

# NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY



THE DIARY OF JOHN McQUIG



VISIONS OF LONG AGO



Summer Issue  
April-June 1963

Volume VI  
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 a 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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### THE DIARY OF JOHN McQUIG

### VISIONS OF LONG AGO

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EDITOR (For This Issue): Mrs. Andy Welliver

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD: Mrs. Clara S. Beatty, Mrs. John Patterson, Dr. Milan J. Webster, Mr. David F. Myrick, Dr. James W. Hulse, Dr. Vincent P. Gianella.

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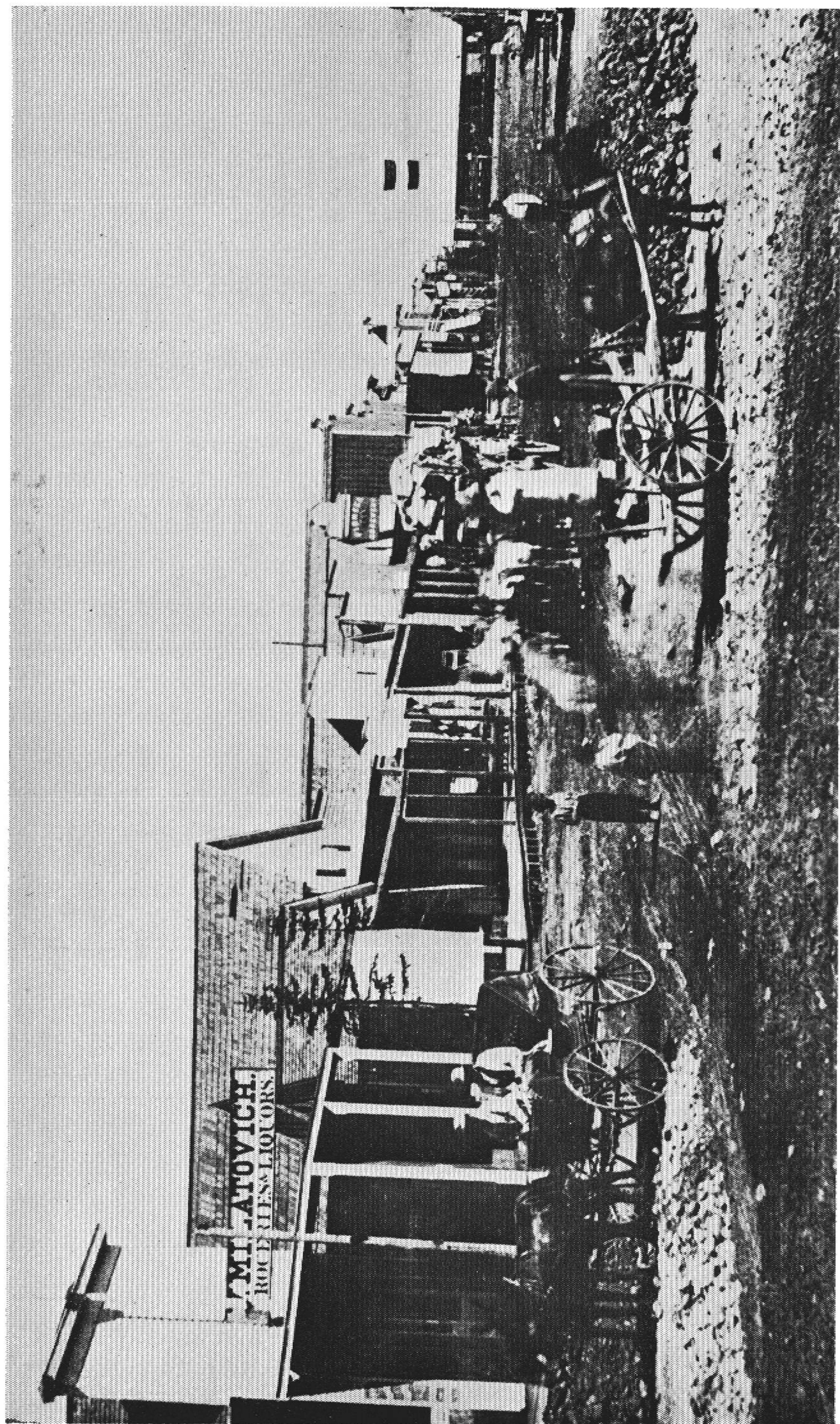


JOHN McQUIG  
DIARY, 1869

**Introduction . . .**

**EDNA PATTERSON**





We arrive in the city of Reno (on Paper) at 1:00 P. M.



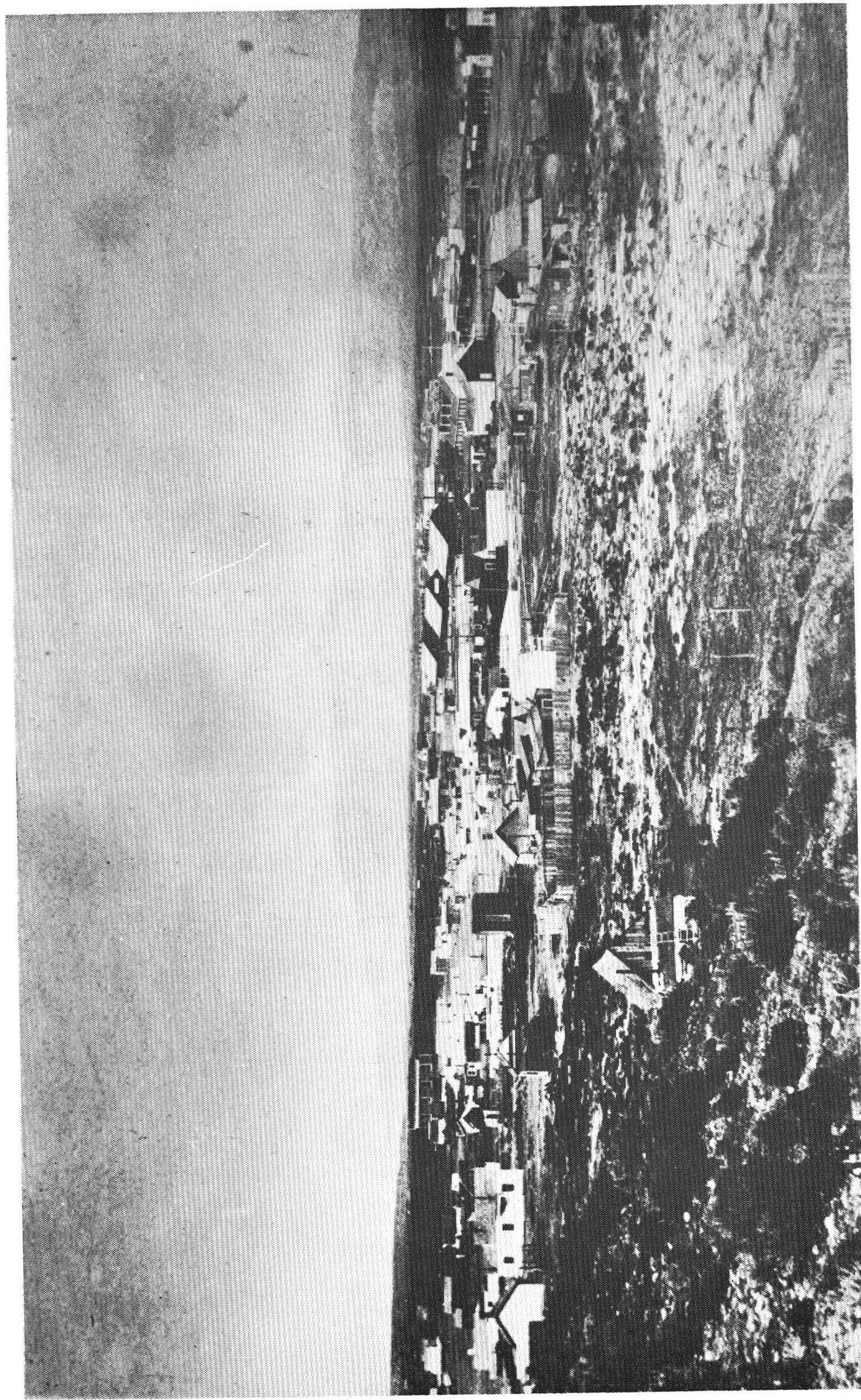
## *John McQuig Diary*

Every once in a while a carefully kept diary of early day Nevada comes to light and sheds its glow on our early years. Such is the case of the John McQuig diary. John McQuig of Murphys, California, made a prospecting excursion into eastern Nevada in 1869 and kept an account of the trip. From the quick-draw town of Elko, to booming Hamilton, he carefully detailed his journey with insight and humor.

Credit is due Rose McQuig Casey, niece of John McQuig, who transcribed the pencil-written, worn and rubbed account of her uncle's Nevada expedition. The diary came into my possession from Dorothy Dalton, former Elko County Librarian and present Research Librarian for the Clark County Library. William Curren Casey, a grand-nephew of John McQuig, is presently living at Babbitt, Nevada, where he is Assistant Housing Director for the U. S. Naval Ammunition Depot. Mr. Casey has kindly given his consent that the diary be published. It is here printed for your enjoyment.

EDNA B. PATTERSON (Mrs. John M. Patterson)  
Lamoille, Nevada, 1963.





. . . safe arrival at Elko, this town is a fine place of about 60 canvas tents.

## JOHN McQUIG

February 24, 1869

Left Virginia City at 10:00 a. m. The road good—my fellow passengers joyous and talkative—especially a Hoosier. He entertained us all very much in his quaint manner of telling his adventures since he arrived on the Pacific Slope.

We arrive in the city Reno (on paper) at 1:00 p. m. Everyone apparently having enjoyed themselves. Even in this place the velocipede is on trial. I have seen no surreys, but I do believe they need a velocipede or some other pede to bring life into the town.

Leave at 4:00 p. m., arrive in Wadsworth. Twenty minutes stop for supper, this is done with a rush, at a dollar a head. This suffices to content the innerman until we reach Humboldt at 1:00 a. m. Twenty minutes more to feed at the same price. All aboard, away we go to Argenta. Fifteen minutes for breakfast—time 9:00 a. m. 2:00 p. m. safe arrival at Elko, this town is a fine place of about 60 canvas tents. All sorts of games and vices in progress. There were only two men killed this afternoon.

Seats on stages are engaged one week ahead—I concluded to go by foot to Walkers. Made 16 miles the first day. Next day made 30 miles in traveling this way. A man has to put up with such as he may get.

Jacob's Wells, 65 miles from Elko. At this point the Overland stages cross. There is also a telegraph office. Charges \$1.00 per meal and sleep where you can.

March 3, 1869

Arrive at Newark, 100 miles from Elko. The accomodations are good in this place, considering the times. This place boasts of a quartz mill of 20 stamps, with sufficient water for milling purposes. There is also a very good lode.

March 4, 1869

We arrive at Hamilton. This is what I call a live town, buildings are going up with all possible haste, everyone is excited about mines. There is much excitement this evening in consequence of there being another rich strike. Everyday brings something new.



March 15, 1869

Treasure City. Snow, windy and disagreeable. Disagreeable to me in many ways. In the first place, it is a cold, snowy, windy day. 2nd, our habitation is on the mountainside exposed to the blast. Said dwelling is composed of a few yards of sheeting thrown across a pole, with room scarcely enough to spread our blankets. 3rd, I am away from the pleasant company of friends with whom I used to spend our National Holy Day (March 17) and still worse I am short of funds. What spirit would not be dejected? Yet, thank God, my health is good and with the blessing of Divine Providence I will spend my next St. Patrick's day along with those I hold dear. Who knows what tomorrow may bring?

Treasure City is very quiet today, for which I am very glad—so many of my countrymen being here.

March 18, 1869

Still storming, the wind blowing and the snow falling thick and fast. All prospecting at a stand still. We try to pass the time with tale and joke.

March 19, 1869

The sun rose bright this morning but the horizon betokens more snow.

March 20, 1869

Noon—still snowing, later—the wind veered to the North—cold—clear and windy. The town looks lively—the Minstrel Band playing “The Flying Trapeze.”

March 21, 1869

Morning dawned with snow, changing to a thick fog. We have concluded to try and finish our cabin, living in this form of tent and cooking out of doors in a snowdrift is far from pleasant.

4:00 p. m. It has now commenced to snow in earnest, so much that we are obliged to seek shelter.

March 22, 1869

Snowing still, this morning. I think last night was as rough a night as ever I experienced, but then this is White Pine. The day continues snowing at intervals. There is now about 30 inches of snow on the level.

March 23, 1869

This morning has come in bright. We have resumed operations on our cabin. The chance of prospecting looks slim, too much snow.

March 24, 1869

Bright and beautiful—my partners have gone to work—while I do the culinary. I feel rheumatic pains in my shoulders and back—it pained me very much during the night. All this comes from sleeping on cold, damp ground, while traveling from Elko to this place, and even now, our present apartment is not much better, but I will put up with all this for the present, hoping that time will remunerate.

Last night a man died of pneumonia, this appears to be the prevailing disease. Once taken with it there appears to be no cure—the air is so light.

I have just returned from town, which is dull. I saw some familiar faces among the new arrivals. Work is very slack, and indeed, many men in want.

March 25, 1869

This being a Holy Day in the Catholic Church—but not much of a Holy Day in this place—it is, nevertheless a very fine day. The snow on the south side of the hill is melting fast. I have been out this morning and examined two ledges, and intend to put notices on them. I feel better this morning—the pain in my back and shoulders is not quite so bad.

March 26, 1869

Last night was very windy. I thought, every minute, that our tent would be carried away. It looks very much like another storm. One of my partners left for Hamilton at 4:00 a. m. yesterday, but has not returned. I hope nothing has happened to him. My other partner is complaining of rheumatism and has not gone to work. Men are crowding into this place—fast.

2:00 p. m. John has arrived alright. I went to town this afternoon and met a number of acquaintances from Virginia.

March 27, 1869

Fine and pleasant.

March 28, 1869

The wind has commenced to howl, and snow is threatening.



March 29, 1869

Last night it began to snow—and the roof was blown off our habitation.

March 30, 1869

Still it storms. Nearly all work is suspended.

March 31, 1869

The same.

April 1, 1869

Today is bright and cold. Some work commenced. I feel almost well and I am in hopes of going to work soon.

April 2, 1869

Fine and pleasant. The town presents a lively appearance. The streets are crowded with the eager, making inquiries about the mines, others a little down in the mouth, men looking for employment and all going to make a fortune in a hurry.

Quite an excitement created in town this afternoon, a shooting scrape took place between Jim Cartwright and Al Baker. Baker was shot in the breast, mouth and a cut on the back of the head. Cartwright had his fingers shot off one hand. To add to the "fun," a rope was stretched across the street on which, a cripple was to walk—and did walk, performing other tricks.

April 11, 1869

Everything in and around here about the same as last reported—nothing new or alarming.

April 12, 1869

Today is something like a spring day. I am idle today because my boss concluded not to work on the shaft until the parties contracted with, paid up.

April 13, 1869

Parties having paid up, went to work. No news of any kind.

April 14, 1869

No news today by the telegraph—the wires are down.

April 15, 1869

Cold and very windy.

April 16, 1869

The same.

April 17, 1869

Windy and hail showers.

April 18, 1869

High winds with snow.

April 19, 1869

Cold in the morning, fine and pleasant later.

April 20, 1869

Work on the contract shaft has ceased. Consequently we have commenced one of our own.

April 21, 1869

Still snowing.

April 22, 1869

This as a beautiful day, we have concluded to roof our cabin once more. The gale preceding the storm having demolished our cabin completely. My friend and myself made the trip after poles and such climbing, I have never done before. Having arrived home and partaken of refreshments we set about straightening things up. The cabin finished, we consider other improvements and will put up bunks.

April 23, 1869

Another day is spent going after poles.

April 24, 1869

Today the same as yesterday, this will finish our lumber packing. San Francisco is well represented by her moneyed men, A. H. \_\_\_\_\_, D. O Mills, Charles McL\_\_\_\_\_, and others are in town to see the mines for themselves. (Ed.: These names were almost erased and could not be deciphered.)

April 25, 1869

Nothing unusual today. Spent most of the day in getting water and fixing up the cabin.

April 26, 1869

My rest was disturbed last night by a pair of Irish fools coming home drunk and fighting among themselves, making the night hideous with their yells.

White Pine has made itself visible once more in the shape of another snow storm. The forenoon was passed in washing our



duds. The afternoon proving fine, we worked on our location adjoining the "Aurora."

My big partner went to town to hunt up work. Came back with the intelligence that we should have more contracts, then we could all work.

April 27, 1869

Went to work on the "Never Sweat." Did a big days work, the spur looks encouraging.

April 28, 1869

Working on the same. The arrest and trial of the Irish fighting party, took place today. One of the party entered a case of assault and battery against the other. The case was dismissed.

April 29, 1869

Nothing of importance has taken place today.

April 30, 1869

Today is bright and sunny. We are at work on our shaft.

May 1, 1869

I have not seen any May parties, although this is a fine day, but then this is not a floral country.

May 2, 1869

Still fine, times are considered dull. Today being Sunday, we apply ourselves to packing snow to make water for the coming week. The wind increased so much in velocity that our cabin came near going over.

May 3, 1869

Nothing new. We have our windlass on the shaft, no ore in sight yet.

May 4, 1869

There is a report this morning that a man has been killed near Hamilton by robbers. The only valuables on his person—a loaf of bread and \$1.50 in silver. I went up town this evening and the excitement is intense. It appears that it has been a double murder, it is supposed that two men were concerned in the deed, and after they killed the man, one of the murderers killed the other.

May 5, 1869

The news this morning is that the supposed murderer has been arrested in Hamilton and will be hung this afternoon at 2:00 p. m.

May 6, 1869

No truth in yesterday's report concerning the murder. One of my locations has been jumped this morning by one of my neighbors. A very neighborly trick, in truth.

May 7, 1869

Today is showery and cold.

May 8, 1869

This morning the sun rose bright and beautiful. I met Pete Dunn coming home from his work, he told me that his partner fell down a shaft a distance of 30 ft. The extent of his injuries are not known yet. No contracts yet. Kerrins and myself still working on our claim "Never Sweat."

Today there is a party surveying Treasure Hill, either for scientific purposes or for the mining companies, "Aurora and Autumn." These companies are now at law with each other. The names of each location has been taken by the surveying parties. Although not directly interested in the lawsuit now pending, I hope the Autumn will come out ahead. It will be a victory for poor men. As it stands now, it is Capital against a poor man's industry.

May 9, 1869

The weather is quite warm.

May 10, 1869

Today we took a contract to sink the Barker & Co. shaft, 15 feet for the sum of \$40 and a building lot 25 x 100 adjoining the Catholic Church.

May 11, 1869

Nothing doing today.

May 12, 1869

Still working on the "Never Sweat."

May 13, 1869

Commenced work on contract for Barker and Company.



May 14, 1869

Today it snows and rains at intervals. Our work on the "Never Sweat" is at a standstill because one of the partners is not at home to help sink the hole. Last night a drunken man fell into a shaft, 35 ft.

May 15, 1869

Wind blowing very hard. Times in this town are very dull for laboring men. I never saw so many idle men, wanting to work.

May 16, 1869

This morning I went to Shermantown to see the firm of Williamson and Baldwin in regard to B. F. Clark. At 1:00 p. m. left Shermantown and went to Hamilton. I must say that it is a lively burg, and has grown so much since I was there that I hardly knew it. There I saw Jo Coburn, the P. F. as drunk as a lord. After seeing the sights in and around Hamilton, I pushed up the Hill to Treasure and arrived home at Hotel de Snowball at 5:30 o'clock, tired and hungry.

May 17, 1869

Today a party is outfitting to go on a prospecting expedition, one of our household goes with them. The distance from here is 180 miles and the name of the place is kept secret.

May 18, 1869

Today the wind blows a perfect gale. The party that came from Tempiute had their ore assayed. No. 1, 180 silver 50 gold, No. 2, 150 silver 50 gold, No. 3, 120 silver 20 gold, No. 4, 90 silver 12½ gold. Very good, I think.

May 19, 1869

This is one of the most disagreeable days that I have ever seen, since my arrival. Our friend, Mr. John Slattery has taken his departure today, for the land of promise Tempiute. My good wishes for his prosperity go with him. He is to act for one of our party as well as for himself.

May 20, 1869

Today we are housed with a good fire burning to keep us from feeling the effects of the snow storm that is pelting against our house. 4:00 p. m. the clouds cleared up this moment.

May 21, 1869

This morning has dawned with a snow storm. The wind ESE.

May 22, 1869

I have received a letter from Murphys containing all the news of that burg.

May 23, 1869

It has stormed for the past three days, snow and sleet, the wind veering from SE to SW. This is tedious cooped up in a shanty waiting for fine weather. There is an advantage in this, if advantage it may be called, and that is; we can catch enough water without buying. We can afford to have a good wash.

May 24, 1869

It still snows this morning but has the appearance of clearing up.

May 25, 1869

Last night and today is, I think, the thickest snow storm that I ever experienced.

May 26, 1869

Clear this morning, went to work on the Barker Ledge.

May 27, 1869

Pat Kerrins and Horan are at work on the "Never Sweat."

May 28, 1869

More snow last night and still snowing this morning. I wrote a letter to Wm. Breman, Gold Hill.

May 29, 1869

Fine today, Kerrins and Horan are working on the "Never Sweat." McTigue and myself are working on the Barker & Co. mine.

May 30, 1869

Sunday is here again. This is a day devoted to letter writing, cooking, airing the blankets, etc.

May 31, 1869

I went up town today and witnessed a funeral procession. The deceased was a Cornish miner, who was blown up in one Nevada Mine while recharging a hole. I never thought there was half as many Cornishmen in the State of Nevada as were in the Procession. They saved Church services by singing the service along the street in the line of march. All hands worked today, everything is lovely.

June 1, 1869

A beautiful morning is this! Nothing stirring about town of any consequence. Times are very dull as far as work or sales. The people are thinning out, but still there are enough, and more than enough left.

June 2, 1869

Same as yesterday. Weather delightful.

June 3, 1869

We have finished our contract on the Barker and Co. ledge. McTigue and I went to work on the "Never Sweat," our own location, tonight, so that we are running it night and day.

June 4, 1869

Today there is some sport for the boys. In town it appears there is a "Sport" by the name of Boxing Barney who has been living with a Mrs. Steele. Last night a misunderstanding arose between the pair, he accusing her of not being true to him, etc. etc., all this and some more—she instantly resented the assertion by firing at him, the ball striking him on the forehead, glanced off—doing no serious injury. The trial is in progress before Judge Magher this afternoon.

June 5, 1869

The above case has been tried and a most ridiculous, laughable case it was, Barney was fined \$20—and costs.

June 6, 1869

Sunday again. Light showers of rain. In the afternoon the wind blew a gale, raising the dust so as to impede pedestrians from perambulating the streets, but not so with two of the fast women of Treasure who, while out airing themselves on horseback and driving their nags at a 2.40 pace, got tilted over in the street, receiving a slight shock on the "Grecian bend." The boys were all on hand to assist the fallen Nervines (I mean Angels) into a saloon near at hand. It being a "free show" of course every one wanted a "free sight," and in a short time the place was crowded, when, presto, down goes the floor, with a crash, into the cellar, all piled on top of one another, luckily no serious injury, except to the saloon. I understand the "Angels" are getting along fine, at least they should if the sympathy of their admirers mean anything.





. . . this being election day for Municipal officers. . . . All saloons are closed today, a law passed by the last legislature forbidding the sale of spiritous liquor.

June 7, 1869

Today is fine, the town all life and bustle, this being election day for Municipal officers in the City of Treasure, Hamilton and Shermantown. All saloons are closed today, a law passed by the last legislature forbidding the sale of spiritous liquors on that day, everything is quiet, so far. I feel no interest in the matter, the candidates being of the class known as "roughs."

June 8, 1869

This morning being fine, I took a ramble across the hills between here and Shermantown and I must say there is a vast quantity of ore in sight at the place I visited. Two locations that I made in March but unfortunately didn't record in time and they were "jumped." Good ore has been found in both of them. So much for luck.

In passing by the California mine, I counted 13 tents and huts and 3 saloons. So people are well provided with drink in Sherman-town. I met Griffith, he told me the news from Tempiute which is about the same as others have brought in. I arrived back at the cabin at noon. The vote of the city having been counted the Democrats have carried everything by a large majority.

June 9, 1869

A man named Maloney died in town this afternoon. Too much whiskey supposed to be the cause.

June 10, 1869

Some rain this morning but soon cleared up. Went uptown this afternoon, heard that Wells Fargo & Co. Stage was robbed last night in the Canyons below Hamilton by three men. They took \$300 belonging to the Express Co. but nothing from the passengers.

June 11, 1869

No clue to the robbers. Thunder and lightning this afternoon, some rain. Some excitement this afternoon, news that gold diggings being struck 50 miles north of Elko.

June 12, 1869

No news today. We have quit work on the "Never Sweat"—cause? Short of funds.

June 13, 1869

Sunday, warm and pleasant. Mules and horses command a good price on account of the stampede to the new El Dorado, north of Elko. No definite accounts from there yet.



At 2:00 I saw a crowd rushing along the O'Neil grade, not knowing what was up, I ran too. Coming up to the procession I learned that a fight was to come off between two men, named Dougherty and Shields. They stripped to the waist and went at it. Two rounds were fought when the cry of "police" was raised. The contestants separated and Dougherty ran. Shields stayed on the ground. The policeman drew his pistol and the fugitive halted. The fight was to settle an old dispute that took place in Ireland, 15 years ago, both are in the lockup.

June 14, 1869

Cloudy but warm today. The fighting party is to have a trial. We started work on the "Never Sweat." For want of funds we are on the lookout for work. I saw John Devons from Murphys in town today. He starts tomorrow for the new Goldfields beyond Elko.

June 15, 1869

Another day passed in idleness all hands seeking employment. More thunder and lightning—some rain and high winds. I met Mr. Michaelson from Virginia City this afternoon. He is here on business in connection with cadetship to Annapolis. Hon. T. Fitch being the object of his visit. (This Mr. M. was the father of the late Albert Michaelson and of Charles Michaelson. He lived at one time in Murphys and had a store there.)<sup>1</sup>

June 16, 1869

The appointment has been made. A boy named \* \* \* was the lucky hombre. We are still idle and no show of work. There are more "dead broke" men in and around Treasure City than I ever saw before.

June 17, 1869

Kerrins and Horan went to work on the "Never Sweat" today.

June 18, 1869

Fine in the morning, changing to wind, thunder and lightning with showers in the afternoon. Horan failed to make an appearance today. I am working on the claim with Kerrins.

June 19, 1869

Horan made his appearance this afternoon. He had been sick.

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<sup>1</sup>Michaelson, Albert, born in Virginia City, was awarded first prize from the French Academy of Sciences for discovery of a method for measuring the velocity of light. He also received an Annapolis appointment.

Michaelson, Charles, born in Virginia City, became managing editor of one of Hearst's newspapers in New York City.

June 20, 1869

No work yet.

June 21, 1869

Quite warm today, thunder and lightning with showers in the afternoon. McTigue went to work in the Post Hole mine tonight.

June 22, 1869

This morning is cloudy and looks like rain. My partner Mc came home during the night, having quit at the Post Hole mine. He and Horan will work on our own mine tonight.

June 23, 1869

We have put in a bid for a contract on the Hidden Treasure at \$22.50 per foot 6 x 8, but it was awarded at \$13.50. The weather is rough this afternoon. The heaviest thunder and the sharpest lightning I ever heard or saw. Two men were struck by lightning, one was stunned and the other killed.

June 24, 1869

More thunder and lightning. Our rock has changed considerably.

June 25, 1869

Cloudy this morning, the wind NW and chilly. Yesterday the cornerstone of the Masonic Hall was laid in Shermantown with the usual ceremonies. More thunder and lightning in the afternoon with showers of rain.

June 26, 1869

Clear and warm. I received a letter from my father with the intelligence that Mr. M. is dead. I am sorry but I hope he is better off. He was a fine gentleman and a staunch friend. No more change in our rock. We are getting discouraged.

3:00 p. m. we quit work on account of the blasting in the Aurora, not deeming it safe to work in the shaft.

June 27, 1869

Warm today. The City of Treasure is unusually quiet, not as many drunks as on previous Sundays, still there are some. Father Welsh from Amador County, California, celebrated Mass here today, he begins to look a little old, but is fleshy.

June 28, 1869

I was uptown today and worked for Judge Magher, helping raise his dwelling house. My partners are knocking about town on the lookout for work. My friend Slattery and party are back from Tempiute. I have not seen any of them.

June 29, 1869

Another day spent in looking at the wonders of Treasure Hill. As for me this will never pay, something must be done, and that ere long.

June 30, 1869

Today as yesterday. Rain, thunder and lightning. McTigue sold one of the windlass and rope for \$30.

July 1, 1869

Mr. P. Kerrins, W. P. Griffith and myself, cross to the other side of White Pine Mountain to look at the new discovery. We found quite an excitement prevailing. The mine worked up, looks well. We intend to go back tomorrow and stay a few days.

July 2, 1869

I intended going back to "Mt. Ophir" today, got up early for the purpose but my partners were not inclined to travel. Got breakfast and went up town and had a talk with Dr. Goodfellow, in regard to buying our claim. He promised to look at the ground and if satisfactory he might trade.

A policeman made himself conspicuous by trying to knock a citizen down in a bar room, but the policeman got the worst of it in two ways, he was well pounded and in trying to get satisfaction in the court, was reprimanded and fined \$40. To everyones pleasure.

Times are indeed dull, there has been over 100 men discharged yesterday and today and I understand there is still more reduction of hands in the principal mines. I sent my package by Wells Fargo & Co. today.

July 3, 1869

I went uptown this morning and met Mr. Hardy—he wants me to sink a shaft 20 ft. I am to look at the rock and see what it can be done for. John McTigue and Kerrins went to work last night in the West Point Mine. I looked at the shaft and offered to sink at 14 a foot. He is to let me know tomorrow morning.



July 4, 1869

There is quite a stir in town. The Treasurites celebrate today—the Hamiltonians tomorrow. As expected there are quite a number of fights and more drunk men, I never saw. I was induced to turn out with the “Hook and Ladder” Company. The boys gave a good entertainment and everything passed off fine.

July 5, 1869

Today is fine. The Hamiltonians celebrate today. The White Pine No. 1 Hook and Ladder Company are to be the guests of the Hamiltons. I am to go with the boys. The usual routine of business is gone through with before starting. At last, away we go, and are received half way down the hill, entering the town the Band heads the procession, the principal streets are paraded, and finally we reach the speakers stand. The machine is left on the grounds when the order comes by the right flank, foreward march, and we fetch up at the basement of the Philadelphia Brewery, where a splendid collation awaited us. Speeches, toasts, Hurrahs are gone through with and we hear the Oration delivered by Hon. Tom Fitch.

We met again at 2:00 when the two companies are again put in marching order and after parading the streets, all hands drinking in a dozen places, we finally wind up in Treasure Hill having had as good a time as any set of mortals could wish.

July 6, 1869

Today a man fell down a 30 ft. shaft, receiving wounds supposed to be fatal. I have not had an answer in regard to sinking the Craig ledge and so I am idle.

July 7, 1869

I went to Hamilton today. There was a homicide about 5 miles below Hamilton, all about some property. Today another man killed in a shaft. He had fired three holes, one of them missed—after awhile he started down to set the other off and within 12 ft of the top he fell out of the tub and mashed his skull. Killed him instantly. Foul air is supposed to have been the cause of his falling out of the tub.

July 8, 1869

Last night I worked in Kerrins place in the West Point Mine. It blew so hard today that it is almost impossible to walk the streets, the dust flying so. Many tents being unroofed.

July 9, 1869

I commence to get a little uneasy today in regard to the dullness of the times and seeing no chance for a sale, I have determined to leave White Pine for the present, leaving my other two partners behind. If it were not for one of them, I would be in possession of some hundreds today by having the claim sold and the chances are now that I will never pocket one cent. Receiving some money through another channel, I determined to leave and went to Hamilton and bought a mule, saddle and bridle for \$90—went up on the hill and told my partners and I rather got their \* \* \* to know where I got the “Nappi Ass.”

July 10, 1869

This morning being fine I got up early and hurried to get started on my journey. Went up to the stable and paid \$3 for boarding my mule overnight, a high price even in White Pine but it is a high place. Got my blankets tied up and started out in company with my partners, Kerrins and McTigue, as far as Hamilton, here I had to make a little outfit such as pistol, canteen, picket rope, etc. Shook hands all around and with many a “God’s Speed” started on the road to Austin, a distance of 130 miles. The road from Hamilton to the Pinto district is through a barren, sandy, alkali plain intersected by a few hills of the same sort of soil. At Pancake there is a man who collects toll from horsemen, for the privilege of traveling past his log shanty.

He says he built the road, and I suppose he has a right to the money. Well, Pinto arrived at, distance 30 miles from Treasure City. A few men are prospecting at this place with some success. A fine stream of water flows through this place, the road follows this stream up the mountain a distance of 4 miles. I cross the summit and find at about the same elevation on this side of the mountain, water bursting from the hillside in about 20 places. There is a sort of station here and I had intended to stop but there are no accommodations, so I pushed on 3 miles farther, where I arrived at Eureka Station or District. Distance traveled 40 miles. I found some excitement about a rich strike but understood that the ore is mixed with a base metal. They have some sort of smelting works in operation, the place is well supplied with water, the accommodations for travelers is good, but charges about the same as White Pine.

July 11, 1869

I arose from my couch with the heavens for a canopy, rolled up my blankets and after waiting for sometime I got my breakfast. Mounted my mule and was on my way. About half a mile from the station, I came to a patch of potatoes owned by a German. They were about 7 inches high overground, and looked fine. This is the only piece of land fit to cultivate that I have seen in this part of Nevada. After leaving this behind, I hurried to the edge of the desert, here I came to two roads, and seeing a man, I shouted, "Which is the road to Austin?" I shouted again and again, he seeing me motioning to him, came up and handed me a paper and pencil. The man was deaf and dumb, a perfect gentleman and scholar and such penmanship, I never saw excelled. Thanking him for his information, I started across one desert, 15 miles wide, the length, I knew not. Emerging from the desert, I pass through a gap, with rocks rising very high on either side. For a distance of four miles, The feed is good, the plain opens wide here with a salt lake in the center. No fowl nor fish in the water. I now overtake a traveler on horseback, a German, well armed and bound for Austin. At 6:00, we found water and grass at the Station 50 miles from Austin. At this place, I hear of other excitement 40 miles north of here, so they go.

July 12, 1869

Left station at 6:00 a. m., traveled through sagebrush and sandy plain and at last reached the 20 mile station at noon. There, there are two roads leading to Austin—one across the mountains, the other is the new stage road. Being on horseback, I took the cutoff, passing by an old fort. Here we find water and grass and stop for dinner, but lo! mine is gone having fallen from it's fastenings, but my Dutch traveler, like a good fellow, shared his with me. At sundown we came to a good place to picket our horses for the night and within a few miles of Austin, we camped for the night. I went to a house close by in quest of bread, got 3 biscuits and a pie, we made a fine meal.

July 13, 1869

Reached Austin at 8:30 a. m. The town is very dull, some very fine buildings going to ruin, the silver excitement has taken a great many people away. At present it appears easy for a man to get work, but how steady I do not know. I look around the place. Wrote a letter to Kerrins and McTigue letting them know



of my travels so far. After dinner I started out for Carson, alone, about 5 miles out of town I came to cross roads, as ill luck would have it, I took the wrong one and traveled for about 2 miles when I altered my opinion and turned back. Night coming on and seeing an old ruins on top the hill and concluded there might be water near it, there was water in plenty and hay for my mule. Here, also, were two men stopping for the night. Inquired the name of the place and about the road but they did not know. After awhile I found out they were old Murphyites, Mr. Spencer and partner, bound for Virginia.

July 14, 1869

Started on again and after traveling 8 miles, we met a teamster who told us we were on the right road. We intended to feed our stock at noon but when we got there, found that some scoundrel had set fire to the hay last night. We then pushed on 18 miles farther to Cold Creek. We pitched our tent for the night but the feed is scarce, but we'll have to put up with it.

July 15, 1869

We went out this morning to catch our horses and found mine tied up so they had nothing to eat all night, however, we concluded to make the best of it and started accordingly, traveled 12 miles further and could find no feed. In this 15 miles a desert is crossed, 10 miles farther and we come to the edge of another desert, reaching the station at 9:00 having traveled 25 miles this afternoon. Here we procure hay for our animals while we spread our blankets on the sand.

July 16, 1869

Got breakfast and started across the desert a distance of 16 miles. In the center of this is a lake so salt that the salt is gathered in plenty along the shore. Here some men are doing a good business putting it in sacks and selling it to the Quartz Mills, in White Pine, Austin and Virginia City. After passing the desert we come to Slew(?) Bridge, here we pay toll. 8 miles farther we camp for the night, a fine chance in a deserted house with a good well of water and feed for our horses.

July 17, 1869

On the road again we come to the Carson River and the far famed Rag Town famous for being a stopping place for the emigrants crossing the plains and being one of the stations of

the Overland Stage Company, now defunct. 11½ miles farther we stop for dinner under the shade of a large alder and at the edge of the river. The temptation for a bath was so great that I peeled off and jumped in the cool and refreshing water. I never saw so many small fish, and the Indians catch some very fine ones. From this point the road diverged to the right, leaving the river in the form of a tangent. After ascending the hill for some distance we commence to descend again to a desert 6 miles wide. We camp at a Station 8 miles from Virginia. We make Virginia at sundown. While passing along the street I saw a young lady dressed in the height of fashion, descending a long flight of steps to the street. She lost her balance and tumbled over and over to the bottom, I supposed her dead or badly hurt. Stopped to go to her rescue but she jumped to her feet in an instant and commenced a tirade of abuse at some person at the head of the stairs, where really there was no one. Then some of the bystanders snickered and looked at each other through their fingers, while I put out as quick as possible.

July 18, 1869

Concluded to rest today, have my mule shod and see my old friends. I found many of them idle and times very dull.

July 19, 1869

Getting ready to leave Virginia I made arrangements to send my trunk by Wells Fargo & Co. to Murphy. I get as far as Carson today, had tea with Mr. McNeil and family and spent a very pleasant evening in social chat about old times in and around Murphy. Carson is a nice town nestled down among the hills and is the Capitol of Nevada, although very close to the California line. The road from Carson to Genoa is dotted here and there with cottages attached to small farms, many of them owned by Mormons. As far as politeness I can say that I have met very many people imbued much more with that virtue.

Genoa—In a small valley apparently supported by the farmers in the valley and the little travel across the mountains by stage on the Big Tree and Placerville Route, at Genoa I stopped for dinner. About 1½ miles from Genoa is the Mineral Spring Baths conducted by Dr. Cureate (?). The farmers along the valley appear to be in comfortable circumstances. 14 miles farther

and I stop for the night at Fredeniksburg. I am now in California, the state line being only a short distance from where I stopped and is marked by a large post in the ground, close to the road.

July 20, 1869

The accomodations not being exactly to my liking I was very desirous of getting away as soon as possible but it was no go. I had to have breakfast. This being dispatched in short order, I finally got off at 7:00. 5 miles farther and I come to Woodford's Station, here the road crosses the river. The Station is a very beautiful place, the tops of the Sierra Nevadas towering above it and the Carson River dashing at its feet. It is indeed a romantic spot.

The road to Markleville is in very good condition, some patches of land are fenced and cultivated. Potatoes and barley are looking well. I noticed a sawmill within one mile of Markleville. It was idle with piles of lumber around. It apparently waiting a market. I stopped within a short distance of town to let my mule rest and fill himself, the grass being good. Having rested one hour, I saddle again and am soon in Markleville. This is a place of considerable size, some fine buildings but very few people living in it. However, I get a good dinner. 5 miles more on a good toll road and I come to the town of Monitor. Here there is considerable mining being done. Silver Mountain is reached at length and what a fine town! Nearly deserted. I intend staying here tonight. Took breakfast and supper at Fisk's Hotel and boarded my mule at the City stables. Two separate guests at two separate houses and the only ones! I saw some very fine rock taken from the mines at this place.

July 21, 1869

Get at far as Blood's, Bear Valley, stayed all night.

July 22, 1869

Arrived at Pennsylvania Gulch, where I found the boys well.

July 23, 1869

Went to town today to see how things looked, found the town as usual, the same familiar faces all glad to see me.



# VISIONS OF LONG AGO . . .

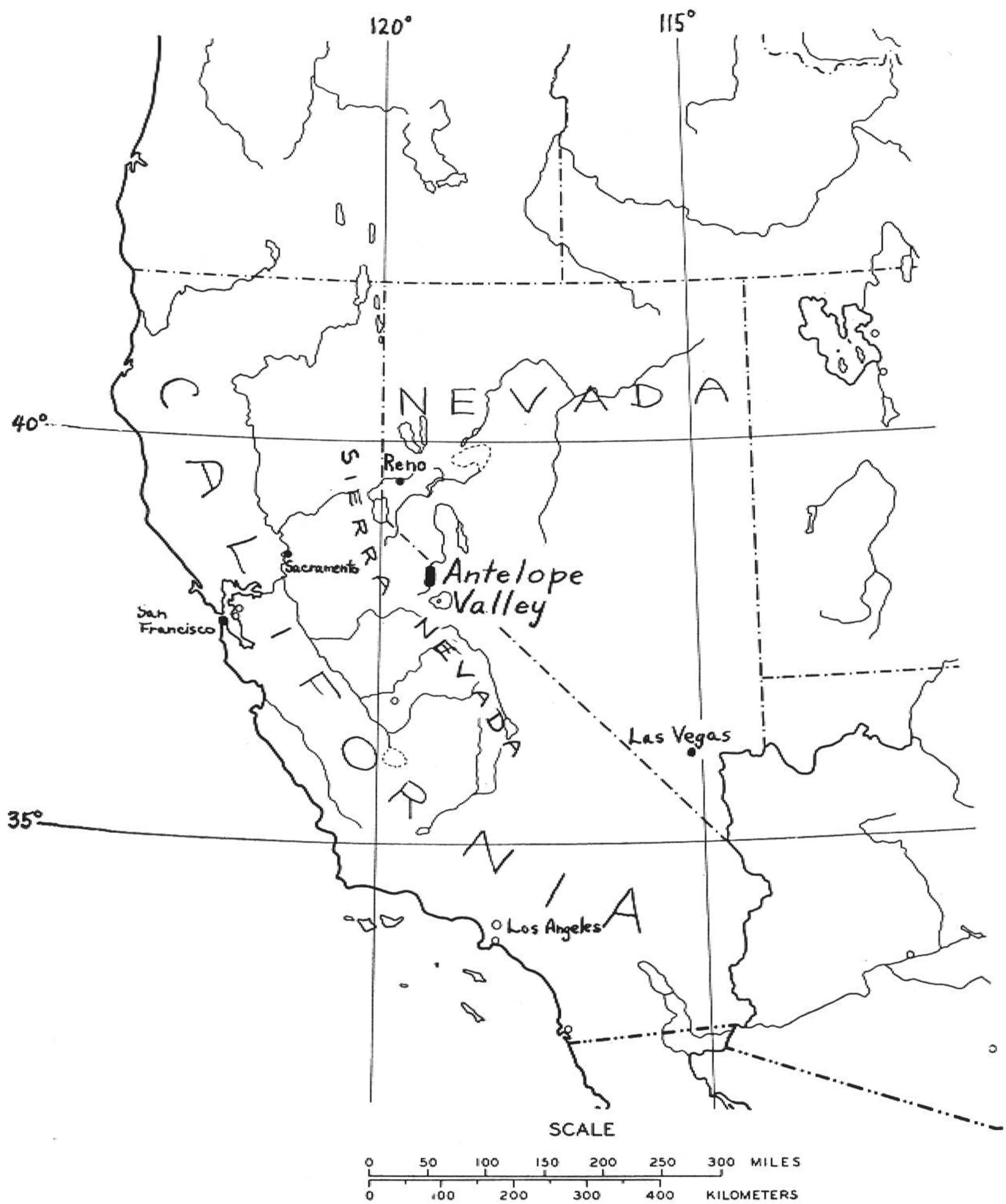
## A RECOLLECTION

VICTOR HUGO LARSON

### Introduction and Notes

LOLA A. CHICHESTER of Antelope Valley, California, is a graduate of the University of Nevada and presently a teacher in Coleville Elementary School.

EARL W. KERSTEN, JR. received his B.A. from Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska. He is Associate Professor of Geography, University of Nevada.



CONIC PROJECTION

Location of Antelope Valley in California

## INTRODUCTION

In the late 1920's, Victor Hugo Larson, a native of Antelope Valley in eastern California and western Nevada wrote the poem which follows, after visiting his birthplace and boyhood home for the first time in many years. The work later passed into the hands of Larson's cousin, Mabel Owens Perry, and after her death, to her husband, Thomas Perry of Coleville, California, who loaned it for purposes of publication.

Visions of Long Ago is both a recollection and a lament. Larson recalls the great old days in the 1860's and 1870's when pioneers opened up the sagebrush-covered valley on the east side of the Sierra, irrigating their lands with water from the West Walker River. But he is apparently also reminded, with a deep sense of loss, of how those promising early days came to an end about 1880. One of the pioneers, Thomas B. Rickey, began to buy out the other ranchers, and, after a time, he owned nearly all of Antelope Valley, as well as extensive adjoining areas, in partnership with Richard Kirman. Most of the old settlers and their families reluctantly sold out and left, but they could hardly forget the beautiful valley that had been their home.

In addition to the historic implications, as expressed in the lines below and explained in the notes, the reader should note how Antelope Valley is identified geographically with Nevada, rather than with California, though most of the area lies in the latter state. The writer tells of hastening back to the "sagebrush state." This is not surprising for, since pioneer days, much of California east of the Sierra has faced inward toward Nevada, rather than westward.

Victor H. Larson was the son of pioneers Wood and Sarah Larson, who settled in Antelope Valley in 1864. Victor was born here in 1872. His father was an energetic and versatile farmer, as well as a community leader. He irrigated his land to raise livestock, hay, grain, fruit and vegetables for sale in Bodie, Virginia City, and other mining camps and, with his brother-in-law, operated a large dairy farm during the summer in Lost Canyon. But near the close of the century the Larson family sold out to Rickey and purchased land in Owens Valley. According to Victor, they did not leave "because of Thomas Rickey" (i.e., his harassment of the smaller ranchers) but because his father felt "there was little future here for his children." Before the family was resettled, Wood Larson was injured in a wagon accident and died a short time later. Victor served in the Spanish-American War, then lived in Owens Valley before going to Alaska during the gold rush. In 1912 he moved to Petaluma, California where, for many years, he operated a poultry farm. He died in Petaluma in 1955, leaving no children. He is buried in Golden Gate National Cemetery, San Bruno, California.





**Victor Larson and Sam Fales**

—Photo courtesy of *Tessa Larson Shirley*.

## VISIONS OF LONG AGO

I've traveled a bit on land and sea  
But a welcoming hand seemed to beckon me  
For of't as I sat in the evening glow  
I would have a longing once more to go  
Where the nut pine and the sagebrush grow  
Back again on my old range  
Where nothing there to me was strange  
Where everybody knew  
Everybody else and everybody else knew you  
And every place you set your feet  
They would place a plate for you to eat  
They would make you as comfy as they can  
Always that way with the old range man  
Back again near my old home  
Where tens of thousands of cattle roam.  
Most of the cattle in olden days  
Were branded with the circle jays<sup>1</sup>  
Dewlaps dangling from the neck  
And right ears cropped off short, By Heck,  
All were claimed by Thomas Rickey<sup>2</sup>  
Good cowman but mighty tricky  
I could see the roundups where the rangers took no bluff  
And part-out horses did their stuff.  
The crystal streams, the singing birds  
The foaming steeds, and surging herds  
I could see again the old winding roads  
And jerk-line teams pulling heavy loads  
Sixteen horses all in line  
All wellbred and looking fine  
Bells on leaders, which would send  
A note of warning around the bend

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<sup>1</sup>Brand used by Thomas B. Rickey.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas B. Rickey, who was born in Ohio in 1836, came west with his parents in 1852 to Amador County, California, where the family took up ranching. Rickey himself later followed mining for a number of years. About 1860, the family migrated east over the Sierra to settle in northern Antelope Valley where both Tom Rickey and his father took up land. In 1876, Tom Rickey, in partnership with Richard Kirman, began to buy ranches. Soon he owned most of the valley. The partners also bought extensive lands in Slinkard, Bridgeport and other valleys on the east slope of the Sierra. When Kirman died in 1897, Rickey purchased his interest. Near the turn of the century, he moved to Carson City and went into banking, but his star began to descend during the Panic of 1907 when his banks failed. Before Rickey died in 1919, his ranchlands had passed into other hands. The January 17, 1920, *Yerington Times* has a short biography.



The dashing stages with the mails  
The pack trains coming down the trails  
Some with shovel, pick and pan,  
Trailed by the old-time mining man  
The signal fires burning on the hills  
That often gave the settlers chills  
For well they knew the Chieftains call  
Beckoning tribesmen, one and all  
The fires would burn, about a week  
And you could see the smoke, from peak to peak  
At night you could see the glow  
Sometimes bright and sometimes low  
And then not long, but very soon  
Just before the next full moon  
From North and South and West and East  
The redskins gather for the feast  
First the Bucks, on ponies backs  
Trailed by Squaws, with heavy packs  
For many a long and weary mile  
They trail along in single file  
And although their coming was for pleasure  
They brought along all earthly treasure  
Rolls of buckskin, heaps of baskets  
Strings of beads and ancient muskets  
Rabbit-skin blankets, and grinding-stones  
Tule-mats water-jugs and powder-horns  
They brought no powder-puff, but instead  
Had all their faces, painted red  
No such gatherings for many moons  
And tepees grow like mushrooms  
The tepees, where I often went  
The smoke curled through the center vent  
Indians smoke with grunts, and dots and dashes  
Cooked most of their food right in the ashes  
If some warrior brought a duck  
Not a feather from it pluck  
But pack it in some sticky clay  
And then in deep hot ashes lay  
They would leave it there for half a day  
When it was done they would crack the shell  
And they would have a savory smell  
Neither skin nor feathers I would say



All was sticking to the clay  
 Squaws dug coxee and taboose<sup>3</sup>  
 For her old buck and little papoose  
 Gather locus and Peaggy<sup>4</sup>  
 Watered Ponies, rough and shaggy  
 Perhaps they would have an evening feed  
 Of porridge, made from bunch-grass seed  
 When daylight wanes and night draws near  
 Their barking dogs you then could hear  
 And the howling of coyotes  
 And the muffled shuffling of the feet of the Washoes  
     and Piutes  
 As they glide aslant  
 With rhythmic chant  
 Ever around and on they go  
 "Hen-no-wen-nah-ho-e-no"  
 Still you hear increasing din  
 As more Redskins gather in  
 Rabbitskin-blankets drawn around  
 And moccasined feet upon the ground  
 Morning breaks and still they go  
 "Hen-no-wen-nah-ho-e-no."  
 The vision was very clear to me  
 Of some old warriors, I did see  
 In thinking of an Indian racket  
 I first recalled Old Yellow Jacket  
 Old Mark,<sup>5</sup> who in former years  
 Wore polished mahogany, in his ears

<sup>3</sup>*Coxee* is the Sago Lily, known to the Washoe by the word Kok-se. It is listed as an Indian food in: Department of Education, *Uses of Food by Nevada Indians*, compiled by Flo Reed, Carson City, Nevada, 1962, p. 1.

Taboose (tupus'si) is probably *Brodiaea capitata*, Benth., a plant the tuber of which was eaten by the Owens Valley Paiutes. Several plots containing these wild plants were irrigated with ditches by the Indians—an example of a near-agricultural practice by people lacking agriculture.

<sup>4</sup>Peaggy (pe-ag-ge, puiga) is the caterpillar of the pandora moth (*Colo-radia pandora* Blake), a favored food of the Paiutes living in the Mono Lake region. These caterpillars live in Jeffrey pines and were collected in shallow trenches dug around the bases of the trees when they crawled down from the trees to form their cocoons. As late as the 1920's there was still significant use of pe-ag-ge. See John Miller and Wallace Hutchinson, "Where the Pe-ag-gie Manna Falls," *Nature Magazine*, Vol. XII, September, 1928, pp. 158-60 and W. A. Chalfant, *The Story of Inyo*, Revised Edition, W. A. Chalfant, Bishop, California, 1933, pp. 82-83.

<sup>5</sup>A Paiute Indian who lived in Antelope Valley during the 1870's. Victor Larson states in his *Map of Antelope Valley with Notes* that Old Mark lived in an Indian village near the Larson home.

Long haired Captain Jim, a Washoe Chief,<sup>6</sup>  
He was always full of grief  
T'was "lapoo biscuit" "lapoo beef"<sup>7</sup>  
Then pointing with his hand  
"White-man takum all my land"  
Old Doc Joe a medicine man  
He was tall and rather thin  
Had tatoo marks on cheeks and chin  
He was a foxy sly old Hick  
And chanted his tunes to heal the sick  
Big Mouth Jim had a jovial grin  
And Yesse-me Pat had a backward chat  
Piute Sam and Little Pete  
Washoe Rube, with bear-like feet  
Rattlesnake-George, and Bony Hank  
Old Doc John and Washoe Frank  
Dobey Jim, and Little Sam  
Poker Dick and Tattoo Dan  
Lame Bob and Big Jim  
A Piute Chief was old Waukim<sup>8</sup>  
As the vision cleared, I resolved to go  
Where the nut-pine and sagebrush grow  
I started my car, as I'll relate  
And hastened to the Sagebrush State  
Back again on my old range  
Where nothing there to me was strange  
Back once more I started to go  
Where the Truckee, Carson and Walker flow  
When I neared the old, old range  
Everything there to me was strange  
The old ranch houses along the way  
Were either gone or in decay<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Washoe leader of pioneer period. Called "the most important leader" of Washoes, by F. Dodge, U. S. Indian Agent, Captain Jim headed a band of about 340 Indians located in Carson, Washoe and Eagle valleys.

<sup>7</sup>Lapoo means "give me" in Washoe, according to Johnny Nevers of Washoe Valley. Interview by Mrs. Maya Miller, Washoe Valley.

<sup>8</sup>This probably refers to Joaquin Jim who according to Chalfant was the leader of the Paiutes in southern Mono County in the 1860's. Joaquin Jim and his group controlled Round Valley and nearby areas at the north end of Owens Valley. Jim was a "Fresno renegade, who had been outlawed by his own people, a man of unusual courage and determination." He never gave in to the whites during the Owens Valley Indian troubles. W. A. Chalfant, *The Story of Inyo*, op. cit., especially pp. 150, 156.

<sup>9</sup>After taking over, Rickey had most of the ranch houses pulled down. He used the lumber for fences. When this was written, the old Larson house was deserted.

Old man Change went along one day  
Took the old winding road and went away  
Turned around as I might say  
And came right back with a new Hi-way  
As I neared the Walker River  
I had chill and began to quiver  
No more countless cattle there  
Both the fields and hills seemed bare  
No mountain quail, no mountain hare  
No grouse, no sage hen there  
Old Change had been around  
Left them dead, upon the ground  
No more teepees did I see  
All was very strange to me  
Strangers here and strangers there  
Strangers were most everywhere  
But the few kind friends that I did see  
Were just as nice as they could be  
I asked some questions, and soon began  
To ask about old cattle men  
“Where then is old Tom Rick?”  
The grass got short, herds could’t pick  
One day he wasn’t very well  
He just got up and went to—Oh well!  
To brand the maverick  
Jesse Summers,<sup>10</sup> from Big Meadows  
Sleeps beneath the silent shadows  
Doc Hudson<sup>11</sup> and Hawk Mason<sup>12</sup>  
Had their last round-up at the basin.  
Dan Simpson<sup>13</sup> and Dutch Fred,<sup>14</sup>  
Also, numbered with the dead.  
Though strange to me, yet I recall  
The comical jokes of Josh Hall.<sup>15</sup>  
Where is he, Oh then?

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<sup>10</sup>Jesse A. Summers was a well-known pioneer of Big Meadows, the Bridgeport and Long Valley, California areas.

<sup>11</sup>William R. “Doc” Hutson (often misspelled Hudson) was a very early settler in Antelope Valley arriving in 1859 or 1860. Hudson Pass in the Singatse Range east of Smith Valley and the former station of Hudson on the Nevada Copper Belt Railroad are named for Hudson or his brother.

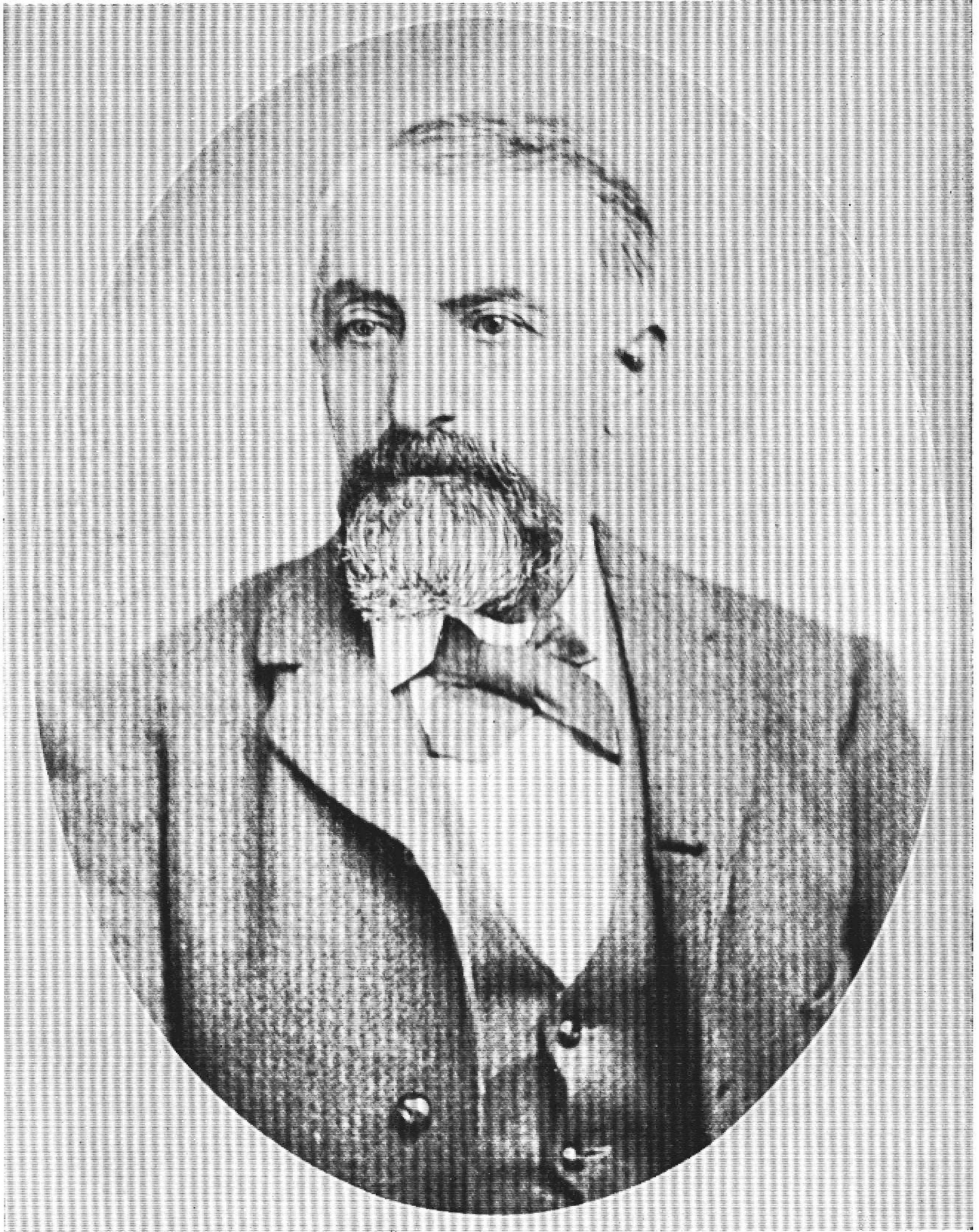
<sup>12</sup>Nathaniel Hockett A. (Hock) Mason, first settler in Mason Valley, Nevada.

<sup>13</sup>Daniel C. Simpson, pioneer of Smith Valley. Simpson, a native of Maine, located a ranch on Desert Creek in Southern Smith Valley in partnership with Warren S. Hall.

<sup>14</sup>H. F. Dangberg, German-born pioneer rancher of Carson Valley.

<sup>15</sup>Refers to Warren S. Hall, partner of Daniel C. Simpson.





**H. F. Dangberg**

—Photo courtesy of *Grace Dangberg*.

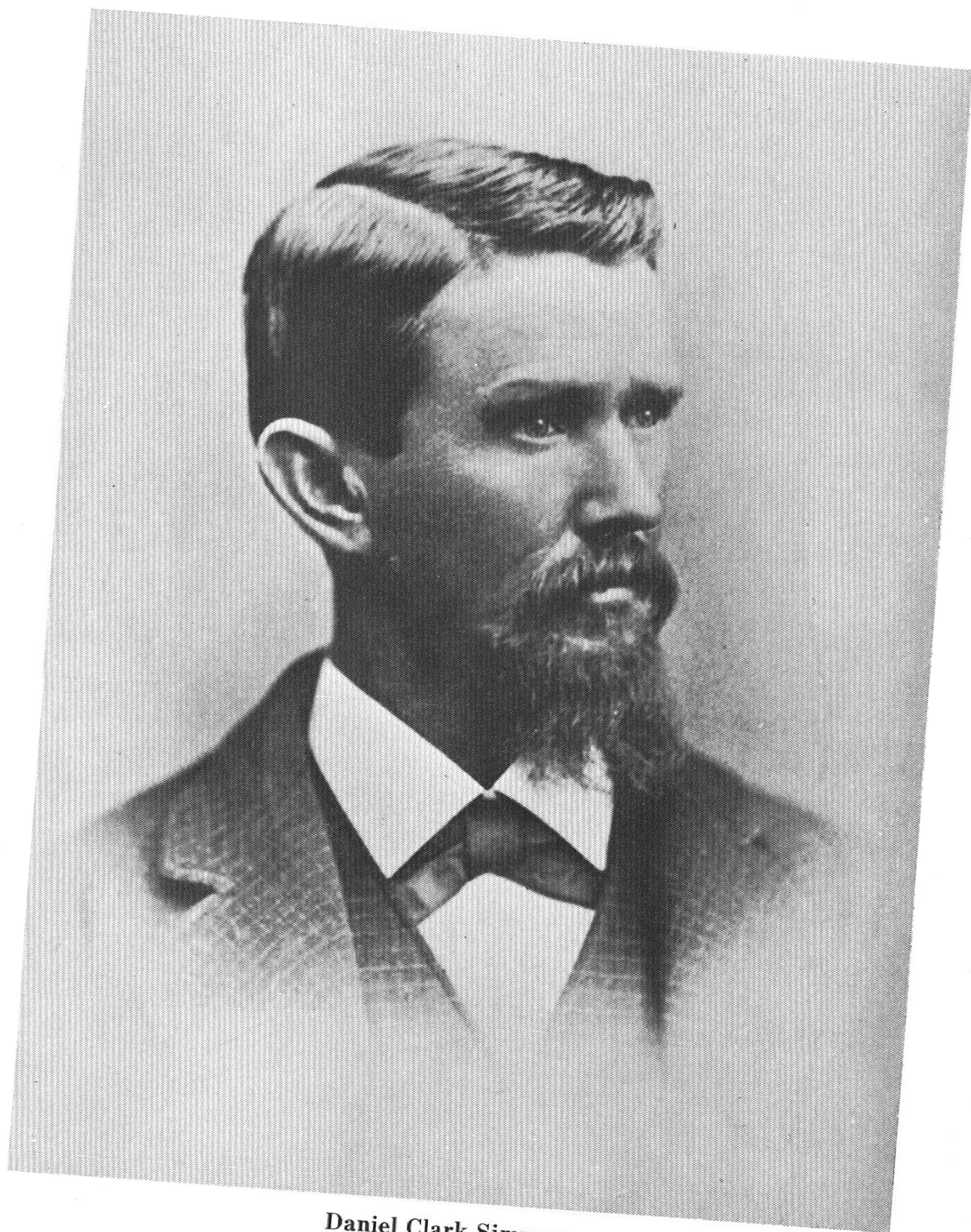
He joined the rest of the cattle men  
I then asked of the old Red Braves,  
All are sleeping in their graves.  
Old Change came around,  
Took them to fine hunting ground.  
But where are all the younger Red?  
Surely they to (sic) are not dead.  
When Old Change came around that day  
He took the Squaws and went away  
With all their cayuses  
And when he took the Redmen too  
There were no more papooses.  
The old cattlemen, are no more  
Their jingling spurs are still  
The Chieftain, never orders now  
The signals from the hill  
For the Redskins gone, but few lament  
Only the night-winds say their chant  
Me thinks they murmur soft and low  
Hen-no-wen-nah-ho-e-no.  
Then I looked far and I looked near  
To find just one "Old Pioneer"  
But when I reached some higher trails  
There soon did appear  
Old "Sam Fales",<sup>16</sup> a fine old pioneer  
But Old Change had been his way  
And he was feeble old and gray  
Changes here, and changes there  
Changes had been everywhere  
I thought for a moment and made up my mind  
That I would go forth, and search till I'd find  
Something or other on this old range  
Something that nothing could ever change  
Then I went farther up the range  
Till the ground it did get lodey  
Then right there I did look down  
On the old boom town of Bodie<sup>17</sup>  
But the dumps and mill upon the hill  
Were standing there just prone and still

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<sup>16</sup>This is the person after whom Fales Hot Springs, located near the West Walker River about 16 miles southeast of Antelope Valley, is named.

<sup>17</sup>Discovered in 1859 by William S. Bodey and several companions, Bodie was a minor camp for many years. But in the middle '70's, rich veins were encountered and in 1878 and 1879 a great rush occurred.





**Daniel Clark Simpson**

—Photo courtesy of *Edith Dorris Lovelock*.



Old Change had been that way  
Before he left he took the pay  
And when he left, the mines closed down  
And left an old deserted town  
But two old miners without frills  
Just know: "Thars gold, in them thar hills"  
The two old timers that still remain  
Are Billy Owens and Jim Cain.  
Before I leave the old boom town  
The old boom town of Bodie  
I think I will relate to you  
The prayer of Mollie Cody  
Little Mollie lived in a quiet cot  
One day, while nipping at her soda  
Little Mollie heard a lot  
Of "The bold bad man" from Bodie  
Soon Mollie did make bold  
To go and dig for gold  
Before she started on the trip  
Her mother packed her little grip  
Then Mollie did get down  
Did little Mollie Cody  
And earnestly did say:  
Good-bye God; I'm going to Bodie  
Then the Bodie folks they did resent  
Not the words, but what they said she meant.  
They would repeat the prayer of Mollie Cody  
"Good! By God! I'm going to Bodie"  
Then I went farther down the range  
Looking for something that would'nt change  
But down Owens Valley same old thing  
City Chief Wantum<sup>18</sup> heep big spring  
Make skukum waw-waw and ahem!  
Make war-hoop, and tomahawk them  
Bye and bye, wantum air  
Make war-hoop and skalpum hair  
Some injun still camp by hill  
Catchum locus, dig taboose  
Damn, hard times, for little papoose  
So Old Change, had been that way

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<sup>18</sup>Reference to the purchase and use by the City of Los Angeles of Owens Valley water. Larson first lived in Owens Valley, after leaving the Antelope Valley area, and after an absence of some years returned to reside there again.

And left desolation, there to stay  
Then I back tracked on the old range  
Still looking for something that wouldn't change  
I drove till I reached a quiet glade  
And stopped beneath a nutpine shade  
The sun sank slowly in the west  
The moon arose above the crest  
As I settled down to take a rest  
I felt that I alone, was blest.  
The rustling pines, my spirit thrilled  
The scented sage, my nostrils filled  
The stars above looked down and said  
"Slumber sweetly on thy bed"  
No shrieking siren, no honking horn  
I fell to sleep, like a newly born  
I never had a sleep so nice  
It seemed I had reached "Paradise"  
Then I heard a whisper, low and crude  
Saying "I am Old Solitude  
I've always been on this old range  
In me alone you'll find no change  
I have no flesh, and I have no bone  
But I sometimes sigh and sometimes moan  
I never came and I will not roam  
For this place here is "Home sweet-home"  
I have no meat, and I have no bread  
But to you "Old Ranger" I'll share my bed  
When you come this way, just call again  
I always welcome The Old Range Men  
Then I arose, and I heaved a sigh  
And I bowed my head as I said "Good-Bye"  
And I resolved once more to go  
Where the nut-pine and the sagebrush grow

SPO, CARSON CITY, NEVADA, 1963

