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

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

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

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

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QUARTERLY

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CONTENTS

**IMMIGRANT THEMES IN
NEVADA NEWSPAPERS**

DR. WILBUR SHEPPERSON

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NEVADA'S ITALIAN WAR

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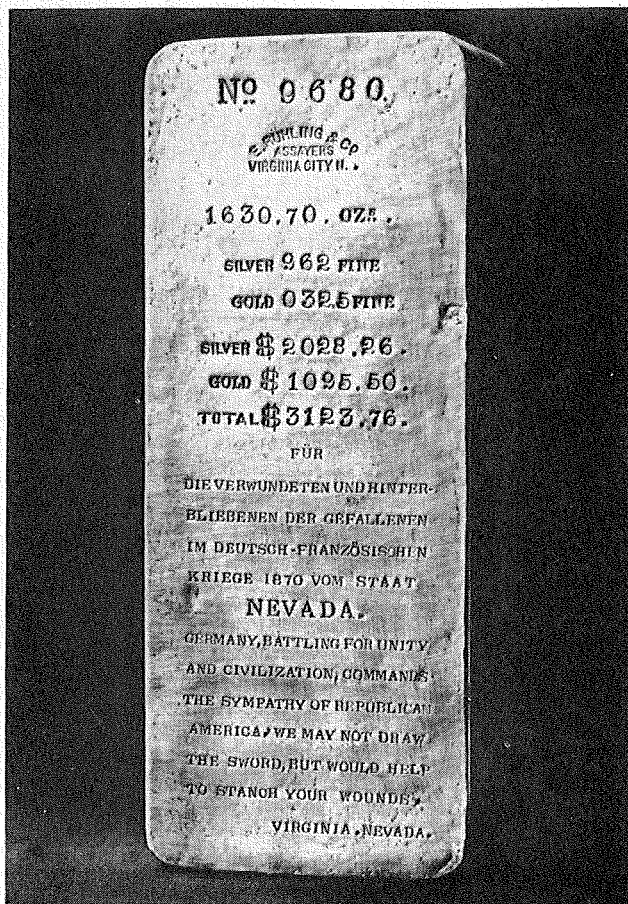
The town of Eureka in the mid-1870's. The bareness of the hills is due to the cutting of timber for charcoal.

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Immigrant Themes in Nevada Newspapers

DR. WILBUR SHEPPERSON



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FÜR

DIE VERWUNDETEN UND HINTER-
BLIEBENEN DER GEFALLENEN
IM DEUTSCH-FRANZÖSISCHEN
KRIEGE 1870 VOM STAAT

NEVADA.

GERMANY, BATTLING FOR UNITY
AND CIVILIZATION, COMMANDS
THE SYMPATHY OF REPUBLICAN
AMERICA; WE MAY NOT DRAW
THE SWORD, BUT WOULD HELP
TO STANCH YOUR WOUNDS.
VIRGINIA, NEVADA.

Silberbarren im Werthe von 4320 Thalern.

Von Deutschen und Amerikanern im Staate Nevada in Nordamerika

am 20. September 1870

dem Deutschen Central-Comité übersandt.

An early American adage declared that once printer's ink got on a boy's shirt it seldom could be washed out in less than three generations. Clearly there was a great fascination for printing and particularly for newspapers on the frontier. Ray Billington has shown that in 1840 the West provided a newspaper for every 12,000 people. Nebraska supported over a hundred papers when only a decade old, and by the mid-1850's San Francisco produced more newspapers than London.¹ By 1870 at least 38 papers had been founded in Nevada, but only 18, or one for every 2,500 people, were still being published. Most of the early editors were self-educated drifters who followed the flow of population. They demonstrated a unique trust in the power of the press and a mystic faith in their own convictions. With fearless zest they dragged their presses to the ragged mining camps and often singlehandedly provided the only cultural or literary force in the wilderness. Exuberant and quarrelsome, the journalists had talent; their interest in community affairs commonly overshadowed that of other professional men. They were an influential group who reflected their environment and yet they possessed little sense of attachment to either a particular paper, a particular place, or a particular social class. Most journalists wrote editorial, promotional, and literary columns and quickly found that the public expected all to be spiced with wit and humor.

Although today only about twenty Nevada communities issue a newspaper, over the past century some 120 districts have provided the state with nearly 450 news periodicals. Six of the papers were foreign language publications. From the era of Mark Twain to the generation of Henry Mighels and from Henry Sinclair Drago to Octavus Roy Cohen and Robert Laxalt, many of the leading cultivators of the immigrant theme have been, at least in part, journalists.

Nevada journalism was of its time and was inevitably transient. Yet there were many ways for a newspaper to listen to the emotions of the society, countless things to listen for, and different methods of relating and recounting what was heard. The journalist who listened wisely and who cared could sense the ambitions and the joy, the misery and the dread of his community. No doubt Mark Twain, Alf Doten, and many other early Nevada reporters remained popular because they felt deeply about the future of society. Despite the fact that they chronicled sweeping changes and lived among a people with a buoyant hope, no newspaperman wrote of utopianism. Beneath the conflicting overstatement and popular exaggeration, they saw the true hardships and noted the frequency of failure. They saw the barren land and the transient life and they observed the large foreign-born population which was flowing into Nevada.

By 1870, only six years after Nevada was admitted to the Union, 44.2 percent of the state's population was foreign born. On a percentage basis, the new land of sagebrush had already become the largest immigrant

state in America; almost seven percent more of its inhabitants were foreign born than that of second place California. Furthermore, the Bureau of Census has estimated that during the following ten years the new foreign migration into Nevada was ten times that of the American-born influx. Although the state's population increased by twenty thousand between 1870 and 1880, the census figures suggest that only eight hundred of the new residents were American-born migrants.² In 1880 Nevada still had seven percent more foreign-born inhabitants than any other state. The area long maintained its immigrant character and was on a percentage basis one of the top ten foreign-born states in America for over seventy-five years.

Significantly, when Nevada was the most remote and isolated state, it attracted the largest per capita immigrant population. Although landlocked, it lured Portuguese fishermen from the Azores into the prosperous dairy industry. Although a desert region, Tuscans from the old duchy of Lucca streamed in to become stable ranchers. Swedish speaking Finns settled in the hot dry boom camps of Nye and Esmeralda counties. And soon thereafter, Spanish farmers and fishermen sought the snow-capped mountains of the north for their sheep. Carson City became a home for many Australian-born females at the same time that it was the Chinese center of the state. Koreans who spoke Japanese, Slavs from Croatia and Serbia, and Greeks from Turkey and the Peloponnesus filled the mines and smelters of White Pine County, and Hindus laid rails for the Southern Pacific. In short, a diverse group of human beings helped to build the state and in turn contributed to its unorthodox social development.

Of the 2,770 men gainfully employed in the mining industry of the Comstock Lode in June, 1880, only 770 were American born.³ In addition to the foreign-born white migration, by 1880, 8.7 percent of the state's total population was from China.⁴ By 1900, when the Italians represented only 4.7 percent of the total immigrant population of the United States, they comprised 3.0 percent of the entire population of the state of Nevada.⁵ Therefore, in 1900, Nevada contained a larger percentage of Italians than any other American state. Indeed, Nevada's percentage of Italian settlers was twice that of any state west of the Mississippi River. By 1910, Nevada had become a major area for Japanese settlement, and along with southern Idaho and southwest Oregon, it had grown into the most significant Basque center in America. Even a Reno brothel of 1910 could boast of eleven foreign-born girls out of a total of nineteen. Furthermore, the prostitutes had come from nine different countries including England, France, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Russia, Belgium, Canada, and Japan.⁶

As the journalists used the foreign born in their day-to-day reporting, numerous immigrant overtones were woven into the newspapers. Perhaps the six most readily apparent themes are humor and fakery, color and off-color, initiative and enterprise, distrust and discrimination, rivalry and conflict, and loneliness and despair.

HUMOR AND FAKERY

Every age has created its comforting illusions and tragic comedy. The ability to laugh when chronicling doubt and reporting disaster characterized the Comstock era. Much of the humor was cruel rather than compassionate, indulgent rather than pleasant. The lengthy and frequent articles which reported the hand-to-hand and verbal combat between Jews and Chinese were thought hilarious. Grotesque insults were exchanged, and "the heathen" regularly enlarged on the Jew's responsibility for the death of Jesus Christ.⁷ In the same vein the papers thought it highly amusing when the "Dublin drifter" shot off the ear of a "careless Cornishman" and when a "London rough" repeatedly terrorized the "Cantonese coolies." A formal dinner held by the Saint George's Society was reported as an "English gunpowder tea"; a minor Slavic disagreement became a "brutal fight by the Slavonian beef dissectors"; and some newly arrived Italians were declared to be "land lovers" because they carried so "much of it on them."

An equally ghoulish approach to pleasure grew out of injury, desperation, or defeat. A *Territorial Enterprise* article entitled "A Zampillaerostationist" explained that a German fell fifteen feet and had he "gone farther" he would have "done worse." More notice was given to the Prussian who suffered repeated financial failures and at last, finding himself ill and without work, attempted suicide by shooting himself in the mouth. The ball lodged in the back part of the immigrant's throat, which prompted the reporter to conclude that if he lived through the experience, he would "probably be troubled with a very sore throat for some time to come."⁸

Over the decades the leading papers of the state developed the tall-tale into something of a trademark and almost uniformly used the foreign born to punctuate its effectiveness. There was the Irishman who won seven hundred dollars gambling in Virginia City and on his way home to Gold Hill, was stopped by three footpads intent on robbing him. With great composure, the Irishman explained that they were the fourth band of thieves to attack him since he left the gambling hall and that he had long since been relieved of his winnings. "Jolly Irish McGinnis," the Virginia City jailer of the mid-sixties, supposedly left the door unlocked so that scoundrels could escape back to California and thus save the "good people of Nevada" both time and money.

Some stories seem to have been born out of confusion, rather than design. For example, during the great prison break of September 17, 1871, in which twenty-nine convicts escaped, the papers emphasized the bravery of an inmate known as "Gallant Frenchy." The Frenchman was supposed to have saved the life of the warden's six-year-old daughter, the life of a visiting lady, and finally that of a prison officer, and then Frenchy faced the hostility of his fellow convicts, who tried to kill him for his gallantry. The Frenchman was never named, and it is somewhat disappointing to learn that there was no Frenchman in or associated with

the prison at the time of the escape. An equally innocent joke was the suggestion that a willow tree in Riverside Park in Reno had grown from a slip cut from a bough which shaded Napoleon's Parisian tomb. With nationalistic fervor, local Frenchmen flocked to the park with knives and carved so extensively on several willows that the *Nevada State Journal* declared that many trees "have suffered, and many have been badly disfigured."⁹

One of the more commonplace types of frontier amusement was the hoax. This often savage humor was popularized in Nevada by Mark Twain's story of October, 1863, in which he reported a massacre at Dutch Nick's on the Carson River. Less than two months after the Dutch Nick story shocked the West, Philip Lynch of the *Gold Hill Daily News* presented his version of a "terrible infanticide." The story, appearing the day after Christmas, told of an unwed German mother killing her infant and of the legal action that was being planned against her. Lynch quickly lost his nerve, however, and admitted that the article was a hoax based on the Mark Twain pattern.¹⁰

One of the more successful and bizarre deceptions was engineered by the *Reese River Reveille* in the spring of 1878. On March 30, the paper reported that two English-educated Hindus had walked into Nevada from the Bodie district. The foreigners had visited and worked at Columbus, Ione, and other towns and were on their way to Austin when one of them, Pietro Las-Como, became so completely exhausted that he died at a ranch house in the Reese River Valley. His companion, Ramel Acknoor, walked on to Austin and asked the mayor for permission to cremate his friend so that the ashes might be sent back to Calcutta. After long deliberation, the mayor approved the burning and appointed a committee to observe the ceremonies and evaluate the merits and demerits of the custom, since the city fathers might wish to adopt a similar means of disposing of the local dead. The following morning half the town rushed to Birchim's Ranch on the Reese River to observe the cremation, and the other half expressed their indignation that the practice of Christian burial was being questioned by the officials. On April 1, 1878, the editor replied to the citizens queries with the comment "April Fool."

A theme closely related to humor and the hoax revolved around the acquisition of foreign wealth or the inheritance of an English title. The story of an unimpressive immigrant becoming the pride of the community when he fell heir to lands and a title in the Old World was a standard American tale. During the sixties and seventies the Comstock rags to English riches version became a regular feature of newspaper reporting. The Jack Sheppard case was not unique. In May, 1873, the *Territorial Enterprise* explained that Sheppard, a hard-working member of the ropes gang at the Imperial Mine, had inherited \$1,500,000 and had left for England. Since neither Sheppard nor his associates read the papers, it was several days before they learned of the fantasy.

When the drifter Frank McDru explained that he had acquired four million dollars and planned to desert Sparks for a home in London, a

newspaper reporter noted McDru's love of the West and sensed "a hidden thread that all the wealth in the world could not break." McDru agreed, and declared that it was not the money that drew him towards England, but the possibility of "going back to my folks."¹¹ Presumably the Canadian George Shea was equally happy to return home when after languishing in a Winnemucca jail, he suddenly found that he had received a large benefaction, whereupon he became a local hero and was released from custody.¹²

A slightly different emphasis was suggested by a *Morning Appeal* headline in 1879. The caption read "The Son of a Noble English House in Carson and Begging for a Meal on the Street."¹³ The Englishman had drifted from wealth and aristocracy in London, to rank and power in the British army, to a sheep ranch and alcoholism in Australia, to a small farm and desperate poverty in Nevada. The story was implemented with much biographical detail and high praise for the noble Englishman. But out of deference to the gentleman's pride, the reporter had not printed the tale until after the immigrant had left town. The spring of 1879 was apparently a good season for aristocrats in Carson City since less than two months later the same reporter sighted a man with a full, thick, black beard waiting in the railroad station. After careful questioning the foreigner admitted to the alert newsman that he was a Russian army officer and nobleman and had participated in the 1866 plot to murder Alexander II. After escaping from a Siberian prison and making his way across much of Asia and Europe, he at last had found freedom in Nevada.¹⁴ The Russian, like the Englishman, was seen only by the nimble reporter.

Well aware of the excitement generated by the discovery of wealth or the arrival of an aristocrat, the newspapers were inclined to exaggerate the presence of either. Many a poor, but quick-witted immigrant lad elevated himself to wealth and prominence in Nevada. Typical was the case of Jacob Greahk, a thirty-three year old Austrian, who worked with a Virginia and Truckee Railroad section gang. When Greahk became ill and explained that he would surely die, he asked that a lawyer be sent to draw up his will. The attorney could not keep a secret, and within hours the talebearers claimed that the foreigner had twelve thousand dollars in cash, plus valuable stocks and other securities. The next day Greahk moved from his room near the railroad tracks into one of the better homes of Gold Hill, and although his illness vanished, he continued to enjoy the finer features of town life. Eventually, he disappeared and left none of his wealth behind.

A Mr. Lazard of Winnemucca used a less subtle approach. He arrived in town in May, 1881, rented a small building, and advertised himself as a "practical watchmaker, jeweler, assayer, lapidary, repairer of astronomical, mathematical, nautical, and surveying instruments, music teacher, piano tuner, etc., etc."¹⁵ After assuring the local populace that he was fluent in Greek, Latin, Turkish, Arabic, and other European and Asiatic languages, he founded a local orchestra and feverishly collected jewelry, watches, instruments, and other valuable items that needed

repair. After only two months in town, Lazard left Winnemucca at night, was apprehended and forced to return the stolen property, and then freed to practice his art on another unsuspecting community.

Nevadans were unquestionably interested, amused, and impressed by the foreign born who commanded special favors and elicited special attention. The newspapers reveal a constant procession of bogus aristocrats like Count Mitkiewicz of Poland. Mitkiewicz charmed Virginia City society during the first part of 1872, while he was searching for a rich heiress to marry. Later in the year, he found and married a wealthy lady in Rochester, New York, only a few days before he was exposed as a charlatan. Not all would-be aristocrats were as lucky. On February 8, 1873, the *Gold Hill Daily News* revealed that Albert Sobieski, a Polish nobleman, had died penniless in the county hospital. Before his death Sobieski had explained to a local bartender that although he was heir to great estates, he had chosen exile rather than the trammels of Europe and had spent his life wandering throughout the world. The reporter remembered the Pole as intelligent, cultivated, a master of languages, a brilliant conversationalist, and a good athlete. He was often seen waiting at the Virginia City post office for money that was to have been dispatched from Europe. But the funds did not arrive and Sobieski sat up in saloons because he could no longer pay for lodgings. Whether noble or peasant, he finally died, a public charge, at the county hospital.

The presence of European nobility was dramatically portrayed by an article in the *Eureka Daily Sentinel* of March 11, 1875. Captioned "A Russian Count . . . Slinging Hash in an Eureka Restaurant," the editorial recounted the life history of Alexander Von Huhn, a waiter at the Lafayette cafe. According to the story, Von Huhn's father was a scion of the House of Hapsburg, and his mother, a Russian countess, could trace her lineage directly to Peter the Great. The youth grew up in a mansion on the Neva River, entered the royal army, became an escort for Czar Alexander II and a companion for the monarch's son. Unfortunately, while at court, he fell in love with a lady betrothed to another officer. Challenged to a duel, he married the lady and straight away left the candlelight of the church to defend his honor. After killing the fellow officer, he sought asylum in western Europe, but was pursued throughout the continent. Even in America, Von Huhn did not feel completely safe until he arrived at Eureka, Nevada, where he at last found contentment. However, the count had failed to say good-bye to his mother and young bride and could never write them because his letters would be traced to the Far West. The reporter found the new waiter fluent in French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Russian, but he spoke little English. His "careworn face, his strange demeanor, and unobtrusive ways" had awakened curiosity throughout the town. He had shown pluck, and although an aristocrat, was "not too proud to bend the knee to circumstances and seek a living in an honest way."¹⁶ The article was so floridly overwritten and so patently false that the editor was either indulging in a

modified type of the Dutch Nick hoax or perhaps attempting to attract customers for the Lafayette restaurant.

Many early Nevada journalists and editors brought to their work an intellectual vividness, a rich framework of ideas, a perspective that was at one and the same time tragic, apocalyptic, comic, and anecdotal. Such journalists applied the imaginative resources of fiction to their daily commentaries. Somewhat freed from the necessity of noting only hard facts, their reporting often became creative. They were not orthodox journalists who probed only for realism; rather they embraced the fictional element and tried to produce their impression of society. Clearly, their emphasis on manners, on attitudes, and on jocular fantasy did not always provide a penetrating insight into the lives of the foreign born. However, most reporters were serious despite a surface humor and most found that immigrants animated their stories.

COLOR AND OFF-COLOR

A second concept running through Nevada newspapers and frequently employed by novelists can perhaps best be described as immigrant color. Foreign-born episodes and characters provided a happy opportunity for mixing myth with reality and interjecting fiction into history. Nevada editors filled their columns with stories about Chinese Mary, Russian Pete, Sauerkraut Schell, and literally hundreds of equally colorful foreigners. Typical was the case of William Herhily, better known by his sobriquet, The Emigrant.

Herhily was a railroad worker who had saved a few dollars and started home to Ireland. He became intoxicated while traveling near Battle Mountain, and during a fight, cut the throat of a fellow Irishman. While being transported to the jail at Austin, he almost succeeded in igniting the powder which was to be used for a Fourth of July celebration. After his stay in the Lander County jail provoked criticism by taxpayers, and after an attempt to turn him over to the Storey County authorities failed, Herhily was finally escorted to the California border and told not to return to the state. The Emigrant found the injunction impossible to honor, since Nevada seemed to separate him from Ireland; therefore, the farce of apprehension and release was reenacted until California authorities escorted the persistent Irishman to Sacramento where they agreed to investigate the case.¹⁷

Russian Pete, actually a thirty-six year old Finn, was more of a true desperado than the confused and mentally-deranged Herhily. After robbing and killing throughout the Sierra, Pete finally took refuge in a mine tunnel at Virginia City. The sheriff promptly dammed the mouth of the shaft, hoping that in time the ruffian would be either drowned or forced to surrender. After hours of confusion and the killing of another man, Pete quenched the excitement and carnival-like atmosphere at the mouth of the tunnel by committing suicide.¹⁸

The early Nevada press was crowded with cases like those of The Emigrant and Russian Pete. The West in general, and Nevada in particular, became a land where hundreds of immigrants chose violence and a raw, corrosive, senseless life in their confused and misdirected search for respect, or attention, or success. The Wild Irishman of Austin enjoyed the notoriety of driving over people with his wagon. Irish Tim and the Irish Man Eater became famous because of an ability to fight with their teeth. Irish Mike was so well known for his wife beating that both the state and national governments considered laws for the protection of wives. Dublin Pete had a tendency to kill his opponents in fist fights, while Irish Riley, Irish Charley, French Charley, Chinese Charley, and French Lefevre were among western Nevada's more pugnacious drunks and brawlers. Indeed, "crazy French Lefevre" once tried to kill the warden of the state prison and on numerous occasions, while incarcerated, attacked the guards. Irish Tom became known as the "father of the Nevada state prison," and Chinese Chow eventually earned the appellation "dean of the state prison." Few Nevada immigrants were given as much attention either before or after death as Frenchy Navarre of Beowawe. Frenchy fractured many skulls during his lifetime, but some weeks after burial, his body was exhumed to see if his skull had been fractured by a murderer or merely by a friend while in a playful scuffle.

In many instances, foreign-born females led equally active lives. English Waller, the "Pioneer Mountain Actress," sang "The 'orn of the 'unter is 'eard on the 'ill" to thousands of miners before her death in 1899. When Mrs. Waller first brought her English songs to the Sierra Nevada, she faced stiff competition from a hurdy house operated by German Schultz. In 1868 Schultz staged Nevada's first "prostitute's ball," at which there was food, dancing, and fun for all. In the same year, English Ida, who worked at a competitive brothel known as Bow Windows, was making a name for herself and for her house; however, Ida died of morphine and opium after only four short years on the Comstock. Also in 1868, English Gussie became famous when she so effectively disposed of her infant child that its body was never found. And at the same time in a neighboring house, Irish Mary killed Galway Farry while both were drunk. Irish Mary and a colleague, Madam Irish, became notorious as the most vulgar and degenerate of the Comstock women.

Bow Windows was the scene of violence in 1871 when "The German Muscle Woman" used a cowhide on a prospective Irish client because he tended to support the French in the Franco-Prussian War. And Dutch Mary was equally outraged when a few weeks later members of the vigilance committee, known as the 601, broke into her room, seized a customer, and later executed him on Geiger grade. She lodged a complaint with the authorities on the grounds of improper entry. Bow Windows added further color to Virginia City later in 1871 when Blanche de Maude earned the sobriquet "Suicide Frenchy" because two attempts at suicide were foiled by the prompt arrival of a doctor. No doubt,

Scottish Laura, who died of an overdose of laudanum, and English Nell, who died of morphine, were more fortunate; they both succumbed before a physician could arrive.

In the meantime English Georgia's brothel, known as the Brick House and located a few doors north of Bow Windows on D Street, also suffered from a series of fights and suicides. On May Day, 1868, a client hit Spanish Mary on the head with a rock and almost killed her. Two weeks later a group of Irish prostitutes became involved in what was commonly known as the Kilkenny fight. In late 1868 and in early 1869, acute problems of competition developed at Bow Windows and the Brick House when several of the musical group known as the Swiss Bell Ringers (actually an English female troupe from Lancashire) remained in Virginia City to practice their second profession.

Of course other towns vied with Virginia City as entertainment centers and girls from many countries competed as dance hall performers. Gustave Chevel, a French-Canadian restaurant owner of Eureka, became famous for his importation of foreign women, and August Jesse of Carson City brought over many girls from his old home in Germany. Jesse insisted that the German females would "raise the tone of dance houses in Carson."¹⁹ Altering the pattern somewhat, it was claimed that at least 150 unmarried women flocked into the Glenbrook area of Lake Tahoe during the summer of 1879 for the purpose of enticing some of the hundreds of French-Canadian woodcutters into marriage.

But in many ways, the piquancy, drama, and action surrounding the life of Chinese Mary surpassed that of any other hurdy dancer in the state, including that of the well-known Julia Bulette. After being responsible for several fights and one killing in Carson City, Mary, in May, 1875, was abducted by members of a rival tong and transported to Wellington. On the way, she repeatedly tried to escape, and upon arrival at Wellington, she jumped into the Walker River in an attempted suicide. Somewhat in desperation, the Chinese captors decided to remove her to Genoa, but since they were afraid of an opposing tong, they employed two white men at five dollars each plus costs to carry out the assignment. A chinaman accompanied the white men in an effort to assure prompt delivery. Outside Wellington, one of the men maneuvered his partner and the chinaman out of the wagon and then drove off with the valuable cargo. He traded Mary to a Chinaman at Aurora for \$220 and a silver watch and chain. The new owner promptly married his prize. But Mary's path of chaos continued on south, and by 1876, she had provoked several Chinese riots and at least one shooting in Esmeralda County. On one occasion at Columbus, nine men claimed her simultaneously. All were arrested.²⁰

Obviously not all immigrant color was associated with crime, violence, or debauchery. Angelo Cardela received favorable publicity when he became known as the "Reno Hercules," the strongest man in the world,²¹ and Frenchy (Charles) Venini was widely heralded as the great Nevada

race horse trainer. Eureka's tattooed Greek, George Costentenus, was billed as the most decorated man in the world, and most persons conceded that Dutch Sal was the most boisterous man in the world even though he and a mulatto mistress kept a lonely stage station. But "the counterfeit Pole of Humboldt" had no wish to become famous or share in the picturesque immigrant traditions.

In early June, 1879, Frank Schollata was arrested in Winnemucca for counterfeiting half dollars. The authorities seized the plaster of Paris molds, lead, babbit metal, antimony, ladles, and other equipment. But while being transported to Carson City, Schollata jumped off the train near Lovelock and for over a week eluded a sheriff's posse of nearly a hundred white men and a band of Indian scouts. Eventually captured on the Oregon border, Schollata was taken to Carson City and brought to trial in November, 1879. To the dismay of the federal officers, the Pole was acquitted by a jury who seemed to agree with the defense attorney's arguments that Winnemucca needed a mint, that Nevada needed more coins, and that no one had proved that Schollata planned to use the newly minted money illegally.²²

"Chicken Thief Charley of Yorkshire" also elicited the public sympathy which so frequently abetted the rogue. Of the ten men in jail at Virginia City on April 20, 1871, nine were foreign born and six were accused of stealing chickens.²³ It was not Charley's first offense. Indeed, he had been caught on previous occasions and in one instance cut off the ear of the man who apprehended him. Finally in September, 1871, many of the good people of the Comstock, including at least one clergyman, became concerned with the case and often visited the culprit while he was in jail. Since Charley claimed that the chickens were stolen to get money to return to his beloved England, it seemed unfair to the preacher that he should be detained in jail. One prayer soliciting God's help in the matter asked that Charley might "become blind to the attractions of such plump pullets as may stray across his path, and deaf to the crowing of the cock. Send him in the way to find honest employment, and when he has secured sufficient gold return him to his own place in Yorkshire, in England."²⁴

Many reporters deliberately emphasized the immigrant as a unique source of color in their otherwise drab communities. An article modestly entitled "Cosmopolitan" from the *Eureka Sentinel* suggested the pride with which some journalists reported on the foreign born.

For variety of nationalities, we believe that Eureka is entitled to the palm. We were particularly impressed with this fact yesterday, by noticing a group standing in front of a saloon on North Main Street. There was a native of Madagascar, an East Indian, a Spaniard, an Italian, a Chilean, and a man born on the Island of Tahiti. In close proximity was a group of Shoshones playing cards, and a Chinaman watching the game. English, French, Scotch, Irish, Slavonians, and Negroes passed during the time that our attention was attracted, and a member of the group referred to gave us the item in regard to the nativity of those first mentioned. Americans

were sadly in the minority, and but few were to be seen. There are representatives from almost every race on the globe residing on the Base Ridge, and we doubt if another town in the United States can show such a cosmopolitan community.²⁵

The *Tonopah Bonanza* was less romantic in viewing the inrush of Caliente in 1903. In "It's a Hot Town" the reporter noted,

The Irishmen [are found] in every kind of a position from running a saloon to spading out a ditch. The natives of southern Europe are here in force. Italians, Greeks, Austrians and Syrians all speaking their own jargons, and boarding themselves and saving their money. They evidently want to save their pile and go back, which is better for the country than to have them stay, for they are evidently too ignorant to make good citizens.²⁶

Other newsmen fancied themselves ethnic analysts. A Carson City reporter declared that when intoxicated, "a Frenchman wants to dance, a German wants to sing, a Spaniard to gamble, an Englishman to eat, an Italian to boast, a Russian to be affectionate, [and] an Irishman to fight. . . ."²⁷

But in the final analysis, it was immigrant cutthroats and foreigners engaged in vice and crime who provided material for the most striking sketches. Patsy Dwyer left Nevada with his "sainted Irish mother" after killing his third man; "The British Blondes" became famous more for prostitution than for their musical performances; Killer Neroni, while in a Nevada jail, declared himself eligible for membership in the Black Hand because he had murdered twelve victims; Jew Mike, the German tailor, took turns at shooting up Eureka, Pioche, and other eastern Nevada towns; and Irish Tom, who, after a long residence in Mexico, became conspicuous for his misdeeds in Aurora and Austin and died a trusted police officer in Hamilton. The Buenos Aires Kid, the Teuton, the Big Swede, the Duke of Bedford, Killer Lopez, Cockney Tim, Butcher-knife John the Serb, Jackass Dutch Billy, Christian Dutch Sinner, Tall George the Slovenian, Greek Louckas the "King of the Prostitutes," and Dutch Voss the "Daniel Boone of Nevada Brewering," further suggest the almost inexhaustible list of foreigners who turned Nevada into a surrealist landscape of variegated shade and tone.

Clearly, Nevada was a land of externals and its migrants were forced to meet and endure the external hazards. It was a disordered land, individualistic, raw, and fascinating, and the migrants were forced to seek a psychological accommodation. But as the winds of many cultures blew into the state they were submerged and tamed and the traditional color of the Old World blended into the multicolors of the new West. For over a century the embellishments of the journalists have filtered through onto the pages of history and literature and outlined, or stereotyped, early Nevada society. Some have argued that the Nevada color was as indigestible for the sensitive novelist as "peanut butter for a gourmet," but more have enthusiastically incorporated it into their work. Indeed, it is ironic that so many writers borrowed from Nevada newspapers because

of the color and yet so often tended to discolor rather than vivify, to chronicle rather than illuminate. Nevertheless, virtually all Nevada commentaries, if not all of Nevada society, has been touched by the richness of the journalistic color and by the vast and varied parade assembled from the entire human race which swept through the state.

INITIATIVE AND ENTERPRISE

Nevada's immigrants, like most of the foreign born who made their way to the frontier, accepted the rags-to-riches myth. They seldom doubted the stories of great natural resources, of limitless opportunities, and of individual freedom. Hard work blended with thrift, enterprise blended with sound judgment were to lead to success. The foreign born did not need to read the Horatio Alger success stories or absorb the boosterism so common to western news sheets. Most arrived already converted to the proposition that they would devote their lives to capitalistic enterprise.

Perhaps the most impressive, if somewhat paradoxical, example of material success was the foreigners who accumulated a fortune so that they might quickly return home. In the same year that the town of Battle Mountain was founded, one of its first citizens, Alexander Melander, sold his interests in a nearby mining claim and after only a brief sojourn in America returned to Britain with his newly earned wealth.²⁸ Charles Maunder heard of Tonopah while working as a miner in Wales. He crossed the Atlantic and traveled directly to southern Nevada. Arriving in 1902, Maunder had by July, 1905, discovered an ore deposit, sold it, and left Nevada to return "to the bosom of his family well supplied with worldly goods."²⁹ After years of work Chinese Tom of Reno sold his laundry at the corner of Center and Second streets for \$15,000. He contacted Father Tubman who had so often befriended him, gave the Irish priest a substantial sum of money to help construct a new church, and left for China to seek out his long deserted wife and family.³⁰ Madam Foo started her career as an illiterate prostitute; in time she became the wealthiest Chinese in Winnemucca and eventually she decided to return to the Orient. But after eighteen months in her homeland she became convinced that Nevada, rather than China, provided opportunity for women with initiative and enterprise. Returning to Winnemucca she, along with other Chinese, helped to establish Hong Kong Row, a restricted street west of the Court House where only Orientals of wealth and position were permitted to reside.³¹

The newspapers portray the foreign born as peculiarly original and enterprising in their approach to the business world. There was the advertising program of the German butchers of Virginia City who drove their cattle with names painted on them through the streets so that housewives could order their Christmas dinner by merely calling out the animal's name. The Irishman J. A. Carnahan hastily moved his wife to Reno in late August, 1868 so that his child would be the first born in

the new community and would thereby receive fifty acres of land from the city's promoters. "The Fortunate Slovenian," George Perasich, located his vegetable market in Carson City next to the theater and thereby was able to sell his overripe produce to a gang of ruffians who regularly pelted the performers. Noting the large number of the foreign born who wished to be buried in their homeland, a venturesome immigrant in Goldfield announced that for a reasonable fee he was prepared to send bodies any place in the world. Equally ambitious were the Italians (or perhaps Irishmen engaged in a hoax) who in late 1901 attached a note to a small stake outside of Tonopah. "We undersigned according to U.S. law claim this fifteen hundred feet ledge, 600 foot wide. Begin at that stake and run to Lone mountains and East to Butler peaks six hundred feet wide. For mining purposes, to have for ourself together to make assessments; and find some rich ore. Guiseppi Rafferti, Pete Pardon, Garabaldi Jonesi."³²

The Italians in particular pursued a broad range of economic activity. At first they became charcoal burners, railroad workers, and miners, but by 1906 the Italian businessmen of Reno had accumulated enough wealth to organize an Italian bank. Many of the Italians of western Nevada became leading suppliers of poultry and agricultural produce for the rapidly expanding towns. As early as 1867, one wagonload of G. B. Buggiano's turkeys and chickens from the Empire area brought \$600 on the Comstock. But after the successful Christmas sale, Buggiano was attacked and robbed by highwaymen before he reached home.³³ Italian truck gardeners suffered similar hardships when their produce was stolen or destroyed by vandals, and when the irrigation ditches dried up. Giovanni Ghiglieri and Pietro Peceti were constantly involved in law suits because their spirited horses were frightened by the activity in Virginia City. People were injured, property destroyed, and most of the produce lost as the teams would break free of their drivers and charge down the mountainous streets.³⁴ Italians from the Pine Nut area of Douglas County supplied much of the poultry for Carson City and during the eighties the Italian Ranch and picnic grounds outside of Eureka became one of the show places of eastern Nevada.

Many nationalities, of course, participated in the provisioning of early Nevada. For years, the Englishman A. Kimber produced large yields of rye, oats, barley, and wheat and supplied western Nevada with flour and grain from his 400 acre field lying north of the Truckee River where Reno now stands.³⁵ As early as the summer of 1863, the reporters of Virginia City noted the productive capacity of a single Chinaman who on a small piece of land along North D Street supplied the town with a great variety of vegetables. Indeed, the term "Chinese Garden" came to denote freshness and quality throughout the community. Other journalistic phrases like the "French chicken woman" of Carson City, the "Basque apple train" of Eureka, the "Dutch chicken man" of the state prison, and the "French icehouse" of Spring Valley suggest the relationship between certain immigrants and the production or storage of food.

Scores of adventurous immigrants were linked by the newspapers with agricultural or business enterprises in Nevada. Tipperary Jack made his living hunting and trapping along the Humboldt River in the wintertime and growing potatoes at Galena during the summer months. He became known humorously as "the Great American Wolf Hunter from Pertater Gulch." The famed "Irish lemon man" of Newark Valley grew potatoes which weighed four pounds each and with five or six to a hill. Bismark Kirschner pioneered the grocery business in Bodie, Aurora, and Belmont. His close friend, Dutch Veaney, became the first white man to grow vegetables commercially in the Belmont area, the first producer and marketer of ice cream in Belmont, the first importer of fresh fish (caught in Walker Lake) for central and southern Nevada, and finally, the first weather forecaster of the region. Sometimes Dutch Veaney's fish was transported in the same wagon with Louis Fidanza's wedding cakes. As the long-time operator of the Cristoforo Colombo restaurant and bakery in Belmont, Fidanza's "Italian wedding cakes" were sold throughout Nye County. Fidanza's only competitor was Frenchy Mestrieu, actually a Belgian, who owned the Lafayette restaurant across the street from the Italian establishment. Shamrock Shane, also operating out of Belmont, became central Nevada's first hair stylist. As a special blender and eastern Nevada's supplier of coffee, Frenchy Castagnetto received the appellation "Coffee King of Hamilton," whereas Jolly John, an Irishman, was the first resident of Hamilton to enjoy the luxuries of a plumbing system. Pablo Laveaga, a Mexican, was the first person in Unionville to use gas for illumination, and J. M. Flurshurtz, a German, became the first ice cream maker of Virginia City. The English Beer brothers, with Joseph Beer as senior partner, ran the famous brewery at Empire. Some twenty-five miles further down the Carson River at the French Ranch over a score of camels were being used by Frenchmen from the Sahara to transport salt from the Churchill County marshes to the Comstock.³⁶

Sauerkraut Schell, the garden-farmer of Smoky Valley; Irish Sulley, an early mine promoter at Rhyolite; Scotty Mathewson, a developer of the Carrara marble camp; and Russian Pearley, who devoted a lifetime to operating gambling parlors at Deleamar, Tonopah, Goldfield, Beatty, Bullfrog, and Rhyolite, suggest a few of the immigrant types who provided Nevada newspapers with provocative accounts of the local society. The list could be easily lengthened to include Cockney Dan, who was born in the center of London, enlisted in the Mexican War, and became one of the first persons to settle in Eureka; or Hungarian John, who founded the camp and town of Tybo, grew wealthy, and died a pauper in 1901; or the six members of "Dot Leetle German Band," who walked from town to town throughout much of northern Nevada and demonstrated a unique physical, as well as musical, ability.

The immigrant connections of many of Nevada's leading promoters, industrialists, financiers and prospectors have long been recognized. Both the contemporary journalists and more recent novelists have written

much about Peter O'Riley and Patrick McLaughlin, the Irishmen who discovered the Comstock Lode, and about Henry Comstock, the Canadian for whom it was named. French John Bishop not only located the mineral wealth at Gold Hill, but his cabin along with one built by a German and another built by an Irishman comprised three of the first four buildings of the camp. Eilley Orrum Bowers, a Scottish-born boardinghouse keeper, along with her husband, became the Nevada symbol for flamboyant wealth; and the Mexican Gabriel Maldonado, one-time owner of the Mexican mine, was for a time the richest man in Virginia City. John Mackay, James Fair, and William O'Brien of Ireland were three of the shrewdest investors on the Comstock, whereas Phillip Deidesheimer, Baron Ferdinand Von Richthofen, and Hermann Schussler of Germany helped to provide the engineering and scientific initiative which made mining profitable. John McCain of Ireland, James F. Lewis of Wales, Adolph Sutro of Germany, and the tenth Lord Fairfax of England have been pictured by journalists and biographers as energetic and industrious foreigners who helped to transform a barren wilderness into a rich and exciting community.

Although the leading Comstock immigrants are repeatedly discussed in biography, fiction, and newspapers, some of the twentieth-century success stories like that of John McKane, W. G. Cotter, L. E. Chiatovich, John Olson, and John Jones also have provided journalistic color and suggest even greater European ties. All were the product of the Tonopah-Goldfield boom era and most of the men emphasized their involvement with Old World ideas and institutions. In 1905 John McKane was declared owner and operator of the richest mine in Nevada, but he openly "maintained allegiance" to King Edward. He had twice stood for the Canadian Parliament and as a Scot planned to sit some day as a lawmaker at Westminster.³⁷ As a onetime captain in the Russian army and later the discoverer and developer of the mining camp at Golden Arrow, W. G. Cotter had enjoyed a series of wide experiences, and while he was not interested in returning to Europe, he attributed his financial success to the knowledge and training he had received in Russia.³⁸ On the other hand, L. E. Chiatovich was considering returning to the Dalmatian Coast when a French friend who was leaving the country gave him a small claim. Chiatovich eventually used the claim as the site for his profitable cyanide plant.³⁹ John Olson of Denmark discovered the Silver Glance mine, but quickly sold his interests so that he might fulfill a life long ambition to become an assayer and engineer. John "January" Jones typified the Welsh miner in that he drifted from Cardiganshire to Canada to Colorado and finally to Goldfield where in 1904 he discovered the famed "Million-Dollar January Lode." Jones' widely advertised investment organization, which practically guaranteed a \$10,000 return for every \$100 invested, made him a hero in his homeland, but demonstrated his propensity for naive schemes.

If pioneering accentuated the materialistic attitudes among the native

Americans, the act of immigration seems to have heightened the urge for self-improvement among the foreign born. While the ability to innovate, discover, and accumulate has at times been identified with the American character and the frontier experience, in Nevada the immigrant provided much of the initiative, energy, and persistence required for the making of the state. Of course, the very *raison d'être* for many of the local newspapers was to advertise and promote the new settlements and boom camps. Consequently, immigrant success stories were often used to justify editorial claims and prove the economic potential of the community.

DISTRUST AND DISCRIMINATION

The newspaper accounts of the immigrant were a compound of myth and reality, bias and objectivity. But the disconcerting mixture seems to reflect the society. In Nevada, as elsewhere, noble ideals were not always translated into efficient action, and stated principles often bore little relationship to actual practice. When aroused, Nevadans could show great feeling for a particular man and yet condemn hundreds of his fellow nationals. In Charles Goodwin's *The Comstock Club*, Yap Sing was viewed as a cook of great merit, yet his employers argued that "all" Chinese should be banished from the state. In 1870, the Irish of the Comstock could literally shower Joseph Gaerens, an injured Cornishman, with silver coins and then devote the remainder of the evening to fighting and maligning his friends and countrymen. In the various immigrant exclusion movements, newspapers often expressed deep-seated racial and nationality bias. In a few instances, the popular feeling broke into physical violence, and immigrant groups became the object of contempt and abuse.

Linguistic misunderstanding, differences in social habits, and economic competition resulted in surprisingly frank disclosures of discrimination. For example, in 1864, when five Frenchmen built a small house a mile north of Dr. Ellis' hotel at Steamboat Springs, a vigilance committee was formed, and a party of men drove off the foreigners and burned the building. The group of about a dozen men proudly explained that they fired at the Frenchmen as they fled through the sagebrush. One man was killed from a bullet in the back, but the vigilantes assured the community that they had wounded others. A few days later, the confused and frightened foreigners erected another cabin a few miles to the south in Washoe Valley on land claimed by the famous Sandy Bowers. Again the ruffians struck and chased the young Frenchmen into the brush while the cabin was dragged away and burned.⁴⁰ In the meantime, a French brigade had been formed at Virginia City and had marched off to assist their countrymen in Washoe Valley, but they arrived too late to participate in the melee and quickly disbanded. Of course, hatred of Frenchmen as such was not the issue. Men like Monsieur Chavel were at the same time teaching Mark Twain and Dan De Quille swordsmanship on the Comstock, and a dozen other highly respected Frenchmen resided in the

area. Nevertheless, it was the foreignness and incipient danger which the five non-English speaking youths represented that brought about their undoing in Washoe Valley.

By the late sixties, Nevada's largest and most easily identified non-white group had come under attack and for the following forty years tended to siphon off much of the latent national bias and racial hatred which might otherwise have been directed towards other foreign elements. The Chinese differed from most migrants in that they were imported to dig irrigation canals, lay rails, and perform other menial tasks. As the original purpose for their importation was satisfied, the predominantly unattached males drifted to the mining camps and took up such occupations as were open to them. Unions and worker-oriented groups expressed immediate resentment, and the Chinese were confined to specified types of labor.

The Orientals, however, faced considerable discrimination even during their first years in Nevada. As early as 1860 E. D. Sweeney, an Irishman, and Robert Fulstone, an Englishman, instituted the famous cry "the Chinese must go." They organized a "committee of safety" for Carson City, marched to the Chinese Quarter west of town, threw the tools and cooking utensils belonging to the Orientals into a pond, "and politely escorted the moon-eyed rascals beyond the town limits."⁴¹

Illustrative of the scores of confrontations reported in the newspapers were the May, 1868, demonstrations by the anti-coolie society of Carson City. Large numbers of Orientals had been hired to augment or supplant the mainly French-Canadian woodcutters of the Sierra. In early May, a group of the unemployed and unemployable, made up mainly of foreign born and led by an Irishman, declared their intention to drive all Chinese out of the state. However, when armed guards were rushed from the Comstock, the sheriff of Douglas County equipped a posse, and the governor declared his readiness to call out the militia, the more boisterous anti-Chinese talk subsided. Unfortunately, it was the big companies and wood contractors who enforced the law and supported the rights of the Chinese. They were profiting from the cheap labor. Consequently, by 1869 many regions in western Nevada were ignoring both the capitalists and the legal restraints in their attacks on the Orientals. Perhaps the most famous confrontation occurred in September, 1869, when a group of Comstock miners, dominated by Irishmen, marched out from Gold Hill and frightened the Chinese from their labor on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad.

But even more ruthless was the "Chinese War of Unionville." At eight o'clock one Sunday morning in mid-January, 1869, a band of citizens drove wagons into the Oriental quarter and ordered "all the Chinese living in town" to prepare to move. By eleven o'clock every Oriental in the community had been escorted on foot or hauled in the wagons out of the district. Some were taken the several miles to the nearest Central Pacific Railroad station. No resistance was encountered from the Chinese, or from the sheriff who was present, or from a single social, religious, or

fraternal organization of the town. The following week a judge dismissed all charges against the men involved, and over the following months the local *Humboldt Register* bitterly attacked any newspaper which even questioned the legality or Christianity of the Unionville action.⁴²

During the seventies and the eighties, the papers reveal a constant series of racial incidents, and in the more troubled periods of 1878–1882 and 1885–1886, the conflict became extremely bitter. From Tybo to Tuscarora and from Wadsworth to Wells, there were clashes between Caucasians and Orientals. The state legislature passed numerous anti-Chinese resolutions and made overtures to the national government for Oriental exclusion. All national discussion and international negotiations on the Chinese problem was followed by scores of editorials in the Nevada press. Anti-Asiatic circles, workingmen's organizations, Caucasian leagues, anti-Chinese phalanxes, and the Ku Klux Klan were formed in communities throughout the state and vigorously endorsed every move to rid Nevada of the "Yellow Peril." Chinese prostitution was condemned and cohabitation outlawed. In the general election of November, 1880, the state, in a declaration of sentiment, voted 17,259 to 193 to abolish further Chinese immigration.

But despite the discrimination, by 1880 the Orientals numbered eighteen percent of the population of Ormsby County (Carson City) and sixteen percent of the inhabitants of Lyon County (Silver City and Dayton) and had grown to 8.7 percent of the state's overall population. In areas like Carson City, where the anti-Chinese societies met weekly and employers were forced to discharge Oriental labor or face a boycott, there was a deep-seated fear that the Chinese would literally take over economic control of the community. Over the years, French-Canadians took advantage of the situation and tried to expel the Orientals from the Sierra forests and the lumbering trade; the Irish attacked the Chinese when they attempted to enter the mines; the Scots and Basques refused to herd sheep with the foreigners; and the Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos, Hindus, and Mexicans demanded separate accommodations and employment on non-Chinese work gangs. Almost everyone criticized "the Celestial's" selling of whiskey to the Indians, his use of opium, his buying and selling of females, and his deplorable living conditions.

In early 1879 O. P. Crawford, a Humboldt County assemblyman, failed to support a resolution directed to the United States Congress calling for the exclusion of the Chinese. Although Crawford emphasized that he withheld his vote for legal and constitutional reasons, over sixty percent of the citizens in his home community of Paradise Valley signed a petition which ordered him "like Adam" to get out of Paradise. The petition was published in most Nevada newspapers. It read in part, "your constituents—the same who elected and trusted you, and whom you have so outrageously betrayed and disgraced—hereby bid you leave forever the town and vicinity of Paradise, and seek a clime more congenial, in which to peddle your perjured honor and flout your violated oath; and remember, wherever you go, the contempt and disgust of every honest voter in Humboldt County will follow you."⁴³

Outbreaks of anti-Chinese hostility continued well into the twentieth century. One of the more famous and destructive riots occurred in Tonopah on the night of September 15, 1903. Homes were pillaged and destroyed, and Orientals injured, driven onto the desert, and even killed. An immediate outcry against the mob violence reached to San Francisco and Washington D. C. and forced the arrest of fifteen suspects who were accused of directing the raid. Over the following weeks, nine men were released from jail and at the December trial of the remaining six all were acquitted in a court room scene of "wildest enthusiasm."⁴⁴

Although Reno had reacted somewhat more moderately than most communities during the nineteenth century, in November, 1908, the city with official authorization destroyed most of the large Chinese quarter and deliberately left dozens of elderly people homeless at the beginning of winter. Chinatown, which occupied valuable property east of Virginia Street and north of the Truckee River, was declared to be unsanitary and "an eyesore to the people of this beautiful city." Pictures of the destruction showing old men on crutches and young women with babies in their arms were reproduced in newspapers throughout the West. The Chinese consul of San Francisco hastened to Nevada and the Chinese minister in Washington tried to intervene with the federal authorities. Petitions were signed and the Chinese demanded damages from the city, but in the end it was decided that the action had probably saved the community from a major epidemic and that it was a necessary part of a beautification program. Anyway the "more substantial" buildings, which were mainly houses of prostitution, had not been bothered.⁴⁵

The immigration of thousands of Chinese into the West was one of the greatest of America's many folk wanderings. Much of Nevada's first half-century of history was bound up with the movement. But for the Chinese, the state was never a promised land; rather, it became a land of heart-break and defeat. The contemporary Nevada journalists recorded the story, but the twentieth century is still waiting for a literary work in which the Oriental's identity is restored, his personality projected, and his aspirations and frustrations effectively dramatized.

The popular image of the prospector with his shovel and burro and the placer miner with his washing pan seriously distort the actual character of many Nevada mining camps. Rather than a pick and shovel economy, industrial societies grew up around the great bodies of ore, and rather than isolated camps, complex urban centers often arose. In many ways, towns like Eureka and McGill tended to resemble the immigrant manufacturing cities of Lawrence, Massachusetts, and Passaic, New Jersey, more than the wild west of popular fiction.

The mineral wealth of the Eureka district was first discovered in the mid-sixties, and by the late seventies, the peculiar ore mixture of silver and lead, with smaller amounts of iron, silica, antimony, and other minerals, had resulted in the erection of an elaborate and complex smelting operation. Foreigners did most of the work in Eureka. There were the German engineers and metallurgists, the Welsh smelter and furnace builders, the Slavic miners, the French service personnel, and the Italian

charcoal burners. Of the 7,086 people in Eureka County in 1880, over 59 percent were foreign born. Considering the rather large number of American-born children, a survey of the census suggests that approximately 75 percent of all adults in Eureka in 1880 were foreign immigrants. Equally surprising was the fact that 15 percent of the population of the district had been born in Italy. Furthermore, the vast majority of the large Swiss population was culturally and linguistically part of the Italian community. By the late seventies, the production of charcoal for the smelters had become almost exclusively an Italian function.

The diverse ethnic population coupled with continuing labor disputes provoked distrust and criticism of the foreign born. The first major clash occurred during the winter of 1871-72 when the construction of new furnaces led to a charcoal burner's attempt to raise the prices on their fuel. Several contractors, therefore, hoped to reduce the price of charcoal through the employment of Chinese woodcutters, but so much antagonism developed that by June, 1872, they were forced to dismiss the Orientals. At this point many contractors began to encourage the introduction of cheap Italian labor. The action was to prove almost too successful.⁴⁶

By March, 1876, the *Eureka Daily Sentinel* complained that three-fourths of the migrants coming into the area were unemployable Italian immigrants.⁴⁷ The burners were consistently viewed as the dregs of the labor market. Their usual ten dollars per week income was less than one half that paid to common mine workers. Muckers and mill-men scorned them, and they were forced to live in crude, ill-equipped hovels and dugouts. The community's deep antipathy to the burners was pointed up by numerous indignities, typical of which was the Oliver Stewart affair. While playing in the timber near his Pinto home, Stewart's nine-year-old son claimed an Italian shot at him. Informed of the attack, the boy's mother accosted the Italian and held him at gun point until neighbors arrived. The foreigner was then taken the fourteen miles over the mountains to Eureka and lodged in jail. Unable to pay the \$2,000 bond, the Italian remained incarcerated for some weeks, until it became obvious that the boy was merely attracting attention and seeking approval by accusing a member of a hated minority.⁴⁸

By 1878, the Eureka furnaces were consuming in excess of 16,000 bushels of charcoal per day at an overall cost for fuel of nearly \$600,000 per month. The hills had been denuded of piñon, dwarf cedar, and mountain mahogany, from which charcoal was made, for a distance of thirty-five to fifty miles around. As a result of greater transportation costs and a mild recession in 1879, the major smelters attempted to reduce the price of charcoal from thirty to twenty-seven cents per bushel.

The charcoal burners' guilds in France and Italy had during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century developed into secret revolutionary societies which played a major political role in the life of both countries. In Nevada, however, the burners had been slow to organize and it was not until July 6, 1879, that some five or six hundred men met at Colso Tatti's saloon and formed The Eureka Coalburners Protective

Association.⁴⁹ The group resolved to hold the price of charcoal at thirty cents a bushel or after July 9 they would cut off all supplies to the smelters. In addition, they demanded payment in cash rather than in credit at local stores where they were consistently overcharged and defrauded. For a few days, it appeared that the burners' demands would be met, but as feeling mounted, the Italian businessmen and store operators, who at first had supported the association, tended to desert their laboring fellow countrymen in favor of a more restrained course of action.

Of the four original officers of the charcoal union, two were Italian and two German, but the four disassociated themselves from the organization when trouble seemed imminent. Vocal opposition to the burners' demands was not raised by the smelters, but rather by Reinhold Sadler, a German who later became governor of Nevada, and by Joseph Tognini and J. Vanina, both Italian. All three had contracted at a fixed price to supply charcoal to the big corporations. Therefore, they hoped to reduce the price paid to the burners and as middlemen reap the profit. Other Germans, Swiss, and Italians like Joseph Hausman, Solomon Ashim, Peter Strozzi, Joe Magnini, and Lambert Molinelli were minor city officials or businessmen who actively supported the establishment. The sheriff was a young and aggressive Irishman. A further ethnic factor influencing the course of events during the spring and early summer of 1879 was a series of anti-Chinese and antiforeign movements. An article in the *Eureka Daily Sentinel* of March 27 explained "It is questionable if any town in the United States of the same size as Eureka possesses so many organizations, secret and otherwise, and no less than three have been formed in the past two weeks."

One of the three new societies was The American Labor Union. Along with the better-established anti-Chinese groups and the Ku Klux Klan it proposed that English-speaking Caucasians "born on the North American Continent" break the monopoly on jobs held by the foreign born of Eureka. The American Labor Union and its kindred societies blossomed into active associations and throughout 1879 urged the exclusive employment of Americans in local industry and in public and civic positions.⁵⁰

During the confusion, the rumors, and the bitterness, the Italians repeatedly used force to stop the loading and transport of charcoal. A sheriff's posse was quickly formed to arrest the troublesome foreigners. Spies were recruited, guerilla-type bands were formed in the hills, and law suits became frequent. On August 11, the governor was asked to send in the militia, and newspapers throughout the state demanded that law and order be restored and that the Italians be crushed. The most eloquent voice raised for the burners was that of a mysterious writer known as Veritas. Veritas later proved to be Louis Monaco, a Swiss-Italian photographer of Eureka. He noted the "miserable, pitiful state of the poor toiler of the forest" and addressed a plea to the company, the middlemen, and the public officials to rise above the deliberate cultivation of prejudice.

Throw down your mask, be fair and just, and in atonement for the past be at least humane in time to come. And since you have been made rich by these poor workers, don't raise prejudices or talk of sending an army with guns, bullets, etc.; but it better becomes your duty to send an army of cheese and macaroni to quench the hunger of these poor, famished, desperate wretches, who are really more hungry than ill-disposed.⁵¹

Joseph Tognini, one of the contracting middlemen, replied to Veritas and supposing him to be an American humanitarian who did not understand the idiosyncrasies of the foreigners ordered him to stay out of the conflict. "Veritas is exceedingly funny in his conclusions, when he speaks of cheese and macaroni as opposed to guns and bullets." The burners' union was a "conspiracy" and a "lawless band," and their talk of freedom was "bosh, balderdash and nonsense." Laissez-faire must prevail. "Can you stop the sun from rising or the wind from blowing?" Remember, "your sympathy is not wanted" by the "better class of Italians."

It is perfectly natural that in times of depression and stagnation of business, idle men . . . seek some plausible excuse to foment other idlers, hoping thereby to derive a benefit from the wreck of the fortunes of good citizens. There is a law governing the business conduct of all men, viz: that of supply and demand.⁵²

On August 18, in a major confrontation near Fish Creek, five Italians were killed and six others seriously wounded. After the "Fish Creek Massacre," the resistance of the Italians slowly collapsed, and although trials, law suits, and occasional clashes continued for many months, the burners did not again challenge the pillars of Eureka's economic life.⁵³

The Italian War tended to end with the "Fish Creek Massacre," but the immigrant irritation continued for many years. The widespread journalistic attention given to the affair, the prejudice and violence engendered, and the letters of Louis Monaco made it worthy of a Sacco and Vanzetti drama; yet in almost ninety years, there has been neither an adequate literary nor historical treatment of the Eureka Italians.

During the early years of the twentieth century, the copper camps of eastern Nevada were rapidly expanded into a major industrial complex. Radical unions were quickly formed, labor trouble became commonplace, and large numbers of immigrants flowed into the region. The labor organizations objected to the employment of certain foreign nationals in skilled jobs and particularly opposed the company's importation of Greeks and Japanese from the mines at Bingham Canyon, Utah.

In March, 1908, *The Ely Mining Record* declared that "Greeks, Hungarians, Slavonians, and Japanese have been coming into the district by the hundreds." The paper charged that they were migrating "under a guarantee of employment" when it would be a "far better policy for companies to employ home labor . . . and thus give the people who are interested in the upbuilding of the country an opportunity to make a living."⁵⁴ About a month later, in a bitter editorial entitled "Cheap Foreign Labor," the *Record* declared, "It is now apparent to all observing

people that a systematic effort has been undertaken by the allied interests in this district to supplant American labor by the employment of Greeks." Indeed, the reluctance of employers to hire the native born had made "an honest American workman . . . a nine day wonder" in the White Pine area.⁵⁵

Over the following months the Greeks along with Slavs, Mexicans, Japanese, Italians, Koreans, and smaller numbers from other European, Latin American, and Asiatic countries quickly converted the mining district at Ruth and Kimberly and the smelter area at McGill into variegated and sometimes turbulent foreign communities, isolated by distance from the outside world. By 1910, almost ten percent of the 7,441 persons in White Pine County had been born in Greece. In the same year, the camp at Copper Flat on the rim of the pit boasted 233 adults (persons over 16), only four of whom had been born in the United States and only one (a Swede) in northern or western Europe. The remaining 228 adults represented fourteen foreign countries.

Deep resentment and fear of the southern Europeans first burst into the open in 1907, when many newspaper articles and editorials called for a "White Man's Camp." In January, 1908, the confusion and violence resulted in the death of three Greeks; and eventually the United States secretary of state, the governor of Nevada, and several Greek consuls were drawn into an investigation of immigrant conditions. In the meantime the findings of a White Pine County jury that a Greek was guilty of attempting to murder a company guard had to be set aside by the judge on the ground that "racial prejudice was shown in the jury's verdict."⁵⁶ While the community feeling was at a fever pitch, some McGill residents, along with a deputy sheriff, decided to "have a general cleaning up of all the Greeks."⁵⁷ And on January 21, 1908, many of the confused and frightened foreigners were called from their homes and forced to stand in line while "the good were culled from the bad." Some eighty-seven who failed the inspection were loaded into two box-cars and hauled the thirteen miles to Ely. Since no one wished to pay the rail charges to transport the cold and hungry foreigners further into the desert, they were eventually released.

The greatest tragedy to grow out of the events of 1907-08 was an atomization and feeling of distrust among the foreign nationals similar to that which had developed at Eureka. For example, in an apparent effort to court favor with the authorities, one Greek merchant brought personal charges against several fellow countrymen who had sought food and shelter at his store. The "Uncle Tomism" destroyed self-respect and pride in national culture and created factions and hatreds within the Greek community. Arms were imported by Greeks to protect themselves from Greeks, resentment led to a further killing, and newspaper headlines like "Greeks are Robbing Greeks" became common.⁵⁸

Throughout the same period, a less well-organized, but equally acrimonious attack was directed against the Japanese. When a drunk shot

into a barracks housing Japanese railroad workers, the occupants retaliated by taking the man a prisoner and returning him to McGill. But a local newspaper caption misrepresented the facts by proclaiming "Japs Regarded as Undesirable." When the community learned that a Japanese man was living with a white woman, immigration officials were brought from Salt Lake City for the purpose of deporting the "undesirable." Certain Greeks and Slavs were also constantly faced with the possibility of deportation as a result of being charged with gambling and keeping houses of ill fame, and many journalists seemed pleased with a western Nevada report which claimed that Japanese and Hindu railway workers were rioting.

When, during the autumn of 1907, exaggerated reports from Hazen declared that a full-scale race war was being waged along the Southern Pacific tracks east of Reno, several editors became almost ecstatic with delight. One writer argued that "this racial friction should be carefully nurtured and fanned into a fierce flame of passion by American section bosses—and Irish, too. It will help a lot to solve the Oriental immigration problem that is puzzling this government today. If a war of extermination between the two unnaturalized alien races could be 'rubbed up' on American soil, the desired end would soon be reached, with no fear of demands for indemnity."⁵⁹

Following the lead of eastern and northern Nevada, on July 30, 1907, *The Tonopah Daily Sun* opened a campaign against the foreign born. *The Sun* declared that southern Europeans were "destroying the prosperity of Tonopah" and that American labor had been almost completely "crowded out by the non-English speaking Slavs."⁶⁰ George Davidovich, the wealthy merchant and saloon keeper, was accused of conducting the "traffic" in European labor. Since there was another carload "of miners for Tonopah" being recruited in New York City, *The Sun* suggested that immediate and drastic action be taken.⁶¹

The facts are that south of Europe miners working here spend no money in the town. After every pay day you can see them lined up in front of the post office, buying money orders and sending 90 percent of their wages to the old country. They live huddled together in shacks and a dozen in a room like Chinamen. Their living is no better than the worst of coolies and they are of as little benefit to the community. They have little intelligence and are low in the scale of civilization.⁶²

For over two years, Lindley C. Branson, the Quaker editor of *The Sun*, led the crusade against southern Europeans and Asiatics. Frequent editorials, and cartoons depicted a European giant crushing innocent America, or President Roosevelt refusing to see the evil Japanese as they slipped by him into a beautiful land. Of course, Branson's arguments were not novel. But he did provide Nevada with a vocal exponent of the anti-immigration movement. Branson pointedly rebuffed foreign groups in Tonopah which urged tolerance, and he charged Davidovich and other immigrant leaders with receiving fifty dollars for every man they imported and placed in the mines. He explained that northern Europeans of the

nineteenth century made good citizens while southern Europeans of the twentieth century made bad citizens. The latter could never be blended into the American character. To them "liberty meant license" and every tree trunk was to be transformed "into a firebrand." According to Branson, the Japanese would never disavow their "allegiance to an emperor beyond the sea."⁶³

During the nineteenth century, the few Japanese who had arrived in Nevada had been received with mixed emotions. In many instances they were given high praise, but on other occasions they met with hostility. For example, in August, 1868, a troupe of performers was on a stage coach traveling from Dayton to Virginia City when a white man ordered one of the Orientals to lower a curtain. The Japanese understood little English and failed to respond. A fist fight ensued and when the stage coach reached Virginia City, a local justice fined three of the foreigners twenty dollars each. The party was among the first of their race to arrive in the United States and in California their performance had been declared excellent. Nevertheless, with the fines, a mixed reception at Piper's Opera House, and excessive local charges it became necessary for the Pacific Mail Company to transport the group out of the state free of charge.⁶⁴

During the first decade of the twentieth century, a large number of Japanese was drawn to Nevada to participate in the railroad building and the new mining boom. At first the sons of Nippon were confused with other Orientals and generally ignored in the large labor battalions. But in January, 1905, they were first singled out as a particularly dangerous minority. In that month, the some sixty-five Japanese adults of Reno organized a grand Japanese-American celebration marking the fall of Port Arthur and the military victories over the Russians. Although many community leaders and particularly the administration and faculty of the University of Nevada actively joined the Japanese festivities, the *Nevada State Journal* balanced all favorable and friendly news items with editorials suggesting that Japanese labor should be excluded from Nevada railroad construction and, if necessary, force should be used to bar further employment of the Orientals.⁶⁵

Some weeks later, in an article entitled "The Yellow Peril," numerous arguments were advanced to prove that the United States must support "our old friend Russia." Otherwise America would be overrun by Japanese immigrants and the Pacific Ocean by the Japanese navy. "In the name of common sense, then let us cease our maudlin and uncalled for sympathy with the yellow nation at war." America must stop "pulling British chestnuts out of the fire," Russia must win, and the west coast must have a "Japanese exclusion act." The United States would present the new act "to a nation the fangs of whose resentment have been made helpless by the forces of defeat."⁶⁶ Over the following years, much of the Nevada press became even more aggressive in seeking Japanese exclusion. The state laws to prevent the intermarriage of Orientals and Caucasians were augmented and bills were introduced to bar the Japanese from working on any publicly financed project.

The animosity was reflected in outbreaks of violence like the one that occurred at Caliente on the night of June 19, 1906. While several car loads of Japanese railroad workers were being transported to their place of employment along the tracks, the draw-head either broke or was removed, allowing the cars to roll free down the track. The cars eventually crashed into the rear of a train, and, although no one was seriously injured, the Japanese assumed that the affair had been deliberately planned. Fighting broke out, and when a deputy sheriff rushed to the scene, shooting followed. The sheriff was killed and several Japanese critically wounded.⁶⁷ With over two hundred Japanese in the area, rumor mongers declared that the Orientals had seized Caliente and that the town had been turned into a fortified stronghold. After the 1906 affair and down to World War I there were repeated suggestions that many of Nevada's Orientals were spies laying the groundwork for Japan's takeover of the American West.

During the early twentieth century, much of the more aggressive anti-immigration sentiment in Nevada was closely tied to unionization, illiteracy, and a strange fear of foreign sabotage. As large numbers of eastern Europeans began to join unions and become effective agitators, labor's anti-immigration sentiment diminished. As communities established schools for the teaching of English to adults, and mine and railway supervisors initiated the policy of posting warning signs in numerous languages, accidents among the foreign born declined and talk of their carelessness and stupidity died away. And finally, when Italy, Greece, the South Slavs, and Japan became America's allies during World War I, fear of an alien political syndicate generally disappeared.

Scores of articles, editorials, feature stories, headlines, and cartoons reflect Nevada's periodic discrimination against various foreign-born groups. Often the newspaper treatment was a conditioned reflex and not an examined premise. Often the journalists noted, but failed to reflect upon, the contemporary problems. Often the foreign born were viewed as part of a monolithic mass of nameless Greeks, Slavs, Italians, or Chinese. Nevertheless, the newspapers offered a vehicle for the exchange of ideas and today they provide history with a means of inquiry into Nevada society. Unfortunately, the Japanese clash at Caliente, the Italian conflict at Eureka, the Greek episode at McGill, and similar incidents have not been elevated from the newspaper columns into literary works where they could become a treasure for those who wish to understand the forces of discrimination in a frontier environment.

RIVALRY AND CONFLICT

Journalists often suggested that only the instinct of self-preservation or the brakes of family loyalty kept immigrants from becoming unmanageable when they breathed the free air of America. Certainly, the "meat eating, beer-drinking people with shoulders and hands like Atlas" enjoyed a kind of productive anarchy in Nevada. Thousands of men were almost

completely self-governed, and dozens of communities were self-constituted and self-directed. Some immigrants were sure to engage in irresponsible confrontation rather than fruitful cooperation, in destructive rivalry rather than creative enterprise. In a way, the local newspapers met the hunger of such people for immortality. They not only recorded the day-to-day events, but also wove the facts into enduring editorials and vignettes. Obviously, some of the newspaper stories lived outside of their readers in that they were mere tales of violence, but others were absorbed into the life and folklore of the state. And many immigrant features contributed to the formation, extension, and maintenance of the Nevada character.

Perhaps, inevitably, minor conflict and rivalry more often grew out of disputes between two foreign groups than between Americans and immigrants. At least a dozen Nevada authors have noticed the traditional animosity between the Irish and Cornish. The often amusing and exaggerated areas of enmity grew up during the era of the California gold rush and were quickly reflected and even intensified in early Nevada. On the Comstock, Cornish and Irish boxers pounded each other into pulp, and on at least one occasion, the respective trainers engaged in an even more deadly rivalry with pistols.

In July and August, 1870, the Irish and Cornish embarked on a week-long conflict which resulted in Gold Hill becoming known as Bloody Gulch. The trouble started when one group of the Fenian Guards attempted to parade at their training grounds, Fort Homestead, at the upper end of Gold Hill. The Cornish heckled them from the side lines and several fights ensued. The disturbance continued over the following days until a major clash occurred in a local saloon. During the melee every door was torn off, every bottle of liquor broken, and after fists became numb, pistols were introduced. But while a score of men were injured, not a single Celt was killed.⁶⁸ Street fights, brawls, and violent conflicts on election night, like the one at Candelaria on November 6, 1888, were accepted with general good humor by the Nevada communities. But incidents like the one at Brunswick Mill on the Carson River were considered far more serious.⁶⁹ In April, 1875, some of the Irish revolted against an English factory superintendent and subsequently wrecked much of the machinery at the mill.

The invasion of each other's bars became a common practice on holidays. In both Virginia City and Austin several men lost their lives in the numerous saloon-crashing episodes. At the same time, the Manxmen of Virginia City refused to drink with either of their Celtic kin and erected their own pub, while the more prestigious Scots formed their Caledonian Clubs and celebrated Robert Burns' birthday with marked exclusiveness. And yet on occasion, as shown by Alice Ward Bailey in *The Sage Brush Parson*, the Irish, the Cornish, and the Scots could unite as a Celtic phalanx so that they might more effectively harass any Englishman imprudent enough to argue politics.

One classic example of the Cornish-Irish feud has been noted in several short stories and touched on in at least one full length book, but details of the episode are still buried in old newspapers. As the town of Belmont was settled during the late 1860's, large numbers of Irish and Cornish miners drifted into the area. In April, 1867, a rumor circulated among the Irish work force of the Silver Bend Mining Company that they were to be discharged so that the English-dominated company could employ more Cornishmen. A gang of ruffians quickly decided to take matters into its own hands. One night they seized the general agent of the company, manhandled him, and finally killed a gunwielding passerby who attempted to assist the agent. A protective league was immediately formed, and the Ku Klux Klan organized an "America for Americans" citizens committee, but further serious clashes were averted.⁷⁰

In February, 1874, John Booth, a longtime newspaperman of Nevada, moved to the rising county seat town and soon thereafter founded the *Belmont Courier*. Although an intelligent and balanced editor, Booth was a native of York, England, and occasionally indulged in a friendly needling of his Irish readers. He pointed out that his birth date of March 16 was one day earlier than that of Saint Patrick and that the great saint was really a British immigrant trying to civilize Ireland. Feeling slowly mounted, and in August, 1874, when an Irishman, Richard O'Malley, tried to gain the Democratic nomination for sheriff of Nye County, Booth, although a Republican, threw his substantial influence to the incumbent Democrat, James Caldwell. When O'Malley lost in the nomination, and violence was narrowly averted, Booth unwisely explained that it had been illiterates, fire-eaters, and "sellout Irishmen" who had supported the opposition. A few weeks later, O'Malley shot and seriously wounded Booth's son, George. Eventually, public reaction forced the leaders of the "Irish faction" to leave town, but by that time, both George Booth and his wife had died, and John Booth had moved to Austin to embark upon his last newspaper undertaking.⁷¹

The duration of the Irish-English feud at Belmont was somewhat unusual, though international rivalries were not. For years, the Chileans of Virginia City insisted on flying their flag beside the Mexican flag on Mexican Independence day. Consequently, every September the two Spanish-speaking societies prepared themselves for national combat. Such disagreements were commonplace in early Nevada. In August, 1863, the *Virginia Evening Bulletin* carried the caption "An International Scrimmage." A German and an Irishman had provoked a violent disturbance which had in turn grown out of a German-Mexican fight of the previous day.⁷² Slavs and Chinese in Carson City cut and mauled each other so often that the court devised a rather perfunctory system of fines. But the clash between Italians and Slavs employed on railroad work gangs proved more serious. In one encounter north of Reno, four Italians were killed in a single night and guards had to be posted to protect the Latins from their former European neighbors. About the turn of the century, Italian railroad laborers at Sparks resisted the employment of

the Japanese. After several fights and one murder, however, the Italians slowly grew to respect the newcomers and eventually many worked under Japanese section foremen. In the same period, the Japanese and Chinese of Reno became involved in a conflict over the closing of a brothel. In early 1905, the Japanese organized the Chigin society, in part designed to force all undesirable members of their race out of the city. They were immediately confronted by Tom Dung, a Chinaman. Dung not only ran a house of prostitution using Japanese girls, but he had taken one of the girls as his common-law wife. After months of economic and legal conflict the well-organized and aggressive Japanese finally closed the brothel.⁷³

During the first decade of the twentieth century, a rash of racial incidents occurred in the Tonopah area of southern Nevada. Newspaper headlines like "Race War at Berlin," "Criminality of the Foreign Born," and "Too Much Nationality," became common. In November, 1903, a *Tonopah Bonanza* caption cried "Murdered by Mexican." At Lone Mountain, a camp some twenty miles west of Tonopah, the Mexicans had killed one of four Italian brothers as the result of a feud over packing wood down from the mountains.⁷⁴ In March, 1906, the sheriff of Nye County and a small posse made a spectacular nighttime drive in an early day automobile to the camp of Berlin. They traveled the seventy-five miles north of Tonopah to restore order in a three-way conflict between Portuguese, Italians, and Basques.⁷⁵ About the same time, the sheriff was called to the camp of Clifford fifty miles east of Tonopah to investigate the murder of a union man who had gone to the community to force all Italians to work under union contracts.⁷⁶ In August, 1907, the sheriff traveled a hundred miles south of Tonopah to crush the so-called "Austro-Mexican War."⁷⁷ And in the same month, the deputy sheriff killed Frenchy Lafleur at Atwood (Gold Dyke) sixty miles northwest of Tonopah and was immediately charged with murder by several Frenchmen of the community.⁷⁸ The "bloody Miller riots," in which the officials tried to keep Italian strikers from killing Greek strikebreakers, was something of a relief for the sheriff, since it occurred only twelve miles from town.

In the years before World War I, the Greeks and Slavs of White Pine County were periodically involved in serious personal hostility. But equally as often strife broke out between the Croats and the Serbs. Each had carried his suspicion of the other to America, and each seemed pleased to stage a bloody knife battle, particularly if the affections of a woman or the fine points of religion were in question. Even the Finns and the Swedes agreed upon widely separate quarters in Tonopah, and the clannish Finns and the proud Montenegrins came to blows in several of the isolated mining camps of Nye County. During the era of the Balkan Wars, Greeks and Italians engaged in numerous battles. The Greeks and Turks sometimes had to be housed and employed in different areas, and the Koreans, who were enraged when referred to as Japanese, brought about the death of an American who consistently affirmed the

superiority of the Nipponese culture to that of the conquered Korean. However, the most well-defined, hard-hitting, and colorful national rivalry ever experienced in Nevada was the feeling provoked by the Franco-Prussian War.

Anticipating the struggle in which their countrymen were soon to become engaged, the Germans started the conflict on the Comstock by killing a Frenchman during the summer of 1869. On August 12, Maximilian Flaco, a worker at the slaughterhouse at American Flat, drifted into a brewery operated by two Germans. He became belligerent and abusive, and the next morning the Frenchman was found with a crushed skull, lying outside the brewery door.⁷⁹ Trouble continued in American Flat, and by the following spring, it had spread to other Comstock communities. By July, 1870, both the French and the Germans had organized themselves into committees and commissions. In early August, as the European war got underway, the saloon encounters blossomed into major brawls. On August 4, the *Gold Hill Daily News* announced "A Bloody International Fight at American Flat," and then after a second day of violence, the paper carried the rather prosaic, but pointed, caption "Still Fighting" and suggested that man's reason had been unhinged by dog days.⁸⁰ Some two weeks later the *Territorial Enterprise* declared "Another International Battle" to be in progress and finally on August 17, it announced "All Quiet on the Rhine." One entire day had passed on the Comstock without a skirmish between the "French and Prussian armies."⁸¹

The manning of the saloon battlements, however, was not limited to the French and Germans. An article of August 16 read,

At the brewery in American Flat, night before last, another grand fight of all nationalities took place. Germans, Irish, French, Americans, Spanish, Swedes, Sclavonians, Italians, and English participated on the festive occasion. The representative of Albion appears to have been very closely engaged, as he came out of the fight with one of his 'blawsted' eyes hanging on his cheek and with his 'bloody' nose split open.⁸²

The English and Italians generally supported the Prussian cause, and the Irish normally threw their influence to the side of the French. But during the "August Days," individuals often switched sides, depending on who bought the whiskey. On one occasion, a contingent of Scotsmen, a few Mexicans, and a Swede united to defy the remainder of the house. In another instance, a Prussian was found who acclaimed the "Marseillaise." And in yet a third encounter, a Spaniard was stabbed when he did not know which side he was on.

One of the more preposterous episodes was entitled "The Knights of the Geiger Grade." A Prussian exuberant over German successes and an Irishman formerly of the British cavalry quarreled over the proper use of the sabre. They grew angry, exchanged challenges, mounted mules,

and at one hundred yards apart the pair of don Quixotes rushed at each other. The mules became frightened and only after much effort did the riders get close enough for the Irishman to hit his opponent on the head with a cudgel and thus win the battle.⁸³ During the months of August and September, 1870, it seemed that half of the population of the Comstock was tilting at Prussian or French windmills.

During the late summer of 1870, the German Sanitary Fund of the Comstock quickly collected funds to purchase a gold and silver brick to be sent to Berlin and to be used "for the wounded, and widows and orphans of the fallen." The inscription on the \$3,123 brick further explained that "Germany, battling for unity and civilization, commands the sympathy of Republican America. We may not draw the sword, but would help to staunch wounds. Virginia, Nevada."⁸⁴ The brick won the highest prize in a patriotic competition in Prussia. It became the object of a national lottery, was won by a Hamburg merchant, was given by him to the military, and was finally placed on display in the trophy room at the armory in Berlin.

During the autumn of 1870, the Germans conducted a series of Grand Military Balls, but on the night of January 31, 1871, during a "jollification" and torch light procession through Virginia City, they met with considerable resistance. Much of the crowd appeared unfriendly, and when a marcher retaliated against a boy who had knocked a torch from his hand, the German was escorted to jail.⁸⁵

Equally surprising was the abrupt change in attitude on the part of the Italian immigrants. During October and November, 1870, the Italians and Germans attended each other's celebrations and united in rejoicing at their common success in Europe. But when the Germans refused to pay Professor Farini for staging their New Years Eve party, the Italian-German friendship not only collapsed, but at least two suicides or murders were traced to the accompanying bitterness.

The Franco-Prussian War was also fought with considerable spirit in Hamilton, where, after the formation of a McMahon Club, there was talk of creating a "Napoleonic Reserve" which would back up the European forces with men and supplies. In the eastern city, the French appear to have been the dominant element, whereas in western Nevada, the Prussians were the more active. In the new railroad town of Elko, the Germans collected forty-five dollars and ordered their country's new flag. It was flown over the town in late August, 1870, so that all could see the flag which was "borne by King William," and was "floating victoriously at the head of nearly a million of warriors."⁸⁶ Perhaps no paper equaled the Carson City *Morning Appeal* in pure chauvinistic romanticism. Typical of its articles was a seven stanza poem of August 28, 1870. After deprecating the flippant, taunting, and conceited attitude of the French and the ruthlessness of the Corsican leadership the poem concluded with a cry for Germanic support around the world.⁸⁷

And surely not in vain we now address you,
You also hear the soul inspiring tale
For what we fight to-day, it must be conquered
For all who from the German spirit hail.
Be French or German! that is now the question;
The arena even now is entered by the foe;
Help, brothers, help! help in this mortal combat
Across the ocean—think of German woe.

Of course many Frenchmen and Germans did not participate in the nationalistic observances. For example, the French-born Nevada newspaperman, Andrew Maute, whose father-in-law was a German, was feted by the Carson City Turnverein and was affectionately known as the "Great Bismark." In Belmont and Austin, as well as in Eureka and Reno the smaller number of French and Germans refused to become involved in the war activities, and most of the German Jewish merchants seemed to ignore the problems of the fatherland.

Immigrant conflict in Nevada as elsewhere throughout the West was more often personal and pointless than organized and nationally oriented. The theme of family strife, with brother set against brother in deadly conflict, was always a newsworthy topic and provided the basis for much journalistic improvisation. Distasteful accounts like that of the four Welsh brothers of Candelaria, who were involved in the crude and wanton killing of each other, or the Irish-Canadian O'Neils of Spring Valley, whose confused feud led to brother being pitted against brother, suggest the personalized reporting followed by local newspapers.

But unquestionably the most famous reenactment of the Cain and Abel drama centered around the Felesina brothers and their experiences as woodcutters in the pine nut area of eastern Douglas County. According to the newspapers, in June, 1874, Giavanni Imperali awakened in the forest to see Dominico Felesina striking his brother Giavanni with a hatchet. Later young Imperali and his brother Pietro watched in shocked horror while Felesina burned his brother's corpse. Fear for their lives led the Imperalis to say nothing of the incident until they had come down from the hills in December, 1874. At that point, Giavanni Imperali wrote to his parents in Italy and told of the crime. The Imperali and the Felesina families were both from the hamlet of Giosotto, near Milan. Soon after receipt of the letter, Dominico Felesina returned to his Italian home, whereupon the elder Imperali, with his son's letter in hand, went to the authorities.

After the introduction of the Italian police into the affair, the numerous tales and extensive journalistic speculation and improvisation leave the reader bewildered. Felesina escaped from the police in Giosotto and was chased about Italy; the two sets of brothers were found to be cousins and the families jealous of each other; and a third Felesina brother, Antonio, entered the picture as a wood contractor at Carson City. Antonio absconded with \$3500 paid in advance of the wood deliveries and became the object of a simultaneous Nevada search. When Dominico

Felesina was captured in Italy he told the police that while in the Carson Valley area he had worked for an Irish wood superintendent by the name of Kelly, an English farmer by the name of Boyd, and a German farmer whose name he had forgotten. Dominico claimed that all would swear to his innocence. Thereupon, the Italian government requested the United States Secretary of State, Hamilton Fish, to ferret out the truth of the case. Fish placed the matter in the hands of the federal officials in Nevada and emphasized that the government of His Majesty, Victor Emanuel II, was anxious to see justice done.⁸⁸ In the meantime the Imperalis had left the state and with only vague and unauthenticated reports the case was dismissed. The Felesina affair failed to point up the efficiency of international justice, but it did provide Nevada journalists with indigenous and topical immigration material.

Unfortunately the foreign born were often guilty of the violence of which they were accused. Both John McCallum and his Scottish fellow cook, John Murphy, were to die because they could not agree on the making of Irish stew. In May, 1874, the two Scotsmen were employed by a fluming company near Lake Tahoe. Although both were Scottish-born, Murphy was of Irish parentage and insisted that McCallum learn how to make Irish stew. The Scotsman belittled the diet of the Emerald Isle and, while drunk, seriously injured Murphy in a fight. Murphy walked the fourteen miles to Carson City to see a doctor and a few days later returned to the mountains to even the score. Over the following several days, Murphy stalked McCallum throughout much of western Nevada and finally overtook him in Carson City, where after pursuing his fellow countryman through stores and down alleys, he finally shot and killed him in front of the post office.

The trial of Murphy proceeded over several months, and although the execution was postponed three times, the hanging finally took place at high noon on December 29, 1874. Murphy did not know when he was born, but as a boy he had run away from home and enlisted in the British navy. He later deserted and arrived in California in 1849. Murphy worked first as a miner, later as a pugilist, and in the late fifties, he enlisted in the American army. He deserted in 1860 and made his way to the Comstock, where he became famous as a fighter in Virginia City and later in Aurora. Both Murphy and his manager were involved in shooting affrays with Cornishmen and Manxmen, and in 1864, he again joined the army, but deserted before his unit left the state. During the late sixties, Murphy became a cook but devoted most of his attention to "anti-Christian spiritualism." Although completely illiterate, he was a good showman and drew large crowds when he talked with spirits. His final hour and a half sermon was delivered from the gallows before his execution.⁸⁹ John Murphy was a braggart, a drunk, a pugilist, a swordsman, a preacher, and a classic example of the undisciplined and emotionally disturbed immigrant who, with an attractive vulgarity and an openness to pain, created a grave and disturbing element on the Nevada frontier.

Along with the Felesina and Murphy episodes, a third affair in 1874 dealt with the shooting of the Frenchman Frank Ben by the printer-journalist William Somers. Ben was working in a field in Carson Valley when Somers rode along the road on horseback. The printer dismounted and shot the Frenchman in cold blood. The community was outraged and a move to lynch Somers was only thwarted after he was moved from Genoa to the Carson City jail. But as the months passed the murderer was made to appear a "giddy-headed" lad who had merely protected his honor after the foreigner had verbally attacked him. One writer suggested that the young man from Iowa might well become another "Mark Twain or Dan De Quille" and Frenchmen were known for their sharp tongues. A petition from the people of Carson Valley and Carson City resulted in the death sentence being set aside at Christmastime 1874. Seldom have the emotions and violent instincts of a society given way to bigotry and prejudice more rapidly and more completely than in the Ben-Somers case.⁹⁰

Another simple and senseless type of violence which overtook many young and inexperienced foreigners was typified by the Cotton Tibbs affair. In May, 1912, a Basque was shot and killed while eating breakfast on the Adams and McGill Ranch, some 35 miles southwest of Ely. The cook, Cotton Tibbs, was known as a troublemaker. His three specialties were molesting Indian squaws, getting drunk, and using firearms. After shooting the young Bonifacio Egosque, Tibbs then rode to a neighboring ranch and explained that four Basques had attacked him while he was cooking and that he had fired in self-defense. He volunteered to ride into Ely and give himself over to the sheriff. Tibbs, of course, never found his way to Ely, and the newly arrived Basque died before the name of his home town could be learned.⁹¹ Cotton Tibbs added another notch to his six-gun, and a family in the Pyrenees quietly waited to learn of the accomplishments of their son in the New World. The disappearance of immigrants in the vastness of the American West was a theme reemphasized with depressing regularity through the printing of European letters of inquiry in Nevada newspapers.

Obviously, not all or even a large percent of the Nevada immigrants were involved in rivalry and conflict. When an English naval officer moved to Virginia City with his non-English speaking Japanese wife, she was received by polite society and showered with pleasant attention by the entire community. Later, as Nevada was being depopulated during the 1880's, journalists put forth the suggestion that the industrious Japanese might make desirable settlers for the state's sparsely inhabited valleys. Examples of friendship between the foreign-born no doubt more than equal the incidents of disagreement. When a Frenchman and a German were temporarily marooned in a mine shaft, they became close friends although neither spoke the other's language and neither was able to speak more than a few words of English. Clearly, the isolation of Nevada's mining camps stimulated mutual trust and interdependence at the same time that it promoted antagonisms.

Even the English-Irish conflict seems to have been more of a masquerade than a deep-seated enmity. The two groups commonly united to oppose the Chinese in the nineteenth century and opposed immigration from southeast Europe in the twentieth. Of the 1,076 persons living west of A Street in Virginia City in June, 1880, 360 were foreign-born, of which 277 were either English or Irish. Twenty-two percent of all the married English persons had Irish spouses. Indeed, over twice as many English men and women had Irish spouses as were married to Americans.⁹² While the upper middle class who lived on Virginia City's west side was no doubt unique, their marital pattern does suggest how little is known about the habits and the thinking of Nevada's foreign born.

Scores of newspaper vignettes have given fidelity to the rivalry and conflict theme. Too many of the articles fail to offer the simplicity of a commentator unaware of his audience or of a reporter indifferent to its presence, and many stories rely on violence and the macabre. Nevertheless, journalists did not overlook the common immigrant, and while they recorded minutiae, they also perceived the manners and the morals of an age. The cumulative impact serves as literature in that it expands the consciousness and communicates insights about man that should be shared with later generations.

ISOLATION AND DESPAIR

One of the most significant, if often fortuitous, characterizations to be supplied by Nevada newspapers was that of the lost, isolated, or desperate immigrant. Space has commonly been viewed as a manifestation of freedom, and in America, size and distance were generally used as a synonym for affluence and pretention. But space was also terrifying when too vast for human control. And man has shown as great a need for the protection of circumscribed limits as for the freedom of unhampered movement. The American West often forcefully demonstrated that size and distance were more of a liability than a liberation. The Nevada foreign born moved freely from one area to another; however, most communities were too small, too isolated, and too fluid to provide the social and cultural opportunities requisite for the immigrant's happiness and well-being.

In the first instance, it was the combination of a destructive physical environment and a peculiarly mobile society which brought misery and death. During the boom decades of the sixties and seventies, stage drivers, prospectors, and others crossing Nevada commonly found exhausted foreigners who had unwittingly attempted to walk the great distances between the mining camps. In June, 1864, four Mexicans left Austin to explore and prospect in the San Antonio district some eighty miles to the south. One of the Mexicans had previously discovered the San Antonio mines, and all were acquainted with the barren terrain; nevertheless, three months later the dried and mummified bodies of three of the group were found on the desert at the southern end of Smoky Valley.⁹³

Newspaper accounts and obituaries were often depressingly brief. One sentence told of an Italian's body found on a hillside near Battle Mountain; he had died while crossing the area on foot. An Elko to Hamilton stage driver saw a Frenchman dead along the road. He had succumbed of exhaustion while climbing a steep mountain grade. A German was discovered a few miles north of Austin; he was incoherent and had been wandering in the sagebrush for days. The immigrant lived for a week, but never regained his sanity. The frozen body of a Norwegian was found in the snow on the mountains west of Washoe Lake. The only Scotsman in Tybo became ill and started to walk the thirty miles to a doctor at Belmont, but died twenty miles from his destination. A man was discovered dead in a cabin below Dayton; his Swedish passport indicated that he had been in America but a few months. A prospector came across the body of a German fifty miles southwest of Tonopah. The man had apparently died of thirst when only three miles from water. A receipt in his pocket indicated that he had recently been admitted to citizenship in Nevada. An Austrian who spoke Italian died of a heart attack in a saloon in Virginia City. The *Territorial Enterprise* summarized the casualness of an age when it explained: "He arrived here after the fire—at least no one remembers seeing him previously to the fire—and nobody seems to know much about him."⁹⁴

Occasionally, when the papers were short of news, a dead body could be expanded into a feature story. During the summer of 1874, a bleached human skull was seen along the road a few miles out of Belmont. After the incident was recorded, interest and speculation mounted, and finally, parts of a skeleton were brought into town for general inspection. The oldtimers identified several of the front teeth as belonging to a Frenchman who had disappeared suddenly four or five years earlier. The editor summed up a thousand unsolved immigrant deaths when he explained, "It is quite probable that the whole affair will remain a mystery for all time to come."⁹⁵ Obviously, not all of those who became lost or were isolated perished. Two crazed and naked Mexicans stumbled into Columbus on September 3, 1875. A Slav gave them food and water, and they quickly recovered from their nineteen day walk from Lone Pine, California. Later the same month a Serb dragged himself into Lida. He had left Pioche thirty days earlier, quickly became lost, and had wandered aimlessly across the entire state of Nevada.

In the second instance, it was isolation and loneliness which led many immigrants to despair and mental decay. An article in the *Reese River Reveille* of March 21, 1878, typifies the stories of tragedy. John Booth, the English-born editor of the *Reveille*, was awakened one morning by the sound of wagons rolling down Austin's main street. Upon inquiry, Booth learned that the lead wagon carried the corpse of Madame Pauline Lognoz, wife of August Lognoz of Ophir Canyon; and that many ranchers from Smoky Valley and Birch Creek made up the procession. The scene was not an uncommon one for Austinites during the sixties and seventies. Persons from the outlying areas tolerated isolation during

life, but as a last wish asked to be buried in town where their grave would not be lost to man. Pauline Lognoz's coffin had been filled with snow from the mountains and the wagon had traveled at night so that the body would be preserved on the long trek to the Austin cemetery.

When the Lognozs first opened a store in Ophir Canyon in 1866, they had dreams of becoming wealthy and of returning to France. But the camp had quickly collapsed, and by the late seventies only three French immigrants remained in the isolated canyon to the west of Smoky Valley. After years without either community life or feminine companionship and with no hope of ever being able to return to Paris, the forty-eight-year-old Pauline Lognoz took strychnine and then quietly requested her husband to call in the only other human being in the canyon to be a witness at her death.

John Booth's article revealed that neither he, nor August Lognoz, nor the men of Smoky Valley understood why Madame Pauline committed suicide, to them she seemed richly blessed with American freedom. They reasoned that the excitement growing out of a shipwreck which she had experienced years before had unsettled her mind.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, Lognoz wanted his wife buried where she had not been privileged to live, near the civilization of a town. Nor was Lognoz totally unaware of the inadequacies of central Nevada; he renamed his mine in Ophir Canyon the Forlorn Mine, moved down into Smoky Valley, and almost twenty years later sold both the ranch and the mine and returned to France to marry a Parisian and became the father of two children.

Only a few weeks after Pauline Lognoz ended her life in Ophir Canyon, the great naturalist John Muir passed through the area on his way up Smoky Valley. Muir was struck by the fact that although Nevada was one "of the very youngest and wildest of the states, nevertheless it is already strewn with ruins that seem as gray and silent and time-worn as if the civilization to which they belonged had perished centuries ago." On his way into Austin he "found no less than five dead towns without a single inhabitant."⁹⁷ Of the over 400 old camp sites and ghost towns that once flourished in Nevada, none collapsed without bringing ruin or decay to at least a few of the inhabitants. And no doubt uninitiated foreigners, who were unacquainted with the American tradition of denuding the landscape and moving on, suffered the most from the physical and psychological mobility of Nevada life.⁹⁸

Isolation, uncertainty, and failure provided a significant undertone which echoed throughout the Nevada press and which clearly imprinted its shadow on the writings of both journalists and novelists. While statistics are unavailable and newspapers thrived on violence and morbidity, nevertheless, the number of ill or depressed persons who destroyed themselves gives a haunting twist to the immigrant theme. A recitation of the examples of suicide at any of the state's major houses of prostitution would quickly dispel the myth of gaiety that has tended to surround the oldest profession.⁹⁹ When a Swiss farmer and a German saloon keeper committed suicide only a few hours apart in July, 1877, the *Gold Hill*

Daily News combined the cases into an article entitled "Self-Murder" and in an ill-advised attempt at humor cautioned that the self-violence should be undertaken early in the day or the story could not be included in the evening paper.¹⁰⁰ Men and women, the young and the old, and particularly the foreign born resorted to self-destruction in such numbers that Nevada's suicide rate rose to over twice that of the national average.

John McIntyre of Donegal threw himself in front of the train three different times before he was finally killed in the switch yards of Virginia City. H. Calaghan first took poison but was revived and then cut his throat but was successfully treated. Therefore, before his third attempt at suicide he requested Comstock doctors to leave him alone. A thorough examination in the local hospital showed the Irishman to be perfectly sane. After living in Unionville eight years, Mara Spors of Holland had neither provided her husband with a child nor adjusted to the western environment. She became "insane from loneliness" and took an overdose of laudanum.¹⁰¹ Felix Francis of Switzerland tried to suffocate himself with charcoal fumes, but the house caught fire and two Mexican women dragged him to safety. Francis spoke no English and had neither money, friends, nor relatives; his only colleague had been killed in a mining disaster.¹⁰² After working for years to save enough money to return to Italy, a woodcutter finally purchased his ticket in Reno, but in the anxiety and excitement he became so confused that he almost committed suicide by deliberately throwing his body against a brick wall.

Peter Alexander arrived in Nevada in 1867. He worked near Battle Mountain and in Austin and moved on to Hamilton during the summer of 1869. While at Austin, the 24-year-old Scotsman had fallen in love with a prostitute, and when he could not find employment in Hamilton, the girl helped to support him. Facing an inner conflict with his conscience and deeply humiliated and confused, the young immigrant borrowed his partner's pistol and shot himself. His brief note read: "John, I have taken your pistol. I can't get work and am tired of life. Keep my razor and stop. Your pistol you will find with me. The authorities will give it to you. Good-bye friends and home. Peter Alexander, Renfrewshire, Scotland."¹⁰³ The day before the Alexander affair, the Hamilton community had been told of a Canadian prostitute who took poison because her German procurer threatened to desert her, and a few days later, a Chinese prostitute committed suicide when her male partner gambled away her earnings and then forced her out onto the street. Also in the same week, both a Cornish and an Irish miner had died at Hamilton after taking poison.

While many immigrants were optimists and opportunists as they started the long trek west, thousands were to die with their spirits crushed by failure, defeat, and despair. On May 10, 1843, Frances Reynolds married W. G. Woon at Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire. A few years later, they immigrated to the United States and during the early fifties moved on to California. In 1860, they arrived on the Comstock and for fifteen years lived in a small cabin overlooking the Ophir mine. The Woons

buried two children in England, three died at sea or while traveling across the plains, others died or were killed in California and Nevada. When the Woons' twelfth, youngest, and only living child was killed in the mines during early 1875, the mother had him buried near her cabin home. In May while visiting the grave, she became incoherent and thirty-two years and seven days after her English wedding she was officially declared insane by the authorities at Virginia City, Nevada.¹⁰⁴

A less dramatic manifestation of disappointment and loneliness was the scores of immigrants who returned to their homeland. Of course, notice was seldom given of the departures unless they became associated with a newsworthy incident. After years of laboring in Nevada, Ferdinand C. Alexander in June, 1876, boarded the train in Virginia City to return to his wife in Bordeaux, France. He had saved \$500 in coin, plus gold notes and some stock certificates. However, he suffered a heart attack near Steamboat and died before reaching Reno.¹⁰⁵ But even more pathetic was the case of Paul Tichard who, in his anxiety to proceed toward France, refused to wait for the train at Wells and started hiking down the track. In either confusion or despondency, he jumped in front of a train and was killed. A generation after the death of Alexander and Tichard, other Frenchmen, along with their Spanish cousins, faced an even sterner test of isolation as sheepherders on the broad Nevada range. Dominique Laxalt echoed the despondency of hundreds of Basques when he explained how his friends Peyo and Garazi went insane from loneliness. But after Garazi was returned to the Pyrenees, he soon regained his senses and was not troubled again. According to Laxalt, the experience showed that homesickness could totally destroy even the sturdiest of the Basque sheepmen.¹⁰⁶

In many instances, emotional disaffection and psychological discontent were factors in promoting immigration in the first place. When the perplexed or bewildered Europeans settled in capricious Nevada, they seldom became permanently attached. Rather they carried their emptiness with them and continued their search for an Eldorado. Such persons were temperamentally incapable of giving the new land a fair trial. Even when economically successful, they often believed their life to be as barren and as purposeless as the soil. Such immigrants could not undergo the shock of being uprooted and of living in a strange and seemingly hostile environment. Many became homing pigeons who would willingly ignore adversity, material loss, and danger in an attempt to seek more familiar surroundings. Other immigrants found it difficult to become a part of the American society and impossible to become a part of the strange life of Nevada. Basic human instincts and innate traditions did not permit them to belong, to participate, to adjust. They lived and worked in the community, but could never grow roots with which to anchor themselves. They easily mastered the details of local life, yet found it impossible to fill the emotional void which immigration had created.

Nevada also swarmed with foreigners who had not exercised conscious

intelligence. Thousands had thrown themselves blindly against the unknown and trusted to luck that the results would be satisfactory. They quickly awakened to the painful realization that their imagination had run away with their judgment. Many immigrants were psychologically ill-equipped for either the life of a recluse tucked away in a mountain valley or that of a riotous miner stranded in a turbulent boom camp.

Obviously thousands of immigrants were diminished by their environment. They were shackled, they were deprived, and they were subjected to a kind of geographical injustice. But their lives have been provided with a deeper meaning because journalists noted the hardships and reported on the hostile conditions. In the twentieth century, the plight of the immigrant has been reemphasized by some of the West's best authors. It is not that the journalists and novelists enhanced the lives of the foreign born or ameliorated their despair, but rather, they have edited and directed thought so that society can more fully appreciate the dimension of the immigrant suffering and the awesome toll taken by the frontier.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ray Allen Billington, *America's Frontier Heritage* (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1966), 80.

2. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of Census, 1960), 45-46. In addition to the seven to one net increase of foreign-born whites over native-born whites shown in the census volume, there was also a net increase of foreign-Oriental population of some 2,300 persons in the period 1870-1880. Therefore, the overall foreign-born migration into the state was over ten times greater than the total American-born influx.

3. Eliot Lord, *Comstock Mining and Miners* (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1959; a Reprint of the 1883 edition), 383-386.

4. William Petersen and Lionel S. Lewis, *Nevada's Changing Population* (Reno: Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of Nevada, 1963), 26.

5. Eliot Lord and Others, *The Italians in America* (New York: B. F. Buck and Company, 1905), 5.

6. Enumerator's Report, Census of 1900, Eureka County, Nevada; and Census of 1910, Washoe County, Nevada.

7. For an example, see *Gold Hill Daily News*, July 20, 1868, p3 c1.

8. *Ibid.*, August 3, 1869, p3 c1.

9. *Nevada State Journal*, September 19, 1885, p2 c2.

10. *Gold Hill Daily News*, December 26, 1863, p3 c1.

11. *Nevada State Journal*, September 27, 1904, p4 c2.

12. *The Silver State*, October 16, 1897, p3 c1.

13. *Morning Appeal*, March 29, 1879, p3 c2.

14. *Ibid.*, May 23, 1879, p3 c3.

15. *The Silver State*, July 18, 1881, p3 c1.

16. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, March 11, 1879, p3 c2.

17. See the *Reese River Reveille* for July and August, 1877, for numerous articles on Herhilly.

18. *Gold Hill Daily News*, July 27, 1868, p3 c1.

19. *Morning Appeal*, January 5, 1873, p3 c2.
20. For two of the more complete articles on Chinese Mary, see the *Carson Valley News*, May 22, 1875, p3 c1 and the *Borax Miner*, April 1, 1876.
21. *Nevada State Journal*, March 2, 1880, p3 c3.
22. See a series of articles in the *Morning Appeal* between June 10, 1879, and November 21, 1879.
23. *Territorial Enterprise*, April 20, 1871, p3 c1.
24. *Ibid.*, September 17, 1871, p3 c2.
25. *Eureka Sentinel*, June 8, 1878, p2 c2.
26. *Tonopah Bonanza* (Weekly), September 26, 1903, p2 c2.
27. *Morning Appeal*, November 20, 1879, p3 c3.
28. *The Elko Independent*, September 11, 1869, p3 c2.
29. *The Tonopah Daily Sun*, July 16, 1905, p1 c6.
30. *Reno Evening Gazette*, October 4, 1906, p5 c2.
31. *The Silver State*, February 25, 1875, p3 c1.
32. *Tonopah Bonanza* (Weekly), November 23, 1901, p4 c3.
33. *Territorial Enterprise*, December 27, 1867, p3 c1.
34. *Ibid.*, February 7, 1879, p3 c3.
35. See a series of articles in the *Territorial Enterprise* during May and June 1866 and climaxed with the report of July 3, 1866, p3 c2.
36. *Morning Appeal*, September 10, 1870, p3 c1; and *Territorial Enterprise*, September 9, 1870, p3 c2.
37. *The Tonopah Daily Sun*, April 29, 1905, p1.
38. *Ibid.*, July 21, 1906, p1.
39. *Ibid.*, July 15, 1905, p1.
40. *Gold Hill Daily News*, April 11, 1864, p2 c1 and April 15, p3 c2; and *Virginia Evening Bulletin*, April 11, 1864, p3 c1 and April 12, p3 c2.
41. *The Daily Nevada Tribune*, February 19, 1879, p3 c5.
42. *Humboldt Register*, January 16, 1869, p3 c2.
43. *Gold Hill Daily News*, March 15, 1879, p2 c2.
44. See the *Tonopah Bonanza* (Weekly), September 19, 1903, and other issues through December, 1903.
45. *Reno Evening Gazette*, November 11, 1908, p1 and 8.
46. See numerous articles in the *Eureka Daily Sentinel* between September 17, 1871 and June 22, 1872.
47. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, March 10, 1876, p3 c3.
48. *Ibid.*, October 10, 1875, p3 c3 and October 17, p3 c2.
49. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 7, 1879, p3 c3.
50. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, March 27, 1879, p3 c3.
51. *Ibid.*, August 15, 1870, p3 c3.
52. *Ibid.*, August 16, 1879, p2 c3.
53. See the *Eureka Daily Sentinel* and the *Eureka Daily Leader* during July and August, 1879, for daily reports on the conflict.
54. *The Ely Mining Record*, March 21, 1908, p4 c1.
55. *Ibid.*, April 18, 1908, p2 c1.
56. *White Pine News*, May 30, 1908, p1 c3-4.
57. *Ely Daily Mining Expositor*, January 22, 1908, p1 c6-7.
58. *White Pine News*, June 2, 1908, p1 c1.
59. *Ely Daily Mining Expositor*, October 29, 1907, p2 c2.
60. *The Tonopah Daily Sun*, August 10, 1907, p2 c1.
61. *Ibid.*, August 7, 1907, p2 c1.
62. *Ibid.*, July 30, 1907, p1 c2.
63. *Ibid.*, August 24, 1907, p2 c1.
64. *Territorial Enterprise*, August 29, 1868, p3 c1.
65. *Nevada State Journal*, January 8, 1905, p2 c1.
66. *Ibid.*, February 28, 1905, p2 c2.
67. *Caliente Load-Express*, June 30, 1906, p4 c3.

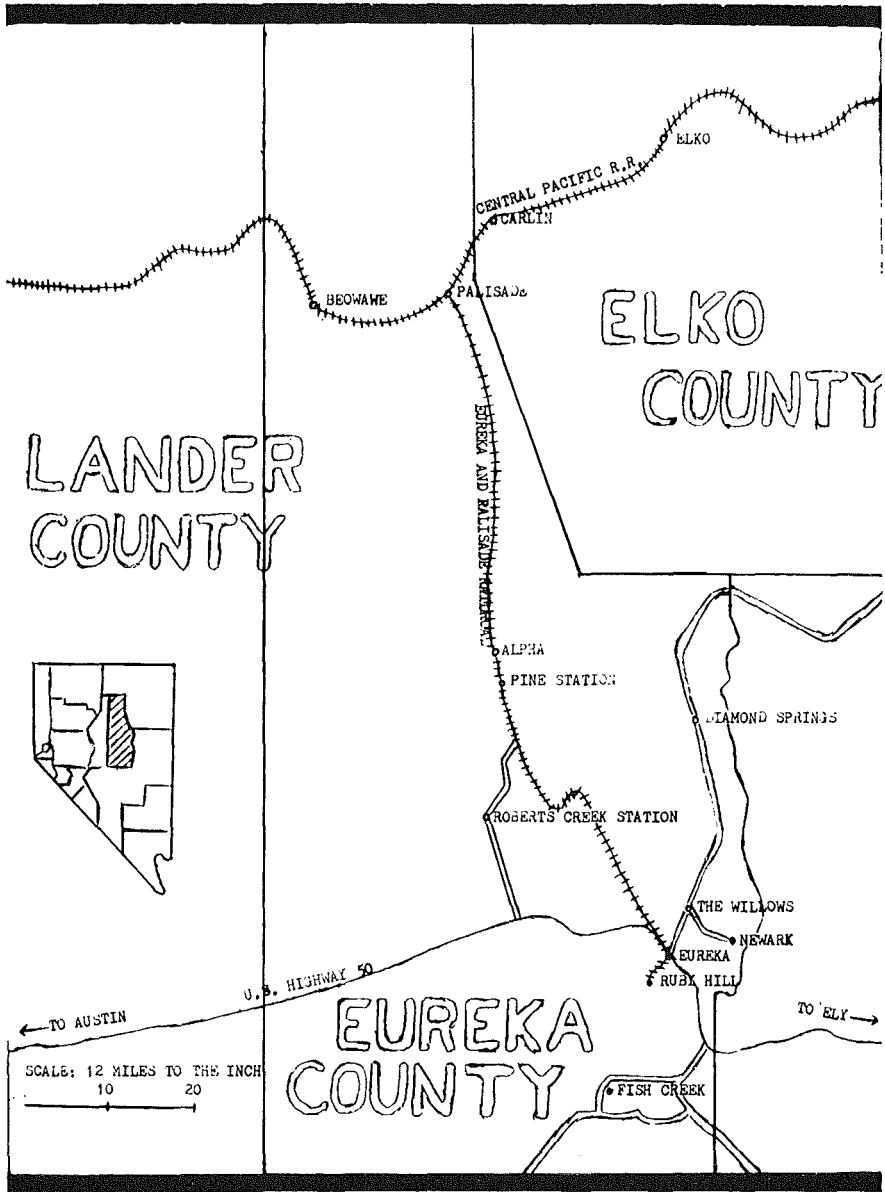
68. *Territorial Enterprise*, August 4, 1870, p3 c1.
69. *Morning Appeal*, April 3, 1875, p3 c3; and April 7, 1875, p3 c2; and other entries over the following weeks.
70. See the *Weekly Silver Bend Reporter* for April and May, 1867.
71. See the *Belmont Courier* for August and September, 1874.
72. *Virginia Evening Bulletin*, August 11, 1863, p3 c1.
73. See the *Nevada State Journal* and *Reno Evening Gazette* for January, February, and March, 1905.
74. *Tonopah Bonanza* (Weekly), November 28, 1903, p1.
75. *The Tonopah Daily Sun*, March 7, 1906, p5 c3.
76. *Ibid.*, January 27, 1906, p4 c2; and January 29, 1906, p1 c1.
77. *Tonopah Bonanza* (Weekly), August 17, 1907, p1.
78. *Ibid.*, (Weekly), August 24, 1907, p1 c5.
79. *Gold Hill Daily News*, August 13, 1869, p3 c1.
80. *Ibid.*, August 4, 1870, p3 c2 and August 5, p3 c2.
81. *Territorial Enterprise*, August 17, 1870, p3 c1.
82. *Ibid.*, August 17, 1870, p3 c2.
83. *Ibid.*, September 13, 1870, p3 c2.
84. *Gold Hill Daily News*, September 14, 1870, p3 c1.
85. *Ibid.*, January 31, 1871, p3 c1 and February 1, p3 c1.
86. *The Elko Independent*, August 24, 1870, p3 c1.
87. *Morning Appeal*, August 28, 1870, p2 c3.
88. Confused accounts of the Felesina affair appeared in most western Nevada newspapers. Perhaps the clearest report is to be found in the *Carson Valley News*, May 8, 1875, p2 c1.
89. See numerous articles in western Nevada newspapers between May 12 and December 30, 1874.
90. See the *Morning Appeal* from May through December, 1874.
91. *White Pine News*, May 19, 1912, p1 c1.
92. See Enumerator's Report, Census of 1880, Storey County, Nevada.
93. *Reese River Reveille*, September 15, 1864, p1 c2.
94. *Territorial Enterprise*, January 11, 1876, p3 c2.
95. *Belmont Courier*, July 11, 1874, p3 c2.
96. *Reese River Reveille*, March 21, 1878, p3 c2.
97. John Muir, *Sheep Trails* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1918), 195-6.
98. Grant Smith Papers, University of Nevada Library, Collection 229, Box 2.
99. See article from *Gold Hill Daily News* of September 5, 1876, entitled "Gilded Sin."
100. See article from *Gold Hill Daily News* of July 20, 1877, entitled "Self-Murder."
101. *The Silver State*, November 30, 1877, p3 c1.
102. *Territorial Enterprise*, June 4, 1869, p3 c1.
103. *The Daily Inland Empire*, August 25, 1869, p3 c2.
104. *Territorial Enterprise*, May 18, 1875, p3 c2.
105. *Gold Hill Daily News*, June 30, 1876, p3 c2.
106. Robert Laxalt, "Basque Shepherders. Lonely Sentinels of the American West," *National Geographic*, June, 1966, 880.

Nevada's Italian War

(Sometimes known as the "Charcoal War"
or the "Coal-Burners War")

July - September, 1879

PHILLIP I. EARL



About 6:00 P.M. on the evening of August 18, 1879, five men were shot and killed by a Sheriff's posse near Fish Creek, twenty miles south of Eureka, Nevada. While not an uncommon occurrence in those times, this shooting has taken on a degree of historical significance due to the fact that the victims were all recent immigrants from Italy and Switzerland.

The series of events leading up to the shooting has been misinterpreted by historical writers and misstated in several standard works on Nevada history. It is the hope of this writer that the following account will help to set the record straight.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUREKA MINING DISTRICT

The is little question that mining "made" Nevada, at least in its early years. The nature of the terrain of the state, its lack of rainfall and its inaccessibility to markets precluded significant agricultural and manufacturing development such as took place in other states. Population movements into the state thus tended to focus upon those areas where mineral discoveries were made. One of these areas was the Eureka Mining District which by 1872 had some 1,500 located mines and a population of over 4,000.¹

The district is located in north-central Nevada near the junction of the Ruby Mountains and the Diamond Range which runs due north for a distance of about 100 miles. The town of Eureka, the center of the District's smelting facilities and its governmental center, is located in the southern part of the District near the mouth of a canyon which provides an easy pass to other mining areas further to the east.

The district was opened up to mining in the early 1860's by prospectors working out of Austin, the county seat of Lander County where the district was then located. A Mr. Fairchild brought out the first ore in 1864 and within the next three years mines were opened up in the McCoy and Ruby Hill areas. The ore proved to be worth more for its lead, iron, silica and antimony content than for its silver, but its extraction and smelting was sufficiently remunerative to cause the district to grow and prosper.²

Equally as important as the opening of new bodies of ore was the process of reduction by large smelting furnaces. The first furnace in the District was erected in 1866 by Moses Wilson, but the venture was not successful and was soon abandoned. The next year Alonzo Monroe had a furnace built and hired a Mr. Stetefeldt, an experienced German metallurgist, to work for him. During the next two years some 2,800 pounds of bullion were turned out. In March of 1869 Major William McCoy became interested in the District and took over Monroe's furnace and hired two Welch smelters to come to Eureka from Virginia City to work for him. Later in the year Colonel D. E. Buel and a Mr. I. C. Bateman purchased two mines in the District and rented McCoy's furnace. In January of 1870 Buel and Bateman began the erection of two more furnaces, but sold their entire operation to an English-owned firm, the Eureka Consolidated Company, in November.³

Other mining and smelting companies began to come into the District after 1870. The Marcellina Company was established in the fall of 1870 and the Phoenix Company built two furnaces in 1871. The former sold out to another company which was in turn bought out by the Richmond Company, also an English-owned firm, in 1871. At least five furnaces were built by individuals who later sold out to either the Richmond

Company or the Eureka Consolidated. By 1874 there were thirteen furnaces in operation with a daily capacity of 595 tons of ore each.⁴

The smelting furnaces of Eureka and other mining areas of the West used charcoal for fuel. The production of this commodity became the most important adjunct to early Western mining and became an industry of some importance in its own right.⁵ The quantity of charcoal used throughout the West during the mining era is impossible to ascertain but the figures for Eureka indicate something of the size of the industry in that area. According to the State Mineralogist, the annual consumption of charcoal was 1,200,000 bushels in 1877-78 and the price was twenty-five cents a bushel, an annual expense of about \$300,000 to the companies.⁶

Other writers indicate that the amounts used were even higher. The Surveyor General of Nevada, in his Report for 1877-78, reported that 16,000 bushels were used each day when all the furnaces were in operation and Nell Murbarger, in an article on the charcoal industry, declared that both the Eureka Consolidated and the Richmond Company, in the better years of their operation, consumed the fuel at the rate of 4,600 bushels daily.⁷

One cord of green wood, when burned in a charcoal pit, yielded about twenty-eight bushels of charcoal. An acre of mature nut-pine trees, the type favored by producers of charcoal, usually produced eight to ten cords. Inasmuch as the average pit held as much as 100 cords, its filling would require the total tree crop from ten to twelve acres.⁸ According to the Report of the State Mineralogist for 1873-74, the hills of the Eureka District had been stripped of trees for a radius of twenty miles; by 1878 this denuded area extended for fifty miles in all directions from Eureka and the average hauling distance from pit to smelter was thirty-five miles. The Report also indicated that wood for the pits was being obtained from adjoining counties, but even this supply was expected to be exhausted within eight years.⁹

Due to the increasing scarcity of trees and the consequent necessity of hauling wood from great distances to their burning pits, the producers of charcoal were, by 1874, demanding an increase in the price they received for their product. The unwillingness of the smelter operators to grant such an increase, or deal directly with the burners instead of contracting with freighting companies, became the source of dissention which led to the shooting at Fish Creek in August of 1879. The State Mineralogist's Report for 1873-74 discussed the economics of using coke as a substitute for charcoal and concluded that it would be fully as cheap as charcoal. This Report indicated that the going price for charcoal in 1874 was thirty cents a bushel but the Report for 1877-78 noted that it had dropped to twenty-five cents.¹⁰ This was the price paid to the teamsters who delivered the fuel to the smelter, not the price received by the producers. There is evidence that the burners received as little as thirteen cents a bushel, a price that was slightly less than the cost of production.¹¹

The center of the smelting operation was the town of Eureka. It was incorporated in 1869 and in 1873 became the county seat of Eureka County which was created out of Lander County in that year. It was connected with the Central Pacific by a stage and freight line until the completion of the Eureka and Palisade rail line in 1874. The town was not only the site of the District's smelting operations, but a supply center for some thirty-three outlying mining settlements in the Eureka district and neighboring areas. In October of 1869 its population numbered 100, all male; by May of the next year it had increased to 1,000 and by August of that year had grown to 2,000. By 1873 the population numbered over 4,000 and the town was bustling with boarding houses, saloons, schools, churches, newspapers, brothels and other accoutrements of civilized life on the mining frontier.¹²

The economic advantages of this concentration of commercial and industrial activity were many, but Eureka was not without problems of other kinds. The town contained a rather large lawless element and, like many another mining town, almost burned to the ground on several occasions. It was also plagued by a rather unique problem: air pollution; a contemporary account of Eureka described the town as follows:

. . . heavy black clouds of dense smoke from the furnaces, heavily laden and strongly scented with the fumes of lead, arsenic and other volatile elements of the ores are constantly rolling over the town, depositing soot, scales and black dust, so that it resembles very much one of the manufacturing towns in the coal regions of Pennsylvania.¹³

CHARCOAL BURNERS BECOME CARBONARI

The production of charcoal was an occupation which had a long history in Europe. It was one of a number of new callings which grew up in connection with the nascent industrialization which took place in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in England, France and northern Italy. The charcoal burners guild became better known than others because it developed into a secret revolutionary society which spread throughout Italy in opposition to the attempts of the Holy Alliance to reestablish the political system which had existed before 1789.

This society, known as the "Carbonari," had its origins in France during the last years of the Old Regime and was introduced into Naples in 1806. It became the center of opposition to Napoleon and received most of its support from landed property holders and priests, the classes which suffered most at the hands of the French despot. The first seeds of Italian nationalism were nurtured and spread by the Carbonari and it soon spread to all parts of Italy after the Napoleonic regime came to an end.

"Carbonarism" became a fashionable intellectual creed among students and younger members of the Italian nobility. The political aims of the society, vague and confused at best, varied from republicanism to limited monarchy. The ultimate aim was Italian unity, but the groups in the

various kingdoms of Italy could not agree upon how it should come about nor what form the government of a unified state should take. The failure of the 1831 revolution in Lombardy, and the subsequent imprisonment and exile of its leaders, caused the society to enter a severe decline from which it never recovered.

Giuseppe Mazzini, a former Carbonari, saw the weaknesses of the society and set out to organize a more cohesive group to achieve Italian unity. Even though the Carbonari failed in its mission, it caught the imagination of the Italian people who thereafter associated ideas of independence, unity and liberty with Carbonarism.¹⁴

It is not unlikely therefore that the Italian charcoal burners of the Eureka District felt themselves to be in the old Carbonari tradition when they organized and protested against the low prices they received for their product and against the manner in which they were treated by native Americans. The group they organized in the summer of 1879 was officially known as "The Eureka Coalburners Protective Association," but the burners often referred to themselves as "Carbonari" and were so called by the newspapers of Eureka and those of other parts of the state that reported the story.

The State Mineralogist's Report for 1877-78 indicated that there were 800 men employed as charcoal burners in the Eureka District; of these, ninety percent were, according to the Report, "foreigners." One is uncertain as to the meaning of this term because the Report goes on to state that about fifty percent of them were American citizens. The writer of the Report was probably referring to their foreign birth and their physical and cultural characteristics which distinguished them from "Americans" rather than to their citizenship. The report also stated that, with a few exceptions, this labor force was in the employ of less than a dozen firms, two-thirds of which were foreign-owned.¹⁵ The Report gave no breakdown as to the nativity of these workers, but census data and newspaper accounts indicate that they were chiefly of Italian and Swiss-Italian birth.

In September of 1879 the *Eureka Daily Leader* published some figures on the charcoal burners which had been obtained first hand. The burners claimed that there were 2,000 following their calling rather than the 800 indicated in the State Mineralogist's Report.¹⁶ If this was the case, then many burners were not Italian-born because the 1880 census listed only 840 citizens or residents of Italian birth in Eureka County. The number of Swiss in the county was not given and it is possible that their number was sufficient to make up the alleged figure of 2,000.¹⁷

According to the 1860 census, there were only thirteen persons of Italian birth in the state out of a total population of 6,812. There were also nineteen persons of Swiss birth, a number of whom could have been ethnic Italians from the Italian areas of southern Switzerland.¹⁸ By 1870 the number of Italians in Nevada was still not large, being only 199 out of a total population of 38,959. Nevada also had 247 citizens from Switzerland at that time.¹⁹

In the census conducted by the state of Nevada in 1875, this writer counted 255 persons of Italian birth and 97 of Swiss birth with Italian names in Eureka County. Very few of these persons listed any occupation other than rancher or laborer.²⁰ The fact that a man listed himself as a rancher is no sure proof that he was involved in the cattle business; Eureka's charcoal burners often referred to the place where they carried on their work as a "charcoal ranch."

The 1880 census, the one that is most pertinent for the purposes of this study, revealed that Nevada had 1,506 persons of Italian birth in its population, an eight-fold increase for the decade. Of this number, 840 were listed as residents of Eureka County. Next to the group listing their nativity as England or Wales, which numbered 852, the Italians were the largest foreign-born group in the county. In Nevada as a whole in 1880, the Italians were the fourth largest foreign-born group.²¹

This writer has not been able to ascertain the reasons for such a preponderance of Italians in the Eureka area, but it is probable that the foreign-owned mining and smelting firms induced a group of them to come from Italy and Switzerland to pursue their calling in the Far West. The so-called Contract Labor Law, whereby employers could bring in foreign laborers under an agreement based on a maximum of twelve months labor for the immigrant's passage, was still in effect during the seventies. The five men who were killed at Fish Creek, two Swiss and three Italians, all came from a group of small villages located within a few miles of each other near the Swiss-Italian frontier.²² This fact seems to indicate that at least some of Eureka's charcoal burners were recruited in specific areas and brought to America as a group.

It is also possible that some of them came first to San Francisco and later migrated to Nevada's Comstock and thence to Eureka. The trans-continental railroad was completed in 1869 and the Eureka and Palisade line, which connected it with the Eureka Mining District, began operation in 1875; thus perhaps some of Eureka's Italians came West from New York or directly from San Francisco. In any case, many of them seemed to know little English, a fact which was demonstrated in the trials and hearings which followed the shooting at Fish Creek.

As might well be expected, charcoal burning was not an exalted calling. The wages paid to the burners were less than half those received by mine laborers and they were forced to live in crude, ill-equipped hovels or dugouts under the worst imaginable conditions of health and sanitation. In addition, they were generally looked down upon by other workers. The teamsters who hauled their product to the smelters often cheated them as did the merchants with whom they dealt.²³

The conditions under which Eureka's Italians worked and lived were not atypical for impoverished immigrants in many parts of the nation in the decades after the Civil War. Native workers often resented the immigrant whom he felt held down wages and caused unemployment. In more than one area of the country this resentment had manifested itself

in violence and death. In addition to their resentment of immigrants as competitors, many Americans held their Catholic religion against them. This was a revival of the old Know-Nothing sentiment of the 1850's and led to the establishment of a number of secret anti-Catholic societies in many localities and the eventual rise of the American Protective Association in the 1890's. Many Americans, particularly businessmen and members of the middle class, believed most immigrants to be of a radical bent and the chief source of the labor violence of the seventies and eighties.²⁴

Whether or not these sentiments had anything to do with the reaction to the activities of Eureka's charcoal burners is conjectural, but they must be considered in any account of the events. Also to be considered is the possible "climate of violence" engendered, in part, by the organization of national trade unions in the decades after the Civil War. Serious outbreaks of labor violence had taken place in New York City, the "Tompkins Square Riot" of January 13, 1874, and in the coal fields of eastern Pennsylvania where the "Molly Maguires" promoted a long series of labor disputes beginning in 1862 and lasting until 1875. There was also a series of extremely violent railroad strikes beginning in 1877 and lasting through the next two decades. Revolutionary European labor programs also made their appearance in America during the Seventies. The events in Eureka took place only two years after the end of Reconstruction and many Eurekans had perhaps fought in the Civil War and were predisposed towards violence and direct action. The Indian Wars were still being fought in the Seventies also, an additional impetus to violence.²⁵

The low prices they received for their charcoal was the major grievance of the burners. According to information from the burners themselves published in the *Eureka Daily Leader*, the 2,000 charcoal burners of the District had expenses of about \$1.00 a day each and the furnaces consumed an average of 7,000 to 8,000 bushels of fuel a day at an average cost of thirteen cents a bushel. They claimed they received about \$1,040 a day for their product, thus making their expenses about \$960 a day more than they received in payment.²⁶

In addition to the low prices, the burners also complained of the manner in which the teamsters and the mine supervisors manipulated the measurement of charcoal in order to cheat them. At the pit, the charcoal was loaded on wagons in bulk or in gunny sacks and transported to the smelters. There it was measured and a receipt issued to the teamster who delivered it. The teamster would in turn pay the going price for the charcoal to the burner who supplied it, but would not turn the smelter receipt over to him so he could determine if he had been paid the correct amount. The smelter operators would deal only with the teamsters and the burners often had no idea how much the teamsters were being paid for the fuel. The burners were often not paid in cash, but rather in orders for goods on certain merchants who, it was charged, redeemed them at

higher prices than those charged to customers who paid in cash. As a result, the burners were forced to buy a portion of their goods on credit and were falling deeper into debt every month.²⁷

This series of circumstances was no coincidence; the collusion of the teamsters, smelter operators and merchants of the town was obvious. Eureka was not a company town, but for the charcoal burners it might well have been inasmuch as they could do little to improve their circumstances nor keep from falling into debt. The motives of the teamsters and the smelter operators were to get their charcoal as cheaply as possible and keep the burners producing. The cooperation with the merchants to keep them in debt, and thus continually producing charcoal, was their means.

Eureka's charcoal burners had apparently tolerated this situation for some time inasmuch as no efforts toward a collective solution were made until the summer of 1879. In February of that year the State Legislature had enacted a law regulating the measurement of charcoal. It had been introduced by the representatives from Eureka County and was signed into law by Governor Kinkead. Under this law, the standard measure of a bushel of charcoal was to be 2,747 cubic inches; the law further stipulated that all charcoal bought or sold must be so measured. The County Surveyor was authorized to estimate the dimensions of any bin or measure and inscribe thereupon the number of standard bushels it could contain.²⁸

Apparently the law was not enforced, perhaps due to the influence of those who were profiting from fraudulent measures, because measurement was still a major issue in the summer of 1879. It is also possible that the teamsters and smelter operators desired such a law on the books so they could point to it in answer to criticism of their dealings with the burners. In any case, the law brought about no apparent change in their living and working conditions.

THE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

The first reported meeting of the Eureka charcoal burners took place on July 6, 1879 in Celso Tolli's saloon in Eureka. How long such a meeting had been planned is impossible to know, but there must have been considerable preliminary organizational work because 500 men attended. Guido Bassetti was elected temporary chairman and a committee was appointed to call upon superintendents Donnelly of the Eureka Consolidated and Rickard of the Richmond Company to see if they would be willing to pay a better price for charcoal. Both Donnelly and Rickard happened to be in attendance and both stated that their obligations to their stockholders made such a move impossible. Donnelly further declared that he had already contracted for his charcoal and that he would close his furnaces unless he got it at the contract price. The burners claimed that they could not make a living at the present rates and would quit burning unless they were raised. The meeting was then adjourned

until the next evening. The matter of the smelter receipts was not brought up at this time nor were the grievances about the food orders and the manner in which they were redeemed by certain of the town's merchants.²⁹

The meeting of the following evening was held in the Eureka Opera House, apparently because it was the only place in town large enough to seat all the burners desiring to attend. At the meeting a membership list was circulated and 600 more names were added to those already on the list from the previous meeting. Officers were elected and the group decided to call itself the "Eureka Coalburners Protective Association." The following men were elected as officers: Joe Maginni, President; Lambert Molinelli, Vice-President; Joe Hansman, Secretary and Sol Ashum, Treasurer. A committee was appointed to circulate the membership roll and induce all the burners of the area to join.³⁰

At this meeting the burners resolved that the price of charcoal be raised to thirty cents a bushel and threatened to cut off supplies unless their demands were met. They also complained that the entire smelting business in Eureka was controlled by a few men who were able to dictate prices and force them to take a large portion of their pay in orders for goods on certain merchants who, when the orders were presented, charged higher prices than were asked of cash customers. They resolved that in the future they would take nothing but cash for their labor.³¹

At neither of these meetings was there any hint or suggestion that the members resort to violence in order to achieve their ends or that the Association would approve of such methods. What the individual burners discussed among themselves is not a part of the historical record, but, in light of their actions during the following weeks, there must have been some discussion of direct action methods.

On July 9 the following notice appeared in the *Eureka Daily Sentinel* and ran for ten days thereafter:

Take notice, that on and after this date, no coal will be sold to anyone by the members of the "Eureka Coal Burners Association" unless the same is disposed of at the furnaces for the sum of Thirty Cents per bushel.

Eureka Coal Burners Association
Eureka, July 8, 1879³²

Neither the *Sentinel* nor the *Leader* carried any editorial comment on the meetings of the burners or the charges and demands they had made. One gets the impression that neither journal took them seriously, in spite of the fact that a stoppage of the charcoal supply would very likely bring smelting operations to a stop and throw many men out of work. Both the Eureka Consolidated and the Richmond Company maintained a constant stockpile of about 120,000 bushels of charcoal³³ and the newspapers and the companies probably assumed that the burners could not last that long without income, even if they did manage to shut off the supply.

On July 16 it was reported that the Burners Association had 1,196 names on its membership list.³⁴ This is perhaps an exaggerated figure if one takes the word of the State Mineralogist who stated in his Report issued in the spring of 1879 that there were but 800 men in the trade.³⁵ The burners themselves stated that there were 2,000 men following their profession in the Eureka District.³⁶

On the same day, July 16, it was reported that the Richmond Company had "expressed willingness" to pay the price asked by the burners, but the Eureka Consolidated had made no statement.³⁷ This was the first of a number of such statements which were to appear during the following weeks. Company officials were usually vague when asked for a confirmation and one gets the impression that their intention was to keep the Association off balance and create division in its ranks.

Part of the adverse reaction to the demands of the charcoal burners was due to a general business depression which had come to a head in the summer of 1879, just when the burners first organized. Many Eureka merchants were not doing well and there was a fear that a higher price for charcoal would force the furnaces to close down. This lull was not blamed on general conditions, but upon those who supposedly sent money out of the country and to other states. According to the *Sentinel*, thirty to forty thousand dollars a month was being sent abroad from Eureka and almost as much to other areas of the United States. "Right on the heels of this general stagnation," the *Sentinel* editorialized, "when a feeling of universal distrust pervades all classes, comes the ill-advised and untimely strike of the coal burners to add to the demoralization that seems to have seized our business men."³⁸

Considering the size of Eureka's Foreign-born population in 1879, which numbered 2,287 persons out of a total population of 4,207,³⁹ the sending of funds abroad could have been a precipitating factor, but it is unlikely that Eureka's Italians were contributing any significant amount to the outflow.

The indifference with which the press and populace of Eureka viewed the actions of the burners came to an end on July 17. On that day a burner who was not a member of the Association came into Eureka and reported that thirty-five armed men had ridden up to his place the previous night and stopped his men from burning charcoal. The burner also reported that several teamsters were forced to return to Eureka with empty wagons. No damage was done to the charcoal pits nor were any men injured, but the implied threat of future violence was clearly evident. No charges were filed against the men.⁴⁰

In commenting upon this story, the editors of the *Leader* indicated their opposition to actions of this sort and expressed a fear that the furnaces might be closed if the price of charcoal were forced up. They contended that the movement should have begun before charcoal contracts were signed between the smelter operators and the teamsters when it would have stood a better chance of success.⁴¹

The *Sentinel* reported the same story, but declared that the officers of the Burners' Association had disclaimed the actions of the men as soon as they were informed of them. The editors of the journal expressed doubt that the furnaces would close and upheld the right of the burners to ask any price they so choose, just as any other merchant, and to refuse to furnish any charcoal to the teamsters. The editors did not indicate whether they supported the use of force to achieve such a price; presumably they did not at this time.⁴²

According to newspaper reports, the people of Eureka had a good deal of sympathy for the plight of the burners and supported their efforts to improve the deplorable conditions of their life and labor. Even so, many persons still feared the effects on the mining and smelting companies. Many also regretted that force had been resorted to and felt that such actions would be self-defeating and cause the companies to ship their ore to California for smelting.⁴³ The crux of the problem was not the price of the charcoal, but rather the fact that the smelter operators refused to deal directly with the burners rather than with the teamsters. This fact seemed to be lost in the debate and the whole conflict centered around the price of charcoal. The operators might even have gotten their fuel at a lower price if they had been willing to do so. One wonders whether the operators themselves were not receiving kick-backs from the teamsters.

On July 18, ten days after the Association's thirty-cent charcoal notice had appeared in the *Sentinel* and the day following the reported stoppage of burning, it was reported that the Eureka Consolidated had cancelled all its charcoal contracts and was willing to pay the asked for price. The Richmond Company was reported to have contracted for a certain amount at twenty-nine cents and to be willing to pay the market price for all charcoal bought outside the contract if not more than twenty-eight cents a bushel. In spite of the fact that neither company indicated that such prices would constitute a hardship on them, rumors continued to persist that the Richmond was going to close its smelter for at least six months due to the low price of lead and silver on the national market. It was reported that the company had several hundred tons of lead piled up in its yard.⁴⁴

Some of the fears of the people of Eureka were confirmed by a letter published in the *Leader* of July 18. According to a "well-posted gentleman" in San Francisco, the Eureka Consolidated was considering shipping all its ore to California for reduction. The Trustees of the company reportedly figured that they could save \$5.00 a ton if the desired freight rates could be secured, a problem they did not consider to be serious because of the desire of the railroad to secure such a large contract. Commenting on the letter, the *Leader* contended that the company was probably anticipating the proposed rise in the price of charcoal, as if anyone reading the letter had missed its significance.⁴⁵ Whether this letter was authentic or not, and whether the company was actually contemplating such a move, is open to question. It is entirely possible that

there was no such "gentleman" and that the letter was intended to defeat the efforts of the burners by throwing a scare into the people of Eureka.

Shortly after it was announced that the Eureka Consolidated had agreed to pay thirty cents for charcoal, the Burners' Association held a meeting to consider the offer. It was accepted and on July 20 a notice to that effect was placed in the *Sentinel* and the Association members were ordered to load all teams hauling for the company.⁴⁶

Meanwhile there were reports coming in of more attempts to stop the burning and loading of charcoal. Those involved were apparently unaware that progress had been made in meeting their price demands. On July 20 it was reported that Robert Brown, a teamster, had taken his wagon out in the direction of the Willows to load charcoal, but was prevented from doing so by five armed Italians.⁴⁷

Upon returning to Eureka, Brown filed charges of malicious mischief against them and the next day, July 21, Sheriff Matt Kyle and six deputies set out to arrest them. After riding some distance Kyle and his posse encountered a large group of Italians armed with rifles, pistols and clubs. Reports as to their numbers varied, but the group was probably 150 to 200 strong. The leader of the group told the lawmen that the men for whom he had warrants were not present and that they would allow no charcoal to be loaded without orders from the President of the Burners' Association. Sheriff Kyle told them of the Eureka Consolidated's action, but they insisted upon official notice. Just at that moment a messenger arrived from the Association President confirming Kyle's statement and ordering the loading of all teams bound for the Eureka Consolidated. The burners seemed satisfied and promised that there would be no more stoppages of Eureka Consolidated wagons and that the men for whom the sheriff had warrants would appear in town within a few days.⁴⁸

The burners were as good as their word and the five men gave themselves up in Eureka on July 23. They were charged with threatening to burn property rather than with malicious mischief, a charge to which all pleaded not guilty. Bail was set at \$200 each and trial was set for August 5. Whether or not they made bail and were released was not reported.⁴⁹

The attack on the burner's ranch and the stopping of Brown's team aroused considerable feeling against the Italians on the part of many in Eureka. Not the least of those who opposed this turn of events was Lambert Molinelli, the Vice-President of the Burners' Association. Molinelli was a successful businessman in Eureka rather than a charcoal burner. He owned a safe company and a real estate business and had served a term as County Clerk for Eureka County. He was well-liked in the community and was of unimpeachable honor and integrity according to all reports. He seemed to be the most articulate spokesman the Italians had and was perhaps induced to join their cause out of sympathy rather than economics. His disavowal of the movement, once it turned violent, was probably due to his business interests which surely would have

suffered had he continued to support a course of action opposed by his business colleagues and customers.

Molinelli first spoke out on July 21, the day after Brown's team had been stopped at the Willows. According to his statement, certain "unprincipled curs" had been circulating rumors that he was behind the actions of the burners. He denied all sympathy with them in their present course and stated that he was simply an interpreter for the Association and was paid for his services.⁵⁰

On July 23 a notice denying the truth of Molinelli's statement was published in the *Leader*. According to this notice, inserted by "the coal-burners," Molinelli had interpreted for nothing at the meetings and had accepted the position of Vice-President with no reservations. The notice further asserted that the coal burners, whether Italian or not, were law abiding citizens and reiterated the demand for thirty-cent charcoal and for the surrender of furnace receipts by the teamsters to the burners.⁵¹

Just who "the coalburners" were is problematical because on the same day the *Leader* published the above notice, the *Sentinel* published the resignation notice of Joe Maggini, the President of the Association, and Joe Hansman, the Secretary. Their notice read as follows:

We have used our best endeavors to promote the interests of the coal burners, and raise the price of coal to 30 cents per bushel, in a peaceable way, and have never countenanced any lawless proceedings or infractions of the laws. We have obtained the price at the Eureka Consolidated, but not at the Richmond.⁵²

These resignations could have been prompted by the officer's fore knowledge of a law suit being brought against them by Brown. On July 24 the suit was filed at the District Court in Eureka. The action named the officers of the Association as defendants and asked for \$3,850 in damages. Brown claimed that the four men, as officers of the Association, had passed, or caused to be passed, resolutions interfering with and preventing him from fulfilling a contract with Reinhold Sadler.⁵³

The filing of this suit seemed to add to the tensions which were building up in Eureka over the coal trouble; rumors of dissension within the ranks of the burners were thick as were stories of more stoppages and threats of violence.⁵⁴ On July 24 a notice appeared in the *Sentinel* of a meeting to be held on August 5. The notice stated that the burners did not wish the resignations of Maggini and Hansman until that time.⁵⁵

On August 4 a number of Italian and Swiss burners were in town for the upcoming meeting and things were reported to be "pretty lively" in Main Street's saloons. According to the *Sentinel* there were many disagreements within the group as to the best course in the future. It was also reported that those who knew the situation best, and were in sympathy with the burners, felt that a compromise at twenty-eight cents would be best for all concerned, the burners as well as the furnaces and the people of Eureka.⁵⁶

The dissensions which were to become evident in the meeting of the following day were preceded by conflicts between individual burners.

The night before the meeting, two burners, Joseph Zarger and Angelo Proti, got in a dispute in a local saloon over matters of coal prices. The altercation ended with Zarger fracturing Proti's skull with a billiard cue. The other Italians feared Zarger, so none swore out a warrant against him.⁵⁷

The Association, with about 200 members in attendance, met on August 5 in the Eureka County Court House. As the first order of business, the old officers handed in their resignations and departed from the meeting. New officers were immediately elected. Angelo Dilboni was elected President; Guiseppi Martinoli, Vice-President; Guido Bassetti, Secretary; Niceleo Ratti, Assistant Secretary and Severino Strozi, Treasurer. There appeared to be little division over the election of these men, in spite of the fact that there were disagreements among the members as to how to proceed in the future. The main order of business was the price of charcoal. Part of the members favored a twenty-eight cent compromise, but the majority held out for thirty cents, although heated words were exchanged and wild confusion raged before the final vote was taken. It was also decided that no burner be allowed to deliver at a price of less than thirty cents and that all burners have the privilege of seeing the furnace receipts.⁵⁸

The manner in which the Association planned to force its will on burners who were not members was not reported, but the implication was fairly obvious: they would use coercion of some type against the teamsters hauling their charcoal to the furnaces.

The *Sentinel* expressed regret at the course of action decided upon by the burners and referred to the officers who were replaced as “. . . intelligent, well-meaning men who had the interests of their countrymen at heart, and, while they differed in minor points, would have steered them clear of all pitfalls.”⁵⁹

Support for the burners' position was not lacking however. The August 6 edition of the *Leader* published a letter from a non-burner who signed himself simply “Sincerity.” The writer supported the price agreed upon, but contended that the manner in which the burners spent their meager wage was the root of the problem. He declared that they were forced to trade with certain merchants, many of whom were themselves Italian, because they were in debt to them. These merchants, he claimed, often charged the burners double the price they exacted from others. If it were not for this, he wrote, the burners could live on twenty-six cents a bushel. As to the burners' claim that they were cheated by the furnace operators and the teamsters, the writer said that all one must do to prove it would be to look at the books of the companies involved. He felt the burners should demand receipts from the teamsters as to the number of bags sent and hold them to account for that amount delivered. The mis-sive ended with the dictum “Fiat Justita Ruat Coelum” [Let Justice be done, though the heavens fall].⁶⁰

Reports continued to circulate that efforts were still being made to reach a compromise figure of twenty-eight cents and a *Sentinel* reporter

was informed, "upon undoubted authority," that the furnaces of both the Richmond and the Eureka Consolidated would close down within two weeks unless satisfactory terms were agreed upon.⁶¹

A number of burners were apparently not willing to await the outcome of these negotiations, but were instead determined to force the price up through more direct methods. On August 7 a large number of burners left Eureka armed with shotguns, grubbing hoes and pruning knives. It was reported that their avowed intention was to prevent any and all teams from loading charcoal until the furnaces came to their terms and paid the rate they had agreed upon. In an editorial comment, the *Leader* ventured that the coalburners ". . . will find that the shotgun policy is somewhat expensive before they get through with it." The journal indicated that it was not denying any man the right to hold his product and sell it at any price he choose, but

. . . when a party of armed men attempt to destroy another's property or threaten his life because he sees fit to dispose of his own wares at what he pleases to ask for them, it is carrying things a little too far and we hope the Coal-Burners Association will not attempt any such high-handed outrage.⁶²

This was precisely what the burners had in mind. On August 8 Sheriff Kyle and several deputies set out for the town of Alpha, some thirty miles northwest of Eureka, to investigate reports of disturbances there and prevent the destruction of property.⁶³ On the same day, George Lamoureux, a Eureka teamster, received notice from the Coalburners Association that he was not to send his team to Cassini's ranch for charcoal. The *Leader* ventured that Lamoureux would do as he pleased with his teams and could get the protection of the law if anyone interfered with his loading of charcoal.⁶⁴

Early the next morning, August 9, six burners entered Lamoureux's home, drug him from his bed and threatened to beat him if he persisted in his efforts to haul charcoal. He ignored the warning and later in the day drove his wagon to Cassini's ranch where he was again confronted by a number of armed Italians. Since he was alone, although armed, he returned to Eureka with an empty wagon and reported the events to the Sheriff's office. Warrants were sworn out against those who prevented him from loading and Deputy Sheriff Simpson immediately left town to serve them. The posse was still with Sheriff Kyle at Alpha, but Simpson said that they would be recalled and sent to aid him if he encountered any difficulty.⁶⁵

Many Eurekans felt that only a minority of the burners favored violence and that only a few agitators were carrying out acts of destruction. Nevertheless, this minority seemed to be alienating many who felt the burners had a hard lot in life. The *Leader* recommended that this minority be "branded as outlaws" and urged "all good citizens" to aid the legal authorities.⁶⁶ Whether or not this was a call for the organization of a vigilante committee is speculative; if so, the call went unheeded as no such group was ever formed.

The *Sentinel* reported the same hardening of attitudes among the people of Eureka and declared that the burners had even lost the support of the "better class" of their own people.⁶⁷ The journal also blamed the merchants of Eureka for much of the current trouble due to the exorbitant prices charged the burners when they redeemed their orders for food and other goods.⁶⁸

In the days that followed, the coal crisis began to become more heated and attitudes to harden on both sides. On August 11 officials of the Eureka Consolidated announced that they would brook no dictation as to where or of whom they would purchase charcoal and threatened to shut the furnaces down if they could not get a supply at the price they desired.⁶⁹

On the same day it was reported that there were armed bands of Italians at every loading point in the District. These bands, it was reported, were interfering with the loading of charcoal, destroying property and threatening the lives of peaceful citizens. On August 9 George Lamoureux had again ventured out with his teams, accompanied this time by a Deputy Sheriff. They had camped overnight at Higby's Station, intending to load the next morning, but, upon awakening, were confronted by a force of forty Italians who had been called together during the night by a system of signal fires. Lamoureux and his men were once again forced to return empty handed to Eureka.⁷⁰

Later in the day, August 10, bands of Italians prevented the teams of Kaye, Riley, Sadler, McKee and Cousey from loading at Fish Creek. Although these teams had been accompanied by sixteen armed men, they returned to Eureka when confronted by a force of twenty Italians in sight and a number of others scattered through the hills. At Newark, ten miles northeast of Eureka, the teams of Reinhold Sadler were met by forty Italians who unloaded the wagons and commanded the teamsters to return to town. At the ranch of Joseph Tognini near Alpha, seventy-five Italians congregated and seized 2,000 bushels of charcoal which they scattered through the sagebrush. They also took possession of an Alpha saloon and proceeded to hold a revel, but scattered to the hills when the rumor of an approaching armed force reached them.⁷¹

The style of operation adopted by the burners made them very effective in stopping the loading of charcoal and very difficult to apprehend. They operated in small guerrilla-type bands which hid out in the hills. A system of spies and runners from the coal loading stations and the towns of the District made it easy for them to hit any station whenever a team arrived. This system also made it easy to evade posses and other armed groups which might ride out after them.⁷²

Various plans for dealing with the raiders were put forth. The editors of the *Leader* suggested that a large posse be summoned and sent out with the wagons to each area where a large amount of charcoal was ready for loading. The posse could protect the teamsters until all the fuel was removed, then transfer operations to another loading point and repeat the procedure.⁷³ On the surface this would seem to be a workable

plan, but it provided no guarantee that the Italians would not confront the posse with a larger force of their own, a situation likely to lead to bloodshed.

On August 10 Deputy Sheriff Simpson rode in from Diamond Station, ten miles northwest of Eureka, and reported that he could not serve the warrants he had been sent out with because he could not find the burners. This infuriated Sheriff Kyle and he immediately announced his intention of arresting all parties for whom warrants had been issued whatever the cost. Shortly after this declaration a teamster, Charley Grimm, rode in from Alpha and reported that Hansen's and Tognini's teams had been stopped and 700 bags of charcoal belonging to the latter had been scattered in the brush. Grimm also said he saw seventy-five armed Italians at Alpha who were bragging that they could overcome any force sent out from Eureka. Later in the day other reports came in of further unloadings in the outlying areas.⁷⁴

Kyle and his deputies held a meeting on the afternoon of August 10 to assess the situation and decide upon a course of action. The Sheriff was in favor of raising a posse of 100 picked, well-armed men to start after the burners the next morning and he delegated Deputy Sheriff Mason to make the necessary arrangements. By ten o'clock that night Mason had thirty-five men and plans were being made to leave with that number if no more could be persuaded to join. A number of prominent citizens, among them several Italians, argued that this number would be insufficient and would be annihilated in a fight. They contended that it would be better to call upon the Governor for arms and men. This plan was discussed with Sheriff Kyle and he reluctantly agreed to it.⁷⁵

THE ACTIVATION OF THE MILITIA

On Monday morning, August 11, a telegram went out to Governor Kinkead at Carson City from Sheriff Kyle and B. J. Turner, Chairman of the Eureka Board of County Commissioners. The wire summarized the troubles in Eureka and stated that 2,000 armed burners were roaming the countryside and preventing the loading of charcoal. There had also been, according to Turner, threats to destroy property and talk of burning the town of Eureka. The telegram requested that the Governor call the Second Brigade of the Nevada Militia into immediate service. A number of teamsters who had suffered at the hands of the burners also sent a wire to the Governor requesting such action.⁷⁶

It is doubtful that there were 2,000 burners arrayed against the lawmen of Eureka but the situation was clearly getting out of hand in any case. The exaggerated figure was probably intentional so the Governor would not hesitate in his decision. The Second Brigade was the unit regularly stationed in Eureka and thus calling it out would not entail any serious logistical problems. Since the Brigade was made up of Eureka residents who knew the situation and the countryside, its activation constituted a welcome source of manpower in case it were needed. It seemed that the Sheriff did not have a great deal of success in recruiting men for

his posses, as was evidenced by the recent attempt of Deputy Mason to recruit one hundred men and his success in getting only thirty-five.

Preparations were quickly made to put the militia into action should the Governor approve the request. Major H. T. Headley, Chief of the Ordnance Section of the Second Brigade, estimated the needs of the outfit and indicated in a communication to General George Sabine, Commander of the unit, that he was prepared to requisition one hundred stands of arms, 4,000 rounds of fifty-caliber cartridges and 2,000 rounds of caliber forty-five if the request for activation were approved. The requisition was signed by Major C. J. R. Butler, Adjutant of the Second Brigade, in the absence of General Sabine who was in San Francisco at the time the activation request was made. The requisition was wired to Carson City immediately.⁷⁷

Upon receiving the first telegram, Governor Kinkead wired back to Eureka for more information as to the state of affairs there and the amount of available arms and ammunition. He was answered by Colonel Edward N. Robinson who stated that there were 1,000 men at Alpha, Roberts Creek, Fish Creek and Newark who would resist authority and at least that many again at various points who would give assistance in case of trouble. He advised the Governor that the town had one hundred stacks of arms but lacked ammunition. The Governor was urged to take immediate action on Major Headley's arms requisition and was informed by Robinson that the members of the Second Brigade had been alerted and were at the armory awaiting orders.⁷⁸

The Governor wired back his approval immediately and stated that the requested arms and ammunition would be sent on the evening express. Word of the official activation was sent to the Brigade members and those who were not already at the Armory assembled on the evening of August 11.⁷⁹

Prior to the calling of the militia, other Nevada newspapers had generally ignored the troubles at Eureka, but they soon picked up the story. Most of them merely copied the accounts of the *Sentinel* or the *Leader* inasmuch as they were without independent sources of information. One exception to this was the *Morning Appeal* of Carson City which, on August 12, reported that the charcoal burners, "the majority of whom are unnaturalized Italians," had taken possession of the town of Eureka and threatened to do great damage if their terms were not acceded to.⁸⁰

Although the burners may have discussed a move of this kind on occasion, *it most emphatically did not take place*. Nevertheless, the belief that it did continues to persist in historical literature. Both Hubert Howe Bancroft and James G. Scrugham, in their histories of Nevada, asserted that the militia was sent by the Governor to free the town of Eureka from the burners.⁸¹

Although the situation appeared to be serious, there seemed to be considerable optimism about it in Eureka. It was generally felt that there would be no armed clash between the authorities and the burners because

the latter would scatter to the hills when confronted by armed authority. The editor of the *Sentinel* indicated a belief that local authorities had acted hastily in calling upon the Governor for aid and that the militia would not be needed at all.⁸²

The activation of the militia created a good deal of excitement in Eureka. The stores and saloons of Main Street reverberated with rumors and even the children got caught up in the excitement. The *Leader* reported that they were now choosing up sides as burners or militiamen instead of cowboys and Indians. The "battle" was a stand-off at present it was reported.⁸³ It was also reported that a drunken burner had attempted to "settle" the coal question by stopping a team in the street and commencing to throw off sacks of charcoal. He dumped a few sacks but lost his balance and fell off the wagon on his head. His comrades picked him up and carried him off the field.⁸⁴

On the morning of August 12 Lieutenant Budd Reynolds was sent with six men to reconnoiter the rail line and prevent any attempt by the burners to capture the arms and ammunition due to arrive on the evening train.⁸⁵ Meanwhile it seemed that Sheriff Kyle had not reconciled himself to relying upon the militia to end the trouble with the burners. On August 12 he announced that he and his posse would attempt to serve all the warrants thus far issued and make peaceful arrests of the leaders. In spite of a warning from a prominent Italian that the burners would meet force with force, he and his men departed for Fish Creek the same evening.⁸⁶

The Sheriff's decision to serve the warrants, no matter what the cost in lives, called forth a rather interesting letter to the editor published in the *Sentinel* of August 14. The writer, who signed himself "Cela," suggested that Kyle form his posses of those men "... who have the greatest interest in this matter," that is, the merchant contractors and the officials of the mining and smelting companies. "It is most just," he wrote, "that they who have property at stake should bear some of the brunt of the battle in person. It may be that they do not seek to enforce the law themselves, against those to whom they have so often denied justice." The writer was of the opinion that this move would end the "war" within twenty-four hours.⁸⁷

The activation of the militia, even though it remained in the armory, seemed to lessen the bravado of some of the Italians and make them less apt to resist the efforts of the lawmen to serve warrants and make arrests. On August 13, Angelo Dilboni, the President of the Burners' Association, was arrested and taken before Justice of the Peace Cromer. Charged with fermenting disturbances and inciting riots, he was held in \$1,000 bail and his trial was set for September. Dilboni denied the charge claiming that when he accepted the position of President, he did so with the intention of lawfully advancing the price of charcoal and removing discrimination against the burners by certain merchants. He disavowed responsibility for any lawless acts carried out by the burners.⁸⁸

On the same day that Dilboni was arrested, Deputy Simpson brought

in Severento Strozzi, the Treasurer of the Association, and lodged him in the county jail. Sheriff Kyle also came in with four ringleaders from the Fish Creek area whom he had disarmed and taken with the help of teamsters H. B. McKee and Hank Storey. The men were placed in the county jail and the lawmen immediately set out for Roberts Creek to make more arrests.⁸⁹

The next day, August 14, there were more arrests. Constable Gorman arrived in the morning with five Italians whom he had captured at Fish Creek and reported that four more were enroute with other lawmen. Sheriff Kyle also brought in one more from Alpha. The four men brought in from Fish Creek the previous day, D. Corichina, L. Pinoli, G. B. Cordino and G. Cesnoli, were taken before Judge Cromer and held in \$1,000 bail to answer the charge of conspiracy. None could put up a bond so all were held to await trial.⁹⁰

Nine more arrests were made on August 15 and the men previously brought in were arraigned before Judge Cromer and bail set at \$1,000 each. The county jail was full to overflowing with Italians by this time so part of them were placed in the armory. The Commander of the Second Brigade, General Sabine, arrived from San Francisco a few hours later and ordered the Sheriff to clear them out as they were in the charge of civil authorities, not the military. The burners were then moved to a room over Tommy Douglas' saloon where they were guarded by special deputies. The Italians seemed to be a rather well-behaved lot once they were locked up. According to reports, they spent their time in "Camp Douglas" drinking beer, playing music and singing. The militiamen were passing their leisure hours playfully tossing their officers in blankets.⁹¹

Even though their leaders were imprisoned, groups of Italians were still roaming about in small bands turning back teams and threatening to kill those who persisted in loading charcoal. Many of them had now blackened their faces to prevent identification.⁹² To add to the tenseness of the situation, officials of both the Eureka Consolidated and the Richmond Company announced that they were closing temporarily because they could no longer continue operations under present circumstances.⁹³ The lack of charcoal was evidently not the reason for the closure as it was reported that both companies had a year's supply in reserve.⁹⁴

Adding to the problems of the lawmen, General Sabine, who seemed to be particularly uncooperative during this entire incident, announced that the militia would be used only to back up civil authorities if they lost control of the situation. At present, the General said, they seemed to be handling it adequately.⁹⁵

Neither the men of the Second Brigade nor the more affluent members of Eureka's Italian community were of one mind in regards to the dispute. Every since the Governor's activation order was received on August 11, there had been rumors of dissidence within the ranks of the militia. The extent of this feeling was not reported but at least one officer, Major David Manheim, the unit's quartermaster, was relieved from duty and

placed under arrest for insubordination. It was said that he had been seen drinking with Modoc Sam and Charcoal Bill, two violent thirty-cent-a-bushel men.⁹⁶

The polarization of attitudes within the Italian community was made evident in a series of letters published in the *Sentinel* on August 15, 16 and 17. The first letter was written by a man who signed himself "Veritas." The main object of the burners, he wrote, was not so much the thirty cents as it was the abolition of all contracts with the charcoal contractors and the right to deliver the fuel directly to the smelters. He repeated the contention of the burners that these middlemen had been cheating them and declared that they were falling deeper and deeper into debt. If anyone doubted the truth of this assertion, said the writer, let him draw a parallel between the comfortable situation of the contractors, who got rich at easy work, and the ". . . miserable, pitiful state of the poor toiler of the forest." "Enough Gentlemen," the writer continued.

. . . throw down your mask, be fair and just, and in atonement for the past be at least humane in time to come. And since you have been made rich by these poor workers, don't try to raise prejudices or talk of sending an army with guns, bullets, etc., but it better becomes your duty to send an army of cheese and macaroni to quench the hunger of these poor, famished, desperate wretches, who are really more hungry than ill-disposed.⁹⁷

The letter went on to assert that the troubles at Alpha had been greatly magnified to arouse public indignation and justify the sending of lawmen to the area. According to the writer, the people of Alpha knew nothing of the destruction or threatened destruction and had to come to Eureka to be informed of it.

"Veritas" received a retort to his epistle in the *Sentinel* of the following day. It came from Joseph Tognini and Joe Vanina, two of the most prominent of the Italian charcoal contractors. Their letter began with a severe condemnation of all strikes and all organizations ". . . existing in defiance of the law and in restraint of trade." The writers asked who these contracting middlemen, these "bloodless monopolies," were. They asked for names, dates, facts and particulars and for the names of the "poor devils" who had assertedly starved to death. They declared that the law of supply and demand governed the business conduct of men and men, as such, could do nothing about it. The writers felt that "Veritas" should remember that the Eureka Consolidated and the Richmond Company represented the prosperity of every man, woman and child in the county and thus nothing should be done to impair their operation in any way. The trouble at Alpha, the letter went on, was not exaggerated; 2,000 bushels of charcoal had been scattered over an area of twenty acres and armed Italians had made threats against both teamsters and burners who were not members of the protective association.⁹⁸

Using his real name, Louis Monaco, "Veritas" answered Tognini and Vanina in the *Sentinel* of August 17. Monaco was not a burner, but rather a Swiss-Italian who owned a photography shop in Eureka.⁹⁹ He

contended that the burner's strike was justified by the conditions they were forced to work under, but denounced the recent acts of violence. Monaco admitted that the furnaces were the source of the county's prosperity but felt that the charcoal burners should have a larger share of it than had been the case in the past. The burners were poor, he contended, and neither would nor could hire lawyers to carry on a war of polemics, "a pen and ink war" as he called it.¹⁰⁰

Meanwhile the lawmen continued their crusade against the burners. Deputy Simpson and several other lawmen departed for Fish Creek on August 15 and on the 17th made two more arrests in that area, one of whom was Guiseppi Martinoli, the Vice-President of the Burners' Association. It was also reported that several Italians planned to bring suits for false arrest against the county.¹⁰¹

On August 18 twenty burners charged with conspiracy and riot appeared before Judge Cromer and pleaded not guilty. Bail was set at \$1,000 each, which none could make, and trials were scheduled for August 20 and 21.¹⁰² The lawmen and the courts of Eureka appeared to be operating in an orderly, dispassionate manner and few citizens were prepared for the events which took place at Fish Creek on August 18.

A SHOOTING AT FISH CREEK

On the morning of August 19 the people of Eureka awoke to hear of a shooting which had taken place at Fish Creek the previous day. The afternoon *Leader* carried the full story as was reported up to that time. According to Deputies Storey and Arrivey, who had arrived in Eureka in the middle of the night, the incident had taken place at dusk on the previous day and five Italian burners were dead. The Deputies said they were members of a party of lawmen led by Deputy Simpson who had been sent to the Fish Creek area in response to threats by the burners that they would permit no more charcoal loading there. The other members of the party were said to be Joseph Toomey, William Martin, Robert Brown, Jim Porter, G. H. Smith and Marshall Rich, the latter a foreman for George Lamoureux's freighting company.¹⁰³

According to Storey's account, the lawmen were confronted by approximately one hundred Italians upon their arrival at Fish Creek. Marshall Rich, who had brought along several wagons, told the owners of the charcoal to go ahead and begin loading, but the Italians prevented them from doing so. This angered Rich and he and Smith rushed to a wagon and began loading it themselves. The leader of the burners ordered them to stop and pushed them away from the wagon. They began to load again, whereupon one of the burners drew his pistol and fired at Rich, grazing his skull. Another burner attacked Smith with a long knife and all the lawmen began to fire with their revolvers.¹⁰⁴

Arrivey added a few details to Storey's account. He said the Italians sprung from the underbrush and from behind trees at the first shot and tore down upon the lawmen shouting and yelling, apparently expecting

them to be terrified into retreat by the great commotion. The officers, said Arrivey, stood their ground and returned the fire, whereupon the Italians dropped their weapons and scattered to the hills. The officers reportedly followed them and captured seventeen, all but three of whom were released as night came on. The three were brought in by Storey and Arrivey and lodged in the county jail. The others retrieved their fallen comrades, taking them to McKennan's ranch where they were placed in a wagon to be brought to Eureka. In addition to those killed, six Italians were said to have been wounded. Marshall Rich suffered a slight wound but the other officers emerged unscathed.¹⁰⁵

The bodies of the five Italians were brought to Eureka on the day after the shooting and taken to the undertaking establishment of W. P. Haskell on Buel Street. They were identified as Pompeo Pattini, 35, Giornici, Switzerland; Antonio Canonica, 25, Corte Ciasea, Switzerland; Marcelino Locatelli, 25, Mozzio, Italy; Theodoro Zerli, 28, San Fellipo, Italy and Giovanni Pedroni, 23, Villa de Chiavenna, Italy.¹⁰⁶

The *Leader* reported that crowds of Italians were congregating in the streets and discussing the killings. Some Italians were indulging in threats of revenge upon the officers but most were reported to be regretful about the whole affair and hopeful that there would be no more killings.¹⁰⁷

Although the editors of the *Leader* feared that the killings would "inflame the passions and intensify the resistance" of the burners, they felt the officers were justified in their action inasmuch as they were upholding "... the dearest of all rights to an American citizen, the peaceful pursuit of his daily labor." The ill treatment suffered by the burners could have been remedied by the law, the journal declared, or the Italians could have gone into another like of work if they were dissatisfied with charcoal burning.¹⁰⁸

The editors of the *Sentinel* blamed Sheriff Kyle for sending a "shooting posse" made up of such men as Simpson, Martin and Toomey who, according to them, would be quick to resent an insult which more moderate men would overlook to avoid trouble. The editors also felt the fight to have been one-sided inasmuch as none of the officers were injured. They pointed out that the preponderance of Italians at the scene did not necessarily mean that they were disposed to resist the officers. "The law," the editorial continued, "does not require an officer to be shot without making an effort to defend himself, but neither does it contemplate or justify a needless sacrifice of human life on a mere pretext of resistance."¹⁰⁹

Most Nevada newspapers merely copied the stories of the *Sentinel* and the *Leader* and assumed an editorial position which more or less justified the actions of the lawmen. One exception to this general rule was the *Gold Hill Daily News*. The editors of this journal felt the fact that none of the officers was wounded indicated that the Italians were probably unarmed and had no intention of precipitating violence. They

contended that the officers probably fired into an unarmed crowd or attacked from ambush.¹¹⁰

That there was perhaps some truth in this supposition was confirmed by a letter published in the *Virginia Chronicle* of Virginia City on August 21. This letter, purportedly from a Eureka Italian who was present at Fish Creek to a fellow countryman in Virginia City, set forth a version of the affray somewhat different than that of Storey and Arrivey. According to the letter there were about one hundred burners at Fish Creek on the day of the shooting, about twenty of whom were armed. The writer said that Deputy Simpson's party had come to Fish Creek to serve more warrants and demanded that the Italians produce certain of their leaders to be taken back to Eureka. The Italians argued with the officers in a very loud and excited manner, saying that they were wrongly dealt with and that all they wanted was justice. The officers repeated their demand, but the Italians, after a consultation in their own language, refused to comply. Three or four of them had revolvers in their hands by this time but none made any attempt to use them. The writer said that the lawmen then drew their weapons and opened fire on the burners who scattered in all directions.¹¹¹

This account is similar to that elicited by a *Sentinel* reporter from another Italian present at the time of the shooting. According to this version there were ninety Italian and Swiss burners present, about thirty of whom had revolvers and four or five who had shotguns. While resting their horses on a hillside near Fish Creek, one of the burners noticed two men coming up the road in a buggy and the group mounted and assembled on the road. When the buggy stopped, one of the men handed a piece of paper to an Italian. Just at that moment a number of other men rode up and after dismounting, ranged themselves in front of the mounted burners. The witness said he then heard one of the lawmen yell "fire" and heard a single shot and saw the Italian, still clutching the paper, tumble from his horse. There followed a dead silence for an instant and then the officers opened up a regular fusillade, the Italians taking to their heels. The witness declared that the Italians neither displayed weapons nor fired any shots.¹¹²

The *Daily Alta Californian* of San Francisco published another version of the events at Fish Creek which it had obtained from a letter published in *La Voce del Popolo*, an Italian-language newspaper of the bay city. The letter was signed "Veritas" and was possibly written by Louis Monaco who had used this pseudonym previously in a letter to the *Sentinel*.^{*} According to this writer, the Italians had met with Deputy Simpson at Fish Creek and agreed to allow him to take the men for whom he had warrants. The Deputy suddenly looked around and, stepping aside, cried "fire" and the other lawmen did so, killing five men outright and chasing the rest for a distance of two miles. The writer stated that

^{*}pp. 70-71.

few of the burners were armed and that he had conducted his own examination of the bodies and found powder marks on their chests, an indication that the guns which killed them must have been within a few feet when fired.¹¹³

General Sabine's report of the incident was made on August 19 in a wire to Colonel George Lyon, a military aide to Governor Kinkead:

Yesterday at 6:00 P.M. about 100 burners attacked Sheriff Kyle's posse at Fish Creek, about 30 miles from here, when firing ensued. Five coal burners were killed and eight or ten wounded. None of the sheriff's force were hurt. The coal burners opened fire on the sheriff's men. The City is quiet.

G. M. Sabine
Commander, Second Brigade¹¹⁴

In his 1881 Report to the State Adjutant General, Sabine said that he had expected further trouble to result from the Fish Creek shooting and had thus placed his men on special alert on the afternoon of August 19, a status they maintained until August 22, at which time he concluded that the danger of more violence had ended.¹¹⁵ What he did not tell the Adjutant General was that he threw a party for his men at the armory on the evening of the 19th at which a keg of fresh lager was served and a box of fine Havanas enjoyed.¹¹⁶

Governor Kinkead was in Bodie at the time of the shooting and Lieutenant Governor Adams in San Francisco. The acting Governor was Senator W. R. King, President Pro Tempore of the State Senate. King took no action of any kind during his short tenure.¹¹⁷ The Governor seemed uninterested in the whole affair and neither made any pronouncement on the events nor bestirred himself to see that justice was done to all sides in the dispute. Perhaps he felt the presence of the Second Brigade was all that was required of the state. In his 1881 message to the legislature he referred to the "slight troubles" in Eureka County in August of 1879 but neglected to mention the deaths which had resulted and the issues involved in the conflict. As to the role of the militia, he said its readiness to cooperate with civil authorities contributed to the keeping of the peace. He singled out General Sabine for special commendation.¹¹⁸

Shortly after the first reports of the Fish Creek shooting began to circulate, several prominent Eureka Italians telegraphed the Italian and Swiss Consuls in San Francisco and requested that they come to Eureka to aid in settling the difficulties.¹¹⁹ In response to this request, or perhaps in anticipation, for reports of the shootings appeared in both San Francisco papers on August 20,¹²⁰ Signor DeBarrellis, the Italian Consul, sent a telegram to Lambert Molinelli expressing the profound manner in which the news had affected him and requesting that Molinelli counsel moderation and trust in the law on the part of Eureka's Italians. The Consul also urged Molinelli to keep the Italians from following the advice of those who would advocate violent retaliation.¹²¹ Shortly after

it was received, the wire was printed up in circular form, in both English and Italian, and distributed to all the charcoal camps in the county.¹²²

Whether the burners were impressed by the message was not reported but a Eureka physician, Dr. Bishop, who visited the charcoal areas on August 19, reported that all was quiet and that the burners were tending their pits. He told a reporter for the *Leader* that they had little to say about the events of the previous day other than that they wished no further bloodshed and desired to avoid trouble in the future.¹²³

The inquest into the death of the Italians began on August 20. The first witness to testify was Marshall Rich. According to his account, he was on his way to Fish Creek on the day of the shooting when he met another teamster who told him there were some sixty Italians preventing charcoal loading there. He said he considered going on anyway but decided instead to return to Eureka to recruit some men to come out and protect his loading operations. He testified that he had gone but a short way when he was stopped by a number of mounted Italians. After some discussion between himself and several of the men, a small altercation ensued in which he struck an Italian with a whip as the man grabbed the reins of his team. The horses reared, he said, and struck the man's horse which in turn reared and threw him to the ground. Someone yelled and eighty to one hundred Italians swooped down from the hills and surrounded him. Rich said the men threatened to kill him and told him of plans to come to Eureka and release their jailed brothers. After some discussion the Italians allowed him to go on his way.¹²⁴

Rich said he proceeded towards Eureka after his release and soon met William Martin, Bob Brown, Jim Porter and two other teamsters. They talked the situation over and decided to send Martin into town for arms and more men. Martin reportedly had traveled less than five miles when he met Joe Toomey and officers Simpson and Smith who had come out to arrest more burners. They rode back to where the other men were waiting and the whole group set out for Fish Creek.¹²⁵

According to Rich they had not traveled more than two miles when they were confronted by the same group of Italians that had previously stopped him. Simpson and Toomey had been coming up the canyon in a buggy while those on horseback had been riding the ridges. The horsemen held the other Italians back while their leaders went down to talk to the officers. After a few minutes Simpson walked up the ridge and asked Brown if there were any of the Italians that he wanted arrested for stopping his teams at Fish Creek. Brown pointed out several whom he wished taken and Rich said he also pointed out one who had drawn a pistol on him earlier in the day. The man called Rich a "damn liar" and reached for his six-gun. Rich said that all of a sudden a shot rang out and firing commenced all around.¹²⁶

When asked who fired the first shot, Rich declared that he did not know, but believed it came from a stand of cedar trees a short distance away; he was certain none of the officers fired it. The moment the shot was fired, Rich said, he heard Simpson yell "Give it to them boys," or

words to that effect. The Italians beat a hasty retreat after the first volley, but were pursued by Simpson and his men who overtook and captured a number of them. Rich ended his testimony by stating that he saw five bodies near the buggy where the first shots were fired.¹²⁷

Deputy Sheriff Simpson followed Rich on the stand. He said he left Eureka with a John Doe warrant for a party of men charged with riot and conspiracy. Upon meeting the teamsters near Fish Creek, he said he decided to serve the warrant on any of the burners pointed out by Brown. Upon meeting the Italians at Fish Creek, he said he handed the document to one of them but could not get back before the shooting started. As to the shooting itself, Simpson testified that he did not know whether all the officers fired, who fired, nor how many shots and that he neither heard nor gave any order to shoot. Asked whether the Italians fired at his men, the Deputy said he saw some of them fire their weapons and heard shots go by his head. He estimated that fifty of the Italians were armed.¹²⁸

Bob Brown testified that he also believed the first shot to have come from behind a tree or bush and that he did not hear any command to shoot. He further declared that he did not know how many shots were fired, only that there was shooting going on. Asked whether he fired any shots, he declined to answer on the grounds that he might incriminate himself. When questioned about who shot the Italians, Brown said he didn't know, but thought that perhaps they shot their own men. Joseph Toomey, one of Simpson's deputies, also said the first shot came from the trees in back of the Italians. His testimony generally supported that of the others.¹²⁹

The Coroner's Jury reassembled the next day, August 21, and a large crowd attended in anticipation of "Judge" A. M. Hillhouse's cross-examination of the officers. Hillhouse was the attorney hired by the Burners' Association to defend its members in the upcoming trials and it was thought that he would subject Simpson to a grueling questioning. Contrary to these expectations, Hillhouse only drew from the lawman a short statement about the type of weapons used and asked a few more unimportant questions. He said he deemed it useless to follow the inquiry any further at the time as the matter would be tried by another court later on. There being no objections, the jury was given the case as it stood. They deliberated a short while and brought back a verdict that the deceased had died from shots fired by the Sheriff's posse during the discharge of its legal duty.¹³⁰

This investigation seemed somewhat superficial and many questions were left unanswered, the most important of which was the legal authority of the men who did the shooting. Only Simpson, Toomey, Smith, Storey and Arrivey were lawmen; Rich, Brown, Martin and Porter were teamsters who just happened to be accompanying them. In all the reports of the incident, there was no indication that any of them had been deputized by Simpson or that he even had such power.

The Italians were extremely unhappy with the verdict of the Coroner's Jury and contended that no overt acts were committed which would justify the killing of five men. They also complained that their side of the story had not been heard and that the Coroner's inquiry had been abruptly ended because it was found that it was "taking too wide a range." The *Leader*, in noting these complaints, said another examination of the posse would take place soon and that the matter would be judicially investigated and facts from both standpoints heard.¹³¹

The funeral for the victims of the Fish Creek fight was held on the morning of August 21. The *Leader* reported that the procession was more than a half mile in length and consisted of five wagons draped in somber black and 230 Italians on foot. "A more solemn and impressive sight than these burial rites can not be conceived" commented the reporter for the journal.¹³² At least six burners were still missing as late as August 24 and the Italians were reported to be scouring the hills for them.¹³³

Even while the Coroner's inquest and the funeral were being held, reports were coming in that roving bands of Italians were still turning back teams and threatening death to those who continued to burn and load charcoal. Tom Reilly came in from Fish Creek on August 22 and reported to the Sheriff that a number of burners were camped near the charcoal pits and had threatened his men when they were loading. The editors of the *Leader* ventured that more bloodshed was likely and suggested that those citizens who opposed the Sheriff's methods consider what they could do to settle the question and arrest the "unruly mob" that was "... interfering with the rights of property and the vocation of peaceful citizens."¹³⁴

On August 22 a preliminary hearing was held in Eureka Justice Court for twenty burners charged with riot and conspiracy. Although the Fish Creek shootings were not officially a part of the proceedings, testimony of the teamsters who appeared as witnesses was obviously designed to influence public opinion in favor of the action taken by the lawmen. As the hearing opened, the attorneys for the burners, Messrs. Hillhouse and Cole, moved to have the charges dismissed on the grounds that the warrants under which the burners were arrested did not specify them by name. Counsel for the county opposed the motion and quoted the Statutes of Nevada to the effect that if the defendants names be unknown, the Justice of the Peace had the right to cause their arrest under any name. Judge Cromer took the matter under advisement and ruled in favor of the county.¹³⁵

The first witness to testify was Joseph Hansman, the former Secretary of the Burners' Association. He stated that there had been no agreement by the Association that force should be used to stop the delivering of charcoal at less than thirty cents a bushel. The group merely imposed a fine of \$50 a load upon any of its own members who did so. Asked about the size of the Association, he estimated that there were five or six hundred names on the membership list.¹³⁶

The next day several teamsters testified about their experiences with the burners. W. M. Patterson, a bookkeeper for teamster Joe Hansen, testified that he saw Severino Strozi at Pine Station between August 9 and 11 and had heard him talking of stopping charcoal teams. Other burners with him, said Patterson, had talked of burning the charcoal instead of merely dumping and scattering it. According to Fred White, Strozi and his men dumped the charcoal sacks he was hauling for Reinhold Sadler and told him that they had already stopped teams owned by Burlingame, Hansen and McDonald. Maximillian Siddle testified that twenty burners had come to Tognini's ranch on August 10 and dumped 640 sacks of charcoal. Natali Frobeli, a burner who was not a member of the Association, told the Court that he had had 840 sacks of charcoal dumped. He also said that he had always been able to get receipts from Tognini when he wanted them. The testimony of four other teamsters generally supported that of Patterson, Siddle, White and the others.¹³⁷

When the Court reconvened on August 25, Monday, the testimony took a somewhat different tack. On the previous Saturday, August 23, Michael Pattini had filed a complaint in Justice Court charging the members of the posse with the murder of Pompeo Pattini, his nephew, at Fish Creek. A warrant was issued on Saturday afternoon and on Sunday the lawmen appeared before Justice of the Peace Cromer. Bail was set at \$5,000 each and the case was scheduled to be heard as soon as that of the coal burners was ended. Bonds were posted for the officers by several "substantial men" of the community and they were released.¹³⁸

The only teamster who testified on August 25 was E. N. Cornforth. He told the Court that he had been prevented from loading on several occasions and identified by name some of the Italians involved. He declared that Giovanni Padroni and Pompeo Pattini, both of whom were killed at Fish Creek, were the "leading spirits" among the burners along with the Vice-President of the Association, Guiseppi Martinoli. Cornforth said he had heard them threaten to burn the charcoal wagons and set fire to the town of Eureka and to the Richmond works if their terms were not met. He also told the Court that he had heard talk of hanging Sadler and killing Tognini and Gabriel.¹³⁹

On August 26 Brown, Arrivey and Rich, all named in the murder complaint filed two days previously, testified before Judge Cromer. Brown said that he was first stopped in July while loading at Willow Creek. Threats to burn his wagons and charcoal were made at that time, he declared, and on later occasions. Brown further stated that he had been deputized in July. Thomas Arrivey, a Deputy and apparently a teamster as well, supported the testimony of Cornforth and Brown and related an account of a struggle to disarm a number of Italians at Fish Creek on August 13 and 14. Marshall Rich related some of his experiences with the Italians and indicated a belief that the troubles were due to decisions made by the Association rather than to individual actions not sanctioned by the group. Reinhold Sadler's testimony indicated that he was in agreement with Rich as to the source of the trouble.¹⁴⁰

On the last day of the hearing, August 27, five more teamsters testified. Their accounts of the coal troubles did not differ significantly from those who had appeared previously. Following this testimony the hearing was concluded and all twenty Italians were held to answer before the Grand Jury. Sixteen were released on their own recognizance and four, Guiseppi Martinoli, Guido Bassetti, John Radoni and Severino Strozi, were held on \$500 bond each. Martinoli, Bassetti and Strozi were all officers in the Association.¹⁴¹

The deaths of the Italians at Fish Creek was not a matter which excited concern only in Nevada. The Italians of San Francisco also became very concerned about the fate of their countrymen across the Sierras. The city numbered some 2,491 Italians among its population in 1879, the largest concentration in the West at that time.¹⁴² The press of the bay city did not carry any stories on the troubles in Eureka until the shooting at Fish Creek. On August 20 both the *Chronicle* and the *Daily Alta Californian* carried accounts of the incident and the latter commented editorially that the circumstances seemed to indicate that the Italians were unarmed and had expected no trouble.¹⁴³

On August 25 both journals reported an "indignation meeting" held by the city's Italians the previous Saturday, August 23, in the Fifteenth District courtroom. The purpose of the meeting was to consider what action should be taken in regards to the recent events in Eureka. One Henri Casanova was elected chairman by the group and Messrs. Galli, Autoldi, Splivalo and Maccory spoke on the question at hand. The prevailing opinion among the group, reported the *Chronicle*, seemed to be that the Eureka Italians had been unfairly dealt with by the authorities. A committee of five men was appointed to have the affair investigated. It was authorized to employ legal counsel and a subscription was opened to defray all expenses. According to the *Daily Alta Californian*, a sub-committee was appointed to proceed to Eureka to carry out an on-the-spot investigation.¹⁴⁴

The people of Eureka, or at least the editors of the *Sentinel*, did not take kindly to the actions of the San Franciscans. Referring to the meeting as "a ridiculous effusion of bombast and bravado," the *Sentinel* reminded the Californians that the laws of Nevada were framed for the purpose of protecting both native and foreign-born citizens ". . . in all the rights that belong to them as individuals or citizens." Nevada justice, the journal declared, would not be influenced by any threats, open or implied, coming from San Francisco or any other quarter.¹⁴⁵

Nothing more was heard of the supposed investigating committee, but the Italian Consul and Vice-Consul did come to Eureka on August 28. The Consul, Signor DeBarrellis, stated that he was acting under instructions from the Italian Minister in Washington but it is entirely possible that he had been prevailed upon by San Francisco's Italians. Shortly after their arrival in Eureka, DeBarrellis and Signor Socchi, the Vice-Consul advised the Italians to refrain from any unlawful acts and assured them that the whole affair would be fully investigated.¹⁴⁶

On the morning of August 29 a number of Eureka Italians conferred with the officials at the Jackson House and superintendent Rickard invited the men to visit the Richmond mine and the smelting furnaces, an invitation which they accepted that afternoon. In the evening they dined with Rickard and Donnelly, the manager of the Eureka Consolidated, and discussed the coal troubles. The *Sentinel* reported that the officials were already informed of the causes that had led to the conflict and that there was little doubt that an amicable settlement of the whole affair would soon be reached.¹⁴⁷

On August 30 a meeting was held with Sheriff Kyle in Lambert Molinelli's office. The *Sentinel* reported that Kyle stated the case plainly and forcefully and, while expressing regret about the deaths, claimed that his officers could not have acted differently under the circumstances.¹⁴⁸

The editors of the *Sentinel* expressed much admiration for the judicious manner in which DeBarrellis was carrying out his investigation. His visit had reportedly done much to lessen the bitterness on the part of all parties concerned. The Consul met with the officers of the Burners Association on August 31 and advised them to desist from further acts of violence and to abide by the decisions of the recognized officers of the law. The Consuls departed for San Francisco the following day.¹⁴⁹ Whether or not they reported their findings to the city's Italians is not known as neither the *Chronicle* nor the *Daily Alta Californian* followed up on the story.

The advice of the Italian Consul to the officers of the Burners' Association was unnecessary inasmuch as word had gone out on August 24 to cease all actions against those loading and hauling charcoal. On August 28 attorney Hillhouse announced that there would be no further stoppages and that the burners would seek to achieve their objectives through lawful means.¹⁵⁰

The preliminary hearing for the officers charged with murder began on September 1. The first witness called was Joseph Lucca, a burner who had been at Fish Creek on the day of the shooting. Lucca did not understand English so an interpreter had to be called. He declared that Marshall Rich had fired the first shot and that none of the Italians fired at all. He further stated that the officers fired for three-quarters of an hour before stopping. Another burner, Dominico Quadro, supported Lucca in declaring that the officers fired the first shot. He said that the Italians took to their heels and did not return the fire.¹⁵¹

Quadro was arrested the next day at the insistence of officers Toomey and Martin who charged that he had fired five shots at them during the Fish Creek fight.¹⁵² The testimony of September 2 went slowly because of the necessity of using an interpreter. Negrini Guisippi testified as to the positions occupied by the officers during the shootings and said he saw Bob Brown shoot Pattini after general firing had commenced. Asked who fired the first shot, Guisippi professed not to know, but said that he did not hear any Italians shoot at any time. Giacomina Ceressi said he was

carrying an unloaded shotgun at the time but did not load or fire it. When asked if others in his party at Fish Creek fired their weapons, Ceressi said he did not know.¹⁵³

In commenting upon the testimony thus far given, the editors of the *Sentinel* expressed some doubt that the officers fired for the length of time stated. The editors believed that they would not have made themselves targets for that length of time and, if they had, they would have killed more than five Italians.¹⁵⁴

On the third day of the hearing Gregorio Marconi, whom Rich said had drawn a pistol on him and struck his horse, testified that the officers did all of the shooting and that, at one point, Rich had had him on his knees threatening to kill him, but was restrained by Deputy Simpson. He also said the officers kept up the shooting for thirty or thirty-five minutes. Upon leaving the stand he was arrested on a charge of perjury and lodged in the county jail in default of \$1,000 bail.¹⁵⁵

Marconi was followed on the stand by Guiseppi Gaspari and Eunice Pedroni, the latter being the first to testify who understood English. Both men identified Rich as the officer who fired the first shot and both said that Rich killed Pattini and Brown killed Giovanni Pedroni, the brother of Eunice.¹⁵⁶ The *Sentinel* of September 5 reported that the prosecution had four more witnesses, but it was decided to conclude the examination on the afternoon of the fifth. Further proceedings were to be postponed until October 1 unless the Grand Jury settled the matter before that time. The officers were to remain free on bail until the case was disposed of.¹⁵⁷

The report of the Grand Jury was made public on September 5, some three weeks later. The charges against the Italians arrested for perjury at the officer's hearing were dismissed as was the charge of murder against the officers. The charges against the twenty burners were also dismissed without comment.¹⁵⁸ The opinion of the Grand Jury marked a fitting end to the Eureka coal troubles. Said the report:

In view of the occurrences connected with and incident upon what is commonly known as the Italian War, the Grand Jury regards this as a proper occasion for expressing their entire approval of the action of the Sheriff's posse in their determination to enforce the law at all hazards, and while the unfortunate result of this determination on the part of the said officers must be regretted by every good citizen, yet, if such results are the consequences of demonstrating the power of the people, represented by their legal officers, to protect themselves in the free enjoyment and disposal of their property as to each seems best, then all acts on the part of individuals, or organized bodies of men, which in any way contravene or interfere with the rights guaranteed by the law to each citizen, must be considered and regarded as acts to be resisted, even if death is the inevitable result.

John E. Plater
Foreman

Max Oberfelder
Secretary¹⁵⁹

No reason was given for the dismissal of the charges against the charcoal burners. Certainly there was sufficient evidence to bring them to trial. Neither the *Sentinel* nor the *Leader* commented upon the report and popular interest in the whole matter seemed to die out. Perhaps the Grand Jury and the officials of the county felt that it was best to put an end to the whole thing rather than string out the bitterness in a series of trials lasting several months. Except for an occasional notice that a teamster was suing an individual burner for damages in connection with the stoppages,¹⁶⁰ the matter was never mentioned in the Eureka press again. The final comment on the coal troubles came on October 31 when the *Sentinel* noticed that Eureka's Italians were receiving many letters from Italy. The journal speculated that news of the coal war had just reached there and that perhaps the Italians were inquiring about friends and relatives in Eureka.¹⁶¹

AFTERMATH

As to whether the burners were able to raise the price of charcoal, this writer could find little information. Hubert Howe Bancroft stated that the price was subsequently reduced to twenty-two cents a bushel, but gave no reference for the fact.¹⁶² The Reports of the State Mineralogist and the Surveyor General indicated the amount of charcoal consumed by the furnaces in later years but made no mention of prices. Whether the burners continued to be victimized by the teamsters and merchants of Eureka is not known.

The Eureka District, along with other mining areas of Nevada, entered a severe decline in the eighties and nineties from which it never recovered. The ruins of the smelting furnaces can be seen in Eureka today and the old charcoal pits could probably be found in the mountains around Eureka if one searched for them.

The burners themselves have been enshrouded by history, but their descendents live on in the Eureka area today. Some of the other figures in the dispute went on to achieve some note in history. Governor Kinkead later became the Territorial Governor of Alaska, the only man to ever hold the office of state Governor and Territorial Governor. Lieutenant Governor Adams, the State Adjutant General at the time the militia was activated, became Governor in 1883 and served until 1886. Reinhold Sadler, the owner of one of the companies engaged in hauling charcoal in Eureka, became Governor of the state in 1898 and served until 1902. Sheriff Mathew Kyle was defeated as a Republican candidate for Surveyor General in 1914 and, at the time of his death in 1922, was the Director of the Nevada School of Industry at Elko. A. M. Hillhouse, the attorney for the burners, became Reno's Chief of Police in the early 1920's.

The burners were not the only immigrants involved in the Eureka coal war. Sheriff Kyle was born in Ireland and Deputy Simpson in England.

Constable F. O. Gorman had emigrated to Nevada in 1865 from Australia and Reinhold Sadler was born in Germany.¹⁶³

The members of the Second Brigade, many of whom were probably immigrants, served without pay during the troubles. General Sabine, who had much admiration for them, said their service was rendered "... from a sense of duty as soldiers and citizens. . . ."¹⁶⁴ The only expense incurred by the state was a small fee for the transportation of arms and ammunition to Eureka and a bill for \$344.50 payable to Nick Millich for food provided to the militiamen who remained on duty at the armory rather than going home for meals.¹⁶⁵

It is difficult to say who was responsible for the bloodshed at Fish Creek. The burners' version seems most plausible and consistent and the lawmen seemed to be in some disagreement with each other as to what happened. Whether the lawmen planned to shoot a few Italians to teach the others a lesson is outside the realm of history, but it is not unlikely that such a thought passed through the minds of all of them on occasion. The same might very well be true for the Italians. Given this state of mind on both sides, and the tense situation surrounding the meeting at Fish Creek, the shooting was not surprising, however regrettable it might be.

FOOTNOTES

1. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Sixth Session (1873), Report of the State Mineralogist, pp. 67-68.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 67; cf. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado and Wyoming, 1540-1888*, Vol. 20: *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1890), p. 283.

3. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Sixth Session (1873), Report of the State Mineralogist, pp. 69-70.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Nell Murbarger, "Forgotten Industry of the Frontier," *Frontier Times*, Vol. 39, No. 3, New Series 36 (April-May, 1965), pp. 26-27, 58-60.

6. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Ninth Session (1879), Report of the State Mineralogist, pp. 27-28.

7. *Ibid.*, Report of the Surveyor General and State Land Registrar, pp. 27-28; Murbarger, "Forgotten Industry of the Frontier," p. 27.

8. Murbarger, "Forgotten Industry of the Frontier," p. 27.

9. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Seventh Session (1875), Report of the State Mineralogist, pp. 35-36; Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Ninth Session (1879), Report of the Surveyor General and State Land Registrar, p. 7; *Ibid.*, Report of the State Mineralogist, p. 27.

10. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Sixth Session (1873), Report of the State Mineralogist, pp. 35-36; *Ibid.*, Ninth Session (1879), Report of the State Mineralogist, p. 28.

11. *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 2, 1879, 3:1.

12. Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado and Wyoming*, pp. 281-84; Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Seventh Session (1875), Report of the State Mineralogist, pp. 67-68.

13. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Seventh Session (1875), Report of the State Mineralogist, p. 68.

14. George Bourgin, "Carbonari," in Edwin R. A. Seligman and Alvin Johnson, eds., *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930), pp. 220-23.

15. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Ninth Session (1879), Report of the State Mineralogist, p. 27.

16. *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 2, 1879, 3:1.

17. United States, Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census* (June 1, 1880), Table XIII, pp. 494-95, Table XIV, p. 520.

18. United States Secretary of the Interior, *Population of the United States in 1860*, Table 5, p. 565.

19. United States Secretary of the Interior, *Population of the United States for the Year 1870*, Table VI, pp. 340-41; Table I, p. 4; Table VI, p. 342.

20. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Vol. II, Eighth Session (1877), Census of the Inhabitants of the State of Nevada, pp. 231-390.

21. United States Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census* (June 1, 1880), Table XIII, pp. 494-95; Table XIV, p. 520.

22. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 22, 1879, 3:3; Giornici, Switzerland; Mozzio, Italy; San Fellipo, Italy; Villa de Chiavenna, Italy; Corte Ciasea, Switzerland.

23. Murbarger, "Forgotten Industry of the Frontier," p. 26; cf. Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado and Wyoming*, p. 285; James Graves Scrugham, *Nevada: A Narrative of the Conquest of a Frontier Land*, Vol. I (Chicago: The American Historical Society Inc., 1935), p. 320.

24. John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*, (New York: Atheneum Books, 1965), pp. 30-32, 45-52, 58-67.

25. Norman J. Ware, *The Labor Movement in the United States, 1860-1895* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1929), *passim*; Richard B. Morris (ed.), *Encyclopedia of American History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), pp. 454-55, 550-52.

26. *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 2, 1879, 3:1.

27. Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado and Wyoming*, pp. 284-85; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 8, 1879, 3:2, August 10, 1879, 3:3, August 15, 1879, 3:3.

28. Nevada State Legislature, *Journal of the Assembly*, Ninth Session (1879), pp. 98, 239, 255; *Journal of the Senate*, Ninth Session (1879), pp. 138-39, 183, 207, 213; Nevada, *Statutes of the State of Nevada Passed at the Ninth Session of the Legislature* (1879), Chapter XLI, p. 50.

29. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 7, 1879, 3:3.

30. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 8, 1879, 3:2.

31. *Ibid.*, July 8, 1879, 3:2, July 9, 1879, 3:2; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 9, 1879, 3:2.

32. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 9, 1879, 2:4.

33. Murbarger, "Forgotten Industry of the Frontier," p. 27.

34. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 16, 1879, 3:3.

35. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Ninth Session (1879), Report of the State Mineralogist, p. 27.

36. *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 2, 1879, 3:1.

37. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 16, 1879, 3:3.

38. *Ibid.*, August 8, 1879, 3:2.

39. United States Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census* (June 1, 1880), Table IX, p. 452.

40. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 17, 1879, 3:5.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 18, 1879, 3:2.
43. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 22, 1879, 3:3.
44. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 18, 1879, 3:2; July 26, 1879, 3:2.
45. *Ibid.*, July 18, 1879, 3:3.
46. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 19, 1879, 3:2, July 20, 1879, 2:4.
47. *Ibid.*, July 20, 1879, 3:2.
48. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 21, 1879, 3:2; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 22, 1879, 3:2.
49. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 23, 1879, 3:2.
50. *Ibid.*, July 21, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 22, 1879, 3:2.
51. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 23, 1879, 3:4.
52. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 23, 1879, 2:4.
53. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 24, 1879, 3:2.
54. *Eureka Daily Leader*, July 25, 1879, 3:2.
55. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, July 24, 1879, 2:4.
56. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 4, 1879, 3:2; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 5, 1879, 3:4.
57. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 5, 1879, 3:2.
58. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 6, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 5, 1879, 3:2.
59. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 6, 1879, 3:3.
60. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 6, 1879, 3:5.
61. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 7, 1879, 3:2.
62. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 7, 1879, 3:2; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 8, 1879, 3:3.
63. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 8, 1879, 3:2.
64. *Ibid.*, August 9, 1879, 3:3.
65. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 9, 1879, 3:2; August 10, 1879, 3:3.
66. *Ibid.*, August 10, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 11, 1879, 2:1.
67. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 9, 1879, 3:4.
68. *Ibid.*, August 10, 1879, 3:3.
69. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 11, 1879, 3:2.
70. *Ibid.*, August 11, 1879, 3:3-4.
71. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 11, 1879, 3:3-4.
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*
74. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 12, 1879, 3:2.
75. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 12, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 12, 1879, 3:2.
76. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 11, 1879, 3:3-4.
77. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 11, 1879, 3:3-4.
78. *Ibid.*, August 12, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 13, 1879, 3:2.
79. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 11, 1879, 3:3-4; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 13, 1879, 3:2.
80. "Mob Law At Eureka," *Morning Appeal* (Carson City), August 12, 1879, 3:2.
81. Bancroft, *History of Nevada, California and Wyoming*, p. 284; Scrugham, *Nevada*, Vol. 1, p. 320.
82. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 12, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 12, 1879, 2:1.
83. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 12, 1879, 3:2.
84. *Ibid.*, August 13, 1879, 3:2.
85. *Ibid.*
86. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 13, 1879, 3:2; *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 13, 1879, 3:2.
87. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 14, 1879, 3:2.
88. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 13, 1879, 3:2.

89. *Ibid.*, August 14, 1879, 3:3.
90. *Ibid.*, August 15, 1879, 3:2.
91. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 15, 1879, 3:2; August 16, 1879, 3:3. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 15, 1879, 3:3.
92. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 15, 1879, 3:4.
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid.*, August 13, 1879, 3:2.
95. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 16, 1879, 3:3.
96. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 16, 1879, 3:4.
97. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 15, 1879, 3:3.
98. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 16, 1879, 3:3.
99. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Eighth Session (1877), Census of the Inhabitants of the State of Nevada, Vol. I, p. 259.
100. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 17, 1879, 3:2.
101. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 16, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 18, 1879, 3:2.
102. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 18, 1879, 3:5.
103. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 19, 1879, 3:2.
104. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 19, 1879, 3:2.
105. *Ibid.*
106. *Ibid.*, August 19, 1879, 3:2; August 20, 1879, 3:2; August 22, 1879, 3:3.
107. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 19, 1879, 3:2.
108. *Ibid.*, August 19, 1879, 3:1; August 20, 1879, 3:2.
109. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 20, 1879, 2:1.
110. "Bloodshed at Eureka," *Gold Hill Daily News*, August 20, 1879, 2:1.
111. "The Italian Version," *Virginia Chronicle*, August 21, 1879, 2:6.
112. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 21, 1879, 3:2.
113. "The Coal-Burners Massacre," *Daily Alta Californian*, August 31, 1879, 1:5.
114. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 21, 1879, 3:3.
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116. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 20, 1879, 3:4.
117. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 21, 1879, 3:3.
118. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Tenth Session (1881), First Biennial Message of John H. Kinkade, Governor of Nevada, delivered to the Legislature January 4, 1881, pp. 3-4.
119. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 20, 1879, 3:5.
120. "Shooting Strikers," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 20, 1879, 2:3; "A Fight With the Coal Burners," *Daily Alta Californian*, August 20, 1879, 2:3.
121. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 20, 1879, 3:4.
122. *Ibid.*, August 21, 1879, 3:2.
123. *Ibid.*, August 20, 1879, 3:4.
124. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 20, 1879, 3:2.
125. *Ibid.*
126. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 20, 1879, 3:2.
127. *Ibid.*
128. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 21, 1879, 3:3.
129. *Ibid.*, August 21, 1879, 3:3-4; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 21, 1879, 3:2.
130. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 22, 1879, 3:3.
131. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 21, 1879, 3:4.
132. *Ibid.*
133. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 24, 1879, 3:4.
134. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 22, 1879, 3:2.

135. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 22, 1879, 3:3.
 136. *Ibid.*
 137. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 23, 1879, 3:4.
 138. *Ibid.*, August 25, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 26, 1879, 3:2.
 139. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 25, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 26, 1879, 3:2.
 140. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 26, 1879, 3:3.
 141. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 27, 1879, 3:2-3.
 142. United States Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Compendium of the Tenth Census* (June 1, 1880), Part I, Table XVI, pp. 540-41.
 143. "Shooting Strikers," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 20, 1879, 2:2; "A Fight With the Coal Burners," *Daily Alta Californian*, August 20, 1879, 2:3; "The Slaughter at Fish Creek," *Ibid.*, August 20, 1879, 2:2.
 144. "The Eureka Charcoal War, Indignation Meeting of Italian Citizens Yesterday," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 25, 1879, 3:4. "The Killing of the Italians in Eureka," *Daily Alta Californian*, August 25, 1879, 1:1.
 145. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 26, 1879, 2:2-3.
 146. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 29, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 31, 1879, 3:3.
 147. *Eureka Daily Leader*, August 29, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 30, 1879, 3:2.
 148. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 31, 1879, 3:3.
 149. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, August 31, 1879, 3:3.
 150. *Ibid.*, August 24, 1879, 3:4; August 28, 1879, 3:2.
 151. *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 2, 1879, 3:2; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, September 2, 1879, 3:2.
 152. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, September 3, 1879, 3:3.
 153. *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 3, 1879, 3:2.
 154. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, September 3, 1879, 3:3.
 155. *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 4, 1879, 3:3.
 156. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, September 5, 1879, 3:2.
 157. *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 5, 1879, 3:3; *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, September 5, 1879, 3:2.
 158. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, September 26, 1879, 3:2; August 19, 1879, 3:4; *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 25, 1879, 3:3. The following men were named in the report.
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|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Andre de Boricco | G. Rodono | J. Gorgita |
| D. Cardocco | Severino Strozi | R. Guiseppi |
| Luigi Pricola | J. Bassetti | D. Batista |
| Giovanni Cisorola | V. Antoine | Pardo Bianca |
| Garcia Defendenta | Bironda Antoine | Tomaso Pajorla |
| Guisippi Martinoli | Jacomo Geni | Guiseppi Winkelreid |
| C. Rosetti | | G. B. Cordino |
159. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, September 26, 1879, 3:2; *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 25, 1879, 3:3.
 160. *Eureka Daily Leader*, September 16, 1879, 3:2, September 17, 1879, 3:2, September 29, 1879, 3:3.
 161. *Eureka Daily Sentinel*, October 31, 1879, 3:2.
 162. Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado and Wyoming*, p. 285.
 163. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Vol. II, Eighth Session (1877), Census of the Inhabitants of the State of Nevada, pp. 287, 367; Myron Angel (ed.), *History of the State of Nevada* (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958), p. 669.
 164. Nevada State Legislature, *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, Tenth Session (1881), Biennial Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Nevada: Report of the Brigade Commandant, p. 24.
 165. *Ibid.*



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