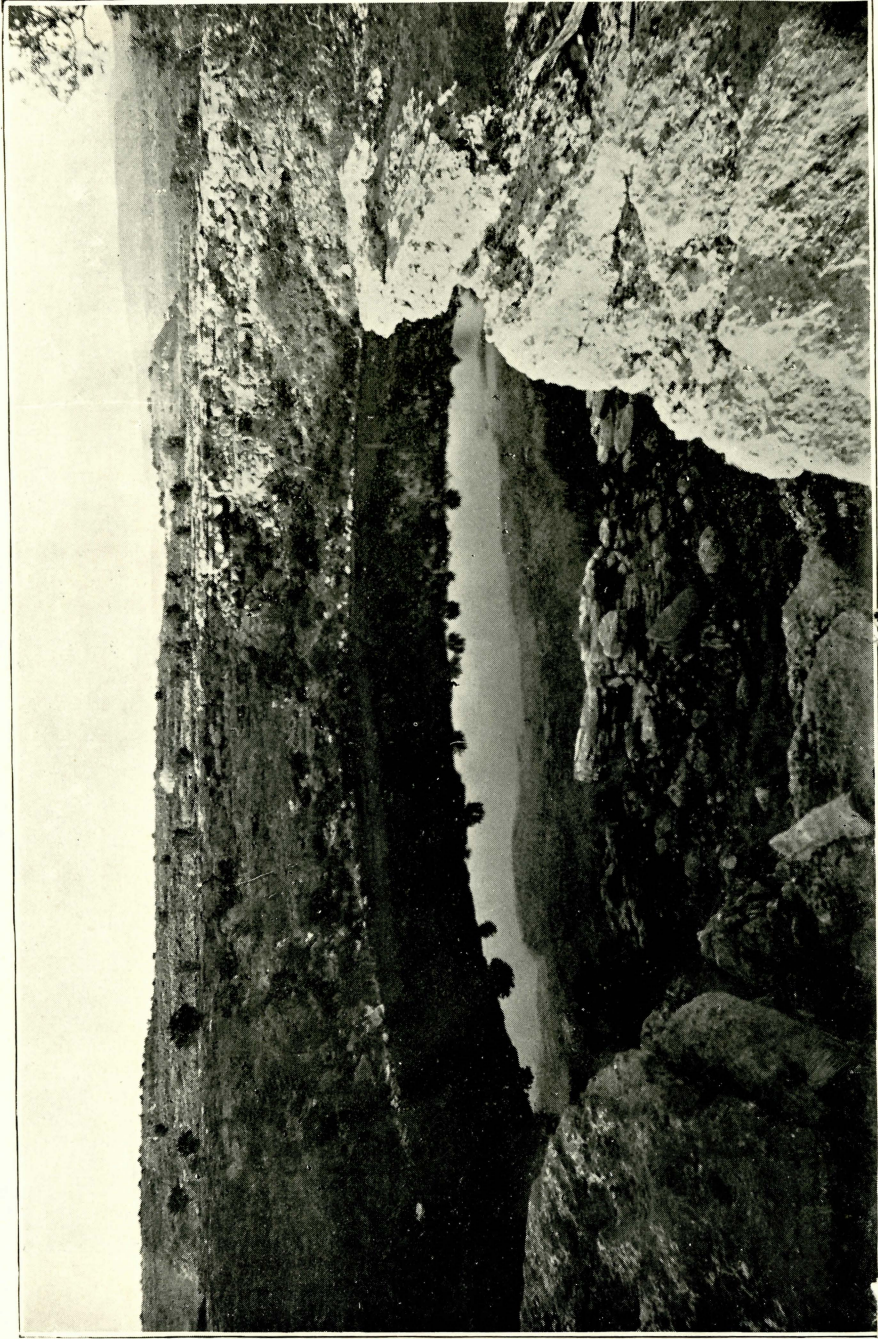


Montezumas Well and the
Soda Spring. Year?



ARD-RICH DAFFODILS, AT HAYWARDS.

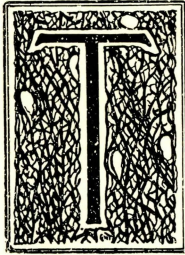


"MONTEZUM
WELL."

Copyright 1891 by Chas. F. Tompkins.

MONTEZUMA'S WELL AND THE SODA SPRING, ARIZONA.

BY A. E. DOUGLASS.



On an Eastern man it is remarkable how quickly and cheaply a camping party in Arizona is organized and started. For our proposed nine-day trip south from Flagstaff it was only necessary to borrow all the supplies for the eight members of our party, and the wagon, from various neighbors. On the morning of our departure the freight wagon with its driver—who is also an excellent cook—stopped at the principal store of the town and took on board a plentiful supply of canned goods, flour and vegetables. At the very comfortable hour of ten o'clock the "ambulance" picked up the members of the party, the ladies displaying becoming sunbonnets, while the gentlemen were in old clothes and riding leggings. The canteens were filled—for in this country water cannot be had for the asking—and we started off.

The season had been rainy and the roads were bad, so the first night we stopped at Munn's ranch, only twenty-one miles from town. It was well we were not obliged to



LOG CABINS ON DRY BEAVER CREEK.

use our tents, for it rained all night. The ladies had the ranchman's cabin, a log house with a fine big fireplace, but somewhat over-ventilated, as the window had been carried away, and some former visitors had used a log from the side of the house for firewood. The gentlemen's protection was a shed close by, clean and dry but lacking one end, and showing large openings in the wall on all sides. The rain, however, came down vertically and we were perfectly dry.

The next day carried us out of the pine forest down to a lower level where the junipers grow. This level is a plain fifteen miles wide, caused by a lava stream spreading out over a flat layer of limestone. We passed in succession Pine Tanks, Cedar Tanks and Rattlesnake Tanks (a "tank" is a little pool of dirty water—the only water to be had in this desolate region), and camped at Devil's Cavern, having passed over, that day, some of the worst roads in Arizona. The night was clear and beautiful, and we spread upon the open ground, near the campfire, each our sheet of canvas with several very heavy Indian blankets upon it.

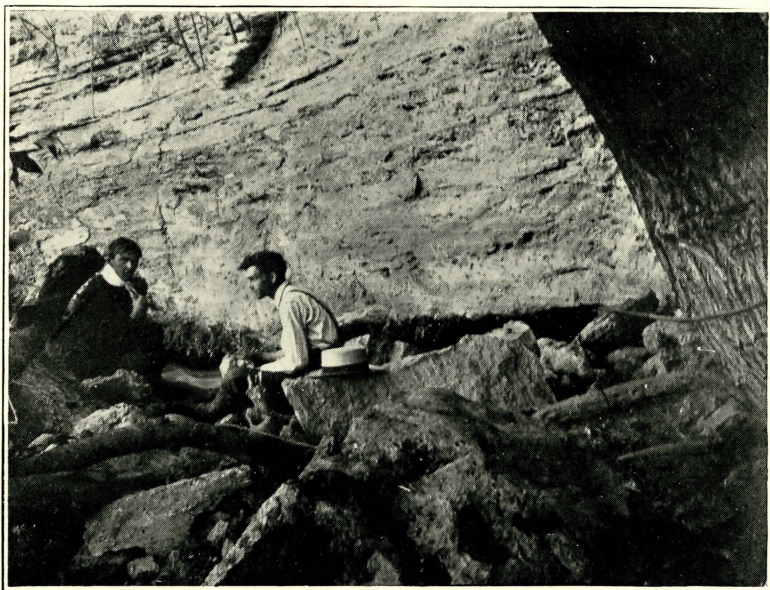
Devil's Cavern was the least noticeable object in the surroundings. A little way from the road there was a slight depression in the otherwise level ground, and at the center of this a hole four feet long by two wide. Standing over it one could perceive that it opened into a large cave with tree-trunks passing from side to side down which one might climb. It was just twenty feet down to the top of the huge pile of debris which stood in the center of the cavern. The actual floor was twenty feet lower yet, and passageways extended one hundred feet in one direction and two hundred in another.

The third day took us past the "Rim," another descent to a lower level—a level where, from the heat and dryness, trees do not grow at all except along water-courses. Here at last we reached Beaver Creek—fifty miles from Flagstaff and only 3300 feet above the sea—and settled ourselves at Finney's ranch.

Just before reaching the creek the road passes near Montezuma's Well, the great natural curiosity of this region. It is a large circular opening in the ground, some four hundred feet across and a hundred feet deep. The walls are precipitous, and are here and there lined with well preserved dwellings of the ancient Indian inhabitants of the country, whose name and history were long since lost. At the bottom of the well is a pool of water three hundred feet long by two hundred wide. Its color is dark green, and its depth, recently measured, varies between 60 and 85 feet. Around the edge of the pond, and twenty feet from shore,

is a fringe of weeds, but the taste of the water is good ; and after once passing the line of weeds the swimming is delightful. The "well" is fed by some hidden spring and has an outlet.

The well is in a hill, and its southern wall is less than forty feet thick, forming on the farther side a cliff overhanging Beaver Creek. Through this wall the water has made its way, coming out in a rushing stream. Inside the wall, and near the outlet, is a cave, which was once filled with dwellings of the prehistoric races. In the far end of the cave is a tiny rill of water—a part of the stream



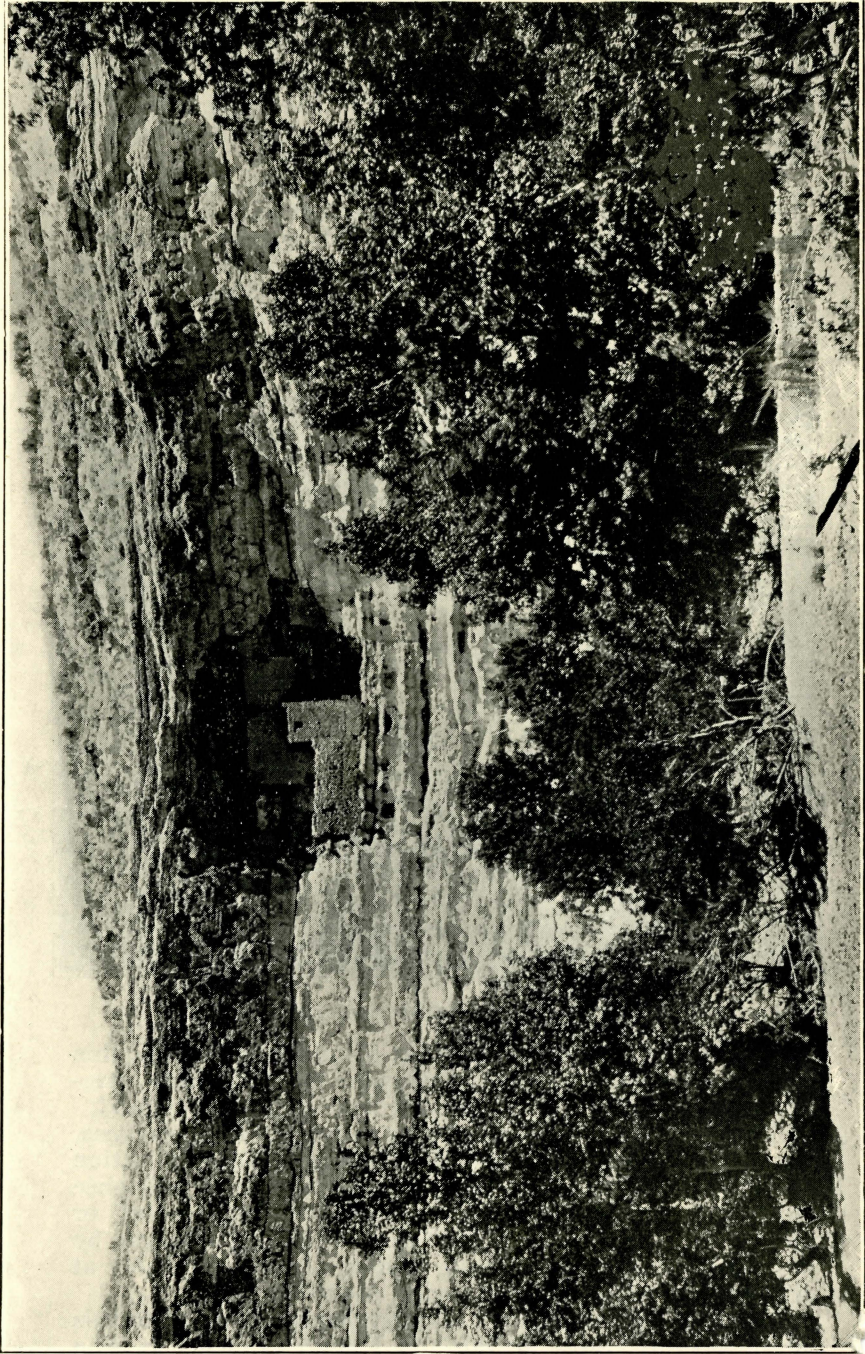
Frank
Reid (R)
+
J C Wesson
(L)

AT THE OUTLET OF "MONTEZUMA'S WELL."

which leaves the well. Of what priceless importance this was to the former inhabitants who built in these inaccessible places to save themselves from besieging tribes!

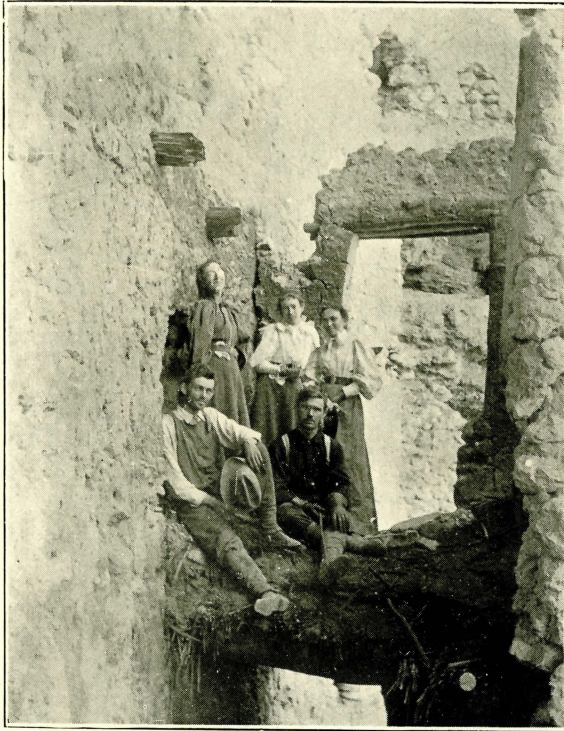
This very remarkable formation is not, as many suppose, an ancient crater ; its only connection with volcanic action is that it is formed in a light-colored rock that was once flowing lava. It began as an immense "blow-hole" or hollow in the rock, which has been enormously enlarged by the assistance of the flowing water. It was probably at one time very like Devil's Cavern, described above.

The other great natural curiosity which drew us to this place was the "Soda Spring" on Finney's ranch. It is on



"MONTEZUM CASTLE."

Copyright 1891 by Chas. F. Lammis



Edwards girls R
Miss Loney
Ried L Wason R

IN A DOOR OF "MONTEZUMA'S CASTLE."

a level with the creek, and only a few rods from it. Upon examining it one finds apparently a basin ten feet square of lukewarm water, clear as crystal and with a clean sandy bottom eighteen inches below the surface. The taste of the water is like weak apollinaris. But if one attempts to stand on the nice sandy bottom he will go down, until the water is breast-high and there stop, standing upright on nothing. The spring is in reality quite deep, and yet, with a man upon my shoulders I could not get entirely under water so long as I remained erect. One can simply sit on the water and paddle about. As with the well the temperature is mild, and one can stay in almost any length of time.

The cause of this curious phenomenon is to be found in the uprush of water and gas which constitutes the spring. The sand is clean and heavy, and in some way distributes the pressure of the upcoming water and gas, so that while a small stone or a bit of glass sinks through the clear



IN THE SODA SPRING, FINNEY'S RANCH.

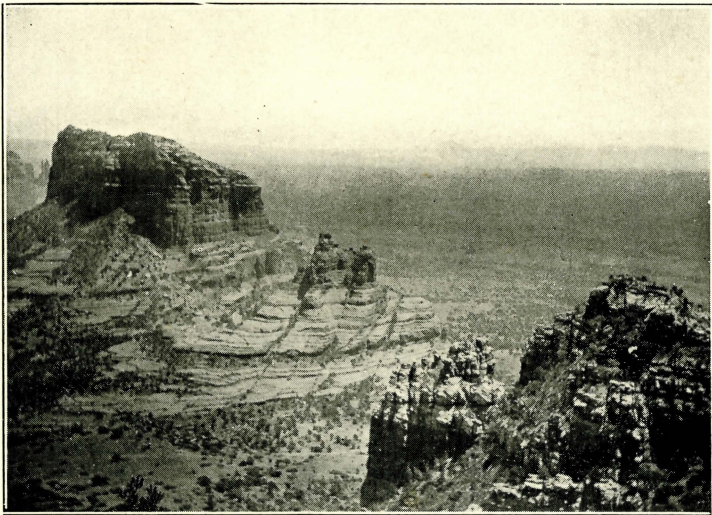
water, it stops on reaching the surface of the sand. A dip in this spring is a sensation of a life time. The water is so good and the buoyancy so remarkable, and the shade of the trees all about so delightful, that one is not likely to have had just such a bath before.

Other points of interest were visited. Some five miles from the ranch are the "Inscription Rocks," a fine wall of red stone thirty feet high and covered upon its lower surfaces with innumerable "pictographs," figures of animals and men, chipped into the surface with a stone hammer. They are similar to many found in Tempe, near Phoenix, and in other parts of Arizona.*

A whole day was spent in a trip to "Montezuma's Castle," a prehistoric dwelling set high in a cliff on the north bank of Beaver creek about ten miles below Finney's ranch and several miles from Camp Verde, an abandoned army post.

*But should not be confounded with the famous "Inscription Rock," El Morro, which is in New Mexico.—Ed.

The cliff rises some two hundred feet above the creek and has a high talus at the bottom. The climb to the buildings is difficult and accomplished only by the aid of crude ladders for overcoming the worst places. The material of the cliff is volcanic and it has in its face a hollow some fifty feet high and twenty feet from front to rear and over one hundred feet above the creek. The builders took advantage of this to rear a complicated system of rooms, one above another. The supporting walls are of stone laid in some kind of mortar, while heavy cross-beams eight inches in diameter pass between these and support a matting of rushes and a layer of earth. The doorways between the



"CASTLE AND BELL ROCK" FROM "THE RED ROCK COUNTRY."

rooms are small and in some cases triangular, standing on one corner, so to speak, so that as one stoops over to pass through, it is wide at the top where the body passes and narrow at the bottom, leaving only 'room for the feet. There are about fifteen rooms in all, most of them about eight feet square, and high enough to stand up in. They are all covered with soot from the fires which their former occupants used for cooking—hardly, we may suppose, for warmth, because upon the day of our trip the thermometer was only a few degrees less than 100° in the shade. The climb up the face of that cliff in the blazing sunlight made a remarkable impression upon us. Thanks to Mr. F. C. Reid (of our party) subscriptions for insuring the preserva-

tion of this wonderful and accessible relic have been collected, and the work has been done.

The day before our start for home was given to a horseback ride to the Red Rock country, seventeen miles to the northwest. It gets its name from the out-cropping of red sandstone all over the bottom of the valley. The general formation is, of course, like that of the Grand Cañon, lacking the latter's tremendous depth. The cañon is, however, some two thousand feet deep, and here widens out to a breadth of six or eight miles with jagged, precipitous hills scattered over the valley. These are worn into fan-



BRANDING A "MAVERICK."

tastic shapes, presenting many remarkable forms which have received such names as the Castle, the Cathedral, Bell Rock and the Monument.

The ride to this country with a guide gave opportunity for seeing one phase of the life in the less known parts of Arizona. The guide was a young fellow of sixteen who had never been more than sixty miles from home. On the road he spied a bunch of cattle and amongst them a heifer not branded. In a few minutes he had "roped" it, thrown it down, tied its feet together, lit a fire to heat his branding iron, and finally in twenty minutes from the start the heifer was branded with his initials, I had taken his pic-

ture, and we were off again. He was vastly amazed when I told him that cattle did not have to be branded in the part of the country that I came from, and that we could get water anywhere without having to "pack" it in canteens or drink from muddy pools full of polliwogs, as we did on that trip to the Red Rock country.

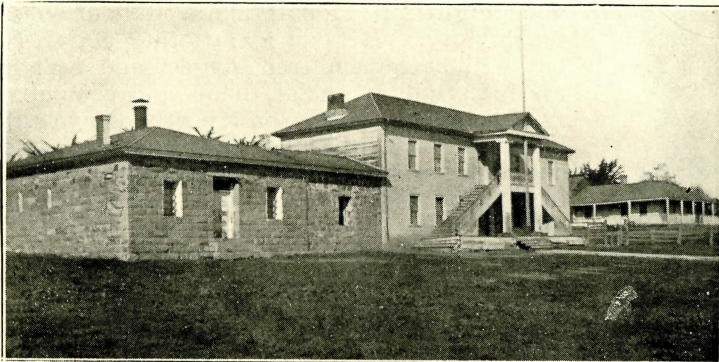
This ride was beneath a sun and in a temperature which is incorrectly credited to the whole of Arizona. The temperature was 100° in the shade that day, but owing to the dryness it was far from unbearable. The return trip to Flagstaff, occupying two days more, was a constant delightful improvement. Flagstaff itself, at an altitude of seven thousand feet, and in its surroundings of dark pine forest, proved so cool that overcoats were necessary. Such is the difference between low and high regions in warm countries.

Lowell Observatory, Flagstaff, Arizona.

THE FIRST WESTERN "TOWN-HALL."

"**COLTON HALL**," of which a recent photograph is given below, was the first "American" public building west of the Missouri, and historically is most interesting. It was built by that charming pioneer, Rev. Walter Colton, the first American civil officer in California; and in it was held, beginning Sept. 1, 1849, the famous convention which drafted the constitution under which California was admitted to the Union a year later.

Colton was chaplain of the frigate "Congress," U. S. Navy. Two weeks after the American flag was first raised in California (July 10, 1846) he was appointed Alcalde (mayor and judge) of Monterey, then the capital. The next month (Aug. 15)—having found a superannuated press and type—he and Robert Semple issued the first number of the first Far Western newspaper, *The Californian*. It was half in English and half in Spanish. Sept. 15, he was formally elected



COLTON HALL, MONTEREY. Photo. 1899 by H. S. C. C.

7-9-49

~~Where~~ is a copy of my
short article with pic-
tures, about Monte-
zuma's Well and the
Soda Springs, Beaver
Creek &c that came
out in Sunset Maga-
zine about 1896 to
1900?

Or was that the Land
of Sunshine Magazine?
My picture would be among
old photos!