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MIRAGES OF THE DESERT

Many Delusions of The Desert of Lake County--Band of Antelope Seen by Moonlight.

Many people are under the impression that mirages are only seen on the great desert of Sahara. People of Oregon do not generally know these phenomena are seen on the Oregon "desert." It is a fact, however, and some of the most deceptive and most beautiful effects are seen while crossing the plains of the great Inland Empire. They may be seen on many points on the desert, but they are only known to be mirages in many instances by those who are acquainted with the particular locality. The most common form of mirage on the Oregon desert is the change in the appearance of landmarks, both as to shape and distance. The stranger mistakes them for actual conditions while the citizen has long known the landmarks and when the atmospheric conditions change them he is quick to detect it and call attention to it. There are also cases in which extraordinary mirages have appeared, and in which the old-time trapper and stockman have been deceived, but they are rare.

IN HARNEY VALLEY.

Some of the most beautiful effects are seen in Harney Valley, in Harney County. Harney Lake, one of the prettiest bodies of water in the state, will appear one day to be only a few miles distance when in fact it is 20 or more miles away. Mountains change their appearance, and while one day they look to be only a few miles away, on another they appear to be many miles distant. Then they change their appearance in shape. A range of mountains lying off to the east of Burns furnishes a diversion in the way of sight-seeing to the citizens. Although the range stretches across the entire Eastern portion of the valley, yet on some occasions they do not seem to be half so long as usual, and at times they appear to be cut in two in the middle or at some other point in the range.

DISTANT MOUNTAINS.

"Do you see that wide opening through that range of mountains?" inquired William Handley, a prominent stockman, near Burns one morning.

"Yes; what of it?" was the answer, for a breach at least a quarter of a mile wide appear in the range. The mountains are several hundred feet in altitude at this point, and the breach appeared to be as distinct as if it had been chiselled out. The walls at either end of the breach were as straight as a die and they appeared to be one of Nature's prettiest demonstrations of her work.

"There is no opening at all through the mountains there," said Mr. Henley. "They are just as solid there as they are to the right and left of the place where there appears to be a breach."

"You are not serious, Mr. Hanley?" was suggested.

"Sure!" was the reply.

"Well, how do you account for it?"

"It's a mirage," replied the stockman.

It was early in the morning and the stranger was requested to look over that way in the afternoon and he would be convinced.

Sure enough, by the middle of the day the breach had disappeared, and the range was once more solid, clear across the eastern border of the valley. At another time the breach will appear at another point in the range but the effects are so real that none except those who are familiar with the country would know that it was only a mirage.

The most beautiful effects are visible at sunrise. At this time one may see many effects, which if one will watch, one will see disappear in regular order as the sun rises and throws on a different light. Then they appear again, often with a different effect at sunset, and some most remarkable spectacles have been seen on a clear night. Animals on the desert have appeared to those familiar with them to be of more than ten times their size, and the most experienced have been dumfounded by this phenomenon.

WINTER ON THE DESERT.

In company with a Lake county trapper I experienced a most remarkable case of the latter kind. We were travelling in a buckboard on the winter range in the mid-desert. The surrounding mountains were all covered with snow, and this as a background gave a peculiar brightness to the light, both by day and night. The section we were in was void of inhabitants. Coyotes, sage hens and antelope were plentiful and I kept up a constant warfare on the sage hens and antelope—that is, when we came close enough to the latter to get a shot.

In making a roundabout trip on the desert in mid-winter we often had to make long drives to reach sheep camps or supply points. On the Oregon desert where the sheepmen spend the winter, they have established supply houses—mere cabins or shacks at a day's travel apart, which are for common use. The trapper and I had spent several days at the foot of Mount Juniper, nearly 100 miles from the nearest human habitation, in company with two men who had a vast herd of sheep. The trapper had been busy in the canyons and gulches and had a number of coyote, wildcat and marten hides as a result, while I had been busy supplying the camp with sage hens, and had brought down one antelope.

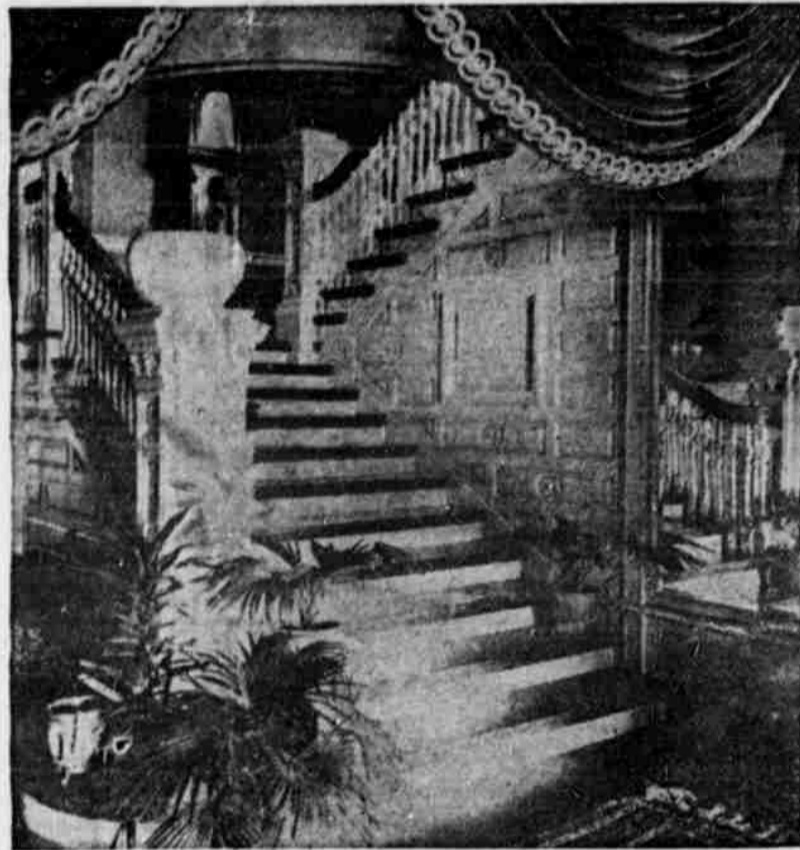
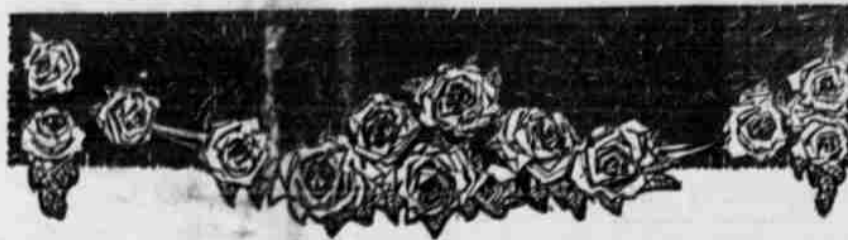
A NIGHT DRIVE.

From Camp Juniper we started early one morning for Windy Hollow, a distance of 50 miles. The roads were rough. At one point the trail lay through a wide stretch of lava beds and we were several hours making the distance of five miles. It was known that we were in a great antelope country, but luck had been against us during the day, and we had not seen one of these much coveted animals, though "sign" was abundant. Night came on while we were still several miles from our destination, but we were compelled to drive on in order to obtain water for ourselves and the horses.

It must have been at least ten o'clock. The stars were shining brightly and the clear, crispy, cold evening gave everything an exaggerated appearance and made the slightest noise sound much louder than under ordinary circumstances. The myriad of coyotes that were following and howling in the distance sounded like a thousand demons.

ANTELOPE.

We had driven some distance in silence, each buttoning his coat to



RECEPTION HALL IN THE WASHINGTON HOME OF SENATOR FORAKER.

One of the most homelike of Washington residences is the big yellow mansion on Sixteenth street which is the home of Senator Joseph B. Foraker of Ohio. In former years it has been the Foraker girls whose friends have filled the big rooms with merrymaking. Now that both the daughters are married the gatherings are less youthful, but none the less frequent and well attended, for Mrs. Foraker is a social leader and a charming hostess.

keep out the chill night air, and each carrying a repeating rifle across his lap from force of habit while in that country. Suddenly the horses shied, and the trapper, who was driving, threw the brake and drew the reins. At the same time he nudged me in the side and said in a low breath:

"Antelope!"

We had been watching for them all day and I immediately scanned the country about us. But I was kept searching for them but an instant. To the left, and on my side of the vehicle, a great band of animals stood, not over 40 yards away, and they were moving restlessly about and nodding their heads up or down, just as antelopes do. I raised my rifle, a Marlin loaded with powder and steel-jacketed cartridges, and took aim at the nearest one. Just as I was about to pull the trigger, the trapper stopped me.

"Don't shoot yet!" he said in a whisper, "there may be a mistake. It might be sheep. Step down to the ground and walk toward them until you get closer—they won't run at night."

I eased down out of the seat, greatly disappointed, for I was positive that they were antelope, and walked a few steps toward them and again raised my gun to my shoulder. Just as I was ready to pull the trigger, again came the warning from the trapper:

"Don't shoot unless you are certain!"

"I am sure," I replied.

"Then let 'em have it," he consented in a louder tone than before.

EARTH SWALLOWED THEM.

I raised my gun to my shoulder again, and as I did so the long line of animals disappeared as suddenly as though the earth had swallowed them up. I looked up at the trapper and I saw from his silence and steadfast gaze in the direction where

the animals had first appeared that he, too, was surprised.

But in a minute the animals appeared again, though a little farther away this time, just as large and numerous as ever.

"Now, shoot!" hissed the trapper.

I again raised my gun to my shoulder and the objects disappeared as completely as before. Two or three times they did this in succession.

"Go nearer to them," said the trapper.

Holding the gun ready for action, I started in a cautious walk toward the point where the animals were last seen. I walked for a hundred yards and there was nothing in view except the level plain which lay out in front of me for miles. I was about to turn back when I stumbled into a large bunch of sagegrass. As I did this a sage hen rose and sailed away, and another and another followed until a great flock had taken its flight.

TRAPPER SOLVES IT.

It was a puzzler to the trapper, who had spent his life on the plains, but we were compelled to admit that our antelope were no more nor no less than a flock of the plains birds. And the horses had been as badly fooled as we, for we had driven through large flocks of the sage hens during the day and they had never noticed them until they appeared in the spectre-like form of antelope that night.

"It was only a mirage," said the trapper, after we had driven some distance in silence.

Strange as it may seem there are five newspapers in Lake county, and four of them are Republican in politics. These four papers are all strongly in favor of Hermann for Congress. Lake should roll up a big majority for the popular ex-land Commissioner.

LOOKS LIKE A RAILROAD

Promising Outlook for a Railroad to Lakeview--N. C. O. Road Will Build this Summer.

Last week The Examiner published an article in regard to the early extension of the N. C. & O. Railroad to Lakeview and while it might have been merely conjecture, there is no doubt a great deal of truth in the report. A friend of The Examiner who was in Reno previous to the departure of Mr. Dunaway of that road, on April 23d for a three months tour of Europe, says there is no doubt in his mind but what the road will be extended this summer from Madeline, and that next year will see the road in Lakeview. Mr. Dunaway will look up the matter of buying rails for his road while abroad. It is also understood, and this report has been confirmed, that the Gould system would shortly build a road through Beckwith Pass, and that it was only a matter of time when the N. C. & O. would be owned by the Gould system. The railroad situation certainly looks promising for Lake county. With the Portland business men prodding up the O. R. & N., and the Columbia Southern, and the San Francisco business men holding onto the trade of this county, and occasionally pushing the N. C. & O., up this way a few miles further in order to grasp a firmer hold of this trade, there seems to be no doubt as to the result. Portland wants this trade and is entitled to it, but she hasn't got it. San Francisco has had this trade for many years, and she don't want to lose it. Lakeview is like a young girl with two ardent lovers, both of whom she liked very well, and would marry both if she could.

The Vote For Goddess.

Two new candidates have entered the race this week for Goddess of Liberty in the names of Kate Woodcock, and Lena Maloy. The two leading candidates are a tie with 16 votes each. The total vote follows:

Anna Down.....	Lakeview	16
Kate Woodcock.....	"	16
Mae Snider.....	"	15
Ada Woodcock.....	"	2
Myrtle Smith.....	Crooked Creek	2
Alta Spray.....	Davis Creek	1
Frances Jones.....	Palsley	1
Ida Howard.....	Drews Valley	1
Ottie Field.....	Lakeview	1
Mabel Pryor.....	"	1
Ollie Heryford.....	"	1
Carrie Tonningsen.....	"	1
Genie Snelling.....	"	1
Bertha Nickerson.....	"	1
Effie Nyswaner.....	"	1
Essie Gupton.....	"	1
Lena Maloy.....	"	1

Another Portland Fire.

A great conflagration along the northern waterfront of Portland occurred May 1st, this being the twentieth fire in Portland in the last thirty days. The Western Lumber Company's mills, Martin's planing mills and the Union Stock yards are a total loss, and a number of other mills, factories and dwellings were damaged or destroyed. The immense Linsced Oil tanks were seriously threatened. A boiler exploded in one of the mills and it is reported two perhaps were killed and three badly injured. One hundred firemen and spectators were cut off by the flames and forced to throw themselves into the Willamette river to save their lives. It is not known whether all escaped or not. The total loss is estimated at \$260,000 with but small insurance.