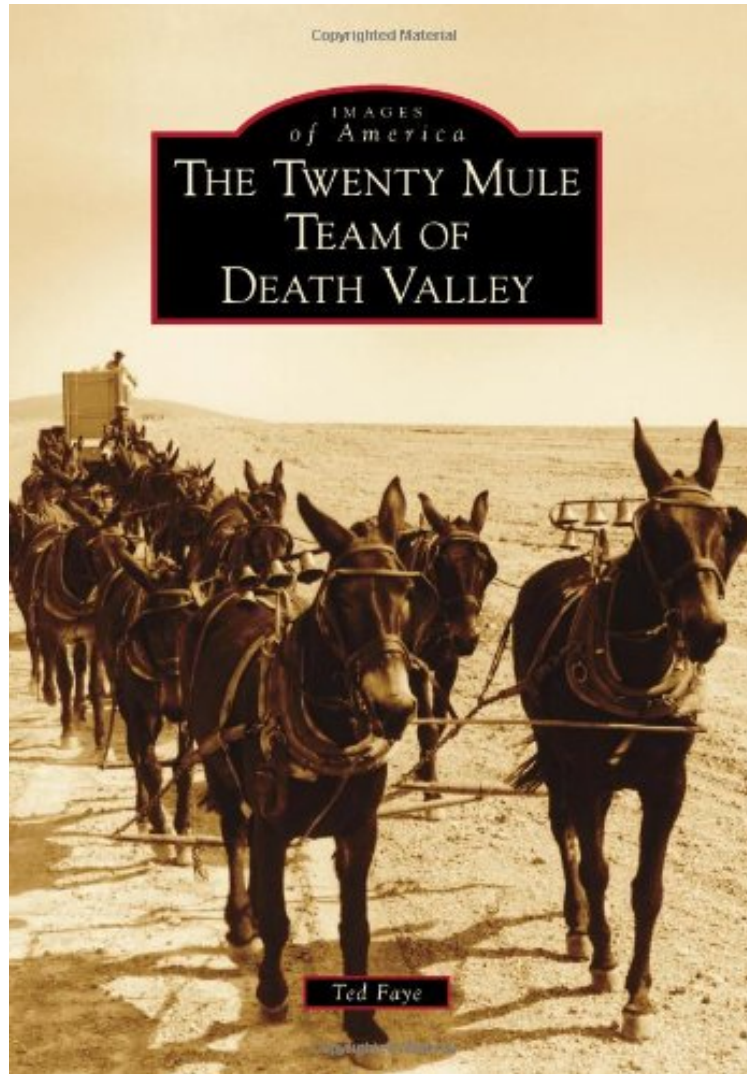


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The Twenty Mule Team of Death Valley (Images of America)

Ted Faye

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The image of 20 mules hauling a train of wagons was once as popular as the golden arches are today. Everyone knew what it meant. It was the trademark of Pacific Coast Borax's most famous product, a laundry additive called Twenty Mule Team Borax. The company's advertising was dependent on one important fact: the connection between the Twenty Mule Team and America's most notorious desert, Death Valley. From 1883 to 1888, teams of mules and wagons hauled borax out of the famed valley on the California-Nevada border. During those years, the teams were not famous; they were just a common means of transportation. After all, it was not the first time 20 mules hauled borax and it was not the longest or the most treacherous path. So what happened? How did this common form of transportation (the big-rig truck of its day) become transformed into an American icon? That is the story of this book.

About the Author Ted Faye is a documentary filmmaker whose company, Gold Creek Films, specializes in stories of the West. Ted develops touring information, including audio CDs, signage, and brochures. He also helps communities to find and tell their stories. Ted was the historian to US Borax, and many images from this book are from the Borax collection at Death Valley National Park.