

EVERY HISTORIAN, explorer or researcher finds that he has two sides to his nature. One he tries to subdue and the other he works to expand. There is an insatiable appetite for answers to questions that have defied solution. The side that must be subdued is that which tries to tempt and lure him away from goals he has set for himself.

In 1965, for the first time since we began doing research on the Superstition Mountains, we felt ourselves being torn between the factual thinking of historical research and the lustful thinking of a treasure hunter on the scent of a bonanza. We were invited by the mythical Travis Marlowe to walk beside him on an ancient treasure trail, created by the Spaniards who mined in these mountains over a century ago.

While our eyes and thoughts tried to observe everything with a serious and dedicated attitude, we began to feel the infectious excitement of what it means to be a treasure hunter. Your heart beats faster, your blood runs a little hotter, and the taste of gold and silver becomes so strong in your mouth that you forget for a moment your initial purpose.

The new sensation, unlike anything we had felt before, was consumed by the "hungry side," when it reminded us that *here* were answers to unsolved questions, and that *we* were here to record them. We had gratefully accepted the invitation from Mr. Marlowe to come and walk the Peralta treasure trail that has lain under the camouflage of the Arizona desert for 118 years. We saw Marlowe's famous Peralta Maps in their entirety and were allowed to hike beside him as he led us up the trail that he knows will lead him to the unbelievable wealth hidden deep in the Superstitions. We vanquished questions that had had no answers heretofore—answers that history had been unable to provide. For us, this was a dream come true.

Long, long ago a mere handful of Spaniards unintentionally left the curse of ignorance and frustration upon those of us who would succeed them centuries later seeking evidence of their past. Our ambition has been to somehow break through the barriers of time and to unravel the mystery of what really transpired in the Superstition Mountains of southern Arizona.

Maybe we could have selected a more difficult area to study, but quite frankly, it doesn't seem possible. To coax these mountains to yield the facts we seek has been quite a task. The old Superstitions are undoubtedly the most exasperating mountains that God ever took the fancy to create—one huge contradictory mass! For over twenty years we have tried to learn the truth about her two most debatable phases.

OUR MAIN INTEREST is what the Superstitions have secretly hidden from the prying and probing of other eyes. Her boundaries are bulging with the priceless remains of a prehistoric age which the average visitors choose to ignore. They seem to be more interested in the legendary "Lost Dutchman Gold Mine" and are oblivious to the real wealth imprisoned here. The monotonous story of the Dutchman is all the public has been allowed to know. Little has been told of the many cliff dwellings waiting to be explored, ancient burial grounds, pit houses, artifacts and petroglyphs that date from the prehistoric "Ho-Ho-Kam" to the Indians of a more recent period. The sudden and mysterious flight of these "Ancient Ones" from their homeland has

driven archaeologists to despair in search of answers to who—where—what—why?

Only in 1963 did a partial answer come to this highly debatable subject of the prehistoric Indian. It is a book that the Indians finally had to write themselves. *Book Of The Hopi* by Frank Waters and Oswald White Bear Fredricks has solved many riddles about the origin of these ancient people, the reasons behind their abrupt and unexplainable migration from not only the Superstitions, but throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Then, in 1964, came proof of the explorations of the Peraltas who gave the Superstitions her second aura of mystery. To fully appreciate the fantastic discovery that was made—whether your interest lies in history or treasure—you must first become better acquainted with the Peralta family. The Peraltas, in search of new deposits of gold and silver, came to this southernmost end of the Pinal Mountain Range in the mid 1840s. Their mines in Chihuahua, Mexico, were showing dangerous signs of becoming worked out.

History also tells us that they located riches in the Superstitions, but what proof was there? Faint clues of their presence throughout the area—arrastres, acres of stumps from trees that must have been used to fire their adobe furnaces and to build ladders to descend into the funnel-shaped mines characteristic of early Mexican mining—these still did not prove that great wealth was attained! The Peraltas left odd hieroglyphics chiseled into the sides of cliffs and boulders throughout the area of the mighty Superstitions, but again, what good were the gold signs and Spanish measurements if no one could decipher them?

In the many books we have read concerning the Peraltas, we found no two

thus corroborating the story of the Peralta Massacre as they fled the mountains.

THE PROOF of these things was found in 1949, but was not made public until 1964. Signed by Don Miguel Peralta and his eldest son, Pedro, three carved stone maps dated 1847 were at last discovered which told the true story of the Peraltas and the fate that was destined to be theirs in the mountains of the Apache Thunder Gods.

Twice the stone tablets confirm the year Don Miguel and Pedro worked the mines. Before the signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), which would bring the area of the mines under the jurisdiction of the United States, Territory of Arizona, the Peraltas made one last effort to mine all the gold and silver they could while the area was still part of Sonora, Mexico.

They left Chihuahua with a large group of miners and camp laborers. The number of men in the expedition's party has been disputed. Some books say 400, some say 68. Let us assume that the number is not important; the fact that the expedition was formed and actually took place is important.

Once they reached the Superstition Mountains and mining was underway, the men must have experienced some harassment from the Apaches because they were digging into and desecrating the sacred grounds of the Indians. The raids at first were probably considered merely a nuisance, but as mining activities increased, so did the number of Apaches. The Peraltas must have sensed danger when it became evident the Indians meant to rid themselves of the trespassers.

Don Miguel's youngest son, Enrico, had been left behind in Mexico to manage the family estate in Chihuahua. It was for him the maps were intended. This is the

By JACK AND BERNICE MCGEE

Photos Courtesy Authors

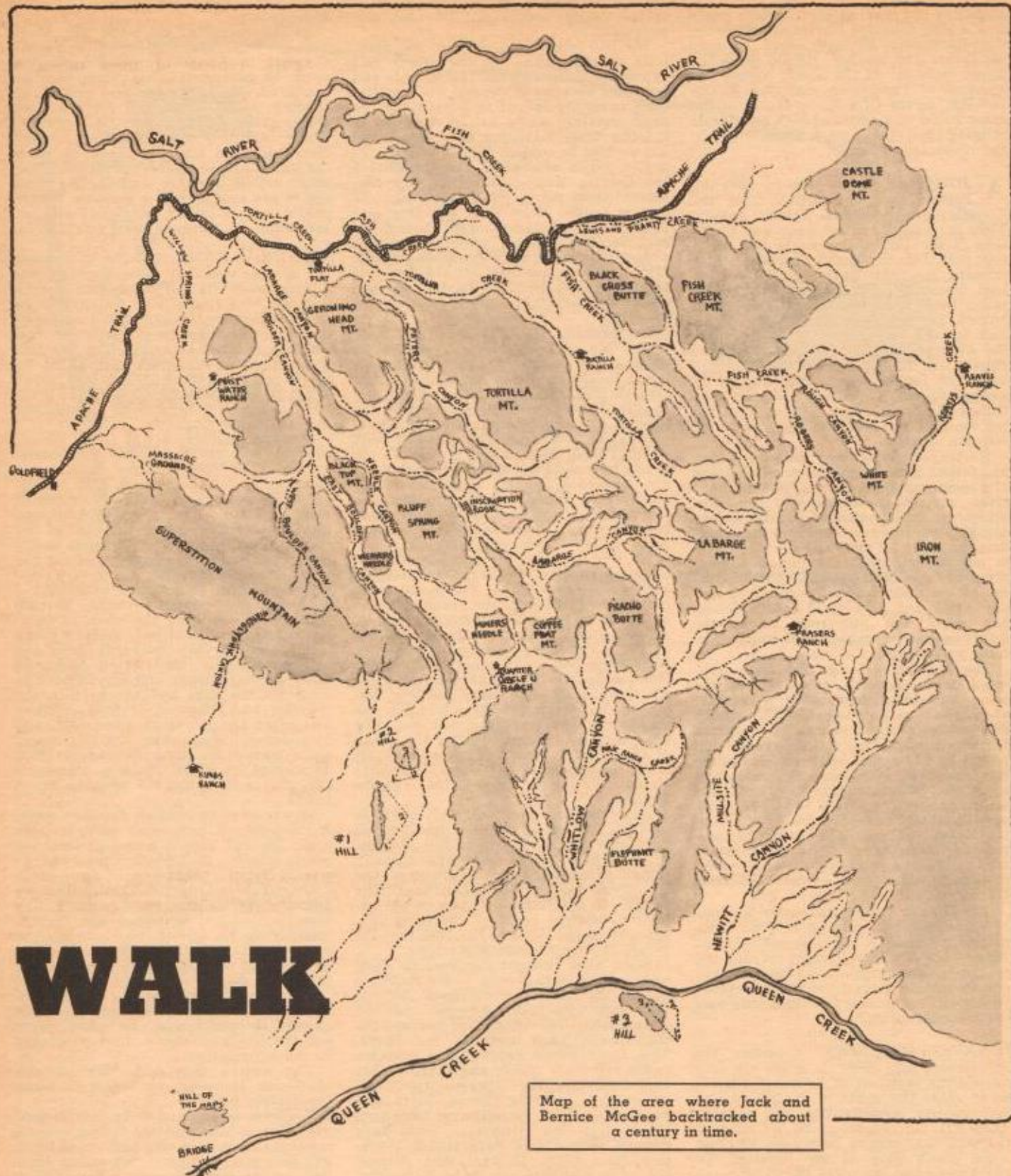
INVITATION TO A GHOST



Through the Superstitions winds a trail so dim that only wraiths—and one man—can see it clearly. The Peraltas laid it out a hundred years ago and they travel it still

stories alike. We will not add to the confusion by repeating them. The story we are about to relate should clear up once and for all that it was the Peraltas who were in the Superstitions, and exactly which members of the family made the historic expedition. It will also prove that the Peraltas found the riches they were seeking, what they were, and the fact that they were forced to leave the greatest portion of the treasure behind,

reason the maps were so carefully prepared. The existing maps reveal that the Peraltas did have time to make them, bury them, and set up the puzzling trail to match the explicit directions carved into the stones. They must have realized that in the event of their capture, death or what-have-you, Enrico would eventually come to investigate the disappearance of his father and brother. Enrico had never seen the mines; therefore, the maps



WALK

had to be hidden somewhere along the trail from Chihuahua in hopes they would be found.

The Peraltas' premonition of death came true. In trying to escape the irate Apaches, they ran directly into a trap prepared for them at the northwest corner of Superstition Mountain. Either they were driven this way purposely by the Indians, or they thought this route offered them the nearest and fastest exit

toward the safety of the open desert to the west. As they passed through the gap behind Superstition Mountain, less than a mile from safety, they were ambushed and slaughtered.

It is known that they tried to take some of the gold with them. A horsehide pouch reported to contain \$18,000 in gold was found by a prospector in 1916 while he was walking across the now historic Massacre Grounds. The pouch

either had been dropped during the melee or had been cut loose from the pack-mules after the butchering of man and animals had taken place on that gruesome date in 1848.

The irony of the Peralta story did not end with their death. News of their fate reached Don Enrico twelve years later when a padre told the story as told to him by an Apache convert. This ended the suspense and uncertainty as to the where-

abouts of the missing men. Twelve years was a long time for Enrico to remember the discussions he had heard between his father and brother. He did know the mines were far to the north, beyond the missions of Tumacacori and San Xavier Del Bac, to the Gila River. North of the river would be a series of high mountains ranging from east to west. These would be the mountains of gold.

A JOURNEY was made in 1865 by Enrico and his cousins from the Gonzales branch of the Peralta family. They successfully made their way to the Gila River and there made the error that cost them the Peralta fortune. After crossing the Gila, Enrico veered too far east from the markers that would have taken him to where the maps had been buried. The Gonzales trail swung north-east toward Picket Post Mountain, past the eventual towns of Silver King and Pinal, not founded until eleven years after the family passed this way in its gallant search. If Enrico had only continued due north, after crossing the Gila, he would have changed the course of Arizona history.

Enrico, of course, was not aware that his father and Pedro had tried to leave him messages along the trail north of the river, nor was he aware that after the massacre, work parties of Apache women and children had been sent into the mountains to cover all traces of the mines. (It is not believed that the Indian convert divulged this information.) Without the aid of the stone maps, the stores of hidden silver and gold could not be found, nor could the numerous mines the Apaches had concealed with such cunning perfection.

The Indians laid logs from the iron-wood tree over the entrances to the mines, plastered them with a mixture of caliche and water that hardens much like concrete when dried, and covered the whole with sand, rocks, boulders and plants to harmonize with the surrounding landscape. No trace of these mines has been found to this day, with the possible exception of the Goldfield Mine, approximately two miles from the site of the Massacre Grounds. This will be mentioned a little later in our story, but it does make one wonder when the other seventeen mines will crumble in from rotting timbers.

The Peralta family was never destined to experience the triumph of their hard-gained prosperity. The ghosts of Don Miguel and Pedro still roam through the mountains and canyons waiting for someone to release them from their surveillance over the treasure for which they paid the ultimate price.

TRAVIS MARLOWE possesses the secrets they hold. He is the one who opened the backdoor of time and allowed us to enter the world of a century ago. All theories, probabilities and hearsay were left far behind as he led us over the trail that was to have been Enrico's—the ghost walk of the Peraltas. To our knowledge, we were the first to be shown the secret trail. Mr. Marlowe has permitted us to share with the readers of *TRUE WEST* this incredible pilgrimage.

June 12, 1964 marked the beginning of a strange chain of events in our lives. On that day *Life Magazine* released the extraordinary news that the maps existed and told about the man who owned them—Travis Marlowe. This was the news for which we had waited so long. We felt self-satisfied and happy that "someone" had finally come along and jerked a knot

in the stingy carcass of "Old Lady Superstition."

We had wanted to contact Mr. Marlowe at that time, but the article had expressed Marlowe's fear for his life and had used an alias to conceal his identity. This naturally led us to believe that he most certainly would not be receptive to a letter from strangers even if we had known how to contact him.

For weeks afterward, the thought of the Peralta Maps haunted us. We considered them pieces lost from a gigantic jigsaw puzzle. More than anything else in the world we wanted to get these missing pieces of history restored to their proper places—to see a complete picture. How could we convince Mr. Marlowe of this? Wouldn't he think it was just another approach from interested treasure hunters?

On January 18, 1965 a miracle happened. We received a letter from Travis Marlowe. It stated, "I read your article about the Superstition Mountains in the *OLD WEST* (Winter Edition, 1964) and thought it very good. Your interest in the legends and the mountains really shows up in your writings. The enclosed book is one I have written and is just off the press. It reveals the true facts that there are numerous Spanish mines and treasure to be found in these mountains. I'm sure you will be interested in these treasure maps and reading this book of some of my experiences."

He was so right! He had photographs of all six sides of the maps published in his book, *Superstition Treasures*, with small pieces of black tape covering a few of the most important symbols. This by no means took away from the importance of the maps. They were not incoherent scribbles but really beautiful works of stone sculpture. This was the first time all three maps had been publicly displayed. Mr. Marlowe's story told how the maps were discovered and how they had come into his possession after the death of the original finder. Marlowe then related his own story of "Disappointments Versus Triumphs" along the Peralta Trail.

After reading his book and carefully studying his maps, we were more excited than ever before, and were full of questions. Where were the maps actually found? Through which section of the mountains does the dotted trail lead? The answer to the latter question would establish concrete proof of the much disputed route the Peraltas had been thought to use in entering the mountains.

Some have thought the Peralta Trail went over Miners Needle at the southern end of the Pinal; others have said the Spaniards went to the extreme west end of Superstition Mountain and followed the old Apache Trail north to Salt River. This route would have gained entrance to the tributary creeks and canyons that cuts deeply into the Superstitions' interior regions, creating the corridors and passageways that we ourselves have used to penetrate the mountains. Some have thought they circled Superstition Mountain from south to west, and entered behind its northern side to reach Boulder Canyon which runs the entire length of the area from Salt River. The latter had seemed the most plausible since it was the route they chose for escape when attacked by the Apaches. To our astonishment, when we later were taken over the Peralta Trail indicated by the maps, it was none of these.

Another question about which we were concerned was the type marker the Peraltas found to use in this arid land. In what condition were the markers when

discovered?

In the course of his letter Mr. Marlowe included the number of a postoffice box in Apache Junction where he could be contacted. This made possible a note of thanks for the nice gesture of sending us his book, and for the kind words about our article in *OLD WEST*. Thus began a correspondence which lasted till the time we were to leave for Arizona to do some research for another article we were writing. We tried not to ask anything of a personal nature in our letters to Mr. Marlowe; any information he gave us was volunteered.

WHEN IT CAME time for us to leave for Arizona we gave Marlowe our address there. He had told us that Apache Junction was full of men claiming to be Travis Marlowe. Nothing could be easier to do since no one knew Marlowe's real identity or what he looked like. We jokingly answered his letter stating that we would recognize the true Travis Marlowe from the large bottle of aspirin he probably carries for headaches he inherited along with the maps.

We had planned to stay in an out-of-the-way spot called Tortilla Flat, about twenty miles from Apache Junction on the Apache Trail. Tortilla Flat is conveniently near the tributary canyons of the Salt River—Willow Spring, LaBarge, and Boulder Canyons to the west of us; Peters, Tortilla and Ash Canyons to the east. Tortilla Flat is comprised of one gas station, a cafe, post office, and very comfortable cabins—population of three.

During the daylight hours, Tortilla Flat is busy meeting the needs of tourists driving the beautifully scenic Apache Trail, but only the foolhardy drive the ninety-eight-mile trail after dark. At dusk, the restaurant and service station close for the day, and heaven help the traveler who runs out of food or gasoline after the sun goes down. Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Stepan, who own this desert oasis, warned us about opening our door to anyone at night. Such a statement doesn't exactly make for sleeping like a baby!

It was hard to imagine anyone's walking around out here after dark, because when the sun sets it seems to take the moon with it. It is blacker than the inside of Satan's heart.

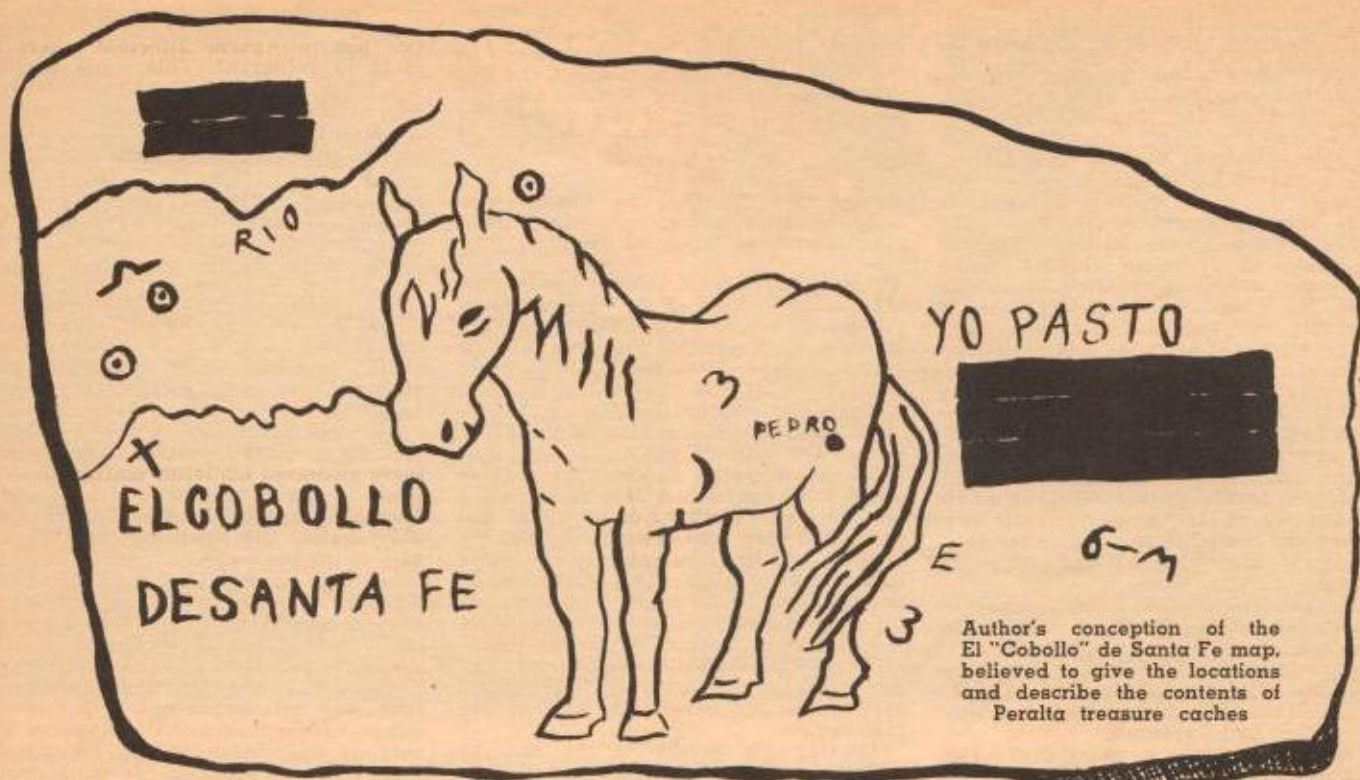
On our second night in Tortilla Flat we heard a car laboring up Apache Trail's steep incline and wondered if a tourist, misjudging his timing, had been caught on the trail. Frankly, we were dismayed to hear the car pull up in front of our cabin and stop.

When we threw open the door in answer to a knock, a nice-looking couple quickly stepped inside and asked, "Are you the McGees?" We nodded our heads in the affirmative.

The woman then said, "We are the Marlowes. However, we forgot to bring the aspirin bottle."

We were so shocked to be face to face with Travis Marlowe that it took several moments to recover. We just stood there grinning like two jackasses eating thistles. In our last letter we had said that we would love to meet them if they thought it wise but, if not, we would certainly understand their reasons. We hadn't dreamed they would take us up on the invitation.

Now that Travis Marlowe was here, what were we going to do with him? Have you ever tried to carry on a conversation with a stranger and not ask a single question of him? Try it sometime, and see how long discussing the weather will last.



Author's conception of the El "Cobollo" de Santa Fe map, believed to give the locations and describe the contents of Peralta treasure caches

The Marlowes were quick to sense our predicament and carried us through a very awkward situation with such grace and warmth that within a matter of minutes we were all settled down with a large pot of coffee between us and talking like old friends. We assured the Marlowes that by not asking questions of them it was not through lack of interest—on the contrary, we would be interested in anything they could tell us—but due to the unusual circumstances of the meeting we felt foolishly afraid to quiz them. Once both of our positions were made clear, we felt much more at ease.

Mr. Marlowe explained many things to us that evening. He elaborated on how the maps were found, and thrilled us with stories concerning discoveries he had made while wandering alone in the desert, making his way from one Peralta marker to the next. Most of our conversation that night centered around the Peralta family. The Marlowes are definitely in the position to appreciate the intelligence of the Peraltas, and praised the brilliant and shrewd manner in which Don Miguel's and Pedro's talented hands and quick intellects joined forces to create their masterpieces of cartographic art.

After several years of trial and error, Marlowe discovered the secret to the maps' hidden meanings. He knew his translations had proven correct when he continued to find one permanent marker after another, each telling him the direction or location of the next series.

WE HAD BROUGHT our copy of *Superstition Treasures* with us and Mr. Marlowe used the maps pictured inside to help us associate the route with the various markers he was describing. He pointed out things on the maps that were so obvious we had overlooked them.

Map Number One, the first to be found, had a horse carved on one side; a witch or priest on the other. Marlowe explained that this map gave the directions to two

other maps buried a few yards from it, and it also described what the treasure would be at the end of the trail—one cache of silver and one of gold. It further described the eighteen mines from which the treasure came. However, the other two maps had to be used with this one before any solution to the mysterious maze of crosses, hearts, numerals, circles and Spanish phrases could be found.

The map of the horse looked like a lovely piece of art work—nothing more! Marlowe told us this was the engraved story of the "silver cache." The lock or mane over the forehead of the horse turns into the numeral "2" when viewed from a side angle; the mane as it continues down the neck spells out the letters "mill," an abbreviation of the Spanish word, *millón*. Farther down, on the horse's side, is a crescent, the symbol for silver. Thus far it reads, "two million in silver." To the right of the horse is the inscription *yo pasto* (I pasture); where he pastures is concealed under black tape.

On the top left-hand corner of the map are two river lines; the word *rio* is written beneath the northernmost line, which incidentally conforms to the topographic lines of Salt River. The bottom line is the surprise. It is *not* the Gila River as others, including us, have thought. After reading Marlowe's book, many have guessed the Gila River, and have been thrown off-course. It is none other than Queen Creek, which we have used on numerous occasions when exploring the desert with trail machines. The creek bed is usually dry, a wide avenue devoid of rocks and cactus, making a quick means of travel.

Between the two river-lines are three small circles with a dot in each center, like doughnuts. In the area of the three doughnuts we noticed a peculiar sign that can best be described as a straight line that has humped itself in the middle much like one segment of an inch-worm. When we remarked that the same sign appears on the opposite side of the horse

map, Marlowe informed us that these are signs of the two caches.

The numeral "3" is carved close to the silver crescent, and is repeated behind the horse's hindfoot. The numbers "3" and "8" will be used quite extensively throughout the story, as you will notice.

We talked for nearly three hours before Marlowe suddenly stood and announced it was time to leave. We were so grateful that he and his wife had given us so much of their time, a great deal more than we had hoped for, but when they walked out the door they would be taking with them the answers to questions we had dared not ask. We hated to see them disappear into the anonymous world they have been forced to build around themselves.

The Marlowes had been saving the biggest surprise of all until the last moment. We can only assume that in the hours spent talking, Mr. Marlowe had reached the conclusion that we were sincerely interested in getting the true history of the Peraltas and were not treasure-competing intent on picking his brain clean of the hard-earned knowledge he had had to acquire from years of walking across the hell of a desert summer, freezing in an unexpected winter snowstorm, and enduring months of a loneliness that only he could know.

On the point of departure, Marlowe stepped back into our doorway and said, "If you can work it into your schedule, I would like to take you with me on the Peralta Trail. It will help answer some of the questions I know both of you have been wanting to ask."

COULD WE fit it into our schedule?

Good-Gosh-Almighty! From that instant all former plans were forgotten. Two days later we joined the Marlowes on one of the most unforgettable adventures of our lives. It began on Thursday, April 22, 1965. We rose at a very early hour as it was a long drive from Tortilla Flat to the meeting place Mr.

Marlowe had designated. Excitement was running high on the way out of the mountains that morning.

We finally reached the desert flats and as we looked across the plain toward the rising foothills and mountains ahead of us, lavender mist enveloped the forest of giant saguaros like an eerie shroud. The wisps of fog created a ghostly veil through which we would soon enter, to walk through a century of time.

The Marlowes were waiting. We were briefed as to where we would be taken and what would be expected of us. We would be free to take photographs of anything we liked with three exceptions—Mr. Marlowe, his wife, and his desert mode of transportation.

While standing beside their waiting vehicle, drinking the coffee Mrs. Marlowe had brought to wake us up a little bit, we stared into the gloom and listened for the sounds of desert life which we should have heard. This was our first evidence of feeling uncomfortable; how lonely and quiet it was. We felt completely isolated from the world of living things.

It was an appropriate time to bring up the subject of Marlowe's ghostly visitor which he had written of in his book. Marlowe lifted his hand, and with a wide sweep of his outstretched palm, he indicated the mountain where the strange apparition had appeared.

"Right over there is where Pedro Peralta came to see me." We almost choked on our coffee when we saw how near we were standing to Pedro's favorite haunting-ground.

Mr. Marlowe had told the story of finding a replica of the three-tiered pedestal pictured on the opposite side of the horse-map. The priest stands atop such a pedestal, his long robes flowing down its back and side. The pedestal proved to be a three-tiered cliff, chisled from a mountainside by nature, not by the Peraltas. In centuries past, a lava flow had spilled over the sides of three pyramidal levels of the cliff, and had swirled and folded into the sweeping lines that precisely match the draped robes of the priest.

While Marlowe was examining a hole he had found bored through the top tier of the pedestal, a specter appeared on the ridge opposite from where he was working. At first glance the apparition looked like part of the landscape with which Marlowe had become so familiar during the weeks he spent clearing the tunnel.

An outline of a saguaro on the horizon can easily be mistaken for a human being. The figure might have escaped notice had Marlowe not been attracted by the movement caused from materializing and fading away, reappearing and disappearing. Mr. Marlowe watched for a time, not trusting his eyes at what he was witnessing. At last the figure of a man came into permanent focus. He remained visible long enough for Mr. Marlowe to get a long look at the ghost of a man he knew beyond all doubt to be Pedro Peralta. The general appearance and manner of dress confirmed his identity.

The man looked at Mr. Marlowe and smiled. He continued to smile all the while he stood on the ridge looking down. Just before vanishing, he lifted his hand and motioned for the digging to continue. Marlowe began to dig where Pedro had pointed and when he looked up again, the apparition had disappeared. Marlowe never saw him again.

It made our blood run a little cold to think of Pedro playing hide-and-seek somewhere out there in the half-light, and we wondered how we would react if

we should see his shadow lurking behind some rock or saguaro. We sincerely believe there wouldn't be enough room in the entire width and breadth of the Superstitions for the two McGees and one century-old ghost—it is said that ghosts won't hurt you, but they can sure as hell make you hurt yourself!

As we piled into Marlowe's jeep and started into the haze we prayed that Señor Peralta would respectfully stay off the trails we would be using.

WE STARTED at the very beginning—the genesis of the Peralta Maps, the Burial Place. The route of the Peraltas began from this spot and was of major importance to the facts we were seeking.

The maps intended for Enrico Peralta were accidentally unearthed from their burial plot in 1949 by a man who had never been in the Superstitions before and had no intention of ever becoming a treasure hunter. This man, whom Mr. Marlowe calls Jack, was driving through Arizona on a summer vacation. While driving along Highway 60-70-80-89, he and his family were being entertained by the magnificent view of the Superstition Mountains. In the hope of seeing Weavers Needle, the famous spire of rock that lies behind the heights of "Old Supe," Jack pulled his car to the side of the highway.

Leaving his family in the car, he walked into the desert toward a small hill, thinking the slightly higher elevation would enable him to catch a glimpse of the peak.

Weavers Needle is beautiful and worth seeing on its own merit, but was made famous by the Dutchman, Jacob Von Walzer, when he used the name of Weavers Needle in the riddles connected with the location of his legendary Lost Dutchman Mine. He said, "From my mine you can climb up a short distance and see Weavers Needle." What he forgot to mention was that you can see the Needle from twenty miles in any direction depending on the right elevation and location.

It was on this hill which Jack had innocently climbed for nothing more than a view, that he found the first of the maps. If he could have foreseen what the maps held in store, he would have left them lying there—for the stone over which he had fallen would send him to his grave within a few short years.

When Jack looked back to find the cause of his tumble, he saw a triangular piece of rock sticking out of the sand. Closer inspection revealed scratches or cuts which did not appear to be accidental. Dislodging the stone from its resting place, he found he had tripped over one corner of a rectangular slab 17x22x3 inches, weighing approximately 25 pounds. This was the map of the horse and priest. In 1950 after a year of study, Jack returned to the area and uncovered two more maps equal in size to the first, plus a smaller heart-shaped map, chisled and shaped to fit inside of map Number Three.

Within six years after making his first discovery on this hill, Jack was dead. The young, healthy man had succumbed to the strain of backbreaking work under the rigorous conditions that only the Superstitions can impose. You who have experienced laboring for a time in these mountains will understand.

Fear of those who might learn about his secret, hard work, heat, cold, frustration and disappointment were the only rewards Jack received for his gallant attempt to locate the Peralta treasure.

His heart could not stand the years of toil, nor his nerves the strain. Perhaps the curse of the Apaches still hangs over those who trespass into the realm of their Thunder Gods in search of gold.

Mr. Marlowe had been a close friend of Jack and had asked to help in the search, but Jack had wanted to try it alone. In 1956, Jack's widow brought the maps to Marlowe announcing she no longer wanted any part of them. This then, marked the beginning of our friend's nine years on the Peralta Trail.

THE MOST IMPORTANT question to be answered at the hill was, "How was Enrico to know that the maps were buried here, this very inconspicuous spot at least seven miles south of the mountains?"

The explanation was simple. Jack had put the cart before the horse when accidentally tripping over the partially exposed stone. South of the hill where the maps had been hidden was a gigantic old saguaro that had been bored out. The hole went completely through it. When looking through the neatly drilled hole, the height of a man's head, it became much like a view-finder on a camera. The hill was the dominant picture and the burial place was the center focus. This would be the spot to dig. Once the first map was uncovered, it led to the others. Directions were written on the map of the priest. "*Este Bereda Es Peligroso*," (This trail is dangerous), "*Yo Voy 18 Lugares*" (I go eighteen places [mines]), "*Busca El Mapa, Busca El Corazon*" (Look for the map, look for the heart).

The trail from here was found only after Mr. Marlowe had figured out the complicated system of triangulations and compass degrees. Compass degrees are the important clues concealed beneath the tapes. It had been arranged into a series of three markers, each forming a triangle. At the apex of the triangle would be a rock pointer or some similar object giving the direction of the next set of triangulated markers. At the most important locations, compass directions would have to be taken from the stone maps.

In this manner Marlowe was taken from the "Hill of the Maps" and was led closer to the canyon which the Peraltas had wanted Enrico to use in entering mountains. The answer to this puzzling canyon was saved until almost the end of our journey with Marlowe. The suspense was agonizing, but there was a good reason for it.

From the hill north of the Queen Creek Bridge, we began moving in a northeasterly direction toward a low, hog-backed ridge whose ugly, jagged spine thrust itself upward from the desert's surface for a quarter-mile. It resembled a sleeping dinosaur of gigantic proportions.

On the southeast corner of the prehistoric outcropping was a set of Peralta petroglyphs—circles with dotted centers and a dagger pointing out the direction to be taken. Mr. Marlowe has interpreted the profusion of circles to represent "Sunflower" and has named this particular stretch of the Peralta course the "Sunflower Trail." Near the center of the long narrow ridge was the first of the markers proving Marlowe's theory.

After leaving the flower-glyphs, using the dagger's point as a directional guide, Mr. Marlowe drove into the desert and stopped. We were surrounded by a forest of saguaros which all looked the same to us, but to him they are old friends, each having its own identity. He claims



Petroglyphs depicting a sunflower and a directional dagger mark the south boundary at Hill No. 1. The dagger points to the east boundary of the triangle which is marked by the sunflower-carved cactus in the photograph at right. The inset shows a close-up view of the marking.

to have personally inspected each saguaro in this area looking for the "something" the petroglyphs indicated he would find. We have watched him drive for miles, then suddenly pull up to one special saguaro without having to hesitate for a moment to get his bearings, even though he was among thousands of them.

It was with a great deal of awe that we stood at the base of a monumental saguaro and looked up at the work of Pedro Peralta. A beautifully carved sunflower looked down at us from a distance of perhaps eight feet. Each petal had been carefully and artistically cut into the saguaro's side. The face of the flower was at least sixteen inches across. The fleshy meat had been removed from the inner part of the design leaving the ribs of the saguaro exposed to the sun and air. A crust had formed over the incisions that were from one to one and one-half inches deep, thereby preserving the cactus and its design. Judging from its height the carving must have been done by a man on horseback. From this point on, all of the marked cactus we were to see were inscribed in the same manner and at the same height.

The Peraltas had tried to attain the ultimate in elevation when preparing a saguaro marker so that it could be seen from a greater distance. Every marker was extremely well planned. For example, this sunflower was carved on the west side of the saguaro. The trail from the flower-glyphs was to follow along the eastern side of the hog-backed ridge which roughly runs north and south. By walking along the east base of the ridge, the face of the sunflower cannot be missed. Its second function was to point toward the third part of the triangulated markers. Had the flower been carved on the opposite side of the cactus it would have gone completely unnoticed. This is why one cannot vary one iota from the specified trail—one slip and the trail is lost.

We thought it odd that the Peraltas had chosen the sunflower to represent this section of the trail for it seemed so out of place in this arid wasteland. We later did research and found that at one time this entire valley was covered with them. Although they are now almost extinct around the base of the Superstitions, the sunflower can still be seen on rare occasions after a heavy rainfall.

BY USING the stone maps, along with what he had already found on and near the ridge, Marlowe located his first set of triangulated markers: the glyphs to the south of the ridge, the sunflower marker to the east, and the most important marker which was located to the west-northwest of the Sleeping Dinosaur. In his search for the remaining piece of the triangle, Marlowe followed the direction given by the face of the sunflower. It forced him to climb the intricate, steep side of the hog-backed ridge. From one end to the other he picked his way along the top of the narrow summit with no results. There was nothing there.

At the northernmost tip of the high ridge he sat down to rest for a moment before tackling the precarious descent. While looking down at the floor of the desert he was struck by how tiny everything looked. It was at this moment Marlowe made the discovery that was to help him break the code of the Peralta maps.

The Peraltas had conceived the idea of placing rock-markers in such a way that they could be passed by and ignored if seen from the desert flats. For example, if walking on the desert, it would be a sure bet that the mounds of heaped and piled rocks would blend with the many other outcroppings surrounding them, and never be noticed. But from up here on the rim looking down on the same heap of rock that appeared to have no meaning, Mr. Marlowe saw a definite diagram drawn out on the floor of the

desert. It was so large that only a high and distant view would bring out the tremendous horseshoe which had been laid out in the desert with the use of many rocks and boulders.

Marlowe told us he descended the hill as fast as the loose rock and slippery sides would allow. Once inside the ring of rocks, Marlowe was confused as to what he should do next. At last he discovered that opposite the open end of the horseshoe, several yards to the northeast, a rock cairn had been placed in the "two o'clock" position of the horseshoe, as seen from the ridge. Marlowe assumed it to be a directional pointer.

It was here the knowledge came of the triangle system used by the Peraltas; the glyphs, the sunflower saguaro and the horseshoe—each leads to the other. This helped Marlowe to locate the trail at a somewhat faster pace. He had an idea of what to look for. It may sound easy but, as he was to discover, some of the triangulations would be from three to five miles apart. How Enrico was to have mastered these maps is a mystery, unless the Peraltas had had occasion to use the system before and Enrico already knew what all the symbols meant and exactly how they were to be utilized.

AS THE MORNING wore on, the haze began to dissipate and familiar landmarks popped through to establish where we were. To the north, Miners Needle was outlined against the horizon. Superstition Mountain was to the west, and the lesser hills around the Whitlow Canyon area were to the east.

From the first set of markers just described, we were taken to another foothill closer still to the mountains. We were now beginning to see the route planned for Enrico taking shape bit by bit, piece by piece, one step at a time.

We were edging closer and closer to the mysterious passageway into the mountains. How far would the Marlowes take us and would we be allowed to learn the answer to this question, we wondered. We knew they were showing us every-



The "Number 8 Saguaro" (above) marks the south boundary of Hill No. 2. Travis Marlowe removed the hand-forged iron band (right) from a saguaro marking the south boundary of the third triangle.

thing they possibly could without jeopardizing their own interests.

We had always thought we knew which canyon the Peraltas had used and were satisfied that it was the trail over Miners Needle. Again we were shown three markers. The southwest tip of the triangle is marked by a saguaro carved in the same manner as the sunflower. However, this cactus was engraved with a large numeral "8." The number "8" cactus is almost dead now, so you can imagine the markers that Marlowe has failed to find. But he stuck with his task and eventually picked up the trail again. This is the explanation for Marlowe's nine-year search, whereas Enrico could have followed the fresh trail in a matter of weeks.

Since the number "8" was carved on the side of the cactus facing east, that is the direction Mr. Marlowe used to find the next clue. The marker to the east was another look-through saguaro whose function was to locate the northern tip of the triangle. The sighting-hole took in the entire hilltop, the center point focusing on its crest. When Marlowe climbed the small conical hill, he found another man-made cairn of stones, topped with a long, thin arm of rock that served as an indicator. The direction surprisingly took an abrupt turn to the east.

The Marlowes left out many of the markers on the way to the next group which they particularly wanted us to see. It would have taken weeks to have seen all of them, so we were shown what the Marlowes felt was most important to our interests.

While we zig-zagged over the desert, they pointed out the mountains and foothills containing markers. We were astonished to find everything was taking us in an easterly direction away from Miners Needle and Superstition Mountain. This really led to a great deal of confusion on our part. It was a shock to realize the canyons considered to be the most likely candidates for the true Peralta Trail were completely out of the running.

The foothills through which we were driving, Marlowe called "D" Hill, "#1 Hill," "#2 Hill," "Hill of the Priest's Pedestal," etc. All names and numbers

matched those on the stone maps. We asked Mr. Marlowe where the faint lines came from designating what we shall laughingly call a road. He grinned and said his nine years of working this area was responsible for all of them. What a ride he gave us! What we couldn't get around, over or under we went through!

At last we reached an old section of dirt road which had been the Butterfield Stage Route between the cities of Florence, Hewitt Stage Stop, Silver King and Pinal. The road is still used today. We traveled it as far as the Whitlow Dam where we saw another set of Peralta Trail markers. We felt quite fortunate in being able to see this group because in the recent construction of the dam and its spillway they came dangerously close to being obliterated.



On the south side of Whitlow Dam Marlowe left the Butterfield Road and swung toward the east side of the dam. This was an important set and the Peraltas had devised a brilliant scheme to show Enrico that this place meant something special.

PEDRO, a real genius, began this set with the ubiquitous saguaro, whose middle had been girded with a hand-forged band of iron. We had seen this cactus pictured in Marlowe's book, but it had been felled by a flash flood and washed away not long after the photograph was made. Marlowe took us to where the saguaro had stood; in comparing the photograph to the two mesquite trees that had embraced the saguaro from both sides we found them to be identical, as was the topography of the background. Later in our acquaintance with the Marlowes, we were allowed to inspect the iron band that he had painstakingly removed with a hacksaw. Marlowe reasoned that perhaps the Peraltas had inscribed further instructions on the inside of the iron ring. The removal of the band was accomplished after a lot of hard work, but the inside surface was perfectly smooth. The ring was meant to mark the south boundary of the triangle, nothing more.

The location of the second part of the triangle was agonizingly slow in its discovery. Mr. Marlowe almost had to give up on this one. Since the iron ring encircled the saguaro, he had no given direction to work from. He had to work in an ever-widening circle looking at everything and anything that might give him a clue.

On one tedious round of checking saguaros, he found it. Behind a head-high clump of mesquite that had grown against the cactus, he discovered slashes that had been cut into its southwest side. Two symbols were placed neatly side by side. The symbol to the left was a reverse "F"; beside it was a crescent—the Spanish symbol for silver. This, then, constituted the east boundary of the triangle, but what did it mean—this marker, so different from the rest?

One afternoon, as he stood beside the cactus, he saw what the two fingers of the "F" were trying to tell him. To the northwest, the afternoon shadows were playing on the east side of the mountains. Patterns of light were formed which he had never before noticed. Halfway up the mountain side was a black crescent, painted by afternoon shadows. The pattern was formed by a crack in the rocky cliffs which made a perfect half-moon.

The large crevice would have made an ideal cache in which to store the silver. Marlowe felt sure the crescent-shaped niche would have appealed to the Peraltas—what better place to hide the silver than a spot simulating their silver sign?

Marlowe said he almost flew up the side of the mountain in his haste to recover the fortune. But the huge cave held nothing except tracks of animals which had been using it as a den.

In disgust he sat in the mouth of the cave and wallowed in self-pity. For years there had been one disappointment after another. Would there ever be an end to the trail?

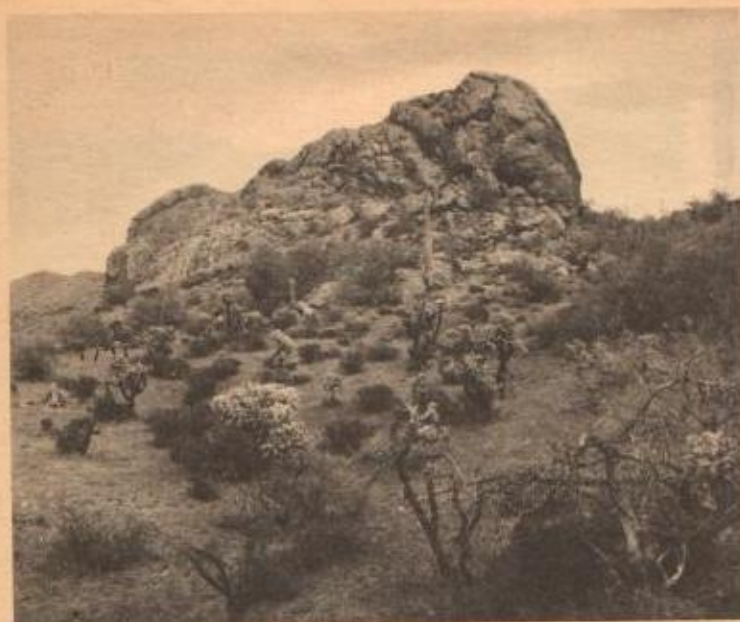
MARLOWE told us that everytime he was on the brink of quitting, something would happen to give him the enthusiasm he had enjoyed when he first came to Arizona all keyed up with the excitement of owning treasure maps, and eager to start his search.

This elation was to be felt once more as he sat in the mouth of the cave. In his dejection and anger at another failure he picked up a rock and threw it down the mountain he had climbed a few minutes ago in such high spirits. As he watched the rock jump down the slope, his eyes were drawn to the very thing he was supposed to see. Again, it was only when looking down that he saw the sign of the holy cross—a massive thing twenty-five feet in length—perfectly arranged with piled stones. The cross had gone unnoticed in his wild scramble up the side of the mountain, although he almost had crawled over the top of it.

The cross led the way to the discovery which established, once and for all, the canyon used by the Peraltas to enter the Superstition Mountains.

The Marlowes had saved this till last. They did not want us to merely take their word for it; it was proved step by step, making the information we got really mean something. Perhaps it was to teach us to believe in our own convictions a little stronger. If we had, we would have realized the route we had explored on the 1963 expedition was a contestant for the honor of becoming the proven Peralta Trail.

In 1963 we had tracked down the trail which the Dutchman, Jacob Von Walzer, had reportedly pursued into the Superstitions. At that time we had followed Queen Creek toward the Whitlow Ranch, there to turn northward into Whitlow Canyon. Whitlow Canyon is not the canyon used by the Spaniards, but if we had ventured farther



A monolithic whim of nature (above left) known as Elephant Butte marks the entrance into the canyon the Peraltas chose for their entry into the Superstitions. Entwined serpents and a ladder (above right) were etched in the side of a pinnacle that had to be climbed in order to reach the second set of petroglyphs. Note the 3 and 8 at the top left of the petroglyph below. They are on the left-hand side of the symbol resembling a wheel connected to the directional spiral. Turn the picture a quarter-turn clockwise and the numerals stand out much clearer.

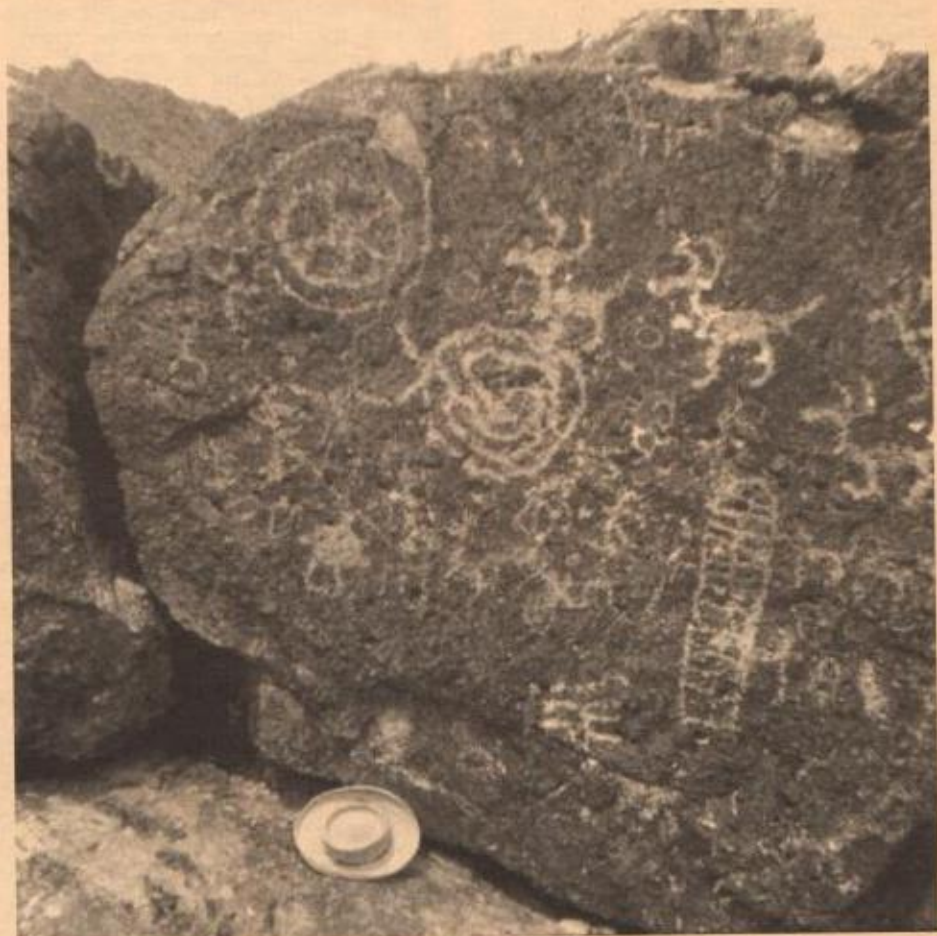
into the mountains from that point we would have eventually been on the Peralta Trail.

The first canyon to the east of Whitlow claims the honor, but to our knowledge it has no name, so we have called it No Name Canyon. It runs north to south, paralleled by Whitlow Canyon to the west, Hewitt and Millsite Canyons to the east. On topography maps of 1900 a dirt road is shown running from the Butterfield Road northward along the full length of No Name Canyon. At the road's end the trail turns west up Milk Ranch Creek, then past the old Kavanaugh Goat Ranch on the north bank of the creek until it converges with the northernmost end of Whitlow Canyon. It is here that our anonymous canyon dead-ends into Coffee Flat Mountain or Picacho Butte, whichever you prefer to call it. It is the first mountain east of Miners Needle and is on the southern edge of the Superstition Mountain Range. It appears there are two mountains in one, or a two-headed mountain; the dome to the west is called Coffee Flat, the east dome is named Picacho Butte.

The important marker at the mouth of this canyon-with-no-name was a spectacular monument of solid rock called Elephant Butte. An inscription on the bottom of the Map of the Horse reads, *El Caballo De Santa Fe* (the horse of Santa Fe). Mr. Marlowe feels that Elephant Butte is the horse of Santa Fe. This colossal mound of granite could not have been more perfect had it been sculpted and polished by human hands.

Marlowe is convinced there is a tie-in between the mapped horse and Elephant Butte, and that it could have been part of a family joke that only the Peraltas would have known. Perhaps a traveling circus or tent show had passed through the old town of Santa Fe bringing with it the first elephant seen by the Peraltas.

This may seem a rather far-fetched theory, but the stone elephant is surrounded by a multitude of Peralta markers, and he *does* mark the beginning of



No-Name Canyon. His head lies to the south; his tail to the north; his west side is flanked by No-Name Canyon.

Across a clearing, behind the elephant's rump, is a rugged hill covered with dense brush. We climbed boulders and crawled through thickets until we saw what was hidden there. The Peraltas concealed many things from the eyes of possible intruders. Only by using

the degree markers inscribed on the maps (under the tapes), was Marlowe able to detect the location of these secrets. On the south wall of the hill's highest pinnacle were some of the most elaborate petroglyphs we have ever seen. We have quite an extensive collection of petroglyphs which we have gathered from the four corners of the Superstitions, but these differ from anything



Marlowe can depend on the three-tiered waterhole (left) behind Elephant Butte as an unfailing source of water. The solitary degree marker (above) appears on a hillside between the Butte and the Peralta petroglyphs.

we have photographed, not only in size but in technique. The symbols are at least three times larger than the average and the designs are quite unique. A ladder with many rungs is pictured, a horseshoe, and the ever-present numerals, "3" and "8", cut into the tail of the directional spiral showing that from here the Peralta Trail goes northwest. On a nearby boulder, the figure "8" appears in the form of two entwined snakes.

A few yards from these glyphs is permanent water. The three-tiered waterhole is usually filled with sand and gravel, but is a dependable source of good water once the sand is pulled aside. Mr. Marlowe has had need of this water many times. He has cleaned the spring of sand only to return after a few weeks' time to find it refilled. On the cliff-side of the spring is the Spanish gold sign and beside it is a bird with a feathered topknot. The Marlowes have nicknamed it "The Goose that Laid the Golden Egg."

THIS IS as far as we were taken on the Peralta Trail. Marlowe would have been foolish to have shown us any more than he already had—and a fool, he isn't!

Although we were not taken any farther, we were given oral directions, up to a point. The Peralta Trail continues north up to No-Name Canyon until the canyon merges with Whitlow Canyon. There they both dead-end at Picacho Butte. The Peralta Trail then turns east at the foot of the Butte to where the junction of Frazer, Randolph, and Red Tank Canyons verge on Picacho Butte's southeast corner. Like giant fingers, Frazer Canyon continues to the east, Randolph to the northeast, and Red Tank continues almost due north to end just short of mighty LaBarge Canyon, the turnpike of the Superstitions. From LaBarge Canyon only Marlowe knows where the trail leads.

Marlowe says it is possible that he will find other maps hidden much the same as the others. The number "6" and the letter "M" is inscribed on the map of the horse. On the Map of the Priest,

"8-N-P" led to the discovery of maps #2 and #3; eight north paces. Therefore, Marlowe believes the "6-M" to mean sixth map. He is now in the vicinity of the silver cache but has failed to find the one remaining clue that will tell him, "Here it is. This is it."

Marlowe takes the bad with the good, never complaining or whining about the years spent in a search that has shown him no mercy. He feels his time has not been wasted and is completely happy in what he is doing. He has an unshakable faith in his maps and the story they tell. He has come to the end of the trail on the small heart-map but the signs there tell him to keep going. He will go on until he finds the silver cache, the cache of gold, and maps which he says will give the location of eighteen mines.

We discussed the possibility of Inscription Rock in LaBarge Canyon being another map. It is sometimes referred to as the "Peralta Master Map." Mr. Marlowe had just proven the Peralta Trail enters LaBarge Canyon from its southernmost end. It seems that once the Peraltas had discovered this unobstructed avenue to the Salt River, they certainly would have taken advantage of the eighteen to twenty miles of easy travel it offered them. LaBarge also would have provided them with many springs of permanent water and ample campsites. Its many side-canyons offered them dozens of passages from which they could explore every nook and cranny of the Superstitions. The north exit of LaBarge Canyon gave them the bonus of the Salt River where water was abundant for their mining operations, camp needs, and for the large remuda of horses and mules.

The master map, on Inscription Rock, was incised into the east wall of LaBarge Canyon. It, too, was strategically placed where it could not possibly escape the attention of anyone traveling LaBarge from either direction. The petroglyphs were chiseled into the dark glaze of desert varnish that covers the surface of the eight by ten-foot upright slab. The exposed white rock underneath makes the symbols stand out in sharp contrast.

A directional spiral is to the left of a network of circles and the lines that connect them. We feel this is more than likely an archaic form of topography map, the circles representing the surrounding peaks, the lines illustrating the canyons. If this map had been made by the Peraltas, the dotted circles could represent the location of the mines. If made by the prehistoric Indians who walked this canyon ten centuries ago, the map was made for the succor, safety, and guidance of those expected to follow their restless migratory path—water, favorable campsites, and migration routes their only message.

The latter of the two explanations is the most realistic, but for one drawing that dominates the right-hand side. Approximately eighteen inches tall, it is the figure of a man. He is facing the labyrinth of circles and lines and appears to be walking in the direction of Salt River. The figure seems to be that of a miner. He carries an ore sack on his back suspended from a band around his forehead. To further clarify this assumption there are two candles protruding from the headband to give the miner light in the dark tunnels.

Inscription Rock Map is no longer as sharp and clearly defined as the maps of Mr. Marlowe. It must be remembered that while his had protection from the elements, Inscription Rock has been exposed to the blistering rays of the sun, eroded by wind and rain, and, worst of all, flash flooding has brought tons of water and sand to grind away at its surface. We wouldn't be at all surprised if man himself hasn't been its most constant enemy.

A slight change has taken place on the Master Map over the last few years. Some of our more inexperienced prospectors and greenhorn treasure hunters have taken advantage of its lonely and desolate location to mar its surface for their own purpose. They evidently believed they were the first to set eyes on the map and have tried to destroy symbols they thought to be of importance. Their feeble attempts are equalled only by their feeble-mindedness in thinking they could remove what the power of

God's elements have been unable to erase. Nevertheless, one can plainly see the scratches where an attempt has been made.

THERE IS MUCH to be said for the moral ethics of the Peraltas and their workers regarding the decent way in which they conducted themselves during their lengthy stay in the Superstitions. They saw the writings from prehistoric times but did not abuse or destroy. The Peraltas showed an admirable quality in that their own markers were always placed a respectable distance from those of the Indians. It seems they, too, realized their importance and had the vision to see that someday, someone would come to study them for the sake of world history. In their effort to preserve the writings, we now have something with which to work in trying to piece together the story of an extinct culture. This is much to the credit of the Peraltas.

We are heartsick to see what some of our supposedly educated and civilized visitors have done on their excursions into the outer fringes of the mountains. Some portions are fairly accessible to the weekend tourist. The ignorance of these selfish and unthinking people is inexcusable and offensive to all of us.

Hieroglyphic Canyon, on Superstition's south side, can be given as one example. It has begun to spring forth a new set of contemporary writings that date from 1927 to the present time. This new form of art we have named "Egoism." It doesn't require any talent; it only expresses the importance the artist places on his own name, and he bores us with his monotonous ideas that never vary. He always gives us the name of the city and state that has the misfortune to claim him, then has the gall to hide behind his initials. He then dates his artistic endeavor to prove to the world, which couldn't care less, just exactly when it was lucky enough to have this poor brainless creature visit this particular spot. There they stand, side by side—clues to an ancient culture and the work of an egomaniac.

We have found the life-giving water-

holes filled with garbage, cans, paper and scraps of lumber. Our most disgusting discovery was a well-worn, well-soaked pair of jockey shorts floating on an orange-crate raft. We have found it necessary to drink from strange sources of water in the past, and did so with no qualms, but this was too much. It might have been funny if we hadn't been so thirsty. After cleaning out the spring for the next person who might stop here for a drink, we went elsewhere for our water. The rangers make the circuit of springs as regularly as they can, but they surely could use a little help from the public.

In the discussion of the LaBarge Map and the possibility of its disclosing the location of eighteen mines, Mr. Marlowe corrected us by saying there are now only seventeen mines left to be rediscovered. This was certainly news to us as we had never heard of anyone's finding a Peralta mine, unless it was the Dutchman. Marlowe said this was a proven Peralta gold mine, not the dubious whereabouts of the Dutchman's gold.

Mr. Marlowe has seen the proof with his own eyes and has held it in his hands. One day, while prospecting around the Goldfield area, a miner hit a large slab of rock with his pick. Curious about the hollow sound it produced, he pried the stone slab to one side and found an opening beneath it—an old mine shaft. Once inside the tunnel, he began looking for some evidence of the mine's previous owner. Lying on the floor of the shaft was a hand-forged iron drill, eighteen inches long, with one end tapering into a cone-shaped tip. Deep grooves had been cut into the tip giving a ribbed effect. On the side of the drill were the engraved initials "P.P."—Pedro Peralta. The iron was tested for age and proven to be of the Peralta era.

THE SHAFT uncovered by the prospector now lies at the bottom of Goldfield Lake, a flooded memorial to what might have been. Goldfield's history has been plagued by flooded shafts since 1917, when miners accidentally hit an underground storage of water, either a subterranean lake or river.

Goldfield's history supposedly did not begin until 1886, when four Mormons did some prospecting around the base of Superstition's western base. In 1891 the first claims were laid out on what became known as the "Mormon Stope", named after the four founders; Orlando and Orrin Merrill, Rile Morris and C. R. Hakes. Could one of these men have been responsible for opening the Peralta shaft?

Much of the research on Goldfield has been obtained from *Spanish Gold and the Lost Dutchman* by Ludwig G. "Doc" Rosecrans. We consider Mr. Rosecrans an authority on the Goldfield area. For the past nineteen years he has lived in a cabin neatly tucked away in the beautiful foothills between Goldfield and Government Wells. He is well known in the Superstition area as a writer, a philosopher and treasure hunter. Mr. Rosecrans confirms the story of the Peraltas' working the Goldfield area.

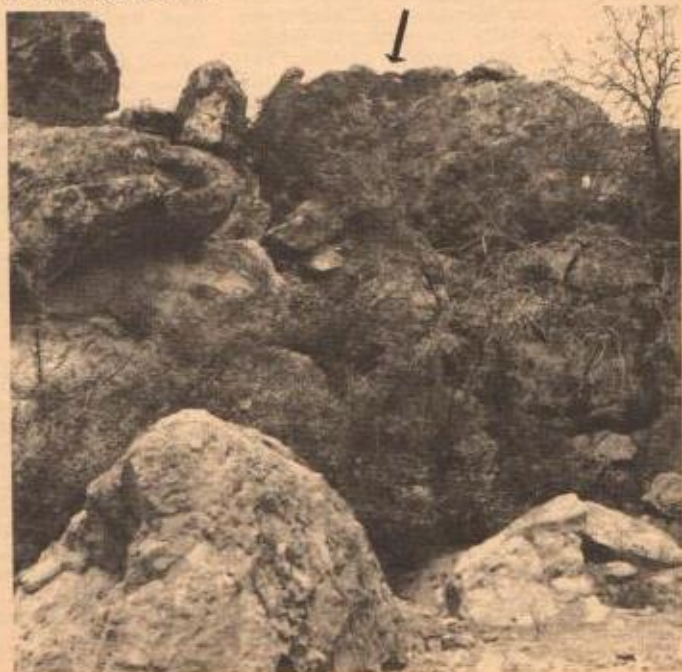
"Extremely rich floats (pieces of loose ore unattached to any particular vein) have been found on the Goldfield grounds; ancient workings, timbered with ironwood and almost totally collapsed, have been found near the later mines. Who might have labored in these aged diggings?"

As proof of this, his book shows photographs of ancient ironwood timbers that have been uncovered by modern mining equipment. Scientific testing has proven the logs to be approximately 100 years old.

There are very few residents now in the once bustling city of Goldfield, but Doc's home is usually filled with his many friends, who enjoy the informal "get-togethers" for which Arizona is so famous. The hospitality of this State is incomparable.

The remains of the old boomtown are five miles from Apache Junction on the scenic Apache Trail. The Massacre grounds are plainly visible from Goldfield which brings up an interesting question, "Were the Peraltas trying to reach the safety of the Goldfield workings? Was this the reason for their using the western retreat from the mountains?"

Across a clearing behind Elephant Butte is the rugged hill below. Boulders and dense thicket shield the hilltop (right) on which the most elaborate set of markings appear.





Bernice McGee pauses by four matched saguaros near the Apache Trail. They point toward the old mining town of Goldfield, a known Peralta mine.

Or were they caught off-guard while mining out in the open desert—making a run toward the mountains for the safety its cliffs and fortress-like peaks would afford? This would reverse history somewhat, and since it may never be proven which direction they were running, we must be content to draw our own conclusions.

Mr. Marlowe's new information explained the set of four perfectly matched, spaced, and aligned saguaros we had found while riding our trail machines in an exploration of the area between the Massacre Grounds and Goldfield. We should have known Mr. Marlowe had already seen the saguaros. We do believe he knows every cactus on the desert personally—especially the saguaros. We had taken many photographs of this rare pattern of growth, but had failed to examine them closely. Mr. Marlowe had to tell us about the circle engraved on the second saguaro from the south. It is a degree marker and, when properly used, points the way to Goldfield.

We first became interested in these sets of four saguaro when we found our first set in 1960. They are many miles from the Goldfield series. We found them on a hike into Hieroglyphic Canyon on Superstition's south side. They grew in the desert's flat country, but pointed out the mouth of a canyon which led us to more proof that the Peraltas had traveled what is now called Hieroglyphic Canyon. Why they used it, we are not certain.

Halfway up the mountain we found a boulder pitted with seven holes ranging from six to ten inches in diameter, ten to twelve inches in depth. The man-made holes had been ground out of the rock by the ancient method of crushing ore by hand. A few yards farther up the canyon we found a Spanish "Sunburst Symbol" the word "Oro" chiseled beneath it. Fifteen feet from this we found still another Sunburst Symbol, different

from the first in that one of the offshoots radiating from the "Sun" was much longer than the others. This was not a mere slip of the artist's hand, for on the tip of the elongated arm was an oval. The desert varnish had been carefully chiseled away to form an unmistakable trail marker. It clearly indicates the direction to be taken from this point—past the numerous Indian writings for which the canyon was named.

The Peraltas discreetly placed their symbols away from those of the Indian. They cleverly carved the Sunburst and Oro on a rock that had to be passed in order to reach the two waterholes that act as a moat around the cliffs containing writings of the Peraltas' predecessors, the "Ho-Ho-Kam." On the narrow ledge of rock separating the waterholes, they added the Sunburst with the oval. This is dead center of the canyon's rock floor. The directional arm leads away from the Indian writings, so there could be no mistake made by trying to read them. By sighting along the arm of the sunburst we could see where the trail had to continue. Several hundred yards farther up the canyon, the walls come together to form a tapering passageway. The oval is aimed at the center of this narrow gorge.

SOMEWHERE near the summit of Superstition Mountain may be another of the seventeen mines waiting to be uncovered. For those of you who are interested in doing a little treasure hunting, the gold signs are there. We feel certain that more trail markers will be found on the other side of the Narrows. Something is to be found up there—that is a certainty. Is it only a coincidence that the four Apache Trail markers led to Goldfield, and that the hieroglyphic markers lead to the "potholes," the Oro Sunburst, and the Directional Sunburst? We think not.

Of course, we found the treasure we had been searching for in Hieroglyphic Canyon. We packed it out in cameras!

We were grateful to capture Mr. Marlowe's findings on film while they still exist. The rock writings will be around for many years to come provided the egomaniacs leave them alone, but many of the saguaros are dying—some from old age and some from a new species of moth that has invaded the Arizona saguaros forests. It seems impossible to think of a tiny moth destroying and toppling these enormous plants. Even the large slabs of flesh Pedro Peralta removed did not harm them.

From the many saguaros we saw bearing his marks, from his work on stone tablets, the cliffs and the boulders, Pedro must have been quite an artist. Mrs. Marlowe suggested that he was enamored with the works of the master artist, Michaelangelo. The latter's mark of the holy cross atop a circle was found on one saguaro, perhaps as a memorial, and although we did not see this particular cactus, a color photograph is in Marlowe's book.

Among Pedro's various symbols with their cryptic meanings, the ones on the stone maps are the most difficult to decode. For example, on the front side of Map Number Two is a deep hole drilled into the stone; a smaller hole is above it. Both are set within lines representing a jagged mountain peak. Mr. Marlowe volunteered an explanation of this particular set of symbols to impress on us the problems he has encountered in his battle of wits with the Peraltas.

He had figured out the trail as far as the two holes on the map, but he could not understand their meaning and didn't know what he should be looking for. On one of his lonely and lengthy stays within the Superstitions, and while looking for shelter in which to spend the night, he spied a cave high on the face of a remote side-canyon. From the smoke-blackened roof of the cave he knew it had sheltered others before him. After building his cook-fire inside the cave, he noticed that the smoke was being drawn toward a small opening in the cave's ceiling.

The next morning he worked his way to the ledge above the cave and found a small smokestack overgrown with brush. It had been constructed of stone, much like the cairn at the end of the

Potholed rock at the base of Hill No. 1. Ore was crushed by hand in these holes—a crude but effective manner of early mining.



horseshoe. Marlowe felt this was the place indicated on the map and spent quite some time in the area trying to decide what he should do.

He worked in a circle around the cave trying to locate marked saguaros, petroglyphs or rock pointers, but there was nothing. At last he hit on the idea of getting a degree marker from one hole to the other.

Marlowe placed a long stick vertically in the center of the cave's entrance. He then placed a second stick horizontally over the top of the cave. One end rested on the vertical pole, the other rested on the smokestack, so that he more or less had a triangle. When he took a degree reading from the pole lying across the cairn and followed its course, he did find the next marker and the triangulation system was picked up again.

Marlowe has found that the Peraltas had protected themselves against anyone who might have accidentally found the secret of three markers in a triangle. By leaving miles of gaps between them, they broke the chain of repetitious triangles. The gaps are filled in *on the maps*. Only the man who has all three of the stone maps and knows how to use them in conjunction with the markers will ever be able to follow the Peralta Trail to its end.

Marlowe's book has brought many new prospectors into the Superstitions. He realizes that people are trying to use his book as a guide to the treasure, but he doesn't hold much fear of their success. Some of the treasure hunters have really gone in style using helicopters to take them in and out of the mountains. Others have packed in to set up permanent camps.

Mr. Marlowe chooses to stay anonymous. He has been spied upon, accidentally shot at, and even followed at times, but the stalkers have never suspected they were watching Travis Marlowe. God help him if his identity is ever made known. We have met some extremely nice men prospecting in the Superstitions, but there are a few who would scare you a lot worse than meeting up with the ghost of old Pedro Peralta. At least, Pedro smiles!

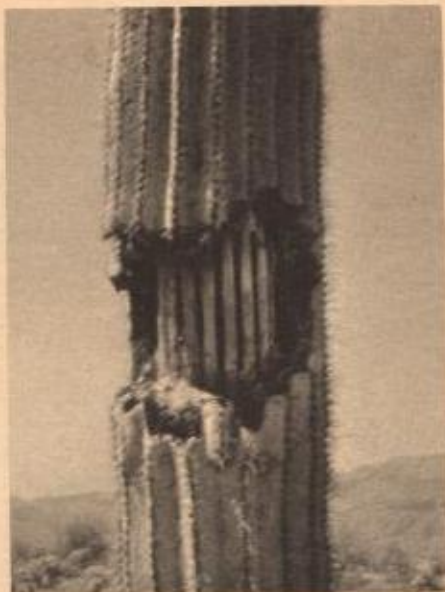
Speaking of Pedro, we were rather disappointed that he didn't show up, once we had grown accustomed to the idea. Marlowe's story of the ghost who roams at will through the Superstitions was only one of four reports we received in the space of a few weeks' time concerning strange events which had taken place in the area. We told Mr. Marlowe about the stories and he didn't seem a bit surprised. He only answered, "There are a lot of strange things going on in those mountains."

We tried to check out the story of the father and son who were trapped overnight in Geronimo's cave during a snowstorm. They had each witnessed a strangely silent parade of flares, wagons or carts and—we would assume—people. This was a fascinating story, and we did try to get more information, but never received an answer to our inquiry. (See *True West*, February, 1965, page 71.) In the first place, nobody in his right mind would be walking those mountain trails at night, especially during a snowstorm. Modern man would not be using a torch or flare, nor would he use a cumbersome cart or wagon.

The two men watched this queer spectacle with the aid of binoculars. The mixture of falling snow, fog and darkness made a poor combination of good vision. By the use of a board, which

they found in the cave, they were able to align themselves with the weird procession determining that it took place on about their same level on the opposite canyon wall. The only thing we have been able to confirm is that there was a snowstorm in the Superstitions at the time of the reported sighting in March, 1963.

Another report of unexplained happenings came from a source that can be considered more reliable. The story concerns two men, well known in the Apache Junction and Florence localities. One of the men had lived close to the Superstitions all of his life; the other came



This cactus marked by a heart-shaped carving was found by the authors as they rode their trail machines off the beaten path. The heart coincides with the phrase written on Peralta Map No. 1: "Look for the heart," and the map of the heart.

to Arizona from the East as a young man. Both had occasion to spend the greater part of their lives in the mountains, knew their way around and loved every inch of the Range. We have had the good fortune to know both of these men. In their day, it would have been hard to find any one in Arizona who could outride, out-shoot or out-cuss these two tough but softhearted old fellows. They were among the first to display the courage and stubborn desire required to make a home out of this barren wilderness—long before the city of Apache Junction was ever heard of.

Any person who chooses the harsh country of the Superstitions for his home, his work area and his playground is not likely to be sporting lace on his underdrawers. He is all man and has never carried the burden of fear.

Why then, would a man of this calibre come out of the Superstitions so badly shaken that he would never set foot in them again? Why would he give no explanation for his actions? Within a space of two years this happened to both men.

No human being could have frightened either one of these old pioneers. It could only have been something they did not understand—something they had never before encountered—something neither one could hope to explain without the risk of ridicule and laughter. This, we believe, is the reason for their silence about the ominous experience that took

them out of the mountains forever. Both of our friends are now dead. They died within two years of each other.

HIS CANDOR is one of the many reasons we admire Mr. Marlowe. He told us his story of the mute, smiling figure with such honesty and in such a matter-of-fact way that there is no doubt in our minds that he spoke the truth. Mr. Marlowe is not a man given to small talk. He speaks softly and quietly when there is something of importance to say and is not prone to long, windy tales or gossip. He looks you square in the eyes when talking or listening. His face radiates with friendliness; his eyes show him to be a kind and gentle man.

Marlowe is thoroughly poised. His every move reveals the confidence of one who knows what he is doing. It is remarkable to watch his coordination of thought, sight and body while in action on the desert and in the mountains he knows so well. He is completely at home in the wilderness and has acquired the instincts of the wildlife he loves so much. Alert, agile of foot, quick of mind, cautious of man, he has learned that only the strong survive.

WE WOULD LIKE to add a word of advice to anyone whose appetite has been whetted for seeking Mr. Marlowe's treasure. It is only fair to state that it would be impossible to locate anything from what we have told you in this story. Many things have to be taken into consideration. The things that were shown to us were spaced many miles apart; the markers between could never be found without Marlowe's maps, which are kept safely in a bank vault.

The Superstition Mountains are not to be taken lightly. They can be as deadly as they are beautiful if you do not know the country. Well-marked foot trails have been built throughout the Superstitions by the United States Department of the Interior for those who wish to hike into the wilderness area. It is wise to stay on these trails unless you are accompanied by an expert guide. Take plenty of water, don't attempt to go in alone, and though you are not permitted to shoot any animal or kill any snake, it is still wise to go in armed. There are \$50 to \$200 fines for violating this law, as you are in a wilderness area and game reserve.

The Superstitions can play rough at times and the next moment be as gentle as a lamb. The only trouble is that you never know what mood they are in until it is too late. If they take a notion to become playful, they can bounce you down the mountainside like a rubber ball, bang you against a canyon wall until your head rattles, scare the wits clear out of you, blister you from the sun, parch you with a terrible thirst, stick every part of your anatomy full of cactus, take years off your life at the sight of a rattlesnake under your feet, or a near brush with a deadly scorpion. The Superstitions can freeze you in your tracks at the sound of strange footsteps approaching from the blindside of the next bend in the trail, then relieve you when the footsteps belong to a bearded prospector whose features are hidden under masses of hair, and whose only greeting is a suspicious grunt as he rounds the bend behind you and disappears from sight.

Your feet cry out in protest from walking over rocks that are either so sharp they feel like they are trying to crawl into your boots, or are so round

(Continued on page 49)

It turned out that almost everything about the castle was against the Sisters' plan. In the building's favor were the eight bathrooms, but few of the other rooms were suitable for bedrooms, being for the most part too small or too large. Equipment for heating water to supply the baths, the kitchen, and the laundry room was inadequate. Any attempt at housing winter visitors would have failed more miserably, because the steam-heating plant installed by Father Francolon barely took the chill out of the big castle.

When the boarding house project failed, the castle was closed. The Sisters of Mercy managed to pay off the mortgage in 1904, partly by selling the furnishings. For many years it remained closed most of the time, opened only for two weeks each summer for a retreat.

World War II came along and Manitou found it needed additional apartments to supply housing for families of troops stationed at Camp Carson, south of nearby Colorado Springs. Someone purchased the castle for \$4,500. Since that time the place has been used by a number of owners as an apartment house of approximately ten suites of rooms.

Because of its unusual architecture, Montcalme Castle, as it's now known, remains a special point of interest for visitors to Manitou. The contrast between the castle and the small frame houses around it is startling. Only a dirt road on either side of the castle leading to homes on top of Capitol Hill keeps the neighbors from encroaching even more on its doorstep. After all these years it still looks surprisingly out of place, but continues to be known as the fabulous Castle of the West.

Invitation to a Ghost Walk

(Continued from page 17)

they roll your feet out from under you, or are so loose they slide out from under you leaving you with nothing but a handful of thorns grabbed to keep from following them down into the canyon bottom. And if you get tired of the blisters that finally make walking unbearable, you can always get a horse that will rub off what skin you might have left!

If it is possible to endure all these things, to laugh at yourself while under the watchful scrutiny of the mischievous mountains, and let them see that you intend to stay, they will eventually open their arms and allow you, the newly-initiated tenderfoot, to enter the realm of their wonderland. You have earned your right to explore their crooked and twisted canyons; gaze at wind-torn crags, towering pinnacles and peaks that only the wild beauty of the interior regions can give you. The indescribable maze of trails offers you the serenity of a virgin land. The dignity of the majestic peaks reduces you to humbleness in their presence, and the occasional glimpse of wildlife in this lovely refuge makes all the hard knocks worthwhile. To lie on your stomach and drink from a stream of sweet water confirms the saying, "Once you have drunk deeply from springs in the Superstitions, you are fated to return."

Thousands of people visit the mountains in complete safety, just as we have done over the years; others haven't been so lucky. The slip of a carelessly placed foot, the bite or sting of an unseen enemy, an empty canteen or lack of emergency supplies on the part of a lost, "off-the-trail" tourist can end in tragedy. (Continued on next page)



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This old adobe house is one of the half-dozen buildings left in Encinosa. It was in one of these houses that Charley Siringo found a beef head baking in an oven.

Common sense, alertness and a cautious step are all that's required for a tremendously exciting trip that you will never forget. Go and enjoy the Superstitions, but leave the treasure hunting to those who know how to withstand the hardships.

There is no possibility of someone's using this story as a means of finding the Peralta Treasure. Mr. Marlowe led us by the hands like two children, but we could never hope to find the markers again—even those which we touched and photographed—without his help.

Fair Trial at Encinosa

(Continued from page 33)

Mexico to the Rio Grande. The herd might change owners two or three times before we'd finally catch up to them and have a showdown."

Being a lawman for many years, Siringo had been on dangerous missions before. He didn't really consider the job at Encinosa a tough one. But tough or not, his many experiences had taught him to be alert. He remembered the time a Negro woman had almost killed him with his own handcuffs before he finally got them on her.

The incident with the Hole-in-the-Wall gang up north had been another near miss. He had pushed his horse off a bluff, made his own impression in the sand, and had hobbled into the gang's hideout on a crutch he had made of a cedar limb. He liked to think about the story he'd made up and told them. He'd made it up good. He even showed them where his horse had fallen and where he had landed in the dirt. He was lucky to be alive after a fall like that, he'd told the outlaws.

That assignment had turned out fine. He finally got the drop on his man and had taken him out of "the Hole" to a judge and a jury.

"There have been many times," Siringo said, "that my nose got me into trouble—real trouble. I decided in Encinosa I would have to use it for what it was intended. I had my old Russian wolfhound, old Eat-em-up-Jake, with me. I figured he would be a big help in smelling out beef too. As it turned out, he really did his part."

AFTER PROWLING about the town for awhile, not finding anything of particular interest to a lawman, Siringo saw Eat-em-up-Jake take off in a big hurry toward a broken-down chicken house with an old milch-cow corral around it. Right away he heard some loud cussing in Mexican, and a big woman appeared at the door of an adobe shack nearby.

Charley pulled up his horse and looked as far as he could through the doorway, momentarily forgetting about his dog and the big woman. As he peered into the room he saw a man inside and Siringo had a feeling he had uncovered some evidence—the evidence he'd come to find.

Then he saw something else. The big woman had picked up a stick as she wobbled along and she was heading straight toward the chicken house and old Eat-em-up-Jake. About the time Charley caught the smell of burnt meat, the Mexican inside the house had come to the door. Siringo looked beyond him. There on the table, still smoking, was a whole beef-head fresh from the big oven of an iron cookstove in the room.

Siringo didn't have a warrant to enter the man's house but knew he wouldn't need one if he could secure enough evidence. He'd trust in his luck as he had many times before.

The Mexican who blocked the doorway to the kitchen was a huge man—and dark, with heavy shaggy brows, Siringo remembered. It felt good to know his Colt's .45 was resting on his hip.

The detective pushed his way through the door to get a better look. He remembered that most Mexicans favored baked cow's head above most other kinds of meat—they liked it real done. He figured this one was about ready.

A howl of pain from old Jake brought Siringo out of the house on a run. He yelled at the fat woman as she landed another blow with her club. Siringo was over the corral gate and had grabbed the fat señora before she could land another blow on his hound. Then he saw the reason for old Jake's excitement.

There high up in the rafters of the old chickenhouse was a fresh-killed beef, all quartered and ready for barbecuing. No wonder old Jake had been so excited. No wonder the señora was fighting mad.