

Sunday May 7th 1978

Dear Mr Irwin - Well, I have the big magnifying glass in one hand & pictures in left hand and doing my best - haven't been to Darwin since 1971 and then did not stop - had been over to the Junction - my old home Millsbaugh etc and home by old Corv - now just a rock pile of fallen old stone cabins - The town is a junk pile now - a disgrace to the pleasant - clean place I spent so many years. from 1900 - off & on to 1948 - when I left for good. It was simply ruined after Anaconda took over The Hill... In the little wash where the jail is & always was this - this is the second one - some one burned the original down back in 1918-19. We kids named it Burro Wash - the jacks used to wade through the piles of cans, tossed there from the first one back in old days - they'd eat the labels off the cans - get their hoofs in them & have to be "rescued" a couple water spouts came down & washed them on into Lucky Jim wash & buried under the sand - but always every one threw their cans there. The pictures 12 - 13 - have been built since I left - where I don't know - looks like Mt Gyro in back of 13 - We kids

named it back in 1900's after a little Chinese girl back in early days, whom the then school kids used to chase and she would run across the little wash & up the hill. # 20 is the remains of a Brewery of 1876 - days - a couple other small ones were in Burro alley wash - later in 1890's probably - a one room house was built in the front where the open door is - and used by miners as a home - would be empty at times - any one could take over - early 1910's Harry Floyd and his wife Lucille (our school teacher then) lived in it awhile - until 1914 and that war began - they left for England to fight

the Kaiser" - Harry was a "re-mittance man" - J.B. when he came to Darwin 1905 thereabouts - family in London shipped him to America & out west for his health - supposed to be well to do "aristocracy" in London - had fine suits of clothes - about as dirty as a man could be - when Lucille Harman came to teach 1909 she boarded with Campbells & he would come courting in the evening - dirty "long handles" (union suits) - grey striped pants - prince albert coat - no shirt - but a stiff - loose front from neck to top of pants & stiff cuffs around his wrists - the "shirt front" looked like an oval piece of card board - how we used to laugh! June 1910 they got married - she became as dirty as he was - slept on the ground - sat on the ground to eat - when they took off for England in 1915 with a string of burros & their possessions for Boxersfield & the train - they worked in munition plants in England - he died in the '40's and she returned to the U.S. in early 1950's & lived with her sister Mrs. Streeter near Talonia until we heard of her death in late '60's. We really had some characters in Darwin, it had a fascination for all who came - passing through - stay over night and spend the rest of their lives there. The dugouts were used from early days - one was really fixed up fine - enlarged - front door & window - by a couple of half brothers who spent their lives together - miners - Jim Burns - tall & thin - Johnny Mc Donough short - and never talked - until on a drunk - then he talked endlessly to a tree or post or just stood in front of the saloon - Black Metal - and talked. Silas is mistaken about George Gregory - he was born near old Cozo or at Chiria Gardens in 1860's - his cousin whose name I won't give as some of her family still live & do not know the story - was 6 months old - born near old Cozo . Dec 24 1869 - and in her mother's arms when her mother was killed during an Indian fight amongst themselves - the baby was rescued by her father - a Mexican - and

37) Brought to Darwin and raised by her Grand mother in Lone Pine - (just between us) - she was a half sister of Mrs. Annie Dupes "Tatecumbe" whom I knew from childhood until her death Feb. 27th - 1970 - 106 yrs old - born Lone Pine July 20th 1865 - I knew George Gregory from 1900's until his death. July 2nd - 1955 - 1867 born about.

Charlie Winkle was supposed to be Saline Valley Indian - worked for the old Roda Works in Keeler for years and when it closed down he & wife Mary came to Darwin - in 1910's - Mary died in Darwin Sept 9th - 1940 and Charlie died April 22nd 1946 - both buried in our cemetery - we old friends still left at that time attended their funerals - our style - but not the Indian ones at the Cemetery - we felt those were their private way and did not intrude - tho their daughters asked us to - Ancestors of the Saline Valley Indians is hard to tell or where originated - but certainly not from So. Fork Country. Silas was born in Darwin Oct 15th 1910. I well remember - we all loved him and he received his name from Silas Reynolds, who to tease his wife Marnie Hession Reynolds - danced around in the store with the baby in his arms. "he my baby" so Silas' Mother named him Silas - George Gregory's family tribe lived in Cozo country back in 1850 when Dr. Darwin French & his party were hunting the "Gunsight" from '49ers tales and came over from Death Valley district? expl. and discovered the ledges of Cozo in March 1860 and the Indians living there. In his party was Dennis Searles - later to find Searles Lake (Irons) and Cozo tribes are not Shoshone - who are Piute (Ut) Shoshone and were Death Valley & Panamint tribes - really just a few people, so Kerr is mistaken. I doubt if he knew any of our Indians or came to our part of Inyo County. Indian Panamint George Hanson - "Boy who ran away" - "jai hi'atai - he - ali" when he saw the '49ers - when 5 yrs old with his father (I write the wrong name down! "Bah - Vanda - Rava - Kee" ! right!

Best way now to get to Joe & Mabel Petersen's old home - is from Irona out on Panamint Valley road to south of Plate range where the pipe line road to their "gardens" turns west as it does - when Irona first started back in 1910's - they got fresh water from Joe & Mabel's place, on east side of Argus range up from Sealers Valley - but in 1900's when Joe would come over to our camp - Millsbaugh - the trail went straight from the head of Mt. Spring Canyon across a flat we called Bircham's to the Malapai over it & down to Joe's place - I rode there several times when hunting our horses - they ran all over with the Indian horses & wild ones & we & the Indians rode miles looking for them - had a big range to run in - from Cole Springs on east & south. hunting horses was when I first saw the fine Indian writings in Rand Canyon as we all called it. where the Professor in 1920's ever thought up the name Renegade only he could tell! See with George Pepin and he can give you best way to get to Petersons now - he stopped by last Wednesday on his way to Renton Washington to spend the summer with his daughter & family as he does each summer when Irona heats up, he will send me his address as soon as he is settled near his step-daughter or some one in Irona can direct you if you go now - Joe Peterson was part of Panamint Indians - was a "cousin" of George Hanson - as for Mabel - I'm not certain - if we ever asked - they generally married into some other tribe than their own. as Mike Hanson - George's son - married into Cozo tribe when he married Annie - George & Mamie Gregory's daughter - so could live in Darwin off and on their family - Annie died during our 1918-19 flu epidemic so little is known of our few Indians - what I know is from long years of friendship from child hood days - Little Lake Indians were probably Cozo - all separate tribes

5) - Death Valley - Panamint - Cozo - Saline Valley - history was handed down with stories - I was always interested from a child and was told of different ways of life and seeing their camps & how they lived - never heard of any Fandango's - the Owen Valley Indians probably did - entirely different people and Owen's Lake was a boundary line and observed until later years when all ours traveled into the Valley & other places - to South Fork - one of our girls married a So. Fork man - Checo - only games I remember was a "stick game" used by many other tribes - all loved to gamble tho - a blanket on the ground & card game going. It will be hard to get all you want to know - so few left and all prefer the white man's style of living - maybe Silas does not want to talk about history or past. "They don't make them any better than Silas". his mother a fine person I first knew 1909 when she came to Darwin in her late teens - her baskets are the finest - Poker - 21 and Solos were the popular card games in the Saloon in Darwin - I remember several Poker Games that ran 3 days & nights and several hundred dollars changed hands. Well I'm getting writers cramp, so best quit for now - just ask and I'll do my best to answer - just the facts as I know them and about the last I know. a couple Darwin "girls" still left & living in Alhambra - but they could not care less & left Darwin when little and I doubt if they ever were told their mother's history - certainly not by me - confidences must never be told. So until next time. I'll return the proof sheet of pictures you may want them. Our Panamint Indians came up each spring from the heat of the valley & their winter home "Warm Springs" (now called Indian Reservation - few acres in the middle of the valley - down from Wild Rose Canyon - in Oct 2nd 1964 notice of termination of Indian Ranch "Rancheria" reservation in Panamint Valley ("Warm Springs") 500 acres - Indian George Hanson & family winter home for many years - probably when 49'ers went through - no

longer remains under jurisdiction of Bureau of Indian Affairs -
at present leased to "Kirk" Lenore Barker. - They camped at
various places around Junction Flat - Tennessee Springs or on
the flat not far from La Motte Springs - in the fall they camped
up in back of our place - Millsbaugh - to gather piñon nuts -
which they knocked off the trees with sticks - had a bed of coals
in a hole - dumped the cones in - they opened & nuts fell out.
roasted - so good - they also cut cords of wood up there for us.
Ed ride up and spend the day - always welcome - they all
cared so much for me, they had the use of our blacksmith
shop when they wanted to shoe their horses or ours - never
so much as a horse shoe nail was missing - honest - decent
proud people. Adios for now - as we used to say, "Keep your
powder dry" - hope I make Pence - as I've said - when I
write - memories rush in - so "let her go as she looks" -
tell Elodie "hello" and to keep up her fine job with pictures -
It was a nice surprise to see my old "desert rat" friend
George Ripkin - he knows Irona country and knew so
many of our old timers around Ballarat country and George
& family - "Tap her light" and best wishes for all your
efforts & interest - Hope you make it to Rand Canyon and
the fine petroglyphs this month.

Elizabeth A. Mechem