PALOMAR MOUNTAIN
PAST AND PRESENT

By MARION F. BECKLER
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PREFACE FROM MARION BECKLER

For aid in gathering the material of The Palomar Story I wish to express thanks to the Curator of San Diego History Center for use of the museum files, to Mary Mendenhall Knox; Charlie Mendenhall; Louis and Hodgie Salmons; Adalind Bailey; Beulah Cook Gates; Elsie Hayes Roberts; Alice Tillinghast; James Avant and Max Hansen, State Park Rangers; Fredrick Gros of the University of Redlands, State Park Naturalist; Reverend Robert C. Fleisher, Assistant Director of the Division of Camps and Conferences, and Southern California Baptist Convention; Ralph Scott, Director of Baptist Camp; William E. Bougher; E. Edwin Reddy; Claude Huse; Mrs. Benjamin Moore; Ruth Leach Dunbar; Kenneth Beach; and Byron Hill, Superintendent of Palomar Observatory.

PREFACE FOR THIS REVISED EDITION

Thank you to Marion's son Stanworth "Danny" Beckler (pictured at left). Danny started going to Palomar Mountain at six months of age, and speaks fondly of his time there with family, at a cabin in the Crestline Camp Sites area, built by his father in the 1930s. Danny was pleased to hear about renewed interest in his mother's book, this re-publication and revision, and wished well to the Palomar Mountain community. This revised edition is considerably abridged, revised, and expanded from the author's original edition. Descriptive non-historical text whose subject is better covered elsewhere was removed. Author errors were corrected. Proper names completed, and photographs, and explanatory annotations (in square brackets noted with PB) were added. Corrections and clarifications are welcomed.

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THE PALOMAR STORY...

Up the "Highway to the Stars" tourists come each year to visit one of the world's greatest telescopes. Scientists come from all over the world to study nebulae billions of light-years beyond the rim of our solar system. An atlas of the skies has been produced here for the use of the world's astronomers.

Such is the greatness of Palomar Mountain. Such is its place in the scientific world. The 48-inch Schmidt telescope, where the National Geographic Magazine has mapped the universe, is not open to the public. The 200-inch Hale Telescope, where astronomers work every clear night analyzing outer space, has a gallery open to visitors every day of the year. The museum by the gate shows results of the astronomers' study.

There is also another side to the Palomar Story. There are fragrant woods where people come to picnic and to camp, the ancient Indian campgrounds, the old apple orchards, the mountain meadows where Mendenhall cattle still graze. There is the charm of the place-names, such as "Doane Valley," "Boucher Hill," "Nate Harrison Grade" and many others, commemorating the old-timers who have made the mountain's history.

PALOMAR MOUNTAIN, NOT "MOUNT PALOMAR" ...

As it is named on government maps and by the United States Post Office Department "Palomar Mountain," those who refer to it as "Mount Palomar" are incorrect. The misnomer seems to have started
with writers, referring to Palomar in conjunction with Mount Wilson which, like Palomar, has its great telescope owned and operated by California Institute of Technology. But, unlike Mount Wilson, Palomar is in no sense a mountain peak. It is a mountain range, a rolling plateau.

Geologically, Palomar Mountain rests on a granite block, twenty-five miles long, six miles wide. As we look down from Boucher Hill we see a vast country of ridges and depressions, running northeast by southwest, like the grain in wood. Five million years ago this country was a great flat plain; the cooling and cracking of the earth's crust produced these ridges and furrows. They are the series of faults responsible for lifting up mountains and dropping troughs or valleys.

Palomar Mountain is surrounded by these faults. Though the well known San Andreas Fault comes no closer than San Gorgonio Pass, on its course toward the Gulf of California, there is, along the mountain's northern base, the Agua Caliente Fault, and along the south the Temecula-Elsinore Fault. But Palomar, on its granite base without fault, is made invulnerable to earthquakes. For five million years this mountain, on its great granite base, has been rising, and is still rising.

FORMER NAMES...

This mountain has been known as "Paauw"; as "Palomar"; as "Smith Mountain." For endless centuries the Indian tribes knew it as Paauw. The name blended the idea of "mother" with "mountain." The First People's legends told how, in the beginning when floods covered the earth, Paauw rose above the waters and saved her children. This Paauw of Indian legend was the summer resort of the tribes of the surrounding country. When the snows melted and spring brought out new leaf and bud, the people, like migrating birds, returned to their mountain campgrounds.

Artifacts from Doane Valley  Robert Asher photo
Each tribe had its own campsite to which it returned year after year. Food on the mountain was abundant: bulbs, seeds, berries, deer and other meat, acorns.

While those busy Indian women ground acorns in those camps on Paauw, a great change was taking place in the land below them. No longer were their fellow tribesmen allowed to travel at will between the desert and sea. For up from the South had come the Spanish soldiers and dark robed padres. Now the deep-toned bells of missions were holding them. Finally, up Paauw's trails came soldiers on horses, obedient neophytes, padres. A mission was to be built down the River Keish, re-named San Luis Rey. They had come up the mountain for timber.

And now the Spaniards looked down off the Crest, down into Baja California whence they had come with so much toil and hardship. But from Paauw's tree-tops came the gentle cooing of the Bandtalled Pigeon, so comforting, full of peace. And they named the mountain "Palomar," "Pigeon-cot." For a century, the Spanish-Californians knew the mountain as "Palomar." It was after the violent death of its first American settler that it was re-named for him, "Smith Mountain." And so it was known for fifty years.

PIONEERS OF PALOMAR...

JOSEPH SMITH

Pioneering on Palomar was closely connected with the opening of the Butterfield Stagecoach Line. The road came in from the east to Warner's Station, crossed Warner's Ranch and passed north of the mountain, with stations at Oak Grove and Aguanga. Immigrants began coming in their covered wagons. There was a growing need for
supplies. Warner's Stage Station stood a mile east of the old adobe Warner Ranch house, then in ruins. For a few years before the Indians had come down from their village at the Hot Springs and had driven Warner out. This 27,000 acre Mexican land grant had been given to John Warner on his marriage with a daughter of the Pico family. But he had not dealt well with the Indians. So now he was gone, his great ranch had become the way-station of desert-weary travelers, who were passing through in ever increasing numbers.

Home of Joseph Smith, first man to make his home on the mountain. After his death the mountain bore his name Smith Mountain for half a century. Escondido History Center, Mary Mendenhall Knox photo

In the growing demand for provisions Joseph Smith, overseer of the Butterfield road, saw a business opportunity. He may already have visited Palomar and known of its good hunting and of its grass to be harvested for horse feed. The stage road had opened in 1858. Smith was living on the mountain in 1859. Joseph Smith was an ex-sea-captain. He came west in 1848 with Colonel Cave Johnson Couts. He was with Couts in the survey of California's southern border [PB: Cave Johnson Couts (1821-1874) and the Whipple Expedition]. In San Diego he took an active part in civic affairs and in boosting the town. Smith boosted and helped plan the first overland route, "The Jackass Mail." [PB: The San Antonio-San Diego Mail Line, organized and financed by James E. Birch, and awarded to Birch, June 22, 1857, with semi-monthly service.] When the Butterfield line started running, he was put in charge of keeping the roads passable and of watching out for bandits.

When the valleys of Palomar beckoned, he got Ephraim W. Morse of San Diego to go into partnership with him in starting a ranch on the east end of the mountain. Smith settled here in 1859, while San Diego was still in "Old Town," thirty years before Rancho el Rincon
del Diablo became the town of Escondido. [PB: Morse owned a general merchandise store in Old Town for several years, then went to Palomar to raise stock and farm, returning to San Diego in 1861 to re-enter business as a merchant.]

Joseph -- "Largo" or "Long Jo" -- Smith hired Indian labor and built an adobe house with a spacious living room which for years was the center of social gatherings. He bought Percheron horses, and built a road so steep in places that pioneers who came after him always walked up to save their horses, and chained their wheels going down to keep the wagons from rolling over the horses. [PB: French Percheron horses were imported in great numbers to America, being used by farmers and teamsters as draft horses.] Smith harvested the natural grass of his meadows. He stocked his ranch with cattle, sheep, horses, hogs. He thought of everything but filing on the land. Others followed Smith's idea of supplying the stage stations. Over in Malava (Mendenhall) Valley, John Place, former stage driver, built a cabin. West of Place, another driver named Wolfe settled. James Davis, father of Abel Davis of Valley Center, went into partnership with Smith raising hogs on acorns. George V. Dyche, a well educated man from Virginia, was living near the foot of Smith's grade, running cattle on Warner's Ranch.

For eight years things went well with Smith, till the day he drove to Temecula with a load of wool and picked up a hitch-hiker. The young man was a deserter from a British ship in San Diego harbor, but to the sociable ex-sea-captain he was someone to talk to "who spoke the white man's language." Smith took him home and made him ranch foreman.

The cause of the trouble between Smith and his foreman remains a mystery that still inspires sleuthing. Some have said it was over Smith's Indian wife. Some have believed the man thought Smith had gold hidden away and was trying to learn where it was. Others say they were "having a drunken argument" that ended fatally -- a usual thing in that day. The man was fleeing on one of Smith's horses when he ran into George Dyche coming up the grade. Dyche was suspicious and made the man return with him. He found Smith's body. Dyche sent for John Place. They took the man as far as Warner's Station. They intended to turn him over to the sheriff, but, as the story goes, they stopped to "imbibe restorative for tired spirits." And while they did so, their prisoner was taken out and hanged.

Joseph Smith had been prominent throughout the southland, and he had many friends. There is a story that he, in his seafaring days, had brought from China seeds of the "Tree-of-Heaven," that wherever he went he gave some of these seeds to his friends, and that the Tree-of-Heaven grew throughout the region. [PB: Tree-of-heaven, Ailanthus altissima, also known as ailanthus, Chinese sumac, and stinking sumac, is a rapidly growing, deciduous tree, reaching 80 feet or more in height, with smooth stems with pale gray bark, light chestnut brown twigs, and large compound leaves, with small, yellow-green flower clusters. It was brought into California mainly by the Chinese during the gold rush in the mid-1800s.]

Smith undoubtedly possessed charm, and his murder caused widespread indignation. And to honor his name the mountain was re-named Smith Mountain.
Known through the years as "Nigger Nate," Nate called himself the "first white man on the mountain." He doubtless pre-dates Joseph Smith. He was the first settler on the west end. His hut was not far from the road where there was a spring and horse trough. Here wagons stopped for water and Nate was always there with his cheerful greeting. He doubtless had lived there for around forty years when the west road was built in 1900. Before that time the mountaineers had used Smith's east grade or the more recent 1891 Trujillo Trail up the south side, paralleling more or less the "Highway to the Stars." So Nate's life must have been a very lonely one.

Nate told many stories about his past, all picturing himself as a runaway slave who had sought refuge in the mountain solitudes, not knowing for years after the war that there had been a war and that he was a free man. The truth about Nathan Harrison is to be found in the Southern California Rancher, issue of May 1952. According to that, Lysander Utt, grandfather of Congressman James Utt, came from Virginia to California during the Gold Rush, bringing one slave [PB: Utt was mining in Mariposa County, and farming/teaming in Placer County]. He was operating the Pioneer Trading Post in Tustin [PB: corner of Fourth and D streets] when California issued a decree against unpaid servitude. So Utt's slave, Nate, was a free man.

Utt's property interests on Agua Tibia probably brought Nate this way. He went first into the valley later known as "Doane," then moved below the snow line, built his hut, planted his orchard, and enjoyed the world as it went by.
After his death a monument was erected in his honor. People traveling that west grade -- a dirt road with the same hair-raising turns it started out with in 1900 -- will see that memorial where the spring and horse trough used to be, where old Nate once greeted folks with his jovial humor:

NATHAN HARRISON'S SPRING
BROUGHT HERE A SLAVE IN 1848
DIED OCTOBER 10TH, 1920, AGED 101 YEARS
"A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT."
ENOS T. MENDENHALL

The outlawry that followed California's Gold Rush spread over the Southland, shedding its lurid color on the Palomar story. Horse thieves, cattle thieves, wanted bad men who evaded pursuit were suspected of being in hiding on the mountaintop. What better place to hole-in and fatten stolen stock than Palomar's green valleys? For a posse who did not know the trails up the brush-covered slopes pursuit was impossible.

California's law enforcement agency saw the need of investigation throughout the Southland, and there was a man who had already proved himself in Secret Service (nee FBI of today) around San Francisco, working on Vigilantes Committees: Enos T. Mendenhall.

Mendenhall came south on government assignment in 1869. Among his friends who had already come south were Alonzo Horton, who was busy starting the new city of San Diego, and Sam Striplin, who was homesteading in Bear Valley. [PB: Valley Center was formerly known as Bear Valley] Mendenhall homesteaded near Striplin, by Pine Mountain, his place later known as the Melrose Ranch, and later as "Hidden Valley Health Resort." He called his house "The Hermitage."

His secret service work throughout the county soon brought him up Smith Mountain. Joseph Smith's murder two years before was still in the Southland's mind. And there had been a more recent murder on the mountain.
Enos T. Mendenhall, pioneer of Palomar or Smith Mountain, founder, in partnership with his son Sylvester, of Mendenhall "Cattle Kings"
John McDowell was living with John Place in Malava Valley. Across the valley and to the west lived ex-stage-coach-driver William Woolf. Woolf and McDowell had a vegetable garden, doubtless to supply the stage stations. They got into an argument, and arguments in those days seemed to prove fatal. As the story goes, McDowell shot Woolf "in the onion patch." When Enos T. Mendenhall rode into the valley, only Place was left. McDowell was gone and Woolf lay buried in the onion patch.

Anyone entering for the first time one of the mountain's beautiful valleys, rich with grass, watered by a perennial stream, closed in by wooded hills, may imagine the effect on Enos T. Mendenhall when he rode into Malava Valley. A man of vision, he saw the great possibilities for the start of a cattle empire. He wrote to his three sons to come south.

Enos T. Mendenhall was born in North Carolina in 1822. When a young man his family moved to Indiana and he became a "Hoosier Schoolmaster." In 1847 when the Henderson Lewelling wagon train started for Oregon from Salem, Iowa, bringing Oregon its first apple trees, young Enos Mendenhall felt the lure of the far west, and went with that wagon train.

Rachel Emily Mills
Mendenhall

In Oregon Enos met and married Rachel Emily Mills (Mills College commemorates her family.) The young couple came south and, with their baby daughter Elvira Ellen, were living in San Francisco when the tremendous excitement of the gold rush hit California. They moved up into the "gold country" and started hotels, one near Sacramento, one in Colfax, one in Grass Valley. Enos Mendenhall was also in the lumber business. When crime throughout that region became so great that vigilantes committees were organized, Enos T. Mendenhall was an active member. The loss of his sawmill and one of his hotels by fire was thought to be vengeance for his Vigilantes action.

Eight more children had been born to the
Mendenhalls. Two died. Those who lived were George Washington, Hannah Jane, Sylvester Jacob, Sylvinia, Thomas Dick, and Lydia Asenath.

When her husband came south, Mrs. (Grandma) Mendenhall did not come. During the years of raising her large family she had helped the whole countryside as nurse and midwife -- duties later assumed by the wife of Sylvester Jacob on Palomar. Now she preferred the comforts of the home of her daughter Lydia, who had married a man of wealth.

Enos T., George, Sylvester, and Dick all homesteaded and took pre-emptions on the mountain. Enos T. and George came south in 1869, and Sylvester came in 1872, then a baby of eighteen. He joined his father and brothers in hog raising, started by Enos T. as a blind while he carried on his secret service work. They also had dairy cows and sold butter at 72 cents a pound to the Stage Station in Oak Grove. [PB: Pre-emption means the settler was physically on the public lands property before the U.S. General Land Office officially sold or even surveyed the tract, and s/he was thus given a pre-emptive right to acquire the land from the United States.]

Sylvester, when he was 21, used his homestead and pre-emption rights in Malava Valley, northeast of John Place, and at the west end of the valley where Iron Springs Creek enters. George and Dick had returned north. A few years later Sylvester decided to return to school and finish his education, going to the College of the Pacific at San Jose. When he came south again, he brought his bride, Annie Elizabeth Morris -- a girl from Utica, New York. The young couple lived first on the Melrose Ranch where their son Sylvester "Charlie" Charles was born. Then they moved into their cabin on Iron Spring Creek where Lucius "Carl" Carlisle was born.

During the mid-1880s, when San Diego was having its great boom, they moved to the city and ran a cafe on Market Street. They were doing well but their sons contracted malaria, so they came back to the mountain. Thereafter, the Sylvester Mendenhalls lived on the mountain, raised their family, and, in partnership with Enos T., built up the famous cattle herds.

During the 1870's many other families had come and homesteaded on the east end of the mountain. In 1876 William Whitlock settled in the valley south of Malava, now Pedley Valley. In 1877 the Cooks came from Texas in a covered wagon, Jefferson "Jeff" Cook and his sons, William, Hiram M., and George W. Jeff, a widower, lived in Downey till he remarried, then came up and homesteaded in Jeff Valley. Will had homesteaded in Will Valley. George had homesteaded, and his home still stands under the poplar trees, north of the road through Dyche Valley.

Over north of Malava were the Joseph R. Barkers, in Barker Valley. In the east end of Malava were Isaac G. Burnett, Benjamin F. La Rue, and James Frazier. In the west were the Marion Smiths, the Johnsons, and the Newlins. James H. Waggoner had filed on the William Woolf place, and Augustus Kitching had bought out John Place. One by one these homesteaders, who had believed they could make a living on 160
acres of mountain scenery, sold out to Enos T. and Sylvester J. Mendenhall.

Sylvester Jacob Mendenhall and his son Sylvester "Charlie" Charles.
This cabin, where Sylvester Mendenhall's family grew up, was known originally as the John Place home. It was torn down when a modern home was built in Mendenhall Valley.
Smith's valley had become Dyche Valley. George V. Dyche had filed on the land, and had bought Smith's stock from the Wolfskill Brothers of Rincon del Diablo, who had taken over at Smith's death. [PB: Rancho Rincon del Diablo was a Spanish land grant. It wasn't part of the mission system, and so was considered unblessed, giving it the name, "the devil's corner." In 1868 the Wolfskill brothers purchased the ranch, reducing the cattle operation, and starting sheep ranching and agriculture (grapes, orange groves).]

The Sylvester Mendenhalls bought out Waggoner, and were living there when their third son, Edmund "Hap" Thomas was born. Then Mrs. Kitching, after a winter of seven months of snow, decided she couldn't take the mountain any longer, and so Augustus Kitching sold out to Mendenhalls. And here, in the original John Place cabin, with additions, lived the Sylvester Mendenhalls. Here were born Mary Elizabeth, George Frederick, and Annie Edith. Malava had truly become "Mendenhall Valley."

MISS NELLIE AND THE BEGINNING OF MAIL DAYS

Nellie McQueen's sojourn on Smith Mountain was comparatively short, but her name left a lasting impression.

Her father, Peter McQueen, a Canadian, led a wagon train west in the Gold Rush days. He and Miss Nellie opened a hotel, livery stable and store on the Box Springs Grade -- the old road between March Air Force Base and Riverside. They did a good business, but Smith Mountain called. They sold out, loaded their household goods on the old covered wagon, and came.

Nellie McQueen was "tough as raw-hide, wiry, real good looking." As she and her aging father drive up into Dyche Valley, past the George Cook home and orchard, we can imagine her sharp eyes appraising the pleasant scene, choosing the lush meadow to the south of the Dyche home -- where twenty years before Joseph Smith had been murdered. The McQueens built their cabin under those towering Trees of Heaven, sprung from seed brought from China by the mountain's first settler.

During those strenuous 1870s, when Smith Mountain pioneers were clearing their land, building their cabins, planting their apple orchards, they were having a long drive to Warner's Station and Store for supplies and mail. Whoever happened to be going, got the mail for everyone. So Miss Nellie saw the opportunity to start a post office.

Nellie McQueen postmark, 1912

She wrote to the office of Post Master General, asking for the post office, offering her name as postmaster. For the name of the post office she suggested "Fern Glen." According to the National Archives, Nellie McQueen got her contract on April 2, 1883. But the postal department turned down the double name, "Fern Glen." They gave the post office her name: "Nellie." Once a week, Miss Nellie, (as the
old timers called her) saddled her horse, rode down the mountain, up through Mesa Grande to Ramona, returning next day with the mail. George Cook sometimes assisted as carrier.

Soon after the coming of the McQueens, the Seiberns -- Miss Nellie's sister's family -- took up land south of them and planted their forty acre apple orchard. Peter McQueen died in 1882. In mountain vernacular, "he went out to milk the cow and kicked the bucket." The strain of postmaster and carrier proved too much for Nellie McQueen. After four years of it she moved to Diamond Valley, near Hemet, and the post office went to Seibern's, then to Bailey's. But still the post office was "Nellie," and it stayed "Nellie" for fifty years.

THEODORE BAILEY

With the coming of the Bailey's, Smith Mountain had its two pioneer families that brought it fame. The Mendenhalls were already known for their cattle business, and the Baileys were soon to build up a resort that would be a favorite vacation spot for all the Southland.

Theodore O. Bailey brought his wife and five children -- Nannie, Hodgie, Clinton, Milton, and Orlando -- in 1887 to live on the mountain. Their youngest, Elizabeth, was born on the mountain. Theodore was the youngest of seven boys. The family was descended from a fighter who had come over with Lafayette. In the Civil War, three of the brothers had fought on the side of the Union, four for the South. Born in Kentucky, Theodore had moved to Illinois, then to Long Beach, California, then to Mesa Grande where his brother Newton lived, then discovering Smith Mountain, he moved once more, and
homesteaded in the beautiful valley still widely known as "Bailey's."

They found the valley rich in soil and water. They raised potatoes. "All they had to do," says Mrs. Milton Bailey, "was lift the sod, put in a potato, and they harvested the largest, finest potatoes in the country. They sold potatoes, lived on potatoes, in those first years."
With the help of Indian labor they started their adobe house. This one-story home was almost finished when fiesta time arrived. This fiesta down at Pala has for years been the great annual event for the Indians. It was when the Baileys were building, and nothing could persuade them to delay one day and finish the house. They threw up the south wall and left. The Baileys moved in. It rained, softening the unseasoned wall. It fell. "Fortunately," says Mrs. Bailey, "it fell out, not in, or they would have been short their three little boys who were sleeping in that room." The fallen wall was replaced by a wooden wall, and later a second story was added.

It was well-known for many years as "Bailey Lodge." It is the home of Dr. Milton Bailey's widow, Mrs. Adalind Bailey.

Difficult as it was to get up the steep grades, people came for miles around by horse and wagon to enjoy the woods and the genial hospitality and fun at "Bailey's." "We never intended to have a hotel," says Mrs. Hodgie Bailey Salmons, "but people kept coming up and wanting to stay and eat, so what could we do?"

GEORGE EDWIN DOANE

George E. Doane shares honors with Nathan Harrison as the mountain's most colorful character. Before he came up to his government claim he had already won the distinction throughout the county of being "the hairiest person ever known in these parts." Quoting San Diego History Center files, Doane is remembered in his early twenties pridefully displaying in the old village of San Luis Rey a glossy brown beard "as big as a pillow. It extended lengthwise from the bushiest of eyebrows to below the belt. Nothing of his features was visible except a narrow band of forehead, a glint of blue-gray eyes and the bridge and tip of his nose."

A well-educated man from San Francisco, he came and, with his mother Nancy, took up the land known as Upper Doane and Lower Doane, now included in State Park.
George Edwin Doane

Doane's second quality of distinction was his love of "schoolmarm's." He would visit the schools, "looking in at the windows and scaring the children out of their wits." He is said to have proposed to every teacher who ever taught on the mountain in those early days.

There is a letter on file in the San Diego History Center which Doane wrote to the County Superintendent of Schools when asked to serve on the school board of this district:

Mr. Hugh J. Baldwin
Dear sir:
Your March fifth letter has just been received
I hope by my answer you'll not be aggrieved
Thanks for the tender offer of school trustee
I long to be great but would rather be free
You must over-rate my mental condition
I'm sure not the one for such a position
Because my old heart is too big for my head
Although it's too small for a schoolmarm to wed
When I meet one my heart tries to thump down my breast
I think more of her than the whole mob of the rest
If six should all write and apply for the school
I would give it to all. I'm just such a fool.
Whether I'm stupid or whether I'm smart
My head has no chance in a race for my heart
I hope you won't think this is said to amuse
And beg you will pardon and kindly excuse
Your friend, G. E. DOANE
Doane's cabin stood where the lower ranger's house now stands, built in the early 1880s.

Doane's romances finally ended in advertising for a wife, marrying a sixteen year old girl from Louisiana, and bringing her and her negro maid to his valley to live. [PB: the widowed mother, sister, and brother of Doane's wife came as well]. By then, the famous beard was gray.

**WILLIAM E. BOUGHER**

Boucher Hill, with its fire lookout commanding a view far beyond the bounds of San Diego County, commemorates the name of William E. Bougher (though spelt differently), pioneer of the west end of Smith Mountain. There is a grave above the road into State Park, with a fairly new marker: William Pearson. He had homesteaded in 1902, to raise bees. His daughter, Laura (Mrs. John) Reddy, and family came soon after and homesteaded at the north, beyond Doane; his son-in-law, William E. Bougher, and family made their home to the west of him.

Bougher built his house of logs and of lumber from the sawmill in Pedley Valley. He made his own shakes, two feet long, for the roof. Water had to be hauled from a spring in barrels on a sled. He built a cistern to fill with snow and supplement the spring water. Having built his home, he bought another 160 acres and planted an apple orchard.

His son, Ernest, had been born in Burbank. His daughter Ina was born on the mountain. When the West Grade road was built [PB: Nate Harrison Grade], William Bougher helped build it. In 1905, his
wife's health failing, Bougher moved to Rincon, and sold his ranch soon after.

William Pearson had already met his tragic death, killed by a falling tree. Beside him lay a ten day old grandchild, son of his daughter Laura.

The John Reddys, with their children, Walter I. and Loda, moved from the mountain in 1906 by wagon, first to Ukiah, then Turlock and to Canada, where John Reddy died. Walter Reddy made his home in Chowchilla, California, and his son Edwin lives in Modesto, with his wife and children, Stephen and Janice [PB: Walter Reddy 1889-1974; Edwin Reddy 1915-2002]. William Bougher died in Escondido, in the home of his daughter, Mrs. Ina Mabrey, at the age of ninety-two. The house he built on the mountain has been preserved by State Park as a landmark. One of the Southland's most important fire lookouts perpetuates his name.

SCHOOL DAYS...

When George Dyche's children and the children of Joe Dameron arrived at school age they made the required number for the opening of school. So the Malava School District was formed, a log schoolhouse
was built, and a Mr. Snow of Love Valley was hired as teacher. But, prior to the establishment of this public school, the residents had looked out for the education of their children.

Several homesteaders had located in the valley now known as Pedley. Among them were the William “Billie” Whitlocks. Mrs. Whitlock, formerly Mrs. Strong, had two daughters, Hannah and Anice. She, with her husband and daughters, had come west in a covered wagon from Indian Territory. Strong had run a Spanish Dagger into his knee, had suffered infection, and died when they reached Downey. Here Mrs. Strong had married Whitlock, and moved up onto Smith Mountain. Hannah and Anice Strong received their first schooling in Pedley Valley. It is probable that the Andrew Cook children attended the school, though this branch of the Cook family did not remain long on the mountain.

The Malava School, built in the 1870s, was east of Mendenhall Valley and northeast of Dyche Valley. The original log building was moved to make an addition to the George Cook home and a new schoolhouse was built. Lumber for it was hauled up Smith’s road -- dubbed "The Slide" -- by George and Hiram Cook. At that time the attendance averaged nine or ten children. There were the older Mendenhall children, the Frazier boys, Charles and Manning, Ida and Susie Cook, Emma Barker, and Manuel Dyche. There was no school at Warner’s so,
in those first years, the Hellums children came up the mountain for school, staying with the Cooks. In later years Malava School joined with Warner's to keep up attendance, having school in Malava until Christmas, and down at Warner's for the second half of the year.

A Mrs. Skaggs taught for several years in the old log schoolhouse. The first teacher in the new school was Mr. McGinnis, then a Mr. Titchworth, remembered for having an organ which he brought to school. A Mr. Ferris of San Diego's Ferris Drug Company, also taught here, and Birdie Robinson and Sue Justice. E. L. Richards, mentioned by Mary Rockwood Peet in her 1949 book, "San Pasqual, a Crack in the Hills" as a teacher in San Pasqual in the early days, completed the school term of 1879 or 1880. There is a story of a cowboy from a ranch near Warner's falling in love with one of the teachers. When she refused him he went and tied his lariat about his neck, threw it over the branch of an oak, and spurred his horse... He was found a few days later.

Palomar School in 1902. Children on the horse are Loda and Walter Reddy. Back row: Miss Cutler, the teacher, and Mabel Hindorff. Second row, left to right: Elizabeth Bailey, Mary Mendenhall, Herbert Smith, Elmer Johnson, Clarence Smith, George Mendenhall and Madge Smith. Third row, left to right: Milton Bailey, Orlando Bailey and Lemuel Clark. Front: Ed. (Hap) Mendenhall. [PB: Smiths are children of Marion Smith, of Smith & Douglass Hotel, now Silvercrest.]

George Cook married Hannah Strong and Hiram married Anice. Hiram and Anice lived in the Seibern House. The East Grade used to pass it,
winding through the apple orchard, much larger than when the Seibern's had owned it. Mrs. Beulah Gates of Escondido is the daughter of Hiram and Anice Cook, and has supplied much information about the Malava School.

In those days of horse-and-buggy travel, distances over the mountain roads seemed very great. The Bailey's found the distance to the Malava School much too great, and a school on their end of the mountain was applied for. So, in 1890, the Palomar School District was formed. An open-air school was started on Sunday School Flats, above Doane Valley to the east. There were the Bailey boys, Clinton and Milton, Bert and Minnie May Todd from Cedar Grove, and the Bates children, Terea, George, and Annabel. The teacher was Miss Breedlove.

This school was soon moved into the adobe house of "Lord" Allerton at Iron Spring. Then Enos T. Mendenhall gave land one-half mile from the spring and a schoolhouse was built. "It was built by the residents themselves," says Mrs. Mary Mendenhall Knox, "at a cost of $800." It is the only early school still standing. This schoolhouse was built at about the time the new school was built over in Malava District. Both schools had difficulties keeping up their enrollment. Malava's was down to five when Ulric, oldest son of George Cook, reached the age of four. To make the necessary sixth child for the opening of school, Ulric was "drafted." He felt very important! The Mendenhall children began helping out the enrollment of both schools.

And now the people of the mountain's west end demanded a school. They got it. Cedar Grove District was established. School was opened in the Pearson home. There were Ina and Ernest Bougher, Walter and Loda Reddy, Clarence and Madge Smith whose mother had died and they were living with the Clarks, and Lemuel Clark. Mrs. Clark was the teacher. The Clark home was on the present site of the State Park Picnic Grounds.

Later a schoolhouse was built on the Solomon Todd place, now Cedar Grove Camp. But, even with three schools, some of the mountain children had quite a distance to come to school. Walter and Loda Reddy rode horseback from over the ridge at the north of Doane Valley. They were terrified at wild cats and mountain lions, and they had to get off their horse to open and close gates!

Eventually, to keep Cedar Grove open, pupils were imported from the Children's Home in San Diego. And now the Mendenhall children did their bit by all the schools. One year Mary, finishing the term in Palomar District, went and boarded with Clark's to finish the Cedar Grove term, then went another month at Malava till it closed for the summer. George Mendenhall, like Ulric Cook, was drafted for school at the age of four.

The last pupils in those early schools were George and Annie Mendenhall and Clarence Smith. So many families had moved from the mountain that there were no schools for a number of years.

During the 1920s Carl Mendenhall was living in Pedley Valley and operating the sawmill. To accommodate his growing family a school
was opened at the head of Pedley Valley with Miss Marian Daniels of Coronado as teacher. According to Leona Mendenhall Bloomer, this school opened in the sawmill cookhouse, with Mrs. Daniels as teacher, for the school age children of the Linthicums and the Mendenhalls. At Christmas time, the Linthicum's house in Camp Sites burned, and with an average attendance of less than five, the school closed. There was no more school on Palomar for another decade.

School was opened in this building in 1948. It had been the mess hall for Observatory construction crews, and is now the recreation hall for the Palomar Mountain Club and for the Children's Bible Class. This photo was taken circa 1949, with John David Mendenhall in the photo. Marion Beckler was the teacher, and also drove the school bus; in her papers, she notes this photo as taken in the second year of this school.

When the construction work at the Observatory, and the building of the Highway to the Stars, brought families to the mountain, school was opened at the Observatory, with Mrs. Harley Marshall as teacher. With the end of the construction, this school closed. By 1947, children of the Observatory staff, and children of State Park Rangers had reached school age. And over in Dyche Valley there were the seven Jameson children, Dr. Mauri Jameson having bought the Louis Salmons ranch. School was opened, with Mrs. Jameson as teacher.

The three old-time mountain school districts had lapsed, long ago, and become part of the Pauma district. And the old-time horseback or "shanks' ponies" means of getting to school had been superseded by the automobile, with the teacher transporting the children from homes which in the old days had seemed so very widely separated.
Cal Tech donated the land for the present school, west of the Observatory grounds. The new school building was dedicated in September 1951 [PB: with Marion Beckler as teacher]. Members of Palomar's pioneer families attended the dedication program and contributed colorful reminiscences of early days. Mary Mendenhall Knox, telling about her school days, said, "We would start with the flag salute, sing America, have a chapter from the Bible and The Lord's Prayer... Spanking was done in those days."

Mrs. Hodgie Bailey Salmons recalled the names of some of the teachers... Alfreda Johnson, Miss Breedlove, Miss Anna Livingston... Mrs. Milton Bailey — who calls herself "an old-timer only by marriage" — accompanied the singing of the song that used to be sung at campfire gatherings of Bailey Resort: "Palomar My Mountain Home." Abel Davis, son of James Davis, who was in partnership with Joseph Smith "raising hogs on acorns," enlivened the evening with a bear story. (There were bears on Smith Mountain.)

Included in the enrollment of the new school was the great-great-grandson of Enos T. Mendenhall, John David Mendenhall.

TWO POST OFFICES...

After the Nellie Post Office was moved to Bailey's the east end people found it a long way to go for their mail. So they petitioned and got their own post office on November 6, 1896, at the Jessee place, in Dyche Valley.

George Cook had the mail contract in 1897 and James Frazier in 1898. By then the mail was coming from San Diego via Escondido to Rincon. From Rincon the carrier brought it on horseback up the Trujillo Trail [PB: south trail; S6, Highway to Stars area]. Eventually the Nellie and Jessee mails came up together to Nellie where the Jessee carrier picked it up. By 1904 so many people had moved away the Jessee Post Office was discontinued.

Two people connected with this Jessee Post Office stand out in the Palomar story: the strange preacher, William W. Jessee, and the tragic Maria Frazier.

William W. Jessee had gained a wide reputation through the west and midwest for his summer camp meetings. He had built a pleasant camp and attracted many people to his "Holiness Meetings." But, though his preaching may have been good his practices seem not to have been so good. "At one of his summer camp meetings," says Mrs. Louis Salmons — always enjoying a laugh over the old times — "Jessee raised funds to start an orphanage. When the camp meeting was over and his patrons had gone home he drove to San Diego with the funds. What he came home with wasn't hungry orphans but a nice load of potatoes."

Then it was learned that William Jessee was selling Hereford calves in Los Angeles. Jessee wasn't raising Herefords. Mendenhalls were. So Sylvester Mendenhall went to Jessee to ask him where he was getting them. "Herefords?" the preacher said, benignly, "The Lord is providing them." "He is not providing Mendenhall Herefords!"
Mendenhall retorted. He called a meeting of the mountain residents. William Jessee was offered a price for his place and so many hours to leave.

On the Highway to the Stars, a few curves below the spring, is Frazier Point. One of the buildings still remains of the Frazier sisters' winter home below the snow line. From here, each spring, they would trek back to their ranch at the east end of Mendenhall Valley, with their stock, a distance of nearly ten miles. Maria was tall, gaunt, weathered from hard work, preferred to walk rather than ride her horse. Miss Lizzie was crippled from arthritis. After the painful trip back to the home ranch she would resume her housekeeping, moving about on a chair, while Miss Maria attended to the outside. There is still the floor of the house, and the stove where Miss Lizzie made biscuits and other good things remembered by the Mendenhalls as children. ...And there is still the old apple orchard on the hillside, and the old well, filled in -- the unmarked grave of Maria Frazier. [U.S. General Land Office records have their names recorded as Lizzie and Mariah Frazer... PB]

In the early nineties James Frazier had sent east for his mother and sisters to come and live with him. But before they reached here he had married a widow with two sons. The new arrivals went to live in the old Wolf cabin, then they homesteaded in Barker Valley. When James Frazier died they moved into his house at the east end of Mendenhall Valley. At the time of her coming to the mountain Maria Frazier was a handsome young woman, with personality and sparkle. There was a romance and she would have married, but Miss Lizzie opposed it.
Miss Maria began carrying the mail for the Jessee Post Office in 1898. She had the long, difficult ride up the Trujillo Trail. Later she had only the ride to Nellie. Even after the Jessee post office was discontinued she rode to Nellie for the mail.

The Carl Mendenhall family was living in Mendenhall Valley. The road to Dyche Valley passed the Frazier sisters' apple orchard. Mrs. Mendenhall had not seen Maria Frazier passing to get the mail from Nellie. She worried, knowing no one had been along the road past Fraziers. Her uneasiness grew. Finally she rode over to see if anything was wrong. Four days ago Miss Maria, exhausted from trying to corral some fractious calves, had come into the house and dropped down on her bed. Miss Maria had been dead four days! The neighbors came, and buried her. Miss Lizzie was taken east to relatives. Not long after, Mrs. Mendenhall received a letter: "Miss Lizzie died," it said, "while eating her breakfast."

THE PASSING YEARS...

This mountain that has gained international fame through its great telescopes had become well known early in the 1900s through its two prominent families, the Mendenhalls and the Baileys.

The many homesteaders who had been drawn to Smith Mountain by the beauty of its wooded hills and valleys had been unable to make a living here. Enos T. Mendenhall had seen it as cattle country, and his vision had proved right. Eventually, homesteaders had to get what they could out of their holdings and move away. Eventually the Mendenhalls owned 11,000 acres of the mountain's beautiful valleys,
for their cattle range, purchased from homesteaders. This had not been easy. During the 1890s cattle had sold at 2 cents a pound. They thought it was wonderful when they got 3 1/2 cents and 4 cents was very special. It wasn't until the family was grown that they got 7 cents. "All those years," says Mrs. Knox, "we were buying a place here, another place there, borrowing money to pay for them, never out of debt until just before father got sick and had to leave the mountain." During those years the Mendenhall boys had all gone through college.

The home at Potrero [PB: Cuca Ranch] was built on land bought from the Trujillo Mexican Land Grant. Winter pastures at the foot of the mountain had been bought years before. When the banks were closing during the 1880 depression, Enos T. gave the bank in Escondido gold money he had in his safety vault to stop the run on that bank. From that time on either he or Sylvester J. Mendenhall could get any money they needed on personal notes. Enos T. died in 1904. He and Sylvester had been partners throughout the building up of the cattle business. When he died, Sylvester bought out his share from his mother and sisters. He and his sons had become the mountain's "Cattle Kings." In 1920, if you went for a hike in Doane Valley you went quietly, and you were careful to leave gates just as you found them. For in Doane, as in many of the other beautiful valleys were sleek Black Angus grazing, and your permission to be there depended on your not startling them.

In 1920 this mountain and its post office became officially Palomar Mountain. Many people had worked hard to get back the original Spanish name. For half a century it had been called Smith Mountain, and the Post Office from its start had been Nellie. "It was always a joke," Mrs. Salmon says, "when it was mail time we would say, 'It's time to go see Nellie', or 'Let's go call on Nellie'.' "Nellie" for many years was at Bailey's. But when government examination for postmaster was instituted, Dr. Milton Bailey did not care to bother with it, while running the resort. Esther Hewlett, though only in her teens, took the examination and became postmaster.

Esther already was winning fame collecting butterflies. Her specimens were sent to collectors all over the world. She was called "The Butterfly Girl." Her discovery of a moth -- an albino apantesis -- a yellow moth with black markings -- led to its being given her name. Esther Hewlett for many years has had an art shop at the mouth of San Antonio Canyon above Highway 66 and below Mount Baldy. Besides her activities with butterflies she has originated crochet patterns appearing in women's magazines.

[PB: Now known as Grammia hewletti or Apantesis hewletti, Esther's moth was originally described as a new variety of ornate tiger moth, Apantesis ornata hewletti var. nov.]
The scientific description includes Esther's observation that the color variation between wild caught moths and her cage-bred moths is probably due to moisture differences. The common name for Esther's moth, if such a name would be used, would be Hewlett's tiger moth, and its range is now known to extend as far north as Sonoma County. See: Barnes, William and McDunnough, James Halliday. Contributions to the Natural History of the Lepidoptera of North America. Decatur, Ill., The Review press, 1918. Volume 4, Number 2, page 88 and plate xiii, figures 3 and 4.

The Hewletts, when they came to the mountain, had bought the Old Mack Place -- now Phillips', with its fine apple orchard bordering State Park. When the Hewletts moved away they sold out to Alonzo G. Hayes -- "160 acres at $10 an acre, house thrown in but extra for furniture..." (quoting Elsie Hayes Roberts).

The Hayes family did not stay on the mountain the year 'round, their daughters, Alice and Elsie, being in high school. So the Nellie Post Office was again at Bailey's. Then Elsie Hayes married Jack Roberts and they came up to stay. They named the place "Planwydd" and ran a resort.

Mrs. Roberts became Nellie's postmaster, and she joined the vigorous fight to get the name changed. She says, "A relative in Wisconsin knew the post office had a girl's name but he couldn't remember what. So he made a guess and addressed his letter to 'Anne, California'. It reached us."

Mrs. Roberts was postmaster from 1918 to 1922. The struggle to be rid of Nellie succeeded in 1920. So for two years she was postmaster of Palomar Mountain Post Office. Both the "Nellie" and "Smith" of pioneer days belonged only to the past.

When Mrs. Roberts left, the post office went to the Linthicums, near the present Crestline Camp. Linthicum was post master pro tem for about a week when his cabin burned. "The loss of the wall case and files was rather serious," says an oldtimer, "but we were all glad to have the post office back at Bailey's. And the old wall case was antiquated and not much use, anyway."

There have been years when nobody bid for the post office. "In 1912," Mrs. Hodgie Salmons says, "we ran the post office for free, just to keep it running, going down to Rincon to pick up the mail." But most of the time for about sixty years the post office was at Bailey's.

And during those years mail day held a special place for mountain residents. Three times a week they gathered to visit while the mail was distributed -- waiting for that "come and get it!" The moving of the post office in January 1958, marked the close of an era. The flavor of the old times vanished. The old Post Office stood, under a huge black oak. In the early 1900s this building replaced a much smaller one, this one having replaced a "cubbyhole" in the Lodge.

Dr. Milton Bailey had become postmaster when very young, and when, in 1913, he married Miss Adalind Shaul, she became acting postmaster. The resort was then in full swing. When Dr. Bailey died in 1942, Mrs. Claire Bussman took over the Lodge and the Post Office. But two years later Mrs. Bailey returned to the mountain,
resumed her work as postmaster, and with the help of her sons, Steve and Newton, reopened the resort.

Old Post Office at Bailey's on Mail Day. People came and visited until Mrs. Bailey called “Come and get it.”

Among her unusual experiences she recalls the 1948 winter of the "Big Snow." "I couldn't get from my house to the Post Office. There was soft snow over my head. And no one could get in for their mail. It was just stacked and left."

That same year, on August 30th, the Palomar Mountain Observatory commemorative stamp came out and "this Post Office was dragged from obscurity into the lime light." At a special ceremony in the Observatory she was an honor guest. She was escorted to the platform and introduced to Dr. Lee A. DuBridge, president of Cal Tech, and to Samuel R. Young from the office of Postmaster General in Washington, D.C. Mrs. Bailey retired on December 31, 1957. Commemorative of the old days, there were still in the post office two canvas money sacks with the label, "Nellie, Calif."
Wayne and Shirley Thompson, at Summit Grove, succeeded Mrs. Bailey as Postmaster.

One day at Bailey's, while we were waiting for the mail to be distributed, Mrs. Salmons said to me, "When the snow is gone we'll show you 'Miss Nellie's'. It's still standing."

It was the year of the "Big Snow," when snow covered all of San Diego County and six feet of it fell on the mountaintop and stayed from January till May. A number of cabins were crushed under its weight. I was delighted at the prospect of seeing our historic post office.

so, early one June morning, I drove over to the Salmons. For years they had owned all of Dyche Valley. Recently they had sold out to Dr. Maury Jameson, reserving eleven acres overlooking the country below, for their beautiful new adobe home.

Louis had come in the 1880s from New Mexico and had married Lucinda Cook. She had died, leaving him with five small daughters. When he married Hodgie Bailey she had been living in San Diego, working in Ernstine's Jewelers as diamond cutter. In her later years Mrs. Salmons had turned to art and had become well known for her beautiful Palomar landscapes.

It was a perfect morning when they took me to see "Miss Nellie's." The road was an alley between fences. On our left was what remained of Seibern's apple orchard. Ahead, on our right, was the George Cook place, the house hidden in poplars and the ancient orchard. Louis opened two gates, then drove through fields of ferns, window high. On the hillside above us, nearly a century ago, Joseph Smith had built his house. We drove down into a meadow, walked through lush grass toward a clump of cedars. Here was where "Miss Nellie's" had been. But the heavy snow had crushed it. What remained of its timbers lay hidden under the bracken.

Mrs. Salmons pointed toward the east end of the meadow, toward a group of towering trees. "Old Joe Smith's 'Trees of Heaven'," she
said, "from seed he brought from China!" So the trees still grow, commemorating that lusty sea-captain's charm. As to Nellie McQueen, the small, energetic first postmaster who brought mail service to this isolated region of the early days and gave her name, unwillingly, to the post office -- may she be long-remembered for her courage and endurance. Nellie Post Office was as much a part of the old time mountain scene as the beauty of the woods, the deep blue of the skies and the closeness of the stars.

THE BEACH BROTHERS...

The site for the observatories was purchased by the California Institute of Technology in 1934. This included government land, Mendenhall land, and the ranch of William and Kenneth Beach. The brothers had come up the mountain at the close of the First World War, in 1918. Old time friends of the family, Edward F. Charnock and Frank Garrison, had homesteaded in the early 1900s, and now the land -- three hundred twenty acres -- was theirs. They had come up to find it.

Their father was a pioneer doctor in Los Angeles, Dr. George H. Beach, with his office near the now-famous Plaza. Bill Beach was a college man, a mining engineer. Kenneth had not yet finished high school. It was the spring of the year when they drove up Nate Harrison Grade, a road not built for automobiles. Their big Chalmers boiled all the way. They made it to Bailey's and stopped to ask the way. Theodore Bailey got horses and took them to the old Charnock & Garrison homestead. No one had been there for years. There was no road beyond French Valley. They found the ranch, with its one-room cabin a little way east of where the Astronomers' Lodge is now. Bill and Kenneth returned to Los Angeles, bought two colts, an old mule, and a wagon. With a load of supplies they started back to the mountain.

Those who have traveled the west end grade will remember the two spots where the mountain slopes level off somewhat, named by the oldtimers Little Tin Can Flat and Big Tin Can Flat. The brothers spent five days getting to Big Tin Can Flat. Here the old mule died and the colts had sore feet. They took the colts to Escondido to be shod. Again they started up the mountain. This time they took their load in relays. With as much as the colts could pull up the steep climb, they would go some distance, unload, go back for more. Load, climb, unload, return for more, until they finally got all their goods to the top.

The road at that time dropped into Doane Valley at about Cedar Grove, then down into Lower Doane and up the steep climb to the north, into French Valley. From here, there being no road, the brothers, with mattock and spade, cut their way through heavy brush and made one.

Bill and Kenneth Beach spent that first winter in their one-room cabin. They built a barn, making their own lumber with whip-saw and pit. They plowed the whole area where the observatories stand. They planted corn and citrons and raised pigs. Others before them had found that farming on Smith Mountain did not make a living. Kenneth
began working in summer for the three resorts -- there were three at that time -- and going to school in winter. He ran the stage to San Diego for Bailey's.

Bill Beach married a schoolteacher. He built a log house near the present schoolhouse. The green house at the edge of the schoolyard, used by astronomers when they bring up their families, was built from his barn.

The Beach brothers had been on the mountain twenty years when the scientists of Cal Tech began taking Palomar Mountain seriously as a location for the great telescope. They set up a complete weather station and Bill Beach made observations and kept the records. Scientists came up every week for checking and testing. The second summer students began coming up to observe visibility.

It was impossible now for Bill Beach to leave his post, however low supplies might get in winter. Kenneth was then working for the California Title, Insurance and Trust Company. He made a practice of keeping tab on the weather, and when it seemed likely that the Bill Beaches were snowed in, he would drive to Aguanga, pack supplies on his back and climb up the north side of the mountain -- a most difficult trail through high brush. The scientific observations were continued from 1928 to 1934. Bill Beach kept a log of the people who came up to check on his observations. It includes many notable names, such as George Ellery Hale for whom the great telescope was named.

Observatory construction, 22 September 1937

During these years Table Mountain in Arizona was also being considered as the telescope site. Table Mountain's visibility was found to be about equal to that on Palomar. But its vulnerability to earthquakes set the decision against it. Palomar, on its great granite base, is unique in its resistibility to earthquakes. Years before, Theodore Bailey had noted the mountain's clear air and had talked of its perfection as a telescope site. And now, long after his death, the scientists made it their choice. The Beach property, on the desert side of the mountain, away from the clouds that drift in from the Pacific over the west and south areas, had proved itself to the astronomers.
The first settlers in Pedley Valley seem to have been among those who did not remain long on the mountain. The valley was finally homesteaded by Thomas J. “Tom” Powers and was known as "Powers Valley" when Enos T. Mendenhall's old friend, Samuel Striplin, came and bought out Powers. Sam Striplin started the sawmill, which supplied lumber for many of the mountain cabins. The old sawmill boiler is still rusting away, and the meadow at the east of the valley was known for many years as "The Old Bull Pasture," for it pastured the sawmill oxen. [PB: Samuel Striplin, wife was Priscilla. Samuel Striplin and William L. Wilhite brought lumber down from their Palomar sawmill to provide building materials for the growing towns of Valley Center, Escondido and San Diego. Striplin lost the sawmill during bankruptcy proceedings.] The Pedleys [PB: Frank and Stell Pedley] bought out Striplin.

The "Old Bull Pasture" is now owned by Charles and Jean Darby of La Jolla, who are starting a resort. [PB: Darby's Palomar Mountain Resort, in operation during the 1950s-1960s.]
The area known as "Camp Sites" [PB: now Crestline] was started in 1921 or 1922 on land owned by Mrs. Elizabeth Bailey, widow of a cousin of the Theodore Baileys. Later, in 1923, Carl Mendenhall was the official agent for an additional subdivision of the adjoining Pedley land. This also was called "Camp Sites" [PB: According to Leona Mendenhall Bloomer, about 1923, Carl Mendenhall and Reid Wallace subdivided forty acres, built roads, and donated land for a store and restaurant. 1924 to 1926 were boom years with many lots sold, cabins built, many parties, and dances twice a week at the Camp Sites club house or at Baileys. The Depression halted this boom period in Palomar vacation home real estate.]

But when the 1920 subdivisions were made, they were for camp sites. Occasionally there is an outburst among the early cabin owners to have the name "Birch Hill" restored, but nothing comes of it.

There are between 100 and 200 cabins on Camp Sites, owned by people of San Diego, Escondido, Oceanside, and other neighboring towns.

To start the project, Pedley gave land for a well and Ralph Tillinghast, resident of the area, contracted to dig the well. William R. Wallace built the reservoir. Jefferson Stickney, lawyer, incorporated the Water Company. Then the first cabin owners got together and raised a fund for the building of a clubhouse. Ralph Tillinghast, who was operating the sawmill, supplied cedar logs and sawed lumber of cedar and fir, and a fine community house was built. Stanley Davis built the fireplace. Then Lawyer Stickney incorporated it.

This clubhouse was the place of evening gatherings for people of the community. They walked from their cabins with lanterns which they placed about for light. They visited about the big fireplace, or they danced, and they sat out on the porch with its view of all the vast country and cities below.

By 1930 the Clubhouse had fallen into disrepair. Mrs. Tillinghast says, "You could see outdoors through the chinks in the walls." Then heavy winter snow broke down the roof. Mr. and Mrs. George Shupe of Murrietta leased the building, the incorporated treasury was drained for repairs, a kitchen and lunch room were added. The Clubhouse became "Edgewood Tavern."
Most of the cabin owners were up for the summer in 1934 when fire roared up from La Jolla Indian Reservation. The Camp Sites people fled for home. Firefighting crews came from as far away as Riverside. Many cabins were burned. All of Camp Sites seemed doomed. The devastation of that fire is still in evidence, from the eastern ridges of Camp Sites to Bailey Lane.
In 1947, Mr. and Mrs. Art and Mildred Koenig of La Mesa bought the old Clubhouse, added bedrooms, found the sign, "Edgewood Tavern" down a canyon where children had slid on it in the snow. They opened a hotel: "Skyline Lodge."
BAILEY'S

Much of the former Bailey Resort has been subdivided and sold for cabin lots. Many of the families who used to come up to enjoy the summer in the resort come up now to their cabins. There are Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Beach and family. The Arthur Thompson children, Barney and Timmy and Kathy, make the fourth generation of the Van Rensselaer and Couts families. (Nan Van Rensselaer-Couts used to be hostess when Dr. Milton Bailey was operating the Lodge.) And there is Mrs. Elsie Roberts and her daughter's family, the Charles Beishlines.

On Saturday evenings there is dancing in the old lodge dining-room. Mrs. Adalind Bailey, a charming hostess, is preserving the tradition of the once famous "Bailey Resort."

STATE PARK

When a State Park on Palomar was under consideration, the granddaughter of Enos T. Mendenhall, Mary Knox, put this plea, in part, before the Escondido Woman's Club: "Let us think of the future history of Palomar, hoping that some day...the people of all Southern California will realize that this is the natural playground...with thousands of acres available; that they will obtain it for a park; make it a game refuge where the deer can be
free to feed without fear...where Palomar's own wild pigeon will settle down at eventide unafraid; where all may go to rest, play, or picnic."

Purchases of land for a State Park were started by the State of California in 1932. 1724 acres, then 40 acres more were added, making the total of 1,764 acres. This area included the homesteads of William Bougher, William Pearson, Solomon Todd, and George Doane, and others who had played their part in the Palomar Story. And Mrs. Knox's hopes for a place of recreation for the people and a refuge for wildlife has been realized.

CITY-COUNTY CAMP

This area is leased from the State by the city and county of San Diego. The buildings were originally the Palomar Civilian Conservation Corps Camp. When one of the CCC buildings burned it was replaced by a modern administration building.

This camp was started in 1949 as Palomar Youth Camp. Each week a group came up from a city or county school. [PB: currently called Palomar Outdoor School.] A similar camp had been started on Cuyamaca. Edwin E. Pumala of San Diego was Executive Secretary of the two camps. Russell Davies, camp director of Palomar, explained the objectives of the camp projects, saying, "There is no cut and dried program. Instruction is upon any living problem that may come up, and includes the proper use of all public facilities, manners, care of the camp. The first excursion for a group is usually to the telescope. Always included is a hike up Boucher Hill Lookout where watershed is studied and Claude Huse instructs the teenagers on fire prevention and control."
To this City-County School Camp come groups of about 100 students each week, Monday to Friday. When school term is over the San Diego Police Department rewards the boys of the Junior Patrol with a week in Camp.

The last of the summer, ending on Labor Day, is the time for "Family Camp." Of this, Davies, the first director, said, "The modern recreation centers tend to divide families into age groups. The objective of Palomar Camp is to correct this."
BAPTIST CAMP

Baptist Camp borders State Park on the west [PB: current name is Palomar Christian Conference Center]. The first camp held on the original camp site located on Pauma Creek was a Boy Scout Camp, June 17th to July 1st, 1933. This was on the first fifteen acres donated by Robert H. Asher, and was directed by Rev. Robert C. Fleisher of San Diego.

In January 1945, Mr. Asher sold 100 acres of his land to the camp, to be added to the original camp. Then in the same year, in August, George Sawday sold 160.91 acres to the camp. At Mr. Asher's death, his will provided that the balance of the land he owned should be given to Baptist Camp, bringing the total to 320.91 acres. The first building of the Camp, the administration building, has been named in Robert Asher's honor, "Asher's Lodge."

Church groups of various denominations come up throughout the year to enjoy beautiful Baptist Camp. Besides the dormitories, there is a kitchen and large hall for dining, for church services, or entertainment; and there is a fine swimming pool.

Robert H. Asher, the first donor to Baptist Camp, lived on Palomar for over 35 years. He built his hut over Pauma Creek. To make his living he gathered and sold various medicinals such as cascara bark, foliage of red-bark, jimson weed from which chemists obtain a substance for dilating the eyes, asparagus plumosa ferns and many bulbs.

Asher had been a pioneer nurseryman in San Diego, and had come to San Diego with Alonzo Horton, Father of San Diego. He was considered
the best informed man on the county history, was well informed in horticulture, geology, and mineralogy. He was a talented artist.

PALOMAR'S TWO FIRE LOOKOUTS

Palomar Mountain is included in the Cleveland National Forest, and the state forestry and the national forestry work in close cooperation. For the detection of fires in the entire southern counties, the U.S. Forestry maintains the Lookout on High Point, and the State Forestry maintains the Boucher Hill Lookout [PB: neither are currently operational].

Boucher Hill Lookout is one of the primary fire lookouts, the others being on Mount Woodson, near Ramona, Tecate Peak near the Mexican border, and Red Mountain near Fallbrook. In case of fire anywhere in the county, two or more lookouts get the direction and phone their findings to the main office in La Mesa.

The present Boucher Hill Tower was built in 1949. It replaced the old tower built in 1934. It is open during the entire fire season which varies with each year, opening in May or June, and closing after the rains begin in fall or winter. During the months of fire-hazard the lookout man is on 24-hour duty. He works ten days then is off four days, replaced then by the supply man.

This tower is open to visitors, and many thousands visit it each year. Claude Huse, promoted last year to a forestry position in Riverside County, was on duty in Boucher Tower for twelve years.
The federal stations serving this district are on Santiago Peak in Orange County, Lyons Peak near Jamul, Cuyamaca, and High Point on Palomar. The altitude of Palomar's highest point is 6,137.7.

High Point Lookout

The High Point Lookout is not open to the public. It is a forty-five foot tower with an exposed stairway, with a trap-door at the top, into a room 6 1/2 feet square.

Here Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin (Benny) Moore share the 24-hour duty during the entire fire season. They have no "supply man." With the exception of a few months while they were on duty at another lookout, they have served on High Point since it was built in 1934.

Benny Moore's first service was in 1919, in Washington and Oregon. In 1949 he was awarded a medal for ten years of consecutive service with the U.S. forestry.
Palomar Mountain School field trip to the High Point home of Mr. and Mrs. Benny Moore, early 1950s. Woman is probably Mrs. Benny Moore. From right, the children are John David Mendenhall, Vera Griggs in front, Eddie Griggs behind her (their father was a state park ranger), Carol Traxler (wearing glasses, daughter of Observatory staffperson), other children unknown.