NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

THE MORMONS IN CARSON COUNTY, UTAH TERRITORY

Juanita Brooks

EARLY MORMON SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTHERN NEVADA

Elbert Edwards

SPRING ISSUE
1965

Volume VIII
Number 1

NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

SPRING 1965

VOLUME VIII
NUMBER 1

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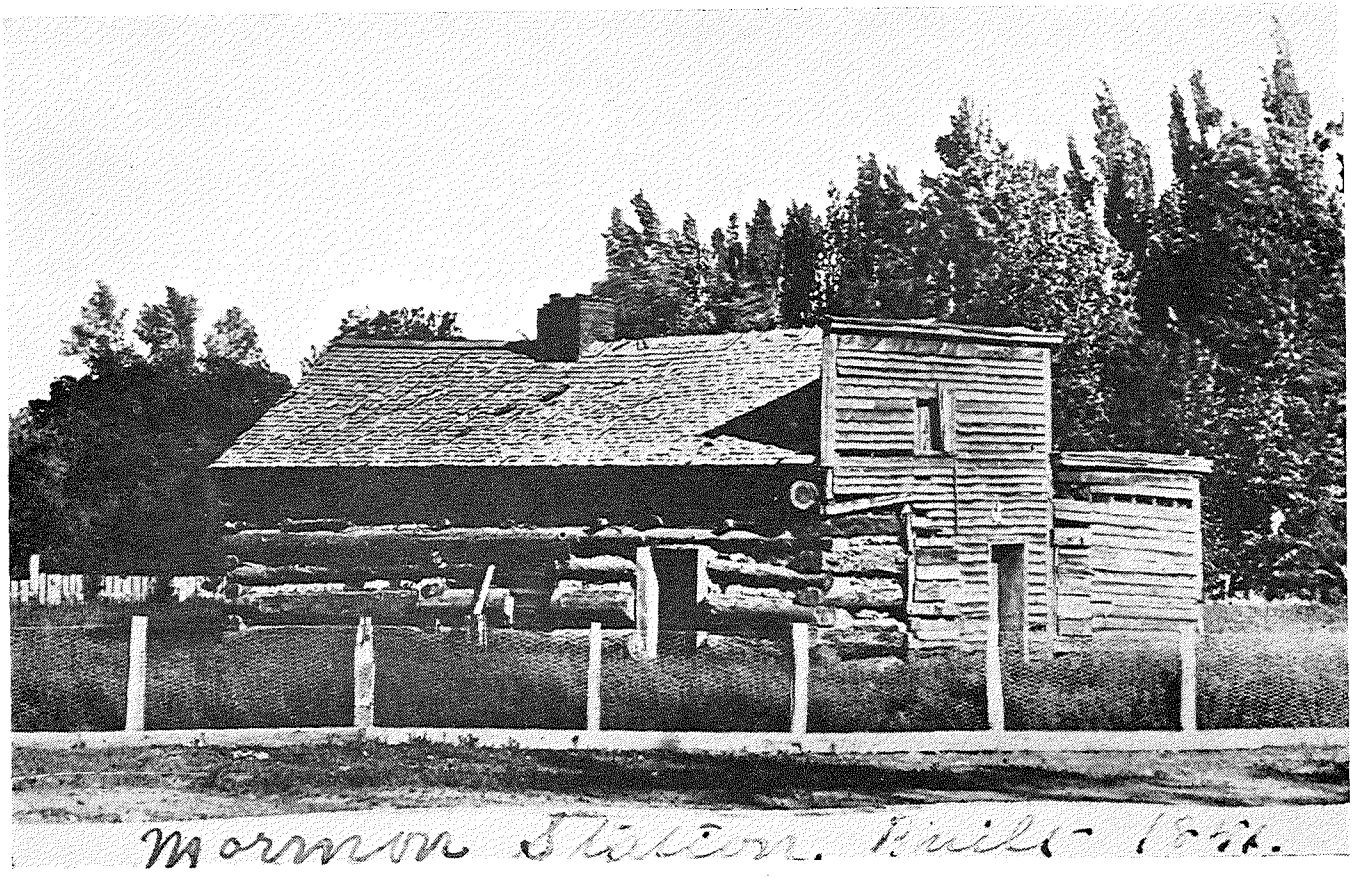
The NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY is published by the Nevada Historical Society, P.O. Box 1129, Reno, Nevada. Orders for membership, change of address, and undeliverable copies should be addressed to the Society.

Second class mailing privilege authorized at Reno, Nevada

SPO, CARSON CITY, NEVADA, 1965

THE MORMONS IN CARSON COUNTY, UTAH TERRITORY

Juanita Brooks


Mormon Station. Built 1851.

THE MORMONS IN CARSON COUNTY, UTAH TERRITORY

The first Mormon to enter the area which became Carson County, Utah Territory, was Samuel Brannan, traveling eastward from San Francisco to intercept Brigham Young and his pioneers en route to the valley of the Great Salt Lake. Brannan had been in New York at the time of the Mormon evacuation of Nauvoo, and since the final home was not yet decided upon, had been directed to collect members of the Church in that area and bring them west by water. He accordingly secured the ship *Brooklyn* and with 238 other members, set sail in February 1846, bringing along a printing press and its supplies. After several mishaps they arrived in San Francisco Bay on the last day of July.

Brannan selected a site in the San Joaquin Valley, acquired property, and set about to establish a Mormon community. He began publication of his paper, *The California Star*, setting forth the many advantages of California as the final home of the Saints. This young man[1] had dreams of an empire in the West, but he must first sell his idea to Brigham Young. With this in mind he set out on the 26th of April, 1847, from Sutter's Fort with 3 men and 11 mules, and with copies of all 16 issues of his papers stuffed into his alforjas. By almost superhuman effort they struggled over the summit, through snow broken by the relief parties to the Donner camp, passed the grisly evidence of human depravity, and arrived on June 9 at Fort Hall.[2]

After 10 days of rest here he left one man with a part of the animals while he and the other two pushed on eastward. They came upon the Mormon company at the Green River, which was too high to ford. Of the meeting, William Clayton wrote on June 30:

> . . . After dinner the brethren commenced making two rafts, one for each division, and a while afterwards Elder Samuel Brannan arrived, having come from the Pacific to meet us, obtain council, etc. He is accompanied by Smith of the firm of Jackson Heaton & Bonney, bogus makers of Nauvoo. There is another young man in company with them. They have come by way of Fort Hall and brought with them several files of the California Star . . .[3]

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[1]Born in 1819, Samuel Brannon had been converted to Mormonism by Orson Hyde and Heber C. Kimball in 1833. He was a zealous member, fully converted to the cause.
See Paul Bailey, *Sam Brannon and the California Mormons*, (Los Angeles, 1959). p. 107 ff.

[2]A letter dated Fort Hall, June 18, 1847, signed by Samuel Brannan, tells the experience to this date. *Millennial Star*, V. 9, No. 20, Oct. 15, 1847 pp. 305–6.
His own weekly, *The California Star* for Saturday, Sept. 18, 1847, noted that "Mr. S. Brannan . . . after an absence of nearly six months, arrived at this place on Friday last, 28 days from Fort Hall. By him we learn that the emigration . . . this year not exceed ninety wagons. . . .
"They (the Mormons) contemplate opening an entire new road through to this country, in connection with the present rendezvous, which completed, they move *en masse* to the valleys of California."

[3]*William Clayton's Journal*, Salt Lake City, 1921, also as a Historical Pamphlet by Kate B. Carter, Oct. 1944, p. 296.

Not until all the wagons were across did Branan have a chance to make his report and present his case. His arguments did not appeal to the Mormon leader, whose mind was already set upon the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

On July 4 Tom Williams and 11 other members of the Mormon Battalion rode into the camp. Again stories were exchanged and each group learned of the experiences of the others. As though to test Brannan's loyalty, Brigham Young ordered him to go back with Tom Williams and help to bring in the wagons of the Battalion families. It would seem at this point, if not earlier, Brannan's two men had returned to California, for on August 24 another group of Mormon Battalion men in Sacramento Valley had "news from a man named Smith who said he had accompanied Samuel Brannan to meet the church who informed us that the Saints were settling in the Great Salt Lake and that 500 wagons were on their way thither."[4]

Williams and Brannan brought their charges into the valley 3 days behind Brigham Young and for the next week all shared in the business of exploring the general area, getting out timber, making adobes, plowing, fencing, planting. On August 8 a meeting was held, after which there was a general rebaptismal wherein some teamsters who were not members before were initiated, and some who had been long away were rebaptized. On the day following many were sent on long and important assignments. Among these were Captain James Brown and an escort of 10 young men,[5] with Samuel Brannan as guide, to go to California and collect the pay for the discharged Mormon Battalion.

The last named attendant, ... Blackburn, was Abner Blackburn, from whose diary we learn the details of this trip. Though his spelling was phonetic, his account is clear and the journey becomes as an experience shared, the character of the company, the nature of the terrain, the events.[6] The reader senses the growing antagonism of the two leaders, the inevitable fist-fight, and the final separation, with Brannan riding on ahead alone.

The next morning Brannan came upon a company of Mormon Battalion men marching down the Truckee canyon. This group had organized after their discharge with Andrew Lytle and James Pace captains of

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[4]Daniel Tyler, *A Concise History of the Mormon Battalion In the Mexican War, 1881*, p. 310.

[5]Utah Early Records Manuscript (copy at Bancroft) p. 10, under date of Aug. 9, 1847:
"A number of men were sent on various expeditions—Samuel Brannan and J. S. Fowler to San Francisco; . . . Ebenezer Hanks, Thomas Williams and Edward Dalton . . . James Brown, Jessie S. Brown, Wm. Squires, William Gribble, Lysander Woodworth, Gilbert Hunt, and ..... Blackburn to get discharges for the Battalion men. . . . Mr. Brannan arrived at San Francisco Sept. 17."

[6]For all the material on Abner Blackburn I am indebted to Dale L. Morgan, *The Humboldt, Highroad of the West*, New York, 1943. He cites it as "Blackburn, Abner, Reminiscences, Manuscript," quoted by courtesy of Robert A. Allen, Carson City, Nevada. To be published in *Pony Express Courier* (q.v.).
The citation here is from Morgan's book, pp. 167–178.

100's, William Hyde, Daniel Tyler, and Reddick N. Allred captains of 50, and Elisha Everett in charge of 10 pioneers to go ahead and mark out the road. They reported that "his description of the valley was anything but encouraging" and insisted that they should turn back since "there were already more men in the Valley than could survive the winter".[7]

In a short time they came upon Captain Brown and his company. Here was a meeting indeed! News of their friends, letters from families, and an official message to them all from Brother Brigham. Already some had stayed behind in California, and here was permission—yes, even encouragement—for others to remain. Some did turn back, but more than 80 pressed on to arrive in Zion on October 17, 1847, the first large company to pass over the road—of Mormons, that is.

Captain Brown and his 10 young men carried out their assignment with such dispatch that they arrived in Salt Lake Valley just 1 month later—November 16, 1847. Though they had left one young man behind —William Squires had been captivated by a Spanish girl—they carried back the gold coin which would be used to purchase the site of present-day Ogden by purchasing the Miles Goodyear claims.

On January 24, 1848, Henry W. Bigler recorded the discovery of gold at Sutter's Fort. By the end of May the news was scattered abroad. Yet the Mormon Battalion men who had turned back the fall before and some of their fellows who were there decided to go home to Zion.

> The company numbered about 37 individuals, all told, with 16 wagons and two small Russian cannon, which they had purchased before leaving Sutter's, one a four, the other a six pounder. The cost of these guns was $400. . . .
>
> In addition to the outfit already named, they subsequently obtained about one hundred and fifty head of horses and mules, with about the same number of horned stock, consisting of work oxen, cows and calves.[8]

This large company took time to pioneer a road through the mountains and instead of following the emigrant road via Fort Hall, some 200 miles out of their way, they struck across country by what is now known as the Deep Creek route, crossing the Malad and Bear Rivers a few miles above their junction. They arrived . . . about the 1st of October, 1848. Others returned during this season in large or smaller groups.

> On the 28th (Sept) Addison Pratt arrived from the Society Islands accompanied by a number of the Battalion men from San Francisco, with 13 wagons. Some days behind him was a company of 15 wagons, being part of the company which went from New York to San Francisco in the Ship "Brooklyn".[9]

[7]Tyler, *Mormon Battalion*, p. 315.

[8]Tyler, *Mormon Battalion*, pp. 336–337.

[9]Early Utah Records, MS., Bancroft, p. 35.

> On the 13 (Nov) fifteen Battalion men arrived from California. During the month several other small companies arrived. Some of them brought considerable gold dust with them.[10]

The returning Mormon Battalion boys might well have hastened the forming of a provisional government. Even without this impetus, there were enough people to make some restrictions necessary. On the first day of February following a petition signed by "many citizens," a notice was posted of a convention to organize a territorial government to be held at Great Salt Lake City on March 5, 1849. Under the name of the "State of Deseret" this government was to extend over most of the Great Basin. (See map.)

The convention met and men were appointed to frame a constitution. These were Albert Carrington, Joseph L. Heywood, William W. Phelps, David Fullmer, John S. Fullmer, Charles C. Rich, John Taylor, Parley P. Pratt, John M. Bernhisel, and Erastus Snow. Within the week the constitution was written and election held in which 674 men voted for the new officers.[11]

"Some of the boys returned from the *mines* bringing large quantities of gold which tempted many young men & some old ones to try their luck," wrote John Pulsipher during the Christmas holidays of 1848. By spring one of his brothers-in-law had taken off for California in spite of the counsel to stay home and run their farms. And though the Authorities preached in public against leaving, they sent some young men on a "gold mission," one under Apostle Amasa Lyman and one under Charles C. Rich. Lyman's group went via Carson Valley and Rich's via the southern route. Both returned across Nevada.[12]

Reports of the "Gold Mission" were published in England, and the fact that 20 men could leave in mid-April, perform their journey in safety, leave some to work in the mines, while the leader could collect $4,000 in tithing and be home by the first of October, would lead members to dreams of wealth in Zion.[13]

Among those who left early in 1849 for the goldfields was our friend Abner Blackburn. With his brother he traveled the new route marked out by the Battalion the year before. In California the boys worked hard and had "considerable success." As fall approached they started back over the mountains expecting to meet some of their relatives on the road. In this they were disappointed, for the folks had decided to remain

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[10]*Ibid*, p. 38.

[11]A definitive study of this projected empire is Dale L. Morgan's *The State of Deseret, Utah Historical Quarterly*, V. VIII, 1940.

[12]For an analysis of the impact of the discovery of gold upon the economy of the Mormon Church see Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, (Cambridge, 1858) pp. 72–76.

[13]A letter from Amasa Lyman dated San Francisco, April 11, 1850, and published in the LDS *Millenial Star*, Vol. 12, July 15, 1850. See also the Fifth General Epistle of the Mormon Authorities also published in the *Millenial Star* Vol. 13, No. 14, pp. 211–212.

in Salt Lake City during the winter. Besides, his brother had a girl friend that he was eager to see. So Abner went along, attending the wedding, and spent a part of the winter in Utah Valley with his uncle.

Their return journey must have impressed them with the great destruction of property and loss of life along the trail and given them the idea of a way station for trading fresh animals for the spent ones. During the first season the only thought seemed to be to get to the gold at once.

An excellent journal for the year 1849 was kept by A. J. McCall, a member of the Roubidaux Train which met "in a solemn council" on May 12, 1849, to organize for the journey. The company consisted of 125 men, representing all professions, 35 wagons with 2 to 4 yoke of oxen each, besides many loose horses. They started on May 13 from the Missouri River 1 day's travel east of the Big Blue. McCall's account is complete and perceptive, with distances and general terrain given.

They reached Salt Lake City on July 22 and rested a few days, getting some supplies. He heard Brigham Young preach a sermon in which he declared that he would not *hurt* the murderers of the Prophet if they came here. No, indeed! He would not hurt them! He would only kill them so quick they wouldn't know what had hit them!

On August 29 they reached the geysers or boiling springs, which were hot enough to cook meat, and of which there were a number in the vicinity. These he called the "Inferno of this Journada del Murto." On September 7 he noted the "Cannibal Cabins of the Donners," but nowhere does he make any mention of any camp or trading post along the way.[14]

On April 18, 1850, a group of 80 men set out for the goldfields, under Captain DeMont as captain and Hampton S. Beaties as clerk. (Here we must interrupt to say the Beatie's date of 1849 is wrong. That year he was enroute west with the Ezra Taft Benson's company. His name, date, and place of birth are listed on that official roll.)[15]

Beaties's story is so close to that told by Blackburn that there can be no doubt that they were there together. For example, he says that "When we got the house built, I and Mr. Blackburn were appointed to go over the mountains and bring supplies back. . . . We went over to Placerville with our teams." Blackburn, learning that snow was selling for $80 a ton, they filled their wagons, covered the snow with pine boughs and

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[14]A. J. McCall, *The Great California Trail in 1849, Wayside Notes of an Oregonite,* (Bath, New York. 1851) listed in the Utah State Historical Society collection as MIC A1-09 (Yale Collection).

[15]This appears as:
Beatie, Hampton S. age 23 b. 31 Dec. 1826 Washington County, Va., in its alphabetical place on the official list of emigrants arriving in Utah in the fall of 1849. Kate Carter, *Heart Throbs of the West,* V. 10, p. 444. (Salt Lake City, 1949).

wagon covers and "killed two birds with one stone hauling down snow and carrying back provisions."

With regard to the house, Beatie says, "We went to make a station for the purpose of supplying provisions to the emigrants who came along. We built a corral there to keep the stock in. The cabin was a double-logged one story house about 20 by 60 feet containing two rooms. We put no roof on nor a floor as it did not rain that season. . . . I don't recollect the object of our putting up the log house only we had nothing to do so we put a house up."[16]

Writing at the time, Abner said that he and his brother picked out the site—"cold watter comeing out of the mountain. and pine trees were plenty on the edge of the valley. their was oceans of good feed for our stock, it was choice place for our business built the first house for our stasion out of pine logs and a large lot coral for stock and fixt for traffic."[17]

Since they had arrived at least a month ahead of traffic from the east, they had time to prepare and some travelers mentioned it. J. M. Stewart noted that "At the base of the mountains was a trading post recently established, where we replenished our short stock of provisions with flour and sugar at $2 per pound and fresh beef at $1."[18]

Robert Lyon, writing from San Buenaventura, California, November 16, 1880, states that:

> . . . The following facts I know to be true. I crossed the plains in 1850, in what was known as the Wilmington train, from Illinois, that was well fitted up . . . with good horses and mules that outtraveled most of the trains. We did not lead the emigration that year, but were in the foremost ranks of it. . . . All of these (travelers) . . . spoke of the Mormon Station as the principal trading post east of the Sierra. There were several places on the Humboldt and Carson Rivers where whiskey and flour were sold from a canvas tent or cloth house, but these traders packed their house on a mule and left when the emigration for that season was over. The Mormon Station . . . was founded in June 1850 by Salt Lake Mormons. I arrived at that station about July 20, 1850, . . . there was one store where they kept for sale flour, beans, tea, coffee, sugar, dried peaches, sardines, tobacco, miner's clothing, overalls, shirts, etc. . . . They had a good sized log house completed all but the roof. . . .[19]

Beatie says that seven men remained to operate the station and names first DeMont, Blackburn (there were two of them), Carter, and himself. Later he remarked that "DeMont & Kimball went over to California and

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[16]*Nevada Historical Society Papers,* 1913–16 (Carson City, 1917) p. 169.

[17]Dale L. Morgan, *Humboldt . . .* p. 199.

[18]J. M. Stewart, "An Overland trip to California in 1850", *Annual Report of the Historical Society of Southern California.* Vol. V, Part 2 (Los Angeles, 1901).

[19]Thompson and West, *History of Nevada . . .* (Oakland, California, 1881) p. 30.

I have never seen them since. That left five of us and 10 more came from California making 15 in all, and we journeyed together back home." Thus we have the names of six of the seven men who founded the first Mormon station.[20]

Both Beatie and Blackburn tell of their troubles with the Indians on their return journey. Beatie preferred to remain in Zion to raise his family, making only one other visit to Carson Valley in 1853 when he went in the employ of Enoch Reese. Blackburn was to return again the next spring with the first train fitted up by the Reese brothers, John and Enoch.

The departure of the "Colonel" Reese (John) train received much local publicity. The *Deseret News* for April 10 and for May 3, 1851, gave it special notice and some diarists mention it. This was a carefully planned enterprise, with the "10 or 12" wagons loaded with staple products for trade and seed for planting. Accompanying it was a herd of loose stock and horses.

Upon arrival Reese evidently purchased Moore's claim to the Mormon Station and set about to finish the house, improve the holdings, and plant crops. These included wheat, barley, corn, watermelons, turnips, and other vegetables. His nephew and partner, Stephen Kinsey, said that on the Fourth of July they raised the first American Flag on this side of the Sierra, and took possession of the lands and grounds known as the Mormon Station.

As early as 1850 there had been traders on the Carson River and points east of the Mormon Station, but they had only temporary tents or camps, and left with the end of the summer trade.

> Thursday 12th (Sept, 1850) We reached Carson river . . . There are a number of temporary recruiting establishments here, with an abundance of provisions . . . held at such extravagant prices.[21]

Permanent settlers in this area were noted by the fall of 1851, some of whom might have had trading establishments earlier.

> Joseph P. Barnard, Frank Bernard, George Follensbee, A. J. Rollins, Frank Hall and W. L. Hall came over the mountains from the California mines in November 1851 to look for gold in Carson Valley . . . they took up land where Carson City now stands and erected a trading post.[22]

On November 12, 1851, the first attempt at setting up a local government was made. The meeting was held at the Mormon Station and presided over by Col. A. Woodward with T. G. Barnard as secretary. Some

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[20]*Nevada Historical Society Papers*, 1913–16. pp. 168–172.

[21]James Bennett, "Overland Journey to California", *Journal of James Bennett*, (New Harmony, Indiana, 1906) p. 43.

[22]H. H. Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado, & Wyoming* Vol. 25, p. 73 fn.

resolutions were adopted and a committee appointed to work out regulations acceptable to all.[23]

The year 1852 was one of heavy traffic to the goldfields, and one of the many "firsts" in the Carson area.

> Israel Mott and his wife left Salt Lake For California in a train, May 1852. He first settled four miles above Reese, and built a house out of the beds of wagons abandoned in the valley. He made a window sash with a jack knife, paying 75¢ a light for 7 x 9 inch glass to put in it. He was the founder of Mottsville. His wife was the first woman settler.[24]
>
> The first land claim recorded under the government of Utah on December 1st 1852, was that of John Reese, which extended from his trading house south "to a lone tree" and included all between the river and the mountains on the west. Five other claims were recorded south of Reese's in the following order: E. L. Barnard, S. A. Kinsey, James C. Fain, J. Brown, and William Byrnes. J. H. Scott and brother took a claim north of Reese, these seven being all that were recorded previous to 1853.[25]
>
> A committee of five then appointed to prepare and present other needed resolutions at the next meeting: John Reese, J. P. Barnard, Wm. Byrnes, Wash. Lumis, H. H. Jameson.
>
> **Second Meeting.** November 19, 1851 (John Reed Chairman and T. A. Hylton, Sec.).
>
> Following six resolutions adopted:
>
> 1. Parties had right to take up a new claim after disposing of one in possession.
> 2. Required prepayment of $25 fee to recorder.
> 3. Required claimants to put $5 in improvements on claims within 180 days.
> 4. Permitted a company to take claims for each member of the company and improve one enough to cover expenses for all.
> 5. Timber was to be common property.
> 6. Committee appointed to draft bylaws for civil government.
>
> **Third Meeting.** November 20, 1851 (Officers as the day previous).
>
> Committee: T. A. Hylton, H. H. Jameson, J. P. Barnard, Wash. Lumis, and Wm. Byrnes presented the following civil government which was adopted:

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[23]The account of the first local or "Squatter Government" appears important enough to include in full here. It is taken from Thompson and West, *History of Nevada*, p. 32.

SQUATTER GOVERNMENT

First Squatter meeting called at Mormon Station Nov. 12, 1851. Col. A. Woodward, Chairman and T. G. Barnard, Secretary. Resolutions adopted:

1. To provide for survey of land claims and employ a Surveyor.
2. To create the offices of Recorder-Treasurer in one person to record and issue receipts for claims—accounts for $25 fee which he was to receive.
3. Limit land claims to quarter-sections—160 acres.
4. Made Recorder accountable to the committee who appointed him.
5. Required recorder to collect fees before performing duties.
6. Appointed an executive committee of Wm. Byrnes, John Reese, E. L. Barnard, A. Woodward, H. H. Jameson, T. A. Hylton, and N. R. Haskell who were to appoint a recorder and arrange all "business touching claims."

[24]Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado & Wyoming*, V. 25, p. 72.

[25]*Ibid*, p. 71.

WHEREAS, it has been deemed necessary . . . that there should be some fixed rules of right agreed upon and established for . . . the protection of citizens in all their privileges . . .; and whereas, it is always requisite to appoint officers whose duty it is to enforce law and maintain order, it is agreed that there be certain officers elected from among our community, to wit: A Justice of the Peace, a Clerk of the Court, and a Sheriff; and these functionaries shall be required to exercise and enforce law according to the acknowledged rules of equity which govern all civilized communities.

There shall be four individuals associated with the Justice . . . himself making the fifth . . . in forming a court, and he shall be empowered to summon any four whenever occasion shall require it, to take cognizance and adjudicate summarily in all cases of controversy, debts or offenses against the public weal; and to enforce fines or other sufficient penalties upon offenders; to issue warrants and authorize arrests. But to provide against the abuse of these powers, citizens and others shall have the right of appeal to a court of twelve citizens, summoned promiscuously, who shall Constitute a court of inquiry from whose decision there shall be no appeal; scrutinize and reverse if necessary the decrees of the Magistrate's Court; and who shall have power to remove the magistrate or impose upon him any other just penalty, in the event of the abusive exercise of his authority. To strengthen them and provide for the execution of their verdicts, etc., there shall be a Clerk and Constable appointed to aid and execute the decrees of these courts.

Officers elected: E. L. Barnard, magistrate; Wm. Byrnes, sheriff; Dr. T. A. Hylton, clerk.

H. H. Bancroft, *Hist. of Nev., Colo. & Wyo.*, p. 71 fn, says:

"The records of this government, made by T. G. Barnard and T. A. Hylton are preserved in a book of 60 leaves, 6 by 7 inches in size, in the possession of Martain Goige of Carson City".

The year 1852 was one of heavy traffic over the road west. During the frenzy of 1849, emigrants loaded too heavily and so were forced to leave most of their possessions behind. By 1851 they had gone to the other extreme and carried not enough. Many of those who came in 1852 were better organized and better prepared for the trip, but always by the time they had arrived in Carson Valley they welcomed a chance to get supplies and change jaded animals for fresh ones. Of the many reports of this year, we shall quote two which describe conditions in this area.

The first is the diary of an unnamed writer traveling with a wagon train from St. Joseph, Missouri, to California in 1852:

Page 67—

. . . Thursday the 31 we came to Carson river and camped in Rag Town.

Page 68—

September the 1st Friday Rag Town consists of a few shantys built by putting small posts in the ground and then they nail canvass

> to them including roof and there Hotels grocerys saloons eating houses and meat market they all keep hay to sell
> Page 69—
> . . . 11 Monday Stoped here all day Carson valley from one to five miles wide and about thirty long there is a great many settlers in this valley and each one keeps a trading house such as all kinds of liquors potatoes, Barley flour onions turnips &c the latter productions of the valley they are not subject to the laws of California but make their own laws and a hard one it is.
> 12 Tuesday started on our journey come to what is called the Mormon Station a large trding house owned by two Mormons they are building a flour mill here . . .[26]

A more complete and vivid record comes from the pen of Thomas Tumbull, who passed through the area in August, 1952. On Wednesday, 11th, he wrote:

> . . . nooned close by a Mormon Station one large log house 2 or 3 tents a garden part fenced in some turnips & garden stuff growing they have stalks of Hay cut almost 40 ft long & still cutting they buy poor stock sells goods &c turnips 10 cts per lb . . . passed some very good log houses 3 or 4 one has a good garden all kinds of vegetables & corn Barley & oats . . . next came to what they call the Mormon Station or Tavern B—shop it stands on a handsome bend along side of the lofty Sierra covered with lofty pines & pines near his door 4 ft through Blacksmith Shop here & fresh beef for Sale . . . also a pretty large farm here barley ripe, oats, potatoes in blossom, mellons, &c.

Two days later, after they had entered the canyon, he wrote:

> . . . after we left about one mile their is a bridge across the River Carson in the middle of the canyon built by a man from California & two others ahead he charged $1 for the three for one span of Horses & Waggon & one Bit for each drove horse or ox this is the 3rd bridge.[27]

Since this traveler found three bridges across the river in August 1852, it would seem that the first toll road grant to Reese and Mott was issued in December of 1851. At any rate, this was evidently a very lucrative business.[28]

That the citizen's government was alert and effective is shown by the fact that they petitioned the Surveyor General for a survey, that they might be certain whether their lands lay in California or Utah. On December 15, 1852, he reported that "I was reluctantly forced to the

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[26]Photostat of M.S. in Bancroft, Miscellaneous Documents listed mF 593 D 44.

[27]Thomas Tumbull, *Travels from the United States Across the Plains to California, from Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin for 1913.*
Original in small leather-bound note book (9 cm by 15 cm) covering 97 pages in neat writing. Citations from printed copy.

[28]Thompson and West, *History of Nevada,* pp. 33–34.

conclusion that the valley was from twelve to fifteen miles out of the state of California."[29]

Since they did not belong to California and were too far from Utah for any contact, the citizen's government continued to function. One amendment to the land law came in 1853, when they decreed that a notice of a claim must be given and that $100 worth of work must be done on it within 60 days. A married man might take 640 acres, a single one only half that amount.[30]

The first lawsuit was brought by John Reese against George Chorpenning, mail contractor, the surviving partner of Woodward & Co., to recover $675 for supplies furnished while carrying the mail to California. The case came before E. L. Barnard, magistrate, who rendered judgment against Chorpenning for the full amount plus $25 costs. Reese took over blacksmith tools and surveying equipment, four mules, one revolver and "all their claim to the Old Mormon Station." This was valued at $130.[31]

Always there was the problem of the road; always there were people searching for a more direct route or for a better terrain. On September 18, 1854, Lt. Col. E. J. Steptoe decided to explore for a more direct route to Carson Valley from Salt Lake City. Taking Oliver B. Huntington and his young nephew, Clark Allen, they set out. Since John Reese had a special interest because of his business between the two points, he also became a member of the party, along with two of his regular men and an Indian. The trip was strenuous and beset with danger, but in the end they did make the trip out—on horseback—in 27 days and back in 24. His description of the land at the Carson might have spurred the interest of the Mormon authorities for further colonization:

> Its soil and climate is equal to the best of the mountain vallies. Its timber is exhaustless and of superior quality. Reese and company have in successful operation a very fine large three story grist mill to which is attached the most complete saw mill we ever saw in motion with a circular saw 6 ft in diameter. We witnessed it saw twice through a ten foot long making a complete change of the mill, and sawing 28 feet of lumber in one minute and 50 seconds. . . .[32]

Other word had come in of an attempt to set up an independent government, of a petition to be annexed to California, of frictions between the Mormons and their neighbors. Before this time, the counties of Utah had been marked by long, straight lines extending to the summit of the

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[29]*California Senate Journal*, 1853. 4th Sess, Dec. 3, p. 14, from the annual report of the Surveyor General, Dec. 15, 1852.

[30]H. H. Bancroft, *Hist. of Nev., Colo. & Wyo.* V. 25, p. 71.

[31]Thompson and West, *History of Nevada*, p. 34.

[32]*Deseret News*, December 7, 1854, p. 2.

Sierra. Now, on January 17, 1854, the western portion of Juab, Millard, and Iron counties were cut off and joined into Carson County by act of the legislature. Carson County was to have one delegate in the Utah legislature and U.S. Justice George P. Stiles was to preside over it. (See map.)

No action was taken on this for more than a year. The law was on the books in Salt Lake City, but the settlers of Western Nevada were all unconscious that they were now inhabitants of a new Carson County. In the spring of 1855 President Young appointed Apostle Orson Hyde to implement this action. He was to go as probate judge and as the ecclesiastical leader of the Mormon colony, with about one hundred families to move with him into the area. This would give the Mormons a majority in voting, and would, therefore, give them a chance to practice their doctrine of celestial marriage. At the same time it would set up the western boundary of what they thought of as The Kingdom of God.

Orson Hyde had little enthusiasm for this assignment. Now 50 years old, he had spent much time on missions for his church; he had remained in Kanesville to take charge of the organization there and to publish the *Frontier Guardian* until 1852, and immediately upon his arrival in Zion has been sent to establish Green River County far to the north. His call came on January 18, and by May 17, 1855, he was on his way west with Judge Styles, Marshal Joseph L. Heywood, Enoch Reese, and an escort of 35 men. Among these were his brothers-in-law, Richard Bentley and William Price.

After more than a month on the road, they arrived in Carson Valley, and Apostle Hyde reported his trip in typical Mormon fashion, with everything being fine, BUT—, with the good and the bad balanced in almost every sentence. Under date of June 19, 1855, he wrote:

> . . . We had an excellent trip, but a very fatiguing one for both man and beast. . . . Messers J and E Reese have a most splendid mill and ranch. . . . Their crops generally look well. Grasshoppers are very destructive at present, however. . . . The harvest will be only middling on account of these insects. . . .
>
> . . . The Big Mountain is not a patching to several that we came down. All four wheels locked, and men behind with lariets to hold back and keep the wagons from ending over upon the teams. Still we got along well and without accident. It is a miracle how we ever got over with the mill stones, but, thanks to our Heavenly Father, we are all here safe and sound and in fine spirits.[33]

The company did not remain long in Carson Valley, but proceeded on to San Francisco, evidently to become acquainted with conditions in California. The *Sacramento Daily Union* of June 25 noted that "Just

[33]*Deseret News*, V. 5, June 27, 1855, p. 167.
Journal History, June 19, 1855.

arrived in Placerville his Honor J. P. Stiles, Associate Justice of Utah, J. L. Heyward, U.S. Marshal of Utah, and Orson Hyde. Col. Steptoe and command will remain at Carson Valley about ten days, to recruit previous to crossing the mountains". On July 14 following, George Q. Cannon, then in charge of the press at San Francisco wrote to his Uncle John Taylor in Salt Lake City that "Bro Orson Hyde has been here, having crossed the mountains from Carson Valley, stayed about three days and has returned. . . . He has . . . been appointed Probate Judge of Carson County, the business of this office and of organizing the county, prevented him from making any longer stay here. . . ."[34]

A letter from Brigham Young dated September 29, 1855, to Orson Hyde in Carson County advised him that . . . "I have come to the conclusion to release you from all duties and obligations towards the press in San Francisco. . . . This liberty will free your hands, enable you to give all the attention necessary to the affairs in Carson County, and relieve your mind of much anxiety. . . ."[35]

Both the *Sacramento Daily Union* for September 19, 1855, and the *Alta California* for September 22 following noted the organization of a district court on September 3 at Mormon Station with "Judge Stiles on the bench, Oron Hyde, esq., clerk. L. A. Norton was appointed District Attorney. Judge Stiles and Marshall Haywood are soon to leave for Salt Lake. Orson Hyde, Judge of the Probate Court, will remain and organize the County of Carson, as soon as the boundary is sufficiently established to warrant him in doing so."

Since the matter of first importance was the establishment of the boundary line, Orson Hyde lost no time in setting the wheels in motion. Under the direction of Surveyor General S. H. Marlette, George H. Goddard conducted the work. With the California crew were Christopher Merkley, Seth Dustin, and George W. Hancock from Utah. Orson Hyde himself worked with them much of the time. With the report on September 7 that the Carson Valley lay in Utah, the proclamation calling for an election to be held on September 20 at Mormon Station was sent out. At that time the Mormon party were elected by a large majority, and the name of the county seat was changed from The Mormon Station to Genoa, in honor of the birthplace of Columbus.[36]

Brigham Young, knowing the skill of Orson Hyde on the frontier, was eager to keep him at his post and to have him happy. When Mr. Reese

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[34]Journal History of the Church (L.D.S.) Aug. 1, 1855.

[35]Church Business Letters Book 2, Sept. 29, 1855.

[36]"Surveyor General's Report," California Assembly Journal, 1856.
Under instructions of Surveyor General S. H. Marlette, Sherman Day explored and reported on several routes across the mountains to Carson Valley during summer of 1855. (pp. 78–87)
December 15, 1855, George H. Goddard submitted his findings on the establishment of the Nevada-California line to S. H. Marlette. This took place from August to December 1855. With the California crew headed by Goddard were Christopher Merkley, Seth Dustin, and George W. Hancock of Salt Lake, and Orson Hyde most of the time.
"As the time approached at which the U.S. District Court was to hold its session for the western division of Utah Territory, Judge Hyde impressed upon me the necessity of proceeding

suggested that a wife might make him willing to establish a more permanent residence here, the President had one on the way in 24 hours. This was Mary Ann Price, mother of only one child. James Townsend drove the outfits which brought her and her belongings, arriving on November 7.[37]

Now Orson Hyde selected a site in Washoe Valley as being the most desirable, and proceeded to build a house and make improvements.

The spring of 1856 saw a large company called from the Utah towns to colonize in Carson County. With the Mormon attention to detail, records were kept of each group, so that a study of the personnel becomes fascinating. For example, one that left the Bear River ferry on May 14 had a total of 11 men, 44 women and children, 16 wagons, 18 oxen, 213 cattle, 24 horses, and 21 chickens. This was really five or six large families with extra teamsters and helpers. In general, people were given a chance to volunteer for such an assignment, but usually the leaders must officially "call" them if they were to go.

Reactions to this assignment were varied. Mary Jane Phippen did not like it at all, and her husband, Sylvester S., shared her feelings. Her letters home, the first written on July 13, 1856, told of the hardships of the journey. For a part of the way she had to trudge along and lead the little cow through the deep sand—and the next letter tells of the birth of her baby. The trip was hard and the end disappointing: ". . . imagin a City with only Three Houses in it, no Streets tall pine trees and a great high mountain to look strait up to. . . . The people are building slab houses. . . ." In each of her four letters the general tone was the same—Do NOT come out; do not let the boys come out; do not encourage anyone to come out. She for one was ready to come back on the slightest excuse.[38]

. . . without delay, so as to determine whether Carson Valley was legally under its jurisdiction. . . . (p. 96)

"We arrived at Mormon Station . . . The U.S. District Court had been opened by Judge Stiles, and the business already got through. The party were preparing for their return to Salt Lake City. My men, who had come out with them in the spring, wished very much to return, but Judge Hyde kept them to their duty.

"Since I was here in 1853, a handsome grist mill had been erected, with a saw mill attached, which appears to do a thriving business. A Court House has likewise been lately built. . . . (p. 107)

"Sept, 7 . . . I informed Judge Hyde that the principal part of the valley was on the Utah side of the line, although there was a little uncertainty as to the settlements in the upper part of the valley. He accordingly determined to issue the proclamation, calling for the election to take place at the Mormon Station, on the 20th of September. (p. 108)

"Sept. 20th. Today being election day in Carson Valley, Dustin and Hancock both went down to vote, and join in the festivities . . . of the first election in Carson County.

"Sept. 21 . . . met Dustin and Hancock returning . . . The Mormon party have been elected by a large majority. The Mormon Station has been chosed for the County Seat, which is to be named Genoa, after the birthplace of Columbus. (p. 114)

[37]Church Business Letters Book No. 2, October 9, 1855.

". . . Learning last Friday that you remained and do not intend to return this season, also of your want of a wife, we . . . obtained the services of bro. James Townsend, purchased a team &c. to go out to Carson County and take your wife to you . . . we have done pretty well as they are going to start tomorrow morning."

The *Sacramento Daily Union* noted the arrival of Hyde's wife on November 7.

[38]Mary Jane Phippen and Sylvester S. Phippen letters on microfilm in the Utah State Historical Society, MIG 255.

In sharp contrast was the account of Richard Bentley. He had looked the country over when he was out the year before, and he saw possibilities.

> . . . In the spring of 1856 with my family and all I possessed, I started for Carson Valley. I had one wagon drawn by two yoke of oxen and one yoke of cows with several loose cows in the herd. The company was very large numbering over one hundred wagons and a large number of loose cattle. We made the trip in about six weeks.
>
> On reaching the Carson River the company was disorganized; the people locating on the river in Carson Valley and in several small valleys adjacent. Washaw Valley was selected by Apostle Orson Hyde, who with his wife Mary Ann [sister to Bentley's only wife, Elizabeth], was with the company as headquarters of the mission.

He was pleased with the town and the stream of pure mountain water. He lived across the creek from Elder Hyde and his neighbors were his friends, among them William Jennings, Christopher Layton, Alex Cowan, Chester Loveland, Mat. Hamilton, and George Billings, all men of energy and enterprise. He himself was appointed bishop.

> August 14, 1856, my son Frank [his fifth child] was born and being the first child born in the new colony had the honor of having the town named Franktown after him.
>
> I am very much pleased with Carson and the surrounding valleys and also with the climate and the many crystal streams coursing down the mighty mountains.[39]

In each settlement homes were being erected, land cleared and planted, and general preparations made for permanent living. The California papers reported a brisk trade in butter, as much as 1,500 pounds at one time. At another time they noted loads of iron in the form of abandoned wagon tires being hauled in. A general summary of the over-all population of the county was made in July of 1857 and seems to be quite accurate:

> Wassau valley . . . is settled by twenty-five families, numbering 150 souls. Each of these families possesses a good farm, with a considerable portion in cultivation. There is a saw mill in Wassu, which furnishes . . . building material at more reasonable rates than . . . could be brought . . . in California. The inhabitants are all Mormons. . . .
>
> Jack's Valley . . . embracing a couple of thousand acres, situated northwest and within one hours travel of Carson Valley. It is inhabited by nine Mormon families . . . a population of fifty. They are engaged in Agriculture and grazing, drawing their supplies of lumber, etc., from Genoa.
>
> Eagle Valley containes ten Mormon and four Gentile families, with a population of ninety.

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[39]The Autobiography of Richard Bentley has been copied from the original by his descendants. Typescript in the hands of the writer.

> Carson Valley . . . contains seventeen Gentile and twenty Mormon families, numbering a population of 225. In Carson are two saw mills and one grist mill.
>
> Note: There were some families in Gold Canyon plus 50 to 60 single men and additional Indians and Chinese. Total population minus Indians and Chinese estimated at 600.
>
> Mr. Farrell, one of the proprietors of a flouring mill in the course of erection, reports that in all these valleys there is now growing 1,500 acres of wheat which . . . will yield 27,000 bushels or 5,400 barrels of flour. . . .[40]

There were some frictions between Mormon and gentile, some moves toward establishing an independent government, and an organization of a high council among the Mormons in an attempt to consolidate them, but in general, conditions in Carson Valley were good.

All this was to be short-lived. Only a little over a year after the arrival of the large emigration to this area, word came to Salt Lake City of a rift with the government of the United States. Utah mail contracts had been canceled and an army was on its way out to put down a rebellion. The first reaction of the Mormon leaders was "Stand up and fight! With God's help they shall not come here!"

This was only another armed mob, they told each other as they recounted their past drivings. They had come half across an unknown continent in search of a place which no one else wanted; they were planting colonies and redeeming the land at a tremendous cost in labor. After 10 years they were beginning to feel economically secure in the mountains, and they did not mean to be driven again.

They would need all their people and all their resources to make a stand. Above all, they must have ammunition. They dispatched express riders north to the settlements on the Green River, south to the colony at San Bernardino, and west to those in Carson County.

No trip came so close to being complete tragedy as did this last. Oliver B. Huntington was chosen as guide because of his experience with the Steptoe exploring company; the captain was Peter Wilson Conover. With a total of 16 men, they were to go express by the most direct route, order all the people to come home, and bring back ". . . as much ammunition as you can. . . . Buy all the powder, lead, and caps you possibly can, but do not tarry to go over into California, or at least to detain you any length of time."[41]

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[40]*Daily Alta California*, San Francisco, July 9, 1857.

[41]Church Letter Book No. 3, dated President's Office, S.L. City August 15, 1857.
Elder Chester Loveland, and the Brethren in Carson Co:
Dear Brethren:

. . . We send this counsel to you by Express that you may avail yourselves of the present emigration to dispose of your property. . . . We want you to secure as much ammunition as you can. . . .

Come in one company, and keep together so that you can protect yourselves against all foes, both white and red. . . .

. . . Buy all the powder, Lead, and Caps, you possibly can, but do not tarry to go over into California, or at least to detain you any length of time.

BRIGHAM YOUNG

Both Huntington and Conover kept daily records of this expedition, and they complement each other exactly. Always and always the problem was water. Springs that ran when Huntington went this way before were now dry. The climax came on August 27, when they found themselves all exhausted and dehydrated beside a dry wash, the nearest water back 20 miles or ahead 70. So great was the urgency of the mission that they felt they must not go back, and to move ahead seemed certain death. Even now the guide lay unconscious on the sand.

Steve Moore and Joe Dudley left the group to find water, promising to send up a smoke signal when they did. The spring, in a mountain canyon, was clear and pure, and while Dudley made a smoke signal, Moore took four canteens on his shoulder and ran like a deer the 6 miles back to his perishing comrades. Refreshed, they all made their way to the pool, where Dave Canfield, with the threat that he would shoot any man who tried to stop him, almost killed himself with drinking.[42]

Huntington, sensing his responsibility for getting the party through, decided on emergency methods for carrying water. They killed a horse that could not make it to water, cooked strips for their immediate meal and jerked the rest to carry along, spending a day here, to travel as far as they could during the night. The guide made containers for water out of the intestines of the horse, cutting them in 2-foot lengths and cleansing them, filling them with water, and tying the ends together. In this way they took along some 8 to 10 gallons in addition to their canteens. A "gut-link" of water was the means of saving an animal at a crucial time.[43]

Arrived at Carson Valley, the men went by twos to the various settlements to carry the word of the call home. They reached headquarters on September 3. At once there was consternation among the Mormons, some eager to go and some lamenting the move, all trying to dispose of their property to as good advantage as possible.

Regarding the ammunition, Bentley wrote "It was agreed to get one ton of powder with lead and caps to match. Wm. Nixon, who was keeping a store at Carson Valley would go to California, make the purchase and buy a small stock of merchandise for himself so as to cover up the ammunition, which was successfully done." In addition to handing over what tithing money he had, Bentley also "furnished money to buy a span of pe-bald mules and Chester Loveland furnished another span of mules and a wagon."

Robert Walker, a clerk in Nixon's store, and Henry Brasee brought the ammunition all the way from the coast in to Salt Lake City. At Angel's Camp, high on the mountain, a group of miners had gathered to intercept

[42]Peter Wilson Conover, "Journal, 1840–1875" (copy at the Utah State Historical Society).

[43]Oliver B. Huntington "Diaries". 18 vols. Photostats at the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California; typewritten copy at the Utah State Historical Society.

the shipment and not allow ammunition with which to fight the government go on into Utah. Only the help of Travers, the innkeeper, and the generosity of Conover in passing out liquor saved it.

Although the Mormons were counseled to say as little as possible about their business, word leaked out of their mass move and all the western papers carried stories. A man who signed himself W.W.S. visited the assembled camp and wrote an account which was repeated with little variation:

> Genoa, Carson Valley
> October 1, 1857
>
> EDITOR UNION: The Mormons have all left us. . . . The train which left . . . , on the 25th ult., comprising about 148 wagons moved . . . to Gold Canyon . . . where they corraled, and orders were issued by the leaders . . . not to move until all obligations, etc. . . . were honorably discharged; and with few exceptions they have left with credit to themselves for their uprightness and fair dealing.
>
> Major Ormsby visited their camp and reported:
>
> Number of people 985—350 men and the balance women and children. Number of stock—horses, mules and oxen, 710; wagons and carriages etc. 148. Estimated value of property (including $25,000 in money) . . . $193,000. The train is apportioned into three divisions, each under the command of a captain, and these are again sub-divided into companies of tens, with a captain to each. . . ."
>
> Signed W.W. S.[44]

The account given as official by the Mormon Church says, quoting Madison D. Hambleton:

> The express from G.S.L.C. calling the Mission home arrived . . . in Carson Co. . . . on Saturday the 5th of Sept. 1857, requiring the mission to return to Salt Lake City en masse.
>
> Three weeks from that day, 26th of Sept., the camp started with the exception of three families, viz: Moore, John Dilworth, and John Hawkins. . . .
>
> Previous to our return home we gathered some $800. in cash and sent to San Francisco and laid it out for powder, lead, and caps.
>
> We had in the company 123 wagons and about 450 souls. The men were divided into 12 companies; and the companies were divided into two divisions. . . . We were 37 days on the road, reaching Salt Lake City, Nov. 2nd. . . .[45]

So far as any permanent effect upon the history of Nevada is concerned, this episode seems "much ado about nothing." It does, however,

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[44]The *Sacramento Daily Union* for October 5, 1857; it was rewritten and rearranged but with the same figures in the *Daily Alta California* for October 8, 1857.

[45]L.D.S. "Journal History" November 2, 1857.

The Deseret News for November 4, 1857, wrote:

FROM CARSON VALLEY. The company from Carson began to arrive on the 1st inst., and will probably all be in by the 3rd. This company, with few exceptions, embraces all who were sent on missions to that region, also several from Oregon and California. . . .

point up with special emphasis the Mormon solidarity, the fervor of their belief that they were establishing The Kingdom of God upon the earth and that each should labor wherever he was most needed.

JUANITA BROOKS

Juanita Brooks was born in Bunkerville, Nevada, at the turn of the century—the eldest of 10 children of D. Henry and Mary Hafen Leavitt. She spent her childhood there and graduated from the Virgin Valley High School before it had a building in which to meet. Classes were held in the church house and in private homes.

She was first married to Ernest Pulsipher. She was left a widow with a baby son 15 months later. Returning to finish college, she graduated from Brigham Young University at Provo, Utah, in 1925. Following graduation she taught at Dixie College for 8 years. Her Master of Arts degree is from Columbia.

Married in 1933 to William Brooks of St. George, Utah.

She spearheaded the WPA Project which later became the Historical Records Survey, by collecting and copying pioneer diaries, letters and early journals. In 1944 she became a "Field Fellow" for the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Out of this activity grew the assignment to make a study of the *Mountain Meadows Massacre,* published in 1950 by Stanford University Press.

This was followed by the editing, with Robert G. Cleland, of five volumes of hand written diaries of John D. Lee. Soon after this work was started, Dr. Cleland suffered a stroke, so after the first 132 pages of Volume I, the work is largely that of Mrs. Brooks. It was published in 1955 by Huntington Library under the title of *A Mormon Chronicle.*

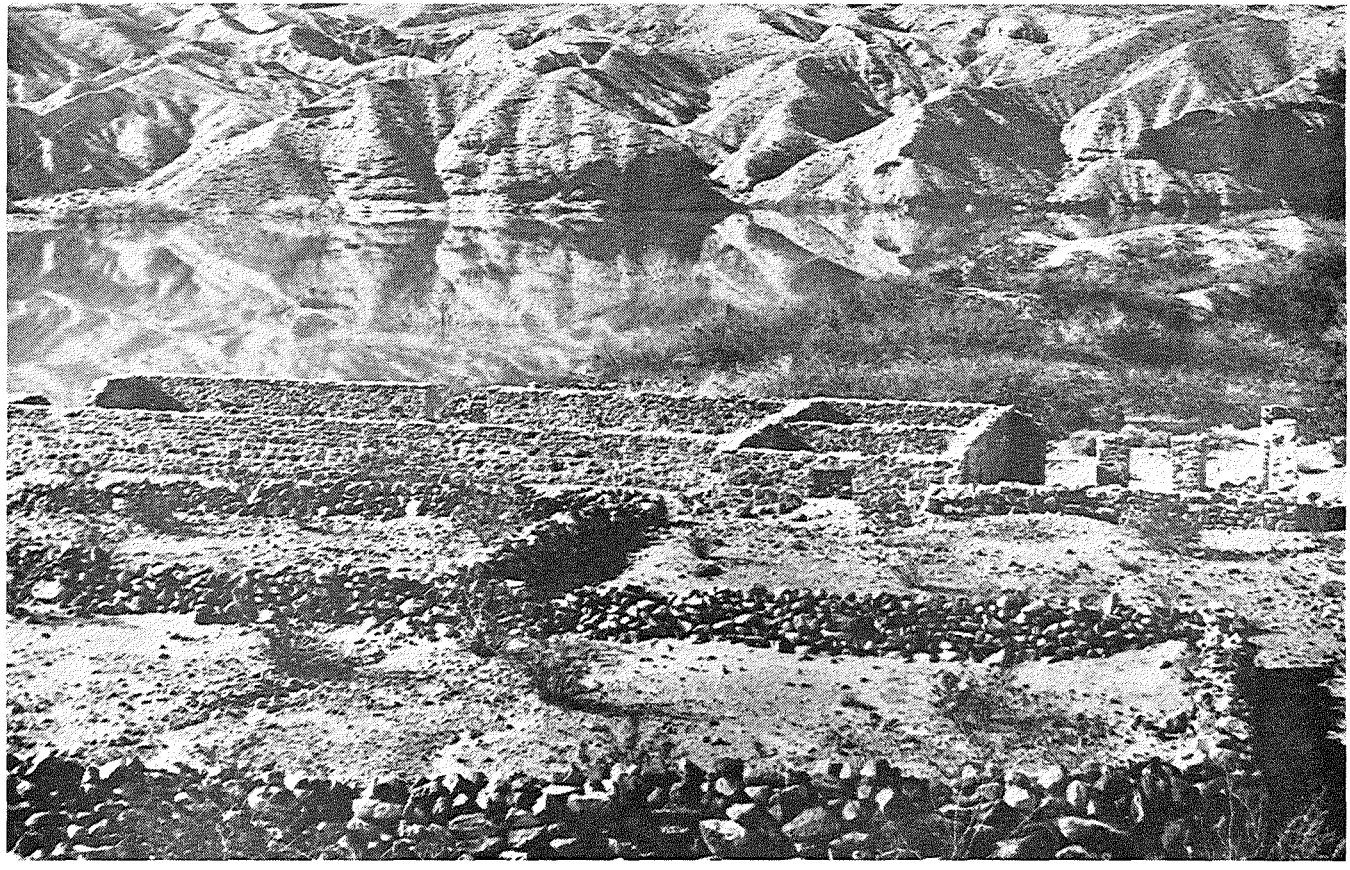
During 1961–62 she edited the Diaries of Hosea Stout. This work will appear this year.

Perhaps Mrs. Brooks' best known work is *John Doyle Lee,* Zealot, Pioneer Builder, Scapegoat, published in 1961 by the Arthur H. Clark Company.

Utah State University at Logan, Utah, conferred an honorary Ph.D—Doctor of Letters last spring (1964).

EARLY MORMON SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTHERN NEVADA

Elbert B. Edwards



The walls of the warehouse at Call's Landing, still sturdy in 1935, bear mute testimony to an era passed.

—Elbert Edwards Collection

EARLY MORMON SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTHERN NEVADA

The early development of Southern Nevada is largely the history of the Mormon colonies called by the central authorities of the Church to establish settlements wherever conditions would warrant, and where natural resources would support its expanding population. The factors which contributed to the selection of present day Nevada sites for settlement were many. Basically, however, the desire of the church to achieve self sufficiency and a home for the migrating multitudes, together with the natural resources of the area which could provide water and soil in sufficient amounts to support an agrarian and pastoral community were the principal contributors. Other influences are found in the hope of developing possible trade and travel routes to aid rerouted immigrants seeking to reach the west from Europe or the Eastern Seaboard, and the desire to convert the Indians to their religion.

The topography of present day Southeastern Nevada qualified the area to serve such purposes in various ways. Atypical to the greater portion of the State which lies within the great Basin and provides no outlet to the sea nor any natural travel routes, all of the southern settlements are located in the Virgin River drainage area or, as in the case of Las Vegas, are directly tributary to the Colorado River. The southernmost areas had been explored and trails established by Jedediah Smith, the Spanish traders, and Fremont. The northern reaches of the area extend into northern Lincoln County and form a number of small but fertile valleys destined to serve the purposes of the Mormon hierarchy in finding homesites for some of its migrating members.

The water rising in the upper reaches of the area in Spring Valley constitutes the head of the Meadow Valley Creek which flows intermittently in a general southerly direction for some 130 miles to its confluence with the Muddy River. In its comparatively direct and undeviating course it provides water for Spring Valley, Eagle Valley, Rose Valley, and Meadow Valley. At the south end of Meadow Valley it enters the Meadow Valley Wash. At the site of Caliente it is joined by its sole major tributary, Clover Creek, which stems from another small oasis, Clover Valley. Below Caliente it enters the 75-mile-long defile of precipitous and rugged Rainbow Canyon. The drainage then merges with the Muddy River, the dominant stream of Southern and Eastern Nevada, which, however, flows but a scant 28 miles to its confluence with the Virgin River. In all the Muddy Valley drainage portion of the basin comprises some 4,194 square miles.[1] The Virgin River flows some 50

[1]Watershed Conditions in the Muddy River Basin, Nevada. United States Department of the Interior—Bureau of Reclamation, Branch of Project Planning, Region 3, Boulder City, Nevada, April 1950.

miles within the State from its entrance at the site of Mesquite to its confluence with the Colorado River.

The one other major geographic feature significant to the early church activities in the south is the Las Vegas Valley. This, too, is without the Great Basin, and drains directly into the Colorado River through the Vegas Wash. The principal feature here is the water supply provided by large springs whose water spread over a large area and produced a luxuriant meadow.

It was to this setting that we owe the earliest colonizing activity in the south. The springs had determined the trail to be adopted by the early Spanish caravans as they have subsequently determined the paths taken by wagon trains, Mormon settlers and missionaries, railroad and highways. Fremont following in the footsteps of the Spanish opened a trail into northern Utah for the Anglo-Saxon portion of North America which was in turn developed by the Mormons into the Mormon Trail, and ultimately resulted in their settlements along the major water courses of the area.

The hope of utilizing this route as a means of ingress for immigrants had led to the establishment of a colony at San Bernardino. This in turn led to the recognition of the Las Vegas Valley as a naturally desirable location for a way-station between the northern settlements and the new gateway colony in southern California. It was in accordance with this plan that, at the general conference of the church in April 1855, 30 members were called to establish a settlement at Las Vegas, and in June of that year the company arrived at the site for that purpose, and also to convert the Indians to their gospel as the opportunities would provide.

During the ensuing 3 years the colony served its purpose by providing a resting place for travelers on the southern route to California, as a center from which explorations were conducted, and from which an abortive attempt was made to secure a supply of lead from the Potosi mineral deposits in the south end of the Spring Mountain Range.

In 1858, however, the Las Vegas mission shared the common fate of abandonment with other outlying settlements when the settlers were recalled to northern Utah because of threatened conflict with the United States government.

Also during the decade of the fifties the population expanded into the upper Virgin River Basin with the hope of utilizing the natural conditions to further add to the church plan for self sufficiency through the production of cotton and other products which required a long growing season. A rapid increase in the population of the area during the early sixties, accompanied by a dry summer and severe water shortage in 1863, stimulated extensive exploration for new area for settlement.

Preliminary explorations in 1854, and again in 1858, had brought to the attention of church authorities the existence of the meadowlands in the northern reaches of the Meadow Creek drainage basin.[2] In 1863, too, the area had come to the attention of the southern settlers through the discovery of a rich lode of silver ore on the present site of Pioche, and the resulting claims staked out by William Hamblin and others. Accordingly several families under the leadership of Edward Bunker moved into Clover Valley 80 miles to the northwest of St. George in the spring of 1864. Shortly after a number of families under the leadership of Francis Lee settled in Meadow Valley, arriving there on May 4, 1864.

The new settlements were visited later that month by Southern Mission President Erastus Snow and party, including the Washington County Surveyer. They assisted the Meadow Valley group in the selection of a townsite, and in the running of a grade level for a water ditch from the large spring which was the main source of water for the valley. The town was laid out in square blocks, 32 rods square, and with four home lots to each block.[3]

Francis Lee was named as presiding elder over the new community, and, in anticiptation of the arrival of other settlers, he was authorized to act as agent for the county surveyor, to locate immigrants as they arrived, and to issue surveyor's certificates. The mission clerk recounts that ". . . on motion, the town was named Panaca, Indian name for white metal—silver."[4]

President Snow counseled the settlers to concentrate on securing the enduring and permanent values of home ownership as tied to the soil. If they were to engage in mining it should be as a secondary consideration to the establishment of their homes, clearing and cultivating the land.

The mission president also observed that while making their survey of the valley they encountered a party of 12 soldiers detached from Col.

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[2]Brigham Young was led to think, probably by Fremont's Report of his Exploring Expedition of 1843–44, and by his map of the Great Basin, that there were in the southwestern parts of the Great Basin, now in Southern Nevada, a large number of small valley oases separated by wide expanses of deserts and mountains. To seek out and chart these supposed sites he sent Bishop David Evans of Lehi in 1854. Evans, however, turned in an adverse report, indicating that he found no such sites as were expected.

When the Mormon country was threatened with invasion by the U.S. Army in 1858, and Brigham Young was seeking another retreat for his people, he again sent out exploring parties into the area to the southwest of Salt Lake City. One group under the direction of George W. Bean, consisting of 104 men with teams, wagons, farming implements, and seed, traveled west and southwest from Parowan. They recognized in the White River Valley one such possible site for which they were seeking and left 45 men to establish a settlement. The remainder of the party extended its search over 800 miles of the Great Basin deserts, and crossed over seven mountain ranges and as many valleys.

A second party led by William H. Dame explored tre country to the south of that covered by Bean. A camp was established on the present site of Panaca where water was diverted and a few acres of corn planted. One group from this party penetrated as far west as the present site of Rhyolite. Reports of both parties, however, but supported the earlier one made by Bishop Evans, and no areas were found that would support any considerable number of people.

[3]Bleak, James G., *Annals of the Southern Utah Mission*, Typescript Copy Book A. p. 145.

[4]*Ibid.*, p. 146.

P. E. Conner's command. The detachment advised they were seeking a practicable wagon road from Fort Crittendon, Millard County, to the Colorado River and Fort Mohave.

On his return to his mission headquarters President Snow reported encountering several parties of prospectors and miners traveling to the mines. He expressed concern that the soldiers and miners had in mind to lay claim to the farmland and water rights of the area as well as to the mineral rights. Accordingly, 37 additional male settlers were called to reinforce the colony at Panaca. Elder John Nebeker was also called to go to Meadow Valley and direct and take general charge of all the infant settlements in that region.

Probably the greatest problem with which the settlers of the new western settlements had to contend during their earlier years was that created by the Indians. Settler relations with the natives fell into the typical evolutionary pattern, passing in successive stages from reticence and reserve to curiosity and goodwill, to begging, insolence, demands, theft, and open hostility. The influx of settlers gradually attracted the natives in ever-increasing numbers and actual frictions began with the incident related in the oft-told tale of Grandmother Lee, armed only with a stick of firewood, repulsing an armed assault by two Indians, followed by the theft of oxen, the demand for a white man to accompany a newly deceased chief to the happy hunting grounds, the capture of five Indians trying to make good the demand, the killing of two in an attempt to escape, and the subsequent killing of the other three, all of which resulted in such a state of tension that a detachment of church-organized militia under Col. John D. L. Pearce was dispatched from mission headquarters to provide protection for the settlers in the Clover and Meadow Valley areas. At the same time, however, the Saints were advised that they must either develop self-sufficiency or withdraw and join settlements with greater concentrations of population. The policy and attitude of the church authorities toward the problems and responsibility is reflected in a letter from President Snow:

> ". . . I deeply regret the necessity for killing your Indian prisoners. I fear it will make conciliations more difficult. I recommend to Bro. Bunker the policy of taking no prisoners, but of killing thieves in the act. I hope, however, that God will over rule it for the best.
>
> Your letters are silent in relation to the progress made in building your stockade.
>
> If there is indeed a combined effort of a large number of warriors to attack Panaca, as these letters represent, I would advise that your women and children be at once sent to Pinto Creek or elsewhere, beyond danger, under a sufficient escort, and for the men to remain to secure the crops, complete the stockade, and entrench themselves if necessary. . . .

> To suppose that any considerable number of men can be spared from the harvest fields of Washington and Iron Counties, to be stationed at Panaca for your defense, is simply absurd. You must either concentrate and adopt the measures of defense recommended, or abandon the place with your families and stock. And what is said of Panaca will apply with still greater force to Clover Valley. . . .
>
> If it is necessary to assume the offensive and make war upon them in their places of rendevouz, or retreat, I consider that Governor Doty or General Connor, with the Governor's approval, should attend to this. . . ."[5]

As a result of the general feeling of insecurity about one-half of the population moved out of the valley at the time the Pearce troop left. It was recommended that all leave but ". . . Sister Lee opposed the proposition and the Lees and a few others stayed."[6] Later that fall the small community was augmented by a few miners, and a neighbor community was established in Eagle Valley, about 20 miles to the north.

It was in November of this year (1864) that word came to the people of these western valleys of the Utah Territory that Congress had admitted the Territory of Nevada with its population of 40,000 as a state of the Union on October 31. At this time, however, the announcement was of relatively little significance to them as the boundary of the new state lay an undetermined distance to the west.

In April of 1865 Elder John Nebeker reported to the mission president a visit to Meadow Valley and vicinity, noting that he ". . . found the Saints enjoying a good spirit living closely together for safety. They were quite energetic in fencing, farming, cutting hay, etc. In Clover Valley he found the same good sprit. Meadow Valley, Eagle Valley and Clover Valley, in all about forty families, he judged would raise 3000 bushels of wheat this year, besides corn, potatoes, etc. . . ."[7]

The Indians, however, continued to be troublesome. In Clover Valley the stealing and killing of cattle led to the pursuit and apprehension of one group of 20. They were disarmed, and their camp was burned, but none were killed. A few days later another message to headquarters reported seven more head of cattle were driven off in spite of their attempt to keep them under guard at all times. Bishop Edward Bunker reported that some 75 head of cattle had been stolen by the Indians from that place the past spring and winter.

In March of 1866 the management of Indian affairs was largely taken from the hands of the settlers in the Meadow Valley area. An Indian, Okus, was apprehended wearing the clothes of a Pahranagat Valley miner. The Indian, under pressure, took a group of the Panaca

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[5]*Ibid.*, p. 154.
[6]*Ibid.*, p. 156.
[7]*Ibid.*, p. 170.

farmers to the site of the killing. Enroute they encountered a posse from the Pahranagat mines intent on fixing the blame on the Mormons for Roger's disappearance. On learning the facts, however, they hanged the Indian and then traveled to Clover Valley where they killed three Indians and hanged another who had been identified by Okus as a prime troublemaker.

The persistence of troubles with the natives throughout the southern mission led the president of the church to issue a statement of instructions and policy, emphasizing that those communities too small to provide adequate protection should be abandoned. When this counsel was carried to Clover Valley in the summer of 1866 by Mission President Snow, on his recommendation, the settlement was abandoned with some of the families moving to Panaca, and others going back to the settlement in present day Utah.

Clover Valley, however, was left unsettled for less than 3 years. In May of 1869 Lyman L. Woods, accompanied by Richard Bird and family moved in and made a permanent settlement in the valley.

The settlements of Meadow Valley and Clover Valley were but a few months old when a call was issued at the fall conference of the church for a large number of members to aid in the further development in the western valleys of the Virgin Basin and along the Colorado River. Church authorities had long considered avenues of ingress into the isolated western regions for immigrants, supplies, and equipment that would relieve them of the arduous trek over the plains and mountains.[8]

Anson Call, pioneer builder and colonizer was accordingly called to seek a site at the head of navigation on the Colorado River, to establish a settlement at that place, and to build a landing and warehouse to facilitate the use of the river to bring goods and immigrants to Utah. A site was selected a short way upstream from the high point reached by Lieutenant Ives in his exploratory trip of 1857–58, and a community was laid out and several buildings and a landing were constructed.

In order to further aid the plan for transportation and also to strengthen the southern mission in the production of cotton, groups were assigned to settle along the Muddy River. The first of those called, a group of 12 brethren, arrived in the valley on January 8, 1865, and settled near the confluence of the Muddy River with the Virgin. The new community was named St. Thomas, honoring Thomas Smith, the leader of the group. A townsite was laid out providing for 85 homesites of 1 acre each, a similar number each of vineyard lots of 2½ acres, and farm lots of 5 acres.

The first visit of President Erastus Snow and other authorities of the

[8]McClintock, James H. "Mormon Settlements in Arizona, A Record of Peaceful Conquest of the Desert." The Manufacturing Stationers, Inc., Phoenix, 1921. 110–111.

southern mission in April found the small colony industriously planting crops for the pending growing season. Nine hundred acres of farmland had been surveyed and 600 acres had been assigned. The visitors also sought out other favorable locations for settlement up the valley from St. Thomas. An area some 8 miles north provided a six or seven hundred acre meadow, and a good millsite. By June this area had been settled, taking the name of St. Joseph, with Elder Warren Foote appointed as presiding elder.

In August the people of St. Thomas and St. Joseph were given a preview of problems of political jurisdiction to come when they had visiting politicians from Fort Mohave. The visitors advised the settlers they were located in Arizona Territory, and announced an election set for Tuesday, September 5. They requested that the communities send a representative to the Arizona Legislature. The settlers, however, ". . . did not appear to be dazzled by the spacious promises made by the visitors," and no election was held at this time.[9]

Another small settlement was established in the lower Muddy area utilizing the millsite 2 miles downstream from St. Joseph. Here Orrawell Simons built a grist mill which he used for grinding wheat flour, corn meal and salt.[10] He also constructed a cotton gin which he powered from the same source as the mill.

The settlements along the Muddy shared the problem of marauding and thieving Indians with the northern valleys. The natives were widely scattered by bands, and each minor geographic area had its own group under its own subchieftan. It was difficult to get them or their leaders together at one time, and so it was also difficult to be on good terms with all at one time. Cattle raids were the principal means of harrassment, but the raiders also stole crops, and it was not uncommon for them to raid the ripening fields of wheat, and anticipate the settlers in the harvest.[11]

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[9]Bleak, 180.

[10]Rock salt was available in large quanities on the Virgin River near St. Thomas. The grist mill reduced it to a rough granular form that permitted its domestic use, although the old fashioned coffee mill, common to most early kitchens, was also used. The salt supply was not only used for food seasoning, but was valuable as a meat preservative, for livestock, and as an item of trade.

[11]The Indians proved quite resourceful in developing ways of keeping themselves in beef supply. The settlers originally looked on the Muddy River as a protective factor and sought to use it as a moat. The Indians, however, often drove the cattle into the water or quicksand, from which they would salvage the dead animals for food.

Larson, Karl Andrew, *I Was Called to Dixie*. The Deseret News Press, 1961. Reporting from Journal History, February 4, 1866, quotes Warren Foote, "We were in the habit of turning our work cattle between the creek nights where we supposed they were safe from the Indians, but the third night after they came back they disappeared with 15 head of our oxen and 11 head of horses and mules. They made a bridge over the west creek and took them over the hills into that Big Wash and made their escape long before daylight. They also took eight or ten head from Simons place. It was noon before we could get started after them and then very poorly fitted out, having no horses left. They followed the Indians beyond the California road in the direction of the timber mountain. Water failing them, they were obliged to return."

On the occasion of a visit of the mission presidency of the settlements on the Muddy in 1866, a meeting was arranged with a number of the chiefs. The annals of the mission recount: "The following chiefs were present: 'Tut-se-gravits,' chief of the Santa Clara Indians; 'To-ish-obe,' principal chief of the Muddy Indians; 'William,' chief of the Colorado Band, and seventeen of his men; 'Farmer,' chief of the St. Thomas Band and twenty of his band; 'Rufus,' chief of the Muddy Springs band above the California Road and fourteen of his band; 'Frank,' chief of the Simmonsville Band and twelve of his band; and 'Thomas,' chief of the Indians at the Narrows of the Muddy and one of his men. Total, 7 chiefs, and 64 of their men. Pres. Erastus Snow spoke to them at some length, using Elder Andrew Smith Gibbons, as Interpreter, assisting (sic) by Elder James Pearce and Indian, 'Benjamin.' A very good feeling prevailed and the settlers on the Muddy flet (sic) that great good was accomplished."[12]

The arrival of a new group of missionaries in 1868 led to the establishment of a new settlement, to be called West Point, on the Upper Muddy. Andrew Gibbons, Indian interpreter of St. Thomas, accompanied them in hopes he could help them in making a peaceful settlement. The Indians gathered, however, in an angry mood and armed with bows and arrows, and demanded that the land be paid for. The arguments of the interpreter would have availed nothing had not the settlers displayed a strong armed force.

In 1869 the final settlement on the Muddy for this early period was established at Overton by a group of 10 families under the leadership of Elder Helaman Pratt.

Regardless of the Indian problem, life was hard in these frontier settlements. Building material especially on the Muddy was very scarce. The nearest timber was more than 40 miles distant. The settlers were even more isolated from all other supplies which they could not produce themselves. In like manner they were far removed from markets for their produce. Commercial transactions and benefits were very limited. In order to compensate in part it was customary in the issuance of a call for settlers for those in authority to select a group of workers, artisans, and craftsmen who could contribute to the self sufficiency of any given area. People were chosen who could serve the needs of a colony for blacksmith, miller, carpenters, masons, teachers, musicians, cobblers, etc., as well as farmers and stockmen, although specialists were also sought for the production of special crops such as cotton and fruits.

In addition the people were also dependent on their own efforts and devices for social, recreational, educational, and other cultural pursuits.

[12]Bleak, 215–216.

It was an occasion for rejoicing when church authorities, the president of the Southern Mission and his party, would make a regular quarterly visit to the different communities. A normal party itinerary would include President Snow with party of from four to eight traveling by team and buggy to the western settlements and visiting in order Clover Valley, Meadow Valley, Eagle Valley, and Spring Valley. Their reception at Panaca on the occasion of their visit on July 16, 1868 is described by the mission clerk:

> Thursday, 16 July 1868, the company traveled 40 miles to Panaca over a very rough road. Some 5 miles from Panaca a company of Cavalry and a martial band together with Bishop Alexander F. Barron and counselors of Panaca met the Missionaries. . . . Meetings were held on Friday 17th; each of the visiting brethren freely dispensing words of appreciation, encouragement, and of instruction of a temporal and spiritual nature.[13]

On succeeding days the party journeyed to other settlements in the area, visiting, addressing, and counseling with the settlers.

The presidency would also make corresponding visits to the Muddy settlements, visiting in turn St. Thomas, Simonsville, St. Joseph, and West Point. In all cases they were most heartily received. Not only were they welcomed because of the assistance and encouragement which they extended, they also represented the general authorities of the church, and brought the latest word from the leaders in Zion who were so highly revered.

The people took advantage of any opportunity for social gatherings. Community meetings and picnics were held in observance of major holidays. These included one, July 24, the day in 1847 when the Mormons first formally entered the Salt Lake Valley, signifying the founding of a new home, and typical of the Mormon community. On this occasion, as on July 4, the communities would salute the dawn with artillery-like explosions by the "shooting of the anvils,"[14] followed by martial band music and the raising of the Flag at sunrise. The people would then celebrate through the day by public meetings with orators of the day, races and athletic contests for the young, horse racing, picnicking, etc., followed by a community dance.

One journal recounts, "Besides our religious meetings we organized a 'mutual aid society' " for the improvement of old and young in public speaking. This was amusing and interesting.[15] Spelling bees, alphabet

[13]*Ibid.*, 271.

[14]Heavy blacksmith anvils were placed one on top of another with a heavy iron hoop between them containing a heavy charge of black powder. The explosion, touched off with a fuse or trail of powder, was well enough contained by the weight of the anvils to give a cannon-like roar when the force of the explosion blew the anvils apart.

[15]Pulsipher, John, Diary.

combination games, and mental arithmetic contests were also common.[16] Dancing occupied a most important position in the social life and relaxation from the dangers and toil of even the smallest community just as it did for the church as a whole. The fiddler was considered as essential to the welfare of the community as were many of the artisans.

Hunting, particularly of predatory animals, also constituted an enjoyable diversion. John Pulsipher noted in his diary: ". . . on Saturday, New Year's Day, we enjoyed a grand party made up of wolf hunters. Our young men formed into two parties have been killing wolves, wildcats and etc., for the last three months. The side that got beat was to furnish supper and dance for all. A host of destructive animals have been killed and a sight of fun in the hunt as well as in the party, which was very good."[17] Such activities even extended as far as roping mountain lions and dragging them to death at the end of a rope. This was something that created a popular hero, and provided conversation for days.

An integral part of the church frontier protective system was a well-organized militia. Each isolated frontier community also maintained its own unit, and drill was held regularly. Note has been made of a detachment sent for the protection of Panaca during an imminent Indian uprising, and of the Panaca cavalry unit. On August 3, 1865, visiting church authorities at Clover Valley held a military inspection. "Military muster was had at 7:30 A.M. Thirteen men mustered. Eight more were out on duty guarding livestock, making in all 21 capable of bearing arms. Reports showed 11 rifles, 5 double-barrelled shot guns, 4 revolvers, 3 holster pistols, 1 rifled pistol and 540 rounds of ammunition. The men were under Dudley Leavitt and Samuel Knight, Captains of tens."[18]

On May 30, 1866, on one of his regular visits to the settlements on the Muddy, President Erastus Snow, as brigadier general, organized ". . . a Battalion of the Nauvoo Legion for the Muddy consisting of ninety-three men, rank and file, Thomas S. Smith, Major."[19] As opportunity permitted groups would gather at central points for concentrated periods of drill. All units were subject to inspection by Col. William H. Dame, Commander of the Iron Military District, which included Washington County.

As in all Mormon communities, schools and provision for education held a priority position. Arrangements for formal instruction in the basics of the three R's came as soon as possible after a minimum of the

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[16]To lend interest various devices were resorted to. A phonetic approach by syllables was common. The writer's mother often resorted to this method of spelling as illustrated by this spelling of Constantinople: "C-o-n, 'tis kon; s-t-a-n, 'tis stan, 'tis kon'stan; t-i, 'tis te, 'tis stan..te, 'tis kon'stan..te; n-o, 'tis no, 'tis te..no, 'tis stan..te..no, 'tis kon'stan..to..no; p-l-e, 'tis pel, 'tis no'pel, 'tis te..no'pel, 'tis stan..te..no'pel, 'tis kon'stan..te..no'pel.

[17]Pulsipher, op. cit.

[18]Bleak, 178.

[19]*Ibid.*, 216.

temporal and physical needs had been met. The school house, which also served as the church building, was the first of the public buildings to be provided. School and election districts were organized under the jurisdiction of Washington County, with Clover Valley being designated District No. 12, Panaca, No. 13, Eagle Valley, No. 14, etc.[20]

In spite of the Indian problems, the poverty, sickness, hardships, and isolation the settlements in these western valleys of the Utah and Arizona Territories reflected progress. They were breaking a new and hostile land, but they were making it productive, and developing a frontier comfort in their self-sufficiency. There was reason to think that the worst of their troubles were over when they began to be plagued by new problems of an entirely different nature.

Mention has been made of the admission of Nevada as a State in October of 1864. Such action by Congress, however, was of no immediate concern to these frontier settlements which were separated from the population center of the new state by several hundred miles of the most inhospitable desert. Even when word reached them that Congress had taken an additional degree of longitude from their own Territory of Utah to add to the new state, and had also provided that the new eastern boundary line should be extended to its junction with the Colorado River, and should follow that stream to its junction with the eastern boundary of California, they did not feel they were concerned.

It was with a feeling of incredulity and shock, therefore, that the Washington County court gave consideration to a communication from John W. Norton, justice of the peace of Panaca, and dated June 13, 1869, stating that a man professing to be the assessor and tax collector of Lincoln County, Nevada, had attempted to assess the property of Panaca as a part of the new county. The Utah court, still in de facto jurisdiction, gave explicit instructions to the assessor and tax collector of Washington County to continue collecting taxes at Panaca until the state line of the western border had been definitely determined by official survey.

On a regular visit to the Meadow Creek settlements in January of the following year the Southern Mission authorities were appraised of a notice received by the settlers of Clover, Meadow, Eagle, and Spring Valleys charging them as defendants to appear at the county seat of Lincoln County at Hiko on February 28 or judgment would be rendered against them by default. The sheriff and posse would be commissioned to come and force collection. An urgent request for advice was telegraphed to the authorities in Salt Lake City with the following response from President Snow to Bishop Henrie of Panaca under date of February 6:

[20] *Ibid.*, 200.

> Since writing you and Bishop Hatch by last mail, I have had another talk with the Acting Governor, who advised the U. S. Supreme Court for the Territory of Utah to issue an injunction against the Sheriff of Lincoln County, Nevada, or any of his deputies or assistants, restraining them from any attempt at collecting taxes until the line is officially determined; and told me that the court was willing to issue such a writ, and place it in the hands of a Deputy Marshal, or a Special Deputy among you, ready to serve whenever attempts shall be made to collect. I have requested the Attorney General to have such an injunction issued ready to forward to you by next mail; as it is quite doubtful which side of you the mail will come. . . . Try to keep down any violent measures until it be definitely known.
>
> You have (sic) better send an agent to answer for you at the Hiko Court so as to avoid, if possible, any further excitement, or great expense or more angry feelings, in case you should find yourselves in Nevada. . . .
>
> (Signed) ERASTUS SNOW[21]

Late in February a protest was forwarded to the Governor and State Legislature of Nevada in which the citizens of the Meadow Creek settlements ". . . . Do hereby enter our solemn protest against the injustice of the State of Nevada in demanding through Justice John D. Gorin's Court at Hiko, that we pay to said State of Nevada prior to the official determination, and declaration, of the Boundary Line between Utah and Nevada. This, our solemn Protest, we enter because we have been, and are now, organized in, and officered by, the Territory of Utah, and as such we have been, and still are, paying taxes to said Territory of Utah."[22]

On August 11, 1870, an express rider arrived at Mission Headquarters in St. George, after 24 hours of continuous riding to report a situation that left the Panaca citizens seething with anxiety, excitement, and unrest. The previous afternoon, while the men of the community were all at work on the big water ditch a deputy sheriff from Pioche, accompanied by three other men, appeared at the Panaca Co-op Store and demanded an inventory of their goods in order to determine license fees for the State of Nevada. On the refusal of the clerk to comply the deputy read a summons issued by the justice of the peace of Pioche ordering J. W. Norton, agent for the store to appear at Pioche the following day. The sheriff and his men then, with drawn guns, took the key to the building, ordered the clerk and two customers to leave, and locked the door, leaving the key with one of the posse.

The townsmen, on being informed of the proceedings, armed themselves and demanded the key. The holder meekly returned it to them.

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[21]Bleak, B, 33.

[22]*Ibid.*, 37.

The Panaca people were advised to use the writ of injunction in such instances or whenever occasion demanded.

In the south and along the Muddy River morale was at an even lower ebb than on Meadow Creek. At West Point the combination of Indian problems, floods, plagues of grasshoppers, isolation, and epidemics, together with economic poverty, proved so discouraging to them that President Snow wrote from St. George authorizing them to abandon the settlement, and giving them permission to settle anywhere they might choose among the Saints.

The breaking up of this community, together with a feeling that President Brigham Young had been disappointed in the resources of the valley on his visit in 1870, also served to discourage the residents of the other Muddy communities. Then on December 14, 1870, came a letter signed by Brigham Young, George Albert Smith, and Erastus Snow with the disheartening word that the official boundary survey placed the settlements within the jurisdiction of the State of Nevada. The communication also suggested that in view of the many adverse conditions, including the geographical, social, and economic, as well as the political, the Saints should gather in council and chart their future course. They should weigh the relative advantages and disadvantages, and then all should abide by the decision of the majority. In any case, however, a petition should be submitted to the State of Nevada requesting an abatement of back taxes, and also for the formation of a new county.[23]

President Erastus Snow also wrote to the settlers at Panaca advising them of the final establishment of the boundary line of the State, and definitely placing the Meadow Valley settlement within the confines of Nevada. He suggested to this community, however, that before they sell or otherwise abandon the settlement and move out that they consider the relative advantages that would accrue to them from having a good market at the mines of Pioche which would enable them to meet the Nevada tax assessments.

On Tuesday, December 20, mission authorities from St. George met with the people of the Muddy River settlements to consider future action. A resolution was drafted and presented providing: "Resolved that we abandon the Muddy and appoint a Delegation to look out a new location." The resolution was adopted by a vote of 61 for and 2 against.

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[23]*Ibid.*, 75. 80. ". . . We also petition that your Honorable Body will, at the earliest practicable date, organize a new County, to be called Las Vegas County, with boundaries as follows, to wit: —Beginning at the point where the East Line of the State of Nevada crosses the summit of the Beaver Dam Mountains, thence, Westerly along said Mountains to the upper end of the Cañon at the South East end of the Paleranegat (sic) Valley, where the road from the Muddy Valley, merges into the Paleranegat (sic) Valley, thence due South to the boundary line of the State of California; thence along said boundary line of California to its intersection with the Colorado River; thence up said River to where the Eastern boundary line of the State of Nevada intersects said River; thence along said Eastern boundary of Nevada to the place of beginning. . . ."

Those voting against were Daniel Bonelli and wife.[24] The citizens in assembly then prepared petitions to be presented to the Governor and Legislature of the State of Nevada requesting the abatement of all taxes assessed by the authorities of Lincoln County, and the organization of a new county to be called Las Vegas County. A petition was also prepared and addressed to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States which listed their grievances and requested that that portion of the area which had been taken from the Territories of Utah and Arizona be ceded back to those territories.

In February 1871, the historian for the Southern Mission made an entry in his journal that "This month most of the settlers on the Muddy left their homes returning to Utah because of the oppressive Gold tax of Nevada. At this time of their leaving, their wheat was in the 'boot.' Most of them went in a body to Long Valley under leadership of Bishop James Leithead and Daniel Stark; arriving there on the 1st of March."[25]

Opportunities offered by the combined resources of land, water, and climate, together with the challenges that come from hard countries, new ground, and pressures were destined to ultimately outweigh political prejudices, and in 1877 a new colony was established within the confines of Southern Nevada. The desire of a number of families, then living in Santa Clara, Utah Territory, to carry on an experiment in communal living in accordance with church doctrine, and known within the church as the United Order, led them to seek an area where such an experiment could be carried on unhampered by previously established custom and economic organization.

A group of 23 persons under the leadership of Edward Bunker, Sr., met in Santa Clara to organize for the selection and establishment of a new home. A site on the left bank of the Virgin River but a few miles west of the eastern boundary was chosen for the new settlement. The advance party with 6 wagons and 70 head of cattle arrived at the site on January 5, 1877. They began immediately to construct a canal, clear and level the land and to plant their crops as the seasons justified.

Doctrine and organization provided for the transfer of all privately owned chattels to the organization, and that all should contribute according to ability, and share according to need. All labor, duties, and material benefits were shared in common. During the earlier period the

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[24]*Ibid.*, 79. Perkins, George E. *Pioneers of the Western Desert.* Wetzel Publishing Co., Inc. Los Angeles, Calif. 1947. The Bonelli family persisted in its determination to maintain a home in the valley, and made plans to remain. On the morning of the exodus, February 1, 1871, a son, Benjamin Franklin Bonelli, was born. The family continued to develop its holdings in the valley, and a few years later Bonelli acquired additional acreage near the junction of the Virgin with the Colorado. Here he produced crops with which he met many of the needs of the mines and mills at Eldorado Canyon and at White Hills in Arizona. He also built a ferry and landing on the Colorado River which did a profitable business until the coming of the railroads rerouted most of the travel.

[25]Bleak, B. 92.

community had a common kitchen and dining room. Chores were set up on a rotation schedule so there would be no occasion for charges of discrimination or for jealousies.

After the preliminary work was done the company was organized into stewardships. Regarding this organization Edward Bunker wrote:

> The land had been divided and drawn by lot; each stewardship was alloted teams, plows and other impliments necessary to carry on the labor assigned them. The products of the various stewardships was to be placed in a general store house and all members, if faithful, should draw therefrom according to their necessities.[26]

Crops consisted primarily of cotton, sugar cane for the production of molasses, wheat, corn, and garden vegetables. At the end of the first season the small community harvested 450 bushels of wheat, 12,000 pounds of cotton in the seed, and 600 gallons of molasses. This was increased the following season to 1,600 bushels of wheat, 30,000 pounds of cotton and 1,600 gallons of molasses.[27]

While the land was productive and the river water was adequate for irrigation purposes, the settlers faced a major problem in controlling the water. Initial ditch work to carry the water to the land required 108 man-days to construct 1½ miles of canal. The river flow, however, was unpredictable and its bed very unstable. The heavy spring run-off would wash out the dams, and the flash floods from summer storms would also wash away the rock and brush dams, and cutting laterally across the course of the canal, would break it in numerous places, and leave behind tons of gravel and other sediment. Keeping irrigation and culinary water available consumed an inordinate amount of time and labor. It is generally agreed that such a project during the formative years of the settlement would have been impossible under any conditions other than those provided under the United Order. Dedication to the common good, and response to accepted direction and leadership provided for a maximum production from the resources available.

Many and frequent council meetings were held to determine if the project should be abandoned in the face of such terrific odds. Invariably, however, the settlers turned out to again take up the fight against the river.

A Dixie poet expressed the sentiments of many when he wrote:

> The old Virgin River hath often perplexed us,
> By tearing out our ditches and dams by the score;
> Like an insatiate gourmand, it many times vexed us,
> By greedily crying, "I want more and more!"[28]

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[26]Bunker, Edward. History of Bunkerville, Typescript.

[27]*Ibid.*

[28]Walker, Charles L. Dixie Pioneers, quoted by Larson, op. cit. 656.

The Virgin farmers took advantage of one of the natural resources of the area, the Virgin Valley Salt Mountain, to realize a small amount of cash income and to secure items of farm equipment, harness, wagons, etc., which they could not provide themselves. The mines at Silver Reef, in need of salt for flux in the milling process, paid $25 a ton for the salt delivered. That the Bunkerville settlers would mine and haul this commodity to the mills, round trip of 235 miles, over the most treacherous of river bottom roads, is again an indication of their dedication to their cause.[29]

The Bunkerville United Order, however, proved quite typical of most such experiments. The industrious and frugal could not help but feel resentment in seeing the careless and wasteful take advantage of their labors. Differences which were small in the beginning, grew and became accentuated with the passage of time. In his *History of Bunkerville*, Edward Bunker wrote of the dissolution of the order:

> We continued working in steward-ships until Oct. 1880, when it became manifest that some stewardships, thru their economy and industry were gathering and laying up in abundance, while others thru carelessness and bad management were wasting the means of the company. Each year brought them further in debt to the company. This was very unsatisfactory to those whose ambition was to accumulate, at least, the necessities of life, and the result was that at a general meeting, held for that purpose, it was decided that each stewardship should have the right to draw eighty (80%) percent, of the proceeds of their labors and that the treasurer be instructed to issue the same. The twenty (20%) to be held as a fund to keep the capital stock good. In case of an unforseen misfortune, a stewardship might with the consent of the company draw from the fund as agreed. Soon after the above amendment was accepted a portion of the company gave notice of a desire to draw out of the company. This required a general settlement and the feelings caused thru this settlement were such that a discontinuance of the Order was considered best and the Order was broken up with the result that the Company was able to pay off all the capital stock and seventeen (17%) of the labor performed.[30]

Following the settlement of Bunkerville other families began to move into the Muddy Valley, and that whole area was gradually reactivated. In 1880 a number of families from St. George, Panaca, and Pine Valley moved onto the Mesquite Flat across the river and slightly upstream

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[29]The road along the river bottom crossed the stream thirty-eight times. It was common for even light loads to become mired in the sand, and for the freighters to spend hours in digging their wagons out, or in finding additional teams to help pull them out. Larson reports a song the freighters sang as related to him by William E. Abbot:

They haul heavy salt over this hard river bed,
They break down their wagons, their teams are half fed,
They mire down their horses, and then they get stuck,
They break up their harness, they have some bad luck.
Hurrah! Hurray! They're hauling salt yet,
And if they stick to it, they will come out of debt.

[30]Bunker, op. cit.

from Bunkerville. The settlement was called Mesquite, and the usual steps were taken to establish a community. These people also experienced the usual opposition from the land, the water, the climate, isolation, disease, and poverty.[31] The combined forces of adversity were more than the new settlers could overcome, and the settlement was abandoned, to be reoccupied 2 years later by Dudley Leavitt who moved across the river from Bunkerville to make the community permanent.

The later years of the Southern Nevada settlement indicated a great improvement in the acceptance of the Mormon settlers and in their reaction to the political forces in control. This is reflected in a news release from the Church Historian's Office in 1892 in which Andrew Jensen is quoted:

> Although this is within the limits of high taxed Nevada, the people here find no reason for complaint on this account, as they receive back in school funds considerably more money than they put out in taxes, and besides, both the state and county officers are very kind and considerate to our people, and exhibit no animosity whatever toward them on account of their religious belief.[32]

At the end of one hundred years the total influence of these settlers, so intrepid in the face of obstacles, is as unassessable within the time allotted as is the total story. It must inevitably lie, however, in the challenges left to posterity, and the effects of the inspiration from example.

Inherent in man's nature, is the urge to respond to the challenges of adversity identified by Toynbee as the challenges of hard country, of new ground, of blows, of pressures, and of penalization, from which new cultures are nurtured. Banished from the Eden of the rich and fertile Valley of the Mississippi, the Mormons had accepted these challenges along with that from Moses, to earn their bread in the sweat of their face.

In the like manner basic doctrine of the church as propounded and interpreted by their ancient prophets, summarized in the succinct phrase, "there is an opposition in all things," together with the doctrine of eternal progress, can be interpreted in the words of the immortal Walt Whitman wherein he wrote: "It is provided in the essence of things that from the fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make greater struggle necessary," and we add, from which greater successes may be realized.

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[31]Malaria was a common affliction among all of the settlements along the rivers and at times severely cut into the man power available to carry on the work. Where the rivers spread over the land the swampy nature of some of the meadows was particularly productive of the anopheles mosquito. While the settlers spoke of the disease as ague or chills and fever, and made no association with the mosquito, they did note that the draining of the swamps tended to lessen the affliction; and so attributed the sickness to the miasma which rose from the swamps. Larson, 615.

[32]Deseret News, 45:499. Quoted in MS. History of Moapa Stake by Larson, op. cit. 174.

ELBERT EDWARDS

Elbert B. Edwards, a native of Nevada, was born in Panaca in 1907. His father arrived in Nevada with the first permanent migration into Southern Nevada in May 1864. His mother's family were the first permanent settlers of Clover Valley, Lincoln County.

Mr. Edwards graduated from the University of Nevada in 1929, following which he taught history in the Las Vegas schools for a period of 9 years. In 1938 he was appointed Deputy State Superintendent of Public Instruction over the southern district, and in 1940 he became superintendent of the Boulder City schools. He retained this position until 1963 at which time he retired from education to affiliate with Frontier Fidelity Savings and Loan Association in Las Vegas. He has held a number of positions in the state educational organizations and in civic service in Clark County. He currently is chairman of the Public Employees' Retirement Board.

Mr. Edwards has had a life-long interest in Nevada history and through the years he has accumulated much source material dealing with the area. In 1933 he contributed a chapter on Southern Nevada to the History of Nevada edited by ex-Governor James G. Scrugham.

With this issue, the Nevada Historical Society begins publication of the papers presented at the First Annual History Conference. This symposium was held at the Riverside Hotel in Reno, May 7, 8, 9, 1964, and was sponsored by the Society and the University of Nevada. Other material covering the early cattle and sheep industries will follow.

. . . the editor