

NEVADA HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY QUARTERLY

*Pony Express Issue*



Spring 1960  
April-June

Volume III  
Number 2



## NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Founded in 1904 for the purpose of investigating topics pertaining to the early history of Nevada and of collecting relics for a museum, the NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY has dedicated itself to the continuing purpose of preserving the rich heritage of the peoples—past and present—who have inhabited the land of Nevada.

The Society believes that it can best serve the State by arousing in the people an historical consciousness which it hopes will be carried to succeeding generations. Thus, through its Director, the Society sponsors an educational program which carries the history of Nevada to the schools and organizations throughout the State.

The Society maintains a library and museum where historical materials of many kinds are on display to the public and are available to students and scholars.

The Society publishes the NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S QUARTERLY which publishes articles of interest to readers in the social, cultural, economic, and political history of the Great Basin area: Nevada, eastern California, eastern and southern Oregon, Idaho, and Utah.

The Society's membership is open to the public; application for membership should be made to the Secretary of the Society, State Building, Reno, Nevada.

# NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

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APRIL-JUNE 1960

Vol. III

PONY EXPRESS ISSUE

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The purpose of this issue of the Nevada Historical Society Quarterly is twofold: first, to clear up for future historians the exact route followed across what is now the State of Nevada; and, second, to leave an accurate account of the centennial celebration of 1960.

We chose to reprint, although not in its entirety, Burton's description of the Overland Mail and Pony Express stations of the route because it was the only contemporary description we could find. Thus, we are presenting 1860 material contrasted with 1960 pictures, that historians may know what one hundred years did to one of the most colorful enterprises of the Western movement.

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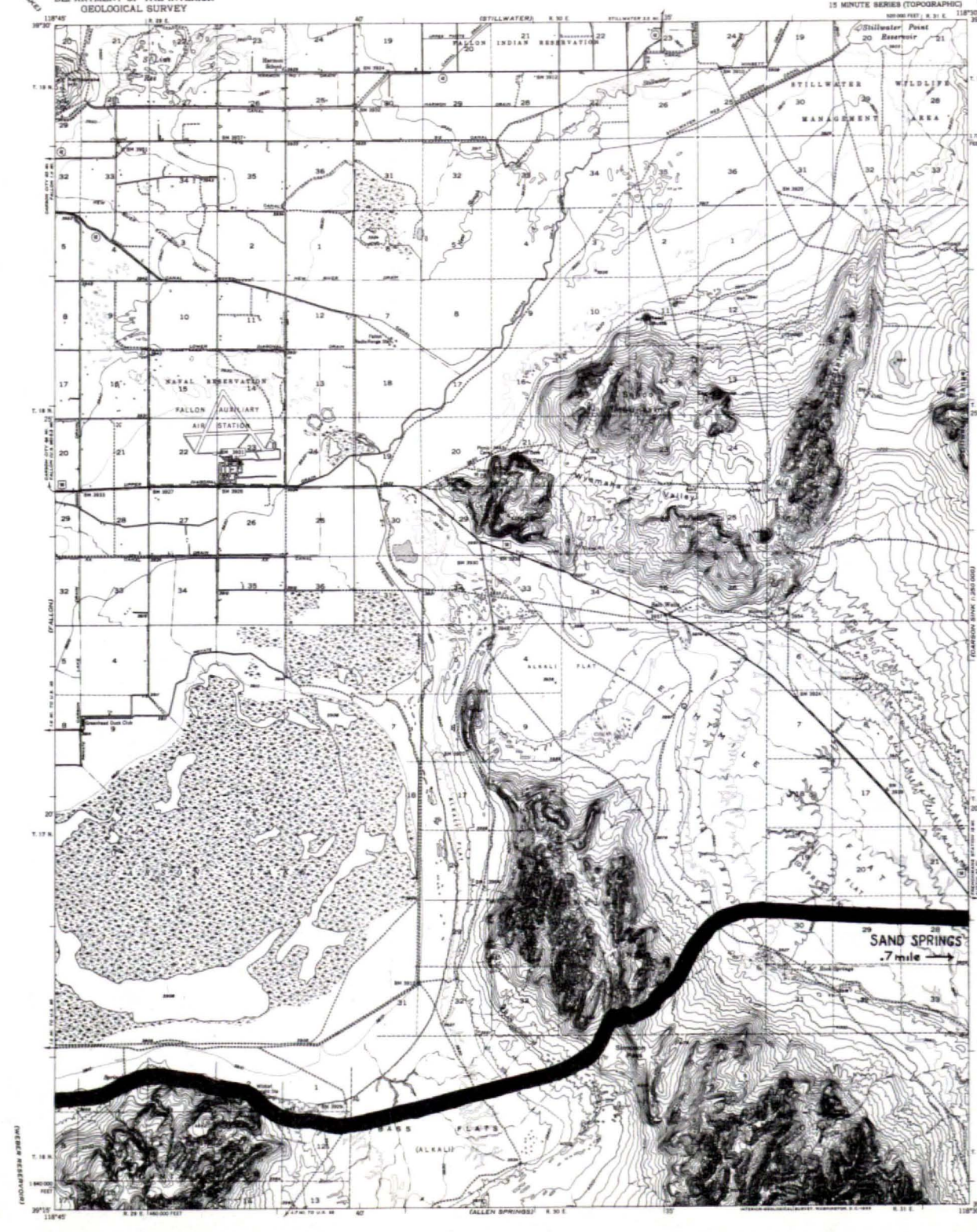
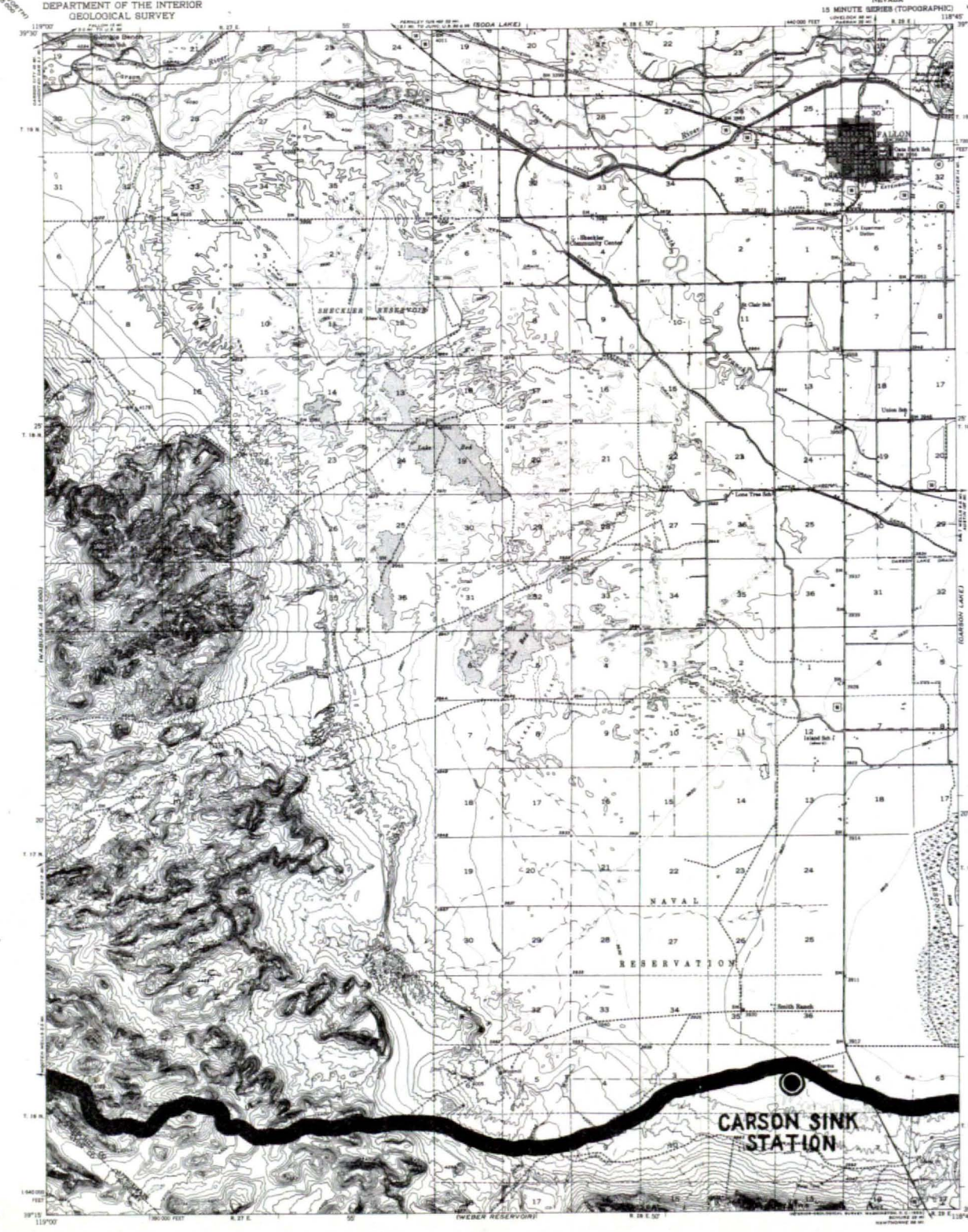
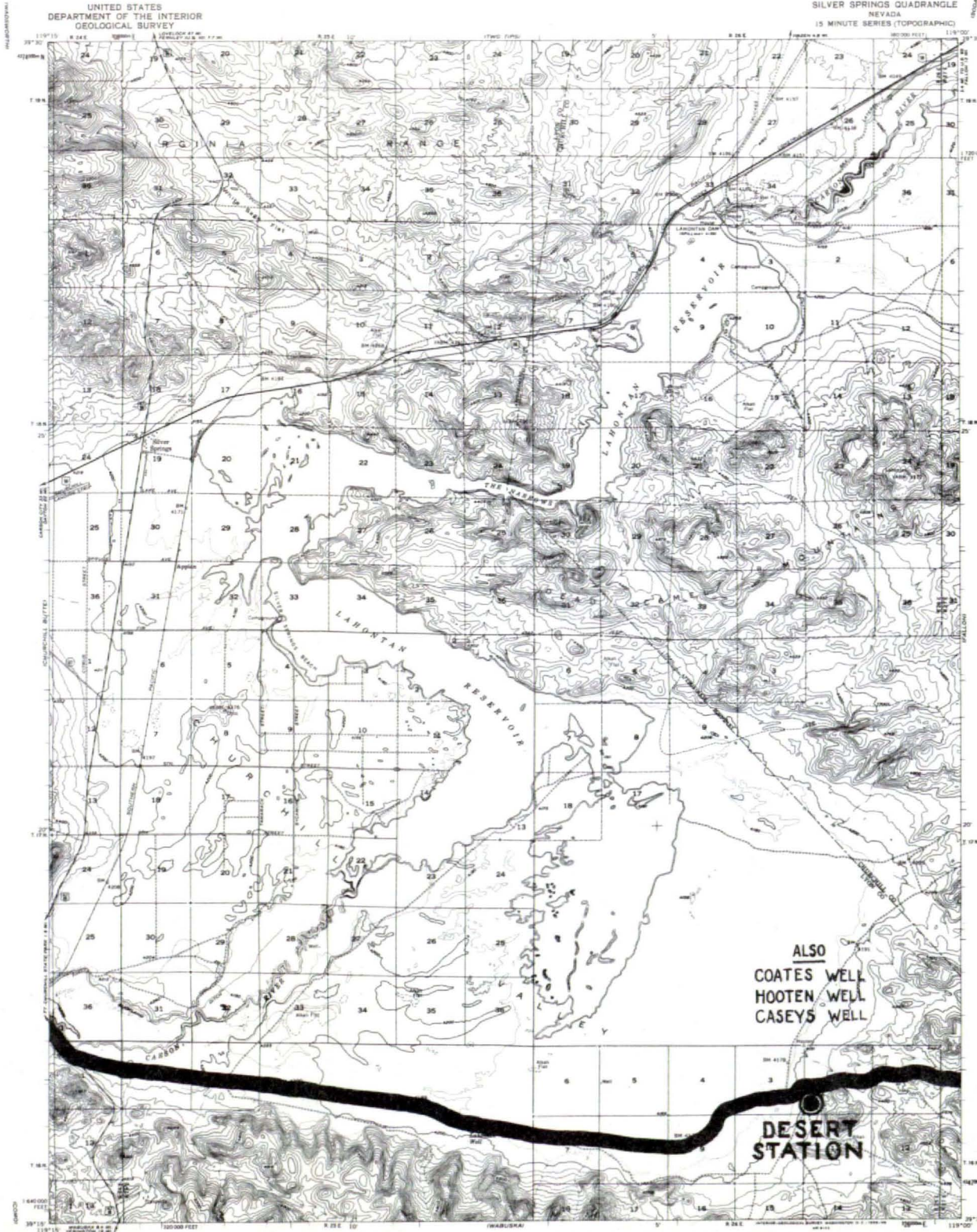
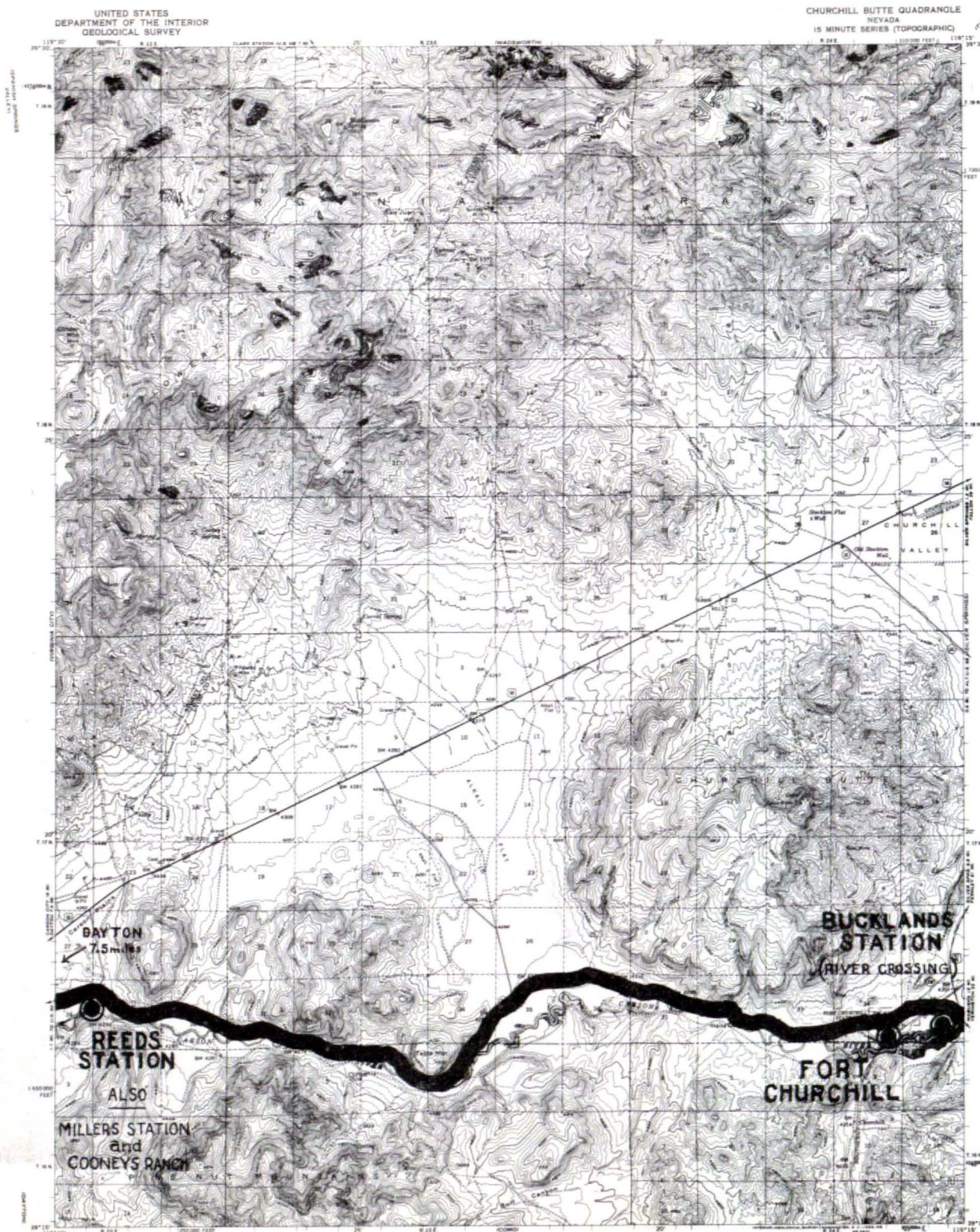
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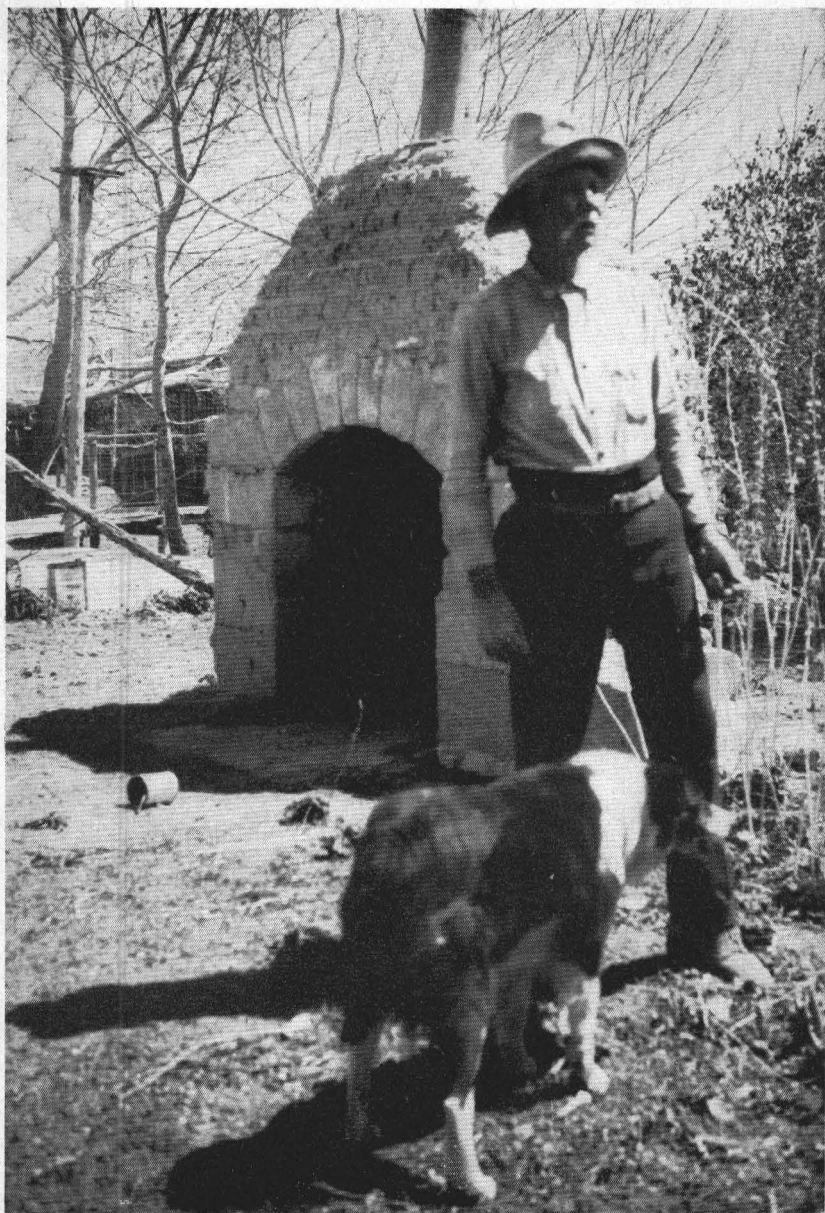
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—Judge Clel Georgetta

**"Happy Jack," John Jackson, 1841–1947, last of the Nevada Pony Express riders, stands in front of the remains of the Spring Station in Deep Creek Valley, White Pine County. He rode for the last three months of the Pony operation in this area. The Station was located on the Georgetta Triune Ranch, now the Goshute Indian Reservation.**



SIR RICHARD BURTON, 1821–1890

Student of many oriental religions and languages, Burton never attained any great popularity in his time. He was, however, widely known for his explorations in the Far East and his wide knowledge of the religions of the countries he visited. The book *City of the Saints*, was the result of a flying visit to the United States in 1860 to study the Mormon Church. It has become a classic for researchers.



"At Guittard's I saw, for the first time, the Pony Express rider arrive. In March, 1860, 'the great dream of news transmitted from New York to San Francisco (more strictly speaking from St. Joseph to Placerville, California) in eight days was tested.' It appeared, in fact, under the form of an advertisement in the St. Louis 'Republican,' and threw at once into the shade the great Butterfield Mail, whose expedition had been the theme of universal praise. Very meritoriously has the contract been fulfilled. At the moment of writing (Nov., 1860), the distance between New York and San Francisco has been farther reduced by the advance of the electric telegraph—it proceeds at the rate of six miles a day—to Fort Kearney from the Mississippi and to Fort Churchill from the Pacific side. The merchant thus receives his advices in six days. The contract of the government with Messrs. Russell, Majors, and Co., to run the mail from St. Joseph to Great Salt Lake City, expired the 30th of November, and it was proposed to continue it only from Julesburg on the crossing of the South Platte, 480 miles west of St. Joseph. Mr. Russell, however, objected, and so did the Western States generally, to abbreviating the mail-service as contemplated by the Post-office Department. His spirit and energy met with supporters whose interest it was not to fall back on the times when a communication between New York and California could not be secured short of twenty-five or thirty days; and, aided by the newspapers, he obtained a renewal of his contract. The riders are mostly youths, mounted upon active and lithe Indian nags. They ride 100 miles at a time—about eight per hour—with four changes of horses, and return to their stations the next day: of their hardships and perils we shall hear more anon. The letters are carried in leathern bags, which are thrown about carelessly enough when the saddle is changed, and the average postage is \$5—£1 per sheet."

—BURTON



## CITY OF THE SAINTS

SIR RICHARD BURTON

Published 1860, Harper and Brothers, N. Y.

Showing the distances between camping-places, the several mail stations where mules are changed, the hours of travel, the character of the roads, and the facilities for obtaining water, wood, grass on the route along the southern bank of the Platte River, from St. Joseph, Mo., via Salt Lake City, to the Carson Valley. From a Diary kept between the 7th of August and the 19th of October, 1860.

"On this line there are two kinds of stations—mail station, where there is an agent in charge of five or six 'boys,' and the express station—every second—where there is only a master and an express rider. The boss receives \$50–\$75 per menses, the boy \$35. It is a hard life, setting aside the chance of death—no less than three murders have been committed by the Indians during this year—the work is severe; the diet is sometimes reduced to wolf-mutton, or a little boiled wheat and rye, and the drink to brackish water; a pound of tea comes occasionally, but the droughty souls are always out of whisky and tobacco.

### **To Deep Creek and halt. 1st and 2nd of October, 1860.**

"A 'little war' had been waging near Willow Springs.\* In June the station was attacked by a small band of Gosh Yuta, of whom three were shot and summarily scalped; an energetic proceeding, which had prevented a repetition of the affair. The savages, who are gathering their pine-nut harvest, and are driven by destitution to beg at the stations, to which one meal will attract them, are now comparatively peaceful; when the emmigration season recommences they are expected to be troublesome, and their numbers—the Pa Utas can bring 12,000 warriors into the field—render them formidable.

"After twelve miles over the bench we passed a dark rock, which protects a water called Reading's Springs, and we halted to form up at the mouth of Deep-Creek Canyon. This is a dangerous gorge, some nine miles long, formed by a water-course which sheds into the valley of the Great Salt Lake. Here I rode forward with 'Jim,' a young express rider from the last station, who volunteered much information upon the subject of Indians. He carried two Colt's revolvers, of the dragoon or largest size, considering all others too small. I asked him what he would do if a

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\*Willow Springs and Deep Creek are both within the boundaries of the State of Utah.



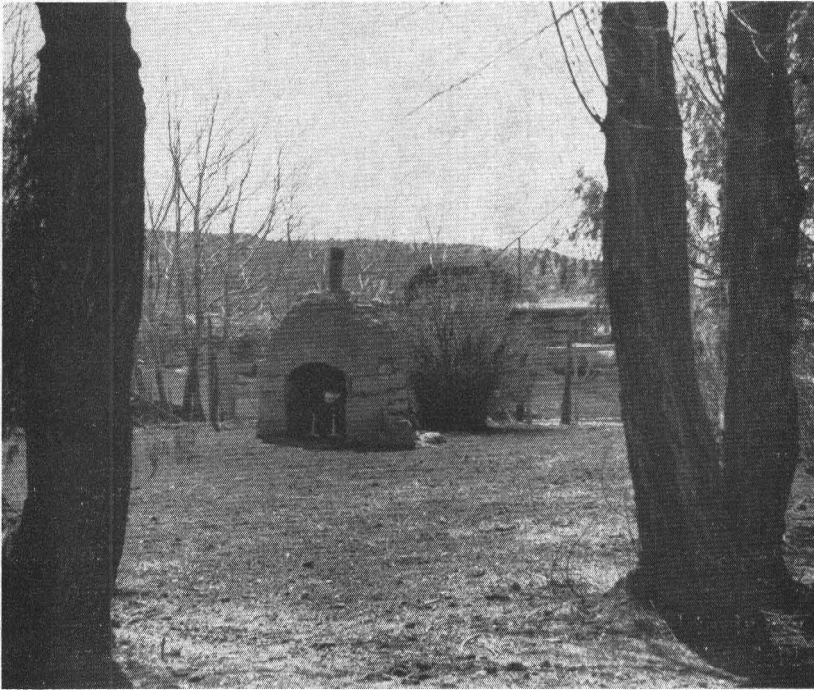
Gosh Yuta appeared. He replied that if the fellow were civil he might shake hands with him, if surly he would shoot him; and, at all events, when riding away, that he would keep a 'stirrup-eye' upon him: that he was in the habit of looking round corners to see if any one was taking aim, in which case he would throw himself from the saddle, or rush on, so as to spoil the shooting—the Indians, when charged, becoming excited, fire without effect. He mentioned four Red Men who could 'draw a bead' against any white; usually, however, they take a minute to load; they require a long aim, and they stint their powder. He pointed out a place where Miller, one of the express riders, had lately been badly wounded, and lost his horse. Nothing, certainly, could be better fitted for an ambuscade than this gorge, with its caves and holes in snow-cuts, earth-drops, and lines of strata, like walls of rudely-piled stone; in one place we saw the ashes of an Indian encampment; in another, a whirlwind, curling, as smoke would rise, from behind a projecting spur, made us advance with the greatest caution.

"As we progressed the valley opened out, and became too broad to be dangerous. Near the summit of the pass the land is well lined with white sage, which may be used as fodder, and a dwarf cedar adorns the hills. The ground gives out a hollow sound, and the existence of a spring in the vicinity is suspected. Descending the western water-shed, we sighted, in Deep-Creek Valley, St. Mary's County, the first patch of cultivation since leaving Great Salt Lake. The Indian name is Aybá-pá, or the Clay-colored Water; pity that America and Australia have not always preserved the native local terms. It is bisected by a rivulet in which three streamlets from the southern hills unite; like these features generally, its course is northward till it sinks: fields extend about one mile from each bank, and the rest of the yellow bottom is a tapestry of wire grass and wheat grass. An Indian model farm had been established here; the war, however, prevented cultivation; the savages had burned down the house, and several of them had been killed by the soldiers. On the west of the valley were white rocks of the lime used for mortar: the hills also showed lias and marble-like limestones. The eastern wall was a grim line of jagged peaks, here bare with granite, there black with cedar; they are crossed by a short cut leading to the last station, which, however, generally proves the longest way, and in a dark ravine Kennedy pointed out the spot where he had of late nearly left his scalp. Coal is said to be found there in chunks, and gold is sup-



posed to abound; the people, however, believing that the valley can not yet support extensive immigration, conceal it probably by 'counsel.'

"At 4 P.M. we reached the settlement, consisting of two huts and a station-house, a large and respectable-looking building of unburnt brick, surrounded by fenced fields, water-courses, and stacks of good adobe. We were introduced to the Mormon station-master, Mr. Sevier, and others. They are mostly farm-laborers, who spend the summer here and supply the road with provisions:



Spring Station, Triune Ranch, now the Goshute Indian Reservation.  
The fireplace is the only remnant.

in the winter they return to Grantsville, where their families are settled. Among them was a Mr. Waddington, an old Pennsylvanian and a bigoted Mormon. It is related of him that he had treasonably saved 300 Indians by warning them of an intended attack by the federal troops. He spoke strongly in favor of the despised Yutas, declared that they are ready to work, and can be led to any thing by civility. The anti-Mormons declared that his praise was for interested motives, wishing the savages to labor



for him gratis; and I observed that when Mr. Waddington started to cut wood in the kanyon, he set out at night, lest his dust should be seen by his red friends.

"The Mormons were not wanting in kindness; they supplied us with excellent potatoes, and told us to make their house our home. We preferred, however, living and cooking afield. The station was dirty to the last degree: the flies suggested the Egyptian plague; they could be brushed from the walls in thousands; but, though sage makes good brooms, no one cares to sweep clean. This, I repeat, is not Mormon, but Western: the people, like the Spaniards, apparently disdain any occupation save that of herding cattle, and will do so till the land is settled.

"The next day was a halt; the stock wanted rest and the men provisions. A 'beef'—the Westerns still retain the singular of 'beeves'—was killed, and we obtained a store of potatoes and wheat. Default of oats, which are not common, this heating food is given to horses—12 lbs. of grain to 14 of long forage—and the furious riding of the Mormons is the only preventive of its evil effects. The people believe that it causes stumbling by the swelling of the fetlock and knee joint. The employés of the station were quiet and respectable, a fact attributed by some of our party to the want of liquor, which is said to cause frequent fights. Our party was less peaceable; there had been an extensive prigging of blankets; the cold now made them valuable, and this drove the losers 'fighting mad.'

#### **En route again. 3d October.**

"The severity of the last night made us active; the appearance of deep snow upon the mountains and of ice in the valleys was an intelligible hint that the Sierra Nevada which lay before us would be by no means an easy task. Despite, therefore, the idleness always engendered by a halt, and the frigid blasts which poured down from the eastern hills, where rain was falling in torrents, we hitched up, bade adieu to our Mormon host, and set out about 4 P.M. Antelope Springs, the next station, was 30 miles distant; we resolved, therefore, to divide it by a short forenoon march.

"The road runs to the southwest down the Deep-Creek Valley, and along the left bank of the western rivulet. Near the divide we found a good bottom, with plenty of water and grass; the only fuel was the sage-bush, which crackled merrily, like thorns, under the pot, but tainted the contents with its medicinal odor. The wagons were drawn up in a half circle to aid us in catching the mules; the animals were turned out to graze, the men were



divided into watches, and the masters took up their quarters in the wagons. I slept with 'Scotch Joe,' an exceedingly surly youth, who apparently preferred any thing to work. At 8 P.M. a storm of wind and rain burst upon us from the S.W.: it was so violent that the wagons rocked before the blast, and at times the chance of a capsizing suggested itself. The weather was highly favorable for Indian plundering, who on such nights expect to make a successful attack.

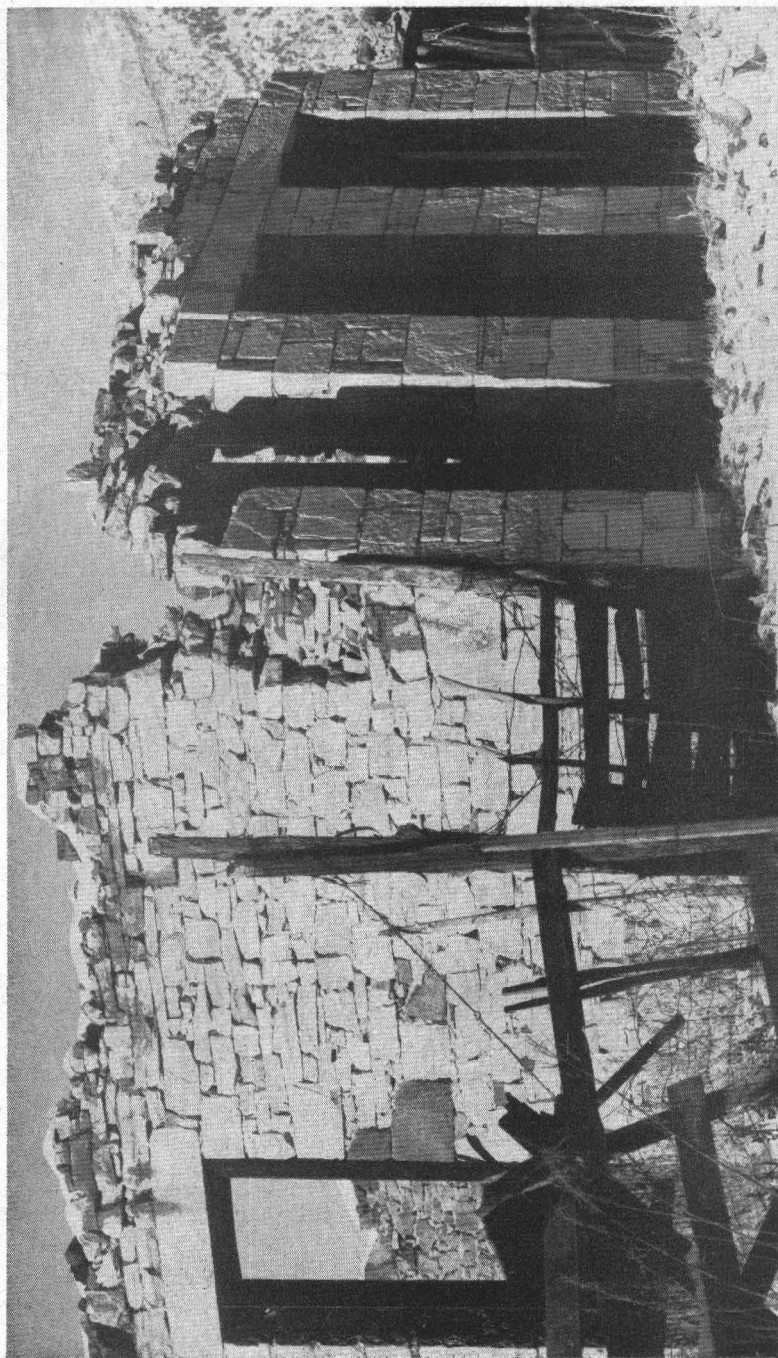
#### **To the Wilderness. 4th October.**

"We awoke early in the frigid S.W. wind, the thermometer showing 39° F. After a few hundred yards we reached 'Eight-mile Springs,' so called from the distance to Deep Creek. The road, which yesterday would have been dusty to the hub, was now heavy and viscid; the rain had washed out the saleratus, and the sight and scent, and the country generally, were those of the environs of a horse-pond. An ugly stretch of two miles, perfectly desert, led to Eight-mile-Spring Canyon, a jagged little ravine about 500 yards long, with a portaled entrance of tall rock. It is not, however, considered dangerous.

"Beyond the canyon lay another grisly land, if possible more deplorable than before; its only crops were dust and mud. On the right hand were turreted rocks, around whose base ran Indian trails, and a violent west wind howled over their summits. About 1 30 P.M. we came upon the station at Antelope Springs: it had been burned by the Gosh Yutas in the last June, and had never been rebuilt. 'George,' our cook, who had been one the inmates at the time, told us how he and his confrères had escaped. Fortunately, the corral still stood; we found wood in plenty, water was lying in an adjoining bottom, and we used the two to brew our tea.

"Beyond Antelope Springs was Shell Creek, distant thirty miles by long road and eighteen by the short cut. Fortunately, two express riders came in and offered to precede us. About 3 P.M. we left the springs and struck for the mouth of the canyon, which has not been named; Sevier and Farish are the rival claimants. Entering the jagged fir and pine-clad breach, we found the necessity of dismounting. The bed was dry—it floods in spring and autumn—but very steep, and in a hole on the right stood water, which we did not touch for fear of poison. Reaching the summit in about an hour we saw below the shaggy foreground of evergreens, or rather ever-blacks, which cast grotesque and exaggerated shadows in the last rays of day, the snowy-white





Schell Creek, White Pine County, now known as Fort Schellbourne.

—Erwin Fehr.



mountains, gloriously sunlit, on the far side of Shell Creek. Here for the first time appeared the piñon pine (*P. Monophyllus*), which forms the principal part of the Indian's diet; it was no beauty to look upon, a dwarfish tree, rendered shrub-like by being feathered down to the ground. The nut is ripe in early autumn, at which time the savages stow away their winter provision in dry ravines and pits. The fruit is about the size of a pistachio, with a decided flavor of turpentine, tolerably palatable, and at first laxative. The cones are thrown upon the fire, and when slightly burnt the nuts are easily extracted; these are eaten raw. The harvest is said to fail every second year. Last season produced a fine crop, while in this autumn many of the trees were found, without apparent reason but frost, dead.

"We resumed the descent along a fumara, which presently 'sank,' and at 5 P.M. halted in a prarillon somewhat beyond. Bunch-grass, sage-fuel, and water were abundant, but the place was favorable for an attack. It is a golden rule in an Indian country never to pitch near trees or rocks that can mask an approach, and we were breaking it in a place of danger. However, the fire was extinguished early, so as to prevent its becoming a mark for Indians, and the pickets, placed on both sides of the ravine, were directed to lie motionless a little below the crest, and to fire at the first comer. I need hardly say we were not murdered; the cold, however, was uncommonly piercing.

#### To 'Robber's Roost.' 5th October. (Butte)

"We set out at 6 A.M. the next morning, through a mixture of snow and hail and howling wind, to finish the ravine, which was *in toto* eight miles long. The descent led us to Spring Valley, a bulge in the mountains about eight miles broad, which a sharp divide separates from Shell Valley, its neighbor. On the summit we fell into the line of rivulet which gives the low lands a name. At the foot of the descent we saw a woodman, and presently the station. Nothing could more want tidying than this log hut, which showed bullet-marks of a recent Indian attack. The master was a *Francais de France*, Constant Dubail, an ex-Lancier. The express riders were three roughs, of whom one was a Mormon. We passed our time while the mules were at bait in visiting the springs. There is a cold creek 200 yards below the station, and close by the hut a warm rivulet, said to contain leeches.

"The weather, which was vile till 10 A.M., when the glass showed 40° (F.), promised to amend, and as the filthy hole—still full of flies, despite the cold—offered no attraction, we set out at



2 P.M. for Egan's Station, beyond an ill-omened canyon of the same name. We descended into a valley by a regular slope—in proportion as we leave distance between us and the Great Salt Lake the bench formation on this line becomes less distinct—and traversed a barren plain by a heavy road. Hares and prairie-hens seemed, however, to like it, and a frieze of willow thicket at the western end showed the presence of water. We halted at the mouth of the canyon; the stock and the boys had fallen far behind, and the place had an exceedingly bad name. But the cold was intense, the shades of evening were closing in, so we made ready for action, and looked to the priming of gun and revolver. After passing that canyon we should exchange the land of the Gosh Yuta for those of the more friendly Shoshonee.

"An uglier place for sharp-shooting can hardly be imagined. The floor of the canyon is almost flush with the bases of the hills, and in such formations, the bed of the creek which occupies the sole is rough and winding. The road was vile—now winding along, then crossing the stream—hedged in with thicket and dotted with boulders. Ahead of us was a rocky projection which appeared to cross our path, and upon this Point Dangerous every eye was fixed.

"Suddenly my eye caught sight of one fire—two fires under the black bunch of firs half way up the hill-side on our left, and as suddenly they were quenched, probably with snow. Nothing remained but to hear the war-whoop, and to see a line of savages rushing down the rocks. We drove on at our fastest speed, with sleet, snow, and wind in our faces. Under the circumstances, it was cold comfort to find, when we had cleared the canyon, that Egan's Station at the farther mouth had been reduced to a chimney-stack and a few charred posts. The Gosh Yutas had set fire to it two or three days before our arrival, in revenge for the death of seventeen of their men by Lieutenant Weed's party. We could distinguish the pits from which the wolves had torn up the corpses, and one fellow's arm projected from the snow. We unhitched the mules, tethered them, and planted ourselves behind the palisade, awaiting all comers, till the boys could bring re-enforcement. The elements fought for us: although two tongues of high land directly in front of us would have formed a fine mask for approach, the snow lay in so even a sheet that a prowling coyote was detected, and the hail-like sleet which beat fiercely on our backs would have been a sore inconvenience to a party attacking in face. Our greatest disadvantage was the extreme cold; it was difficult to keep a finger warm enough to draw a trigger.



"After an hour's freezing, which seemed a day's, we heard with quickened ears the shouts and tramp of the boys and the stock. We threw ourselves into the wagons, numbed with cold, and forgot on the soft piles of saddles, bridles, and baggage, and under heaps of blankets and buffalos. About 3 A.M. this enjoyment was brought to a close by arriving at the end of the stage, Butte Station. The road was six inches deep with snow, and the final ascent was accomplished with difficulty. The good station-master, Mr. Thomas, a Cambrian Mormon, who had, he informed me, three brothers in the British army, bade us kindly welcome, built a roaring fire, added meat to our supper of coffee and doughboy, and cleared by a summary process among the snorers places for us on the floor of 'Robber's Roost,' or 'Thieves Delight,' as the place is facetiously known throughout the country-side.

#### **Halt at 'Robber's Roost.' 6th October. (1860)**

"About noon we arose, expecting a black fog, and looked down upon Butte Valley, whose northern edge we had traversed last night. Snow still lay there—that bottom is rarely without frost—but in the fine clear sunny day, with the mercury at 43° F. in the shade, the lowest levels re-became green, the hill cedars turned once more black, earth steamed like a garment hung out to dry, and dark spots here and there mottled the hills, which were capped with huge turbans of muslin-like mist. We will glance around the 'Robber's Roost,' which will answer for a study of the Western man's home.

"A cabin fronting east and west, long walls thirty feet, with port-holes for windows, short ditto fifteen; material, sandstone and bog ironstone slabs compacted with mud, the whole roofed with split cedar trunks, reposing on horizontals which rested on perpendiculars. Behind the house a corral of rails planted in the ground; the inclosed space of mass of earth, and a mere shed in one corner the only shelter. Outside the door—the hingeless and lockless backboard of a wagon, bearing the wounds of bullets—and resting on lintels and staples, which also had formed parts of locomotives, a slab acting stepping-stone over a mass of soppy black soil strewn with ashes, gobs of meat offals, and other delicacies. On the right hand a load of wood; on the left a tank formed by damming a dirty pool which had flowed through a corral behind the 'Roost.' There was a regular line of drip distilling from the caked and hollowed snow which toppled from the thick thatch above the cedar braces.

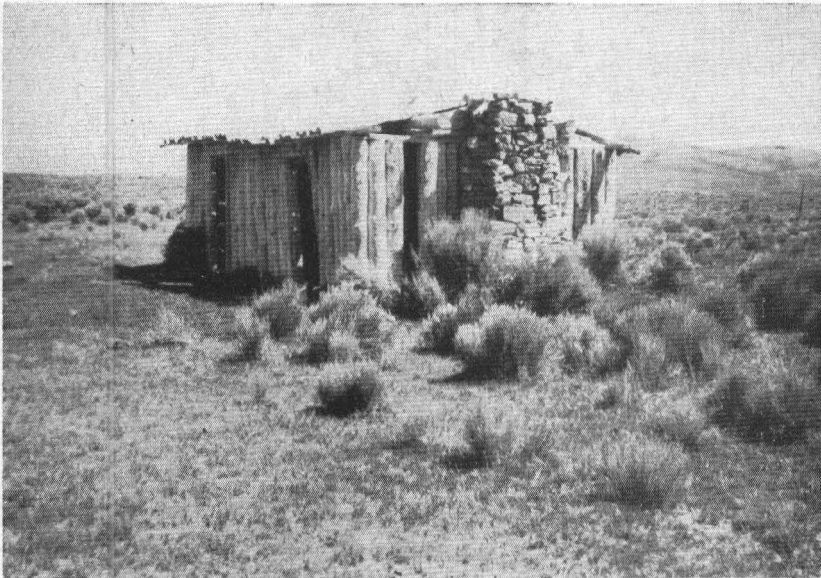
"The inside reflected the outside. The length was divided by



two perpendiculars, the southernmost of which, assisted by a half-way canvas partition, cut the hut into unequal parts. Behind it were two bunks for four men: standing bedsteads of poles planted in the ground and covered with piles of ragged blankets. Beneath the frame-work were heaps of rubbish, saddles, cloths, harness, and straps, sacks of wheat, oats, meal, and potatoes, defended from the ground by underlying logs, and dogs nestled where they found room. The floor, which also frequently represented bedstead, was rough, uneven earth, neither tamped nor swept, and the fine end of a spring oozing through the western wall kept part of it in a state of eternal mud. A redeeming point was the fireplace, which occupied half of the northern short wall: it might have belonged to Guy of Warwick's great hall; its ingle nooks boasted dimensions which one connects with an idea of hospitality and jollity; while a long hook hanging down it spoke of the bouillon-pot, and the iron oven of hot rolls. Nothing could be more simple than the furniture. The chairs were either posts mounted on four legs spread out for a base, or three-legged stools with reniform seats. The tables were rough-dressed planks, two feet by two, on rickety trestles. One stood in the centre for feeding purposes; the other was placed as buffet in the corner near the fire, with eating apparatus—tin coffee-pot and gamelles, rough knives, 'pitch-forks,' and pewter spoons. The walls were pegged to support spurs and pistols, whips, gloves, and leggins. Over the door, in a niche, stood a broken coffee-mill, for which a flat stone did duty. Near the entrance, on a broad shelf raised about a foot from the ground, lay a tin skillet and its 'dipper.' Soap was supplied by a handful of gravel, and evaporation was expected to act towel. Under the board was a pail of water with a floating can, which enabled the inmates to supply the drainage of everlasting thaws. There was no sign of Bible, Shakespeare, or Milton; a Holywell-Street romance or two was the only attempt at literature. *En revanche*, weapons of the flesh, rifles, guns, and pistols, lay and hung all about the house, carelessly stowed as usual, and tools were not wanting—hammers, large borers, axe, saw, and chisel. An almost invariable figure in these huts is an Indian standing cross-legged at the door, or squatting uncomfortably close to the fire. He derides the whites for their wastefulness, preferring to crouch in parties of three or four over a little bit of fuel than to sit before a blazing log. These savages act, among other things, as hunters, bringing home rabbits and birds. We tried our revolvers against one of them, and beat him easily; yet they are said to put, three times out of four, an arrow through a

keyhole forty paces off. In shooting they place the thumb and forefinger of the right hand upon the notch, and strengthen the pull by means of the second finger stretched along the bow-string. The left hand holds the whipped handle, and the shaft rests upon the knuckle of the index.

"From Mr. Thomas we heard an account of the affair which took place near Egan's Canyon. In the last August, Lieutenant Weed happened to be 'on a scout,' with seventeen mounted riflemen, after Indians. An express rider from the West had ridden



Dr. Charles Secor collection

**Ruby Valley Station (July 1944), White Pine County. This station was the half-way house between Salt Lake City and the Carson Valley.**

up to the station, which, being in a hollow, can not be seen from afar, and found it surrounded by Gosh Yuta Indians. The fellows had tied up the master and the boy, and were preparing with civilized provisions a good dinner for themselves, to be followed by a little treat in the form of burning down the house and roasting their captives. The Indians allowed the soldiers brought up by the express rider to draw near, thinking that the dust was raised by fresh arrivals of their own people; and when charged, at once fled. The mounted riflemen were armed with revolvers, not with sabres, or they would have done considerable execution;



as it was, seventeen of the enemy remained upon the field, besides those who were carried off by their friends. The Indian will always leave a scalped and wounded fellow-tribesman in favor of an unscalped corpse.

#### To Ruby Valley. 7th October. (1860)

"A frosty night was followed by a Tuscan day: a cold tramontana from the south, and a clear hot sun, which expanded the mercury at 10 A.M. to 70° F. After taking leave of the hospitable station-master, we resumed the road which ran up the short and heavy ascent, through a country here and there eighteen inches deep in snow, and abounding in large sage and little rabbits. A descent led into Long Valley, whose northern end we crossed, and then we came upon a third ascent, where, finding a sinking creek, a halt was called for lunch. The formation of the whole country is a succession of basins and divides. Ensued another twelve miles' descent, which placed us in sight of Ruby Valley, and a mile beyond carried us to the station.

"Ruby Valley is a half-way house, about 300 miles from Great Salt Lake City, and at the same distance from Carson Valley. It derives its name from the small precious stones which are found like nuggets of gold in the crevices of primitive rock. The length of the valley is about 100 miles, by three or four broad, and springs are scattered in numbers along the base of the western mountains. The cold is said to be here more severe than in any place on the line of road, Spring Valley excepted. There is, however, excellent bench-land for grazing. In this season the scenery is really pretty. The white peaks tower over hill-land black with cedar, and this looks down upon the green bottom scattered over with white sage—winter above lying by the side of summer below.

"We were received at the Ruby-Valley Station by Colonel Rogers, better known as 'Uncle Billy.' He had served in the troublous days of California as marshal, and has many a hair-breadth escape to relate. He is now assistant Indian agent, the superintendent of a government model farm, and he lives *en garcon*, having left his wife and children at Frogtown. We were soon introduced to the chief of the country, Chyukupichya (the 'old man'), changed by whites into Chokop ('earth'). His lands are long to the north and south, though of little breadth. He commands about 500 warriors, and, as Uncle Billy is returning to Frogtown, he is collecting a large hunting-party for the autumnal battue.

"We dined in the colonel's stone hut, and then saw the lions feed; after us, Chokop and five followers sat down with knife and fork before a huge tureen full of soft pie, among which they did terrible execution, champing and chewing with the noisiness of wild beasts, and eating each enough for three able-bodied sailors. The chief, a young man twenty-five years old, had little to denote the Indian except vermilion where soap should have been; one of his companions, however, crowned with eagle's feathers disposed in tulip shape, while the claws depended gracefully down his back. All were, however, to appearance, happy, and for the first time I heard an Indian really laugh outright. Outside squatted the common herd in a costume which explains the prevalence of rheumatism. The men were in rags, yet they had their coquetry, vermilion streaked down their cheeks and across their foreheads—the Indian fashion of the omnilocal rouge. The women, especially the elders, were horrid objects, shivering and half dressed in breech-cloths and scanty capes or tippets of wolf and rabbit skin: the existence of old age, however, speaks well for the race. Both are unclean; they use no water where Asiatics would; they ignore soap, and rarely repair to the stream, except, like animals, in hot weather.

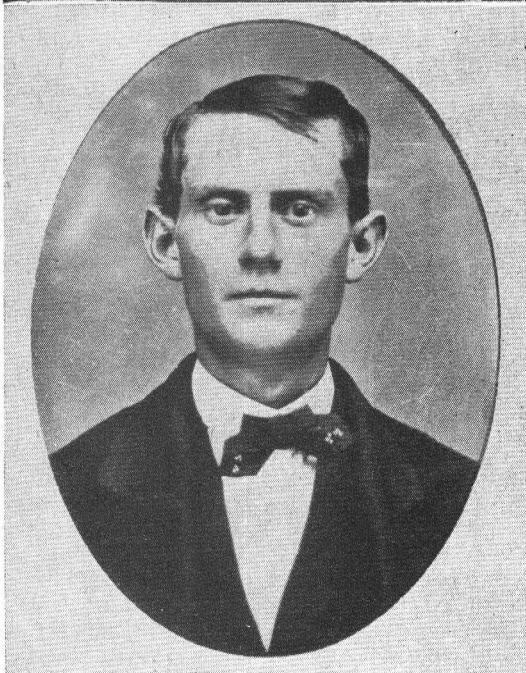
"About two miles from the station there is a lake covered with water-fowl, from the wild swan to the rail.

Uncle Billy managed to make the post pay by peltries of the mink, wolf, woodchuck or ground-hog, fox, badger, antelope, black-tailed deer, and others.

#### **To Chokop's Pass. 8th October, 1860.**

"The morning was wasted in binding two loose tires upon their respective wheels; it was past noon before we were *en route*. We shook hands cordially with Uncle Billy, whose generosity—a virtue highly prized by those who, rarely practicing, expect it to be practiced upon them—has won for him the sobriquet of the 'Big-hearted Father.' He had vainly, however, attempted to rescue my silver pen-holder, whose glitter was too much for Indian virtue. Our route lay over a long divide, cold but not unpicturesque, a scene of light-tinted mountain mahogany, black cedar, pure snowy hill, and pink sky. After ten miles we reached the place where the road forks; that to the right, passing through Pine Valley, falls into the gravelly ford of the Humboldt River, distant from this point eighty to eighty-five miles. After surmounting the water-shed we descended over bench-land into a raw and dreary plain, in which greasewood was more plentiful than sage-bush.





Diamond Springs Station, Eureka County. The picture was taken in 1959. One end of the building was removed to prevent further damage to the structure.

—Northeastern Historical Society  
George Francis Cox, station tender at  
Diamond Springs.

'Huntington Valley' is traversed by Smith's Fork, which flows northward to the Humboldt River; when we crossed it it was a mere rivulet. Our camping-ground was at the farther end of the plain, under a Pass called after the chief Chokop; the kanyon emitted a cold draught like the breathing cawes of Kentucky. We alighted at a water near the entrance, and found bunch-grass, besides a little fuel. After two hours the wagon came up with the stock, which was now becoming weary, and we had the usual supper of dough, butter, and coffee. I should have slept comfortably enough upon a shovel and a layer of carpet-bags had not the furious south wind howled like the distant whooping of Indians.

### **To the Wilderness again. 9th October. (1860)**

"The frosty night was followed by a thaw in the morning. We hastened to ascend Chokop's Pass by a bad, steep dugway: it lies south of 'Railroad Kanyon,' which is said to be nearly flat-soled. A descent led into 'Moonshine,' called by the Yutas Pahannap Valley, and we saw with pleasure the bench rising at the foot of the pass. The station is named Diamond Springs, from an eye of warm, but sweet and beautifully clear water bubbling up from the earth. A little below it drains off in a deep rushy ditch, with a gravel bottom, containing equal parts of comminuted shells: we found it an agreeable and opportune bath. Hard work had begun to tell upon the temper of the party. The boys—four or five in number—ate for breakfast a quarter of beef, as though they had been Kaffirs or Esquimaux, and were threatened with ration-cutting. The station folks were Mormons, but not particularly civil: they afterward had to fly before the savages, which, perhaps, they will be pleased to consider a 'judgment' upon them.

"Shortly after noon we left Diamond Springs and carried on for a stretch of seven miles to our lunching-ground, a rushy water, black where it overlies mud, and bluish-green where light gravel and shells form the bottom: the taste is sulphury, and it abounds in confervae and animalculae like leeches and little tadpoles. After playing a tidy bowie-knife, we remounted, and passed over to the rough divide lying westward of Moonshine Valley. As night had closed in, we found some difficulty in choosing a camping-place: at length we pitched upon a prairillon under the lee of a hill, where we had bunch-grass and fuel, but no water. The wind blew sternly through the livelong night, and those who suffered from cramps in cold feet had little to do with the 'sweet restorer, balmy sleep.'



**To Sheawit Creek. 10th October. (1860)**

"At 6 A.M. the mercury was sunk only to 29° F., but the elevation and rapid evaporation, with the fierce gusty wind coursing through the kanyon, rendered the sensation of cold painful. As usual on these occasions, 'George,' our chef, sensibly preferred standing over the fire, and enwrapping himself with smoke, to the inevitable exposure incurred while fetching a coffee-pot or tea-kettle. A long divide, with many ascents and descents, at length placed in front of us a view of the normal 'distance'—heaps of hills, white as bridal cakes, and, nearer, a sand-like plain, somewhat more yellow than the average of those salt-bottoms: instinct told us that there lay the station-house. From the hills rose the smokes of Indian fires: the lands belonging to the Tusawichya, or White-Knives, a band of Shoshones under an independent chief. This depression is known to the Yutas as Sheawit, or Willow Creek: the whites call it, from Mr. Bolivar Roberts, the Western agent, 'Roberts' Springs Valley.' It lies 286 miles from Camp Floyd: from this point 'Simpson's Road' strikes off to the S.E., and as Mr. Howard Egan's rule here terminates, it is considered the latter end of Mormondom. Like all the stations to the westward, that is to say, those now before us, it was burned down in the late Indian troubles, and has only been partially rebuilt. One of the employés was Mr. Mose Wright, of Illinois, who again kindly assisted me with correcting my vocabulary.

"About the station loitered several Indians of the White-Knife tribe, which boasts, like the old Sioux and modern Flatheads, never to have stained its weapons with the blood of a white man. They may be a respectable race, but they are an ugly: they resemble the Diggers, and the children are not a little like juvenile baboons. The dress was the usual medley of rags and rabbit furs: they were streaked with vermilion; and their hair—contrary to, and more sensibly than the practice of our grandfathers—was fastened into a frontal pigtail, to prevent it falling into the eyes. These men attend upon the station and herd the stock for an occasional meal, their sole payment. They will trade their skins and peltries for arms and gunpowder, but, African-like, they are apt to look upon provisions, beads, and tobacco in the light of presents.

"A long march of thirty-five miles lay before us. Resolved to pass the night at Sheawit Creek, and, despite their grumbling, sent on the boys, the stock, and the wagons, when rested from their labor, in the early afternoon. We spent a cosy, pleasant

evening in the ingle corner and round the huge hearth of the half-finished station, with its holey walls. At intervals, the roarings of the wind, the ticking of the death-watch (a well-known xylophagus), boring a home in the soft cotton-wood rafters, and the howling of the Indians, who were keening at a neighboring grave, formed a rude and appropriate chorus.

“Mose Wright described the Indian arrow-poison. The rattlesnake—the copperhead and the moccasin he ignored—is caught with a forked stick planted over its neck, and is allowed to fix its fangs in an antelope’s liver. The meat, which turns green, is carried upon a skewer when wanted for use: the flint-head of an arrow, made purposely to break in the wound, is thrust into the poison, and when withdrawn is covered with a thin coat of glue. Ammonia is considered a cure for it, and the Indians treat snake-bites with the actual cautery. The rattlesnake here attains a length of eight to nine feet, and is described as having reached the number of seventy-three rattles, which, supposing (as the theory is) that after the third year it puts forth one per annum, would raise its age to that of man: it is much feared in Utah Territory. We were cautioned against the poison oak, which is worse than the poison vine east of the Mississippi. It is a dwarf bush with quercine leaves, dark colored and prickly like those of the holly: the effect of a sting, of a touch, or, it is said, in sensitives of its proximity, is a painful itching, followed by a rash that lasts three weeks, and other highly inconvenient consequences. Strong brine was recommended to us by our prairie doctor.

#### **To Dry Creek. 11th October. (1860)**

“We arose early, and found that it had not ‘frosted;’ that flies were busy in the station-house; and that the snow, though thick on the northern faces, had melted from the southern shoulders of the hills—these were so many indices of the St. Martin’s, or Indian summer, the last warm glow of life before the cold and palid death of the year. At 6 A.M. we followed a good road across the remains of the long, broad Sheawit Valley. After twelve miles we came upon a water surrounded by willows, with dwarf artemisia beyond—it grows better on the benches, where the subsoil is damper, than in the bottoms—and there we found our lazy boys, who, as Jim Gilston said, had been last night ‘on a drunk.’ Resuming our way, after three miles we reached some wells whose alkaline waters chap the skin. Twenty miles farther led to the west end of the Sheawit Valley, where we found that station on



a grassy bench at the foot of low rolling hills. It was a mere shell, with a substantial stone corral behind, and the inmates were speculating upon the possibility of roofing themselves in before the winter. Water is found in tolerable quantities below the station, but the place deserved its name, 'Dry Creek.'

"Dry-Creek Station is on the eastern frontier of the western agency; as at Roberts' Creek, supplies and literatures from Great Salt City east and Carson City west are usually exhausted before they reach these final points. After a frugal feed, we inspected a grave for two, which bore the names of Loscier and Applegate, and the date 21st of May. These men, employés of the station, were attacked by Indians—Panaks or Shoshonees, or possibly both: the former was killed by the first fire; the latter, when shot in the groin, and unable to proceed, borrowed, under pretext of defense, a revolver, bade good-by to his companions, and put a bullet through his own head: the remainder then escaped. Both these poor fellows remain unavenged. The double grave, piled up with stones, showed gaps where the wolves had attempted to tunnel, and blue-bottle flies were buzzing over it in expectation.

"The night was comfortably passed at Dry Creek, under the leeward side of a large haystack. The weather was cold, but clear and bright. We slept the sleep of the just.

#### To Simpson's Park. 12th October. (1860)

"At the time of the cold clear dawn, whose gray contrasted strongly with the blush of the most lovely evening that preceded it, the mercury stood at 45° F. Shortly after 8 A.M. we were afield, hastening to finish the long divide that separates Roberts' Creek Valley from its western neighbor, which, as yet unchristened, is known to the b'hoys as Smoky Valley. The road wound in the shape of the letter U round the impassable part of the ridge. Crossing the north end of Smoky Valley, we came upon rolling ground, with water-willows and cedars 'blazed'—barked with a gash—for sign-posts. Ensued a long kanyon, with a flat sole, not unlike Egan's, a gate by which the swift shallow stream had broken through the mountains: in places it was apparently a *cul de sac*; in others, shoulder after shoulder rose in long perspective, with points and projections behind, which an enemy might easily turn. The granite walls were of Cyclopean form, with regular lines of cleavage, as in the Rattlesnake Hills, which gave a false air of stratification. The road was a mere path along and across the rivulet bed, and the lower slopes were garnished with the pepper-grass and the everlasting bunch-grass, so truly

characteristic of the 'Basin State.' Above us, in the pellucid sky, towered the eagle in his pride of place; the rabbit ran before us from the thicket; the ground-squirrel cached himself in the sage-bush; and where distance appeared, smokes upcurling in slow, heavy masses told us that man was not far distant. A second divide, more abrupt than the former, placed us in sight of Simpson's Park—and such a park! a circlet of tawny stubble, embosomed in sage-grown hills, the 'Hire' or 'Look-out,' and others, without other tree but the deformed cedars. The bottom is notorious for cold; it freezes even in June and July; and our night was, as may be imagined, none of the pleasantest.

"The station-house in Simpson's Park was being rebuilt. As we issued from Mormondom into Christendom, the civility of our hosts perceptibly diminished. The station was well provided with good minies, and the men apparently expected to use them; it was, however, commanded by the neighboring heights, and the haystacks were exposed to fire at a time of the year when no more forage could be collected. A hideous Pa Yuta and surly Shoshonee, whom I sketched, loitered about the station: they were dressed in the usual rabbit-skin cape, and carried little horn bows, with which they missed small marks at fifteen paces. The boys, who were now weary of watching, hired one of these men for a shirt—tobacco was not to be had, and a blanket was too high pay—to mount guard through the night.

#### To Reese's River, 13th October. (1860)

"Simpson's Park lies 195 miles from Carson City, where we might consider the journey at an end; yet the cold of night did not allow us to set out before 10 A.M. Our route lay across the park, which was dotted with wheat-grass and broom-like reeds rising from a ground saupoudre like salt. Presently we began to ascend Simpson's Pass, a long kanyon whose sloping sides and benches were dotted with the green bunch-grass. At the divide we found the 'Sage Springs,' whose position is too elevated for the infiltration of salt: they are consequently sweet and wholesome. Descending by a rugged road, we sighted every where on the heights the fires of the natives. They were not symbols of war, but signals—for which smokes are eminently adapted—made by tribes telegraphing to one another their being *en route* for their winter quarters. Below us, 'Reese's River' Valley might have served for a sketch in the African desert: a plain of saleratus, here yellow with sand or hay, there black with fire, there brown where the skin of earth showed through her garb of rags, and



beyond it were chocolate-colored hills, from whose heads curled blue smokes of volcanic appearance.

"Bisecting the barren plain ran a bright little stream, whose banks, however, had been stripped of their 'salt grass:' pure and clear it flows over a bed of gravel, sheds in northerly direction, and sinks at a distance of about twenty miles. From afar we all mistook the course, deceived, as travelers often are, by the horizontality of the lines. Leaving on the right the road which forks to the lower ford, we followed that on the left hand leading to the station. There can not be much traveling upon these lines: the tracks last for years, unaffected by snow: the carcasses of animals, however, no longer mummified us as in the Eastern prairies, are readily reduced to skeletons.

"The station-house in the Reese-River Valley had lately been evacuated by its proprietors and burnt down by the Indians: a new building of adobe was already assuming a comfortable shape. The food around it being poor and thin, our cattle were driven to the mountains. At night, probably by contrast with the torrid sun, the frost appeared colder than ever: we provided against it, however, by burrowing into the haystack, and, despite the jackal-like cry of the coyote, we slept like tops.

#### **To Smith's Creek. 14th October. (1860)**

"Before 8 A.M. we were under way, bound for Smith's Creek. Our path stretched over the remainder of Reese's River Valley, an expanse of white sage and large rabbit-bush which affords fuel even when green. After a long and peculiarly rough divide, we sighted the place of our destination. It lay beyond a broad plain or valley, like a huge white 'splotch' in the centre, set in dirty brown vegetation, backed by bare and rugged hills, which are snow-topped only on the north; presently we reached the 'splotch' which changed its aspect from that of a muddy pool to a yellow floor of earth so hard that the wheels scarcely made a dent, except where a later inundation had caused the mud to cake, flake, and curl—smooth as ice without being slippery. Beyond that point, guided by streams meandering through willow-thickets, we entered a kanyon—all are now wearying of the name—and presently sighted the station deep in a hollow. It had a good stone corral and the usual haystack, which fires on the hilltops seemed to menace. Among the station-folks we found two New Yorkers, a Belfast man, and a tawny Mexican named Anton, who had passed his life riding the San Bernardino road. The house was unusually neat, and displayed even signs of decoration in the

adornment of the bunks with osier-work taken from the neighboring creek. We are now in the lands of the Pa Yuta, and rarely fail to meet a party on the road: they at once propose 'shwop,' and readily exchange pine nuts for 'white grub,' *i.e.*, biscuits. I observed, however, that none of the natives were allowed to enter the station-house, whereas in other places, especially among the Mormons, the savages squeezed themselves into the room, took the best seats near the fire, and never showed a symptom of moving.

#### To Cold Springs. 15th October. (1860)

"After a warmer night than usual—thanks to fire and lodging—we awoke, and found a genial south wind blowing. Our road lay through the kanyon, whose floor was flush with the plain; the bed of the mountain stream was the initiative of vile traveling, which, without our suspecting it, was to last till the end of the journey. As we progressed, the valleys became more and more desert, the sage more stunted, and the hills more brown and barren. At last, after much sticking and kicking on the part of the cattle, and the mental refreshment of abundant bad language, self-adhibited by the men, we made Cold-Springs Station, which, by means of a cut across the hills, could be brought within eight miles of Smith's Creek.

"The station was a wretched place, half built and wholly unroofed; the four boys, an exceedingly rough set, ate standing, and neither paper nor pencil was known among them. Our animals, however, found good water in a rivulet from the neighboring hills, and the promise of a plentiful feed on the morrow, while the humans, observing that a 'beef' had been freshly killed, supped upon an excellent steak. The warm wind was a pleasant contrast to the usual frost, but, as it came from the south, all the weather-wise predicted that rain would result. We slept, however, without such accident, under the haystack, and heard the loud howling of the wolves, which are said to be larger on these hills than elsewhere.

#### To Sand Springs. 16th October. (1860)

"In the morning the wind had shifted from the south to a more pluvial quarter, the southeast—in these regions the westerly wind promises the fairest—and stormy cirri mottled the sky. We had a long stage of thirty-five miles before us, and required an early start, yet the lazy b'hoys and the weary cattle saw 10 A.M. before we were *en route*. Simpson's road lay to our south; we could,

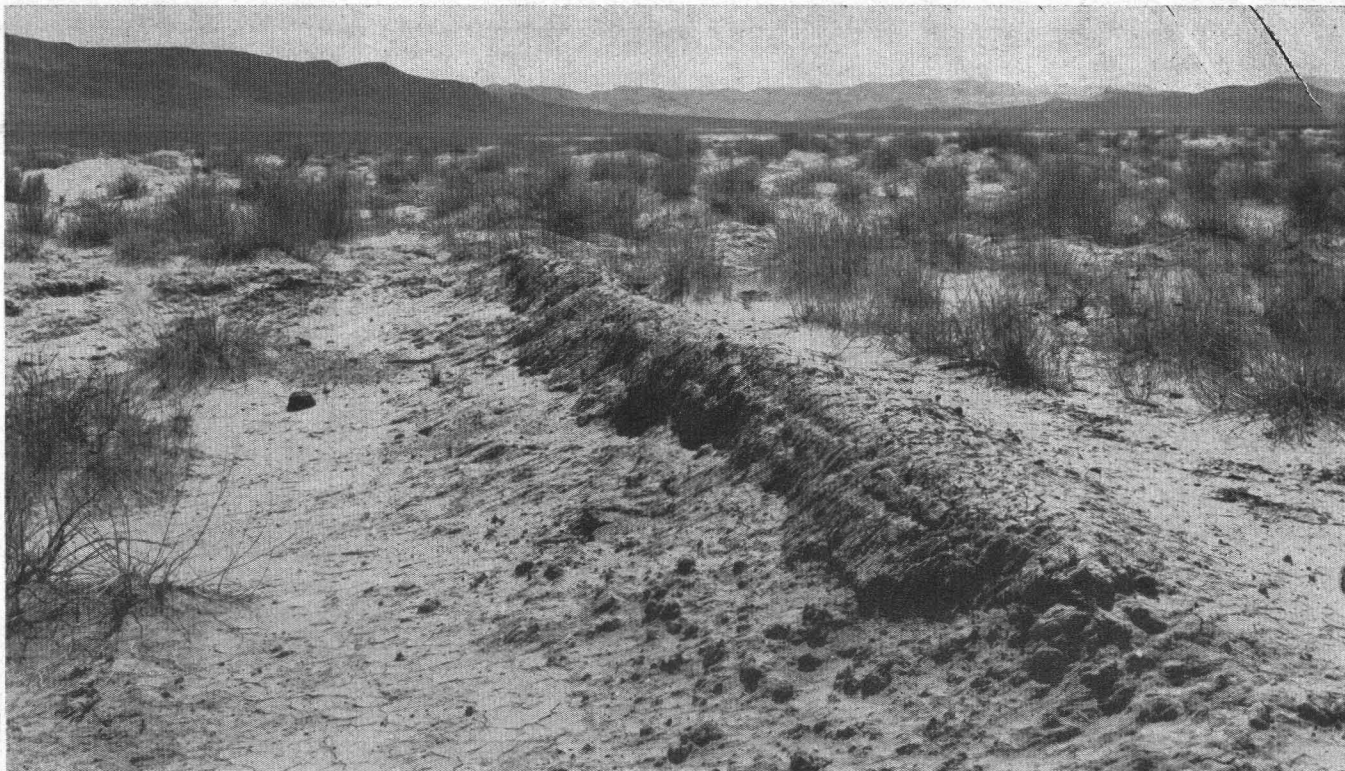


however, sight, about two miles distant from the station, the easternmost formation, which he calls Gibraltar Gate. For the first three miles our way was exceedingly rough; it gradually improved into a plain cut with nullahs, and overgrown with a chapparal, which concealed a few 'burrowing hares.' The animals are rare; during the snow they are said to tread in one another's trails after Indian fashion, yet the huntsman easily follows them. After eight miles we passed a spring, and two miles beyond it came to the Middle Gate, where we halted from noon til 5 15 P.M. Water was found in the bed of a river which fills like a mill-dam after rain, and a plentiful supply of bunch-grass, whose dark seeds it was difficult to husk out of the oat-like capsules.

"Hitching to as the sun neared the western horizon, we passed through the Gate, narrowly escaping a 'spill' down a dwarf precipice. A plain bounded on our left by cretacious bluffs, white as snow, led to the West Gate, two symmetrical projections like those farther eastward. After that began a long divide broken by frequent chuck-holes, which, however, had no cunette at the bottom. An ascent of five miles led to a second broad basin, whose white and sounding ground, now stony, then sandy, scattered over with carcass and skeleton, was bounded in front by low dark ranges of hill. Then crossing a long rocky divide, so winding that the mules' heads pointed within a few miles to N., S., E., and W., we descended by narrow passes into a plain. The eye could not distinguish it from a lake, so misty and vague were its outlines: other senses corrected vision, when we sank up to the hub in the loose sand. As we progressed painfully, broken clay and dwarf vegetation assumed in the dim shades fantastic and mysterious forms. At last, about 2 30 A.M., thoroughly 'knocked up'—a phrase which I should advise the Englishman to eschew in the society of the fair Columbian—we sighted a roofless shed, found a haystack, and, reckless of supper or of stamping horses, fell asleep upon the sand.

#### To Carson Lake. 17th October. (1860)

"Sand-Springs Station deserved its name. Like the Brazas de San Diego and other *mauvaises terres* near the Rio Grande, the land is cumbered here and there with drifted ridges of the finest sand, sometimes 200 feet high, and shifting before every gale. Behind the house stood a mound shaped like the contents of an hour-glass, drifted up by the stormy S.E. gale in esplanade shape, and falling steep to northward or against the wind. The water near this vile hole was thick and stale with sulphury salts: it



—Walt Mulcahy

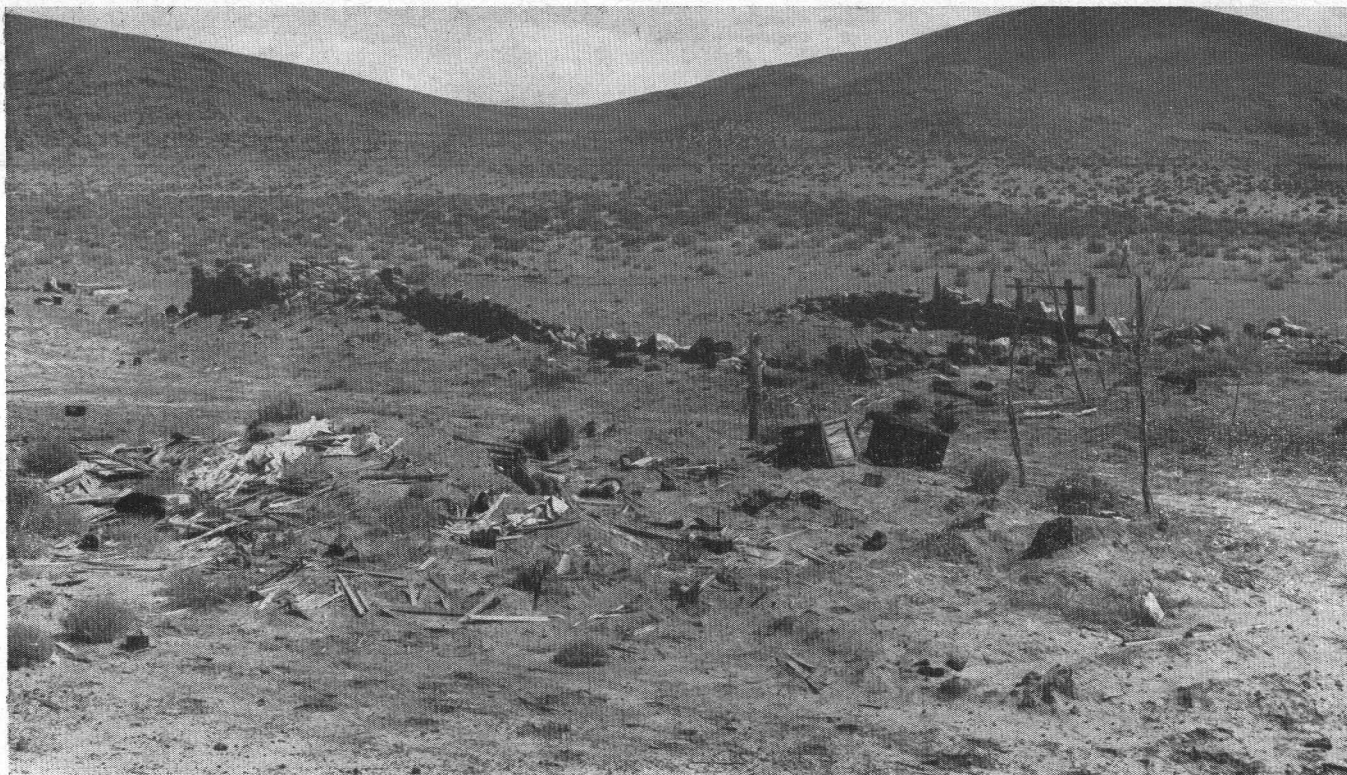
Carson Sink Station. Left background and far middle background show Desert Range. The right background is the south end of Dead Camel Range crossed by the Pony Express trail.



blistered even the hands. The station-house was no unfit object in such a scene, roofless and chairless, filthy and squalid, with a smoky fire in one corner, and a table in the centre of an impure floor, the walls open to every wind, and the interior full of dust. Hibernia herself never produced aught more characteristic. Of the employés, all loitered and sauntered about *desoeuvres* as cretins, except one, who lay on the ground crippled and apparently dying by the fall of a horse upon his breast-bone.

"About 11 A.M. we set off to cross the ten miles of valley that stretched between us and the summit of the western divide still separating us from Carson Lake. The land was smooth *saleratus* plain, with curious masses of porous red and black basalt protruding from a ghastly white. The water-shed was apparently to the north, the benches were distinctly marked, and the bottom looked as if it were inundated every year. It was smooth except where broken up by tracks, but all off the road was dangerous ground: in one place the horses sank to their hocks, and were not extricated without difficulty. After a hot drive—the glass at 9 A.M. showed 74° F.—we began to toil up the divide, a sand formation mixed with bits of granite, red seeds, and dwarf shells, whose lips were for the most part broken off. Over the fine loose surface was a floating haze of the smaller particles, like the film that veils the Arabian desert. Arrived at the summit, we sighted for the first time Carson Lake, or rather the sink of the Carson River. It derives its name from the well-known mountaineer whose adventurous roamings long anticipated scientific exploration. Supplied by the stream from the eastern flank of the Sierra Nevada, it is just such a lake as might be formed in any one of basins which we had traversed—a shallow sheet of water, which, in the cloudy sky and mitigated glare of the sun, looked pale and muddy. Apparently it was divided by a long, narrow ruddy line, like ochre-colored sand; a near approach showed that water on the right was separated from a *saleratus* bed on the left by a thick bed of tule rush. Stones imitated the sweep of the tide, and white particles the color of a wash.

"Our conscientious informant at Sand-Springs Station had warned us that upon the summit of the divide we should find a perpendicular drop, down which the wagons could be lowered only by means of lariats affixed to the axle-trees and lashed round strong 'stubbing-posts.' We were not, however, surprised to find a mild descent of about 30°. From the summit of the divide five miles led us over a plain too barren for sage, and a stretch of stone and *saleratus* to the watery margin, which was troublesome with



—Walt Mulcahy

**Desert Station.** This station was also known as Hooten Well, Coat's Well, and Casey's Well. The old road running east to west shown is the Pony Express trail. The road shown on the mountain in the background is not the trail. There were remains of five adobe buildings in the area.



sloughs and mud. The cattle relished the water, although tainted by the rush; we failed, however, to find any of the fresh-water clams, whose shells were scattered along the shore.

"Remounting at 5 15 P.M. we proceeded to finish the ten miles which still separated us from the station, by a rough and stony road, perilous to wheel conveyances, which rounded the southern extremity of the lake. After passing a promontory whose bold projection had been conspicuous from afar, and threading a steep kanyon leading toward the lake, we fell into its selvage, which averaged about one mile in breadth. The small crescent of the moon soon ceased to befriend us, and we sat in the sadness of the shade, till presently a light glimmered under Arcturus, the road bent toward it, and all felt 'jolly.'

"A long dull hour still lay before us, and we were approaching civilized land. 'Sink Station' looked well from without; there was a frame house inside an adobe inclosure, and a pile of wood and a stout haystack promised fuel and fodder. The inmates, however, were asleep, and it was ominously long before a door was opened. At last appeared a surly cripple, who presently disappeared to arm himself with his revolver. Asked civilly for a cup of water, were told to fetch it from the lake, which was not more than a mile off, though, as the road was full of quagmires, it would be hard to travel at night. Wood the churl would not part with: we offered to buy it, to borrow it, to replace it in the morning; he told us to go for it ourselves, and that after about two miles and a half we might chance to gather some. Certainly our party was a law-abiding and a self-governing one; never did I see men so tamely bullied; they threw back the fellow's sticks, and cold and hungry, and thirsty, simply began to sulk. An Indian standing by asked \$20 to herd the stock for a single night.

"I preferred passing the night on a side of bacon in the wagon to using the cripple's haystack, and allowed sleep to steep my senses in forgetfulness, after deeply regretting that the Mormons do not extend somewhat farther westward.

#### **To Fort Churchill. 18th October. (1860)**

"The b'hoys and the stock were doomed to remain near the Carson Lake, where forage was abundant, while we made our way to Carson Valley—an arrangement not affected without excessive grumbling. At last the deserted ones were satisfied with the promise that they should exchange their desert quarters for civilization on Tuesday, and we were permitted to start. Crossing a long plain bordering on the Sink, we 'snaked up' painfully a

high divide which a little engineering skill would have avoided. From the summit, bleak with the west wind, we could descry, at a distance of fifty miles, a snowy saddle-back—the Sierra Nevada. When the deep sand had fatigued our cattle, we halted for an hour to bait in a patch of land rich with bunch-grass. Descending from the eminence, we saw a gladdening sight; the Carson River, winding through its avenue of dark cotton-woods, and afar off the quarters and barracks of Fort Churchill. The nearer view was a hard-tamped plain, besprinkled with black and red porous stones and a sparse vegetation, with the ruddy and yellow autumnal hues; a miserable range of low, brown, sunburnt rocks and hills,



Ruins of the Headquarters building at Fort Churchill, 1.3 miles from Buckland's Station. The Fort was not a change stop for the Pony Express however, as the Mochila's three locked boxes carried official mail only. Stops at all forts along the route were necessary.

whose ravines were choked with white sand-drifts, bounded the basin. The farther distance used it as a foil; the Sierra developed itself into four distinct magnificent tiers of snow-capped and cloud-veiled mountain, whose dissolving views faded into thin darkness as the sun disappeared behind their gigantic heads.

#### **Hurrah again—in! 19th October. (1860)**

"This day will be the last of my diary. We have now emerged from the deserts of the Basin State, and are debouching upon lands where coaches and the electric telegraph ply.

"After a cold night, and losing the cattle, we managed to hitch to, and crossed, not without difficulty, the deep bed of the Carson River, which runs over sands glittering with mica. A little beyond



it we found the station-house, and congratulated ourselves that we had escaped a twelve hours' durance vile in its atmosphere of rum, korn, schnapps, stale tobacco, flies, and profane oaths, not to mention the chance of being 'wiped out' in a 'difference' between a soldier and a gambler, or a miner and a rider.

"From the station-house we walked, accompanied by a Mr. O—— who, after being an editor in Texas, had become a mail-rider in Utah Territory—to the fort. It was, upon the principle of its eastern neighbors, a well-disposed cantonment, containing quarters for the officers and barracks for the men. Fort Churchill had been built during the last few months: it lodged about two companies of infantry, and required at least 2000 men. Captain F. F. Flint (6th Regiment) was then commanding, and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Swords, a deputy quarter-master general, was on a tour of inspection. We went straight to the quarter-master's office, and there found Lieutenant Moore, who introduced us to all present, and supplied us with the last newspapers and news. The camp was Teetotalist, and avoided cards like good Moslems: we were not, however, expected to drink water except in the form of strong waters, and the desert had disinclined us to abstain from whisky.

"The dull morning had threatened snow, and shortly after noon the west wind brought up cold heavy showers, which continued with intervals to the end of the stage. Our next station was Miller's (Reeds), distant 15 to 16 miles. The road ran along the valley of Carson River, whose trees were a repose to our eyes, and we congratulated ourselves when we looked down the stiff clay banks, 30 feet high, and wholly unfenced, that our journey was by day. The desert was now 'done.' At every few miles was a drinking 'calaboose': where sheds were not a kettle hung under a tree, and women peeped out of the log huts. They were probably not charming, but, next to a sea voyage, a desert march is the finest cosmetic ever invented. We looked upon each as if

"Her face was like the Milky Way i' the sky,

A meeting of gently lights without a name.

"At Miller's (Reeds) Station, which we reached at 2 30 P.M., there really was one pretty girl—which, according to the author of the Art of Pluck, induces proclivity to temulency. While the rain was heavy we sat round the hot stove, eating bread and cheese, sausages and anchovies, which Rabelais, not to speak of other honest drinkers, enumerates among provocatives to thirst. When we started at 4 P.M. through the cold rain, along the bad

road up the river bed, to 'liquor up' was manifestly a duty we owed to ourselves. And, finally, when my impatient companions betted a supper that we should reach Carson City before 9 P.M., and sealed it with a 'smile,' I knew that the only way to win was to ply the driver with as many *pocula* as possible.

"Colder waxed the weather and heavier the rain as, diverging from the river, we ascended the little bench upon which China-town (Dayton) lies. The line of ranches and frame houses, a kind of length-without-breadth place, once celebrated the gold-digging days, looked dreary and grim in the evening gloom. At 5 30 P.M. we were still fourteen miles distant from our destination. The benches and the country round about had been turned topsy-turvy in the search for precious metal, and the soil was still burrowed with shaft and tunnel, and crossed at every possible spot by flumes, at which the natives of the Flowery Land still found it worth their while to work. Beyond China-town we quitted the river, and in the cold darkness of night we slowly began to breast the steep ascent of a long divide. Unwilling to risk our necks we walked over the rest of the rough ground, and found our way to 'Dutch Nick's,' a ranch and tavern apparently much frequented by the teamsters and other roughs, who seemed, honest fellows!

"Remounting after a time, we sped forward, and sighted in front a dark line, but partially lit up about the flanks, with a brilliant illumination in the centre, the Kursaal of Mr. Hopkins, the local Crockford. Our entrance to Penrod House, the Fifth Avenue of Carson City was by no means of a triumphal order. But after a good supper and change of raiment, a cigar, 'something warm,' and the certainty of a bed, combined to diffuse over our minds the calm satisfaction of having surmounted our difficulties *tant bien que mal*."

\* \* \* \* \*

Burton gives no description of Carson City. His remarks on Genoa are:

"At Genoa, pronounced Ge- nóa, the country town, built in a valley thirteen miles south of Carson, I met Judge Cradlebaugh, who set me right on grounds where the Mormons had sown some prejudices. Five days of a very dilatory travel placed us on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada . . ."



STATE OF NEVADA  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER  
Carson City

**A PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR**

WHEREAS, 1960 is the centennial year of the founding of the Pony Express; and

WHEREAS, the Pony Express, founded by the overland freighting and staging firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell, performed a great national service; and

WHEREAS, the founders of the Pony Express, in order to bind East and West together, continued to operate the Pony Express until the completion of the transcontinental telegraph; and

WHEREAS, the Pony Express is the highest expression of our American heritage of pioneering courage;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GRANT SAWYER, Governor of the State of Nevada, by the power in me vested, do hereby proclaim

**THIS YEAR 1960**

**AS**

**PONY EXPRESS YEAR**

and I hereby call upon all the communities and the people of Nevada to observe this year with appropriate ceremonies and activities.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Nevada to be affixed at the State Capitol in Carson City this 12th day of May in the year of our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and sixty.

**GRANT SAWYER,**  
Governor.

**JOHN KOONTZ,**  
Secretary of State.

By **JOHN K. WOODBURN,**  
Deputy.



**NEVADA PONY EXPRESS CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE**  
**Edwin Semenza, Earl Guyton, Jock Taylor, Chairman Pete Kelley,**  
**Clara Beatty, William Harrah.**



## PLANS FOR THE PONY EXPRESS RE-RUN

JULY 19, 1960

By PETE KELLY, *Chairman, Nevada Centennial Committee*

Nevada has made elaborate plans to appropriately observe the 100th anniversary of the famed Pony Express, thanks to the diligent work of the six members of the Pony Express Centennial Committee. Donating their time and effort as a public service to the State, they have labored diligently for almost two years following their appointment by former Governor Charles H. Russell.

They have worked closely with the National Pony Express Centennial Committee as well as attending to the details of the project within the borders of the State.

Nevada's Centennial Committee includes Pete Kelly, of Carson City, chairman, former director of the Nevada Department of Economic Development; William "Bill" Harrah, of Reno, owner of Reno and Lake Tahoe casinos; Mrs. Clara S. Beatty, director of the Nevada Historical Society; Earl Guyton, Reno saddle maker, representative of the Nevada Horsemen's Association; Jock Taylor, editor of Nevada's oldest newspaper, the *Reese River Reveille*; and Edwin Semenza, of Reno, director of the Reno Little Theater.

As part of the Centennial year, the Nevada Committee has marked over 400 miles of the Pony trail through Nevada, from Stateline, Lake Tahoe, to the Utah border in White Pine County. The marking was done with eight-foot steel poles driven firmly into the ground. They have been placed every quarter mile along the historic route and every fourth post has a sign the shape of the State of Nevada affixed to it reading—

### PONY EXPRESS TRAIL

The trail marking program was made possible by the State Legislature which in 1959 allocated \$15,000 to the committee for the Centennial expenditures. Members feel that in marking the trail permanently they will, for all time, perpetuate memory of the famed mail-carrying system and provide a riding trail of lasting interest to the many horseback riders in Nevada.

With an authentic 1966-mile re-run of the Pony Express, between Sacramento, California and St. Joseph, Missouri, to be

the highlight of the Centennial year plans, the Nevada Committee has recruited over 100 riders and horses to insure that Nevada's portion will be successful.

The following applications to ride have been accepted :

### GOVERNOR GRANT SAWYER

### LT. GOV. REX BELL

#### **Reno Area**

Ackerman, Glen	Helm, John W.
Anderson, Larry E.	Horgan, Jack
Austin, Tom	Hostetler, C. L.
Bankofier, Dick	Hutton, Ernest C.
Bell, Walter R.	Jensen, Singer
Brown, Paul R.	Johnson, E. R.
Burks, Elmer	Letarti, Cliff
Campbell, David E.	Maitoza, Melvin J.
Canepa, William	Mansfield, Nick
Cantlon, Edwin	McGowan, James B.
Clarkson, Robert H.	Pedrett, Larry
Craig, Robert	Powell, Corliss L.
Davis, John B.	Rhodes, Bryce
DeMattei, Roy L.	Solomon, Ray
Dix, M. L.	Shipley, Mark A.
Fitzgerald, Patrick J.	Swart, Murl F.
Flindt, Herb C.	Thomas, Ralph H.
Gasho, J. B.	Thompson, Bruce R.
Gordon, Glen D.	Thompson, Thomas G.
Guyton, Earl	Walcott, Charles B.
Guyton, Ed	Williamson, Bill

#### **Carson-Dayton-Douglas County Area**

Blair, George	Goni, William J.
Borda, Raymond P.	Imus, Ted
Carter, Harley W.	McGinn, Charles E.
Evenson, Ernie	Newman, Yell
Gold, Ross A.	Winters, JohnD

#### **Yerington-Smith Valley**

Joplin, Albert	Rice, Jack Lester
Lee, Roger	

**Elko-Jiggs North**

Lear, Bill	Sustacha, Joe, Jr.
Lear, Kitt	Walker, Eldon
Rahwer, Monte	

**Hawthorne Area**

Babb, Robert W.	Heinze, Donald R.
Combs, Hayden	Linninger, Donald L.
DeMars, Alfred A., Sr.	Parks, Bruce M.
DeMars, Art A., Sr.	Pearce, Jay
DeMars, Peter E.	Robertson, L. A. (Robbie)
Easley, James	Sauza, Frank
Guy, Major C. P.	Schroder, Gerald C.

**Austin-Eureka Area**

Demele, Benney	Etchegaray, LeRoy
Damele, Charles, Jr.	Griswold, Lee
Damele, Leo J.	Hancock, William B.
Damele, Peter J.	Shangle, Milton
Damele, Ronald	Shangle, Monte

**McGill-Ely-White Pine County**

Adams, Bruce	Mitchell, William
Ahlstrom, Ralph S.	Norton, Ronold O.
Benson, W. J.	O'Donnell, Rulon
Bustos, Tony	Oxborrow, Dan
Cox, William A.	Oxborrow, Grant
Greenwell, D. R. (Dick)	Oxborrow, Nathaniel
Hanson, Demont	Prince, Ross M.
Kerr, Alden C.	Scow, Clinton
Kerr, Duane	Stone, Albert A.
Kleiman, Laurence H.	Swain, Clarence
Larson, Neil J.	

The re-ride starts simultaneously at 9 p. m., July 19, from St. Joseph and Sacramento and will take 10 days. The eastbound Pony rider should pass his westbound counterpart somewhere in Wyoming.

July 20 will be a big day for Nevada. At 9 a. m. on that date, the Pony rider will cross from California into Nevada at State-line, Lake Tahoe, to climax an hour-long celebration in front of



a replica of one of the Pony stations operating 100 years ago in Nevada, being built by Committee Member "Bill" Harrah. Postmaster-General Summerfield has been invited and will head the long list of federal and state dignitaries expected for the program. Other programs that day are slated for Genoa, Nevada's oldest town; Carson City and at strategic spots across the center of the State.

Working closely with the Nevada and other state committees is the U. S. postal service in Washington, D. C., which regards the Centennial observance as its major public service project for 1960. The post-office department will issue a four-cent commemorative stamp in Sacramento on July 19, and a stamped envelope for release the same day in St. Joseph.

During the summer, the post office department will have a mobile exhibit at towns along or near the original Pony Express route. The display will be packed full of historical items, all pertaining to the Pony Express.

The re-ride is expected to attract national attention, and over 1,000 riders and horses will be taking part in the Centennial year's prime function, designed to call attention to the intrepid men of 100 years ago who blazed their names forever in the annals of American history.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY wishes to thank the following for their part in making this issue of the QUARTERLY possible:

HARPER AND BROTHERS, New York, for the permission to reprint the BURTON material; the NORTHEASTERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEVADA for the pictures of Diamond Springs and Ruby Valley Stations, obtained by MRS. EDNA PATTERSON. Also thanks to JUDGE CLEL GEORGETTA, of Reno, for his pictures of "Happy Jack" and Spring Station. We are greatly indebted to WALT MULCAHY for his hours of work spent in locating and authenticating Reed's, Carson Sink and Desert Stations, and for his fine pictures and map of the disputed desert trail of the Pony Express. Research done by MRS. MYRTLE MYLES of the Historical Society staff greatly aided his work. The fine picture of SCHELLBOURNE was the gift of ERWIN FEHR of Ely. The "Re-run" was written by PETE KELLEY, Chairman of the Centennial celebration. MRS. ANDY WELLIVER was responsible for the research, make-up and editing of the issue.

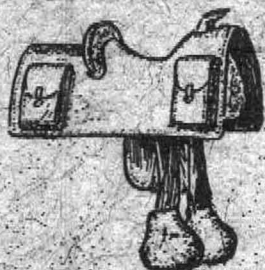
CLARA S. BEATTY, *Director,*  
*Nevada Historical Society.*



# NEVADA PONY EXPRESS TIMETABLE FOR 1960 CENTENNIAL RE-RUN

EASTBOUND				WESTBOUND			
STATION	ARR. TIME	DATE	MILES BETW.	STATION	ARR. TIME	DATE	MILES BETW.
CALIFORNIA LINE	9:00 A.M.	7/20/60	0	UTAH LINE	11:00 A.M.	7/26/60	0
FRIDAY'S	9:05 A.M.	"	2	8 MILE STATION	11:21 A.M.	"	3
GENOA	10:19 A.M.	"	12	ANTELOPE SPRINGS	11:12 P.M.	"	18
CARSON	11:47 A.M.	"	14	SPRING VALLEY	2:40 P.M.	"	14
DAYTON	1:23 P.M.	"	13	SHELL CREEK	3:54 P.M.	"	12
REED'S	2:44 P.M.	"	13	EGAN CANYON	5:08 P.M.	"	12
BUCKLAND'S	3:58 P.M.	"	12	BUTTE STATION	6:38 P.M.	"	15
HOUTEN WELL	5:28 P.M.	"	15	MOUNTAIN SPRING	7:45 P.M.	"	11
SINK STATION	6:58 P.M.	"	15	RUBY STATION	8:45 P.M.	"	10
SAND SPRING	8:28 P.M.	"	15	JACOBS WELL	9:54 P.M.	"	12
WESTGATE	9:58 P.M.	"	15	DIAMOND SPRINGS	11:13 P.M.	"	12
MIDDLEGATE	11:28 P.M.	"	15	SULPHUR SPRINGS	12:27 A.M.	7/27/60	12
GOLD SPRINGS	12:28 A.M.	7/21/60	10	ROBERTS CREEK	1:48 A.M.	"	13
EDWARDS CREEK	1:42 A.M.	"	12	GRUBB'S WELL	3:18 A.M.	"	15
SMITH CREEK	2:56 A.M.	"	12	DRY CREEK	4:48 A.M.	"	15
DRY WELLS	4:24 A.M.	"	14	SIMPSON'S PARK	6:18 A.M.	"	15
JACOBSTOWN	5:38 A.M.	"	12	JACOBSTOWN	7:48 A.M.	"	15
SIMPSON'S PARK	7:08 A.M.	"	15	DRY WELL	9:02 A.M.	"	12
DRY CREEK	8:38 A.M.	"	15	SMITH CREEK	10:30 A.M.	"	14
GRUBB'S WELLS	10:08 A.M.	"	15	EDWARDS CREEK	11:44 A.M.	"	12
ROBERTS CREEK	11:38 A.M.	"	15	GOLD SPRINGS	12:58 P.M.	"	12
SULPHUR SPRING	12:59 P.M.	"	13	MIDDLEGATE	1:58 P.M.	"	10
DIAMOND SPRING	2:13 P.M.	"	12	WESTGATE	3:28 P.M.	"	15
JACOBS WELL	3:27 P.M.	"	12	SAND SPRINGS	4:58 P.M.	"	15
RUBY STATION	4:31 P.M.	"	12	SINK STATION	6:58 P.M.	"	15
MOUNTAIN SPRING	5:31 P.M.	"	10	HOUTEN WELL	7:58 P.M.	"	15
BUTTE STATION	6:38 P.M.	"	11	BUCKLAND'S	9:28 P.M.	"	15
EGAN CANYON	8:08 P.M.	"	15	REED'S	10:42 P.M.	"	12
SHELL CREEK	9:22 P.M.	"	12	DAYTON	12:03 A.M.	7/28/60	13
SPRING VALLEY	10:36 P.M.	"	12	CARSON	1:24 A.M.	"	13
ANTELOPE SPRINGS	12:04 A.M.	7/22/60	14	GENOA	2:52 A.M.	"	14
8 MILE STATION	1:55 A.M.	"	18	FRIDAY'S	4:06 A.M.	"	12
UTAH LINE	2:16 A.M.	"	3	CALIFORNIA LINE	9:00 A.M.	"	2

THIS TIMETABLE PUBLISHED BY THE  
NEVADA PONY EXPRESS CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE



COMPILED BY EARL GUYTON  
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

