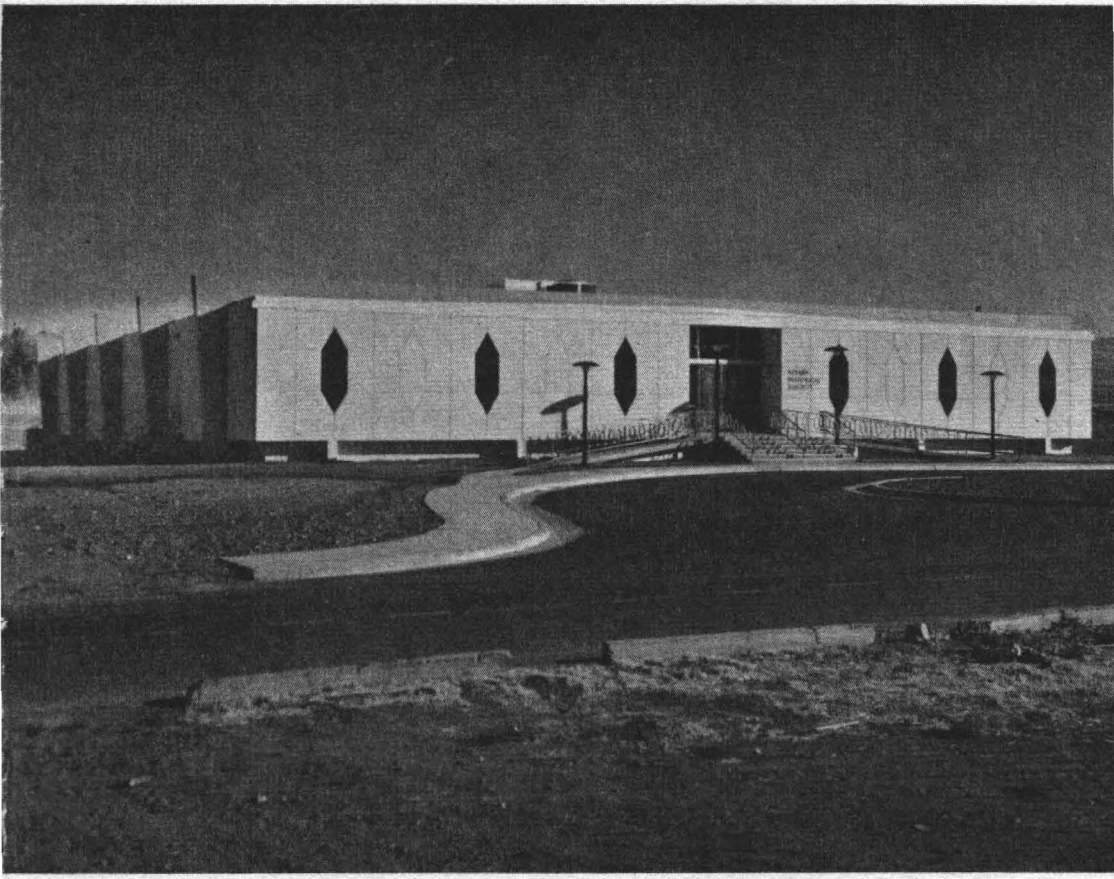
NEVADA Historical Society Quarterly



Spring · 1970

The Nevada Historical Society was founded in 1904 for the purpose of investigating topics pertaining to the early history of Nevada and of collecting relics for a museum. The Society maintains a library and museum at its Reno facility where historical materials of many kinds are on display to the public and are available to students and scholars.

Membership dues are: annual, $5; student, $3; sustaining, $25; life, $100; and patron, $250. Membership applications and dues should be sent to the director.

Correspondence concerning articles in the *Quarterly* and manuscripts to be considered for publication should be addressed to the editor. The Society assumes no responsibility for statements made by contributors.

NEVADA
Historical Society Quarterly

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Contents

THE COVER

The recently completed quarters of the Nevada Historical Society.

The *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* is published by the Nevada Historical Society, P.O. Box 1129, Reno, Nevada 89504. It is distributed without charge to members of the Society; single issues, when available, may be purchased for $1.50. Orders for changes of address should be addressed to the Society.

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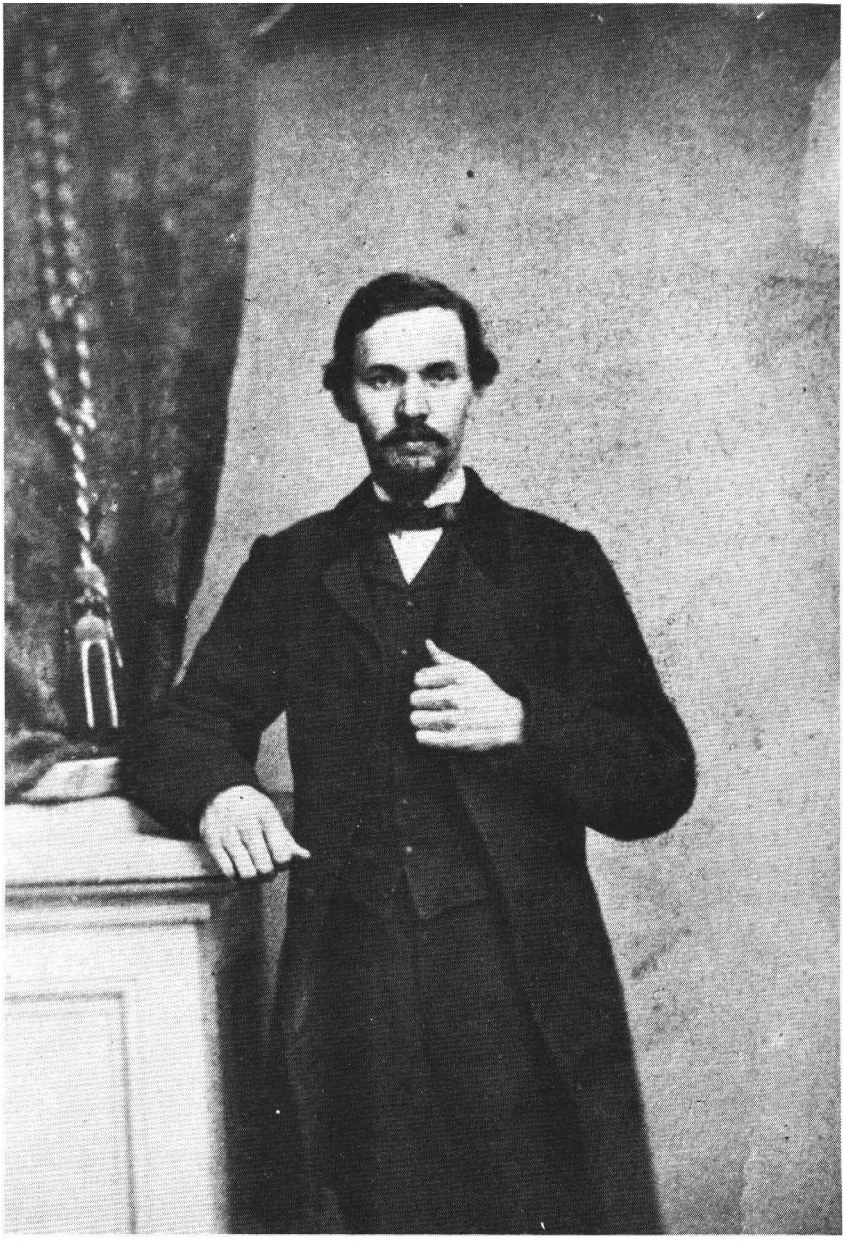
Introduction to the Yager Journals

OCCASIONALLY ONE HISTORICAL publication leads directly to another. In 1963 the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* published three items relating to the so-called "Maiden's Grave" near Beowawe (Vol. VI, No. 3–4, Fall-Winter, 1963). There were uncertainties and contradictory accounts about Lucinda Duncan, the young lady who was presumably buried in this isolated spot more than a century ago, and the *Quarterly's* efforts to ascertain the facts did not provide answers to all the questions. The publication of these items did, however, have an unexpected side effect: it brought the Society a remarkable journal that proves beyond doubt Lucinda Duncan was not a young girl but a highly respected grandmother!

One reader of that issue of the *Quarterly* was Carlisle F. Smith, a resident of Knoxville, Illinois. He first sent copies of pages from his grandfather's diary proving our version of the story to be correct. The Society was offered the opportunity to publish the complete diary of James Pressley Yager, who crossed the plains in 1863. Yager was a native of Kentucky, born February 21, 1834, and he wrote one of the few descriptions of Nevada that are available for the Territorial period. He was more alert than most emigrants and he saw several Nevada communities only a few years after the discovery of the Comstock Lode. The editors of the *Quarterly* have decided that his journals are worthy of publication in installments.

The editors are grateful to Mr. Smith and to his sister, Agnes Lee Smith, for sharing these pages with our readers. They are also pleased that Professor E. W. Harris, emeritus faculty member of the engineering college of the University of Nevada, has consented to supply notes and commentary for this publication. Dr. Harris, a native Nevadan, is an expert on the emigrant trails; all four of his grandparents crossed the plains in the 1850s or early 1860s and settled in Dayton, and he has made the study of the trails a lifelong project.



James Pressley Yager

1863

Diary of a Journey Across the Plains

Part One

Wednesday April 22. 1863 Michael L Yager[1] & my self left Newton Gaars[2] three oclock in the evening in John Gaars carriage; three miles found us in Louisville Kentucky. Left Louisville fifteen minutes past eight after securing tickets, through to St. Joseph Mo. Through tickets twenty one dollars & fifty cents. Left Louisville in an omnibus, crossing the Ohio River on the ferry to Jeffersonville & then to the Indianapolis Depot. We left Jeffersonville on the cars ten oclock P.M. After runing fifteen miles we were stoped by a freight train that had run off of the track. Engine & two cars smashed & two or three persons hurt. We remained here untill the train going south came up when we changed trains & soon found ourselves going again.

Thursday 23. Arrived at Indianapolis ten oclock A.M. Missed connection. Put up at the Morris House near the Union Depot. Left Indianapolis eight oclock & fifteen minutes P.M. on the Indianapolis Terrehaut & St. Louis R. R. From Louisville Ky. to Indianapolis Ia one hundred & eight miles. Took the sleeping car.

Friday 24. Soon after geting up after a good nights sleep we found our train stoped at Viena, Illnois by the pasenger train going east off of the track. After making a track around the locomotive we passed it. Arrived at St. Louis nine A.M. By means of omnibus & ferry we was conveyed across the Mississippi River, from the depot in Illinoistown or East St. Louis to the city of St. Louis & to the Keokuck & St. Louis packet After securing rooms washing & brushing we took a walk through the city Four oclock P.M. our boat shoved off. At Alton Ill. opposite the mouth of the Missouri River at sun down

Saturday 25. We arrived at Hanibald Mo. eight oclock A.M. From Indianapolis to St Louis two sixty two miles. From St. Louis to Hanibal one hundred & fifty miles. Left Hanibal nine A.M. on the Hanibal & St Joe R. R. Took dinner at Brookfield or Macon city at the junction of the North Missouri R. R. Broke two engines one soon after leaving Macon City & one forty five miles from Macon City.

Sunday 26: Arrived at St. Joe.[3] nine oclock A.M. behind time We went amediatly to the steamer Emily & secured pasage for Nebaska City,[4] after which we took a look around St Joe. From Hanibal to St. Jo Mo. is two hundred & six miles.

Monday 27. Left St. Joe. eight oclock A.M. on the "Emily"

Wednesday 29. After two days on the Missouri River laying up every night, we arrived at Nebraska City Nebraska Teritory ten oclock this morning. Finding conveyance for our bagage we walked up to the Cincinnati House kept by Mr. Hamlin. On the wharf is calle Karney City on the hill is the main town called Nebraska City. St Joe to N. City 178 miles.

May

Friday 14th Two hours before sun set we left Nebraska City going three miles & camped. Many other wagons were camped near by. I called on Mr..... & Mrs..... on our way out; relations of ours.

Friday 15th Camped on a little creek about eighteen miles from Nebraska City. Saw some prarie chickens late in the evening, the first we had seen. Mike shot at one of them.

Saturday 16. Camped about forty miles from Nebraska City. Morris shot at a prarie chicken.

Sunday 17. Camp Salt Creek.[5] We drove ten miles before breakfast to water wood & good grass, camping at the foot of a hill near a bridge. We had milk for breakfast the first since we left the states.

Camp Had of Beaver Creek Wednesday 20. Passed over some pretty rolling prarie & left the road to our left in order to find water, which we found in the head of Beaver Creek, but only in holes, but in sufficient quantities for our purposes. The mules strayed off while runing loose before dark, & gave us a little trouble to find them.

Thursday 21. Last night was quite blustery. We halted for dinner to day at the junction of our road (the "cut off)" with the old Nebraska City & Platt River Road. Quite a number of mud or doby[6] houses in this vacinity. The country passed over to day was mostly level All the land or the most of it, that we have seen thus far is rich & good land for cultivation. The soil is black & deep & at this season is covered with young grass. To night we camped for the first time on Platt River. Our camp is ten miles from where we entered the river bottom. The wind has lulled & a thunder storm is threatening.

Camp Sober Whiskey Friday 22. We had a thunder storm last night. It rained for several hours this morning. Verry cool. Our camp is near a ranch called Sober Whiskey twelve miles from Fort Karney,[7] on the river bottom. Our rout to day has been up the river bottom

Saturday 23. We halted a short while in Valley City, a little vilage, all the houses doby or sod but the hotel. It is nine miles from Ft Karney. The St. Jo. Achison & Leavenworth City road joins our road here. We passed Ft. Karney about ten oclock in the morning & nooned in Karney City or Doby Town as it is nick named on acount of the houses being mostly doby. Karney City is about a mile & a half from the fort. Five miles more & we camped for night.

Plum Creek Sunday 24. We nooned twenty four miles from Ft Kareny. While at dinner an antelope came galloping around our camp with a couple of men on horse back after him. We are now camped on Plum Creek near its junction with the Platt, thirty five miles from Fort Karney.

Camp Sue Monday 25. About siven miles from Plum Creeke was passed a large camp of Sue[8] indians on the right of the road. They had tents made of buffalo hides. Some of them came up to the road side and spoke to us. They would with a coars "how" hold out their hands which we received with reciprical "how" One of them asked me for tobacco in broken english, which I gave him. We are now twenty five miles from Plum Creek.

Tuesday 26. We are now camped about twelve miles below Cotten Wood Springs. This morning we met a party of Sues, men & squaws, on horse back & a foot. They had their "lodg poles" fastened on their ponys sides with the ends draging on the ground; on these poles behind the ponys the squaws & paposes rode, they also had their tent skins & other things lashed to the poles. They also had a dog geared up in the same manner carrying some article. These poles, after they get to the end of their journey or when they stop, they set up & spread buffalo skins over making a round tent or a "lodg" as the fronteer men say We are now in the Sue country. The most of the indians are naked with the exception of a robe drawn around their shoulders, some of them are partialy clothed with old cloths that was given or traded to them by the whites. One probably with a shirt alone, another with an old pair of pants, another with a coat & c. We passed a camp of indians this evening also a prarie dog town. The prarie dogs are very watchful & when any one is approaching their towns they set up a hollowing & scamper for their holes.

Fremonts Slough Wednesday 27. We passed Cotten Wood Springs[9] about nine oclock this morning. At this point or near the spring are a few houses, a post office also. I stoped & drank at the spring which was a verry common spring. We nooned five miles a bove Cottenwood Springs. We next came to the forks of the Platt[10] & to Jack Marrows ranch. Near the ranch on the opposite side of the road is several indian graves. The boddies were wraped up in skins or blankets & laid upon skaffolds built upon four forks. It is called ninty four miles from Jack Marrows to Julesburg.[11] We went on to Fremonts Slough & camped

Fremont Springs Thursday 28. About eleven miles above Jack Marrows we passed a camp of Sues. We saw four antelope this morning We nooned one half mile below O'Fallons Bluffs, & four miles below the O'Fafallons Bluff post office, & two miles a bove Fremont Springs.

Evening. We are camped about fifteen miles below Alkli Station. At O'Fallons Bluffs[12] we left the river & ascended to the sumit of the Bluffs, the river comeing so near the bluffs as to prevent a road from comeing between. At the uper end of the bluffs we decended to the river bottom again. The water on the Platt is more or less alkli.[13] It can be easily tasted

from the wells, & where ever it is found in ponds or sloughs it is poisonous to man or beast. Near Jack Marrows is the junction of the Plats.[14]

Friday 29th We nooned about two miles below Alkli Station. We are now camped fifteen miles above Alkli Station at a large spring. Near us, just below a train of Missourians are camped.

Saturday 30. We saw the first jack rabit we saw on the trip this evening. Roads very fine untill late in the evening. We are now camped nine miles below Julesburg.

Camp South Platt Sunday 31. We got to Julesburg about nine in the morning. Roads bad on account of sand & deep gullys; the sand in the gullys being deep. A great deal of prickly pear on each side of the road. Here we crossed the south fork of the Platt or the South Platt as it is called.[15]

The ford is shallow but the bottom being quick sand made it hard pulling. It is straining on a waggon; the sinking of the wheels in the sand gave the wagon a jaring motion.[16] Julesburg consisting of three or four houses is more name than town. We had our wagon drawn across by four yoke of oxen. They broke a chain twice before they got over. After we got across we went up the river two miles and camped in the bottom on a little creek. A small train was camped at the same place. I saw an antelope & tried to get a shoot at it as I went up.

Monday June 1st. I killed a rattle snake this morning with a shot gun while trying to catch fish & kill ducks in the little creek.

Camp Lodge Pole Creek,[17] *Evening.* We left the Platt about noon going diagonaly down the river passing over a wide bottom which was covered with prickly pear many of which was in bloom. They have a yellow bloom. Saw four antelope. We got in to the Fort Larima road and traveling up that several miles we camped at our present camping place on a small creek. Here we joined a train of eighteen wagons the same train we camped near last Friday night.

Lodge Pole Creek Again Tuesday 2. We left our late camp this morning arriving at this point about ten oclock in the morning, when we "laid over" for the womin to wash. I spent most of the day fishing, both morning & evening catching enough in the twice going, for a small mess for our "shebang" as the fronteer men say; for our "mess", better to be understood.

Wednesday 3. We are yet at the same place. I spent most of the day fishing. I fished in a beaver dam most of the time. The dam was well built of brush & mud. The brush had the appearance of being cut off with a dull hatchet leaving stubs a few inches high along the bank of the creek in the vacinity of the dam. I did not have much luck fishing to day. I saw one antelope this morning. The wind has raised & is now blowing hard.

Crossing of Pole Creek Thursday 4. We are now camped at the crossing of Pole Creek Leaving our late camp we followed up the creek on the

same side (the right hand) that we have been traveling since leaving the Platt at no great distance from the creek at any time to this point. We are now forty miles from Julesburg. A great deal of prickly pear on the rout to this point. I saw one antelope to day. We passed through several prarie dog towns to day. We had rain last night.

Mud Springs Friday 5. We are camped to night at Mud Springs twenty six miles from the crossing of Pole Creek. The country amediatly in the vacinity of Mud Springs is high rolling prarie farther off more broken, cliffs of rock crowning the points & breaks of hills. The rock that we have seen since leaving Pole Creek is white like lime & has the appearance of having been melted & cooled in many shapes. Some of it is soft & other parts hard as flint. It has the appearance of a volcanic eruption or what I suppose a volcanic eruption looks like. There are a few scattering trees on some of these hills. I saw five antelope & one wolf to day. I shot at two of the antelope with my pistole but missed. They were runing at the time. We dined to day at a deep well that is said to be two hundred feet deep. There was no water in the well. The person who dug it inted[18] to build a ranch here, but failing to git water did not build. We have not seen a ranch since leaving Julesburg up to this point, nothing but the crumbleing remains of two or three old ranches. There is a telegraph station & an indian hut here.

Saturday Noon 6. We are now halted two or three miles beyond Court House[19] Rock for dinner. The country we have been passing over is rolling and sandy. The greatest curiosity I have seen to day or during the trip is Court House Rock, which the "forty niners" & other early emigrants recollect. It is very high & can be seen a long distance. Some of our train saw it yesterday about noon. I did not see it untill in the evening. We got to it about noon to day. I & several others took a jaunt to its sumit. It has several benches getting smaller as we approached the top. From one bench to the next higher we had to climb up by nitches cut in the side of the rock. The top is flat. From the top we could see the North Platt, a long silvery sheat before us, a little crooked creek behind us, to our left the towering Chimney Rock[20] looking like a monument in the distance, & to the right the distant hills surrounding Mud Springs. There is another rock standing by it that looked like the base of a large foundry chimney from a a distance but when we got to it, a tall raged specimen it was. In the distance, Court House Rock looked like the Tower of Babel or an egyptian pyramid, but a rough looking thing when we got to it. They are both sand cemented or soft sand stone. Parts of the rocks are harder than others especially the top of Court House Rock. Any of it is soft enough to be cut with a knife. Names are cut where ever a human could get all over it I cut my name or the initials of my name in three places once on the top & twice on the front side. When we got to the top we fired our pistols. It is a strange specimen of nature standing out alone. How it got there is a question; the most reasonable answer is it was forced up by a convultion[21] of the earth when all this western country was turned upside down. It, no doubt was much larger than it is now an hundred years ago. It is waisting away as

time rolls on, by the action of the weather upon it. The country around it is nothing but loose sand with scattering bunches of sage brush & prarie grass, some parts is perfectly bare of vegetation.

Camp North Platt. The sun is three or four hours hight & we have at last arrived on the banks of the north fork of Platt River[22] or North Platt as it is called. We will remain at this point untill morning. We are about sixteen miles from Mud Springs. We started what is called the Court House Rock "CutOff", but the sand was so deep & wearid our teams so, that we left it several miles before it joined the old road, & made a bee-line as near as we could for the Platt. We gained several miles over the main road any way, We crossed a small creek just before we passed the rock. The road run about one and a half miles to the right of the rock. The country we have traveled over to day is rolling and nothing but sand, and the grass thin though green. I suppose there has been more rain in this part of the country than that we have been traveling over in the passed week. I saw a great deal of small sage today.

Chimney Rock. Sunday 7. We are now camped for dinner about two miles north of Chimney Rock on the Platt, the road runing between our camp & the rock. It is now raining & we are all in our wagons. Plez James & I went to Chimney Rock this morning. We commenced to ascend it on the east side and when we got to the highest point we could go we found our selves on the north side. Or rather Mr. James made the trip around ahead of me & returned meeting me & then started around in an opposite direction & I went around alone. I made the circumference of the chimney with the exception of a few yards. which did not admit of a foot holt. The rock goes up in the first place in the shape of a cone or pyramid & on the apex of the cone is the stem of the chimney a massive collum about two hundred feet high. It is about the same nature of Court House Rock & is cracked the whole length of its stem and must fall down some day. I have been told by persons who crossed the plains at an early day that the stem is not more than half as high as it was ten years ago, two hundred feet of it having fallen down. Great scales hang around it, that appear as if quite a light jar would cause to fall to the ground. I climed as high as any one with the exception of a few feet up the side of the stem. On a narrow shelf about two feet wide, the last shelf on which stands the stem of the chimney, I halted, two or three feet above my fartherest reach was a few weather beaten names, was all the traces of human above me, I almost dared to look down & involantarily clung to the wall of the chimney & when I looked up it appeared as if the chimney was topeling over on me, I gave the boys in the train, which was by this time passing slowly, a wave of my hat, a yell & a salute from my pistole, & feeling a little "tender footed" by this time I concluded to retrace my steps in search of a better foundation. The work of getting down was more dificult than the ascent. Having to go down backwards the steep sides, feeling for the nitches with my feet was not very pleasant when I knew if I lost my holt nothing but instant death would be the result. I soon got over the worst of the decent which found me on the top of the cone. Down the side of this

cone was comparatively an easy job though if I had have stumbled & fell the probability is I would have been killed as there would have been no stoping short of the bottom; I would have been badly bruzed at best. When I got around to the point wher I expected to find Mr. James I could find him no where. I hallowed for him, but go no answer; this was quite strange—something must be the matter. When I reached the base I found him He told me a scale had fallen off the stem while he was "prospecting" & he concluded he would make short work of it & return to where there was more room for dodging. There is a strata of white rock of finer sand that belts the cone.

Castle Rock Evening. We have camped for the night on the Platt about opposite Castle Rock.[23] It aught to have been called Capitol Rock from its resemblence to the capitol. It is probably five hundred feet high Chimney Rock is about the same, Court House Rock is not quite so high. Castle Rock has a peak on it in the shape of a dome. About a dozen of our boys have gone to the rock. It is about four miles from our camp. The boys will wish they had not started before they get back.

Monday 8. We are now halted about eight miles below Scotts Bluffs. We passed a telegraph station about two miles below this point, nine miles above Castle Rock & sixty five below Fort Laramie. We stoped at this point to prepare for a storm that was threatening

Tuesday 9. At the last point where I wrote, we were waiting for a storm; the storm went around & we continued on our way passing through a pass in Scotts Bluff.[24] These bluffs rise up very high [25] on both sides of the road. I do not think they have been ascended; several of our boys tried it but failed. Frome some cause the road had to leave the river[26] & pass through these bluffs While passing through the echo of the ox whips sounded like the shooting off of guns. One of the bluffs on the left as we entered the pass resembled a huge copper still. The two bluffs on each side of the main portion of the pass was caped with a kind of dome. On an eminence on the right at the uper end of the pass, which I ascended I could see five trains on the opposite side of the river. The ranchmen say there is five times as much travel on the opposite side of the river.[27] The road through the bluffs was quite uneven. Going about one mile from the bluffs we camped on the banks of the Platt near the remains of an old ranch. Such of the wood part of the ranch as was left we managed to get fire wood from, but with some dificulty for the emigrants before us had nearly used it all leaving only some stumps of posts. We are now about fifteen miles above Scotts Bluffs I saw twelve antelope to day, nine in one gang & three in another.

Wednesday 10. It is now night & we are camped about eight miles below Fort Laramie.[28] The most remarkable thing that I have seen in the last two or three days, which has not mentioned, is the depth the wind has blown out the road in places. Just before we got to Scotts Bluffs was a long place that the wind had blown out twenty feet deep & many other places, but not so deep, that I have seen I have seen mounds formed by

the wind. The indians are troublesome to night comeing around our camp beging & trading ther skins & mockasons for flour meat sugar old clothes & c. I saw several indian encampments to day on the river on both sides.

Camp Cotten Wood Tree Thursday 11th. We are now camped about three miles above Fort Laramie on the Platt. We passed several indian vilages[29] to day There wigwams are made of buffalo hides stretched over poles in the shape of a sibly[30] tent. I am now writing under the shade of a large spreading cottenwood tree which has been quite a rare thing as I have seen trees but seldom on this side of the river. We crossed Laramie Fork on a tole bridge & passed Fort Laramie about noon. The fort is situated on the west side of Laramies Fork about two miles above its junction with the Platt.[31] We crossed the fork about midway between the fort & the mouth of the creek The fort is a pretty military post having plenty of shade trees. We will remain at our present camp untill morning. I tried my hand at fishing in the Platt this evening. The river is very swift & it is necessary to have a heavy senker to my line. I did not have much luck, only catching one fish, a pickerel This morning we came in sight of Laramies Peak rather off to our left. It is said to be about sixty miles from the fort. There was many indians in the vacinity of the fort. One swam the Platt & came in to our camp compartively nakid this evening. We saw Shians & Laramies near the fort.

Camp Gates of Black Hills Friday 12. We are now camped for dinner just below where the Platt comes through the Black Hills as they are called We will leave the Platt here for a few miles We are now in a mountainous country, the bottoms on the Platt have become short & narrow & between these bottoms we will have to tug our way through heavy sand & over steep hills sometimes. About a mile back from this point, I saw what might be called a curiosity, the body of a dead indian all wraped in his red blanket & buffalo robe & laid up in the top of a spruce pine, to rest untill the Great Spirit called him to the land of deer & turkey.[32]

Camp Black Hills Saturday Morning 13. We are yet at our camp which was selected yesterday evening late. Yesterday evening was a heavy tug through sand & over hills. These hills are doted over with scrubby spruce or pitch pine & cedar We crossed Bitter Cotten Wood in the evening late, a creek whose bottom was now dry, though by going a quarter of a mile below the road water was found. We crossed the Bitter Cottenwood about a mile & a half above its junction with the Platt. The pass of the Platt through the Black Hills is quite romantic, in many places steep precipitous cliffs rise on each side, appearing as if the water had cut its way through. Several of these places could be seen from the road on the east hill of Bitter Cottenwood. The banks of Bitter Cottenwood is lined with cottenwood trees. About seventy yards from camp is a cool spring. Our camp is on a low place on the banks of a little crooked creek; all around us rise the hills. Low crooked cottenwood line the creek. We had a little trouble with our stock; our geting in late yesterday evening & having selected a camp that was rather scarce of grass, it was necessary to let the stock run

at large all night in order that they might get enough, & this morning they were very much scattered among the gulches & kanyons. We have seen a great deal of sage brush & not much grass since leaving Scotts Bluffs. Some of it is high, as much as four or five feet, but most of it is low; it looks & smells very much like tame sage. We had a little "chunk" of a fight in camp this morning, but nobody go much hurt.

Horse Shoe Creek, Noon. After having wound around and over hills & through kanyons & narrow valleys over rocky, sandy & good roads, some of each, we find our selves camped on the banks of Horse Shoe Creek. We came in sight of the creek four or five miles back, on our right but it was soon lost behind a hill. We probably would have camped there if there had been any grass convenient. We crossed the edge of the bottom on the creek & a dry creek & raised to the hills again, but the hills were low & easy of ascent. About two miles brought us to a fine spring of coald water, the best spring that I had seen since leaving the states. This was an unexpected and wecomed friend that we had found by the way side. Our train halted and every dusty pilgrim of us drank our fill, filled all of our kegs & jugs & then washed our dirty faces, "which you know is a rarety on the plains". Well, this is a fine camp for water, shade & sage brush but not very much for grass. We are now about thirty eight miles from Ft. Laramie.

Elk Creek,[33] *Monday 15th.* Morning—We have spent a good nights rest at this point. The cooks are now busy preparing breakfast. We camped the night before at "Box Alder Retreet" about a quarter of a mile above Camp Horse Shoe Creek, which was the prettiest camp we have ever had. It was a little spot of grass on the left bank of Horse Shoe, surrounded by box alder trees mostly which were low and bushy & made a fine shade. We left Camp Horse Shoe Creek in the evening of the same day we camped there & selected this shady place for a "lay over". We had preaching yesterday morning which was Sunday, under the sade of a box alder. Mr. John Duncan a presbyterian, preached. It was quite an interesting scene to look upon the little congregation, every stage of life was represented from the infant on its mothers bosome to the old & gray haired, hundreds of miles from civilization in the midst of a country inhabited by indians & wild animals; assembled to hear the word of God. The females had some little the appearance of Sabbath, having on a clean collar heads better arranged & other little change in their toilet but most of the men wore the common emigrant appearance, in their shirt sleaves & dirty with a week or twos ware. Our yesterday evenings drive presented some changes in the scenery. The rocks & banks were spoted red & white with but little order as to stratas & the dip of the stratas was every way, appearing as if the original order of the stratas had been broken up by some imminse up heaving of the earth Some of them looked like they had been melted ten or twenty feet of a ciliff red & the next over or under, white. Some places banks & rocks red and white on the same line of strata We left Box Alder Retreet about noon Sunday crossing Horse Shoe about a mile a bove camp & then leaving the creek entrely, to our left. There is a telegraph station[34] on the

left hand side near the crossing of the creek. We passed through a small forest of pitch pine on a hill yesterday evening; they were of a larger size than any I have seen. Our camp is well selected in point of wood & water but not much grass. We have the benifit of a spring

Camp La Bonda[35] *Creek.* Noon—We have advanced fifteen miles farther on our journey. Our road to day was good with one exception, a succession of hills some of them steep. Our camp is well selected in respect to shade wood & water, the La Bonda making a half circle around us, making the same circle of shade. Since we left Ft. Laramie we have had plenty of dry wood for cooking purposes, there being plenty of timber on all the streams we have camped on. The timber on the North Platt has thickened as we ascended; there was compartively none where we first came on to it. Grass at this point is scarce, Since we passed Cottenwood Springs, we have had but little good grass & found it in but few places in abundance; some times having to drive late; in the night some times, in order to get enough for our stock. We have a good spring at this point We will lay over here untill tomorrow. We had a light sprinkle of rain here soon after camping

Tuesday 16. Morning we had an election of officers last night,[36] viz. a military captan, drill master president, secretary, a committie of three on grievances & the pasage of a set of by laws & resolutions for our government. Captan of train and wagon boss was already elected There was some speaches made as each one pressed or objected to a resolution, getting the spirit of debate up pretty high sometimes protracting the meeting to a late hour. The bones of persons killed as was supposed was found in a gully in the vacinity of the camp Brush was piled upon them.

Camped for dinner. I have been much interested to day in the rock on our road. After crossing the La Bonda,[37] we traveled a couple of miles, we found our selves on the top of a steep hill with a comb of rock shelving south-ward. The hill was long and sharp and was followed by a number of others whose combs shelved over the same way, or diped north ward These mountains formed the south side of the valley that we was then entering whose bottom was red clay sand & rock. On the opposite side of the valley a tall cliff of light collor showed a base of red stone running nearly its whole length. The rock on each side of the valley & in the valley all diped the same way, to the north, & all about the same angle & seamed to be on a regular line, gray red or light collored stone. I saw streaks of gray stone, in red, only an inch thick, runing along its length as far as I was able to trace it just before crossing the dry bed of a creek, about four miles back in a gulch of red clay & sand I found a ledge of perfectly white rock; it was white as snow & soft some of it could be mashed between the fingers. Some that clamed to know called it pumis stone, which is used for finc polishing on tomb stones glass & c. Probably a mile farther as we journeyed on we came to a pile of hard sand stone about one hundred feet high, that appeared as if they were piled there as long as one rock would

lay upon another, tapering from the base to a point at the top, like a sugar loaf. I ascended to the sumit of this pile. I found names on some of the rock. We have left the valley of red & are now resting on the brink of another narrow valley. We still see Laramies Peak from time to time every day though it is now getting far behind us. Back on the hill from which we have just decended, we could see a cliff of rock several miles to our right that resembled the raged remains of an old stone wall. In the neighborhood of our camp on Elk Creek the hills are crowned with what looks like the begining of a stone wall. Another curiosity at that point is the disappearance of the water of a spring in the sandy bed of Elk Creek, giveing us a dry crossing for some distance & then appearing again. Another instance of nearly the same kind I saw in the second creek east of Court House Rock. We had a perfectly dry bed to cross on, but above us we could see the watter approaching us. I have no doubt if we had have crossed an hour later we would have had water to cross

Laparelle Creek[38] We have pitched our camp for the night. After crossing the dry bed of a creek, to begin with, we followed up a kanyon, ascending for about four miles. We next made a graduel decent of about the same distance, but at the point of decent the kanyon or narrow valley, widened The hills on each side was covered with dry grass. This is a beautiful camping place, being plenty of shade trees of box alder willow & c. The roads to day was better than yesterday. Three soldiers that are traveling in a wagon camped here one of them was an oficer Or rather two soldiers and a negro. The grass here was tolerable good. Laparell Creek is a very pretty stream

Box Alder[39] *Creek, Wednesday 17.* We are now at our noon camp on this pretty little stream being clear. All the streams we have crossed since we left Pole Creek are clear. Our roads to day was hilly but good. We crossed a small stream of water three or four miles before getting to this one Very much the same kind of mountains rise up on our left as those yesterday, but not so much rock. I notice at this point scattering trees crown the top of them I notice that since we left Red Valley that we have been following along a range of mountains on our left growing larger as we advanced.

Camp Mouth of Deer Creek. Evening—We have again camped for the night on the Platt about one mile below the mouth of Deer Creek. We crossed Box Alder, to start on, & then come hilly roads; with that exception the roads were good. After ascending a narrow valley, we sudenly, at the top of a hill came in sight of the long looked for North Platt.[40] The same range of rocky mountains continue on our left & an erregular set of hills on our right. These mountains are caped with a forest of pitch pine, as they appear from the road a distance of four or five miles. We followed up the valley of the Platt four or fives miles before camping. The Platt is much narrower but the same shallow swift stream, but not so muddy as below. We traveled twenty five miles to day. A couple of officers from a

military post just above the mouth of Deer Creek rode down to our camp & spent an hour or more chatting with us.

Thursday Morning 18. I stood guard last night from mid-night untill day. A pack of wolves prowled around our camp during my watch and as day was breaking they set up a desperate howling, enough to raise the hair on a mans head. One of them galloped across my path before me while I was hunting for some horses that had gotten too far from camp

Camp Platt Valley. Evening—We are camped on the Platt again, for the night, about eighteen miles above the mouth of Deer Creek. Our rout has been up the Platt to day. In the first place we passed a ranch & telegraph station at the mouth of Deer Creek. Our train halted here about a half hour. I bought a hat here my old one having nearly lost all its rim. Our tain lost an ox here from the effects of alkli After crossing the creek & leaving the station we came in to a shaparelle[41] bottom; it & the sage brush about occupied the whole ground. There was a great deal of sage brush for eight miles which was the first in quantities sufficient to be much noticed, on the rout. The grass is good at this point. A few scattering cottenwood furnishes us fine shade Some of our train have been fishing in the Platt this evening & have caught fine messes of shad Nearly all train have had fish for supper or will have them for breakfast in the morning. This is said to be a fine river for fish.

Friday Morning 19. We are yet at the same camp & will remain here untill tomorrow morning. We lost another ox[42] last night from alkli on the grass or in the water. They passed blood & bled at the nose before they died. There is but little alkli in runing water but in still water is the danger from alkli.

Camp Uper Crossing Saturday 20. We are now camped about one mile below the uper bridge across the Platt; four or five miles below here is the lower bridge & "lower crossing"[43] A heavy growth of shaparelle is between us and the river Just above us a small train is camped We spent the day yesterday fishing. I only caught two pickerel though others had better luck. We left our old camp this morning Our road this morning was good being nearly level, only two or three deep gullys to cross The roads have been good ever since we struck the Platt the last time. Some two or three miles after leaving our old camp we came up with some curiositys in the way of rocks The first on our left up on the side of a hill was some that resembled the ruins of a large building, the stumps of pillars & other parts remaining. A little farther an ancient city, under a hill, with its spires, & still a little farther on the same side of the road, another ancient city with a grove of pine around it, with its spires & monuments. A range of mountains yet continues on our left; they are some times near us & sometimes off at a distance. A fight took place at this point about two months ago between a party of soldiers & thirty Snake indians.[44] The indians commensed the fight by stampeeding the government horses. A squad of soldiers are stationed at the uper bridge.

(*To be continued*)

1. Michael Leighter Yager was a first cousin of James P. Yager. Yager is listed in the Storey, Ormsby, Washoe and Lyon counties directory for 1871–1872 as Clerk, State Treasurer's Office, Carson. Also, in the Directory for 1873–1874 as Deputy State Treasurer, Res. North end Nevada; and in the directory for 1878–1879 as Deputy State Treasurer.

2. Probably a friend of James P. Yager.

3. St. Joseph, Independence, and Council Bluffs on the Missouri River were the principal starting points for the overland journey to California and Oregon. Here the emigrants assembled, formed companies for mutual help and protection, purchased supplies, livestock, and wagons, hired a professional guide and elected a captain for each company. The journey was roughly 2,000 miles to California, and the time for travel was four or five months.

4. Nebraska City, established on the west bank of the Missouri River in 1854, was forty miles below Council Bluffs. An easy trail led to the Platte River and a junction with the main trail from St. Joseph and Independence.

5. Camp Salt Creek. Yager assigns his own names to his various campsites, which usually describe some specific topographical feature but may be purely whimsical.

6. Probably refers to Dobeytown, a place of evil reputation in trail days.

7. Fort Kearney, an army fort, was established in 1848 as a protection for emigrants and settlers against Indians. It was named for Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny (note change in spelling).

8. Sioux.

9. Cottonwood Spring eighty miles west of Fort Kearney was an emigrant campground on the trail.

10. The junction of the North and South Platte Rivers.

11. Located at Julesburg was the upper California crossing of the South Platte River.

12. O'Fallons Bluffs was the first of a series of sand, clay, and limestone formations adjacent to the trail following the Platte River. This one is south of the South Platte River, east of Ogallala, Nebraska.

13. Alkaline.

14. The junction of the North and South Platte rivers.

15. Yager's company had been following the South Platte River from its junction with the North Platte.

16. The crossing of the Platte was hazardous. It was a wide shallow river with shifting sands, treacherous currents, and floating trees. Animals were yoked in tandem to each wagon. Then if some animals lost their footing, others could carry on and keep the wagon moving. Sometimes the wagon box was jacked up and made to float by calking the seams.

17. Lodge Pole Creek is a tributary of the South Platte River.

18. Intended.

19. Courthouse was a conspicuous and famous landmark adjacent to the trail in the North Platte Valley. It was a huge, eroded, sculptured, sand, clay, and limestone formation which reminded the emigrants of their courthouse back in Missouri. This formation and others to follow excited wonderment and were always duly noted in the trail diaries.

20. Chimney Rock, the next famous landmark, lay a few miles west of Courthouse Rock along the trail. It was like a huge inverted funnel about 500 feet in height and 500 feet in diameter at the base of the funnel. Emigrants paused to climb it and carve their names on it. Today it is a national monument.

21. More factually, erosion due to wind, sand, and water working on soft sandstone or brule clay with a hardrock cap.

22. Yager's party had been traveling over a newer Lodgepole Creek Road connecting Julesburg on the South Platte River with Courthouse Rock on the North Platte.

The older route connected Brule on the South Platte with Ash Hollow on the North Platte. Ash Hollow was a famous trail landmark where the emigrants camped.

23. Castle Rock lies about seven miles west of Chimney Rock flanking the trail. It is not nearly as famous as Courthouse Rock, Chimney Rock, or Scotts Bluff.

24. The trail wound around the base of Scotts Bluff through a low gap called Mitchell Pass. Here the wagons gouged out ruts like an irrigation ditch, that are plainly visible today. Scotts Bluff is named after Hiram Scott, a trader of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company who, according to legend, was taken sick and deserted by his companions and left to die. Scott painfully traveled some sixty miles to the base of the bluffs that now bear his name and, finding no help, lay down and died. (There are other versions of this tragedy.)

25. Scotts Bluff rises 700 feet above the badlands and is a most imposing dome-like monument of similar formation to the preceding landmarks described. Today there is a fine pioneer museum here and the bluff is a national monument. Gering, Nebraska, is close by.

26. The trail left the river on account of the badlands at this point.

27. The Mormon Trail lay on the north bank of the river.

28. Fort Laramie, in southwestern Wyoming, was astride the emigrant trail. It was erected in 1849 by the army as a protection to emigrants against the Indians. It was the meeting place for all the plains people including explorers, missionaries, traders, trappers, Indians, soldiers, emigrants, etc. It was perhaps the most colorful of all the forts of the Old West, and the scene of stirring drama. It is now a national monument, partially restored, and very interesting to visit.

The trail was here making a gradual ascent to the South Pass of the Rockies.

29. Probably the Sioux tribe. In this region lived the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes.

30. The Sibly tent, developed by Major Sibly of the U.S. Army, had a center pole and was conical.

31. The trail was still in western Wyoming, following the North Platte in a northwesterly direction.

32. This burial custom was common among the Plains Indians. A platform was usually erected to hold the body.

33. This and many other creeks were tributaries of the North Platte river along which the trail ran. Except for short dry runs the emigrant trail followed the water lines. This was necessary for survival.

34. By this time (1863) the telegraph line had been established.

35. La Bonte Creek.

36. This was a typical procedure of the emigrants, who formed themselves into companies for mutual help and protection. Some companies were even para-military in character.

37. Yager was in the vicinity of Douglas, Wyoming, at this point.

38. La Prele Creek, a tributary of the North Platte, near Douglas, Wyoming.

39. Box Alder Creek, west of La Prele Creek.

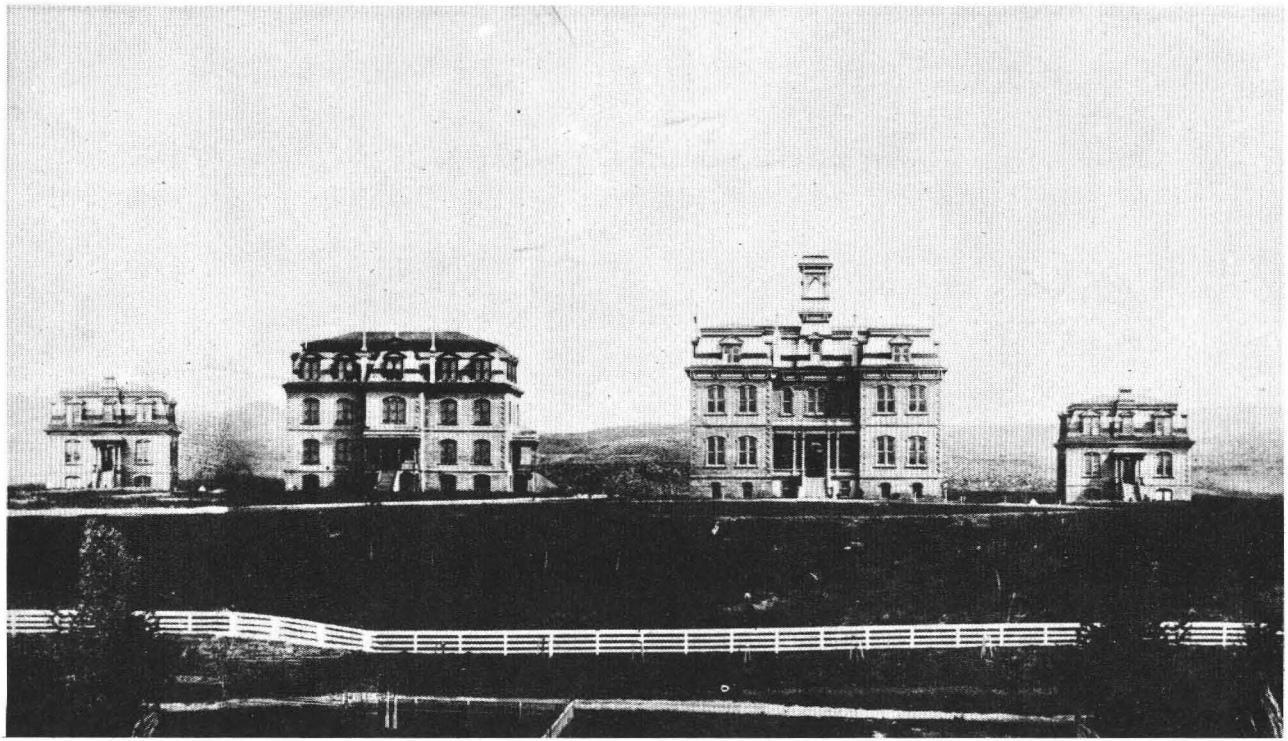
40. Yager's company may have been following the North Platte River ever since they approached it at Courthouse Rock in Nebraska. Their trail lay south of the river, so it is probable that his company was out of sight of the river for some distance past, but within easy access to it. If not, they may have been taking a cut-off route which shortened the distance by cutting across the bulge of the river through the Black Hills.

41. Chaparral.

42. Along this route the livestock had to be guarded from alkali pools and poison springs.

43. These bridges were near Casper, Wyoming. The early emigrants either forded the North Platte River or crossed on ferries. The Mormon or Upper Ferry was located here before the bridges were built. Those emigrants following the trail south of the river had to cross it sooner or later in order to reach the Sweetwater River, their next lifeline.

44. This skirmish in 1863 is not identified. In 1865 a wagon train under army escort was attacked by Indians. There were no survivors. Lieutenant Caspar Collins endeavored with twenty-five soldiers from Mormon Ferry Post to come to their aid, but was surrounded and killed along with seven of his men. The name of this fort was later changed to Fort Caspar in honor of Lt. Caspar Collins, as was also the town of Casper (spelled with an e), Wyoming.



The University of Nevada Campus, Reno—about 1894

The Centennial History of The University of Nevada: A Prospectus

by James W. Hulse

THE UNIVERSITY OF Nevada will observe its centennial in 1974, and if adequate individual and institutional interest can be generated, there will be a new history of the institution published in that year. It has been more than forty-five years since a book-length history of the University appeared; Samuel B. Doten's ornate volume is now almost a relic.[1] It has served well, but it probably will not be of much help in preparing the new history. Far more historical raw material has accumulated in the last decade alone than Doten had before him for the first half-century of the University's operation.

Doten's history is typical of the volumes that have been written about American colleges and universities. It allots generous praise to the diligent pioneers who laid the foundations; it describes the administrations of the various presidents in chronological order; and it relates in Victorian-style prose the accomplishments and prospects of students and faculty. It takes little note of anything beyond the borders of Nevada that affected the institution, unless it relates to financial support. This approach was appropriate for the University of the early 1920s, serving fewer than one thousand regular students and having few pretentions or claims to attention in the larger academic world.

The history of the 1970s will have to be a far more ambitious undertaking, reflecting not only the growth but the more sophistocated aspirations of the University—or perhaps one will have to say of the two Universities and the community college system. Even though the University at Reno and its vigorous offspring at Las Vegas are still primarily regional in their services and reputations, they are the products of much larger influences and responsive to more powerful pressures, and the new history should take this into account.

All the notable historical statements about the University in the last few years have had the traditional emphasis. Austin E. Hutcheson's article published in 1948 is competent, but it is primarily a survey of the local conditions that influenced the founding.[2] The so-called McHenry Report that resulted from the academic crisis of the 1950s begins with a good

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James W. Hulse, *professor of History at the University of Nevada, Reno, spends most of his time teaching and studying European history, but he retains a strong secondary interest in Nevada's past. He is a native of Pioche and attended the University as an undergraduate from 1948 to 1952.*

interpretative historical chapter on the institution, but it is likewise narrow in its focus.[3] The various essays produced locally for accrediting and descriptive purposes are understandably in the same category.

During the 1960s a number of important books on higher education in the United States came from the presses, and it is now possible to see more clearly how the histories of individual colleges and universities relate to the larger academic world. Books by scholars such as Frederick Rudolph, Laurence Veysey, Paul Woodring, Jacques Barzun, and Richard Hofstadter and Wilson Smith will probably soon change the nature of institutional history writing.[4] At least the availability of these books will make it less acceptable to be myopic about universities, as historians of them have generally been in the past. A period of revisionism is overdue in writing the records of the institutions of higher education. Perhaps Nevada would be a good place to experiment.

When Nevada's founding fathers included provisions for a state university in the Constitution of 1864, they were not being especially visionary or imaginative. The Constitutional arrangements that they made were somewhat unusual, but the fact that they wanted a college was not; it had become almost a matter of habit for Americans to talk about establishing a college soon after they had conquered the frontier. It was axiomatic that if there were to be a new state, then it must arrange to have a college —or preferably a university. It mattered little that the human and material resources for such an institution were not immediately available.

More than seven hundred colleges had been created and had perished between the end of the American Revolution and the beginning of the Civil War.[5] The men who wrote the Constitution probably did not know this, but even if they had, it would have made little difference. They were optimistic and proud of their role as state-makers, and it would have been intolerable not to assume that the new state would be equal to and worthy of higher education. They took it as a matter of faith that young Nevadans were entitled to free higher education at public expense.

The Constitution makers may have been somewhat aware that the institution they were conceiving would be partly the product of a revolution in higher education that was just then beginning in the United States. The Jacksonian Revolution and the westward movement had raised some fundamental questions about the role of higher education in America. Colleges had been places where the sons of the more fortunate citizens received the training that would guide them into polite society. They still looked back to classical methods of training and most of them had been founded to supply Christian ministers. Perhaps the fact that so many of them had been so traditional explains the high rate of college mortality in the two generations before the Civil War. Critics of higher education in the 1850s had been asking, in effect, whether the colleges were doing

anything relevant to the contemporary scene. The crisis of that period was producing some important new proposals and solutions just as the war came; institutions of higher learning were just beginning to turn more attention to technology, the sciences, and graduate study.

The work of Senator Justin Morrill of Vermont was only one phase of this reorientation, but an important one. Senator Morrill had been trying to get support for legislation to finance training in the practical fields for the "industrial" classes for several years before he finally got his famous bill through Congress in 1862. The land grant college proposal had encountered serious opposition, particularly from the Southern states, and it was possible to get it enacted only after the senators from that region had left their seats. This law, granting to the states 30,000 acres of public land for each senator and representative in Congress for the endowment of a college of agriculture and mechanic arts, not only gave frontier regions like Nevada an important incentive to conceive a college, but it virtually determined the legal foundations of the institution.

When the writers of the Constitution drafted their section on higher education, they borrowed the essential language from the Morrill Act, mentioning in two places that the state university must have departments of agriculture and mechanic arts; they specified that military tactics and mining must also be areas of instruction. It is obvious from the Constitutional debates as well as from the language of the final document that the founding fathers had pragmatic expectations for their university. They were a long way from the medieval concept of a university or even from American colonial concept of a college. More of the convention's discussion was devoted to trying to assure the establishment of a department of mining than to any other academic subject.

While the Constitutional Convention provided the authority for establishing the University along these lines, it obviously did not provide the means; it remained for the first sessions of the state legislature and for an awkwardly designed Board of Regents to try to implement the Constitutional provisions. The legislature was required to "provide for the establishment of a state university," which would be under the control of an interim Board of Regents composed for the first four years of the governor, the secretary of state, and the superintendent of public instruction.[6] The legislature was to provide for the election of another board within the four years; the initial officers held responsibility and authority in higher education until 1868.

The Morrill Act, however, provided that states would be entitled to financial benefits only if they could put a college into operation within five years of the passage of the law—or by 1867. The new state did not have the resources to create a college immediately (one reason was that the Constitution writers had given a major tax exemption to mines). So it faced the possibility of losing this important source of income. State officials considered various ingenuous devices to avert the crisis. The state legislature tried to establish an instant college in 1865, but the effort foundered. The superintendent of public instruction and the state inspector of mines considered giving a series of lectures and calling them college

training. Fortunately in 1866 Congress granted Nevada a five-year extension to the time limit and authorized the state to use the income from the land grant endowment for a school of mines as well as for the original purposes. In 1871 Nevada's legislature asked again for a deferral of the time limit and received an extension until 1877.

The immediate problem was to comply with the law and to hold onto the money that was already accumulating from the sale of land; the establishment of a genuine academic or technical institution was a secondary consideration. When the 1873 legislature finally did provide for the "opening" of the University in Elko, it was possible only to establish a "Preparatory Department" of the University, which went into operation in 1874. It is highly questionable whether this institution, which functioned for more than ten years with never more than about thirty-five young pupils, was legally consistent with the Morrill Act provisions. Its students were receiving instruction at the secondary school level and during most of the time it was not emphasizing the subjects specified in the land grant laws. The first "principal" of the school and its only teacher for the first few years was D. R. Sessions, a graduate of Princeton whose training had been in ancient and modern languages. Not until the tenth year did the school begin to offer training in fields relating to mining, and then the Regents seem to have been acting from fear that they might lose the land grant endowment income unless they made a gesture toward offering technical training.

So it was to be during much of the University's history. The Regents and officers had legal requirements to meet and local needs to fill, but the people whom they brought from the East or Middle West to teach often had professional backgrounds and ideals of a different kind—more traditional and classical than technical. The history of the University is largely the story of various attempts to implement diverse ideas about what the institution ought to become. It was inevitable that there would be many frustrations for all participants as the University assumed its distinctive form.

Professor Frederick Jackson Turner recognized the dichotomy that troubled the state universities sixty years ago. Speaking at Indiana University in 1910, he observed that these institutions had usually come into existence in response to elementary pioneer needs, but that they had a mission that required them to transcend their original goals. They must provide leaders to a democratic society that had traditionally been suspicious of leadership and they must reveal to the practical pioneers more of the "richness and complexity of life," he argued:

> . . . Thus it is the function of the university to reveal to the individual the mystery and the glory of life as a whole—to open all the realms of rational human enjoyment and achievement; to preserve the consciousness of the past; to spread before the eye the beauty of the universe; and to throw wide its portals of duty and of power to the human soul. It must honor the poet and painter, the writer and the teacher, the scientist and the inventor, the musician and the prophet of righteousness—the men of genius in all fields who make life

> nobler. It must call forth anew, and for finer uses, the pioneer's love of creative individualism and provide for it a spiritual atmosphere friendly to the development of personality in all uplifting ways. It must check the tendency to act in mediocre social masses with undue emphasis upon the ideals of prosperity and politics. In short, it must summon ability of all kinds to joyous and earnest effort for the welfare and the spiritual enrichment of society. It must awaken new tastes and ambitions among the people.[7]

Turner was obviously vocalizing the attitude of many academics of that time and later, and most of those who taught at Nevada in the early years and since would have found themselves in general agreement with his remarks. But a large part of the money that the universities were receiving had been granted to them for more pragmatic purposes and programs. As late as 1904, when the University of Nevada was thirty years old, it was receiving more than three-fourths of its income from federal support programs like the Morrill Act which did not embrace such elaborate intellectual ideals.[8] In short many of the University's cultural and intellectual services became available because there was money for technical training programs in such fields as agriculture and the mechanic arts.

The most obvious way to write a university's history is to record its officers and its institutional transitions. The quantitative evidence nearly always suggests progress, because the numbers get larger whether one is talking about students, or faculty, or dollars, or square feet. But the historian who takes this approach cannot assert convincingly that the quality of the work of a university is reflected in the statistics; it is possible to make a persuasive argument that the smaller units did the educational job more effectively than the later, larger ones. In any event, the usual historical method, following the calendar and the sequence of presidencies, is comparatively easy to implement and gratifying to the egocentricities of contemporary functionaries in the structure. It may be, on the other hand, a waste of time.

Perhaps the history of the University of Nevada should be written in terms of the struggle to become what its name implies. It is partially the story of a pioneering venture in a social and geographical setting that was originally hostile to the traditional idea of university. It is also part of an experiment in education that was being conducted in a hundred places across the land simultaneously. It is also the story of continuing tension between an electorate with rather vague ideas about the "best education" for their progeny and a community of scholars largely assembled from elsewhere with more exalted ideas about their proper functions—with assorted students, legislators, Regents, and administrators stationed strategically in the no-man's land between. It would be tedious for everyone —writer and readers alike—to deal with each episode of local interest that has occurred in the university communities in the last hundred years.

It would be far more meaningful to many readers to describe the records of the football teams with all the various data about yardage and the like.

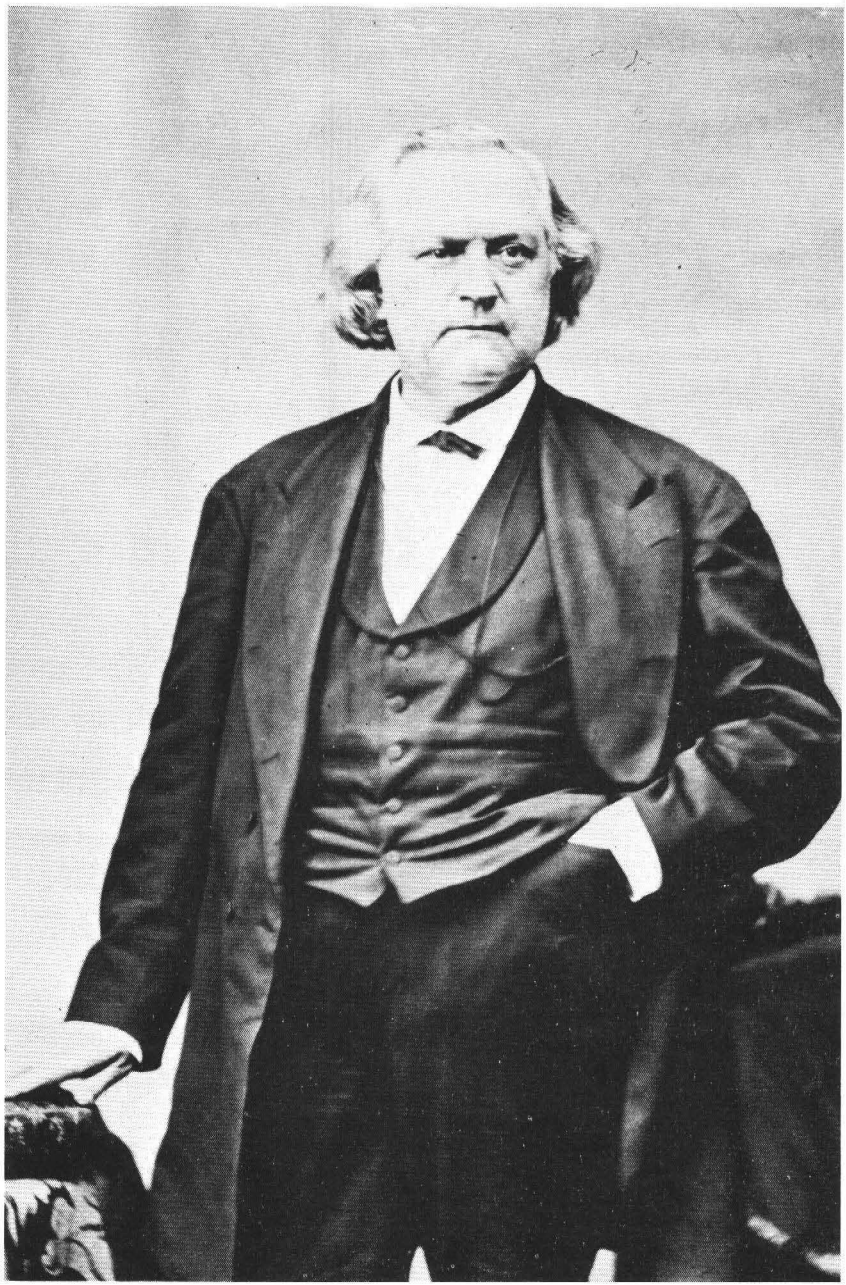
The history of the University that ought to be written—at least in the opinion of one person who is considering the project seriously—would embrace some of the qualities of the old-fashioned history, but primarily it would try to measure the experiences of the University of Nevada system against a tableau that is much larger than the Nevada setting. It would attempt to evaluate the work of the local academic communities by the standards that exist in some better known institutions, and it would not automatically assume that the rank or position of a salaried official is an indication of his importance. It might reach the conclusion, for example, that only about a fourth of the University's presidents have made substantial contributions to the intellectual life of the institution. It might find the work of some of the lower ranking professors or a few of the members of the Board of Regents to have been of greater significance.

Such a study—it necessarily would be subjective in places—would try to ascertain the significance of the life of a man like James Edward Church, who came to the University as a young classics professor in 1892 and spent more than sixty years on the Reno campus. Trained in the Latin and German literatures, he was admired for his classroom work in the traditional disciplines, but he made his reputation in Nevada and beyond when he yielded to the lure of the mountains. Together with colleagues and students, he devised a system of snow surveying that attracted international attention and he made fruitful suggestions in the field of meteorology. He helped to establish and support the Nevada Art Gallery and he spent the last, poignant years of his life trying to preserve a home in downtown Reno that was doomed to be the victim of commercial expansion. Some of his works may reflect—or be reflected in—the life of the University more fully than the deeds of its deans.

The history thus conceived might also try to evaluate the role of a person such as Erling Skorpen, a Quaker and a man of conscience who spent six years in Nevada in the 1960s. His philosophy classes and his activities in the community won substantial admiration from part of the University community, but his attitudes offended some members of the larger community, and he came to represent one aspect of the new concerns of the academic world of that decade.

The success of such a history could probably never be measured very well by the usual standards—by tabulating the copies sold or by consulting the reviews, if any. But if it helped to explain the various segments of the University's constituency—taxpayers, legislators, Regents, administrators, faculty, students, and other institutions—to each other a little more clearly than they now seem to be explained, it would have achieved its purpose.

1. Samuel Bradford Doten, *An Illustrated History of the University of Nevada,* (Reno, 1924).
2. Austin E. Hutcheson, "The University of Nevada—Early History of Its Aims and Problems," (Carson City, 1948).
3. Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, *The University of Nevada: An Appraisal.* The Report of the University Survey. Bulletin No. 28. (Carson City, 1957).
4. Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History* (New York, 1962); Laurence Veysey, *The Emergence of the American University,* (Chicago, 1965); Paul Woodring, *The Higher Learning in America: A Reassessment,* (New York, 1968); Jacques Barzun, *The American University: How It Runs, Where It Is Going,* (New York, 1968); and Richard Hofstadter and Wilson Smith, *American Higher Education: A Documentary History,* (Chicago, 1961), 2 vols.
5. Rudolph, p. 219.
6. Constitution of the State of Nevada, Article XI, Sections 4–7.
7. Frederick J. Turner, *The Frontier in American History,* (New York, 1920), pp. 287–288.
8. Romanzo Adams, "The University: An Historical Sketch," in *Nevada State University: Tri-Decennial Celebration,* edited by J. E. Church, Jr., (Reno, 1904), p. 11.



James Warren Nye, Territorial Governor

The American Colonial System in Nevada

by Kent D. Richards

EARL POMEROY'S APT phrase "The American Colonial System" describes much that is relevant to Nevada territory during its short but eventful existence. Created from the exigencies of national politics, Nevada's experience between 1861–64 clearly foreshadowed the evolution of the American territorial system after the Civil War. The attempt of the Republican administration to impose political machinery upon the territory through appointed officials comprises one portion of the history of the territorial period. The territory suffered at the hands of political adventurers and corrupt spoilsmen, while federal control of the territorial budget and general bureaucratic ineptitude frustrated those who attempted to meet the needs of the new area. The policies and methods of federal officials provide insight into the political realities of the territorial system during the later third of the nineteenth century.

When Southern representatives withdrew from Congress early in 1861, the remaining legislators acted to create Colorado, Dakota, and Nevada territories. The problem of administering the new territories was one of many the Lincoln administration faced as it took office. As the sectional crisis grew, the territories faded to the background of the national political stage. Lincoln and his chief advisors did take the time, however, to distribute the spoils of victory. Secretary of State, William H. Seward, secured the governorship of Nevada for one of his supporters, James W. Nye. An upper New York state lawyer, stump speaker, county judge and Tammany Hall politician, Nye had moved in his political affiliation from Democrat to Barnburner to abolitionist and finally to Republican. Short, stocky, and a ready wit, Nye, as part of the Weed-Seward machine, worked for Seward's Presidential nomination in 1860, and, this failing, he followed his champion's lead and campaigned for the rail-splitter from Illinois.[1]

To Seward and Lincoln, Nye seemed the perfect choice for the Nevada post. The New Yorker had served his party well during the preceding four years, and they believed his ability as a speaker and his known loyalty to the Union would prove valuable in an area suspected of harboring Southern sympathizers. Nye's feelings about the appointment were another matter, but as a loyal party member he had little choice for he

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Kent D. Richards, *assistant professor of history at Central Washington State College, Ellensburg, is a student of political institutions in the Far West. Dr. Richards is a native of Wisconsin and a graduate of Knox College and the University of Wisconsin.*

knew it was usually safest to take jobs which came one's way. Nye recognized that although the territorial governorship might not seem particularly attractive, opportunities for advancement were promising. If Congress made Nevada a state Nye could be the leading candidate for a Senate seat.[2]

Edward Bates of Missouri, a second unsuccessful Presidential candidate, reserved the office of territorial secretary for one of his proteges, Orion Clemens. Bates had thrown his support to Lincoln at a crucial time and reaped as his reward the cabinet post of Attorney General.[3] Thus the men who filled the most important of the territorial offices were political appointees of other political appointees.

Among the other officials sent to Nevada territory, Chief Justice George Turner had campaigned actively for the Republicans in Ohio, Associate Justice Gordon Mott worked for the party in Zanesville, Ohio, and later in California, and Surveyor General John North headed the Minnesota delegation to the 1860 convention. All the plums of territorial office fell to easterners who for qualifications needed only to display a record of previous service to the party.[4] The territorial appointments served as the first lesson illustrating Nevada's dependence upon the whims of the national government.

Governor Nye left New York by ship in June, 1861, accompanied by a retinue described by Orion Clemen's younger brother Samuel, writing as Mark Twain, as the "pursuers of the crumbs of territorial office."[5] While the citizenry in Nevada chafed impatiently, Nye languished in San Francisco and then leisurely made his way across California.[6] When he finally arrived in Carson City in the middle of the summer, the governor received a grand welcome from the townspeople who escorted him into the city to the accompaniment of cheers and booming cannon. Nye responded with a speech delivered in typical spread-eagle style which emphasized the two points Nevadans would hear him repeat many times during the next three years, loyalty to the Union and early statehood for Nevada. A reception followed at which the townspeople provided food and drink including champagne, "worth its weight in gold."[7]

The spirit of the reception was no doubt genuine; the former "second-class" citizens of western Utah had now achieved official respectability. Nevadans expressed confidence that the territorial courts would bring order out of the chaos of conflicting land claims, thereby raising the value of all property.[8] Nevada's citizens also believed that the new government would alleviate the economic depression, provide a circulating medium, and insure protection from the Indians. If skeptics needed proof of the new day about to dawn one could point to the "fabulous prices" asked for town lots and quote the contention of "authoritative" sources that soon "an immense amount of capital will be rushing in."[9]

A minority remained unhappy with the area's new status or expressed doubt about the future. Secessionist David S. Terry and others left for the deep South, while members of the Democratic party met to denounce Lincoln's policies.[10] A correspondent of the Virginia City *Territorial*

Enterprise characterized the territorial officers as "weak, dishonest, and broken-down politicians of other sections" who possessed only their own interests and would involve the territory in embarrassing developments while oppressing the people.[11] The truth of his observation soon became painfully apparent.

Nevada contained little to recommend it in the summer of 1861 except gold and silver embedded in hard quartz. The population of 16,000 settled mostly in Carson City or in the sister cities of Gold Hill, Silver City, and Virginia City which straggled up the side of Mount Davidson. With timber scarce, baked mud, canvas, and brush served as architectural material. Entrepreneurs stretched small pieces of canvas over a pole and christened the resulting structure a hotel, saloon, or grocery store. If Virginia City appeared an unsightly hodgepodge, the surrounding countryside represented no improvement having a "blasted and barren" look.[12] Nature blessed Carson City with a more favorable location, and one observer found it "quite a pretty and thrifty little town." Inhabitants particularly disliked the strong winds which blew down from the mountains most afternoons. This "Washoe zephyr" did little to calm dispositions and cool tempers frayed by the heat and the monotony.[13]

In this setting Nye proceeded to set the wheels of territorial government in motion. The organic acts for all the Far Western territories imitated the Wisconsin act of 1836, but Congress made some changes in the Nevada act designed to strengthen the control of the President over territorial officials. Congress set the term of office for all appointees (except the secretary) at four years, subject to removal at the President's pleasure. The salary scale was $3,000 for the governor in his dual role as chief executive and superintendent of Indian affairs, and $1,800 for the secretary and territorial judges. Wisconsin officials had received the same salaries in 1836, but the figures represented a slight increase over the Oregon scale of 1848. Members of the legislature received $3 a day for a yearly session limited to sixty days. Nevada's organic act included the usual absolute veto for the governor, appeals from the territorial courts to the Supreme Court, and the right of Congress to review and veto all territorial legislation.[14]

Governor Nye divided the state into three judicial districts, appointed Henry DeGroot to take a census, set August 31, 1861, as the day to elect the nine members of the council and fifteen representatives, and left for California, an area with a more salubrious climate and better recreational facilities. The task of conducting the affairs of government fell to Secretary Orion Clemens who found many of the local citizens suspicious and loath to cooperate with the new government. The $20,000 appropriated for the territory's contingent expenses remained in Washington and Clemens tried to operate on credit, a virtual impossibility. He even experienced difficulty in securing a place for the legislature to meet, finally settling for a building two miles from town.[15] Legislators proved easier to find, although room and board cost half again as much as the $3 a day salary. "Distinction," declared Samuel Clemens, "had its charms in

Nevada as well as elsewhere, and there were plenty of patriotic souls out of employment. . . ."[16]

Results of the 1861 election quited temporarily the fear that Democrats, or Southern sympathizers, as the Republicans labeled them, would gain control in Nevada. The presence of a small but vocal Democratic organization in the territory and the persistent rumors of a plot to form a Pacific republic gave the Republican party a good bogeyman to replace the Mormons, who had filled this need prior to 1861. The major themes of the Republican election campaigns throughout the territorial period did not deal with the problems facing the territory, but consisted of attacks upon the South and Democrats.[17] All the elected members of the council and house professed affiliation with the Republican party, and John Cradlebaugh, former federal judge for western Utah, won election as the delegate to Congress on the same ticket.[18] The legislature convened on October 1, 1861, and the next day "jolly and portly" Governor Nye, freshly returned from California, read his message to the assembled solons.

Nye used the metaphor of a family to describe the relationship between federal government and territory. He praised the "parental regard" which the federal government bestowed upon its "most wandering citizens . . . [for] as the ever watchful mother . . . [she] never fails to watch vigilantly for her absent children." The trustfulness and magnanimity of the government became apparent in the organic act, Nye claimed, for it placed no restraints upon the territory. The governor asserted that the legislature needed only to pass laws consistent with the Constitution an instrument, "pregnant with good and barren with wrong." Nye then moved to his favorite theme and attacked the doctrine of state rights as "absurd and unnatural." He declared, "As well might you look for an orderly and well conducted family, where all parental restraint and authority were repudiated and disregarded by the offspring, as for a happy, prosperous, and well ordered government, containing within it thirty-four independencies, each claiming superiority over the parent government."[19]

His lecture on the virtues and primacy of the federal government concluded, Nye proceeded to make recommendations on specific territorial problems. The governor advocated economy, a tax on the gross proceeds of the mines, and laws prohibiting the carrying of concealed weapons, sale of liquor on Sunday, and gambling, the worst "of all the seductive vices extant."[20] The disproportionate amount of attention given to national problems facing the Republican party indicated how the governor viewed his role in Nevada—problems of the territory took second place to the tasks of insuring loyalty and building a strong party machine.

The primary dilemma faced by Nevada's legislators, local autonomy or national supremacy, soon came to the fore. The legislators, as part of the national Republican organization imposed upon the territory by Governor Nye, passed resolutions which branded the doctrine of state secession as heresy, and resolved that the people of a state or territory owed

paramount allegiance to the national government.[21] But the same legislators were quick to defend the perogatives of the legislature and the people.

Upon reading the organic act, the legislature awakened to the limitations imposed upon it. Legislative printing, for example, quickly became a troublesome problem when a committee appointed to negotiate a contract reported that, "the general government claims and exercises the right" of fixing the price paid for any printing. Secretary Clemens's instructions from the treasury department ordered him to pay for printing with greenbacks, but only gold and silver circulated freely in Nevada. The secretary either had to pay the substantial discount on greenbacks out of his own pocket or neglect the territory's printing. The situation left Secretary Clemens unhappy, the legislators angry because they could not control the best source of free propaganda, and the newspapers disgruntled with the low rates and the difficulty of collecting payment from the government. Samuel Clemens summed up the collective frustration when he grumbled that, "nothing in the world is palled in such impenetrable obscurity as a United States Treasury comptroller's understanding."[22]

The question of sovereignty arose again when the legislature created the offices of territorial treasurer, auditor, and superintendent of public education and provided for elections to fill the posts. Nye promptly vetoed the measure arguing that the organic act gave him the power to appoint these officials. The governor was correct for the act stated "the governor shall nominate and, by and with the advice and consent of the legislative council, appoint all officers not herein otherwise provided for."[23] Members of the legislature, however, took issue with Nye. Mr. Mills argued that the legislators as representatives of the people had, "the right to say in what manner and at what time they would appoint or elect officers of the Territory." Mills protested that the governor's veto constituted an assumption of power and nothing else. "Talk about Popular Sovereignty," fumed another legislator, "this buried Popular Sovereignty and all other sovereignty except the sovereignty of the executive."[24] The legislators proved that despite lip-service to the doctrines of the Republican party, notions of self-rule remained very much in evidence.

If Nevadans fought federal control they also expressed suspicion of Californians whom they suspected entertained plans aimed at political and economic control of Nevada. Although the Nevada legislature granted many charters for railroads, bridges, gas companies, and ferries to the people of the territory (Samuel Clemens said they granted so many toll road charters the roads piled on top of each other and hung over the boundaries), the same legislators became extremely hesitant when the charter seekers appeared from California. In 1861 Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington, and Charles Crocker made the trip over the mountains to seek a charter for the Nevada section of a transcontinental railroad. More than one legislator suggested that the railroad charter represented a scheme to milk the territory of its riches. These doubters objected to

Stanford's request for a fifty-year charter and his refusal to give any guarantees that the railroad would ever be built or, if built, that any federal aid would be spent in Nevada. The California magnates eventually built their railroad, but no thanks to the Nevada legislators.[25]

Most important, the people of Nevada wanted to prevent the steady flow of gold and silver to San Francisco. In 1862 the legislature passed, and Governor Nye signed, an act requiring companies operating in the territory to incorporate under a law stipulating that a majority of stockholders be citizens of Nevada. During debate on the measure public interest reached a fever pitch and large crowds gathered outside the legislative building in an attempt to expedite passage.[26] This same legislature sent a memorial to Congress asking for changes in the organic act allowing the people to elect all territorial office holders and giving the legislature power to override the governor's veto by a two-thirds vote.[27] The legislature's economic and political actions represented a philosophy cut from one cloth—a conviction that the people and their elected representatives should control the political and economic destiny of the territory.

As governor, Nye was most concerned with building a political machine. He channeled the old hatred of the Mormons into opposition to the South and Democrats, and founded Union clubs which held county conventions and became the bodies that made party nominations for local offices and territorial conventions. Nye employed various methods to gain membership for the clubs. A miner in Humboldt county later recalled that the governor furnished a group of miners with arms as protection against the Indians, and in return they agreed to join the Union club and remain on call to fight "Indians or rebels."[28]

Nye maintained close contact with his appointees in the local districts. He wrote to Robert Howland, warden of the territorial prison at Aurora, "I think the political sky is pretty clear but we can't tell till after election how the matter stands. I want you to stand by out there and not leave until after the election. Stark Betchel and Cal Young will stand to their places. Keep your shoes up at the heels and your nose clean."[29] Nye and the local leaders of the Union clubs endeavored to keep all political discussions focused on the war effort and loyalty to the Union and the party. Apparently they succeeded in large measure for elected officials in Nevada between 1861–64 remained solidly Republican.

The governor in his role as superintendent of Indian affairs resorted to chicanery to obtain funds to finance his political ambitions. From 1861–65 constant confusion existed concerning the whereabouts of funds appropriated for Indian affairs. Indian agent Jacob Lockhart once complained that he and his men went for a year without pay, and he wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1863 pointedly suggesting that agents in the field needed the means and power to run Indian affairs rather than the governors who never stirred from their capitals.[30] The most flagrant misuse of funds involved a grant of $75,000 appropriated for the development of a dam, sawmill, and irrigation project for Indians

on the Truckee River reservation. Nye sent enthusiastic statements to Washington that depicted constant progress, and eventually he reported water wheel and saw mill machinery ready to operate.[31]

A new Indian agent who arrived in 1865 reported that some logs had been cut and other preliminary work started, but he observed that the entire project appeared to have been abandoned for some time.[32] Nye reported in 1864, "The wisdom of the outlay is more and more apparent every day."[33] This was, of course, true from the governor's point of view. Nye's free-wheeling use of Union clubs and government money proved politically effective, at least for a time, as he served two terms in the Senate after Nevada obtained statehood.

Nye's political success during the years of Nevada's territorial period and on into the early years of statehood must be attributed, however, at least in part to the political myopia of Nevada's citizens. Although the legislators and their constituents disliked outsiders and talked of the right of popular sovereignty, many citizens unquestioningly followed Nye into acceptance of the Republican party and its principles. Nye helped his cause by providing the first effective political leadership since the departure of the Mormons. Thus while many citizens complained of the governor's authoritarian control, Nye, through the use of patronage, platitudes, and plunder, remained in command.

The wrath of citizens displeased with the territorial system fell instead upon the territorial judges. A belief that land and mining claims would receive legal sanction and a hope that the judiciary would solve the many claim disputes had led many citizens to welcome territorial status. The territorial judges of Nevada confused rather than rectified the tangled legal situation. The course of a dispute between the Chollar and Potosi companies provided an extreme, although typical, example of the pitfalls of entering into litigation. The Potosi Company rankled by earlier decisions in favor of their opponents asked Judge John North, the former surveyor general, for an injunction against the Chollar Company to prevent it from following a lead onto the Potosi claim. North ruled for the Potosi Company on the premise that dips and spurs of a vein could not be followed outside the vertical planes of a company's claim. The Chollar Company appealed the decision to the territorial Supreme Court. They knew North would continue to favor the Potosi Company and that Chief Justice George Turner could be counted in their corner; thus the deciding vote belonged to Powhatan B. Locke.[34]

In the days following the taking of final arguments in the case, Judge Locke drifted from parties and conferences with the representatives of one company to dinners and meetings with the minions of the other. Just when the Potosi thought it had won his vote he would be off with William Stewart and the other lawyers for the Chollar. Locke finally cast his vote for the Chollar group, but a few days later he submitted an addendum declaring his earlier decision null and void, and thus the court denied a hearing on Judge North's ruling.[35]

During the flush years of 1861–63 the workings of the territorial courts, like the actions of the other branches of the territorial government, if not condoned, were tolerated. The prosperity of these years, however, rested upon the earnings of a few rich mines plus the optimistic belief that hundreds of other mines equally rich would soon appear. When these dreams failed to materialize, and the wealth of some of the large mines began to diminish, Nevada suffered a severe depression. The territorial judges became the scapegoats and full blame for the collapse of prosperity fell upon their shoulders. An editor charged that Locke received a large bribe from the Potosi Company, and the judge did not deny the accusation.[36]

Others attacked Judge Turner for holding stock worth $50,00 in two mining companies. No one, the editor of the *Territorial Enterprise* claimed, had ever spoken well of Turner; his very presence was suggestive of "flattery, fawning, treachery, and dishonesty. . . . 'For Sale' is written on his countenance as plainly as on a house, and he has grown wealthy by virtue of that sign. If the balance of our lovely Judges can be induced to retain their seats we shall be a stout advocate for Judge Turner remaining in his—for in such a body of Judicial excellence, the Chief Justiceship, as a matter of right, should be filled by a low, slimy, intriguing imbecile like himself."[37] This same editor concluded that the territory was fast approaching ruin, and "a thousand evidences tell that the distrust and corruption of our Judges are the principle causes that are sinking us."[38] It was generally agreed that the indecision, vacilation, and corruption of the courts, "had more to do with the present depressed condition of the territory than any one cause."[39]

Although the territorial judges in Nevada were inexcusably corrupt, inefficient, and ineffective, much of the blame for their failure must rest with the territorial system and with the people in Nevada. Territorial judges drew an annual salary of $1,800. Little enough thirty years earlier, in Nevada in the 1860s it became a mere pittance. In this situation the judges turned to obvious expedients to supplement income.

The territorial system suffered from the type of men most often selected for office. The judges and other territorial officials were usually mediocrities unfit for the positions they occupied. In Nevada the most able public official, Governor Nye, limited his ambitions to the extension of his personal power and wealth. Others like Powhatan Locke were obviously unfit for any position of responsibility.

Nevada's citizens were aware that the territorial government was not living up to the high expectations of 1861. Evidence of this is seen in the statehood movement and the constitutional convention of 1863. Statehood was rejected early in 1864, but with the sharp economic decline of that year, the citizens grew increasingly restive. Then the citizens' wrath fell on the territorial judges, who received the largest portion of blame for the depressed state of the territory. Although other reasons existed for the sad state of economic, political, and moral affairs in Nevada by 1864, certainly most of the territorial officials and the territorial system must

assume much of the responsibility. The Republican party, although fighting a Civil War in the name of freedom and equality, helped to perpetuate and solidify the undemocratic and repressive tendencies of the territorial system.

1. *Dictionary of American Biography,* XIII:600. San Francisco *Daily Evening Bulletin,* April 8, 1861. Effie Mack, "James Warren Nye," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* IV (July-Dec., 1961), 9–12.

2. The New York *Herald* carried the following story on Nye shortly before his appointment as governor: "General Nye, who, it will be remembered, had sundry trials of skill in telling peculiar kinds of stories with Old Abe, in which there was sort of a drawn battle, has applied for every office in New York. He has applied for Collector, Postmaster, Surveyor, Naval Officer, Sub-Treasurer, and Superintendent of the Assay Office, on the principle probably, that by making a grab for all he will be likely to secure one." New York *Herald,* Mar. 2, 1861. Mack, "James Nye," 16.

3. Effie Mack, "Orion Clemens," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* IV (July-Dec., 1961), 64.

4. *Biographical Directory of the American Congress 1774–1961* (Washington, D.C., 1961), 1367. Harry Carmen and Reinhard Luthin, *Lincoln and the Patronage* (N.Y., 1943), 169. Mary North Shepard, *John W. North, A Maligned Judge* (MSS., Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California), 31. Hereafter abbreviated as BanL.

5. Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens), *Roughing It* (N.Y., 1871), 150.

6. John Wesley North, *Letters to his Wife and Sister* (Microfilm copies, BanL.). North to his wife, June 29 & June 31, 1861.

7. *Ibid.,* North to his wife, July 12, 1861. San Francisco *Daily Evening Bulletin,* July 13, 1861.

8. Nevada *Journal* (Nevada City, California), Mar. 29, 1861.

9. San Francisco *Daily Evening Bulletin,* Mar. 29, 1861 & Aug. 19, 1861.

10. *Ibid.,* Aug. 21, 1861.

11. Article from Virginia City *Territorial Enterprise* reprinted in San Francisco *Daily Evening Bulletin,* Mar. 13, 1861.

12. J. Ross Browne, *A Peep at Washoe and Washoe Revisited* (Balboa Island, Cal., 1959), 52–53, 70, 77.

13. *Ibid.,* 55. Susan Hall, "The Diary of a Trip from Ione to Nevada in 1859," *California Historical Society Quarterly,* XVII, n.1 (Mar. 1938), 76. Twain, *Roughing It,* 145–146.

14. Francis Newton Thorpe, comp., *The Federal and State Constitutions, Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the States, Territories and Colonies. . .* (7 vols., Washington, D.C., 1909), IV:2391–2397, V:2986–2995, VII:4065–4071.

15. Twain, *Roughing It,* 176–178.

16. *Ibid.,* 177.

17. Sacramento *Daily Union,* Jan. 13, 1860. San Francisco *Daily Evening Bulletin,* Aug. 21, 1861. Joseph Ellison, "Design for a Pacific Republic, 1843–1862," *Oregon Historical Quarterly,* XXXI, n.4 (Dec. 1930), 330–336.

18. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming 1540–1888* (San Francisco, 1890), 158.

19. *Journal of the Council of the First Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Nevada* (San Francisco, 1862), Oct. 2, 1861.

20. *Sacramento Daily Union,* Oct. 3, 1861.

21. *Journal of the Council of the First Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Nevada,* Oct. 22, 1861.

22. *Journal of the Council of the First Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Nevada,* Oct. 2, 3, 1861. Article reprinted from the Gold Hill (Nevada) *Daily News* in Sacramento *Daily Union,* Apr. 19, 1864. Twain, *Roughing It,* 179.

23. Thorpe, comp., *The Federal and State Constitutions . . .,* IV:2394.

24. Report of the proceedings of the legislature by a special correspondent in the Sacramento *Daily Union,* Dec. 3, 1861.

25. *Ibid.,* Oct. 25, Dec. 4, 1861. Dale Morgan, *The Humboldt: Highroad of the West* (The Rivers of America, N.Y., 1943), 295.

26. Ivan Benson, *Mark Twain's Western Years* (San Marino, Cal., 1938), 101. Sacramento *Daily Union,* Dec. 23, 1862.

27. Sacramento *Daily Union,* Dec. 3, 1862.

28. A. J. Humphrey, *Western Adventures of A. J. Humphrey in the Far West 1852–66* (MSS., State Historical Society of Wisconsin), np.

29. James Nye to Robert Howland, Dec. 4, 1863. Photostat in *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* IV (July-Dec., 1961), 29.

30. *Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Nevada Superintendency, 1861–1869* (Microfilm, Originals in National Archives). Jacob Lockhart to Orion Clemens, Oct. 13, 1862, Lockhart to James Nye, Sept. 15, 1862, Orion Clemens to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Jan. 15, 1863.

31. *Ibid.,* Nye to John Usher, Secretary of the Interior, Feb. 9, Feb. 26, Sept. 20, Sept. 25, 1864.

32. Robert Merrifield, *Nevada, 1859–1881: The Impact of an Advanced Technological Society on a Frontier Area* (PhD., University of Chicago, 1957), 90.

33. *Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, Nevada Superintendency, 1861–1869,* Nye to John Usher, Secretary of the Interior, Feb. 26, 1864.

34. Orion Clemens, *Scrapbook* (University of California library, Berkeley), Clemens kept a scrapbook of Nevada newspaper clippings during 1862–65. For many of the numbers there are no complete copies known to exist; Virginia City *Territorial Enterprise,* Jan. 28, 1863, Virginia (City) *Daily Union,* Mar. 12, 13, 1863, Mar. 12, 1864. Eliot Lord, *Comstock Mining and Miners* (Washington, D.C., 1883, Berkeley, Cal., 1959), 155–157.

35. Lord, *Comstock Mining and Miners,* 158–160.

36. Grant Smith, *The History of the Comstock Lode 1850–1920* (University of Nevada Bulletin, XXXVII, n.3, Reno, 1943), 34, 58. Gold Hill *Daily News,* May 11, 1864.

37. Orion Clemens, *Scrapbook,* Virginia City *Territorial Enterprise,* July 21, 22, 26, 1864.

38. *Ibid.,* July 22, 1864.

39. Gold Hill *Daily News,* June 30, 1864.

What's Being Written

NO MORE THAN *a decade ago books being written on Nevada history were so scarce that it would have been sheer folly to attempt a book review column such as the one now planned for each issue of the* Nevada Historical Society Quarterly. *However, if the 1970s produces as many books on Nevada history as were published in the 1960s, then there will be little difficulty in having sufficient review items. In a future issue I hope to have for the reader a list of all the important works on Nevada history published in the 1960s. For the present, I wish to review, briefly, two Nevada history books which were released in 1969.*

The first, *Nevada's Northeast Frontier,* by Edna B. Patterson, Louise A. Ulph and Victor Goodwin, (Sparks, Nevada: Western Printing and Publishing co., 1969), is, as one reviewer has already noted, "a big book about a big country." Only the authors really know, although others who have worked in local history can appreciate, just how much effort went into the research and writing of this huge volume. The authors were so industrious in compiling facts that it is unlikely that there remains much of importance about Elko County which does not appear somewhere among these pages. The dedication and perseverance of the authors was matched by the faith of the publisher since even the best local history has a limited potential sale. The publication of a work of this magnitude not only provides an excellent reference for future researchers, but extends a challenge to local historians throughout Nevada to produce a similar record for their own counties.

While the Patterson, Ulph, Goodwin volume focuses its attention on the northeastern part of the state, the work by James Hulse, *The Nevada Adventure: A History,* Revised Edition, (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1969), addresses itself to the entire state. The work was published originally in 1965 and immediately received wide acceptance. Suffice here to note that this edition, like its predecessor, is accurate, well-organized and well-written.

In closing this first review column, I would like to emphasize the variety of publishing outlets now available to Nevada authors. Besides the Western Printing and Publishing Company of Sparks, Nevada and the University of Nevada Press in Reno, both of which have released a number of Nevada titles during the past few days and no doubt will continue to do so in the 1970s, numerous companies outside Nevada have published Nevada materials. Three good examples, all published in 1968, are: *The Desert Lake. The Story of Nevada's Pyramid Lake,* by Sessions Wheeler, (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1968); *Lady in Boomtown, Miners and Manners on the Nevada Frontier* by Mrs. Hugh Brown, (Palo Alto: The American West Publishing Co., 1968); and *Mining Camp Days* by Emil W. Billeb, (Berkeley: Howell-North Books, 1968).

For items less than book length, a number of other outlets are available. One of these, the *Nevada Studies in History and Political Science,* published by the University of Nevada Press, has released nine titles to date. Another is the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* which, during the past few years, has printed a number of important articles on Nevada history. In addition, each issue of the *Nevada Highways and Parks* magazine has at least one article on Nevada history, and local newspapers continue active in seeking out and publishing articles on Nevada. Other western magazines, such as *The American West, The Journal of the West* and *Arizona and the West,* have published articles on Nevada during the past year.

The decade of the 1960s was the most productive era in Nevada historiography since the Comstock period. The 1970s should prove equally rich in the quantity and quality of books and articles published for there is so much left to write about Nevada history and fortunately now, publishers ready to print what is written. In future issues of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* it will be my pleasure to keep you informed of such developments.

RUSSELL R. ELLIOTT

What's Going On

A Note From the Editors

WITH THE OPENING of the new decade, the Nevada State Historical Society is initiating several new experiments on behalf of amateur and professional historians in the state. The enlarged format of the *Quarterly* and an expanded set of objectives mark the beginning of this effort.

The Society is more than sixty-five years old, but like the state it was created to serve, it has had an uneven development and there have been periods of borrasca. For most of its early history, the Society survived largely on the tenacity and dedication of one spirited lady, Jeanne Elizabeth Wier, a professor of history at the University of Nevada. Following her death in 1950, the director's office was filled by Mrs. Clara Beatty, who for many years had served as Miss Wier's assistant and who continued to serve until her own death in 1967. Over the years many other conscientious persons assisted in the work of assembling and preserving the Society's collections; among them have been the present director, Mrs. Marian Welliver, and Mrs. Myrtle Myles, the late Mrs. Iveagh Sterry and Mrs. Ray Jefferson.

In view of the limited financial resources at the disposal of the Society, it is remarkable that it has been able to achieve anything in the area of scholarly research and publication. From 1907 until 1912, the officers managed to issue the biennial report required by law in a form that allowed a few scholarly papers and other historical items to be printed. In 1913 the format was changed slightly and for the next thirteen years the Society issued the *Nevada Historical Society Papers* containing a variety of items, notes, biographies, and—in some instances—valuable primary sources. In all of these enterprises, the energy of Miss Wier was the catalyst, but her efforts were not sufficient to keep the publishing program alive in the last years of her life.

A new effort to encourage publication in the name of the Society began in 1957, when Professor William Miller of the University's speech and drama department became active in the Society's scholarly work. Professor Miller's service continued for several years, and the *Quarterly* of the past twelve years has retained approximately the format that he established. Once again the achievements that resulted depended more upon Professor Miller and Mrs. Welliver than upon the community of historians in the state.

There are now more than a half-million people in Nevada and the resources of the state—both in money and historians—are equal to a more ambitious and systematic effort. The Board of Directors and the staff are hopeful that the *Quarterly* can now become an important forum for sharing historical arguments and news as well as a periodical for

reproducing historical documents. The editors invite letters, items of interest, articles, and others notes relevant to Nevada history and social life.

The Pioche Library-Museum

FOR SEVERAL YEARS Lincoln County has been operating a small museum in connection with its library in Pioche. It is located in a building near the center of town on Main Street; the structure was a gift from Mr. and Mrs. James H. Gottfredson in 1960 to the people of the county. The building had formerly been a general merchandise store and for many years had been owned by the A. S. Thompson Company, a pioneer mercantile firm in the area. Among the notable displays are several restored organs, also contributed by Mr. Gottfredson, two rooms from the Conway Ranch home near Caliente, some Indian artifacts, and several mineral collections. The custodian is Harry S. Wilder.

Tenth Annual Conference on the History of Western America

ALMOST ONE THOUSAND Western history enthusiasts will gather in Reno from October 7 to 10, 1970 for the tenth annual conference of the Western History Association. The two and a half day conference will include a program of scholarly papers to be delivered in Reno's Pioneer Theatre Auditorium which will touch upon subjects ranging from history to literature to the anthropology of the American West. Various banquets, a reception by Governor Laxalt in Carson City, and an afternoon in Virginia City are planned by the local arrangement committee.

The first annual conference on the history of Western America was held at Santa Fe in mid-October, 1961. Writers and researchers, publishers and bookmen, librarians and archivists, and "all others with a spark of interest in the American West" were invited to attend. At this meeting plans for a permanent organization were made and future conferences projected. The organization committee immediately arranged for a second conference to meet in Denver in mid-October, 1962. There a constitution was adopted and officers elected for the new Western History Association which has held annual meetings in key western cities since 1962. It was in 1968 that the Association accepted the University of Nevada's invitation to hold the 1970 conference in Reno.

The noted Western historian Ray A. Billington explains the purpose of the organization in the following words:

> The Western History Association is designed to serve as a meeting ground for all persons interested in the North American West, whatever their occupations and however unusual their interests. It hopes to attract as members historians, anthropologists, ethnohistorians, economists, sociologists, students of literature, and just plain Western buffs who enjoy immersing themselves in the glamorous details of the pioneer past.

To further these objectives the Association began publication of a quarterly journal, *The American West,* to appeal to its broad-based membership. The first issue appeared in the winter of 1964. The spring of 1970 will see the appearance of a new and additional publication by the Association, *The Western Historical Quarterly*. Its appeal will be to the specialized interests of researchers in western history. Members of the organization receive both journals for the price of their annual $9 membership fee. The Association now has a membership of over two thousand.

For further information on the October conference inquiries may be directed to Professor William Rowley of the History Department, Reno campus, University of Nevada.

The Southern Nevada Historical Society

THE SOUTHERN NEVADA Historical Society was organized in 1959 and has pursued an active winter schedule over the past ten years. The programs during the present season have been particularly varied. In addition to talks by Florine Lawlor, columnist for the *Las Vegas Sun,* and Frank Fairchild, Superintendent of Mitchell Caverns State Park (California), Mr. K. O. Knudson has conducted a series of informal get-togethers in which the development of mining and ranching in southern Nevada was reviewed. Field trips have included traveling to the Goodsprings mining district in October and a tour of the historic spots in the Las Vegas Valley in November. During the spring, trips are planned for Pahrump Valley and El Dorado Canyon.

At the January meeting of the Society Professor Russell R. Elliott, Chairman of the Nevada Historical Society Board of Trustees, spoke on the need for closer cooperation between the state society and regional organizations.

In Memoriam

VELMA STEVENS TRUETT—Member of the staff, Nevada Historical Society, and author of works on Nevada livestock—on February 10, 1967.

CLARA BEATTY—Director of the Nevada Historical Society and Secretary of the Board of Trustees—on October 25, 1967.

EFFIE MONA MACK—Teacher, historian, and prolific Nevada author—on February 1, 1969.

MILES N. PIKE—Attorney, Nevada Supreme Court Justice, and Chairman, Board of Trustees, Nevada Historical Society—on May 27, 1969.

In our next issue the notes will include: THE NORTHEASTERN NEVADA MUSEUM—Elko; THE NEVADA AND WESTERN HISTORY COLLECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY—Reno; and THE NEVADA STATE MUSEUM—Carson City.

SPO, CARSON CITY, NEVADA, 1970