

**NEVADA**  
**Historical**  
**Society**  
**Quarterly**



**Winter • 1976**

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**EDITOR**

**JOHN M. TOWNLEY**

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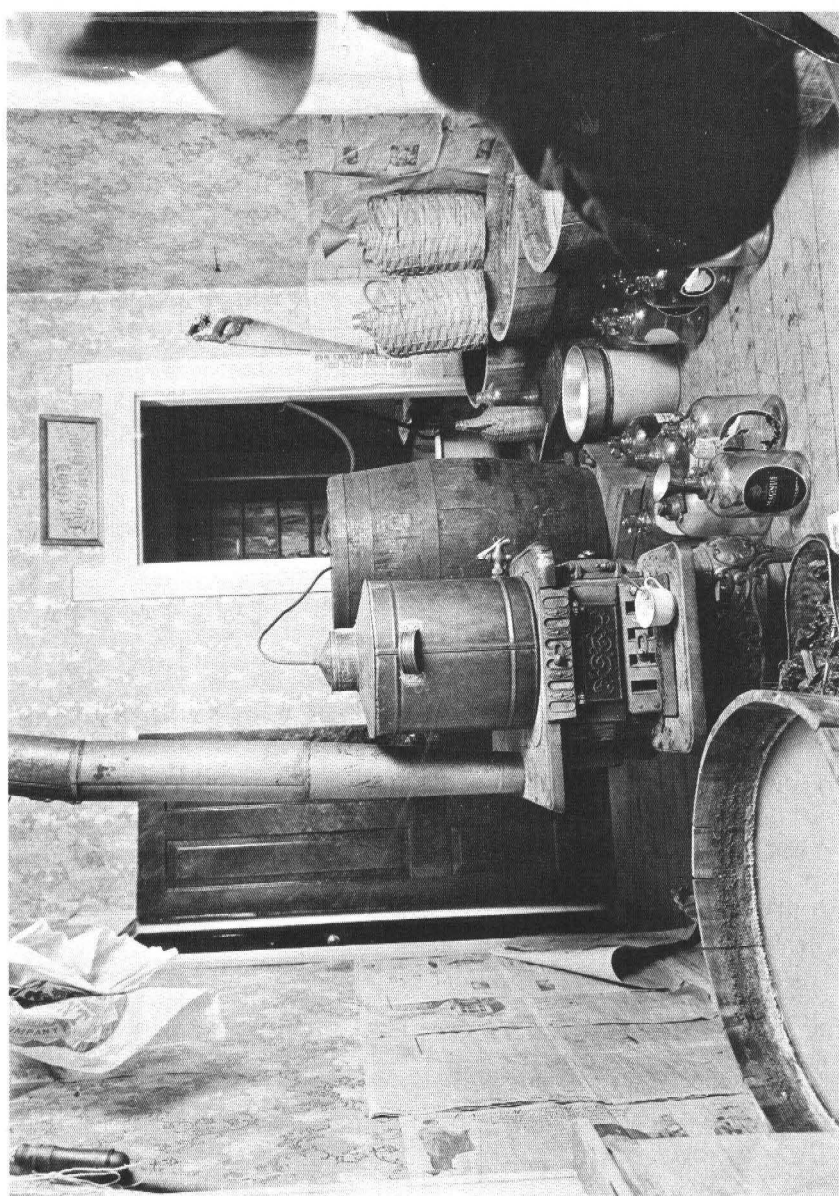
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**THE COVER**

**Main Street,  
Lovelock, 1920's**

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Early Nevada legislatures regarded liquor, at least from a legislative standpoint, as a means of revenue. They established a system of licenses with few restrictions. Saloons and liquor traffic became an accepted part of the social fabric, especially in mining areas. Mark Twain, writing about life in the late nineteenth century, said:

In Nevada for a time, the lawyer, the editor, the banker, the chief desperado, the chief gambler, and the saloon-keeper, occupied the same level in society, and it was the highest. The cheapest and easiest way to become an influential man and be looked up to by the community at large, was to stand behind a bar, wear a cluster-diamond pin, and sell whiskey. I am not sure but that the saloon-keeper held a shade higher rank than any other member of society.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning life in the mining area of Virginia City, Twain wrote:

There were military companies, fire companies, brass bands, banks, hotels, theaters, 'Hurdy gurdy houses,' wide-open gambling places, political pow-wows, civic processions, street fights, murders, inquests, riots, a whiskey mill every fifteen steps, . . . and some talk of building a church . . .<sup>3</sup>

Twain's description may be exaggerated, but it does illustrate the importance of liquor in contemporary social life.

Initial attempts to form temperance societies in Nevada met with limited success. In January, 1880, one group organized at Stillwater in Churchill County with about forty members, but it died completely within a few years. The National Women's Christian Temperance Union was organized in Reno three years later; however, membership in the Nevada branch remained small and activities were diverse. Its work included such responsibilities as "rescue work among unmarried mothers."<sup>4</sup>

Generally, there was little serious concern in Nevada over liquor control before the twentieth century, but change was imminent. After initial success in other areas, the Anti-Saloon League came to Nevada in 1909, promising "to solve the liquor problem." League spokesmen depicted Nevada as having more liquor dealers in proportion to population than any other state in the Union. Mining camps, they said, had more saloons than other businesses and very few legislative restrictions. They promised a determined effort "to secure some wholesome restrictive measures."<sup>5</sup>

Although the League failed to prosper in Nevada and had to be reorganized several years later, dry forces did succeed in passing a local option law in 1911. Rural saloons could be closed under the measure by petition, provided that signatures of at least ten per cent of the taxpayers in the local school district were secured. Before closure could be effected, it was necessary to prove that the saloons were detrimental to public health and community morals. Burden of proof rested on the petitioners.

The town of Elko, with a population of 1,700 people and seventeen saloons, successfully withstood the prohibitionist assault, although sev-

eral saloons were eventually closed in Elko County as a result of the 1911 Local Option Law. Even then, the county was by no means completely dry.<sup>6</sup> By 1915, only two towns in Nevada, Montello and Imlay, prohibited intoxicating liquor sales. Deeds to all property in these railroad towns on the Southern Pacific Railway forbade such sales. But the remaining ninety-one percent of Nevada's population lived in areas allowing liquor to be sold under license. And it was readily available. Federal retail liquor tax receipts issued in Nevada during 1915 totalled 1,285 for a population of 81,875.<sup>7</sup>

Influenced by the Progressive Movement, Nevada adopted an initiative amendment to the state constitution in 1912. Voters could propose a law or an amendment by petition, but the petitioners had to equal ten percent of the qualified voters casting ballots in the last general election and be distributed in such fashion that one area could not impose its will over the entire state. Once a petition had been submitted, the legislature was required to act. If rejected, it was placed before the voters at the next general election. If the voters approved, the petition became law and could not be annulled or repealed for three years.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, changing national and international conditions began to affect local opinion in Nevada. Russia in 1914 had attempted prohibition by Imperial decree. A year later that "Right Little, tight Little Isle of Britain" also was teetering on the verge because of wartime contingencies.<sup>9</sup> At home, Americans were working to revitalize and preserve democracy. Prohibition was frequently mentioned in connection with this effort.<sup>10</sup> Although defeated, a prohibition amendment had been introduced in Congress. And the national Anti-Saloon League, efficiently reorganized in 1913, was beginning to make its presence felt.<sup>11</sup> In Nevada, a segment of recently enfranchised women had begun work to gain laws and social reforms that would conform to those "of other enlightened states."<sup>12</sup> Prohibition was sweeping some of the "enlightened states" they hoped to imitate.

In 1916, the Prohibition Party courageously fielded a candidate for the presidency. But Nevada, conspicuous by her absence from that party's lists of national committeemen and state chairmen, gave slight support.<sup>13</sup> Returns from Nevada's 1916 general elections reflected very little sentiment favoring a national prohibition administration. The total vote for presidential electors in Nevada was 33,187. Of these, the Prohibition Party electors received 347 votes.<sup>14</sup>

The small vote polled by the party in Nevada, however, did not accurately reflect public sentiment on the liquor question. With the nation facing war, many voters probably felt that major changes in the national administration were inadvisable. Even though only one percent of Nevada's voters endorsed a national prohibition administration, a much greater number soon made their wishes known concerning statewide changes.

As prohibition successes in other areas continued to make headline news in Nevada, the dry forces within the state redoubled their efforts.<sup>15</sup>

In mid-December, 1916, prohibitionists filed initiative petitions with the Secretary of State containing 7,355 signatures representing every county. They requested the legislature to vote the state "bone dry" at its next session. Reverend W. K. Howe, pastor of the Reno Presbyterian Church, filed one petition December 13, with 5,499 signatures. Reverend Loyd B. Thomas of Carson City filed a second petition containing 1,856 names. By provisions of the 1912 Initiative Act, the 1917 Legislature was required either to pass the proposed measure or refer it to the voters in November, 1918.<sup>16</sup>

Speculation developed immediately whether the wets or dries would be stronger in the coming legislative session. Opinion differed, but it was generally agreed that the liquor problem was complicated by gambling, horse-racing, and divorce laws.

Some citizens who anticipated secondary benefits did not believe Nevadans were strongly opposed to saloons, but felt prohibition might help eradicate gambling and other undesirable activities. They felt the saloon men must willingly submit to high license fees and strict regulation or face prohibition within two years.<sup>17</sup>

An editor printed a resumé of one petition and noted that this was no "makeshift" measure. He candidly observed:

They are going on principle of whole hog or none, and if they have their way, John Barleycorn will be taboo from garret to cellar in homes, hotels and restaurants either in the mild and blandishing forms of wine and beer, or in the more be-deviling forms of whiskey and gin, either in thimbles, demitasse cups, small flasks, demijohns, kegs, barrels or in the hogsheads. Noway, no how, to have the elixir around without the prescription of a physician of good standing, obtained over your solemn oath that you have an ailment more serious than the bellyache.<sup>18</sup>

One "enthusiastic" prohibitionist stated that his group would rather see the measure defeated than substituted or relaxed in any manner, because "in states where the mild law had been enacted, it proved of no force or effect."<sup>19</sup>

Anticipating strong controversy over the petition, Governor Emmet D. Boyle addressed the Legislature on January 15, 1917, as follows:

The 'initiative' provision in our Constitution and supplementary laws have [sic] been employed to bring before you a measure designed to prohibit the manufacture, consumption, and sale of intoxicating liquors.

This measure under the law must have preferential consideration at your hands and must be adopted or rejected without change. Committed as we all must be to the theory that the public has a right to define its own policy in regard to the ethical questions upon which it naturally divides, and since favorable action by the Legislature on this important measure, while not necessarily depriving the people of a direct voice in its adoption or rejection later, will at least operate to adjudicate a matter in advance of the final and definite settlement of this question by the people themselves which will be brought about by your

unfavorable action on this bill, therefore, however inevitable and desirable prohibition may appear, it is suggested that you expeditiously take the steps necessary to place the question of its adoption or rejection on the ballot, both for the reasons given in the foregoing and because of the probable impairment of legislative efficiency which may be expected to result from an extended consideration by your body of so controversial a subject.<sup>20</sup>

As requested, the Assembly voted on the petition. It was rejected by a margin of thirty-one to five. Many legislators believed Governor Boyle would sign the measure if the Assembly approved it. By defeating it, they allowed Nevadans to express themselves directly by ballot.<sup>21</sup>

The petition made news a second time during the session. After its rejection by the Assembly, Attorney General George B. Thatcher decided it should also be brought before the Senate because the state constitution's initiative provision specified that such acts should be delivered to the legislature, not merely to one house. The Senate, dodging a direct roll call, rejected the measure.<sup>22</sup> However, Senator N.H. Chapin of White Pine County refused to let the question die. He introduced a bill almost identical to the rejected petition. After several evasive maneuvers to avoid action, the Senate finally voted on Chapin's bill. It passed by a margin of twelve to five. It next went to the Assembly where a battle ensued, but the wets emerged victorious when the bill was referred to the Committee on Public Morals. It remained there to die when the session closed.<sup>23</sup>

An idea voiced earlier that retail liquor traffic would "either be regulated or exterminated" began to gain support. One editor commented, "What Nevada might do when she comes to vote next year [1918] is a problem; what she will do in the absence of regulation is no longer open to doubt."<sup>24</sup>

Attempting to bring effective control and perhaps avoid outright prohibition, Senator W. A. Keddie introduced a bill to create an excise board consisting of five members appointed by the Governor, Attorney General, and Secretary of State. Its primary function would be to reduce the number of licenses in force to the point where they did not exceed one for every 500 persons. The board would be empowered to revoke licenses, if necessary, on the basis of consideration for public welfare alone. Increased license fees would help defray board salaries and related expenses. But enemies of the bill attacked it as simply "the creation of fat jobs for a number of politicians."<sup>25</sup> It failed to gain sufficient support and died with the session. Another measure, embodying the same idea of control on a less comprehensive basis, and perhaps less likely to be effective, did gain approval. It authorized boards composed of county officials who would have regulatory powers outside corporate limits to fix hours, conditions, and locations. The act reflected philosophies long since discarded when it prohibited females from participating in the sale or disposition of liquor.<sup>26</sup>

As public concern over the liquor question increased, both sides accelerated their efforts. The Anti-Saloon League, which failed to prosper in

Nevada after its organization in 1909, was reorganized in 1916. In a search for capable leadership, it returned William E. "Pussyfoot" Johnson to Nevada. Formerly with the Government Indian Service in the state, Johnson was now a professional propagandist. His previous work in preventing the sale of liquor to Indians, and in securing convictions for violations whenever possible, made him an effective man in the cause. The League received additional aid from related organizations, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union.<sup>27</sup>

To counteract League propaganda, the National Wholesale Liquor Dealers Association distributed literature charging the League with fear of real prohibition. The Association contended that prohibition did not work in areas already tried and, furthermore, drinking nations historically had "led the world."<sup>28</sup>

A loosely knit organization called United Nevada Industries was formed supposedly by "liquor dealers, property owners, bankers, merchants, labor unions" and others who wanted a "prosperous Nevada." It was not a corporation, but its primary purpose was twofold: to fight prohibition so the members and their families could continue to live, and to protect a legitimate business "still recognized by law." Prohibitionists charged that the organization had created a "slush fund" to be used in defeating dry candidates for political office. United Nevada Industries denied any interest in politics, claiming that the funds were merely to oppose prohibition and not political candidates. After all, their argument continued, wets had the same right to organize as the Anti-Saloon League, and someone should be protecting an industry that contributed "one-third" of the state's tax revenues. Finally, United Nevada Industries contended, the initiative law was not a true saloon law. "It even takes in Horlick's Malted Milk," they said, which would be prohibited from homes if the law should be adopted. Nonetheless, a dubious editor recalled mischievously that the liquor interests had controlled elections in the past, and since the "slush fund" was not to be used against dry politicians, wondered if it might be given instead to aid the Red Cross or Y.M.C.A.<sup>29</sup> The wets appeared weak and poorly coordinated when compared with their opposition.

In a telegram to President Wilson, Governor Boyle encouraged national prohibition laws during the European war, which the United States had just entered, and confidently predicted that Nevada's initiative amendment would be adopted at the next election.<sup>30</sup> With such encouragement, dry forces continued to gain ground nationally. Congress passed the Food Bill (Lever Act) containing prohibitory provisions in August, 1917; thus, foodstuffs could no longer be used to manufacture distilled beverages nor could such beverages be imported. In addition, the bill gave the President regulatory power over use of foodstuffs to manufacture beer and wine. Also in August, the U.S. Senate voted sixty-five to twenty for a prohibition amendment to the federal Constitution, while the House of Representatives approved the prohibition resolution in December, 282 to 128. The measure had to be ratified within six years, but it

passed both Houses by substantial margins.<sup>31</sup> The national prohibition resolution now needed only state legislative approval before becoming the law of the land. With Governor Boyle's support, state prohibition received additional impetus from national advances.

For a while Nevada's opposing groups, wets and dries, appeared near an understanding that would solve their differences. A series of conferences in June, 1918, resulted in plans for defeating the initiative law and adopting a new bill that would compensate for loss of whiskey stocks. Nevada would then become dry by 1920. But dry forces reneged on the agreement, charging that some wets wanted to manipulate the fall elections.<sup>32</sup>

After United States entry, struggles over prohibition in 1918 were overshadowed by the war in Europe. Both sides, however (especially the dries), made efforts to influence opinion before the November general elections. Wets argued that revenue lost through prohibition would force taxes higher and that such action would not solve existing problems but merely create additional difficulties. Dries countered, saying that lost revenue would be more than matched by a subsequent decline in court costs. With liquor outlawed, the crime rate would drop so drastically that jails would become unnecessary; society would be the winner through enforced sobriety.<sup>33</sup>

Of Nevada's two United States Senators, Francis Newlands was classified as a "conservative wet." But his colleague, Key Pittman, claimed to be an outright prohibitionist,<sup>34</sup> at least in his public pronouncements. Pittman, in an open letter to the Nevada Dry Campaign Association, declared himself in favor of the initiative amendment and expressed his intention to support it at the polls. He then enumerated several patriotic reasons why prohibition was desirable.<sup>35</sup> With Pittman's aid, the dry movement gained additional prestige and moral support. However, some people doubted Pittman's sincerity as a full fledged prohibitionist, because of rumors associating him with legendary drinking escapades.

Both sides used numerous imaginative arguments to promote their respective causes. Dry forces patriotically contended that outlawing liquor would aid the war effort, while the wets, in turn, depicted such famous historical persons as Socrates, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Jesus Christ, and John C. Calhoun as opposing prohibition during their lifetimes. Democracy, the dries maintained, would be advanced if liquor could be outlawed. The wets retorted that democracy would be endangered by enacting prohibition legislation.<sup>36</sup>

Neither side, however, put forth the same vigorous effort that might have been expected had there been no European conflict. But the war gave well organized dry forces a patriotic rallying point. Conversely, it placed the poorly organized wets in the unenviable position of appearing unpatriotic, perhaps even disloyal, if they opposed prohibition during a national emergency.

After being urged to read the initiative act carefully before voting, because it could not be changed soon after adoption,<sup>37</sup> Nevadans trekked



to the polls November 5 and gave the drys victory by a good majority, 13,248 to 9,060. Election day passed very quietly.

The title of the newly-enacted measure expressed its intent:

An Act to prohibit the manufacture, sale, keeping for sale, and gift, of malt, vinuous and spiritous liquors, and other intoxicating drinks, mixtures or preparations, making the superintendent of the Nevada state police ex officio commissioner of prohibition, and defining his duties; and providing for the enforcement of this act, and prescribing penalties for the violations thereof.<sup>38</sup>

Explicit in detail, it contained thirty sections and filled almost thirteen pages in the statute books. Esmeralda and Storey were the only counties not returning a majority favoring prohibition.<sup>39</sup>

The initiative act became law when the election results were certified.<sup>40</sup> Prohibitionists were jubilant because about 800 saloons would be eliminated by December 17. The drys conceded that some revenue might be lost for a time, but they believed money formerly spent for liquor would circulate in other channels and generally stimulate business overall. Also, "there might be bootlegging here for a while, but if the officers do their duty this class of gentry will soon be serving time in prison." And finally, the Legislature would be free from the undesirable influence and control of saloon men.<sup>41</sup> However, their unbounded optimism and dreams of utopia were soon to be rudely shattered.

While Nevada struggled with state liquor problems, Congress passed a national wartime prohibition act November 21, 1918, preventing the manufacture of intoxicating liquors after May 1, 1919, and prohibiting its sales after June 30 of the same year. The act would remain effective until the army was demobilized, but Nevada raced ahead by adopting state prohibition almost six months before the national act became effective.<sup>42</sup>

Elsewhere, state legislatures across the nation were quickly ratifying the proposed eighteenth amendment to the federal Constitution. If ratification could be accomplished rapidly, the country would become "permanently dry" on July 1, 1919, when wartime prohibition went into effect. Nebraska, on January 16, 1919, was the thirty-sixth state to ratify, giving the three-fourths majority required for adoption and thus ensuring that wartime prohibition would be followed by Constitutional prohibition in January, 1920.<sup>43</sup>

When the Legislature convened in January, 1919, Governor Boyle addressed both houses as follows:

Nevada having expressed herself unequivocally and favorably on the matter of state prohibition, and both political parties represented here having in their platforms pledged their legislative representatives to the ratification of the Amendment to the Federal Constitution providing for National Prohibition, you are urged to promptly and unanimously ratify the federal action.<sup>44</sup>

The Legislators promptly fulfilled half of the Governor's request by approving the amendment January 22, but not unanimously. The Senate vote was fourteen to one. Ratification, however, was a mere formality because the majority required for adoption had been reached six days earlier.<sup>45</sup>

In their wish to outlaw liquor, proponents had either naively overlooked or seriously underestimated at least one crucial consideration which involved enforcement responsibilities. Many Nevadans erroneously believed federal authorities would immediately assume all enforcement duties once the national laws became effective, thereby relieving state officers of that burden. Nevada, already having state prohibition, would be doubly guarded for a while; but since "local authorities" were "willing to give way to the federal officers," and state control would be in effect less than a year, it was felt that "worries of the constabulary should be in the minimum."<sup>46</sup> Prohibitionists prepared to enjoy an era of sobriety, tranquility, and prosperity; but if they believed the surprised wets would take defeat calmly, they were in for extreme disappointment.<sup>47</sup> Any means at hand, legal or otherwise, were eventually employed as a last resort to keep old John Barleycorn available.

Nevada's initiative prohibition law became effective December 17, 1918, and confusion immediately arose over its provisions despite the thirty very explicit sections. Many people preparing for dry times had stocked supplies of liquor at home. Could drinks legally be served to guests, provided the liquor had been purchased prior to December 17? If liquor could be kept at home for personal use, might it be carried in a hip flask? Should restaurateurs be prosecuted for failing to remove liquor prices from the backs of menus? Could this be a form of the prohibited advertising? These and similar questions, when presented to different authorities, brought conflicting interpretations.<sup>48</sup> As a consequence, several sections of the law were before the State Supreme Court within a month. More significant, however, by December 27, only ten days after the effective date of adoption, a move was underway to organize a citizens' league to halt illicit liquor traffic that already had sprung up inside "soft drink" parlors in some towns.<sup>49</sup> Nevada's thirstier citizens were determined to continue old habits by any means, either fair or foul.

The initiative law proved so confusing that the Legislature, on March 27, 1919, approved an act to liberalize the definition of liquor. As defined in the original act, liquor was:

. . . all malt, vinuous or spirituous liquors, wine, porter, ale, beer or any other intoxicating drink, mixture or preparation of like nature; and all malt or brewed drinks, whether intoxicating or not, shall be deemed malt liquors within the meaning of this act; and all liquids, mixtures or preparations, whether patented or not, which will produce intoxication, and all beverages containing so much as one-half of one per centum of alcohol by volume, shall be deemed spiritous liquors, and all shall be embraced in the word 'liquors,' as hereinafter used in this act.<sup>50</sup>

The March 27 amendment provided for the manufacture and sale of malt drinks and near beer (beverages with less than one-half of one percent alcohol). It also permitted the manufacture and sale of vanilla, lemon, and other extracts for culinary purposes, and perfumes or related articles used for toilet purposes.<sup>51</sup>

Fearing their action might produce results that were unconstitutional,

the Legislators, on April 1, 1919, passed a complete prohibition law. It embodied essentially the same definition of liquor as the March 27 amendment, but the remainder was simplified and shortened, containing only eleven provisions as compared with thirty in the initiative act.<sup>52</sup>

Efforts to get the initiative measure declared unconstitutional by the State Supreme Court failed. Opponents contended that the measure had not been properly adopted; furthermore, it provided double jurisdiction on justices of the peace and district attorneys. When the court upheld its validity, Nevadans found themselves with two state prohibition laws, an initiative act approved by the people and a state prohibition law enacted by the legislature.<sup>53</sup> With two state laws recorded, wartime prohibition coming within months and national Constitutional prohibition approaching in 1920, Nevada should have been the "driest" state in the Union.<sup>54</sup> However, prohibitionist theory now faced the supreme test of practical application.

Riepetown, in eastern Nevada, which may have been established to evade corporate limitations on liquor, was raided the first week in February by the district attorney, sheriff, and several deputies. As a result:

They found the liquor in original and unbroken packages, in coffee pots, syrup jars and other camouflaged surroundings. In one establishment they found eight cases of whiskey which the owner insisted he had saved over for his own use in case of sickness. He stated that while it might seem to the officers as a rather large quantity for one man, the facts were that he was always subject to stomach cramps, and never felt safe unless he had a little of the good old stuff where he could put his hands on it on short notice.<sup>55</sup>

The raid netted three car loads of whiskey, yet prohibitionists believed a few more similar raids would convince bootleggers that illicit liquor trade was unprofitable. They were expected to quickly abandon the practice for a less hazardous occupation. The dries gleefully pointed to high fines collected, plus attorney fees paid out by defendants. Large fines would offset enforcement costs; business income would be stimulated by the fees.<sup>56</sup> Succeeding raids over the state brought corresponding results: confiscation of much illegal whiskey and many illicit stills.<sup>57</sup>

Nevadans supporting prohibition waited patiently for federal authorities to assume enforcement duties. But the federal government promised to enforce the wartime prohibition law, effective July 1, 1919, only "so far as existing machinery" would permit. State prohibitionists anticipated minor difficulties for federal enforcement officials at the beginning, but they believed the reform was "certainly worth the trial."<sup>58</sup>

The Eighteenth Amendment did not forbid purchase or consumption of intoxicating liquor. Only manufacture, sale, or transport were prohibited. Therefore, Congress passed another law, introduced by Representative Andrew Volstead of Minnesota, to enforce the amendment. President Wilson considered the Volstead Act too harsh and vetoed it, but

Congress repassed the measure over Wilson's veto in October, 1919.<sup>59</sup> Still, the Volstead Act was less stringent than Nevada's state laws.

With national prohibition laws defining liquor more leniently than Nevada's Initiative Act, complications were inevitable.<sup>60</sup> The dries were complaining bitterly within three days after the wartime prohibition measure became law. Nevada, controlled by her own strict laws, bordered on towns under national law that, to a degree, were still wet. Some saloons remained open, selling high proof liquors; in a few instances, liquor could be purchased at one location while it was banned next door. Numerous test cases again brought differing interpretations about what constituted legality. Prohibitionists lamented that the people previously had always obeyed the laws of the land, but now they violated practically every provision of the prohibition statutes. Either the "law" should be enforced, or the "farce" repealed, they wailed.<sup>61</sup> But regardless of circumstances or national laws, Nevada had a state prohibition law adopted through the initiative process that could neither be annulled nor repealed for three years.

By January, 1920, after six months of wartime prohibition, and with constitutional "dryness" ready to begin, it was evident that existing enforcement machinery could not cope with the problems at hand. According to the sheriff's department, Reno alone had fifty stills in operation. Federal officials moved to aid local officers in a job the latter had hoped to relinquish when the national laws became effective. But the combined forces proved inadequate to secure compliance. Lack of both funds and personnel hampered effective enforcement.<sup>62</sup>

Yet prohibitionist hopes still remained high. An editorial on January 1, 1920, surmised that "Many Americans may not like prohibition, but they realize that it is so nominated in the end and, like the law-abiding citizens they are, they bow to the will of the majority." Dry forces clung to the hope that arrests and fines would convince violators the bootlegging business was totally unrewarding and the infractions would then cease.<sup>63</sup> Later events proved their assumptions to be overly-optimistic.

Enforcement problems that began with state prohibition continued to mount rapidly under the national laws. Moonshiners employed every conceivable trick to evade detection and continue manufacturing illegal whiskey. At times, stills were operated in old abandoned mine shafts. Other enterprising moonshiners used butane or natural gas to cook the mash and escape detection, since there were no revealing spirals of smoke from the still. Large operations often moved to remote valleys and, if they were discovered by agents, several trips might be required to transport the enormous amount of confiscated supplies and paraphernalia into town. Many operations were capable of producing fifty to one-hundred gallons of whiskey per day.<sup>64</sup> Some enterprising violators resorted to unique methods for protection: when small stills were threatened they were occasionally buried in the sand until danger passed.<sup>65</sup>

The Nevada State Police report of December 31, 1920, noted the tremendous enforcement problems already encountered. After local liquor stocks had dwindled, large supplies began arriving from California, mainly by automobile. The ingenious bootleggers had many routes available, making complete exclusion impossible; but probably two-thirds of them, according to the Police Superintendent, were either apprehended or driven elsewhere. Yet when the importation of tax paid liquor from California dropped off, stills sprang up within the state. Some limited cooperation developed between federal and state officials; but it was not specifically recorded, nor was it extensive. During 1920 and 1921 the State Police handled fifty-seven prohibition cases that produced fines totalling \$4,376. Expenditures on prohibition alone for the same period amounted to \$46,123.18.<sup>66</sup>

The national prohibition enforcement agency first designated the entire state of Nevada as an enforcement district. When that arrangement failed, the eastern part of the state, including Clark, Elko, Lincoln and White Pine Counties, was assigned to federal officers working from Salt Lake City and Arizona. Plumas, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada and Sierra Counties in California were placed under Nevada jurisdiction. In 1925, Nevada was again made a separate district.<sup>67</sup> But a mere shuffling of jurisdiction was not enough to solve the multitude of existing problems.

Many factors contributed to lax enforcement. Aside from the vast areas to be policed in Nevada, no local government wanted to spend the funds necessary for apprehension of violators only to have the state or federal government reap the reward in fines. Money paid for enforcement constituted a drain on local treasuries that was strongly resented.<sup>68</sup> Collaboration was also a problem. Offenders were frequently warned by sympathetic neighbors or townsmen. In some cases, prohibition officers could be bribed into divulging information about forthcoming raids, thus allowing the imperiled bootleggers sufficient notice to escape apprehension and prevent loss of his stock.<sup>69</sup> During the first eleven years of prohibition, approximately one in twelve federal prohibition agents was dismissed for cause.<sup>70</sup> The corruptive effect became very evident.

Incidents frequently occurred that, when viewed with hindsight, produced hilarious results. For example, one constable in eastern Nevada unearthed a still and took the contrivance to his hotel room in Wells. He locked the door for safekeeping but somehow a thief obtained a key and stole the entire works during the constable's absence. The officer believed the former owner was the culprit, but he had no "convincing evidence."<sup>71</sup>

In another instance, a sheriff and deputy went to Rabbit Creek, in the Elko area, to apprehend a bootlegger. But while questioning the suspected violator, a woman, "with the deftness of a professional [baseball] hurler, threw two bottles from the house." And though both bottles were broken upon hitting the ground, the smell left no doubt as to their contents. A thorough investigation failed to disclose a still; consequently, no arrests were made because the "evidence" was completely destroyed.<sup>72</sup>



WANTED—AN UMBRELLA MENDER

At Winnemucca a different fate awaited an unlucky proprietor of a "soft drink" parlor who managed to successfully tip over a shaker full of moonshine when raided. After destroying the evidence, he was arrested on charges of resisting a federal officer. The charge usually was rewarded with six months in jail.<sup>73</sup>

Considering the difficulty of control and the desirability of revenue, one idea which was applied in Reno received considerable attention elsewhere. This concerned adoption of a "Little Volstead Act." Not intended as a prohibitive measure, it did provide penalties for violation of the original Volstead Act. It supposedly would promote better control of establishments where drinks were sold and produce revenue through "semi-occasional fines."<sup>74</sup>

Nothing, however, seemed to slow the illegal manufacture, traffic, and consumption of whiskey. United States District Attorney William Woodburn, speaking before the Lions' Club in Reno, on January 20, 1922, summarized the conditions and problems involved. Seventy-five bootlegging establishments, exclusive of "blind pigs" and "rooming houses," were running wide open in Reno alone, whereas only fifty saloons had been allowed there before prohibition, according to Woodburn.

In other parts of the state you would not know there was such a thing as a prohibition law. In two counties there are municipal stills operating and in one county the sheriff has the only still and no other stills are allowed to operate. In no place in the state except Reno and possibly Tonopah is there any good liquor left. In every other place jackass brandy, which is nothing but poison, is being distributed broadcast.<sup>75</sup>



Woodburn commented that the necessity of a search warrant guaranteed good business for bootleggers. Also, the requirement that evidence of sale, not merely manufacture, was necessary for conviction posed another handicap. He censured the general public for apathy toward the law, not caring whether it was enforced or not, and condemned police and other peace officers for taking no part whatever in prohibition enforcement. Woodburn charged that police and county officers had acted as witnesses in only three of more than 200 cases prosecuted. He concluded by lamenting that "Three prohibition officers are all that this state has and they cannot be everywhere."<sup>76</sup>

The prohibition experiment clearly faced tremendous obstacles. A federal grand jury making its report at Carson City in January, 1923, admitted that prohibition enforcement in Nevada was a "failure." In fact, the existing governmental enforcement machinery had failed so completely that many people regarded "the Volstead Act as a joke." Federal officials were charged simultaneously with neglect of duties. Even if state and county officials failed to perform their duties, the report continued, this provided no valid excuses for laxity by federal officers.<sup>77</sup>

In 1923, the Legislature had its first opportunity to reconsider state prohibition because the initiative measure had been in effect the required three years. During that time, uncontrolled flagrant violations of the law occurred and no prospect for abatement existed. Several federal officers had been shot, and at least one was killed, trying to enforce prohibition in Nevada.<sup>78</sup>

Meanwhile, public opinion within the state slowly but surely turned against prohibition and the excesses it generated. Even strong supporters who previously upheld the experiment began to criticize. After news of a raid in Washington, D.C., one editor cynically noted that the city had long been "wide open" with prohibition officers playing the game.

Had the cloak rooms of the capitol building been raided it is probable that a considerable number of congressmen and senators would have been caught with the 'goods' in their possession: If the government really desires to enforce prohibition it would set a good example by first cleaning up Washington.<sup>79</sup>

Closer to home, there were probably several Nevadans who believed the dubious tactics employed by two enterprising federal officers might lead to further underhanded methods of apprehension. Coming to Reno, ostensibly for divorce, the two agents managed "proper introductions," that led to the "inside circle." Once acquainted, they secured damaging evidence and eventually arrested more than twenty persons, including several prominent citizens.<sup>80</sup>

Of greater importance, however, was the financial consideration surrounding enforcement. Governor James G. Scrugham unsuccessfully requested appropriations to facilitate cooperation between federal and state officers.<sup>81</sup> United States District Attorney George Springmeyer, who replaced Woodburn in 1922, also got into the act. Springmeyer noted the enforcement failure and personally proposed a law requiring an appropriation of \$52,500 to correct matters. Prohibitionists and wets both

protested immediately; every saloon in Nevada, they said, operated "in violation of state and national laws, and the people know it and they don't care." The cry continued, "If the federal government wants to enforce prohibition let them get busy and do so, but if it don't want to enforce the law, or can't do it, then why pile additional expense on the local taxpayer."<sup>82</sup>

The protesters questioned whether Springmeyer, a federal officer, was within his jurisdiction in requesting the state legislature to pass specific laws concerning prohibition enforcement. His action, they said, amounted to undue pressure by a federal official on a state legislature. "The truth of the matter," some thought, was that prohibition laws were "too stringent." Far too many persons were "publicly upholding the law and privately drinking their home-made wine." The criticism continued in a caustic tone:

Someone has loquaciously said that the prohibition law will be amended as soon as the private stocks of some of our congressmen are gone. It is high time that the federal law is amended to permit the use of beer and wine. It is not the time for Nevada legislature to be creating a state constabulary to enforce an unpopular law. . . . If the federal agents are a failure, how can a state constabulary expect to do any better?<sup>83</sup>

Under the prevailing public opinion, there was little doubt that prohibition legislation would be a major issue in the 1923 legislative session. In early January, Senator A.L. Scott of Lincoln County introduced two bills in the Senate — one to repeal the initiative prohibition measure, and a companion bill to remove the state liquor law from the statutes.<sup>84</sup> The two bills were speedily referred to the Judiciary Committee.

Scott contended his measures were based on economic considerations; the federal government relied too heavily upon state resources for enforcement. Repeal of the laws could cause the federal government to increase its force, thereby relieving the state of some onerous expense in the matter. Opponents declared that economics were not involved; nevertheless, the Senate voted to repeal the state liquor acts, eleven to five.<sup>85</sup>

In passing the measures, the Senate "reflected the frame of mind of Nevada people on the subject of prohibition," but some feared Governor Scrugham might veto the bills.<sup>86</sup> Still, encouragement was strong for total repeal. State repeal would not affect the Volstead law, but even then "a liberal interpretation of the prohibition law" was necessary for the "general welfare." Supporters contended that alcoholic liquors should be available for medicinal purposes, but state laws prevented doctors from writing prescriptions requiring liquor. And, if the prescription could be written, there was no legitimate alcohol or liquor to be had within the state. "Saneness and sense should go hand in hand, repeal a law that does not contain an iota of either."<sup>87</sup> They said prohibition was a "fiasco" brought on by reformers who were usually "well-paid hypocrites."<sup>88</sup>

Numerous bills were introduced in the Assembly that hopefully would replace the stringent state laws, but that body overwhelmingly approved

Scott's repeal bills by a vote of twenty-seven to nine. Only the Governor's signature stood between the Legislature and total repeal.<sup>89</sup>

The Governor, however, refused to cooperate. He signed the measure repealing the Legislature's prohibition law, but vetoed the bill that would have repealed the Initiative Act. If both laws were repealed the state would be without a prohibition law and thus automatically under the Volstead Act. Governor Scrugham believed the state should not "lightly surrender its sovereign right to regulate its own domestic affairs." He requested that another state prohibition law be enacted that would conform closely to the national acts before the Initiative measure was repealed.<sup>90</sup>

The Legislature was equally as determined as the Governor and would not be thwarted. On February 13, 1923, the Senate voted twelve to five to override the Governor's veto. The Assembly, agreeing with the Senate, followed suit three days later with a vote of twenty-nine to seven.<sup>91</sup> Nevada no longer had a state liquor law,<sup>92</sup> but a bill introduced earlier by Assemblyman George A. Whiteley looked promising. It proposed to take the Volstead Act as the state's prohibition law. However, Attorney General M. A. Diskin warned Governor Scrugham that the Whiteley bill was unconstitutional because the title did "not express the intent of the act." As a result, after it passed the Legislature, the Governor refused either to sign or veto the bill.<sup>93</sup>

The Volstead Act therefore became Nevada's prohibition law on February 22, 1923. Later attempts to adopt that law in detail as the state's prohibition law were defeated.<sup>94</sup> After the Whiteley bill became law without a signature, district attorneys refused it as a basis for prosecution because of its doubtful constitutionality. It was soon declared invalid by the State Supreme Court.<sup>95</sup>

Resolutions were discussed for both the Senate and Assembly that would request Congress to modify the Eighteenth Amendment. But the Legislature evidently was content to rest with the gains made up to that moment. They had repealed the state laws; resolutions could be deferred until a later date.<sup>96</sup>

With the state laws repealed, many people eagerly anticipated the purchase of actual bottled-in-bond liquor within weeks after restrictions had been cleared away. The whiskey, plus a doctor's prescription necessary for purchase, was expected to cost about \$7.50 per pint, or approximately "one-thousand" percent more than pre-prohibition days, but it seemed "reasonable enough."<sup>97</sup>

Nonetheless, repeal of the stringent state laws in favor of more lenient national acts failed to halt the tremendous bootlegging business in Nevada. The practice apparently accelerated. Throughout 1923, violations continued to mount; thirty-one persons were arrested in one week at Tonopah. Both the United States Marshal and the federal court at Carson City were kept busy.<sup>98</sup> Effective prohibition enforcement appeared virtually impossible.

In September, 1923, Governor Scrugham returned to Nevada from a governors' meeting in Washington and requested a meeting of state and

federal officials at Reno on November 12. Plans were to be devised for cooperation between all categories of officers so that prohibition could be thoroughly enforced. Scrugham believed Nevada had a responsibility to work with federal officials, even though no state law required such action.<sup>99</sup> However, the Reno meeting produced sharp friction between federal District Attorney Springmeyer and several state and local district attorneys. Their differences virtually insured even less future cooperation.<sup>100</sup>

Perhaps the most novel enforcement attempt came at McGill, Nevada. Catching bootleggers "with the goods" seemed almost impossible. Therefore, in December, 1922, several prominent offenders were warned to leave town or face arrest on vagrancy charges. Any success was temporary because nine months later conditions were so bad as to seriously interfere with local copper plant and mine operations. Frequently a hundred men (or more) failed to appear for work, and many who came were unable to perform satisfactorily because of drunkenness. The plants and surrounding lands were both owned by the company which finally, in desperation, used its ownership advantage in attacking the problem. A note was sent to all bootleggers doing business on company property:

It has been brought to our attention that you have established the practice of selling moonshine and other intoxicating beverages, which as you know is contrary to company regulations. In view of this you are requested to vacate your house and the company's business premises immediately. A copy of this letter is being sent to Sheriff Nicholson, who will make the necessary arrangements to see that you carry out the above instructions.<sup>101</sup>

Bootleggers were given a few hours head start on the sheriff. The company then hired a night watchman to look for "hip peddlers" operating at the plant after dark.<sup>102</sup>

Arrests for violations in Nevada continued during 1924, while the corrupting influence of prohibition legislation reached into high echelons. Nevada's federal prohibition chief was charged and eventually convicted of misconduct in office. The officer, Captain J. P. Donnelly, resigned his position and fought a losing battle in the courts, finally paying a fine of \$500.<sup>103</sup>

By early 1925, jail space was "at a premium" in Nevada. Washoe, Ormsby, and Churchill County jails were filled to capacity with liquor law violators. Elko and White Pine jails also contained United States prisoners, but some counties refused their facilities for federal use. Both Mineral and Storey Counties declined completely; Douglas County had room for three prisoners at the time, but it was "considered a bad place during winter because of the heavy expense of keeping it heated."<sup>104</sup>

Governor Scrugham, speaking to the Legislature on January 20, 1925, noted the problems facing society where practices that were once legal and generally accepted had suddenly become illegal. The Governor, realizing that public acceptance was necessary before the law could ever be enforced, called for an enlightened public attitude. "Public sentiment

is the greatest law in existence and the responsibility of the public is as great as the responsibility of its servants."<sup>105</sup>

The Governor's pleas for understanding and public cooperation with enforcement officials fell on deaf ears. During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1925, 331 prohibition violators were convicted. An average jail sentence of 73.83 days was assessed on offenders, plus an average fine of \$224.77. Total fines amounted to \$74,400,<sup>106</sup> but the fines were no deterrent to the determined bootleggers.

A reflection of the changing public and official attitudes was demonstrated by one particular event in 1925. The sheriff of Churchill County was fined for contempt by the federal court because he allowed prohibition violators to attend movies and gave them liberties that would not have been permitted to robbers or similar criminals. An editor summed up the situation well, remarking that "The latter [robbery] is generally held to be a crime, the other [bootlegger] an unfortunate who failed to outwit enforcement officers."<sup>107</sup>

Throughout 1926 prohibition officers continued raids that frequently netted large quantities of moonshine whiskey. For example, one trip by officers into Steptoe Valley, about twenty-five miles north of Ely, uncovered 825 gallons of mash and 325 gallons of whiskey. The contest between violators and officers raged on. When an unarmed bootlegger was killed near Pyramid Lake by an agent, the violence prompted one editor to point out disgustedly that "in this great country of ours, human life is held mighty cheap."<sup>108</sup> Sentiment had turned sharply against the "Noble experiment."

Enforcement agencies by 1926 had alienated or completely lost whatever public support and good will previously existed in Nevada. When examinations were given later to employ more officers, there were not enough applicants to fill the positions. And attempts to create support for enforcement of the laws met vigorous opposition, especially if the plan involved use of funds from local treasuries.<sup>109</sup> By late 1926, jails in western Nevada were filled and overflowing with violators, prompting fears that additional convictions might require construction of new and larger jails.<sup>110</sup> The picture of empty, useless jails, painted by prohibitionists eight years earlier, had become a nightmare in reverse.

A referendum vote was taken in the 1926 general election on an anti-prohibition resolution, asking Congress to amend the Eighteenth Amendment. The resolution requested that states be allowed to frame their own definitions of intoxicating liquor. Nevada voters approved that resolution by a margin of four to one.<sup>111</sup> The results merely reinforced earlier pronouncements that wet sentiment predominated.<sup>112</sup>

In Nevada, resentment continued to build as reports of extreme punishment for violators in other areas circulated within the state. Under the "majesty of the law," people were being sentenced to life imprisonment as habitual criminals for minor infractions of the law.<sup>113</sup> A remark concerning gangland killings in the East that "The Volstead act has certainly developed the greatest murder proficiency of any law that ever went onto the calendar," was well taken.<sup>114</sup>

By October, 1928, conditions in Nevada were depicted by these words of an observant editor:

Prohibition in Nevada has not been prohibition. It has kept the federal court busy for the past ten years, and today road houses, soft drink joints and home brew have taken the place of the licensed saloon. Despite the condemning of licensed saloons the fact must stick out to the drys that there was more law and order and less generally drinking under open saloon days than there is today. The sale of sugar, corn, corks, bottles, kegs and train loads of grapes is the best evidence of the assertion and the jails back up the history of the case.<sup>115</sup>

Prohibition was charged with making criminals of "half the population of the United States."<sup>116</sup>

The accusations acquired additional validity with raids, such as one in Las Vegas that brought the Mayor, Police Commissioner, and former Chief of Police, plus many accomplices, under arrest. The number of prisoners was so large that buses were required to transport them to federal court at Carson City.<sup>117</sup> Finally, the backlog of federal cases became great enough in Nevada that "bargain days"<sup>118</sup> were proclaimed. Violators simply appeared before the judge without benefit of trial by jury, pled guilty, paid the fine and, presumably, returned to bootlegging.

Attention given to prohibition at national levels during the 1928 political campaigns concerned modification rather than abolition of existing laws. Nevada calmly accepted the decision.<sup>119</sup> By 1932, however, problems had reached such proportions nationally that definite and absolute repeal of the law was required. For Nevadans it was a period of watchful waiting,<sup>120</sup> but not one in which they delayed until legality prevailed before slaking their thirst.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected president in 1932 on a platform containing a plank which called for eradication of the liquor laws. This development pressured the Seventy-second Congress into action. On February 20, 1933, the old Congress approved submission of the Eighteenth Amendment to state conventions for repeal. Copies of the resolution were forwarded to states the following day for action by the conventions. The 1933 Nevada Legislature provided that delegates be chosen from each county on May 27 to attend a state convention set for September 5, 1933. Thirty-nine of forty delegates at Nevada's State Convention voted for repeal. Nevada was the forty-second state to ratify the Eighteenth Amendment, not doing so until it had already been legally adopted, and the twenty-second state to approve its repeal fourteen years later.<sup>121</sup>

National prohibition finally ended December 5, 1933, at 3:32:30 when the Utah State Convention ratified adoption of the Twenty-first Amendment to the Constitution, thereby repealing the Eighteenth Amendment. One Nevadan lightly remarked that ratification by Utah was a "polite gesture," because that state presumably would remain "as dry after repeal as before."<sup>122</sup> Nevadans at the moment, however, were uncon-



cerned with Utah's conditions or problems. They were happy that a local problem, which had defied solution since December 17, 1918, had at last disappeared.

Frederick Lewis Allen, writing about national prohibition, mentioned the ease with which it was made a law of the land.<sup>123</sup> In retrospect, Nevada did not differ radically from that pattern when it adopted prohibition in 1918, prior to national legislation. Dry forces within Nevada were better organized than the wets. But if the wets had protested strongly, animosity probably would have run higher against them, because products used to manufacture liquors were supposedly needed for the war effort.

The same patriotic fervor that supported World War One also carried the idea that Utopia would reign once the conflict ended, and it would be greatly enhanced by prohibition. Anyone who opposed these ideas on patriotism and a glorious future would have been cast in an unfavorable light. Consequently, many who might have otherwise opposed prohibition went along with the experiment.

If dry forces had superior organization prior to 1920, it is apparent that wets were better prepared afterward — at least the bootleggers. All conceivable measures were employed to keep whiskey available for those who desired it. Much collusion occurred between bootleggers and the consuming public (if such a distinction may be made), with officials frequently joining in. Under prevailing conditions, public opinion shifted.

Some Nevadans consistently opposed prohibition, but many who initially favored the law soon realized the futility of it all. Perhaps they did not reject the idea theoretically, but were convinced it could never be enforced. State prohibition laws were repealed at the first opportunity, in 1923, and three years later Nevada voters overwhelmingly expressed themselves in favor of changing the national laws.

During the last half-dozen years of the prohibition experiment, Nevadans continued to acquire liquor whenever and wherever possible, without regard for laws — a practice to which they had become accustomed. Meanwhile, they waited for the remainder of the nation to recognize a principle which they had learned earlier, that some facets of life are almost immune to successful regulation by legislation.

### Notes

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89. *Review-Miner*, February 9, 1923, p. 1, c. 3; *Reno Evening Gazette*, February 1, 1923, p. 1, c. 7; *Ely Record*, January 12, 1923, p. 2, c. 2; *Carson City Daily Appeal*, February 1, 1923, p. 1, c. 5; February 2, 1923, p. 1, c. 5; p. 2, c. 1; *Tonopah Daily Bonanza*, February 1, 1923, p. 1, c. 1.
90. *Carson City Daily Appeal*, February 5, 1923, p. 1, c. 3; February 16, 1923, p. 1, c. 5; *Reno Evening Gazette*, February 5, 1923, p. 1, c. 7.
91. *Review-Miner*, February 16, 1923, p. 1, c. 4; *Reno Evening Gazette*, February 3, 1923, p. 9, c. 2; February 13, 1923, p. 1, c. 2; February 16, 1923, p. 1, c. 1; *Carson City Daily Appeal*, February 13, 1923, p. 1, c. 6; February 16, 1923, p. 1, c. 5.
92. *Las Vegas Age*, February 17, 1923, p. 1, c. 5.
93. *Reno Evening Gazette*, quoted in *Ely Record*, February 9, 1923, p. 7, c. 2; *Reno Evening Gazette*, February 3, 1923, p. 2, c. 4; February 19, 1923, p. 1, c. 1; *Carson City Daily Appeal*, February 17, 1923, p. 1, c. 5; *Ely Record*, February 16, 1923, p. 2, c. 3; p. 7, c. 2; February 23, 1923, p. 1, c. 1; p. 7, c. 4.
94. *Carson City Daily Appeal*, March 6, 1923, p. 1, c. 1; *Review-Miner*, February 23, 1923, p. 1, c. 4; March 2, 1923, p. 1, c. 6; *Reno Evening Gazette*, February 17, 1923, p. 1, c. 1.
95. *Reno Evening Gazette*, February 21, 1923, p. 2, c. 4; March 21, 1923, p. 1, c. 7; March 26, 1923, p. 6, c. 1.
96. *Ely Record*, March 2, 1923, p. 3; *Carson City Daily Appeal*, February 2, 1923, p. 4, c. 1; *Reno Evening Gazette*, February 24, 1923, p. 1, c. 1.
97. *Carson City Daily Appeal*, February 23, 1923, p. 1, c. 1; *Reno Evening Gazette*, February 22, 1923, p. 1, c. 1.
98. *Ely Record*, April 27, 1923, p. 2, c. 4; June 22, 1923, p. 1, c. 2; December 7, 1923, p. 1, c. 5; December 14, 1923, p. 1, c. 6; December 21, 1923, p. 1, c. 5; *Las Vegas Age*, January 23, 1923, p. 1, c. 5.
99. *Ely Record*, November 2, 1923, p. 5, c. 4.

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outlying counties in the state recall more traditional approaches. The urban center with regular growth, as in the Reno/Carson City area suggest the demographics of recent urban studies. The rapid growth and constantly changing population of Clark County represents a dimension not often surveyed. Taken together, these three facets of demographics in Nevada make the state an ideal laboratory in which to study language stability and change.

The project officially began in the spring of 1976, with a grant from the Research Council at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. An earlier grant had already allowed, in 1972, a preliminary investigation of speakers of Black English Vernacular in Clark County. The methodology of the earlier study was to prove instrumental for the aims of the present survey.

### **Historical Antecedents**

The systematic analysis of language has been a scholarly pursuit for hundreds of years, but comparative methods between languages had its initial impetus with an address delivered in 1786, in which Sir William Jones noted that Sanskrit bears a resemblance to Latin and Greek, a resemblance too close to be accidental. For nearly one hundred years after Jones' address, European scholars examined correlations between and among languages. It was not until 1876 that Georg Wenker began to look at variations within a language.<sup>1</sup> He noted that his native tongue, German, varied strikingly from region to region. He set out to determine what differences in pronunciation could be described and patterned. He composed a list of forty sentences and sent the list to local schoolmasters in 40,376 villages. He asked the schoolmasters to rewrite the sentences in an eye-dialect form, that is, respelling the words much like authors rewrite English to capture the flavor of local pronunciations (e.g., "He warn't no 'count at ridin' harses, but he et reg'lar.")).

Wenker received 44,251 responses to his request, a return which is indicative of Teutonic responsibility and dedication to scholarship.

The major failing of Wenker's study was that local schoolmasters had no particular background in phonology, and no systematic manner with which to transcribe the sounds they heard. Consequently, the returned sample was uneven in quality. In 1926, maps showing the results of the study began appearing in print under the general editorship of F. Wrede. It is doubtful that the entire set of data will ever be completely presented. The information is now so dated as to be worthless. However, the major value of the study had been established early on: that linguistic changes are patterned and occur in different regions of a single language area. Wenker had demonstrated a value in analyzing differences in pronunciation within a language.

One of the scholars inspired by Wenker was a Frenchman names Jules Gillieron.<sup>2</sup> Gillieron felt that Wenker had an excellent idea, but that it had been poorly executed. The son of a scientist, Gillieron had been drilled in the scientific method of the day. He determined that the study of language change needed to be tightly controlled. To accomplish this, he composed

a questionnaire containing two thousand words and phrases. He then trained a greengrocer in the principles of phonetic transcription and sent the youth out to interview people face-to-face in 600 communities around France. Edmond Edmont bicycled his way through France and adjoining strips in Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy to become the patron saint of modern linguistic fieldworkers. The *Atlas Linguistique de la France* appeared in full between 1896 and 1908.

The value of Gillieron's work cannot be underestimated. For the first time, he noted that there is a difference between urban and rural speakers, and that the language in large cities influences surrounding areas. That is to say, people around Paris are influenced by the language of the city. As people were interviewed farther away from the city, the influence of Paris as a focal point was less discerned. At the same time, the French linguistic atlas was denigrated for having too loose a network of communities, and for failing to include whole sentences. But Gillieron's contribution was the use of a fieldworker and a face-to-face interview. He pointed the way toward more rigorous methods to all who followed.

Problems of accuracy and determination of specific meanings were attended to by Karl Jaberg and Jakob Jud, whose *Sprach-und Sachatlas Italiens und der Sudschweiz* appeared between 1928 and 1940.<sup>3</sup> In addition to Gillieron's work on variances between urban and rural speakers, they noted that sex and education also have a bearing on language variety. They demonstrated the value of learning from the good examples as well as the mistakes of others.

A number of other linguistic atlases were initiated in European language areas. Some were completed. In the United States, language scholars were becoming concerned that little had been done in this country, since there were obvious variations in English pronunciation and vocabulary between northern and southern states. American scholars had been looking to the Continent and England for the lead in language study. It was not until word was received of Joseph Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary* (1895-1905), that American language scholars initiated work in this country on an organized basis. To this end, the American Dialect Society was formed in 1889.<sup>4</sup> The first president of the society was Francis James Child, whose study of English and Scottish ballads lent credence to the examination of variants within a single language.

In 1890, *Dialect Notes*, the journal of the society, began to appear. It contained lists of word variants found in particular regions. In 1939, the society experienced financial difficulties and had to be reorganized. The name of the journal was changed to *Publications of the American Dialect Society* (PADS), but kept as its goal the eventual publication of an American dialect dictionary after the fashion of Wright's dictionary. During the 1920's the Americans began to feel that an adequate lexical study could not be realized until a complete description of pronunciation had been made. (Some members of the society did not agree, including its most famous member, the man who accomplished an inestimable amount in forwarding the study of English in America, H. L. Mencken. In 1944,

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survey questionnaire, but is something that utilizes the aspects of both types while not being rigidly bound to either. At the same time the Nevada questionnaire goes beyond either type.

The main function of the linguistic geographer's concern about the comparability of data led to long term use of the format of the questionnaire used in the *Linguistic Atlas of New England*. While comparability is one desirable trait from one language study to another, it cannot be the overriding factor in the selection of items for a questionnaire because earlier questionnaires oftentimes neglected some of the more important aspects of language, particularly those dealing with stylistic variation. The type of questionnaire used in the linguistic atlas studies emphasized rural life styles, farm implements and equipment, names for different types of crops and methods of collecting those crops. In the intervening forty years since the beginnings of dialect studies in the United States, the population shift has become more urban in nature and this led to the development of a type of questionnaire for urban studies which eliminated all references to farm implements, farming and many of the types of vocabulary items labeled as old-fashioned. For example, the difference between "snuggies" and "teddies", the use of terms like "step-ins", "privy" and "Chic Sales." Many incidental vocabulary items serve as a basis for comparison, particularly in pronunciation comparisons. But that type of questionnaire would not suffice in a state where few people know the difference between a sheaf of wheat and a quahog. Consequently, although linguistic atlas worksheets contain the same items for investigation throughout the country, the questions are often of little value outside of a relatively narrow regional setting.

It would seem from the foregoing, that because of outdated methods, that dialect research need not be undertaken; however, we do need knowledge of language variation in both rural and urban areas. We need studies of language characteristics of a wide variety of the population, not simply the narrowly prescribed population that seemed to be the main basis for traditional atlas studies. We need to examine correlations of linguistic variations in stylistic varieties within a speech group and to look at differences in characteristics of age, sex, social class, education, occupation, income levels, cultural isolation, ethnic background.

The questionnaires used for the more recent urban surveys have tended to emphasize stylistic variation and syntactic systems by asking open-ended questions of a nature designed to interest and excite or becalm the respondent. Doing so has given us additional information about the relative productive competence of the respondents and occasionally has also given evidence of receptive competence, though on a much lesser scale. There have been more recent studies which have included repetition tests and judgments of grammaticality or appropriate usage.<sup>8</sup>

The questionnaire for the Nevada Language Survey is comprised of four main parts. The first part includes biographical information which is used to determine the demographics of the study. Such questions as age,

occupation, amount of time lived in a particular area, and questions designed to elicit information of an individual's speech acquisition as a child are all included. The second section is a set passage designed to elicit a variety of pronunciation forms in a rather rigid formal setting. The third section is comprised of a series of open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are those which require detailed answers on the part of the respondent. Some of these are designed to be very low-keyed, for example, "Tell me about what you studied in school when you were younger." Other questions are designed to excite the respondent, to change the stylistic form in which a person might speak. For example, "Have you ever been in a situation where you thought you might die? Tell me about it." The fourth major section of the questionnaire is devoted to short response items. For example, in a non-threatening way, respondents are asked to describe types of things people might have for breakfast, particular foods that might be desired for lunch, different cooking utensils, and different items around the house.

In addition to the standard items used for socio-linguistic surveys and linguistic geography surveys, the Nevada Language questionnaire has a section devoted to onomastics, that is, the pronunciation of names in the region and spellings of names which are not normally found on maps. The purpose of this last is to utilize the questionnaire and the fieldwork to as high a degree as possible. In some cases fieldworkers are asked to glean additional information concerning folklore in an area as well as occupational terms of unusual occupations or occupations considered peculiar to Nevada, such as legalized gaming.

The name section of the questionnaire will supplement information already known concerning name studies in the state. However, as in many name studies, a great deal of information is missing concerning pronunciation of names, particularly by auslanders in any given region in the state. For example, unless people live in a particular region in Nevada, they may not know how to pronounce names like "Lodi", "Owyhee" or "Moapa".

Ultimately, a questionnaire needs to collect information regarding social evaluations and grammatical evaluations, and to reflect the population of an entire area in all social classes, in all ethnic backgrounds. The questionnaire in Nevada, therefore, differs from one, say, in Louisiana, in that Nevada has a greater preponderance of people with a Basque background, while Louisiana has a larger population of people with a French-speaking background.

### **The Respondents**

Traditional studies in the United States divided respondents, then called "informants" into three types.<sup>9</sup> Type One informants were the oldest members of a community with less than an eighth grade education. Normally these respondents would be second or third or even fourth generation natives. Type Two respondents were generally middle-aged,

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tion and vocabulary reflect both formal and street education, ethnic background and origins, and all the factors which contribute to labeling social class. It is well known, for example, that people form judgments about a person's intelligence or class ranking simply from pronunciation, regardless of the content of the message. In fact, G. B. Shaw's play *Pygmalion* is a fictionalized account of an experiment designed to change a person's social class by changing her pronunciation. Eliza Doolittle is transformed by Professor Henry Higgins into a beautiful young woman who acquires the external accoutrements of position and bearing. The model for Higgins was Professor Henry Sweet, a renowned phoneticist of the late nineteenth century who could determine the place of residence and the class ranking of Londoners simply by listening to them speak.

Although dialect variations in Nevada are not so great as those in London, the Nevada Language Survey will nonetheless demonstrate the striking differences between, say, a black speaker for the near west side of Las Vegas whose parents came from around Tallulah, Louisiana, and a rancher from Spring Valley whose family has lived along the eastern border of Nevada for four generations. Between two such extremes is a multitude of dialect features that accurately delineate Nevadans from one another and from speakers in other regions. This survey satisfies the requirements of a model by which to test aspects of linguistic theory, while providing a correlation between linguistic and social variables.

### Notes

1. Winfred P. Lehmann, *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), pp. 110 ff.
2. Leonard Bloomfield, *Language* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1933), pp. 324-27.
3. Raven I. McDavid, Jr., in *Structure of American English* by W. Nelson Francis (New York: The Ronald Press, 1958), p. 487.
4. H. L. Mencken, *The American Language*, 4th ed. rev. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), pp. 52 ff.
5. Walter A. Wolfram, *A Sociolinguistic Description of Detroit Negro Speech* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1969), pp. 4-9.
6. Gary N. Underwood, "American English Dialectology: Alternatives for the Southwest," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, vol. 2, 19-40.
7. Labov, op. cit.
8. Rudolph C. Troike, "Receptive Competence, Productive Competence, and Performance," *Georgetown University Monograph Series on Language and Linguistics* 22, 66-67.
9. Hans Kurath, *Handbook of the Linguistic Geography of New England* (Providence: Brown University, 1939), p. 44.
10. I hereby notify the more than twenty fieldworkers for the Nevada Language Survey: Your names and contributions will *not* be relegated to a footnote. In the general volume describing the language of Nevada you will be duly recognized.
11. Lee A. Pederson, "Tape/Text and Analogues," *American Speech*, vol. 49, nos. 1 & 2, 5-23.

# ***The Development of Lovelock***

by Russell McDonald

MANY OF THE ARGONAUTS in their overland journey west to California in 1849 and the immediate subsequent years followed along the course of the Humboldt River. Upon arrival at the Great Meadows (also called Lassen's Meadows), the present site of the Rye Patch Reservoir, it was time to rest, refit and refurbish. This oasis in the desert offered a singular opportunity to prepare themselves for crossing the tortuous Forty Mile Desert. A forty-niner who arrived at the Great Meadows in August 1849 wrote in his journal:

This marsh for three miles is certainly the liveliest place that one could witness in a lifetime. There is some two hundred and fifty wagons here all the time. Trains going out and others coming in and taking their places is the constant order of the day. Cattle and mules by the hundreds are surrounding us, in grass to their knees, all discoursing sweet music with the grinding of their jaws. Men too are seen hurrying in many different ways and everybody attending to his own business. Some mowing, some reaping, some carrying, some packing the grass, others spreading it out to dry, or collecting that already dry and fixing it for transportation. In fact the joyous laugh and the familiar sound of the whetted scythe gives an air of happiness and content around that must carry the wearied travellers through to the "Promised Land." The scene reminds one much of a large encampment of the army, divided off into separate and distinct parties, everybody minding his own business and letting other people alone.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the emigrants in their haste proceeded without stopping at the Great Meadows and entered a valley some thirty miles long and twelve miles wide, the present site of the city of Lovelock. Faced with the realities of a dreadful desert crossing, hundreds abandoned "their worn-out teams, wagons, and the remains of their outfit, to be appropriated by any who liked . . . [in order] to make the balance of their way on foot to California. Guns, pistols, clothing, carpenter's tools, and every

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nent and prosperous population, situated, as it is, in the center of the Big Meadows, the lands of which are watered by the Humboldt river — the longest and largest river in the State.<sup>9</sup>

In 1914 the *Review-Miner* proudly carried on its masthead claims of the town's superiority with respect to mining, agriculture and the livestock industry, proclaiming "Lovelock — The Distribution Center for the rich mining districts of Rochester, Seven Troughs, Jessup and other camps of promise" and the "Home of Alfalfa, whose superior fattening qualities bring thousands of cattle from distant points to be conditioned."<sup>10</sup> The year 1914 also saw the emergence of a municipal conscience, the local editor employing biting criticism for the residents' apathy in not supporting a water distribution system, the inadequacies of the town fire bell and the lack of sanitary facilities and security in the town jail. On June 12, 1914, the editor posed the question to his readers: "Do the people of Lovelock want good water or are they satisfied with the present bad water and inadequate supply?" His editorial continued: "From one end of the state to the other Lovelock is known as a good town with a bad water supply. Even the hoboes won't stay long on that account. With an assured supply of good water Lovelock would soon be able to boast of 2,000 population in a short time and much new money would be brought in for investment."<sup>11</sup>

Observing that little progress was being made for a municipal water supply, the *Review-Miner* on November 27, 1914, fired another blast: "What is Lovelock doing to get a good water supply? Apparently nothing. . . . If there is any knock that really counts against this town it is the fact that we have bad water and little of it. There is little use in trying to induce people to locate here until the water question is settled."<sup>12</sup>

Turning his attention to town fire protection, the *Review-Miner* editor in 1914 evidenced his concern: "Lovelock is supposed to have a fire system, but does anyone ever hear the fire gong over two blocks away from the location? There is the Methodist church bell, the school bell, the Catholic church bell and the Arobio clock bell, to say nothing of the railroad alarm bell at the crossing; yet, any one of these can be heard further than the fire alarm gong. . . . If your home takes fire how are you going to get help to save it unless you arouse the neighborhood? The present bell is a farce."<sup>13</sup>

Agitation for Humboldt County division first became apparent in 1912, surfaced again in 1914, but did not obtain the endorsement of the local newspaper. A public meeting held in Lovelock in August, 1914 to discuss the proposition resolved itself into a factional fight, and the *Review-Miner* cautioned against immediate county division.<sup>14</sup>

Lovelock was described as being "in a class by itself" in 1915, although the subjects of bad roads, bad water, inadequate fire protection, weeds, the noisy Southern Pacific Railroad and the county's division occupied the columns of the *Review-Miner*. The virtues of the town and its surrounding valley were itemized in an article published in the *Christian Science Monitor*.<sup>15</sup> Lovelock Valley honey was being shipped directly to the French market by car lots commanding the highest market

price. The town was growing and growing fast, taking on the air of a mining camp. Every house in town was occupied. Business quarters and office space were unobtainable. The Big Meadow Hotel building was under construction.<sup>16</sup> The erection of "a thoroughly modern hospital" was commenced in November, 1915, and the drainage system of the Lower Valley was completed, reclaiming "thousands of acres of the best soil on earth."<sup>17</sup> The road between Winnemucca and Lovelock was "reasonably good with the exception of 10 miles between Mill City and Rye Patch."<sup>18</sup>

The scarcity of water in July 1915 compelled the town board (which had no official standing) to curtail the supply allowed to each consumer and to impose a fine of \$5 when water was found running after certain hours. As the *Review-Miner* editor said, "Maybe the water does not kill anyone, but it certainly drives people away from here. . . ."<sup>19</sup> The town's fire apparatus was described as being "of such a nature that it is almost obsolete,"<sup>20</sup> and a visitor stated that the first thing that struck him about the appearance of the town was the abundance of weeds in evidence.<sup>21</sup>

The Southern Pacific Railroad engineers were accused of "having it in for Lovelock" by blowing so much steam away in whistling their engines that they didn't have much left for noise in other places.<sup>22</sup> The county division subject was once again raised, and while the Lovelock newspaper commented that it was too remote a possibility to be taken seriously at the time, it was possible that it might be found advantageous to carve out a new county from the southern and western portions of Humboldt and the northern part of Washoe.<sup>23</sup>

Town revenues in 1916 totaled \$12,422.35, \$7,422.35 being derived from the property tax, \$4,000 from the inadequate town water system and \$1,000 from license fees. Liabilities totaled \$19,500, \$4,500 being the balance due on fire bonds and \$15,000 due on Lovelock's sewer bonds.<sup>24</sup>

The Lovelock merchants had formed an association by 1916 and the *Review-Miner* of September 29, 1916, extolled the advantages of the town "in the valley of opportunity," in part as follows:

Nestling in the center of beautiful Lovelock Valley, in the midst of an agricultural section which is in the infancy of its development and the center of a circle of rich mining districts of which it is the distributing center, lies the Town of Lovelock. The Humboldt River glides smoothly past its doors, seeming to whisper of the early days of Nevada's history made famous by Bret Harte's vivid stories, and murmuring of the future greatness of this vast domain.

Modern structures, housing concerns conducting their business along the lines of 1916 business efficiency, now take the place of the rambling shacks which composed the Lovelock of early mining camp days, but the spirit which animated those sturdy pioneers is manifest in the virile, aggressive citizens who are fast making the town among the best known communities in Nevada. It now has a population of between 1200 and 1500, and with the steady development of its tributary resources there is no doubt but that its sure destiny is to be one of the real population centers of the state. . . . The club and social life of the small city



is here at its best, and the spirit of Western hospitality is evidenced in the fact that one is judged entirely for what one is rather than for what one has. . . . Enrolled in our schools are 100 pupils, and the teachers employed number nine. . . . Lovelock has every natural resource for growth. It wants people with a reasonable amount of initiative and courage, who are looking for opportunity in a comparatively underdeveloped country, and who are willing to work for success. This is not a land of milk and honey, where money grows on trees, but it is a land where a competence is assured honest endeavor. And it's a mighty pleasant place to live.<sup>25</sup>

Enameled street signs made their appearance in 1916,<sup>26</sup> the town was placed on the weather map with the installation of weather bureau instruments at the railroad depot,<sup>27</sup> and the newspaper editor continued his attack on the railroad noise nuisance<sup>28</sup> and complained of inadequate telephone service in the town.<sup>29</sup>

The greatest municipal accomplishment of 1916 was voter approval of a \$90,000 water system bond issue. In January 1916, thirty-one citizens, including J. H. Bible, C. & L. Arobio, A. Jahn, E. L. Stiff and L. A. Friedman, publicly endorsed the proposed system, giving sixteen reasons in a newspaper article why the pending bond election question should carry, concluding "That a vote for good water will remove the shackles which have retarded our growth, infuse new blood and life within us, equip us with fire protection not excelled in the entire west, and give to us a system which will more than pay for itself within the proposed bonding time of twenty years."<sup>30</sup>

The bond issue carried decisively by 360 to 37; the bonds sold in March 1916, and construction was underway.<sup>31</sup>

The *Review-Miner* six months later urged the townspeople "to begin thinking along the lines of 'The City Beautiful,' by making preparations for lawns, and for the planting of flowers and young trees. With the coming of the water from the springs in the Humboldt range canyons, these things will be possible, and will enable the residents of Lovelock to make their town a garden spot. . . . The water system will furnish 700,000 gallons every 24 hours."<sup>32</sup> By November 1916 water was available in Lovelock for house use.<sup>33</sup>

Incorporation as a city was achieved by Lovelock in 1917. A mass meeting was held in Arobio Hall in February 1917, the purpose of which was "to get together those who are most vitally concerned in the future of Lovelock, and ask them their views on the question of breaking away from the antiquated system which has been outgrown by Lovelock."<sup>34</sup> Not missing a political opportunity, R. M. Hardy, a legislator and later District Attorney of Pershing County representing the Lovelock area in the Nevada legislature then in session in Carson City, sent the following telegram to J. H. Bible:

Please act as my proxy at mass meeting. Am for anything that will help the home town. If I can do anything down here, just let me know. Hurrah for Lovelock!<sup>35</sup>

The sense of the mass meeting, held with standing room only, was overwhelmingly for incorporation. A committee of ten was named to make a further investigation of incorporation costs and report at a later meeting. W. C. Pitt, one of the spokesmen who endorsed incorporation, also referred to the long-discussed question of county division: "County division has been talked, and the time is coming when this division will be demanded by the people of Lovelock. If we incorporate now we will be in a much better position to stand solidly together to accomplish our purposes than if we are unorganized, and unprepared to act with unity in this or in any other matter affecting the community."<sup>36</sup>

The second mass meeting was held and an incorporation petition circulated.<sup>37</sup> On May 16, 1917, J. H. Bible filed the petition with the district court pursuant to statute;<sup>38</sup> and on May 22, 1917, District Judge Edward A. Ducker entered a decree declaring Lovelock an incorporated city of the third class and appointed three commissioners to carry the incorporation into effect.<sup>39</sup> At the first election held in August 1917, L. A. Friedman, president and general manager of the Rochester Mines Company and the Rochester Consolidated Mines Company, with other important mining activities in the Rochester and Seven Troughs Mining Districts, was elected mayor. A. L. Bachrodt, manager of the W. C. Pitt Mill and Elevator Company and secretary of the Overland Trail Club, Leland S. Young, of the Young-Goodin Company, and W. R. Chadwick, retired business man, were elected councilmen, to serve until 1919.<sup>40</sup> Subsequently the Humboldt County commissioners and the new city fathers met and the control of the city was given over by the county authorities.<sup>41</sup>

The city government was pledged to begin in an inexpensive manner, with every effort to be made to keep down costs and, if possible, conduct the city administration more economically than under the board of county commissioners.<sup>42</sup> The new city council was also faced with the recommendations of the committee on public morals of the Humboldt County grand jury for the town of Lovelock, which had filed a report in February 1917 recommending: (1) The enforcement of the law in the removal of the houses of prostitution in Lovelock that were within 1,200 feet of the Methodist Episcopal Church; (2) that the liquor licenses of all houses of prostitution in Humboldt County be revoked; (3) that the peace officers throughout the county furnish the grand jury with the names of men living off the earnings of fallen women; and (4) that peace officers enforce the curfew ordinance of the town of Lovelock.<sup>43</sup>

In July, 1918 the Humboldt County courthouse in Winnemucca was partially destroyed by fire and considerable talk resulted over reports that Lovelock people were taking advantage of the situation and had started a movement to remove the county seat to Lovelock. Mayor Friedman of Lovelock denied the rumors but endorsed a division of the county if mutual agreement could be reached regarding the territory to be included in each county.<sup>44</sup>

The Winnemucca Business Men's Association countered by calling a mass meeting on July 31, 1918. Absolute opposition to county division,

and the placing of a legislative ticket in the field from the Winnemucca end of the county with united support without regard to party affiliation, were the keynotes of the speeches made that night. Former State Senator W. J. Bell from the Winnemucca section of the county was unanimously endorsed for state senator. Mayor Friedman, a candidate himself for the Democratic nomination for state senator, was present by invitation. He said the Lovelockers were not in favor of county division but were opposed to a bond issue to build a new courthouse in Winnemucca. Bell pledged himself if elected to fight county division to the last ditch.<sup>45</sup> Friedman later stated his position in writing to Lovelock's *Review-Miner*.<sup>46</sup> Friedman came out positively against county division, stating: "I am unalterably opposed to any such move, as being against the best interest of the taxpayers, and if elected this will be my course as to county division, and I want everybody to know it."<sup>47</sup> Friedman was elected state senator in September, 1918, disposing of W. J. Bell, and having no opposition at the general election in November. In his victory statement printed in the *Humboldt Star* he promised "that there will be no attempt made to divide Humboldt County, and further that one of my first efforts in the senate shall be to have a bill passed providing for the necessary funds to build a good and modern courthouse at Winnemucca. . . ."<sup>48</sup>

The 29th session of the Nevada legislature convened in Carson City on January 20, 1919, with Senator Friedman in his seat. On February 6, 1919, the Humboldt county commissioners, despite the protests of J. T. Goodin, cashier of the First National Bank of Lovelock, and A. Jahn, president of the Lovelock Merchants Association and Lovelock city councilman, adopted a resolution requesting the Humboldt County legislative delegation to introduce and support a bill providing for the issuance of \$150,000 of bonds for the purpose of building a new courthouse in Winnemucca. Jahn brought out the county division question and rattled it before the commissioners with no effect.<sup>49</sup>

On February 19, 1919, Assemblymen George Farris and John R. Tullis of the Winnemucca segment of the Humboldt County delegation, apprehensive of Lovelock's opposition to the proposed bond bill, wrote the county commissioners, urging them to settle definitely "a proper amount" for the bond issue. February 28 was the last day that a bill could be introduced without unanimous consent. The county commissioners called a special meeting for February 21, 1919, and the *Humboldt Star* urged the commissioners to stand fast, suggesting that rather than throw away the money to build a courthouse conforming to Lovelock's parsimonious ideas, it would be better to install a roof on the debris of the old courthouse and let it go at that.<sup>50</sup>

Several mass meetings were held in Lovelock on February 22 and 23, resulting in a unanimous approval to divide the county and sending a committee to Carson City headed by former State Senator L. N. Carpenter to carry the fight for county division before the legislature. On February 24 a delegation from the Winnemucca end of the county, the result of the special meeting of the Humboldt county commissioners, was dispatched to Carson City to fight against county division and for the bill

to issue \$150,000 of courthouse bonds.<sup>51</sup> Winnemucca's *Silver State*, disturbed by Lovelock's "amazing proposition" on county division, commented:

One thing which would appeal as poetic retribution would be for greater Humboldt county to start a movement to secede from Lovelock, by fencing her off in a nice little corner . . . and giving her just what she is entitled to. Let her run a county to her heart's content — without any greater proportion of tax receipts than she has always contributed.<sup>52</sup>

Assembly Bill No. 109, proposing to divide Humboldt County, was introduced in the Assembly February 26, 1919, notwithstanding the opposition of a majority of the Humboldt County delegation. Winnemucca was up in arms and another citizens' delegation readied itself to go to Carson City to battle "the iniquitous division bill." It was inconceivable to the *Humboldt Star* that the legislature would yield to the proposition of the Lovelockers to divide the county, in face of opposition representing three-fourths of the population and taxable property.<sup>53</sup> The editor fired off a telegram to Senator Friedman asking him if he intended to disregard his campaign pledges against county division. The result was "an abusive and characteristically evasive telegram" received from Friedman described by the editor as being of no public interest or importance.<sup>54</sup>

The *Reno Evening Gazette's* legislative correspondent observed that the tension between the contending factions had grown somewhat more strained and feeling was running "pretty high among the delegations in Carson City awaiting disposition of the bill by the legislature." Senator Friedman, reported the *Carson City News*, openly stated that he favored the bill.<sup>55</sup> Sensing defeat, some Winnemuccans who had been at Carson City returned home to seek reinforcements and denounce Friedman for violating his campaign pledges. When the senator's name was mentioned at a mass meeting "there was a storm of hisses." Coupled with the denunciation of Friedman's action in supporting division was the accusation that he had obtained his election through false pretenses and never, before or after the campaign, had he any intention of keeping faith with the people.<sup>56</sup>

Notwithstanding forecasts of a close vote, the amended division bill passed the Assembly by a vote of 24 to 6 on March 5, 1919. Pandemonium broke loose in the assembly chambers. Consideration of the courthouse bond bill was put over until March 10.<sup>57</sup> Anticipated opposition did not materialize in the Senate, where the bill was passed by a 12 to 1 vote on March 12, 1919. It was a runaway race for Pershing County.<sup>58</sup> The *Humboldt Star* charged that the bill was a deliberate betrayal of Humboldt County and its people and observed that "the bill, absolutely unjust in nearly every respect, went through with a rush." The editor verbally attacked Friedman and his satellites and accused the legislators who supported the bill of acting like trained animals in a circus, cringingly obeying the crack of their master's whip. The Pershingites had only to ask and they received. The *Humboldt Star's* final shot cautioned the new

county's residents: "The residents of Pershing County may rejoice for a time over what they believe to be a victory over the hated northern end of the county but it requires no seer to predict that the song of joy will in a few short years modulate into a wail of distress."<sup>59</sup>

Senator Friedman resigned on March 17, 1919, his resignation to be effective March 22, 1919, and Governor Emmet D. Boyle signed the division bill on March 18. Section 2 of the statute<sup>60</sup> read:

The place known officially as Lovelock, being the city and postoffice of Lovelock, is hereby designated and made the county-seat of Pershing County, at which place shall be erected and maintained the county and judicial offices and the necessary county buildings.

When the news reached Lovelock "whistles were blown and considerable rejoicing was shown that the matter which had occupied the attention of the county had at last been settled."<sup>61</sup> The Lovelock Mercantile Bank immediately cabled the news to General John Joseph Pershing for whom the new county was named. He responded from the American Expeditionary Headquarters in France: "Deeply touched by the fact that Nevada has created a new county and named it in my honor."<sup>62</sup>

On March 27, 1919, county officers were appointed for the new county and they occupied temporary quarters in the Lovelock Mercantile Building — four officers in one room, two in another.<sup>63</sup> But Humboldt County had not given up. On March 29, 1919, the Humboldt County commissioners retained counsel,<sup>64</sup> and a flurry of legal proceedings — mandamus, prohibition and injunction — followed, all attacking in one way or another the constitutionality of the county division law. Humboldt County lost on every point, the Nevada Supreme Court deciding in June 1919 that the law was constitutional.<sup>65</sup> The news was telegraphed to the new Pershing County district attorney, R. M. Hardy, and arrangements were hurriedly completed for an extemporaneous celebration of the event. The band was called out and a parade of prominent people formed and all marched around the Lovelock streets accompanied by cheers of everybody lined up on the sidewalks. The good news was announced at both the afternoon and evening performances at the chautauqua tent, which was greeted with cheers and great applause which lasted for several minutes.<sup>66</sup> Thus the great county division fight came to a close.

How had the incorporated city of Lovelock fared during this period? L. A. Friedman had continued to serve as mayor during his abbreviated term of office as a state senator. The original city council elected in 1917 served until 1921, with Mrs. Grace Jahn replacing W. R. Chadwick. The May, 1921 election resulted in the election of L. S. Young as mayor, and William C. Ast, John Dotta and C. Arobio as city councilmen. The 1919 municipal election was a disappointment, with only 40 votes cast. However in 1921, 425 of the 450 registered voters cast their ballots.<sup>67</sup>

The first years of incorporation were difficult. National prohibition closed the saloons and wiped out anticipated city license fees of \$5,000. This financial crisis led to expense reduction by the city council to conform with the loss of revenue. In January, 1919, the city council

discontinued the monthly \$25 salary of the city treasurer, reduced the salary of the chief of police from \$50 per month to \$25 per month and discontinued the services of the city jailer, making arrangements for the city teamster to sleep in the jail and act as jailer. To effect a savings in light bills the city clerk was instructed to take up with the Valleys Power Company the matter of turning out the lights of the city when there was sufficient moonlight to be able to do without them! Indian Policeman Frank Snodgrass' job, which paid \$50 per month, was abolished.<sup>68</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that the city of Lovelock had the lowest actual operating expenses of any city of the same size in the state in 1918, the 1919 property tax rate was reduced seventeen cents from \$2.18 to \$2.01 per \$100 of assessed valuation.<sup>69</sup>

Despite heavy debt service requirements inherited from the town of Lovelock on incorporation, many permanent and salutary improvements were made by the city fathers in the first years. Second and Third Streets in the Western Addition were opened from West Humboldt to the northern limits of the city. A great deal of street improvement work was accomplished by the purchase of three horses, permitting more economical handling of the work. A powerful electric siren and tower were installed and 1,000 feet of hose and an additional hand cart were added to the fire equipment in 1919. In 1920 the city purchased an American LaFrance double tank combination chemical engine and hose automotive truck. Over 1,200 feet of 6-inch pipe and 1,080 feet of 4-inch pipe were laid for water mains and fire hydrants installed. Street lighting was improved by the addition of more and better lights. A concrete dam and intake were constructed to increase the city water supply in Wright's Canyon with a minimum of cost, and three wells were drilled to augment municipal water. The bonded indebtedness of the city was reduced by approximately \$21,000. By cooperative agreement with Pershing County the city streets were sprinkled by a motor-driven sprinkler. The *Review-Miner* complimented the mayor and city councilmen for "the economical administration of affairs and the proper expenditure of one hundred cents for a dollar's worth of value."<sup>70</sup>

Almost sixty years of corporate existence have failed to fulfill the prophesy of the 1916 editor of the *Review-Miner* that Lovelock's "sure destiny is to be one of the real population centers of the state." In 1950 Lovelock's population was 1,609. In 1960, it was 1,948, and in 1970, 1,571. Although these population statistics reveal somewhat of a decline in population, the University of Nevada has projected an annual average increase of about 6.7 percent for 5 years until 2000.

Lovelock continues as the trading and commercial center for the fertile Lovelock Valley. The city is still administered by a mayor and council form of government, its citizens being conservative, hardworking farmers, ranchers and businessmen. The city now enjoys an abundant supply of water and natural gas, and offers a lovely picnic park and swimming pool for the visiting tourist. Because of its resources and favorable climate, Lovelock has a good potential for further growth and development both agriculturally and industrially. The 1916 editor was correct,



however, for today in Lovelock one is still judged entirely for what one is rather than for what one has. Lovelock is "a land where a competence is assured honest endeavor. And it's a mighty pleasant place to live."

### Notes

1. Hannon, Jessie Gould, "The Boston-Newton Company Venture," University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln (1969), p. 183, quoting from David Morris Potter, ed., *Trail to California; The Overland Journal of Vincent Geiger and Wakeman Bryarly*, Yale University Press, New Haven (1945), pp. 184-185.
2. Thompson and West, *History of Nevada*, Howell-North Reprint, Berkeley, California (1958), p. 454.
3. Ch. XXIV, *Laws of the Territory of Nevada, 1861*, p. 52.
4. The county seat of Humboldt County was removed from Unionville to Winnemucca on May 1, 1873. Ch. XIV, *Statutes of Nevada, 1873*, p. 59.
5. George Lovelock (1824-1907) was born in England, emigrated to Australia, then to the Sandwich Islands, and arrived in San Francisco in April 1850. He moved frequently, residing thereafter in Brown's Valley, Oroville, Marysville and Butte Creek, California. In 1855 he constructed a wagon road over the mountains to Honey Lake Valley. After his arrival in Nevada Territory until his death at age eighty-three he engaged in farming, ranching and mining in Nevada. *Review-Miner*, October 22, 1915, p. 1, c. 6.
6. A California town in Butte County was also named "Lovelock." The Nevada town was commonly referred to as "Lovelocks" until 1914, when it was officially designated by the Post Office Department as "Lovelock." The *Review-Miner* of September 4, 1914, stated: "Hereafter Uncle Sam will officially designate our town on the post office guides as 'Lovelock' instead of 'Lovelocks' to prevent the confusion arising out of the fact that there is a station in California of the same name, minus the 's', to which some of our mail goes because it has no 's' on the end of the word. . . . How the name came to be spelled that way is more or less of a mystery as the town was named after George Lovelock, grandfather of the present postmaster." See also: *Review-Miner*, October 22, 1915, p. 1, c. 6.
7. Scrugham, James G., *History of Nevada*, American Historical Society, Inc., Chicago and New York (1935), Vol. II, pp. 105-106.
8. Thompson and West, *History of Nevada*, Howell-North Reprint, Berkeley, California (1958), pp. 454-455.
9. *Daily Territorial Enterprise*, September 6, 1892, p. 3, c. 3.
10. *Review-Miner*, June 12, 1914, p. 1.
11. *Review-Miner*, June 12, 1914, p. 2, c. 3-4.
12. *Review-Miner*, November 27, 1914, p. 2, c. 3-4.
13. *Review-Miner*, August 28, 1914, p. 4, c. 3-4.
14. *Humboldt Star*, August 12, 1914, p. 1, c. 6; *Review-Miner*, August 7, 1914, p. 2, c. 3-4; *Silver State*, August 13, 1914, p. 1, c. 2.
15. *Review-Miner*, February 26, 1915, p. 1, c. 6; p. 5, c. 3.
16. *Review-Miner*, December 17, 1915, p. 1, c. 3-4.
17. *Review-Miner*, November 19, 1915, p. 4, c. 3-4.
18. *Review-Miner*, July 2, 1915, p. 7, c. 5-6.
19. *Review-Miner*, July 9, 1915, p. 4, c. 3-4.
20. *Review-Miner*, July 23, 1915, p. 4, c. 3-4.
21. *Review-Miner*, August 6, 1915, p. 4, c. 3-4.



22. The noise produced by the railroad must have really gotten to the editor of the *Review-Miner* on August 20, 1915, when he wrote:

Perhaps it is ungracious to speak ill of that life-giving artery that spans our beautiful valley and brings to our doors the commerce of the world . . . , and the service is perhaps beyond compare, but you can take it from those who live near the depot and within the sound zone of the right of way, that the Southern Pacific has certainly got it on any railroad in the world for short-haired engineers with the long pull and whistles that for soul-stirring noise have the demons of hell or bedlam beaten to a Chinese whisper.

Whether or not in their demoniac fury the engine drivers of this road have it in for Lovelock particularly over other towns, we cannot say, but we would make a small bet that they blow so much steam away here they haven't much left for noise in other places.

Off in the stilly night as the stars look calmly down, a nearby sleeper suddenly finds himself leaping from his bed with goose-flesh on his legs while the very air seems shattering about his ears. But peace — it is only the engineer of the midnight freight calling in the flagman who is presumably seven miles down the track sitting on a boulder in sound slumber. If going one way it is four nerve-rasping shrieks; if going the other it is five. As the trainmen conceive the etiquette while in Lovelock, it is necessary to go to sleep on the whistle cord with each blast.

Once in a while there is an engineer [who] goes through here who calls in his flagman with cute little toots that are a real pleasure to hear. We have learned to watch for this man and to look our gratitude out of tear-dimmed eyes.

23. *Silver State*, December 18, 1915, p. 2, c. 1.

24. *Review-Miner*, January 7, 1916, p. 5, c. 5.

25. *Review-Miner*, September 29, 1916, p. 1, c. 2-5.

26. *Review-Miner*, November 24, 1916, p. 1, c. 1.

27. *Review-Miner*, March 24, 1916, p. 1, c. 1.

28. The following editorial in the *Review-Miner* of August 4, 1916, entitled "That Whistle Must Stop," reveals the editor's loss of his sense of humor concerning the railroad's activities:

Residents of Lovelock would like to know whether the Southern Pacific company wants the kindly feeling and good will of this community. This good will should be worth something, and bring some consideration from the railroad corporation.

The attitude of the big concern can be shown by what action is taken in ridding the town of the "tooting" horror. Lovelockers are heartily sick and tired of the nonsensical, uncalled for noise. They don't object to a sane signal, and are willing to put up with that. But it's rubbing it in a little when the inconsiderate employes hang on the whistle and apparently see how long they can draw out the agonizing racket.

It is a fact, and can be proved, that people have been driven out of Lovelock hotels by the whistles. . . . [Citizens] have suggested, as a last resort, the trick of shooting the whistles off as the train rolls by.

29. *Review-Miner*, April 7, 1916, p. 4, c. 3-4.

30. *Review-Miner*, January 7, 1916, p. 5, c. 3.

31. *Review-Miner*, January 21, 1916, p. 1, c. 1.

32. *Review-Miner*, October 6, 1916, p. 4, c. 3-4.

33. *Review-Miner*, November 17, 1916, p. 1, c. 3-4.

34. *Review-Miner*, February 9, 1917, p. 1, c. 3-4.

35. *Review-Miner*, February 16, 1917, p. 1, c. 1.

36. *Review-Miner*, February 16, 1917, p. 1, c. 3-4; p. 8, c. 3-5.

37. *Review-Miner*, February 23, 1917, p. 1, c. 3-4.

38. *Silver State*, May 17, 1917, p. 1, c. 5.

39. *Humboldt Star*, May 23, 1917, p. 1, c. 4; *Review-Miner*, May 25, 1917, p. 1, c. 5-6.

40. *Review-Miner*, August 10, 1917, p. 1, c. 5-6; p. 4, c. 4.
41. *Review-Miner*, August 10, 1917, p. 1, c. 1-2.
42. *Review-Miner*, May 25, 1917, p. 1, c. 5-6.
43. *Humboldt Star*, February 19, 1917, p. 1, c. 2.
44. *Humboldt Star*, July 24, 1918, p. 1, c. 6.
45. *Humboldt Star*, July 31, 1918, p. 1, c. 2; *Silver State*, August 1, 1918, p. 1, c. 5.
46. *Humboldt Star*, August 5, 1918, p. 1, c. 6; p. 4, c. 3. Attorney H. Warren rebutted Friedman's arguments in a lengthy letter published in the August 9, 1918, issue of the *Humboldt Star*. Warren described the partially destroyed Winnemucca courthouse, when architecturally considered, as an affront to modern civilization, and as an antique, it was an eyesore and a monstrosity. He cautioned that Friedman's election would mean ruin to the town of Winnemucca and no benefit to the state or county, or any part of either.
47. *Humboldt Star*, August 23, 1918, p. 1, c. 3-6; *Silver State*, August 24, 1918, p. 1, c. 2-4.
48. *Humboldt Star*, September 6, 1918, p. 1, c. 2.
49. *Humboldt Star*, February 7, 1919, p. 1, c. 1.
50. *Humboldt Star*, February 21, 1919, p. 1, c. 3-4.
51. *Humboldt Star*, February 24, 1919, p. 1, c. 3-4; *Silver State*, February 25, 1919, p. 1, c. 1.
52. *Silver State*, February 25, 1919, p. 2, c. 1-2.
53. *Humboldt Star*, February 26, 1919, p. 1, c. 2-3.
54. *Humboldt Star*, February 26, 1919, p. 1, c. 5-6.
55. *Humboldt Star*, February 28, 1919, p. 1, c. 2-3. Former Acting Governor Denver S. Dickerson commented in the *Reno News Letter* that the proposed division of Humboldt County was the lode stone that had attracted a number of prominent Humboldters to the state capital. Former Senator Carpenter, working in the interests of the divisionists, was opposed by former Senator Bell, who was working just as hard to prevent division. Dickerson advocated allowing the county voters to decide the division question, asserting that "charges of bad faith and broken promises are being freely made by both sides." *Humboldt Star*, March 3, 1919, p. 1, c. 1-3.
56. *Humboldt Star*, March 3, 1919, p. 1, c. 1-3.
57. *Humboldt Star*, March 5, 1919, p. 1, c. 2-3; *Review-Miner*, March 7, 1919, p. 1, c. 1; p. 5, c. 6. Humboldt County succeeded in obtaining an act authorizing the issuance of \$150,000 of courthouse construction bonds. The act became effective July 1, 1919. Ch. 202, *Statutes of Nevada, 1919*, pp. 367-369. The "new and magnificent" courthouse was accepted by the Humboldt County commissioners on New Year's Day, 1921, when the doors of the fine building were thrown open to the public and an entertainment given in the rotunda. One of the speakers spoke of the county division as a great economic mistake. *Humboldt Star*, January 3, 1921, p. 1, c. 3-4.
58. *Silver State*, March 13, 1919, p. 1, c. 5; *Review-Miner*, March 14, 1919, p. 1, c. 6.
59. *Humboldt Star*, March 14, 1919, p. 2, c. 1-2.
60. Ch. 62, *Statutes of Nevada, 1919*, pp. 75-82. See NRS 243.330.
61. *Silver State*, March 20, 1919, p. 1, c. 4; *Review-Miner*, March 21, 1919, p. 1, c. 6. The *Humboldt Star* on March 19, 1919, continued its attack on Friedman. Commenting on Friedman's resignation, the editor sarcastically retorted: "The evident reason was that he dared not face the recall that would doubtless have been invoked by the people of this county, whom he has so wantonly betrayed. . . . Thus ends Friedman's brief political career." The Winnemucca editor was wrong. Friedman continued as mayor of Lovelock until May 1921, and was later elected state senator from Pershing County, serving in the 34th and 35th Nevada legislative sessions (1929-1933).
62. *Review-Miner*, March 21, 1919, p. 1, c. 5.
63. *Review-Miner*, March 28, 1919, p. 1, c. 3.
64. *Silver State*, March 29, 1919, p. 1, c. 1.

65. *Pershing County v. Humboldt County*, 43 Nev. 78, 181 Pac. 960 (1919); *Humboldt Star*, June 18, 1919, p. 1, c. 1. The *Humboldt Star* took a verbal shot at the Nevada Supreme Court on July 16, 1919, saying the county division law was "enthusiastically and unanimously upheld by the state supreme court. . . . Poor old Humboldt! What did you ever do to deserve this punishment?"
66. *Review-Miner*, June 20, 1919, p. 1, c. 3-4.
67. *Review-Miner*, May 8, 1921, p. 1, c. 1.
68. *Review-Miner*, January 31, 1919, p. 1, c. 1.
69. *Review-Miner*, March 7, 1919, p. 1, c. 2.
70. *Review-Miner*, March 7, 1919, p. 1, c. 2; April 18, 1919, p. 1, c. 3; April 2, 1920, p. 1, c. 5-6.

## What's Being Written

*Northern Paiutes on the Comstock: Archaeology and Ethnohistory of an American Indian Population in Virginia City, Nevada.* By Eugene M. Hattori (Occasional Papers Number 2, Nevada State Museum, Carson City, 1975)

DESPITE OUR RECOGNITION of ethnic diversity in Virginia City during the Comstock, very little is known about the lifestyles of the constituent ethnic groups. *Northern Paiutes on the Comstock* will help fill that gap and is a welcome contribution to the literature on nineteenth century Nevada. From contemporary newspaper accounts, Hattori reconstructs the lifeways of a small group of Northern Paiutes living in and around Virginia City. A dynamic picture of adaptation to a new social environment is portrayed. The Paiutes gave up many of their traditional ways, not only to reduce the impact of no longer available resources but also to take advantage of new economic opportunities available in an urban center. Thus, native resources such as pinyon pine nuts and game were traded to the White community for other commodities such as beef. Wage labor and "urban scavenging" were adopted as important sources of food and materials. Hattori found that "Food was purchased, salvaged from restaurant and market refuse, begged from the townspeople, or provided by churches and other community organizations" (p. 19). That this mode of adaptation was successful is indicated by newspaper accounts that the Paiutes survived the winter "in good shape and (they) . . . start summer fat and hardy" (p. 20). Hattori then goes on to outline other adaptations to an urban environment, including adoption of castoff and new clothing from the White community; houses constructed from sheet metal, iron pipe, canvas, burlap, and scavenged wood; and the game of marbles.

The second part of *Northern Paiutes on the Comstock* is an inventory of archaeological data recovered from a Virginia City Paiute encampment, dating somewhere between 1881 and 1920, at the foot of the Chollar and Potosi Mine tailings. According to Hattori, "the artifact inventory indicates a material culture based on goods obtained from the town" (p. 70), including glass bottles, marbles, glass beads, buttons, nails, pottery jars, cups, pipes, and bowls. Only a few artifacts were made of aboriginal materials and by aboriginal techniques. Food remains from the encampment include birds, rabbits, beef, and sheep, suggesting a mixed diet of domestic animals from the town and traditional game foods. Although only a small part of the camp was excavated, the data recovered support the urban adapted lifestyle reconstructed from newspaper accounts.

Hattori has done a good job of archival and archaeological research into a little known minority group in Virginia City. The only major weakness of the paper is its failure to effectively integrate the two sources of data. Indeed, the reader gets the impression that *Northern Paiutes on the Comstock* is two separate papers. Furthermore, the archaeological section is nearly all data description; almost no interpretation is given. I think that both problems could have been avoided by adding a "Discussion" section in which hypotheses about the Paiute lifestyle based upon archival data were tested with archaeological data. In this way flesh could be given to archaeological bones. A second weakness of the paper is its inconsistent artifact classification, although this is not an uncommon inconsistency in historical archaeology. Artifact categories are sometimes based upon function, as in "bottles" and "marbles," and sometimes upon material, as in "pottery" and "shell." Material as a basis of classification is traditional in prehistoric archaeology, and sometimes cannot be avoided, but its use cannot be defended in this paper. The only other criticism that I have is the use of the metric system to give the dimensions of nails. Nail sizes in Virginia City during the Comstock were based upon pennyweights and the English system. Why not use a culturally meaningful measurement?

These criticisms should not discourage the prospective reader. *Northern Paiutes on the Comstock* is an interesting paper, and I strongly recommend it to the general public and to the professional.

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*Western Writing*. Edited by Gerald W. Haslam. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974. 156 pp., \$3.50)

IN THE FIRST ESSAY in this collection of thirteen, Bernard De Voto says the Old West, as a segment of American experience, "is still looking for a serious novelist. And will never find one." This prediction was made in 1955. David Lander, in 1968, says in the last essay of the collection, that the formula western has so thoroughly petrified our critical attitudes toward the genre that a true literature based on the western experience can never develop. Of the remaining essays, half by writers of western fiction and half by writers about western fiction, two provide the reader with criteria for excellence in the western novel and short story and offer valuable lists of works that meet these criteria. The others are, for the most part, mildly polemical essays on one of the central problems of creative literature as that problem relates specifically to historical fiction of the Old West. The problem goes back at least as far as Plato and, to my mind, achieves its most emphatic statement in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. The problem is this: To what extent is the artist bound by the empirical facts of space and time in his pursuit of truth and to what extent may he — or must he — violate those facts?

The essay by Wallace Stegner discusses the relationship between fiction and history and particularly the role of narrative in the latter. A. B. Guthrie, Jr., turns the coin over and looks at the role historical fact plays in the creation of historical fiction. Stegner seems to argue that historical writing improves as it approaches fiction; Guthrie suggests that fiction improves as it approaches history. Their respective positions are representative of the problem with which these essays, in their varied ways, attempt to deal. That is, where is the artist's commitment — to the recreation of authentic time and place and event, or to the universal myth inherent in the particulars of time and place and event, but recognizable only by a distortion of those particulars by the magic mirror of Fiction moving through the real town of History? The essayists in this collection seem pretty well split down the middle. De Voto, Stewart and Hutchinson push for fidelity to the region and to the historical fact. Dobie, Fisher, and Cawelti emphasize the myth.

The latter trio makes room for the formula western, which the former deplores. What they are really deploring, though, is not so much the formula but the inept use of it as represented by the dime novels of the early twentieth century and the modern television horse opera. Obviously, there need not be a conflict, any more than there need be a conflict between history and fiction. Regionalism — the specifics of time and place — is the raw ore out of which truth is refined. The artist inclined toward empiricism may present the particular, specific facts and attain to truth via a realism which expresses the spirit of the authentic place and time. By so doing he moves from the particular to the universal, arriving there because the human spirit and the human experience are not so splintered and fragmented that what happens in one region in one time is of no significance or interest to another region and another time. We are not spiritual or experiential islands. Just as we share generically similar biological characteristics so do we share generically similar spiritual and experiential characteristics. So one artist may use his art to depict the minutiae of historical fact and thus approach the universal.

Another may work the other way, beginning with the universal, the myth, the archetype and locating it in a region which then functions as a vehicle to express the spirit of man. The two methods are comparable to the inductive and deductive processes of reasoning. Both methods have their beauties and both have their dangers, though the latter method has proven more treacherous to the western novelists. The key to the success of either method is in the artistry of the creator. The regionalist too intent on authenticity may clutter his work with artistic irrelevancies and thus lose the perspective necessary for universality, substituting, as Fisher says, knowledge for memory. On the other hand, the writer who lets the formula do the work for him creates nothing, and it is the plethora of these authors that have so restricted the critical attention to and vitiated the literary potential of this genre.

However, the simple fact of the existence of the present collection of intellectually stimulating essays, which are remarkable for their considerable grace and dignity, tends to weaken the arguments of De Voto and

Lander that serious literature of the Old West is impossible. Professor Halsam has done a valuable service to a wide variety of readers in collecting these essays, but perhaps more importantly he has helped revitalize the moribund respectability of western writing.

LEON COBURN  
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*Voices from the Wilderness: The Frontiersman's Own Story.* Edited by Thomas Froncek. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1974. xv + 360 pp., map, \$9.95)

VOICES FROM THE WILDERNESS is an anthology of the published reminiscences of some of the famous and the less well-known American frontiersmen. It spans the years from 1755 to 1870, and consists of twenty-seven selections: eleven deal with the Trans-Appalachian frontier (1755 to 1825), and sixteen with the frontier west of the Missouri (1808 to 1870). An editor's introduction precedes each selection.

Few new interpretations emerge. The book's editor, Thomas Froncek, accepts and conveys many conventional ideas about the frontiersmen such as their escapist motivations, and their roles as vanguards of environmental destruction, technological "progress," and the westward movement of white American settlement. Various frontiersmen like Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, Jedediah Smith, James Bridger, and others are presented as men who excelled at physical and mental adaptation to wilderness environments. Yet the frontiersmen, for all their bravery, were not without their faults. Some of them, like George Rogers Clark, just could not adjust to living in peaceful, settled societies. Froncek speculates about men like Clark, and stimulates the reader to pose interesting questions:

- 1) Was the frontier a spawning ground for Social Darwinist-type behavior prior to the advent of the Industrial Revolution?

and

- 2) Were the frontiersmen marginal men? That is, were they "civilized" by frontier standards, and "savages" by urban, industrialized, post-frontier norms?

Unfortunately, these questions are not answered in the book's selections, which relate only to the frontier experiences of America's trailblazers. What they did *after* their pathfinding days is only briefly and sketchily described in the editor's introductions. Thus the reader looking for fresh interpretive insights will be disappointed.

On the other hand, *Voices from the Wilderness* is not without its strong points. Froncek's liberal use of out-of-print published memoirs and archival documents as sources is commendable. Moreover, he provides factual corrections and additional details in explanatory footnotes throughout the anthology. He questions the veracity of men such as James Ohio Pattie and James P. Beckwourth, and cautions the reader to



avoid uncritical acceptance of their self-acclaimed exploits as objective historical facts.

*Voices from the Wilderness* would make a good companion to any standard collegiate-level textbook about the history of the American West. It might also be consulted as a reference. The book is attractively printed, reasonably priced, and a worthy addition to anyone's western history library.

LOREN B. CHAN

San Jose State University

*The Indian in America*. By Wilcomb E. Washburn. Part of *The New American Nation Series*. Edited by Henry Steele Commanger and Richard B. Morris. (New York: Harper & Row, 1975. 275 pp., notes, illustrations, bibliographic essay and index. \$10.00)

SCHOLARS, STUDENTS and the general public should welcome this addition to the literature of the American Indians. Wilcomb Washburn along with others has for several years noted the need to combine the specialized knowledge of anthropologists and historians in American Indian studies. His *The Indian in America* has succeeded in providing just such a useful synthesis written in an informed and lively style. Washburn's book is particularly welcome at this moment. The volume of specialized literature from historians, ethnologists, archeologists and anthropologists in recent years has been staggering. Since 1972 the Library of Congress has catalogued over 500 new titles on all aspects of Indian life and history. The literature continues to grow with the addition of several new titles each week. Scholars in Indian history will always welcome this acceleration of activity, but even the serious reader is faced with a mountain of print to absorb. Certainly the time has arrived for someone to produce a one-volume synthesis of current interpretations. Washburn has accomplished the task in admirable fashion.

Earlier histories of the American Indians have tended to stereotype the Indians as either formidable, but removable, barriers to progress and westward expansion or, more recently, as a refreshing contrast to an uncomfortable modern industrial state. Few historians have mastered the vast quantity of anthropological information before constructing their narratives. Consequently, the American Indian's integrity was lost in descriptions of savages or as idyllic children of nature. In contrast, particularly in his first chapters, Washburn has skillfully described the variety and richness of Indian societies and notes the dynamics of Indian-White relations.

Washburn has chosen to write a two-part work emphasizing cultural traits in the first five chapters of his book and providing a quick chronology of events in the next six chapters with a concluding chapter on the Indians in the contemporary United States. Although divided first topically and then chronologically, the chapters are not discrete units. Historical events inform the synthesis of anthropological information in the first

half of the book while anthropological insights flesh out the chronology. Washburn suggests that Indian-White relations evolved within three different sets of circumstances. In the earliest years, the American Indians dealt with whites from an equal and often superior position. By the end of the Colonial period, Whites entered into a long period of successful challenge to the Indians resulting in their confinement to reservations. A third and contemporary relationship, according to Washburn, is still emerging in which American Indians are receiving their just protection in rights of cultural integrity, self-government and economic and educational opportunity.

For all of its virtues, however, the book is not without its disappointments. The chronological treatment of events lacks the verve and penetrating insights that illuminate the first five chapters. The author punctuates the narrative with one violent confrontation after another while slighting the enormous change that contact with Whites wrought on Indian societies. Often the realization of losing contact with their own past and internal rivalries motivated Indian hostility to White encroachments as well as potential loss of land. Cultural traits that had served the Southeast Indians well when they lived in relative isolation proved destructive to their societies after intimate contact with White traders.

The period after the Plains wars is given sparse and conventional treatment. In his discussion of the reservation period and after, Washburn notes that the destruction of traditional tribal organization led to factionalism within the tribes but he doesn't elaborate on the consequences. The Bureau of Indian Affairs' inability to cope with the administrative nightmare of the allotment process and the demands of alienated mixed-bloods might explain the haste to issue fee simple patents to Indians as well as the activities of grasping whites. The influence of congressional committees on B.I.A. policy and the competition between agencies within the Interior Department still await investigation.

Washburn's discussion of contemporary affairs ends on an optimistic note. He finds that elected tribal leadership is growing in sophistication and represents Indian aspirations with greater clarity than the more outspoken leadership of the American Indian Movement. Likely, Washburn is correct, yet he probably dismisses the role of A.I.M. in raising Indian consciousness and forcing traditional leaders to more aggressive actions too quickly. Too often Indian leaders still seem to view available resources as finite and principally for their close supporters. Relations with the B.I.A., however unwittingly, may still foster such attitudes.

Nevertheless, criticism aside, Washburn has contributed a valuable, critical and sympathetic review of the Indians in America. It should be widely read and this reviewer for one will use it in his own introductory course on Indian history.

THOMAS R. WESSEL  
*Montana State University*

*Instant Cities: Urbanization and the Rise of San Francisco and Denver.* By Gunther Barth. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975. 310 pp., \$11.95)

FOR A LONG TIME the urban Far West was neglected by scholars, and the oversight proved costly to historical awareness, but in recent years interest in the urban dimension has become more evident. An outstanding example is Gunther Barth's admirable study of the rise of San Francisco and Denver.

Barth calls them "instant cities" because of the suddenness of their emergence and the speed of their evolution. Compared to the older centers of urban life in the East as well as the slowly developing towns of the West, they were unique. Unlike other variations of type, notably Salt Lake City, gold was behind their explosive growth. Ambitious men, seeking sudden wealth and the good life, created these "instant cities" and in the process reflected their goal of success.

Preoccupied with money-making, these men proved to be "reluctant citizens." Involved in the urban gamble, they displayed an indifference to most aspects of urban life that did not directly affect their pursuit of riches. This attitude bred instability and problems. Growth sustained the rising cities, but increased the task of establishing tolerable order. It took time to change, and only slowly did more stable forces assert themselves as the rawness of youth gave way to a more settled and restrained atmosphere. This transition was accelerated once the relationship between a more mature city and that city's ability to attract more people, new capital, commerce, and industry was clearly realized.

As the California and Colorado gold eras declined, the returns from commerce and manufacturing sustained the momentum of the city builders, and finally technological advancement, especially transportation innovations, drew San Francisco and Denver steadily into the normal framework of American society and its national economy. In the process permanence was assured, and the "instant cities" became "ordinary cities."

In following the quick strides of San Francisco and Denver, Barth pays appropriate attention to their social, economic, political, and cultural ups and downs. His perceptive descriptions and meticulous prose illuminate well the full picture of urban development and the spirit of the times. Barth also handles complex problems well; for example, his chapters on the complications of order and "culture for the moment" impose patience on the reader at times, but they are worth reflecting upon. After all, life in the "instant cities" was multifarious, and Barth should be commended for making considerable sense out of much chaos.

Barth also ranges far beyond San Francisco and Denver. While "instant cities" were unique in the American experience in many ways, he finds analogues throughout European history. An examination of this historical background is found in the opening chapter. In the following chapter the distinctions between another "instant city," Salt Lake City,

and San Francisco and Denver are analyzed. All shared the same explosive character, but the "temple city" responded to a different vision. In Chapter 3 the author's interest in the urban experiences of the entire West is evident. Especially informative are his detailed portrayals of Santa Fe as economic hub, Monterey as administrative center, and Champoege (Oregon) as marketplace. None of them shared the hectic pace of the "instant cities," but their inclusion adds a good deal to the book. Chapters 4 through 8, containing the fascinating story of San Francisco and Denver, make up the remainder of the work.

In telling of San Francisco and Denver's rapid growth and development in a single generation from wilderness points to urban centers, and calling them "instant cities," Barth makes a nice case, but he may have overdone his emphasis on the unusual. As Daniel Boorstin illustrates in his section on "upstart cities" in *The National Experience*, many of the occurrences that Barth notes happened elsewhere, for example in Chicago. Also, on the theoretical level Barth is often brilliant, but many who read his book will lament the absence of more concrete examples.

Nevertheless, this is an excellent study, certainly one of the best in western urban history yet published. Barth makes us see more in the history of San Francisco and Denver than we have seen before. More than that, he sheds considerable light on the whole process of urbanization west of the Mississippi. And it is hoped that he will continue to make exciting contributions to this long neglected but vital part of the history of the American West.

There is a great amount of source material on nineteenth-century San Francisco and Denver, and Barth appears to have consulted all of it. His footnotes are massive and instructive, and the variety of items utilized is impressive. A bibliographical essay is included as well as an index.

BRAD LUCKINGHAM  
*Arizona State University*

# **What's Going On**

## **HIGGINS RESIGNS**

Effective October 8, 1976, L. James Higgins, the Society's Curator of Manuscripts resigned in order to relocate in Virginia. Mr. Higgins has been a long-time employee of the Society and will be badly missed by staff and patrons. His knowledge of Reno was legendary, particularly the ability to dredge up little known facts from a capacious memory. The current well-organized status of our archives and manuscripts collections are due to Jim's efforts in cataloging and protecting the materials. The recent *Guide* to the collections was the capstone to his work and represented years of careful management and annotation.

## **TERRITORIAL PAPERS GRANT**

The National Historic Publications and Records Commission has awarded the Society a grant of \$17,000 to compile a finding aid to public and private records dating from the territorial period, 1850-1864. An historian/archivist will be employed for a year in locating the materials, nationwide, and preparing the manuscript. The finding aid will appear as a special publication of the Society.

## **20TH CENTURY EXHIBITS**

The National Endowment for the Humanities has recently made the third, and last, grant of \$41,000 to the Society for the complete renovation of its exhibit area. This particular award will enable Curator of Exhibits Phillip I. Earl to design the displays dealing with the 20th century and Nevada. The generous assistance of the Endowment has resulted in a chronological series of exhibits treating the state and composed of the best in materials and techniques.

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

October 2nd was the date of the Society's annual meeting for 1976. Two events were held for members, a field trip during the morning and afternoon followed by a dinner in the evening. Field Services Specialist Richard Datin led over two hundred attendees on a trip to the discovery points on the Comstock Lode as well as walking tours of Dayton, Silver City, Gold Hill and Virginia City. The trip concluded with a drive down Six-Mile Canyon past the remnants of large mills and historic buildings. At the evening dinner, the Board of Trustees' award was made to Hugh

Shamberger, mining historian and ex-State Engineer. Certificates of Appreciation went to Mr. Robert Goodman, Director of the State Department of Economic Development, and Mr. Frank O'Bryan, trail specialist and volunteer. Professor Stan Barnhill of the University of Nevada, Reno spoke on *Frontier Violence*.

### **HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY**

The Society has initiated a comprehensive inventory of Nevada's historic sites. Beginning with Clark and Washoe counties, two researchers have been employed to comb the literature, maps, newspaper files and public records for locations and data on cultural sites. Modeled on the California inventory system, this listing is expected to ultimately contain thousands of entries and require a decade for completion.

### **TRUCKEE-CARSON IRRIGATION DISTRICT HISTORY**

The TCID Board has contracted with the Society to prepare a history of the Churchill County-based reclamation project. The publication is expected to reach book stores in the fall months of 1977. It will include information on early occupation of the Carson Sink area, pioneer residents, construction of the reclamation project and the decades of growth and development since 1903.

### **DESERT RESEARCH INSTITUTE PROJECT**

A study of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and water problems on the Truckee River has been authorized by a grant from DRI. The project will require a year of work and employs Mr. Robert Nylen, a history graduate student from UNR. Much of the current water litigation relative to the Truckee River developed in a few years after 1903, when the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation selected the Truckee-Carson Project as Nevada's first federally-funded reclamation project. The study will review data on specific problems such as drainage, control of Lake Tahoe and diversion of Truckee River water to the Newlands Project.

### **SOUTHERN NEVADA OFFICE**

In September, Assistant Director Gary Roberts was transferred to Las Vegas. This move had been long anticipated by the Society and was intended to improve services to southern Nevada. Mr. Roberts will continue to administer the Society's publications program and local historic sites inventory, as well as assisting in any historical work conducted in the Las Vegas area. A series of projects dealing with southern Nevada are planned for the office.

# ***Prohibition in Nevada***

by Harold T. Smith

A POPULAR VERSE which originated during the Prohibition Era contained the following lines:

Mother makes brandy from cherries;  
Pop distills whiskey and gin;  
Sister sells wine from the grapes on our vine—  
Good grief, how the money rolls in!

This bit of doggerel probably brought smiles to many American faces during the nineteen twenties. It was a humourous approach to a complex nationwide problem that increasingly defied solution. Many people were actually engaged in similar activities, though perhaps not on the same "family wide" scale. Ordinary citizens from small towns and rural areas joined big-time racketeers in refusing to accept "enforced aridity." Prohibition, which spawned rumrunning and concomitant warfare over territorial boundaries, brought unparalleled opportunities for gangsterism and corruption in metropolitan areas. At the same time, it made possible the existence of the small bootleg operator. Before the saga ended, literally thousands of their fellows offered assistance and alternatives to the American people by providing special brews of substitute thirst quenchers, concocted close to home.

Nevada has a special attraction with respect to a study of prohibition because its history is identified with a free-wheeling social atmosphere. Its citizens have normally been open and uninhibited about availing themselves of such pursuits as legally sanctioned gambling, racing, and prostitution, all accompanied by liberal quantities of liquor. Before the Prohibition Era, Nevadans were not strongly censured for such straightforward approaches to social institutions, because life in the western desert country was (and still is) far different from that in an eastern metropolis. Yet the response of Nevadans to prohibition did not differ greatly from that of their big-city cousins. They merely developed new sources, frequently by ingenious methods, when liquor supplies began to dwindle. Their actions are readily understood when viewed in the perspective of prohibitionist development within the state.

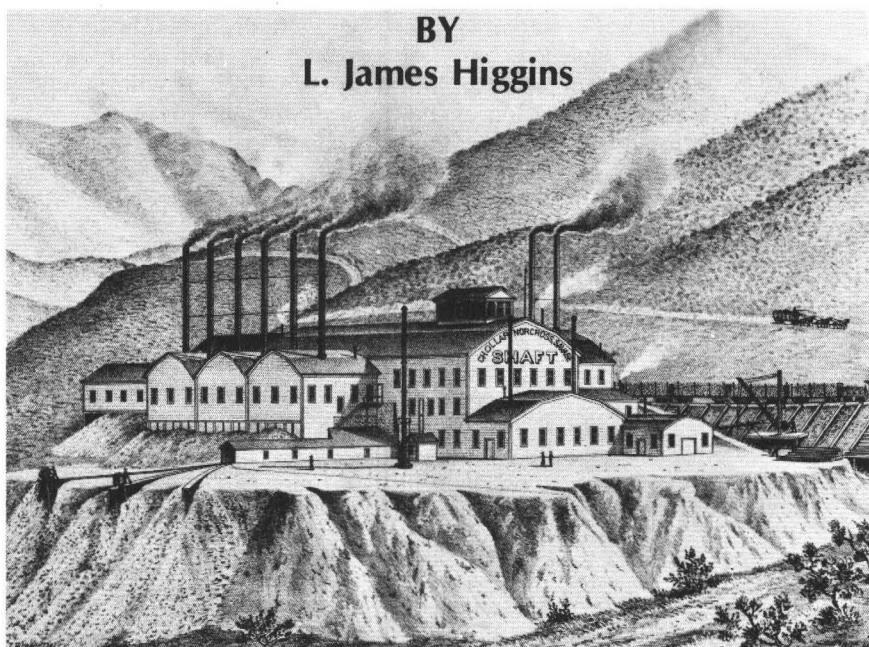
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**Dr. Harold T. Smith** earned his Ph.D. degree at the University of Nevada, Reno. He is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, where he has been teaching since 1969.



# A GUIDE TO THE MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS AT THE NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BY  
L. James Higgins



Now, after more than seventy years of collecting, the Nevada Historical Society offers its first complete Guide to the Society's manuscript collections. Supplemented by a large "name, place, thing" index and a date index, this work is certain to interest individuals and institutions studying the history of the American West. 1975. **305 pages. \$7.50, plus 50c postage and handling.**

# Western Nevada

(By Al and Mary Ellen Glass)



## Nevada Historical Society Guide Book Series

The Nevada Historical Society announces the publication of **Western Nevada**, a guide to the Reno, Lake Tahoe and Emigrant Trail portions of the state. Written by Al and Mary Ellen Glass, the guide provides five day-trips filled with exciting visits to Nevada's most fascinating historic sites and early settlements. **It can be found at your bookstore or ordered from the Society at \$1.95, plus postage.**

# Southern Nevada

(By Maryellen V. Sadovich)



## Nevada Historical Society Guide Book Series

The Nevada Historical Society announces the publication of the second volume of its Guide Book Series, **Your Guide to Southern Nevada**. Written by Maryellen V. Sadovich, the book provides the reader with six fascinating one-day tours of historic areas near Las Vegas. It can be found at your bookstore or ordered from the Society at \$1.95, plus 50c postage.