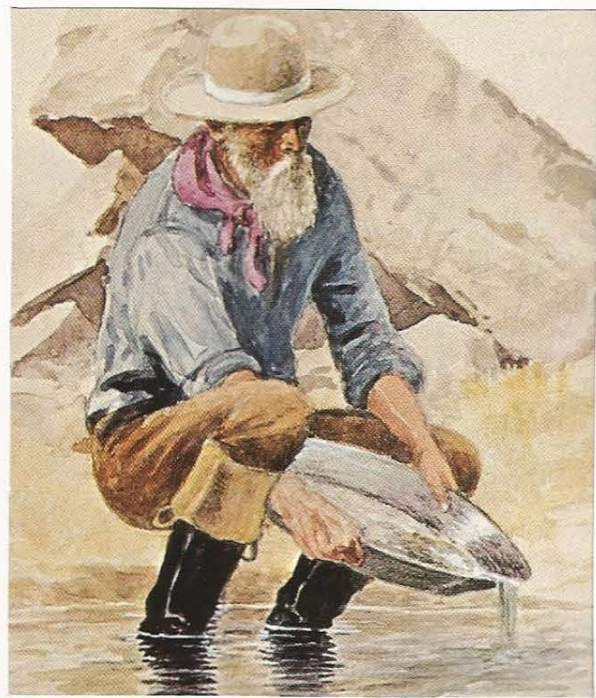


AMERICAN SCENE

THE THOMAS GILCREASE INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN HISTORY AND ART, TULSA, OKLAHOMA



AMERICAN SCENE

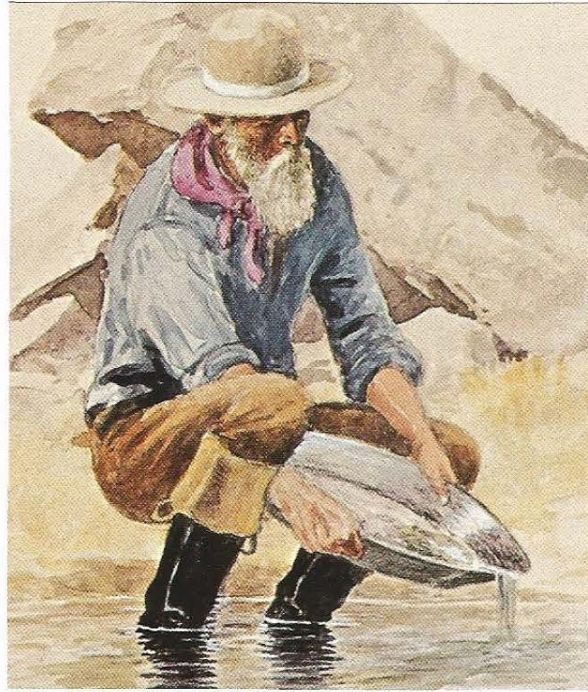
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In this, the concluding issue of Volume XV of *American Scene*, we continue our practice of spotlighting recent gallery exhibition events and general research activities in the Gilcrease Museum.

The lead article on Olaf Seltzer calls attention to both areas of exhibition and research. A new gallery has recently been created which presently houses a showing of part of the Gilcrease collection of works by Olaf Seltzer. That artist's career is currently being researched in depth by the author of our magazine article, Millie Ladner.



Mrs. Ladner is one of the good friends of the Gilcrease Museum. We are grateful to her for her contribution to this current issue.

The second article is derived from the ledger notebooks of one Josiah Gregg, who is known as the "Historian of the Santa Fe Trade," and was one of the first observers in the Southwest to write of his experiences. These close observations give us an accurate description of life during that time in our country's history. The inclusion here of excerpts from this extremely important journal are representative of the constant process of research ongoing in our documents collection.

The third article, which deals with the Cultural life of the American Indian North of Mexico from 12,000 years ago to the European contact period maintains a focus on the developing concept of exhibition which will soon be brought to fruition in our two anthropological galleries.

Olaf Carl Seltzer



Placer Miner

Perhaps no other pictures in the extensive collection of Americana at the Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art provoke more queries than those of Olaf Carl Seltzer. Seltzer was the Danish locomotive builder who rode into the Montana wilderness on painting trips with Charles M. Russell over a twenty year period and chronicled the ways of the old West for another thirty years after his friend's death.

The reason for the interest in his paintings is, in part, that so little has been written about Seltzer, a quiet, dedicated man who worked steadily in the shadow of his flamboyant friend, Russell.

Seltzer has come to be known in art circles as the foremost exponent of the Russell school of painting. Yet he went on into areas unexplored by Russell, painting in oil more than a hundred four-by-six inch jewel-like miniatures to celebrate a frontier era that had ended.

It is doubtful that the comradeship between the two men ever assumed a teacher-pupil relationship. Seltzer was only thirteen years younger than Russell and it would not have been like the unassuming Charlie to presume to teach a draftsman as talented as Olaf. More likely, they helped one another as they surely posed for one another. The younger man obviously stood in awe of the established cowboy artist who was so different in temperament.

The free-wheeling Charlie, somewhat tamed by his recent venture "in double harness" with eighteen-year-old Nancy Cooper, was celebrating his thirty-third birthday in Bill Rance's Silver Dollar Saloon on March 19, 1897, when a mutual friend introduced him to a raw-boned immigrant boy who dreamed of becoming an artist. That boy, almost twenty, was Olaf. He had arrived in Great Falls in 1892, in his fifteenth year, and had worked for several horse outfits before becoming an apprentice machinist for the Great Northern Railroad. Prior to his meeting with Russell, Seltzer had also worked for a narrow gauge railroad in Alberta, Canada, sketching wild life and Indian ways before returning to the Great Northern as a machinist.

There was an immediate rapport between the two men. Charlie's fame as a raconteur was widespread. Olaf was enraptured by becoming his associate. Charlie, on the other hand, spotted a kindred soul in young Olaf with whom he could share his dream of preserving on canvas the rapidly fading old days.

From the viewpoint of Charlie's bride, the steady, conscientious Seltzer came along at a propitious moment. The Russells were married in September, 1896, and their early years were a financial struggle. It was difficult to manage on Charlie's paltry earnings from his paintings and the little figures he molded out of wax. Nancy recognized the need for holding a tight rein on her artist husband, who ten years earlier had passed up a Philadelphia patron's offer to finance an Eastern art education in favor of riding the range. Surely she was not averse to encouraging this saloon-made friendship over other alliances with saddlepounders from Charlie's round-up years. For Charlie, like Will Rogers, seldom met a man he didn't like, and his drinking pals ranged from Montana's foremost citizens to sleazy outlaws.

In spite of Olaf's full-time job building and rebuilding locomotives for the Great Northern, the two friends found ample time to sketch and paint together in the next twenty-four years. Charlie was always a morning worker, arising at dawn and cleaning his brushes before the noon meal. Olaf for years worked as shop foreman on the 4 p.m. to midnight shift, and like Russell, he preferred to paint in the good northern light of morning.

Olaf, however, had more formal art training than the redoubtable Charlie—a school drop-out with only two art lessons under his belt before he left St. Louis to become a cowboy. Shortly after the death of Seltzer's father, a cigar maker and glass blower, the twelve-year-old Olaf had been accepted as a special student at the Art and Technical Institute of Copenhagen, where he held his own in classes with students many years his senior.

Olaf and his mother made their home with her sister, Laura, and Laura's husband, Louis Jensen. After Laura followed her husband across the Atlantic to settle at Great Springs, east of Great Falls, Montana (where Jensen was making a prosperous living of two dollars per day working in the roaster furnace of the silver smelter), the Jensens sent for Julia and Olaf. Halder M. Hansen of Fort Benton, Montana, remembers their arrival in the summer of 1892 when he was eleven years old. Young

Olaf Carl Seltzer



Seltzer, Painter and Locomotive Builder



The Iron Trail

Prowlers of the Prairie



Olaf turned to Halder and his nine-year-old brother for English words, including the word "painting." (Letter from Hansen to editor of *True West*, February, 1963.)

The raw Montana frontier was hardly conducive to fostering an interest in painting. But young Olaf sketched whenever he had the chance, absorbing all he could of this exhilarating new land and its passing aborigines. Encouraged by an early friend, Fred Downer, Olaf had begun experimenting before he met Charlie. He painted his first oil in 1897. (The Kennedy Galleries, in New York City, has a 13 x 18½ inch watercolor, *Mad Steer or Green Cowhand*, dated 1897. Its background appears sketchy compared with the minute details of later Seltzer works.)

Unquestionably, the aspiring young Dane drew encouragement from his relationship with Russell, whose rough-and-ready charisma attracted all manner of friends from the Bloods and Piegans (who called him *Cholly*) to famous humorists such as Irvin Cobb and Will Rogers.

Austin Russell, who came to make his home with his uncle and aunt in 1908, remembers Olaf as one of the regulars who dropped in to visit and work with Charlie in the telephone pole log cabin which was his studio and special preserve. By then, Olaf, as foreman of the railroad machine shop, was "making big money, but was discontented because he wanted to be an artist. He would work at his easel awhile and then get discouraged and quit." (Russell, 1957)

For Olaf, who had married Mabel Cleeland in 1903 and proceeded to rear two sons, could not afford the leisure of dedicating himself totally to his painting.

Olaf and Charlie enjoyed packing into the Judith Basin country of central Montana to watch the remnants of buffalo herds and other wild animals and study the Indians on the move. On one such occasion, they collaborated on a watercolor to which Russell signed both their names. Entitled *War Party*, it is the only known collaboration on which they purposely cooperated, and is owned by Mr. and Mrs. E. E. MacGillvra of Butte, Montana.

Although Olaf was of a more serious mien, there was a lot of horse-play (sometimes literally) and raucous practical joking between the two men. They would go on an occasional binge together in the decade before 1908, when Charlie gave up the bottle because he feared its effect on his painting. It was during one of their cutting-up moods that the pair marched into the Ford Studio in 1914 to have their photograph taken by North Dakota Stark.

Carter V. Rubottom in his sketch, "I Knew Charles M. Russell," recalls that his father once loaned a horse to Russell for a trip he was organizing which included Seltzer.

"Father had told Mr. Russell that Chub would buck if spurred in the flanks, so C. M. R. was mindful of the chance to have fun with someone. During the trip, each member of the party took a turn at wrangling horses. When it came to Olaf Seltzer's turn, he wanted to look the part, so he put on chaps and spurs before he climbed on old Chub to round up the other horses.

"Chub, as usual, took his time in getting started. Charlie Russell had told Mr. Seltzer to give him the spurs. Olaf followed instructions all right, and Chub piled him high, wide and handsome!" (Rubottom, 1954)

Carl C. Seltzer, Olaf's elder son, remembers his father's amusement in recalling a trick he was inspired to pull — with Russell's eager assistance — when the two artists were riding south of Great Falls one day.

They came upon an elaborate livery stable surrey, its horse tied to the barbed wire fence. A young couple, walking hand in hand across the prairie, disappeared behind a low hill. The jokers hid their own horses in a thicket, quickly unhitched the bay, led him through a gate in the fence and rehitched him so that the horse was on one side of the fence and the surrey on the other. In their hide-out, they nearly burst with suppressed laughter at the couple's bafflement upon their return.

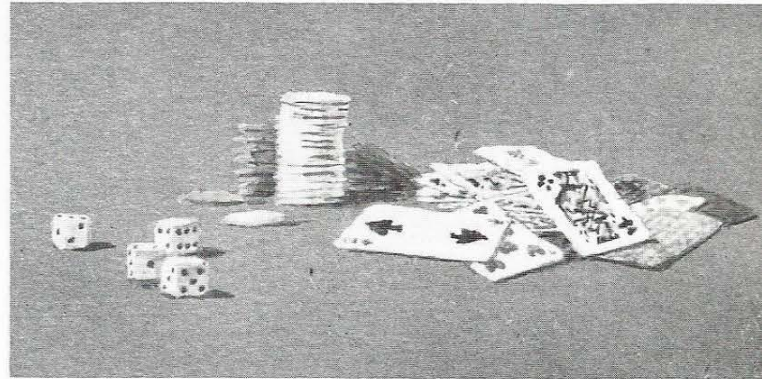
The culprits had plenty of time to enjoy their joke, for the young man, who must have been a new arrival in the West, was totally inept in his attempts to bring the horse and rig together again. The pair was forced to remain in hiding for nearly three hours.

Olaf Seltzer was extremely prolific and he was still working at his easel from a wheelchair on his 79th birthday in 1956. When he died in 1957, it was estimated that he had produced more than twenty-six hundred watercolors, oils, pen and ink drawings, and pencil sketches. Some of them with such fine detail that he worked under magnifying glasses. He painted at least a dozen recognizable oils and watercolors of Charlie Russell, including *The Grub Pile*, the *N-N Outfit at Judith Basin about 1891*, *Showing Horace Brewster*, *Gros Ventre Johnny and Charles M. Russell*. This 12 x 10 inch oil has Russell seated with his food-laden plate before the chuck wagon during roundup.

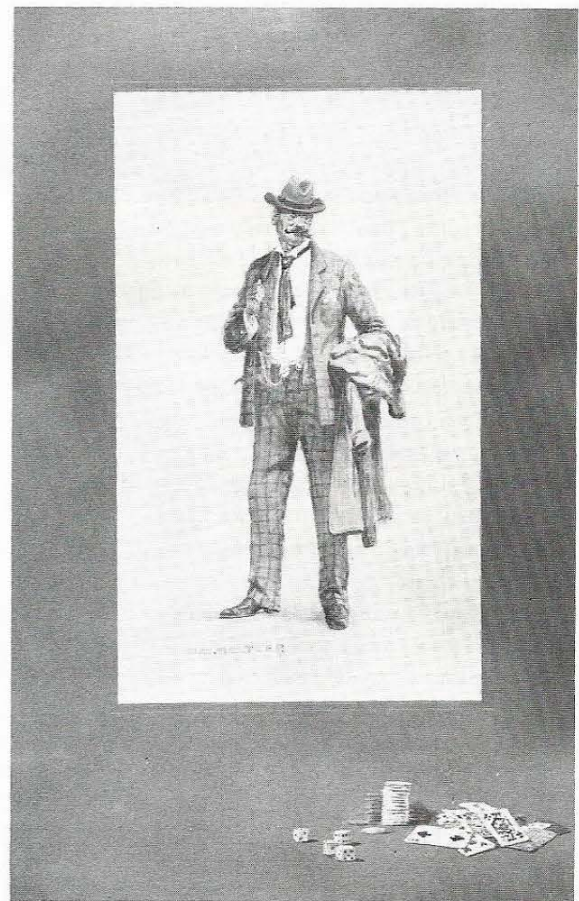
In 1921, a recession caused a lay-off at the Great Northern shops and Seltzer was given a chance to devote full time to his painting, although he didn't entirely sever his connections with the railroad until after 1925. Charlie was away from Great Falls much of the time after 1921, when he suffered his first attack of illness. Olaf, too, began to make trips to New York where he won commissions from such notables as Malcolm McKay, Amelia Earhart and her husband, George Palmer Putnam. In this period, Dr. W. J. Butler, a Montana veterinarian, introduced Seltzer and the man who was to become his patron, the Montana-reared physician turned industrialist, Dr. Philip G. Cole, who was assembling a singular collection of Western art at Zeeview, his estate in Tarrytown, New York.

Charlie Russell's unflagging desire to record the passing of the old West was visceral. He had spent months warming the saddle, been lost in cruel blizzards, sung to the dogies, ridden strange trails without any assurance as to where his next meal was coming from. His knowledge was detail perfect because he was there in time to be part of the scene.

Philip Cole's interest was nostalgic. Yielding to his father's desire that he enter the family business of



Detail of vignette delineated on the mat of *The Gambler*.



The Gambler

manufacturing tire valves in the New York area, he gave up the dream of returning to Montana with great reluctance, and devoted a fortune to sponsoring the reconstruction on canvas of a past era.

Olaf Seltzer's interest was intellectual. He recognized the closing of a colorful age that would never come again to the American scene. Too late to have been a part of it, he was to spend hundreds of hours researching in order to record faithfully Montana's past.

By the time of Dr. Cole's death in 1941, some 234 Seltzer oils and watercolors were among the 560 paintings purchased from the estate by Thomas Gilcrease who brought them to his new museum in the Osage Hills of Oklahoma on the periphery of Tulsa.

The friendship between Cole and Seltzer flourished during the months Olaf spent at Zeeview repairing some of the canvases in Cole's leading collection of Russell's work.

Perhaps nowhere is the devotion Seltzer felt toward Russell better expressed than in an illustrated letter to Dr. Cole written on December 21, 1926, in tribute to his friend.

Recounting Charlie's recital of those days Olaf wrote:

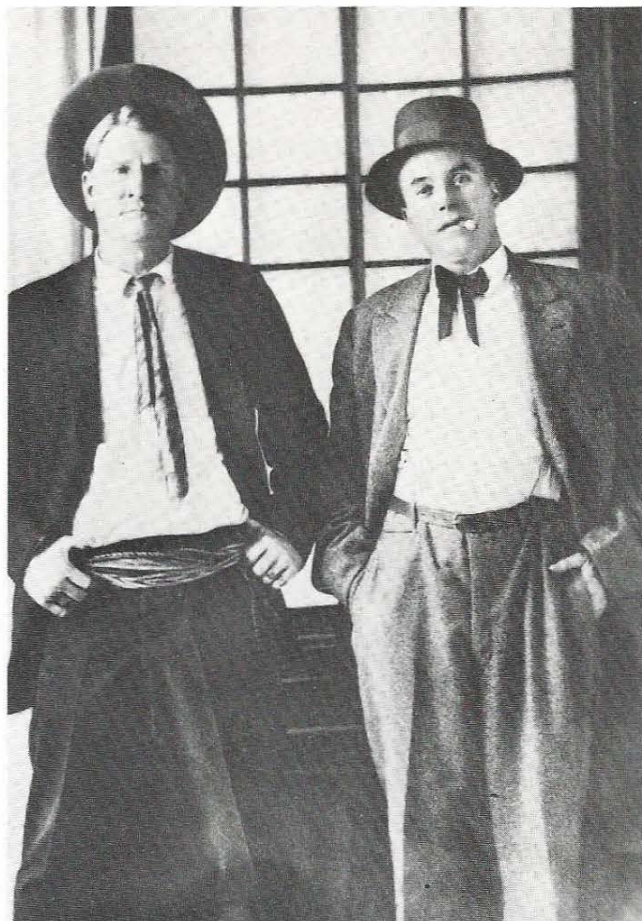
"He was hired by... Horace Brewster as horse wrangler, and he was known to the N-N in general, and Brewster in particular, as 'The Buckskin Kid' due to his straw-coloured hair and his bleached complexion, and also due to a pair of buckskin seated riding pants. When sometime after that he went north across the Canadian border line, this same pair of pants caused him to be named by the Bloods and Piegans — 'Aw-a-Kos' — 'The Antelope' — these Indians figuring in their picturesque, simple way that the rear view of Charley in his riding pants looked like an antelope flagging his danger signal in full retreat. This obscure kid became through evolution an interesting and well-known (sic.) character throughout the Northwest and even further."

In addition to a first page sketch of Russell in disheveled riding gear, cigarette in hand, Olaf illustrated the second page with a rear view sketch of Charlie in his well-worn pants and an antelope in the same stance. This is followed by five sketches labeled *EVOLUTION* (via the Darwin Route) in which a paint cup holding a broom-like brush emerges into another rear view sketch of a straw-haired Russell, again holding the ever-present hand-rolled cigarette.

Nine months later, on the anniversary of Russell's death, Olaf wrote a more somber letter to Philip Cole illustrated with a watercolor of the natural stone used as Russell's monument.

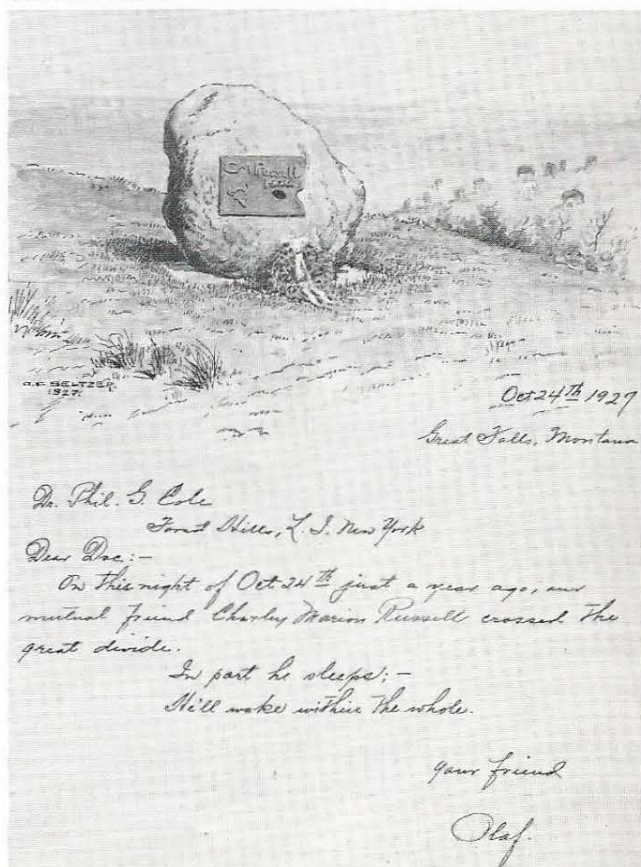
"Dear Doc — On this night of Oct. 24 just a year ago, our mutual friend, Charles Marion Russell, crossed the great divide.

"In part he sleeps: — He'll wake within the whole."



Olaf and Charlie

Memorial Letter





The Overland Stage



Medicine Man



Bead Worker

It has been the long-held view among some critics of Western art that O. C. S. was only a copyist of C. M. R. A prominent collector, when asked if he owned any Seltzers, used the term "Russell copyist" in his answer—but in the next breath admitted that he had tried to buy some Seltzers from the Cole collection before he learned it was to be sold intact.

Certainly both artists displayed a deep love for the open skies of Montana and captured on canvas the crystal clear atmosphere and subtle nuances of color change, of light and shadow over the prairies. Both revered accuracy in detail and strove to perfect each marking on Indian and mount, each trapping on stagecoach and freighter and the subtle differences in attire among the spectrum of characters which built the West. Seltzer picked up Russell's habit of sketching these characters and relating their activities in tiny vignettes below; eighty-five such watercolors were commissioned by Cole, and twenty-four of them are in a popular *Western Characters* print series distributed by Gilcrease Institute. On the whole, Seltzer's characters appear to be more finely delineated than Russell's.

It is not surprising that the copyist charge is made against Seltzer, just as earlier critics charged Russell with copying Frederic Remington. But Seltzer showed no more envy for his friend than Russell felt rivalry between himself and Remington. Both men were aware that their work matured in their contacts with other artists, and Russell welcomed many of the best known painters of the period to his home and his summer retreat at Lake McDonald. A major difference between C. M. R. and O. C. S. was that Nancy Russell failed in her attempt to have Charlie visit the famed galleries of Europe—a single visit in Paris was "a-nough" for him, according to Austin Russell's account—whereas Olaf, a European by birth, haunted the New York galleries whenever he was

there to pick up whatever he could learn from the masters.

The similarity of effect is beyond question. In 1937, when Seltzer was sixty years old and Charlie Russell had been gone for eleven years, Dr. Cole tipped off Olaf about a forgery attempt. He wrote:

"Within the past few days three paintings signed 'C. M. Russell' and dated—two of them I believe 1913 and one 1911—have been offered me for sale as beautiful examples of Charlie's work. Personally I am convinced that someone has been getting hold of some of your paintings and either changing your signature to that of Charlie's or possibly managing to get three unsigned ones and adding Charlie's signature."

"Of course, I don't know that they were painted by you, but I cannot think of anyone else except Charlie who could make such truly good paintings with so much good action, background, color, etc., etc. The dealers as a matter of fact raved over them!"

(Cole, 1937)

Olaf Seltzer never expressed any emotion except gratitude for his chance to be a friend of Charlie Russell's. He was seemingly content to stay out of the limelight focused on the more colorful personality of Charlie.

But he has left his distinctive mark on the art world. Austin Russell, in recounting fond memories of two Eastern artists who were regular visitors to Russell's Great Falls home and summer cabin, Bill Krieghoff, a portrait painter, and Philip Goodwin, who painted animals, recalls that "a generation later... I went through the card index in the art room of the New York Library. No mention of either Krieghoff or Philip Goodwin—two good artists, both New Yorkers, and nothing to show they existed!" (Russell, 1957)

By contrast, he also recalls walking along New York's 57th Street and suddenly spying some Seltzers, which he recognized by the coloring "even before I stooped close enough to see the name!"

A modest man, O. C. Seltzer must have felt overpowered on many occasions by the Russells' Eastern artist friends. His confidence in his ability as an artist is synthesized in a simple statement he often repeated to his family:

"If there is in my art anything of lasting value it will live. If not, it will perish!"

Cole, Dr. Philip G.

Letter from Dr. Cole to Olaf C. Seltzer, November 18, 1937.

Hansen, Halder M.

Letter from Mr. Hansen to the editor of *True West*, February, 1963.

Rubottom, Carter V.

"I Knew Charles M. Russell." *Montana Magazine of History*, Vol. IV, No. 1 (1954).

Russell, Austin

C. M. R. Charles M. Russell, Cowboy Artist, Twane Publishers, New York (1957) (p. 120).



Reservation Buck



Santa Fe trader, sometime doctor, adventurer, author, and naturalist Josiah Gregg was responsible for a number of our first and most reliable impressions of the lower Great Plains and the Southwest. We know that he was born in Overton County, Tennessee, in 1806 of one of those truly American families of the frontier that moved west from the eastern seaboard. He was a part of that restless movement through the mountains, across rivers, and onto the Great Plains. The Gregg family was from Pennsylvania, moved to Tennessee, to Illinois, and then on to Missouri where they moved twice before settling down near Independence. He was the youngest of his family and being in poor health, he was spoiled, and turned his efforts toward intellectual pursuits early in life. For those days on the edge of the frontier, he acquired a good education, having an early interest in medicine and the law. Because of his rather delicate health he was advised to make a trip out to drier, higher plains. In 1831, he made his first trip to Santa Fe, on this eventful trip, his health returned and over a period of the next nine years he was to cross the plains four times with large merchant caravans to trade American dry goods and hardware for Mexican silver and mules. His activities were not limited to New Mexico, and he traveled far into old Mexico. He was responsible for a new trail, which later was to become the route traveled by those making their way to the gold fields of California in the late 1840's. In the spring of 1839, Gregg gathered a caravan in Van Buren, Arkansas, and made a trail across Indian Territory to New Mexico. This route was to provide his animals with the early spring that the more northerly trade route did not have. By taking this southern path, Gregg managed to get to Santa Fe a full month ahead of his competition.

JOSIAH GREGG

On these long treks across the plains, Gregg put the many hours of slow travel to good use. His bright and inquisitive mind was taken up with his insatiable note taking. He would take notes on the lay of the land, water, soil, trees, grass, Indians, the attitudes of those he met, and almost anything that struck his fancy. From these voluminous notes, four years later was to come his well-known *Commerce of the Prairies*, which appeared in 1844 in two volumes. The book was well received by the public and was the first account of the Santa Fe trade and was to become a classic of early reporting on the Great Plains. It was also the first report of the natural history of the area and although it was written by an amateur, it was surprisingly accurate. The Gilcrease Library has two copies of this rare book, sixteen letters to his brother John concerning business and trade plus several memorandum notebooks.

In the Spring of 1846, he joined General Wool's army in San Antonio for the march to Chihuahua during the Mexican War. After some months of service with Wool, Gregg arranged a transfer to a regiment of Missouri volunteers under the command of Colonel Alexander Doniphan, which was on its way to Saltillo. In this Mexican city, Gregg was to involve himself in a trading venture and also to establish himself in a medical practice. In his early years he had studied medicine at the University of Louisville and had been awarded an honorary degree in medicine, but had not practiced until his arrival in Mexico. He was very much at home in Saltillo, but the need to pack up and move on resulted in his 1848 departure from that city. His last adventure started in 1849, and he arrived in California, and traveled to the mining camp on the Trinity River. There he was commissioned to lead an expedition across the mountains to the coast in search of a long lost bay, which would cut the time spent on the long overland trip to San Francisco. Along with seven men the exploration party was to meet disaster and great suffering on their crossing the Coast Range. They were not to find the lost bay, and in an effort to get back to the mining settlement, Gregg died of exposure and hunger at the age of forty-four.



C.M. Russell, *The Attack on the Wagon Train*

March 7th

The following are excerpts from notebooks containing the record of Josiah Gregg's last trip from Santa Fe to Van Buren, Arkansas, in 1840. His return that spring covered the time period from late February to April, but only the middle part of his journey—during March—is recorded here.

Tonight encamped in front (south-east) of the Cerro de Tucumcari, 4 or 5 miles distant, having traveled until the last day and a half on the route the wagons came in last summer, and until this evening on a cart road made by buffalo hunters; but from this ahead we will be without road.

The following is an estimate of the courses and distances which I have kept from San Miguel: To Ojo de Bernal (called by traders San Miguel Spring) East 6 miles, thence to Ojo de Los Chupaines E. 35°S. 20 miles—thence to Gallinas (or Turkey) creek 10 miles E. 10°S.—thence E. 40°S. 15 miles to a watering called Esteros (of Pecos waters)—thence E. 30°S. to waters of Colorado called Cuerbito—15 miles—then to

another branch of Rio Colorado called Pajarito 12 miles E. 7°N.—thence to Laguna Colorado made by a small branch, East 10 miles,—thence E. 10°S. 15 miles, to water on head branches of Arroyo de Monte Revuelto, thence E. 25°N. 12 miles and encamped on same creek tonight. [Note: Took latitude at last night's camp and found it to be 35° 2½']

As the young grass is beginning to shoot, our stock will eat but little corn; for the first appearance of spring grass sets animals crazy—they will leave all other food to seek after the few sprouting shoots, which begin to peep out of the ground. A horse or mule will thus almost starve with abundance of corn lying by him. Therefore, to force them to eat, we resolved on forming a *large corral*, in which to pen and feed



Currier and Ives, *Life on the Prairie*

March 8th

them. The usual *corral* or pen is formed by running the fore wheels of the hind on wagons to the hind wheels of the next before, until they close behind, leaving an oval area in the centre. This area would contain at least 500 head of mules; but to allow them a still more ample space, the large *corral* is formed by running the tongue or guide pole of the hind wagon to the hind wheel of that next ahead of it, and tying up the vacancies with ropes—closing behind and leaving an oval area as before, but of more than double the capacity. Animals thus shut all night with their food are forced to eat a sufficiency for a sustenance. They are here, too, much more sure than when tethered without.

Came 8 miles E. 38°N. 7 miles and encamped on same creek—good road.

Yesterday at noon the grass took fire from our camp; but as the wind blew back, it gave us no uneasiness, but as we were catching up the wind turned toward the east, and it was with difficulty we could get out of the burning prairie. We however extricated ourselves from it and thought we were done with it; but this evening as our wagons were descending into the valley of the creek through some tall grass which grew on the hill side, the fire overtook them (having a heavy wind astern) and they were only able to keep out of its way by striking a long trot, until they reached a spot of shorter grass, where the fire progressed slower. Here we halted and set out fires, and then drove our wagons into the burnt

ground; for fire burns so slowly back against the wind even through tall grass, wagons can be driven through it with safety; whilst on the opposite side when carried by the wind it would often (particularly in tall grass) set both wagon and team in flames. Thus these prairies of dry grass are quite dangerous; for if it gets a start in a gale of wind, it is impossible to extinguish it, and as much so for the wagons to keep out of its reach. The only remedy therefore is to burn a place ahead, which serves as a refuge: or if a fire approaches from the windward whilst encamped, we must set out fire against it; thus burning a narrow strip around the wagons and extinguishing it before it gets under headway.

March 10th

This morning about 6 miles east of Cañada de Trugillo—or Salt Creek—a handsome bright running small creek. The water is quite salt, and all the rocks projecting out of it are covered with excellent calcined salt. Breakfasted here. Caught up about 12 o'clock, and drove about 7 miles same direction to another branch (with water but not running,) which joins the preceding—then about E. 25°N. 3 miles to water in some holes in a ravine (but not lasting) and encamped.

Between 12 and 1 o'clock (at night) I was suddenly aroused by the firing of guns, and immediately heard from the guard the cry of "Indians! Indians!" which was terrified by a savage yell which we heard around camp—mixt with the shrill sound of a species of whistle used by the Pawnees and the croak clattering of Indian tongues. All hands were immediately on foot and prepared for defense. Fortunately our mules were all penned within the wagons, else we might have lost some of them! [Note: This to my surprise did not happen.] My two riding horses only were tethered without, one of which broke loose and made his escape back down the road of the first fire. [Note: I am convinced the Indians did not get him, although we could find nothing of him.] The other was saved by the bravery of a Mexican servant called Antonio Chaves, who ran out in the midst of a shower of balls and brought him in. At the same time our sheep and goats fled in an opposite direction, but we were enabled to follow their trail and find them next day.

But to return to the battle: We immediately commenced firing in the direction we heard the Indians, but it was quite dark; for it commenced clouding about this time, and soon began a mist of rain and snow. We therefore could not discern a single object, and could only shoot at the noise or the flash of their guns. Fearing no danger, we had been careless in pitching our camp. The head wagons were within 40 or 50 yards of a small hollow with some holes which contained water. The Indians had slipped up the hollow, which with the assistance of the

obscurity concealed them from the guard. They thus gained these holes, the banks of which afforded them a breast-work about a foot high behind which they lay, and kept a continual fire upon us for about two hours. I once thought of driving them out of their fortification by a charge; but it was opposed by some of our party, alleging that by the light of our fires, the Indians would be able to see and shoot every one of us, whilst we could not see one of them until we were upon them; moreover as we would be apt now to charge very regular, those behind would not be able to distinguish those ahead from the Indians, and thus we would be in danger of shooting each other. [Note: As the night was cold, the guard had built large fires of dry cottonwood around the camp:—Guards should never stand by fires—although it is too often done—for it gives an enemy every advantage of them.] This was all quite true; and so we remained within our wagons, and kept firing at the flashes of their guns until we worried them out of their holes. We know not if we killed or wounded any of them. Of our party a Spanish boy, Nacifor Palacio, was shot through the side of his hand—being but a slight wound. Also an Italian named Giovanni Elmini (John Elmini), received a more serious wound, a ball passing through the top of his head, deep enough to leave an inch of unbroken skin betwixt the two holes: but he seems to be in a fair way for recovery. This poor fellow had been nicknamed *Dutch* by the company, on account of his being a low heavy-set corpulent man—precisely the Sancho Panza of Cervantes;—not only in his bodily appearance, but Sancho only could equal him in eating: indeed this is the only thing he was good for. He always measured his meals, not by his appetite but by his *ventre*, which is a huge one. Therefore every day or two he was sick, as his stomach was unable to digest his enormous potions and as often had he to take purgatives to relieve his bowels. That evening poor John had reported himself sick: I immediately administered him a double dose of Epsom salts. From the commencement of the attack he was heard groaning at a

terrible rate; but no one paid any attention to it, as they only supposed him sick from the salts, as well he might be: but in the middle of the battle a Spanish boy came and told me that Dutch was wounded. I went to the wagon where he lay and asked him what was the matter. "Oh," said he, "I am shot!" "Shot! Where?" said I. "In the head," replied he, with his natural tone of voice. "Pshaw! none of that," said I, "you have only bumped your head against the wagon in your fright on jumping up." He still protested he was shot, but I could not believe it until I had lighted a match, and picking up his hat I found where a ball had passed through the middle of it, which testified to the fact. So I bound up the wound until the battle should cease.—We have not been able to find any place in his skull fractured: but I would ask, is it possible for a half ounce ball to pass under the skin without fracturing the skull!

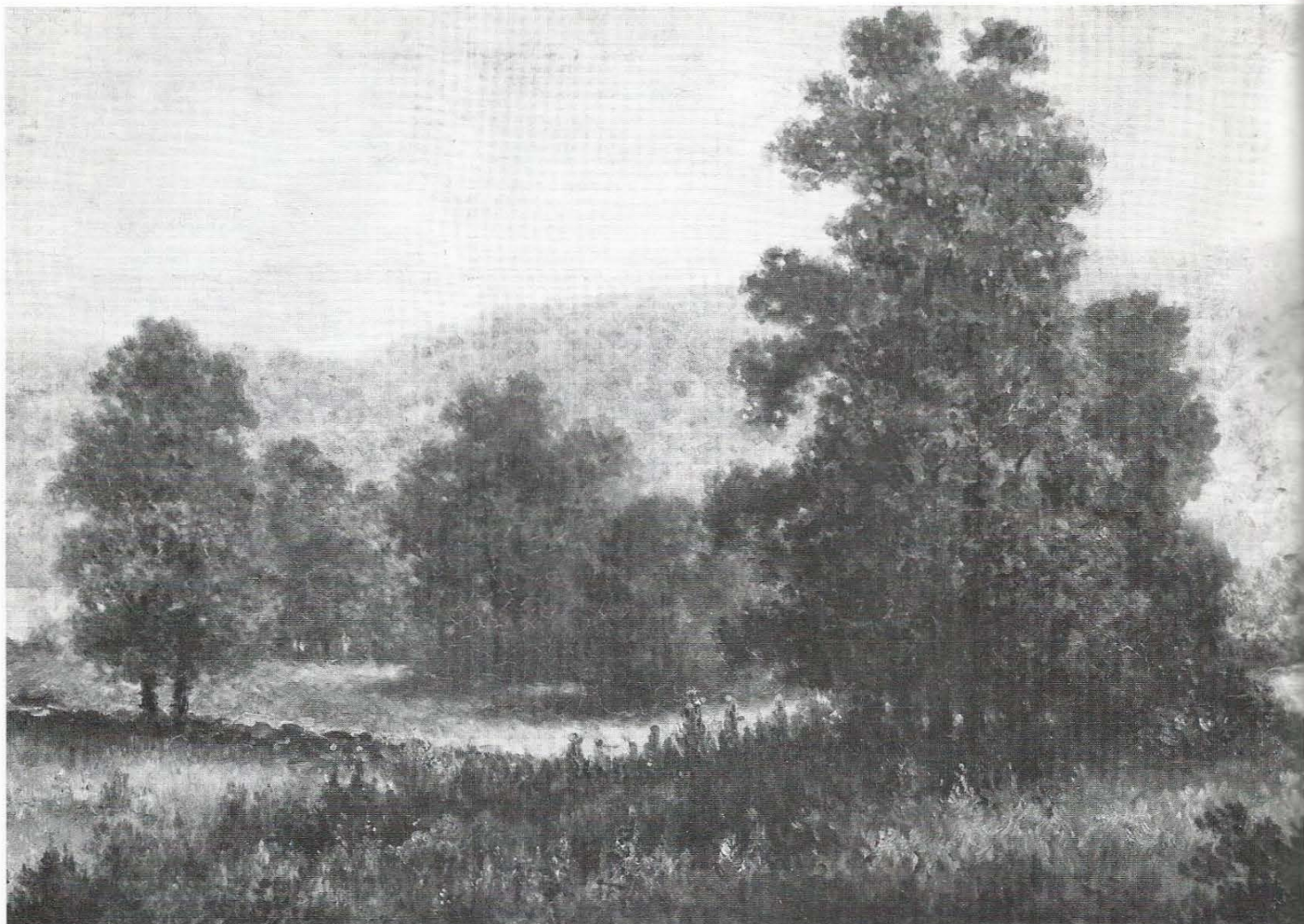
Some 20 or 30 balls were shot into our wagons, but we received no farther damage than the above, except one mule was shot through the hind leg, which caused it to break as soon as we started to travel, and we were compelled to leave it.

As soon as the attack was made our Comanche guide hailed them in his tongue, but soon found they were not Comanches, but Pawnees, as he understood a little of that tongue. Also their whistle, and the fact of their being afoot convinced us that they were of that most savage and marauding tribe. From the trail which we saw next morning we supposed there were not more than 50 or 60 of them: and I believe there were at least that number of guns fired at our camp.

Caravans are usually too careless in their encampments. They often (indeed most generally) encamp near enough the bank of some stream for it to serve as a breast-work for an offending enemy; but caravans have very rarely suffered any injury by it; still if a brave Indian force knew how to take the advantage of this impudence, they might much injure or even defeat large companies.



Arthur F. Tait, *The Check*



M.H. Lowell, *Morning in the Hills*

March 18th

Yesterday evening we had drawn out upon the high grounds supposing they would afford better road than the Canadian bottoms; but this morning after crossing Second Creek we perceived a sandy region ahead, which compelled us to turn in to the river again. (Yesterday we nooned about a mile south of the Canadian, and afternoon we started up its valley, but after traveling about a mile, we turned to the high grounds. I have no doubt we would have lost less time and distance by keeping to the river.) After having come 7 or 8 miles this morning, we nooned

on the Canadian bank. Course from yesterday's nooning about E. 35° N. which is that of the river as far as I could see up and down. Afternoon came about 10 miles down the Canadian bottom and encamped near the river. (Longitude of tonight's camp by observation of eclipse of one (No. 1) of Jupiter's satellites $101^{\circ} 27'$ to $35'$.) Course of river about the same as above. The valleys of the river here are variegated—occasionally firm, but oftener sandy or wettish, and in many places drips or small springs ooze from the sandy bluffs, which form perfect quagmires in the valley. These valleys are most generally covered by a coat of tall grass. We are compelled to encamp on a spot surrounded by dry grass as tall as a man's waist. If an enemy were to take advantage of our situation, they might

trouble us very much by firing this grass.

All the adjoining high ground on this side of the river which we have passed this afternoon seem to be quite sandy. Also opposite where we came to the river today on the other side, the high land appeared very sandy for some miles. The most of the opposite high lands which we have seen since we approached the river seemed to be table plains, bordered on this edge by a *ceja*, or *mesa*.

When we turned to the river, our Comanche guide assured us it was indispensable as there was no water in the high lands. This I am now convinced was an error from the number of stout



Will James, *Mule*

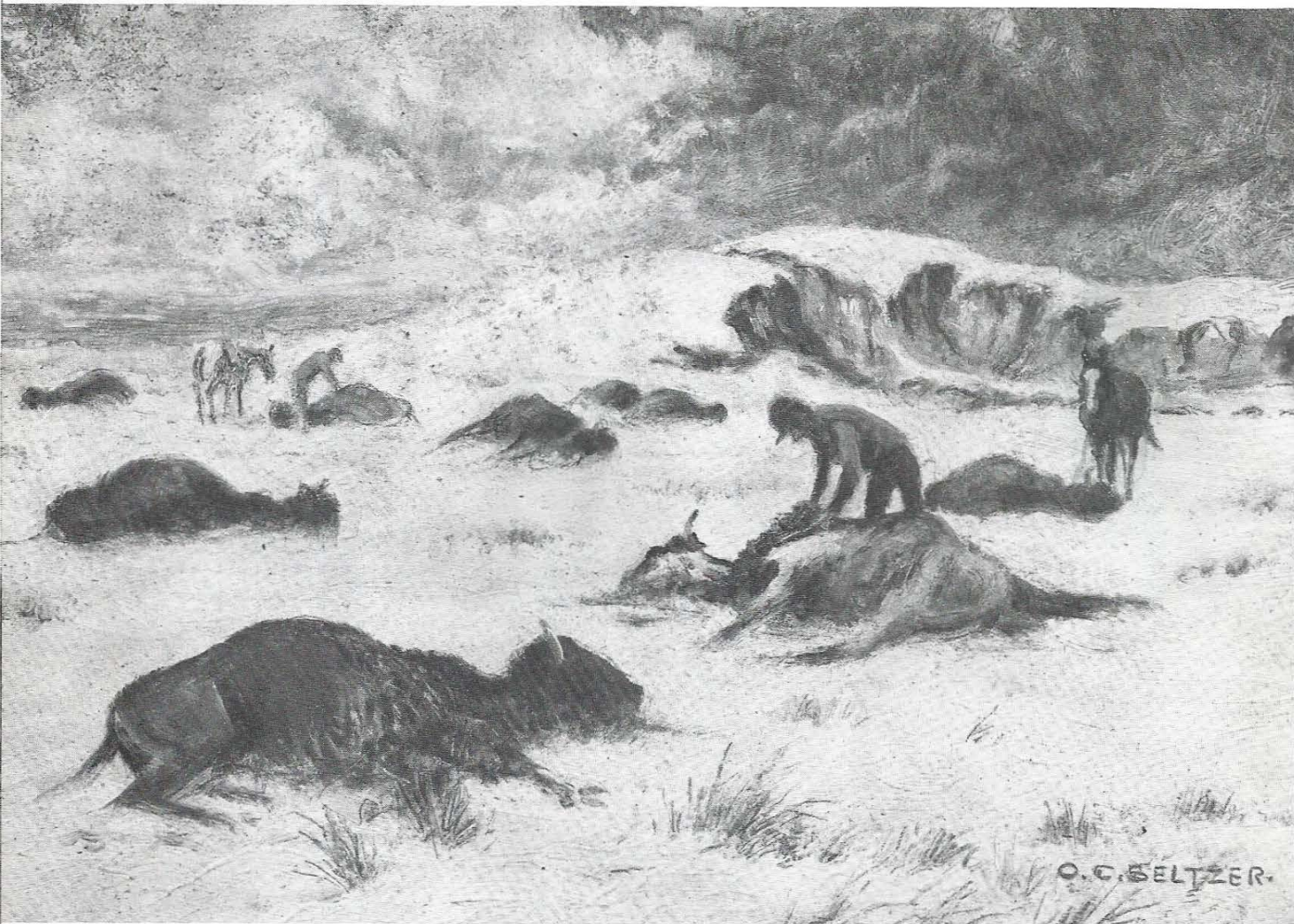
March 19th

running creeks which we have already crossed since we have been traveling down the Canadian Valley. However, if the plains farther back are as sandy as those which border the valley, it would be impossible to travel through them with wagons; and although the bottoms are a little sandy occasionally, they probably afford us the best route.

Shortly after noon we crossed a creek (larger than any of the preceding) which made down through a sandy region and which we call Sand Creek.

This morning our guide told us it was unnecessary to turn into the hills to avoid a quagmire at the mouth of a creek ahead. We found the high grounds here still quite sandy; and when we reached Quagmire Creek, we were a good deal troubled in crossing it on account of the mire. Oh, what mulish animals are mules! Many of these silly brutes, when they get their feet into sticky mud over the hoof, conclude they are mired and immediately fall down; and even when lifted up again they often will not stand, but quietly permit themselves to be dragged out of the mud by the ears or tail; and even then it is sometimes necessary to strangle them

to make them get up. From Quagmire Creek course about 8 miles (for directions) about E. 15° N. and encamped near the river. (Note: Nooned on Quagmire—having come about 4 miles, E. 25° N.)



O.C. Seltzer, *The Hide Hunters*

March 20th

Yesterday evening we broke a pair of wagon hounds and were detained this morning in mending them; so that we only made about 10 miles today. Course about east. Just after starting this morning, we passed for a mile or two a ledge of white sand hills, with but little vegetation upon them. After this the uplands seemed to be but little sandy. After passing these sand hills the *ceja* or brow of the plains commenced again, which had ceased from some distance before we struck down to the river.

Today a couple of our company were ahead, and seeing a gang of buffalo, they crawled near; then they shot down a cow. The balance took but little notice to it, moving but a short distance; so our hunters crawled up behind the

dead buffalo and shot a couple more; thus a hunter will sometimes kill half a dozen out of a gang before they take fright. I once saw eleven or twelve lying within view of each other, killed by a couple of hunters out of one drove; and they would probably have killed more had not the caravan approached and given them fright. In the evening I was riding some distance ahead alone, and observing half a dozen buffalo feeding in a glade of tall grass, I approached without being observed by them, and commenced shooting at them with Cochran's repeating rifle which I had. I fired six shots at them without giving them more fright than to give a jump and look around at every report; but as the grass concealed me, they would commence feeding again, all except the wounded, which though

mortally wounded, stand sullenly as though unhurt. (This is a peculiarity of these animals.) I ceased shooting and showed myself, when all fled except one which fell dead, and two others badly wounded. Those no doubt would soon have died had not some of our party approached and gave them chase; they fled and made their escape. A buffalo bull, though mortally wounded, if chased will run many miles, when if left quiet, would lie down and die in a few minutes. When irritated, they are extraordinarily tenacious of life. I have seen more than 20 balls (well directed) shot into an irritated buffalo bull, and yet he would not die for some time afterwards, whilst with one shot only, when quiet, they will frequently fall dead.

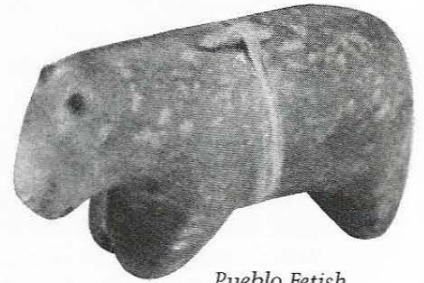
The American Indian North of Mexico

The history of the North American Indian is long and complex and has numerous gaps that will undoubtedly never be filled. There are many time periods and culture areas yet to be thoroughly explored. It is rather surprising, considering how small the population must have been at times, that so much is known about the Indians of long ago. One of the known facts is that these ancestral Indians first came to the Americas during the Ice Age and that before them, there were no humans in either North or South America.

It is assumed that these first Indians were hunters. The route they must have traveled any time they migrated out of Northeast Asia would have offered little in the way of food plants. However, even in the Ice Age, there must have been sufficient grasses or lichen to feed the animals they hunted. The chance that they lived on sea animals or fish is rather remote. The routes they traveled in their movements to the South and onto the continents is unknown.

The oldest material left by these people — that can be recognized at present — is in the form of projectile points and is found in the central part of the North American Continent, not to the north and west as one would imagine. This kind of early material found in the central Plains region was not to appear in western Canada and Alaska until later. This time lapse is referred to as Arctic retardation. In the last few years, older and older material has come to light in Alaska, but it is not certain that any of it was left by the first migrants.

A significant puzzle concerning these early days is that the Indian appears to have brought no style of stone projectile point with him from Asia. The oldest identified projectile points are those which were made by the Clovis people. They date back to eleven or twelve thousand years ago and are found over the entire continent except for Alaska, Canada, southern Mexico, and west of the Rockies. In the Plains region and in New Mexico and southern Arizona, these points were used to kill and butcher large Ice Age elephants; east of the Plains region the early Indians evidently hunted only smaller game.



Pueblo Fetish

An unusual feature of these Clovis points, and of the points of the Folsom hunters who came immediately after them, was that they had a large flake removed from each face at the back, to make them thinner. This was never done in eastern Asia. It is an American innovation and found on the *earliest* dateable points. Significant "finds" of these points are found in association with mammoths at Clovis in New Mexico, at Naco and Lever in Arizona, and at Dent, Colorado, as well as at two sites in southwestern Oklahoma and several other places. The points are plentiful in the east—including several variants—but are not found with elephants. How long Indians had been here and what type of foods they utilized before they began making Clovis style points is still a mystery.

About eleven thousand years ago the American elephant either became extinct or became insignificant as a food source. In Mexico, a few may have been hunted after this date but they seem to have disappeared from the rest of the continent. There are many theories as to why the large elephants became extinct. Perhaps the Indians killed them all for food, or fired the grass destroying their food, maybe disease took them or—more probably—climate change destroyed their habitat.

The Clovis point disappeared with the elephant and its replacement was a magnificent product of the *flint knappers' art called the Folsom point*. The classic Folsom point is confined to the High Plains region. It is not nearly so widespread as the Clovis styles, but like the Clovis, there were variant points east of the Plains. The classic Folsom points of the Plains region are found in association with the now extinct Ice Age bison, which is about half again as large as a modern bison. Although they undoubtedly utilized some vegetal foods, the Folsom period people, like the Clovis people before them, are referred to as Big Game Hunters. They lived from about eleven thousand until ten thousand years ago. During the age of both the Clovis and Folsom people, large parts of Canada were still covered with glacial ice, as were the mountains of Alaska. Ancestral American Indians were probably still migrating from Siberia across a land bridge into America.

The stage of culture following the Big Game Hunters is called the Archaic and began about ten thousand years ago. Actually the Archaic must already have been in existence west of the Rocky Mountains before this time with maybe a short Big Game Hunting culture preceding it.

The Archaic stage lasted a long time in the East—until three thousand years ago. In the West, it would continue in certain areas until the arrival of the Europeans. The Archaic differed from the preceding Big Game Hunters stage in that more importance was placed on gathering than had been the case before. As the Archaic stage proceeded, hunting became less and less important and the utilization of the total environment became more the custom. Hunting was never discontinued and, in some areas, remained a very important part of the economy.

Some anthropologists believe that the Archaic way of life spread into the East from the area west of the Rockies along a route through New Mexico and Texas into eastern Oklahoma and Arkansas from whence it spread to the rest of the East. Others think the particular aspects of the Archaic developed in both areas independently and were made possible by changes in climate—permitting a wider variety of plant and small animal life to develop in the areas involved. It should be understood when attempting to place beginning and terminal dates on the Archaic stage, that in the Plains region, a Big Game Hunting economy was practiced until sixty-five hundred years ago, thirty-five hundred years after it began to disappear over the rest of the continent. Big Game Hunting on the Plains ended circa 4,500 B.C. at the advent of a climatic period called the Altithermal. It evidently became quite hot and/or dry. The big Ice Age bison became extinct. This continuation of one stage into another is mentioned to exemplify the impossibility of assigning stage or period change dates to an entire continent. These Plains hunters are placed in the Archaic because they blended with the Archaic in the East and because they did use some implements such as grinding stones which are diagnostic of the Archaic.

As the Archaic progressed, a greater knowledge was gained by the Indians in the utilization of available foods, and seasonal migrations would place them in the proper area at the proper time to take advantage of what nature had to offer. This offering could be anything from shell fish to wild grasses, fruits, or nuts. The trend in styles of projectile points moved away from the long slender points used by the Big Game Hunters toward a more triangular shape. Slowly they learned to grind stone with other stone and ultimately to polish it so that we now have the very fine and tastefully executed bird stones and banners stones which they probably used for weight on their throwing sticks. They learned to drill holes in hard stone using an abrasive material and a reed.

Sometime during the latter part of the Archaic stage, Indians in the Southeast began to manufacture a fired-type pottery which they tempered with vegetal fibers. This pottery dates to 2,400 B.C. Here is the antithesis of the Plains Big Game Hunting. Pottery manufacture was not supposed to begin until the following Woodland period, Circa 1,000 B.C. It is clear that Indians gave no thought to future categorizers of their cultures. Nevertheless, the Archaic modes, for many thousands of years and with many regional variations, covered the entire continent.

The Woodland period which followed the Archaic in the eastern United States brought maize agriculture to the area. Almost as if by design, the Archaic people had increased their knowledge of plant foods. Perhaps they practiced some pre-maize agriculture before its arrival—to the point where they would readily accept this new crop. Also, with this period began the construction of rounded burial mounds—sometimes with structures inside—the widespread use of pottery and some of the



A. Keyenta Bowl, Northern Arizona (Classic Period) B. Stone Mace, Spiro Mound (Mississippian Period) C. Bow Drill Cap, Eskimo
D. Shell Necklace, Chumash, California E. Snow Goggles, Eskimo F. Banner Stone (Archaic Period) G. Clovis Projectile
H. Group of five Lithic-Archaic, Transitional and Later Archaic Projectile Points

finest ground, drilled, and polished stone works ever to appear among a primitive people.

The corn (maize) which was introduced into the area from Mexico was raised along with the varieties of wild grasses, and requiring — unlike the wild seeds they had previously gathered — care and attention. This precipitated a move toward a more sedentary lifestyle. It should be noted that agriculture offers better security from hunger than does the gathering of wild foods.

At this time, the second pottery tradition began. This time, the center of distribution was in the southern Great Lakes and New York State area moving soon into the Ohio River Valley. During the Woodland Period, pottery would spread over the entire East. The center of Woodland innovation was the Ohio River Valley for most of the period. The new stone works consisted of superb effigy smoking pipes and equally well-executed flanged pipes as well as many other fine works of art. Villages, though not well centralized and organized, came with agriculture. Later, secondary centers developed which outlasted the Early Ohio Valley Centers. In the extreme north and east of the United States and in the southern part of eastern Canada, the culture of the Woodland

Period lasted until European contact along with some overlay from the following period. In the Ozark region, Woodland tradition arrived so late that there is only a thin veneer to be found between the Archaic and the traits of the following Mississippian Period. The Mississippian Period, circa A.D. 600-1500, shows strong Mexican influence in both form and in style. The center for the distribution of ideas shifted to the southern part of the country to the areas which are now Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. Mound building continued but the shape of mounds and their function shifted to a truncated pyramid style and that of structure support. They also ceased to be used primarily for interment. The bow and arrow became prevalent (although they quite possibly arrived from Asia rather than from Mexico). Agriculture, along with a more sedentary life-style, was established too. As could be expected, government became more involved. Religion certainly appears to have changed and become more complex. It was probably closely involved with government. Centers of development and warfare both appear to have increased in importance. The latter may have been caused by the increased

importance of arable land. The population had escalated also.

The Mississippian Period reached its climax possibly between A.D. 1250 and 1450. When the Europeans arrived, only a few of the old Mississippian centers still existed. The Natchez group in Mississippi, as described by the early Spaniards, is probably a good example of the way things had been.

The Southwest (Pueblo) Culture area was not directly connected with these eastern events, but had a separate growth pattern of its own which, like the East, was influenced by events and developments in Mexico. The manufacture of pottery began on an Archaic Basin-Desert base a century or two before Christ. Maize found in the area has been dated two thousand years before Christ, but its potential evidently was not realized. In California, maize was known but it probably was not considered worth the effort in the land of such plenty. This could not have been the case in southwestern New Mexico where any agriculture would have been welcomed.

There were three major sub-areas of the Southwest: the Mogollon (or Mountain Culture), the Hohokam (a Desert Culture), and the Anasazi (or Plateau Culture). A fourth minor sub-area is found in western Arizona and adjacent areas known as the Patayan Culture.

The Mogollon culture of southwest New Mexico dates as early as 300 B.C. and of the major sub-areas, it was the first to begin and also the first to end. Although the Mogollon would grow through several phases by A.D. 1400, it disintegrated and its populace scattered, with many of them going to the north and some, perhaps, into Mexico.

The other culture of the Southwest was the Hohokam. Some scientists believe the modern Papago are descendants of the Hohokam's initial phase and that migrations out of Mexico were responsible for the more elaborate phases which earlier had carried Mexican ball courts as far north as Flagstaff. Others think the Hohokam were migrants from California who met with Mexican influences and built a very advanced agricultural economy in the desert. The Hohokam is called the Desert Culture. Whoever they were, they developed an irrigation system, parts of which are still usable. But they, like the Mogollon, either went back to California or to Mexico—or perhaps the Pima and Papago actually are their modern descendants. The fourth sub-area (found in western Arizona) failed to achieve the complexity or distribution of its neighbors to the east. It was, however, influenced by them. By A.D. 1500, the fourth area appears to have broken up. Their modern descendants might be the Yuman Indians who are still in the area.

Most famous by far of the Southwest sub-areas is the northern or Plateau Culture called Anasazi—the Ancient Ones—by the Navajo. The Anasazi were responsible for Mesa Verde, Chaco Cañon, Navajo National Monument, Cañon de Chelly, Aztec Ruin, Lowery Ruin, and all the other spots in northern Arizona, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico which have helped

make the area a popular tourist attraction. Their history, like the histories of the Mogollon and Hohokam to the south, is divided into periods which can be segmented and dated. First, there were the San Juan hunters and gatherers who extended in time from the Big Game Hunting stage of ten to eleven thousand years ago until about the time of Christ. By A.D. 200, they were identifiable as Basketmakers who were still without pottery, houses, or agriculture. But by A.D. 700, they had all three and were henceforth classified as Pueblo Indians.

Before the Spaniards arrived there were several Pueblo periods: I, II, III (the Classic), and IV. Some students call the post-Spaniard Pueblo Period the Pueblo V phase (some have even added a VI or VII).

The Pueblo pottery grew from a crude, sometimes unfired ware (or the San Juan region and the late Basketmaker period), into the fine wares one can buy now at San Ildefonso or other existing pueblos. With dendrochronology (tree ring dating) and all the archaeological work that has been done since the late 1800's, the Anasazi culture is by far the best documented culture in America north of Mexico.

California has been commented on briefly since part of the state belonged to the Basin Plateau and the Basin-Desert Culture with hunting and gathering still extant in the nineteenth century.

The Coastal California Indian had a relatively easy existence, with fish in both the ocean and the streams, as well as a plentiful supply of nuts and small game. Acorns were particularly helpful because the Indians had learned to leach and grind them into meal. When the Europeans arrived in northern California, the area belonged to the Northwest Coast Culture area. This culture area became rather well known, due in part, to its elaborate art forms and extensive use of carved wood and well-made baskets—not to mention their wooden houses and tall totem poles. It is thought that many aspects of the Northwest Coast Culture were late in manifestation and heavily influenced from the Eskimo to the north and possibly even from the Siberians. If many of the manifestations are late, others go back perhaps five or six thousand years and are found also up the rivers in the plateau and mountain country to the east. Both the Coastal and Riverine cultures grew out of an ancient base coeval with early Archaic or even Big Game Hunting stages in the eastern part of the continent. This ancient base is called the Old Cordilleran Culture, and is possibly eight to ten thousand years old.

Meanwhile, for six or seven thousand years without knowing it, the people of the Arctic had been overcoming any "retardation" they may have suffered. With considerable stimulation from Asia, after approximately 1000 B.C., they evolved into probably the most specialized culture of all time—the modern Eskimo. The culture area stretches from the Lena River in Siberia to the coast of Greenland. The Eskimo are not, *per se*, American Indians. So, perhaps we can give them credit for being the first to "discover" the New World.

