

DEATH VALLEY DOIN'S

(By THE RAMBLER)

Charles Brown, Jr., of Shoshone, twenty-five miles south of us, was in town last Monday evening on business matters.

Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Schrader, have returned to their home here after spending a two-month vacation during the heated period at their former home, Pacific Grove, Calif. Their son, Don, manager of the company store, also spent a few days there, during his two-weeks vacation, last month.

Mrs. Joe Merino of Death Valley Junction has returned home from Los Angeles, bringing their twin boy babies, born to Mrs. Merino, while in the city.

Regular meeting of the Death Valley Post, No. 542, American Legion, was held in Corkhill Hall last Thursday night.

Johnnie Mills, the oldest of Death Valley Old-Timers, was in town from Ryan for a few hours last Thursday. Johnnie came up to mingle with the boys of the radio group, taking in the Cubs-Yankee ball game, and to pull for the Cubs. Johnnie was in great glee, and was very demonstrative, during the early part of the game. But that home run of Crossetti, with one on in the eighth, which "put the game on ice" for the Yanks, soured Johnnie; he pulled his cap down over his eyes, broke away from the crowd, mumbled a few words to himself and lit out for home before the game was ended.

The Rambler is in receipt of news of the death, in a Las Vegas hospital, on September 23, of William Nettle, of Chloride, Arizona. Mr. Nettle was formerly of Jerome, Arizona, where he was employed for many years as a hoisting engineer, and was known by many of the mining men of the southwest. His death was the result of an auto accident, six miles east of Las Vegas, a few weeks ago.

Wilbur Dowdna, a member of the Ranger service, in the Death Valley Monument area, has returned to his post in the Valley, after six weeks' vacation, part of which was spent in the middle-western and eastern states.

Charles Brown, Sr., our Inyo county supervisor for this the 5th district, of Shoshone, made his regular monthly trip to the county seat, Independence, early last week, to sit as a member of the board of supervisors for transaction of county business.

Cecil Ward, caterer at the fountain at Hotel Amargosa, is away on a week's vacation. During his absence, Grant Winger, from Furnace Creek camp, cafe, is relieving him. Mr. Winger has just returned from the north, where he was employed in one of the cafes in Yellowstone National park, during the summer.

Mr. Archie Boden, city attorney of San Jose, toured the Valley during the past week and was registered at hotel Amargosa.

Frank Jones, manager of the Death Valley laundry, with Mrs. Jones, arrived home from their summer vacation, during the past week. Mr. Jones has been busy with his staff, during the past few days, getting things in readiness for operations, the machinery began to turn over, slowly, last Friday, and soon the laundry will be a busy place.

Mrs. R. M. Nice, of the Coen Clay camp, has recently returned from a prolonged vacation, passed in the Los Angeles district.

A ball game between Shoshone and Death Valley Junction, last Sunday, resulted in a victory for the Shoshone team, the game was played at the Junction.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Green, and son 'Bobbie, with Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Whitlow, formed a shopping party to Las Vegas last Saturday.

Date picking is in progress at the date gardens, on the floor of the Valley, and has been for the past month. It will take a couple of weeks yet to gather all of the crop, which is said to be unusually fine this year. Dates are a bit different from most crops, when it comes to gathering them, inasmuch as they do not all mature or ripen at the same time. This irregularity in ripening necessitates going over the golden-hued bunches, many times from day to day, over a period of several weeks, those that are ripe being picked, one at a time, until all have matured. Dates require an abundance of water, and a long period of hot weather. It is estimated that this year's crop being grown by the Borax Co. in the Valley, will amount to from 15 to 20 tons.

Alva R. McElhany, employed by the state highway department in the Junction district, returned last week from a two-weeks' vacation trip.

Messrs. C. M. Rose, I. M. Chamberlain and E. A. Smith, of the State Highway department, with headquarters at Bishop, arrived at Hotel Amargosa during the past week, and are now engaged in "staking" the stretch of new roadway to be constructed between the Junction and the floor of the Valley. The highway at present is within the Monument, from the Valley up to a point 13 miles from Furnace Creek Inn where the road, at the Monument line becomes the State highway, for the remainder of the distance of 17 miles, a total of 30 miles from the Inn to the Junction. On the 17 miles extending from the Monument line to the Junction, now a state secondary road, a new stretch of about 11½ miles will be entirely reconstructed by the state forces. The contract for this piece of road has been let to Oswald Bros., and construction by the contractors will soon begin.

Mr. Bill Walsh, machinist at the T. and T. shops, motored in to San Bernardino over the week-end for a visit with his family, returning Sunday.

During the past week, while it has been partly cloudy at the Junction, yet we had no rain, nor any down on the floor of the Valley. However, particularly last Friday,

we could see heavy clouds hovering over the distant mountains, fifty to sixty miles to the west in the Panamint range, with indications of heavy rainfall, perhaps snow, higher up, over Telescope peak, (Alt. 11045 ft.). Also over the Charleston mountains (Alt. 11,688 ft.), to the east of us about sixty miles, or about half way between the Junction and Las Vegas, it seemed to be raining or snowing, depending upon the altitude.

Now, since the storm has abated, we can plainly see both peaks, heavily snowcapped, pointing into the skies. These peaks are approximately 120 miles apart, as the road runs, one in Nevada and the other in California.

In their pilgrimage over the Charleston mountains and on west, down the slope onto the Amargosa desert, in the winter of 1849, it was this great snow-capped peak which served as the landmark for the Manly party, as their landmark, and toward which they slowly trudged in quest of fresh or drinkable, potable, water. Strange as it may seem, in dead of winter, it was not so much from lack of food, from which the 49'rs, crossing the Amargosa desert and Death Valley suffered, and from which so many of them died, as from lack of pure, fresh drinking and domestic water. While small pools of water were occasionally encountered on the desert, most of it was heavily mineralized rendering it almost unfit to drink. And when the little trickle of water, barely flowing down the wash we now know as the Amargosa river, was sighted, the pilgrims, almost famished from lack of pure drinking water, were overjoyed, at first. Likewise, the cattle seemed to smell, or sense, the water before the pilgrims, and those which were loose, even though they were weak and lank, started to trot in order to reach the water in the little stream more quickly.

But when they came to drink the water it was found to be "bitter," "had a bitter taste," and those who partook of it were affected about as if they had taken a large dose of salts. Hence this "bitter" water, as described by the Manly party, is the origin of the word, "amargo," that being the Spanish term, or equivalent for the English word, "bitter." Hence the terms, Amargosa river, Amargosa desert, etc.

Had the Manly party reached this "Amargosa river," in summer, they would have encountered no water in it at all, unless after heavy rains, in the Nevada mountains, to the north. It required considerable potable water for even the Manly party, inasmuch as there were from twelve to twenty persons in it, and at this point, the crossing of the Amargosa river, they had several yoke of oxen, perhaps 12 or 15 head in all, they also retained their wagons, most of them, but these were later abandoned in Death Valley proper, 40 or 50 miles farther on. This, for the reason that they could not get the heavy wagons over the rough mountain passes of the Panamint range, though they attempted to do so. However, even though compelled to abandon their wagons in Death Valley, they tumbled several head of oxen over at least one large, deep rock ledge, and slowly proceeded over their rugged, rough, unbroken road.

THE PLUM TREE

Attempts to move the Government establishments back in the direction of the Civil Service are precipitating bitter political opposition from branches of the Government that have been filled with political pets during recent years. The Civil Service Commission admits the above facts, and indicates that there is a decided tendency throughout many executive agencies to keep the good jobs that now fall under the patronage basis.

AT POLITICAL HEADQUARTERS

National headquarters of the two old parties in Washington report the Republicans as greatly encouraged by the primaries in Wisconsin, where the GOP polled more votes than the Progressives or the Democrats. The Republicans have been claiming that they would win between 75 and 100 new seats in the Congressional election. They are encouraged in this belief to the point of hilarity by the Gallup poll which shows that they will likely win 60 more seats.

On the other hand the Democratic headquarters, headed by James A. Farley say that the Republicans are feeding on the wrong kind of hops and predict another New Deal landslide.

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