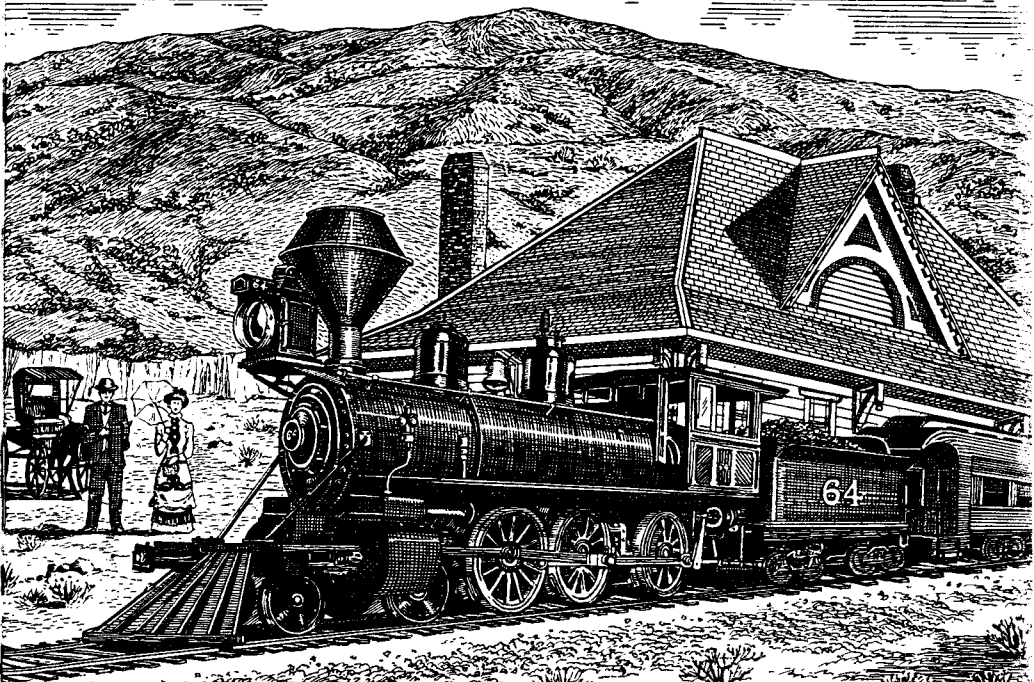
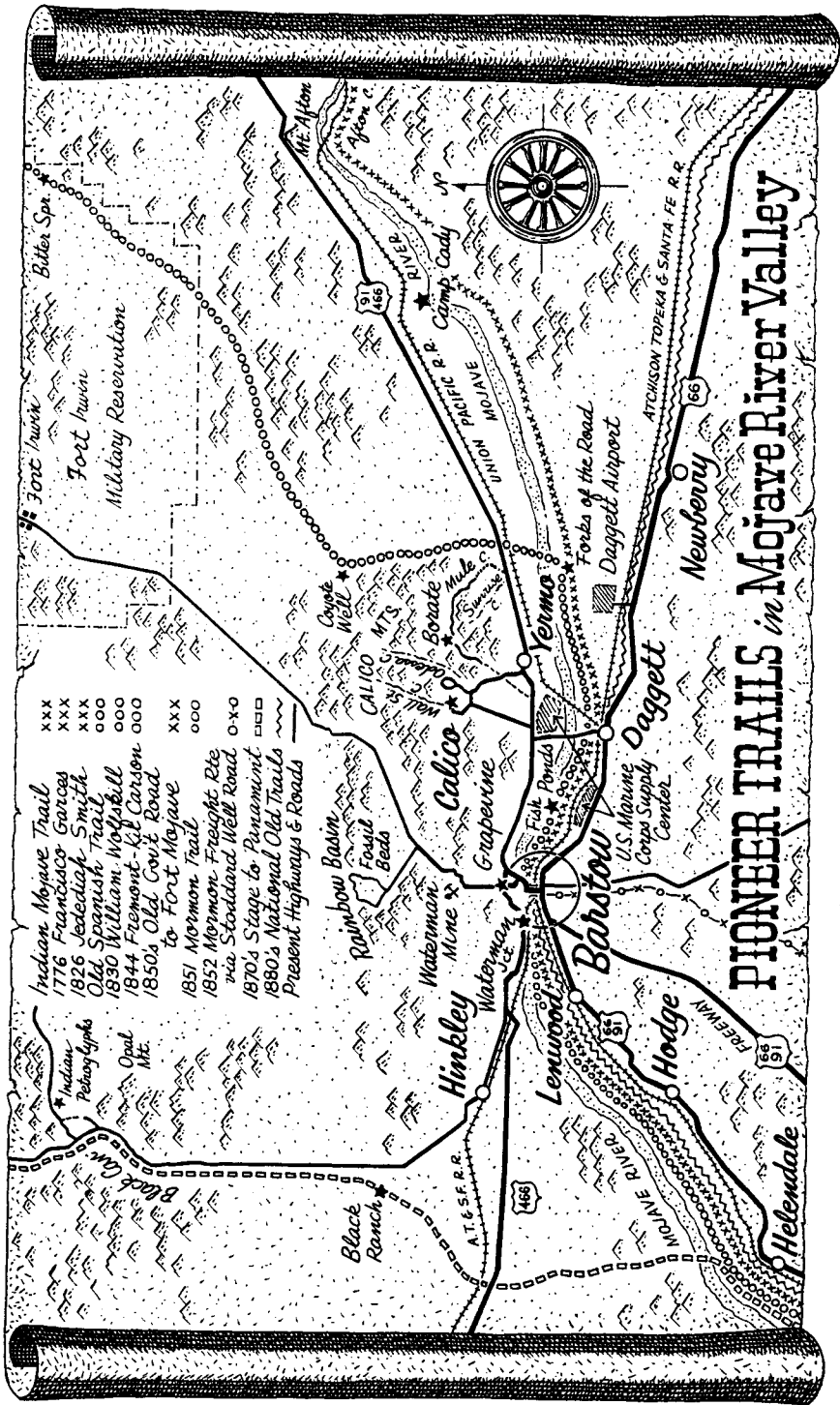


Romantic Heritage of
**Mojave River
Valley**

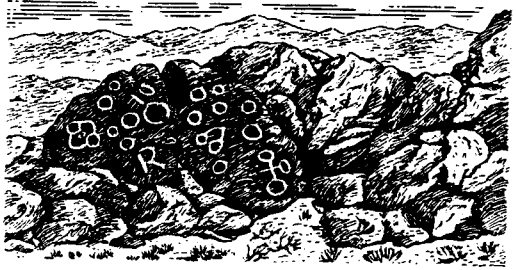


*A Saga of Transportation ...
... and Desert Frontiers*



FRONT COVER: Engine No. 64 of the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad pulling out from the quaint, steep-roofed station at Barstow in the mid-1880s.

Indian petroglyphs and relics found in Black Canyon, north of Hinkley and in other areas in the Mojave, as well as the ancient weapons and tools excavated in caves in Newberry district, offer mute testimony to the existence of civilizations extending far into the distant past.



APPROXIMATELY 3,500 years ago, semi-civilized tribes of prehistoric man had their homes in the Mojave River Valley, where they hunted waterfowl, mined deposits of turquoise and sent off trade caravans to such distant places as far off Yucatan. The stone age tools and weapons of this early man have been found recently by scientific groups excavating in caves at Newberry and in gem mines of great antiquity explored in the Baker area to the north. Because of these discoveries, it is not improbable that some of today's freeways are, in part, but superimposed on the foot trails of the ancient dwellers.

The Mojave River Valley's written history begins in 1776 when Francisco Hermenegildo Garces, a missionary-priest, came overland from the Colorado River, following a trail parallel to the Mojave River on his way to the San Gabriel Mission. Father Garces is important to us today because he was the leader of a colorful pageant of travel that brought successive waves of civilization to this desert area then occupied by the semi-nomadic Chemehuevi Indian tribes.

Fifty years later, a devout Anglo-Saxon mountain man named Jedediah Strong Smith, a renowned trapper and explorer, came west over the same trail from the Colorado. His arrival caused consternation in the Spanish-Mexican province of California. The next year, 1827, he returned, this time fleeing from a massacre near the present Needles, where the formerly friendly Indians had turned on his men to rob and kill.

In the 1830s and 1840s, the old trail along the Mojave was followed by gaily-garbed traders from the province of New Mexico, intent upon trading their fruit of the loom for the colorful abalone

Ruins of old Camp Cady as they appeared before the flood of 1938 washed them away. This desert fort was first built in 1860 and finally abandoned in 1871. It served as a principal fort in a chain of redoubts which stretched across the Mojave to protect emigrants from Indian attacks.



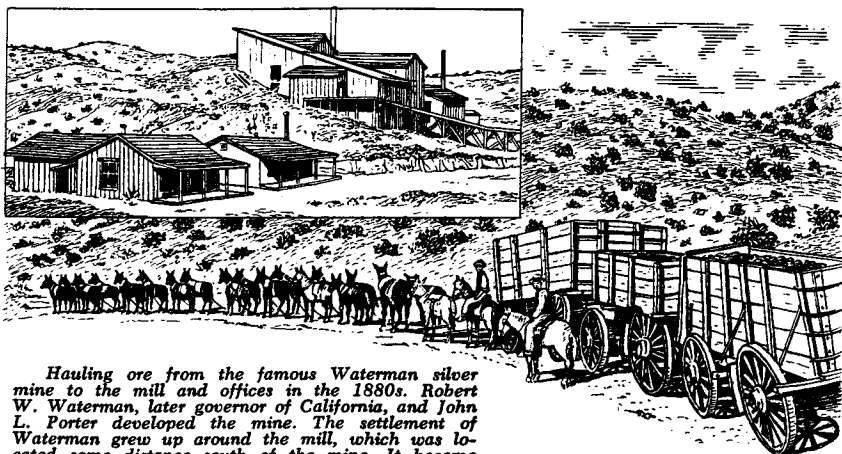


Black Ranch, northwest of Hinkley, was the site of a station and drayage depot which served the stage coaches and freighters which plied back and forth to the Panamint mining area in the 1870s.

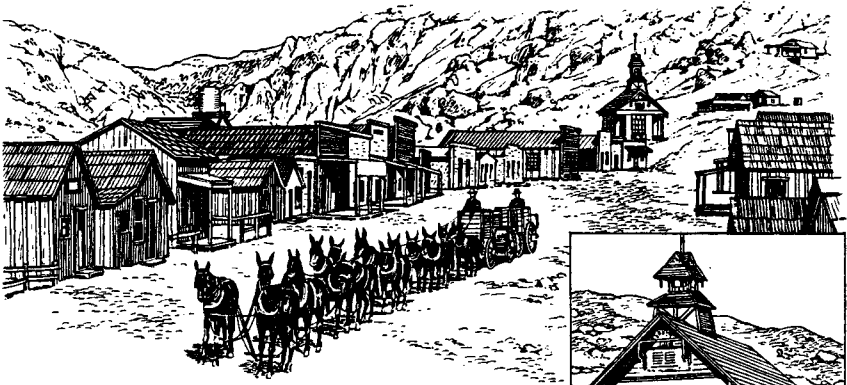
shells and Yankee notions brought to California by ship. These Santa Fe caravans suffered continuous harassment from an Indian chief named Walkara and his hard riding band of outlaw tribesmen who swept like a scourge through the Mojave, stealing horses by the thousands from California's ranchos. Often he was an ally with unscrupulous men such as Jim Beckwourth and Thomas (Peg-leg) Smith.

In the same period, the great American Pathfinder, John Charles Fremont, returned east from an exploring expedition accompanied by his peerless scouts, Kit Carson and Alexis Godey. Enroute, these fearless westerners avenged an outlaw Indian attack on a New Mexican caravan trader.

The year 1846 began a new epoch. Horse thievery became unprofitable with soldiers of the Army's Mormon Battalion guarding Cajon Pass and with California placed under the Stars and Stripes. When the war was over, the discharged soldiers of the Mormon Battalion headed back to Salt Lake, venturing to take with them a wagon loaded with flour, seeds and fruit cuttings from the verdant Santa Ana del Chino Rancho. That historic wagon pioneered the old pack train trail for wheeled vehicles. It was the forerunner of today's route of U. S. 91 Highway and the Union Pacific Railroad.



Hauling ore from the famous Waterman silver mine to the mill and offices in the 1880s. Robert W. Waterman, later governor of California, and John L. Porter developed the mine. The settlement of Waterman grew up around the mill, which was located some distance south of the mine. It became Waterman Junction when the railroad came through and later was renamed Barstow in 1886.



From 1881 to 1896, Calico was California's greatest silver camp, producing millions in silver bullion. At its peak, population mushroomed to 3,500. Shown above is Calico's main street as it appeared when rebuilt after the first disastrous fire of 1887. At right is the picturesque schoolhouse, which has been faithfully restored.

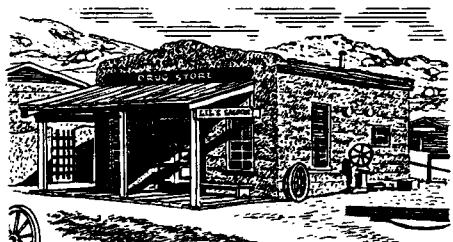


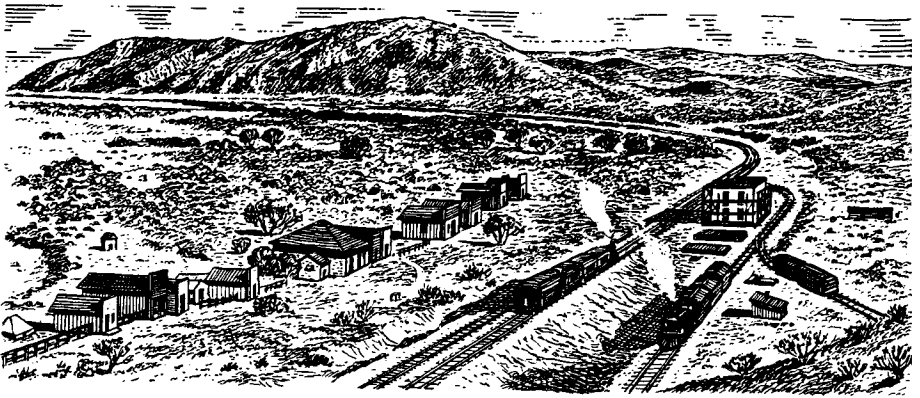
The 1850s probably brought the greatest occasion for wonderment on the part of the desert's natives when a Lt. Edward Beale led a herd of camels driven by swarthy Syrian drivers through the Mojave, with Los Angeles and his ranch in Tejon Pass as destinations.

By this time, the sketchy early trail had become rutted by the wheels of settlers' wagons. In 1851, a group of nearly 500 Mormon colonists had come from Salt Lake. They were to settle in San Bernardino. In 1857 a large part of them went back on call by the church but by that time, covered wagon caravans had become a common sight on the desert.

The 1860s brought the great American civil war, with divided loyalties in California and the threat of its invasion from Confederate forces in Texas. California volunteers set out to secure the state's gateways and established a chain of little redoubts or forts across the Mojave, with the main base, named Camp Cady, located northwest of the present Newberry. When the war ceased, desert travelers were plagued with raiding Paiute bands from farther north and the little desert forts again were manned, this time by regulars. Mail service began and stage coaches jolted over what became known as the Old Government Road to the Colorado.

Thousands of visitors are attracted annually to Calico, which is being restored methodically by Walter Knott, of Knott's Berry Farm. His lifelong ambition has been to recapture the colorful and original atmosphere of the booming silvermine town. At right is Lil's saloon, reconstructed over the red rammed-earth walls of the original Rhea Drug Store. It typifies the restoration which is being done on the historic site which smuggles against the Calico Mountains.



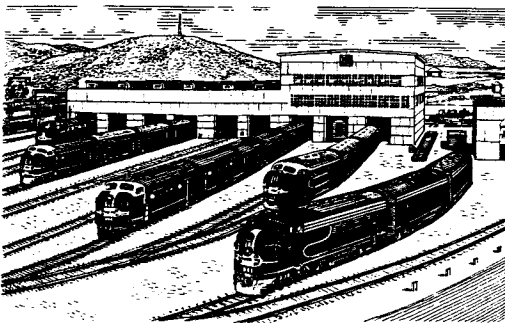


YESTERDAY: The beginning of Barstow, showing the old Santa Fe station and original Harvey House under construction. The straggly row of buildings was "Old Town" north of the freight tracks. A far cry, indeed, from the scenes sketched below.

Gold was found along the Colorado at Eldorado Canyon and in the San Bernardino Mountains at Holcomb Valley. Silver was discovered north of the county line in Panamint City and a pioneer stage line was brought into service through what is now the Hinkley district. These discoveries, together with a rich silver strike at Ivanpah, accounted for an unprecedented influx of settlers and merchants who established what was known as "stations" to serve the traveler.

Two of the most prominent stations were the Fish Ponds, located at the site of the present Marine Corps Supply Center, and the Grapevine, which was about where the present Fort Irwin Road turns away from U. S. 91. Lafayette Mecham was owner of Fish Ponds, so named because a natural pond in the Mojave River at that point abounded with fish. He raised hay and grain for the travelers, repaired wagons and supplied leather to mend harness. Those desert stations were a predecessor to the general store of the later villages.

Roving Paiute Indian bands were troublesome and one day an Indian rode off with one of Mecham's saddle horses. The Indian had a good start and as the owner trailed his thief into the calico colored hills to the north, he noted some likely signs of ore. Dark-



TODAY: The huge, modern Diesel shops (left), largest on the system, and railroad yards of the Santa Fe (right) at Barstow offer a striking contrast to the infant settlement pictured above. Repeated fires in the original Barstow, which was built by the river bottom, coupled with the pressing demand for land to take care of the railroad facilities, accounted for the moving of the business and residential districts to the present location on the hills above. Santa Fe shops and yards play a major role in the economic life of this area, employing some 1,345 people with an annual payroll of around \$8,350,000.

ness called off the pursuit. Months later, Lafayette Mecham recalled the likely ore signs. His memory sparked the famous Calico silver discovery.

Similar to the station at Fish Ponds was one operated by Ellis Miller at Grapevine. While camping one day at this station, Robert W. Waterman and John L. Porter heard of an abandoned prospect nearby where one George C. Lee had located what he thought was quicksilver in 1875. They looked over the location and found silver ore in the dump. In December 1880 a claim was filed for what became the famous Waterman mine.

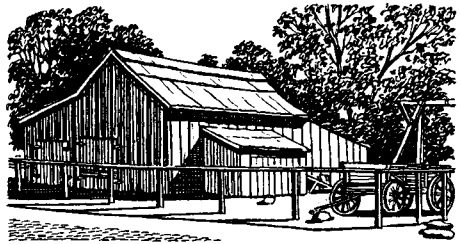
About the same time Sheriff John King heard of the possible ore vein previously noted by Lafayette Mecham and agreed to grubstake a party in a hunt for it. Thus, Frank Mecham, a son of Lafayette, John C. King and the latter's deputies, Tom Warden and Hues Thomas, tentatively made up a party. The sheriff couldn't leave his office at the time, so "Doc" Yaeger, uncle of the Mecham boys, went instead. Several claims were staked and some ore located but nothing sensational. Later, when assessment work was due on the claims, Frank Mecham's brother, Charley, and Thomas went out. Mecham climbed up a hill where he sank his pick in what proved to be horn silver. That was the start of the bonanza Silver King mine, which produced millions and started the county's biggest silver rush to the Calico Hills.

The next year, in 1882, the Southern Pacific started a railroad line from Mojave east to the Colorado River. It was obvious, because of its strategic location on the railroad, that the infant settlement of Daggett would become the transportation center for the Calico mines, as well as the outfitting point for mining districts being developed farther north and east. Soon a mill was erected on the Mojave River and a little narrow gauge railroad engine puffed back and forth between Daggett and Calico hauling ore.

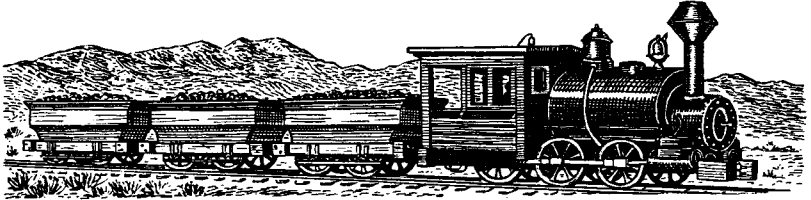
In 1889 Francis M. (Borax) Smith transferred operations of his borax company from the Death Valley area to the Calico Hills, where a rich deposit of colemanite borax ore had been found. Pacific Coast Borax built a plant near Daggett. The colorful twenty-mule teams hauled the ore from the mine at Borate to the railside near Daggett and that desert town became both the silver and borax



Still standing in Daggett is this blacksmith shop, erected by Seymour Alf in 1894. The first one burned down on this site. Here, twenty-mule teams, desert freighters and wagons were put in shape.



(Below) This picturesque ore train was operated in the mid-80s by the Waterloo Mining and Milling Company between the Calico mines and the mill across the river from Daggett.



capital. Smith retired his mule teams and built the little Daggett & Borate Railroad to his mine.

In a trade of railroad trackage, the Atlantic & Pacific (a subsidiary of the Santa Fe) took over the Mojave-Needles branch from the Southern Pacific in 1884. A year later, another subsidiary, the California Southern, which ran from San Diego to San Bernardino, pushed its rails through the Cajon Pass to a junction with the Atlantic & Pacific some 9 miles west of Daggett, at a point first known as Waterman Junction, then renamed Barstow.

With the Santa Fe transcontinental railroad extending from Chicago to Los Angeles and San Diego, the need came for a major railroad town with yards and shops between San Bernardino and Needles. Daggett is said to have been chosen but it was so ill kept as a secret that land prices there soared. The railroad simply went to Barstow, bought its land at reasonable terms, and developed its main division point there.

About 1905, another railroad entered the Mojave River Valley. Senator William A. Clark built the San Pedro, Los Angeles & Salt Lake railroad diagonally northeast from Daggett. It used the Santa Fe tracks from Riverside to Daggett. Around 1922, the Salt Lake



Daggett's main street as it appeared at the turn of the century, when this community was the center of activity. The entire block was destroyed by fire. At extreme right is the first floor portion of the original two-story Stone Hotel which is still standing today.

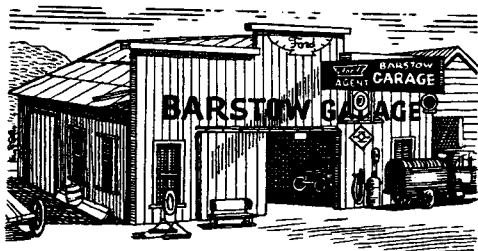


(Above) Barstow's first general merchandise store as it appeared in the late 1880s. It was operated by Joseph Gooding just south of the railroad freight tracks. (Left) Later, Henderson's Department Store opened north of the freight tracks. The original building burned in 1907 and was replaced by Bartow's first concrete structure as shown. In 1925, the Henderson Clothing Store moved to its present Main Street location and is Barstow's oldest business establishment.

line was bought by the Union Pacific, which established its main division point in the Mojave River Valley at Yermo.

A new form of transportation began to take shape before World War I when a few hardy folks started trying to see how far overland they could travel in automobiles. The dirt road paralleling the Santa Fe east to Needles carried the brave name of the National Old Trails Highway. After the war, automobile travel stepped up in earnest despite ruts, rocks and dust. Then, in the early 1920s a shortened version of the Old Mormon Trail to Salt Lake became the Arrowhead Trail, a second major highway. It was built by Arthur L. Doran, pioneer Barstow resident who served for many years as a county supervisor. By 1929, both the National Old Trails and Arrowhead Trail had been surfaced to the state borders. The former became U. S. 66 and the latter received the new name of U. S. 91.

Despite the fact that the silver and borax mines were no longer a factor by 1907, business and population in the Mojave River Valley continued to expand year by year over the past half century. Farming became of increasing importance in the economy. With the ever-increasing migration of newcomers to California, it was obvious that railroad and highway activities would surge forward at an unprecedented pace. World War II brought in the vast military bases, U. S. Marine Corps Supply Center and Fort Irwin, with



A notable landmark in the era of the Model T and World War I was the old Barstow Garage, since dismantled. It was a welcome sight to the daring motorists who braved the dusty roads which converged at Barstow. A modest forerunner, indeed, to the vast facilities offered by scores of gas stations, garages and motels to the thousands of motorists who come through over modern highways.



At the "Intersection of Opportunity" is the slogan coined for Barstow. Night and day, traffic pours into this busy intersection where U. S. Highways 91 and 66 meet. With the additional traffic from U. S. Highway 466, which passes through just to the north, this metropolis of the desert is truly the hub of a vast and growing area.

new payrolls. And now, with the operations of the Goldstone Tracking Station ushering the "space age" into the desert, the future holds promise far beyond the wildest dreams of the rugged pioneers.

BARSTOW. In 1886, Waterman Junction was named Barstow after William Barstow Strong, president of the A & P Railroad. Inasmuch as his name had been given previously to Strong City in the midwest, railroad officials used his middle name, Barstow.

Barstow's "Old Town" was sandwiched between the Santa Fe railroad's freight tracks on the south and the passenger tracks on the north. By the late 1890s, the community had become an important freight consolidation point as well as a junction for passengers. In the forepart of this century, Barstow had a two-story brick depot, a roundhouse and what passed for a Harvey House. Fires had destroyed each by 1910. Likewise, much of "Old Town" had burned down and the business and residential areas expanded largely south of the tracks on a level with the railroad grade.

Because of increased railroad traffic demands during World War I and the years immediately following, the Santa Fe bought the existing business district and Barstow moved up hill, its Main Street becoming the newly realigned National Old Trails (U. S. 66) Highway. Half of the town's residences were also moved. The



(Above) Daggett is proud of its fine, modern school, which is indicative of progress in this community as well as surrounding area.

(Right) The Union Pacific station at Yermo, which also serves as the division point. Yermo is known as the "Gateway to the Calicos."



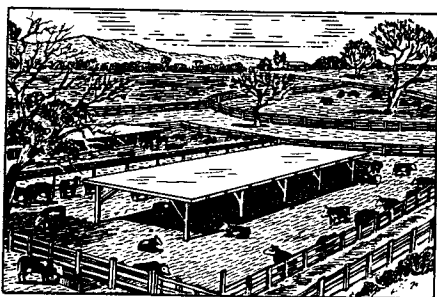
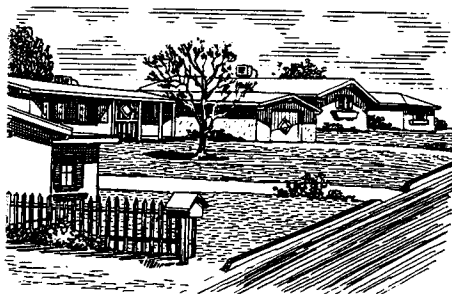


(Left) Newberry's trout and duck ponds now attract sportsmen where once its springs were sought by Indians and wagon trains. (Right) Hinkley terms itself the "Garden Spot" of the Mojave because its fertile soil and abundant water are conducive to diversified farming.

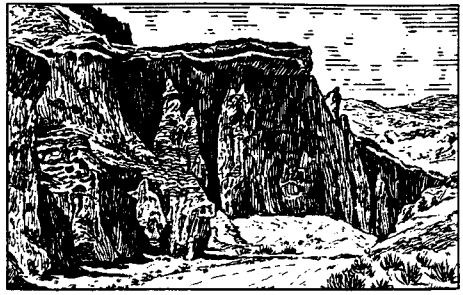
two-story Melrose Hotel, a garage that claimed to be the biggest west of Albuquerque and two entire business blocks started the new Barstow in the mid 1920s.

During the intervening years, Barstow has never stopped growing. Its strategic location can be likened to the hub of a wheel, the spokes radiating out representing the Santa Fe and Union Pacific railroad lines and U. S. Highways 66, 91 and 466. Expanding railroad activities and increasing agricultural development throughout the Mojave River Valley have played a tremendous part in its economic life. World War II set off a new tempo with the establishment of the huge military bases nearby. Then its tourist trade, of growing significance each year, zoomed to a new high, now bringing in more than \$11,000,000 annually.

DAGGETT. Here is an old historical town, older than Calico. In 1882 the railroad was constructed through the community and it was named after Lt. Governor John L. Daggett the following year. When silver and borax mining activities ceased, it became dormant. In 1908 it was the locale for western movies. Strategically located on Highway 66 and served by the Santa Fe and Union Pacific, it is obvious that Daggett is enjoying a surging rebirth, all the more pronounced because of the close proximity to the



(Left) Residential development at Lenwood typifies ideal "desert suburban living," with shopping facilities of a large community nearby. (Right) Dairying, cattle raising and the growing of alfalfa hay have established the Helendale-Hodge district as a center for these agricultural pursuits.



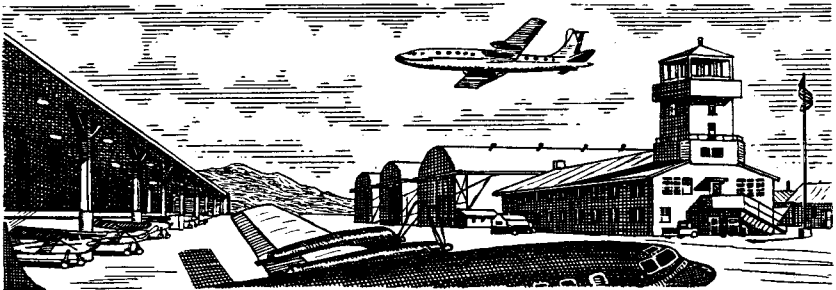
A paradise for tourists and camera enthusiasts are the scenic marvels and striking multi-colored rock formations formed by volcanic action and erosion in Odessa Canyon, a part of Doran Scenic Drive, Rainbow Basin with fossil beds nearby, Mule, Sunrise and Afton Canyons, the Opal Mountains and scores of other natural wonders in the Mojave River Valley. Semi-precious stones – jasper, agate, sagenite and others – as well as petrified woods, make this area a favorite haunt for rockhounds and collectors.

U. S. Marine Corps Supply Center and the Daggett Airport.

YERMO. Founded in 1902 as Otis, the name was later changed to Yermo, meaning “desert.” It is the division point of the Union Pacific Railroad and is situated on Highway 91. Many of its citizens are employed in the U. S. Marine Corps Supply Center close by. It is a natural stopover for tourists inasmuch as it is the “Gateway to the Calicos.” Likewise, its rock shops are outstanding attractions.

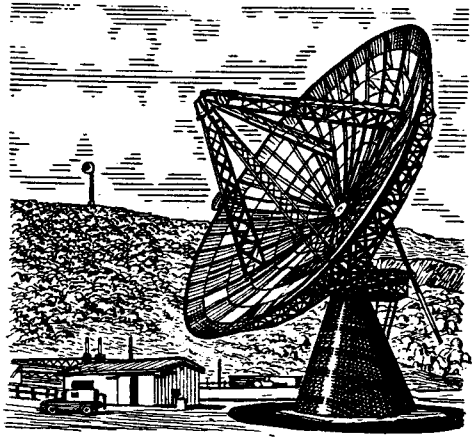
NEWBERRY. An historic landmark because its never failing springs were sought out by pioneer wagon trains, Newberry, also known as “water” in the early days, has afforded the water supply for the Santa Fe, which has transported it to all arid points along the division. In addition to its artificial ponds created for sportsmen, Newberry is fast becoming an agricultural district and its potential for farm crops, fruit trees, cattle raising and kindred development is almost unlimited.

HINKLEY. In 1882, Hinkley (originally spelled Hinckley after Hinckley Henderson, son of the pioneer Barstow merchant) got its start along the railroad. Served by Highway 466 and the Santa Fe, this growing community and surrounding area are prosperous be-



Comprising 1,082 acres, San Bernardino County's Daggett Airport is the air terminus of the Mojave River Valley. An all-weather lighted field at the intersection of a half-dozen major airways, the FAA operates a 24-hour communication and weather station here. In addition to east-west and northeast-southwest runways, there are four nose-dock hangers and three others.

The "Space Age" has come to the Mojave River Valley with the operation of NASA's Goldstone Tracking Station 48 miles north of Barstow. It is under the technical direction of the California Institute of Technology Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Just recently, a message was telephoned from Washington to the Goldstone Tracking Station. From here it was bounced off the moon to a similar tracking station at Woomera, Australia. Traveling with the speed of light—186,000 miles a second—the message took but 2.44 seconds to cover the 455,682 miles. Only a prelude of things to come!

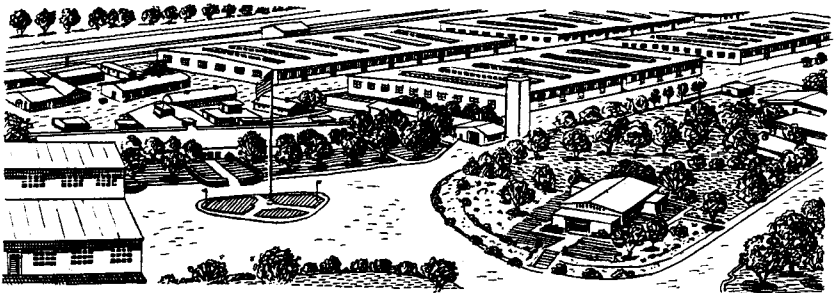


cause of the rich virgin soil, excellent for corn, melons, grapes, alfalfa and other crops. It is ever expanding its dairying, cattle, chicken and turkey raising activities.

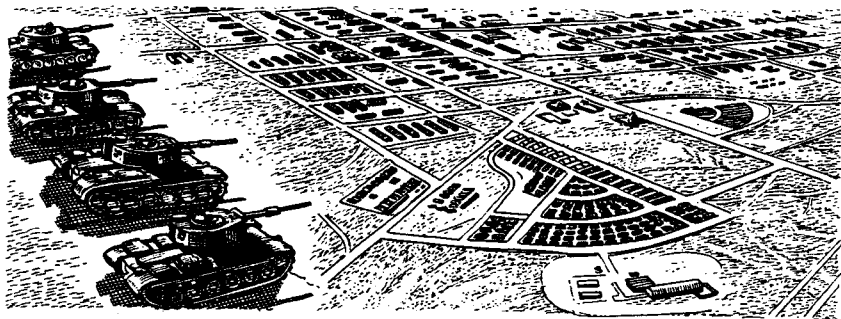
LENWOOD. Located three miles west of Barstow, Lenwood received its first impetus as a community of homes when several large ranches were subdivided in 1924. Appealing to those who seek "desert suburban living," this community is enjoying a building boom. Residents point out that large-city shopping facilities are available in Barstow nearby.

HELENDALE. When the railroad arrived in 1885, the station was known as Point of Rocks. This was changed to Helendale by a Santa Fe executive to honor his daughter, Helen. This farming center was referred to as "shallow water," an apt one for the broad Mojave bottom lands where repeated crops could be raised and where cattle and dairying thrived.

HODGE. In 1911, Gilbert Hodge homesteaded large acreage along the Mojave River. Arthur Brisbane, noted newspaper columnist, bought adjoining acreage and in 1925 was responsible for



The Marine Corps Supply Center, largest Marine Corps installation of its kind in the world, covers 4,550 acres. It occupies two areas.—at Nebo, three miles east of Barstow, and in the Yermo district. The Center has a personnel of approximately 1,700 Marines and 2,300 civilians. Annual payroll is estimated at over \$16,000,000.



Originally the Mojave Anti-Aircraft Range, Fort Irwin was named in honor of Major General George L. Irwin in 1942. When reactivated in 1951, it became an Armor Combat Training Center, covering over 600,000 acres. It employs approximately four hundred civilians and has an annual payroll of over \$4,000,000.

the community being named Hodge in honor of the pioneer settlers, Gilbert and Robert Hodge. Like its neighbor, Helendale, the main activities are dairying and raising alfalfa and grain.

ALTHOUGH the history of Continental Telephone Corporation dates but from 1960, Continental's California Interstate operations trace back half a century to pioneer companies which became vital segments of the system. Some had their humble beginnings during the rugged formative days of booming mining camps.

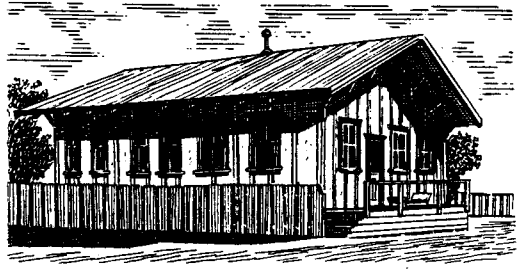
Mining activity attracted two Denver men to the region in 1904. Unsuccessful in finding promising claims at Tonopah and Goldfield, Nevada, their attention turned to possibilities of developing hydro-electric power on Bishop Creek, in the Sierras to the west, to supply the mines.

Subsequently, in 1905, The Nevada Power, Mining & Milling Company was organized and became the first in a line of power company entities. During the year an initial telephone line was constructed paralleling the first power transmission line from Bishop Creek, via Silver Peak, to Tonopah and Goldfield, which served the power company for internal purposes.

In October 1910, Interstate Telegraph Company, predecessor to California Interstate, was originally incorporated. Control of the new company was acquired by power company associates in 1911 and a single communications network formed. Composed of power company communication facilities within the counties of Nye and Esmeralda, Nevada, and Inyo and Mono, in California, plus a line under construction to the south within the additional California counties of Kern, San Bernardino and Riverside, Interstate commenced operations on March 1, 1912.

Over the years service boundaries have drastically changed. To the south, telephone lines followed construction of power transmis-

First telephone communications into Barstow were handled by an agent of the power company. Later, a switchboard was installed in the original Melrose Hotel lobby and then moved into the small building (shown at right) which also housed the library. This building, since dismantled, was on a site now covered by railroad tracks. California Interstate constructed its own re-inforced concrete building and the exchange was moved there in 1926.



sion facilities, and by late 1912, telephone service was established at Victorville.

Early the following year, lines were extended from Victorville, through Oro Grande and on into Barstow. On February 21, 1913, the Barstow Printer could report, "32 phones were in service and more being applied for." The first switchboard was located in the lobby of the original Melrose Hotel. It was moved later to the small building pictured above. Barstow's expansion to the south prompted construction of a concrete exchange building south of the tracks, which brought automatic dial service to the Barstow service area in 1926.

A milestone in telecommunications was given due recognition in Barstow on September 2, 1953, when the Pacific Coast's 6-millionth telephone was installed in the Barstow home of Marine M/Sgt. Lionel P. Williams. Completion of a new long distance facility in 1963 represented another milestone, bringing distance-dialing service to the Barstow telephone user — the first distance-dialing conversion on the system.

In 1954 exchange facilities at Newberry were placed in service and a satellite office at Yermo within the Barstow exchange, constructed in 1964. Completion of a new central office at Lenwood preceded formation of the Lenwood Exchange in 1966. Today, some 13,000 telephones serve this region of the Barstow District.

California Interstate was incorporated in January, 1954 and acquired the business and assets of Interstate Telephone Company. Subsequently, in June of 1965, California Interstate became part of the Continental System.

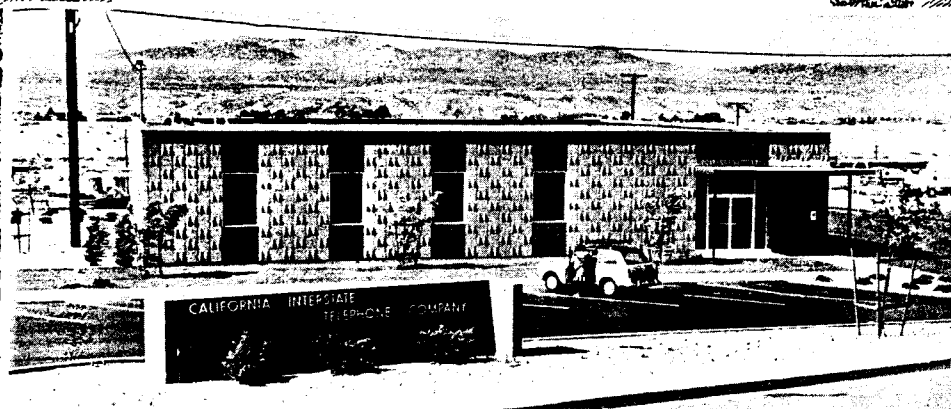
Headquartered in St. Louis, Continental Telephone Corporation now represents the third largest independent (nonBell) telephone company in the United States, with operating properties in 37 states, including Alaska, in Canada, the Bahamas and West Indies. A manufacturing arm has recently been added to the growing Continental operations.

Through these service areas growth is continuing at a rapid pace, making Continental Telephone Corporation one of the fastest growing telephone companies in the nation.

WITH a past rich in historical romance and tradition, it is obvious that the communities of Mojave River Valley are on the threshold of an equally colorful future — one promising unprecedented advancements, yet retaining all the unspoiled charm which is prized so much.

The family of California Interstate Telephone Company is proud that it has, in certain measure, been a part of the development of this area and it looks forward to greater participation in the years to come.

This history portrays, in brief form, the transition of this area from its earliest days to the present. This company, in its efforts to cooperate with the communities it serves, hopes this booklet may be a source of enlightenment to both residents and visitors.



Barstow Service Center, housing business, plant and district offices.



CONTINENTAL
SYSTEM

**CALIFORNIA
INTERSTATE
TELEPHONE
COMPANY**