NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

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NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

The *Quarterly* solicits contributions of scholarly or popular interest dealing with the following subjects: the general (e.g., the political, social, economic, constitutional) or the natural history of Nevada and the Great Basin; the literature, languages, anthropology, and archeaology of these areas; reprints of historic documents (concerning people, flora, fauna, historical or archaeological sites); reviews and essays concerning the historical literature of Nevada, the Great Basin, and the West.

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Jesse L. Reno, ca. 1846. *(U.S. Military Academy Archives)*

The Naming of Reno, Nevada: A Century-Old Mystery

DARWIN L. FLAHERTY

ON APRIL 23, 1868, the public first learned of a place in Nevada called Reno. Buried in the local news column of the Auburn (Calif.) *Stars and Stripes* was the following item:

> The name of the new town on the C.P.R.R at the junction of the contemplated branch road to Virginia City in Nevada, is Reno, in honor of General Reno, who fell gloriously fighting in defence of the old flag against the assault of traitors in rebellion . . .

The brief announcement concluded with the name assigned to the next town on the railroad, Wadsworth, which will later be shown to have particular relevance.

Undoubtedly, the Reno announcement puzzled some readers of the *Stars and Stripes*. They had just become accustomed to the name Argenta for the junction. Why the change? Doubtlessly this was asked the associates,[1] but if any of the five answered it never reached print. More than a century has passed, and the reason the reticent railroaders chose to honor Jesse Lee Reno at Lake's Crossing is as much an enigma today as it was back in the spring of 1868.

Unquestionably, the Virginia City junction was important in the plans of the associates. During the years they had struggled to build their railroad over the Sierra Nevada mountains, a primary goal had been to provide rail service to the Comstock mines. Originally, they had hoped to serve Virginia City directly on their transcontinental route, but surveys showed this to be impracticable. They had to be content with the junction on the north bank of the Truckee River—hence the selection of Stone and Gate's Crossing (later

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[1] This collective reference to the Central Pacific's inner circle will be used interchangably with "railroaders" throughout this article. The remarkable unanimity of purpose, the one-voice policy, of this secretive body leaves no other choice. "Associates" include not only the Central Pacific's famous Big Four of Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington, Mark Hopkins, and Charles Crocker, but also Charles's older brother Edwin B. "Judge" Crocker as well. Much of the decision-making during the period considered by this article was influenced by the wisdom and courage of E.B. Crocker.

known as Glendale), four miles down river from Lake's. In his report to the associates, Theodore Judah referred to the place jointly as "Stone's" and, significantly, "Virginia Station."[2] It was understood a town of importance would grow up around the junction point.

Therefore, a suitable name was needed. The associates had years to reflect upon this. Argenta, by its appropriateness, seemed the product of such reflection. Its selection was first announced on April 6th in the *Sacramento Bee*, edited by James McClatchy, longtime acquaintance of the associates and stockholder in the Central Pacific.[3] Argenta was well received in Nevada, particularly in Virginia City by the *Territorial Enterprise:* "The name is very pretty and appropriate. . . ."[4] This was two weeks after the *Bee* announcement. It appeared settled: Argenta was to be the name of the new junction site at Lake's Crossing.

On the day following the warm endorsement of the *Territorial Enterprise* came the startling news from Auburn that the name was to be Reno. How the *Stars and Stripes* got this information is part of the enigma that surrounds the naming of Reno.[5] But however informed, the weekly newspaper's announcement was considered sufficiently newsworthy to be copied forthwith by leading California dailies.

By April 27, 1868, most thorough readers of California newspapers were aware of the Reno naming. However, the importance attached to the announcement varied. For example, the *San Francisco Call* of April 26th, and the *San Francisco Bulletin* of April 27th, gave it separate coverage. Conversely, the *Sacramento Union*, April 24th, and the *San Francisco Alta California*, April 25th, printed it last of Placer County happenings reported by the *Stars and Stripes.*

The only reaction of the Nevada press came a week later when the *Gold Hill Evening News* quoted the *Stars and Stripes* and then questioned when new Nevada towns would be named for Nevadans: "But when shall we hear of the town of Stewart, of Nye, of Conness, of Ashley, etc.? Do tell."[6] No comment ever appeared in the *Territorial Enterprise.* As if irked over being misinformed in the Argenta matter, the *Enterprise* displayed no further interest in the name selection for Lake's Crossing. With the notable excep-

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[2] Theodore D. Judah, "Memorial of the Central Pacific Railroad Company of California," *House Miscellaneous Document No. 12*(1141), 37th Cong., 2d Sess., December 9, 1861, p. 26.

[3] David Lavender, *The Great Persuader* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1970), p. 67. For McClatchy's small financial interest in the Central Pacific, see "U.S. Pacific Railway Commission, Exhibit No. 5," *Senate Executive Documents* (2507), 50th Cong., 1st sess., July 26, 1887, pp. 2555, 2556. Hereafter cited as *Pacific Railway Commission.*

[4] *Territorial Enterprise,* April 22, 1868, 3:2.

[5] As Placer County's only Republican newspaper, the *Stars and Stripes* was certainly compatible with the railroaders politically. See Myron Angel, ed., *History of Placer County* (Oakland: Thompson and West, 1882), p. 300.

[6] *Gold Hill Evening News,* April 30, 1868.

tion of the *Gold Hill Evening News*, this lack of interest pervaded the rest of the Nevada press as well.[7]

Undoubtedly, substitution of unfamiliar Reno for preferred Argenta was the cause for their sudden lack of interest. The abrupt announcement from California with no explanation for the change reminded Nevada journalists that local preferences were of little concern to the invading promoters of the Central Pacific. New towns along the railroad would be named at the whimsy of the associates. Months before the *Gold Hill Evening News* had foretold this: "Of course there will be the Crocker Gulch Station, and the Stanford Knole Station and the Huntington Ridge Station. . . ."[8] Confronted with the realization they would have to interview the close-mouthed associates for the answer, the Nevada press apparently bridled at the prospect and elected to ignore the Reno naming matter completely.

But the *Gold Hill Evening News* was an exception. Its editor and proprietor, Philip Lynch, genuinely concerned over the naming of Nevada towns, wrote a brief editorial entitled "Reno" less than two weeks after the *Stars and Stripes* announcement. Lynch's editorial contained the frequently quoted comment: ". . . Argenta was the prettiest and most appropriate name. . . ." (Note how Lynch paraphrased the comment of the *Territorial Enterprise.*) Further along, Lynch made a particularly pertinent observation: "We are willing to allow it to be called 'Reno' the more especially as *whoever named it* had sense enough not to tack 'city' to its name . . . ."[9] As a Central Pacific stockholder and an old acquaintance of the associates, particularly Charles Crocker, Lynch was in a good position to satisfy his journalistic curiosity about the origin of the Reno name. Yet, two weeks after the event, he was unable to identify the selector of the name. Of course, during this interval, neither Charles Crocker nor any other associate was closeby for interview. But this had never stopped Lynch before. He was always quick to level criticism at the railroaders, especially Charles Crocker and Leland Stanford. It was uncharacteristic for Lynch to treat any Central Pacific transaction with restraint. Nevertheless, he did so with the Reno naming, and thus added to the enigma surrounding its selection.[10]

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[7] Argenta was first announced in Nevada by Washoe City's *Eastern Slope*, April 11, 1868, 2:1. This was copied by Carson City's *Daily Appeal*, April 14, 1868. On May 6th, the *Appeal* published a brief editorial on Reno but the *Eastern Slope* followed the example of the *Territorial Enterprise* and never mentioned the Reno naming whatsoever.

[8] Copied by the Unionville (Nevada) *Humboldt Register*, September 28, 1867, 1:4.

[9] *Gold Hill Evening News*, May 5, 1868.

[10] "Stockholder's List, Exhibit No. 5," *Pacific Railway Commission*, p. 2555. Hardly a month after Lynch acquired stock in the Central Pacific he was given a conducted tour of the construction line by Charles Crocker. Forest Hill (Calif.) *Placer Courier*, August 29, 1863, 3:2. A few days after his "Reno" editorial Lynch was given a short ride on the Central Pacific by ". . . friend Mark Hopkins, Esq." *Gold Hill Evening News*, May 12, 1868, 2:1. Did Hopkins's hospitality include disclosure of the reason for the Reno selection?

DIVERSE VIEWS OF WRITERS

In keeping with Lynch's vague "whoever named it," diverse views developed among writers over the years regarding the selector's identity and reason for selection. Although most associated Charles Crocker with the naming of Reno, only a minority stated he actually selected the name. Some wrote he *named* the town. Others only inferred his part in the naming. The remaining writers disregarded Crocker, preferring anonymity for Reno's name selector. As regards the reason for the name, most writers avoided comment. The few who commented gave plausible but widely different reasons for the selection. In summary, the diverse views are undoubtedly due to lack of concrete facts, and to some myths that pervaded the whole era.

Who Selected the Name?

A minority of writers saw no problem with the identity of Reno's name selector: it was Charles Crocker. Their assurance is traceable to the Works Progress Administration's publication, *Nevada, A Guide to the Silver State* (Portland, Oregon: Bonfords & Mort, 1940), p. 148:

> . . . Charles Crocker, the Big Four man who took town naming as his favorite chore, selected Reno to honor General Jesse Lee Reno, of West Virginia, a Union officer killed at 39 years of age during the Battle of South Mountain. The name had been suggested by men who had served with him in the Mexican War.

Vardis Fisher, a respected western writer, contributed this bit of Nevada history under the Writer's Program of 1940. Eventually, five writers adopted Fisher's view and informed their readers of Crocker's responsibility for the name selection.[11]

Unlike Fisher and his followers, some writers never stated that Charles Crocker *selected* the name Reno for Lake's Crossing, only that he *named* it. Maybe selected was implied, but by use of "named" they allowed for the possibility that Crocker merely followed orders. Precedent for this possibility appeared in the October 29th issue of the Winnemucca *Argent* six months after the naming of Reno:

> The railroad town nearest Austin is christened Argenta. Judge E.B. Crocker gave it this bright silvery name. He had been laboring for some time to fasten this appelation

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[11] George Session Perry, "Reno," *Saturday Evening Post*, July 5, 1952, p. 70; Robert Best Howard, *The Great Iron Trail* (New York: G.P. Putnams, 1962), pp. 280, 281; James McCague, *Moguls and Iron Men* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 220; George R. Stewart, *Names on the Land* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), pp. 321, 322; John M. Townley, *Tough Little Town on the Truckee: Reno 1868-1900*, History of Reno Series, Vol. I (Reno: Great Basin Studies Center, 1983), p. 67. In addition, there was a local article by feature writer Peggy Trego, "Reno," *Nevada State Journal*, January 30, 1955.

on some burg. He wanted to give it to Reno, but Charley C. out-generaled him, and named it after the fallen Union General Reno.

The *Argent* did not explain why after two weeks of apparent acceptance, Crocker set aside his brother's choice of Argenta. Despite the *Argent's* breezy handling of the matter, it might have been an action Crocker performed with reluctance. But if the name change was ordered by the inner circle, he would have had no choice. Three modern writers may have provided for this possibility with their terse "Crocker *named* it."[12]

Unswayed by either Fisher or those of the "named" persuasion, another group of writers only inferred Crocker's connection with Reno's naming. This view was first expressed in Myron Angel's edited *History of Nevada*. Describing Reno's beginning, Angel credited Charles Crocker with the town's founding but was less specific about the naming:

> He [Myron Lake] deeded forty acres to Charles Crocker in consideration of his causing a station to be established there. . . . This was accordingly done. The town was christened Reno, in honor of General Jesse Reno . . . .[13]

Thus, by analogy, it could be inferred that since Crocker founded Reno he selected its name. Five writers adopted Angel's inference.[14]

Charles Crocker was ignored by the remaining writers. Probably this was because their concise views of Reno's beginning left little space for individual recognition. At any rate, they indicated the name was selected collectively by Central Pacific officialdom. Although two stated personal friends of General Reno among the railroad officials were responsible,[15] the remaining eight writers adopted the terse, "anonymous" view published in 1890 by California's prolific historian, Hubert Howe Bancroft: "Reno was founded by the Central Pacific Railroad company in 1868 in the Truckee valley and named in honor of General Reno who fell at the battle of South Mountain."[16]

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[12] Wesly S. Griswold, *A Work of Giants* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1962), p. 239; Rufus W. Leigh, *Nevada Place Names* (Salt Lake: Deseret News Press, 1964), p. 19; Russell R. Elliott, *History of Nevada* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1973), p. 113. This group should also include a limited local publication: Allan M. Robinette, compiler, *History of the Reno Fire Department* (Reno: 1908), p. 25.

[13] Myron Angel, ed., *History of Nevada* . . . (Oakland: Thompson and West, 1881; reprinted, Berkeley, Howell-North, 1958), p. 634.

[14] Annie Estelle Prouty, "The Development of Reno," Nevada Historical Society *Papers* (1924); pp. 99, 100; James G. Scrugham, *History of Nevada*, I (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1935), p. 254; Dale Morgan, *The Humboldt* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1943), p. 300; Don Ashbaugh, *Nevada's Turbulent Yesterdays* (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1963), p. 115; James W. Hulse, *The Nevada Adventure* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1965), pp. 122, 123.

[15] Audrey W. Ohmert, "The Significance of the Nomenclature in Washoe County, Nevada," Nevada Historical Society, Second Bienniel *Report* (1911), p. 85; Federal Writers Project, *Origin of Place Names: Nevada* (W.P.A., 1941), p. 69.

[16] Hubert Howe Bancroft, Vol. XXV, *History of Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1890), p. 255; Samuel P. Davis, *The History of Nevada*, II (Reno and Los Angeles: Elms Publishing Co., 1913), p. 1034; William Webb, *The Reno Guide* (Reno, 1924), p. 4; Philip E. Siggers,

In summary, only seven of the twenty-eight writers reviewed specifically identified Reno's name selector. Even with the addition of the four who stated Crocker "named" it, there remained a majority of seventeen uncommitted writers. Seemingly, this indicated precise identification of Reno's name selector was unimportant, and that inference or anonymity would do. But such brevity seems strange when one notes that the majority included virtually all the recognized historians of Nevada. Why did such perceptive writers generalize? Perhaps like Philip Lynch of the *Gold Hill News*, they pondered the associates' selection of a stranger's name for a key Nevada town, and had to ignore the selector's identity completely. Those who sought an answer in the Central Pacific archives were soon disappointed. The secretive railroaders kept no minutes of their inner circle meetings: ". . . no one could get at the inside workings, those who know it would not tell."[17] Exacting writers had no choice but to accept Lynch's anonymous "whoever named it."

Why the Name Was Selected

Interestingly, it was Philip Lynch who first indicated a reason for the Reno name selection. In his brief editorial disparaging the use of strangers' names quoted earlier, Lynch apparently felt the associates had been motivated by patriotism. At least this was implied by the title of his editorial, "Patriotic Names."

Only a few writers followed suit. Of these, Vardis Fisher gave the most confident reason. It will be recalled that following his identification of Charles Crocker as Reno's name selector, Fisher wrote: "The name had been suggested by men who served with him [Reno] in the Mexican War." Three of the four nationally-known writers who accepted Crocker as selector saw equal credibility in Fisher's belief that the selection was made to accommodate Mexican War veterans. The fourth writer opted with the majority and gave no reason.[18]

Less confident than Fisher's reason, but nearly as popular, was one advanced by a University of Nevada coed. In 1923, the Nevada State Historical Society published in its *Papers* Estelle Prouty's 1917 Master of Arts Thesis, "Development of Reno," wherein she stated: "Rumor has it that Reno

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The Truth About Reno (Reno, 1934), p. 8n; "All Aboard for Reno and Sparks," *Nevada Highways and Parks*, Vol. 5, September, 1940, No. 3, p. 1; Max Miller, *Reno* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1941), pp. 6, 7; Walter Van Tilburg Clark, "The State City," *Rocky Mountain Cities*, edited by Ray B. West (New York: Norton, 1949), p. 37; David F. Myrick, *Railroads of Nevada and Eastern California*, I (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1962), p. 13; Helen S. Carlson, *Nevada Place Names* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1974), p. 201.

[17] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *Some Reflections of an Early California Governor—F.F. Low, 1883*, edited by Robert H. Becker (Sacramento: Sacramento Book Collectors' Club, 1959), p. 39.

[18] Howard, *Great Iron Trail*, pp. 280, 281; McCague, *Moguls and Iron Men*, p. 220; Stewart, *Names on the Land*, p. 322. Perry, "Reno," p. 70, was replaced by Carlson, *Nevada Place Names*, p. 201.

was the lucky name drawn when the railroad officials shook the box containing names for cities. However that may be, Reno is named in honor of General Jesse Reno. . . ."[19] Seeing suitability in this for Reno's gambling image, two writers disregarded Prouty's "rumor has it" and flatly declared the name was drawn from a hat. Two others were more cautious, one of whom wrote, "Perhaps . . . just a gay tale. . . ."[20]

Several writers who commented on Reno's selection by chance also mentioned brevity as another reason. One writer merged the two: "All the short names that came to mind were placed in a hat, and 'Reno' was drawn."[21] Others were careful to speculate about chance and brevity separately. Their likely source for the latter reason was the published thesis of another University of Nevada coed, Audrey Ohmert. In 1910, she wrote: "Verdi . . . was chosen on account of its brevity and dissimilarity of other stations nearby."[22] Since Verdi was the station immediately west of Reno, the implication was obvious.

In her thesis, Ohmert also advanced the "personal friend" reason for the Reno selection. On local authority, she stated that the name was selected to honor General Reno, ". . . who was a personal friend of Mr. Mills of the Central Pacific. . . ." Two writers adopted Ohmert's friendship reason.[23]

In 1968, however, a writer of another sort cast it in bronze for Nevada Historical Marker Number 42. Attached to Reno's famous Virginia Street Bridge, this marker informs the casual passerby that Charles Crocker named: ". . . the town after his friend, a Union General, Jesse L. Reno. . . ."[24]

Despite Marker Number 42 and numerous publications that accurately identified Reno's namesake as Jesse Lee Reno, the fantasy persisted among a few that the town was really named for another Reno, Major Marcus Albert Reno (no relation), General Custer's second in command at the Little Big Horn. To believers, this famed horse soldier apparently fitted Reno's western image better than the comparatively unknown ordnance soldier Jesse Reno. A local writer helped promote this when he footnoted his limited publication: "Reno . . . was named in honor of General Marcus Reno, a cavalry officer . . . ." Another Renoite contributed to the fantasy with a poorly-researched account that blended the military careers of both Renos.[25]

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[19] Prouty, "Development of Reno," pp. 99, 100.

[20] Griswold, *Work of Giants*, p. 239; Miller, *Reno*, p. 6. Less confident were: Trego, "Reno," *Nevada State Journal*, Jan. 30, 1955; Clark, "State City," p. 37.

[21] Miller, *Reno*, p. 6.

[22] Ohmert, "Nomenclature," p. 86.

[23] Ibid., p. 85. Townley, *Tough Little Town*, p. 67, went further than Ohmert and indicated the possibility that besides Mills there was another individual named Scupham who may have influenced Crocker's choice. The identity of Reno's personal friend was not revealed in Writers Project, *Origin of Place Names: Nevada*, p. 69.

[24] Nevada Historical Marker No. 42, June 29, 1968, Julia C. Bulette Chapter E Clampus Vitus.

[25] Siggers, *Truth About Reno*, p. 8n. The careers were merged in *History of Reno Fire Department*, p. 25.

The two Renos did have West Point in common: Jesse graduated in 1846, eleven years before Marcus. They never served together in the Army. Possibly they could have met just before Jesse's death. According to the *Official Records of the Rebellion*, Vol. XIX, Part 1, p. 170, Marcus was in command of the Quartermaster's Guard at General McClellan's headquarters at the time Jesse reported for duty with his Ninth Corps.

Not only is there no evidence for the naming of Reno after Marcus, but also the other accounts are often without factual support. This deficiency is particularly apparent in Vardis Fisher's version focusing on the "Mexican War comrades" thesis, and Prouty's "named by chance" approach. Neither writer provided a source. Ohmert did present some sources, but they were at best secondary.[26] Considering the obvious lack of facts about the naming of Reno, the reticence of the majority of the writers on the subject certainly appears understandable.

It must be kept in mind that to most writers, the founding and the naming of Reno are only minor events in Nevada's history, and in their accounts. The naming in particular usually requires only minor emphasis. The enigma revolving around the naming is nowhere better expressed than in the passing comment of one of these writers, James McCague, in his *Moguls and Iron Men*, p. 220: "Just why they thought of suggesting a tribute to him [Reno] at this particular time and place is not clear."

POSSIBLE CLUES

Since nothing in the intervening years provided an acceptable solution to the puzzle, the present author decided to make an independent search of contemporary records. The search began at the scene of the mystery, Lake's Crossing. A search of records relating to that location revealed interesting facts about Reno's beginning. For example, Myron Lake did not donate or sell the original site to the Central Pacific as most accounts relate. Washoe County Land Records (*Deeds Book #2*, pp. 360, 443) reveal that Lake in effect traded nearly equal acreage for railroad land adjoining his hotel on the Truckee's south bank. The deal was actually more complex than this, and subsequent concessions had to be made to appease Lake, but all in all it appears to have been close to an even swap.

As regards the naming, the only relevant fact noted was the substitution of

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[26] Although an unquestioned authority on the Central Pacific and the associates, in this case Robert L. Fulton was hardly a primary source for Audrey Ohmert's "brevity." He did not arrive in Reno until 1876, eight years after the name selection. See Scrugham, *Nevada*, II, p. 398. As regards Ohmert's "personal friend," Mr. Mills, there were three individuals of this name who were more or less affiliated with the Central Pacific: Darius Ogden Mills, capitalist; Edgar Mills, Darius's younger brother (not son as stated by some writers), civil engineer turned banker; William H. Mills, Central Pacific land agent. Despite Ohmert's lack of specificity, none of the three were discovered to be personal friends of Jesse Reno.

Reno for Argenta, discussed earlier. But no obvious clue is provided by this unprecedented name change.[27] Possibly Argenta had been intended for Judah's original site down river near Glendale. When flooding caused abandonment of the place for drier ground at Lake's, it was decided the new site should have a new name, Reno, somehow significant at the time to the associates.

Certainly important to the associates was an event which occurred shortly before the *Stars and Stripes* announced the Reno naming: marauding Indians butchered some settlers north of Truckee Meadows.[28] Tension spread south, into both Nevada and other areas of California. Possible trouble from Indians was something brand-new for the associates. Undoubtedly concerned for their construction camps along the Truckee, they turned to Colonel John I. Gregg at nearby Fort Churchill for reassurance. His orders were specific regarding the railroad: ". . . to protect the rapidly increasing settlements there-abouts from Indian depredations, as also the laborers along the line of the Pacific Railroad route."[29]

In the midst of this alarm, the associates suddenly named one of their key towns for a soldier, the first so honored on the Central Pacific. Their action could be interpreted as an attempt to curry favor with their military protectors. But if so, it seems the associates could have selected a better known Civil War hero than Jesse Reno.

The name Reno was hardly abroad in the land at the time of the christening of Lake's Crossing. A wide search of newspapers has revealed only three events where the name was mentioned: in Kansas, the state legislature created a county called Reno; in Dakota Territory, Indians attacked a mail party enroute to Fort Reno; in Arizona Territory, a detachment of infantry was enroute to Apache country to establish Camp Reno. Only the last was likely read by the associates.[30] Seemingly, there was nothing about the establishment of Camp Reno that would have attracted the attention of the railroaders and led them to apply the same name to Lake's Crossing.

However, news regarding Camp Reno would have been of interest to the associates' military commander, Colonel Gregg. He well knew the site of the proposed camp, seventy miles southeast of his former command at Fort Whipple, A.T. Furthermore, he also knew the identity of the camp's

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[27] Apparently once assigned, station names remained. Aside from Argenta, the only other change discovered was for a point on the old road to Promontory called Rozel. Originally, it was named Victory. See Edwin L. Sabin, *Building the Pacific Railway* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1919), p. 202.

[28] This was the massacre of the Thomas J. Pierson family near Susanville, California. See *Territorial Enterprise*, April 22, 1868, 3:1; *New York Times*, April 23, 1868, 1:3.

[29] *Alta California*, January 28, 1868, 1:6. Also see "Report of Major General Halleck, Department of the Pacific," *Report of the Secretary of War* (1367), 40th Cong., 3d sess., September 22, 1868, p. 45.

[30] "History of Reno County," Hutchinson (Kansas) *News*, July 4, 1893; Albany (New York) *Argus*, April 20, 1868, 1:4. The Camp Reno establishment was reported by the *Sacramento Union*, March 13, 1868.

namesake, Brevet Major General Jesse Reno.[31] Consequently, when the same soldier was commemorated at nearby Lake's Crossing, it must have struck Gregg as an odd coincidence. He must have been intrigued by still another curious parallel between Camp Reno, A.T., and Reno, Nevada: the former was east of Verde: the latter, Verdi.

It was while searching into the background of the parallel names that a more significant discovery was made: Verdi was the last name selected by Charles Crocker and Company,[32] and Reno was the first selected by the Contract and Finance Company. Between namings, the associates reorganized at the Nevada boundary, replacing Crocker's financially troubled company with the new construction firm in which all members contributed equally. Although Crocker retained title as president, he no longer made decisions without concurrence of his partners. Consequently, all construction matters, even town namings, were subject to deliberation at Sacramento headquarters. From such committee action emerged the naming of Reno.

Reno was a long time emerging. For nearly a month after they swapped land with Myron Lake, the associates deliberated over the name for their first major town in Nevada. Although Argenta seemed appropriate at first, it was obviously not a unanimous choice. Actually, it is doubtful that Argenta was submitted for committee approval until after it was released (or leaked) to the *Sacramento Bee*. Otherwise, the public never may have heard of the name Argenta for Lake's Crossing. However this may be, a holdout prevailed and the Central Pacific got its first soldier-named town.

This novel choice could have been politically motivated. At least, this appeared to be the interpretation of Henry R. Mighels, ardent Republican editor of the *Carson Daily Appeal*, when on May 6th he editorialized on the new town, referring to its namesake as: ". . . the gallant Virginia loyalist. . . ." Certainly, the associates, also strong Republicans, must have delighted in Mighels' flaunt of General Reno's loyalty before Nevada's Copperheads and ex-secessionist Democrats.

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[31] General Irvin McDowell's General Order #39, October 31, 1866, for establishment of Camp Reno became a model of sorts for subsequent construction of outposts in Apache Country. See "Remarks of General McDowell on the Report of Colonel Roger Jones," *Report of the Secretary of War* (1324), 40th Cong., 2d sess., August 14, 1867, p. 94.

[32] *Gold Hill Daily News*, November 23, 1867, 2:2. Although articles of association for the Contract and Finance Company were filed in Sacramento on October 28, 1867, correspondence from C.P. Huntington to E.B. Crocker, January 1, 1868, indicates the new management did not begin until early 1868. *Letters from C.P. Huntington to Mark Hopkins, Leland Stanford, Charles Crocker, E.B. Crocker, and D.D. Colton, August 20, 1867-August 5, 1869* (New York: privately printed, 1892). Hereafter cited as *Collected Letters*.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STARS AND STRIPES ANNOUNCEMENT

Henry Mighels was not the first editor to see the Reno name selection as an opportunity to strike a blow for the Union Party. To recall, when the *Stars and Stripes* announced the naming on April 23rd, readers were reminded that General Reno: ". . . fell gloriously fighting in defence of the old flag against the assaults of traitors in rebellion." The announcement concluded with more Unionism: "The next town on the line of the road, we are informed, will be named Wadsworth, in honor of another distinguished Union general." This was the reporting of Hart Fellows, the *Stars and Stripes's* staunch Republican editor from Illinois, brother-in-law of Abraham Lincoln's close friend, Colonel E.D. Baker.[33] It was hardly three weeks since California Republicans met in Sacramento and unanimously endorsed General Grant for the presidency. The simultaneous naming of two Central Pacific towns in western Nevada for Union generals certainly seemed politically motivated.

But aside from possible political significance, Fellows' announcement only added to the mystery surrounding the Reno naming. New to the enigma was the simultaneous naming of two towns, a definite departure from the associates' usual practice (from what little evidence survives, this appears to be the only occasion this occurred). Obviously, something extraordinary caused them to select the names Reno and Wadsworth like a matched pair for Lake's Crossing and the Truckee's big bend, the most important railroad sites in western Nevada. Not just way-stations, Reno and Wadsworth were to serve the Central Pacific as junction point and sub-terminal, respectively.

Particularly important was the Wadsworth site, thirty-five miles down river from Lake's Crossing where the Truckee turned north to empty into Pyramid Lake. Highly regarded since Theodore Judah's first reconnaisance, this oasis on the edge of the Humboldt Desert was ideally situated to serve the trains of those times. No less than the first complete maintenance facility east of Sacramento was planned for Wadsworth.[34]

Reno, on the other hand, was regarded as somewhat less important. Its effectiveness as a rail junction to the silver mines was dependent upon completion of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, which was far from certain in April, 1868 (three years later the *Nevada State Journal* of July 1, 1871, reported that work on the Reno end of the V&T had begun). Nevertheless,

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[33] *Sacramento Bee*, December 26, 1878, 3:2.

[34] George Kraus, *High Road to Promontory* (Palo Alto: American West Publishing Company, 1969), p. 201. Also see Griswold, *Work of Giants*, p. 245; Myrick, *Railroads of Nevada*, I, p. 23.

Reno was the associates' "Virginia Station," an important goal since Judah's time.

But acknowledging the importance to the railroaders of Truckee's big bend and Lake's Crossing only raises the inevitable question: why were such important sites named for comparatively unknown Union generals? From the comments of Henry Mighels and Hart Fellows, Republicanism could have been the answer; but there had to be more to the namings than just political motivation.

Reverting to the views of writers previously discussed, a significant discovery was made. The simultaneous namings of Reno and Wadsworth invalidated Prouty's "named by chance" (obviously, odds are against picking the names of two Union generals from a box); Ohmert's emphasis upon brevity (Wadsworth hardly fit this mold); and Fisher's Mexican War comrades approach (Wadsworth never served in the Mexican War). Enhanced by the simultaneous factor was Ohmert's stress upon personal friends. In combination, the names of Generals Reno and Wadsworth could be significant to someone. It was worth a search.

First eliminated were the associates. None of the five ever knew Reno or Wadsworth. Despite Nevada Historical Marker No. 42, Charles Crocker probably never heard of Jesse Reno before 1868, let alone have been a friend of his. The same applied to his four colleagues. As regards James Wadsworth, however, all five must have known of him from the New York governor's race of 1862 when Wadsworth ran unsuccessfully against Democrat Horatio Seymour. The race was covered by the *Sacramento Union*, reporting Wadsworth's speech of nomination on October 23, 1862.

The same lack of acquaintanceship with the generals applied to subordinates the railroaders regularly contacted along the construction line, as well as to residents occasionally met with in surrounding communities. One of the latter, Henry Mighels of the *Carson Appeal,* was actually in the presence of both Reno and Wadsworth during the Civil War, but hardly under circumstances that would justify commemoration of the pair.[35]

The search turned to San Francisco. Discovered among active and retired Army officers living there were a few who had known either Reno or Wadsworth, but only one, General Irvin McDowell, who had known both. As will be shown, there was no one anywhere to whom the particular combina-

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[35] As adjutant to General Samuel D. Sturgis, Captain Mighels was present when Sturgis reported to General Reno just before the Battle of South Mountain. Sturgis was put in command of Reno's old division in the Ninth Corps. See *Official Records of the Rebellion*, XIX, Part 1, p. 445. Hereafter cited as *Official Records*. Furthermore, Mighels could have been a bystander when Sturgis visited behind the lines with dying Jesse Reno. Thomas H. Parker, *History of the 51st. Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers . . .* (Philadelphia: King and Baird, 1869), pp. 226, 227. As regards General Wadsworth, Mighels observed him frequently during the brief period Sturgis shared command of forces in Washington, D.C. *Official Records,* XII, Part III, pp. 408, 695.

tion of names had more personal significance. Of all the individuals known to the associates, McDowell was definitely unique in this regard.

But to conclude that General McDowell was the "personal friend" involved in the Reno-Wadsworth namings presumes more than facts seem to indicate. Nothing recorded suggests the associates had cordial feelings for McDowell, certainly not to the extent of accommodating him with the names of total strangers for their important Nevada centers. Yet, despite the incongruity, circumstantial evidence indicates accommodation of McDowell was a factor. His four-year tour ended (possibly by local request), General McDowell departed San Francisco for an eastern post on March 31, 1868. Three weeks later came news of the Reno-Wadsworth namings; if this was not a belated farewell gift, certainly it was a remarkable coincidence.

Although no surviving record says so, the namings were intended as a farewell tribute to McDowell. In the lengthy deliberation over Lake's Crossing, Leland Stanford, the only member of the inner circle who ever socialized with the general,[36] finally persuaded his associates to defer the name Argenta, to adopt Reno in its place, and to pre-name as Wadsworth the site at the big bend of the Truckee. Stanford must have encountered considerable resistence to his proposal. To adopt names of obscure strangers was in itself objectionable; to do so for McDowell's gratification was downright hypocritical. After all, the associates had reason to be delighted with the General's removal, an action they may have helped bring about.[37]

There is little doubt that Stanford, officially, was as delighted as his colleagues with McDowell's departure: it meant the removal of an obstacle. Unofficially, however, he may have regretted seeing the general leave. They had moved in the same social and political circles for four years. The cordial, unpretentious manner McDowell displayed among civilians probably captivated Stanford as it had so many other Californians:

> Do you know I am beginning to like the General very well, for all that I thought him a little pompous at first. It is real good of him to go on these occasions, instead of being stuck-up because he wears soldier clothes, and he is just as pleasant and affable as can be. . . .[38]

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[36] Leland Stanford attended at least six public affairs in San Francisco where McDowell was also a guest: Farewell Banquet to Schuyler Colfax, *Alta California*, September 1, 1865, 1:2; Grand Ball, ibid., December 11, 1865, 4:3; China Mail Banquet, San Francisco *Daily Times*, January 1, 1867, 5:3; Fireman's Ball, *Alta California*, January 5, 1867, 4:3 (ad.); Lick House Ball, ibid., February 22, 1867, 1:3; Southern Relief Meeting, ibid., April 5, 1867, 1:2. Not reported were private affairs, particularly where McDowell was the host.

[37] In late 1866, General McDowell issued an order that endangered the plans for a terminal on Goat Island opposite San Francisco. See editorial, *Alta California*, January 14, 1867, 1:1. McDowell's continued opposition to unrestricted commercial use of the island irked the associates as clearly shown in Huntington's letter of December 7, 1867, to E.B. Crocker. See *Collected Letters*, (#68).

[38] Amelia Ransome Neville, *Scrap Book Collection of Social Gossip, 1865-1874-#18*, California Historical Society, San Francisco, California.

But more important than his drawing room charm, McDowell knew railroading. This is evidenced in the *Official Records of the Rebellion, XII, Part 1*, pp. 76-80, which reports that McDowell, while in command of the Department of the Rappahannock in 1862, was charged with restoration of the Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad destroyed by Confederates. More pertinent, he had influential contacts in the railroad industry in the East.

By the time of his departure, a close relationship must have developed between the railroad president and general. How else would Stanford have known of the personal significance to McDowell of the names Reno and Wadsworth?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NAMES TO McDOWELL

McDowell's public utterances never contained any mention of either Jesse Reno or James Wadsworth, let alone any special regard. The only hint of any such sentiment to reach the public came indirectly through publication of his military correspondence. In 1865, nine months after his arrival in San Francisco, McDowell requested that Washington consider renaming Fort Point, the impressive installation at the entrance to San Francisco Bay, for Jesse Reno.[39] However, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated shortly thereafter; in the confusion the request was apparently shelved—at least, nothing ever came of it. Not to be deterred, McDowell acted on his own the following year and ordered the name Reno for the camp in Arizona Territory mentioned earlier. Obviously, McDowell was determined to commemorate Jesse Reno. But there was never any public indication he felt the same about James Wadsworth.

It was only in the privacy of a circle of friends that McDowell would have mentioned James Wadsworth, and Reno as well. Their names would have inevitably come up as he refought and agonized over First and Second Bull Run, the same battlefield where a year apart fate twice dealt him humiliating defeats: "He was evidently much affected by the sad memories called up by the scene as he described the incidents of the battle to a group of interested listeners, in a low tremulous voice."[40] Such emotional accounts would have been incomplete without mention of the elderly Wadsworth at First Bull

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[39] *Official Records*, L, Part II, p. 1166.

[40] General John Gibbon witnessed this episode at Bull Run shortly after the first battle. See John Gibbon, *Personal Recollections of the Civil War* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1928), p. 17. It became the scenario McDowell followed many times in later years. All who were close to the general were aware that he: ". . . never fully recovered from the shock of his discomfiture at Bull Run. . . ." See "Irwin McDowell," *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, IV (New York: White and Company, 1902), p. 50. Perhaps it was best put at the time of McDowell's death by the English newspaper journalist, Sir William Howard Russell, "The blight of Bull Run was on him always," San Francisco *Call*, May 24, 1885, 5:2.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL IRVIN McDOWELL.
From a photograph taken in July, 1861.

A downcast General McDowell, shortly after the first battle at Bull Run.

Run, valiantly trying to stem the rout; and of Reno at Second Bull Run, gallantly following Pope's order to guard the rear as the demoralized Union army retreated towards Washington.

It should be noted that although General John Pope was in command of the Army of Virginia at Second Bull Run, McDowell was Pope's close adviser,

and regarded the battle as an opportunity to redeem himself. This was indicated in a despatch sent to his close friend, Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase, just before disaster struck. The despatch as copied by the *Sacramento Union*, September 25, 1862, read as follows:

> Dear Governor: Please telegraph Mrs. McDowell that I have gone through a second battle of Bull Run, on the identical field of last year, and unhurt. The victory is decidedly ours. . . .

McDowell would have left no doubt with his listeners that Reno's rear guard action saved the day, his account running somewhat as follows:

> The rebel army about noon began to turn the left wing of Pope's army, and had driven it back for more than a mile, nearly doubling it up, and soon after it began to retreat, leaving the left or rear entirely unprotected until Reno's division filled up the void, which would have proved fatal to a large portion of the army had Reno been less prompt in getting his command into position. . . .[41]

With characteristic candor, McDowell would have confided his ignominious role in the last critical hours of Second Bull Run: his own corps in retreat, he personally delivered General Pope's order to Reno. A witness to the event recalled that McDowell added the comment: "You and your command will be captured but it can't be helped as the army must be saved."[42] This bit of military curtness was probably omitted from McDowell's account.

Possibly, McDowell informed his listeners that Second Bull Run was not the first time he passed an order to Jesse Reno. Twenty years before he had done so as post adjutant at West Point. Charged with record keeping for the cadet corps, McDowell discovered early that Reno was prone to breaches of discipline. Throughout his four-year term, he accumulated excessive demerits (125, of which 105 were recorded by McDowell) and only escaped dismissal because of his high academic standing.[43] Obviously, there was little likelihood of cordiality at West Point between disciplinarian McDowell and unruly Reno.

If McDowell touched upon his acquaintanceship with Reno at all, he would have had to admit to his listeners that relations had not improved in the intervening years. If anything, they had worsened by the time of Second Bull Run. Reno had become a "McClellan general" who owed his loyalty and his generalship to his close friend and West Point classmate, General George B. McClellan. This was the same McClellan who had written of McDowell and

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[41] Parker, *51st. Pa. Vols.*, p. 214.

[42] Ibid., p. 214.

[43] From archives, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York: "Post Order Book #2" (June, 1842-June, 1846); *Register of Delinquencies*; Cadet Record of Jesse Lee Reno, U.S.M.A. Class of 1846, *Official Register of the Officers and Cadets of the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, N.Y., 1842-1846.*

Pope that "Between them they are responsible for the lives of many of my best and bravest men. They have done all they could (unintentionally, I hope) to ruin and destroy the country. I can never forgive them that."[44]

And the same McClellan McDowell later accused ". . . of designedly securing the defeat of Pope at the Second Bull Run fight, by detaining reinforcements which might have been sent. Gen. McDowell used the strongest possible terms of condemnation of McClellan as a military man."[45]

But as McDowell agonized over Second Bull Run with California friends, it is doubtful he dwelt much upon his acquaintanceship with Reno. The less said about the old West Point animosity, or Reno's loyalty to hated McClellan, the better. Nevertheless, he would have revealed enough to prove that Reno was not pleased being in Pope's army. It was important to establish that regardless of his displeasure, Reno promptly obeyed Pope's orders. This vindicated McDowell for having helped cashier Fitz-John Porter, another "McClellan general" on that ill-fated battlefield. McDowell wanted everyone to believe there would have been a Union victory at Bull Run had Porter submerged his personal feelings like Reno and moved his corps as promptly.[46] Thus by his example, Reno provided Pope and McDowell with a scapegoat. It was obvious to McDowell why he should commemorate Jesse Reno, but to his audience it might not have been as clear.

In contrast, McDowell's reason for commemorating James Wadsworth would have been crystal clear. His California listeners would have learned intimate details of the brief but close friendship between the two: how Wadsworth's middle son, Craig, served on McDowell's staff before Second Bull Run; how his oldest son, Charles, married Mrs. McDowell's youngest sister, Jessica Burden.[47] But mostly, they would have heard how the senior Wadsworth galloped about the battlefield trying to enforce the plan that would have brought certain victory at First Bull Run.[48] McDowell would have told his listeners that, had most of his generals performed their duties with the same dispatch and courage as his elderly aide, victory would have been assured:

He was in the thick of the fighting, his horse was shot under him, and more than once

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[44] George B. McClellan, *McClellan's Own Story* (New York: Chas. L. Webster & Co., 1887), p. 568.

[45] *Alta California,* October 19, 1864, 1:4.

[46] Otto Eisenschiml, *The Celebrated Case of Fitz-John Porter* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1950), p. 102.

[47] *Official Records,* LI, Part 1, pp. 62-78. For the Burden-Wadsworth family relationship see Henry G. Pearson, *James S. Wadsworth of Geneseo* (London: John Murray, 1913), pp. 246, 247; also, Cuyler Reynolds, ed., *Hudson-Mohawk Genealogical and Family Memoirs,* II (N.Y.: Lewis Historical Publ. Co., 1911), pp. 778, 779.

[48] General William Tecumseh Sherman, a brigade commander at First Bull Run, wrote: "It is now generally admitted that it was one of the best-planned battles of the war, but one of the worst-fought." See William T. Sherman, *Memoirs* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1875), p. 181.

when a regiment fell back in confusion he seized its color and called on the men to rally to the flag.[49]

It must have pleased McDowell to relate how he helped reward Wadsworth for gallantry at Bull Run: based upon McDowell's recommendation, Abraham Lincoln promoted Wadsworth from major to brigadier general of volunteers. On the same day, August 9, 1862, Wadsworth was assigned to command a brigade in McDowell's division: ". . . a welcome arrangement to both men."[50] It would have been obvious to all why McDowell wanted to commemorate James Wadsworth.

WHY HONOR McDOWELL?

According to the *Alta California* of June 30, 1864, General McDowell arrived in San Francisco the previous day aboard the coastal steamer *Golden City*. Scarcely six weeks before, he had marched in Wadsworth's funeral procession in New York City.[51] This sad business had come on top of his orders to the far West, prospects of which already had him depressed. McDowell did not welcome command of the Pacific Division.[52] Remote from Civil War operations, mostly administrative, if offered no hope of active field command, no tactical opportunity to redeem his military reputation. But McDowell always obeyed orders. Displaying, ". . . a determined expression of countenance,"[53] he came ashore to a cordial welcome in San Francisco. Long accustomed to the indifference, if not scorn, of crowds in the East, the respectful acclaim of the San Franciscans must have startled the stern McDowell, and dispelled some misgivings over his first journey to California (the July 1st *Alta California* reported that McDowell and family were serenaded by no less than two bands on their first night in San Francisco).

In the welcoming throng of civilians, McDowell encountered an acquaintance from his youth, Lucius H. Allen. A prominent San Francisco merchant and major general of militia, Allen had graduated from West Point the year following McDowell. Furthermore, Allen was acquainted with the associates, having received his militia appointment from Governor Leland Stanford in 1862. Mutual acquaintanceship with Allen, a strong Unionist, should have facilitated favorable relations between McDowell and the railroaders.

Among other arrivals on the San Francisco docks the same day was another mutual acquaintance, ex-Senator Milton S. Latham, who could not have cared less about fostering favorable relations between McDowell and the

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[49] Pearson, *Wadsworth*, p. 74.

[50] Ibid., p. 81. Also see *Official Records*, XII, Part I, p. 112.

[51] *New York Times*, May 21, 1864, 3:1.

[52] In his response to the testimonial letter of California wellwishers in 1868, McDowell admitted: "I came out here with great regret. . . ." See San Francisco *Bulletin*, March 30, 1868, 3:2.

[53] *Gold Hill Evening News*, July 2, 1864, 2:3.

associates (Latham was aboard the damaged *Golden Age* which was towed to San Francisco from Acapulco by the *Golden City*). A native Ohioan turned Southern Democrat, Latham knew the associates as old political enemies in Sacramento, having defeated Stanford for the governorship in 1860. He knew McDowell from Washington, having witnessed both of the General's retreats into the capital from Bull Run. With Lincoln's re-election in doubt and General McClellan's nomination being sought by Copperheads, the last person needed in July, 1864, was an eloquent Democrat like Milton Latham. Latham's return seemed a threat to California Unionism because he was openly opposed to Lincoln, and sympathetic to both McClellan and Copperhead leader Vallandingham.[54]

There was no cause for concern. During his brief stay in California, Latham confined his activities to banking and avoided politics. It was McDowell who electioneered. Hardly off the *Golden City*, he addressed Union meetings in California and Nevada, applauded everywhere for his censure of Democrat McClellan:

> . . .soon after McClellan took command he fell under the influence of the men who now form the party who supports him for the presidency, and said McClellan, in his long delay of six or eight months to move the army, showed his incompetency to do anything whatever.[55]

There was definitely a question of propriety in McDowell's conduct: American generals on active duty do not stump for political candidates. Furthermore, McDowell's action appeared personal, motivated by animosity toward McClellan rather than loyalty to Lincoln and the Union Party. But on this occasion, impropriety did not bother McDowell, and he campaigned energetically up to election day.

Upon Lincoln's re-election, McDowell retired from the political scene. By this time, his relations with the associates should have been well established. If so, it was not apparent. They never joined his speaking tours like other prominent Unionists. This was particularly evident when McDowell spoke in Sacramento just before the election; mentioned as speakers with McDowell by the November 3rd *Union* were many prominent members of the community, but the associates were conspicuous by their absence. Of course, in the fall of 1864, the railroaders were preoccupied with construction of the Central Pacific: the formidable Sierra Nevada loomed before them. Nevertheless, it was significant that in their hometown not one found time to join McDowell in support of the Republican Party, the party they helped found in California.

Whatever the reason, it became academic two years later when McDowell

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[54] Edgar E. Robinson, "Milton S. Latham," *Dictionary of American Biography* (edited by Dumas Malone), XI, p. 13, New York, 1933.

[55] *Alta California*, October 19, 1864, 1:4.

ordered Goat Island closed to public ownership. Land not needed for military purposes could be leased for non-commercial use only.[56] This presented the associates with a serious obstacle to their railroad plans, since Goat Island was the intended site for the Central Pacific's western terminus. Exclusion meant a costly detour around the bay to San Francisco. Defiantly, the associates proceeded with their plans for Goat Island, hoping to get McDowell's order rescinded.[57] They were unsuccessful; General Grant, and ultimately Congress, supported McDowell.

Displeasure over the Goat Island order eliminated any possibility of accord developing between the associates and McDowell. Perhaps it started them thinking about his removal. If so, a tragic event occurred in the summer of 1867 that played into their hands. James Banks, a respected Nevada Republican, former California legislator, and a speaker at the Central Pacific's inaugural, was murdered by Indians north of Winnemucca.[58] Public outrage spread to areas further west and south. A Carson City correspondent charged Bank's murder to McDowell's indulgent Indian policy and recommended local authorities prepare a petition ". . . asking for the removal of Gen. McDowell, signed by every man in Humboldt county. Do not send it to Halleck but direct to the War Department in Washington. . . ."[59] The correspondent's implication was correct: Major General Henry W. Halleck, who had assumed command of the Pacific Division from McDowell in 1865, staunchly supported his subordinate's humane treatment of Nevada's Indians. The desperate living conditions of Paiutes and other Nevada tribes were never described more sympathetically than by Halleck in his annual report of 1867.[60]

But following the murder of Banks, Halleck apparently yielded to local pressure and appointed a recognized Indian fighter as Nevada's district commander. This was Colonel Gregg, mentioned earlier. Although widely admired for his vigorous handling of Arizona's Apaches, Gregg was not admired by his immediate superior, General McDowell. In his 1867 annual report for Arizona operations, McDowell denounced Gregg for indiscriminate warfare on peaceable and hostile Indians alike and for unsoldierly conduct in seeking local public support for this action.[61] Gregg's dismissal,

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[56] Ibid., January 14, 1867, 1:1.

[57] C.P. Huntington was never convinced that Goat Island was closed for military purposes, but rather to serve private interests. This was clearly shown in his correspondence of August 5, 1868, to E.B. Crocker. See *Collected Letters*, (#220).

[58] *Sacramento Union*, August 5, 1867, 4:1, 5:3. For Banks' address at the Central Pacific inaugural, see *Sacramento Union*, January 9, 1863, 1:9.

[59] *Humboldt Register*, August 17, 1867, 2:1.

[60] "Annual Report of Major General Henry W. Halleck," *Secretary of War* (1324), September 17, 1867, p. 71.

[61] "Annual Report of Brevet Major General Irvin McDowell," ibid., September 14, 1867, p. 127. Also see pp. 110-113 for exchange of correspondence between McDowell and Gregg.

not transfer to command in Nevada, would have been McDowell's preference.

Even more irksome to McDowell should have been Halleck's direct intervention in his department. Gregg's transfer was intra-departmental (McDowell's Department of California included Nevada and Arizona Territory); military courtesy required Halleck pass the order to McDowell for execution.

But such infringements by Halleck were commonplace, particularly on behalf of the associates. Late in 1866, they began petitioning Halleck directly for protection in Nevada. McDowell was ignored. Unlike Halleck, McDowell was a virtual stranger to Nevada, apparently content to command the rugged sagebrush state from the comfort of his office at the San Francisco Presidio. The unconcern implied by his aloofness probably best explained McDowell's anonymity with the associates.

Actually, it was not unconcern that kept McDowell from inspection trips to Nevada. He exhibited the same aloofness toward Arizona, where Apaches plagued his troops. Clearly, McDowell preferred to command from headquarters and to rely on stale field reports for guidance. This serious shortcoming did not escape the notice of Halleck's inspector general:

> In San Francisco, without telegraphic communications, and with unreliable weekly or semi-weekly mails, it is impossible for the department commander to know of any particular transaction in Arizona until long after it has transpired.[62]

McDowell's only visit to Nevada was shortly after his arrival from the East. Following a visit to the capital and Virginia City, he went on to Fort Churchill. Enroute he was subjected to the sport reserved for eastern visitors, a mad-dash stage ride. The *Alta California* of October 18, 1864, carried an account of the ride (copied from the *Territorial Enterprise*):

> The teamsters who drove General McDowell and staff to Fort Churchill gave them a specimen of driving which must have astonished them not a little. The driving was of the same style as that which Hank Monk astonished old Horace Greeley. Relays of horses were provided along the road and the boys put the General through at railroad speed. They went down Six Mile Canyon road at the dead run. At the Gould and Curry Mill everybody supposed the team running away and looked on in consternation. . . .When they reached the station on the Carson known as Frenchman's the axles of the carriage were nearly red-hot. It was found necessary to take off the wheels and pour water on the spindles. The General has doubtlessly been through battles without being half so much frightened as during this ride; yet he stood it without crying for quarter.

McDowell visited Arizona Territory twice: in 1866, and pressured by criticism, again in late 1867 (both visits in the cool season). Such reluctance to

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[62] See "[Confidential]," Ibid., July 15, 1867, pp. 82-85.

visit outposts had not been typical of McDowell when he commanded along the Potomac, but distances in the West were far greater. Precipitous mountains and barren deserts had to be crossed by stagecoach, a form of transportation he obviously detested. Soldiering in the West demanded such hardships, and McDowell refused to adapt.

Not overly-tolerant of the military anyway, the associates were accustomed to soldiers who were at least inured to western life. Consequently, McDowell's tenderfoot approach to his responsibilities would have been a barrier to closer relationships. His reluctance to leave big city comforts for routine inspections of his desert commands would have been inexcusable to Superintendent Charles Crocker, who for years had shared the hardships of his workers as he inspected many miles of construction in mountains and desert in all kinds of weather. Crocker's scorn might have been shared to a lesser degree by E.B. Crocker, C.P. Huntington and even office-shackled Mark Hopkins. Only Leland Stanford, a gregarious member of the inner circle and somewhat a headquarters type himself, might have been inclined to overlook McDowell's eastern softness.

STANFORD'S GESTURE

When General McDowell departed San Francisco for the East, he carried aboard the *Golden City* parting gifts from his California friends: a silver tea service monogrammed with his initials, and a testimonial letter signed by seventy-two "citizens of California."[63] There were additional presents given the general at private occasions that went unreported by the press. Included among these would have been Stanford's intangible gift: his promise to commemorate Jesse Reno and James Wadsworth on Central Pacific stationboards.

What motivated Stanford to make such a gift? Why not something conventional? The answer is obvious: Stanford wanted anonymity. It would have appeared strange, indeed, if it were discovered that the president of the Central Pacific had presented a parting gift to the man who had denied the railroad access to Goat Island. Compelled to make some gesture of regard, Stanford hit upon the namings as a means of pleasing McDowell with little risk of publicity. He must have confided his promise to McDowell at some meeting place in San Francisco. Consequently, when the *Stars and Stripes* announced the namings three weeks after the General's departure, only the associates and a few outsiders were aware of the connection.

Concern over the reaction of his colleagues perhaps was another reason Stanford would have wanted anonymity. He had to prepare an argument to win their approval. He was well aware it would be futile to justify the namings

[63] San Francisco *Bulletin*, March 30, 1868; *Alta California*, April 5, 1868.

to them solely on the basis of personal regard for McDowell. They would not have understood this, particularly Charles Crocker. But none of them had been exposed to the McDowell personality; none had experienced the charm that had won over hardened politicians like James Garfield, Salmon Chase, and, to a degree, even Abraham Lincoln: ". . . with a heavy heart Lincoln agreed there should be a court of inquiry for McDowell."[64] Stanford realized his hardheaded partners in Sacramento (Huntington in New York) would cooperate only if convinced the namings would somehow benefit construction of the Central Pacific.

Of course, it is not known what argument Stanford advanced in the inner circle at Sacramento headquarters in April, 1868. Records that might have given a clue were lost or destroyed long ago. All that remains is supposition. However, there is enough background information available to hypothesize at least one argument Stanford could have used effectively to persuade his partners: McDowell's "Troy Connection."

THE TROY CONNECTION

Research into the lives of the five associates revealed that three had personal ties with Troy, New York. Charles Crocker was born there in 1822 and later sold newspapers on its streets. When Charles was two, Leland Stanford was born just across the Hudson in Watervliet (originally known as West Troy). Although Stanford spent most of his youth west of the river, he undoubtedly became as familiar with Troy as newsboy Charles. When Charles Crocker was eleven, his older brother, Edwin B., graduated as a civil engineer from Troy's famed Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (Theodore Judah attended the school four years later, from 1837 to 1839, but did not graduate). For a short time, Edwin followed his profession, helping lay out the nearby Albany and Schnectady Railroad.[65]

Although the remaining two associates, Collis P. Huntington and Mark Hopkins, had no personal ties with Troy, they were well acquainted with its existence. In their hardware business they had sold many a product of its three well-known iron works: Corning, Rensselaer, and Burden.

By April, 1868, the associates regarded Troy as more than a source of youthful memories or horseshoes or sheet iron. They knew it also as a railroad

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[64] Garfield was so taken with McDowell he named a son after him. See Frederick D. Williams, ed., *The Wild Life of the Army—Civil War Letters of James A. Garfield* (Ann Arbor: Michigan State University, 1964), Appendix 305. For Chase, see David Donald, ed., *Inside Lincoln's Cabinet, The Civil War Diary of Salmon P. Chase* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1954), pp. 12, 13. See Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln, The Prairie Years and The War Years* (Pleasantville, New York: Reader's Digest Ass'n., 1970), p. 263.

[65] For Charles Crocker, see Oscar Lewis, *The Big Four* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), pp. 53, 54. For Stanford, George T. Clark, *Leland Stanford* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1931), pp. 8-13. For E.B. Crocker, see Hubert Howe Bancroft, *Chronicles of the Builders of the Commonwealth*, VI (San Francisco: H.H. Bancroft, 1892), p. 35.

manufacturing center, supplying the nation's railroads with spikes, rails, and other materiel. In 1867, C.P. Huntington transacted for rails directly with Congressman John A. Griswold, president of Rensselaer Iron Works.[66] Whether he ordered spikes from Corning or Burden is unknown. Regardless of that, every spike shipped to the Central Pacific earned income for Henry Burden, the inventor of the spike-making machine. Burden's enviable position as an individual with royalty rights in such an essential railroad materiel would have been well known to the associates.[67]

Equally well-known to them was another fact regarding Henry Burden: he was General McDowell's father-in-law.[68] Over the years this would have been of only casual interest. Their attitude would have changed, however, when Stanford described the unusual cordiality that existed between the relatives-in-law: McDowell was as close to Burden as the old Scot's two surviving sons.[69] Stanford could have related how McDowell knew not only the operations at Henry Burden & Company, but also at other Troy iron works as well. He was well-acquainted with Burden's competitor, John A. Griswold and knew Rensselaer products, and sales and shipping policies.[70] Intent upon stockpiling materiel for the Central Pacific and other railroads then in prospect, Stanford's information would have been of keen interest to his partners.

While the depth of McDowell's knowledge, as presented by Stanford, might have impressed the Crocker brothers, it would not have Huntington and Hopkins. As owners of the largest iron and steel house on the coast, both were already well-informed on Troy manufacturers. Furthermore, Huntington had purchased materiel throughout the East; he had been based in New York City since 1862. A shrewd bargainer, he knew everything necessary to negotiate effectively in Troy. It would have been Stanford's account of McDowell's personal influence with Burden that would have

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[66] C.P. Huntington to E.B. Crocker, November 30, 1867. See *Collected Letters* (#65).

[67] Margaret Burden Proudfit, *Henry Burden, His Life and a History of His Inventions* (Troy, New York: privately printed. 1904), pp. 58-59. Also see "Henry Burden", *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, II (New York: White and Co., 1902), p. 333.

[68] Irvin McDowell married Helen Burden, oldest daughter of Henry Burden, on November 13, 1849. See *New York Times*, December 13, 1891, 2:6.

[69] The close bond between McDowell and Burden was demonstrated after Second Bull Run when McDowell, in disgrace, found refuge at Burden's home in Troy. See Washington *National Intelligencer*, September 17, 1862, 3:4. Following this, Burden was a character witness at McDowell's inquiry. See "Record of the McDowell Court of Inquiry," *Official Records*, XII, Part I, p. 43. The final proof of Burden's regard came when he made McDowell trustee of his large estate, responsible for distributions to all family members. See *New York Times*, January 25, 1871, 6:2.

[70] As an aide to General Wool, McDowell would have first met Griswold sometime after 1845 on one of Wool's frequent visits to his home in Troy. As Wool's nephew by marriage, Griswold lived in the Wool home for a time. See "John Augustus Griswold," *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography*, III (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1888), p. 3. McDowell would have known of Rensselaer through Henry Burden, who originally owned and operated the iron works before disposing of it to John A. Griswold & Co. See Proudfit, *Henry Burden*, p. 16.

impressed Hopkins and Huntington. The relationship had possibilities. Proper exploitation might reap future benefits, and perhaps lower prices.

Thus when Stanford finally persuaded his associates to honor McDowell with the Reno-Wadsworth namings it could have been hope of future benefit from the general's relationship with Burden that won their final approval. No other argument would have had the same unifying effect. As noted, the associates had just formed the Contract and Finance Company, and would shoulder all the construction worries of the defunct Charles Crocker and Company. These included the cost of rail and fastenings at approximately seventy-two hundred dollars per mile. Of course, most of the iron required for the five hundred miles of mainline track yet to be laid for the Central Pacific had already been purchased. But thousands of miles of iron would soon be needed for the California Central, California and Oregon, San Joaquin Valley, Southern Pacific, Western Pacific, and Yuba roads. This was a staggering prospect in April, 1868. Understandably, price concessions from Burden Iron Works, even if only for spikes,[71] would have been eagerly sought.

This hypothetical solution of the century-old enigma of the naming of Reno may seem crassly commercial alongside the altruistic or whimsical reasons discussed earlier, but it fits the associates' style. Intensely pragmatic, Stanford's partners had no time to waste on town namings. Only something practical would have induced them to reconsider the naming of their Virginia City junction. The matter pended in Sacramento for approximately two weeks. Argenta was quietly withdrawn and the name Reno substituted; the site at the big bend of the Truckee was pre-named Wadsworth. When this unprecedented action was announced in the *Stars and Stripes*, General McDowell had just arrived in New York City. However, if not informed by Stanford beforehand, McDowell would have never learned of the namings from New York newspapers.[72] From July, 1868, until long after the Central Pacific reached Promontory Point, McDowell was posted at Governor's Island just down the Hudson from the Burden Iron Works and convenient to C.P. Huntington's office at 54 William Street in New York City.[73]

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[71] This iron cost per mile was estimated from an account schedule provided the Pacific Railway Commission. See "Testimony of Richard F. Stevens," *Pacific Railway Commission*, August 18, 1887, pp. 3512, 3513. Although spikes accounted for only 3% of the cost per mile, coordinating shipments in proper proportions with the other iron was a continual logistics problem. There never seemed to be enough spikes. Huntington's exasperation was clearly shown in his letter of July 24, 1868, to E.B. Crocker. See *Collected Letters* (#211).

[72] The first mention of Reno in New York newspapers had nothing to do with the christening, only that Central Pacific cars were running there: "Twenty miles from Virginia City." See *Troy Times*, May 14, 1868, 4:1.

[73] McDowell commanded the Department of the East at Fort Columbus, Governor's Island from July, 1868, until December, 1872. See George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.*, I (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1891), pp. 711-713.

In the summer of 1876, General McDowell returned to California for his second tour of duty. This time, instead of the long ocean passage by steamer, he travelled west on the railroad, arriving in San Francisco (Oakland) aboard the Central Pacific's afternoon express. This was Train No. 2, which had stopped briefly in Wadsworth, Nevada, the night before to change locomo-

Brigadier General James S. Wadsworth
Enlarged from a photograph taken at Upton's Hill

tives for the climb over the Sierra Nevada range.[74] If on schedule, this would have occurred at 10:45 PM (Sacramento time). After a dusty, sweltering August day, travelling at twenty miles-per-hour across the Humboldt Desert, McDowell most likely would have been sound asleep in his Pullman berth, oblivious to being in a place named for his old comrade, James Wadsworth. The same would have applied two hours later when Train No. 2 passed through Reno. Ironically, even if McDowell had been awake, he would have hardly been in a mood to reflect sentimentally upon remote desert towns named for Jesse Reno and James Wadsworth. Instead, he would have been impatient to end the seemingly-interminable week-long train ride, and to reach the cool shores of San Francisco Bay.

Judging by the enthusiatic reception McDowell received, San Franciscans were as happy as he was about his return to their city.[75] He was soon active in the same social circles of eight years before:

> From 1864 to 1868 at Black Point (present Fort Mason), again from 1876 to 1882, and a little later in a handsome home on Van Ness Avenue, General and Mrs. Irwin McDowell gave some of the most memorable military and social affairs in the city's history.[76]

Of course, all this socializing afforded Stanford and McDowell an opportunity to renew their friendship. The strength of this bond was demonstrated in 1882 when General McDowell retired from the Army. Stanford gave McDowell a stag dinner that was exceptional even by San Francisco standards.[77] But even more conclusive proof of the friendship between railroader and soldier came three years later when Stanford accompanied McDowell's remains to the officer's circle in the Presidio cemetery. As a pallbearer, he witnessed the impressive ceremony accorded McDowell, the first regulation funeral for a major general on the Pacific Coast. Sixteen artillery pieces fired as the casket was lowered into the grave.[78] At that somber moment, it may have cheered Stanford to recall how seventeen years before he had pleased his old military friend with the Reno-Wadsworth namings.

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[74] McDowell's train arrived in Oakland in the late afternoon of August 8, 1876. See *Alta California*, August 9, 1876, 1:4. See contemporary timetable, Gerald M. Best, *Iron Horses to Promontory* (San Marino, Calif.: Golden West Books, 1969), pp. 188, 189.

[75] *Alta California*, August 9, 1876, 1:4.

[76] Julia Cooley Altrochi, *The Spectacular San Franciscans* (New York: Dutton, 1949), p. 131.

[77] San Francisco *Call*, October 14, 1882, 1:7.

[78] San Francisco *Chronicle*, May 7, 1885, 1:6.

Nevada Power Broker: Pat McCarran and His Political Machine

JEROME E. EDWARDS

PATRICK MCCARRAN became one of Nevada's most influential and controversial twentieth-century politicians. Born in Reno in 1876, he was Nevada's first native-born United States Senator. Prior to his election to the Senate in 1932, however, his political career had not been particularly successful. He had suffered more election defeats than he had earned victories. He won election as a member of the Nevada Supreme Court, but was defeated in his bid for re-election. The position he desired more than any other, that of senator, was denied him for about twenty years; McCarran thus spent more years in the political wilderness practicing law than in actually holding political office.

A major reason for this involved the hostility of George Wingfield, who dominated much of Nevada's economic and political life for a quarter century. In turn, McCarran detested, and fought, Wingfield's sometimes ruthless tactics. He bitterly characterized Wingfield as "an avaricious controller, demanding the pound of flesh in every line in which he bent his efforts."[1]

McCarran finally won his long-coveted senate seat in 1932, when he was fifty-six years old. Through a combination of fortuitous circumstances, the Wingfield organization was too confident that his opponent, the Republican incumbent Tasker Oddie, would win a third term, and McCarran was able to win the Democratic nomination almost by default. Thousands of workers who were new to Nevada, and unfamiliar with the way politics were supposed to be played in the state, flooded into Clark County to work on Hoover Dam. The Wingfield banks closed a week before the election; and of course the Great Depression ravaged the national and state economy, discrediting Republican party candidates.

Once McCarran became a senator, he set about strengthening his power base both in Nevada and in Washington, D.C. The voters of Nevada re-

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[1] P.A. McCarran to Sister Margaret P. McCarran, Feb. 12, 1933, McCarran Collection, Nevada Historical Society, Reno. For a more extensive treatment of Patrick McCarran and his political organization in Nevada with additional specific examples of how it operated, see Jerome E. Edwards, *Pat McCarran, Political Boss of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1982).

elected him in 1938, 1944, and 1950. He still occupied his seat when he died in 1954. In the Senate, he shrewdly and effectively used his key committee assignments, and his skill in the legislative process, to accumulate power. By 1944, he was the chairman of the powerful Judiciary Committee. In 1952, the disapproving *Washington Post* could write, "It sums up the character of this congress to state an unquestionable fact: that its most powerful member was Patrick A. McCarran."[2] Both Presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman disliked the senator, but they had to work with him.

McCarran was able to protect himself in Nevada by building up a political organization which in time would dominate Nevada politics. By 1938 he had gained a preeminence in the Nevada Democratic organization, a preeminence he held until his death. Ironically, in order to consolidate his power, he

Left to right: Sen. George Malone, Senator Patrick McCarran, and Governor Charles Russell at the dedication of Nellis Air Force base near Las Vegas. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

[2] *Washington Post*, July 10, 1952, scrapbook 47, McCarran Collection.

adopted and refined many of the same techniques he had so abhorred when they had been used against him by George Wingfield. Although it is relatively unusual for a United States senator to dominate the internal politics of his home state, McCarran's influence was quite extensive in a number of key aspects of Nevada life of the 1940s and early 1950s. His decisions affected the Republican party as well as the Democratic. They affected the state's economic life, and the growing gambling industry. He was truly a political boss in the old style urban boss tradition, but his power extended to an entire state.

The most important aspect of McCarran's organization was that it was based on personal relationships. It was not primarily ideological, or even partisan, but rather was personal in nature. Partly this was because in McCarran's day Nevada was by far the most lightly populated state in the union. When McCarran was first elected to the senate in 1932, the state had only approximately 90,000 people, not too many more than an average Chicago ward. By the time of his death, its population had ballooned to about 200,000, but Nevada still easily remained the least populated state. Politics still could be conducted on a first name basis. It was theoretically possible for candidates to shake hands with every registered voter in the state, and some, such as Thomas Mechling in 1952, even made the attempt to do so. When McCarran campaigned, he could speak to people personally and ask them about their problems.

Under the extremely efficient leadership of his administrative assistant, Eva Adams, his whole office was geared to help people with their personal needs. Everything possible was done to run the office in the interests of Nevada constituents, and to convince the voters of the state of his deep commitment to them. "The voters of Nevada," the *Nevada State Journal* asserted in a revealing editorial, "don't give a hoot how he votes on most of the national bills that have no direct connection with Nevada, but they do want someone in Washington to whom they can turn when they need help on local problems and even personal problems. There has never been a senator in the history of the state who has paid as close attention to the needs of the state."[3] Although McCarran was quite interested in many national and international issues, at campaign time his rhetoric was slanted far more toward the parochial concerns of his constituents, as if Nevada voters thought more locally—and personally—than did others.

The senator solicited problems: if anyone were in a jam with a bureaucracy—the Bureau of Land Management, Social Security, Veterans Administration, or another agency—just write the senator and he would help. He became a type of ombudsman for people's problems. On the radio he told his listeners, "When your community has any kind of problem, let me know

[3] *Nevada State Journal*, scrapbook 23, McCarran Collection.

about it, whether or not you think I can help." He was proud of the help he could give. "I thank God," he declared, "that He has seen fit to place me in a position where I have been able to aid my many friends and neighbors in Nevada." His office was attuned to people's problems; letters from constituents received immediate attention; his staff had direct orders to answer all mail from Nevadans within a twenty-four hour period, even if only by an acknowledgment and promise of a later answer.[4]

Two examples demonstrate some of the scope of McCarran's interest in his constituents' needs, his willingness to follow through with problems, and his own attention to detail. A typical example of the senator's helpfulness involved an injured prospector in Tuscarora who wrote a letter to McCarran pleading for winter wood. Soon afterward, Norman Biltz (who was worth about ten million dollars), then staying on a ranch near Winnemucca, received a telephone call from the senator in Washington. "You got any wood on that ranch?" McCarran asked. "What do you mean wood?" "I mean firewood." "Hell . . . I guess so." "Well, do me a favor . . . there's a miner up Tuscarora Canyon who broke his chopping arm and can't get in his winter wood. Would you take up a couple loads for him?" Biltz did, and never forgot the incident.[5]

Another example of McCarran's intervention and assistance involved Joseph McDonald, editor of the *Nevada State Journal*, and his son. At the time of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, one of his two sons, Joe, Jr., was stationed on Wake Island. The Japanese attacked the island on December 23, 1941, and soon captured the defending force. At first, the Navy Department informed the McDonald family their son had been killed, but in February the grieving family was renotified; actually, their son was alive and being held prisoner by the Japanese in China.[6] Senator McCarran was involved from the beginning. He had known Joe, Jr, since boyhood and expressed to the relieved parents his special gratitude their son was alive. "Every one of us here was just delighted at this absolute definite information about him," he wrote. "He has been on my mind many, many times, and I can't tell you how happy I feel and how glad I am that my feeling that night when I looked at his picture, on the occasion when you were so kind as to have me for dinner, has been verified. I refer to that deep conviction that he was still alive."[7]

The senator did not let the matter rest. He attempted the seemingly impossible task of securing the young man's release by the Japanese, which

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[4] Interview with Eva Adams, May 10, 1975.

[5] Norman Biltz, "Memoirs of the Duke of Nevada," (Oral History, Library, University of Nevada, Reno), pp. 216-217; Interview with Robert Laxalt, June, 1976.

[6] *Nevada State Journal*, Dec. 27, 1941 and *Las Vegas Age*, June 26, 1942, McCarran Collection; Navy Dept. to Mrs. J.F. McDonald, Dec. 24, 1941; L.B. Combs, Navy Dept., Bureau of Yards and Docks, to Joseph McDonald, Feb. 26, 1942, McDonald Papers, Library, University of Nevada, Reno.

[7] Pat McCarran to Joe McDonald, June 16, 1942, McDonald Papers.

indeed did turn out to be impossible. What McCarran did accomplish seems impressive enough. He began by seeking information about the prisoner's status. He attempted to have him declared a United Press correspondent (Joe, Jr., had done some stringer work on Wake Island), which would have enhanced his chances for exchange. The senator kept at the effort, which reflected not only his usual practice, but also a deep emotional involvement. Eva Adams wrote the father, "He speaks of young Joe so often . . .; the senator seems to feel very close to him." For the senator's part, he promised only "We will keep plugging away." He even sent telegrams to the young man in China as regularly as possible. "We are leaving no stone unturned in your behalf. Keep your chin up and take good care."[8] At one point, the senator believed he could arrange the young man's exchange, but unfortunately this fell through. Joe, Jr. remained in the prison camp until August, 1945. But McCarran never stopped trying, and after McDonald returned he was given a job in McCarran's office, and helped through law school.

McCarran's personal favors extended to patronage; he obtained jobs for his loyal political supporters. These problems received his closest perusal, and no job was too small for his attention. Pete Peterson became McCarran's closest political adviser on Nevada matters, and his chief lieutenant for all patronage problems. Although the number of jobs at McCarran's direct disposal was limited, he made the best of his opportunities. His position on the Senate Judiciary Committee, which had to pass on many key federal posts, gave him unusual leverage, and he never hesitated to use it. Three federal offices in Nevada he always tried to control, and which required senate confirmation, were those of United States Attorney, United States Marshal, and Internal Revenue Collector. If he could not actually control the heads of these offices, then he attempted to name the deputies. Once, when Senator Key Pittman named the U.S. Marshal (after some sharp infighting with McCarran) he wrote a friend that McCarrran had already "pledged two deputy jobs no matter who is appointed marshal. It seems to be a habit of his pledging jobs." McCarran subsequently named "practically every deputy in the Marshal's office."[9] The senator also tried to make suggestions concerning appointments made by various governors of Nevada, but he had only mixed success. In return, these political appointees were required to give McCarran their political loyalty, and to keep him apprised of ongoing political developments; they were intended as private fifth columns.

Another type of patronage was ultimately even more important in building

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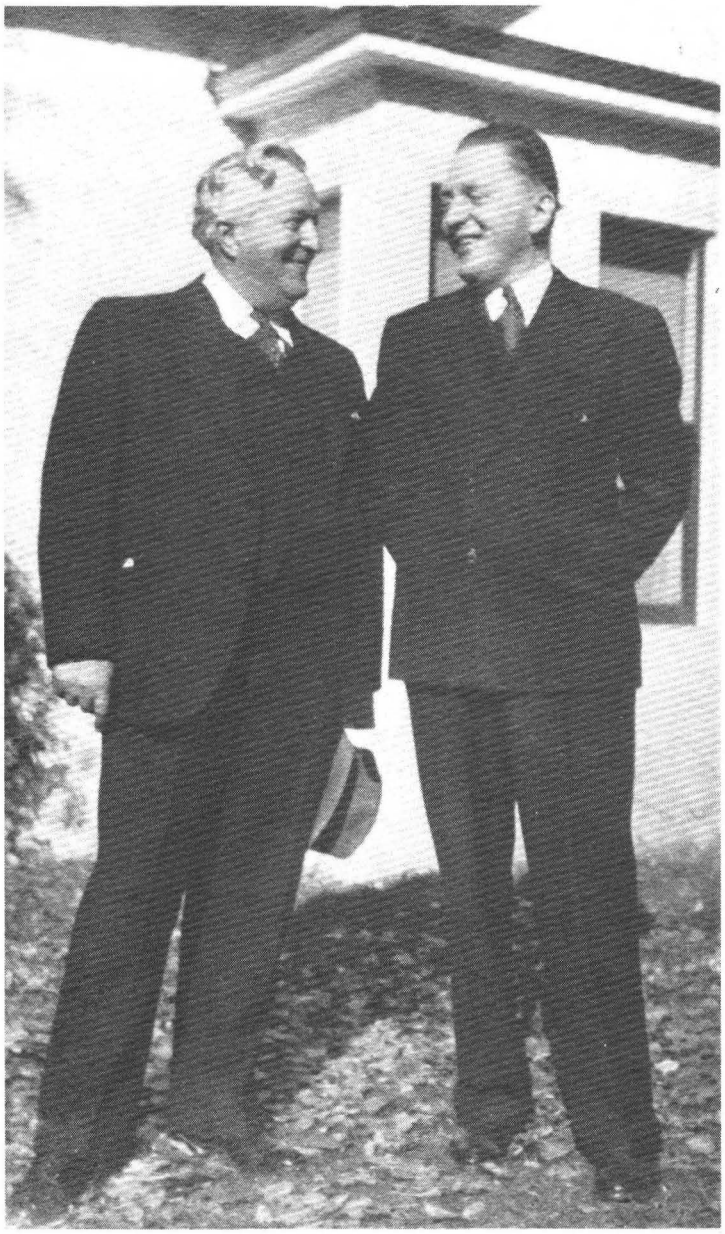
[8] Eva Adams to Joe McDonald, March 4, 1942; Eva Adams to Joe McDonald, Sept. 26, 1942; Cordell Hull to Pat McCarran, June 4, 1943; Pat McCarran to Joe McDonald, Jr., April 29, 1943; Joe McDonald, Jr. to parents, April 14, 1944; McDonald Papers.

[9] Key Pittman to William Woodburn, Oct. 4, 1933, Box 16, Pittman Papers, Library of Congress.



Senator Patrick McCarran and Pete Peterson, ca. early 1940s. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

up the McCarran machine, and it was one which he used to great political advantage. Nevada had no law school, and any ambitious young man in the state who wished to become an attorney had to go elsewhere for his legal training. Yet lawyers were unusually important in Nevada, partly because of

the state's importance as a divorce center. And lawyers were very significant in Nevada's political processes.

Although McCarran was not the first officeholder from Nevada to sponsor young men and to find them government jobs to help them pay their way through law school, none before him made it such a high political art. Because of McCarran's chairmanships, he had a number of jobs under his control or influence. Many Nevadans were helped through the study of law, at such universities as George Washington, Georgetown, American, Catholic, National, or Southeastern, by McCarran's patronage. They worked in his office or on one of his committees; some were elevator operators, capital policemen, clerks, or assistants. After receiving their law degrees, most returned to Nevada and began practicing law; some became important cogs in his political machine. Often they began their political careers by running for district attorney in their respective counties. In a variety of ways, they were able to assist McCarran at state party conventions.[10]

The list of Nevadans who at one time or another served as "McCarran's boys" reads like a who's who of Nevada politicians for a period of a quarter century. The status provided a training ground for future Nevada leaders, and also allowed "old boy" relationships to begin and develop. Not all of the men went into Nevada politics, but many did, including Alan Bible, attorney general of Nevada, 1942-1950, and U.S. Senator, 1954-1975; Harvey Dickerson, attorney general of Nevada, 1963-1970; Grant Sawyer, governor, 1959-1966; John Laxalt (brother of Paul, who served first as governor and then as U.S. Senator); and Jon Collins, member of the Nevada Supreme Court, 1967-1970. Even Charles Russell, the governor from 1951 to 1958, obtained employment in Washington through McCarran after his defeat in the race for a seat in the House of Representatives in 1948. Others, mostly prominent lawyers, who worked for McCarran include Chester Smith, Joseph T. McDonnell, Joseph McDonald, Jr., Bob McDonald, Clark Guild, Jr., James Johnson, Ralph Denton, Virgil Wedge, C.E. ("Dutch") Horton, Calvin Corey, Gordon Rice, and James Archer. Archer went to dental school at Georgetown. It was not absolutely necessary to be a prospective lawyer to work for McCarran.

The senator demanded instant loyalty from these young men, and obtained it. They were doubtless attracted by his paternal interest in their well-being, and by his personal magnetism. Invariably they remained politically loyal to the senator after leaving his office. *Time Magazine*, in its obituary on McCarran, quoted one of the "boys" as saying, "What the hell. McCarran took me off the street when my belly had wrinkles in it. He fed me and clothed me and

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[10] Examples of how McCarran's "boys" were important to the senator's machine may be found in Edwards, *Pat McCarran, Political Boss of Nevada;* see pp. 138-139, and 216n.

put me through law school and helped me get started in practice. What kind of jerk would I be to turn on him now."[11]

McCarran's political style thus was based on personal interaction, personal services, and jobs. By temperament, he was interested in people, their problems, and particularly their relationships to him. He had a fine eye for detail, which, combined with a not overly-generous assessment of human nature, kept him on top of affairs. Herman (Hank) Greenspun, the Las Vegas publisher, put it this way: "In Nevada it was McCarran's eye, not God's, that was always on the sparrow." He solicited information about people from everyone who could be of use to him, and his office became a sort of clearing house for gossip, political and otherwise. As he wrote to Eva Adams shortly after hiring her: "Now, I do wish you would write to me every day, if possible, and give me all the gossip and the news and the dirt of every kind and description." Perhaps he wrote this with a gleam in his eye, but he was quite serious.[12]

Only one thing was asked of the recipients of McCarran's favors: undeviating and unremitting loyalty. The rewards and consequent loyalties cut across the party spectrum; indeed, they led to a diminishing of party differences. This fuzzing of party distinctions was by no means new in Nevada; earlier, the Wingfield organization had its cohorts in both parties.

On the national level, McCarran himself was a Democratic party maverick. Towards the end of his career, he was far closer to many Republicans in his attitude toward foreign policy than he was to members of his own party, and he became an ideological associate of Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin. Although he was never one of the Dixiecrats (he did not share their racial or their economic policies), he was not in the mainline liberal Roosevelt-Truman tradition, either.

Whether a Nevadan was a Republican or a Democrat during those years did not mean all that much to McCarran. The party was far less significant to him than personal loyalty. Most of his associates held similar views. Norman Biltz, for example, declared, "What most of us are interested in is getting the right kind of people, and we don't give a damn whether they are Democrats or Republicans." Eva Adams put it straightforwardly enough: Nevada politics, in McCarran's eyes, was not so much Democrats versus Republicans as the "good guys" versus the "bad guys."[13]

Consequently, McCarran's power in the Democratic party in Nevada extended to the punishment of those Democrats who posed a threat to him, or whose loyalty he could not count on, even if it meant the defeat of that

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[11] *Nevada State Journal,* Sept. 30, 1954; *Nevada State Journal,* Sept. 28, 1970; interview with Jay Sourwine, Aug, 4, 1969; interview with Howard Cannon, July 28, 1969; interview with Charles Sobsey, July 24, 1969; interview with Grant Sawyer, Oct. 29, 1974; *Time Magazine,* LXIV (Oct. 11, 1954), 30.

[12] Pat McCarran to Eva Adams, Dec. 12, 1940, Adams Collection, University of Nevada, Reno.

[13] Freeman Lincoln, "Norman Biltz, Duke of Nevada," *Fortune,* L(Sept. 1954), 141.

Democrat by a Republican. In 1946, he quietly favored Republican Charles Russell for congressman over Democratic candidate Malcom McEachin. In 1950, he not-so-covertly supported Charles Russell for governor over an old enemy, incumbent Vail Pittman. Two years later, he backed Republican "Molly" Malone for United States Senator over the unspeakable (in his view) Thomas Mechling, and he publicly supported Dwight Eisenhower for President instead of Adlai Stevenson. That same year, when U.S. Congressman Walter Baring, a Democrat, had the temerity to tell the senator at the Democratic national convention that he preferred Adlai Stevenson over Richard Russell for the party nomination, McCarran bluntly told Baring in front of several reporters, "You will vote for Russell, or I will personally see to it that you're beaten in the fall's election." Baring did vote for Stevenson and indeed was defeated in the fall election.[14]

One prominent Democrat, who asked to be unnamed, stated that McCarran "wrecked" the Democratic party in Nevada. The Democrats did remain the majority party within the state, but the charge was true in a sense: McCarran caused real problems of cohesion and morale within the party. The fact is that he attempted to devour both political parties in Nevada. In addition to helping settle old scores within the Democratic party, his alliance with certain Republican leaders was in other ways advantageous to McCarran. Many contacts were made through Norm Biltz and John Mueller. Mueller for a time controlled the Republican State Senate. Biltz, himself wealthy, provided access to influential friends whom he had encouraged to come to Nevada because of its tax advantages. These friends, men such as Max Fleischmann and Errit L. Cord, could help ease the economic strains of a tough campaign.[15]

McCarran was a man who knew his enemies, and he did not forgive them their sins. His methods extended to the attempted political annihilation of those who did not give him complete loyalty. He even supported Republican candidates in order to secure the defeat of antagonists within his own party. Some of his tactics in dealing with political enemies went beyond mere "dirty tricks," and had sinister implications. A letter in 1950 to Reno postmaster Pete Petersen, his devoted ally, illustrates his methods well. The senator was discussing certain precinct caucus meetings:

> I think something should be done toward controlling the precincts, especially the two precincts, one occupied by Carville and the other by Hilliard. I don't want them to get a single delegate out of either of those places. I don't want those two birds to have a chance to show their noses in the state convention, or any of their friends. This can be done if we just get the matter arranged as to a favorable place to hold the mass

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[14] *Reno Evening Gazette*, July 25, 1952, July 26, 1952, "Nevada Political Picture," scrapbook 46, McCarran Collection; interview with Walter Baring, May 14, 1975.

[15] Edwards, *Pat McCarran, Political Boss of Nevada*, pp. 181-184.

meetings and then have our friends so organized that they will fill the places plumb full so that nobody else can get in and then have the motions all ready to put over and adjourn P.D.Q. with all the delegates nominated and elected. It may be necessary to rent five, ten or twenty buses so as to have them loaded up and take them to the respective mass meetings where they can take over. We want to do this thing and do it right.[16]

It must be remembered that in 1950, when he wrote this letter, McCarran was virtually assured of renomination and re-election. But relaxation was not in his makeup, and he remembered too many past hard fights and defeats.

His vindictiveness and methods are well documented. McCarran had great influence within the Internal Revenue Office in Reno and many individuals (Governor Vail Pittman was one) believed that opponents had their tax records audited and friends did not. Some credence to that assertion is given by the senator himself. In another letter to Peterson, he suggested what the Reno postmaster should tell a newly-appointed Chief Field Deputy for the Internal Revenue Service, who contrary to federal law was supposed to go around the state electioneering for McCarran in 1950: "Then when he catches some poor devil a little off his foot as regards his taxes, go easy with him and make it known that he is going easy because he is a good friend of Pat McCarran. We must be 'at our father's business.' "[17]

Political antagonists were investigated as a matter of course. McCarran's papers contain numerous reports on political enemies—confidential F.B.I. reports on Las Vegas publisher Hank Greenspun, for example, and copies of his parole report, and confidential reports on critical journalists. The columnist Drew Pearson, whom McCarran particularly detested, attracted the most investigation; the files contain F.B.I. reports and even sealed Nevada court records dating from the first Mrs. Drew Pearson's divorce. The F.B.I. reports were probably obtained through the office of "my good friend the director," and because of McCarran's privileged position as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and of its Internal Security subcommittee. Sealed court records could be obtained by many of his political operatives within Nevada.[18]

Perhaps the single most important case of intimidation involved freedom of the press. The newspapers in Nevada had either abjectly supported McCarran (like the *Nevada State Journal* and the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*), treated his office press releases as objective news (as did many of the small

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[16] Pat McCarran to Pete Petersen, Jan. 19, 1950, Petersen Papers, Library, University of Nevada, Reno.

[17] Pat McCarran to Pete Petersen, March 8, 1949, McCarran Collection.

[18] The confidential reports are in the Eva Adams Collection, Library, University of Nevada, Reno; this collection is in the process of being sorted. There are many investigative reports on McCarran's political, and other, enemies scattered throughout the collection. See e.g. Gordon Rice to Pat McCarran, May 21, 1952, Adams Collection.

town papers), or at least opposed him according to certain recognized canons of courteous journalistic behavior (such as the *Reno Evening Gazette*). But Hank Greenspun's *Las Vegas Sun* was different. It abided by no traditional rules, but rather adopted a vitriolic, infuriating, anti-McCarran stance which stridently carried over to the news pages. Not only did the *Sun* bitterly and personally attack the senator, but it also went after Norman Biltz, Eva Adams, and all the rest, right down to the senator's office staff. And Greenspun could wield a mean pen.[19]

In March, 1952 the *Sun* suddenly one morning lost all of its advertising from twelve major Las Vegas casinos and hotels, an estimated thirty percent of its total advertising revenue. The twelve casinos and hotels, obviously working in collusion, claimed that economic losses had forced them to cancel the advertising. Some observers suspected, instead, that it was a deliberate attempt either to shut down the newspaper or force it to change its editorial positions. Greenspun, who had some legal training, went to the U.S. District Court and sued the casinos, Pat McCarran, and Eva Adams for over a million dollars; he charged that the orders to cancel the advertising had come from McCarran's office. The case was eventually settled out of court and Greenspun was awarded actual out-of-pocket damages of $80,000 on terms agreed to by the senator. McCarran's name was not dropped from the suit (Adams' was), although the casinos paid his part of the damages. The casinos also resumed advertising in the *Sun*. In retrospect, it is not entirely clear whether the orders were initiated by Senator McCarran himself or by close associates using his name.[20]

McCarran's office had a previous record of paying close attention to the *Sun's* editorial page; soon after the newspaper was founded in 1950, the office had tried to get the *Sun* to stop running the cartoons of the *Washington Post's* Herbert Block (Herblock) whenever they depicted Senator McCarran in an unflattering way, which was often.[21] After the court suit debacle McCarran asked an ex-Communist informer, Harvey Matusow, if he would investigate Greenspun. According to Matusow, "He asked me if I knew Hank Greenspun. . . . McCarran said he thought Greenspun was a Communist, or a Communist fronter. He wanted to know if I, through my connections, could establish this fact." Matusow was glad to comply; as a first course of action he asked the senator to furnish him with a list of all the *Sun's* employees. "My plan was to try to pin the 'Communist label' on his staff." Nothing came of this

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[19] Edwards, *Pat McCarran, Political Boss of Nevada*, pp 124-126, has a discussion of McCarran and the press.

[20] See Edwards, *Pat McCarran, Political Boss of Nevada*, pp. 155-167; Jerome E. Edwards, "The Sun and the Senator," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, XXIV (Spring, 1981), 3-16.

[21] Adams Collection.

because Greenspun, and the *Sun*, had impeccable anti-Communist credentials.[22]

This strange power over the casinos reflected his control of the Nevada Tax Commission, which licensed them, plus his valiant and successful efforts the previous year to quash an attempt in congress to tax Nevada gambling right out of existence. He had taken full credit for the success of his efforts. Casinos and hotels also had to come to the senator for assistance in obtaining construction materials, because of Korean War restrictions and shortages. In turn, they gave the Senator free room and meals, but in the end, they were required to give more.[23]

McCarran's organization played equally rough whenever he came up for re-election. One favorite tactic used by him and his supporters was to accuse opposition candidates of being financed by "outside interests"; it was believed this tactic would produce votes in Nevada. These "outside interests" always represented groups unpopular with typical Nevada voters.

In 1944, when McCarran faced a bruising primary fight, he accused the quite conservative Vail Pittman of being the candidate and tool of the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations). One McCarran ad asked, "WHO WILL RULE NEVADA? THE PEOPLE OR THE CIO?" People were led to believe that somehow the state was in danger of coming under CIO control, or even worse, if McCarran were to be defeated. Pittman denied he had received any CIO money, but the charge hurt and he narrowly lost the election.[24]

In the campaign of 1950, McCarran and his supporters tried to frame opposition candidates by accusing them of being tools of certain sinister "outside" groups. Because of the senator's strenuous opposition to any liberalized Displaced Persons legislation, the basic strategy was to make it appear that the opposition was heavily financed by "New York" money. The words "Jewish" and "Zionist" were occasionally used, and often meant, in this connection. Pete Peterson, for one, considered this a clever strategy. "My idea of the thing was to emphasize that the Jews were after you. I don't think that particular race is too well thought of in this state. . . . It may not be a bad idea to create the information that there are certain Jews after you for their own selfish purposes." In 1944 it had been the CIO that had sought to dominate Nevada, and now in 1950 it was the Jews. McCarran did not disagree with these tactics, but he thought they could be modified a bit. After

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[22] Harvey Matusow, *False Witness* (New York: Cameron & Kahn, 1955), pp. 160ff.

[23] Edwards, *Pat McCarran, Political Boss of Nevada*, pp. 152-153, 164-165. Deposition of Senator Patrick A. McCarran, Washington, D.C., December 29, 1952; *Milwaukee Journal*, editorial, Jan. 3, 1953; Jacob Kozloff to McCarran, May 10, 1952; Adams Collection.

[24] *Nevada State Journal*, July 19, 1944. The CIO charges lasted through the election, often with innuendoes of Communist affiliation. See Edwards, *Pat McCarran, Political Boss of Nevada*, pp. 116-118, 120.

expressing his doubt that there was actually all that much "Jew money" coming into Nevada, he suggested his own idea: "What we want them to do is to send the money on and get it into the hands of our own friends, and we'll use their money for my election. I think we should get the work started on this plan."[25]

Sympathetic columnists spread the word that outside money was flooding Nevada. Hearst columnist George Sokolsky wrote that the "Committee on National Affairs" in New York was attempting to raise money to elect liberal senators, and to defeat such men as McCarran. Senator James Eastland of Mississippi, a colleague on the Judiciary Committee, charged in a statement inserted in the *Congressional Record* that "outside" groups were attempting to defeat the senior senator from Nevada. In Eastland's words, "The Communists and Communist-front groups . . . are determined to get McCarran." McCarran himself wrote to a Nevada correspondent, "Our communistic friends in New York have been rustling money to send to those who would oppose me." The *Nevada State Journal*, under the always friendly guidance of Joe McDonald, also tried to pin the "financed in New York" label on McCarran's enemies. "All of which discloses that Nevada can expect a New York invasion, backed by money, to determine the kind of Senator we want."[26]

The Committee on National Affairs did give a total of $5,500 to the anti-McCarran forces. Otherwise the campaigns of the Democratic challenger, George Franklin, Jr., and the Republican candidate, George E. Marshall, were meagerly financed.[27] The issue of outside "Jew money" was a cynical and false one, but it was designed to pander to Nevada's fear of outside manipulation. The straw men created in 1944 and 1950 continued to play directly on voters' fears, and McCarran succeeded in diverting discussion from meaningful issues.

Perhaps to McCarran his arguments were not entirely cynical. A perusal of the files compiled during the last few years of his life results in dispiriting reading. His political gossip became increasingly paranoid. More and more investigations of political enemies were conducted. The expressed feeling in many letters in the files is that if McCarran retired, if he did not continue to fight on, Nevada would be taken over by "outsiders." In his later years, his health was poor; he had a series of heart attacks, and had a sense that little time remained for him. Yet the stakes seemed so important. He and his machine were not just confronting run-of-the-mill outsiders, but something

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[25] Pete Petersen to Pat McCarran, Jan. 6, 1950; Pat McCarran to Pete Petersen, Jan. 19, 1950; Petersen Papers.

[26] *New York Journal American*, May 25, 1950, scrapbook 32; *Reno Evening Gazette*, July 8, 1950, "Politics"; *Nevada State Journal*, July 9, 1950, "Nevada Politics," scrapbook 32; McCarran Collection.

[27] *Nevada State Journal*, Sept. 24, 1950, "Nevada Politics," scrapbook 37, McCarran Collection.

Senator Patrick McCarran and his administrative aide, Eva Adams. *(Special Collections, University of Nevada, Reno, Library)*

far more sinister. In a strange fashion, cold war rhetoric was used in order to keep Nevada inviolate—there, true patriotic principles could prevail.

Eva Adams expressed these fears in several letters. Greenspun, in her view, was just a front for the communists. "I feel guilty of omission," she wrote, "in my failure to give warning or otherwise let it be known out home that we have incontrovertible evidence, and have repeatedly been told by

those in position of authority where confidential information comes, that a smear campaign against Senator McCarran is one of the major projects of the party at this time." If true patriots and Nevadans let down their guard, she wrote at another time, the "grim scheme of cold war" would reach down into the "state legislatures," and the subversive influences backing McCarran's opponents would take over the state he so loved:

> I realize that I am imposing on you in this regard, but I think you are just as interested as I am in safeguarding, as much as possible, the State of Nevada from the bold activities of these certain individuals. I don't think I need to paint a picture for you as to the things that might occur in the elections for the next few years to come. It was doubly tragic that the Nevada primary did not receive more attention.[28] Nevada proved itself to be fertile ground for conquering by outsiders, and you and I and other loyal citizens must do everything we can to offset the damage that has been done and guard against future inroads.[29]

The picture was never precisely drawn, but it was clear that Nevada was in great peril of being taken over by these "outsiders." In the context of a number of letters, these forces were viewed as fronts for foreign "isms" and influences. The senator's view concerning an internal Communist conspiracy bent on subverting the United States reached right down to the neighborhoods of Reno and Pioche.

Yet ultimately, the McCarran machine, for all its rough methods and its false rhetoric, was not successful. It never did quite gain total control of the Democratic party in the state—hence the necessity for alliances with the Republicans. By the time McCarran died, his influence had considerably diminished. He always seemed to have to contend with the Pittmans of this world, and although he usually won the battles, he never was able to achieve undivided control. There were always other foes to replace those who had been vanquished. Of course, one problem involved his own methods, which always created more opposition. In addition, his personality and character seemed to *demand* enemies; if they did not exist, then he had to manufacture them in his mind, and thus in the way he perceived reality. His good friend, Joe McDonald, emphasized in the obituary he wrote that "Senator McCarran's career was marked by many political fights, some of them unnecessary." It was not in his nature to relax.[30]

The senator also lost influence in the early 1950s because the state was changing, and he did not quite understand the nature of the changes. He was old, and remained consumed by his anti-Communist rhetoric. By 1954,

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[28] This refers to the 1952 Democratic primary for the U.S. Senate seat; Thomas Mechling defeated the McCarran-sponsored candidate, Alan Bible.

[29] Eva Adams to Denver Dickerson, April 1, 1952; Eva Adams to Calvin Cory, April 13, 1953; Adams Collection.

[30] *Nevada State Journal*, Sept. 29, 1954.

Nevada had been undergoing rapid demographic changes and economic growth for several years. McCarran seemed confused. Overall, from 1932 to 1954 the state more than doubled its population. The rise was most evident in Clark County, which includes Las Vegas, and the senator was never quite able to come to terms with the rapid growth of that area. In 1930, it had only 8,532 inhabitants, but by 1940 it had 16,414, and by 1950, 48,289. After 1950, the growth was even more explosive. The "old boy" network and the personal-favor way of doing business did not as easily work in an environment altered by the influx of thousands of newcomers, to many of whom the name "McCarran" meant little. Although Clark County was kept safely, and badly, underrepresented in the state legislature, its growth still posed major political problems.[31] The senator wrote his wife: "There is a great movement of new people into this state. There are four thousand people living in trailers in Clark County alone and as many more here [Reno]. They are on wheels, so to speak, and really don't belong here." He did not understand the newcomers who "really don't belong here," and they obviously did not understand the old paternalism. His conclusion was that "Clark County is the worst mess I ever saw." His close political associate, John Mueller, put it slightly differently: "Clark County is still an upset mess no one can figure it out. . . . Personally I have a belly full of the place."[32]

By 1954, gambling had achieved economic preeminence in Nevada. This had been unforeseen at the time of its legalization in 1931. The rise of gambling crept up on the senator, and he never fully came to terms with it. McCarran's idea of progress was oriented toward mining, agriculture, and belching smokestacks. Nevada, to his way of thinking, should grow by attracting industry, "and by basing its growth on gambling instead, I am afraid we have blinked our eyes at that which to my mind is the stronger form of economy. . . ."[33] Although he had contacts with many of the leading casino owners, and in fact took credit for saving the industry when an attempt was initiated in the House of Representatives to tax it out of existence, he never believed that gambling was the best thing for his native state. He was of a generation to whom gambling did not mean much. He was neither fully aware of the many social, political, and regulatory problems of the industry, nor was he sensitive concerning how rapidly gambling was changing the nature of the Nevada he loved.

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[31] In 1950, Clark County had almost thirty percent of Nevada's population. During the decade of the 1950s it had one seat in the Nevada State Senate out of seventeen, and nine Assembly seats out of forty-seven. This underrepresentation continued until after the major United States Supreme Court decision, *Reynolds v. Sims* (1964) forced the states to reapportion both houses of their legislatures according to population.

[32] Pat McCarran to Mrs. McCarran, Sept. 23, 1952; Pat McCarran to Mrs. McCarran, Nov. 4, 1952; McCarran Collection. John Mueller to Pat McCarran, April 23, 1953, Adams Collection.

[33] Pat McCarran to Joseph F. McDonald, July 3, 1951, McCarran Collection; Edwards, *Pat McCarran, Political Boss of Nevada*, pp. 152-155.

It must be stated in conclusion that McCarran did little to help reform the gambling industry at a time when it was a national scandal because of the murders of Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegal and "Russian Louie" Strauss, the attempted assassination of Lincoln Fitzgerald, and the revelations of the U.S. Senate Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce (the Kefauver committee). Indeed, McCarran's political organization did very little to improve any aspect of Nevada government. There was all the pork barrel anyone could ever want, but meaningful regulation of gambling was left for others to attempt. The Internal Revenue Office in Reno, which was under McCarran's thumb for ten years, became a national scandal when conditions were exposed in the Pulitzer Prize-winning investigations of Ed Montgomery, and the subsequent resignation and suicide of the collector. Far-reaching legislation in the 1950s for education in Nevada had to be initiated by others.[34] The senator truly loved his state (once when visiting Paris he wrote home, "I wouldn't give one block in Reno for this whole city"),[35] but his organization simply had one goal—McCarran's own political aggrandizement. Only one thing was expected of its minions—unrelenting loyalty.

It is clear that to the McCarran machine, personal relationships—the relation of individuals to the thought and personality of one man—counted for almost everything. Other factors—party, effective government, ideology—were secondary. Except for the leader, the organization had no focus, no center. He was it. Attempts to provide a center, to develop a focus in campaigns (fear of outsiders, the CIO, New York City, or Communists) were artificially superimposed and certainly irrelevant to the real problems of Nevada. People who did not like this arrangement, and who could not work with it, were to be politically crushed. It was all quite simple. As long as the voters of Nevada got their personal services and favors, and all the pork barrel anyone could possibly desire, they were not to mind that their state was a political pigsty.

But a political machine, thus based, lacked either the ideological center or the party framework to survive the death of the leader. If the senator left any political legacy to his state, it was his "boys," but after his removal from the scene, they grew up and went on to other things. The limitations of the McCarran organization and the selfishness of its leader left Nevada badly prepared to confront the dilemmas and problems resulting from its rapidly changing economy and growing population.

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[34] See Mary Ellen Glass, *Nevada's Turbulent '50s: Decade of Political and Economic Change* (Nevada Studies in History and Political Science, No. 15. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1981) for a discussion of the "far reaching legislation" of the 1950s.

[35] Pat McCarran to Sister Mary Mercy, Sept. 25, 1949, McCarran Collection, quoted in Von Pittman, Jr., "Senator Patrick A. McCarran and the Politics of Containment," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Georgia, 1979), p. 164.

Tom Edison and the Bonanzograph

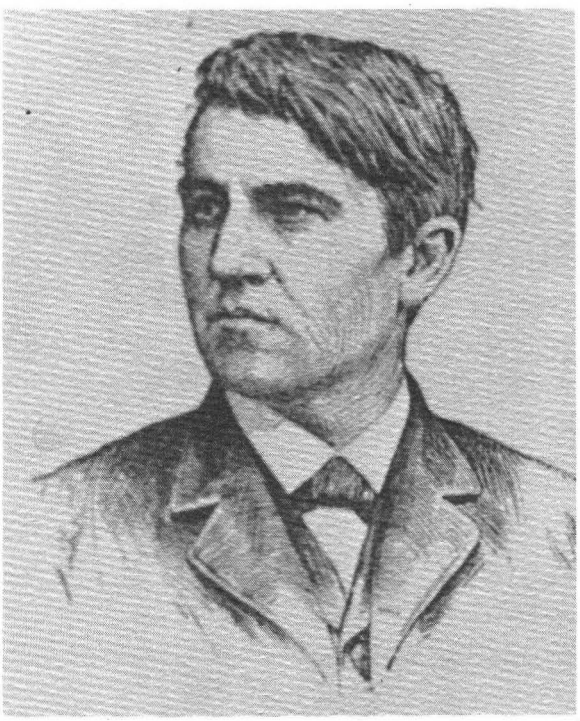
ERIC N. MOODY

THE CENTRAL PACIFIC'S passenger express from Sacramento was late when it pulled into Reno. Earlier in the day, a train running ahead of it had derailed at Cascade, in the high Sierra west of Reno, and had blocked the track for hours. Consequently, it was almost eleven o'clock on the sunny morning of August 9, 1878, before the express arrived and deposited upon Nevada soil its celebrated and eagerly awaited passenger, Thomas Alva Edison.

At thirty-one years of age, the visiting inventor was already one of the most famous personalities of his day. Just in the previous year he had invented the phonograph. Before that he had achieved major advances in the telegraph and telephone fields, and had developed the mimeograph, electric pen, a vote recording machine and an improved stock ticker and printer. Still another invention, the tasimeter, was responsible for bringing him west in the summer of 1878.

The tasimeter was a heat measuring device that Edison and a party of scientists, led by Professors George F. Barker and Henry Draper, had proposed to use in gauging heat from the sun during a solar eclipse on July 29. When the party had set out for the Rocky Mountains in Wyoming, where the eclipse would be total, Edison had gone along as much because he wanted a vacation as to oversee the use of his invention. Following their arrival in Rawlins, the scientists had set up their equipment and awaited the big event. At the appointed time, the moon had moved across the sun and the landscape had darkened, but—to Edison's consternation—the tasimeter had not worked quite as expected and no accurate readings were obtained.

The failure of the new experimental device, however, had not affected Edison's determination to enjoy a holiday. Leaving Wyoming (to which he would return in few weeks to join a hunting and fishing expedition), he had set out with Professor Barker on a trip to the West Coast. The journey by train had taken longer than expected because of a delay of several hours in Reno on August 1. It was there that a newspaper reporter, boarding the passenger cars and seeking Edison out for an interview, had elicited some surprising news: the inventor was toying with an idea that electricity could be used to locate underground mineral deposits. Edison had aroused further



The young Tom Edison. (From: *Appleton's Cyclopedia of Biography,* 1888)

interest by remarking that he wanted to stop and test his theory in the mines of the Comstock Lode on his way back east.

In California, Edison had spent some time looking around San Francisco, and then he had toured Yosemite and the gold mining regions of the Sierra. By the second week in August, he and Barker had begun their return trip, planning to interrupt their departure from the Pacific slope only long enough to visit Nevada's famous silver mines.

At Reno travelers stopped to catch connecting trains to Virginia City, the principal community on the Comstock. When Edison arrived there on August 9 and stepped from his coach, reporters from the local newspapers were on hand. Naturally intrigued by his earlier comments about metal detecting experiments, the Reno newsmen had anxiously been awaiting for him to return. One would subsequently disclose, in his account of the meeting, that Edison was going to the Comstock to test a new invention (soon to be good naturedly labeled the "bonanzograph") that could "tell the presence of gold and silver ore, and the extent of the ledge."

As soon as he was able, Edison broke away from the reporters, telling them he was in a hurry and had to be in Omaha in a few days; he and Barker boarded the Virginia and Truckee Railroad's "lightning express" for Virginia City. No doubt he was an object of curiosity among the other passengers as the train proceeded south to Carson City, and then up, through Gold Hill, to

the Queen City of the Comstock. Just before 2:00 in the afternoon the train steamed into the depot, and Edison and his colleague disembarked.

Once again the press was waiting. A reporter from the *Virginia Chronicle* was surprised to find that Edison "bears his honors modestly and acts as if he had never heard that he was famous." The visitor's appearance, too, was not what the reporter expected: he "did not look at all like his pictures in the *Popular Sciences Monthly* or *Harper's Weekly,* as he had grown much fatter in the face since they were taken, having gained eighteen pounds since his trip west. He looks like a green farmer's boy who has come to town to see the sights."

When the visiting "hayseed" realized that he was going to be subjected to yet another interview, he "drew a long breath and looked as if the attentions of the past few weeks had wearied him." He did, though, agree to talk.

The *Chronicle* reporter asked first how the much publicized tasimeter had worked during the eclipse. "Wonderfully," replied Edison. "I measured the heat of Vega and Arcturas—that is, comparatively—and both planets deflected the indicator two inches. The corona of the sun, however, deflected it so much that I could not use it. It's the darndest thing to measure heat you ever saw, and astonishes me every time I try it."

Wanting to find out more about the wondrous new instrument, the reporter inquired how far away it could measure the heat from a candle. 'Oh, about 500 feet," said Edison. "If you place a cake of ice a foot thick alongside the instrument, and touch your finger against the further side of the ice, the heat of the finger passing through is measured by the instrument instantly."

At that point, attention shifted to something of greater local interest: exactly what was Edison up to on the Comstock—could his genius aid the mining industry? The question represented more than passing curiosity, because the Comstock was just entering the twilight of its great Bonanza period. Only the year before, the immense body of gold and silver ore that for half a decade had given Virginia City its greatest prosperity and begun to diminish. Mine shafts were being sunk deeper and deeper, but without major new discoveries; by 1878 only the Consolidated Virginia and California, among the dozens of Comstock mining companies, were still paying dividends to shareholders. Unemployment had risen dramatically and miners and other Comstockers were leaving by the thousands for more active camps, such as Bodie, California. The people of Nevada, like other Americans of the time, had almost unlimited faith in the power of new technology to solve problems; Tom Edison and his new ore-detecting gadget seemed to be appearing at precisely the right moment to find a solution to the area's economic ills.

The *Chronicle's* representative asked Edison if he did, indeed, intend to "experiment on the mines." There had been the talk, after all, of his creating a device which could locate gold and silver deposits.

"Yes," said Edison, "I will see what I can do. I imagine that the resistance

of an ore body to an electric current could be utilized to determine the location of the ore and its extent. I am going down in the mines today to see how the land lays."

Within a few minutes of his arrival, Edison and Barker had made their way to the C&C shaft, which was used by both the Consolidated Virginia and California mines. There, superintendent William H. Patton of the Consolidated Virginia joined them, and hoisting signals were sounded by ropes and bells.

Edison inquired why electric signals weren't used, and was told that they wouldn't work.

"But they *must* work!" Edison protested, "I'll make a drawing tonight, and it's bound to go."

The inventor was reminded that a device such as he was proposing had been displayed at the May Festival in San Francisco and had failed to perform satisfactorily. Edison explained that the machine in San Francisco had not been his, but was only a crude imitation, and that his was "absolutely perfect." Following this exchange, Edison, Barker and Patton began their descent into the mines.

Edison's initial tour of the underground workings of the Comstock seems to have been a brief one; after only a short interval, he was back on the surface and in the center of Virginia City, taking in its exotic sights. As usual, representatives of the local newspapers tagged along. A reporter from the *Territorial Enterprise* (most likely Dan DeQuille) brought up a recent magazine article Edison had written concerning his scientific accomplishments and the benefits to be derived from their future refinement. In the article, Edison had mentioned a number of ways in which the phonograph could be used, but he had not discussed its employment in one area that especially interested the *Enterprise* newsman. Could it not, asked the reporter, also be adapted to use in daily journalism?

Indeed it could, Edison replied. He appeared already to have given some thought to its use as an aid to typesetters. Instead of writing down an article, a journalist would find it much easier and faster to record the piece by speaking into a phonograph. The instrument could then be placed beside the compositor's type-case, turned on, and, "with a backward flow carefully adjusted to the speed of the printer," be used by that craftsman to set the words in type. Edison suggested that the phonograph might be equipped "with a simple treadle for the foot of the printer, so arranged and adjusted as to permit the escape of eight or ten words consecutively, or as many as the operator might be able to retain in his mind while he was placing them in type."

There was also some discussion of the phonograph's use in interviewing—the *Enterprise* writer felt the machine would prove a "great success" in that area.

When evening arrived, Edison, who in his youth had worked as a telegrapher, made his way to the Western Union telegraph office. The night was a sultry one, not inviting sleep, and Edison settled in for a session of talk with the operators and other office staff. According to the *Virginia Chronicle,* when he was introduced there was a "commotion among the operators, who crowded around to greet the king of electricians and the inventor of so many instruments used by them daily."

Edison began looking around the office, here and there testing instruments, occasionally correcting small errors and noting where improvements might be made. But there was "no air of superiority observable" in him, the *Chronicle's* writing noted:

From the moment of his arrival he was with the operators as one of themselves, chatting pleasantly, cracking jokes, and moving about as if he had worked in the office for years. He was the worst dressed man in the room by all odds. An old black hat, a cheap shirt with the stud-holes in the bosom unoccupied, a two-bit necktie several months old, coarse pants and vest and a mouse-colored linen duster, completed his attire.

C Street, Virginia City, in the late 1870s. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

Edison was asked by one of the office boys to autograph an album. He complied, and his unique style of penmanship evoked admiration. His letters looked as though they had been carefully printed, and this caused someone to remark, "You couldn't take thirty words a minute and print like that."

"I can take forty," Edison quickly responded, and proceeded to prove it.

The fastest operator in the room took up a wire, Edison positioned himself by a receiver, and at the inventor's signal a message started clicking away. Edison commenced writing, and in three minutes had taken 103 words "with apparent ease, doing better than he had promised." And the entire message was written out in the "faultless hand that graced the autograph album."

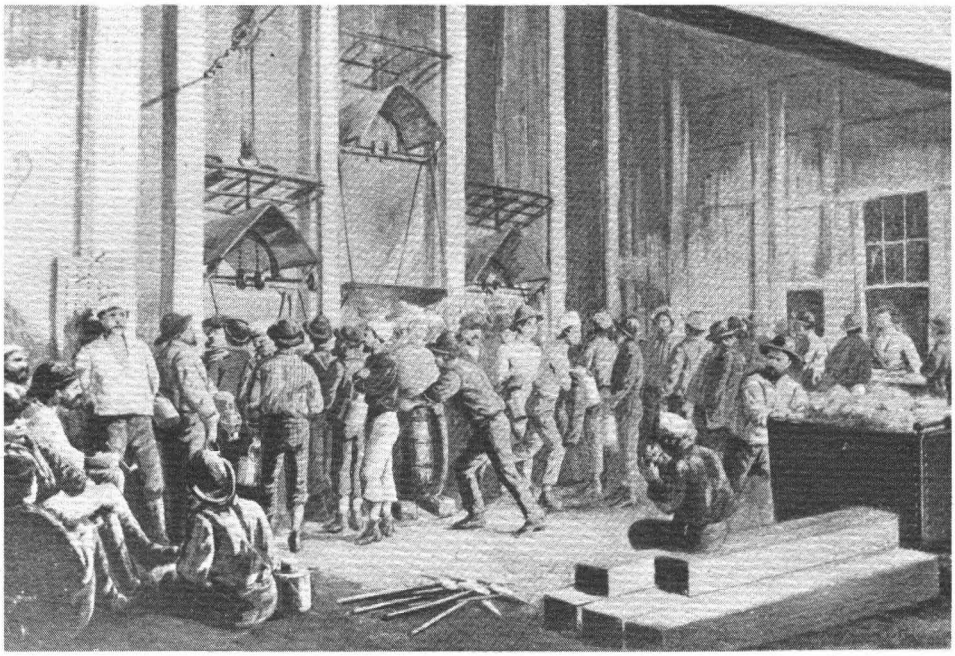
Soon after this impressive display, one of the operators began telling Edison about a "telegraphic instrument" he had devised, and he asked the visitor if he would take a look at it. This, as might be guessed, was the sort of invitation Edison found difficult to decline. "Of course," he said, and he grabbed his hat and disappeared into the night with the fellow inventor.

The next day, August 10, was a Saturday—and the hottest day of the summer. Edison had undoubtedly spent time during the previous uncomfortable night, or that morning, thinking about his heralded ore detection theory, and he may well have improvised some sort of mechanism to use in testing it. That afternoon he once again entered the mines, descending to the lower levels (about 1,800 feet) in the Consolidated Virginia to try some experiments with the electric currents he believed could be utilized to locate ore bodies.

Some of the mining men accompanying him indicated that they felt iron ore might be found by measuring currents, but not deposits of gold or silver. Edison, the *Territorial Enterprise* reported, was not discouraged by these expert opinions and felt confident that he could "construct an apparatus that will indicate the presence of any considerable body of ore containing gold or silver, as is likely to be the case in a silver-bearing region if any ore at all is found."

By observing the effects of currents he generated in the presence of underground ore masses, Edison hoped, in the *Virginia Chronicle's* words, to get a start on an "apparatus that will be of great use to miners in searching for bonanzas of the precious metals." According to the *Enterprise*, Edison felt that "in all large bodies of ore of the precious metals there is such a mass of metals of various kinds . . . that there will be magnetic and electric currents much stronger and more prompt and active than in a region where there is nothing but plain granite, slate, sand or limestone." Thus, it followed that where there was an indication of ore his detection apparatus would be "somewhat affected," and where there was a large body of ore the instrument would be "strongly agitated."

When he had concluded his experiments, Edison rose again to the surface and met a cluster of expectant reporters. While some of the newsmen appear



Changing shifts at the Consolidated Virginia Mine. From a painting in the company office. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

to have been confused whether the "electrical and magnetic currents" the inventor spoke of were exploratory currents intentionally directed through the ground or impulses naturally existing in metal-bearing ores, they did perceive that Edison had satisfied himself regarding the occurrence of such flows on ore bodies, and that he was sure they could be detected. Existing instruments were not able to measure them, but Edison did ascertain that the currents were "stronger where a lode exists than where nothing but country rock abounds, and where the ore body is large and rich they are found to be strongest, and to vary with the size and richness of the vein." Edison was sure he could manufacture the instruments needed to measure currents in ore, and thus to disclose how much and what kind of metal lay hidden in subterranean veins.

There was some speculation in the Virginia City press that Edison intended to make additional experiments in other mines as he traveled east, but the inventor himself said nothing about further development of a metal detector—or "bonanzograph," as one Comstock fourth estate wit dubbed it.

With his underground work wrapped up, Edison spent a little more time looking around Virginia City. While walking on C Street in the company of Western Union superintendent Frank Bell, he stopped to chat with Alf Doten, thereby insuring himself a mention in the *Gold Hill News* editor's famous diary.

A few hours later, as evening fell, Edison and Professor Barker boarded a train for Reno. Tom Edison had stopped over for little more than a day, but he had probably received as much attention as any other famous visitor to the lode, and his experiments in the mines surely had stirred sparks of hope for an economic revival in the hearts of at least some Comstockers.

The Virginia and Truckee locomotive rumbled down into Carson, then northward, through Washoe Valley and the Truckee Meadows to Reno. The mountain tops, east and west, stood out in impressive silhouette against the dark sky, but Edison's thoughts were certainly already drifting away from Nevada's landscape and the state's economic troubles. Development of a practical incandescent electric light had begun to intrigue him during the course of his western trip, and very soon he would be devoting full attention to that crowning achievement of his scientific career.

At Reno Edison changed trains, and once again he was off, speeding eastward aboard the Central Pacific's overland express. When daylight came he would be leaving Nevada behind, and with it any lingering plans for the fabulous "bonanzograph."

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NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

The Beginnings of Eight Decades of Historical Work in Nevada

PETER L. BANDURRAGA

THE NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY turns eighty in 1984. It was in February of 1904 that members of the Social Science Section of the old Nevada Academy of Sciences met in Reno to discuss the problems of preserving the state's history. They decided a new, separate organization was necessary for "the investigation of topics pertaining to the early history of Nevada and the collection of relics for a museum." In a letter sent to over a thousand citizens all over the state, the members of the organizing committee declared, "We realize that the pioneers are rapidly passing away, and that if this work is ever to be done in a satisfactory way, it must not be delayed." The response was encouraging, and the first meeting of the new Society was held in Morrill Hall on the University of Nevada campus on May 31. In June a slate of officers was elected by mail ballot. The first President of the Society was Robert L. Fulton, and Miss J.E. Wier was elected Secretary and Curator. By September of the 1904, the Nevada Historical Society was a fully-functioning institution.[1]

In May of 1984, John Fulton—the grandson of the Society's first President—hosted a reception in the museum in Reno to celebrate the Society's eightieth birthday and the publication of a new biography of Robert L. Fulton, *A River Flows* by Barbara Richnak. The article presented here about the founding of the Society grows out of Ms. Richnak's research for the biography.

Jeanne Elizabeth Wier was a remarkable woman who had a remarkable career in Nevada. She served as chief executive of the Nevada Historical Society from the time of its founding until her death in 1950. For much of that period, she was also Professor and Chair of the Department of History and Political Science at the University of Nevada.

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[1] Jeanne E. Wier, "Report of the Historical Society," *State of Nevada: First Biennial Report of the Nevada Historical Society 1907-1908* (Carson City: State Printer, 1909), pp. 18-22.

Born in Grinnell, Iowa, in 1870, she attended Iowa State Teachers' College and had taught school in her home state and Oregon before enrolling at Stanford University in 1895. Her undergraduate studies were in American history under Professor George Elliott Howard and her bachelor's thesis in 1901 was titled, "The Washoe Indians." By 1899 she had begun teaching in Nevada, but she maintained her close association with the new university at Palo Alto for many years. Several of the Stanford faculty—most notably Max Farrand and Herbert E. Bolton before he moved to the University of California—were friends and students of perhaps the most influential American historian of the day, Frederick Jackson Turner.[2] In addition to his famous thesis that the frontier had had a unique effect on the development of the United States and that its closing was having serious consequences, Turner also stressed the great importance of studying the histories of the various sections of the country in order to understand the history of the nation as a whole. It was the latter idea that guided Jeanne Wier's work with the Nevada Historical Society, work she carried on with an enthusiasm that approached missionary zeal. The emphasis she gave the idea is apparent in the piece presented here, an edited version of the address Wier gave before the Nevada Academy of Sciences in 1905, "The Mission of the State Historical Society."[3]

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[2] For an interesting discussion of Turner's influence as a teacher, see Vernon E. Mattson, "Frederick Jackson Turner: A Study in Misplaced Priorities?" *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 22 (1979): 100-114.

[3] Wier, "The Mission of the State Historical Society," *State of Nevada: First Biennial Report of the Nevada Historical Society 1907-1908* (Carson City: State Printer, 1909), pp. 61-70. For a more complete account of Miss Wier's life and career with the Nevada Historical Society, see James T. Stensvaag, " 'The Life of My Child': Jeanne Elizabeth Wier, the Nevada Historical Society, and the Great Quarters Struggle of the 1920s," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 23 (1980): 3-20.

The Mission of the State Historical Society

JEANNE ELIZABETH WIER

(Address Given Before the Academy of Sciences, 1905.)

In attempting an enumeration of the motives for local historical work in Nevada it is but natural that those which embody a conception of its most immediate and direct purpose should receive first consideration.

Certainly the thing that appeals most strongly to the members of the Society and to other citizens of the State is the work of saving the records of the past for future generations. Through a well-organized system of field work it is the function of this Society to carry on archaeological investigations, the study of our own Indian tribes, and to accumulate manuscripts and other materials which will form the basis, not merely of a library and of a museum, but which will furthermore serve as a warehouse from which to draw materials for the writing of the true history of Nevada.

So far as the record of this Commonwealth is concerned—a record to which the coming years will give a value beyond our most sanguine estimates—the opportunities are unique, but they are on the wing. The story of Nevada's infancy, fascinating as it now is, will become more important as the influence of the State increases. Shall that final record of the early days be written by those who have been separated by a long term of years from the events they portray—who have only the confused, obscured vision and dull inspiration which comes from the study of official records and ill-preserved archives—or shall the work be done now by those who have themselves made that history and who are therefore able to furnish that wonderful wealth of detail which alone can give to it the highest value?

The time has forever gone by when the writer of history has but to chronicle the deeds of kings, presidents, governors, or others who sit in high places. The history of to-day and that of the future must be the record of the masses, the events which have to do with human nature, with human hopes and ideals, and which point the way to the working out of the political and social order of the world. And if, perchance, here and there to one man or woman is given an extra page of the chronicle, the reason for such emphasis will be found, not in the strength of official rank, but in the heroism, the self-sacrifice, and the patriotism of the truly great individual.

Do we wish the history of Nevada to be thus written? Then it is for us as a

Society to see that the landmarks of our history are not obscured, neither the portraits of our heroes and our pioneers lost to present view. Certain it is that the day cannot be far distant when no human memory will be able to furnish the details of the events which have made us what we are to-day. Already there is a lamentable lack of interest among the younger generation. It will indeed be a sad day for Nevada when a people have grown up "who know not Joseph nor the way by which we came into this land." I need not speak further of this immediate direct aim.

To explain the indirect and more distant, though no less important, purpose of the Society will require more space, for it must include a discussion of the Society as an educational force—an instrument in the fostering of that historic consciousness among our people which is the basis of civic patriotism.

And first of all let me assure you that I speak as a Nevadan. Shortly after coming to the State, when Stanford University vanquished Nevada in a game of football, it was impossible for me to conceal my pleasure at the result. There were many who chided me for my sympathy with my own college team, but I shall never forget how the President of the University mildly remarked that he would allow me two years in which to change my views—that he did not believe in sudden conversions, anyhow. And two years was none too long a period in which to grow into citizenship in spirit and in truth, to become acclimated to these strange new conditions, to come to understand something of the struggle of the past by riding or driving over large sections of our desert wastes, and having borne in upon the senses the sparsity of population, the meagerness of developed resources, and the hardy, determined spirit with which these conditions are being met. To-night I speak to you as an adopted child of the State, and ask you if it be not true that those affections which come to us, not by nature, but by second nature—those friendships as of David and Jonathan which are based, not upon blood, but upon intimate knowledge and thorough appreciation, may not perhaps be stronger and deeper than even those of heredity?

True it is that I have come to love the mountains and the valleys and even the desert wastes of this State. For in few places on the earth's surface have Nature's gifts and her withholdings been equally complete. Nowhere are there broader and more majestic mountain ranges, nowhere better climate, nowhere broods an atmosphere more pure and exhilarating, yet nowhere are the deserts more appalling in their extent or the winds fiercer in their sweep. Who can withstand the prolonged daily, yes, and the nightly, wooing of the ever-changing mountains with their endless variety of form, with their infinite possibilities of color—sometimes of a mottled appearance, anon an iron gray, here and there soft as velvet they look, while over on the Western range lie banked at sunset the masses of dark blue shadows, those children of the brilliant sunset which tinges the Eastern peaks with edgings of glittering fire, which again in their turn fade away into strips of lilac and purple? And then

there is the occasional bank or streak of silver snow, the sign of water for man and the promise of food for beast. How it glitters in the moonlight—a moonlight more resplendent than that of other climes as the sunlight is purer and warmer. Who shall describe the glory of those clouds banked around the horizon at sunrise and sunset—clouds which minister to man's needs as truly as though they precipitated their moisture upon the thirsty land? Absent for a time from these surroundings, how the imagination recalls the silvery sheen of the sagebrush when the stream shines across its tops; the alkali fields dazzling white as with hoar frost; the capricious rivers, whose waters rise and flow and waste within themselves; the sulphurous waters which beat and bubble beneath the surface and occasionally burst out in clouds of steam. What tongue shall ever be able to describe the sense of peace and inspiration combined which holds as by spell the human soul which has once come to an appreciation of the grandeur of this desolate desert life?

You will understand me then, I believe, when I say that, to my mind, in but few other places in these United States is there to be found in the same space such poverty of ideals in social and intellectual life, and, perhaps I might add, in political life as well. The East never tires of girding at Nevada, denouncing her as a "rotten borough," scoffing at her so-called barbarism and uncouth ways. And I ask you to consider whether we, not as individuals, but as a whole, have not, in some measure at least, merited the criticisms which have been heaped upon us? Has not our development, as compared with that of our neighbor States, been in the main a materialistic one, so materialistic in fact that when men even to-day accumulate a competency they go elsewhere to enjoy a richer, more inspiring life? I leave you to answer these questions for yourselves.

If this which I have just said of Nevada be true, what, then, are the reasons for the peculiarities of her civilization? Many a superficial reason has been given: the sparcity of her population, the greater attractions of California as to climate and scenery, the higher taxes, the undue altitude—these and scores of others. The real reason is to be found, I believe, in the physiographic conditions of this district and the peculiar westward movement of the frontier.

The ever-changing frontier of the United States is, without question, the most vital topic in American history, for in it are included all the great movements of the Nation and in it, as in an index, may be found the key to American characteristics: energy, ambition, and the power to do. "A rapid advance of the boundary, whether of settlement or political control, speaks of vigorous, abundant forces behind demanding an enlarged field of activity; a retrogression or caving-in of the frontier points to declining powers, inadequate strength." Nevada is scarred, because of the unfavorable geographical condition and because an unusual factor, gold, diverted still more strongly the natural westward development which should have included this section.

The population flowed all around it and about it and then, when the California trail was opened, directly through it, and left it still an isolated vacant spot. Then a little part of the human mass which had poured by ebbed back into the Washoe District; then came the discovery of gold and silver and the great rush to the Comstock; and then the conferring of Statehood upon this people of abnormal growth.

And may I suggest right here that we bear a Spanish name, Nevada, to-day as a token of this abnormal development? For I think that you will find that it is only in those places and States where the white man has come into possession of the country gradually that the old Indian names have been preserved.

And still the scar remains and always will remain. For it is a scar, not merely of scant population, but of retarded development as well—the scar that comes from the lack of home-building instinct and from the absence of an agricultural stage in its proper time and place. California, though the child of gold, and although for a brief moment her mining interests seemed to obscure all other resources, had, before attaining the age of twenty years, outgrown her parentage, and had come to depend more on her agriculture and her commerce than upon her mines for prosperity. Unfortunate has it been for Nevada that its youth was spent, not under the open skies in closest contact with even a desert soil, but in the deeps of the darksome mines. Something of the light and joyousness of her life has been sacrificed forever. You cut your finger and the wound may heal, but, if the hurt be but deep enough, the scar will remain through life.

Is it true that our pure sunlight and wonderful color effects are due to the very sparsity of our population and the lack of vegetation; that the desert air is not thickened by particles of moisture and factory dust and human breath? It may be true. But who is there among us who has witnessed the travail of Nevada's birth or the struggle of her early years who can say that the American desert should never be reclaimed? It may be good theory to say that some sections should lie fallow in order that other sections may be richly productive, and that the deserts as breathing-spaces on the continent furnish health to the plant as well as to the human. But practically we are not willing that Nature should come to her own again here. Even now we plan the extension of cultivated fields and the promotion of manufactures and commerce as well as the future development of the mines. We are indeed determined that Nature shall reap, if it be necessary, even where she has not sown. How is it with respect to the less material interests of the State?

It is a true saying and worthy of great acceptation that civilization at bottom is economic, but at top it is ethical. What are the ethical forces at work in Nevada? The church and the school, you will answer. And truly these are potent instruments in developing a broader, better type of manhood and womanhood. I wish to present to your attention this evening the Historical

Society as an active assistant in this educative ethical work. And in order to make my meaning more clear, allow me to speak first of history study in general. History is not simply a collection of events. It is the logic of events. Historic intelligence is not merely information respecting events. It is the comprehension of their logic, and history is therefore one of the most difficult of studies. It is the great channel which conveys to man the past experience of the race, showing him the different phases of his progress upward and onward into civilization, and it may be taken, as a general rule, that those people who cannot look very far back into their past do not look very far forward into future needs and conditions. No work can stand unless it grows out of the real wants of the age and strikes firm root in the soil of history. And I question whether any man can be called truly educated unless he has so far and so well studied history as to be able to feel with Tennyson:

"Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs, And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

History, moreover, is moral knowledge. By its study conduct is shaped and the intellect is disciplined. Bishop Stubbs once said: "While of all studies in the whole range of knowledge the study of law affords the most conservative training, so the study of modern history is, next to theology itself, and only next in so far as theology rests on a divine revelation, the most thoroughly religious training that the mind can receive."

In the next place, I hold that the study of local history has more than ordinary historical value as an ethical and intellectual force. There is perhaps no better corrective for the unpopularity of historical studies in general than to bid people in their own little hamlets and towns work out the history of the men who have lived and died there. Elementary history teaching must perforce commence with what we call the sense phase of the subject, or thought and feeling as expressed in outward acts—acts which can be seen, heard, and felt. Through careful training in this stage, the child becomes able through the transforming power of the imagination to build pictures of the deeds of all peoples of all times, and finally to reflect upon these pictures and to form judgments. Such likewise must be the best method for the development of the historic sense of a community, and therefore local historical work finds its justification, not only in its bearing upon the affairs of the community, but also in the fact that it furnishes a basis in actual understanding for the proper comprehension of all history. In other words, such work will lift the institutional facts of the community up to their place in the general historic process and at the same time bring the apparently remote historical movement down to the present and root it in the concrete life of our people, enriching thereby our civic institutions.

Moreover, historical insight depends intimately upon human sympathy.

You must think and feel with the people you are studying, and therefore the more historic association we can link with our localities the richer will be the daily life of our people in human friendships and affections, as well as in accuracy of thought and of judgment. If to think and feel the truth be indeed to know God, then shall this local historical work be for us a religious and ethical influence, increasing in value as the days and years go by, bringing to our people eventually a true freedom of spirit.

Is the time ripe for it now, or are we seeking to force it by undue means, is a question which should be carefully considered. Any such movement, if it be an exotic, rarely flourishes, and is too costly in human strength for mere idle experiments. I feel that we stand at this time at the parting of the ways. It is not that our people are unwilling to aid in the work, but that they need to have its importance impressed upon them. I do not wish to say that our people are without energy or capacity. A Western man has been defined as an Easterner with added experiences. You will grant that this is true of Nevadans. What we do need is intelligent organization of the forces, the passions, that are swaying the hearts and lives of our people. We need, as some one has said, "the primal support of basal moral quality to insure success." The call of the wild is very strong all over this American desert. Constantly, like Buck, we are harking "back through the ages of fire and roof to the raw beginnings of things in the howling ages." Places once humanized and full of life have become desolate within a few miles of where we are to-night. Nature has come to her own again at Washoe City and many another spot within our borders. An interesting subject for investigation would be to find out how many names which were on the maps of the 50's and 60's are known no more to-day.

But we are determined that Nature shall not always conquer us thus. We are determined that out of all this adversity and pain and struggle there shall finally emerge a strong, enduring, and self trusting Commonwealth, that the final triumph in government, in social development, in intellectual advancement, and in material supremacy shall be on a scale commensurate with the hardness of the way by which we have come. Let us hope that in this work the Historical Society may find an honored and useful place.

Robert Fulton and the Founding of the Nevada Historical Society

BARBARA RICHNAK

THE NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY assumed life upon the death of another organization. Not many Nevadans have ever heard of the Social Science Section of the Nevada Academy of Sciences, which existed briefly in the earliest years of the twentieth century. On February 11, 1904, Jeanne Elizabeth Wier, then a professor of history at the University of Nevada and a member of the Academy's Social Science Section, reported to her group on what was needed for the Section to operate most effectively: materials were needed for research purposes, and yet the personal papers, the documents, memorabilia and other sources needed were widely scattered throughout the state, and were not organized or accessible for use.

In the ensuing discussion, Dr. Romanzo Adams, a professor of economics at the University, brought up the idea of an historical society, an organization, he said, which would appeal to a greater number of people than had the little-known Social Science section. Adams's idea was not neglected, and before long the group met again, on February 25, to appoint a committee to organize such a society. Appointed were Wier (who was named chairman), and two of her colleagues from the University, J.E. Church, Jr., professor of Latin, and Gordon H. True, professor of agriculture. Added to the original committee later were J.E. Stubbs, president of the University, and Robert L. Fulton, the only non-academic among the original group.[1]

The selection of Fulton must have been no accident. It would have been apparent at the time that someone from outside the University community was needed to assist in the formation of a broadly-based historical society, particularly someone with business experience, and who had a wide range of acquaintances throughout the community. Certainly, Fulton would fulfill these requirements. As editor of the *Reno Evening Gazette* in its early years, he had helped to rally public thinking on irrigation, and he later helped

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[1] *First Biennial Report of the Nevada Historical Society, 1907-1908* (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1909), pp. 19-48, hereafter referred to as *Biennial Report*.

Francis Newlands in his water storage campaign from 1889 to 1893.[2] As manager of the Nevada State Board of Trade, Fulton organized a wide-ranging publicity campaign, involving over twenty state leaders, which aimed at putting Nevada on the map and boosting its population following the demise of the mines.[3] Though his efforts in politics, specifically his gold-bug Republicanism and anti-lottery activities, did not gain him a wide following in the era of Nevada's Silver Party, he had shown that he was a man of principle. His loyalty to traditional Republican virtues brought him to the podium of the Republican National Convention in 1900 to second the presidential nomination of William McKinley. His constant and vigilant campaign against gambling in the state made him a force behind the passage in 1909 of the law prohibiting games of chance.

Another factor influencing the birth of the Nevada Historical Society was Fulton's long-lasting friendship with Stubbs. They had been boyhood friends in Ashland, Ohio, and Fulton may have been important in bringing Stubbs to Nevada to take over the helm as president of the University of Nevada.[4] The friends, acting in concert with various other spokespersons throughout the state, helped bring about the fruition of the anti-gambling movement in 1909.

Despite the many accolades Fulton had accumulated by this point in his life (he was fifty-seven the year the Society was organized), he was highly flattered at being asked to participate in the formation of the group. A man of little formal education, he had been forced to leave school at the age of fourteen to make a living. He became a railroad telegrapher, and made his way west. Perhaps it was his lack of schooling that helped create his interest in education. Fulton's papers note the fact that he established the first library in Rawlings Springs (later Rawlins), Wyoming, on a slow day at the Union Pacific dispatcher's office.[5] Later, as *Reno Evening Gazette* editor, he first advocated a type of literary club for young men for the discussion of intellectual topics, and then a drama club that he hoped would be able to compete with the evil attractions of the saloon. "We hope to be a college town and draw to us brains and learning," he wrote.[6]

Reno had actually been a college town for eighteen years when Wier, Fulton, and others began the task of organizing an institution which could serve as a repository of the state's artifacts and records for the benefit of future

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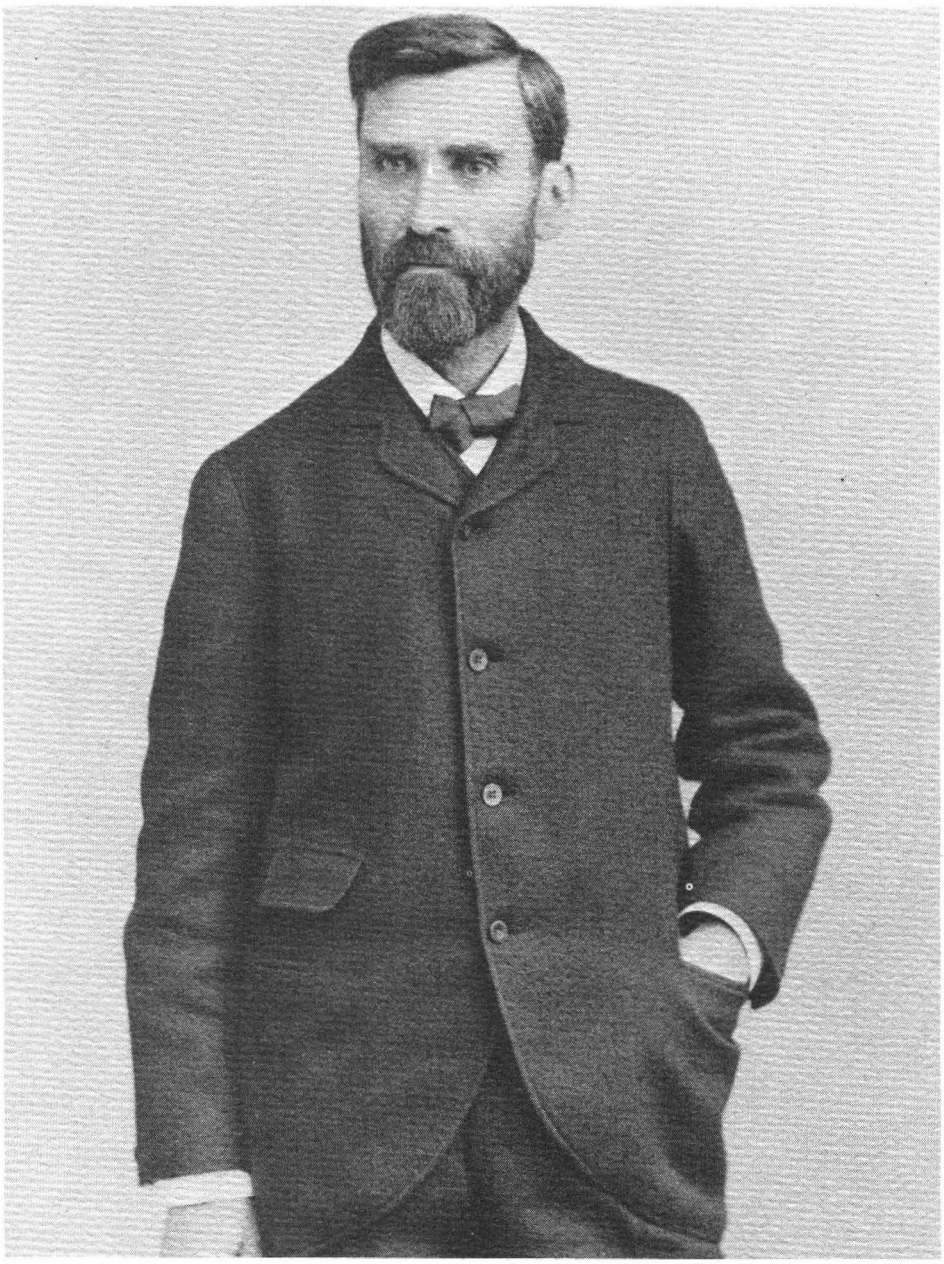
[2] *Reno Evening Gazette*, Nov. 21, 1878; Jan. 9, 1879; Jan. 29, 1879; Feb. 5, 1879; Feb. 11, 1879; Feb. 15, 1879; Jan. 6, 1881; Feb. 3, 1881; April 7, 1881; Aug. 20, 1889.

[3] Letter from F.G. Newlands to R.L. Fulton, Dec. 24, 1889; letter from R.L. Fulton (*Winnemucca Silver State*, Feb. 18, 1891); letters to J.C. Stubbs (March 12, 1890) and F.G. Newlands (April 13, 1890); "Board of Trade letters—1890, 1891" in the R.L. Fulton collection in the possession of John A. Fulton, Jr.

[4] Fulton's first attempt to bring Stubbs to the West was in 1890 when California's Senator Stanford was looking for a man to head Leland Stanford Jr. University at Palo Alto. Fulton wrote to Senator Stewart asking that Stubbs be considered for the post. (Letter dated Feb. 14, 1890)

[5] Written reminiscences of R.L. Fulton (unpublished).

[6] *Reno Evening Gazette*, Feb. 12, 1879.



Robert L. Fulton, ca. 1890. *(courtesy of Barbara Richnak)*

generations. On March 11, a letter went out to twenty-six state leaders requesting endorsements. Replies came back from sixteen, and the organizing committee considered this sufficient support for the drafting of a constitution. The document contained the interesting provision that membership

would be awarded to "any person who is willing to collect data regarding the history of his district and endeavor to obtain relics for preservation." An active member thus would be one who would be a donor and a fount of information.

Among the sixteen who replied with endorsements were men, and one woman, who were at the forefront of Nevada life: Chief Justice of the Nevada Supreme Court G.F. Talbot, and General E.D. Kelley, both of whom would later serve as presidents of the Society; Judge G.S. Brown, and E.S. Farrington of Elko; Reverend Father Thomas M. Tubman, and G. McM. Ross of Virginia City; F.M. Lee of Winnemucca; and Allen Bragg, the editor of the *Reno Evening Gazette* and the brother-in-law of Fulton. The one woman who responded was Hannah Clapp, who had taught many of Nevada's prominent citizens both in Carson City and later at the University. In his reply to the request for an endorsement, Sam Davis was more than enthusiastic about the fledgling organization: "Any one in Nevada should consider it an honor to become a member," he wrote.[7]

One thousand prospective members from all over the state were then solicited. The response to this mailing was prompt, and the date of May 31, 1904, was fixed for the first meeting of the new Nevada Historical Society; it was to be held in Morrill Hall on the University campus, following the session of the Academy of Sciences. Sixty-six individuals joined the organization. On hand for the meeting, according to the chairman's report, were "a number of pioneers . . . as well as a goodly representation of the younger citizens of the State."[8] Nevertheless, Wier was disappointed at the small response, and there was talk of organizing local branches. At the meeting, Robert Fulton was proposed for president; others named were E.D. Kelley for vice-president; Jeanne Elizabeth Wier, secretary; A.E. Hershiser, treasurer; and as two additional members of the executive council, W.W. Booher and Judge Talbot. When the committee on organization met once more on September 19 to dissolve itself (as well as the Social Science Section of the Academy of Sciences), the slate of officers nominated in May was elected.

Fulton took charge of an organization that in its formative years had to work hard merely to keep the wolf from the door. The small membership fee of $1 per year allowed for no frills, and a permanent, paid secretary was out of the question. Wier had to perform her functions during vacations from the University. Meetings were often held in Fulton's home. For some reason that is not entirely clear, there was no decision made to request state aid, despite the fact that there was barely enough money to cover mailing costs. The membership grew to ninety charter members, however.

On May 15, 1905, President Fulton announced that the second annual

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[7] *Biennial Report, 1907-1908.*

[8] Ibid.

meeting would be on May 27, and would be in two parts, an afternoon business meeting for members, and an evening lecture, open to the public, by Dr. Bernard Moses of the University of California. Alas, if support for the new society were measured by attendance at this second gathering, then the organization seemed fated to fail: the business meeting had to be cancelled for lack of a quorum. Indeed, the treasury was so depleted that there had been a question earlier whether the meeting would be held at all, but an eleventh-hour plea produced donations from three members, and $25 from a fourth, Senator Tasker Oddie, who became the first life member of the Society.

The third annual meeting, held on May 29, 1906, was marked by Fulton's absence; he and his family had moved from Reno, and were living in Alameda, California. Vice President Kelley presided over the meeting, which was attended by "a fair-sized audience," who heard an inspiring address by T.D. McClelland entitled "The Makers of History Should be Its Preservers."[9] Father Tubman led a prayer for the departed members: ex-Governor Reinhold Sadler, Dr. G.I. Leavitt, Judge Thomas Haydon, and Grove Holcomb, all charter members who had died during the year. The same slate of officers was returned for the following year, except that A.E. Cheyney replaced Judge Talbot on the Executive Council. Talbot was then made vice-president for Ormsby County, and was joined by R.M. Price for Washoe County, and Charles Greene for White Pine. The amendment naming a vice-president for each county had been added to the constitution the previous year.

The financial plight of the Society came to a head the following January, and the council met in the law offices of Judge Cheney on Virginia Street to discuss asking the state for money and recognition. The Society, it was felt, had withstood the test of time, and had shown its ability to get along with the most modest of budgets; at the same time, it was clear that without additional funds, it would never grow. To lend emphasis to the Society's intention, Fulton (who once again was residing in Reno) resigned his office in order to leave the way open for a Carson City man to spearhead the drive for governmental support.[10] General Kelley was named president and Judge Talbot vice-president for the remainder of the term. Although Fulton stepped down, he remained an active participant in Society activities; he frequently contributed to Society publications, and he gave speeches at several meetings until his death in 1920.

A bill for a $4,000 appropriation was introduced in the Assembly on

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Fulton was a prime mover in other Reno civic organizations—i.e. the Nevada (later Twentieth Century) Club. His pattern was to gather together like-minded citizens, form an ongoing nucleus of officers, and then step aside to pursue other interests that required his attention.

February 19, 1907, and it was unanimously passed on March 11 after the amount had been reduced to $2,000. Governor Sparks signed the appropriation bill on March 20, 1907, and the Nevada Historical Society became a state agency.

At the time, it seemed as if the Society's fortunes had taken a turn for the better. Though an invitation asking Clarence Mackay to speak at the annual meeting drew a refusal (the Mackays would be traveling in Europe during the summer), the millionaire enclosed a check for $500. Such a generous gift required more than just a thank-you, and Mackay was granted an honorary membership at the June 3 meeting, which was held at the Reno Congregational Church. Fulton and Dr. Stubbs presented speeches, and members learned that the Society's growing collection of papers and memorabilia was being lovingly cared for in a basement room of Jeanne Wier's house. In her moments free from University duties, Wier could take time to arrange the collection. With the loss of storage facilities in San Francisco because of the earthquake's devastation, acquisitions were arriving from the West Coast; California's losses were becoming Nevada's gains.

The Executive Council next met at the Fulton residence by the Truckee River on March 18, 1908. It mourned the passing of its new president, General Kelley, who had done such constructive work in urging that the state appropriation be passed. Judge Talbot was named to replace him, and Senator George Nixon became vice-president. Fulton proposed an illustrious name out of Nevada's past for honorary membership—Mark Twain.

Fulton had written to Twain three years before in the manner of one old newspaperman writing to another, although their respective journalistic periods in Nevada were separated by two decades. Twain had worked for the *Territorial Enterprise* in the heyday of the Comstock Lode, and Fulton had edited the *Gazette* throughout the eighties. In the spring of 1905, Fulton asked Twain to come to Reno to attend Independence Day festivities. "By order of our citizens I am a committee of one to invite Mark Twain to attend and deliver the oration," he wrote with mock ceremony.[11]

Twain answered in kind:

> I remember as if it were yesterday, that when I disembarked from the overland stage in front of the Ormsby in Carson City in August, 1861, I was not expecting to be asked to come again. . . . And so I thank you sincerely for the invitation; and with you, all Reno, and if I were a few years younger I would accept it, and promptly, I would go. I would let someone else do the oration, but as for me, I would talk—just talk.

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[11] Letter from R.L. Fulton to Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain), May 12, 1905. Twain's reply is dated May 24, 1905.

He then proceeded to "march the unforgotten and unforgettable antiques by, and name their names, and give them reverent hail and farewell as they passed." He was, of course, speaking of his comrades on the Comstock, and he listed them: "Goodman, McCarthy, Gillis, Curry, Baldwin, Winters, Howard, Nye, Stewart, Neely Johnson, Hal Clayton, Jones, North, Root—and my brother (Orion) upon whom be peace!"

The great man was now seventy years old, and could be forgiven a tendency toward nostalgia: "Those were the days!—those old ones. They will come no more. Youth will come no more. They were full to the brim with the wine of life; there have been no others like them. It chokes me up to think of them. Would you like me to come out there and cry?"

Fulton handed over the Twain letter to the Reno press; it was published in full, but with some glaring typographical errors, and Fulton felt called upon to apologize to Twain in a subsequent letter:

> Our people have been greatly disappointed at not seeing you again in Nevada, but next to that your good letter has given them pleasure. I gave it to the press and it went in with the usual variations, and I guess you know what that means. None of the new men knew Joe Goodman so they set it up "Goodwin" in honor of Charlie. They made twins of Hal. Clayton and Neely Johnson, and took their accustomed liberties.[12]

Fulton also sent a small book containing his speech given at the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the University of Nevada in 1904, a kind of eulogy to Nevada's pioneers. "If you had been dead, it would certainly have given me pleasure to have included your name among the illustrious men I mentioned," he joked. Twain himself would be dead within five years.

As for the invitation to Twain to become an honorary member of the Nevada Historical Society, it was accepted by his secretary (and later biographer) Albert Bigelow Paine.[13] At the annual meeting in 1908, the resolution drawn up by Fulton was read to the audience: "Whereas the Nevada Historical Society recognizes the preeminence in the literary world of our former citizen, Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain); and whereas his early fame is so closely entwined with the history of this State, and so much of his early writings pertain to our State and to neighboring States. . . . Be it resolved that we hereby make Mr. Samuel L. Clemens of the City of New York an honorary member of the Nevada Historical Society."[14]

Twain's membership was only one of the upbeat features of the 1908

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[12] Letter from R.L. Fulton to Samuel L. Clemens, June 12, 1905.

[13] J.A. Fulton Jr. recalls that when Paine came to Reno to gather material for the biography, his Aunt Helen (R.L. Fulton's daughter) was asked to type part of the manuscript. She was later sent an autographed copy of a Twain book.

[14] *Biennial Report, 1907-1908.*

meeting. The meeting was held at the end of the day that marked the inauguration of the new Mackay School of Mines at the University, an event which brought many illustrious guests to Reno. Several, including such notables as Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Mackay and Senator Francis Newlands, attended both events. Newlands spoke, pointing out that the Historical Society had a "great work to perform, for a State is only great when public opinion has been awakened along moral lines as well as material."[15] Fulton, in an address titled "Reminiscences of Nevada," called attention to the greatness of John Mackay, "who from an everyday miner rose to sit beside princes and kings with dignity and repose."[16]

In 1908, the first publication of the Society became available: a *Bulletin* containing a brief summary of Society work up to that time was distributed. Later, the same material was included in the bound *First Biennial Report of the Nevada Historical Society* prepared for the governor. Wier called attention to the necessity (and the difficulty) of gathering together historical materials scattered all over the state. She urged readers to write down historical facts they were aware of, to ask neighbors to do the same, and to search out the articles of history which in reality belonged to the Society as its "lawful inheritance."

Primarily due to the efforts of Wier, the Society by 1909 had accumulated a substantial number of books, records, and artifacts, all of which were assembled in her basement. Not least among them were the papers of Senator William Stewart, still unpacked. Twenty-five boxes of books and curios from Rhyolite, weighing 4,450 pounds, were contributed as a result of a trip to the Bullfrog District and other areas of southern Nevada by Wier in the fall of 1908. The variety and extent of the Society's collections by the end of the year were quite substantial, and included significant archaeological acquisitions as well as important documents and ephemera. It was clear that the basement would soon be overcrowded. A great need, therefore, was a building to house a library and a museum, where the collections could be put in order, and made accessible to students and scholars. Later, the wish would become a fact; appropriately enough, the Society's first building would be located on the University of Nevada campus.

Together with Jeanne Elizabeth Wier and others, Robert Fulton was one of the small and dedicated group responsible for the founding and the initial growth of the Nevada Historical Society. Throughout his life, he held the pursuit of knowledge in high regard. He is perhaps the best example we have from the Society's formative years of the interested businessman assisting University of Nevada professors in the establishment of an organization

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[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

dedicated to the acquisition and preservation of artifacts and records. Fulton's writings appeared in Society publications from time to time until his death in 1920, and his book dealing with his early days on the railroad, *Epic of the Overland,* was published posthumously in 1924.

Jeanne Elizabeth Wier, ca. 1903. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

Book Reviews

Quicksand and Cactus: A Memoir of the Southern Mormon Frontier. By Juanita Brooks. (Salt Lake City: Howe Brothers, 1982. xxxvi+342 pp. Illustrations, map, appendices. $19.95)

JUANITA BROOKS could hardly close her illustrious career with a more delightful book, nor with one that will be more pleasing to her friends and other readers. *Quicksand and Cactus* provides a vital and remarkably entertaining insight into life among the Mormons of southern Nevada and southern Utah in the first three decades of the twentieth century. It is significant on at least two levels: as an autobiography of a courageous and important woman, and as a warm, intimate account of the people who made up this southern Mormon frontier.

The book is not a well-balanced, complete autobiography. Rather, it is a series of essays, or vignettes, some of which were published earlier, and a few of which were edited or pieced together by the editors from other sketches. This tends to give the reader a feeling of unevenness, and leaves one wishing for a better sense of transition between sections. There are no chapter numbers, which only adds to the feeling that one is reading essays rather than a monograph. The author's childhood years in Bunkerville, Nevada, are covered in more detail than the rest of her early life, and the treatment becomes less and less complete as the story progresses.

Such weaknesses, however, are more than compensated for by the strengths of the book. It ends with Mrs. Brooks just beginning her career as a historian and writer and thus becomes, in a sense, a delightful preface to her scholarly productions. Charles Peterson's excellent introduction is also a strength, for it provides an important statement about the significance of Mrs. Brooks as a historian, the influence of other prominent scholars on her career, and the problems involved in producing her nationally famous *Mountain Meadows Massacre*. In the text, Mrs. Brooks provides her readers with tantalizing insights into her early interest in this tragic episode, and Peterson completes the story. His commentary on the opposition she received in southern Utah, as well as from Church officials, and particularly from J. Reuben Clark, Jr. of the First Presidency, is vitally important to understanding the significance of her work and also appreciating the stubborn determination and scholarly integrity of this "Little Schoolteacher" (as one of her vignettes is entitled) from Bunkerville.

Born in 1898, Juanita Brooks devotes most of her book to telling warm, interesting, homey stories about life during her growing-up years. But the stories are more than *just* stories—they are intimate descriptions of the attitudes, perceptions, faith, frustrations, and daily life of a people. For that reason, if for no other, the book makes a significant contribution to Western and Mormon Americana.

Pa and Ma—Henry and Mary Leavitt—are major characters in this delightful memoir, and one of Mrs. Brooks's earliest tales is of the time when Pa spent two years away from home as a Mormon missionary. His first son was born shortly after he left. "Won't Pa be surprised?" the innocent young girl asked. "Let's have another one before he gets back, and surprise him again!" She could not understand why Ma laughed so hard as she agreed that Pa most certainly would be surprised.

Such commonplace stories set against the Mormon cultural background constitute an intimate and important social history. They are myriad and diverse: the day when young Juanita actually received twenty-five cents in cash—the most money she had ever received in her life; the first trip with Pa to Moapa, where Juanita and her sister stayed in a rooming house and could not figure out how to turn out the electric light, so they untied the long cord and put it in a dresser drawer for the night; her introduction to the phonograph, which not only entertained but also distressed her as it became the catalyst for her dissatisfaction with small town life and her urge to learn more about the outside world; Grandma Maria, the best storyteller in town; the trip to St. George for a Mormon conference, where Juanita suddenly saw herself as an ugly duckling in her braided hair, calico dress, and too-large shoes, as compared with the daintily dressed young ladies of the big city; life in school at Bunkerville, with all the mischief-makers as well as the teachers who inspired her; the strong Mormon mores and the way they affected community life; the coach who, contrary to those mores, sometimes slipped into the outhouse to have a cigarette. On one embarrassing occasion, Aunt Vina Bunker washed her living room drapes in gasoline, then poured the dirty liquid down a hole in the outhouse. Along came the coach, lit a cigarette, flipped the match down the hole, and the "instant explosion lifted the building off the ground and tipped it over several feet away." "It must have been something I et!" was all the coach could say.

Some stories are directly related to things Juanita Brooks did in later life. After graduation from Bunkerville High she went to normal school, and soon became a teacher. She tells of her early interest in writing, and how she produced her first publications. Most significantly, she tells of old Brother Johnson, who called for her shortly before he died and said he wanted her to write something he had never told anyone. She put it off, however, and when she saw him again he was rambling deliriously, praying, yelling, preaching, and then looking at the ceiling and crying "Blood! BLOOD! BLOOD!" Only

then did she learn that he had been at the Mountain Meadows Massacre, and realize that he wanted to tell her the truth as he saw it. Unfortunately, he died before he could tell his story, and Juanita never stopped criticizing herself for not taking it when she had the chance. "Fool, fool that I was," she wrote, "not to have taken the opportunity to write it when he was eager to talk, and ready to tell it all!" Clearly, this early experience was one of the things that eventually gave her the determination to learn the story as well as she could, and tell it as best she could.

Other stories reveal the feisty individualism that characterized so much of Juanita Brooks's life. Always a devoted Mormon, for example, she nevertheless was not afraid to stand up to her bishop when he seemed to want too much tithing money. As a young, widowed, schoolteacher with a small baby, she set up a budget for her $120 per month: $40 to support her sister, Charity, who was serving the Church as a missionary; $30 to her mother for room and board and baby-sitting; and $8.00 for tithing. The bishop insisted that she owed $12 tithing, but Juanita said that she was already paying $40 for the missionary cause, and therefore felt she should only be required to tithe the remaining $80. "I'll have to put you down as a part-tithe payer," the bishop said, whereupon the hard-pressed young teacher replied "I'll argue it out before St. Peter when we get there. . . . I believe he'll agree that I'm making quite a liberal donation to the cause."

Juanita Brooks also recalls her marriage to Ernest Pulisipher, who died of cancer when their child was still an infant. She quickly tells of her further education at Brigham Young University and then at Columbia, of her teaching experiences at Dixie College (where she became Dean of Women), and of her involvement with the Federal Writer's Project in Utah during the 1930s. Finally, she tells of her courtship and marriage to Sheriff Will Brooks of St. George. The book ends all too quickly, but whoever reads it will feel a new and satisfying relationship not only to this remarkable woman, but also to a most interesting group of people.

James B. Allen
Brigham Young University

Report of Explorations Across the Great Basin in 1859. By James H. Simpson. (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1983. 518 pp., foreword, appendices, index, maps, footnotes, drawings. $13.25)

THE SIMPSON REPORT is the fifth in the reprint series of the University of Nevada Press. In these volumes, labeled the Vintage Nevada Series, the Press has sought to publish scarce, out-of-print, but still useful sources of

Nevada history. The present volume admirably fits that objective. Since only 1500 copies were authorized originally, this reprint fills a real need by making this valuable report available at a reasonable cost.

The report was the result of an exploring expedition led by Captain James Hervey Simpson of the U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers. The objective was to find the shortest path across the present state of Nevada, ostensibly for the development of wagon roads. Simpson was well qualified for the task assigned him. After joining the Topographical Corps in 1838, he participated in a number of wagon road surveys before being assigned to Utah Territory in 1858. Although conservative in his judgments, he was considered to be an excellent topographer and dedicated to the concept of wagon roads. His intelligence, breadth of knowledge, and sensitivity to his surroundings emerge from these pages and mark him as an explorer quite superior to many whose work gained greater fame.

The expedition of sixty-four men, which included scientists, guides, a military contingent, plus fourteen wagons (which were necessary to haul needed scientific equipment and supplies for three months), left Camp Floyd, Utah Territory, on May 2, 1859. By the time Simpson returned to Camp Floyd in early August, 1859, he had succeeded in tracing a route across the Great Basin that cut 250 miles from the journey to San Francisco, and saved about two weeks of travel time. In addition, the scientists attached to the expedition included surveys of the geology, botany, and zoology of the region, all of which are included in the appendices. The comprehensive nature of the Simpson report testifies to the type of exploration the Topographical Engineers performed in the opening of the West.

The importance of the route Simpson opened across the Great Basin was recognized almost immediately; shortly after the return of the party to Camp Floyd, emigrants began moving across the new route in such numbers that Army contingents were used to protect them. Also finding advantages to the new, direct route to California was the Pony Express, which began its service in April, 1860, using the northernmost route of Simpson's survey. The transcontinental connection of the telegraph across the Great Basin was made along the Simpson route, and the Overland Mail also adopted it.

The importance of the route and the fame of its founder seemed assured. But history often takes peculiar twists and turns, as it did in the case of the Simpson report and the central route it surveyed. The report was not published until 1876 due to the outbreak of the Civil War and to the Reconstruction problems which followed. By that time, nearly all the data in the report and its appendices had been published in abstracts. The importance of the route itself became the victim of history, for with the completion of the transcontinental railroad, traversing the Great Basin along the earlier Humboldt River route, the Simpson route was pushed into the background. The advent of the automobile further relegated it to a secondary role, for although

the available feed and water made the route attractive to wagon-road travel, the numerous mountain ranges to be crossed lengthened the travel time for automobiles. Thus Highway 50, which follows the basic Simpson route, has been overshadowed by the interstate road system which follows the Humboldt route.

Nevertheless, the story told in these pages is interesting and historically significant, noting as it does Simpson's detailed and sensitive descriptions of China Town (Dayton), Carson City, and Genoa, some five years before Nevada became a state; giving modern-day readers a glimpse of the physical characteristics of the central route across the state as they appeared some 125 years ago; and revealing the intelligent and far-sighted treatment of the Indians by Simpson. It is unfortunate that his party was not the first white party encountered by the natives.

Except for the duotone of Genoa which appears on the cover, the reprint does not include a number of color drawings made by artists accompanying the expedition. These color views, the first of present-day Nevada, were not included in the original report published by the government. Their inclusion in the reprint would have added to the volume's historical value, but also would have added substantially to the cost—the reason, no doubt, for their omission.

The 1983 reprint by the University of Nevada Press is an important addition to the historiography of Nevada and deserves a wide audience.

Russell R. Elliott
University of Nevada, Reno

A Bibliographical Guide to the Study of Western American Literature. By Richard W. Etulain. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1982. 317 pp.)

RICHARD W. ETULAIN'S *A Bibliographical Guide to the Study of Western American Literature* deals admirably with a topic that presents special problems to the bibliographer. Most bibliographers, in the face of the print explosion, must deal with the problem of selection. The bibliographer of Western American literature must make selections that acknowledge the slippery definition of the American West. Throughout American history, as the eastern parts of our country became more settled, the concept of the West has moved toward the Pacific Coast. James Fenimore Cooper's west began at the Hudson River, Mark Twain's at the Mississippi, and Jack London's somewhere near the Pacific.

In addition, it would be possible to write a modern novel, set, for example,

in San Francisco, that would have little or nothing to do with the concept of westernism. Should such a novel, simply because of its geography, be considered a novel of the American West?

Etulain has used common sense to solve both problems. His introduction states that he wants the bibliography to be as "comprehensive" as possible; "Literary critics and historians must utilize definitions sufficiently broad and flexible to cover the varied kinds of literature written about the West by insiders and outsiders," he writes. His entries affirm that his definitions have indeed been as broad and as flexible as possible.

The bibliography is divided into five general sections. The first lists bibliographies of western literature; the second, anthologies; the third, general works about western literature; the fourth, such special topics as local color, popular culture, films, ethnic western literature, the Beats and Canadian western literature; the fifth section, the longest and probably the most useful, consists of more that 3,500 entries of works on individual authors from Edward Abbey to Ray Young Bear.

Etulain claims that his work is not "exhaustive," but that it is "comprehensive" and "brings together in one volume the most important research on the literature of the American West." An examination of Etulain's entries reveals that, in fact, he has succeeded relatively well in fulfilling this goal.

His bibliography, therefore, becomes a convenient list of sources for the student of Western American literature. Of equal importance, it is also a guide to the strengths and weaknesses of western literary scholarship. As Etulain points out in his introduction, for example, there are few scholarly works that attempt to present an overview of western literature, and there are many approaches to literary criticism that have not yet been applied to western writers.

The entries regarding individual authors also sometimes suggest possible areas of study. For example, James Welch's novel *Winter in the Blood* has been discussed at least fifteen times, his poetry only once.

Finally, even serious students of American literature will probably find the names of many writers that they have overlooked or forgotten. Many of them will be worth reading.

Robert K. Dodge
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform. By Lawrence C. Kelly. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983. 445 pages. Photographs, footnotes, note on sources, index. Foreword by John Collier, Jr. $23.50)

JOHN COLLIER (1884-1968) was an extraordinary man. He is perhaps best known for his commitment to Indian peoples and their right in this century to continue as Indians within the confines of the United States. His career as a reformer and as Commissioner of Indian Affairs demonstrated both the power of an individual to affect significantly his society, and also the limits one faces in imposing widespread and lasting alterations upon that same society. Collier's life spanned more than eight decades of unparalleled change within American Indian life within this century. In this first volume of a projected two volume study, North Texas State University history professor Lawrence C. Kelly has brought his analysis up to 1927, when the issue of the Meriam Report indicated that the "assault on assimilation" had begun to succeed.

Born and raised in the South, Collier eventually migrated north to New York City for education and later for work in the community center movement. There he met some remarkable people, including Mabel Dodge, John Reed, Walter Lippmann, and Isadora Duncan. There, too, within the community centers he encountered the resilient spirit of immigrant people who sought to accommodate and survive within an often confusing world. These years were a kind of foundation for the work that Collier would soon undertake among the Indians of the Southwest.

It would be at Taos Pueblo in December, 1920, that a recently arrived Collier would find people who "possessed the fundamental secret of human life—the secret of building great personality through the instrumentality of social institutions." Soon he launched an impressive campaign to save that threatened community of Pueblo Indians, which seemed to offer much to all America. Following a decade of exceptional activity, the outsider became the insider; Collier emerged as Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt. While not always successful in his actions or well-advised in his policies, Commissioner Collier nonetheless symbolized a basic alteration in the federal approach toward Indians—a change that recognized more fully Indian rights and the Indian future.

This long-awaited biography has many attributes. It is the product of painstaking research in an impressive array of archival materials. Kelly writes well, and he is not afraid to make judgments about people or events. Thus, for example, Isadora Duncan in 1915 is portrayed as "a moody, unstable drunk whose dissipation had robbed her of the grace and vitality that had once made her famous." And *The Assault on Assimilation* is filled with marvelous photographs, many of them provided by John Collier, Jr., who has also contributed a fascinating foreword.

As any good biography should, Kelly's work sheds light not only upon an individual but upon the era in which that individual lived. In this instance, "the origins of Indian policy reform" become more clear. Collier's relations with a varied cast (including Stella Atwood, Mary Austin, Charles Burke, Holm Bursum, Albert Fall, D.H. Lawrence, and Clara True) tell us much about the movement originating in northern New Mexico that challenged with growing success the assimilationist foundations of federal policy.

It may well be some time before volume two is published. If it is at all comparable to volume one, we can afford to be patient. *The Assault on Assimilation* is, quite simply, a splendid, important book.

Peter Iverson
University of Wyoming

Wolves for the Blue Soldiers: Indian Scouts and Auxiliaries with the United States Army, 1860-90. By Thomas W. Dunlay. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982. 304 pp.; maps, illustrations, notes, bibliographical essay, index, $21.95)

ONE OF THE MORE ARRESTING THEMES that is emerging out of recent works on North American Indians is that the Indians were often agents of their own undoing. Many historians now believe that Indians hastened the coming of white domination by aiding overland migration, converting to Christianity, guiding explorers, and engaging in the fur trade. And now Thomas W. Dunlay shows the extent to which many Indians were willing and eager participants in the American army's efforts to subdue other Indians. He concentrates on the post-Civil War era but gives sufficient background to show that the practice began early in the colonial period. The participation consisted of both tracking ("trailing") and actual combat.

Dunlay does not waste anyone's time with sermons about "treason" against their red brothers. Rather he presents reasons why some Indians joined the white soldiers: "help against more powerful Indian enemies; material gain [e.g., pay and rations], more favorable terms than could be won by resistance, and a chance to adjust to radically changing conditions in ways that were relatively easy and familiar" (pp. 200-201). Equally diverse were the attitudes of the army officers towards the use of Indian scouts and auxiliaries. In general, the more an officer sympathized with Indians and sought to understand their culture, the more he was inclined to employ them as scouts and auxiliaries. For example, George Crook consistently used Indians in his campaigns and praised their services. On the other hand, Philip H. Sheridan was skeptical and usually opposed the practice. Officers who wished the

Indians well believed that army service hastened assimilation with whites, then considered a desirable goal. Equally sympathetic civilians disagreed, arguing that association with regular soldiers spread vice and immorality among the Indians.

Indian cooperation with whites warring against other Indians is less difficult to understand when there is an appreciation of the fact that Indians had a tradition of fighting each other long before the arrival of the Europeans; whites were often seen as simply another ally or foe in the continuing warfare among Indians. Dunlay contends that they lacked a sense of Indian unity; therefore there was no disloyalty to other Indians in joining whites in combat. Nor should instances of Indians fighting fellow "tribesmen" occasion surprise since tribal designations were often artificial creations based upon white misunderstanding. More basic loyalties were to bands, family groups, and factions. Members of the White Mountain Apaches gladly fought with the army against the Chiricahua Apaches.

Other groups who frequently served as scouts and auxiliaries (the distinction between the two terms cannot be clearly made) were the Warm Springs of Oregon, Tonkawas, Crows, and the Wyoming Shoshones. The best known example was Frank North's battalion of Pawnee scouts.

A historian's first book is expected to be a workmanlike but unadventuresome contribution to a larger topic. *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers* does not fit the mold. In the first place, the book covers far more ground than the subtitle suggests because the author convincingly demonstrates that the use of scouts and auxiliaries touched directly on a multitude of Indian-white relationships. Also, this volume is a bold, imaginative intellectual effort. Dunlay can expect challenges to his many provocative assertions. Right or wrong, his thoughts and conclusions will not be dismissed lightly. Dunlay's book deserves respect.

Michael J. Brodhead
University of Nevada, Reno

The Vanishing Race and Other Illusions: Photographs of Indians by Edward S. Curtis. By Christopher M. Lyman. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1982. 158 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $22.50, cloth; $14.95, paper)

FEW PHOTOGRAPHERS of the American Indian have received the acclaim given to Edward S. Curtis. Copies of his photographs have appeared in numerous volumes, and most of his famous prints first appeared in his twenty-volume work, *The North American Indian.* Books of all shapes and sizes illustrating Curtis photographs grace the coffee tables of the world, and Curtis himself has been immortalized by many as a prominent preserver of

American Indian culture. Christopher Lyman's book, *The Vanishing Race and Other Illusions*, is not just another presentation of photographs by Curtis. It is a thought-provoking study of the art of photography, a critical analysis of Curtis' Indians, and an examination of Curtis' techniques of photographing his subjects. This is a fine book; it portrays in an illuminating fashion—both written and pictorial—the lifework of Curtis among the Indians of the Northwest, Southwest, and Great Plains.

Lyman has provided us with much more than a picture book, for he devotes the first portion of his work to an interpretation of Curtis in light of the discipline of photography, the era in which Curtis worked, and the motives of the famous artist. As Vine Deloria, Jr., puts it in his introduction, "Lyman does not take a debunker's cynical attitude, chastising Curtis for obvious fakery and romanticism" but instead presents "us with sufficient background so that we can view with a great deal of understanding and some sympathy the gigantic vision that drove Curtis into his major project." The author points out that Curtis was an ambitious man who sought to photograph every aspect of Indian life. In so doing, Curtis often manipulated his subjects, using props and photographic techniques that created an unreal image of his subjects. Certainly Curtis created the image he desired, and in so doing, "lied" about his subjects. Lyman's work points out many incongruities in Curtis' photography and suggests that all forms of cultural imagery should be examined with a critical eye and mind.

Lyman presents many examples of Curtis' work with various Indian tribes, including the photographing of the Navajo Nightway Ceremony—the Yebechai. While Curtis was completing his study of the Navajos as part of the first volume of *The North American Indian*, he photographed a portion of the Yebechai Dance performed especially for him at the mouth of the Canyon de Chelly in northeastern Arizona. The dance was arranged by two white men, Charles and Samuel Day, traders to the Navajos; and it was performed near Day's trading post, known today as the Thunderbird Ranch and Trading Company. Because it was against Navajo religious beliefs to perform the ceremony, Curtis was forced to make all of the masks worn by the dancers. Furthermore, the dancers themselves, led by Sam Day, decided that they would not perform the dance correctly—they danced it backwards, perhaps in hope that the Holy People would not be angry at their violation by performing the dance at all. Lyman provides an excellent discussion of the filming of the Yebechai and other Indian settings, and the problems involved with specific photos. This is a well-researched book, and it is written in a lively manner. It is a must for anyone interested in the American Indian, the work of Edward S. Curtis, or the art of photography.

Clifford E. Trafzer
San Diego State University

New Resource Materials

Nevada Historical Society

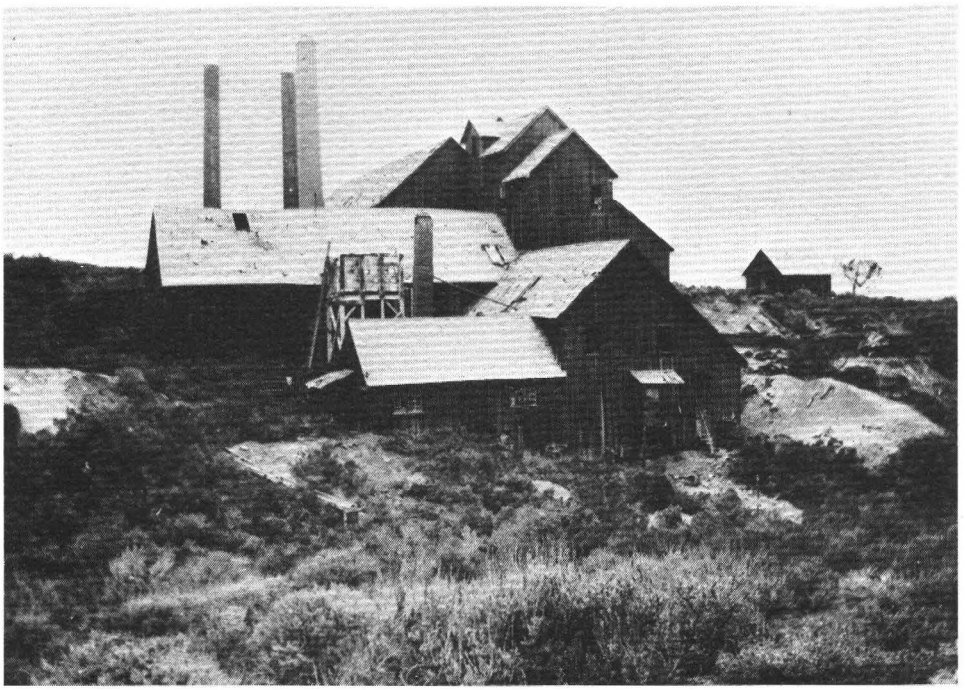
Silver Spur Casino Records

The Nevada Historical Society has acquired the records of the Silver Spur Casino, a well-known gaming establishment which operated on Virginia Street in downtown Reno from 1968 to 1981. It was consolidated with the adjoining Horseshoe Club in 1981, after its purchase by the latter casino. The records donated to the Society are administrative and financial in nature, and cover the entire life of the casino. They include, among other things, general ledgers, minutes of directors' meetings, correspondence with gaming control authorities, the casino's internal control manual, a copy of the "Black Book," records of dealings with gaming equipment suppliers, and publicity files. The donation of these materials by Morrey and Stuart Mason, whose Mason Corporation owns the Horseshoe Club, marks the first time that business records of a modern Nevada casino have been deposited with a public institution and made available to researchers. The Society wishes to thank the Masons for their most significant gift, and also Dwayne Kling, former general manager and part-owner of the Silver Spur, and Everett Brunzell, former president and part-owner of the casino, who were instrumental in arranging the donation.

Edna Covert Plummer Papers

When Edna Covert Plummer was appointed district attorney of Eureka County in 1918, she became not only the first woman to hold such office in Nevada, but also the first woman district attorney in the nation. She went on to pursue a distinguished legal career in Nevada and in California, where she moved in 1922. Active in many public endeavors, she chaired the Eureka County Council of Defense during World War I, was principal organizer of the Farmers and Merchants National Bank of Eureka in 1920, and was a co-founder of the Legal Aid Foundation while practicing law in Los Angeles. As the result of a gracious donation by Mrs. J. R. Rees, Mrs. Jewell Fraley, and Mrs. Julia Plummer, the Society has acquired a portfolio of documents and other papers kept by Edna Plummer which detail the principal activities

Silver Spur and Horseshoe Club on Virginia Street in Reno, early 1970s.



Attwood Mill at Mineral Hill in 1902.

and accomplishments of her life. The Society extends its thanks to the donors, and to Connie Noland Hicks of Elko, whose interest in Edna Plummer led to her discovery of the portfolio and its donation to the Society. (Mrs. Hicks' article, "First Woman D. A.: Edna Covert Plummer, 1877-1972," appeared in the Spring, 1984 number of the *Northeastern Nevada Historical Society Quarterly.)*

Mineral Hill Silver Mines Company Records

Mineral Hill, in eastern Eureka County, was one of the more important sites of British mining investment in nineteenth-century Nevada. During the period 1871-1874, the Mineral Hill Silver Mines Company, Ltd., operated both mines and mills, exploiting the silver deposits of the district and shipping out over $1 million in bullion before the richest ores were exhausted and the company was forced into bankruptcy. During the past year the Society has assembled a considerable collection of the British firm's records through new acquisitions and the reidentification of already-held materials. These records span the entire period of the Mineral Hill company's involvement in Eureka County, and include payroll accounts, records of wood, charcoal and equipment purchases, property inventories, and cash accounts, particularly for the company's Attwood and Taylor Mills.

Eric Moody
Curator of Manuscripts

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Recently the Special Collections Department acquired the photo collection, field notes, and clippings of Frank D. Rathbun, Sr. Rathbun, a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was employed by the Municipal Water District of Los Angeles as a field engineer and surveyor in the southern Great Basin. He was a resident of southern Nevada during the construction of Hoover, Davis, and Parker dams.

Rathbun was fascinated with the rock art left by early man that he found in the course of his field work for the Water District. As he surveyed, he photographed and described in careful detail the petroglyph sites he found, recording his data in notebooks. Rathbun also photographed construction sites: Boulder Dam, Metropolitan Water District canal and power lines, and Southern California Edison Company projects. Miscellaneous photos include mine sites, desert and mountain flora, Rathbun dwellings, and family subjects.

As important an archaeological record as it is in its own right, Rathbun's collection is further enhanced by the photographic collection and field notes of Michael Moen, who in 1967-1968 retraced Rathbun's surveys.

The photo collection consists of approximately 3,000 black and white photos, many matched with negatives, and 77 postcards. Access to the Rathbun Collection is restricted in order to protect sites. Permission to research the collection may be obtained (with proper credentials and need to know) from the Anthropology Department, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Elizabeth Nelson Patrick
Special Collections Department, UNLV

University of Nevada, Reno

A major collection of architectural drawings will soon be cataloged and accessible for research use in the Special Collections Department of the UNR Library. A grant from the Nevada Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology has provided funding for processing, arranging, and cataloging the architectural drawings and records in the Frederic J. DeLongchamps collection, which was acquired by the library in 1978.

Frederick DeLongchamps was Nevada's most prolific and prominent architect during the first half of this century. He worked on over 500 public and private projects in the state, designing many government and commercial buildings, schools, and residences. Several of his most important buildings include courthouses in Washoe, Clark, Pershing and Humboldt counties, the state Supreme Court Building, and Reno's Riverside Hotel. DeLongchamps also designed the Nevada State buildings for the Panama-Pacific Expositions in San Francisco and San Diego.

The DeLongchamps Collection consists of thousands of drawings which are currently stored in cardboard tubes. As they are processed the materials will be flattened, given conservation treatment, and stored on shelves in large archival folders. Each drawing will be cataloged using a computerized data base specifically designed for architectural materials. When the project is completed, access to drawings for each building in the collection will be through both an on-line and printed catalog.

The DeLongchamps Collection receives extensive public use for restoration planning, historic preservation, and architectural research. It is the foundation of a Nevada architectural archives which was recently begun in the library's Special Collections Department. The archives' primary purpose is to document Nevada's architectural heritage through collecting and preserving architectural drawings, specifications, and other records which detail

the design and construction of significant public and private buildings. Along with the DeLongchamps Collection, the 14,000 drawings in the archives also include the collections of Nevada architects Edward S. Parsons and Hewitt Wells.

Robert E. Blesse, *Head*
UNR Special Collections Department