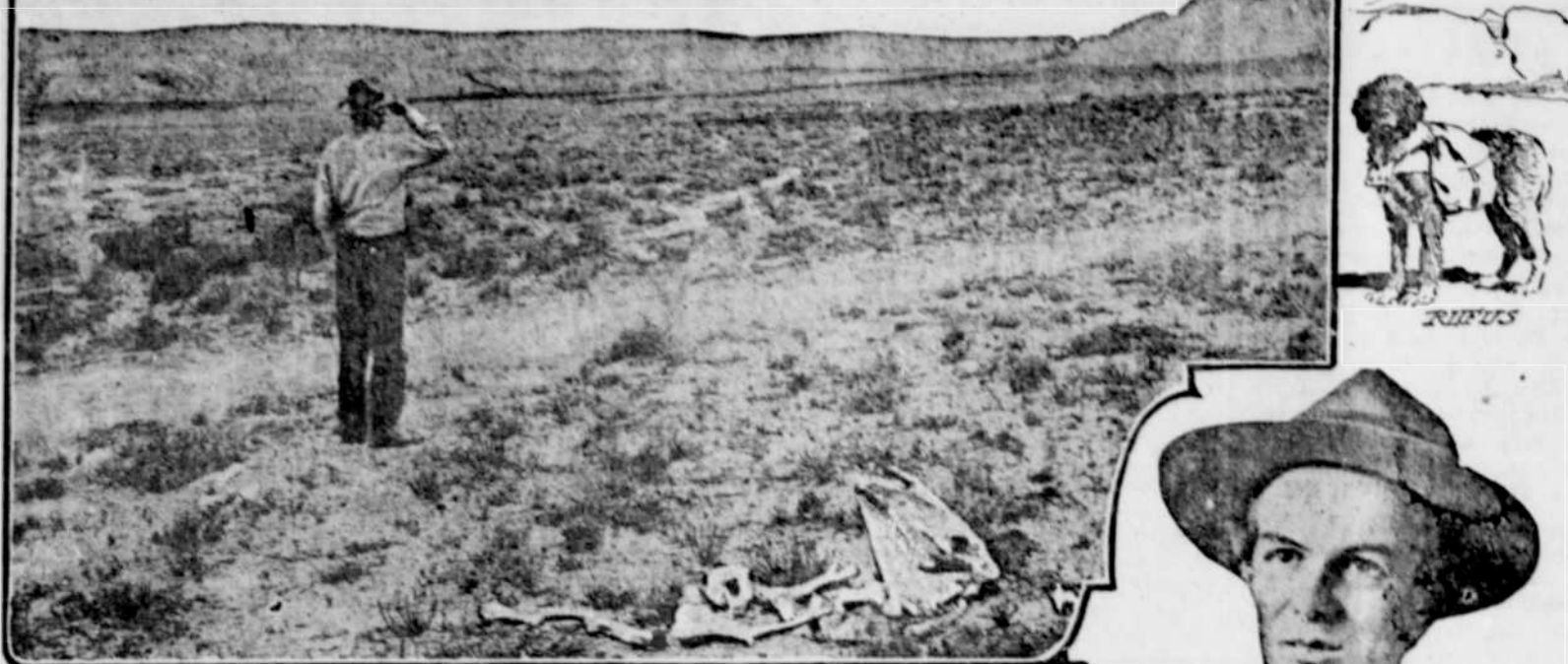


Death Valley Opens to Tourists



LOOKING OUT OVER THE LAND OF THIRST



QUE OF THE FAMOUS 20-MILE TRAILS



LOU WESTCOTT BECK AND "RUFUS"

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

DEATH VALLEY! What visions of horror those words conjure up in the mind of one who knows anything about this famous spot in southern California—visions of an inferno of heat and thirst, a narrow valley shut in between black-walled mountains and lying below sea level, the lowest point on the American continent; visions of a white plain across which the heat waves shimmer and dance, of mirages of cool lakes which appear before the eyes of dying men to mock their thirst, then vanish, of a desolate, barren land, whose terrible heat literally dries up men's blood in their veins and drives them mad before they die; a plague spot to be shunned by all living creatures.

Such was Death Valley of yesterday. But the Death Valley of today is different. True, the heat and the thirst are still there, but it is no longer a place to be shunned by man. Instead, it is now actually being opened to tourist sight-seeing traffic and is being advertised as a new "playground". And the invitation for tourists to visit Death Valley comes from no less a host than the United States national park service. The following announcement was recently made by Stephen T. Mather, director of the park service:

"A hotel for the accommodation of visitors is just now being completed on the very edge of the desert, a few miles from Ryan. A magnificent view of the valley with its frame of jagged mountains and fascinating colored cliffs may be obtained from the hotel."

"Arrangements have also been made for side trips to various points of interest. One of the most striking of these is Dante's peak, where from an elevation of 8,000 feet the visitor may look into Death Valley, which at this point lies 800 feet below sea level."

"Travelers will be able to get on a train in Los Angeles about 6 p. m. and reach the hotel the next morning."

The new "playground" has already been opened—on February 1, to be exact—but if you expect to visit Death Valley this season you will have to do so before May 15, for on that date the last tourist must be out of the valley. Hereafter the season will open in the fall, but always May 15 will be the "deadline." For Death Valley, pleasant as it is in the winter, becomes an inferno with the return of the summer sun and the temperature runs up as high as 140 degrees or more. As the familiar saying goes, "It isn't the heat, it's the humidity," only in the case of Death Valley it's the lack of humidity that kills. The average humidity is only .01 of 1 per cent. Old-timers will tell you that if you come a blanket in a tub of water and pull one end out dripping, it will dry thoroughly while you are scrubbing the other half. Or dip your handkerchief in water and hold it up. It is dry in a minute's time. Jump into water fully clothed and you will be bone dry to the last thread in half an hour. Lay an egg on the sand and in ten minutes it will be baked hard. Alfalfa cut in field is cured and ready for stacking in less than two hours. Yes, it's HOT in Death Valley!

Death Valley got its name during the Days of '49. In the spring of 1849 a party of emigrants—100 wagons strong—set out from Galesburg, Ill., for the California gold fields. Late that summer the emigrant train reached Salt Lake City, Utah. There they were told that the regular mountain route to San Francisco would lie beneath twenty feet of Sierra Nevada snow before they could reach the mountain passes. They were warned, too, of the awful fate that had overtaken the now-famous Donner party, most of which had perished of hunger when it was caught in a blizzard near Donner lake in northern California.

But the gold seekers were impatient to reach their goal and, joining with other argonauts, they set out under the guidance of John Hunt, who

contracted to take them over the old Spanish trail to Los Angeles through San Bernardino. Progress was slow and some of the emigrants became dissatisfied. Having heard of a short cut leading west that would save 500 miles of their journey, they decided, over Hunt's protest, to make the venture. The result was that shortly afterwards they found themselves in what is now Death Valley, hemmed in by mountains through which there appeared to be no opening.

There the party split. One group, 36 persons in all, young bachelors from Illinois who called themselves "The Jayhawkers," pressed on toward the mountains to try to find a way out of the trap. Some of them died of starvation, some of thirst and others went mad and wandered away to their deaths in the valley. In all, 13 of the 36 perished before they fought their way through to safety. In the meantime the rest of the party, men with families, had found a tiny stream and there they camped to rest.

But their food supplies began to run low. Their oxen began to die and their wagons to fall apart in the blistering sun. So the leader, Asahel Bennett, sent two young fellows, Will Manley and John Rogers, forth to find a way out of this living hell. As they departed Mrs. Bennett gave Manley a double handful of rice—half of all she had—and silently pointed to the hunger-pinched faces of her children. He understood her meaning. Upon the success of his and Rogers' efforts depended the lives of all the emigrants.

Then the party sat down to wait for the return of the two scouts. A week passed—two—three—and still Manley and Rogers did not return. At the end of the fourth week all except Asahel Bennett's wife had abandoned hope. "They will come back," she maintained steadfastly. But they did not and the party resolved upon one last desperate attempt to escape. They began stripping the canvas covers from the prairie schooners and flanking pack saddles upon their emaciated oxen. And then Manley and Rogers returned! They spoke but briefly of the days of horror spent in struggling from one waterhole to the next across the 250 miles of the Mojave desert, of the dead of the Jayhawkers party whom they had found along the trail. But they had found food and, most vital of all, they had found a way out of the valley. They guided the party on the long climb to the summit of the Panamint range which frowned down upon the valley. As the emigrants reached the crest and looked back into the trap from which they had escaped, Asahel Bennett's wife raised her arms in a gesture of farewell. "Good by, Death Valley!" she cried. And so it was named.

Although this occurred three-quarters of a century ago, echoes of this tragic event have been heard from time to time in recent years. As late as 1918 the two survivors of the Jayhawkers party—Col. John B. Colton of Galesburg, Ill., and Lorenzo Dow Stephens of San Jose, Calif.—met once more to talk over their thrilling experience, but the last living link with the tragic past was snapped on February 12, 1921, when Stephens died in Oakland, Calif., at the age of ninety-three years. Last November, however, the story of the Jayhawkers was recalled again when a crowd of merry-makers dined and danced in celebration of the opening of a new 24,000-barrel artesian well at Stovepipe Wells in Death Valley. It was on this spot that Manley and Rogers, the two scouts sent out by Asahel Bennett, on November 23, 1849, first sighted the waterhole and members of the party slipped from the tiny depression, where now a great volume of water gushes forth, the few life-saving draughts which gave them the strength to struggle on.

Scarcely less dramatic than the story of the naming of Death Valley is the story of how borax, which forms the basis of an industry that helped make this spot even more famous, was discovered there. In the year 1880 Aaron Winters

lived with his wife, Rosie, in a frontier home in Ash Meadows, a tiny oasis east of Death Valley. To their home one day came a wandering prospector who told the Winters of the borax deposits in the state of Nevada and how a great fortune awaited anyone who could find more such deposits. Winters asked many questions, including the question of how a person could know borax if he discovered it. He was told that the best test was to pour certain chemicals over the supposed borax deposit and then to fire it. If it were borax the chemicals would burn with a green flame.

Winters had made many visits into Death Valley, and after talking to the prospector was convinced that there was borax there. So he set out immediately, accompanied by his wife, and soon afterwards encamped on Furnace creek. In the marsh (which appears on Furnace creek in the spring) he gathered the most likely-looking deposit. That night he made the test as the prospector had told him. There was a breathless moment of suspense and then Aaron Winters cried "Rosie, she burns green! We're rich!" The borax industry of Death Valley had come into existence.

The next problem was how to get the rich borax deposits out of the valley. Out of necessity came the famous 20-mile team wagons which are inseparably associated with the name of Death Valley. For years this unique transport system brought the borax wealth out of Death Valley. Then the modern tractor wrote "finis" on another chapter of American transportation—one whose like the world has never seen elsewhere. That was written last year and it marked the passing of another era in the history of Death Valley.

But borax is not the only wealth which it contains. Gold was discovered there many years ago and it has been a favorite haunt for the old-time prospector, the lure of its wealth being all the more attractive because of the dangers which guard it. Remember the picturesque "Death Valley" Scotty, whose "find" there made him rich and who gained nation-wide notoriety by the freedom with which he "blew" his wealth? Even more picturesque was another prospector who became known as the "Good Samaritan" of Death Valley. Lou Westcott Beck was one of the great number who rushed to Death Valley at the news of Scotty's find. He nearly lost his life on his barren wastes and when he finally escaped he resolved to devote his life to saving others from the fate which he had so narrowly escaped in that dread region.

Each summer Beck made a trip into the valley of purple mist and great thirst, piling up rocks and placing signs on them to guide prospectors to waterholes, searching for lost travelers and guiding them to safety. For 15 years he did this work and during that time he and his companion, a Newfoundland dog named "Rufus," saved the lives of between three and four hundred travelers in the great American deserts—the Colorado and the Mojave as well as Death Valley. Then in 1917 Death Valley "got him" at last. During one of his trips he came to a spring which he had always used and drank from it. He offered some water to Rufus, but the dog refused to drink. The spring had become infected. After a terrible trip to his home in Pasadena, where Mrs. Beck awaited their return, the "Good Samaritan" went to bed ill and never rose again.

The work which Beck inaugurated has been carried on by the United States geological survey until Death Valley is now supplied with enough sign posts so that it is safe enough to travel for anyone who will use ordinary common sense and not take foolish chances. Those who do not soon learn the truth of the prophetic warning of old-timers that "you can't fool with the desert. If you do she'll get you every time." And now the latest announcement of the United States park service means that even those who "fool with her" have better than an even chance to escape the dangers of this "land of thirst."

can be recommended for general use.

Increased efforts were made last summer to develop a repellent which could be used on fruit trees without leaving a deposit on the foliage or fruit. It was found that certain odors, particularly the odor of tar, are distinctly repellent to the Japanese beetle.

Shocking Affair

Ostriches may have fine feathers but they have bad tempers, so a device has been invented to conquer

these birds. It consists of a handle six feet long, with a fork at the top which carries a strip of brass. When pushed against the neck of a charging bird, an electrical contact is made and the bird is given such a shock that docility results.

Says the Deacon

Some folks who cannot save them selves are great on preaching salvation sermons to others.—Atlanta Constitution.

Shanghai Natives in Terror of the Cantonese



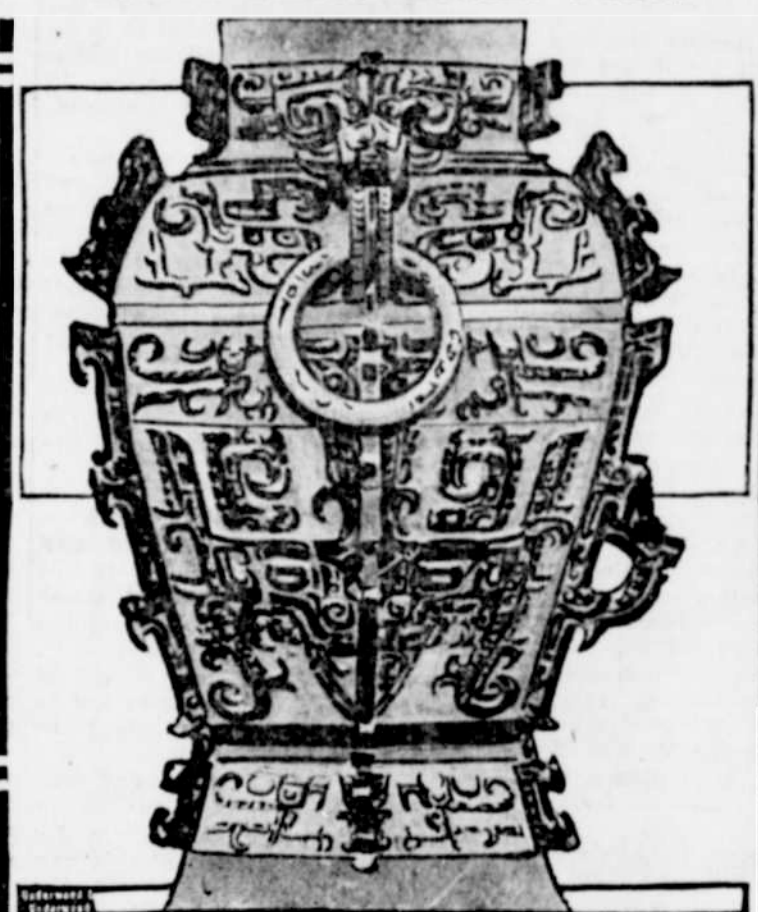
This photograph from Shanghai shows part of the crowd of natives near the foreign concession trying to get inside the guarded walls for protection against the Cantonese troops.

Bodies of Dead Good Will Flyers Brought Home



Military escort from Governors Island, followed by the two hearse containing the bodies of Capt. C. F. Woolsey and Lieut. J. W. Benton, Good Will flyers who died in the plane crash in Buenos Aires, on their way from the S. S. Vauban, on which they arrived, to the railroad station in New York.

Sacred Chinese Bronze Vessel



A sacred bronze vessel from the Orient, believed to be the only one ever brought out of China. It was brought to the Chicago Art Institute under guard. It is valued at \$500,000.

IN THE MIDST OF IT



John K. Davis, American consul, who was rescued with his family and other Americans from the hands of Cantonese besiegers in the recent fighting at Nanking. Consul Davis performed valuable work in saving Americans and other nationals in China from the hands of the predatory soldiery.

SHOT MAN AND SELF



Countess De Janze, formerly Alice Silverthorne, society girl of Lake Forest, Ill., suburb of Chicago, who shot her lover, Raymond De Trafford, and herself in a Paris railway station.

Main Part of Them

"She's an insignificant little woman, but how she dresses. Don't you think she has style?"

"Remarkable. She's one of those women who are merely the by-product of their clothes."

Revolutionized Industry

Ell Whitney, the inventor, was granted a patent on the cotton gin on March 14, 1793. This machine separating the cotton fibers from the seeds, marked the revolutionization of the cotton industry.

Longfellow's "Friends"

The "three friends" referred to in Longfellow's sonnet, "Three Friends of Mine," were Cornelius Conway Fenton, president of Harvard college; Louis Agassiz and Charles Sumner.

Have Found Means to Fight Beetle

The new attractive agent, geraniol, developed by the bureau of entomology as an aid to its control work against the Japanese beetle, has been found very successful. Methods have been worked out whereby this material may be used to concentrate the beetles in a relatively small area.

It was found that by spraying less than an acre of orchard with geraniol beetles could be drawn on the leeward

side of the orchard for a distance of nearly one-half mile within the first fifteen minutes after the spray had been applied. This makes it possible to destroy large numbers of beetles with a comparatively small quantity of a contact spray. Further work has been done on traps baited with geraniol, but although these capture large numbers of beetles, it is not felt that a trap has been developed which

WORTH REMEMBERING

Whales were once land animals. Evidence of tuberculosis of the spine were found in an Egyptian mummy dating back to about 2500 B. C.

Regular airplane service between Belgium and the Congo for passengers, goods and mail is being considered.

Primitive men carved designs on their pottery partly to make it attractive and partly to make it less slippery when greasy.

A recent decree holds that British mayors must wear fur robes of office on official occasions.

When the engine of an automobile equipped with a new thermostatic device overheats the car's horn is sounded.

Two ore crushers just built weigh 1,000,000 pounds each and are said to break the record for size in such machinery.