

# Mission of the Journal of the Riverside Historical Society

- To publish carefully researched and documented articles of broad popular appeal relating to Riverside personalities, events, and institutions of the past.
- To publish personal accounts by witnesses of or participants in significant past events. These are to be derived both from manuscripts and from planned oral history interviews.
- To encourage both established and new historians to research and publish articles on previously unexplored aspects of Riverside's history.
- To foster among Riverside's newer residents a lively interest in Riverside's history and an active concern for Riverside's historic resources.
- To increase participation in Riverside Historical Society membership and activities among the publication's readers.

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## INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS:

The *Journal of the Riverside Historical Society* is currently an annual publication devoted to the history of the City of Riverside. It is the stated intention of the Board of the Society to increase the frequency of the *Journal*.

Contributions of articles, edited documents, and book reviews are welcome on a continuous basis. They should be submitted (at the owner's risk) to: Publications Committee, Riverside Historical Society, P.O. Box 246, Riverside, CA 92502. The *Journal's* Publications Committee will also announce a specific period of solicitation for each issue.

The authority for matters of style will be the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 14<sup>th</sup> edition. The Editorial Committee reserves the right to return accepted manuscripts to authors for required changes. An author whose article is accepted for publication will receive ten gratis copies of the issue in which his or her article appears. Statements and opinions expressed in articles are the sole responsibility of the authors.

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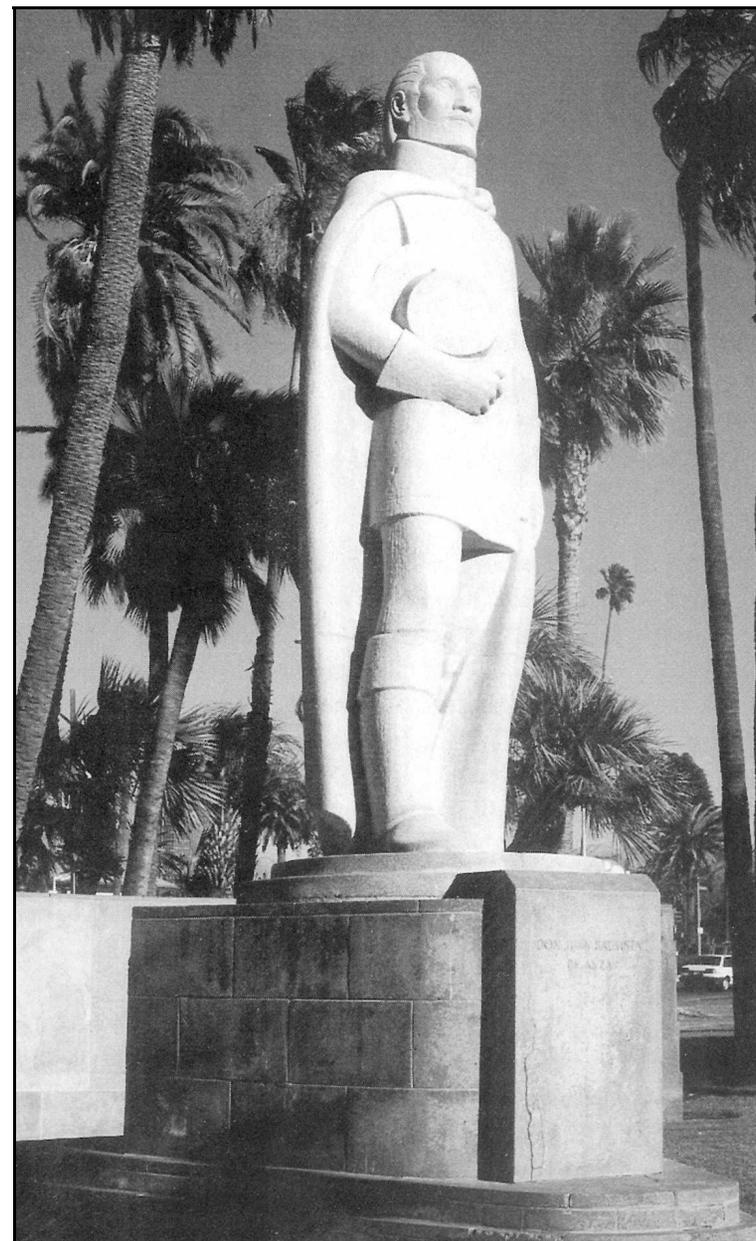
## Foreword

**I**n this, the third issue of *The Journal of the Riverside Historical Society*, the reader will once again find some of the best historical writing on Riverside available. It is our goal with each issue to present not only some of the best historical research on Riverside, but also some of the best writing. In this issue both come together admirably. A short biographical sketch of Edmund C. Jaeger is preceded by three articles that read so well together as to be every editor's dream. All deal with similar issues and themes. All deal with the same era of time. Yet each writer has his or her own perspective. Thus the reader is given a wonderful three-dimensional view of Riverside in the 1920s and 1930s that is not only instructive, but enjoyable.

New stories are always solicited. Your research or remembrances may have a place in a future issue.

William Swafford, Editor

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*The statue of Juan Bautista de Anza which stands in Newman Park was created by Sherry Peticolos with WPA support.*

## Making Riverside Work: The Benefits of the WPA

by Terry Baggs

A poll in 1939 by the Institute of Public Opinion was taken to determine the “greatest accomplishment” of the Roosevelt administration, as well as the “worst thing” it had done. The federal relief programs were named the most often in both categories<sup>1</sup>. Contradictory feelings about the Works Projects Administration were held by the residents of Riverside, California. The WPA did manage, however, to establish itself quite firmly in the city and to have widespread effects.

An area in which the WPA in Riverside was quite active was the arts. The most visible project was the creation of the Juan Bautista De Anza statue at the corner of Fourteenth Street and Magnolia Avenue. According to Tom Patterson, “While De Anza merely passed through the Riverside area nearly a century before the town was founded, the statue brought a new cultivation of his legend.”<sup>2</sup> Riverside eventually had a “De Anza Theater, De Anza Chevrolet Company and a De Anza Avenue.”<sup>3</sup>

The De Anza statue was created by Sherry Peticolas with WPA support. The Riverside Art Association, which sponsored the project, donated \$5,000 and the rest of the cost was paid for with federal funds. The space in Newman Park was provided by the city, and Riverside resident Ed J. Loustaunau, a great-great-great-great-grandnephew of De Anza posed for the statue, since he was thought to resemble an old portrait of De Anza himself. Because of the unstable nature of the land where it is located, the statue goes fourteen feet into the ground. It has a masonry wall behind it which depicts “the start of the second, colonizing, expedition.”<sup>4</sup>

The Federal Art Project had the goal of giving “jobs to unemployed artists, often men of modest talents, but there were gifted painters too.”<sup>5</sup> Rexford Brandt, a painter who was in Riverside during the Depression and did much work for the WPA, said that the really good artists were working, whether for Walt

Disney or for other private enterprises.<sup>6</sup> These jobs were so scarce though, it became necessary to have a federal project to employ those talented artists who could not find work. Rexford Brandt was one such artist. He was a student at Riverside City College and became acquainted with one of his professors, Richard Allman. Allman painted the first government sponsored mural in California at Central Junior High School. Brandt had been making \$15 per month working in the art lab at the City College for the National Youth Administration but possibly because of the experience he had had with murals under Professor Allman, he went to San Francisco and worked with other artists painting the murals in Coit Tower.

Brandt eventually returned to Riverside to work for the WPA, not because he needed the money but rather because he thought it was the “greatest thing” to happen to art.<sup>7</sup> By now there was a Riverside Art Project with ten artists. Brandt became one of these artists and worked four six-hour days per week for \$124 per month. He worked on three murals that were done in the San Bernardino High School Auditorium foyer depicting a history of the community. Other projects he worked on included a mosaic drinking fountain at Riverside City College and several other such fountains which were installed at Chemawa Junior High School. When part of Chemawa was torn down, these massive twelve inch thick concrete mosaic drinking fountains were saved and stored at the Riverside Art Center thanks to the efforts of Ray Miller and the Riverside Press-Enterprise.

Another Riverside product, Thyrsis Field, was appointed State Director of the Federal Art Project. He began work in his new position in late 1937 and had 105 Southern California artists to work with. He had worked on the bronze doors of the St. Francis Chapel of the Mission Inn and according to the local press, Riverside was quite proud of him for his new appointment.<sup>8</sup>

One WPA art project with cultural benefit was the production of operas in Riverside. James K. Guthrie, “son of the publisher of the *San Bernardino Sun*, whose musical talent and interests led him to gravitate for years between musical and publishing careers” was the

conductor.<sup>9</sup> Operas were performed in both the Riverside and San Bernardino areas.

Other small improvements were made by the WPA in Riverside in the area of culture and recreation. The zoo and tennis courts which had been built at Fairmount Park by the Emergency Relief Appropriations (ERA) in 1933 were supplemented in 1938 by the WPA's construction of a Masonry Club House and a pistol range, both of which were to be available for public use.<sup>10</sup> A few WPA workers were also employed at the Riverside Public Library. Of these, one person did book mending, one examined bags and briefcases at the door, and several worked under reference librarian Helen Evans and indexed the Press-Enterprise.<sup>11</sup> The WPA was quite active in the cultural and recreational fields in Riverside, as was the WPA trend nationwide.

Much emphasis in Riverside was also placed on street construction. In fact, construction increased so much due to WPA efforts that it became necessary in February of 1936 to create a new city position. Leo Hylton became the city's first Foreman of Street Construction and served under the Riverside Street Superintendent J. R. Elliot. Hylton's control was directly over the construction then being done in the city; he was well-qualified, having served in the county roads department for ten years.<sup>12</sup>

Major street work was conducted on Van Buren Drive, "to relieve the congestion that had developed on Highway 60."<sup>13</sup> This work connected Van Buren Drive with Highway 395 near March Air Force Base. Completed in 1941, it was one of the last WPA projects in the Riverside area.

Street work done by the WPA in Riverside included simple repaving, gutter and curb construction, and the building of bridges such as the Colton Avenue Bridge. Sidewalks were also done by the WPA – if they were in front of public buildings. If constructed in front of a private building, the owner had the option of either doing all the work or of paying half the cost with the WPA furnishing the remaining funds and the workforce.

Coordinated with work done on the streets was the construction of Riverside's important storm drains and sewers. Unexciting in

their appearance and description, the majority of the storm drains were constructed between 1933 and 1936, all before the damaging flood of 1938. There is no way of calculating how much more damage the flood would have done had the storm drains not been constructed. Some drains were built on the Eastside on Tenth Street, on Market between First and Thirteenth Streets and on Twelfth Street. By far the largest project undertaken was the Washington Street storm drain. Work began in 1934 under the ERA,<sup>14</sup> but was not completed until 1936, two years later. This drain traveled from Washington Street near the canal of the Riverside Water Company, underneath the Union Pacific tracks to Arch Way, then crossed Grand Avenue to the Santa Ana River. It was a major project in Riverside and closed several areas, such as the intersection of Magnolia and Arlington, while work was being done.<sup>15</sup> It was also one of the largest and most consistent employers of WPA workers in the city.



*WPA was responsible for the installation of many curbs such as this one.*

Women constituted a good part of the WPA working force in several areas. In 1936, the peak year of national WPA

employment, women occupied 52.8% of the clerical positions and 56.7% of the professional and technician positions.<sup>16</sup> A study of Riverside county in 1935 shows that it was very close to the national average. Women occupied over 51.1% of the clerical positions and 44% of the professional and technical positions in Riverside. Larger than a two-to-one ratio existed, however, for male to female employee totals for Riverside County that year.<sup>17</sup>

One project, however, that employed over 90% women (587 during its one year existence) was the Riverside Sewing Project. This project employed women for thirty hours per week making garments which were sold to the needy. One hundred and forty sewing machines rented by the government were located in the fireproof basement of the old Montgomery Ward building at 4133 Main Street. The women were able to produce up to four hundred garments in one day, and produced over 72,000 from December 2, 1935 to April 15, 1936. The 481 seamstresses had the lowest pay of the project – \$48 per month – while the eighteen supervisors made \$77 per month. The director of the project was Alice J. Allender. The only unfortunate thing that occurred was in the middle of July 1936 when three women, Eleanor Nobbs, Helen Barney, and Leslie Reynolds, had to be taken to the County Hospital because of heat prostration. They later returned to their homes where they recovered.<sup>18</sup>

In the field of education, WPA relief was limited to repair and construction work. The WPA did work on seventeen Riverside area schools, with such tasks as painting Lincoln Elementary School, improving the Bryant Elementary School playgrounds, and rebuilding the Riverside City College chemistry lab.<sup>19</sup> A \$40,000 building was also built at Fremont Elementary School under the WPA, the most extensive work done on any Riverside school.<sup>20</sup>

WPA work was also done on a Riverside hospital. The Riverside County Hospital east wing, which served as the surgical wing, was begun by the WPA in 1935. It was ready for use in 1938 and cost approximately \$315,000. It was fireproof, four stories high, and had a basement. Upon touring the nearly completed addition, Ralph Smith declared, “This project is

regarded as the most outstanding in the entire state.”<sup>21</sup> A bronze marker adorned the wing as a reminder that the WPA did the work and provided the materials for its construction. Such bronze markers can be seen on many completed WPA projects as the markers themselves were made by the WPA and then sold at a cost of \$5 - \$6 apiece.<sup>22</sup>

Other Riverside WPA projects included a wood chopping program, a census and inventory of all Riverside trees, and improvements at March Air Force Base which included the construction of an armory.<sup>23</sup>

As the year 1940 drew closer, the WPA began to decline. President Roosevelt made cuts in the program and

The more prosperous the country became, the more people returned to the only values they knew, those associated with an individualistic, success-oriented, society.<sup>24</sup>

In the July 28, 1939 issue of the Riverside Press-Enterprise, a Herblock cartoon shows a man representing Congress cutting off a roll of names as if it were a tree branch. Little people are falling off the roll while Congress says, “Some of ‘em ought to land on their feet.”<sup>25</sup> The WPA was coming to an end, but it had had wide influence in Riverside and the city benefitted from its presence.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Donald S. Howard, The WPA and the Federal Relief Policy New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1943, p.105.

<sup>2</sup>Tom Patterson, A Colony for California Riverside: Press-Enterprise Company, 1971, p. 388.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Tom Patterson, Landmarks of Riverside: and the Stories Behind Them Riverside: Press-Enterprise Company, 1964, p.175

<sup>5</sup>William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal: 1932-1940 New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1963, p.128

<sup>6</sup>Interview with Rexford Brandt, held by telephone from Riverside to Corona Del Mar, 7 April 1977.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>"Riverside Boy Heads Project," Press, 28 October 1937.

<sup>9</sup>Patterson, Colony, p.388.

<sup>10</sup>W. C. Evans to Ralph Smith, 12 August 1938, Record Group IIBB, Riverside Archives, Riverside.

<sup>11</sup>Interview with Louise Strong, Riverside, California, 6 April 1977.

<sup>12</sup>Press, 3 April 1936, Record Group IIBB, Riverside Archives, Riverside.

<sup>13</sup>The March Field Story: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 1918-1968, commemorative issue, p. 44.

<sup>14</sup>Press, 2 January 1935, Record Group IIBB, Riverside Archives, Riverside.

<sup>15</sup>"Huge Storm Drain Nears Completion," Press, 9 September 1936, Record Group IIBB, Riverside Archives, Riverside.

<sup>16</sup>Arthur W. MacMahon, John D. Millet, and Gladys Ogden, The Administration of Federal Work Relief New York: de Capo Press, 1971, p.207. Originally published in 1941 for the Social Science Research Council.

<sup>17</sup>Phillip M. Hauser, Workers on Relief in the United States in March 1935, 2 vols. Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1938, 1:215-16.

<sup>18</sup>Press, 18 July 1936, p.4.

<sup>19</sup>"Improvements of Schools Slated," Press, 23 July 1936, p. 70.

<sup>20</sup>Fremont to get \$40,000 Building," Press, 7 July 1936, Record Group IIBB, Riverside Archives, Riverside.

<sup>21</sup>"New County Hospital Building Ready for Use Early in 1937; Officials Examine Structure," Enterprise, 6 August 1936, Record Group IIBB, Riverside Archives, Riverside.

<sup>22</sup>Ralph Smith to Mayor Criddle, 23 November 1936, Record Group IIBB, Riverside Archives, Riverside.

<sup>23</sup>"WPA Wood Choppers to Aid Relief Work," Press, 5 August 1936; "Tree Census and Inventory of All Trees in Riverside," Minutes of the Board of Park Commissioners January 1931 to June 194(?)4, 19 February 1940, Riverside Archives, Riverside, p. 297; "Funds Ready for Armory Here, City Must Donate Site and National Armory Projects Pay Part Cost," Press, 2 August 1936, Record Group IIBB, Riverside Archives, Riverside.

<sup>24</sup>Leuchtenburg, F.D.R. and the New Deal, p. 273.

<sup>25</sup>Herblock Cartoon, Press, 28 July 1939.

## Law Enforcement, Politics, and Prohibition

by Alan Curl

Riverside's 1927 mayoral election attracted a field of six candidates. On October 27, The Riverside Enterprise ran biographies on each of the contenders. While the stories on the other candidates emphasized experience in city government, involvement in benevolent brotherhoods and civic-minded organizations, or length of residency in Riverside, the thrust of Edward M. Dighton's biographic sketch was quite different.

Unlike the vitae of other candidates, Dighton's story was the only one to include campaign promises – “an economical administration, reform in the police department and the securing of new industries in the community.”<sup>1</sup>

Dighton's interest in law enforcement had been established earlier in the campaign. On October 4, for instance, The Enterprise reported on a candidates' forum sponsored by the local chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. All of the speakers encouraged strict law enforcement, but Dighton offered an alarming revelation when he stated that the “dope evil” situation in Riverside was “serious but not alarming. He stated that a number of Los Angeles candy-makers ‘put’ dope into candy...made for sale,” making it “almost impossible to keep it from children under such conditions.”<sup>2</sup>

Such “dope evil”, as Dighton described it, seems largely the product of a zealous candidate's imagination. A. M. Monroy, a federal narcotics agent in San Bernardino, concluded after the election that the suggestion “that narcotics were being peddled in the high school” was merely political rabble-rousing and that there had been no more calls to investigate “‘doped’ ice cream cones” since the election.<sup>3</sup>

Although The Enterprise and The Riverside Daily Press supported different candidates, both newspapers decried the shameful manner in which campaigns were being conducted. Editorials lamented the local introduction of “cowardly and



*Riverside Mayor Edward M. Dighton served from 1928 to 1929.*

contemptible attacks by means of anonymous circulars”<sup>4</sup> posted “under cover of darkness.”<sup>5</sup> Just four days before the election, former mayor and candidate Dr. Horace Porter, who had served eight years as pastor of the First Congregational Church, ran an advertisement in The Daily Press denouncing propaganda suggesting that he and his wife were “wet” and consorted with bootleggers.<sup>6</sup> An editorial by the same newspaper had endorsed Porter for mayor and noted that, prior to the Volstead Act, Porter had made Riverside officially “dry” while mayor in 1918.<sup>7</sup>

The election enjoyed a seventy percent voter turn-out. Of a total 7541 votes cast, Dighton led the field, capturing a little more than one-third of this total with 2825.<sup>8</sup> Because election was based upon a plurality, Edward M. Dighton became mayor without a run-off.

On January 1, 1928, his first day in office, Riverside’s new mayor announced his appointments to boards, commissions, and special offices in city government. His appointments included chief of police and police judge.<sup>9</sup> In appointing John Franklin as police chief, Dighton praised him as the sort of strict law enforcer that Riverside needed.<sup>10</sup>

As a guest speaker for the Riverside Exchange Club a few weeks later, the mayor issued a call for more funds to better equip and expand the police department.<sup>11</sup> As Dighton rallied to increase the police budget, Chief Franklin also kept the theme of strict law enforcement in the public consciousness. Raids on bootleggers were reported frequently in the local press.

By April, Dighton’s campaign on behalf of the police department was showing promise. Petitions calling for more police funds and a police pay raise carried over 2500 signatures, mostly from merchants and residents downtown. Franklin promised several hundred more signatures before presenting the petitions to the mayor and common council.<sup>12</sup> It was at this point, however, that Riverside’s reformer mayor began experiencing a series of political and moral setbacks in the area of law enforcement.

On April 3, Franklin appeared before the common council to answer some questions. When one councilman criticized the chief, suggesting that the handling of liquor cases was more clearly the

duty of the sheriff, Dighton proclaimed that, as long as he was mayor, those laws would be enforced by the city police.<sup>13</sup> Franklin’s insistence on authority regarding the enforcement of liquor laws, however, ultimately resulted in his arrest for issuing a malicious search warrant for an unproductive liquor raid in a private home.<sup>14</sup>

The Dighton administration and local law enforcement agencies had just begun actively to court the aid of the local Women’s Christian Temperance Union for more police funding at the time of the Franklin arrest. The week prior to the complaint, Sheriff Sweeters had addressed the group’s April 8 meeting and, after a strong statement against bootleggers, explained the need for more officers with higher pay in order to stop the illegal liquor traffic.<sup>15</sup> At the next meetings, on April 26 and May 10, it was urged that as many members as possible lend Franklin moral support by attending his trial.<sup>16</sup> No amount of moral support could mitigate the embarrassment that the police chief next caused Riverside law enforcement and the Dighton administration, however.

On May 11, at 3:30 am, one week before his trial for being overzealous in his efforts to find liquor in a private home, Police Chief Franklin was arrested for drunkenness in Colton. Two Colton police officers had found him asleep in his car, which was stalled in the middle of the street with a burned out bearing. Four pints of liquor were found in the car, Franklin was drunk, and dented turned-under fenders suggested that the auto had been backed into a tree.<sup>17</sup>

Two hours after his arrest, Franklin was released into Dighton’s custody. One hundred dollars was posted as bail, but only after, according to Colton Police Chief Elmer Deiss, Dighton told Colton officers that Franklin had been framed.<sup>18</sup>

Dighton suspended Franklin, pending his trial. On the evening of May 12, Franklin went before Judge Pemby of Colton and pleaded guilty to drunkenness and to having liquor in his possession. He was fined \$150. Dighton immediately dismissed Franklin and accused the Colton police chief of being “a thoroughly good professional liar” for suggesting that he had called a frame-up.<sup>19</sup>

Councilman Clarence Backstrand, who, along with his colleagues, had objected to Franklin’s aggressive pursuit of prohibition

violators, launched an investigation to discover where the former police chief had gotten his liquor. He did not have far to look. One pint of hundred-proof whiskey found in Franklin's possession had been legally purchased with a prescription at a Riverside drug store. Prior to being found in Franklin's car, the bottle had last been seen in the police evidence cupboard, having been unlawfully confiscated from the medicine chest of a raided home.<sup>20</sup>

After asking the press to state that rumors that he and Franklin were brothers-in-law were untrue, Dighton continued his law enforcement campaign in the wake of his police chief's dismissal. He declared that Franklin's "failure" would not deter "in an iota" his determination to see all laws strictly and vigorously enforced.<sup>21</sup>

Dighton's crusade for law enforcement was not unjustified. In an address to the Riverside Exchange Club, the mayor pointed out that the previous Saturday night had been the first in seventeen months in which Riverside had not had a burglary. With thirty thousand citizens, Riverside had only one officer to patrol the entire business district, and only seventeen to patrol the other forty square miles of the city. At a time when law-breaking motorists were beginning to become a menace, the Riverside Police Department had at its disposal only two motorcycles, and a car which was expected to be shared with other city departments.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, despite Federal Prohibition Officer Harris' claim to the WCTU that he and his family moved to Riverside because it was "the cleanest city in southern California,"<sup>23</sup> frequent reports of bootlegger arrests in both of the city's daily newspapers do attest to the existence of a liquor problem.

On May 24, Acting Police Chief Boche addressed the WCTU, expressing the opinion that the worst problem facing Riverside police was a lack of money for undercover liquor officers.<sup>24</sup> Petitions calling for more money to be made available to the police department were presented to the common council and an election date was scheduled for a special ballot measure.

Because Dighton had not been elected by a majority of voters, and because he had made stricter law enforcement the foremost issue of his administration, the July 1 election was the mayor's first

opportunity for a vote of confidence from all the people of the city. Certainly, the 658 votes for, as opposed to the 2448 votes against,<sup>25</sup> Dighton's increased police funding did not demonstrate public support for the mayor's policies.

The implications of the resounding defeat at the polls was not lost in some critics of the mayor, and an editorial in The Daily Press responded to rumors of impending petitions calling for Dighton's recall. The newspaper held the view that

the talk of recall at this time is exceedingly unwise. The machinery of the recall should be invoked only in the event that the official is guilty of moral or official turpitude; it was never intended to apply to mere difference of opinion regarding policies and appointments.<sup>26</sup>

As the mayor's attention turned beyond issues of law enforcement, however, it would only be a matter of months before The Daily Press would join those calling for Mayor Dighton's removal from office. That, though, is another story.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>The Riverside Enterprise, 27 October, 1927

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 4 October, 1927

<sup>3</sup>The Riverside Daily Press, 8 November, 1927

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 15 November, 1927

<sup>5</sup>Enterprise, 13 November, 1927

<sup>6</sup>Daily Press, 11 November, 1927

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 7 November, 1927

<sup>8</sup>Ibid. and Enterprise, 16 November, 1927

<sup>9</sup>Daily Press, 1 January, 1928

<sup>10</sup>Enterprise, 1 January, 1927

<sup>11</sup>Daily Press, 24 February, 1928

<sup>12</sup>Enterprise, 6 April and 8 April, 1928

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 4 April, 1928

<sup>14</sup>Daily Press, 18 May, 1928

<sup>15</sup>Minutes of the University Heights Women's Christian Temperance Union, 8 April, 1928.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 26 April, 1928 and 10 May, 1928

<sup>17</sup>Daily Press 11 May, 1928 and Enterprise, 13 May, 1928

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Daily Press, 14 May, 1928 and Enterprise, 13 May, 1928

<sup>20</sup>Daily Press, 17 May, 1928

<sup>21</sup>Enterprise, 13 May, 1928

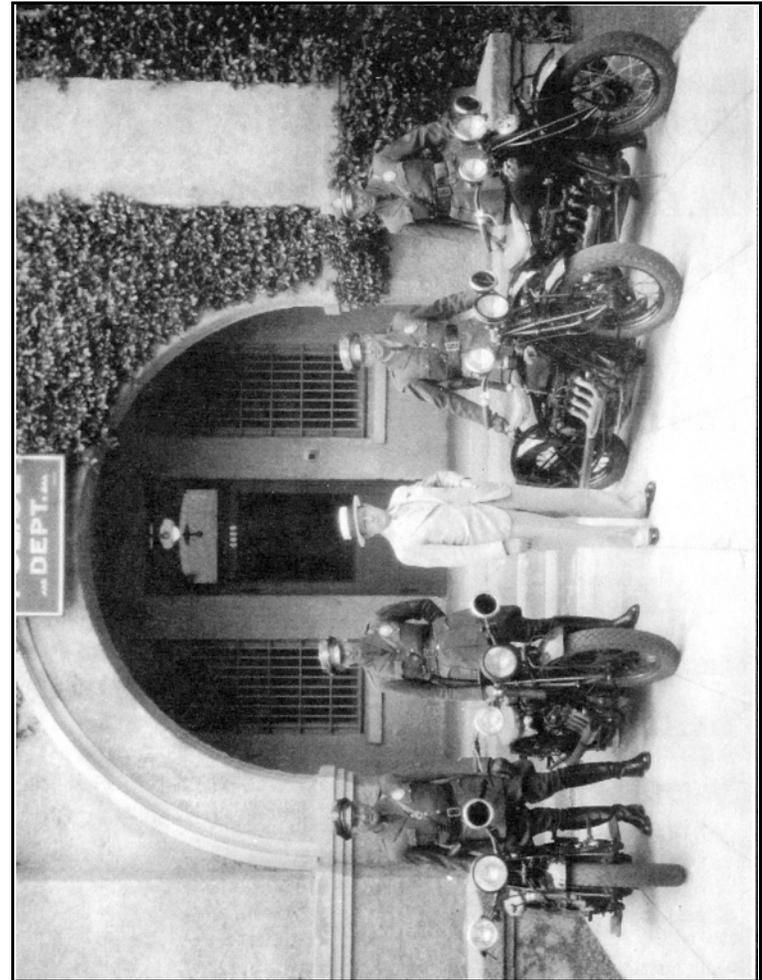
<sup>22</sup>Daily Press, 24 February, 1928

<sup>23</sup>Minutes of ... Women's Christian Temperance Union, 8 April 1928

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 24 May, 1928

<sup>25</sup>Daily Press, 2 July, 1928

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 3 July, 1928



*Police Chief Franklin stands before the police station with motorcycle officers.*

## Prohibition in a Dry Town: Some Contending Forces

*by Joyce C. Vickery*

During the 1920s the idea of a dry America, one denied access to intoxicating beverages by constitutional law, quickly proved to be but an illusion for most of the country. Historians of the prohibition movement are inclined to suggest that such success as prohibition enjoyed occurred only in those communities, like Riverside, which were legally and ideologically dry well before the establishment of the Eighteenth Amendment. A closer look, however, at the activities and performance of those locally in authority – law enforcement officers and political leaders – will indicate that even in such communities predisposed to eschewing the consumption of alcohol the prohibition statute proved almost impossible to enforce effectively.

Riverside's geographical location in the state contributed to its difficulties with regard to prohibition, for two of California's major industries provided strong, organized opposition. Viticulture and viniculture, grapes and wine, were commercial activities as early as 1840, especially in and around San Bernardino and Riverside. By 1916 the total annual wealth stemming from grapes and wine amounted to \$30 million and, well before the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment of 1920, 15,000 Californians were employed in these industries.<sup>1</sup> The second industry with a built-in antipathy to dry sentiments was tourism. Southern California in particular served as a magnet for tourists from the eastern states as well as from foreign countries. Development of this activity was encouraged by special reduced rates offered by competing railroads since the late 1880s and materially strengthened by the freedom to travel and the individual mobility afforded by the increased number of private automobiles from around the end of World War I. A beneficiary of the popularity of the region as a tourist haven was Riverside's own Mission Inn whose distinguished visitors included members of the royal families of Europe.<sup>2</sup> The tourists from the

chilly East and sophisticated, urbane Europe were seeking relaxation, not reform. Hoteliers throughout the state recognized this and so saw prohibition as a serious constraint on the success of their businesses. Frank Miller, owner of the Mission Inn and a staunch temperance man who claimed never to have taken a drink over a bar in his life, epitomized those who faced a serious conflict between their personal preferences and their business survival.

Southern California's overall population consisted of largely homogenous immigrants as compared to that of the northern part of the state. In this regard, Riverside might actually be considered the typical Southern California dry community. Founded in 1870 as a colony for "intelligent, industrious and enterprising people"<sup>3</sup> whose thrift and dedication would help promote the general communal welfare, Riverside drew its original settlers primarily from the Midwest and New England. These areas were the very heart of the late nineteenth century temperance movement and such sentiments accompanied the new Riverside residents. In particular, they were concerned with the impact of public drunkenness and the presence of saloons on the quality of community life. It is no surprise that their sentiments prevailed throughout the subsequent decades, at least until the increase in population and individual mobility, which began in earnest in the 1920s, began to dilute their political, economic, and social influence in the community.

Evidence of this influence is varied and significant. It includes citizen endorsement of temperance both in 1883 and later in 1920 and the amassing of a \$10,000 fund by the well-organized chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union to support dry candidates for state office.<sup>4</sup> By 1910 a strong campaign for statewide temperance laws had gained momentum from an alliance between prohibitionists and progressives who were seeking reform in local and state government. Leading Riversiders such as Mayor S. C. Evans were prominent in this campaign. Part of the incentive for such laws was the failure of high license fees and active enforcement of liquor control ordinances on a township level to eliminate or satisfactorily control the misuse of intoxicating beverages. Indeed, by the time the state-wide campaign was

underway, Riverside had already passed fourteen separate ordinances severely limiting the sale and use of liquor. The culmination of these local efforts was Ordinance #49, passed on April 6, 1908, which was actually a temperance rather than a prohibition law in that it permitted sale of alcohol for medical purposes and allowed hotels with more than forty rooms to serve wine or liquor with meals.<sup>5</sup>

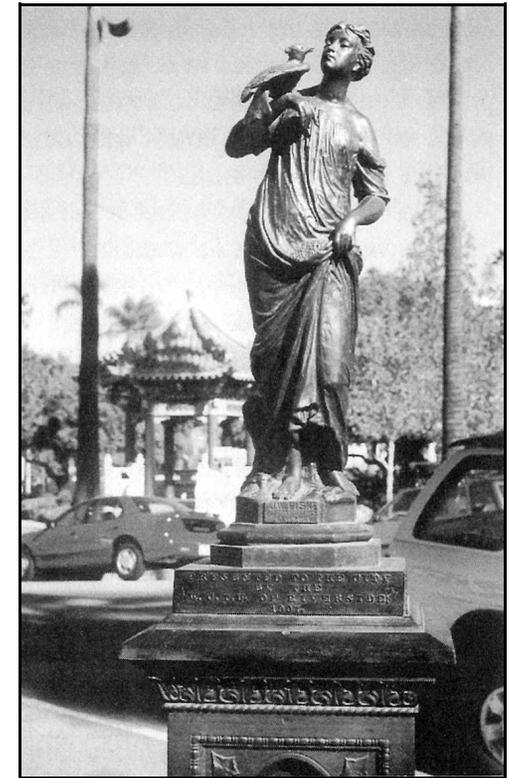
Yet almost from the outset Riverside was more dry by law and public sentiment than in actuality. The local laws were strict, but they were also disobeyed virtually from the town's incorporation in 1883. Unlicensed saloons were a fact of life in the 1890s; prominent citizens such as A. H. Brown were arrested for illegal winery operations in 1894; and in 1912 a mayor hired two women detectives to catch the prestigious Victoria Club serving illegal alcohol.<sup>6</sup> Oral history interviews with 1920s Riverside residents afford additional personal testimony to the public's flouting of such laws. Mr. J. M. Wells, then a municipal meter reader, remembers several instances of the discovery of illegal stills in the area.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Mrs. Olive Trujillo Vlahovich, a former resident of the La Placita area just north of Riverside, vividly recalls that the Cantina in the area continued its alcoholic beverage business even throughout the entire period of national prohibition while bootleggers operated more or less openly in the river bottom area.<sup>8</sup>

Arrests for drunkenness led all other categories in police files. And while such arrests were affected by a number of factors, such as the size and composition of the population, the general attitude of law enforcement officers, the prevailing reactions of the public, and the amount of contact between officers and the population as a whole, they also testify eloquently to the fact that people were indeed drinking and breaking the laws currently in force. As a result, Riverside politicians played an important part in securing passage of the Wyllie local option bill in the state legislature in 1911, which enabled entire supervisorial districts to vote themselves dry.<sup>9</sup>

Dry by local option on the eve of national prohibition, Riverside seemed to have the support of many of its leading citizens and law

enforcement officers for laws regulating the use of alcohol. One might anticipate that the effectuation of the Eighteenth Amendment on January 17, 1920, lending the weight and prestige of the federal government to alcohol regulation, would intensify the dry orientation of the town and immediate area. Enforcement, however, continued to be a thorny and perplexing problem unreceptive to the relatively straightforward moral postures adopted by both sides.

For one thing, the ability of localities to enforce effectively the Eighteenth Amendment was greatly dependent upon the passage of a state enforcement act which would enable local officers to act in cooperation with Federal officers in apprehending and prosecuting violators of the law. Only in 1922 was the Wright Enforcement Act passed by California voters. Thus, only two years after the passage of the Volstead Act could legal cooperation between local and federal officers occur, a period which allowed their opponents to refine their techniques of production and distribution of alcohol in all its myriad forms. Coupled with this was the fact that Congress in passing the national enforcement act (the Volstead Act, 1920), provided for merely a skeleton force of officers and



*The Women's Christian Temperance Union drinking fountain.*

ridiculously small amount of money with which to enforce a constitutional amendment that, from the outset, was met with outright opposition by a significant portion of the public.<sup>10</sup>

In Riverside this attitudinal split was producing a widening gap between public virtue and private practice. Several factors which had been minor prior to 1920 began to grow rapidly in importance and to affect the enforcement of prohibition. In addition to the national problems of illicit stills, smuggling from Canada and Mexico, and divided public opinion, Riverside also faced a change in both the size and the composition of its populace while feeling with unusual force the growing impact of the automobile. Between 1920 and 1930 the city experienced a population boom while more than doubling its rate of growth in comparison to the preceding decade.<sup>11</sup> These new immigrants, in the main, did not share the Midwestern temperance sentiments of earlier settlers coming as they did from the South, the more densely urban areas of the East, and even from other countries. As a result, the base of electoral support for rigorous enforcement policies, the generation of additional personnel, and the provision of necessary funds from tax resources of the local government was actually narrowing while the population itself was growing.

Reports both monthly and annually by various Riverside Police Chiefs during this period repeatedly request additional men and money to maintain the necessary level of police protection for the community. In 1919 the Police Force consisted of sixteen men which was reduced to fourteen in 1920, and by 1928 had grown to only 22 members. At the same time, the city had grown from 19,341 to 30,000 people. Faced with patrolling a forty-six square mile area and some 25,000 to 30,000 people, police were clearly being forced to prioritize radically the offenses that they could and did deal with. Among these, public drunkenness and other violations of the prohibition law could scarcely receive a terribly high priority. Here the impact of the increased use of the automobile and all of the additional and multiple problems of law enforcement to which it gave rise came into play. It is significant in the extreme that most of the requests made by Riverside Police

Chiefs between 1920 and 1928 for additional men, money, and equipment involved policing the use of the automobile rather than apprehending violators of the Eighteenth Amendment.<sup>12</sup>

With the increased use of the automobile came an unending series of ordinances designed to enable the city to comply with the California State Motor Vehicle Act. During much of the 1920s the Police Chief was, in effect, a traffic engineer as well as an officer committed to controlling crime. Reports for the chiefs between 1920 and 1928 abound with references to traffic control problems such as needed parking spaces and stop signs for dangerous intersections. Even the maintenance of signs, crosswalks, and parking areas was the duty of the police department. In addition, the department itself had to become more mobile in order to police effectively a much more mobile populace and so requests for automobiles and motorcycles rose in number as the decade advanced. A striking instance of the acuteness of the problem of police transportation is found in an excerpt from Chief John Franklin's request of the City Council dated January 24, 1928:

The other night, a burglary call was sent in to the office. I sent out one car and it failed to operate somewhere near 14<sup>th</sup> and Main streets. Upon the second burglary call I sent the other car and it got a little farther down the street and "died." The cars are absolutely useless and every time that an officer gets in one of them he takes his life in his hands. The burglary call that I referred to was finally attended to by begging and borrowing a private car.

If the crooks learn of the condition, they will flock in here by the hundred and will cause a situation more serious than it is now.<sup>13</sup>

In light of this situation, it is interesting to note that the records of arrests and detentions from 1919 to 1928 show an overall steady increase in both the number and percentage of total arrests for

violations of the Motor Vehicle Act. This parallels a decrease in the arrests for violations of liquor control laws.<sup>14</sup> At the very least it would appear that the emphasis or priority in law enforcement in Riverside shifted to apprehending those who violated the Motor Vehicle Act. This would seem to have been a major factor in the lack of success of the Eighteenth Amendment in what was, at least ideologically, preeminently a dry town.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Wendell E. Harmon, "A History of the Prohibition Movement in California" (PH.D. Dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1955), pp. 98-99, passim.

<sup>2</sup>Dewitt Hutchings, Handbook of the Mission Inn (Riverside, California, 1940), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup>John W. North, "A Colony for California" (Knoxville, Tennessee, 1870), original circular at the Riverside Municipal Museum.

<sup>4</sup>See City of Riverside, Board of Trustees Minutes, Book 1, 1883, p.2; S. D. Evans, "Prohibition Book #2," Riverside Municipal Archives, Record Group IIBB, no pagination.

<sup>5</sup>City of Riverside, City Council Minutes, Book 10, 1908, p. 112.

<sup>6</sup>See Riverside Press, Riverside, California, January 12, 1894; S. C. Evans, "Prohibition Book #2," Riverside Municipal Archives, Record Group IIBB, no pagination.

<sup>7</sup>Interviewed by the author, 18 March, 1975.

<sup>8</sup>Interviewed by the author, 10 April, 1975.

<sup>9</sup>S. C. Evans, "Prohibition Book #2," Riverside Municipal Archives, Record Group IIBB, no pagination.

<sup>10</sup>State of California, Secretary of State, Statement of the Vote, vols. for 1919-1954 (Sacramento, 1914-1954)

<sup>11</sup>Figures on the population and geographical size of the City of Riverside are from the files of the Riverside Planning Department.

<sup>12</sup>Chief of Police, Communications, Papers, Reports, 1920-1928, Riverside Municipal Archives, Record Group IID, no pagination.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

## Edmund Carroll Jaeger – Examining the Early Career of one of Southern California’s Premier Naturalists

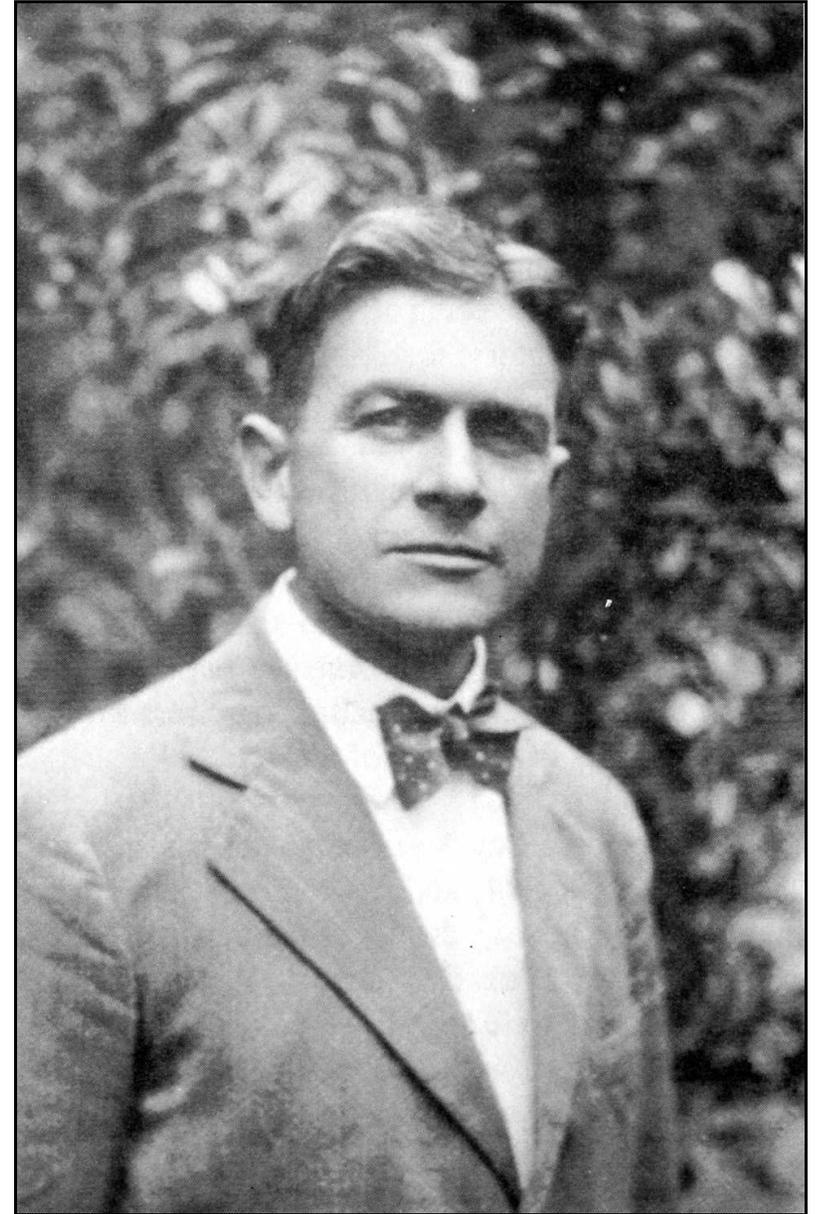
*by James Bryant  
and Vince Moses*

**B**orn on the Nebraska prairie in 1883, Edmund Carroll Jaeger was a son of the nineteenth century. But for more than sixty years of the twentieth century, the California desert wilderness was his obsession. He made himself its champion, and the leading agitator for its preservation.

From early childhood, Edmund Jaeger’s interest in natural history took root in his talents for drawing and for patient, careful observation of nature. Jaeger believed direct contact with nature and wilderness was the proper route to scientific discovery. He often referred to scientists who worked in laboratories as “chair polishers”. Yet, as strong as his inclinations were toward natural history, it was not his first choice of a career.

Jaeger moved to Riverside with his family in 1910. During the early years, as a Seventh Day Adventist youth minister, he lectured against the evils of alcohol, and ran reform-minded nature study programs for young men in the local mountains. During 1913, Jaeger organized the “Vocation School of Natural History for Boys” in Pasadena, as well as the “Mountain Camp for Boys and Young Men” in the San Bernardino mountains. From this point of view, Jaeger was a representative reformer of his day, intent upon instilling moral character in young men through nature study and a love of the wilderness. In many ways, Jaeger was influenced by and came to model himself after author and naturalist John Muir. In 1914, Jaeger even attempted to emulate Muir by walking over 700 miles of trails in the San Jacinto and San Bernardino Mountains.

Jaeger earned money for college by running his natural history programs for young men, as well as by publishing a series of natural

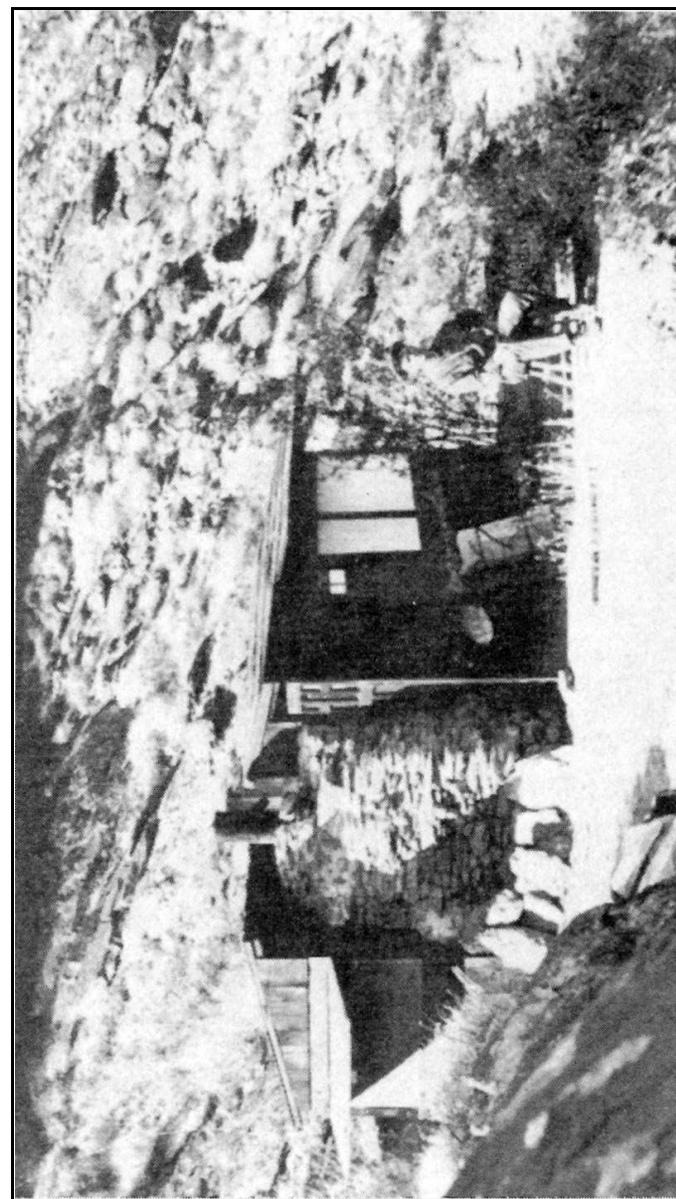


*The 1929 issue of Riverside Junior College’s Tequesquite was dedicated to Edmund C. Jaeger.*

history essays, “Desert Dwellers”, in the Youth’s Instructor magazine. Like Charles Darwin and numerous other nineteenth century savants, Jaeger first pursued professional opportunities in medicine (albeit with a distinct Seventh Day Adventist emphasis). However, in 1911, a beetle collecting trip with an Occidental College professor converted his central commitment to the study of natural history. The fostering of Jaeger’s early science career involved consultation with a number of noted California and international scientists. Among these were herpetologist Loye Holmes Miller, British ornithologist William Homan Thorpe, California botanist Phillip Munz and Redlands invertebrate biologist Stillman Berry. Jaeger also attracted his own circle of companions and students who provided assistance and good company on long field trips.

Edmund Jaeger’s distinctive jaunts into primitive back country had begun by 1912, collecting plants, fossil mollusks and birds in the Spring Mountain Range region of Nevada. Before long, Edmund Jaeger came to live, breathe, and imbibe in the desert. It became his passion, his faith, his life’s force. To gain constant access to it, he built, and rebuilt, a small rustic cabin in Tahquitz Canyon, near Palm Springs. This structure provided Jaeger with all he needed to carry on observations of desert plants and animals.

Jaeger’s intention was to approach the desert with monk-like reverence, bringing only those few items necessary for completing the journey. He equipped his tiny cabin with only the smallest selection of personal items and natural objects from the surrounding environment, and much of the structure itself was built from materials salvaged from the flotsam of failed human enterprises in the harsh Colorado Desert setting. From 1915 into the 1920s, with Palm Springs as his base of operations, Jaeger earned part of his living as a paid natural history collector for the University of California at Berkeley and the Smithsonian Institution. He made long expeditions – traveling by burro and on foot – into desert and mountain regions to collect plant specimens for both organizations. He also used these trips to gather data for his own research projects.



*Edmund C. Jaeger’s Palm Springs cabin*

Some of Jaeger's field collecting during this time included travels in the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa mountains with California journalist Charles F. Saunders; accounts of these trips can be found in portions of Saunderson's book *The Southern Sierras of California* (1923, pp 155-174), in which he dubs Jaeger, "the Professor".

The summer of 1920 found Jaeger doing research at Pomona College Biological Station in Laguna. And over a period of several years, Jaeger gained insight through field work with the pioneering woman botanist Mary Spencer. At age 82, Spencer traveled by burro with Jaeger as high as 6,000 feet in the Tahquitz Valley of the San Jacintos.

By the early 1920s, Jaeger had begun to write both professional and popular publications based on the extensive background of field work. His long string of published titles actually began in 1919 with a very limited printing of *The Mountain Trees of Southern California*, which included Jaeger's own photographs and line illustrations of plants. While, in many ways, Edmund Jaeger is best known today for his work studying and collecting desert plants, much of his life's work involved writings and observations on animal behavior. He would use his field notes on a particular species in writing both scientific and popular publications. The first compendium of the popular essays appeared in 1921 as *Denizens of the Desert*.

From the 1920s to the early '30s, Jaeger's research publications included papers on the birds and plants of Nevada's Charleston Mountains. As a faculty member of the Riverside Junior College, Jaeger made frequent field trips with students, during which he made systematic collections of lichens of the southwestern states, discovered snail, insect and spider species, and continued preparations for a guide to desert plants.

1940 saw publication of *Desert Wildflowers* (Stanford University Press), perhaps Jaeger's greatest single contribution to the field of

botany. The guide includes references to over 800 plants, accompanied by Jaeger's own line drawings. This work is still in print.

Jaeger's field work and Riverside teaching activities continued through the World War II years. The discovery that earned him international fame took place in the Chuckwalla Mountains during the winter of 1946. A student in Jaeger's field trip group spotted what he thought was an odd-shaped root wedged into a hole in a rock face. Taking a closer look, Jaeger realized the root was actually a familiar, desert bird, the common poorwill (*phalaenoptilus nuttallii*). Yet this poorwill was doing something surprising: it seemed to be in that odd state we call "hibernation".

Later, Dr. Jaeger learned that others had found these "sleeping" birds in different places, but this particular bird in the Chuckwallas gave him a special opportunity. Jaeger placed an identification band on the bird's leg, and for the next three winters the same bird returned to this rocky crypt. By observing this bird, Jaeger was able to prove that this poorwill was, indeed, hibernating. The common poorwill is now the world's only bird species known to hibernate.

Jaeger's first observations of the hibernating Common Poorwill were published in the ornithological journal *The Condor* in 1946. Widespread attention to the discovery came as a result of Jaeger's article for the February 1953 issue of *National Geographic Magazine*: "Poorwill Sleeps Away the Winter".

In recognition for these accomplishments and his growing international fame, in 1953 both Occidental College and the University of California, Riverside awarded Edmund Jaeger with honorary doctoral degrees. After retiring from the Riverside Junior College faculty in 1954, Jaeger began his association with the Riverside Municipal Museum, as Curator of Plants for the museum's new Clark Botanical division. For the remaining

decades of his long life, it was as if he had begun a new career, of lectures, world travels, continued popular writings and the inauguration of the ongoing series of wilderness “palavers”, outdoor gatherings during which men and their sons and grandsons can focus on nature study.

END NOTE: The authors would like to credit personal communications with authorized Jaeger biographer Ray Ryckman, palaver coordinator Jack Harris, Lloyd Mason Smith and Sam Hinton (both formerly of the Palm Springs Desert Museum) as providing information and insights invaluable to the creation of this essay.

[Editor’s Note: The Riverside Municipal Museum has recently inaugurated a series of exhibits, publications, and educational programs examining Jaeger’s career and many accomplishments. The first of these is a scenic interpretation of Jaeger’s Palm Springs cabin. Also noteworthy is the recent publication of Raymond E. Ryckman’s Son of the Living Desert – Edmund C. Jaeger, 1887-1983. (Loma Linda, 1998).]

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