

PORTAL  
Arizona  
March 17  
1958

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Self-portrait

## DIGGING UP SKELETONS

Rustlers Park came by its name honestly through being used as a hangout by a lot of honest people.

Beginning back in the 1870s and ending along about 1902, just about every outlaw or rustler and probably a few honest men who drifted through southern Arizona spent some time there.

In those days when lightning fires burned up the fallen pine straw in accordance with the will of the Almighty instead of being put out by the present day proteges of bureaucracy, Rustlers Park was a veritable Paradise for hungry trail-weary animals. Wild oats together with about every other kind of forage indigenous to this neck of the woods grew in abundance. Where now you find nothing but pine straw to a depth of anywhere from a few inches to a few feet.

There is no one left who remembers which ones of the rustlers did it, but some of them built a drift fence of poles extending across the middle of the park from one peak to the other. When cattle and horses were stolen on the west side of the mountain, they were held on the east side of the fence and vice versa until they were prepared for market. Generally such preparation consisted of resting and fattening them, altering brands, and then finding a buyer on the opposite side of the mountain from where they had been stolen.

720 Curly Bill Broccius and his gang were credited by some with handling most of the stolen stock. Others contended that John Ringo was the kingpin of them all. There is now way of resolving that question at this late date, but it is safe to

assume that they both, along with the Clantons, McLowerys and a good many others of the same stripe have built camp and branding fires under some of the pines that are still standing in Rustlers Park. Parts of the pole drift fence were still in evidence as late as 1911. The reason we picked the year 1902 as about the time stock rustling as a big business came to an end is that that was the time when the presently much touted Arizona Rangers came into full bloom. Most of the old notorious boys had drifted on by that time, but there were plenty of younger sprouts following in their footsteps. When the Rangers were organized, a good number of these younger bucks were recruited into the service -- which might or might not have been a wise move on the part of the powers that were.

They were probably going on the old adage "send a thief to catch a thief", but it did go a long way toward breaking up the rustler gangs.

There were some honest men in the service, notably the three consecutive Captains -- Mossman, Tom Rynning, and Harry Wheeler-- and probably a few others but they were by far in the minority. It was utterly impossible for the captains to keep a very close watch on their underlings who were scattered throught the state, so the young thugs on horseback never had it so good. Beside having the authority to chase their erstwhile pals out of business and draw a salary from the state while doing it, they had ample opportunity to carry on their old trade and enjoy almost complete immunity from the law at the same time. Should they have been caught handling stolen stock, all they had to do to clear their skirts was to claim that they had recovered them from some other thief who had escaped arrest.

As one example of how the Rangers operated, when W. K. Morrow moved into Douglas in 1902, he brought sixteen head

of good horses with him, and within a week every one of them had disappeared. The theft was reported to Captain Rynning the morning after the horses were stolen, and the Rangers stationed at Douglas went into action. Before sunset they came in and reported that the horses had all been cracked into Mexico, which of course took them out of their jurisdiction as they had no authority in Mexico. The only one of these horses that was ever recovered was found several months later at Barfoot Park working in a logging team. The man who had him claimed that he had bought him from an Arizona Ranger and produced a signed Bill of Sale to prove it. No prosecution was instituted and the ranger involved departed for parts unknown, but some years later returned and lived in Douglas for a good many years. The Ranger organization only lasted a short time.

One of the last horse-stealing escapades known to have terminated in Rustlers Park occurred in about 1913. Bill and Frank Price and Rusty Tulk, all of the West Turkey Creek area, had drifted over near Steins Pass and gone to work for the Seven Twelve Cattle Co. Ol Mart Taylor was the Wagon Boss of that outfit. Some people still think that he was the real Billy the Kid and that the man killed by Sheriff Pat Garrett at Fort Sumner, New Mexico was just a phony. We will refer you to Buford Martin on that question as he knows more about it than we do, and get back to our horsestealing.

One morning Rusty rode away from the Seven Twelve Ranch, presumably to range brand some calves, riding the top horse of the outfit. When he didn't show up by the next morning, Mart Taylor took his two other hands, Bill and Frank, with him and set out on Rusty's trail. They discovered or remembered that Rusty had taken a pistol and a 30-30 rifle with him so they armed themselves accordingly.

The trail wasn't hard to follow as they knew the horse's tracks about as well as they knew the horse, and the tracks pointed straight for the high part of the Chiricahuas. They followed the trail right to Rustlers Park, but stopped just before they rode out of the timber into the clearing as they could see the horse they were looking for from there grazing out in the middle of the Park, but Rusty and his saddle were not visible.

After a short consultation, they decided to go to Paradise and enlist the services of Constable Mart Moore. They knew Rusty well enough that they didn't think he took the guns along to shoot chipmunks.

After they told the whole story to the Constable, he decided that he had a lot of unfinished business about everywhere except in Rustlers Park, and that it would be several days before he could possibly find time to go after the horse.

They didn't want to go back to the ranch without the horse, but they didn't feel quite up to going after him either as it looked like a sure thing that Rusty was camped out in the timber watching the horse in hope that they would come after him in person. So they took their troubles to Carson Morrow who was a bigger chump at age seventeen than he is now if that is possible, and paid him ten dollars to go and get the horse. Either Rusty didn't care to waste a cartridge on that big a damned fool, or his bravery might have faded out and he had simply caught another horse and gone on to Turkey Creek. "Pues, Quen Saves?"

#### TRES CABEZAS

Doctor Ted Schneirla of the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, came out to the Southwestern

Research Station a short time ago to study ants. He arrived at a very inopportune time for that business, as the only insect that could possibly have negotiated the weather would have been a Snow Bee. Undaunted, the good Doc loaded up a station wagon with shoe polish and other ant-cataching paraphernalia including Russell Clark, and headed out for Alamos, Sonora. The trip may have been unnecessary, since the way he was charging around preparing for it, forgetting this and deciding not to take that, indicated that he might have had ants in his pants before he even started.

We generally associate the State of Michigan with the manufacture of flivvers and other types of heavy machinery, but there seems to be exceptions. We have a pretty nice pair of spurs from that state here at the S.W.R.S. In fact we have two pair.

The Pa and Ma, Professor Stephen Spurr of the University of Michigan and his red-headed wife Pat, are the sharpest pair of the two.

The smaller pair are not very well matches for size. Dan is ten years old and attends the Portal school, while Jeannie isn't quite two and is as sweet a little towhead as you would care to meet.

The Professor has been teaching forestry for several years, and is out here now trying to learn something about the subject. He has a wonderful opportunity to learn how to denude the State of Michigan of all its forests if he will study the forest management that has been practiced here since 1905. That was the year the U. S. Forest Service took over, and they have managed since that time to let the underbrush choke a good part of the big timber to death and dry up a large portion of the springs and streams.

## DID YOU KNOW THAT

Mikey Murphy finally caught the mumps?

Mud River Newman bought a hearing aid from a psychiatrist?

Ralph Kimble and his partner showed most of those Pumpkin Picking Team Tiers the difference between ranches and railroads at the Douglas Rodco? Fred Darnell did some of the same for the calf ropers. Well, second money is better than nothing, ain't it?

Fritzie Roa spent a week end with the old folks, Archie and Ruth, recently.

Our correspondent, Sorrowful Sam of Manhattan Island, appears to be strictly a single shot reporter? Come again, Sam, we thought you did right well the last time. Or doesn't anything ever happen around there that is worth writing about?

It appears as though the Forest Service will have to employ mud guards instead of fire guards this summer?

Old rough tough cowboy Winkie Anderson is going to have his tonsils removed at the Douglas Hospital this week?

Uncle Mountain Gordon tells that our little sweetheart Karen is having tooth troubles? You had better have your old folks bring you back home, honey! New Jersey is no fit place for a mountain baby at teething time, or any other time for that matter.

Doc Pugsley is back from the hospital and feeling good? He says that he isn't quite up to either an audition or a demonstration, but is confident that by next Friday he will be bellowing like a three-year-old bull. He didn't say why he set Friday as the dead line.

VOCX POPULI

Rodeo, N.M.  
March 3, 53

Mr. Carson Morrow

Dear sir in closed \$2.00 for the Chiricahua Bull Sheet to be sent to Mr. L. R. Adams, 1518 R.R. Ave Douglas, Ariz. Mr. Adams is the Roadmaster between Douglas Ariz and Columbus, N.M. Mr. Adams was sec. 4man for several years. And not being a very Brito sec. 4man the company kneced a Roadmaster so they chase him. he was Reading the Bull sheet in my hamburger joint to day - and says to me Charley have that paper sent to me. he says that old cub is smarter than a Roadmaster. Best regards to the lady in oil city.

Hamburger Charley

SAN SIMON HEIFER DUST

by Manic Franklin

A short while back we had an occurrence at San Simon with all the earmarks of a real catastrophe. One Sunday morning the doors at Woody's were all locked, there was none of the usual hustle and bustle, and in the windows were signs that read:

CLOSED SUNDAY

Gas-line broke. Husband ran off with dish-washer. Betty broke her laig --- had to shoot her. They repossessed Mercy's car -- too far to walk to work. Some one flushed the toilet so we're out of water. SEE YOU MONDAY.

It sure sounded bad, but I'm now going to tell the truth about what really happened. The whole kit and caboodle played hooky. They went over and admired the sights at Colossal Cave, then took in the races at Tucson. Some of them even got took.

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Speaking of new cars -- Betty Newman recently became the proud possessor of a Model A. She never gets to drive it, however, There is a rumor that

Calvin even sleeps and cats in it, since he moved the chickens in with Betty and Lennie.

ATTENTION INJUN FIGHTERS! Bring along your old muzzle loaders and join the fun with the San Simon Rifle Club. Let's hope there's a doctor in the crowd. No one's been shot accidentally or otherwise as yet, but give them time -- they're just getting organized.

Folks around here aren't a bit happy about Bill Galbreath bringing back that Chevrolet from Phoenix. It doesn't seem natural to see Jean Ellen without her Buick. I hope she won't think her friends are hilgh-hattin' her when the truth is they just won't recognize her.

We're all surely glad Mrs. Schad came back to live in San Simon. She won't admit it but I think she would have missed us as we would have missed her if she had stayed in Yuma.

The cub wouldn't print my editorial about the roads around here because we had a main highway running through San Simon. We aren't complaining about the highway. None of us got to travel it much anyway. All of our gripes have to do with the condition of these county cowtrails we have to drive over to reach the highway. Since the new bridge on the road to Portal was completed, we have a bit of good road where the contractors oiled the fill on both sides of it. I notice most people drive over it slow and easy so as to make it last longer.

We're hoping to see all you good people at the Big Baile on the 22nd. Hasta luego.

(Manic, thanks a lot for getting back on the job. We won't reduce your salary for the time you was off. The Cub.)

HILTOP NEEDS AN HILDEEDS  
by Verna Nichols

Mr. Herb Fisher was a business caller in Safford for 2 days this month.

Mr. Nichols (Nick) has been confined to his bed with a bad case of the upside down mumps.

Mr. and Mrs. Nichols were business callers in San Simon and Willcox recently.

Alma Pague has been indulging in extensive carpenter work recently.

Alice Miller is so darn busy with her mail route that I cannot catch up with her long enough to find out what she is doing, but it all must be good or we would have heard about it by now.

Everyone up this way seems to have been bit by the same bug. We all seem to be spending all our time getting things ready for spring. I hope that we are not all just a little early.

Mr. Dixon had an accident the other day. He ran a stick into his eye while pruning the orchard. It is much better now. (That ain't the way we heered it. The Cub.)

White tail Canon was dressed in her finest winter splendor on Friday --- about nine inches of snow.

MOUTH OF THE CANYON

In the springtime when the grass begins to green up a little, the colts and the old nags alike begin to kick up their heels even before the loco gets high enough for them to nibble on. Our old friend Herman Kollmar got to feeling so coltish a few days ago that he turned a handspring in a pickup truck. The truck was banged up some and spilled the oil out of the crankcase, but as usual old Indestructible Herman came out of it smelling like a --- . Well, maybe not exactly like a rose.

It has been said that the pie like Mother used to make killed father, but MRS. HILDA GASTON says the kind of pie she is going to make and sell at the Coffee Pot Cafe in San Simon will cause father or anybody else to live a century.

Names don't seem to count for much but "Coffee Pot" seems like quite a come down from "Beulich's Pie Choppe". Why don't you call it "Hildas Mulligan Gun"? Or, since you are going to specialize in Spanish food, maybe "El Frijole SAVOROSO" would be more appropriate. By the way, if you want to start off with an onchilada supper, Scotty Anderson has several fat pups he would like to dispose of.

Just about all the upper crust of Portal society attended the Rodeo at Douglas on the 8th and 9th of this month. Miss Gale Lee and Miss Hazel Morrow of Tucson also graced the fair city of Douglas with their presence during these days.

Fred Darnell, the only participating cowboy from this part of the country, roped a steer by the head and held it for several minutes while his partner practiced roping at its heels. Another old cowboy from Willcox, who does most of his stuff on the Home Gas and Appliance Company tank truck, was right there among them. He didn't actually enter any of the contests, but boy he was all decked out in the approved garb and ready in case he was called. Old Bugass Red looks like the real McCoy when he stuffs his breeches down in his boots and pulls his shirttail out.

June Kimble was also in on the parade. She apparently had a job wagon bossing a bunch of old fashioned washer women with tubs and rub-boards set up on the back end of a truck. They seemed to be representing a mobilized economic depression or maybe a clean-up day at a goat ranch after the shearing was over.

Excuse us Please, Somebody said it was the Cow Bells!

Old Hamburger Charley Brown is determined to turn this publication into a matrimonial agency. In spite of our admonition to him in the last issue when we pointed out in no uncertain terms that he and not us was trying to get married, he up and wrote us another letter which he apparently hoped we would either publish or preferably forward to Oil City. The reason we think he wanted us to forward the letter is that he doused the envelope with perfume that smelled like a breeze emanating directly from the Ranchita in Agua Prieta, Sonora. Even Charley should know that we can't reproduce an odor like that on a mimeograph machine!

Snow, rain, sleet, wind, and ice! Whatever kind of weather you can name, we have had it during the first half of this month. The sun has even shown a time or two.

But we have had also over four inches of moisture altogether this calendar year, and in spite of the cold, the grass and woods are beginning to green up. The creek is running pretty and clear well out into the valley and the old woodpile looks like it will last another month. So everything is lovely and the goose hangs high in Cave Creek.

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The little fruit jar down in the Post Office makes us feel sort of like we imagine a kept woman (or man) feels, only maybe not so good. The money that has been so generously deposited in it by the good neighbors has surely helped out with paying the postage and we appreciate it, but would appreciate it more if you will in future contribute to the publication of the Sheet by some other modus operandi.

#### TRIPIST'S TYPE

The boss says that I can't let any space go to waste, and though I feel a bit like that thing on the front cover, I'll have to tell you why its raining so in Peralta.

Do you remember Joe Btschkix (or somebody like that) in Little Abner? Well, I'm his twin brother as far as Arizona is concerned.

First time I came this way was in 49. We cleared L.A. and headed east. No sooner did we hit the desert when the rains came. It rained three to four inches on the desert that day and we drove with the storm so saw thirty or forty inches of rain as we rec<sup>ed</sup> it anyway. At Gila Bend, seven Mexicans in a car ahead of us were drowned it a dip so we had to pitch camp there until the flood subsided.

Came February, 1958, and we headed east from Tijuana. The clouds broke as we pulled out of town and we saw Baja California into Mexicali in the steady drizzle. From Yuma on we pulled ahead into the dust storms but stopped at Gila Bend to tell them to batten down the hatches as we were back.

In 18 days since we've been at the S.W.R.S., its done something dark and wet on 15 of them. Every morning I wake up and tell my wife cheerfully that its all a delusion -- Arizona is really hot and dry. Maybe it's just me that's all wet!

Now we like southeastern Arizona just fine and would like to stay on. Only we need food for the kids and I can't ride a horse, rope a calf, or even find uranium. If only the ranchers would get together though and chip in a few thousand a year to keep me here, I bet I could bring on about thirty inches of rainfall each year. How about it?