NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

EARLY CATTLE IN ELKO COUNTY

Mrs. John Patterson

SHEEP IN NEVADA

Clel Georgetta

SUMMER
1965

VOLUME VIII
Number 2

NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

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

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

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

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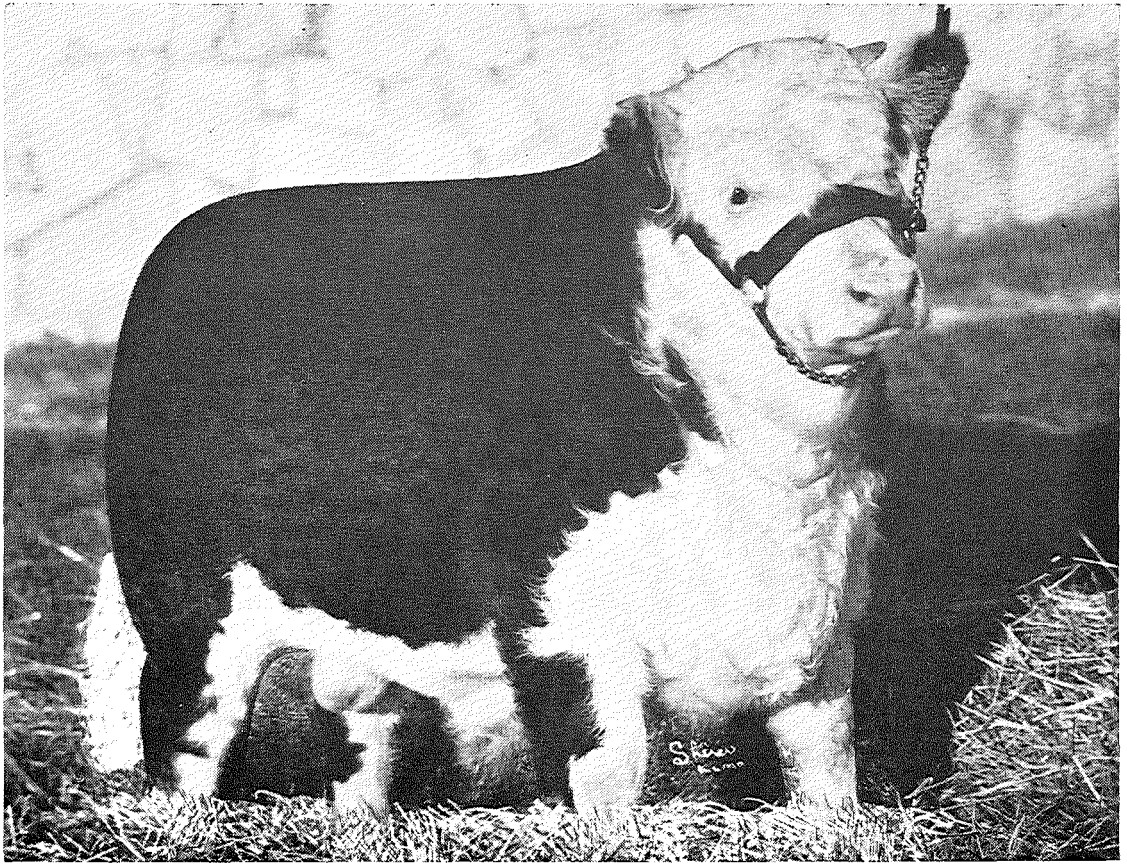
The NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY is published by the Nevada Historical Society, P.O. Box 1129, Reno, Nevada. Orders for membership, change of address, and undeliverable copies should be addressed to the Society.

Second class mailing privilege authorized at Reno, Nevada

SPO, Carson City, Nevada, 1965

EARLY CATTLE IN ELKO COUNTY

Mrs. John Patterson



Elko County is noted for purebred Herefords, such as this Silver Zato bred on the H. H. Cazier ranch.

EARLY CATTLE IN ELKO COUNTY

In Northeastern Nevada, where temperatures often dip to 40 degrees below zero, lies one of the great counties of our State. This vast area, larger than the combined states of Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Jersey, still retains its flavor of the old West; for even today thirsty and dried-out cowpokes ride the juniper-covered hills, sagebrush flats, and tortuous trails of towering mountains caring for their cattle which total one-third the combined numbers of the 17 Nevada counties. To even fresh and raw incident time has a way of tangling and shattering facts, so that to unravel the naked truth is a task of gigantic proportions. In order that the beginning of the cattle business of Elko County be not lost I shall relate tales of research and legend, exploration and pioneer reminiscence.

The first cattle brought into this country were cattle that had weakened and faltered along the way of the Humboldt and Overland Trails. These exhausted animals were either traded with an occasional settler, or else turned loose to fare as best they could with whatever grass and water the fagged-out critter might find. These numbers, however, were small, and the first cattle of any quantity to reach Elko County were brought into that country in the two decades following the Civil War when herds of bellowing Texas longhorns took to the trail and headed west to lush bunchgrass of Northeastern Nevada; or else they came as cattle driven from California, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, and Oregon in times of drought or in quest of a market, or to give their owners a new chance in this land of opportunity. These herds moved into the northeastern section of Nevada where there were no fences, the grass was thick between the sage and was free for the taking. They came in the years when bankrupt Texas numbered her cattle in the millions, her people in the thousands, and her money in worthless Confederate paper; and so for survival sought an outlet in the range countries of the North and West. They came in the years when Mexican cattle were reckoned in the worth of their hides and tallow, and a few jingling pesos; and they came in the years when California was fast being taken up by the homesteader, and men of the open range found themselves hemmed in by fences. It was the years from 1865 until as late as 1914. These were the years when men bought and moved droves into Elko County; and these were the years when speculators bought cattle and trailed them into this country, and then sold them in smaller lots to ranchers and farmers; and they were the years when the frugal farmer let his few milk cows build into a herd that could graze on the sagebrush range. They were the years when men gambled on a herd and the dirty, sweating cowboys—that they would deliver to the mining camps and government forts the cattle of the trail. They were the years when adventurers drifted down alkali-fogged trails with cattle that would

roam free and feed upon the lush grass and would make a man a quick and easy dollar. But whether they became a part of a big spread, or whether they became a part of a smaller ranch holding, or were a part of a speculator's dream, this movement of cattle marked the birth of the cattle industry of Elko County.

From the 1860's until the hard winter of 1889–90 the years were prosperous for the cattlemen. They lived under few laws except those of their own making; they laughed and they pocketed their money. They sang and hummed soft tunes to the hooves of the cattle at roundup time. Then came the year 1887; it was unusually dry and there was little rain that summer, and during the winter of 1887–88 little snow fell in the mountains and practically none upon the sagebrush flats. The following summer was dry and the grass shriveled to nothing, and the cattle gaunted up and lowed at the dry streams and stagnant, scummy waterholes. Then came October and November, and it half rained and half snowed on the poor skeleton-like animals as they shivered and turned their backs to the stinging sleet. Then came December, and the winter struck with the fury of demons. The wind howled and drifted snow in white tornadoes. By January 5 snow lay 3 feet deep on the level, and the grass and sage was covered over. Cattle were frozen stiff in solid drifts, and in the gulches cattle died too poor for the buzzards. The cowboys stumbled through snowdrifts that were shoulder high, and they rode floundering cow ponies into drifts where they dug out living cattle skeletons. At the same time, they left hundreds of cattle huddled in death, where the dead could take care of the dead, as they tried to get the living few back to the ranch. I've heard how one oldtimer, with the small herd he was able to get back to the ranch, took some of the hay he had cut by hand that summer and tied it onto his back and walked amid his cattle the night the temperature dropped to 60 degrees below zero. He knew if his cattle stopped moving and lay down they would never rise again. He walked among his cattle, for a man would freeze to death upon a horse. When he could stand the cold no longer he would call to the house and another would come out and put the hay upon his back and walk amid the cattle, and when he became numb with cold another replaced him, and so on through the night. The cold chilled the air until late spring, and the snow stayed on the ground until May when patches of brown grass became the symbol of the life of the land. Everywhere were frozen carcasses of cattle that had huddled against the willows to die in the cold and the blizzards, and as spring came on the carcasses of the cattle that had died along the bed of the Humboldt River began to float downstream, and the lower towns began to complain of the sickening stench. The outfits sifted their ghastly herds as they stood nearly lifeless during the spring roundup. Then the cattlemen learned the truth—they were flat broke. The grizzled and

stunned men were face to face with disaster. Some of the ranches closed out or went bankrupt. In this country that had been favored for the making of beef, one found a boneyard. Some of the cattlemen survived and began anew. Barbed wire was strung up and meadows fenced. Following the hard winter of 1889–90 many changes came to the Elko County ranges. There was plowing and pasture planting, hay mowing and winter feeding. And then came the sheep bells to tinkle over what had once been a cattlemen's free range, as whole bands of sheep moved in and nibbled off the grass too close to the roots. George Banks, who spent most of his 91 years in the cattle industry, related to me that as a young boy he lived with the Bill Hunter family, and that he was given the job of patrolling their range to keep the first transient Basque sheep outfit in the country from trespassing upon Hunter range. He told how the sheep outfit out of Bakersfield, California tried to get to the Hunter waterholes, and how he was given a gun and told to use it. And as the Bill Hunter outfit armed themselves against the sheep, so did other cattle ranchers. The "Don't Give A Damn" cowboys would ride whooping and hollering into bands of docile sheep and scatter them to the four winds; and the sheepmen would trespass with no regards for anyone. Tempers flared and killings came about.

There was the shooting by the little homesteader, Dan Wallace, of one of the herders of a big sheep outfit. Dan was a homesteader in that remote and lonely country on the way to the Jarbidge mountains, and the sheepmen and sheepherders felt he had no right to be there. They would tear down his fences and drive their sheep into his garden. Dan would rebuild the fence and again it would be torn down. One day the herders came when Dan was home. Savage words flew, and when they refused to leave his homestead with their sheep Dan turned and shot the herder. The country took sides and was aflame with indignation. The cowmen of the area became the champion of Dan Wallace, and they sent men by horseback to ride into the Bruneau country, and the North Fork and Charleston, to raise funds from the cattlemen for Dan's defense, for as it was with Dan Wallace so might it be with them. They raised money and they fought it out in the courts of Elko County; the cattlemen and the sheepmen with Dan Wallace the puppet. Dan was tried and eventually acquitted of the charge, and the cattlemen had beaten the sheepmen. There were other sheep and cattle wars, and then there were just cattle wars. In the Whiterock country, hard feelings had grown into a long-standing feud between ranchers over the use of a brand. The bitterness was fanned by the loose tongue of a neighbor who carried to the two men each inflamed word that the other said. At the crescendo of the feud one of the men died from a bullet from the other's gun. And in Ruby Valley some of the cattle outfits hired gunmen to protect their range from trespass by

other cattle outfits, and here in this valley a colorful range war had its setting and men died by the gun.

There was the Sam McIntyre outfit that ran some 12,000 head of cattle in the Halleck area. This canny Scotsman believed that from Scotland came only the best, and so he ran the Galloways developed in that country. One oldtimer has said that he was sure the McIntyre Galloways were part billy goat, in the way they could climb the rocks, and by their size. When Sam first turned out in this country, he thought his blacks symbol enough and did not brand his cattle. When told that he should do so he replied, "I can ship them in as fast as they can steal them." But Sam reckoned without my neighbors' talents; and when someone inquired from him a few years later as to who was running his cattle he replied, "Every blasted so-and-so that has a horse!" After a time of this rustling he decided it wise to have his cowboys burn the MC iron into the hides of his blacks. Oldtimers tell me that he ranged in the north, and that the last of his cattle would be trailing out of the Devil's Gate Ranch as the first of the string would reach the Home Ranch at Halleck, a distance of nearly 25 miles. Sam was a thin man of medium stature. He had white whiskers and a goatee. He always wore a white kerchief about his neck; and he was a master in the use of the bullwhip, a talent he picked up in his trail driving days from Texas. He could curl it over his head and make it crack with the sound of a cannon. There is the story of how he came upon one of his hands jogging along at a leisurely pace in an old spring wagon, and how Sam let fly with his bullwhip across the rump of the horse and then hauled back and delivered the second lash as he bellowed, "I'll teach you lazy whelps to loaf on my time. Giddap."

There is the story of the Dan Murphy outfit and how Dan Murphy became the largest individual landowner in the world. There is the deeply religious side of the man, that is evidenced in the opening clause of his holographic will that was probated in the Elko County courts following his death in Elko in 1882. He made his peace with his God before he distributed any worldly goods. I could go into detail about how he came through the North Fork of the Humboldt River country in the first covered wagon train to ever reach California, in the year 1844, as part of the Murphy-Stevens-Townsend party. I would like to tell how he later drove cattle north from California and into Nevada, where his home domain stretched along the North Fork of the Humboldt and into Idaho, and his cattle ranged to the east and into White Pine County where he was a partner with A. C. Cleveland. Dan Murphy reached his peak in Northern Nevada when some 20,000 head of cattle wore his Diamond A brand. He owned land in California near San Martin, named for his father, Martin Murphy. He owned land in New Mexico and over 4 million acres in old Mexico. There is the story of his son Dan, and his

daughter Dianna, and her life with her husband, Morgan Hill. Following Dan Murphy's death the Mexican land was left to the son, and the American property was shared equally between the son and the daughter. After the daughter's inheritance the Hills moved from Morgan Hill, California, to Elko where Morgan Hill became overseer for his wife's vast property. Dianna's life with Morgan Hill was an unhappy affair, for this tall, dark-complexioned man became deaf and gradually lost his mind; and as this tragedy progressed he allowed his garb to become careless, until he seemed to fairly bespeak of poverty. He always wore an old pair of overalls, a dirty work shirt, a slouch hat, and had one pant leg tucked into his boot and the other outside. His last years were spent in a wheelchair with a nurse constantly at his side. There is the tragic suicide of the Hill's only daughter in Paris, and the coming to Nevada of the daughter's husband, a Frenchman named Captain Worth, and how he raised hogs at the mighty Rancho Grande. There is the story of how Dianna Murphy Hill later found happiness as Lady Dianna Rhodes of England.

There is the story of the fiery old soldier, Colonel Jerimiah Moore, of Ruby Valley, and how he put one over on "Uncle Sam" by using soldier labor under his command at old Fort Ruby to develop his nearby ranch. After leaving the army he went to Texas, and in 1869 trailed some 800 head of Texas longhorns into his ranch, where he and his two dogs could look after them with less commotion than most outfits could using a dozen buckaroos.

There was the French Basque family of the Garats who developed a cattle spread in the distant Whiterock area. Juan and Grace Garat came to California from France during the gold rush days and went into the cattle business in the San Joaquin Valley of California, first using their YP iron in 1852. The influx of settlers caused them to look for a new base, so in 1871 they started trailing their herd of a thousand head to Nevada, crossing the Sierra Nevada at Bridgeport. The first year they arrived at Lovelock and spent the winter on the Humboldt River east of that town. The following winter found them on the Humboldt just north and east of Golconda. It was 3 years after leaving California that they purchased 320 acres at Salmon Point, on the Tuscurora Fork of the Owyhee River, from the Captain Stiles estate. This was the start of the Garat holdings that, when they were sold in 1939 to the Petan Company, comprised some 75,000 acres of land, of which 70,000 were in one block, 7,500 head of cattle, and 500 head of horses. This rugged country molded these people into God-fearing, honest, hard-working individuals who were more interested in opportunity than they were in security.

There is the story of the Spanish Basque family, the Altubes, and the two brothers, Bernardo and Pedro, and the great cattle kingdom of the

Spanish Ranch in the Independence Mountain country of the Tuscurora region. There is the story of how Pedro came to America in 1850 on an old sailing vessel out of Spain, and in the next few years saved enough money to send back to Spain for his brother, Bernardo, and how these two Basques first settled at San Mateo where they ran a dairy. The city was growing and wanted their ground for a cemetery, so the brothers sold and moved farther south to Palo Alto, where it was said that the town took its name from Pedro, who stood 6 feet 6 inches without his boots and was known as Palo Alto, or the "Tall Pine." In Palo Alto they continued to run a dairy, and also a slaughter house, and so bought and traded in cattle. The railroad was coming and they wanted their land, so they sold to the speculators and took their dairy herd and slaughter-reprieved cattle and drove north into Nevada. While on the trail Pedro related they were not in as much danger from the Indians as from the bandits that preyed on the trail drivers of the time. When they reached the Independence Mountain country of the north they established the mighty Spanish Ranch. Pedro owned two-thirds, and Bernardo one-third, of the Palo Alto Land and Livestock Company; where with the help of Jeff Henderson, and later the Henderson Banking Company, they were able to build their great ranch. They made huge purchases of land and used thousands of additional acres of open grazing land upon which they finally ran up to 23,000 head of P- (P Bench) cattle. Following the hard winter of 1889–90 they went into Idaho and restocked with 1,500 head of cows. These brothers were along in years when they came to Elko County, Pedro being 46 and Bernardo 42. They led a life of hardship, but from this life of perseverance and hardship, together with their belief in the goodness of God, they built one of the great cattle ranches in Nevada. Old Palo Alto was strictly a character. He always carried a pint of whiskey in his pocket and his greeting was always the same, "Hey, son-of-a-witch, my friend. Take a drink with me"—only the name wasn't witch. Old Pedro had a passion for poker, and every night he and his daughters would have a game. Miss Amelia even played with the cowboys, and won back most of the money Palo Alto paid them in wages. Palo Alto was a handsome man and rode with the air of a Spanish Grandee. His demeanor and help to his countrymen earned him the title of Father of the Basques in America. His cowboys were mostly Basque, with a sprinkling of Spanish and Mexican. In 1960 Pedro Altube was elected to the Cowboy Hall of Fame as Nevada's candidate to the shrine located at Norman, Oklahoma.

There was Colonel Hardesty, who drove longhorns from Texas into the Wells area, where, in 1889, 20,000 head of cattle wore his brands. In 1890, after the hard winter, he branded only 25 calves. There was the Bradley outfit of old Governor "Broadhorns" Bradley and his son

John R. I would like to tell how Bradley cattle used to rumble out of Twelve Mile Ranch, on the Humboldt River east of Elko, and on to the trail as they were being driven to Kansas City for market. The Bradleys had great holdings around Deeth and the Mary's River, and they extended north into Idaho where one of their rodeo grounds was where the town of Twin Falls now stands. There was the great cattle domain of John Sparks and Jasper Harrell that controlled the northeastern section of the county. There was the Utah Construction Company whose area claimed comprised one thirty-second of the area of Nevada. The company owned, leased, and used 3 million acres, had 42,000 head of sheep, 50,000 head of cattle, and 3,000 head of horses. Their holdings were divided into 38 units, and there were 232 year-round employees with extra seasonal help for lambing, haying, and shipping.* There was the ranching career of J. J. Hylton, the interests of the Badt Family; and the story of W. H. Moffitt and how he lost a fortune and built back is a gigantic story. Each generation had its kings, some could hold onto their domain and others lost them.

There is the story of the Larios family of the northern country and how their grandfather was the possessor of one of the original Mexican Land Grants in California, and how this man's lands were confiscated by the Americans and their Congress. Following the taking of his lands he and his sons worked for the Murphys and the Altubes in Nevada, and the cowboys always showed their deference by addressing them as Don Pedro and Don Manuel, their inherited titles. Following Manuel Larios' death in 1956, at the age of 89 years, he was buried in his grandfather's private cemetery at San Juan Batista, California.

There is the story of Susie Rapier, the woman outlaw and cattle rustler who, with her band of men, preyed upon the cattle of Elko and Lander counties. I would like to tell of "Six-Shooter Sal," who buckarooed for one of the large outfits and had her apartment in the bunkhouse along with the men—but she always kept her honor by the six-shooter she placed under her pillow each night. There is the tale of how the foreman of one of the big outfits came upon a smaller rancher butchering one of his company's steers, and how he told him in no uncertain terms to take the hide and nail it to the front of his barn and if he ever came by and found that hide down he'd have him arrested for cattle stealing, and how that hide stayed on the barn for all to know and see that here was the home of a cattle thief, so long as the foreman remained boss of the company.

The backbone of the cattle industry of Elko County was not necessarily the large outfits, but the smaller ones from 500 head upward. They were in reality the true builders, for the land was their home and they lived

*Bowman, Nora Linjer—Only The Mountains Remain.

upon it. Many of the large outfits only spent their summers in Elko County and then went to California for the winter. They drained this country and used their riches to provide them with money for the type of living they wished to maintain in California for the winter season. In order to build a solid foundation, it takes the people, the land, and their homes. I could name these pioneers in every valley of the county, but I would probably leave out some to whom credit would be due so I shall let their names go by.

Before I close I must mention the men of steel, skill, and stamina whose job it was to ride the range. These men who were so proud of their jobs rode with an air of dignity as they sat straight in their saddles. They always wore a large felt hat, a kerchief about their necks, and usually chaps. These cowboys spoke with a profanity that was perfection itself, and has never been surpassed. In their hearts they were not profane, but in their speech they challenged all comers. A cowboy's life was not easy but it was colorful. Both cowboy and owner built this country, and if it was done with many an oath it was also done with a song and a prayer. Oldtimers have told how at the close of a day, as old George Russell sat around his campfire with his boys, they often took to singing, and invariably before the evening was over they had to sing his favorite song, "Just One More River To Cross." Then they always said goodnight with a passage from the Bible.

What I have related here is but a fragment of the cattle story of Elko County. The subject is tremendous, but I love it for its size and its herds and its people. In closing I quote the words of Teddy Blue in "We Pointed Them North": "I would know an old cowboy in hell with his hide burned off. It is the way they stand and walk and talk. Only a few are left now—the rest have left the wagon and gone on ahead, across the big divide looking for a new range. I hope they find good water and plenty of grass—but wherever they are it is where I want to go."

EDNA PATTERSON

Edna Patterson, a native of Kansas, is a strong Nevada convert. After graduating from South Denver High School, Denver, Colorado, she attended Colorado State College, where she received a degree in Education. Following her training she came to Nevada and taught school for one year. She then married John M. Patterson, a rancher and native Nevadan. For the past thirty-seven years she has lived in Lamoille Valley, Elko County, where they have been engaged in the ranching business.

Her interest in Nevada history, and particularly in the northeastern part of the State, developed with the realization that in historical research the area was a virgin field and historical happenings were mostly unrecorded. Through the years she has made a hobby of recording pioneer reminiscences and Nevadana.

She is a past president of the Nevada State Board of Education, a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the Nevada Historical Society Quarterly, a member and past president of the Northeastern Nevada Historical Society. She is also the author of the Elko County place name booklet, "Who Named It." She has listings in *Who's Who of American Women* and *Who's Who In the West*.

SHEEP IN NEVADA

Clel Georgetta

Strays on the winter range.

SHEEP IN NEVADA

In this centennial year of Nevada's history, signs of the times disclose that sheep have played a far more important role in this State during the last one hundred years than they will play in the next century. For sheep in Nevada, the past is greater than the future.

Before discussing the past and the future of sheep, let us briefly consider the nature of the beast under consideration.

Sheep are the most gregarious of all domestic animals. In many respects they are like women. Where one goes, they will all go. What one does, they will all do. Women are like that. Even though women hate women, they usually flock together. Hardly ever does one woman go traveling alone. If a husband is not available for the trip, she will talk two, three, four or more other women into going along with her. If one woman shortens her skirt, they all do it. Shorter and shorter—until some dress manufacturer starts a fad clear down to the ankles, so all the women will have to buy new clothes because the hem of the short dress does not have enough goods to let it out to the new length. If a few women wear silly hats, soon all women are wearing silly hats.

Women are constantly trying to "keep up with the Jones'." Sheep will do whatever they see other sheep do, whether there is any sense in it or not. For example, when sheep are being run through a sparation chute, if you put a board or stick across the pathway so the sheep have to jump into the air to go over it—after the obstruction is removed, the rest of the sheep will still jump into the air at that place even though they see no obstruction at all.

Sheep and women alike have a fear of the unseen or the unknown. Both are timid and fearful at night. Sheep will balk and refuse to go into tall grass or thick brush they cannot see through.

Perhaps the way in which sheep and women resemble each other to the greatest degree is in the way each of them will respond to a crisis. Each of them will go nobly through a period of great stress and strain, and then collapse when it is all over. When the house is on fire, a woman will remain calm and collected. She will see that her children are safe, help the men get out clothing and furniture, and then later, after the fire is out, she will faint. Sheep are like that too. They will go hungry, or live off the bark peeled from cedar trees above the snow as they hang onto life through a long, cold winter, and then in the spring when the green grass comes they will lie down and die.

In the last hundred years there have been several hard winters when many sheep died in the spring.

The very first sheep in Nevada were, of course, the wild Bighorns that ranged in the Sierras and some of the north and south ranges near the center of the State; especially the Rubies in Elko County and the Grant

Range in Nye County, where there are quite a number of Bighorns today. The North American Bighorns, as most hunters know, have a head and horns similar to some breeds of domestic sheep, but wool that more closely resembles goat's hair. Close to the skin there is a thick layer of short, tight fleece, or wool, but on the outer surface the coat is composed of long, straight, and rather coarse hair. The North American Bighorn is a sheep, but completely unrelated to any breed of our domestic sheep. On the other hand, the wild Urial sheep of Western Asia and the Mouflon sheep of Southeastern Europe each have many of the general characteristics of domestic sheep.

The Merino is a direct descendant of the wild Urial sheep of Central Asia, but was further developed in Spain some time prior to the days of Columbus. The Merino has the strongest flocking instinct of all breeds of domestic sheep. Where one goes, they all go, even to a leap to death over a cliff. This strong flocking instinct made the Merino a desirable sheep for open range herding because one, or a few alone, would not stray far from the main herd. They do not have the inclination to ramble and roam as a Hampshire sheep will do whenever the herder or the dog is not blocking departure from the crowd.

The first domestic sheep on the American continent were Merinos brought from Spain by Columbus on his second voyage. When he landed on Santo Domingo on November 3, 1493, he unloaded from one ship some sheep to establish a colony there, and then later unloaded more sheep at a second landing. I have found no record of the number of sheep Columbus had with him, but the fact he also took sheep to Cuba on the same voyage indicates he probably had over a hundred sheep on board when he left Spain. From that small beginning vast herds of Spanish Merino sheep grew up in the West Indies and later in Mexico. By 1800 there were many quite large herds at the various Catholic missions in California, but the greatest concentration of sheep in North America was in what is now the State of New Mexico.

In 1800 there were no domestic sheep in Nevada, as far as any records disclose. The sagebrush flats, foothills, and mountain ranges of Nevada had never been marked by the tracks of sheep until about 1841.

WORKMAN AND ROWLAND MIGRATION—1841

As far as I have been able to determine, the first domestic sheep in Nevada were those taken along by a small group of people, known in history as the Workman-Rowland group, who left New Mexico in 1841 to seek a new home in southern California. It is well established that they did take with them from New Mexico 150 head of sheep, and they crossed the southern tip of Nevada on the old Spanish Trail.

THE BIDWELL PARTY—1841

In the same year of the Workman-Rowland migration (1841) the first emigrant train, the Bidwell Party, crossed the central portion of the State. That party came west with a wagon train, but somewhere near the present eastern boundary of Nevada abandoned all wagons and proceeded on west by horseback and pack mules. I have found no record of the Bidwell Party having any sheep. It is believed, however, that many early covered wagon trains took along a few sheep for mutton on the way if wild game became scarce, and also to have a few sheep for a start wherever the families settled down to make a new home. It is well known that Brigham Young insisted that every band of Mormon settlers must take along a few cattle, some sheep, and even a pair of hogs. Wherever the Mormons went to settle the country they took sheep. It is therefore reasonable to assume that when the Mormons settled at Mormon Station (later known as Genoa), in 1849 and 1851, they had some sheep with them. It was also at Genoa where the first home-based herd of sheep existed in Nevada, as will later be mentioned.

GOLD IN CALIFORNIA

In 1839 Captain John Sutter, the Swiss who had built Sutter's Fort at Sacramento and claimed thousands of acres of land, started raising sheep from a small band he purchased from Don Ygnacio Martinez, far to the south, and trailed home to his Sacramento Valley domain. At the time gold was discovered on January 27, 1848, Sutter was running more than ten thousand ewes. Within 10 or 15 days after gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill on the American River, all of Sutter's employees—his blacksmith, his ranch hands, tanners, and even the cook—left for the "Diggins." Many of his sheepherders were Indians, but even they walked off, or rode off on his horses, and left the sheep to scatter so far and wide in the valleys and hills that it was never possible to round them all up again.

The gold rush produced a population explosion, as the lure of the yellow metal brought men from the far corners of the earth. In 10 years the population of California jumped from less than 100,000 to 380,000 people, most of them hard working miners with husky appetites. In a very short time after gold was discovered all of Sutter's sheep and cattle had disappeared, most of them stolen by outlaws who butchered them and sold the meat at the mines. Most of the sheep in California, at the missions and on a few large ranches owned by Spanish Dons, soon disappeared. The demand for "mutton" was very great. Before the discovery of gold, sheep sold in California for 75 cents to a dollar a head. A year after the "gold rush" started, they were worth from 12 to 15 dollars each.

It was not economically feasible to bring sheep to California from the Eastern States by boat, because in 1849 ocean freight from the east coast around Cape Horn was $100 a head for sheep and $500 for a cow or a steer.

The miners had to have meat. This great demand, and sky rocketed price, put the first hoofprints of sheep upon the land now known as Nevada.

In 1849 there were many thousands of sheep in New Mexico worth less than two dollars a head. Here seemed a clear way to get rich—buy low in New Mexico and sell high in California. The great problem, however, was how to get them there. There were no railroads, no trucks or highways, not even a direct wagon road or trail where one wagon had passed and another had followed. The sheep would have to walk all the way—a thousand miles or more.

THE OTERO AND LUNA DRIVE—1849

During the summer of 1849 Miguel Otero and Jose Luna, as partners, gathered up in New Mexico about 25,000 head of sheep and started for California with 10 bands. With each band of about 2,500 sheep went three men—most of them New Mexican sheepherders who went with the sheep when they were sold by former owners. Many good sheep dogs went on that drive too. The bedrolls and camp equipment, such as the old iron Dutch oven, came along on pack mules. It is believed this was the first sheep drive to California. The route followed was across Arizona, along the general line later followed by the Santa Fe Railroad into southern California. The drive then went north up the central part of that state, and then northeastward into the Mother Lode country. It took about 4½ months to make the trip. There was no trouble with Indians, but there are no records I have been able to find as to how many sheep died on the way or had to be left behind because they became too tired or footsore to travel. We do know, however, that Otero and Luna made a very handsome profit by selling the sheep they had left for 20 to 25 dollars a head at the mining camps of the Mother Lode. That first drive of sheep to California did not cross any of the country that later became the State of Nevada. The success of that venture, however, lighted the way for many subsequent drives that did cross Nevada.

THE UNCLE DICK WOOTTON DRIVE—1852

The success of the drive of sheep from New Mexico to California by Otero and Luna was the incentive for a similar venture by "Uncle Dick" Wootton of southern Colorado in the spring of 1852. Near Watrous, New Mexico, he purchased about 9,000 sheep and hired 21 men, consisting

of 14 New Mexican sheepherders and 7 American ex-soldiers, to act as guards in passing through hostile Indian territory. Wootton also bought a thousand dollars worth of supplies consisting mainly of flour, sugar, coffee, bacon, and ham, and plenty of ammunition for the pistols and rifles he and his men carried. Wootton also bought eight trail-trained goats to lead the sheep.

It is claimed by some historians of the trail movements, such as Edward Wentworth in "American Sheep Trails," that the Wootton drive had only *one* dog. It is almost unbelievable that a man of his experience, or any of the New Mexican sheepherders he hired, would be willing to start out on a long drive without several dogs—probably at least one to each herder. Anyone who has ever driven sheep a single mile knows so well that a good sheep dog is almost an absolute necessity. Without the presence of a dog the sheep fear and dislike, they soon slow down to almost a standstill and pay no attention to the hoots and hollers of men who try to urge them to move on ahead. Furthermore, a sheep dog can take care of all of one side of a moving band, or even both sides, by circling back and forth to keep the sheep from heading off in a direction other than straight ahead.

Wentworth also says that on the great drives, three men were used with each band of sheep—"one on the lead, one in the middle and one at the rear." This is pure folly. Wentworth bought many thousands of lambs and sheep for Armours, but it is almost a certainty he never drove a band of sheep anywhere. If one man walked on lead, the sheep would not follow him; they would turn back, or to one side or the other. If one walked in the middle, there would very soon be two bands going in two different directions. The only man doing any good would be the one at the rear shoving the sheep forward. Three men—yes, well and good; but the only way they could drive a band of sheep forward in any direction would be one man at the rear, and one on each side to keep the sheep from heading away in that direction. As the men urged the sheep to move there would be only one direction they could go—straight ahead.

One man at the rear with a dog, and a well-trained dog on each side of the herd, can drive a band of sheep further in a day than several men with no dogs.

There would be places where the sheep must be bunched closely and driven ahead—such as through a fenced lane, across a stream, or across some dry, barren flat—in order to get to water or a suitable bedground before dark. Most of the time, however, on any long drive the sheep must be allowed to spread out, possibly as much as a mile wide, in order to graze and feed as they move on ahead slowly in the one direction toward the final destination. The width they are allowed to spread would depend

upon the number of sheep in the band, the plentifulness or scarcity of feed, and the type of country they are passing through.

Some historians of the great drives say that 25 or 30 thousand sheep were driven in 8 or 10 bands only a mile or two miles apart, one right behind the other. This is pure folly because by the time one, two, or three bands had passed over an area of this western country there would be nothing for the other bands to eat. Even if driven across a grassy meadow, what grass the first three or four bands did not eat they would trample into the ground so that the rest of the sheep would starve unless the herders changed the line of march frequently.

Well, let's see what happened to Uncle Dick Wootton and his 9,000 Merino woolies. He left Taos, New Mexico, on June 24, 1852, but did not follow the Santa Fe Trail across the deserts of Arizona. Wootton knew the southern part of Colorado well. He knew there he would find plenty of water and good feed so that his sheep might do well as they traveled. From Taos, New Mexico, he went up the Rio Grande Valley into Colorado, across the southwestern portion of that state and across its western border about the center of Utah. In eastern Utah he had a little trouble with an Indian chief, "Uncotash" of the Utes, who demanded a part of Wootton's sheep as tribute for allowing him to cross the Utes' hunting ground. Some historians have related that the chief made rather commanding, insolent demands for a large part of Wootton's sheep. The two men argued and then fought. Wootton was the stronger man. He threw the chief, choked him and held a knife near his throat. There were more Indian braves than Wootton guards; but if they tried to rescue their chief, death to him was certain, even if they killed Wootton. The chief agreed to settle for some flour and bacon. The chief kept his bargain and the drive was allowed to pass through the Ute country without being further molested.

The Wootton drive crossed the Wasatch Mountains to Spanish Fork, Utah, then north to American Fork and on into the Salt Lake Valley. Where Wootton went from there is quite uncertain and somewhat in dispute. He probably drove his sheep along the foothills on the west side of Salt Lake Valley.

It is well established that while in that vicinity Wootton took some of his pack mules into Salt Lake City, met Brigham Young, and there bought needed supplies for the rest of his long journey to California.

The route Wootton followed after leaving the Salt Lake Valley is unknown as far as research of this author has been able to determine. Some historians believe he went north of Great Salt Lake because many years later Wootton's biographer, Howard Louis Conrad (in "Uncle Dick Wootton"), quotes Wootton as saying he followed the "emigrant trail." Other historians indicate he might have gone across the great salt flats

and entered Nevada someplace near Pilots Peak northwest of where Wendover is now located. On that route, however, there would be places as much as 60 or 70 miles without water. Wootton was too wise a frontiersman to follow such a route.

It seems more likely the Wootton drive went around the south end of the salt flats. Wentworth says he went through Bingham Canyon, Tooele, and across the desert to Nevada mountains northwest of modern "Ibspah" (meaning Ibapah—the post office in Deep Creek Valley). It is reasonable to believe that from the vicinity of Tooele he turned south through Skull Valley (or Rush Valley) over Lookout Pass, Dugway Mountain, on to Fish Springs—Callao (formerly called Willow Springs)—through Overland Pass into the Deep Creek Valley, along which route his sheep would have water and feed most of the way. That is the route later followed by the Pony Express and the Overland Stage.

If Wootton took that route around the southern end of the great salt beds, he entered what is now the State of Nevada some place in the Deep Creek Valley near the Triune Ranch formerly owned by this writer. That is Goshute Indian country. About 50 years ago an old Goshute chief, "Antelope Jake," told me that the first time he ever saw a white man, several white men, more than his 10 fingers, came through the Deep Creek Valley driving many, many little white animals like long-haired antelope, "all a same sheep." He said they stayed on the wild grass meadows of the valley a long time and then went through the Badland Hills, past White Horse Mountain, on the west side of the Deep Creek Valley. That may have been the Wootton drive.

Regardless of what route was followed west of Salt Lake Valley, the first large bands of domestic sheep to leave their hoof prints upon the land that later became the State of Nevada were those of the Wootton Drive which entered the State in 1852, perhaps through the Deep Creek Valley, which was destined to become a great sheep country some 40 years later.

It is generally believed that across most of Nevada Wootton followed the Humboldt River route. Therefore, if he did go around the south end of the salt flats and entered Nevada through the Deep Creek Valley, he must have crossed Antelope Valley, skirted Dolly Varden Mountain, on across Ruby Valley, through Secret Pass, and onto the Humboldt River somewhere near the present City of Elko.

At that time the Indians in this area were not hostile and the Wootton Drive, after entering Nevada, had no unpleasant experiences with man or beast. We have no record as to where Wootton crossed the Sierras, but do know that he did so before snowfall and reached Elk Grove, 12 miles north of Sacramento, with 8,900 sheep, having lost only a hundred head on the trail. There is no record of any other such long drive with so

little loss of sheep. Wootton did not receive the high prices previously obtained by Otero and Luna, but he did realize a profit of over $50,000 for his venture.

THE KIT CARSON DRIVE—1853

The next year, 1853, a similar drive was made by Nevada's hero, Kit Carson. After the Mexican War was over, Kit Carson married and settled down in Taos, New Mexico. It seems that the success of the Wootton drive spurred him to try a similar venture. He and a partner, Lucien B. Maxwell, who had been a friend of Carson's during the war, were financed by Thomas Boggs of Taos in purchasing 13,000 sheep in the Sante Fe region. Wentworth and other historians say these 13,000 sheep were divided in only two bands of 6,500 each. Kit Carson and two Frenchmen lead out and Maxwell, with two other men, followed with the second band. This I do not believe. Experienced sheepmen would not undertake a long drive with as many as 6,000 sheep in one band. Even if they were not going anywhere and were being grazed on good range, 3,000 to 4,000 is about the limit number that can be grazed on open winter range without producing many "drags" and causing heavy losses.

Sheep, like men, have many sluggards among them. Every morning when the sheep leave bedground it is always the same leaders that strike out for feed. It is always the same lazy slowpokes who trail along at the rear end of the herd. If the herd is not "swung" frequently to put the tail end out on lead, these stragglers get less and less to eat until they finally lie down and die. It is interesting to note that when the herder turns the herd around and starts the stragglers out on lead to get some fresh feed, they do not stay there long. The leaders work right on up through the herd and within an hour or so the sluggards and bums are back at the tail end again, limited to what feed has been left by those that have the courage and ambition to strike out on lead. In this respect, men and sheep are alike. If all the wealth in the world were divided equally among all its people, in a few years the rich would be rich again, and the sluggards would be poor.

The Kit Carson drive of 1853 was probably divided into more than two huge bands, because the losses suffered on the long trail were not extensive. Kit Carson did not follow the Wootton route through Colorado and Utah. From Taos, New Mexico, he headed almost straight north through eastern Colorado on the east side of the Rockies—clear up to Fort Laramie, Wyoming. From there on west he was very familiar with the trail over which he had guided Fremont's little army and various wagon trains of immigrants. He took the easy way through the Rockies along the southern boundary of Wyoming, cut across one corner of Utah near the Idaho border, into Idaho and then southwest, entering Nevada right at the northeast corner of our present State. He came on south and

joined the Wootton trail somewhere near Elko. From there on he followed the same course as Wootton—down the Humboldt River Valley and up either the Truckee or the Carson over the Sierras to Sacramento.

We have no record of what Kit Carson's losses were. We do know, however, that upon arrival in California Carson and Maxwell sold all their sheep to Samuel Norris of San Francisco for $5.50 a head, and each partner made a profit of over $15,000. Kit Carson had more money than he had ever hoped to have in his lifetime. He returned to his wife and 3-month-old baby in Taos, New Mexico, where he lived the rest of his life.

DRIVES FROM EAST TO WEST

After these two pioneer drives there were many drives of many thousands of sheep across Nevada to California. Some originated in New Mexico and others clear back in the Middle Western States. Some Californians went east, bought sheep and trailed them home. One ill-fated drive was made by "Hub" Hollister, Dibbee Brothers, and J. W. Cooper (all of Santa Barbara), who in 1858 went to Ohio and bought up 12,000 head of farm-fence raised sheep to drive to California. These sheep, pasture raised, were not range-broke to remain in a herd. They were of mixed breeds and the flocking instinct was not strong as in the New Mexican Merinos. They were difficult to drive, as a few would take off in all directions. Sheep dogs were scarce in Ohio. When trailers bought range sheep in New Mexico, they tried to buy the dogs along with them. The farm dogs in Ohio, the Hollister drive picked up, knew nothing about herding or driving and were probably more harm than good. On the way, in the Rio Grande Valley, the Hollister ewes lambed out over 8,000 lambs. This drive went through the central part of Utah and across the southern part of Nevada. In January of 1860 it arrived in southern California with only about 4,000 sheep left out of the original 12,000 ewes, plus 8,000 lambs, or 20,000 in all.

Between 1852 (Wootton drive) and 1860, more than half a million sheep crossed Nevada going west. All across Utah and some places in Nevada, the Mormons traded hay or grain for sheep. If caught in bad weather, a trailer would trade part of his sheep for hay to feed the rest. In 1850 a large band was snowed-in near Lehi, Utah. The owner traded one-half his sheep to the Mormons for enough hay to keep the rest alive until he could move on west.

DRIVES FROM WEST TO EAST

About 1865 the direction of travel was reversed. Vast herds of sheep had grown up in California and Oregon. Sheep were worth more in the Chicago area and in the Eastern States, so sheep trailers began buying sheep in California and Oregon to trail to the eastern market.

After the Comstock Lode was discovered in 1859, sheep were driven east from California into Nevada to supply the boarding houses at the mines. In 1860 a band of sheep was trailed to the Truckee Meadows to supply meat to the mines at Virginia City. In 1862 new markets came into existence in Austin and Eureka, and after that sheep were driven from California and Oregon to those localities.

THE MAJOR KIMBALL DRIVE—1865

As far as we know, the very first band of sheep ever trailed across any part of Nevada going east to a market beyond Nevada was the Major Kimball drive that started at Red Bluff, California on June 6, 1865, headed for the newly discovered silver mines in southern Idaho. Of this drive we have a complete day by day record because Major Kimball, formerly from the State of Maine, had promised his mother back home that he would keep a daily journal of the trip and send it to her. A copy of his journal has been made available to me by Mrs. Sally Pay Cook, the surviving wife of Nevada sheepman Lyle Cook, now deceased, who several years ago went along Kimball's trail with the historian Edward N. Wentworth having Kimball's journal in hand.

Kimball and his men left Red Bluff, California on June 6, 1865, with 3,700 sheep. He entered what is now Nevada on July 25, 1865, at Smoke Creek. From there he turned north and went back into what is now California. At that time the boundary was much in dispute, and most people considered that all land east of the Sierras was part of the territory of Nevada (Roop County). Kimball took his sheep up over the Madeline Plain. At that time the Indians had become quite hostile to emigrants, and just ahead of Kimball's drive had killed several white people and taken their horses and supplies. In Kimball's journal, he mentions fresh graves where other white people had buried the dead and marked the graves "killed by Indians."

On July 5, 1865, Kimball entered the south end of Surprise Valley and rested an hour at a house where the Indians had killed two men a few days before. He described Surprise Valley as the best watered valley he had ever seen.

On July 8, 1865, Kimball camped in a new log fort the settlers of Surprise Valley had built to protect the white people if the Indians attempted to drive them from the valley. The fort was probably just a few miles south of the present town of Cedarville. He was advised not to leave the valley, as the Indians would kill him and his men the first night out and take all his stock. He moved a few miles further north in the valley and camped on Soldier's Creek only a few miles north of the present town of Cedarville, California. He decided to wait there until some other people desiring to go on east into Indian country might join him. He says in his

journal that while he was camped there on July 10, 1865, "Indians came into the valley today and ran out 16 head of Cook's cattle. Never saw so frightened a set as the settlers here are."

Kimball told the settlers that if they would furnish him five good men and horses, and a fresh horse for himself, he would go to Fort Crook 140 miles away, about where the town of Glenburn, California, stands today, and ask the famous Indian fighter Captain Starr to send some soldiers from that military installation to Surprise Valley to protect the settlers. The next day, July 12, 1865, Kimball and five men who volunteered left for Fort Crook. The Kimball sheep had good water and feed on Soldier's Creek during his absence. The party ran into one band of Indians who proved friendly. Kimball's journal describes the trip in detail, but the account is too long to be repeated here. On July 13, 1865, the day after leaving Surprise Valley, the Kimball party ran into Captain Starr and a company of soldiers camped about 4 days' march east of Fort Crook. They were there to clean out some very hostile Pit River Indians who had recently killed many settlers in the Pit River Valley. At first Captain Starr refused to send soldiers to Surprise Valley, but the next day reconsidered and told Kimball he would move his outfit on eastward and should be in Surprise Valley in about 3 days.

Kimball and his five companions went back to Surprise Valley and on July 16, 1865, when Kimball reached the place he had left his sheep, he was surprised to find the camp gone. His men had left him a letter (he doesn't say where or how) telling him 30 soldiers had come in from Camp Lyon, and were going to escort the sheep and Kimball's men across the hostile Indian country if the soldiers were furnished one sheep a day for meat. They had 3 days' start on Kimball. He was afraid to go on alone to overtake them.

On July 20, 1865, Kimball and Captain Starr, with 33 soldiers, started east on the trail to overtake the sheep. They passed Alkali Lake in what is now Nevada, got off the trail and went 12 miles toward the Black Rock Desert, but turned back and found the sheep track again before dark. This party lived on sage hen for meat all the way across the northern part of present Washoe County. They overtook the sheep on July 23, 1865, at a place Kimball calls "Trout Creek," after traveling about 140 miles from Surprise Valley. That would put them somewhere near the Quinn River on the east side of Black Rock Desert. The sheep trailers still had eight soldiers with them. Kimball does not say what had happened to the rest of the 30 soldiers. Captain Starr and his men, after resting their horses for a day or two, returned west. The eight soldiers, of First Oregon Cavalry under Lieutenant Gates, remained with Kimball and his men as they went on northeast toward the mines in Idaho.

On July 30, 1865, on the Owyhee River, Kimball mentions seeing a house—the first one since he left Surprise Valley.

On July 31, 1865, the Kimball drive crossed over the line into the State of Oregon, so must have left the present State of Nevada near the northeast corner of Humboldt County. He probably crossed the southeast corner of Oregon and then into Idaho. When he reached the vicinity of Boise, in August 1865, his sheep were too poor for mutton so he wintered in that area and fed hay until March, when the sheep were fat enough to kill—but he sheared them first. In his journal he does not state how many sheep he had left when he reached Idaho.

Thus ended the first drive of sheep across Nevada from the west going east. In the years that followed, many large bands were driven across Nevada eastward, as there were too many sheep in California and Oregon and not enough in the Middle West and Eastern States. The period of greatest sheep movement from west to east across Nevada was from about 1875 to 1900. There were two well-established trails across Nevada. The south-central route came over the Sierras south of Lake Tahoe to Carson Valley, down the Carson River to the vicinity of Fallon, north to the Humboldt River and then along the Humboldt River Valley to a point above Elko, and then northeast into northern Utah. The northern route entered Nevada in northern Washoe County and crossed the State not far south of the Oregon and Idaho boundaries. On these drives the sheep moved slowly and were allowed to spread and graze extensively as they traveled, in order to have them in as good a condition as possible when the market was reached. To travel 1,600 miles from various points in California, across Nevada, to various points in the Middle Western States, usually took about 7 months. The U.S. Census indicates that in 1877 about 50,000 sheep were driven across Nevada going east. In 1880 there were over 150,000 sheep trailed across the State on these eastward drives.

SQUATTERS AND HOMESTEADERS

In many of the valleys of Nevada there are wild grass meadows, usually "wire grass," watered by springs in the meadows or by streams of water that run down from the mountain ranges on each side of the valley. These wild meadows were the first lands claimed by white men. In Nevada prior to 1860, some such meadows were fenced and claimed by early settlers under a system called "Squatters' Rights," which gave an enterprising pioneer a color of title to all the land he took possession of and used. A fence around the land was considered "ample proof of possession." The oft repeated adage that "possession is nine points in law" was the squatter's main argument against anyone who disputed his ownership of all the lands he had fenced. In 1862 the Federal Homestead Act was passed, providing that anyone who filed a claim in the land office and lived on the land for 3 years could acquire title in fee to 160 acres of public domain. At that time, and for many years thereafter, very little of

the public domain in Nevada had been surveyed into townships of 36 square miles, and sections of 1 mile square containing 640 acres. A title by patent issued by the United States could not be obtained until the land had been surveyed so it could be properly described. Many squatters posted notices on the land and filed a notice at a land office, or a county recorder's office, of his squatter's right and intention to homestead as soon as the land was surveyed. Under such notices some early pioneers held under fence as much as, or more than, a thousand acres of meadow for many years.

By 1875, when the large sheep drives began across Nevada to eastern markets, many of the wild meadows along the trail had been squatted on and fenced. All along the trails in such places, trading posts were established where the owner would pay a dollar or less for a tired, weary, or sorefooted sheep. Later he would trade to some other trailer one rested, spry sheep for four or five wornout ones, until he had enough sheep for a herd of his own. In this manner, many of Nevada's early sheepmen got their start.

C. D. JONES—1852

It is believed that the very first resident sheepman of Nevada was C. D. Jones, who had squatted on some of the meadows of Carson Valley below Genoa. In 1852 he brought a small band of a few hundred Spanish Merinos from some point in California, and thereafter raised sheep in the Carson Valley. He did not become a large operator, however, because there was no nearby market for mutton or wool until after the Comstock Lode was discovered in 1859. I have found no record of what had happened to Mr. Jones by that time.

DANIEL C. WHEELER—1867

In the early livestock days, Nevada, like all the rest of the West except New Mexico, was primarily "cattle country." One of the earliest cattlemen to change from cattle to sheep was Daniel C. Wheeler of Reno, who ran his cattle on the Truckee Meadows. In 1867 he bought a herd of sheep someplace in Oregon and trailed them home to Reno. Wentworth says Wheeler built a sheep corral on the north bank of the Truckee about where the Mapes Hotel and the new First National Bank building now stand. In a period of about 10 or 12 years, Wheeler had many thousands of sheep which he ran in northern Washoe County and Humboldt County, as well as in southern Oregon and Idaho. For many years now the Reno Elks Club has honored him with the "Uncle Dan's Dinner" to raise money for charity.

During the 1870's the major sheep kings of Western Nevada were Daniel C. Wheeler, George W. Mapes, and David Ridenour. By 1874

there were 185,000 resident sheep in Nevada. Later came the Dangbergs in Carson Vally, and Andrew Frandsen of Reno, who built the Frandsen Apartments on Fourth Street. In the beginning of his sheep career, about 1886, Frandsen was a partner of Henry Anderson, another very early operator. They terminated the partnership about 1900, and each ran sheep in Nevada and California until about 1920.

PATRICK L. FLANNIGAN—1877

One of Nevada's most colorful sheepmen was Patrick L. Flannigan, an Irish boy who came to Nevada in 1877 when he was 17 years old. Soon after arrival he bought a few sheep with money he was able to borrow. In 1886 he squatted on a part of the Truckee Meadows. A few years later he was the sheep king of Northern Nevada. He owned the Smoke Creek Ranch, the Big Canyon Ranch west of Pyramid Lake, and eventually nearly all the ranches of northern Washoe County, as well as vast holdings in California on the Madeline plains and valleys on west. He built the Flannigan Warehouse in Reno and established the Nevada Packing Company of Reno. Flannigan became interested in politics and neglected his livestock empire. A series of heavy losses and mistakes in management by those he relied upon to run his vast outfit put him out of business in 1916. It has been said that when his livestock was liquidated that year (1916) he had 30,000 sheep, 10,000 cattle, and over 1,000 horses.

JOHN G. TAYLOR—1886

Another very interesting and colorful sheep empire builder was John G. Taylor, who for many years made his headquarters at Lovelock and Winnemucca. He walked into Nevada from California to shear sheep at a shearing corral in the Truckee Meadows. He wandered on eastward, shearing sheep here and there. In 1886 he leased a herd of sheep near Austin from A. G. Fletcher, who was then the administrator of the Hall Estate of Lander County. At first Taylor was a nomad, a tramp sheepman, herding his sheep on the best range he could find in summer and winter. He grew to about 10,000 sheep in a few years. In the cold, long winter of 1889–90, when the temperature in Central Nevada went as low as 60° below zero, Taylor lost most of his sheep, but he soon recovered his losses. Then he gave up the nomad life and began buying land, mostly along the Humboldt River Valley. He bought more land to raise more sheep and raised more sheep to buy more land. By the end of World War I, about 1918, John G. Taylor had about 60,000 sheep and 10,000 cattle, making him probably the largest individual sheep owner ever produced by Nevada. The John G. Taylor empire was finally liquidated in the 1930's.

McCURDY AND CHAPMAN—1865

In Eastern Nevada various sheep empires grew up after the Civil War. One of the earliest settlers in White Pine County was a man named Bob Chin who squatted on a stream of water that ran eastward out of the Antelope Range into Antelope Valley south of Kingsley Mountain, which became known as Chin Creek, a ranch now owned by Bert Robison of Spring Valley—one of Nevada's largest sheepmen today.

Civil war ended on May 26, 1865, and sometime that summer or fall William McCurdy, a mustered out soldier who had fought all through the war on the northern side, rode up on horseback to Bob Chin's log house and asked for lodging and a job if possible. Chin gave the ex-soldier a job herding a few sheep Chin had on the range above his ranch. Where had Chin obtained his sheep? Probably by trading hay and grain for tired, weary sheep that passed his way on one of the big cross-country drives above discussed.

Later McCurdy bought the ranch from Chin, and later still took in as a sheep partner a man named Chapman. In a few years McCurdy and Chapman had several thousand sheep using the entire Antelope Range of mountains for summer range and the Antelope Valley below as their winter range. It is entirely possible that Bob Chin was the first man to own resident sheep in White Pine County, and McCurdy and Chapman were the first sizeable operators in Eastern Nevada.

THE DEEP CREEK VALLEY

The next valley east from Antelope Valley where McCurdy and Chapman wintered their sheep is the Deep Creek Valley, which runs in a southwesterly to northeasterly direction across the Utah-Nevada state line. The lower portion of the valley is in Utah and the upper part is in Nevada. On the easterly side of the valley is the Ibapah or Deep Creek Range—from 10,000 to 12,000 feet high, being one of the tallest ranges of mountains in the Great Basin. Since the prevailing winds are from the west, that tall mountain range catches many storm clouds and causes them to drop their moisture in that valley. As a result, the valley is better watered than most valleys in Nevada. Several mountain streams flow down to form Deep Creek. There are many miles of natural wild grass meadows. This is the first fertile valley west of the great salt flats, and is somewhat an oasis. This valley, however, had no permanent settlers until after the Pony Express went through it in 1860.

The whole story of the West could be told in the story of the Deep Creek Valley. First, the cattle era when the Worthingtons, James Ferguson, and John Burington (Burrington) dominated the valley with cattle. Then came the sheep era when cattle declined to small numbers under fence; and lastly, government control of the open range under the Taylor

Grazing Act, when many large range sheep outfits were whittled down to small ones and many small ones were put out of business because they had only small headquarter ranches, and not enough "commensurate property" to qualify them for enough open range to make a year around operation.

JOHN (OR DAVID) WEAVER—1873

The first sheepman in the Deep Creek Valley was John Weaver, sometimes called David Weaver, an Englishman who squatted on one of the wild grass meadows above the Nevada line in 1873. We have no record of how many sheep he had, but oldtimers recall that he summered in the south mountains where Weaver Canyon now bears his name, and wintered his sheep in the Badland Hills on the west side of Deep Creek Valley. Practically all of his range was later part of the Triune Ranch, once owned and operated by this writer. The Weaver operation was of short duration in a land of cattle.

THE FELTS—1872–1915

In 1872 Charles Felt squatted on a large, level wild meadow on the Utah side of the line. At first he had only a few cattle under fence, but later Felt and his sons began running sheep on the open range. By 1900 the Felts had many thousands of sheep. They completely dominated the entire valley by using all of the Deep Creek Range of mountains in Utah and all the south mountains in Nevada as their summer range. The Felts might be classed as a Utah outfit because the home ranch was on the Utah side of the line, but a third of their summer range and all their spring, fall, and winter range was in Nevada in the Badland Hills and Antelope Valley. The Felts finally went out of business about 1915 when Wade Parrish, a man who once herded sheep for them and later married a Felt girl, took over what was left of the Felt Empire. The rise and decline of the Felts is too long a story for this brief account of sheep in Nevada. It would make a full length book.

AMASA LYMAN PARKER—1882

A. L. Parker, a Mormon, came to Salt Lake City as a small boy with his parents in 1850. When only 14 years old he left home and went to Nevada. He became employed by the Overland Stage Co. as either a driver or a station keeper. He became familiar with the country around Hamilton and decided it would be a good sheep range. In 1882 he went back to Utah, and with money he had saved over many years he bought a herd of sheep. He trailed his sheep along the Pony Express and Overland Stage route south of the salt flats through the Deep Creek Valley, and after crossing Antelope Valley he had to cross Spring Valley, which

was cattle country owned by one of the early cattle kings, A. C. Cleveland. Parker was a bit apprehensive that the Cleveland cowboys might give him trouble. His fears were ungrounded, as this was before the cattlemen came to hate sheep and sheepherders. Cleveland told Parker to water his sheep on the creek above the Cleveland Ranch, and invited Parker and his men to come to the ranchouse for "supper" and to feed his horses in the ranch feed corral.

After enjoying Cleveland's hospitality and a good meal of beef, Parker moved on the next day over Conner's Pass, across Steptoe Valley, up the canyon where Ely now stands, and on over to the Hamilton area.

Later Parker bought, from a man named Halstead, the Round Springs Ranch east of Hamilton to be used as a headquarters for his open range operation. Parker grew into quite a large sheep operator as the years passed, and many years later sold his outfit to Adams-McGill which eventually became one of the largest livestock outfits of Nevada, running over 40,000 sheep on the open ranges of Eastern Nevada.

JIM SAMPSON—1876

In the late seventies Jim Sampson was a miner working in the Starr Mine at Cherry Creek. Somewhere he picked up 50 ewes and 1 buck, which his wife herded on the hills above the mine. A few years later he had a herd of sheep and quit his job at the mine. He was a nomad, or tramp sheepman, roaming over Steptoe Valley, Dolly Varden Mountain, and the northern end of Spring Valley. In 1889, only about 12 or 13 years after he had started with 50 sheep, he gave B. F. Miller, an early day mule team freighter, a contract to haul over 100 tons of wool to the railroad at Wells, Nevada, to be shipped to the Boston wool market. In those days Nevada sheep sheared only about 4 pounds of wool each, so Sampson must have had about 50,000 sheep; or Miller is mistaken in his Nevada Historical Society papers, where he states he hauled 200,000 pounds, or 100 tons, of wool for Sampson in 1889. Where did Sampson acquire so many sheep in so short a time? No historian has ever been able to answer that question.

There are many other sheepmen in various counties who are worthy of mention, some of them worthy of full length biographies, who are not included in this article. Also, no mention has been made so far of the vast number of sheep Nevada once supported, and the decline of the industry in recent years. No mention has been made of lambing, shearing, the ups and downs, the joys, and the numerous trials and tribulations of owning or herding sheep. These should by all means be discussed in some detail, but must be left for a longer work to be written in the future because this account is already too long for the purpose it is intended to serve.

Any account of sheep in Nevada, however, would be disappointingly incomplete without some mention of the nationalities and characters of sheepherders.

It is believed the earliest full-time professional sheepherders in Nevada were Scots, who came from the sheep-covered glens of Scotland where the long, thin-faced Cheviots had taught them the ways, habits, and all-around cussedness of sheep.

After the Central Pacific Railroad, later called the Southern Pacific, was completed, many Chinamen who had worked on the railroad construction were unemployed and far from home or any Chinese settlement. The first sheepman to hire Chinese herders was Thomas Nelson, who ran sheep in the Battle Mountain area. They proved to be such good herders that other sheepmen began hiring the Chinese. Eventually there were Chinese herders and camp-tenders almost all over Nevada wherever sheep were run on the open range.

Later came the French and Spanish Basques from the Pyrenees. They proved to be the best herders of all, probably because the people of that area have been sheep people for hundreds of years. A Basque, more than any other nationality of man, seems to know what a sheep is likely to do next.

There are of course good herders and bad herders. You can usually tell a good herder by where he tells the camp-tender to place the sheep wagon or the teepee tent. The bedground is nearly always on a hillside, as sheep will not lie on level ground if they can get to a hill, preferably one of gentle slope. If the herder wants his camp *below* the bedground he is usually a good herder. He knows that if a coyote or bobcat gets after the sheep at night, the sheep will always run downhill past his camp and wake him up. If the herder wants his camp on *top* of the hill, he is probably not a good herder. He wants the camp up high so he can sit in the wagon and watch the sheep as they spread out on the bench or flat below. He herds the wagon instead of the sheep.

One way in which sheepherders may be classified is by what they do with their spare time.

THE READER

Some of them, only a few of them, read magazines or books while the sheep are feeding well or are "shaded up" during the heat of the day. When I herded sheep in the 1920's, I read clear through a set of law books, "The Blackstone Institute Correspondence Course," preparatory to going to law school. This, however, is rather unusual for a sheepherder. Most of them never intend to do anything but herd sheep or own sheep.

THE WHITTLER

All herders carry a sharp pocket knife. Some of them sit on a hill, pick up a piece of dead cedar or sagebrush and whittle it away, and then do it all over again on another piece of wood. A confirmed whittler will usually carry a stick of wood along with him to be sure to have it handy when the sheep settle down and need little attention. Some of them whittle fancy canes or walking sticks, and other such useful articles, from scrub mahogany that grows on many Nevada mountains. The best whittler I ever knew was a pocket knife sculptor who specialized in mahogany sheep and horses. During one summer on the Triune Ranch summer range he carved out a reproduction of "The Thinker," a naked man seated on a rock with his left hand on his left knee and his closed right fist up to his mouth. The carver's model was a picture on a calendar that hung in the sheep wagon during the spring. When the herder moved on into the high mountains to live in a teepee tent during the summer he took the calendar along with him. His work was quite realistic.

THE ARTIST

Another type of sheepherder is the "artist," who is closely related to the "whittler" because he does his art work with his pocket knife by carving pictures on the smooth white bark of the "quaking aspens" that grow on the higher mountains of Nevada. His favorite theme is usually naked women. Like the "sculptor," the "artist" sometimes becomes very clever with his pocket knife. He usually carves his name and the date under or over the picture he has drawn. Some of the older aspens in Nevada carry very lifelike, realistic nudes with dates as early as the 1870's.

THE MUSICIAN

While on the subject of the arts we must not overlook the "musician." He usually carries in his pocket a harmonica which he calls his "mouth organ." He pulls it out and plays himself a tune whenever he has time. I once knew a young Basque who carried a big, heavy accordian around, strapped over his shoulder, all day long, summer and winter, except during stormy weather.

THE ARSONIST

Then there is the arsonist. He has an impelling desire to set fire to any dead tree or bush he comes upon, even on a hot summer day. He gets this way from building fires in the winter to warm himself when the sheep are quiet and he doesn't have to go anywhere to turn the herd. It becomes a habit that carries on through the hot summer months as well.

THE STONEMASON

All over the desert hills of the winter range in Nevada there are monuments of stone piled up by man. In cold weather when the sheep are all spread out feeding slowly, the herder climbs to the top of some hill and sits down where he can see most of the herd. If he is not a "reader" or a "whittler" or a "musician," he is probably a "monument builder." The top of such a hill is a cold, windy place. The herder doesn't want to leave the hill; there is no place to go until the sheep need turning, and then he may send the dog to do it. After sitting there a while he gets chilly. He needs to move around to keep warm. There is no wood in sight to build a fire—only rocks—as most hilltops on the Nevada winter range are rocky and woodless. Since rocks are handy the herder begins piling up rocks. He might as well build something, so he starts placing the rocks so they will bind and he builds a monument as tall as he can reach. Some such stonemasons try to build a monument today taller than the one they built yesterday. It becomes a habit so well fixed that they go on building monuments all summer on the summer range in the high mountains.

THE SADIST

The most unusual sheepherder I ever knew was a "bug killer." He loved sheep and herded them well, but he hated bugs—all kinds of bugs —even ants. He had made himself a fancy little mahogany stick about 16 inches long. The upper end was about an inch in diameter fastened to a metal ring he slipped into a harness snap on his belt to thus carry the stick with him when not in use. The stick—a very straight stick—tapered down to about a quarter of an inch thick at the lower end where it was cut off square across, forming a flat end, no point at all. Yes, the stick was fancy—with small naked women carved on it in several places. This herder must have at one time been a "whittler," and also an "artist," but when I knew him he was just a "bug killer," nothing else. I was his camptender for awhile. He snapped that stick to his belt when he pulled on his levis in the early morning and carried it all day. When I asked him what he used it for he swung his right hand up and said "oha—nothing." I was curious so several times, from a distance, I watched him with the binoculars we had in camp. He would overturn a rock. If he found any bugs under it he would unsnap his fancy stick and kill them. He would get down on his hands and knees, place the small flat lower end of the stick on top of the bug, and then twirl the stick back and forth with the fingers of his right hand. When the bug had been reduced to a squashed and twisted mass, the herder would pick it up with the fingers of his left hand and put it to one side. When he had killed all the bugs

under that rock, he would count them and enter the number in a small notebook he carried in his pocket. He always had two or three short stubs of pencil with him, just in case he lost the one held by a leather loop inside the cover of his notebook. If the sheep still did not need his attention he would try another rock. One day I saw him crawl up to an anthill, which absorbed his attention for quite a long time. He always counted the bugs he killed and entered the number in his little book. Perhaps each day he tried to kill more bugs than he had killed the day before. Sometimes I saw him add up the day's kill before he went to bed at night in the canvas covered box on wheels we called "home."

The "bug killer" was a very good herder. He never allowed his glee at killing bugs to interfere with his herding duties. He counted his blacks several times a day—usually every time he could get a view of the whole herd at close enough range—and always when the sheep settled on the bedground at night if it was still light enough to pick out the blacks. Every morning he was ready to leave camp as soon as the first ambitious sheep began to move, and then he counted the blacks again as the herd left bedground. A good herder counts his "markers" (the black sheep) every time he gets a chance. Even if all the blacks are there he may be short some sheep, but if one or more of the blacks are missing it is very likely a number of white sheep are gone too. As soon as possible after discovering a black sheep is absent, the herder or the camp-tender, or both, will try to circle clear around the area where the sheep made tracks that day. They frequently find the tracks of a few, or possibly as many as two or three hundred sheep, leading off into the hills or down onto the flat. When those tracks are followed the lost sheep are found, possibly several miles away, and are then driven back to the herd. A good sheepherder is a good "tracker" too. When the "bug killer" brought his herd of 3,000 sheep off the winter range the year I worked with him, he had them all except 15, and he had 12 pelts, or hides, of those. He also had about 50 stray sheep, from two other outfits, which his herd had picked up on the range.

Seven different types of sheepherders have been discussed above. There are others who use their spare time differently, but we have no space here to discuss them.

As in all "professions" there are good herders and bad herders, but in closing let it be said that a good herder is a very dedicated man. He is entrusted with as much as 40 or 50 thousand dollars worth of very perishable property, out in a wilderness where a slight neglect of his duties might result in heavy losses. A herder is rated by the fat carried by the sheep he herds, and the number and size of lambs they still have in the fall, but most of all, by the number of sheep he loses. Herders among themselves take great pride in a record of small losses.

Many herders, especially the Basques, will never leave the sheep when in danger. Many a herder has frozen his feet or lost the lobe of an ear circling his sheep in a blizzard, to be sure none of them stray off into the wilderness to never be found again, even to get their pelts if they had died.

Without hard working, dedicated sheepherders, the open range sheep industry could never exist.

The sheepherder is a man who works for the love of his job rather than for the money he gets—all of which he usually spends on a spree in town twice a year.

This account is very incomplete, and has been sketchy, but it is hoped it will give the reader at least a glimpse of Sheep in Nevada.

CLEL GEORGETTA

This man has traveled many paths since he was born April 20, 1901. His early life was spent in White Pine County, Nevada, where he was a sheepherder, a cowboy, and later a rancher who built a small ranch into a cattle and sheep empire spreading into four counties and two states—Nevada and Utah.

He has been a canal and reservoir builder, a prospector and a mine operator, later a lawmaker as a member of the Nevada Legislature, and a soldier (Lt. Col.) in World War II. He is also a writer of western stories (Wool, Beef and Gold, Pac Books, 1956). He is best known as a trial lawyer and a District Judge in Washoe County. Throughout all his active and varied life he has never lost his love of the open range, as demonstrated by this article "Sheep in Nevada."