



IN A HIGH AND GLORIOUS PLACE

A SURVEY OF FOLKLIFE IN LINCOLN COUNTY, NEVADA, 1987

NEVADA ARTS COUNCIL

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FRONT COVER PHOTO: **The end of the rainbow,
Lincoln County, Nevada.**

PHOTO BY MIKE LUSTER

BACK COVER PHOTO: **Road sign near Ely, Nevada.**

PHOTO BY BLANTON OWEN

IN A HIGH AND GLORIOUS PLACE

A SURVEY OF FOLKLIFE IN
LINCOLN COUNTY, NEVADA, 1987

*O my Father, thou that dwellest
In the high and glorious place,
When shall I regain thy presence,
And again behold thy face?*

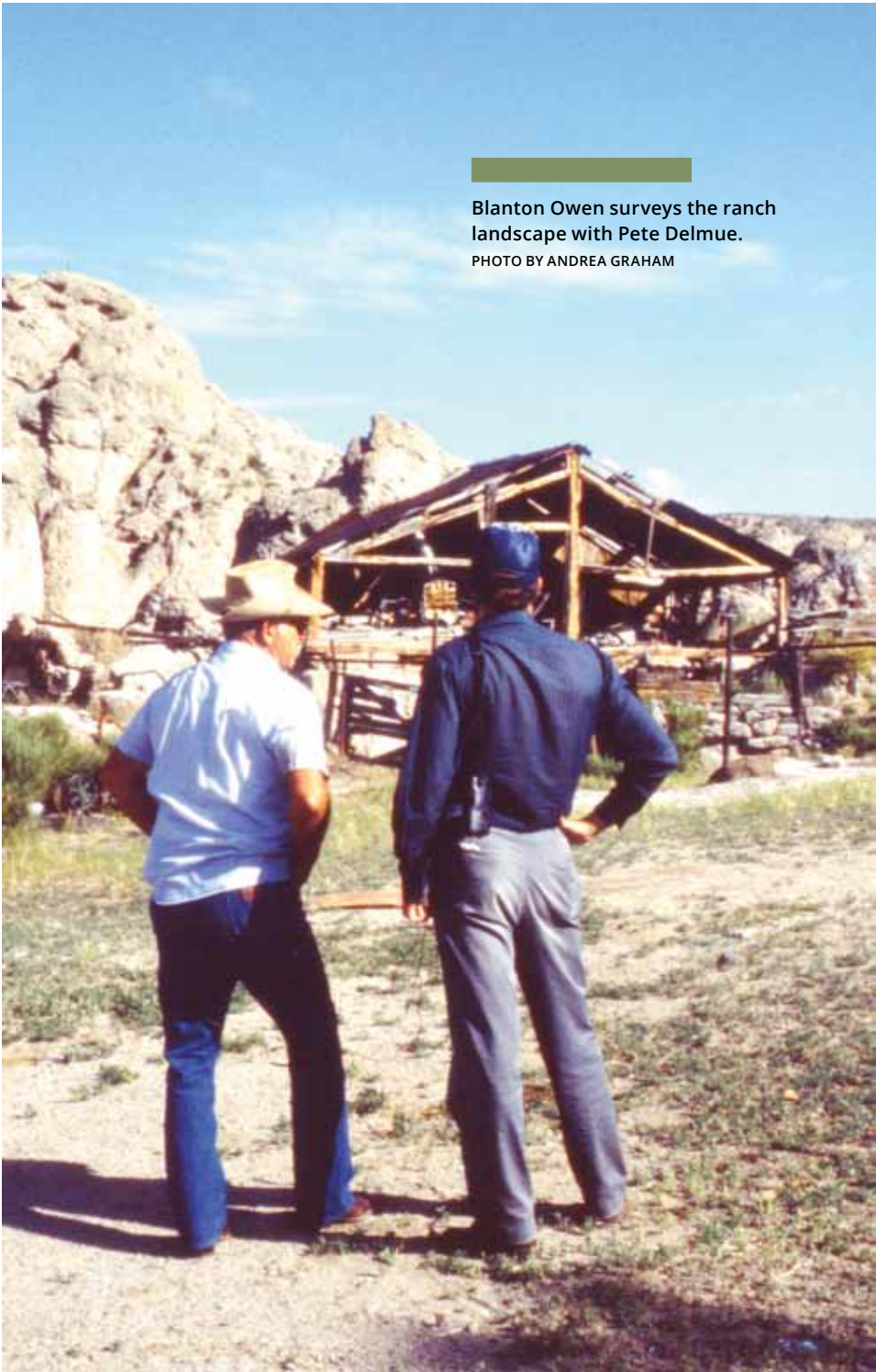
—FROM "O MY FATHER," A MORMON HYMN; LYRICS BY
ELIZA R. SNOW, MUSIC BY JAMES M'GRANAHAN



Antler monument near the
Caliente cemetery.

Folklorist Mike Luster at work.



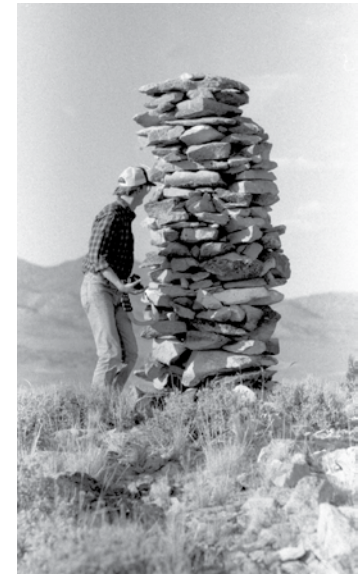


Blanton Owen surveys the ranch landscape with Pete Delmue.

PHOTO BY ANDREA GRAHAM

INTRODUCTION

Folk culture refers to those verbal, material, gestural, and musical forms of traditional expressive culture by which a group maintains and passes on its shared way of life. Nevada's first official folklorist was Blanton Owen, hired by the Nevada State Council on the Arts in December of 1985. He began to explore Nevada's urban and rural landscapes in 1986, and his travels included site visits and fieldwork in Lincoln County. In May and June of 1987, the Folk Arts Program conducted a folk culture survey to identify, document, and present the varied folk traditions that could be discovered in Lincoln County. Folklorist Michael Luster and photographer Debbie Nolan were commissioned to conduct six weeks of fieldwork that produced thousands of black-and-white and color photographs, and many hours of tape recorded interviews and folk performances. Their words and pictures traced the contours of Lincoln County's rich folk heritage and the people, families, and communities who gave it life. The original publication, long out of print, has been revised, expanded, and reformatted to produce this digital edition—a snapshot of Lincoln County, Nevada as the folklorists found it in 1987.



Mike Luster takes a closer look at the Basque stone monument.

Let's see, today is March the 9th, 1987, and I'm out west of Panaca about 10 or 12 miles, and if you'd give your name and address and that stuff, that'd be good... Alright. We're sittin' here in a sheep camp. Tell me about the camp here, maybe that'd be a good way to start, the trailer...and the yearly cycle...tell me about that...umm hmm...[listens]...yeah, so you've been over this territory a good many times...[listens]... well how did you get into the business... [listens]...yeah...can you make a livin' at it?... [listens]... huh... [listens]... yeah... [listens]... alright... [listens]... [laughs]... [listens]... ahhh!... [listens]... Why don't you tell me some of what your day is like...[listens]... Well, let me unplug this thing, and be done...alright.

—BLANTON OWEN, INTERVIEWING BRAD GUYMAN, 1987

We've left a lot of stones unturned. It's just amazing to me...this huge county...We're living in Maryland and this one county is five times the state of Maryland and its total population is about the population of just our neighborhood at home...you almost, literally, could knock on every door...Always before... I've worked...where it was isolated, you'd talk to one person and you'd go somewhere else and talk to somebody else and there wouldn't be any link-up between them. Here...almost everybody is connected...somehow.

—MIKE LUSTER, INTERVIEWING GORDON LYTLE, 1987



Blanton Owen in 1986.
PHOTO BY ANDREA GRAHAM



Mike Luster and Debbie Nolan.

Mike Luster's site visit
with Frank Ernst.





Panaca warm spring.

TRADITIONS THAT REMAIN STRONG

You get south of Ely it's a whole 'nother world.

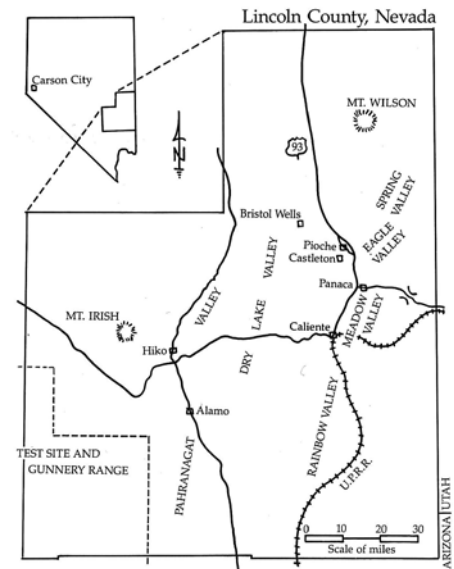
—LYLE WHITESIDE, TO MIKE LUSTER, 1987

Perched on the eastern edge of a western state, Lincoln County strikes a balance between the traditions of the past and the shock waves of the future. To the east lies its Mormon motherland, Utah's blooming desert Dixie. To the west lies the nation's atomic bomb testing ground. To the north is the romantic and hardworking land of buckaroos and cowboy poets. To the south is modern, metropolitan Las Vegas, forever grasping to control and consume the crystal waters of the Meadow and Pahranaगत Valleys.

Lincoln County is a place of contrasts: a large land area, sparsely populated; high valleys surrounded by still higher mountains; parched open range and verdant valley fields; peaceful serenity in the rain shadow of a nuclear testing ground. Its inhabitants confront the future with convictions grounded in shared heritage, belief, and time-honored traditions that remain strong in families and communities.



Cattle drive.





Dutch oven cooking at LDS picnic on Panaca Summit.

Snack time for Tandy Getz, Dawn and Kenny Lee, Brett Blackner, and the crew while driving cattle to their summer range.



Hunting guide Phil Truesdale on Mt. Wilson.



The Sophus Hansen adobe house, Panaca.

MORMON SETTLEMENT: A PLACE OF MANY WATERS

*We'll find the place which God for us prepared,
Far away in the West,
Where none shall come to hurt or make afraid,
There the Saints will be blessed.*

—"COME, COME, YE SAINTS", LYRICS BY WILLIAM CLAYTON,
MUSIC FROM AN ENGLISH FOLK SONG

During the Mormon Church's search for new lands in the mid-19th century, several families were sent into what was then the western extension of Washington County, Utah. Scouting parties had located valleys with plenty of water, and Mormon families fanned out to fill them. Some went only a few miles over today's Nevada/Utah border and settled in an area they named Eagle Valley. Others headed further west and south to settle in the valley the Paiutes called *Pahrnanagat*, or "place of many waters." A large group of pioneers was sent across the mountains to the "valley of the white hills" and settled in a generously watered spot they named Meadow Valley.



Meadow Valley from the airport.

The leader of this latter group was Francis Lee, remembered by the citizens of Panaca as a gentle man who helped plat the town according to the rigorous grid preferred by the Church. At ninety-eight, Lester Lee can recall the God-centered, work-filled lives of his grandparents. Grayce McBride's grandfather, Sophus Hansen, was one of many Danes to join the LDS Church and immigrate to Utah in the second quarter of the 19th century. In the 1880s, Sophus moved to Panaca, married Hannah Wadsworth, and built a double-pen adobe house. The Hansen House is still standing and is typical of early Panaca houses built by the Mormon settlers.

Grayce McBride, grand-daughter of Sophus Hansen.



Lester Lee, holding a picture of himself and his wife Grace Gentry, taken on their wedding day.



Spring water at Bristol Wells.



TRADITIONS THAT FAMILIES SHARE

There's three wards over here in Nevada, there's Pioche and Caliente and Panaca... and [in Utah] there's Newcastle...and there's three wards in Enterprise [in Utah], so there's seven wards in this stake, about 2,500 to 2,800 people...The temple...is in St. George.

We'll get together...we'll go out somewhere and cook up a dinner... potatoes and onions in one Dutch oven, and baking powder biscuits in another...and some kind of meat...and some salad ...and in July, take a big pot and fill it full of corn and boil it for about five minutes...The twenty-fourth of July is a Mormon holiday... the time when the pioneers first came into the Salt Lake Valley...we used to take and butcher a beef... wrap it all up...put it in the ground...take it out the next day...oh it's the best tasting stuff in the world...

—KENNY LEE, INTERVIEW WITH MIKE LUSTER

In the early summer, men who have achieved the rank of High Priest in the Panaca Ward of the Enterprise Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints celebrate with a picnic at the Panaca Summit, near where their pioneer forefathers crossed the mountains. The men build fires and cook the traditional meal for such occasions: hamburgers grilled on black iron griddles and potatoes cooked in bacon fat inside Dutch ovens with glowing coals heaped on the lids. The women bring salads both “set” (molded) and tossed, jars of chili sauce and relish, brownies, and carrot pudding. The fires are tended by Frank Ernst, who made the many of the griddles, cooking utensils and Dutch ovens in the machine shop at the Castleton mine where he was once employed.



Dutch oven cooking.

Dutch ovens made by Frank Ernst.

This one is 16 inch...I have made smaller...it's a short section of pipe with a bottom welded into it and then machined to smooth it up and make it thinner, because the pipe wall originally was about 3/8 of an inch thick. The pipe is just something I picked up, salvage ends...could be used around mills, plants, the like...

That tray for biscuits, that's something that's extra to a Dutch oven...I've never seen them in any other locality...saves burning the biscuits on the bottom...and if you wish to cook a lot of biscuits for a large crowd you can have a crew that is placing the dough on the tray while one is cooking...At my wife's family reunion there were 104 people there that day...we cooked over 200 pieces of chicken, 65 pounds of spuds and 283 biscuits...all with Dutch ovens. I believe we had something like 16 Dutch ovens there that day.

[This is the] Dutch oven hook...fork...spatula... no two of them alike. I build them freehand, I cut these by eye so there's some variation... The hook, that's made with a 42-inch welding rod and a flat hook on the end. The nature of it is that you can balance a lid with coals on it without dropping the coals into the oven. People that have used these tell me that they like these the best of what they've used.

—FRANK ERNST, INTERVIEW WITH MIKE LUSTER, 1987

After the meal, June Cox's brother Dr. Joe Wilkin is persuaded to lead some songs with his black-and-white piano accordion. While he plays, standing next to a bonfire with one leg up on a folding chair and his accordion balanced on the lifted knee, a semi-circle of people face him and sing some of their favorite old popular songs and Mormon hymns. Someone suggests the song "Good Night, Ladies," a signal that it is getting late. After a few more "goodnight" songs, people fold their chairs and pack their things while the accordionist serenades them with a sprightly rendition of "Roll Out the Barrel." They leave their glorious gathering place until the next traditional gathering in this spot will bring them together again to celebrate the heritage and tradition their families share, early in the fall when the corn is ready for harvest.



LDS picnic at Panaca Summit.





Rafters set into volcanic stone wall in 1880 barn.



Pete Delmue.

A Foothold in America

Grandpa, he'd just plan something and then go to it...all by hand, you know...like that stone over there, you can see where he cut it.

—PETE DELMUE, INTERVIEW WITH BLANTON OWEN, 1987

Pete Delmue's grandfather Joseph moved into his new house in Dry Valley in on Christmas Day, 1900. Joseph built the house with the help of Jacob Stuzzenegger, another Swiss rancher. Other work was done by Swiss and Italian immigrants who traded their labor for a foothold in America and a place to learn the English language and American ways, Nevada style. They helped to cut the huge blocks of granite from the surrounding hills and hauled them to the site Joseph selected for his ranch-stead.

An array of outbuildings stands to the west and north of the house, along a parabolic rise of volcanic stone. Into this soft rock, Joseph carved the back walls of barns and the pivot points of gates. His last building achievement was a huge cathedral of a barn. Completed in 1916, it is made of stone, concrete, and the spikes, rails and ties of a railroad that carried ore from the mines of Pioche to the mill at Bullionville, north of Panaca.



First barn built on Delmue ranch in 1880 is built against and into a volcanic stone outcropping.

...the first barn he built is over there, it's all cobblestones there under that manure, a milk barn, and that's the old narrow gauge railroad track and rails, he just used them for supports when they tore that out. These beams, he got them off of Wilson Creek, went up there and cut them and drug them down here with a horse; and this is the original roof. These old doors come off the Fogliani place up at Spring Creek.

This part here was his old sausage house and his cellar—"the back of the house" we call it—you might put up 50 cheeses or 75 cheeses, we made our own. He used to hang all the sausages up on the ceiling. We'd kill our own beef of course; and in here, underneath, that's where he kept his milk, down under this floor there's a box and he'd put ice in that, this was all the rock hill and he just cut all this out when he built the house.

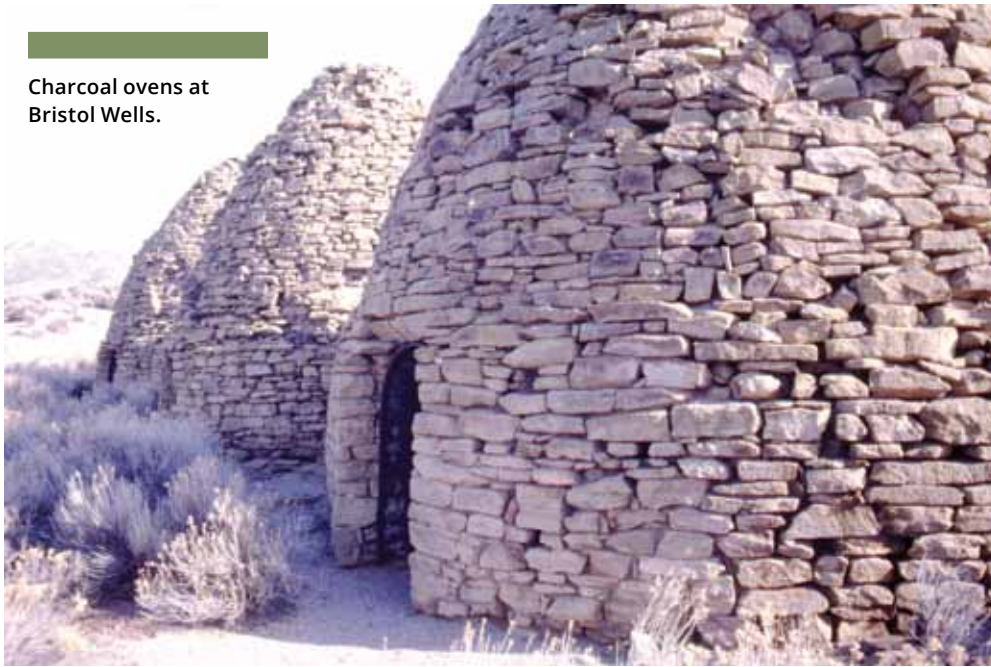
—PETE DELMUE, INTERVIEW WITH
BLANTON OWEN, 1987



Aerial of the
Delmue ranch.

Stone house on the
Delmue ranch.

Charcoal ovens at
Bristol Wells.



MINING IN THE MOUNTAINS

A lot of times I'm out here in the hills and I find where people have dug—and I have to say, some of those old timers, I think they just liked to dig—because a lot of times they have dug some hellacious holes. It was the name of the game back in those days and if they could find something that had a little gold in it, well they could sell it. And back in those days, you know, there wasn't any welfare and there wasn't any relief lines, I mean, it was "root hog, or die!"

—JACK DARLAND, INTERVIEW WITH BLANTON OWEN, 1986

The discovery of silver in the mountains of Lincoln County created a population explosion just as "battle born" Nevada entered the Union as the 36th state, in 1864. A county seat was established near the mill at Hiko in the Pahrnagat Valley but it was moved to the boomtown of Pioche when a larger strike was found in the hills at the head of Meadow Valley. Pioche grew into the epitome of the frontier mining town—full of quick fortunes and quicker tempers—and developed a brisk trade with the Mormon agricultural settlement at Panaca.

As each new metal was uncovered in the hills, another wave of people swept into the county. Some came from other mining camps around the West; others were recent immigrants who arrived with high hopes of prospering from the silver, gold, lead, zinc, and tungsten just waiting to be excavated. Italian-speaking Swiss, known for their skill at cutting timber, came to feed the charcoal ovens with pinion pine to make fuel for the smelters.



Jay Schofield
demonstrates
panning for gold.

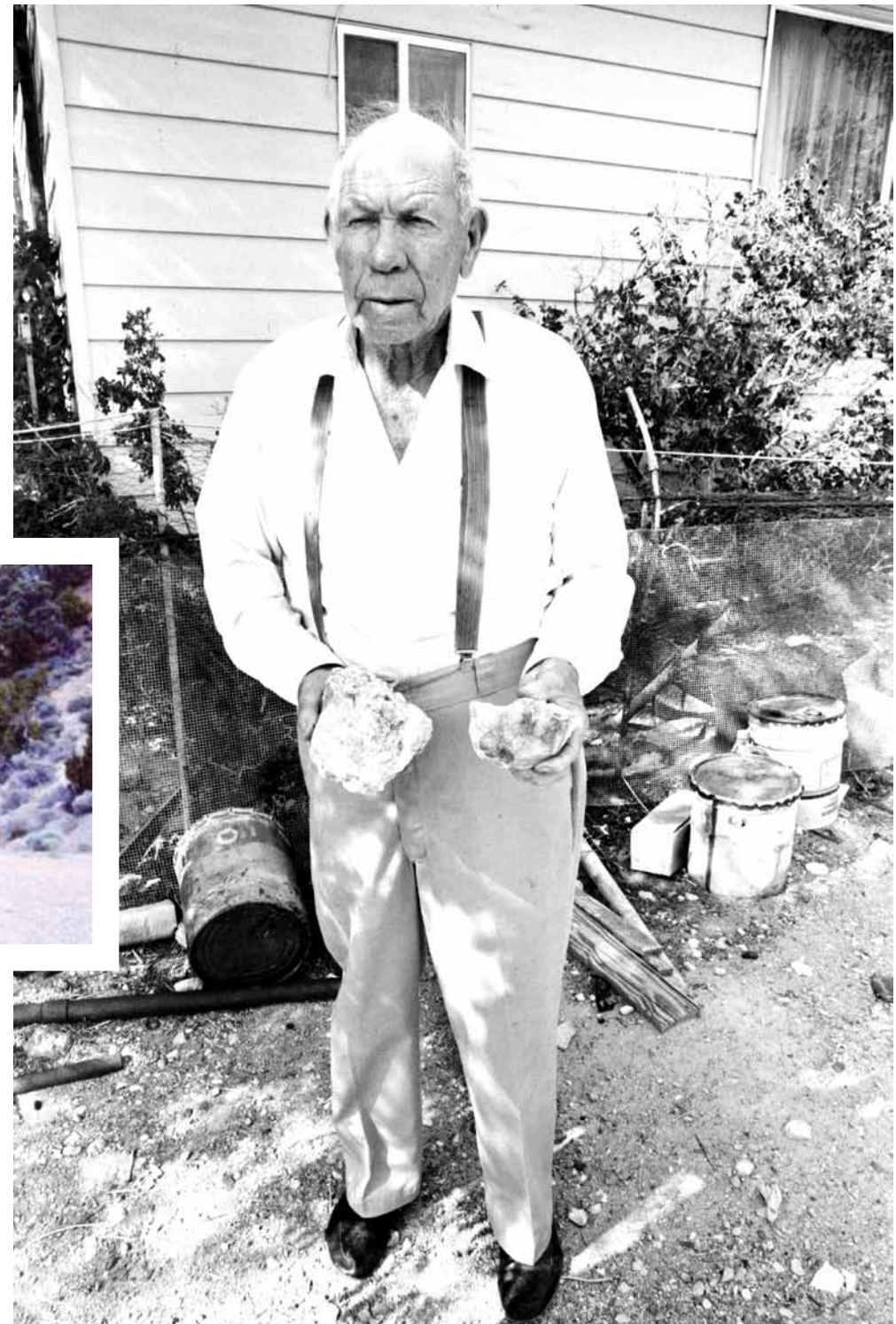


Atlanta Mine.

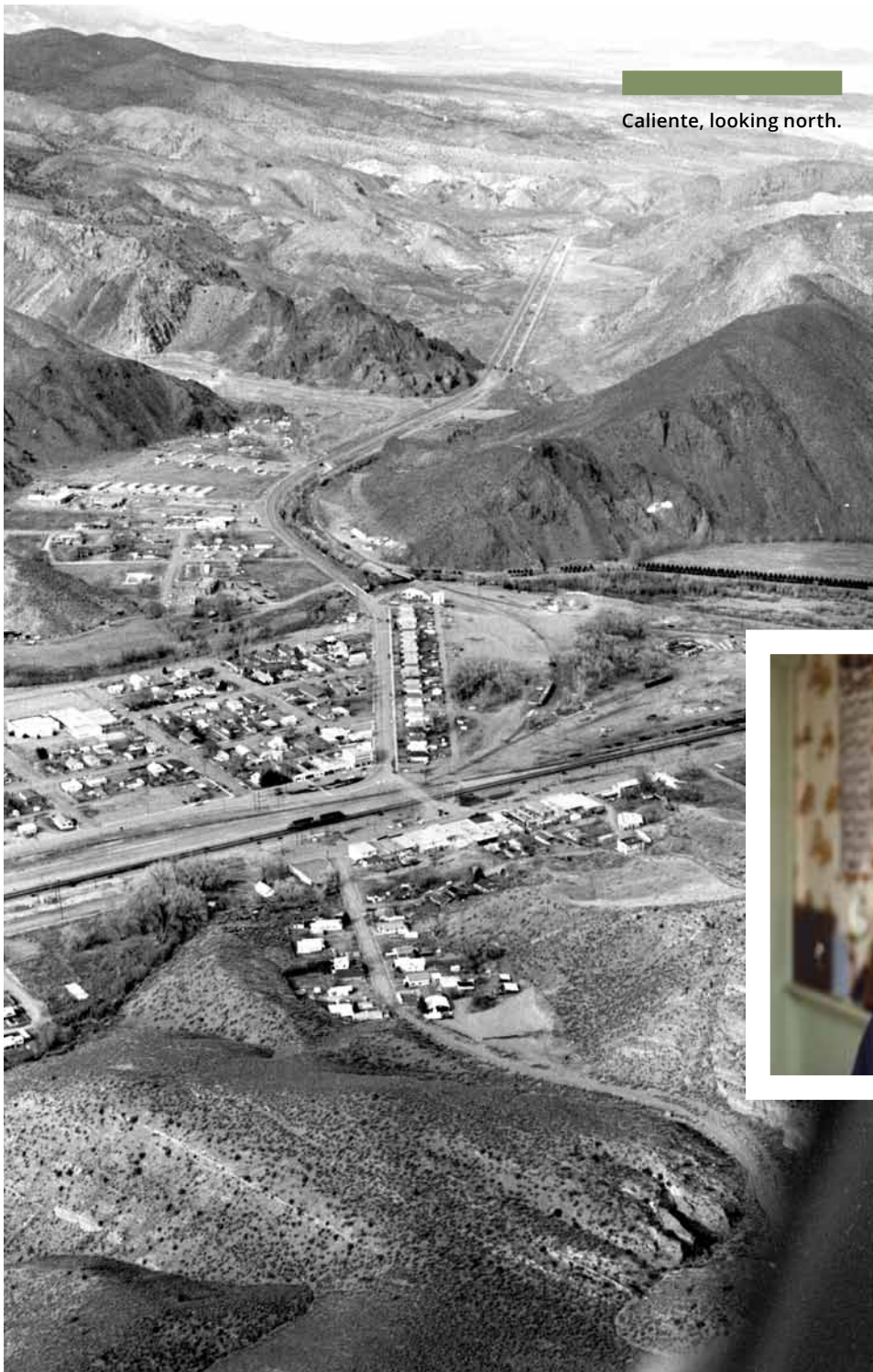
Wesley Koyen, now eighty-one years old, is the son of a Danish cigar maker and is responsible for the last great mineral boom in Lincoln County: the discovery of tungsten near the old silver mine at Tempiute, not far from the Mt. Irish site where it all began. Today that mine is owned by a subsidiary of Union Carbide and sits more or less idle under the watchful gaze of Jay Schofield, whose family acquired the mine from the Koyens. Schofield, whose wife runs the tiny post office in Hiko, spends his days visiting with Wesley and patrolling the mine whose history and lore they both share. He occupies his nights reading mining magazines, and weekends driving his Bronco into the mountains with pick, pan, and placer washer—looking for gold.



Tempiute tungsten mine.



Wesley Koyen holding ore samples.



Caliente, looking north.

THE RAILROAD THROUGH RAINBOW CANYON

I got a job on the U.P. Railroad. I worked there in the Caliente yards—six years on the track—and during the war I worked five years in the roundhouse as a stepped-up boilermaker. Then when they took the steam engines out of Caliente, I got a job on a B & B [bridge and building] gang and worked there four years. That made 15 years on the railroad.

—MERVIN BAKER, INTERVIEW WITH MIKE LUSTER, 1987

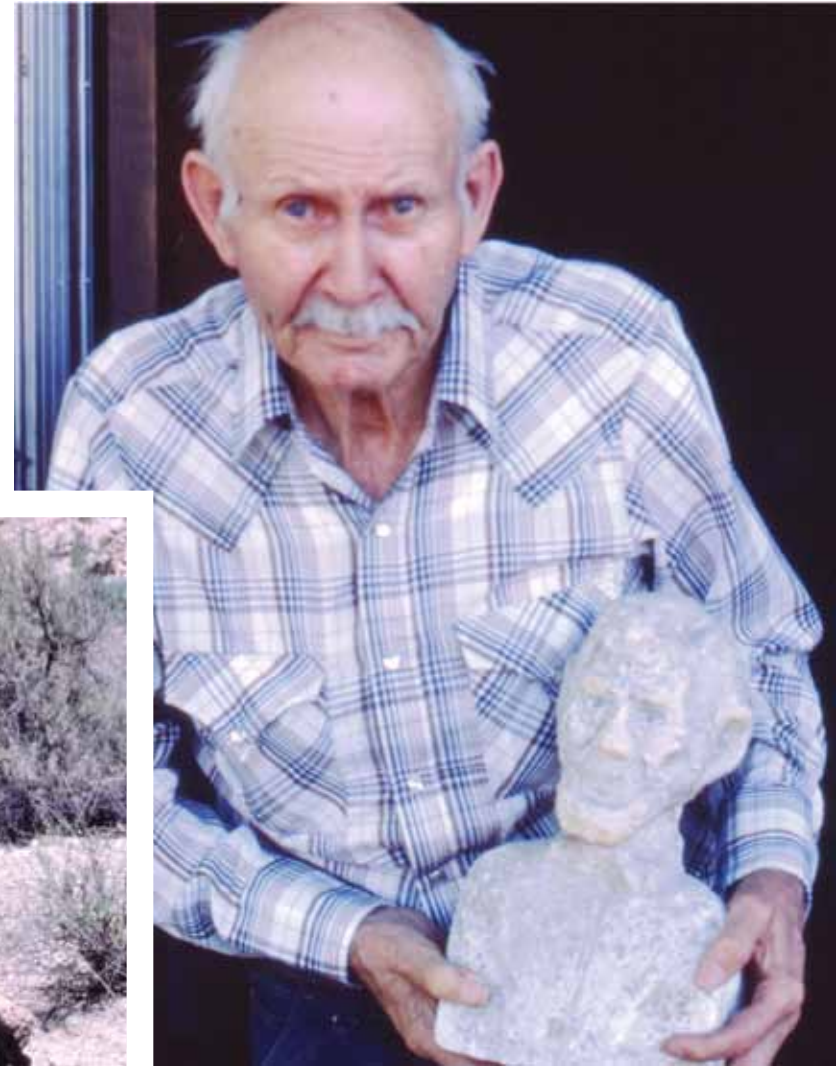
The railroad from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles, built just after the turn of the 20th century, brought a second wave of prosperity to Lincoln County. The mainline bypassed both Panaca and Pioche and created a new town, Caliente, on the northernmost flat of Rainbow Canyon. Caliente became a rail hub as the mid-point on the Salt Lake City-Los Angeles line. By mid-century the new diesel locomotives could climb more easily through the brightly-colored walls of Rainbow Canyon. The roundhouse in Caliente was abandoned and Union Pacific moved its hub to Las Vegas.



Ralph Smeath.

Ralph Smeath is now retired and lives in one of the row houses built by the Union Pacific for its workers. Most of his fifty years of railroad work were spent as foreman of the roundhouse, where he oversaw the operation of thirty-two stalls and the large ninety-six foot turntable. Today Ralph, like his friend Jay Schofield, spends much of his time prospecting in the hills.

Mervin Baker is a retired boilermaker who came to Caliente to work for the Union Pacific in 1936. He was good with his hands and often amused his co-workers by molding their likenesses in the heavy, wax-like grease they called "pin dope." He would play "Wreck of the Old Ninety-Seven" on his harmonica, entertaining the men with his uncanny imitations of steam train sounds. He remembers the roundhouse as a busy, convivial place where the men would gather with their lunch buckets to eat, trade jokes, and swap stories.



Mervin Baker with a stone bust of Abraham Lincoln he carved from a rock with a screwdriver and ball-peen hammer.



Water diversion dam built by Union Pacific in Rainbow Canyon.



RANCHING REMAINS ITS HEART

Lions, more than any other wildlife around here, have played more of a part in people's lives. You get 'em started on a lion, and they've got a story there—one they want to tell. If a guy's a rancher, he's probably had some time in his life that one particular lion has done this or killed this or something like that. I've seen them come right in and get chickens; kill house cats. We had one walk right down the sidewalk at about 10:30 in the morning right over there, three years ago.

—JERRY HUGHES, INTERVIEW WITH MIKE LUSTER, 1987

The passing of the railroad boom and the shutdowns at the mines hurt Lincoln County financially, but not critically, for ranching remains its heart. Livestock are well suited to the county's open range, and evidence of the people who have tended them can still be found on remote mountaintops. Near Bennett's Spring, west of Panaca, a pillar of stones stands sentinel on the crest of a hill, left there long ago by Basque shepherds. On Mt. Wilson, north of Eagle Valley, there are strange figures, names and comically lewd pictures that they carved into

the smooth, white-barked aspens. Sheep are still grazed in the county, but the today the flocks are owned by Utahans, such as Brad Guyman. They winter their flocks in Lincoln County, living in mobile sheep-wagons or sheep-camps, but return home to Cedar City for lambing in early spring.



Stone monument built by Basque shepherders, west of Panaca.

Brad Guyman and sheep.

Mountain lions, also known as “cougars,” “catamounts,” or simply “lions,” retain an important role in the verbal lore of the county. Nearly everyone who has raised cattle or sheep has a great cat story. John Ballow not only roped one, he walled another up in a cave by the railroad tracks while he went home to get his gun, and stalked a third with a hammer. His wife Shorty had one come in her bedroom at night and frightened it away with a scream. Emery Conaway’s mother killed one in the kitchen with a broom and a hoe...and so the stories go. Nevada now has a regulated lion hunting season, and Jerry Hughes guides hunters who come to Lincoln County to stalk the big cats.

Line camp near Bristol Wells.



Brad Guyman's sheep camp.





Horses in corral on Jay Hunt's ranch.



Trailing cattle on Kenny Lee's ranch.

A CIRCULAR TRAIL, A YEARLY CYCLE

We just have to continually fight to stay in business, and there's so many of the ranchers goin' broke, and you have to fight the weather conditions and you're always continually hassling with the Bureau, and then...there's a lot of people that want the stock off the range, they just don't want them there, they think they're ruining the range. We spend a lot of time and money trying to figure out ways we can stabilize the industry, but it's really quite hard.

—KENNY LEE, INTERVIEW WITH MIKE LUSTER, 1987

The Westside Cattle Company was established by early ranching families in Lincoln County. Some of the founding members were Irish; others were descendants of Italian-speaking Swiss who came to cut timber for the mines. The rest were Mormons from the original Eagle Valley settlement. Their descendants continued to follow the trail blazed by their fathers and grandfathers. This trail was a circular one, a yearly cycle which began in October when the men left their homes in the Spring, Eagle and Dry Valleys and came together to drive their cattle to winter range northwest of Pioche, a fifty mile flat called Dry Lake. By the first of November, the Westside men liked to have the “weaners” (calves) sold and the “drys” (cows no longer nursing calves) out on the range. The stock could be left there alone, except in the worst of winters when someone would stay in one of the remote line camps to chop ice from the cattle’s drinking water. Some of these men passed the time by carving their names in the soft rock walls of the line camps. Gordon Lytle remembers the winter of 1948 when he and the others spent forty-five days and nights camped out with the snow piled deep and the temperature plunging to more than forty degrees below zero. Despite the Army’s efforts to airlift hay from Fallon in their “flying boxcars,” and the loan of heavy snow clearing equipment by the Bureau of Land Management, they lost over a thousand head of cattle that year.

This old boy, we used to ride with him all the time and he wouldn't bathe, you know, unless you forced him to do it. We'd been riding for about a week, and he was getting pretty ripe, so we come to one camp, and it had a windmill, and nice big tank of water, and we decided, "well, now's as good a time as any," so about three of us grabbed him and we stripped him and threw him in the tank, and give him a good bath. We stayed there about two days and the damn wind didn't blow and we had to drink the water! We had to boil it, we'd boil it up to make coffee...I remember—that was a bad winter.

—GORDON LYTLE, INTERVIEW WITH MIKE LUSTER, 1987

By spring, the cattle would have wandered down to the lower end of the range and the men would ride south, sometimes as far as the Clark County line, to begin moving them north. At first they would ride with the Rainbow Canyon ranchers, but at the flats they would separate. The Westside Cattle Company, jokingly referred to as the “Starvation Cattle Company,” would push their stock on up to the old charcoal ovens at Bristol Wells to be branded. By the first of May, the cattle had been moved over the top of Bristol Pass into the Wilson Creek Range for summer grazing. In September they would be brought down to Spring Valley where those to be sold were cut from the herd to be readied for shipment. Then it was time, once again, to trail the cattle down through Eagle Valley and back to Dry Lake.

The Delmues and the Lytles still make the yearly round of Dry Lake to Wilson Creek to Spring Valley and back. Today they truck the cattle and horses from place to place instead of driving them on foot the entire way. At branding time, they may use dirt bikes to accomplish in a single day what used to take two weeks. They use electric branding irons powered by a gasoline engine: no fire to keep burning, and no unevenly heated irons.

**Branding at
Jay Hunt's place.**



Corral fence, Ballow ranch.

**Windmill on the
open range.**





Branding day at
Jay Hunt's ranch.

WORKING COWBOYS

If you're riding in mountainous country, a lot of these hot-blooded horses won't stand up, you know, like a mustang or something that's got a little more bottom to 'em. My little old Snowball horse actually was a mustang. He was caught when he was just a young horse and I broke him and rode him for a lot of years—best little horse I ever had in my life, he really was. You could ride him for two or three weeks straight and never have to change horses. Only thing—you'd let him rest for two or three days and he'd try to buck you off.

—GORDON LYTLE, INTERVIEW BY MIKE LUSTER, 1987



Cattle drive at
Kenny Lee's ranch.

The tough and tiresome work of ranching calls for appropriate entertainment. Much of what Lincoln County cowboys choose for play involved the skills they used on the job. In the early days the men preferred a Fourth of July horse race, usually run around Caliente's Company Row, followed by a bowl of ice cream made with the last of the ice cut from the ponds back in December. Today many prefer the gymkhana—where riders show their skill in events like pole-bending, keyhole and barrel-racing—or a game of cowboy polo, where brooms are used instead of mallets; or the wild burro races in Pioche.

Horses loaded for transport while driving cattle to summer range.



Many working cowboys opt for jackpot roping competitions. Mike Wadsworth, Lyle Whiteside and Ole Olson often spend their Sundays at the arena in Caliente chasing and roping steers, and then get up the next morning to do the same thing at Jay Hunt's corral while teenage boys scramble for calves in need of "cutting" (castration), shots, brands, and ear marks. Sometimes, in the evenings, the cowboys find their recreation indoors. Today it is likely to be a dance at the Overland Bar in Pioche, where they bop and two-step to the music of country singer Andy Robinson and his array of synthesizers. In days past, they might have gathered at the Foglianis' to enjoy a program put on by the children, or to be coaxed into reciting a favorite bit of verse themselves; or take their ladies and dance the polka to the phonograph in the spacious living room of another Italian-Swiss family, the Delmues.



Kenny Lee in "shotgun" chaps made for him by June Cox.



Branding day at Jay Hunt's ranch.



WORKING COWGIRLS

I always did want to raise horses and cows.

—JUNE COX, INTERVIEW WITH MIKE LUSTER

The range has never been the province of cowboys alone. There have always been cowgirls and women ranchers. In Meadow Valley, June Cox has lived a life filled with noteworthy accomplishments. In 1969, the last year she competed, she won the average (best time averaged over several rounds) at both the finals for the Girl's International Rodeo League and for the Girl's Northwest Rodeo Association. She also won the women's world championships in both calf roping and goat tying. Although she was badly injured that year when her horse, Poco Paiute, had a stroke and fell on her, she regained her strength and built a ranch with the help of her three sons. Now her sons are grown and gone from home and she runs the ranch by herself. She raises cattle, registered quarter horses, sheep, goats and chickens, plus she puts up a sizable quantity of her own and her neighbor's hay. She does her own butchering, cures the hides—goat, deer, elk and beef—and sends them off to have them tanned. Some are oak-tanned for general use and for tooling, and the rest she has soft-tanned for chaps, gloves, car seats, and other items.

Leatherwork by June Cox.

My first time to rope a calf and tie it from a horse, we had a milk cow when I was a kid in Pioche, and I'd rope the cow's calf and tie it down, and learned to tie calves and rope, and I'd rope this calf until it got too big to rope and tie.

It's hard to even imagine how this horse can feel your signals...you're just there, you're sitting in the box and you're just primed and ready and you nod for the calf and there's a feeling between you and the horse, and he's gone. I don't know what signal he picked up, but there's just that communication, the bond you have between you that's just so close that...it's amazing!

—JUNE COX, INTERVIEW WITH MIKE LUSTER, 1987



Roping at
Jay Hunt's ranch.



June Cox checks her alfalfa
field in Meadow Valley.

The first horse I ever had that was my own was a mustang mare that a guy had given me, they'd caught some out on the range, and so he gave me this colt, and I named her Penney, and raised her up. I trained her to hold the rope and work the rope, then I practiced every chance I got. I had gone to Helldorado Rodeo in Vegas and barrel raced, so I went down there and I got a chance to rope Exhibition. I went out there and I just took right off, threw my rope, caught it and jerked the slack, piled off, and then they said I hit the ground and I sort of stalled, you know, like I couldn't believe it, then I ran out and threw that calf and tied it up and arms in the air and it was 17.2 seconds. First time in a rodeo I had tied with the man that won third place money in that day's rodeo event, so, I was on my way. Any chance to go to a rodeo and compete, I was there.

—JUNE COX, INTERVIEW WITH
MIKE LUSTER, 1987

June Cox and Chip at home
in Meadow Valley.





**IN A HIGH AND
GLORIOUS PLACE**