NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

Volume XXVIII Summer 1985 Number 2

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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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The *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* (ISSN 0047-9462) is published quarterly by the Nevada Historical Society, 1650 N. Virginia, Reno, Nevada 89503. The *Quarterly* is sent to all members of the Society. Membership dues are: Student and Senior Citizen, $5; Regular Annual, $15; Sustaining, $35; Corporate Patron, $100; Life, $2,500. Membership applications and dues should be sent to the Director, Nevada Historical Society, 1650 N. Virginia, Reno, Nevada 89503. Second-class postage paid at Reno, Nevada. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Nevada Historical Society Quarterly, 1650 N. Virginia, Reno, Nevada 89503.

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Yugoslavs in Nevada
Part I

LENORE M. KOSSO

IN RECENT YEARS, cultural diversity in America is enjoying a new resurgence. While in the past children of immigrants were usually encouraged to ignore their parents' "foreign" background, grandchildren of European families are now eager to discover their roots and learn about their heritage. Yugoslavs, or South Slavs, in Nevada are no exception, and judging by the activities of newly formed state and local clubs they are enthusiastic about keeping the Yugoslav culture alive.

Many Yugoslavs came to Nevada with the tide of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe after the turn of the century. They came to work in the mines and generally settled in the mining towns of Nye and White Pine Counties. This two-part series will focus on the Yugoslavs in Tonopah in Nye County and in the Ely-Ruth-McGill area in White Pine County, the two most important South Slavic communities in the state. It will discuss the origin of the people, their transfer of culture and their reception and ultimate assimilation in their new localities. It will also compare and contrast the Yugoslav experience in the two Nevada communities. Most important, it will record a part of the Yugoslav contribution to Nevada's history.

THE SOUTH SLAVS

The Yugoslavs are a complex and diverse people. Before becoming a nation in 1918, South Slavs were dominated and influenced by a variety of nations and cultures. The Balkan Peninsula knew Greek and Roman civilization before the various South Slavic tribes migrated to the area in the sixth century from their original home in the northern Carpathian Mountains. Slovenes and Croats settled in the north and west and came increasingly under Germanic influence, accepting Roman Catholicism as their religion. Serbs established themselves in the south and east, adopting Byzantine and Bulgarian culture, including Orthodox Christianity. This early and decisive cultural and religious split remained the most serious obstacle to unity among the South Slavs throughout their history. It continues to divide the people of

Freight team in Tonopah, *c.* 1903. Photo by Al Smith. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

Yugoslavia today, and it has carried over to relationships in the new world. Although the movement toward unity and a "Yugoslav Idea" began early in the nineteenth century, different cultures and historical experiences precluded national harmony. When the South Slavs came to America, they came as Slovenes, Croats, Dalmatians, Montenegrins and Serbs.

To complicate the problem of nationality, beginning in the late fourteenth century the people of the Balkans experienced about five hundred years of domination by the Ottoman Turks, who introduced yet another culture and religion to the South Slavs. Turkish occupation also instigated a series of migrations, the largest one occurring in 1691 when over 30,000 Serbs uprooted and moved north. The Lika-Krbava district in Croatia became a military frontier zone and an area of permanent settlement, where Serbs lived in close proximity to Croatians while maintaining their own customs and the Serbian Orthodox religion. It was from this region that large numbers of Serbs and Croats later emigrated to America, and many of them found their way to Nevada.

South Slavs began to emigrate overseas in significant numbers after 1880. A shortage of agricultural land at home, coupled with political, social and economic upheaval in the border areas, provided the impetus for young Slavic males to seek new opportunities elsewhere. The United States, a growing industrial nation, needed workers; and although most South Slavs

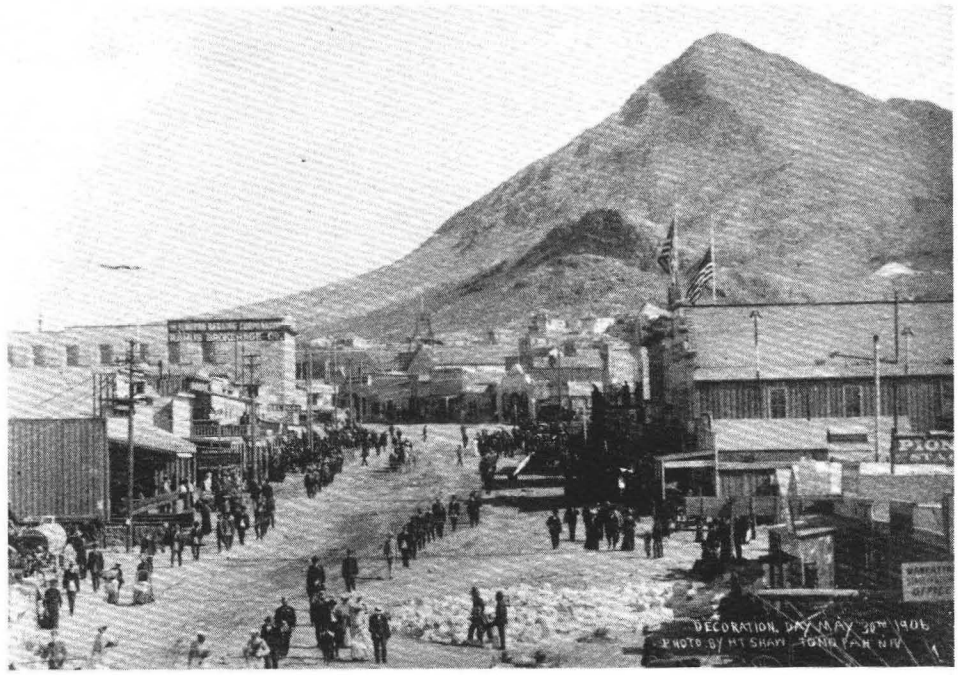
had been rural dwellers at home, they headed for the large cities and mining towns where employment beckoned. For others the political domination of the Balkan Peninsula by a foreign power, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, made emigration a necessity. Different parts of Nevada were populated by people from different parts of Yugoslavia.

The typical South Slav immigrant came to the United States alone. Most likely, he had a friend or relative already established in a city or mining town who had sent word of a job opportunity and with whom he could board. If he found steady work, he would probably send home for his wife or a village sweetheart to join him. In this way whole Slavic communities were often transported from the old country to the new. This pattern was followed in the two areas of Nye and White Pine Counties when South Slavs came to work in the mines during Nevada's twentieth-century mining boom. Slavic communities developed in Tonopah and around Ely, Ruth and McGill after 1900 when friends and relatives from villages in Montenegro and Croatia moved into these areas and brought their language, religion and culture with them.

A few South Slavs had ventured earlier into Nevada before the turn of the century, but almost without exception they were Californians who crossed the border to participate in the early mining activities in the Silver State. Some were actually miners, but the majority established themselves in the scattered mining communities as merchants and saloon keepers. Typically, they followed the boom towns, setting up business for a while and then pulling up stakes when the mining declined. Most of the early Slavic pioneers stayed in Nevada less than ten years and eventually returned to California. Some notable exceptions in Esmeralda, Eureka and Nye Counties remained and became prominent members of the Tonopah community.

The South Slavs who found their way to Nevada after 1900 differed from the few individuals who had come in the earlier days. There were more of them, they emigrated from several regions in the Balkans, and, most important, they formed sizable ethnic communities in both Nye and White Pine counties where their native language was spoken and Slavic culture was maintained. Another notable difference was that the later immigrants were predominately miners, or at least employed in the mining industry.

The South Slav communities in Nye and White Pine counties had their differences. Slavs in the Tonopah area were mainly Serbs from the Dalmatian Coast, Hercegovina and Montenegro. White Pine County drew both Serbs and Croats from regions in the northern portion of the Balkan Peninsula. In Tonopah, the South Slavic people became part of the community at large. They did, indeed, form a closely-knit ethnic group for social reasons but, in general, they were integrated into the everyday life of the town. A few of the Slavic pioneer businessmen remained from earlier days and, although the majority of newcomers to Tonopah were miners, some followed the old pattern and entered the restaurant and mercantile businesses. The Slavs in



Decoration Day Parade, Tonopah, May 30, 1906. Photo by H. T. Shaw. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

White Pine County, by contrast, lived in segregated communities. Almost all of them were engaged in some aspect of the mining industry and, if one or two did become the proprietor of a saloon or restaurant, it was in a Slavic neighborhood. These people did not participate in the affairs of the whole community but remained isolated in a small Slavic world. Partly because of these diverse environments, the two Slavic communities experienced unique problems and dissimilar development.

The Tonopah Community

The town of Tonopah was born with the discovery of ore in the hills of Nye County in 1900. It was an unlikely area for settlement because it lacked water and timber, and it was quite isolated in the Nevada desert. But in spite of these drawbacks people came. The new town was not far from Esmeralda County, and some of the pioneer South Slavs who had remained there became involved in the Tonopah community. John Chiatovich from Silver Peak was one of these. He was frequently mentioned in the Tonopah newspapers as a successful businessman and a respected resident of the area. George (Jefto) Davidovich, also a pre-1900 Yugoslav in Nevada, originated

from the same Dalmatian coastal area as Chiatovich who, reportedly, financed his passage to Nevada.[1] Davidovich arrived in 1886 and became naturalized in Hawthorne, Nevada, in 1890. When the town of Tonopah was established, he joined the community as one of its first businessmen. In 1901, Davidovich and Plamenaz opened the Silver Star Saloon and Hall, which soon became the Miner's Exchange Saloon.[2] Milo Plamenaz, a Montenegrin, also owned the Tonopah Soda Works and evidently had enough capital to purchase a half interest in a mine at Lone Mountain.[3] He had been in Nevada before 1880, as his name appears in the U.S. Census for that year which listed him as a miner from Nye County.

These three businessmen were not typical of the Slavic population that settled in the Tonopah area after 1900, but were individuals from an earlier era. Like the Slavic merchants and saloon keepers in the nineteenth century mining camps, they were recognized by the community as important citizens. The newspapers reflected this attitude and the daily activities of the Chiatovich, Davidovich, and Plamenaz families were reported along with those of other prominent Tonopahns. When George Davidovich's son Milo left for Reno to attend the State University, the *Tonopah Bonanza* noted the event and commented, "Milo is a bright, gentlemanly boy and will succeed in his education."[4] Milo did succeed. After graduating from the University, he returned to Tonopah in 1910 as the newly appointed assistant mines inspector. He was hailed by the *Tonopah Daily Sun* as, "an excellent example of a self-made man."[5] By this time, however, there were growing trends of negativism toward immigrants from southern and eastern Europe in communities throughout the United States, and Tonopah was no exception. The *Sun* reported that Milo was a native of Sodaville, Nevada, but the Voter Registration Record at the Nye County Court House indicates he was born in Austria and naturalized by his father's citizenship. Many South Slavs, emigrating in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, listed their native country as Austria since a large part of the Balkan Peninsula, including Dalmatia, was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The *Sun* noted that the young mines inspector had recently married a former "belle" of Tonopah and that she would be "welcomed on her return to the social circles."[6] The Tonopah paper neglected to mention, however, that Milo's father was George Davidovich, a well-known businessman, one of the town's first citizens, and a Slavic immigrant.

The elder Davidovich had clashed with the *Tonopah Daily Sun* in 1907,

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[1] Cecil Chiatovich, private interview, Reno, Nevada, October, 1973.
[2] *Tonopah Bonanza*, September 24, 1901.
[3] *Ibid.*, July 19, 1902.
[4] *Ibid.*, September 14, 1901.
[5] *Tonopah Daily Sun*, March 16, 1910.
[6] *Ibid.*

when the editor accused someone of importing South Slavs to work in the mines. George Davidovich defended the "hard working Slavs" without admitting he was the importer, but the editor of the *Sun* claimed that, "the employment of non-English speaking foreigners is bad for Tonopah."[7] The well-being of Tonopah seemed to be the key issue for the editors of the Tonopah newspapers. Both the *Tonopah Bonanza* and the *Tonopah Daily Sun* displayed an almost fanatical local chauvinism which influenced and dominated their news coverage. This was plainly illustrated in regard to George Davidovich who was given favorable treatment by the press a few years later. He had just redecorated the Miner's Exchange Hall and declared, after returning from a European trip, that Tonopah was just about the best town that he had visited.[8]

John Gregovich, another early Slavic pioneer businessman and one-time State Senator from Eureka County, was a resident of the Tonopah community in his later years. He was proprietor of a grocery store in town and Lena Gregovich, probably a daughter, taught second and third grades at the Tonopah school. On May 14, 1912, large headlines appeared in the *Tonopah Daily Bonanza* proclaiming, "One of Tonopah's Most Respected Citizens and Prominent Business Men" had been murdered by a fellow Slav. The townspeople were outraged and for several days local newspapers carried stories of the shocking event, along with elaborations of the tribute paid to Gregovich by the entire community. He was honored with a large funeral, and shops were closed in mourning.

John Gregovich's assassin, Andrija Mirkovich, was a Montenegrin, a miner who could hardly speak English. He claimed that Gregovich had cheated him out of some money that was rightfully his from a cousin's inheritance. Up to the day of his execution, Mirkovich never understood American justice; in Montenegro, family feuds were commonly settled by the knife. The Tonopah community had little sympathy for old country traditions when one of their "most esteemed citizens" was the victim—Gregovich had been a member of the Eureka Lodge of Odd Fellows and a pillar of the Episcopal Church of Tonopah—and Mirkovich was sentenced to death the following month. There were no Slavs on the jury, which deliberated only forty-five minutes.[9] Under a new Nevada law, which had just been passed by the 1911 State Legislature allowing death by a firing squad, Mirkovich was given his choice of being shot or hanged. He chose the former and created massive problems for state authorities in Carson City who had trouble finding volunteers to serve on the

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[7] *Ibid.*, August 7, 1907.
[8] *Tonopah Daily Bonanza*, March 30, 1912.
[9] *Ibid.*, June 13, 1912.

John Gregovich, formerly a Nevada State Senator from Eureka, who was murdered by Audrija Mirkovich in Tonopah in 1912. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

firing squad.[10] Finally, after a year's delay, Andrija Mirkovich became the first person in Nevada to be legally executed by shooting.

Andrija Mirkovich, who died a confused and lonely immigrant, was more representative of the South Slavs in Nevada after 1900 than John Gregovich, "esteemed citizen." Very few Slavic names appeared in newspaper articles which reported the activities of the local population in Tonopah. One or two became Masons or Odd Fellows or belonged to the exclusive Athletic Club of Tonopah, but the bulk of the Slavic population were given almost no recognition in the press.

Massive representation, however, could be found in the Tonopah cemetery. There are still some handsome gravestones in the Slavic section of the cemetery just outside the town, but a closer look also reveals scores of small metal markers indicating the graves of young Slavic miners who died in the early 1900's from silicosis. The dust from the Tonopah mines was particularly harmful to the lungs, and until water was used to subdue it, many men's lives were destroyed. One family, who lost a young relative, aged twenty-seven, described the insidious disease as one of constant coughing, bleeding and loss of energy which plagued the lives of the miners until they died, slowly and painfully. Except for a short, general article on "miners consumption," there was nothing in the Tonopah press about the disease, or its effect on the local miners. Indeed, when other state newspapers carried stories of illness in Tonopah, they were called "knockers" by the editor of one Tonopah paper who defended Tonopah as, "the greatest, the richest and the best mining camp in the world."[11]

For Tonopah the great influx of South Slavic people began soon after 1900, and most of them came specifically to work as miners. Some had mined in California, others came from mining camps in Arizona and Montana. A great many were Montenegrins, some were Serbs, but almost none were Croatians. Essentially, they came from the same area, on or around the southern

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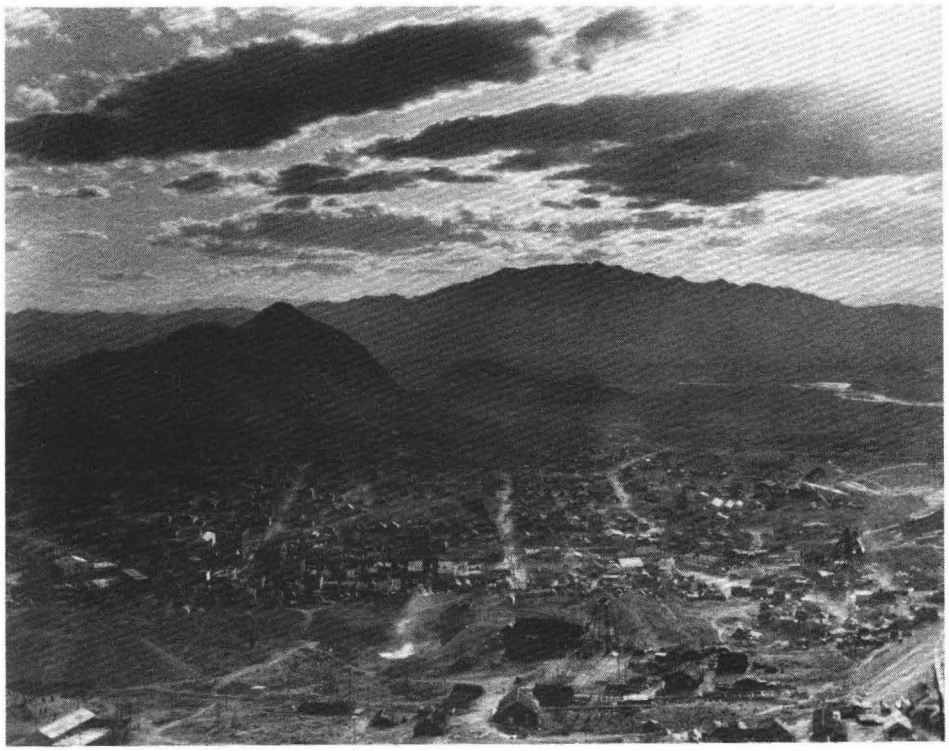
[10] Phillip I. Earl, "Nevada's Execution Machine," *The Nevadan, Las Vegas Review-Journal,* December 3, 1972, p. 3.

[11] *Tonopah Bonanza,* April 29, 1905. Although respiratory ailments among miners caused some concern, there was confusion about the classification and causes of these maladies until well into the twentieth century. An epidemic of pneumonia in Tonopah during 1901 and 1902 puzzled Nevada physicians, although some of them blamed "poisons in the ore" as a contributing factor and, it was noted, that similar outbreaks had been reported in a number of Nevada mining camps. A 1921 Department of Interior report described the disease commonly known as "miner's con" as phthisis or silicosis, which was caused by particles of rock containing free silica entering the lungs of the hard rock miner. The report stated that prolonged exposure to the free silica dust, combined with poor ventilation in the mines, contributed to the disease and also increased the miner's chances to contract pneumonia and tuberculosis. The report also noted that death records rarely distinguished which respiratory disease was the cause of death. See "Biennial Report of the State Board of Health, 1901-1902", *Appendix to the Journals of the Senate and Assembly, 1903,* 21st Session (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1903), and Daniel Harrington and A.J. Lanza, "Miners' Consumption in the Mines of Butte, Montana: Preliminary Report of an Investigation Made in the Years 1916-1919," U.S. Bureau of Mines *Technical Paper 260* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921).



Tonopah, late summer, 1914. Photo attributed to Mrs. Key Pittman. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

Dalmatian coast, from which earlier Nevada and California Slavs had originated. Small coastal towns such as Herceg-Novi, Budva, Kotor and Petrovac, famous for their Adriatic seamen and their vineyards; Trebinje, just inland from the coast and marked by centuries of Ottoman rule; and small mountain villages in Montenegro all sent young men to Tonopah. The entire area had been inhabited by Serbians since their arrival in the Balkan Peninsula, and for over a century and a half, it was part of the medieval Serbian Empire. A variety of foreign powers, however, exercised control and influence during succeeding centuries. Venice was most successful along the coast. Montenegro had been an independent kingdom for almost a century, when the Dalmatian coast and Hercegovina came under Austro-Hungarian administration in 1878. For the Serbian Orthodox people, whose national feelings were intensified by the emergence of an independent Serbia, also in 1878, Austrian domination was particularly resented. Many Serbs, in fact, emigrated to escape Austrian military service. Poor land, wine crop failure and a decline in the commercial importance of the Dalmatian Coast after 1870, all encouraged the growing swell of Slavs who emigrated overseas. Their fellow countrymen, who had gone earlier to settle in America, provided the impetus to emigrate,

as they had undoubtedly sent word of the new opportunities for employment in the western mines. By 1910, according to an estimate of the U.S. Census figures, there were 101 Montenegrins, 19 Serbs and 247 "Austrians" (about four fifths of whom were Slavs), living in Nye County.[12] Another, somewhat exuberant estimate by a South Slav who came later to Tonopah, numbered the Serbs there at one thousand.[13] The population of Tonopah in 1910 was about four thousand people.

The South Slavic miners were young and single, which was typical of the new immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. In Tonopah they lived in crude wooden cabins or in boarding houses. When a man married and established a family home, he and his wife almost always welcomed some of their single countrymen as boarders. Remembering the early days in Tonopah, one Slavic woman, Saveta Beko, who still lived in the house she came to from Dalmatia, recalled a life of constant hard work. Caring for her husband, five children, and a few boarders as well as cooking, washing, and fixing lunches for about ten people a day left little time to feel homesick in a strange, new land.

Seventeen-year old Saveta traveled to Tonopah from Herceg-Novi on the Dalmatian Coast in 1913 to join Pete Beko, a man she had never seen. He had arrived in Tonopah in 1904 from Angel's Camp, California, and had learned about Saveta through a friend. They were from neighboring villages in the old country. To marry a stranger was not uncommon for a Slavic woman. Indeed, before the First World War, in many parts of the Balkans, it was the regular custom for the bride not to see the bridegroom at all, not only before marriage but also on the wedding day.[14] Furthermore, men were scarce in Balkan villages at the turn of the century when many young Slavs emigrated overseas, and husbands were hard to find, particularly if one's family could not provide a large dowry. Nevertheless, it was no small adventure for a young girl to journey alone to a foreign world to begin a new life. Saveta Beko did not speak English when she arrived, but found in Tonopah a colony of South Slavic people. Her husband, a railroad worker, provided her with a pleasant home, and she settled down to a life in Nevada not much different from the one she had known in her native village and even perhaps a bit more comfortable. Nevertheless, it is difficult to imagine that she did not think longingly of the beautiful Adriatic, as she gazed out of her window at the bare hills of Tonopah.

Days were busy for the young Slavic housewife, and she remembers having little time for activities aside from household chores and raising the children.

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[12] Wilbur Shepperson, private notes.

[13] Gus Knezevich, private notes.

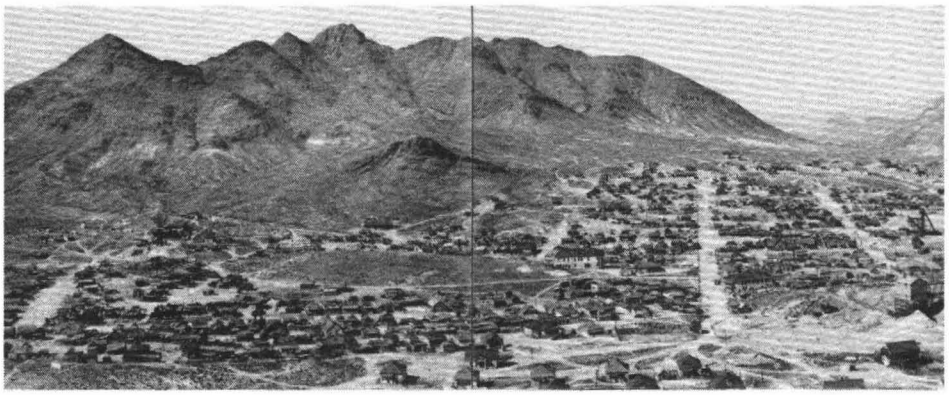
[14] Vera St. Erlich, *Family in Transition: A Study of 300 Yugoslav Villages* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 163.

Victory Loan Parade, Tonopah, c. 1918. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

She learned English from them and from their textbooks when they attended school. Mr. Beko had mastered the language quickly; he was able to help his fellow Slavs with correspondence and in obtaining their naturalization papers. Since he had become a citizen in 1910, Mrs. Beko gained that status on the day she married him.

Holidays were the highlight of the Tonopah Slavic community, and Saveta Beko looked forward to them. She regularly prepared Serbian dishes for her family and boarders; and for the Serbian holidays, she produced the traditional specialties of her native land. On these occasions, the Bekos joined with their friends for feasting, drinking, singing and visiting. Yugoslav hospitality is well-known and regardless of how poor a family might be, food and drink was always offered to guests. There was usually plenty at holiday time. The custom, on the Orthodox holidays, was for families to make the rounds of neighboring homes for a time of singing and refreshment. During some years the mines were forced to close on these days, which usually came on January 7 and a week after the western Easter. Celebration of the religious holidays centered in the home in Tonopah, mainly because there was not enough money for a Serbian Orthodox Church. When children were to be baptized, the Orthodox priest came from San Francisco to perform the sacrament.

An active Serbian Lodge in Tonopah served as the center of Slavic social life. Young Serbian miners, perhaps two hundred of them, formed the



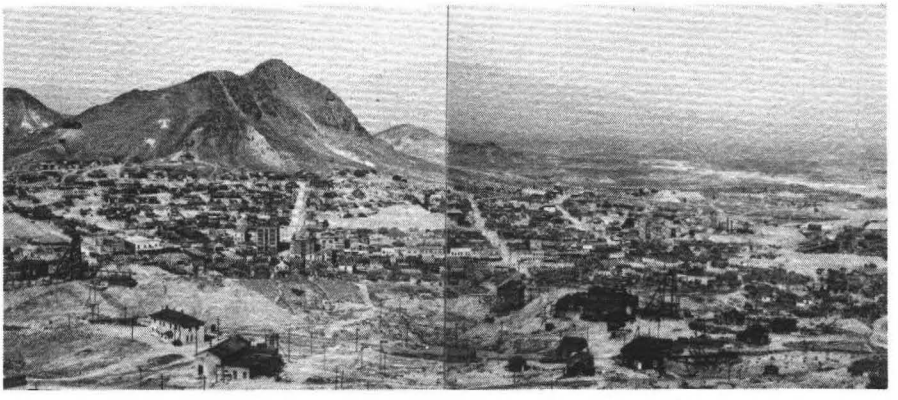
Panorama of Tonopah, summer, 1919. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

nucleus of the Lodge and marched as a group in parades and at funerals to the accompaniment of Serbian music. The Lodge was also a gathering place for parties where South Slavs of Tonopah danced the *kolo*, the national dance of Serbia. Since there were few authentic *gusles* from the old country, New World versions of this ancient one-stringed musical instrument were created with half an oil can, a wooden stick, and hair from a horse's tail. During the summer, the Lodge sponsored a Serbian school for children so they would not lose the cultural heritage of their ancestors. The children of Slavic immigrants learned to read and write Serbo-Croatian, the language spoken throughout Yugoslavia, with the exception of Slovenia. They recited poems and sang songs in the language of their parents. Mrs. Beko's oldest daughter could not speak English when she started school, although she had been born in Tonopah.

According to the Beko family, there was little discrimination against the Slavic people in Tonopah, except for the men in the mines. The South Slavs did not live in a segregated section of town and, in the early days, everyone "pulled together." The Bekos did achieve more prominence than most immigrant families, however. Pete became part owner of a grocery store and, in his later years, served a term in the 1945 Nevada State Legislature as Assemblyman from Nye County.[15]

The Slavic men in the mines, who constituted the bulk of the South Slavs in Tonopah, did suffer discrimination. They were often resented by their fellow non-Slavic workers because they would work for low wages and because they worked diligently, without complaint. Since many of them could not speak English, they were looked upon with disfavor and often ridiculed for their

[15] Saveta Beko, Rose Beko Skanovsky, Milka Beko Jacobson, private interview, Tonopah, May 1973. Olga Beko Traynor, private interview, Reno, Nevada, May, 1973.



customs. The Tonopah newspapers were leaders, or maybe they simply reflected public opinion, in the attempt to downgrade the Slavic immigrant and his culture. An article describing "Slavonian Christmas," which appeared in the *Tonopah Daily Sun* in 1910, exploited the Tonopah South Slavs for the amusement of its non-Slavic readers. Describing the "gala time in Tonopah," the *Sun* reported, "They kept the night in a state of uproar for hours, by their shouts and drunken orgies at various parts of town where they live a dozen or more in a house. As a result one, whose name is about three feet long and could not be reproduced in English, had his collar bone broken. Dr. Hammond was summoned to a cabin in the south part of town and found the victim gloriously drunk."[16] The insult of this news story was compounded by the fact that there were no serious attempts to publicize or explain the religious holidays and traditions of the Orthodox Slavic citizens, who comprised a sizable portion of the community. Neither were the functions of the Serbian Lodge included in the social news of the Tonopah press before the first World War.

The Tonopah newspapers did not ignore the Slavic population when any of them were involved in a fight. It has been observed that Tonopah was a surprisingly quiet town in the early years, despite the absence of a strong local law enforcement body,[17] but like most Western mining camps, it had its share of prostitution, heavy drinking and local brawls. Slavs found their way into the news when they were the subjects of a bizarre incident like a stabbing or a shooting, often with accompanying headlines such as, "Murderous Austrian Stabs Countryman."[18] Fewer inter-Slavic fights occurred in Tonopah than in White Pine County, however, since most of the Tonopah

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[16] *Tonopah Daily Sun*, January 8, 1910.

[17] Russell R. Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth Century Mining Boom: Tonopah, Goldfield, Ely* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1966), p. 54.

[18] *Tonopah Bonanza*, July 13, 1907.

Slavs were Serbian Orthodox, and there were few Catholic Slavs in the area. The result was that religious arguments between Orthodox and Catholic, which often led to violence, arose less frequently than in White Pine County. Occasionally religious feelings did lead to local feuds, which prompted the editor of the *Tonopah Daily Sun* to express his concern that too many foreigners were carrying guns. He voiced the opinion that, "the foreigner is a more dangerous man with a gun than the average American who carries one. When the foreigner carries a gun he has blood in his eye and means to kill someone who does not think as he thinks or against whom he has some idle and fancied grievance. The American carries a gun oftimes out of mere habit and does not always have his victim marked for death."[19]

The major grievance against the foreign-born worker, at least in Tonopah, stemmed from the belief that the immigrant was not contributing to the prosperity of the town. It was true that the Slavic people sent a large portion of their wages overseas to needy relatives. One South Slav, who became a successful hotel owner in northern Nevada, reportedly sent enough to build the first road into his remote village near the Dalmatian Coast. But even the poorest worker managed to save something from his wages to send back to the old country where, it should be remembered, many still had wives and children. Each week there was a line at the Post Office, and observers noticed an increase in the business of money orders.[20]

Much of the agitation against foreign-born workers began in 1907, when Tonopah felt the effects of national depression and the labor trouble in Goldfield, a nearby mining camp. Competition for jobs, coupled with fear that outside laborers would be imported to replace them in the mines, caused American and Anglo workers to resent the immigrants, whom they believed would work for lower pay. The *Tonopah Daily Sun* was a leader in the crusade against the employment of foreign labor, and it was at this time that it accused local Slavic businessman George Davidovich of importing his countrymen. In an editorial on July 30, 1907, a strong indictment against the colonization and employment of Slavs and Italians appeared accusing them of, "being used to monopolize nine-tenths of the work in the mines." The editorial claimed that no one else could get work, but its most bitter criticism was for the foreign workers who were not spending their money in Tonopah, but were sending it back home. The article attacked their way of life calling it, "no better than the worst of coolies and they are of as little benefit to the community. They have little intelligence and are low in the scale of civilization." The editorial implied that because of the foreign-born worker, businessmen had lost twenty to thirty percent of their former trade. Clearly, this

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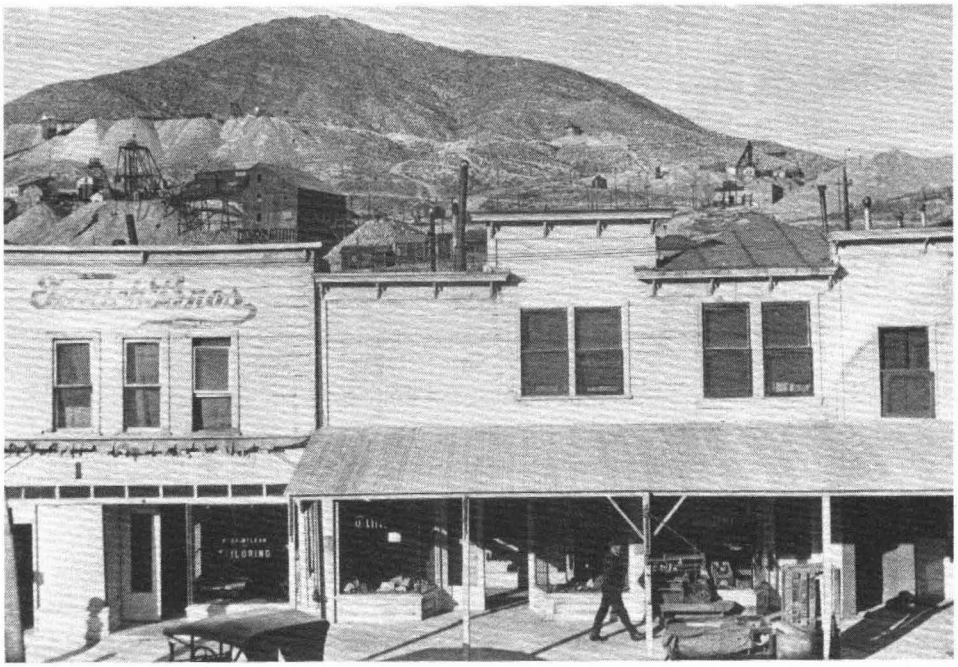
[19] *Tonopah Daily Sun*, February 2, 1910.
[20] *Ibid.*, March 14, 1910.



Tradich Bros. building, Main Street, Tonopah, c. 1921. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

was not good for Tonopah and, as the editor firmly stated, "This paper will do anything in its power for the preservation of Tonopah."[21]

Labor troubles erupted in nearby Goldfield between 1906 and 1908. Tonopah was also subjected to strikes and internal friction at the same time. In both towns the clashes between mine owners and unions fueled the fires of anti-foreign feeling among the native-born—miners and owners alike. L.C. Branson, owner of the *Tonopah Daily Sun*, also owned the *Goldfield Sun*. He used both papers to attack the unions. One in particular, the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.), provoked the most ire from Branson, the mine owners, and even other union miners, for its radical policies and its willingness to recruit foreign-born members.

It is difficult to determine the number of South Slavs in Goldfield during its brief existence as a sizable town. Total population figures of over 15,000 have been estimated for Goldfield between 1907 and 1908, and without doubt some were South Slavs. One source claims, "Hundreds of Serbian miners worked in Goldfield mines . . . from 1900 to 1910."[22] By 1910, however, the U.S. Census recorded only 104 Austrians and 29 Montenegrins in all of Esmeralda County. By this time, as well, the population of Goldfield had

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[21] *Ibid.*, July 30, 1907.

[22] Gus Knezevich, private notes.

declined to 4,838 people. If there were sizable numbers of Slavic people in Goldfield, they did not stay long and it is likely that those who did remain were saloon keepers and merchants rather than miners. George Wingfield, part owner and manager of the Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company, virtually controlled mining in Goldfield and attributed a great deal of his prosperity to the fact that he "stuck to a policy of employing Americans only." In a speech to the Commercial Club of Goldfield in March, 1912, he announced, "I will assure you that as long as I am at the head of the company of which I am now the head, that rule will be strictly enforced. And when we have to employ foreigners to do our work and cannot find Americans to do it, I will quit the property."[23] By this time, however, Goldfield had already declined substantially as an important mineral producing area, and as a town.

Tonopah never experienced a dramatic boom to parallel the one in Goldfield, and its decline was more gradual. It has managed to survive as a town, and it remained an important mining center into the nineteen twenties. The mines in Tonopah were controlled by interests in the East, which remained outside the sphere of community life. One observer commented, "The Tonopah Mining Company officials took no interest in Tonopah save as a source of income."[24] Another evaluation of the Tonopah Mining Company described its directors and management as "excellent businessmen."[25] Apparently, relations between the operators and mine workers remained relatively cordial, even through the turmoil of 1906-1908. Advanced mining techniques and the eventual introduction of safety measures improved conditions in the mines, although there is little firsthand information concerning working conditions in the early-day Nevada mines. A few oral accounts confirm that work in a mine was tedious, exhausting, and dangerous. Indeed, there were frequent mining accidents, and Slavic workers were often among the unfortunate victims.

After the initial excitement of the first ten years, Tonopah achieved a new stability. Better homes, improved sanitation, town government, and civilizing institutions such as churches, schools and theaters brought a new maturity to the community. The people who remained formed the nucleus of a permanent citizenry and, for the first time, there were indications that the South Slavs were being included.

The event which touched off a new recognition of the Tonopah Slavic community was the first Balkan War of 1912, in which Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria joined forces against Turkey. In early October, stories regarding the

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[23] *Tonopah Daily Bonanza*, March 11, 1912.

[24] Jay A. Carpenter, Russell Richard Elliott, Byrd Fanita Sawyer, *The History of Fifty Years of Mining at Tonopah 1900-1950*, University of Nevada Bulletin, Geology and Mining Series, no. 51 (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1953), p. 16.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

Cemetery at Candelaria. Photo by Eugene Kosso. (*Photo courtesy of author.*)

outbreak of hostilities in the Balkans appeared in the *Tonopah Daily Bonanza*. Then, on October fifteenth, large headlines dominated the front page announcing, "Departing Servians Are Cheered at Depot," as volunteers from Tonopah left to fight for their fatherland against the hated Turks.[26] The feature story praised their patriotism and described the "impressive ceremony" witnessed by fellow countrymen, as over twenty members of the local Serbian colony departed. The men were to travel across the country by train, with more expected to join the group. Forty Montenegrins from Goldfield were reported ready to accompany the men from Tonopah. A second group left a few days later, while some men decided to wait until after the next payday, when they would have additional funds to cover the expense of returning, since they were financing the trip themselves.[27] Names of the Serbian volunteers were printed in the newspaper. They included Joe Bulich, who had served in the last war against Turkey (1876-1878); Sam Umis, proprietor of the Balkan Saloon who sold out his business in order to go; and John Vukanovich, the town's champion rock driller. For several days there was wide coverage of new departures and farewell ceremonies conducted by the Young Men's Serbian Society. One account estimated the crowd of well

[26] *Tonopah Daily Bonanza*, October 15, 1912.
[27] *Ibid.*, October 18, 1912.

wishers at two thousand people, which indicated that there were others besides fellow Slavs honoring the volunteers.[28] The citizens of Tonopah were kept informed about the developments in the Balkan War to an extent greater than one would expect in such a small mining town. There was a special editorial on "The Montenegrins," describing them as fighters—proud, brave men and "magnificent looking people."[29] It appeared that Tonopah had finally included the South Slavs as honored members of the community.

The cessation of fighting in the Balkans in 1913 ended the brief period of South Slavic prominence in the Tonopah press, although some representation had been established. Slavic names still appeared in stories of quarrels and violence but, occasionally, South Slavs were mentioned in the social and business news as well. A few editorials in the *Bonanza* reflected the general anti-foreign feeling that was prevalent nationally, but when local Slavic patriots were involved, the paper rallied to their cause.

In March, 1914, an article appeared in the *Tonopah Bonanza* announcing that veterans of the Balkan Wars would lose their American citizenship. The story really concerned the Serbian and Montenegrin volunteers who discovered, upon returning to this country, that their accumulated years toward American citizenship had been cancelled. They were told they would be required to re-apply and wait five more years. The article, which was obviously sympathetic, elaborated on the case of Marko Milich, "a young and enthusiastic Slavonian who was well posted on republican institutions and this form of government."[30] At the examination for naturalization, an officer from the Department of Justice informed him that he would have to repeat his application for first papers. No restrictions encumbered South Slavs who were already United States citizens, as several of them went off to fight for Serbia, and retained their American citizenship.

For the first time, in May, 1914, a local Tonopah newspaper featured an article on an aspect of Slavic culture. The story announced the forthcoming celebration of Vidovdan on June 28th, and it explained the significance of the day in Serbian history. On this day in 1389, the Serbian Empire had fallen to the Turks in the Battle of Kosovo and the sad event had since been remembered in story and song. With the defeat of the Turks in the latest Balkan War and the emergence of a strong Serbia, this first official celebration of Vidovdan in five hundred years would be a time of rejoicing for the Serbian people who believed that, "the dawn of a new national existence is at hand."[31] No doubt, every Serb in Tonopah had known about Vidovdan since childhood, but it was probably the first time the remainder of the community were able to learn something of the culture of its South Slavic people.

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[28] *Ibid.*, October 21, 1912.
[29] *Ibid.*, November 17, 1912.
[30] *Ibid.*, March 24, 1914.
[31] *Ibid.*, May 22, 1914.

That fateful Vidovdan in 1914 was hardly a time of rejoicing, as the events of the day in Sarajevo precipitated the First World War. Repercussions of the clash between Austria and Serbia were felt in Tonopah, where Orthodox Serbians and Catholic Croatians battled in the Monte Carlo Saloon over the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria.[32] Again war news, especially reports of the Serbian Army, gained prominence in the Tonopah papers. Local Serbs and Montenegrins were reported ready to return once more to fight for their homeland, and when a direct appeal came from the Consul General of the Balkan States, about thirty men from the Young Men's Serbian Club of Tonopah responded immediately.[33]

The fall of Serbia to Austrian, German and Bulgarian forces in 1915 was given full coverage in the *Tonopah Bonanza,* as the local community seemed to share the grief with its Slavic citizens. Attention centered on the tiny mountain kingdom of Montenegro in the autumn of 1915 when fifty-eight, "husky, young Montenegrins" left Tonopah to fight for king and country. A representative of the Montenegrin government had been in the area for several weeks recruiting countrymen and, this time, their passage was being financed by Montenegro. The news stories honored the departing men, but a related editorial in the same issue indicated that there might be other reasons for the favorable publicity. The editorial pointed out that nearly all who left were unmarried and had no property interests in Tonopah. These were the people who sent their earnings back home. Their places were being filled by native Americans with family and property who could pay their debts and, "who owe stronger allegiance to the United States." The editorial commended the patriotism of the Montenegrins, but it said in effect that the economy of Tonopah would be healthier without them.[34]

However unwelcome the young Montenegrins may have been had they returned to Tonopah, no one wished them the tragic fate they encountered. On February 26, 1916, headlines in the *Tonopah Bonanza* announced, "28 Tonopahns Go Down To Their Fate," "Sons of Balkans Die to Aid Their Country." Their ship, the *Brindisi,* had hit a mine in the Adriatic Sea and sunk. Meanwhile Cetinje, the capital of Montenegro, had fallen, and some Montenegrins were joining the Italian army. One of the survivors of the disaster, Andy Kissin, chose to return to Tonopah, where there was peace. Times were good in Tonopah, and although each day news stories related the unfortunate destiny of Serbia, headlines proclaimed the rising price of silver.

Entry of the United States into World War I in April, 1917, fomented a greater unity among the citizens of Tonopah. A wave of patriotism, which overwhelmed the entire nation, was evident in the small mining community. Local Serbs gained new stature because of their country's position in the war.

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[32] *Ibid.*, July 14, 1914.

[33] *Ibid.*, September 23, 1914.

[34] *Ibid.*, September 8, 1915.

In a patriotic parade held following the war declaration, the Young Men's Serbian Society marched, "two hundred strong . . . proudly carrying the stars and stripes and the Servian national colors." "The appearance of this element was the signal for universal cheering as the boys were instantly recognized as representatives of the little nation which was the immediate cause of the present world's war . . . . The Servians were stern-faced and severe as became men who had seen their country wiped off the map."[35] Periodically, South Slavs from Tonopah still left to serve their country; and in June, 1918, when the Serbian Army sent recruiters to the United States for volunteers, a large group received a "rousing send-off" by the whole town. The young men were presented with "comfort kits," tobacco and money by local organizations in a ceremony at the railroad depot and, as a final tribute, all the local mine whistles blew a shrill salute as their train left Tonopah.[36] Some of the South Slavs elected to join the United States Army, and the U.S. Senate sanctioned the organization of a volunteer "Slavonic Legion" to fight under the Stars and Stripes.

By 1918, the unity created by a World War and a new maturity of the Tonopah community had established an atmosphere of not merely acceptance, but of real pride in the South Slavs of Tonopah. The newspapers reflected the attitude. Articles announcing the celebration of Orthodox Christmas, describing religious observances as well as the traditional visiting, feasting, and music, were in marked contrast to the earlier ones of derision.[37] Activities of the Young Men's Serbian Society were given full recognition, and the ethnic music and costumes which accompanied their functions were admired with special interest. On one occasion the general public was chastised by the local press for not taking part in the Serbian Society's celebration of the Allied conquest of Macedonia. The editor of the *Tonopah Bonanza* stated the opinion that, "Serbia, man for man, has done more in the present war than all other nations." He reminded his readers that the first Tonopah blood shed in the war had been that of a Serb fighting for his country; the second fatality was another Serb fighting for the United States.[38]

General good feeling toward the Slavic citizens of Tonopah paralleled a trend on the part of the former immigrants to acclimate eagerly to their American environment. Of those who remained in the United States, many became citizens and registered voters. Some changed their names at the time of naturalization because, like Sam Divanovich who became Sam Devine, they thought it would "sound better and not cause as much comment."[39] There was little opposition when the Nye County Council of Defense adopted

[35] *Ibid.*, April 12, 1917.
[36] *Ibid.*, June 12, 1918.
[37] *Ibid.*, January 8, 1916.
[38] *Ibid.*, September 24, 1918.
[39] *Ibid.*, May 7, 1912.

a resolution stating that the use of any language other than English in public places would be deemed evidence of disloyalty. Pete Beko, a leader in the Slavic community, assured members of the Council that, "every Slavonian knows enough English to comply with the rule."[40] Increasing Slavic participation in the community-at-large was in evidence after the war. Slavic names appeared on union committees and on membership lists of non-Slavic organizations. A new crop of Slavic businessmen advertised in the pages of the *Tonopah Bonanza*, and some were recognized as prominent local citizens: men like George Banovich, who served as a Lincoln County Commissioner before coming to Tonopah and Pero Novakovich, a popular leader in the Serbian Society who became active in the Democratic Party of his adopted country.

By the mid 1920's, the town of Tonopah was moving toward decline, due mainly to the end of U.S. Government silver purchases at subsidy levels. Decreasing value of the ore also led to a slowdown in production and a reduction in the population.[41] A few Slavs, including the Beko and Banovich families, remained in Tonopah, but the majority of Yugoslavs in southern Nevada went to California where many of them had relatives and cultural ties. Some looked to other sections of Nevada, especially White Pine County where an even larger South Slavic community was still thriving. The 1920 U.S. Census indicated that the Slavs were indeed leaving the area. Out of a total of 693 Yugoslavs in the State of Nevada, only 84 were living in Nye County.

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[40] *Ibid.*, July 31, 1918.

[41] Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth Century Mining Boom*, p. 162.

Blacks in the Pacific West, 1850-1860: A View from the Census

MICHAEL S. CORAY

HAVE YOU EVER WANTED to bemuse or even terrify a historian? Well, there is one surefire method. Just mention "numbers." They don't have to be big unwieldly numbers, for any number that cannot easily be reduced to a date will do. Better still, mention "statistics." Now here is the stuff of nightmares! And the statistics don't have to be the Chi square, *Cramer's* V, or Kendall's tau b or c kind of statistics to do the trick. Simple counting, as in the case of crosstabulations and averages, will do just fine, administered in the proper dosage of course. But if you want to give yourself a little insurance, just mention the term "quantitative" (as in "quantitative study")—a kind of mystical counting of lots of things and the construction of sometimes elaborate arguments (either descriptive or analytical) based upon how much or how little was counted and the interaction of each of whatever was counted on what was and wasn't counted—for this is guaranteed to raise eyebrows and cause an uncomfortable tightness in the chest.

Much of the reason for these symptoms is that until recently historians who were not trained as economic historians have tended to regard statistical analyses, however simple they may be, as the province of scientists rather than social scientists or humanists. Most people who are interested in history also claim interest in the human condition and tend to regard the use of statistics as a dehumanization of the past by reducing it to a set of numbers which have significance only in relationship to other sets of numbers. Since the growth of quantitative study and a consequent improvement in the persuasiveness of such arguments during the decade of the 1970s, however, much of this initial queasiness has been supplanted by the knowledge that "numbers" often bring important insights into the lives of people in the past, and that the use of statistical information need not dehumanize the persons involved.

The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Elmer R. Rusco, professor of political science at the University of Nevada, Reno in both the initiation and development of the information base which formed the basis of this study, and to thank the Research Advisory Board of the University of Nevada, Reno for funding the collection of much of the data.

Identified as first black baby born in Virginia City. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

There is also one form of historical research that has always recognized the value of statistical information as the basis for both the reconstruction and understanding of populations in the past. Historical demography, the study of vital statistics of past populations, has long been devoted to the use of statistical information as the primary method of descriptive and analytical history. This discipline has recently drawn the attention of researchers from nearly every spectrum of the social sciences and practitioners of the natural sciences as well. As a result, the fruits of such research have begun to appear more widely in historical literature. The nature of such research has been stated succinctly:

> Research in historical demography may be thought of as falling along a scale of increasing analytic breadth. At the scale's narrowest point, research is restricted solely to the documentation and description of classic demographic characteristics such as population size, geographical distribution, age structure, and change produced by births, deaths, and migration. At this end of the scale demographic features are analyzed in their own right, with little or no regard for their possible relationships with nondemographic phenomena or specific historical settings. At the other end of the scale, the scope of historical demography is broadest. In contrast to the study of purely demographic phenomena in relative isolation from their temporal and social contexts, efforts would be made to establish and analyze the causal links between a historical community's formal demographic properties and every important feature of the world in which its members lived. Obviously, most research lies between these two extremes.[1]

The essence of historical demography, then, is its potential to illuminate the subtle rites of passage within a given community. Such characteristics as birth, nativity, death, marriage, sex ratios, educational attainment or financial worth are, in a real sense, but subtle elements of life's experience. They add light and shadow to the fabric of community life and are just as important to our understanding of populations in the past as the more familiar topics of historical study.

Yet there is one distinguishing feature of historical demography which serves to differentiate it from more familiar forms. Historical demography concentrates on *populations* as the basic unit of study. This may appear to obscure the role of *individuals* within a community, but appearance is often illusion. Historical demography has the saving grace of supplying the socio-historical context against which individual achievement might more accurately be gauged.

And nowhere in this distinction more important than in the application of historical demography to the study of racial and ethnic minority groups in the United States. Such study, perhaps more than any other kind of historical study, is often devoid of contextual framework—particularly the context

[1] J. Dennis Willigan and Katharine A. Lynch, *Sources and Methods of Historical Demography*. (New York, 1982), p. xi.

Unidentified women. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

which serves to illuminate the more subtle of life's experiences. Historical demography, in such circumstances, offers the possibility of recovering contextual information which can only deepen our understanding of the minority experience, its challenges and triumphs, obstacles and failures.

The contributions made by blacks to the settlement and development of California and surrounding territories (Oregon, Utah, and Washington) during the second half of the nineteenth century have been the subject of scholarly investigations for a number of years, but only rarely have any of these studies touched upon the important question of the structure of the black community at mid-century.[2] Treatment of such illuminating questions as rates of growth, median age, age and sex composition, intraracial classification, or residence types are all but absent from published works, despite the clarity that such information might bring to the contextual framework in which blacks made their contributions. The present study is an attempt to bridge this gap by investigating the materials contained within the original schedules of the federal censuses of 1850 and 1860, in order to produce a view of the black community in the Pacific West region during the formative decade of the 1850s.

The censuses of 1850 and 1860 are important starting points for such a study because they marked a major turning point in the decennial count of the population of the United States. Prior to 1850, the marshalls and assistant marshalls who served as enumerators for the census were largely political appointees who did not always possess the skills necessary to carry out an accurate count of the population.[3] Until the federal census of 1830, these enumerators were not provided with either standardized forms or with specific questions that were to be asked of all subjects. Dissatisfaction with the results of the census of 1840 brought the first major reform in the procedure for collecting and analyzing census materials; beginning in 1850 and continuing to 1870, enumerators were provided both forms and instructions. In addition, the basic materials regarding age, sex, nativity, etc., were augmented by new questions involving education, physical handicap, and measure of economic progress.[4] Most important, the decennial count of 1850 marked the first time in American history in which the black population was

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[2] See especially: William Loren Katz, *The Black West* (Garden City, N.Y., 1971); Kenneth W. Porter, *The Negro on the American Frontier* (New York, 1971); W. Sherman Savage, *Blacks in the West* (Westport, Conn., 1976); Robert T. Ernst and Lawrence Huggs, eds., *Black America: Geographical Perspectives* (Garden City, N.Y., 1976); Daniel M. Johnson and Rex R. Campbell, *Black Migration in America: A Social Demographic History* (Durham, 1981). State and local histories, however, often provide the structural analyses absent in the larger works. Excellent examples include Elmer R. Rusco, *"Good Time Coming?" Black Nevadans in the Nineteenth Century* (Westport, Conn., 1975) and Douglas Henry Daniels, *Pioneer Urbanities: A Social and Cultural History of Black San Francisco* (Philadelphia, 1980).

[3] Reynolds Farley, *Growth of Black Population: A Study of Demographic Trends* (Chicago, 1970), pp. 23-25.

[4] A. Ross Eckler, *The Bureau of the Census* (New York, 1972), pp. 43-44.

Unidentified women, photographed in Reno. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

enumerated in the same detail previously accorded only to whites.[5] Not only did this census require the ages of the black population for the first time, but also it attempted to differentiate between what were then called "blacks" and "mulattoes" to obtain a description of the condition of the "colored races."[6]

The procedures adopted to classify individuals into these intraracial groups remained vague. Persons were classified as colored if, in the opinion of the enumerator, they appeared to be either blacks or mulattoes. No definition of black was provided, but malattoes were to include anyone "having any perceptible trace of African blood."[7] The decision to count mulattoes as a distinct racial category, then, had deep sociological justification in the American mind of the mid-nineteenth century, and may have had some quantifiable importance to members of the black community who were subjected to that classification. The degree to which that importance might be measured will also be a subject of this study.

The Census of 1850 thus marked a turning point in the collection and analysis of demographic materials involving the black population of the United States. The procedures adopted in 1850 were continued in the Census of 1860, making these two enumerations valuable repositories for information that is available in few other sources. Yet one of the key difficulties in the utilization of this information for a reconstruction of the black community of the Pacific West is the loss of returns for the populous California counties of San Francisco, Contra Costa, and Santa Clara in the federal census of 1850.[8] The absence of these returns has forced a methodological compromsie here, for given the fact that our chief interest lies in the investigation of the black community, all information regarding blacks has been gleaned from the manuscripts of the federal censuses. Information for the lost counties of California was compiled from the manuscripts of the California State Census of 1852. Limited resources, on the other hand, forced a compilation of materials regarding the white population from the published federal censuses of 1850 and 1860. All comparisons between the black and white populations, therefore, exclude information on the missing California counties and are presented here only to establish the general context of change within the regional population during the decade of the 1850s.[9]

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[5] Joel Williamson, *New People: Miscegenation and Mulattoes in the United States* (New York, 1980), p. 5; Farley, *Growth of Black Population*, p. 26.

[6] U.S. Census Office, 7th Census, 1850, *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850* (Washington, D.C., 1853), pp. xxii. Although the census uses such terms as "black," "mulatto," and "colored" to describe the members of color groups, the more familiar present-day "Negro," "mulatto," and "black" will be used in this study.

[7] Farley, *Growth of Black Population*, p. 32.

[8] *Seventh Census, 1850*, p. 966.

[9] Extrapolations for the missing counties are available, but do not include breakdowns by age. *Ibid.*, Table I, p. 982 .

Unidentified man, said to have been Mark Twain's janitor. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

Black and White in the Pacific West

The most obvious feature of the black population of the states and territories of the Pacific West at mid-nineteenth century was its miniscule size. Of the 117,169 inhibitants of California and the areas that would be included in the territories of Oregon, Utah and Washington in 1850, blacks accounted for only 1,117 individuals. A decade later, blacks accounted for only 4,425 of the 437,837 residents of this area.[10] Yet even these regional figures tend to obscure local patterns. An investigation of the individual areas within the region reveals that blacks in California accounted for 946 individuals, or 84.7 percent of the black regional total in 1850, and for 4,198 individuals or 94.9 percent of the total in 1860.[11] This amounts to 1 percent and 1.3 percent of the total state population in 1850 and 1860 respectively. In Oregon and Utah territories, blacks accounted for 1.2 percent and .1 percent of the total population in 1850. After a decade of rapid growth for the region during which the total population increased by 273.6 percent, the black populations of Oregon, Utah and Washington accounted for only .2, .1, and .3 percent of the total populations of these respective territories. The intercensal growth rate of the white population of the region was 273.4 percent. This demonstrates an absolute change of 317,360 individuals over the decade, or an average annual increase of 31,736 persons for each year of the decade. The average annual percent change, therefore, was 27.3 percent, which translates into an annual average rate of growth of 11.6 percent. The black population experienced an intercensal percent change of 296.1 percent. The absolute change increased the population by 3,308 individuals per year for an annual average rate of growth of 11.9 percent. Given these explosive rates of growth, the white population was doubling every 6 years, while the black population had a doubling time of 5.8 years.[12] So despite the obvious disparity in size, the black and white populations of the Pacific West were remarkably similar in their ability to grow over the decade.

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[10] *Ibid.*, pp. xlii-xliii, 988-990; U.S. Census Office, *Eighth Census, 1860, Population of the United States in 1860* (Washington, D.C., 1864), pp. 22-23, 400-401, 562-563, 574-575; [United States Census Bureau], *Original Schedule of the Seventh Census, 1850* [hereafter cited, with appropriate year, as *MS*]; *MS, 1860.* When the blacks found in the manuscript of the California State Census of 1852 are included for the missing counties, the final count for the region is 1,726, and exceeds the published figures by 4.4 percent in 1850. Our count of 4,425 blacks in the region by 1860 exceeds the figures in the published census by 2.4 percent. Although sample techniques were not used here, a useful methodology is provided in R. Christian Johnson, "A Procedure for Sampling the Manuscript Census Schedules," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, VIII (Winter 1973), pp. 515-530.

[11] *MS, 1850; MS, 1860.*

[12] Computation of these rates is based on arithmetic approximation methods found in: Donald J. Bogue, *Principles of Demography* (New York, 1969), pp. 33-36; Henry Shryock, Jacob S. Siegel, and Associates, *The Methods and Materials of Demography.* Condensed Edition by Edward Stockwell (New York, 1976), pp. 213-216; Donald B. Pittenger, *Projecting State and Local Populations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), pp. 7-8; Willard J. Jacobson, *Population Education: A Knowledge Base* (New York, 1979), pp. 21-22.

But the similarities between the two populations do not end here. The age and sex composition of the two groups were also quite similar in a number of respects. Both groups, for instance, displayed the initial predominance of males that often characterized frontier societies.[13] As illustrated in Table 1-1, the white population in 1850 had an overall sex ratio of 575.3 males per 100 females, while the black population was a bit more narrow at a ratio of 542. Growth during the decade reduced the degree of male predominance in both groups, but much more effectively for the white population than for its black cohort. By 1860, the sex ratio of the white population had declined to 208 males per 100 females, while that of the black population hovered at 225.8 males per 100 females.[14] Such changes reveal the degree to which the Pacific West was emerging from classical frontier conditions—as expressed by the proportional rise in the female component of the population. From an initial ratio of roughly five to one in 1850, males outnumbered females by only two to one a decade later.[15]

TABLE 1-1
Age Specific Sex Ratios in the Pacific West (males per 100 females)

	1850		1860	
Age	White	Black	White	Black
Under 5	106.0	157.8	105.0	100.6
5-9	102.7	50.0	103.3	116.4
10-14	115.7	104.0	108.8	99.0
15-19	285.5	330.0	111.3	100.0
20-29	1471.4	775.6	291.4	252.5
30-39	1106.3	1026.9	385.4	306.2
40-49	763.2	906.7	322.6	352.3
50-59	506.3	2600.0	257.2	382.0
60-69	293.6	—	213.5	491.7
70-79	241.3	—	157.8	1600.0
80+	185.7	—	116.0	150.0
Overall	575.3	542.0	208.0	225.8

Source: U.S. Census Office, 7th Census, 1850, *The Seventh Census of the United States: 1850* (Washington: Robert Armstrong, 1853): pp. xlii-xliii, 966-969, 988-990; *Manuscript Census, 1850;* U.S. Census Office, 8th Census, 1860, *Population of the United States in 1860* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864: pp. 22-23, 400-401, 562-563, 574-575, 580-581; *Manuscript Census, 1860.* The figures for the population of Nevada Territory have been merged with those for Utah Territory in 1860.

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[13] Bogue, *Principles of Demography*, p. 167.

[14] Using information from the published censuses, Lawrence B. de Graaf has maintained that "there were only 392 black women in the non-slave states west of the Mississippi in 1850, and they comprised less than three-tenths of one percent of the area's total female population. Black women never reached one percent of the females in the Mountain and Pacific states through 1920. . . . In California in 1850 there were only 90 black females in a total population of 962 blacks." Lawrence B. de Graaf, "Race, Sex, and Region: Black Women in the American West, 1850-1920," *Pacific Historical Review*, XLIX (May 1980), pp. 286-287. Manuscript sources indicate the presence of 93 black females in California in 1850, and of 185 in 1850/52. *MS, 1850; MS*, California State Census, *1852.*

[15] The recent trend in the expression of sex ratios has been to state them in terms of males per 100

The effect of these changes in sex ratios becomes more discrete when viewed from the vantage point of the child-woman, or general fertility, ratio.[16] This ratio increased in the white population from 709 children per 1,000 women in 1850, to 851 children per 1,000 women in 1860. In the black population, on the other hand, the child-woman ratio decreased over the decade from 462 in 1850 to 422 in 1860. Whether or not such changes are statistically significant is less important here than the divergent directions of change. Given the proportional increases of females in both populations over the decade, the fact that the child-woman ratio increased among whites but decreased among blacks reflects other changes which occurred in the overall age composition of the two populations.

Table 1-2 reveals that children, represented by the age segments from 0-14 years of age, accounted for 14 percent of the total white population in 1850 but for 29.3 percent in 1860. Children in the black population increased from 12.2 percent to 18.8 percent over the same period. But as a result of such growth the age segments which include persons of intermediate age (15-59 years) experienced a proportional decline. Most important, these groups declined by 15.9 percent in the white population, but by only 7.3 percent in the black population. While the proportion of children increased in both populations, then, the black population continued to reflect the presence of a higher proportion of persons of intermediate age than did its white cohort.

The effect of this development appears to have been twofold. First, the median ages of the cohort populations changed. For whites, the median age was driven downward from 26.5 years in 1850, to 25.8 years in 1860. The black population, in contrast, experienced a rise in median age from 28.8 years in 1850 to 30.6 years in 1860. The difference in median age between the two populations broadened from 2.3 years in 1850 to 4.8 years in 1860. Second, the dependency, or aged-child, ratio of both populations shifted slightly. Not only was the white population of the Pacific West region "young-ing" during the decade, it was "younging" at a faster rate than its black cohort was "aging." As a result the differential between the dependency ratios of the two populations broadened slightly from 5.1 in 1850 to 6.1 in 1860.[17]

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females. Equality of the sexes, therefore, is expressed by a ratio of 100.0. Any ratio which deviates appreciably from equality within the range of below 90 or above 105 must be a result either of migration or an extremely high sex-selective death rate. Ratios which deviate by a wider range (below 85 or above 110) must be explained in terms of the unique features of the particular area under investigation. For an assessment of the use of sex ratios, see Shryock, *Methods and Materials of Demography*, pp. 107-110.

[16] The child-woman ratio is a useful index of the general fertility of a population but it does not take infant mortality into account and assumes, therefore, that such mortality is equal for all groups being compared. The ratio calculates the number of children aged 0-4 years per 1000 females in the child-bearing ages of a given population. This latter designation has been defined, alternatively, as ages 15 through 44 or 15 through 49. The latter definition has been used here to make the information gathered from manuscript sources compatible with published information. For a discussion of child-women ratios see Bogue, *Principles of Demography*, p. 662.

[17] Measured solely according to median age, the black population can be classified as "old" in 1860. But

TABLE 1-2
Population of the Pacific West, Summary Measure of Age Composition, 1850-1860.

Year	Race	Median Age (1)	Percent of Total Population: Under 15 years (2)	15-59 (3)	60 years or older (4)	$\frac{(4)}{(2)}$ = Ratio of aged persons to children (per 100) (5)
1850	White	26.5	14.0	85.1	.9	6.4
1850	Black	28.5	12.2	86.4	1.4	11.5
1860	White	25.8	29.3	69.2	1.5	5.1
1860	Black	30.6	18.8	79.1	2.1	11.2

Source: *7th Census, 1850*, pp. xlii-xliii; *Manuscript Census, 1850; 8th Census, 1860*, pp. 22-23, 400-401, 562-563, 580-581; *Manuscript Census, 1860*. The method of computation is described in Shryock and Siegel, *Methods and Materials of Demography*, p. 133.

This process of growing younger or older is reflective of changes in the overall age composition. As shown in Table 1-3, such changes were consistently age-specific for both populations. Of particular interest are shifts in the age segments which comprise the intermediate age range. The white population experienced a rather significant reduction of 17.5 percent in the proportion between 20 and 29 years of age over the decade. Every other age segment in the intermediate age range experienced a marginal increase. The black population, conversely, experienced a less dramatic decrease of 10.8 percent in the 20-29 age segment, but greater percentages of increase in all of the other segments within the intermediate range, particularly in the 50-59 age segment where a 3.2 percent increase took place. Moreover, while the 20-29 age segment occupied a position of dominance in both populations in 1850, there was a significant shift for the black population by 1860 when the 30-39 age segment became dominant.

Equally revealing, the two age segments (20-39 years of age) represented 67.1 percent of the whites and 61.8 percent of the blacks in 1850. By 1860, these same age segments represented only 51.2 and 51.8 percent of the respective populations. But if the 40-49 age segment is included in these calculations, the age-specific quality of population change during the intercensal period becomes even more clear. For the white community in 1850, the ages 20-49 accounted for 76.3 percent of the total population; they accounted for 75.4 percent of the total number of blacks at the same period.

because changes in the median age of a population depend upon the relative degree of growth in the total age segments both above and below the initial median age, it may not be markedly changed when the proportion of aged and young persons increases or decrease simultaneously. The aged-child ratio, then, is a more sensitive analytical tool for discerning the age patterns of populations. According to this ratio the black population can be considered as "young" at both census dates. The white population, on the other hand, is a "younging" population by either criteria. For a fuller discussion of the use of median age and aged-child ratios as indexes to aging, see Shryock, *Methods and Materials of Demography*, pp. 132-33; William Peterson, *Population* (New York, 1961), pp. 76-81.

By the turn of the decade, these same age segments accounted for only 60 percent of the white population, but for 67.4 percent of its black cohort. This represents a reduction of some 16.3 percent among whites, but only an 8 percent reduction among blacks.

The broadening differential in median age and dependency ratios, then, reflects basic changes in the ages of the members of the incoming racial populations. Black immigrants were consistently older than their white contemporaries, and must have been adding a greater proportion of older persons than was the white population. Equally important, significant numbers of these older black immigrants to the Pacific West must have been females.

Final results of the population growth of the 1850s were rather dramatic alterations in the age-specific sex ratios. As shown in Table 1-1, the most obvious feature of these ratios is that despite the high overall sex ratio that existed in each population, there were marked differences in those for the three youngest age segments in 1850. For children under five years of age, the black population was far more heavily male than was the white. In the 5-9 age segment the white population was more heavily male than the black. In fact, black females outnumbered black males on the average of 2:1 in the 5-9 age segment. This pattern of white male dominance was repeated in the last of the youthful age segments (10-14 years of age), where the white population was markedly male in sex composition. In the first age segment of the

TABLE 1-3
*Percentage Age Distribution by Race and Year

Age	Race		Difference	Race		Difference
	White (1)	Black (2)	(2)−(1)=(3)	White (4)	Black (5)	(5)−(4)=(6)
	1850		(3)	1860		(6)
Under 5	5.3	4.4	−.9	14.2	8.3	−5.9
5-9	4.6	3.2	−1.4	8.8	6.1	−2.7
10-14	4.1	4.6	+.5	6.2	4.5	−1.7
15-19	6.9	7.7	+.8	5.8	4.9	−.9
20-29	44.8	35.4	−9.4	27.3	24.6	−2.7
30-39	22.3	26.4	+4.1	23.9	27.2	+3.3
40-49	8.5	13.6	+5.1	8.8	15.6	+6.8
50-59	2.7	3.3	+.6	3.5	6.7	+3.2
60-69	.7	1.2	+.5	1.2	1.6	+.2
70-79	.1	.2	+.1	.2	.4	+.2
80+	—	—	—	.1	.1	—
Sum of absolute differences			23.4			27.6
Index of dissimilarity (1/2 the sum of absolute difference)			11.7			13.8

Source: *7th Census, 1850*, pp. 966-969, 988-992; *Manuscript Census, 1850; 8th Census, 1860*, pp. 22-23, 400-401, 562-563, 574-575, 580-581; *Manuscript Census, 1860.*

*The percentages listed above, as well as all others in this study, include only the population of known age.

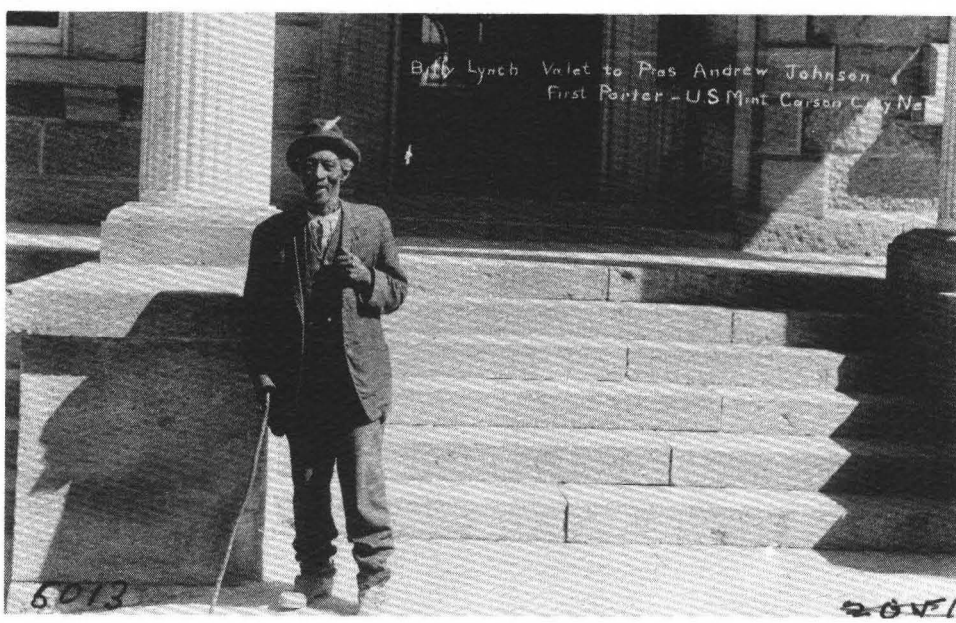
Virginia City High School Class of 1883. Seated, from left to right; Annie Fraser, Mame Hanning, Jennie Hinch, Katie Ford. Standing from left to right: Clarence Sands, Principal Van Wagenen, Mark Averill, Harry Lynd. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

intermediate age range, black males experienced a numerical dominance over black females that was far in excess of the dominance of white males over white females in the same segment. This situation was dramatically reversed in the 20-29 age segment, where white males had nearly twice the numerical dominance of black males.

The importance of such differences in the 15-19 and 20-29 age segments is crucial, for the proportion of females found in these segments holds the key to early marriage and child-bearing within any community. That the blacks of the Pacific West in 1850 enjoyed a slight advantage in this regard—if ratios of from three to nearly eight to one may be considered advantageous—may be an important indicator of potential population growth. The prospects of white males, on the other hand, jumped from about 3:1 in the 15-19 age segment, to almost 5:1 in the 20-29 age group.

By 1860 both populations had experienced a significant reshaping of their age-specific sex ratios. That the general pattern was one of narrowing—at least in the age segments that represented the portion which might have been resident in 1850—hints at the possible operation of either sex-selective

immigration or sex-selective mortality.[18] The result, in either case, was a disproportional increase in the number of adult females in each racial population during the decade of the 1850s. This is confirmed by the fact that males accounted for 85.2 percent of the white regional population in 1850, but for only 67.5 percent a decade later. Among blacks, the decline in male dominance was nearly identical: from 84.4 percent in 1850 to 69.3 percent in 1860. The proportion of white women, therefore, increased by 17.7 percent over the decade as compared to a 15.1 percent increase for black females. Sex ratios within the population of child-bearing age (15-49), meanwhile, were also changed dramatically. Ratios for both racial groups approached equality



William "Billy" Lynch, the first porter at the U.S. Mint in Carson City. A story in the *Nevada State Journal* of February 27, 1927, describes Lynch as having been in Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., the night President Lincoln was shot. (*Nevada Historical Society photo.*)

[18] Questions of mortality and fertility fall beyond the scope of this investigation. For a demographic analysis of such topics see: Jack E. Eblen, "Growth of the Black Population in *ante bellum* America, 1820-1860," *Population Studies*, 26 (July 1972), pp. 273-289; Jack Ericson Eblen "New Estimates of the Vital Rates of the United States Black Population During the Nineteenth Century," *Demography*, 11 (May 1974), pp. 301-319; Maris A. Vinovskis, "Socioeconomic Determinants of Interstate Fertility Differentials in the United States in 1850 and 1860," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, VI (Winter 1976), pp. 375-396; Richard A. Easterlin, "Factors in the Decline of Farm Fertility in the United States: Some Preliminary Research Results," in Michael Gordon, ed., *The American Family in Social-Historical Perspective*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1978), pp. 533-545; Melvin Zelnik, "Fertility of the American Negro in 1830 and 1850," *Population Studies*, 20 (July 1966), pp. 77-83; Maris A. Vinovskis, ed., *Studies in American Historical Demography* (New York, 1979).

for those between 15-19, while those for the 20-29 age segment declined to just under 3:1, and those for the 30-39 age group declined to slightly over 3:1 among blacks and to just under 4:1 for whites. Black males continued to exhibit a relative disadvantage overall when compared to their white peers.

Gross disparity in size notwithstanding, then, the black and white populations of the Pacific West shared several common characteristics during the period of this study. Both racial populations exhibited an initial predominance of males over females; both experienced an explosive rates of growth during the decade of the 1850s; and the basis for such growth was inmigration, particularly by females. But the results of growth were slightly different for the two racial populations. Sex ratios were reduced for both, but more effectively for white than for blacks. The general fertility ratio among whites increased, but that of blacks moved in an opposite direction. The median age of the white population became younger over the decade, while that of the black population became older: as a result, the differential in the median age of the two racial communities broadened over the decade. It becomes clear, then, that although both were growing rather explosively, the black population was growing more as the result of the migration of older individuals to the Pacific West than was the white. Among whites, growth was chiefly within the younger age categories.

Racial Classification in the Black Community

One of the most interesting aspects of change within the black community during the decade was the shifting pattern of intraracial identification. As mentioned above, the population count of 1850 marked the first time that census takers sought to count mulattoes, as distinct from Negroes. No specific criteria were established for the identification of mulattoes, and enumerators were allowed to rely on their own abilities to recognize persons of mixed racial ancestry. One of the unforeseen results of this practice was that persons identified as mulattoes comprised a higher proportion of blacks in the Pacific West than within the black population of the nation as a whole. Using published sources, historian Joel Williamson has found that mulattoes accounted for "11.2 percent of the Negro population and 1.8 percent of the national total" in 1850.[19] The mulatto segment of blacks in the Pacific West would exceed these and other published proportions in both 1850 and 1860.

The basic pattern of intraracial identification revealed in California illustrates the norm of the region as being one of significant growth over the decade in the percentage of the population classified as mulatto. Tables 2-1 and 2-2 show that mulattoes accounted for 20.4 percent of the black population of California in 1852, and for 41.5 percent in 1860.[20] This represents a doubling of the mulatto proportion that was spread nearly evenly between

the sexes—a doubling that occurred within the context of a dramatic rate of growth for the population during the time period.

Tables 2-3 and 2-4 show that the mulatto population of Utah Territory followed a pattern similar in direction but different in detail from developments in the Golden State. Mulattoes were not present in Utah's black population in 1850, but by the end of the next decade accounted for nearly half the males and one-quarter of the females, or a total of 41.4 percent of the population. Washington Territory (see Table 2-5) contained a mulatto population that accounted for nearly one-quarter of the black population in 1860. The only clear exception to the pattern of increase was Oregon Territory, in which the overwhelmingly mulatto population of 1850 (71 percent) declined significantly (to 33.3 percent) by 1860. As shown in Tables 2-6 and 2-7, this decline was not gender specific since it reduced the mulatto proportion of both males and females nearly by half during the decade of the 1850s.

So in addition to the increase in the proportion of females which has already been revealed as one of the key patterns of black population growth during the decade, the Pacific West region also experienced a marked increase in the proportion of blacks who were classified as mulatto. That some of this increase might be attributable to errors in classification by enumerators is undeniable. Yet the use of random criteria by census enumerators could not account for so significant a degree of change in the intraracial composition of the black population. By 1860 the female population of California had increased nearly seven-fold, and almost half of these black females were classified as mulatto; the black male population had more than doubled, and mulattoes comprised nearly four of every ten black males. The most obvious explanation for such change is that California, and most of the other entities of the Pacific West, featured an important in-migration by mulatto males and females during the decade of the 1850s.

Household Types

The uncommonly high proportion of mulattoes included in the black population of the region, particularly in California by 1860, offers an opportunity to investigate the possible operation of an intraracial influence, as well as the more common dynamic of gender, on other demographic features of the black

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[19] Williamson, *New People*, p. 24 Williamson's source depicts the mulatto proportion of the Negro population as 10 percent in the South, 24.8 percent in the North, and 23.4 percent in the West in 1850. For 1860, mulattoes account for 12 percent in the South, 27 percent in the North, and 37.5 percent in the West. Bureau of the Census, *Negro Population in the United States, 1790-1915* (Washington, D.C., 1918), pp. 210, 220.

[20] Information on the black population of California now includes data extracted from the California State Census of 1852 to cover the "missing counties." This merged data will be used in all subsequent discussions of the black population of the Golden State in 1850 and will be cited hereafter as *MS, 1850/52*.

TABLE 2-1

Black Population of California, 1850/52: Age, Race, Sex, and Sex Ratio

Age	MALES					FEMALES					
	Negro	Mulatto	Unk.	Tot.	%MP	Negro	Mulatto	Unk.	Tot.	%FP	Sex Ratio
Under 5	10 (.9)	5 (1.8)	—	15	1.1	6 (4.3)	4 (9.1)	—	10	5.4	150.0
5-9	11 (1.0)	2 (.7)	—	13	.9	7 (5.0)	3 (6.8)	—	10	5.4	130.0
10-14	22 (2.0)	5 (1.8)	—	27	2.0	25 (17.7)	4 (9.1)	—	29	15.7	93.1
15-19	46 (4.2)	25 (9.2)	—	71	5.2	10 (7.1)	4 (9.1)	—	14	7.6	507.1
20-29	412 (37.6)	121 (44.3)	1	534	39.0	47 (33.3)	15 (34.1)	—	62	33.5	861.3
30-39	349 (31.8)	78 (28.6)	—	427	31.2	27 (19.1)	9 (20.5)	—	36	19.5	1186.1
40-49	174 (15.9)	17 (6.2)	—	191	13.9	17 (12.1)	5 (11.4)	—	22	11.9	868.2
50-59	37 (3.4)	11 (4.0)	—	48	3.5	2 (1.4)	—	—	2	1.1	2400.0
60-69	12 (1.1)	3 (1.1)	—	15	1.1	—	—	—	—	—	—
70-79	2 (.2)	—	—	2	.1	—	—	—	—	—	—
80+	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Age Unk.	21 (2.0)	6 (2.2)	—	27	2.0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	1096 (80.0)	273 (19.9)	1	1370	100.0	141 (76.2)	44 (23.8)	—	185	100.0	740.5

Source: *Manuscript Censuses, 1850/52.*

%MP = percentage of male population
%FP = percentage of female population

Summary

The median age of the population was 29.6 years. Negroes comprised 1237 (79.5 percent), and mulattoes 317 (20.4 percent) of the population; the one male for whom intraracial identification could not be discerned represents .1 percent of the total black population of 1555.

TABLE 2-2

Black Population of California, 1860: Age, Race, Sex, and Sex Ratio

Age	MALES					FEMALES					
	Negro	Mulatto	Unk.	Tot.	%MP	Negro	Mulatto	Unk.	Tot.	%FP	Sex Ratio
Under 5	61 (3.4)	109 (9.6)	—	170	5.8	61 (9.1)	111 (18.3)	—	172	13.4	98.8
5-9	48 (2.7)	84 (7.4)	—	132	4.5	45 (6.7)	64 (10.5)	—	109	8.5	121.1
10-14	49 (2.8)	39 (3.4)	—	88	3.0	48 (7.2)	40 (6.6)	—	88	6.9	100.0
15-19	47 (2.6)	57 (5.0)	—	104	3.6	48 (7.2)	51 (8.4)	1	100	7.8	104.0
20-29	418 (23.5)	314 (27.6)	1	733	25.1	146 (21.8)	140 (23.1)	2	288	22.5	254.9
30-39	550 (31.0)	303 (26.6)	1	854	29.3	168 (25.0)	116 (19.1)	—	284	22.2	300.7
40-49	352 (19.8)	155 (13.6)	—	507	17.4	91 (13.6)	53 (8.7)	1	145	11.3	349.7
50-59	172 (9.7)	49 (4.3)	—	221	7.6	42 (6.3)	15 (2.5)	—	57	4.4	387.7
60-69	46 (2.6)	10 (.9)	—	56	1.9	10 (1.5)	1 (.2)	—	11	.9	509.1
70-79	12 (.7)	2 (.2)	—	14	.5	1 (.1)	—	—	1	.1	1400.0
80+	2 (.1)	2 (.2)	—	3	.1	1 (.1)	1 (.2)	—	2	.2	150.0
Age Unk.	20 (1.1)	13 (1.2)	—	33	1.1	10 (1.5)	15 (2.5)	—	25	2.0	—
Totals	1776 (60.9)	1137 (39.0)	3 (.1)	2915	100.0	671 (52.3)	607 (47.3)	4 (.3)	1282	100.0	227.5

Source: *Manuscript Censuses, 1860.*

%MP = percentage of male population
%FP = percentage of female population

Summary

The median age of the population was 30.9 years. Negroes comprised 2447 (58.3 percent), and mulattoes 1744 (41.5 percent) of the population; the six individuals for whom an intraracial identification could not be discerned accounted for .2 percent of the total population. The net total included 4197 individuals.

TABLE 2-3
Black Population of Utah Territory, 1850: Age, Race, Sex, and Sex Ratio

Age	Negro	Mulatto	Tot.	%MP	Negro	Mulatto	Tot.	%FP	Sex Ratio
	MALES				FEMALES				
Under 5	3 (30.0)	—	3	30.0	1 (16.7)	—	1	16.7	300.0
5-9	—	—	—	—	1 (16.7)	—	1	16.7	—
10-14	1 (10.0)	—	1	10.0	—	—	—	—	—
15-19	1 (10.0)	—	1	10.0	—	—	—	—	—
20-29	2 (20.0)	—	2	20.0	1 (16.7)	—	1	16.7	200.0
30-39	1 (10.0)	—	1	10.0	2 (33.3)	—	2	33.3	50.0
40-49	—	—	—	—	1 (16.7)	—	1	16.7	—
50-59	2 (20.0)	—	2	20.0	—	—	—	—	—
Total	10 (100.0)	—	10	100.0	6 (100.0)	—	6	100.0	166.7

Source: *Manuscript Census, 1850.*

Summary
The median age for the sixteen Negroes of Utah Territory was 23.3 years.

settlement in the region. The development of residence patterns is a likely feature with which to begin, for the decade of the 1850s was one in which white Americans became evermore deeply committed to the ideology of white supremacy and to notions of inherent black inferiority. Race had become, in the words of historian George Frederickson, "a necessary and proper criterion for determining social and legal status" in American society. Because blackness was regarded as a racial variant ranging from the pure Negro to the nearly white, a comparison of the residence patterns exhibited by Negroes and mulattoes may indicate something of the general sociological context of black settlement in the region.[21]

The census materials indicate the presence of four distinct types of household residence patterns over the period of this study: (1) individuals living alone; (2) group quarters (including hotels, boarding and rooming houses, etc.); (3) two or more unrelated individuals sharing accommodations which could not be classified as group quarters; (4) family households. The key question, in our view, is the degree to which gender and/or intraracial identification appeared to influence the type of residence pattern established by members of the black population. Did mulatto males exhibit the same residential patterns as Negro males? Was the same true for mulatto and Negro females?

In 1850/52, information on residence was available for a total of 998 of the region's male population. Of these, 72.5 percent were concentrated within the shared accommodations residential type, while family households (18.2 percent) and group quarters (6.1 percent) also appear to have been viable residential types. Interestingly, only 3.1 percent of the males reported living

[21] George M. Frederickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 154.

TABLE 2-4
Black Population of Utah Territory, 1860: Age, Race, Sex, and Sex Ratio

Age	Negro	Mulatto	Tot.	%MP	Negro	Mulatto	Tot.	%FP	Sex Ratio
Under 5	1 (4.3)	2 (8.7)	3	6.5	2 (11.1)	1 (16.7)	3	12.5	100.0
5-9	1 (4.3)	1 (4.3)	2	4.3	4 (22.2)	1 (16.7)	5	20.8	40.0
10-14	1 (4.3)	1 (4.3)	2	4.3	2 (11.1)	—	2	8.3	100.0
15-19	—	—	—	—	2 (11.1)	—	2	8.3	—
20-29	8 (34.8)	4 (17.4)	12	26.1	2 (11.1)	3 (50.0)	5	20.8	240.0
30-39	8 (34.8)	8 (34.8)	16	34.8	2 (11.1)	—	2	8.3	800.0
40-49	4 (17.4)	5 (21.7)	9	19.6	3 (16.7)	1 (16.7)	4	16.7	225.0
50-59	—	1 (4.3)	1	2.2	1 (5.6)	—	1	4.2	100.0
60-69	—	1 (4.3)	1	2.2	—	—	—	—	—
Total	23 (50.0)	23 (50.0)	46	100.00	18 (75.0)	6 (25.0)	24	100.0	191.7
	MALES				FEMALES				

Source: *Manuscript Census. 1860.*

Summary

The median age for Utah's seventy blacks was 24.4 years. Negroes comprised 41 (58.6 percent) and mulattoes 29 (41.4 percent) of the total population.

TABLE 2-5
Black Population of Washington Territory, 1860: Age, Race, Sex, and Sex Ratio

Age	Negro	Mulatto	Tot.	%MP	Negro	Mulatto	Tot.	%FP	Sex Ratio
Under 5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10-14	1 (4.3)	1 (12.5)	2	6.5	—	—	—	—	—
15-19	—	2 (25.0)	2	6.5	—	—	—	—	—
20-29	4 (17.4)	3 (37.5)	7	22.6	1 (33.3)	—	1	33.3	700.0
30-39	8 (34.8)	1 (12.5)	9	29.0	2 (66.7)	—	2	66.7	450.0
40-49	5 (21.7)	1 (12.5)	6	19.4	—	—	—	—	—
50-59	3 (13.0)	—	3	9.7	—	—	—	—	—
60-69	1 (4.3)	—	1	3.2	—	—	—	—	—
70-79	1 (4.3)	—	1	3.2	—	—	—	—	—
Total	23 (74.2)	8 (25.8)	31	100.0	3 (100.0)	—	3	100.0	1033.3
	MALES				FEMALES				

Source: *Manuscript Census, 1860.*

Summary

The median age for Washington's 34 blacks was 34.5 years. Negroes accounted for 26 (76.5 percent), while mulattoes accounted for 8 (23.5 percent) of the total population.

alone. Of the 200 females for whom information was available, some 74 percent were concentrated within the family household residence type. Shared accommodations were reported by 21.5 percent, and group quarters by 4 percent. Solitary habitation, at .5 percent, was vitually unknown among black females.[22]

By 1860 a marked change in residential concentration had occurred. Among males, residence could be reconstructed for 2,865 individuals, and

[22] *MS, 1850/52.* Residence could be reconstructed for 998 males who represented 68.4 percent of the total male population in 1850/52, and for 200, or 75.2 percent, of the female population.

TABLE 2-6
Black Population of Oregon Territory, 1850: Age, Race, Sex, and Sex Ratio

Age	Negro	Mulatto	Tot.	%MP	Negro	Mulatto	Tot.	%FP	Sex Ratio
Under 5	3 (11.1)	19 (35.8)	22	27.5	2 (11.1)	11 (19.3)	13	17.3	169.2
5-9	—	11 (20.8)	11	13.7	3 (16.7)	13 (22.8)	16	21.3	68.8
10-14	3 (11.1)	6 (11.3)	9	11.2	3 (16.7)	6 (10.5)	9	12.0	100.0
15-19	3 (11.1)	6 (11.3)	9	11.2	2 (11.1)	7 (12.3)	9	12.0	100.0
20-29	3 (11.1)	7 (13.2)	10	12.5	3 (16.7)	14 (24.6)	17	22.7	58.8
30-39	9 (33.3)	4 (7.5)	13	16.2	3 (16.7)	4 (7.0)	7	9.3	185.7
40-49	4 (14.8)	—	4	5.0	2 (11.1)	2 (3.5)	4	5.3	100.0
50-59	2 ((7.4)	—	2	2.5	—	—	—	—	—
Total	27 (33.7)	53 (66.3)	80	100.0	18 (24.0)	57 (76.0)	75	100.0	106.7
	MALES				FEMALES				

Source: *Manuscript Census, 1850.*

%MP = percentage of male population
%FP = percentage of female population

Summary

The median age of the population was 14.3 years. The 155 individuals included 110 (71 percent) mulattoes, and 45 (29 percent) Negroes.

TABLE 2-7
Black Population of Oregon Territory, 1860: Age, Race, Sex, and Sex Ratio

Age	Negro	Mulatto	Tot.	%MP	Negro	Mulatto	Tot.	%FP	Sex Ratio
Under 5	1 (2.0)	7 (30.4)	8	11.1	2 (6.9)	3 (16.7)	5	10.6	160.0
5-9	5 (10.2)	2 (8.7)	3[a]	9.7	3 (10.3)	4 (22.2)	7[b]	14.9	100.0
10-14	1 (2.0)	2 (8.7)	7[c]	4.2	6 (20.7)	1 (5.6)	7	14.9	57.1
15-19	2 (4.1)	—	2	2.8	3 (10.3)	3 (16.7)	6	12.8	33.3
20-29	10 (20.4)	7 (30.4)	17	23.6	6 (20.7)	5 (27.8)	11	23.4	154.5
30-39	10 (20.4)	5 (21.7)	15	20.8	3 (10.3)	1 (5.6)	4	8.5	375.0
40-49	10 (20.4)	—	10	13.9	2 (6.9)	—	2	4.3	500.0
50-59	8 (16.3)	—	8	11.1	3 (10.3)	—	3	6.4	266.7
60-69	1 (2.0)	—	1	1.4	1 (3.4)	—	1	2.1	100.0
70-79	1 (2.0)	—		1.4	—	—	—	—	—
Unknown	—	—	—	—	—	1[d] (5.6)	1	2.1	—
Total	49 (68.1)	23 (31.9)	72	100.0	29 (61.7)	18 (38.3)	47	100.0	151.0
	MALES				FEMALES				

Source: *Manuscript Census, 1860.*

%MP = percentage of male population
%FP = percentage of female population

[a]One male in the 5-9 age segment for whom race could not be discerned.
[b]One female in the 5-9 age segment for whom race could not be discerned.
[c]One male in the 10-14 age segment for whom race could not be discerned.
[d]One female for whom neither age nor race could be discerned.

Summary

The median age of the population was 25 years. The 123 individuals included 41 (33.3 percent) mulattoes and 78 (63.4 percent) Negroes. The four individuals for whom an intraracial identification could not be established account for 3.3 percent.

the family household type reported by 38 percent narrowly supplanted shared accommodations (36.9 percent) as the most frequent residential category. Group quarters (15.3 percent) became more frequent than at the beginning of the decade, and so did solitary habitation (9.7 percent). Residence could also be discerned for 1,168 females in 1860. Family household patterns continued to be the norm and were reported by 73.9 percent of all females. Shared accommodations (20.3 percent) and group quarters (3.3 percent) remained at much the same frequency as in 1850/52. Solitary habitation, meanwhile, became slightly more frequent: 2.5 percent of the female population reported this pattern in 1860.[23]

These general regional norms point to a movement within the black population, particularly among black males, toward the establishment of family household patterns of residence. That this movement is clearer among males is likely a product of their numerical superiority at both ends of the decade, but the continued concentration of females within this same category is no less noteworthy. The marked increase by 1860 in the proportion of mulattoes in the population allows an investigation of the degree to which Negroes and mulattoes contributed to the changing pattern of residential concentration.

The patterns described above are summarized in intraracial terms by Table 3-1. The beginning of the decade saw black males concentrated in shared accommodations, where Negroes were more than 8 percent more likely to report such arrangements than mulattoes. The categories of group quarters and solitary living were the least frequently reported categories for both groups of males, and the differences by which Negroes and mulattoes reported these categories were narrower than was the case for shared accommodations. But within the family household category, mulatto males were more heavily concentrated than were Negro males—and the disparity (11.6 percent) between the two intraracial groups was broader here than in any other residential category. The information regarding black females in 1850/52 is similar to that for black males; both Negro and mulatto females shared similar patterns of concentration into two of the residential categories. The overwhelming majority of both intraracial groups reported family household patterns of residence, but mulatto females were nearly 20 percent more likely to report this category than their Negro peers. Shared accommodations, the most viable alternative form of residence for both, was more than 11 percent more typical of Negro females than of their mulatto counterparts. That no mulatto females resided in either individual or group quarters seems less important given the context of the relatively rare frequency in which Negro females reported these residential categories.

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[23] *MS, 1860.* The 2,865 males for whom residence could be reconstructed in 1860 represented 93.5 percent of the male population of California while the 1,168 females represented 86.1 percent of the black females.

TABLE 3-1
Household Type in the Pacific West, by Sex, Race, and Year

		1850/52					1860				
		Negro	%	Mulatto	%		Negro	%	Mulatto	%	
MALES	A.	24	3.2	7	2.8		214	11.9	65	6.1	
	B.	556	74.6	168	66.4		731	40.8	326	30.6	
	C.	51	6.8	10	4.0		223	12.4	215	20.1	
	D.	114	15.3	68	26.9		625	34.9	461	43.2	
	TOTAL	745		253		998	1793		1067		2860
FEMALES	A.	1	.9	0			19	2.9	12	2.3	
	B.	29	26.6	14	15.4		131	20.2	107	20.8	
	C.	8	7.3	0			21	3.2	15	2.9	
	D.	71	65.1	77	84.6		476	73.6	381	74.0	
	TOTAL	109		91		200	647		515		1162
	Grand Total	854		334		1198	2440		1582		4022

Source: *MS, 1850/52, MS, 1860.*

A. Individuals living alone
B. Shared Accommodations
C. Group Quarters
D. Family Households

Comparison across intraracial lines, then, reveals a decided mulatto preference for the family household residence pattern. Whether male or female, mulatto residents of the Pacific West at the beginning of the 1850s resided more frequently in this pattern of residence than did Negroes. But the disparity between the two intraracial groups becomes even clearer when residence is considered in the context of the proportion of the population which each group represented. Among males, Negroes accounted for 62.6 percent of those who reported family household patterns of residence, but for 74.6 percent of all males for whom residence could be reconstructed. Mulatto males, on the other hand, accounted for only 25.4 percent of the reconstructed population, but for 37.4 percent of the family households. Mulatto females, similarly, accounted for 45.5 percent of all black females but for 52 percent of those resident in family households. Mulattoes of both sexes, then, were over-represented in this residential category at the beginning of the decade.

By 1860 the residence patterns of black males had experienced dramatic changes. Solitary habitation and group quarters became more viable for both Negroes and mulattoes, and the slight predominance of Negroes in the former category was broadened while their slight predominance in the latter was dramatically reversed. More important, however, was the decline in the

frequency of shared accommodations for both intraracial groups. The 33.8 percent decline among Negroes was matched by a 35.8 percent decline for mulattoes, and the range of difference between the two groups narrowed by more than 3 percent. The family household became the most frequent residence for mulatto males; it continued as the second most frequent type among Negroes, although it was reported more than twice as often as at the beginning of the decade.

The 1850s brought a similar broadening of residential alternatives for black females, but the change was less dramatic than for males. Perhaps most interesting is the observation that the proportion of Negro and mulatto females in every category of residence is nearly equal; there is less than one percent difference in each case.

Placed within the context of proportional representation, the changes summarized in Table 3-1 indicate that mulatto and Negro females in 1860 represented the same proportion of the family residential category that they did of the female population at large. Mulatto males, however, continued to be over-represented among males who reported this residential type, but by a more narrow margin that at the beginning of the decade.

The relationship between the increased mulatto population and increased residence within the family household pattern, then, appears to be less axiomatic. Mulattoes, whether male or female, appear to have been decidedly more prone toward such residence patterns at the beginning of the 1850s, but only slightly more prone to such patterns by 1860. But if gender is eliminated as a factor, the relationship between proportional increases in the mulatto population and increases in family household patterns of residence acquires a new distinction.

In 1850/52, a total of 330 blacks in the Pacific West region reported family household patterns of residence. Of these, 43.9 percent were identified as mulatto. For the entire population for whom residence could be reconstructed at this date, mulattoes represented just 28.7 percent. Thus, the mulatto population was 15.2 percent over-represented within the black population reporting family residence. By 1860, however, the degree of over-representation had been reduced to only 4 percent. The movement toward the establishment of family household patterns of residence appears to have been a general characteristic of the black population in which mulattoes had a disproportionately high representation at the beginning of the decade that was reduced significantly by 1860.

The possibility remains, however, that the prominence of mulattoes within this regional pattern is merely an aberration caused by the dramatic changes in population that occurred in California. After all, the black population of the Golden State accounted for nearly 85 and 95 percent of the black population of the entire region in 1850/52 and 1860 respectively. To check this possibility, each political entity within the region must be investigated, but with one

major refinement. Instead of reviewing the residence patterns of the entire black population, this investigation will be limited to the segment of the population most prone to establish family household patterns of residence—persons between the ages of 15 and 49 years who comprise the marriageable age group of the population. By focusing on members of this age group greater clarification may be brought to the role of Negroes and mulattoes in the shifting patterns of residence which marked the period of the 1850s.

Household Type: The Marriageable Age Group

The black population of California included 893 individuals of marriageable age for whom residence could be determined in 1850/52.[24] Mulattoes accounted for just 22.3 percent of the total, and for 21.8 and 27.2 percent of the males and females respectively.[25] The residence patterns of both men and women appear much more evenly distributed across intraracial lines (as shown in Table 4-1) than was the case for Negroes and mulattoes within the general population. Male concentration into the category of shared accommodations was markedly higher within the marriageable age group, and the disparity between Negro and mulatto men was relatively insignificant. Both group quarters and solitary habitation showed lesser percentages of difference than was the case for the general population (Table 3-1); the wide disparity within the family household category was not only erased, but even reversed. Within the male population of marriageable age, Negro men were slightly more likely to reside in family households than their mulatto peers.

Among women of the specified age group, the residential concentration into family households and group quarters established for the general population was repeated, but the differences between Negro and mulatto women within these categories were much less pronounced. Negro women continued to be less concentrated in family households, but by less than half the percentage that was revealed in the general population. The frequency of shared accommodations, meanwhile, took on a very different appearance among marriageable aged women; less than 2 percent of variation replaced the 11 percent within the general female population.

By 1860, the mulatto segment of the marriageable age group had increased by 16 percent overall, and by 15 percent among both males and females.[26] This growth had important ramifications for the proportion of Negro and mulatto males who resided in solitary habitation and group quarters, since

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[24] *MS, 1850/52.* The 805 men and 88 women represented 88.1 and 73.9 percent of the male and female populations for whom residence could be discerned in 1850/52.

[25] This contrasts with 28.7 percent of the general population, and 25.3 percent of the males and 45.5 percent of the females within the general population.

[26] *MS, 1860.* The marriageable age group, in 1860, included 77.3 percent of the male population; mulattoes accounted for 36.9 percent of these individuals.

TABLE 4-1
The Household Types of the Marriageable Age Group in California, by Sex, Race and Year

		1850/52					1860				
		Negro	%	Mulatto	%		Negro	%	Mulatto	%	
MALES	A.	23	3.7	7	4.0		167	12.6	52	6.7	
	B.	513	81.6	148	84.1		580	43.8	255	33.0	
	C.	31	4.9	5	2.8		197	14.9	208	26.9	
	D.	62	9.9	16	9.1		379	28.7	258	33.4	
	TOTAL	629		176		805	1323		773		2096
FEMALES	A.	1	1.6	0	0		16	4.0	11	3.6	
	B.	25	39.1	10	41.7		94	23.0	75	24.6	
	C.	6	9.4	0	0		17	4.0	13	4.3	
	D.	32	50.0	14	58.3		281	69.0	206	67.5	
	TOTAL	64		24		88	408		305		713
	Grand Total	693		200		893	1731		1078		2809

Source: *MS, 1850/52, MS, 1860.*

A. Individuals living alone
B. Shared Accommodations
C. Group Quarters
D. Family Households

the same patterns evidenced in the general population were repeated within the men of marriageable age. The greatest change occurred within the category of shared accommodations, where the frequency of this residential type declined by 37.8 percent for Negroes, but by more than 51 percent for mulattoes. This contrasts rather dramatically with the 33.8 and 35.8 percent declines which marked the Negro and mulatto segments of the general population. Family household patterns of residence, meanwhile, increased by 18.8 percent and 24.3 percent for Negro and mulatto males of the marriageable age group.

The almost mirror-like quality of the residence patterns of Negro and mulatto females in the general population was repeated within the marriageable age group in 1960. The proportion of Negro and mulatto women did not vary by more than 2 percent in any given category of residence.

As a result of the changes within the male population of marriageable age, however, the decade of the 1850s saw a reversal of the range of difference between the two intraracial groups. In 1850/52, the residential patterns of Negro and mulatto males were divided by a rather narrow range of difference: .3 percent in solitary habitation; 2.5 percent in shared accommodations; 2.1 percent in group quarters; and .8 percent in family household patterns. Mulattoes were slightly more likely to reside in either individual or shared accommodations than their Negro peers, and Negroes were slightly more

likely to reside in group quarters and family patterns than were mulattoes. By 1860, the range of difference had broadened for each residential type: 5.9 percent in individual habitation; 10.8 percent in shared accommodations; 12 percent in group quarters; and 4.7 percent in family households. Negro males, moreover, were now twice as likely to reside alone and 10 percent more likely to reside in shared accommodations as their mulatto peers. Mulattoes, on the other hand, were nearly twice as likely to reside in group quarters, but only slightly more likely to reside in family households than their Negro peers in 1860.[27]

Table 4-1 also reveals that the range of difference in the residential patterns of black women was influenced in 1850/52 by the absence of mulattoes in either solitary or group quarters. Still, the small number of Negro women present in solitary habitation (as mentioned above) at least partially resolved this disparity. The range of difference was 1.6 percent in solitary habitation; 2.7 percent in shared accommodations; 9.4 percent in group quarters; and 8.3 percent in family households. Negro women were more frequent in the obvious categories of solitary and group quarters, while their mulatto peers were concentrated in shared accommodations and family households. By 1860, the range of difference had narrowed in each residential type: .4 percent in solitary habitation; 1.6 percent in shared accommodations; .3 percent in group quarters; and 1.5 percent in family household patterns. Negro females continued to be more frequent residents of solitary habitation, but mulattoes had become the more frequent residents of group quarters. Shared accommodations continued to be slightly more typical of mulattoes than of Negroes, and family households became slightly more characteristic of Negroes than of mulattoes. What is most important, perhaps, is not the degree of difference between the residential patterns of the two intraracial groups, but rather the direction of such change. Mulatto females can now be found in all residential categories, but the category of greatest growth among all black females was that of family households: the proportion of Negroes in this residential type increased by 19 percent (to 69 percent) and that of mulattoes by 9.2 percent (to 67.5 percent) over the intercensal period.[28]

On the surface, then, there appears to be little direct evidence that the increased frequency of family residential patterns reported by members of the marriageable age group can be attributed specifically to the influx of mulattoes during the decade of the 1850s. Mulatto males were about equal, proportionately, to their Negro peers in this category of residence in 1850/52, and only 5 percent more likely to reside in that category a decade later. Mulatto females, meanwhile, were only 8 percent more likely to be found in family households in 1850/52 than their Negro peers, and nearly equally as likely to be found in such patterns in 1860.

[27] *MS, 1850/52, MS, 1860.*

[28] *Ibid.*

Another form of analysis, however, speaks more directly to the importance of mulattoes in the emergence of the family household residence pattern during the decade. In 1850/52, Negroes comprised 75.8 percent of the individuals of marriageable age who reported such residence patterns; by 1860, they accounted for only 58.7 percent of such persons. Only 20.2 percent of the black population of marriageable age, moreover, was classified as mulatto at the beginning of the decade. So by this measure, the 24.2 percent of the family households identified as mulatto represents a proportional imbalance once again. In 1860, mulattoes had increased to 39.5 percent of the black population of marriageable age, but accounted for 41.3 percent of the family households. Over-representation, then, was a consistent feature for mulattoes in this category of residence in California.[29]

When the intraracial dimension is removed from the analysis, however, the context of this over-representation of mulattoes is again repeated. For males in the marriageable age group there was a 6.5 percent decline in solitary habitation over the decade, while black females experienced a 2.7 percent rise in this residential type. Males sharing accommodations declined by 42.3 percent, while their female contemporaries experienced an increase of 16.2 percent. Group quarters attracted 14.9 percent more males in 1860 than in 1850/52, but 2.6 percent fewer females. Residence in family household patterns, meanwhile, increased by 20.9 percent among black males, and by 16.2 percent among black females.[30] The movement toward family household patterns of residence thus was a general phenomenon regardless of intraracial identification or gender. That mulattoes appear to have been more fully concentrated within this residential type must be understood within the context of this general movement among blacks in California.

The residence patterns of blacks in the less populous areas of the Pacific West differed from those established in California in two important respects. First, the black female population, regardless of intraracial identification, was more fully concentrated within the family household pattern than was the case in California in either 1850 or 1860.[31] Black males, meanwhile, showed a greater general tendency to reside in family households—particularly in

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[29] *Ibid.*

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] Mulatto females accounted for 76 percent of the black females in Oregon Territory in 1850, and for 73 percent of all women of marriageable age. Every female within this age group resided in family households. By 1860, the 55.3 percent of the black female population that comprised the marriageable age group was only 34.6 percent mulatto, and there was no real distinction between the residence patterns of Negro and mulatto females in this group. The female population of Utah Territory in 1850, meanwhile, was classified entirely as Negro and resided in family households. By 1860, there was intraracial diversity within the female population, but 87.5 percent of the Negro and 80 percent of the mulatto females of marriageable age continued to reside in family patterns. *MS, 1850.*

1850—than did their California peers regardless of intraracial identification.[32] Such differences reflect not only the vastly fewer number of blacks within the territories of the Pacific West, but also some of the prevailing social conditions within these areas as well. Black concentration within the family household pattern, particularly in 1850, reflects a higher percentage of family groups in the territories during this period than was the case for California. By 1860 blacks living in the less populous areas of the region began to display the diversity of residential forms exhibited in California at the beginning of the decade. The general growth of the total population of the territories must have served to broaden the residential possibilities for blacks.

But the black communities of the territories also shared one interesting characteristic with their cohorts in California. Mulatto males in the territories displayed the same propensity to reside in family household patterns that marked their peers in California at both ends of the decade. And with the exception of Oregon Territory in 1860, mulatto males displayed this pattern with greater frequency than did Negroes.[33]

Contrary to the monolithic depiction of blacks often found in recent studies, then, the black communities of the Pacific West displayed a diversity of demographic features that reveal that intraracial identification was no less important than gender in the formation of residential types. The specific locations of the black communities played an important role in determining patterns of general population growth, but this factor operated for the nonblack population as well. Beyond this general influence stood intraracial classification, and the different patterns of growth and residence revealed throughout this study. That such differences existed speaks to differing opportunities afforded Negroes and mulattoes; that these differences also existed across lines of gender demonstrates that racial classification carried observable consequences in even so rudimentary a feature of social life as residence patterns. Contemporary America may have grown comfortable with the monolithic image of the black community, but the intraracial distinc-

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[32] The male population of Oregon Territory in 1850 was 66.3 percent mulatto, but within the marriageable age group Negro males accounted for 52.8 percent. In the family household pattern of residence, mulatto males demonstrated a higher proportional representation than their Negro peers (76.5 percent compared to 68.4 percent), despite more equal representation throughout the other residential categories. By 1860, Negroes comprised 68.1 percent of the male population, and 65.3 percent of the marriageable age group for men. Negro males also comprised the majority of males within the family household pattern, and 46.9 percent of all Negroes of marriageable age resided in such households. For mulatto males of marriagable age, shared accommodation was the predominant residence pattern. In Utah Territory in 1850, all black males were Negroes who resided in family households. Some change had occurred by 1860, as mulatto males then comprised 44.4 percent of the marriage-aged males. Negro and mulatto males were resident predominately in shared accommodations and family groups, and mulattoes had a slight advantage in the latter (43.7 percent against 40 percent). For Washington Territory, 85.7 percent of the mulatto males of marriageable age and 29.4 percent of their Negro peers lived in family households in 1860. *MS, 1860.*

[33] *MS, 1850, MS, 1860.*

tions of the mid-nineteenth century helped to shape the structure of the black communities of the Pacific West and may have been important in other ways as well.

Conclusion

The demographic materials included in the original schedules of the federal and state censuses have provided a context in which to view the black experience in the Pacific West during the decade of the 1850s. These materials reveal that the black population of the region was quite similar in many respects to its white contemporary, despite a gross disparity in size. Both were characterized by an initial imbalance between the sexes that is typical of frontier communities; both experienced a significant measure of reversal in sex ratios during the decade. Each racial community also experienced rapid and significant growth over the decade, particularly in the female portion of the population.

This growth produced differing results, however, largely because it occurred within different age segments of the two racial populations. For whites, growth in the younger age segments increased the general fertility ratio; this ratio declined among blacks where the most significant growth occurred within older age segments than was the case for whites. The white population was also growing younger because of the increases in the youthful age segments while the black population aged markedly during the same period of rapid population growth. Equally important, the young adults in the age segment between 20-29 years experienced different levels of reduction that served to broaden the difference in the median ages of the two populations. The black population, as mentioned above, experienced a higher level of growth in older individuals than was the case for the white population.

The census records also indicate that the black population of the Pacific West was not a racial monolith. Instead, it was composed of two intraracial groups, Negroes and mulattoes. The proportion of mulattoes to Negroes was higher here than in any other region of the nation, and was growing at a greater rate than was its Negro cohort. It was also discovered that differences existed between Negroes and mulattoes, not the least of which were subtle differences in the growth of the two intraracial populations over the decade of the 1850s. That mulattoes grew at a proportionally greater rate than their Negro neighbors hints at the possible operation of selective in-migration on the part of mulattoes as well as to substantial racial mixing within the host region. This latter factor is indicated by the high proportion of mulattoes present in the youngest age segments at the end of the decade.

Other differences include divergent patterns of residence over the period—divergence which existed at each census date but can not be explained readily by such factors as gender, age or geographical location. That

differences existed in the residential patterns of Negroes and mulattoes also speaks to the strong possibility that intraracial identification may have had quantifiable meaning in the Pacific West that cannot be accounted for by other factors. The testing of this possibility has involved, thus far, a comparative study of Negroes and mulattoes, but will also require the investigation of other elements of the demographic history of blacks in the Pacific West before incontrovertible evidence can be produced. Specifically, these studies will address the possible relationship between intraracial identification and household structure, and the relationship between such identification and nativity and occupational structure. These future investigations, together with the work presented here, should help to clarify still dark recesses of the black experience in the Pacific West by illuminating some of the more subtle of life's experiences within an entire community of human beings.

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

Early Freighting in Northeastern Nevada: A Look at the Equipment, the Teams and One Local Route

LINN E. CLAWSON

Introduction

THIS ESSAY PRESENTS GLIMPSES of certain aspects of teamster freighting in northeastern Nevada from the settlement of that country in the late 1860s to the demise of freighting with teams because of the widespread use of motor-driven trucks by the 1920s. The use of heavy freight wagons and teams did not emerge in the West (with the exception of commercial trade between Santa Fe and the Missouri River Valley) until the American development of California and the Salt Lake City area in the late 1840s, and until the mining boom periods in Colorado, Montana and Idaho, starting about a decade later. The mining activities were accompanied by revolutionary technologies producing mechanical assistance unheard of only a few years before. Waterways, seaways, and railroads were used to transport the new machinery, and animal-drawn conveyances were required in many areas of the West. The size and weight of the machinery required specialized wagons; and the mountainous terrain, poor roads, and isolation characteristic of mining regions required unique skills on the part of both animals and the men who worked them.

The Central Pacific Railroad crossed northeastern Nevada in late 1868 and early 1869, meeting the Union Pacific Railroad in Utah in May, 1869. This coincided roughly with the beginning of mining and the settlement of Independence Valley some fifty miles north of Elko. My choice of this region as the location for study comes in part from the fact that it represents to a great extent what occurred throughout the Intermountain West at about the same

time, and in part because little has been written about this particular aspect of life in the area. In the main, however, the choice originates because of my access to a unique store of information concerning freighting in northeastern Nevada. The author's great uncle, Ray Clawson, took part in the activity before and after the turn of the century, as did his brothers. Their father, William Henry Clawson, worked his entire life as a teamster, starting in Utah during the early 1860s as a boy working for his step-father, who was also a freighter. Ray Clawson helped considerably by filling in details, especially the specifics of freighting in general and particularly in northeastern Nevada.

Large wagon freighting encompassed all of the far West in some fashion; in some way it resembled the trucking industry of today in both structure and purpose. The advent of the railroad—both the transcontinental trunk lines and short lines—may have enhanced rather than decreased the importance of heavy freighting, albeit with some accompanying changes in the business, insofar as the railroads stimulated settlement and economic growth in the region. That, however, is not the focus of this study. Likewise, while important and of great interest, the long-hual freighting from both the Pacific Coast and Missouri River Valley into the intermountain region lies outside the scope of this work. The major purpose of this essay is to summarize briefly the background of freighting in northeastern Nevada; to examine the wagons and horse teams characteristic of the business in its later days; and, finally, to describe the freight route between the railroad town of Elko and the mining town of Tuscarora.

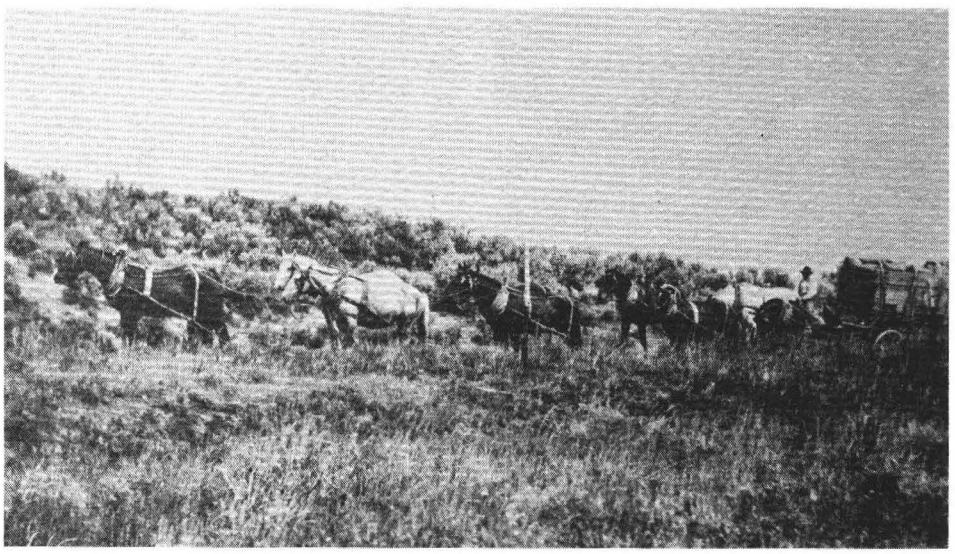
Historical Background

Contrary to popular assumption, the wagons and teams of the emigrants traversing the continent from east to west were not large vehicles requiring many draft animals. With such a great distance to travel through unsettled country, the wise emigrant chose lightweight equipment requiring few animals, opting for relative speed, maneuverability, and ease of maintenance. Except for saddle horses, ox and mule teams most often provided the power. Oxen and mules proved tougher in the extreme aridity and heat of the West, keeping their strength and surviving on the sparse native grasses better than horses.[1]

Considering that the first wagons to reach very far beyond the Continental Divide came with the Marcus Whitman party to Walla Walla in 1840, and that approximately 1,000 people crossed the continent by wagon in 1843, the momentum for wagon migration picked up quickly.[2] At first, this had more to

[1] George R. Stewart, *The California Trial*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962), pp. 108-113.

[2] Henry Pickering Walker, *The Wagonmasters: High Plains Freighting from the Earliest Days of the Santa Fe Trail to 1880* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966), p.16.



J. H. Clawson with one of his teams, *c.* 1909. (*Photo courtesy of author.*)

do with the movement of people than with the transporting of goods, but the latter quickly developed as early settlements expanded.

Henry Pickering Walker builds a strong case for the origin of the heavy freight wagon and structure of the business as it developed in the West in the trade between Santa Fe and the United States, beginning with Mexican independence in 1821. (Before that, the trade had been discouraged by the Spanish colonial authorities.) Unlike the transcontinental migration, the trail to Santa Fe from the start was mostly a commercial route.[3] The first commercial wagons went to Sante Fe in 1822; through the years many of the techniques and the technology were perfected which characterized large wagon freighting west of the Mississippi later on. Freighting east of the Mississippi utilized such wagons as the Conestoga, which was pulled by four- and six-horse teams of large special-purpose draft horses; these wagons were appropriate to the good roads, the established en route stations, and the available good forage, water, and shelter of the more developed East; each of these factors simply did not exist in the West.[4]

The evolution of the large freight wagon occurred in part because the route to Santa Fe contained none of the heavy pulling required in mountainous regions; mostly, however, the stimulation to build larger wagons came from legislation by the Mexican government in 1839 levying a $500 import duty on each wagon of goods brought into their country.[5] The main point is that the

[3] Ibid., p. 32.
[4] Ibid., p. 101.
[5] Ibid., pp. 31, 96.

wagons differed from those used in the East. The reasons for the differences lie in varied sources: topography, climate, soil composition, vegetation, availability of water and forage, and various political, economic, and technological considerations.

Locally-based freighting around present-day Elko, Nevada, started along with the town when the Central Pacific Railroad arrived at the site in December, 1868.[6] This provided a means by which freight from California could be shipped both south to the White Pine Mining District and north to Idaho's Silver City and the mining centers in the Boise basin. Freighting into Idaho from California either went north to Portland by water and up the Columbia River before going overland, or by various routes across the Sierra Nevada.[7]

As the railroad was completed, first across the Sierra Nevada, and then gradually across Nevada, the terminus for freighting into Idaho also tended to move, dictating the abandonment of certain routes and the establishment of others. The route from Elko northward followed this pattern, beginning as a toll road in 1869 and declining in importance after about 1871, when shorter north-south overland freighting routes existed from points further east in Nevada, and from the Salt Lake Valley of Utah, connecting with railroads running east and west.[8] The evolution of freighting in this region reflected that occurring elsewhere in the west, e.g., east along the Columbia, north out of the Salt Lake Valley, and west from the Missouri River Valley.[9]

Team freighting to Tuscarora begun after the discovery of gold and silver in the district in 1869, and it continued until it was replaced by automotive transportation in the 1920s. Freighting fluctuated in volume along with the booms and busts of the various mining and ranching enterprises, but it was always important in supplying goods from outside the area.[10]

Wagons

Of the wagons freighting between Elko and Tuscarora, the early days saw more handmade wagons than in later years when manufactured wagons became more available. Handmade wagons not only held up better and lasted longer, but also were built to carry heavier loads. A handmade wagon would last indefinitely if well cared for, as exemplified by those brought into Nevada by William Henry Clawson in 1890 which dated back at least to the 1870s,

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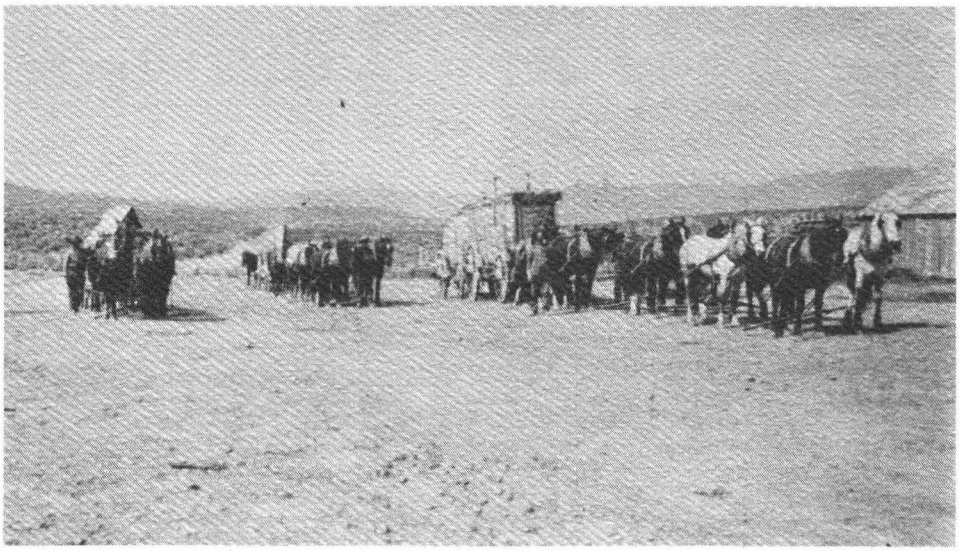
[6] Edna Patterson, Louise A. Ulph, Victor Goodwin, *Nevada's Northeast Frontier* (Sparks: Western Printing and Publishing, 1969), p. 175.

[7] Victor Goodwin, "William C. (Hill) Beachy, Nevada-California-Idaho Stagecoach King," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 10 (1967), pp. 17-33.

[8] Ibid., pp. 39-40.

[9] Walker, pp. 116-174, 204-209.

[10] Patterson, pp. 141-154.



At "Dinner Station": John Thompson and team at right, Ray Clawson and team in center, unidentified team at left. (*Photo courtesy of author.*)

and which hauled freight into the 1920s when the business ceased to exist. Handmade wagons did not necessarily mean construction within a shop located in a town; indeed, freighter John Thompson had two large wagons custom-built by wagonwrights Al Bunsel and his father on Jack Creek above Independence Valley at the turn of the century.

The heavy freight wagons that evolved in the Santa Fe trade, such as those developed by J. Murphy of St. Louis, used thimble skein hubs, named for the cast-iron cup at the wheel's center which slipped over the hardwood axle. This replaced the strap skein which had a hub with a bearing surface made of several straps of iron impregnated lengthwise on the hub. The thimble skein wagon suffered fewer maintenance problems than the strap hub wagon and probably could bear heavier loads. Both used heavy lubricants, such as a mix of tar, resin, and tallow.[11] The thimble skein gave way to the steel axle wagon, which characterized the largest wagons of the business at its conclusion. The ball bearing appeared too late to contribute to heavy freight technology, at least in this region.

The steel axle wagon had a tooled steel axle with a close-fitting beveled stub and matching hub which required pure castor oil for lubrication; it could bear up to one-fourth more load than a similar wagon on thimble skein wheels and wooden axles. When jacked free of the ground, the seven-foot diameter wheel (whose tire alone weighed 300 to 400 pounds) could be freely turned on the axle with one finger, a feat not possible with a thimble skein wheel of

[11] Walker, pp. 97-101.

like size and weight. Typically, a lead wagon weighed 5,200 pounds and could carry a normal load of ten to twelve tons of cargo, up to a maximum of fifteen tons; it measured about twenty feet in length, had a bed less than six feet wide, and sides and ends seven to eight feet high.

The wagons had no springs, yet had to flex enough to encounter uneven terrain and poor roads without straining or breaking. To do this, the wagon box, which provided little structural support other than to contain the freight and distribute the weight, rode on the axle assembly, which not only provided the flexibility, but also bore the force applied to the wagon by the team. The wagon box rode on hardwood bolsters fastened to the axles, with the front (steering) axle turning on a pair of steel plates sandwiched between sections of bolster on the axle and wagon bed. A kingbolt down through the center held the assembly together. The reach, resembling the wooden tongue in size and appearance, tied the axles together by fastening to the front axle at the kingbolt and extended to the center of the rear axle where it attached to the bolster, transferring horizontal forces through it rather than the bed. By virtue of its location at the center of the axles, it allowed the wagon to twist to some degree. Additional support came through iron bars running from the reach to the outer ends of the axle just inside the wheels.

Contrary to first impressions, the wagon tongue served mainly to turn the vehicle and, except for the first four horses, bore no pulling forces from the team, which transferred its power directly to the axle by means of chains. Similarly, the second freight wagon, pulled in tandem behind the first, received its pulling force through chains running from its front axle to a steel rod suspended beneath the reach and attached to a plate on the front axle of the lead wagon. When a smaller third wagon was sometimes used, it attached to the second in similar fashion, thus providing a transfer of pulling and braking forces in a continuous line along the plane of the axles through all three wagons. The tongues of the second and third wagons needed only length enough (about four feet) to allow turning space, and attached behind the rear axle of the wagon in front.[12]

Braking the freight wagon required several different procedures depending on the circumstances. Generally the teamster relied on manually-operated mechanical friction brakes assisted by the first pair, or span, of horses (called "wheelers") whose harness and location on either side of the tongue allowed them to brace against the weight of the wagon through the tongue. The mechanical brakes pressed against the rear wheels through leverage applied by a system of linked metal rods. The rods terminated at the wagon front in a vertical rod within a notched bracket; this was activated by a leather brake

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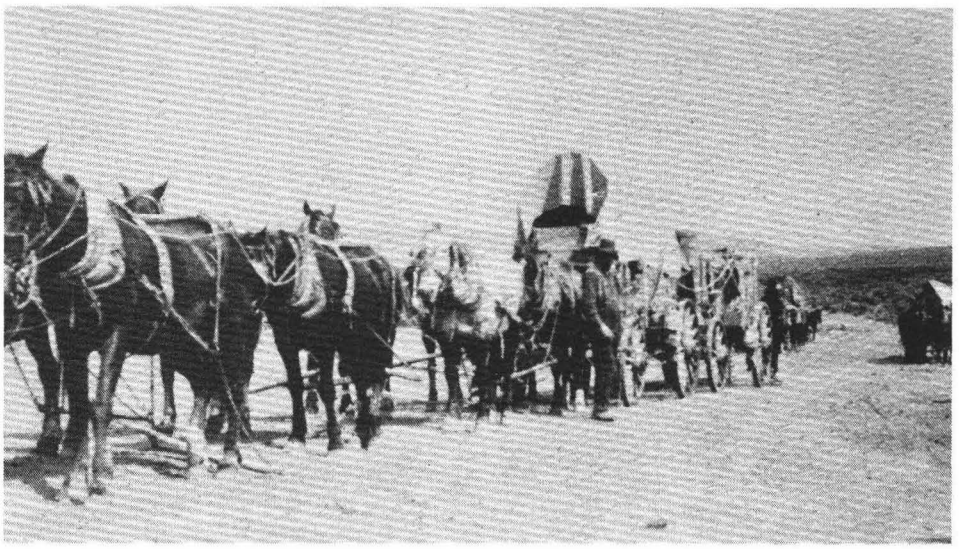
[12] Arthur R. Clawson, "Turn-of-the-Century Freight Wagons" (San Diego: unpublished typescript, 1983), pp. 1-4.



W. H. Clawson wagons, with son George (?) as driver. (*Photo courtesy of author.*)

strap pulled forward and locked against the notches by the teamster from his mount on the near (left) wheeler.

The brakes on both rear wheels worked simultaneously; the amount of force was dictated by the degree of slope. The brakes were released by the teamster pulling the brake strap forward and away from his body to release the brake rod from the notches in the bracket. To execute this maneuver smoothly required some adroitness, especially when there was high tension on the brake, and when it was necessary to perform a similar procedure on the brakes of the rear wagon using a long rope instead of a brake strap. If the team pulled a third wagon, the freighter had three brakes to control; depending on the grade and conditions, he could lock the brake of the rear wagon(s) and use the lead wagon brake to vary the braking pressure as needed. A good teamster could lock the rear wagon brakes and vary the lead wagon brakes as quickly, frequently, and with whatever dexterity the situation demanded.

In addition to the brakes, the teamster had wheel shoes and rough locks at his disposal. The wheel shoe was a shaped iron footing about an inch thick onto which the freighter rolled the lowest front wheel of the second wagon. In very steep terrain, the teamster lashed a two-inch wide by two-inch thick iron collar to the shoe bottom with chain which ran up to the axle of the lead wagon, pulled back tight against itself, and fastened with a toggle to hold the collar in place on the shoe at the bottom center of the wheel without putting stress on the wheel spokes. The shoe itself curved up at the front, and effectively held itself to the wheel and kept it from turning. On a grade as steep as one requiring a collar, the teamster might remove all but the four

horses nearest the lead wagon to reduce the confusion and possible risk of disaster in the rapid descent. The attached horses would provide the necessary steering control.

Less drastic than the shoe and collar, the rough lock more often produced the extra braking needed in steep terrain made hazardous by mud, ice, or snow. A rough lock consisted of a ring of specially forged chain with square links of one-and-a-half-inch diameter material weighing up to 100 pounds or more. The teamster usually fastened this to the lowest front wheel of the second wagon (as with the shoe) by threading a longer chain through the ring, binding it to the *felloe* on either side of a spoke, and holding it in place directly under the center of the wheel by pulling the longer chain taut against the axle of the lead wagon. Freight wagons also had iron hooks anchored into the sides of the box and extending below it at a downward angle front to back. From these, a rough lock to a rear wheel could be centered and held by chain. One always attached a rough lock to the lower side of a wagon, because it caused the wagon to be drawn to the inside (the highest and safest side) of the grade. As the rough locks became worn, they provided a variety of choices from new to old (sharp to smooth links) for use on varying degrees of steepness and road conditions; a rough lock bit into ice and frozen ground where a wheel shoe would not, and as a result it saw more use in winter than the shoe.

The last aid often used by the teamster was the wheel chock, a wood block hung from the wagon in such a way as to permit quick placement behind a rear wheel to hold a wagon on an incline when a teamster wished to let his team catch its wind. He could also rig the chock to drag immediately behind the wheel if circumstances required frequent stops on a grade. Placing the chock could prove dangerous. Jack Clawson, as a boy of fourteen or fifteen, at his father's request kicked the chock in place on the trailing wagon to hold it on an icy grade; he missed the mark and caught his foot between the wheel and chock as the wagon settled into place. He crushed several toes, and that night ended up removing the end of one with his own pocket knife!

Teams

Large wagon freighting used horses, mules, and oxen for draft animals, depending on the location and the era. In the early days of freighting west of the Missouri River, the ox and later the mule performed draft animal duties, primarily because they held up better under the stresses and strains of long arduous treks through extreme conditions in unsettled country. Horses generally did not have sufficient endurance, or the ability to survive well on sparse native forage.[13]

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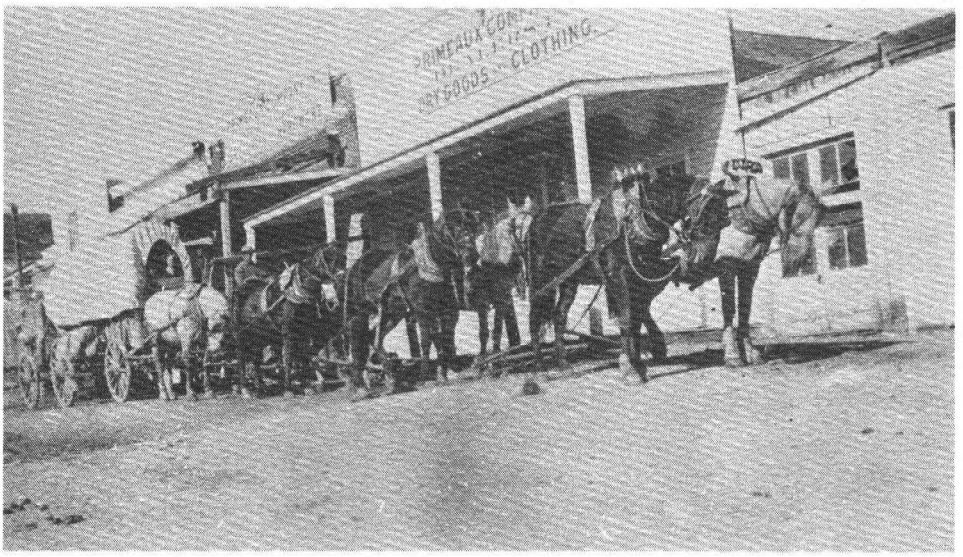
[13] Walker, pp. 101-112.



W. H. Clawson's team in Tuscarora, *c.* 1909. Jack Clawson on horse; Ernest Clawson in wagon. (*Photo courtesy of author.*)

The horse became the main draft animal in northeastern Nevada, however. The area was able to supply the food, shelter, and maintenance needed, and by the end of the ninteenth century the horse fairly-well dominated freighting. Probably the greater speed of the horse relative to the ox, and cheaper costs relative to the mule, contributed significantly to this. Only infrequently did teams mix horses and mules, because the difference in gait affected their ability to pull well together.

Heavy wagon freight teams were best known as jerk line or long line teams, taking the name from the way the teamster controlled the horses. The size of the team depended on the weight of the wagon (or wagons) and the cargo, as well as the length of journey and the terrain. The general rule among professional freighters figured one ton of cargo for each horse, with teams generally composed of no fewer than eight animals, increasing to as many as sixteen or eighteen, or even twice that if grades or mud required two outfits to double team to move the wagons. The condition of wagons and draft animals also affected the ratio of weight to animal.

A jerk line team followed a particular order, with the wheelers generally chosen for possessing larger, heavier bodies, and the leaders (the last span of horses going forward from the wagon) chosen for their intelligence. The second pair of horses in front of the wheelers was known as the pointers, since they helped the wheelers steer, and bore responsibility for pointing the wagon in the desired direction. The wheelers pulled the wagon through chains attached to a doubletree bolted to the tongue, and could thus hold or back a wagon on level ground or on a slight incline; as a result of this, the

wheelers wore breaching harness made completely of leather. All the other animals had traces of chain running through canvas sleeves.

Each horse had a two-foot long wooden singletree or stretcher to which the chain traces of the harness attached; this maintained equal pulling force, which transferred from the center of the singletree to one end of a doubletree, each horse pulling against an end. From either end, as well as from the center of the doubletree, a length of chain fastened each span of horses to a chain called a swing chain, or fifth chain, running from the tongue rod (a short iron rod under the tongue base held loosely to the tongue by a leather tongue strap) between the horses to the front of the team. The fifth chain utilized heavier links nearer the wagon, with progressively lighter chain toward the leader end where the forces pulling against it lessened.

Because of the way the fifth chain tied to the wagon, the pointers often had to point the wagon across the direction of pull by the body of the team in order to keep the wagon on the road when negotiating a turn; consequently, each pointer had to learn to step over the chain while still pulling (on the inside of a turn), then step back over the chain when completing the turn. In hilly country with meandering roads, the pointers had to complete this maneuver fairly frequently. They pulled from the end of the tongue instead of the swing chain; they and the wheelers worked independently of the rest of the team. In very rough country a teamster might have to use two spans of pointers.

To train his pointers, a freighter would call a command to the horse and at the same time give him a little jab behind the shoulder with a blunted bamboo pole at the appropriate moment for him to step. A smart horse learned quickly and could complete the action without breaking stride, even when the chain went fairly high in the air when rounding sharp turns in the mountains.

As mentioned, the jerk line refers to the way the teamster commanded the team, and specifically names the long line running from the freighter's perch on the near wheeler through rings on the left hame of the near horse in each span until reaching the bit of the near leader. The jockey stick, a wooden rod some three or four feet long, attached to the hame of the near leader, then ran down and fastened to the bit of the off leader.

The teamster transmitted commands to the leaders through the rope line: a steady pull meant left and a series of gentle jerks meant right. The near leader, responding to the steady pull, would turn his head left, pulling the jockey stick and the off leader that way, too; the other horses, none of which wore bits, would follow. Similarly, when turning right the near leader's reflex actions to the jerks would throw his head to the right, away from the jerk, and push the off leader's bit with the jockey stick.[14] After a pair of leaders were

[14] H. Wilbur Hoffman, *Sagas of Old Western Travel and Transport*, (San Diego: Howell-North Books, c. 1980), p. 44.

John Thompson's team, hauling wool. Elko, 1916. (*Photo courtesy of author.*)

trained, they needed only a hint of command transmitted through the jerk line to produce the desired "gee" or "haw." To keep one leader from pulling around the other, a buck strap ran from the bit back to the stretcher, requiring the horse to put pressure against his jaw if he wished to pull disproportionately harder than his partner. Each of the leaders and all other horses in the team also wore a strap called a check rein from the halter to the point of the collar on the hame to keep the horses' heads up, prohibiting them from lowering their heads to graze or for any other reason.

Most teamsters would train a near leader by fastening the jerk line to a light buckskin spring rigged from the bit to the hame to lessen the sharpness of the commands. Not all teamsters could train a leader, since it required a gentle touch. Intelligent horses made good leaders, and good leaders not only made the teamster's work easier by directing the following animals, but also by anticipating commands as they recognized changing conditions.

Once trained, a teamster kept his leaders; for example, William Henry Clawson had one off leader for twenty-six years before retiring the horse. He also once lost his near leader (the jerk line horse) when aiding an inexperienced teamster double team to pull a wagon on Dobie Grade out of Elko. He allowed the fellow to help connect the teams; this varied from the normal procedure of each man handling his own. The other man did not allow enough looseness in rigging the harness required for the horse to throw his weight as he leaned into the first step against the load; consequently, the horse broke his own neck. While the loss of a good leader hurt, the team

made it to Tuscarora by buying a horse from the Dobie ranch and reversing the jockey stick to allow the off leader, who knew the road well, to guide the new animal—sans jerk line!

Another feature which distinguished the leaders from the other horses of the team were the hames bells, which served a dual purpose. They warned other traffic on the road in narrow canyons or other tight places of the approaching team, and they set a tempo to which the horses would stride. The bells each had a mouth about three inches in diameter, and hung in a row from a one-piece steel frame above each hame.

The jerk line enabled the teamster to increase or decrease the size of his team as the situation required and permitted the use of much more horsepower on narrow roads than possible with teams driven using reins. Inexperienced horses could be used after only brief exposure to the harness by intermixing them in spans with trained horses, and the teamster could stimulate a recalcitrant animal verbally, with a flick of his whip (called a "black snake"), or by throwing a small stone. From his position in the saddle, (which had no saddle horn and was of lighter weight than a regular western saddle), the teamster controlled the five to ten spans of horses before him, and through the brakes he controlled the wagons behind him.

A freighter adjusted his techniques to accomodate changing conditions; for example, his loads usually ran lighter in winter and spring than in summer, and while he would turn the animals loose in summer and spring (even in towns with available grazing areas), he would keep them in barns at night in the winter. Stations along the route provided these services, as well as room and board for the teamsters. A good teamster at the end of the day, regardless of season, would curry his horses, make sure they received whatever other care they needed, and feed them, as well as perform maintenance on harness and store it where it would remain clean and dry. Some professional teamsters would carry grain to feed their teams in feed bags while they were still harnessed during a noon break. Teamsters generally believed a properly treated team and equipment gave better service.[15]

Among other duties, a teamster had to serve as a farrier when a horse threw a shoe en route. Tools and supplies to do this resided in a jockey box usually mounted on the side of the wagon; this also contained rough locks, wheel shoes, and the various jacks and spare parts needed to perform emergency repairs on the road. A second jockey box might be attached to the front of the lead wagon and it could serve as a seat should the need arise; otherwise, freight wagons had no seats. At least one freighter carried two lard cans in the front jockey box: one contained small stones to throw at the odd horse sloughing off his work load, and the other contained larger stones to throw at

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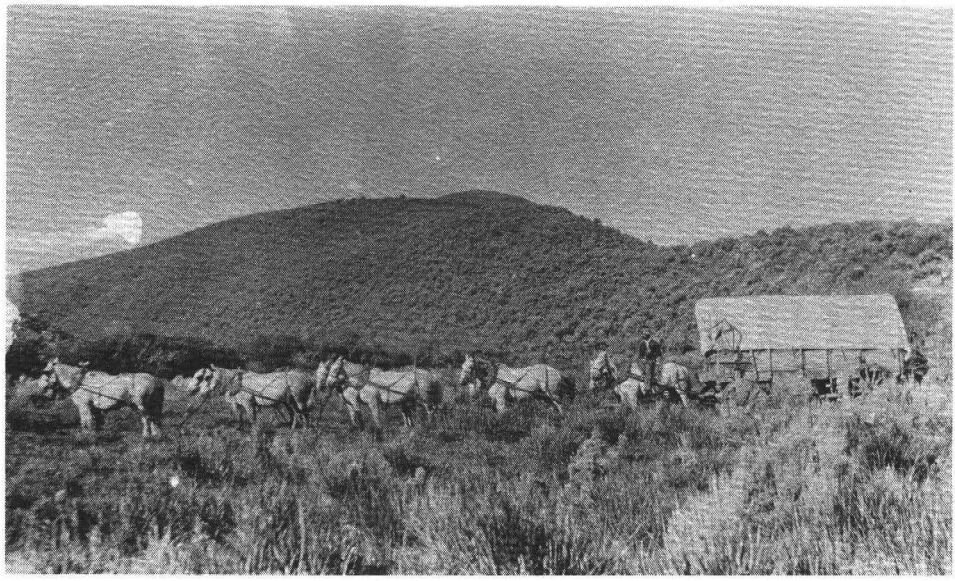
[15] Ibid, p. 44.



W. H. Clawson team. Only he and son Will used bells on leaders. *(Photo courtesy of author).*

sage chickens in hopes of bagging dinner. Twelve-gauge shotguns were at times carried for the latter purpose.

The teamster had heel and toe caulks put on the shoes of his horses to enable them to break the surface of the ground for better footing, especially in winter, when they needed to penetrate the crust on ice, snow, or frozen ground, or at least to obtain firm footing when the surface would not break. The caulks consisted of a short bar of steel about a half-inch wide and three- to three-and-a-half inches long welded to the front of the shoe to make the toe caulk, and two similar pieces welded to the back of the shoe as heel caulks. In winter the teamster sharpened the toe caulk and one of the heel caulks, which he turned sideways to keep each horse from slipping.

Without the aid of snow removal equipment, freighters worked with all interested parties to clear the road of drifts after heavy winter storms, and they made use of a sled when the roads became too snowbound to use the wagons. The "common sense" sled used by most freighters had runners which moved vertically to help negotiate the uneven country. The runners, made of five-inch wide steel plate, had a half-inch square steel ridge which ran lengthwise down the runner to prevent sliding, and could be rough locked for braking on the highest side to pull the sled toward the bank. In this the sled worked opposite to a wagon which the teamster rough locked on the lower side to effect the same purpose. An inexperienced teamster could tempt disaster if he did not know this, as did one "Windy Bill," who flipped his load out of Elko as he dropped down from Dobie Summit. Al Bunsel, the

wagonwright on Jack Creek, built the common sense sled used by John Thompson, a sled which could carry four cords of green wood or its equivalent, pulled by a four-horse team.

The teams and equipment of the professional freighter combined with his ability and ingenuity to make him a unique and necessary figure in Western life both before and after the advent of rail transport, and even into the early years of motor vehicular transport.

Elko to Tuscarora

Freighting northward from Elko, whether to Tuscarora or other communities or mines, generally meant traveling from Elko with a full load and returning empty. Outlying areas consumed more than they produced in terms of the volume of their exports. The 1869 toll road to the North Fork of the Owyhee River and into Idaho left Elko over Dobie Grade; it was abandoned as a toll road in the early 1870s, but it became the main route to Tuscarora, although it was much more demanding than the route from the railroad at Carlin up Maggie Creek.[16] Not only was Elko the county seat, but the old Railroad Stages Lines stations, abandoned after that line stopped regular service to Idaho, became stops for freighters plying the route to Tuscarora and other mining districts north of Elko. The stations provided year-round lodging for the teamsters and barns for the teams in winter. For whatever combination of reasons, this route basically remains the one followed by the current highway.

Before leaving Elko early in the morning, the teamster had to load the wagons (if they had not been loaded the day before) and harness the team, which in summer he probably had turned out to graze south of town, and which might have wandered three or four miles into the hills. Immediately after leaving Elko, the road started the long twelve-mile climb to Dobie Summit, punctuated only by The Barrels, three fifty-gallon whiskey barrels sunk in the ground at a spring (now replaced by a watering trough), eight miles up the grade. There was no respite from the climb for the teams during the first seven miles. At The Barrels, freighters would water teams by hauling water to each animal in a bucket. If the rigs did not get an early start from Elko, they might camp there; often as many as eight to ten freight rigs would do this, taking advantage of the water, the public grazing, and the numerous sage chickens.

From The Barrels, the wagons usually went on to remain overnight at the Dobie Summit station where, at least during winters of later years, horses were charged ten cents a head to feed and house. In addition, teams were

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[16] Patterson, pp. 141-8.

often fed oats or barley as a supplement in the morning and evening; some teams received a nose bag each at the noon break, too, but that seems to have been an exception to the rule.

The Dobie Grade could prove very difficult when there was ice and snow in the winter, and in the spring when the mud (which gave the grade its name) made travel most arduous. Ray Clawson recalls an occasion when it took three days to cover the twelve miles from Elko to Dobie Summit because of the need to double team (use two freight teams in tandem) each wagon the whole distance, and then double back for the next wagon. Jack Clawson, Ray's brother, once had a rough lock break while descending Dobie Grade, forcing the team to run away from the wagon. One of the pointers, a white mare named Sal, slipped, fell, had her front legs broken when run over by a wheel, and was dragged some distance before Jack regained control of both wagons and team; the horse had to be killed.

During the spring of 1889, in support of one of the minor mining booms north of Elko, the Dobie Summit road filled with all manner of outfits hauling freight, including some "Jim Crow" outfits thrown together by amateurs hoping to cash in on the demand. This situation strained the ethics of the professional teamster because it required him to stop and offer aid when needed, even to his cut-rate competition.

One offender, of dubious intelligence, carried a load of four-inch diameter iron pipe on a lightweight wagon pulled by four or six horses; he had to be pulled from the mud so many times during the first day out of Elko that the professionals lost considerable time and expended more than the usual extra effort. Tom Van Dreillen, one of the professionals, approached the fellow that evening at Dobie Summit and, after commiserating with him, modestly proposed a solution to the problem.

The wagon kept sinking in the mud, Tom offered, because of the extra weight created by air passing through the load of pipe. If the fellow plugged the pipe, Tom continued, it would weigh less and the wagon would not sink into the mud quite so often. This sounded logical enough to the amateur teamster, who went to the rancher and procured enough four-by-four wood post material to plug the pipe. The next morning while he carefully fitted and drove plugs into each pipe—at both ends to make sure he kept the air out—the other rigs headed north, free of their hindrance.

Normally, the second day started by wrangling the team, possibly with the aid of other teamsters, or, as in the Clawson family, with the aid of one or two boys who accompanied their father or older brother. The first water past Dobie Summit was a spring and creek (named for the neighboring station) two miles west of Sixteen Mile station, where the Tuscarora stage made a team switch and near where the Elko stage road intersected the freight road.

Teams watered next at the Dinner Station, also known as Coryell's, another of the original toll road stage stops. Then they drove across Weyland Flat,

forked left off the road to North Fork, and proceeded on the Independence Valley road over two "pitches" (short, steep grades) to Fox Springs, or Oldham's Station. Freight teams could stop there for the second night, in summer turning the horses out on the slopes of Lone Mountain to graze, until the grass was depleted. The teamsters would camp out, sleeping in a bedroll made of sixteen-ounce canvas measuring six feet by sixteen feet, which enclosed a feather bed for one or two persons (depending on how many accompanied the rig) with homemade quilts containing wool or cotton batting; when unrolled, the canvas could fold over the beds, serving as groundcloth and cover.

If possible, freighters tried to reach Reed Station (also known as Stewart's) by the end of the second day, three miles and two more pitches beyond Fox Springs. On the third day the teams would leave Reed Station for Eagle Rock Station, another old stage stop, encountering Red Hill (where, as recounted earlier, Jack Clawson crushed his foot) and one other grade en route. From Eagle Rock the road crossed Telegraph Flat and went up over Telegraph Summit, the divide between the Humbolt River drainage and the Owyhee/Columbia River system, before descending across McPheeters Flat to the Meadows (where the road from Carlin entered). Sometimes in winter the snow would drift quite deep above McPheeters Flat, requiring as many as forty men and 100 horses to break through.

Normally, a freighter went from Reed Station past Eagle Rock and the Meadows into Taylor Canyon before watering the team at either Water Canyon or, more frequently, at Twin Bridges, where he would lead the horses to the stream one span at a time. The canyon had numerous narrow places; one, called Cape Horn, about two miles below Water Canyon, had been reduced somewhat by the use of black powder, but it still required care lest the hubs of the upslope wheels rubbed the bank. The road curved and dropped sharply away below Cape Horn before encountering Shirttail Bend another mile down the road where the rig had to go sharply up, around, and down a point in the canyon. This was below Twin Bridges, in a tight part of the canyon known as The Narrows, where teams heading down the grade (with the right of way) would send out a rider to stop teams coming up.

After leaving Taylor Canyon, then as now, the main road crossed Independence Valley to Idaho via Jack Creek, while the Tuscarora road forked to the left and climbed steadily across the valley into the town, a rise in elevation of about 1200 feet. In Tuscarora, the destination of the third and final day's travel, teamsters kept horses in barns or adjacent feed corrals, depending on the season. Naturally, such variables as weather, road conditions, time consumed in loading or unloading wagons, or even rounding up a team which had wandered further afield than usual when grazing on the range, could slow the three-day trip, requiring another camp along the way. Generally, however, the trip took three days each way, compared with passenger service via

stage which normally took six hours, with stops for team changes at Eagle Rock and Sixteen Mile.

While most freighting between Elko and Tuscarora supplied the needs of the latter community, during later periods other hauling of equipment and merchandise occurred in response to boom-and-bust cycles of mining ventures, and to serve the more constant, albeit less demanding, needs of the sparsely populated region. In fact, some freighting of merchandise from Tuscarora into southern Idaho took place even after the turn of the century.

The rigs of big wagons and long teams persisted into the 1920s before quickly vanishing, victims of a new technology which produced motor vehicles able to out-perform them. In fact, the last major use of the big wagons to do a job beyond the capability of motor-driven trucks in northeastern Nevada may well have been the hauling of heavy mining equipment (some pieces weighing ten tons) from the railroad at Deeth over Bear Creek Summit into Jarbidge in 1918. The fleets of "Sagebrush Clippers" disappeared quickly and completely.[17] They appear in the eyes of today's world as perhaps more of an anomaly than as the essential freight vehicles of the time.

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[17] Ibid., p. 142.

Book Reviews

The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890. By Robert M. Utley. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984. xxi + 325 pp. Illustrations, notes, foreword, preface and index. $19.95)

WELL-KNOWN and respected for his earlier works on the Sioux and the frontier army, Robert M. Utley has written a skillful synthesis of Indian-white relations between manifest destiny of the 1840s and the closing of the frontier in 1890. It is also a welcome addition to the series, *History of the American Frontier*. The author states in his preface that he intends the book for the non-specialist. He also suggests that the frontier involved more than a single line of white settlement. Instead, the frontier process consisted "of groupings of frontier zones in which white and red met and mingled." The author maintains that the mixing of the two races led to mutual acculturation. Unfortunately, he does not develop this thesis adequately, especially the Indians' impact on whites, in the body of his treatment. In fact, the idea is not mentioned again directly until the close of the book.

Utley uses several approaches to construct his general narrative. After a background chapter to describe the nature of trans-Mississippi Indians, he discusses white attitudes toward Native Americans in the 1840s, outlines the nature of military and civilian organizations for dealing with Indians, and treats the beginnings of the reservation policy in the 1850s. In his discussion of the Civil War, the author stresses that the withdrawal of regular troops from Western posts did not leave the white frontier defenseless. Utley, in fact, maintains that some 20,000 troops (mostly volunteers) were stationed in the region in 1865, compared to only half that number in 1860.

The remainder of the book Utley devotes to the period from the end of the Civil War to 1890. Again he pursues a multi-dimensional approach which blends such elements as military affairs, territorial interests, reformers' activities, Indian reactions, Bureau of Indian Affairs administration, and public attitudes about the Indian. Utley knows his subject well, and he centers his concise narrative on major events and trends. He moves skillfully from President Grant's Peace Policy to the warfare of the period and then to the reform crusade which resulted in the Dawes Severalty Act of 1887. He closes with the Ghost Dance and the tragedy at Wounded Knee.

Perhaps the major strength of Utley's book is not his mastery of subject matter, but his writing ability. His points are forcefully and clearly made, and he summarizes his research smoothly and effectively. His character sketches

of white and Indian leaders contribute much to his readers' interest and understanding. Utley uses the representative anecdote skillfully when he makes the point that the large campaigns of the Indian wars have received much attention but they were atypical. He drives the point home by describing in detail a small patrol against the Apaches commanded by Lieutenant Walter S. Schulyer in 1871 and by examining a typical raid against whites by a Kiowa leader named Pago-to-goodle in the same period.

Minor problems do appear in the book. Occasionally the author's summations are so heavily distilled that a non-specialist will have difficulty understanding the content. Although Utley generally uses and footnotes the best monographical literature available, he sometimes has not incorporated the most recent works into his discussion. Finally, Utley perhaps concentrates too much attention on the Sioux, doubtless because of his strong background interest in this group.

Nevertheless, *The Indian Frontier* provides a superb synthesis. It offers an objective, well-researched, and skillfully written summary which will benefit both specialist and non-specialist.

Donald L. Parman
Purdue University

Red Shirts and Leather Helmets: Volunteer Fire Fighting on the Comstock Lode. By Steven R. Frady. (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1984. vii + 261 pp. Appendices, index, notes, illustrations.)

THIS BOOK, the first on Nevada's pioneer firefighters, proves once again that the Comstock, despite its demise as a major treasure trove more than a century ago, still provides pay dirt for writers. Firefighting in the bonanza years (1860-1880), the main focus of Steven Frady's study of the Comstock volunteers of Virginia City and Gold Hill, involved much more than heroic men turning out to battle frequent blazes; it was the work of well-organized companies whose members—be they bankers, saloon keepers, newspapermen, merchants or miners—were, for the most part, fiercely proud of their units, their skills and equipment. When bells sounded the alarm, the men in red shirts and leather helmets rushed to danger, well aware that the very lives, property and future of their mining towns depended on them.

Telling this story was a labor of love. The author is the current chief of the Virginia City Volunteer Fire Department and is actively involved in preserving the remaining apparatus of the Comstock fire companies for the Comstock Firemen's Museum in Virginia City. He researched extant department records, diaries of firemen, correspondence, newspaper files and photographs to produce an informal, entertaining picture of a facet of life heretofore

neglected by writers. The chapters deal with the organization and functions of the engine, hook and ladder, and hose companies; firefighting equipment and techniques; social life, scandals and rivalries; and notable conflagrations. Frady's discussion of Virginia City's Great Fire of 1875, which destroyed two-thirds of the town and endangered the mines below, is the best to date.

With high-density frame construction and candles and coal oil for illumination, Virginia City in 1861 was a fire trap. But a network of much-needed fire companies appeared shortly in Comstock towns after pioneers battled the "fire fiend" that year by throwing snowballs at a blazing cabin. Soon they acquired the most sophisticated hand pumpers, hose carts or "jumpers," and other equipment available. However, it took many hands and strong backs to push, pull and operate the pumpers and later steam engines, one of which weighed 4,000 pounds, on the rather steep slopes of Mt. Davidson. Just getting to a fire could be perilous. On one occasion firemen, racing to put on "first water," lost control of a pumper they were pulling, and it tore out half the side of a house.

Rivalries between companies were inevitable, and it was not uncommon for more men to be injured in street brawls at fires rather than from flames and falling walls. However, competition also motivated them to be more courageous and more effective than might otherwise have been the case. Fighting fires, particularly in mines, was dangerous work. Injuries and death were not uncommon for the Comstock volunteers, who numbered about 500 at one time.

If firemen were rivals, they were also close friends and their companies exclusive social clubs. Each of the more than twenty companies formed before 1885 tried to outdo the others with fancy dress balls, picnics that sometimes lasted for days, tournaments and races, and in parades. Decorations for one ball featured flower beds, birds singing in trees, a fountain with jets of water four feet high, a live monkey, and an old gray goose wandering among the guests. The enjoyed their own and the functions of other companies. In 1869 more than 250 Comstock firemen in dress uniforms hopped aboard Central Pacific flatcars, taking two fire engines with them, for a breezy trip to Sacramento to celebrate completion of the transcontinental line.

Unfortunately, the days of the Virginia City volunteers were numbered. They were unable to contain the city's disastrous fire of 1875 before it had destroyed most of the town. Their ineptness was blamed for the heavy loss. In their defense, Frady points to high winds, water shortage, and the city's failure to maintain the equipment as principal factors impeding the firefighters. After the fire the city established a paid department, with volunteers assisting as needed. Gold Hill continued to depend on its volunteer companies, but by the turn of the century, with mining in the doldrums, few firefighters were needed on the lode. A colorful era had drawn to a close.

Despite his efforts to present a full picture of his subject, Frady omits any

serious discussion of the water supplies, sources and adequacy. He mentions that water shortage was often an impediment to effective firefighting, and the problem deserves to be explored. Also, he makes passing and intriguing mention of a firemen's stike before 1865 which "crippled the . . . capabilities of the Virginia Fire Department" but unfortunately does not develop this.

Organizing this book was no easy task. In addition to chapters, the author uses "sidebars" for biographical vignettes of notables like Alf Doten, Tom Peasley and a beloved "fire dog" named "Old Butt." Rather than being clearly delineated from other material, they appear as unrelated addenda to five chapters. I found this confusing and feel that material could have been incorporated more effectively into the text.

Despite these shortcomings, *Red Shirts and Leather Helmets* presents a new view of the Comstock and will be welcomed by scholars and "buffs" alike. It undoubtedly will inspire other studies of firefighting in the American West. The photographs, drawings and maps are excellent. There is a helpful glossary of firehouse jargon, and the appendices include the constitution and by-laws of a fire company and the chronology of twenty-four companies operating between 1861 and 1938.

Robert W. Davenport
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

The Newspapers of Nevada: A History and Bibliography, 1854-1979. By Richard E. Lingenfelter and Karen Rix Gash. (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1984. xxvii. + 337 pp. Bibliography, illustrations, index.)

TWO DECADES AGO, coincidentally with the observation of the centenary of Nevada statehood, there appeared two different bibliographies of Nevada newspapers, one prepared by John G. Folkes and the other by Richard E. Lingenfelter. They were prepared separately and represented a considerable redundancy of effort. The Folks bibliography listed more than 400 different newspapers that had been published within the state between 1854 and 1964; Lingenfelter identified approximately the same number for the years between 1858 and 1958. In addition, Lingenfelter's volume provided short historical essays on most newspapers whenever sufficient information was available.

Now comes a new and greatly expanded version of the Lingenfelter study, embracing all the information of the previous two and adding much more data. We now have not only fuller descriptions of many of the journals, but better information than was previously available on where, if copies survive, they may be found. Lingenfelter and Gash have been able to offer some

information on about 320 periodicals in the present work which Lingenfelter had not mentioned earlier; about half began publication after 1959. In many cases, the descriptive essays this time are much fuller, and the information is better organized.

This is raw material for further historical research—not the end product. Because of the diligence of the compilers, future historians will have an easier time tracking down elusive newspapers or following the itinerant editors/writers/printers from town to town. It whets the historical appetite for a good essay on the significance of the periodical press on the frontier and post-frontier, and it invites speculation on the continuing fecundity of the journalist-entrepreneurs in the expanding Nevada of the late twentieth century. It is a catalog and encyclopedia rather than an analysis.

It would be stimulating, at this time, to have some thoughtful reflections on what the First Amendment has meant to Nevada, and whether the profession that has been so prolific here has contributed much to the cultural life of the state.

At times one is puzzled about the system that was used to organize the names of the periodicals under the communities where they were published. Some small, short-lived papers get as much space as the larger, more important ones. The specialists and old timers will spot an error or omission here and there, but they are minor in view of the size of the project.

Bibliographers are the unsung heroes of scholarship, and Lingenfelter-Gash will probably never get proper credit for their efforts, the product of which will be out-of-date long before another twenty years have expired. But they deserve the thanks of any Western historian who has occasion to labor in the dusty vineyards of regional journalistic history. The University Press has done a fine job of production, as has been its pattern in recent years.

Jim Hulse
University of Nevada, Reno

RODEO: AN ANTHROPOLOGIST LOOKS AT THE WILD AND THE TAME. By Elizabeth Atwood Lawrence. (Knoxville, Tenn., University of Tennessee Press, 1982, 288 pp. Bibliography, illustrations, index.)

IN *RODEO*, Dr. Lawrence undertakes the classic quest of the tenderfoot—to understand not only "what the West was and is, but what the present society wishes it to continue to be." She approaches her task through a symbolic analysis of the premier sport of the Great Plains—an event by which ranching society "serves to express, reaffirm, and perpetuate its values, attitudes, and way of life." Within the arena, she argues, men recreate the life of the cowboy

of the open range and act out the conquest and submission of the frontier through aggressive, masculine action. Ironically, as Dr. Lawrence points out, the ritual celebration of the cowboy came into existence just as the American frontier and the open range disappeared from the national landscape.

Dr. Lawrence's primary concern in the study is to interpret the rodeo in terms of the categories of thought and perceptions of the participants. She focuses on the relationship between man and animal (primarily horses and cattle, but also including pigs, goats, and sheep) as they are embodied in her interviews with participants, the texts of rodeo songs, and the statements of the rodeo announcers who continually interpret the events to the audience. Bulls, for instance, represent the epitome of the wild world the cowboy seeks to conquer, both in their sheer power and as an embodiment of male sexuality. They are respected and admired as fitting opponents in a test of masculine mastery. Horses, in contrast, bridge the gap between wild and tame, occupying both the role of trained assistant in timed events and the unruly opponent in bronco busting. Underlying the action of the rodeo is a deep contradiction in the Westerner's conception of the frontier, which enables him to extol the natural grandeur of the environment while bitterly resenting any attempt to interfere with its destruction.

As a study of the American West, this book is an example of both the strengths and weaknesses of participant observation as a research tool. Dr. Lawrence is clearly an empathic and insightful observer of those she studies. Her description of the preparation of animals for performance is a model of objectivity, despite casual cruelty which must have been offensive to one with fifteen years experience as a practicing veterinarian. In the interviews she has taken time to piece together the world view of a population which prides itself on an anti-intellectual approach to life. Her use of song lyrics and written historical accounts is perceptive and persuasive. On the other hand, the symbolic approach limits this study to the point of view of the participants. The reader will search in vain for the number of rodeos held each year, the number of participants, the income of the average performer, or the social organization of performers' associations. Lawrence continually refers to the rodeo as being a phenomenon of the Great Plains, even though some of the events she refers to (Las Vegas's Helldorado, for instance) are farther west.

Such complaints, however, should not obscure the contribution made in this volume. It is an excellent and insightful description of a uniquely Western ritual and constitutes a major addition to the anthropology of contemporary American society.

John Swetnam
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Richard Lowitt. *The New Deal and the West.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984. xx + 283 pp. $25.00.)

FEW OTHER AREAS in American history have been treated with as much scholarly attention as the New Deal and the West. Both of them now enjoy a rich and sophisticated literature and both are considered critical to understanding the nature of United States history—the West for the influence of the frontier on social and political institutions, and the New Deal for its impact on contemporary public policy. Ever since the late 1960s, historians have focused a great deal of attention on various New Deal programs on the state and local level. Indeed, hundreds of articles and dozens of books have treated the local question, but there has been no general synthesis of the New Deal in the West. Professor Richard Lowitt's fine book in the Indiana University Press's *The West in the Twentieth Century* series fills that gap.

Lowitt defines the West as those "states west of the first tier of states bordering the Mississippi River on the east." Abandoning a state-by-state approach, Lowitt instead has relied on a combination of regionalism and the diversity of federal programs. Since most Department of Agriculture programs dealt with the Great Plains, Lowitt spends several chapters dealing with farming and the associated problems of surpluses, water usage, prices, and land use. Most of the Department of the Interior's resources during the New Deal were focused on Harold L. Ickes's "Inland Empire" of the Intermountain West. The Pacific Northwest was unique, in Lowitt's view, because it was there that New Deal resource planning reached its apogee. Finally, Lowitt sees California as a unique area deserving separate treatment.

In assessing the effect of the New Deal during the 1930s, Lowitt turns to the West's pre-1929 economic position. Grossly undercapitalized and underdeveloped, the American West had always been precariously vulnerable, a location where prosperity in the mining and agricultural industries depended on the rapid exploitation of resources. Lowitt argues that the New Deal helped the American West move into a new economic era by helping convince state isolationists that purely local approaches to the problems of water, energy, and natural resources were outdated and ineffective; by promoting electrification programs allowing the Western economy to end its exclusive dependence on farming and mining; by easing the suffering brought on by unemployment, drought, and dust storms; and by leaving a legacy, often unfulfilled, of conservation, prudent resource use, and regional planning.

By bringing together and synthesizing a large and diverse literature on the New Deal in the West, Professor Lowitt has written a fine book, one which should interest all those intrigued with the history of the West. It will also serve as an essential resource for New Deal scholars.

James S. Olson
Sam Houston State University

Tahoe: An Environmental History. By Douglas H. Strong, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984. xviii + 252 pp. Illustrations, maps, preface, notes, bibliographical essay and index.)

LAKE TAHOE, the Jewel of the Sierra, is losing its sparkle. That is the burden of a superlative history of the Tahoe Basin by an esteemed environmental historian. It is a tale of lost opportunities, of what might have been, if only greed had not been so well rewarded in an acquisitive capitalistic society. Additionally the governmental "hodgepodge" of jurisdictions had given a minority commercial interest the veto of a succession of remedies to redress the damage to the lake and environs. And still it goes on. The latest horror story is of a smog accumulation, especially above the South Shore, which precipitates nitrate particles over the lake and its watershed heightening eutrophication and the greening of beautiful Lake Tahoe. From the scientist's point of view the lake presents, in microcosm, the same forces at work elsewhere on the earth's surface where urbanization and industrialization spawn by-products that contaminate the human nest. Tahoe is a special case, however, and offers an object lesson because of its extremely fragile environment, to begin with, and its incredible build-up of population and the attendant spiraling rate of degradation within the last three decades.

This book stands apart from others for its clarity of exposition, cutting through the romanticized travel literature and pioneer history to focus on the succession of exploitive economies whose traces are still discernable in this high altitude ecosystem. The Washo Indians, whose descendants still survive in the area, lived from the usufruct of the basin without disturbing it during their several thousand year sojourn. Neither agriculture (principally dairying) nor commercial fishing, which found their market outside the basin at Virginia City, altered things appreciably. Still, commercial fishing had to be banned in 1917 because of the extinction of native species, a sign of future problems caused by population concentration. The Comstock mining epoch brought in its wake a logging boom that decimated virgin timber stands in the Tahoe Basin, produced millionaires and left a cutover wasteland which sheep grazing further denuded. The legacy was a depressed economy by the turn of the century and a tradition of large land holding on the Nevada side of the lake in contrast to the diverse California tenure patterns.

The author depicts the forces of tourism in the twentieth century producing a paradox of opportunities. The tourist boom, at first a function of railway transportation, was followed by the auto revolution in the 1930s, spawning clusters of summer resorts around the lake shore. There succeeded winter skiing resorts, year around visitors, and the explosion of monolithic gambling palaces on the South Shore after World War II. Soil erosion, despoilation of lake purity and air pollution all accompanied the "instant" urbanization that occurred in succeeding years. Tourism also brought permanent settlers who

cared about the natural environment. So the national conservation movement was manifested at Tahoe with successful reservation programs, some of them fostered by private interests as with the developing Lake Tahoe National Forest movement, 1897-1905. Somewhat later appeared state parks embracing Emerald Bay on the California side and sections of Nevada's lake shore. Thus, by 1970, some 70% of the land area in the basin was reserved for recreation and/or preservation purposes. While often attempted, the scheme to include Tahoe Basin within the National Park System came too late in its developmental history to be accepted by the dominant commercial interests or park authorities.

The contemporary saga of efforts to save Tahoe favors the formula of controlled growth and development and is the most fascinating portion of the book. The required regional agency, which was needed to apply zoning regulations on real estate development as well as to control water pollution, came into being only after a protracted and bitter struggle within each state between developers and environmentalists. Then the contest moved to the state capitals. California presented a posture of environmental self-righteousness with its water quality and environmental protection statutes. Nevada resisted joining the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency for a time. At risk, of course, was the threat of federal intervention. Interestingly enough in a Catch 22 situation, both states found that federal public works and other grants facilitated the very process of massive building that the environmentalists wanted to curb. The Governing Body of the T.R.P.A., representing preponderantly the local governing bodies from both states, however, scarcely slowed down the rate of construction. Finally, in 1980, the compact that had brought T.R.P.A. into being was amended by both states, bringing state wide representation into the rigorous enforcement of environmental standards.

Thus it is that Douglas Strong concentrates on this setting to narrate man's varied effects upon Tahoe Basin from the era of the Washo Indians to today's weekend crush of traffic on the South Shore. His purpose is not to cast blame for past transgressions, rather to point up lessons from the historical record that may profit the on-going effort to control growth at Lake Tahoe and incidentally, have a salutory effect where other environmental struggles are joined. His inspiration is a profound belief that Tahoe is so exceptional, both "for scenic and recreational values that it belongs to all Americans." This work is embellished with attractive and significant illustrations, helpful maps and a comprehensive bibliographical essay that speaks to the authenticity of this appealing narrative. Throughout, the author registers a positive hope that the cooperative machinery will be made to work as the private sector takes stock of its future shadowed by impending environmental and economic crises.

Lawrence B. Lee
San Jose, California

Letters

Note: The Editor of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* invites commentary from readers in regard to articles, notes and reviews. When any are received, they will be printed, along with appropriate responses.

TO THE EDITOR:

WE WOULD LIKE to make some comments in reply to a book review that was published in *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* for Spring, 1984. The review concerns our book, *Silver Short Line*, about the Virginia & Truckee Railway of Nevada.

The reviewer [Phillip I. Earl] pointed out certain errors of fact, which we freely acknowledge. However, we must reject some of his adverse criticisms because we were not attempting to produce a comprehensive history of the railway and various factors causing and affecting it. Our publisher imposed certain space limitations, necessitating that we be brief in certain areas. We sacrificed some text in order to include a sufficient number of illustrations; we tried to balance this, based on what we considered to be our readership and "viewership."

When remarking on our coverage of Major Gordon Sampson, final general manager of the V&T, the reviewer seems to be out of line. We cannot understand how any historian would hold a person's memoirs, recollections, or oral history to be more reliable than documentation. We feel that we were actually generous in assessing Sampson's words and actions, in view of records in our possession.

A story in the *Nevada State Journal* of June 1, 1949, covering the railroad's abandonment hearings, brings out several interesting facts about Sampson. Whom did he hire to testify that repair would be prohibitive? He hired Robert A. Allen, highway engineer for the State of Nevada (part of the V&T route would be valuable for freeway construction). Sampson deliberately increased railroad overhead by doubling the number of full steam trains, running six days a week rather than three. We have documents in our files that state the V&T management was lacking in railroad knowledge. The contention that the management under Sampson was lacking in business sense was confirmed by my business contacts in Carson City at the time.

Many of Major Sampson's statements and writings, *cf*, Mary Ellen Glass "Rails in the Mud: Last Years of the V&T," *NHS Quarterly* XV (Summer, 1972) pp. 37-44 are refuted by facts documented in our book. We have papers in our files to support every allegation made in *Silver Short Line*, in

the matter of Gordon Sampson's period of management. Generally, our aim was simply to record the facts and let readers reach their own conclusions.

Ted Wurm
Harre W. Demoro
Oakland, California

MR. EARL REPLIES:

IN REPLY TO THE ABOVE LETTER, I merely commented in the review that the authors were "rather hard on" Major Sampson. I based this judgement on a reading of Sampson's oral history and an article by Mary Ellen Glass, director of the University's Oral History Program, "Rails in the Mud: Last Years of the V & T," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* XV (Summer, 1972) pp. 37-44. Since railroads are not a prime interest of mine, I have not gone into the records of the V & T, relying instead upon whatever secondary material was available and assuming it was reliable. I am certainly aware of some of the dangers of oral history, one of which is a tendency to try to influence the future writing of history. To some extent, Major Sampson has been successful. As the authors will perhaps note from the review, I acknowledged only that there were conflicting interpretations of Sampson's tenure which should be straightened out. I am certain that the editor of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* would be most receptive to a documented account of the authors' version.

Phillip I. Earl

Contributors

Lenore M. Kosso is the Manuscript Curator in the Department of Special Collections in the University of Nevada, Reno Library. Her article grows out of work for her master's thesis in History at UNR. In 1972 she traveled extensively throughout Yugoslavia, and from January to June lived in Belgrade.

Michael S. Coray is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Nevada, Reno. The current article is an overview of a larger project, *Blacks in the West, 1850-1860,* which he is writing based on census information. Professor Coray's most recent publication is a chapter entitled "In the Beginning" in *The British in the Sudan, 1898-1956: The Sweetness and the Sorrow.* Edited by Robert O. Collins and Francis M. Deng. (London: St. Antony's/Macmillan Series; Stanford, California: Hoover Institution, 1984).

Linn E. Clawson resides in Fairbanks, Alaska. His great uncle, Ray Clawson, was the primary source of information for the article. Ray Clawson and his brothers followed their father W.H. Clawson into the freighting business before the turn of the century.

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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.