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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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Contents

Alternate Visions of Reno

ELMER R. RUSCO

WALTER VAN TILBURG CLARK wrote in 1949 that Reno was the "State City" because, while it was a small town in some ways, it was also the "big city" for the state. Reno's newspapers served the rest of the state, and Reno was interdependent with most of Nevada in a variety of ways. The city, he said, "politically and economically stands in about the same relationship to the state of Nevada that New York City does to the state of New York."[1]

While this characterization is no longer accurate, since the rise of Las Vegas several decades ago, it is still a valid description of Reno's relationship with most of central and northern Nevada and also with some parts of the surrounding states of California and Oregon. Yet until recently there was very little good historical or contemporary writing about Reno.[2] Within the last three years, however, three Reno histories have been published. It is the purpose of this article to provide a description and an evaluation of these works.

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[1] Walter Van Tilburg Clark, "Reno: The State City," in *Rocky Mountain Cities*, ed. Ray B. West, Jr. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1949), pp. 29-53.

[2] Clark's chapter about Reno remains one of the most insightful efforts to describe what Reno is like from the viewpoint of a resident. It also deals, sometimes with humor, about aspects of the city often neglected in municipal histories; but, of course, it is brief. Max Miller, a visitor, wrote a general description of Reno in the early 1940s which is of some value, *Reno* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1941). His book devotes a great deal of space to describing the history of the surrounding parts of Nevada and the places which a visitor to Reno might choose to see outside the city itself, but provides relatively little information about several aspects of Reno life. It still treats divorce as the primary economic activity of the community, for example, with only eight to ten pages describing gambling. Also, it makes several errors which result from lack of personal familiarity with the area; identifying the Truckee Meadows with Washoe Valley, for example, which he does on pp. 23 and 55. Annie Estelle Prouty wrote a history of Reno in 1917, expanded in 1924 by addition of material discussing the intervening years. About a third of this work deals with the development of the network of emigrant trails and, later, railroads which brought Reno into existence. Unfortunately, it also ignores certain topics. The Divorce Colony, for example, receives mention only briefly at the end of her study, although during this period Reno's status as a divorce capital was extremely important. However, it does contain some information about schools, churches and various voluntary groups. "The Development of Reno in Relation to its Topography," in *Nevada State Historical Society Papers*, vol. 4 (1923-1924), pp. 29-189. Raymond I. Sawyer's *Reno, Where the Gamblers Go!* (Reno: Sawston Publishing Co., 1976) seldom gets beyond gambling and lacks documentation. Several works of fiction about Reno or set in Reno are of interest but do not qualify as serious attempts to understand the city. Clark's *City of Trembling Leaves* provides intriguing glimpses of the city in the 1930s and 1940s (New York: Random House, 1945).

In 1981, Doris Cerveri, a local author who is a native Nevadan, published *Reno: A Pictorial History* (Norfolk/Virginia Beach: Donning Company). As the title indicates, the text is limited; there are 190 pages of illustrations compared to about twenty-two pages of text. Many of the captions for the illustrations are long and informative, however, and they add to the value of the book. Unfortunately, there is no documentation for the text. The volume is well-designed and produced, with a hard cover, slick paper, and generally excellent reproduction of the photographs. All are in black-and-white or brown half-tone; a few are blurred or otherwise not of high quality. Nevertheless, the book is very interesting to anyone concerned with the local history of this area. Sparks is included to some extent, as well as Pyramid Lake and a few other areas close to Reno and of interest to many of its residents. The illustrations represent all periods of the city's history, from a few showing aboriginal inhabitants, through others showing the building of river crossings, the establishment of ranches, the coming of the railroad, the slow growth of Reno in the nineteenth century, and other eras and topics down to the period of rapid growth after 1978. By my count, there are 276 illustrations; the book provides ample opportunity for browsing, for returning to a photograph to examine details, or for attempting to decide what was going on in the minds of the persons represented. There is also a short, sensitive foreword by Sessions Wheeler, a long-time Reno resident who has written a good deal about Nevada. The index might have been more detailed, and the brief bibliography might have noted where some of the rare items may now be found.[3]

John M. Townley has written a book which goes into great detail about nineteenth-century Reno; it is the first of three projected volumes that will deal with all of Reno's history to date. In 1977, Nevada historian Phillip I. Earl suggested a number of "Questions, Themes, and Topics in Washoe County's History" that needed attention.[4] While Townley's book does not answer all of the questions Earl posed, it does provide information on quite a number of them, and it is a very large step forward.

Townley's title, *Tough Little Town on the Truckee*, is evidently modified from one of the best memoirs of life in Reno in the nineteenth century, Bertha Bender Brown's *A Tale of Three Cities*, in which Reno is the "tough

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[3] Part of the proceeds of the sale of this book went to the Self-Help Foundation, a Reno nonprofit organization which provides housing for physically handicapped adults, with the objective of enabling them to be as independent as possible. Unfortunately, the limited edition of 1,500 copies of this book has been sold out, and there are no current plans to publish a second edition. *Reno Evening Gazette*, July 18, 1984, p. 1, "Neighbors" section; *The Communicator*, December, 1983, p. 11; and information from Caryl Hurd, Executive Director of the Self-Help Foundation.

[4] Phillip I. Earl, "Questions, Themes, and Topics in Washoe County's History," *Washoe Rambler, Journal of the Washoe County Historical Society*, No. 3 (Fall 1977), pp. 48-58. Since the formation of this society in 1977, some of the gaps in the history of Reno have been filled by articles in its journal and presentations at its meetings.

little town *by* the Truckee."[5] Townley received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Nevada, Reno, and during the 1970s was Director of the Nevada Historical Society; he has written several books and articles about Nevada history, and now works on his own, styling himself the Great Basin Studies Center.

This first volume is the first to go into such detail on Reno's past. While it is based on such published works as are available, the chief sources are the newspapers of the era. It is hard to believe the author missed anything of importance in any of the surviving Reno papers of the later nineteenth century, and the book is admirably footnoted so that researchers can go back to his sources if they need to do so. Townley's book is satisfyingly detailed about many topics, and it really is about the Truckee Meadows as a whole. About all that can be done here is to describe the major topics of the book, make a few criticisms, and report on his overall conclusions. The following subjects receive attention:

— There is a description of the physical setting of the Truckee Meadows, and of the geological events which produced this environment, along with brief descriptions of plants and animals of the area. Most interesting is the detailed documentation of the fact that there were large areas of native grasslands in the Meadows when white Americans first saw them; numerous quotations from emigrant diaries make this point thoroughly. There is a brief discussion of the Native Americans who have lived here for a very long time. Notable about this is Townley's emphasis upon the obvious (though often overlooked) fact that the Washo Indians of this area lived in one of the most productive areas of the Great Basin; before white contact they could hardly have been struggling just to stay alive, which many current accounts still suggest.

— A brief account of explorers and emigrants who traveled through the Truckee Meadows at various times during the nineteenth century is included.

— The author has written the most detailed account available anywhere of the earliest non-Indian settlers. The first of these was probably W.H. Jamison, who may have arrived in 1852. Various of these settlers took up ranches and/or operated various kinds of crossings over the Truckee. A few of these during the 1850s were Mormons, who were recalled to Salt Lake City in 1857; why there were not more Mormons or what their relationships with non-Mormons were remain unclear. One topic not discussed is how non-Indian landownership began. Since the Washo owned the land as far as the national government was concerned, and since no treaties were every signed with them transferring ownership, it remains unclear how white settlers

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[5] Bertha Bender Brown, *A Tale of Three Cities* (Healdsburg, California: Naturegraphy Company, 1964), p. 4.

acquired lands and ranches. Neither is there a discussion of how water rights were first acquired from the Indians. The origin of several sites during these early years which later became of importance is treated—Huffaker's Station, Glendale, and Mayberry's, for example.

— The acquisition by Myron Lake of Fuller's Crossing, and Lake's success in persuading the Central Pacific Railroad to lay out a townsite on part of his property are analyzed. Also described are Lake's toll bridge (on what is now Virginia Street) and his hotel. The auction on May 9, 1868, marking the beginning of Reno and the naming of the town (still mysterious since other names were considered and the Civil War general after whom it was named had no known connection with western Nevada) are reported.[6] After winning designation as the county seat from Washoe City, Reno built a courthouse on land donated by Myron Lake. Lake's bridge became public property (and toll-free) in 1873, although he remained a wealthy and prominent member of the community until his death in 1884. His mansion is now open to the public (although incongruously placed on a corner of the site for the Centennial Coliseum).

— There are accounts of several interesting areas close to Reno which were important in various ways to the growing town. For example, Townley discusses at length the importance of ranching and farming in the Meadows. Initially, hay was made from native grasses, but alfalfa was introduced in the 1860s. Although hay was the main crop, and feeding livestock the main industry, there were also dairies; and various crops, from potatoes to strawberries, were raised during different periods. Chinese and Italian gardeners were best at the production of vegetables, it would seem. There was an early problem with misuse of chemicals: certain chemicals used in raising alfalfa resulted in the deaths of most of the bees that were providing honey as a cash crop. He also discusses Steamboat Springs and efforts to develop it as a resort area, and provides admirable detail about the Peavine Mining District, whose development included the building of several temporary towns on the slopes of Peavine Mountain.

— The development of what today is called infrastructure is extensively detailed. A network of ditches carrying irrigation waters from the Truckee was built by various private individuals and companies; several water companies were organized to bring water to residents of the city; and there was a

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[6] Darwin L. Flaherty has the most thorough discussion of this question. Moreover, he suggests an ingenious hypothesis to account for the naming of both Reno and Wadsworth (the latter named at the same time in honor of another Civil War officer). He suggests that the Big Four, led by Leland Stanford, named the two towns after officers personally known to General Irvin McDowell, commander of the Army's Pacific Division. Presumably they were making an attempt to impress General McDowell, perhaps for business reasons. The hypothesis is intriguing and is supported by the fact that McDowell did know both officers and held them in high esteem. Perhaps some strong evidence will some day be found to confirm this hypothesis. "The Naming of Reno, Nevada: A Century-Old Mystery," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly,* XXVII (Fall 1984), pp. 155-181.

long-standing problem with pollution of the Truckee upstream in California which was not resolved until the end of the century. The beginning of sewage disposal (sewers were first built in the 1880s) and provision of natural gas, electricity, and telephones are all dealt with, as is, briefly, the building of roads and highways to provide easier transportation within the town, and also to link it with the Comstock mines and with California.

— Town government receives attention. Throughout the century, Reno was unincorporated, being governed by the members of the Washoe County Commission. Toward the end of the century, there were several attempts at incorporation; however, none produced any lasting change until this century. It would have been desirable to have had more information about the reasons for the conflicts over incorporation. In one case the battle clearly revolved around attempts to put the water company under public ownership; despite a popular vote in favor of such action, the company remained in private hands, and the decision to incorporate was reversed.

— In an extensive chapter on politics, Townley argues that Reno's political system was corrupt. He believes charges made at the time that the deciding votes in elections were usually purchased, but he does not clearly relate what was going on in Reno and Washoe County to the state's political system. This was the period when railroad machines attempted to dominate government, and evidently did so to some extent. He notes that the railroads resisted efforts to tax their properties; the railroads often were successful, but they at times met with considerable resistance from local officials. This hardly proves domination of all aspects of government. The author's conclusion that state legislators were sent to Carson City to "loot and pillage" is not supported by evidence, and how all of this relates to the partisanship of voters and newspapers, both of which were clearly more extreme than at present, remains unclear. He does give data on local and state elections in the county by party, however. Probably the data are inadequate for reaching firm conclusions on such matters, but if so the historian should note the unanswered questions.

— There are discussions of the growth and development of various local businesses. The railroads (the Central Pacific, the Virginia and Truckee, and the Nevada, California and Oregon) were major employers in the area, and their rates and other practices had great effect on the community. A striking illustration of this fact is the account of the attempt to set up a meat packing plant in Reno, which was made unprofitable by the raising of railroad rates for shipping meat from the plant to San Francisco. Townley also discusses an important local flour mill and several other businesses, and reports that the principal business district was at first along Commercial Row and only later moved to Virginia Street.

— A number of institutions important to Reno's life are described. These are: the "Asylum," now the Mental Health Institute; an abortive attempt to build a state prison in Reno (which left conspicuous ruins for several decades);

the State Fair; the development of schools (with quite a bit of attention to the Whitaker School, an Episcopal school for girls founded by Bishop Ozi W. Whitaker, and located where Whitaker Park is now); the University of Nevada, which moved to Reno from Elko in 1885; several abortive attempts to set up a public library; the establishment of several churches; and the activities of the Salvation Army.

— There is an account of the women's suffrage movement, which succeeded in getting a constitutional amendment proposed by one legislature in the 1890s, although the next legislature killed the effort.

— Townley states in his preface that he wanted to overcome as far as possible the biases of his sources regarding "the poor, minorities and undeserving mankind," which in the past have resulted in the ignoring of these groups by most historians. This he does quite well, given the problems with his sources. Indians adapted to white intrusion by working on nearby ranches or by moving to colonies near Reno (there were several during the century) where certain kinds of wage work were available, but also where alcohol could be had. White attitudes toward Indians are also described. The role of the Chinese and the hostility often displayed toward them are noted. Unfortunately, there is much less information about blacks and Hispanics. All of these groups were discriminated against by the dominant white population.

— Another non Anglo-Saxon Protestant group which sometimes met discrimination consisted of Italian immigrants, whose descendants play such an important role in the Truckee Meadows today. During the last century, Italians in the Truckee Meadows were mostly engaged in agriculture. More information about this group would be highly desirable; for example, Townley found little information about the areas of Italy from which Italians came or about the religious, social, or economic organizations within the community. Probably such information will have to come from sources other than newspapers, if it is recoverable at all.

— The roots of Reno's twentieth-century economic dependence upon divorce, marriage, and gambling are explored. Reno in the nineteenth century did not object to making money from marriages and divorces; it tolerated gambling in practice although it displayed hostility toward gambling in principle. Reno joined the state in voting down a proposal to establish a lottery.

The author is occasionally opinionated in presenting all of this information. In this reviewer's judgment, this is partly the case in his section on politics. And in discussing Reno's climate, he says it is very poor because of the frequent strong winds. At one point, he even describes Reno's climate as "foul." However, these eccentricities are quite visible and should not be annoying to a reader. As far as he can, Townley presents the basic data about each topic; if anyone wants to disagree with his opinions by interpreting the data differently, it is easy to do so.

As he interprets this wealth of data, Townley offers some interesting and

significant conclusions about the "tough little town." First, Reno did not experience the radical booms and busts of Comstock towns, in spite of deriving economic benefit from mining when this activity was profitable in surrounding areas; the town grew, for the most part steadily, through the century. By 1900, it was the largest town in Nevada; for some time before that, it had enjoyed the status Walter van Tilburg Clark was to note in 1950. The reasons for this, Townley suggests, have to do with the complex, multifaceted economic base of the community. A transportation center by virtue of its location and the decision of the Central Pacific to build the first transcontinental railroad through the Meadows, Reno served a large surrounding area in northern and central Nevada and adjoining parts of California and Oregon. Besides an income from transportation itself, this meant economic benefits from lumbering and ranching as well as mining. Emphasis is placed on the long period during which the Meadows was a major feeding area for livestock moving to market in California. This was made possible by the hay-producing potential of the area and also by the rate policies of the railroad, which charged ranchers no more for laying their livestock over in the Reno area than for direct shipment from ranches to California. As the largest town in the wider area, after the decline of Virginia City, Reno was also the banking and professional center for smaller towns and ranches. In other words, a diversified economic base permitted growth which was more stable and slower than the more restricted economic base of some other Nevada towns.

Townley is blunt in asserting that Reno was dominated by businessmen and patterns of belief shared by such men in the Gilded Age. Although full documentation for his assertions is not available, it is hard to dispute his overall conclusions about the sources from which governmental leadership came. No other group could have competed effectively with business for control of the town; organized labor was weak (although not on the Comstock), racial and even cultural minorities were discriminated against, and there was no sizable group of professional persons to vie for leadership. However, the question of the way these business leaders governed is more complex. Townley argues that the values of the business leaders were those of small town, Midwestern America, not those of the frontier; he charges that, "Town leadership put profits before living conditions, public health threats, or amenities." In other words, "boosterism," and "progress" defined in narrowly economic terms were the criteria for deciding important questions. Although some may consider his conclusions too unequivocal, there is evidence for them; by 1900 Reno was prosperous, for a small town, but had few public amenities. There were no parks or libraries, and few and poor schools or cultural organizations. The Whitaker School was gone, and the University of Nevada was weak and struggling.

Another aspect of his conclusions deserves mention. Reno was unlike many Midwestern towns in its toleration of what was almost universally considered

vice elsewhere. Instead of trying to hide gambling, saloons, and prostitution, Reno largely confined these to the Tenderloin and made no attempt to suppress them. A pattern developed which became far more important in the twentieth century: the community learned to make its living from activities it did not care to acknowledge in its own life.

Tough Little Town on the Truckee also contains many illustrations—231 by my count, although the table of contents lists only 91 figures, tables, and maps. Few of these are photographs; many are reproductions of newspaper articles, cartoons, poems, advertisements, etc. The result of this rich visual addition to the text is to give a strong flavor of nineteenth century journalism and life.

In brief, *Tough Little Town on the Truckee* is a mine of information about Reno and the surrounding area over approximately half a century. Although the author denies that his work is intended for the professional historian, this book undoubtedly will be used for some time by scholars as well as by residents and others who merely seek interestingly-presented information about the community's past. It is a very welcome addition to the professional literature on this area and indeed Nevada as a whole. The footnotes are full for almost all chapters, and there is an extensive bibliography and a good index. Townley's history can easily be used for further research.

The good news must be followed by some bad news, however. While he has obviously tried hard to write in an interesting fashion, and while there is no reason to doubt his accuracy as to factual matters, he was less careful about minor accuracy; there are too many typographical errors and many places where hyphenation is eccentric. Since the text is in double columns, there is a good deal of hyphenation, and in many cases the decision about where to divide a word was evidently made without benefit of a dictionary. Moreover, to reduce costs and permit sale at a lower price, Townley has typed the book on a typewriter and reproduced it by the offset process. While the text comes through reasonably well, the process gives inferior reproductions. A few of the illustrations, especially those taken directly from newspapers, are practically illegible, and a number of others are poorly reproduced. The few photographs in the book do not come through with the clarity and contrast desired by most readers. Also, the design of the book leaves something to be desired; the placement of illustrations on the pages does not conform to accepted standards. (The cover, which reproduces in color an 1890 "Bird's Eye View of Reno" whose source is not given, is attractive.) In short, the book leaves much to be desired aesthetically; Townley should consider seeking help from persons familiar with book design, and consider a more orthodox method of reproduction before publishing his next two volumes.

William Rowley's *Reno, Hub of the Washoe Country: An Illustrated History* deals briefly with all of Reno's history to the last city election in 1983.

The author is a faculty member in the Department of History at the University of Nevada, Reno; he has written on various aspects of Western history and is Executive Secretary of the Western History Association. It is stated on the title page that the book is "Produced in Cooperation with the University of Nevada, Reno" but the nature of this cooperation is not revealed. The University is one of the patrons given special attention in a separate section written by Robert Nylen, and presumably this means that it (along with other patrons) gave money toward production of the book, but whether the University was involved in some other way is unclear.

Because of this special section, the book is partly a contemporary example of a common nineteenth-century publishing phenomenon, the mug book, which provided individuals with an opportunity to see themselves described in print, in return for financial contributions. The new type of mug book has the strengths and weaknesses of the old type; while the reader and the future historian gain access to facts which might not be available otherwise, the importance of the information presented is not determined by scholarly criteria and the quality of this information is often suspect. The obvious pressures to present accounts of local institutions in a way which can only be called puffery have not always been resisted. For example, a casino which is not one of the largest in Reno is described in the book as "the convention headquarters of northern Nevada"; readers will easily detect other evidences of this phenomenon.

In addition to the chapter "Partners in Progress," which is written by Nylen and deals glowingly with the corporate patrons (a section which constitutes about twenty percent of the book), there is a brief introduction by Phillip I. Earl. The bulk of the book is by Professor Rowley, however, and his portion will receive most attention in this review. Rowley says in his acknowledgements that he has aimed at "a broad thematic approach . . . within the context of national history" and that he has given the "general picture" rather than a "sea of detail." The length of the book alone precludes much presentation of detail; because it is profusely illustrated, the book contains only sixty-two pages of text in the main section and twenty-five in the mug section, and most of these are partial pages on which there are also some illustrations.

The emphasis on regional and national context is carried out most fully in the early portions of the book, which well describe the place of events in the Truckee Meadows in the general Western movement, and the way in which the organization of the area that would become Nevada was shaped by national political considerations. There is also attention paid to the peculiar position of Mormons in Western development. After this point, however, the focus is largely on local happenings.

Rowley adds little regarding the nineteenth century to the information presented by Townley, although he does note that several important streets

are named for their destinations; Virginia Street connected with the highway to Virginia City, and Sierra Street with a highway north to Henness Pass through the Sierra Nevada. His conclusion about Reno before 1900 is different than Townley's, however. Rowley implies that the economic effects on Reno due to the decline of Comstock mining were greater than Townley suggests, and he then states that "Reno and Nevada became fixed in old frontier time and social attitudes," with laws not changing as rapidly as in other states. "By the time the 20th century arrived the state and its communities were in some respects outdated and even anachronisms. But in this arrested development . . . the city and the state would find much of their 20th-century identity."

The portions of Rowley's book dealing with the twentieth century feature a number of interesting points. Reno experienced a large population growth as a result of mining discoveries in the Tonopah-Goldfield area in the first decade of this century, but after this its substantial growth has been due to the adoption of various lures for tourists. Early in this century the city experimented with the holding of professional prize fights, but from the middle of the first decade of the century until the 1930s Reno was widely known as the divorce capital of the United States. Locally, those who had come to the city for this purpose were known as the Divorce Colony, or simply the Colony.[7] Originally made possible by the failure to change the 1860s law requiring only six months' residency for a divorce when other states were making divorce more difficult, easy divorce came to be valued highly for its economic effects. When a reform legislature in 1913 extended the residence period for divorce, the reaction was swift and strong, and the 1915 legislature wasted no time in restoring the old law, also exacting a price by removing the State Fair to Fallon. The same legislature liberalized anti-gambling laws which had been passed in 1909. More important, however, was the development of a pattern which prevailed for a long time, and is still the case with respect to marijuana legislation.[8] Nevadans voted for prohibition along with other Americans during World War I, but Renoites, at least, made very little effort to enforce this or similar laws.[9]

An even more striking example of the pattern is Rowley's description of the election of Reno Mayor E.E. Roberts in 1923. The incumbent mayor, reform-minded H.E. Stewart, campaigned on a platform which promised the

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[7] Rowley suggests that Walter Winchell during the 1930s first used the term "renovation" to describe the effects of a Reno divorce. However, the term was used at least as early as 1921 in a book by Lilyan Stratton, *Reno: A Book of Short Stories and Information* (Newark: Colyer Printing Company, 1921).

[8] See John F. Galliher and John R. Cross, *Morals Legislation Without Morality: The Case of Nevada* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1983).

[9] Sally Springmeyer Zanjani's graphic account of the difficulties encountered by her law-abiding father as a United States Attorney who attempted to enforce the prohibition laws makes this point quite clearly. *The Unspiked Rail: Memoir of a Nevada Rebel* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1981).

closing of the Stockade, an open center for prostitution. Attorney E.E. Roberts compaigned just as forthrightly in favor of keeping the Stockade open and continuing Reno's economically-motivated tolerance for most kinds of vice. Roberts won this election by a decisive margin, and he died in office ten years later, evidently still quite popular. Mayor Roberts is most famous for his speech in a Methodist Church advocating placing a barrel of whiskey on every street corner with a ladle in it.[10] The Stockade was finally closed during World War II, because of pressure from the Army, and Stewart was mayor once again when this occurred.

In 1927 the residence period for divorce was reduced to three months and the legislature also liberalized the marriage laws, thus paving the way for another lucrative tourist-based industry. In 1931, the legislature cut the residence period for divorce to six weeks, where it has remained, and legalized gambling (except for lotteries, which paradoxically continue to be unconstitutional).

Consistent with its increasing concern for tourism, Reno took the lead in the 1920s in developing national highways connecting the city with California and other states—the Victory Highway (the ancestor of present Interstate 80), and the Lincoln Highway (now U.S. 50). One product of this activity for Reno is the California Building in Idlewild Park, which is California's gift to Nevada, left over from a 1927 Transcontinental Highway Exposition cosponsored by both states. An airfield was built in 1920, and commercial flights began in 1927.

The rise of large-scale gambling appealing to average Americans is chronicled, beginning with the arrival of Harold Smith in 1936 and William Harrah in 1937. At the end of the book there is a description of the more recent explosion of gambling which occurred a few years after the repeal of the Red Line Ordinance restricting gambling to downtown Reno. Rowley also discusses the anti-rapid growth sentiment which prevailed in elections from 1978 on, though not in decisions of the Reno City Council.

Other aspects of Reno's politics and government are briefly noted. In 1903 Reno incorporated under a legislatively-granted charter creating a mayor-council government with a city manager. Reno's government changed slowly until the 1960s, when a citizens' committee led by former schools superintendent Earl Wooster successfully advocated charter changes to strengthen the position of mayor, and sponsored a reform slate of candidates for city council. The reform effort did not persist, however, and Reno politics remain nonpartisan and highly individualistic with most elected city officials being representatives of the business community.

Rowley succinctly notes several other developments. Reno was certainly not a "City of Trembling Leaves" in 1900; it did earn this title early in this

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[10] Other anecdotes about Roberts are reported in Clark's chapter on Reno, cited earlier.

century, and the establishment of the city's park system contributed. Reno finally got a public library in 1903 (with the help of Andrew Carnegie), and became the home of the Nevada Historical Society in 1904. Public schools expanded as did the University. Oddly, there is little attention paid in the book to the role of the University in the developing community.

Some attention is paid to Reno's leadership in state politics and government from about 1910 on, though more on this subject would have been desirable. George Wingfield ran a major banking system and both major parties from his office in downtown Reno; after him, Norman Biltz took over some of the same political functions. Unfortunately, no adequate account of the significance of this type of machine politics yet exists.

Reno, Hub of the Washoe Country is most notable for its photographs; there is a special color section with 34 pictures, and by my count there are 102 black-and-white photographs in the main section and 40 in the mug section. Almost all of them are clearly reproduced and aesthetically appealing. In general, the book is handsomely produced, on slick paper and with a hard cover. There is a good bibliography and an adequate index. The book will look good on coffee tables. As a history, however, its obvious problem is its brevity, compounded by the total absence of footnotes. In an area where most of the original research has not been done, these are substantial shortcomings. Of course, if the research had been done with the thoroughness involved in the writing of *Tough Little Town on the Truckee,* presumably the resulting book would have been several times longer than it is.[11] Perhaps it is too early to write a comprehensive history of Reno.

Finally, it should be noted that Rowley writes well and clearly. The book is not only slick and well-done from an aesthetic point of view but also is a pleasure to read.

Perhaps because of the desire to give a balanced, well-rounded account, neither *Tough Little Town on the Truckee* nor *Reno, Hub of the Washoe Country* is particularly insightful about the characteristics of the city which are apparent to its residents. Likewise, neither conveys the truth that the city is different things to different people. Although not a book, a recent publication called *A Guidebook for Californians Who Have Relocated to Reno, Nevada* catches some of these characteristics of Reno. A multilithed collection of pithy sayings about the city and its distinctive characteristics, *A Guidebook* contains insights, sometimes humorous, which residents of Reno ought to recognize. For example:

> Pickups. Over half of the registered vehicles around Reno are pickups—usually with two dogs in the back.
>
> Baseball Caps. This unofficial symbol of the real Nevadan is worn while driving a pickup.

[11] Rowley also cites Bertha Bender Brown's phrase, also without attribution.

Land Ownership. Owning a piece of Nevada real estate identifies you as a non-indigent, and a non-transient. It is a big deal. You already own, cooperatively, over 85% of Nevada's real estate, as the federal government owns most all of Nevada. The rest of the land is owned by people who want to maximize their investment. They want somebody to build a casino on it. Some Nevada land is actually salt-covered, worthless desert, and the price is fairly reasonable. Most real estate prices are beyond reason.

Taxes . . . and the I.R.S. Nevada seems to be peopled by those who have and those who have not. Those who have intend to hang on to every penny of what they have. Many workers in the gaming industry make excellent livings, but most of it is in cash and not documentable. Efforts to collect income tax on tips . . . or "tokes" as they are locally known . . . has fired this simmering hatred of "federal intervention."[12]

From a situation in which there was a virtual absence of histories of Reno, we have moved in a few years to one in which there is quite a bit in print about "the biggest little city in the world." People seriously interested in understanding this complex city can learn much from reading some of the new literature. To close this review it may be appropriate to quote Faith Baldwin, who in the early 1940s wrote a series of short stories set in Reno. According to Ms. Baldwin,

Reno . . . is a little city under great mountains, set in a superb country and with a bracing and exciting climate. It has its schools and churches, its university and its charities, its women's clubs and civic interests, very like any other city in the United States. Its difference from other cities lies in a number of things: its setting for one, the legalized gambling for another, the completely tax-free lure. . . . And, here and now, I ask the people who begged me not to give their thriving city a bad name to be fair . . . and to agree with me that, while Reno is not a city of sin as the sensationmongers would have it, neither is it a city of sweetness and light—light other than that of the sun or the neons. Because no city is that. No city is entirely wicked or entirely pure. And few cities are as interesting as Reno, Nevada. . . .[13]

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[12] Multilithed, this publication is evidently produced by the author, W.E. Bauer, described as a "Semi-Native of Nevada." It is available for $7.00 from the author at P.O. Box 707, Fernley, NV, 89408.

[13] Faith Baldwin, *Temporary Address: Reno* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1941), pp. vii-viii.

Joanne de Longchamps, portrait by Robert Caples, which appeared in *The Schoolhouse Poems* (Reno: West Coast Poetry Review, 1977). Used with permission.

Nevada Images in the Poetry of Joanne de Longchamps

BARBARA AGONIA

JOANNE DE LONGCHAMPS, a widely-published contemporary American poet, has been neglected in the general commentary on Western poets. Yet, a significant portion of the corpus of her work is tied firmly to the twentieth-century Western experience and the Nevada landscape. Gary Owen, editor of *Southern Poetry Review*, praised de Longchamps's poetry for its color and "compelling images."[1] That color, those compelling images, arise from de Longchamps's persistent exploration of nature to find the metaphors for human experience. Landscape and language are often analogous in her poems. For example, in "A Letter to Virginia Wolff"[2] (1951) de Longchamps calls "words, the moving forests of green thoughts." That same image is made even more specific in "Entering" (1975) when she compares the merging metaphors of a poem to the uniquely individual elements of nature which co-exist and blend to form the landscape:

> I would write here,
> learn coyote by his laughter,
> lizard by quick looking,
> . . .
> Each by its nature comes,
> sounding or silent, to the pines
> I place in my lines.[3]

It is obvious, even in these poems about poetry, that the images of nature are intrinsic to de Longchamps's expression of human experience.

In 1941, when she was eighteen and newly married, Joanne de Longchamps began her romance with the lakes, mountains, and deserts of Nevada—a romance which grew in intensity until her death in 1983.[4] Before

[1] Joanne de Longchamps, *The Wishing Animal* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1970), flyleaf.

[2] de Longchamps, *Eden Under Glass* (Francestown, N.H.: The Golden Quill Press), p. 4.

[3] de Longchamps, *The Schoolhouse Poems* (Reno: West Coast Poetry Review, 1977), p. 15.

[4] The personal information here and throughout the article is gathered from notes, letters, marginalia, and journals in the de Longchamps Estate Papers, which will become the property of the University of Nevada, Reno upon final settlement of the estate. They are presently located in the de Longchamps residence under the supervision of the estate executor, Pauline Nichols.

her marriage, de Longchamps (then Joan Cutten) had led a fairy tale youth: studying painting in Paris, going to school with the child stars of Hollywood, and receiving recognition as a model. At sixteen she turned down a Warner Brothers contract, started to college, and began seriously to publish poetry. When she married a Reno man, de Longchamps feared, as did many women artists of past decades, that her domestic role, especially in a community little known for its cultural virtues, would subvert her writing and painting. However, she quickly discovered the University of Nevada and made it her intellectual home. Marriage, as she noted later, did not limit, but rather enhanced her perspective.

Joanne de Longchamps achieved early success in publishing. Her first collection was printed by a regional press in 1944. At about that same time, she met Harold Witt, a young California poet who was to become a lifelong friend. The two poets continued a letter-writing marathon for nearly forty years, exchanging poems for criticism, sharing information about publishers, recommending books to each other, and commenting on other poets. One thread of the correspondence is the persistent reminder of the difficulty of being recognized as a "serious" poet if one lives and writes in the West. Nevertheless, for the next three decades de Longchamps persistently and successfully pursued publication in Eastern periodicals. Her second, third and fourth books were published by Golden Quill, Indiana University, and Vanderbilt University, respectively. However, de Longchamps returned to the regional presses of the West for her last three books. As her poetry became more consciously Western and feminist and as personal health problems used up her energies, de Longchamps discovered that having a local press gave her more time to concentrate on her writing. The *West Coast Poetry Review* in Reno welcomed the challenge of combining her increasingly popular collages with her poetry.

The collage medium that de Longchamps also worked in for twenty-five years, until physical limitations forced her to put down the scissors and paste, allowed her to use totally disparate objects to create a unified motif. All sorts of paper were used, often in layers, and occasionally she added paint, wax, gravel, or some other substance to develop a particular effect. Ironically, the photographic reproductions of the collages will very likely outlast the originals because of the very nature of the collage art. The paper fades; the mucilage shrinks; small edges begin to flake and disintegrate. Her poetry, made of durable words, is less likely to be subject to the erosion of time. However, it is the artist's eye for color, shape, and perspective that makes the poetry of Joanne de Longchamps at least in part a visual art.

The Nevada landscape, an important image in de Longchamps's early poetry, reached its power in her mature work. She saw the landscape in panorama; she saw it in microcosm. Like other women of the West, pioneer and modern, she gradually absorbed the landscape into her own personal

experience. It would be unfair, no doubt, to classify Joanne de Longchamps as a regional poet because her subjects range far beyond her relationship to the American West; yet that very relationship colors her poetry with the spirit of Western regionalism. Spatial metaphors imply the vastness of nature in desert, sea, and mountain. Creature images speak of survival among hostile, uncontrollable forces.

In the early poems de Longchamps is the intellectual observer, viewer of geologic and human phenomena from the distant hill of learning. Her verse is structured, rhymed, traditional in form. "Pyramid Lake," (1944) like her other youthful poems, exhibits a practiced approach to both subject and structure that reflects the keen eye of the landscape painter, but does not exhibit the intensity or compressed metaphor that characterizes her later poems. One of the remaining vestiges of a vast, pre-historic sea, Pyramid Lake is a huge oblong body of water lying northeast of Reno. Its vivid blue surface is broken intermittently by odd formations of porous tufa, and its shores are as stark and treeless as the surrounding high desert. De Longchamps imitates the method of time-lapse photography to capture the power and mystery of the creation of this Nevada landscape. In the first stanza she uses a simile to personify formation of the land mass:

> In time of fire, time forgotten
> With a slow and mighty thrust
> These silent stones like ragged fingers
> Pierced the brittle earth's new crust.

The second stanza, "In time of water," fills "the hollows of this ground / [with] . . . strange and lovely waters." The final stanza phases from the past "where all was chaos" to the present where "there stands complete, alone, / The still blue wonder of deep water, / Ragged figures out of stone."[5] The three quatrains of "Pyramid Lake" are carefully executed and skillfully rhymed. The voice is impersonal, omniscient; the content, visual and unemotional.

In the following decade, de Longchamps's imagery became more original, her forms less rigid. She had begun to recognize the tensions between nature and civilization with its attendant mythologies. In "This Is the Place" (1955) we see these tensions expressed in the elliptical compression of language that has, in spite of its abuses, been highly effective in so much twentieth-century poetry. The subtle contrasts between Salt Lake City and Reno, the paradox of the welcoming-closed Mormon Temple, the signs of civilization planted like crucifixes on the pagan earth—these embody the themes, the new *mythoi* of the American West, that de Longchamps was to write about for the next twenty-five years.

The rhythms in "This Is the Place" are irregular combinations of iambs and

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[5] de Longchamps *And Ever Venus* (West Los Angeles: Wagon and Star Publishers, 1944), p. 11.

trochees, simulating, but not imitating the natural speech patterns of travelogue terseness. Within those rhythms the images flash quickly by, producing a tongue-in-cheek irreverence for the restrictions of civilization and its myths. The poem is structured in a series of pictures, beginning with a wide-angle shot and moving to a close-up. The first stanza moves panoramically across the salt flats "along the belly of lost oceans. / Spacing rigid sorrowsalt / wired crucifixion trees spell telephone." The second stanza narrows the scene to the city, commercial and greedy, regardless of moral appearance. "Streets cry Christmas: spend your dollar. / Reno has saloons, here candy booths / proclaim another shading of intent." Continuing to an even more limited scene, the third stanza focuses on Temple Square where Moroni beckons, but the walls are tall and the steel gates locked. Finally in the close-up, as far inside civilization as one can get, "An Eleventh Commandment shames us from a sign: / Thou shalt not smoke upon the temple grounds . . . ."[6] Contradictions in the morality of Salt Lake City, when placed in subtle contrast to Reno's bawdiness, make Reno the more honest.

By the time de Longchamps published her fourth volume of poems in 1970, the landscape had taken on the imagery of escape from civilization and the scenic direction of the poems often reversed, moving from close-up to panorama. "Insomniac" begins as a deeply personal poem: "Needing to sleep, / craving escape in open country, / a move from personal to primal, / I conjure animals . . . ." The speaker transports herself to ". . . November's / polar ending of the light," shoots "South through stunted spruce, / on moss, across frost-shattered stones." But knowing that these open lands are no more free from the threats of civilization than she herself is, she conjures a dream of personal power which, paradoxically, returns primal control to nature as it metaphorically releases her from the hunter and the trapper who keep her awake and fearful:

> That herds may winterfeed unharmed,
> that I may sleep,
> I clear the waiting forest. At my wish
> hunters vanish, traps are sprung.
> Calmed, the creatures browse
> and drowsy snow descends.[7]

This theme of freeing the landscape from the ravages of human interference is one that de Longchamps and Witt joked about in their correspondence as their "social consciousness." But perhaps more significant at that time was de Longchamps's recognition of her own mortality. Illness, surgery, and the prospect of life with constant pain brought with them a heightened perception of the fragile balances in nature to be cherished and honored.

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[6] de Longchamps *Eden Under Glass*, p. 68.

[7] de Longchamps *The Wishing Animal*, p. 87.

The Schoolhouse Poems, de Longchamps's fifth volume, are not, as the title would indicate, poems about the little schoolhouse on the de Longchamps land at timberline, some miles south of Reno. They are poems about three figurative schools: nature, travel, and personal suffering. It is almost as if these schools work in progression, each carrying its lessons into the next level. The rites of passage, none of which is so clearly demarcated as theory would have us believe, are not ages or dates or ceremonies, but thresholds in the mind.

"The Schoolmarm" (1974) is a poem about a tree. More than that, it is a poem about the loss of innocent perspective, about the reduction of nature to human terms. The "country-proud" owners of timberline land—not just deed holders, but spiritual possessors—show this piece of the Sierra Nevadas to visitors:

> Meadow to mountain—
> a creek that crosses
> one cloverbank corner, pink and gray granite
> enhanced by lichens,
> and trees—count them,
> twenty yellowpine towers.

The landscape, observed in minute detail, is vast and wild, wonderful. As they finally make their way to the prize tree on the property, a huge bi-forked ponderosa, one of the visitors says, "old-timers, timbermen, / would call this a schoolmarm." Suddenly, the human term "brings down to size / the high ponderosa." Superimposed on that great tree lies the surrealistic image of a spinster schoolmarm, upside down, exposing her unfulfilled sexuality to the world:

> Angled before us,
> tree-crotch gapes wide,
> spreads a vast pubic nest
> where spiked drying tangles
> of pine needles rest.[8]

As the innocence leaves the speaker, de Longchamps clamps the free-flowing, unrhymed lines into a rhymed anapestic conclusion.

In fact, whenever she writes lines which assess the impositions of civilization upon the wilderness, de Longchamps—perhaps consciously, perhaps unconsciously—imposes structure upon them. Often she sees herself, or the personae of her poems, as a part of the wilderness being threatened by encroachment. The would-be conquerors are set against the land itself and its denizens. "Self Defense" (1975) is one such poem, made startling with the

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[8] de Longchamps *The Schoolhouse Poems*, p. 14.

irony of its concluding line. Fear is the dominant emotion of the poem, fear of being stalked, fear of being killed. The narrative is simple; a woman driving down "escape's sweet road to timberline" passes "signs forbidding firearms" and feels safe from trespassers. But along the road is a pick-up truck, and in an instant safety is gone: "three men and three rifles cocked at the ready." The woman stops, speaks, and is answered in that patterned voice of encroachment, "We can shoot coyotes, yeah we can, / it's ok for coyotes, you got it wrong, ma'am." With that, the woman hurries on, becoming one with the coyote:

> Since then, they've been coming to get me.
> Curled up, small as coyote, I hear them;
> three men and each with his rifle. I run
> dodge in the dark and take bullets in,
> fall and fall—

Underlying the narrative is the sense of nature being chased down and destroyed by man until nature, the woman, reacts: "then crazy for sleep, / I turn and I shoot to kill."[9] This final irony, nature fighting back with the very weapons it fears, is a typical de Longchamps twist. She often remarked that paradox and irony were the necessary elements for holding life a few notches above mere existence.

Irony is also a strong force in "The Red Internationals." (1975) It is easy to accept this poem as a pleasant account of a day spent trucking through the foothills, but a few significant phrases lead the way to a more bitter reading. The poem begins:

> Crazy, or ready to be,
> you can ride from your city
> to a place between high-rise and hermitage
> (that last empty cave) to here—

The prevailing image is one of escape from city confines, yet the suggestion is that the escape is only partial and that it is irrational. The poem continues to describe "here" as a:

> country of four-wheel drives,
> paradise for pick-up trucks
> that bear, safe under tarps, glossy
> slope-shouldered cycles waiting their turn
> to be loosed on the land,
> to be mounted and bounced and throttled wide open.

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[9] Ibid., p. 16.

The jumbled rhythm of retreat in the first six lines is tightened to an anapestic gallop as the metaphor of mechanized beasts creates an image of an army on the attack. However, the front is amorphous, and the troops arm themselves first with "joyous . . . booze." The poem concludes with the poignant irony of tamed animals being used to track down their wild kin to be killed in these war games against the wilderness:

> . . . lovable dogs whining pleasure
> to belong to a marvellous master
> whose hands and commands they will run to
> when motors stop and the guns are lifted
> from the racks in the cabs of the red Internationals.[10]

The final irony of the poem is de Longchamps's witty pun on red Internationals. After all the war imagery in the poem, she once again puts tongue in cheek and hints that the innocuous International truck—a simple, durable farm vehicle—might, if put to the wrong use, be a symbol of an alien political ideology.

Regardless of the tone of her poems, de Longchamps always maintains a sense of unity with the landscape, of seeing life as a reflection of nature, the human microcosm. "Diary Entry: Galena Creek" (1975) is a love poem, although not of the usual sort. In each stanza of the poem a segment of the day is considered; its creatures, personified. In the morning, lizards, "dragons doing push-ups," exercise and rest like athletes performing their regimens. In the afternoon, squirrels perform a *pas-de-deux* on an aerial stage of two trees with intersecting branches. And at night there are the "unseen owls / questioning the wilderness." Then the metaphor is reversed and the persona's lover embodies all of the creatures:

> and you become
> anthology of animals;
> my lizard doing push-ups,
> dancing squirrel and hunting owl
> sleek, pouncing on softness.[11]

"Diary Entry: Galena Creek" reflects the increasing personalization of voice in the later de Longchamps poems as she becomes not only a participant in nature, but also an active participant within her own verse.

Another intensely personal poem is the eulogy, "Late Letter to Walter Clark," (1972) written a year after the writer's death in November, 1971. Joanne de Longchamps was a friend of Walter Clark, sharing with him a love of the Reno area, a passion for literature, and an appreciation for the Univer-

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[10] Ibid., p. 17.
[11] Ibid., p. 18.

sity of Nevada, Reno. Appropriately, she was the first to hold the Walter Van Tilburg Clark Chair in Creative Writing at UNR, which was established in 1973. The poem moves in a gently pensive way backward through the year after his death, through the mountain-valley images they shared to the gravesite "on a snowhill." Using Clark's own description of a hawk, de Longchamps eulogizes the man who, like his hawk, "sailed up out of the white mountains . . . gaining height against the wind . . . the light golden in the fringe of his plumage." It is a straight-forward poem, visual in its images, touching in its content. Of all the poems, this one is the most simply passionate expression of the Western person at home in the Western landscape. De Longchamps speaks of the mountains and valleys in the Reno area as if all the world, at least all the world that matters, will recognize them as readily as they would their own family homes. The hawks "cross your trembling valley / between two peaks; exalted Rose / and the humped black bulk of Peavine." It is "my year for watching them."[12] And it was her year for remembering.

That year was also de Longchamps's year for coping with her own fragile life. She was approaching the half-century mark, already scarred by several surgeries, weakened by multiple sclerosis. In "Breaking, Mending" (1972) de Longchamps looks to the landscape for solace, but realizes that it is not always possible to find an exact analogue in nature for all human experience. The final rite of passage is nearing, slowly and inexorably:

> Self-torn from a trap,
> I limp to my mending—
> look up into pines;
> webbed ladders,
> cross-hatched tangles,
> a geometer's madhouse,
> a twigged maze of angles.
> I note the red
> new wood in the cracks
> of the tree's black rind.
>
> I try for solace,
> a forced hypothesis—
> thinking:
> by breaking of bark,
> this ragged splitting,
> does a conifer grow.
>
> No analogy here—
> with breathing flesh
> it is not so.[13]

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[12] Ibid., p. 23.
[13] Ibid., p. 24.

Joanne de Longchamps published seven books of poetry, plus more than three hundred uncollected poems. Over the course of four decades her style changed from one based on traditional, structured forms to one of flexible arrangement and patterning. Gradually she moved closer to her subject matter, and with that movement she heightened the intensity of her imagery and the compression of her uses of language.

In addition to the poems emphasizing the images of Nevada's landscape, de Longchamps also wrote about the sea. She once told her friend, Pauline Nichols, that if Reno had a sea coast, it would be the most perfect spot on earth. Another fascination that captured de Longchamps's imagination was Greek myth which she frequently adapted to modern themes in her poetry and in her collages. Her last two collections, *One Creature* and *Warm-Bloods, Cold-Bloods*, are beautifully arranged to reflect the merger of de Longchamps's two arts which she said "since childhood . . . have been twin concerns for me. Very often they complemented one another, the paintings illustrating the poems, the poems growing out of the paintings."[14]

In the final two decades, particularly, de Longchamps emphasized themes of female experience. Most are in her own voice; a few are miniature dramatic monologues; and several use the omniscient narrator. Particularly strong in both imagery and versification, these poems deliver intense emotional impact and render remarkable diversity.

Regardless of subject or voice, however, de Longchamps's mature poems express the merger of landscape and personal experience. Joanne de Longchamps literally absorbed the Nevada landscape into her life and into her poetry. Sometimes her images are panoramic, expressing the immeasurable vastness of Nevada's deserts, lakes, and mountains. At other times, her focus turns to the minuscule, emphasizing the fragile balances of nature necessary to survival. Always, these images are compressed into metaphors for human experience.

In 1983, her sixtieth and final year, Joanne de Longchamps was honored twice for her contributions to the literature and art of Nevada. The prized Governor's Art Award for Literature and an honorary Doctor of Letters from the University of Nevada, Reno, confirmed Nevada's appreciation for this poet-artist who had made Nevada her home forty-two years before. Although de Longchamps's seven books of poetry are currently out of print and her art resides primarily in private collections, these recent honors have brought renewed attention to her work. It is reasonable to expect that the next few years will see the publication of a new anthology of her poetry, including some of the previously unpublished poems. The critical analyses are just beginning. Joanne de Longchamps is indeed a compelling poet.

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[14] de Longchamps to Bill Willard, May 26, 1967, Nevada State Council on the Arts.

de Longchamps Books of Poetry

And Ever Venus. West Lost Angeles: Wagon and Star Publishers, 1944.

Eden Under Glass. Francestown, N.H.: The Golden Quill Press, 1957.

The Hungry Lions. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963. Reprinted by Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1974.

The Wishing Animal. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1970.

The Schoolhouse Poems. Reno: West Coast Poetry Review, 1977.

One Creature, Poems and Collages. Reno: West Coast Poetry Review, 1977.

Warm-Bloods, Cold-Bloods: Poems and Collages. Reno: West Coast Poetry Review, 1981

Sandstone Quarry: A Site Complex in the Spring Mountains of Southern Nevada

KEVIN RAFFERTY

SANDSTONE QUARRY is a geological and man-modified complex located in the Red Rock Canyon Recreation Lands (RRCRL), a recreation area supervised by the Bureau of Land Management. It is situated fifteen miles west of Las Vegas at the base of the Spring Mountains. This area was the locus of an intense protohistoric occupation by Southern Paiutes during the nineteenth century, and it was exploited for its sandstone by the earliest Anglo settlers of Las Vegas in the early twentieth century.

In late 1982 and early 1983, the writer, then employed by the BLM, conducted an intuitive survey[1] in the Sandstone Quarry area. This was prompted by a report from a visitor concerning a rockshelter associated with charcoal pictographs that seemed to date from the recent protohistoric period. The investigation of this site (number 26CK419 in the Smithsonian Institution site numbering system) led to the conclusion that further work was necessary in order to assess the archaeological resources and potential of the area; plans then could be established to protect the sites from increased visitation caused by the paving of the Red Rock Canyon loop road and the opening of the Visitor's Center in May, 1982. Thus in late December, 1982, and late January and early February, 1983, the author, assisted at various times by Red Rock Canyon Recreation Lands Manager Rodger Schmitt, Rangers Doug Filer, Steve Fleming and Rick Obernesser, and District Archaeological Technician Ron Young, undertook an intuitive survey and reevaluation of already recorded sites. Thirteen sites were recorded: ten were previously recorded, and three sites previously unknown. The specific data is reported below, and an attempt is made to interpret these sites in the light of their local and regional significance to the archaeological record.

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[1] An archaeological survey that examines known or suspected site locations, as opposed to a sample survey which examines parcels of land selected via mathematical sampling theory.

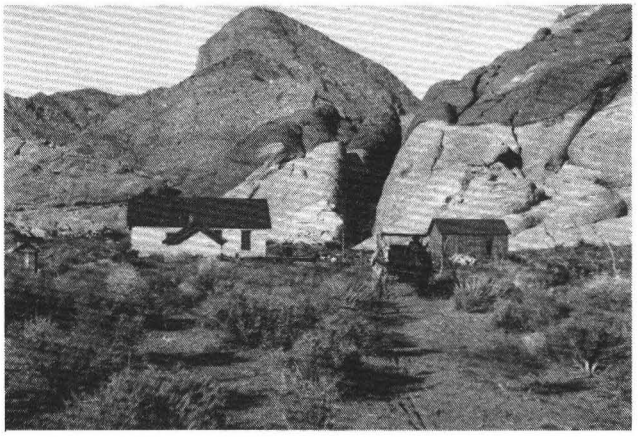
Natural Setting

For over 400 million years, the study area was part of an ancient sea bed that deposited what are now layers of limestone and shales that comprise the Spring Mountains. Crusted movement and structural faulting thrust up the mountains and the dominant feature of the study area, the Red Rock Canyon escarpment that rises over 3000 feet above the Las Vegas Valley floor and forms the eastern edge of the Spring Mountains (Seior 1962; Fiero 1976; USDI, BLM 1980).

The arid valley floor receives only about four inches of rain a year, but precipitation increases to about twelve inches a year at elevations over 7,000 feet. Daily temperature fluctuations of 30°F or more are common, and temperatures range from a low of 5°F to a high of 110°F in the study area. The scanty rainfall and high temperatures prevent the formation of surface streams, but numerous springs in the Red Rock Canyon areas provided abundant water for the aboriginal inhabitants of the region (NOAA 1955-1978; USDI, BLM 1980).

Vegetation also changes with elevation, with each vegetative zone supporting a slightly different set of fauna. Zones within walking distance of Sandstone Quarry include creosote (under 4,000 feet), oakbrush-blackbrush (4,000-6,000 feet), Joshua Tree (3,600-4,200 feet) and pinyon-juniper (5,000-7,000 feet). There are also a number of unique vegetative types located in the cool, well-watered canyons cut into the face of the escarpment (USDI, BLM 1980). Thus the Spring Mountains provided several different types of exploitable habitats for the humans who occupied the southern Nevada region for the last 12,000 years.

The Sandstone Quarry consists of two sets of sandstone outcrops bisected by a large, southerly flowing wash, and it is in a transition zone between the



Sandstone Quarry. (*Courtesy of University of Nevada, Las Vegas*)

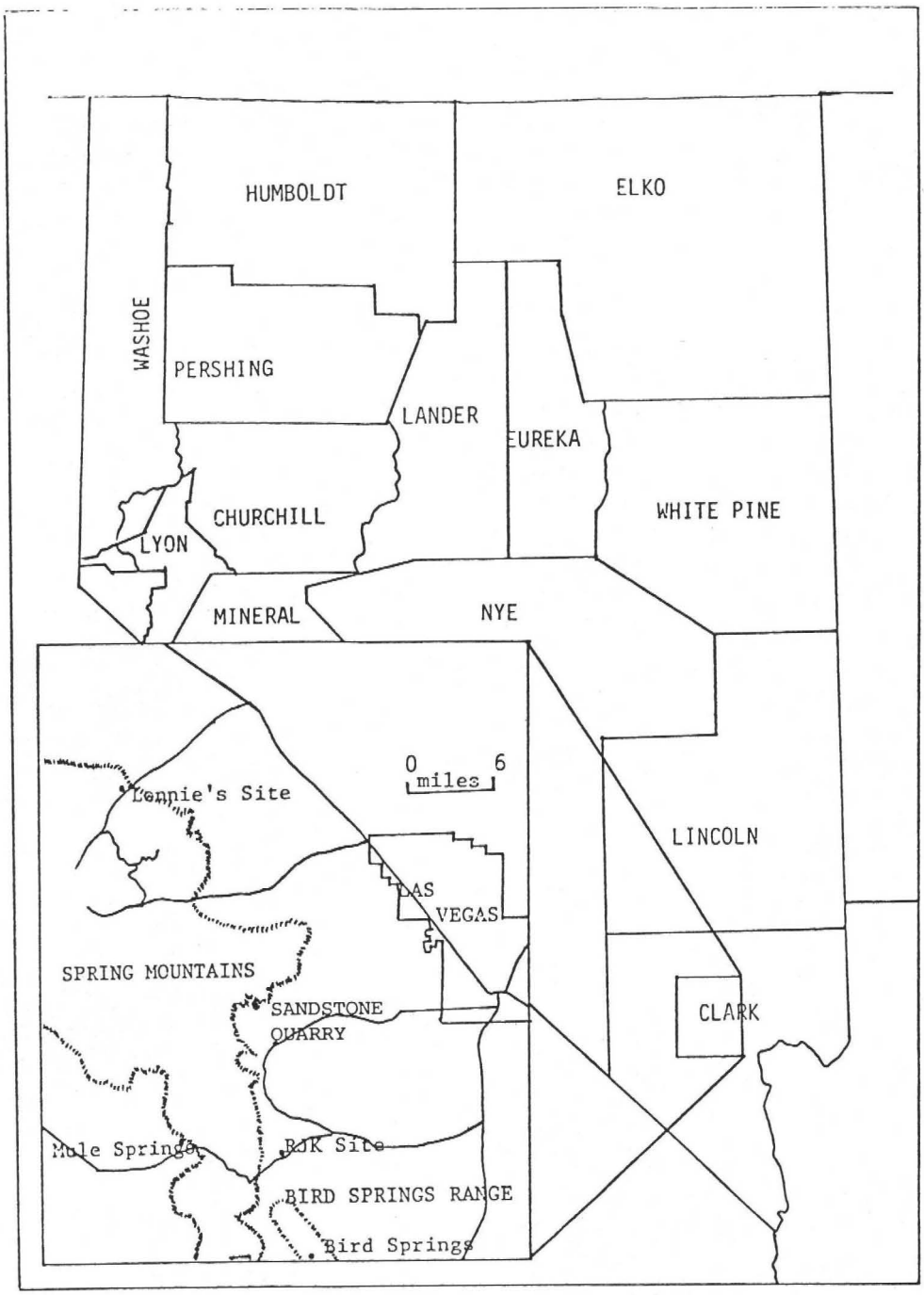

HUMBOLDT
ELKO
WASHOE
PERSHING
LANDER
EUREKA
CHURCHILL
WHITE PINE
LYON
MINERAL
NYE
0 miles 6
Lonnie's Site
LINCOLN
LAS VEGAS
SPRING MOUNTAINS
SANDSTONE QUARRY
CLARK
Mule Spring
BJK Site
BIRD SPRINGS RANGE
Bird Springs

Figure 1

yucca and blackbrush communities. In addition to these flora, the area contains several species of cacti, Indian rice grass, desert almond, agave, and a small community of juniper and pinyon in its northern reaches. Exploitable animals in the region included bighorn sheep, white-tail deer, jackrabbits and cottontail rabbits, desert tortoise, lizards, and birds. Water was available at several springs within two miles of the study area and at numerous sandstone *tinajas* (natural water catchment basins) that contain water in the spring after winter rains. Sandstone Quarry was a very desirable area for prehistoric use.

Prehistoric Site Descriptions

This report does not represent the first work conducted in this vicinity; a number of other researchers have conducted surveys and excavations in the Sandstone Quarry area.[2] However, the results of this survey and the ensuing literature search[3] represent the latest and it is hoped the most accurate description and interpretation of the archaeological and historic material of this locality.

The prehistoric sites can be placed in three categories. The first is roasting pits. These sites are circular or doughnut shaped features consisting of burnt limestone and organic material that seem to have been used in the southern Nevada area for many hundreds or thousands of years. The aboriginal inhabitants of the region roasted agave, desert tortoise, bighorn sheep, pinyon nuts, and other wild resources in these pits. In Sandstone Quarry there are five sites that can be placed in this category either as individual roasting pits or as collections. There are twelve of these features, ranging in size from 2m to 17m in diameter, and from .5m to 1.5m high. It is obvious that they are indicative of a long period of use by humans within Sandstone Quarry.

Petroglyphs are designs—geometric, human or animal—that are pecked into sandstone or other outcrops of rock, while pictographs are similar sorts of designs painted onto rock outcrops. There are three sites in Sandstone Quarry that are strictly petroglyph or pictograph sites. One consists of black painted lines criss-crossing in a grid pattern on a sheared-off sandstone panel in an area 3m by 3m. This site also has some red ochre lines and blobs that may have been figures interspersed among the black lines. The second site consists of two small petroglyphs, one a headless human figure carrying a bow and spear and the other a badly worn circular figure.

The third site deserves separate consideration. This site has been named "Prayer Service Cave" by the author, and has been recorded previously

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[2] Published and unpublished reports include Duffield (1904), Harrington (Brooks *et al.* 1976:2), Shutler and Shutler (1962), Brooks *et al.* (1976, 1977a, 1977b), Martineau (1973) and Moen (1978).

[3] Sites originally recorded (Brooks *et al.* 1977a) were revisited and re-recorded, while the survey consisted of examining the western and eastern sides of both sandstone outcrops, tops, sides and bottoms looking for a recording as thoroughly as possible archaeological sites contained within the study area.

Quarry Machinery at Sandstone Quarry. (*Courtesy of University of Nevada, Las Vegas*)

(Moen 1968; Martineau 1973). It consists of a large oval cave situated above the Sandstone Quarry Wash, 12m wide, 3m high, and 6m deep. Its outstanding feature is two lines of charcoal anthropomorphs (human figures); there are between forty and fifty such figures drawn on the cave's back wall. As identified by their hats and clothing, these are Anglo settlers or travelers and include men, women and children, all holding hands. Also depicted are horses or mules and what may either be a loaded packhorse or possibly a camel. There are also several badly faded charcoal figures, several small geometric petroglyphs on the cave floor, and two small petroglyphs (a hunter aiming a bow at a sheep) just north of the cave. Situated north of the cave in the wash is a roasting pit that may have been associated with it.

It is the author's opinion that this site is one of the most spectacular renderings of charcoal pictographs in the southern Nevada area. It probably dates to the late protohistoric or early historic Southern Paiute Indian occupation of the region.

The final site type consists of rockshelters or living sites situated within caves or alcoves carved into sandstone or limestone outcrops. There are four of these, all accompanied by midden or dark organic soil containing artifacts and bone; some of these were also associated with roasting pits and/or pictographs and petroglyphs. The solitary rockshelter is small, 2m by 1m by 1.5m, and it contains only a few nondescript artifacts and stone tools. The other three contain additional features that deserve some separate discussion.

The first is a west facing shelter 12-15m above Sandstone Quarry Wash. Measuring 4m wide, 1m high, and 3-4m deep, it contains midden soil with chert flakes, sheep bone and bone fragments, a bone awl, and several possible sandstone grinding stones. There is also what seems to be a small wall inside. This shelter is also accompanied by a series of pictographs and petroglyphs (Moen 1968; Martineau 1973) situated either on two sandstone boulders in the cave mouth or on the cave wall. At least eighteen petroglyphs can be identified, including six human figures, three bighorn sheep and nine geometric or abstract linear figures. The pictographs are executed in black charcoal similar in style to "Prayer Service Cave," and include: one Anglo wearing a hat and carrying a rifle and pack, two deer associated with a hatted hunter, one horse and rider, three other Anglo figures, five bighorn sheep, and several faded or blobbed figures. These could date from any time beginning in 1829 when the Old Spanish Trail started going through the Las Vegas Valley (Hafen and Hafen 1954) until the permanent settling of the Las Vegas Valley by ranchers in the late 1800s.

The second shelter site contains midden soil with artifacts; it is associated with a roasting pit, and consists of two caves, one for habitation, and a small alcove with seven charcoal pictographs including four sheep, two deer and one badly smudged figure. The third shelter also contains midden and artifactual material, and is associated with a roasting pit and several badly

faded petroglyphs including circles, a warshield (?), some abstract geometrics and some unidentifiable figures. All of these caves have been vandalized. Brooks (1969) conducted some test excavations at the latter two sites.

Historic Site Descriptions

One major historic site (the one for which the area is named) has been recorded in the Sandstone Quarry area. This site contained six buildings or structures, five quarry areas, two roads, and several historic carvings. It was first recorded by Brooks et al. (1977a:24-27), and then heavily researched in the historic archives by John Lancos, a ranger for Red Rock Canyon Recreation Lands. The present author then conducted the field work and put into final form the data presented here.

The site was originally known as the Excelsior Stone Quarry, and it was opened in 1905 by the Lyon-Wilson Construction Company of San Francisco. Its original purpose was to produce "superior quality" sandstone for buildings in Los Angeles and San Francisco. The stone was cut into blocks of up to ten tons by a channeling machine, and then transported overland in large wagons to the Salt Lake Railroad siding for shipment. A seventeen-ton steam traction machine pulled the wagons, which often weighed twenty tons or more. Unfortunately, the "Big devil wagon" as it was called in the *Las Vegas Age*, consumed 400 gallons of crude oil a day, and thus proved to be an uneconomical means of transport. When an acceptable grade of sandstone was located closer to Las Vegas, the quarry was shut down in 1906. (See the *Las Vegas Age*, May 20, June 24, and August 26, 1905, and October 6 and December 29, 1906. Also, John Lancos, research notes.)

Later in 1906, the quarry was reopened as the Lincoln Sandstone Company, but it fell on hard times, and was reorganized as the Nevada Sandstone Company in 1910. The last reference to the quarry in the *Las Vegas Age* is in late 1912, after which presumably the operation was shut down. (*Las Vegas Age:* January 9 and May 8, 1909; March 12, April 2, April 9, April 30, May 7, May 28, July 16, 1910; January 6 and November 9, 1912. John Lancos, research notes.)

In general, all three operations employed from fifteen to thirty men and used similar equipment, including channeling and gadding machines, hoists and derricks. However, Nevada Sandstone Company also employed a gas-powered traction engine called a caterpillar, which was more powerful and efficient than the old steam traction engine. (*Las Vegas Age*, May 7 and May 28, 1910).

Archival research by Lancos in the Special Collections Department of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Library uncovered eight photos of the quarry, showing the quarry headquarters, a storage barn, an outside privy,

the channeling machine, various hoists and cables, and the general quarry areas. Today, these features are in ruins, with only the foundations of the buildings remaining, along with the remnant blocks from the quarrying, the quarry areas themselves, garbage dumps, and parts of the old wagon road (Figure 2). There is also a series of historic carvings in the area, indicative of recreational use of the area early in Las Vegas's history. Each category of features is discussed below.

Four photographs from the Ferron-Bracken collection in Special Collections show the main quarry building, the storage barn, and an outside privy. The main building appears to have been rectangular, constructed of rectangular bricks of sandstone held together by mortar, with a pointed roof apparently covered by wooden planks or shingles. Today, all that remains of the building are the sandstone foundation blocks, which have been damaged by the construction of an access road into the quarry, and associated historic debris (Figure 3). This ruin measures 8m × 12.5m in overall dimensions, oriented north to south, with one interior room. Five meters of the main building is a small storage room that measures 5m × 5m, with a large pothole in its center. There is an associated scatter of historic debris in and around the building, and dumps on the edge of the adjacent wash. The building has been vandalized and pothunted.

The two barns were constructed of wood planks, in the same rough design as the main house. Remains of the buildings include remnants of several wall supports partially enclosing an area 4m × 8m, and 2.5m × 4m, respectively. There is a large historic artifact scatter south and west of this feature, and the scatter is bisected by both the modern access road and the remnants of the old wagon road (Figure 2). There is a third structure, a tent platform, consisting of a dirt platform with its eastern wall a single tier of sandstone. It measures 2.5m × 4m and is north of the barns. A small dugout or outlier in the back of the wash is 132m north of the main building. It has a sandstone wall built into the bank of the wash; it is roughly rectangular, measuring 3.5m × 5m, and it is associated with various historic debris.

Located north of the main operations building (on a bench overlooking the main wash) there are other historic features that may be associated with the quarry. Situated on the eastern side of the wash are three mounds or linear features of shaped sandstone and rubble, and a linear feature at the base of the sandstone boulder. The first feature is oriented in an east-west direction, and it measures 11m long, 2m wide, and 1m high. In an approximately 20m radius around the mound there are hundreds of white porcelain fragments. Feature 2 is 30m northeast of feature 1, and the third feature is 20m north of the first. Numbers two and three consist of the same materials, and are of roughly the same dimensions as the first. Finally, 43m north of Feature 1 is what appears to the base of a temporary windbreak, consisting of three shaped sandstone blocks forming a clearing 3m long × 1m wide. There were

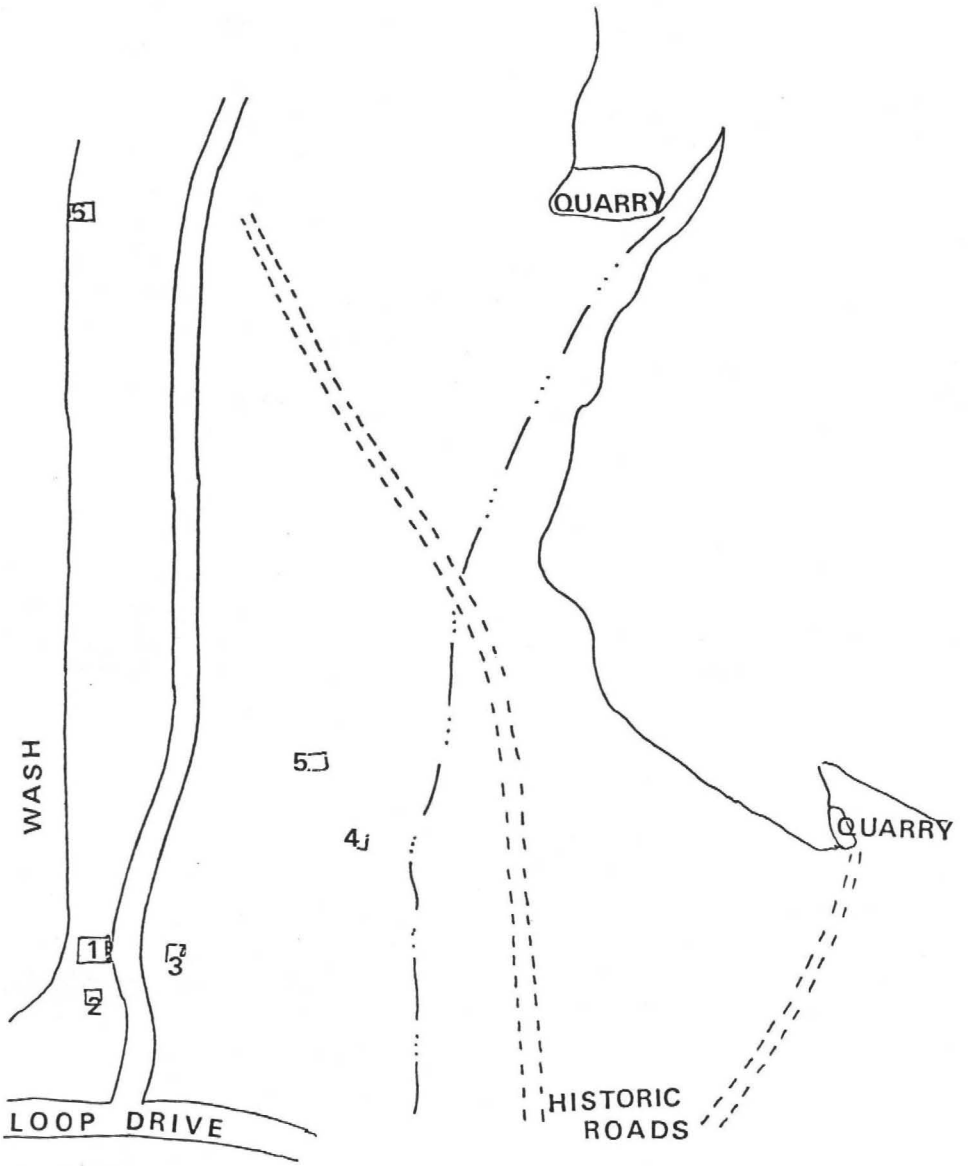

Figure 2

no artifacts associated with the windbreak, and only a few porcelain fragments with Features 2 and 3. The purpose or function of these is presently unknown.

There are five quarry loci within a half mile of the main operations building. The first is the quarry associated with the USGS map, a rectangular pit cut into the western edge of the sandstone hills a quarter of a mile north of the operations building. There are large rectangular sandstone blocks here, evidence of the use of the channeling machine.

The second quarry area is northeast of the main building, and consists of a sandstone shelf and accompanying talus slope; it is one-tenth of a mile from the main building. Area three is two-tenths of a mile east of the main building, and is at the end of an offshoot of the old historic wagon road. It consists of a rectangularly shaped cut in an east facing wall of red sandstone, and slopes downward (north) into a wash.

Areas four and five are farthest from the main building. The former is six-tenths of a mile to the northwest, cut into a sandstone outcrop. It consists of a rectangular cut into the outcrop, and a large talus slope, all facing east. There seem to be no access roads leading to this quarry, so how the material was transported, if at all, remains a mystery. Area five is one-half mile north of the main building up the main wash on its western periphery. It consists of two quarry holes or shafts, associated with several circular drill holes driven into the sandstone outcrop south of the shafts. The shafts measure roughly 2m across and 5m deep, and contain wooden cross beams and other debris. There is also a short access road bladed onto the outcrop, ending 40m south of the shafts.[4]

Finally, there are four examples of historic "petroglyphs" in the quarry area. The first reads "A.N. Arnold Colwich Kan." It is on a quarried sandstone face at the second quarry area, and thus could not have been done prior to 1905. The second reads "J.W., E.G. Woodard, April 13__." This probably can be attributed to John Warren Woodard and his wife, Edith Georgiana, who were married February 3, 1931. Woodard was an important businessman in early Las Vegas from at least 1910 on. He was the proprietor of a steam laundry, and in addition he at times sold cars, oil, mining equipment and tires. He also operated "motor camps," and held various public offices, including that of sheriff in 1916. Woodard died in Albuquerque on

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[4] There are four road segments associated with the quarry; they are parts of the old wagon road through the Red Rocks area. Segment #1 begins .4 miles southeast of the paved entrance into Sandstone Quarry, loops southwest and then northwest around a small knoll ending .15 miles southeast of the quarry entrance, where it is destroyed by the paved loop road placed in the wagon road bed. This connected to segments #2 and #3, which begin .1 mile east of the present quarry entrance. Both are about .15 miles long. Segment #2 bears northeast and terminates at quarry 3, while segment #3 terminates by quarry area 2. Segment #4 is the portion south of quarry area 5, and is several hundred meters long. It bears to the northwest out of the wash onto the sandstone outcrops on the west side of the study area.

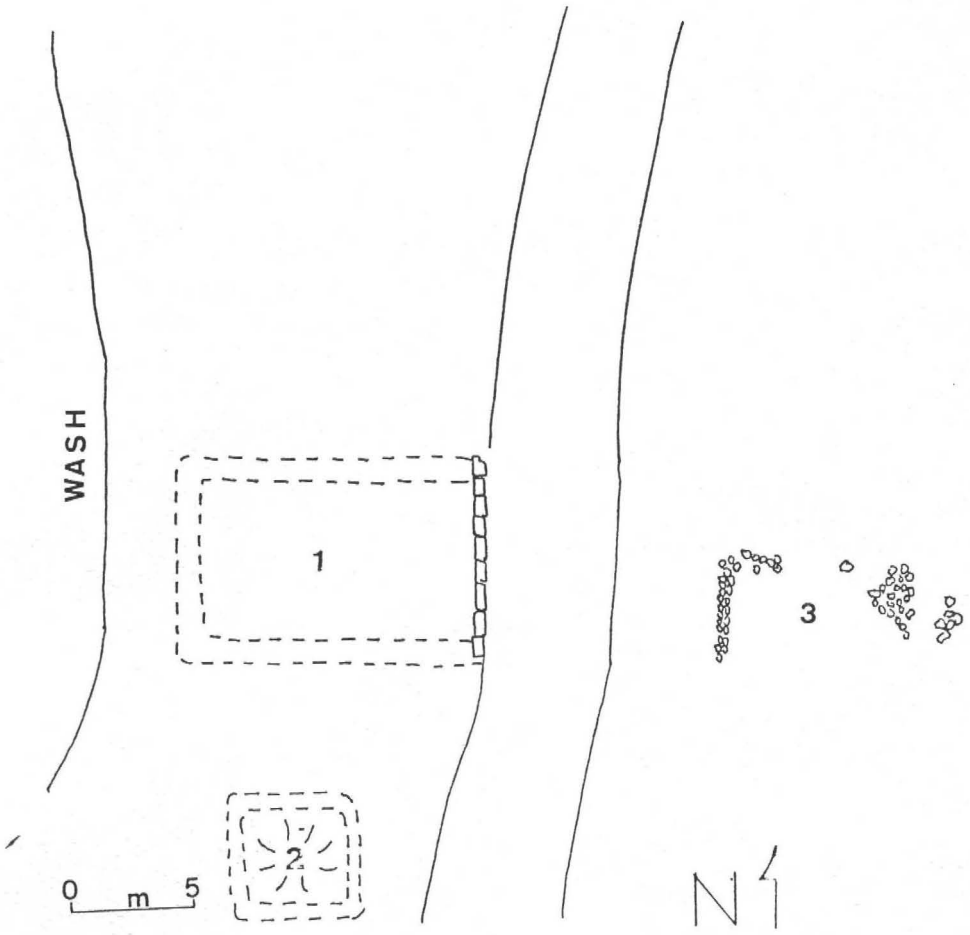

Figure 3

September 10, 1944. There also are two dates ("1905" and "1910") that are probably the work of quarriers working at the site.

Discussion and Interpretation

The prehistoric and protohistoric sites at Sandstone Quarry represent the seasonal occupation of the vicinity for many hundreds of years. In terms of the necessities of subsistence, the study area is rich in the flora, fauna, and water resources that are needed to survive in the region. A wide variety of edible flora exist within or close by: three varieties of yucca, Indian rice grass, beavertain and cholla cactus, desert almond, pinyon and juniper, manzanita, cliffrose, scrub oak, and most importantly, agave. In addition, game animals such as bighorn sheep, mule deer, jack- and cottontail rabbits, desert tortoise, and a variety of small lizards, rodents, and avifauna also occur. Most importantly, water is available on both a seasonal and year-round basis. There are several permanent springs several miles east and west of the quarry, and there are hundreds of small *tinajas* in the sandstone outcrops, as well as several large tanks in the adjacent Calico Hills. These could hold thousands of gallons of water, and could have provided water into late spring or early summer, depending on the amount of winter rains that had fallen from December through February or March, and sometimes later.

The suitability of the study area for temporary habitation and resource exploitation is well illustrated by the number of sites in the one-half by one-fourth mile square area. There are twelve prehistoric/protohistoric sites and five individual rockshelters. In the spring and the fall, aborigines could come into the quarry area and exploit both ripening floral resources and available game animals. Grinding stones located in the shelters, as well as the presence of roasting pits, testify to the exploitation of flora; quantities of bone (presumably bighorn and mule deer) in the rockshelters testify to the exploitation of game.

The length of occupation and the identity of the groups that occupied the quarry area are uncertain except in its later stages of occupation. The two Class II surveys conducted by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas teams (Brooks et al. 1977a,b) identified Puebloan, Paiute, and Lower Colorado ceramics within the general Red Rocks area, and various other projects within the Spring Mountains (Brooks, York and Massey 1972; Ancient Enterprises 1980; Turner 1978) have recorded these same ceramic types in excavations of rockshelters. The literature that deals directly with Sandstone Quarry (Shutler and Shutler 1962; Moen 1967; Brooks 1969; Brooks et al. 1977a) either do not record ceramics at these sites, or just note that ceramics were present. Nonetheless, it seems very likely that the exploitation of the area extends to at least the Puebloan occupation of the Las Vegas Valley, circa A.D. 700-1100.

The possibility exists that the study area was in use prior to the Puebloan era, based on data elsewhere in the Red Rock Canyon and Spring Mountains area. Mule Springs Rockshelter (Turner 1978), Lennie's Site in the Spring Mountains (Brooks, York and Massey 1972), Bird Springs Rockshelter (Ancient Enterprises 1980) and the RJK Site in southern Red Rocks (Rodriguez and Rodriguez n.d.) all contain projectile points dating to the Archaic occupation of the region—there are Eastgate and Pinto points in particular. Additional archaic material was noted in the southern Red Rocks area at Lone Grapevine and Scrub Oak Springs in the form of projectile points and Great Basin curvilinear petroglyphs that may date to 1000 B.C. (Cunningham 1978; Heizer and Baumhoff 1962). The petroglyphs at 26CK419 represent some Great Basin curvilinear and representational styles, and thus may help date the occupation of the area from 1000 B.C.

Evidence elsewhere in Clark County also hints at the possible ancient use of the quarry area. Excavations of roasting pits from the Virgin Peak area have yielded radiocarbon dates of 500 B.C. ± 155, 450 B.C. ± 80 and A.D. 595 ± 70 (Ellis et al. 1982). Work in the Dry Lake and Muddy Mountains area have yielded dates of A.D. 1440 ± 65, 845 B.C. ± 45 (Brooks and Larson 1975), and 1355 B.C. ± 125 (Ellis et al. 1982). It is not beyond the realm of possibility that the Sandstone Quarry roasting pits could yield similar dates.

Finally, the pictographs at 26CK419 and 26CK417 very likely represent a protohistoric or contact period use of the quarry. These figures have been known for a number of years. Moen (1968) recorded them in the late 1960s, but dismissed them, particularly the pictographs at 26CK417, as the work of "boy scouts" or vandals. Martineau (1973) recorded them in the early 1970s, claiming that they were authentic and that they represented Southern Paiute records of early travelers to California via the Old Spanish Trial. The writer has examined both sets in great detail, and is convinced that they are authentic Southern Paiute. The sheer number of the figures, their size and the details incorporated into them, are more than the average "boy scout" or "vandal" would know or wish to take the time to draw for a prank. There are also several charcoal figures in both sites that are obviously the work of vandals who attempted to imitate the work of the Southern Paiute, and failed miserably. These figures are blurry and smudged, and are far from being in the style and execution of the original artists. Based on these figures, it can be stated that the occupation of the quarry area could have continued into the period 1830-1849, the period the Old Spanish Trial was in use, or even to the Mormon occupation of Las Vegas during 1855-1857.

The historic quarry is significant because it was one of the first industries to spring up after the founding of Las Vegas in 1905. Mining had been important in the areas south and west of the Las Vegas Valley for a number of years in places such as Mt. Potosi, Searchlight, Goodsprings, and El Dorado Canyon, but not in or immediately near the present city of Las Vegas. Ranching and

farming were also important, starting with the Mormon mission of 1855-1857. The fort, buildings, and land eventually became the property of Mrs. Helen Stewart, who sold 1800 acres of her holdings to the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad, which in turn sold land as parcels to start the Las Vegas townsite. Thus, aside from the railroad, the Sandstone Quarry itself represents one of the earliest "industries" to have an impact on the economy of early Las Vegas.

From the standpoint of communication with the rest of the West, the quarry was also important. Sandstone was shipped to Los Angeles and San Francisco on the Salt Lake, San Pedro and Los Angeles Railroad, bringing the townsite of Las Vegas to the increased attention of west coast population centers.

Finally, the site is associated with at least one important person in Las Vegas, John Warren Woodard, whose initials are carved on a boulder in the quarry area. What sort of direct association, if any, Woodard had with the quarry is unknown; he did leave his mark, and probably this is evidence that the vicinity was a recreation spot from at least the early 1930s to the present day.

This rich cultural depository needs considerable additional research, including excavation, radiocarbon dating, and detailed recordation and analysis of artifacts and features. The present study, it is hoped, reveals the potential of the area and provides a summary and assessment of the current status of the data. The site complex discussed represents human occupation of the Sandstone Quarry for an extended period of time, perhaps thousands of years; it is a valuable repository for data concerning settlement and subsistence patterns through time. The complex illustrates cultural interactions in the prehistoric past, and records Western penetration into the Las Vegas Valley during the mid-nineteenth century. Additional examination of the area undoubtedly will reveal new and valuable insights.

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NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

"Reno Reflections"

Reno sits here upon a river-meadow with her back against the High Sierra and her face towards the Great Desert—and does not care what people say of her.

— Max Miller
Reno[1]

FROM OCTOBER 19, 1984, through the middle of April, 1985, the Nevada Historical Society has a photography exhibition in the Downtown Gallery titled "Reno Reflections." Funded in part by grants from the Nevada Humanities Committee and Reno attorney William Thornton, the exhibition explores the growth of the city through historic and modern photographs, taken from the same locations with the same angles. In addition, quotations from major works of fiction and commentary about Reno give varying impressions of the city.

Much of Reno's development as a city has come in the twentieth century. As a result, excellent photographic records of town life, showing both private and public buildings, exist in the photo collections of the Nevada Historical Society. These photographs chart the changes, the progress and even the occasional defeat of the human spirit amidst Reno's drive for commercial success.

Reno came to the realization early that although mining in Nevada brought prosperity, even greater wealth lay in the city's connections to the outside world. The built environment shows how Reno made itself attractive first as a mountain resort offering renewal of life and then as a gambling town with 24-hour casinos and neon. At the same time, Reno's structures and streets show it to be in many respects like other communities in America, undergoing dynamic change since the beginning of the century.

Photography for the exhibition was by Tony Mindling. Professor William Rowley of the University of Nevada, Reno wrote the interpretive text, and NHS Curator of Exhibits Phillip Earl provided the photo captions.

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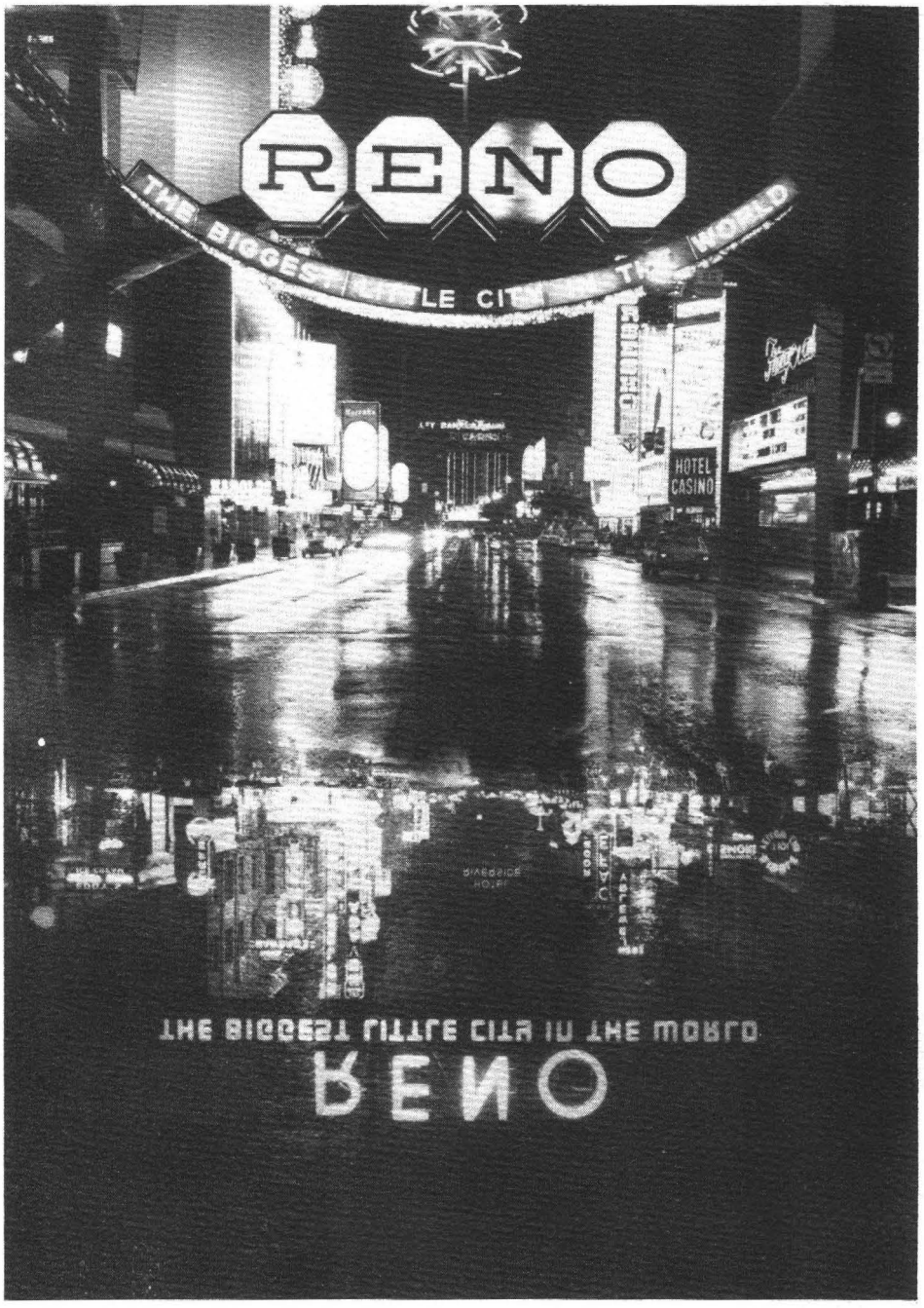
[1] Max Miller, *Reno* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1941), p. vii.



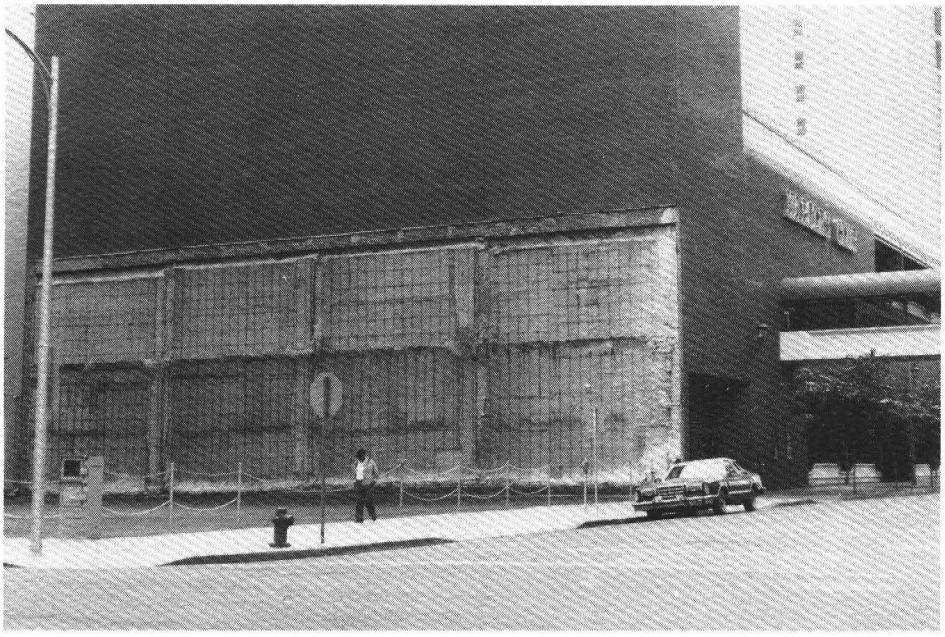
"Reno Reflections"

Virginia Street, south from Commercial Row, about 1904. The automobile had begun to replace the horse and buggy, and the bicycle was a vehicle of convenience. The old iron bridge at the end of the street was replaced by the current bridge in 1905.

Virginia Street and the Reno arch at Commercial Row. The older, neon arch dates from 1935, and the new arch went up in the fall of 1963.

Virginia Street in 1984.

The Palace Club, Commercial Row, about 1900. This wooden structure burned in 1909 and was replaced by a brick building. The club shared the fate of other historic structures torn down in the late 1970s to make way for an expansion of gaming.



The site of the old Palace Club, Commercial Row and Center Street. The 1909 Palace Club was torn down in the early 1980s.

Looking north on Virginia Street, 1924. The old Post Office to the right opened in 1908. The Mapes Hotel, 1947, currently occupies the site.

First and Virginia Streets, 1984, with the Mapes Hotel on the southeast corner and the refurbished Woolworth's store to the northwest.

Book Reviews

The Tennessee Letters: From Carson Valley, 1847-1860. Compiled by David Thompson. (Reno: The Grace Dangberg Foundation, Inc., 1983. xiv + 189 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, index. $15.50)

FROM HIS HOME ON MAIN STREET in Genoa, Richard N. Allen witnessed thousands of emigrants traveling the Overland Trail to California from 1857 to 1860. He heard firsthand the reports of the mineral discoveries in Gold Canyon and along the Walker River, and the circumstances surrounding the "Pyramid Lake War" in 1860. From September 30, 1857, to August 30, 1860, he described these and other events in his letters to the San Francisco *Herald*, under the pen name "Tennessee." In three years he wrote more than ninety letters containing early descriptions of Carson Valley, Lake Bigler (Tahoe), Carson City and other areas in western Utah Territory. He reported on the weather, conditions of the soil, food prices and the demeanor of the local residents. He also recorded events, such as the meetings of the circuit court, local political meetings, the arrival of Captain James Simpson's surveying expedition to Genoa in 1859 and others.

Allen's observations are colored by his wit. He was opinionated and prejudiced. In one letter he stated very plainly, "In my communications with the *Herald*, I have always expressed my honest feelings upon every subject I have treated, regardless of the approbation or censure of anybody whether Mormon, Jew, Gentile or Heathen; in doing so, I have aroused the wrath of many, but this gives me no uneasiness as they are not the kind I desire to please." (p. 61)

At first his brief letters were little more than travel descriptions, weather reports and complaints about high prices. As time went on, his letters became more detailed. He developed a style early in 1859 that separated several topics of interest, including agriculture, mining, immigration, Indians and local politics. He reported faithfully on these and other topics, although some were only mentioned. From May to September of 1860, Allen tried to collect and present the facts surrounding the Pryamid Lake War. He gathered his information from Indian agents, white eyewitnesses and the Paiutes themselves; he reported the causes, casualties and reactions to the incident as he believed them. As often as he was able, he ruled out the hearsay and told the story very well.

The Introduction to this volume tells the reader little about Tennessee other than his name, his admission to the State Bar in 1869 and his death

eight months later in White Pine County. There is an attempt to explain his coming to Carson Valley by correlating his arrival to the 1857 recall of the Mormon faithful or the opening of a wagon road across the Sierra Nevada. Had more research been accomplished, David Thompson would have found that Richard N. Allen came west to make his fortune as a miner in 1853 before his arrival in western Utah Territory in 1857. He either accompanied or came at the urging of Col. William B. "Uncle Billy" Williams, who owned both land and mining claims in the territory. Although Tennessee never stated his purpose in coming, it did not take him long to claim land, water rights, and mineral claims, and to establish a law practice in Genoa. Within a year he owned at least one thousand acres of land, including all of Williams's previous claims. In two years he owned major portions of the La Plata and Harford mining companies in Carson Valley and held the mortgage on some Genoa town lots. Sometime after his arrival, Allen was joined by his wife, Mary Jane, and two sons, August and Luis.

In 1860 he was sworn in as justice of the peace, advertising his services in the *Territorial Enterprise*; and he became an election judge for the first elections in Nevada Territory in 1861 and in Douglas County in 1862. Other references are lacking on Allen until his acceptance to the State Bar in 1869 and his violent death in 1870.

Tennessee's letters are left unedited in this book. They have been presented in their entirety, chronologically and complete with misspellings. There is an appendix that includes Allen's letters to the *Territorial Enterprise* and newspaper accounts of his death. They appear to have been added as an afterthought, and they are totally out of sequence with the rest of the letters. The few explanatory footnotes are almost trivial, and more important questions are left unanswered. Several times Allen rebuts articles from the *Herald* and the *Valley Tan*, leaving the reader with a one-sided account. It would have been more valuable to have included those letters or to have placed Allen's responses into some kind of perspective. Also, many people are mentioned but not identified, such as Uncle Billy Rodgers; his activities are described, but the reader still wonders who he was. The staff of the Research and Educational Planning Center of the University of Nevada, Reno have compiled a name index that provides a valuable reference. Several indices were compiled before this one was completed. It would have been more valuable to researchers to have included a subject index so that information could be located on prices, vigilantes or mining without having to read the entire book. Actually, it is unclear whether this volume is intended to be a reference work or just a series of letters compiled for readers' enjoyment.

The letters originally were compiled by William Doyle Malloy as an appendix to his master's thesis, "Carson Valley, 1857-1860" (unpublished ms., University of California, 1931). A copy of the thesis has been available at the Douglas County Library in Gardnerville for a number of years.

Thompson did compile the letters in the appendix of this thesis, and he "discovered" the identity of Tennessee by happenstance, but this could have been accomplished easily by referring to the index of the *Territorial Enterprise* available at the Reno headquarters of the Nevada Historical Society.

The book has been attractively designed by Jan Walker. Illustrations were used from J. Ross Browne's *A Peep at Washoe* and *Washoe Revisited*, as well as a watercolor of Genoa from the 1859 Simpson expedition report. The two maps on the endpapers provide a fascinating contrast between the overland trails of 1862 and present-day roads. Unfortunately, however, this volume offers nothing new in the way of scholarship, particularly since the letters had already been compiled. The publication in a handsome and well-conceived format does make them more readily available to researchers and to collectors of Nevadiana.

Jeffery Kintop
Nevada State Archives

Comic Relief: The Life and Laughter of Artemus Ward, 1834-1867. By John J. Pullen. (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1983. 202 pp. Notes, bibliography, appendix, index. $22.50)

DURING CHARLES FARRAR BROWNE'S brief career, he became (as Artemus Ward) one of the most popular and influential literary comedians in the nineteenth century, both in America and in England. At his premature death at thirty-three he left behind few published writings, no diaries, but a reputation and influence in American humor surpassed by few. A study of Browne's life offers an opportunity to understand many important strains of literary humor in nineteenth-century America, as well as catch a glimpse of its culture.

John J. Pullen's biography of Ward, *Comic Relief*, is admirable in many ways. He provides a full and accurate account of Ward's life, develops at length the circumstances surrounding some of Ward's most notable sketches and public lecturers, generously sprinkles his discussion with extensive examples of Ward's humor, and briefly treats Ward's influence on other American writers, most notably Mark Twain. Although Pullen does not particularly cite new facts that were not already developed at length in Don C. Seitz's *Artemus Ward* (New York, 1919) and E.P. Hingston's *The Genial Showman* (London, 1870), Pullen's informal treatment and anecdotal quality lend a charm to Ward's life not found in other studies. The fact that Pullen is not a professional literary critic enables him to avoid one of the pitfalls of analyzing humor that was recognized by E.B. White: "Analysts have had their go at humor, and I have read some of this interpretive literature, but

without being greatly instructed. Humor can be dissected, as a frog can, but the thing dies in the process and the innards are discouraging to any but the pure scientific mind."

It is, however, this lack of analysis that ultimately becomes the book's chief limitation and, unfortunately, diminishes its significance. After telling, for example, the well-known story of Abraham Lincoln entertaining his cabinet with a reading of Ward's story "High Handed Outrage at Utica" before reading to them the Emancipation Proclamation, Pullen goes on to develop reasonably well Lincoln's character and what it was that he found fascinating in Ward. But with a more important association—Mark Twain—we do not get a satisfactory analysis. To be sure, Pullen accurately retells the famous meeting between the two in 1863, and he recounts Twain's enthusiasm upon meeting the noted lecturer in Nevada. But the degree that Twain was influenced, both in subject and in style, by Ward is insufficiently treated. Pullen assumes that the readers of his book are already well-grounded in Twain's development as a humorist, and thus devotes little space to any discussion of Twain's artistry. And, for all of Pullen's suggestions that Ward was influential, he scarcely mentions three other successful humorists who found Ward's way of writing, his lecturing, and his prosperity attractive: Josh Billings (Henry Wheeler Shaw), Petroleum V. Nasby (David Ross Locke), and Bill Arp (Charles Henry Smith).

A more important omission, however, is the lack of analysis of Ward's writings and his techniques. He made famous one favorite device and gave an example of it: "People laugh . . . more because of my eccentric sentences than on account of the subject matter . . . . There is no wit in the *form* of a well-rounded sentence. If I say Alexander the Great conquered the world and then sighed because *he could not do it some more*, there is a funny mixture." He is illustrating anticlimax, a favorite misstep, as in Ward's touching story of his leaving his dear old father and his boyhood home: "I thought I saw tears tricklin' down his venerable chin, but it might have been tobacco juice. He chawed." An analysis of techniques like these and other favorites of Ward's, such as his eccentric sentences, conceits, overstatements, twisted clichés, logical confusions, euphuisms, misspellings, and comic lists of words would be useful. Also helpful would be a clearer and fuller discussion of Ward's affectations of naïveté, and his marvelous burlesques and dramatic reviews which, together with his platform techniques, insured his triumphant invasion of England shortly before his death. Too often the reader receives long passages of Ward's without adequate discussion of either the works, or, in some cases, their significance.

Despite these limitations, Pullen's study is worth reading. His facts are handled responsibly, and Ward's character is clearly delineated. Attention is

quite properly drawn to Ward's legacy, which should not go unnoticed by any student of American humor.

Joseph B. McCullough
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Plotting the Golden West: American Literature and the Rhetoric of the California Trail. By Stephen Fender. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982. 240 pp. Illustrations, map, bibliography, index. $24.95)

STEPHEN FENDER'S PROVOCATIVE WORK on the rhetoric of the California trail breaks a sometimes direct, sometimes devious trail of its own. *Plotting the Golden West* moves from the earliest reports of Captain John Frémont through the popular guides, diaries and letters of ordinary travellers all the way up to *Little Big Man* and the *Crying of Lot 49*, adding insights from writers as diverse as Jane Austen and Norman Mailer. Fender keeps the journey stimulating all the way.

Fender's frontier, like Edwin Fussell's, is not a matter of geography, and his researches touch on Hawthorne, Thoreau, Melville, and Whitman, all publishing within a few years of the strike at Sutter's Mill, and they include the early years of the Comstock as well. The emphasis is upon the amateur and professional recorders of the journey west who shared a common problem: how to write what Emerson called "the poem that is America," how to document the fantastic on the one hand, and how to fantasize the documentary.

Common strategies join the Washoe wits—Clemens, Taylor, de Quille—and the unpublished diarists: use of the vernacular for the experience and "finer garments" for description. But neither diarist nor journalist could find a really satisfactory voice for depicting the Golden West. Shared techniques included catalogs both negative and positive, pseudo scientific prose to record particulars, and figurative language copied from the picturesque in order to see castles in buttes and exotic natives in the Indians. There was general frustration in trying to force the West's gigantic shape into a borrowed Eastern or European mold.

Just as Washington Irving's accounts of the prairies were affected by his previous travel-writing about Europe and lost power by the mixture, so diarists who had read Frémont and Edwin Bryant's popular *What I Saw in California* sought to use those hybrid forms. Most seemed to feel obliged to describe the wonders they were seeing, and to imitate the scientist as well in marking specifics. And most were uncomfortable with the mixture. Multiple

accounts of individual writers trying to capture individual sights along the trail demonstrate the common problems particularly well.

In one of his best chapters Fender shows how the young Samuel Clemens learned much during his Comstock and California days from Dan deQuille and Bayard Taylor, and practiced that disparity of matter and manner that marks much comic Western writing. But Fender contends that Clemens initially failed to create social satire out of the stuff of his Nevada experience because he could not find a pitch, a voice to catch that dissonance between respectability and vulgarity that made Virginia City society a pretentious Victorian edifice precariously built above the square-timbered stopes of the mines.

Finding a narrative stance in the warring elements of the extravagant and the realistic continued to puzzle amateur and professional alike. In Hawthorne, the ambiguity of real and fantastic becomes a studied technique in *The Scarlet Letter*, and *The House of the Seven Gables* develops into conscious narrative strategy as it also does, Fender admits, in Thoreau and Melville. Faced with sights hard to comprehend, diarists and professionals alike could be beguiled into inflated diction and glamorized syntax that neutralized the effort toward straightforward, realistic accounts; most remained frustrated and weakened by the double style.

Some writers did succeed—and Fender's list of successes offers some surprises. While male diarists were hobbled by their sense of being engaged in heroic endeavor, the few women who wrote showed "precision and energy" in their prose. Not only had the women read different books—*Pilgrim's Progress* and captivity narratives—but also they found nothing beneath the dignity of notice. Fender claims that Captain Frémont learned to synthesize the objective and the subjective in an appropriate style, but he saves his highest praise for Thomas Berger and his fusion of fact and fantasy in *Little Big Man*.

Readers may disagree with his arguments for that tale as a major work, as they may argue with his view of the journey west as a "kind of vacation from Protestant communities" and as a heroic venture all at once, a male rite of passage, a glorified hunting trip; but scholars and lay readers of history and literature alike will find this provoking, carefully-documented study an articulate guide book. Fender is a perceptive reader of his varied texts, an able and lively writer. His "Suggestions for Further Reading" is a relaxed guide to still more useful material. In all, *Plotting the Golden West* is a fine addition to the growing number of works documenting those demanding days.

Anne Howard
University of Nevada, Reno

Frank Waters: A Bibliography with Relevant Selections from His Correspondence. By Terence A. Tanner. (Glenwood, Illinois: Meyerbooks, 1983. 356 pages. $45.00)

NEVER IN MY WILDEST DREAMS did I expect to review a bibliography.* Further, I never imagined I could possibly apply the word *exciting* to such a work. But while most bibliographies do not lend themselves to exciting reading, *Frank Waters: A Bibliography with Relevant Selections from His Correspondence* actually does. For this is far more than a bibliography. It constitutes a complete history of all of Waters's publications from 1916 (in his grade school literary magazine) through 1982 (*Cuchama and Sacred Mountains*), and it provides a fascinating record of the genesis and publication history of each work of this major author—frequently in Waters's own words.

Tanner's decision to include selections from Waters's correspondence, "to flesh out the bare bones," is a most fortunate one. The result is almost like having a book entitled *Everything You Always Wanted to Known about Everything Frank Waters Has Written.* The "bare bones" themselves are of great interest. The bibliographical material is thoroughly detailed, and it is complete, covering Waters's books, his pamphlets published by the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, his foreign translations, his contributions to books by others, to *Encyclopedia Americana,* to periodicals, and to the prize-winning *El Crepusculo* (which he edited), and even his blurbs. It also includes articles by others containing material by Waters, and interviews with Waters; and it contains a fine selected list of articles written about Waters and his work.

But, for me, the correspondence alone is worth the price of the book. In it we find not only factual data concerning Waters's intentions, and historical accounts of various problems and tribulations, but we also see much of the plain hard work—the sweat, tears, disappointments, and frustrations—that are all a part of the craft of Frank Waters. In addition to revealing Frank Waters the writer, the bibliography also reveals Frank Waters the man. While this is totally contrary to Tanner's avowed (and frequently frustratingly adhered to) intention (e.g., he refrains from indicating the place in which a letter was written, feeling that that would be "biographical" rather than "bibliographical"), scholars and students will find it invaluable for providing insight into the man himself. For example, from a letter to Mable Dodge Lujan about *The Man Who Killed the Deer:*

We all break away. We look outward, and inward, and finally see in ourselves the macrocosmic universe, and the world outside as a microcosmic replica of ourselves.

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* This review originally appeared in the journal *Western American Literature,* Vol. XVIII, #4. It is reprinted with permission.

And what prompts us, and ever keeps us on the track of self-fulfillment, is that peculiar thing we call conscience which turns us back, or the intuition which illumines the forward step. It might just as well be called a deer. (February 14, 1941)

Or this comment on *The Colorado:*

I have been writing *The Colorado* for the past twenty years, though the words themselves have yet to be put on paper. (October 18, 1943)

Or from a letter about the *Book of the Hopi:*

After many years I've found that the bigger a thing is, the more trouble it meets initially. Only mediocrity has an easy path—and a short life. (September 2, 1962)

Or this charming reference to his work:

Despite the oppressive war news filtering through the pines, the corn comes up boldly, the trout streams pour full and noisily down the cañons, and I am shoe-deep, but with both feet, into a new novel. (June 21, 1940)

Also in Waters's own words is the introduction he has provided for Tanner's volume. Looking back on a lifetime of writing, he says

Every writer, whether he admits it or not, hankers after fame and fortune. That I did not attain them was the best thing that every happened to me. I was compelled to keep following the carrot dangling before my nose by doing still another book.

The reputation I gained of being "the best known unknown writer in America" does not make me uncomfortable. Nor being regarded as solely a "regional writer." . . . A regional writer, if he fulfills his role, shows how the whole is reflected in each of its parts.

I've never written my books as business ventures. At this late stage they seem stages of my creative development. Their mere writing brought their own rewards.

It seems to me that a book speaks to us from something between the printed lines. If it is honestly written from the heart, with a pure motive, it establishes an indefinable *simpatica* between writer and reader by merely opening a door to what the reader unconsciously knows.

Only rarely does a writer gain such acceptance. But when he does, if only once in a lifetime of prolific work, he is amply rewarded. He can be humbly grateful for having been permitted to speak in a language of the heart understood by many of his unknown and sometimes distant fellowmen.

In several differant ways, Tanner's bibliography brings a reader closer to Frank Waters.

Incidentally, through the process of researching and compiling this monumental volume, Tanner forces many of us to give up one of our favorite illusions—namely, that Scholarship resides solely in the halls of Academe. Tanner is primarily a business man, an antiquarian book-dealer, with offices in Chicago, Illinois. And, in this case, no university gets credit for encouraging or supporting his labors. Indeed, most of the work for the bibliography

was accomplished in the basement study in his home in Skokie, Illinois, after the rigors of the usual eight-to-five day.

The product of this labor, however, with all due respect to other Frank Waters scholars, is the finest piece of Waters scholarship yet published. And it is likely to remain the "high-water mark" for quite a few years to come. It is a scholarly tool of the first order. It will prove invaluable, not only to book dealers and investors, but also to students, teachers, and scholars, and to general readers interested in Frank Waters' work.

Charles Adams
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Forging New Rights in Western Waters. By Robert G. Dunbar. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983. xiii + 278 pp. Preface, notes, index. $19.95)

AT LEAST SINCE THE TIME of John Wesley Powell, scientists, lawyers, and scholars have speculated about the proper economic and legal institutions that would enable men and women to wring a livelihood from the semi-arid West. While they speculated, ordinary citizens acted to acquire and to apportion the natural resources of this region. Professor Dunbar picks up and then amplifies, corrects and supplements this story of Western water rights at the point to which it was developed by Walter Prescott Webb over half a century ago.

Dunbar reviews the irrigation efforts of southwestern Indians, missionaries, miners, and Mormons. The heart of his book, though, concerns the trials and successes of Western farmers. Farmers and businessmen attempted a variety of approaches in constructing and financing their irrigation projects. They worked alone, as well as with corporations, states, and the federal government in developing these projects. They also tried for a time to apply the English and eastern United States' riparian law doctrine in establishing their water rights.

The major contribution of Dunbar's valuable work lies in his comprehensive treatment of the development of the code of prior appropriation. The first state to replace completely the riparian code with that of the new adaptation was Colorado. By 1882, by means of constitution, statute, and judicial decision, Coloradoans had guaranteed the right of appropriation to all citizens. The only limitation was that the use be beneficial, a determination made first by local irrigation districts and ultimately by the courts.

But the Colorado system did not find favor with most Westerners. In Wyoming, where the state assumed the ownership of water and apportioned it to irrigators, a more workable system developed, and it spread, usually in

modified form, to various Western states. Many states had difficulties not only with their own citizens but also with those of other states. Professor Dunbar deals with the tortuous process of forming interstate compacts to apportion the waters of rivers flowing between and among the states.

Dunbar has no predecessors of note in his interpretation of the transformation of the common law of groundwater in the semi-arid West. This environmental adaptation began in California with the adoption of correlative rights to groundwater to ensure that overlying landowners each be given a proportionate share of the underground rivers flowing beneath their lands. The California system, however, never caught on as a principle of adjudication beyond that state.

What did become accepted was the New Mexico groundwater right that guaranteed appropriation rights in groundwater if the boundaries of underground waters were reasonably ascertained. Later the state declared all groundwater to be public property. New Mexicans also attacked the problem of groundwater wastage by establishing conservancy districts. Thirteen of the nineteen Western states have adopted New Mexico's principle of appropriate use of groundwaters to one degree or another. Dunbar concludes his work with two chapters on federal-state conflicts over water rights, and the recent struggles between advocates of appropriation rights and urban dwellers who wish to modify or eliminate them.

Forging New Rights in Western Waters is both an original contribution and a fine work of synthesis. Dunbar's conclusions are drawn from all appropriate secondary works and unpublished sources. He understands the intricacies of the changing demands of Western water user groups, and how their plans have reflected changing land uses. He can explicate a legal matter clearly. Dunbar places his topic, which is potentially strewn with organizational traps, in a sensible framework. Along with the works of Webb, Norris Hundley, and Lawrence Lee, Dunbar's book is indispensable for students of Western water use.

Gordon B. Dodds
Portland State University

Ohiyesa: Charles Eastman, Santee Sioux. By Raymond Wilson. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983. xiv + 219 pp. Notes, bibliography, illustrations, index. $16.95)

OHIYESA, A SANTEE SIOUX, better known as Charles Eastman, has deserved a biography. Born in the "deep woods" in 1858, he was by the time of his death in 1939 widely acclaimed as the foremost example of a Native American who had adapted successfully to white cultural patterns. To record and evaluate the odyssey that took Ohiyesa from a forest to an urban society is the objective of this book.

The 1862 Sioux Uprising in Minnesota left Ohiyesa a refugee in Canada separated from his family. By 1872 he had reunited with his father at Flandreau, South Dakota, converted to Christianity and enrolled in a mission school. The next eighteen years were spent pursuing a formal education at Beloit, Knox, and Dartmouth colleges as well as Boston University School of Medicine. In 1890 the Commissioner of Indian Affairs appointed Eastman as a physician at Pine Ridge Agency, where he arrived in time to care for casualties of the Wounded Knee Massacre. Marriage to white reformer Elaine Goodale, controversy with the agent, resignation from the Indian service, appointment as Indian secretary for the YMCA, and activities as a Sioux claim agent followed. Eastman accepted another Bureau of Indian Affairs position in 1902 as agency physician at Crow Creek, but this also led to controversy with his superior. One year later he was reassigned and charged with the responsibility of Anglicizing the names of individual Sioux allotted land according to the Dawes Act.

After 1903, Eastman supported himself by writing, lecturing, and operating a summer camp for children. During these years of popularity and influence, he helped to found the Pan-Indian movement, opposed the use of peyote, and reinforced the growing stereotype that all Native Americans were identical to northern Plains Indians. Between 1923 and 1925, Eastman served as an inspector for the BIA. Thereafter he lived in retirement until his death.

This biography of Ohiyesa was not easy for Raymond Wilson to prepare. Among other things, source materials were pretty much restricted to records of an official nature and to the published works of Eastman and his wife. The narrative, therefore, is long on accounts of government service but short on insights about the man. Eastman's three year medical school experience barely consumes a paragraph, while his disputes with BIA officials encompass whole chapters. The paucity of records necessarily prevents much discussion or critical comment on his relationship with the Republican Party, on his role as a father and husband, and on his skill as a writer independent of his wife's editorial work. Yet additional sources would only have enhanced what is without question an excellent biography. It puts Eastman's life into a broad historical context; it reads well; and it is as informative as it is objective. Wilson admits that the promise of Eastman's youth was never fulfilled, yet he demonstrates that Ohiyesa adjusted to an alien culture without abandoning his Indian identity. Given pressures to the contrary, the latter was no small accomplishment. If nothing else, it certainly qualifies Eastman for this careful inquiry.

W. David Baird
Oklahoma State University

Quarterdeck & Saddlehorn: The Story of Edward F. Beale, 1822-1893. By Carl Briggs and Clyde Francis Trudell. (Glendale, Calif.: Arthur W. Clark Company, 1983. 304 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. $20.50 cloth)

IN THE MIDDLE decades of the nineteenth century, few Westerners enjoyed as much fame and fortune as Edward Fitzgerald Beale. With an auspicious beginning as a midshipman, Beale initially appeared in the public eye during the Mexican War. Soon thereafter, he became a Brigadier General in the California militia and then served as the first Superintendent of Indian Affairs for California and Nevada. His greatest fame, however, came as director of the U.S. Army's ill-fated camel experiment during the 1850s. Beale capped his career by building a major wagon road to California and by representing the United States before the Hapsburg Court of Austria. Throughout these years, Beale also established close relationships with such leading figures in American history as Kit Carson, John C. Frémont, and Ulysses S. Grant.

The biography of Edward F. Beale is the twentieth volume of the Western frontiersman series of the Arthur W. Clark Company, a publishing house with a long record of significant contributions to Western historical literature. But there are several problems in *Quarterdeck & Saddlehorn* that prevent this volume from meeting the standards of this distinguished series.

Clearly Edward Beale is one of the fascinating personalities in nineteenth century American history. Not only was he actively involved in expanding the American empire to the West Coast, Beale used his own financial common sense, and his public position, to create an empire of oil, mineral, and land holdings that few others could match. But Briggs and Trudell rarely deal with the ideology—the motivation—that drove this man. Instead, they have written a book better described as Beale and his times, with emphasis on the latter. A biography should capture the essence of its subject. While Briggs and Trudell stress that Beale belongs in the pantheon of Western frontiersmen, they will not allow his career to be judged on its own merits. More often than not, the reader learns more about Carson, Frémont, and early California history than precisely how Beale reacted to the world around him and how a public servant was so quickly transformed into a millionaire. The constant references to the more famous people acquainted with Beale are not only distracting, they do Edward Beale a disservice. The book's conclusion underscores this problem. The authors describe Beale's character by comparing it to those of Frémont and Carson, leaving one to wonder whether Edward Beale had a historical identity of his own.

Another problem is that the authors often adopt the "cant of conquest" in their writing. Too many times, they describe the Native Americans as "savages." As a matter of fact, they declare that the San Joaquin Valley Indians "were neither civilized nor domesticated." (p. 122) Such cultural biases lessen the book's scholarship.

The volume's weaknesses are due, in part, to the book's chronological organization. A thematic approach could have raised, and answered, more questions. But perhaps this problem is almost unavoidable. Carl Briggs had to complete a project largely based on the research of Clyde Trudell who died in 1878. That Briggs could produce a manuscript under such circumstances should be applauded.

Quarterdeck & Saddlehorn does not succeed as a biography. Those who wish to know more about Edward F. Beale should read Gerald Thompson's excellent book, *Edward F. Beale and the American West* (University of New Mexico Press, 1983). Thompson's biography serves as the basic reference about the career of this oft-forgotten American.

Carroll Van West
Montana Historical Society

Tarnished Expansion The Alaska Scandal, the Press, and Congress, 1867-1871. By Paul S. Holbo. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1983. xix + 145 pp. Appendix, notes, bibliography, index. $12.95)

FOR THOSE FAMILIAR with Paul S. Holbo's previous work on late nineteenth century American foreign policy, this exhaustively researched, clearly written, and closely argued study on the scandal surrounding the Alaska purchase will come as no surprise. Holbo goes beyond the existing literature on this much-studied episode by focusing on the charges of corruption and suggesting their effect on subsequent territorial expansion. In the process, he confirms some charges, refutes others, illuminates several shadowy characters, and creates a fascinating detective story.

Contending that corruption and scandal have been "neglected subjects in American history," Holbo meticulously traces the lobbying and monetary payoffs that accompanied the Senate's ratification of the treaty and the House's approval of the $7.2 million appropriation. He demonstrates that Edouard de Stoeckl, the Russian minister to the United States, had approximately $400,000 at his disposal to help secure U.S. agreement to the treaty—$200,000 from the Russian government and $200,000 from the U.S. appropriation. Holbo agrees with previous charges that Stoeckl used $26,000 to compensate Robert J. Walker, a veteran Democratic politican and expansionist, for his lobbying and publicity efforts. He also concurs with the accusations that Stoeckl retained Frederick P. Stanton and Robert W. Latham, shadowy lobbyists and manipulators, as go-betweens with newspaper reporters and editors. Unlike prior commentators, Holbo argues persuasively that Stoeckl seized the opportunity provided by these surreptitious activities to pocket the "lion's share" of the funds. Finding no concrete evidence of payoffs to congressmen, Holbo challenges the allegation that

Walker was on his way to bribe legislators when robbed of $16,000 in gold certificates in New York City, and he absolves both Thaddeus Stevens and Nathaniel P. Banks of having traded their votes for money. His convicing conclusion that the verdict on Banks "should be not guilty, or at least not proven," breaks with the long-held historical consensus.

Rumors surrounding this Alaska lobby received a sympathetic hearing in 1868 and 1869; for it was, writes Holbo, a "time of little faith in government." An American public already bombarded by stories of corruption in the Treasury Department, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Interior Department was most receptive to the suggestion of still another "ring." Uriah Painter, an influential Washington lobbyist and reporter for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the *New York Sun*, doggedly pursued the rumors, broke a garbled version of the story, and prodded Representative Ben Butler of Massachusetts to call for a congressional investigation. After numerous other newspapers joined Painter in exposing the scandal, the House Standing Committee on Public Expenditures conducted two months of inconclusive hearings. The hearings substantiated little beyond payments to Walker, Stanton, and D.C. Forney, the publisher of the *Philadephia Morning Chronicle;* but since accusations against important papers and reporters abounded, the press provided extensive coverage. Ironically, when reporters and editors responded vigorously to the allegations of press corruption, they intensified the "impressions of widespread dishonesty."

"The purchase of Alaska," Holbo asserts, "had become a tainted act, and the suspicions were as important as the reality of the scandal." In his final and most provocative chapter, he argues that this scandal and the association of territorial expansion with corruption played key roles in frustrating subsequent Gilded Age expansionists. Most immediately, the Alaska affair "heightened sensitivities" among those inclined to suspect a "job" in Grant's efforts to purchase the Dominican Republic; and opponents of the Dominican acquisition consistently linked and emphasized the corrupt nature of the two projects. Nor was the impact confined to the early Grant years; the suspicions and taint attached to this "first scandal" would reappear with efforts to acquire Samoa and Hawaii. Not until 1898, when both the McKinley administration and its opponents were expansionists, would the "pattern of expansion blocked owing to cries of corruption" be broken.

In summary, Holbo has made an important contribution to the history of both the Alaska purchase and the course of late nineteenth-century territorial expansion. His promised sequel tracing the theme of corruption and expansion through the remainer of the Gilded Age should prove equally useful.

Joseph A. Fry
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

New Resource Materials

University of Nevada, Reno

County Records on Microfilm

Early records of Douglas, Lyon, Ormsby, Storey and Washoe Counties, as well as selected records of the Utah and Nevada Territories are available on microfilm in the Special Collections Department of the University of Nevada, Reno, Library. The project to microfilm these records was initiated and funded by the Carson Valley Historical Society several years ago. Upon completion, the Historical Society generously donated a set of film to the University Library. A guide to the records was compiled by Robert Mann in 1982. Both the guide and the film are open for use by all researchers, but must be used in the Special Collections Department.

The records, which date from 1860 to 1964, are in alphabetical order by county. Each roll of film is numbered within the county and is listed in the guide which provides the name of the agency, type of record, book number, inclusive dates and pages of each book. For example the first Douglas County microfilm roll appears in the guide as follows:

Board of County Commissioners
DG-1 MINUTES
Book 1 December 28, 1861-April 4, 1870, pp. 1-139.
Book 2 January 6, 1879-October 5, 1891, pp. 1-400.

County Clerk
RECORD OF BALLOTS (Primary & General Elections)
Book ? September 7, 1926-September 7, 1950, pp. 1-50.

Similar identification also appears on the box of film.

Types of records available on film are minutes of meetings of various county departments, voter registration lists, birth, death, burial and marriage records, mortgages, deeds, assessment rolls, plats of surveys, records of homesteads, mining district law and locations records, court files and minutes, naturalization records, patents, land records, water ditch rights and a variety of miscellaneous records.

Transfers to State Archives

Nine manuscript collections were recently transferred from the UNR Special Collections Department to the Nevada State Archives. The materials range from Thanksgiving Day proclamations made in the 1860's to specifications for the Governor's Mansion in Carson City in 1908. The two most important collections are fifteen pieces of correspondence of Governor John Henry Kinkhead, 1880, and a larger collection (seventy items) of Governor Harry G. Blasdel's papers, 1864-1870.

In the spirit of co-operation among state historical agencies, UNR Special Collections head Robert E. Blesse and State Archivist Guy Louis Rocha agreed that these papers, as official state records, should be transferred to the Archives.

During the past year the UNR Special Collections Department has already received materials from the State Archives and the Nevada Historical Society to supplement its existing collections. The department will continue its long-standing policy to transfer materials more appropriate to collections in other repositories.

De Longchamps and Dukes Papers

The Special Collections Department at the University of Nevada Reno Library recently acquired two significant manuscript collections, the papers of Nevada poet and artist, Joanne de Longchamps and the records of Federal Water Master Claude Dukes.

The Joanne de Longchamps papers were bequeathed to the University of Nevada by the artist, who died on November 13, 1983, in Reno. She was born in Los Angeles and moved to Reno in 1941 where she attended the University of Nevada and taught several classes in the UNR English Department. A nationally recognized poet, Joanne de Longchamps produced seven books of poetry, the later ones illustrated with her own collages. Her work was widely published in journals of poetry and in national magazines. The collection includes manuscripts, poetry notebooks, business correspondence, memorabilia, a personal library and correspondence with poet Harold Witt and Nevada artist Robert Caples.

Records of former Water Master Harrison Claude Dukes were given to Special Collections by the office of the Federal Water Master in Reno. The collection also includes water records from the early 1920s when Mr. Dukes's father served as the first Truckee River Water Master.

Harry Dukes was appointed by the Federal District Court in Reno in 1926 to regulate waters of the Truckee River. Claude Dukes performed field work for his father and later became assistant to Walter Bell who succeeded Harry Dukes as water master when he died in 1946. Claude Dukes was named

Water Master on Bell's death in 1959 and remained in the position until his death on September 9, 1984. He also inherited the position of Water Master of the Carson Valley which was decreed by the Court in 1949. The records contain a variety of water data from the two river systems, along with office files, correspondence and maps. Also included in the collection are Mr. Dukes's scrapbooks of water-related newspaper clippings from 1924 to 1982.

Lenore M. Kosso
Manuscripts Curator

Nevada Historical Society

Sanborn Maps of Las Vegas and Reno

The Society has enlarged its holdings of Sanborn Map Company fire insurance maps with the acquisition of atlases for both of Nevada's largest cities. An atlas for Las Vegas, containing a set of maps published in 1928 and revised to 1961, is apparently unique in that no similar volume is listed among the holdings of any other library or museum. It was donated by Jerry Bruner of Las Vegas, whose father, architect Elmo Bruner, had acquired it. The Reno atlas, which details the physical make-up of the city just seventeen years after its creation, was donated by Charles V. Carter of Reno and Honolulu, Hawaii.

The Sanborn maps, which for more than a century, beginning in 1867, were created for fire insurance companies and depicted in detail the structures and geographical development of major United States communities, are invaluable tools for urban, social and architectural historians. The Society's large collection of Sanborns, in original form and on microfilm, receives extensive use. We wish to thank Mr. Bruner and Mr. Carter for their gifts, which significantly enhance the value of this collection.

Silver Brick Saloon Records

Tuscarora, in Elko County, was a booming silver mining camp in the late 1870s, with its several thousand inhabitants supporting schools, churches, two newspapers and various business establishments. Among the last were numerous saloons, one of which, the Silver Brick, has had its records preserved to this day. An account book now held by the Society details receipts and expenses, and contains several inventories for the years 1877-1880, when the saloon was owned, successfully, by A.P. Matthews and Jerry Riordan. The saloon's transactions with the San Francisco liquor wholesaler Kane, O'Leary and Company are recorded, as are wages paid employees.

Fillmore Blacksmith Shop Records

In the 1880s and 1890s, Rufus and W.H. Fillmore maintained a blacksmith shop in the eastern Nevada mining town of Cherry Creek. Their shop was probably fairly typical of businesses of its kind at that time, and thus the records of its operation are of considerable interest to historians. The Society has acquired two journals that list customers, the amounts and types of work performed, and the charges made for blacksmithing and related work during the period 1880-1894. Some personal business activities of the shop's proprietors are also recorded. While little information about the Fillmores has survived, their account books remain to provide us with data on how they practiced their profession in early Nevada.

Eric Moody
Curator of Manuscripts

Contributors

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Barbara Agonia has been in the Department of English at Clark County Community College since 1971. Currently she is completing a doctorate in English at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Her dissertation is a critical analysis of the major poems of Joanne de Longchamps.

Kevin Rafferty is the Director of the Division of Anthropological Services of the Environmental Research Center at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He received his Ph.D. from the State University of New York, Stony Brook and has conducted research and published articles on Southwestern and Great Basin archaeology since 1978.

NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1904, the Nevada Historical Society seeks to advance the study of the heritage of Nevada. The Society publishes scholarly studies, indexes, guidebooks, bibliographies, and the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly;* it collects manuscripts, rare books, artifacts, and historical photographs and maps, and makes its collections available for research; it maintains a museum at its Reno facility; and it is engaged in the development and publication of educational materials for use in the public schools.