In the Alabama Hills of
Lone Pine, California

MOVIE ROAD

SELF-GUIDED TOUR

FEATURING

Real Movie Locations
that You Can Find!

Movie History In The Alabama Hills, Lone Pine, California

It didn't take long after the invention of moving pictures for Hollywood to discover a spectacular location within a few hours' drive. The first feature film shot entirely on location at Lone Pine was *The Round-up*, a 1920 silent Western starring Fatty Arbuckle in his first feature film. The director made good use of the incredible scenery near Lone Pine, with the weirdly eroded, jumbled rocks of the Alabama Hills (named for a Civil War battleship) backed by the snowcapped Sierra Nevada.

The Alabama Hills appeared in over 300 movies in the 1920s-50s, mostly Westerns – although they also served as northern India, the Gobi Desert, various parts of Arabia, and even Africa in two Tarzan films.

The pace of movie-making slowed only slightly here as the Western genre became less wildly popular. Several stories featuring the distant past or sci-fi future have found a setting here, including Star Trek V and VII, Tremors, Gladiator, and Dinosaur.

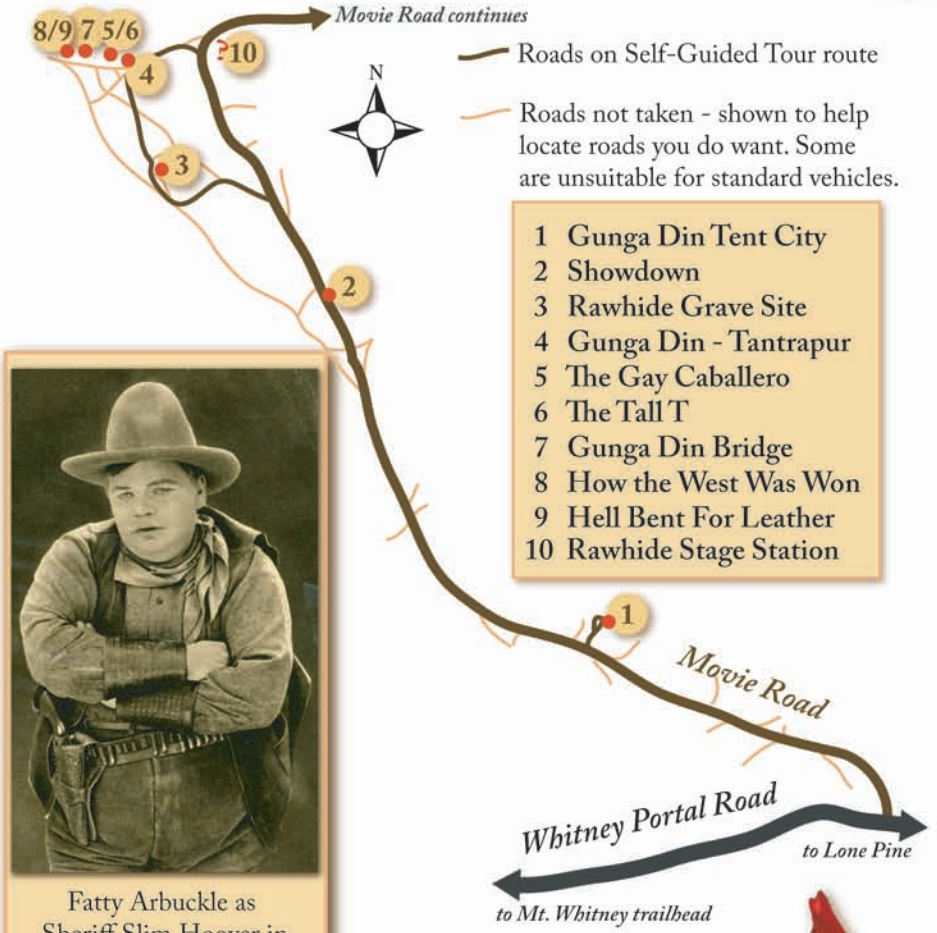
Most parts of the Alabama Hills are public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM Bishop Field Office issues about 30 to 40 film permits a year for movies, TV shows, commercials and still photo shoots in the Alabamas. Permittees agree to be fire-safe and not to disturb wildlife, vegetation or artifacts, and to take every bit of trash away when they're done. BLM representatives meet with the director or scouts beforehand and monitor during and after filming, to make sure this fantastic place stays as wild and beautiful as ever.

The Self-Guided Tour

With these directions and a good eye (a compass helps too), you can find ten great locations from classic films along a short driving loop.

Your vehicle can bring you very close to each location. Then on foot, find the exact camera location and angle for each shot. First find background mountains and hills, then line them up with foreground rocks. You might want to get your companions to pose like the old-time actors!

Movie Road Self-Guided Tour Map



Fatty Arbuckle as Sheriff Slim Hoover in *The Round-up*

Finder's Tips:

Reset your trip meter after finding each site.

Drive slowly and keep an eye on the road surface. The roads on the tour route are usually safe and passable for a standard 2WD vehicle, but weather events can change them overnight.

Be like the movie pros: Never drive off-road. Pull over and park safely, but don't crush brush. Photographers and film studios make the same promise when they get a permit to shoot here. Keep the Alabama Hills photogenic!

WANTED Your feedback! Do the directions work for you? Any suggestions? Call Jim Jennings at (760)872-5027 or email jjenning@ca.blm.gov

1 Gunga Din Tent City

In Lone Pine, from Hwy 395, drive west up Whitney Portal Road 2.7 miles and look for Movie Road on your right. The intersection has a large parking area marked by a white rock with a plaque.

Turning onto Movie Road, set your trip meter to zero. At 0.5 mile, just before the "Welcome to the Alabama Hills" sign, turn onto this road on your right. Drive up and stop where the road makes a little loop. Look back down at the site of the vast tent city that housed cast and crew during the making of ***Gunga Din***. Move to your left to find the rock in the left foreground of the old photo, and stand behind it so that this rock is in the left foreground of your view.

Gunga Din

1939, RKO Pictures. Directed by George Stevens.
This is a classic heroic adventure tale – full of both courage and comedy – set in 19th century India, and inspired by the famous Rudyard Kipling poem.
Cary Grant, Victor McLaglen and Douglas Fairbanks Jr. play three rowdy British soldiers who with their loyal water-bearer Gunga Din, played by Sam Jaffe, must stop a major uprising by a murderous cult.

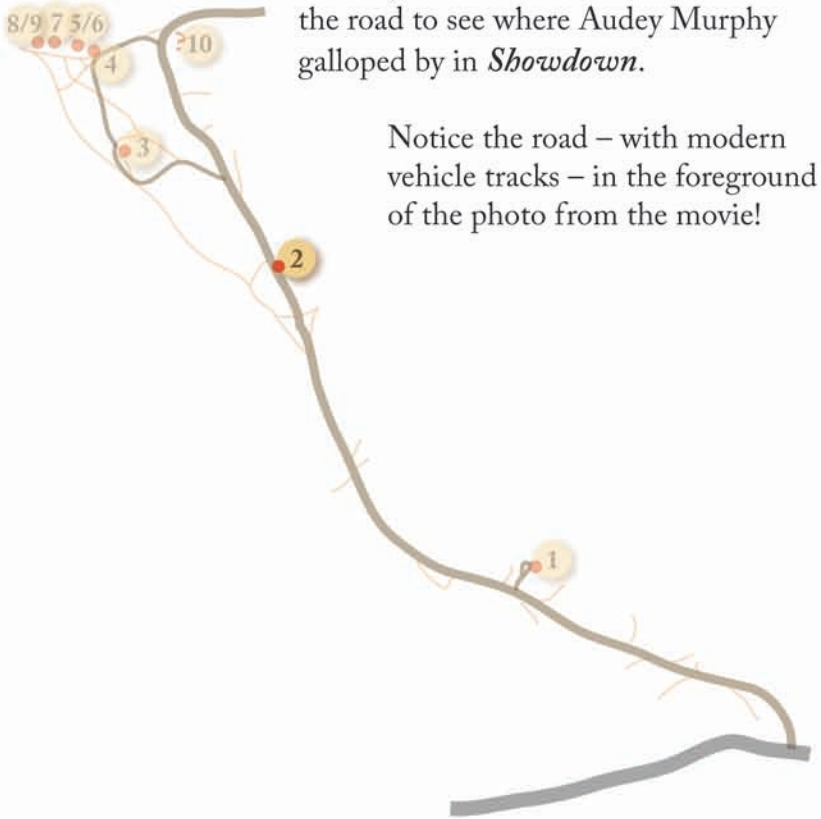
2 Showdown

Back at Movie Road reset your trip meter to zero.

After continuing along Movie Road for 0.4 miles, begin to watch for small roads turning off to the left. Pass one... another... and stop just a couple car lengths before the third, at 0.6 miles.

Pull over (but not up onto the soft shoulder), stand by the roadside and look south across the road to see where Audey Murphy galloped by in ***Showdown***.

Notice the road – with modern vehicle tracks – in the foreground of the photo from the movie!

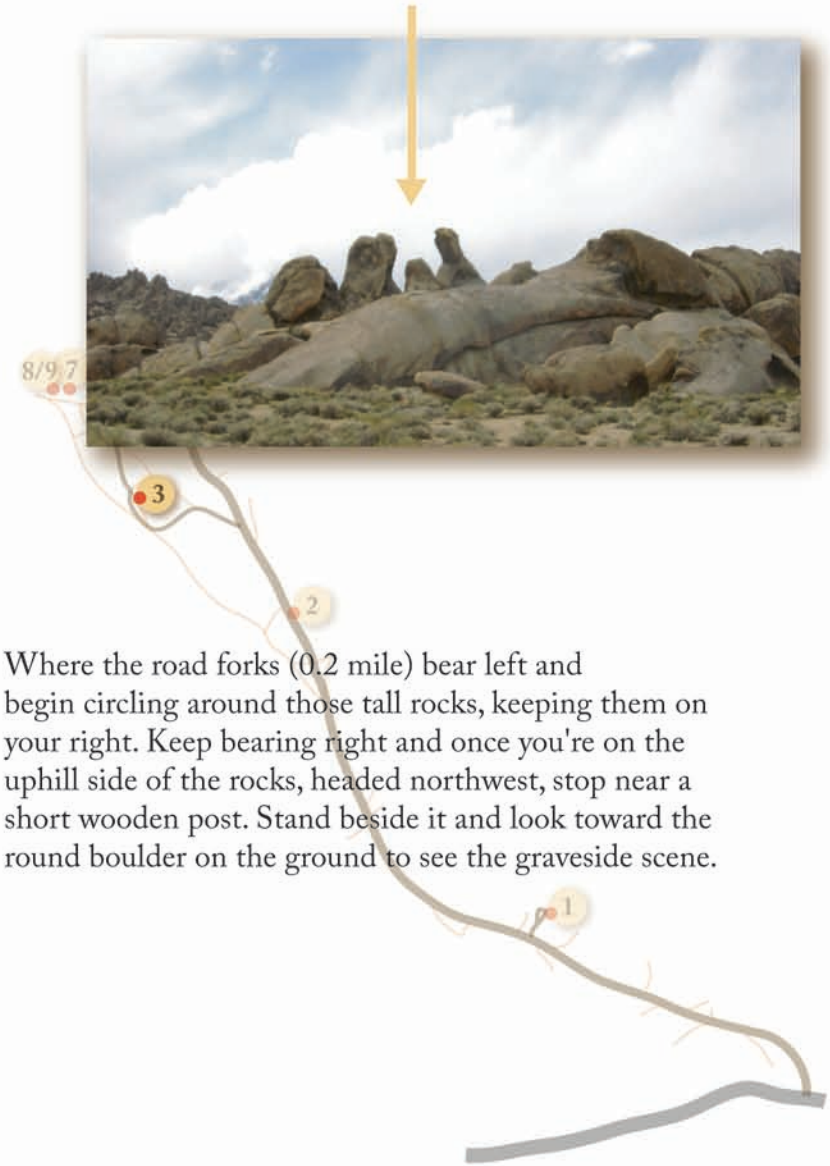


Showdown

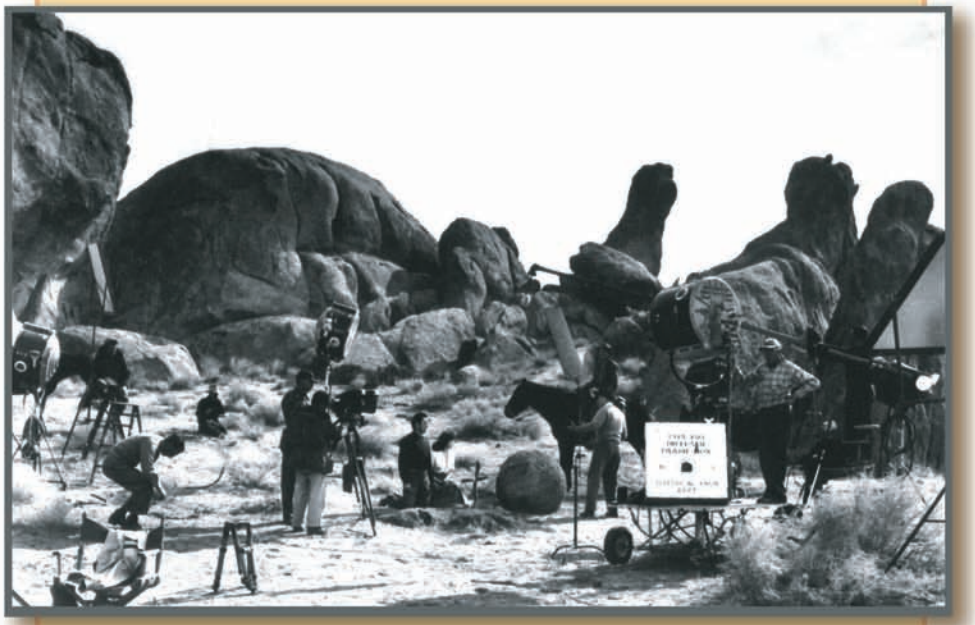
1963, Universal-International. Directed by R.G. Springsteen. Fugitive Audie Murphy must escape both the law and the outlaws in pursuit of the money, the girl and a happy ending. Before becoming a Hollywood star, Murphy was already famous as the most decorated combat soldier of World War II. The 1955 movie ***To Hell and Back,*** starring Murphy and based on his autobiography, was Universal's biggest-grossing picture until surpassed by ***Jaws*** in 1975.

3 Rawhide Grave Site

Reset your trip meter to zero and continue on to the next road to the left, at 0.1 mile. Go up this road, and keep an eye on this clump of tall rocks – you're looking at the other side of the tall rocks in the graveside scene from Rawhide.



Where the road forks (0.2 mile) bear left and begin circling around those tall rocks, keeping them on your right. Keep bearing right and once you're on the uphill side of the rocks, headed northwest, stop near a short wooden post. Stand beside it and look toward the round boulder on the ground to see the graveside scene.

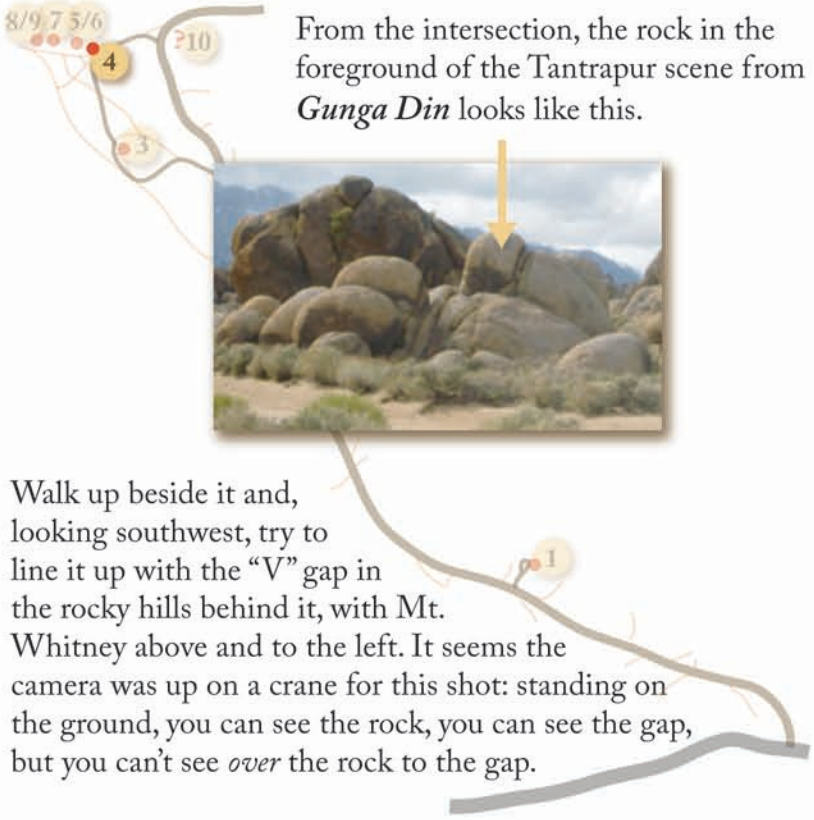


Rawhide

1951, 20th Century Fox. Directed by Henry Hathaway.
No relation to the TV series, this story takes place entirely at a stagecoach stop that's taken over by escaped convicts with intent to intercept a shipment of gold.
Tyrone Power and Susan Hayward play the leading roles.
Director Hathaway was a master of both Westerns and film noir; in this film the Western setting is incidental to the suspenseful drama.

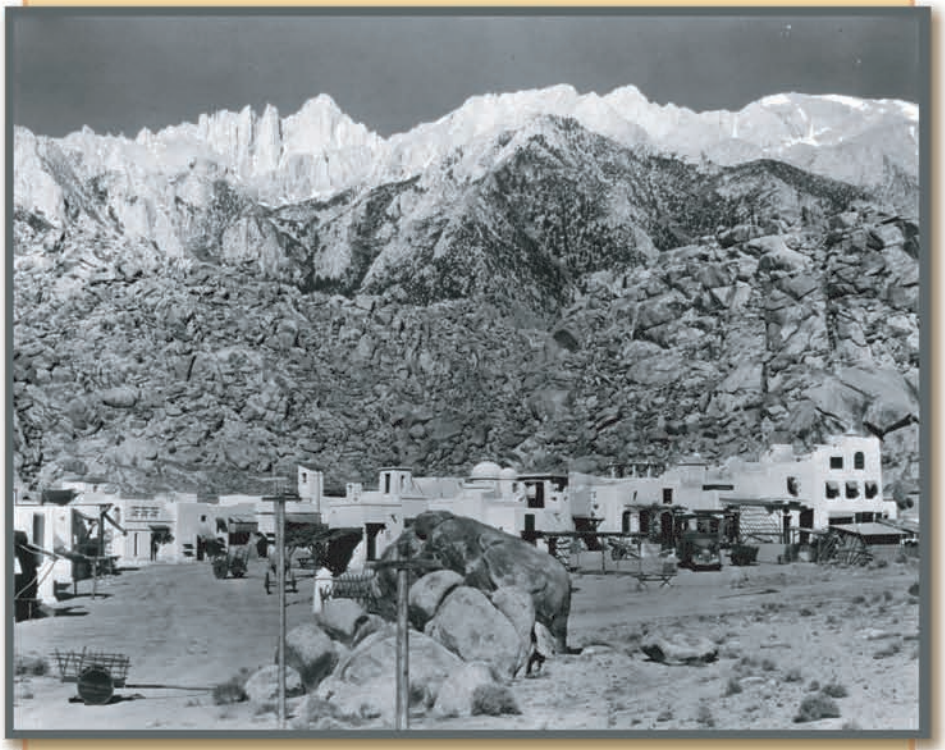
4 Gunga Din - Tantrapur

Reset your trip meter to zero. Continue northwest on this road, heading toward these rocks. Pass straight through one simple crossroads and stop at a complicated intersection right in front of the rocks (0.1 mile).



From the intersection, the rock in the foreground of the Tantrapur scene from ***Gunga Din*** looks like this.

Walk up beside it and, looking southwest, try to line it up with the "V" gap in the rocky hills behind it, with Mt. Whitney above and to the left. It seems the camera was up on a crane for this shot: standing on the ground, you can see the rock, you can see the gap, but you can't see *over* the rock to the gap.

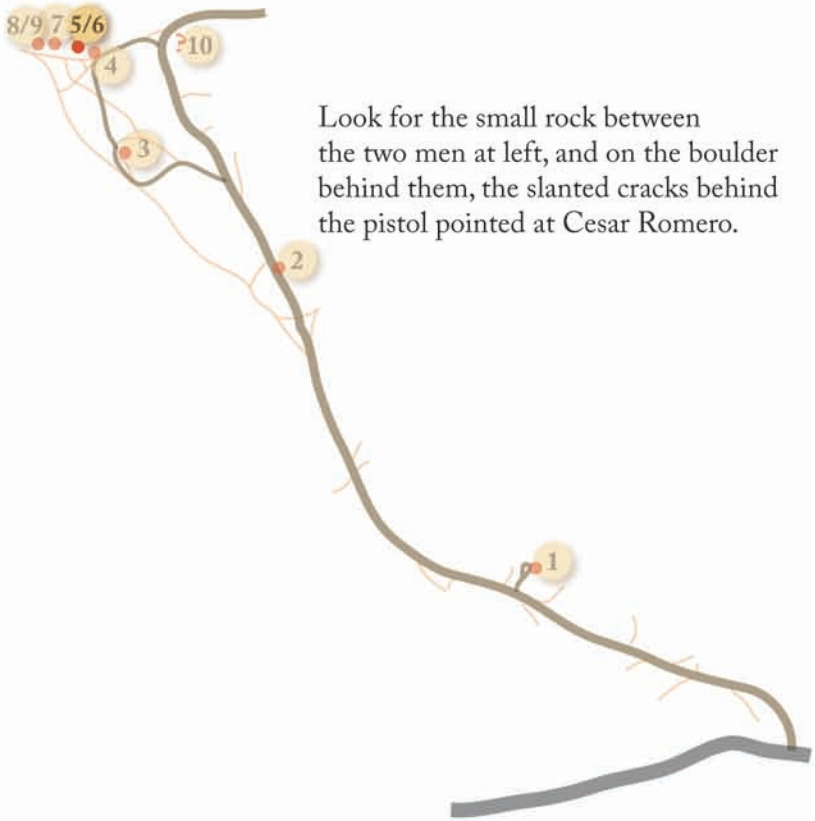


Gunga Din

1939, RKO Pictures. Directed by George Stevens.
The cult of murderers takes over the remote village of Tantrapur at the beginning of the film, and when our heroes are sent to find out why the telegraph line is down, a wild battle takes place among these rocks and walls. The Alabama Hills are a convincing stand-in for northern India, with the Sierra posing as the Himalayas - although the well-known jagged profile of Mt. Whitney, highest peak in the lower 48 states, is obvious in the upper left background of this shot.

5 The Gay Caballero

Now start walking around this very same clump of rocks, keeping it to your left. Keep looking at it, until – facing the other side of this large, darker rock – you see the scene from *The Gay Caballero*.



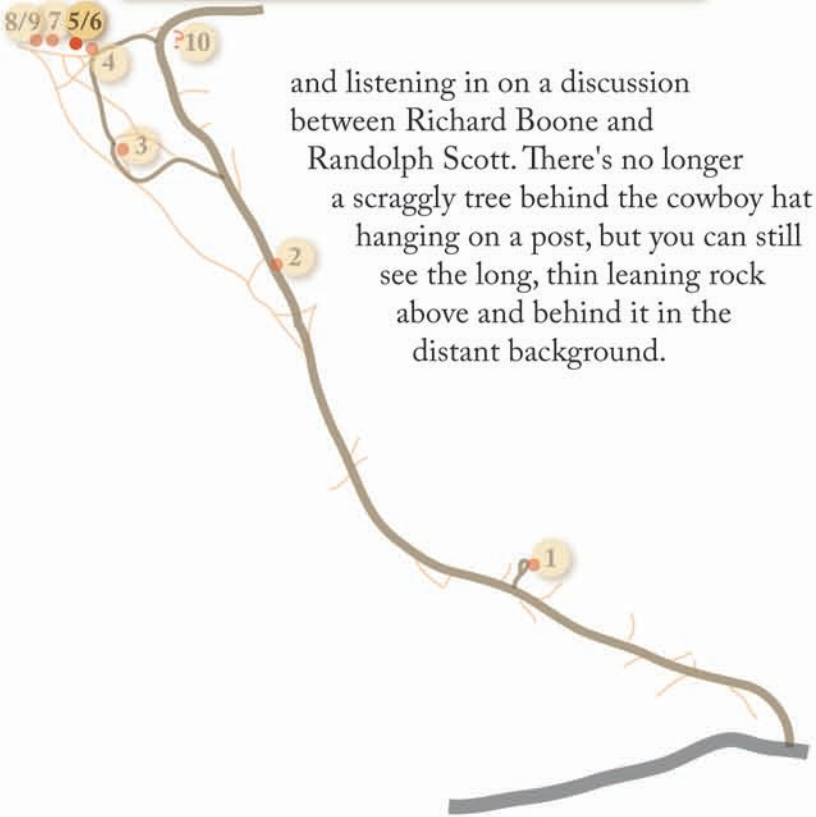
Look for the small rock between the two men at left, and on the boulder behind them, the slanted cracks behind the pistol pointed at Cesar Romero.

The Gay Caballero

1940, 20th Century Fox. Directed by Otto Brower.
Cesar Romero plays The Cisco Kid – a Robin Hood-like character invented by the great short-story writer O. Henry – responding to rumors of his own death, linked to an attempt to blame him for evildoings that were really the work of a lady outlaw.

6 The Tall T

Next turn around, look behind you (west-northwest), take 10 paces and you're in *The Tall T,* looking toward the tall rock on the right in our locator photo...



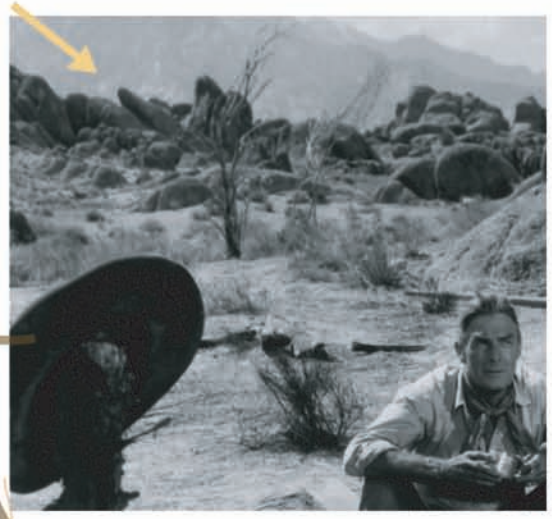
and listening in on a discussion between Richard Boone and Randolph Scott. There's no longer a scraggly tree behind the cowboy hat hanging on a post, but you can still see the long, thin leaning rock above and behind it in the distant background.

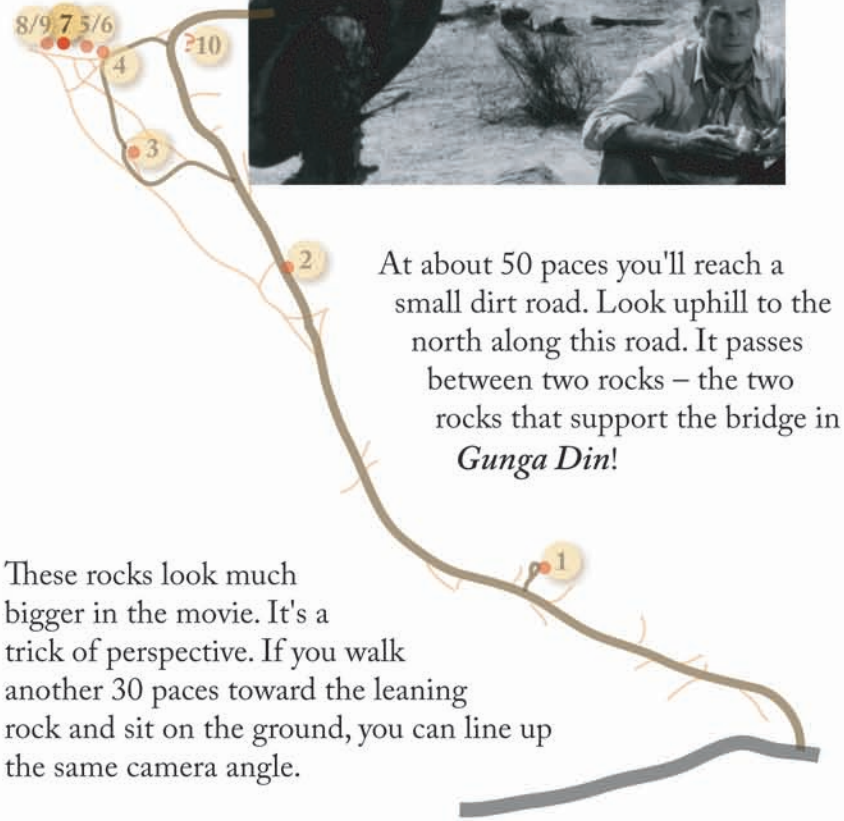
The Tall T

1957, Columbia Pictures. Directed by Budd Boetticher.
In this tense, critically-acclaimed Western,
Randolph Scott plays the brave cowboy trying to defend
his kidnapped fellow stagecoach passengers from
a gang of violent outlaws led by Richard Boone.
The two men in leadership roles come to respect one another
but know that one must die.
The U. S. Library of Congress preserves this as a
"culturally significant" film in the National Film Registry.

7 Gunga Din - Bridge

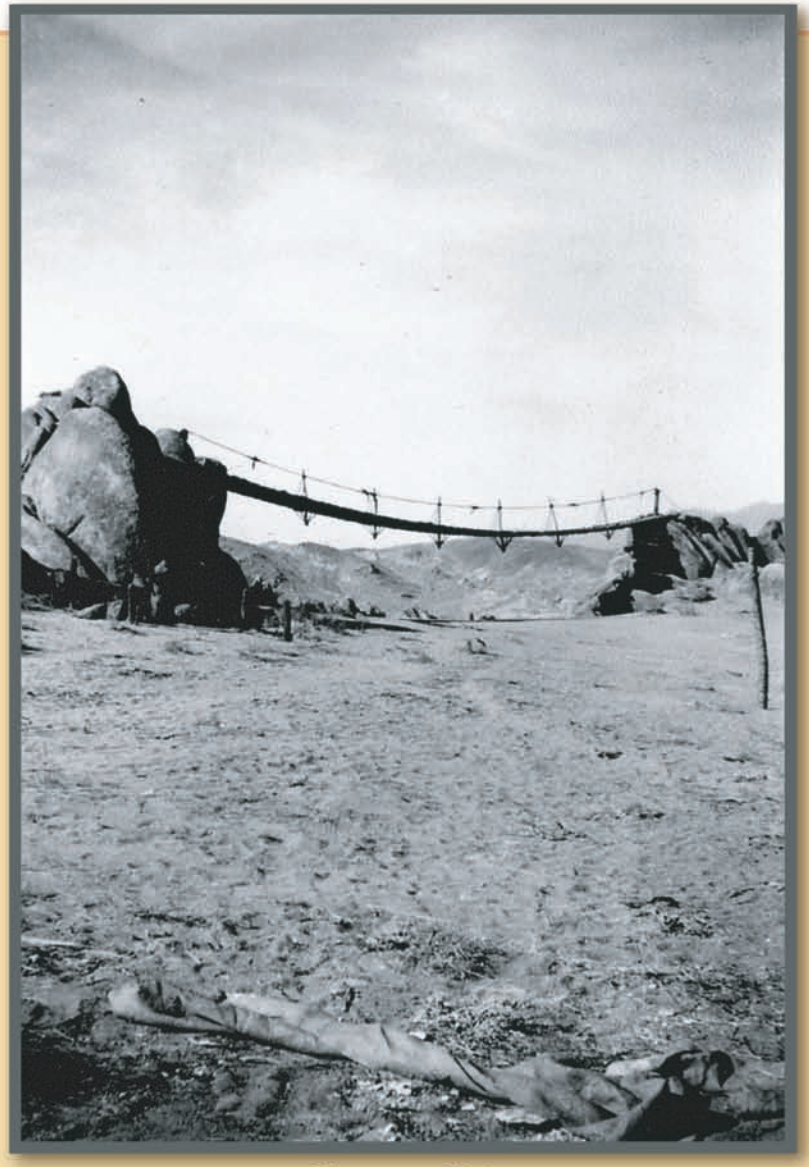
Have another look at the leaning rock in the background of The Tall T. Walk toward that leaning rock.





At about 50 paces you'll reach a small dirt road. Look uphill to the north along this road. It passes between two rocks – the two rocks that support the bridge in *Gunga Din*!

These rocks look much bigger in the movie. It's a trick of perspective. If you walk another 30 paces toward the leaning rock and sit on the ground, you can line up the same camera angle.

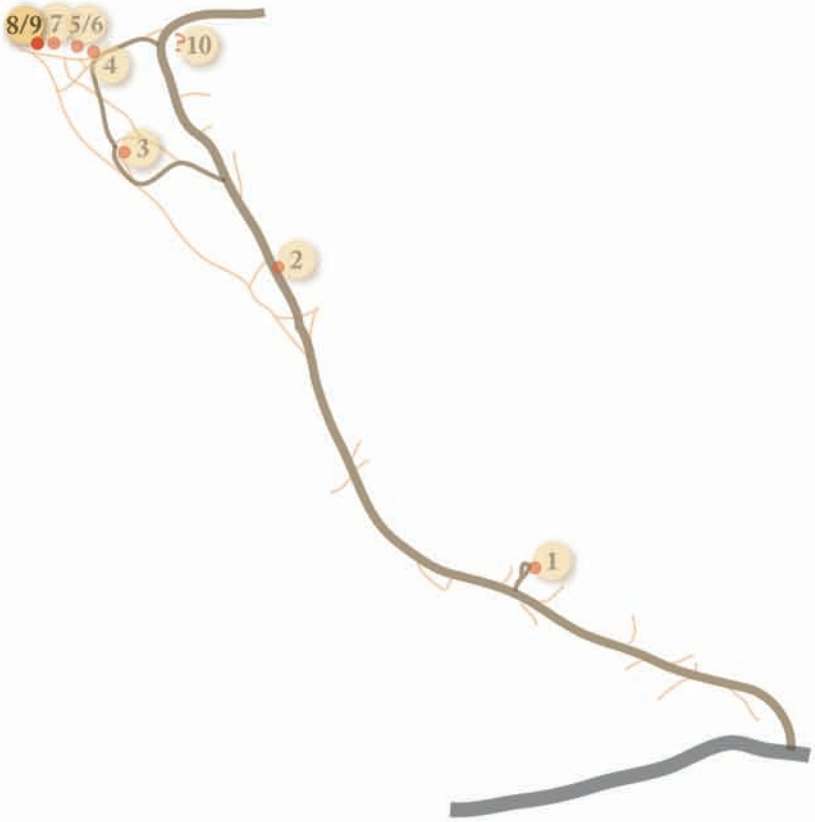


Gunga Din

1939, RKO Pictures. This bridge is featured in more than one scene and contributes to both humor and suspense. The film was an Oscar nominee for Best Cinematography. Clever camera work combined with simple special effects technology made it look as if the bridge hangs from towering rocks and swings across a vast gorge. But if you watch closely, in shots from above the bridge you can see the sagebrush just a few feet beneath!

8 How the West Was Won

Another 30 paces toward the leaning rock, find a road alongside a steep arroyo - a favorite place for sending wagons over the edge. In front of you, toward the Tantrapur location, is this scene from ***How the West Was Won***.

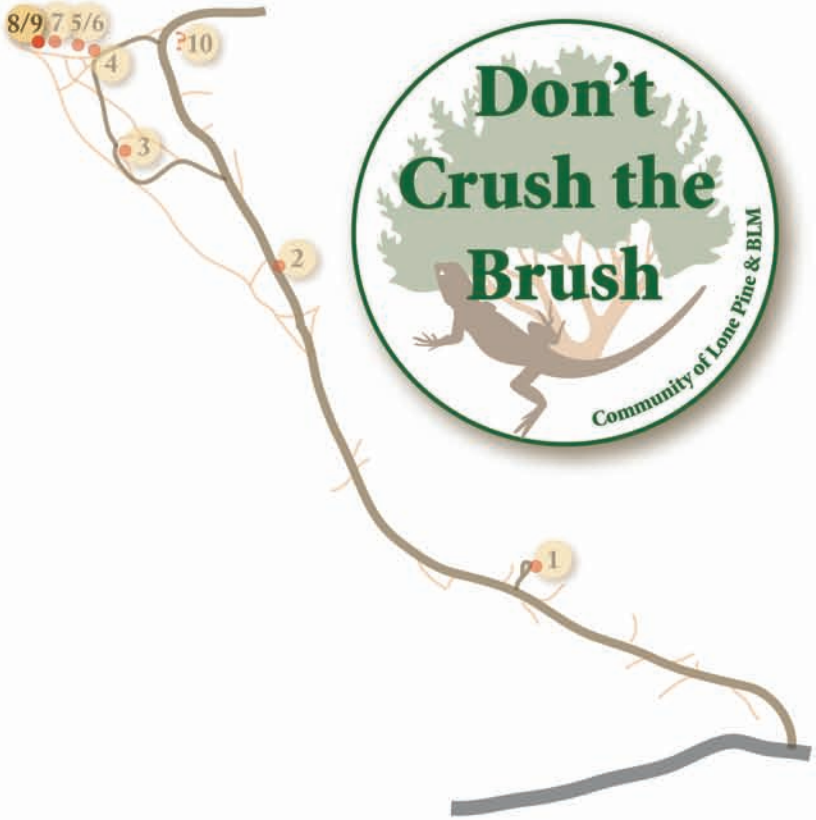


How the West Was Won

1962, MGM/Cinerama. Directed by John Ford, Henry Hathaway and George Marshall.
For this epic tale of American westward expansion as experienced by three generations of a pioneer family, MGM procured a star-studded cast plus 630 horses, 150 mules, 107 wagons and 1500 pairs of moccasins.

9 Hell Bent For Leather

After finding the scene from *How the West Was Won,* turn around and look behind you, toward the tall rock that was at the right of the scene in *The Tall T*. This gives you an approximate view of the scene from *Hell Bent For Leather* in which another wagon pitches into the same ravine. To line up the exact angle, you'll need to walk partway down into the ravine and look up toward the edge.

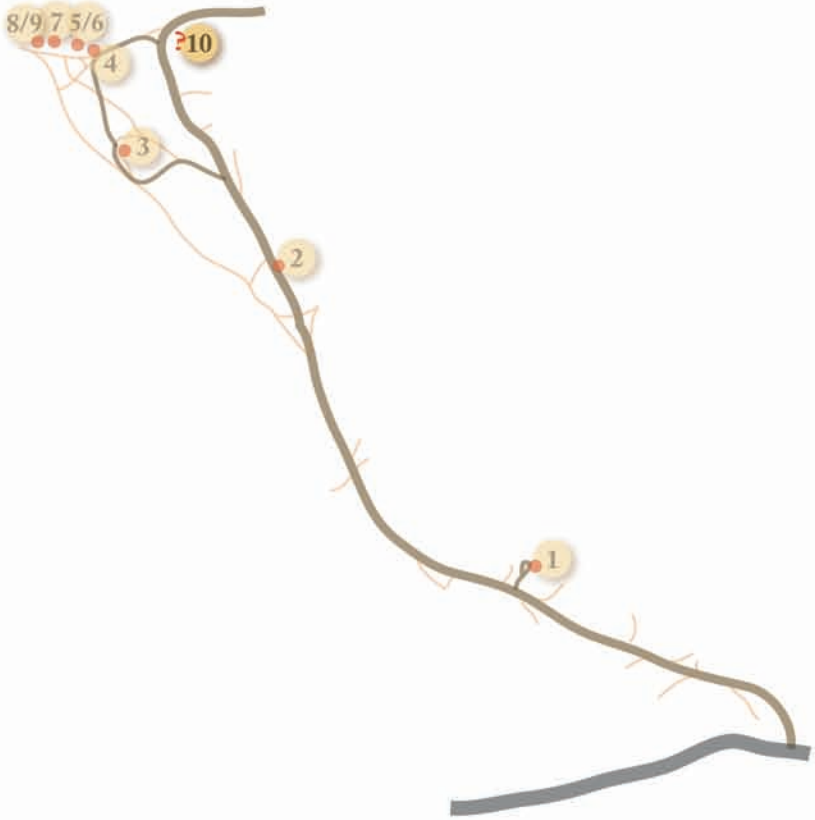


Hell Bent for Leather

1960, Universal International. Directed by George Sherman. This story of mistaken identity, false charges and lovely hostage - familiar themes from other Western movies on this tour - starred Audie Murphy and Felicia Farr, but the damsel in distress in this scene would be Polly Burson, "Queen of Western Stuntwomen," who began rodeo trick-riding as a girl and went on to a long and successful Hollywood career.

10 Rawhide Stage Station

Back in your vehicle, bear right and downhill; about 0.1 mile will bring you back to Movie Road. Somewhere beyond this intersection, can you find the exact location of the stagecoach station buildings in ***Rawhide***? The background of the top picture should look familiar by now. The lower photo, as seen from near Move Road, shows some distinctive rocks right behind the log building. When you think you recognize the location, park on Movie Road and walk to find the camera positions for both these shots.

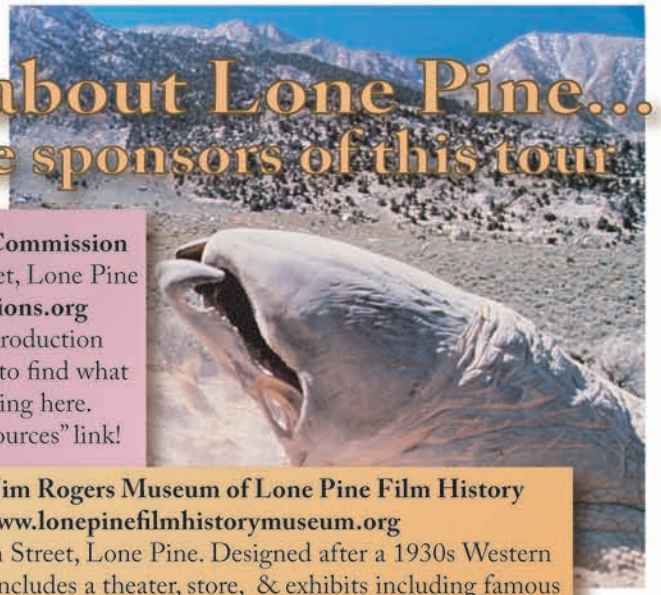


Rawhide

1951, 20th Century Fox.

When word comes to this stage station that four convicts are on the loose nearby, a female passenger with a baby girl is told they must wait here until the escapees are found....

More about Lone Pine...
and the sponsors of this tour



Inyo County Film Commission
120 South Main Street, Lone Pine
http://inyolocations.org
...helping scouts, production companies & others to find what they need for filming here. Check out the "Resources" link!

Beverly and Jim Rogers Museum of Lone Pine Film History
www.lonepinefilmhistorymuseum.org
701 South Main Street, Lone Pine. Designed after a 1930s Western movie theater, it includes a theater, store, & exhibits including famous movie props - from the car Bogart drove in *High Sierra* to the graboid worms that terrorized the townspeople in *Tremors*. A 15-minute orientation film is the perfect way to prepare for your tour.

Lone Pine Film History Guided Tours
Knowledgeable and entertaining guides stand ready to give you custom tours to the film locations of your choice. Ask at the museum, or call (760) 876-9909

Lone Pine Film Festival
www.lonepinefilmfestival.org
Annual event - location tours, screenings, concerts, celebrities and more!

Lone Pine Economic Development Corporation
Lone Pine Community Association
Helping make Lone Pine a great place to live and to visit.

Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Information Center
126 South Main Street, in the old Lone Pine Hotel
(760) 876-4444 or toll-free at (877) 253-8981
www.lonepinechamber.org
Links to dining, lodging, visitor services and fun things to do in and around Lone Pine.

Bureau of Land Management, Bishop Field Office
www.blm.gov/ca/bishop
Explore more of the extraordinary parts of wild California managed for you, the public, by Bishop BLM.

Published in cooperation with the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association, Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce, and BLM Bishop Field Office
Design, layout and text by Joy Fatooh
All photos courtesy of Lone Pine Museum of Film History and the film studios

Don't Crush the Brush

Community of Lone Pine & BLM

Movie Road Touring Brochure GPS Locations

Location #	Longitude Degrees Minutes Seconds	Latitude Degrees Minutes Seconds	Longitude Degrees Decimal Minutes	Latitude Degrees Decimal Minutes	Longitude Decimal Degrees	Latitude Decimal Degrees	UTM Easting*	UTM Northing *
1	N 36° 35' 57.7"	W 118° 6` 56.5"	N 36° 35.961`	W 118° 6.942`	N 36.59936°	W 118.11570°	0400208	4051009
2	N 36° 36' 21.1"	W 118° 7' 21.9"	N 36° 36.352'	W 118° 7.366'	N 36.60587°	W 118.12276°	0399585	4051739
3	N 36° 36' 29.9"	W 118° 7' 36.6"	N 36° 36.500'	W 118° 7.610'	N 36.60829°	W 118.12684°	0399225	4052011
4	N 36° 36' 37.2"	W 118° 7' 40.0"	N 36° 36.617'	W 118° 7.667'	N 36.61029°	W 118.12779°	0399142	4052235
5/6	N 36° 36' 37.5"	W 118° 7' 41.0"	N 36° 36.625'	W 118° 7.684'	N 36.61041°	W 118.12807°	0399117	4052247
7	N 36° 36' 37.8"	W 118° 7' 43.5"	N 36° 36.629'	W 118° 7.724'	N 36.61049°	W 118.12874°	0399057	4052257
8/9	N 36° 36' 37.8"	W 118° 7' 44.9"	N 36° 36.630'	W 118° 7.748'	N 36.61050°	W 118.12913°	0399023	4052258
10	N 36° 36' 33.9"	W 118° 7' 31.4"	N 36° 36.566'	W 118° 7.523'	N 36.60944°	W 118.12538°	0399357	4052137

*For the best results while navigating to these locations we suggest using the UTM coordinates.