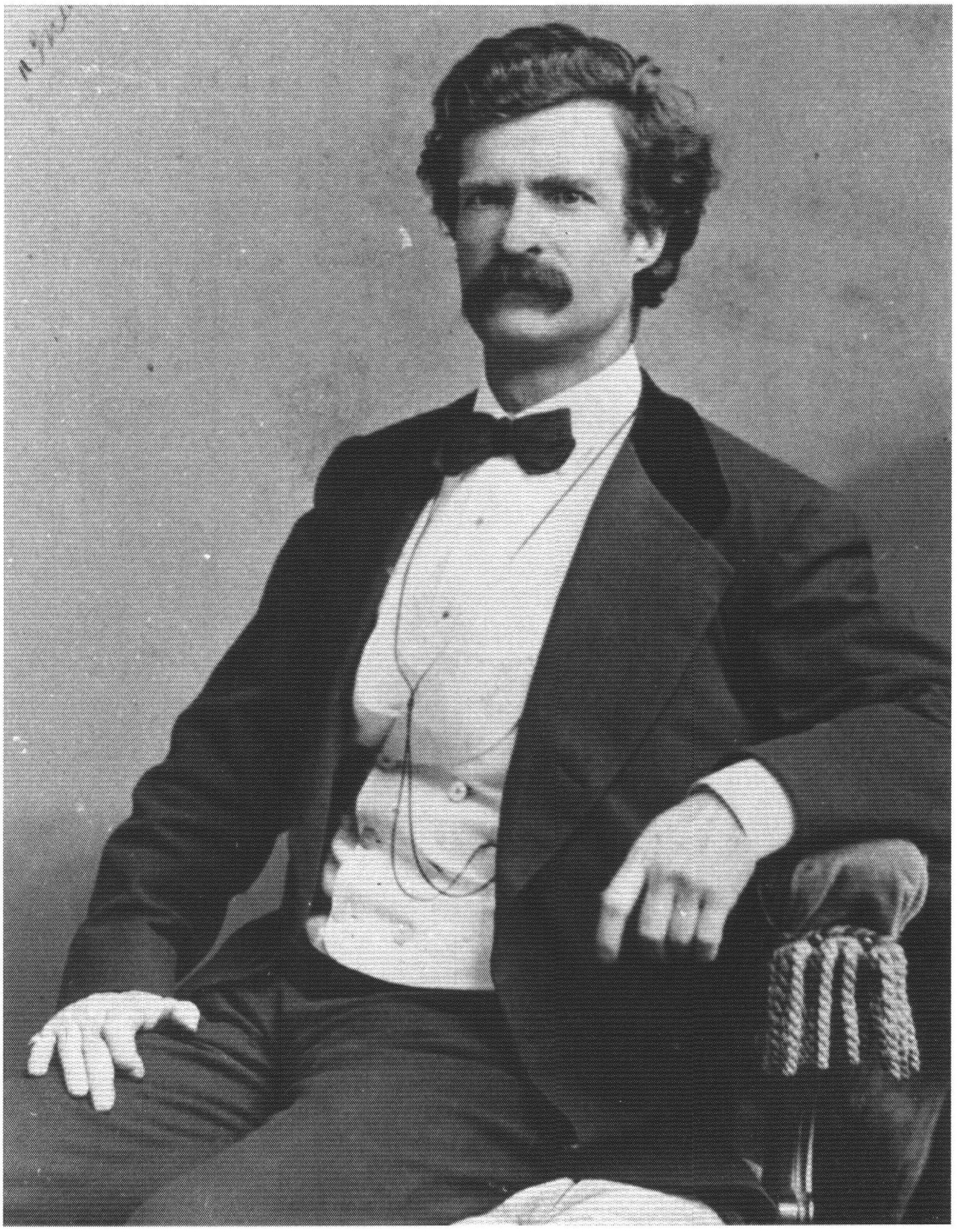
Nevada

Historical Society Quarterly



Summer 2008

Nevada Historical Society Quarterly

The *Nevada Historical Society 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 archaeology of these areas; reprints of historic documents; 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, along with a copy on disk (in MAC© or IBM© compatible form-WordPerfect© 5.1, 6.0, or Microsoft Word©). All manuscripts, whether articles, edited documents, or essays, should conform to 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. Submission guidelines are available on request. Correspondence concerning articles and essays is welcomed, and should be addressed to The Editor.

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Contents

Front Cover: Mark Twain adopted the look he would retain for the rest of his career ca. 1868. Photograph by Jeremiah Gurney. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

Mark Twain in Nevada

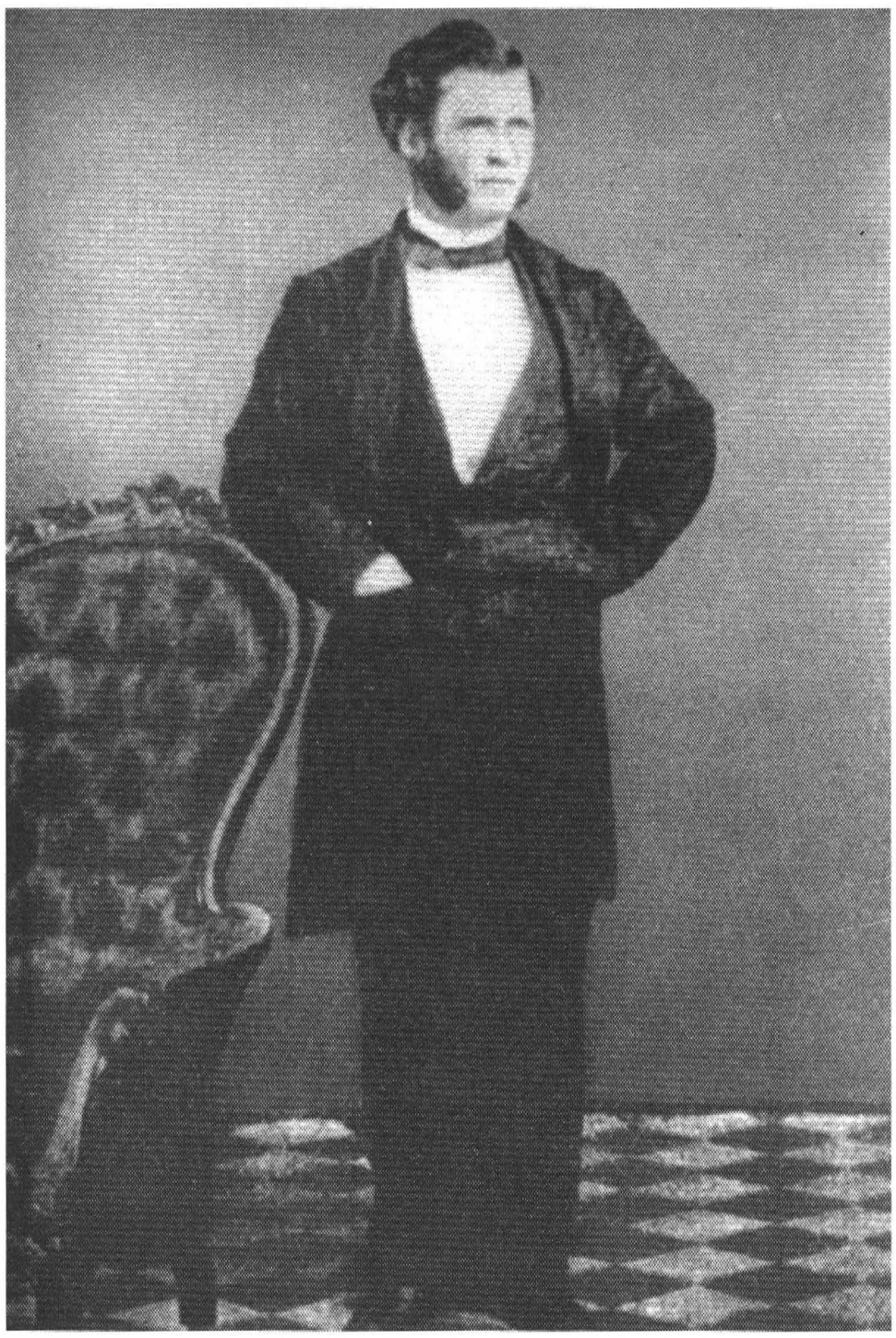
RONALD M. JAMES

The following articles are the work of careful, dedicated researchers who crafted portraits of Mark Twain based on intimate knowledge of places that influenced his life and career. The Nevada sojourn of Samuel Clemens represented one of the most formative periods for Mark Twain, an icon of American literature. Nevada is the place where Clemens became Twain, the place where he fused Missouri storytelling with the western tall tale.

Unfortunately, those who seek to understand the famed author too often misunderstand his life and career in Nevada. This has been the case, for example, with a 2002 documentary by Ken Burns, as well as with Ron Powers, author of *Mark Twain, a Life* (2005). Both fail to capture the essence of Twain's nearly three years in Nevada, and they play to stereotypes that have incorrectly shaped the national image of the American West and how it affected the great humorist.

Ron Powers's recent tour de force biography of Twain has rightly won acclaim, but the way he incorrectly portrays Nevada is disturbing. We can forgive Powers for asserting that the Comstock yielded $20 million in bullion from 1863 to 1867, when it was actually more than $70 million. Confusing the layout of Virginia City may also be a small matter: "Vertical connecting streets didn't exist, and so anyone wishing to get from A to B had to do something like enter a building, descend a staircase, and exit on the next street down."

Ronald M. James, historian and folklorist, is the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer, having administered the agency since 1983. He is the author or co-author of five books, including *The Roar and the Silence: A History of Virginia City and the Comstock Lode* and *Comstock Women: The Making of a Mining Community*. James's articles have appeared in publications in Europe and North America. He serves as adjunct faculty at the University of Nevada, Reno. Mr. James is also contributing an article in the Notes and Documents section of this issue of the *Quarterly* on Grafton Brown's bird's eye view of Virginia City.



Young Samuel Clemens adopted the name Mark Twain in 1863 while working for the *Territorial Enterprise*. He had yet to grow the moustache that would become his trademark. The photographer who created this 1863 portrait is unknown. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

This is simply wrong, but it does not affect the way in which we consider how the community changed Clemens. Still, Powers is building the case, perhaps without actually visiting the place, that Virginia City was a crude, primitive, slapped-together collection of shacks.

It is of greater concern when Powers declares that Virginia City was "a hive of grasping ambition, excess, treachery, vice, dissipation, murder, and lost hopes." "Grasping ambition" and "excess" may be fair, but the other attributes are profound misunderstandings of a place. Virginia City was certainly no better or worse than many other cities, and its very real economic opportunities hardly equaled "lost hopes."

Powers perpetuates the folklore about the prostitute Julia Bulette, completely ignoring more realistic portrayals published over the past twenty years. She was not British born, and she did not ride around "in a gleaming carriage." Bulette did not prevail on the city fathers to build clean cabins on D Street for her "daughters of desire." Powers further asserts that the prostitute "decorated her own cottage, 'Julia's Castle,' with geraniums and roses." Bulette was a mid-range prostitute of fine clothes but humble means, who, when murdered in 1867, was in debt as she left the world.

Powers tells us how Twain observed a wind storm knocking down a lodging house, asserting that Twain "didn't need to explain to his readers what 'lodging houses' were." Powers cannot resist the tired cliché that brands Nevada as the center, if not the origin, of sin. A lodging house is no more than a lodging house, and Virginia City's prostitutes were the same as those to be found practically anywhere else. Powers gives the reader a wholly wrong impression of the vibrant, cosmopolitan center of industry that shaped Clemens. His preoccupation with the lurid suggests more about his prejudices than about reality.

When Powers compares the content of the *Territorial Enterprise* to bovine excrement he profoundly misses the point. The *Enterprise* was an extraordinarily good paper. Its talented reporters wrote about the news and occasionally salted columns with material that astute readers recognized as farce. The humorous did not dominate, and to discount all the content as some weird experimental fusion between comedy and journalism is to disregard one of the West's finest newspapers.

In all, Powers falls into a common trap by believing that newspapers print fair depictions of reality. The vast majority of everyday existence is boring and not newsworthy. Newspapers report on the extraordinary. Reality is a blend of the news and the large amount of time when people live quietly. Believing that a newspaper conveys a reasonable portrait of a place and a time is a naïve use of the media. Reading some of the more recent literature on his subject would have helped Powers build a more accurate image of Twain's Comstock.

The shortcomings of Powers are eclipsed by those of the renowned filmmaker Ken Burns and his documentary "Mark Twain." In an interview posted on the documentary's web site, the scriptwriter, Dayton Duncan, boasts about how they traveled to the Twain "stations of the cross," Missouri, New York, and Connecticut. But not Nevada. And it shows. They characterized Virginia City with photographs of California mining and images of places that look like anywhere but the Virginia Range.

For Burns, Twain's Nevada sojourn is akin to a biblical forty days in the wilderness. The filmmaker would lead us to believe that Clemens came to the American outback, a primitive place of crude mining, scattered small settlements, and frankly, nothing much else. Burns implies that the future writer used the solitude to find himself, discovering the Twain within.

The error here is far greater than the misunderstandings of Powers. Burns completely misinterprets both the Nevada of the 1860s and what it meant to Clemens. What Burns has missed is that Twain encountered a Virginia City that

was emerging as a sophisticated urban center of cutting-edge technology and industrial development. Clemens did not reinvent himself in the midst of quiet solitude. There was no silent seclusion, and he hardly had the time. Instead, he worked with and studied the skills of great writers who laid the foundation for Mark Twain long before Clemens arrived. His encounter with Artemus Ward during the Comstock Christmas of 1863 showed him how to perform on stage and capture laughs while turning a career of writing and speaking into a moneymaking proposition. It was a moment when the blending of diverse influences gave birth to a great author and lecturer.

My analysis presents a subjective, debatable assessment of the works of Powers and Burns, but it is based on an understanding of Nevada and Virginia City. Concrete knowledge is sorely absent with Powers and Burns, who would portray a period of Twain's life without understanding the place or reading the available, recently published literature. When they get it wrong in my backyard, I must hold their entire work suspect.

The authors of the articles in this issue of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* stand in opposition to the work of Burns and Powers. David Antonucci, on the one hand, and Robert Stewart, on the other, may not offer broad, sweeping interpretations of Twain and his role in American literature. Their concerns and the questions they ask are more intimate, tied specifically to the Nevada landscape. They are attempting to place bricks in the wall. Their work is the sort of thing one can respect, because one solid brick is worth more than a wall made of fluff.

That is not to say that all questions are answered here. Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of these articles is that they disagree. Stewart sees Twain's route to Lake Tahoe in a way that Antonucci contradicts. It is up to the reader to decide. Future researchers may arrive at a definitive answer or perhaps such a conclusion will always remain elusive. Nevertheless, both articles have value, and Antonucci and Stewart are to be commended for their detailed research.

Similarly, Stewart's discussion of Twain and his journey from Aurora is filled with valuable insights resting on a solid examination of documents and the place. He takes on the idea that Twain walked alone from Aurora to Virginia City, finding evidence that he likely rode horseback with a friend. Twain scholars should never be surprised to find that the humorist twisted the facts. Nevertheless, the story of the down-and-out miner turned would-be reporter arriving disheveled at the door of the *Enterprise* is part of the accepted, sacred story surrounding Twain. Stewart's work is a valuable addition to the study of America's most beloved author.

To this collection, I have added a description of Grafton Brown's 1864 Virginia City lithograph. It captures the place when Twain walked the streets, and so like the other articles, it rests on something concrete and tactile. Considering these images in the context of Twain and his Virginia City adds meaning to both.

Sam Clemens and the Wildland Fire at Lake Tahoe

ROBERT E. STEWART

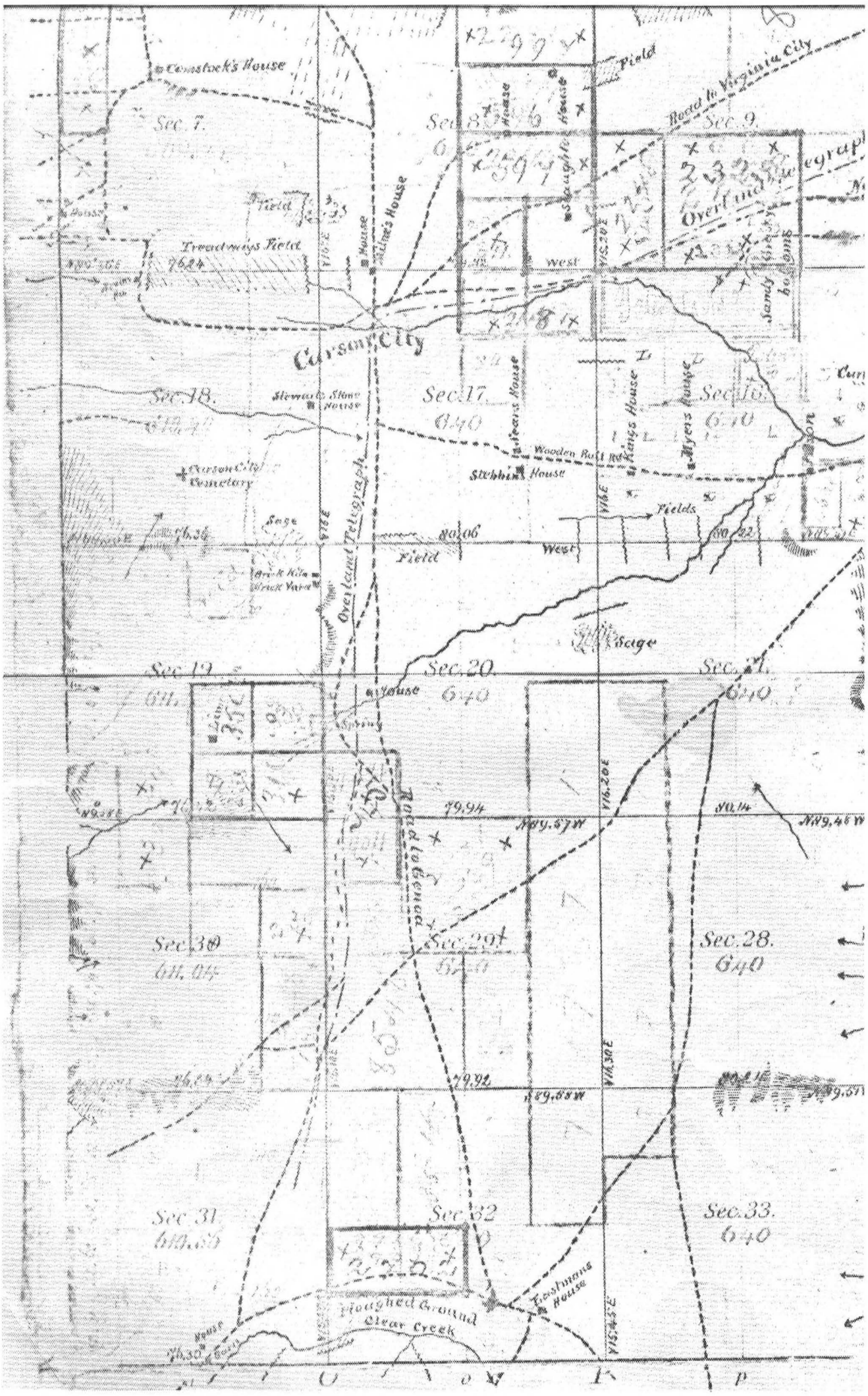
Learning soon after his arrival in the new Territory of Nevada that there was no money to pay him as assistant to his brother, Sam Clemens began casting about for a source of income, preferably one that would make him rich without much physical labor. In one of his first adventures in the fall of 1861, he teamed up with his new friend John Kinney to become a timber baron in the forests on the east shores of Lake Tahoe (then Lake Bigler). During the trip, Clemens caused an evening wildland fire in the Tahoe basin.

The lake straddling the border of California and the Territory of Nevada had been named Lake Bigler by the California Legislature in 1854, honoring Governor John Bigler. A Democrat, Bigler served as governor from 1852 to 1856. In 1870, the legislature rescinded that action, applying the name Tahoe, a Washoe Indian word meaning "Water in a High Place" or "Big Water."

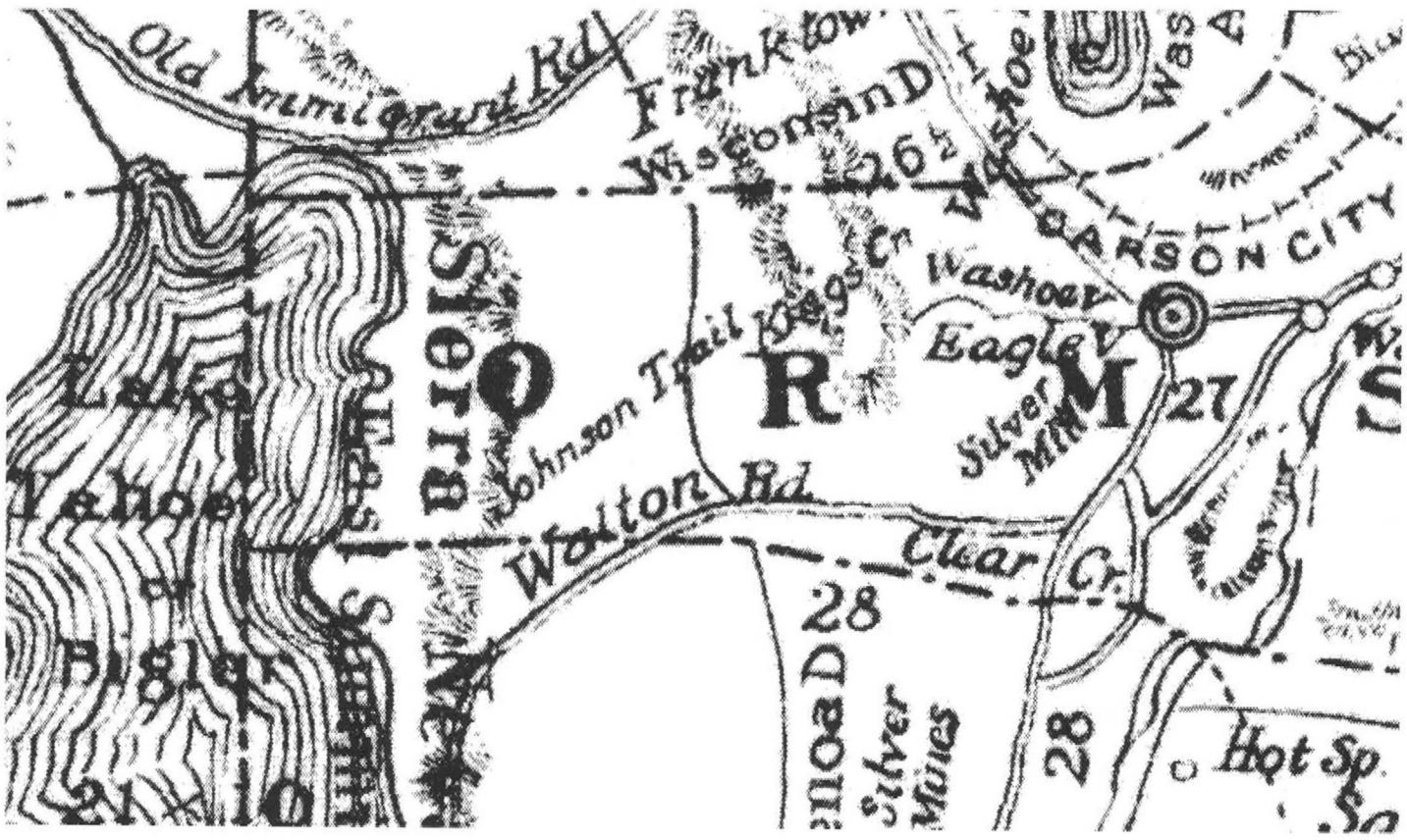
Sam's partner in the timber venture, John Kinney, was a native of Ohio who had come to the territory as a traveling companion of Judge George Turner. Turner, also from Ohio, had been appointed chief justice of the Territorial Supreme Court by President Abraham Lincoln. They arrived during the second week in September, just a few days before Kinney joined Clemens in the venture at the lake.

They would have hiked south from downtown Carson City, on the road to Genoa, turning west up the old Johnson Trail in Clear Creek Canyon. Today we might consider that to be a very long hike, but these boys were used to walking.[1]

Robert (Bob) Stewart, author of *Aurora, Nevada's Ghost City of the Dawn*, retired from the Bureau of Land Management in 2001. In retirement he is continuing research into early Nevada. Mr. Stewart also authored the companion article in this issue of the *Quarterly*, "Mark Twain's Return from Aurora."



A portion of the plat of the township in which Carson City is located shows the road south to Genoa. At Clear Creek, the Johnson Cut-off Trail leads west toward Lake Tahoe and on to Placerville, California. 15N 20 E Carson City 1862. *(Scans provided by Rick Jones, Bureau of Land Management, Reno)*



A portion of the DeGroot's Map of California, published in 1862, indicates the Johnson Trail at the top of Kings Canyon, which here rises out of Washoe Valley instead of Carson City. The Walton road is actually the Johnson Trail, blazed by John "Cock-eye" Johnson. *(Mary B. Ansari Map Library, University of Nevada, Reno)*

Kinney and Clemens's hike to the lake is described by Clemens, writing as Mark Twain, in chapters 22 and 23 of *Roughing It*, written in 1874.[2] Twain wrote that in 1861 they

> toiled laboriously up a mountain about a thousand miles high and looked over. No lake there. We descended on the other side, crossed the valley and toiled up another mountain three or four thousand miles high, apparently, and looked over again. . . . We plodded on, two or three hours, and at last the Lake burst upon us–a noble sheet of blue water.

A well-established route by that time, the Johnson Trail led directly to the water's edge, where they located a small skiff belonging to a group led by Territorial Governor James W. Nye. Clemens and Kinney "set out across a deep bend of the lake." The Johnson Trail arrived at the lakeshore in Section 10 of Township 14 North, Range 18 East, Mount Diablo Meridian (MDM). That bend would have been the north shore of Glenbrook Bay.

The route had been blazed by John Calhoun "Cock-eye" Johnson, a trans-Sierran mail carrier who sought a shorter route from Carson Valley to Placerville

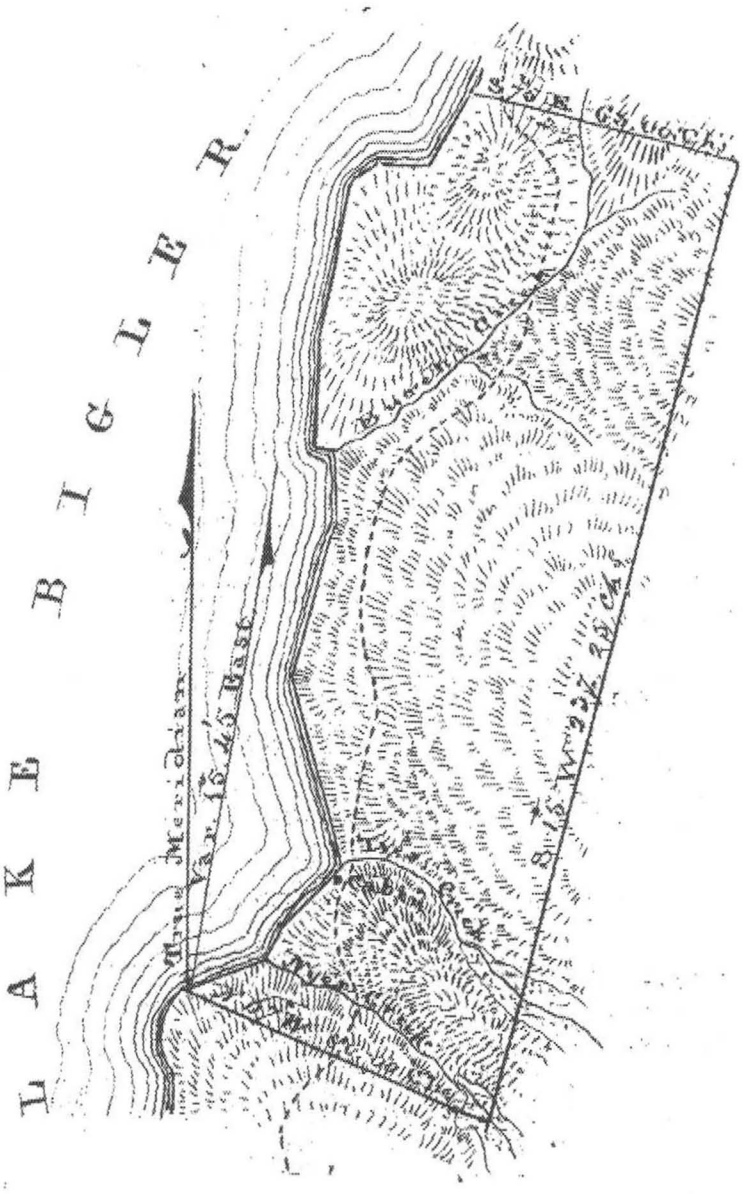
in the 1850s, before Carson City was established. He had headed up the first canyon north of Genoa, and found a route that was shorter and at lower elevations than either the Truckee River Route or the Carson Emigrant Trail.[3]

There was no system of numbering roads in the 1800s. The Johnson Trail up Clear Creek soon became known as the "Road between Placerville and Carson City." Then, during 1862-63, Butler Ives, who had surveyed all through these canyons, constructed the Lake Bigler Toll Road. His route went up King's Canyon from downtown Carson City, eliminating the long dog-leg south on the Genoa Road to Clear Creek. There had been no trail up King's Canyon prior to that. Ives's route tied into the old Johnson Trail in the area of Spooner Summit. In 1914, segments of road across the nation were tied together to create the Lincoln Highway, America's first transcontinental highway. Ives's wide road at the top of King Street in Carson City was incorporated. Then, in 1928, the Clear Creek route was improved. Offering a gentler grade, it became the Lincoln Highway route. In the 1940s, America adopted a highway numbering system, and the name Lincoln Highway fell into disuse. The trail Sam and John had hiked almost a century earlier, somewhat realigned, became a portion of today's U. S. Highway 50.[4]

In *Roughing It*, Twain recalls that they set out in the skiff, and a "three-mile pull brought us to the [Irish Brigade boys' timber claim] camp just as night fell." Notice that the exaggerated distances are gone—a Mississippi riverboat pilot tells us water distance, with the caveat that it is as he remembers it some years later. Kinney was rowing, Clemens steering. They went out around Deadman's Point and into Skunk Harbor, "about" three miles north.

The timber claim of the Brigade had been staked out by a group headed by John Nye, brother James W. Nye, the Nevada territorial governor. John—"Captain Nye"—was already in the West when the territory was created and brother James was appointed.[5] Joining Captain Nye in the timber claim was a group Sam Clemens dubbed the Irish Brigade. The following year, on July 10, 1862, the county surveyor James Lawson mapped their claim, and the plat was filed with the Ormsby County Recorder.[6] When the General Land Office (GLO) for Nevada opened in early 1864, the brigade boys did not follow through with an application for patent, and the land was eventually sold to others.

In 1865, Butler Ives, as GLO surveyor, conducted the initial public land survey subdividing Township 15 North, Range 18 East, MDM, into sections. This survey placed the Nye camp in Section 23, four land miles north, as the crow flies, from the estimated starting point in Glenbrook Bay—close enough to Twain's remembered "three miles."[7] The next day, after raiding supplies at the Nye camp, Clemens again "piloted" while Kinney rowed. In *Roughing It*, Twain recalled that they "skirted along the lake shore about three miles and disembarked."



Ormsby County Surveyor James Lawson mapped the John Nye "Irish Brigade" tree claim in September 1862. The claimants never followed through to gain title to the land. *(Carson City Clerk files, vol. 3, 197-200)*

If they had gone south, that distance would have taken them back to Glenbrook, where others had already begun laying timber claims. North along the shoreline, again being generous with Twain's "three miles," places them in the vicinity of Secret Cove. Clemens continues in *Roughing It* that at their chosen campsite, they "slept in the sand close to the water's edge, between two protecting boulders." Several things have changed since the pair arrived there and placed a timber claim on some three hundred acres, a half-section of Tahoe's shoreline. A dam at Tahoe City has raised the level of the lake six feet, hiding their lakeside camp under water during most years, and the logging that occurred during the next few decades profoundly changed the nature of the forest itself.

Twain's *Roughing It* account "remembers" that he and Kinney spent four weeks there. Clemens's letters, however, allow for him to have been gone from Carson City for only a few days. We can write that difference off as one of many cases of literary license that Twain takes to improve the story.

Arriving back at camp one evening after again raiding the Nye camp for supplies, Twain tells us in *Roughing It*, that he "took the loaf of bread, some slices of bacon, and the coffee-pot . . . set them down by a tree, lit a fire, and went back to the boat to get the frying-pan. While I was at this, I heard a shout from Johnny, and looking up I saw that my fire was galloping all over the premises!" It soon became a major wildland fire. "Within half an hour all before us was a tossing, blinding tempest of flame! It went surging up adjacent ridges–surmounted them and disappeared in the canyons beyond."

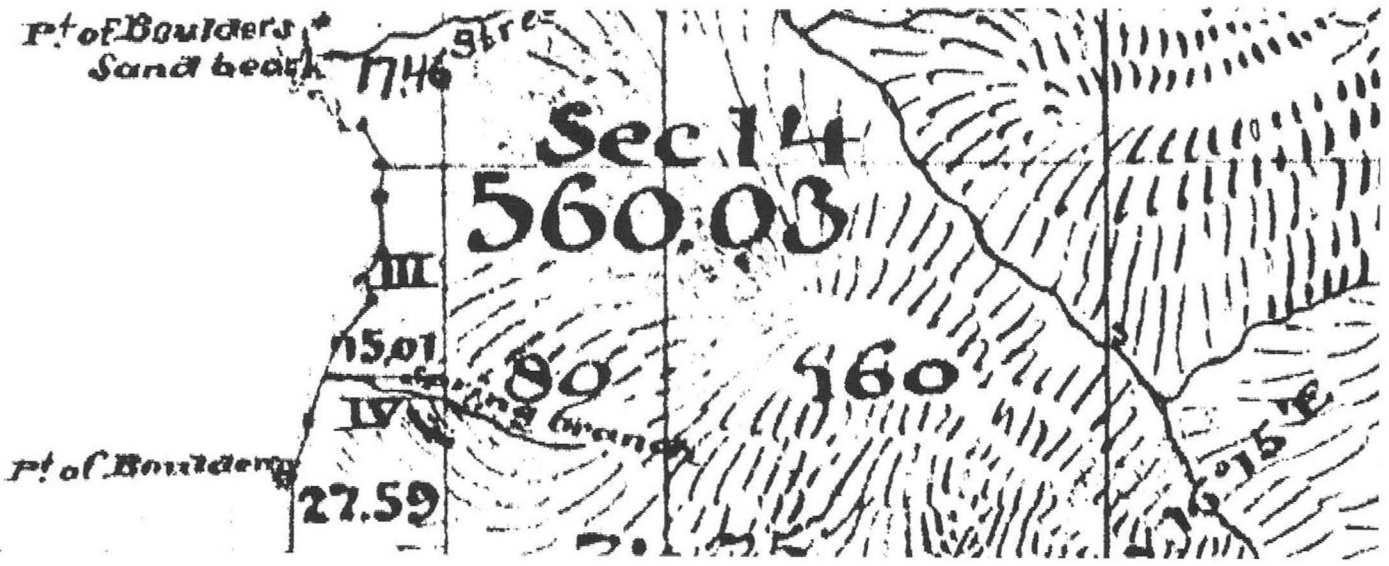
In a letter to his mother, written shortly after their return to Carson City (sometime between September 18 and 21), he says,

> The level ranks of flame were relieved at intervals by the standard bearers, as we called the tall dead trees, wrapped in fire, and waving their blazing banners a hundred feet in the air. Then we could turn from this scene to the Lake, and see every branch, and leaf, and cataract of flame upon its bank perfectly reflected as in a gleaming, fiery mirror. The mighty roaring of the conflagration, together with our solitary and somewhat unsafe position (for there was no one within six miles of us, rendered the scene very impressive. Occasionally, one of us would remove his pipe from his mouth and say,– "*Superb! Magnificent! Beautiful!*–but–by the Lord God Almighty, if we attempt to sleep in this little patch to-night, we'll never live till morning!–for if we don't burn up, we'll certainly suffocate." But he was persuaded to sit up until we felt pretty safe as far as the *fire* was concerned, and then we turned in, with many misgivings. When we got up in the morning, we found that the fire had burned small pieces of drift wood within six feet of our boat, and had made its way to within 4 or 5 steps of us on the South side. We looked like *lava* men, covered as we were with ashes, and begrimed with smoke.[8]

Wildland fire presents its most dramatic scenes after sunset, which in September comes early. The vivid images of flames became firmly embedded in Clemens' memory. But more important in understanding this fire, flames are less aggressive in the cooler air of late-summer nighttime.

The Clemens letter and Twain's later recollection in *Roughing It* create the mental image of a present-day forest fire. Veteran wildland firefighters agree the descriptions are clear and "ring true." They point out that it is a description of wildland brushfire that never burned up into the mature, living trees–it never "crowned." The tree bark at ground level was probably charred, but the living tree did not become involved. It was the undergrowth that carried the fire–the forest carpet of dry pine needles, manzanita, grasses, and shrubs. A revealing comment is Clemens's reference to "standard bearers"—solitary dead trees burning among the live trees.[9]

Within weeks after the fire, a GLO survey team led by James Lawson walked all over the land that had been involved with the Clemens fire. Their field notes, made on the ground in October 1861, while subdividing Township 15 North, Range 20 East, contain no mention of ashes or burned land.



A sand beach and rocky point were mapped at the estimated location of the Clemens-Kinney camp. Today, the area is a part of Sand Harbor State Park. Federal surveyors were on the ground here in July 1861, September 1861 and August 1865, doing work that was presented on a township and range map. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

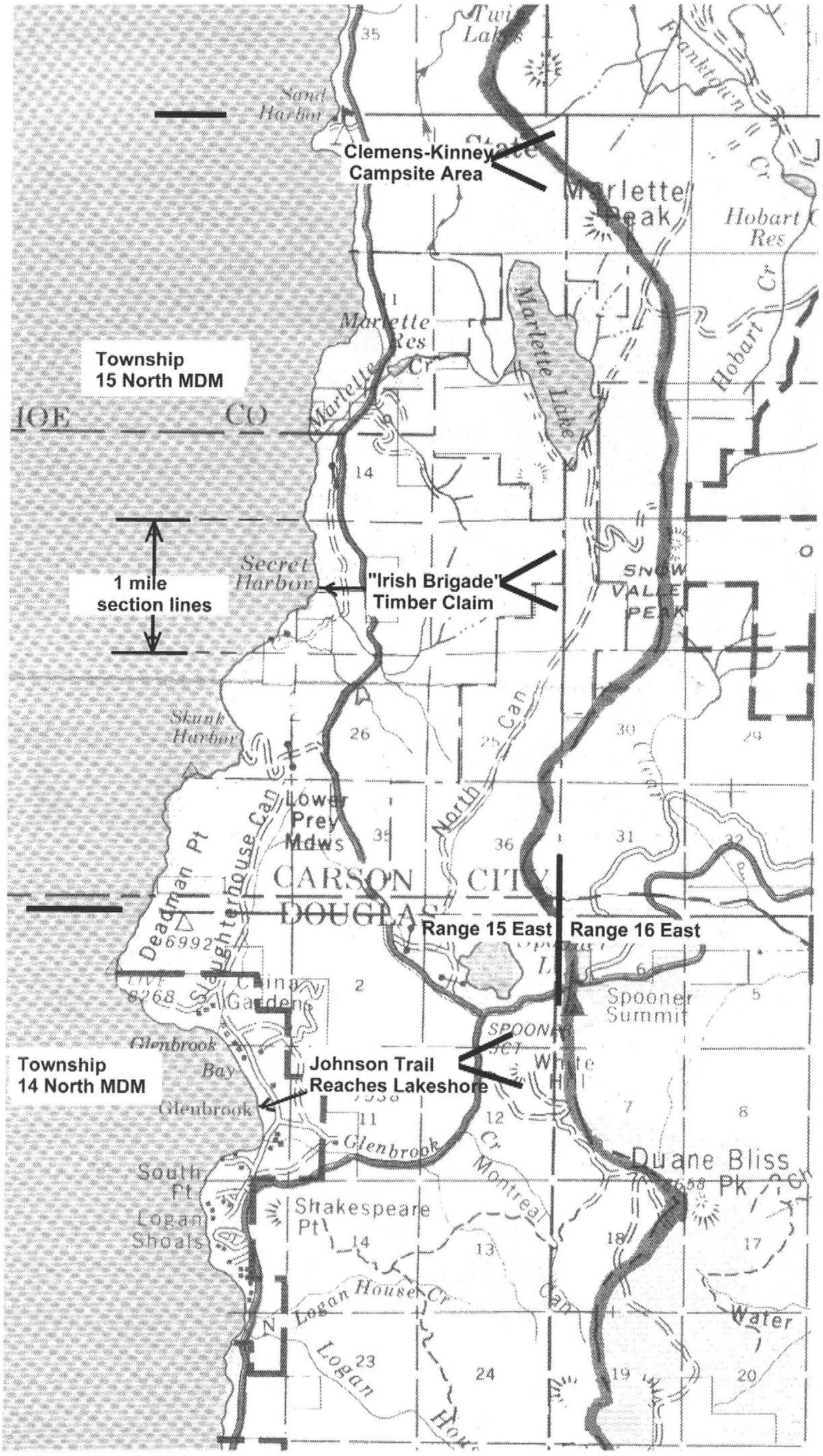
The fire started in the northern tier of sections in Township 15. Lawson was surveying township lines in Townships 15 and 16 in mid October of 1861, a few weeks after Clemens and Kinney left. His crew was east of and uphill from the camp of the would-be timber barons' camp, traversing land over which the fire had doubtless passed.

One of the requirements placed on federal surveyors was that they include in their notes a general description of the land, as an aid to potential settlers. Of this land Ives writes: "Surface rolling, soil sandy and unfit for cultivation. Timber Yellow Pine and a few Balsam fir." Lawson describes the lands as "timbered with a large open grove of yellow pine and a little sugar pine, fir, spruce and mountain mahogany near the summit."[10]

Describing points along their lines, surveyors often note the size of trees. Yellow pine was mostly 14 to 28 inches in diameter, with one at 36 inches, and another at 44 inches, breast high. Sugar pines were slender, measuring 10 to 12 inches in diameter; balsam was 11 to 30 inches in diameter, and yellow firs 20 to 40 inches.

Nowhere in their notes does either surveyor refer to burned trees. Burned underbrush would not be worth noting; it was a temporary condition having no importance in their work. Indeed, having the brush burned would have made the work of traversing straight lines of the survey easier.

Although the Nye timber claim was duly recorded with the Ormsby County Recorder, no formal recording of the Clemens-Kinney claim has ever been found in either Carson City (the former Ormsby County) or Washoe County records. Within a few years, men providing timber for the Comstock mines were pur-



A present-day U.S. Forest Service map of a portion of the east shoreline of Lake Tahoe showing approximate locations of the Johnson Trail reaching Glenbrook Bay. The location of the Nye (Irish Brigade) tree claim, and the probable site of the Clemens-Kinney camp. *(Courtesy of the author)*

chasing the land where the Clemens fire had raged. Logging operations were to continue there for many years.

What Clemens initiated was a wildland fire, but not a "forest" fire. He did something accidentally that the Washoe Indians of the basin had been doing at that same time of year for unknown decades. Also, for unnumbered years, Native Americans in the region had broken off and gathered for firewood the dead lower branches—"squaw wood"—which, left in place, could have provided a ladder for flames to reach up into the tree crowns.

The forest trees around Lake Tahoe in 1861 had regenerated in the middle years of a period known to climatologists as the Little Ice Age. That era began about 1350 and ended about 1850. Few trees from the virgin forest that existed in 1861 remained standing by about 1900. The forests of the Tahoe region today developed in the post ice-age decades, under changed climatological conditions, and changed human conditions. The forest is no longer the domain of the Native Americans, who had regularly harvested dead limbs on and near the ground.

Some years before the Clemens visit, Henry Bigler, a member of the old Mormon Battalion, was keeping a daily journal as he hiked from California in 1848. The battalion cut a new trail across the Sierra while returning to Salt Lake City. From the crest, the Mormons descended along the Carson River, arriving in the vicinity of present-day Woodfords in August 1848. Bigler noted in his journal that "The mountains seem to be all on fire and the valley full of smoke. . . . At night we could see as it were a hundred fires in the California mountains made no doubt by Indians."[11] Another member of the party, Azariah Smith, overestimated the number of Indians in the region, writing on August 6, 1848 that "in the evening the mountains was fairly covere[d] with fires, at Indians camps, and a good many of them came in camp."[12]

In *Fire in Sierra Nevada Forests*, George Gruell reports on one of the reasons the Indians burned brush in the fall:

> The Washoe Indians, who lived in the Lake Tahoe basin in summer and in the Carson Valley in winter, used fire for various purposes, including to stimulate the growth of mule-ears. The aboriginal residents of the Lake Tahoe area relied on the seeds of this sunflower species as an important food source. . . . The Indians' frequent burning maintained open forest conditions that stimulated an abundance of mule-ears in the Tahoe Basin.[13]

Describing the Sierran forest before the loggers arrived, Gruell says that "until the beginning of the twentieth century, Jeffrey pine dominated unlogged stands. These grew in a patchy pattern within variable-size forest openings."

In 1880, D. W. Bliss of the Tahoe Lumber and Fluming Company, provided candid testimony to members of a fact-finding national public-lands commission. The description Bliss gives of forest harvesting provides insight into timber

cutting in the Lake Tahoe region. Records in the Nevada Division of State Lands clearly show that the lands Bliss is discussing include those where Clemens had earlier caused the wildland fire.[14]

> Many of our lands are around Lake Tahoe, in the counties of Douglas and Ormsby, and a small portion in Washoe County, Nevada. . . . We have title to most all of it. We have adopted the practice of buying the land, cutting off the timber, and then abandoning [the land], in order not to have to pay taxes on the land. The land in Nevada was located by the State. We got parties to take it from the State—320 acres each. . . . All the land we got in this State was selected by the State, and we had no difficulty in getting our title. We don't use any timber on the public lands.
>
> Nearly everything around the lake is bought up or taken up. Until recently on the other side of the lake we have only taken such timbers as would make logs, but lately we have cleaned off not only what was fit for logs but what would make [cord] wood. At first the cutting off of the timber increased the chances of fire, because we left the dry limbs on the ground, but after we commenced to utilize the limbs for cord-wood it decreased the chances of fire.
>
> I am unable to say how long it takes for a second growth to grow up. If all the timber was off the hills it would take a very long time before new trees would grow up. It is of very slow growth. Fifteen or twenty years won't make much of a tree. Some trees we cut are 200 or 300 years old. I think we cut one that was 1,000 years old. It was 11 feet in diameter. . . . The majority of our trees are from 150 to 350 years old.
>
> We have yellow pine, sugar pine, and what they call bull pine or black pine, which is least valuable to timber. Then we have red and white cedar and red fir. The latter is generally rotten for eight or ten feet at the root, called churn bottom.[15]

Following the fire, Clemens and Kinney began the return trip to Carson City. A storm forced them ashore, so they hiked toward the Brigade camp, and then hiked "three miles" farther, to a house. The GLO plat for the township containing Glenbrook, field mapped in May 1862, places a house just south of the Johnson Trail. They were back at the point of their beginning, taking a familiar route eastward to home.[16]

No official recording of their timber claim has been located in the records of either Washoe County or Carson City (then Ormsby County). Despite statements alleging the placing of timber claims for others, there is no firm evidence that Clemens ever followed through on his own claims. To record them, he would

have had to pay a surveyor. It appears that Clemens and Kinney had not even properly marked the claim boundaries before returning to Carson City.

John Kinney left the territory in March of 1862. In October, he participated in the organization of the Seventh Regiment, Ohio Cavalry, as captain in command of Company G. The regiment was active through the Civil War, and was involved in actions in Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, and Georgia.[17]

Clearly, Sam Clemens learned at Lake Tahoe that cutting down a tree was hard work, and further, that cutting was the easy part of making money from timber. The downed tree had to be limbed, sawed into sections, and somehow hauled to a sawmill. That was both labor intensive and capital intensive. That dream shattered, the lure of pulling riches from the ground began to call. Clemens put aside his dream of becoming a timber baron, and turned to the mines.[18]

In the following months, although it is of course another story, young Sam Clemens learned a similarly hard lesson in Aurora about mining for precious metals. Had he also tried his hand at ranching, he would have come to know that there were no fast bucks available in Nevada of the 1860s.

NOTES

[1]The Johnson Route is identified on Britton and Rey's 1860 map of California, and on DeGroot's 1862 map, where it appears to tie to King's Canyon, which it did not. Most important here, the General Land Office (GLO) plats of a survey dated 1861-1862 identify it in some detail. The GLO plats do not identify any trails between Carson City and the lake shore via Voltaire Canyon, King's Canyon, or Ash Canyon (the sequence of canyons north of Clear Creek). One scholar (David Antonucci, in "Mark Twain's Entire Trek to Tahoe Finally Revealed!" *North Lake Tahoe Bonanza*, 3 August 2005) has made an argument that Clemens and Kinney ascended via Ash Canyon, based on topography and the *Roughing It* description. Ash Canyon was then known as Gregory's Canyon; Mr. Gregory had erected a sawmill in the canyon, three miles west of town, in 1859. It was carried off in the flooding of 1862, leaving intact the nearby mill of Alexander Ash (or Ashe). The 1861 plats of the survey, however, show that the trail up that canyon's Mill Creek dead ends at Summit Valley. Along with the GLO maps, Sam Clemens's letter to his mother in September 1861, mentioning the house at the lake, provides the strongest evidence that they used the Johnson Trail. Edgar M. Branch, Michael B. Frank, and Kenneth M. Sanderson, eds, *Mark Twain's Letters*, vol. 1, 1853-1866 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) 124. The first pages of the letter are missing. The GLO maps consulted were the contemporaneous paper "true copies" held by the Nevada Division of State Lands, and the microfiche copies of the originals at the Bureau of Land Management in Reno.

[2]The first edition of *Roughing It* was published in 1874. All quotations from *Roughing It* in this study are taken from the Iowa Center for Textual Studies version (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

[3]Richard Hughey, "Johnson's Cutoff Led to First Link in State Highway System," *The Mountain Democrat* (Placerville, Calif.) 29 April 1999.

[4]The original trail remains as Old Clear Creek Road, just south of U. S. Highway 50, a private drive on which the public is allowed. The highway department abandoned the road in 1959, and Carson City has not accepted it as a street or road. Beyond the state youth camp it is a fire-access road, closed by a gate. The lower portion of the road in this gated area traverses private property; the owners at present do not prohibit its use by hikers and mountain bikers. Along this trail visitors will see some of the old stone cisterns, once fed by springs, that provided water for automobiles in danger of boiling dry on the long uphill grade.

[5]When President Lincoln was considering appointments for the various territories in 1861, he jotted down James W. Nye's name as governor for Nebraska, with Rufus King for Nevada. Secretary of State William Seward, in whose company Nye had campaigned for Lincoln, convinced King to accept the post of minister to Rome. Lincoln lined out Nye for Nebraska, and moved him to Nevada. We may speculate that Seward advised Lincoln that Nye would prefer Nevada, because of his brother's presence in that region. Lincoln's note is in the Library of Congress collection.

[6]Ormsby County Records, vol. 3, 197-200, now in the Carson City Clerk-Recorder's office. The plat was filed with the Ormsby County Recorder on September 19, 1862.

[7]The original plats and books of handwritten notes accompanying them are maintained in the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) at San Bruno, California. Microfiche copies are available for public inspection in the Bureau of Land Management offices in western Nevada.

[8]Branch, *Mark Twain's Letters*, 124. The most puzzling statement by Twain is the reference to seeing the fire mirrored in the lake. To see the fire that way, he would need to have the lake between himself and the fire. There is a hook of land near their supposed campsite, which may have provided that view. In *Roughing It*, he says, "We were driven to the boat by the intense heat, and there we remained, spell-bound." And to his mother: "When we got up in the morning, we found that the fire had burned small pieces of drift wood within six feet of our boat, and had made its way to within 4 or 5 steps of us on the South side." So it is possible that they watched the fire from the boat out on the lake, then beached the boat and slept ashore.

[9]The firefighters consulted were Everell "Butch" Hayes and Sandy Gregory of the Bureau of Land Management, Nevada State Office.

[10]Quoted from the field notes of the surveys. See note 6.

[11]Henry W. Bigler, "Journal Extracts of Henry W. Bigler: Return of the Mormon Battalion in 1848," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, 5:4, 155, as quoted in George E. Gruell, *Fire in Sierra Nevada Forests: A Photographic Interpretation of Ecological Change Since 1849*. Gruell, a retired federal wildlife biologist, provides understanding of the changes in the Sierra Nevada forests. His writing and the skillful use of then-and-now photographs provides detailed explanation of the situation that existed when Clemens and Kinney beached their skiff along the northeastern shore of Lake Tahoe.

[12]David L. Bigler, ed., *The Gold Discovery Journal of Azariah Smith* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990). Bigler places the party two miles east of Carson City on the line of today's U. S. Highway 50. A third member, Addison Pratt, wrote that the Indians "terrified us some at night by making innumberable [*sic*] fires on the mountain sides, which was supposed to be a signal of attack by some of our party." S. George Ellsworth, ed., *The Journals of Addison Pratt* (Salt lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990). These quotes are from research conducted by Bob Ellison, Carson Valley historian.

[13]Gruell, *Fire in Sierra Nevada Forests*, 207.

[14]The Nevada Division of State Lands, in Carson City, maintains in its vault records of purchases made of land granted to the state by Congress, including plats of the purchases. These were consulted to identify the timber lands purchased by Bliss and others in the 1800s.

[15]Stuart Buchery, ed., *Use and Abuse of America's Natural Resources* (New York: Arno Press, 1972), reprinting *Report of the Public Lands Committee Created by the Act of March 3, 1879* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1880) 605-6.

[16]A return trip by land to the Nye camp is described in some detail in Clemens's letter to his mother. Branch, *Mark Twain's Letters*, 124. The letter makes it clear that they are returning the same way they came. In it, he refers to coming to a house. A house shown on Butler Ives's survey of the following spring, just south of the Johnson Trail, is the only house indicated along the shoreline between Nye's camp and the south end of Glenbrook Bay.

[17]Branch, *Mark Twain's Letters*, 117 (Kinney's departure); *Dyer's Compendium*, U. S. Park Service Civil War website, www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/ (History of Seventh Ohio Cavalry).

[18]Clemens wrote to his sister Pamela Moffett in October 1861, saying, "You ask me if I have forgotten my promise to lay a claim for Mr. Moffett. By no means. I have already laid a timber claim on the borders of a lake [Bigler. . . . In that claim, I took up about two miles in length by one in width—and the names in it are as follows: 'Sam. L. Clemens, Wm. A. Moffett, Thos. Nye and three others.' Branch, *Mark Twain's Letters*, 129. No formal recording of this claim has been located.

Mark Twain's Route to Lake Tahoe

David C. Antonucci

In 1861, Samuel Clemens traveled to the newly created Nevada Territory with his brother Orion, who had been appointed by President Abraham Lincoln to the office of secretary of the Territory of Nevada. Shortly after his arrival in the territorial capital of Carson City, Clemens hiked to Lake Tahoe with his recent acquaintance John Kinney to explore the lake's beauty and stake a timber claim. His account of these visits and ensuing adventures are contained in chapters 22 and 23 of his 1872 memoir, *Roughing It* (Twain 1993) and in letters written to his mother and sister during the period of these visits (Branch, Frank, and Sanderson 1988). The *Roughing It* account is actually a composite of ten-year-old recollections of two timber-scouting visits to the lake, with characteristic hyperbolic embellishments.

Clemens went on to become a prolific and revered American author with an impressive literary legacy. In 1863, he assumed the better-known pen name Mark Twain. This essay will refer to Samuel Clemens as Mark Twain.

Mark Twain's early visits to Lake Tahoe are historic because they inspired him to express his oft-quoted visual and emotional impressions upon sighting the lake for the first time: "As it lay there with the shadows of the mountains brilliantly photographed upon its still surface I thought it must surely be the fairest picture the whole earth affords" (Twain 1993, 148). Carved deeply into the rich Tahoe history, these words are perhaps the most eloquent and immortal description of Lake Tahoe.

David C. Antonucci has been a resident of Lake Tahoe for more than thirty-three years. A professional engineer, he has been directly involved with plans and activities to protect Lake Tahoe throughout his long career in management and policy-level positions for state regulatory and local environmental management agencies. He is the author of *The Natural World of Lake Tahoe* and *Mark Twain at Lake Tahoe*, gives multi-media presentations on Lake Tahoe environmental issues and interpretive history, and is a frequent presenter at the UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center at Incline Village, Nevada.

Through these visits, Twain encounters a classic social trap—the conflict surrounding the use of a natural resource, exemplified in the ecological parable. The Tahoe version of this social trap pits the individual's motive to exploit natural assets for personal gain against the socially responsible opportunity to conserve. Twain arrives at Tahoe with exploitation on his mind, but leaves as a changed person with deep reverence for the lake and a spirit moved by its extraordinary natural beauty.

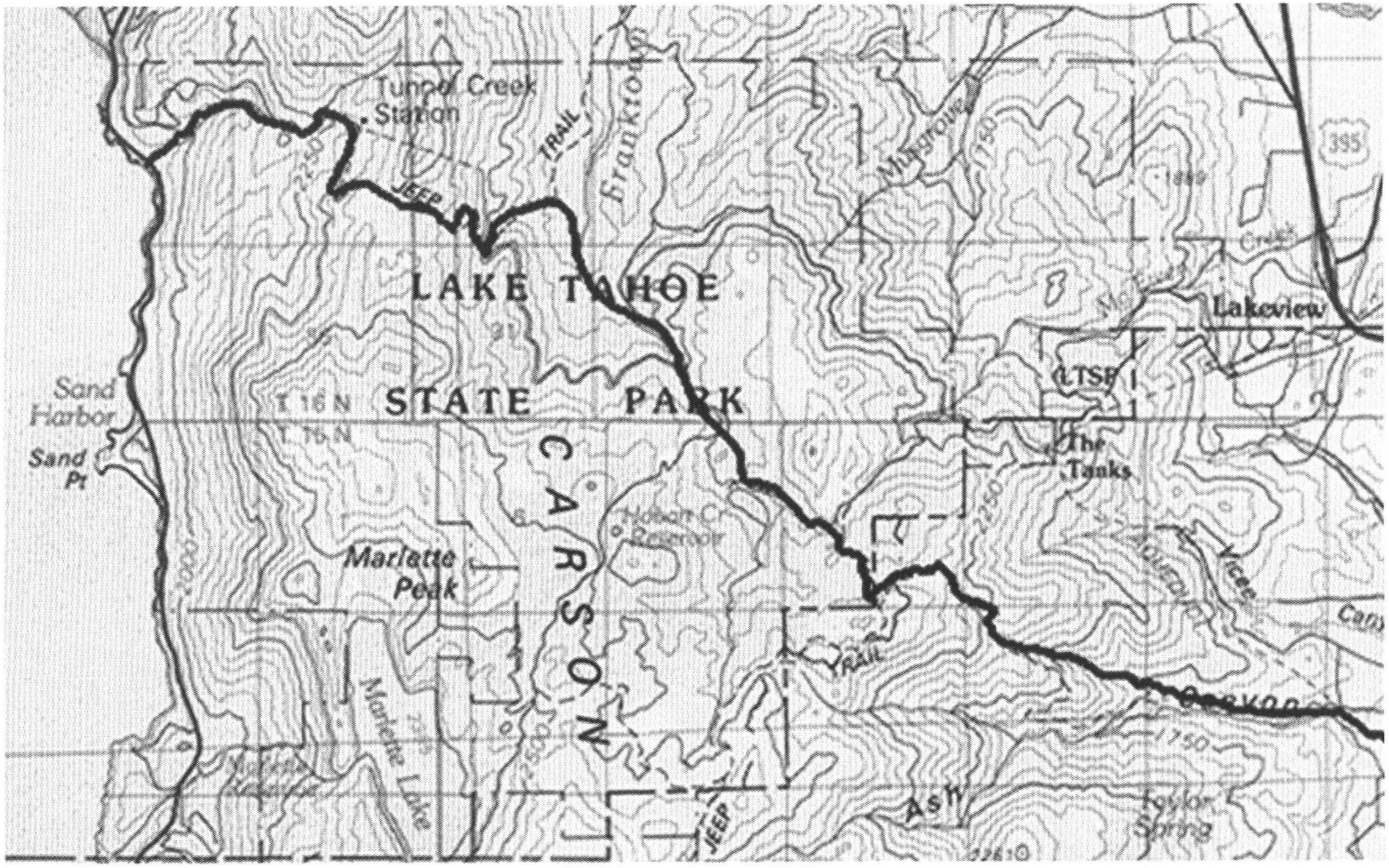
As evidenced in his later writings, Lake Tahoe became the gold standard to which Twain compared all other lakes, with none ever measuring up. If he were alive today, he would surely be a formidable and vociferous proponent of preservation of Lake Tahoe. In Twain's words, Lake Tahoe "is the masterpiece of the Creator" (Branch, Frank, and Sanderson 1988, 264).

Although Twain did not publish his account until ten years after his historic trip, and despite his liberal use of humorous exaggeration, one can reconstruct the route and locations by relating clues in his description to known topographic features and historical records. The analysis presented here cites the original manuscript passages verbatim where possible.

Twain's route has been the subject of some conjecture. E. B. Scott in *Saga of Lake Tahoe*, as well as other authors, place him near Glenbrook, although Twain's description clearly does not fit. Others speculate that he came to the east shore or west shore of the lake. Neither appears accurate. Twain, in fact, states, "We were on the north shore" (Twain 1993, 153)

Twain's comment, "We were told the distance was eleven miles" places his starting point in or near modern-day Carson City (Twain 1993, 147). In 1861, a known route from Carson City toward Lake Tahoe was the Ash Canyon Road (Public Land Survey Plats, 1861-65). This road serviced two lumber mills that produced timbers for the Comstock mines in Virginia City from stands of Jeffrey pine. By following a road and creek this route would have intersected the Placer County Emigrant Road constructed in 1852 (Scott 1957), taking Twain toward Lake Tahoe near present-day Incline Village, Nevada. The other possible routes from Carson City, Walton's Road and Kings Canyon Road, did not exist or were not widely used before 1861 and fit neither Twain's cited distance nor the topographic description of his route.

Twain mentions walking a "long time on level ground," suggesting a stroll over the gentle terrain west of Carson City to a point where his steep climb up a mountain "about a thousand miles high" begins. This likely route follows the very steep grade of Ash Canyon Road up to the first ridge. This ridge defines the eastern extent of Little Valley, a watershed draining Franktown Creek northerly into the Washoe Valley. He remarks after reaching the top of this first summit, "No lake there" (Twain 1993, 147). Because of the topography, Lake Tahoe is not yet visible from this ridge. After descending from the ridge and following a road and Franktown Creek, Twain would have intersected the Placer County Emigrant Road that followed Little Valley, connecting Lake Tahoe with Washoe Valley. At this time, the road was probably little more than a wide trail. He would have then tracked the trail northwesterly toward his Lake Tahoe destination.



Route of Mark Twain from Carson City to Tunnel Creek outlet. *(Map created with TOPO!® ©2003 National Geographic)*

He continues: "We descended on the other side, crossed the valley and toiled up another mountain three or four thousand miles high." This is consistent with the topography of Little Valley, accepting that Twain loosely used the term *mountain* to describe each of the pair of north-south-tending ridges that enclose Little Valley and disregarding the obvious hyperbole. In addition, this is consistent with the trace of the Placer County Emigrant Road. Reaching the top of the second ridge, he proclaims, "No lake yet" (Twain 1993, 147). From this location, Lake Tahoe is still not clearly visible because of the topography and the tall mature forest that existed in 1861.

At this point in his journey, Twain recollects, "We sat down tired and perspiring, and hired a couple of [Chinese] to curse those people who had beguiled us" (Twain 1993, 147). At first glance, this seems fanciful and another injection of Twain's clever sense of humor. However, consider that Chinese immigrants worked in the forests as laborers, loggers, and wood gatherers (Chung 2002). A lumber mill established on Franktown Creek at the edge of the Washoe Valley in 1856 utilized logs harvested in Little Valley and perhaps employed Chinese workers.

After reaching the summit of the second ridge and resting, Twain recalls,

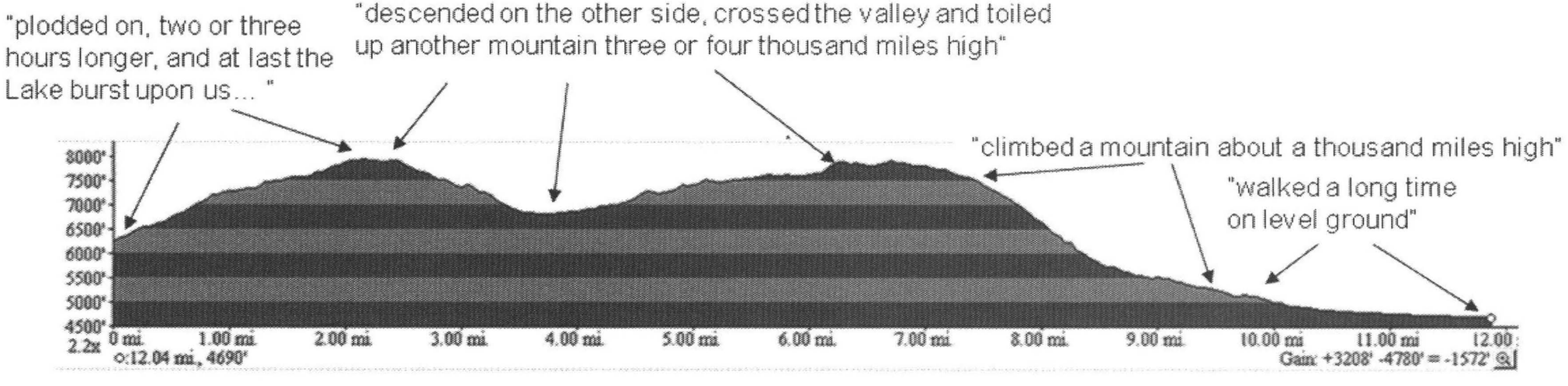
> We plodded on, two or three hours longer, and at last the Lake burst upon us—a noble sheet of blue water lifted six thousand three hundred feet above the level of the sea, and walled in by a rim of snow-clad mountain peaks that towered aloft full three thousand feet higher still! (Twain 1993, 148).

Although this portion of the description is vague, the most expedient way to get from the second ridge to the lake would be to continue to follow the Placer County Emigrant Road along Tunnel Creek canyon, a trek that would take no more than the prescribed amount of time for exhausted travelers on foot.

The topography and probable forest cover support describing the first appearance of the lake as having "burst" into view. Even today, the second-growth forest conceals the view until one is within one mile of Lake Tahoe. Clearly, Twain's moment of first sighting the lake blazed itself into his memory and became the inspiration for his elegant prose that unmistakably captured the magnificent beauty of the pristine Lake Tahoe basin in 1861.

Following the reconstructed route up to this point, we project that Twain could have reached the lakeshore by following the Placer County Emigrant Road or, more likely, a shorter route along the Tunnel Creek watercourse to its outlet into Lake Tahoe. From the vantage point of the second summit, Tunnel Creek and the Placer County Emigrant Road trace are the only logical ways to approach the lake. Along the shore, he "found the small skiff" left by an earlier party (Twain 1993, 148). It seems logical that the only secure and launch-accessible location for stowing such a vessel would be a wide beach. Indeed, there is a small, though wide, sandy beach (Hidden Beach) at the outlet of Tunnel Creek.

It is of interest that the total overland distance from Carson City to the Tunnel Creek outlet is approximately twelve miles, remarkably close to Twain's recollection



Profile of Mark Twain's route from Carson City to Tunnel Creek outlet with locations of *Roughing It* text references marked.
(Map created with TOPO!® ©2003 National Geographic)

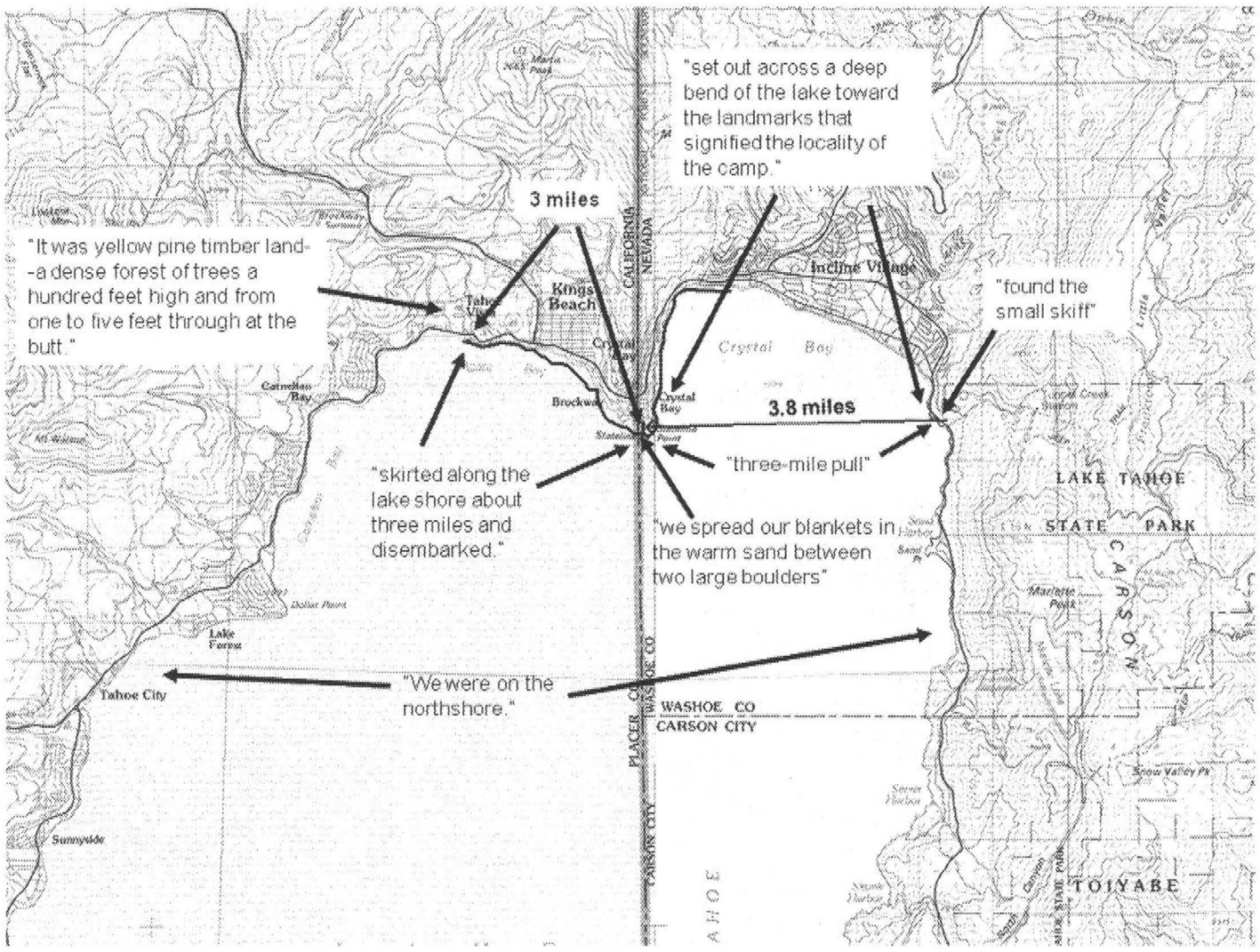
of the distance of eleven miles, as told to him by others. In comparison, the overland distance from Carson City to Glenbrook is approximately fifteen miles via the Ash Canyon route and sixteen miles by the Clear Creek route. This further eliminates Glenbrook as a destination.

Maps from the years 1861-65 show a road ascending Ash Canyon (called Mill Creek in 1861) (Public Land Survey Plats 1861-65), a road part way along Franktown Creek, and the crossing of Franktown Creek by the Placer County Emigrant Road. The plat for T16N, R18E clearly shows a trail labeled "Trail to Carson" heading southeast from Lake Tahoe toward Carson City. Although this road appears to enter the plat for T16N, R19E, cartographers did not show its connection to Placer County Emigrant Road at Franktown Creek. Unfortunately, this plat omits significant detail on roads, trails, and watercourses compared to the adjacent plats to the west and south. The plat of T15N, R19E resumes the route, shows Franktown Creek, and a trail paralleling the creek part way and continuing to its intersection with the Ash Canyon Road to Carson City. All subsequent mapping shows a connector trail or road between these points.

At the found skiff, Twain and his traveling companion "set out across a deep bend of the lake toward the landmarks that signified the locality of the camp." The "deep bend of the lake" is consistent with the configuration of Crystal Bay. Twain's use of the term bend rather than bay probably comes from his riverboat-pilot days, where he recalled the Mississippi River exhibiting very wide bends comparable to the curvature of Crystal Bay. From the lakeshore at Tunnel Creek outlet, the only prominent landmark for line-of-sight navigation is Stateline Point. Twain estimates a "three-mile pull" in the skiff to the campsite (Twain 1993, 148), not far off from the 3.8 miles straight-line distance from the Tunnel Creek outlet to Stateline Point.

Twain's description of his outdoor bed reinforces the evidence that Stateline Point was the site of the first camp: "We spread our blankets in the warm sand between two large boulders" (Twain 1993, 148). Stateline Point is an ideal campsite because its exceptional southern exposure enhances solar warming of the ground throughout the day. The southern exposure, when combined with the presence of very large boulders along the shoreline, provide the dual benefit of shelter and natural heat. At night, heat accumulated from the day's solar warming emanates from the large boulders as radiation and convection, warming the surroundings and evening air. Speedboat Beach is the location of this campsite.

Twain's observation, "Three miles away was a saw-mill and some workmen" is puzzling (Twain 1993, 148). Historical records reveal that the nearest Tahoe Basin sawmill in operation in 1861 was Augustus Pray's mill at Glenbrook. However, this mill site is ten miles from Stateline Point and is blocked from view by the westward projection of Deadman's Point, northerly of Glenbrook. Twain could be recalling Pray's mill as being closer than it actually was, or possibly there was a temporary sawmill nearby that went unrecorded in history. In any event, this quadrant of the Tahoe Basin is where active logging commenced for wood supply to the Comstock Lode, and Twain's observation is consistent with that historical fact.



Map of North Lake Tahoe with locations of *Roughing It* text references marked.
(Map created with TOPO!® ©2003 National Geographic)

Twain states that the purpose for the trip was to search out a timber claim at Tahoe. He says that they "skirted along the lakeshore about three miles and disembarked" (Twain 1993, 150). He does not indicate in which direction he traveled, leaving the possibility of either a northeasterly or a northwesterly heading. Three miles to the northeast of the Stateline Point campsite lies the steep, rocky shoreline of Crystal Bay. Here, trees are sparse because of the steep slopes and visible rock at the surface, resulting in poor soil conditions. Going much farther east would have landed them in present-day Incline Village, where the T16N, R18E plat for 1861 shows a gravelly beach and yellow-pine forest. Three miles from their campsite in a westerly direction is level shoreline and sandy beach; dense forest growth occurs there at what is now the community of Tahoe Vista, located along the shoreline of Agate Bay. Here, Twain's description of his timber claim is an important clue: "It was yellow pine timber land—a dense forest of trees a hundred feet high and from one to five feet through at the butt" (Twain 1993, 150). The T16N, R17E Mount Diablo Meridian (MDM) plat for 1865 shows yellow pine as the predominant

species in the Tahoe Vista-Carnelian Bay area. Given the consistency of the forest description and considering that a level, sandy shoreline is preferable for depositing logs into the lake for rafting to a sawmill, this emerges as the most probable location for the timber claim.

Twain writes that they felled trees to create a property boundary and constructed a crude brush shelter as prerequisites to perfecting a right of ownership. He does not make mention of any steepness of the land, surely a point not missed if his location on the sheer east-facing slope of Stateline Point. The two travelers occupy the site as camp for the duration of their stay. Later, Twain carelessly allows their campfire to rage out of control, igniting the forest and burning the timber claim. His description of the fire lends further evidence to support the Tahoe Vista–Agate Bay location. He writes of his view of the fire from offshore:

> It went surging up adjacent ridges—surmounted them and disappeared in the canons beyond—burst into view upon higher and farther ridges, presently—shed a grander illumination abroad, and dove again—flamed out again, directly, higher and still higher up the mountain-side—threw out skirmishing parties of fire here and there, and sent them trailing their crimson spirals away among remote ramparts and ribs and gorges, till as far as the eye could reach the lofty mountain-fronts were webbed as it were with a tangled network of red lava streams (Twain 1993, 156).

A gently sloping topography, as Twain describes here, is visible from the near shore of Tahoe Vista, as opposed to that from Crystal Bay, where a steep and relatively high fault scarp and ridge conceal the topography beyond from a nearby offshore vantage point. One must be nearly one mile offshore to see clearly the full length of the eastern slope of Stateline Point to Mount Baldy.

Twain characterizes their timber-claim beach camp as being "in the sand close to the water's edge, between two protecting boulders" (Twain 1993, 152). In the time since Twain's first encampment, the shoreline of Agate Bay has been heavily man-modified by dredging, filling, rock structures, and an artificially raised lake level. A visual survey of this stretch of beach identified two large boulders spaced sufficiently far apart; these lie offshore in shallow water and appear to be naturally occurring. Only the tops of the boulders are now visible above the current lake bottom. Littoral drift from the outward cutting of the new shoreline has embedded their bulk in sand. Allowing for erosion of the beach caused by higher unnatural lake levels beginning in the 1870s in combination with seasonal and long-term climatic factors, these boulders almost certainly would have been on the dry, natural beach of Lake Tahoe, near the water's edge as Twain describes. Only further investigation will reveal whether these boulders could qualify as the ones mentioned in *Roughing It*.

In the 1914 book *California Romantic and Beautiful*, written by George Wharton James, we find a final and conclusive piece of evidence as to Twain's actual location. In chapter 15, "The Lake Tahoe Region," James writes,

> In the sixties Mark Twain, the inimitable, the world famed, then unknown and poverty-stricken, came with a friend from Carson City and camped for awhile on its shores. His chief stopping-place was not far from what is now known as Carnelian Bay. Later, in half jest, half earnest, he wrote of his experiences (p. 236).

At the time of James's writing, Tahoe Vista was still in its formative years compared to the much longer established Carnelian Bay resort and townsite, which were located near Agate Bay and founded in the 1870s. James was a contemporary of Mark Twain and knew him well, having written at least two biographical magazine articles about him.

After surviving a summer thunderstorm, Twain resolves to "set out to Carson" to tell his story to his waiting comrades (Twain 1993, 157), a further confirming reference to modern-day Carson City as the starting point for his historic expedition to Lake Tahoe.

As a side note, in a fragment of a letter Twain wrote about September 18-21, 1861, to his mother, Jane Clemens, and his sister, Pamela Moffett, he recounts his first trip to Tahoe with the same companion, John Kinney. He refers to the fire but describes the balance of the visit much differently from the *Roughing It* version and vows to return in a few days to establish another claim (Branch, Frank, and Sanderson 1988).

This September 18-21 letter and others appear to correct Twain's *Roughing It* description of a period beginning in late August and running to mid September. In addition, this letter describes hiking for three miles, and then another three miles to a cabin, a side trip not mentioned in *Roughing It*. Although not conclusive because of a four-year time lag, the T16N, R17E MDM plat of 1865 does show a house on the shoreline five and a half miles southwest from Twain's Stateline Point campsite.

In an October 1861 letter to his mother and sister Twain states that he had returned to Tahoe and staked a timber claim for himself and five others. The letter contains no description of the location of this claim. It is clear that the *Roughing It* account is a composite of the two visits, mixed with a somewhat fuzzy recollection some ten years later, and spiked with a liberal dose of humorous embellishment (Branch, Frank, and Sanderson, 1988).

So far, researchers have not found any evidence that Twain or Kinney ever filed a claim, nor did they leave any clue as to why they never followed through. Perfecting the claim would have required hiring a surveyor to set corners, prepare a legal description, and file papers with the Government Land Office.

Perhaps that was a sizable expense that Twain and Kinney could not or would not pay. The most likely explanation is that the claim actually lay within the state of California, not in the Nevada Territory, and was either pre-empted by others or not offered.

While Twain and Kinney were scouting for timber, government surveyors were laying out townships and marking state boundaries in the Tahoe area. Up until that time, highly inaccurate maps had mistakenly placed the site of Twain's supposed timber claim within the Nevada Territory. However, the plats prepared by government surveyors showed the actual location of the state line as lying much farther east than previously thought.

By depending on whatever map he may have used or on the verbal description given to him, in combination with his unfamiliarity with the terrain, Twain was misled into believing that his claim was in the Nevada Territory. The result of his venture was a claim in California that the would-be timber barons could not consummate.

Twain turned his attention to mining speculation and writing, while Kinney moved into real-estate dealing and mining speculation and eventually returned to the East.

This research clears Twain's much-celebrated trip both of misconceptions and of the self-serving speculation of others. Despite a generalized and embellished description, many facts remain certain. Twain traveled to and from modern-day Carson City, he was actually on the north shore of Lake Tahoe, and he crossed Crystal Bay. In addition, he camped at Stateline Point, established a fleeting timber claim near present-day Tahoe Vista in Agate Bay, and carelessly started a wildland fire. While the details of Twain's route and visit are intriguing, the immortal words inspired by that trip that most eloquently capture the feelings of all who are, at first sight, forever moved by the exceptional beauty of Lake Tahoe.

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Mark Twain's Return from Aurora

ROBERT E. STEWART

There is a long-accepted and oft-told tale that a tired, discouraged Samuel Clemens walked from Aurora to Virginia City in the fall of 1862. Broke and disenchanted, he had abandoned mining to begin the job in which he would take the enduring pen name Mark Twain.

The image that he walked the whole way may not have any basis in fact. The story is a colorful anecdote deeply embedded in the lore of Mark Twain. The author's friend and biographer, Albert Bigelow Paine, was to write of Clemens's return from Aurora:

> one hot, dusty August afternoon, in Virginia City, a worn, travel-stained pilgrim dragged himself into the office of the *Territorial Enterprise*, then in its new building on C Street, and, loosening a heavy roll of blankets from his shoulder, dropped wearily into a chair. He wore a rusty slouch hat, no coat, a faded blue-flannel shirt, a navy revolver; his trousers were tucked into his boot-tops, a tangle of reddish-brown hair fell on his shoulders; a mass of tawny beard, dingy with alkali dust, dropped half-way to his waist. Aurora lay one hundred and thirty miles from Virginia City. He had walked that distance, carrying his heavy load.[1]

But in 1862, Paine had not yet met Sam Clemens, and when he wrote the above in 1915, Twain was no longer around to comment. Effie Mona Mack, in her classic work *Mark Twain in Nevada* (1947), carried forward the image of a discouraged Sam Clemens leaving the mining camp of Aurora on foot to begin work as a reporter for the *Territorial Enterprise*. In an unattributed description of Sam's departure from Aurora, after he had already been out on one extensive hike, she wrote that now "Sam was off on another long hike from Aurora to Virginia City, too broke, it was said, to go by stage."[2]

The tale has taken on a life of its own in writing about Twain. Ron Powers, winner of the Pulitzer Prize and Emmy Award tells it anew in his 2005 biography *Mark Twain, a Life*. He advises us that Sam Clemens "walked to work. That is to say, he left Aurora and the Humboldt mines [*sic*] on foot in late September 1862, and hiked

When *The New York Times* printed its interview with Frank Fuller in 1911, it included this artist's sketch of Fuller. There are no known photos of Fuller. *(The New York Times, 1 October 1911, 5:10)*

the 120 miles north to Virginia City with a bundle of blankets on his back. He was on foot because horses cost money, and being a gold and silver miner, he didn't have any."[3]

Aurora was a mining camp located south of, and more or less halfway along, a line between present day Hawthorne, Nevada, and Bridgeport, California.[4] Did Sam Clemens actually walk some ninety-five miles from there to Virginia City? Strong evidence suggests he made the trip, at least as far as Carson City and probably all the way, on horseback. The trip may also have marked the beginning of Twain's long and profitable friendship with his new acquaintance and traveling companion, Frank Fuller.

At the time, Fuller was secretary of Utah Territory, counterpart to Sam's brother Orion Clemens, secretary of Nevada Territory. That Mark Twain and Frank Fuller became lifelong friends is well documented. The friendship was cemented when in 1866 Fuller, in New York, backed and organized the first New York City speaking engagement for Twain.[5] A best-selling author, Twain's turn-of-the-century lecture appearances (in the days before radio and television) never failed to draw crowds. He was to become one of the most successful platform speakers of his time. The surviving correspondence between Twain and Fuller attests to the friendship that continued after Fuller helped establish Twain as a lecturer.

Fuller's memory of how and when he first met Twain, and Twain's recollection of the event, are at odds, and neither's memory was perfect. Fuller would later say he and Twain met in Carson City, and then became close friends when Fuller visited Twain in San Francisco in the 1860s. Fuller gives two slightly different versions of the first meeting. Under extensive research, neither of Fuller's versions holds up, nor does Twain's. To consider how they actually met, it is important to consider how they did not meet.

The first of Fuller's two statements describing becoming acquainted with Sam Clemens was made in 1911, forty-nine years after the fact. In an interview with a *New York Times* reporter, Fuller, eighty-three years old, said:

> There came a time during my term of office [as secretary and acting governor of the Territory of Utah] when it became necessary for me to meet the Governor of [the Territory of] Nevada to take some joint action against the Indians who were very troublesome. I went by the overland stage with James Gamble, the man who built the first telegraph line in California. He taught me the Morse alphabet, and we tapped messages on each other's hands with our fingernails as we rode along.
>
> I saw my first of Mark Twain in Nevada, in the little capital town under the mountain where Gov. James W. Nye lived. He was employed at something or other around the Governor's premises. On that trip I was admitted to the bar of Nevada, the motion to admit me being made by William M. Stewart, afterward United States Senator.

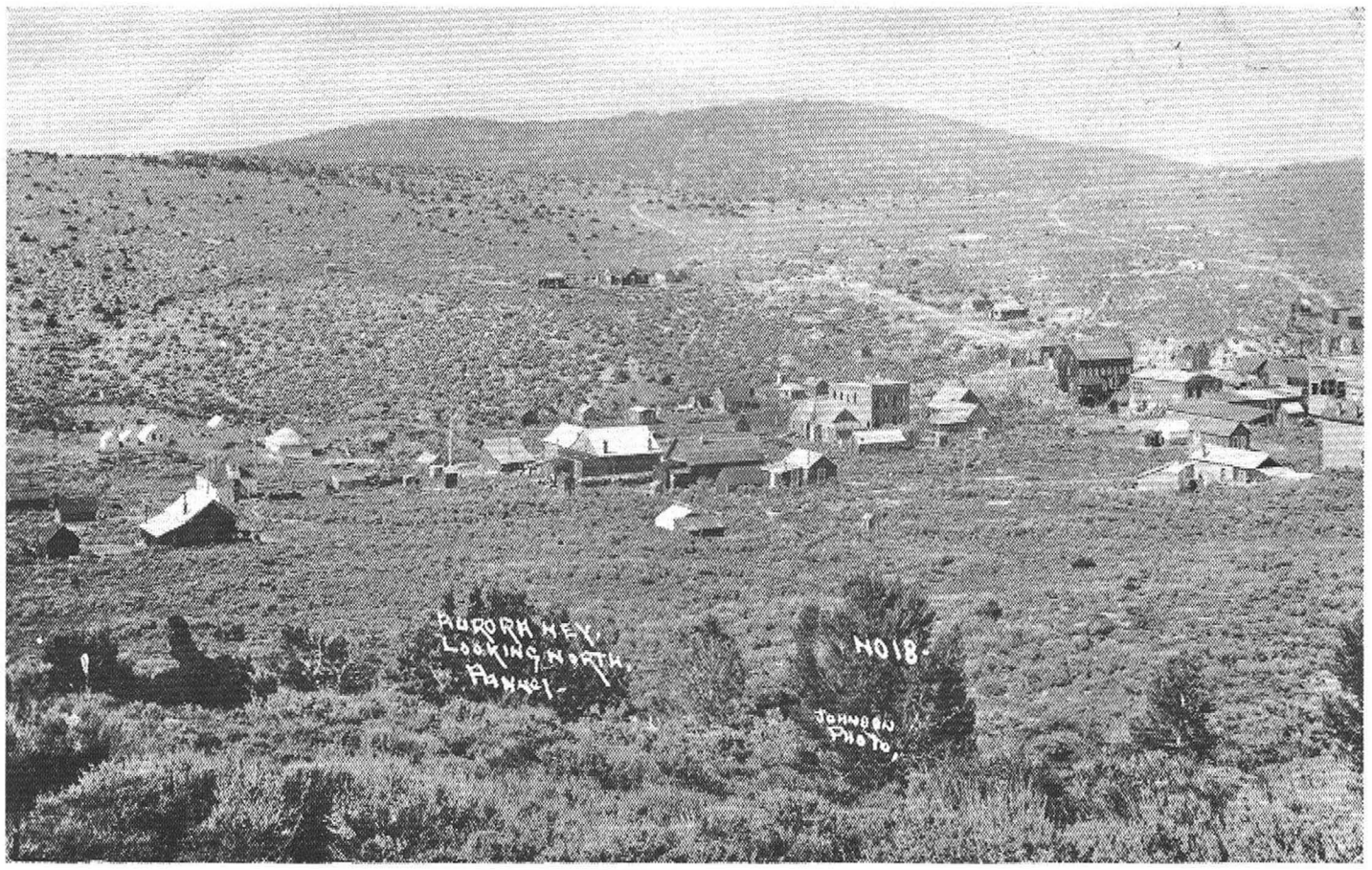
Mark Twain at that time was writing for the *Territorial Enterprise* of Virginia City, owned and edited by James T. Goodman.[6]

In a written memoir statement believed to have been prepared by Fuller a couple of months later, there is a slight difference in the tale. Here he writes (spelling errors uncorrected; Fuller's strikeouts in brackets):

> Mark was active around the Executive quarters when the stage bearing James Gamble, Supt. of the telegraph Co. and me drove up. I never saw Mark when he [was] had not a keen scent for news and it was a great day for that commodity when [the] high and mighty potentates of the passenger and freight and express and mail and telegraph systems met the representatives of the United States Government in more or less solemn conclave on Indian affairs. That was a gala time for Mark and he made the most of it. The wire was kept hot with his reports of the great meeting and the *Territorial Enterprise* printed his columns. A few days later he volunteered to take me on a horseback excursion to the Esmaralda mining camp. Great silver mines were all around us but every foot of ground was worth a fortune. Esmaralda's mines were "locations" and cheap. So off we went, each with a blanket on the back of the saddle, in case of need and a bag of crackers. We crossed the Carson River on a toll bridge kept by a man named Sise, who proved to be from Portsmouth N.H. and the son of one of [the] its most prominent citizens. [of that wealthy town.] He refused to collect the usual "2 bits"—25 cents—from us and we jogged along. We met a rattlesnake in our path & Mark shot his head off with his Colt's revolver. When night came we turned the horses loose to feed on the abounding bunch grass, spread our blankets together and snuggled up for warmth, as the night air bites shrewdly in that [land of] mountain land.[7]

Fuller goes on to talk about the two of them looking at stars and constellations. The toll taker at the Cradlebaugh Bridge over the Carson River was indeed from Fuller's home state of New Hampshire, although his name was Richard "Dick" *Sides*, not Sise.[8]

Note that Fuller mentions only a one-way trip. He writes they each had "a blanket on the back of the saddle," adding information that the night on the trail was so cold that he and Twain had to huddle together with the two blankets over them to keep warm. In the region between Aurora and Carson City one could expect that kind of nighttime chill during almost any night of the year, perhaps—but not necessarily—excepting July and August. Using the Antelope Valley cutoff, the 1860s trip from Carson City to Aurora could be made on horseback in one grueling day. It was more comfortably made in two days. The important aspect of this reminiscence is that Fuller recalls, in some detail, spending time on the road between Aurora and the Comstock with Sam Clemens.



A ca. 1906 view of Aurora, looking north. Photograph by Ned E. Johnson. *(Emil W. Billeb Collection, Nevada Historical Society)*

Reviewing how each came to be in the West sets the stage for the meeting, and identifies some time frames during which they could not have been in the same place at the same time. In early 1861, President Abraham Lincoln appointed Sam's brother Orion as secretary of the new Territory of Nevada. Orion and Sam Clemens then came to Carson City by Overland Mail stagecoach from St. Joseph, Missouri. They left that city on July 26, 1861.

These were exciting times along that route. The Pony Express was still operating, and the brothers observed one of its riders passing their coach. In Nevada they saw work crews setting posts and stringing wire for the transcontinental telegraph line. The Overland Stage line on which they were passengers had only recently begun using this northern route, abandoning the route through the drier Southwest.

In the Civil War-troubled nation's capital back east, Frank Fuller had arrived in the District of Columbia on about June 21, 1861, with the Second New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry. He had helped organize that regiment in his home town of Portsmouth. The regiment would remain in the District until July 16, when it left for Manassas and the First Battle of Bull Run. The Second New Hampshire went on to give distinguished service in many battles during the Civil War, including both Fredericksburg and Gettysburg.[9]

But Frank Fuller was not at Manassas or any of the later battles.[10] The day before the regiment left Washington for that battlefield, Senator John P. Hale of New Hampshire took Fuller to the White House to meet President Abraham Lincoln. Fuller says he emerged from the meeting as the new secretary of Utah Territory. It appeared he would also be acting governor. President James Buchanan's appointee as governor, Alfred Cumming, had quietly departed to become a colonel commanding the Confederate Army's Tenth Georgia Infantry, organized in June 1861 in his home state.

Word of Lincoln's appointments did not travel west quickly. It was almost two months later that the Salt Lake City *Deseret News* for September 11, 1861, reported that "Mr. Frank Fuller, a promising young lawyer, somewhere in New Hampshire, [is appointed] as Secretary." Fuller set foot in Utah a few days later, taking his first official action on September 17.[11]

The Clemens brothers passed through Salt Lake City in late July or early August. Twain's later memory of meeting Frank Fuller in Salt Lake City is clearly faulty when, in his autobiography, he says:

> When Orion and I crossed the continent in the overland stagecoach in the summer of 1861, we stopped two or three days in Great Salt Lake City. I do not remember who the Governor of Utah Territory was at that time, but I remember that he was absent—which is a common habit of territorial Governors. But the man who was acting in the Governor's place was the Secretary of the Territory, Frank Fuller.
>
> Well, Fuller was acting Governor, and he gave us a very good time during those two or three days that we rested in Great Salt Lake City. He was an alert and energetic man; a pushing man; a man who was able to take an interest in anything that was going.[12]

It was Francis (Frank) Wootton, the outgoing secretary of Utah Territory, with whom Orion and Sam dined. Wootton had been appointed by President Buchanan, and was often criticized by the Mormons for overindulgence in alcohol.[13] Fuller was not to arrive until several weeks later.

The Clemens brothers arrived in Carson City on August 14. Finding himself footloose, Sam Clemens began a tour through the countryside. His first trip was to Esmeralda Mining District, where the mining camp of Aurora would soon be built. This excursion is believed to have begun about September 8. Fuller could not have accompanied Sam Clemens on this first exploratory trip to the Esmeralda Mining District.

Clemens left Carson City for Aurora, this time to relocate there as a miner, between April 2 and April 11, 1862. The weather throughout that period was typical of late winter along the eastern slope of the Sierra: cold days, with a series of light snowfalls and colder nights.[14]

Fuller says that the reason underlying his undated trip to Carson City was a high-level meeting about Indian troubles along the Overland Mail and telegraph route, which approximated the line of today's U.S. Highway 50 across Nevada. "Indian troubles" had begun some years earlier, as soon as the first Pony Express riders came into view. The stagecoaches and telegraph construction crews only intensified the distress of the Native Americans. In July 1861, James Gamble was in the process of constructing the telegraph line across Ruby Valley. The first northern-route Overland Stage had passed through, arriving in Carson City on July 16 with twenty-one hundred pounds of mail. The editor of the *Territorial Enterprise* observed on July 20 that "Reports from the Overland Mail route represent the Indians in the neighborhood of Ruby Valley as hostile. They do not seem to understand yet the nature of the Stage and Telegraph company's [*sic*] operations."[15]

The first battles of the Civil War had now been fought back east. Among the Lincoln administration's many concerns was the fear that communication with California could be interrupted. Such a disruption could have allowed the Confederates to gain control of the West. On July 24, 1861, while the Clemens brothers were en route to the West and Fuller was still in the East, Secretary of War Simon Cameron laid a levy upon California Governor John G. Downey to raise one regiment of infantry and five companies of cavalry. The key assignment for these troops was to guard the Overland Mail route between Carson Valley, in western Nevada Territory, and Salt Lake City.

On August 13, a California building contractor, Patrick E. Connor, was nominated as one of the officers in command of Downey's new army. Connor was destined to be in charge of on-the-ground protection of the Overland Mail. He began recruiting troops on September 26, setting up camp near Stockton. With the time needed for training, unit organization, outfitting and equipping, followed by waiting for the Sierra snow to melt, it was July 21, 1862, before troops began the march eastward. They arrived at Fort Churchill, some miles east of Virginia City, on August 1. After remaining there for a dozen days, they left to set up a fort in Ruby Valley and then press on to Salt Lake City. Men were posted at each of the Overland Mail/Pony Express stations along the way.[16]

With all this recruiting, mustering-in and preparation, it was clear that the government was looking to the security of the Overland Mail and telegraph lines. The long months required to get the soldiers into the field was a frustration, but action was being taken, and in the cold month of April 1862 there would have been no need for a meeting of the type Fuller describes. Further evidence that Fuller fabricated the recollection is the fact that no records of any such meeting have been located.

A more likely time for it to have occurred would have been a year later, in May 1863. Military correspondence during that period indicates an increase in conflicts with Native Americans along the entire Overland Mail line. An attack on Eight Mile Station in western Utah in March, discovered by, among others, Judge Gordon N. Mott, the newly elected delegate to Congress from Nevada Territory, was particularly brutal.[17]

However, the archives of the State of Nevada, which include considerable material from the administrations of Governor James W. Nye and Secretary Orion Clemens, are devoid of mention of Frank Fuller. Similarly, the few newspapers that remain from that time also fail to make note of any meeting of communications moguls. Nor is it mentioned in Thompson and West's comprehensive *History of Nevada 1881* or in *The Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies.* Utah's archives have little information on Fuller's tour of duty.

Appointed territorial officials needed permission from Washington to leave their posts for any length of time. It is fair to say that the archival record suggests it was not issues with American Indians that took Fuller west out of Salt Lake City in May 1863. In fact, Fuller had requested leave to go east. In a letter to Secretary of State William Seward dated May 13, 1863, he informed Seward that he would "avail myself of the permission which you have kindly granted me, to vacate my post of duty for a brief period. I have arranged to start this day for San Francisco, intending to journey thence by sea to New York in the hope that the voyage may improve my failing health."[18]

He had been granted four months' leave and was due back in Salt Lake City on September 1, 1863. But Fuller did not make it to San Francisco. And by September, he had been replaced as secretary. Fuller was in western Nevada Territory in late May. His name appears in the mining records in Virginia City as co-locator of the Frank Silver Mining Company in the nearby Flowery District, located on May 29, 1863. His partners included William Brackett, an attorney, and James McConnel, one of the early Comstock prospectors.[19]

Three days earlier, on May 26, Frank Fuller had been named as one of the incorporators of the Luzerne Mining Company in Aurora.[20] If that action involved a trip to Aurora by Fuller, Mark Twain was clearly not available as his traveling companion. On May 3, the *Territorial Enterprise* noted that Twain had "abdicated" the local column. A letter Twain wrote on about May 18 makes it clear he had already been in San Francisco for at least the past two weeks, if not longer, and was still there.[21]

During that May 1863 visit, Fuller was admitted to practice before the judge of the First Judicial District (Carson City) of Nevada Territory. His name does not, however, appear in the roster of those admitted to practice before the Territorial Supreme Court.[22]

With this information in hand, it is possible to determine that the trip Fuller and Clemens took occurred in September of 1862. That was the month when, on an unrecorded date, a disillusioned Sam Clemens abandoned his dreams of riches in Aurora and set out for a new career (and a new name) at the *Territorial Enterprise* in Virginia City. His travel was not to, but from, Aurora.

In surviving letters, writings, and documents, Twain himself tells us nothing of his physical travel to or from the Esmeralda Mining District. As he was preparing to leave, on Tuesday, September 9, Clemens wrote his friend William H. Claggett that "Times have never grown brisk here [in Aurora] until this

week. I don't think much of the camp—not as much as I did. Old fashioned winter & snow lasted until the middle of June."[23] Claggett was in Unionville, a mining camp located about twice as far northeast of the Comstock as Aurora was south.

Clemens's earliest known article for the *Territorial Enterprise* in Virginia City appeared three weeks and a day later, on Wednesday, October 1, 1862.[24]

The evidence that Fuller was in Aurora in September 1862, and was shortly thereafter someplace not too far distant from Aurora, is found in the journal kept by Samuel Youngs, a pioneer resident of Aurora.[25] Youngs, a lawyer by training, was always careful to record in his journal a list of all incoming mail and of all letters he wrote. He did not note the content of correspondence, and he seldom recorded meeting people. He mentioned visitors only when some event was involved. Further, Youngs did not describe where his correspondent was located, only that he received or sent mail to that person. A native of Long Island, Youngs left home in 1849 and remained in the West for many years. Before taking on the job of territorial governor, James W. Nye was for a time the law partner of Youngs's brother-in-law.

Initially, there was uncertainty as to whether Aurora was in California or in Nevada Territory. Until late 1863, Nevada had largely conceded civil authority to California, where Aurora was the county seat of that state's new Mono County. In the Nevada territorial statutes, it was also the county seat of Esmeralda County, Nevada Territory. When surveyors ran the line in September 1863, they found Aurora to be two miles east of the California state line.

On Wednesday, September 24, 1862, with no prior correspondence between them recorded in his journal, Youngs filed a formal notice with the Mono County Recorder, in Aurora, of the transfer of fifty feet (shares) in each of eight ledges (mining claims) in the Esmeralda Mining District, from himself to Frank Fuller, for $1,000.[26] He does not record writing to Fuller after that filing. The following Saturday, Youngs received his first letter from Fuller, to which he responded the following day. That Youngs' letter would have left Aurora early Monday morning. Fuller's response arrived in Aurora late the following Friday, October 3, and was handed to Youngs on Saturday morning. Given the short turnaround, Fuller could not have been far distant from Aurora.

In that same mail, Youngs received a letter from James Gamble; this is the first mention of Gamble's name in the journal. Fuller recalls riding the stage from Utah to Carson City with Gamble. Perhaps Fuller's report to Gamble on his return from Aurora prompted the correspondence with Youngs.

Youngs responded to Fuller on Monday, October 6, and that same day sent a telegram to Gamble, followed by a mailed ore sample.[27] Studying the notations in Youngs's journal, we can conclude that Fuller had probably been in Aurora on or shortly before September 24, 1862, and that by September 27 Fuller was no longer in town, since on that date Youngs received a letter from him. From the timing of the correspondence in the days that follow, it also appears that

Fuller remained in the Carson-Virginia City area for a few days. The Fuller-Youngs business relationship continued until August 1864, when Aurora's mines failed.

From the Youngs journal entries it seems clear that Fuller arrived in Aurora sometime in late August or early September 1862, met Youngs, and conducted business with him. Regarding Sam Clemens, there is ample evidence that Youngs and Clemens were mining-camp friends. In one letter, Sam Clemens tells his brother Orion that "Old Col. Youngs [Youngs was fifty-eight, Clemens twenty-six] is very friendly, and I like him much."[28] We also know that September is the month when Sam Clemens left Aurora to become a reporter for the *Territorial Enterprise*. It is not a stretch to conclude that Sam Clemens made the return trip to Carson City in company with Fuller.

But there are two caveats concerning Fuller's "memory": He seems to remember himself in the best light. First, in that *New York Times* interview, Fuller told the reporter that:

> I visited California and found Mark Twain there, and we became quite intimate. That was in 1863. He was writing chiefly for the *Morning Call*.
>
> Coming back from California we stopped for dinner at Job Taylor's in America [*sic*] Valley. Job kept liquor for sale, and the driver got drunk and drove the stage over a stump. I was thrown out and seriously injured, and I resigned.[29]

It appears, however, that Utah Territorial Secretary Frank Fuller did not resign; he was apparently removed after he was granted leave to go east, wrote the secretary of state that he was heading east, and instead went to visit the Nevada mines.[30] Fuller was due back from his four-month leave to visit the East on September 1. Whatever the underlying reason, it is a matter of record that while Fuller was away, on June 11, President Lincoln and Secretary Seward did some political housekeeping in Utah. Governor Steven Harding departed for a new appointment as United States consul at Valparaiso, Chile. James Duane Doty was appointed in his stead, and Amos Reed was appointed as secretary of Utah Territory. Doty had come to Utah as commissioner of Indian Affairs, and Amos Reed had accompanied him as his secretary. On September 24, Reed wrote the secretary of state accepting a commission as Fuller's successor. The formal commissions for Doty and Reed, signed with the advice and consent of the United States Senate, did not arrive in Salt Lake City until February 26, 1864.[31]

And the second caveat: When Fuller told his story, Samuel L. Clemens—Mark Twain—was not around to comment. Twain died on April 21, 1910. Fuller first mentioned their trip to Aurora in his memoir, apparently written in December of that year. He first publicly spoke of it in the interview published in *The New York Times* on October 1, 1911, seventeen months after Twain's death.

One other statement in the interview warns against trusting Fuller's memory, or veracity. James W. Nye, former territorial governor of Nevada, and in 1866 United States senator from Nevada, was supposed to introduce Twain during his first New York speaking engagement at the Cooper Union, which Fuller did in fact organize. But Nye was a no-show that night. In the 1911 *Times* interview, Fuller recalls the Nye incident, saying "Twenty-five years later I met Gov. Nye on a steamboat going to Glen Cove. 'Why did you disappoint us that night?' I asked him. 'I never intended to show up,' he replied. '[Twain's] nothing but a damned Secessionist.'" Fuller is here saying that he met Nye on a steamboat in 1891. Or his ghost? James Warren Nye died on Christmas Day, 1876.

Twain's companion reporter at the *Enterprise*, Dan De Quille, observed that "when it came to *cast iron* items, [Mark Twain] gave them a lick and a promise. He hated to have to do with figures, measurements, and solid facts."[32] The disappointed miner walking away from Aurora makes a better story than a tale of riding off north with a companion, and if someone else told that version often enough—it does not appear in Twain's own writing—he might even come to believe it himself.

From today's vantage point, we can only speculate on the evidence. Whatever means the future author used to journey to Virginia City, it is the outcome of that trip that the world continues to celebrate. Within six months of the trip, Samuel Clemens became Mark Twain.[33]

NOTES

[1]Albert Bigelow Paine, *The Adventures of Mark Twain* [originally *Boys' Life of Mark Twain*] (New York: Kessinger Publishing, 1915), 122. Paine first met Clemens in 1906. Note that he says this was in August, while the record indicates Clemens left Aurora in September.

[2]Effie Mona Mack, *Mark Twain in Nevada* (New York: Scribners and Son, 1947), 174. Mack did not cite a source for the statement.

[3]Ron Powers, *Mark Twain, a Life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005), 110. Powers does not cite a source for the statement. Aurora to Virginia City by way of Winnemucca? Powers clearly did not review a map of Nevada.

[4]During the time Sam was there, it was believed by California legislators that Aurora was within their state, not the Territory of Nevada. In September 1863, surveyors confirmed it was on the Nevada side.

[5]Albert Bigelow Paine, *Mark Twain, a Biography: The Personal and Literary Life of Samuel Langhorne Clemens* (New York: Harper Brothers Publishers, 1912), 58.

[6] *The New York Times* (1 October 1911), 5:10. The document admitting Fuller to the Nevada bar is actually dated 1863, during Fuller's second visit to Nevada Territory. Frank Fuller Papers (MS 305), Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

[7]Frank Fuller, "Reminiscences of Mark Twain," manuscript dated December 1911, James S. Copley Library, La Jolla, Calif. The author thanks Barbara Schmidt, who quoted it in her essay "Frank Fuller, the American, Revisited," www.twainquotes.com/FullerRevisited.html

[8]Robert Ellison, Carson Valley historian, personal communication.

[9]*Dyer's Compendium*, U. S. Park Service Civil War website, www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/.

[10]Fuller would most certainly have told us if he had been part of a Civil War battle. According to *The New York Times*, "Arrivals in the City" (18 July 1861), 5:5, he was in that city on July 17th.

[11]*Deseret News* (11 September 1861), 5:4. The issue of October 2 reports that Acting Governor Fuller's first official act, denying clemency in a capital murder case, was signed on September 17. (*Deseret News* (2 October 1861), 8:3. Http://www.lib.utah.edu/digital/unews/. See also "Affairs in Utah," *The New York Times* (22 October 1861), 2:3, which mentions Fuller's executive decision of September 17. I am assuming that Fuller came west by Overland Stage. Had he come by ship, there would probably have been mention in the San Francisco newspapers, and no such articles have been located. Because Congress was not in session, consent by the Senate (which was automatic in those days) was not required. Fuller's name does not appear in the 1861 *Congressional Globe*.

[12]*Mark Twain's Autobiography*, I Albert Bigelow Paine, ed. (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1924). II, 349-50.

[13]Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (Hartford: American Publishing Co., 1871), second paragraph of chapter 13, and a letter from Orion Clemens to the *Missouri Democrat*, naming Wootton, both cited in the Mark Twain Project edition of *Roughing It*. Wootton left Utah to become an aide to Confederate General James J. Archer and died of wounds received at Fredericksburg. *Deseret News* (25 February 1863), 8:2.

[14]"Journal of Col. Samuel Youngs," typescript in the collection of the author.

[15]*Territorial Enterprise* (6 July 1861), 2:4.

[16]See Brigham D. Madsen, *Glory Hunter, a Biography of Patrick Edward Connor* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990), 48-53.

[17]See correspondence and reports in Robert N. Scott, *War of the Rebellion; A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: United States War Department, 1880), ser. I, vol. d, pts 1, 2.

[18]Letter in *State Department Territorial Papers-Utah*, 1853-1872, microfilm publication M12, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.

[19]Schmidt, "Frank Fuller, American," citing research by G. Ross Riggans; Myron Angel, *History of Nevada* (Oakland: Thompson & West, 1881), 58, 337.

[20]Mono County Records, Book D.

[21]Edgar M. Branch, M. Frank, and E. Sanderson. *Mark Twain's Letters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), I, 252, 253, n. 1.

[22]The Nevada State Archives has a ledger that lists the names of all persons admitted to practice before the Territorial Supreme Court. Fuller's name is not in that book. Carson City was the First Judicial District.

The Carson City Clerk-Recorder's office has not located any similar list of those admitted to practice only before the District Court. Early court records for Virginia City were lost in a fire.

[23]Branch, *Mark Twain's Letters*, I, 239-40.

[24]*Ibid.*, 241 n. 4, citing Branch, Frank, and Sanderson, *Early Tales and Sketches*, I. Clemens's first known use of the name Mark Twain occurs in an article written January 31, 1863. Branch, *Mark Twain's Letters*, I, 145, 146 n. 1.

[25]In the 1980s, the author had Youngs's journal in his possession, and made a careful typescript of the entire document. The journal itself was returned to its owner, who before her death gave it to her grandson. An abridged version of the journal was published in the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 2:2 (Spring 1959), 27-67.

[26]Mono County Records, Book C. Fuller's annual salary as secretary, incidentally, was $2,000.

[27]The telegraph lines did not reach Aurora until mid June 1863. During early September 1862, arrangements were made for dispatches to be carried to Genoa, then "sent by wires from that point." *Mining and Scientific News* (11 September 1962).

[28]Samuel Clemens to Orion Clemens, 9 July 1862, Branch, *Mark Twain's Letters*, I, 226.

[29]*The New York Times* (1 October 1911).

[30]Fuller twice asked permission to go east to visit his ailing father. Then, in accepting the grant of leave, he said it was for his own health. *State Department Territorial Papers—Utah Series*, microfilm publication G29, reel 2. The National Archives record is incomplete. The information that Fuller was fired for this transgression comes from a personal communication from the Utah historian Will Bagley.

[31]Bancroft, Herbert Howe, *History of Utah* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1889), 22, citing the *Deseret News* (17 June 1863); Roberts, B. H., *Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978) vol. 5, and *Mormon Biographical References*, at www.byustudies.byu.edu/index/MBRegisters.asp. *State Department Territorial Papers, Utah Series*, microfilm publication G29, reel 2. The *Congressional Globe* for the 1860s does not note Senate confirmations of presidential appointments, and the secretary of state did not include reports on the various territories for which he was responsible in his formal reports to Congress. No death date has been located for Frank Fuller's father, John Smith Fuller.

[32]Dan De Quille [William Wright], "Autobiography," *California Illustrated Magazine*, (4 July 1893), 170-78. Quoted in Richard A. Dwyer and Richard Lingenfelter, *Dan DeQuille, The Washoe Giant* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1990), 207.

[33]Mention should be made of one other report about Sam's return from Aurora. An unsigned article in the *Territorial Enterprise* of 23 June 1881 alleges that Clemens was given free passage on the stage by its operator, identified as Clugage. However, in 1862 the Aurora stage was operated by Wellington. Other elements of the story are similarly off-fact, and the tale can be dismissed as fiction.

Notes & Documents

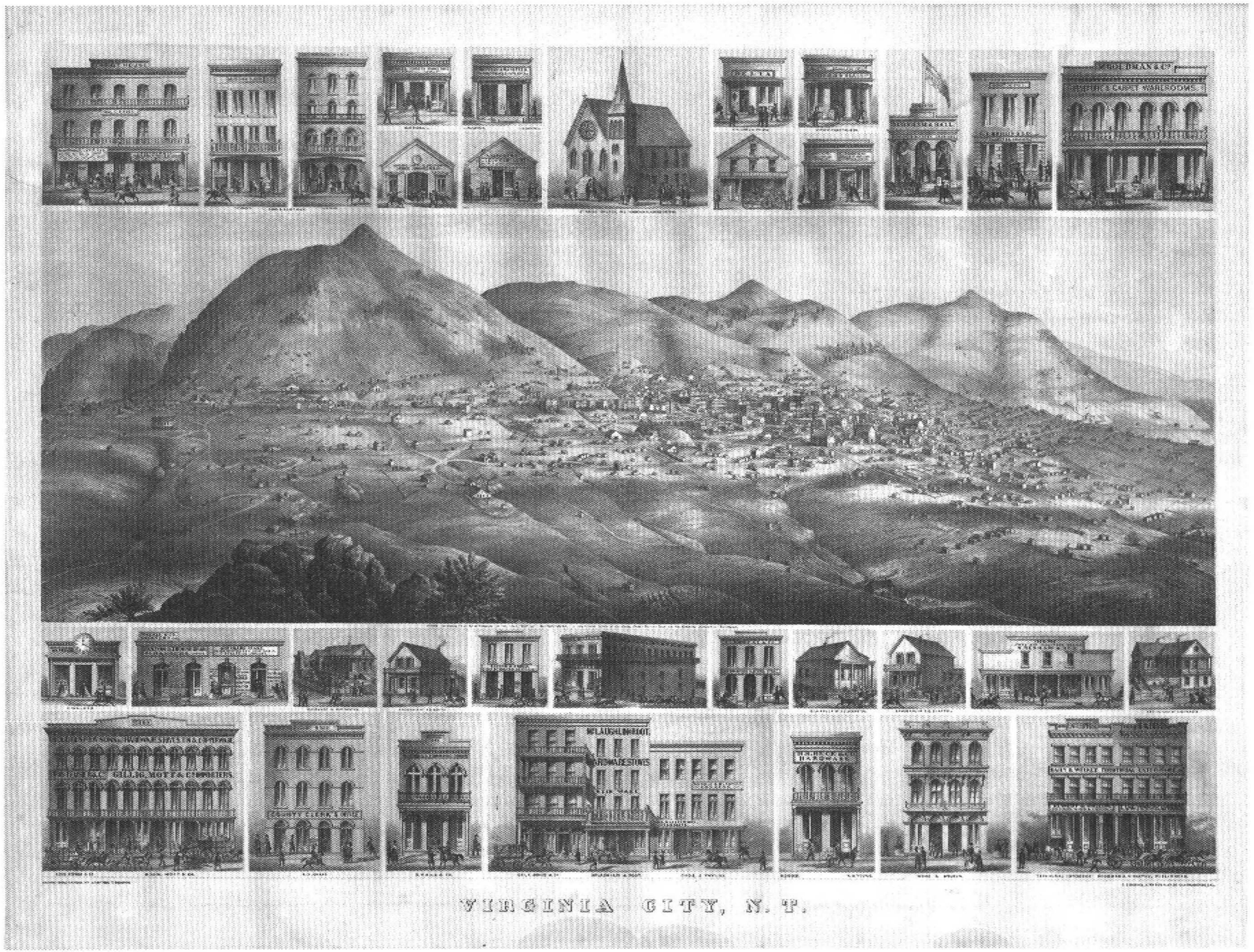
Mark Twain's Virginia City: The 1864 Bird's Eye Views of Grafton Brown

RONALD M. JAMES

In the spring 2006 issue of the *Nevada Historical Quarterly*, Michael Brodhead and I introduced the topic of Grafton T. Brown, a talented African American artist who traveled the West, depicting communities for publication. His 1861 lithograph, the focus of the previous article, is the earliest detailed depiction of Virginia City, one of the most important mining boomtowns of the West. Identifying the various components of the drawing was part of a larger project associated with the 2006 premier of the Online Nevada Encyclopedia. To see the earlier work of Grafton Brown, visit www.onlinenevada.org.

Fortunately for historians, Brown also depicted Fort Churchill in 1863, giving us one of the better images of that National Historic Landmark. In addition, he returned to Virginia City in 1864 for a second bird's eye view of the mining capital. Like his 1861 lithograph, detailed insets captured various buildings and sites, but in 1864 there were two versions, one with businesses and houses, and the other with mines and mills. It affords historians twice the opportunity to see the places Brown visited. The Special Collections Department of the University of Nevada, Reno library preserves both posters.[1]

The place Brown illustrated in 1864 was Mark Twain's Virginia City during his nearly two years at the *Territorial Enterprise*. The first phase of bonanza mining had made the town internationally famous for its wealth in gold and silver. More people lived there than in 1861, and it had more substantial buildings. Like Virginia City, Brown had also matured. Now all of twenty-three, he was an experienced, emerging artist. In 1861, he stood on a nearby outcropping of rock overlooking Virginia City from the south. The vantage point allowed for a drawing filled with details. Three years later, he stood on the Flowery Range, roughly one mile to the south and southeast. His 1864 drawing of Virginia City, while still precise, is more impressionistic. It captures the broad setting



During an 1863 visit to Virginia City, Grafton Brown drew images for two posters featuring different insets for the borders, one featuring mining properties, and the other depicting important buildings in the community. *(Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno Library)*

of the Virginia Range and depicts a growing town, sprawling downhill. It is, perhaps, a better work of art, but buildings are smaller and harder to sort out. The perspective causes streets to fold into one another, making it difficult to distinguish one from another. The two sets of insets are our consolation for the loss of detail in the overview. The fact that Brown revisited Virginia City after three years allows for the comparison of the two works.

Brown depicted ninety-eight people, including eight women and four children for his 1864 insets of the male-dominated mines and mills. Statistically, this is nearly identical to Brown's 1861 recordation of women, as representing eight percent of his community. This, however, is not a fair documentation of the Comstock's demography. The second 1864 lithograph, featuring businesses and houses, captures a maturing community as Nevada transformed from a territory to a state. Fifty women and twelve children appear among the 257 people. This gives the town a new gender balance where women represented almost twenty percent of the community. Of course, the impression of an artist is not statistically valid, but he clearly witnessed a change between 1861 and 1864.[2]

Brown's first lithograph documented forty-three names, about a quarter of which appeared in the 1860 census. His 1864 work recorded roughly fifty-eight names, but only four appear in the 1860 census. In a mere three years, the community had transformed, in keeping with the mobility of the transient West. Many more of these people, however, remained until 1870. In 1861, Brown recorded just seven people who were still there during the following census, and yet his 1864 lithography documented between fourteen and twenty who appeared in the 1870 census. The range reflects the problem of linking names in the lithograph to those in the census, but the increased continuity points to a community that was beginning to stabilize after its turbulent beginning.[3]

The various buildings depicted on the border reveal facets of this early mining community and the people who made it great. A few in particular lend insight into the period. Among the images included in Brown's 1864 mining and milling edition were the hoisting works of the Potosi Mine and of its rival, the Chollar. The Potosi Mine, at the south end of Virginia City was involved in one of the most important legal cases in the history of Nevada mining. In 1861, the Chollar sued the Postosi, insisting the latter was working the original Chollar claim. Potosi owners maintained theirs was a separate discrete ore body. The dispute manifested in a similar case pitting the Ophir against the neighboring Burning Moscow on the north end of Virginia City.

The legal contest, often called the Single Ledge Case, spanned more than two years. Initially, the territorial Supreme Court sided with those who argued there were many separate ore bodies. Free-lance miners, working as they had in the California gold country during the 1850s, opposed single ledge advocates who would place the wealth of the Comstock in the hands of a few. The failure of the 1863 Nevada state constitution was caused in part by voters correctly concluding that William Stewart, the attorney arguing for the single ledge, hoped to use the new state government to elect friendly judges.[4]

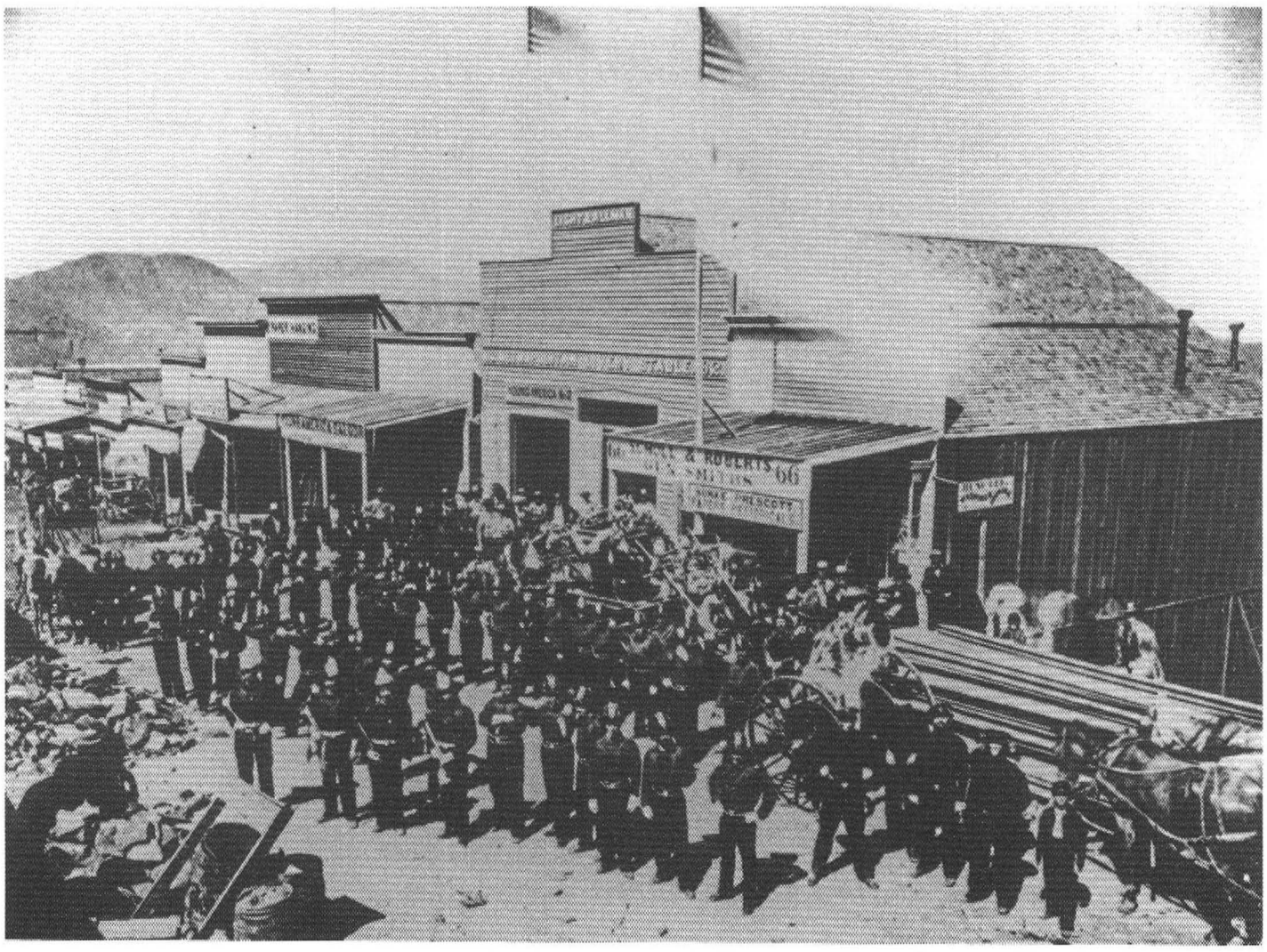
Ultimately, geologists concluded that the Comstock was connected by a single fault line. One could own feet along the north-south axis of the Lode, but competing claims to the east or west would likely default to sole ownership of those who possessed the original claims. Before the court could reverse itself, the Chollar purchased the Potosi operation, ending the dispute. Coincidentally, the 1864 Comstock depression encouraged people to view large corporations exploiting ore bodies along a single ledge as in the best interests of the district's economic health. That would prove the only way to muster the capital needed to exploit deep ore bodies.

Brown's depiction of the Chollar and Potosi Mines yields considerable information. Local lore maintains the Chollar Mine moved its mansion sometime after its 1861 construction from an original location at the current portal below the south end of F Street, two blocks downhill.[5] With Brown's lithograph, it is possible to see that the mine superintendent's house originally stood higher on the hill on or near A Street, the current location of an open pit mine dating to the 1930s. This suggests that workers skidded the three-story structure downhill to its present location below the Fourth Ward School on D Street. In addition, Brown illustrates the relative position of the Chollar to the Potosi Mine, which was a few feet downhill, to the east of the original location of the Chollar portal. The close juxtaposition meant the competing developments would, by nature, encroach on one another's excavations. Brown provides us with a vivid illustration of the cause of the lawsuit.

Brown also depicted the Mexican Mine and its mill. In 1859, Gabriel Maldonado purchased half of Emanuel Penrod's original claim for $3,000. Maldonado and his brothers alternately claimed Spanish and Mexican origin. Their mine, known both as the Spanish and by the more commonly-used name, the Mexican Mine, employed hundreds of people including many Spanish speakers.

Other miners noted that Maldonado, like Mexican immigrants in general, used "little adobe smelting furnaces" that proved extremely effective in extracting gold and silver. Miners hauled ore to the surface in sacks, climbing ladders. Supports consisted of pillars of rock rather than the more expensive square-set timbers designed to address the soft rock of the Comstock Lode. The Mexican Mine employed traditional technology with centuries-old origins in Spain and Mexico. Not surprisingly, Brown depicted a worker hammering rock in front of the Mexican Mine. It was a non-industrial approach to milling less common at other places.[6]

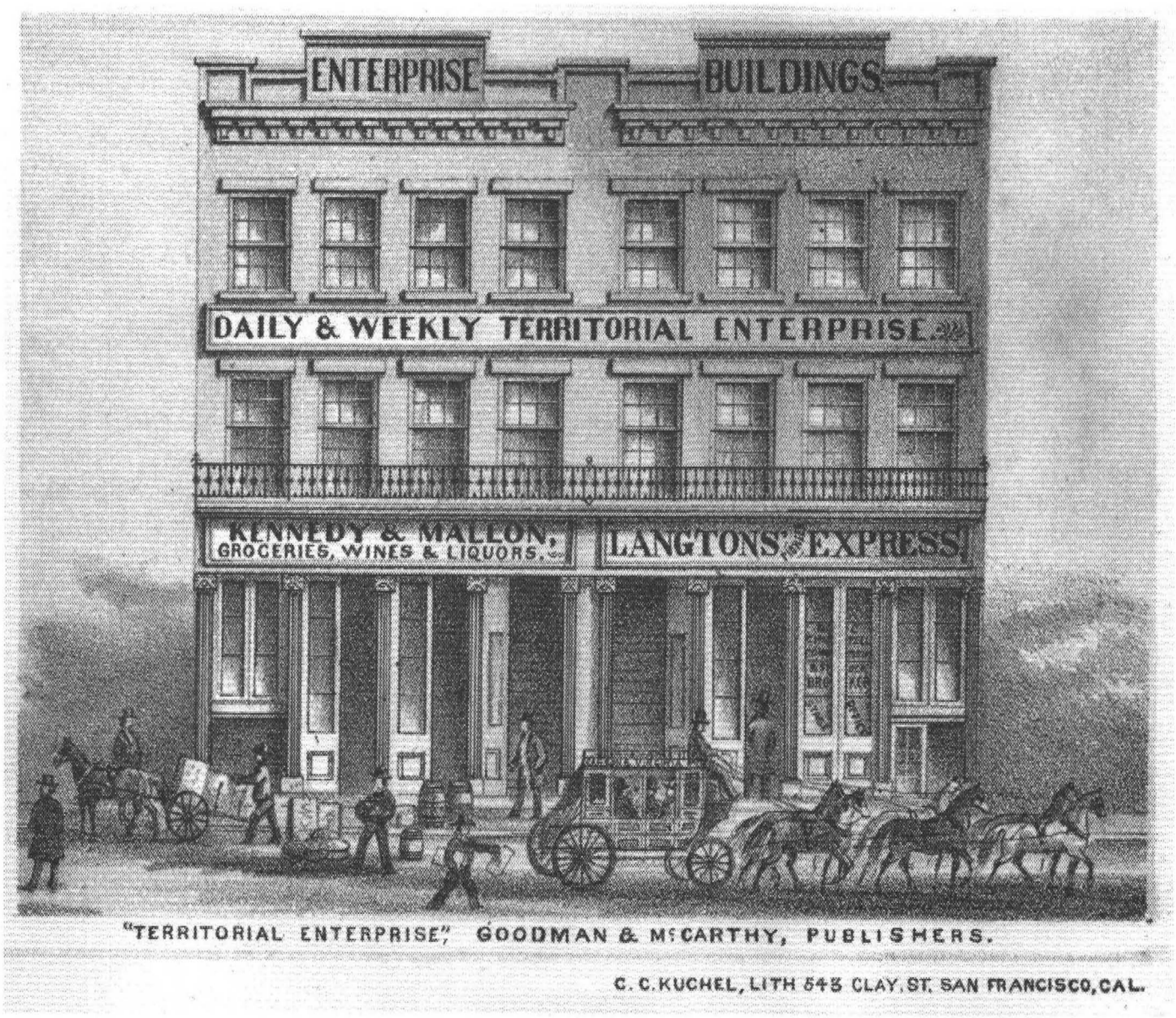
Brown's second 1864 lithograph includes homes and businesses in Virginia City, providing an opportunity to understand the place Mark Twain knew well. In addition, it affords historians a chance to understand how the community had changed since Brown captured it in 1861. Buildings had become more substantial and complex in three years. In 1864, Brown depicted large structures with many different businesses. This trend was emerging in 1861, but it had become more the standard three years later.



The earliest known photograph of Virginia City dates to the 4th of July 1862. The work of R. H. Vance captures the Young American Company in the center of town. *(Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno Library)*

Among the structures of note are the courthouse, the Episcopal Church, and the *Territorial Enterprise* building. Storey County organized after the 1861 creation of Nevada Territory. Its first courthouse was a converted hall for the International Order of the Odd Fellows, which continued to meet on an upper floor. Brown features a rare image of the substantial masonry building destroyed in the 1875 fire. A sign on its front façade reads N. W. Winton, County Clerk. His residence, which the 1863 directory locates on South B Street, appears in another inset, and his name occurs in the 1861 lithograph associated with Langton's Pioneer Express. The courthouse caption bears the name of Albert Hoffman Ungar, who apparently owned and leased the courthouse building. He was co-owner of the What Cheer House, a restaurant and lodging house a few doors to the north. Shortly after Brown completed his lithograph, the county purchased the courthouse building and added an additional floor.[7]

The Episcopal congregation was one of the first to build a formal church in Virginia City. This structure burned in the 1875 fire, but its successor, looking much like this earlier incarnation, still stands on the site. In a community that



Grafton Brown's 1863 depiction of the Territorial Enterprise building provides historians with the best image of the place when it employed Mark Twain. The newspaper operated above the street level, where businesses rented space. The street bustles with activity during a time when mines produced millions in gold and silver. From the border of Grafton Brown's 1863 Bird's Eye view of Virginia City. *(Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno Library)*

Irish Catholics would increasingly dominate, the smaller Episcopal congregation was destined to have a more humble place of worship. Nevertheless, their wooden church has an elegance that transcends its scale. The Rising brothers, one a judge and the other a minister, provided a moral bedrock in the early 1860s.[8]

Brown depicted the *Territorial Enterprise* building in 1861 as a modest wooden structure. By 1864, it had moved to a location in the center of town on the uphill side of C Street. Twain began working for the *Enterprise* in August 1862. He left in May 1864 after insulting the wrong people. The new, substantial, brick building stood three stories on the C Street, with two floors on the uphill side facing B Street. The business included a grocer and liquor distributor and Langton's Pioneer Express, which appeared elsewhere in Brown's 1861 litho-

graph. The *Enterprise* building was an elaborate expression of architecture on the mining frontier, making a clear statement that Virginia City and its premier newspaper had arrived. Perhaps more importantly, this was Twain's *Enterprise*, and Brown gives us the best existing image of this building, later destroyed in the 1875 fire.[9]

Among the other buildings Brown depicted is one identified as the Gage and Eastman Masonic Block. The Free and Accepted Masons provided a fraternal foundation for the transient mining West. People may have moved from place to place, but the Freemasons offered a warm welcome to one another. Building a substantial Masonic hall was one of the organization's first goals, and when achieved, a town could lay claim to a degree of permanence.

Brown depicted two bookstores in the 1864 where before there had been none. Both businesses also acted as libraries, indicating that patrons could buy or rent books. Brown's 1861 lithograph documented two saloons; his 1864 effort reduced this to one, the Delta Saloon. This business remains a popular Virginia City institution, claiming to be the place that invented the Tom and Jerry drink. While the drink predates the founding of the Delta, the saloon nevertheless has deep roots in the center of the community.[10]

Several other businesses and buildings appeared in both the 1861 and 1864 lithographs, affording even more opportunity for comparison. This includes E. Ruhling's assay office, the Black and Howell Building, Feusier's business block, and the Mott Hardware store, which had partially changed ownership. Although Taylor's building appears in both, Taylor seems to be gone. Beck's Hardware also makes two appearances, but H. S. Beck, the proprietor, remained.

Because of Brown's precise documentation, historians have the opportunity to understand Nevada's largest community just as it was making the transition to statehood. It was a growing, dynamic place that bore the vestiges of permanence. There are few photographs surviving from this period, so the two lithographs provide unique images. To gaze upon them is to walk the streets that Twain knew well.

Notes

[1]Kathryn Totton, "The History of Fort Churchill, Nevada," in *Historical, Architectural, and Archaeological Studies of Fort Churchill, Nevada*, Donald L. Hardesty, General Editor (Carson City: Nevada Division of State Parks, 1978). Thanks are extended to Ms. Totton and the Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno Library for help with this citation and with the Brown 1864 lithographs.

[2]For an overview of Comstock history and demography see Ronald M. James, *The Roar and the Silence: A History of Virginia City and the Comstock Lode* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998). For an overview of women on the Comstock see Ronald M. James and C. Elizabeth Raymond, *Comstock Women, the Making of a Mining Community* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998).

[3]The Nevada Online Census at www.nevadaculture.org is extremely useful for locating individuals and defining trends.

[4]For numerous sources related to the Chollar and Potosi conflict see James, *The Roar and the Silence*, 64-67 and 288. The works of David A. Johnson, identified in those citations, is particularly useful. See especially his *Founding the Far West: California, Oregon, and Nevada, 1840-1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

[5]The nineteenth-century move of this large masonry structure is one of the local bragging points, but invariably local residents identify the original location as below F Street. The actual move, downhill, was more easily achieved although it was still a remarkable feat.

[6]Eliot Lord, *Comstock Mining and Miners* (Washington, D.C.: General Printing Office, 1883), 61; William Wright (Dan De Quille), *The Big Bonanza: An Authentic Account of the Discovery, History, and Working of the World-Renowned Comstock Lode of Nevada* (Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1876) 43,85, 118; Otis E. Young, *Western Mining: An Informal Account of Precious-Metals Prospecting, Placering, Lode Mining, and Milling of the American Frontier from Spanish Times to 1893* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970) 79, 155-56; *Virginia City Evening Bulletin* (8 August 1863), 3:1.

[7]Kelly's 1863 Nevada Directory is extremely useful in finding people located on Brown's lithographs. J. Wells Kelly, *Second Directory of Nevada Territory* (1863; available on microfilm). For the history of the Storey County Courthouse, see Ronald M. James, *Temples of Justice: County Courthouses of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1994) 133-42.

[8]Rachel J. Hartigan, "Looking for a Friend among Strangers: Virginia City's Religious Institutions as Purveyors of Community," undergraduate thesis (New Haven: Yale University, 1993); and for additional context see Charles Jeffrey Garrison, "Presbyterians and Miners: The Church's Response to the Comstock Lode," doctoral dissertation (San Francisco: San Francisco Theological Seminary, 2002).

[9]Richard E. Lingenfelter and Karen Rix Gash, *The Newspapers of Nevada: A History and Bibliography, 1854-1979* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1984); Jake Highton, *Nevada Newspaper Days: A History of Journalism in the Silver State* (Stockton, California: Heritage West Books, 1990). Special thanks to Virginia City's Joe Curtis and his Mark Twain Bookstore for assistance with the history of the *Territorial Enterprise* buildings.

[10]A sign in the Delta Saloon lays claim to inventing the Tom and Jerry drink.

Notes & Documents

New Acquisitions at the Nevada Historical Society

NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY STAFF

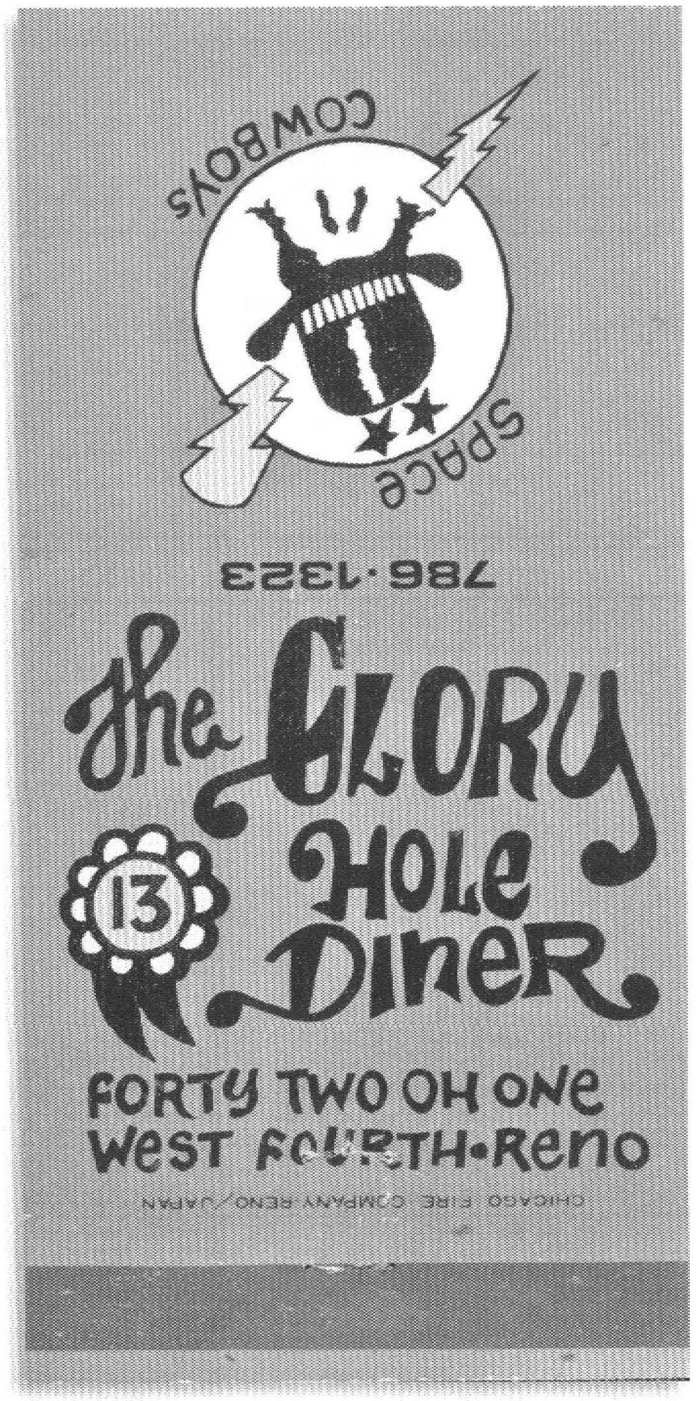
LIBRARY

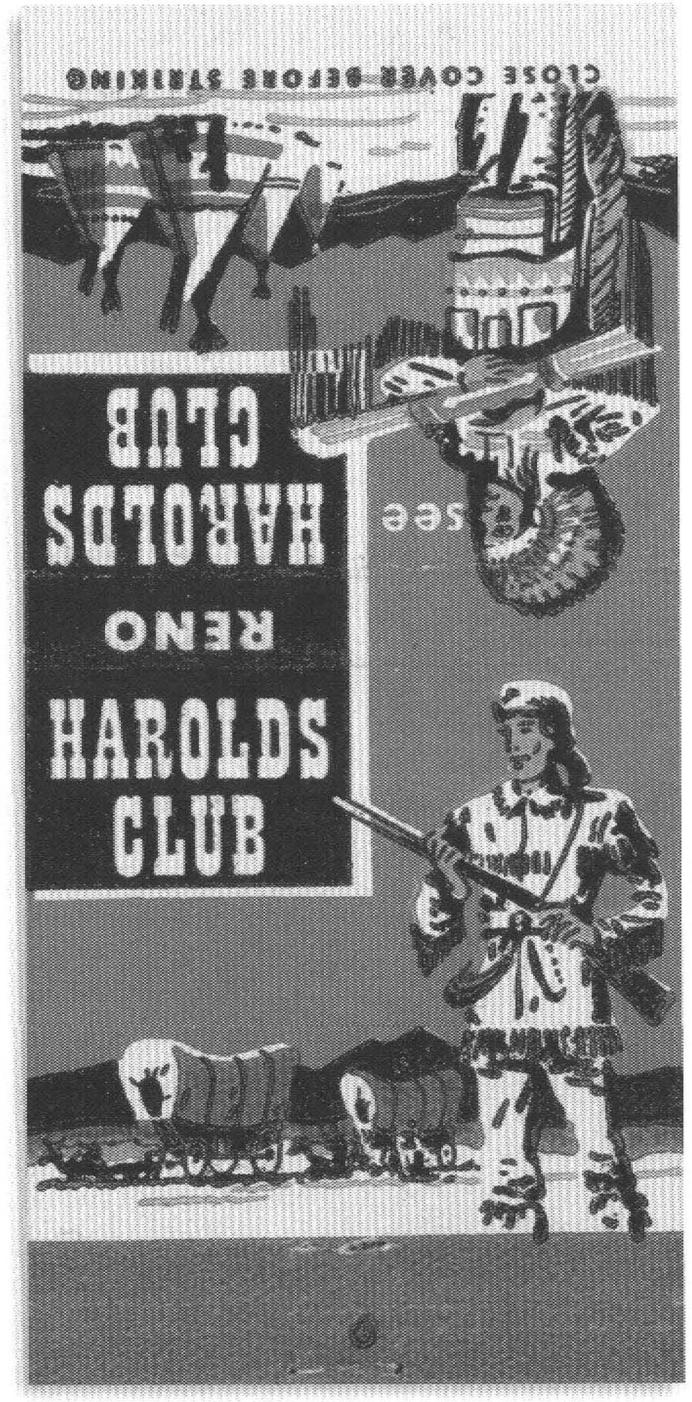
The library recently received a donation of matchbooks that will be added to the Nevada Historical Society's collection. The collection now contains approximately five hundred matchbooks from Nevada casinos, restaurants, hotels, motels, and political campaigns, to name just a few categories. Some of the matchbooks are from Nevada's long-forgotten past, and the matchbook may be the last physical remnant of an establishment or a hard-run campaign for political office. Some matchbooks contain more information than one would usually think, such as maps, menus and food specialties of restaurants, and pictures of the establishments themselves. They are a cultural representation of a particular time and place. They can be serious, comical, and informational.

We have recently scanned the matchbooks into the PastPerfect database, and they are available for viewing in the Nevada Historical Society Library. They can be used to illustrate articles and books, or to just browse through for research or for fun.

If you have any Nevada matchbooks that you don't know what to do with, we would be pleased to add them to our collection.

Michael Maher
Librarian


SPACE COWBOYS
786·1323
The GLORY HOLE Diner
13
FORTY TWO OH ONE
WEST FOURTH·RENO
CHICAGO FIRE COMPANY RENO/JAPAN


CLOSE COVER BEFORE STRIKING
HAROLDS CLUB
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HAROLDS CLUB
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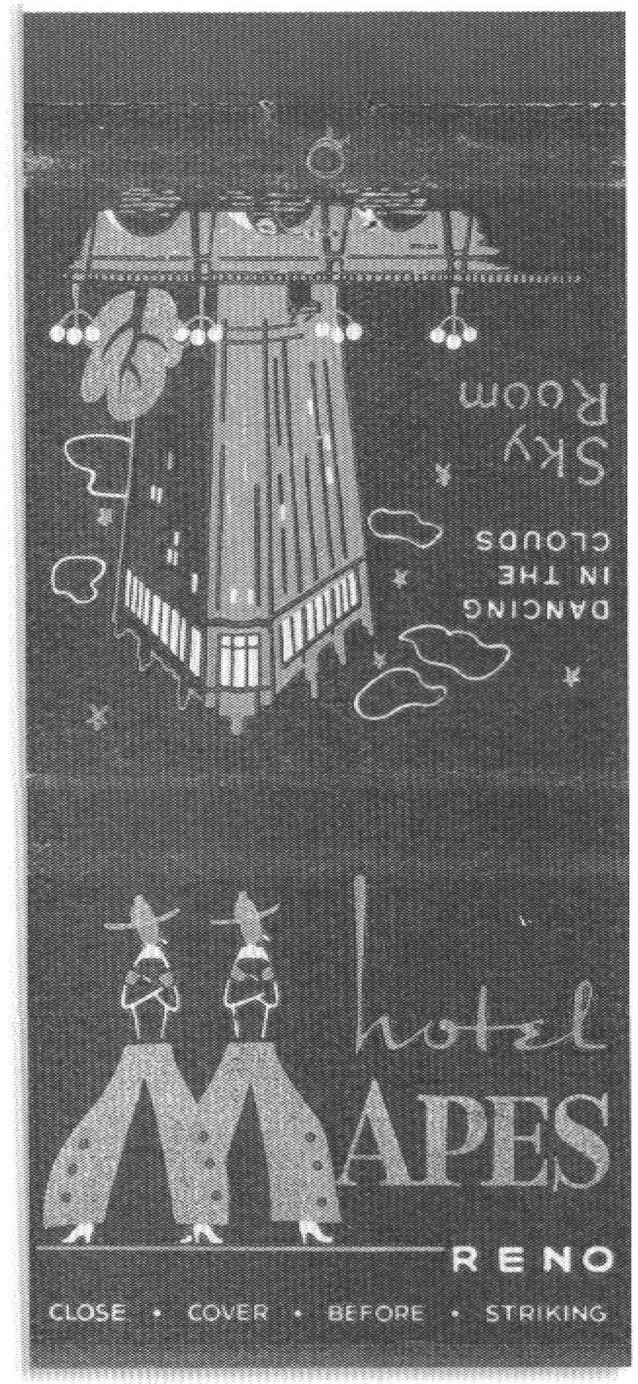
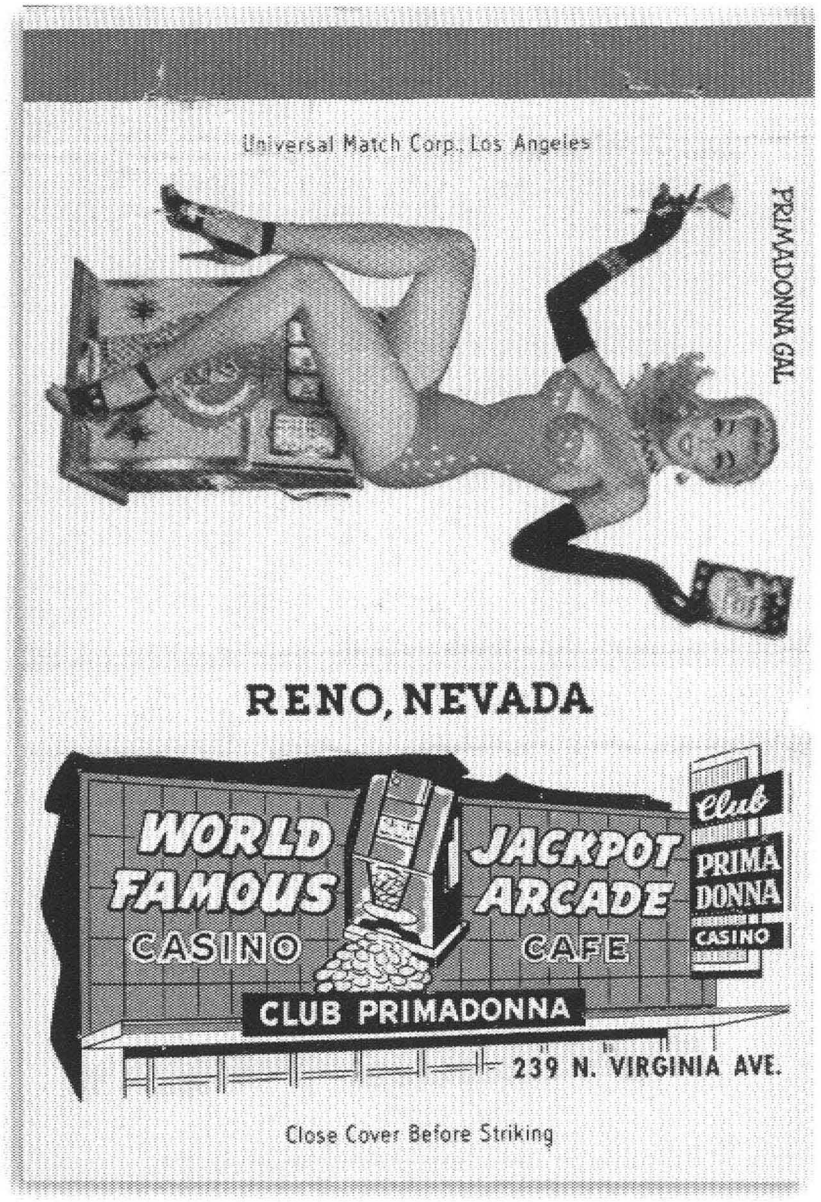
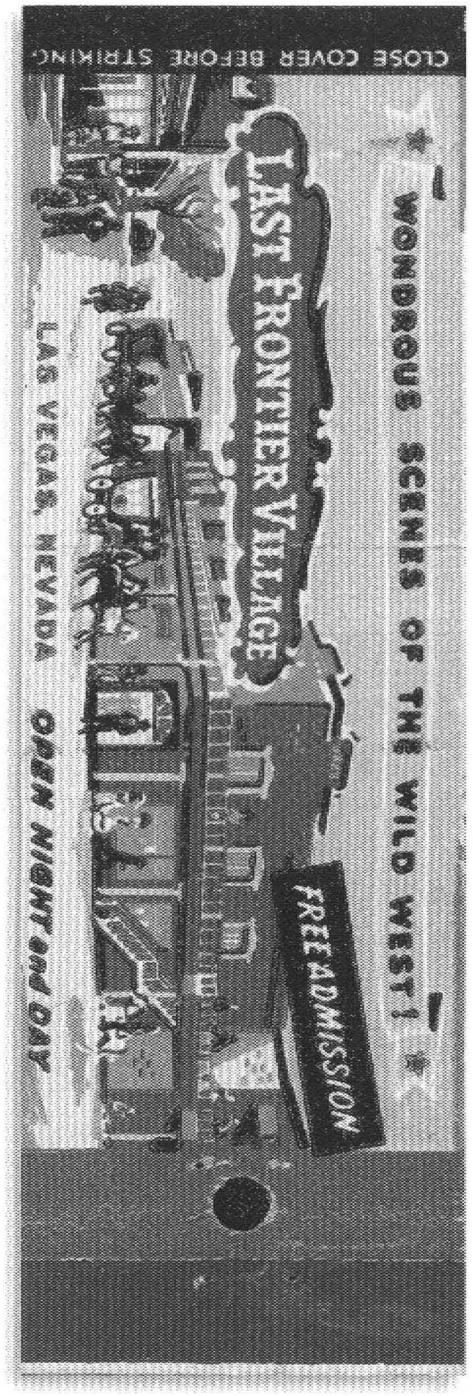

DANCING IN THE CLOUDS
Sky Room
hotel
APES
RENO
CLOSE • COVER • BEFORE • STRIKING


CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR MALONE
SENATOR MALONE UP ON HIS "CUTTING HORSE PAYDIRT"
THIS LITTLE QUARTER HORSE MARE STANDS 14½ HANDS HIGH
AND WEIGHS . . . 1,050 POUNDS . . . A TOP COMPETITOR !
KNOWS NEVADA BEST!
RE-ELECT
U.S. SENATOR
NOV. 4, 1958
GEORGE W. (MOLLY) MALONE
Close Cover Before Striking


Universal Match Corp. Los Angeles
PRIMADONNA GAL
RENO, NEVADA
WORLD FAMOUS CASINO
JACKPOT ARCADE CAFE
Club PRIMA DONNA CASINO
CLUB PRIMADONNA
239 N. VIRGINIA AVE.
Close Cover Before Striking


CLOSE COVER BEFORE STRIKING
WONDROUS SCENES OF THE WILD WEST!
LAST FRONTIER VILLAGE
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
FREE ADMISSION
OPEN NIGHT and DAY

Manuscripts

When Charles Wesley Baker came to Reno right after World War II, the city was just commencing a commercial and residential construction boom. In 1947, he formed Sterling Builders, Inc., and began building houses and other structures to meet the postwar demand. In succeeding years he became associated with several other local business ventures and entered the field of commercial banking through his C. W. Baker Company (he later declared that he was "forced" to become a mortgage banker because there was insufficient local financing for building projects in northern Nevada).

"Wes" Baker's granddaughter, Melissa Shanley, has generously donated a collection of his business papers to the Nevada Historical Society. Most of the materials, which include early minute books from Sterling Builders and the C. W. Baker Company, date from the period 1947-74 and serve to document Baker's important and multifaceted business career in the Reno area.

Financial records from a number of northern Nevada banks have recently been added to the Society's catalogued manuscript holdings. Notable among these are substantial groups of documents from two Elko County banks, the Bank of Wells and the First National Bank of Elko. The Bank of Wells records are from the period 1912-22 and include stock journals and ledgers, as well as minutes of meetings of the bank's stockholders and board of directors. Much of the material relates to the bank's placement in the hands of the Nevada state bank examiner, Gilbert C. Ross, in 1922, and its reorganization that year as the Wells State Bank.

The records of the First National Bank of Elko, which occupy approximately eight cubic feet of shelf space, cover the years 1904 to 1936, and contain a variety of materials. Among these are transaction journals, check and draft registers, collection records, account reconcilement registers, a general ledger for 1935-36, and minutes of directors' and stockholders' meetings, 1905-17.

Bert V. Bradshaw (1884-1965) and his wife, Pearl Scott Bradshaw (1896-1981), were ministers of the Methodist Church who served congregations on a number of western Indian reservations from the years of World War I into the 1960s. From 1947 to 1963, they were at the Methodist Mission in Schurz, Nevada, on the Walker Lake Indian Reservation. The Society has added to its research library holdings a significant group of photographs, certificates, and other materials that document the Bradshaws's activities at Schurz during their decade and a half of church service there. Included are dozens of photographs of the Bradshaws, the community of Schurz, various public events, and the Paiute residents of the Walker Lake Reservation.

Eric N. Moody
Curator of Manuscripts

The Walker River Indian Agency at Schurz, Nevada. Photographer unknown. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

Bradshaw and the mission station wagon at Schurz in the 1950s. Photographer unknown. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

The Methodist church and parsonage at Schurz, ca. 1960. Photographer unknown. *(Nevada Historical Society)*

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Nevada Historical Society is pleased to announce the recent acquisition of a gift of the historic photograph and manuscript collection of Emil W. Billeb, courtesy of his granddaughter Vickie C. Daniels. Mr. Billeb was actively involved in the mining and railroad industries in Nevada and California from 1905 through the 1950s. He is well known for his book *Mining Camp Days*, which recounts his work and adventures of that period, as well as his subsequent instrumental role in setting up the preservation of the town of Bodie as a California state park.

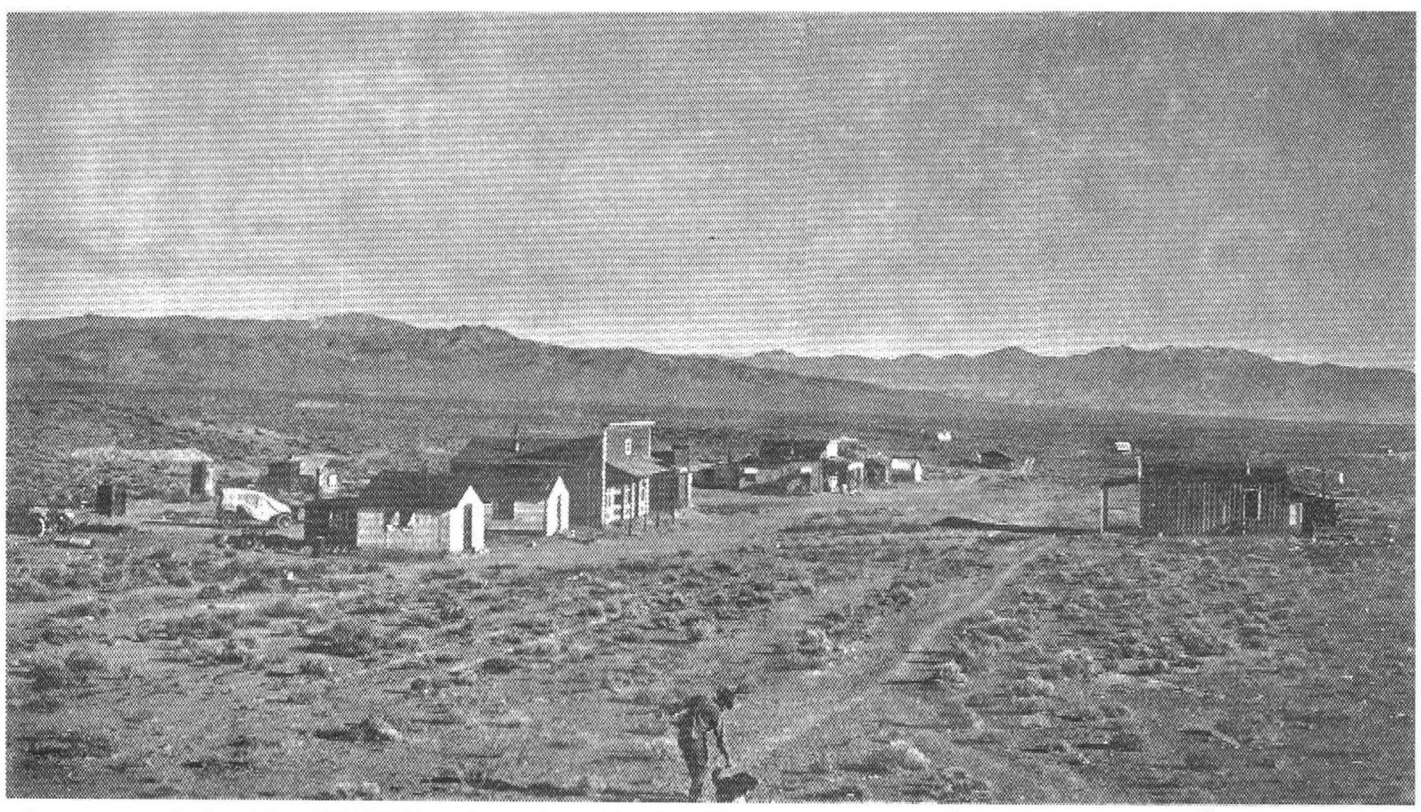
The Billeb collection contains five thousand original photographs, including extensive views of the towns and areas surrounding Tonopah, Aurora, Bodie, Mono Mills, Lundy, Bridgeport, and Mono Lake. There are images of Reno, Carson City, Yerington, Hawthorne, Broken Hills, Quartz Mountain, Klondyke, Goldfield, Benton, Mammoth, Tioga Pass, and the high Sierra. Also included is the largest known group of photographs of the Mono Lake Lumber Company (successor to the Bodie Railway and Lumber Company and the Bodie and Benton Railway). The collection includes original correspondence from mining and railroad companies, stocks and bonds, historic newspaper articles, plus the inventory and documentation of buildings remaining at Bodie in the 1950s.

The Society has scanned and fully processed the first group of four hundred photographs from the collection, and they are now available for public viewing. This group includes nearly all of the two hundred photographs depicted in *Mining Camp Days*, as well as two hundred additional photographs of the railroad and logging-related views in the collection.

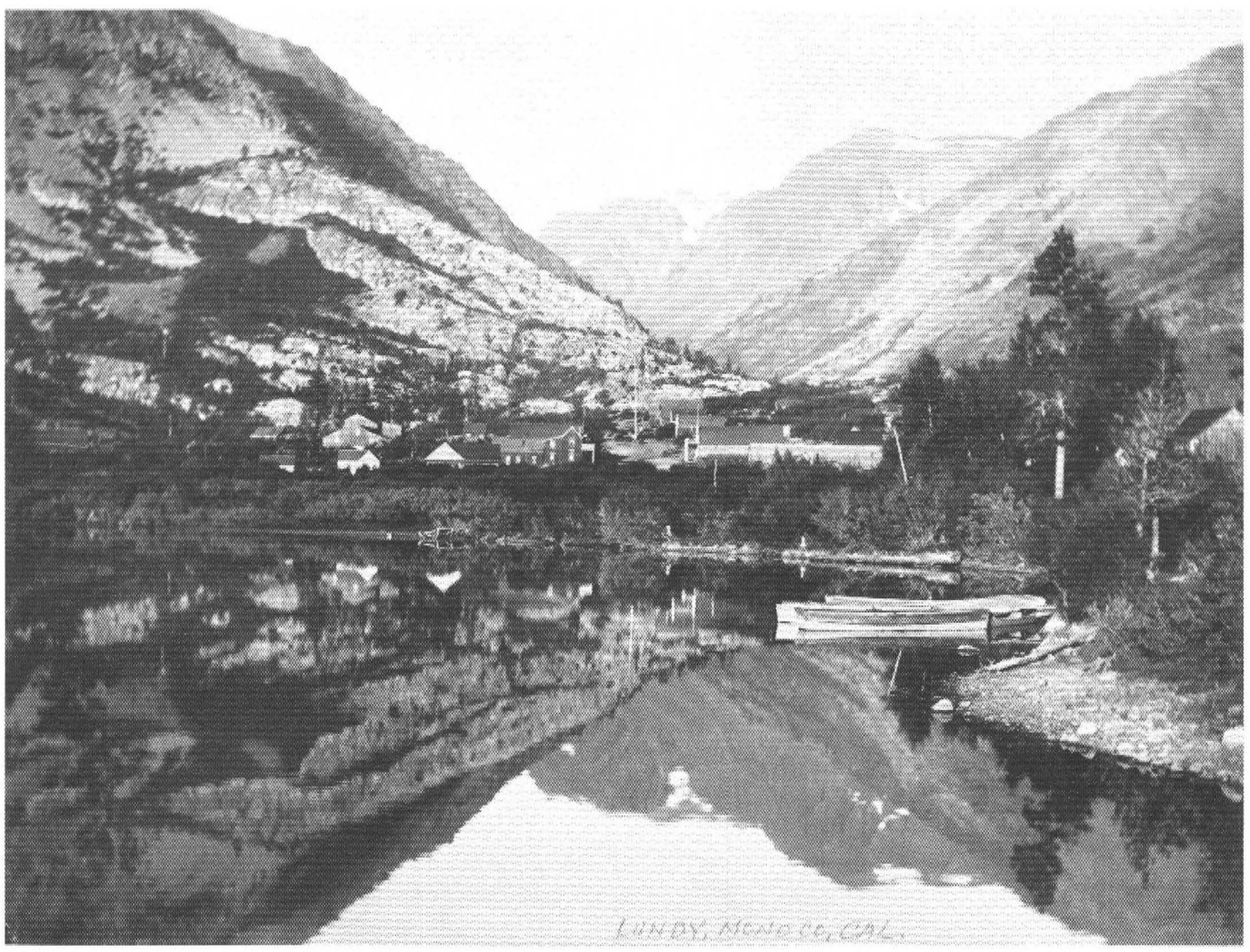
To protect the integrity of the collection, the Society is limiting researcher access to those parts that have been catalogued and archived. As funding and other applicable resources become available over time, the Society will make more of the collection available to the public. The Society thanks Lawrence Meeker of Reno for his four-year volunteer role in locating, acquiring, and processing this valuable addition to the documentary history of Nevada and bordering areas in California.

Lee Brumbaugh
Curator of Photography

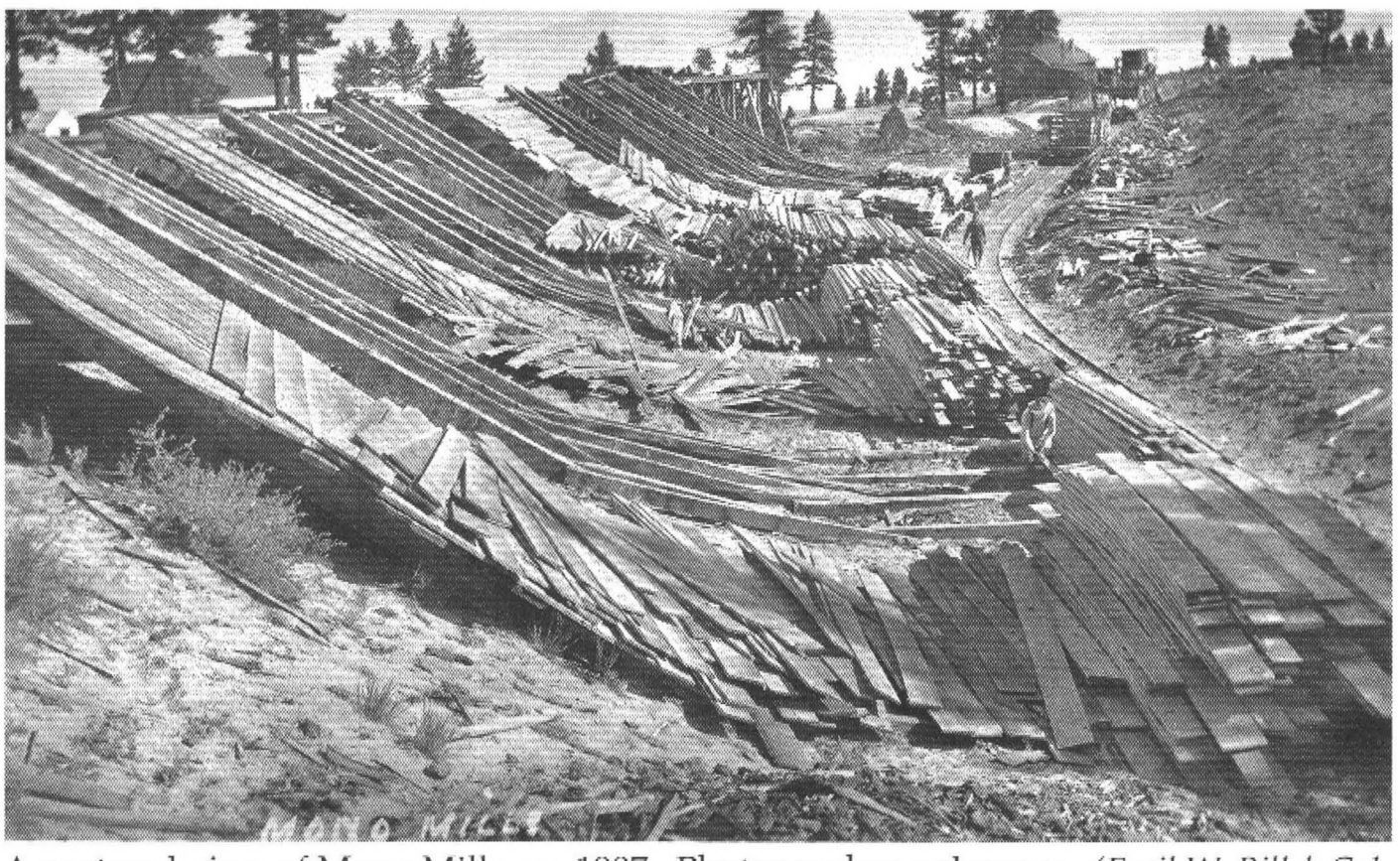
The lumber yard in Bodie, California, around 1880, before the railroad was built. Photographer unknown. *(Emil W. Billeb Collection, Nevada Historical Society)*



Photograph by Emil Billeb of Broken Hills, Nevada, 1926, showing nearly the entire town. *(Emil W. Billeb Collection, Nevada Historical Society)*



The mining camp of Lundy on Lundy Lake, Mono County, California, ca. 1898. Photograph by Andrew Alexander Forbes of Bishop, California. *(Emil W. Billeb Collection, Nevada Historical Society)*



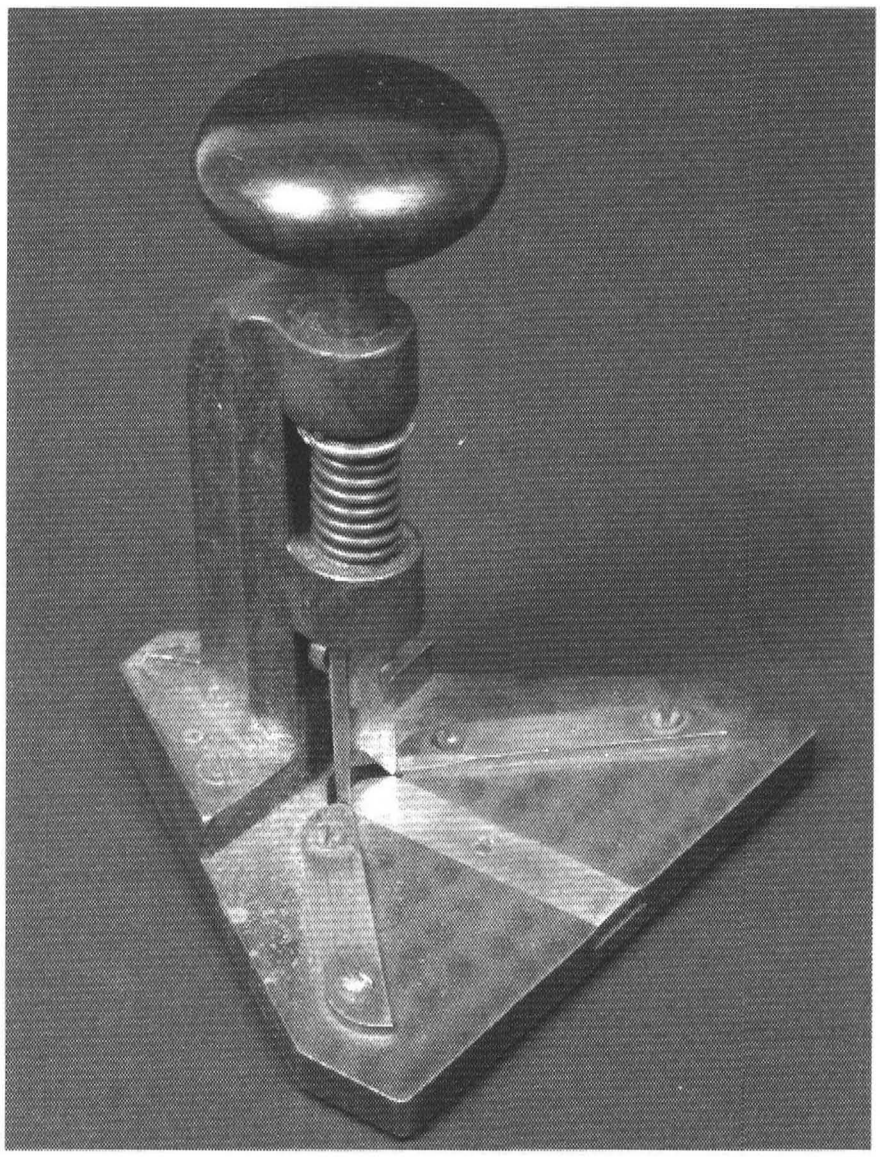
A postcard view of Mono Mills, ca. 1907. Photographer unknown. *(Emil W. Billeb Collection, Nevada Historical Society)*

Museum

In recent months, the Nevada Historical Society has acquired a number of fascinating and historically important artifacts through generous donations from the public. These items represent important aspects of Nevada's history that might be lost to future generations. In the area of gaming and casino memorabilia, the society has acquired two important collections.

Julianne Gordon Anastassatos donated artifacts used by cheaters in Nevada during the 1920s and beyond in memory of her father. The items include a wool houndstooth vest modified with a spring-loaded metal card holder, a brass card trimmer with an ivory-handle tip, and a brass card-corner trimmer with a mahogany handle dating back to 1864 and made by Will and Finck, San Francisco makers of cutlery, surgical instruments, and barber's supplies.

Joe Snyder, Jr., donated sets of cheaters' dice from various casinos including the Sahara Tahoe, the Rolo Club, Ed's Tahoe Nugget, the Cal-Neva Club, and the Silver Nugget; two ties from the Golden Bank Club and the Golden Nugget; and a dice-duplicator set used in Nevada casinos.



Corner trimmer.

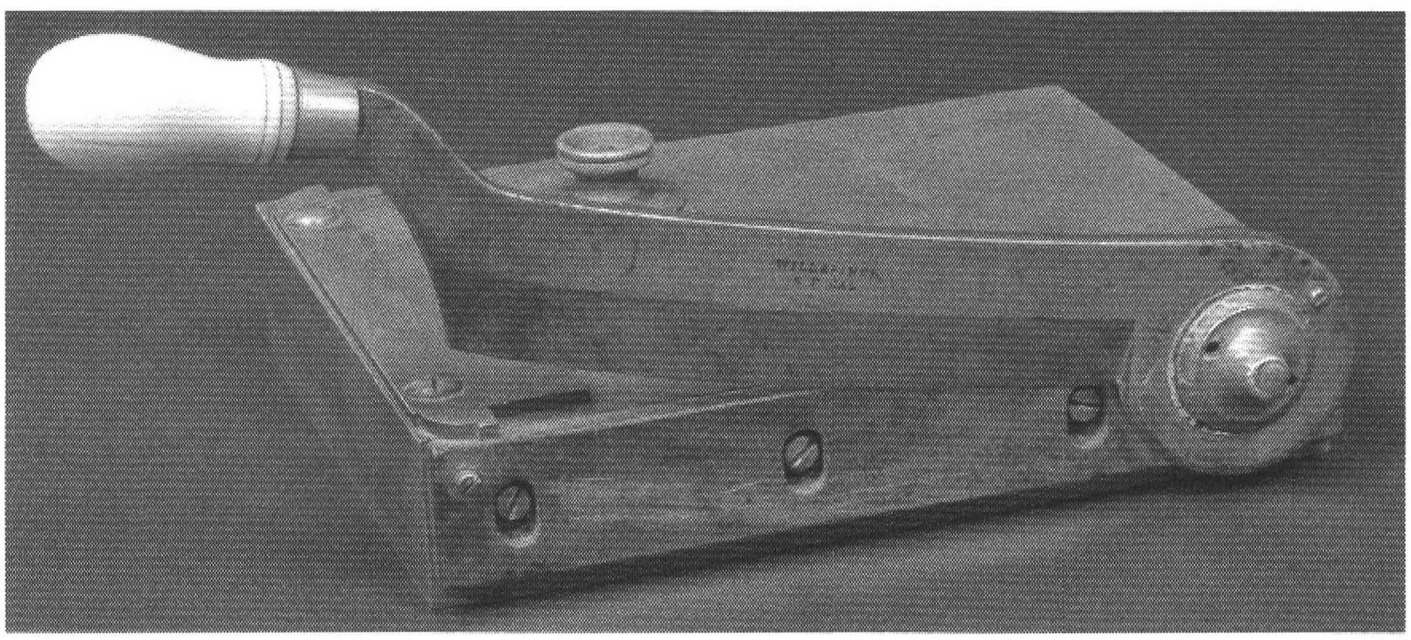
Mr. Snyder's father was known as "Back Line Joe" because he never played anything on the dice table except the back line (betting against the dice). He was born in Baltimore in 1893; he was involved in illegal gambling in Baltimore, and when it got a little too hot there he headed for Nevada. He arrived in Reno in 1942, and because of his previous connections with Bill Graham and James McKay, he was offered work as a pit boss in the Bank Club. Snyder later worked summers at Tahoe Village Casino on the south shore of Lake Tahoe. In 1948 and 1949, he owned and operated the Rolo Club on Commercial Row in Reno, and in 1951 he was manager of the Frisco Club on North Center Street. Snyder suffered a heart attack while working on the catwalk of Harvey's Wagon Wheel. He died on June 28, 1957.

Snyder's son, Joe, also worked in the gaming industry. His first job was as a dealer at the Tahoe Village Casino. Most of his almost fifty-year casino career was spent as a pit supervisor.

The Pincolini family and Quilici Construction donated items in the area of historical business equipment and memorabilia including the original wooden telephone switchboard from the historic Mizpah Hotel (Pincolini Hotel) that was located at 214 Lake Street in Reno. It was the original switchboard for the hotel's 110 rooms. Unfortunately, Reno lost the historic hotel to an arson fire on November 1, 2006.

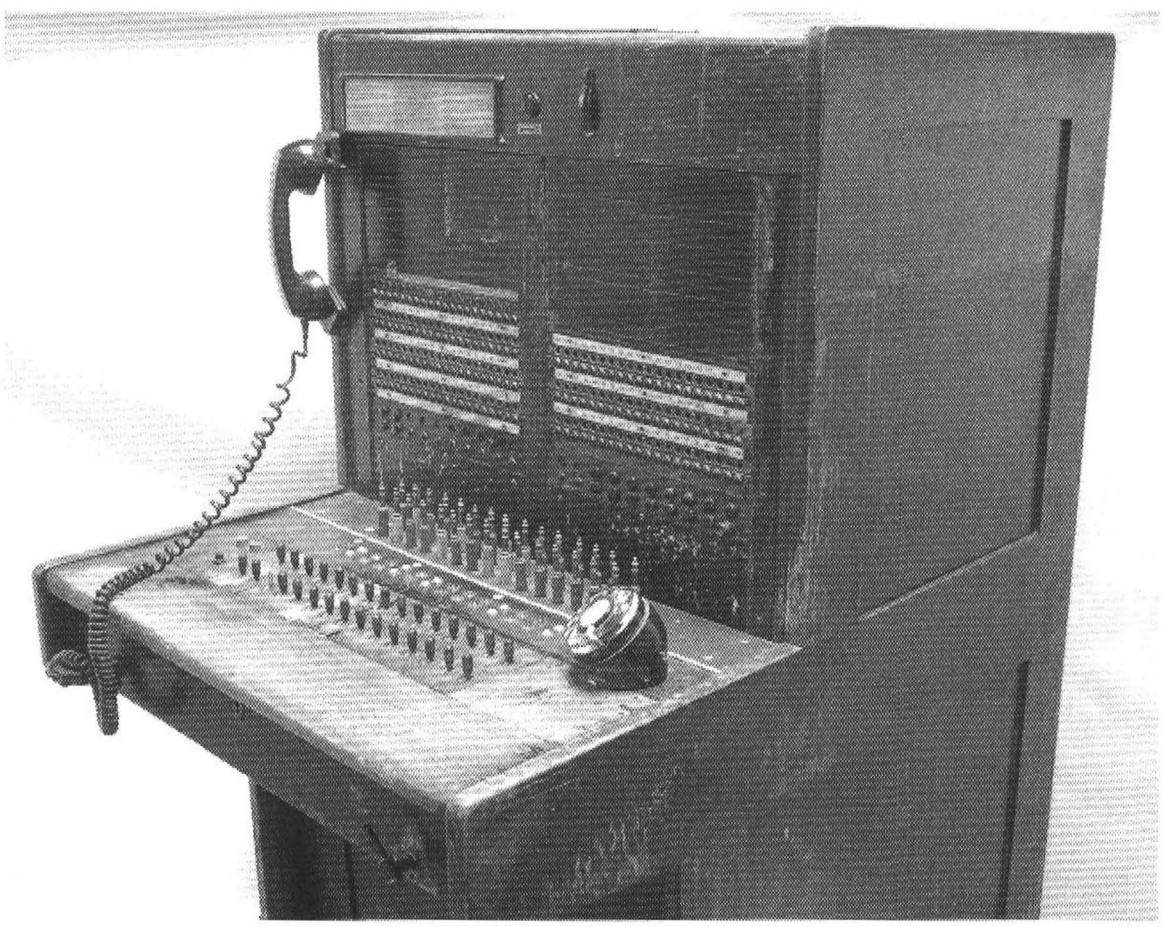
Dr. Joxe Mallea, professor of Basque history at the University of Nevada, Reno donated a carved aspen tree trunk, a good example of the types of Basque carvings found in Nevada. Basque immigrants from the Pyrenees mountain region between France and Spain came to the United States between 1860 and 1930. They left thousands of aspen trees carved with names, dates, poetry, and pictures marking their duties as sheepherders in the industry that supplied mutton to the early western mining camps. They, more than any other ethnic group, are being studied through the use of arborglyphs carved over the last century.

Sheryln Hayes-Zorn
Registrar



Brass card trimmer.

Bank Club tie.



Mizpah Hotel switchboard.

Notes & Documents

Recent Additions to the Nevada State Archives Web Pages

Most members of the general public are unfamiliar with the holdings of the Nevada State Archives. Many also do not know how the Archives makes information about the records available. Although the Nevada State Archives has not yet begun to digitize its archival holdings, we use our web page at NevadaCulture.org to let researchers know what we have. On this page you can find information about individual state agencies and descriptions of record series. Some examples follow.

The Division of Conservation Districts/Soil Conservation grew out of the Great Depression of the 1930s, when farmers desperately needed assistance to cope with the results of poor agricultural and grazing practices. Nevada adopted a version of national legislation that authorized soil conservation districts to carry out erosion-control remedies and assist farmers financially with erosion-control projects and land-use plans. In 1971, the Soil Conservation Districts became part of the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. A full agency history and description of the records is on the Archives web page at http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/archival/exec/conser.htm.

Biographical sketches and photos of Governor Jim Gibbons and First Lady Dawn Gibbons have been added to the Archives web pages. The information about the governor is on the Nevada Governors' Biographical Information page at http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/gov/govbib.htm. Mrs. Gibbons's information appears on "Nevada's First Ladies" at http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/photos/1ladies.htm.

Access to historic maps has been vastly increased by additions to the Archives page "Discover Nevada History," http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/history. Click on "Historic Maps" to locate scanned images of all the Nevada state lands plat maps; the site also includes useful information on how the plats were compiled and how to use them. The same Historic Maps page includes a link to the U. S. Board of Geographic Names web page, with its searchable

index geonames.usgs.gov. If you don't know where Carson Rapids City was (down river from Dayton), by searching this site you can read a description or look at a digitized topographic map or view an aerial photo of the area–even though the city is long gone.

Sometimes it's just as important to know what is NOT in the Archives as to know what is. Additions have been made to the "What's Not in the Archives" page: http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/whatnot.htm. The FAQs now include better information about where to find naturalization and immigration records, http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/natural.htm, and records of the Civilian Conservation Corps in Nevada, http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/ccc.htm.

There is a new web page describing the history of the Department of Cultural Affairs and links to agency histories for the Nevada State Railroad Museum and the Nevada State Library and Archives at http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/culturalaffairs.htm. Click on the link to NSLA, http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/archival/exec/nsla.htm, and see photos of the Old Federal Building, home to the State Library from 1975 to 1992, as well as our current building. A description of the records is also included in the collection.

The Nevada Division of Forestry originated in federal legislation in 1924 and is now a part of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. A description of the records and photographs of this agency are now available at http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/archival/exec/forestry.htm. The web page includes fun photos of two fire-lookout towers at Zephyr Point on Lake Tahoe ("manned" by a married couple) and at Wheeler Peak.

Even though the 1871 legislative session met in the original Nevada State Capitol, the building was not completed until 1872. To oversee construction, maintenance, and remodeling, the legislature created the Board of Capitol Building Commissioners, later known as the Board of Capitol Commissioners. Did you know that when the capitol building was completed in 1872 there were no indoor bathrooms and a special appropriation had to be made to rectify that oversight? Cost over-runs, disputes with subcontractors, problems with limited space, and the later planning for many new state buildings (including the governor's mansion) are all documented in these records. A new web page details the history of the Commission, whose functions were later absorbed by State Buildings and Grounds: http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/archival/spboards/capcomm.htm.

Archivist Susan Searcy recently processed the collection of John Nulty's photographs and negatives and placed a guide to the collection on-line at http://nevadaculture.org/docs/nsla/archives/photos/images/nulty.htm. John Nulty was employed by the Nevada secretary of state's office, but his avocation was photography. He had a photo-developing laboratory in the basement of the state capitol and spent much of his time capturing on film the officials, employees, buildings, and activities of state government. He also photographed

many private businesses, houses, and other buildings in Carson City and the surrounding area, including aerial views of the capital city, as well as the special occasions of private citizens such as anniversaries, weddings, and grand openings of businesses.

The John Nulty collection consists of 3,191 photographic prints and negatives dating from approximately 1947 to 1975. The bulk of the collection falls between 1958 and 1967. The collection can be characterized almost entirely as negatives although Nulty prints exist in other photo collections in the State Archives, principally those of Governor Charles Russell and Governor Grant Sawyer. Other collections of photographs dating from the 1958-67 period may largely be uncredited Nulty images. The collection was donated to the Nevada State Archives by Mr. Nulty. The majority of the negatives (almost entirely black and white) are on 4-by-5-inch individual film stock but there are some on 2-by-2.5-inch film in strips. Nulty did not seem to have a particular order for the collection and the identification on the original sleeves was sketchy at best, consisting of a few words and perhaps a date. To make the collection usable, the negatives were examined and supplemental identification added where possible. The negatives were then arranged alphabetically by subject.

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The Recovery of Sagebrush School Writers

A Biographical Sketch of Lawrence I. Berkove and an Omnibus Book Review of His Recent Editions

CHERYLL GLOTFELTY

Quietly, with no fanfare, an important new chapter has been inserted into the record of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western American literature—the writings of the authors of the Sagebrush School. Until only a few years ago, it was possible for students of Western literature to be almost certain that all essential writers from the period were either present or accounted for, and to be confident that wherever these writers came from besides California, they certainly didn't come from Nevada. That picture has changed. We now know that Nevada must be reckoned with not only as a major site of Western literature, but one close, if not equal, in importance to that of California. The Sagebrush School—a literary movement based in Virginia City during the latter half of the nineteenth century—is responsible for shaping as well as launching Mark Twain on his path to fame, for influencing Ambrose Bierce in some of his best work, for being the home base of some of the West's finest authors, for raising the art of the hoax to a new level of literary eminence, and for leaving behind a priceless legacy of bold, witty, artistic, and moral literature. Much of what we now know about the importance of the Sagebrush School is attributable to the persistent labors of Lawrence I. Berkove.

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Lawrence I. Berkove. *(Courtesy of Lawrence I. Berkove)*

Scholars such as Berkove who specialize in literary recovery rescue forgotten writers and neglected works from oblivion. But even as the scholarly work of reclaiming and republishing writers rescues those authors from obscurity, the scholars may find themselves consigned to invisibility. Who remembers the name of the scholar who revived Herman Melville?[1] A scholar who does literary recovery may perhaps be likened to a political campaign manager, someone who works behind the scenes and devotes his or her talents to advancing the career—and power—of someone else. Or perhaps the literary recoverer is more akin to a museum curator who collects historical artifacts and endeavors to preserve, display, and interpret them for the public. In either case, it is sadly ironic that the scholars who do so much to reshape our understanding of literary history

are themselves often forgotten. This essay intends to give due credit to "the man behind the curtain" by telling the story of Lawrence Berkove, the scholar most responsible for rediscovering and promoting Nevada's Sagebrush School.[2]

An emeritus professor of English and American literature at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, Berkove has spent more than twenty-five years reviving the literary works and reputations of a cadre of writers that Mark Twain associated with during his years in Virginia City, Nevada. While Twain is regarded as a major American author, his peers—and *mentors*—on the Comstock have hitherto teetered on the brink of obscurity. This article explores the motives and methods of literary recovery by surveying Berkove's life and research trajectory, explaining how he discovered Sagebrush writers, why and how he decided to champion them, and with what results. This article doubles as an omnibus book review, focusing on Berkove's most recent editions, four books published in 2006 and 2007. Two are reprints of forgotten plays, one an anthology of fiction and poetry, and the last a collection of Comstock memoirs. These works add considerably to our knowledge of the literary activity in Nevada during its mining heyday, and Berkove's reprinted editions make available many works that had all but disappeared from the record.

Berkove's most recent book, *Insider Stories of the Comstock Lode and Nevada's Mining Frontier* is dedicated: "In loving memory of the former generations of my family, humble, poor, and oppressed who faithfully supported the Tree of Life in the worst of times that their descendants might inherit the privilege of supporting it in the best of times." Berkove's paternal grandparents were Yiddish-speaking Russian Jews who immigrated to the United States in 1906 to flee persecution. In his flight from Russia, Berkove's grandfather narrowly escaped two attacks on his life. The family settled in Rochester, New York, where Berkove's grandfather became a pants presser. Lawrence Berkove's father, who was one year old when the family moved to America, grew up to take some college courses, but he withdrew from college during the Great Depression, later enrolling in a school of podiatry and becoming a podiatrist. Berkove's love of reading was encouraged by his family, who believed that there was more to life than mere survival. In college, he majored in English and became the first member of his family to earn a college degree. He went on to earn his master's degree in 1953 at the University of Minnesota, where he worked with Henry Nash Smith and Leo Marx at a time when American literature was just beginning to gain a tenuous toehold in literary studies. Berkove then enlisted for three years in the army and was sent to Korea, returning home hungrier than ever to continue his study of English. He earned his Ph.D. in 1962 at the University of Pennsylvania, where he received rigorous, traditional training in British and American Literature.

One can detect Berkove's interest in understudied writers in his choice of a dissertation topic. At the time, one of his undergraduate students was interested in Civil War writers, and Berkove suggested that she write her research

paper on Ambrose Bierce. Her paper seemed so thinly researched that Berkove was about to give it a low grade, but he decided first to check the library to see what material was available on Bierce. He discovered that the student had actually done a good job (she earned an A), given the paucity of work on Bierce. Regarding the skimpy state of Bierce scholarship at the time, Berkove thought to himself, "I could do a better job than this, right now!" and his dissertation on the moral art of Ambrose Bierce was launched.[3] Another incident related to the dissertation proved to be fateful. When Berkove showed his advisor his first chapter, the advisor noticed that some of Bierce's stories had originally been published in the *San Francisco Examiner*, and he asked Berkove if he had consulted the original texts. Berkove said no. His advisor replied, "I think you ought to." Berkove did, working from microfilms and making weekend trips to the Library of Congress to read the stories in their original versions. This was in the days before photocopiers, so Berkove toted his manual typewriter and typed up the stories. He began to notice significant differences between the original stories and the reprinted versions that he had been working with earlier; analyzing those discrepancies led him to insights that informed his reading of Bierce's stories, the original versions being more explicit about their intent.

Berkove later took trips to San Francisco to continue his research on Bierce, during the course of which he developed a habit that has served him well ever since. In perusing the newspapers and periodicals in which Bierce published, Berkove broadened his focus and read around in the paper or magazine in order to get a sense of the period. He began to notice articles and stories, some of them exceptional, by a little-known author named Dan De Quille. I note here Berkove's faith in his ability to discriminate between literary wheat and chaff. The comprehensive and stringent training that Berkove received in graduate school gave him a context and, most important, the *confidence* to be an independent judge of literary quality. By this time photocopiers were available, so Berkove made copies of some De Quille stories and started a file on him. In 1984, the Western Literature Association (WLA) held its annual conference in Reno, Nevada. Among the featured conference topics was Nevada literature. Berkove figured that if he was ever going to do something with his De Quille materials, this was the time, so he began to look more deeply into De Quille's biography and oeuvre. What he discovered was that after the 1876 publication of *The Big Bonanza*, De Quille's history of the Comstock Lode, the author apparently dropped off the literary radar screen, as if that big book were his last bang. Yet, the photocopied stories that Berkove had collected in his files were all published in the 1880s. De Quille had planned to collect his short stories into a book, but it did not happen, and consequently this fine work was forgotten. Berkove presented his paper, "The Literary Journalism of Dan De Quille," at the WLA conference, and maintained an interest in this author.

He later decided to fulfill De Quille's unrealized ambition and bring out a collection of his stories. De Quille had been a farmer in Iowa before leaving

his wife and children behind to go west. Wondering whether De Quille had any remaining relatives in Iowa, Berkove wrote to a librarian in De Quille's hometown of West Liberty, Iowa, who replied that De Quille's great-grandson Evans Morris still lived there. Berkove, with his son, drove from Michigan to meet Morris, who owned a stationery store in West Liberty. After chatting for a bit, Morris produced eight letters written to Dan De Quille. Berkove fell speechless. All were written by Mark Twain. Berkove's son explained his father's loss for words: "I think Dad is happy." Apparently, Mark Twain scholars had approached De Quille's granddaughter in the past, asking if she had any materials on Twain. The granddaughter, who had spent years attempting to honor the memory of Dan De Quille, was offended by the Twain scholars and did not show them anything, but she told her son that if anyone ever came looking for materials on De Quille, he should help them. Thus Berkove, himself a Twain scholar, was the lucky winner. Berkove was able to match Twain's letters to De Quille's written replies, which are housed in the Twain collection of the Beinecke Library at Yale. With appropriate permission from all parties, Berkove published the correspondence between Twain and De Quille in *The Mark Twain Journal*.[4]

As Berkove became further acquainted with Morris, he was shown more papers and was eventually invited to the man's house, where again he gasped as he beheld a hitherto unknown three-quarter-length portrait of Dan De Quille. Berkove told Morris that these materials were important and ought to be preserved. Accordingly, with the cooperation of De Quille's descendants, Berkove made arrangements for a De Quille archive to be established and for the papers to be photocopied onto archival paper, where they are now available at the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City. Berkove also met an editor at the University of Iowa Press, who agreed to publish Berkove's edited book, *The Fighting Horse of the Stanislaus: Stories and Essays by Dan De Quille*.[5]

While working on that book, and on Twain, Berkove became curious about who else might have influenced Mark Twain during his Comstock years. This question opened up a whole new field and a wide horizon of research possibilities; Berkove discovered a group of other writers who, with Twain, constituted a vibrant and distinctive literary school, which an 1893 study by Ella Sterling Cummins had dubbed the Sagebrush School.[6] Adopting the name for the movement that Cummins had coined, Berkove came to realize that, in their own era, members of the Sagebrush School were not minor writers. They were some of the most respected writers of the day, and they went on to prominent careers. Rollin M. Daggett, for example, became a United States congressman and minister to the kingdom of Hawaii, while Joseph Goodman is known among Meso-American anthropologists even today for deciphering the hieroglyphics that explained the Mayan calendar. Berkove's essays argue for the influence of these writers on Twain's development—they introduced Twain to the literary hoax, for example. In an essay entitled "Life after Twain"

he also makes a case for considering them on their own merits, independent of Twain, noting the distinguished careers they carved after their time on the Comstock.[7] Berkove does not deny that Twain's pre-eminence is deserved, but he regrets that his extraordinary reputation has effaced the memory of his close literary colleagues. We study Emerson in the context of a circle of other Transcendentalist writers. No author develops in a vacuum. Why then do we study Twain's formative years in such isolation? As Berkove puts it, even though you are hunting for gold, it is not intelligent to reject silver. Hence, Berkove has dedicated a major part of his career to collecting Sagebrush writing and finding publishers for it.

Because he is based in Michigan, Berkove's study of Sagebrush writers entailed many summer research trips to the West, where he worked in archives and special collections in California and Nevada. While working in the Nevada Historical Society in Reno, Berkove met manuscript curator Eric Moody, who drew his attention to a little-known nineteenth-century play jointly written by Joseph T. Goodman, an editor and the owner-publisher of Virginia City's leading newspaper, the *Territorial Enterprise*, and his friend and fellow journalist Rollin Mallory Daggett. Entitled *The Psychoscope: A Sensational Drama in Five Acts*, the play ran for four days in August 1872 in Piper's Opera House in Virginia City, produced by John McCullough's California Theatre Company. Berkove's edition includes a facsimile reproduction of the copyrighted version of the play, an introduction written by Berkove, photographs of Virginia City in the 1870s, newspaper reviews of the performances, an 1873 editorial, a 1909 memoir likely written by Joseph Goodman, and a fold-out facsimile of the 1872 playbill.[8] Berkove's excellent introduction gives readers a sense of 1870s Virginia City as a cultural hub, the biggest city between Chicago and San Francisco, boasting two opera houses, several music halls, a theater, and a National Guard Hall that could be used for shows. The play itself is entertaining, and the supplementary materials provided by Berkove make a case for its literary significance and historical interest.

Set in New York, *The Psychoscope* is a murder mystery, love triangle, and science fiction tale rolled into one and enhanced by "sensational" special effects. A young inventor named Percy Gresham is working out the final details to harness electricity to do the work of steam. He shares his progress with his sweetheart Lucy, the lovely daughter of the wealthy stock broker and banker Amos Royalton. When Royalton is later found murdered, Percy is arrested and imprisoned because he is present at the crime scene with Royalton's money in his possession. In prison, Percy develops a new invention, which he calls a psychoscope, a mind-reading machine that projects people's thoughts onto a screen. Percy then uses another new invention to cut his way through the prison bars and escape. In disguise, Percy brings the psychoscope to the Royaltons' house on the eve of Lucy's reluctant marriage to Royalton's clerk Robert Fairbanks. Fairbanks volunteers to be hooked up to the psychoscope, only to

horrify the assembled group minutes later when the murder is projected onto a screen, revealing Fairbanks himself to be Royalton's brutal murderer, a fact later corroborated by a brothel-house madam named Molly.

Although Piper's Opera House was within easy walking distance of Virginia City's redlight district, the aspect of the play that ignited heated public controversy, and that dominated the reviews, is a scene set in a panel-house (brothel). Most reviews found this scene to be in poor taste and declared the play "unfit to be placed upon the stage."[9] For its part, the *Territorial Enterprise*, whose publisher was one of the authors of the play, defended the script while trouncing the actors for making a mockery of the scene, apparently lampooning their own roles as prostitutes. The controversy that the play aroused guaranteed that it played to full houses for the duration of its brief run. According to Berkove's introduction, the producer McCullough, who also acted in the play, offered to buy the script for ten thousand dollars, with the intention of removing two offending brothel scenes. On principle, Goodman and Daggett refused the offer, and the play was not performed again until 1949, in a production by drama students at the University of Nevada. Berkove's introduction points to the brothel scenes as an important stride in literary history, a precocious instance of realism appearing a decade *before* the novels of William Dean Howells stimulated the realist movement in the United States. One scene in the play even editorializes on the subject, making a persuasive argument for the use of realism in the arts. In short, *The Psychoscope* was ahead of its time, revealing Virginia City to be aesthetically avant-garde, relative to England as well as the rest of America, and earning this play a deserved place in the history of literary realism.

Readers today, accustomed to even more explicit realism than this play dares, may find themselves less interested in the brothel scene and more intrigued by the way that the play grapples with science. The sanity of the inventor Percy Gresham is continually called into question throughout the play, flirting with the idea of the mad scientist. Because the prison physician considers him somewhat daffy, Percy is allowed to continue tinkering on his inventions. The evidence of the psychoscope, which vividly implicates Fairbanks as the murderer, is in fact not used to indict him; rather, the testimony of the brothel's madam, Molly McPherson, ultimately puts the villain behind bars. In the play's conclusion, a minister proclaims, "It is not for us to read the hearts of men."[10] The playwrights, then, while proposing the idea of a mind-reading machine, ultimately retreat from its implications, affirming that God alone can "judge between the wicked and the just."[11] This ambivalence toward science—the simultaneous fascination with and fear of its potential to give humans godlike powers—is a theme as relevant today as it was on the Comstock, itself a leader in nineteenth-century technological innovation.

Berkove's discovery of another play by a Sagebrush author stands out as one of his favorite memories from a rewarding career. Through his growing

Sylvia Crowell Stoddard and Lawrence I. Berkove, and the steamer trunk that housed the "Stoddard Archive" of Sam Davis papers. Photograph taken in the garage of the Stoddard home, Carson City, Nevada. Photographer unknown. *(Courtesy of Lawrence I. Berkove)*

familiarity with the Sagebrush School, Berkove began to recognize the talent and productivity of Samuel Post Davis (1850-1918), who also published as Sam Davis. Born in Branford, Connecticut, Davis pursued an interest in journalism and was drawn to Virginia City in 1875, where he joined other Sagebrushers, who were, Berkove writes, "distinguished by a flinty morality, personal courage, and wit, as well as by impressive literary ability."[12] In 1879, Davis moved to Carson City, where he became editor of the *Morning Appeal* and wrote prodigiously, including an 1886 collection, *Short Stories*, and the *History of Nevada* (1913). Berkove learned that Davis had a granddaughter named Sylvia Crowell Stoddard, who lived in Carson City. In 1996, he arranged to meet Mrs. Stod-

dard at her home. This gracious, elderly lady—she verged on ninety at the time he met her and she has since died—chatted with Berkove in her living room, showing him a sheaf of papers related to Sam Davis. The materials she showed him were already familiar to Berkove, who after a couple of hours thanked her and politely excused himself. Mrs. Stoddard replied, "But don't you want to see my grandfather's papers?" Apparently there were more. She led him into her garage and showed him a large wooden steamer trunk. When he lifted the lid he stood stunned. The trunk was stuffed with an unsorted miscellany of papers written by or about Sam Davis. For the next three days Berkove sorted through this amazing treasure trove—a Rosetta Stone of the Sagebrush School—and organized the material into categories. Among the discoveries was an unknown play, *The Prince of Timbuctoo*, that Davis wrote around 1905. This play, with an introduction and explanatory notes by Berkove, is reprinted in *The Old West in the Old World: Lost Plays by Bret Harte and Sam Davis*, together with a little-known play written by Bret Harte and M. de Seigneur entitled *The Luck of Roaring Camp* (c. 1883), edited by Gary Scharnhorst.[13] As Berkove and Scharnhorst's general introduction explains, during the late nineteenth century, literature that explored the international theme grew in popularity, probably because of the unprecedented numbers of middle-class Americans with the means to travel abroad. While novelists Henry James and Edith Wharton depicted the European encounters of Americans of an educated and cultured class, writers shaped by the American West, such as Mark Twain, Bret Harte, and Sam Davis, wrote about the adventures abroad of characters from the less-sophisticated working class. Apparently never produced, Bret Harte's play is a spin off of his popular short story "The Luck of Roaring Camp," about a baby boy orphan, reared by miners in a California gold camp. In the play, the baby is a girl named Fortuna ("Luck") whom her adoptive mining-camp fathers send to France to get a genteel education when she turns seventeen. The drama contrasts American boldness, frankness, and principle with French sophistication, snobbery, and intrigue.

In a century not known for good American drama, Sam Davis's *The Prince of Timbuctoo* is arguably the country's best comic opera, with social commentary. Set in faraway Timbuctoo, the play is about a dying king who has disinherited his only son, Festicus, for falling in love with a beautiful Zulu maiden against the king's wishes. Meanwhile, one of the king's former paramours, an American adventuress named Francisera, teams up with an unscrupulous lawyer to forge a will that leaves the king's money and his throne to her. Enter Daniel Orndorff, an agent for Carnegie Steel, sent to Timbuctoo to secure a contract to build a steel bridge across the Niger that will serve as a path of retreat for British forces engaged in an imperial war in Africa. Orndorff's valet is a Chicago politician, who allies himself with Prince Festicus, introducing Chicago-style ballot-box stuffing to unseat Francisera and "elect" the disinherited prince to be the new King of Timbuctoo. This comedy abounds in silliness, including a

duet entitled "Two Hearts Beat in One Ragout," sung by the Zulu maiden and Festicus when it appears that Francisera will boil them together in a pot and serve them to her subjects. To add to the ridiculous plot elements, a group of traveling Puritan girls become enamored of the tropics and by the end of the play are dancing lewdly in short grass skirts. Yet, as Berkove's keen introduction points out, beneath the entertaining silliness Davis aims satirical barbs at Roosevelt's "big stick" foreign policy, American imperialism, Gilded Age industrial giants, election fraud, and political corruption, the implication being that America's greed and rottenness are being exported. With the aid of Berkove's informative endnotes, *The Prince of Timbuctoo* can be appreciated today as a period piece, turn-of-the-century political satire served up as comic opera. The two plays reprinted in this book would hardly stand on their own dramatic merits today—both are flawed and dated—but with the interpretive introductions and notes by Scharnhorst and Berkove, they can be read together to illuminate different representations of encounters between the Old West and the Old World at the end of the nineteenth century. And they are valuable examples of the genre of nineteenth-century drama, still an underappreciated aspect of American literary history.

Notwithstanding the historically significant elements of *The Psychoscope* and *The Prince of Timbuctoo,* most readers are likely to conclude that the Sagebrushers do not warrant a critical revival based solely on their dramatic works. These plays were either short-lived or possibly never produced in their own day, and they are unlikely to become enduring classics. However, the same cannot be said for Sagebrush fiction, which should be considered a national treasure, worthy of frequent reprinting, inclusion in anthologies of American literature, and critical study. Duncan Emrich made an important effort to revive nineteenth-century Nevada fiction in his edited collection *Comstock Bonanza,* which also includes nonfiction.[14] Unfortunately, Emrich's pioneering collection is out of print and little known. Berkove's *The Sagebrush Anthology: Literature from the Silver Age of the Old West* makes these authors available once more, extending Emrich's coverage by including newly discovered works, many additional authors, and a sampling of poetry.[15] The collection culls the best representative works discovered in Berkove's twenty-five years of research, featuring pieces originally published in period magazines and newspapers such as the *Argonaut,* the *Territorial Enterprise,* the *Golden Era,* the *San Franciscan,* the *San Francisco Examiner,* the *Midwinter Appeal,* the *Salt Lake City Daily Tribune, Nevada Mining News,* the *Overland Monthly,* and more, as well as articles and unpublished material from archives at the Nevada Historical Society; the Special Collections at the University of Nevada, Reno; the Bancroft library at the University of California, Berkeley; and the steamer trunk of Mrs. Stoddard, aka the "Stoddard Collection."

The Sagebrush Anthology not only will delight the lay reader, but also should interest scholars. Among the seventeen authors represented are well-known names such as Mark Twain and Dan De Quille and their friends Joseph T. Goodman and Sam Davis; lesser-known figures such as Alfred Doten, Rollin

Mallory Daggett, and Fred H. Hart; and the nearly forgotten writers Thomas Fitch, James W. Gally, C. C. Goodwin, D. Jones, James W. Kennedy, W. H. Marshall, Denis McCarthy, and Arthur McEwen. Collecting these works in one volume makes it clear that Mark Twain was indeed part of a school of writers, a cadre marked by sharp wit, a buoyant sense of adventure and fun, facility with wordplay and puns, and the literary use of the hoax. Also included is an article by Northern Paiute author Sarah Winnemucca and a report from G. W. Pease, a clerk at the Walker River Indian Reservation, pieces whose tones and points of view differ dramatically, poignant reminders of the native peoples whose cultures were disrupted by the mining rush that attracted the writers of the Sagebrush School.

The Sagebrush Anthology includes sections on Humor and Hoaxes, Short Fiction, Memoirs, Nonfiction, Letters, and Poetry. Within each section, Berkove has arranged the pieces chronologically, spanning publication dates from 1862 to 1909 (and possibly as late as 1914). Berkove's introduction explains that these works illuminate the literary milieu that shaped Twain's techniques and values. While the works contribute to our better understanding of Twain's literary artistry, they deserve study for their own sake as well. In Berkove's view, Sagebrush literature does not conform to a central, unifying creed, but its works do share several distinctive features, including "a fierce love of the Nevada experience," a "sense of high spirits, of tasting life at its most flavorful," a pervasive nostalgia, and a penchant for personal narrative. Underneath its characteristic humor, Berkove identifies a set of shared values that include "honor, virtue, and fair play" along with adherence to a code of manliness that encompasses "principle and decency as well as courage."[16] Thus, despite their embellishments and habitual stretching of the truth, Sagebrush writers stand out as some of the most *moral* men on the Comstock, exposing the criminal activities of the social elite and finding heroes among the lowly. A case can even be made that the harmless literary hoaxes of these writers helped vaccinate readers against the daily deceptions perpetrated by mining promoters and stock brokers, real-life scams that spelled financial ruin for the gullible. Berkove distinguishes between "gentle" hoaxes—or quaints—in which the reader is privy to the joke and watches a gullible character being duped, and the more aggressive hoaxes in which the reader himself takes the bait. Among the most enjoyable hoaxes collected here are Dan De Quille's "Solar Armor," which reports the discovery of a *frozen* corpse in Death Valley, a man whose suit of heat-resistant "armor" had apparently worked too well. Mark Twain's risible "The Carson Fossil-Footprints" uses a rambling, nonsensical narrator to claim that the fossilized footprints in the sandstone quarry of the Nevada State Prison, already the subject of much scientific speculation, were actually made by the first Nevada Territorial Legislature, whose members were whisky besotted and slogging through thick mud. Samuel Davis's "The Mystery of the Savage Sump" imagines a hidden drain at the bottom of Lake Tahoe, used by

an unscrupulous businessman to manipulate mining-stock prices by controlling the water level in the Comstock mines. On one occasion, he flushes the body of his murder victim out of sight, which explains the mysterious appearance of a corpse found in a Comstock mineshaft.

Berkove has done a superb job of editing this outstanding collection. The pieces are well chosen; Berkove's introductions and headnotes are informative, interesting, and accurate; editorial footnotes explain terms and references that may puzzle the modern reader (in one case, decoding a baffling cryptogram that concludes Alfred Doten's short story "The Living Hinge"); and the bibliography points readers to additional material. In sum, Berkove accomplishes several important things in this book: He describes the Sagebrush School and makes a case for its value and significance; he makes representative works by these authors available for the general reader and students; and he opens up a promising field of study for literary scholarship, paving the way for an overdue critical revival of this literary movement.

If *The Sagebrush Anthology* can be relished for its literary merits, Berkove's most recent publication, *Insider Stories of the Comstock Lode and Nevada's Mining Frontier, 1859-1909*, will be appreciated for its historical value.[17] While perusing the materials in the Stoddard Collection, Berkove found clippings of several columns published in *Nevada Mining News*, a trade tabloid established in 1907 whose primary purpose was to stimulate investment in Nevada mines. Berkove also found a copy of a letter from Sam Davis to his friend Joseph Goodman, former editor of the *Territorial Enterprise*, encouraging Goodman to join him in writing for the publication. The clippings and letter piqued Berkove's interest in *Nevada Mining News*, and he located it on microfilm at the University of Nevada, Reno, in all probability the sole copy of the microfilm that exists anywhere, virtually unknown to scholars.

What Berkove discovered when he pored over the microfilm is that a signed Comstock reminiscence by C. C. Goodwin that appeared in the April 23, 1908 edition of the paper apparently garnered enough reader interest that the next issue, April 30, featured a new column entitled "By-the-Bye," which, as Berkove's introduction explains, consisted of "unsigned . . . informal commentaries on miscellaneous topics of general and historical interest."[18] By July, the column had taken hold and became more singularly focused on Comstock recollections, running weekly until May 27, 1909, when the newspaper, which had been recently renamed *Mining Financial News*, relocated to New York City. It apparently stayed in New York, printing under its final banner, the *New York Mining News*, until 1914.

Having discovered this vast body of forgotten material, Berkove felt a moral obligation to preserve it before it became irrevocably lost to history. At one point, when finding a publisher for the complete collection looked doubtful, Berkove seriously considered publishing the book himself rather than cutting it down as one prospective publisher had suggested. "I wouldn't know what

to cut," protested an exasperated Berkove. "I might be cutting something important." When the Edwin Mellen Press agreed to publish the material in its entirety, Berkove felt the hand of Providence blessing the project. The Mellen Press requires camera-ready copy, so the formidable task of copy-editing the text and formatting the manuscript fell to him. Again Providence intervened in the form of a kind and talented friend who offered to do the layout.

Insider Stories transcribes the complete run of the "By-the-Bye" columns, with an editor's introduction, a glossary of mining terms, editorial footnotes, a bibliography, and an index, making available in a user-friendly form a vast treasure trove—1076 pages—of fascinating Comstock information. Berkove's excellent introduction recounts the history of the *Nevada Mining News*, summarizes the contents of the "By-the-Bye" column, explains the significance of the Comstock era in American history and culture, identifies the hoax as a distinctive activity and genre of this period, speculates on the authorship of the mostly anonymous contributors to these columns, and provides biographical sketches of three of the leading confirmed authors, Sam Davis, Joe Goodman, and C. C. Goodwin.

This collection of assorted reminiscences, snippets, anecdotes, and sketches is admittedly a "loose baggy monster," as Henry James once characterized the novels of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. Anyone but a true Comstock buff will need tenacity to read the two-volume book from cover to cover. There is no driving plot line, no coherent shape to this portmanteau of miscellany. Recollections commence out of nowhere, and just when the reader has become engaged in a particular story, it abruptly cuts off and another story begins. Despite the collection's unwieldiness, Berkove made the right choice to reprint everything rather than to abridge it. Literary prospectors will discover hundreds of nuggets of astonishing information unavailable anywhere else. The writing is all very good and the effect is cumulative, conveying a sense of the Comstock that you can't get from any other source. Berkove provides navigation tools and finding aids to help readers make the most of this priceless *Nevada Mining News* collection. An annotated Table of Contents identifies between three and ten stories per "By-the-Bye" column. For example, the contents for column 14 (30 July 1908) reads, "'Old Man Murphy' of Rawhide—The 'Baby Pi-Ute' Hoax—A Defense of Mining Stock Speculation—Chivalric Damphoolishness—Nevada as a Divorce Center—Leland Stanford's Hoggishness—Theodore Roosevelt's Ambition to be President." Of particular value to historians is the extensive index, with upwards of twelve hundred entries, from "Actors" to "Zangwill, Israel." Topics and people that receive the most coverage in the columns include the Bank of California, Sandy Bowers, William Jennings Bryan, Rollin Mallory Daggett, Samuel Post Davis, Dan De Quille, Senator James Fair, Joseph Thompson Goodman, William Randolph Hearst, Senator John P. Jones, Clarence Mackay and John Mackay, the Consolidated Virginia / Bonanza Mine, Goldfield, Ophir, Stagecoach Drivers, Governor James W. Nye, prize fights, William C. Ralston,

President Theodore Roosevelt, William Sharon, Senator William Stewart, Adolph Sutro and the Sutro Tunnel, Tonopah, Mark Twain, and the *Territorial Enterprise*. Noteworthy and quirky topics include barroom homicides, billiard table cushion invention, Bohemian Club, chill mills, Chinese, Confederate sympathies in Nevada, Cornish, Delamar mines' deadliness, diamond hoax, dueling, fireworks, horse racing, Indigent Act, Irish, Jews, Julia mine scam, Li Hung Chang, Mormons, Negroes, patio process, Piute Indians, railroad extortions, Sazerac Lying Club, socialism, spiritualism and supernatural, Sugar-foot Jack, toll roads, and vigilantes. For Mark Twain scholars, the book is a must. Throughout the text are important pieces of information on Mark Twain that exist nowhere else. One of two appendices reprints the personal recollections of Twain's close friend Joseph Goodman, who describes Twain as a devoted husband and a somewhat neurotic writer, whose humor masked a serious sensibility and philosophical turn of mind.

Berkove places the "By-the-Bye" series "in a class by itself," being "the most candid of all the recollections of the Comstock," offering "an unsurpassed revelation" into the "wide-open" life of the Comstock, revealing hitherto "suppressed or hidden details."[19] Two factors may account for the unparalleled candor of the columns: the passage of time and anonymity. The columns were written at least thirty and as many as fifty years after the events they describe, when many of the key players were dead and therefore not a threat. In addition, the columns are unsigned, their authors protected behind the armor of anonymity. Most of the columns are narrated in the third person, and those using the first person employ a fictional or disguising pretext to frame the story, such as "*A veteran Nevada journalist*, who was a guest at the Riverside [Hotel] last Sunday, told some entertaining stories relative to mine-salting and other questionable methods of securing the coin of the unwary in the early days of the mining industry in the Sagebrush State."[20] Thus, paradoxically, a fictional frame creates the conditions for unprecedented truthfulness in reporting, if one discounts the inevitable distortion caused by distant memories. While it is true that "completely new, valuable, and sometimes shocking information" appears in these columns—such as the unprosecuted murders masterminded by James Fair—perhaps their greatest value lies in capturing "the character and soul" of the Comstock.[21] Future historians of Nevada will be indebted to Berkove for reprinting these detail-rich columns, which have yet to be mined.

When Berkove, who is pushing eighty, reflects on a distinguished career (his *curriculum vitae* lists sixteen books and monographs, twenty-three essays in books, sixty-eight published articles, forty-two notes, more than one hundred academic presentations, and several works in progress), he regards his main accomplishment as the recovery of the Sagebrush School. Working virtually alone, he discovered that Nevada developed a distinctive literature, rivaled only by California in its importance to Western American literature of the nineteenth century and that the state was a formative influence on Mark Twain.

But because most of the writing appeared not in book form but as uncollected individual items in local newspapers and regional magazines, it was lost to view. "These are *good* writers," Berkove insists. He has taught courses in Spenser, in Shakespeare, in Milton. He knows good writing. "I would not waste my time on unworthy authors," he says. During his research in archives, Berkove has turned brittle pages that literally crumbled in his fingers. He has viewed materials that exist only on a single microfilm in a single library or in a steamer trunk in Sam Davis's granddaughter's garage in Carson City.

As Berkove came to understand the importance of this material, he felt a sense of urgency to publish it before it disintegrated or was lost forever. Not only does the work have inherent literary value, he explains, but it has historical value as well. It was in the Comstock mining boom, which lasted from the early 1860s to the 1890s, that the frontier met the financier and the engineer. Hard-rock mining on the Comstock required enormous capital investments, technological innovations, and imported labor. It is a case study in unregulated capitalism, stock manipulation, labor-management relations, ethnic diversity, and vigilante justice. Not to know the nature and history of this collision would have left a sad gap in our national self-knowledge.

Let me conclude by revisiting a pair of analogies that opened this inquiry. Campaign manager or museum curator? Are acts of literary recovery ultimately about power or about posterity? Some scholars doing the work of literary recovery—particularly those affiliated with minority and women's studies—engage in recovery work in order to give roots to contemporary political movements, so as to, for example, get women's voices into anthologies of American literature, or to ensure that the perspectives of ethnic minorities are represented in the canon and in the classroom, with the aim of redistributing cultural capital to groups that have been hitherto denied it. In this campaign-manager model of literary recovery, political engagement precedes and motivates recovery work, and editors of this work sometimes challenge prevailing notions of what constitutes "good" literature, arguing that received standards of literary worth reflect the values of the dominant group.

Berkove, however, has been preoccupied with a different kind of concern. Having received a thorough education in classic English literature, Berkove has internalized the literary standards of classic British and American literature. His objection is not to the standards themselves, nor to the politics that gave rise to them, but to the star system that fixates our attention on a limited number of exemplary writers at the expense of other worthy authors. As he explains, even the greatest writers—Shakespeare and Twain, for example—have written some "real dogs." Yet their hack work, potboilers, and flops are still read today simply because of the status of the authors. At the same time, writers who are not so prominent have written some pieces that are really good literature. Why don't we read them? Shouldn't we save them? In recovering the work of forgotten writers, most of whom happen to be dead white males, Berkove

is not engaged in the struggles of contemporary identity politics. Rather, he is motivated by a haunting awareness of Ozymandias, of how the sands of time bury the treasures of yesterday. Like a museum curator, Berkove feels impelled to preserve for future generations a page of our literary heritage before it vanishes altogether. As he rightly argues, Sagebrush literature "should not, and must not, be allowed to fall once more into neglect."

For Berkove the work of literary recovery has been its own reward. "I've been happy," he says, "I have been happy in my career. I have loved what I've done. Everything I have done has been a labor of love. Everything. I've often thought, if I weren't paid to do this, I would pay to do it." When asked what legacy he wants to leave, Berkove replies that he does not seek fame, fame being out of his control. What he wants is to do a good job, and for his scholarship and writing to be valid. He tells a story about Henry David Thoreau, who once remarked that he would like to be able to strike a nail into wood so well that at night he could smile because he knew that the nail would never come loose. Berkove's work is well built. Not only has he revived the work of deserving writers, but his own writing—biographies, scholarly introductions, editorial notes, critical essays, and monographs—is thoroughly researched, meticulously verified, clearly written, and likely to stand the test of time. He explains, "I feel that if I do a good job, if something is valid, then time will pass and maybe somebody else will come along and find my stuff useful and be able to do something with it. You know, I am essentially a servant. I really consider teachers to be servants. We are serving something beyond ourselves, and I want to do a good job. The sense of mission has always been with me." For Lawrence Berkove, working on the Sagebrush authors of the arid West has been anything but dry. While the work of literary recovery has been a deeply felt calling, it has also been fun. He shares one final story: "All my career I have been in research libraries where at all the tables in this large hall people were bent over their work assiduously writing with serious faces. Whereas I've been laughing."

Notes

[1]Raymond Weaver at Columbia University published a biography of Melville in 1921 and from Melville's unpublished manuscripts brought out an edition of *Billy Budd* in 1924.

[2]Biographical information for this essay has been gleaned from Berkove's curriculum vitae (2008) and from a telephone interview with the author, conducted on 19 June 2007. Unless otherwise attributed in the text, all remarks by Berkove are quoted from the interview.

[3]The dissertation, extensively revised and extended, was subsequently published as *A Prescription for Adversity: The Moral Art of Ambrose Bierce* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2002).

[4]Lawrence I. Berkove, "'Nobody Writes to Anybody Except to Ask a Favor': New Correspondence between Mark Twain and Dan De Quille," *The Mark Twain Journal*, 26.1 (Spring 1988), 2-21.

[5]Dan De Quille, *The Fighting Horse of the Stanislaus: Stories and Essays by Dan De Quille*, ed. with introduction by Lawrence I. Berkove, ed. (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1990).

[6]Ella Sterling Cummins, "Writers of the Sagebrush School, 1858-1893," *The Story of the Files: A Review of Californian Writers and Literature* (San Francisco: World's Fair Commission of California, 1893), 102-18.

[7]Lawrence I. Berkove, "Life after Twain: The Later Careers of the *Enterprise* Staff," *The Mark Twain Journal*, 29.1 (Spring 1991), 22-28.

[8]Rollin Mallory Daggett and Joseph Thompson Goodman, *The Psychoscope*, introduction by Lawrence I. Berkove, ed. (Charleston, S. C: Mark Twain Journal Press, 2006).

[9]*Virginia City Chronicle*, 16 August 1872, reprinted in Daggett and Goodman, *Psychoscope*.

[10]Daggett and Goodman, *Psychoscope*, 60.

[11]*Ibid.*

[12]Bret Harte and Sam Davis, *The Old West in the Old World: Lost Plays by Bret Harte and Sam Davis*, introductions by Lawrence I. Berkove and Gary Scharnhorst, eds. (Albuquerque: Univresity of New Mexico Press, 2006), 132.

[13]*Ibid.*

[14] Duncan Emrich, *Comstock Bonanza* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1950).

[15]Lawrence I. Berkove, ed., *The Sagebrush Anthology: Literature from the Silver Age of the Old West* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006).

[16]*Ibid.*, 3, 4.

[17]Lawrence I. Berkove, ed., *Insider Stories of the Comstock Lode and Nevada's Mining Frontier, 1859-1909: Primary Sources in American Social History*, 2 vols. (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2007).

[18]*Ibid.*, xix.

[19]*Ibid.*, xxiv.

[20]*Ibid.*, 316, italics supplied.

[21]*Ibid.*, xxv, xxiv.

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