

Charles N. Drwin.

me and The Egg.

In early 1900's Silas H. Reynolds was Under-Sheriff for Charles Collins and in the spring of 1903 he started for Ballarat & pick up a prisoner - arrived at our camp Millsbaugh - and stayed over night; next morning ^{Sunday} when I went down to feed the horses, his mare, "Chew to back" had jumped the fence & was gone - headed for Independence taking a short cut & avoiding towns as everyone would know she was Silas' mare. "horse sense" - a mule figures it out even better. So he borrowed one of our horses. "Jerry" and I went along on "Yaque" to bring Jerry back. What does a little girl and a 36 yr. old deputy find to talk about on a 20 mile ride. So we digressed the horses and how "Chew-to-back" got her name - pleasant going down Shepherd's Canyon and then the heat of Panamint Valley & across Ballarat sparkling in the sun, arrived there at noon and put the horses in the corral for water & hay. I went over to George & Kitty Valmer's and they invited me to lunch - George was tending bar on the night shift. The main thing of the trip that has stayed with me all the years is the hard boiled egg Kitty served. I cracked mine & inside was a chicken! - I couldn't let her know, so wrapped it in the napkin on my lap. What else we had I don't remember - but that chicken in the egg! In the mean time a sand storm came up - but at 2 o'clock I started home, leading "Jerry". In the middle of Panamint Valley is a large "dry lake" - I left the sand storm behind and rode on the lake, blue water ahead & tree lined banks, so real I could hear the water splash on the horses hooves -

turn and look back and nothing but dry lake - finally rode out of the "lake" and on to the rocks & sage brush & into the mouth of the canyon - I've seen a lot of desert mirages, but never one that can equal that for reality.

Delas acquired his prisoner and returned on the stage Tuesday to Darwin. Wed. to Keeler and finally reaching Lone Pine & Independence with a team & buggy rented.

Ballarat had survived its 1897-98 boom and settled down - a town built of "dobie" and an occasional clod burst the walls melted down - the original school house still stands - our (Shorty) Harris lived in it in 1930 until he went to Big Pine Sanatorium to die Nov 10 - 1934 and our beloved Charlie Brown saw that his last request at Shoshone was granted - to be buried at Bennett Wells in Death Valley - beside his old prospecting pal Dayton (James)

In those days we considered Ballarat, Keeler & Mojave, the "jumping off" places. In the fall the lake shore would be black with ducks - good eating at first - but in a few weeks so full of soda, no longer fit to eat, when they rose in flight, were like a black cloud.

"Elm"