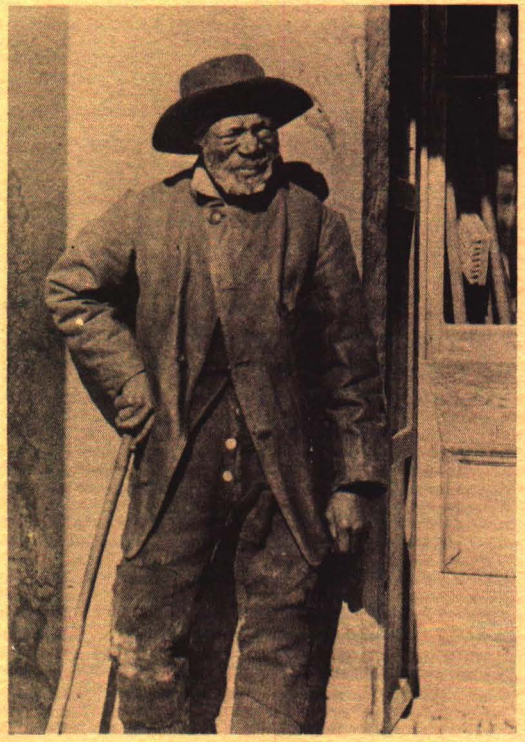
# Nevada Historical Society Quarterly



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# Nevada Historical Society Quarterly

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## *Contents*



**THE COVER**

Two Nineteenth-Century residents of Nevada. Both are unidentified: the woman on the left carries a sack of wood; the man on the right was a resident of Aurora. *See* Michael Coray's article " 'Democracy' on the Frontier" in this issue.

*John Edward Jones*

*Reinhold Sadler*

# *The Silver Governors: Immigrants in Nevada Politics. Part I.*

by Mary Ellen Glass

## I. Immigrants from Wales and Germany

MIGRATION OF PEOPLES across the face of the earth has represented a pervasive theme of both history and experience. In the same way, immigration to the North American continent from the nations of Europe, Asia, and Africa has penetrated American consciousness to the extent that scholars have asserted that American history is *immigrant* history.

With the settlement of the United States, each succeeding "frontier" experienced the impact of both native-born and foreign peoples. Native and immigrant explorers, trappers, miners, farmers, and town builders established themselves across the continent. The immigrants, mostly but not exclusively Europeans, responded to innumerable lures, represented nearly every segment of society in their native countries, and in time, they and the native-born filled (or people said they filled) every portion of free land in the country.

Nevada absorbed a large proportion of foreigners into its population. They occupied nearly every station in the state's society and economy. And two European immigrants became governors of the state before the turn of the twentieth century.[1] The first, John Edward Jones, was a native of Wales; the second, Reinhold Sadler, left Germany to reside in the United States. Diverse motives and individual needs brought them into the same town, and to a common political cause.

### The Welsh Emigration

Inhabitants of Wales, a principality of Great Britain, found themselves involved in large and shattering controversies during the nineteenth century. These disrupted lives and caused hundreds of people to emigrate. Pressing problems for Welsh farmers included the unpopularity of the Corn Laws imposed by the central government of England, and the antagonism between the Church of England and the partisans of the movement for separation, the "Dissenters." The dispute regarding church tithes and the authority over Dissenters evolved into a demand for disestablishment of the Church. In December, 1843, when a conference was called in London to try to implement the disestablishment movement, one of the strongest delegations at the meeting came from Montgomeryshire, the center of Welsh disestablishmentarianism.[2]

Although Montgomeryshire was the home of one of the oldest dissenting groups, the Independents, the real strength behind the movement there lay in the Reverend Samuel Roberts, a Congregational preacher and determined leader of the dissenting forces. Roberts was also an authority

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**Mary Ellen Glass** is the Head of the Oral History Project, University of Nevada, Reno. She is the author of *Water for Nevada: The Reclamation Controversy, 1885-1902; Silver and Politics in Nevada: 1892-1902;* and a number of articles. The second part of "The Silver Governors" will appear in the Winter issue of the *Quarterly*.

on agriculture and a firm supporter of the Anti-Corn Law League.[3] He combined belief in these twin causes with a talent for agitation, and aroused the farmers of Montgomeryshire with his outspoken opposition to the established order. By 1850, the process had become formal, with Roberts issuing pamphlets and newspapers urging flight to America to escape unfair regulation in Britain. At that time, three-fourths or more of the Welsh people had become Dissenters, joining one of the many sympathetic sects. The Methodists and Independents were probably the most active in spurring interest in dissent.

This agitation, augmented by bitterness against exploiting absentee landlords, created a climate of discontent among the farmers. Roberts' work caused hundreds of his fellow countrymen to embark for America. The emigration movement, sizable by 1855, culminated in 1856 when a colony founded for Welsh immigrants was established in Tennessee. The Tennessee colony failed quickly as the immigrants came to realize that, contrary to their notions, America was not Utopia.[4]

Nevertheless, other individuals and groups continued to move from Wales to North America. A small migration involved industrial laborers, miners, quarrymen, iron workers, and weavers.[5] A group of Mormons, not associated with the disestablishment controversy, moved from Wales to help in settling the new Zion at Great Salt Lake in Utah.[6] The promoters of emigration — humanitarians, agitators, or plain propagandists — all played variations on the same theme: the oppressed or dissatisfied people of the British Isles could find freedom, wealth, and contentment in North America. Land, they said, was plentiful, cheap, and fertile — an inducement to the agrarians who formed the nucleus of the migration from Britain.[7]

Montgomeryshire was one of the first Welsh counties to respond to the magnet of North America. Family after family decided that it was no longer profitable to stay in their tiny agricultural homeland. In increasing numbers, they left for America. Common destinations included Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and the upper Mississippi Valley.

One of these families, composed of Edward Jones and his wife Mary, her mother, and seven children, decided that Iowa would offer them a good home where they could own a piece of land and practice their religion. Thus, as part of a general movement of people, the Jones family joined a party going to America. Like hundreds of others, they found a parcel of land that they could cultivate and settled on it, intending to make their home.

The Welsh made desirable settlers in America, for they threw themselves readily into the life of their adopted country. They were known for founding Sunday schools, for their literary festivals, called "Eisteddfods," and for a few Welsh-language newspapers and magazines. They often filled the latter with half-legendary history or Old World poetry between columns of news and opinion.[9] Nevertheless, they became rapidly assimilated, offering their varied talents to the building of the country.

Some of the most famous Welsh immigrants included John Percival Jones, Nevada's "silver Senator;" B. F. Jones of the Jones and Laughlin

Steel Company; and Henry M. Stanley, who found Dr. Livingstone. Americans of Welsh descent include General Nelson Miles of Spanish-American War fame, John Llewellyn Lewis, leader of the United Mine Workers Union, author and critic William Dean Howells, Jefferson Davis of the Civil War Confederacy, Secretary of State William H. Seward, and Presidents Garfield, Jefferson, and the Adamses.[10]

When they arrived in America, the usual route of the Welsh immigrants led from a landing at New York or Boston, to Davenport, Iowa.[11] This migration began as early as 1838, the year Iowa gained territorial status. The people who came were generally farmers, land-hungry and tax-burdened. Almost as soon as they reached their new homes, many emigrants began to send letters to friends in Wales describing the cheap, fertile land, and the possibility of having a good home. "I am sure there is no more fertile land in creation than in the state of Iowa," one Welshman wrote to his family.[12]

There was indeed good land at low prices — a real inducement to the Welshmen who had fought poor, rocky soil in their native country. By the 1850s, there were settlements of Welsh in Iowa at Flint Creek, Long Creek, and Old Man's Creek; those who could not buy land in these agrarian communities turned to sharecropping.

Despite formation of these early colonies, the majority of Welsh in America seemed uninterested in maintaining exclusively Welsh communities, although they retained an interest in hearing sermons preached in their own tongue. Even this idea died out, and by the 1870s, many Welshmen had neither heard nor spoken a word of Welsh in twenty years.[13] The language and religious customs, along with Welsh educational and literary ideals, thus disappeared into the American "melting pot."[14]

The Jones family typified this assimilation. Edward Jones settled his family on a farm in Des Moines County, near Pleasant Grove in eastern Iowa. Then tragedy struck; Edward Jones died only two weeks after arriving in the United States. Mary Jones, unable to hold the farm, moved to another place near Iowa City, where the four older children entered school. For the next several years, the Jones family struggled to educate the children. John, the oldest, worked as a teacher while he completed his formal education. He attended local public schools and then the State University of Iowa.[15]

The Civil War broke out while young Jones was still in school. His fellow countrymen established a pattern at that time that endured for several decades. Fierce partisans during the conflict, they regarded the war as a holy crusade against slavery, with President Lincoln in the role of "God's lieutenant on earth," and the Democrats cast as "instruments of the devil." England's failure to identify her interests with the Union caused the Americanized Welsh to revive their old grievances against the mother country. They made the Union cause their own, and voted almost *en bloc* for Lincoln and Republicanism.[16] John Jones, like his other former countrymen, became a Republican; he stayed with the party until 1892.

With the return of normal times, and the end of his schooling, John and his brother Edward Jones moved west. Other Welshmen had pre-

ceded them and would come after, following the mining rushes. They saw no reason why skills acquired in mining coal in their native land could not be adapted to the mining of gold and silver. But life in the mining camps was less attractive than it had been on the fertile farmlands of the American Midwest. Letters to friends and relatives reflected on the difficulties of life on the mining frontier, often warning of the loose life and uncertain fortune in the camps.[17] Nonetheless, the Welsh worked well as miners, and with their Cornish partners, came to be known as "Cousin Jacks."[18]

Colorado had already passed the peak of its first mining rush in 1865, but John Jones taught school there, worked in the mines, and labored on a farm until 1867. That autumn he moved to Wyoming Territory to work on the construction of the Union Pacific railroad. With the driving of the last spike in 1869, many laborers, Jones included, were out of work. By this time, Nevada's mining business had assumed considerable importance in the West. Jones recognized the opportunity to make his fortune in the growing state, and traveled to Nevada in 1869.

Jones went first to White Pine County in eastern Nevada, but stayed there only briefly. In the Eureka district in east-central Nevada, the discovery of a new method of smelting the silver-lead ores had started a boom, and Jones decided to make Eureka his home.[19]

## The German Migrations

The forces of German emigration were as compelling as, and no less complex than, those of the British. The number of individuals involved in the nineteenth-century German migration was second only to the exodus from the entire British kingdom, greatly exceeding the Welsh. Economic disruption, political strife, religious oppression, social unrest, and militarism all exacted a toll on the German population.

Germans began to leave their native land for North America early in American history. They were among the Rappite and Mennonite colonists, the Palatines of early New York, the "hired Hessians" of the American Revolution, and the "Pennsylvania Dutch."[20] Between 1820 and 1870, the years of German political revolution and early Bismarckian authoritarianism and the commencement of the American industrial revolution, over two million persons left Germany for the United States.[21]

Their motives for leaving Germany varied widely. Victims of religious persecution, Jew and Christian alike, migrated in search of freedom to practice their beliefs. Young militarists became dissatisfied during Europe's brief interludes of peace, and went to America seeking adventure.[22] Young men of a subsequent generation went to America to escape Bismarck's conscription laws. Similarly, political revolutionists, despondent over drifting politics or antinationalism in Germany fled as enthusiastically as later refugees from supernationalism. Some Germans, offered transportation to America instead of a jail sentence, grasped that opportunity to escape.[23]

However, despite unrest in Europe, economics became the most potent motive for German emigration; it was expressed in hundreds of ways, but the hope of wealth was usually the magnet. On the American side of the Atlantic, great efforts went into attracting the German and other Euro-

pean immigrants through appeals to economic desires. American railroad companies, like the Illinois Central and the Central Pacific, in need of both capital and labor to press their enterprises, kept agents in Europe to advertise their interests. Other businesses — not always savory — also paid agents to entice prospective workers from Europe to America. These concerns provided information on employment, assistance with travel arrangements, and other services. In America, the immigrant might be met by another agent of the same company that had arranged his passage from Europe with offers of further assistance. Individual states added their inducements by passing laws for easy citizenship.[24]

The growing number of emigrants from the Fatherland caused Germany's rulers to enact restrictive legislation, prohibiting refugees from leaving without penalties. This proved unsuccessful, and led to attempts to establish all-German colonies in various countries of the world. Colonization also failed to halt the loss of the nation's population. The exodus of young people and intellectuals, the influence of diversified western culture, and increasing economic pressures all spurred further migrations.[25]

Friends or relatives who had previously gone to America. created another important force in increasing migration. Like their Welsh counterparts, nineteenth-century German immigrants often made their fortunes early, and began sending for those they had left behind. The so-called "America letters" of these earlier emigrants circulated from hand to hand in German towns, causing much excitement and making firm some decisions to leave.[26] These letters described the attractiveness of the country, the friendliness of the people, and, above all, the economic opportunities available to the ambitious emigrant. Often the letter writers offered prospective immigrants help in beginning a new life in America. Reinhold Sadler, a teenaged boy in Prussian Posen, received an "American letter."

Sadler was born in Czarnikow, now in west-central Poland, in the year of the revolution, 1848. He was only a few months old when the "Polish question" agitated the citizens of Posen. The Prussian government, over the violent opposition of local leaders, divided the province and added a large portion of the area to the contiguous Prussian state. All attempts to defend Poland's integrity from Prussian rapaciousness failed; the Prussian army stood ready to enforce the political demands of the rulers.[27] A number of the local citizens departed soon after the imposition of Prussian hegemony; others stayed, awaiting a stronger motive or outside assistance.

The Sadler family was not wealthy; the father was a petty artisan as his father had been before him. After the trouble over the Polish question, the Sadlers and their growing family stayed in Czarnikow, until the "America letter" bearing a San Francisco postmark arrived in 1863. Reinhold Sadler's uncle, Albert Mau, founder of a mercantile company which had branches in California and Nevada, invited Reinhold and Herman Sadler to come to work in one of his offices.[28]

The United States was at war when the Sadler brothers arrived in 1864. Germans fought on both sides in the Civil War, although as a group they

were inclined to favor the Union. Before the war, however, most Germans had joined the Democratic party and many remained Democrats even while supporting the North over the South. Their loyalty was never as firm as that of the Welsh to the Republicans, although Germans deserted the Democrats to demonstrate their general affirmation of the Union by voting for Frémont and the new Republican party in 1856. This followed in the wake of the "free soil" controversy, illustrated by the slogan "Free soil, free men, Frémont . . ." Germans who stayed with the Democrats often became allied with other conservative groups, notably Catholics.[29]

While the Germans in America preserved parts of their homeland culture with more enthusiasm than their Welsh counterparts, they nevertheless became assimilated into American society. Eventually, as the children attended American schools, as they dealt commonly with English-speaking people, as English became their everyday language, the old German customs became only a dream-like tie with the past. The most outstanding characteristic of the Germans was their devotion to amassing fortunes in the United States. Examples of this dedication include not only the great brewery fortunes, but also enterprises like John Jacob Astor's fur trade and John Sutter's gold mining in California. Weinstock and Lubin had mercantile interests in both California and Nevada, and Adolph Sutro also made fortunes in those states. In fact, these and other Germans constituted the "most prosperous foreign business element" in Nevada.[30] In the case of Reinhold Sadler, assimilation into western American society meant not only interest in the accumulation of money, but also fervid pursuit of political office.

After their preliminary observation of the eastern part of the United States, the Sadler brothers went directly to California. No difficulties of the struggle for education and immediate material needs met young Reinhold Sadler; he had a job as a clerk in Mau and Company's office in San Francisco. Albert Mau maintained headquarters there with branches and subsidiaries at various places around Nevada: Austin, Virginia City, Hamilton, and Treasure City.[31]

City life in California proved not very exciting for Reinhold. Everywhere he heard talk of the Nevada mines; the Comstock of the eastern White Pine district offered a challenge. Thus, within a short time, the two Sadler brothers were working for Mau's mercantile firm at Virginia City, where they dispensed the usual assortment of mining camp merchandise — food, liquor, hardware, feed, powder, and fuses.[32] Because of this experience, Reinhold Sadler finally was able to work independently for another of his uncle's establishments, this time at Hamilton in White Pine County, where he arrived in 1869, the same year John Jones entered the state.

Sadler quickly became part of both the social and political life of the booming eastern Nevada camp. While other Germans at Hamilton formed a "Sanitary Verein," he became active in the local Masonic lodges. He soon was elected treasurer of White Pine Lodge No. 14, Free and Accepted Masons, and secretary of the Royal Arch Masons.[33] At about the same time, the local *White Pine News* announced the formation

of a new social club at Hamilton, to be known as the "Independent Order of Deserted Lovers." The object of the order, founded in 1872, was "mutual condolence among the members" for the departure of many women as hard times came to Hamilton that autumn. Sadler was elected treasurer, becoming a former member when he married Louisa Zadow in 1875.[34] Meanwhile, the young merchant combined business and politics at Hamilton.

Hamilton came into existence (as did other Nevada towns of its era) as the result of mining discoveries in the vicinity. In the spring of 1870, enough people lived there to dictate the need for organized law and order. Plans were announced for a city election to be held the first week in June. Various leaders began to declare their ambitions, and interest heightened. One of the first political advertisements appearing in the local paper read:

> For City Treasurer
> Reinhold Sadler
> (With Mau & Co.)
> Respectfully wishes to announce himself a candidate
> for the office of City Treasurer, at the
> ensuing election, subject to the action of the
> Democratic City Convention.[35]

Sadler, barely twenty-two years old, was accepted by the Democrats of Hamilton as their candidate for city treasurer. The campaign was short and intense. The *White Pine News* editor dogmatically declared in every issue that the Republicans would win. The editor assessed the situation correctly; the Republicans swept every office in the city, with Sadler's first attempt to gain political status prevented by just forty-six votes.[36] This first test established a pattern that endured, with very few exceptions, throughout the rest of the man's life. In 1872, in the pitch of the mining decline and with many White Pine residents in exodus to better diggings, Sadler, together with his Republican cousin Henry Mau, was successful in being elected to a single term on the board of White Pine County Commissioners.[37]

Although Hamilton continued to decline throughout the early 1870s, Sadler pursued his business interests there. Then, in the summer of 1873, a fire swept the business district, causing damage estimated at $600,000, and destroying all but two of the town's business houses.[38] The fire, set by an arsonist who hoped to collect insurance on his loss, nearly finished what the mining decline had begun.[39] All efforts to rebuild Hamilton failed. The young merchant moved on early in June, 1875.

## II. Two Men in Eureka, Nevada

By the time John Edward Jones had decided to make his home in Eureka and Reinhold Sadler had chosen White Pine, Nevada had enjoyed statehood for nearly five years. The great silver lode at Virginia City had attracted the attention of miners for almost a decade, although the "bonanza" years still lay in the future. Eureka was still a part of Lander County, and would remain so for another four years.

The first significant discoveries of ore in the Eureka district were made in 1864. Until that time, the only white residents of the area were

employees of the stage line that crossed the county. In 1869, the first successful smelting of the ores made the discoveries effective. In that year, Palisade and Beowawe (to the north) and Eureka were platted. Eureka became a stop on the stageline. The mines in the Eureka district have been called "the first important lead-silver mines" in the nation; they produced more than eighty percent of the county's total output — over $65 million — during the years prior to World War II.[40]

Eureka became a fast-growing boom town in its first years. In 1869, only two or three cabins dotted the hills, and the population amounted to about one hundred people.[41] By October, 1875, the town was reckoned "the second place in Nevada." During the first winter, however, supplies were scarce and expensive for John Jones and other prospectors on the rugged hills of Lander County. Itinerant traders supplied the little settlement, selling provisions on credit to the miners. One of the region's pioneer newspapermen, C. C. Goodwin, wrote of that first winter in Eureka:

> There were just enough roughs in town to make things lively; just enough fighters to keep things interesting; just enough thieves to insure caution; just enough suffering to keep people generous; just enough whiskey to make desperate men, once in a while, forget care . . . ; just enough ladies to keep a trace of civilization . . . .

Transportation seemed difficult at best. The Central Pacific did not stop for freight at Palisade, and no stage ran to the railroad. The quickest route to Palisade, some eighty miles north, led 160 miles by way of Hamilton in White Pine County.[42]

Eureka's pioneers came from many countries. In 1870, the area that was then Lander County had the fifth largest foreign-born population in the state.[43] By 1875, the census of men in Eureka County showed that more than two-thirds were foreign-born, and that more than one-fourth of the women were immigrants. In a population of 6,009 that year, there were only 836 families, including Orientals and some Indians. Eureka was then a man's town.[44] By 1880, Eureka County contained the state's second largest number of immigrants, following only Storey, which had a much larger total population. After the district began to decline, there were still enough immigrants to make Eureka's alien population the third largest of Nevada's counties. The Welsh and English began as a somewhat smaller group than the Germans: in 1870, seven percent of the foreign-born were Welsh and English, and twelve percent were German. In 1880, the Welsh and English combined made up twenty percent of the foreigners, and the Germans seven percent. The Welsh, never very numerous, constituted fewer than two percent in 1890 as the camp continued to subside, while Germans made up just over seven percent of the foreign-born. There were larger groups of Chinese, Italians, English, Irish, and Canadians.[45]

The immigrants made important contributions to the area. A party of Cornish prospectors made the initial discoveries. The first smelter was operated by foreman T. Pritchard, who was half Welsh and half Mexican, while Mexicans and Indians made up the crew at the smelter. Three

Germans hired as metallurgists subsequently remodeled and rebuilt the furnaces in the district.[46]

The activities at the mines and smelters and the concerns of the workers made Eureka a busy village. Several shootings, strikes at the company mines, excitement among the prospectors, a mine accident or two, fires and floods all furnished material for three newspapers. The town also had its share of social events, despite the relatively small number of women. Balls, parties, lodge meetings of Masons, Odd Fellows, and the Hibernian Society, and numberless private celebrations occupied time and attention. John Jones' name seldom appeared in the newspapers' lists of people attending these affairs.[47] He worked busily as a prospector or carpenter.[48]

The arrival of the railroad in October, 1875, was probably the most important event of the mid-1870s in Eureka County. After months of anticipation, the Eureka and Palisade reached the city, and a local observer reported that the entire population of the town was at the celebration.[49]

Another important event occurred earlier that same year. On June 8, 1875, under the *Sentinel*'s heading, "New Goods, New Firm!" R. Sadler and Company announced the "largest assortment of General Merchandise in the State" for a new store at Eureka.[50] Sadler's store operated during the best years of mining production in the Eureka district.[51] Although excitement was intense among the miners and speculators, Sadler had only a secondary interest in the "diggings." He sold coal in considerable quantity to the Eureka Consolidated Mining Company, and sent pack trains to the mines with provisions. Thoroughly "Americanized" and conservative, he supported the status quo in the "Charcoal Burners War," in which Italian immigrants attempted a work action.[52] At the same time, he gained recognition as a friend of prospectors, one who never refused a request for a "stake." He constantly received letters from miners he had helped, thanking him for assistance or asking for more favors. The close relationship he enjoyed with the prospectors made Sadler a mark for speculators seeking information about the mines. They importuned him not only for information and opinions about the area, but also for help in financing explorations. He evidently exercised care in the assistance he gave, for he amassed a fortune before he died, buying land and business properties in Eureka, Lincoln, and Douglas counties in Nevada, and Alpine County in California.[53]

In March, 1878, a vacancy occurred on the board of Eureka County Commissioners. Possibilities surrounding the prospective appointment made interesting local gossip and newspaper copy. In the local papers, Sadler's name appeared prominently, but writers suggested that while the politically powerful Virginia and Truckee railroad's owners would support his appointment, Governor L. R. Bradley (who would confer the appointment) would not.[54] Lieutenant Governor J. W. Adams found the young German immigrant impressive, and when Governor Bradley was out of state, gave the post to Sadler. The new commissioner took his seat at the next meeting of the board — his second political office.[55]

Sadler's brief tenure on the board of county commissioners was undis-

tinguished and relatively uneventful. The main controversy revolved around the location for the new courthouse. Nevertheless, he managed to gain recognition. A large man, he had a temper to match. He swore great German oaths, amusing both newspaper reporters and colleagues. At one meeting of the commissioners, he "was so exceedingly irate that his German savored of incoherency."[56] By the summer of that year, Sadler again was pursuing elective office.

In August, as the autumn primaries approached, the *Eureka Sentinel* announced Sadler's aspirations to become county treasurer, calling him a "solid businessman," and pointing to expected support from miners and "the laboring class."[57] The announcement marked Sadler's second attempt to become county treasurer. He had announced in 1876 that he would be a candidate for the office, but he had failed to receive the endorsement of the county convention. He was subsequently elected secretary of the Democratic county central committee.[58] In 1878, however, Sadler succeeded in gaining the nomination.[59] But in the closest election contest in the county that year, he garnered 932 votes to his opponent's 1,086.[60] Again, the defeated candidate returned to his business chores.

In the autumn of 1880, opportunity came again, this time with Sadler receiving bipartisan support for his candidacy to become county treasurer.[61] He then defeated his Republican opponent by 101 votes, and served a satisfying two-year term.[62] In 1882, he was nominated for reelection, but renounced the county post for a chance to run for state treasurer. Following a rather well-established pattern, he suffered defeat in a close contest.[63] Now better known statewide, Sadler returned again to his business affairs to await the next recurrence of his biennial fever.

Meanwhile, John Jones, the bachelor-prospector-carpenter-teacher-farmer lived in the town of Ruby Hill. This little camp served as the main residential section for people interested in the mines, while Eureka, two and one-half miles east, contained the smelters and the bulk of the population. In 1880, the population of Ruby Hill was about 2,100, comprising some nine hundred miners and their families. There were stores, churches, the office of the Ruby Hill *Mining News*, schools, a theater, and other buildings.[64] A Methodist Sunday school marked the presence of former Dissenters from the Church of England.[65]

Jones worked primarily on his own prospects, occasionally in partnership with his brother Edward. He located several claims in the Prospect Mountain area of the Eureka district, and in the Spring Valley range west of Eureka.[66] About the time he stopped this activity, a newswriter described him as "familiar with the ores of Silverado and Eureka . . . [and] qualified to judge rock."[67] He found the business often fraught with disappointment. In 1875, he and his partners defended three lawsuits to quiet title on a property known as the Maria Mine. In March, 1876, he lost all three actions: one by judgment, one by failing to contest the claim, and the third by making a settlement out of court.[68]

Life was more than work and lawsuits for the Welsh immigrant. Ruby Hill's Cornish Glee Club became a source of entertainment early in the life of the camp.[69] Another activity involved the future politician in the

enterprises of the local militia company. This organization, formed in 1876, bore the name of the "Centennial Company" of the state militia. Jones joined the guards as a third sergeant shortly after they organized.[70] For several years afterward, Jones wrote reports for the company, first as secretary and later as assistant adjutant general.[71] In 1878, in a typical observance, the Centennial Guards sponsored a ball at Eureka, with members "out in full force" in fancy-dress uniforms. Dancing, in the custom of the day, continued from early evening until midnight; the dancers then ate supper at a local restaurant and resumed dancing until early morning.[72]

Meanwhile, Jones, like Sadler, had begun to gain an interest in local politics. In 1878, he was a delegate from Ruby Hill to the Republican county convention.[73] His appetite for politics whetted, Jones decided to run for office at the next convention; he won the nomination for road supervisor in 1880.[74] The editor of the *Eureka Daily Leader,* the local Republican sheet, declared Jones "an honest, upright citizen, a man qualified in every respect for the position, and one who will be elected." The editor's prediction proved faulty, and the opponent won the office.[75] Jones tried once more to gain office in Eureka County. In 1882, he lost the Republican nomination for county clerk to another aspirant.[76]

In 1883, Jones suffered a crippling attack of rheumatism, which ended his strenuous life as a prospector and carpenter.[79] He received an appointment as deputy collector of internal revenue from President Arthur, and also obtained a position as agent for the Giant Powder Company.[78]

The appointment from the President helped the former miner politically. He became secretary of the Republican county central committee in 1884.[79] Two years later, he was the Republican candidate for surveyor general of Nevada. He spent eight years in this post, performing useful service to his adopted state.

In the meantime, Jones' Democratic counterpart stayed in Eureka, pursuing business affairs and political office. In 1884, Sadler served as a delegate to the national Democratic convention that nominated Grover Cleveland. He also served as a member on both the state and the county Democratic central committees.[80] As the reputed "boss of Eureka County," Sadler might have expected election as state senator that year, but he lost again in the usual close contest.[81]

In the autumn of 1886, having previously appealed to the voters seven times, Sadler prepared for another attempt to gain an elective position. He was mentioned as a candidate for governor by the *Eureka Sentinel*'s editor, but was nominated for state controller by the state Democratic convention.[82] That year, the "silver question" was politically important for the first time in the decade. Candidates for office made speeches about the money problem; in Eureka, the *Sentinel* began to publish daily quotations on the price of silver.[83] Election returns reached Eureka slowly in 1886, and at first Sadler seemed elected state controller by a close vote. The statewide tally was in doubt for several days.[84] When the count was finally completed, Sadler had lost by only 407 votes out of more than 12,000 cast.[85]

The depression which had begun in the late 1870s worsened in Nevada;

mines began to close and stocks suffered drastic losses. The silver question became more acute, and knowing politicians learned the complexities of bimetallism and monetary policy. "Boss Sadler's" opinion was often sought on political questions vital to his home county, but he failed again in a race for state senator in 1888.[86]

In 1890, some of the silver supporters held a convention to discuss problems in Nevada stemming from the "silver crime." Eureka County sent delegates to the convention, but Sadler did not attend the meeting; he was then involved in trying to become the Democratic nominee for lieutenant governor.[87] Sadler's tenth appeal to the voters ended in the same way most of his contests had ended; he lost the election by 844 votes out of over 12,000 cast.[88] Nearly all of his election campaigns featured close tallies, but narrow margins mean little to defeated candidates. Sadler found it necessary to join the mainstream of Nevada politics before he tried again for elective office.

## III. The Surveyor General

By the early 1880s, a major decline in Nevada's economy had begun. The output of ore from the Comstock dropped from a high of over $38 million in 1876, to $3.4 million in 1886.[89] Eureka County's high point of production in 1878 of over five million dollars had slipped to just over one million dollars in 1886, and would not again reach even one million dollars after 1888.[90] Nevada needed either to build new economy on agriculture, or to support the people who were talking of manipulation of the currency through free coinage of silver. Thus two issues dominated the political scene in 1886: the so-called silver question, and the problem of irrigating the arid lands upon which an agricultural economy might grow. John E. Jones chose the latter as his first political cause.

Jones became a candidate for the office of surveyor general and state land register of Nevada at the Republican state convention in September, 1886.[91] An important Republican editor wrote of his candidacy: "Mr. Jones' career is a guarantee that he will [be a good officer]. We have known him for years and a more faithful, reliable and friendly man there is not in Nevada."[92] The writer assured his readers that the Republicans had nominated a strong ticket, with Jones' nomination dictated by powerful Republicans in eastern Nevada.[93]

That year's campaign passed quietly, with the leading feature being a battle between James G. Fair and William Morris Stewart for the Senate seat. Jones made a good race, winning his election by the largest majority given any candidate.[94] He moved his family — his wife, son, and daughter — to Carson City and purchased a home there.[95]

The new surveyor general began immediately to learn the technicalities of his office. The situation indeed presented challenges. The Nevada legislature had failed repeatedly to pass constructive legislation to meet the state's agricultural problems. Nevertheless, Jones pressed the case for reclamation.[96] In 1889, he filed a lengthy report with the state legislature, devoting more than half of it to the problem of irrigating arid lands. He urged the lawmakers to pass laws to regulate and control the state's water systems; there were then only eighteen irrigation reservoirs in the state. Jones suggested that the legislators study laws of other states, and that

they inspect some proposed reclamation sites near the capital.[97] The legislature responded with the passage of a reclamation act, but then failed to implement it.[98]

In the summer of 1889, the United States Senate Irrigation Committee, under the direction of Nevada's Senator William M. Stewart, announced a visit to the state on an investigative tour of arid western lands. Jones circulated reports and suggestions to the commissioners who would testify at the committee's hearings, and made important efforts to ensure a favorable impression.[99] When the irrigation committee arrived in Carson City, the state engineer submitted a statement compiled mainly from Jones' report to the 1889 legislature.[100] Constructive action, however, lay more than a decade away.

In the election of 1890, the surveyor general repeated his victory of four years before, polling the largest number of votes given any candidate in the state election.[101] Then John Jones returned to his office chores. The surveyor general's report in 1891 again examined the problems of agriculture and reclamation. In this report, Jones drew his facts from all over the world, showing the value of irrigation projects in many countries, and recommending a variety of experiments in water control. He offered reprints of papers by outstanding authorities, trying to make his readers understand that irrigation of arid lands would bring great profits to the state. He further designated a number of acreages in Nevada that would lend themselves to reclamation, and ultimately to agricultural colonization.

Jones was not narrowly devoted to agriculture, however. He had prospected the hills for too many years to neglect mining as a facet of Nevada's economy. Denying that the mineral industry was dead in the state, he tried to show that Nevada could continue to be a leading producer. He claimed that the area's miners could produce not only gold, silver, lead, and copper, but also a number of less exotic, and, in the long run, more profitable minerals including salt, borax, building stone, sulphur, gypsum, potash, coal, and iron. This report also contained the germ of an idea that Nevada could become famous for its healthful climate, if properly advertised.[102]

Despite the catholicity of interest demonstrated in the reports, Jones remained true to the cause of irrigation. He served as a delegate to the National Irrigation Congress in 1893, and as chairman of the Nevada delegation at the National Irrigation Congress in Denver in 1894. There, he helped to write to the delegation's report, which complained of the failure by the Nevada legislature to act positively for reclamation, recommended federal government action, and suggested reforms in methods of disposing of public land.[103]

His zeal for reclamation and his participation in its promotion left Jones with little time for outside activities. Nonetheless, he served as a member of the board of directors of the State Orphans Home during his term of office.[104] He also found satisfaction in the Masonic orders, earning recognition in a year's term as Grand Master of Masons in Nevada.[105]

In 1895, as his last year as surveyor general drew to a close, Jones filed

a final report with the legislature. In this document, he asserted that Nevada contained a number of bodies of water that could be utilized for irrigation. The lakes he described ranged in size from the three-quarter-square-mile Forty-Nine Lake in Washoe County to the 462-square-mile Pyramid Lake in the same county, and the 330-square-mile Walker Lake in (then) Esmeralda County. Rivers ranged from the 350-mile Humboldt in northern Nevada to the forty-mile-long Muddy in the south. These rivers and lakes, together with springs, wells, and annual rainfall, Jones wrote, made "the water supply of the State that may be made available for irrigation . . . far in excess of what it is generally conceived to be." Rainfall over the state, he claimed, could make 12.8 million acre-feet of water available for storage. Other streams filled from the Sierra Nevada on the state's western border also brought "no inconsiderable supply." The flow from the Truckee, Carson, and Walker rivers in western Nevada, he said, would approximate 3.5 million acre-feet, at least 1.25 million of which could be stored in reservoirs. All this water, at least fourteen million acre-feet, was available for only one million acres of arable land. Water from the Humboldt alone, Jones argued, could reclaim another million acres. The waters from the branches of the Snake River in the north — the Salmon, Bruneau, and Owyhee rivers — could reclaim another 400,000 acres. Similarly, Jones wrote, wasted water from the Quinn River in Humboldt County could irrigate 175,000 acres, and from the Virgin in southern Lincoln County, another 100,000 acres. Completing this survey, Jones declared "water in sight" ample for irrigating 5.8 million acres, with subsurface water swelling the total to six million acres of arable land in Nevada. Furthermore, he reported, "less than one-tenth of the water supply of Nevada" had been appropriated.[106] Implementation of Jones' recommendations would have meant that about ten percent of the entire area of Nevada might have been reclaimed from the desert for agriculture. The legislature, caught up in hopes for a revival of mining, and increasingly focusing on the activities of the newly powerful Silver party, gave no indication of consideration of this wide-ranging report.[107]

Jones must have felt disappointed at the legislature's lack of enthusiasm. He was surely determined to advance the cause of reclamation as he assumed the office of governor of Nevada early in 1895.

**(Part II will appear in the Winter *Quarterly*)**

*Notes*

1. The most recent, and so far the most complete analysis of Nevada's immigrant population is Wilbur S. Shepperson, *Restless Strangers: Nevada's Immigrants and Their Interpreters* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1970).

2. Ieuan Gwynnedd Jones, "The Liberation Society and Welsh Politics, 1844-1868," *The Welsh History Review: Cylchgrawn Hanes Cymru,* I:2 (1961), pp. 193-244.

3. Wilbur S. Shepperson, *British Emigration to North America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957), pp. 34-35.

4. Wilbur S. Shepperson, *Samuel Roberts, A Welsh Colonizer in Civil War Tennessee* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1961), pp. 3-43.

5. Shepperson, *British Emigration,* pp. 82-84.

6. *Ibid.,* pp. 139-147.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 49-64. Agriculture was a leading business for British emigrants. They settled large parts of the American Midwest. See Charlotte Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in Nineteenth Century America* (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1968), pp. 13-78.

8. Shepperson, *British Emigration,* pp. 33-34.

9. Owen M. Edwards, *Wales* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1905. The Story of the Nations Series), pp. 403-404.

10. Herbert N. Casson, "The Welsh in America," *Munsey's Magazine,* XXXV:6 (September, 1906), pp. 749-754.

11. Grant Foreman, "English Emigrants in Iowa," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics,* XLIV:4 (October, 1946), 389-417.

12. Alan Conway (ed.), *The Welsh in America: Letters from the Immigrants* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1961), pp. 111-112.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96. There was still a Welsh-speaking society in Nevada in 1875, in Virginia City. See Shepperson, *Restless Strangers,* p. 21.

14. Conway, pp. 322-323.

15. Myrtle T. Myles, *Nevada's Governors* (Sparks: Western Printing and Publishing Company, 1972), pp. 55-58; *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White and Company, 1909), XI, 201. Children in school are shown in material copied from the U.S. Census manuscript for Iowa, 1860, by William J. Peterson, State Historical Society of Iowa, personal letter to the writer, March 9, 1965. Jones claimed that he graduated from the State University of Iowa at Iowa City. However, the registrar at the University found no record of his having done so; personal letter to the writer, March 25, 1965.

16. William J. Peterson, "A Day by Day Calendar of Historical Events in Iowa," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics,* XLIV:2-3 (April and July, 1946), pp. 283-284.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 231, 232.

18. It is sometimes thought that only the Cornish were called "Cousin Jacks." However, few people seem to have distinguished between Cornish and Welsh in using the term. In fact, migration between the principality of Wales and the county of Cornwall further blurred the distinction between people from the area. See A. L. Rowse, *The Cousin Jacks: The Cornish in America* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), pp. 178, 290, 337. Scholars of immigration from the British Isles do not always make the distinction, either, calling all natives "British" or "English;" see Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants.*

19. *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography,* XI, 201.

20. Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America: The Saga of the Immigrant* (Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press, 1961 [tenth printing]), pp. 66-97.

21. Kurt F. Reinhardt, *Germany: 2,000 Years* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1950), p. 518.

22. Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration, 1607-1860* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), pp. 79-81, 136-140.

23. Carl Wittke, *Refugees of Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952), pp. 45, 354.

24. Wittke, *We Who Built America,* pp. 101-128.

25. Reinhardt, p. 518.

26. Wittke, *We Who Built America,* p. 188.

27. Koppel S. Pinson, *Modern Germany* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1962), pp. 99-100.

28. Myles, pp. 60-64; Myrtle Myles, "Fortune for a Governor," *Las Vegas Review-Journal* ("The Nevadan" supplement), May 24, 1964, p. 4.

29. Wittke, *We Who Built America,* pp. 187-255. See also: Richard O'Connor, *The German-Americans* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968), p. 134: "Most Germans subscribed to [Frémont's] candidacy . . . after he published his platform, along with a translation of the United States Constitution in a German-language pamphlet." President Lincoln also recognized German-American strength in appointing the popular Carl Schurz to an ambassadorship.

30. Shepperson, *Restless Strangers,* p. 30.

31. *White Pine News* (Hamilton, Nevada), May 27, 1870, p. 1.

32. William R. Gillis, *The Nevada Directory for 1868-9* (San Francisco: The Author, 1868), p. 61. Cf. *White Pine News,* May 27, 1870, p. 1.

33. *White Pine News,* August 30, 1870, p. 3; December 21, 1871, p. 3.

34. *Ibid.,* December 7 and December 10, 1872. Hamilton's mine production was at its highest point in 1870; after that time, the decline was sharp and steady. Louisa Zadow was also German; see Myles, *Nevada's Governors,* p. 63.

35. *White Pine News,* May 27, 1870, p. 3. From the beginning of the state's political history until after the turn of the twentieth of the century, nominations for any partisan office came through party conventions. Candidates did not run for office without the convention's endorsement. "Primary" elections were for the purpose of electing delegates to these conventions.

36. *White Pine News,* June 7, 1870, p. 3.

37. Myron Angel (ed.), *History of Nevada* (Berkeley: Howell-North Books, 1958 [photo reprint of the 1881 edition by Thompson and West]), p. 651.

38. W. Turrentine Jackson, *Treasure Hill* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1963), pp. 148-149. The *White Pine News,* July 5, 1873, published a list of losses in the fire. Mau's store, with $51,000 damage, was the heaviest loser.

39. Angel, p. 660.

40. Bertrand F. Couch and Jay A. Carpenter, *Nevada's Metal and Mineral Production (1859-1940 Inclusive),* (University of Nevada Geology and Mining Series, No. 38, 1943), p. 56.

41. Nevada State Mineralogist, Report, 1877.

42. *Eureka Daily Sentinel* (Eureka, Nevada), October 26, 1875, p. 2.

43. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870. Population,* Nevada.

44. *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* October 2, 1875, p. 3.

45. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Ninth, Tenth,* and *Eleventh Censuses of the United States, 1870, 1880, 1890. Population,* Nevada. Shepperson, *Restless Strangers,* p. 121: "Foreigners did most of the work in Eureka . . ." and amounted to perhaps as much as three-fourths of the total adult population by 1880.

46. Samuel Post Davis, *The History of Nevada* (Reno: The Elms Publishing Company, 1913), II, 841.

47. *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* 1875, *passim.*

48. Nevada, *Census of the Inhabitants of the State of Nevada, 1875* (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1875), II, 321.

49. *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* October 23, 1875, p. 3.

50. *Ibid.,* June 8, 1875, pp. 2, 3.

51. Couch and Carpenter, pp. 56-59.

52. *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* April 30, 1880, p. 3; May 9, 1880, p. 3; Shepperson, *Restless Strangers,* pp. 123, 124.

53. Papers in "Sadler Letter Box," Nevada Historical Society, Reno. *See also:* James G. Scrugham (ed.), *Nevada* (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1935), I, 389.

54. *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* March 7, 1878, p. 3.

55. *Ibid.,* March 6, 1878, p. 3; March 16, 1878, p. 3.

56. *Ibid.,* July 24, 1878, p. 3.

57. *Ibid.,* August 31, 1878, p. 2.

58. *Ibid.,* September 16, 1876, p. 3; September 27, 1876, p. 3; October 1, 1876, p. 3.

59. *Ibid.,* September 18, 1878, p. 3.

60. *Ibid.,* November 10, 1878, p. 3.

61. *Ibid.,* September 19, 1880, p. 3; November 2, 1880, p. 3.

62. *Ibid.,* November 9, 1880, p. 3.

63. *Ibid.*, September 18, 1882, p. 3; Nevada Secretary of State, *Political History of Nevada, 1973* (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1973), p. 181.

64. Angel, p. 443.

65. Nell Murbarger, *Ghosts of the Glory Trail* (Palm Desert, California: Desert Magazine Press, 1956), p. 267.

66. *Weekly Sentinel* (Eureka), April 18, 1896, p. 2; *Eureka Evening Leader,* June 4, 1883, p. 3.

67. *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* June 14, 1883, p. 3.

68. Eureka County, District Court, *Judgement Book A,* pp. 206-208, 210-211.

69. *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* October 27, 1876, p. 3.

70. *History of the Nevada Militia, 1862-1912,* Compiled under the direction of Brigadier General Jay H. White, Adjutant General, by Joseph Wickendon, 1941. ms. [no pagination]. Office of the Adjutant General, Carson City, Nevada.

71. Nevada National Guard, Adjutant General's office files. Folder: "Centennial Guards — 2nd Brigade Co. 'B' Ruby Hill, Eureka County — Elections."

72. *Eureka Evening Leader,* September 10, 1878, p. 3.

73. *Ibid.*, September 9, 1878, p. 3.

74. *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* October 1,1880, p. 3.

75. *Eureka Evening Leader,* November 1,880, p. 3; November 5, 1880, p. 3.

76. *Ibid.*, September 28, 1882, p. 2.

77. *Weekly Sentinel,* April 18, 1896, p. 2.

78. Scrugham, I, 382n.; *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* June 6, 1883, p. 3.

79. *Ruby Hill Mining News,* April 7, 1884, p. 3.

80. *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* June 12, 1884, p. 3; June 13, 1884, p. 3.

81. *Ibid.*, October 1, 1884, p. 3; October 2, 1884, p. 3; November 15, 1884, p. 3.

82. *Ibid.*, September 10, 1886, p. 3; September 11, 1886, p. 3.

83. *Ibid.*, November 2, 1886, p. 3.

84. *Ibid.*, November 11, 1886, p. 3; November 11, 1886, p. 3.

85. *Political History of Nevada, 1973,* p. 181.

86. *Weekly Sentinel,* May 19, 1888, p. 3; November 10, 1888, pp. 2, 3.

87. *Ibid.*, June 7, 1890, p. 3.

88. *Political History of Nevada, 1973,* p. 183.

89. Couch and Carpenter, p. 133.

90. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

91. *Eureka Daily Sentinel,* September 28, 1886, p. 3.

92. *Reno Evening Gazette,* October 30, 1886, p. 3.

93. *Ibid.*, September 27, 1886, p. 2.

94. *Political History of Nevada, 1973,* p. 181.

95. Jones married Elizabeth Weyburn, daughter of a Welsh miner, in Eureka in November, 1880.

96. Mary Ellen Glass, *Water for Nevada: The Reclamation Controversy: 1885-1902* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1964. Nevada Studies in History and Political Science, No. 7), pp. 21-23. By far the most comprehensive and scholarly study of Nevada's agriculture and reclamation is John M. Townley, "Reclamation in Nevada, 1850-1904," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nevada, Reno, 1976. Townley is a good deal less positive in his assessment of Jones' participation in the struggle for water storage laws than is this writer. See especially pp. 187 ff., where Townley implies a corrupt bargain between the surveyor general and certain legislators and businessmen, suggesting that the failure of constructive legislation lay in that arrangement.

97. Nevada Surveyor General and State Land Register, Report, 1889.

98. Glass, pp. 24-25, Townley, p. 175.

99. *Morning Appeal* (Carson City), August 8, 1889, p. 2.

100. *Ibid.*, August 23, 1889, p. 3.

101. *Political History of Nevada, 1973,* p. 183.

102. Nevada Surveyor General and State Land Register, Report, 1891.

103. Governor Colcord's message to the Seventeenth Session of the Nevada Legislature (1895); Nevada Surveyor General and State Land Register, Report, 1895.

104. *Morning Appeal,* February 13, 1891, p. 2.

105. Silas E. Ross, *Biographical Sketches of Nevada Grand Masters, F.&A.M., 1865-1970* (Reno: Privately printed, 1970), p. 21.

106. Nevada Surveyor General and State Land Register, Report, 1895.

107. Glass, p. 27; Townley, p. 207.

*Street scene in Eureka, Nevada, circa 1880s.*

# 'Democracy' on the Frontier: A Case Study of Nevada Editorial Attitudes on the Issue of Nonwhite Equality

by Michael S. Coray

UNTIL THE DECADE of the 1960s, blacks and Chinese were either absent or largely invisible actors in the studies of the development of American civilization in any area of the Far West save California. Much of this has been the product of the historian's design, reinforced intellectually by quantitative data. The 1860 enumeration of forty-five blacks in what would become Nevada Territory in 1861, or the 1870 calculation that blacks accounted for less than one percent of the state's population, for example, seem to suggest that they were of little importance to the early history of this region.[1] The absence of detailed demographic data on the Chinese suggests a similar conclusion. Yet such conclusions are misleading. Blacks and Chinese, as much by their absence as by their presence, played significant roles in the formation of important socio-political attitudes in the minds of many white Nevadans during the state's formative years. It was, after all, the determination of the Republican party to secure additional votes for the passage of the anti-slavery Thirteenth Amendment which lent impetus to the decision to rush the infant territory to statehood in 1864 — an action which set the direction of Nevada voting patterns for decades to come.[2]

A more important demonstration of the significance of "insignificant" numbers to the formation of attitudes can be found in the crucial postwar editorial debate on the question of extending the right of suffrage. That this question should have received wide discussion in the newspapers of a frontier state that was the virtual creation of the Republican party is in its own way instructive, although not altogether surprising. For the absence of large numbers of nonwhites had not deterred the conscious establishment of a socio-political structure which both supported and protected white supremacy by constitutional and statutory means.

Sitting in 1861, the first territorial legislature began the process of drawing clear distinctions between whites and nonwhites by defining mulattoes as persons having one-half Indian blood. Once defined, mulattoes and other nonwhites were prohibited by law from giving testimony in legal proceedings to which white persons might be parties. An accompanying piece of legislation declared interracial marriage a misdemeanor punishable by one to two years in the territorial prison not only for the offending parties but for the persons solemnizing such unions as

**Michael S. Coray** is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Nevada, Reno. He received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara, in the field of African History. His current research interests include the history of blacks in the American West, particularly during the frontier period.

well. Whites convicted of cohabitation with nonwhites "in a state of fornication" faced fines ranging from one hundred to five hundred dollars, and as long as six months in the county jail. All revenue generated by such fines was consigned to the maintenance of a public school system that, through oversight more than design, was not yet legally segregated.[3]

The movement toward statehood required the framing of a state constitution. This, in turn, provided an opportunity to white Nevadans to alter the direction of the racist legislation of the territorial period. But, while the 1864 constitution did prohibit slavery, it also restricted the right of suffrage to white male citizens of the United States.[4] Although this was not an uncommon combination in the free states and territories of the West during this period, it amplified, nonetheless, the trend which led to the systematic exclusion of nonwhites from the many privileges which flowed from the exercise of the franchise.[5] Chief among these were service on juries or as officeholders.[6] It fell to the first state legislature, through subsequent legislation, to refine and extend these disabilities. During the same session which passed joint resolutions ratifying the Thirteenth Amendment and praising President Lincoln's second inauguration, bills were passed to provide for segregation in public education as well as the exclusion of all nonwhites from the newly established state militia.[7] As an afterthought, the earlier legislation which prohibited nonwhite testimony was amended to allow the credibility of black and mulatto witnesses to be decided by white juries.[8] By the end of the 1865 legislature, the only basic element of political life shared by white and nonwhite residents of the Silver State was the dubious privilege of paying taxes — poll taxes, property taxes, and school taxes.[9] White Nevadans had successfully established a structure of white hegemony.

The passage of the Civil Rights Act over a presidential veto in 1866 alerted these same Nevadans to the vulnerability of that structure. The state's Republican press, particularly the *Daily Territorial Enterprise* of Virginia City — the leading party newspaper in the state — moved briskly to assuage white anxieties by describing the legislation as a simple act of paternalistic justice with which "no intelligent or right thinking" supporter of the Union cause could take issue. Not only was the act required to protect the rights of freedmen, but those of white Unionists in the South as well.[10] White Nevadans could rest assured that the Act operated only to confer citizenship upon individuals born in the United States. And while the civil rights of all citizens must be guaranteed, the right of suffrage remained a privilege.[11] A paternalistic concession on civil rights would not mandate concessions in other areas of society.

The editors of the *Enterprise* would find it much more difficult to obscure the direction of Republican policy in subsequent editorials. The substance of President Johnson's veto message, for instance, contained a potential bombshell; in addition to his states' rights argument, Johnson had justified his veto on the grounds that the bill would grant citizenship to "the Chinese, taxed [non-reservation] Indians, and 'the people called Gipsies'" as well as to freedmen.[12] By raising the spectre of universal citizenship, Johnson had helped to cement an already solid link in the

popular mind between changes in the status of one nonwhite group — blacks — and inevitable changes in the status of all other nonwhite groups.

Not satisfied by simply describing Johnson's argument as a specious and desperate act of political pandering, the *Enterprise* developed a counterargument based on statistical information drawn from the 1860 census. According to the paper's reading of these statistics, the number of Chinese eligible for citizenship under the Act was infinitesimal, and showed little potential for appreciable growth in the coming decade.[13] The nation's black population, it was argued, had been in the process of numerical decline for some thirty years. That this process would be attenuated by the coming of freedom and a consequent reduction in the birth rates of blacks was accepted by the *Enterprise* as axiomatic. On the scientific basis of statistics, the paper argued, the Civil Rights Act did not imply any dissolution of white hegemony in the United States.[14] On the contrary, the editors summarized, even should blacks be enfranchised immediately,

> . . . a negro could be elected to no public place of importance in any State or Territory of the Republic, for there is no State or Territory where the blacks as a class predominate, and there is no State or Territory where the whites would not vote in a body against a negro aspirant for any office above that of a pound keeper.[15]

Despite the apparent logic of such arguments, the *Enterprise* would find itself hard pressed to assuage white anxieties regarding the direction of national politics.

The codification of the main features of the Civil Rights Act into a proposed Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution would provide a focal point for these anxieties. Less than three weeks after the state legislature's ratification of the Amendment on January 22,1867, the state's first avowedly Democratic journal emerged in Humboldt County — in the booming mining town of Unionville.[16] Proudly announcing their intention to "plant some seeds of political virtue in the public heart," Charles L. Perkins and M. S. Bonnifield assumed joint editorship of a previously moderate weekly called the *Humboldt Register.*[17] Through the remainder of 1867, this organ of the "Democracy" attempted to undermine what it perceived as the already sagging influence of the Republican party on the minds of white Nevadans by waging a partisan battle over the direction of Republican policy — particularly policies which might affect race relations.

The key to the *Register*'s campaign was the issue of universal suffrage — a logical extension of Johnson's universal citizenship arguments. This broadening of the heated national debate on the question of Negro suffrage was influenced not only by the trends of political action within the national Democratic party, but by an astute assessment of the political realities of Nevada as well.[18] The editors of the *Register* sensed that a campaign which could be limited in focus to the specific question of enfranchising blacks in the South carried inherent tactical disadvantages. Despite the failure of the *Enterprise* and other Republican organs to

generate widespread support for legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1866, white Nevadans remained predisposed to cast their ballots on the pro-Union side.[19] Moreover, so long as the Republican press was led by the *Enterprise,* it could be counted upon to exert considerable influence against any campaign which smacked of "Copperheadism." The fact that blacks constituted but a small minority in Nevada and its neighboring states and territories, meanwhile, might continue to provide the Republican press with an opportunity to give the issue of black enfranchisement a progressive, though distant, ideological quality. So long as voting behavior might be influenced by appeals to racial paternalism, patriotic duty or party affiliation, the *Register*'s campaign would have to maintain something of a defensive stance.

The issue of universal suffrage, on the other hand, held the potential to transform tactical weaknesses into strengths. A staunch advocacy of the status quo in race relations would allow the *Register* to exploit the Negrophobe sentiment generated by political debate on the national level, toward an intensification of xenophobia regarding all nonwhites in Nevada. By carefully catering to the pervasive belief that the destiny of blacks was intimately linked to the destiny of other nonwhite groups, the *Register* could convert Republican arguments for improving the status of freedmen into persuasive evidence of a conspiracy to undermine white supremacy in general.[20]

Unionville's organ of the "Democracy" began with a tantalizing proposition. The enfranchisement of blacks in the South, as implied by the Fourteenth Amendment and made possible by the First Reconstruction Act of 1867, was portrayed as the opening gambit in an elaborate ploy by which the radical political interests in New England would secure control of the nation's political and economic direction. After broadening the electoral base of the South, the Republican party and its radical leadership would push for the adoption of the principle of universal suffrage on a national basis. The new classes of voters created by such a policy would then acknowledge their paternity by observing continuous fealty to the radicals. The result of such an alliance would be especially disastrous for whites residing in the more sparsely populated regions of the Far West. Here, the *Register* warned, an inundation by nonwhite voters could cement Republican control of national politics. The day would come "when the Chinese, Piute and Digger [Indians] will form a powerful political element in the Pacific States as well as the Negro will in those of the Atlantic."[21] As a result, the economic and political importance of the white laboring classes in both regions would be completely eroded.[22]

Early signs of such erosion could be seen in California where the Union party's devotion to the "political and social advancement of the inferior races" was already beginning to leave its mark on the position of white labor. Not only was the state being inundated by "the swarthy children of the Orient,"but budget estimates for public works were being formulated on the basis of the "cheap labor" offered by the Chinese — wages from which no white man and his family, according to the *Register,* could possibly derive subsistence. If some means were not devised to check this invasion within the next decade, the wage structure encouraged by the

presence of Chinese laborers would generate the widespread exploitation of white labor. White families, as a result, would soon face the equally repugnant alternatives of leaving the Golden State or plunging down to the level of their Chinese competitors.[23] So if the white laboring classes of Nevada did not heed the experiences of their brethren in California, if they did not withdraw their support from politicians who would not pledge themselves "irrevocably" to the protection of white interests, then they could rest assured, the *Register* concluded, that the absentee "moneyed classes" of the Silver State would soon substitute Chinese for white muscle in the mines of Nevada.[24]

By such careful readings of the intent of Republican policy, the *Register* hoped to transform the popular interpretation of that policy into a call for the creation of a new society; a society in which "the negro is to take the place of the white man at the ballot-box, and the Chinaman and Japanese are to take his place in the field, and work-shop, and the mines and upon our public works." And because the states had already been enjoined from effective discrimination "against any class of people on the assumption of inferiority" by what the *Register* viewed as the "usurping" instrument of the Fourteenth Amendment, this new society would also bring the destruction of "the fabric of constitutional government."[25] Contrary to the opinions expressed in the *Enterprise,* then, the voice of Nevada's Democracy argued that civil rights for blacks were indeed linked to political rights; civil rights for nonwhites would reduce the entire corpus of white privilege. The future held the prospect of a thorough metamorphosis of American society — the creation, in the view of the *Register,* of a world turned upside down. The Republican party fully intended to create what the editors of the *Register* considered the quintessential horror: "a gigantic superstructure of true republican institutions, upon the broad basis of equality before the law, equality of the ballot-box, equality in the social circle, and equality at the marriage altar."[26]

Shortly after the main thrust of its attack had been delivered, the editorial rhetoric of the *Register* began a gradual though significant change. The relatively soft pandering to white anxieties implied by words and phrases such as "negroes," and "brothers of the African persuasion" or "Chinese," and "Asiatics" gave way to exhortations against the threats of "niggers," "Sambo," "Celestials," and "Chinamen." The character of the paper's editorial pages, simultaneously, became markedly vitriolic. A projection of key planks in the Republican party platform during the coming presidential elections, for example, foretold of a plank calling for "the importation of Chinamen, baboons and trained monkeys" to supplant white workers.[27] Negro suffrage became "nigger suffrage" and the "self-denying" white man who supported it was encouraged "to adopt a nigger's skin, to correspond with the nigger-loving blood that courses through his veins."[28] Such an intensification of racist rhetoric appears to have been a calculated decision on the part of the editors, for it served to underscore, for the popular mind, the gulf which lay between Democratic and Republican principles.

After only four months of exploiting this gap, the *Register* trium-

phantly claimed responsibility for having forced the powerful *Enterprise* to a defensive position. The Virginia City paper, it was charged, had acknowledged its support of "negro suffrage and cheap labor" in the mines of Nevada.[29] This claim had some validity, but it was nonetheless a bit premature.

The *Enterprise* had, during the first half of the year, adopted a relatively soft approach on the question of the future roles and positions of the "colored" citizens of Nevada, but this approach signalled no Negrophile sentiments on the part of that journal. A blast against the state assembly's authorization of a $2,500 expenditure for the support of the Catholic Orphan Asylum in Virginia City, for instance, was based only in part on the fact that the orphanage's restrictive clause prohibited the acceptance of black orphans. The castigation of these same legislators for refusing to strike the word "white" from state statutes that defined those who might testify in court, meanwhile, was grounded in the *Enterprise*'s belief that such a denial prevented black merchants from collecting their "honest dues." In both cases, the rather mild protests lodged by the journal sprang from the editors' contention that the essence of the Civil Rights Act and the Fourteenth Amendment had established the principle that American citizens enjoyed equality before the law. State legislators, the *Enterprise* had argued, simply did not have the "legal nor equitable right to appropriate the funds of the general treasury to the support of . . . one class of taxpayers to the exclusion of another."[30]

The same period did bear witness, however, to a subtle attempt on the part of the *Enterprise* to encourage whites to take a more benign view of black Nevadans. Editorial space was provided in which Dr. W. H. Stephenson, a "prominent colored citizen" of Virginia City, offered a personal protest on behalf of the state's black citizenry against the actions of the state legislature in disregarding the mandate of the Civil Rights Act.[31] The paper had also contested the San Francisco *Examiner*'s claim that "the colored race are incapable of intellectual development; that they are indolent and thriftless, and but for the example of the whites, would relapse into their original [African] barbarism." Citing the tranquility and stability of the republics of Santo Domingo and Liberia as examples, the *Enterprise* attempted to counter Democratic rhetoric by illustrating the fact that blacks had indeed demonstrated their capacity for self-government.[32]

Closer to home, praise was also heaped upon the attempts of Virginia City's black inhabitants to secure the education of their children against the greatest of obstacles. Even "uneducated adults," the *Enterprise* observed, were attempting to make "themselves more worthy to wear the mantle of citizenship" by freeing themselves from "a mental enslavement which was a part of the bondage from which they have been raised . . . ."[33] Such praise, however, remained the exception rather than the rule.

On the more important issue of extending the franchise, the *Enterprise* maintained the narrow view. "There is no constitutional amendment now before the people," it reminded white Nevadans, " to confer 'manhood suffrage,' and the supplemental Reconstruction law [of March 23, 1867] gives the ballot solely to all 'male *citizens* of the United States . . . . '"

This, the paper contended, operated to eliminate the Chinese, for they were not citizens by birth and could only hope to achieve citizenship through naturalization. Support for "citizen" suffrage through the doctrine of "impartial" suffrage thus was not synonymous with support for what the Democratic press called "universal suffrage." The latter doctrine "has never been recommended by the Union party, and 'impartial' suffrage means 'citizen' suffrage, and nothing more."[34] The suggestion of that consummate Radical, Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, that blacks be given access to the ballot by an act of Congress in time to vote in the coming presidential elections was printed by the *Enterprise* for "the investigation of the intelligent" but was never endorsed. Instead, the paper continued its attempt to restrict the issue of extending the franchise to the question of doing justice to freedmen in the South.

The *Register* was not prepared to allow such restriction. An editorial of June, 1867, attempted to expose the marriage between Republican policy and "manhood suffrage and universal equality" by pointing out the hypocrisy of proposals that white Nevadans could vote Republican and continue their denial of the equality of nonwhites. The Republican party, after all, was dedicated to the eradication of every customary social and political barrier between the races, including those which served to maintain racial purity. But if white Americans assented at the ballot box to Republican suggestions that the nation would be "better, wiser, and happier" as a nation of "mongrels, with all distinction of caste, race and color abolished," the *Register* continued, then both it and the Democratic party stood ready to accept that verdict. Democrats, the paper joked, would support the extension of the ballot to "Piutes, Diggers, Gorillas, Baboons and Orangoutangs [sic]," if that was the will of the white electorate. But so long as such decisions were influenced by the "deception and fraud practiced on the people under false pretenses by influential journals in our State teaching them that they can vote for the Republican party and at the same time vote against the equality of the races," the Democracy would resist. Nevadans must be made to recognize that a Republican vote in the coming presidential elections meant a vote for "mongrelism and negro equality" in Nevada! If the Union party could carry the state in this enlightened situation, then so be it. Republicans could justly claim that Nevada "had planted her banner firmly on the doctrine of universal brotherhood among the races of men, and in future no State action would be tolerated against Chinese or niggers in our midst."[36]

Subsequent issues of the *Register* sought to provide greater illumination to the shadowy workings of the Republican conspiracy. "Northern Capitalists" were found at work making clandestine contracts for the use of "coolie labor" in the cotton and rice lands of the South. And while the threat of substituting Chinese for black labor might serve to quiet the social and political demands of blacks in the South, the *Register* chortled, the more likely effect would be the forced departure of the freedman from "his pleasant home in the sunny South to cheerless Northern skies" where he would be pitted against the "hard, calculating Yankees, who will prey upon his weak and confiding nature until he will sigh for the old

plantation home and its thousand cherished memories."[37] The real danger of such schemes, however, was that they might prove profitable. Should this occur, the paper queried, would the "capitalists" who owned Nevada's mines allow a small matter of racial chauvinism to stand in the way of ever-increasing profits?[38]

Congressional Reconstruction, meanwhile, was viewed as a covert and purposeful attempt to restructure the North by subtly forcing changes in the fundamental law of the land. Borrowing from the editorial columns of the Washington Correspondent for the *Alta California,* the *Register* skillfully argued that any denial of the "elective franchise to any male citizen of the United States by any State on account of color, race or previous condition," could, in a technical sense, be challenged by the recently ratified Fourteenth Amendment. The Supreme Court, it was charged, had already assented to a judicial construction which interpreted the "immunities and privileges of citizens" phraseology as embracing "all rights of whatever kind or nature, including the right to a voice in the management of the Government."[39] And now that the overwhelming majority of the northern states were in the process of rejecting attempts to enfranchise blacks within their borders, would the Radical-controlled Congress change the direction of its devious plans? No. Self-preservation would mandate federal legislation to correct this national disparity. The recent Congressional usurpation of omnipotent power as evidenced, according to the *Register,* by the creation of military governments in the South simply overruled any possibility for an eleventh hour conversion.[40] Discriminatory legislation and white hegemony in Nevada would soon be forced to "melt like snow-wreaths around the crater of an active volcano." Blacks, and presumably other nonwhites, would soon "stand forth clothed in the royal purple of full-blown American citizenship."[41]

Nevada's Republican senators, James Nye and William Stewart, were singled out as "missionaries" of the new faith. Nye, according to the *Register,* had been sent to the South with other minions of a demonic New England overlord, to spread the Radical gospel, while Stewart had been assigned a similar task in California and Nevada. Because of the urgency of the coming elections in the Golden State, Stewart was said to have delegated his evangelical tasks in Nevada to the *Daily Territorial Enterprise* and other organs of the "self-denying" Republican doctrine in the state. This delegation of responsibility, the *Register* chided, had been a mistake. "The influence and weight" of such journals would be limited, in the Democracy's view, to "that higher order of intelligence, the Asiatics." Arguments that the employment of Chinese labor would "enable the white laborers to get better wages," the paper appended, would not find fertile soil in Nevada.[42]

The subsequent threat of federal confiscation and redistribution of southern lands to freedmen would provide the *Register* with a novel oppportunity to expand its explanation of the Republican conspiracy. Charging that the mere enfranchisement of blacks in the South was a hollow victory for the Union party, the *Register* proposed that the Radical version of a lasting victory would require placing blacks "in possession of the lands of their former masters." Humanitarian senti-

ment and political expediency would demand "making the negroes land owners to an equal extent with the whites." But could such a scheme, once initiated, be limited in application to the South or to blacks? What of the rights of the thousands of poverty-stricken white families in the North? Would they sit quietly and watch a Republican government grant land to blacks in the South without demanding "that like liberality be shown" them? If the white propertied classes of the South were to be forced to divide their lands and property with "Africans," the paper warned, then the propertied classes of the North must stand ready to distribute their "plethoric wealth" to the "needy Caucasians" of their region! "Confiscation and distribution like negro suffrage," the *Register* demanded, "must be general, if at all."[43]

The conspiracy theory notwithstanding, racist demagoguery continued to be the *Register*'s stock-in-trade during the last half of the year. Borrowing extracts from both northern and southern organs of the Democracy, and supplementing these tracts with insights of their own, the editors of the *Register* added new brushstrokes to their bleak rendition of Republican policy. "Negro suffrage," it was alleged, would surely become the central plank of the Republican platform at the coming Chicago convention. An insistence upon social equality would just as surely follow.

Events in the South, such as the racial confrontations in New Orleans, Richmond and other key cities, moreover, signalled to the *Register* that blacks would allow no middle ground on the issue of their social status. If whites decided to make blacks their political equals, the editorial pages intoned, they had best be prepared to accept the abundant social consequences of that decision — including the possibility of widespread miscegenation.[44] To stress the urgency of this message, the *Register* pointed to the Equal Rights Society, which included such Radical luminaries as Henry Ward Beecher and William Lloyd Garrison, and to Beecher's alleged suggestion that the Republican party secure black votes by the simple method of offering "the fair daughters of the South" as the "companions of [the Negro's] loathsome bed."[45]

Closer to home, the staff of the *Enterprise* was subjected to the *Register*'s scathing blasts. Called "defunct mongrel nondescripts" and "wretched hybrid Albinos," they were said to be in the grips of a monstrous struggle which pitted "the flesh and muscle of a Congo nigger within" against the "white, unnatural skin without." That "nigger blood" would be victorious over "white skin" was, for the *Register,* a foregone conclusion. The only question regarding this metamorphosois concerned why the struggle had lasted so long "when all their tastes, inclinations and habits were so essentially nigger, and nothing but the thin Albino skin in any manner bore resemblance to the Caucasian race." Still, the *Register* encouraged the staff of the *Enterprise* to take heart, for it had been recently reported that:

> the last obstacle in the way of admission to full fellowship in the great brotherhood of niggers will soon be removed. It is reported that Doctor Bird, after great labor and research, has succeeded in making a concoction of 'herbs' that will change the skin of an

> Albino to that of a glossy and shining nigger in less than sixty days . . . .[46]

Frivolity aside, the *Register*'s message was clear. The staff of the *Enterprise,* and every white man who was soft on the issue of black enfranchisement, was involved in a self-destructive struggle. The final resolution offered the possibility of the establishment of black hegemony. The violent self-denying mission of "white niggers" to change the color of their skins served merely to make them "niggers . . . in color as well as in fact."[47]

By early September, 1867, the *Register*'s attack on the Republican party had shifted into high gear. News of the election of H. H. Haight, Democratic candidate for the governorship of California, provided tangible proof that racist demagoguery could lead to political success in the Far West. The victory was celebrated in the *Register* as the redemption of the Golden State "from the thrall and deadly blight of amalgamation rule."[48] Nevada's Senator Stewart was castigated for his efforts to secure support for the Union ticket in California by foolishly suggesting that white voters share political power with nonwhites. White westerners, the *Register* argued, would no longer listen to such demonic and imbecilic prattle. Instead, they would elect men who, like themselves, were irretrievably opposed to any doctrine that espoused racial equality on any level. The election of the Democracy in California signalled the beginning of what the *Register* considered a counterrevolution. White men would vote in their own best interest. The next United States senator from Nevada, the *Register* asserted, "will be a Democrat."[49]

In an attempt to insure this, the *Register* undertook an exposé of the utter bankruptcy of Stewart's racial pride by dissecting a speech made by the Senator to a Virginia City audience on the subject of the Fourteenth Amendment. According to the *Register,* Stewart's statement that the second section of that Amendment "provides that a white man in Nevada shall have an equal voice in the representation of the country with a white man in South Carolina," allowed only two possible assessments. "Either the Senator is ignorant on the subject," the *Register* announced, "or he takes his constituents to be a set of idiots." The section was designed, the paper declared, to insure the hegemony of black men over whites in both the North and the South:

> It provides first, that in making the apportionment in the several States for Representatives in Congress the whole number of persons in each State shall be counted, except Indians untaxed. Second, it provides that, in any election in any State for President and Vice President, Congressmen, Governor, etc., if any male citizens of the United States, 21 years old, are denied the ballot, except the denial be made for participating in the rebellion, or other crimes, the basis of representation shall be reduced in such State in the proportion which the number of such male citizens who are denied the ballot bears to the whole number of male citizens 21 years old . . . .[50]

Using South Carolina as a working example, the *Register* calculated that if adult white males, who accounted for only 40,000 of the state's 90,000

voting age males, decided to withhold the ballot from blacks, the state's representation in the House would be reduced by more than half. But if the 50,000 blacks chose to disfranchise their white counterparts on the grounds that they had participated in the rebellion, the state would suffer no reduction in representation.[51]

The *Register* charged Stewart, then, with duplicity for having failed to "inform his audience of the fact that [the Fourteenth Amendment] does not give the white man in Nevada an equal voice in the representation of the country with the greasy nigger of South Carolina." Blacks could deny the ballot to whites and still count those whites for purposes of representation, but if the whites of Nevada chose to deny "the ballot to the nigger in this State, said nigger cannot be counted in the basis of representation." Moreover, the editorial charged, "for every nigger we may refuse to let vote from five to ten whites are denied representation in Congress." This second point was illustrated by the example of California where, according to the *Register,* the 80,000 white voters were soon to augmented by some 20,000 voting age freedmen who were to be imported by the Freedmen's Bureau to work the mines and railroads. If whites decided to withhold the ballot from these new residents, the editorial calculated, California would suffer a twenty percent reduction in representation in the House of Representatives. This meant that the Fourteenth Amendment, in essence, made "one nigger in California as good as five white men." If Nevadans wanted to suffer a similar fate, the editorial concluded, then let them return Republicans of Bill Stewart's ilk to Washington at the next election.[52]

News of the fall elections in several northern states, particularly Ohio where Democrats captured both houses of the state legislature, and defeated by a substantial margin a constitutional amendment which would have enfranchised blacks, underscored the *Register*'s conviction that its rhetoric was fully in accord with the currents of the white American mind.[53] Racist politics had again proven to be winning politics; if white northerners were not rejecting black suffrage at home, they would surely reject its perpetuation in the South in the near future. "If the Congressional system," the *Register* warned, "is to put the South in possession of the negroes, it does not meet the views of the people" either North or South. "Rather than surrender our white nationality," the paper announced, "we will massacre and enslave every colored man in the States . . . . We have sacrificed too many whites for a principle to stop at taking the lives of a few worthless blacks."[54] The fall elections were to serve notice that the "corrupt bargain" struck between "the Puritan and the nigger" had been discovered and would be repudiated.[55]

The editors of the *Humboldt Register* concluded the first year of their battle over the role of nonwhites in white society by reciting the "lessons of history," and the "laws of nature." Whenever political power had been placed "in the hands of the ignorant masses of an inferior race," he warned that the inevitable product had been "insurrection, conflicts between the races, revolution, and decline in material prosperity, ending in the destruction of constitutional government and the establishment of despotism."[56] Should the Republicans who were leading the nation

toward the implementation of universal suffrage not repent, then they must prepare themselves to face an avalanche of white protest that could only be a catalyst to the "destruction of the African race in this country."[57]

Historian Forrest G. Wood's study of the racist response to the socio-political changes of the Civil War and Reconstruction periods has suggested that despite the numerical insignificance of blacks in the Far West, "some of the most vulgar racist expressions of the 1860s came from western critics." Wood categorizes white westerners as the most "complete" racists in the nation because of their manifestation of racial hostility toward every nonwhite group. But Wood also concludes that western hostility toward blacks was largely a function of maintaining consistency with eastern racists.[58] There is much in the editorial columns of both the *Enterprise* and the *Register* to substantiate the view that white westerners were more thorough in their racism than their eastern counterparts; but there is also much to suggest that the expressions of Negrophobe sentiment were generated not for the sake of agreement, but because of deeply held fears regarding the proper ordering of American society.

That nonwhites, generally, were considered inherently inferior to whites appears axiomatic. Yet the rhetoric of both newspapers reveals that Nevada editors were able to perceive distinct levels of inferiority. These levels were arranged in a hierarchical fashion that corresponded directly to the area and immediacy of threat posed by specific nonwhite groups. Least threatening were Indian groups, and white perceptions of Indians were used largely to underscore the absurdity of any dilution of white political power. The Chinese, meanwhile, were seen as more tangible economic and political threats. By constantly calling attention to the California example, the editors of the *Register* attempted to paint a picture of the Chinese as slave-like beings with the capacity to endure arduous labor fortified by the most meager subsistence; the ideal workers from the "capitalist" viewpoint, in the labor-intensive mining industry.[59] But the political threat posed by the Chinese remained rather remote. The question of their political participation rested firmly on a modification of naturalization requirements, and the growing fervor in California gave some degree of assurance that whatever direction such modification might take, Chinese political participation would remain comfortably within the perimeters of local control. And the potential for Chinese social intrusion was gauged to be minimal at best. Stereotyped as excessively clannish and tied to the dictums of their own culture, the Chinese were perceived as threats to the customary social milieu only insofar as their employment as laborers might lead to some general decline in the level of material prosperity among white workers.

The concerns generated by the images of blacks, by contrast, appear to have defied specification to any given area of social activity. Portrayed as the child-like "Sambo," the polite "colored citizen," or the despised and feared "nigger," the image employed was shaped largely by the immediate needs of an editorial commentary. But in each case, image selection

seems to have been a calculated decision based on the emotive power of the stereotype. The enfranchisement of "Sambo" went against the design of nature and the founding fathers; the imposition of political participation for the nation's "colored citizens" would destroy the fabric of constitutional government; generations spent in slavery had ill equipped ignorant and indolent "niggers" for coping with the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.

Behind such smokescreens and the inverse contradiction therein established, however, lay a more important vision. Blacks, unlike Indians or the Chinese, were seen as threats to existing structures of white hegemony because the direction of national politics clearly indicated that they would be enfranchised. White Nevadans had little power to impede, much less halt, this development. The ballot, then, came to symbolize the catalyst that would explode an essentially rigid caste system by speeding the development of considerably more fluid, and therefore more competitive, class structures. Black equality, be it political, economic or social, implied the initiation of new forms of competition by threatening the destruction of many familiar guideposts of white identity and privilege. And most important, black Americans were the only nonwhite group whose enfranchisement was said to pose an explicit sexual threat to white America. The fact that this threat became the singular goal of the *Register*'s version of the Radical conspiracy is noteworthy, for it served to reinforce not only the degree, but the kind of competition that could be expected to flow from a dilution of white political power. The absence of a numerically significant black population in Nevada served to intensify the symbolic impact as well as the credibility of such views. Negrophobe rhetoric in Nevada was not merely an expression of consensus with eastern racists; it was tied intricately to white identity in the present, and to a white vision of the future.

## *Notes*

1. U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Negro Population, 1790-1915* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), 44, 51; William Hanchett, "Yankee Law and the Negro in Nevada, 1861-1869," *Western Humanities Review,* IX (Summer 1956), 242. A more recent work has found the citation of forty-five blacks to have been erroneous; the actual figure was forty-four. Elmer R. Rusco, *"Good Time Coming?" Black Nevadans in the Nineteenth Century* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975), 124. A solid critique of the historiography of blacks in the American West is provided in Lawrence B. de Graaf, "Recognition, Racism, and Reflection on the Writing of Western Black History," *Pacific Historical Review,* XLIV (February 1975), 22-51.

2. Russell R. Elliott, *History of Nevada* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Nebraska University Press, 1973), 89; Eleanore Bushnell, *The Nevada Constitution: Origins and Growth,* 3rd ed. (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada Presss, 1972), 35; Lawanda Cox and John H. Cox, *Politics, Principle, and Prejudice 1865-1866* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 1-2.

3. Nevada, *Laws of the Territory of Nevada,* 1st sess., 1861, "An Act Concerning Crimes and Punishment," (November 26, 1861), ch. 28, sec. 13; "An Act to Prohibit Marriage and Cohabitation of Whites with Indians, Chinese, Mulattoes and Negroes," (November 28,1861), ch. 32, secs. 1-4; "An Act Establishing a Common School System for the Territory of Nevada," (November 29,1861), ch. 72, secs. 7, 12.

4. Nevada, *Constitution,* Art. I, sec. 17; Art. II, sec. 1. Both of these features were required by Congressional legislation. See: "Act of Congress Organizing the Territory of Nevada," March 2, 1861, sec. 5; "Act of Congress to Enable the People of Nevada to form

a Constitution and State Government, and for the Admission of Such State into the Union on Equal Footing with the Original States," March 21, 1864, secs. 3-4, both in Nevada, *Laws,* 1861.

5. *See* especially: Eugene H. Berwanger, *The Frontier Against Slavery: Western Anti-Negro Prejudice and the Slavery Extension Controversy* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1967), 60-122, *passim.* It has also been suggested that the "frontier experience" clearly demonstrates the "nationalization of racial hostility." William L. Katz has observed that "the intrepid pioneers who crossed the western plains carried the virus of racism with them, as much a part of their psyche as their heralded courage and their fears. Once settled in frontier communities, these hearty souls erected the racial barriers their forefathers had created back east . . . . Even after the death of slavery, their belief in black inferiority would remain. The pioneers and their children would hold tenaciously to the creed of their ancestors." William Loren Katz, *The Black West,* rev. ed. (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press, 1973), 284.

6. Nevada, *Constitution,* Art. IV, sec. 27; Art. XV, sec. 3.

7. Nevada, *Statutes of the State of Nevada,* 1st sess., 1864-5, Joint Resolution No. 7 (February 16, 1865); Joint Resolution No. 14 (March 6, 1865); "An Act to provide for the Maintenance and Supervision of Public Schools," (March 20, 1865), ch. 145, secs. 17, 32, 50; "An Act to Provide for Organizing and Disciplining the Militia of the State," (March 4, 1865), ch. 67, sec. 12.

8. *Ibid.,* "An Act amendatory to an Act concerning Crimes and Punishments, approved November Twenty-sixth, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one," (March 14, 1865), ch. 136, sec. 13.

9. Nevada, *Constitution,* Art. II, sec. 7. According to Katz, white frontiersmen commonly erected legal barriers against blacks (and presumably against other nonwhites as well) in anticipation of their appearance in the territories. "The severity of these black laws," Katz explains, "increased in direct proportion to the numbers of blacks anticipated in a territory, white fright escalating geometrically to arithmetical increases in black population." Katz, *The Black West,* 286. The symbolic importance of such legislation has been underscored by Joel Kovel, who has observed that "to a certain extent, the institutions of civilization are given life because of the symbolic value they fulfill." Distortion, for the sake of "mental synthesis," Kovel continues, affects social institutions and the numerous human activities which "subserve" them. As a result, some of the most important structures within American society "are heavily the creatures of symbolic distortion. Racism is perhaps the most glaring of this class." Kovel concludes, however, that American racism is not "merely a product of the symbolic foibles of the human mind. It is indeed a symbolic product, a set of fantasies, but only insofar as the symbols and fantasies of racism have been themselves generated by the history of race relations and sustained by the rest of an organically related culture." Joel Kovel, *White Racism: A Psychohistory* (New York: Pantheon, 1970), 5.

10. Virginia City, Nevada, *Daily Territorial Enterprise,* Apr. 8, 10, 12, 1866.

11. *Ibid.,* Apr. 12, 1866.

12. *Ibid.,* Apr. 21, 1866.

13. *Ibid.* The *Enterprise* failed to mention the alarm expressed in the census over the growth of a "Celestial Empire" in the Far West. U.S., Bureau of the Census, *Eighth Census of the United States: 1860, Population* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), xxix.

14. *Daily Territorial Enterprise,* May 3, 1866. Abolitionists may have felt differently. According to McPherson, the issue of "Negro Suffrage" was becoming the central area of their concern by as early as January 1865. James A. McPherson, *The Struggle for Equality: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 297.

15. *Daily Territorial Enterprise,* May 3, 1866.

16. Nevada, *Statutes,* 1867, Assembly Joint Resolution, No. IV (January 22, 1867).

17. *Humboldt Register,* Feb. 9, 1867. The tenure of M. S. Bonnifield, previously an unsuccessful candidate for Lieutenant Governor on the Democratic ticket in 1866, would end on October 19, 1867 with his return to politics and a law career. His replacement was the previously silent partner, Judge George G. Berry, who served as District Judge of Hum-

boldt County from 1867-1872. In 1868, Bonnifield was elected to the State Senate from Humboldt County; he served there for the two sessions of 1869-1871. John Koontz, *Political History of Nevada,* 5th ed. (Carson City, Nevada: State Printing Office, 1965), 122-23, 146. The town of Unionville was originally called "Dixie" because of the preponderance of persons sympathizing with the Rebellion" who resided there. Formal change occurred in July, 1861. Myron Angel, ed., *History of the State of Nevada, 1881,* (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958), 459.

18. The basic arguments on the national side of this debate are discussed in Forrest G. Wood, *Black Scare: The Racist Response to Emancipation and Reconstruction* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 81-92. *See* also: George M. Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 165-197; John S. Haller, Jr., *Outcasts from Evolution: Scientific Attitudes of Racial Inferiority, 1859-1900* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1971) *passim.*

19. The initial state legislature (1865) contained only two Democrats. This disparity would continue through the 1860s when Democrats never accounted for more than twenty percent of Nevada's legislators. The first Democrat congressman and governor, Charles W. Kendall and Lewis R. Bradley, respectively, were elected in 1870, while the first United States Senator from the Democratic party was not elected until 1881. Rusco, *"Good Time Coming?",* 43.

20. Literature on the "Republican Conspiracy" is abundant. For a concise, though dated appraisal, *see:* Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), ch. 1. More recent is Richard O. Curry's "The Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861-1877: A Critical Overview of Recent Trends and Interpretations," *Civil War History,* 20 (September 1974), 215-38.

21. *Humboldt Register,* Mar. 2, 1867.

22. *Ibid.,* Mar. 23, 1867.

23. *Ibid.,* Mar. 30, 1867.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.,* Mar. 2, 30, 1867.

26. *Ibid.,* Mar. 2, 1867.

27. *Ibid.,* Apr. 27, 1867.

28. *Ibid.,* May 11, 1867.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Daily Territorial Enterprise,* Mar. 3, 1867.

31. *Ibid.,* Feb. 24. Mar. 30, 1867.

32. *Ibid.,* Apr. 17, 1867. The practice of using a black Republic, such as Santo Domingo, Haiti, or Liberia to illustrate the social, political, or economic results that could be expected from black "domination" was a consistent feature of the *Register.* The "evils of miscegenation" were illustrated, meanwhile, in articles dealing with Mexico or some other Latin American republic. The more sophisticated "ethnological" arguments seen elsewhere, however, were seldom used in the *Register. See:* Frederickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind,* 191-93; Haller, *Outcast from Evolution, passim.*

33. *Daily Territorial Enterprise,* Apr. 28, 1867.

34. *Ibid.,* May 3, 1867. William Gillette has noted that "Reconstruction terms characterizing the sort of suffrage desired were used loosely, but 'equal' or 'impartial' suffrage generally could mean either unrestricted or qualified suffrage. Both terms, however, meant suffrage open equally to both races. 'Universal' suffrage meant unrestricted manhood suffrage except for age and residence requirements. The term 'Negro' suffrage could mean either universal or impartial suffrage." William Gillette, *The Right to Vote: Politics and the Passage of the Fifteenth Amendment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1965), 21-22.

35. *Daily Territorial Enterprise,* May 31, 1867.

36. *Humboldt Register,* June 1, 1867.

37. *Ibid.,* June 15, 1867.

38. *Ibid.,* June 22, 1867.

39. No specific case was cited to support this argument. One may presume, however, that such a judgment was based, at least in part, on the authorization given Congress to enforce the amendment through "appropriate legislation" as provided in section 5.

40. *Humboldt Register,* June 22, 1867.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.,* July 6, 1867.

43. *Ibid.,* July 20, 1867.

44. *Ibid.,* quoting an extract from the Detroit *Free Press,* "Negro Equality," n.d.

45. *Ibid.,* July 27, 1867.

46. *Ibid.,* Aug. 3,1867. The identify of Doctor Bird has not been estàblished. That some of the labels may have fit is suggested, however, by Alfred Doten, a one-time local news editor for the *Enterprise,* who reports having stood in for Dan De Quille (William Wright) because of the latter's drunkenness on numerous occasions. Walter Van Tilburg Clark, ed., *The Journals of Alfred Doten, 1849-1903,* 3 vols. (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1973), Vol. 2, Books 30-36.

47. *Humboldt Register,* Aug. 3, 1867.

48. *Ibid.,* Sept. 7, 1867.

49. *Ibid.,* Sept. 14, 1867.

50. *Ibid.,* Sept. 28, 1867.

51. *Ibid.*

52. *Ibid.* A subsequent editorial would refer to Stewart abusively as the champion of "Mongrelism." *Ibid.,* Oct. 12, 1867. Although Stewart would later claim authorship of the Fifteenth Amendment, his involvement in drafting that important piece of legislation remains controversial. It was largely through his efforts, however, that Nevada, in March 1869, became the only state in the Far West to ratify that amendment. Gillette, *The Right to Vote,* 157.

53. *Ibid.,* 26. The issue of black suffrage was at the heart of the Republican defeat in Ohio. A constitutional amendment proposing enfranchisement for blacks was defeated by over a 50,000-vote majority. Felice A. Bonadio, "Ohio: 'A Perfect Contempt of All Unity,'" in James C. Mohr, ed., *Radical Republicans in the North: State Politics During Reconstruction* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 92.

54. *Humboldt Register,* Oct. 19, 1867, quoting an uncited New York journal.

55. *Ibid.,* Oct. 26, 1867.

56. *Ibid.,* Nov. 30, 1867.

57. *Ibid.,* Dec. 7, 1867. George Frederickson has emphasized that racist critics of Reconstruction tended, universally, to link "amalgamation" and "miscegenation" to "the debasement of the white race." It was also common for critics to cite black equality as the sole ingredient needed to bring about some form of "catastrophic divine intervention" that would lead to the extermination of the human race. Frederickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind,* 188.

58. Wood, *Black Scare,* 97.

59. "From the 1840s on," writes Klaus Hansen, "American labor would never be without anxieties about real, potential, or imagined competition from immigrants who were often willing to work for less than their native American 'brothers' and who thus played a significant part in delaying the effective organization of American labor as a bargaining tool." Klaus J. Hansen, "The Millennium, the West, and Race in the Antebellum American Mind," *Western Historical Quarterly,* III (October 1972), 378-79.

# *Key Pittman and the Monetary Act of 1939*

by David L. Porter

HISTORIANS HAVE extensively examined the role and impact of Nevada Senator Key Pittman in the New Deal period.[1] At the same time, however, they largely have neglected his key role in the Congressional battle over the Monetary Act of 1939.[2] This article describes how Pittman directed the battle in the Senate for securing higher rates for domestic silver, and then helped swing the pendulum in favor of the Monetary Act of 1939.

Monetary questions had fascinated Pittman for many years. As a young man, he had journeyed in 1897 from Seattle, Washington to Dawson, Yukon Territory to participate in the Klondike gold rush and two years later had traveled further westward to Nome, Alaska. Pittman did not find instant wealth, but he did become familiar for the first time with the life and legal problems of miners. Between 1897 and 1901, he acted as counsel for Australians attacking corrupt Klondike officials, helped to fight Alaskan claim jumpers in the Nome area, and was the first district attorney in the "consent" (vigilante) Nome government. Pittman then moved in 1901 to the boom town of Tonopah, Nevada and purchased substantial interests in the Mojave and Nye County mines. He maintained his legal residence there until his death in November, 1940.[3]

After being elected in 1913 to the U.S. Senate as a Democrat from Nevada, he became a leading spokesman for Western mining interests. Pittman helped influence Senators from seven silver-mining states to form a solid bloc, thus enabling the Mountain States to influence monetary legislation. During 1918, for example, Pittman's bloc steered through the Senate a measure authorizing the federal government to send India 350 million ounces of bullion from silver dollars stored in the Treasury. He also insisted that the government replace the melted dollars through bullion purchases from domestic miners for one dollar an ounce, an amount considerably above the existing world market price. Pittman continued to play a dynamic role in monetary matters during the Republican years of the 1920s, making several unsuccessful attempts to extend the one-dollar purchase program. Silver prices collapsed below twenty-five cents per ounce in the early depression years, prompting Pittman to propose more ameliorative monetary measures. Congress, however, rejected Pittman's plans to loan sizeable amounts of bullion to China, to compel the national government to make monthly purchases of domestic silver, and to convene an International Conference on Silver.[4]

After Democrat Franklin Roosevelt assumed the Presidency in 1933, Pittman encountered greater success on monetary questions. As a dele-

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**David L. Porter** received his Ph.D. in History from Pennsylvania State University, and is an Associate Professor at William Penn College, Oskaloosa, Iowa. He is the author of a number of articles, and he is currently doing research on Congress during the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

gate to the London Economic Conference of 1933, he negotiated an agreement with several foreign countries which compelled the United States to purchase from domestic producers over the next four years nearly 25 million ounces of silver over the next four years. This was the equivalent of the nation's entire production in 1932. American producers netted about 64.5 cents per ounce during the life of the agreement, nearly double the international rate for silver. In 1934, Pittman helped insure enactment of the Silver Purchase Act, whereby the federal government agreed to purchase existing silver stocks. As a result, President Roosevelt promptly ordered the national government to purchase remaining silver stocks for at least 50.01 cents per ounce. Domestic silver rates rose to 77.57 cents per ounce over the next four years, but then plunged almost overnight in 1938 to 64.5 cents per ounce.[5]

The sudden change in fortunes for silver angered Pittman. Domestic silver prices, he complained, had declined so abruptly that the western mining situation had become "very grave." In addition, he stressed that silver production had dropped ten percent, causing an additional 200,000 miners to lose their jobs. In order to remedy the mining situation, he urged that silver rates be restored to at least 77 cents per ounce. He pessimistically warned that "unless the price of American-produced silver is restored to 77.57 cents per ounce mining conditions will be even worse."[6]

Western governors joined Pittman in urging higher silver rates. At a gathering in Reno, Nevada, on March 27 and 28, 1939, they discussed existing monetary problems and means of remedying the silver situation in their respective states. At the conference, the governors adopted a resolution urging "the Congress and the President to take action immediately, fixing the price of silver for monetary purposes beyond June 30, 1939 and that this price be increased from the present basis of 64.64¢ per ounce for domestic silver." Governors C. A. Bottolfsen of Idaho and E. P. Carville of Nevada even wrote President Roosevelt urging the chief executive's support for higher silver rates. "I do hope, Mr. President," Bottolfsen wrote, "that this statement by we Governors meets with your approval." Bottolfsen insisted upon a domestic silver rate increase as "a fine forward step for the elimination of much of our unemployment and economic distress," while Carville stressed, "it is our purpose to further the cause of silver and meet whenever we consider we might be of benefit in this regard."[7]

Pittman soon found an excellent opportunity to bargain for higher silver rates. During early 1939, Roosevelt had requested that Congress extend for two years his power to devalue the gold content of the dollar, continue purchasing foreign silver, and renew the $2 billion Stabilization Fund. Unless Congress enacted this legislation before June 30, however, these Presidential monetary powers would expire. The House of Representatives decisively approved the President's recommendations during April, 1939,[8] but Pittman was prepared to prevent any Senate action on the bill and let the Presidential powers expire unless domestic silver rates were increased. During April, for example, Pittman convened his Special Senate Silver Committee, of which he was Chairman, to discuss just how adversely the Administration's policy had affected domestic silver producers. Witnesses generally confirmed his suspicions that domestic silver

output had fallen alarmingly, that silver prices had declined rapidly, and that massive unemployment had hit mining areas. Pittman, who lauded the hearings as "very valuable," claimed that the lower rates caused the unemployment rolls in mining areas to expand considerably.[9]

Buoyed by the hearings, Pittman quickly sought to organize his Mountain State colleagues into a formidable bloc. The fate of the Administration measure in the Senate now depended largely upon the Western Democrats, who wielded the balance of power. Although representing only three percent of the nation's population, the Mountain members constituted eighteen votes or one-sixth of the entire upper chamber. On April 24, Pittman canvassed seventeen senators from his region, urging them to lobby collectively for higher silver prices. He asked his colleagues whether they were "willing and ready to join in a fight at this time to have the domestic silver fixed at not less than 77.57 cents per ounce until June 30, 1941 as a condition for voting for the extension of the so-called Thomas amendment," which had created the Presidential devaluation powers. Expecting that the Senate would debate the issue soon, Pittman urged that the Western Senators reply "without delay."[10]

Most Mountain Senators eagerly supported Pittman's appeal. Democrat Carl Hayden of Arizona wrote Pittman, "I have always followed your leadership on silver matters and I am glad to join with you in any representation which you may care to make looking toward the reasonably permanent establishment of a higher price for domestically mined silver." Borah of Idaho concurred, indicating he would be "glad to join" the battle in the Senate for higher silver prices. A few westerners, including Democrats Alva Adams of Colorado, Pat McCarran of Nevada, and Henry Ashurst of Arizona, favored doubling the domestic silver price, but consented for the time being to participate in Pittman's movement for moderate increases.[11]

For the next month, Pittman lacked the time to play a dominant role in the monetary struggle. As Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, he conducted extensive hearings on his resolution to repeal the arms embargo. Since isolationists dominated his committee, Pittman eventually decided to postpone any further consideration of the neutrality question and renewed his campaign for raising silver prices.[12] Utilizing carefully designed strategy, he next sought to inform the President about the rapidly deteriorating mining situation and particularly hoped to secure Roosevelt's endorsement for raising silver rates. In a letter to the chief executive on May 23, Pittman vividly described how the decline in silver rates had caused the growth of financial instability in China. He claimed that China had prospered using silver money and "rarely" had experienced "a bank or business failure" until the world silver rate in 1934 "was beaten down to 25 cents an ounce." He clearly was warning Roosevelt what might happen in the United States if American silver prices continued to decline. Roosevelt, however, was not inclined to make any concessions to the silverites.[13]

A rebellious group within the silver bloc also troubled Pittman. McCarran of Nevada and Ashurst of Arizona favored battling for an increase of silver levels to $1.04 an ounce, and they complained that

Pittman was acting too cautiously. They even advocating filibustering the monetary measure on the Senate floor until Roosevelt made very substantial concessions regarding rates. Without consulting Pittman, McCarran on June 15 negotiated a deal with Democrat Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma. McCarran pledged that some Mountain Senators would support two billion dollars to aid farmers, while Thomas promised that the agricultural Senators would join the battle to fix silver prices at $1.04 per ounce. Until these twin objectives were met, McCarran and Thomas agreed to filibuster the monetary bill. Thomas on June 20 and 21 occupied the Senate floor for several hours to prevent Majority Leader Alben Barkley of Kentucky from obtaining a vote on the bill.[14]

Pittman strongly disapproved of the McCarran-Thomas filibuster strategy. Although personally sympathetic to the $1.04 price, he protested that the delaying tactics might make impossible any compromise with Roosevelt. Pittman quite understandably criticized McCarran's approach because he wanted to avoid any further confrontations with the President. Besides failing to bring the neutrality bill out of his committee, Pittman on June 23 had denounced Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr. on the Senate floor for contributing to mining unemployment. He realistically considered that only by returning to the President's good graces would he be able to secure higher silver levels. In a letter to Roosevelt on June 24, Pittman insisted that the silver controversy had not altered his favorable attitude toward the President and particularly sought to absolve the chief executive from direct responsibility for the silver situation. Pittman also assured the President, "I have nothing to do with a filibuster," and, to verify this he claimed that the Majority Leader Barkley "understands this." Nevertheless, he still believed that Roosevelt underestimated the extent of the silver situation and insisted, "The matter involved in seven states is more serious, I am sure, than you are aware of, and troubles me quite deeply."[15]

With Senate roll calls on monetary legislation rapidly approaching, Pittman and Borah devised floor strategy for a majority of the silver senators. Each advocated an alliance with the non-devaluationists and the Republicans as the best means of securing higher silver prices. Non-devaluationists, comprising conservative Democrats led by the aging Carter Glass of Virginia, opposed extending the Presidential authority to devalue currency, while Republicans, led by John Townsend, Jr. of Delaware and Clyde Reed of Kansas, opposed the foreign silver purchase program. Pittman designated Borah to negotiate the deal because a Republican probably could persuade his colleagues more easily to join an alliance.[16]

Behind closed doors, Borah on June 23 reached an understanding with the non-devaluationists and the Republicans. The Idaho Senator promised that the silverites would approve an Adams amendment to remove the President's devaluation authority and a Townsend proposal to oppose the foreign silver purchase program. In exchange, the non-devaluationists and the Republicans agreed to support an Adams amendment to raise the silver price to 77.57 cents per ounce. Reed of Kansas frankly admitted that the various factions had made "a deal" and even boasted, "I was the

most active man in making the arrangements." The alliance reached fruition on June 26, when the three groups cooperated to ensure passage of the Townsend proposal and the Adams amendments. Besides terminating the Presidential monetary powers, the coalition had raised the price of silver temporarily from 64 to 77 cents per ounce.[17]

Although delighted with the Senate action, Pittman personally preferred substantially higher increases in silver rates. During Senate debate, he argued vigorously that the federal government should arbitrarily value all silver at $1.29 per ounce, and he insisted that the producer should get a larger share of this amount. Unless Congress raised silver prices considerably, Pittman warned that over 200,000 additional miners would be thrown out of work. He introduced an amendment on June 26 to raise silver rates to $1.16 per ounce, but the Senate rejected the plan by a solid two-to-one margin.[18]

The alliance jeopardized several other Administration programs. Roosevelt wanted prompt Congressional approval of raising certain taxes, increasing funds for the Works Progress Administration, and removing the arms embargo.[19] In order to secure Senatorial action on these vital measures, President Roosevelt needed to bargain with the silver bloc. Pittman already had warned the President that "we (the Mountain members) have eighteen votes" and inquired "what are you going to do about it?"[20]

Roosevelt, though, still flatly declined to reach any settlement with Pittman. To the Nevadan's dismay, the President even charged that the federal government was subsidizing silver producers because the price of the metal was twenty-three cents above the world market prices. Besides contending that the subsidy proportionately exceeded that given to wheat and cotton farmers, he insisted that "the world does not seem to want our silver." Since "our own subsidy to our own domestic producers is plenty high," Roosevelt preferred discovering "more permanently useful methods" to promote farming and manufacturing in the Mountain States.[21]

Conferees, meanwhile, sought to reconcile the differences between the Senate and the House monetary bills. In late June, they restored most of the original House version, including the reinsertion of the President's prerogatives to devalue the dollar and to purchase foreign silver. The conferees probably realized, though, that their report could not survive in the Senate without backing from the silver bloc. In an attempt to compromise with Pittman's forces, they agreed to raise the rate of the metal to 71.11 cents per ounce. Pittman greeted the conference report with mixed reactions: he favored the silver price increase, but opposed extension of the foreign silver purchase program. Although the conferees "did not give the silver bloc all that the Senate granted them," Pittman promised to support the committee version and urged his colleagues to desert the alliance with the non-devaluationists and Republicans. The Nevada Democrat hailed the committee action for relieving silverites "of the uncertainty of bureaucratic domination" because the Treasury Department had displayed "vindictiveness towards the metal mining industry."[22]

The House quickly approved the conference report, but Pittman anticipated considerable difficulty in the Senate. Conservative Democrats naturally opposed the restoration of the Presidential devaluation powers, while Republicans protested the revival of the foreign silver purchase program. Pittman expected that the Senate ultimately would approve the conference report, but feared that the elevation of silver rates might fall by the wayside because the Presidential monetary powers might expire in the meantime. In hopes of expediting Senate action, he appealed directly to President Roosevelt to support the conference action on the silver price increase. Pittman, fearing that the Republicans might renew a filibuster for several days, figured that Presidential acceptance of the silver compromise might save the Administration measure. On the last day of June, Pittman urged Roosevelt to "help the situation in the Senate" by issuing immediately a proclamation establishing the silver price at the conference level of 71.11 cents per ounce. Pittman stressed that "Today is your last day to take any action if you see fit" and warned, "If no action is taken, there will be great confusion."[23]

This time, Pittman's overtures to the President paid dividends. Roosevelt welcomed the conference action restoring the Presidential powers to devalue the dollar and to purchase foreign silver, but also realized that the Presidential powers would expire automatically if the Senate did not act before midnight. In what appears to have been an expedient move, Roosevelt agreed for the first time to accept concessions toward the silver bloc, and thus enhanced the propects for securing Senate extension of his monetary powers. The President on June 30 made a deal with Pittman, promising to accept an increase in the price of silver to 71.11 cents per ounce. Pittman, in return, pledged that most Mountain members would support the conference report and also agreed to reconvene his Foreign Relations Committee to discuss repealing the arms embargo.[24]

Pittman, however, was unable to unite the silver senators behind the conference report. McCarran, Adams, and three other Mountain State Democrats[25] refused to accept the conference solution because they advocated much higher domestic silver rates and opposed continuing the Presidential devaluation powers. Complaining that Pittman was selling out to the President, McCarran and Adams denounced the conference committee for ignoring the will of the Senate and continued to cooperate with the disenchanted Republicans and non-devaluationists. McCarran, Adams, and other critics filibustered the measure past midnight, halting the Presidential powers temporarily. During the same evening, Roosevelt and Pittman both wished that the Senate would take a roll call vote on the conference report; but Majority Leader Barkley of Kentucky wisely induced them to delay voting until July 5 because an estimated 38 of 73 Senators present that night disapproved of the conference report.[26]

During early July, Pittman remained in the limelight on the monetary question. During the holiday recess, he helped to induce skeptical Mountain Democrats Carl Hatch of New Mexico and Burton Wheeler of Montana to support the conference report because of the proposed increase in silver prices. In a persuasive floor speech on July 5, Pittman urged that the Senate accept the compromise silver rate instead of resort-

ing to further pricefixing by the unsympathetic Department of the Treasury. Considering the silver bloc very fortunate to secure any compromise on rates in the conference committee, he urged all western senators to take advantage of the development and to approve the conference solution. Pittman's last-minute activities paid dividends as the Senate shortly afterwards narrowly approved (43-39) the conference report and thus restored the Presidential monetary powers. The Senate outcome naturally bolstered Pittman's morale because the Nevada mine owners now had secured a rate increase. After making a "hard fight," Pittman concluded, "We got the best price that could be gotten at this time."[27]

Historians have only briefly mentioned the Senate battle on this measure, and usually have not stressed Pittman's key role. Allan Everest, in his *Morgenthau, the New Deal and Silver,* considers the Monetary Act from the perspective of Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., who kept an extensive diary during the Roosevelt Administration. In *Congressional Conservatism and the New Deal,* James Patterson focuses on the role of the entire silver bloc rather than on Pittman or any other individual participants. Fred Israel, Pittman's biographer, focuses his attention for 1939 primarily on the Senator's significant role as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee in helping revise the neutrality laws.[28]

This article shows that Pittman in 1939 played a most prominent role in the Senate on the monetary question. He assumed a difficult position and always ran on a tightrope between the conflicting demands of President Roosevelt and the more extreme silverites. At the outset, he organized an effective Mountain bloc to lobby for elevated silver rates. Pittman initiated a deal with the Republicans and the conservative Democrats and thus enabled the Senate to raise the silver prices substantially. As a pragmatic politician, however, Pittman recognized that the conferees probably would not agree to a thirteen-cent increase and thus he exerted his influence toward establishing a compromise. After many unsuccessful attempts, he also induced President Roosevelt to accept a moderate rise in silver rates. He therefore helped save the Presidential powers over devaluation and purchase of foreign silver. Without Pittman's assistance and ability to compromise, the Senate most likely would have killed Roosevelt's entire monetary policy.

This silver legislation represented a pivotal turning point for Congress. Between February and May, 1939, conservatives on Capitol Hill had denounced the Works Progress Administration and several other Roosevelt programs. These outbursts usually were sporadic in nature, resulting in short-lived victories for the anti-New Dealers. The successful revolt by the silver bloc in the early summer may have encouraged Congress to rebel more often against the President's domestic and foreign policy measures. During the next two months, anti-New Dealers forced an investigation of the National Labor Relations Board, rejected funding of self-liquidating projects, and refused to increase the lending powers of the U.S. Housing Authority.[29] On the foreign policy front, Congress also thwarted President Roosevelt's plans to repeal the arms embargo.[30] Thus the struggle over the price of silver and Presidential powers served as an

example of, and an incitement to, increased opposition to Roosevelt and his policies.

## *Notes*

1. Two such works are Fred Israel, *Nevada's Key Pittman* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963) and Robert Divine, *The Illusion of Neutrality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

2. For a brief discussion of the Monetary Act of 1939, *see* Allan Everest, *Morgenthau, the New Deal and Silver* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1950), pp. 69-75; James Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism and the New Deal* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967), pp. 312-315; and Israel, *Pittman,* pp. 118-120.

3. "Key Pittman," *Dictionary of American Biography,* Vol. XXII, Supp. Two (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), pp. 530-531; U.S. Congress, *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1961* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing office, 1961); Israel, *Pittman, passim.*

4. *Dictionary of American Biography,* p. 531; Israel, *Pittman, passim.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. Key Pittman to Franklin Roosevelt, December 17, 1938, Franklin Roosevelt Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York, Official Files 229, Box 12.

7. "Silver Conference Held at Reno," *Mining Congress Journal* (May, 1939), 566; C. A. Bottolfsen to Franklin Roosevelt, April 5, 1939, Roosevelt Papers, OF 229, Box 12; E. P. Carville to Franklin Roosevelt, March 30, 1939, Roosevelt Papers, OF 229, Box 12.

8. Franklin Roosevelt to William Bankhead, January 19, 1939, National Archives, Legislative Division, 76th Congress, Folder on H. R. 3325; *Congressional Record,* 76th Congress, 1st Session. Vol. 84, April 21, 1939, pp. 4624-4626, 4634-4635.

9. Key Pittman to William Borah, *et al.,* April 24, 1939, William Borah Papers, Library of Congress, Box 433.

10. Everett Cooley, "Silver Politics in the United States, 1918-1946," (University of California, Berkeley: Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, 1951), pp. 210-212; Pittman to Borah, *et al.,* April 24, 1939.

11. Carl Hayden to Key Pittman, April 29, 1939, Carl Hayden Papers, Arizona State University Library, 633/18; William Borah to Key Pittman, April 26, 1939, Borah Papers, Box 433.

12. Divine, *Illusion,* pp. 246-252. For Pittman's impact on American foreign policy, *see* Wayne Cole, "Senator Pittman and American Neutrality Policies, 1933-1940," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review,* XLVI (March, 1960), 644-662.

13. Key Pittman to Franklin Roosevelt, May 23, 1939, Roosevelt Papers, President's Personal File 745; Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), *FDR: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945,* Vol. 2 (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1950), p. 887.

14. *New York Times,* June 22, 1939; *Congressional Record,* June 21, 1939, pp. 7591-7627.

15. *Congressional Record,* June 23, 1939, *passim;* Key Pittman to Franklin Roosevelt, June 24, 1939, Roosevelt Papers, PPF 745.

16. William Borah to Irvin Rockwell of Bellevue, Idaho, June 23, 1939, Borah Papers, Box 433; *Richmond Times Dispatch,* June 18, 1939; Clyde Reed to William Allen White of Emporia, Kansas, July 7, 1939, William Allen White Papers, Library of Congress, Box 222.

17. Borah to Rockwell, June 23, 1939; Reed to White, July 7, 1939; *Congressional Record,* June 26, 1939, 7859, 7867, 7881.

18. *Congressional Record,* June 26, 1939, *passim.*

19. For these legislative issues, *see* Randolph Paul, *Taxation in the United States* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1954); Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism;* and Divine, *Illusion.*

20. Everest, *Morgenthau,* pp. 72-73.

21. Franklin Roosevelt to Key Pittman, June 27, 1939 as in Roosevelt (ed.), *Personal Letters,* p. 898.

22. U.S. Congress, House, Conference Committee, Rpt. No. 1006, "Stabilization Fund, Devaluation, and Silver Purchases," June 29, 1939, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939); Key Pittman Press Release, June 30, 1939, Key Pittman Papers, Library of Congress, Box 162.

23. *Congressional Record,* June 30, 1939, *passim;* Key Pittman to Franklin Roosevelt, June 30, 1939, Roosevelt Papers, PPF 745.

24. Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism,* p. 314; Everest, *Morgenthau,* p. 72.

25. Other Mountain Democrats supporting the filibuster included Henry Ashurst of Arizona, Carl Hatch of New Mexico, and Burton Wheeler of Montana.

26. *Congressional Record,* June 30, 1939, *passim; New York Times,* July 1, 1939, Everest, *Morgenthau,* pp. 73-74; Reed to White, July 7, 1939. In the July 7 letter, Reed complained "Pittman wriggled out on us in the midst of the fight." According to Reed, "McCarran, Ashurst, and Adams, and a couple of more silver Democrats kept their word and went clear through with us." Reed and Republican Robert Taft of Ohio wanted to take a roll call vote on the conference report, but lamented "we couldn't get the cautious and conservative G.O.P.'ers to agree with us."

27. *Congressional Record,* July 5, 1939, *passim;* Key Pittman to Zeb Kendall of Virginia City, Nevada, undated, Pittman Papers, Box 38.

28. *See* Everest, *Morgenthau,* pp. 69-75; Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism,* pp. 312-315; and Israel, *Pittman,* pp. 118-120.

29. Patterson, *Congressonal Conservatism,* pp. 298-324

30. Divine, *Illusion,* pp. 266-282.

# Notes and Documents

## *"Life in Mercur": The Recollections of a Young Girl in a Great Basin Mining Town At the Turn of the Century*

*by Mary Joanna Dern Goodrich*
*Introduced and Edited by Newell G. Bringhurst*

WHEN GREAT BASIN mining activity of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is considered it is usually studied from the vantage point of such prominent Nevada-Utah mining communities as Virginia City, Bingham Canyon, Park City, and Tonopah. Generally overlooked are the dozens of less well-known and less successful Great Basin mining regions.[1] This is unfortunate. Such mining regions often played significant roles in the development of the Great Basin.[2] One such region was Mercur, Utah, located fifty-five miles southwest of Salt Lake City. Mercur emerged as a flourishing gold mining camp during the period 1890-1913.[3] At the peak of Mercur's boom in 1896, one outside admirer dubbed it in rather grandiose terms as the "Johannesburg of America."[4] While Mercur obviously did not produce the wealth of its South African counterpart, it was nevertheless significant for several reasons. First, Mercur was a proving ground for a number of innovations in mining technology. It provided an arena for the first successful use, on a large scale, of the cyanide milling process which facilitated the removal of gold from hitherto stubborn ores. After Mercur, the cyanide process, considered a major technological breakthrough, was utilized in various gold mining districts within the United States and throughout the world.[5] The Golden Gate Mill, the major milling facility in Mercur, was significant for two other reasons. Upon its completion in 1898 this mill was the first all-steel facility of any size built anywhere in the world for the treatment of non-ferrous ores. It was also the first metallurgical plant to use transmitted electrical energy as a source of motive power.[6]

Mercur was important for a more subtle reason. It was representative of the dozens of less well-known mining communities in the Great Basin that boomed, matured, and declined during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, ultimately becoming abandoned ghost towns. In fact, the following recollections written by Mary Joanna Dern Goodrich present a portrait of Mercur's last years as a mining community during the early 1900s. Mercur was then struggling to survive. Mary Joanna's father, George H. Dern, in his role as General Manager of the Consolidated Mercur Mining and Milling Company, tried to prevent the collapse of mining operations. As part of his effort to breathe new life into the dying mining camp, Dern, along with his family, moved there in 1904 in order to closely supervise and maximize the efficiency of the mines and mill. The Dern family remained in Mercur from 1904 to 1909 ( the period covered by Mary Joanna's recollections).[7] Although Dern failed in his

efforts to perpetuate the life of Mercur beyond 1913, he developed a reputation as an efficient administrator which enabled him to go on and serve as governor of Utah and Secretary of War in the Cabinet of Franklin D. Roosevelt.[8] As for Mary Joanna's recollections, they provide a very keen and perceptive portrait of economic, social, and cultural life in Mercur during its declining years as a mining community.

Finally, Mrs. Goodrich's account is significant in that it presents the story of Mercur from a feminine vantage point. Her recollections provide a needed feminine perspective usually overlooked in traditional accounts of life in Great Basin male-dominated mining communities.[9] Even though Mrs. Goodrich wrote her narrative story during the early 1950s — some forty-five years after the time and events that it describes — it is nevertheless a most vivid account, one written by a well-educated and articulate woman.[10] Mary Joanna was born in Salt Lake City in 1901, just three years before her family moved to Mercur. She remained in this mining community with her family for five years. After her return to Salt Lake, she attended the schools of that city and then travelled east to attend Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York.[11] Following her graduation in 1922, she returned to Salt Lake City and became a teacher at Roland Hall, a private girls' school in that city.[12] Two years later she married Harry Baxter, a sales executive for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. She had two children by this marriage and lived in Chicago for a time.[13] Following the death of Mr. Baxter in 1931, Mary Joanna returned with her family to Salt Lake City, where she lived until 1933. In that year she moved to Washington, D.C., where she served as an administrative assistant to her father after his appointment as Secretary of War in the Cabinet of Franklin D. Roosevelt.[14] In 1940, she married Herbert F. Goodrich of Philadelphia, a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals.[15] Even though she had a child by her second marriage, she remained active in various political and civic affairs. She died in Philadelphia in 1967.[16]

# *Life in Mercur*

WHEN I WAS FOUR OR FIVE we moved to Mercur.[17] My father was general manager of the Consolidated Mercur Mines, which included not only several mines but also a huge mill where the gold was extracted from the ore. The mill was the dominating feature of the landscape, seeming to grow out of the hill on which it was built. There were great mountainous dumps of earth from which the gold had been taken and these dumps grew steadily like fingers stretching out to grab more and more of the surrounding country. It was interesting to see the dump cars pushed out on tracks to the end of the dumps and to see the contents tumble down to add to the ever-growing mass. We were of course less conscious of the mines, although there were visible signs of them too — tramways built along the mountainside where ore trains thundered along, old abandoned shafts which we were ordered to avoid like the plague lest we fall in and be lost forever, whistles blowing to note the change in shifts with long lines of miners with candles in their caps coming down or going up to an entrance tunnel. In short, even small children were conscious of the thing

that made Mercur live.

It wasn't the least bit pretty. The town sprawled along the hillsides of a canyon, with the mill standing at the apex. There were no trees[18] and the houses were frame, some of them very crude indeed. Many of them were gaily painted pink or light green or yellow by the Italian population.[19] To facilitate getting around, boardwalks were laid down and flights of wooden steps led from one level to another. The commercial part of town was on the canyon (or gulch) floor and was a haphazard sprawling street which eventually petered out in a rough rocky road leading down the canyon and out into the barren sagebrush-covered Rush Valley, the home of jack rabbits, gophers and rattlesnakes.

Our house was the biggest and best in the camp, as befitted the general manager. It was a small snug white clapboard job, and it had a hot air furnace and indoor plumbing! We also had a pianola — an odd contraption which fitted over the keyboard of a piano and had within it all the machinery which later evolved into the player piano of a later day. I'm not sure that mother cared much for the pianola — she was an expert pianist and liked to make her own music as well as accompany Dad when he sang, which he often did. I remember that on his return from frequent trips to Salt Lake he would bring back copies of the newest popular songs ("Waiting at the Church," "Cheer Up Mary," "Wait Till the Sun Shines Nellie" and one called "Ain't It Awful, Mabel" which mother confiscated as not being desirable for young ears) and the house would ring with music, good songs too as well as the more popular stuff. The pianola also was sometimes moved down to the hall in town where the young set — the mining engineers, executives, schoolteachers, professional people, etc. had "pianola dances" which seemed to me the height of glamor.[20]

Indeed, I am quite sure that those young people must have had a very good time in Mercur. My father always said they were the best years of his life.[21] My aunt Cora came out to teach school and there were several other girls of her age, several of whom met and married eligible young engineers. Aunt Co was one of those. There was a tennis court and there were "horseback rides,"[22] picnics and hikes and camping trips and an occasional hunt for jack rabbits or coyotes and card clubs (500)[23] and dances. Why shouldn't it be fun?

I went to school in a "little white schoolhouse," down the hill a bit and next to the pink Methodist church (the Mormon church was gray and I can't remember the Catholic church).[24]

There were several rooms, but two grades to each room. The usual big stove in the middle kept us warm. The teaching was pretty good — I can remember being proud that I could read and spell such words as caterpillar before I was out of "Beginners' Class." Aunt Co was my teacher one year and she, or family pride on both our parts, kept me on my toes. My closest competitor was a small curly-headed dark-eyed Italian child named Angelo Semini.

We were a great collection of children, many Italians, a number of Irish, just plain kids like me, and *one* Negro.[25] His name was Earl. I remember him because of one incident. I was standing with a group of children one day as Earl was passing by and with the usual thoughtless-

ness of the young we were all shouting "Hello, nigger" when suddenly, I suppose it was because of a look on his face, it seemed a cruel thing to do and I went forward a little and said clearly and distinctly, "Hello, *Earl.*" That was all, except that he answered with a smile and I've always been glad that I did it. Another experience which stays with me because it must mark a development or awakening of a sense of understanding of others had to do with a large Italian boy, named Stef. He came into school late in the term knowing almost no English and he must have been hard to manage. He sat behind me and used to pull my hair and annoy me considerably. One day the teacher came bearing down on us after I had remonstrated with him and I was terrified because I'd spoken in class. But she went past me and to Stef's desk where she smacked his hands with a ruler. Of course I felt self-righteous and felt that Stef was the devil himself. But it was only a few days later that during the morning session someone from the mine came for Stef because of an accident to his father. (Actually his father had been killed.) And the stricken look on the boy's face as he left the room and my wishing that I hadn't had a part in hurting him in any kind of way, since he was so bitterly hurt, has stayed in my memory.

There's no consecutive story. All I can do is give a few scattered impressions which may create some picture of the kind of mining camp experience I had.

## *Expeditions to the Mine and the Mill*

Occasionally when Dad was taking an important visitor or family friends who were visiting us on a tour to see how the Consolidated Mercur Gold Mines operated I was allowed to go along. It was mysterious and more than a little terrifying. When we went down into the mine we did it by riding on a sort of open elevator called a cage and it was pretty weird to go swishing down through the dark with nothing but solid rock on all sides lighted only by the candles we had with us and the smell of cold agelessness all around. Then we would get off at some "level," which would be like getting off at a certain floor in a tall building, and walk along a tunnel cut out of the rock, watching and listening for trains of ore carts which would come along at certain times on the narrow track which took up most of the floor of the tunnel. Sometimes we would come upon dim figures of men hacking at the rock[26] and sometimes there would be ladders to climb to get up to where work was going on off the main tunnel. And Dad would point out the vein of ore which held the precious gold and it was all wonderful but a little frightening too. I was always glad to come out into the hot sunshine again.

The mill was different — not mysterious at all but a clash with great grinding machinery and dust where the ore was crushed and odorous with acrid chemicals, especially in the building which held the great cyanide tanks where one always walked with terrible caution along the edges because the solution which was in the tanks was deadly poison and even a drop might kill you (so I thought anyway). And there was the heat of the enormous roasters which refined and melted and formed the gold into nuggets or buttons or bricks and finally there was a blessedly quiet spot

where the "buttons" where assembled and weighed. And this room seemed so small after the gigantic size of everything else in the mill and yet here was the reason and result for which all the rest was made — a few cones of shining metal, called bullion and very heavy to lift! In a way it seemed an anticlimax to a child.

## *Picnicking and Camping in Ophir Canyon*

Ophir was another mining camp not very far away and was situated at the mouth of an unusually attractive canyon — green and piney with a lovely little mountain stream (Ophir Creek). It was our favorite objective for an all-day picnic and to us children it was the finest adventure in the world. We went in an open buckboard — really more like a wagon with seats attached drawn by a team of horses.[27] Dad always did the driving and it was most exciting going down the steep and rocky road of Mercur Gulch where the screeching brake would grind against the metal wheels and holding on like mad you would wonder whether the buckboard would ram the horses' behinds or whether it would tip as you went bouncing over some unusually large boulder. Such never did happen but I don't know why not. Then out into Rush Valley — all wide and gray and fragrant with sagebrush where enormous jack rabbits would often seem to race us as we dashed along. And then up Ophir Canyon where everything was miraculously cool and green and mysterious after the heat and drabness of the deserty valley and of Mercur itself. It was the creek we loved best — to be able to wade in it was our idea of complete bliss.

Once or twice we had camping trips of several days when we really set up camp with tents and a camp stove and a wooden table underneath a bower of branches to keep off the sun — and rain — and nothing could have been more fun.

## *Trips to Salt Lake City*

Going into Salt Lake City was like going into a foreign country, and attended by almost as many complicated maneuvers as crossing certain European borders. There was one train a day both in and out of the camp. It got in about noon — if it was on time. You could hear the engine's whistle long before you could see it so you were always on the watch to see it appear on the summit of the hill on the opposite side of the canyon and slowly wind its way down to the little station. It was a narrow gauge road and there was a great deal of jumping the track on the part of the engine so of course it didn't go very fast and on the days you were going to Salt Lake you were always glad when it got in, since that meant you could count on leaving on time.

The trip started after lunch. The time was for my father, being the boss-man, not too inflexible and many a time the train would be held until he could get there. You got on the train breathlessly and you settled down in the combined baggage car and passenger coach heated by a stove in the middle and leaned against the plain wooden seat and caught your breath and beamed with anticipation. Presently as the train pulled its chugging self up the steep grades and wound round and round the mountain you went out on the back platform to wave to those loved ones left at

home who were all standing on the front porch of the house across the canyon waving frantic good-byes until the train started unwinding on the other side of the mountain and Mercur was lost to view. Some there were who went out on the back platform for a less pleasant reason. That trip on the Mercur train could be as treacherous to a delicate digestion as a rough sea voyage and many a sturdy traveller paid the toll![28]

The ride on the Mercur train lasted, I should say, two hours or so. Then you got to Fairfield Junction where you got out to "change cars." You were in a wide valley now, down from the mountains, but not full of people. While waiting for the other train you walked along a rail trying to balance yourself and finding it very hard to do. The Fairfield train was a step up in luxury. The passenger car was all passenger and the seats were covered in wicker and the ride was smoother and less deliberate. But you found this stage of the journey tedious because you were so eager for the next stage to begin. Finally, you got to Lehi Junction, and this was It! Almost immediately a big locomotive came snorting up with bells and whistles and lots of passenger cars, not just one, and you got on and the seats were lovely red velvety plush and you glided like the wind so fast and effortlessly that you had to look sharp to see all the wonderful things there were to see out of the window — houses, barns, cows, lake, *trees,* green grass, people. It was magnificent and magical. Your father played a game with you called "I see" where you each took turns saying what you saw. And there were so many different kinds of things to see that it was quite a contest to see who could see the most unusual thing. And so finally you reached Salt Lake, the teeming metropolis, with yellow streetcars and cabs and carriages and some automobiles and you were whisked by one of these to the lovely soft richness of your grandfather's house where you were warmly welcomed by your dear grandmother Dern and some shy cousins and handsome aunts and uncles and you were in a different world and the new adventure had commenced!

## *Notes*

1. A notable exception to this tendency is W. Turrentine Jackson's *Treasure Hill: Portrait of a Silver Mining Camp* (Tucson, Arizona, 1963). In this account Jackson traces the rise and fall of the little-known White Pine mining district in eastern Nevada. Along this same line, Duane A. Smith in *Rocky Mountain Mining Camps: The Urban Frontier* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1967) has tried to reconstruct a composite portrait of urban life on the mining frontier utilizing both better- and lesser-known mining communities.

2. As W. Turrentine Jackson has perceptively pointed out, "These countless, shortlived, booming camps consumed far greater human effort and suffering, more money and equipment than the occasional mining district that gained lasting fame." *Treasure Hill,* 1.

3. For a good historical overview of this mining camp *see* Douglas D. Alder, "The Ghost of Mercur," *Utah Historical Quarterly,* XXIX, January 1961, 33-42. Also *see* Newell G. Bringhurst, "The Mining Career of George H. Dern (unpublished masters thesis, University of Utah, 1967), 4-98.

4. H. L. Warren, Mercur Gold Fields, *The Johannesburg of America* (n.p., 1896). In fact, one geologist went so far as to suggest that Mercur's gold ore deposits were richer than those being mined in South Africa. *See* Dee Richins Edgeworth "Community Life in Mercur, Tooele County, Utah, 1896-1913" (unpublished seminar paper, Brigham Young University, June 1974), 7.

5. Harold U. Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion* (New York, 1959), 269; Clark C. Spence, *Mining Engineers & the American West: The Lace-Boot Brigade, 1849-1933* (New

Haven, 1970), 241.

6. Bringhurst, "The Mining Career of George H. Dern," 26.

7. Initially George Dern thought that it would only require a five- to six-month residency in Mercur in order to straighten things out at the mine and mill. *See* Bringhurst, "The Mining Career of George H. Dern," 62-3.

8. *Ibid.*, 4-98.

9. In fact, according to Edgworth, the role and contributions of women to the development of Mercur were much more significant than in other Great Basin mining camps. *See* his "Community Life in Mercur," 26.

10. The exact date that Mrs. Goodrich wrote "Life in Mercur," appears to be 1952, according to the best recollection of her son. Letter from Herbert F. Goodrich, Jr., to Newell G. Bringhurst, October 17, 1977 (letter in possession of author).

11. According to Goodrich the family returned to Salt Lake in 1909 so that Mary Joanna, as well as her younger brothers and sisters, would have the benefit of the better schools that Salt Lake had to offer. Letter from Mary Dern Goodrich to Newell G. Bringhurst, February 20, 1967 (letter in possession of author).

12. *Salt Lake Tribune,* September 14, 1967.

13. *Ibid.*, November 30, 1922 and "Vassar College Biographical Record Questionnaire for 1929" (copy in possession of author).

14. "Vassar College Alumni Newspaper for 1932" and *Salt Lake Tribune,* September 14, 1967.

15. *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* September 13 & 24, 1940. *The Evening and Sunday Bulletin* (Philadelphia) September 13, 1940, *New York Herald Tribune,* September 24, 1940.

16. *Salt Lake Tribune,* September 14, 1967, *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* September 15, 1967, *The Evening and Sunday Bulletin,* September 15, 1967. Herbert F. Goodrich died five years earlier in 1962.

17. Here Mrs. Goodrich appears to be mistaken about her age when the family moved to Mercur. According to various accounts, the family moved to Mercur in August, 1904, which would have made Mary Joanna three, since she was born on August 9, 1901.

18. The lack of trees was probably related to the difficulty of transporting adequate water to this arid mining community. Bringhurst, "The Mining Career of George H. Dern," 16.

19. Italians represented a substantial segment of Mercur's population, especially when compared with other Utah communities. In fact as early as 1896, Mercur boasted the first Italian Mutual Aid Society in Utah. *See* Philip F. Notarianni, "Italianita in Utah," in Helen Z. Papanikolas, ed., *The Peoples of Utah* (Salt Lake City, Utah), 309-310.

20. Mary Joanna makes no mention of the saloons frequented by the Italians and other mining residents since such establishments were obviously beyond the purview of a three-to-seven-year-old girl, and also most of her social contacts would have been with the families of the "professional people." *See* Edgeworth, "Community Life in Mercur," 6, 8-9.

21. *See* George H. Dern, "Mercur Community Life" in *Souvenir Edition of Mercur Miner and Lewiston Mercury,* 1 (September 8, 1935).

22. George Dern recalled with fondness "dear old Topsy," his "saddle horse known to everybody in town." *See* his "Mercur Community Life."

23. According to George Dern, "It was rumored that other games were played in the saloons," despite city ordinances prohibiting gambling. Dern, "Mercur Community Life."

24. Mary Joanna's failure to remember the Catholic Church was possibly due to the fact that her house was located close to the Methodist and Latter-day Saint (Mormon) churches, while the Catholic church (rebuilt by 1904 following its destruction by a fire in 1902) was located down the hill from her home near the main business district. Louis J. Fries, *One Hundred and Fifty Years of Catholicity in Utah* (Salt Lake City, 1926), 101. As for the Dern family itself, since they were Congregationalists, they possibly attended the Methodist church (if they were churchgoers).

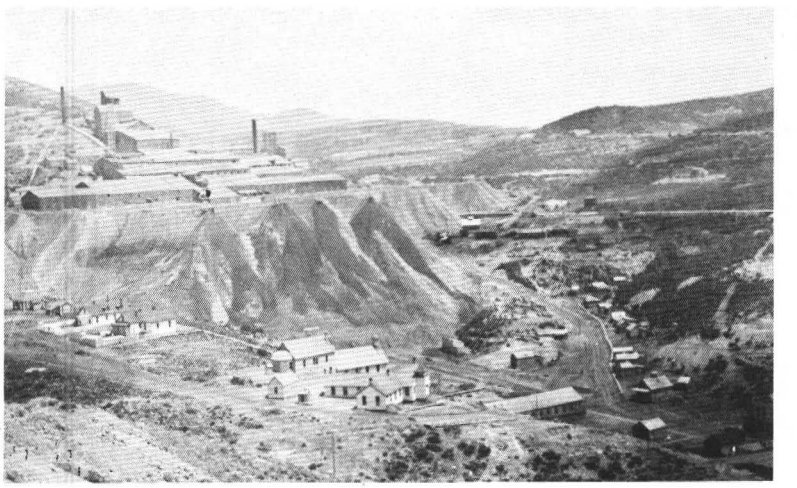
25. In her asides concerning the various ethnic groups in Mercur, Mary Joanna fails to mention Mercur's Chinese population as described in Edgeworth's "Community Life in Mercur," 9. Since the Chinese were barred from working in the mines, it is likely that their

children were also barred from the schools. Also *see* Don C. Conley "The Pioneer Chinese of Utah," 265-70 in *The Peoples of Utah,* ed. by Helen D. Papanikolas.

26. "Hacking" is perhaps not the quite correct term because the ore removed from the mines tended to be of a hard clay or soft rock consistency. Bringhurst, "The Mining Career of George H. Dern," 7-8.

27. This was probably the "old Con. Mercur buckboard." As for transportation vehicles coming to and from Mercur as well as within the mining community itself (excluding the railroad) "horsepower produced by oats, and hay" was the chief means of motive power. "No Mercurite was so plutocratic as to be the owner of one of those new-fangled contraptions" — the automobile; Dern, "Mercur Community Life."

28. According to one observer the "Salt Lake & Mercur Railroad" was the "crookedest Railway in the U.S.," making twenty-six complete circles on a grade which declined from 6,344 feet at Mercur to 5,500 at Fairfield over a distance of twelve and one-half miles. James W. Neill, "Camp Floyd District, Utah, *Engineering and Mining Journal,* 61, (1896), 85.



*Mercur, Utah. The first building to the right in the foreground is the school attended by Mary Joanna, and the two structures immediately to the left of the school are the Methodist and Mormon churches. The Dern residence is the first house to the left of the churches, and in the background is the Golden Gate Mill.* (Photo courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.)

# Book Reviews

*The Complete Las Vegas.* By C. Gregory Crampton. (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Inc., 1976. 151 pages, illustrations, maps, bibliography. $5.95)

FOR MUCH TOO LONG historians have neglected the study of Las Vegas and Clark County. Fortunately, Professor Crampton has done something to fill this scholarly void. In writing a "tourist guide" to the greater Las Vegas area, Crampton outdid himself and the ostensible scope of the work; he offers the reader not only a detailed "Compendium of Useful Information About the City and the Region," but more importantly the first general scholarly overview of Clark County history. Based on secondary sources, both scholarly and popular, and on his personal experience with the area which dates back to 1936, Crampton's "guide" sheds much light on the county's heretofore obscure past, captures and conveys that special ethos which makes contemporary Las Vegas so unique, and furthermore is highly readable. No doubt considerable work stills needs to be completed on the region, and especially research using primary sources. *The Complete Las Vegas* should give impetus to further academic study.

Of course, even the best scholarly "guide" has weaknesses. Perry Kaufman's "City Boosters, Las Vegas Style," published in the July 1974 issue of the *Journal of the West,* is conspicuously absent from Crampton's bibliography. Kaufman, whose dissertation at the University of California, Santa Barbara, centered on Las Vegas boosterism, is one of the few historians who have examined the Las Vegas "experience." It is no surprise that Crampton and Kaufman have drawn similar conclusions on the community's growth pattern, for boosterism has played a major role in the town's phenomenal transformation from a small, dusty, isolated Southern Nevada hamlet into the "glitter-glamour" capital of the world in less than forty years. Crampton, like Kaufman, argues that Las Vegas' "take-off" period began in 1940 with Thomas E. Hull's construction of the first luxury hotel, the El Rancho Vegas, and shortly thereafter R. E. Griffith's opening of the Last Frontier. The expansion of gaming from downtown Las Vegas to what would later be called "The Strip," and the massive influx of wartime tourists, coupled with the opening of the Army Air Corps gunnery school and Basic Magnesium Incorporated, permanently changed the face of the city. By 1950, the population of Las Vegas had increased from 8,422 to 24,624, or 192.4%.

Yet an important feature of Las Vegas' "take-off" has been neglected by both Kaufman and Crampton: the role of film personalities in making Las Vegas "Hollywood's sandbox," where tourists flocked to "do what the stars do," and hopefully mingle with their screen idols in a casino, in a hotel lobby, or by a pool. Although Hollywood's directors and silent film stars had sojourned to Las Vegas as early as 1915 to make one-reel thrillers and westerns, the celluloid capital and its screen celebrities did not make any significant impact on the sleepy railroad town until 1931. First came Rex Bell's marriage to the "It Girl," Clara Bow, and their

subsequent move to Clark County where Rex had purchased a large ranch between Nipton and Searchlight. They made Hollywood welcome at the "Walking Box," and Las Vegas' two newspapers made copy with the arrival and departure of the silver screen's greats and near-greats. When the Helldorado celebration was inaugurated in 1934, Tom Mix, Rex Bell, and other western film stars made the "frontier" extravaganza an annual affair. The Chamber of Commerce played it up as well. With easy marriage and easy divorce readily available in Las Vegas either by automobile travel over the newly-paved L.A. highway or on the Union Pacific's "City of Los Angeles," Hollywood's lovelorn and love-lost generally chose to make the mad dash to Vegas rather than Reno. After 1936, with the opening of the Lake Mead recreational area, the screen's finest not only came to gamble, tie the knot, or untie it, but now also came to enjoy "fun in the sun," water skiing, boating, and fishing.

Despite Hollywood's actors and actresses making Las Vegas their "sandbox" in the 1930s, the real "take-off" can be traced to Rhea Langham Gable's divorce of Clark Gable in 1939. Not since Mary Pickford divorced Owen Moore in 1920 had Nevada witnessed such a highly publicized divorce — Gable was making "Gone With the Wind" at the time — and the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce loved the media play. With Boulder Dam's completion in 1936, the chamber had feared that the town was due for a severe economic setback. A campaign was launched to make Las Vegas the divorce mecca of the country, but despite their promotional literature and strong local business support, the national press and magazines displayed absolutely no interest. Only after this divorce, and Gable's marriage to Carole Lombard three weeks later, did the country take notice of this "sagebrush babylon."

New county divorce records were set in the month of the Gable divorce, again two months later, and then for 1939, 1940, and 1941. In July 1939, Las Vegas' first haven for prospective divorcees, the Boulderado Dude Ranch, opened, and others soon followed. The town was booming by the latter half of 1939, and it was entrepreneurs like Tom Hull and R. E. Griffith who recognized Las Vegas' potential as a "get-away-from-it-all" tourist resort when they built their lavish gaming establishments in the early 1940s. No doubt it was true for most of the depression years, as Crampton points out, that "people went to Reno for gambling and divorce; they went to Las Vegas to see Boulder Dam." But in 1939, a new trend in the Las Vegas saga had begun that has not substantially altered for almost forty years. "The city where time appears meaningless and money flows freely," proclaims the Greater Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, a city that ". . . has prospered on the carefree individual, millions of them, all seeking refuge from the day-in-day-out living."

C. Gregory Crampton has given us a "complete guide" to the "entertainment capital of the world," and a fine work on Las Vegas and Clark County history as well.

Guy Louis Rocha
*Nevada Historical Society*

*The Trader on the American Frontier: Myth's Victim.* By Howard R. Lamar. (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1977. 53 pp., illustrations. $5.00)

ONE HISTORIAN has recorded that in the cold Montana winter of 1844 the Indians sent for a trader. He exchanged five gallons of alcohol and a few trinkets for 210 buffalo robes. If, as a result of this deal, the Indians froze to death, there is no record that it bothered the trader. Another authority has pointed out how a barrel of gunpowder worth $2.00 in London, transported all the way to the Big Horn region of Wyoming and there traded for beaver peltry, netted John Jacob Astor a cool $56.02. Still other historians have documented how traders introduced smallpox and "ye venereal" to Indians. They encouraged the capture of Indians for slaves. They fostered the slaughter of the buffalo for their tongues and hides alone. They contributed to the near extermination of the beaver. Thus has been created an image of the unscrupulous Indian trader. In Professor Lamar's opinion this image is a myth — a false myth.

In this spritely, well-documented essay he reminds us that traders have always existed in human society. (Indeed they have: Adam and Eve may not have plucked the forbidden fruit — they traded it from a huckster who also dealt in fig leaves and snakebite kits!) Indians carried on considerable trade prior to the whites' arrival. Spanish traders later established commerce with nearby tribes. French traders ranged from the Mandan villages south to Santa Fe.

Then came the Anglo-Americans, not, Lamar reminds us, as enemies, but as traders meeting another race and culture on peaceful terms of commerce. They were ahead of the Indian-hating farmers and ranchers; they were ahead of the army. Many of these traders became bicultural, intermarrying and establishing families of lasting prominence. Often the traders became powers in Indian councils. Some of these business families still flourish in the American West. Intermarriage among them has resulted in a further extension and interlocking of their activities.

All of this is certainly correct, and Lamar makes a contribution in calling our attention to the trader's role on the frontier. He is also correct in suggesting that more work needs to be done on these people. It is high time that frontier historians turn more attention to the urban, business, and ethnic history of the American frontier.

Yet this reviewer must take issue with Professor Lamar's thesis that the trader suffers from a bad myth. As historians we must let a spade be a spade. First-generation Astors, Goulds, and Rockefellers committed a few sins. Government eventually stepped in and began regulating their seamy business practices. In an earlier generation government tried very hard to control the excesses of the traders. The United States tried to halt the sale of whiskey. It tried to license traders. And it did this because traders were so much the source of white-Indian conflict. That the government failed does not deter from the reality of the clear and present need for control.

That Professor Lamar could write nearly fifty pages about frontier traders with never the use of the words *alcohol, whiskey, "ye venereal,"*

*exploitation,* and *depletion* of buffalo and beaver indicates that he is trying to create a favorable image that the historical record will not, cannot support. On the other hand, if his aim is to start a dialogue about the role of the trader, then he has achieved his goal.

A word of praise is due to the Texas A & M University Press. This book is number two in Essays on the American West sponsored by the Elma Dill Russell Spencer Foundation. These essays appear in attractive, hard cover formats at a reasonable price. It strikes this reviewer as a good idea, deserving the support of historians.

Richard A. Bartlett
*Florida State University, Tallahassee*

*Guide to Mormon Diaries and Autobiographies.* Edited by Davis Bitton. (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1977. xi, 406 pp., index. $29.95)

NO PEOPLE in American history have written about themselves more prolifically than have the Mormons. Record-keeping as a veritable cornerstone of religion emerged early in the history of Mormonism. Founders Joseph Smith and Brigham Young spent thousands in church funds and hours in the pulpit encouraging the arts of both personal and organizational record-keeping. The resultant trove of minute books, official journals, ledgers, diaries, autobiographies, and family histories is at once overwhelming and wonderful to the serious student not only of Utah and Mormonism but of history in general. As the energetic Saints pressed their proselytizing activities across the globe, they observed and recorded everything from customs and mores to scenery and climate. But more particularly, it is within the seemingly boundless expanse of the Mormon experience as a part of the westward movement that virtually every facet of life finds first-person expression in Mormon sources. Indeed, it would seem less than thorough for any scholar of Mormon history to neglect an examination of such sources, but until now such a search could be only cursory. Davis Bitton, a member of Leonard Arrington's staff at the LDS Church Historical Department and a University of Utah professor, has produced a *Guide* to personal sources in Mormon history that will go a long way toward correcting that problem.

Bitton's compilation is nearly as awe-inspiring as is the body of Mormon diaries and autobiographies it catalogues. It consists of 2,894 separate entries, some listing only the author, inclusive dates of the work, its physical description and location, and a one-line statement of content. Others include a more extensive summary of content varying in length from a few words to several paragraphs. All told, the *Guide* is a *magnum opus* of patience and even love. While its compiler sought only to provide a "guide to works available to researchers" and made no pretension of listing anything close to all Mormon diaries and reminiscences, nevertheless he has tapped every major repository of Mormon materials from the LDS Church Archives and the Utah Historical Society to university libraries and specialized collections such as those at the Bancroft and

Huntington. In short, the student of history with any interest in primary sources would want to have ready access to this incredibly useful research tool.

Although criticism of the *Guide* must remain minor in comparison to the great contribution the volume makes to the process of historiography, and particularly Western historiography, it has some unfortunate problems that detract from that contribution, in some cases considerably. For example, the index appears at first glance to be quite exhaustive, at least within the bounds the compiler sets in his "Guide to the Index," but some important items seem to have been neglected in haste or confusion. Despite the activities of several Mormon diarists within what is now Nevada, the name of the state is not indexed, while other states surrounding Utah — Idaho, Arizona, Colorado — receive suitable entries. One may find specific references to Nevada locations, such as Las Vegas and Carson Valley, but the omission still seems, if nothing more, impolitic. This type of annoyance, however, is passing and restricted. Others are more nagging. While the standardization of the entries provides some consistency to their value, there is still a sad gap between the qualities of good entries and bad ones. The compiler admits in his introduction that he employed several assistants to write the entries. The varying competence of these assistants, as it shows through in the entries, makes such an admission unnecessary. And inasmuch as Bitton excuses himself in this regard by saying that he had "personally . . . examined the majority of the works listed," it is unfortunate that he did not then take the time to compose the entries for that majority.

Probably the most serious of the *Guide*'s failings revolve about a single issue, whether or not the guide should have taken the standard publication form that it did. Several difficulties immediately strike the researcher from this perspective. Since 1973, the *Guide*'s cutoff date, literally hundreds of new primary-material items have joined the ranks of the readily accessible diaries and autobiographies listed in Bitton's work. While he recognizes this problem of continuous updating, the compiler apparently chose not to consider another form for his publication, such as microfiche, that would have lent itself more easily to constant revision. This would admittedly limit possession of the *Guide* to libraries and the most dedicated scholars, but the present volume's thirty-dollar price tag has virtually the same effect. It is additionally unfortunate in this regard that the Brigham Young University Press, while refusing to blush over the price, has failed to produce a durable book that can undergo the continual usage the *Guide* is bound to receive at the hands of a researcher. The reviewer's copy is already coming apart at the spine. It would also be an expensive task to produce a continually updated version of the *Guide* in some other form; but inasmuch as Bitton is an employee of the Mormon Church with access to its computer facilities and continuing funds for research assistance, it would seem to have been more responsible for him to have chosen another format, not only in light of his church position (which the book's "About the Author" section chose not to reveal) but also in behalf of the body of scholars he seeks to serve.

Other small problems, such as failure to include in all cases birth and

death dates of the authors when most of these are quickly available in a card file in the Church Archives, make only tiny dents in the otherwise immense respectability and quality of Professor Bitton's marathon work. Despite its drawbacks, the *Guide* must stand as a landmark publication in the historiography of Mormonism and the West, and a standing tribute to the perseverance and dedication of the compiler and his assistants.

Gene A. Sessions
*Weber State College*

*Blacks in the West.* By W. Sherman Savage. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976. 230 pp., foreword, introduction, notes, bibliography, appendix, index)

THOSE INTERESTED in charting the course of blacks in the development of the West have long been indebted to the pioneering efforts of W. Sherman Savage, Professor Emeritus at Missouri's Lincoln University. It should come as no surprise, then, that Dr. Savage would be the one to write the first general survey of Afro-Americans in the trans-Mississippi West in the nineteenth century. While he notes his debt to William Loren Katz, Kenneth Wiggins Porter, Arlen Fowler, William H. Leckie, and others who have written on phases of this story, Savage's *Blacks in the West* immediately takes its place as the starting point for all future studies on the subject.

Investigating the Afro-American past in the West is not an easy task. The sources are limited, and this has deterred all but the most industrious researchers. The secondary literature is skimpy, and what there is concentrates on geographic areas where blacks were most numerous, although by 1890 there were over 115,000 blacks living west of the Mississippi.

The famous Afro-Americans who joined the migration West, such as Nat Love, Edward Rose, James Beckwourth, and John Wallace, have received treatment in general histories, but other remarkable blacks have rated hardly a mention. Part of Savage's achievement is documenting the lives and contributions of dozens of heretofore unknown persons.

*Blacks in the West,* however, is much more than a *Who Was Who* of blacks on the far western frontier. Savage details the accomplishments, frustrations, near successes, and failures of scores of blacks who faced the same obstacles which have plagued Afro-Americans throughout our nation's history. He concludes that although "the West was not the Promised Land," Afro-Americans found more opportunities in the West than elsewhere and, more importantly, "they have given the West of themselves."(199)

Dr. Savage limits his view to blacks living on the trans-Mississippi frontier between 1830 and 1890. He tells the story in a straightforward manner, organizing his treatment both chronologically and topically. Beginning with an explanation of why blacks came west, Savage details the roles they played as fur traders, soldiers, laborers, businessmen, and professionals. In addition, he discusses problems they encountered in politics, education, social life, and civil rights.

We learn a great deal about living conditions experienced by Afro-Americans in places as removed from one another as Des Moines and Los Angeles, but the real strength of the book lies in the many biographical sketches Savage has compiled. Blacks joined the westward movement for many of the same reasons others did, and the exploits of individuals included in this volume documents the author's contention that blacks grasped opportunities as quickly as anyone else on the frontier.

One of Savage's examples of black entrepreneurship is Junius G. Groves, the so-called "Potato King" of Kansas. Born in Kentucky in 1859, Groves joined others in following Benjamin "Pap" Singleton to Kansas in 1879. Beginning as an agricultural day laborer, Groves soon purchased a plot of land, expanded his holdings to 320 acres by 1900, on which he harvested 396 bushels of potatoes per acre, and eventually owned a 2,100-acre farm and lived in a 22-room house. Groves' success in agriculture was matched by William Alexander Leidesdorff's real estate and transportation investments in San Francisco, and George Washington's foresight in platting Centralia, Washington in 1875. These and other biographies should stimulate local historians to take a closer look at blacks who lived in their region when the West was young.

When Savage treats civil rights, politics, education, and social life, he broadens his view, exchanging the biographical approach for a more general and interpretive discussion. He appears to be on solid ground when he suggests that, although the blacks' civil rights debilities followed them, the West proved to be the region of greatest freedom. Yet, Dr. Savage and others who argue this line may be in error on this issue, for there have been far too few local and state studies completed to answer this question with certainty. To state, as Savage does, that there is no evidence to prove that "there was any confusion about black children's entering the public schools" (181) in Montana, Washington, Idaho, and other less settled states is surely an overstatement. In Montana, for example, there were heated debates in the 1870s and 1880s over the probity of establishing separate black schools.

Part of the difficulty may be that Savage has not taken advantage of recent scholarship. Eugene Berwanger's investigation of the slavery controversy on the frontier, *The Frontier Against Slavery* (1967), and V. Jacque Voegeli's examination of mid-western racism, *Free But Not Equal* (1967), do not appear in the author's bibliography.

There are other weaknesses in this book which should not go without notice. While Savage's writing style is direct, some judicious editing could eliminate awkward transitions, unnecessary detail, and the catalog-like organization of some sections of the book. Perhaps the greatest weakness is the all-too-brief discussion of social life within western Afro-American communities. There was much more to black society on the frontier, particularly in urban areas, than just AME Church and fraternal lodge activities. Indeed, this is an area of western black history which demands more attention than it has received.

These criticisms aside, W. Sherman Savage has written an able overview of the black experience in the West. There is a mine of information here about many of the neglected persons who contributed to the settle-

ment and development of the western regions. This is not the definitive history, but it is a welcome and important addition to Afro-American history and the history of the West.

William L. Lang
*Montana Historical Society*
*Helena, Montana*

*Women of the West.* By Dorothy Gray. (Millbrae, California: Les Femmes, 1976. 179 pp. Paperback)

JOINING THE somewhat overstacked shelves of feminine literature is a modest work by Dorothy Gray entitled *Women of the West.* It is, however, a worthwhile addition. Highly readable while offering a serious commentary on the role of women in the western pioneering experience, *Women of the West* should appeal to just about everyone, from the student of women's history to the casual reader.

Ms. Gray successfully combines individual tales of American women achieving self-fulfillment with a vivid portrayal of the hardships and challenges of western frontier life. According to the author, ". . . the West offered not only the opportunity but the necessity of being the fullest, strongest, most independent and competent person that any woman or man could be"; and her thesis in this book centers on the idea that the West offered women greater opportunity for equality. While the Victorian Age and the Industrial Revolution were setting women apart and delineating their "role" in the eastern United States, the rugged pioneering experience in the West afforded women a valued position where their skills were needed and their scarcity appreciated. By necessity, women in the West "pulled their own weight" and managed to get their rights. Gray's chapter on "Winning the Vote in the West" emphasizes the point nicely. She develops the fact that even though the East was intellectually the center of the women's suffrage movement, the franchise for women came first in the western states. It was a matter of local support, and western women enjoyed this as well as respect from the men in their communities. "It was hard for men to deny the vote to women who had handled weapons, braved the overland trail, starved and struggled alongside the men or on their own against all manner of conditions."

Drawing from the lives and writings of the women themselves, Gray presents women of the West not as the passive pioneers in sunbonnets or the heart-of-gold prostitutes popularized by western fiction writers, but as rugged individuals and equal participants in the western historical experience. In her chapter on Sacajawea, for example, we read the Lewis and Clark saga from an Indian woman's point of view and can perceive Sacajawea as a true maker of history. The author pays special tribute to author Willa Cather who ". . . almost alone in literature . . . tried to convey in her fiction the fuller range of Western woman."

Gray's stories of missionary Narcissa Whitman, emigrant Juliet Brier, mining camp wife Dame Shirley, rancher Agnes Morley Cleaveland and Indian champion Bright Eyes La Flesche are not unique. There were

scores of similar western pioneer women — Nevada had her own Eilley Orrum Bowers and Sarah Winnemucca. But the stories bear telling to demonstrate the variety of women who played leading roles in shaping the American West, some surviving the challenge far more successfully than their husbands. Typical also are the sad tales of discrimination, enslavement and criminal mistreatment suffered by minority women on the western frontier, and Gray devotes a chapter to their special problems. All too often in western literature, prostitution is romanticized and oftentimes treated humorously. Gray dispels these myths with some grim descriptions of the ordeals of Chinese and Indian women. Minority women had their heroes and champions too, and the story of Biddy Mason is a bright one. Born into slavery in 1818, this ambitious and intelligent black woman gained freedom for herself and her children in the West and then went on to become a financial success and a model for the black community in Los Angeles County, California.

Less typical, but certainly not less fascinating, are Gray's portrayals of the West's pioneer professional women. These women found it more difficult to achieve self-fulfillment and gain acceptance even in the West, possibly because their chosen roles were not vital to the western way of life. Anna Howard Shaw and Bethenia Owens Adair were born in pioneer western communities in the mid 1800s but sought more challenging occupations than those normally open to western women. Here, the western milieu presented a special obstacle since educational opportunities lagged far behind those in the East. Furthermore, while the typical frontier woman enjoyed the respect of the entire community, those who sought unorthodox professions faced disapproval and sometimes ostracism by friends and family. Nevertheless, Gray still credits the western experience with providing women with the hardihood and determination that enabled Anna Shaw and Bethenia Owens to pursue their respective careers in the ministry and medicine.

Finally, Gray honors Willa Cather as a pioneer of western literature. Deeply moved by the beauty of the Nebraska prairie, her frontier home in the late 1890s, Cather became the first writer, according to Gray, to portray the western experience in American literature. A pioneer in using western people as major fictional characters, she portrayed ". . . Westering as a significant and universal human experience . . . ." She was awarded a Pulitzer Prize and was recognized as one of the finest novelists of her time.

In its analysis of the western women's experience, *Women in the West* often lacks depth, but by the author's own admission, it does not pretend to be ". . . a definitive study of the history or significance of the Western woman." The bibliography is quite good and those who wish to pursue further study of any chapter will find a variety of sources. The value of *Women of the West* is in its simplicity and popular appeal, for in this form it is bound to reach a wide audience.

Not too long ago we were asking "Where are the women in history, the writers, the artists, the heroes?" Little by little we are learning that,

indeed, women were there, and Dorothy Gray has given us, in a most pleasant form, some new heroes.

Lenore M. Kosso
*Reno, Nevada*

*A Governor's Wife on the Mining Frontier: The Letters of Mary Edgerton from Montana, 1863-1865.* By Mary Wright Edgerton; edited by James L. Thane, Jr. (Published by Tanner Trust Fund, University of Utah Library, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1976. 148 pp., photographs, $8.50)

IN 1863, Mary Wright Edgerton left her family and friends in Ohio to accompany her husband across the country to Idaho. He had just been appointed the new chief justice of the territory and, although the capital was as yet undesignated, he decided to head west to take up his new post. The story of the Edgertons' trek to Idaho and their subsequent two years in Montana is recounted in Mrs. Edgerton's letters home in *A Governor's Wife on the Mining Frontier,* edited by James L. Thane, Jr.

The collection opens with letters she wrote while on the trail. The uneventful trip was marked only by a single difficult decision — what should be their destination? Should they turn north to Bannack or continue west to Lewiston? Their naiveté prevailed; even after they learned that Lewiston had been named the territorial capital they chose to go to Bannack first. Winter came early that year, and the apparent detour proved decisive, for storms forced the Edgertons to settle permanently in Bannack and to forego any thought of proceeding to Lewiston. Meanwhile, gold and silver had been discovered in the Rocky Mountains, and miners were agitating for a division of territory. Mr. Edgerton agreed to argue their cause and, in January of 1864, left his family in Bannack and went back east. Partly as a result of his persuasiveness, Montana was carved out of eastern Idaho, and wholly because of his Republican politics, Edgerton was named governor by President Lincoln. He returned to Bannack, now the territorial capital of Montana, helped establish the new government, and then, in a dispute with the new president, Andrew Johnson, he resigned precipitously. At that point, the Edgertons' political life and their sojourn in the West ended abruptly, and Mrs. Edgerton's letters also stop.

The governmental intrigue, the ups and downs of political life, the lawless frontier setting of Bannack, the ruthless behavior of the early Montana vigilantes — all these should have provided an abundance of fascinating raw material for Mrs. Edgerton. Instead, her letters are models of omission. Rather than inform her correspondents about current events and prominent people, she writes of baking apple pie from a new recipe, of struggling to keep her house clean, of sewing ribbons on a dress, of nursing baby's first cold, of keeping warm in bitter winter weather. So reluctant is she to discuss anything crucial that she neglects even to mention her own pregnancy. Only after the fact does a tiny baby suddenly appear.

Apparently, Mrs. Edgerton rarely left the safe confines of her own home and apparently, too, Mr. Edgerton told her very little about what was happening beyond her own front door. This reviewer finds that isolation frustrating. Perhaps a scholar researching mining camp domesticity could learn valuable details from Mrs. Edgerton, but the general reader calls for more excitement. Quite simply, nothing very interesting happened to the governor's wife, and consequently she had nothing much to write about. Furthermore, her prose style resembles that of any semi-educated, genteel, nineteenth-century lady, and does little either to attract or sustain the reader's attention.

Let me hasten to add, however, that this limited edition of 1,250 copies has one significant redeeming feature. James L. Thane, Jr., has provided a model of scholarly treatment of archival materials. The letters are carefully annotated with key passages from Mrs. Edgerton's correspondents, citations from essays written by members of her family, references to various historical documents, and explanations of contemporary events in the Montana territory. In fact, Professor Thane's editing is so thorough, his supporting details so wide-ranging, his own writing so fluent and informative, that one questions the design of his book. Approximately one-fourth of it is devoted to historical explication and three-fourths to Mrs. Edgerton's contributions. The proportions should have been reversed. Had the editor used the letters as supporting material rather than as his focus, and had he written instead a history of Bannack from 1863 to 1865, he would have produced a far more valuable and readable account.

Recent interest in women's writing has encouraged the publication of literally hundreds of first-hand observations of pioneer life. Too many of them resemble Mrs. Edgerton's. By reading such books we gain new perspectives on the frontier struggle, but within their pages we too rarely find either philosophical insight or creative interpretation. Perhaps it is unfair to evaluate them as strictly literary endeavors: possibly they should be considered only as historical artifacts. Yet one cannot help wondering whether they are worth publishing. Certainly Mrs. Edgerton's letters deserve some recognition — they would serve well as footnotes to history or perhaps as the cornerstone of an article or two in a regional review. But I seriously question the value of presenting them, in a hardbound edition, to the critical eye of the general public.

Ann Ronald
*University of Nevada, Reno*

*Plains Indian Mythology.* By Alice Marriott and Carol K. Rachlin. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1975. 194 pp.)

IN A SEQUEL to their popular *American Indian Mythology,* Alice Marriott and Carol K. Rachlin have collected thirty-one stories told by eleven tribes that hunted and lived on the Great Plains, from Canada to Mexico, from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains.

The collection is divided into four major parts. First are the great

myths — the stories of Creation, of how the earth and men were made. Second, there are the little stories, some of which teach manners, behavior, and ethics, while others explain common phenomena such as why prairie dogs have short tails and turtles have checked shells. The third part records the classic horseback days of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Finally, there are the modern stories, which include personal folklore and modern Plains Indian songs.

The collection is interesting, and embedded in the mythology (which the authors interpret broadly to include legends and folklore) are central themes of the Plains Indians' religion and other aspects of their culture which help to define their world view. But the book, including its division, as well as the definition of terms, provides problems and unfortunate ambiguity. In the foreword, the authors indicate that it is advisable to pause and redefine terms. But, unfortunately, these definitions are not particularly useful and do little to clarify passages in their collection. They maintain that "*Mythology* is the backbone of religion; the accounts of the supernatural, superhuman beings who have become embodied in the universe: Sun, Moon, Stars, Winds, and the Earth herself." They go on to explain that "*Legendary* falls into two sections: the how and why, or explanatory stories, such as are told questioning children, and the accounts of men and women who actually have lived, but who, since their lifetimes, have become larger than life." Finally, they indicate that they have included a third category of storytelling: *folklore.* "These stories are literally the lore and wisdom of the folk." While the authors point out that they have included all three — myth, legend, and folklore — in their collection, their divisions are not particularly helpful in seeing the distinction. Furthermore, the definitions themselves are imprecise and too vague to be of any real use. Unfortunately, this poses more than minor difficulties, for these terms should not be used carelessly, particularly by established scholars.

The authors would have done well to have adopted Brunvand's definitions and distinctions set forth in *Study of American Folklore* and then organized their collection along those lines. Brunvand proceeds to divide traditional oral prose narrative into two main categories: those believed by the teller to be true (which include both myth and legend) and those believed by the teller to be fictional (which includes the folktale). He then goes on to cite characteristics of *myth* and *legend* that distinguish the two from each other. First, the attitude of the storyteller: In myth: sacred; in legend, sacred or secular, usually secular. Second, the settings: in myth, the remote past; in legend, the historical past. Third, the principal characters: in myth, gods, animals, demi-gods, and culture heroes; in legend, human beings.

Furthermore, the authors need to spend more time indicating the background of the storyteller, for given an oral narrative, detailed knowledge of the teller is indispensable.

Certainly one can learn about the Plains Indians from this collection. But, like many sequels, the book suffers at too many points and does not have the strengths that their first book offered.

Joseph B. McCullough
*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

*The Navajos and the New Deal.* By Donald L. Parman. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976. 316 pages; illustrations, footnotes, bibliography, index; $17.50)

DURING THE 1930s, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt launched the New Deal — an all-out effort of relief, recovery, and reform to alleviate the pressing economic problems Americans endured during the Great Depression. Equally as important were a variety of programs, known as the Indian New Deal, initiated to alter drastically federal Indian policy. Having its primary origins in several studies conducted and recommendations made during the 1920s, the Indian New Deal fell under the direction of Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier, who had a good working rapport with and received substantial support from both President Roosevelt and Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes.

In *The Navajo and the New Deal,* Donald L. Parman, assistant professor of history at Purdue University, thoroughly examines the attempts to implement these new policies, which stressed the reorganization of tribal governments, the ending of allotments in severalty (fortunately the Navajos had not been subjected to the Dawes Act), and the promotion of traditional culture on the Navajo reservation. The Navajos formed the largest Indian tribe in the United States, and Collier, who had previous associations with them, hoped that they would serve as a test case for these programs. His successes and failures are deftly detailed by Parman.

Two major factors hampered Collier's progress in obtaining Navajo approval of many of the new reservation programs, especially the Wheeler-Howard Act of 1934, which the Navajos rejected. The first was Collier's inability to realize the importance of livestock to Navajo culture. His sincere efforts to prevent the increasing problem of overgrazing on the Navajo reservation through conservation programs and the reduction of sheep and goat herds instilled a deep and bitter hatred toward him, which many Navajos today still harbor. The Navajos believed social and spiritual power were measured by the amount of livestock they owned; and regardless of the fact that it was poor economics to have such large herds on land that could not profitably sustain such numbers, the Navajo clung to tradition.

The second major factor undermining Collier's efforts involved the political divisions among the Navajos. Important information is presented on two key Navajo leaders: J. C. Morgan, a graduate of Hampton Institute, and Chee Dodge, a recognized leader since the 1880s, who as a child had been among the Navajos sent to Bosque Redondo in eastern New Mexico. Both leaders frequently clashed over religious and assimilation matters. Morgan was a member of the Christian Reformed Church and a progressive, while Dodge was a Catholic and a traditionalist. Moreover, Morgan was extremely anti-Collier.

Throughout the book, Parman has maintained an objective posture regarding individuals and events. His writing style is lucid and his research sound. He fails, however, to employ the wealth of material on Collier contained in the Indian Rights Association Papers. The book is marred by a few mechanical errors, e.g., the misspelling of Assistant Indian Commissioner Edgar B. Meritt's last name (p. 26) and Secretary

of the Interior Hubert W. Work's first name (p. 16).

Parman's assessment of the successes and failures of the Navajo New Deal appear to this reviewer quite satisfactory. Although there were significant failures, there were also marked successes such as the establishment of the Navajo Arts and Crafts Board and the upgrading of medical services and Bureau of Indian Affairs personnel. This book should be read by all students of Indian history, and it should serve as a model for additional studies.

Raymond Wilson
*Sam Houston State University*
*Huntsville, Texas*

# NHS Archival Acquisitions

## *Evans Family Collection*

THE COLLECTION, retrieved from the attic of the former Evans family residence at 707 W. 7th Street in Reno shortly before its destruction by fire on August 5, 1977, largely represents the interests of Alvaro Evans (1827-1915) and his oldest son Pierce. A California pioneer, Alvaro, together with his wife and son, resided in Lassen County until moving to Humboldt County, Nevada in 1872. Alvaro soon acquired a large ranch and extensive cattle holdings. By 1876 he was a widower, and he and Pierce had moved to Reno. Alvarez built the Evans family house in 1878, while serving as Washoe County Deputy Assessor; and Pierce, after being admitted to the Nevada Bar on November 8, 1877, opened his first practice.

Alvaro, his two brothers, Alphonso and John Newton, and Pierce soon became powerful figures in Reno, buying up large parcels of land in and around the city, as well as controlling the town's utilities and most of the water supply. Pierce, as attorney for the family, amassed a large amount of papers, legal journals, and court briefs which are reflected in the collection. Many of the family's business records, including those of their Pyramid Lake mining interests and Humboldt County ranching operations, are also represented in the collection. Private family correspondence sprinkled throughout the papers offer valuable insights into the interpersonal relations of the large family.

Pierce permanently left Reno for Fairhaven, Washington on April 9, 1890, and later moved to Los Angeles where he became a prominent attorney. Alvaro and his brothers divested themselves of much of their business interests after 1890; Alphonso and John Newton died in 1903, and Alvaro in 1915. Alvaro's widow, the former Anna E. Gulling, died in 1936. Leslie Evans, the last surviving child of Alvaro and Anna, died in 1958, and with his death the Evans' house passed out of the family.

The collection consists of seven boxes of letters, papers, business records, legal journals, and court briefs primarily covering the period from 1872 to 1889. The Society thanks Dr. Richard C. Inskip of Reno for his valuable donation, which preserves important facets of the history of Reno, Washoe County, and northwestern Nevada.

## *Tonopah Photographs*

THE NHS Tonopah photograph collection is growing by leaps and bounds. Last August Mrs. Hugh Brown donated over two hundred fifty Tonopah photos to the Society, and now, thanks to Mrs. Virginia Estes of Longmont, Colorado, the Tonopah collection has grown by another fifty photographs.

The period reflected in the shots is the early 1920s when Tonopah was experiencing its last mining boom as a result of the Divide discoveries just south of the town in Esmeralda County. Street scenes abound, especially

those of Main Street showing the July 4, 1922 parade. Rare shots of the famous, or infamous, Big Casino are to be found in the collection, and there are two photos of the Big Casino and red light district burning on August 23, 1922. Mrs. Estes witnessed the fire as a young girl. Overall, the acquisition fills a small chronological void in the Tonopah Collection, which now presents a generally coherent photographic history of the Nye County town from late 1900 to 1923.

## *Edgar Wright Manuscript*

LAWRENCE B. WRIGHT of Walnut Creek, California has recently donated a chapter of his father's unpublished manuscript memoirs (1930-1931). It is entitled "Sandy Bower's Wife, Queen of the Comstock," and in it Edgar Wright recalls Eilley Orrum Bowers' activities at Camp Alamo, Baja California in June 1889. Wright had been hired by Thomas Fitch, at one time Eilley's attorney, to captain a gold-mining expedition to the site some eighty miles south of Ensenada. The five-page piece sheds some light on a heretofore obscure part of Eilley's later life. Also included in the collection are two pieces of correspondence from Lawrence Wright which provide background information on the manuscript and his father, and a typescript version of Edgar Wright's chapter on Eilley edited by his son. The Society extends its thanks to Mr. Wright.

## *John Lester James Collection*

BORN IN IOWA HILL, Placer County, California, in 1889, John L. James spent his boyhood at Centerville and Murphy's Ranch in the Sierra Nevada. "He cut his eyeteeth on gold dredging in 1906 when operating boat dredges of that vintage at Oroville" in nearby Butte County.

The year 1910 found James employed by the Yuba Construction Company of San Francisco. At twenty-one, his job took him to Ophir Creek, Alaska where he helped construct and operate a massive gold dredge for the Wild Goose Mining & Trading Company. James then followed his vocation in California for twenty-seven years, except for a brief tenure with the 20th Engineers in France during World War I.

In 1937, the Natomas Company sent the gold dredging expert to Manhattan Gulch, just west of the town of Manhattan, to ascertain if dredging the area would be a profitable venture. The results were positive.

The Manhattan Gold Dredging Company was incorporated in November 1937, the gold dredge completed in the summer of 1938, and work began in October of that year. The dredge cost $700,000, and Jamestown, the company camp named after John James, the project superintendent, cost $300,000.

For eight years the dredging operations showed a profit, but post-war inflation and diminishing gold placer brought a stop to the operation in the fall of 1946. The Manhattan gold dredge was dismantled in 1947, the constituent parts were sent to Copper Canyon some seventeen miles south

of Battle Mountain, and the dredge was reassembled at the new company camp of Natomas in 1948-49. Work began in October 1949.

A year later, James was recalled by the Natomas Company to manage the operation. Moving from Carson City, where he had established his residence in the fall of 1947, to Copper Canyon, he continued to work there until the spring of 1955, when dredging ceased. James, with his wife Etta, retired in Carson City. They operated the Gold Pan Rock Shop on North Carson until 1966. John Lester James died February 7, 1977.

In the collection are eight slide shows which include slides of the Manhattan and Copper Canyon dredging operations, as well as a photograph album and assorted photos which primarily depict Jamestown and the nearby Manhattan Gold Dredging Company dredge.

The Society thanks Mrs. Evelyn Longero James of Carson City for her generous donation, and also thanks Mark Amodei, who brought the collection to our attention.

## *American Association of University Women, Reno Chapter*

THE COLLECTION consists of correspondence, records, papers, and publications, 1921-1976. Included are membership lists, treasurer's reports, business correspondence, state and Reno chapter meeting minutes and by-laws, and national, state, and Reno chapter periodicals. The Society thanks Marian E. LaVoy, past Reno Chapter president of the AAUW.

## *United States Decennial Census*

THE SOCIETY has purchased microfilm of all available U.S. Census records which pertain to the Nevada area. The time period reflected in the collection begins with the 1850 census for Utah Territory and the New Mexico Territorial counties which later became part of Nevada, and extends to the 1890 Special Schedule for Nevada Union Civil War Veterans and Widows. Unfortunately, the U.S. population schedules for 1890 were destroyed by fire. The 1900 schedules have just recently been released by the National Archives and Records Service, and should be available for use at the Society by the time this notice is published.

# NHS News and Developments

## *New Finding Aid to Emigrant Diaries*

MR. FRANK J. O'BRYAN, volunteer researcher in Reno, has concluded over a year of study in western Nevada libraries with publication of a bibliography to all emigrant diaries held in libraries in Reno, Carson City and Minden. The bibliography is annotated and lists diaries by year of emigration, point of departure from the Mississippi Valley, major trails followed by the individual party, and cutoffs followed. A complete set of maps to the major trails is included. The completion of this tool will aid the growing number of trail historians in locating specific information from western Nevada libraries.

## *Historic Sites Inventory for Carson City*

UNDER CONTRACT from the Nevada Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology, the Society is completing another in its county-wide inventories of historic sites. Modeled on the first inventories conducted in Washoe and Clark counties, this newest program is being conducted within the short period of six months as a pilot study. David Thompson, who earlier administered the Washoe County inventory, heads a team consisting of Donald Dickerson and Alvin McLane. The Nevada State Library has generously supplied an office for the group, which is working in Carson City for better access to local records and county sites.

## Halcyon, *a New Humanities Journal*

THE SOCIETY is acting as fiscal agent for the Nevada Humanities Committee in two unique and interesting projects. The first involves the institution of an annual humanities lecture, while the second will result in the yearly publication of a collection of humanistic articles by Nevada scholars in a journal entitled *Halcyon*. The initial lecture will be held in Las Vegas and will be delivered by Paul Fussell. The first issue of *Halcyon* is expected in early 1979.

## *California State Railroad Museum*

Nevadans going west to the Golden State may enjoy a visit to an impressive museum being built by the California Department of Parks and Recreation in Old Sacramento. The museum will interpret the story of western railroading from 1850 to the present. The focal point of the program will be a fine collection of vintage railroad locomotives and cars, some of which will be of special interest to Nevadans: the V & T locomotives Nos. 12 ("Genoa") and 13 ("Empire"); V & T combination car No. 16; the Nevada Shortline No. 1; the Nevada Central Railway engine No. 5; and the Nevada Central Railway car No. 1 and coach "Silver State."

## *CETA Projects*

Nevada's CETA offices have provided seven individuals to assist the Society's staff in the ongoing county historic sites inventories and newspaper indexes. In Las Vegas, Patricia Keenan, David Millman, and Monique Kimball are working with Gary Roberts on an index to the *Las Vegas Age* from 1905 to 1930. In Reno, James Glaser and Carolyn Kershaw are assisting David Thompson in completing the Washoe County historic sites inventory, and two as yet unselected CETA employees will work on an index to the *Nevada State Journal* and on organizing additions to the archives collections. Another welcome addition is a temporary Management Assistant, Kathy Tipton, who is helping the Las Vegas office administer its growing number of projects and staff.

## *Washoe County Historical Society*

In March the Society elected a Board of Directors for 1978; incoming members are Mary B. Ansari, Michael J. Brodhead, Fred J. Dailey, L. James Higgins, and Douglas Hutchinson.

The Society, which was created in January, 1977, currently has about two hundred members. It holds regular meetings in the Reno-Sparks area, at which speakers discuss various topics in county history. The WCHS publishes an illustrated quarterly journal, the *Washoe Rambler.*

The Society's address is Box 11703, Reno 89510.