

Granite Slab Marks Grave of Father, Sons

By DOROTHY STEWART
Mail Tribune Correspondent

Yreka — Along a lonesome road south of Yreka, Calif., stands a slab of dirty gray granite inscribed with the names of a father and three sons.

Hiram Page, the father, and his two oldest sons, Salathiel and Balphor, died Sept. 6, 1863. The third son, Julian, died nearly a year later, July 14, 1864. There is no other evidence of life near the tombstone site.

The headstone is not tended. What the four died from, and why they died so close in time to each other, remains a mystery. The two older sons were 14 and 13 years old, and Julian was either six or nine years old.

Rich in History

Northern California is rich in the history of the gold-seekers. Gold was discovered in 1851 on the site of the present city of Yreka. In 1852, the California state legislature passed a bill making a county

by the name of Siskiyou. They named Yreka as the county seat.

There is a main road near the trail where the grave is, called Greenhorn rd. This thoroughfare was named because one day many years ago a young well-dressed Englishman came along the creek bed where all the old miners were panning and working the streams for gold. He asked if he might try his hand at it, and immediately struck it rich. This traditional "green-

horn luck" gave the road its name.

The buttes of this area are an east and west spur of the Greenhorn mountains, and on the side of one of these is the area that evidently belonged to Hiram Page.

On Aug. 28, 1862, a deed was made over to Page by George P. Furber and his wife for a parcel of land bounded on the east by Main rd. (Highway 99) and on the south by Greenhorn rd. On the west, the land was bounded by the range of Greenhorn hills, and on the north by the land

claims of Lorenzo Ladd and his brother. Records of this deed have been found in the Siskiyou County Recorder's office.

Further back in the records can be found evidence of deeds held by Page. In 1853, Page sold land to Charles Jacquith and Oliver Randall, as well as to John Cook. The land was located on Miner st., the main east-west street in Yreka where all the gaming houses and trading places were located.

It would appear from this evidence that Hiram Page

came from some other part of the country, and settled in Yreka with a wife and two sons.

Records Not Available

Past this point no records are available to tell what happened to the Page family. There is no death certificate to be found since county records go back only to 1873. It is not known who buried them or even if they died all together.

A possibility is that the family were victims of an Indian attack. There is evidence of an uprising of the Klamath

Indians about this time, but it was down the Klamath river and probably did not reach as far east as Yreka.

Another possibility is that they were the victims of a grudge fight for the property, which perhaps was rich in gold. If Hiram Page and his two older sons were murdered, it is possible that the murderers kept after Julian until they found and murdered him also. However, this does not explain the lack of mention of Mrs. Page.

Another Reason Noted

Still another reason might have been an epidemic. There is knowledge of a diphtheria epidemic in Scott Valley during the fall of 1863. There must have been

someone in the community who cared about the Page family, since they were buried on their own land, and a headstone was erected. It is probable that what killed the Page family never

will be discovered. It is indeed strange that a family could be born, live, and die with no other tangible evidence of their lives than a few paper deeds and a granite tombstone.

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Unusual Camping Trip Planned

By BOB VROMAN
Mail Tribune Staff Writer

An unusual camping trip is in store for a group of some 20 outdoor-minded Oregonians this August.

There will be no hot dogs, no flapjacks or bacon and eggs cooked over the campfire. In fact, there will be no food at all in the hikers' rucksacks.



TO LEAD GROUP—Naturalist, Odd Bjerke, above, will lead a group of 20 campers into the Three Sisters wilderness area in August on an unusual "outing." The party will live off the land for a period of 10 days. Wild plants, fish, frogs and berries will be on the menu for members of the wilderness survival course.

The party intends to "live off the land" in the remote Three Sisters wilderness area in central Oregon for a period of 10 days, eating only what they can scrounge off mother nature.

Headed by experienced naturalist Odd Bjerke, the group will partake of such wild foods as boiled skunk cabbage, various roots and

herbs, berries, trout or perhaps an occasional water snake or frog legs.

A Training Course

"This excursion is not an experiment. Rather it is a training course in wilderness survival," Bjerke explained. "It will involve the physiological and psychological aspects of survival training and members of the party will learn first hand how to procure and prepare wilderness foods," Bjerke added.

Bjerke himself has lived under such conditions, eating porcupine, roasted grasshoppers, squirrel and wild grasses. Cat tail and water lily roots and fir needle tea have served as fare around his evening campfire. He claims that it is no problem at all to get one's 1,500 calories daily from nature's store.

The trek will begin with a two-day indoctrination session at Diamond Lake YMCA camp, where Bjerke is camp director this year, and the group will proceed to Scott Lake on the fringe of the wilderness area by bus. Here they will see the last of civilization for the 10-day period... with one exception.

Load of 'Goodies'

On the fifth day out, an airplane will drop a load of "goodies" by parachute. There will be fresh meat, bread, vegetables and perhaps even ice cream... enough for a good meal for everyone. Then the group will be back on its own resources for the rest of the period.

The party will consist of boys 14 years of age and over, as well as adults. A southern Oregon physician and a minister will be among those making the trip.

Bjerke said there are still a few openings to round out the roster and that he would welcome young men with camping experience (and an unfussy appetite) to join them on the venture. Inquiries may be sent directly to the Diamond Lake YMCA camp, he said.

One of Best Qualified

Bjerke, who is well known for his outdoor adventure films, and who was one of the leaders of the Geophysical Year expedition to the Greenland ice cap, is probably one of the best qualified men in the field of wilderness survival in the world today.

"Being able to recognize and prepare wild foods will be only one of the phases of survival technique stressed on this trip," Bjerke said. Building comfortable shelters, wilderness safety, health practice and mental attitude will all enter into the total picture, he added.

Although survival was second nature to many of our forebearers, Bjerke feels there is a great need to reintroduce this knowledge to our younger generation, and that there are far too few teachers in this field.

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