

July 14th 1978.

Dear Mr. Inwin - First off - I never heard of a Isabelle
Mozey - if there was one of that name she did not come
up home with any of Panamint George's family - unless some-
one who knew no better called Isabelle Hanson - George's daughter
by that name - I knew Isabelle from 1900 on - when I was
little & they all came up in summers out of the heat at
their winter home Warm Springs in Panamint Valley - and when
she had Molly in 1900 - whom we all loved - Isabelle made
fine baskets tho not many - those made for camp use - for
storage - were always around their camps. I like to be
offered baskets for little things I did for them - but could
not accept as what ever we or I did was because we could
be of some help - and collecting baskets was not a hobby until
later on - Mamie Reynolds started it when she came to
Darwin as a bride 1910 - and when the store and all burned
on July 7th 1918 we saved them - if any thing can be funny
at a time like that - we all - tho few yrs - were saving as
much as we could from the store & her rooms in back -
Silas had died Dec 31st 1917 and she was trying to pay the
huge debts of his long illness with the store - we got some
furniture out and lined up in the street - where it burned
when the fire jumped across to the Hotel - I can still see it.
what I started to say - Mrs. Owen - "Jo" was saving Mamie's
chairs - a pl. china dinner set - dropping them down into
a large laundry wicker basket - I said Jo you're breaking
them - she said "it doesn't matter, Bess - I'm saving them!"
the fire the year before across the street was bad enough
but this one was terrible - and an end to all the original
1876 buildings - except the little Thompson house up at the end

of the main street where the water tanks are and our old school house - and no water to fight it with and our nice little town gone - except for the out lying houses - I should have kept traces of the pictures I've sent you - maybe not 2 of the old town looking up the street & one looking down 1914 before the 1917 & 1918 fires. ? Showing 1876 buildings - I do not remember of a preacher or church services ever in Darwin - maybe back in the beginning - but those "hard rock" miners were not interested in church - saloons yes - and eating houses. in 1900's when I was going to school and staying with Mrs. Loughrey & her family - the priest - Father ? would come out once in awhile for confessions no doubt, no other catholics in town - who would admit they were ! a couple times some outfit came out and showed "moving pictures" on a screen in the old Jack Gunn Saloon - we didn't seem to need entertainment in those days - sufficient unto ourselves - men worked 10 hrs a day & hung out at the saloon in their idle hours - we women kept house - baked bread etc. and cooked good meals - had Mamie Gregory come and clean house - wash heavy men's clothes - blankets - sheets etc. iron - all for \$1.00 a long day - standard pay - Mamie liked to "work" for me - "everything was so clean" - bless her memory - the miners took their clothes down to "camp" to be washed - \$1.00 - white clothes were washed on a wash board - boiled in a copper boiler on the stove - rubbed out again - rinsed and then in blueing water - hung on the line - winter time would freeze stiff - comical to see the "long handles" flopping in the breeze - Ah those good old days - I wouldn't have missed them for any other time - well enough of that - I do wander around Robin Hood's Barn as memories rush in - as bear with me ! 1900 Hot Springs was open to all - drunks went over to camp and boil out. others went to take the baths - mud

and water - & drink the horrible tasting water - to me. we went over several times & camp a week or so - barley sacks were draped around the springs - for privacy - smear mud all over one - then rinse off. at that time 1900's there was also a cold water or cool - hole - a one room shack to camp in - used by every one. 5 miles up east by north was a fine spring - Wild Horse Spring at the base of the west side of the Cosos - the few Coso Indians left did not go there in my time - nor did Panamint Valley ones - distinct lines were drawn in those days and "they" ventured over at their own risk. the valley Indians used the springs more - the east shore of Owens Lake was a dividing line - and in pre-history days the east end of the country could go to the lake to gather the grass & bug that was on them - a tasty dish! "Cozaby". - No doubt you have read Chalfants Story of Inyo - revised addition 1922 - again 1933 - his information of early Indians is about as I knew it of my Panamint Valley ones and Coso Indians. as many were still around in his young days - especially the Valley Indians. pg 34 tells of Panamint ways of dealing with the ail & death as we knew they did, last time was in late 1910's and "we noble white men" rescued them, interfering with customs of hundreds of years - cruel - sure - but so are / is the white man... These "strays" in Darwin know nothing of our old timers or days - Mr Thompson included - who changes old place names - which "annoys" me... I hope you can go "over home" with Silas & Frances Ness. while he knows nothing of how places & things were in my growing up years and later - he has some stock running on the range & keep to the gates - use to be 5 of them! I you get to the Junction it is changed - our boarding house moved there in 1914-15 some one burned down in the '60's and the Navy put up a small 3 room building - we sold every thing at camp

Millsbaugh in 1914 to Summers & Butler Cow outfit from
Mono Co. & Bishop when they bought the Junction and cow
from Domingo Etcharren - the Cow hands tore down the 1876
original house that Greens had established as a station -
had intended to build it at the cross roads of old Coso road
Shepherd built and Nadeau's road from Indian Wells Valley
he put down a 90 ft. well - drier at the bottom than at the
top - open all my years - Navy finally filled it - as they do
what ever they do in my home country. As they give permission
to Silas to enter the bombing range when they won't be doing
what they do - remains of bomb holes on the flat, but scraped
over... Nadeau went on 4 miles beyond the Junction and
built a stone cabin & corrals - remains you can see - it
was his stop over before turning right a mile or so beyond
& on up to Modoc. road can still be faintly seen as can any
on desert where Sage brush & Grease wood has been disturbed.
they seldom grow back. Millsbaugh at head of Shepherd's Canyon
is over grown with brush - but close your eyes and "see" the
fine place it was - by the pictures I've sent you. our well with
the hand pump still there by the flat rock - our boarding house
just above to right - the mill well - 100 ft deep & 50 ft drift at
50 ft. level - still there by the old boiler - covered now - and
as you go up around on our original grade - the Navy user -
half way you'll pass our 1900 ft. tunnel, they've closed the
entrance - but the dump still there - on up they also filled in
our 90 ft. K.P.C. shaft - just the dump left & road goes over
it - you'll look down in to Panamint Valley - they've built
a steep road up above the K.P.C. dump to some kind of Look out.
In many ways I'm glad the Navy keeps the range closed -
vandals can't tear up my old home land, so dear to my
heart. I do hope you can make the trip - make a day of
it - maybe come back to Darwin on the old Coso road by Cole
Spring and the Bad Right of old Coso - the original stone houses

5) all fallen in ruins - "Ree" it in 1860's when the Mexicans were there - the soldiers came for a short time - we kids used to find buttons off their uniforms and remains of rifles & pistols - and didn't have sense enough to realize their value - and if brought home "throw that junk out" - If there are "Eagle Rocks" south of our cemetery - some new comer has named them - couple miles out on the flat are a couple Buttes and the old Cozo road goes between them - an old road goes west by south we called the Crystal Spring road - drops over the hill to the upper end of Centennial Flat & on to Crystal Springs and a couple other springs along the base of the Cozo Mts. that end on south side of Centennial Flat - also a little canyon in the Malapai we called Black Rock Spring - a few horses run in there - along the edge of Darwin on east side is a little wash we called Burro Alley - every one dumped their cans in there - knee deep on a burro and they'd wade around through them eating the labels off & getting cans stuck on their hoofs - and we'd have to catch them & take off with much protest from the Gaers. It is true they can be a pest - pawing and tearing around water holes - hee heaving and generally making a nuisance of themselves - across this little wash to the east is a sort of bluish hill - we kids named Mt. Gyron after a little Chinese girl the kids back in the 1870-80's would chase up the side of the hill - old timers would tell us - and there is Mt. Ophir where the Hill buildings are at the base of - as you go to the Junction before crossing the main Darwin Wash - which heads in the Cozo - 8 miles out - on your right you will see an out crop of the Alabama Hills. Same formation - in entirely different hills - also a large granite boulder sits alone completely cracked through - after you cross the wash and soon start up - the formation is completely different, rocks and sage brush - grease wood left behind - that's about all the names we gave places or old timers did - the Summit 4 miles west on road and over which we could see the dust

of teams coming - later day lights of cars. and thanks to dear
Charlie Brown no more dust - when he paved our road - a
parting gift to Darwin - he always took care of us - so we sent
him to the Senate at Sacramento. Those red hupya berries
you sampled may be the same kind that grew on low grey
brush - we called currents - on the slope up from Darwin
wash by Nadeau's stone corral - used to stop and eat them
in the spring going to or coming from Darwin and George and
his family gathered them & dried - and baked a sort of bread
after crushing them in a sort of flour - the picture of George &
his burro is at the old stone corral - they would camp there
some times - and gather the berries - No particular pioneer
or Indian trails - Nadeau's Hamilton road up out of Indian
Wells Valley - fine stone work on the grade - Navy sleep it up
to come to the Junction & branches off to go to the Indian Village
in Rand Canyon - (that idiotic name Renegade) - I have
rambled on - but I want you to "see" my old home country
as it was & to answer your questions, as I know them -
it's a "lead pipe cinch" no one else is left who can. Let
me know if I sent you the picture looking up the main St.
with original buildings I took before our fires - and have I
sent a picture of the original 1876 way station house at the
Junction. Best wishes - as you "wade" through the fog going!

Sincerely

Elizabeth L. Mechem

As usual, this "goes as the looks" - if I read it over, most likely
would not go! "Elm" Oh, yes, did George Pipkin write you the
best way these days to get to Joe and
Mabel Petersen's old home? I asked him
too - as living in Irona he should know.
he is vacationing now at Renton Wash. & core
off from Irona heat!