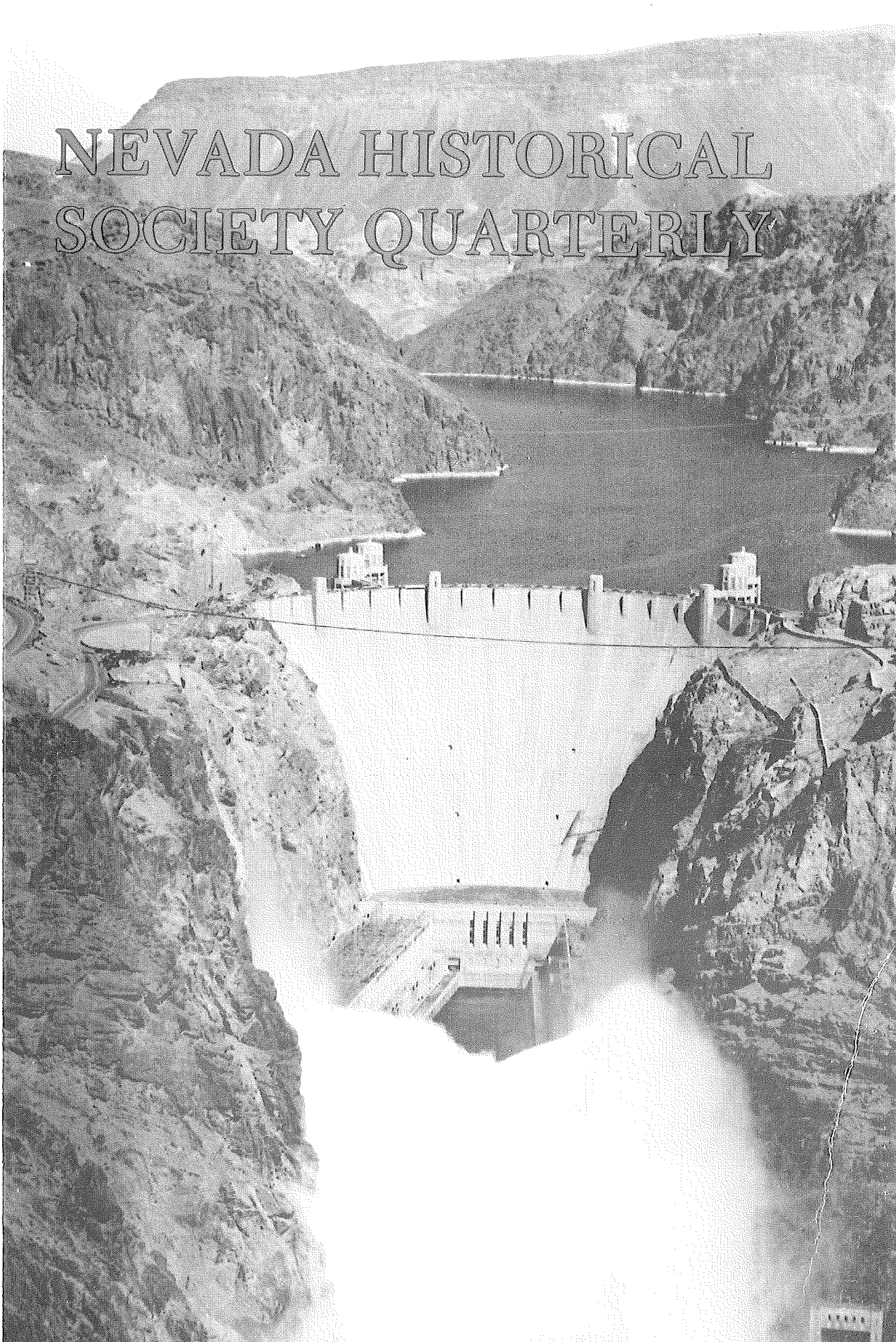
# NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY



# NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY



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

Prospective authors should send their work to The Editor, *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 1650 N. Virginia St., Reno, Nevada 89503. Papers should be typed double-spaced and sent in duplicate. All manuscripts, whether articles, edited documents, or essays, should conform with the most recent edition of the University of Chicago Press *Manual of Style*. Footnotes should be typed double-spaced on separate pages and numbered consecutively. Correspondence concerning articles and essays is welcomed, and should be addressed to The Editor. 

The *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* (ISSN 0047-9462) is published quarterly by the Nevada Historical Society, 1650 N. Virginia, Reno, NV 89503. The *Quarterly* is sent to all members of the Society. Membership dues are: Student, $5; Senior Citizen without *Quarterly*, $7.50; Regular, $25; Family, $30; Sustaining, $35; Contributing, $50; Associate Fellow, $100; Fellow, $250; Associate Patron, $500; Corporate Patron, $1,000; Life, $2,500. Membership applications and dues should be sent to the Director, Nevada Historical Society, 1650 N. Virginia, Reno, NV 89503. Second-class postage paid at Reno, Nevada. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Nevada Historical Society Quarterly, 1650 N. Virginia, Reno, Nevada 89503.

# NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

VOLUME XXX SPRING 1987 NUMBER 1

## Contents



**THE COVER:** Boulder Dam power plant seen here with water being discharged through seven-foot needle valves. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

# *The Ruby Valley Indian Reservation of Northeastern Nevada: "Six Miles Square"*

STEVEN J. CRUM

OVER THE YEARS THE TEMOKE BAND of Western Shoshone Indians have maintained that a "six miles square" reservation was set aside for them, and it included the Overland Creek in Ruby Valley, Nevada. This reservation, they argue, was established in the mid-nineteenth century at the time of white contact. Because such a reservation has not existed in Ruby Valley in this century, the Shoshones have continuously asked whatever became of the "six miles square." In 1919, Chief Muchach Temoke and his interpreter Thomas Wahne, both Shoshones from Ruby Valley, posed the following question to Cato Sells, the Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA): "We ask you to tell us, put it down in a letter, when this tract six miles square was deed to Temoak's band. We want a copy of that deed."[1] Some forty years later, in 1964, another Shoshone, Edward McDade, asked the Indian Bureau a similar question: "Could you find about six square that was set aside at Ruby Valley for Shoshone Indians for the Te-Moak Band?"[2] The BIA either did not give an answer that satisfied the Indians or it failed to respond to them at all.

Contrary to what the Indians have been saying, there are white settlers of northeastern Nevada who have argued that a reservation never existed for the Shoshones in Ruby Valley, not even in the nineteenth century. When asked about the "six miles square" reservation, which supposedly included the Overland Creek, one white settler, Ashley Dawley of Elko, Nevada, asserted in 1917 "that no Indian Reservation was ever located by anyone . . . or near that point."[3]

Who is correct as to whether or not a reservation "six miles square" ever existed in Ruby Valley, the Shoshones or the white settlers? As will be argued the Shoshones are correct because the reservation actually did exist. The history of this reservation, and why it does not exist today, is traced in this paper.

*Steven J. Crum is a member of the Western Shoshone Tribe of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in northeastern Nevada. He completed his Ph.D in history from the University of Utah in 1983, and is an instructor of history at California State University, Chico. He is currently researching American Indian higher education history through a post-doctoral fellowship he received from the Smithsonian.*

Lazy Jim remembers when the 1863 treaty was signed and claims that the reservation was surveyed; photo c. 1917. *(Photo courtesy of Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno)*

In 1859, the Ruby Valley Indian Reservation was established by Jacob Forney, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Great Basin region, who requested his subordinate Robert Jarvis to set aside a reservation for the Western Shoshones living in northeastern Nevada. Forney wanted a reservation established for the Shoshones because he knew that the whites would soon occupy the entire Great Basin region and claim all good land suitable for agriculture. Additionally, he wanted the Indians to give up their hunting and gathering lifestyle and become sedentary farmers. Forney chose Ruby Valley because it had fertile soil in some locations and also available water.[4]

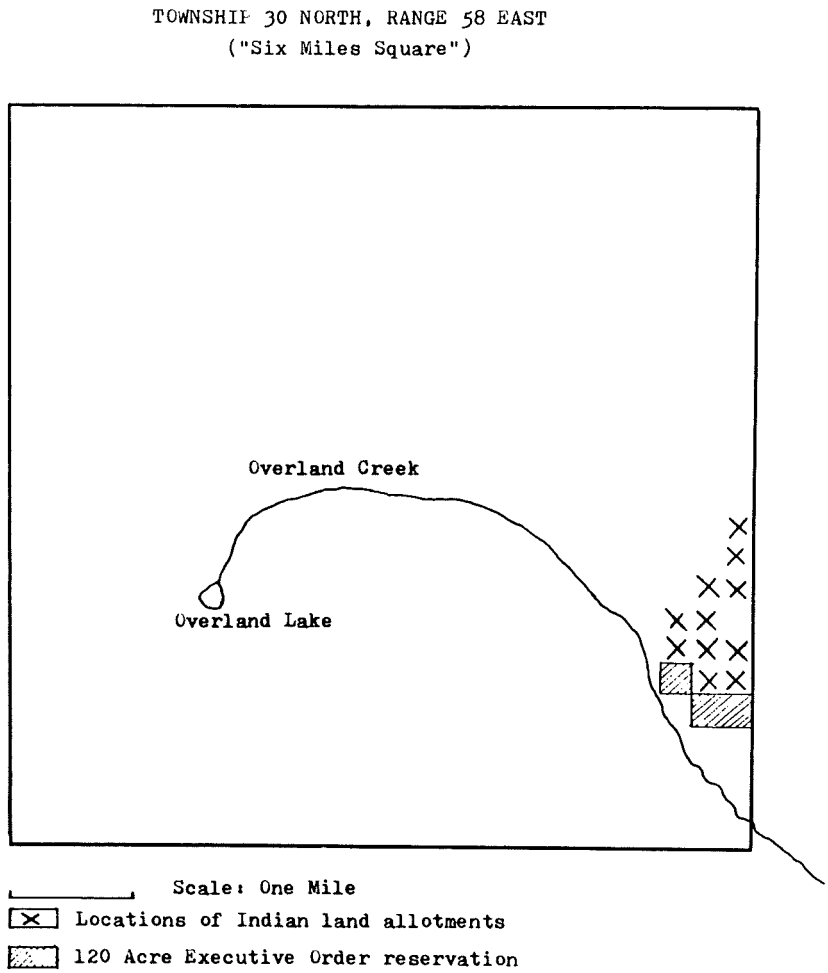
Carrying out his assignment agent Jarvis specified the location of the Ruby Valley Reservation. The BIA, in turn, said that it should be "six miles square," or one township, the basic unit of land determined by the federal government's Ordinance of 1785.[5] But for reasons not entirely clear, the BIA

did not survey the reservation in 1859 nor in the following years. Perhaps the Bureau had more urgent Indian matters elsewhere in the nation and intended to survey it at a later date. Perhaps the Bureau could not survey the reservation because the region of Ruby Valley was not mapped by the General Land Office until 1868-1869, making it impossible to delineate a "six miles square" at an earlier date.[6] If the reservation had been surveyed, most likely it would have been identical or nearly identical with Township 30 North, Range 58 East, where the Overland Creek is located. At any rate, what did come into existence in 1859 was the "six miles square" Ruby Valley Reservation with unmapped boundaries.

From the outset, the existence of the Ruby Valley Reservation remained in doubt because the Central Office of the BIA in Washington, D.C. never provided enough funds for its maintenance. As a case in point, local farm agent Jarvis remained on the reserve for only four months, from March to June 1859. He was forced to resign because the Indian Bureau paid him only meager wages. It is doubtful whether he had the time to teach the Indians how to farm. However, his successor Benjamin Rogers did teach the Indians how to plant crops, and forty acres were under cultivation by 1860. Unfortunately, Rogers resigned in 1861 because the Bureau gave him only limited supplies and failed to pay his salary. Farm operations on the reservation ceased after 1861. Obviously, the Ruby Valley Reservation was not a top priority of the BIA.[7]

About the time Rogers resigned his position, Benjamin Davies, the new Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Great Basin region, visited the Ruby Valley Reservation. The Shoshones, under the leadership of Chief Sho-cup, asked him if the government intended to revive the reservation farm. Because the necessary aid had not been forthcoming from his superiors, Davies could not make any promises to the Indians. However, he did make a recommendation to the Central Office in Washington: because the "six miles square" was "too small" for all the Shoshones of the region, and understanding that the white settlers would soon occupy all of Ruby Valley, Davies recommended "that the whole valley be declared" as a reservation for the Shoshones and "that farming operations be commenced there at once."[8] The Central Office did not consider this recommendation, and the interests of the Shoshones continued to be ignored.

The unsurveyed Ruby Valley Reservation would have quickly been forgotten had it not been for the negotiating and signing of the Treaty of Ruby Valley on October 1, 1963. Although the treaty was basically a pact of "peace" and "friendship" between the Western Shoshones and the Americans, it did have provisions relating to the landbase of the Shoshones. One provision defined the Western Shoshone territory as covering a large part of today's northeastern Nevada, including Ruby Valley. Another provision specified that more than one reservation would be set aside for the Western Shoshones




Map showing the "Six Miles Square" in question. *(Map courtesy of author)*

inside the territory designated by the treaty.[9] This provision was included because the federal officials knew that the Shoshones were widely dispersed over a large geographic area of the Great Basin and were deeply attached to particular locations within their aboriginal homeland. It would be impossible to place all of them on a single, centralized reservation.

The Treaty of Ruby Valley of 1863 did not specify the locations of reservation sites. However, Ruby Valley was considered a prime locality for several reasons: first, the valley possessed adequate natural resources, including water from the Overland Creek; second, the 1859 unsurveyed reservation was located in the valley; third, since 1859, a large number of Shoshones, under the leadership of Chief Sho-cup and later Chief Temoke, had always occupied the valley before the unsurveyed reservation was designated;

fourth, the 1863 treaty was negotiated in the valley; and, fifth, the valley lay within the boundaries of the Western Shoshone treaty territory.

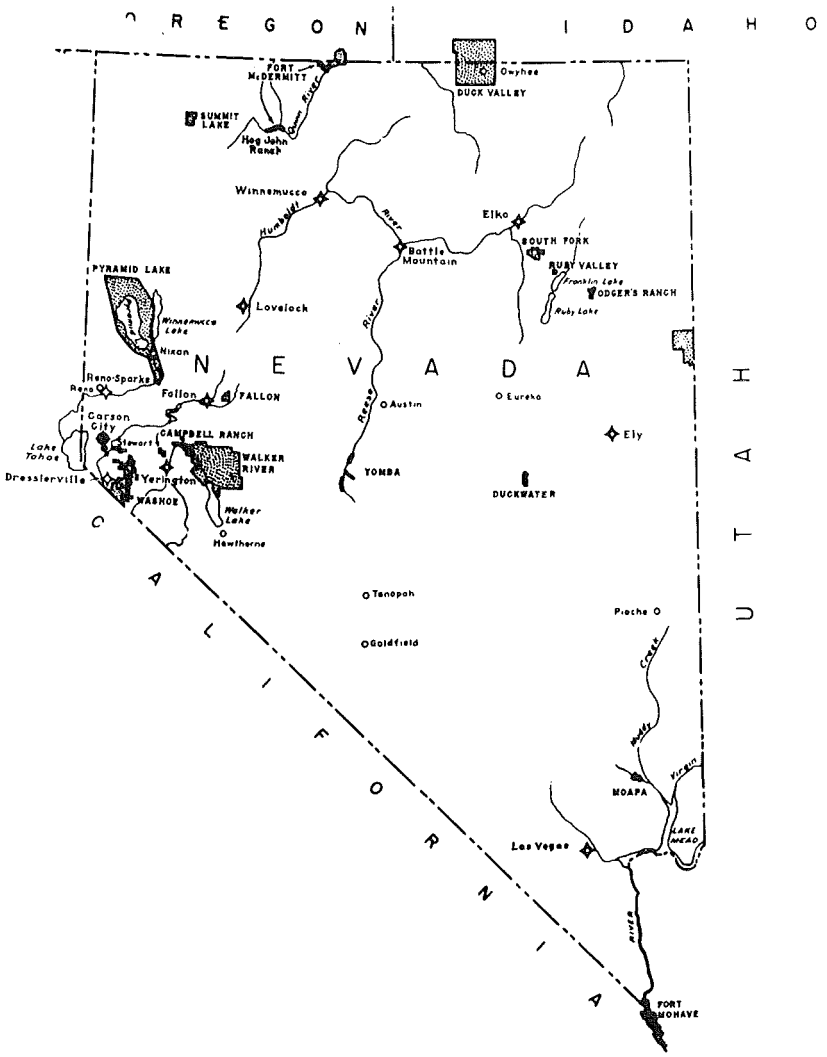
Hence, the unsurveyed "six miles square" reservation, in existence since 1859, was given new life, at least for awhile. It was "re-occupied" in 1863 by James Nye, Governor of Nevada Territory, and was intended to be the future home of the Ruby Valley Shoshones.[10] Jacob Lockhart, the Indian Agent of Nevada, was given instructions to survey the reservation in 1864.

As had been the case before the Treaty of Ruby Valley, the Ruby Valley Reservation was still not a top priority of the BIA after 1863. Agent Lockhart, as well as his successors in Nevada, never surveyed the reservation because the Central Office in Washington did not provide enough funds for that purpose. Lockhart expressed his regret over this matter in 1865 when he wrote: "I did not succeed in getting the 'Ruby Valley' Reserve surveyed . . . and not having funds to go there it is yet unsurveyed."[11] The BIA also failed to revive the reservation farm. Governor Nye selected Henry Butterfield, an employee of the Butterfield Overland Mail Company, to be the local reservation farm agent. Having not received his salary from the Indian Bureau after six months, Butterfield quit his job. He was rehired in 1866 but quit again beause of salary problems.[12] The Indian farm was not revived, at least not in the 1860s.

Because the BIA did not survey the "six miles square" as a home for the Ruby Valley Shoshones, white settlers began to settle there by the mid-1860s. Two such ranchers were Chester A. Griswold and Samuel Woodward, who received financial backing from the Overland Mail Company. They established a farm, called the Overland Ranch (or Farm), adjacent to the Overland Creek, and cultivated grain.[13] Owing to this development, Franklin Campbell, the Indian Agent for Nevada, wrote in 1866 that "the reserve in Ruby Valley, which was formerly intended for their use, is now occupied by settlers and the Overland Mail Company's farm."[14] Campbell recommended "that another [reservation] be set apart for them upon the headwaters at the Humboldt River" in northeastern Nevada.[15] After the mid-1860s, the BIA never again considered reviving the "six miles square" reservation for the Shoshones in Ruby Valley.

As the years passed, the correspondence concerning the "six miles square" reservation became buried among the voluminous records of the Central Office of the BIA in Washington. Indian Bureau officials soon forgot about the existence of the reservation. In fact, after 1870, only one Nevada Indian agent, Levi Gheen, knew that a reservation was supposed to have been set aside in Ruby Valley for the Shoshones, but he did not know that it was "six miles square."[16] By the turn of the century, the top administrators of the BIA knew nothing about the reservation.

Although the "six miles square" reservation was never surveyed by the BIA, the Temoke Band of Ruby Valley Shoshones have always regarded its




Reprinted, by permission, from Bureau of Indian Affairs, Phoenix Area Office, *Information Profiles of Indian Reservations in Arizona, Nevada, & Utah* (Phoenix, 1976), p. 87.

location as their permanent home. This is substantiated by Indian Agent Levi Gheen who wrote in 1874 that the land "near the overland farm in Ruby Valley is considered by the Indians their capital or centre [sic] place."[17] The Indians, with the help of Gheen—who incidentally had no desire to survey the reservation but wanted the Shoshones to remove themselves to Duck Valley, 170 miles north of Ruby Valley—began to farm the land adjacent to the Overland Creek and continued to do so intermittently into the twentieth century.[18]

In the opening decade of this century, the Shoshones and white settlers lived side-by-side in Ruby Valley, coexisting peacefully. The Indians were friendly to the whites as they had remained peaceful since the signing of the 1863 treaty. The white ranchers depended upon the Indians as a source of labor and paid them wages. Both claimed the land around the Overland Creek. The whites claimed the land under federal and state land laws; the Shoshones asserted ownership because they regarded it as their reservation home. But the Indians, at least those living there around 1900, did not know the boundaries of the land they called their reservation since it had never been surveyed by the BIA. Obviously an earlier generation of Shoshones, including Chief Old Temoke, the principal signer of the 1863 treaty, knew that it was "six miles square." But Old Temoke's land and treaty papers were burned in 1890, in accordance with tribal custom, when the old chief died.[19]

Peaceful coexistence between the Shoshones and whites in Ruby Valley ended around 1910 when one white rancher, Stanley Wines, told the Indians to remove themselves from forty acres of land near the Overland Creek, located in Section 25 East, inside Township 30 North, Range 58 East. Wines claimed the small tract had been passed down to him by his father, Ira Wines, who acquired the land under the land laws of Nevada in 1897. Wines allowed the Indians to live on the land because he was their friend and hired them as laborers on occasion. His son Stanley was not friendly to the Indians and wanted them off the tract.[20] The Shoshones were completely unaware that the older Wines had purchased the tract in 1897.

In response to Wines's demand, the Indians began to complain to the BIA. In a letter sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, Muchuch Temoke, the grandson of Old Chief Temoke, wrote in 1912 that "I am steel [sic] here where my grand Father us to be place. . . . Wines claimed all my land what's the George Washington gave to me in year 1863."[21] Relying on oral tradition, Temoke was told by his parents and grandparents that Governor Nye had "re-occupied" the Ruby Valley Reservation in 1863 as a permanent home for the Shoshones, and that the Indians had lived at this place permanently since the 1860s.

The BIA responded to the Shoshones by sending Calvin H. Asbury, Superintendent of the Reno Indian Agency in Nevada, to deal with the Ruby Valley land dispute. Although Asbury did his best to defend the interests of the Indians, he did not believe that an Indian reservation had been set aside in Ruby Valley in the nineteenth century, particularly since the Indians could not give written proof that it had existed, nor recall its dimensions. Since the whites had already filed for land near the Overland Creek inside Township 30 North, Asbury decided it was time to do the same for the Indians. Beginning in 1911 and 1912 Asbury aided several Shoshones in filing for public domain allotments, seven of which were located in Township 30 North, Range 58 East, adjacent to or near the Overland Creek. Upon Asbury's recommenda-

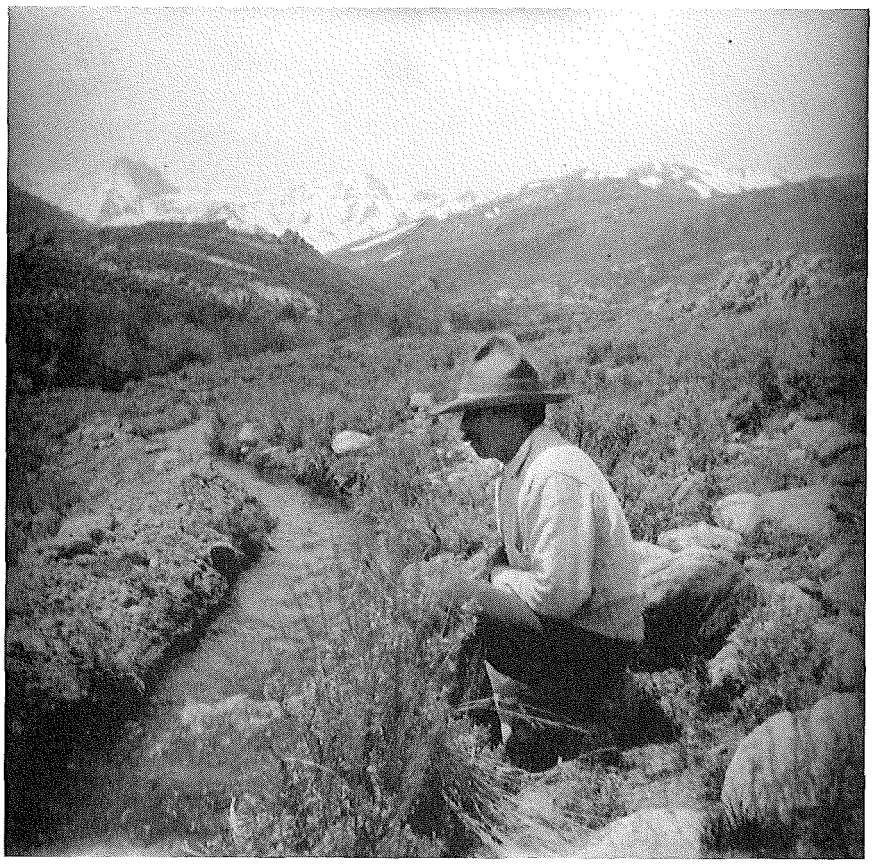
tion President William H. Taft established a small 120 acre reservation (if it can be called one) by Executive Order in September 1912. A total of 1,240 acres of land including both allotments and the small reserve were set aside for the Shoshones near the Overland Creek in the early twentieth century.[22]

Although land had been set aside for the Temoke Band of Ruby Valley Shoshones after 1911, its members were still dissatisfied. As far as the Indians were concerned, the 1863 reservation still existed, and they had always lived on it. The Shoshones could not understand why the BIA, under Asbury, had set aside land for them a second time. To voice their dissatisfaction and to find out details about the 1863 reservation, Muchuch Temoke, who became the hereditary chief of the Temoke Band in 1916, traveled to Washington, D.C. In addressing the concerns of the Indians to the BIA, Temoke stated: "Some of us tried to farm, but the white people have taken our lands away after we had farmed it. They have taken my land, fence, and all away, this included 40 acres of land farmed mostly in alfalfa hay and (red top)."[23] In responding to Temoke, Cato Sells, the Commissioner of the BIA, wrote the following: "A small reservation, about six miles square, was established at Ruby Valley in 1859 by a Special Indian Agent, but after a few years of occupancy it was abandoned and became a station for the Overland Stage Company."[24]

Sells's remarks were important because not since the 1860s had an official of the BIA specified that the Ruby Valley Reservation was "six miles square." Furthermore, the Indian Bureau of the twentieth century finally acknowledged the existence of the reservation. The talk of the "six miles square," dead since the 1860s, was revived publicly in 1917.

Actually, a few federal officials were aware of the existence of the "six miles square" reservation prior to 1917. BIA Commissioner Sells had known of its existence since 1915 after receiving information from the General Land Office.[25] The GLO in turn had obtained its information from the *Eighteenth Annual Report* of the Smithsonian Institution, published in 1899 and edited by Charles Royce. Royce had dug through the voluminous land files of the BIA and published a wealth of information about Indian reservations. His report specified the following about the Ruby Valley Reservation: "A reserve was selected and set apart by agent Jarvis at Ruby Valley, Nevada. This reserve was 6 miles square. After being occupied and cultivated for several years it was abandoned and subsequently became a station for the Overland Stage Company."[26]

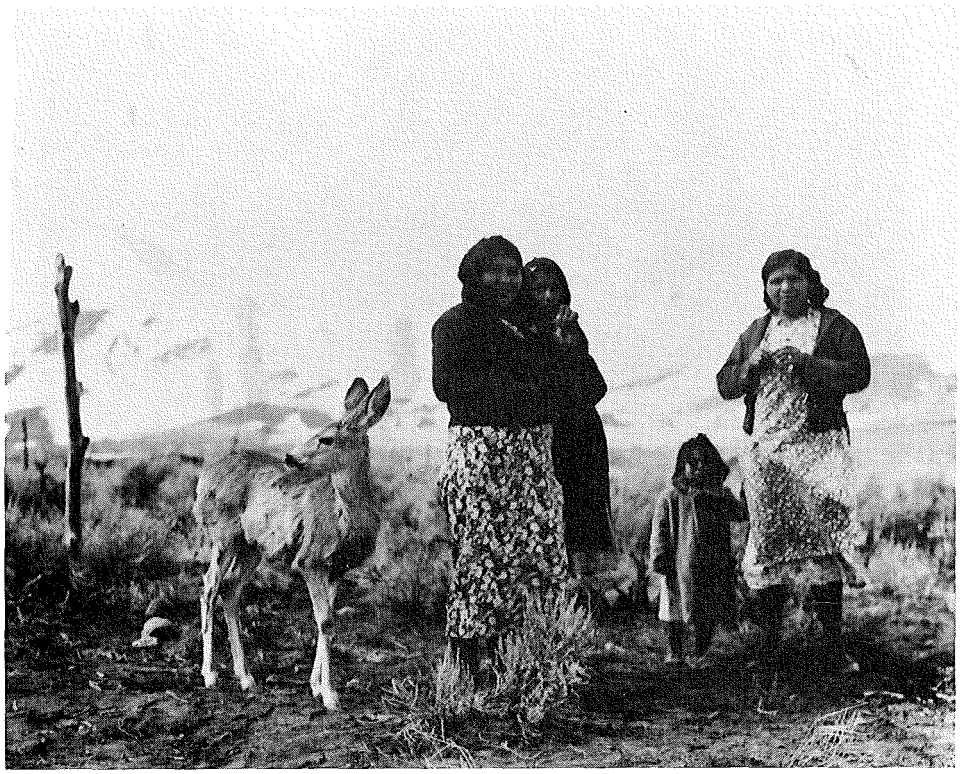
Royce's Smithsonian report, in which Commissioner Sells held confidence, was correct. However, in one respect, it was unclear because Royce did not specify who "abandoned" the Ruby Valley Reservation: was it the Indians or the BIA? If he meant the Indians, then the author was wrong because the Shoshones never abandoned the tract. If the report was referring to the BIA, then it was correct because the BIA did not consider surveying the reservation after 1865. Nor did it evict the white settlers, including the employees of



The water shed, Canyon of Overland Creek, the McBride Wines ditch near the point of diversion and Masach Timoke, June 7, 1917. *(Photo courtesy of Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno)*

the Overland Company, who settled on the unsurveyed reservation in the mid-1860s.

Although the BIA, under Commissioner Sells in the second decade of this century was now fully aware that the "six miles square" reservation had existed in Ruby Valley since 1859, it had no intention of restoring the land to the Indians. To restore it would have meant purchasing all the white-owned ranches around the Overland Creek, and the fiscally conservative Indian Bureau did not want to use its money for that purpose. The Bureau maintained that the Ruby Valley Shoshones could move to the Duck Valley Reservation, set aside by Executive Order in 1877 for Western Shoshone Indians and located roughly 170 miles north of Ruby Valley.[27] As far as the BIA was concerned, there was no need to establish another reservation for the Nevada Shoshones. In essence, the BIA did not want to comply with the



Shoshone residents of Ruby Valley, c. 1936. *(Photo courtesy of The Northeastern Nevada Museum, Elko)*

Treaty of 1863 which specified that more than one reservation would be established for the Western Shoshones.

The Ruby Valley Shoshones rejected the BIA's position and became adamant that the "six miles square" must be restored. They argued that the Ruby Valley Reservation should have been set aside in fulfillment of the Treaty of Ruby Valley. They asserted that the Duck Valley Reservation was not located inside the territory claimed by the Temoke Band of Ruby Valley Shoshones. Duck Valley was set aside for other bands of Shoshones and not the followers of Old Chief Temoke.[28] Because the Temoke Band was deeply attached to Ruby Valley, its hunting and gathering territory since time immemorial and their permanent home since the 1860s, it chose to fight for the restoration of the "six miles square" reservation.

In waging verbal and political combat against the BIA, the Shoshones sent a delegation to Washington, D.C. in 1919. The representatives, Chief Muchuch Temoke and his interpreter Thomas Wahne, had a number of issues to present to the BIA. Their main concern was the restoration of the "six miles square." Part of their statement reads: "The Government promised

to set aside for Temoak's band a tract of land that was six miles square. . . . Now we have come to find out the truth. We ask you to tell us, put it down in a letter, when this tract six miles square was deeded to Temoak's band. We want a copy of that deed."[29]

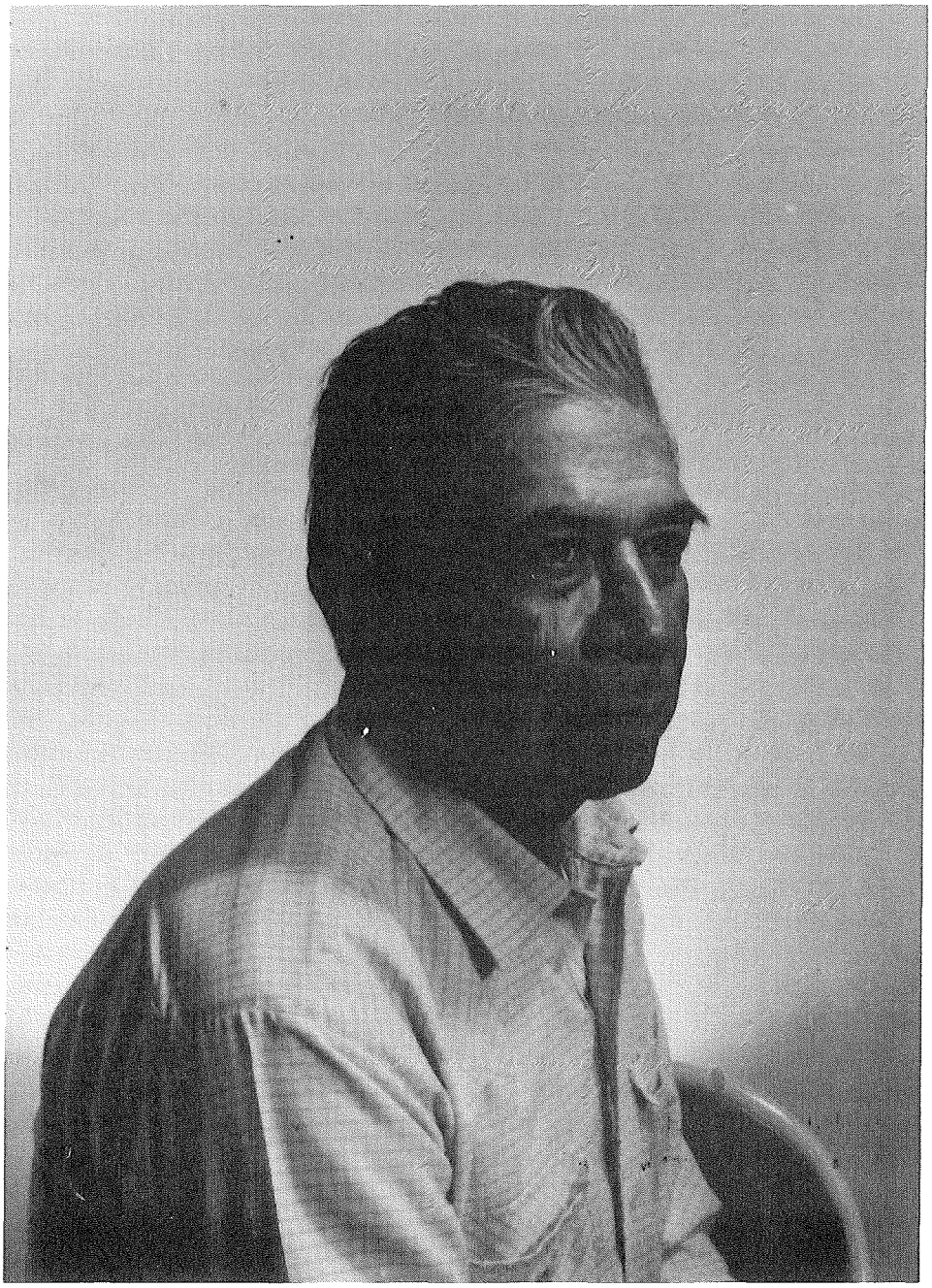
Responding to the Indians in writing was Edgar Meritt, the Assistant Commissioner of the BIA in Washington. Meritt simply reiterated the earlier comments of other Bureau officials, that the reservation did exist at an earlier date but was eventually "abandoned." He implied that the reservation had never been surveyed and therefore existed only on paper in the nineteenth century. Meritt concluded: "As has been said before there is nothing in the records to substantiate the Indians' claim to the tract six miles square located in Ruby Valley."[30]

Although the BIA did not intend to restore the "six miles square," it did make a serious effort to acquire additional land for the Ruby Valley Shoshones. First, in 1920, Stanley Wines relinquished title to the 40 acre tract which sparked the Indian-white land controversy initially. The BIA, in turn, acquired this land from the State of Nevada and gave it to Joe Temoke, one of the local Indians.[31] Second, in 1924, Congress, in response to a BIA request, appropriated $25,000 for purchasing additional land and water rights in Ruby Valley for the Indians.[32] The fact that Congress appropriated this money elated the Shoshones, for they hoped that the government would use it to restore the "six miles square."[33]

Unfortunately, the Shoshones' happiness was shortlived, for the "six miles square" was not restored. In fact, the $25,000 was not enough to purchase even a small ranch in Ruby Valley. The white ranches owning land inside and near Township 30 North were willing to sell, but their prices were far above the $25,000 figure. One rancher, William short, was willing to sell his 2,000 acres for $80,000. At least one rancher was willing to sell for only $12,000, but his land did not have sufficient water for irrigation. By 1928 the appropriation remained unspent and it eventually reverted back to the government's budget office.[34]

Because much of the good agricultural land in Ruby Valley had been taken over by the whites, and since the remaining land was unsuitable for farming, some federal and Nevada state officials maintained that the Temoke Band should leave Ruby Valley and move elsewhere. In 1924, James Jenkins, Superintendent of the Reno Indian Agency, encouraged the Ruby Valley group to move to the newly established 160 acre Elko Indian Colony, located in Elko, Nevada, about 70 miles to the northwest.[35] In 1926, Jerry Sheehan, a state senator in Nevada, suggested that the government set aside a reservation in the Duckwater Valley, roughly 100 miles south of Ruby Valley, and resettle the Temoke Band on that reservation.[36]

The Ruby Valley Shoshones had no intention of leaving their long-established home around the Overland Creek. On two separate occasions in the



Frank Temoke, 1972. *(Photo courtesy of The Northeastern Nevada Museum, Elko)*

1920s, they argued that soldiers at Fort Ruby—a northeastern Nevada Fort occupied from 1862 to 1869, located in the southern end of Ruby Valley—had surveyed the "six miles square" in the 1860s. In 1927 a few Shoshones, including Lazy Jim, an aged Indian who was in Ruby Valley when the 1863 treaty was signed, claimed that soldiers, including one named "Hay," surveyed the reservation.[37] In an extensive hearing held in Elko in May 1929, focusing on the controversy over the issue of land near the Overland Creek, the Indians again argued that the reservation had been surveyed by Fort Ruby soldiers and that a monument was placed near the Overland Creek, the heart of the reservation.[38] However, to date the alleged military survey has not been located.

Officials of the BIA did not take the Indians' survey argument seriously because the boundaries of the "six miles square" were never identified. Furthermore, the Indians could not give the Indian Bureau written proof that the reservation had ever been surveyed. Regarding the "six miles square," W.W. Reed, the BIA moderator at the May 1929 Elko hearing, made the following remark:

> It is strange how the story of some soldier or officer having promised the Indians a reservation 6 miles square, located in the vicinty of Overland Creek, should be revived at this date. . . . If the promise was ever made, it was evidently by someone without authority to do so and who made no record that can be used to further its fulfillment.[39]

In the 1930s, during the era of the Great Depression, the issue of land continued to be a major concern of the Ruby Valley Shoshones. In fact, some of the Indians' hopes were raised when Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934. One provision of the act specified that the federal government would appropriate funds to purchase reservation land for so-called landless Indians.[40] The person responsible for carrying out the provisions of the 1934 act in Nevada was Alida Bowler, a reformist and the first and only woman Superintendent of the BIA in Nevada. While in office from 1934 to 1939, Bowler laid the groundwork for the establishment of reservations for numerous non-reservation Western Shoshones. As a result, by the late 1930s and early 1940s, the Yomba, Duckwater, and South Fork reservations, nonexistent before 1934, had been established.[41]

The Temoke Band of Ruby Valley Shoshones, well aware of the land provision of the 1934 act, wanted land set aside for its members. In 1935, Joe Temoke, who was given the 40 acre Wines tract in 1920, pushed for the establishment of a Ruby Valley Indian reservation.[42] Obviously, Temoke was pushing for the restoration of the "six miles square."

Superintendent Bowler was never enthusiastic about establishing a reservation in Ruby Valley. Bowler disliked the location of the Indian land allotments because the soil was not the best of quality for agricultural purposes.

Furthermore, most of the Overland Creek water had already been legally filed for and claimed by the local white ranchers. It would be impossible to make farmers of the Indians.[43] Realizing that Chief Muchuch Temoke and other Shoshones were "wholly unwilling to live anywhere but here [Ruby Valley], the home of their ancestors," Bowler and her staff decided to purchase land for them in Ruby Valley.[44] Her first objective was to purchase land near the land allotments established after 1911. This plan did not work because, with the exception of one white rancher, all the other ranchers were unwilling to part with their property. White rancher William Short wanted to sell his property for $80,000, a price too high to pay for the BIA.[45]

The best Bowler and her staff could do in the 1930s for the Ruby Valley Shoshones was to purchase the Odger's Ranch, located roughly 25 miles east of the Overland Creek Indian land allotments. In October 1936, the 2,000 acre ranch was acquired for the Shoshones by the BIA at a cost of $16,200.[46]

The Odger's Ranch accommodated only five families and did not satisfy most of the Ruby Valley Shoshones. Generally speaking, the Temoke Band still insisted that the government must establish a reservation for them in Ruby Valley. In essence, what these Shoshones were saying was that the "six miles square" must be restored in the name of the Treaty of Ruby Valley.

In representing those who wanted reservation land in Ruby Valley, Chief Muchuch Temoke wrote in 1938: "No other way take up a land, but according under this authority such treaty. No purchase land said but according by the law said treaty."[47] In other words, Temoke and his supporters rejected the 1934 act because no reservation land was set aside in Ruby Valley under its authority. Because the "six miles square" was "re-occupied" in 1863, and because it was intended to be a reservation for the Shoshones in accordance with the 1863 treaty, Temoke argued that it must be restored.

In retrospect, the Ruby Valley Shoshones have never forgotten about the Ruby Valley Reservation which was established 126 years ago and later abandoned by the BIA. In fact, within the last thirty-five years, it has been an issue among the Shoshones. In 1951, Chief Muchuch Temoke wrote a letter to Senator Hugh Butler of Nevada and mentioned the "six miles square." In a roundabout way, he was trying to say that it must be restored.[48] In 1954 the Ruby Valley Shoshones hired Elko, attorney Leo J. Puccinelli as their legal counsel. In representing his clients at a federal hearing in Reno, Puccinelli stated: "They are attempting to show that they have a right to that 6-miles square or if not, in the alternative that they don't have the right, they would like the right created for them to have this 6-mile square."[49] As pointed out Edward McDade inquired about the "six miles square" reservation in 1964. In 1966 Edna Patterson, a local non-Indian historian of northeastern Nevada, interviewed Chief Frank Temoke who, replacing his father Muchuch, had become the chief of the Temoke Band of Ruby Valley Shoshones in 1954. In

the course of the interview, Frank recalled the reservation and said: "The government promise the Temokes a reservation 6 miles square on the Overland Creek in Ruby Valley. . . . The government forgot its promise and we never get a good reservation."[50]

As late as 1985 the Shoshones were still talking about the "six miles square" reservation. At a mass Western Shoshone land claims meeting held on the Duckwater Shoshone Reservation on May 17, 1985, Chief Frank Temoke addressed the audience. In his native language he focused on a number of topics, including the "six miles square": *"Ekkih tea Ruby Valleyneen six miles square newi ta uttuppeh sokoppeh 1863,"* or translated into English, "There is in Ruby Valley a six miles square land which was given to the Shoshones in 1863."[51] Temoke and other Shoshones have never forgotten about the six miles square township, where some of them still live today.

Regardless of what the Indians think, the federal government argues that the "six miles square" does not exist because it was never surveyed, at least not by the BIA. On the other hand, the Shoshones of this century have argued that it was surveyed by soldiers stationed at Fort Ruby in the nineteenth century. Twice in the 1960s Frank Temoke gave the names of those soldiers who supposedly did the survey. Temoke also pointed out that the late Harry Johnny, a Shoshone who once lived in Ely, found the "six miles square" survey map in Boise, Idaho.[52] Yet, as of today, no military map of the reservation has been located. It is probable that the reservation was surveyed, but the military map never reached BIA officials in Washington.

Today, what exists in and near Township 30 North are white-owned ranches and the various Indian land allotments set aside after 1911. The so-called small 120 acre reservation, set aside by Presidential Executive Order in September, 1912, was classified as an Indian allotment in 1970 and issued to Frank Temoke, Jr.[53] Only a few Shoshones continue to reside in Ruby Valley. The majority have left the valley over the years because they became tired of waiting for the restoration of the "six miles square." Frank Steele, who was issued a land allotment in 1920, resettled on the Goshute Reservation, located along the Nevada-Utah border.[54] Several Shoshones, including Moon Carson and Brownie Mose, settled on the South Fork Reservation when it was established around 1940.[55] Still others settled on the Duck Valley Reservation and the Elko Indian Colony in this century.

The Temoke Band of Ruby Valley Shoshone Indians continue to fight for a reservation in Ruby Valley. They are persistent in their efforts because to date there is not a Western Shoshone reservation established under the authority of the Treaty of Ruby Valley. The reservations that do exist, including the Duck Valley and the South Fork reservations, were established either by Presidential Executive Order or by the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. Summing up the Shoshones' viewpoint is the following statement made by Shoshone member Edward McDade in 1964: "I believe that there should be one more attempt to form another reservation at Ruby Valley."[56]

NOTES

[1] Muchuch Temoak and Tommy Wahne to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (CIA), 25 November 1919, Central Files (CF), 9355-17-Western Shoshone-313, Pt. 1, Record Group 75, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[2] Edward McDade to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), 7 January 1964, Nevada Agency Records, RG 75, Washington National Records Center, Washington, D.C.

Over the years the name "Temoke" has been spelled in different ways. Of course, this is pointed out by anthropologist Omer C. Stewart who writes that the "spellings include Tim-oak, Tumok, Tomoke, Te-Moak, Tumoak, Timook, and others." Like Stewart, I will also use the spelling "Temoke" because it is accepted and used by the Shoshone family of Nevada. See Omer C. Stewart, "Temoke Band of Shoshone and the Oasis Concept," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 23 (1980): 250.

For additional information regarding the Ruby Valley Shoshones, see Donald R. Tuohy's "Drowning Out the Paiute Ground Squirrels: Lorenzo Creel's Observations on Ruby Valley Indian Life and Problems in 1917," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 27 (1984): 109-129.

[3] Ashley Dawley to Lorenzo Creel, 27 June 1917, Lorenzo Creel Papers, University of Nevada Archives, Reno, Nevada.

[4] Jacob Forney to James Denver, 9 March 1859 (R 899, Utah, M 234), RG 75, Forney to James Denver, 15 February 1859 (R 899, Utah, M 234), RG 75.

[5] Forney to William Dole, 19 April 1861 (R 900, Utah, M 234), RG 75.

[6] Cadastral Survey Index Cards, Township 30 North, Ranges 58 and 59 East, U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Reno, Nevada.

The 1859 "six miles square" Ruby Valley Indian Reservation must not be confused with the "6 miles square" Fort Ruby military survey of September 1862. This military reserve included Fort Ruby. See "Early Nevada Forts," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 7 (1964): 48-51.

[7] Forney to CIA, 16 June 1859 (R 899, Utah, M 234), RG 75; William Rogers to James McDongal, 17 March 1862 (R 901, Utah M 234), RG 75; Benjamin Davies to CIA, 20 January 1861, pp. 2-3 (R 900, Utah, M 234), RG 75.

[8] Davies to CIA, 20 January 1861 (R 900, Utah, M 234), RG 75.

[9] "Treaty with Western Bands of Shoshonee Indians," 1 October 1863, 18 Stat. 689-692.

[10] James Nye to J.P. Usher, 30 September 1864 (R 538, Nevada, M 234), RG 75.

Some of the information, including information given in the previous paragraph, is extracted from my doctoral dissertation entitled "The Western Shoshone of Nevada and the Indian New Deal," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Utah, 1983.

[11] Jacob Lockhart to W.P. Dole, 7 June 1865 (R 538, Nevada, M 234), RG 75.

[12] Henry Butterfield to CIA, 1 March 1867 (R 538, Nevada, M 234), RG 75.

[13] Edna B. Patterson, Louise A. Ulph, Victor Goodwin, *Nevada's Northeast Frontier* (Sparks, Nevada: Western Printing and Publishing Company, 1969), 501-505.

[14] Franklin Campbell to H.G. Parker, 22 August 1866, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (ARCIA), 1866.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Levi Gheen to C.A. Bateman, 2 January 1872 (R 540, Nevada, M 234), RG 75.

[17] Gheen to E.P. Smith, 3 October 1874 (R 541, Nevada, M 234), RG 75.

[18] Gheen to CIA, 15 March 1873 (R 540, Nevada, M 234), RG 75; Statement by Lazy Jim, 4 July 1915, CF, 125909-15-General Services-313, RG 75.

[19] "An Interview with members of the Te-moak Band of Homeless Indians," 17 January 1927, CF, 56890-13-Western Shoshone-211, RG 75.

[20] Grant Patterson to C.H. Asbury, 15 July 1914, Reno Agency Records (RAR), Box 290, Federal Archives and Records Center (FARC), San Bruno (SB); Joseph Jensen to CIA, 1 October 1915, pp. 5-6, CF, 125909-15-General Services-313, RG 75.

[21] Mutacho Timack to CIA, 15 April 1912, CF, 40126-12-Western Shoshone-313, RG 75.

[22] C.H. Asbury to CIA, 30 September 1914, CF, 125750-13-General Services-377, RG 75; Asbury to CIA, 2 October 1912, CF, 70328-12-General Service-313, RG 75; Memorandum by Leonard Ware, 14 May 1959, Nevada Agency Records, BIA, RG 75, WNRC. For more information regarding the Indian land allotments of Ruby Valley, see the following two sources: T.C.-B.I.A., "South Fork and Ruby Valley Projects for the Shoshones of Northeastern Nevada," April, May, 1937, p. 12, Phoenix Area Office

Records, BIA, RG 75, FARC-Laguna Niguel; "Social and Economic Information for the Te-Moak Bands of Western Shoshone Indians," April 10, 1939, CF, 22444-39-Western Shoshone-032, RG 75.

[23] Muchach Timoche to CIA, 27 January 1917, CF, 9355-17-Western Shoshone-313, Pt. 1, RG 75.

[24] Cato Sells to Muchach Timock, 31 January 1917, CF, 9355-17-Western Shoshone-313, Pt. 1, RG 75.

[25] General Land Office to CIA, 22 October 1915, CF, 125909-15-General Services-313, RG 75.

[26] Charles C. Royce, *Indian Land Cessions in the United States* (Government Printing Office, 1899), 822-823.

[27] Lorenzo Creel to L.A. Dorrington, 24 October 1917, Reno Agency Records, Box 290, FARC-SB; C.F. Hauke to Muchach Timocke, 29 January 1918, CF, 9355-17-Western Shoshone-313, Pt. 1, RG 75.

[28] Ibid; Asbury to CIA, 30 September 1914, CF, 125750-13-General Services-377, RG 75.

[29] Muchach Temoak and Tommy Wahne to CIA, 25 November 1919, CF, 9355-17-Western Shoshone-313, Pt. 1, RG 75.

[30] E.B. Meritt to Wahne and Temoak, 1 December 1919, Key Pittman Papers, Box 105, Library of Congress.

[31] Creel and others to Masach and Joe Timoque, and other Indians of the Ruby Valley Band, 29 December 1920, Reno Agency Records, Box 290, FARC-SB.

[32] 43 Stat. 596.

[33] Tommy Wahne to Key Pittman, 14 May 1921, Key Pittman Papers, Box 105, Library of Congress. This is one of several letters in which the Indians expressed their viewpoint over the subject of land in Ruby Valley.

[34] Report of Samuel Blair, 16 September 1924; Charles A. Engle, "Report on Water Supply and Irrigation Conditions Among the Ruby Valley Indians." October 31, 1925; Engle Report of March 10, 1926; Engle Report of November 3, 1928; All these reports are in 9355-17-Western Shoshone-313, Pts. 1-2; Blair Report of March 13, 1926, Inspection Reports, RG 75.

[35] James E. Jenkins to CIA, 12 November 1924, p. 2, CF, 78095-24-Reno-300, RG 75.

[36] Tasker Oddie to A.C. Florio, 3 March 1926, Tasker Oddie Papers, Nevada Historical Society, Reno, Nevada.

[37] "An Interview with members of the Te-moak Band of Homeless Indians," p. 3.

[38] Transcript, "In the Matter of the controversy, Overland and water rights on Overland Creek, Elko County, Nevada, as they may exist as to the U.S. Interior Department and the Crystal Land Company, a Corporation," May 17, 18, 20, 1929, CF, 9355-17-Western Shoshone-313, Pt. 3, RG 75.

[39] W.W. Reed and Frederick Snyder to CIA, 27 May 1929, CF, 9355-17-Western Shoshone-313, Pt. 2, RG 75.

[40] 48 Stat. 985-986.

[41] For more information on the Indian Reorganization Act and its impact on the Western Shoshone, see the following two sources: "The Western Shoshone of Nevada and the Indian New Deal," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Utah, 1983; Elmer R. Rusco, "The Organization of the Te-Moak Bands of Western Shoshone," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 25 (1982): 175-196.

[42] Edna B. Patterson, "Recorded Interview with Chief Frank Temoke at his home in Ruby Valley, Nevada," 4 May 1967. Typed Manuscript, Northeastern Nevada Museum, Elko, Nevada.

[43] Alida Bowler, "Report for National Resource Board, September 1934, Phoenix Area Office Records, BIA, RG 75, FARC-LN.

[44] "Ruby Valley Project, Carson Agency-Nevada, Project Plan, Schedule I," 12 January 1937, Phoenix Area Office Records, BIA, RG 75, FARC-LN.

[45] Bowler to CIA, 22 January 1937, PAO, BIA, RG 75, FARC-LN: Pearson to Bowler, 24 April 1937, PAO, BIA, RG 75, FARC-LN.

[46] Leonard Ware, "Background Data on the Odgers Ranch, Nevada," CF, 11740-59-Nevada-077, RG 75, WNRC.

[47] Machach Temoke to John Collier, 20 December 1938, CF, 78468-38-Western Shoshone-066, RG 75, NA.

[48] Chief Machach Temoke to Senator Hugh R. Butler, 7 February 1951, p. 1, RG 46.

[49] *Termination of Federal Supervision over Certain Tribes of Indians,* Joint Hearing before the Subcommittees of the Committees on Interior and Insular Affairs, U.S. Senate, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., Part 10, April 16, 1954, p. 1306.

[50] Edna Patterson, "Recorded Interview with Chief Frank Temoke at His home in Ruby Valley, Nevada."

[51] Annual Meeting of the Western Shoshone National Council, May 18, 1985, Duckwater, Nevada. Recorded and translated by Beverly Crum.

The "six miles square" reservation is one facet of the Western Shoshones' land and treaty claims against the federal government in the twentieth century. For a more in-depth study of this aspect, see Elmer R. Rusco's "The MX Missile and Western Shoshone Land Claims," *Nevada Public Affairs Review,* No. 2 (1982): 45-54.

[52] Patterson, "Recorded Interview with Chief Frank Temoke."

[53] Richard G. Morrison to Steven Crum, 19 July 1983, letter in possession of author. According to the records of the Eastern Nevada Agency of the BIA in Elko, Nevada, there are eleven Indian land allotments in Ruby Valley as of 1986. Seven of these are located inside Township 30 North.

[54] Goshute Business Council Minutes, 1941, Eastern Nevada Agency, Elko, Nevada.

[55] Te-Moak Bands Tribal Minutes, 28 July 1950, Eastern Nevada Agency.

[56] Letter by Edward McDade, 7 January 1964, Nevada Agency, RG 75, WNRC.

# *Justice in Balance: Nevada's County Courthouses*

RONALD M. JAMES

NEVADA'S COUNTY COURTHOUSES, built as community focal points, are usually monumental structures intended to project an image of prosperity and commitment to law and order. Although each courthouse is different from the others, they all play a common role in the community: they are the places where people are most likely to deal with the government and law. This unites Nevada's county courthouses into a common thread of history which parallels the overall development of the state.

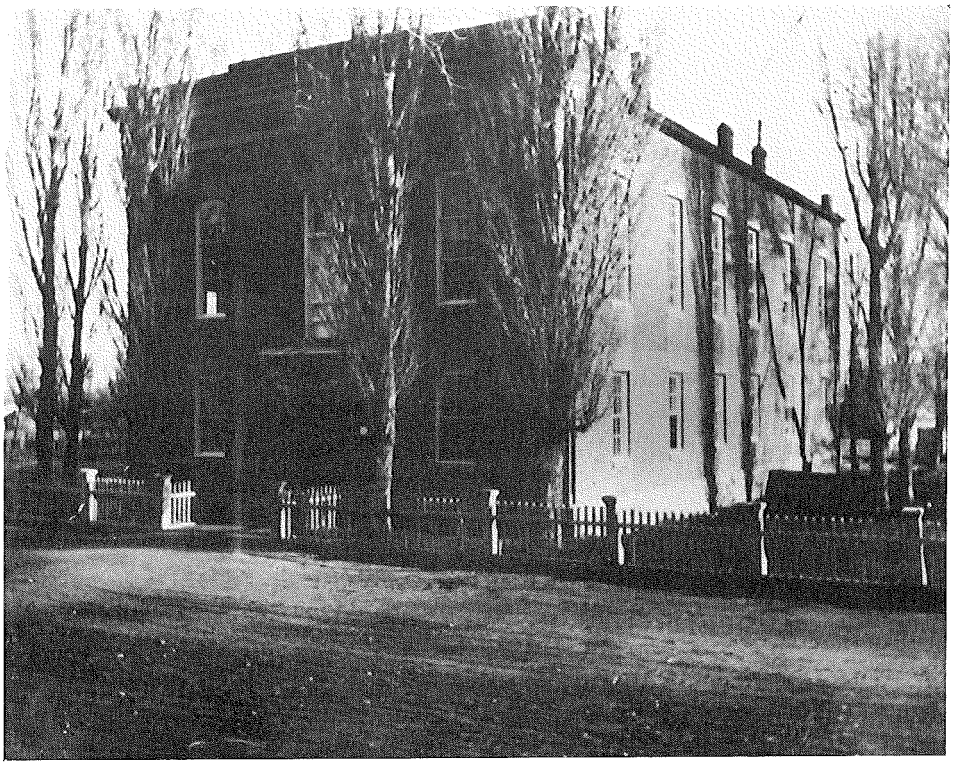
Because the county courthouse is an important local symbol of government and law, the Nevada Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology undertook a survey of the structures as part of the celebration of the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution. As part of the project, the Division cooperated with the Nevada Historical Society to produce an exhibition on Nevada's county courthouses. "Justice in Balance" is open from January 16 to June 30, 1987 in the Nevada Historical Society's changing gallery in Reno. The Society also created a travelling version of the exhibit which is available to counties and local museums.

Based on the survey of Nevada's county courthouses it is clear that construction of the structures falls into four distinct periods. Each of these eras reflects different architectural styles and attitudes toward public architecture.

During the settlement of the western Great Basin, establishing law and order was often more important than building a courthouse. Resorting to mob justice, vigilante groups administered their own laws in the absence of legitimate government and courts. By the mid-1850s people were organizing courts and government; and within a decade, they were constructing courthouses.

Between 1863 and 1865, Nevadans constructed several courthouses, designed by people who lacked formal training in architecture.[1] The resulting

*Ronald M. James is supervisor and historian for the Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology. As part of Nevada's celebration of the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, he has surveyed the state's county courthouse and is authoring a book on the subject.*



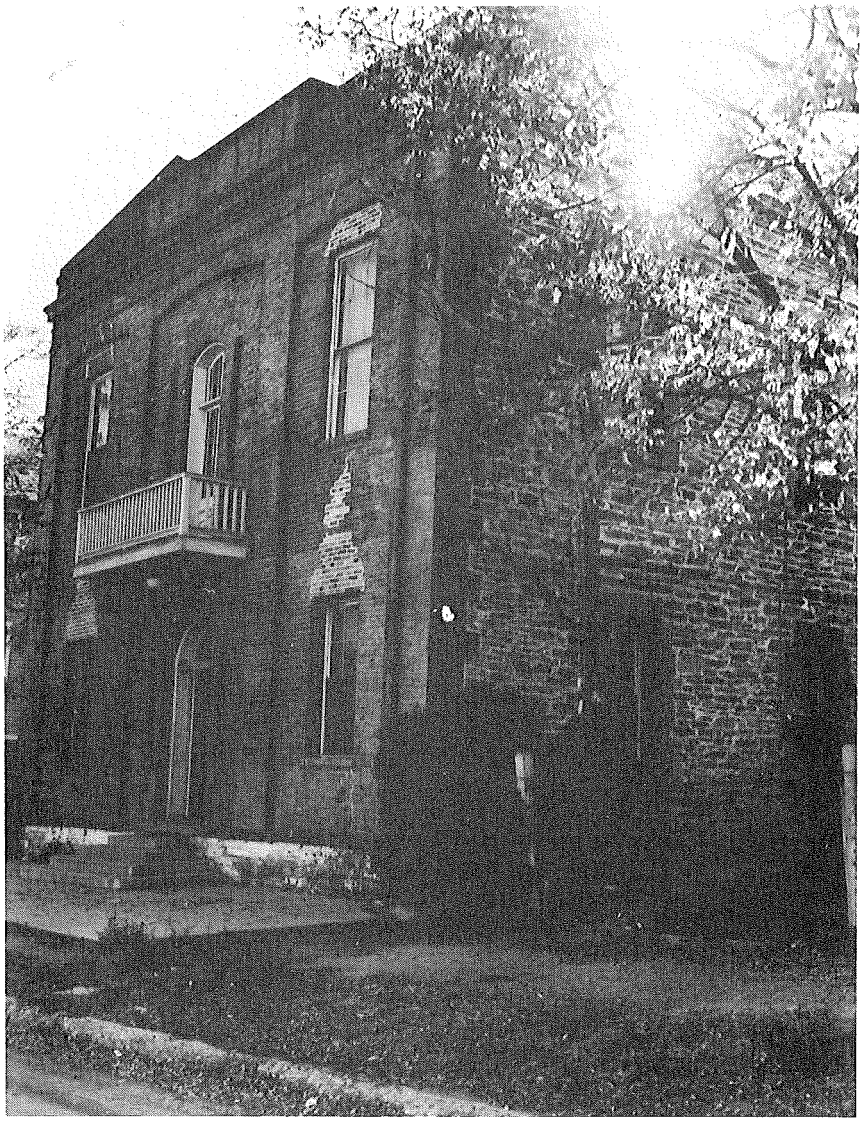
The Lyon County courthouse in Dayton was built in 1864. It was a substantial symbol of law and order in the Nevada Territory. When it burned in 1909, the courthouse in Genoa became the only surviving example from the first period of courthouse construction.

utilitarian, solidly-built structures answered the needs of the time by providing shelter for government and a sense of permanence to the community.

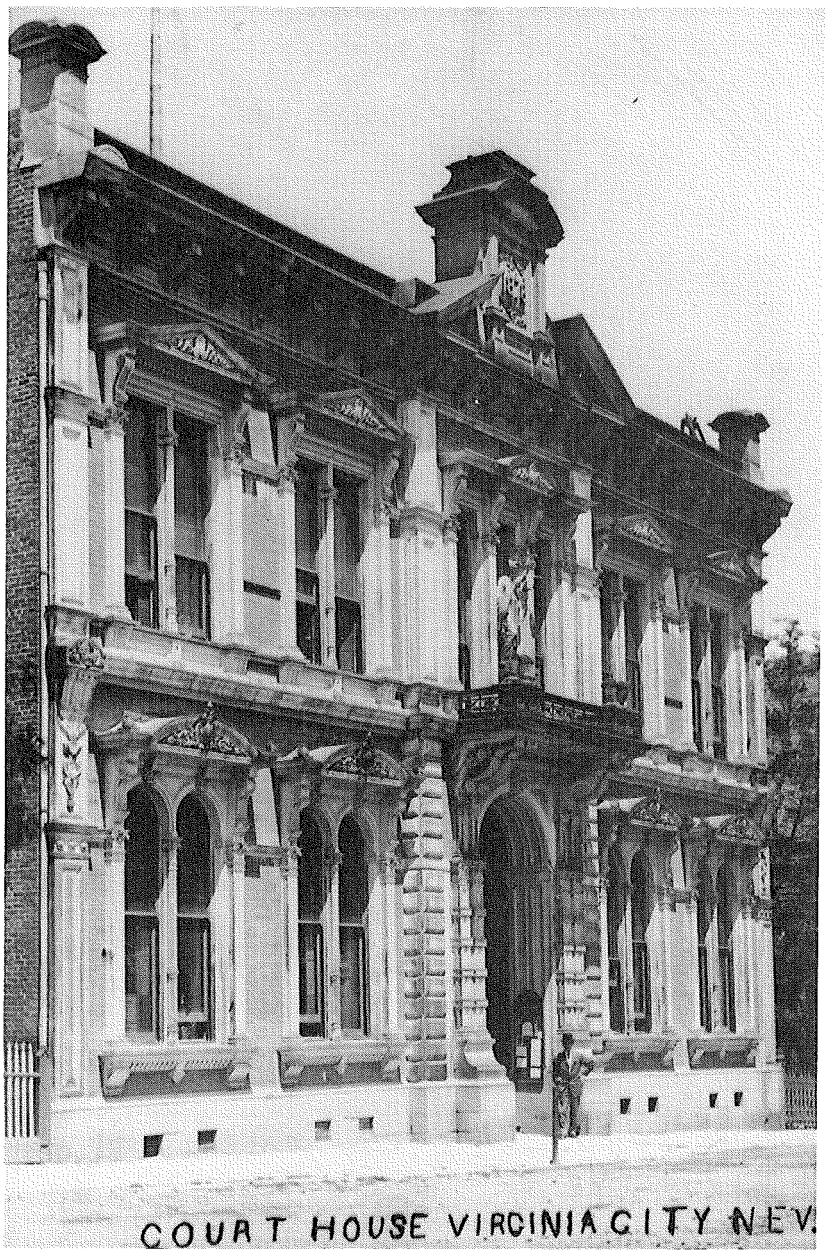
Once local governments and courts were firmly established, counties could afford the luxury of erecting elaborate formal courthouses. As a result, the courthouses constructed between 1869 and 1883 are ornate expressions of nationally-prominent styles.

From Austin to Pioche and Eureka to Virginia City, the courthouses of this period are elegant examples of county governments using public funds in an attempt to project an image of prosperity. Economic growth inspired the construction of ten courthouses, many of which survive as formal examples of nineteenth-century architecture.

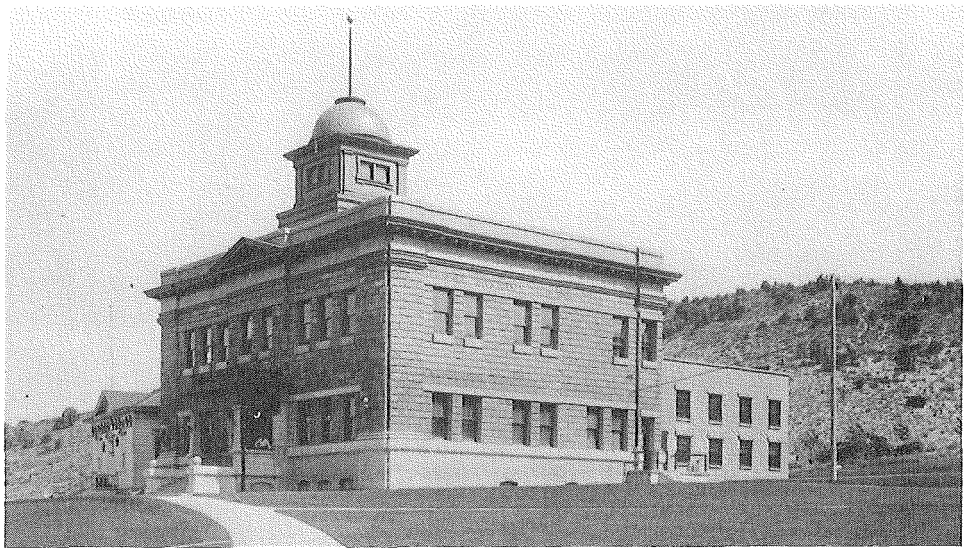
No major county courthouses were erected in Nevada during the two decades after 1883. The hiatus corresponds to depressions in the state's mining economy. After the turn of the century, prosperity returned and people swarmed to new mining boom towns such as Tonopah and Goldfield.



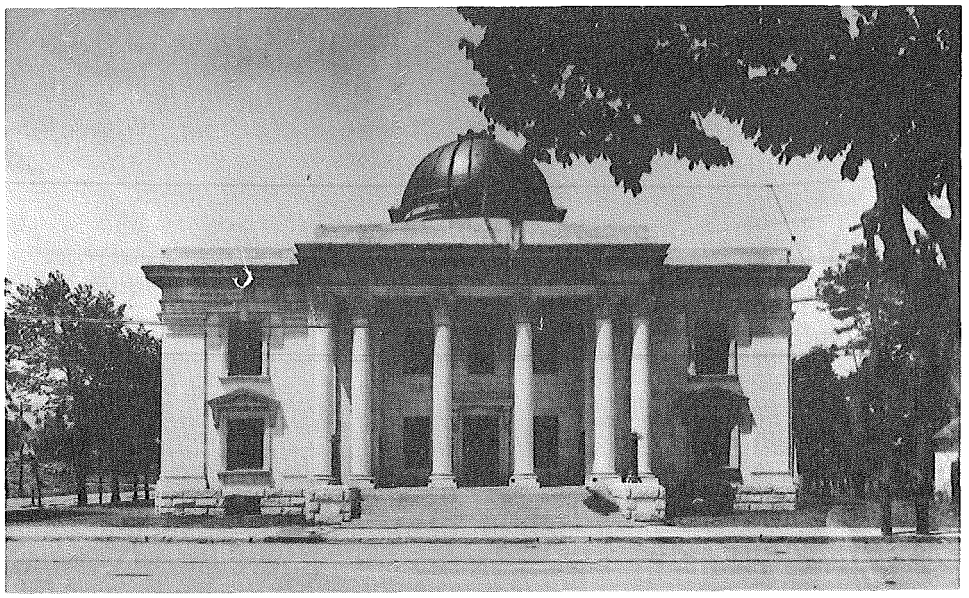
The "million dollar courthouse" in Pioche cost about $75,000 but interest on the debt increased the cost to about $800,000. The Lincoln County courthouse is an elegant, subtle statement of Italianate architecture, which was popular during the second era of Nevada courthouse construction.




Completed in 1876, the Storey County courthouse was the most ornate and expensive Nevada courthouse of the time (construction cost over $100,000). Its statue of Justice is the only one to grace the outside of a Nevada courthouse, and it is one of the few in the nation to lack a blindfold.



Two White Pine County courthouses once stood side by side. The modest wooden Italianate structure in the background, built in 1888, falls between the second and third period of courthouse construction. It was later moved away from its replacement. Completed in 1909, the larger, more permanent county courthouse was part of the third phase of courthouse construction. It is influenced by Italianate and neo-classical architectural style.



The Washoe County courthouse was the first designed by Frederick J. DeLongchamps. The architect later designed several more courthouses, but none was as elaborate as this Beaux Arts structure completed in 1911.


The Clark County courthouse of 1958 was built to house a growing county government. The sleek lines of the international-style building were devoid of monumental ornamentation. Later the county surrounded the structure with an addition which included large columns and a grand entrance. The building, initially constructed to be functional and later given a ceremonial entrance, is an excellent expression of factors which influenced the fourth era of Nevada county courthouse construction.

Shifts in populations and a thriving economy inspired more courthouse construction. Between 1903 and 1922, twelve prosperous Nevada counties built new courthouses.

Over half of these counties sought the help of Frederick J. DeLongchamps, who came to dominate the state's architectural profession. Most of his Neo-Classical monuments remain as testaments to a time when counties undertook grand building programs.

The most recent phase of courthouse construction has produced practical structures which serve as functional office buildings rather than formal focal

points for a community. Where previous courthouses employed grandiose ceremonial entrances, halls and courtrooms, their modern counterparts are more utilitarian.

The relationship of Nevadans to their local courthouses has changed over the past 125 years. Originally, the needs of county government were minimal. Courthouses were designed to house the judicial workings of the county, and the courtroom had to be large enough to seat much of the community; besides acting as meeting halls, early courthouses were also a local center of entertainment. A murder trial, for example, often became a diversion which many followed closely.

Today, people are less likely to turn out for a trial or for a public meeting. Contemporary courthouses now house not only the county courts but also expanded government and social services. Increased population, among other factors, has changed our views of local government. With public space in a courthouse less critical now than it was a century ago, modern courthouse architecture has assumed forms which meet new demands.[2]

NOTES

[1] Henry-Russell Hitchcock and William Seale, *Temples of Democracy: The State Capitols of the USA* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 107, 159. Hitchcock and Seale discuss architectural training and Capitol architecture.

[2] The synthesis presented in this article grew out of research conducted by the Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology. Sources include records and interviews with officials from each of the counties and newspaper accounts of construction of the courthouses. A detailed bibliography is part of a book being prepared by the author.

# *New River Books: The Most Recent Water Warnings*

JAMES HULSE

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE ARID WEST—and specifically of southern California, the Great Basin and Colorado River watershed—has been greatly enriched in the last several years by an unprecedented number of serious studies by historians, journalists, and social scientists on local and regional water problems. Water distribution and the controversy surrounding it has become one of the major subdivisions of Far Western History in the past decade or so. The mid-point of the penultimate decade of the century is perhaps an appropriate time to reflect on some of these studies and their significance in the context of critical history writing on the region.

As this was written, efforts to achieve Congressional ratification of the California-Nevada Bi-State Water Compact had collapsed and Senator Paul Laxalt had abandoned his efforts to get approval before the end of his career in the U.S. Senate. And rumors of new litigation on the waters of the Colorado River abounded. Future historians of the Far West will be at least as preoccupied with water problems as their predecessors have been.

The acceleration in the production of books on the river systems and other water problems of the Southwest was stimulated in part by a two-year drought of the middle 1970s in the American Southwest, in part by the increase in water-rights and environmental litigation and some landmark court decisions, and perhaps in part by a growing awareness by sensitive people in the region that water, the most precious of resources in the arid West, has been managed in almost cavalier manner by the residents of Nevada, California, the Great Basin and the Colorado River drainage systems, with the benign help of their political leaders. Historical writers are increasingly ecologists, and the reverse is also true.

One of the most effective of these recent works is by Philip L. Fradkin, entitled *A River No More: The Colorado River and the West.*[1] Armed with

*James Hulse is professor of history at the University of Nevada, Reno, and is a specialist in European and Russian history. He has published a number of books on Nevada history, the latest of which is* Forty Years in the Wilderness, *published by the University of Nevada Press.*

considerable experience as a journalist for the *Los Angeles Times*, a free-lance writer, and a California civil servant, Fradkin has produced an incomparable panoramic survey of the Colorado River Basin and its social diversity. His overview is geographical, political, social, and pictorial; Fradkin travelled the river from the upper tributaries in the high Rocky Mountains to its pitiful, polluted mouth in the Gulf of California. He recorded his impressions in print and photographs, and the end product is profoundly moving and disturbing. Fradkin, a latter-day Jeremiah of water, writes:

> To me the river, in its present state, is primarily a product of the political process, whether conducted in Salt Lake City or Washington, D.C., rather than a natural phenomenon. The policies and laws that determine where water goes means life itself in this dry region—not only life but death, as the river has been depleted to serve the lands and people surrounding it. This oasis civilization will ultimately face that same process of withering when shortages occur in western water supplies in coming years.

It would be difficult to find a series of sentences that more adequately summarizes the tone of many of the recent studies of the Western water situation. The generalists and specialists alike who have studied water resource policy and history are increasingly critical of past policies and gloomy about prospects for the future.

A more modest companion to Fradkin's volume is one prepared by David Lavender, entitled *Colorado River Country.*[2] With the easy-going style that has made him one of the more successful practitioners of serious Western fiction, Lavender has managed to condense a thousand years of pre-history and a couple of hundred years of history into a narrative which reminds one of the Rivers of America Series that flourished a third-of-a-century ago. His account does not try to deal with the twentieth-century problems that Fradkin addresses; it is descriptive and narrative in the older tradition of historical writing. The Colorado River Compact of 1922 and the building of the Hoover Dam are the focal points of his effort.

These two books supersede rather decisively Norris Hundley Jr.'s scholarly and (for its time) comprehensive study of the Colorado River Compact, issued only a decade ago, which was itself a kind of pioneering study.[3] When Hundley wrote, he noted with accuracy the relative lack of systematic serious historical scholarship on Western water problems. Technical studies there had been in abundance, and some respectable local historical explorations of water-related problems. But scarcely anyone had previously looked at the broad water picture in a regional, chronological and ecological frame. That this seems to be an old-fashioned book in the late 1980s is a commentary on how far water research has progressed.

The Truckee River basin in northwestern Nevada is much smaller and its demographic demands much more limited, but it does not follow that the issues or the scholarly literature are insignificant. It is not unreasonable to ask

An aerial photograph of Lahontan Dam and Reservoir in Churchill County, a result of the Newlands Reclamation Act of 1902. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

whether the users of any local stream system in the Far West have generated more controversy or produced more adjudicated law than those residing on the modest stream which serves Lake Tahoe, the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation, Reno, and the Newlands Project. The latest effort to produce order from this tangled skein is that of Martha C. Knack and Omer C. Stewart, *As Long as the River Shall Run: An Ethnohistory of Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation.*[4]

The Knack/Stewart volume is largely the result of the seemingly interminable water-rights litigation which has afflicted the Truckee basin almost since the beginning of the twentieth century. But it relies also on a long sequence of anthropological studies to which Professor Stewart contributed, and it becomes entangled in the problem of Native American rights as they apply to the meager rivers and streams of the Western Great Basin.

Knack and Stewart are at least as concerned about the plight of the 500 or so Pyramid Lake Paiutes as they are about the uses of the river. As "ethnohistorians," a relatively new group of specialists in the academic community,

they have begun their quest for facts and legal interpretation in the studies of a deprived and exploited people whose water has been diverted from its aboriginal uses by the westward movement of Americans of European ancestry.

Although the point of departure is different, the central problem raised by Knack and Stewart is similar to that addressed by Franklin throughout *A River No More* and by Lavender in the last pages of *Colorado River Country.* How does a rapidly expanding, progress-oriented society, fresh from the frontier tradition, cope with the fact of the finite limitation of its most precious resource? The special contribution of Knack/Stewart is that this volume looks at the problem from the perspective of the silent and underrepresented Native Americans, who lost most of their human rights and their water rights long before the 1970s. They have gained back a large measure—but not all—of their basic human rights within the last few decades, partly because they persevered in asserting them. But is it realistic to assume that they can assert more of those rights, in a rapidly expanding economy, simply by trying to invoke long neglected water rights?

Knack/Stewart provides a dialectical balance for John Townley's commendable study of the Newlands Project, published approximately a decade ago.[5] The history of the initial federally-funded reclamation project had not been adequately summarized until that time, and even then only part of the river's social history had been developed.

Pyramid Lake and the Newlands project are at the lower end of the hundred-mile-long Truckee River; the high-alpine Lake Tahoe is at the upper end and is the primary source of that river, and the fate of this spectacular body of water is the subject of a sensitive study by Douglas H. Strong.[6] Like the other volumes under consideration here, *Tahoe: An Environmental History* is an extended description and lament over the despoliation of a water resource, but it is distinguished by a slightly more optimistic tone than some of the other volumes. It is difficult to find a justification for this, in view of the sad record of private exploitation and commercialism—stimulated primarily by Nevada's gambling business—and the repeated failures of the various governmental agencies to find a suitable compromise for the control of growth.

Among the broad surveys and the warnings about interior basin water problems that appeared in the mid-1970s was Samuel G. Houghton's *A Trace of Desert Waters,* an admirable geological-geographical survey of the region by an observant non-scientist.[7] Houghton did not assert that he was preparing a scholarly piece; his intention at the outset was that of a concerned, transplanted New Englander, who came to love the Nevada desert and the California mountains as much as Thoreau did the Maine woods. Houghton did not shed the tradition of the New England naturalists when he relocated in the West. His is book is a groping, searching description of the topographi-

Pyramid Lake is located at the lower end of the Truckee River and is the subject of a recent book that addresses problems encountered by the Native Americans who reside there. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

cal subdivisions of the Great Basin by a man of conscience, sometimes plodding, sometimes almost lyrical in its effort to convince those city people who read books of the need to preserve scarce water resources on remote desert lands. Finishing the book shortly before his death, Houghton ventured the conclusion that some form of population control and/or more positive regulation of water resources may be the only answers to the approaching crisis.

For one who wants to draw a social lesson from studies of the Western water crisis, one of the most gratifying but also one of the most frustrating of the recent books is that of two environmental law scholars, Barbara T. Anderson and Marie Sansone, who have made an intensive study of the New Melones Dam project on California's Stanislaus River.[8] Anderson and Sansone set out to use the New Melones project as a case study in the decision-making process and to "stimulate creative inquiry into contemporary water allocation processes and problems."[9] This work is admirable because it effec-

tively performs the task of describing the tangled web of legislation, administrative indecision, and litigation in the New Melones case in the context of Western water policy history; it is frustrating because it seems to come so close to proposing a policy for solution without exactly doing so.

Another California book that has special significance for residents of the Great Basin is William L. Kahrl's study of the diversion of the Owens Valley water to Los Angeles. The story of Owens Valley is of special interest in the Far West because it was a pioneering western water project, contemporary with the Newlands Project, and it transported a small inland river from the Great Basin to Los Angeles early in this century and ruined the valley's agricultural society in the process.[10]

The saga of Owens Valley-Los Angeles is, like the histories of the Truckee Basin and the Colorado River, an unfinished tale. Kahrl is understanding of the Los Angeles planners who have often been treated as villains in this long-running battle; he has constructed a reasonable defense of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. A strong virtue of this book is that it is dispassionate, scholarly, and fair. It, too, is informed by the values and attitudes of the conservationists as well as of the urban developers. In his concluding section, Kahrl writes

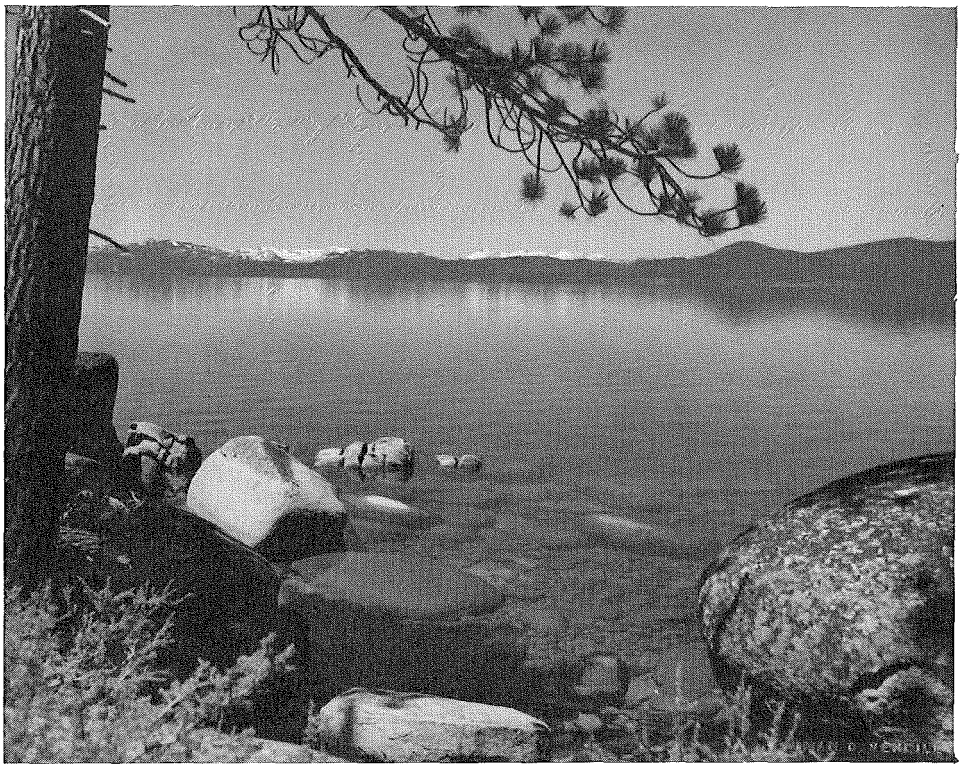
> . . . if there is any lesson to be drawn from the long history of relations between Los Angeles and the Owens Valley, it is that policies of the Department of Water and Power are neither benevolent nor malicious, they are merely practical.[11]

In other words, one senses that there was a sort of historical inevitability—fashioned from the aridity of the region and American pragmatism—that created the present situation, in which every jurisdiction is in need of more water for the future, and committed to find it. This has been the water ethic that has prevailed in the West—at least until recently.

It is not merely the arid desert Southwest that is in trouble over its water policies. There is both a quantitative and qualitative increase in the books on the West in general and the nation as a whole.[12] Some of them fall beyond the scope of this essay. But two monumental studies that dwarf all the others in their scope and virtually demand the attention of Westerners concerned about their environment have also appeared within recent months, and they invite attention from all regions.

The most alarming of the recent tomes in this field is that produced by the San Francisco journalist Marc Reisner, whose *Cadillac Desert* is a sweeping indictment of all the basic American water policies of the past century.[13] It is a strident, combative, disturbing mongraph that predicts an early doom for civilization as we know it in the Far West because of the reckless use that has been made of a precious, finite resource in one of the more arid parts of the globe.

According to Reisner's findings, our rivers are over-allocated, our under-



Lake Tahoe is the subject of a study by Douglas Strong that addresses water problems such as private exploitation, commercialization and despoliation. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

ground aquifers are being depleted at a reckless rate, our reservoirs and agricultural valleys are becoming salt-laden and chemically poisoned, and our dams are filling with silt to such an extent that catastrophe cannot be far away. The story of western water resource development is one long tale of greed, folly, and deception, especially on the part of the government agencies—the Bureau of Reclamation and the Army Corps of Engineers—which theoretically had responsibility for water resource management.

In his narrative, Reisner leaps from one river system to another across the American landscape like a jet-set politician, chronicling the frauds and misjudgments that have wasted money on unnecessary and uneconomical projects. It is a doomsday story, which assumes that in some not-to-distant year of drought, it will be necessary to evacuate millions of people from Los Angeles to prevent them from dying of thirst. Of the Colorado River, for example, he says:

> One could almost say . . . that the history of the Colorado River contains a metaphor for our time. One could say that the age of great expectations was inaugurated at Hoover Dam—a fifty year flowering of hopes when all things appeared possible. And one could say that, amid the salt-encrusted sands of the river's dried-up delta, we began to founder on the Era of Limits.[14]

Reisner surveys the destruction of the Owens Valley for the sake of Los Angeles and the building Central Valley Project, the rapid depletion of the Ogalalla aquifer, the "forty-year binge" of federal dam building which began in the 1930s, the wasteful construction of the Central Arizona Project, the erection of the Grand Coulee Dam on a "foundation of deception," and he finds all of them to be examples of monumental waste and political folly.

All great civilizations of antiquity, Reisner argues, were based on irrigation; all of them ultimately perished because of the excess of salt, which ruined their soils and destroyed their abilities to grow the basic foodstuffs. His view is that the same thing is happening, very rapidly, to California and other rich American agricultural areas because of reckless water-use practices.

Reisner's book can be faulted on several counts. His historical narrative is occasionally more alkaline than accurate; he provides no footnotes, insufficient attribution for his quotations, and an inadequate bibliography. But his argument and statistics are not to be dismissed for these or any other trivial reasons. Although this is a jeremiad, it is obviously one of the more important water books of the decade.

A companion volume with a similar thesis and a more convincing approach is Donald Worster's *River of Empire,* which appeared a few months earlier than Reisner's work.[15] While Reisner's approach is sensational and flashy, Worster's is methodical, well-documented, and thoroughly annotated. It raises the same alarms about the growing salinization, sedimentation, and poisoning of the Western water systems.

Worster's analysis opens with a thoughtful discussion of the "hydraulic" hypothesis of Professor Karl Wittfogel, which seeks to explain the rise of Oriental despotisms in terms of the control of the autocrats over the water distribution system. It is Worster's thesis that civilizations based upon large-scale water distribution systems tend toward dictatorial forms of government, and he fears that the much-praised freedom and democracy of the American West is in jeopardy because of the extent to which the region has become dependent on government sponsored, centrally controlled water management systems.

The dangerous "federalizing of irrigation" began with the Newlands Act of 1902, Worster argues; he offers an excellent, extensive discussion of the steps by which this proposal of Nevada Congressman Francis Newlands became the foundation of national policy.[16] He regards this act and its sequels as a failure and a disgrace. The stated policy of the Newlands and much subsequent legislation has been to help the small farmer; its actual result has been

to enrich large corporations and to subsidize giant "agro-business" in California and elsewhere.

*Rivers of Empire* concludes with a half-optimistic, almost hopeful look toward the future because of the growth of the environmental movement and the failure of "hydraulic empire" to win approval of any new projects between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s.

Worster is a crusader with a pen; so, in a fundamental sense, are Reisner, Fradkin, Knack/Stewart, Strong, Anderson/Sansone, and Houghton. The messages of such people are becoming increasingly strident and demanding of reform. Their missions and messages are not likely to be comforting to Westerners who have become accustomed to having all the water they can divert by technology or win by litigation. But their information is timely, and in general their arguments are historically sound.

What are the lessons to be drawn from the history of Western water resource development, implicit in all these books and in several others that might be cited?

First, water distribution decisions have primarily been made in all of the arid West, and in much of the rest of the country as well, not on the basis of legitimate need or economic feasibility, but on the basis of political greed and financial pressures—in which ad hoc, one-at-a-time pork barrel projects have proliferated without regard to cost, environment, or social consequences. Second, although the Congress authored such projects on a continuing basis between 1902 and the mid-1970s, it never developed a coherent policy for the range of its projects, and has passed difficult decisions on individual projects to the administrative agencies, who often ignored stated policy to assure their own bureaucratic well-being, and to the courts. As Anderson-Sansone wrote:

> Although Congress is broadly empowered to dictate the course of water development, political factors often prevent Congress from exercising that power in a clear and decisive way. Because projects require political action and entail political consequences, legislators support them to the extent that they offer benefits without incurring liabilities. As a result, legislators tend to advocate projects in broad outline, while ignoring controversial aspects such as service areas, beneficiary groups, and operating functions and procedures. The political costs of making specific allocation decisions are often too high; Congress leaves them to the agencies which implement the projects.[17]

Once the agencies have run afoul of each other and of the competing private interests, virtually every major project becomes the subject of a prolonged court battle, and even when the courts have handed down what appears to be a definitive judgment, as in the celebrated case of *Arizona v. California,* the unending flux of legislation, the adding of environmental requirements, the rapid rise of population especially in urban centers, the revival of long-neglected claims (as in the case of Indian tribes), and the lack of clearly

defined boundaries between state and national authority on water matters—all these concerns and more make the difficulty of finding long term solutions even greater. And in the process, the water development stampede has made the rich richer and has created a dangerous anti-democratic oligarchy in the West.

And it is Reisner who, characteristically, offers the most awesome possibilities. He raises the spectre of the kind of drought that has transformed parts of the Middle East to absolute desert, of the collapse of dams like Glen Canyon or Hoover, and the salt-poisoning or exhaustion of water sources, and the ultimate collapse of civilization in the American West. But he is certainly not alone in issuing the warnings.

Do these recent books suggest that a consensus is emerging for a rational, non-political approach to water distribution and management in the Far West? Perhaps not, but in reviewing the historical record, the law, and the geo-political situation in such scope, they have contributed to an unprecedented public and scholarly discussion on a regional basis and have presented still further opportunities and challenges to historians as shapers of social policy. As a group, these books have brought new, and favorable attention to the ideas of John Wesley Powell, who a century ago proposed a democratic, small-project approach to the hydraulic development of the American West. And together, they appeal for a more environmentally sensitive approach to water use and distribution.

Could it be that this discussion will influence policy decision in the Western states, dependent as they are on the increasingly interlocked system of rivers which are certain to be inadequate to meet the joint needs of the region when the next prolonged drought occurs? Perhaps another federal-regional compact, patterned upon the Colorado River Compact and Commission, armed with more up-to-date hydrological, historical, and environment information than was available in the 1920s, could provide a region-wide formula which would transcend the existing system of water distribution by pork barrel and litigation.

It may be that Nevada—for all its aridity—is relatively fortunate in its water resources and may be, for that reason, a possible laboratory for experimentation with more rational, conservation-minded water policies.

NOTES

[1] Philip L. Fradkin, *A River No More: The Colorado River and the West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1984).

[2] David Lavender, *Colorado River Country* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1982).

[3] Norris Hundley Jr., *Water and the West: The Colorado River Compact and the Politics of Water in the American West* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975).

[4] Martha C. Knack and Omer C. Stewart, *As Long as the River Shall Run: An Ethnohistory of Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

[5] John M. Townley, *Turn This Water into Gold: The Story of the Newlands Project* (Reno: Nevada Historical Society, 1977).

[6] Douglas H. Strong, *Tahoe: An Environmental History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).

[7] Samuel G. Houghton, *A Trace of Desert Waters: The Great Basin Story,* (Glendale: Arthur C. Clark Co., 1976). Reissued with illustrations by Philip Hyde, Howe Brothers, 1986.

[8] Barbara T. Anderson and Marie Sansone, *Who Runs the Rivers? Dams and Decision in the New West* (Stanford: Stanford Environmental Law Society, 1983).

[9] Andrews, *Who Runs the Rivers?*, 13.

[10] William L. Kahrl, *Water and Power: The Conflict over Los Angeles' Water Supply in Owens Valley* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

[11] Kahrl, *Water*, 443.

[12] There are many other commendable studies that have considerably advanced our understanding of the historical development of water policy. Among the most valuable are Michael C. Meyer, *Water in the Hispanic Southwest: A Social and Legal History—1550-1850* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1984), 189 pp. And Donald J. Pisani, *From the Family Farm to Agribusiness: The Irrigation Crusade and the West—1850-1931* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 521 pp.

[13] Marc Reisner, *Cadillac Desert: The American Desert and Its Disappearing Water* (New York: Viking, 1986).

[14] Reisner, *Cadillac Desert,* 126.

[15] Donald Worster, *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985).

[16] Worster, 156-169.

[17] Andrews and Sansone, *Who Runs The Rivers?* 413.

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

# *Silver City: Reminiscences, Facts and a Little Gossip*

JIM MCCORMICK

ON THANKSGIVING DAY OF 1970, for reasons that I have never been able to fully explain, I loaded the belongings from my home on Ralston Avenue in Reno into several vehicles, including a rented van, and moved to Silver City, Nevada. Those friends that helped my wife, two children and me in this relocation were possibly as puzzled by our actions as we were. At the time we knew virtually nothing about the small community some thirty miles south and east of Reno, just on the other side of its more notorious Comstock counterpart, Virginia City.

At the turn of the decade, this country, especially Nevada's neighbor to the west, was experiencing profound social and political unrest. The movement against the war in Viet Nam and the more passive back-to-the-earth counter-culture were decisively challenging prevailing attitudes around the country. As time wore on, these two strains of discontent stretched further apart. Subscribers to *Mother Earth News* and *The Whole Earth Catalog* seemed drawn to rural America, either through fantasy or action, and a substantial number of families established self-sufficient intentional communities. On the other hand, the expression of dissent over events in Viet Nam, and later Cambodia, ran the gamut from passing out protest literature to voicing anger in the streets where the possibility of personal injury or imprisonment ran high.

I would characterize myself in the years prior to 1970 as a moderate in the arena of political protest. I had marched with some twenty-five faculty and students in the first anti-compulsory ROTC demonstration on the University

*Jim McCormick is professor of art at the University of Nevada, Reno. He is a member of the board for the Nevada State Council on the Arts and is affiliated with numerous gallerys around the country.*

of Nevada, Reno campus and demonstrated in shocked silence after the murders at Kent State. I called a meeting in my home in response to the actions of a Reno police chief who supported a systematic campaign of harassment against so-called hippies. A number of unshorn UNR students, including several of mine, had been arrested, one I recall, for "breathing clean Reno air." The climate in Reno at the time was intimidating, with calls in the night that would turn up *no* caller when the receiver was lifted.

Perhaps, part of the motive behind the move to Silver City was based on a desire to pull myself and my family away from these stresses. In addition, the glittering rudeness of Reno, its volume of noise and chaotic patterns of growth seemed to play a part in the decision. The notion of living in a small mountain town held great appeal, I didn't calculate the energy and cost exacted by a sixty mile round trip each working day. Later, I started driving to Reno via Carson City, an eighty-five mile per day trip, this, in order to reduce the wear on my tires and the danger of the long curving drive up and down the grade just on the other side of Virginia City.

State Highway 342 breaks out of Silver City at Devil's Gate and runs a serpentine course north, past the remains of countless mines—to Gold Hill. Gold Hill, a one-time stop on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, experienced a revival in the 1970s when Houston Minerals took over the area and attempted to rework some of the mine sites from the 1800s. This company's boom or bust mentality led to a minor bonanza, with old housing being moved to the slopes of the town's narrow limits and duplexes constructed for company workers. The clear arrogance of Houston's operation eventually led to governmental intervention. At one point the company had excavated right up to the state highway and the road's foundations began to give way. Today, Gold Hill is back to a quiet and unhurried state. Businesses that started during the recent mining activities have been sold. Few tourists stop on their way out of Virginia City.

The crown of the Comstock, Virginia City, is some four miles out of Silver (as the town is dubbed by locals), above Gold Hill and over the divide. I don't intend to dwell on "VC" (as it is often called on the Comstock). Its historical importance is well established. The long shadow of Virginia City has always extended down Gold Canyon and over Silver. Even during my tenure it seemed that folks up in Storey County suspected the little Lyon County community of all manner of misdoings. In their eyes, Silver was a hippie haven, a collection of wrecked cars, certainly not a legitimate Victorian-trimmed mining town.

To the west, some eleven miles, is the state capitol. A trip to Carson City for groceries, a movie or supplies from Myers Hardware was a desert drive. You passed Moundhouse on the way, the site of another V&T yard and a scattering of low cost houses and trailer homes. The flashing lights of the Kit

Kat Ranch, the Starlight and the Moonlight could be seen from the highway. These illegal houses of prostitution were eventually brought onto the county's tax roles through legalization.

There were occasions when Silver City folks went to Carson City en masse. Each October 31st the fire department entered its antique truck in the Nevada Day Parade. On one occasion a large contingent of citizens, mostly women, converged on the Nevada State Prison to protest the rule that women must have their husband's written permission before visiting a male prisoner in maximum security. To my knowledge this regulation is still in force.

Over in the other direction, to the east, lies Dayton. This town of some 800 on the Carson River boasts of being the oldest town in Nevada, a claim that is heartily disputed by Genoa. Dayton and Silver share a number of things in common. Both are located in Lyon County and look to the county seat, Yerington, for governmental dispensations. The main street in Dayton resembles a set from "Gunsmoke" and, at times, the action in town, especially in and about the bars, provides nearly as much entertainment. Both towns support volunteer fire departments. During the 1970s these companies often held joint training sessions. One afternoon they converged on Joe Conforte's restaurant, Cabin in the Sky, where a small fire had broken out. An uncomfortably long discussion ensued among the firefighters, a light-hearted debate over whether the fire should be extinguished.

Silver City never quite dried up. From the earliest explorations of the ill-fated Grosch brothers in 1851 until the present day, it has maintained a thread of civic and social life.

Donovan's Mill continued in operation well into the 1940s. Bill Donovan was a kingpin figure in Lyon County for many years, powerful, and sometimes ruthless in his dealings. Silver was close enough to Carson City and Reno to serve some as a bedroom community. The Silver City School, housed in a structure that is now over one hundred years old, kept its doors open until 1954 when its students were transferred to the elementary school in Dayton.

Just as my family arrived in Silver, the community began to re-awaken from a sustained period of hibernation. During the 1950s and 60s it had dozed off, having passed up the development of any tourist trade. The area was dotted with abandoned mines, sage covered tailings and very dangerous holes in the ground.

Silver's political structure was simple. Three town fathers, as the town board was called, were elected by the people at an annual town meeting and, in turn, their election was approved by the county commissioners. In 1970, the deeply entrenched town fathers felt little need to call town meetings, especially when requested by a crowd of young newcomers. The board had

gotten into the habit of asking little of the county in the way of road improvements or any other services for that matter. Silver City was openly regarded by many as "the armpit of Lyon County."

The fire department consisted of one piece of ancient equipment in the early 1970s. The capacity of its water tank permitted only a few minutes of spray. The water system for the town was faulty with service available to a limited number of hydrants. One avoided speculating what would happen if a fire started in the town on a windy day.

Street maintenance was almost non-existent. Occasionally the boys from the county road agency would show up with their front loaders to patch things up, but in winter the three major roads to the center of town were very difficult to negotiate.

The water company serving Silver had its offices up in Virginia City. When I built my home in Silver, it was owned and managed by Hobart Leonard, a cooperative and genial fellow. Rumor had it he was a distant relative of Teddy Roosevelt's vice president. "Hobie" didn't really like to get involved with Silver's decaying system. The mains and pipes were better left covered, except in cases of major flooding. If you really had a problem, you would activate the crank phone and ask the VC operator to locate Hobie. After several calls around town, mainly to the bars, the operator would dispatch the water commissioner, but this, always, in his own good time.

There is a story, which I suspect is true, that recounts a phone conversation between two women in Virginia City. After a lengthy period of talk one of the callers suddenly stopped, realizing that the topic was getting too gossipy. "Let's not talk about this any more" she said. "I understand the operators listen in." Abruptly, a third voice entered the conversation with a firm "We do not."

If you glance up to the hill overlooking Silver City, you will see two water tanks. The larger one was installed after I left. The older one evokes some fine memories of hot summer afternoons when adults and kids would climb the shaky ladder to the top of the tank. It was a simple maneuver to raise the lid on the tank and dive into the very cold water beneath. We never thought much about the health hazards involved in splashing in the town's water supply, especially in the summer. Hobie often sent down official warnings about the high algae count or the presence of a dead "varmit" in the small reservoir on the divide. Surely we couldn't lessen the quality of the water much by swimming in it.

In the weeks following our move to Silver, my family joined with a number of others in an attempt to form a free school. You may recall that free schools were a favored institution for counter-culture folks at the time. They were not a reflection of racial or economic tensions but rather a direct assault on the quality of public school education. A loose confederation of parents in Silver believed the Lyon County school board was paying too little attention to

educational matters in the northern part of the county and that a free school would be an effective alternative for their children. High school students from Silver and Dayton were bussed to Carson City. The elementary school in Dayton, which served the children of Silver, was located in a shabby and cold courthouse dating from the turn of the century. I volunteered to teach art classes in this building on a number of occasions and found it exceedingly noisy, poorly equipped and administered in an out-of-date manner. These conditions seemed all the more pointed with the knowledge that the county was focusing a great deal of its educational resources in Yerington and the more affluent Smith Valley ranching district.

The free school, hastily put into operation, lasted a few days. The handful of students attending it simply disappeared from the school in Dayton. Classes were held in a private home. Teaching materials and books were scarce.

One morning, while the free school was in session, a deputy sheriff from Dayton, accompanied by the county truant officer, shut down the school. The kids reluctantly returned to the Dayton school some eleven miles away.

Rather than quit, the parents collected their thoughts and enlisted more persons in the project. Their next target was the Nevada State Board of Education. A far more comprehensive program of instruction was devised and, for the first time, the parents began to assess the talent pool in the town of one hundred and twenty-five. When the resource list was completed the parents could count on the services of an anthropologist, professional writer and a former actress. There were plenty of musicians around as well as visual artists. Several certified teachers came forward, willing to work for almost nothing, just to be a part of the free school environment.

Late night meetings were held, punctuated by lively discussions of educational philosophy and possible approaches to discipline in the new school. The differences between individualized programs and small group instruction were debated.

The state board, in an open meeting, turned the proposal down. The idea was dead, at least legally. It was discovered soon afterward that some of the most vocal opponents of our plans had been the teachers in the Lyon County school district, especially those in Yerington. It seemed so strange at the time that this group felt so threatened by the prospects of a fresh approach to education in the county.

Eventually a new elementary school was built in Dayton and, to the surprise of a number of us, some fine teachers were placed on its faculty. Our children, because they sported long hair and came from Silver, often bore the brunt of verbal and physical abuse from their Dayton classmates. The parents of these children did little to minimize the prejudice.

The old schoolhouse stands on high ground in Silver. In more prosperous days its facade contained two doors, one for boys and the other for girls. At times two teachers were hired, one for upper and one for lower grade levels.

Recently the town held an evening program honoring the school, its students and teachers. Ernest Gilbert turned up, possibly the oldest living graduate. Now in his 90s, Ernest attended the school just before the turn of the century. In Carson City he is known for his association with the popular Gilbert Drug Store at the junction of Highways 50 and 395.

In 1971 Silver City had a revolution. It was a minor skirmish by most historical standards. At least it caused county officials to take notice.

Town fathers had been governing by benign neglect. There seemed to be little concern for the children of Silver and the board was reluctant to call a town meeting. The fire department was almost a secret.

Several of the new folks in town requested a meeting. The idea was rejected by the board. A few people got together and agreed to post meeting notices at the post office and on the school house door. The town board chose to ignore all the activity.

Silver was somewhat tense in the days before the Sunday evening meeting. The school house was nearly full that night as the discussion centered on the lack of strong representation in Yerington and the resulting weakness of services in Silver's corner of the county. An election was called, the intent being to choose new town fathers. Nominations were quickly offered and a new board was in place. None of the old fathers were in attendance, and few old timers bothered to show up. A letter was drafted informing the county commissioners of the new board.

Word came down to Silver some time later that the commissioners did not recognize the results of the election. There was some question about the legality of the meeting since it had not been called by the regular board. Another meeting and election was decreed. It was suggested that certain folks in Yerington were hoping the results of the first meeting would be nullified in the second.

Some weeks later a second meeting was held. Those who opposed the takeover were very much in evidence. A lengthy debate over procedures raged long into the night. When the town finally got around to voting, the results were the same as the first meeting. A new board had been secured and was ready to work on neglected town business.

Sunday night town meetings occasionally drew good crowds, sometimes twenty or thirty people, more if the agenda contained a burning issue . . . such as the noise late at night at the bar or speeding on the main highway where the children often played.

Logan Dennison, the Lyon County deputy sheriff, might be called to Silver for a town meeting to keep a lid on things. Logan was a peaceful officer who dealt with difficult matters in a quiet, reasonable way. The town, for all its rebels, ex-cons and anarchists, shared an open respect for Logan's style. He literally followed the motto painted on the side of his patrol car, "TO PROTECT AND SERVE." Legend has it that Logan was once shot in the leg by a

drunk in Dayton. He took the fellow to jail to dry out but never preferred charges against the local man.

A frequent topic during town meetings was the question of road maintenance. This one never generated much unanimity. While the roads were constantly in a state of decay, a number of citizens openly opposed any kind of new surface, lest the roads provide any encouragement to tourists who might be included to drive up into the center of town. It was bad enough having to endure the "snowconers" speeding down from VC on the main highway.

One year, when it seemed most likely that the county was serious about road repair, a deal was struck. No road repair. If they had to lay asphalt somewhere, do it in the large area in front of the old schoolhouse, where a basketball court could be installed. This met with the approval of the road department, in part because it was easier to lay the paving on level terrain. They were no fools.

At about the same time, Mert Crouch and I began to develop a plan for a small park adjacent to the school house. With the flat court laid, it was time to approach the county park board for support in outfitting the grounds. We journeyed to Yerington, diagrams and catalogs containing illustrations of playground equipment in hand. We presented our ambitious plan and much to our surprise it was accepted. The strong support of our area representative, Kay Winters, played a significant role in its approval. In the coming months several work days were held and the park grew to include a Swedish gym, swings, park benches, basketball goals and volleyball posts.

Silver City's post office is possibly the smallest in all Nevada. Postmaster Bea Williamson has held her post for what must be twenty years. I have admired her ability to retain all kinds of gossip without becoming the town gossip. She was always friendly, helpful and willing to deliver verbal messages to box holders as they showed up later in the day. On the other hand, she wouldn't tolerate folks slipping unstamped, private communications into the mail boxes (those wonderful cast metal types). She regularly affixed the FBI's most wanted posters to the bulletin board in the tiny lobby, surely with full knowledge that the ones containing figures such as Patty Hurst or Eldridge Cleaver would disappear by day's end.

If you wanted to know anything about happenings in town, you consulted the glassed-over board just outside the post office door. It told of fire department meetings, dances at the nearby Craft Guild, baby sitting opportunities for the town's few teenagers and once or twice an affectionate note from one lover to another.

Each year, on Armistice Day, the town would gather for a major celebration, the parade of the Silver City Guard. This organization refused to recognize the more recently proclaimed Veteran's Day and continued to honor those who fought in World War I. Led by the tall, silver-maned Pierce Powell, the rag-tag collection of guardsmen would assemble before the Gol-


The Golden Gate Bar in Silver City was an unofficial civic center where locals would gather for a game of pool, a birthday party or just to chat. *(Photo courtesy of author)*

den Gate Bar and, on Powell's command, casually march up the hill to the center of town. A second order ushered the column south to the Silver City graveyard. This acreage on the east side of town may be more characteristic of the Comstock than Virginia City's more heralded "Boot Hill." It contains the graves of soldiers and citizens dating back to the 1850s. The contingent of guardsmen would shuffle directly to the grave of one Asa Phelps, reputed to be Silver City's first casualty in the Pyramid Lake Indian Wars. As was the practice at the time, Reverend Ian Stevens would step forward and say some carefully chosen words over Phelps's plot. This was all done with appropriate solemnity. Then the guard, which usually numbered a dozen or so, would raise their assorted weapons to their shoulders and issue forth with a volley that would bounce around the area from Devil's Gate to Johntown, a report that seemed to last for a number of seconds. I have observed this ritual on several occasions and noted a variety of gun-like pieces that took part in the salute. Black powder rifles were commonplace. Also beebee guns, broomsticks and 2″ by 4″s might be raised. Their task completed, the guard, accompanied by a handful of onlookers would trudge back to Pat Staub's bar for a round or two and some tourist watching. It must have been quite a jolt to

some Sacramento family, all nestled in their massive station wagon, to come across this costumed militia, sprawling over the steps and window ledges of the Golden Gate Bar. Surely a regular father with strong protective instincts would jam his foot into the gas pedal to hasten his retreat from the old west.

Silver City, in the early 1970s, was vivid theater. The cast of characters included the one-legged fire chief, Ray Muller, who worked diligently for several years to revive the fire department. Muller also ran the Tahoe Beer Hotel for a time. While his establishment never gained the popularity of the Golden Gate, it offered a pool table that was a frequent setting for rousing arguments, wagers and story telling. Muller had an interchangeable attitude toward his missing leg. One day he might be seen wearing his prosthesis and on another his peg leg. With either he could move as quickly as anyone on two limbs.

Chandler Laughlin and Lynne Hughes lived in the only remaining church in Silver. Chandler is known in northern Nevada and the Bay Area by his more familiar radio name, "Travis T. Hipp." His character, both on and off the air, was crafted over years of travel around the world. Aggressive, opinionated, Laughlin had bounced in and out of the Comstock for many years. His wife, Lynne, was the lead singer for several western-rock bands during the period, most notably with the Sutro Sympathy Orchestra, a band that Silver claimed as its own. Her warm, husky voice was the centerpiece for countless dances and concerts in the region.

While still in his early-thirties, Bob McKinney was a legend on the Comstock. A product of Berkeley High School, McKinney lived in Silver on occasions but felt equally at home in VC. He was about 6′ 4″, rangy and very strong. He liked to haul rocks and build stone walls. Whenever he settled into a place for a period of time, such as the Dayton Consolidated Mine where he served as caretaker, McKinney would start collecting things, mostly from the nearby Silver City dump. He was a bag-man with an advanced degree. His interests were diverse—newspapers, bottles, plastic items, battered old appliances. He also liked to plant seeds, especially orange and lemon seeds. His traces were easily observed. Once he had planted a seed, usually a foot or more beneath the surface, he would place an old tire over the spot where he expected the tree or plant to emerge. A gentle man, McKinney could be seen walking all over the area. Sometimes when he was hungry he would hike all the way to Carson City to rummage around in the dumpster at McDonalds or Warehouse Market. He seemed to live on no-one's time.

One November, McKinney found himself on the ballot for sheriff of Storey County. It was not a serious candidacy, considering that his opponent was the popular incumbent, Bob del Carlo. The flames of the campaign were fanned somewhat when *Rolling Stone Magazine* ran an article on McKinney and his unorthodox battle for political office. The election was never a contest and McKinney returned to walking and moving rocks.

"Alaska" Mike was probably in his 60s when he appeared on the Comstock. He was one of those fellows who immediately qualified as a codger. Average in height and displaying a course red beard, he sounded like a cross between someone's grandfather and Gabby Hayes. He could have dropped back into the 1870s and fit in easily. His favorite phrase was "gin-dang," and he dropped it into his conversation as often as kids today say "you know." His home for a while was in the remains of a small mining operation. Mike was quite a mechanic and fixer-upper. He made his adopted shack fairly livable even though there were those in town who worried about his survival during the bitter winter months.

After a year or so in Silver Mike began to lose his perspective on things. He took to wearing an aluminum pan on his head and his bladder would act up at the most inopportune times. Silver City, however, had taken a liking to Mike and watched over him almost as a child. When he would wander out of town, folks would get fearful that he might be picked up by local police or the highway patrol. I recall one shopping trip to Carson City with a friend. We spotted Mike in a market, pan in place on his head. We hustled him out as quickly as possible and into out truck. As the pickup was making a sharp turn onto Highway 50, Mike, his arm draped over the window ledge and spouting his umpteenth "gin-dang," suddenly swung out into space. The door hadn't been closed fully. Lifting his feet, he sat suspended in midair over the highway, his arm still over the ledge. The driver of the car quickly realized Mike's predicament and accelerated to bring the door shut. Mike didn't even mention his brief trip out over the highway. He just kept "gin-dang"ing.

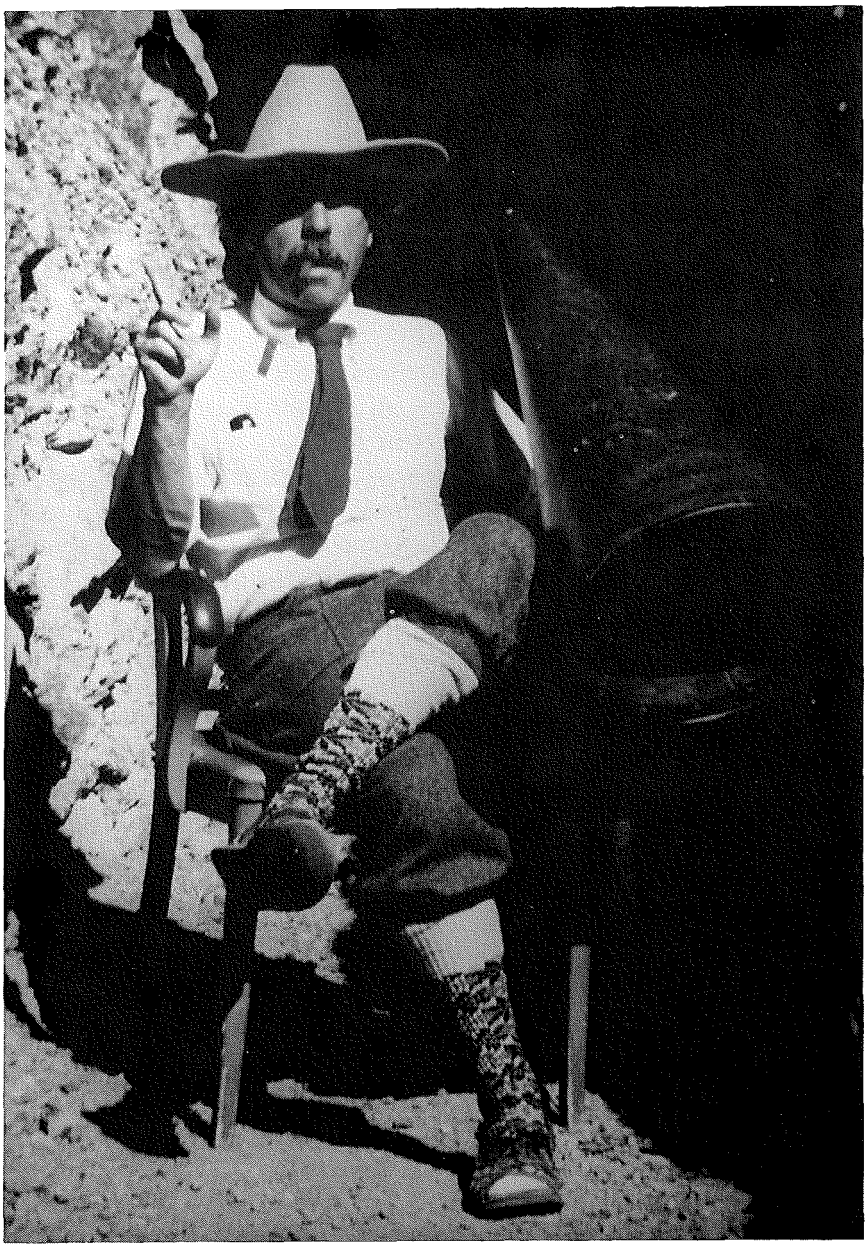
One day Mike went away. No one seems to know where. Nor did they even know his last name.

Pat Staub died a few years ago. He had been the long time owner of the Golden Gate Bar. Staub married Betty, a former circus performer who trained dog acts. Rumor has it that they really didn't like each other. Perhaps they stuck it out because they had no other place to go. Perhaps it was the business that kept them together.

Staub maintained the bar as Silver's unofficial civic center. A short, chunky man with a firm jaw, he ran the bar with a tight fist, even though he was past seventy. While I never saw it myself, certain bar patrons claimed that Staub kept a thirty-eight under the bar—just in case. Someone recalled that he had once pulled it out and unloaded a round into the ceiling, to calm things down.

Staub claimed to have had an illustrious career as a prison guard at San Quentin. Someone in town who had been in prison suggested that Staub's manner of speech and general style owed much to having spent time on the other side of the bars, away from the keys. No one seemed to know for sure. For the most part, no one cared.

The Golden Gate Bar was more than a place to get a drink. It was a great spot for a birthday party or a farewell get-together or a game of pool. Because



Henry Park chooses to live the simple life in Silver City with his hunting dog. *(Photo courtesy of author)*

state and local officials seldom drifted in on real business, there was an easy policy on kids hanging out. After the school bus dropped them off each day, several would walk across the street to the bar for a coke or electric sandwich. I remember one warm summer afternoon when eleven-year-old Sam Toll decided to streak the bar. Sam peeled out of his clothes across the street at Graham and Cleo Ross' house, donned a ski mask of many colors, jetted down the bar and out the back door. No one paid any attention. He tried it again. Still no interest. Finally, Sam sauntered back into the bar, stark naked, and ordered up a soft drink. He stood there for a number of minutes, unpeeled, no one to talk to.

The walls of the bar were crammed, jammed with stuff. One was shingled with thousands of yellowing business cards. There were many eight by ten glossy photographs depicting moments in the bar's history, unknown folks toasting the camera. Several movie posters, including one for the film "Silver City" (starring the RKO starlet Twinkle Watts), were tacked around the room. First timers to the bar might have felt they had entered a museum. Every corner yielded up some kind of artifact.

Henry Park is the son of a noted anthropologist who did the first studies of the Indians at Pyramid Lake in the 1930s. After some moving about, Park settled into a rented adobe off the main highway, across the dry creek bed. He planted a garden that yielded tasty vegetables and purchased some nearby property that he intended as a site for a future home.

Between frequent trips to San Francisco, Park worked on various literary projects. His business in the Bay Area was strictly a functional exercise, to make enough money on the docks and aboard ships to support his simpler life in Silver. At times, jobs were scarce and he would return with nearly empty pockets.

Park was evicted from the adobe after several years by an unsympathetic landlord in Virginia City. He agitated the situation further by placing a large sign in the front yard that read "What Creep Would Evict Park?" Questions regarding back rent and the right-of-way over this land led eventually to court cases in the JP's office in Dayton and the District Court in Yerington. After all was wrung out it seemed that neither party won much of anything.

Park now lives in a small trailer on the north side of Silver. A neighbor permitted him to run an electric cord to his trailer, providing light and heat. His principal interest, next to his ever-faithful hunting dog, is writing a play that levels a satirical assault at the judicial system. In it he saves his most biting salvos for the lawyers.

The *Gold Hill News* was reborn in June of 1974. David Toll, better known as the author of *The Compleat Nevada Traveler*, decided to give new life to Alf Doten's paper. True to the flavor of the original, Toll chose to amplify and color the daily happenings on the Comstock. His beat, from Virginia City to Dayton and every gulch and mine shaft between, was covered with lively writing and vivid pictorials.


Playbill for the third anniversary party of the *Gold Hill News* after its revival in 1974 by David Toll. *(Photo courtesy of author)*

Joe Conforte, his roots planted firmly in Storey County politics, was a frequent subject for *News* articles. He and Toll seemed to get along well enough. The fire departments of the region were generally good for a story. While striving to be as professional as possible, they had a streak of the Keystone Kops in them that provided Toll with some compelling material. At election time candidates were given plenty of inches to argue and rebut their cases. Celebrations on the Fourth of July at the Nevada Craft Guild provided action-filled photographs of horse races and anvil shoots. Toll also seemed to keep his readers up on who had been arrested and hauled away to the jails in Virginia City or Yerington.

Toll assembled and shifted a corps of writers, paste-up and graphic artists that gave the paper its special flair. During its second life the *Gold Hill News* received subscription requests from around the world. Buckeye Blake and Steve Powell, in the tradition of Remington and Russell, rendered original illustrations and executed drawings for ads that were consistent with the paper's tone.

Toll published the *News* on a regular basis until 1977. Then he shelved it for a year until Nevada Day, 1978, when he brought forth one final issue.

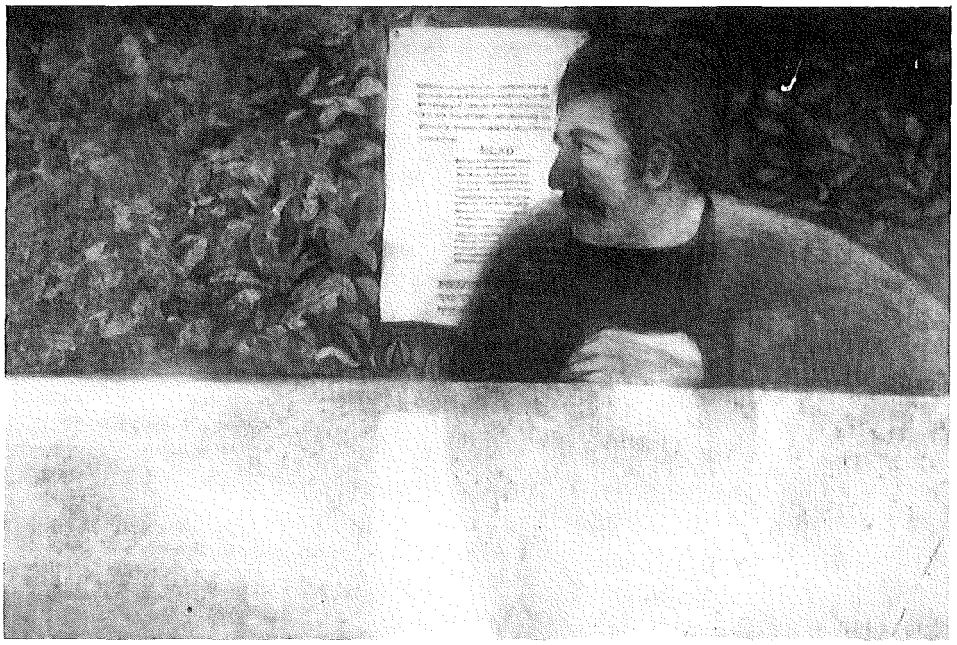
From the first issue that had declared "With this publication the *Gold Hill News* resumes publication after a hiatus of 92 years. To our readers and advertisers we apologize for any inconvenience caused by the delay," Toll attempted to view the happenings on the Comstock with a cocked eye. Proclaiming that "Mark Twain Never Worked for This Paper," the *News* exposed, jabbed and nudged the locals with just enough irreverence and affection to make it fascinating reading for most anyone who picked up a copy.

. . .

Silver was a Democratic town. In 1972, when county and state conventions were held, I suspect that the ratio of Democrats to Republicans was somewhere around eight to one. Having felt the power of the turnover in local government and with deep concerns for state and national issues, the most politically involved folks in town organized a registration drive that drove the Democratic rolls up even higher.

The Silver City Democratic precinct meeting that year attracted a large turnout. Debate over gun control, marijuana legislation and the presidential candidates dominated the evening. Toward the end a slate of five persons with one-half vote each was elected to the delegation to the Lyon County Democratic Convention.

Party officials in Yerington didn't quite seem to know what to do when they heard about the representatives from Silver. There appeared to be a genuine fear of this batch of "rock throwing hippies." It was our understanding that a number of high school teachers and other "intellectuals" were called and urged to attend the county meeting, in order to combat the radicals who were likely to interrupt convention business.



A charcoal drawing by the author entitled "Waiting" where he attempts to bridge the gap between the Comstock of the 19th century and present day. *(Photo courtesy of author)*

The biennial gathering was set for 8:00 p.m. on a Saturday night. Old timers expected the proceedings to be over easily by 9:30. However, the delegates from Silver had no intention of participating in a rubber-stamping session, as was apparently the custom. When the president finally gaveled the meeting to a close, it was well past midnight. In what was proclaimed the longest meeting in anyone's memory, citizens from Silver pushed for full discussion of the issues their precinct had debated and, in the process, gained some measure of acceptance as a serious and informed group. The groundwork had also been laid for a much deeper involvement in the Democratic fortunes of Lyon County.

The state Democratic convention was held in Las Vegas in 1972. The Lyon County delegation had been allocated sixteen votes. Silver City managed to garner one and a half votes.

In the two years that followed, Silver City's commitment to Lyon County, at the party level, with the commissioners and the park department, led to greater acceptance by county Democrats.

A banner year in Silver City politics was in 1974. It is estimated that Silver mounted the largest Democratic precinct meeting in the state. Some thirty-

five party loyalists attended this gathering in the old schoolhouse. The delegation to the county convention was much larger this time, and county leaders scheduled the meeting in Yerington to start at 2:00 p.m. to allow time for a full discussion of issues. Silver's delegation again submitted an armload of resolutions for the party platform. Without the hostility of two years before, it was a vigorous give and take in which Silver's opinions had a full hearing.

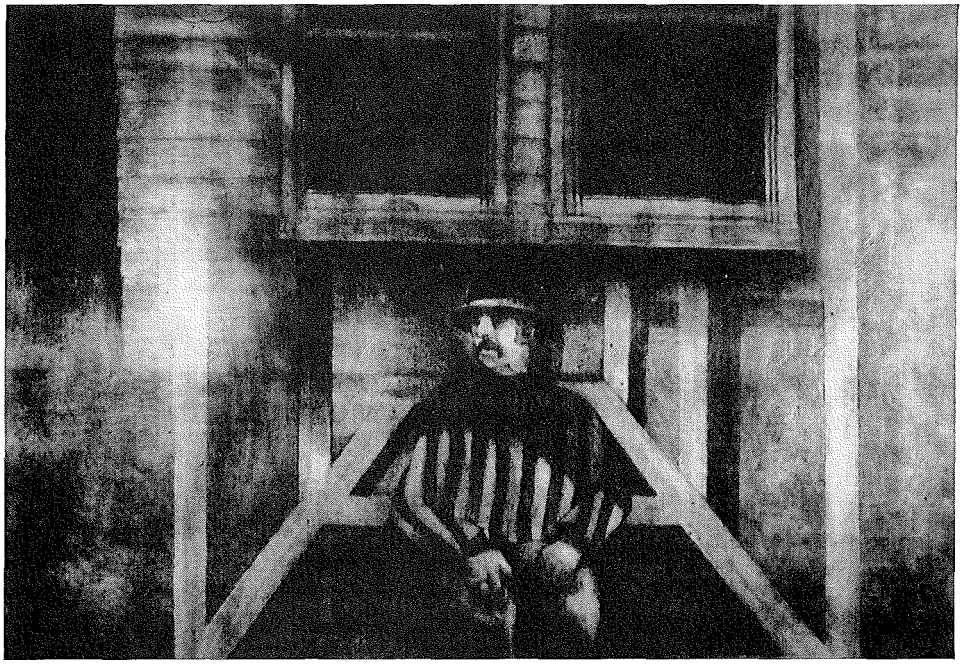
The state Democratic convention of 1974 was held in Reno's Pioneer Auditorium. Lyon County's delegation had been increased to twenty-four and, of that number, eight were from Silver. It was generally recognized as the most cosmopolitan at the convention: Smith Valley farmers, Fernley teachers, Yerington businessmen and Silver City hippies.

. . .

Most of the businesses that survived in Silver City did so because they were patronized by locals. Mary Seldon Stevens opened a small general store for a brief time. It offered the basics: tooth paste, cans of soup, fresh bread and friendly talk. Nancy Young operated an antique store that eventually pulled up stakes and moved to a more lucrative location on C Street in Virginia City.

Fully one-third of Silver's citizens were involved with the arts. Cashion Callaway was a silversmith who won recognition in a highly competitive exhibition at the Renwick Gallery, a division of the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. Buckeye Blake of the *News* was a self-trained artist who set up his studio in an old caboose below Silver. Roz Works came from a theatrical background in the Chicago area. Daniel Murray was a leather craftsman who fashioned elegant saddles. Barbara Stein received her training in the visual arts at the Art Students League in New York under the German expressionist George Grosz. Musicians were plentiful. Daniel Yuhaus was active in local bands and was generous as an impromptu performer. One day he was spotted strolling down the street in front of the old Dayton school, a banjo hanging over his shoulder. One of the teachers called out the classroom window and invited him in for a short concert. The children were delighted with his picking and strumming.

The mission of the Silver City Volunteer Fire Department was serious stuff. It was the only company within four miles. Lapsed time for arrival of other companies was enough to turn a structural fire into a total conflagration. As Silver grew during the 1970s increasing pressure was applied to Bill Southard and the fire district office. Gradually new equipment and fire fighting gear arrived in town. A short wave radio station was put in place, and training was offered on a more systematic basis. At one time nearly thirty men and women were registered as firefighters. Silver was the subject of some derision at this time, because it allowed women into the company on more than an auxiliary basis.



A drawing by the author entitled "Mine Boss" which is one in a series called the "Comstock Suite," a collection produced during his last months in Silver City. *(Photo courtesy of author)*

I served as fire training officer for a time and organized regular classes in range and structural firefighting. A number of members went to Carson City for classes with the professionals at the Warren Engine Company.

In the eyes of Silver's firefighters, the town was a disaster waiting to happen. A majority of Silver's homes were frame construction, many so far from working hydrants that it was doubtful the necessary water could be supplied. At first the hoses looked like they would rupture on contact with the high pressure at the hydrants. Firefighters were instructed to deal with structural fires by first getting people out of buildings, then to protect nearby structures by hosing them down. It was doubtful that a reasonably engulfed structure would survive. Most of the department's action took place out in the field, where summer brush fires activated regional companies and firefighters worked with the assistance of plane loads of retardant from Salt Lake City.

One summer afternoon the department received a slightly confusing call. A mysterious column of smoke had been sighted west of town; the exact location was not known. Our company was to answer the call, as was Dayton. The truck left the firehouse followed by an ancient field van. The crew drove south to the junction of US Highway 50 and stood at the bottom of the

Comstock trying to locate the smoke. Nothing! Then, it was decided to drive up to Gold Hill to attack from above. Since the siren had alerted the entire town, a number of citizens had stationed themselves at the bar to find out the latest news. They watched as the trucks rolled by a second time. In Gold Hill the firefighters took the high ground to look down on the fire, but still no fire, or smoke. When the company drove down through Silver for the third time, a crowd of some fifteen to twenty people broke out in sustained applause. Had the fire not been located in a deep mine shaft some time later they might still be there cheering on the men and women of their fire company.

The annual Fireman's Ball was the big event of the year. Organized in the early 1970s as a summer fund raiser, it grew to be a regional affair attracting hundreds to its booths, contests, food, heavy drinking and dancing. Persons from Carson City and Reno, normally quite proper in their attire and demeanor, would slip into their most tattered and stained pair of jeans and tell friends and relatives not to expect them back until the next day, or maybe after that. The event raised thousands of dollars over the years and lightened the load on the fire district's limited resources.

I left Silver City late in the summer of 1975. It was not a pleasant departure in that my family was breaking up. I resigned my position on the town board, said many difficult farewells and reluctantly returned to Reno.

I have maintained a number of friendships in Silver over the intervening years. I still catch an occasional Reno Padre game at Moana Stadium with Ted and Evy Daily. Patty Crouch and I have kept in touch through her enrollment in university art classes.

Henry Park and I have corresponded for years and have dinner together frequently. There is a part of my spirit that will remain fondly attached to Silver. At a deeper level, when all the tales have been spun, I realize the value of genuine neighbors, persons who not only live close by in the physical sense, but who, as a matter of course, are available in moments of crisis or who will help mix cement, carry rocks for a new wall, check out the wiring in a remodeled room or pick up groceries on their way through Carson City. I miss the morning ritual of talk at the post office. I miss sharing the concern for the security of each other's houses. Pat Staub would grill a newcomer who asked where a local's house was. He wouldn't give directions to the home until he was certain things were on the up and up. When something important was about to occur, you called the editor of the local newspaper and gave him the scoop. It was all very close stuff and at times you could suffer from it. I seldom found the proximity oppressive or mean.

During my time in Silver I became acutely aware of the seasons, especially winter. During our first winter in the house we built, there was no running water, no electricity and the wood for the stove was stacked a few steps from the back door. On a night when near blizzard conditions prevailed, it was

tough to convince yourself to haul in an armload or two of kindling and cottonwood.

In Silver, between 1970 and 1975, I had as neighbors: teachers, ex-cons, scientists, artists, alcoholics, bartenders, codgers, and a bunch of kids that had to put up with all the above mentioned folks. It wasn't always cozy or pleasant, but the town seemed to grasp the notion that it was this rough blend of people that led to the cooperative and creative spirit of the place. It was sure boring to return to the suburbs of Reno.

During my final months in Silver I started a series of drawings which I later called "The Comstock Suite." In this group of charcoal studies I attempted to bridge the distance between the Comstock of the last century and what I could still see around me. What seemed to come through in these works was the starkness of the terrain. When the figure of a miner appeared, it yielded an impression almost as solid and abiding as the rock beneath his feet.

# *Book Reviews*

*Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity & the Growth of the American West.* By Donald Worster. (New York: Pantheon, 1985. 402 pp., notes, bibliography, index. $24.95.)

THIS BOOK IS BRILLIANT, BEAUTIFUL, and provocative, but also arrogant, distorted, and hopelessly moralistic. Worster's vision, his conceptualization, and above all his writing are breathtaking, at times even spellbinding. This is a stunning sythesis and most readers will find it captivating. Yet if *Rivers of Empire* is judged on freshness of research, originality, or strength of thesis, it will receive no better than mixed marks.

The book freely builds on ideas borrowed from the famous sinologist, Karl Wittfogel, who argued in *Oriental Despotism* (1957) that "hydraulic societies" of the ancient world manifested totalitarian and despotic systems of government in which, to use Worster's words, "one or a few supreme individuals wielded absolute control over the common people as they did over the rivers that coursed through their territory." (p. 23) Irrigation required centralization, centralization led to the formation of powerful elites, and those elites swept away local control over natural resources and prevented the development of democratic values. Wittfogel later abandoned this theory, but Worster valiantly defends it as a viable blend of Marxism, the sociology of Max Weber, and the teachings of the Frankfurt School of social science. He sketches three stages of irrigation development common to all hydraulic societies, regardless of time and place. In the American West, "incipience" lasted from the first Mormon settlements through the 1890s. Complete dependence on local construction skills and capital characterized this stage, which also included local control over water. Passage of the Reclamation Act of 1902 ushered in a second stage of irrigation as the "federal government took firm charge of western rivers, furnishing the capital and engineering expertise to lift the region to a higher plateau of development." (p. 64) Finally, after World War II, "the two forces of government and private wealth achieved a powerful alliance, bringing every major western river under their unified control and perfecting a hydraulic society without peer in history." (p. 64)

Worster's book contains many insights. He discusses the nature and the extent of the federal government's subsidies to western agriculture, the failures of western reclamation (symbolized by the collapse of the Teton Dam on a Snake River tributary in 1976), and the need to look at patterns of

water-use, not just land holdings, to understanding western agriculture. Moreover, Worster's discussion of the destructive effects of irrigation agriculture on the land—such as choking the soil with salts (which ultimately requires much irrigated land to be retired from production) and creating a society completely out of touch with natural limits—is instructive, if not altogether new (see, for example, the Nader Report entitled *Damming the West* published in 1973). But the author provides very little evidence to show that hydraulic empires differ from other totalitarian states, that institutions in the arid West resemble those in other hydraulic societies (modern or ancient), that irrigation agriculture produces forms of agricultural capitalism different from dry farming, or even that federal involvement in western reclamation has been antidemocratic. Worster's study focuses largely on California and assumes that the states of the arid West have all manifested similar characteristics as a result of irrigation.

More important than regional differences within the West is Worster's failure to explain just how the attempt of easterners to achieve dominance over nature differed from the quest for control of Western dam-builders. After all, in the East, human beings stripped away forests, tapped pools of underground oil, killed off species after species of animals, and drained millions of acres of swamps. (In fact, Corps of Engineers flood control structures in the humid East have reclaimed far more land for agriculture than the reservoirs built by the Bureau of Reclamation in the arid West!) Certainly these activities, carried out over many decades, had as much influence over the nature of government as irrigation in the West.

There are many other points at which the book can be challenged. Worster deplores man's defiance of nature, and claims that our continuing quest for mastery is a problem endemic to the value-structure of western civilization. (pp. 56, 188) This suggests that our basic environmental problems stem from deeply rooted cultural imperatives. In this schema, no one's to blame when everyone's to blame. However, Worster is also obsessed with finding villains, and to do so he must flatten the motives of water planners so that those individuals all fit comfortably together into the same elite or class. Everywhere appear "poised . . . eager . . . professional water managers" (p. 266), and they are invariably aided by "big-money boys" (p. 100) bent on the "naked accumulation of wealth." (p. 284) Indeed, greed is one of the liet-motifs of the book. (pp. 74, 129, 254) Worster's ideas are not consistent, nor can they be. For if the real enemy is a "growth ethic" at the heart of American capitalism, then how can we pin the blame for so many of the West's fundamental problems exclusively on a greedy, arrogant elite of "water hustlers"? After all, are the motives and goals of irrigation agriculture and agribusiness really that much different from those of other sectors of American capitalism? Can we separate agribusiness from manufacturing, shipping, transportation, and other components of sophisticated economy?

The book has to be filled with distortions to support its questionable thesis that the institutions of the arid West might have evolved very differently from those in the rest of the country, that there was a chance to make the West a "model democracy." Worster's writing has a strong nostalgic quality which is built on the assumption that the West is a land of missed opportunities and dreams. "Was it," Worster asks, "a society in which power and profit were broadly diffused—was it, after all, a people's Eden? Or was it instead, more or less as the earlier hydraulic societies had been, a hierarchical system of power, of unequal life-chances, of some humans dominating others? Were there concentrated, centralized forms of authority there, and did the individual and the small community stand before them in futility and impotence?" (p. 279) Of course, Worster states the dilemma of modern technological societies in general, and the choice between a democratic Eden *or* a leviathan is hopelessly romantic and naive. No less naive is Worster's conclusion that to save ourselves we must take John Wesley Powell's advice seriously and redesign the West "as a network of more or less discrete, self-contained watershed settlements." (p. 333)

Two or three decades ago, historians debated whether "objectivity" in history was a practical goal, though few denied that historians should strive for fairness and detachment. One great legacy of the revisionism of the 1960s was to make it respectable for historians to write history with a cause. It had always been done, of course, but seldom as openly or zealously as William Appleman Williams or Gabriel Kolko. This book might well be seen more as an extended jeremiad than as history. The West is called upon to learn the lessons of the past and repent or suffer the same fate as the hydraulic empires which preceded it on the path to destruction. Siltation, the waste of water, the plight of farmworkers (the great underclass created by irrigation), the reckless use of pesticides, and urban sprawl all become symptoms of an underlying disease. Worster's attempts to force history to conform to his sermon—however good the sermon itself—violate some basic standards of the historian's craft.

Donald J. Pisani
*Texas A&M University*

*Women and Indians on the Frontier, 1825-1915.* By Glenda Riley. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984. xvi + 336 pp., photographs, notes, note on sources, and index.)

GLENDA RILEY'S STUDY of *Women and Indians on the Frontier, 1825-1915,* pursues the status of relationships between white women of the frontier and Native-Americans of the trans-Mississippi West. The primary focus of Riley's

work is an analysis of the *changes* in women's attitudes toward Indians as women devised new perceptions about themselves. It is the author's contention that most frontierswomen modified their views towards Indians in a positive and expansive way. This change of attitude was an experience not generally shared by their male companions, and indeed, it was an expansiveness of mind not extended by these women to any other minority group encountered along the way.

Women of the nineteenth century were bombarded on every side by the barbarous nature of native life in the American West. National folklore, the American press, as well as European literary sources, persisted in projecting a one-dimensional, stereotypical view of Native-Americans. Indian males were portrayed as deceitful, lazy and dirty. Native women fared little better; to Americans and Europeans they were homely, dependent and grossly mistreated by their men. Most Americans contemplating westward migration accepted these myths as fact; their experiences prior to migration contained little to discredit these assumptions.

In a study based largely on diaries, journals and personal reminiscences written mainly by women, Riley succeeds in documenting significant shifts in white female attitudes with increased interaction with Native-Americans. She also emphasizes the rarity of such shifts among white males. Because frontier conditions freed women from their limited views of their own abilities, this new freedom of identity spilled over into other areas of their lives. In contrast, men's responsibilities on the journey remained consistent with societal views of men's duties and roles. Since men failed to modify their own perceptions of themselves, they typically retained their beliefs that Native-Americans were inferior creatures, existing in an uncivilized condition.

Women's duties revolved around activities requiring cooperative relations with Native-Americans. Once initial, non-threatening contact was made, frontier women to a large degree cast aside their prejudices and accepted Native-Americans on a human level. Positive accounts abound of frontierswomen establishing working relationships, and in some cases, friendships, with Indians. Such encounters were inevitable, given the nature of female "duties." As women adapted their perceptions of self to the demanding conditions of the frontier, women assumed non-traditional roles in order to survive. This flexibility of thought eventually eroded other frontier stereotypes, particularly those concerning Native-Americans.

Women's relationships with and attitudes toward Indians were complicated by their societal role as "moral missionaries." The duty of women to uphold and teach American notions of morality forced them to lace their opprobrium of Indians with optimistic visions of converting roving savages to a Christian, settled way of life. Since white males typically did not serve as guardians of morality, they generally did not adopt flexible attitudes toward Indians. Indeed, their role as provider and protector of the family increased the

likelihood that their encounters with Native-Americans would be within an adversarial context.

*Women and Indians on the Frontier, 1825-1915* is a valuable contribution to the history of women in the west. The study is clearly from the white female perspective; other groups covered in the study (Native-Americans, Mormons, Panamanians) serve only as a yardstick for measuring the degree of change in female perspective. The link between the changing attitudes of Indians and the shifting perceptions of women of themselves is well-documented, as is the author's explanation of why such radical perceptual changes were largely confined to women. While Riley occasionally succumbs to simplistic statements and polemical language when castigating the treatment that Indians suffer at the hands of whites, she clearly adds a new dimension to the experience of American women in the trans-Mississippi West.

Doris D. Dwyer
*Western Nevada Community College*

*On the Trail of Forgotten People: A Personal Account of the Life and Career of Mark Raymond Harrington.* By Marie Harrington. (Reno: Great Basin Press, 1985. 322 pp., forward, bibliography, illustrations, $12.50.)

MARK RAYMOND HARRINGTON IS CONSIDERED the "father of Nevada archaeology," that is according to his widow, Marie, who wrote this biography. Harrington first arrived in Nevada in 1924. He had been sent by the Museum of American Indian in New York to explore Lovelock Cave. This event "was to make a confirmed westerner of him for the rest of his life. This was also the real beginning of his archaeological fame." Indeed, from that time on, Harrington's name was associated with most of the major archaeological excavations in the state, including Pueblo Grande de Nevada (the Lost City), Gypsum Cave and Tule Springs, all in Clark County in addition to Lovelock Cave and Pyramid Lake Cave in northern Nevada.

Harrington's career prior to his Nevada sojourn had taken him to diverse areas collecting ethnographic material and doing archaeology. Between 1908 and 1924 he did archaeology in New York, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Cuba and collected from the Onieda in Canada, the Seminole in Florida, the Choctaw in Louisiana, the Cherokee in North Carolina, the Seneca, Wyandotte, Shawnee, Peoria, Quapaw, Modoc, Osage, Delaware, Comanche, Kiowa, Wichita, Caddo, Anadarko, Kickapoo, Sac, Fox, Seminole and Creek in Oklahoma, the Alibamu in Texas, the Potowatomie in Kansas and the Kickapoo in Mexico. However, it is his archaeological work in Nevada for which Harrington is best known, and which is the focus of a large part of this book.

He spent several years excavating the Lost City sites, and the Lost City Museum in Overton stands today much as he visualized it in the early 1930s. He had at that time gone to work for the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles. With the construction of Boulder Dam, it became apparent that the waters of Lake Mead would cover part of the Lost City sites. The National Park Service borrowed Harrington to lead the Civilian Conservation Corps in the excavations of these sites. In 1935, branching out from his usual archaeological duties, Harrington designed the exhibits and restorations for the then Boulder Dam Park Museum which was built to house the artifacts taken from the excavated sites. Although the National Park Service withdrew their artifacts in 1953, local residents replaced the exhibits keeping true to Harrington's original plan. Many of those exhibits remain today in the original wing of the Lost City Museum.

M.R. Harrington died in 1971 leaving behind a legacy that formed the foundation for the study of prehistory of the area. Nevada owes him a debt of gratitude for his contributions to the understanding of that prehistory. A bibliography of his works at the back of this book cites no less than 59 articles and five books dealing with Nevada.

Mrs. Harrington writes from the viewpoint of twenty-three years of marriage and is able to offer many first-hand accounts of Harrington's later work when he became an authority on adobe restoration and worked to preserve many of the old adobe buildings in California and also continued his search for evidence of early man in Nevada and the California deserts. The earlier parts of her husband's life are recounted through correspondence and Harrington's journals which are quoted extensively throughout the book. Many personal insights are also added to these written accounts by personal reminiscences that her husband shared with her over the years.

Mrs. Harrington has written an enjoyable book, rich in information about both the professional and personal life of her husband. Although the chronological events sometime skip around and are hard to follow, this book is recommended for anyone interested in Nevada history and those who enjoy biographies of interesting people.

Kathy Olson
*Lost City Museum*

*Brigham Young: American Moses.* By Leonard J. Arrington. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985, preface, illus., appendix, notes & references, bibliographical essay, index. 552 pp., $24.95.) *Brigham Young and the Expanding American Frontier.* By Newell G. Bringhurst. Edited by Oscar Handlin. (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1986, preface, notes, illus., index. 246 pp., $6.95.)

LEONARD J. ARRINGTON'S *Brigham Young: American Moses* and Newell G. Bringhurst's *Brigham Young and the Expanding American Frontier* help fill an important gap in the historiography of the American West. Arrington's book is the finest overall biography ever written on the famous Mormon leader, while Bringhurst's study contributes positively to the "Library of American Biography" series edited by Oscar Handlin.

Arrington, the leading authority on the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, has written a masterful account of the life of the LDS Church's second President. He has succeeded, as he expressed in the book's preface, in writing a biography which is fair, balanced, and characterized by "the kind of empathy that we ourselves would hope for if our own lives were being examined by someone who has not lived in our skin" (xvii). The author's acquaintance with secondary and primary materials relating to Young's life is evident throughout the book. His extensive access to and frequent quotation from primary documents makes the book particularly valuable. Because of Young's crucial roles in Mormon development, the story of his life, when related in a broad context as in this study, tells much about the history of Mormonism. Arrington provides a window which gives a helpful glimpse into Mormon beginnings, the continuing search for refuge, the anti-Mormon persecutions, and the establishment of permanent settlements in the West.

One senses that Arrington has captured the essence of the Mormon prophet's personality. He persuasively depicts Young as a deeply religious man who played a primary role not only in religious affairs, but also in the general development of the Great Basin. Young's pervasive influence was felt in such diverse areas as territorial politics, Indian affairs, railroad and telegraph building, resource allocation, immigration, economic planning and cooperation, military affairs, ecclesiastical administration, and colonization. In this broad-ranging biography, Arrington effectively portrays a man, not a legend, and sets the record straight about a leader whose true identity has often been unduly shrouded in myth and legend by both sympathizers and critics. This study, in typical Arrington style, is candid, balanced, interpretive, and takes into account the larger American scene.

As accurately implied by the title of his book, Newell G. Bringhurst focuses on Brigham Young's impact on the expanding *American* frontier. In doing so, he also describes the expanding *Mormon* frontier. Bringhurst provides a

concise, readable account of Young's life and his impact on American history. His biography integrates Young's experience with the general American experience. While he recognizes the distinctive features of both Young and his followers, the author notes the similarities with other American groups. He adds perspective to his narrative by relating Young's activities to such major historical themes as Manifest Destiny, economic crises, religious revivalism, immigration, social attitudes, slavery, millenialism, national politics, and the expansion and decline of the American frontier. Nevertheless, Bringhurst points out that Young and the Mormons differed from other American groups, as demonstrated, for instance, by their atypically good Indian relations and their usually cohesive pioneer companies. The author maintains that Young personified the American frontier experience. His birth in the East, his westward migration experiences, and his opportunities to succeed in a frontier setting were each part of a broader American social pattern.

Brigham Young's loyalty to the first Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith, no doubt "enhanced his own status" (p. 40), as Bringhurst suggests, but the author places excessive and inadequately substantiated emphasis on Young's desire for recognition and status. The author capably relates, however, interesting and pertinent information about Brigham Young's wives and children. In doing so, he wisely avoids sensationalizing and deals with Young's family life in an evenhanded fashion. Such treatment is characteristic of the general balance of this solid, interpretive study of Brigham Young.

Gene Pace
*Alice Lloyd College*

*Flanigan: Anatomy of a Railroad Ghost Town.* By Eric N. Moody. (Susanville, CA: Lahontan Images, 1985. 121 pp., preface, illustrations, index.)

FLANIGAN WAS ONCE A SMALL, isolated railroad town west of Pyramid Lake in the eastern Honey Lake Valley. It would not appear at first to be a particularly stimulating subject for a book. However, it is interesting on two levels, both of which are clearly illustrated in Moody's book. First, Flanigan is a good example of a town promoted far out of proportion to its realistic possibilities. It is an instance of an isolated railroad town with a stubborn, drawn-out existence occasionally punctuated by hopes of mineral wealth, and of a community with a fairly recent death. Second, Flanigan is interesting on a purely human level. Three individuals were particularly prominent in the town's life and development. Paul Butler, one of an energetic breed common in the early 1900s, promoted the town using newspapers and other means for exorbitant statements and rosy predictions and was trapped by his own

enthusiasm. Orlando Gasparini, a good businessman, made a success of the Flanigan store but saw more clearly than Butler the present and future status of the community. Gertrude Milne, who came to teach at the school in 1930, stayed until she was the last resident in town and saw Flanigan decline from a quiet railroad community to an abandoned spot in the desert.

In delineating Flanigan's story, Moody's book examines a common but generally overlooked aspect of western life and development. Early photographs of the town would have been welcome, but perhaps none exist. Also, considering the railroad background of Flanigan, more detailed railroad maps of the general areas are needed.

Nevertheless, the book modestly and successfully fills a gap in the historical study of Nevada. This reviewer hopes this examination of a railroad community of the Great Basin will not be as isolated as Flanigan itself.

John McDonald
*Washoe County Library*

*The Ignoble Conspiracy: Radicalism on Trial in Nevada.* By Guy Louis Rocha and Sally Zanjani. (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1986. 209 pp., illus., index, notes, $16.50.)

THE IGNOBLE CONSPIRACY IS A NARRATIVE account of the 1907 trial of Morrie Preston and Joseph Smith for a Goldfield, Nevada, homicide committed amidst labor agitation in the frontier mining community. The authors diligently compare the trial and its context with the more noted Big Bill Haywood trial in Idaho and the Mooney and Billings bombing trial in California. The authors find that corporate interests used money, power, and undue influence to achieve convictions that were contrary to law and the evidence. More interestingly, the authors find that the inadequacy of counsel for Preston and Smith was a significant contributing factor in their conviction and extended stays in prison.

This book is about labor radicalism at the turn of the century, Nevada's mining and political heritage, and legal history. The authors spend a great deal of necessary ink on the Western Federation of Miners and the Industrial Workers of the World, their organizing efforts in Nevada, and the internal schisms within the labor movement. Preston and Smith were part of that history and Preston, in particular, remains part of the history and mythology of the labor movement. The authors also provide a fine background on Nevada's boom and bust mining economy, the politics of corporate intrigue, and parties. It is with legal history that the authors become caught up in the rhetoric of the times and the labor movement that the book loses that element of elegant style and analytical symmetry.

The authors argue that counsel for Preston and Smith failed in numerous ways. First, they failed to insist upon preliminary hearings to glean more of the prosecution strategy. Second, they did not seek separate trials to avoid jury confusion and to allow each defendant to stand alone without collateral behaviors being attributed to him. Third, they failed to anticipate a conspiracy theory and to prepare for such an eventuality. Fourth, they failed to prepare their witnesses adequately and to conduct examination and cross-examination effectively. Finally, they did not do a good job getting a favorable jury. All these criticisms sound very appealing when, as the authors do, the trial and its results are compared with Clarence Darrow's successful defense of Big Bill Haywood. It is even more appealing when the reader keeps in mind the quotation from Louis Nizer that "a lawyer who will put his witness on the stand without thorough preparation disserves his client, his profession and the truth." Appealing, but is the assessment fair if we look at the norms of practice of the nineteenth-century bar?

Robert A. Ferguson's *Law and Letters in American Culture* (1984) has convincingly forwarded the proposition that lawyers of the early national period were men of culture that as generalists transmitted the values of that culture through the practice of law and the making of public policy. These generalists were slowly replaced by specialists, scholars of the law, who saw no need to see the larger cultural picture. The generalist survived, however, on the frontier until that frontier culture saw no need for his talents. Perhaps with the Preston-Smith defense counsel the jury witnessed the performance of generalists and Clarence Darrow was the model specialist. Further, the nineteenth century valued the art of rhetoric in criminal defense attorneys. Patrick Reddy of Bodie, California, never lost a case and amused spectator and jury alike with his rhetorical flourishes and command of the law. According to Roger McGrath's *Gunfighters, Highwaymen & Vigilantes* (1984), criminal defense attorneys were surprisingly capable. The standard of practice of the times is the standard for evaluation.

The authors also attack the Nevada Supreme Court for throwing out the Preston-Smith appeal on the technicality that the appellate brief forwarded merely an "intent" to appeal. Technicalities of civil and criminal procedure are very much part of law and the American legal practice. Depending upon the observer's politics, a technicality that voids a death sentence can be either a great victory for civil liberties or an evidence of judicial usurpation of the public will. While this might be the stuff for an analysis of voter attitude in the 1986 California Supreme Court election, it is not the stuff of legal history. Rather the question is what was the law at the time. The authors do not tell us. We must remember that the criminal appellate practice of the states varied on such issues; and Nevada's justices should be given the benefit of analysis under the probing eye of the social scientist looking at both the autonomous legal system and the impacts of economic and social change,

remembering that appellate procedure was among those elements of law least susceptible to change. The authors do tell us that when rejecting the petition for rehearing, the Court wrote that the defense position was "entirely new" and "not a little startling in view of the practice that has prevailed in this state from its organization to the present time." Another part of law practice was knowing the law of the forum. Whether the defense attorneys again failed to do their homework or the Court went out of its way to deny the appeal and rehearing remains an open question.

Finally, a word about style. This is a compelling book, well-written in a narrative style with analytical comment interspersed without jarring hesitation. The authors make judicious use of secondary source quotations of an interpretative nature to lend that important degree of scholarly veracity to an enticing narrative.

Gordon Morris Bakken
*California State University, Fullerton*

# *Readers' Notebook*

*A Report on Recent Books and Articles*

NEVADA'S WILD HORSES, THEIR MANAGEMENT and the political problems they have created are the subjects of several recent publications. Joel Berger's *Wild Horses of the Great Basin: Social Competition and Population Size* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986) traces the natural history of wild horses in the region and examines their behavior and effect on the environment. Amy Dansie, Don Tuohy and Ann Pinzel discuss the evolution of the wild horse, the historical relationship between the Indian and the horse, and efforts to save mustangs in their natural environment in *The Wild Horse in Nevada: I Thought I Heard a Discouraging Word* (Carson City: Nevada State Museum, 1985), edited by Cheryl Young. Richard Symanski's *Wild Horses and Sacred Cows* (Flagstaff, Arizona: Northland Press, 1985) examines historical and present threats to the mustangs, as well as the current battles between their enemies and protectors.

Horses also figure prominently in two new books on the rodeo. Kristine Fredriksson's *American Rodeo: From Buffalo Bill to Big Business* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1985) traces the rodeo's development as a sport and commercial enterprise, while Cyra McFadden's *Rain or Shine: A Family Memoir* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986) relates the life and career of the author's father, Cy Taillon, "king of the rodeo announcers," who was a familiar figure at Nevada events. The first rodeos in Elko, Nevada, are among several subjects covered in a book about one of the state's most accomplished artisans, David L. Van Meter's *G. S. Garcia, Elko, Nev.: A History of the World Famous Saddlemaker* (Reno: Avail Publishing, 1984).

Several new and reprinted works on the Far West's Indian peoples have appeared. Brigham D. Madsen's *The Shoshoni Frontier and the Bear River Massacre* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1985) examines the development of factors leading to the 1863 massacre of more than two hundred Shoshone men, women and children in southern Idaho and the impact on Indian-white relations of that terrible event. John Running's *Honor Dance: Native American Photographs* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1985) presents evocative color and black-and-white portraits of contemporary

Southwestern Indians. Sally Zanjani has written about "Indian Prospectors" in *Nevada Magazine*, November/December, 1986. David Humphreys Miller's *Ghost Dance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985) is a republication of a 1959 work which tells the story of the phenomenon that originated with Wovoka (Jack Wilson), the Walker River, Nevada, Paiute prophet and culminated in the Wounded Knee massacre of 1890. Sessions Wheeler's *Paiute* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1986),also a new reprint, is a historical novel whose action is set in the early days of Nevada's Comstock mining boom and the 1860 Pyramid Lake Indian War. This latter conflict is the subject of another recent reprint, Ferol Egan's *Sand in a Whirlwind: The Paiute Indian War of 1860* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1985). The state's earliest inhabitants are discussed in Eugene M. Hattori's "The First Nevadans: Historical Themes of Pleistocene Human Occupation in Nevada," *Halcyon* 7 (1985).

Early white intrusions into Nevada and the Great Basin are dealt with in a handful of newly reprinted books about fur trappers, explorers and emigrants: Bil Gilbert, *Westering Man: The Life of Joseph Walker, Master of the Frontier* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985); Douglas S. Watson, *West Wind: The Life Story of Joseph Reddeford Walker* (Morongo Valley, Calif.: Sagebrush Press, 1984); Hiram Martin Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade of the Far West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986); Ferol Egan, *Fremont: Explorer for a Restless Nation* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1985); and George R. Stewart, *Ordeal by Hunger: The Story of the Donner Party* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986). New periodical literature on the emigrant experience includes Jeanne H. Watson's "The Carson Emigrant Road," *Overland Journal* 4 (Summer 1986); Joseph R. Conlin's "Eating on the Run: Organizing Meals on the Overland Trail," *California History* LXIV (Summer 1985); and David Rich Lewis's "Argonauts and the Overland Trail Experience: Method and Theory," *Western Historical Quarterly* XVI (July 1985), in which the author suggests avenues for "further synthesis" of already accumulated data on the emigrants.

*Nevada Mining and You: A Resource Guide, With Sections on Historical Mining Camps, Modern Mining Methods, and an Overview of Some Mineral-Producing Areas in the State* was issued in 1985 as Special Publication No. 8 by the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology. Other recent books on mining are: Oscar Lewis, *Silver Kings: The Lives and Times of Mackay, Fair, Flood and O'Brien, Lords of the Nevada Comstock Lode* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1986), a reprint of the classic 1947 work; Oscar Lewis, again, *The Town that Died Laughing: The Story of Austin, Nevada, Rambunctious Early-Day Mining Camp, and of Its Renowned Newspaper, The Reese River Reveille* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1986), a reprint of a 1955 book; and Donald Abbe, *Austin and the Reese River Mining District:*

*Nevada's Forgotten Frontier* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1985), which authoritatively details the history of Austin so colorfully sketched in Lewis's book.

Mining is one of the central topics of Frank Wright's *The Comstock* (Reno: Nevada Historical Society, 1985), a recent addition to the series of booklets written by the Society's curator of education for use in Nevada classrooms. A political battle stemming from Nevada's nineteenth century attempts to annex additional mining regions is recounted in James Hulse's "Idaho versus Nevada: The 1887 Struggle Between Nevada's Senator and Idaho's Governor," *Idaho Yesterdays* 29 (Fall 1985). Michael Malone's "The Collapse of Western Metal Mining: An Historical Epitaph," *Pacific Historical Review* LV (August 1986), examines the present decline of the region's mining industry in an historical context.

Western outlaws and gunmen, past and present, are celebrated in Carl W. Breihan's *Lawmen and Robbers* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1986); David H. Grover's *Diamondfield Jack: A Study in Frontier Justice* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), which is a reprint of a 1968 University of Nevada Press book; Sally Zanjani, "Sam Brown: The Evolution of a Frontier Villain," *Pacific Historian* XXIX (Winter 1985); and in two books about Claude Dallas—Jack Olsen's *Give a Boy a Gun: A True Story of Law and Disorder in the American West* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1985) and Jeff Long's *Outlaw: The True Story of Claude Dallas* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1985). A new edition of Richard Dillon's *Well Fargo Detective: A Biography of James B. Hume* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1986) portrays one of the more famous lawmen chasing the outlaws.

Phillip I. Earl and Guy Louis Rocha have written about a major nationwide labor dispute and its ramifications for Nevada in "The National Railroad Strike of 1922 and the Decline of Organized Labor in Nevada," *Journal of the West* XXV (April 1986). Rocha is also the author of another article on labor history, "Big Bill Haywood and Humboldt County: The Making of a Revolutionary," *Humboldt Historian* VIII, nos. 2&3 (1985).

"Disease and Medical Care in Frontier and Modern Rural Nevada," by Caroline Ford, appears in *Nevada Public Affairs Review* no. 1 (1986), together with Steve Burghardt's "The Navy in Rural Nevada," which contains information on the early history and recent development of one of the state's major military installations, the Fallon Naval Air Station.

The story of aviation in Nevada is also treated in John Tegler's *"Gentlemen You Have a Race": A History of the Reno National Championship Air Races, 1964-1983* (Severna Park, Md.: Wings Publishing Company, 1984); Phillip I. Earl's "Wings Over the Truckee: The Early Years of Aviation in the Truckee Meadows, 1910-1914," *Washoe Rambler* 9,nos. 1&2, 3&4 (1985) and 10, nos. 1&2 (1986); and Richard Rashke's *Stormy Genius: The Life of Aviation's*

*Maverick, Bill Lear* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985). A segment of the last work covers Lear's Reno years, during which he continued aircraft projects and sought to perfect a new steam-powered automobile.

Automobiles are the principal subjects of Dean Batchelor's *Harrah's Automobile Collection: One Man's Tribute to the Great Automobiles of the World* (Pontiac, Mich.: GP Publishing, 1984). This lavish description of the collection—no longer intact—complements the earlier biography by Leon Mandel, *William Fisk Harrah: The Life and Times of a Gambling Magnate* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1982). Another older book about the automobiles of a Nevada resident, one that for some reason hasn't been seen much, is Griffith Borgeson's *Errett Lobban Cord, His Empire, His Motor Cars: Auburn, Cord, Duesenberg* (Kutztown, Pa.: Automobile Quarterly Publications, 1983), $395.

A fascinating look at a Western institution can be found in a new edition of Richard Erdoes' *Saloons of the Old West* (Salt Lake City: Howe Brothers, 1985). A brief account of one of the beverages served in Nevada's saloons appears in Eric N. Moody and Robert A. Nylen's *Brewed in Nevada: A History of the Silver State's Beers and Breweries,* Nevada State Museum, Popular Series No. 9 (Carson City, 1986). "The Goldfield Brewery," one of the state's largest, is described by Alma Stenz Millard, daughter of its proprietor, in *Central Nevada's Glorious Past* 8 (May 1985).

Another typically Western institution, now unique to Nevada, is the subject of two recent works. Jeanie Kasindorf's *The Nye County Brothel Wars: A Tale of the New West* (New York: Linden Press/Simon & Schuster, 1985) recounts a violent episode in the recent history of Nevada's legal prostitution business, while an ambitious survey of the same business, from its beginnings to the present, appeared as a series by Doug McMillan and others in the *Reno Gazette-Journal,* November 9-16, 1986, under the title "Sex for Sale."

The Grand Canyon and Colorado River areas are the settings in a new edition of C. Gregory Crampton's *Land of Living Rock: The Grand Canyon and the High Plateaus, Arizona, Utah, Nevada* (Layton, Utah: Gibbs M. Smith/Peregrine Smith Books, 1985) and David Lavender's *River Runners of the Grand Canyon* (Tucson: Grand Canyon Natural History Association/ University of Arizona Press, 1985), an historical account that commences with John Wesley Powell's exploits in 1869. The politics surrounding the construction, and the economic and environmental impacts of the Colorado River's most famous dam are described in Linda J. Lear's "Boulder Dam: A Crossroads in Natural Resource Policy," *Journal of the West* XXIV (October 1985).

Hoover (Boulder) Dam's architecture is the subject of Richard Guy Wilson's "Machine-Age Iconography in the American West: The Design of Hoover Dam," *Pacific Historical Review* LIV (November 1985); another discussion of architectural design and decoration is found in the second edition of Michael Webb's *The Magic of Neon* (Layton, Utah: Gibbs M. Smith/

Peregrine Smith Books, 1986), which prominently features Las Vegas as the current center of neon inventiveness.

Roberta Childers's *Magee Station and the Churchill Chronicles* (Reno: Jamison Station Press, 1985) relates the story of the William Magee family and other pioneering settlers of Churchill County, Nevada. The story also deals, to some extent, with early Washoe County, parts of which are described in *Frontier Times: The 1874-1875 Journals of Sylvester Daniels* (Susanville, Calif.: Tim I. Purdy, 1985) edited by Tim Purdy. The entire history of the county is covered, in brief, in Frank Wright's *Nevada's Heartland: Washoe County and Its Neighbors* (Reno: Nevada Historical Society, 1986), the latest educational booklet issued by the Society.

Organized crime's presence in the Nevada gambling industry and the state's efforts to regulate the industry are the subjects of Ken Miller's "The Other Nevada: Gaming, Politics and the Mob," a series of articles published by the *Reno Gazette-Journal,* July 14-28, 1985. The Las Vegas casino entertainment scene in the 1950s is portrayed in a reminiscence by former public relations figure Tricia Hurst, "Once Upon a Time in Las Vegas," *Nevada Magazine,* May/June 1986. The leading opponent of Nevada's legal gambling in the 1930s and 1940s, Frank Williams, receives attention in Michael Green's "Clark County's Anti-Casino Crusader," *The Nevadan* (Sunday magazine of the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*), March 23, 1986, while one of the giants of the industry he couldn't defeat is portrayed in Michael Drosnin's *Citizen Hughes* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985), a major work that focuses on the gambling and political ventures of Howard Hughes in his Nevada years. One of the subjects covered in the book is Hughes's campaign against nuclear testing in southern Nevada; official and popular efforts to portray the testing in a positive light during the 1950s and 1960s are examined in A. Constandina Titus's "Selling the Bomb: Hollywood and the Government Join Forces at Ground Zero," *Halcyon* 7 (1985).

Issues and problems presently confronting Nevada and the West are addressed in *Empires in the Sun: The Rise of the New American West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986), a reprint of the controversial 1983 work by Peter Wiley and Robert Gottlieb, and in Charles Bowden's *Blue Desert* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986), which looks at the Southwest, including southern Nevada, and decries the region's flood of immigrants who "hope to escape their pasts—the unemployment, the smoggy skies, dirty cities, crush of human numbers" and only "reproduce the world they have fled."

Some new reference works of interest are *The World Almanac of the American West* (New York: World Almanac/Pharos Books, 1986), edited by John S. Bowman, which offers a chronology of major events from 1492 to 1985; the *Nevada Historical Marker Guidebook* (Sparks, Nev.; Falcon Hill Press, 1986), edited by Dave Basso; Riley Moore Moffat's *Map Index to*

*Topographic Quadrangles of the United States, 1882-1940* (Santa Cruz, Calif.: Western Association of Map Libraries, Occasional Paper No. 10, 1985); and *State Maps on File: West—Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington* (New York: Facts on File Publications, 1984), a classroom tool that would be of greater use if its current maps were more detailed and its historical maps more accurate.

Eric N. Moody

# *New Resource Materials*

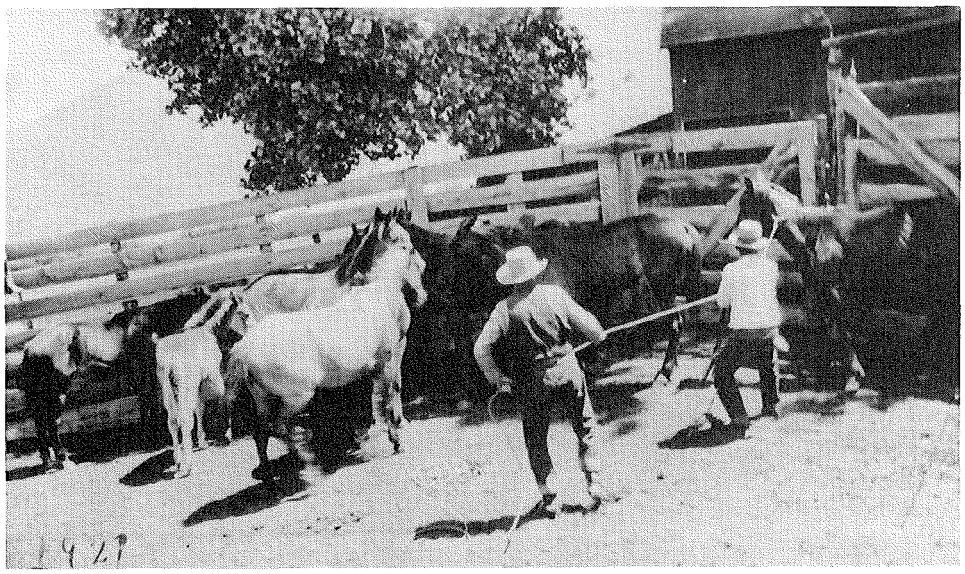
## *Nevada Historical Society*

During the past two years the Society has received a number of important groups of photographs depicting ranching in northwestern Nevada. Donated by Lige Langston of Cedarville, California, Dewey Parker of Reno, John M. Matley of Doyle, California, and John Kleppe of Reno, the pictures are drawn from family photograph albums compiled from about 1910 into the 1940s. Ranching and farming activities, as well as domestic scenes and recreational pursuits—such as ice skating, boating and rodeoing—are shown at the Matley, Kleppe, TH, Buffalo Meadows, Granite and other ranches in the Truckee Meadows and further north in Washoe County. Included, also, are some views of Gerlach, Seven Troughs, Winnemucca Lake, coyote trappers' catches, *pogonip,* mining at Donnelly Mountain and dude ranches near Pyramid Lake. Together, the pictures form a detailed personal record of what ranching and ranch life were like in the area during the first half of this century, and we thank the donors for making them available for inclusion among our photograph collections.

Eric Moody
*Curator of Manuscripts*

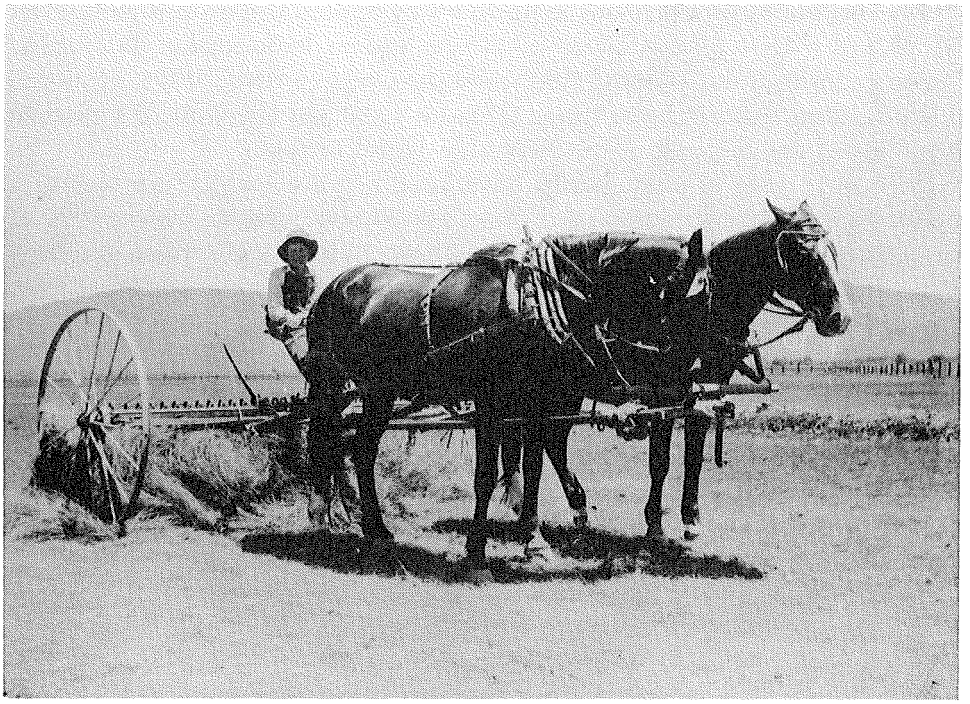
## *University of Nevada-Reno, Library*
## *Special Collections Department*

The UNR Library's Special Collections Department has acquired a number of important photograph collections within the past few months. These include a group of early Nevada stereographs which date from the early 1860s to the 1880s. Included are images of Nevada mining activities in Virginia City, Gold Hill, Washoe City, and Eureka. One very unusual stereo was taken during a flash flood in the mining town of Ruby Hill, Nevada. In this unique image water can be seen literally rolling down the street. Also included are stereo views of Lake Tahoe, the Sutro tunnel, Nevada Indians, and Truckee, California. A number of images of Virginia City complement an earlier acquisition, a Thomas Houseworth stereo taken in 1862, which is thought to be the earliest known photographic view of the town.



The TH Ranch near Pyramid Lake donated by Lige Langston. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

Young man plowing on the Dewey Parker Ranch, c. 1920. *(Nevada Historical Society)*



Ernest John Kleppe raking hay on his family ranch, c. 1916. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

Stacking hay on the Matley Ranch, July 12, 1928. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

Other recent historical photo acquisitions by Special Collections include an Edward S. Curtis photogravure of Washo Indian basketmaker Datsolalee (1924); panoramas of Goldfield (1907) and the Owyhee River (n.d.); an album of hand-tinted views of Lake Tahoe, Donner Lake and Yosemite; a sequence of photos of the burning of the Riverside Hotel in Reno.

Thirty-five pairs of photographs have been acquired which are part of a recent project to rephotograph the West. The Rephotographic Survey Project was a three year project begun in 1977 with the objective of rephotographing selected sites of nineteenth-century U.S. Government survey photographs. The original photographs had been taken by well-known western photographers such as William Henry Jackson, Timothy O'Sullivan, and J.K. Hillers working for the surveys of Clarence King, F.V. Hayden, and John Wesley Powell. One-hundred-twenty pairs of images done by the Reprographic Survey Project are reproduced in *Second View, The Reprographic Survey Project,* Mark Klett, Ellen Manchester, JoAnn Verburg, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984). The sets of prints for the Special Collections Department were done by Mark Klett, the chief photographer of the survey project.

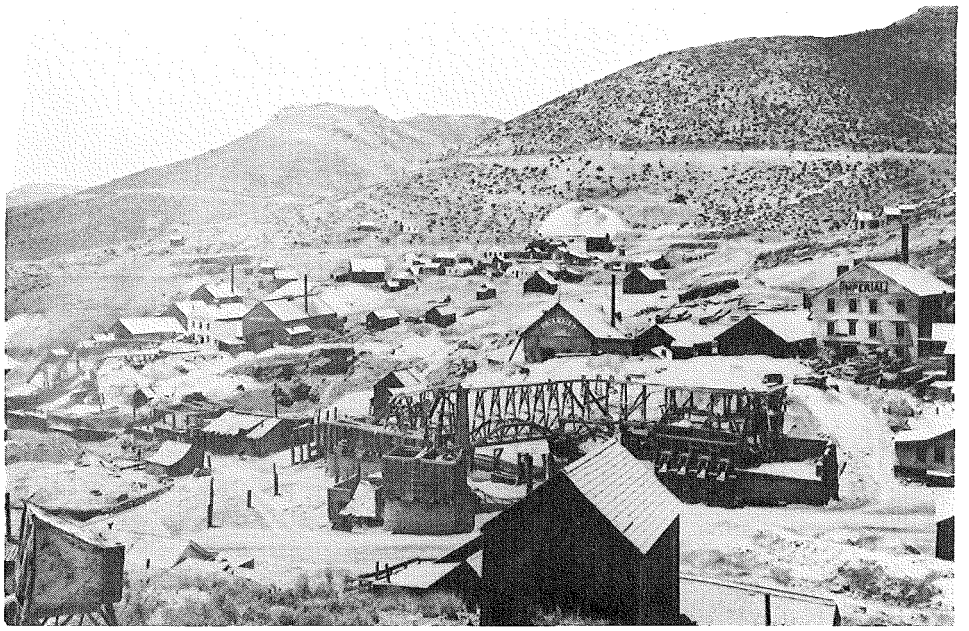
Robert E. Blesse
*Head, Special Collections Department*

## *Nevada State Library and Archives*

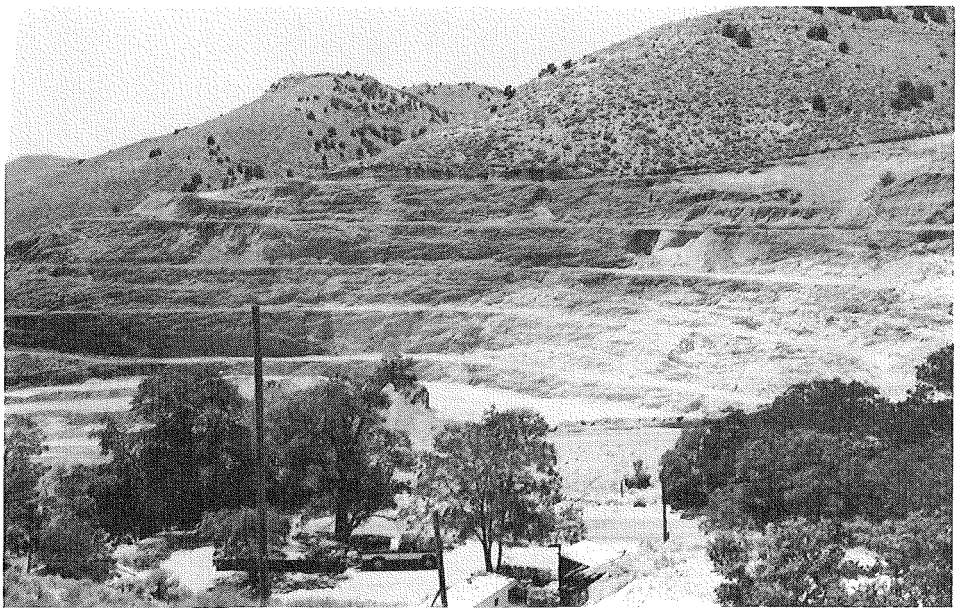
### Division of Archives and Records

The Division of Archives and Records recently received a letterbook of the Nevada State Railroad Commission from the Nevada Historical Society and several annual reports of railroad companies to the Nevada Public Service Commission from the Special Collections Department of the Getchell Library at the University of Nevada, Reno. The transfer is part of an ongoing cooperative effort of Nevada's state historical records repositories to return state records to the state archives.

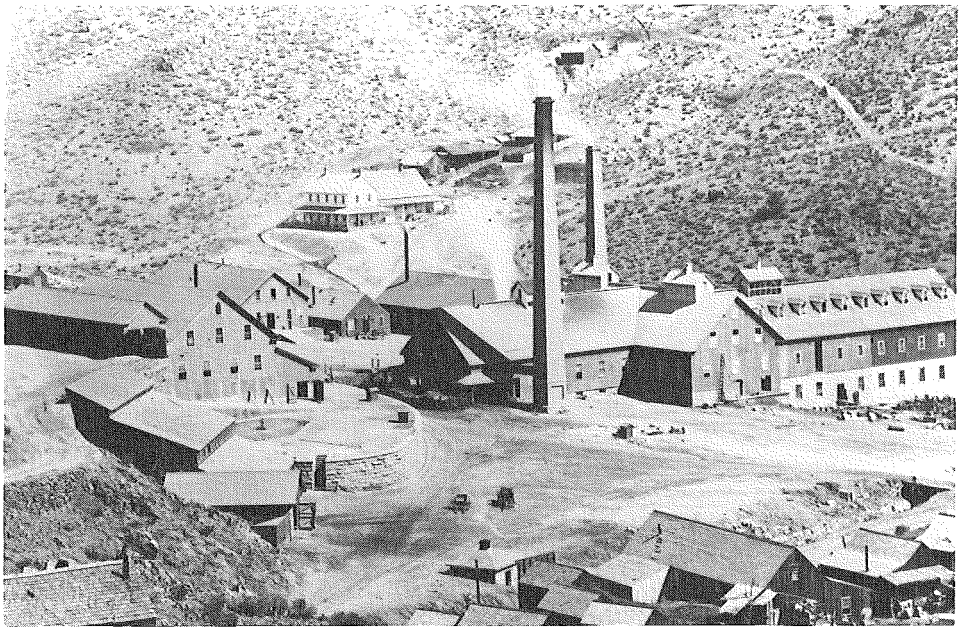
The Nevada State Railroad Commission was created in 1909 to monitor and regulate the railroad companies operating in Nevada. It was originally established to regulate transportation and freight rates charged. Later it was given the responsibility to regulate other public utilities such as telephone and telegraph companies and the electric railroad that operated for a brief period of time in Reno and Sparks. This letterbook contains incoming and outgoing correspondence requesting information and informal opinions of the Commission from 1913 to 1916. The book contains information regarding the Commission's powers, information on electric railroads and concerns regard-



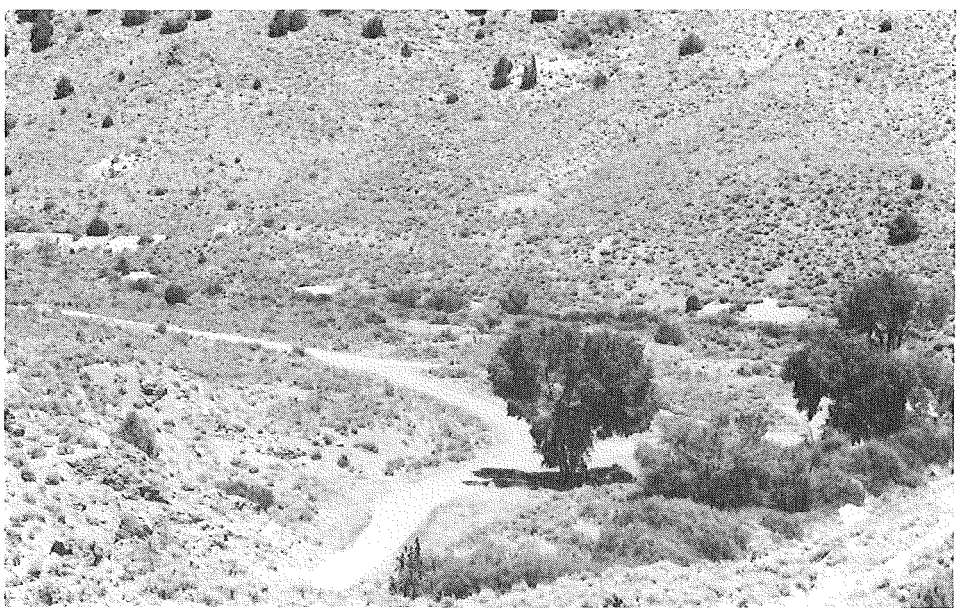
Timothy O'Sullivan, 1868. Virginia City, Comstock Mines. *(Photo courtesy of Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno)*



Mark Klett for the Rephotographic Survey Project, 1979. Strip Mines at the site of Comstock Mines, Virginia City, Nevada. *(Photo courtesy of Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno)*



Timothy O'Sullivan, 1868. Quartz Mill near Virginia City, Nevada. *(Photo courtesy of Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno)*



Mark Klett for the Rephotographic Survey Project, 1979. Site of the Gould and Curry Mine, Virginia City, Nevada. *(Photo courtesy of Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno)*

ing the apparent monopoly of American Telephone and Telegraph Company in 1916.

In 1919 the Public Service Commission was created to replace the Railroad Commission because of the expanded duties beyond the regulation of railroads. As before, however, every railroad operating in Nevada had to file an annual report of the company's activities with the Commission. The reports in this records group now include: the Central Pacific Railroad for 1931-1934; the Southern Pacific Railroad for 1951; the Union Pacific Railroad for 1942-1946, 1950, 1952 and 1955; the Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad for 1926; the Nevada Copper Belt Railroad for 1934; and the Virginia and Truckee Railway for 1929. These reports contain information on company officers, debts, track mileage by state, revenues, and transportation rates. In addition they also provide statistics on number of employees, the hours they worked and their pay, and valuable information on products transported by carload and ton. All these statistics are for the national operations of the company and the Nevada operations, thereby showing Nevada's percentage of national activities.

Jeffrey M. Kintop
*Curator of Archives/Manuscripts*

# BECOME A MEMBER OF THE NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY OR GIVE A GIFT MEMBERSHIP

Memberships help the NHS by providing funds to publish the QUARTERLY and to create new exhibitions for the changing galleries.

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*
- **Nevada State Museum Newsletter** — the publication of a sister museum in the Department of Museums and History, the newsletter keeps all members informed of upcoming events.
- **Discount** of 15% in the Nevada Historical Society Gift Shop and in the gift shops of the other museums of the Department of Museums and History.
- **Tours** — Society sponsored tours take members to historic sites within reach of Reno. 15% discount on tour fares.
- Special notice of all Society events and activities.

## MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

☐ Regular — $25.
☐ Family — $30.
☐ Student — $5.
☐ Senior Citizen (60 or over) without *Quarterly* — $7.50.
☐ Sustaining — $35.
☐ Contributing — $50.
☐ Associate Fellow — $100.
☐ Fellow — $250.
☐ Associate Patron — $500.
☐ Corporate Patron — $1000.
☐ Life — $2,500.

Special memberships help defray the cost of special exhibitions and education projects.

---

☐ Check enclosed for $_____
☐ Please charge my ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

Card No._____ Exp. date_____

Signature_____

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

☐ This is a gift. Please send to above name with compliments of

_____

Mail to Membership Department, Nevada Historical Society
1650 N. Virginia Street, Reno, NV 89503

# 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.


NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1904