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Scenes from the past

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This is one of many related papers that were included in the 1974 NMGS Fall Field Conference Guidebook.

Annual NMGS Fall Field Conference Guidebooks

Every fall since 1950, the New Mexico Geological Society (NMGS) has held an annual [Fall Field Conference](#) that explores some region of New Mexico (or surrounding states). Always well attended, these conferences provide a guidebook to participants. Besides detailed road logs, the guidebooks contain many well written, edited, and peer-reviewed geoscience papers. These books have set the national standard for geologic guidebooks and are an essential geologic reference for anyone working in or around New Mexico.

Free Downloads

NMGS has decided to make peer-reviewed papers from our Fall Field Conference guidebooks available for free download. This is in keeping with our mission of promoting interest, research, and cooperation regarding geology in New Mexico. However, guidebook sales represent a significant proportion of our operating budget. Therefore, only *research papers* are available for download. *Road logs*, *mini-papers*, and other selected content are available only in print for recent guidebooks.

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SCENES FROM THE PAST

by

WILLIAM L. HISS

President, New Mexico Geological Society

INTRODUCTION

Several members of the New Mexico Geological Society have expressed an interest in recalling memorable events in the history of the Geological Society. With the Silver Anniversary Field Conference at hand, it seems appropriate to commence what is hoped will be a series of illustrated articles containing brief descriptions of past events in the history of the Geological Society and highlights from the geological exploration of New Mexico.

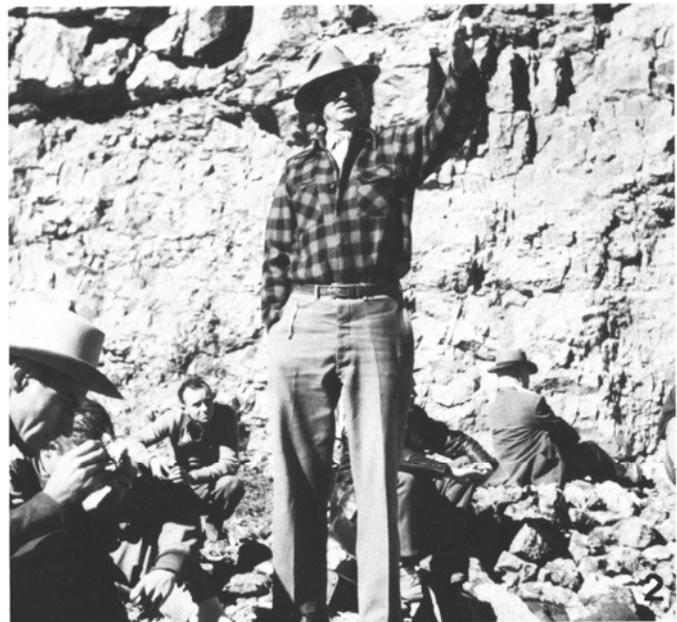
The Geological Society needs the cooperation and support of "those that were there" in order to accomplish this worthwhile objective. Please search through your dusty files for those "long forgotten" photographs of you and your associates and loan them to the officers of the Geological Society who will have them copied and promptly returned to you. A brief, but complete, narrative containing the names of the people shown in the photos, the location and date on which the photo was taken, a description of the geological features shown, and the general background information that will be of interest to your colleagues should accompany each photograph. With your help, we will "recapture the past".

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

Dr. Vincent C. Kelley, General Chairman of the first field conference, and 195 geologists departed Albuquerque on November 3, 1950 for Pagosa Springs, Colorado for a look at the geology of the San Juan basin of northwestern New Mexico and southwestern Colorado. Overnight stops were made at Pagosa Springs and Durango with the field conference ending at Molas Lake, Colorado on the third day.

An excellent account of the first field conference and the beginning of what has gradually evolved into a traditional annual event is available in Stuart Northrop's *"History of the New Mexico Geological Society"*. The first guidebook was compiled and edited by Vin Kelley with the assistance of Edward C. Beaumont and Caswell Silver. Ed and Cas are listed as "Sub-editors" in the preface to the first guidebook (second printing now available); presumably they would be deemed "Co-editors" in more modern times. Dr. Sherman A. Wengerd is listed as an "Advisor", a position Sherm has filled continuously throughout the past 25 years. Ed Beaumont and Emory Arnold have contributed articles to both the 1st and 25th guidebooks—a fact worthy of note.

The photographs of the first field conference were prepared from Kodachrome slides generously loaned to the author by Sherm Wengerd, University of New Mexico (photos 1-17) and Robert A. Bieberman, New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources (photos 18-22). Bob was a flagman during the first conference and, like Sherm, has been active in the affairs of the Geological Society from that time to the present. Sherm and Bob have also kindly contributed the comments relating to the photographs.



1. Dr. Vincent C. Kelley of the University of New Mexico, General Chairman of the first field conference. Engineer Mountain at Columbine stop.

2. N. Wood Bass of U.S.G.S. talks at Rockwood Quarry, Animas Canyon. Stop No. 3. "The old man of Hermosa Mountain, Wood Bass, who wrote the 1944 U.S.G.S. mimeographed paper in which he was the first to state that the Eagle Gypsum and Paradox Basins were originally one sedimentational basin, holds forth on the pre-Paradox Section, and we all listened in awe!"



3. Stop No. 1 on the first annual field trip sponsored by the New Mexico Geological Society. San Ysidro anticline, Cuba highway, November 3, 1950. "They came from all over the U.S.A. to see our fabulous geology and gas sold at 5¢ a thousand. Gordon Wood on the pedestal."

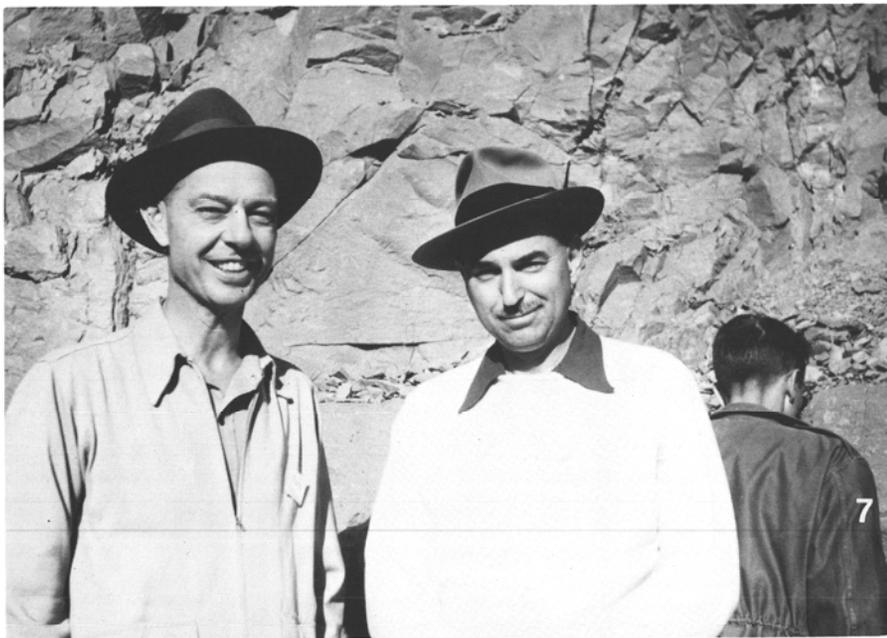
4. "Tubby Engle and Sam Johnson of Superior Oil Co.; R. Looney, Bob Murphy Magnolia Petroleum Co.; Phil Hayes and Charlie Read of U.S.G.S."

GORDON WOOD JR.

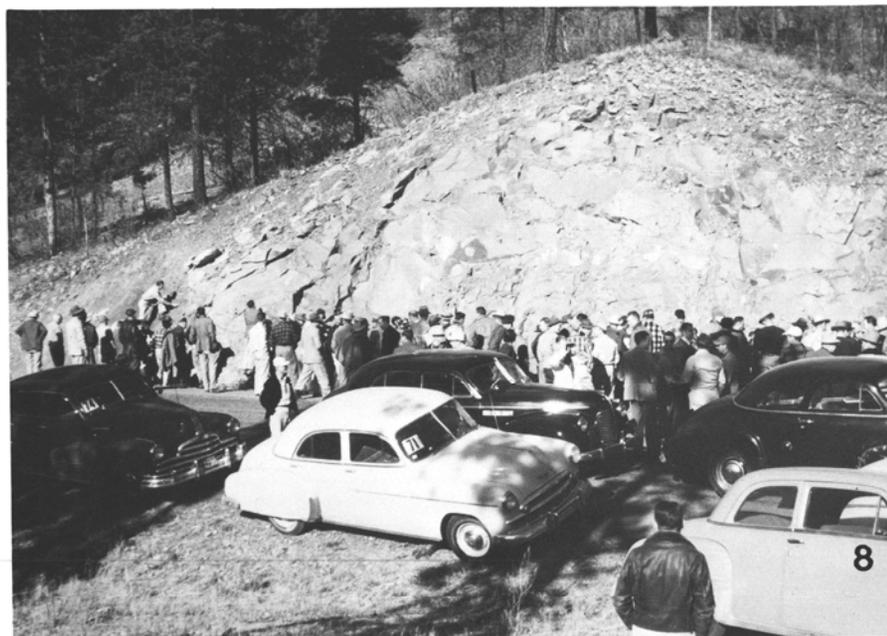


5. Charlie Sternberg, Bob Painter and the late Sherril Shannon of Barnsdall Oil Company. "This is the old Barnsdall Gang, for whom Sherman Wengert discussed west Blanco field several years before the California pipeline went in; at least they had faith. Charlie is now retired back in the Carolinas, Bob is with Aramco in Arabia, and Sherril has passed from this mortal soil. After all, Barnsdall was bought by the Sunray which in turn was absorbed by Sun Oil, and West Blanco field was sold to El Paso Natural Gas for "x" millions of dollars."

6. Field trip gang at outcrop, Stop No. 3, November 4, 1950. "The easiest way to "do" geology at Pagosa Springs is to sit and listen to a U.S.G.S. geologist lecture about basalt dikes in the Mancos Shale; of course that doesn't help find much oil!"



7. John Rouse and Gerry Upp.



8. A lecture to the field trip gang at Stop No. 5, Piedra Canyon, Colorado.



9. The late Harrison Schmitt, Navajo Jack Frost and Sherman Wengerd, at lunch in Piedra Canyon, Colorado. "The two stalwarts of our Society, Schmitt and Frost, are no longer with us. But, the tragedy right after this picture was taken was Cary Butcher dying of a massive heart attack on our first N.M.G.S. field trip. Cary, a great west Texas oil-finder, told me (Wengerd) just before he died that he wanted just one more time to come to our mountain country, even though his doctor had told him to stay home in the low country."

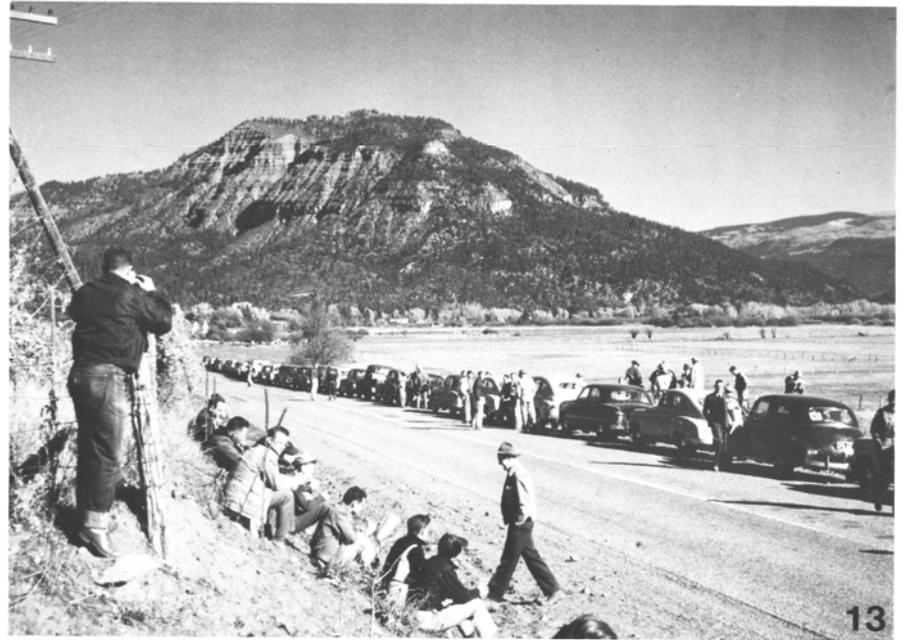
10. The late Vernon King; Don Hillis, and the late Bill Pemberton of California; the late Dudley Cornell of Albuquerque. "King was the original Hospah geologist; Hillis, an avid sail boat enthusiast in California, came to see what he called hard-rock outcrops; Pemberton, the real joker on the trip, was the foremost conservator of the famous California condor; and if it had not been for Dudley Cornell, we might never have had a gas pipeline to California."



11. John Elliott Allen, Hoyo Caine, Caswell Silver, Tubby Engle, and the late Bob Zeller. "This hearty gang of New Mexicans (all but that "outlander" from Superior, Tubby Engle) got into a friendly argument as to the cause of the big rock slide that created an earthquake in Durango in the early forties. Caswell won, as usual."



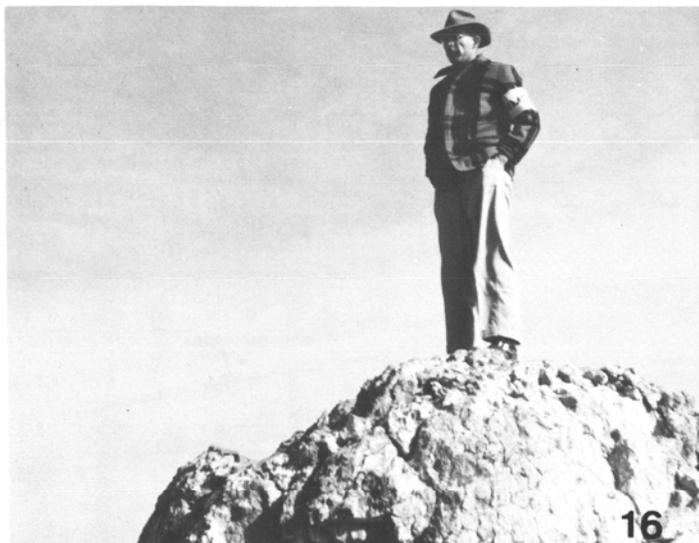
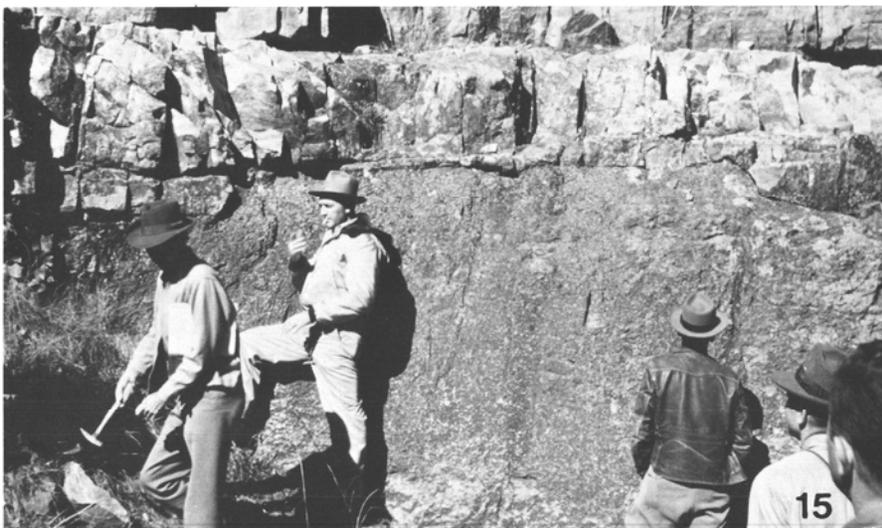
12. Silas "Buzz" Brown, Wayne Sellon, and Jim Tatum, early stalwarts of the Four Corners Geological Society.



13. Crowd looks at Hermosa Mountain, in Animas Canyon, north of Durango.

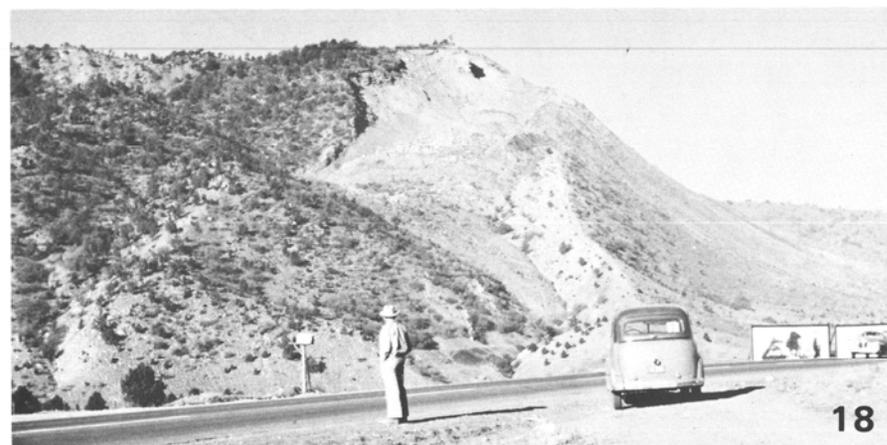


14. Burton Dunn and sound truck. Stop No. 1, November 5, 1950.



15. The Precambrian-Ignacio contact at Baker's Bridge, Animas Canyon. "Now here the fight really began; Harley Barnes said the granite intruded the Cambrian Ignacio quartzite, even published a paper saying so, which no one believed. But what can you expect from an igneous petrologist. The petroleum geologists were vehement and threatened to throw him over the bridge into the river, so he retreated to the Schlumberger beer truck."

16. Gordon Wood, Jr. talks about strata and structure at Stop No. 1. "Gordon Wood's gypsum pedestal still stands by the old Cuba road, but it is much smaller and Gordon is 25 years older."



17. The gang at Columbine Meadow below Coal Bank Hill, on the Million Dollar Highway to Silverton. "Lunch stop and then a walk up the old Rico Road to see the Pennsylvanian channel sandstones and darned if we didn't find a stack of small fossils in a red marine shale just above the Molas. Big argument, divided the group into 3 camps: one said "fish scales," another "ostracods," a third "small clams." A fourth group said 'What the hell, it'll never produce oil'. To show what great paleo experts we were on that trip, years later Christina Balk identified them as small swimming crustaceans with a long, long name, not at all like any of the above, but found only in lower Pennsylvanian beds deposited near delta fronts."

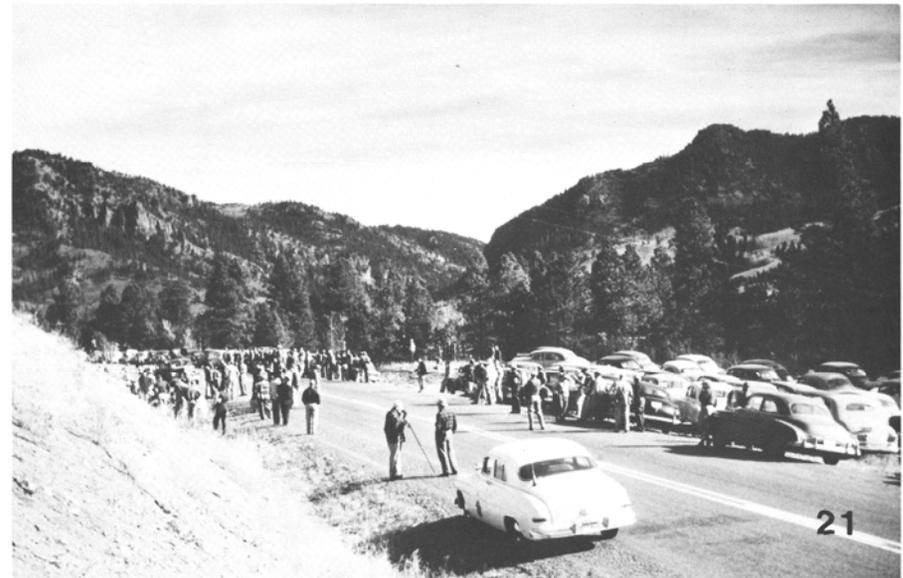
18. Second day, November 4, 1950 at Stop No. 7, 2.6 miles south of Durango. Dr. Eugene Callaghan, Honorary Member, Past President of the New Mexico Geological Society, and then Director of the New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources, looking over the section from the top of the Pictured Cliffs into the lower part of the Animas Formation. Also, "Moving Mountain" landslide mass with Fruitland shale dropped downward on Pictured Cliffs Sandstone.



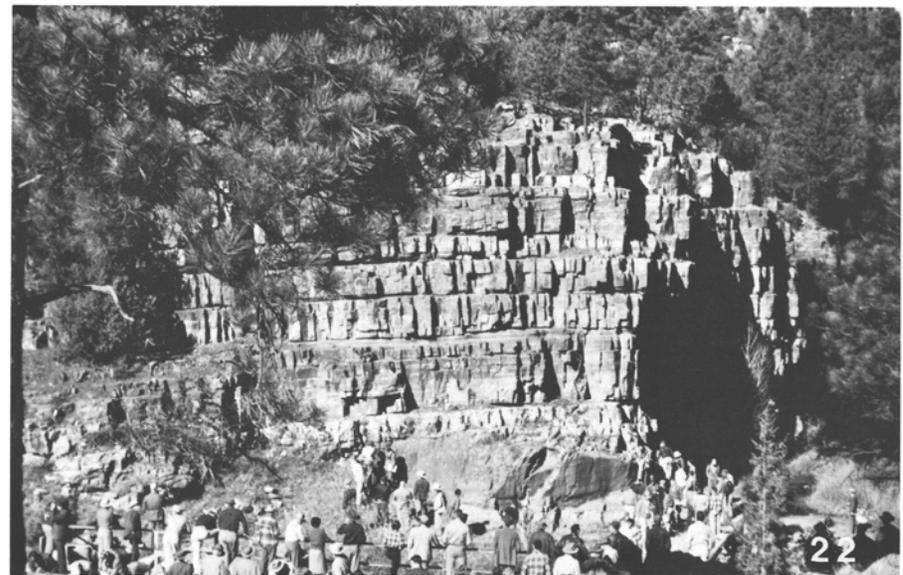
19. Second day, November 4, 1950 at Stop No. 1, 3.1 miles north of Pagosa Springs. View to south.



20. Second day, November 4, 1950 at Stop No. 2, 5.8 miles north of Pagosa Springs. Group looking at Lewis Shale intruded by porphyritic dacite (?) dike.



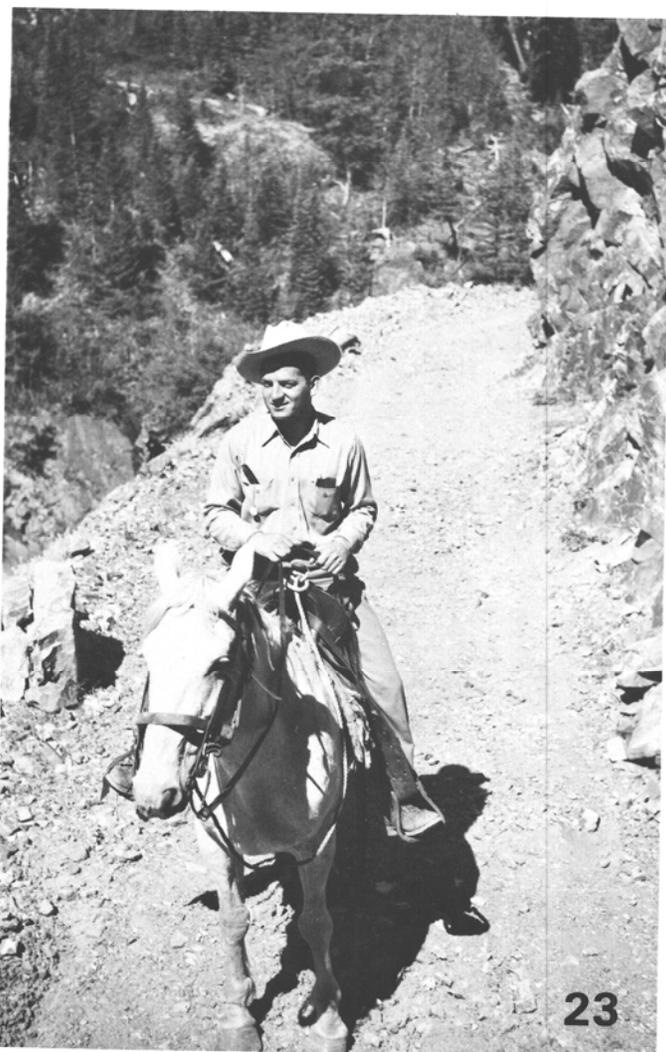
21. Second day, November 4, 1950 at Stop No. 3, 8.2 miles north of Pagosa Springs. Group looking at exposures of Animas (?) Formation in the road cut.



22. Third day, November 5, 1950 at Stop No. 3, 13.6 miles north of Durango. Contact of Ignacio quartzite and Precambrian granite. "Site of one of the most heated "discussions" in New Mexico Field Trip history. Is the contact intrusive or sedimentary?"

THE LATE HOLOCENE

Dr. Vincent C. Kelley, Professor Emeritus, University of New Mexico, kindly loaned the photographs shown in this section of "Scenes from the past". Captions were obtained from the photographs or provided by Vin.



23. Caswell Silver on Old Spook in the San Juan Mountains, 1940.

24. Caswell Silver solving the three point problem. May 10, 1942. Photo given to Vin Kelley by G. H. Wood, Jr.

25. Typical early-day U.S.G.S. field conference. Gordon H. Wood, Jr., Charles B. Read, and Vincent C. Kelley along the Pecos River above Cowles, New Mexico near the Pecos Wilderness. Summer, 1945.



26. Photograph taken by E. R. Harrington, November 2, 1940 near Abo Pass on a "Fall Field Trip—Sierra and Socorro Counties, New Mexico" led by M. L. Thompson and C. E. Needham during November 2 and 3, 1940. Photograph, original caption with names of group and road log transmitted from Dr. Harrington to Dr. V. C. Kelley on May 2, 1961.

Top row, left to right: Dr. Eldred R. Harrington, Albuquerque School System; Dr. Vincent G. Kelley, U.N.M.; Gordon H. Wood, Jr., U.N.M. Student; Robert K. Wyant, U.N.M. Student; Arvid A. Stromquist, U.N.M. Student; Charles Delaplain, N.M.I.M.T. Student; M. L. "Luke" Thompson, N.M.I.M.T.; J. P. Wootton, N.M.I.M.T.; M. H. Milligan, U.N.M. Student; Unidentified N.M.I.M.T. Student; Dr.

Claude E. Needham, N.M.I.M.T.; George C. Edgerton, N.M.I.M.T. Student; Alfred F. Glenn, N.M.I.M.T. Student; Sterling B. Talmage, N.M.I.M.T.; David H. Smith, N.M.I.M.T. Student; Roger F. Hall, N.M.I.M.T. Student; Ricardo J. Seyffert, N.M.I.M.T. Student.

Bottom row, left to right: Tom C. Baker, N.M.I.M.T. Student; Rudolph Canan, N.M.I.M.T. Student; James Dousman, U.N.M. Student; J. H. Routledge, U.N.M. Student; Richard C. Murray, U.S.G.S.; Rueben A. Ortega, U.N.M. Student (Deceased); Samuel G. Lasky, U.S.G.S. or N.M.I.M.T. at that time; Arthur M. Morgan, U.S.G.S. (Deceased); Quin Hayes, N.M.I.M.T. Student; Nels P. Peterson, N.M.I.M.T.; John Emery Adams, now Standard of Texas, Midland.