

Nevada

Historical Society Quarterly

Volume 60

2017

Numbers 1-4

Sheryln L. Hayes-Zorn
Managing Editor

-
Associate Editor
Articles

Hillary Velázquez
& Frank Ozaki
Production & Design

John B. Reid
Editor-in-Chief (2013-2017)

Toni Briegel
Manuscript Editor

Diane L. Ahmad
Book Review Editor

-
Assistant Editor
Notes and Documents

Joyce M. Cox
Proofreader

Contents

- 4 Constructing Back Country Wilderness
 The Sierra Club and the Clair Tappaan Lodge at Donner Summit
 KIMBERLY J. ROBERTS
- 18 Mark Twain, Ruel Gridley, and The U.S. Sanitary Commission
 Raising Funds to Aid Civil War Soldiers
 ROBERT E. STEWART
- 37 C. D. Baker and the Modernization of Postwar Las Vegas
 EUGENE MOEHRING
- 59 Sisters All
 Tonopah's Women Go to War, 1914-1918
 PHILLIP I. EARL

Front Cover: Paiute man on a mule, ca. 1913-18. Photograph by Harry Hess.
(*Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas Collection*)

- 83 "They Live by Daily Wage"
Labor and the Work of the Paiutes of Moapa and Las Vegas, 1911-1924
POLLY C. MICHEL
- 100 An Irish Immigrant in the Wild West
The Letters of Denis Hurley of Carson City, Nevada, 1873-1938
BRYAN LAMKIN
- 137 The Boundaries of Being a Nevadan
National Reputation and Exceptionalism
MICHAEL GREEN
- 148 Resistance to the "Hoofed Locusts"
Key Pittman, Basque Immigrants, and the
Sheep Industry of Nevada, 1910-1920
IKER SAITUA
- 173 Notes and Documents
Nevada and the Thirteenth Amendment
ROBERT E. STEWART

Book Reviews

- 191 *Lake Tahoe's Rustic Architecture*. By Peter B. Mires
(Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2016)
Reviewed by Mella Rothwell Harmon, M.S.
- 194 *Cities, Sagebrush, and Solitude: Urbanization and Cultural Conflict in the
Great Basin*. Edited by Dennis R. Judd and Stephanie L. Witt
(Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2015)
- Reno, Las Vegas, and the Strip: A Tale of Three Cities*.
By Eugene P. Moehring (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2014)
Reviewed by Jon Christensen
- 197 *Success Depends on the Animals*. By Diana L. Ahmad
(Reno & Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 2016)
Reviewed by Curtis Foxley
- 199 Cumulative Index – Volume 60

Nevada

Historical Society Quarterly

NEW QUARTERLY OPPORTUNITIES

The Quarterly is actively seeking Associate Editors

The former Editor-in-Chief position has been reorganized into three positions. We are currently seeking:

- **Associate Editor–Articles**
- **Assistant Editor–Notes and Documents**

If you are interested in either of these unpaid positions, please email Sheryl Hayes-Zorn, Managing Editor at shayeszorn@nevadaculture.org.

The Quarterly is actively seeking Peer Reviewers

If you are interested in being a Peer Reviewer for the NHSQ, please email Sheryl Hayes-Zorn, Managing Editor at shayeszorn@nevadaculture.org. In your letter, identify the fields in which you are qualified to review and include a listing of your significant publications.

The Quarterly is actively seeking Book Reviewers

Every issue of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* will begin to feature more book reviews. Please submit your review, 2 to 3 pages to Dr. Diana Ahmad, Book Review Editor at ahmadd@mst.edu. NHSQ would consider publishing longer review essays. If you are interested in writing book reviews for the NHSQ, please email Dr. Diana Ahmad. In your letter, identify the fields in which you are qualified to review and include a listing of your significant publications. Book reviewers should have a record of refereed publication in the area in which they review.

Publishers may mail books for review to Book Review Editor, Nevada Historical Society, 1650 North Virginia Street, Reno, NV 89503.

The Quarterly is seeking new content for the publication: **Articles, Notes and Documents** and **Book Reviews**.

Please note: We must inform authors that it can take up to two years from the time of final acceptance for an article to come out in print. We do our best to publish articles as soon as we can in the order in which they are accepted.

Constructing Back Country Wilderness

The Sierra Club and the Clair Tappaan

Lodge at Donner Summit

KIMBERLY J. ROBERTS

DONNER SUMMIT, 1929

Nathan Clark remembered his first “winter snow wilderness”¹ adventure vividly. In 1929, he and his older brother Lewis, both members and future presidents of the Sierra Club, got on board the overnight train from Oakland and arrived at Donner Summit in the middle of a blizzard the next morning. They loaded their gear onto a toboggan and set out in search of the telephone company cabin they had made arrangements to stay at. They had never been on skis before. Nathan recalled:

“We didn’t know where we were; we didn’t know where anything was; it was terribly cold; and the wind was blowing, and the snow was flying. We bravely took the toboggan off the train and lowered it down onto the tracks, and the train went away. Then we pulled it along the ties inside the snow shed for quite a long way. We struggled thru deep snow and reached a well-made little lodge and knocked on the door. A rather stern and grumpy man opened it and said we couldn’t stay there—it was private. He let us in for a while, and we thawed out and

Kimberly J. Roberts is the Photo Curator in the Special Collections Department at the University of Nevada, Reno. She received her M.A. degree in history of photography, science, and western landscapes from the University of Nevada, Reno, and B.A. in english and history from Colorado State University. She grew up in the intermountain west, mainly in Colorado, and has worked at museums, libraries, and archives her entire career, including the Denver branch of the National Archives, and the Minnesota Historical Society.

behaved very respectfully... After a while we left this lodge, put on our skis, and started out eastward in search of the telephone cabin. We returned to the toboggan, which I think we'd left near the snow sheds, and went along the tracks. We found a cabin—roofed but too open—it was no good. It had a stove and wood, but one side was missing, and we left. We found another building, which was not the telephone cabin, but it was at least complete. We were too cold and lost to go farther, so we dug down thru the snow, went in, removed the tin can from the top of the chimney, struggled with the toboggan, fixed our meals, spent a couple of nights there, and did so-called skiing during the day. This was Washington's Birthday weekend, 1929—Friday, Saturday and Sunday. There were no developments at Norden at all. Just the railroad station."²

Clearly, despite Nathan's insistence that the area was undeveloped wilderness, they were surrounded by infrastructure. His account mentions multiple buildings, including train stations, snow sheds, and three cabins not including the one they were actually looking for. They were not far from Highway 40, by then a well-traveled road even in winter. This is not to downplay the danger they faced; they were clearly isolated and at the mercy of the elements. Realizing just how exposed and vulnerable they were as they took those first tentative steps into the storm must have triggered an awareness of the vastness of their surroundings and their lack of control over the environment. This sensation is the core of the word "wilderness" itself. Derived from the Teutonic/ Norse root word "will," wilderness literally means willful and uncontrollable. Notions of wilderness have always referred more to this idea than to a specific material object or place.³ The unfamiliar and dangerous terrain, the hazardous conditions, and the difficulties finding shelter certainly comprise a wilderness experience. Safe, mediated access to our public lands is something we take for granted today, not realizing it isn't natural and that a lack of specialized infrastructure and amenities create actual barriers to experiencing the backcountry. Even a simple trail makes all the difference in the world to traversing the landscape, offering a sense of freedom within a carefully bounded security and turning abstract "space" into a more intimate and understandable "place," to use the words of Yi-Fu Tuan in *Space and Place: the Perspective of Experience*. Open space, he explains, "has no trodden paths and signposts. It has no fixed pattern of established human meaning; it is like a blank sheet on which meaning may be imposed."⁴ To create accessible wilderness areas is to impose a set of values on land, creating a specific context and meaning through which the land is experienced. Backcountry recreational areas are carefully designed to create an experience of wildness and the Sierra Club was one of many groups actively engaged in constructing such places. Ultimately, the perceived commercialization of this landscape was one of the factors that led the Sierra Club down the path towards political activism.

The Clair Tappaan Lodge, built by the club up at Donner Summit in the 1930s and still owned and operated by them, was one of their major projects. The construction and operation of this lodge parallels larger developments within the club over the course of the twentieth century as demand for access to recreational backcountry shifted to concern for wilderness preservation. This shift occurred between the 1920s and the 1960s, roughly the time between John Muir's leadership and the emergence of the club as a major voice in the environmental movement. During roughly the first half of the twentieth century, the Sierra Club functioned more as a social club using landscape as a hub for recreational activity than a political club using notions of landscape to campaign for environmental causes. Conservation at this time was a comparatively harmonious national movement and public lands were not yet a contested political landscape. Conservation groups across the country were working in tandem with Federal agencies to set public land aside from commercial use and develop it instead as recreational space.

This recreational landscape has been ignored or glossed over by most environmental historians, who have focused more on Muir's preservation efforts such as the Sierra Club's attempt to thwart the construction of the Hetch Hetchy dam. In *True Gardens of the Gods*, Ian Tyrrell argues that this has resulted in an exaggerated understanding of Muir's environmental legacy, pointing out that the Sierra Club functioned mainly as a hiking club and that most Sierra Club members were not radical preservationists but urbanites who "valued the high country of the Sierra as a recreational zone that complemented their economic activity."⁵ Educated and progressive, they were more comfortable with what Tyrrell describes as the garden ideal, a less ardent form of the wilderness ethic than what Muir preached. As such, they saw nothing inherently contradictory in the ideal of a seemingly pristine wilderness, safe from destruction and yet easily available via roads and trails. Tyrrell believes that the protest of Hetch Hetchy was the exception for the Sierra Club, not the rule. Susan R. Schrepfer seconds this when she examines the relationship between the Forest Service and the Sierra Club, writing that through the first half of the twentieth century "citizen activism was complementary, rather than an antagonistic, development in the evolution of the administrative state"⁶ Activism at this time referred to involvement, not protest; wilderness destruction was not yet a major issue and citizens were active participants in the creation of recreational areas. This is why the Sierra Club wanted to build a ski lodge.

By 1930, the area around Donner Summit was largely logged out and abandoned by the timber companies who had operated there for decades. Realizing that "scenic beauty was a commodity like other natural resources,"⁷ the Forest Service was actively seeking out new ways to utilize large tracts of land with little remaining commercial value. By the 1920s, a new outdoor culture was on the rise, spurred by the growing popularity of automobiles and the easy mobility they promised. The impact of the automobile cannot be overstated: for the

first time in history people could get out and explore, no longer hampered by the limits of railroad tracks and the slow plod of horses. According to Gerald W. Williams, this was a time of increasing recreational use of public lands as people began to explore the roads and trails left by the lumber industry. Resorts and motels sprang up across the countryside and recreational facilities began to operate in the national forests with the construction of trails and campgrounds and summer homes available for lease. The New Deal provided the crucial link between the growing interest in outdoor recreation and the efforts of the Forest Service to reinvent the landscape. Implemented in 1933, it coincided with a report issued by the Forest Service titled *A National Plan for American Forestry*, which listed hundreds of projects in need of money and people to “improve the recreational potential and management of the national forests”⁸ by building trails, trail facilities, shelters, campgrounds, scenic vistas, roads, guard and ranger stations, lookouts, and telephone lines. Government aid provided both the financial backing and the labor necessary to implement this construction work. The Forest Service then, by constructing trails and campgrounds, was seeking new ways to access the landscape but also to transform it and make it something modern.

The rise of automobile culture changed not only the physical layout of the land, but generated novel ways of engaging it. New art forms emerged out of new visual perceptions. Gone were the compositionally balanced pastoral panoramas of the nineteenth century made famous by train travel that Douglas R. Nickel referred to as “railroad vision,” a passive view of the distant horizon as seen from inside the passenger car.⁹ According to John Ott, California led the way in marketing a culture specific to the traveler through the publication of magazines such as the Auto Club of Southern California’s *Touring Topics*, which commissioned art from a wide variety of California artists. The result was a sleeker, more minimalistic image frequently showcasing an off-center stretch of highway which drew the viewer into a landscape offering the promise of renewal and easy access along with a sense of anticipation, resulting in a kind of selling of California landscapes to a new kind of consumer, one interested in buying things that promised self-transformation.

This notion of self-transformation was the impetus that propelled outdoor recreation into prominence. When the Forest Service began to explore recreational development in the 1920s, they turned to the Sierra Club, arranging meetings between the two groups and using the Sierra Club as a means to advocate Forest Service conservation issues to the public. The club was among the leading public voices in preservation efforts, the legacy of John Muir who had spoken so eloquently about the spiritual and moral benefits of experiencing nature first hand. The desire for these kinds of experiences lies at the heart of the emergence of outdoor recreation; people equated recreation with spiritual growth, character formation, and patriotism. As Edward Taylor points out in *Pilgrims of the Vertical: Yosemite Rock Climbers and Nature at Risk*, they sought out

physical hardship in an effort to build leadership skills and instill a sense of civic responsibility, convinced that strenuous outdoor activities such as rock climbing were tantamount to this kind of character development. Clifford Putney shows how the muscular Christianity of the Victorian age laid the foundation for the more secular athletic morality of the 1920s. Roderick Nash fleshes out the relationship of the outdoors to patriotism and civic pride when he points out that the program for President Coolidge's 1924 Conference on Outdoor Recreation included a photograph of people camping with the caption "It is the American Heritage."¹⁰ Bernard Mergen analyses how the Forest Service was, by 1930, addressing not only the recreational but the "inspirational and educational" uses of the forest."¹¹ This reveals the many layers of cultural significance embedded in the notion of outdoor activities and helps understand the significance of the recreational landscapes of the 1930s.

Through their partnership with the Forest Service, the Sierra Club gained unparalleled access to the backcountry, helping to design and construct a landscape that resonated with these values. This was a time of tremendous growth for the club; they were, as Nathan Clark remembered, a "large reputable organization that the U.S. Forest Service would be willing to authorize to build ski huts which the young people sought."¹² This new winter landscape owed much of its existence to the invention of the snowplow, which made year round mobility and access possible. Like the automobile, the impact of the snow plow cannot be overstated. According to Bernard Mergen, the very idea of winter underwent a drastic transformation as "technology restructured human ecological relations and society's dialogue with the natural world."¹³ As snow removal became a mechanized process, creating what he calls a de-seasoned city, the growing popularity of the automobile created a desire for a year round mobility that had been previously inconceivable. At this time, the Forest Service began leasing lands for private development and became involved with efforts to create and develop ski areas. Using the Civilian Conservation Corps to build and clear trails, snow, once "refuse to be disposed of in the industrial landscape"¹⁴ was transformed into a resource.

In 1931, the newly formed Auburn Ski Club convinced the California legislature to appropriate funds to plow Highway 40. According to Margie Powell in *Donner Summit: a Brief History*, the 1932 Winter Olympics at Lake Placid ignited a public passion for skiing and Donner Summit became a winter recreation destination. Organized ski tours to the area commenced with the "Snowball Special," a train from San Francisco to Truckee with a stop at Soda Springs. The railroad built a ski hut that included lockers, changing rooms, and a snack bar. Club president Joel Hildebrand wrote that "the Sierra Club is in the process of making a number of notable discoveries: that its beloved Sierra is the Sierra Nevada, or snowy range, and must be sought by devoted pilgrims not only in July, but also in January, to be known in the fullness of its glory."¹⁵

DONNER SUMMIT, 1934

Unfazed by the hardships they encountered on their first trip, Sierra Club members continued to make the trip from the Bay Area to ski at Donner Summit. Now well prepared, they carried the latest cold weather gear, skiing and packing equipment, and knew what lodging accommodations to make. They were no longer wandering lost along the railroad tracks; however, they were still unmoored in a seeming wilderness. According to one Sierra Club member, they were "homeless wanderers, sponging on the hospitable Auburn Ski Club, renting Boy Scout camps, or sleeping like tramps in the abandoned railroad-station at Soda Springs."¹⁶ The expense and difficulties of these arrangements influenced their decision to pursue the building of their own ski lodge.

On January 26, 1934, 26 people rented a bus for three days of skiing at Donner Summit. They left the Bay Area on Friday at 5:45 pm and arrived at Soda Springs at 12:10 am.¹⁷ According to Joel Hildebrand and Lewis Clark, who jotted down their departure and arrival times and listed the names of the people on the bus, the idea of a ski hut was born on the return trip. Among these people was an architect named Walter Ratcliff who offered his services in the design and building of the lodge, making the notion a realistic possibility.¹⁸ The very next month, the Snow Sports Committee of the Sierra Club met and "officially launched the hut idea."¹⁹ Shortly thereafter, the club obtained a property lease through the Forest Service and began collecting funds for the building of a ski lodge on that property to be named in memorial of former club president, Judge Clair S. Tappaan.

Lewis Clark kept a pocket diary full of notes on the construction of the Clair Tappaan Lodge. What emerges from his scribbles is the scope of alterations the Sierra Club made to the landscape and the amount of physical labor and infrastructure necessary to create a natural appearing back-country skiing environment. This was a massive construction project involving miles of trails and ski runs in addition the lodge itself. According to this diary, the preliminary site survey was the weekend of April 21-22, 1934, when club members met with a Forest Service Ranger and surveyed the plot. They cut trees. It rained. Construction began the weekend of May 19-20 when five men arrived with a tool box consisting of 6 shovels, 3 axes, 2 picks, 2 mauls, a two-man tree saw and a hammer. Lewis's first summary of work began with the word "build." Realizing perhaps that he was already ahead of himself, he crossed that out and wrote this plan instead: "Layout, clear, excavate road.... Build log bridge over stream, Corduroy across swamp, Drain Swamps, Fell a number of trees dead & dying around Site, Burn cuttings, Discuss site layout, Fight Mosquitoes."²⁰

Not only did they have to build their own shelter; they needed to build their own ski runs. Far from simple paths meandering through the trees along the mountains, constructing the ski trails became a serious logging operation as well. One particularly interesting sequence of events occurs in fall of 1935:

Sept 14-15: ...selected trees to be cut to open up present ski trail and develop new one from top of knoll to Diddle Slope including new crossing of creek...felled over 3 dozen trees... hauled down logs from ski trail—lower end cleaned up. Much brush burned (i.e. tree leaves) Sun pm, 3 men busy drowning fires.

Sept 21-22: Visited by Cunningham and Hodgson, forest rangers at Big Bend who had forest fire report. Satisfied with our handling. Advised us to get burning permit.

Sept 28-29: Got burning permit from Ranger Hodgson.²¹

What these cryptic, understated remarks mean is that after downing over three dozen trees, the Sierra Club decided to burn the refuse without a permit and started a forest fire in the process. It clearly shows the Sierra Club was engaged as developers of wilderness rather than preservationists. Understanding the reason behind this—namely the need for access—breaks down the dichotomy between the concepts of development and preservation, inferring instead that the wilderness ideal is dependent on a specific kind of development. It also shows very clearly to what lengths this was a manufactured landscape, albeit one that functions scenically and symbolically as wild, its very construction hidden by its natural appearance. In October of 1936, they felled over 300 trees to open a schuss run from the beacon on top of Signal Hill. They then dragged the trees into the creek to mat the snow. "Fine run," wrote Lewis.²²

The final work entries in Lewis Clark's diary return to the beginning: in 1937 they began requisitioning supplies, tools, and lumber to start more construction in the form of the Peter Grub ski hut, a small back country shelter along the ski trail near Castle Peak for longer, overnight ski trips. Ultimately four more huts for overnight use were built, stretching south and east towards Squaw Valley. To accomplish this, work parties arrived at the lodge every weekend during the summer months, volunteering their labor, socializing, and rock climbing. For several decades, the club continued to acquire more properties at Donner Summit, including the Norden store and part of the town of Norden itself. Buildings and lands under jurisdiction of the Lodge Committee included the Clair Tappaan Lodge, the Hutchinson Lodge, all the ski huts and the Sierra Club Ski Lands, as well as properties at Flora and Azalea Lakes, the tow and spring property, the water development system, and the Signal Hill Warming Hut and Tow House. Born of an original need for overnight shelter, the bunkhouse they built expanded into a development with all the amenities of a resort.

DONNER SUMMIT, POST WORLD WAR II

This landscape began to shift with the booming post World War II economy. During the Great Depression when they began their treks to Donner Summit, Sierra Club members had pooled their resources, sharing not only lodging but equipment and rides. The post war landscape was increasingly commercial, much more crowded, and fostered an environment of individual skill and accomplishment.²³ At first the club embraced a new role in this new landscape. In an article he wrote for the *Sierra Club Bulletin* titled "Winter Sports Committee: A Progress Report," Lewis Clark outlined club responsibilities, creating a code that went beyond the physical nature of the activities themselves. Still envisioning a cooperative and harmonious environment, he advocated for active participation with the various agencies and outfits operating in the ski areas, calling on club skiers to take a leadership role in area planning as advisors and educators.²⁴ Involvement in rescue and safety was prominent among his priorities. Sierra Club skiers had developed a set of standards and graded one another through a series of increasingly difficult skill tests, awarding ski badges that corresponded to the competence of the skier. They worked and trained with other agencies, such as the National Ski Patrol, together inventing the techniques that remain standard procedure in search and rescue operations. This indicates that Sierra Club members, in keeping with the sense of civic responsibility they had honed in the 1920s, were still participating in what they deemed the broader betterment of both landscape and society through physical activities.

However, expansion of commercial runs and overcrowding gradually undermined both the sense of camaraderie and the very landscape itself. New developments at Donner Ski Ranch, now covering most of Signal Hill, included new ski lifts running parallel to the Sierra Club rope tow. This impeded not only physically on the landscape they had created, but also psychically intruded on their symbolic landscape. New highway construction created right-of-way issues and the network of back country trails was broken up, crisscrossed by the new freeway and numerous side roads in addition to private housing. Ultimately one of the overnight huts had to be relocated due to development. Crowding also forced the breakdown of the communal culture that had existed between the ski clubs. In 1946 the Sierra Club announced that they owned the water rights to the spring on the Clair Tappaan property. Previously they had shared this water with two other ski clubs but were now planning further development of the existing springs exclusively for the use of the Clair Tappaan Lodge. The spring property was to be fenced with barbed wires and signs. A once small, private bunkhouse had been transformed into an increasingly commercial resort with very little sense of wilderness attached.

In 1949, the Clair Tappaan Lodge was condemned by the state of California due to fire code violations, including unsafe stairways which could hamper evacuations. Major reconstruction at the lodge was needed to get it up to code.

This was coupled with an alarming financial report: the lodge was now officially operating at a loss due to competition from other commercial ventures with better ski lifts. The lodge committee met to review their options, discussing the possibility of raising their rates or closing down in the summer. They proposed the sale of 72 silver-tip fir trees to raise the necessary funds to refurbish the building and make it possible to move the ski tow and have a larger skiing area as well, indicating a continued focus on recreational and structural issues; however, a much larger question emerged as club members began to reevaluate their presence at Donner Summit and to question whether the lodge and ski operation even fit into the values the Sierra Club represented.

In 1951, the lodge committee issued a report reviewing the history of their work at the summit, stating "the success of subsequent skiing enterprises in the area, affording a complete variety of accommodations, attests to the original wisdom and success of the original undertaking. However, the emphasis on skiing in the area has undergone an almost complete change from the original predominance of ski-touring to skiing on packed slopes."²⁵ Cross country and downhill skiing were now, for the first time, two distinctly different styles of skiing and two very divergent interactions with the landscape. Ski touring had dominated in the early days; however, by the 1950s, downhill skiing had taken over the slopes. The reliance on chair lifts and groomed, hard packed runs had benefited the commercial outfits at the expense of the Sierra Club and its vision of an accessible, safely traversed backcountry wilderness. Realizing that the ground had literally shifted beneath their feet and aware of the growing contradiction between access and development, club members no longer felt comfortable with their role as developers and began to resist the commercialization that came with downhill skiing. They complained that no touring program existed anymore and that evenings at the Clair Tappaan Lodge no longer had a "congenial club-like atmosphere."²⁶ They pointed out that the lodge was now used mainly by people using lifts and was simply an overnight accommodation, a "sizable business venture with little expression of Sierra Club values," and accused club leadership of being more concerned with "insuring adequate patronage rather than sponsoring activities in keeping with the purposes of the Sierra Club."²⁷ One member wrote a letter to the club stating that "I believe it would be more akin to the Sierra Club's policy of protecting wilderness areas to induce touring in winter, and thereby help stem the growing commercialism in the ski areas."²⁸

Written in 1952, this reveals a profound shift in how club members were interacting both with their landscape and the sport of skiing itself. Once simply a means of having fun and engaging nature, skiing was now bifurcated into two diametrical opposites: downhill skiing, a commercialized activity devoid of spiritual value, whose growth was suddenly destructive; and cross country, an activity which taught the values fundamental to protecting wilderness. In choosing cross country skiing and turning their backs on downhill, the mean-

ing behind Sierra Club activities also began to shift, transforming from a focus on recreation to preservation, from engaging in activity to a quietly emerging activism. The lodge committee issued an explicit statement arguing that the purpose of the Clair Tappaan Lodge and the Sierra Club lands at Donner Summit were different from the other resorts in the area: "It is *not* operated as a cheap place to go skiing; rather to introduce new members to the purposes of the club as a whole."²⁹ This shows the Sierra Club taking a more political, less commercial stand and beginning to speak out against development rather than participating in it.

This extent of this shift can be traced through the articles written by club members in their many newsletters and magazines. In 1958, the *Norden Newsletter* bluntly denounced the current state of skiing, writing that "it seems like all you read about these days is speed...the race against time...competition,"³⁰ a far cry from the group treks and cooperation the club championed. A year later, it triumphantly reported that the "lack of good skiing surface on the downhill runs forces people to look to other oft-forgotten ways of enjoying one's self in the snow country, and we think this is a good thing. Some tried touring for the first time and found that breaking new trail in untouched powder is an exhilarating experience."³¹ This issue also contained a conversation with Lewis Clark, then nearing 60 years old, bringing the readers up to date on the Club's "hard fought battles against 'progress'...i.e. the destruction of our vanishing wilderness."³² This is an increasing theme among the Sierra Club skiers at this time. Once the vanguard of recreational development, they were dedicating more and more time to stopping it.

They were, however, still acquiring property and expanding. Architect and club member George Homsey was brought in to renovate the Clair Tappaan Lodge, working from 1952 to 1960 on a number of projects ranging from remodeling the living room to replacing the old rope-tow with a warming hut. In 1956, the Hutchinson Lodge, which stood next door to the Clair Tappaan, was deeded over to the Sierra Club. Ironically, this was the very place Lewis and Nathan Clark had met the "stern and grumpy man" who had allowed them to thaw out on their ski venture nearly thirty years prior, himself a prominent Sierra Club member. Rather than simply adding to the available room count, the lodge committee recommended operating the new facility "as a quiet retreat for any of those in the Sierra Club who will appreciate and utilize the relative solitude, both indoors and outdoors, in the pursuit of enjoyment of our natural scene, under the management of the Clair Tappaan Lodge" and to "refrain from any drastic changes in the physical set-up, attempting to maintain the lodge and grounds as the perfect retreat that it has been for the last thirty years."³³ This included banning phonographs and radios as unnatural. This acquisition marks a complete shift in direction for the club. Up through World War II, the club had always prided itself as being the unquestioned leader in outdoor and recreational lifestyles, creating skiing techniques and gear, helping found search

and rescue, as well as leading in community outreach and educational efforts. Now the club seemed ready to retire from the former and focus on the latter, seeking a quiet retreat in an ever-growing landscape.

While wilderness destruction was a growing theme among the Sierra Club skiers at this time, land issues were not the only changes they were grappling with. The very culture and community the original group of skiers had painstakingly built, not only into the grounds but into the design of the lodge itself, was disappearing. By then a large, sprawling compound, the original 1934 wing of the building consisted of a central fireplace and main room, along with two bunk area balconies containing an equal number of men's and women's bunks. The gendered bunk rooms remained as the building grew, and the breakdown of the communal culture of the Great Depression can be seen in the complaints by users regarding this. One letter from the 1950s stated that members of Sierra Club wanted family friendly lodging and "did not find the present club facilities ideal" because the gender-based communal bunk rooms made it "hard to put kids to bed early due to comings and goings."³⁴ The letter requested separate family facilities, indicating a rearrangement of social space among club members, shifting from the communal, group-oriented layout of the 1930s to that of the nuclear family gaining prominence in the post war culture. Club members were increasingly demanding privacy and isolation from the group at large. In 1957, responding to this trend, George Homsey raised the roof of the lodge in the women's sleeping quarters, an area known as the "coffins," creating family rooms.³⁵

As the 1960s set in, more cultural gaps became apparent. The Sierra Club owned a store in Norden and the people in charge of running it wanted a liquor license. Many members objected to this, stating that this was not in line with the values of the Sierra Club. However, there were increasing reports of drinking at the lodge, resulting in four boys being asked to leave as liquor was not allowed. The Annual Report for 1966 noted that a shift in use to younger members was causing friction between age groups. This was resolved by adding a youth representative to the lodge committee and the adoption of their recommendations via a special subcommittee headed by Lewis Clark. The growth of a more diverse membership with more individual needs as well as the formation of more committees and subcommittees to handle these needs attests to both the growing bureaucratic nature of the Sierra Club and to the increasing individuality of its membership. This weakened the participatory nature of club activities but provided the necessary structure for its incremental move from social activity to political activism.

This early version of activism remained rooted in social activities but included a greater focus on education and outreach. In a conscious attempt at teaching the values of the club through social engagements, Sierra Clubbers increasingly used activities such as ski trips to attract new members and then attempted to raise their awareness of preservation issues. For example, Lewis

Clark made the decision to change the focus of the Saturday evening programs at the Clair Tappaan Lodge from commercial travel movies to conservation education, stating that “pictures shown at CTL should be club-related and have educational as well as entertainment value.”³⁶ Other club educational activities, such as public lectures and slide shows, also grew at this time as club members consciously devoted more time and energy to outreach. Nathan Clark later remembered that “all these real conservationists, who fought hard on the cause of conservation, it’s almost unanimous that they originally joined the club for the social side—the trips and the outings and the ski trips—and didn’t really think much about conservation at first. So therefore we can get good conservationists if we give them a proper exposure to the things that we’re trying to conserve.”³⁷ Access to wilderness areas remained a priority but no longer as an end unto itself; it now functioned as a means to an end, raising awareness of preservation issues through the enjoyment of the landscape.

This occurred as development, the first and crucial step to accessing the landscape, now overran and transformed it. And as skiing itself became more individualistic and commercial outfits more corporate, the landscape at Donner Summit was both physically and symbolically rearranged, losing many of the very qualities inherent in the notion of wilderness that had made it attractive to the early Sierra Club skiers. Now moving up the Sierra Club boardroom hierarchy, club members such as Lewis and Nathan Clark fought to preserve both their landscape and their ideals, realizing the latter were imbedded in the former. According to Nathan Clark, “The developments, of course, were all for the benefit of the commercial people that wanted to make a killing off of what the skiers would spend—that’s what it really amounted to. It was not to help the skiers, it was to get an income, which is what all these commercial things are, in the final analysis.”³⁸ Advocating for educational experiences over commercialized ones, they turned increasingly to the *ideal* of wilderness to express their values and used their manufactured landscape to propel notions of conservation. Ultimately, these were stepping stones to the lobbying efforts the club would engage in as environmental concerns began to percolate in mainstream discourse. However, while steering the club into a more activist stance during the 1960s, this generation of leaders remained convinced that outdoor recreation was the foundation for advocacy, functioning both as a means to raise awareness and a conduit through which to engage in the political process. Although it is now known more for its political engagement, the Sierra Club still leads backcountry expeditions and advocates passionately for outdoor activities. Firm in their conviction that skiing is a means to both adventure and enlightenment, they still operate the Clair Tappaan Lodge, the Hutchinson Lodge, and the trail system and overnight huts up at Donner Summit. Vestiges of old trail markers are still to be found, cultural artifacts invested with a symbolic meaning that eludes most of the passersby.

NOTES

¹Nathan C. Clark, Richard Searle, Lewis F. Clark, "Nathan C. Clark, Sierra Club Leader, Outdoorsman & Engineer. Oral History Transcript, 1976" (San Francisco: Sierra Club History Committee, 1977), 30.

²Nathan C. Clark, Richard Searle, Lewis F. Clark, "Nathan C. Clark, Sierra Club Leader, Outdoorsman & Engineer. Oral History Transcript, 1976" (San Francisco: Sierra Club History Committee, 1977), 31-32.

³Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*. Third Edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 1.

⁴Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: the Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 54.

⁵Ian R. Tyrrell, *True Gardens of the Gods: Californian-Australian Environmental Reform, 1860-1930* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1999), 57.

⁶Susan R. Schrepfer, "Establishing Administrative 'Standing': The Sierra Club and the Forest Service, 1897-1956," in *American Forests: Nature, Culture, and Politics*, ed. Char Miller (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), 126.

⁷Donald J. Pisani, "Lost Parkland: Lumbering & Park Proposals in the Tahoe-Truckee Basin." *Journal of Forest History*, 1977, 21 (1): 4-17.

⁸Gerald W. Williams, *The USDA Forest Service: The First Century* (Washington, DC: USDA Forest Service, 2000), 67.

⁹Douglas R. Nickel, *Carleton Watkins: the Art of Perception* (San Francisco, Calif. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1999), 31.

¹⁰Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*. Third Edition. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 190.

¹¹Bernard Mergen. *Snow in America*. (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 98.

¹²Nathan C. Clark, Richard Searle, Lewis F. Clark, "Nathan C. Clark, Sierra Club Leader, Outdoorsman & Engineer. Oral History Transcript, 1976" (San Francisco: Sierra Club History Committee, 1977), 54.

¹³Bernard Mergen, *Snow in America*. (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), xvi.

¹⁴Mergen, 97.

¹⁵Joel H. Hildebrand, "Ski Heil!" *Sierra Club Bulletin* (1935), v. 20, no. 1: 1.

¹⁶Hildebrand, 2.

¹⁷Lewis Clark, *The History of Clair Tappaan Lodge*, 1934. Unpublished compilation, Clair Tappaan Lodge, Norden, CA. (Original manuscript in George Homsey Private Collection, San Francisco, CA).

¹⁸Hildebrand, 2.

¹⁹Lewis Clark, *The History of Clair Tappaan Lodge*, 1934. Unpublished compilation, Clair Tappaan Lodge, Norden, CA. (Original manuscript in George Homsey Private Collection, San Francisco, CA).

²⁰Lewis Clark, "Clark Papers." *Sierra Club Members Papers*, box 4, May 19-20, 1934, BANC MSS 71/295 c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

²¹Clark papers, box 4, September 14-29, 1935.

²²Clark papers, box 4, October 17-18, 1936.

²³Joseph E. Taylor, *Pilgrims of the Vertical: Yosemite Rock Climbers and Nature at Risk*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

²⁴Lewis Clark, "Winter Sports Committee: A Progress Report," *Sierra Club Bulletin* v. 32 (1947): 9.

²⁵Clark papers, carton 279, folder 14, May 23, 1951.

²⁶Clark papers, carton 279, folder 14, May 23, 1951.

²⁷Clark papers, carton 279, folder 14, May 23, 1951.

²⁸Clark papers, carton 37, folder 31, May 10, 1952.

²⁹Clark papers, carton 37, folder 32, March 24, 1956.

³⁰Clark papers, carton 279, folder 1, Norden Newsletter, March 6, 1958.

³¹Clark papers, carton 279, folder 1, Norden Newsletter, Jan 13, 1959.

³²Clark papers, carton 279, folder 1, Norden Newsletter, Jan 13, 1959.

³³Clark papers, carton 279, folder 14, March 24 1956.

³⁴Clark papers, carton 279, folder 14, January 17, 1957.

³⁵Author's interviews and correspondence with George Homsey, 2011-2016.

³⁶Clark papers, carton 279, folder 14, January 17, 1956.

³⁷Nathan C. Clark, Richard Searle, Lewis F. Clark. "Nathan C. Clark, Sierra Club Leader, Outdoorsman & Engineer. Oral History Transcript, 1976" (San Francisco: Sierra Club History Committee, 1977), 89.

³⁸Nathan C. Clark, Richard Searle, Lewis F. Clark. 1977. "Nathan C. Clark, Sierra Club Leader, Outdoorsman & Engineer. Oral History Transcript, 1976" (San Francisco: Sierra Club History Committee, 1977), 85.

Mark Twain, Ruel Gridley, and The U.S. Sanitary Commission Raising Funds to Aid Civil War Soldiers

ROBERT E. STEWART

Bright sunshine was reflecting off the Mississippi River at Hannibal, Missouri, on June 4, 1846. It was Thursday, usually a work day, but many shops were closed as townspeople gathered along the main street to watch men in uniform from two Missouri militia units forming up on horseback for muster. Among the observing throng were two boys, watching in awe. One of the boys was nearly seven years older than the other, and they were probably not standing near each other that day, but they were schoolmates together. Years later their paths would cross in far off Nevada Territory.¹

Both would become nationally known—one perhaps fleetingly; the other remaining famous to this day. As this story unfolds below, it will take two directions. The first boy's story opens with the previously untold background of Ruel Colt Gridley and develops into the oft-told tale of Gridley's "Sanitary Sack of Flour."² It attempts to suggest what it was events in his early life that drove him to spending his personal wealth while destroying his own health raising funds to support an organization aiding Union soldiers.

Robert E. (Bob) Stewart has presented material on Mark Twain in earlier issues of the *Quarterly*, most notably the findings of a multidisciplinary bistate group that set out to locate Sam Clemens' campsite at Lake Tahoe through primary documents. He has also written three articles on Mark Twain in Nevada for the *Mark Twain Journal*, and spoke on Clemens at Tahoe at the Seventh Quadrennial Conference on the Status of Mark Twain Studies in Elmira, N.Y., and at the 2013 American Literature Association. He was Administrative Assistant for Natural Resources to Nevada Governor Mike O'Callaghan, and Chief of Public Affairs in Nevada (and for a year, nationally) for the U. S. Bureau of Land Management. In retirement, he is researching and writing about early Nevada and Nevadans, focusing on Mark Twain. He lives in Carson City.

The second boy's story, equally important, provides a glimpse at the maturing of fledgling reporter Samuel Langhorne Clemens into Mark Twain, a writer of international merit. During 1864, the bloody fourth year of the Civil War, Clemens's schoolmate Gridley—how close they were in the one-room school is unknown—would become a central figure in a critical period in the early development of Clemens's "Mark Twain" persona. This was the time when Twain passed from a naive scribbler, his writing largely ignored by the California press which was always hungry for news from the Territory and its mines, to a writer more aware of the consequences of his printed words.

The boy watching the parade who remains famous today is, of course, Sam Clemens, born in Florida, Missouri, 30-some miles west of Hannibal, on November 30, 1835. Years after that 1846 Hannibal military muster, Sam would spend a few years in Nevada Territory, where he became known as Mark Twain. It was also in the Territory that Ruel Gridley, the other boy watching the 1846 cavalymen, would embark on a mission through which he personally raised over one per cent of the \$25 million donated to the U.S. Sanitary Fund, the "Red Cross" of the Civil War.³

Although as noted above, the tale of Gridley and the "Sanitary Sack of Flour" has been told many times, and in various ways, little has ever been written of Gridley's life. Accounts of Sam Clemens's small role in the saga of the sack and fund-raising for the Commission, are usually limited to recounting the faulty tale told in Mark Twain's 1872 book *Roughing It*, a volume throughout which he often favored entertaining his readers over recording facts.

In Hannibal, Gridley's father Amos was a liquor merchant, selling whiskey at five cents a dram, twenty-five cents a gallon. Amos died in 1833, when Ruel was four. His mother, Sarah Ann (Sally), remarried in 1838; her new husband, Ruel's step-father Robert Blakely, was a carpenter.⁴

Ruel Gridley, two months shy of being seven years older than Sam Clemens, had not bothered going to school. In the 1840s, after an early childhood of casting around, perhaps now influenced by his step-father, he became a willing student in the same one-room school where Sam Clemens was an unwilling pupil.

Ten-year-old Sam Clemens was in school at the time of the muster because his mother insisted that he attend. His Tom Sawyeresque youth in Hannibal is not important to this tale, nor is his early employment and travel; so we leave him at the curbside, wide-eyed and carefree, to rejoin him when he has become a reporter on the staff of the *Territorial Enterprise* in Virginia City, Nevada Territory.

The purpose of the 1846 militia muster both boys were watching was to organize a thousand-man regiment in response to a call for cavalymen made by President James K. Polk to the governor of Missouri. In July, the regiment left for service in the Mexican-American war. The two units that provided the men for the "Second Regiment of Missouri Mounted Volunteers" were the Hannibal Rangers, from the Mississippi River town of Hannibal, Marion County, Missouri; and the Marion Guard, from the Marion County seat at Palmyra.⁵



COULDN'T WAIT.

Contributions to the Sanitary Fund. Illustration by Truman (True) W. Williams for *Roughing It*, by Mark Twain, 1872. (Courtesy of the author).

The following year, with the war in Mexico escalating, Congress authorized further expansion of the Army. Col. John Ralls recruited men in eastern Missouri to serve one year as the Third Regiment of Missouri Mounted Volunteers. Ruel, having turned 18, was among those answering the call. The group crossed the state on horseback. In Independence, Missouri, on June 12, 1847, Ruel Colt Gridley was mustered in as a private in Company E, commanded by Capt. William S. Lofland.

A few days later, the mounted company departed Independence for El Paso, on the Rio Grande. In March 1848, the Third played a key role in the assault on Santa Rosa de Rosales. An account of the attack written by Thomas Butler, a fellow member of Company E with Gridley, gives today's reader a feeling for the motivation that would later bring Ruel Gridley to the support of wounded Civil War soldiers:⁶

... on the 16th of March 1848, our company and six other companies of Col. Ralls' regiment and two companies of United States Dragoons [cavalrymen], under the command of Major Beal; also Major Watkins' Santa Fe Battalion, making about 600 in all had a "brush" with the Mexicans, under General Freas. The Mexicans were in town and were entrenched behind their breast-works. We fought them all day driving them about sundown from their position with a loss of three or four hundred killed and wounded and a large quantity of their stores and ammunition: also a number of prisoners. Our loss was considerably less than theirs. In this battle Thomas Ely and Al Robinson of my company were killed and Liss Norton had his leg shot off. They were by my side [at] the time and I will never forget the fatal incident. I had been on picket duty all night before the fight and in the morning without any rest, anything to eat or drink and not a bit of tobacco, I was ordered into line. We were about 600 yards from the enemy looking for the position of their batteries, which were belching grape and canister shot all around us. Tom Ely was next to me on my right and Liss Norton on my left and Al Robinson to the right of Ely. I asked Liss if he had any tobacco.... [Suddenly] a shower of balls dashed against us. I looked around saw that my three comrades were stuck, their horses were down and in the charge left behind.

A war correspondent, P. G. Fergusson, in a report reprinted in the *Santa Fe Republican* of April 22, 1848, adds to understanding Private Gridley's combat experience:⁷

The charge of Col. Ralls' column was a splendid affair. It moved like a thunder-bolt, precisely in the direction it was sent spreading dismay, death and destruction, and it was over this column that Col. Sanchez extended the flag of surrender. It was a proud day for all, but for those leading and directing this column, it was particularly so, and Col. Ralls in his report has but rendered justice to his officers and men, and that report does that commander distinguished honor for the virtue of his head and heart.

An entire park of artillery was captured with about 2,000 stand of arms and munitions, with other public property to the value of seven to eight hundred thousand dollars. We captured the whole force, including thirty commissioned officers, Gov. Maj. General Trias at their head.

After the day had nearly expired we learned that the place could only be carried by storming. The order to charge was given, and in one hour's time the city surrendered, our arms as ever, victorious, adding another trophy to the Fame of the great Republic we serve.

After the battle, Col. Ralls's men remained stationed at Santa Cruz de Rosales, occupying that post until the end of the war. Along with the other members of his unit, Ruel Gridley had now heard, seen, and smelled the ugly side of war: men with terrible wounds dying in great agony; wounded men screaming in pain, carried on stretchers; the bloody walking wounded; the unmistakable stench from the gruesome piles of legs and arms outside the field surgeons' tents. Perhaps this was the stimulus, as suggested above, that years later would lead him to his quest in support of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, a private relief agency created by federal legislation on June 18, 1861, to support sick and wounded soldiers of the U.S. Army during the American Civil War.⁸

In July 1848, Ralls's men were ordered to Independence, Missouri, where they were mustered out on October 21. Ruel, now 19, returned to Hannibal where he worked as a carpenter, a trade learned under his step-father. It was also then that Ruel joined the Hannibal Methodist Episcopal Church.

In September 1850, Ruel married Susan Snyder, 19. A son, Amos, was born in 1851, and a daughter, Clara, joined the family the following year.

In the manner of many young men in active military service, Ruel's travel during the war had opened his eyes to opportunities far beyond Marion County. In 1852, he set off for California on horseback. There was work aplenty for a carpenter in California, and he was soon able to send for Susan. She and the children came by sea, crossing the Isthmus of Panama.

When they arrived, Ruel was working as a carpenter in San Francisco. Soon after Susan arrived, the family moved inland to Oroville, in California's Butte County, where Ruel opened a carpentry business.

On September 21, 1857, an arsonist set fire to a residence near Ruel's shop. Spreading rapidly, the fire quickly leveled the Gridley building, a loss estimated at \$1,000. With no further explanation, the Oroville *Butte Record* noted "Mr. Gridley is for the third time in California reduced to penury by fire."⁹

Three months later Ruel, financially destitute, his carpenter's tools destroyed by fire, was sworn in as a Deputy Sheriff in Oroville.¹⁰ Deputies held patronage positions, and that employment terminated in December 1859, when Sheriff Nathaniel Plum's term ended. In the June 1860 federal census, Ruel is listed as a merchant in Kimsheew Township, Butte County, in the foothills 30 miles northeast of Chico.

Across the West, the decade of the 1860s opened with news of the Comstock's promise of wealth. Prospectors spread out across the Great Basin in hopes of making their own rich strike. In 1861, after completion of the through telegraph line to the east, the famed Pony Express was abandoned, and its experienced riders were left to find new occupations. The Overland Mail stage line, following the general route of the Pony Express, continued serving the central Great Basin until completion of the transcontinental railroad, located a long day's ride and more to the north along the Humboldt River route.¹¹

One Pony Express employee, William Talcott, remained in the Reese River valley, at the foot of the Toiyabe Mountain range in the middle of the Great Basin. While in nearby Pony Canyon in May 1862, he discovered an outcrop of greenish ore. Talcott staked the "Pony Mine" and sent a sample of the ore to a Virginia City assayer. The ore contained free silver. Word quickly spread, and early in 1863 men began arriving in the area.

A substantial mining camp, christened Austin, quickly blossomed on the steep hillsides of Pony Canyon. A separate camp, named Clifton, was created at the mouth of the canyon, on the more level land of the Reese River Valley. Quickly outgrowing temporary camp status, by September, Austin had become a full-fledged town, with, by one count, "279 structures: stone, 24; adobe brick, 57; frame 31; log or pole, 49; canvas, 38, tent, 38; brushwood, 42. Diminutive Clifton added 87 structures: stone, 24; adobe brick, 57; frame 31; log or pole, 49; canvas, 38; tent, 38; brushwood, 42-279." The population was estimated at 1,100 for Austin and 350 for Clifton. "Hardly six months since but one solitary tent could be seen in this vicinity, inhabited by a few enterprising pioneers," observed the editor of the *Reese River Reveille*, which began publication four months earlier, in May.¹² The influx of new arrivals continued; during the first six months of 1864, one hundred and eighty substantial houses were erected in Austin, with another twenty-nine under way.¹³

It was in this burgeoning mining district that Ruel Gridley and William W. Hobart, with Henry Jacobs, opened a general merchandise and grocery store. Gridley and Hobart had been deputy sheriffs together in Butte County, patronage appointees during the 1858 through 1859 tenure of Sheriff Plum. The men had two stores in Austin: Hobart, who soon became a town alderman, ran the shop in "lower Austin," while Ruel ran the store in a stone building at the uphill end of town. In the upper store, Jacobs was a Nevada Territory notary public and a commissioner of deeds for California.¹⁴

At this point in the story, many years later, Mark Twain attempted to insert himself back into the tale, albeit briefly. In his 1906 autobiographical dictation, Twain speaks of Gridley leaving school for the Mexican War and his own frustration at his inability to go because of his young age. In a paragraph (dictated in 1906) making the transition from the Mexican war to the Civil War and Ruel Gridley's sack of flour, Twain said:

...Gridley went away to the wars and we heard of him no more for fifteen or sixteen years. Then one day in Carson City while I was having a difficulty with an editor on the sidewalk—an editor better built for war than I was—I heard a voice say “Give him the best you’ve got, Sam, I’m at your back.” It was Reuel [sic] Gridley. He said he had not recognized me by my face but by my drawling style of speech.¹⁵

But is it possible such a meeting occurred in Carson City? First, the time frame: “...we heard no more of him for fifteen or sixteen years” after the 1847 mustering-in would bring the “hearer” to 1862-63. As the *Enterprise* reporter covering the second session of the Territorial Legislature, Sam Clemens arrived in Carson City shortly before November 11, 1862. Reporter Clemens (he first uses the name Mark Twain in a February 1863 *Enterprise* column), was a resident in Virginia City. James L. Laird, with whom Twain would feud in 1864, had been one of the publishers of the *Silver Age* newspaper in Carson City, but, on November 2, that paper and staff moved to Virginia City, publishing the first edition of the new *Virginia City Union* on November 4, 1862. From November 2, 1862, until the summer of 1863, there were no editors resident in Carson City for Twain to have a “difficulty” with.

As for Gridley, his store in “upper Austin” opened in mid-July 1863, as noticed by a “New Store” advertisement in the *Reese River Reveille*. That Gridley had been in Austin for some time is suggested by an editorial comment in the *Reveille* on July 28, 1863, announcing a Sunday School movement in upper Austin led by R. C. Gridley, a “well-known character for morality and probity.”¹⁶

The wording of a letter Sam Clemens wrote to his mother and sister about the Sanitary Fund in May 1864, in which he wrote: “along came Gridley, (you remember him) whom I hadn’t seen for 15 years, and he brought help,” tends to suggest no such meeting took place in Carson City in 1862 or ‘63. The text of Clemens’s letter is printed below, telling of the adventures with Gridley and the Sanitary Sack of Flour.

The contemporaneous letter home carries the ring of truth. And possibly the answer—not fifteen or sixteen, but seventeen years. In May 1864, Mark Twain was having issues with the publishers of the *Virginia Daily Union*. It is possible they were having words when Gridley arrived unannounced in Virginia City with the Sanitary Sack of Flour. We cannot dismiss that as possibly being the point and manner in which Gridley did make “got your back” contact with Twain—in Virginia City, not Carson City. The tale of Gridley in Virginia City will unfold below. The nature of Gridley and Twain getting back together is a minor point, probably over-explored here only because several secondary sources, perhaps following the lead of Dr. Effie Mona Mack’s volume *Mark Twain in Nevada*, refer to the incident being in Carson City as fact.¹⁷

Back up a few weeks now, to municipal election time in Austin. For residents and visitors alike, throughout Nevada Territory in 1864, almost everything came from California, assisted by a limited amount of Austin-bound freight



The Gridley Store in Austin, NV, 2011.

dispatched by merchants in Salt Lake City. From needles and thread to sew on buttons or tailor clothing, to heavy iron castings for crushing and milling gold and silver ore, most freight came across the Sierra Nevada. Smaller items were loaded on trains of pack mules, forty pounds per mule; medium freight on wagons drawn by horses or mules, and the heavy equipment by the long-haul semi-trucks of the day, ox-drawn freight wagons. Most of the wagons, which continued in a seemingly endless stream, were off-loaded in Carson City or Virginia City. After the Austin mines were discovered, a few loads of freight continued east to the Reese River region, where the populace of the new mining district was always in need of all kinds of mining equipment, supplies, and food—including flour.

In Gridley's store, Chico-brand wheat flour was sold to householders in 50-pound sacks. The sacks themselves soon became shirts, dresses, even wall covering in place of lath and plaster.

The Chico flouring mill was owned by Gen. John Bidwell, who came west as the leader of the pre-Gold Rush overland Bartleson-Bidwell party. He was just 22 years old when he arrived in California in 1841. Ten years later he completed purchase of the 22,214-acre Mexican land grant called Rancho Arroyo Chico in Butte County.

In 1860, the General Land Office recognized the validity of the grant, and on part of it Bidwell quickly founded the town of Chico, two dozen miles southwest of Ruel's business in Butte County's Kimsheew Township. "General Bidwell," as he was known, created a highly productive farm and ranch on the south side of Chico creek. His Chico Mill quickly became known for its high-quality wheat flour.¹⁸ Early in 1864, an order of Bidwell's Chico flour was delivered to the Gridley Store in Austin, Nevada Territory.

Also in early 1864, and also related to the Chico flour in Gridley's store—the importance of which will become obvious—the third Nevada Territorial Legislature created the incorporated City of Austin. It included the land area from upper Austin down Pony Canyon to include Clifton. The election for a mayor and other officers for the new city was set for Wednesday, April 20, 1864. All men who had lived in the city for 90 days were eligible to vote.

There were two candidates for Mayor. Charles Holbrook, 33, and David E. Buell, 38.

When he was 19, candidate Holbrook sailed from Boston for California during the 1849 Gold Rush. Born in New Hampshire, he was trained as a machinist in Massachusetts. In Sacramento, he became a partner in a hardware business, and, in 1863, he opened the Austin, Nevada Territory, branch of the Sacramento hardware store, "Lord, Holbrook & Co." There, the following spring, he ran on the Republican ticket for the new office of mayor, strongly supporting President Lincoln and the Union cause.¹⁹

On the Democratic ticket, David E. Buell was an unabashed Copperhead. Another man drawn to Nevada's mines from California, he had been in Placerville as the elected sheriff of El Dorado County and was an Assemblyman from that county in 1858. In 1862, he was in Nevada Territory as a prime promoter of the new camp at Austin, having assisted in creating a wagon road up narrow Pony Canyon.

Mr. Holbrook, as the representative of the loyal people, won the election. The editor of the *Sacramento Daily Union*, reporting the election at Austin, wrote that it:

...must have been a rich affair, something like the doings that we were wont to witness in the pioneer days of California, when horseracing, card playing and fights abounded, and liquor did much more abound—especially in the mining region. The election at Austin, however, notwithstanding some extravagances in language and action, was distinguished by undoubted loyalty on the part of the majority, which made itself manifest in the selection of loyal municipal officers.

The editor then went on to quote a correspondent from Austin: "...big speeches, bigger bonfires and biggest processions were the order of business day and night. Whisky was as free as water... merchants closed their stores and went to gambling on the general result—'put up or shut up' was the war cry...."²⁰

Among those making a bet on the Mayoral race was one which would create the legend under discussion. It was between Ruel Gridley, a Democrat and a Copperhead—"or" Twain wrote his mother, "as he calls himself, 'Union to the backbone, but a Copperhead in sympathies' "—and his friend, Dr. Hamas S. Herrick, MD, 44, a Republican and the elected Lander County Assessor. Born in Holland in 1820, Dr. Herrick had been superintendent of schools in Placerville, where he doubtless knew sheriff and Assemblyman Buell.²¹

It was a lopsided bet—if the Copperhead candidate Buell had won, Dr. Herrick would have had to carry a fifty-pound sack of flour about two miles, from The Bank Exchange at the lower end of Clifton up to the store of Gridley, Hobart & Jacobs, in Upper Austin. It was (and is) a steep grade, rising about 200 feet in elevation. For Gridley, it was to be a downhill hike.

The morning after the election, which was a Union landslide, the town was ready for a gala event. It began at 10 a.m. in upper Austin, where Ruel Gridley hefted one of his store's 50-pound bags of Chico flour, trimmed with flags and red-white and blue ribbons, onto his shoulder.

It was a parade and a celebration, variously described later, suggesting people and groups joined it along the way. The story was telegraphed to California newspapers, as follows:

A number of sympathizing friends of the Copperhead school, and a large number of Union men, the officials-elect of the city included, gave Gridley the honor of their company. The process led by the Austin Brass Band, proceeded to Upper Austin, where Gridley ...took his place in the procession. Having arrived at the point of delivery, ...Thomas B. Wade made the presentation speech for Gridley, which was felicitously responded to by H. G. Worthington on the part of Dr. Herrick. The suggestion having been made by someone that the sack ...be sold at auction for the benefit of the Sanitary Fund, it was accordingly put up at auction in front of Grimes' saloon, the most public part of the newly incorporated city. It was bought successively by [a number of persons, each in turn] immediately empowering the volunteer auctioneer, Thomas B. Wade, to sell it over again for the benefit of the Sanitary Fund.²²

Auctioneer Wade, like Gridley, was a veteran of the Mexican War. He was wounded in the battle of Chapultepec, recovering sufficiently to take part in the capture of the city of Mexico, where he was one of the heroes at the storming of the Belén Gate.

In the Austin municipal election, Gridley's partner William Hobart, a Union man, had been elected as an Alderman. It was about this time that they divided the business, Hobart keeping the "south Austin" store while Gridley and Jacobs kept the stone store, still standing today, at the top of Austin. As Gridley became more deeply involved with Sanitary Fund travel, Jacobs left the partnership to become an independent notary public.



Ruel Gridley carrying the sack of flour. Illustrated by J. Ross Brown for *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 33, June 1886. (Courtesy of the author)

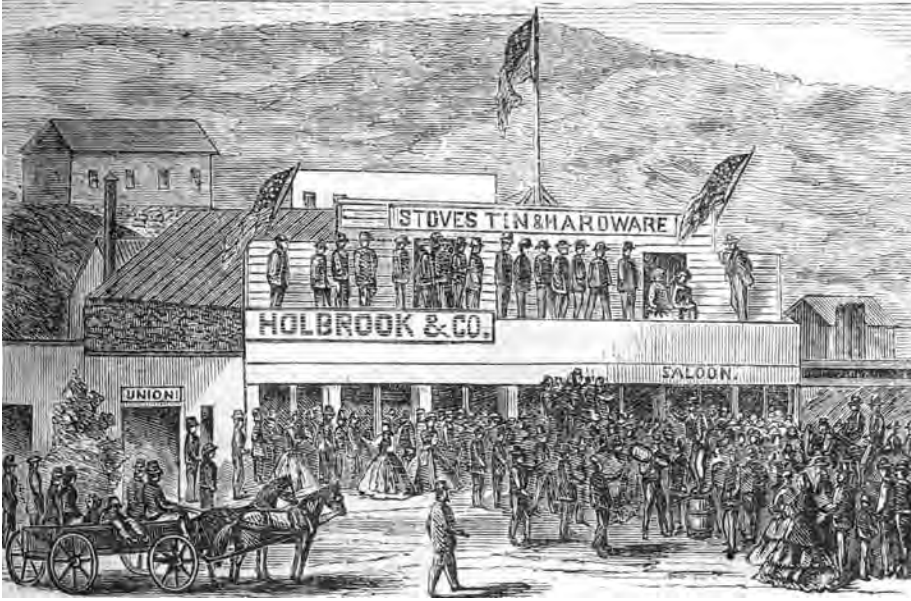
In the *Territorial Enterprise* of May 18, 1864, Mark Twain wrote of the "Travels and Fortunes of the Great Austin Sack of Flour" which had occurred on the 16. He stated that between auctions at Austin and in western Nevada Territory, the sack had paid the Sanitary Fund not far from \$30,000. In the article, Twain listed all the donors and the amount each "paid" for the sack of flour. Then he wrote that on Monday Evening, May 16, following the final Nevada Territory auction of Gridley's sack of flour at a mass meeting in Virginia City, thirteen committees were named to call on various persons for additional contributions. Most of the names are unimportant here.²³

Perhaps as a testament to Clemens's friendship with Gridley, he is the only man named on two committees. But he was not on the two committees where we might expect to find him. Twain's fellow reporter at the *Enterprise*, Dan De Quille, was on the committee to call on "the Ladies," and five lesser known townsmen were named to call on saloon keepers. On one of his two, "Sam Clemens" joined John Doble to call on brewers of beer.²⁴ Clemens's other assignment was for "A. W. Baldwin, Mark Twain, and the Old Piute" to solicit donations from Comstock lawyers. Note use by reporter Twain, the name Clemens for the one and Twain for the second.

There were a lot of lawyers, and this committee was a powerful trio of Comstock men, so it is disappointing to have to report that their success at fundraising remains unrecorded. Twain's committee partner Alexander W. (Sandy) Baldwin, an extremely talented and popular public speaker, was also a young man at the time, just five months older than Twain. Earlier, in July 1861, speaking in California, he said "I regard secession as revolution against the highest law of the land."²⁵ He was highly respected as a lawyer, and a year later, in 1865, Baldwin would become a U.S. District Court judge, one of President Lincoln's last appointments. The other member of the trio, "the Old Piute" was John K. Lovejoy, a decade older than Baldwin and Twain. He had recently become publisher of the *Daily Old Piute*, a small Virginia City newspaper. Lovejoy's coarse humor and over fondness for puns with an acid twist, would soon lead to demise of that paper.²⁶

Twain's further personal involvement in the fund-raising on the Comstock is detailed in a long letter to his mother and sister, written at midnight on Tuesday the seventeenth, after writing the long article for the next morning's *Enterprise*. Clearly, Twain was ebullient following the carnival-like atmosphere of the events. The letter reflects his joyous excitement at the success of the fund-raising events:

Virginia is only a small town, about three times as large as Hannibal, and Gold Hill is about the same size as Hannibal. Silver City and Dayton are mere villages—but you ought to see them roll out the twenty dollar pieces when their blood is up.... I think they like that Sanitary Fund because it affords them such a bully opportunity of giving away their money. They are slow until you move them, though. When Pamela



Gridley sack of flour at auction. Illustrated by J. Ross Brown for *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 33, June 1886. (Courtesy of the author)

wrote us to try and do something for the [Sanitary Fund fair in St. Louis] I went after the President of the [Storey] County Sanitary Commission, [Almarin B. Paul], who is an old St. Louisian—I had never taken much interest in sanitary matters before. He went to work sending calls to the several counties to contribute, and I, being chief of our editorial corps, then, went to scribbling editorials. But we couldn't make the raffle.

Paul got the ladies of Gold Hill to give a ball, and a silver brick worth \$3,000 was the result, but that wouldn't go far, you know. Then we got up a meeting in Virginia, and only got \$1,500 or \$1,800, and that made us sick. We tried it again, and almost concluded to disband the audience without trying to do anything—but we went on, kept it up all the afternoon and raised \$3,500, and had about concluded it was no use to try to get up a sanitary excitement. We began to think we were going to make a mighty poor show at the St. Louis Fair, when along came Gridley, (you remember him) whom I hadn't seen for 15 years, and he brought help. He is a Copperhead, or as [he] calls [himself], "Union to

the backbone, but a Copperhead in sympathies." ... When Ruel got here yesterday, with his sack, ... We put it up at auction and it only brought five or six hundred dollars. Paul lives in Gold Hill, and he said he was so disgusted with Virginia that he would try his own town, and if she failed he would leave the country. This morning at eleven o'clock he had two open carriages—one for reporters and the other for the speakers—got a brass band and we started for Gold Hill. When we got there Ruel gave the history of the flour sack, and said that from what he could see people outside of Austin didn't care much for flour. But they soon made him sing small. Gold Hill raised Austin out of her boots, and paid nearly seven thousand dollars in gold for the sack of flour....

Then we went down to little Silver City and sold it for \$1,500 or \$1,700. From there we went to the village of Dayton and sold it for somewhere in the neighborhood of \$2,000....

We got [back up] to Gold Hill at four in the afternoon, and found the streets crowded, and they hailed us from all sides with "Virginia's boom-in'!" "Virginia's mad!" "Virginia's got her back up!" "You better go 'long to Virginia; they say they'll be d—d if the whole Territory combined shall beat them!" and a hundred other such exclamations. Wherefore we journeyed into Virginia with a long procession at our heels, coming up to see the fun. We got to the meeting place after dark, and found the neighboring buildings illuminated and the adjacent streets completely blocked up with people. Then the fun commenced, and I wished Pamela could have been there to see her own private project bringing forth its fruit and culminating in such a sweeping excitement away out here among barren mountains.... She has certainly secured \$30,000 or \$40,000 worth of greenbacks from us....

Well, the fun commenced, and the very first dash made Austin take a back seat, and strode half way up the Gold Hill. It was a bid for the sack of flour by the men employed in the Gould & Curry mine and mill, of three thousand five hundred dollars! They went ahead of Austin two hundred dollars. Then followed half a dozen bids of five hundred dollars each, and the thing was fairly under way. In two hours and a half Virginia cleaned out the Territory and paid nearly \$13,000 for the sack of flour! How's that? Nearly a dollar a head for every man, woman and child in the camp, in two hours and a half; and on four hours' notice. New York couldn't come up to that ratio in the same length of time. And then the offices of all our big mines are located in San Francisco, and when that city makes a big dash for the Sanitary fund, the heaviest end of it comes always from those very offices.

The other day the *Daily Union* gave \$200, and I gave \$300, under instructions from the proprietors always to "go them a hundred better." Tonight the Union bid \$100, and I bid \$150 for the *Enterprise*. I had to go to the office to make up my report, and the *Union* fellows came back and bid another \$100. It was provoking, because I had orders to run our bid up to \$1,000, if necessary, and I only struck the *Union* lightly to draw them on. But I guess we'll make them hunt their holes yet, before we are done with them.

Gridley and the sack of flour, which was protected in a buckskin carrier during travel, departed the Territory on the Pioneer Stage to Sacramento. The flour sack was stenciled "Austin Sanitary Flour" in large letters, denoting it as "the official" sack. In Sacramento, the Sanitary Fund picnic drew three thousand participants. After numerous other auctions in California, Gridley traveled by ship to New York to continue his quest to help fund the U.S. Sanitary Commission. Gridley and the Sack of Flour having departed Nevada, we will suspend their story for the moment to consider related matters in Nevada Territory.

Well before the Austin election, the Ladies of Carson City had planned a "Fancy Dress Ball" to raise funds for the Sanitary Commission. It was held on May 5th. When it raised only \$1,815, well short of their goal, Gov. James W. Nye offered his popularity as a public speaker to raise an added two hundred dollars. Perhaps it is not coincidental that he gave that talk in Carson City on May 19, two days after the Comstock Sack of Flour success, and two days after Twain made a serious error in judgment in publication of derogatory comments about the "Fancy Dress Ball."

The evening of the 16, Twain was still full of excitement from the day's success, and while writing up the emotion-charged events on the Comstock for publication the next morning, stuck his foot deep in mud. He wrote: "the reason the Flour Sack was not taken from Dayton to Carson, was because it was stated that the money raised at the Sanitary Fancy Dress Ball, recently held in Carson "...had been diverted from its legitimate course, and was to be sent to aid a Miscegenation Society somewhere in the East; and it was feared the proceeds of the sack might be similarly disposed of." He did then mollify the statement by saying that "it was a hoax, but not all a hoax, for an effort is being made to divert those funds from their proper course."²⁷ Miscegenation was a newly-coined word, and in the flush of success, at a late-night hour after a wonderfully full day, and probably a few drinks, Mark Twain apparently made an impetuous, naïve mistake by playing with the word.

The diversion from the "proper course" line was clearly a shot by Twain relative to routing of the proceeds. Pamela had asked her brother for support of an ongoing fundraising "Sanitary Fair" event in her hometown, St. Louis, and honoring her request the Comstock adventure was funneling the money through that event. But the Carson Ladies had decided to send their donation

directly to the Sanitary Commission. There is also, perhaps, a bit of sibling teasing at play. Sam's older brother Orion was president of the Ormsby County Sanitary Commission.²⁸ Orion's wife Molly was a member of the Ball committee.

In far-away New York, shortly before the preceding Christmas, a 72-page pamphlet had appeared for sale in New York City, titled *Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races, Applied to the American White Man and Negro*. "Miscegenation" was created by the pamphlet authors from the Latin *miscere*, "to mix," and *genus*, "race," with the English suffix "tion." The authors were David G. Croly, managing editor of the staunchly Democratic *New York World*, and staff reporter George Wakeman. In an attempt to destroy President Lincoln's re-election, the pamphlet offered a social philosophy that in 1863 was highly inflammatory, encouraging white and black people to have children with each other.

Now Mark Twain was over his head in trouble. He was already carrying on a vituperous public exchange with James Laird, of the *Virginia Daily Union*, on another matter. When Twain belatedly responded to a letter of complaint from Ellen G. Cutler, president of the Ladies of Carson, he wrote that her letter:

...came at a moment when I was in the midst of what ought to have been a deadly quarrel with the publishers of the *Union*, and I could not come out and make public apologies to any one at such a time. It is bad policy to do it even now (as challenges have already passed between myself and a proprietor of the *Union*, and the matter is still in abeyance,) but I suppose I had better say a word or two to show the ladies that I did not wilfully and maliciously do them a wrong.

Twain also acknowledged the pain he had caused Orion's wife, thanking Mrs. Cutler: "for your continued friendship for Mollie while others are disposed to withdraw theirs on account of a fault for which I alone am responsible."

That was written on May 24, the same day that the *Enterprise* also published a strong apology.²⁹ Newspaperman Twain found his pen had now brought him trouble in his family, possible mortal duels with Mrs. Cutler's husband and another with publisher James Laird of the *Union*, and threats of thrashings or worse from other of the Ladies' husbands. Shortly after this, Twain decamped to San Francisco. It was a lesson he did not forget, later recalling "When I laid down my editorial pen I had four horse-whippings and two duels owing to me."³⁰

Returning to the travels of Ruel Gridley: at one point during his travel in the East, the fact of his being a Copperhead was raised. The *Reese River Reveille* promptly responded: "Gridley is an old Douglas Democrat, and, although acting with the Copperhead party, his honor and devotion to the humane effort of relieving the sick and wounded soldier are undoubted by those who know him best."³¹

Over the next 18 months the sack was auctioned and re-auctioned innumerable times. In St. Louis, a few miles south of Gridley's home in Hannibal,

a 21-transaction auction raised \$3,755 in March 1865, at what may have been one of the final auctions. The Civil War was drawing to a close.

The estimated total derived from sack sales was \$275,000. Gridley spent his entire savings financing his 15,000-mile charitable campaign, never touching the income from the auctions. Gridley paid his own expenses; all the money raised went to the fund. He came home broke and in poor health.

Shortly after he returned to Austin, making matters worse for Gridley and his family, the Reese River silver boom hit a pause, and with that his general store fell on hard times and soon failed. Suffering from a rheumatic condition in 1868, he moved to Stockton, California, where his sister lived. He died there two years later on Thursday, November 24, 1870—it was Thanksgiving Day. Twain was living in Buffalo, New York. For him, 1870 was memorable: He married Livy on February 2nd, and she bore him a son on November 9; he was enjoying the success of his first major book, *Innocents Abroad*, published in 1869, and was preparing to write *Roughing It*.

In the years following Ruel Gridley's death, friends helped the destitute Gridley family ask Congress to reimburse the Gridley family for the time, and especially the money, spent raising the donations. Members of Congress were sympathetic, but the response had to be that Congress only chartered the Sanitary Commission and could not set a precedent for such organizations by funding it or reimbursing expenses of any of its members.³²

Twain did not learn of Gridley's death until he arrived in New York City in December. On Saturday, the 10 of December, he hand-wrote and hand-delivered an obituary to Horace Greeley at the *New York Tribune*, to inform New Yorkers of Gridley's death and remind them of Ruel's quest, concluding the letter: "This long and tedious expedition, undertaken and carried through to the end with whole-hearted zeal, albeit there was no dollar of remuneration in it for Mr. Gridley, is the best exemplar of the generous nature of the man, & also of his great energy."³³

NOTES

¹Caveat: I am, of course, only assuming that two boys, one ten and the other sixteen, would not miss the color and excitement of watching a two-company muster in their own home town.

²In his military records, marriage record (on Ancestry.com, search for "Reed," a misreading of the handwriting), on his tombstone, etc., it is spelled "Ruel." Many writers, including Twain in *Roughing It*, misspell it as "Reuel."

³The first retelling of the sack auctioning is found in Charles J. Stille, *History of the United States Sanitary Commission* (J.B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1866), 236-7. Stille focuses on the Austin and Comstock auctions and leaves Gridley in Sacramento. The New York Public Library manuscripts and archives division, under the direction of Susan Waide, has undertaken a project processing all the known papers from the commission. An early account of the sack's Nevada history was provided by Ruel's granddaughter, Clara Louise Wood, in the first volume of *Nevada Historical Society Papers*, 1917, 59-60.

⁴Genealogical information has been compiled from various entries on Ancestry.com and other Internet sites. His name is often written as Reuel, the form it is also given by Twain in *Roughing It*; however, his marriage certificate, various military documents, and gravestone, spell it Ruel. California newspaper references are found online at the free website *California Digital Newspaper Collection*, created and maintained by the University of California, Riverside (cdnc.ucr.edu/) and GenealogyBank.com. Many of Mark Twain's *Enterprise* articles are available at the extensive Twainquotes.com site maintained by Barbara Schmidt. A "dram" is one-sixteenth of an ounce, about a teaspoonful, or "a thimbleful."

⁵*History of Marion County, Missouri* (St. Louis: E. F. Perkins, 1884), 283-291. The unit names—Marion Guard (infantry) and Washington Rangers (cavalry)—are interesting when we remember that Mark Twain, in *The History of a Campaign that Failed*, says he joined the "Marion Rangers." The county name, Marion, honors the Revolutionary War hero Frances Marion, "The Swamp Fox." In Hannibal, the name was not original to Twain's fictional 1861 militia unit: A group of Hannibal men joining the California Gold Rush in 1850 had called their company "Marion Rangers."

⁶Ralls County Historical Society, "Thomas Butler," *Ralls County Times*, 30 March 1900, accessed February 10, 2016. https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?id=109255402451402&story_fbid=574804189229852

⁷*Bugler Sound the Charge*, Brig. Gen. Sterling Price, 31 March 1848, accessed February 16, 2016. <http://www.chargeofthedragoons.com/2005/06/22/>

⁸The name Sanitary Commission was first applied by the British to a group aiding Crimean War soldiers. Word meanings can change over time: In Noah Webster's *Dictionary of the English Language*, 1865 (Springfield, Mass, 1865), 1169. "Sanitary" means "Pertaining to, or designed to secure, sanity or health; relating to the preservation of health; hygienic. From the Latin *sanitas*, health."

⁹"Fire in Butte," *Sacramento Daily Union*, September 24, 1857. Because of the late hour, Michael Kelly had been told earlier that night not to sing in the saloon run by the owner of the residence where the fire started. Just before leaving the saloon. Kelly asked for and received some matches from the saloon keeper.

¹⁰*Sacramento Daily Union*, December 1, 1858.

¹¹*Daily Alta California*, September 15, 1890.

¹²*Marysville Daily Appeal*, September 4, 1863, quoting the *Reese River Reveille* of unstated date, crediting the count to G. F. Allardt.

¹³*Daily Alta California*, July 22, 1864.

¹⁴Advertisements, *Reese River Reveille*, December 5, 1863; *Sacramento Daily Union*, November 21, 1863.

¹⁵Harriet E. Smith et al., eds., *Autobiography*, vol. 1, (University of California Press, 2010), dictation of 16 March 1906, p. 419; *Mark Twain Letters*, Vol. 1, ed. Edgar Marques Smith & others, University of California Press, 1988, p. 288ff, letter of 17 May 1864.

¹⁶*Reese River Reveille*, 29 July 29, 1863, p. 3, col. 1. "New Store" advertisement, *Reveille*, 25 July 1863, p. 4, col. 3. The editor, W. C. Phillips of Virginia City, had been recruited by people in the Reese River area to establish a newspaper in Clifton (lower Austin), which he did in May, 1863. In October, 1863, his health failing, he removed to Sangamon County, Illinois, where he died in

May, 1865, of consumption. He had come west to California in the 1850s, then moved to Virginia City in 1859.

¹⁷Effie Mona Mack, *Mark Twain in Nevada* (New York, Chas Scribner's Sons, 1947), 312. Mack cites the two-volume Twain *Autobiography* published in 1925.

¹⁸George C. Mansfield, *History of Butte County, California* (Los Angeles, CA: Historic Record Co, 1918), 135, 418-426. The mill was later purchased by the Sperry Co., now a division of General Mills.

¹⁹*San Francisco Call*, 26 April 1895, Page 8, col. 3. The article consists of biographical sketches of members of a new San Francisco grand jury.

²⁰*Sacramento Daily Union*, 26 April 1864, p. 2, col. 2.

²¹Special care has been taken in identifying each of the men mentioned in the election and bet narrative. In *Roughing It*, written to entertain and never as history, Mark Twain, who never visited Austin, has changed some players' roles, probably to simplify his story line. Later writers often believe *Roughing It* is autobiographical, despite Twain's own disclaimer. *Harpers' Monthly* writer, J. Ross Browne, in "The Reese River Country" (June, 1866, pp. 26-43) predates *Roughing It* by six years with a delightful version of the Austin event, written during a visit to Austin (pp. 34-36). Dr. Mack, *Mark Twain in Nevada*, (note 14, above, p. 310ff), follows Twain's *Roughing It*, with corrections and clarification. In *Mark Twain of the Enterprise*, Henry Nash Smith (University of California Press, 1957, p.186ff), prints the text of Twain's letter of 17 May 1864 without comment. Paul Fatout, *Mark Twain in Virginia City* (Indiana University Press, 1964, 186ff), relates the Comstock auction clearly, and loosely ties the miscegenation letter to the Comstock auction. The sack of flour still exists in the holdings of the Nevada Historical Society in Reno. It has been mentioned in publications of the society, including a photograph and a brief but accurate story of the sack by Douglas MacDonald. *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, Reno, 14: 1, Spring 1971, pp. 59-60.

²²The first detailed appearance was in the *Daily Alta California*, 21 April 1864, p. 1. Col. 4. Auctioneer Wade was a widely known California '49er and former mayor of Placerville. (*Los Angeles Herald*, 18 October 1879), p. 3. col. 4.

²³Reprinted in the *San Francisco Bulletin*, 19 May 1864, Page 5, col. 6 & 20 May 1864, p. 1, col. 2. There is no mention of Carson City in the *Bulletin* reprint. Volume IV of *The Union Army*, by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Federal Publishing Co., p. 432, places Nevada's contribution at \$51,500 "in silver bricks."

²⁴Little record of this John Doble has been located. The following August, he was one of six men appointed to "prepare an address to the citizens of Storey county, showing the advantages which would follow a state organization." *San Francisco Bulletin*, 8 August 1864, p. 5, col. 6, quoting the Virginia Union of 5 August. In 1874, he was a founding member and vice-president of the Nevada Pioneers' Assn. *Daily Alta California*, 10 September 1874, p. 1, col. 2. N.b. This is clearly not the John Doble of *John Doble's Journal and Letters from the Mines*, who was a prominent businessman in San Francisco in 1864.

²⁵*Sacramento Daily Union*, 13 July 1861, p. 2, col. 1., p. 5, cols. 5-6.

²⁶Richard E. Lingenfelter & Karen Rix Gash, *The Newspapers of Nevada: A History and Bibliography, 1854-1979* (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1984), pp. 257-8; *The New York Times*, 5 February 1877, reprinting the *Virginia City Enterprise* of 27 January 1877.

²⁷The article itself is not found; the wording is quoted from an 1864 letter to the *Enterprise* in *Mark Twain's Western Years*, Ivan Benson, (Stanford University Press, 1938), p. 111.

²⁸Howard K. Beale, ed. *The Diary of Edward Bates* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1933), p. 377. Bates has pasted in a July 17, 1864, clipping from an unidentified newspaper, in which Ormsby County's contribution to the national fund is mentioned.

²⁹The full text of the apology is reprinted in *Mark Twain of the Enterprise*, Univ. of California Press, 1957, pp. 197-98. Sidney Kaplan discusses the pamphlet on miscegenation and its importance in 1864 in "The Miscegenation Issue in the Election of 1864," *The Journal of Negro History* 34 (1949) pp. 274-343. The text of Twain's letter is contained in *Letters*, vol. I, pp. 296-7.

³⁰Twain, *Autobiography*, Vol. I, p. 298.

³¹*Reese River Reveille*, quoted in the *Sacramento Daily Union*, 2 June 1864, p. 2, col. 1.

³²Congress chartered hundreds of organizations, ending the program in 1992 ("U.S. Code Title 36 organizations"). Among the many chartered organizations assisting military veterans are the American Red Cross, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Marine Corps League, and many more.

³³*New York Tribune*, 11 December 1870, p. 5, col. 5.

C. D. Baker and the Modernization of Postwar Las Vegas

EUGENE MOEHRING

Following its victory in World War II, America entered a new age as its empire now spread from colonial markets based chiefly in Central and South America and the mid-Pacific to new bastions of economic power in the oil-rich Middle East and East Asia. As the economist, John Kenneth Galbraith, noted in his 1958 classic, *The Affluent Society*, the typical American family went from a meager average income of \$2,000 per year in the 1920s (with barely a few thousand dollars in the bank, if that) to \$8,000 to \$10,000 per year by the late 1950s as more families moved above the poverty line and also into the middle class.¹ This awarded many white American families and single adults much more disposable income than their parents ever had. More disposable income meant more money to travel and to play in new vacation getaways like Miami, Honolulu, Reno, and Las Vegas. Along with a dramatic postwar increase in leisure time for workers, this benefited places like Las Vegas and Reno, but it also required the construction of new hotels, highways, airports,

Eugene Moehring is professor of history. He received his PhD in 1976 from the City University of New York and his BA (1968) and MA (1970) in history from Queens College. A specialist in urban history, he also taught courses in business history, history of the United States since 1920, Nevada history, and the history of science.

In addition to numerous journal articles and book chapters, he has published five books: *Public Works and the Patterns of Urban Real Estate Growth in Manhattan, 1835-1894*; *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas, 1930-2000*; *Urbanism and Empire in the Far West, 1840-1890*; *A Centennial History of Las Vegas* with Michael Green; *The University of Nevada, Las Vegas: A History*; and *Reno, Las Vegas and Strip: A Take of Three Cities*.



C.D Baker, Mayor of Las Vegas. (*C.D. Baker Photo Collection, UNLV Libraries, Special Collection*).

and convention centers. Just as Las Vegas began experiencing these issues C. D. Baker became the city's mayor, and he quickly proved himself to be up to the challenge of getting this infrastructure built to attract millions of tourists and residents over the next half century. By the end of his mayoral tenure, Las Vegas had become America's newest metropolitan area.

Baker's arrival in town almost 30 years earlier was barely noticed. Trained as a civil engineer at Rose Polytechnic Institute but lacking a secure position in life, Charles Duncan Baker (he preferred to be called C. D. Baker) came to Las Vegas in 1922 as a 21-year-old mathematics teacher at Clark County High School and doubled as the school's basketball coach. Once he had more money and connections, the restless Baker started his own engineering and realty firms to supplement a few early land investments in the area. During the New Deal the ambitious Baker served as county surveyor, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) director, and city engineer. In this latter position, he not only came to grasp the workings of Las Vegas city government, but also played a key role in designing the street network from which young Las Vegas would expand in the decades after World War II.

Baker soon began to dabble in politics. In 1939, he tried to parlay his growing popularity for engineering his city's street system into the Las Vegas mayoral position, but he lost to fiscal conservative John Russell. However, in 1940, Baker successfully ran for the State Assembly and served in the 1941 session. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, he served in the Pacific in the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers helping to build airports, hospitals, and other facilities in the Philippines and other island nations liberated from Japanese rule. In this capacity he rose to the rank of colonel. Once back from the war, Baker married and resumed his engineering and real estate businesses and revived his political career. Baker served as Clark County's representative in the State Senate during the 1947 and 1949 sessions and played a key role in convincing northern lawmakers to approve the state's purchase of Basic Magnesium from the federal government—the key prerequisite for saving the giant war plant that later spawned the city of Henderson. Saving the giant factory also gave the Las Vegas area a permanent chemical industry to supplement tourism and Cold War defense. Senator Baker also sponsored a bill permitting Basic Townsite residents to buy the company home they were renting, thereby contributing to the infant community's permanence after the war. In 1947, Baker also supported the creation of what soon became Nellis Air Force Base by endorsing the effort to move the current city airport from the base's site just north of North Las Vegas to a location one mile south of the Flamingo Hotel. In 1951, he tried again for mayor of Las Vegas and won, defeating longtime incumbent, Ernie Cragin, who, for many voters, had grown too close to the city's casino owners.²

Clearly, Baker's early tenure as city engineer in the 1930s taught him to be vigilant as mayor regarding the city's needs as it underwent a wave of growth related to Hoover Dam's construction, which flooded his city with new resi-

dents and tourists. By 1950 casino gambling had clearly begun to transform the town, more than tripling its 1940 population of 8,400.³ Baker actively worked to prepare the city for its rapid growth and expansion outward.

Water was the greatest obstacle blocking the Las Vegas area's development. Inadequate supply became a major issue for Las Vegas during World War II when population, increased by tourists, California defense workers, and soldiers on weekend passes caused some taps in the city to run dry. Union Pacific Railroad executives, whose company wells had been the main supplier since the city's inception, told Las Vegas leaders they could no longer guarantee enough water if the onetime division town grew much larger and certainly if it became the tourist center that many businessmen hoped for. After much discussion with community leaders, Baker introduced a bill in the 1947 legislative session to create the Las Vegas Valley Water District, a valley-wide public entity designed to issue bonds to purchase the Union Pacific's water sources and infrastructure and take over the responsibility for extending that system. Voters approved creation of this special service district in 1948. Beginning in 1951, Baker helped lead the struggle to pass a Water District bond issue to build the needed infrastructure to give the city more water.

Water was a particularly controversial issue in the mid-1950s, since the water district was still in its infancy and lacked enough money to deliver water to everyone immediately. The mayor battled with both the water district and its contractors to get the pipes laid, and was forced to authorize restrictions on lawn watering in 1954 to conserve water.⁴ The city was plagued with shortages until 1955 when the district finally completed a line to Basic Magnesium in Henderson, which delivered the first Lake Mead water to the Strip area and to the city. Until then, everyone relied on artesian wells and other small sources, which Las Vegas' rising number of tourists and residents helped drain. In some areas in 1954, neighborhood cisterns actually ran dry.⁵

Las Vegas boomed during and after the Korean War, thanks to Nellis Air Force Base, the nuclear test site, the Cold War, and tourism, which created thousands of new jobs in the area and stimulated much new construction. New suburbs not only required more water mains, but also street paving above them. Paving was especially necessary in a town where summer downpours created excess runoff that overwhelmed the many dirt roads in the city's outer suburbs, creating puddles that lasted for days. Of course, not every homeowner supported Mayor Baker's ambitious paving program. As the Republican *Las Vegas Sun* noted, on the east side many residents opposed paying assessments for paving streets, and in some cases the city fathers had to back off and re-pave thoroughfares farther down the block. In his first year as mayor, the Democratic mayor created a firestorm in conservative circles by raising municipal fees to spend more on public works. But as the Democratic *Las Vegas Review-Journal* noted in a 1959 story defending Baker, "streets have been built where none existed before. Curbs, gutters and sidewalks have been

established in areas where before were just dirt and mud.”⁶ Despite this support, the mayor faced intense criticism whenever the progress of street improvements moved slowly.

In response, Baker directed his anger not just at his critics but at contractors as well. Throughout the 1950s, he fumed at the slow progress of public works in the city. In 1955 Baker was particularly miffed at the lack of effort by the contractor paving parts of East Charleston Boulevard that served many of the town’s newer suburbs. Police Commissioner A. H. Kennedy threatened to have officers cite the contractor for blocking the road and even levy additional fines and perhaps initiate court action against him for contract violations. The same was true for the failure of the water district’s contractors to lay mains fast enough to stave off a water crisis in many of the city’s outer suburbs.⁷

The pace of sewer construction also went slowly in some places, as the former city engineer and realtor worked with frequent allies such as progressive city commissioners Reed Whipple and Phil Mirabelli to convince more conservative city commissioners and some homeowners that liberating whole neighborhoods from their reliance on septic tanks was worth the investment in public funds and assessments. Las Vegas’ booming population in the 1950s threatened to overwhelm the city’s system, and in 1954 the engineer mayor aggressively pushed for construction of a second sewage treatment plant to “relieve the odor” in the Charleston Boulevard and Nellis Avenue sections in the city’s far eastern suburbs. Mayor Baker also supported construction of the second facility, because Clark County’s plant was too far away to be cost effective for the city to share. He argued that Las Vegas needed to build a second plant closer to town to take pressure off the current facility that was being overworked and to give the town enough additional capacity to allow Las Vegas to serve a future population of 100,000 people or more. This, he insisted, would someday be an indispensable asset for a resort city hosting thousands of tourists who drove the city’s weekend population far beyond weekday numbers.⁸

Given the city’s rapid growth and the number of public works projects required, Mayor Baker and city commissioners also recognized the need to better coordinate the administration of these activities as other, fast-growing American cities had. By fall 1953, Baker, city commissioners, and city manager George Rounthwaite had merged Engineering, Buildings, and five other city departments into one large Department of Public Works to save money and promote efficiency.⁹ This was a move that New York City had undertaken in 1870 and other large cities had imitated once their exponential growth made it obvious they were destined to become the central city of a sprawling metropolitan area. As of the 1960 U. S. Census, Las Vegas was the only Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) in the United States whose central city began in the 20th Century, so its feverish postwar development required actions like these at the municipal level.

In 1954, with the arrival of more water mains to increase the street hydrants' ability to fight fires and with more buildings in the city than ever before, at Mayor Baker's urging the fire department announced that it would finally install a fire alarm call-box system. This act clearly symbolized Las Vegas' move upward to more of a modern city and the center of a budding metropolitan area.¹⁰

Traffic was still another issue the mayor had to grapple with. By December 1953 it was obvious that as the city's business district expanded, more parking meters would need to be installed downtown where they never existed before. Some business people and customers applauded this action, but others were enraged, not yet willing to concede that Las Vegas' small-town atmosphere was yielding to the hustle and bustle of a big city.¹¹ In response, Baker, reflecting the blueprinting style of civil engineers, established a citizen's panel that would study the problems and adopt a planning approach to guide its recommendations. Their panel's findings could then be used to help legitimize future parking policies that could be embedded in Las Vegas' first, full-fledged master plan, whose creation he strongly supported. In 1954 Baker worked to establish a city parking commission of up to nine citizens to analyze downtown's snarled traffic. This group spent months studying traffic and parking problems and ultimately proposed a course of action that was hardly popular with everyone. The installation of more parking meters in the central city and the imposition of a higher charge to pay for it was not well received by all merchants nor was the proposal for more on-site parking for stores and offices to eliminate street parking and allow more lanes for traffic to use. The commission also urged city leaders to rent more vacant land downtown for parking lots and to begin building a multi-decked, public parking garage. Baker in particular defended the group from critics, and in 1955 pushed city commissioners to build a five-deck parking garage off Fremont Street and change building ordinances to require all new commercial buildings to have on-site parking following a strict formula that tied the number of parking spaces to the amount of acreage owned. In 1954 Baker courageously pushed for an off-street parking ordinance that the city desperately needed to maximize space in an effort to hold off competing Strip resorts and their spacious parking lots, which were siphoning a growing number of customers away from the city's sidewalk-fronting hotels and clubs on and near Fremont Street.¹²

In addition to parking and traffic improvements, the city also needed to clear space for new downtown buildings and facilities to serve a modern, growing business district. Having a civil engineer as mayor hardly hurt Las Vegas in this regard. In 1953, Baker pushed for a city slum clearance program in areas north and south of Fremont Street from Main to Fifth Streets to clear the land of old shacks and other dilapidated buildings whose conditions fell well below building code standards. Baker faced only token opposition from a few owners and business tenants who promised, in desperation and in vain,

to bring their structures eventually up to code. Baker's goal was to create room for low-rise apartments that could accommodate hotel-casino workers who could not easily commute to their jobs from distant housing. Baker also insisted that "downtown business... get behind the slum clearance movement and come up... [with] some plans for development."¹³ In the 1950s, Sunbelt cities across America were actively bulldozing old neighborhoods to make room for convention centers, sports arenas, interstate highways and their downtown interchanges, as well as other projects designed to enhance central city land values (which incidentally helped increased property tax revenues) and attract more business downtown.

Of course, the goals of the still small city of Las Vegas were more limited. Mayor Baker and city commissioners pushed slum clearance to create space for new structures that would reinforce the downtown district's customer clientele with more working families in multi-occupancy dwellings and save the hotels and clubs the cost of paying their workers more to commute by car or bus. The future routes of Interstate 15 and U.S. 95 were still officially undetermined, so room had to be left for the highways but no longer for a convention center whose site was already set by 1958, east of the Strip behind the Riviera Hotel. Still, Baker's anticipation of future city needs was not always accurate. For example, he steadfastly opposed raising the city's building height limit in 1953 for Al Rose's Patio Hotel. The mayor justified his position by appealing to aesthetics, contending that a downtown hotel such as Reno's 12-story Mapes "would stand out like a lily in a cabbage patch."¹⁴ He was wrong, of course, and it would be later mayors who would change Las Vegas' ordinances to allow the Union Plaza, the Mint, the 34-story Sundance (later Fitzgeralds and now The D), and other buildings that gave downtown more of a modern city look.

Throughout Baker's time as mayor the pains of growth and development often sparked tensions between the city and other entities. In 1953, for instance, Chamber of Commerce director Ken Frogley charged that in past years Las Vegas officials "did not have enough funds to support the all-important Live Wire Fund when it was asked to give the chamber \$10,000 a year... to help advertise Las Vegas." Frogley complained that the city had just spent \$79,500 for a public golf course and wondered aloud in the *Las Vegas Sun* if the city "with its growing pains, could use that \$79,500 to much better advantage"—especially since the private sector had already built "all the golfing facilities we will need for many years." A day later Baker angrily responded that the course would more than pay for itself in 15 years. He insisted that a resort and recreational city, unlike its industrial and commercial counterparts, really needed less expensive public golf courses not only to satisfy tourists but to serve residents as well. He also noted that giving public funds to the chamber was illegal and suggested that chamber officials might better spend their time convincing state legislators to amend Las Vegas charter to permit the city to give money to agencies, such as the chamber of commerce, that it did not control.¹⁵

Other issues during Baker's time as mayor were also more metropolitan in scope and involved whether the city would expand its borders and annex some of the suburbs it had spawned. Unlike Phoenix, San Antonio, and other imperialistic cities in the West, 1950s Las Vegas was not looking to annex every nearby tract of suburban land that it could. Certainly, it took in new housing tracts along its periphery, usually to help residents eliminate cesspools and send their kids to a good city school before the 1955 legislature eliminated that inducement by creating the Clark County School District. Still, Las Vegas was not as land-hungry as Phoenix, San Antonio, and other Sunbelt cities. In July 1954, for instance, Baker discounted rumors that Las Vegas was looking to annex North Las Vegas. At the time, he could see no reason for doing it, because land values in "North Town" were so low, and the cost of supplying it with modern infrastructure services was so high. Baker, the engineer and politician, could never justify the expense. In later years, however, it became obvious this was a major mistake. From the 1960s onward, North Las Vegas grew rapidly outward in all directions from its border with Las Vegas. In 2012 North Las Vegas became the third largest city in Nevada, after it briefly passed Reno. Over the years North Las Vegas snared many new subdivisions and captured a larger portion of the metropolitan area north and east of Las Vegas, keeping sizable housing tracts away from the central city and Clark County.¹⁶

The county did much the same thing on Las Vegas' southern border, but during Baker's first term as mayor there was still a possibility of annexing what is today considered "the North Strip." Even after Strip resort owners and residents rejected annexation in 1946 and 1951, during Baker's regime the city continued its effort to grab some major resorts and the suburban lands around them. In April 1953 Las Vegas-based businessmen and city commissioners again pushed the annexation issue when a housing boom around the Thunderbird Hotel (the site of today's Fontainebleau) on Paradise Road raised the question of how to establish sewer service for the expected 350 multi-occupancy dwellings and up to 600 single-family homes planned by developers to house Strip workers near their jobs. Pressure on county officials came from the FHA, which required sewer service either from the city or county before it would approve mortgage insurance in the area. Former Lieutenant Governor Cliff Jones, a part owner of the Thunderbird and a major supporter of 1949 legislation forcing Nevada's cities to get county approval for the annexation of any nearby incorporated townships, was actually willing to consider allowing Las Vegas to annex the lands east of his hotel. The problem in 1953 was that Clark County barely had enough taxable land to fund its own sewer system to serve the Strip resorts and the new suburban subdivisions it spawned. But Clark County managed to hold off the city on the sewer service front, as the resorts and most other property owners opted to retain their septic tanks rather than join the city with its zoning restrictions and higher taxes.¹⁷

The sewer issue rose again in the mid-1950s, as resort construction south of the Thunderbird put even more pressure on Clark County commissioners.

Then, as they prepared to approve construction of the new Casablanca (later renamed the Riviera) hotel, the question of building sewers to remove wastes once again emerged. The county's first approach was to see if the city would provide sewer service to the Strip area—even though it was still in the county. During the early 1950s the city agreed to do this using trucks. But the FHA and many residents wanted the Strip area to connect directly with Las Vegas' sewer network to remove wastes underground. After all, using a modern engineered infrastructure was preferable to cleaning septic tanks and cesspools and periodically transporting their wastes in trucks to the city's sewage treatment plant east of town, especially in the 100-degree-plus summer weather.¹⁸

County commissioners realized the Riviera would not only bring more tourists but also more workers, who would need additional FHA-approved housing in the area for themselves and their families. Still, many observers felt that Clark County, even in 1955, lacked enough taxable wealth to finance these improvements. County commissioners seriously considered urging Mayor Baker and the city commissioners, who in the 1940s and early '50s provided fire service for the Strip, to now extend it sewer service—even though county commissioners and most Strip area residents staunchly opposed joining the city. For their part, however, city leaders began to balk at the expense of building sewer lines southward, even if county residents paid for most of it. Mayor Baker and his predecessor Ernie Cragin firmly believed the Strip and its suburbs should join the city that helped create them; then the city would provide sewer connections. For a while Las Vegas transported sewage from the Strip area in trucks and processed those wastes at the city's treatment plant, but this was only intended to be temporary. Las Vegas also owned land in the county near the Flamingo Hotel, which it had purchased a few years earlier, so the city already had a presence on the Strip. In addition, after construction of its second sewage plant, Baker knew the city would have more than enough reserve capacity to treat the Strip area's wastes—even with all the new subdivisions on the drawing board for that section as well as new sections of the city.

The only long-term solution for keeping the Strip and its suburbs out of the city was for Clark County's commissioners to start forming Sanitary Districts on lands beyond the valley's municipal limits to host a sewer system of its own. None of this thinking was lost on Las Vegas' former city engineer who understood the high costs associated with building waste networks. In November 1953 the city commission adopted a firm position that Las Vegas would construct no sewer lines into the county except for commercial projects or residential subdivisions along its municipality's border, including Strip areas that were willing to be annexed. This effectively ended the discussion, forcing county commissioners and residents of the various townships along the Strip and the Boulder Highway to begin reaching deep into their pockets for the millions of dollars needed to dig trenches into the *caliche*-filled desert for the installation of sewer and water lines. In that same year county commissioners also had to establish the Clark County Fire Department after the city cut off service to the Strip and its nascent suburbs.¹⁹

Conflict between city and county flared again in the mid 1950s when Joe W. Brown first offered his newly purchased land on Joe Smoot's old Las Vegas Downs racetrack to Las Vegas as a site for a convention center. Even though this land was not downtown but south of the city limits on county lands, Mayor Baker, to his credit, immediately supported the idea of building the facility. Despite the site's location, there was still a chance the city might annex it, because, as just noted, two years earlier city and county business leaders conducted serious discussions about Las Vegas annexing some of the Strip area near the Thunderbird Hotel in return for sewer lines to the municipality's sewage treatment plant. In the end, county commissioners decided to establish their own Sanitation District in Paradise and Winchester townships (the Strip area) and build their own sewer system, anticipating that Strip resorts and the surrounding suburbs they encouraged would only grow over time as would their taxable value—an assumption that proved to be correct. The Las Vegas Convention Center was another expensive project that the gaming industry, the chamber of commerce, and city and county commissioners all wanted. The problem was how to pay for it. The obvious option was to float bonds, but the chamber of commerce favored private funding, which proved hard to come by. At the time, the City of Las Vegas, being well populated, possessed the most bonding capacity of any local government.²⁰

Because of this, Mayor Baker and the city commissioners were determined that they should not pay for most of the convention center's cost, insisting instead that Clark County pay its fair share of the bill. They also felt that valley residents should not be burdened with the cost of building the facility; visitors should pay for most of it. In a spirit of consensus, city and county leaders eventually agreed that only those businesses directly benefited by conventions—hotels, casinos, restaurants, and stores—should help defray the project's cost through their license fees. But as the mayor pointed out, county license fees were much lower than comparable city fees, and county commissioners had little enthusiasm for raising theirs. Baker therefore reasoned that if the city were to contribute more money than the county for the convention center, then the city should be allowed *to annex it as well as the property around it*. The land's increased value, he argued, would soon generate enough revenue to justify the city's expense. So, he asserted that the city's southern border should be extended outward roughly as far as today's Wynn resort on Paradise Road in return for the city bearing most of the convention center's cost. Presumably, the city would also extend its sewer lines out to the convention center and surrounding lands (and maybe even westward to the Riviera and Thunderbird hotels) to relieve the county of that responsibility.²¹

But concerned Clark County commissioners blocked this option by offering a novel idea of their own to finance the convention center. County Commissioner George Albright proposed creating a building fund financed by money collected from a 5% hotel and 3% motel room tax levied on Las Ve-

gas area tourists. In the end, all local governments and the chamber backed this proposal. In 1955 the state legislative session had passed a law permitting counties with a population in excess of 100,000 people to establish Fair and Recreation boards with the power to administer and issue bonds to build convention centers. While city officials were allowed to serve on these convention authority boards and influence policymaking, Clark County officials had once again met the challenge and fended off Las Vegas' efforts to annex some of the county's most valuable property in and around the emerging Strip.²²

Conventioneers, like tourists, need to fly if they travel a long way, so airport expansion was another major priority for the resort city at midcentury. Following the maiden flight of the Boeing 707 in December 1957, city and county officials along with prominent hotel operators and other business leaders began discussing the transformation of McCarran Airport into a modern jetport by extending its runways and taxiways and building a new terminal on Paradise Road. Enlarging the 1948 facility became even more important after the arrival of commercial jets made their debut at McCarran in September 1960. From the start Mayor Baker took part in these discussions and enthusiastically sought voter approval for the March 8, 1960 bond issue that did it—even though his tenure as mayor ended a year earlier.²³

Of course, not all of Mayor Baker's activities revolved around construction projects. By 1950 gambling was the major force driving Las Vegas tourism, and the city still played a role in gaming's regulation. While 1945 state legislation took most of this responsibility away from municipalities that were clearly overtaxed by the burden and gave it to the Nevada Tax Commission, the cities still exerted some power over gaming properties. Baker, a pious man who was no advocate of spreading the pastime beyond the state's borders, nevertheless recognized that gaming was crucial to Las Vegas' growth as a resort city and was determined there be no improprieties. It should be noted that the former state Senate Democrat strongly supported Republican Governor Charles Russell's creation of the State Gaming Control Board in 1955 and Grant Sawyer's Gaming Control Commission in 1959. Baker, like other leaders, recognized that the Nevada Tax Commission had enough important work to do with property taxes and related issues without being saddled with the regulation of what was fast becoming a larger industry.

A year before the state legislative session that created the Gaming Control Board, Baker supported legal efforts to protect the investigatory and regulatory powers of the Nevada Tax Commission in the Thunderbird Case and similar litigation. Unlike some, the mayor wanted no part of returning the power to grant gaming licenses to the cities—even though many of Las Vegas' major casino owners, including mob figures, wanted to deny state authorities this authority. Baker resented the presence of mob figures in the city and on the Strip. Though he generally got along with them, he realized that the key to Las Vegas' future popularity and protection from Bible Belt demagogues such

as Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver was to keep Nevada gaming as clean as possible.²⁴ At this time, the reform-minded *Las Vegas Sun*, shared this view much more than the *Review-Journal*. The Democrat Baker and *Las Vegas Sun* publisher and Republican Hank Greenspun were not only drawn to each other by their mutual dislike of Senator Pat McCarran, but also by their concern over the mob's presence in so many resorts and clubs in the Las Vegas area.

Determined that gaming industry people follow the law and do nothing to tarnish Las Vegas' already maverick image, Baker adopted a strict approach to hotel-casinos, clubs, and sports books. Any deviation from municipal or state regulations usually resulted in immediate action by the mayor. In 1954, for instance, Baker moved quickly to close the California Club when he was alerted that Golden Nugget part-owner Guy McAfee had acquired an interest in the California Club, but his name was not on the property's gaming license. A short time later he even ordered the Saratoga Sports Book closed after the owner tried to install a coffee machine for patrons despite the city's strict ban on "concessions" in any sports book.²⁵

Given Baker's strong leadership and long list of accomplishments, one might expect his easy re-election. But conservative critics, like many residents, while applauding the city's economic growth and hotel-casino development, resented the municipality's increased taxes, fees, and assessments for which they held Baker chiefly responsible. As the mayor approached his spring 1955 re-election bid, former Clark County Commission chair and perennial political gadfly George Franklin entered the race and appealed to conservative businessmen and residents who objected to the city's perennially torn-up street system, overspending, and "high taxes." The campaign somewhat resembled the 1939 mayoral contest where Baker pushed to carry on the city's ambitious New Deal agenda of public works but lost to fiscal conservative John Russell, who reflected the anti-Roosevelt sentiment of the late 1930s. Now, in the more current spirit of President Dwight Eisenhower and Senator Robert Taft (R-Ohio), Franklin declared: "There has not been a time in Mayor Baker's tenure that someone or other main arterial road or street in the city has not been torn up and traffic disrupted to the extent that some small businessmen have been forced to the wall and larger business materially injured." Franklin went so far as to accuse the mayor of a "lack of coordination on public improvements" and then promised to institute "a long range, integrated program of public improvements so that there is not a constant, continuous tearing up of streets and of digging and re-digging." To be sure, this was one of the many pipe dreams that Franklin had during his long public career. Even today, Las Vegas area streets in all directions are covered with miles of "red cones" blocking off dug-up surfaces and narrowing traffic to one or two lanes—always in the interest of progress.²⁶

Even more politically threatening, however, was Franklin's charge that Baker's administration had pushed taxes up. Franklin insisted that it was

"mandatory" that local governments practice "economy" in the wake of the 1955 legislature raising property taxes, imposing a sales tax, and expanding bonding power to pay for reforms and more schools in the newly created Clark County School District. In response to this, Baker directed a furious attack not only against Franklin but also against contractors whose street improvement projects were slowing traffic unnecessarily. This was particularly true of the water district and its main contractor, Fisher Construction. But as the mayor and angry residents soon learned, not all of the old Union Pacific mains were easily found underground, which delayed efforts to replace them with modern equipment. For the most part, however, Baker took a largely positive approach during the campaign and dwelt heavily on his accomplishments, especially in the area of public works. In a 1955 paid advertisement for his re-election, the mayor boasted that in his first term as mayor he increased: paved streets from 104 to 180 miles; street lights from 750 to 2,200; sidewalks from 38-100 miles; sewers from 60-122 miles, and parks and playgrounds from 132 to 292 acres. Some of these public works projects were in the new and rapidly expanding suburbs as well as in the older, more neglected parts of town. As a civil engineer, realtor, and mayor he realized the city's growing population had to be serviced correspondingly by public works if land values were to appreciate for homeowners. This also meant more property tax revenue for the city to maintain an aggressive public works program that kept pace with urbanization.²⁷

As it turned out, Baker's concerns mattered little on Election Day when voters awarded him a second term. Part of his campaign rhetoric voiced support for the city's first master plan to guide zoning measures and other policy decisions aimed at promoting growth and preparing for its consequences. Even before the election it was clear that the emerging metropolitan area's central city needed a master plan. With the appearance of so many new hotels on the Strip and downtown, by 1954 the pace of urban growth had accelerated to the point where Baker and city commissioners had to halt building permits for new stores and houses until the planning and street coordination process caught up. At this time, there were already \$1 million in "public improvements" underway, including the extension of Maryland Parkway from Circle Park at Charleston Boulevard to Oakey Boulevard, site of the new Bishop Gorman Catholic high school. This area was part of the 1950s march of progress southward to lands that would form the city's eastern suburbs, crossing the city line at Sahara Avenue. Eventually, Maryland Parkway would be paved all the way to the metropolitan area's new 1957 college campus (today's UNLV) and beyond to McCarran Airport's fence. Everywhere in the eastern sections of the county and city development was underway. As city public works director George Wade told a Soroptimist Club luncheon in 1955, 28 new housing tracts covering 588 acres were currently in the planning stages. Wade predicted that Las Vegas' population, which barely totaled 25,000 in 1950, would surpass 80,000 by the next census.²⁸

Baker, who as city engineer during the New Deal public works helped blueprint the system of streets and sewers downtown, worked as mayor to draw up the city's first master plan to guide development in the late 1950s and 1960s. The preliminary 1955 plan that he and city commissioners expanded during his second term into a more comprehensive plan (published in 1959) imitated efforts in Dallas, Phoenix, and other sunbelt cities during the postwar years to identify and clear blighted slum areas to create more space downtown for freeways, convention centers, and commerce. Though Las Vegas never got the valley's main convention center and while much of the big office buildings and business centers it expected ultimately sprouted in the county's Strip suburbs, the master plan was a useful guide for development until more dramatic population growth and resort expansion forced coordinated valley-wide master planning in the 1970s and '80s. Still, the 1959 document quite properly anticipated congressional approval of the Interstate Highway Act of 1956 and planned for at least three and maybe four interchanges on the interstate highway within the city as well as a metropolitan expressway that later became U.S. 95.²⁹

Las Vegas' master plan listed not Los Angeles, but Pasadena, Whittier, Fresno, Sacramento, and even Beverly Hills as cities whose population densities and other traits Las Vegas compared to itself. The master plan prioritized the need to reserve more space for schools, as valley-wide student enrollment in the newly-created Clark County School District passed 15,000 and continued to soar in response to the metropolitan area's growing number of jobs and people. But while there was consideration of other needs such as parks, recreation, and housing, it was streets, roads, and traffic flow were the major concerns the plan addressed.³⁰

Noting that "both sides of the mainline railroad tracks were planned and installed at a time when the full potential and the expansion of the community could not be fully realized" and that train traffic was impeding motor vehicle movement on Charleston Boulevard and other big east-west thoroughfares, the master plan called for "grade separation" for all of these current and future arteries. This was in response to widespread public sentiment on the issue, perhaps best expressed by *Las Vegas Sun* publisher Hank Greenspun, who highlighted the need to build more underpasses below the railroad tracks to "knit the town more firmly together as it began to develop a west end that would soon match the size of Senator [William] Clark's east end." Las Vegas did not want to duplicate the situation Reno experienced downtown with trains daily slowing traffic along its north-south arteries. Moreover, the master plan, while certainly welcoming the impending construction of the new "Interstate freeway" on today's I-15 route along the city's western periphery, reiterated that this highway could also block cross-town traffic if underpasses and overpasses were not built for all main drags in the city.³¹ However, the plan also indicated that the path for the as-yet un-built "San Francisco freeway" (today's U. S. 95) would not run along its present-day route north of downtown and *through* the city but rather along Sahara Avenue on the *edge* of the city—where Las Vegas met the emerging Strip. Only in later years was this route changed.

Baker and city commissioners also made sure the plan mentioned the city's need to annex developed lands beyond its borders "to alleviate the problems of conflicting and overlapping jurisdictions... [and] where the city can furnish urban services more economically than other jurisdictions." Citing this concern, city officials later pushed for a 1968 consultant's report that recommended annexation of the Strip hotels and various townships lying east and west of the resorts on county land. Las Vegas officials did not give up their effort to annex these valuable lands until 1978 when county voters overwhelmingly rejected annexation by a wide margin. Finally in the 1980s, as the Strip suburbs surged past the city's population by many thousands of people, the danger of annexation ended forever.³²

Another problem mentioned in the master plan was flood control, an issue that the engineer mayor regarded as a threat that had to be addressed, especially after disastrous floods inundated city streets and some homes and businesses in 1955 and 1959. In that latter year Baker joined with other city and county officials to convince the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to study the problem. Efforts by U. S. Senator (and former Nevada State Engineer) George "Molly" Malone and later Howard Cannon finally brought army engineers to town in the late 1950s to study the problem, and they drafted plans to channel flood waters. In addition, now-former Mayor Baker supported creation of the Clark County Flood Control District in 1961. However, Las Vegas area voters rejected a bond issue to build a flood control system. At that time, too many other bond issues were more important to them, including those for schools, streets, sewers, and airport expansion. In the 1960s the metropolitan population had not yet sprawled far enough outward to cross major washes and put buildings not yet built and residents not yet present in widespread danger. They would not be there until the mid-1980s when a valley-wide effort to build miles of flood control channels became an absolute necessity. In 1986, voters approved creation of the Clark County Regional Flood Control District to fund a 30-year effort to network the metropolitan area with an elaborate flood control system far beyond anything the Army Corps had proposed.³³

The emphasis on better planning came just in time, because the arrival of more hotel-casinos downtown and casino resorts on the Strip filled the city of Las Vegas with more residents who preferred living in a place with municipal services, stores, and churches rather than the snake-filled, tumbleweed suburbs sprouting hither and yon on county lands east and west of the Strip. The City of Las Vegas' budget for 1955 was the highest ever at \$2,880,000. With a growing population to serve but also with a correspondingly higher tax base, Mayor Baker supported dozens of public works projects to serve new residents and divert them from living in the county. By the mid-1950s road projects employed over 500 men, much to the dismay of conservatives and those residents frustrated by torn-up streets.³⁴

The pressure constantly mounted on Baker and liberal city commissioners to cut back on spending. Aggressive city managers were a favorite target of fis-

cal reformers, and few lasted very long if their agendas were overly expensive or wasteful. Witness the case of George Rounthwaite, a person who the mayor highly respected. Rounthwaite's planned renovation of an aging City Hall that really needed to be replaced with a modern building only antagonized conservative city commissioners, who also criticized his installation of modern air conditioning refrigeration units in the old building rather than cheaper evaporative coolers. In the end, Rounthwaite was replaced by longtime police commissioner A.H. Kennedy, who hardly qualified for the city manager job in a fast-growing place like Las Vegas, but was a longtime subordinate that everyone, including fiscal conservatives, liked.³⁵

Another target was the relatively new post of assistant mayor, a position that Baker needed and strongly defended. By March 1958 it was obvious to Assistant Mayor Robert Notti that the city commission would soon abolish his job, since tourism and the national economy were both suffering a downturn at the time. The former Assistant Manager of Titanium Metals, Notti, had held his city position since spring 1954. Pressuring Baker to abolish Notti's office was conservative city commissioner Wendell Bunker, who would run for mayor in 1959 but lose to Oran Gragson. In 1958 Bunker denounced what he considered excessive city spending, which he intended to reign in by forming a "county taxpayers' association" similar to the Las Vegas Taxpayers' Association that brought John Russell to power in 1939 and helped oust 3-term mayor Ernie Cragin. Russell had taken aim at supposed overspending by Mayors Ernie Cragin (1931-35; 1943-51) and Leonard Arnett (1935-38). Now, in the late 1950s Bunker set his sights on Baker. Like his predecessors, Baker criticized the effort by conservatives to cut spending despite rapid population growth and Las Vegas' need to provide services to new neighborhoods and modernize the city to attract more businesses and residents.³⁶

Baker understood how much conservative businessmen and utility executives benefited from growth and resented their failure to promote the process.

Street contractors, the water district, the gas company, and others all incurred the mayor's wrath on occasion. This also included the Southern Nevada Telephone Company, which came under intense scrutiny by Baker and the city for its endless delay in getting rid of 4-party lines, installing dial phones, and stringing lines into new neighborhoods. Fearing the possible loss of its status as the region's lone telephone utility, company executives promised to equip City Hall with its long awaited, new switchboard within four months and to establish private one-party lines in all new suburbs by early 1956. The utility had already begun putting in dial phones, which particularly pleased city and Strip hotel executives, who were fed up with tourists and other visitors trying to make room, dinner, and show reservations on 4-party lines. So, with executive assurances and the progress already underway, Baker backed off for a while and gave the phone company time to fulfill its promises. Despite some more delays and resident complaints, service slowly improved.³⁷

Mayor Baker had many strengths as a leader, especially in the area of public works and planning, but he also had weaknesses. Indeed, while Baker was a positive force for modernizing Las Vegas with public works improvements for commercial and residential streets, as well as building a modern water system, a convention center, and a jetport to accommodate growth, he was hostile toward extending full civil rights to racial minorities and women. In 1958, for example, the mayor and city commissioners passed an ordinance banning women dealers from working in any casino in the city. As a result, women remained in the so-called "girls' ghetto" of keno-running and cocktail waitressing for the next decade. This policy was mostly pushed by male dealers, many of whom were regular voters and fearful that attractive female dealers would earn more tips, draw more players to their tables, and ultimately cost a lot of men their jobs. The law was not changed until 1971 when influential casino magnate Sam Boyd insisted on the right to hire female dealers at his new Union Plaza Hotel at the head of Fremont Street, and Mayor Oran Gragson (1959-75) got the law changed.³⁸

Regarding the emerging civil rights movement and Las Vegas' African American Westside community, Baker's record was mixed. In March 1954 he approved construction of the Moulin Rouge Hotel, despite its location on Highland Avenue, far from the Westside's red-line district for casino gambling. Local white residents were furious. Bonanza Village residents opposed a big, 250-room hotel so close to their homes. But their protests were to no avail. The resort opened with much hoopla, and while not technically in the Westside, the short-lived Moulin Rouge provided many low-paying jobs for African American workers.³⁹

Baker also championed a general improvement of Westside streets to match a similar effort of his in the white areas of town. This had been delayed for years, because low land values in this poor section could not generate enough revenue in local assessments to pay for the work. Baker, however, pushed the project anyway. In February 1956 the city began spending \$2 million in bonds for sewers, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and streetlights in several new and existing neighborhoods. This was all part of his effort to modernize the city's infrastructure and raise land values as well as property revenues. This February project antedated the construction of Interstate 15 *and came even before* congressional passage of the Interstate Highway Act later that year in June. The Westside's improvement had been discussed as early as 1954 and was a Baker priority.⁴⁰ But the master plan adopted by the city commission in 1955 contained Baker's vision of the freeway passing west of the railroad tracks through the eastern part of the African American neighborhood. However, there is no evidence of an official deal being made to improve the Westside as suggested by some historians, or to construct a D Street interchange in return for the loss of many Westside homes to the freeway project. That all came later when the interstate program was organized and engineers began

considering route options in the late 1950s and early '60s. Interstate 15 finally arrived at Sahara Avenue in 1966, but did not reach the Westside and downtown until 1970-71.⁴¹

Dozens of black homes were ultimately destroyed to make room for Interstate 15, but the blame does not solely fall on Baker. His successor, Oran Gragson, also championed the freeway's Westside route—as did most white businessmen and residents. Even more damaging, however, was the city's Jim Crow approach to public accommodations, jobs, and residency. Not surprisingly, in the 1950s Las Vegas and its leaders supported segregation in an effort to please the city's predominantly white tourists.⁴² For his part, Baker actively opposed efforts to ease racial discrimination in Las Vegas by enacting civil rights ordinances. Baker, a native of Indiana—a state populated heavily by southerners and long a bastion of Jim Crow, typified the views of many mid-century, white middle class Americans as did then-Las Vegas City Attorney and later U.S. Senator Howard Cannon—who, as a Lyndon Johnson supporter, would later embrace civil rights reform in the 1960s and '70s. In the 1950s, however, Cannon, like most Democrats, had not yet undergone his political epiphany on civil rights. After researching the issue, the city attorney advised Baker and other officials that the courts would most likely void a municipal civil rights ordinance banning racial discrimination in public places.⁴³ This was hardly a disappointment for Baker and his associates, because Las Vegas businesses and especially Fremont Street clubs, restaurants, and casino resorts largely mirrored the Jim Crow practices of white America in the mid-1950s. In those days Democrats such as Baker and Cannon differed little from Republicans on the race issue.

So, when the Las Vegas chapter of the NAACP petitioned for a local civil rights law opening public accommodations to all races—in the absence of any state or federal action—Baker flatly refused to support it, citing Cannon's opinion and his own view that "Social equality cannot be legislated." Then, referring specifically to the NAACP's denunciation of Jim Crow practices at Strip and downtown resorts, clubs, restaurants, and stores, Baker asserted that "the right to refuse service is an inherent right." Beginning in 1954, the steadfast position of Baker and other local leaders certainly played a role in convincing national NAACP's leaders to urge all groups and associations to boycott Las Vegas as a convention destination and hold their meetings elsewhere until city officials formally outlawed all Jim Crow practices. This would not occur until the mid-1960s when support of civil rights became more popular nationally, and resort cities like Las Vegas and Reno felt it was now safe to embrace an end to racial discrimination.⁴⁴

At the end of the 1950s Baker was looking to become Nevada's next governor and considered his mayoral accomplishments a clear manifestation of his leadership and other qualifications for higher office. In 1955 he had rejected suggestions that he run against fellow Democrat Alan Bible for his U.S. Senate

seat, and also declined invitations to oppose Republican Governor Charles Russell's bid for a second term. But in 1958 he was ready to run for governor. Besides noting his leadership positions in such community clubs as the Elks, Eagles, Kiwanis, and Veterans of Foreign Wars, as well as his accomplishments in the state legislature and as mayor, Baker touted his time as city engineer building streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, sewers, and water lines across the city. His campaign literature reminded voters that he had served as "The designing engineer in charge of the many subdivisions constructed in Las Vegas in the 1930s" during the New Deal and in the immediate postwar years. As Clark County's state senator he not only introduced the bill that created the Las Vegas Valley Water District, but also the one to classify city fire and police positions as civil service, in addition to other initiatives that benefited the three cities as well as the county.⁴⁵

In the end, Baker's campaign efforts were in vain. Grant Sawyer, the young Elko County district attorney, was a more attractive candidate in 1958 to Nevada Democrats. His more enthusiastic support for and record on civil rights, his push for a state gaming commission, and other popular initiatives won him his party's nomination. In the 1960s Baker was still a prominent figure in the state's Democratic Party, campaigning for the Kennedy-Johnson ticket, and endorsing the re-election efforts of Senators Alan Bible and Howard Cannon, as well as several public works bond issues sponsored by the city and water district. But his days as an elected public servant were over.

Baker retired from his business in the late 1960s and died in 1972. Local newspapers were quick to praise his contributions. The *Las Vegas Review-Journal* observed how as mayor he "doubled the miles of paving and sewer lines in the city," and while "sometimes citizens grumbled because the streets were torn up, ... Baker pushed through one project after another for the benefit of all Las Vegans." Another columnist portrayed him as "the right man at the right place at the right time." Finally, Hank Greenspun, a major Nevada Republican, lauded Baker for guiding "the city through a crucial boom period, insuring through his leadership that development was orderly."⁴⁶

Obviously, C. D. Baker was no visionary liberal when it came to civil rights. But he was an excellent mayor when it came to spending the money necessary to modernize the city's infrastructure to accommodate the rapid growth that Las Vegas feverishly sought. Baker worked to get the Las Vegas Valley Water District created in the 1947 state legislative session, and, as mayor, championed the McCarran jetport, the construction of a large convention center, and the routing of Interstate 15 through, rather than around, the metropolitan area. Baker clearly possessed a metropolitan vision and approach, supporting efforts to transform the old army gunnery school into Nellis Air Force Base and the old magnesium factory into a chemical complex. He engaged in fundraising to help the nascent city of Henderson and willingly shared some capacity from his city's sewage treatment plants with the nearby and poorer city

of North Las Vegas, as well as with some Strip resorts in the county. Baker's public works agenda and his willingness to fight fiscal conservatives to spend the millions necessary to fund urban projects were crucial to Las Vegas' mid-century growth. These and other actions helped establish a solid foundation for the kind of aggressive and innovative thinking that would promote even faster growth into the next century.

C. D. Baker's career offers an insightful plumb line into the political vortex of issues Las Vegas-area leaders had to address at mid-century if they were to transform their valley into a sprawling metropolitan area by the 1980s and '90s. As mayor, Baker played a dynamic role in this process. Perhaps one writer summarized it best, characterizing him as a man who "came to Las Vegas as a teacher and remained for half a century to help make a metropolis of what in 1922 was only a railroad division point with 2,000 population" seemingly destined for oblivion.⁴⁷

NOTES

¹John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958).

²For a list of biographical sources on Baker, see C. D. Baker, *Engineering Field Notebooks*, UNLV Lied Library, Special Collections Division, 4. See also A. D. Hopkins and K. J. Evans, *The First 100: Portraits of the Men and Women Who Shaped Las Vegas* (Las Vegas: Huntington Press, 1999), 131.

³United States Department of Commerce, *Census of the Population, 1910-1980*.

⁴*Las Vegas Review-Journal* (2 April 1958), 9. C. D. Baker Collection (hereafter referred to as the CDB Coll.), File 12 see *Las Vegas Sun* (19 May 1954), *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (21 May 1954), and (23 June 1954). Newspapers cited as these without page numbers refer to loose newspaper clippings or sometimes clippings pasted onto a page in Baker's archives.

⁵Eugene P. Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas, 1930-2000*, second ed. (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2000), 216.

⁶CDB Coll., File 16, 62, *Las Vegas Sun* (30 May 1953).

⁷CDB Coll., File 17, 21, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (23 March 1955) and *Las Vegas Sun* (22 March 1955).

⁸CDB Coll., File 14, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (24 December 1954).

⁹CDB Coll., File 16, 99, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (17 September 1953).

¹⁰CDB Coll., File 14, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (17 October 1954).

¹¹CDB Coll., File 16, 143, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (17 December 1953).

¹²CDB Coll., 141, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (16 December 1955), (22 March 1954), and (9 June 1954).

¹³CDB Coll., File 16, 7, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (23 February 1953), 2.

¹⁴CDB Coll., File 16, 15, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (March 1953—no day listed), 1, 3.

¹⁵CDB Coll., File 16, 70, *Las Vegas Sun* (18 July 1953).

¹⁶CDB Coll., File 13, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (21 July 1954).

¹⁷CDB Coll., File 16, 39. In this context, "businessmen" were not monolithic. County-based businessmen, such as the Strip resort owners, were not thrilled with being annexed and only reluctantly would have agreed—if they couldn't get sewer service from the county.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 75.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, and File 16, 75, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (24 July 1953).

²⁰For more on the City of Las Vegas and its position on the convention center, see CDB Coll., File 17, 14.

²¹CDB Coll., File 17, 64, 46. See also *Las Vegas Sun* (19 August 1955), 1 and *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (19 August 1955), 1, 16.

²²Eugene P. Moehring, "Tumult in Playland: The Annexation-Consolidation Controversy in the Las Vegas Metropolitan Area," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 53 (Summer 2010): 80-107.

²³Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt*, 123.

²⁴CDB Coll., File 14, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (8 December 1954).

²⁵CDB Coll., File 16, 129, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (3 December 1953) and (18 December 1953).

²⁶CDB Coll., File 17, 26, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (4 April 1955) and (5 March 1955) on 27 of File 17.

²⁷CDB Coll., Folder 10, see the booklet.

²⁸CDB Coll., File 11, *Las Vegas Sun* (16 March 1954).

²⁹CDB Coll., File 17, 32, *Las Vegas Sun* (8 April 1955). See also *Comprehensive Master Plan: The City of Las Vegas* (City Planning Commission, 1959), 21, 39-41, 43, 49, 54-58, 71, 72 and *Preliminary Report on the Proposed Master Plan: City of Las Vegas* (City Planning Commission, 1958), 3.

³⁰CDB Coll., File 17, 55, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (15 September 1955).

³¹CDB Coll., File 17, 75, *Las Vegas Sun* (28 November 1955), 4.

³²*Comprehensive Master Plan: The City of Las Vegas* (City Planning Commission, 1959), 72; Public Administration Services, "Local Government in Clark County, Nevada" (Chicago, 1968), 77-81.

³³For the city and county's efforts to secure flood control during Baker's time, see *Las Vegas City Commission, Minutes*, 5, August 1959, 507 and 16, September 1959, 53. See also Clark County Board of Commissioners, *Clark County Road and Flood Control Needs Assessment* (April 1981) and *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (17 October 1958), 4, (24 October 1958), 1 and (18 March 1960), 2.

³⁴CDB Coll., File 14 *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (13 December 1954).

³⁵CDB Coll., File 14 *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (25 August 1954) and *Las Vegas Sun* (5 September 1954).

³⁶CDB Coll., Folder 4 see Robert Notti's letter of resignation to City Manager A. H. Kennedy dated 12 March 1958. In Folder 10, see *Las Vegas Sun* (7 March 1958), 1, 10 for informative coverage of City Commissioner Wendell Bunker's position on Notti.

³⁷CDB Coll., File 17, 72 *Las Vegas Sun* (3 and 4 November 1955) for more on telephone service controversies.

³⁸Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt*, 68.

³⁹CDB Coll., File 11, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (30 March 1954).

⁴⁰*Las Vegas Review-Journal* (9 February 1956), 1.

⁴¹Annelise Orleck, *Storming Caesar's Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), 48. Oran Gragson was Las Vegas' mayor when the final routing of Interstate 15 was decided, and there is no record in his papers either of a deal to get federal money to improve the Westside in return for routing the interstate through the neighborhood's eastern portion.

⁴²*Jet: The Weekly Negro News Magazine* (6 May 1954): 5. In the issue this national African American publication reported the mayor's opposition to an ordinance banning Jim Crow practices in public places in Las Vegas.

⁴³For Cannon's position, see *Resort City in the Sunbelt*, 181.

⁴⁴*Jet: The Weekly Negro News Magazine* (6 May 1954): 5.

⁴⁵CDB Coll., File 17, 75, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (20 December 1955), 1; Folder 2 see Baker's campaign brochure for the 1958 gubernatorial primary. See also Folder 4 for the letter dated 26 July 1958 for more on the award presentation to Ed Sullivan.

⁴⁶*Las Vegas Review-Journal* (20 February 1972), n.p.; *Las Vegas Sun* (22 February 1972), 10.

⁴⁷*Las Vegas Review-Journal* (20 February 1972), n.p.

Sisters All

Tonopah's Women Go to War, 1914-1918

PHILLIP I. EARL

Nevada's women had been enfranchised for less than three years when America went to war in the spring of 1917 and were only beginning to assume a role in civic affairs. When war came, they took up the cause on the home front, seeing their men off, sewing bandages and surgical dressings, making clothing for French and Belgian refugees, conserving food, dealing with fuel shortages, and, in the case of Tonopah's women, funding an ambulance for the warfront *in* France and Belgium, all the while caring for house, home, husbands, and children.

In Tonopah, women had been involved with their community since 1900, the year of Jim Butler's fabled discovery of the silver lode which led to the development of the mining economy, a tradition which continued as the women faced one crisis after another during the war. Among those who took a leading part on the home front was Marjorie Moore Brown, the wife of the attorney Hugh Henry Brown; she had been a pioneer since she and her husband of six days stepped off the Sodaville stage on the evening of February 24, 1904. She was instrumental in the founding of the Tonopah Free

Phillip I. Earl, M.A. is an author and Curator of History, Emeritus from the Nevada Historical Society. He received his M.A. degree in history from the University of Nevada, Reno. His thesis was focused in Nevada history, "Sagebrush Volunteers: Nevadans in the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection, 1898-1900," and was the first of more than 400 publications to his credit in the forms of books, articles, and book reviews over the course of his impressive career. He has also taught in the fields of American history and government at many institutions including Reno High School, Truckee Meadows Community College and the University of Nevada, Reno.

Public Library and took a leading part in the Woman Suffrage Crusade in her section of the state during 1912-14. Her years in the high desert camp were the later focus of her memoir, *Lady in Boomtown: Miners and Manners on the Nevada Frontier*, a lively chronicle of life as it was at that time.¹

President Woodrow Wilson issued a formal Proclamation of Neutrality on August 18, 1914, as Europe went to war, urging the American people to be "impartial in thought as well as action," and America maintained a precarious neutrality for the next three years, but the citizens of Tonopah were involved from the first days. In October 1912, a contingent of young Serbians and Montenegrans left for the Balkan Wars, while those remaining behind organized a local chapter of the Serbian Red Cross to raise funds for civilian relief and hospital services at the front. Officials of Tonopah's Young Men's Serbian Society had organized the recruiting drive and put on a parade and public sendoff at the Tonopah & Goldfield depot. Wives and sweethearts grieved, but history makes no mention of them.²

In January 1916, the citizens of Tonopah contributed to a relief fund for the Jews of Poland organized by the American Jewish Committee of New York City. Three months later, Mrs. Sydney Moore, Marjorie Brown's sister-in-law, headed a drive to raise funds for the American Fund to Assist the French Wounded. She and other Tonopah women also collected sheets, pillowcases, and pajamas to be forwarded to the organization's San Francisco headquarters. She also interested several housewives in making bandages and absorbent dressings for the American Red Cross. On July 12, the women put on a dance at the Airdome for the families of Irish separatists jailed by British authorities for their part in the recent Easter Rebellion in Dublin.³

Hugh Brown had meanwhile joined the League to Enforce Peace, a national organization founded by Americans who sought a role in world affairs for their country. He and Marjorie attended the first annual convention in Washington, D.C. in May 1916, and he delivered an address on world peace to the members of the Nevada State Legislature in Carson City on February 13, 1917.⁴

Marjorie Brown had become the president of the Nevada chapter of the Fatherless Children of France, an organization devoted to the welfare of French orphans; they raised money in Tonopah to "adopt" Madeline Didat, a two-year-old Paris girl whose father had been killed at Verdun. On February 14, the day after Hugh's speech at the Legislature, Marjorie spoke to the women of Carson's Leisure Hour Club about French widows and their children. Hugh had legal business in Lovelock and Marjorie spoke to the Women's Civic Improvement Club on February 17, raising \$75, the cost of two years care for "The Lovelock Baby," as the child they had decided to support was referred to in the local press. John T. Reid, a Lovelock citizen, learned of her efforts, and wrote a check to purchase sixty pairs of shoes to be sent to her orphans.⁵

Marjorie continued her work in other communities, speaking to Reno's Twentieth Century Club during a trip through town on March 11, informing the

women that \$2.00 a month would support one widow, and \$73 would support a child for two years. Within three months, women in other communities came forward, and some eighteen children were being supported by early summer. Individuals were also sending money under the auspices of the Red Cross, and the *Reno Evening Gazette* of June 15 noted that a Tonopah matron had received a postal card from the mother of a French baby informing her that the child was in good health and expressing her gratitude.⁶

On April 11, 1917, five days after America signed the Declaration of War, Tonopah civic leaders staged a Loyalty Day parade. The members of the Tonopah Women's Relief Corps marched that day, as did children who carried patriotic streamers hastily sewed up by their mothers. The Pythian Sisters, the Rebeccas, and the members of the Tonopah Women's Club were also represented, as were members of the German community, a handful of citizens from the African-American populace, and a few Indians who stepped off the curb as the parade passed.⁷

Food conservation was an issue from the outset, and Secretary of the Interior Franklin Lane urged womens' club leaders to organize "Lend-a-Hand-to-Wilson-Leagues" to raise garden crops, can foods for off seasons, and teach their children to raise chickens and rabbits. There were other matters as well. Editor William Booth of the *Tonopah Bonanza* took note of the women in England, France, and Italy working in hospitals near the front, suggesting that the women of Tonopah become involved in the Red Cross campaign to provide hospital supplies, bandages, and surgical garments to be sent to Europe.⁸

On April 19, several young men who would soon be subject to military conscription organized "Patriotic Night" at the Airdome. Father Jerome Diss of St. Patrick's Church opened with "The Star Spangled Banner," Lenore Hanby offered up her own piece, "Wake Up America," and J. J. Degan ended the evening with "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean." Miss Gertrude Ripplingham appeared in a theatrical production, "Spirit of Preparedness," featuring a Mrs. Swasey as an American mother who responded to an appeal for her support of her son's desire to enlist. Reverend Harlan Bailey portrayed Uncle Sam, and Jack Smith, Tonopah's U.S. Army recruiter, appeared in uniform. Professor William Young's orchestra backed up the musical presentations and played for dancing later in the evening.⁹ The women were soon involved more directly. On April 27, Dr. Anne DeChene, an ear, nose, and throat specialist practicing in Tonopah, offered a lesson in bandage rolling at a whist party held in her home. Next day, Alice Dumont and Portia Hatfield entertained the Tonopah Women's Club, playing "military whist," a new variant on the traditional card game.¹⁰

The continuing rise in food prices and charges that speculators were distorting the market continued to be featured in the press. Food waste was also an issue, and U.S. Department of Agriculture officials began sending out weekly editions of the *Food Waste Bulletin* to local editors. The *Tonopah Bonanza* and the *Daily Times* carried excerpts almost daily and the *Daily Times* of May

8 featured an editorial cartoon depicting Uncle Sam crushing speculators and those who wasted food under the heel of his boot.¹¹

On August 1, President Wilson signed the Lever Food and Fuel Act, appointing Herbert Clark Hoover as director of the U.S. Food Administration and Harry A. Garfield as head of the U.S. Fuel Administration. Hoover's staff was to become involved in price fixing, consumer education, production controls, conservation, and export quotas, but the Fuel Administration was less successful and fuel shortages plagued the country for the duration of the war.¹²

Mrs. Helen Richardson Grigsby, wife of Dr. Edward S. Grigsby, became the chair of the executive committee of the Ladies' Liberty Loan Committee on June 2. Assisted by Mrs. Odessa Davenport, publicity, and Mrs. Letson Balliet, secretary, the women were an integral part of the First Liberty Loan Campaign which raised \$525,800, a figure exceeding that of any other Nevada county.¹³

The Tonopah chapter of the American Red Cross had been organized on May 19, with Hugh Brown presiding at a fundraising rally on May 21. Mrs. Lenore Hanby again offered up "Wake Up America" that evening as well as "Boom Boom," written by her for that occasion. Marjorie Brown and Dr. DeChene were elected to the Executive Committee and some 700 Tonopah citizens had filled out membership applications by May 23. A bandage and surgical dressing project was decided upon as the initial endeavor, and quarters were taken downtown at Kind's Furniture Store with Mrs. J. W. Sherwin in charge.¹⁴

Tonopah's younger set were also becoming involved on the homefront: twenty-four small girls dressed in white lead the flag drill at the Airdome on Flag Day, June 14, and the Girls High School Quartet sang "America the Beautiful!"¹⁵

Helen Grigsby convened the initial meeting of the Women's Auxiliary to the Red Cross on June 25, and the women joined their sisters of the Women's Relief Corps at the Airdome in sponsoring a blackface minstrel and music show on June 25 and 26 to raise funds for military families in the community. Mrs. Hanby again appeared, and two shows, "The Cabaret Minstrels," and "The Cannibal Isle," were staged the first night and "The Gamblers," a comedy, was performed the second evening.¹⁶

Thirty-four Tonopah women completed a first-aid class taught by Dr. Grigsby and personnel of the U.S. Bureau of Mines Rescue Car team on June 2. The Liberty Loan and other war-related activities took up the remainder of the month, but Helen Grigsby found time to pursue the purchase of an ambulance to be sent to the front in France. She contacted officials of the American Field Ambulance Service in New York City and broached the idea at a gathering of the Red Cross Auxiliary on July 2, suggesting that the women needed some "concrete object" or "centralized interest" if they were to remain involved in the war effort. She then proposed that the auxiliary be

reconstituted, suggesting that the name Tonopah Ambulance Regiment be adopted. Explaining the need for transportation on the battlefield, she offered some thoughts on raising funds, the organization of childrens' groups, drills, ceremonies, regimental colors, a flag and a mascot. The matter of continuing the work of the Red Cross came up, and the women went on record as being willing to do whatever they could. Mrs. Sherwin, the matron of the Red Cross sewing room, did not accept this pledge, but Mrs. Grigsby prevailed. As the meeting broke up, the women stood and filed by the speaker's table, each in turn gently touching the folded American flag and reverently laying a hand on the Bible as a sign of allegiance to God and country.¹⁷

Mrs. Grigsby rented office space at the Richards Mercantile Building and appointed other members to plan an opening reception. At a second meeting at the Butler Theatre on July 5, Sergeant Frank Kayle spoke on the need for ambulances at the front, and Mrs. Grigsby addressed those youngsters who turned out as to what they could do to assist the ambulance campaign. Several women involved in Red Cross work turned in their money and checks and other Red Cross projects were discussed.¹⁸ At a meeting at the headquarters on July 9, Mrs. Harry Atkinson, the wife of Nye county's district attorney, agreed to chair the reception committee, Mrs. Jesse Simmons became the head of the entertainment committee, and Mrs. Odessa Davenport volunteered to take care of the refreshments. Mrs. Paul Revert assumed the publicity post and Mrs. Ann Kirchen, the wife of John G. Kirchen of the Tonopah Mining Company, offered to provide green silk, and gold edging for a regimental flag. Miss Dorothy Tregloan then spoke up about the ambulance banks she had designed which were being fabricated out of cyanide canisters; these would be available for sale at the reception and were being distributed to downtown merchants. Mrs. Grigsby also showed the design of a Tonopah Ambulance Regiment button which was being ordered from a San Francisco novelty company.¹⁹

Tonopah High School students who had become members of the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment had already selected their officers when they held an organizational meeting on July 18. Mrs. Grigsby informed the women in attendance that a special "T.A.R. punch" would be served at the reception, and that she had designed a monogram which was being handpainted on napkins by Mrs. Arthur Neth. Miss Alice Dumont, Mrs. S. M. B. Wheeler, Mrs. Gadora Horton, Mrs. M. C. Corson and Mrs. B. M. Carter were to preside over the tea table, and the entertainment features were carried in the newspapers of July 20. Julius Goldsmith was slated to play a violin solo, his wife was to offer a piano piece, and vocal selections were to be performed by Mrs. Arthur Neth, Mrs. S. S. Errett and Mrs. George Dase. Mrs. Zeb Kendall, a vocalist, Mrs. Letson Balliet, pianist, and singer James J. Degan appeared on the day of the reception, July 21, which was considered the highlight of the summer social season.²⁰

Mrs. Grigsby had meanwhile learned that there were no ambulances available and no space aboard ships for the vehicles, but she let the women know that any monies raised would be used in some manner to further the war effort. She was also writing a history of the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment, as a well as a prayer, and a song which was later set to music by Dorothy Marette and arranged by Herman Albert:

THE CALL OF THE AMBULANCE

From the hills of old Nevada
Where the silver bullion grows,
Comes this ambulance to succor
Those sore wounded by our foes.
On our banner waves our motto,
"Tis to Know, To Will, To Dare,"
Therefore thru the thickest fighting
We shall give our soldiers care.

CHORUS

Hurry up, hurry up to the poor wounded man,
Yes, we are corning, yes, we are coming
Just as fast as we can;
When you hear the toot of that big auto car,
You'll know 'tis our ambulance, from Tonopah afar.
Don't you hear our engines chugging?
Don't you see our colors wave?
Bringing comfort to the wounded,
To the soldier grand and brave.
And above us waves Old Glory,
Bidding us to keep it there,
And we bow our heads in silence
For our Father's loving care.
And when the war is over
And the awful debt is paid,
We shall love our boys so dearly
For the sacrifice they made.
And we know our land shall blossom
Like a garden after rain,
Because of that closer brotherhood
Which humanity shall gain.²¹

Marjorie Brown was also trying her hand at verse, and Mrs. Grigsby included the following piece in her history:

SONG OF THE AMBULANCE

In my body see the sacrifice that brought me into life;
 In the lamps you see the searching eyes of every loving wife;
 My springs are arms of mothers seeking still to shield their sons;
 My bandages are fingers snatching life-stuff from the guns!
 Hurry, hurry, hurry to the poor wounded soldier!
 Hear my engine throbbing with impatience from afar!
 Oh, I sing a glorious song as I boldly roll along.
 I'm the symbol of compassion from the T.A.R.

Tell me not that men are slackers—women eager to pull down,
 For I'm the living symbol that has unified a town.
 Let me spread my peaceful presence o'r this place of noise and pain ;
 For I come with "living water" from the land of little rain.
 Mercy shall not be forgotten in the blood and hate of strife;
 I will go where death is thickest, bringing men the hope of life;
 "For my country" is my motto—and my mission is to heal.
 Hurry, hurry, hurry to the poor wounded soldier!
 Hear my engine throbbing with impatience from afar!
 Oh, I sing a glorious song as I boldly roll along,
 I'm the symbol of compassion from the T.A.R.²²

Draft Day, June 5, passed without protest or controversy, 592 men from Tonopah signing on and another 249 registering at smaller Nye County camps, and preparations were soon underway for the departure of the first draft contingent. The women of the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment had their sewing room set up at the Richards Building by mid July and arrangements were being made for local merchants to donate items for "comfort kits," small pouches containing pads of paper, pencils, envelopes, stamps, needles, thread, scissors, thimbles, buttons, tooth brushes, and cigarettes, which the men would carry off to the training camps. The older girls reported on June 23, and others took up the work in the domestic science rooms at the high school, each kit had the emblem of the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment sewn inside the front flap. A reporter from the *Daily Times* came out to visit a school workroom on August 1, reflecting in his column the next morning that "It was very touching to see the little girls working so earnestly and gladly, so happy in the chance to do all they could for their country. Some very real sentiment and patriotism went into the cases our boys from Tonopah are taking with them."²³

The first four men, all volunteers, departed on August 2, each carrying his kit as he boarded the Tonopah & Goldfield bound north for Fort Lewis, American Lake, Washington. Austin L. Warde and Charles J. Stitt left the next morning, and four others took their leave on August 5.²⁴

The ambulance savings banks were being painted by the children and placed in local stores, and the surgical dressing project got underway at the Richards Building on August 15; under the supervision of Miss Elizabeth McGregor, a trained nurse, who had thirty-five women and girls working on tampons, bandages and linen compresses. Their work was put on exhibit at a reception at which Mrs. Arthur Neth sang Helen Grigsby's regimental anthem for the first time. The women of the Red Cross opened their sewing room in the Sollender Building, 130 Main Street, on August 13. Forty women were on hand that day, taking up the fabrication of surgical shirts. They had completed 165 by the end of the month, by which time they had refocused their efforts on sweaters for soldiers, mufflers, wristlets, and hospital socks.²⁵

Miss Frances James, twelve-year-old daughter of Henry James of the Tonopah Extension, had meanwhile been writing a play, "Sweethearts," depicting the homefront in Tonopah and a Red Cross hospital in France. She recruited her classmates to fill out the cast, and Helen Grigsby assisted with rehearsals. The production premiered at the Richards Building on August 31, drawing many parents and raising \$38 for the surgical dressing fund.²⁶

Helen Grigsby was also persevering on the matter of an ambulance and informed the other women on September 4 that she had heard from William R. Herford of the American Field Ambulance Service and was told that a vehicle would be available later in the fall at a cost of \$2,000. She also told them that plans for an October fete were going forward and that booth space had already been allocated. The Tonopah Ambulance Regiment headquarters was to be moved to the club rooms and ladies' parlor of the Mizpah Hotel, she said, and she spent a few minutes discussing the specifications of the regimental flag which was to carry the motto "To Know-To-Will-To Dare." Odessa Davenport then passed out postal cards to be filled out and mailed to Washington, D.C. to enable the senders to receive information on food conservation.²⁷

September 7 was celebrated as Draft Day as the community's first six conscripts left for American Lake. The women of the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment joined their Red Cross sisters and members of other women's groups in the parade from the courthouse to the depot that morning, putting lunches and jugs of lemonade aboard the train and standing back as several prominent men delivered patriotic addresses. This civic event was the first of many over the next year as the draft took the young men of Tonopah and other central Nevada towns. Without exception, local editors covered them in detail, but there was another take which was entirely unreported, beyond the ken of history. As Marjorie Brown, who marched on several occasions, would write a half century later: "When in April 1917, the United States entered the war, Tonopah's men and women, like people in every town and city, revealed unimagined capabilities. As our Tonopah boys left to enlist, marching to the railroad station behind the Miners' Union Band, the men on the sidelines cheered and the women bit back the tears."²⁸

The women opened the new quarters at the Mizpah on September 14. Mrs. Arthur Neth entertained with "Carrissima" and "Stars Shining Brightly," Mrs. R. A. Bushman offered "The Sunshine of Your Smile," and Ryder Ray, a Tonopah boy scheduled to leave soon, accompanied himself on the guitar, singing "A Long, Long Way From Home," and "Send Me Away With a Smile," a song written by Russell Hecox, a friend who was also being inducted.²⁹

Another twenty-seven men departed on September 24, and Jules Smith of the Butler Theatre showed footage of the departure of the first Tonopah draft contingent the next evening. He turned his facility over to the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment on September 28, and Frances James's play, rewritten to include several additional characters, was performed twice. A five-reel childrens' movie "Two Little Imps," was shown, and Mrs. Neth sang a musical version of Marjorie Brown's poem, backed up on the chorus by Mrs. Hugh Burk, Ryder Ray, and Russell Hecox. She also sang "The Stars and Stripes Forever," Ryder Ray holding up the flag behind her. He also offered up a popular war song, "Goodbye Broadway, Hello France." Manager Smith gave Mrs. Grigsby half of the day's receipts, \$120, instead of the 35 percent previously agreed upon.³⁰

Planning for the fundraiser on October 19 was well along by this time, with housewives providing candy and baked goods, merchants donating raffle prizes and husbands stringing electrical wire and installing extra lighting. Mrs. Bert Whitney was training 125 children to perform the flag drill, and the girls of the commercial department of Tonopah High School were preparing tickets and publicity circulars. The members of the Elks Lodge took charge of the punchboards, and a selection of items to be sold or raffled was put on exhibit at Klinger's Variety Store on October 13. Editor Booth of the *Tonopah Bonanza* gave the ladies a boost on October 18: "What would not every one of us give up of personal pleasure or comfort to bring back to Tonopah from the jaws of death even one of those boys of ours that went so bravely away from us in the last few weeks? We would count such a sacrifice our proudest privilege. And that is exactly what you will be doing when you come to the Airdome tomorrow evening and participate in the fete that will take place there."³¹

The fundraising was a stunning success. The children gathered at Odd Fellows Hall at 6:00 p.m., marching behind two boys, one carrying the American flag and the other sporting the new Tonopah Ambulance Regiment banner. They were greeted by cheers and thunderous applause as they entered the hall and began their drill, all the while singing "The Call of the Ambulance." Mrs. Bush then sang two songs written by Mrs. Thomas Lindsay, "The Poor Wounded Soldier" and "T.A.R.'s Appeal," and the crowd moved to the booths and the dance floor. High school girls in patriotic dress manned the booths, and the boys sold raffle tickets. As the strains of Professor Young's orchestra wafted across the auditorium, the auctioneers worked those men gathered near the entrance. Dancing continued until the crowd thinned out just after midnight.³²

Next morning, Mrs. Grigsby and Mrs. J. Wesley Stewart totaled up the receipts, some \$1,900. At a meeting on October 23, Mrs. Stewart reported that she had \$2,380.50 in the treasury. Mrs. Grigsby then read a letter from William Herford informing her that five Model T Ford ambulances had recently been shipped to France, one of which the women of Tonopah could claim at a cost of \$1,425. The women discussed the matter and authorized Mrs. Stewart to wire that amount to New York City. Herford had indicated that a small bronze plaque reading "A Gift from the People of Tonopah" would be attached to the vehicle, but Mrs. Grigsby said that John G. Kirchen, president of the First National Bank and general manager of the Tonopah Extension Mining Company, had offered to donate silver for a permanent plate and would have it engraved in San Francisco and sent on to France.³³

Officials of the American Ambulance Field Service were informed that the Tonopah ambulance had been assigned to the American Military Hospital No. 1 at Nully-sur-Seine, a Paris suburb. Mrs. Grigsby was notified and passed on the intelligence at a meeting on November 8. She also brought up the matter of thanking the people of Tonopah for their support, and the women decided to sponsor a dance at the Mizpah on November 15. A musical program was arranged and examples of the surgical dressings were exhibited that evening. The dance was so successful that Mrs. Grigsby was asked to put on another later in the winter.³⁴

Dr. DeChene took over the Red Cross sewing room on October 18. The Singer Agency in Reno had donated nine sewing machines, and the McNamara Mining Company installed a new stove. Fifty women were at work on knit goods, and Mrs. Katherine Smith, domestic science teacher at the high school, had a dozen of her students sewing hospital garments. The women were also reaching out to surrounding camps; the *Daily Times* of October 28 related that Mrs. C. T. Lawrence of Manhattan had recently brought in sixty hospital shirts and fifty-two pairs of flannel bed socks and had taken back a supply of heavy khaki twill for the making of comfort kits.³⁵

The Second Liberty Loan campaign was launched on October 5; Helen Grigsby appointed captains in each of Tonopah's sixteen precincts and a Liberty Loan function was sponsored at the Airdome on October 24. The schools were also involved: thirty-eight members of the eighth grade bought three \$50 bonds and helped the pupils of the lower grades pay for a bond they had purchased. High school students also bought a bond, and committees were set up to solicit work. The boys were reported to be out the next day washing cars, doing janitorial work, hauling coal, cutting wood, and running errands, and the girls were cleaning homes, washing dishes, and looking after children. One girl with artistic talent produced place cards, and the students organized a box social at the high school, raising \$36.85 for the bond fund. The Tonopah Banking Corporation and officials of the First National Bank signed on for the bulk of the \$284,000 subscribed, but the women of the Ladies' Liberty Loan Committee and the schools were responsible for \$10,250.³⁶



Marjorie Brown in a tank in Tonopah, 1918. (*Nevada Historical Society*)

Marjorie Brown had kept track of the two French orphan girls supported by the citizens of Tonopah, putting their photographs and letters from their mothers on display in the front window of a downtown store. Editor Booth was touched, writing that "everyone should look at these and be grateful that we are thus assured that our money has gone to protect two little innocent victims of this war tragedy." He suggested that his readers might consider sending them Christmas gifts or a little money.³⁷

In October, Tonopah homeowners were running short of coal, and fuel dealers were rationing and limiting deliveries to families with small children or homes where there was illness. A very poor grade of coal was being hauled in from the mines south of Coalville, and wood was being trucked from the Toyaibe forest near Manhattan, but it was green and virtually unburnable. Edwin Walker, Nevada's Fuel Administrator, had some success in arranging coal shipments from Utah and Colorado, but H. S. Greathouse, Nevada's railroad inspector, who investigated in November, found that Tonopah had less coal than any other community in the state in proportion to population.³⁸

Tonopah housewives were also trying to observe the food conservation directives coming from the U.S. Food Administration. By late November, the strictures were becoming increasingly complicated, with wheatless and meatless meals, conservation of lard, sugar, and soap containing fats and glycerin, the use of honey and sour milk, and utilization of barley, rye, and oats in place of wheat. Recommendations also included increased consumption of potatoes, and on and on, a situation which was to prevail for the next year. Katherine Smith, the domestic science teacher at the high school, helped the women interpret the orders and used the war emergency to enable her students to learn something of wartime administrative agencies and the way of the world, an opportunity which would have been denied them otherwise.³⁹

The women of the Red Cross were making a variety of bandages and surgical dressings under the supervision of Dr. DeChene and two professional nurses, Mrs. A. T. Galling and Miss Mabel Winthrop. Younger girls were working on surgical pillows, and the older girls were busy with a variety of hospital items, a scene which impressed a visitor who told a *Tonopah Bonanza* reporter that "a few hours taken from their play now may mean for all time these children and their children will have a country in which to play."⁴⁰

The Tonopah Ambulance Regiment workroom opened on November 26. Some women were also sewing up surgical dressings at home and the members of the Tonopah Women's Club were knitting scarves, sweaters, and hospital socks at home. The National Surgical Dressing Committee assumed control of both the Red Cross and the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment rooms in December, and the *Tonopah Bonanza* of December 21 reported that 2,662 absorbent pads, gauze compresses, roll bandages, and tampons were ready for shipment.⁴¹

Marjorie Brown organized a Junior Red Cross chapter on November 28 and the younger girls were soon engaged in cutting material for ambulance pillows and those of the fifth and sixth grades were learning to knit. The upper grades were sewing surgical gowns and hospital robes and making candy and hominy for sale at the Red Cross headquarters. Roy Cross, manual training instructor, had his boys making knitting needles, canes, crutches and shipping boxes, and one of them, Emil Stuggy, made a flag stand for the office downtown.⁴²

As the first year of the war came to an end, the thoughts of many Tonopahites turned to the men at American Lake who would soon be going



WWI cartoon, June 1918. (Nevada Historical Society)

across the big water to fight. In October, Edna Booth initiated a project of making up gift boxes of small items donated by local merchants—pencils, pads, candy, chewing gum, corncob pipes, bags of tobacco, cigarettes, and playing cards. A personal message in a plain envelope sealed with a cocky little Santa Claus sticker went in each box, and the Red Cross shipped the first one hundred on October 26.⁴³

Food conservation was a principal element in the transition to 1918. Henry M. Hoyt, Food Administrator for the State of Nevada, was organizing food committees in January and February. Odessa Davenport was placed in charge in Tonopah on February 7, assisted by Mrs. E. C. Davis, Mrs. Paul Revert, Mrs. C. E. Chapman, Mrs. Thomas Lindsay, Mrs. E. C. Harris, and Mrs. James Mayberry, and a card index of family food rules and restrictions on restaurants and boarding houses was established at the Red Cross headquarters. Katherine Smith arranged for publication of recipes coming from Washington D.C., and Millicent Sears, professor of home economics, University of Nevada, was in town on March 8 to address an assembly at the high school on food conservation, nutritional research and the tractor driving courses for women being offered by the university.⁴⁴

On January 31, the *Daily Times* reported that there were 4,530 bandages, dressings, and items of hospital clothing ready to be sent out. Other Tonopah women were working on layettes for French and Belgian babies, as were the women of Beatty, who sent twenty-two sets to Tonopah in late March. The women also took part in a refugee clothing drive sponsored by the Commission for Relief in Belgium. Tonopah's Boy Scouts and the members of the Campfire Girls collected donations door-to-door, and a large number of clothing items came in from Red Cross chapters in Round Mountain, Manhattan, and Millers. When the campaign ended on March 22, the women counted up to 1,595 garments.⁴⁵

In December 1917, Marjorie Brown's mother, Mrs. Grace R. Moore, Tonopah's Public Librarian, took it upon herself to ship several boxes of books to the Mare Island Navy Yard, Vallejo, California. Three months later, officials of the War Library Service of the American Library Association began a drive to collect 2,000,000 books for camp libraries and men serving in Europe. Joseph D. Layman, University of Nevada Librarian, announced that Nevada's quota was 6,000 books, and superintendent of Tonopah's schools, George L. Dilworth, informed the citizens that the high school would be the collection point, and that they would be expected to contribute 400 books. The students were the first to come forward, bringing books on the first day, March 18. The boys of the manual training camp made a clock face indicating the progress of the campaign; it was hung in the front hall and the number of books totaled 234 on the second day. A private citizen donated his entire library, and those conducting the drive counted over 1,000 books on March 25.⁴⁶

Mrs. Grigsby was meanwhile investigating the establishment of a local chapter of the Blue Cross, a national organization raising funds to provide

veterinary services for dogs and horses serving at the front in Europe. At a meeting on March 6, she was named to head the relief effort, and was assisted by Mrs. Alliene Case, vice president, Miss May D. Corson, secretary, and Miss Helen Case, who was to be in charge of entertainment. Marjorie Brown was organizing a Junior Blue Cross chapter, and the Boy Scouts and members of the Junior Red Cross offered their help. Editor Booth of the *Tonopah Bonanza* also stepped up, writing on March 7 that "The Blue Cross of Tonopah comes as champions of the cause of dogs and horses that are helping us win the war. The cause is one that must and will appeal to all when it is understood. Try to understand it at once." A second meeting was scheduled for March 8, and Booth was again at the fore, writing that afternoon that a horse:

asks no payment, for a bare living, he performs Herculean work at the front carrying his rider straight at the enemy, drags guns into position, brings munitions up to the fighting lines, transports the men from points impossible for motor traffic. Side by side with his master, he fights on, torn with shot and shell, gassed, squirted with liquid fire and bombed from the skies.⁴⁷

That evening, a membership drive was planned, dues established, and a benefit dance was scheduled for March 13. Editor Booth pushed the event, writing on March 12 that "all the hearts of animal lovers in this country must bleed for our faithful dumb friends in the front lines" and observing that..." the horse and the dog have no exhortations of patriotic duty, no visions of glory and promotion, no nationality, and it is only right that we should strive to help these animals."⁴⁸

At 10:00 a.m. on the day of the dance, Mrs. Grigsby met with the members of the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment for the last time, speaking to them of their contributions to the war effort and making two motions, one to formally disband the organization and a second to donate the remaining \$625.25 in the treasury to the Blue Cross. Both were unanimously approved. Professor Young's orchestra played that evening, and booths opened for popcorn, candy, and membership sales. The boys and girls sang "The Star Spangled Banner" and marched arm-in-arm behind Hugh Brown Jr. and their leased mascots, "Nig" Booth and "Flippy" Moore. Mrs. Grigsby totaled up \$58.10 in receipts the next morning and wired \$704.10 to Blue Cross headquarters in New York City.⁴⁹

The Tonopah Ambulance Regiment thus exits the stage of history, but the war was to rage on for another eight months. Five more volunteers departed on March 31, and April 10 was celebrated as Liberty Loan Day. Miss Helen Mitchell rode the lead float as the Goddess of Liberty, and the women of the Women's Relief Corps, the Phthian Sisters, the Rebeccas, the Women's Auxiliary of the Moose, and the Women of Woodcraft were out in force, as were the members of the Tonopah Rifle Club, the Grand Army of the Republic, and the Young Men's Serbian Society, as well as 115 autoists in their vehicles, one of whom was Marjorie Brown.⁵⁰

The women of Tonopah produced 729 hospital shirts and 1,093 bandages in March. They were also knitting, as were their sisters in Manhattan, Round Mountain, Belmont, Smokey Valley, Beatty, and Millers. We know only that they produced, not how they felt, but Margaret Blue of Rye Patch perhaps expressed the sentiments of many in a note she enclosed in a shipment of socks in June: "I hope that the boys who wear the socks I am knitting will get 13 Germans on every pair and enjoy wearing them. Have no boy of my own, but somebody's boy will be proud of them."⁵¹

And then there were the poets, one of whom produced the following piece of doggerel in support of the Liberty Loan campaign; it was published in the *Walker Lake Bulletin* of nearby Hawthorne on May 25:

LIBERTY LOAN MOTHER GOOSE RHYMES

Sing a song of pennies, for pennies rank high;
 Five and twenty pennies a thrift stamp will buy;
 Sixteen stamps of thrift will buy a little bond,
 And bonds will give short shrift to Hans and Fritz beyond.
 Buy baby Bunting
 A baby bond for hunting
 Submarine and Zeppelin
 Before they hunt the Babykin.
 See, saw, Marjorie Daw.
 Prussia shall have a new master;
 His name will be Democracy,
 Which spells a Junker disaster.⁵²

Odessa and Roy Davenport published Nevada's only Red Cross magazine that summer; they produced *The Net*, getting out three issues. The banner read "A Great Net of Mercy, Drawn Through an Ocean of Unspeakable Pain." The publication focused upon Red Cross news, war reports by civic leaders, and letters from Nye County boys overseas. It was also an outlet for war-related poetry and Odessa's own literary aspirations, the July issue carried her story "Thy Portion of the Wall: A Fable by Odessa Davenport." Publication ceased with the third issue in September, with an insert on the last page informing readers that the termination "was due to the shortage of paper and recent adverse rulings of the Post Office Department." Roy resigned from his position as purchasing agent for the Tonopah Extension a few days later, and he and Odessa left by automobile for Washington, D.C. to engage in war work.⁵³

On June 10, Tonopah Red Cross officials sent out thirteen cases of surgical dressings, seven boxes of shirts and pajamas, four boxes of knitted goods, fifty pair of socks, twenty-five sweaters, and several packages of knit helmets and

wristlets. Four days later, they were notified that all surgical dressing work was to be suspended. The supply of certain items was in excess of need, they were told, and there was a shortage of gauze and cotton. That same day, 4,000 yards of gauze, 1,016 yards of outing flannel, and 500 yards of unbleached muslin was delivered to the workroom. They contacted Red Cross officials in San Francisco and were told that they should query the Home Service Section of Civilian Relief. They set up the Nye County Home Service at the Masonic Building a few days later, putting Anna G. Lindsay in charge with Marie Burdick as secretary.⁵⁴

Tonopah's Independence Day was subdued, many citizens feeling that "this was a time for humility," in the words of editor Frank Garside of the *Daily Times*. Patriotic exercises and a reading of the Declaration of Independence by Tom Lindsay at a platform set up at Main and Brougner, took up the morning and children's races and a parade were held in the afternoon. There were no fireworks by order of Governor Emmet Boyle.⁵⁵

Bastille Day, July 14, was also celebrated, with officials of the Nye County Council of Defense handling the arrangements. There was a parade on the appointed day; and the members of the Presbyterian Church opened a room that evening for a patriotic observance. Arthur Burroughs sang "The Marseillaise" in French, and Mrs. H. L. Grafious rendered the Italian National Hymn. Mrs. R. Smith offered one of her own compositions, "The Flag with a Stain" and the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts sang "The Star Spangled Banner." A dance at the Airdome was held in honor of several conscripts who would be leaving the next morning.⁵⁶

The Red Cross sewing room reopened on August 12, with absorbent surgical pads and clothing for refugees in France and Belgium, day shirts for men, and petticoats for young girls having the first priority. Many of the women who had previously worked at the sewing room had resumed their family routines when the program came to an end, and Red Cross officials had trouble getting them to return, not wanting their community to appear a "slacker town." Members of the Girl Scouts responded, as did twenty or so women, and 120 pads were shipped out on August 18. More women reported the next day, and 124 hospital shirts, and 280 petticoats were completed in the next few days.⁵⁷

Helen Grigsby and her husband had separated earlier in the summer and she had moved to Berkeley, California, but she remained in contact with officials of the American Field Ambulance Service and Colonel George Peed, commander of the hospital to which the Tonopah ambulance had been assigned. He informed her that the vehicle had been in the middle of several battles and sent along a series of lantern slides showing the ambulance and other vehicles; she forwarded to Tonopah. On August 7, they were screened at the Butler Theatre. In a subsequent letter to the *Tonopah Bonanza*, Mrs. Grigsby expressed her gratification for the work she and her sisters had done. She also penned a touching reminiscence of the ambulance campaign: "It may be very

much like the school boy who wanted to place his class number in evidence on the hillside," she wrote, "but never-the-less, it is satisfactory to know that, way over there in the thick of activities and in the heart of Paris, will be dearer than ever to the American people, the name of Tonopah can be seen daily, and that it stands as a symbol of love and mercy."⁵⁸

The war was to continue for another two months. The members of the Ladies Liberty Loan Committee got together in September to get ready for the next Liberty Loan drive, and others complied with the plea of officials of the U.S. Commission for Relief in Belgium to collect clothing for refugees facing the winter. The Salvation Army also had a fund drive in September, and the Red Cross sewing work continued; four cases of surgical dressings, five hundred absorbent pads, twenty sweaters, and fifty pairs of socks were shipped out on September 13. The women also joined in a celebration on September 14 of recent American victories and turned out for a gathering of the Serbian community on September 24 to mark the triumphs of their countrymen fighting in Macedonia.⁵⁹

In August, the *Tonopah Bonanza* and the *Daily Times* began carrying stories of a particularly virulent strain of influenza, the "Spanish Flu" as it came to be known. Over the next nine months, Nevada was to suffer a siege unprecedented in the state's history, 3,914 cases and 65 deaths in 1918, and 772 cases and 36 deaths in 1919. Many of the influenza deaths were recorded as pneumonia and other type of deaths resulting from preexisting medical conditions, so the figures are inexact. In Nye County, primarily in Tonopah, there were 91 cases and 29 deaths in 1918, and 92 cases and 11 deaths in 1919, the highest figures for any county in the state.⁶⁰

Editor Garside had some advice for his readers on August 28: no kissing, always covering the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, keeping a distance of five feet from others, and avoiding public transportation. Rupert Blue, Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service passed along similar suggestions just a month later, by which time the epidemic had spread to 26 states and many military installations, including Camp Lewis, Washington, where most Nevada men taken in the draft were stationed.⁶¹

Nye County's schools were closed on October 28, leaving mothers with children underfoot for the next three months. To make matters worse, the mines and mills shut down, with the workforce being furloughed. Wives were then burdened with grumpy husbands with nothing to do since saloons had also shut their doors. The Nye County Commissioners also passed laws requiring the wearing of flu masks on the streets, and some merchants posted signs informing shoppers that those neglecting to wear them would not be served. Patrons of the Butler Theatre were also turned away if they showed up without masks, and many men were arrested for draping their masks around their necks instead of wearing them properly. There were no reports of women being arrested, nor were threats of the arrest of dancers

at the Airdome who got on the floor without masks carried out. There were also other issues with masks involving smokers, diners in restaurants, and musicians at funerals. The Red Cross had meanwhile turned to making masks, and many women were making masks at home out of sugar sacks. The question of whether they were effective in checking the spread of the epidemic was raised at the time, just as it is today in connection with the H1N1 outbreak. Women were also trying every home remedy they had ever heard of and experimenting with all the patent medicines advertised in the newspapers or made available by their druggists. How effective? History tells us little.⁶²

The epidemic seemed to be petering out as the year came to an end, and the schools opened on Monday, January 6. Students and teachers wore masks for the next several weeks and Superintendent Dilworth set up half-day Saturday sessions to make up for lost time. Dr. C. J. Richards, Nye County's health officer, lifted the ban on public meetings, dances, movies, and church services the next day, and the Butler Theatre reopened on January 10. The Elks put on a Yama-Yama dance to benefit the Syrian and Armenian Relief on January 17, and a crew from the William H. Otts Production Company arrived in February to film scenes for the movie "Nevada." Mining operations resumed and town officials sponsored Clean-Up Week in April. There were occasional deaths, but the epidemic as over as far as the citizens were concerned and the war was a fading memory, although local veterans met on June 4 to establish an American Legion post.⁶³

Word of the armistice in France reached Tonopah just at dawn, November 11, 1918, and citizens were beginning to come downtown within the hour, some wearing flu masks, some not. That day, Monday, was payday at the mines, so businesses and banks closed for only a few hours. Members of the Nye County Board of Health were opposed to a parade because of the epidemic, but Lieutenant Governor Maurice J. Sullivan, acting for Governor Boyle, declared a half-holiday beginning at 1:00 p.m., and Harry Grier was delegated to plan a parade, which was held that evening. The epidemic kept many citizens at home, but others either came out with masks or expressed themselves in other ways, among them Nellie Brissell, who submitted the following poem which was published in the *Daily Times* on December 3:

AT LAST

At last, dear God, my dreams come true;
This dreadful war is nearly through,
And some of our brave boys will soon be marching home,
While some will sleep on cruel battlefields, alone.

Their glory, ever great, as to the living will be shown.
 For future generations, their names will e'er be known,
 And let us show our gratitude to each and every one
 Of the boys who never had a chance to even raise a gun.
 They offered all they had to give, those men so brave and true
 To make a future peaceful happiness for me and you.
 No praise too loud and honors none too much
 To show our heroes, for were there ever such?

In every year to come we'll ever know the day
 With peace declared and Democracy won her way.
 And we've shown our strength and daring to this well-beaten Hun,
 Their plundered gains must be returned by each and every one.

Their battleships and submarines and boats of every class,
 Their Zeps so bold and treacherous to the allies must now pass,
 Crushed to the very uppermost these tyrants, one and all.

The mothers, wives and sweethearts who have heroes left behind,
 They surely fought their battles, but this they do not mind.
 You, in your ever goodness, dear Lord, we pray thee send
 Our loved ones home again to us to stay until the end.⁶⁴

The economic good times came to an end within three years of the armistice, the policy of the U.S. Treasury officials in declining to purchase silver under the Pittman Silver Act in July, 1923, being the principal precipitating factor. Tonopah lost two-thirds of its population by 1930, including many women who had taken up war work; thus we know very little of their subsequent lives.⁶⁵

Dr. Anne DeChene left Tonopah for Tulane University in October 1918, but was back in Nevada within two years. She practiced her profession in Reno until her husband died in 1936. She then moved to San Francisco, where she died on June 29, 1950, at eighty years of age.⁶⁶

Following her separation from her husband, Helen Grigsby moved to Berkeley. In the fall of 1919, she went to Reno to visit friends. On December 5, she ventured out and disappeared, not being seen again until her body was found lodged beneath an ice flow in the Truckee River two months later. An obituary writer for the *Reno Evening Gazette* noted that she was a student of theosophy and a collector of Indian baskets, pottery and Navajo blankets. She was also a talented musician, the writer claimed and had taken an active part in the social life of Tonopah for many years. He also informed readers that she was the president of the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment during the late war.⁶⁷

And then there was Marjorie Brown. After she and Hugh moved to Palo Alto, California, in September 1924, she taught poetry at a private girls' school.

Following Hugh's suicide in November, 1930, she became an investment counselor in San Francisco. We interviewed her in July 1976, and picked up many details of women's lives in wartime Tonopah. She died in San Francisco on February 4, 1987, at age 103.⁶⁸

And so it was. This brief sketch of Tonopah's women on the homefront does not include other details of their lives because no records were left. How did they manage tight budgets when they contributed to the Ladies Liberty Loan? What about dues to various organizations and the cost of admissions to the dances at the Airdome? How did they balance their responsibilities at home with time spent at the Red Cross and Tonopah Ambulance Regiment sewing rooms? We would also like to have details of the manner in which they cooperated with each other in child care, and how they dealt with sick husbands and children when they themselves were under the weather. What of their husbands' attitudes? Same problem. How did they feel about their wives spending so much time out of the house? Neglected? What did they think of food conservation meals? And then there was the grief that everyone felt when the casualty lists were published as the war went on. Should this be a part of history? Most certainly, but those living through historic times do not see those times as history, but perceive them as history only later when the details are only vaguely recalled, a problem for those of us who endeavor to reconstruct the past.

NOTES

¹Mrs. Hugh Brown, *Lady in Boomtown: Miners and Manners on the Nevada Frontier* (Palo Alto: American West Publishing Company); Interview with Mrs. Hugh Brown (Marjorie), San Francisco, 26 July 1976.

²Lenore M. Kosso, "Yugoslavs in Nevada," pt. I, *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 27:2 (Summer 1985), 84-89.

³*Tonopah Bonanza* (27 January 1916), 1:6, 2:1-2; (24 February 1916), 2:1-2; (17 March 1916), 4:2; (13 July 1916), 4:4.

⁴*Carson City Appeal*, (13 February 1917), 1:2; The League to Enforce Peace, address to a joint session of the State Legislature (Carson City: Nevada State Printing Office, 1913); *Journal of the Senate*, 28th Session, (1917), pp.73-74,78.

⁵*Ibid.* (23 February 1917), 4:4; (24 February 1917), 4:4; *Lovelock Review-Miner* (23 February 1917), 5:3, 4, 8:1.

⁶*Reno Evening Gazette* (12 March 1917), 3:2; (15 June 1912), 7:1.

⁷*Tonopah Bonanza* (12 April 1917), 1:3-5, 3:1-3; *Tonopah Daily Times* (10 April 1917), 1:3-4.

⁸*Tonopah Bonanza* (13 April 1917), 2:3; (17 April 1917), 2:1-2.

⁹*Ibid.* (18 April 1917), 4:4; (20 April 1917), 4:2-3; *Tonopah Daily Times* (19 April 1917), 4:3; (20 April 1917), 1:3-5, 2:4-5.

¹⁰*Tonopah Daily Times* (28 April 1917), 4:2; April Ross, *A Directory of Nevada Medical Practitioners* (Reno: privately published, 1957), 35.

¹¹*Tonopah Bonanza* (16 May 1917), 2:1-2; (18 May 1917), 2:1-2; *Tonopah Daily Times* (8 May 1917), 1:3; (13 May 1917), 2:1-2.

¹²*Tonopah Daily Times* (9 August 1917), 1:1-2; (11 August 1917), 1:1-3.

¹³*Ibid.* (3 June 1917), 1:7; (7 June 1917), 4:1; (8 June 1917), 4:1; (29 June 1917), 4:4; *Tonopah Bonanza* (5 June 1917), 4:2; (8 June 1917), 4:2-3; (15 June 1917), 1:1-3; (16 June 1917), 4:2-3.

¹⁴*Tonopah Bonanza* (24 May 1917), 4:2-3; (12 June 1917), 4:3; (15 June 1917), 4:2-3; (5 July 1917), 1:5-7, 3:1-2; *Tonopah Daily Times* (23 June 1917), 1:6-7; (4 July 1917), 1:1-3; (7 July 1917), 1:4-5.

¹⁵*Tonopah Daily Times* (15 June 1917), 1:3; *Tonopah Bonanza* (14 June 1917), 4:2-3; (15 June 1917), 1:6; (21 June 1917), 4:5; (26 June 1917), 4:2.

¹⁶*Tonopah Bonanza* (25 June 1917), 4:2; (26 June 1917), 4:2.

¹⁷*Tonopah Daily Times* (3 June 1917), 4:4; (3 July 1917), 4:3-4; Helen Richardson Grigsby, *A Short History – the Organization of the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment* (Tonopah: Tonopah Miner Publishing Company, 1917), pp.1-3; Odessa Davenport, "History of the Tonopah Ambulance Regiment," in Grigsby, *Short History*, 9-14.

¹⁸*Tonopah Daily Times* (6 July 1917), 1:6-7.

¹⁹*Tonopah Bonanza* (12 July 1917), 4:5; (17 July 1917), 4:2; *Tonopah Daily Times* (17 July 1917), 4:3-4.

²⁰*Tonopah Bonanza* (19 July 1917), 1:6-7, 4:2-3; (20 July 1917), 4:2-3; (23 July 1917), 1:4; *Tonopah Daily Times* (19 July 1917), 1:2-3; (20 July 1917), 1:5; (22 July 1917), 1:7.

²¹Grigsby, *A Short History*, 2, 4.

²²*Ibid.*, 3.

²³*Tonopah Bonanza* (5 June 1917), 1:1; (6 June 1917), 1:3; (23 June 1917), 1:4, 3:5-6; (28 July 1917), 4:2; (2 August 1917), 4:2; *Tonopah Daily Times* (27 July 1917), 4:4; (28 July 1917), 1:1-2; (2 August 1917), 4:2.

²⁴*Tonopah Daily Times* (2 August 1917), 4:2; (5 August 1917), 4:1; *Tonopah Bonanza* (3 August 1917), 4:2; (6 August 1917), 4:2.

²⁵*Tonopah Daily Times* (7 August 1917), 4:4; (16 August 1917), 4:1; (22 August 1917), 4:5; (26 August 1917), 1:6-7, 4:1-3; *Tonopah Bonanza* (13 August 1917), 4:5; (21 August 1917), 4:2.

²⁶*Tonopah Bonanza* (29 August 1917), 3:1-2, 4:2-3; (30 August 1917), 2:5-6; *Tonopah Daily Times* (1 September 1917), 4:3.

²⁷*Tonopah Bonanza* (5 September 1917), 4:2-3.

²⁸*Ibid.* (6 September 1917), 1:1; (7 September 1917), 1:5, 2:1-2, 4:5;

Mrs. Hugh Brown, *Lady in Boomtown*, 121.

²⁹*Tonopah Bonanza* (4 September 1917), 2:2-3.

³⁰*Ibid.* (24 September 1917), 1:1-3, 4:5; (27 September 1917), 1:2, 2:5; (28 September 1917), 4:5; (29 September 1917), 4:2-3; *Tonopah Daily Times* (23 September 1917), 1:5-7; (25 September 1917), 1:1-2; (28 September 1917), 4:3; 29 September 1917, 4:2.

³¹*Tonopah Daily Times* (5 October 1917), 4:2; (11 October 1917), 4:5; (13 October 1917), 4:1; (14 October 1917), 4:4; (18 October 1917), 4:3; (19 October 1917), 1:6-7; *Tonopah Bonanza* (12 October 1917), 1:4-5; (13 October 1917), 4:1; (15 October 1917), 4; (16 October 1917), 1:1-3; (17 October 1917), 4:2-3; (18 October 1917), 2:1-2, 4:2; (19 October 1917), 4:2-3.

³²*Tonopah Daily Times* (18 October 1917), 4:3; (19 October 1917), 1:6-7; (20 October 1917), 1:2; (23 October 1917), 4:7; *Tonopah Bonanza* (17 October 1917), 4:2-3; (18 October 1917), 2:3-4; Marjorie Brown interview; Interview with Mrs. Lillian Ninnis, Reno, 14 October 1976.

³³*Tonopah Bonanza* (20 October 1917), 4:3; (22 October 1917), 4:3-4; (16 October 1917), 2:3-4; *Tonopah Daily Times* (24 October 1917), 1:1-2.

³⁴*Tonopah Daily Times* (9 November 1917), 1:3-4; (16 November 1917), 1:6; *Tonopah Bonanza* (14 November 1917), 4:4; (16 November 1917), 4:2.

³⁵*Tonopah Daily Times* (17 October 1917), 1:3-5; (21 October 1917), 1:3; (21 October 1917), 4:2; *Tonopah Bonanza* (18 October 1917), 4:2-3.

³⁶*Tonopah Daily Times* (5 October 1917), 1:5; (25 October 1917), 1:1-2; (27 October 1917), 1:2, 4:4; *Tonopah Bonanza* (6 October 1917), 4:3; (23 October 1917), 4:3; (26 October 1917), 4:2-3; (27 October 1917), 1:4, 4:2-3; (29 October 1917), 1:1; (17 November 1917), 4:2-3.

³⁷*Tonopah Bonanza*, 27 October 1917, 1:1.

³⁸*Ibid.* (23 October 1917), 2:1-2; (2 November 1917), 4:2; (6 November 1917), 4:4; (28 November 1917), 4:2; *Tonopah Daily Times* (23 October 1917), 1:2.

³⁹*Tonopah Daily Times* (5 October 1917), 2:4; (14 October 1917), 2:2-3; (17 November 1917), 4:7; (23 November 1917), 4:2; *Tonopah Bonanza* (7 November 1917), 4:2-3; (24 November 1917), 4:2-3.

⁴⁰*Tonopah Bonanza* (25 October 1917), 4:3; *Tonopah Daily Times* (21 December 1917), 4:2-3.

⁴¹*Tonopah Daily Times* (25 November 1917), 4:3; (9 December 1917), 4:4; *Tonopah Bonanza* (21 December 1917), 4:2-3.

⁴²*Tonopah Daily Times* (29 November 1917), 4:4; (6 December 1917), 4:6; *Tonopah Bonanza* (26 November 1917), 4:2-3; (5 December 1917), 4:3.

⁴³*Tonopah Daily Times* (28 October 1917), 4:2.

⁴⁴*Tonopah Bonanza* (9 February 1918), 4:4; (15 February 1918), 4:2-3; (9 March 1918), 1:4-5; (7 February 1918), 1:6-7; (15 February 1918), 2:4-5; (12 March 1918), 4:3.

⁴⁵*Tonopah Daily Times* (17 January 1918), 4:5; (31 January 1918), 4:3; (16 February 1918), 4:3; (26 February 1918), 4:3; (18 March 1918), 4:4; (21 March 1918), 4:1; *Tonopah Bonanza* (9 March 1918), 1:4; (21 March 1918), 4:2-3; (22 March 1918), 4:2; (25 March 1918), 4:2; (26 March 1918), 4:3; (28 March 1918), 4:3.

⁴⁶*Tonopah Daily Times* (14 December 1917), 1:6; (20 March 1918), 4:3; (24 March 1918), 4:5; (26 March 1918), 4:5; (27 March 1918), 1:3; *Tonopah Bonanza* (19 March 1918), 4:2; (22 March 1918), 4:3.

⁴⁷*Tonopah Bonanza* (6 March 1918), 4:3-4; (7 March 1918), 2:1-2; (8 March 1918), 2:1-2; *Tonopah Daily Times* (7 March 1918), 4:3; (8 March 1918), 4:3.

⁴⁸*Tonopah Bonanza* (8 March 1918), 2:1-2; (12 March 1918), 2:1-2, 4:2.

⁴⁹*Tonopah Daily Times* (8 March 1918), 4:3; (13 March 1918), 4:5; *Tonopah Bonanza* (14 March 1918), 4:3-4; (15 March 1918), 2:1-2, 4:3.

⁵⁰*Tonopah Daily Times* (31 March 1918), 1:3; (1 April 1918), 4:3; (11 April 1918), 1:3-4, 4:5.

⁵¹*Ibid.* (31 March 1918), 1:3; *Tonopah Bonanza* (29 March 1918), 4:2; (8 April 1918), 4:3-4; "A Practical Patriot," *The Net*, vol. I (July 1918), p. 7.

⁵²*Walker Lake Bulletin* (25 May 1918), 4:2.

⁵³Richard E. Lingenfelter and Karen Rix Gash, *The Newspapers of Nevada: A History and Bibliography, 1854-1979* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1984), 243; *The Net*, vol. I (July 1918), pp. 10-12; vol. III (September 1918), pp. 3, 14; *Tonopah Daily Times* (2 October 1918), 4:4; (18 October 1918), 4:3; The author wishes to thank Mike Maher of the Nevada Historical Society for his help on locating resources.

⁵⁴*Tonopah Daily Times* (16 June 1918), 4:4; (18 June 1918), 4:4; (20 June 1918), 4:5; (22 June 1918), 4:5; *Tonopah Bonanza* (15 June 1918), 4:1; (29 June 1918), 4:3; "Nye County Home Service," *The Net*, vol. II (August 1918), p. 12.

⁵⁵*Tonopah Daily Times* (6 July 1918), 4:3-4; *Tonopah Bonanza* (15 July 1918), 1:3-5, 4:1-3.

⁵⁶*Tonopah Daily Times* (13 July 1918), 1:5-6; (14 July 1918), 4:4.

⁵⁷*Tonopah Bonanza* (13 August 1918), 4:2; (14 August 1918), 4:2; (21 August 1918), 4:4; *Tonopah Daily Times* (9 August 1918), 4:6; (10 August 1918), 4:2; (17 August 1918), 4:3; (20 August 1918), 4:3.

⁵⁸*Tonopah Daily Times* (8 August 1918), 4:4; *Tonopah Bonanza* (3 September 1918), 4:3.

⁵⁹*Tonopah Bonanza* (11 September 1918), 4:2-3; (14 September 1918), 2:5-6; (19 September 1918), 1:1; (20 September 1918), 4:1; (24 September 1918), 1:6-7; (27 September 1918), 1:2; (28 September 1918), 2:3-4.

⁶⁰Biennial Report of the State Board of Health for the year ending 31 December 1918, p.34; *idem.*, for the year ending 31 December 1919, p.33.

⁶¹*Tonopah Daily Times* (28 August 1918), 2:1-2; *Tonopah Bonanza* (21 September 1918), 1:1; Rupert Blue, "Spanish Influenza," U.S. Public Health Service Supplement 34 to Public Health Reports (28 September 1918); Phillip I. Earl, "A Visit from the Spanish Lady: North Central Nevada and the Great Spanish Flu Epidemic, 1918-19," *The Humboldt Historian*, Part I, Vol.19, 1999; Part II: vol. 20, 2000.

⁶²*Tonopah Daily Times* (4 October 1918), 3:4-5; (27 October 1918), 1:4, 6:4; (29 October 1918), 1:5-6; (30 October 1918), 6:4; (14 November 1918), 1:6-7, 4:4; (3 December 1918), 3:2-3; (7 December 1918), 4:2; (8 December 1918), 4:5; (17 December 1918), 1:3-5.

⁶³*Tonopah Bonanza* (4 January 1919), 4:3-4; (6 January 1919), 4:2-3; (18 January 1919), 4:3; (19 March 1919), 1:3-4; (27 March 1919), 1:2-4, 2:1-2; *Tonopah Daily Times* (11 January 1919), 4:3; (17 January 1919), 4:3; (20 February 1919), 1:3-4; (21 February 1919), 4:4; (22 February 1919), 1:4; (9 March 1919), 1:4, 3:1-2; (2 April 1919), 2:1-2; (11 April 1919), 6:5; (24 May 1919), 1:4; (4 June 1919), 4:2-5; (5 June 1919), 1:3.

⁶⁴*Tonopah Daily Times* (12 November 1918), 1:1-2, 4:4; (3 December 1918), 3:3-4; *Tonopah Bonanza* (11 November 1918), 3:3-4.

⁶⁵Russell R. Elliott, *Nevada's Twentieth Century Mining Boom* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1966), pp.160-64.

⁶⁶*Polk's Directory of Washoe County, 1920-21*, 247; *Reno Evening Gazette* (2 October 1936), 6:5; California Death Index, 1940-77.

⁶⁷*Reno Evening Gazette* (17 March 1920), 3:2; (18 March 1920), 1:7; (19 March 1920), 8:3.

⁶⁸Mrs. Hugh Brown, *Lady in Boomtown*, 127; Mary Lorna Stephenson, "An Exciting Challenge," *The Trumpeteer* (May 1954); *Reno Evening Gazette* (16 February 1987); cf. Phillip I. Earl, "Tonopah Women Buy Ambulance for WWI Troops in France," *Reno Evening Gazette* (3 November 1987), 2E.

*“They Live by Daily Wage”
Labor and the Work of the Paiutes of Moapa
and Las Vegas, 1911-1924*

POLLY C. MICHEL

Two visions contend with each other and compete for the researcher’s attention when seeking to understand the Paiute experience in the labor market and the economic life of early-twentieth century Southern Nevada. The Paiutes offer a story of wandering, making do, and survival. Labor done for the good of the band without thought of monetary compensation became, of necessity, labor in the small cultivated fields of Moapa or labor for wages on the ranches, farms, mines, and homes across the landscape of Southern Nevada. Wage labor to replace lost access to resources was an extension of their peripatetic existence. Movement back and forth from one band of Paiutes to another, reconnecting with a broader kinship group, was natural, habitual, and necessary. Such migrations could mean food provided via hospitality during lean years if a relied-on food source failed and strengthened kinship ties through marriage of young members across bands.

The second vision offered an administrative interpretation—the official position—of the Indian as a wanderer in need of focus as a worker and laborer. That official position itself began undergoing a transformation in the late

Polly Clark Michel received her undergraduate degree from Smith College and pursued graduate studies at Washington University in St. Louis. She is currently completing her Master’s degree in American History at Arizona State University. Ms. Michel is employed by the Clark County School District. Ms. Michel is the founder of HistoryWorks, a free after-school program that immerses 4th and 5th grade students in American history through a series of engaging, thematic programs designed for hands-on learning.

nineteenth century as the American government sought to bring "Indian lands" under control. The Dawes Act of 1887—the allotment of Indian lands—had intended to extend to Indians the "benefits of civilization," by turning commonly-held Indian reservations into privately-owned small farms.¹ Indians would become productive, independent farmers. The policy created a "pathway for legal, economic and social integration of Native Americans into the United States."² While a "keystone" to federal Indian policy until the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, the government chipped away at the expectations of—and hopes for—the Indians embodied in the act almost from the time of its passage. Government officials narrowed goals and objectives, and responded to constant pressures from politicians, businesses, and citizens for access to still more land through modifications like the Burke Act of 1906, and through shifting concepts of citizenship and guardianship, particularly as defined in key legal decisions.³

From the perspective of the agents administering the Paiute bands of Southern Nevada in the 1910s, official expectations, based on those changing land policies and rules, observations and suppositions often ran counter to the daily reality of lives lived on and between small, poor reservations.⁴ The expectations that farming for oneself and then laboring for wages paid by another could transform Indians into productive citizens ignored that they were already, and would continue to be, productive citizens. The Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives collection offers a unique documentation of those two visions, through the recollections of older Paiutes—children in the 1910s and 1920s—side by side with the accounts and narratives of the superintendents of the Moapa Agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the men who oversaw Paiute bands in Moapa and Las Vegas.

Superintendents reflected—in their thinking, in their writing—the expectations of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Commissioner—and, by extension, the President and white Protestant society at large. Official expectations defined the space allowed to Indians for their labor. Commissioner Francis Leupp expected most Indians to "draw their living from the soil." As alternatives, they could enter the "general labor market" to work as "lumbermen, ditchers, miners, railroad hands or what not."⁵ The Reverend James Funsten, living among and writing about the Shoshone reservations of Lemhi Fort Hall and Wind River, stated bluntly that Indians had to realize the "absolute necessity of work." Multiple factors worked to facilitate this lesson, among them the "teaching of the Government, the example of surrounding white men, the disappearance of wild animals which furnished a food supply," and the very conditions of life on the reservation.⁶ Honorable toil could allow Indians the surest path to thriving in their new conditions. Funsten railed against needlessly large reservations—a problem he believed would soon be solved by allotment—that kept the Indians from absorption "into the lines of the world's workers." Indians were not to fear the coming of allotment, a harbinger of the rapidly approaching "American civilization, which is Christian," because hardworking and industrious Indians surely would be assisted by their white neighbors.⁷



Paiute man with donkeys, ca. 1913-18. Photograph by Harry Hess. (*Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas Collection*)

Where Funsten saw salvation as the ultimate goal of Indian absorption into a larger labor force (he was, after all, an Episcopalian bishop and missionary), C. H. Forbes-Lindsay, gentleman adventurer and author of books on primitive peoples, offered a path to citizenship through labor and toil, but only after cataloging the myriad moral failings Indians needed to overcome. The Indian "lacked the qualities that make for success in agriculture." He distrusted innovation, had "an aversion to manual labor," and lacked the drive for "independent effort" necessary for success in any independent venture. Only allotment could address these ills. The "ration-fed" Indian, placed on his own piece of land, would learn to compete with the "strenuous white man."⁸

Then, in an abrupt about-face, Forbes-Lindsay argued, the "directors of the movement" realized that the Indian did not possess the agricultural skills or "attachment" to succeed on the land. Wage labor, on the other hand, promised an alternative, an introduction of the Indian to the benefits of "contact with the work-a-day world." Employers overcame misgivings when hiring Indians, and Indians, guided by "educated men of their own race," adapted

to the "restraint and regulation" of wage labor. He learned discipline. He learned thrift. On the Salt River project, the Apaches did "white man's work in the white man's way." By proving himself in this way, Forbes-Lindsay argued, the Indian cleared a path to "a place in the citizen community." Work became a training ground, of sorts, for "higher efforts." Commissioner Leupp had guided them to the threshold of useful citizenship.⁹

The Paiutes of southern Nevada would be forced onto that "training ground." When the small Paiute band settled in 1912 on the ten-acre reservation in Las Vegas, a booming railroad town, their isolation from the natural resources they relied on for sustenance, generation after generation, was nearly complete. Their familiar pattern of migration that had taken them across the Las Vegas valley and beyond the mountains that encircle it, as far as Pahrump and Ash Meadow to the west; south along the Colorado River to Cottonwood Island; northeast to Moapa, St. Thomas, and the Muddy River; and up into the Spring Mountains, particularly Mt. Charleston, nearly ceased. For generations, small Paiute bands had understood where and when to gather food. Yet harvesting what they needed—seed pods, berries, roots, wild spinach, pine nuts—hunting, and returning to natural water sources became more difficult as settlers, ranchers, and the railroad restricted the very land they once crossed freely and claimed rights to the water there.¹⁰ Ilee Castillo and Herbert Myers, for instance, recalled that Tule Springs, just north of Las Vegas, was the place where "Indians really used to live," until it was claimed by "white" farmers.¹¹

To survive in this constricted landscape, the Paiutes labored much as they lived, by a willingness to migrate to work and an ability to adapt to necessity. Paiutes who resided in Las Vegas worked as agricultural laborers and as ranch hands. They raised pigs, planted and harvested corn, picked watermelons, cut hay, and hauled wood at the Stewart ranch; they grew and harvested vegetables at the Auza farm. Paiutes worked for wages as housekeepers, dishwashers, housepainters, and gardeners.¹² Many Paiutes continued to "scatter" and come back, perhaps remaining "two or three months," and then returning to a familiar kinship circle, or even to a spouse.¹³ Their work took them south to the mining camps of Nelson, Searchlight, and El Dorado Canyon to Cottonwood Island where the men were "cutting wood for the mine." They crossed the Colorado River, traveling east to the mines near Kingman and Chloride, where the "Indian women ... would do all the cooking for the [miners] right there, and the men would pay the women for their cooking."¹⁴ The river itself became a place of employment, for Indians lived "on the river and set [sic] as guides and boatmen."¹⁵ Noting that "no white men could be found" in a daring attempt to repair a break in a levee farther down the river near Blythe, two Indians were employed to guide repair pilings into place.¹⁶ Paiutes traveled along familiar terrain northward, as well, to the mining community of Pioche, and to the farming communities along the Muddy and

Virgin Rivers, including St. Thomas, Overton, and Moapa. Even the Indian schools at Ft. Mohave and Albuquerque played their part in the movement of Paiute pupils into the seasonal workforce. Paiute Daisy Mike remembered her transfer from the Ft. Mohave School to Albuquerque, for upon her arrival, "I hardly got to go to school. I just work for people." School officials arranged for Mike to work in Los Angeles for two summers. Once she moved to Santa Fe, she found that she enjoyed working "out in the wood." Nellie Sanchez had similar memories of being sent to Santa Monica and Venice, California, to do domestic work for a family. When she attended the school in Albuquerque, she worked summers in Beverly Hills.¹⁷

The cycle of laboring for wages at the Moapa Reservation, fifty miles north of Las Vegas, did not differ greatly from the cycle of wage work practiced by the Paiute band in Las Vegas. In theory, the 1916 allotment of the Moapa Reservation, a reservation first established in 1875, provided land for each family to have a farm large enough to support itself. That was never the case, for several reasons. The State's water restrictions limited the amount of land that could be irrigated successfully. Alkalinity in the soil required time and enormous amounts of water to remedy by deliberate flooding and leeching. The rock-hard soil of Southern Nevada required two seasons before it could successfully produce a marketable crop, and the allotments were too small to provide sustenance for a family and produce an abundance for sale. Hiring out for wages on nearby farms, on more distant ranches, and in mining communities was a matter of survival.

Through the decade of the 1910s, the annual reports to the Bureau of Indian Affairs from the superintendents overseeing the small sub-agency of Moapa offered, certainly, the official vision—and version—of the expectations for the Paiutes. They were there, after all, to oversee the implementation of official policies. Superintendents fretted over disappointing moral shortcomings—a fondness for gambling, marriages entered into and then abandoned with alarming regularity, superstitious beliefs that disregarded medical advice, meddling of the grandmothers, and lack of church attendance. However, in other moments they recognized the hardscrabble existence of life at Moapa and Las Vegas, the absolute necessity of wage work, the futility of farming in the face of repeated natural disasters, the desperate need for more water—clean water—the constant lack of tools and supplies to build the most basic living shelters. Between the world of the official reports and the reality of Paiutes' daily lives, the superintendents offered an honest glimpse of life and work in Moapa and Las Vegas. In their annual responses on the official questionnaire, the repetitive nature of their responses revealed the willingness of Paiutes to find work wherever they could.

The annual reports of Superintendent Murtaugh, dating from 1911, could at times be cheerfully optimistic—"they are making a start towards independence"—and then turn bleakly pessimistic within the same report about the opportunities for a profitable farming community on the reservation in Moapa. He could, for instance, report that "almost all the Indians have a piece of

land which they farm ... and all the able-bodied Indians are self-supporting." Funsten's comment, "murderous wanderers ... are now working on their little places," would not have been out of place in Murtaugh's report.¹⁸ In the same report, Murtaugh expressed concern at the lack of water for cultivation and the poor condition of the very ditches needed to deliver water.¹⁹ At times, the reader wonders whether the superintendent read through his own assessments of conditions in Moapa, and in Las Vegas as well. There was a tension between the descriptions he offered of an industrious community of "easily managed" small farmers, ready to live up to expectations of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and of Indians beset by problems of unforgiving land, a hostile environment, and their own moral failings, most often in regard to gambling and irregular marriages. He struggled to "change the sentiment of the better class" of Paiutes until they could "reach the rest" and presumably instruct and correct their errors.²⁰ The local newspaper, reporting on a 1913 interview with Murtaugh, held out hope that the Indians at Moapa might soon be able to stand on their own "in modern business transactions" with "white neighbors."²¹ Soon—but not yet. Additionally, the school, if better equipped, could shoulder more of the burden of industrial and practical instruction.

Murtaugh suggested that the "best returns from this land with the least expenditure of water" would be had from cultivating peach and cherry trees, along with grape vines, if only because there would be "excellent returns for a moderate expenditure of labor." That suggestion, however, ignored the length of time required to plant and cultivate fruit trees. The Paiutes' most profitable and reliable crop was alfalfa which they could sell to area ranches or even ship to "Jean and other places," earning \$14.00 per ton, as the previous superintendent had done. Cattle ranching was out of the question, "on account of the limited range" for grazing. A few pigs were raised. Reimbursable funds allowed for the purchase of horses for breeding, and the alfalfa was used for feed.²² A lack of access to ice, or even to cold water, made dairying impossible. Paiutes understood what Murtaugh often ignored, that their small reservation could not produce the food needed to survive, let alone to prosper.

Paiutes turned to wage labor even as the superintendent stated in his report that no Indians were "employed at a distance from the reservation." Yet local farmers—perhaps in St. Thomas or Overton—valued and sought out Paiute labor for the cantaloupe harvest during July and August; they picked the crop "for the farmers below here on the river, at good wages." Paiute men and women earned wages at such times. He acknowledged that they spent "about a month" in the mountains for the pine nut harvest, "for which there is a good market," although he did not comment that pine nuts were a staple in the Paiute diet. Paiute women continued to weave intricate baskets "for which they get good prices." Murtaugh reported that the Paiutes in the Las Vegas colony found employment with "ranchers, the railroad, and others, at good wages, and ... are self-supporting."²³



Pigs and sheep grazing at the Moapa reservation, ca. 1913-18. Photograph by Harry Hess. (*Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas Collection*)

Year after year, the Superintendent, responding to, yet at the same time constrained by, the format of the annual report, focused on Paiutes as promising, "industrious" farmers when all the evidence pointed to the futility of the endeavor. The frustration was evident in Murtaugh's report just a few years later as he described three general problems besetting the Moapa Reservation. First, too little land was under cultivation; of the 600 acres of "irrigable land ...less than half is being farmed." The back-breaking process of breaking and harrowing ground covered with tenacious sacaton grass, then leveling it, and the necessary flooding for removal of the salt, required equipment not to be found on the Reservation. The lack of water and the inadequate water allotted by the State Engineer could at best be alleviated by planting "winter crops," when the water supply was "greater." Murtaugh went out on a limb by encouraging the reservation farmers to use more than their allowed water share of 87 feet, noting that the "white users do not seem disposed to take the aggressive" legally, but realizing the matter would be settled by the courts nonetheless. Even a successful crop, such as the cantaloupe crop in 1914, did not guarantee profits. "The market was bad" and the crop could not be sold.

A shortage of equipment meant that "systematic" training, teaching necessary skills and "dry farming methods," could not be accomplished. Insufficient storage buildings on the reservation meant that what equipment they had was left out in the open, year-round.²⁴

Health problems also played a role in reservation enterprises. Murtaugh clearly understood as a physician that health concerns prevented "a half-starved people" from falling ill with "wasting diseases." He clearly admired "some of our Indians," who "actually worked harder than their health and strength would justify." Interestingly, Murtaugh identified the slow pace of allotment as another impediment to success at Moapa. Paiutes eager to own "their land in severalty" became discouraged and disheartened by the empty promises.²⁵

The greatest culprit, in Murtaugh's judgment—what proved most distracting to the Indians under his care, what prevented results of all the effort from being anything but unremarkable—was the problem of wage labor. The prospect of earning a living through wages earned by "labor on neighboring ranches" had turned the reservation into "an occasional camp ground," rather than a primary focus of effort and attention. Even the attempt to "secure good men for the police force" at Moapa was hampered by the "able-bodied" choosing to earn higher wages on valley "ranches, when he has time to spare from his own land." He postponed his plan for an agricultural exhibition later that year, as it seemed pointless to host such an event "for a people engaged, principally, as hired laborers."²⁶

Over the next several years, the new superintendent, L. B. Sandalls, reported on a series of natural disasters that wiped out several harvests and discouraged the Paiutes who by this time most probably were fairly skeptical of becoming a viable agricultural concern. Yet somehow Sandalls—whose approach to the Paiutes in Moapa and Las Vegas carried a much harder edge than his predecessor—blamed wage labor as the primary cause of disappointing results. "The Moapa Indians are not adverse to hard work. But they have spent so many years as hired laborers that they are not fully successful in working for themselves." Relying on "bosses" to direct their wage-work, they had not learned to plan ahead or "exercise foresight in preventing the loss of crops by damage from the elements" or the loss of stock by "avoidable accidents."²⁷ Thus, on the one hand, the Paiute rose to the war-time challenge for increased food production and "entered into the food-production campaign with zeal" as men and women were required to "lend a hand." On the other hand, Sandalls blamed crop losses from violent summer floods in 1916, which destroyed the crops, on the Indians. The floods which inundated the reservation just four short weeks after his report was submitted "came down the Moapa river in great volume, covering alfalfa fields with silt and ruining a large portion of the cantaloupes and other crops."²⁸ The other reservation-based, income-producing venture he spoke of was basketry, although the "returns" from sales were "very small." Sandalls himself had tried unsuccessfully to find a market

for the baskets, as had Helen Stewart, for the Las Vegas Paiutes. In spite of the venture's futility, Sandalls clung to the notion that encouraging basketry was better than watching Paiute women do nothing at all.²⁹

The following year, Sandalls responded to a request from the Commissioner for a tally of Paiutes not living on a reservation—either in Las Vegas or Moapa. While 113 Indians lived at Moapa and were under "tribal jurisdiction," a far greater number—200—he estimated to be "living between Moapa and Pahrump Valley," some sixty-five miles to the west. Those Indians "never had any affiliation with any reservation or agency." Yet the fact that nearly half the Paiutes lived somewhat unaccounted for, even after the purchase of the tiny reservation in Las Vegas in 1912—"they are a wandering lot" he explained—does not lessen the likelihood that those drifting seasonally remained in the workforce. Moapa, Las Vegas and Pahrump formed a triangle encompassing numerous agricultural, mining, and railroad communities, including Glendale, St. Thomas, Corn Creek, Indian Springs, and Blue Diamond. It made sense that the growing town of Las Vegas was "the center of their territory." To survive, he admitted, they had to "live around where ever [sic] there is work."³⁰

By 1920, Sandalls faced the series of natural disasters that devastated the crops on the Moapa allotments in his annual report. The crop failure of 1919 caused problems in many quarters. Paiutes were discouraged about "loosing [sic] their work and time" in planting, and fewer acres were under cultivation. The resident reservation farmer poisoned the grasshopper breeding grounds, but at great expense, and without the cooperation of the Indians, who would not spread the poison unless they were paid for the additional labor. Farmers attempted a cotton crop, but it carried the risk of requiring "much work and at the right time." In response to the list of questions, Sandalls reminded the Commissioner that neither "pottery, fishing, logging nor lumbering," was possible on the Moapa Reservations. The normally reliable cantaloupe crop was, in 1919, financially unsuccessful. Worse, the crop failures prevented Paiutes from repaying loans for equipment and horses provided through the federal reimbursement program.³¹

Much like his predecessor, Sandalls could not find a consistent way to describe the Paiute character or prospects. He described the tribe as "A No. 1 with a star in morality," a tribe that, in only a decade, had become "self-supporting [sic]." In another section of the same report, however, he remarked that the Indians were "too shiftless" to care for a milk cow, forgetting the difficulty of keeping milk from spoiling, and the need to find forage for the animals. People who needed to "work out all the rest of the time" when not tending crops could hardly care for an animal that needed daily milking. Sandalls held out hope that the women on the reservations might try their hand at "blanket weaving or lace making," if only to keep the squaws from their penchant for gambling.³² That their culture did not have a blanket-making tradition, or the interest in making lace, did not seem to matter.



Two young Paiute women on the Moapa reservation, ca. 1913-18. Photograph by Harry Hess. (*Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas Collection*)

Yet “nearly enough” would not be sufficient to survive; they would have to “work out all the rest of the time.” That additional “working out” began on the reservation. The Paiute farmer fortunate to own a team of horses powerful enough to break “new ground covered with sacaton” sod demanded payment above “the going rate” to do the job and so priced himself beyond the ability of other reservation farmers to pay. Indians refused to participate in upkeep and repair of the road to the reservation without being paid for their labor. That those members of the Paiute community grasped the opportunities in working for hire that annoyed Sandalls as much as it, perhaps, gave him hope. As in Las Vegas, working on ranches or riding as cowboys for the cattlemen was “the main employment.” In Overton, men from the reservation found work at the gypsum mine there, yet failed at being steady enough to stay on the job; “they do not last long for they want to lay off too often.” During the farming season extending from April to November, calls came in daily for laborers from the reservation. There was work for all “able-bodied Indians that care[d] to work up and down the Valley.”³³

The tenor and tone of reports shifted in 1922, when Carl Boyd took over as the agency's superintendent. Undertaking a "head count" on the reservation, Boyd complained that there were "probably as many unenrolled Indians" benefitting from agency administration as enrolled, and he blamed that on the Indians who drifted up from Las Vegas or "other railroad towns."³⁴ He acknowledged the Paiutes' seasonal, even daily, "struggle for existence" and wrote that they lived on "whatever they [could] get." Yet in the same report, Boyd stated there was not a "case in this reservation" of want. The very harvests out of which they were to sell produce for income also supported their meagre food supply. "Their diet," Boyd wrote, "may be all watermelon ... or all tomatoes ... for weeks at a time." While Boyd believed they were "fitted" to the harsh climate of the desert, the "most enervating summer climate in the United States," the small allotments "made it impossible to obtain an income from them large enough to support a family." Such small allotments could not be "leased to any advantage," cutting off that possible avenue to additional income. Additional land had been brought under cultivation, yet there was no more irrigable land to be had; beyond the narrow Muddy River valley, the land was "barren ... with an abominable summer climate and a repelling general aspect." Realizing they were facing an imminent grasshopper infestation, Boyd must have wondered whether the wheat and hay would survive. (In fact, a flood later that summer destroyed the alfalfa crop and covered the fields with a layer of sand. The prior harvest, the wheat, was never harvested and threshed.) Meanwhile, rather than extending further "reimbursable privileges," Boyd commented that perhaps a supply of useful tools would do the Paiutes "more good."³⁵

As they had for so many years, the Paiutes turned to local ranches and farms for seasonal labor, although Boyd noted that growers "suspended" the cantaloupe harvest when prices dropped, "thus depriving the Indians of their opportunity for work at a time when they needed the money." Indians traveling fifteen miles "down the valley" to "various ranches" earned half of their household income there. When Sandalls returned the following year as superintendent, his observations were much the same, adding to the list of area businesses hiring Paiute laborers the borax and gypsum mines, where wages could go to \$5.00 per day, \$2.00 higher than on the ranches.³⁶ Certainly Sandalls would have echoed the sentiments of Lorenz Creel, visiting in Reno as a special representative "of the Indians for the government," that the "Indian as a laborer is his biggest asset to Nevada"—whether in the potato fields or working the highways of the northern part of the state or in the cantaloupe fields of the southern part.³⁷ Sandalls lamented the lack of additional reimbursable funds to continue the horse-breeding efforts, but took hope from the vegetable gardens tended on the reservation, with surplus available for sale. He reported cheerfully that "all of the Moapa Indians are practically self-supporting"; work was plentiful; they worked their allotments with vigor; no one was in "want."³⁸

In 1915, the well-known Seneca archeologist and historian Arthur C. Parker charged that the American people "through their governmental agencies and through the aggression of their citizens" had "robbed the American Indian of his economic independence." To make the necessary restitution, Parker argued, the United States needed to return the resources and the land that would allow Indians, once again, to "procure, cultivate, or make their life necessities." Those "indictments"—the "economic" was the fourth of seven charges leveled by Parker—still resonate with anyone studying the experience of the Paiutes in the early twentieth century; moreover, they offer an apt starting point for consideration of scholarship on the labor and toil of Paiutes in Southern Nevada.³⁹

The more we try to understand the economic world of the Paiutes—entering into a farming economy, joining the wage labor force, traveling great distances in search of dwindling resources—we come back to the idea set out above, that two different sets of ideas and expectations, understood differently by the Paiutes and by the Anglo-Americans who settled around them and took control of resources, converged and conflicted in Southern Nevada. Martha Knack, a preeminent scholar of Southern Paiutes, traced the shrinking circle of resources to which Paiutes had access and connected it to their acceptance of the necessity to labor for wages. The process began long before 1900. In one location after another, Paiutes found their water sources taken over, their resources circumscribed, and their best land seized by arriving Mormons, miners, ranchers, and farmers.⁴⁰ Faced with an organized and methodical Mormon migration into Southern Utah and then onto southern Nevada, "Paiutes were blocked from capitalizing on the scant resources of their territory," wild plants, and "the eclectic search for meat," the former disparaged as "weeds" by settlers, the latter termed "loathsome." Settlers speculated that those undesirable resources maintained the Paiutes at a narrow "margin close to survival." To the arriving farmers, it appeared that the motivations of the Paiutes in seeking work were clear enough: They desired the new items they could earn by their work, and they wished to escape starvation. The true motivation, Knack argues, was more likely necessity in the face of displacement. The natural resources the Indians *could* offer that had value to settlers—pine nuts, fish, hay—were taken over by settlers. The Paiutes "had only one product left of value to them by white settlers—their labor."⁴¹

Paiute bands of southern Nevada were faced with settlers of a different sort—miners arriving to discover precious metals and make their fortune. With the more limited resources available in Nevada being taken over in the mid-nineteenth century by mining communities and the establishment of the ranches and farms needed to support mining communities, a delicate and fragile Paiute subsistence economy was upended. By the 1860s and 1870s, Paiutes worked to gather driftwood along the Colorado River, to haul lumber to mines in Pioche, to guide prospectors seeking new veins of precious ores, to build roads, and to



Paiute man on a mule, ca. 1913-18. Photograph by Harry Hess. (*Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas Collection*)

launder clothing and cook in mining camps. They may have worked to serve the mines, yet they did not work as miners, and their wages were consistently one-third to one-half of the prevailing wage for white workers.

Thus, before the purchase of the 10-acre Las Vegas colony in 1912 or the allotment of Moapa in 1916, the Paiutes' labor patterns were well established. As we have seen, superintendents reported on them regularly, if with alternating hope and frustration. Wage labor on farms, ranches, mines, construction, or households necessitated that Paiutes live in proximity to white employers—the "co-residence" described by Knack.⁴² Paiutes lived in proximity, yet on the fringe, a place and position defined by "discriminatory and separatist" practices and values of the Euro-Americans.⁴³

After reading the reports of the superintendents for the 1910s and following the descriptions of Paiutes who were children during that time, two issues in Knack's work appear inconsistent with my own research. Knack argued that the Indians themselves "saw wage labor and reservation life as antithetical,"

a viewpoint shared, she continued, by the whites they lived amongst. Yet the cyclical pattern of movement off the Moapa reservation to work and then back again, and the maintenance of living quarters on the tiny Las Vegas reservation from which to go out in search of work and then return would seem to call for some modification of Knack's argument. By working for wages, the Paiutes, like the Timbisha of Death Valley described by anthropologist Beth Sennett, could "cope with shrinking environmental resources," and at the same time purchase the goods that "made life easier on a daily basis."⁴⁴ In maintaining ties to Moapa and to Las Vegas, Paiutes offered generosity and hospitality to those who were traveling to find work, often remaining for the seasonal duration of the job, knowing that the same would be returned at some time in the future, perhaps for a harvest.

Knack argued that the superintendents on the Paiute reservations were threatened by the Indians under their care resorting increasingly to laboring for wages off the reservations. Within the narrow scope of my research, with a focus on a single decade, I did not sense the superintendents feeling so threatened. Assistant Commissioner Meritt may have railed against anything that distracted Indians from the work of becoming farmers—dancing (which did *not* happen at Moapa), racing ponies (which *did* happen)—but the experience of the superintendents taught them otherwise.⁴⁵ Sandalls may have felt that laboring for wages away from their Moapa fields meant that Paiutes could not work for themselves, yet, faced with floods and the epic plagues of grasshoppers, he also realized working for wages meant survival. Lorenzo Creel certainly was not threatened by Paiute labor, which he termed a great asset to the state.⁴⁶

Of the two visions of labor and work among southern Nevada's Paiutes, the Paiutes understood the need for practicality in subsistence. There was no other way, for their survival depended upon it. A natural environment with scant resources and a harsh climate offered few options. They maintained and strengthened extended kinship circles as they moved. They offered hospitality to those in need and understood it would be reciprocated. However, the arrival of ranchers, miners, and farmers transformed the daily questions—where to migrate, at what time, for what resource, and for how long—into entirely new concerns. Instead, Paiutes had to learn to find what was left over after resources had been stripped or fenced or plowed under or grazed barren or diverted. If the Paiutes negotiated the unforgiving environment and the onslaught of Euro-American immigrants, they also had to negotiate the personnel and the rules of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, made known to them in the person of the superintendent. Undoubtedly aware of the expectations—expressed by Murtaugh, then by Sandalls, then by Boyd—the Paiutes tried to bridge the gulf between the expectations of becoming the hard-working, thriving independent farmer and the reality of working as the wage laborer who needed to put food on the table. As farmers on small allotments, they

battled natural disasters that devastated the crops they tended and made their labors in vain. As laborers, they were needed and readily hired across the valley. As farmers, they were tied to the land. As laborers, they could work when necessary, not tied down for months on end. For the superintendents, the finer points of official policy and the shifts then underway in Washington probably counted for less than what they saw all around them in Moapa and in Las Vegas. As it was, allotment came fairly late to Moapa, and at no time during the 1910s did anyone express an interest in leasing or purchasing the tiny parcels. The superintendents did not come across, in their yearly reports, as cruel or foolish men. They wished for success—farms that flourished, harvests that sold quickly for good prices, adequate supplies and buildings at Moapa, a new school, good health, better nutrition, a clean water supply—as they would define it. Their expectations could be very high and then modify into more realistic planning. We have seen they could become quite frustrated that the Paiutes did not share their vision for change. Ultimately, however, grasshoppers and floods—beyond the control of any human—reminded the superintendents of what Paiutes understood—that they would need to live by their labor and by daily wage.

NOTES

¹D. S. Otis, *The Dawes Act and the Allotment of Indian Lands* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), 8-9.

²Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Bison Books, University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 200.

³Hoxie, 209, 213, 215-216, 220-222.

⁴Hoxie, 186.

⁵Francis Leupp, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1905* (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1905), p. 3.

⁶James Funsten, "The Indian as Worker," *The Outlook*, (December 1905), 875.

⁷Funsten, 876.

⁸C. H. Forbes-Lindsay, "The North American Indian as a Laborer: His Value as a Worker and a Citizen," *The Craftsman* 14, no. 2 (May 1908): 146.

⁹Forbes-Lindsay, 151-155.

¹⁰Edith Mike, interview by Maureen Frank and Robert Eben, [no date], transcript, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, University of Nevada Las Vegas Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada. Edith Mike, interview by John Alley, December 21 [no year], transcript, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, University of Nevada Las Vegas Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada. Daisy Mike, interview by Floyd O'Neil, 2 January 2 1977, transcript, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, University of Nevada Las Vegas Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada.

¹¹Ilee Castillo and Herbert Myers, interview by Maureen Frank and Robert Eben, [no date], transcript, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, University of Nevada Las Vegas Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada.

¹²D. Mike interview, 2 January 1977; Nellie Sanchez, interview by Jackie Rice and Floyd O'Neil, June 1, 1974, transcript, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, University of Nevada Las Vegas Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada.

¹³E. Mike interview, December 21 [no year]; D. Mike interview, 7 January.

¹⁴E. Mike interview, December 21 [no year].

¹⁵"The Las Vegas Age Newspaper Digital Collection from April 7, 1905-1915, 1917-1922, 1924." *Las Vegas Age* (2 May 1905) <http://digital.lvcld.org/lvage.html>

¹⁶"The Las Vegas Age Newspaper Digital Collection from April 7, 1905-1915, 1917-1922, 1924." (29 June 1912).

¹⁷D. Mike interview, 2 January 1977; Nellie Sanchez interview, 1 June 1974. For more on the 'outing' system, see Richard H. Pratt, "A Way Out," in *Americanizing the American Indians* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 1973), 272-276.

¹⁸Funsten, 877.

¹⁹E. G. Murtaugh, *Annual Report of the Superintendent*, 28 August 1911, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, UNLV Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada.

²⁰Murtaugh, *Annual Report* 1911.

²¹"The Las Vegas Age Newspaper Digital Collection from April 7, 1905-1915, 1917-1922, 1924." (5 May 1913).

²²Murtaugh, *Annual Report* 1911.

²³Murtaugh, *Annual Report* 1911.

²⁴*Annual Report*, Murtaugh, 1911.

²⁵*Annual Report of the Superintendent*, August 1915, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections UNLV Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada; *Annual Report*, Murtaugh, 1911.

²⁶*Annual Report*, Murtaugh, 1915. Taking on the job of reservation policeman, not surprisingly, could mean being at odds with family and friends.

²⁷*Annual Report of the Superintendent*, 30 June 1917, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, UNLV Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada.

²⁸*Las Vegas Age* (4 August 1917).

²⁹*Annual Report*, Sandalls, 1915.

³⁰Letter from L. B. Sandalls to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 26 August 1918, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, UNLV Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada.

³¹Annual Report of the Superintendent, 30 June 1920, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, UNLV Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada.

³²Annual Report, Sandalls, 30 June 1920.

³³Annual Report, Sandalls, 30 June 1920.

³⁴Narrative Report of the Superintendent, August 1922, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections UNLV Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada.

³⁵Annual Report of the Superintendent, 30 June 1922, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, UNLV Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada; Annual Report of the Superintendent, 30 June 1923, Las Vegas Paiute Tribal Archives, Special Collections, UNLV Libraries, Las Vegas, Nevada.

³⁶Narrative Report, Sandalls August 1922; Annual Report, June 1923.

³⁷Las Vegas Voice (18 November 1922).

³⁸Annual Report, Sandalls, 1923.

³⁹Arthur C. Parker, "Arthur C. Parker Indicts the Government for its Actions," in *Talking Back to Civilization: Indian Voices from the Progressive Era*, ed. Frederick Hoxie, (Boston, Massachusetts: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 96-97, 99-100.

⁴⁰Martha Knack, *Boundaries Between: The Southern Paiutes, 1775-1995* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press 2001), 128.

⁴¹Martha Knack, "Nineteenth-Century Great Basin Indian Wage Labor," in *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, ed. Alice Littlefield and Martha C. Knack, (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 148-150, 153.

⁴²Knack, *Native Americans*, 157

⁴³Knack, *Boundaries Between*, 128-129.

⁴⁴Beth Sennett, "Wage Labor: Survival for the Death Valley Timbisha," in *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, ed. Alice Littlefield and Martha C. Knack, (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 240.

⁴⁵Gabriella Treglia, "Using Citizenship to Retain Identity: The Native American Dance Bans of the Later Assimilation Era, 1900-1933," *Journal of American Studies* 47, 3 (August 2013), 777- 800.

⁴⁶Treglia, 8, 12

An Irish Immigrant in the Wild West
The Letters of Denis Hurley of
Carson City, Nevada, 1873-1938

BRYAN LAMKIN

In 1873, 24-year-old Denis Hurley of County Cork, only months after he had crossed the Atlantic, arrived at his destination of Carson City, Nevada. In his first report home from the West, he notes to his cousin:

This climate is fatal to the longevity of shoes, on account of its extreme drought. Before a month's wear the soles and uppers of store [boots] apply for a divorce... and the divorce is readily granted. Why not, in a country in which the marriage tie between man and woman is so easily severed.... Why not the shoes [in like manner] when they become tired of so close a relationship between them, wish for a separation each desiring to go its own way.

After likening the area to the Sahara, he goes on:

Men from every nation under heaven may be found in Carson. The long-tailed, sombre-looking Chinamen; the black-haired red skinned Indian, ... The swarthy, copper-coloured Mexican; the slow thoughtful looking German; the more lively Frenchman. With Swedes, Swiss, Italians, Spanish, Portuguese &c. In conclusion, I have wandered away from home and domestic relations, for which in the present letter I beg to be excused.

Bryan Lamkin, Ph.D., has taught U.S. history at Azusa Pacific University for twenty years. His expertise includes American ethnic and immigration history, nineteenth-century U.S. cultural history, and the history of the American West. He is working on several articles and books about Irish immigrants in the American West, based on a large database of Irish immigrant letters that he has created over the last decade. Dr. Lamkin was the co-founder and first elected president of the Western Regional branch of the Conference on Faith and History.

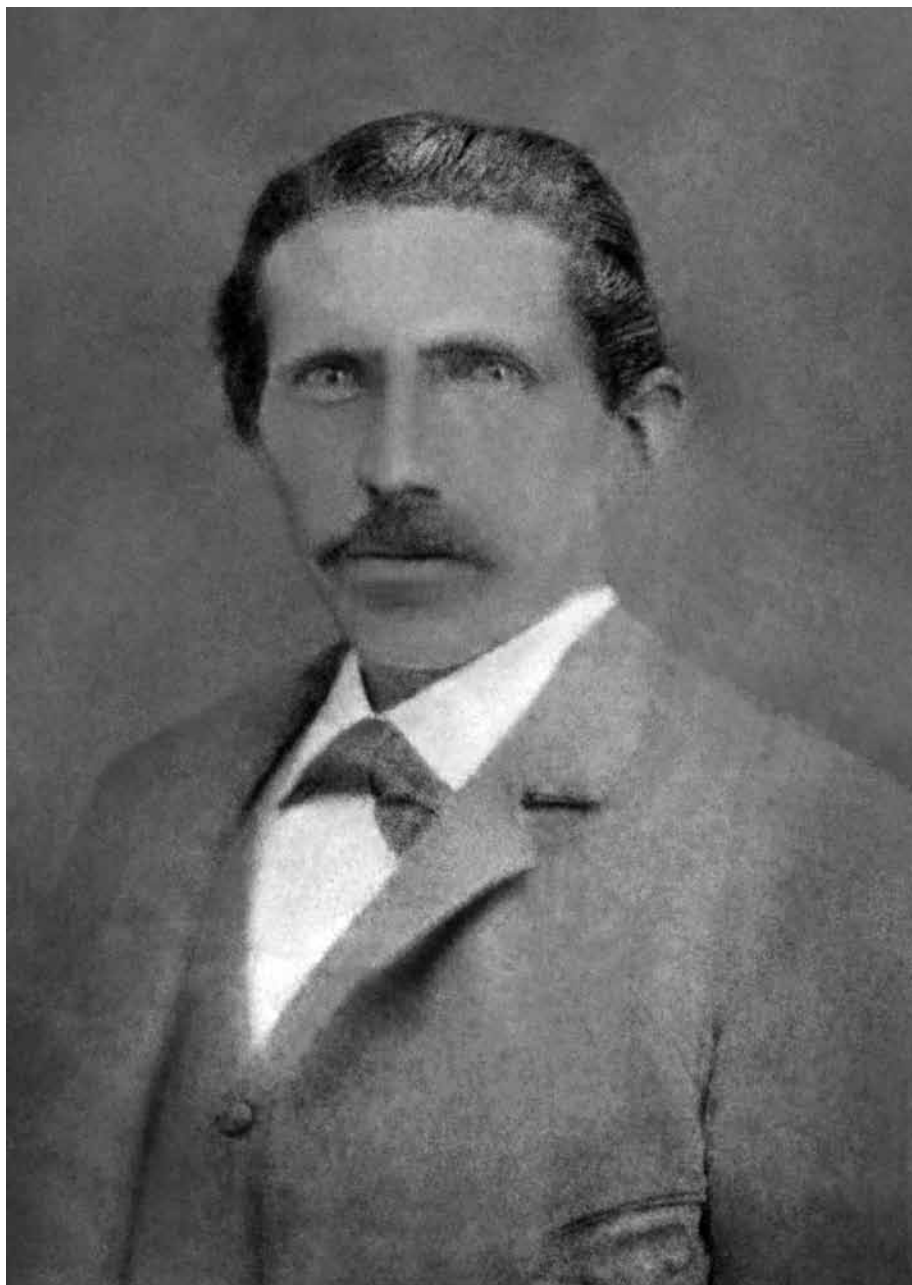


Figure 1. Denis Hurley, ca. 1890. (Cork City and County Archives, U170/137)

Sixty-five years later, the almost 90-year-old Hurley was still writing back to his homeland, now to his niece. He writes to her in 1938, "I am glad that you are preparing to build a new house. I took an active part in quarrying rock in the hill side in front of the house.... How many of the family stepped down and out and where did they go...? I hope your house builders are not so unreasonable and high priced as they are here."¹

So, who was this native of Ireland, so obviously amazed by the sights and diversity and heat of the nineteenth-century American West on arrival, yet 65 years after he left the country of his birth claiming a connection to the very rocks of the Emerald Isle? Denis Hurley was an Irish immigrant, railroad worker, husband, brother, son, politician, and Irish American; a man who immersed himself in his adopted homeland and became a proud citizen of the United States, but whose heart also remained firmly fixed in County Cork. We know much about that heart because Hurley wrote 124 letters home between 1873 and 1938; these letters show how successfully he navigated the complexities of living in both worlds.

The written records left by Irish immigrants like Denis Hurley help us to understand, to at least a small degree, the complex mental and emotional transitions that accompanied the physical transition from Europe to the United States.² But the letters are more than that. These letters served as a verbal lifeline between the Old World and the New—what can best be described as a verbal bridge. Their words undoubtedly helped the emigrants cope with the potential confusion and pain that followed the decision to leave their European homelands. Their correspondence was also a way of maintaining an Old-World connection—making sure that their friends and family knew that the immigrant heart would never leave Europe entirely.³

Denis Hurley was born in County Cork in 1848, in the midst of the great famine, to middling farming parents, Timothy and Mary. He grew up with three brothers—John, Michael, and Timothy, and a sister, Kate. We know Hurley was a trainee teacher prior to emigration and his education is quite obvious from his strong writing abilities over the course of his life, but we know little of his life growing up in Tawnies, near Clonakilty, other than some clues in his letters. [Fig. 1]

IRISH BACKGROUND

Located about twenty-five miles southwest of Cork City, the four-hundred-year-old Clonakilty is a seaside town surrounded by small townlands, such as the birthplace of Denis Hurley, Tawnies Upper, just to its north. The rolling countryside and the townlands are, and were, known for dairy production. The famine affected Clonakilty / Tawnies significantly, but not nearly as dramatically as other areas of Ireland. Clonakilty's population figures ranged from just under 52,000 in 1841 to a low of about 28,000 in 1861. That is not to say that greater Clonakilty was not witness to scenes of distress and misery: County Cork was one of five Irish counties that had an average excess mortality of more than one-



Figure 2. The Hurley home in Tawnies Upper, 1925 or 1926. (Courtesy of the Deasy family, Clonakilty, Ireland)

eighth of the total population between 1846 and 1850. The family would have told young Hurley frightening tales of death, food riots, evictions, and emigration.⁴

So, what would the rhythms of life have been for Hurley in his formative years? Timothy Hurley, Denis's father, controlled several plots of land in the Clonakilty area, including a twenty-acre farm in Tawnies Upper.⁵ [Fig. 2] Hurley and his siblings grew up in a reasonably sized home—a home that still exists, though in considerable disrepair. [Fig. 3] Donnelly argues that middling dairy farmers in County Cork, like Denis's father, saw their production increase or remain about the same between 1847 and 1851, so, compared to the majority of Ireland's inhabitants who worked on lands of less than five acres in the mid-nineteenth century, Hurley would have known relative comfort, even in the years after the famine.⁶

Denis Hurley's home was about two kilometers from the center of Clonakilty—perhaps a 25-minute walk. He would have had easy access to the sights and sounds of both farm life and small-town life. The effects of the famine would have resulted in a shortage of laborers by the 1850s, so Hurley and his siblings would undoubtedly have been working on their father's dairy farm from an early age.



Figure 3:. Tawnies home, 2010. Photograph by the author.

What would Denis Hurley's chores have entailed? Because of the heavy rains in Munster—more than 40 inches annually—pasturelands were lush and were extremely conducive to dairy production.⁷ Butter thus became the dominant agricultural product for Munster by the nineteenth century. Hurley and his siblings would have had a number of everyday jobs related to dairy cows. Hurley reminisces in an 1897 letter that he had to take care of the old rogue cows "that would not stay out without a man and a stick to hold them back."⁸ The average dairy herd would have ranged from twenty to forty, so the Hurley family would have been kept quite busy milking that number of cows on a daily basis. Most dairy farmers also grew corn, potatoes, and kept ten or more pigs. Despite this obvious agricultural variety, dairy farmers in general and butter producers in particular were not exactly noteworthy capitalists in the mid-nineteenth century. Theirs, rather, was a life of persistent struggle.⁹ An annual dairy contract typically required the smaller farmer to feed the cattle through the winter months, meaning that part of the farm had to be dedicated

to hay. The Hurley sons would have participated in fencing off meadow land in the spring and harvesting the hay in the summer. Hurley writes to his brother, John, in 1924 that August 15 was “the day that we used to have the early part of our harvest—in the days when we were young.”¹⁰ And the production of the butter itself was an ongoing arduous affair, leaving Hurley minimal time for goofing off.¹¹

THE YOUNG TEACHER

Perhaps such struggles made the life of a farmer seem increasingly unattractive to Denis Hurley and inclined him toward a more educated profession. Unlike the U.S. at the time, there was no mandatory education, but his father allowed or encouraged the young Hurley to walk the short distance to town and take the classes. Hurley attended school in Clonakilty and it was there where he discovered a lifelong love for learning and its transformative power.

A public school system dated from the early eighteenth century, but was designed to improve the state of the “popish natives” who had “very little sense or knowledge,” so opportunities for the Catholic population, like the Hurleys, remained less than stellar. It was not until the early nineteenth century that the education commissioners centered in Dublin began to make significant reforms and not until an official report in 1825 that “the schools came in for a thorough official roasting.”¹²

A state-funded national system of education, intended to be non-sectarian, began in 1831. Donald Akenson postulates that this relatively early advent of an Irish national school system was due, in part, to the Irish peasantry wanting their children to be educated and thus willing to support “any reasonable educational arrangement.” He explains:

In its attempts to conquer the Irish Catholics, the English realized that they had to reduce them to a cultural level as low as that of a preliterate society. To effect such a brutalization the extinction of catholic educational institutions was a requirement. Significantly, the Roman Catholic peasant clung to education for the same reason that the Protestants attempted to suppress it: without schooling the Catholics would be ground into economic helplessness, permanent social inferiority, and religious ignorance.

The impact of the national system was dramatic—the number of schools in the nation exploded from under 800 in 1833 to over 4,300 by 1849, and in that same period the number of children in those schools rose from just over 100,000 to just under 500,000. In County Cork, the percentage of children between five and fourteen who attended school went from just under 30% in 1841, to over 50% in 1871. Despite this increase, such an educational opportunity would have been remarkable and somewhat unusual for many of Hurley’s young

contemporaries, considering that the illiteracy rate in the county hovered around 45-60% in his school-going years. Hurley is listed as an “underteacher”—essentially an assistant teacher—at the Male National School in Clonakilty between 1868 and 1873. This school, located on Chapel Street, was established in 1828 and had about four hundred male students at the time Hurley would have been teaching. It is highly likely he attended this same school where Timothy Hurley was the master. Hurley was probably a very bright pupil, and, at the end of his primary schooling, the school patron would have nominated him to become a paid monitor, or pupil teacher. In that capacity, he would have worked under the tutelage of the local headmaster, the principal, done some practice teaching, and studied for the very demanding Monitorial Exams. The examination Hurley took to become a certified teacher required him to show proficiency in the art of teaching, of composition and English literature, of natural history, of mathematics, and of mental philosophy, including the elements of logic and rhetoric. Passing this exam qualified him to become an assistant national teacher by the age of twenty. Hurley would have done the brunt of the actual teaching work from that point forward.¹³

What would his teaching experience have looked like in the national school in Clonakilty? Akenson notes that:

In a typical national school, row upon row of children sat at long communal desks facing the teacher. Eighteen inches per pupil was commonly allowed; thus a desk of ten and a half feet in length normally accommodated seven pupils. A row desk of this sort and the seat were estimated to take up only slightly more than two feet in width.... Rote teaching was not widely practiced in the national schools. Teachers, after a talk or a reading lesson, usually questioned the children on the contents and attempted to elicit some indication of understanding on the child's part. Questions by children were encouraged and teachers were expected to be prepared to deal with questions arising from any of their lessons.¹⁴

Though most children only attended national schools for about two or three years, the children did have the opportunity to reach an intermediate level of education or beyond. Clearly that was the case with young Hurley. Hurley learned and taught in a system that served him well, and many other Irish youth, for the remainder of his years.

We are ultimately left with questions about Hurley's decision to leave the field of teaching and head to the wilds of the U.S. Was it because of salary issues? Did he doubt his ability to recruit an average attendance of 35 pupils per year, as the state required? Did his education inspire him to move beyond the bounds of rural County Cork? Did he tire of the bureaucracy and political infighting? The exact answers are not available to us, but considering that the payment by results system began in 1872 and a year later he was headed for America, it seems probable that this system did not appeal to him.¹⁵

What other factors might have influenced Denis Hurley, living in seeming middle-class comfort, to make the decision to leave his native land? Perhaps mere observation of the many people around him departing for the U.S. played a role. Young Mr. Hurley would have seen a steady stream of emigrants leaving County Cork in the decade prior to his own departure, most of them about his own age.¹⁶ He also had the precedent of his older brother, Michael, who had left the homeland for America by 1870. Michael made his way to the American West and began working for a railroad. In 1871, Hurley would have read a letter from his brother in which Michael noted having attended mass around St. Patrick's Day and the French priest who lauded Patrick "for the love he bore to that country who gave so many saints to god and so many prophets to the world irishmen are scattered all over the world Caring the word of god with them wherever they goe." Michael had already been able to make enough money to send a donation to the church being built in Clonakilty. In the last portion of the letter, Michael records that "there are some irish men living hear what there are more chinamen I can speak some china language now and some of every european language Except the russian and turkish language Them are the only countries who dont send Emigrants hear."¹⁷ Might we suppose that Michael's words, though written with poor spelling and a style that might have perturbed the better-educated younger brother, would nevertheless have inspired the younger Hurley to think about possibilities abroad? He, most likely, would have read the letter to his parents in front of the fireplace with his other siblings gathered around. Such a letter might have been the final spark that encouraged Hurley to set his sights on the American West.

THE VOYAGE TO AMERICA

Although it is difficult to know precisely why he decided to emigrate to America, we know that his destination was never really in doubt. His goal was to follow his brother Michael to Nevada. In early April, 1873, Hurley made his way to Queenstown—present day Cobh—about 75 miles from Clonakilty as the crow flies. In that bustling emigration center, he most likely caught the steamship, *Siberia*, paid just under £7 for steerage accommodations, which he would have shared with up to eight hundred third-class passengers, and enjoyed or endured the sea voyage for about ten days.¹⁸ He reports in an early letter to his family that he was not "able to bid adieu to the receding shores of dear Erin, being below by the bunks with a heavy heart and an upset stomach puking."¹⁹

He arrived in Boston on April 15 and then left by train for New York, transferring to a steamer at 11 p.m. that night, arriving in the future Big Apple at 7 a.m. on a Friday morning, April 18. He visited Irish relatives and friends in New York City for three days, took a ferry to Jersey, and from there, while waiting for a train to the American West, he wrote his first surviving letter. Hurley informed his parents:

We were to get off on the 19th inst but deferred it until this Monday evening at 5 o'clock when we are to get by ferry over to Jersey and then train it away to the west.... I was up at the grand central Park of New York on yesterday and saw there in the zoological gardens animals and birds from all parts of the globe.... The meat of New York and Boston is very palatable, my mother need not fear that I am not able to eat it.... There is no great demand for labour here now in this city; workmen when employed get 2 dollars a day. Servant girls get from 12 to 15 dollars a month the most of which is taken up by clothes.

The zoo, the visits to Irish friends and relatives, a curiosity about American practices, and his assurance to his mother—in this first letter, we get a sense of the Hurley sense of adventure, his wide range of interests in business and politics, his unassailable ties to Ireland, and his wit.

THE JOURNEY WEST BY TRAIN

It is difficult to know for certain his itinerary to Carson City, the only clues being his departure from New Jersey and newspaper reports at the time of his death that mentioned coming from Missouri. The emigrant railroad journey was reasonably well established by 1873, having been spelled out in the guidebooks of the day, so he might have arrived in late April, after a journey of seven days. Considering the number of connections, the regular and inevitable delays for train travel in that period, and the sheer exhaustion Hurley must have felt, it is more likely he arrived sometime in May.²⁰

Because cross-country train travel was still in its infancy, there were many uncertainties about a long trip across the nation, especially if he took one of the dedicated emigrant trains. Bruce Cooper writes:

Although a vast improvement over earlier methods, most transcontinental rail travel in the 1870s and 1880s was nonetheless often still fraught with unexpected challenges, delays, and hardships, especially for those who made the journey to seek their fortunes as they ventured beyond the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers on the early “emigrant” trains of the Union and Central Pacific.

If or when Hurley rode one of the emigrant trains, in cars that were hauled in freight trains, he would have averaged twenty miles an hour and would have spent considerable time waiting on remote sidings while higher priority trains passed. Even in second or third class, the seating accommodations would not have been exactly comfy. Stevenson describes the seating and potential sleeping arrangements on one of the emigrant trains:

I suppose the reader has some notion of an American railroad-car, that long, narrow wooden box, like a flat-roofed Noah's ark, with a stove and a convenience, one at either end, a passage down the middle, and transverse benches upon either hand. Those destined for emigrants on the Union Pacific are only remarkable for their extreme plainness, nothing but wood entering in any part into their constitution, and for the usual inefficacy of the lamps, which often went out and shed but a dying glimmer even while they burned. The benches are too short for anything but a young child.²¹

Travel costs alone would have set Hurley back at least \$100, probably more. Emigrants would grab meals at waysides, and at each of the three meal stops, Stevenson states, the allotted time for eating was less than twenty minutes.²²

THE EARLY HISTORY OF CARSON CITY

The Carson where Hurley arrived was still a relatively young town, having been founded about fifteen years prior and having been named the permanent capital only with statehood in 1864. The capital building, in fact, was still under construction. Much had happened in those fifteen years, however, to make the little community incredibly vibrant and important.

It was in the early 1850s that gold-mining men from California in search of riches, and Mormon settlers, intent on providing supplies for wagon trains, made their way east and founded a small agricultural and trading settlement called Mormon Station, today's Genoa, in what was then the territory of Utah. After increasing religious hostility led the Mormons to vacate the "Eagle Valley" settlement in 1857, Major William Ormsby and Judge James Crane lobbied the federal government to create a separate territory, a feat finally accomplished in 1861. In the meantime, some major businessmen from California, including Abraham "Abe" Curry, Benjamin F. Green, John J. Musser, and Francis "Frank" M. Proctor, began buying property and establishing businesses. By early 1860, when the Comstock Lode of Virginia City became a magnet for fortune seekers, newly named Carson City had a population of 1,200 - 1,400, but its citizenry grew by leaps and bounds as it assumed a pivotal role in the silver trade.²³

The mining boom and the rise of political activity meant that the little community had a great deal of adapting to do in a very short time. Wagon trains from the East, timber wagons from the nearby forests—crucial for supplying the Comstock mining needs—and miners from the hills near Virginia City all congregated in this small town and helped Carson to become a confluence of important interests. Construction on the Virginia & Truckee Railroad maintenance facilities—the enginehouse and shops—began in 1872 and opened in 1873. This was the settlement Hurley observed when he disembarked from his train in the spring of 1873.

Carson City attracted wealthy residents who had made recent fortunes in the Comstock or who were interested in serving the needs of the many new constituents of this new and bustling municipality. In 1875, after the failure of the Bank of California and the attendant funding of many of Nevada's mining and growth interests, a particular group of these "new constituents," took advantage of the economic vacuum to consolidate their power in the region. John W. Mackay, James G. Fair, James C. Flood, and William S. O'Brien, nicknamed "The Bonanza Kings," used their mining profits to begin purchasing various companies and utilities²⁴ Hurley mentions these four in an 1877 letter in which he states, "This mine and her neighbor the Con Virginia both controlled by those Irishmen who were themselves miners and saloon keepers, ...These 4 men are now about the richest firm in America. They control other mines adjacent to those rich ones, in which your humble friend is keeping an eye."²⁵ In general, this period saw the development of fine new Victorian homes, opera houses, schools, banks, saloons, and a host of other businesses. The Carson City of Hurley's early years was becoming, in Richard Moreno's words, "a proper community."²⁶

The major contours of his life in this early period revolved around work and religion, but his letters and other information reveal a man who approached life in the Wild West with a sense of wonder and amazement and who was taken with his life in Nevada.—and perhaps wondering if this had been the right decision. He extols in his third letter home, "I thought I would not hear from home at all. When I got the 1st papers and saw the address thoughts of home burst upon me and 'my spirit filled up, and my longing eye filled.'"²⁷ And in that same letter he shares openly the pain it would cause him if he knew his parents were uneasy about his being in the new world. Denis Hurley was also a son, thankful for his parents and longing to please them, but knowing that he might never see them again. That is why the letters, from the very first, were so important to both senders and receivers—they provided the essential, ongoing connection, and, in that connection, they provided a sustaining hope. Like so many Irish immigrant letters of the era, Hurley's communication with his family and friends contained a strong balance of information about his life and this new adventure he was living, but also a phenomenal number of questions and comments about the land of his birth and those he had left behind.

DENIS HURLEY'S FAMILY

Denis Hurley was also a brother. He had followed his big brother, Michael, to Nevada. Michael worked primarily for various railroads, but unlike his younger brother, he moved throughout the American West in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By the early twentieth century, he was boarding with a family in San Francisco and stayed in that situation until his death in 1926. Denis Hurley visited his brother fairly often over the years.²⁸

Hurley was also a sibling of those who remained in County Cork. John, his eldest brother, inherited the family farm at Tawnies sometime after their father died, probably between 1879 and 1886. In 1889, he married Mary Ann O'Sullivan of Rosscarbery, and over the years they had eight children, two of whom, Mary and Catherine, became frequent correspondents with Hurley by the 1920s. His younger brother, Tim, also continued life as a farmer, eventually moving to a farm in Kilkerranmore, a short distance southwest of Clonakilty. Tim married Kate Scannell in 1895, and they had seven children between 1896 and 1908. [Fig. 4] It was with his sister, Kate, that he had the most complicated relationship. One senses, based on Hurley's use of sarcasm, and her short- and long-term splits with her family members, that Kate was somewhat outspoken and bold in her opinions. Kate married John Deasy about 1880 and they had eight children between 1881 and 1896. There was a mysterious rift that occurred between Hurley and his sister that never mended, something that grieved him to the end of his life.²⁹

THE COMSTOCK LODGE

Although his correspondence with his Irish family kept him grounded in the old world, Hurley had traveled to the new world, and a very different part of the new world at that—the West. For better or worse, the development of the American West is largely tied to the discovery of precious metals, especially gold and silver. The discovery of gold and silver in the hills northeast of present-day Carson City, named the Comstock Lode after one of the early successful miners, Henry T. "Pancake" Comstock, was no exception to the rule of communities transformed almost instantly. By mid-1859, prospectors at Gold Hill, south of Virginia City, found some phenomenal ore deposits and very soon the normal cast of characters—miners and those hoping to "support" the miners—came in droves. Hurley arrived during the peak years of the Comstock production and profit. In 1869, the combined gold and silver yield was \$7.4 million and, in 1877, the gold yield was \$14.5 million and silver \$21.8 million. Thereafter the yield began to decrease and, by the late 1880s, was a fraction of the glory years.³⁰ By the late nineteenth century, Hurley commented regularly on the difficulties for miners. In 1894, for example, he writes, "Very bad times in United States, everything low and a great scarcity of money and work. Nevada and other silver-producing states, who owing to the low price of silver which... is now selling at... less than half the par value."³¹

Mining strikes, of course, never pay equal dividends to all those attempting to make their fortune, but because of the geologic realities, the Nevada Comstock payout provided far less equity than that of California fame a decade earlier. In eastern Nevada, the riches were in a single fissure that ran eastward, and the great majority of the quality ore was extremely deep. Thus, the amount of luck and specialized mining equipment needed to find the gold and silver ruled out

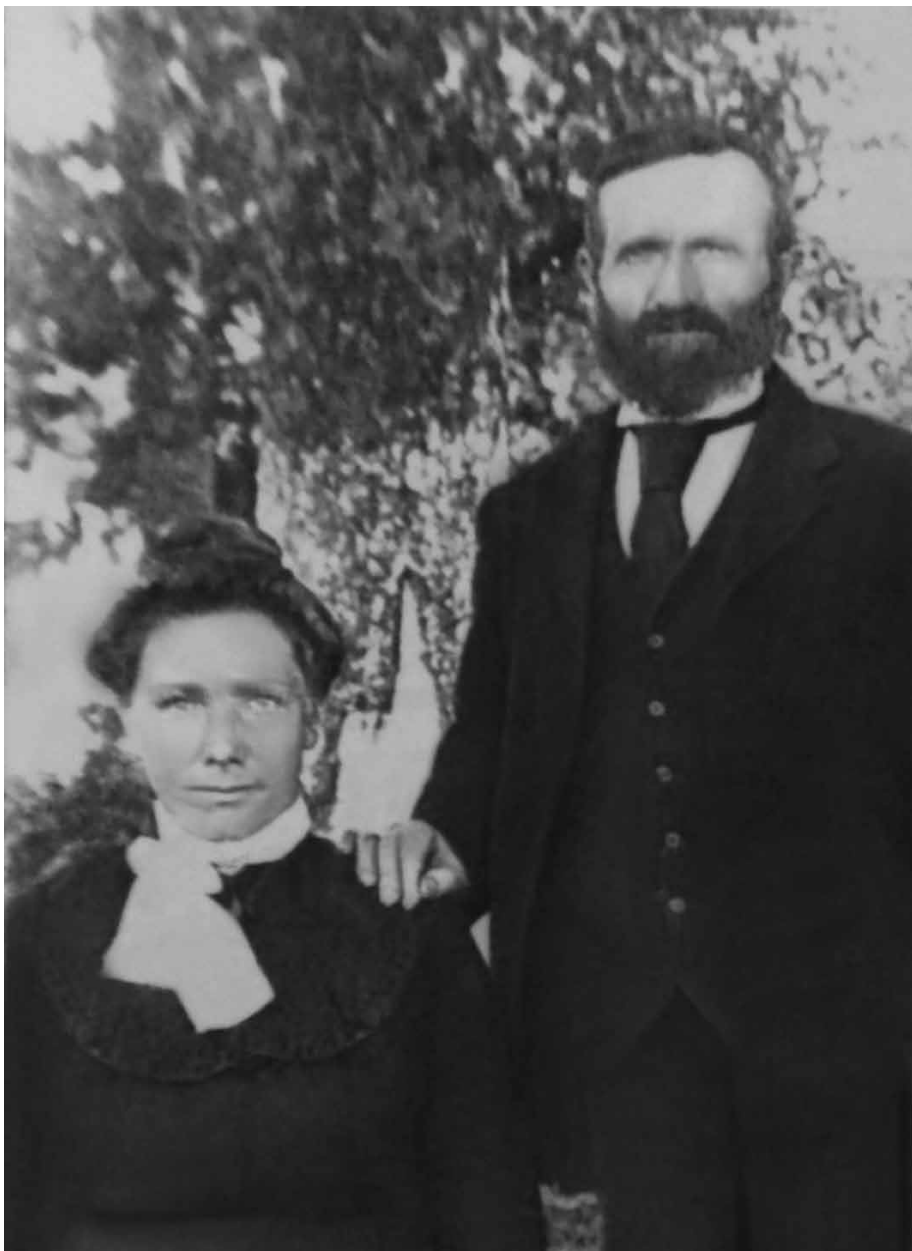


Figure 4. Timothy and Kate Hurley. Date unknown. (*Courtesy of the Deasy family, Clonakilty, Ireland*)

success for most of the “ordinary” miners on the mountain. Corporate mining was the eventual model in California, but it was the necessary and dominant model in Nevada. And corporate mining meant political and legal clashes dictated the terms of Eastern Nevada’s subsequent history—to the benefit of the state’s politicians and lawyers. The development of the few who controlled so much, especially the bonanza kings, also meant that much of the power from the Comstock wealth became centered in places other than Nevada.³²

The Hurley brothers had a fairly strong connection to the Comstock and its wealth, because both brothers invested in a variety of stocks, especially mining stocks. In 1876, for example, Hurley writes “We have more confidence in the stocks we hold now, than those we held at any time since we became connected with them. The market has been improving for some time back with every indication of much further advances in the next few months.”³³ In that letter Hurley relates that they had bought stock in the Belcher mine, one of the most prominent in the Comstock.³⁴ Speculation in mines was a fever, and Denis and Michael Hurley obviously caught that fever. But speculation was a high-risk game—the Belcher paid dividends until 1876, so their risk did not pay off.

One of the most fascinating letters of the Hurley collection came the following year, in 1877. Hurley wrote to his father and asked for a loan of £100 so that he and Michael could invest in mines that were going at a tenth of their value. His urgency comes through clearly in the following passage, as does his use of guilt, bribery, manipulation, and a host of other methods well known by sons trying to get something from their fathers:

Father don’t hesitate, if you knew how things work, you would not. We have several thousand dollars at stake, and with your loan we are almost morally certain that next Fall would render us independent of work and Christmas find us home together with a handsome fortune. If you wish to hasten that consummation, don’t deny our request. You may be sure that it is no trifling affair that has induced us to take this step, and we trust we won’t be disappointed. We know with how much pains a little money is put together to home, and we would never think of asking it for any risky and or doubtful venture. If we are as successful as we expect we will return your money doubled at least two-fold. Father we don’t ask this in [pity?], or for charity, as even if you refuse it, for we cannot believe you will, we will still have means thank God, but your refusing will cause us a loss of at least £1000. If you intend to send, lose not a day, no excuse is worth a cent. We are neither drinking nor howdying nor squandering.... We have been more fortunate than others in work have carried our bark through a terrible storm to within sight of land weak and exhausted from buffeting with the breakers and the friendly hand we asked to assist us ashore we hope will not be withheld. If our own family should return as a deaf ear; then farewell all beside.



Figure 5. V. & T. Shops, Carson City, June 1882. (*Library of Congress, HABS NEV, 13-CARCI, 6-1*)

Though father succumbed and provided the loan, the bonanza never came and the brothers never repaid the loan, and other than a brief mention from Michael in 1877, they did not talk of it.³⁵

WORKING FOR THE VIRGINIA & TRUCKEE RAILROAD

Arguably the most important early institution in Carson City was the Virginia & Truckee Railroad. The rail line between Carson and Virginia City had been completed only in early 1870 and in 1872, less than a year from the time that Hurley used the railroad to reach his destination, the line connected to the Central Pacific at Reno. The V & T officials decided to house their offices in Carson City, and Abe Curry contracted with them to construct maintenance facilities for the V & T in the new capital as well, commencing that project in late 1872.³⁶ One of the buildings in this complex, a large rectangular building known as the enginehouse and shops, would play a large role in Hurley's life, as he would work in this facility for most of his years until the early twentieth century. [Fig 5]

It is hard to underestimate the transforming power of this railroad to turn the potential of massive riches for the area, for investors, for mine owners, and for the nation, into actual riches. Without the V & T, that potential would have gone untapped. It not only carried the gold and silver, it carried the owners and workers who formed the human machinery of the Comstock. Experts point out that one of the factors that made the V & T so effective was its reliability, making it a sought-after model for other railroads. By 1873, the V & T was making about thirty runs per day between Carson and Virginia City. Such extensive usage required ongoing routine maintenance on the tracks—lightweight rails on curves often only lasted nine months.³⁷

Hurley, following his brother's lead, went to work for the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, and remained in their employ until December of 1906. What precisely he did in the earliest years is not known. In his first letter, he wrote that he was "assisting to keep a railway track in order." According to Wendell Huffman, Curator of History at the Nevada State Railroad Museum in Carson City, this most likely refers to the repairing of tracks that was part of a regular railroad maintenance program. Hurley would have been a member of a crew of about four to six people whose responsibility was to make sure the gauge and height of tracks was proper. The tracks, because of railroad traffic and geographic changes, would become uneven and out of alignment. The repair crew would work together and while some men lifted the rails with crowbars others would shovel gravel under the tracks to get them closer to uniformity.³⁸ Considering the steepness of the grade and the extreme weather conditions that would have been typical on the line between Carson City and Virginia City, this would have been difficult work indeed.

In succeeding years, Hurley mentioned from time to time that his work was not overly strenuous. That was because by the mid-1870s he was working as a laborer in the enginehouse and roundhouse, specifically serving as the night watchman for those facilities, first in Carson, in Reno during the 1880s, then back in Carson from the early 1890s until his retirement.³⁹

What would the job of night watchman have entailed? The image that may come to mind is of a hunched-over elderly man in a railroad cap, holding aloft a lantern and shouting "who's there?" as he hears a noise during his rounds. Certainly, Hurley would have been responsible for keeping the equipment in the enginehouse secure, but his job would have been much more extensive than playing solitaire and occasionally making a stroll around the facilities.

First, the sheer size of the Carson City shops must be emphasized—the enginehouse and shops was one of about forty structures, all of which were dedicated to keeping the railroad running, especially the twenty-four steam locomotives. There were also four hundred passenger, freight, and service cars. The Carson enginehouse itself was a 60 by 180 foot garage that could house up to eleven locomotives. A fifty-four-foot diameter turntable dominated the enginehouse. The engines would enter through large wooden doors into individual stalls, with maintenance pits underneath, where the men would perform minor repairs and routine engine servicing, primarily with hand tools.⁴⁰

The Virginia and Truckee payroll and labor repair records provide additional clues as to Hurley's regular activities in the shops. The first record we have for Hurley is from December of 1875. The occupation column lists him as a "wiper," and that label is used again in December of 1886, when he was working in the Reno shops. Hurley provides his own occupation as "engine oiler" in the 1900 census. According to the foremost authority on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, former long-time Chief Curator of the California State Railroad Museum, Stephen Drew, the terms wiper and oiler referred to the same activity. The engines would come into the roundhouse having been out in the elements for many hours and having collected all types of "souvenirs" during their journeys up and down the mountain—dust, dirt, ash, soot, splashes of oil, and a variety of other materials. When the engine came into the roundhouse, a crack team would get to work sprucing it up and making sure it was presentable to the world by the next morning. Hurley, as the wiper, would have used an oiled rag to wipe down the painted and polished metal surfaces of the locomotive, making sure it was clean and bright. Considering the size of the engines, that would have been a considerable amount of work involving climbing and a great amount of reaching and stretching.⁴¹

An additional term, "packer," is used to describe his roundhouse duties in the various company records. A packer, according to Wendell W. Huffman and Chris DeWitt, Restoration Supervisor of the Nevada Railroad Museum shop, refers to the person responsible for helping to keep the train axles lubricated. Hurley would have opened the journal box cover, taken a wool-fiber yarn that had been soaked in oil, and packed it into the journal box, aligning and fluffing the material as needed around the axle. Packing was part of the regular maintenance that ensured the smooth operation of the train axles.⁴²

Our picture of the roundhouse watchman is thus transformed through these descriptions. Certainly Hurley was responsible for keeping an eye on the activities occurring in the shops. He might indeed have done a great deal of walking, and that proverbial lantern might have been part of the process. But he also worked hard in his role as a night watchman/oiler/packer in his thirty-three years with the V & T. Drew points out that the Reno facility was a 2-stall engine house that serviced the "crack" trains—the fastest and best locomotives like *Reno*. They coordinated their schedule with the Central Pacific and then the Southern Pacific, and for Hurley to have been part of that crew for over a decade says a great deal about his position with the company.⁴³

Hurley maintained a remarkable attitude of thankfulness toward his job; he never seemed to lose a sense of privilege that he was able to work, even when the rail company resorted to pay decreases, layoffs, and reduced hours. He writes in 1893, as Nevada was beginning to feel the ravages of the Panic of 1893, "My pay is still \$3.50: 3 ½ dollars. Fortunate so far; there is but a handful of men employed around here now, and the pay is generally [reduced?] here now." Five years later he reports "I am still steadily employed and am making

some hay while the sun shines,” and he adds in 1904, “I have worked every night this year yet save one. It seems we have to toil wherever we are. But there is pleasure in toil if we have health and a contented and benevolent mind.” Hurley believed strongly in honest, hard work, and sometimes lamented that others, including his Irish countrymen, did not share his view. “Here or in Ireland it takes thrift, industry, and good judgement to get along,” he asserts in 1928.⁴⁴

How did Hurley put his hard-earned wages to use, and what did he do in the hours when he was not working the night shift for the railroad? We know very little about his life in Reno during the 1880s because no letters survive from the decade he was there. There is a reasonable amount of information that can be mined from other sources, however. In 1882 and 1888, he is listed as a potential Reno precinct juror and, in 1884, the *Reno Evening Gazette* notes he won a side-saddle at the Catholic fair at the Nevada Theater, & immediately presented it to Father Walsh. Newspapers and vital records also reveal that he married Margaret Burke in Reno in January of 1887. The *Nevada State Journal* reported that Father Maloney presided over the marriage and it was “spoken of as being one of the grandest of the season, and the presents superb.” His new bride was born in County Roscommon and had come to Nevada in 1884, when she was eighteen. Hurley participated actively and served as an officer in the Young Men’s Institute, a Catholic fraternal organization, founded in 1883, in San Francisco. The paper reported that he was one of the “well known and reliable citizens of Reno.”⁴⁵

In the summer of 1889, Hurley returned to Carson City. He and Margaret bought a home for \$750 just off North Carson Street between Washington and Caroline, behind what was then the Carson Exchange Hotel, and where the Nevada State Museum stands today. The assessed value of the home was \$500 in 1890 and grew to \$850 by 1910.⁴⁶ Part of the reason for the increase in property values was that Mr. and Mrs. Hurley continued to upgrade, including the purchase of additional surrounding lots. One senses the comparative pride he felt in 1903, sharing with his brother John that they had purchased additional land, and calling the new lot his “farm.” He writes, “I have got a new farm - a lot adjoining my own which cost me about \$100. We have planted some beds of vegetables, onions, pease beans, lettuce potatoes, etc. besides a grass lawn & We are also getting the electric light into the house and some other improvements. This is a great place for comfort and convenience if you have the means of procuring them.” Their personal property also added to the total value of their house. Hurley compares his furnishings with those in Ireland in 1892, stating, “Furniture must last longer in Ireland than here. It is more substantial and plain there. I have several table extension, drawers, etc., carpeted floors, rugs, book-case, and revolving writing desk combined.” In 1892, the assessor notes a value of \$350 for improvements. Denis Hurley clearly valued owning his own home and the responsibilities that came with that ownership, although he did sometimes note the expenses of being a homeowner. He elaborates in

1900, "I do not think you have the facilities in many of any houses in Clonakilty that we have here. We have bathtub washbowl sink for dish washing a patent closet for private purposes - instead of the shelter of the ditches, as we had to at home. Fresh water turned on in facits and the impure to run off into other pipes. Besides we have hoses to sprinke flowers, shrubs, and grass. Very convenient but quite expensive."⁴⁷

It seems clear that by the late nineteenth century, Denis Hurley, the once unknown Irish immigrant from County Cork and his wife, had become "prominent" citizens, known and respected by many, in both Reno and Carson City. This is obvious by their position in the church, by Hurley's leadership in local fraternal organizations, and as one of the directors of the Nye and Ormsby County Bank, and by the ways in which the newspapers reported on their social connections.⁴⁸

Margaret died of typhoid in August of 1910. She had been sick many times over the years, especially since the early twentieth century, but it still came as a shock to Hurley. He fairly quickly relocated to a boarding house, though he held on to the property and rented it to the end of his life.⁴⁹

A MAN OF MANY INTERESTS

Denis Hurley, as has been shown thus far, navigated his dual Irish and American identities with considerable skill. One of the ways in which he made sense of both his native and birth lands, was the inclusion of a wide variety of topics in his letters. He had a particular interest in the practice and well-being of farming and farmers, not surprising considering his agricultural roots. Hurley typically made comparative comments—relating the farming conditions in the U.S. to those in Ireland. Ownership and hard work were qualities that he valued and seem to be qualities that he developed during his formative years in Ireland, living and working on a farm.⁵⁰

Despite his cheerful disposition toward laboring, he certainly would not have minded making it big in the new world. He admits to his mother in his correspondence from 1898, "We are in good health, thank God, and I am still employed. It is hard to get employment in this part of the world lately, and many are as hard up as in the old country.... I had hopes one time to have an independent fortune and to dazzle the natives. But thank God that we are so well."⁵¹

RELIGION IN NEVADA

A significant source of the optimism and confidence that permeated Denis Hurley's views of his economic state most likely stemmed from the state of his soul. Hurley was a devout Catholic and his religious faith seems to have buoyed him in the midst of a number of storms he encountered in his long life, as well

as providing him with an upbeat everyday demeanor. His very first letter home reports "We have got a nice Catholic church, attended by a very eloquent Irish Priest, in this town. All persons are provided with good comfortable seats. The appearance of the congregation is very respectable, on account of the rich clothes which all the members, especially, the female portion wears." Hurley attended mass faithfully throughout his life, despite hindrances like health issues and work schedules. In 1891, he writes, "I have been able to attend 5 o'clock mass every morning after getting through work."⁵² He also reveals his commitment to the church in comments home about the organization of the diocese and the activities of his parish, both in Carson City and Reno.⁵³ Hurley was so faithful in his attendance that when illness forced him to miss services in 1937, the old timers took marked notice of his absence. Beyond faithful attendance, Hurley connected with his faith through active membership and participation in groups like the Knights of Columbus and the Young Men's Institute.⁵⁴

As was the case for the rapid development of the Catholic Church in California—the church responding to the rush of men and women to the area with the establishment of missionary congregations—so, too, did that scene play out in Nevada. The bishop of the San Francisco Diocese, Joseph Sadoc Alemany, sent Father Joseph Gallagher into Nevada in 1858, just as news of the riches in the Comstock started to make its way into the public arena. The Carson City church in which Denis Hurley worshiped, St. Theresa of Avila, was only three years old when he arrived in 1873. [Fig. 6] The Carson congregation did not see much leadership stability in its early years, with as many as ten priests serving there between 1865 and 1871. In 1871, Rev. Luke Tormey began his service at St. Teresa's and remained there until 1886. Denis Hurley would have known and served with at least ten different priests in his years at St. Teresa's.⁵⁵

While in Reno in the 1880s, Hurley attended the newly consecrated Saint Mary's Catholic Church, located at the Northwest corner of Lake Street and Sixth Street and led by Rev. James J. Callan. Built under the guidance of Callan a year after the great fire of 1879 that destroyed much of Reno, St. Mary's served the Reno Catholic population until it, too, burned down in 1905.⁵⁶

Over the years, Denis Hurley forged strong relationships and friendships with most of the Catholic clergy in Carson City and Reno, including some of the prominent and pioneer priests. In 1891, he was part of a group who dined with Bishop Manogue when he visited Carson City. He gave instructions to his brother Tim, in 1895, that Father Kiely of Reno would be visiting Ireland and noted "He said he would call to see mother if at all convenient. I hope [you will provide him with hospitality?] He is in every way worthy of it. I have sat at his table many times, and he at mine. Until we moved here, he hardly ever came to Carson that he would not call to see us."⁵⁷

But Denis Hurley was a man who obviously went beyond merely attending his church and visiting with priests and bishops. His reflections reveal an individual who was deeply concerned about spiritual matters—an Irish immigrant



Figure 6. St. Teresa's Catholic Church, Carson City. Photograph taken by the author.

who had been infused with a moral, Christian character in his upbringing and who brought that understanding with him as he observed the rather un-Christian West. He shared his concern that the West was a place of destitution and lawlessness. In one letter, he compared the Irish people of Clonakilty to those in Nevada, stating "My goodness what a contrast there is between the spirit of the people of both places. One confessor is not kept busy here for one week. There is not much faith here, but drinking, gambling, immoralities and dissipation." Hurley infused his letters with pronouncements about religious issues in general, exposing to us a deeply spiritual Irish-American. The seriousness of his faith comes through most often when commenting on others who are sick or who have died. In one letter, he exclaims, "Death is as natural as going to sleep and a few years of time is a small moment compared with eternity. The happy translation is the thing to labor and hope for," and, in another note, he consoles his brother, writing, "I am very sorry for the death of your son. He has escaped the dangers and temptations and burdens of this life. The life to come is the important part."⁵⁸

Denis Hurley's letters also reveal a man with a spirit of Christian humility and fairness. To Hurley, the best way to practice Christian principles was to live in peace and harmony with all who were within his sphere. In 1876, America's centennial year, Hurley states, "We are at the end of Christmas Time and the beginning of a New Year an eventful one in the history of America. May Almighty God be equally propitious to us with his favors In the New as he has been in the old. May He preserve us from family broils bitterness and contention, & enable us to live in unity, peace & harmony to the end of our lives."⁵⁹

As I stated earlier, I think his view of "the West" is at least part of what made him concerned to live peaceably with others, as a reflection of good Christian practice. When he describes "the long-tailed, sombre-looking Chinamen; the black-haired red skinned Indian, ...The swarthy, copper-coloured Mexican," etc., I do not detect superiority and disdain. Instead, I see him as fascinated—intoxicated with the diversity of peoples and places in the American frontier.⁶⁰ And Hurley did have the chance to see a wider view of the West than Carson—he worked and lived in Virginia City and Reno and took multiple journeys to Tahoe and San Francisco to visit his brother. There is virtually no negative tone when describing the people or places he visits; instead, praise and marvel.⁶¹

A BAILIFF IN THE FEDERAL COURT

By 1906, Hurley had come to the end of his time with the railroad—one senses that he was a bit weary with the grind of the everyday V & T routines. About five years after his retirement from the railroad, Hurley took a job as guard at the state prison. Two years after his stint as a prison guard, Hurley commenced work as a bailiff for a federal judge. The early twentieth-century

legal system in Nevada reflected the raw political power and manipulation that the rapid growth and mining wealth had brought to the region. James Hulse summarizes:

The early history of the federal court system in Nevada is the record of the gradual establishment of judicial authority in a region where there was great wealth at stake before the basic instruments of law and government had been established, and where there was little incentive for the citizenry to respect the principles of American law established on the other side of the continent.

In early 1918 Hurley began working for the fifth federal judge in Nevada history, Edward Silsby Farrington.⁶² E. S. Farrington, raised in New England and a resident of Nevada from the early 1880s, commenced his position as U.S. District Judge for the District of Nevada in 1907. Hulse argues that Farrington's appointment served as an end to "the judicial frontier," marked by a "kind of casual, or ex post facto, procedure for establishing a judiciary."⁶³ After Farrington retired in 1928, Hurley stayed on at the request of the new appointee, Frank Herbert Norcross. Also a confirmed Republican, he served on the Nevada Supreme Court from 1905-1917 and then President Coolidge appointed him to succeed Farrington, beginning a stint of seventeen years in May of 1928. Hurley, despite possessing a wide knowledge of politics, would have been thrust into a new world after 1918—a world full of legal jargon. That he remained in his position as a bailiff for twenty years speaks to his abilities to adapt and learn. It also says something about his stamina and mental acuity, well into his ninth decade.⁶⁴

What was a bailiff and what did his duties entail in the early twentieth century? The U.S. Congress authorized the position of crier, a position eventually called bailiff, in 1799, outlining the duties as follows: "The respective courts of the United States shall appoint cryers for their courts, ...to attend upon the grand and other jurors, and for other necessary purposes." Although describing bailiffs' working in state courts, *Revised Laws of Nevada* (1912) provides a more detailed description that would most likely overlap strongly with Hurley's duties as a federal bailiff:

4916. Duty of bailiff.

Sec. 3. It shall be the duty of each bailiff to preserve order in the court, or the division to which he may be appointed; to attend upon the jury; to open and close court, and to perform such other duties as may be required of him by the judge of the court.

Various sources list Denis Hurley as a bailiff, crier, and messenger during his time serving two federal judges, so it is safe to assume that his duties were fairly wide ranging; in essence, he served at the direction and pleasure of judges

Farrington and Norcross. He would have opened the courtroom and ushered in the lawyers, witnesses, and other persons attending court. He would have announced the arrival of the judge, asking that "all rise" and perhaps announcing "Oyez! Oyez! Court is now in session, the honorable Judge E. S. Farrington presiding." He might have transported evidence into the courtroom and delivered it to various parties as requested by the judge. Acting as an intermediary between the jury foreman and the district judge, he would have been responsible to bring the jury into and out of the courtroom and to provide any procedural guidance they would have needed for their deliberations. Finally, he would have been a messenger for the judge, running any errands Farrington or Norcross needed that were pertinent to the cases at hand. For all of this, Denis Hurley received \$850 in 1919 and 1921, according to the *Official Register of the United States* directory.⁶⁵

Browsing the cases at which Hurley was present between 1918 and 1938 reveals the major themes of the United States in those years. In the 1920s, an overwhelming number of cases dealt with prohibition; in the 1930s, bankruptcy. On the eve of prohibition, one of "his" first cases involved the illegal selling of liquor to Indian country. This would be the single most common case Hurley would witness in his first two years as bailiff.⁶⁶ One wonders how Hurley, seemingly amazed by the diversity of the West, felt about cases that seemed to reflect the ethnic and racial hostility characteristic of so many at the time.

By 1918, the United States involvement in the Great War was in full swing, and Hurley witnessed a number of cases of violation of the Selective Services Act—men who failed to respond to their draft call.⁶⁷ Within two years, as 1920 wore on, violations of the Prohibition Act dominated court proceedings. Hurley reports in a 1920 letter, "Our government has a hard time in enforcing the prohibition act. A good many violators of the law are brought before the Federal Court, where I am in attendance and many odd and ingenious (sic) devices for the manufacture of illicit liquor exhibited."⁶⁸ As the 1920s gave way to the 1930s and the Depression, Hurley observed a phenomenal number of bankruptcy cases and one wonders how many of the people suffering from economic woes he would have known. Perhaps his comment in 1930, "Unemployment is a hard problem to solve the world over. I am very fortunate to hold a position that does not require much strength in my old age," reveals a man who was confronted daily in the courtroom with many who were challenged financially, and was thankful not to be in the same situation.⁶⁹

AN OBSERVER OF POLITICS

A final way in which Denis Hurley negotiated the dual identities of being American and Irish was through his interest and involvement in politics. Hurley was an active, avid follower and participant in the world of politics, both domestic and international, and in his case, those are interesting terms in

themselves. The amount and depth of political conversation in his correspondence reveals him to be a man who saw Irish politics as something “domestic,” even to the end of his life, while simultaneously adopting American politics as domestic. His letters thus allowed him to live comfortably in both political worlds. Through the years, Hurley included discussions of the English Parliament and Monarchy, political parties in Ireland, local elections, and women’s suffrage.⁷⁰ One of the most frequent matters on which he offered opinion was that of Home Rule.

From the late 19th century, through the violence of the Irish Civil War, and until the Irish Free State became a reality, Hurley followed the Britain-Ireland debate closely and urged Irish independence in letter after letter. The Home Rule conflict proper preceded a Denis Hurley’s birth by only a half century, starting with the Act of Union in 1800. Struggles between unionists and nationalists would have been part of the regular conversation as he grew up. Charles Stewart Parnell became the public face of the Land League, whose goal was to end the landlord system and enable Irish farmers to own their own lands.⁷¹ By the 1880s, a series of home rule and land act bills, championed by Parnell and British PM William Gladstone were making their way through Parliament, with Parnell representing the Cork seat in the House of Commons—how could Hurley not be inspired and hopeful about Irish independence, both nationally and individually?

Hurley’s comments over the years make it obvious that he was in agreement with the independence movement. In 1913, for instance, he exclaims, “I am glad to see that Home Rule is making good headway and that the Home Rulers elected their member in Derry. It took the boast and the brag from the Unionists.” He added in 1914, “I hope that St. Patrick’s day 1915 will find Ireland thriving under Home Rule and enjoying peace and prosperity,” and, in 1917, he exclaims “Home Rule struggle is still occupying much attention—they must not let it flag until victory perches on their banner.”⁷²

His interest in American politics was equally keen. From early in his time in the United States, Hurley favored the Republican platform, a position which put him at odds at times with his pro-Democratic Party brother. In some of his first letters back to Ireland, Mr. Hurley commented upon and included political news from the States. The range of topics is sweeping: monetary policy, tariff issues, the Great Depression, wars, labor, foreign relations, and agricultural policy, among others. Because of the importance of mineral wealth to Nevada, the silver question arises frequently in his correspondence.⁷³

He had some interesting things to say about temperance in particular. Though opposed to the abuse of alcohol and the ways in which it degraded society, Denis Hurley had mixed feelings at best about Prohibition. On the one hand, he condemned the rampant availability of alcohol because of its harm to society, stating about whiskey in 1875, “It is the cause of a great deal of misery, more so here than in the old country owing to the greater opportunities working

men have to indulge their brutish appetites. The inferior kinds which indeed is a very poor article, can be had very cheaply, it is the devil's own stuff." He made his position concerning alcohol quite clear at the start of Prohibition, lamenting, "We cannot get a drink of whiskey, wine, or porter for love or money here. The abuse of drink is a curse, but its total suppression works a hardship especially in cases of sickness." For Hurley, the ineffectiveness of enforcing Prohibition was one of its chief drawbacks, but nothing compared to the inability to celebrate with some good, quality alcohol! He complains in 1922, "We cannot celebrate here with any St Patrick's Day Pot or glass. We have a weak beer which is not like the Clonakilty Porter."⁷⁴

In the early twentieth century, Denis Hurley began to run for elected office. In 1908, he informed his brother that he was running for the Nevada Legislature—a run that ultimately proved to be controversial and unsuccessful. At first, he seemed to win by one vote in the election for the Assembly over the Democratic candidate, James A. Raycraft, but when Raycraft challenged the vote the recount resulted in Raycraft winning by one vote. Hurley contended that a combination of bribery and the fact that the Commissioners doing the recount were Democrats, led to his ultimate loss. He was, however, encouraged that he had such strong community support.⁷⁵

A POLITICAL PARTICIPANT

As Denis Hurley entered into the world of politics in the early twentieth century, the Progressive Movement and its aim to curb political corruption, to make democracy more direct, and to reign in the power of big business was well underway. Nevada, however, seemed to have missed that memo. He was about sixty when he entered the political arena, and, though clearly not innocent about the world of politics, he had never before grappled with the realities of running for office.

Nevada had been organized politically in the midst of the Civil War, when Lincoln had garnered extra support for the Republican Party by advocating Nevada's entrance into the Union. The state maintained a strong Republican loyalty for the next few decades, veered to the Silver Party between 1892 and 1906, then maintained a fairly balanced Republican-Democrat balance until 1932 when FDR and the Democrats dominated. Balance, however, was not a term one would use to describe Gilded-Age Nevada, nor even the Nevada of the early 1900s. With mining interests diminishing quickly, the state was losing its population and the respect of other states; so, as Mary Ellen Glass notes, exploitation and manipulation became the means for politicians to maintain their control. These logistical realities and the efforts that the Republicans expended to regain control of the Senate races earned Nevada the moniker of the "Rotten Borough."⁷⁶

Hurley continued to enter his name in the political arena. He made unsuccessful bids for the position of Ormsby County Commissioner in 1910 and 1912. Hurley tried the Assembly race again in 1912, but lost by 10 votes in that election. He reported to his brother the summer before that race, "We are entering on a hot campaign in this country. I do not know if I will make my move this Fall. I give some time to city affairs—I like to show that an Irishman is able to take a hand in affairs of government."⁷⁷

That phrase, "an Irishman able to take a hand in affairs of government," represents the balance that Denis Hurley reached in the American West, as an Irishman and as a naturalized American citizen. He was able to conceptualize that dual identity, and, in 1911, he succeeded in making the conceptual a reality when elected to the Carson City Board of Trustees from the 2nd Ward, a position to which he was reelected in every election for the rest of his life. For over a quarter of a century, he served on that Board, championing city improvements like street paving, sewers, and better lighting, and challenging excessive spending patterns, especially during the Depression years. In his very first Trustee meeting, Hurley asks to be informed about the standing of the city concerning its income, expenses, and outstanding debts. His Board challenges toward financial responsibility became one of his hallmarks. Over the years his suggestions included the county clerk reducing his salary, not putting down plank crossings, installing porch lights instead of street lights, and lowering water rates.⁷⁸

A review of his almost twenty-seven years of service as a Trustee shows, however, that reigning in finances was only a small part of his overall service. More importantly, Hurley championed causes that would advance the city's efficiency and reputation, while guarding the rights and well-being of Carson City's citizens and acting in accordance with their wishes. Such an approach led him to propose or challenge a number of ordinances and policies during his time in office. Some of the issues with which Hurley and his fellow Trustees dealt seem quaint and even silly to us now, but they were not so to the men at the time. Hurley, for example, once moved to allow cattle and other stock to graze within the city limits so they could eat grass growing in the public areas and diminish fire danger.⁷⁹

Hurley brought passion, even feistiness, to his position. Over the years, he argued positions strongly, sometimes stubbornly, and challenged his fellow board members to support his ideas and motions, but also maintained a genial relationship with those men, and there is no indication that he held grudges or voted for or against measures because of personal rivalries. In 1918, for example, Hurley moved to reduce the Carson City police force, recognizing the need to decrease expenses, and also commented on the passing of the "Wild West." He argues, "We are entering on a new era of temperance, prudence and sobriety. The millennium is come, and the wolf and the lamb shall lie down peaceable side by side. The drunken Indian and the festive cowboy will be things of the past for the future historian to describe."⁸⁰



Figure 7. Denis Hurley, ca. 1930s. (Cork City and County Archives, U170/138)



Figure 8. Hurley gravesite, Lone Mountain Cemetery, Carson City, NV. Photograph taken by the author.

Perhaps the epitome of success for this Irish immigrant from County Cork came in 1925. In June of that year he wrote to his niece, "I enclose a clipping from one of our papers, announcing my political elevation as Chairman of our City Council. It carries no salary, but we all like a voice in managing our City affairs. I have received many Congratulations from friends within and without the State." In other words, Denis Hurley, Irish immigrant and Irish-American citizen in the American West, had been named Mayor of Carson City, Nevada, a position he held for two years. As mayor, he helped reorganize the various boards and revise the rules for conducting meetings, and continued his quest for a clean, orderly, financially-responsible city.⁸¹ After his stint as mayor, Hurley remained an active participant on the Board, attending meetings faithfully until about two weeks prior to his death.⁸² [Fig. 7]

How to evaluate the life of Denis Hurley? His letters show us a man who lived in two worlds, with his correspondence serving as the verbal bridge between those worlds. As time went by, he became resigned—perhaps the better word is comfortable—with being Irish-American rather than merely Irish. He declared his intent to become an American citizen in May of 1876 and became a naturalized American citizen in October of 1878. Nevertheless, in his earlier years, one can note the tensions—the tug-of-war—that sometimes pulled at Hurley in his new home. Thus, in 1879, a trip to Lake Tahoe led him to admit to his parents that “thoughts were running through my sleep that night that it was from my old Irish home I had started, and old associations were running through my head.” Even into the 1890s, the tensions remained, hinting in a letter to his mother in 1893 that he trade places with his brother and go home to Ireland to manage the farm and admitting in 1900 that he “was seriously thinking of returning to the land of my birth and ending my days in a little cottage home.” And he did long to return, though as the years went by the intention became one of visitation, not a permanent move, which he expressed most clearly in 1913, stating “I may some day possibly see the land of my birth, but I doubt it as the world has been treating me but I intend my remains to lie beside my wife in Carson City. Forty years work a change and we transfer our affections to the scenes tha[t] we are familiar with.”⁸³ He never did return, even for a visit, and when he died at the age of 89 in 1938, the citizens of Nevada and Clonakilty alike mourned his death and celebrated his life. [Fig. 8] Both sides of the Atlantic claimed him, and rightfully so; he was both an Irish immigrant in the American West and a respectable Irish-American citizen in that same West.

NOTES

¹Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Denis Ryan, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 25 May 1873, Hurley Papers, Cork City and County Archives, Cork, Ireland (hereafter referred to as Cork Archives), U170/3; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 8 January 1938, Cork Archives, U170/122. Note: original spelling has been maintained throughout this paper. The letters were discovered in the family home in Tawnies by Eileen O'Donovan. Eileen O'Donovan, interview by author, Timoleague, County Cork, Ireland, August 8, 2010.

²Several important sources on Nevada, the West in general, and immigration in particular, should be highlighted. One of the few sources that explores the issue of immigration in Nevada specifically is Wilbur S. Shepperson's *Restless Strangers: Nevada's Immigrants and Their Interpreters* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1970). His use of newspapers, literature, and five hundred individual interviews provides some fascinating information, but he tends towards the use of anecdotal evidence in his approach. Elliott Barkan's six hundred page *From All Points: America's Immigrant West, 1870s-1952* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), is sweeping and provides many case studies of his immigrant arrival to integration model, but very little attention is given to Nevada or to the Irish. *Beyond the American Pale: The Irish in the West, 1845-1910* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), by David M. Emmons is a wonderful examination of immigrants in the West that embraces the Kerby Miller exile motif and that includes immigrant letters as a key source. Once again, however, little attention is given to Nevada. Emmons also wrote *The Butte Irish: Class and Ethnicity in an American Mining Town, 1875-1925* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), a work that highlights class and labor realities among the Irish workers in Montana.

³On the use of letters, see David A. Gerber, *Authors of Their Lives: The Personal Correspondence of British Immigrants to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2006).

⁴Ireland, Census Office, *Census of Ireland for the Year 1861, Part I: Showing the Area, Population, and Number of Houses by Townlands and Electoral Divisions, Volume II, Province of Munster* (Dublin: Alexander Thom for H.M. Stationery Off, 1863), 164. For a history of Clonakilty and West Cork County, see Jeremiah O'Mahony, *West Cork and Its Story* (Tralee, Ireland: Kerryman, 1961); Michael J. Collins, *Clonakilty a History: A Little Big Town on the Banks of the Feale* (Clonakilty, Ireland: Cumann Seanchais Chloch na gCoillte, 1999). For an overview of the development of dairy production in County Cork, see David Dickson, "Butter Comes to Market: The Origins of Commercial Dairying in County Cork," in Patrick O'Flanagan, Cornelius G. Buttmer, and Gerard O'Brien, *Cork: History & Society* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1993), 367-390. On the famine, see James S. Donnelly, *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork: The Rural Economy and the Land Question, Studies in Irish History, Second Series, Vol. 9* (London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), 89-92, 112-114, 120-121; L. M. Cullen, *An Economic History of Ireland since 1660, Studies in Economic and Social History* (London: Batsford, 1972), 134.

⁵Such holdings would have put Timothy Hurley in the upper 20% or higher of landholders in County Cork. See, Donnelly, *Nineteenth-Century Cork*, 14-15. The Hurley property information is culled from a variety of sources, including House Books, Rent Books, Record of Tenure Books, Tithe Applotment Books, and Roman Catholic Parish Records.

⁶Collins, *Clonakilty a History*, 217; Donnelly, *Nineteenth-Century Cork*, 78-79; Jonathan Bell and Mervyn Watson, *A History of Irish Farming, 1750-1950* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008), 32; Raymond D. Crotty, *Irish Agricultural Production, Its Volume and Structure* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1966), 49-50; Cullen, *Economic History of Ireland*, 136.

⁷Donnelly, *Nineteenth-Century Cork*, 138; Crotty, *Irish Agricultural Production*, 42-43.

⁸Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy Hurley, Kilkerranmore, County Cork, Ireland, 11 February 1897, Cork Archives, U170/32.

⁹John O'Donovan, *The Economic History of Live Stock in Ireland* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1940), 174-75, 180, 301-302; Colin Rynne, *At the Sign of the Cow: The Cork Butter Market, 1770-1924* (Cork: Collins Press, 1998), 15-16, 19. Dickson, "Butter Comes to Market," 368-376, 380-381, 383-384; Crotty, *Irish Agricultural Production*, 49; Donnelly, *Nineteenth-Century Cork*, 133-135, 141-143; Mary Francis Cusack, *A History of the City and County of Cork* (Dublin: McGlashan and Gill, 1875), 482-483; C. F. Bastable, "The Irish Export Trade in Butter, With Special Reference to the Regulations of the Cork Market," *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland* 8 (August 1882), 333.

¹⁰Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 28 September 1924, Cork Archives, U170/86.

¹¹James Coombes, *A History of Timoleague and Barryroe* (Timoleague: Muintir na Tire/Friary Preservation Committee, 1969), 55-57; Rynne, *At the Sign of the Cow*, 20-29; Dickson, "Butter Comes to Market," 377-378; Donnelly, *Nineteenth-Century Cork*, 143-145; Watson and Bell, *A History of Irish Farming*, 245-246.

¹²Donald H. Akenson, *The Irish Education Experiment: The National System of Education in the Nineteenth Century*, Studies in Irish History Series (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1970), 30-36; Michael C. Coleman, "'The Children Are Used Wretchedly': Pupil Responses to the Irish Charter Schools in the Early Nineteenth Century," *History of Education* 30 (2001). Dowling provides an overview of the various types of Irish schools prior to the 1831 system changes. P. J. Dowling, *A History of Irish Education: A Study in Conflicting Loyalties* (Cork: Ireland Mercier Press, 1971), 42-85.

¹³Akenson, *The Irish Education Experiment*, 17-18, 50, 140, 146-148, 216, 306-07, 376; Donnelly, *Nineteenth-Century Cork*, 247-249. See also Bruce Curtis, "Patterns of Resistance to Public Education: England, Ireland, and Canada West, 1830-1890," *Comparative Education Review* 32 (1988), 329; James Johnston Auchmuty, *Irish Education, a Historical Survey* (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co., 1937), 68-81. Department of Education, *Registers of Summaries of Documents Relating to Administration of National Schools: District 59, Volume 2: Cork, Baronies of Carbery East and West, Courceys, Ibane, and Barryroe, Kinalea and Kinalmeaky*, Roll 490, fol. 6 (Dublin, 1862-1885). Godkin, *Education in Ireland: Its History, Institutions, Systems, Statistics, and Progress, from the Earliest Times to the Present* (London and Dublin: Saunders, Otley, & Co., 1862), 91-95; 175, 178-179, 236-237, 252. Dowling, *A History of Irish Education*, 123-124; John Coolahan, *Irish Education: Its History and Structure* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1981), 30.

¹⁴Akenson, *The Irish Education Experiment*, 226-27, 234.

¹⁵As an assistant, Hurley would have received a salary of £15-£24. Godkin, *Education in Ireland*, 238. The average wage of a laborer in 1870 varied from £16 to £23. Coolahan, *Irish Education: Its History and Structure*, 25.

¹⁶Godkin, *Education in Ireland*, 238.

¹⁷Michael Hurley, Cedar Pass, NV, to Timothy and Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 26 August 1871, Cork Archives, U170/1.

¹⁸Thomas Wrigley Grimshaw, "A Statistical Survey of Ireland, from 1840 to 1888," *Journal of The Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland* 9 (1889), 328. See also *Official Guide and Album of the Cunard Steamship Company*, rev. ed. (London: Sutton Sharpe and Co., 1877), 20. F. Lawrence Babcock, *Spanning the Atlantic* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931), 129, 132-34, 147; *History of the Cunard Steamship Company*, extracted from *The Illustrated Naval and Military Magazine* (England: s.n., 1886), 9-10, 14; Frank E. Dodman, *Ships of the Cunard Line* (New York: John De Graff, 1955), 134; Douglas Hart, "Sociability and 'Separate Spheres' on the North Atlantic: The Interior Architecture of British Atlantic Liners, 1840-1930," *Journal of Social History* 44 (Fall 2010), 189, 190. Records list a Denis Hurley, age 20, on the manifest of arriving passenger in Boston for the Siberia; his age was probably recorded incorrectly. National Archives and Records Administration, *Crew Lists of Vessels Arriving at Boston, Massachusetts, 1917-1943*, T938; Roll 84 (Washington, D.C.), Ancestry.com. Boston, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1820-1954 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2006. Details of the ship can be found on the Norway Heritage Site. See also Raymond L. Cohn, "The Transition from Sail to Steam in Immigration to the United States," *The Journal of Economic History* 65 (June 2005), 469-495.

¹⁹Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy and Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 24 June 1873, Cork Archives, U170/4.

²⁰Robert Louis Stevenson, *Across the Plains: With Other Memories and Essays* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1892), 1-8. "Denis Hurley Passes Away," *Nevada State Journal*, March 4, 1938; "Death of Denis Hurley, Resident of Carson since 1874, Shocks City," *Carson City Daily Appeal*, March 4, 1938. A biographical article, in fact, states that Hurley arrived in May. James G. Scrugham, ed., *Nevada: A Narrative of the Conquest of a Frontier Land. Comprising the Story of Her People from the Dawn of History to the Present Times*, vol. III (Chicago and New York: American Historical Society, 1935), 101-02. Train schedules can be found in a number of sources. See, for example, W. F. Allen, ed., *Travelers' Official Guide of the Railway and Steam Navigation Lines in the United States and Canada* (Philadelphia: National Railway Publication Company, 1874); or *The International Railway and Steam Navigation Guide* (Montreal: C. R. Chisholm & Bros., 1875).

²¹See Bruce Clement Cooper, ed., *The Classic Western American Railroad Routes* (New York: Chartwell Books, 2010), 31, 43. Stevenson, *Across the Plains*, 10, 27-28. Cooper notes that "Stops for food were haphazard and often far too brief for a comfortable meal." *Classic Western American Railroad Routes*, 43.

²²Fares can be estimated through various schedules. See also Stephen E. Drew, *Nevada's Virginia & Truckee Railroad* (Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 21; Stevenson, *Across the Plains*, 19, 22-23, 35.

²³For a description of the early history of Carson City and surroundings, see Michael S. Green, *Nevada: A History of the Silver State* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2015), 68-74, 80-82; Russell R. Elliott, *History of Nevada*, 2nd ed., rev. (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 49-68; Richard Moreno, *A Short History of Carson City* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2011), 10-33. Older histories contain much more detailed accounts. See Myron F. Angel, ed., *History of Nevada, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of its Prominent Men and Pioneers*, The Far Western Frontier Series (Oakland, CA: Thompson and West, 1881), 31-49; 527-28, 531-34; Sam P. Davis, ed. *The History of Nevada* (Reno, NV: Elms Publishing Co., 1913), 190-97, 199, 223-232. The early political settlement is also described in Thomas Wren, *A History of the State of Nevada: Its Resources and People* (New York: Lewis Publishing, 1904), 55-59.

²⁴Dennis Drabelle provides a colorful overview of the rise of the Bonanza Kings. *Mile-High Fever: Silver Mines, Boom Towns, and High Living on the Comstock Lode* (St Martin's Press, 2009), 127-155. See also Dan De Quille, *History of the Big Bonanza: An Authentic Account of the Discovery, History, and Working of the World Renowned Comstock Silver Lode of Nevada: Including the Present Condition of the Various Mines Situated Thereon; Sketches of the Most Prominent Men Interested in Them* (Hartford, CT, American Pub. Co; San Francisco, A. L. Bancroft and Co., 1876), 517-530; Carl B. Glasscock, *The Big Bonanza; the Story of the Comstock Lode* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1931), 198-214, 242-53, 284-98.

²⁵Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy and Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 21 August 1877, Cork Archives, U170/10.

²⁶See Moreno, *A Short History of Carson City*, 34-53, 61; Michael Wayne Bowers, *The Sagebrush State: Nevada's History, Government, and Politics*, 3rd ed., Wilbur S. Shepperson Series in History and Humanities (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2006), 123; Gilman Marston Ostrander, *Nevada, the Great Rotten Borough, 1859-1964* (New York: Knopf, 1966), 53-58.

²⁷Michael Hurley, 26 August 1871; Michael Hurley, Kennet, CA, to Kate Hurley Deasy, Balinspittle, County Cork, Ireland, 5 December 1886, Cork Archives, U170/13; 24 June 1873.

²⁸Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy and Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 3 October 1873, Cork Archives, U170/5. For examples of Denis Hurley's relationship with Michael see Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy and Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 20 May 1877, Cork Archives, U170/9; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 25 January 1891, Cork Archives, U170/15; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 9 March 1896, Cork Archives, U170/29; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 10 June 1926, Cork Archives, U170/91.

²⁹For examples of Denis Hurley's relationship with John see Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 5 December 1891, Cork Archives, U170/17; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 31 May 1900, Cork Archives, U170/42; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 11 December 1913, Cork Archives, U170/65; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 6 January 1924, Cork Archives, U170/83. For examples of Denis Hurley's relationship with Tim see Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 18 February 1892, Cork Archives, U170/18; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 16 October 1892, Cork Archives, U170/19; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 29 June 1927, Cork Archives, U170/92. For examples of his relationship with his sister, see Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 18 June 1897, Cork Archives, U170/33; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 29 May 1902, Cork Archives, U170/47. See also Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 2 January 1903, Cork Archives, U170/48; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 30 January 1905, Cork Archives, U170/52; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley,

Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 16 March 1914, Cork Archives, U170/66; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 24 February 1899, Cork Archives, U170/38.

³⁰Ronald M. James, *The Roar and the Silence: A History of Virginia City and the Comstock Lode*, Wilbur S. Shepperson Series in History and Humanities (University of Nevada Press, 1998), 12-13-19-20, 25, 91-118; Mary B. Ansari, *Mines and Mills of the Comstock Region, Western Nevada, Camp Nevada Monograph* (Reno, NV: Camp Nevada, 1989), 2-3; De Quille, *History of the Big Bonanza*, 47-54, 116-20; Elliott, *History of Nevada*, 123-137; Green, *Nevada*, 108-123. For a fascinating parallel of another Irish immigrant who arrived about the same time as Hurley, see Ronald M. James, "Timothy Francis McCarthy: Life of an Irish Immigrant Worker on the Comstock," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 39 (1996): 300-308.

³¹Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 12 March 1894, Cork Archives, U170/22. See also Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 21 June 1898, Cork Archives, U170/35; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 2 May 1930, Cork Archives, U170/100.

³²Ostrander, *Great Rotten Borough*, 4-5, 7-8, 16-17; James, *The Roar and the Silence*, 2-4, 9-12, 23-24, 30-31, 45-52, 60-67. See also Drabelle, *Mile-High Fever*, 25-33, 46-63; De Quille, *History of the Big Bonanza*, 109-115, 336-45; Glasscock, *The Big Bonanza*, 51-58, 148-178, 290-91; George R. Witters, "History of the Comstock Lode," *Rocks & Minerals* 74 (1999), 383-89; Robert E. Kendall, "Deep Enough: Pitfalls and Perils of Deep Mining on the Comstock," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 39 (Fall 1996), 222-228; Eugene J. Michal, "Win Some, Lose Some: The Evolution of Milling Practice on the Comstock Lode," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 48 (Summer 2005), 255-267;

³³Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy and Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 6 January 1876, Cork Archives, U170/8; 20 May 1877; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 9 December 1898, Cork Archives, U170/37; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 1 November 1900, Cork, U170/43; 2 January 1903; 6 January 1924; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 8 April 1925, Cork Archives, U170/88. For a colorful discussion of mining stock speculation see De Quille, *History of the Big Bonanza*, 405-412.

³⁴Ansari, *Mines and Mills of the Comstock Region*, 43-44. See also Richard Lyle Garner, *The Comstock: Economic History of Mining Bonanza 1865-1885* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2009), chapters 8 and 17; James, *The Roar and the Silence*, 106-07; Eliot Lord, *Comstock Mining and Miners* (Berkeley, CA: Howell-North, 1959), 306-314; Robert W. Prince and Max Crowell, *Individual Histories of the Mines of the Comstock* (Reno, NV: Nevada State Bureau of Mines, 1942), 18-25; US Department of the Treasury, *Statistics of Mines and Mining in the States and Territories West of the Rocky Mountains*, Annual Report of Rosister W. Raymond, U.S. Commissioner of Mining Statistics, 41st Cong., 2d sess., House Executive Document 207 (Washington, DC: Govt. Print. Off., 1875), 196-202.

³⁵Denis Hurley, 20 May 1877. For a fuller treatment of the loan episode, see the account by local Oxford historian—and descendant of the Hurleys—John Fox. Fox, "The California Letter," *The California Territorial Quarterly* 54 (Summer 2003), 42.

³⁶Moreno, *A Short History of Carson City*, 38-41; Elliott, *History of Nevada*, 126-128; Green, *Nevada*, 103-106, 118.

³⁷See De Quille, *History of the Big Bonanza*, 227-230. Gilbert H. Kneiss, "The Virginia and Truckee Railway," *Railway & Locomotive Historical Society Bulletin* 45 (1938), 14, 17. See also James, *The Roar and the Silence*, 80-84.

³⁸Wendell Huffman, interview by author, Carson City, NV, August 1, 2013.

³⁹Denis Hurley, 3 October 1873. See also 6 January 1876; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 25 June 1906, Cork Archives, U170/55; 30 January 1905.

⁴⁰Stephen E. Drew and Walter P. Gray, *Virginia & Truckee Railroad Carson City Shops: An Interpretive Evaluation* (Sacramento, CA: n.p., 1981), 11-12, 21; see also Drew, *Virginia & Truckee Railroad Carson City Enginehouse and Shops: An Historical Overview for the Twentieth Annual Virginia & Truckee Symposium*, Carson City, Nevada, October 1990 (Sacramento, CA: Stephen E. Drew, 1990).

⁴¹Papers of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, Payroll, Carson Machine and Tin Shop, December 1875 and December 1886, University of Nevada, Reno, Special Collections, NC427/5, no. 1146; 1900 U.S. Census, Ormsby Co., Nevada, Carson Township, Ward 2, Supervisor's Dist. No. 150, Enumeration Dist. 36, Page 13, Line 84. Stephen Drew, interview by author, Sacramento, CA, August 20, 2012.

⁴²Wendell Huffman and Chris DeWitt, interview by author, Carson City, NV, August 1, 2013.

⁴³Stephen Drew, interview, August 20, 2012.

⁴⁴Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 14 September 1893, Cork Archives, U170/21; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 15 October 1894, Cork Archives, U170/23. See also 11 February 1897; 21 June 1898; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 15 November 1904, Cork Archives, U170/51; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 29 September 1898, Cork Archives, U170/36; Denis Hurley, 25 May 1873; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 2 July 1928, Cork Archives, U170/93.

⁴⁵*Daily Nevada State Journal*, 14 January 1888; *Reno Weekly Gazette*, 28 February 1884 and 14 January 1888; *Nevada State Journal*, 15 January 1887. Scrugham, *Nevada*, 101-02; Marita Foster, "From Carson City to Clonakilty," *World of Hibernia* 5 (Spring 2000), 5; Certificate of Marriage, Denis Hurley to Margaret A. Burke, 11 January 1887, Washoe County, Nevada. County Recorder's Office, Carson City, Nevada. Francis Kierce and George Stanley, "The Young Men's Institute," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 15 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912); His installation as First Vice-President and then Second Vice-President is reported in the 22 November 1887 and 26 November 1887 editions of the *Daily Nevada State Journal* and in the 27 June 1889 edition of the *Weekly Gazette Stockman*; *Nevada State Journal*, 26 November 1887; 13 May 1888.

⁴⁶Deed of Sale from James and Minnie Howard to Denis Hurley, 11 September 1890 (filed 19 June 1890), Ormsby County, Nevada, Notation Deed Records, Book 25, 234-236. County Recorder's Office, Carson City, Nevada. Ormsby County Assessor Tax Rolls, for the Fiscal Year ending December 31, 1890 through December 31, 1910, Carson City, Nevada.

⁴⁷Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 7 May 1903, Cork Archives, U170/49; 18 February 1892; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 3 December 1897, Cork Archives, U170/34; 31 May 1900.

⁴⁸*Nevada State Journal*, April 24, 1910.

⁴⁹Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 15 August 1910, Cork Archives, U170/59. He writes in 1923, "My former residence I still hold, and paid about \$450 for repairs last year, on a valuation of \$1000 and on which I pay about \$50 per year in taxes." Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 10 August 1923, Cork Archives, U170/81.

⁵⁰Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 30 November 1925, Cork Archives, U170/90. Denis Hurley, 9 March 1896. See also Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 27 June 1907, Cork Archives, U170/56; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 3 March 1913, Cork Archives, U170/63; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 23 March 1929, Cork Archives, U170/94.

⁵¹Denis Hurley, 9 December 1898. Economic optimism was one of Denis Hurley's character traits. He comments in 1908, "I have fared pretty well in my affairs though short of money as the present time. My investments will I hope soon bring me in larger returns." Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 25 April 1908, Cork Archives, U170/57. Even in the late 1930s, despite the Depression, he claims that his investments were bringing him a fair income. Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 21 January 1937, Cork Archives, U170/119.

⁵²Denis Hurley, 25 May 1873; 5 December 1891. In a similar letter excerpt from 1907 he writes, "Gave up work: I have plenty time now to look after my garden. I also can go to mass every morning." 27 June 1907; See also Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 9 November 1912, Cork Archives, U170/62; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 29 January 1925, Cork Archives, U170/87; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Catherine Hurley McCarthy, Carrigroe Upper, County Cork, Ireland, 10 February 1934, Cork Archives, U170/114.

⁵³Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 9 November 1931, Cork Archives, U170/107.

⁵⁴Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 25 March 1937, Cork Archives, U170/120; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 15 November 1923, Cork Archives, U170/82.

⁵⁵Thomas K. Gorman, *Seventy-Five Years of Catholic Life in Nevada* (Reno: The Journal Press, 1935); Harold F. Vieages, *The Catholic Church in the Territory and State of Nevada in Carson City, 1858-1975* (Carson City: Diocese of Reno, 1975). See also Elliott, *History of Nevada*, 379-381.

⁵⁶Tamera Buzick, *Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Cathedral Remembered: 1908-2008* (Reno: Fortunatus Press, 2008), 4-6.

⁵⁷Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 15 September 1891, Cork Archives, U170/16; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy Hurley, Kilkerranmore, County Cork, Ireland, 7 November 1895, Cork Archives, U170/26. Father Kiely did visit the Hurley family in Clonakilty. See Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 3 July 1896, Cork Archives, U170/30. Father Gartland was another priest-friend. See 9 November 1912. In 1925 he mentions his relationship with Bishop Keane. 30 November 1925.

⁵⁸Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy Hurley, Kilkerranmore, County Cork, Ireland, 1 April 1895, Cork Archives, U170/24. See also Davis, *History of Nevada*, 242-260. He was saddened by the overall loss of Catholics in Nevada over the decades, and the ever increasing openness to gambling and divorce. 9 November 1931. Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy and Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 16 March 1874, Cork Archives, Cork, Ireland, U170/6. See also Denis Hurley, 16 October 1892; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 3 May 1899, Cork Archives, U170/39; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 13 February 1900, Cork Archives, U170/41; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Catherine Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 16 December 1929, Cork Archives, U170/97. Denis Hurley, 24 February 1899; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 12 May 1922, Cork Archives, U170/78. Likewise, he tells his sick mother in 1899, "Now dear Mother, I hope you are better, but don't be afraid of death—you were devoted to the Rosary plus the B.V. will protect you." 3 May 1899.

⁵⁹Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 14 April 1923, Cork Archives, U170/80. Denis Hurley, 6 January 1876.

⁶⁰Denis Hurley, 25 May 1873; 3 October 1873.

⁶¹Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 11 August 1903, Cork Archives, U170/50; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy and Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 22 August 1879, Cork Archives, U170/12; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 18 December 1914, Cork Archives, U170/69.

⁶²James W. Hulse, "Making Law in the Great Basin: The Evolution of the Federal Court in Nevada, 1855-1905," *Western Legal History* 1 (Summer/Fall 1988), 143, 136-37, 148-151, 161-162. See also Frank H. Norcross, "The Bench and Bar," in Davis, *History of Nevada*, 273-314. Hulse seems to overstate his case. One might argue that the law was more fluid in Nevada's early years, but to say that law and government was not established is too strong. See David A. Hardy, "Nevada's Territorial Courts: An Unrecognized Political Influence toward Statehood," *Nevada Lawyer* (October 2014), 12-15. Having such a low number of judges tended to be the pattern in most U.S. territories, especially those in the West. See "The U.S. District Courts and the Federal Judiciary," Federal Judicial Center, accessed 17 September 2015, http://www.fjc.gov/history/home.nsf/page/courts_district.html.

⁶³For an overview of Farrington's role as a Nevada federal judge, see Russell W. McDonald, *Biographical Summaries: Nevada's Territorial, District, Supreme Court and Federal Judges, 1856-1993*, unpublished manuscript (Reno: Nevada Historical Society, 1993), 211-216. Hulse, "Making Law in the Great Basin," 162.

⁶⁴Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Catherine Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 22 July 1930, Cork Archives, U170/102; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 25 October 1933, Cork Archives, U170/113.

⁶⁵U.S. Congress, *U.S. Statutes*, Statue III, Sec. 7, 5th Congress, 3d sess. (28 February 1799), 626. James G. Sweeney, George Frederick Talbot, and Frank H. Norcross, *Revised Laws of Nevada: Containing State Statutes of a General Nature from 1861, Revised to 1912, and Pertinent Acts of Congress, with Annotations from Volumes 1 to 34, Nevada Reports, and from Federal and State Decisions* (1912), 1410-1411. US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Official Register of the United States: Persons in the Civil, Military, and Naval Service, Exclusive of the Postal Service* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Printing Off., 1919), 665; *Official Register*, 1921, 640.

⁶⁶U.S. District Court, District of Nevada, *The United States v. A. Armstrong*, et al, 5060-5085 (9th Cir. 1918), Records of District Courts of the United States, Record Group 21, The National Archives at San Francisco; *The United States v. Jim Kee*, et al., 5087-5089.

⁶⁷The United States v. Charles Roy Hansen, 5131 (9th Cir. 1918).

⁶⁸Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 17 October 1920, Cork Archives, U170/74. For a case example, see *The United States v. James Ferguson*, 7643 (9th Cir. 1928).

⁶⁹Denis Hurley, 22 July 1930. For a sampling of bankruptcy-related cases, see *Roscoe Dallas Williams, Bankrupt*, 483 (9th Cir. 1932); *Frederick G. Wallender, Bankrupt*, 484 (9th Cir. 1932); *Morris & Levy (Incorporated), a corporation, Bankrupt*, 472 (9th Cir. 1932); *Walter J. Thompson, Bankrupt*, 481 (9th Cir. 1932); *Angelo S. Pappas, formerly doing business under the name and style of "Wellworth Grocery," Bankrupt*, 476 (9th Cir. 1932); *The Owl Drug Company, a Nevada Corporation, Bankrupt*, 480 (9th Cir. 1932).

⁷⁰For examples of international political topics, see Denis Hurley, 15 October 1894; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 19 October 1899, Cork Archives, U170/40; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 13 March 1906, Cork Archives, U170/53; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 8 September 1914, Cork Archives, U170/68; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 19 January 1920, Cork Archives, U170/73; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 18 September 1922, Cork Archives, U170/79; 21 January 1937. For political party discussions see Denis Hurley, 7 May 1903; for discussions of monarchy see 12 March 1901; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 4 May 1937, Cork Archives, U170/121; on suffragettes see 3 March 1913; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 18 June 1913, Cork Archives, U170/64; Denis Hurley, 24 June 1873; 12 March 1894. See also Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 9 June 1914, Cork Archives, U170/67.

⁷¹Denis contributed \$50 to the Land League in 1887. *Weekly Nevada State Journal*, November 5, 1887.

⁷²Michael Hurley, 5 December 1886. Denis Hurley, Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 12 July 1912, Cork Archives, U170/61. For other comments on Home Rule see 16 March 1914; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 17 March 1922, Cork Archives, U170/77.

⁷³Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 18 October 1916, Cork Archives, U170/72. On monetary policy, including the Great Depression, see Denis Hurley, 14 September 1893; 23 March 1929; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 17 February 1931, Cork Archives, U170/105; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Catherine Hurley McCarthy, Carrigroe Upper, County Cork, Ireland, 21 March 1935, Cork Archives, U170/117. On wars see 21 June 1898; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 17 March 1916, Cork Archives, U170/71. On labor issues see Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 1 August 1901, Cork Archives, U170/45. On foreign relations see 9 June 1914. On agricultural policy see 29 May 1902; 25 October 1933. Denis Hurley, 14 September 1893.

⁷⁴Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Timothy and Mary Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 21 July 1875, Cork Archives, Cork, Ireland, U170/7.

⁷⁵Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to John Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 31 December 1908, Cork Archives, U170/58.

⁷⁶Bowers, *Sagebrush State*, 45. Elliott, *History of Nevada*, 152-156, 177-209, 239-250, 265-272; Green, *Nevada*, 134-148. See also William D. Rowley, "Farewell to the Rotten Borough: Francis G. Newlands in Nevada," *Halcyone* 17 (1995), 109-110; Mary Ellen Glass, *Silver and Politics in Nevada: 1892-1902*, The Lancehead Series: Nevada and the West (University of Nevada Press, 1969), 4.

⁷⁷Denis Hurley, 31 December 1908; 9 November 1912.

⁷⁸Carson City Board of Trustees Proceedings, Minutes, Vol. 4, 8 May 1911; 22 May 1911; 10 July 1911; Vol. 5, 27 October 1922; 14 July 1924; 11 May 1921.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, Vol. 4, 8 April 1912; 13 March 1916; Vol. 5, 8 July 1918.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 9 December 1918. See also 22 April 1922.

⁸¹Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 5 June 1925, Cork Archives, U170/89. Carson City Board of Trustees Proceedings, Minutes, Vol. 5, 16 May 1925.

⁸²Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary Hurley Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 29 February 1932, Cork Archives, U170/108.

⁸³Denis Hurley, 22 August 1879; 31 May 1900; 9 March 1896. For other comments relating to a return visit to Ireland see 27 June 1907; 18 June 1913; 29 June 1927; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Catherine Hurley, Tawnies, County Cork, Ireland, 1 December 1930, Cork Archives, U170/104; Denis Hurley, Carson City, NV, to Mary [Hurley] Deasy, Ahafore, County Cork, Ireland, 9 June 1932, Cork Archives, U170/109.

The Boundaries of Being a Nevadan

National Reputation and Exceptionalism

MICHAEL GREEN

In the early 1830s, Alexis de Tocqueville detected something about the United States that struck him as exceptional: its exceptionalism. As he wrote, "The position of the Americans is therefore quite exceptional, and it may be believed that no democratic people will ever be placed in a similar one. Their strictly Puritanical origin, their exclusively commercial habits, even the country they inhabit, which seems to divert their minds from the pursuit of science, literature, and the arts, the proximity of Europe, which allows them to neglect these pursuits without relapsing into barbarism, a thousand special causes, of which I have only been able to point out the most important, have singularly concurred to fix the mind of the American upon purely practical objects." While the visiting French observer did his part to promote the concept by writing about it, his definition of it could hardly be called precise, or even new. American exceptionalism might also be traced to John Winthrop's pronouncement about a "city upon a hill" as he and his fellow Puritans arrived in Massachusetts Bay in 1630 and to the circumstances of the Revolution and the creation of the American republic. Similarly, it can be seen in such ideas as Manifest Destiny, the importance of the frontier to the American experience, and the continually contested concept of American freedom. It can take the form of the American belief in empire or human rights, in expanding and contracting democracy, and in our political system itself.¹

Michael Green is an associate professor of history at UNLV and the author of *Nevada: A History of the Silver State*, a new one-volume history of Nevada. He is the former editor-in-chief of the *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* and the author or co-author of numerous books and articles on Nevada.

As part of that system, the inboxes of politically active Republicans often filled up in the late 2000s and 2010s with emails warning of the evil or incompetence or cunning—or some combination thereof—of Harry Reid. As Senate Democratic leader from 2005 until his retirement at the end of 2016, Reid served as the main congressional player in enacting his party's legislation, and a lightning rod for opposition at the national and local levels. But no one can deny that he became one of the most powerful people in Washington, D.C., and probably the most powerful Nevadan in the nation's history. Indeed, he is among the few Nevadans ever to become a political household name, and that begs a question at once simple and complex: why? The roots of the question and the answer lie not with Reid himself, who obviously has been a talented enough politician for his opponents and even some of his allies to consider him both incompetent and shrewd. Rather, the issue is why it has been so rare and difficult for a Nevadan to achieve national political prominence. The solution to that conundrum lies in the myth and reality of Nevada exceptionalism, and how it fits into American exceptionalism.²

When Tocqueville was traveling America, what is now Nevada belonged to Mexico, and a few trappers and traders had crossed its borders. They had little use for the place they saw or the Native Americans they encountered: one exploring party, led by Joseph Walker, wound up in battle with them; John C. Frémont, leading his mapmaking party, dismissed the Southern Paiutes as "lizard-eaters." In southern Nevada, word spread that horse thieves and possibly a cannibal populated that portion of the Old Spanish Trail. Already, in the 1830s, Nevada was developing an image. In decades to come, outsiders would continue to present their view of the land, and Nevadans would agree, disagree, and propagate their own image of their place. Sometimes they did it thoughtfully and analytically, expressing a sense of place, and sometimes they sought to convince others of an image that would attract investment, population, and money. When it comes to Nevadans promoting what their state is or what it is supposed to be, what happens here is not intended to stay here.³

While scholars have demonstrated that actually makes Nevada similar to the rest of the West, Nevada's unique circumstances have shaped its image in other ways. Its heavy dependence on mining meant that boom-and-bust cycles had longer-lasting effects than in other states, with a two-decade bonanza centered on the Comstock Lode giving way to a two-decade *borrasca* that inspired discussion of revoking Nevada's statehood. With Nevada's population having dwindled to 42,000, the *Chicago Tribune* wondered why the "palsied, decaying" state still had two U.S. senators. Yet, half a century later, with Nevada's population estimated to have surpassed 200,000, Harry Truman privately made the same suggestion. He wrote of a trip to the West Coast, "Then we came to the great gambling and marriage destruction hell, known as Nevada. To look at it from the air it is just that—hell on earth. There are tiny green specks on the landscape where dice, roulette, light-o-loves, crooked poker and gambling



Senator Pat McCarran and Senator Key Pittman, (right), exchanging opinions on President Roosevelt's proposal that the membership of the Supreme Court be increased to possibly 15 members. They are pictured as they attended a meeting of the Senate Judiciary Committee in February 1937. (Harris & Ewing Collection, Library of Congress)

thugs thrive. Such places should be abolished and so should Nevada. It never should have been made a State. A county in the great State of California would be too much of a civil existence for that dead and sinful territory. Think of that awful, sinful place having two Senators and a congressman in Washington, and Alaska and Hawaii not represented." Nor were the sentiments it expressed as the twentieth century approached unique to the loyally Republican *Tribune*, which resented Nevada's support for Democratic silverite William Jennings Bryan and its recent legalization of prize-fighting. Nor were they unique to Truman, the lifelong Democrat who had shared a mutual distaste with the state's longtime U.S. senator, Pat McCarran, who had died nine months before Truman's trip.⁴

What distinguished Nevada in the late nineteenth century and mid-twentieth century (and disgusted both the *Tribune* and Truman) was its willingness to tolerate and even encourage activities that other states tried and found wanting

or immoral or unacceptable. Boxing, easy divorce, gambling, prostitution—all of these carried a stigma that affected the state's image across the country, and the image of the people who lived there. Nevada certainly exacerbated this image by catering to mobsters and ignoring some of its social obligations—thus, descriptions of it as “the Mississippi of the West” and “the sorry state of Nevada,” and books with titles like *The Green Felt Jungle* and *The Great Rotten Borough*. While its history of racial and gender discrimination is less fairly criticized only in the context that it did what other states were doing, Nevada had a financial necessity for tolerating vices, so-called or real.⁵

Some Nevadans understood and lamented the situation. In this context, McCarran makes for an unlikely sympathetic figure: leader of a communist witch hunt that often ignored basic principles of the Bill of Rights, operator of a political machine who brooked no dissent, and an anti-Semite who catered to African Americans only when he needed their votes. But in the wake of Senator Estes Kefauver's hearings on organized crime in 1950-51, and subsequent efforts to tax gambling revenue, he sent a letter to *Nevada State Journal* editor Joe McDonald, a loyal ally. McCarran's biographer, Jerome Edwards, called the letter “one of the most revealing he ever wrote.”:

It isn't a very laudable position for one to have to defend gambling. One doesn't feel very lofty when his feet are resting on the argument that gambling must prevail in the State that he represents. The rest of the world looks upon him with disdain even though every other State in the Union is harboring gambling in one form or another, illegally, of course, and even though the State that he defends and represents, has legalized gambling, it doesn't take from the actuality in defending the thing in an open forum, where men of all walks of life and all particular phase and religious bents are listening and laughing, condemning or ridiculing. We have everything in the Congress of the United States from Orthodox Puritanical preachers to pill rollers. So, when the economic structure of one's state is so involved in the gambling business, or to put it another way, when the gambling business is involved in the economic structure of one's State, one must lay aside pride and put on the hide of a rhinoceros and go to it....

The City of Reno has grown immensely in the past 20 years. The City of Las Vegas has come from a wide spot in the road to a community of 40,000 or more. That growth in neither instance was accomplished by industries with payrolls. It was accomplished by making the State of Nevada a playground to which the world was invited, and that playground has as its base gambling in all forms, and those who have been responsible for this growth upon this foundation cannot with propriety and good conscience take on a longhaired attitude overnight.⁶

Ironically, McCarran had contributed greatly to the growth he cited, partly by taking advantage of another characteristic that made Nevada exceptional and more easily dismissed as unworthy: the amount of federal land within its borders. The ease with which the federal government could build military bases and defense plants on that acreage resulted in economic benefits and population expansion for several Nevada communities. But Reno and Las Vegas and their surrounding areas particularly benefited, turning each city into something similar to what urban historian Roger Lotchin, describing western cities during World War II, called a "martial metropolis." Nevada also capitalized on the tourism possibilities in these projects, welcoming visitors to Hoover Dam and turning the mushroom cloud from atomic testing into an attraction. Indeed, Nevada's enthusiasm for atomic testing seemed patriotic and profitable at the time. But later, when the Department of Energy and members of Congress targeted part of the Nevada Test Site for the nation's only federal high-level nuclear waste repository, Nevadans considered their state a target and a victim.⁷

This aspect of the federal government's role in the state is one example of what Nevadans consider their exceptionalism: They often have felt as though they and their state have been special targets. In the late nineteenth-century, Nevadans cried foul over the demonetization of silver in the "Crime of '73"; mid-twentieth-century complaints focused on proposed gambling taxes and policies that Nevada saw as hurting domestic mining and benefiting foreign producers. The fight over Yucca Mountain has been the most obvious recent example, with Nevadans from the highest political position to the person in the street objecting to being the nation's dumping ground for nuclear waste. That part of the state's vast expanse of federal land—more than 86 percent of its territory—could be used for these purposes highlights another way in which Nevadans have felt put upon or picked on: They have fought federal land policies for decades, and with special fervor since the Bureau of Land Management's creation in 1946 and its subsequent expansion. What became known as the Sagebrush Rebellion originated in the state in the mid- and late-1970s, and numerous lawsuits and conflicts have made headlines since, from the Jarbidge Shovel Brigade and Elko County's battles with the U.S. Forest Service to Bunkerville rancher Cliven Bundy, the more than twenty years worth of fees he owes to the federal government, and the political firestorm that resulted when officials went after him and his family took part in the seizure of an Oregon wildlife refuge. Other ranchers resented Bundy's refusal to pay his taxes, but all of them shared a deep resentment toward the federal government.⁸

The feeling of resentment could be mutual. At times the federal government had strong feelings about Nevada. In the late 1970s, federal officials targeted organized crime in Las Vegas. A strike force posted a dartboard with photos on it of federal judges Harry Claiborne, once a legendary defense attorney for, among others, gangsters and suspected gangsters, and Roger D. Foley, known for his belief in civil liberties and long connections to the community. In 1979, the FBI sent longtime agent Joseph Yablonsky, known as the "King of Sting," to head its Las Vegas office.

Yablonsky declared that he had been sent to “plant the American flag” in Nevada. Senator Paul Laxalt, a close friend of Ronald Reagan and chair of his successful national presidential campaign in 1980, also was a target and sought Yablonsky’s removal, to no avail. Hank Greenspun, the publisher of the *Las Vegas Sun*, crusaded against Yablonsky and the FBI over the prosecution of Claiborne, who had committed tax evasion. The federal effort included giving immunity to Joe Conforte, the operator of the Mustang Ranch brothel and a veteran and inveterate law-breaker. “A federal judge is being hanged by a pimp. It’s outrageous,” Greenspun said. Federal officials expressed amazement that a lawyer who had been a close friend of casino owner and reputed killer, Benny Binion, could be appointed a federal judge. They also targeted the senator responsible for Claiborne’s appointment, Howard Cannon, who had to testify about Teamsters and mob leaders conspiring to attempt to bribe him—and, as Cannon noted, managed to schedule his testimony right before an election, which he lost.⁹

The year of another Cannon campaign, 1964, helps us understand the political ramifications of this idea of Nevada exceptionalism. As that year’s Democratic national convention began, Lyndon Johnson refused to identify his running-mate on that year’s ticket. One of the names that popped up was Nevada’s second-term Democratic governor, Grant Sawyer, who later recalled that “the Nevada delegation passed a resolution supporting my candidacy ... once in a while you run into one of those old Johnson-Sawyer buttons at a swap meet or something.” In the end, Johnson chose, to almost no one’s surprise, one of his former U.S. Senate colleagues, Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota. Sawyer had long since dismissed the idea anyway, pointing out that candidates often spread such rumors about potential vice-presidential candidates in hopes of attracting support from their states or constituencies.

For Nevadans with political ambitions, the irony of that election year would be considerable. In Sawyer’s case, he knew that someone else would be on the ticket, and not just because Nevada could provide only three electoral votes and would do nothing to sway surrounding states. Indeed, two decades before, when he had been a law student in Washington, D.C., he had received a valuable lesson in politics. The senator who put him on his patronage, McCarran, was one of the most influential members of Congress, for good or ill. According to Sawyer, he “had told me years before that nobody from Nevada was ever going to be a president or vice-president of the United States, and probably none would hold a cabinet position, because of the generally-held perception of Nevada. I agreed with that assessment.”¹⁰

That stigma became even clearer to another Nevada politician of Sawyer’s time. In 1958, Cannon had won election to the Senate from Nevada as part of a national and local Democratic sweep. In the same year, Sawyer won the governorship, and ran for reelection in 1962. Cannon’s top aide, Jack Conlon, a veteran of Nevada Democratic politics and its intrigue, had been concerned that, if reelected, Sawyer might use the governorship as a springboard to challenge Cannon’s reelection. To

keep that from happening, in 1962, Conlon worked to elect a Republican lieutenant governor; Sawyer would be less likely to take on Cannon in a primary if doing so would hand the governor's mansion to the opposition. Conlon proved too successful: he helped elect Republican Paul Laxalt, who then challenged Cannon's reelection in 1964 and came within 84 votes of defeating him in a Democratic year in which Cannon should have won easily.¹¹

It would be the last time Laxalt lost an election. In 1966, he defeated Sawyer's attempt for a third term and undoubtedly would have been reelected in 1970, but chose not to seek a second term. He and his family reopened an old Carson City staple, the Ormsby House, with help from a Teamsters Central States Pension Fund loan. Then Laxalt returned to politics, winning a Senate seat in 1974. During his two terms, he became best known for being Ronald Reagan's best friend, chairing his unsuccessful presidential campaign in 1976 and his winning ones in 1980 and 1984. In 1980, Reagan wanted Laxalt to be his running-mate, but the Nevadan said no, logically pointing out that between sharing his conservative ideology and coming from a neighboring state with the minimum number of electoral votes, he did nothing to strengthen the ticket; George H.W. Bush, Connecticut-born and a Texas resident, did and became vice-president. Yet as Reagan's second term neared its end, Laxalt retired from the Senate and pondered a presidential run. It would have been an uphill climb, as Laxalt knew: Bush had loyally served Reagan over his two terms, and thus had a head start.¹²

Laxalt also ran into the very problem about which McCarran had warned Sawyer. In 1983, the *Sacramento Bee* had published a report on the Teamsters loan and skimming at the Ormsby House. Laxalt responded with a \$250 million libel suit. Eventually, Laxalt and the press chain reached a settlement, with both sides claiming victory. But McClatchy reported that Laxalt had no knowledge of any skimming (ironically, the editor in charge of the series, legendary journalist Frank McCulloch, a onetime managing editor of *The Los Angeles Times* and executive at Time-Life, had been born in Fernley, Nevada, and worked as a wire service reporter in Reno). In 1987, the CBS News broadcast *Sixty Minutes* canceled a planned report following up on the McClatchy newspaper's reporting, and independent arbitrators awarded Laxalt his legal fees, but dredging up the story did nothing to help the Nevadan's presidential aspirations. He ended his effort before it really had started.¹³

Whether McCarran's warning still holds true may be open to debate. Reid became the most powerful member of the U.S. Senate, but also faced occasional sniping from critics inside and outside of Nevada over his earlier tenure as chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission—specifically, a mobster's specious claim that he had special connections to Reid. While Reid had no presidential aspirations, his onetime junior colleague from Nevada, Republican John Ensign, visited Iowa in advance of the 2012 presidential campaign before his resignation from the Senate over ethics charges. Ensign had been a veterinarian and a gaming executive, and the son of a casino owner, but his ethics problems had nothing to do with gaming.

Whether he would have run for higher office, and whether his casino and Nevada connections would have posed a problem, cannot be known. Another Nevada Republican, Brian Sandoval, attracted attention nationally as a potential vice-presidential candidate and even as a possible nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court; while he had no experience in casino ownership, he had, like Reid, chaired the state gaming commission. If Sandoval had had hopes of being on the national ticket in 2016, it seemed more likely that he would face criticism from fellow Republicans for supporting a \$1 billion tax increase than for coming from one of 48 states with some form of legal gambling.¹⁴

The spread of gambling has done a great deal to ameliorate the potential effects of casino operators involving themselves in national affairs. Some outsiders and in-state critics found Laxalt's observation mind-boggling: "For a Nevada politician to refuse a contribution from Moe Dalitz would be like running for office in Michigan and turning down a contribution from General Motors." Granting that Dalitz had an organized crime past, Laxalt's comment reflected the same kind of political reality that led a politician from Georgia to be known as "the Senator from Coca-Cola." But times have been changing. In 1996, *The Nation*, a left-wing magazine, called Republican presidential candidate Robert Dole "Vegas Bob" for his frequent visits to the city and the large campaign contributions he received, and resort mogul Steve Wynn golfed with President Bill Clinton. In September 2015, *New York* magazine headlined a story about the chief executive of Las Vegas Sands, "Sheldon Adelson Is Ready to Buy the Presidency," and talked about his views about Israel and similarities to and differences from the Koch brothers, the businessmen who, like Adelson, have spent heavily on behalf of Republican candidates and causes. The article never discussed whether a Republican presidential aspirant should or would have qualms about taking millions of dollars from a casino owner—and doing so while also seeking the votes of evangelical Christians who, two decades before, had pushed the party to try to limit the spread of gambling. What once had made Nevada so exceptional no longer seemed to be all that big a deal.¹⁵

Between the legalization of gambling and the passage of time, perhaps Nevada actually has become unexceptional, or exceptional in ways that Nevadans have not considered. Recent presidential elections may provide a clue. In what was known as the "Mississippi of the West," Barack Obama twice won a higher percentage of the vote in Nevada than he did nationally, and during his reelection, in 2012, the state elected its first African-American member of Congress, Steven Horsford. In 2016, Democrat Hillary Clinton lost her bid to succeed Obama, and sexism played some role in that outcome. Yet in a state that often has faced national criticism for permitting prostitution and using women's bodies to attract tourists to shows, Nevada's electoral votes went to Clinton (only the second time in a century that it failed to vote for the winning candidate), and Nevadans elected the first Latina senator in American history, Catherine Cortez Masto, to succeed Reid. No sooner did the election end than the national president of Unite Here, the former leader of the Las Vegas Culi-

nary Union, published an essay entitled, "Democrats must look to Nevada for hope—and lessons on how to win." But as Nevada State Democratic Party chair Roberta Lange said, "I don't think there's a cookie-cutter model that works for every state."¹⁶

Nevada rarely has fit in with any national cookie cutter. As historian David Levering Lewis has pointed out, perhaps "what has been exceptional about our exceptionalist national narrative are the historic exceptions to it—notably, people of color?" and historians now may be "at the frontier of a new meta-narrative that upends exceptionalism" and shows how slavery made possible "the enormous wealth that made the industrial North possible and the surplus capital upon which the commercial and industrial paramouncy of New York and Philadelphia were built." Nevada owes its statehood to a war that led to the upending of that world, and subsequent efforts to recapture it. That war led to the Fourteenth Amendment, whose approval of birthright citizenship Eric Foner has described as "the good kind of American exceptionalism" and long "a crowning achievement of what once called itself the party of Lincoln"—a party that recently has discussed eliminating that right, although, as Foner wrote, birthright citizenship "does make the United States (along with Canada) unique in the developed world." That discussion, led by Republican presidential candidates in 2016 and culminating with Donald Trump's comments about Mexicans, has been especially offensive to many Hispanic people, who now comprise about 30 percent of Nevada's population—and thus problematic for Republican candidates, who fared more poorly in Nevada than its recent elections might have led them to expect. As the writings of Wilbur Shepperson and Ronald M. James, among others, have demonstrated, Nevada has a long history of alternately welcoming and turning away from immigrants. Nevada now seems to celebrate the diversity that other parts of the country view as a challenge at best and as unacceptable at worst.¹⁷

Nevada long has seemed like an exception, a unique place. As *Time* magazine argued in 1994, America had become much more like Las Vegas, with its service economy in a post-industrial society. Politically, Nevada seems to fit the rest of the country: blue and purple in the cities, and blood red in rural areas. But its population is demographically more representative of the United States than the first two states on the presidential road map, Iowa and New Hampshire, which helps explain the decision by both major parties to make Nevada's presidential caucus one of the first stops in the nomination process. Nevada's economy still depends primarily on gaming and mining, and measurements of its sociocultural status regularly rank it near the bottom in most areas. All of that may seem exceptional in some ways, unexceptional in others. But Nevada's lack of economic diversity and its long history of human diversity may distinguish it from other places, as might its equally long history of a willingness to project an image of itself that often is at variance with the image that most states would prefer to present. Perhaps Nevada has only seemed exceptional all these years, when it really has been a mirror to America that shows the rest of the country both the best and the worst of itself.¹⁸

NOTES

¹Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1904), II, 519; Richard W. Etulain, ed., *Does the Frontier Experience Make America Exceptional?* (New York: Bedford / St. Martin's, 1999); Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998).

²See Harry Reid and Mark Warren, *The Good Fight: Hard Lessons from Searchlight to Washington* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2008). See also Steve Sebelius, ed., "Harry," *Desert Companion*, October 2016 (xiv:10), 50-55.

³Wilbur S. Shepperson and Ann Harvey, *Mirage-Land: Images of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1992); Wilbur S. Shepperson, ed., *East of Eden, West of Zion: Essays on Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1989). On the West and its promotion of an image, see David M. Wrobel, *Promised Lands: Promotion, Memory, and the Creation of the American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002); Eugene P. Moehring, "'Promoting the Varied Interests of the New and Rising Community': The Booster Press on Nevada's Mining Frontier, 1859-1885," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 42:2 (Summer 1999), 91-118.

⁴*Chicago Tribune*, May 17, 1897, p. 6; "Diary," San Francisco, June 24, 1955, in Robert H. Ferrell, ed., *Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 317; Richard O. Davies, *The Main Event: Boxing in Nevada from the Mining Camps to the Las Vegas Strip* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2014); Jerome E. Edwards, *Pat McCarran: Political Boss of Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1982), 179; Ralph L. Denton and Michael S. Green, *A Liberal Conscience: Ralph Denton, Nevadan* (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 2001), 67-68.

⁵Albert Deutsch, "The Sorry State of Nevada," *Collier's Weekly*, March 18, 1955, 74-79; Ed Reid and Ovid DeMaris, *The Green Felt Jungle* (New York: Trident Press, 1963); Gilman M. Ostrander, *Nevada: The Great Rotten Borough, 1859-1964* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966).

⁶Pat McCarran to Joseph F. McDonald, Washington, July 3, 1951, McCarran ms, Nevada Historical Society, Reno; Edwards, *McCarran*, 152-55. James W. Hulse, *Forty Years in the Wilderness: Impressions of Nevada, 1940-1980* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1986), and Sally Denton and Roger Morris, *The Money and the Power: The Making of Las Vegas and Its Hold on America, 1947-2000* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), address these issues and the works in question.

⁷Robert V. Nickel, "Dollars, Defense, and the Desert: Southern Nevada's Military Economy and World War II," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 47:4 (Winter 2004), 303-27; Roger W. Lotchin, ed., *The Martial Metropolis: U.S. Cities in War and Peace* (New York: Praeger, 1984); Gerald D. Nash, *The Federal Landscape: An Economic History of the Twentieth-Century West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999); A. Costandina Titus, *Bombs in the Backyard: Atomic Testing and American Politics* (Second edition, Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2001).

⁸J. Samuel Walker, *The Road to Yucca Mountain: The Development of Radioactive Waste Policy in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); R. McGregor Cawley, *Federal Land, Western Anger: The Sagebrush Rebellion and Environmental Politics* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993); Florence Williams and Ethan Hill, "The Shovel Rebellion," *Mother Jones*, 26:1 (January/February 2001), 60-67. On Bundy, see, for example, *The New York Times*, April 24, 2014, A1. On the fights over silver and mining, see Russell R. Elliott, *Servant of Power: A Political Biography of Senator William M. Stewart* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1983), especially 101-94; Gary E. Elliott, *Senator Alan Bible and the Politics of the New West* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1994), where numerous chapters detail Bible's efforts on behalf of the mineral industry.

⁹Denton and Morris, *The Money and the Power*, 332-49; Robert A. Friedman, "Fastest Pen in the West: Las Vegas Sun Publisher Hank Greenspun," *Washington Journalism Review*, April 1984, 36-42, 58; Eleanore Bushnell, "Judge Harry E. Claiborne and the Federal Impeachment Process," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 32:4 (Winter 1989), 235-61; Bushnell, *Crimes, Follies, and Misfortunes: The Federal Impeachment Trials* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992); J. Bruce Alverson, *Flamboyant Lawyer in a Maverick Western Town: Las Vegas Through the Eyes of Harry Claiborne* (Las Vegas: Alverson, Taylor, Mortensen, and Sanders, 2011); Michael Verneti, *Lies Within Lies: The Betrayal of Nevada Judge Harry Claiborne* (Las Vegas: Stephens Press, 2011).

¹⁰Grant Sawyer, Gary E. Elliott, and R.T. King, *Hang Tough! Grant Sawyer: An Activist in the Governor's Mansion* (Reno: University of Nevada Oral History Program, 1993), 199.

¹¹Denton and Green, *A Liberal Conscience*, 245-50.

¹²Richard L. Spees, "Paul Laxalt: Man of Political Independence," in Richard O. Davies, ed., *The Maverick Spirit: Building a New Nevada* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998), 166-93; Paul Laxalt, *Nevada's Paul Laxalt: A Memoir* (Reno: Jack Bacon & Company, 2000), 281-336.

¹³On *Sixty Minutes*, see <http://www.moldea.com/60Minutes.html>, accessed September 8, 2015; Denton and Morris, *The Money and the Power*, 347-49.

¹⁴*The Mob on the Run*, KLAS-TV, January 1987 (tape in author's possession, also accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sg-CxZWW7kA>, October 23, 2016; *Las Vegas Sun*, May 13, 2009; *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, March 27, 2015.

¹⁵Denton and Morris, *The Money and the Power*, 337; Russell Baker, *The Good Times* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1989), 279; New York, September 7, 2015, at <http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2015/09/sheldon-adelson-is-ready-to-buy-the-presidency.html#>, accessed September 9, 2015. An examination of news stories from 2010 to the present demonstrates many examples of reports on Adelson's political activities that focus on his ideology rather than where and how he makes his money.

¹⁶<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/11/democrats-campaign-win-nevada-party-lessons-election>, accessed November 13, 2016; <http://www.reviewjournal.com/news/politics-and-government/nevada/democratic-machine-turned-nevada-blue-election-night>, accessed November 14, 2016.

¹⁷David Levering Lewis, "Historians of Color Are Revolutionizing the Narrative of 'American Exceptionalism,'" *The Nation*, September 1, 2015, <https://www.thenation.com/article/historians-of-color-are-revolutionizing-the-narrative-of-american-exceptionalism/>, accessed November 14, 2016; Eric Foner, "Birthright Citizenship Is the Good Kind of American Exceptionalism," *The Nation*, August 27, 2015, <https://www.thenation.com/article/birthright-citizenship-is-the-good-kind-of-american-exceptionalism/>, accessed November 14, 2016; Wilbur S. Shepperson, *Restless Strangers: Nevada's Immigrants and Their Interpreters* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1970); Ronald M. James, <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/32>, accessed October 23, 2016.

¹⁸Kurt Andersen, "Las Vegas, U.S.A.," *Time*, January 10, 1994, <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,979939,00.html>, accessed November 15, 2016. See also David F. Damore and Robert E. Lang, "Beyond Density & Diversity: Understanding the Socio-Cultural Geography of Contemporary Presidential Elections" (Las Vegas: Brookings Mountain West, 2016).

Resistance to the “Hoofed Locusts”

Key Pittman, Basque Immigrants, and the Sheep Industry of Nevada, 1910-1920

IKER SAITUA

INTRODUCTION

In December 1913, the *Tonopah Daily Bonanza* lamented that five Basque sheep owners in McDermitt (on the Nevada-Oregon border) sold out their businesses, took their capital, and returned to their European homeland. The *Tonopah Bonanza* blamed Nevada’s U.S. Senator Key Pittman for his ingratitude towards the Basque immigrant community:

Five of those undesirable citizens [Basques] of whom Senator Key Pittman never seems to tire of picking out for invidious discrimination have bid farewell to Humboldt county and gone back home to Spain. If Senator Pittman wished to repel immigration, he could not have succeeded better than by his treatment of the sheep industry and the men who tended the flocks of Nevada.¹

Iker Saitua received his Ph.D. from the University of Nevada, Reno (Spring 2016). He holds a B.A. in history from the University of the Basque Country (2010) and an M.A. in contemporary history from the same institution. Saitua’s main areas of research include Western, labor, immigration, and environmental history. His work focuses largely on the intersections among agricultural labor, natural resources, and livestock-raising in the intermountain West. He is particularly interested in grazing issues on Western public lands, as well as the nineteenth and twentieth century migration of Basque labor forces to the Great Basin.

In the 1910s, Basque immigrants in the sheep industry had become a target group of discrimination. In the context of increased economic competition and social tension on Nevada's ranges, older cattlemen scapegoated Basque sheep workers for all the problems with grazing on public lands. During the early twentieth century, as Congress and the President moved to establish forest reserves and eventually National Forests, issues of rangeland governance made the Basque question and itinerant sheepherders central to a political debate at the state and national level over who could use public grazing lands. "The prevalence of Basques among the herders," historian Samuel Hays stressed, "gave the industry an even more alien character."² Along with the general nativist sentiment in the United States, the World War I had much to do with the discrimination and exclusion efforts to take Basques off the public-domain lands.

The present article explores this subject of land-use disputes against the Basques in Nevada and the political attention it attracted from pro-cattle interests. Among them, the most vociferous was Senator Key Pittman who worked on several fronts in order to remove the "hoofed locusts" from Nevada throughout the 1910s and 1920s.³ This article analyzes Key Pittman's campaign against the open-range sheep industry in the Silver State whose targets included the Basque agricultural labor.

NEVADA'S PROBLEMS WITH THE FREE AND OPEN RANGE

In the 1880s, the state of Nevada saw an unprecedented expansion and growth of stock numbers on the ranges—both sheep and cattle. As in the Great Plains, the early livestock industry in the Great Basin developed with open-range grazing. Low operating expenses with cheap labor, free forage, and open range made for large profits. After the winter of 1889-1890 (the so-called "White Winter"), stock operators abandoned the classic open-range system and placed greater emphasis upon the raising of hay for winter-feeding. The "White Winter" significantly reduced cattle numbers on the Nevada ranges to the benefit of sheep graziers. Availability of range resources was altered by overgrazing and inappropriate agricultural practices, as well as droughts and severe winters. The exhaustion of perennial grasses was followed by the invasion of annuals, shrubs, and big sagebrush—all of which did not adversely affect sheep grazing. Big stock operations had collapsed after their exploitation of the ranges and their monopolization of water resources to control the ranges. While smaller operations scrambled to pick up the pieces, the ranges were now open to outside herds, especially sheep.⁴

As sheep ranching expanded rapidly in Nevada and other western states, the Basque Country became an important source of pliable labor to work in the public rangelands.⁵ In the late nineteenth century, although other collectivities also entered this occupation, Basques had become a noticeable and visible group

in sheep grazing. Even though Basque immigrants not only worked in sheep grazing, their work in this industry had shaped and strengthened the overall Basque-American community all around the West. At the turn of the twentieth century, when an increasing number of Basque immigrants were arriving in the American West to work as sheepherders, their presence in the public ranges began to disturb the economic interests of the older livestock operators.⁶

Exploitation and degradation of the natural resources raised concerns among forestry and water experts as well as those Progressives who saw opportunities to champion the causes of an emerging Conservation Movement that emphasized "wise use" of resources based upon a utilitarian doctrine that stressed use for the greatest number, for the greatest good, for the longest period of time. In the 1890s, Congress initiated a partial reorganization of the public domain. In response to calls to conserve the nation's forest resources, Congress gave the President the authority to proclaim forest reserves on the public domain mostly in the Far and Mountain West. Establishment of forest reserves was a first step to conserve and protect conservation of water and timber resources. With the passage of the Land Revision Act of 1891, Congress prohibited land entries or private land claims under the land laws of the United States on the designated or proclaimed forest reserve lands. The immediate effects of the Land Revision Act were to close resource-use development on these lands.⁷

In 1897, Congress passed the Forest Organic or Forest Use Act. The Act permitted resource use in the reserves, but only under the regulation and supervision of the Department of Interior from where the original forest reserves were administered. By 1898 and 1899, the Department of Interior and its General Land Office moved to regulate and limit the numbers of stock grazing on the newly-established forest reserves. In March 1898, Nevada's *Reno Weekly Gazette and Stockman* informed its grazing community that the federal government opened the forest reserve in California "to her starving herds." While forest reserves were proclaimed in California during the 1890s, lands in Nevada would not be reserved for National Forests until after 1905. Since there were no forest reserves or National Forests in Nevada during the decade of the 1890s, the free and open range existed even in the valuable high mountain pastures. In the still abundant free open ranges of Nevada, law enforcement was weak or absent giving opportunity to incidents of violence.⁸

Unregulated livestock grazing on common land invited crises and conflicts. The growing anarchy on the Nevada ranges often made contracted sheepherders the brunt of the resulting range conflicts. Sheepherders, either Basques or others, were easy targets for their opponents or enemies. Their presence and especially their immigrant status created in part an agenda for conflict that marked the Nevada range struggles from the 1890s to the 1930s. In November 1895, two Basque sheepherders were killed at a sheep camp northwest of Pyramid Lake near Winnemucca Valley in Nevada, by two ranch hands working for the cattle operation of J. M. Flannigan.⁹

By the early twentieth century, livestock agriculture in Nevada was a major economic activity. In 1900, the Nevada Surveyor General, Edward D. Kelley, in his Biennial Report, declared that the livestock industry was "one of the most prominent as well as most profitable in the State." However, the itinerant sheep grazing presented a threat to larger livestock interests that traditionally operated on the public-domain lands in Nevada. While the Department of Interior tried to ignore grazing issues on its public domain other than prevention of any private fencing of lands, the Nevada range users faced issues of over grazing and the destruction of water sources. Year after year, Nevada policymakers tried to address the grazing problems on the state's ranges. While state powers were limited over federal lands within the state, the legislature, however, took some measures to resolve the matters at hand.¹⁰

The Administration of Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) invigorated the Conservation Movement. Gifford Pinchot persuaded the President to move the forest reserves to the Department of Agriculture under a new National Forest System. In February 1905, the Department of Interior's administrative functions and responsibilities were transferred to a newly established agency, the United States Forest Service, within the Department of Agriculture. Gifford Pinchot, friend and adviser of Roosevelt, was appointed Chief Forester for the new agency. At the turn of the century, to Pinchot, grazing was one of the most important economic activities in the forest reserves. In 1905, Pinchot and the Forest Service continued to implement a permit system for grazing that the General Land Office had begun. The Forest Service issued a *Use Book* that defined resource-use regulations under a permit for an allotment. In 1902, the Department of Interior through the *Forest Reserve Manual* had stated that the Secretary of Interior possessed the authority to restrict any livestock grazing activity with the aim of protecting the forest reserves. The new Forest Service blueprint made similar claims for the Secretary of Agriculture.¹¹

The *Use Book* set out rules on grazing seasons, set numbers of stock, and issued grazing permits based upon property ownership and traditional use criteria. Three classes of grazing permits were available: first, Class A to those owners of ranch properties within or adjacent to the National Forests who customarily grazed stock on lands now within the National Forests; second, Class B for those who possessed property near the National Forests and traditionally grazed stock in these high mountain pastures; and third, Class C to itinerant graziers who did not own property or a home ranch. The various permits were issued on the basis of this preference criteria. All permits granted were considered grazing privileges not rights by the Forest Service. The preference system favored the first two classes and generally excluded the third or Class C permits. Also, as historian William Rowley has explained, the Forest Service based its preference system on the concept of "commensurate property ownership." The principle of commensurability required graziers to own enough private land to support winter feeding of stock when they must be

removed from the National Forests at the end of the season of graze. Forest Service considered these policies the mechanism to defend established landowning ranchers and small homesteads against the intrusion of itinerant sheep graziers. Basques should not be automatically regarded as itinerants because many were already landowners, but still the widely held image of the Basque as an itinerant tramp shepherd on the margins of the grazing economy persisted. Their marginalized status in the industry took many years to overcome.¹²

By the 1910s, the majority of resident stock operators (sheep and cattle people) who owned land, either large or small, saw transient sheep grazing on the public domain as a threat to established range practices and, therefore, a threat to law and order. This rural public sentiment against the itinerant sheep grazing on the federal lands was in accord with the yeoman farmer private property tenants of Jeffersonian Democracy that the privatization of small farms of much of the public domain made possible. In Nevada, however, the privatization of most of the public domain was not to occur under the prevailing land laws of the nineteenth century or the twentieth century for that matter. By that time, nomadic shepherders and Basque immigrants were synonyms. Although an increasing number of Basques were already property owners, Basque immigrants were ridiculed by pro-cattle interests in Nevada who joined the anti-foreign nativist xenophobia of the time.¹³

KEY PITTMAN'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE BASQUE IMMIGRANTS AND THE OPEN-RANGE SHEEP INDUSTRY IN NEVADA

The continuous expansion of the open-range itinerant sheep herding posed a threat to the economic interests of some cattle and sheep companies using the public-domain lands outside of Forest Service regulations. By then, nomadic bands of sheep from Utah and Idaho wintered in the eastern part of Nevada, in White Pine county. Typically, these sheep companies employed cheap immigrant labor, especially the Basque. In addition, the election of a Democratic President, Woodrow Wilson, in 1912, brought to power the Democratic Party nationally that traditionally supported low tariff policies. New tariff bills placed wool on the free list, opening American markets to wool imports that drove down prices.¹⁴

Key Pittman, Democratic Senator from Nevada, defended vigorously these new policies in line with the Democratic Party's position. In 1902, Pittman served as a member of the Central Committee of the Silver Party of Nevada. In 1908, Pittman resigned from the declining Silver Party to join the Democratic Party. In the context of the national Progressive reforms, Pittman launched an unsuccessful campaign for the Senate. While endorsing the Democratic Party's leading reformers, Pittman campaigned in favor of a reduction in the tariff rates, advocated to enlarge the scope of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, defended

a powerful national bank system, and endorsed federal irrigation projects. At the same time, Pittman raised his voice in favor of the private landowners and livestock ranchers, particularly cattle owners.¹⁵ During the 1910s, Nevada's U.S. Senator, Key Pittman, launched a campaign against the open-range sheep industry in Nevada responding to his cattle constituency. Basque workers became the focus of Pittman's attacks. He blamed Basque sheepherders for depleting public ranges, but the Basque community withered the attack and even gained broad support.

ADVOCATING THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE NATIONAL FOREST LANDS IN NEVADA

Key Pittman blamed Basque sheepherders, sometimes called "tramp herders," for creating problems on the public grazing lands of Nevada. While the U.S. Forest Service had taken control of some parts of the grazing situation on the public lands, especially in the high mountain meadows, a vast open range still remained outside Forest Service management. While conservation policies were unfolding in Nevada, conflicts prevailed on the Nevada ranges, including Native American competition for range lands.¹⁶ After he had occupied his Senate seat in 1913, cattle ranchers appealed to Pittman to find ways to curtail itinerant sheep operations. Pittman as a Democrat supported placing wool on the free list and, as a supporter of the Forest Service, advocated the extension of its regulations over larger parts of the public domain to exclude an increasing number of newcomers with their herds coming on to public grazing lands. Pittman not only defended the limited number of National Forests in Nevada, but wished to expand them so that they might regulate and exclude sheep from larger parts of the public domain.¹⁷

With the establishment of the Forest Service in Nevada, studies began on forage resources in relation to livestock grazing in order to determine an optimum economic use of the ranges. The Forest Service evaluated and made decisions on range management based on the "carrying capacity" of the ranges as determined by the availability and conditions of range forage. The Forest Service's implementation of grazing fees associated with the issuing of permits on the number of stock grazed generally favored cattle permits, but sheep operations were not excluded, although there were complaints to the contrary. During and after the Great War, state and national representatives became increasingly irritated and frustrated about the uses of the still open rangelands. The Stock Raising Homestead Act of 1916 tried to promote homesteading on the lands with parcels of 640 acres, but only resulted in further monopolization of the lands by large outfits. The amount of land was still too small for successful small homestead ranching.

In the late 1910s, especially after the United States had entered WWI in April 1917, the state of Nevada witnessed a remarkable expansion of the livestock industry largely based on the wartime demand for wool, mutton, and beef. High prices for livestock meant prosperity. The Forest Service, for its part, accommodated its regulatory policy to the wartime economic demands and



Key Pittman, ca. 1915. (George Grantham Bain Collection, Library of Congress)

relaxed its protective limits on numbers of stock. High stock prices and almost open admission to National Forest range resources quieted range conflicts at least for a while in rural Nevada. During that period, however, as increasing number of newcomers arrived with new sheep bands to share the resources. At the same time established ranchers, be they sheep people or cattle people, raised concerns about non-citizen immigrants' possessing grazing permits in the National Forests.¹⁸

The Great War was followed by a severe depression in the livestock industry in which prices and production dramatically declined. Consequently, many ranchers were forced into bankruptcy. From 1919 to 1922, the postwar crisis was followed by a slow recovery because of a credit crunch which affected negatively on capital investment in the livestock industry characterized by a reduction of competition and increase in risk. In 1923, the Nevada Legislature passed a livestock branding act through a system of registration of stock-brands under the supervision of the stock inspector. Although the new state branding law served to discourage sheep itinerancy, still disorder and conflict prevailed in the public grazing lands beyond the Forest Service's National Forests in Nevada. In Grass Valley of central Nevada, on July 9, 1924, Thomas E. Brackney, a prominent rancher of Austin, killed a Basque shepherd employed by the Sabal Estate and Sheep Company for allegedly trampling his ranch property with his flock.¹⁹

In the early 1920s, responding to his cattle-grazing constituency, Pittman moved to exclude immigrant sheep operators from using the public grazing lands. His constituents had written Pittman about expanding Forest Service regulations to the public-domain grazing lands outside the National Forests in order to discourage tramp sheep herding. In February 1924, Pittman addressed Chief Forester William B. Greeley, advocating the enlargement of the National Forest lands in Nevada in an attempt to have the Forest Service extend its grazing regulations over public-domain range with the intent of further restricting itinerant sheep herding. The Forest Service, however, denied Pittman's request to expand National Forest jurisdiction in Nevada on the ground that "the timber within the proposed reserve was not sufficient to warrant conservation, and that such timber did not serve sufficiently to protect a watershed of useable flowing surface water."²⁰

Pittman attempted to persuade Greeley to find a legally acceptable way to enlarge the National Forest lands in the state of Nevada. Pittman justified the need to expand the existing regulatory system on economic efficiency grounds:

The use of forest reserves in Nevada for range control has proven of great benefit to the stock growing industry. Range control is essential in Nevada if the range is to be preserved. There is not range control legislation for the unreserved public domain and therefore it becomes important for stock growers to utilize wherever it is beneficial, range control through forest reservations.²¹

Despite Pittman's perseverance, the Forest Service eventually denied the petition of the Senator from Nevada invoking that Nevada's lands were unworthy for further protection. However, the Forest Service empathized with the Nevada's local stock owners' struggles:

During the past ten years, however, transient sheep owners, excluded from other ranges by private acquisition, or otherwise, have come into this region in increasing numbers and have not only deprived the local stock growers of the forage resources upon which they are dependent but, through excessive grazing and improper use of the range, have largely destroyed the grazing value of the lands.²²

Although the conservation movement and private companies shared views toward safeguarding and preserving economic stability, this time, the Forest Service considered unjustifiable the expansion of its lands or, more to the point, it did not believe it had the lawful authority to do so. Beyond their powers, the Forest Service and the Secretary of Agriculture judged necessary that Congress should enact legislation for constructively managing the use of the public-domain lands for grazing purposes.²³

Nevada cattle owners became increasingly frustrated over the government inaction concerning the management of the public-domain lands in Nevada. In April 1924, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Quinn Canyon Livestock Association wrote to Pittman complaining about the overgrazing and destruction caused by the sheepherders in the public grazing lands beyond the National Forests. He wanted some form of government control or regulation to stop the trampling bands of sheep:

The grazing of livestock during the summer months in practically all parts of the State is properly taken care of and provided for through the present National Forest areas throughout the State. The spring, fall and winter ranges are not properly taken care of or controlled and as a result these three seasonal ranges are fast becoming denuded and unless some immediate action is taken to place these ranges under some form of Government control the livestock industry of the State will be completely ruined by over-grazing [*sic*]. The overgrazed condition on our now open public ranges is being brought about principally by the so-called "tramp sheepmen" who drive their flocks into Nevada early in the fall and allow them to remain here until the following spring. The tramp or transient sheepman has absolutely no regard for the welfare of our ranges, his only interest being to avail himself of the maximum results and benefits of our ranges so long as they last.

The condition as briefly outlined above is becoming worse each year and in an attempt to protect our local ranch and stockmen, two petitions have recently been forwarded to you praying for additions to the White Pine Division of the Nevada National Forest.²⁴

Much to the disappointment of cattle ranchers, Pittman could not obtain legislation to permit the expansion of National Forests, and the Forest Service and the Department of Agriculture declined to cooperate with him in the effort. In the 1920s, a series of issues disturbed the ranching community in Nevada: tramp sheepherders; grazing fees; grazing permits or "privileges"; the attachment or no attachment to ranch property; enhanced ranch values created by grazing permits.²⁵

FAILURES OF THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE BASQUES

Key Pittman's hostility against Basques did not go unnoticed. His blustery statements captured the attention of the media and the public in Nevada and other western states where the Basque population concentrated. On October 7, 1910, the *Reno Evening Gazette* questioned Key Pittman's attacks against the sheep industry and the Basque workers. The *Gazette* complained about Pittman's allegations as follows: "Some good Democrat ought to tell Mr. Pittman that he is making a joke of himself when he campaigns along those lines." The Reno newspaper considered the Senator's statements unfair: "Are you going to send to Washington a man who would do all he could to ruin the sheep industry of this state because he believed that the only men who were benefitted by that industry were twenty sheepowners and two hundred Basque sheep herders?"

Contrary to Pittman's arguments, because the sheep industry represented an important sector in the state's economy, the *Gazette* saw Pittman's position incomprehensible:

Upon the ranges of Nevada today there are running about one million sheep. The average price realized from a fleece is over one dollar. The income from sheep sold as mutton is over two million dollars. Over three thousand sheep men are employed directly and indirectly in this great industry.²⁶

Furthermore, it declared that Nevadans were intelligent enough not to be swayed by these kinds of arguments and "to distinguish between fit and unfit—and they know that any man who would destroy the sheep industry of this state simply because he believes or pretends to believe that the only men who benefit from it are twenty sheep owners and two hundred Basque sheepherders is unfit to look after Nevada's interests in the United States senate."²⁷

Their Catholic affiliation gave the Basque immigrant community a public voice and an opportunity to strengthen their ties with the overall society. On March 31, 1911, Father Thomas M. Tubman, Reverend of St. Thomas Aquinas Cathedral of Reno, wrote a letter to the editor of the *Reno Evening Gazette*, in response to Senator Pittman's outbursts against the Basques and the sheep industry. In this letter, Father Tubman expressed his admiration for the Basque immigrant community and their support of the Catholic Church. The letter reflects the Church's embrace of the Basque community. Tubman wrote:

... For years I have observed their progress, their social, religious, and patriotic activities, and I have come to the conclusion that Nevada can well boast of her Basque population. We need just such a people to assist in developing the limitless resources of a state that is slowly but surely coming into its own. While other states of the union are rapidly approaching the zenith of their prosperity, Nevada is but facing the dawn...

The Basques who are now here have made good. They have shown how wealth can be wrung from our uncultivated plains and rugged mountains. With indomitable energy they have gone to work in raising great sheepfolds, that have brought wealth to themselves and the state. They are admirably adapted to pastoral and agricultural pursuits, strong of limb, healthy in body, temperate in habit, religious and Godfearing, there can be no failures among them.

While they tenaciously cling to the memories, traditions, folklore, and national customs of their native land, they soon learn to love their adopted country.

Divorce is unknown among them. The men make ideal husbands and marry early in life, and their women, renowned for their beauty and virtue, cannot be surpassed as matrons in the home. Their children are numerous and inherit all the characteristics of their forebears.

Knowing them as I do from the intimate relations of pastor and people and recognizing their importance in the future of this state, I have much pleasure in rendering this tribute to our friends of the Basque nationality.²⁸

Tubman not only praised the contribution of the Basque immigrant community in Nevada, but also deplored the discrimination because of their work on the rangelands as sheepherders. In his praises and claims in favor of the Basques, Tubman's letter shows how, by the 1910s, the Basque-American community was not only settled in the sheep camps of the Great Basin, but also in towns like Reno.²⁹

In January 1913, Key Pittman was elected a Senator of Nevada. In this position, he could do more for his cattle grazing constituency. On June 4, 1913, Pittman testified before the Senate Lobby Investigation Committee in Washington, D.C., which was carrying out a general investigation to determine the proposed tariff bill. Representing the Nevada Democrats, Pittman defended the reduction of the tariff rate on wool, arguing that the sheep industry of Nevada was one of the less important sectors in the state's economy. Besides saying that the sheep industry amounted to little, Pittman remarked that a large percentage of the total sheep population—over a million sheep—were owned by out-of-state owners from California, Idaho, and Utah. Pittman continued:

...I also know of my own personal knowledge that nearly all of the laborers employed in that occupation are Basque sheep herders, who can hardly speak the English language, and get about \$35 a month.³⁰

Immediately, James A. Reed, Senator from Missouri and member of the Committee, got interested in the question of the Basque immigrant labor:

Senator Reed: What do you mean by Basque sheep herders?

Senator Pittman: The Basques come from the Pyrenees mountains in Spain. They get that class of labor because they seem to be adapted to sheep herding, and they are lacking in intelligence, independence, or anything else. They are just about as near a slave as anybody could be under our present existing conditions, and I do know of my own personal knowledge that the sentiment of our State is not in favor of a tariff on wool or sugar.³¹

Pittman denigrated the Basque immigrant labor as inferior and despicable. He blamed Basques for being an economic threat to Nevada because they took these agricultural jobs and depressed local wages. A brief time later, Reed asked Pittman more about the Basques of Nevada:

Senator Reed: You spoke a moment ago of the Basque sheep herders. Are they ordinarily naturalized citizens, or otherwise?

Senator Pittman: No, they are not. As a general thing they never associate with the other people in the State; they live among themselves; they can only speak a few words of the English language; they live in the lowest possible way for a human being to live; and they are nothing but sheep herders.

Senator Reed: You spoke of the wages, \$35 a month. Is that an ordinary wage in your State, or is it less than the wage that other people receive?

Senator Pittman: It is much less.³²

According to Pittman, the Basque immigrant community of Nevada was very clannish and unassimilable. He sneered at Basque-Americans because he erroneously considered them as mere sojourners. To Pittman, in other words, the Basques were undesirable immigrants many of whom would never become citizens of the United States.³³

Pittman's declarations infuriated not only the Basque immigrant population living in the West, but also other non-Basques who stood up publicly for the Basque residents. Public reactions to these statements came first from the non-Basques. On July 24, Nevada attorney J. A. Langwith from Winnemucca wrote a letter to the *Silver State* criticizing Pittman's accusations and paying a special tribute to the Basque community. He said that Pittman's declarations had caused a loss of confidence among businessmen in other economic sectors of Nevada:

...Pittman's attack on the sheep industry and the Basque sheepowners and herders is doing much injury to our state. Business men and men with money are figuring that our leading industries, such as cattle, sheep, lead, mining, and possibly silver and copper, will get some very hard knocks should cattle, wool and lead be eventually placed on the free list.³⁴

Then Langwith questioned the Senator's charges against the Basque immigrants, considering them to be untrue and unfair. He stuck up for the Basque community of Nevada as follows:

There are many Basques and descendants of Basques engaged in ranching, cattle, and mercantile business as well as the sheep business. The Basque is usually a man of more than ordinary intelligence, with keen business ability, and is usually prosperous. They are, as a rule, law abiding, sober, and make good citizens.³⁵

He explained how Basque immigrants were not only mere sheep workers, but were also engaged in every level of the livestock industry, whether cattle or sheep. Langwith enjoyed good relations with the state's Basque immigrant community and he could not understand Pittman's attitude toward them: "I feel it my duty to thus poorly express what I know about the men and women whose fair name, honor, pride, and integrity Senator Pittman has so maligned and deeply wounded." The dignity of the Basque shepherders and the overall immigrant community became a constant issue in those letters and articles.³⁶

During the debate of the tariff bill on August 21, 1913, in the first session of the sixty-third congress, Key Pittman gave a long speech on the floor of the

Senate declaring himself "heartily" in favor of the bill H. R. 3321 to reduce tariff rates on wool and he was "firmly convinced that it is for the best interests of the people of my State." Pittman responded that lowering tariff rates for wool did not mean fiercer competition for domestic sheep companies:

The removal of the tariff will certainly permit foreign wool to come into the country, but the question is: How much will come in, and at what price can the foreigner afford to sell it in the United States?

In the first place, the foreigner can not afford to sell his wool in the United States for less than he can obtain for it in the markets of the world; and in the second place, he can not afford to sell it for less than it cost him to produce.³⁷

After arguing the benefits of tariff liberalization, Pittman contended that the sheep industry in Nevada was insignificant compared with other western states, and cattle ranching and the mining industry were more important for the state's wealth. Pittman advocated protection of settlers and home builders against sheep grazing in the public range in Nevada. According to Pittman, sheep grazing was detrimental for agricultural development and farm settlements in Nevada. In strongly nationalist terms, he described the following disadvantages of the sheep industry to Nevada:

The American farmer comes naturally to the raising of cattle and horses, and he has no superior on earth, while the sheep industry, with its cheap labor, seems to require the most ignorant, the most unprogressive, and the lowest type of foreign labor. It is the custom of the farmer in our valleys to range his cattle and horses on the adjacent mountain side while raising and harvesting his hay, and then to drive them within his inclosure, fatten them upon the grass and the hay, and drive them to market. Since the sheep industry has monopolized the range of the State of Nevada the farmer finds it difficult to pursue this system of raising cattle and horses. Down each side of the valleys, along the mountain ranges adjacent to these farms, come thousands upon thousands of sheep, driven by Basque sheep herders and collie dogs, uprooting the vegetation, breaking down fences, destroying roads, obliterating ranges, defiling the watercourses, and driving the cattle and horses of the farmer off of their natural ranges.³⁸

While demeaning the sheep industry, Pittman stood up for homesteading and the cattle industry, saying things like: "...there is ample room to increase the number of farms and to increase the number of the farmers' cattle and horses if the sheep are not permitted to monopolize the public domain, the springs, the wells, and the watercourses of the State."³⁹

At the end of his speech, Pittman said that, "practically all of our sheep herders and nearly all of the laborers engaged in the sheep industry are Basque herders... who speak very little of the English language and rarely ever declare their intention to become citizens of the United States." In total sympathy with a pro-labor progressive ideology in Nevada, Pittman contrasted itinerant sheep laborers with the stalwart unionized immigrants who worked in the hard-rock mining industry of his state:

As to the employment of foreigners in other branches of labor in my State, I wish to say that the other foreigners who are engaged in labor in the State are engaged principally in mining; not coal mining, for we have none, but hard-rock mining. There are no higher class laborers than miners. All of them are union miners. All of them stand for union wages. They are all capable, intelligent workers, and every one of them declares his intention to become a citizen of the United States just the minute the opportunity is offered to him. There is no comparison whatever between the ordinary foreigner and the Basque sheep herder from the Pyrenees Mountains.⁴⁰

On October 3, 1913, Congress finally passed the Underwood Tariff Act which placed raw wool on the free list. Western woolgrowers were angered with the passage. They were particularly furious with Key Pittman's declarations about the sheep industry of Nevada. In its November issue, the editorial of the *National Wool Grower* refuted each of Key Pittman's charges against the sheep industry of Nevada. The National Wool Growers Association accused Pittman of blasphemy and contended that everything he had said about sheep business in Nevada rested on vague generalizations. The *Grower* complained against Pittman for making false accusations on the Nevada's sheep economy claiming that this industry represented more than 25 percent of the total value of the entire livestock economy of the state. Also, the editorial of the *National Wool Grower* contended that 1,154,000 sheep were owned by ranchers from Nevada. The editor said that Pittman's accusations of the Basques were "untrue," arguing that:

Less than one-half of the labor in the sheep industry of Nevada are Basques. But suppose there are some Basques in Nevada who happen to be in the sheep business. Does it necessarily follow in the senator's opinion that because a man is foreign born he is necessarily an undesirable citizen? The census shows that 25 per cent of Nevada's entire population is foreign born. We happen to know, however, many Basques in the sheep business who are honorable citizens and several Basques in Nevada have contributed more to the upbuilding of that State than Senator Pittman ever did or would if he lived there one hundred years.⁴¹

Moreover, the editorial of the *National Wool Grower* said that Pittman’s statements on the wages were baseless and “downright falsehood.” The *National Wool Grower* reprinted some statistics of the Tariff Board in order to contradict Pittman’s statement on the low wages and revealing the pay of the sheepherders was about \$60 (See Table 1.1).⁴² In addition, the *National Wool Grower* said that Pittman’s “talk about sheep herders being slaves is unworthy the consideration of intelligent citizens.” Further, the NWGA considered Pittman an outsider or carpetbag Senator who was not interested in the prosperity of Nevada. It noted that Pittman had investments himself out of the state in Alaska, where indeed he had moved from, and that he was doing much more for the far northern arctic state than he was doing for Nevada.⁴³

CLASS OF LABOR	PAY IN DOLLARS PER MONTH
Superintendent	111.5
Camp Tender	64.93
Herder	59.42
Extra Labor	63.02

Table 1.1: Wages of sheep labor.
Source: *National Wool Grower* 3, no. 11 (November 1913): 23.

Understandably, Pittman’s statement was not well received by the Basque community. In October 1914, with the Great War as a backdrop, someone who identified himself as a Basque sheepherder wrote a letter to the *Reno Evening Gazette*, in which he contradicted Pittman. He wrote, “Sir: ...”

Your esteemed editorial on “Senator Pittman’s Estimate” of the sheep industry, and the men that conduct it in Nevada, fell like a bomb into our camp. We felt happy over the able way in which you and Mr. [Jerry] Sheehan of the Winnemucca First National bank, have disposed of the misrepresentation of the industry by that “misrepresentative” of ours, and I shall not dwell on that phase of his testimony.

His description of the sheepmen in Nevada is in keeping with his estimate of the industry itself, and has proved a veritable bolt from a clear sky.

It is concerning this feature of his testimony that I mean to enter my indignant protest, before the people of the state of Nevada, and before

the ruling powers in Washington... Nine-tenths of them [Basques] own their land and their homes, dependence being considered the lowest condition of social life, and none being ever excused from work, that has a mind to think and a hand to wield...

Have they then mastered masterminds in statesmanship and war for 30 centuries, with intelligence? But how could we expect an ignoramus to be acquainted with the great men of the past, when he displays mulish ignorance of his own constituents and their interest, in his own day and generation, right at his own door...

Who have dotted the California coast with successfully managed and prosperous ranches for the last 50 years, but some of these sturdy Pyrenean mountaineers? What did the sheep industry amount to in Nevada, until they came, and made this industry the biggest in the state, notwithstanding the senator's assertion to the contrary?

It does not take book lore to create and keep up the sheep industry, but it does take intelligence, dogged tenacity, sobriety, and business acumen, such as all university professors and senators do not always have, to push it to a successful issue.

Note well, there are scores of Basques, young and old, who speak and write fluently in four or five languages...⁴⁴

Similar expressions of indignation against the attacks on the Basque community and the detrimental effects of the low tariff bills on wool appeared in other western states. From Boise (Idaho), on October 27, 1916, Sol Silen wrote a letter to the editor of the *Reno Evening Gazette*, in which he bitterly expressed his displeasure about Pittman's attacks on the Basque immigrant community. Silen complimented Basque immigrants: "Wherever the Basques choose to establish their home, that community is the better. They are an intelligent, energetic, and progressive people: they hold valuable landed estates, erect substantial business structures and homes that are a credit to their respective communities." Silen's argument praised the Basque "race," its achievements, and historical heritage in America.⁴⁵

BASQUE IMMIGRATION DURING THE RESTRICTION PERIOD, 1917-1924

In the late 1910s, in the context of the Great War, Congress reacted to the strong nativist attitudes that had gained momentum in the United States. Between 1917 and 1924, Congress adopted measures to restrict immigration from Europe, which disrupted Basque immigration to the United States.

In February 1917, before the United States entered WWI, Congress passed an immigration act that established more rigid criteria for admission and strengthened mechanisms for excluding some nationalities. The 1917 Act implemented the following provisions: established a literacy requirement, authorized deportation, enlarged the list of deportable aliens, and increased the categories of Asian exclusion. Although this act did not hinder significantly the increasing recruitment of the Basque immigrant labor, it made more difficult for those Basques already in the country to obtain naturalization.⁴⁶

The 1917 immigration act did provide a legal avenue to permit the entrance of immigrant labor. It kept the doors open to "skilled" workers, among others, "if labor of like kind unemployed can not be found in this country." The act mandated the Secretary of Labor to determine "the necessity of importing such skilled labor in any particular instance." In the near future, when a Basque labor shortage became increasingly acute (particularly in the late 1930s as a consequence of the increasing immigration restrictions in the 1924 Act), this provision served as a legal mechanism to allow the recruitment of more Basque immigrants. The question would be how to demonstrate that Basques were the only "skilled" workers for the open-range sheep industry of the West.⁴⁷

In the war context of 1917, a sheepherder immigrant labor shortage was already apparent. From Fallon (Nevada), on September 28, William A. Keddie, a prominent Nevada rancher who at that time ran the Williams family outfit, wrote Pittman indicating that there was a critical labor shortage in Nevada's sheep industry: "...this year we have experienced considerable difficulty in securing sheep-herders and the men for ranch work. This shortage of help has without a doubt lessened the amount of our products." Keddie noted that this labor shortage partly was because of some "BASQUE [*sic.*] herders we now have and who are becoming entirely too independent to be useful, to say nothing about the growing scarcity of getting them at all." As Basques quit sheepherding jobs and found other better paid employment and became U.S. citizens, Fallon-area ranchers looked for other immigrant groups to recruit dependable labor, particularly Rumanian and Armenian workers. Keddie asked Pittman to find ways in Congress to open the doors for these immigrants, "securing 50 to 200 of these folks, preferably those from a sheep raising country of theirs." Keddie further noted:

Our idea was to get a number of these people, those without families preferred, use them on our ranches until we had accustomed them to our ways etc. and then break them in for work on the ranch and with the sheep.⁴⁸

Keddie's statement exemplifies a determination on the part of ranchers to obtain immigrant sheep herders (young and single from Europe). Pittman also took up the matter with the Department of Labor and the Immigration and Naturalization Service with apparently no qualms about inviting foreign

European labor to Nevada. His response was in harmony with the views of ranchers that European labor was preferable to the closer-at-hand Mexican labor for these tasks. He was responding to the needs of his constituency as Senator Patrick McCarran will do decades later in his campaign to import Basque labor during the labor shortage in WWII and after.⁴⁹

On October 20, 1917, Pittman sent a letter to Anthony Caminetti, Commissioner General of Immigration, asking that restrictions on immigration be lifted to allow the recruitment of Romanian and Armenian immigrants. Pittman described the situation as follows:

You will remember that on a prior occasion I took up with you and with the Secretary of Labor, the question of permitting Mexicans to come into the United States for limited periods of time, to serve as farmers and miners, to meet the scarcity of labor caused by war conditions. The Department of Labor at that time was willing to remove the immigration restrictions to the extent that such laborers could come into the country for the purpose of farming. It was then pointed out to the Department that the farmers received these laborers from the railroad companies and unless the Mexicans were permitted to come in for the purpose of working on the railroads they would never reach the farming districts. My argument has been entirely sustained. The farmers have not received any benefit from Mexican labor by the removal of the immigration restrictions that I have referred to. There are various tracts of land in our state that can not be farmed by reason of lack of labor. In fact, I have been authorized to the Government three thousand acres of irrigable land with water for irrigation if the Government sees fit to cultivate it and I have heretofore made the offer. All of us favor the conservation of foodstuffs when it is necessary, but we must admit that the greatest relief is to increase the production. I am satisfied that if as much effort was made to increase production as is now being made to conserve that which is produced that this would be much better.⁵⁰

Later, the office of the Department of Labor informed Pittman that immigrant labor from those eastern European countries could be recruited under the clause of the "skilled" laborers in the 1917 Immigration Act. But WWI concluded in the following year, November 1918, without any efforts to recruit sheepherders from Romania and Armenia.⁵¹ In the meantime, an increasing number of Basque youths wanted to immigrate to the West and make some money in America following in the steps of their older brothers and uncles who had immigrated earlier. At that time, according to the office of the Commissioner of Labor of Nevada, the average pay for a sheepherder per day was \$1.95 (See Table 1.2).⁵²

OCCUPATION	#OF EMPLOYEES	AVG. WAGES PER DAY	AVG. HOURS PER DAY	AVG. PAY FOR NOV. 1917
Cowboys	205	\$1.76	9.6	\$46.20
Camp Tenders	129	\$2.11	10.2	\$63.29
Foremen	168	\$2.61	9.9	\$78.55
Sheepherders	774	\$1.95	10.5	\$56.73

Table 1.2: Average daily wage and hours of stock-raising labor in Nevada.

Source: *Second Biennial Report of the Commissioner of Labor of the State of Nevada, 1917-1918* (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1919), 42.

Congress increasingly entertained proposals for restrictions on European immigration after World War I. It further tightened immigration rules in 1921 with the Emergency Quota Act that introduced a system of national quotas limiting annual immigration up to three percent of the number of each nationality's inhabitants existing in the United States based on the 1910 census. Because some Basques were in Spain and some in France, their respective populations were included in the quotas for those two countries. Between 1921 and 1924, the total number of immigrants permitted to enter annually under the quota remained the same for both Spain and France: the quota for Spain was set at 912 and for France 5,729 immigrants (See Table 1.3).⁵³

COUNTRY	FISCAL YEAR 1921-1922		FISCAL YEAR 1922-1923		FISCAL YEAR 1923-1924	
	Quota	Number Admitted	Quota	Number Admitted	Quota	Number Admitted
Spain	912	888	912	912	912	912
France	5,729	4,343	5,729	5,034	5,729	5,729

Table 1.3: Annual quota numbers, 1921-1924.

Source: *Twelfth Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor. For the Fiscal Year Ended June 1924*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1924), 50.

In May 1924, Congress passed a new immigration act, the so-called Johnson-Reed Act, which further reduced the quota numbers allowing entrance of newcomers. Compared with the previous 1921 legislation, the 1924 Immigration Act was more stringent. The new immigration act reduced the quota number to two percent based on the 1890 census instead of the 1910 census, which reduced the numbers from eastern and southern European countries. In comparison with the French numbers, again, the immigration quota into Spain was sharply limited because there were fewer Spanish immigrants in the United States. The annual quota for Spain was set at 131 and for France at 3,954. From 1924 until the passage of the 1965 immigration act, Basques generally had to find their places within these quota numbers.⁵⁴

By looking at the list of quota numbers set for European countries, it is clear how the act of 1924 favored the immigration from northern Europe and largely discriminated against the immigration from southern and eastern Europe. In the case of the Basque Country, the quota number for France was higher than that applied to Spain. The provisions systematically reduced the opportunities for those Basques willing to immigrate from the provinces of Biscay, Gipuzkoa, Araba, and Navarre in Spain. In his book *Following the Grass*, American novelist Harry Sinclair Drago dealt with Basque sheepherders in northern Nevada and referred to the Pyrenees in their home country as “the great Basque barrier” protecting them from the outside world. Of course, on one side of the Pyrenees were the Spanish-speaking Basques and on the other side French speakers. For its part, the American immigration quota law created another “Basque barrier”—limiting Spanish Basque immigration more severely than that from the French side of the Pyrenees.⁵⁵

CONCLUSIONS

Nevada's U.S. Senator Key Pittman worked tirelessly on the range issues, particularly on the persistent problems affecting the cattle business in Nevada. His early political career was marked by continuous defense of the cattle community and a hostility toward the sheep industry. Pittman's efforts to extend the boundaries of National Forests, eliminate the protective tariff on wool, and support of the 1916 Ranch Homestead Act, all aimed to undermine the sheep business in Nevada. Furthermore, Pittman's anti-immigrant sentiments fitted well with his fight against the sheep industry that was synonymous with the Basque immigrant community. Pittman's stand against the Basque-run sheep industry did not gain the expected support in Nevada, and, in fact, there was a backlash that came to the defense of the Basques as an important community contributing to the economy of Nevada. In time, a popular sympathy developed towards Basque immigrant

labor in Nevada. By the early 1910s, although still faced with discrimination and stigmatization on the ranges, it can be said that Basque immigrants were settling and integrating into the broader American society of Nevada and other western states. Through their labor in the sheep business and benefiting from their "whiteness," Basque immigrants moved from being an oppressed and impoverished population to being an honorable class of laborers in Nevada.

NOTES

¹*Tonopah Daily Bonanza* (8 December 1913), p. 2.

²Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), 54.

³In the late nineteenth century, famous preservationist John Muir popularized the epithet "hoofed locusts" which referred to the sheep for their ruthless destruction of forest vegetation in California's Sierra Nevada. Muir wrote: "[...] the arch destroyers are the shepherds, with their flocks of hoofed locusts, sweeping over the ground like a fire, and trampling down every rod that escapes the plow as completely as if the whole plain were a cottage garden-plot without a fence." Historian James Snyder has said: "The term 'hoofed locusts' encompassed both animals and herders and clearly defined the best people and right ideas in opposition. Muir's use of the term for the problems he saw in the Sierra also tended to focus understanding of problems on the local mountain range but with little relation to broader geographies, markets, or populations. Finally, by casting sheep and shepherds as the bad guys, the idea of 'hoofed locusts' has obscured the actual conduct of sheep and sheepmen in the Sierra in the term's implied, oversimplified, and politically charged dualism." John Muir, *The Mountains of California* (New York: The Century Co., 1894), 349-350; James B. Snyder, "Putting 'Hoofed Locusts' Out to Pasture," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 46:3 (Fall, 2003), 139.

⁴Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 270-272; James A. Young and B. Abbott Sparks, *Cattle in the Cold Desert* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1985), 130-136, 155-179; James A. Young, "Hay Making: The Mechanical Revolution on the Western Range," *Western Historical Quarterly* 14:3 (July, 1983), 311-313.

⁵The Basque Country is a territory consisting of the following seven provinces which are divided between Spain and France. On the one hand, the Basque provinces in Spain are Biscay, Gipuzkoa, Araba, and Navarre. On the other hand, the provinces in France are Labourd, Lower Navarre, and Soule.

⁶Iker Saitua, "Becoming Herders: Basque Immigration, Labor, and Settlement in Nevada, 1880-1910," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 67:3 (Winter, 2016).

⁷William D. Rowley, *U.S. Forest Service Grazing and Rangelands: A History* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1985), 4, 5; also see for an overview of Progressivism's reform agenda, Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency*; Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967).

⁸Harold K. Steen, *The U.S. Forest Service: A History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976), 56-61; *Reno Weekly Gazette and Stockman* (31 March 1898), p. 2; Marion Clawson, "Range Lands of Northeastern Nevada: Their proper and Profitable Use (A Progress Report)," Bureau of Agricultural Economics, USDA, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1938), 4-6.

⁹Richard H. Lane, "Trouble in the Sweet Promised Land: Basques in Early Twentieth Century Northeastern Nevada," in William A. Douglass, Richard W. Etulain, and William H. Jacobsen, Jr., eds., *Anglo-American Contributions to Basque Studies: Essays in Honor of Jon Bilbao* (Reno, Nev.: Desert Research Institute Publications on the Social Sciences, 1977), 35-36; *Nevada State Journal* (16 November 1895); in February 1896, Jack Davis, better known as "Diamondfield" Jack, a hired gunslinger for the Sparks-Harrell cattle Company, allegedly killed two sheepherders in the state of Idaho close to the Nevada border. The "Diamondfield" Jack murder case, which has stirred interest among western historians, became a symbol of the Nevada-Idaho court history. See David H. Grover, *Diamondfield Jack: A Study in Frontier Justice* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 7-44.

¹⁰Biennial Report of the Surveyor-General and State Land Register, State of Nevada, for 1899-1900, (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1901), 7; Elmer O. Wooton, *The Public Domain of Nevada and Factors Affecting Its Use*, USDA Tech. Bulletin no. 301 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, Apr. 1932), 33-37.

¹¹Char Miller, *Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press/Shearwater Books, 2001), 162-164; Rowley, *U.S. Forest Service Grazing*, 46-59; United States Department of Agriculture, 1905 "Use Book" The Use of the National Forest Reserves: Regulations and Instructions, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1905).

¹²William D. Rowley, "Privilege vs. Right: Livestock Grazing in U.S. Government Forests," in Harold K. Steen, ed., *History of Sustained-Yield Forestry: A Symposium* (Durham, North Carolina: Forest History Society, 1984), 61-67; Rowley, *U.S. Forest Service Grazing*, 58-62.

¹³*Nevada State Journal* (5 May 1895); Romanzo Adams, "Public Range Lands: A New Policy Needed," *American Journal of Sociology* 3 (1916), 331-341; *California Cultivator and Livestock and Dairy Journal* 13 (1899), p. 97.

¹⁴Richard H. Lane, "The Cultural Ecology of Sheep Nomadism: Northeastern Nevada, 1870-1972" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1974), 180; Frank W. Taussig, "The Tariff Act of 1913," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 28:1 (November 1913), 1-30.

¹⁵Fred L. Israel, *Nevada's Key Pittman* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), 19-34.

¹⁶In 1911, a small band of Indians murdered four sheepherders, including Basques. This incident, commonly known as "the Last Indian Uprising," illustrated the still violent character of the American West. Frank V. Perry, "The Last Indian Uprising in the United States," *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 15:4 (Winter, 1972), 23-37; see also Effie M. Mack, *The Indian Massacre of 1911 at Little High Rock Canyon, Nevada* (Sparks, Nev.: Western Print and Publishing Company, 1968).

¹⁷"Speech of Hon. Key Pittman," Cong. Rec., 63rd Cong., 1st Sess., (August 21, 1913), [HF.2651.W82P58(1913)], Nevada Historical Society, Reno, Nevada; Clawson, "Range Lands of Northeastern Nevada," 4-6.

¹⁸William D. Rowley, "Historical Considerations in the Development of Range Science," in Harold K. Steen, ed., *Forest and Wildlife Science in America: A History* (Durham, North Carolina: Forest History Society, 1999), 247; Rowley, *U.S. Forest Service Grazing*, 67-73; Steen, *The U.S. Forest Service*, 163.

¹⁹*Statutes of the State of Nevada, Thirty-First Session of the Legislature 1923* (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1923), 25-31; *Reno Evening Gazette* (10 July 1924), p. 3.

²⁰D. Staunton to Key Pittman, March 25, 1914, Box 64, File Department of Agriculture; Chester A. Laing to Key Pittman, December 8, 1916, Box 112, File Stock Raising Homestead Bill; T. J. Bell to Key Pittman, April 23, 1917, Box 124, File Miscellaneous Correspondence; Key Pittman to T. J. Bell, June 4, 1917, Box 124, File Miscellaneous Correspondence; Advisory Board of the North Fork Livestock Association to C. E. Favre, November 15, 1917, Box 64, File Forest Service; Advisory Board of the North Fork Livestock Association to Key Pittman, February 23, 1918, Box 64, File Forest Service; J. H. Clemons to the Forest Service office in Ogden, Utah, March 20, 1918, Box 64, File Forest Service; Timothy Murphy to Key Pittman, April 26, 1918, Box 64, File Department of Agriculture; Key Pittman to James Dysart, June 2, 1923, Box 104, File Grazing Reserves; Key Pittman to William B. Greely, February 21, 1924, Box 108, File Nevada National Forests, Key Pittman Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²¹Key Pittman to William B. Greely, February 21, 1924, Pittman Papers.

²²Leon F. Kneipp to Key Pittman, April 12, 1924, Box 108, File National Forests, Pittman Papers.

²³Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency*, 266; Leon F. Kneipp to Key Pittman, April 12, 1924, Box 108, File National Forests, Pittman Papers.

²⁴F. N. Smith to Key Pittman, April 7, 1924, Box 108, File Nevada National Forests, Pittman Papers.

²⁵Rowley, *U.S. Forest Service Grazing*, 119, 123.

²⁶*Reno Evening Gazette* (7 October 1910), p. 4.

²⁷*Ibid.*

²⁸*Reno Evening Gazette* (1 April 1911), p. 2.

²⁹Father Thomas Tubman enjoyed good personal relationships with the Basques of Nevada. He had conducted many baptisms, weddings, and funerals for the Basque immigrant population. Sometimes, the local press reported Basque weddings. Many articles noted that the married couples were prominent members of the local community. Similar events and reports occurred in other Nevada towns such as Elko. Some few examples are as follows: May 24, 1910: Isidoro Sara and Marie Arbans; August 9, 1910: Juan Uhalde and Jeanne Marie Borda; February 11, 1911: Jose Oznarez and Catalina Etulian; March 11, 1911: Pedro Uguiza and Felicia Villanueva. *Reno Evening Gazette* (25 May 1910); *Reno Evening Gazette* (10 August 1910), p. 2; *Nevada State Journal* (12 February 1911), p. 8; *Nevada State Journal* (13 March 1911), p. 6; *Daily Free Press* (12 August 1915).

³⁰"The Statement of Senator Pittman of Nevada," *National Wool Grower* 3:11 (November, 1913), 21.

³¹*Ibid.*

³²*Ibid.*

³³Israel, *Nevada's Key Pittman*, 26; "Statement of Senator Pittman," *National Wool Grower*, 21-22.

³⁴*Silver State* (24 July 1913), p. 1; the letter was reprinted in the Elko newspaper: *Daily Free Press* (29 July 1913).

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷"Speech of Hon. Key Pittman," Nevada Historical Society.

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰*Ibid.*

⁴¹"Statement of Senator Pittman," *National Wool Grower*, 23.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 23.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 23-24.

⁴⁴The letter was reprinted in the Elko newspaper: *Daily Free Press* (21 October 1914).

⁴⁵*Reno Evening Gazette* (30 October 1916), p. 5; later, in 1917, Sol Silen published his book *La Historia de los Vascongados en el Oeste de los Estados Unidos* [The History of the Basques in the American West]. Silen described Basques as a respectful, conservative, and proud "race." He noted that Basque immigrants had become important elements in the western sheep industry because of their "racial" characteristics and identity. He pointed out: "Their sterling honesty makes them to be eagerly sought by everybody and many of them, starting in very humble positions become partners of their former employers. Their deeply religious nature makes them men of very good morals, who establish themselves and raise families that are an honor to any country." To Silen, the main virtues of the Basque newcomers were friendliness, honesty, truthfulness, and loyalty. The immigrants' work herding sheep flocks in the desolate rangelands, far from the employers'

supervision, according to Silen, was an example of their honesty to the sheep owner. This was something inherent of their "racial" type, which made it an "admirable race," Silen wrote. Paying tribute to the Basque-American community of the West, he went further saying that "the majority of the basques that belong to the fraternity of real men who through sacrifice, steady work, honesty, and good moral principles are making of the western States the greatest emporium of America." Sol Silen, *La Historia de los Vascongados en el Oeste de los Estados Unidos* (New York: Las Novedades, Inc., 1917), 5, 6.

⁴⁶Keith Fitzgerald, *The Face of the Nation: Immigration, the State, and the National Identity* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1996), 127-130; Immigration Act of 1917, H.R. 10384, 64th Cong., 2nd Sess., Pub. L. 301, 39 Stat. 874, February 5, 1917, in *Statutes of the United States of America, Passed at the Second Session of the Sixty-Fourth Congress, 1916-1917, Part I: Public Acts and Resolutions* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1917), 874-898.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 877.

⁴⁸William A. Keddie to Key Pittman, September 28, 1917, Williams Family Archive, Fallon, Nevada.

⁴⁹Key Pittman to William A. Keddie, October 8, 1917, Williams Family Archive.

⁵⁰Key Pittman to Anthony Caminetti, October 20, 1917, Williams Family Archive.

⁵¹E. J. Trenwith to William A. Keddie, October 30, 1917, Williams Family Archive.

⁵²*Second Biennial Report of the Commissioner of Labor of the State of Nevada, 1917-1918* (Carson City: State Printing Office, 1919), 42.

⁵³Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), 21-22; *Twelfth Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor. For the Fiscal Year Ended June 1924* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1924), 50-51.

⁵⁴*Twelfth Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor. For the Fiscal Year Ended June 1924*, 51-55.

⁵⁵Fitzgerald, *The Face of the Nation*, 150-152; Harry Sinclair Drago, *Following the Grass* (New York: The Macaulay Company, 1924), 11.

Notes & Documents

Nevada and the Thirteenth Amendment

ROBERT E. STEWART

In early February 1865, two months before his assassination on April 15, President Abraham Lincoln signed and had Secretary of State William H. Seward send to all state legislatures a proposal to amend the United States Constitution, making slavery an unconstitutional act. He had signed a proclamation making Nevada a state the previous October 31. In the years leading up to these events, Nevada was involved in the politics of passage of the Amendment.

In the eastern United States, the events leading up to admission of the State of Nevada to the Union and the new state's role in Congressional passage three months later of the anti-slavery Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, may well have begun the night Abraham Lincoln gave his landmark "Cooper Union" speech at the Cooper Institute in Manhattan, New York, on February 27, 1860.¹

The stirring speech, which spelled out how and why the founding fathers did not believe slavery should be expanded into new territories, brought the audience of 1,500 to its feet. Newspapers across the nation, including California, carried the full 7,000-word text, and, as Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune* reported the next day:

Lincoln is one of nature's orators, using his rare powers solely and effectively to elucidate and to convince, though their inevitable effect is to delight and electrify as well. [The *Tribune* today carries] a very full and accurate report of this speech; yet the tones, the gestures, the kindling eye and the mirth-provoking look, defy the reporter's skill. The vast assemblage frequently rang with cheers and shouts of applause, which were prolonged and intensified at the close. No man ever made such an impression on his first appeal to a New York audience."²

After Lincoln spoke, Greeley, one of the Cooper Institution's directors, spoke briefly. Former New York City Police Commission president, James W. Nye, was advertised and scheduled as the speaker following Lincoln and Greeley. There is no evidence that Lincoln and Nye had ever met before this evening. At the podium, Greeley was:

...followed by Gen. Nye, who was called for a long time before he appeared; and when he did appear it was only to say that he could not allow himself to disturb the effect of the address to which they had listened, by any remarks of his. By and by there would be a more appropriate occasion, and when it came he promised to express his sentiments freely.³

An important friendship developed between Nye and Lincoln—a friendship that would eventually lead to a key vote in adoption of America's permanent ban on slavery, the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

In the 1840s, Nye had been promoted to major general in the upstate Seventeenth New York Militia.⁴ The appellation "General Nye" stuck. Born in central New York, he was a lawyer, later a judge, and well-known as a fine "stump speaker." When the New York legislature merged the patronage-staffed police forces of five greater New York boroughs into the Metropolitan Police, a contentious action to which all five mayors objected, the Governor named Nye chairman of the new three-member Metropolitan Police Commission.

At the Republican National Convention in Chicago a dozen weeks after the Cooper Institute event, General Nye gave the nomination speech for his close friend, Senator William H. Seward of New York. When Lincoln's campaign manager out-manuevered Seward and gained the party nomination for Abraham Lincoln, Seward immediately began campaigning for election of Lincoln.

In those years, the Presidential candidate remained at home while surrogates campaigned around the states. Accompanied by a group that included Gen. Nye and Nye's 17-year-old daughter Mary, Sen. Seward set out on a long campaign swing for Lincoln. It carried them as far west as St. Joseph, Missouri. On their return, the campaigners passed through Springfield, Illinois, where Lincoln boarded the train, greeting the individual members of Seward's party before a short private meeting with Seward.⁵

Following the election, Nye returned to his practice as an attorney in New York City—an attorney who wanted to be active in politics. He offered his name for several of the patronage jobs in New York City.⁶

That Lincoln won election hardly needs to be mentioned. The act to carve Nevada Territory out of Utah Territory had been signed by President James Buchanan on March 2, 1861, two days before Lincoln took the oath of office and entered the White House.

Nye's friend Seward was now Secretary of State, a position which included oversight of the Territories. At Seward's request, the President considered appointing Nye as governor of Nebraska Territory.

Nye, like Lincoln, enjoyed "swapping yarns," and a friendship had developed between the two. One evening, Nye pointed out to the President there was an unexplored Territory west of the Rocky Mountains that he wanted to go out and explore. Lincoln called for his secretary, John G. Nicolay, and asked if he knew anything about that region. Nicolay had heard of it—the Comstock mines were just coming into production. Lincoln sent for Secretary Seward and, after some conversation, the President thought he would let General Nye go and look at Nevada as its governor.⁷ The name was sent to the Senate on Wednesday, March 20, 1861. On Friday the Senate approved it.

Nye had perhaps not told the President his full reason. James Warren Nye was the seventh of ten children of James and Thankful Crocker Nye. One brother, "Captain" John Nye, three years older than James, had left their DeRuyter, New York, home in 1835 for a gold rush in Alabama. There he married the widow Arabella Dupree Hays in 1838. A son, Thomas C. Nye, was born in late 1842. In 1849, leaving his wife and son in Alabama, John joined the California gold rush. His son joined him in California in about 1857, and, in 1860, John and his son Tom, then 17 years old, were living in Auburn, Placer County.⁸ News of confirmation of James W. Nye as governor of the new territory reached California in April 1861.⁹ Soon after that, Captain Nye and Tom relocated in Carson City.

Colonel Samuel Youngs, the brother-in-law of Albert Sidney McCoun, James Nye's law partner in New York City, was a former New York state legislator. He was in the new mining camp of Aurora, 70 miles southeast of Carson City. Youngs, an attorney, had been active in New York politics in the 1840s, was a gold miner in 1849, and was an elected Sacramento alderman in the 1850s.

These were the type of men the novice territorial governor sought to advise him, and to form his administration. They were "border men," who understood the unique issues that creating a government on the frontier would involve. While still in Washington, Governor Nye said he would "decline the proffered office" unless he could have an administration of "men acquainted with border life."¹⁰ His wish was granted and Nye and Orion Clemens of Missouri, Lincoln's appointee as Secretary of the Territory, soon led a team of men who had experience living on the outer edges—the frontier borders of organized government—that put the Territory on the fast track to statehood.

In a March 27 dispatch sent west by Pony Express, the New York correspondent of San Francisco's *Daily Alta California* reported:

General Nye, the new Governor, was formerly one of the Police Commissioners of this city. He is an Old-Line Whig, nearly 60 years of age [sic.

He was a portly 46], and has all the elements of popularity about him, eminently social and genial in his disposition, and considered highly conservative in his political opinions.¹¹

Three weeks after Nye's confirmation as governor on April 12, he was still in Washington, D.C. obtaining instruction when Confederate artillerymen in Charleston, South Carolina, opened fire on Fort Sumter.

An immediate concern was protection of the capital; abolitionist Kentucky politician Cassius M. Clay stepped forward to organize a unit to protect the White House. Another brigade was organized to defend the Capitol building.

Nye delayed his departure for Nevada, serving instead as "First Lieutenant" in the "Clay Brigade." He provided about 50 men for the new infantry unit, but Nye was probably not among those Clay Battalion soldiers billeted in the East Room of the White House.¹²

When Lieutenant Nye left the Clay Battalion is unknown. He was, however, still in the capital the evening of Saturday, April 27, when he and DeWitt Littlejohn, speaker of the New York Assembly, fell in with an Irishman named Pierson, who believed Nye and Littlejohn were secessionists. Pierson boasted freely of his operations in tearing up railroad tracks and then spoke of plans to stop the train bearing Colonel Michael Corcoran's New York Sixty-Ninth Infantry—a unit which would soon earn the sobriquet "Fighting Irish." Corcoran was a New York City politician well-known to Nye. Pierson said a party of Maryland Irish Secessionists would be attacking the train bearing the New York Irish Unionist soldiers. Nye and Littlejohn then took Pierson in custody and turned him over to the proper Union authorities.¹³

On his eventual return to New York City, Nye was further delayed by farewell parties given in his honor, then by luggage left on the dock in Panama City.

Finally arriving in Carson City on July 11, Nye selected the young settlement as the Territorial capital. It had been laid out on sagebrush land in Eagle Valley as a townsite just two years earlier. In 1861, it was a frontier settlement where there were more houses with walls of canvas than there were permanent structures.

Governor Nye, himself a former judge, quickly arranged for continuance of the existing Utah Territorial courts and called for elections to hold a legislative session in October.

One key personal political Nye initiative was to establish "Union clubs" in every town and mining camp. Conservative in nature, they welcomed Democrats who were supportive of President Lincoln and the Union cause. Nye, with assistance from Secretary Clemens, began governing the territory. One of his most troublesome issues was secessionists who crossed the mountains from California, where lawyers were now required to take a loyalty oath to practice in the courts.

Two years later in 1863, with the Comstock (Virginia City), Reese River (Austin) and Esmeralda (Aurora) mines booming, the popular desire for

statehood had grown to the point that a public vote led to a convention to draft a constitution. That first version was rejected by the voters.

Other factors were at play in the nation. Using his wartime powers, President Lincoln issued an Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, that was little more than paper. It provided that slaves on the land in secession were free. However, by the very nature of the wording, there were no federal forces in those lands to enforce the freedom. What force the proclamation would have after peace was restored was questionable. A Constitutional amendment was needed to end slavery in America. But could such an amendment gain a two-thirds majority vote in both houses of Congress? And following that, could it gain ratification by three-fourths of the states?

In March-April 1864, Congress was considering statehood-enabling acts for three territories, Colorado, Nevada, and Nebraska. Of the three, Lincoln seems to have focused on Nevada. His reason is never stated, but it may have been the Nevadans' initiative in a testing a trial Constitution, or the strong leadership Nye gave to the National Union Party, a political party designed to embrace pro-Union Democrats as well as Republicans.

Lincoln knew the arithmetic: Three-fourths of thirty-five is a fraction over twenty-six, so twenty-seven states would need to ratify the amendment. Eleven states had seceded, leaving twenty-five loyal states, two votes shy of the needed twenty-seven. Three-fourths of thirty-six is an even twenty-seven. Adding one more state would not change the total votes needed, but would bring down the "shortage" to one.

Charles A. Dana, former 15-year managing editor of Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune*, had become a special investigating agent of the War Department in 1864.¹⁴ In a lengthy 1897 article, Dana wrote of his role in passage of the Nevada Enabling Act:

I always hear Abraham Lincoln saying, "It is easier to admit Nevada than to raise another million of soldiers."

In March, 1864, the question of allowing Nevada to form a state government finally came up in the House of Representatives. There was strong opposition to it. For a long time beforehand the question had been canvassed anxiously. At last, late one afternoon, the President came into my office, in the third story of the War Department. He used to come there sometimes rather than send for me, because he was fond of walking and liked to get away from the crowds in the White House. He came in, and shut the door.

"Dana," he said, "I am very anxious about this vote. It has got to be taken next week. The time is very short. It is going to be a great deal closer than I wish it was."

[They discussed various Representatives, then Lincoln continued] “. . . But there are some others that I am not clear about. There are three that you can deal with better than anybody else, perhaps, as you know them all. I wish you would send for them.”

He told me who they were; it isn't necessary to repeat the names here. One man was from New Jersey and two from New York.

“What will they be likely to want?” I asked.

“I don't know” said the President; “I don't know. It makes no difference, though, what they want. Here is the alternative: that we carry this vote, or be compelled to raise another million and I don't know how many more, men, and fight no one knows how long. It is a question of three votes or new armies.”¹⁵

Dana carried out the mission. On March 3, 1864, Lincoln signed an Act passed by Congress, to enable Nevada to Obtain statehood.¹⁶ A second Nevada constitutional convention opened on Independence Day; a new Constitution was drafted and presented to the public on July 27. On September 2, 1864, it received overwhelming support of the voters.

Despite the desire for statehood, there were surprisingly strong efforts to keep Nevada Territory in unrest as the November 8, 1864 election approached. In late September, Governor Nye reported that for the past five weeks the territory:

...has been in considerable turmoil and commotion, owing to apprehended raids from avowed disloyalists from California and this Territory on the principal towns of the Territory, on one hand, and the riotous and unlawful proceedings of persons comprising what is here called The Miners' League on the other. On two occasions I found it necessary to order out the military from Fort Churchill to the towns of Virginia and Carson, to be in readiness to suppress or prevent these anticipated troubles. A force of near 300 cavalry is now on duty at Virginia, ready to meet any outbreaks of the rioters, etc. I have also had to form companies of home guards in every town in the Territory, and arm them, to suppress or subdue unlawful violence.¹⁷

Following a cabinet meeting on September 30, Attorney General Edward Bates wrote in his diary:

I was surprised to hear Mr. [Secretary of State] Seward insist that the Prest. [sic] Should issue a proclamation declaring Nevada a state in the

union, upon no better evidence than a short telegram of Gov. Nye, and in the teeth, I think, of the act of Congress, which requires the adoption of the constitution, by popular vote, and also a certified copy of the constitution to be sent to the Prest.

[Secretary of the Treasury William P.] Fessenden declared, flatly, against it, and so did I. The Prest. told Mr. S to prepare a proclamation, and he would think on it.¹⁸

Congress's enabling act was clear. Nothing could happen until a certified copy of the Constitution was received in Washington. If the Nye-Seward proclamation was ever written out, it was never signed.

As October began, the Presidential campaign continued. Nationally, Republicans were vilifying all Democrats as Copperheads (anti-war Democrats), if not outright traitors. The Democrat's candidate, General George McClellan was expected to win the soldiers' vote (It didn't) and the Democratic party platform called for an end to combat. But sadly, it had become a personal campaign which left Lincoln depressed by attacks on his administration, individually and severally, and on his actions and ability as President.

On October 5, Mr. Benedict of the State Department received "for file" a letter to the President from J. Neely Johnson, former governor of California and president of the 1864 Nevada Constitutional Convention. In the letter, Johnson wrote:

I have the honor of enclosing herewith copies of the Constitution of the State of Nevada which was adopted by the recent Convention and under the provisions of the enabling act, is to be submitted to the people for their approval or rejection on the 7th, proximo.

Judging from the evident state of the public mind at the present time, there can be no reasonable doubt but that the people will by a large majority ratify the action of the convention, and the most speedy means will be adopted by which you will be officially notified of the fact, so that we can be admitted as a state and participate in the approaching Presidential canvass, thus assuring the addition of three votes to Lincoln and Johnson in the Electoral College.¹⁹

Enclosed with the letter was a newspaper page from the Territorial Enterprise, with the Constitution printed in full, bearing the notation "Enclosed Aug. 15, Johnson to President."

In late 1861, the telegraph wires and telegraph relay stations were completed to connect Nevada and California with the East. The first message sent across the line from Carson City was penned by the first Nevada Territorial Legislature. It read:

Nevada Territory through her first Legislative Assembly. To the President and People of the United States, Greeting; Nevada for the Union ever true and loyal. The last born of the Nation, will be the last to desert the Flag. Our aid to the extent of our ability, can be relied upon to crush rebellion.²⁰

Early in the war, President Lincoln came to understand how the telegraph allowed him to keep fingers out to all his military leaders. After a small telegraph office was built next door to the White House, Lincoln spent many long hours there, appropriating the desk of Maj. Thomas T. Eckert who provided paper, pens and ink, and kept Lincoln's notes locked in a drawer, unread even by him, between the Presidential visits.

The days were counting down toward the November 8 election. While sitting at that desk on Thursday, October 13, twenty-six days before the election, President Lincoln took a telegraph blank and wrote down his "worst case" estimate of how many Electoral College votes he would get as against George McClellan, the Union general he had relieved of field command after the September 1862 Battle of Antietam (Sharpsburg). The President knew Americans were tired of the war. McClellan was trying to portray himself to voters as the "peace candidate" who wanted to bring the Civil War to a speedy end.

Maj. David Bates, War Department telegraph office manager and cipher-operator, recalled that Lincoln:

...entered in one column the names of the eight States which he conceded to McClellan, giving him 114 electoral votes. In a second column he entered the names of the States which he felt sure would cast 117 votes for the Administration. This total showed only three more votes than he allowed McClellan. He did this from memory, making no mistake in the number of electoral votes to which each State was entitled....

Maj. Thomas T. Eckert then picked up the pen and added Nevada's three votes. This scratching of Eckert's pen began a flurry of activity.²¹

On Wednesday, four days later, Gov. Nye telegraphed Secretary Seward, apparently in response to an inquiry from Seward, that the state constitution and documentation "with proper certificates," was forwarded. Two copies sent earlier had "probably miscarried." Seward received the message at 1:20 p.m. Thursday.

On Saturday, October 22, John Hay, secretary to President Lincoln, sent to Secretary Seward two true copies of the official canvass of the vote, showing the ten-to-one positive vote. But there was still no certified copy of the Constitution.

On Monday, while western Nevada Territory was getting its first snowfall of the winter, Secretary Seward telegraphed Nye:

Official canvass of vote received but not certified copy of the Constitution and Ordinance as required by the fifth section of the act of Congress. It is presumed that the latter are on the way. No proclamation until they reach here.²²

Twenty-one days before the election, on Tuesday, October 25, H. W. Carpentier, president of the California State Telegraph, Oakland, got involved and on Thursday morning, October 27, the *Gold Hill News* reported the overland telegraph wires were down west of Omaha, "particulars unknown."²³ The next day, Friday, the news was that the "Telegraph is again working."

The "particulars" were that Gov. Nye had worked with James Gamble of the overland telegraph to set up the route of relay machines (Salt Lake City, Chicago, Philadelphia, and finally, the War Department in Washington, D.C.) to carry the Constitution to Washington by Morse code. The lines were occupied for seven hours while telegrapher James H. Guild keyed the 16,543-word message.²⁴

At 2:45 p.m. Sunday, October 30, Secretary Seward sent a telegram to Gov. Nye. Arriving at 9 p.m., it was relayed to Gov. Nye, who was seventy miles away in the mining camp of Unionville, campaigning for Lincoln. It said:

Your telegram of the 27th received. Pursuant thereof the following proclamation has been issued, W.H. Seward by the President of the United States of America. [The text of the proclamation, dated Oct. 31, followed.]²⁵

At 1 p.m. Monday, Governor Nye telegraphed all newspapers in Nevada: "Nevada was this day admitted into the Union." Of course, the public soon became aware of the long telegram—and the \$3,416.77 bill.

Celebrations were held throughout the new state. As one example, in the mining camp of Aurora, the Stars and Stripes were hoisted on the tall "Liberty Pole" on the main street, and 36 guns fired, one for each state. A torchlight procession celebrating the great day for Nevada passed up the canyon on the Aurora-Bodie toll road.

Years later the road-master's step-daughter, Ella Sterling Mighels, who had turned eleven in May, 1864, recalled that she "entreated" to be allowed to march, too, with her brothers and step-father. "But my mother asked who would keep the lights in the windows for their return and cheer them as they passed by.... So I dried my tears and kept the candles burning."²⁶

The first Election Day in a brand-new State! Sixteen thousand four hundred twenty men in Nevada turned out to vote. Roughly two-thirds voted for re-election of President Lincoln.

In the United States Capitol, at one p.m. on December sixth, 1864, President Lincoln's private secretary, John G. Nicolay, handed a copy of the President's

written annual message—his “State of the Union” message—to each House. It was read aloud in the Senate by the Secretary of the Senate, John W. Forney. In the House it was read by the Clerk, Edward McPherson. In his message, the President Lincoln wrote:

The organization and admission of the State of Nevada has been completed in conformity with law, and thus our excellent system is firmly established in the mountains, which once seemed a barren and uninhabitable waste between the Atlantic States and those which have grown up on the coast of the Pacific Ocean.

February 8, 1865, dawned clear and cold after a rainy evening. At one o’clock, the Electoral College votes of the 25 loyal states were tallied for the House and Senate, in joint session, to formally confirm President Lincoln’s re-election.

[B]efore the hour of noon the galleries and corridors were crowded almost to suffocation by a dense crowd eager to secure a glimpse of the proceedings within the Hall. The floor of the House was thronged with visitors introduced by members. . . .²⁷

Prior to announcing the result of the canvass, retiring Vice President Hamilton Hamlin stated that:

...the messenger who bore the returns from the State of Nevada communicated the fact that the third elector did not appear when the vote was taken. The State having been but recently admitted into the Union, had no law by which the vacancy could be filled; and consequently but two votes were given for President and Vice President.²⁸

It was true. A storm destroyed major portions of the roads south of Carson City, preventing the third elector, Dr. Addison S. Peck of Aurora, from leaving town.

A California news report on December 12 said the storm “raging for the past three weeks appears to be general all over the Pacific Coast.” It quotes an undated *Aurora Union* saying the water “Swept down the road ... with the force of an avalanche.... Every road leading to Aurora, so far as we have learned, has been more or less injured, and teams will be unable to reach town from any quarter for some time to come.”²⁹

It was well into December before the doctor could file his papers with the Nevada Secretary of State. The Electoral College voting date was set by federal law; his December vote could not be recorded. Lincoln’s “worst case” scenario was far from the mark; he didn’t really need Nevada’s votes. The Electoral College returned President Lincoln to office, 212 to 21.

As noted above, it was not just for the Electoral College votes that Lincoln welcomed Nevada's statehood. It also had to do with the pending amendment to the Constitution which would abolish slavery in America. The amendment, Senate Joint Resolution 16 ("S No. 16"), had passed the upper house easily — just twenty-four days after the Nevada enabling act was approved on March 24, 1864. But the resolution was stalled in the House of Representatives. Lincoln again recommended its passage by the House. If the House did not vote on S No. 16 during the second session of the 38th Congress, the resolution would die when the House adjourned *sine die*.

In the first Nevada State and national election, eight days after becoming a state, Nevada also chose its first Representative in Congress. Henry Gaither Worthington, an attorney in the mining town of Austin, was 36 when he won election to Congress on November 8, 1864. He replaced Gordon N. Mott, the non-voting Delegate to Congress from Nevada Territory.³⁰

Worthington was a California '49er before opening his law practice in Austin, Nevada in 1862. In San Francisco in late April, 1861, there was a Union party demonstration; Worthington had been a Douglas Democrat in the 1860 election, but during the demonstration he was:

...repeatedly called, and rose amid applause. He said he was present because it was a Union meeting. He had differed from the Republican party in the past campaign, but he took pleasure in saying that he would rather be a Union Republican than a Disunion Democrat. [Tremendous applause.]³¹

Representative Worthington went east by ship, leaving San Francisco on November 23 after being serenaded at the Russ House the night before sailing. He had been a Judge, and then a lawyer in Marysville, Yuba County, in the 1850s when his friend Gordon Mott was the Yuba County Recorder there. The new Representative's trip was far less eventful than that of Delegate Mott in 1863.

In that year (1863), Delegate Mott left for Washington on March 17, aboard the Overland Mail Company's Stage from Carson City. A week later he was napping inside the stage when it was attacked on Sunday morning by Indians at Eight Mile station, some miles northeast of today's Ely. The two station-keepers had already been killed. When approaching the station, the driver, Hank Harvey, saw trouble and whipped up his horses. Near the station Harvey was mortally wounded by rifle fire. The adult passenger riding beside the driver received a dangerous head wound. When the driver fell into the boot, Judge Mott climbed out a window and took the reins. By running the horses they escaped and arrived safely at Deep Creek Station. The wounded passenger's two sons, twelve and fourteen, were bruised, but not wounded.³²

In 1864, Worthington arrived safely in the nation's capital and on Friday, December 16, 1864, he made an unannounced appearance in the District of Columbia, an incident best described by a clipping from the *Washington Star* newspaper:

A Promise Fulfilled.—On Friday morning Mr. Rueben Worthington, who was formerly one of the clerks in the office of the clerk of the court, was agreeably surprised by an unexpected visit from his son, Hon. Henry G. Worthington, the new member of the House of Representatives from the State of Nevada. The son left the city about 14 years since, after studying law with his brother-in-law Hon. Geo. A. Pearre, of Cumberland, Md., and proceeded to the far West, promising his father at the time that he would never return except as a member of Congress—a promise regarded as idle at the time, but which has been fulfilled to the letter. Mr. W. was a mere youth when he left here, and had so much changed that when he greeted his father the latter did not recognize him. Mr. Worthington met at the courthouse a number of the friends of his boyhood, who heartily congratulated him on his success.³³

Maryland-born Representative Worthington, was introduced to the floor of the House on December 21 by William Higby, who had been a California State Senator in 1862-63 when Worthington was a member of the California State Assembly in 1861-1862. Worthington became Chief Clerk of that body in 1863. With this background, Mr. Worthington quickly settled into the routine of the U.S. House of Representatives.³⁴ On January sixth he introduced a bill (H640) to create a district court in Nevada, later defending the judicial salary for that court. Otherwise he kept quiet, voting with the majority on the very few roll call votes held during the latter days of December and all of January—and then came the last day of that month.

Since April 8 of the preceding year, S No. 16, amending the constitution to abolish slavery, had been on the House agenda. The wording was short and clear:

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall be duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Following Senate approval, the House voted it down on June 15, 1864, then set it aside for reconsideration at a later date. From time to time the House had discussed the resolution, but it remained on the House table.

On January seventh, Mr. Higby gave a statement that portrays the issue in terms of the national spirit:

Many gentlemen have overlooked in their remarks, and probably have forgotten, what has transpired between the last session of Congress and the present; that the policy pursued by the Administration has been indorsed by the vote of the people; that four hundred thousand majority of the votes of the people was given to sustain that policy; that the [Emancipation] proclamation issued by the President of the United States on the first day of January, 1863, was indorsed as a part of that policy; that the action of Congress in reference to this question of slavery, since the beginning of the rebellion, was also indorsed; that the action of Congress at the last session in reference to this very subject was indorsed by the people in the re-election of, I believe, every member of the present House upon the Union side who was put in nomination....³⁵

His remarks reflected those of the President, who said in his December 6, 1864, message to Congress:

It is the voice of the people now for the first time heard upon the question. In a great national crisis like ours unanimity of action among those seeking a common end is very desirable—almost indispensable. And yet no approach to such unanimity is attainable unless some deference shall be paid to the will of the majority simply because it is the will of the majority. In this case the common end is the maintenance of the Union, and among the means to secure that end such will, through the election, is most dearly declared in favor of such constitutional amendment.

On January 13 the *Sacramento Daily Union* reporter wrote that James M. Ashley of Ohio, floor manager for the resolution, felt he was “about six votes” short of a two-thirds majority.³⁶ Then, on Tuesday morning, January 31, 1865, discussion was renewed. The vote was scheduled for 3 p.m.

In floor discussion that day, veteran New York political boss Fernando Wood, a Democrat who had been known at home as the Boss of the Tammany Society, stated the platform of the Democratic Party in New York called for “The Constitution as it is, and the Union as it was.” He worked to derail reconsideration of S No. 16.

Then a fellow New York City Democrat, journalist/publisher Anson Herrick, gave a long, impassioned speech on why he would now vote for an amendment he had opposed the previous year.

The Democrats may have felt confident of the lack of a two-thirds majority when John L. Dawson, a Pennsylvania Democrat who would vote nay called for a “taking of the yeas and nays.” Each Representative voted as his name was called, in alphabetical order. Obviously, George “Gentleman George” Pendleton of Ohio, who had been the strongly Copperhead running mate of George McClellan against President Lincoln in the recent election,

was among those voting nay. Two Democrats had been excused; one was in Ohio burying a daughter, the other was caring for a sick wife. Although both were Democrats, based on their past comments they probably would have cancelled each other's votes. Six other Democrats would fail to respond when their name was called.

At his desk on the House floor, Republican Cornelius Cole of California was writing a letter home while the vote continued. Noting the time as 4 p.m., he wrote "We are voting at last on the great question and it will just pass. The one question of the age is settled. Glory enough for one session, yes, even for a life. I never felt so much excitement over any measure before."

In his memoir he added "It passed the House by the decisive vote of 119 to 56, a much larger majority than was anticipated. Several members who were violently opposed to the measure, on seeing that it was sure to pass, wisely forbore to record their names against it."³⁷

As the roll call progressed, the Republicans cheered when James E. English, a Democrat from Connecticut voted yea, and again three names later when a Democrat from upstate New York, John Ganson, voted yea. Speaker of the House Schuyler Colfax called for order, and asked that the members should set a better example to spectators in the gallery.

There was tension in the air when the Clerk neared the end of the alphabet, Daniel W. Voorhees, an eloquent anti-war Indiana Democrat, was the last Representative to be "not voting." Then ten Republicans and six Democrats whose names began with "W" all voted along party lines. We pick up the voting with New York's Fernando Wood, who voted nay.

Frederick E. Woodbridge of Vermont voted the 116th year, providing the two-thirds majority required to pass the resolution.

Six Congressmen, all Democrats, had failed to vote; two others were excused. If just one of the non-voting Democrats had been present and voted nay, the next aye vote would have been required for Congressional passage of the Amendment to the Constitution prohibiting slavery and freeing all existing slaves in America. That next vote was the yea vote cast by Henry G. Worthington, the freshman member from the fledgling State of Nevada.

The final voter, Kentucky Congressman George H. Yeaman, of the Union party, was also a yea, providing frosting on the cake. Kentucky was a border state in which there were slaves. On January 9, in a lengthy oration, Mr. Yeaman, himself the former owner of two slaves, made his support for passage clear.³⁸

As the Republican side of the house stood, applauding and cheering, Speaker Colfax, of Indiana, asked that his own name be called, a highly unusual request. It was called, he voted yea, and the applause was renewed. Speaker Colfax announced the joint resolution had passed, 119 yea (including the Speaker's vote), 56 nay, 8 non-voting. The *Globe* then records:

The announcement was received by the House and by the spectators with an outburst of enthusiasm. The members on the Republican side of the House instantly sprung to their feet, and, regardless of parliamentary rules, applauded with cheers and clapping of hands. The example was followed by the male spectators in the galleries, which were crowded to excess, who waved their hats and cheered loud and long, while the ladies, hundreds of whom were present, rose in their seats and waved their handkerchiefs, participating in and adding to the general excitement and intense interest of the scene. This lasted for several minutes.³⁹

The next day the *Washington Star* commented:

...the announcement of the vote led to a scene never before seen in either House. Members embraced and all the galleries rang with deafening cheers; all joined in a spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm, which refused to be checked by the Speaker for several moments. As the crowd dispersed, the excitement gradually subsided, and the House resumed business with its usual decorum, but the great triumph of the day now left no spirit for tamer subjects, and adjournment speedily followed.⁴⁰ The celebration was followed that day with the firing of a 100-gun salute at Franklin Square, a mile and a half northwest of the capitol.⁴¹

Senate Joint Resolution 16 was sent to the White House. Although joint resolutions do not require nor normally receive the President's signature, President Lincoln did sign this one. Now it was up to the legislatures of three-fourths of the states to ratify the amendment.

In far-away Nevada the meeting of the first state legislature was in session. On February 13, Governor Henry Blasdel received a telegram from Mr. Worthington, confirming passage. The governor quickly sent a message to the Senate and Assembly, requesting the two houses formalize Nevada's vote to ratify. There was a single Democrat in each house: Frank M. Proctor of Nye County in the Senate, and James A. St. Clair of Churchill County in the Assembly. Their votes were the only nays preventing unanimous votes of ratification by Nevada. The *Sacramento Daily Union* reported that: "Having thus hastened to indorse the action of Congress, the Legislature of the Silver State adjourned in a jubilant mood."⁴²

On December 18, Secretary Seward announced the anti-slavery Resolution was ratified. The passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States became an inextricable part of the foundations of the Territory and State of Nevada.

AN AFTER NOTE

Until 1913, U. S. Senators were elected by their state legislature. Nevada's first Senators, William M. Stewart and James W. Nye, were elected at a joint session of the first Nevada State Legislature, on December 15, 1864. The new Senators arrived in Washington D.C. on February first, and within hours both were seated in the Senate, nearly nine months after the Senate had approved the resolution initiating the Thirteenth Amendment.⁴³ After taking the oath of office a lottery was held; Stewart drew the six-year term, ending March 3, 1869. Nye received the three-year term.

The 68th Congress adjourned *sine die* on March fourth. Mr. Worthington remained in the city where he was one of the pallbearers representing the House of Representatives at the funeral for President Lincoln in April. Senator Nye was one of the Senators named to accompany the President's casket to Springfield, Illinois.⁴⁴

Henry Worthington did not stand for re-election that fall, and never returned to Nevada.

NOTES

¹*Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, Summer 2009, p. 85, Michael Green discusses “Abraham Lincoln, Nevada, and the Law of Unintended Consequences,” in which he addresses the granting of Statehood and passage of the Thirteenth Amendment from a broader political and economic perspective. Here the focus is on the interplay of the persons involved in those two events.

²*New York Tribune*, quoted in *Sacramento Daily Union*, 29 March 1860, p. 2, col. 2.

³*Daily Illinois State Journal*, Springfield, Ill., 3 March 1860, p. 2, cols. 5-6

⁴“Appointments by the Governor” *Albany* (N.Y.) *Argus*, 13 March 1846, p. 3, col. 4.

⁵Walter Stahr, *Seward, Lincoln’s Indispensable Man*, (Simon & Schuster, 2012), pp. 201, 205.

⁶*Sacramento Daily Union*, 30 March 1861, p. 2, col. 6, crediting *The New York Herald’s* Washington correspondent.

⁷*Idem*, 21 July 1865, p. 5, col. 3, quoting the *New York Herald* of 21 June, reporting on a dinner which had been given to Senator Nye “of Nevada,” on 20 June. Then-prominent attorney Edwards Pierrepont, presiding over the dinner, made some remarks highly complimentary of Sen. Nye, then told the story of the appointment. Nicolay, who was present at the dinner and spoke later, did not comment about the anecdote.

⁸860 U. S. Census; George Hyatt Nye, *A Genealogy of the Nye Family*, (Cleveland, Nye Family of America Assn.) pp. 390-391. Capt. John left his son, then seven, and his wife, Arabella, 49, in Monroe County in southwestern Alabama (Court records). Thomas (Tom) joined him in California in about 1855. Arabella died in Alabama sometime in the early 1860s. 1860 U.S. Census. The first notice in California of James Nye’s 22 March Senate confirmation was in the *Sacramento Daily Union* of 8 April 1861, p. 4, col. 6.

⁹*Sacramento Daily Union*, 8 April 1861, p. 4, col. 6. The article reports the Washington, D.C. information, dated March 22, arrived at Fort Kearny, Nebraska Territory by telegraph from St. Louis, thence by Pony Express to Sacramento.

¹⁰*New York Times*, 23 March 1861. Although only one of Lincoln’s appointees to the Territory was a “border man,” Californian Gordon N. Mott, of the Territorial Supreme Court, Nye’s appointees to his administrative posts—Treasurer, Auditor, Deputy Indian Agent, etc., all fit that category.

¹¹*Daily Alta California*, 18 April 1861, p. 1, col. 5.

¹²*Albany* (N.Y.) *Evening Journal*, 27 April, p. 2, col. 2; *New York Herald*, 19 April, 1861, p. 10, col. 2.

¹³*New York Times*, 29 April 1861.

¹⁴After fifteen years with Greeley, following the battle of Bull Run/Manassas the two disagreed on the management of the war. The conflict was never resolved, and in March, 1862, Dana was asked for, and gave, his resignation. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton immediately made him a special investigator, with the title “Assistant Secretary of War.”

¹⁵Charles A. Dana, “Reminiscences of Men and Events of the Civil War, Chapter 6, Mr. Lincoln and his Cabinet,” *McClure’s Magazine*, April 1898, p. 564. Dana wrote that two were from New York and one from New Jersey. Lending credence to Dana’s article, Anson Herrick, D-N.Y., and John F. Starr, D-N.J. later said they were offered political appointments. The second New Yorker may have been John Ganson, D-N.Y., whose vote caused spontaneous applause. Following the assassination of Lincoln, President Johnson chose not to honor the promises.

¹⁶As noted in the text, similar enabling acts were passed to allow Colorado (act of March 8, 1864) and Nebraska (act of April 19, 1864) to attain statehood. Neither was able to meet the requirements of their enabling acts as rapidly as Nevada. Despite the wording of the enabling acts for all three territories, neither Nebraska (1867) nor Colorado (1876) became states “without any further action by Congress.”

¹⁷National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), *Nevada Territorial Records, 1861-1864*, microfilm.

¹⁸Howard K. Beale, ed., *The Diary of Edward Bates, 1859-1866*, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1933, pp. 113-114. This paper discusses Nevada’s role in the election and vote for the Thirteenth Amendment. For a thorough, highly readable discussion of these topics at the national level, the reader is referred to Jennifer L. Weber, *Copperheads; the Rise and Fall of Lincoln’s Opponents in the North*, Oxford University Press, 2006.

¹⁹NARA, *Nevada Territorial Records, 1861-1864*, Microfilm.

²⁰*Journal of the Council of the First Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Nevada*, San Francisco, Valentine & Co. 1862, p. 99.

²¹David Homer Bates, *Lincoln in the Telegraph Office*, New York, The Century Company, 1907, pp. 278-279. In early 1865 Eckert was promoted through the officer ranks to General.

²²NARA, *Nevada Territorial Records, 1861-1864*, microfilm.

²³A similar comment is in the *San Francisco Daily Alta California*, 28 October 1864, p. 1, col. 5.

²⁴Details of transmission provided by NARA. The tap of a telegraph key delivers an electric current which causes a relay to click at the other end of the wire. That relay can be the end of the line, where an operator writes down the message, or it can be a relay to another wire, refreshing the signal and moving the message forward.

²⁵The original telegram is preserved in the Nevada State Archives.

²⁶Ella Sterling Mighels, *Letter to the Nevada Historical Society*, Reno, 27 October 1914. In Aurora the *Esmeralda Daily Union* offered to print "any amount of transparencies for the great torchlight procession.... Bring along your canvas and mottoes, gentlemen, and we will soon put them together for you." "Lamps" for the parade were sold for 25 cents each at Molineaux & Co. hardware store on Pine Street. Wicks and coal oil were available free for the parade at Woodliff's drug store. *Esmeralda Daily Union*, 3 November 1864, p. 3, col. 2 and November 5, p. 3, col. 1.

²⁶*Evening Star*, Washington, D.C., 8 February 1865, p. 2, col. 4.

²⁷F. & J. Rives, *The Congressional Globe, Second Session, 38th Congress*, Washington, Globe Office, 1865, p. 668.

²⁹*Red Bluff Independent*, 12 December 1864, p. 2, col. 2. The *Sacramento Daily Union* of 17 December 1864, p. 3, col. 3, reports "The damages to the Aurora and Carson road, which was badly injured by the late flood, have been so far repaired that wagons now reach the two places without trouble."

³⁰In 1861, Gordon Mott of Marysville California was appointed by Lincoln as one of the first two associate judges on the Nevada Territory Supreme Court. He resigned on being elected territorial delegate to the Thirty-eighth Congress.

³¹*Ibid.*, 1 May 1861, p. 4, col. 3, quoting an undated *San Francisco Times*.

³²*Sacramento Daily Union*, Letter from Salt Lake, 4 April 1863 p. 2, col. 5. The "Letter" is a detailed description of the incident based on an interview with Mott.

³³Reprinted in the *Daily Evening Traveler*, Boston, Massachusetts, 22 December 1864, p. 5, col. 6.

³⁴*Globe, idem*, pp. 98-99. Here we follow the *Globe's* form of reference to members of Congress as "Mr.", and not as not "Rep." or "Cong." In his personal life, William Higby served as Mr. Worthington's groomsman when he married Miss Eugeni Kent of Maryland, in Annapolis on 19 January 1865. *Washington Star*, 21 January 1865 (Sat.), p. 2, col. 5. Eugeni's father, James Kent, died in 1852. He had owned Portland Manor, a 300-acre tobacco plantation south of Annapolis, in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. In the sometimes confusing standards of the times, eighty-four slaves, aged from 72 down to one-month lived on the plantation. NARA, *Schedule of Slave Inhabitants*, 1 November 1850. "Castine," Washington reporter for the *Sacramento Daily Union*, wrote on 12 February that Worthington "...has distinguished himself as a hard-working and attentive legislator...." 22 March 1865, p. 1, col. 5.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 155.

³⁶*Sacramento Daily Union*, 20 February, 1865, p. 1, col. 2, "Letters from Washington."

³⁷Cornelius Cole, *Memoirs of Cornelius Cole, [Ex-Congressman and] Ex-Senator of the U.S. from California*, 1908, New York, McLoughlin Brothers, (letter) p. 220; (vote) p. 221.

³⁸*Globe, idem.*, p.s 168-172. On 28 January 1865 President Lincoln issued a pass allowing Mrs. Lallie Holliday of Kentucky to visit her husband, Major J. B. Holliday, at Johnson's Island, a Union prison in Lake Erie north of Sandusky, Ohio, based on a petition by Mr. Yeaman and others. Nicholas County, Kentucky Citizens to Abraham Lincoln, 23 January 1865, *Abraham Lincoln Papers*, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. It is possible the President granted the pass to insure Yeaman's vote. Because the Amendment conflicted with the Kentucky State Constitution, which denied free blacks the right to vote, the State did not ratify the Thirteenth Amendment until 1976. In February 2013, spurred by Steven Spielberg's motion picture *Lincoln*, Mississippi filed its ratification resolution.

³⁹*Globe, idem.*, p. 155.

⁴⁰*Evening Star*, 1 February 1865, p. 2, col. 1.

⁴¹*Daily National Republican*, Washington, D.C., 4:30 p.m. edition, 1 February 1865, p. 2, col. 5.

⁴²*Sacramento Daily Union*, 17 February 1865, p. 2, col. 1. The newspaper misspells Blasdel's name, adding a second terminal 'l'.

⁴³*Ibid.*, col. 1.

⁴⁴*Idem.*, 18 April 1865, p. 2, col. 5.

Book Reviews

Lake Tahoe's Rustic Architecture. By Peter B. Mires (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2016)

Lake Tahoe's Rustic Architecture is one of the latest in Arcadia Publishing's popular Images of America series, which highlights a town or area through photographs, captions, and short narratives. In this case, the reader is in for a special treat. The author Peter Mires has selected engaging photographs to illustrate the topic, but he has gone beyond creating a book of beautiful photographs. He has also provided the reader with entertaining and authoritative text that will appeal to a broad audience.

No one could be better qualified to take on the subject than Dr. Mires, who studied at the University of Louisiana under the influential anthropologist and geographer Fred Kniffen. Dr. Mires interprets Tahoe's rustic architecture from the point at which landscape and culture converge. And what more beautiful spot could there be for this convergence than Lake Tahoe? Straddling Nevada and California in the Sierra Nevada mountain range, it is North America's largest alpine lake.

As the architect Peter R. Dubé points out in the book's foreword, Dr. Mires establishes the context in which Lake Tahoe rustic architecture is understood. To this end, Dr. Mires's chapters present the ways the rustic style has permeated Lake Tahoe's built environment in response to the demands of the human population.

The sources of the remarkable historic photographs that Dr. Mires has assembled deserve acknowledgement. The list is too long to repeat here, but let it suffice to say that Dr. Mires did a thorough job of rooting out photographs from archives, libraries, and historical societies in California and Nevada, as well as the Library of Congress. There are also excellent present-day photographs taken by Dr. Mires himself.

The book's introduction sets the stage for the architectural pageant that follows. Here Dr. Mires defines rustic as it relates to architecture and explains how rustic architecture relates to Lake Tahoe's environment, as well as its history. From the 1850s to the present day, the rustic style has been the architectural signature of Lake Tahoe.

Chapter One describes the origins of the rustic style in the simple log buildings constructed by the early emigrants crossing the Sierra Nevada and the

way-stations built along established wagon roads as travel picked up. The great Comstock Lode and its premier mining town, Virginia City, influenced Tahoe's architecture as well. The chapter includes photographs of General William Phipps's second log cabin, built in 1872 on Lake Tahoe's west shore, and a larger structure built in 1859 and known as the Lake House—the first hostelry on the shores of Lake Tahoe. The latter date is especially significant as it marks the beginning of the "Rush to Washoe."

The term "Resort Rustic" has come to represent Lake Tahoe's built environment and the importance of the region as a resort mecca. Through text and photographs, Chapter Two underscores this importance. By the 1880s, Lake Tahoe was a vacation destination, especially for wealthy Californians. The early resorts such as the Tallac Hotel were characterized as rustic, although some were a more elegant form of rustic than others. Glen Alpine Springs and Fallen Leaf Lodge were such examples, which appealed to the likes of John Muir and the architect Bernard Maybeck. The resort rustic theme continued through the evolution of Lake Tahoe's attraction as it was democratized by the advent of automobile travel and year-round roads to and around the lake. In this chapter, Dr. Mires has collected images to appeal to all tastes, from the lavish Tahoe Tavern near Tahoe City to the western-themed neon sign of the Washoe Motel in South Lake Tahoe.

Until paved highways were completed around the lake, few people lived there year-round. As a result, the first residential properties ranged from simple one-room log cabins to large summer homes built for the Bay Area elite. In Chapter Three, "Residential Rustic," Dr. Mires describes the progression of residential construction that stayed true to the rustic ethos regardless of the size and extravagance of the home. Here we meet some well-known characters and their homes, such as George Whittell and his Thunderbird Lodge, Lora J. Knight and her remarkable Vikingsholm on Emerald Bay, and San Francisco Banker Isaias W. Hellman's Pine Lodge at Sugar Pine Point. As a counterpoint, we see the modest Lena N. Gale Cabin at Zephyr Cove and the Withers Log Cabin in Crystal Bay. However, the word modest does not do justice to the latter two examples. In terms of defining resort rustic, they possess every possible quality.

While Lake Tahoe architecture began with the architectural sensibilities of average people bringing to the region their own personal notions of how buildings should be built, a number of architects have left their marks on the Tahoe's built landscape. In Chapter Four, Dr. Mires introduces us to some of the most important and influential of the early twentieth century, including Bernard Maybeck, Walter Bliss, Frederic DeLongchamps, G. Albert Lansburgh, and Lennart Palme. Each one of these remarkable architects left his particular mark on Lake Tahoe's resort rustic style.

The photographs that Dr. Mires has chosen to represent the works of these architects demonstrate the wide variety of design elements that contribute to

the local style. Three of the five —Maybeck, Bliss, and Lansburgh represented the San Francisco Bay Area. Lennart Palme, a Swede, designed Vikingsholm. Renoite Frederic DeLongchamps—the only one among this august group without an academic architecture degree—had early ties to a San Francisco firm and maintained an office there for many years.

The rustic style at Lake Tahoe has not been limited to residential architecture, as anyone who has driven the highways that encircle the lake will recognize. Dr. Mires points out that with this increased commercial visibility, rustic becomes Tahoe's brand.

Chapters Five ("Retail"), Six ("Religious"), and Seven ("Resort") discuss specific building types that further the style's visual impact on the region. With increased tourism and then year-round habitation at the lake, grocery stores, shops of various kinds, gas stations, and eating establishments proliferated, many reflecting the rustic style.

Of course, Lake Tahoe's transcendent natural beauty has always attracted the spiritually minded. In terms of architecture, however, the area attracted summer church camps beginning in the nineteenth century. These camps offered worship and spiritual fellowship among clusters of rustic cabins, chapels, and communal buildings. As the long-term population grew in the twentieth century, the camps persisted, but larger houses of worship were also built. The rustic style, implemented in a variety of ways in church architecture, captures the essence of the glory of nature in Tahoe's beauty.

From the spiritual to the temporal, in the penultimate chapter, Dr. Mires discusses the most widely known aspect of Lake Tahoe's built environment, recreation. This includes all manner of outdoor sports and activities carried out on land and water (and horseback), but also gambling and nightlife on the Nevada side, where gaming is legal. While today's Lake Tahoe casinos are modern in appearance, earlier gambling establishments were rustic in nature, drawing on Wild West images. Other recreational facilities from U.S. Forest Service cabins to fish hatcheries and golf courses reflect the rustic mode. Nor does Dr. Mires forget the iconic Ponderosa Ranch featured on the long-running TV show *Bonanza*. Although it was closed several years ago, some of the set piece, featuring the Cartrightss log ranch house, operated for many years as a theme park in Incline Village.

Closing out the stunning visual tour of Lake Tahoe's historic rustic architecture, Dr. Mires's final chapter discusses the style's endurance into the modern day in the form of new buildings paying homage to the rustic style and, to the preservation of small architectural elements that are emblematic of rustic character.

Dr. Mires's book will appeal to a broad audience. It is lovely to look at, easy to read, and an important and authoritative contribution to the appreciation of architecture in one of the most beautiful spots on earth.

Mella Rothwell Harmon, M.S.
Spokane, WA

Cities, Sagebrush, and Solitude: Urbanization and Cultural Conflict in the Great Basin. Edited by Dennis R. Judd and Stephanie L. Witt (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2015)

Reno, Las Vegas, and the Strip: A Tale of Three Cities. By Eugene P. Moehring (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2014)

For a spell in the 1990s, I had the hubris to try to cover the Great Basin for the western regional biweekly *High Country News*, which is published in Paonia, a small town in Colorado. Ed Marston, the publisher and one of the region's great editors of all times, egged me on by noting that the Great Basin was a "black hole" in their coverage of the American West. I went on to found an erstwhile magazine called *Great Basin* that put up a valiant effort to put the region between two covers quarterly before passing away quietly before the turn of the century.

The Great Basin is still a black hole in most people's consciousness of the American West—if they can even locate or define the region. This is true even for people who live in the Great Basin, most of whom inhabit the cities that ring the Great Basin—Reno and Salt Lake City, by any definition, and Las Vegas and Boise, depending on your definition of the region.

One reason it was hard to sustain a regional magazine is that very few people actually live fully, consciously, in the Great Basin. The people who live in the cities of the Great Basin mostly identify with their own cities. What happens in Vegas, as we all know, stays in Vegas. Reno mostly looks west to the Sierra Nevada, not east to the Great Basin. Salt Lake City looks east to the Wasatch Mountains. And while Boise is, technically, in the Great Basin Desert floristic region, the city seems much more closely identified with the Boise River, which runs through the city on its way to join the Snake River on its journey west to the Pacific, and with the great rivers and mountains to the north.

So I sympathize with the editors of *Cities, Sagebrush, and Solitude: Urbanization and Cultural Conflict in the Great Basin*, who have valiantly tried to find a regional identity and coherent unifying themes to explain these four cities and the vast, sparsely inhabited region between them.

By way of explaining their overarching themes, the editors write: "The alchemical mixture of three ingredients—cities (which are morphing into sprawling metropolitan regions), sagebrush (the ubiquitous signifier of aridity and resource scarcity), and solitude (which has nurtured a libertarian political outlook)—makes the Great Basin a compelling place to study." The book will provide a provocative introduction to the region and its challenges for many readers, with essays delving into the Great Basin's image, economies, politics, conflicts, environmental crises, public lands and resources, tourism, urbanism, planning, and future prospects.

The central paradox of the book is framed by two prefatory statements by the editors, Dennis R. Judd and Stephanie L. Witt: "Despite its vast expanses of thinly populated desert, the Great Basin is the fastest-growing urban region in

the United States." And: "*rural* does not work well to describe the lightly settled reaches of this desert region; terms such as *frontier* and *outback* come more easily to mind." Witt goes further in her own essay, writing, "Most of the Basin is not *rural*; it is, instead, almost *empty*."

In another essay, Witt and Brian Laurent argue that this peculiar geography of solitude, along with the history of public lands, which make up 70.6 percent of the region's landmass, have nurtured a "distinctive political culture" in the Great Basin. "Resistance to government is a habit of mind so deep that it has become a leading marker of a distinctive culture within the Basin even within the context of the popular celebration of attributes such as rugged individualism and self-reliance throughout the American West." In the requisite chapter on the Sagebrush Rebellion, Christopher A. Simon calls the region "a crucible for populist resistance."

But as this fall's presidential election has shown, this is not just a culture of the American West, let alone the Great Basin. What makes it a distinctive political culture? Wallace Stegner famously wrote that California is like the rest of America, only more so. And it may be that the Great Basin is like a certain version of America, only more so. Sagebrush rebels perennially attract a lot of attention with their rhetoric and antics, though their movement has never gone anywhere. Simon is optimistic that a new "majoritarian politics" may emerge around energy and national security in the desert and assuage the anger that has sustained the Sagebrush Rebellion. After spending more than a decade writing about half a dozen different renaissances of this dead-end rebellion, and many years since reading about new versions of the same, I'm afraid it will always be with us. We might just have to learn to live with the "rebellion" rather than give it a central place in a "distinctive political culture."

More intriguing is the notion that the spatial and demographic characteristics of the Great Basin might give it an interesting and perhaps extreme, if not unique, political culture because of the tension between "big and small governments." The authors of various chapters in this book lay out fascinating evidence for this. The obvious example of the problem is small county governments that don't have the resources to govern the region's huge counties, some of which are more than 80 percent owned by the "big" (bad) federal government. One, Esmeralda County in Nevada, is 97.9 percent federal land. On the other hand, the "big governments" of the region's cities sometimes complain that they don't get the attention they deserve because they are only a small part of this vast landscape.

Alas, this argument is never nailed down satisfactorily—in part, because of simple mistakes. Witt writes that "because they over-represent nonurban interests, the state legislatures of Idaho and Nevada see little reason to help their larger cities address their quite unique problems." The cities may not get what they think they deserve, but that's not because the legislatures over-represent nonurban interests. In 1964, the Supreme Court ruled that state legislative districts, like districts in the U.S. House of Representatives, have to be reapportioned regularly

to roughly represent equal populations. In Nevada and Utah, state legislatures are now overwhelmingly dominated by urban representatives. Only in Idaho could an argument be made that urban representatives are a minority (depending on how you define “urban,” whether as “cities” of over 2,500 residents or some larger number). But even in Idaho, any claim that nonurban interests are “over-represented” would need to be based on some other argument than actual representation. And the claim that some former county seats no longer even exist as living communities—based on directories of “ghost towns”—will surprise at least some current residents of the very much alive Nevada communities of Genoa, Hawthorne, Austin, Dayton, and Washoe City.

The bigger problem is that the nuanced portraits of the region’s cities in the book don’t connect in a clear way to any of the book’s overarching arguments about the cities and their hinterlands. Erin Daina McClellan writes about Boise’s politics of “quality of life.” Elizabeth Raymond gives a historical account of the astonishing ability of Las Vegas to always—at least so far—make something of nothing even in the face of the “persistent possibility of failure.” Alicia Barber offers a critical appraisal of how Reno’s errant “acts against nature” evince its fundamental alienation from its own region. And Chris Blanchard argues that cowboys and Mormon clerics created two very different political cultures in Salt Lake City and Boise, essentially contradicting any notion of a distinctive regional political culture.

Perhaps it’s too much to ask for a coherent argument from a collected volume. For that, one had better turn to a traditional historical monograph. In *Reno, Las Vegas, and the Strip: A Tale of Three Cities*, Eugene P. Moehring uses his deep knowledge of the history of Las Vegas to ask why Reno turned out so differently when the two cities resembled each other much more closely through the 1970s. Las Vegas got a Strip and Reno didn’t—even though it wanted one badly at times. Moehring’s book is a must-read for anyone interested in these two cities, and how the Strip came to be essentially a city of its own right next door to Las Vegas, but controlled by Clark County, which is 95 percent federally owned, troubling in no small way the arguments of *Cities, Sagebrush, and Solitude*.

Although Moehring doesn’t use the phrase, his book is a provocative framing of a “natural experiment in history.” We can’t experiment on cities, of course, but we can look back at history, in some cases, as giving us quasi-experiments to analyze. Two similar subjects were given different experimental treatments, allowing us to analyze what caused them to turn out differently.

In this case, however, there are too many variables. Stuff happened. A lot of different stuff. And it made all the difference. That’s history.

Jon Christensen
University of California, Los Angeles

Success Depends on the Animals. By Diana L. Ahmad (Reno & Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 2016)

Between 1840 and 1860, hundreds of thousands of Americans packed their most-precious belongings, gathered their loved ones, purchased or stole or tamed beasts of burden, and moved west. Those people, known to history as the overlanders or the pioneers, participated in one of the longest voluntary migrations of humanity in history. Some settled in Utah. Others traveled to Oregon or California. Today, most Americans have a good understanding of the trials these settlers went through thanks to countless movies, television programs, and books, as well as the classic educational computer game *The Oregon Trail*. However, according to the historian Diana Ahmad, we still have a narrow understanding of the overland trails experience. While historians and the American public may have a good understanding of the human experience on the trails, Ahmad points out that we have not examined the journey from the point of view of the animals that accompanied their masters.

In *Success Depends on the Animals*, Ahmad argues that the experiences shared by humans and animals on the trails changed the way masters interacted with their beasts. Men, women, children, and animals all traveled the same dangerous terrain, forded waterways together, weathered the weather together, feasted together, and famished together. According to Ahmad, these experiences softened the attitude humans had towards their animals. Additionally, Ahmad contends that travelers also began taking better care of their beasts because they realized that in order to complete their journey on the overland trails, they needed animals to haul weight and provide calories. To prove this claim, Ahmad divides her monograph into seven chapters that take readers on the trails with the pioneers. She begins by explaining the cultural baggage people packed with them before the journey. Next, she takes readers through the gateway cities and onto the trails. There, readers encounter sublime mountains, treacherous waterways, imperial supply centers, and wild creatures. Throughout this journey, all parties learn that success depended on the animals.

It is clear that Ahmad's argument is another example of an observation the historian Richard White made in two of his 1995 publications: the thought-piece "Are You an Environmentalist or Do You Work for a Living?" and the monograph *The Organic Machine*. In those works, White notes that people often gain an understanding and appreciation of nature through work because their labor is embedded in nature. For example, because of their time working in forests, nineteenth-century lumbermen gained distinctive knowledge about woodlands and began developing a forestry ethic. Similarly, New Deal dam builders in Washington gained an education about the rivers they worked on and understood their power and composition. Ahmad's *Success Depends on the Animals* is yet another example of humans coming to know and appreciate nature through

labor. In this case, people working their way west gained an understanding of the value and limitations of their animals. This idea is important and valuable.

Despite drawing on a variety of journals, diaries, and newspaper accounts, *Success Depends on the Animals* is a very short book. Ahmad perhaps misses an opportunity to frame her work alongside important monographs and articles that describe the mass-extinction of animals on the Great Plains. Many of the extinctions occurred at hands of overland travelers. Andrew Isenberg's *The Destruction of the Bison* and Dan Flores's many articles on the destruction of wildlife on the Great Plains are just a few of the key pieces of literature on wildlife destruction in the West that Ahmad could have grappled with.

Success Depends on the Animals does provide a good overview of the routes, landforms, and gateway cities travelers used and visited on their journey west. Readers wanting a brief overview of the overland trails will appreciate this book. This reader would certainly assign it in undergraduate courses on the American West.

Curtis Foxley
University of Oklahoma

CUMULATIVE INDEX - VOLUME 58

2016

COMPILED BY NEW WEST INDEXING

Numbers 1-4

1 - 106

2016

*Numbers printed in boldface refer to
photographs and illustrations*

"A-Bombs in the Backyard" (Titus), 27
Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The (Twain), 92n14

AEC. *See* Atomic Energy Commission

Agricultural Society, 10, 11

Alamo Ranch, 15

Albuquerque Tribune, 36

Allen, Lem, 11

allotment policy, 68, 73

Ancient and Honorable Society of Atom Bomb
Watchers, 39

Annenberg, Moe, 22

anthropology, applied, 5, 69

anti-booze law, 22

anti-gambling laws, 7, 9, 10, 11, 23

Associated Press, gambling legislation and, 22

atomic-bomb enthusiasts, 39

Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), 5, 26; fallout
compensation and, 39, 40; NTS and, 27,
28, 30-31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41;
nuclear science and, 29, 31, 35; nuclear
weapons and, 36, 37; Observer Project and,
35; pamphlets from, 32, 35, 36; radioactive
fallout and, 35, 36; strike and, 30, 31;
tourism and, 34

*Atomic Test Effects in Nevada Proving Ground
Region* (pamphlet), 36

*Background Information on Continental Nuclear
Tests* (pamphlet), 32

Baer, Max, 21

Balogh, Brian, 27, 28

Bancroft, Hubert Howe, 75

Bancroft Library, 92n15

Bank Club, 21

Barrington, Richard, 77

Baruch, Bernard: Wingfield and, 15, 16

Bauman, I. L.: testimony of, 55

Bay Meadows Racetrack, opening of, 22

Beebe, Lucius, 87, 88

Bell, Joe, 60, 62; cover-up/sabotage and, 57-58;
testimony of, 58-59

Belmont Stakes, 9

betting: horse race, 7, 12, 18, 20, 22, 23; pari-
mutuel, 4, 7-8, 9, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21,
22, 23

Bianchini, G.: testimony of, 53

Blackhawk, Ned, 76

Board of Inquiry, 51, 54, 57

Boas, Franz, 76

**"Bomb from the Bottom Up: Site Workers,
Southern Nevadans, and the Nevada Test
Site, 1951-1963, The"** (Rogers), 4, 26-44

Bombast: Spinning Atoms in the Desert
(Mackedon), 28

"Bombs in the Backyard" (Titus), 27

bookmakers, 9, 10

bookmaking, 13, 23

Boyle, Emmet Derby, 12, 17; horse racing and, 19,
20; Wingfield and, 19

bridge No. 4, maintenance on, 53

bridge No. 5: derailment near, 54; maintenance on, 53

- Brownsville Herald*, 51
 Bulgin, E. J., 10
 Bureau of American Ethnology, 77
 Bush, George W.: approval rating for, 3
 Busha, C. T., Jr.: Washoe Tribe and, 75
- California Jockey Club, 16
 Camp Desert Rock, 28, 31, 32
 Carlin, Nev., 54, 55; derailment near, 5, 48, 50, 53
 Carson City, Nev., 73
 Carson Valley, 72, 73
 Carville, Edward, 22, 23
 Cave Rock, 68
 Celesta (horse), 18
 Central Pacific Railroad, 72
Chain Reaction (Balogh), 28
Challenger (train), speed of, 47
Changing the Game: Women at Work in Las Vegas, 1940-1990 (Joanne L. Goodwin), review of, 94-95
 Chicago and North Western Railroad, *City of San Francisco* and, 47
 “China Town” (sleeper car), 49
 Church, Bruce, 29
 Churchill County, Nev.: agricultural ventures in, 15
 Churchill Creamery, 15
City of San Francisco (train): advertisement for, 47; described, 46-48; sabotage and, 45, 46, 51, 52, 57, 63; wreck of, 5, 45-66, **50**, **58**, **60**
 civil society, 26, 27, 34, 36, 40, 41; NTS and, 39; nuclear fallout and, 35
 Clark, Walter van Tilburg, 7
- Clark County, Nev., 27; NTS and, 34
 Clemens, Clara, 91, 92n18
 Clemens, Jennie: death of, 91
 Clemens, Olivia, 91
 Clemens, Orion, 83, 84, 91, 92n2
 Clemens, Samuel, 5, 92n8; departure of, 85, 90; DeQuille and, 85, 89; Great Fire and, 85; Laird and, 84, 90, 92n5; legacy of, 84, 90-91.
See also Twain, Mark
 “Clouds from Nevada” (*The Reporter*), 36
Coast Daylight (train), 63
 Cold War, 27, 28, 41
 Collier, John, 68
 Collins, Flora: train wreck and, 50
 Commercial Row, 11
 Comstock, 5, 10, 75, 77
 Conboie, Joseph Anthony, 87, 89, 90, 92n12
 Constitutional Convention of the State of Nevada, 90
 cover-up, questions about, 57-61, 62
 Creel, Lorenzo D.: Carson Indian Colony and, 74
 culture, 9, 71, 76, 78; mining, 23; native, 69, 70, 71; ranch, 23
 “Curse of California, The” (cartoon), 66n75
- Daily Racing Form*, 22
 Davis, Sam P., 10, 75
 Dawes Severalty Act (1887), 68, 73, 74
 Del Rio Rey (horse), 10
 DeLongchamps, Frederic, 21
 Dempsey, Jack, 21
 DeNevi, Don: book by, 46
 DeQuille, Dan, 5, 88; Clemens and, 85, 89; death of, 85, 87, 89; McKinnon and, 89-90
 derailment, 54, 55, 59, 63
 divorce, 8, 9, 16; residency, 12, 13
 Dodge, Frederick: Washoe and, 72
 Downs, James, 70
 Dresslerville, 74, 77
 “Duel that Never Was,” article about, 83-92
 dueling, 90, 92n17
 Dwight, T. T., 72
- education, 78; tribal, 67
 Elko, Nev., 48, 51, 59
- Elko County, Nev., 51
Elko Daily Free Press, 52
Elko Independent, 50
 “Embarcadero” (club car), 49
 “Employee Group Hints Roadbed Unfit for Use” (*Los Angeles Daily News*), 52
 Eureka County, Nev., 51
- Fallon, Nev.: state fair in, 13, 18
 Federal Aid Road Act (1921), 18
 Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), 51, 60
 Federal District Court, 60, 62
 Fields, W. C., 21
 Fitch, Tom, 90
 Flory, Ishmael, 52, 53, 62
 Foote, F. S., 48, 49; on roadbed, 53; sabotage story and, 52; track maintenance and, 54
 Freedom of Information Act, 60
 Frémont, John C.: Washoe and, 71, 72
 Frenchmen’s Flat, atomic detonation at, **38**
- gamblers, 6, 8, 9, 10
 gambling, 38; casino, 8; environment for, 4; Great Depression and, 7; legalized, 3, 7;

- open, 3, 20; progressive reform and, 7-25;
suppressing, 11, 23
- gambling laws, 7, 12, 16-17
- General Infantry (GI), 28, 31
- General Land Office, Washoe and, 72
- General Thatcher (horse), **20**
- Gerould, Katharine Fullerton, 19
- Getchell Mine, 21
- GI. *See* General Infantry
- Gillis, Steve: Clemens and, 84, 92n5, 92n8
- Golconda County, Nev.: horse racing in, 13
- Golconda News*, 13
- gold, discovery of, 72
- Gold Hill Evening News*, 84
- Gold Rush, 90
- Golden Hotel, 21
- Goldfield, Nev., 16; fire in, 92n16; gambling and, 11
- Goldfield Consolidated Mining Company, 15
- Goldfield mine, 8, 13, 15
- Goodman, Joe, 90
- Goodwin, Joanne L.: review of her *Changing the Game: Women at Work in Las Vegas, 1940-1990*, 94-95
- Goshute, 68
- Graf, P. E., 59
- Graham, Bill, 21
- "Great American Monte Carlo" (*Sacramento Union*), 16
- Great Basin, 69, 76; ethnographic universe of, 77; indigenous peoples of, 70; white settlement in, 71, 72
- Great Basin Indians, 68, 76, 77
- Great Depression, 45, 46, 48, 61, 63; economic hardships of, 53, 62; gambling and, 7, 22; horse racing and, 23; race meetings and, 21
- Great Fire (Virginia City, Nev.), 85, 87, 89, 92n16
- Great Salt Lake, 3
- Gridley, Reuel: Sanitary Commission and, 92n5
- Hanford Nuclear Reservation, 27
- Harper's Magazine*, 7, 19
- Harrison, Christian: book review by, 96-97
- Hecox, Ed: testimony of, 54, 55; train wreck and, 48-49, 50, 52
- Heizer, Robert, 75
- Hemingway, Ernest: on Twain, 84
- Herring, George C., 3
- Hickson, Howard, 60
- History of Nevada* (Davis), 10
- Holabird Americana, 85, 92n13
- Holden, Hale: train wreck and, 51
- Honey Lake, 15, 70
- Hood, Thomas, 48
- Hoover, J. Edgar: train wreck and, 51
- horse racing: article about, 7-25; bills, 13; boom/bust for, 7, 19-23; business interests and, 12; establishment of, 17-18; laws, 13, 16; legalization of, 23; tourism and, 18
- horses, **8**, 20
- Hotel Last Frontier, swimming pool at, **38**
- How Kentucky Became Southern: A Tale of Outlaws, Horse Thieves, Gamblers and Breeders* (Wall), 10
- Huckleberry Finn* (Twain), 84, 92n14
- Humboldt, Alexander von, 76
- Humboldt County, Nev., 21; horse racing in, 13
- Humboldt River, 48, 49, 51
- IBM, 48
- ICC. *See* Indian Claims Commission
- Imes, Robert, 18
- Independent Guard Association of Nevada (IGAN), 29, 30
- Indian Allotment Act (1887), 73
- Indian Appropriation Act (1915), 74
- Indian Citizenship Act (1924), 74
- Indian Claims Commission (ICC), 5, 69, 71; emergence of, 74; Washoe and, 68, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79
- Indian Claims Commission Act (1946), 68, 74
- Indian Reorganization Act (1934), 68, 74
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters, 29
- Interstate Commerce Commission: investigation by, 51, 53, 54, 57, 59, 61; report by, 56 (fig.)
- Jack Dempsey Cup, 21
- Jackson, Helen Hunt, 73
- Jeffries, Jim, 17
- Johnson, Christine K., 5, 6; article by, 83-92
- Johnson, Jack, 17
- Joint Council of Dining Car Employees, 52, 62
- Keaton, Buster, 21
- Keller, G. Frederick, 62
- Kelly, Fireman: train wreck and, 50
- Kirk, Andrew, 27
- Knights of Pythias, 87
- Knights of the Royal Arch, 11
- Kroeber, Alfred, 75, 76, 77
- Kyne, William, 19, 21, 22

- labor movement, 5, 28
 Laird, James: Clemens and, 84, 88, 90, 92n5
 Lake Tahoe, 6, 67-68, 70, 73, 75, 77
 land rights, 15, 78
 Lander County, Nev., 15
 languages, native, 69, 70
 Las Vegas, Nev., 16; gambling in, 38
Las Vegas Review-Journal, 32, 36
Las Vegas Sun, 31, 32
 Las Vegas Test Site, **33**
 Lefebvre, Henry: "social space" theory and, 28
 Limerick, Patricia Nelson, 38
 Lincoln, Abraham: Clemens and, 83, 84
 Los Alamos Laboratory, 27
Los Angeles Daily News, 52
- Mack, Effie Mona: on Clemens, 90
 Mackedon, Michon, 27, 28, 35
 MacMahon, Christopher, 5; article by, 45-66
 Maidu, 69
 Makley, Matthew, 70
 Manypenny, George W., 73
 Marcus, Emerson, 4; article by, 7-25
 "Mark Twain's Revolver: Myths and Realities"
 (Johnson), 83-92
 "Market Street" (chair car), 49
 Martin, Anne, 12-13
 Marx Brothers, 21
 Max Baer Cup, 21
 McDonald, A. D.: train wreck and, 51
 McIntosh, George: anti-gambling bill by, 11
 McKay, Jim, 20, 21
 McKinnon, John E., 87; DeQuille and, 89-90
 Meadowbrook Ranch, 15
 Meeks Bay Resort, 68
 Meeks Creek Meadow, 67-68
Merriam Report, 74
 military-industrial complex, 27, 29, 41
 Mills, Roy C., 59
 mining, 9
 "Mission Dolores" (diner-kitchen car), 49
 Moffet, William H., 18
 Monroe, Warren: train wreck and, 50
 Moren, Les: train wreck and, 50-51
 Morgan, Lewis Henry, 73, 76
 Murphy, Frank: Flory letter to, 52
 "Mushroom Cloud as Kitsch, The" (Titus), 27
 "Mystery on the Mainline: What Wrecked the 'City
 of San Francisco'?" (MacMahon), 5, 45-66
- National Atomic Testing Museum, 89
 National Labor Relations Board, 30
 Native Americans, 68, 70; ethnocentric attitudes
 toward, 77; homeless non-reservation, 74;
 lives/cultures of, 69; plight of, 73
 Navy Colt Revolver, 87, 88
Nevada Citizen, 30
 Nevada Derby, 17, 18
 Nevada Highway Patrol, train wreck and, 51
 Nevada Historical Society (NHS), 5, 19, 88, 91,
 92n5; Great Fire and, 89; Twain's revolver
 and, 83, 85, 87
 Nevada Jockey Club, reorganization of, 16
 Nevada Proving Grounds, 26. *See also* Nevada
 Test Site
 Nevada State Board of Agriculture, 11, 19
 Nevada State Fair, 11, 17; horse racing at, 10;
 moving, 13, 18
Nevada State Journal, 17, 22
 Nevada State Racing Commission, 18, 19, 20;
 creation of, 12, 13; race meetings and, 21
 Nevada Stock Farm, 15, 19, 21
Nevada Test Site Information Handbook
 (pamphlet), distribution of, 28-29
 Nevada Test Site (NTS), 4; AEC and, 27, 28,
 30-31, **31**, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41;
 article about, 26-44; labor conflict at, 29, 30;
 tourism and, 38, 39, 40
 New York State Court, 16
 Newlands, Francis, 9, 73
 NHS. *See* Nevada Historical Society
 Nixon, George, 13
 Nixon, Richard M.: approval rating for, 3
 Nolan, T., 18
 Norris, Frank, 66n75
 Northern Paiute, 68, 76
 "Notes & Documents" (Johnson), 83-92
 NTS. *See* Nevada Test Site
 nuclear experiments, 28, 35; military
 personnel in, 33
 nuclear fallout, 35, 40
 Nuclear Rocket Development Station, 30
 nuclear science, 28, 29, 32, 34
 nuclear weapons tests, 32, 34; AEC and, 36, 37;
 casinos and, 39; experiments with, 37; NTS
 and, 39; **38**; protecting secrets of, 28-29;
 tourism and, 35, 38, 39-40, 41; tunnel for, **33**
- Nye, James W.: Clemens and, 84
 Nye County, Nev., 27, 34

- Observer Project, 34, 35, 40
Octopus: The Story of California, The (Norris), 66n75
 Odd Fellows, 87
 Office of Indian Affairs, 68, 73, 74
 Offner, Arnold A., 3
 Ogden, Utah, 47, 48
 O'Neill, Eugene, 84
 Operation Desert Rock, 32
 Operation Plowshare, 37
 Oral History project, 29
Overland Limited (train), 63
 Overland Route, 47
- Paiutes, 69, 70, 72
 Parker, H. G.: reservation land and, 72
 Parry, R. W., 11, 12
 Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (1963), 26
 Paulino Cup, 21
 Pine Nut Hills, 70, 73
 Pit River Indians, 69
 Pittman, Key, 73, 74
Plowshare (pamphlet), 35
 Powell, John Wesley, 76
 Power Unit 2: 55
 Preakness Stakes, 20
 "Presidio" (diner-kitchen car), 49
Production of Space, The (Lefebvre), 28
 Progressive Era, 8-9, 10, 23, 62
 progressive reform, gambling and, 7-25
 Project Gnome, 37
 Project Pluto, 27
 Project Sunshine, 36
 Public Service Commission, 9
 Pullman-Standard Car Manufacturing Company, *City of San Francisco* and, 47
 Pyramid Lake, 72
 Pyramid Land and Stock Company, 15
- race meetings, 17, 19, 21, 23
 radioactive fallout, 35, 36, 37, 40
 ranching, 9, 23
 "Recalling a Train Wreck" (Hickson), 60
 Reid, John B.: article by, 3-6
 Remington Company, 85, 88, 92n13
 Remington model 1858: access card for, patent for, 85; **86**
 Reno, Nev., 47, 85; gambling and, 11; horse racing in, 7-25; social life in, 7; state fair in, 13
- "Reno at the Races: The Sporting Life and Progressive Reform" (Marcus), 4, 7-25
Reno Evening Gazette, 15, 19
Reno Gazette-Journal, 46
 Reno National Bank Building, 19
 Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, 74
Reporter, The, 36
Rereading the Nature of Atomic Doom Towns (Kirk), 27
 revolver, Mark Twain's, 83, 92
 Robinson, Edward G., 21
 Rocha, Guy, 90
 rodeos, 18, 22
 Rogers, Harry W. G., 4-5; article by, 26-44
 Roosevelt, Franklin D., 22
 Rose Creek, 53
Roughing It (Twain), 68, 87, 89
 Ruocco, William, Jr.: train wreck and, 49
- sabotage, 45, 46, 51, 52, 53, 62, 63; questions about, 57-61
Sacramento Union, 16
 sagebrush journalism, 5
 St. Sure, Judge, 61
 San Francisco, Calif., 3, 16, 45, 51, 85
 San Francisco earthquake (1906), 89
 Sanitary Commission, 92n5
Santa Fé New Mexican, 39
 Scholl & Roberts Gunsmiths, 88
 Scrugham, James, 18
 Seaborg, Glen: strike and, 30
 Security Services Company of Washington (SSCW), 29, 30
 "Seeing and Being Seen" (Limerick), 38
 Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, 74
 Shaw, Anne Howard, 13
 Sheerin, Chris H.: on sabotage, 52
 Shoshone, 69, 70
 Siegel, Benjamin "Bugsy," 22
 Sierra Nevada, 70
 Sierra Valley, Washoe and, 77
 silver, discovery of, 72
 Silver State Jockey Club, 19, 21-22
 Smith, Jedediah, 71
 Smith, John Lewis, Jr.: Washoe Tribe and, 75
 Smith & Wesson, 87, 88
 Smithsonian Institution, 77
 social progress, 9, 76

- “social space” theory, 28
- Southern Pacific Company, 51, 54, 62
- Southern Pacific Railroad: *City of San Francisco* and, 47, 52; fight against, 66n75; hospitals by, 66n76; investigation by, 51; investigation of, 54; police, 51; roadbed problems for, 53; sabotage and, 57, 59, 61, 62, 63; suit against, 60; time-service rules of, 54; track maintenance and, 54; wreck of, **50**
- Southern Paiute, 68
- Spanish Springs Ranch, 21
- Sparks, Nev., 21
- Sparks, John, 15
- SSCW. *See* Security Services Company of Washington
- Standard Oil, 51
- Star Shooter (horse), 18
- Steward, Julian Haynes, 5, 76, 77
- Stewart, Omer Call, 5, 76, 77, 78
- Strekal, Edan, 5; article by, 67-82
- strikes, 29, 30
- Sunset Limited* (train), 63
- Taft Hartley Act, 30
- Teamsters Union Local 631: 29-30, 31
- technology, 29; nuclear, 27, 40; primitive, 70-71
- Territorial Enterprise*, 87, 92n5; Clemens and, 84, 90, 91, 92n8
- Thomas, Elmer J.: testimony of, 54-55
- Titus, Alice Constandina, 27, 28
- Tonopah mine, 8, 13
- tourism, 8; AEC and, 34; horse racing and, 18; NTS and, 38, 40; nuclear explosions and, 35, 38, 39-40, 41
- Tragic Train* (DeNevi), 46
- Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, 69
- Truman, Harry S., 5, 6; approval rating for, 3; gambling and, 4
- Twain, Mark, 92n1; death of, 87; as “Father of American Literature,” 84; Great Basin Indians and, 68; revolver of, 83-92; undertakers and, 91; whores/gamblers and, 6. *See also* Clemens, Samuel
- Twenty-Third Psalm, 10
- “Twin Peaks” (sleeper car), 49
- Union Army, 92n11
- Union Pacific Railroad: *City of San Francisco* and, 47; train wreck and, 51
- “Union Square” (railroad car), 59
- unionizing, 29, 31, 33
- United States Department of Justice, Washoe Tribe and, 75
- United States Department of the Interior, 74-75
- United States Forest Service, 67
- United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, 68
- University of Nevada, Oral History project of, 29
- “U.S. Blue Laws Being Wiped Out,” 22
- USS Arizona Memorial, 89
- Uzcudun, Paulino, 21
- Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Blackhawk), 76
- Virginia City, Nev., 87, 88; Clemens in, 83-84, 85, 89, 90, 91
- Virginia City Daily Union*, 84, 90
- Wall, Mary Jean, 10
- Wallace, Henry: on Truman, 3
- Wallar, Eleanor, 54, 60, 61
- Wallar v. Southern Pacific Company*, 60
- Wallis, Eileen V.: book review by, 94-95
- Walsh, John G., 51
- Washer, Julius, 18
- Washoe, Nev.: rush to, 90
- “Washoe Redux: Territory, Sovereignty, and Anthropology” (Strekal), 5, 67-82
- Washoe Tribal Council, 74
- Washoe Tribe, 5; article about, 67-82; compensation for, 78, 79; development of, 67-68; disenfranchisement of, 74; lands for, 62, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 78; litigation for, 74-75; population of, 70; reorganization of, 67
- Washoe Tribe of the States of Nevada and California v. the United States*, 74
- Washoe Valley, 10
- Wasp, The* (magazine), 66n75
- Water Politics in Northern Nevada: A Century of Struggle* (Leah J. Wilds), review of, 96-97
- Weeks, Otis, 55
- Welch, V. V.: train wreck and, 49
- Western Pacific Railroad, 51, 63
- Western Shoshone, 68, 76
- Wier, Jeanne, 87, 91
- Wilds, Leah J.: review of her *Water Politics in Northern Nevada: A Century of Struggle*, 96-97
- Williamson, T. L., 58; testimony of, 53, 59

Wingfield, George, **8**, 9, 11, 23; bank of, 18;
bankruptcy for, 21, 22; Baruch and, 15, 16;
Boyle and, 19; death of, 21; gambling and,
15; horse racing and, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20;
horses of, **8**, 18, **20**; livestock outfits and,
15; Martin and, 13; Nevada Stock Farm and,
19; 14; as Racing Commissioner, 18

Wingfield Park, 17

Winnemucca, Nev., 14

Winters, Theodore, 10

Women's Civic League, 11

World Trade Center, 89

Wright, George F.: Washoe Tribe and, 74, 75

Wright, William, 92n9

Young American Engine Co. #2, **88**

Nevada

Historical Society Quarterly

SEEKING NEW CONTENT

The *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* is actively seeking articles for future issues. We invite and encourage papers related to all aspects of Nevada, the Great Basin, and the West history, from prehistory to the present.

While our focus is original scholarly research, the *Quarterly* accepts shorter articles for the *Notes and Documents* section. New topics that would fit into this section:

Preservation: Interpretation of historic buildings, built and natural landscapes, and preservation efforts, including the history narratives for nominations.

Archaeology: Field notes and case studies with detailed historic background promoting the importance of historic sites in Nevada.

Photographic Essays: Historic content and interpretation with the use of 8-12 images or illustrations.

Instructions for Submissions and Abstracts

Please send brief abstract to SherylN Hayes-Zorn at shayeszorn@nevadaculture.org.

Full manuscripts should be sent in electronic form to the Associate Editor and should be between 4,000 and 7,000 words. Please include a minimum of 2-3 photographs, illustrations or maps to accompany your article.

For the **Notes and Documents** section, please submit shorter pieces of original research, ranging from 5 to 10 pages.

ADVERTISING

Nevada Historical Society Quarterly is accepting advertisements. For rates, specs and deadlines, please contact SherylN L. Hayes-Zorn, Managing Editor, at 775.688.1190, ext. 223, or shayeszorn@nevadaculture.org.

Nevada Historical Society Membership

Giving to the Nevada Historical Society is the perfect way to embrace Nevada's rich heritage

A year's membership includes:

- ☐ Nevada Historical Society Quarterly publications (except at the Student & Senior level memberships)*
- ☐ unlimited free admission to all seven museums in the Nevada Division of Museums and History
- ☐ e-newsletter, regular email announcements to upcoming and current exhibitions
- ☐ free exhibit events and programs, and a 15% discount in all museum stores when you present your valid membership card!

Membership amounts over \$20 can be tax deductible and support state level museum operations. Donations can be 100% tax deductible and you specify what your donation supports at NHS. Donors and Members reap more than benefits—you are supporting Nevada's oldest cultural institution!

Membership Categories

- ___ Yes, I want to become a member of the Nevada Historical Society at the following membership level:
- ___ Yes, I want to renew my membership at the following level (renewal date _____)

- | | |
|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$35 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$60 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student* | \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior* | \$20 |

**Valid ID required, does not include Quarterly publications*

Donations and Gifts *You choose what your money benefits beyond membership!*

- ___ Yes, I want to join the new **499 Club** with an additional donation of \$499, beyond my membership to be used for:
☐ general use ☐ events ☐ collections ☐ conservation
- ___ Yes, I want add an additional donation to my membership with a gift of \$_____ to be used for:
☐ general use ☐ events ☐ collections ☐ conservation
- ___ No, I do not wish to be a member of the Historical Society.
Please accept my tax deductible gift of \$_____ to be used for:
☐ general use ☐ events ☐ collections ☐ conservation

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home _____ Business _____

Email _____

The Society respects your right to privacy. We will not share your e-mail address with other organizations.

Mail this form and your check to:

Nevada Historical Society, Attn: Membership, 1650 N.Virginia St. Reno, NV 89503

NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY SURVEY

1. How often do you attend the NHS?
☐ once a month ☐ twice a year ☐ yearly ☐ other _____
2. What programming do you enjoy at the NHS? (select all that apply)
☐ School tours ☐ Guest lectures ☐ High Noon ☐ Chip Dig
☐ Special exhibits ☐ Writers' Wednesday ☐ Nevada Day event
☐ Other _____
3. How do you hear about NHS programs? (select all that apply)
☐ Emails from NHS ☐ Facebook ☐ NHS website ☐ Other _____
4. Do you consider the Nevada Historical Society Quarterly publication a benefit of your membership? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. What do you enjoy about the Nevada Historical Society Quarterly? (select all that apply) ☐ Book Reviews ☐ Articles ☐ Photographs
☐ Other _____
6. Would you support the Nevada Historical Society Quarterly becoming an online, digital publication with expanded articles, photos and graphics and color content? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No Opinion
7. Do you want the Nevada Historical Society Quarterly to remain a print-only publication? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No Opinion
8. Would you support the Nevada Historical Society Quarterly changing to a renamed, single issue, yearly publication? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No Opinion
9. Would you support the Nevada Historical Society Quarterly changing to a once yearly, print-only publication with online journal articles accessible throughout the year ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ No Opinion

You can also access this survey on our website: <http://nvhistoricalsociety.org> under Flyers or Quarterly Publication. Send surveys to: *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly*, 1650 N. Virginia St. Reno, Nevada 89503.

