are covered with old photographs, a shelf is lined with books about the West, and a file drawer is crammed with his collection of Western store catalogues, some dating back to the last century.

The family’s interest in the preservation of the Western tradition doesn’t stop with the store. In 1978 the Bears bought the Garcia Bit and Spur Company, an 88-year-old firm whose silver and steel work is considered among the finest of its kind by riders and collectors. As Bill Bear explains, “The main reason the Garcia was so special was that it was preservative on a saddle.

For the same reason, the Bears raise Texas longhorns on the family ranch a few miles north of town.

Mr. Bear emphasizes that it’s not simply a matter of style: even the store’s more exotic items, like reatas, 60- to 89-foot roper mades of braided rawhide, fluffy angora chaps and fierce-looking spade bits, are used today by tradition-minded cowboys.

Although President Reagan owns a Capriola’s saddle and the store’s customers include such popular singing stars as Charlie Daniels and Tom Jones, Capriola’s bread and butter is still the working rancher and cowboy.

Capriola’s serves as an informal employment agency. “Cowboy, some education, knows all kinds of ranch work, needs work,” reads the scrawled card on the bulletin board. When Elko ranchers need cowboys, they ask the store to spread the word.

The store was almost unaffected by the urban cowboy fad of a few years ago except for some problems it had getting merchandise from regular suppliers. “The only thing that affects our business is the cattle market,” Mr. Bear says. “When beef prices rise, up, ranchers and cowboys are more inclined to indulge in a new saddle or hat.

More than half of Capriola’s business comes from the 66-page mail-order catalogue that Bill Bear wrote more as a book than a sales pitch. It is a meticulously detailed record of the artifacts of authentic Western style. Two pages are devoted to breast collars for horses, another two pages are given to boots, and a page explains the selection of ropes, including reverse-twist models for left-handed ropers.

The catalogue, now in its fifth printing, is one reason that a significant amount of business now comes from Europe.

Each spring one of the Bears takes eight massive saddle boxes of merchandise to an equestrian fair in Essen, West Germany. In 1981 Bill Bear and his wife were honored guests at a dinner given by French equestrians who ride Western style in the Bois de Boulogne each weekend.

“The catalogue is a bible to them,” Bill Bear said. “They know a lot more about us than we know about them.”

He pointed at a photograph of what seemed to be several 19th-century Nevada cowboys; in fact, the picture was taken in 1861 in Switzerland. Most recently, the fascination with Western America has spread even farther; Capriola’s newest international customer is a store in Japan.

Silver-trimmed saddle.

If you go

Business Hours
J.M. Capriola is at 500 Commercial Street, Elko, Nev. (778-5010); open 7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. Monday to Saturday.

Where to Eat
Another authentic Western experience is dining at a Basque restaurant. The copious, garlicky meals include soup, salad and one or two entrees, with spaghetti, paella, beans or vegetables on the side. Within walking distance of Capriola’s are the Star Hotel, 248 Silver Street (9 P.M. to 10 P.M. Tuesday to Saturday); the Nevada Dinner House, 355 Silver Street (3 P.M. to 10 P.M. Tuesday to Saturday) and Bilbao (the name means Gathering Place in Basque, 440 Silver Street; 7-10 to 10 P.M. Thursday to Saturday). Dinner prices range from $5 to $14.

Where to Stay
Elko, a major stopping place on Interstate 80, has plenty of motels. The newest and most luxurious is the Red Lion Inn and Casino (7055 Idaho Street, 702-738-2211; $50 for two in a room). Other lodgings include the Marquis Motor Inn ($50 East 1st Street, 702-738-2211; $50 for two) and El Neva Motel (700 Idaho Street, 702-738-7132; $45 for four and a half); 10; $45 for two) and El Neva Motel (700 Idaho Street, 702-738-7132; $45 for four and a half).