

DICK COSTLEY

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By James L. Jacobs

It was a real pleasure to read in the October 1986 *Old Timers News* the enthusiastic report of Dick Costley. This calls to mind one episode in his career that is unusual.

I was a ranger on the Widtsoe District of the old Powell National Forest when I was assigned on detail to assist with completion of the extensive Cooperative Range Survey of all wilderness rangelands in Utah. That was done by range men of several agencies and involved lands of all ownership.

To train for this job, the participants met at Nephi and were given training on the desert country west of town. We met together on September 18, 1936, completed our training, and were assigned out as 2 man teams. Dick Costely and I were one team. We were assigned to the survey on Garfield and Kane Counties in southern Utah.

We started out in the area east of Kanab. Here we found range devastation from overgrazing which was worse than one could have imagined. A large band of goats was run for their mohair on one area year round. Water sources were far apart so the goats had to travel long distances for ther water. All green growth that could be reached by the goats was completely grazed for a mile of more away from every water source. Goats "nicked down" every tall flexible shrub so they could graze all the growth to the top. They were adept at climbing juniper trees with any leaning trunks so they could reach and eat all of the growth. We sampled grazing areas here.

Then we drove to Boulder, Utah, over the Hell's Backbone road, which was open only during summer months. During the six months when this was closed, all men and supplies were packed by pack animal 17 miles to Escalante. John King operated a cheese factory, and his cheeses were packed to Escalante. We hired John King with his

saddle horses and pack burros to lead us into the country between Boulder and the Colorado River so we could conduct a grazing survey where livestock were run. John knew all the trails, and places where we could find potholes in gullies where sweetwater from storms could be found, as most springs in the area were strongly alkaline, mainly magnesium sulfate, which caused a strong laxative to horses and men. We stayed one night at Onion Beds Spring where cattle had so befouled the water that it was almost unusable—but when you get so thirsty it would keep a man alive.

We then spent a week typing out the range in the Bullfrog country south of Notom. The road ran through the Bown ranch. We asked the rancher how the road down Bullfrog was and he told us he did not know, nor did anyone else know as no one had been over the road since Emery King brought the sheep out in April, and this was October. But we packed a week's supply of gasoline, food, and water in our pickup and surveyed the Bullfrog range.

When we went through Hanksville, we saw a huge garden with an abundance of ripe watermelon and cantelopes. We asked the farmer to sell us some, so we loaded the pickup. Total cost: 50¢.

At a ranch we rented saddle and pack horses, and typed out much of the range in the Henry Mountains.

We then hired Reginald Stewart of Tropic with his saddle and pack stock to guide us into the Last Chance Country. This included the Smokey Mountain area where coal beds deep in the ground had been burning for many years. Where the smoke came out of the ground, sulfuric acid would deposit on rocks, and anyone sitting on such rocks found that the acid ate the seats of their pants.

On a Friday night when our pack string came off the trail to the end of the road, the Powell Forest Supervisor was waiting for us. He told me to report to the AAA Headquarters in Mandan, North Dakota, by Monday morning, so I returned to Panguitch

with him and left Dick Costley to compile all the survey data we had collected in a fine week of field survey work without my help.

In March 1957 when Dick Costely and I were spending a week at the W.O., we roomed together at the Raleigh Hotel.

Dick and I were traveling down Johns Valley in our pickup one black dark night when a big buck deer ran into the side of the pickup and dropped to the ground. We got out and looked at him, and decided to dress him out and deliver him to Frank Daley, game warden at Panguitch. I opened my big pocket knife and reached down to cut his throat when the deer jumped up and dashed away. Although we thought he was dead, he was only stunned and got away unharmed.