

HISTORY OF WASHOE COUNTY

Introduction

Lying in the northwest portion of the State of Nevada, named for a tribe of American Indians and containing a land area in excess of 6,000 square miles, Washoe County today consists of two of the nine original counties -- Washoe and Lake (later renamed Roop) Counties -- into which the Territory of Nevada was divided by the first territorial legislature in 1861. The country, "a land of contrasts, extremes, and apparent contradictions, of mingled barrenness and fertility, beauty and desolation, aridity and storm,"¹ was claimed by the Spanish Empire until 1822 when it became a part of Mexican territory resulting from Mexico's successful war of independence from Spain. Mexico ceded the area to the United States in 1848 following the Mexican War, and the ceded lands remained part of the "unorganized territory" of the United States until 1850.

Spanish and Mexican constructive possession probably had little effect on the life styles of the Northern Paiutes and the Washos -- the two American Indian tribes which inhabited the area. The Northern Paiutes ranged over most of Washoe County² save the series of valleys lying along the eastern foothills of the Sierra Nevada. These valleys were the domain of the Washos, a small, nomadic tribe whose members spoke an alien tongue and from which the name of the county is derived³.

The 1840's

During the 1840's Washoe County was traversed by a number of trappers and explorers, as well as several well-defined emigrant trails leading to California and Oregon. In 1843 mountain man "Old Bill" Williams⁴ led his trappers from the Klamath Lake

region of California to Pyramid Lake and the Truckee River. On January 10, 1844, Lieutenant John C. Fremont⁶ with his second exploring expedition, having come down from Oregon, discovered and named Pyramid Lake⁷, and five days later the expedition came to the mouth of the Truckee River, which Fremont named the Salmon Trout River⁸. The Stevens-Donner route, sometimes called the Truckee route, was opened in 1844 by the Stevens-Murphy party of about 100 persons led by Elisha Stevens and guided by the Paiute Chief Truckee. The route crossed the desert from the Humboldt Sink to the Truckee River, which the Stevens-Murphy party followed to Truckee Pass on their way to crossing the Sierra Nevada⁹. The Stevens-Murphy party is the first known to have taken the Truckee River route to California and to have taken wagons across the Sierra Nevada¹⁰.

Named for Jesse Applegate,¹¹ the Applegate Trail in north western Nevada was opened in 1846 Applegate and his party traveled from the Rogue River in Oregon, passed Lower Klamath Lake south of Goose Lake, and entered Nevada, where they crossed the Black Rock Desert and connected with the Humboldt Route near present-day Mill City in Pershing County¹². This route was to become part of the future Lassen and Nobles' trail¹³. In 1848 the Lassen Cutoff, named for Peter Lassen,¹⁴ was in use. From Mill City it followed the Applegate Trail through High Rock Canyon¹⁵ to the south end of Goose Lake. From there to the Sacramento Valley the trail became known as Lassen's.¹⁶

On March 18, 1849, the Mormons created the provisional State of Deseret, which included within its jurisdiction most of Nevada. Meeting at Monterey later in 1849, the California Constitutional Convention on September 22 debated the boundary question for the new state to be called California. Lawyer members of the convention expressed their views concerning the inclusion of the Great Basin in the proposed new state. One

attorney from Coloma argued that "a great portion of it [the Great Basin] can be of no advantage to us. A vast deal of it is an immense unexplored region -- a barren waste."¹⁷ Myron Norton, a San Francisco lawyer, must have had a hunch when he argued "Whatever the region may be, a barren waste or a land of promise, we have no right to relinquish it * * *. It may be rich in agricultural and mineral wealth, we know nothing to the contrary * * *. No man knows whether it is worthless or not."¹⁸ The convention settled (for the time being) the boundary question, the majority feeling that nothing would be gained by extending the limits of California on the east further than the Sierra Nevada.

The 1850's

In the early '50's, the continued migration to California attracted some settlers to the Truckee Meadows. Three miles south of the Truckee River, near Moana Springs, William H Anderson established the Junction House¹⁹ about 1850; and on September 9, 1850, the Congress created the Territory of Utah, which included present-day Washoe County.²⁰ The year 1851 saw the establishment of the Nobles Road²¹ in the northern section and the Beckwourth Route²² leading from the Truckee River at Truckee Meadows to Marysville by way of the Beckwourth Pass and the Feather River. In 1852 Jamison, a Mormon trader, moved from Washoe Valley and built a trading post near Steamboat Creek three miles southeast of the present city of Sparks to intercept westbound emigrant trains and their businesses. This station was the only settlement on the Truckee River for several years.²³

Both the Utah territorial legislative assembly and the California legislature in 1852 enacted statutes affecting the area of Washoe County. On March 2, 1852, the Utah body created the County of Tooele, which "embraced a tract so extensive that

the settlers on its western border found the county organization of but little use."²⁴ Not to be outdone, the California solons created Pautah County on paper, including an area from Lake Tahoe to Pyramid and Walker Lakes, naming Carsonville as the seat of justice. The act was to take effect when the Congress ceded the described territory to California. The Congress failed to act, and the California act was repealed in 1860.²⁵

Washoe Valley attracted some settlers in 1853. A man named Clark built a small cabin near the present site of Franktown, J H. ("Old Man") Rose also settled in Washoe Valley, C W. Dodge and John Campbell took up the Bowers Ranch, and Christopher West settled on the Winters Ranch.²⁶ One emigrant, impressed with the verdant condition of the Truckee Meadows, wrote:

In the month of August, 1853, we camped on the banks of the Truckee a few miles below where Wadsworth²⁷ now stands. Our train, consisting of nine wagons, two or three hundred head of horses and mules, and seven hundred and fifty head of cattle, were all driven and managed by forty-five men. * * * We rested there for a few days, and then moved up to the Truckee Meadows, about five miles below the present town of Reno. Such a grand sight for hungry cattle and horses! Thousands of acres of blue joint grass laid around us; our herds reveled in it for several days, and yet they could make no impression upon it.²⁸

On January 17, 1854, Carson County was created by the Utah territorial legislative assembly. The Utah county, an area of 20,000 square miles, included what is now Washoe, Douglas, Storey and Lyon Counties, Carson City (formerly Ormsby County) and portions of Esmeralda, Churchill and Humboldt Counties.²⁹ In the same year John Owens and Edward C. Ing³⁰ maintained a trading

post on the Truckee River near what was to be called Glendale; Bill Gregory started a post at Drytown³¹ near the present site of Wadsworth, and James O'Neil had a station at Crystal Peak,³² two miles from the present site of Verdi.³³

In 1855 the Utah territorial legislative assembly expanded the area of Carson County by extending its boundary northward for its entire width to the Oregon line. Mormon Elder Orson Hyde³⁴ in the spring of 1856 commenced the erection of a sawmill at Franktown, and from 20 to 30 Mormon families settled there. Coming to Washoe Valley, Alexander Cowan and his wife (later Mrs. Lemuel S "Sandy" Bowers) purchased the Dodge and Campbell ranch, located three years previously.³⁵

In 1856 Carson County was combined with Great Salt Lake and other counties in a single judicial district. George Smith, Sr., a Mormon, settled in Pleasant Valley with "his eight children and an estimable wife";³⁶ and at a meeting held April 26, 1856, in Honey Lake Valley, the Territory of Nataqua was created, with Isaac N Roop³⁷ being chosen recorder and Peter Lassen as surveyor. The Territory of Nataqua was, as one writer described it, "a frontier land club or claim association, designed to protect the property rights of the individual squatter until regular government reached the area." The problem was that the organizers overlooked the fact that the territorial boundaries of Nataqua included the unsuspecting six hundred inhabitants of Carson, Eagle and Washoe Valleys, then situated within the confines of Carson County, Utah Territory.³⁸

Franktown,³⁹ one of the earliest settled places in western Utah, was laid out on the western border of Washoe Valley by Elder Hyde in 1856 after "the much to-be-commended manner" of the Mormons. Each lot of one and a quarter acres was irrigated by water conducted through all of the public streets, the houses being built of hewn timber. Though rude, they were substantial and comfortable.⁴⁰

On January 14, 1857, Carson County was attached to Great Salt Lake County for election, revenue and judicial purposes, although the two counties did not form a contiguous territory. The same year, President John Buchanan ordered a small army under Colonel (later General) Albert Sydney Johnston to Salt Lake City to reestablish the Federal Government's supremacy over the Mormons.⁴¹

Apprehensive of the army's purpose, Brigham Young in calling his Saints from western Utah and elsewhere to defend Salt Lake City wrote "We have concluded that it is wisdom that you should dispose of your property as well as you can and come home. *** Come in one company, and keep together so that you can protect yourselves against all foes, both red and white."⁴² Obediently, on September 26, 1857, the Mormons of Washoe Valley abandoned their farms and returned to Salt Lake City.⁴³ Most of the adherents of Brigham Young withdrew from the section now called Nevada, leaving as residents of Carson County only Gentiles and those who repudiated the authority of Brigham Young.

After the departure of the Mormons in 1857, John F Stone and Charles C Gates conducted a trading post on the Truckee River (formerly called Jamison's Station), which was afterward known as Stone and Gates Crossing and later as Glendale.⁴⁴

Western Utah in 1859 remained a sparsely settled country. A reorganization of Carson County detaching it from Great Salt Lake County proved only partially successful, leaving the section practically without political organization. In the spring of 1859, C W. Fuller, a Honey Lake rancher, established Fuller's Station on the Truckee River, the present site of Reno.⁴⁵ The Comstock Lode was discovered in June 1859. The whole region between the Sierra Nevada and Salt Lake City came to be known to the outside world as Washoe. "History records few migrations of men equal to that produced by the discovery of the Comstock Lode. The placer mines of California had begun to

fail and the Washoe excitement captured the coast and a tide of men poured over the Sierra Nevada range in a perfect torrent."⁴⁶ On November 25, 1859, the agent for the United States Office of Indian Affairs for western Utah Territory requested that the northern portion of the Truckee River Valley, including Pyramid Lake, be reserved for Indians, but no executive order was forth coming immediately.⁴⁷

The 1860's

An 1860 census revealed that there were 58 families and 543 people within the limits of what was to become Washoe County.⁴⁸ Ninety-seven males and eight females resided in the Truckee Meadows in 22 dwellings.⁴⁹ As the result of the encroachment of the white men caused by the Comstock discovery, the Paiutes assembled at Pyramid Lake in the spring of 1860 to decide what to do. The killing of three whites at Williams' Station by Bannocks, allies to the Paiutes, precipitated a clash between "a motley group" of white volunteers, numbering 105, and the Indians on May 12, 1860, near Pyramid Lake. Seventy-six whites were killed and many wounded. The defeat of the whites created panic, and ultimately, on May 31, 1860, a sizeable force of volunteers was combined with soldiers of the regular army to defeat the Indians near the mouth of the Truckee River. This time the Indians were bested. Only two whites were killed, while the Indians lost an estimated 160.⁵⁰

In November 1860, Governor Alfred W Cumming of the Territory of Utah, recognizing the inability of Utah to maintain a stable government for the western region, said in a message to the Utah legislative assembly

The population of the western portion of this Territory, known as Nevada, has recently become much more numerous, in consequence of the influx of a large number of persons,

attracted by the mineral wealth of that region. The vast extent of uninhabited country which separate [sic] these valleys from those of Sierra Nevada, renders intercourse between them very inconvenient, and makes it very probable that the latter will receive a separate Territorial organization from the Government, so soon as the increased population shall have become permanent, and sufficiently large to justify the United States in granting their request for one.⁵¹

Four months later on March 2, 1861, the Congress created the Territory of Nevada,⁵² and in July 1861 Governor James W Nye proclaimed that the territory was organized. Washoe County's population was then estimated at 1,613.⁵³

The first legislative assembly convened October 1, 1861, at Carson City. By an act approved November 25, 1861,⁵⁴ the Territory of Nevada was divided into nine counties,⁵⁵ Washoe and Lake being two of the original counties. Section 4 of the act stated:

There shall be a county, to be known as Washoe County, to include all that part of the Territory within the boundaries described, as follows: Beginning at the north-west corner of Ormsby County, and running easterly along the northern boundary of said county, to the summit of the mountains east of Washoe Lake, thence, in a northerly course, along the summit of said mountains, to the lower end of the Big Meadows, on Truckee River, thence, down said river, to its lower crossing, thence, east, along the Immigrant Road to the summit of the mountains lying east of said river, thence, north, on the main summit of said mountains, to a point from which, running direct west, would intersect the Truckee River at its mouth in Pyramid Lake, thence, due west, to the California line, thence, south, to the place of beginning.⁵⁶

The surface area of Washoe County was 1,195 square miles.⁵⁷ Washoe City, then the largest town within its limits, was designated as the seat of justice and the county seat.⁵⁸

Lake County, a narrow area of land above Washoe County, was created by section 7 of the 1861 act:

There shall be a county, to be known as Lake County, to include all that part of the Territory within the boundaries described, as follows: Beginning at the north-west corner of Washoe County, and running easterly along the northern boundary of said county to the mouth of Truckee River, thence, due east to the summit of the first range of mountains east of said river, thence, in a northerly direction, along said range, and the main granite range of mountains, to the Oregon line, thence, west, along said line, to the summit of the Sierra, thence, south, along said summit, to the place of beginning.

The described area, extending from the south end of Pyramid Lake to the Oregon state line, was named Lake County because it contained three lakes -- Pyramid, Winnemucca and Honey.⁵⁹ The county seat was to be "at such point as shall be decided by a vote of a majority of the voters of said county, at the first election to be held therein."⁶⁰

The 1861 legislative assembly also passed acts creating boards of county commissioners and defining their duties,⁶¹ provided for the support of the poor, the genesis of today's county welfare,⁶² and granted franchises to individuals for the construction of public toll roads in Washoe County.⁶³

The towns of Ophir,⁶⁴ Galena⁶⁵ and Washoe City⁶⁶ "all blazed up in 1861 and entered upon a career of prosperity that lasted several years." At the same time, settlements along the Truckee River grew -- at Hunter's,⁶⁷ Lake's Crossing (now Reno) and at Stone and Gates Crossing. Other 1861 population centers

in Washoe County were Mill Station,⁶⁸ Huffaker's,⁶⁹ Steamboat Springs⁷⁰ and Lemmon Valley.⁷¹

In honor of Isaac N Roop, the 1859 governor of the provisional Territory of Nevada, the 1862 territorial legislature changed the name of Lake County to Roop County,⁷² and in addition granted several toll road franchises in Washoe and Roop Counties.⁷³ Included was a toll road franchise granted to Myron C Lake, who was authorized to construct a toll road from Junction House north crossing the Truckee River at what was known as Fuller's Bridge (now Reno) to a ravine northwest coming down from the east side of what was known as the Pea Vine Mountains, then to the Washoe Lake county boundary. Other persons were prohibited from keeping, maintaining or constructing a bridge or ferry within one mile on either side of Fuller's Bridge.⁷⁴

The establishment of Lake County, renamed Roop on December 5, 1862, ultimately precipitated a boundary dispute with California, variously called the Roop County War, the War of Injunctions, and the Sagebrush War.⁷⁵ Joseph T. Goodman,⁷⁶ one-time editor of the Territorial Enterprise, described the "war" in the San Francisco Chronicle:

In the organic act creating the Territory of Nevada the western boundary was left undefined, with a strong recommendation to the State of California to cede to the Territory whatever rights it might have on the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada and establish the summit of that range as the boundary line Commissioners were sent to California to lay the matter before the Governor and Legislature. So confident were the Territorial authorities that their request, backed as it was by the earnest recommendation of Congress, would be granted, that in fixing the lines of the counties and judicial districts they included everything east of the summit. The only settlement of any importance affected by this proceeding was Honey Lake Valley. That was included in, and in fact

constituted the greater part of Roop county. Officers were elected, Courts organized and the whole machinery of a county government was soon in active operation.

Everything went swimmingly until the Spring of 1863, when a Deputy Sheriff from Plumas county, Cal., within whose bailiwick Honey Lake Valley was assumed to be, came over the mountains to serve a process. The Honey Lakers were the most loyal of Nevadans. Instead of acknowledging the alien's authority they resisted and imprisoned the invader. When they deemed he had had a sufficient taste of their hospitality to fully appreciate it they released him, and he returned to Quincy, his county seat, to fire the Plumas heart by the story of the outrage committed upon him. The Sheriff himself, with a number of deputies, departed at once for the scene of rebellion. He immediately arrested most of the Roop county officials, all of whom had been more or less concerned in the ill-treatment accorded his deputy, and started back over the mountains with them. The party had not gone far, however, before a body of Honey Lakers, headed by the venerable Isaac Roop, overtook it and rescued the prisoners.

The Sheriff returned to Quincy with blood in his eye and raised a force of 180 men, which, fully armed and equipped, was marched over to Susanville, the seat of the war. The army of invasion arrived at that place late in the afternoon of Saturday, February 14th, 1863. Upon the approach of the hostile forces the Honey Lakers hurriedly gathered the parties threatened with arrest into a log house, and, while guarding it with such strength as they could hastily collect, sent couriers throughout the whole valley to give the alarm. Before morning three hundred hardy settlers had gathered in response to the call, every one of whom was armed with a rifle and meant business.

The Sheriff with his force took possession of a barn just opposite the log house where the settlers were guarding their county officers. Thinking to strengthen his position by fortifying it with some timbers lying close by, he ordered his men to move them in front of the barn. The opposing leader forbade them to touch the timbers, but they proceeded to obey the first command. Thereupon the Honey Lakers opened fire. The battle lasted four hours, but fortunately both parties were so well sheltered that the casualties were not very serious. Eight of the Sheriff's posse and one or two settlers were wounded, but none of them fatally. The Californians finally agreed to surrender on condition that they be allowed to return home with their arms, terms which the magnanimous Honey Lakers readily granted.

That ended the war. Notwithstanding their valiant resistance and their signal victory in the only pitched battle, the Honey Lakers were eventually forced to submit to the yoke of the hated enemy. California refused to entertain the thought of ceding a single inch of ground.⁷⁷

On July 16, 1863, Washoe County advertised for bids on the construction of a courthouse in Washoe City and awarded the contract for \$15,000.⁷⁸ And on October 22, 1863, a contract was let for the construction of a county jail for \$3,740.⁷⁹ Before the end of 1863, the buildings were completed and occupied. But the lack of public education facilities in Washoe City caused the Washoe Times editor to urge immediate construction of a schoolhouse:

Our Washoe City is in its municipal infancy, and can not be expected to possess all the adjuncts and accessories of civilization, belonging to communities of older and larger growth. Let, therefore, none of our big and ancient neighbors sneer at us because we have no schoolhouse.

While our enterprising and patriotic ladies are so industriously adding to the infant population, we men must do something to show our appreciation of their generous efforts by instituting means and methods of properly educating that infant population. * * * We must have a schoolhouse -- and the quicker we have it, the better.⁸⁰

In 1863 Peavine, a small mining camp and district in Washoe County, was organized 10 miles northwest of Reno on the slopes of Peavine Mountain, but activity at Peavine peaked about 1873-1874, and by 1880 the population had declined to a mere dozen.⁸¹

Attaching Roop County to Washoe County for judicial, legislative and revenue purposes, ⁸² the 1864 territorial legislature granted additional toll road franchises in Washoe and Roop Counties.⁸³ Some members of the 1864 constitutional convention which met in Carson City in July wished to name the new state "Washoe," but were out-argued when J Neely Johnson, president of the convention, pointed out that the terms of admission to the Union were predicated from the beginning upon the name "State of Nevada."⁸⁴ The 1864 constitution was approved by President Lincoln on October 31, 1864, and the territory ceased to exist. The constitution provided that the County of Washoe was to constitute the Fourth Judicial District, Washoe and Roop Counties were to be entitled to two senators and three assemblymen in the new state's legislature, and all county officers under the laws of the Territory of Nevada were to be continued in office until January 1867.⁸⁵

Statehood appears to have had little immediate effect on Washoe City. The Washoe Weekly Star complained on August 27, 1864, that "certain individuals about town, who seem to have nothing particular to engage their attention, make a practice of shooting chickens if they (the chickens, we mean) happen to

wander a short distance from home. This is wrong. It may be fine 'sport' to the individual engaged in doing it, and a nice chicken-pie may agree perfectly with the stomach, but, it is not very agreeable to the person raising and feeding chickens to have them disposed of in that manner. It had better be stopped, or the persons engaged in the business may get into trouble."

In August 1864 the county expended \$1,000 for the purchase of a building to be used as a county hospital. Three years later, the building was sold at auction for \$200.⁸⁶

Little Bangor, named for Bangor, Maine, a small community about a mile south of Franktown, emerged in 1864. It was a short lived settlement dependent upon lumbering and milling, and contained a store, a school and a blacksmith shop.⁸⁷

The first state legislature met in 1864-1865, granting two toll road franchises in Washoe County.⁸⁸ Critical of the board of county commissioners of Washoe County, the Eastern Slope on May 12, 1865, commented on Washoe County's roadbuilding inadequacies:

The county expenses indicated by the allowances as made at the last session of the board of county commissioners appear to suffer no material diminution. The sum of \$500 seems to have been expended on the road in the vicinity of Franktown, and yet we have no road that can be considered safe at the present time -- no improvement that can be considered permanent in its character. It is quite impossible for * * * [any] man to make good and permanent roads with sagebrush and sand, and it is equally impossible to use better material with an appropriation of \$500 * * *. An expenditure of \$500 is simply throwing money away.

Other settlements in Roop and Washoe Counties in 1865 were Buffalo Meadows⁸⁹ and Auburn.⁹⁰

The year 1866 was one of renewed criticism of the board of county commissioners by both the Eastern Slope (the Washoe City newspaper) and the grand jury. On January 27, 1866, the editor of the newspaper wrote:

The late wind storm rendered it necessary for the County Commissioners to make some rather extensive repairs on the Court House, and, as by law provided, notice was given and proposals received for doing the necessary work. The lowest and best bidder, or at least the bid that found favor in the eyes of the Board, and to which the contract was awarded, was made by a blacksmith Sundry carpenters may now be seen daily with their hands in their empty pockets, criticizing and commenting on the work as it progresses. As they have lost an opportunity of making wages they seemed determined to make merry over their discomfit. We do not vouch for the truth of the statement, but the carpenters do say Vulcan has sublet the painting to a tailor, the brick work to a barber, and is negotiating with a shoemaker to do the plastering.

The editor traveled over the public road from Washoe City to Carson City in March 1866, and then, with aching back, commented that "if it be true that variety is the spice of life, then this road is lovely. Just look at the variety afforded; there are mudholes, rocks, sand, broken down bridges, streams without any bridges, stumps and logs, etc. etc. We are proud of the people and proud of the County Commissioners -- You bet."⁹¹ On March 31, 1866, the board of county commissioners levied a \$3.55 tax on each \$100 of assessed valuation of property in the county. In answer to this ploy, the editor fired back:

This tax, burthensome as it is, doubtless would be freely paid, could taxpayers be satisfied that the money would be expended economically and discreetly for the benefit

of the county, but there is an impression, and we feel that it is but too well founded, that the necessity for such rates of taxation is based only on ill-considered and extravagant disbursements * * * Good roads are a blessing, but a heavy road tax and no roads at all, except toll roads, is an unmitigated humbug. A radical change in the management of our county affairs is loudly called for * * *."⁹²

After having viewed the recent repairs of the courthouse, and finding that the building was "in as good a state of preservation as could be expected in a building so faulty in its construction," the 1866 county grand jury had no glowing words for the county jail, then without occupants. The grand jury found the county jail "entirely unfit for the purpose for which it was designed, it is destitute of all claims as a place of security for criminals, and is discreditable to the county as a place of confinement for prisoners awaiting trial." The county hospital, whose roof leaked in rainy weather, also came in for criticism. Reserving its final remarks for the county commissioners, the grand jury figuratively shook its finger "To the County Commissioners we would recommend that meetings of that Board be called only when necessary, and that the records of their meetings should show a more reasonable amount of business transacted."⁹³

In the 1867 legislature a bill was introduced proposing to divide Washoe and the other counties of the state into three county commissioner districts, commissioners' annual salaries being increased from \$600 to \$1,000. The Eastern Slope commented "If it is the intention of the Legislature to pay the County Commissioners for the abuse that they naturally receive for the faithful discharge of their duties, \$1,000 will not pay 10% of the demand. If on the contrary they propose to pay for the labor done and performed, the \$600 is more than sufficient."

The editor then suggested that the legislature reduce the number of county commissioners to one, to be elected for two years, stating his opinion "was based on the belief that any competent business man can take the revenue of this county and run its government -- give the County better roads, better bridges, better hospital accommodations, and at the same time save the County \$10,000 per year on present expenses."⁹⁴ The liberality of the county commissioners was the subject of the 1867 county grand jury report:

The Jury believe that the County Commissioners in their good nature have heretofore been too easy and liberal in allowing many of the claims presented against the county * * *. The Jury would earnestly recommend to the County Commissioners to use more rigid economy in the management of the County finances in the future as they firmly believe that the present County indebtedness might be considerably less than \$10,000 instead of some \$15,000 or \$16,000.⁹⁵

In July 1867 the district attorney, claiming to be a preferred creditor of the county, and the district judge, Charles N Harris,⁹⁶ commenced actions against the county. The county commissioners were of the opinion that a vacant room in the Washoe City courthouse, modestly furnished, was quite sufficient for all the purposes of judicial business. Judge Harris, perhaps a little elevated with judicial dignity, demanded a large room, with finer furniture and convenient sleeping apartments, as being essential to the administration of justice and the maintenance of the dignity of the Court. The differences between the district attorney and the board of county commissioners were worse, according to the Eastern Slope, because it would be necessary for the county, after paying its legal advisor, to pay a second attorney to fight such of the district attorney's claims as the board deemed illegal and unjust. The

Eastern Slope editor blasted away: "For some reason, to us inexplicable, certain of Washoe County's officials find it impossible to discover the exact character of their rights as officers, and as a natural consequence an immense amount of expensive and vexatious litigation follows."⁹⁷

By 1867 Washoe City had reached its peak, but the newspaper campaigned against the city's foraging hogs⁹⁸ and the establishment of new saloons. The Eastern Slope of December 21, 1867, commented:

Washoe City, by the establishment of a new saloon, is now called upon to support ten drinking establishments. When we estimate the amount required for the maintenance of each one of these establishments, and realize how freely it is advanced by our citizens, we necessarily form large ideas of the wealth and importance of this place. Washoe certainly did not need to be noticed in the constitution or laid out in streets and squares. The liberality of her contributions at the shrine of the jolly god is sufficient to entitle her to the status of a first class city.⁹⁹

The 1868 county grand jury in its report recommended to the county commissioners that the courthouse at Washoe City be repaired and commented that "from the reports of some of the road supervisors it appears that considerable money has been collected for the benefit of the county roads, while in some instances at least, hardly any, if any of said money has actually been expended in repairing the county roads, neither has the money been paid into the county treasury for the benefit of the school fund."¹⁰⁰ In stronger and more picturesque language than used by the grand jury, a Carson City merchant in a letter to the newspaper editor complained about the Washoe County roads and the board of county commissioners:

We merchants * * * can't get a team of more than six animals that will come through Washoe Valley because it

[the road] "waves in and waves out" round about the foot-hills, goes through barnyards and corrals, and is generally a very miserable road over which a heavy load can't come, because the bridges are weak, the ground soft, and the turns short. In consequence our heavy teams all come by Virginia * * *. Now, I wish to inquire if Washoe County has a Board of Commissioners, and if so, if the members thereof can read and write, and if so why can't they make a road? Somewhere, anywhere, but a road.¹⁰¹

Apparently, Judge Harris felt that the county commissioners weren't moving rapidly enough with the repairs to the courthouse previously recommended by the grand jury. On August 3, 1868, in his charge to the grand jury, he said that he would not risk another term of court in the courthouse on account of its dilapidated condition. The newspaper editor retorted "We think the Court took counsel of its fears, and are confident that the building is all-sufficient to sustain many times the weight of the entire Bar and Bench of Washoe County."¹⁰²

When the Central Pacific Railroad began ascending the Sierra Nevada it became apparent that somewhere on the Truckee River there must be a point where the goods for Virginia City and vicinity would be unloaded and forwarded to their destination. Myron C Lake deeded 40 acres to the railroad in consideration of the establishment of a station at Lake's Crossing. This was done, and the station was christened "Reno."¹⁰³ On May 9, 1868, city lots were auctioned by the railroad.¹⁰⁴ It "was a great day" when the first train from Sacramento arrived in Reno on June 18, 1868.¹⁰⁵ And on July 4, 1868, John C Lewis,¹⁰⁶ who had for several years published the Eastern Slope at Washoe City, removed the newspaper to Reno and renamed it the Reno Crescent. The paper, which was to exist for almost 10 years,¹⁰⁷ on August 22, 1868, reported:

Reno still improves The sound of saw and hammer is constantly heard, clerks look tired, proprietors happy. There is an endless stream of coaches and mountain schooners coming and going. Hotels are full and new ones are going up. Besides we have jerkers that can jerk m-o-r-a l-a-g-e-r, hurdles that can jump higher and sports that can bet heavier than any other town of the age of Reno in the world.¹⁰⁸

A correspondent of the San Francisco Times, passing over the line of the Central Pacific in 1868, paid his respects to Reno:

Reno is situated in the middle of a frightful plain, destitute of any feature of beauty or picturesqueness. It is one of those mushroom towns that seem to spring up in a single night, like Alladin's Palace, and from the nature of its elements its sudden vanishment would be scarcely matter for surprise. In the language of its inhabitants, it is "quite a place," and if it lacks age and stability, it makes up for them in exuberant vitality. Its streets are composed of frame buildings, knocked together for the most part as hastily as though they were accompaniments to a travelling circus. It has more than a fair proportion of grogeries, and dance houses, and it drives a very lively business in the gambling way. Its population comprises an immoderate share of "sports," from the suave and "high toned" gambler, airily lounging in snow white trousers and coat, and spotless, delicately plaited shirt front, with broad-brimmed Panama hat and fragrant cigar, to the disreputable and hangdog looking sharper, beneath whose short and frayed coat tails the muzzle of a revolver protrudes threateningly, and whose fierce eyes and bloated face proclaim that he is ready to take a drink or to cut a throat. Women, whose gay dresses are not needed to

designate their shameful business, stroll through the sandy streets with an abandon which is only to be met with in such semi-civilized places; Piute Indians loaf about, accompanied by their heavy and degraded looking squaws, who carry their juvenile encumbrances packed neatly in small parcels and slung upon their broad backs, whence they can form their own opinions of society. Expressmen hurry up and down in the broiling sun, and fling packages, trunks and boxes about, with feverish energy, and the engines and trains of the Company glide back and forth upon the sidings in apparently inextricable confusion, while the station master screams himself hoarse, and perspires himself thin. There is no such thing as rest to be had in Reno. The tavern keepers do not think it worth their while to provide anything like decent sleeping accommodation for travelers, for nobody comes there save to make money, and when a man is bent upon business, what does it signify where he sleeps? So people rush into Reno and gobble up whatever fuel in the shape of meals they can get, and never grumble, and drink bad whiskey without a murmur; and doze on chairs, or make their bones ache by lying on boards, and rush away again, by rail or stage, and Reno cares nothing, but swelters on in the broiling sun, while all the day the sharp tapping of hammers and grating of saws accompanies the erection of new buildings and all the night the fiddles go, and the glasses clink, and the general hurry and bustle is brought to a climax now and then by a lively shooting affray. Somebody, perhaps, is killed or maimed in the row. Well, it is only "Four ace Dick," or "Jack the Sweater," or somebody else with a nickname that has taken the place of a patronymic. Only some adventurer, not too particular as to the character of his ventures, who has "pegged out." It may be that, a

couple of thousand miles away, some weary heart is waiting anxiously for news of him, or that some home is being prepared for his anticipated return. No matter! Busy Reno has no concern with the fate, present, past or future, of any one of her motley population. She is on the railroad, and has a "big thing," and she is bent upon making her pile with what speed she can command, and the pace of Reno is by no means contemptible.¹⁰⁹

Reno was soon conscious of her strength. The Reno Crescent reported on August 1, 1868, that petitions for the removal of the county seat and also for the purchase of M C Lake's bridge were in circulation and were being generally signed by the Reno citizens. The editor continued "The Commissioners who refuse the prayers of the petitioners will doubtless call down many curses on their heads in the present. The Board who should grant both these prayers, would take a lively chance of being hung in the future."¹¹⁰ On August 5, 1868, a petition signed by 765 citizens was presented to the board of county commissioners for the removal of the county seat from Washoe City to Reno. The petition was denied by the board on September 8, 1868, but the county seat removal question was to arise again in 1870.¹¹¹

In December 1868 it was reported that "there is not much left of Washoe City, at least the town seems almost deserted, we still furnish our regular stock of wood and timber to Virginia and Gold Hill and we still have spasmodic terms of Court here."¹¹²

In 1869 both the grand jury and the editor of the Reno Crescent bore down on the county commissioners. Reporting on a meeting of the board held July 5, 1869, the Reno Crescent said: "The board of county commissioners met July 5th, full Board present, transacted business in the regular way -- that means regular, irregular and defective. Failed to order proceedings published;

reason assigned, could not stand the cost -- real cause, fear that the work wouldn't bear accounting."¹¹³ In another article of the same date the editor asserted: "* * * the management of County affairs through a board of county commissioners is a humbug of the first water, and the quicker the system is abolished the better for all parties. Six hundred dollars per year don't pay a man to attend to the County's business to the neglect of his own, and consequently no man does it. * * * Economy would dictate the policy of paying a man -- one man -- to give his attention to county affairs, instead of three to neglect them."¹¹⁴ The grand jury in its report published August 14, 1869, "respectfully" called the attention of the commissioners to that provision of law regulating their per diem and urged upon them the necessity of a more strict compliance with the letter of the law.¹¹⁵

The 1870's

The 1870 census reported the population of Washoe County to be 3,091, Reno having 1,035 people and the unincorporated area 2,056. The increase of Reno's size and the continued retrogression of Washoe City caused Reno interests to submit a petition to the board of county commissioners on April 4, 1870, asking that the county seat be moved to Reno. At a special election held June 14, 1870, the vote favored Reno over Washoe City 544 to 362. Accordingly, the county commissioners proclaimed Reno to be the permanent county seat of Washoe County and announced that all county offices would be relocated in Reno. But Washoe City didn't surrender without a fight. Alleging election irregularities, Washoe City residents applied to the district court for a temporary restraining order Judge Charles N Harris was on vacation, but Judge William Haydon of Lyon County issued the order. At the subsequent hearing the order

was dismissed. Washoe City then applied to the Nevada supreme court, claiming that the election was illegal because the board of county commissioners did not follow statutory procedures in holding the election. The supreme court ordered the district court reversed, thus annulling the proclamation of the board of county commissioners changing the county seat, and the mooted question remained in status quo to be revived at some future day.¹¹⁶

The year 1870 saw the Reno Crescent commenting on the appearance of cockfights and velocipedes in Reno,¹¹⁷ and the Crescent's competitor, the Nevada State Journal, observed the presence of professional thieves and road agents in the growing town:

For some time past much complaint has been made and many citizens alarmed at the looseness of certain things around our growing town. Many are not accustomed to the musical click of the six-shooter at all hours of the night; on the other hand, a majority are chagrined because there is not enough killing for the amount of flourishing. * * *

We think this is a very quiet, nice place, notwithstanding some insist that it is the worst place on land, and that we are no more civilized than forty-niners or the aborigines.

* * * It is a notorious fact * * * that a number of professional thieves and road agents are concentrating in and around our promising burg.¹¹⁸

On November 5, 1870, the east-bound passenger train of the Central Pacific Railroad was boarded at Verdi by a gang of five men, who detached the engine and express car and ran them down the road to within five miles of Reno, where they stopped them and robbed the express car of \$41,000. This has been alleged to be the first train robbery in the Far West. County authorities apprehended all the robbers, who "were brought up before the

grand jury" on November 22, 1870, and subsequently received sentences in the state prison.¹¹⁹

In his December 1870 report, the Washoe County surveyor reported that there were within the county 19 irrigating ditches, the most important of which was the Truckee Ditch with a length of 17 miles, which took its water from the Truckee River at Hunter's bridge and terminated near Brown's Station in Steamboat Valley. The county surveyor's report concluded that:

* * * the day is not far distant when our sage and greasewood plains, now grim and silent in their desolation, may be dotted with thrifty homes where will be garnered bountiful harvests and where vast herds of stock will find ample subsistence.¹²⁰

In 1871 the citizens of Reno again pursued the removal of the county seat from Washoe City to Reno. The Nevada State Journal of January 14, 1871, commented: "It is evident that three-fourths of the population, three-fourths of the taxes, and more than three-fourths of the business transacted in our Courts are from the northern portion of our county along the line and in the vicinity of the Central Pacific Railroad." On January 14, 1871, a bill was introduced in the Nevada senate providing that the county seat of Washoe County was to be fixed at Reno after April 3, 1871. After its passage in the senate, H. H Beck,¹²¹ an assemblyman from Washoe Valley, unsuccessfully tried to defeat the bill in the assembly, but it passed despite his maneuvering and was signed by the governor on February 17, 1871.¹²²

The people of Washoe Valley were most unhappy with the actions of the legislature and the governor, since they desired to be attached to Ormsby County. And Beck, following the wishes of his constituents, introduced a bill in the assembly proposing to change the boundary line between Ormsby and Washoe Counties, giving Ormsby County all of Washoe Valley and over a half million

dollars in taxable property. After his bill failed to pass, Beck by legal action attacked the constitutionality of the special act which awarded the county seat to Reno. He was granted an injunction by the district court in April 1871, but upon appeal by the board of county commissioners the supreme court reversed the district court, upholding the validity of the special legislative act.¹²³ Reno was victorious! The county seat was officially moved to Reno on June 21, 1871, when the books and papers of the county clerk's office arrived as well as the clerk himself. As one historian stated "The saga of the transfer of the Washoe County seat is one of expensive, reckless litigation made so by the senseless opposition of a few malcontents favoring Washoe City against the will and interests of the most populous area of the county, Reno."¹²⁴

Upon removal to Reno, the district court held its sessions in a theater and the various county offices were scattered about town.¹²⁵ During the summer of 1871 the selection of the site for a new courthouse became a critical issue in the town. Demanding that the county commissioners look well to the interests of the county and to its future welfare, the Nevada State Journal suggested:

In making a permanent location for the Court-house, the County Commissioners should not be influenced by the selfish interests of this or that man. Reno is a permanent and growing town, and the Court-house should be located with a view to the future. It should not be too near the river, for the noise and confusion of the rushing waters, whenever the river is at a high stage, is a very serious objection. It should not be on or near the business streets of the town, where the noise and clatter of the surrounding business would seriously interfere with Court affairs. It should be located sufficiently near the business portion of the town, on a plat of ground large

enough for plenty of room on all sides of the building, so that the surroundings can be adorned with shade trees and ornamental shrubbery.¹²⁶

By July 1871 a four-way fight had developed over the site of the permanent location of the courthouse. Three sites north of the Truckee River in the town's commercial area were offered to the county, and Myron C. Lake tendered a one-acre site on the south side of the river (a portion of Lake's Addition to the original town) for \$1,500 in cash, also promising to set out shade trees, lay out a public square in front of the site and to supply water to the county property.¹²⁷

Acceptance by the county commissioners of Lake's offer on July 7, 1871, brought forth unhappy protests from both citizens and newspapers. The Nevada State Journal maintained that the location of the county buildings on the south side of the Truckee River was against the wishes of three-fourths of the taxpayers and decidedly against the manifest interests of the county.¹²⁸ Calling for a reexamination of the commissioners' action, the editor continued:

It is believed that the Commissioners may have acted hastily, and without reviewing the subject in all its bearings, in having located the County buildings on the opposite side of the Truckee River from that on which Reno is situated. The almost if not entirely unanimous wish of the voters of Reno is that the order shall be reviewed and the subject thoroughly reexamined. * * * The Court-house, if located at Lake's, could be accessible to the people of Reno by ferryboat or bridge only, and if Lake's bridge were impassible the traveling of 8 miles by the way of Glendale or 10 miles by the way of Hunter's would be required.¹²⁹

Despite the open opposition to their site selection, the commissioners stood their ground, and on September 10, 1871, the board opened bids and awarded the building contract to S F. Hoole¹³⁰ for \$20,500. Three days before the award, an action had been commenced on the ground that the selected site was not in the Town of Reno, the place to which the county seat had been removed,¹³¹ seeking to restrain the commissioners from erecting the county buildings outside of the original plat of Reno on the south side of the river. Judge Harris denied the injunction on October 6, 1871, and an appeal to the supreme court was dismissed. Construction began on the courthouse on April 20, 1872.¹³²

The board of county commissioners apparently were willing to dispose of the Washoe City courthouse as soon as the county seat was removed to Reno, and the Nevada State Journal, in approving the proposed donation of the courthouse to the State of Nevada for the accommodation of the insane, and continuing to heap abuse upon abandoned Washoe City, chortled: "We can imagine no more fitting place for a home for the poor demented beings than Washoe City, for there they can be assured of having those essentials which are so necessary to the restoration of their wandering reason -- peace and absolute quiet."¹³³

To provide a construction fund for the new courthouse, county bonds in the amount of \$23,000 were issued July 1, 1872.¹³⁴ On June 22, 1872, the day the cornerstone was laid, forty men were employed by contractor Hoole on construction Hoole subcontracted the brickwork for \$2,000 on June 29, 1872.¹³⁵

According to the local newspapers, public safety and health protection in 1872 appear to have been minimal. The Reno Crescent described Washoe County as "the battleground of robbers and plunderers" because of the proximity of the railroad:

Washoe County enjoys the reputation of being the best represented county of the State, in the Nevada State Prison. Twenty of our citizens are now enjoying the hospitality of the Silver State, and we are well satisfied that at least twice as many more are justly entitled to the same distinguished consideration. Washoe County furnishes the only female representative, and hence the conclusion that Washoe favors the women's rights doctrine. Of the six car robbers sent from the county, three were citizens of Storey County, two citizens of California; but one claiming residence in Washoe County; and so of the others. A large percentage belong elsewhere. The expense incurred by the county for their trial is the price we pay for the advantages arising from our connection with the railroad; the privilege of taxing its property at their own valuation, about one-seventh of its real value, whether estimated at its market value, or on the profits paid to the stockholders; Washoe County is by its location made the battleground of robbers and plunderers.¹³⁶

Critical of the lack of medical facilities, the Nevada State Journal complained: "Since we urged the necessity of 'preparing for war in time of peace,' by providing a good, comfortable pest-house, a number of our people say 'we have a pest-house.' We have a hog pen, a poor one at that, about large enough to accommodate a small sized pig. We would like for some who think we have a pest-house to examine the present building and see whether they would like to be placed in it and take the chances of recovery."¹³⁷ When a smallpox patient died in the county hospital, the Reno Crescent reported "that the bedding was tied up in bundles and thrown into the river, exposing hundreds of Indians and many white families to an attack from this loathsome disease."¹³⁸ That newspaper followed up with the following editorial:

The Truckee River is by far the most important and beautiful stream that runs through the State of Nevada. The people of the whole State -- and particularly the people of Washoe county, are justly proud of the Truckee, and extremely jealous of any project that threatens its entirety. Hundreds of men, women and children are dependent on it for at least one of the necessities of life -- pure water. How criminally inconsiderate, then, are those persons who make the bed of this river a receptacle for all manner of filth and rubbish. At this time the Truckee is garnished with the carcasses of horses, cattle, hogs, dogs, and cats, deposited there to save somebody the trouble of burying a carcass that is offensive both to the eyes and the nostrils. Will our neighbors who thoughtlessly commit a nuisance and perpetuate an outrage of the grossest character on their friends, in making the Truckee River a potter's field for dumb beasts, take heed in the future to the golden rule, "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you," or shall we be compelled to protect ourselves by an appeal to law?¹³⁹

The lack of fire protection in the young town of Reno of 1872 was observed by the editor of the Truckee Republican:

Reno is built up apparently with especial reference to being burned up, or rather burned down. The houses, dwelling and otherwise, are almost exclusively of wood, packed closely together. The town has no fire engine, nor water pressure of any kind. The only means for putting out fires are a number of tanks filled with water, and two dozen or so of water buckets at each tank.¹⁴⁰

At the time of the execution of the courthouse building contract with S. F. Hoole, the style of the outside finish was entirely changed by the board of county commissioners from the plans originally adopted, which change, according to the Nevada

State Journal, destroyed wholly the symmetry and beautiful architectural appearance of the building.¹⁴¹ The courthouse was completed and accepted by the commissioners on January 24, 1873. It was described as "a substantial structure" and the interior finish as "excellent."¹⁴² Change orders had delayed completion of the building from August 31, 1872, until the acceptance date Hoole presented a claim for extra labor and material totaling \$10,967, which the commissioners refused to allow, and Hoole sued the county. The matter was submitted to a board of arbitrators, who ultimately allowed \$4,828, and the decision was accepted by both Hoole and the county.¹⁴³

The courthouse was a fine-looking, two-storied, brick edifice with a frontage of 58 feet and a depth of 79 feet. Offices of the county clerk, county treasurer, county assessor, county recorder and the sheriff, and the county jail were located on the first floor. On the upper floor was a "pleasant" courtroom, 35 feet by 58 feet, the jury room and offices of the district attorney and county surveyor. The building was topped off by a dome, 10 feet in diameter, 16 feet in height "from which a fine view of the surrounding country may be obtained,"¹⁴⁴ and covered on the top with zinc. Generally the Nevada State Journal approved of the building but criticized the lack of ventilation and light in the jail cells caused by the "little gratings in the doors."¹⁴⁵

Two weeks after acceptance of the new courthouse by the board of county commissioners, Judge Harris, whose ongoing difficulties with the board have been previously described, issued the following order characterized by the Reno Crescent as "a literary and legal curiosity":

It is by law within the inherent power of this Court
first to occupy the entire structure, or so much thereof

as is reasonably necessary for its own convenience and the convenience of its immediate officers, including the Clerk, Sheriff and District Attorney, without controlling reference to the convenience or necessities of such other officers of the County as are of not immediate service to the Court.

And the Court will of its own power appropriate such portions of this or any other building occupied by it as is most convenient for our own purposes, and the ready access of and to its own particular officers. And while by law it is made the duty of the Board of Commissioners to provide suitable structures for the use of the Court and its officers, as well as the officers of the County, yet the Court will not suffer its manner or extent of occupation of such public property, when so provided, or its reasonable convenience to be controlled or restricted by the arbitrary will of a Board of Commissioners.

It satisfactorily and fully appears to this Court that the said Board of Commissioners have failed to reserve for the occupation of the District Judge any convenient apartment within this spacious building, neither have they provided elsewhere such office. Therefore this Court at this time assumes its rightful jurisdiction of this matter and acts therein by virtue of its authority as will be hereafter more fully apparent.

It appears to this Court that in the said Court House, contiguous to the Jury Room upon the second floor * * * is a room of convenient size and well lighted, suitable in all respects for use as an office for the use of the Judge of this Court. That said room is now occupied by a number of persons engaged in business which is principally disconnected with the duty of any county office. That one of said persons incidentally exercises the office of County

Surveyor, by which to give a color of title to such occupation of said room, but that the duties pertaining to said office are trivial in extent. Wherefore, this Court by reason of the law and the premises, hereby appropriates said room to its use as an office for the District Judge. And the Sheriff is hereby directed to proceed without delay or bantering of words to clear said room of all persons and property now being, occupying or remaining therein, except such stove and furniture as he shall ascertain to belong to the County.

And said Sheriff is hereby further directed to procure carpet of good quality and of decent appearance, either three-ply or brussels, and carpet said room, also to procure and place therein at least three good chairs, one of which shall be an easy chair; also one good writing desk with compartments for books, papers, etc.; also one lounge of substantial and decent construction; also a broom, dust pan and whisk; also a good quality of curtains or blinds for the windows, and place the same in position; also two good lamps; also two large sized spittoons; also water pitcher and three glasses.

And said Sheriff is hereby directed and ordered to keep said room in order at all times, and furnish therein at all times requisite fuel, stationery (including ink, erasers, etc.) and oil for lights, etc. And during the absence of the Judge from the County Seat, the said Sheriff is directed to keep the key of said room in his custody, in his office.

The Reno Crescent editor commented: "We dislike very much to make a burlesque of this matter, and yet find it hardly possible to review it in a serious light." After giving reasons why the county surveyor should "not be bundled out in the cold," the editor continued: "Nine months of the year, and probably

more, the room is to be kept locked, and the key in the possession of the Sheriff, discommoding a whole community to gratify a diseased mind, the peculiar idiosyncrasy of which is a disposition to exercise arbitrary power. We know that there is such a thing as contempt of court. The court should know that there is such an offense as contempt of the sovereign people, of which he may some day be called upon to purge himself."¹⁴⁶

Judge Harris apparently was unconcerned about the county expenses to be incurred in obeying his order. The grand jury report of February 1873 criticized both the county commissioners and the district judge:

With the facts before us, that we are drifting deeper into debt every year, we would recommend to the board of county commissioners the most rigid economy in our county expenditures. It appears from the records that the County Commissioners in the years 1871 and 1872 overdrew their salary. We recommend to the district attorney to notify those gentlemen of the fact that they have overdrawn their salaries as above stated, and if not paid proceed to recover the same according to law. * * * the Grand Jury would suggest that the Judge should be and remain at the county seat during the several court terms of the year in order to facilitate business. This was painfully apparent during the last October term of his court when a heavy expense was entailed upon the county without any benefit, and the county, as well as citizens individually suffered alike in having to try cases again that would have been disposed of had the Judge been present. The officers of the county, without distinction, are public servants and should consult the best interests of the Commonwealth, before consulting their own convenience.¹⁴⁷

In may 1873, the Reno Crescent called for economy in the administration of county government:

It is a well understood fact that the finances of Washoe County are in anything but a satisfactory condition, and the impression is rapidly growing on the public mind that under the present administration of our business affairs, there is scarcely a hope of improvement. Contracts are let not to the lowest but to the highest bidder and when let the Commissioners appear to be working in the interest of the swindling contractor, rather than of the county, the discretion placed in their hands is not exercised with judgment for the benefit of the public but rather for the benefit of personal friends, and to the advancement of private interests.

Our county affairs call for the strictest economy and the exercise of the soundest judgment in their management, and we know of no better place to inaugurate a system of economy than before the board of county commissioners. Let the members reduce their own pay to such wages as they would charge an individual citizen for the same service and then ignoring pets and partisan friends, deal for the county as they would for themselves and there can be no difficulty in once more placing the county on a cash basis.¹⁴⁸

The 1873 grand jury did approve of the condition of the county hospital, stating: "We have examined the County Hospital and found therein eight patients and who are well fed and appear to be doing well. The rooms and beds are neat and clean, and every thing about the building is in good order."¹⁴⁹

The board of county commissioners declared M C Lake's toll road and bridge a public highway and free bridge in 1873. Lake took issue with the county commissioners by putting a gate on the bridge.¹⁵⁰ Lake's action caused several "vexatious broils" to arise and the Reno Crescent to comment:

On Monday a teamster from Aurora on his return trip, resolved that he would not pay toll, for crossing Lake's bridge. He found the gate fastened, and the gate keeper firm in his demand for silver. He expressed his determination to stay there all winter rather than to put up a cent, accordingly he dismounted from his wheeler and seated himself contentedly upon the railing, and thus things continued for about four hours, teams collected at each end of the bridge, and a large amount of responsible swearing was done. Finally some person whose team was delayed swore out a warrant against M. C. Lake; the obstinate teamster finding himself not possessed of the "gift of continuance" in as high a degree as he had first supposed, paid his toll under protest, and passed on. The Justice Court found it had no jurisdiction, and Lake was accordingly discharged, having the question of right to take toll no nearer a solution than before. The stoppage afforded amusement for a large number of idlers who were evidently glad of a good excuse to sit in the sun, and were highly disgusted when they found that there would be no one hurt.¹⁵¹

The old courthouse at Washoe City was demolished in April 1873, the brick being shipped to Carson City to be used for building a powder magazine. It was rumored that the county commissioners sold the structure for \$250, but the Reno Crescent could not prove the truth of the rumor "as there is nothing in the records of the Board to show that they have ever taken any action in the premises." The newspaper added: "If it is true, it is an outrage on the County, very appropriately consummated in secrecy."¹⁵²

By law the board of county commissioners were charged with administering the affairs of the town of Reno. Concerning the condition of the town's sidewalks, the Reno Crescent complained:

The sidewalks on Virginia Street are in a state of dangerous decay. Some of the man-holes will not only hopelessly engulf a human being beyond recovery, but can accommodate themselves for the reception of steamboats, court-houses, etc. Other less pretentious contrivances will break our legs, sprain our ankles and wrench the heels from our boots with a most dutiful alacrity. The neglect is criminal considering the injury that can be done, and the little trouble and expense that would remove the danger.¹⁵³

In 1873, the legislature granted a franchise to G. W. Huffaker,¹⁵⁴ William Webster,¹⁵⁵ L. C. Savage¹⁵⁶ and others to construct and operate a narrow gauge railroad between Reno and Susanville, California. Under certain conditions, the county was empowered to issue construction bonds totaling not to exceed \$100,000,¹⁵⁷ but it would be several years before such a railroad became an actuality

The year 1874 witnessed the usual annual grand jury report, the withdrawal of federal lands for the Indian reservation at Pyramid Lake, commencement of construction of a new state prison near Reno, complaints about water company facilities¹⁵⁸ in the town of Reno, and mining excitement at Poeville,¹⁵⁹ north of Reno.

The grand jury complained about the deteriorating condition of the roof of the two-year-old courthouse, found the county hospital to be "in a neat and entirely satisfactory condition," but entertained serious doubts as to the propriety of county officers traveling with free passes furnished by railroad companies. "As there is no direct statute against the practice," said the grand jury, "the recipient of this equivocal favor may content himself with the happy reflection that he violates no law, but whether the duties of his office be ministerial or deliberative, and whether he be swerved from duty or not, he cannot be free from a sense of obligation to the company, nor can he escape at least a suspicion of corruption."¹⁶⁰

President Grant issued an executive order in 1874 withdrawing "the tract of country known and occupied as the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation * * * from sale or other disposition, and set apart for the Pah-Ute and other Indians residing thereon." The reservation, including the lake, totaled 475,152 acres.¹⁶¹

In 1873, the legislature authorized construction of a new state prison in Washoe County to house 300 prisoners, and appropriated \$100,000 for the project. On August 8, 1874, a prison site of 206 acres was selected about 2 1/2 miles east of Reno near the Truckee River.¹⁶² Work commenced on August 29, 1874, the enterprising S F Hoole (who had built the courthouse in Reno) being architect and superintendent of the work,¹⁶³ and continued until November 24, 1875, when construction was suspended pending a legislative appropriation for the purpose of continuing the work. By New Year's Day 1875, four miles of road connected the site with downtown Reno, a railroad spur was in place and the walls had begun to rise.¹⁶⁴

In his 1875 message to the legislature, Governor Luther R. Bradley, recommending prompt action in hastening the new prison to completion, commented: "The site is considered healthy, safe and accessible. The importance of the speedy completion of the prison is self-evident. Every consideration of economy, safety and humanity demands it."¹⁶⁵ Having appointed a joint special committee to inspect the work, the legislature grumbled about the cost of the site and the foundation wall. The joint committee estimated that a \$100,000 appropriation would be sufficient to complete the wall and cells sufficiently to enable the prisoners to be removed to assist in completing the prison, and in addition recommended that Hoole's services as superintending architect be dispensed with.¹⁶⁶ In the dying days of the legislature, according to the Nevada State Journal,¹⁶⁷ the \$100,000 appropriation for the new prison was stricken from the general appropriation bill "in a spirit of meanness and

revenge." The work continued through 1875, but with less vigor, causing the Carson Tribune to observe:

The Nevada State Prison is the sickest thing we ever saw
Oh, what a monstrous humbug is that new State Prison!
* * * The location of the ground is the most bleak and un-
pleasant in the State of Nevada and there is not a redeem-
ing feature in the whole arrangement. We will wager two
bits' worth of silver spoons that never a State Prison
goes up on that ground.¹⁶⁸

The 1875 legislature did authorize the board of county commissioners to issue \$7,000 of bonds "for the purpose of erecting or buying suitable buildings for a county hospital and establishing a poor farm for the indigent sick and common paupers of Washoe County."¹⁶⁹ The grand jury commented on the "very unsafe" condition of the public bridge crossing the Truckee River in Reno, stating the bridge would not withstand the ravages of another winter, and recommending that the commissioners cause "a new double-track" bridge to be erected before the coming winter.¹⁷⁰

Early in 1875 the New York Company began running a tunnel on the south side of Peavine Mountain midway between Reno and Verdi, and a small town named Brooklyn was laid out. A boardinghouse for the miners, a few shanties, and the shops and stables of the company composed all there ever was of the town of Brooklyn. The settlement was abandoned a year or two later.¹⁷¹

The most important agricultural product of Washoe County in 1876 was hay, 35,000 tons being produced compared with 5,000 tons in 1860.¹⁷² The potato crop was second in importance.

The timber industry was rapidly devouring 90,000 acres of timberland to supply the Comstock mills and mines with wood, lumber and timber. The largest portion of the timber business was being done by the Pacific Wood, Lumber and Flume Company about 12 miles west by south from Reno. The company operated

two steam sawmills with a combined capacity of 100,000 board feet per 24-hour day; and it was estimated that continued consumption at the rate existing in 1876 would clear the mountains in five years.¹⁷³

Mining development in the county in 1876 resulted in the laying out of Pyramid City, about 25 miles north of Sparks.¹⁷⁴

The Reno Evening Gazette of July 24, 1876, announced that the enclosing wall of the state prison was completed, and the Carson Tribune claimed that the prison walls stood "as monuments of legislative and executive humbuggery with a slight tint of political fraud intermingled."¹⁷⁵

The Reno Evening Gazette, beating the drum for Washoe County, suggested on March 31, 1876, that "a university should be placed in a popular portion of the state, where it might draw students from its vicinity, and where its growth would be assured."¹⁷⁶

The crowning achievement for the county commissioners in 1876 was the procurement of a new county hospital and poor farm. On October 4, 1875, forty acres on the south side of the river one mile east of Reno were purchased for \$1,000 to be used for a poor farm. A contract for \$5,253,177 for construction of a county hospital on the poor farm was signed April 17, 1876, and the building was finished by October 10, 1876, when the Reno Evening Gazette reported:

It had been our misfortune to go several times into the old, miserable hospital which stood near the corner of Second and Virginia streets, but yesterday it was our pleasure to step into the comfortable quarters now provided for the less fortunate ones of the county. The poor house, or County Hospital, is a comfortable building of 16 rooms, all hard finished, conveniently arranged and well ventilated. On the first floor is found the Doctor's office, large ward, two family rooms, two patient rooms, dining

room, kitchen, pantry, closet and wash room. On the second floor, a large ward and 6 rooms for private patients and those with contagious and infectious diseases. The rooms are supplied with a wash stand, iron bedstead and bedding. Each bed has, first, a straw mattress, and on top of this a Eureka mattress and pillow. The coverings consist of sheets, a pair of gray blankets and a comforter. There are 15 bedroom sets such as the one we have described.

* * * The food furnished is plain and substantial and plenty of it. There are nine patients, eight men and one woman.

A new board of county commissioners was elected in 1876. The Reno Evening Gazette, despite the previous board's accomplishments, admonished the new commissioners: "* * * we should like to see the new Commissioners do something besides audit bills. We may be mistaken with regard to the powers of this body, but it seems to us that the law certainly intended them to be of use to the people."¹⁷⁸ And so on to 1877.

By the time of the convention of the 1877 legislature, \$90,000 had been expended on the unfinished state prison. The Carson Tribune, claiming there was no more reason for removing the prison to Reno than to the Sandwich Islands, claimed "it was an iniquitous scheme gotten up * * * for the purpose of manufacturing Democratic votes, and is a most lamentable failure in every respect." And the legislature abandoned the project.¹⁷⁹

The commissioners were authorized by the 1877 legislature to issue: (1) \$5,000 of bonds for the purpose of securing the right-of-way and laying out a public highway in Washoe Valley commencing near Franktown and running across the valley in an easterly direction to connect with the Ophir toll road,¹⁸⁰ and (2) \$16,000 of bonds for the purpose of constructing a bridge across the Truckee River in Reno at the intersection of Virginia Street with the river. The bridge was to be of sufficient width for two wagons to pass each other on the carriage way,

with sidewalks on each side, separated from the carriage way by a substantial railing.¹⁸¹ The bonds were issued, and on April 5, 1877, a \$15,700 contract was awarded for the construction of an iron arch bridge.¹⁸²

The bridge, "a beautiful structure,"¹⁸³ was completed, accepted and opened for travel on August 7, 1877, having been tested on August 1 as described in the Reno Evening Gazette:

About 11 o'clock today nearly one-half of the male population of Reno turned out to see George Elder's 16-mule team cross the new bridge. Three large wagons were heavily loaded with barley and the whole driven by 16 fine mules. * * * The total weight of the team, wagons and barley amounted to 72,000 pounds. The iron giant only smiled at the infant weight which passed over his rugged breast.¹⁸⁴

By June 1877, the total debt of Washoe County was \$16,000,¹⁸⁵ and the grand jurors in October found it to be their duty "to again urge the County Commissioners to renew efforts to the end that expenses of the county be kept within bounds of its resources, so that the fair fame [which] our county has enjoyed for the last three years may be maintained."¹⁸⁶ The Reno Evening Gazette complained of "lavish expenditure of the county funds," asserting "no one department is administered more efficiently, and many less so."¹⁸⁷

The new board of county commissioners had signified its intention of clearing the streets and alleys of Reno, which caused the Reno Evening Gazette to remark: "A good, honest attempt at cleaning the streets is commendable anyway, and our people waited in vain for such an effort on the part of the last Board."¹⁸⁸

For a long time Reno had been infested with a mob of vagrants, cutthroats and thieves, who had inaugurated a reign of terror. Robbery and intimidation were a nightly occurrence. People were

afraid to venture beyond their doors after dark without being armed. The sheriff was either indolent or incapable of providing protection, which led the editor of the Nevada State Journal to advocate the creation of a vigilance or "601" committee to rid the town of all suspicious characters.¹⁸⁹

The year 1878 witnessed a revival of the effort to incorporate Reno, and, asserting that Reno "should have a government of its own," the Nevada State Journal pointed out that "the sidewalks are allowed to go to decay because there is no officer to compel their repair," "cattle roam about the streets at will, eating up the budding trees," and "defective stovepipes and flues endanger the property of the neighborhood."¹⁹⁰

The only infliction of the death penalty in the history of Washoe County occurred when J. W. Rover was hanged on the gallows erected in the jailyard of the county jail in Reno on February 19, 1878. His crime was the murder of I. N. Sharp in Humboldt County, change of venue and several trials resulting in Washoe County officers' having the duty to dispatch Rover. A crowd of 200 spectators witnessed the execution.¹⁹¹

When the legislature met once more in 1879, it authorized the board of county commissioners to issue \$4,000 of bonds for the construction of a bridge across the Truckee River at Wadsworth.¹⁹² Nearly 10 years after the matter was first discussed, Reno became an incorporated town on April 8, 1879, imposing the duties on the county commissioners as a town board of levying taxes, enacting ordinances and regulating the fire and police departments.¹⁹³ Town incorporation was hailed by the Reno Evening Gazette, which observed that "the necessary ordinances will be passed * * * and the foolish and reckless will no longer be allowed to endanger the lives and property of their neighbors at will. * * * The owners of hogs and cattle will not be permitted to let them forage in the streets. * * * The streets are to be graded, and sanitary measures taken. The effect of all these

regulations will be to make the town healthier, cleaner, more peaceable, and safer from fire."¹⁹⁴ The newspaper concluded that incorporation "will have the good effect of stopping the vile practice of opium smoking" on the principal streets of the town and advocated the banishment or isolation of practicing prostitutes.¹⁹⁵

The year 1879 was the genesis of the present county library system. The Women's Temperance Union and the Reno Reform Club, mutually interested in temperance and moral reform, called the attention of the public to the fact "that Reno should have a public library and reading room such as would induce the youth of the town to spend their leisure hours away from the haunts of temptation."¹⁹⁶ The Reno Evening Gazette joined the cause, commenting that "a public library of some sort is badly needed in Reno, even if it is only a circulating one. There is a dearth of standard books in Reno. Good books are conducive to good morals, inasmuch as they occupy spare time that would be spent in saloons and other questionable places. A public library would in many ways counteract the vicious influences that surround young men here."¹⁹⁷ But the library question was put on the back burner until a later date.

Despite the optimism expressed by the Reno Evening Gazette that the town incorporation would result in making the town "safer from fire," Reno suffered a devastating fire on March 2, 1879. Fifty acres of buildings and improvements in the business district north of Second Street were destroyed, fifty families were made homeless, and the loss was estimated at \$800,000.¹⁹⁸ The legislature, then in session, appropriated \$10,000 for the immediate relief of those rendered destitute by the fire, placing the money in the hands of the governor to be distributed by him in such amounts and manner as the immediate necessities required.¹⁹⁹ Reno sprang back after the fire, causing one observer to write:

I observed that Reno since the fire of last spring has been rebuilt in a style far superior to its former self. Substantial buildings, mostly of brick, now cover the burnt district, while the number of saloons has been increased, and the whisky watered, to meet the demands of an increasing trade.²⁰⁰

The year 1879 ended as it began -- very dully. The season was discouragingly backward, and the spring and first part of summer were so cold that only a light crop of alfalfa was raised. This made the farmers in the county about as hard up as the people in Reno, who were suffering from the effects of the big fire. This universal stagnation added not a little to the stringency of the times.²⁰¹

The 1880's

Washoe County entered the 1880's with a total population of 5,664; Reno residents totaled 1,302, and the unincorporated area contained 4,362 people. The new decade saw the arrival of the first bicycle in Reno on February 10, 1880, and the Reno Evening Gazette extolled the virtues of the vehicle:

A bicycle came by express to C. T. Bender this morning. These vehicles are coming largely into use. There are thousands of them ridden in England and they are rapidly growing in favor in this country. On a good road, a practiced bicyclist can distance a fast trotter in harness. The bicycle rider can travel thirty or forty miles in a day with comparative ease. There is a great difference between the bicycle and the velocipede. The bicycle has a very large driving wheel about five feet in diameter, and the diameter of the hind wheel is only about a foot and a half. The bicycle rider sits almost directly over the centre of the forward wheel, and propels the machine by

shifting his weight from one to the other of the two treadles, alternately. On the velocipede the rider sits between the wheels, and propulsion is accomplished by a pushing motion. The velocipede has gone out of use, except as a plaything for children, but the bicycle appears to be destined to remain in favor, as it is a machine of great practical utility, a labor saver.²⁰²

By 1881, Reno had three public schools (one of which was "a fine edifice" according to the Reno Evening Gazette), five churches, two banks, 12 hotels, 22 stores, two daily newspapers, one theater, one flouring mill, one foundry and machine shop, one planing mill, three lumber yards, three livery stables, two wagon manufactories, one tannery, one cabinet shop, five meat markets, one gas works, besides several small stores, shops and "saloons too numerous to mention."²⁰³ But the town had no municipal dump, which led the editor of the Plaindealer²⁰⁴ to comment:

We have been intending for some time to call the attention of the people to the fact that there is only one place in town to throw their rubbish, such as decayed apples and vegetables, the sweepings of the streets and alleys, old scraps of bread and meat and the like, and that place is directly in front of the Pavilion, on Front Street.²⁰⁵

It makes the street look as cheerful, and the aroma arising therefrom, is so delightful and refreshing that one can but enjoy a walk in beautiful surroundings. From the amount of rubbish already there we presume that most people know where to deposit their filth, but lest any might be in ignorance and carry any part of it beyond the town limits we insert this notice.²⁰⁶

The Reno press continued its attacks on the board of county commissioners, the Reno Evening Gazette being critical of the board's rejection of a \$10 claim by a local firm of undertakers

for burying an Indian who had been killed by the railroad,²⁰⁷ and the Plaindealer, upset by the commissioners' action in reducing railroad valuations, calling in direct and harsh language for the resignation of the board:

We would respectfully call your attention to the fact that you have robbed the people of this county during the past year out of \$1,500 This does not include the \$6,500 that the people will have to pay on account of your having unjustly reduced the railroad valuations Now, gentlemen, if you are to continue in your mad course for the next year, regardless of law and decency, we ask you to be patriotic enough to resign the honorable offices you are degrading, and allow men to be appointed who will have respect enough for themselves not to rob the people as you have done Individually we protest against your taking another dollar unjustly out of our pocket and giving it to your friends or followers.²⁰⁸

The Washoe legislative delegation in 1881 was successful in having a law enacted appropriating \$80,000 to erect and furnish a state insane asylum near Reno.²⁰⁹ The Eureka Leader explained:

Reno has been demented on the proposition of having some state institution located near that thriving burg for a long time. * * * Since 1873 no Legislature has been found to appropriate a dollar for the completion of the prison. Of late years Reno has sort of switched off on the prison proposition (though it makes spasmodic efforts in that direction -- just enough to alarm and infuriate Carson), and the energies of the Washoe delegation have for the past two sessions been concentrated in securing an appropriation for the erection of a state insane asylum on the prison grounds near Reno.²¹⁰

By December 10, 1881, the state insane asylum could be plainly seen from all parts of the valley. The Reno Evening Gazette described the building:

It stands two stories of fine brick walls with a handsomely striped mansard roof and a stone basement. It is 150 feet north and south and 230 feet east and west, [it has] 48 water closets with pipes to the sewers. Each floor is divided into 4 wards. A big iron sign, weighing 500 pounds, occupies the front facade. It will be painted black, with the letters and border gilded. It bears the letters "Nevada Insane Asylum," in an arch, with "1881" beneath.²¹¹

The Sierra Nevada Wood and Lumber Company expanded its logging and wood business in 1881 at Crystal Bay at the north end of Lake Tahoe. The first rails for the company's railroad arrived at Crystal Bay in the spring of 1881, and eventually the line was extended into the woods north of Crystal Bay.²¹²

The editor of the Plaindealer continued in 1882 (and promised to continue) his attacks on the county commissioners:

Whenever the Commissioners make up their minds to follow the law and conduct the affairs of the people with as much care and concern as they do their own business, there are none who will more willingly do them honor than ourselves. Could they at this time plead ignorance as an excuse for their course in wrongdoing none would be more lenient in their strictures, but when in face of law of right and justice they administer the affairs of this county to the detriment of its inhabitants, so long may they expect to be told of it, whatever may be the consequences. Personally we wish every one of them well, and when they learn that they are the servants of the people and are paid and sworn to perform a sacred trust, and in accordance with their oath and knowledge, then, and not till then, will the Plaindealer cease to assail them.²¹³

The state insane asylum building was completed in 1882;²¹⁴ and on July 1, 1882, long before the train, transporting 117 male patients and 31 "unusually quiet and subdued" female patients from California, arrived in Reno, the curious of Reno turned out and "strings of vehicles, men on horseback and pedestrians wended their way towards the asylum" to view the arrival.²¹⁵

Reno's streets and alleys continued to be receptacles for garbage and rubbish in 1882,²¹⁶ and the members of the Women's Temperance Union were discouraged by the lack of interest in their recently established reading room. They were willing to turn the library over to the town,²¹⁷ but no immediate taker appeared. On the northeast shore of Lake Tahoe in Washoe County, Incline (now Incline Village) was established as a "company town" in 1882 by the Sierra Wood and Lumber Company. The town received its name from the steeply inclined railway of 1,600 feet up which the lumber was hauled by a continuous car affair, based on a hydraulic plan, to a flume, where it was flumed to Lakeview.²¹⁸

Limited legislation enacted by the 1883 legislature affecting Washoe County included authorization of the board of county commissioners to issue \$3,000 of bonds for the purpose of constructing a bridge across the Truckee River near Verdi (the bridge was to "be of sufficient width for wagons to pass"),²¹⁹ and consolidation of Washoe and Roop Counties. The final absorption of Roop County in 1883 established the unique elongated area of Washoe County, now reaching north to the Oregon boundary.²²⁰

Security in the county jail appeared to be lax when on January 29, 1883, "Sacramento Bill" crawled in through a jail window, stole the jailer's trousers containing \$5, as well as his revolver and the keys to the jail, undid the fastenings of the jail door and walked away unmolested.²²¹ A Nevada State Journal reporter, perhaps envious because of his limited diet at home, reporting on the condition of the county hospital in May 1883,

observed that the four patients had "the best of food, and there is not a private family in Reno that is blessed with purer milk, more delicious butter, whiter bread, juicier roasts, fresher eggs or plumper chickens, as well as every known vegetable, than these same paupers."²²²

The 1884 grand jury criticized the liberality of the county commissioners in approving claims against the county, county purchasing practices, administration of the road fund and jail conditions:

Having with considerable time and care examined the many claims allowed by the board of county commissioners for the last year [1883], we are prepared to report that, in our opinion, the administration of affairs intrusted to their hands has not been such as the taxpayers of the county can approve. * * * we wish to say that it would appear that these officers do not comprehend as fully as they should the positions they occupy. A careful examination of the bills for supplies to some of the indigents will disclose the fact that the kindness of our County Commissioners has been abused as it is not often that the truly needy require such things in their bill of fare as "bird seed, tobacco, brandy and whisky."

We find that the system in vogue for the purchase of supplies is about as bad as it could be. By actual count there were, during the last year, seventeen persons who exercised the right or privilege of purchasing supplies for the county.

Our attention is also called to the management, or rather mismanagement, of the General Road Fund during the past year. In fact there seems to have been a looseness in this matter, almost beyond belief. * * * the Commissioners are guilty of gross negligence and disregard of the law fixing and defining the duties of their office.

We find the jail room in very bad condition The water closet is very unclean and should be connected by a sewer running to the river.²²³

In April 1884 the Nevada State Journal also criticized county jail conditions:

Our jail is altogether too small for Washoe County. Reno lies in such a position as to receive criminals of every shade and disreputable and undesirable persons of all classes from every direction. The place is filled with these vultures nearly all the time. Our jail should be at least double its present capacity, and provisions made to keep the real criminals from the simple vagrants, drunks, etc. Our county fathers should provide additional accommodations at the jail, or cause to be erected a city jail of sufficient capacity and comfortable enough to supply the demands of the town.²²⁴

The 1885 legislature, subject to several conditions, relocated the state university, directing its removal from Elko to Reno,²²⁵ and the 1885 county grand jury found, among other things, that:

* * * the county has paid during the past year for gas to light the Court room and county offices, the sum of \$206.25. This we consider an exorbitant sum, as upon inquiry we find that the court has been held but few evenings during the year, that during the month of December, when no evening session was held, the bill amounted to \$34.25. We would respectfully recommend to the Board of Commissioners that unless a very great reduction in the above charges can be had, that the various offices and courtroom be supplied with coal oil lamps, and the supply of gas shut off.

For a change, however, the grand jury complimented the county's officers:

* * * after a careful examination into the acts and doings of our various county officers, we find that there are so many ways through which the county could be defrauded (the county officers so desiring), that the only real safety for the people and taxpayers, is in the election of honest men to fill public trusts, and we are pleased to say that in the judgment of the Grand Jury, Washoe County has succeeded in accomplishing that very difficult and most desirable object.²²⁶

The big news in Washoe County in the year 1886 was the construction and opening of the state university located "on a very picturesque site less than one mile north of the railroad depot at Reno." The new three-story brick building provided rooms in the basement for the janitor, stores, assay furnaces, quartz crushers and workshops. The first floor housed the principal's office, a reception room, the regents' room, library and museum, assayer's office and room, lavatory and gymnasium. A large lecture hall and two classrooms were located on the second floor and the third floor was devoted to two large apartments, a general assembly room and an armory. Tuition was free to the first class of 39 students. The faculty was composed of two instructors.²²⁷ And the Reno Evening Gazette bragged that in its second year of operation at Reno the university would rise above the dignity of a high school.²²⁸

The board of county commissioners were authorized by the 1887 legislature to issue \$10,000 of bonds for the construction of two bridges across the Truckee River, one at Mayberry's Ranch and the other below the Virginia and Truckee Railroad bridge in Reno.²²⁹

Viewing with alarm the enormous expense to the county taxpayers resulting from the promiscuous use of intoxicating liquors (and not alone in the interest of economy, but in the interest of good morals), the 1887 grand jury favored a high

license fee and recommended to the county commissioners the enactment of an ordinance for the town of Reno which would require the payment of \$300 per quarter in advance from all persons engaged or who desired to engage in the sale of any spirituous or malt or vinous liquors. The grand jury also recommended the passage of an ordinance requiring all houses of ill fame to be removed to some certain and isolated section of Reno. Further, the grand jury observed that an examination of the county assessor's books revealed that the Virginia and Truckee Railroad was an especially favored creature in the matter of assessment of property. And the water at the county hospital was bad, a well in that institution's wood shed affording the only supply for drinking and cooking purposes. To top off its report, the 1887 grand jury, with respect to the county jail, observed and recommended:

The practice of cleaning the jail once a week is inadequate to keep it healthy and [we] recommend that it be cleaned twice a week.²³⁰

Charging that the county commissioners were guilty of gross negligence in approving unnecessary bills against the county, the 1888 grand jury found that the commissioners had drawn their salaries one month in advance during the year, criticized the location of a county pesthouse northwest of Reno as exposing to contagious diseases the public schools and people in general, and recommended that action be taken for the erection of a new county jail as the jail was entirely too small for "present emergencies."²³¹

The question of a public library still engaged the interest of some, the Women's Christian Temperance Union agreeing in December 1888 to transfer its library of 300 volumes to the Public Library Association.²³²

In 1888 Reno contained 900 children of school age, but only 500 pupils actually attended. The Nevada State Journal boasted of Reno's students:

Nowhere does the sun shine on brighter-eyed, more intelligent, capable, or better behaved children than are to be found in Reno.²³³

The 1889 legislature authorized the board of county commissioners to issue \$20,000 of county bonds to construct sewers in the town of Reno²³⁴ and granted a 25-year street railway franchise to Fielding Lemmon²³⁵ and others to lay down and maintain an iron railroad track within the town of Reno and to run cars thereon at all convenient hours of every day and night. A right of way was not granted across the "iron bridge crossing the Truckee River" on Virginia Street. The cars were to be moved by horses or mules, "and not otherwise," and at a speed not exceeding eight miles per hour.²³⁶

Grand jurors of 1889 produced the following startling statement in their report:

We find that the Commissioners have immense powers with no responsibility to any one except on election day.²³⁷

The 1890's

The population of Washoe County in 1890 was 6,437. Reno citizens numbered 3,563, while the unincorporated area totaled 2,874 residents. Surrendering at last to a lack of use of the public library, its trustees on March 24, 1890, closed its doors.²³⁸ The 1891 legislature (1) authorized the board of county commissioners to issue \$5,000 of county bonds for the purposes of purchasing a full block of land in Reno and lots in front of the courthouse and for improvements of the real estate so purchased for the use as a public park,²³⁹ (2) authorized \$5,000 of county bonds for the construction of sewers in Reno,²⁴⁰ and (3) granted a street-railroad franchise for 25 years to F. G. Newlands,²⁴¹ M. D. Foley²⁴² and others. Work was to commence before May 1, 1893,²⁴³ and the terms of the

franchise were similar to the franchise granted to Fielding Lemmon in 1889²⁴⁴ except that the cars were to be moved by horses, mules or electric power at a speed not exceeding eight miles per hour.²⁴⁵

The 1891 grand jury report claimed that "there is entirely too much neglect and failure to understand and faithfully carry out the provisions of the laws governing the financial affairs of the county." The grand jury charged two of the county commissioners with conspiring together to evade competitive bidding for construction of a bridge and that a cost in excess of \$130,000 resulted from such evasion and favoritism. Also, money had been drawn from the county treasury by the same two commissioners to reimburse themselves for money paid out in the transportation of various and sundry persons on the pretext of affording relief to indigents. Admitting that the county jail was "not exactly first class," the grand jury recommended against expending a sufficient sum to build a new one because of the financial condition of the county. And in the interest of economy the grand jury recommended that the practice of working prisoners on public works be discontinued and that the expenses of feeding county prisoners be reduced to 30 cents per day and supplies of tobacco and clothing be cut off.²⁴⁶

The grand jury in a report filed in February 1892 found that for the year 1891 the cost of maintaining the indigent sick and poor at the county hospital, including maintenance, physicians and repairs, was an exorbitant 72 cents per day for each patient. The commissioners were chastised for expending large sums of money yearly on county roads, the expenses bringing but a small return to the taxpayers. The road running through the middle of Spanish Spring Valley was nothing but a "slough hole," making it impossible for teams to pass on that route. And although there was a more general observance of the 12 o'clock closing law among saloonkeepers, the law prohibiting the sale of

cigarettes to minors was not generally complied with. The jury commented:

Our local dealers, it appears, let their greed for gain overcome their respect for law and the boy of tender years has no trouble in supplying himself with the health-destroying narcotic.²⁴⁷

The grand jury finally recognized the health hazards posed by dumping the town sewage into the Truckee River:

The sewer outlets at the river should be changed, as sewerage should not be dumped within the town limits. The north bank of the river in the immediate vicinity of the iron bridge [the center of town] above and below is lined with a mass of foul sewerage matter, which if not removed before the approach of hot weather, will prove a prolific source for deadly disease. We do not believe that Reno has a right legally to use the Truckee River for a dumping ground for her sewers, and some other outlet should be secured as soon as possible.²⁴⁸

Despite the known unhealthy condition of the Truckee River caused by the dumping of Reno's sewage, young males continued their swimming activities, and the chief of police had to publish the following notice interdicting river bathing, although no reference was made to the sewage problem:

Complaints having been frequently made to me that young men and boys are in the habit of bathing in the river above the flour mill dam, in plain view of many family residences and indulging in all kinds of vulgar language and conduct and in the indiscriminate use of firearms, I hereby give notice that the practice must be stopped forthwith or the offenders will be arrested and punished as the law directs.²⁴⁹

Recognizing the poor condition of the county's roads, the 1893 legislature allowed the county commissioners to issue \$15,000 of county bonds for the purposes of paying the outstanding indebtedness of the general road fund and to improve county roads.²⁵⁰ Acquisition of additional real estate in front of the courthouse for public park purposes was authorized,²⁵¹ and after January 1893 each of the county commissioners was to receive an annual salary of \$400. Because of his extra duties, the chairman of the board was to receive an additional \$200 per annum "for looking after the business of the county hospital, and the fire department and the sewerage system of the town of Reno."²⁵²

The extra compensation provided the chairman seems to have gone to his head. Critical of the board, and the chairman in particular, the Reno Evening Gazette commented:

The chairman of the board of county commissioners seems to think he is the whole board, body and breeches, judging from his insulting manner when gentlemen go before the body for the transaction of business. The Gazette has much data that tends to prove the utter incompetence of the majority of the board of county commissioners as now constituted, so far as the management of county business is concerned.²⁵³

The 1894 grand jury found Reno's water system to be inadequate, the reservoir full of weeds and otherwise in an unclean condition. The water was declared to be "absolutely unfit to drink." The jurors also found the county jail to be inadequate in size and unsafe in construction for jail purposes. In short, it was a disgrace to Washoe County, the woodwork being so thoroughly infested with noxious vermin and filth that it endangered the health and well-being of all who came in contact with it. The jury recommended immediate and complete renovation.²⁵⁴

Apparently, the meals served the prisoners at the county jail were not up to the prisoners' standards in 1894. The inmates kicked the bottom out of the coffee pot on one occasion, "busted" the dishes, and left the following note:

This is only a sample of your cans. We want sugar in our tea and coffee, milk, and grub that is fit to eat. We want enough to eat. We want you to understand this or we will break every can you send in here.

Prisoners

P.S. Send pie sometimes.²⁵⁵

The finances of the county in 1895 demanded economy. The commissioners answered by dispensing with the services of a janitor at the courthouse, and in consequence of this new departure the several county officers had to do their own sweeping, dusting and spittoon cleaning.²⁵⁶ On March 9, 1895, the Reno Evening Gazette reported on the condition of the county poor farm. Bedbugs appeared on the upper floor and vermin was found in the beds. The bathroom was a disgrace. The greatest complaint among some of the patients was that they were not furnished a variety of food. Two meals -- breakfast and dinner -- were furnished daily. The breakfast bill of fare consisted of rolled oats with milk and sugar, tea or coffee, a dish of meat, onions and potatoes, bread and butter, syrup, cake and applesauce. The same thing was warmed over for dinner, served at 3 p.m.²⁵⁷

A library was opened under the auspices of the Reno Twentieth Century Club in November 1895.²⁵⁸ And by action of the 1895 legislature the people of the town of Reno were to vote at the November 1896 election as to whether or not Reno should be incorporated and acquire and operate a municipal waterworks and a municipal light plant. The result of the vote was to be considered as advisory only and not as having any legal or binding effect.²⁵⁹

In 1896 the county grand jury examined the county hospital and found that the food furnished the inmates "is not what it should be." The jurors, being informed that the county commissioners had been in the habit of loaning for private use tools belonging to the county, recommended that the practice be discontinued.²⁶⁰

Reno was incorporated as a city in April 1897 by the enactment of a special legislative charter.²⁶¹ The Nevada State Journal approved of the city council as a body of "practical men, all being property owners and in business" and stated that "their knowledge of the needs of the community in the way of public improvements fits them especially for the responsible position for which they have been chosen."²⁶²

However, the municipal road proved to be rocky. Contesting groups emerged in Reno for or against continued incorporation, all of which led to the repeal of the special charter by the 1899 Nevada legislature and the reinstatement of the town of Reno.²⁶³ When the disincorporation bill was delivered to the governor, Reinhold Sadler, he signed it, had a change of heart before he delivered the signed bill to the secretary of state, took some scissors and cut off his signature, then later retrieved his signature, stuck it on the bill and delivered the act to the secretary of state. This gubernatorial finagling eventually caused the secretary of state to seek the opinion of the attorney general as to whether the patchwork bill was law. The attorney general opined that the act became a law as soon as the governor approved and signed it and that it remained such notwithstanding the subsequent removal by the governor of his name.²⁶⁴ But matters refused to rest there, and in the same year a quo warranto proceeding was instituted in the supreme court to determine whether the board of county commissioners was lawfully governing the unincorporated town of

Reno. The court held that Reno had reverted to an unincorporated town.²⁶⁵

Mining activity in Washoe County in the 1890's led in 1896 to the discovery of the Reno Star Mine by George H Wedekind, a Reno piano tuner. The mine (later called Wedekind), located two miles north of Sparks, produced rich ore in 1898. A large mill and several other buildings were constructed at Wedekind, which had its own post office from 1902 to 1905.²⁶⁶

The 1900's

At the opening of the 20th century, the population of Washoe County consisted of 9,141--4,500 in Reno and 4,641 in the remainder of the county. The 1900 grand jury fixed the population of Reno at about 6,000, and claimed the United States Post Office, cramped and crowded into a room 18 feet by 50 feet, to be entirely inadequate for Reno's needs. The jury declared that "Reno needs a United States public building and needs it badly." Neither did the condition of county buildings go unnoticed, and the cleaning of the courthouse hall was recommended and "at least the cobwebs swept from their hangings to the end that the county's main building presents a neater appearance than it does today."²⁶⁷

The Nevada State Journal, mindful of the apparent need for a public library, commented:

At different times in years past, efforts have been made to establish and maintain a public library by private subscription, but in every case such efforts have been short lived. A public library of the character that should be possessed by this community cannot be successfully maintained except by public aid.²⁶⁸

In 1901 the board of county commissioners finally invited bids for the construction of a new jail -- a project long sought by

grand juries and the local press. The new brick jail was to be built on a lot adjoining the county building and facing Court Street, was to accommodate a maximum of 70 prisoners in 15 steel cells and have wards for women and boys.²⁶⁹

By 1901, Reno's "iron bridge," constructed in 1877, was declared by the Reno Evening Gazette to be "unsafe for a single day,"²⁷⁰ while the Nevada State Journal criticized the county poorhouse as "an unsanitary building -- a disgrace to this opulent and generous county," and urged each good citizen "to see for himself the shack into which the county stuffs the aged and the ill."²⁷¹ The grand jury filed its report in February 1901, finding the condition of the county roads in the south end of the county to "be bad and in urgent need of repairs." The jurors recommended that the county hospital and the courthouse be lighted by electricity in place of coal oil.²⁷²

Responding to some of the needs of the town of Reno, the 1901 legislature passed legislation authorizing the board of county commissioners to issue \$15,000 of county bonds the proceeds of which were to be expended for the use and benefit of the Reno Fire Department in purchasing a fire engine house, a fire alarm system, a fire hose wagon and horses and "other necessary be longings and equipment",²⁷³ and the Renoites got another shot at incorporating the town by the enactment of an enabling act which became effective only after an election demonstrated that a majority of votes had been cast in favor of incorporation.²⁷⁴ At an election held April 30, 1901, the voters rejected incorporation by a vote of 324 to 137. As the Reno Evening Gazette put it: "About one-third of the voting population got out and expressed themselves while the other two-thirds remained at home and worked in the garden."²⁷⁵ According to the grand jury in 1901, pimps and delinquents apparently were in good supply in Reno:

There are many males in the town of Reno living off the earnings of fallen women. * * * Many boys are in the habit of discharging rifles in Reno town limits at pigeons and other birds to the great danger to life and limb of the residents of Reno, [and] are in the habit of gathering around the Southern Pacific depot at night at about the time of the arrival of the various trains, and conducting themselves in such a manner that it makes it unpleasant and disagreeable for people having business in and around the depot.²⁷⁶

On November 14, 1901, F. H. Norcross,²⁷⁷ then a practicing lawyer in Reno, wrote Andrew Carnegie²⁷⁸ seeking a public library construction grant for Reno. Carnegie replied that 150 applications for grants were ahead of Reno's request. Other correspondence between Norcross and Carnegie during early 1902 resulted in Carnegie's making an offer on March 14, 1902, that if Reno would pledge itself to support a free public library at a cost of not less than \$1,500 a year and provide a suitable site, Carnegie would grant \$15,000 for library construction.²⁷⁹ In June 1902 a lot on the south side of the river near the iron bridge (now the site of the downtown post office) was selected as the library site.²⁸⁰

The 1902 grand jury praised the new county jail, but was severe in its condemnation of the office of the county assessor:

The conduct of this office is very unsatisfactory for several reasons:

1. It has no books or records of its transactions. When called upon by your examiners and asked for the records of the office showing the business for 1901, the answer was: "we keep no books." When asked for an account of the poll taxes collected last year, the answer was: "Go to the Auditor." When asked for an account of the money realized, the answer was: "Go to the Treasurer."

2. When asked the amount of the assessment roll for 1901, the answer was: "Don't know, here is the list, you can figure it up."

It is evident from an examination of the tax list that the matter of assessing was performed in a perfunctory manner and not in accord with the letter or spirit of the statute.²⁸¹

"An Act to incorporate the Town of Reno and to establish a city government therefor" was passed by the 1903 legislature to become effective on March 16, 1903.²⁸² The board of county commissioners was directed to issue a proclamation on or before April 7, 1903, establishing the date of an election 30 days thereafter for the election of a mayor, five councilmen, a city clerk and a city attorney,²⁸³ was required to apportion the county road fund to the City of Reno upon adoption of a resolution by the city council, and was ordered to deliver the town property to the new city.²⁸⁴

Also in 1903 the legislature enacted laws relating to the site selected for the free public library building in Reno²⁸⁵ and authorizing the board of county commissioners to issue \$50,000 of county bonds to take up the outstanding county indebtedness, to pay for the construction of a new county hospital and repairs and improvements to the courthouse.²⁸⁶

on September 21, 1903, the cornerstone of the free public library was laid by the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Nevada. Headed by the Reno Wheelmen's band, escorted by Knights Templar in full regalia, the Grand Lodge officers and over 200 Masons marched from the Masonic Temple to the site where the ceremonies were held.²⁸⁷

The courthouse was refurbished, the works being completed in December 1903. The interior was renovated, the ceiling of the district courtroom frescoed "in a most artistic manner," and a "massive piece of oak" installed for the judge's bench.²⁸⁸

Post offices were established in 1903 at Harriman (later renamed Sparks on May 27, 1904)²⁸⁹ three miles east of Reno, and at Olinghouse four miles west of Wadsworth.²⁹⁰ Planning to move its shops from Wadsworth, the Southern Pacific Railroad began leveling land in the Harriman area in May 1903, and the town sprang into being. The post office was instituted on September 15, 1903; the first store opened in October 1903; and 1,000 shade trees were planted a few months later.²⁹¹

Olinghouse,²⁹² first named McClanesburg,²⁹³ had a post office from October 1, 1903, to July 31, 1923. A small mill for ore processing was erected in 1903. In 1904 one long main street ran along the bed of a canyon surrounded by "a scattered collection of business establishments and small houses." But mining activity was reduced in 1913, and Olinghouse Township was abolished by the legislature, the area being attached to Wadsworth Township.²⁹⁴

In 1904 Reno's free public library and the new county hospital were placed in use. The Reno Evening Gazette announced that the library, an artistic structure, the gift of philanthropic steelmaker Andrew Carnegie, would be dedicated on June 4, 1904, and "regularly opened for the pleasure and profit of all the citizens of this community, the rich and the poor alike." When it opened, the library contained about 1,700 volumes of standard works as well as a moderate supply of modern fiction.²⁹⁵ By October 1904, nearly 1,500 library cards were in force and the book inventory had grown to 2,500 volumes.²⁹⁶

Finished in July 1904 for a contract price of \$21,000, the new county hospital was described as "a work of art and a credit not only to Washoe County but to the entire state as well",²⁹⁷ and according to the Nevada State Journal it was "the most modern and best equipped institution of its kind between Salt Lake and San Francisco."²⁹⁸ The Journal editor, for a change, praised the county commissioners:

The County Commissioners have seen to it that everything is first class and without resorting to extravagance no expense has been spared.

The Reno Evening Gazette described the new building:

There is an abundance of room in the building, and everything is neatly and conveniently arranged. On the second floor there are eight wards. The dining rooms for the patients and attendants are large and well lighted.²⁹⁹

At the time of occupancy of the new building, 43 patients were being cared for.

The annual grand jury report, filed in December 1904, less caustic in content than usual, recommended the opening of the Boynton Road from Glendale to and through the Boynton Slough.³⁰⁰

The first business house in Harriman, opened in 1904, was a bar -- the Surf Saloon. The Harriman Herald began publication in January 1904, and six months later changed its name to the Sparks Headlight in accord with the change of name of the town of Sparks in March 1904.³⁰¹ The railroad company, "with a liberality seldom exhibited by corporations," laid out a tract of land next to the roundhouse, and to each of its old employees at Wadsworth donated a lot 50 x 140 feet in size, presenting each employee with a deed. Each deed contained the conditions that a house had to be erected before September 10, 1904, and that the lot must never be used for business purposes. The lots in the "Reserve" were rapidly built upon, and soon 70 neat and substantial cottages and residences, moved from Wadsworth, graced the town. The Reno Power, Light and Water Company extended its lighting system and water mains to Sparks, and by November 1904 the Sunset Telephone Company had 250 subscribers and the streetcar line between Reno and Sparks was completed. Advertised in 1904 as the "Headlight City of the West," Sparks had an estimated

1,500 residents who extended "a warm invitation to the homeseeker, the mechanic, the investor and the business man to come and live amongst us."³⁰²

Turning its attention to the shaky "iron bridge" in Reno, the 1905 legislature authorized the board of county commissioners to issue \$60,000 of county bonds to remove and reconstruct the iron bridge at some other point within the city limits, construct a new bridge at the Virginia Street crossing and build and repair other necessary bridges in the county. The statute contained the specifications for the new bridge: "The new bridge is to be of a uniform width of 80 feet; it shall have a side walk or walkway on either side thereof at least 10 feet in width; it shall have two driveways for carriages, each of which shall not be less than 24 feet in width, and through the center thereof there shall be a carway or trackway, for the use of streetcars, 12 feet in width."³⁰³

Accordingly, the iron bridge was moved downstream within the city, and a new two-arch bridge, built of concrete, reinforced with steel, and containing clusters of arc lights on each side of the structure, was built at a cost of \$35,000.³⁰⁴

During 1905 both the Reno Evening Gazette and the Nevada State Journal urged that the City of Reno, then in the formative period of its municipal existence, employ an expert to prepare a city plan. The Journal observed:

Beauty of form, regularity of outline, permanent character of works of a public nature and a definite, apparent plan to provide for expansion along lines thought out in advance are coming to be recognized as tangible assets of a city. * * * The policy of permitting a city to grow as it will without regulation, let or hindrance may be excusable in a mining town, but in a city with the assured permanence of Reno, it is a duty we owe to posterity

to see that the most is made of the natural resources with which we are so richly dowered. * * * The beautiful Truckee is the chief charm of Reno and its banks should be transformed into magnificent drive-ways. Trees should be planted in place of the thickets of brush which now fringe the shore line of the stream. * * * Our city officials should so plan that all improvements should be made in the future of a permanent character and each separate piece of work should be designed as a part of a preconceived whole to the end that later we may not be faced with defects that will materially affect the symmetrical development along artistic lines. * * * It is time we ceased thinking only of building for the time being and settle down to a well defined policy of permanency.³⁰⁵

Commenting on the rapid growth of Sparks in January 1905, the Sparks Dispatch pleaded for "a good school building, good church accommodation, good water and a sewage system."³⁰⁶ The Nevada State Journal, in an article about Sparks, commented that, like all new towns, the community "possesses its due proportion of saloons. There is room for no more places of that kind here, and it is probable that there will be less of them before there are more. It may be said, however, that the saloons of Sparks are better conducted and kept in a more orderly manner than those of most towns in the west."³⁰⁷

Also in 1905, the question of incorporation of Sparks was argued on the streets and in the press. The Sparks Dispatch, taking a stand against incorporation, said: "It is the opinion of the Dispatch that incorporation at the present time would be one of the greatest calamities that could befall our town. Is it right that the people of Sparks should be saddled down with a heavier tax to maintain a city government? As the

project stands the expenses of such government would not be heavy in the beginning, but the incorporation of the town and the election of city officers, even though some serve without pay, would simply be putting on the saddle without tightening the girth. The girth would soon have to be tightened or the saddle would continually slip and the result would be worse than unsatisfactory."³⁰⁸

A bill to incorporate Sparks was introduced in the Nevada assembly on February 25, 1905, passing the assembly by unanimous vote on February 28.³⁰⁹ Anticipating no problems with the incorporation bill in the senate, the governor on March 11, 1905, invited the people of Sparks to his ranch for a barbecue, and the Sparks Dispatch reported:

Sparks is deserted today and the business houses are closed. Bright and early all the people who could leave their daily work put on their glad rags and at 10 o'clock hotfooted it to a special train which was soon underway for the Alamo Stock Farm, the home of Governor John Sparks of Nevada. This pretty little city is named after Governor Sparks, and because of this honor the chief magistrate of the state invited the people here to become his guests for a day at his beautiful home. Today for his guests Governor Sparks barbecued some of his world-famous Hereford beef steers and fine sheep. There was also possum.³¹⁰

The incorporation bill passed the senate and was approved by Governor Sparks on March 15, 1905.³¹¹ The first city election, held May 2, 1905, was conducted "quietly and orderly," 159 votes being cast. There were no contests for the elective offices save for the office of mayor.³¹²

The present rivalry between Reno and Sparks started with Sparks' incorporation as a city, with the Sparks Dispatch leading off:

While in Reno visitors naturally make inquiries about Sparks and are generally answered by the "knockers" with short, snappy replies. They are told that Sparks is nothing but a swamp, a frog pond and a hell hole for sickness. The idea of this knocking is seemingly to prejudice the visitors against making investments here. In the meantime, he is told of the alleged advantages of Reno. The traveler, however, having come so far usually continues on to Sparks, expecting that his nostrils will be greeted by a malarial atmosphere and preparing to invest in rubber boots to parade around town. A great surprise awaits him. Instead of a swamp, he finds the town situated on high, dry ground. He sees no yellow-skinned victims of disease, but only happy, healthy and energetic people.³¹³

By 1905 Derby, 27 miles east of Reno, had developed into a small but "rough and murderous" community in Washoe County. The camp, which had a reputation for violence, had its genesis with the construction of the Derby Dam, a part of the Newlands Project, in 1903. Shootings, larceny and other crimes became so rampant (over a dozen bodies had been found in the Truckee River) that the board of county commissioners were asked by the Federal Government to close the "Derby dives." With the completion of the dam, Derby declined, the post office established in 1906 being discontinued in 1922.³¹⁴

After acceptance of the new bridge in Reno and paying for the lighting for one month at a cost of \$42.90, the board of county commissioners on March 6, 1906, served notice on the city council of Reno that the commissioners felt it was the duty of the City of Reno to pay the lighting bills.³¹⁵ A federal appropriation of \$60,000 for the construction of Reno's new federal building proved to be insufficient after \$9,000 for site acquisition.³¹⁶

and \$15,000 in preliminary costs had been expended, and it was felt that the balance of the \$100,000 appropriation would fall short of the amount needed for building construction. Senator Nixon's efforts procured an additional \$40,000, but on October 9, 1906, the Treasury Department ordered work on the building suspended pending a revision of the entire plan.³¹⁷

In July 1906, hope was expressed that the board of county commissioners would rebuild a road from Reno to Lake Tahoe via Galena Creek during the summer season.³¹⁸ And Gerlach, located in old Roop County between the Black Rock and Smoke Creek deserts, was settled during 1906, named for Louis Gerlach, the founder of the Gerlach Land and Cattle Company.³¹⁹

The 1907 legislature provided that each county commissioner would receive an annual salary of \$900,320 and, after the Nevada State Journal declared the county roads to be a disgrace,³²¹ authorized the board to issue \$40,000 of bonds for the construction and improvement of the public roads and highways of the county.³²² The condition of the county courthouse also caught the attention of the Journal:

Have you seen it [the courthouse] lately? Well, just go down and take a look at the institution wherein the courts dispense law and justice and the county officials perform the public's work. It will give you a cold chill. It never was much of a building and now it is a shack, compared with what Washoe County should have. To call such a shanty a courthouse is a desecration of our mother tongue. It is not right to let it stand there. The county is too rich and populous to be optically vilified by such a structure.³²³

Washoe County Senator James Boyd got the message, and he introduced a bill proposing to authorize the county commissioners to issue \$500,000 of county bonds for a new courthouse and road improvements, but the bill failed of passage.³²⁴

The 1907 county grand jury condemned the condition of the county's roads and recommended that the courthouse be provided with a furnace and heating system and that the method of heating the rooms with stoves be abolished³²⁵

one of the privileged characters about the courthouse in 1907 was Buster the Cat, who went into the various offices as he saw fit. Buster was a very large and very prepossessing feline, adorned with a handsome nickel collar, and was as round as it was possible for a cat to be and remain graceful. He followed the janitor as he went about his daily rounds.³²⁶

Reno in 1907 saw the destruction of the old Lake House and the commencement of construction of a modern caravansary, the Riverside Hotel.³²⁷ The municipality of 1907 treated juvenile delinquents harshly and didn't even treat some ill persons at all. A 14-year-old boy who, after being arrested, admitted passing counterfeit bills on a blind cigar dealer was given "just one hour" by the police judge to vacate the city,³²⁸ and when a tramp drifted into Reno, suffering with smallpox and his face and body covered with large sores, the bureaucrats took over. The president of the city board of health discovered the tramp walking the city streets. The city officer asked permission of the county board of health to admit the tramp to the county pest house, but permission was denied on the ground that the hobo was not a county resident. Nowhere could he find care and shelter so he was compelled to go his way to live or die.³²⁹

In March 1907 a fearful storm and melting snow swelled the Truckee River, destroying much property, including bridges and flumes. The Virginia Street bridge was the only safe crossing over the river. Denominated the greatest in the history of Reno, the storm caused the water of the Truckee River almost to reach the top of the arches of the new bridge Sparks became "a muddy, sloppy town," the streets becoming small rivers. The

river submerged all the land between Sparks and the eastern foothills, and as the water struck the canyon at Vista it formed a solid wall. When the contracted waterway refused to carry the flood, the great mass of water was forced back to the lower ground. A portion of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad track was washed away between Steamboat Slough and Washoe City, the Winters ranch was under water, the lights went out in Reno, Southern Pacific trains were tied up in the Reno yards, and county roads in the area were washed out and cut by the rain and the flood.³³⁰

In February 1908, a thief entered the county pest house and stole everything the building contained. Even the blankets which had been used to cover smallpox and diphtheria patients were taken. The Reno Evening Gazette surmised that "the thief must have possessed a rig as he carried away the stove, cooking utensils, the tables, the chairs, beds, bed clothing and all other household furniture."³³¹ The location and condition of the county pest house had long been the subject of grand jury investigation and comment. The 1908 grand jury report painted a grim picture of the pest house:

Our committee visited the pest house just north of town and we find there conditions that would be a disgrace to any community. We found two old shacks, one marked "ladies," the other marked "gentlemen," which words, we believe under the conditions existing there, to be striking misnomers. It would be criminal, in the estimation of this grand jury, to place in these houses, any one afflicted with contagious disease, as the conditions and surroundings would seem to breed disease rather than aid in preventing or curing. The buildings are unsuitable, and the inmates are subjected to the sights of garbage dumps, where all the refuse of the city is dumped, and at

times when the rubbish is being burned the inmates are compelled to endure the sickening smells of burning horse-flesh and refuse of all kinds. In view of these circumstances we recommend that a suitable location for a pest house be selected and proper buildings erected thereon.³³²

By 1908 the Nevada hospital for mental diseases, then 27 years old, contained 10 distinct buildings, 211 patients, 29 criminally insane, 24 employees, including seven attendants, and operated at a monthly cost of \$3,500.³³³ The sheriff in the same year installed a fingerprinting system in his office.³³⁴

Excoriating the board of county commissioners in 1909 concerning the condition of the county roads, the Reno Evening Gazette editorialized:

Judging from the roads around Reno the general road fund of the county must be poverty-stricken. The road between Reno and Steamboat Springs, perhaps the most traveled road in the State, would be a disgrace to a backwards community. We elected a board of commissioners two years ago who went into office with a great harrah about good roads. They were going to see to it that Washoe County had good roads. Their election slogan was good roads. The result has been that the fairly good roads which obtained when they went into office have degenerated into the most abominable roads that the county ever suffered from.

The Virginia road is nothing but a dangerous and annoying succession of chuck-hole humps and hollows. An automobile going over it has to travel at slow speed, and even then the occupants have to hang to the machine to keep from being thrown out. * * * The "good roads" commission seems to find the attractions of Reno too interesting ever to get beyond the city limits to observe the results of their neglect and incompetence on the public highways.

Formerly we had twice as well-kept roads when the county was not half as wealthy and populous as it is now. What is the troubles? One thing is certain and that is the commissioners should either submit some reasonable excuse why they have so signally and outrageously failed to make good, or resign to make way for a board that will take an interest in the road improvement duties attached to the offices of county commissioners.³³⁵

The county commissioners in fact did undertake to improve 22 miles of the Incline road during 1909 at a cost of \$1,000. The county contributed \$500 toward the work and the commissioners looked to "automobile enthusiasts and public spirited men" to furnish the additional \$500.³³⁶

On May 1, 1909, the post office moved into the new Federal Building in Reno, the exterior of which presented "a real metropolitan appearance."³³⁷ The post office occupied the first floor, while located on the second floor were the "large, airy and sunny" offices of the surveyor general and the deputy U S. revenue collector for Nevada. The Reno Evening Gazette commented:

The new building represents an architectural style that should be followed if Washoe County decides to erect a new court house. The prevailing style of architecture in Nevada public buildings to date may be described as brick or stone rectangles surmounted by a chicken-coop. This chicken-coop tower seems to be the piece de resistance of every public building that we have.³³⁸

The 1909 legislature authorized the county commissioners to issue \$150,000 of county bonds for altering, improving and repairing the existing Washoe County courthouse and for constructing a courthouse addition. The sum of \$125,000 was to be expended for construction and repairs, \$25,000 was authorized for furnishings.³³⁹ When the county commissioners sold \$150,000

of the authorized bonds, the editor of the Reno Evening Gazette observed:

Washoe County has disposed of \$150,000 of bonds for the purpose of erecting a new court house. The building so erected will stand perhaps for the next fifty years. Now it is pertinent to everyone that a building of such character and cost ought to be a building possessing such architectural features that the average discriminating public may feel some pride in its appearance, rather than be ashamed of it. In other words it should be up to modern architectural standards rather than an architectural monstrosity. The public buildings of the State * * * are to say the least architectural misfits. They conform to no known style of architecture, unless they may be typified as Nevadan. Most of them are ornamented with an aggressive, obtruding chicken-coop deformity on top, designed for what purpose no rational being has yet been able to give a satisfactory answer. The ordinarily intelligent people of Washoe County do not want any more of these monstrosities and will not stand for the perpetration of any more of them. We do not propose to pay taxes to erect any more of these terrestrial disfigurements without protest.³⁴⁰

On April 8, 1909, the Nevada State Journal reported the landscape gardening and building of a wall along the riverfront in the rear of the new library building.³⁴¹ The ladies of the Twentieth Century Club in Reno passed resolutions calling upon the county commissioners to hire a paid probation officer and to place a 1909 statute in operation providing for a juvenile court in Washoe County,³⁴² and the Reno Evening Gazette, in urging the board of county commissioners and the district judge to take action, said

It is a shame, an outrage on justice and a general social crime to look with indifference upon the neglected, dependent or delinquent children until a crime has been committed and then send a boy to the penitentiary for any ordinary offense. * * * The people of every community owe a duty to the children. First, to set them a good example, and this we do by licensing about every vice except opium smoking. Second, by giving them good schools and compelling their attendance. This we have done. Third, to look after them and see that they keep out of harmful mischief. * * * Give the young delinquents a chance.³⁴³

County bonds issued in 1905 carried no county seal. The bonds had been purchased by the Washoe County Bank and were sold by the bank to eastern purchasers in 1909. Upon refusal by the purchasers to accept the bonds without the seal, the board of county commissioners got around to adopting one in June of that year.³⁴⁴

By 1909 the Western Pacific Railroad tracks had reached Gerlach from Winnemucca and the board of county commissioners voted \$10,000 for the construction of a wagon road from Surprise Valley, California, to Gerlach "so that it would become an important trading place."³⁴⁵ And at Leadville, 38 miles north of Gerlach, mining activity was begun.³⁴⁶

The 1910's

The population of Washoe County in 1910 was 17,434. Of this number, 10,867 resided in Reno, 2,500 in Sparks and 4,068 in the unincorporated area. In February 1910, the Reno Evening Gazette railed against the county commissioners, claiming they were "discriminating against" the use of Nevada building stone, granite and marble in the new county courthouse. The Gazette charged :

The commissioners seem to have fallen under the hypnotic influence of "Chuckhole" John Evans, the young-old

dictator of the board. * * * When the full truth is known regarding the refusal of "Chuckhole John" to permit the board to patronize home industry there will be a revulsion of feeling against his methods that will probably make him decide not to try again for a position where he will have the disposal of public funds.³⁴⁷

During courthouse construction in 1910, the county assessor and the county clerk moved their offices into a renovated bathhouse. The district judges moved into the Oddfellows' lodgeroom, while the county recorder and the county treasurer remained in the old courthouse.³⁴⁸ The cornerstone of the new courthouse was laid by officers of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Nevada on June 10, 1910, the impressive ceremonies being witnessed by nearly 3,000 people, and the district attorney, William Woodburn, acted as chairman of the occasion.³⁴⁹

Again, the condition of county roads came under attack when the Reno Evening Gazette, alleging that the people's money was being squandered by incompetents, observed that "one can always tell when he enters Washoe County, for from that time on the roads are shameful. Highways that ought to resemble boulevards are nothing but ruts and chuckholes Culverts -- they are called culverts -- are nothing but tragic jokes. In many places the roads are nothing but irrigating ditches."³⁵⁰

On July 27, 1910, the Gazette lambasted Commissioners Evans and Sessions, claiming that a high, abnormal tax rate had been necessitated by the utter incompetence of the board of county commissioners:

To the utter shame of the county, those tremendous sums of money which have come through this high taxation have been spent almost without result. So far as accomplishing anything save paying salaries is concerned the money might nearly as well have been thrown in the river.³⁵¹

Naming Commissioners Evans and Sessions as the men responsible for this squandering of the public funds, the Gazette called for their defeat at the next election:

The opportunity is going to be presented to the people of Washoe County this year to free itself from the shameful methods that have so long been in vogue. Both John Evans, better known as "Chuck-hole" because of his farcical attempts to repair roads, and Orville Sessions, better known as "Putty" Sessions because of his well-known characteristics, are candidates for reelection.

* * * They are the men who have taxed this county to the very limit and have so spent the money that the people have got nothing in return. * * * The first thing to do is for the Republicans of Washoe County to defeat Orville Sessions at the primary. Then will come the final contest, which will mean the defeat of "Chuck-hole" Evans at the election.³⁵²

With the activation of the Juvenile Court Law in Washoe County in 1910, the probation officer, G. W. Ingalls, after 13 months in office, reported having handled 230 cases of delinquency, dependency, contributing delinquency and contributing dependency.³⁵³

On April 17, 1911, over 300 of Reno's taxpayers formed the Washoe County Taxpayers Association "to keep its right hand on the public pulse and its left hand on the public pocket."³⁵⁴

Announcing on May 1, 1911, that the new courthouse was practically completed, the Reno Evening Gazette described "the gleam of incandescents [shining] forth for the first time last night" from the new building.³⁵⁵ On May 10, 1911, the county commissioners ordered that no dogs were to be allowed in the new courthouse, but the commissioners had considerable trouble enforcing the order because attorneys wished to have their "dumb

friends" accompany them to court.³⁵⁶ When the building's grand opening occurred on June 1, 1911, the public was invited, and several hundred people visited the new edifice, where "everything was new, bright and brilliant."³⁵⁷

Washoe County was 50 years old in 1911, and to celebrate its anniversary, Old Pioneers' Day was proclaimed to be July 3, 1911. An automobile parade of pioneers preceded exercises, which were held in the "courthouse" [Powning] park, and during which Judge C. C. Goodwin, Washoe County pioneer, addressed the crowd.³⁵⁸

On receipt of word from the Gerlach constable that if a jail was not soon built he would arrive in Reno some day with at least 21 hoboes, and that he was forced to handcuff the tramps and tie them to trees, no other shelter being provided, the county commissioners decided to erect a new jail there.³⁵⁹

The 1913 legislature increased the annual salaries of each of the county commissioners to \$1,200.³⁶⁰

Prompted by the Nevada Good Roads Club, the Governor of Nevada in May 1914 proclaimed a voluntary statewide holiday for the purpose of bettering the roads. In response to the governor's wishes, 225 business houses were closed and 500 men turned out to work on the public highways. The Reno Evening Gazette described the cooperative effort in Washoe County:

The superintendent of the Sparks [railroad] shops and a number of local dealers made donation of the use of tools and the Equal Suffrage Society prepared luncheons for the workers. The people of Verdi showed great enthusiasm, practically everybody in the town turning out early for the work. They were reinforced by a big bunch of Renoites. The Verdi Lumber Company donated the lumber for 34 culverts, which are being put in place on the Dog Valley grade, the most difficult portion of the Lincoln trail in Nevada. Sparks people were abroad at an early hour. The forces extended in an almost unbroken line from Coney Island

through B Street and on to the head of the Truckee Canyon, while a considerable force spent the day on the Glendale road.

From Reno the first caravan consisted of 22 touring cars and trucks, packed with men, tools and provisions. Some 40 university students and about an equal number of high school boys were among the early departures. It was not until noon that the bulk of the workers departed, for many of the business houses did not close until that hour. The first workers were sent to Verdi to aid in the repairs of the Dog Valley grade. Others went to reinforce the Sparks workers. Some took the northern route and still others the Reno-Carson highway. Several loads left last night for Pyramid where considerable work is being done in conjunction with the farmers and miners of that region.

In deference to the university regents and the trustees of the public schools no liquid refreshments of an alcoholic nature were served to the workers, but water carriers were busy and purveyors of lunches were as active as the men whom they served.³⁶¹

The grand jury grudgingly reported in 1914 that, after 50 years of complaints, "the county commissioners not only repaired county roads damaged by a severe winter but have furthermore done more work on roads than in any year previously." Additionally, the grand jury recommended the consolidation of certain city and county offices and that the City of Reno take some immediate steps toward removing city sewage from the Truckee River.³⁶²

In January 1915, 134 parcels of tax-delinquent property in Washoe County were sold at auction at the courthouse (six times the usual amount), the Reno Evening Gazette blaming the higher valuations assessed by the Nevada Tax Commission.³⁶³

The 1915

legislature authorized the issuance of \$15,000 of county bonds for the construction of a new bridge across the Truckee River at the Park Street crossing within the City of Reno,³⁶⁴ and the legislative session was enlivened by the appearance of many residents of the northern part of Washoe County on the streets of Carson City and in the capitol wearing tags labeled "Boost for Roop County." On February 15, 1915, a bill was introduced in the assembly creating Roop County out of the northern portion of Washoe County, but the bill failed to pass.³⁶⁵

The grand jury of 1915 took the board of county commissioners to task for their failure to enforce properly the regulations of roadhouses in the county. The report declared that "the roadhouses are a menace to the good morals of the land, and a particular temptation to the young people of Reno as well as the misguided and unfortunate, dissatisfied married people."³⁶⁶

On April 7, 1915, the commissioners enacted an ordinance establishing a county law library fund and set aside a portion of civil action filing fees for the purchase of books and the maintenance of the library.³⁶⁷ Installed in the courthouse in a room connecting with the district judges' chambers, the law library opened for business in May 3, 1915. The personal law library of W. A. Massey,³⁶⁸ consisting of about 2,400 volumes and considered one of the most complete and best of its kind in the state, was purchased.³⁶⁹

In April 1915 Governor Emmet D. Boyle proclaimed May 1 following as "Nevada Good Roads Day," and urged citizens to observe the date as a holiday to be devoted to voluntary service in improving the state highways.³⁷⁰ Subscriptions by Reno business and professional men for the good roads fund totaled \$1,060, and on May 11 "several hundred men equipped with picks and shovels and several dozen teams fared forth to battle with the ruts and rocks that have made the Reno-Carson and Reno-Lawton's roads the worst in this section of the state."³⁷¹

Plans were being made in May 1915 for conducting prizefights in Washoe County on Memorial Day, but the sheriff announced on May 18 that fights would not be held because he would refuse to issue a license and would not allow the bouts to be held on that day. "You can say for me," said the sheriff, "that if I have anything to say about it there will be no fights in Washoe County on Decoration Day. I believe that Decoration Day was set apart as an occasion for honoring the memory of the heroes who fought, bled and died to preserve the Union and should be held sacred to that purpose. I shall absolutely refuse to issue a license for bouts to be conducted on that day and shall make it a point to see that no ring contests between man and man are held on that day."³⁷² The sheriff prevailed. No prizefights were held.

A \$12,000 bond issue, proposed by the Truckee River Drainage District to pay for drainage of thousands of acres of worthless land lying east of Reno by lowering the bed of the Truckee River and widening the channel sufficiently to carry away the standing water,³⁷³ was rejected on June 23, 1915, by a property owners' vote of 23 to 7 and 7 not voting.

Tramps and coyotes plagued Gerlach in 1915, and the Gerlach constable appealed to the commissioners in November for the appointment of a deputy to aid him in handling hoboos, most of them members of the Industrial Workers of the World, who he anticipated would invade Gerlach.³⁷⁴ On November 5, 1915, the justice of the peace of Gerlach Township advised the county commissioners that rabid coyotes were becoming a menace to the safety of residents of the northern part of Washoe County as well as to the cattle, sheep and other domestic animals, and requested that the board pass an ordinance requiring all dogs in Gerlach to be muzzled or shot. After the district attorney.

advised that no such ordinance could be enacted,³⁷⁵ Gerlach citizens petitioned the commissioners to make the county bounty on coyotes larger, stating that "most of the school children carry guns while going to attend their classes."³⁷⁶

In April 1916, the sheriff, having a hard time rounding up unlicensed motor vehicles, asked the county commissioners to provide funds for a deputy "who will be mounted on a motorcycle."³⁷⁷ Calling the district court's attention to the personal, antagonistic condition existing in the board of county commissioners, the grand jury report of 1916 cautioned:

This is an individual antagonism and has a tendency to work to the disadvantage of the county affairs. After all is said and done the condition is due to the system that makes no one person responsible nor secures to no one person the credit. Necessarily a system that makes a mad scramble for praise for work well done and a constant dodging of responsibility is deplorable to say the least.³⁷⁸

The problems of the Truckee River reefs near Vista and of county roads were addressed by the 1917 legislature. The board of county commissioners were authorized to issue (1) \$20,000 of county bonds for the improvement of county public roads, \$5,000 of which was to be expended on improvement of the county road from Reno to a point on the state line near Purdy, California, to meet the California highway from Susanville,³⁷⁹ and (2) \$25,000 of county bonds for the purpose of deepening the natural channel of the Truckee River in order to reduce the maintenance cost of certain county roads and to conserve the public health by the drainage of impounded waters in the lower Truckee Valley.³⁸⁰

Urging that a purchasing agent for the county be appointed and that the supplies bought by the county not be "parceled out

to every store in order to pay political debts," the public institutions committee of the Woman Citizens' Club in a communication to the county commissioners in January 1917 asked that body to take some action regarding the extravagant manner in which the county hospital was being conducted.³⁸¹ And on March 15, 1917, the Reno Evening Gazette reported that the 60-member Reno Golf Club had purchased 80 acres from Louis Berrum for a nine-hole golf course near Moana Springs "west of the streetcar track just before it makes the last turn before running to the springs." Mrs. Gourley Dunn-Webb was to be the golf pro at the new course.³⁸²

In April 1917 the Washoe County liquor board ordered the district attorney to draw an ordinance to:

1. Prohibit women from acting in the capacity of bartender in places where dancing and entertainment were carried on;
2. Prohibit the employment of females in the solicitation of the sale of drinks;
3. Require all roadhouses to close at 1:00 a.m.;
4. Prohibit the sale of liquor to intoxicated persons, particularly to women; and
5. Require proprietors of all roadhouses to pay particular attention to and prohibit the presence of young girls in their places of business.³⁸³

In 1917, there were 23 licensed slot machines in the unincorporated area of the county, while Reno licensed 63.³⁸⁴ Declaring that the "most daring bunco man of old would blush with shame to see the raw attempts employed to bilk the public," the sheriff in October had some 20-odd unlawful games of Bernardi's Greater Shows (a carnival) closed down, and the carnival moved on.³⁸⁵

A grand jury committee voiced its concern for visiting tourists in November 1917:

We are informed that many automobile tourists camp beside the irrigation ditches which flow through the City of Reno and use the water from these ditches for drinking purposes. It is known to your committee that these ditches are made the receptacles of filth unspeakable by people living along their banks and we strongly recommend that the health officer of Washoe County take steps to warn travelers of the danger which may arise from the use of these waters, by placing signs or otherwise.³⁸⁶

Washoe County's roads continued to attract legislative attention. At the 1919 session, two acts authorizing the issuance of county bonds for ambitious road improvements were passed. One act³⁸⁷ attempted to cure the county's long-time road ills by authorizing the issuance of \$500,000 of county bonds for surfacing with permanent, durable material:

1. The county road from the California boundary through Verdi, Reno, Sparks and Wadsworth to the eastern boundary line of the county;
2. The road running from Reno south through Huffaker's, Steamboat, around Washoe Lake to the south boundary of the county; and
3. The road running from Reno northwest to the California line.

The county commissioners were also authorized to improve in such manner as they deemed necessary the road from Reno to Pyramid Lake, to Gerlach, to Long Valley north to the Oregon line and all other roads in Washoe County. Only bonds required to do the work in any one year could be sold, and the commissioners were also authorized to enter into contracts with the director of the state department of highways whereby the state would pay for one-half of the road improvements. The other act authorized the county commissioners to issue \$150,000 of county bonds to aid the state department of highways in constructing

a highway across Washoe County along the line designated as Route 1 of the system of state highways, provided that Pershing, Humboldt and Elko Counties also issued highway construction bonds.³⁸⁸

Some attention really had to be given to the county's roads, according to a reporter who, in July 1919, took a 200-mile journey in the wilds of northern Washoe County and wrote the following warnings and advice:

As one honest motorist to another don't go farther than Doyle or Pyramid Lake for a joy ride unless you have important business It ceases to be a joy ride at those points.

The reporter, on his return trip to Reno, left Cedarville, California, traveling via Buffalo Meadows. He described the return route:

To call that route a road is a misnomer; 40 miles of the Smoke Creek desert was enough for me. We kept to the western edge and it was the hottest road I ever crept across. The road was an alkali dust wallow 6 inches to a foot deep and there was 40 miles of it.³⁸⁹

In an article entitled "Dividing Washoe County" appearing in the Reno Evening Gazette of March 1, 1919, the attempts of Assemblyman D. E. Hill of Beulah, Washoe County, to reestablish Roop County were explored. The article explained:

Assemblyman Hill has leaped into fame. Assemblyman Hill comes from Beulah, a pastoral village of less than a dozen families situated in the northwestern section of Washoe County,³⁹⁰ and he has introduced a bill to cut Washoe County into two pieces, the northern portion to be called Roop County, while the southern portion is to be left with Reno as the county seat. Incidentally the southern portion is to retain the name of Washoe.

The Gazette would like to presume that Assemblyman Hill is serious, and is not trying to sandbag the other members of the Washoe County delegation into voting for something else. For let it be remembered that Assemblyman Hill has introduced another bill -- one providing that the Washoe County commissioners shall be elected from districts -- one from the extreme north of the county, one from Sparks and one from Reno. Of course, as Reno and her environs contain only about eighty percent of the county's population and pay most of the taxes they ought to be satisfied with one county commissioner -- according to the statesman from Beulah.

And this, after all, is apparently what the statesman-like Mr. Hill is after. He and his section don't want to divide Washoe County -- they want to divide the board of commissioners and the proper way to do it is to introduce a vicious sandbag bill. Then threaten with the sandbag until you get what you are really after -- in this case a county commissioner for Beulah and its dozen inhabitants.

This is Assemblyman Hill's first session but he is learning.³⁹¹

The board of county commissioners on November 5, 1919, rejected a proposal made by the president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers of America that the commissioners sign a contract binding the board to hire none but union employees, establish an eight-hour day with time and a half for overtime, holidays and Sundays, and fix a standard wage for truck drivers, teamsters and helpers. The board, taking the position that it was contrary to the statutes and public interest for the county to bind itself to labor union contracts, instructed the county clerk to throw the letter and the proposed agreement into the waste basket.

Notwithstanding the board's instructions, the documents were placed on file by the county clerk.³⁹²

The 1920's

The 1920 census indicated that there were 18,627 people in Washoe County, with 12,016 residing in Reno, 3,238 in Sparks and 3,373 in the unincorporated area. The public library in January 1920 contained over 24,000 volumes and had 6,700 active patrons who held library cards. The trustees suggested doubling the library's capacity within a year or two.³⁹³

Washoe County and the City of Reno agreed that each would assume one-half the cost of construction of a bridge to be built across the Truckee River at the Western extremity of Riverside Drive in Reno, and the construction contract was signed April 5, 1920. The bridge was to cost \$32,097 and was to be a single span 160 feet in length with a 24-foot driveway and two five foot walks.³⁹⁴

In May 1920, the county commissioners and the City of Reno executed a lease with an option to purchase 80 acres north of the golf course from Louis Berrum for the location of a city county aviation field.³⁹⁵ The two entities on July 13, 1920, agreed to purchase the Berrum tract on Plumas Street in Reno for use as an aviation field and to construct a hanger on the ground to conform with the Federal Government's requirements for the use of government mail-carrying airplanes, the field to be prepared and the hanger to be constructed by September 1, 1920. The cost of the hanger was estimated at from \$30,000 to \$35,000, the field at from \$30,000 to \$40,000. The Federal Government was to furnish the heating and lighting system for the hanger and to construct the field.³⁹⁶

The arrival in Reno of the first transcontinental "aerial mail carrier," a DeHaviland Four, on September 9, 1920, was welcomed by about 100 persons who had gathered at the new field.

Reporting an uneventful flight from Salt Lake City with a stop at Elko, the pilot brought with him 7 pounds 14 ounces of letters. The Reno Evening Gazette reported:

The big DeHaviland Four came through the canyon east of Reno, the pilot roaring around the field several times before he landed. He explained that it had been difficult to determine the direction of the wind and that had caused him to ascend several times when within a few feet of the ground. He suggested that a flag be posted on the postal building at the field which would serve to guide the flyers who, he said, will not be able to see the small flag now flying from the pole at the lower end of the field.³⁹⁷

In 1920 the county hospital was found to be clean, wholesome, comfortable and well supplied. It was equipped with 85 beds, had 30 acres of land, 10 in pasture and 20 under cultivation. The investigator reported:

The hospital, under the present administration, is giving the people the real, efficient, economical service that they have a right to expect but so seldom receive in the management of public institutions.³⁹⁸

The 1921 legislature authorized the county commissioners to issue (1) \$35,000 of county bonds for building and furnishing an addition to the county hospital,³⁹⁹ and (2) \$150,000 of county bonds to construct Route 1 of the state highway system.⁴⁰⁰

The community was agog on New Year's Day of 1921 when it was learned that an orgy had occurred at the county jail on New Year's Eve, during which liquor was supplied by the night jailer to the inmates, several of whom escaped after a night of revelry with the keys to the jail. "Windy" Krakenberg, the night jailer, who had sent out for the liquor and then invited the inmates to hold the party, pleaded guilty to charges of

permitting prisoners to escape and of having intoxicating liquor in a public building, although he asserted that someone had turned the prisoners out while he was asleep. "Windy" was fined \$1,000 or sentenced to serve 500 days in the county jail. Two weeks after the escape, an Indian exploring the ditches north of Reno for valuables found the missing jail keys.⁴⁰¹

April 17, 1921, witnessed the largest public assemblage in Reno's history. The crowd gathered to witness a triple ceremony -- the official dedication of the Riverside and Wingfield Park bridges, representing city and county enterprise, and the dedication of the new airfield. As the Gazette related "Ugly weather brought no obstacles to the success of the undertaking. A sharp wind swept down the Truckee valley bringing scudding clouds, betimes picking up the dust in blinding squalls, an altogether prank of the elements, but Reno was out to hear and see."⁴⁰²

An automobile procession of officials and citizens left the courthouse at 1 p.m., moving out California Avenue to the new Riverside Bridge, which had taken the place of the old "electric light bridge" at the powerhouse near the river. After an appropriate ribbon-cutting ceremony and addresses, the procession continued down the Truckee to the Wingfield Park Bridge, where a similar ceremony was held. Both ceremonies consumed less than half an hour. Then a great automobile caravan led the way to the airfield with hundreds of pedestrians bringing up the rear. As the time for dedication drew near, large throngs surrounded the hangar.⁴⁰³ Five airplanes had started from coast points on the morning of April 17 to attend the airfield dedication ceremony. In spite of weather warnings and a gale which turned four of his fellow pilots back before they reached "the extreme heights over the Sierras," one intrepid Captain Kauch,

piloting "a DeHaviland of the army type," arrived at the field just as the celebration was starting. But the good captain made a sloppy landing. When a gust of wind caught his plane, it careened sharply as it struck the ground, smashing a wheel and breaking several of the struts supporting the wings.⁴⁰⁴ Back at the hangar, the crowd was advised that Captain Eddie Rickenbacker had been invited, could not come, but had telegraphed his felicitations. The keynote of the entire ceremony was struck by the Reverend Brewster Adams, Baptist minister and local civic leader, when he said "Reno is on the highway of the skies", and the district attorney, Lester Summerfield, joined in, exclaiming "We are living today in the time when dreams come true."⁴⁰⁵

After the ceremony, Captain Kauch, whose plane had been repaired, attempted to take off for the return flight to Mather Field. When he was about 25 feet off the ground he hit a tree, totally demolishing the DeHaviland.⁴⁰⁶

The completion of the \$35,000 addition to the county hospital in 1922 led the Reno Evening Gazette to describe the new section as "modern in every particular, containing two wards with 12 beds each." There were 42 hospital inmates in November 1922.⁴⁰⁷

In 1924, the dome of the courthouse was leaking, which led to the suggestion that it be surfaced with gold leaf at a cost of \$2,000, but the commissioners demurred on account of the expense.⁴⁰⁸

The Pacific Portland Cement Company had built a company town five miles south of Gerlach in 1922 and named it Empire, a trade name for gypsum products.⁴⁰⁹ On May 24, 1924, a Western Pacific special train from San Francisco, arrived in Empire to celebrate the opening of the cement company's new \$1,500,000 plant. Raw gypsum was quarried five miles from the plant where

the company owned a deposit of 900 acres of gypsum estimated to contain more than 20 million tons. Reduced to dust by machinery at the scene of the deposit, the gypsum was automatically loaded into buckets with 1,500 pounds capacity each and transported by aerial tramway five miles over the mountains down to the plant.⁴¹⁰ Empire's post office was established in 1951.⁴¹¹

The 1925 Nevada legislature set aside in Reno and dedicated Powning Park to the public as a site for a Nevada Building (later referred to as the "state building") to provide suitable quarters for a continuous exhibit of state and county resources and relics collected by the Nevada Historical Society.⁴¹² The same legislative session directed the Washoe County commissioners to levy a 20-cent ad valorem tax for fiscal years 1925 and 1926 for the 1926 Nevada transcontinental exposition fund to support a 1926 exposition to celebrate and commemorate the completion of the transcontinental highway. The legislature found that such an exposition would possess great educational values for the State of Nevada and would be of great benefit to this state and particularly to Washoe County Directing the county commissioners to appoint 11 citizens of the state to act as a board of governors to manage and direct the exposition, the legislature authorized the board to negotiate temporary loans of \$150,000 to provide immediate money.⁴¹³

On July 25, 1925, the City of Reno and Washoe County exercised their option and purchased the airfield for \$15,000.⁴¹⁴ The attention of the county commissioners was called on July 27, 1925, to the lack of overnight accommodations for trial jurors at the courthouse and, there being no hotel accommodations, the commissioners immediately voted to purchase 15 cots and 15 sets of sheets, pillowcases and blankets to be used by jurors who might be locked up overnight. The cots and bedding were to be stored in the courthouse attic and the law library was to be utilized as the jurors' dormitory.⁴¹⁵

It developed that the 1926 Nevada Transcontinental Highway Exposition could not be held in 1926 because the highways were not completed and the Washoe County-mandated tax proved insufficient to meet and defray the costs and expenses for holding of the exposition. And the 1927 legislature decided that the exposition was to be held in 1927.⁴¹⁶ The county commissioners of Washoe County were directed to levy an ad valorem tax for fiscal year 1927, with the proceeds to be deposited in the exposition fund, and authorized to make temporary loans of \$75,000 for exposition purposes.⁴¹⁷

In January 1927 the United States Treasury and Post Office Departments proposed to the Congress the abandonment of Reno's post office and the erection of a new federal building, at an estimated cost of \$450,000, and located south of the Truckee River on Mill Street facing the state building.⁴¹⁸

By July 1928, the airfield was admittedly too small, difficulties being experienced by the larger commercial and pleasure planes because of the field's limited area. The Gazette suggested that the county and the City of Reno make a study of the cost of a new field.⁴¹⁹ But on July 13, 1928, the Boeing Air Transport Company purchased "a new airplane landing field" for its own use. Located in the center of the valley, the new field initially was comprised of about 120 acres. A new hangar was to be erected, and the Gazette speculated that "the big 12-passenger planes would probably be flying by September 1."⁴²⁰ On July 20, 1928, the county commissioner ordered the construction of a graveled-surface road, 18 feet wide, from the Virginia Road to Boynton Lane to connect with the new airport. The board also agreed to construct two graveled runways on the new field, which were to be 2,000 feet long and 200 feet wide.⁴²¹

Jay Peters, Inc. was authorized in September 1928 to operate a 100-watt radio broadcasting station, to be installed in the Elks Club in Reno,⁴²² with half-time night hours and full-time day hours.

The question of moving the public library from its river site occasioned by the Federal Government's desire to build a new post office and Federal Building led the 1929 legislature to enact statutes (a) authorizing the City of Reno to donate to Washoe County any land belonging to the city and within the city limits for library purposes;⁴²³ and (b) authorizing Washoe County to issue \$150,000 of county bonds for constructing, equipping and furnishing a county library building within the city if a building site was donated to the county within 1,000 feet of the intersection of Mill and South Virginia Streets in Reno. This law also required the establishment and equipment of branch county libraries in each school district within Washoe County before July 1, 1930.⁴²⁴

On April 9, 1929, the Reno Evening Gazette announced that the Washoe County library was to be given the use of the large central room on the ground floor of the state building,⁴²⁵ and on April 23, 1929, Reno Mayor E. E. Roberts⁴²⁶ stated, "the city has authority, without legislative authorization, to deed the library site to the Federal Government for a postoffice site."⁴²⁷ The mayor's opinion was not concurred in by Reno's city attorney, who concluded that the legislature had to specifically authorize the City of Reno to deed the site of the library to the Federal Government before the city or county or any other agency could convey a clear title to the land.⁴²⁸ Washoe County signed a 99-year lease for the Nevada state building in Powning Park on June 19, 1929, and the county commissioners made immediate plans to move the library to the new quarters⁴²⁹ on New Year's Day, 1930.⁴³⁰

The 1930's

The 1930 census revealed that Washoe County's total population was 27,158, of whom 18,529 resided in Reno, 4,508 in Sparks and

4,121 in the unincorporated area. On March 5, 1930, the board of county commissioners voted to offer to the City of Reno the county's share of the municipal airport, making the field a municipal property entirely. The airport, according to the county officials, was a losing proposition, and the county proposed to turn it over to the city for no consideration whatsoever.⁴³¹

The 1931 legislature: (a) authorized the Washoe County commissioners to issue \$25,000 of county bonds to erect a public library building in Sparks and to destroy the old Reno public library building;⁴³² and (b) placed the Carnegie library building and site under the exclusive control, management and possession of the county commissioners, who were empowered to convey the site to the State of Nevada or the United States with or without consideration. The City of Reno was mandated to join in the conveyance, which was to be conditioned that the land when conveyed should be for a public use.⁴³³

On January 10, 1931, the commissioners indicated that an oiled gravel road from the main state highway at Wadsworth through the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation and on to Gerlach was an immediate probability for 1931.⁴³⁴

The razing of the old library building began in March 1931, and the flagpole from one of the Virginia City mines, which had been earlier presented to the county library, was installed at the veterans' plot in the Mountain View Cemetery.⁴³⁵

After the board of hospital trustees awarded a construction contract for the county hospital to a local contractor for \$198,997 over the low outside bidder of \$184,400 in August 1931, a group of local taxpayers filed suit and obtained a temporary injunction to save the \$14,000.⁴³⁶

By August 1931, the widening of the Reno-Carson highway between Huffaker's and Lakeview Hill was approaching completion; and

the Reno Evening Gazette urged that steps should be taken by the county and Reno's civic bodies to see that the highway would be widened sufficiently by 1932 to provide three lanes of travel between the Reno city limits and Huffaker's to accommodate "the enormous local traffic to which the highway is subjected every afternoon and evening." The traffic congestion in the Truckee Meadows had begun!⁴³⁷

Complaining about the waste of taxpayers' money in the past in maintaining county roads, the Gazette, in an editorial published November 9, 1931, lauded a newly announced policy of the county commissioners to provide certain roads of the county with oil-macadam surfaces. The editor said:

Several miles of county roads in the vicinity of Reno, which have been "maintained" heretofore by inexperienced road crews using old-fashioned graders and other like equipment, are being given an oil-macadam surface under the direction of an engineer and next year, according to plans agreed upon by the commissioners, additional work of this character will be prosecuted by the county.⁴³⁸

The United States Department of Justice requested that Washoe County lower from \$1 a day its expected compensation then received for the maintenance of federal prisoners in the county jail, and the county commissioners and the sheriff met and decided on November 12, 1931, that, although the county made a profit out of federal prisoners, the profit was not so great that a reduction could be granted.⁴³⁹

The effects of the Great Depression began to surface in Washoe County in 1932. The county physician, in his annual report, observed:

The industrial depression has largely added to our indigent population, both in Reno and at the county hospital We are always filled to over capacity. We need a new hospital or hospital expansion.⁴⁴⁰

At a cost of \$93,165, a construction contract was awarded in March 1932 for the first unit of a new county hospital, a three story brick building with trimmings of ornamental cast stone.⁴⁴¹

The question of title to the site of the old library at Mill and Virginia Streets in Reno continued to plague the community. On June 9, 1932, Myron C. Lake, Jr., a California resident, filed suit against Washoe County and the City of Reno in the federal court seeking title to the land and valuing it at \$100,000. Lake alleged that the land should revert to him because the conditions under which the property was given to the city had not been fulfilled.⁴⁴²

On July 5, 1932, the board of county commissioners ordered a 10-percent salary reduction for county employees, retroactive to July 1.⁴⁴³ This action was followed by recommendations of the grand jury that:

1. All county departments be placed under the direct supervision of the county commissioners and that in the future department heads consult the commissioners before adding employees to their departments;
2. No married women be employed in county offices if their husbands were able to work; and
3. The county should employ people for their ability to work and not as a means of dispensing charity.

The grand jury also found that health conditions of Reno, Sparks and Washoe County were so interwoven that they could not be separated and "an efficient county health organization" should be created.⁴⁴⁴

Recognizing the ongoing economic depression, the county commissioners cut the tax rate 11 cents, resulting in a property tax of \$1.20 per \$100 of assessed valuation.⁴⁴⁵ A bid of \$337,088 was submitted for construction of the new post office building, the contract, which was signed October 13, 1932, calling for construction at a cost of \$363,660.⁴⁴⁶

The stark reality of the depression struck home on November 1, 1932, when the banks closed, with an ultimate loss to Washoe County of \$77,601.84.⁴⁴⁷

The 1933 legislature mandated that the county commissioners divide Washoe County into two county commissioner districts: One district was to contain Reno, Verdi and a portion of the county south of Reno to be represented by two commissioners; the other district was to contain the remaining portion of the county, to be represented by one commissioner.⁴⁴⁸ When the new board of county commissioners met on January 5, 1933, sharp curtailment of all county expenses was discussed and the commissioners were expected to name a county purchasing agent.⁴⁴⁹ However, six days later, after being faced with protests by one or two county officials and persons who sold supplies to the county, the commissioners abandoned their plan.⁴⁵⁰ Saving the county an estimated \$500 per month, ten deputies in the county clerk's office were placed on an alternating work week basis whereby they worked one week and not the next.⁴⁵¹ And anticipating that the county's general fund would be "broke" in 60 days, the county commissioners recommended to all county department heads and the hospital trustees that they voluntarily take steps to reduce their budgets for 1933 by 20 percent to help combat the depleted condition of the county treasury. The commissioners voluntarily reduced their own salaries from \$100 to \$80 a month.⁴⁵²

In February 1933, the grand jury found "that there is too much abuse of the use of county cars and equipment for private use," and charged that the sheriff could not be depended upon for the proper collection of gambling licenses. Apparently, 57 gambling games were operating in the county without licenses, resulting in a quarterly loss to the county of \$1,600. The grand jury recommended that the county license board appoint a license inspector.⁴⁵³ Upon an analysis of the county's financial problems, it was revealed that the shortage of cash had been brought

about not only by the bank failures but by a heavy drop in license fees and other fees, which would necessitate an immediate curtailment of expenditures.⁴⁵⁴ On February 7, 1933, the county commissioners decreased the salaries of all county employees by 20 percent; and elected officers voluntarily reduced their salaries and the salaries of their deputies by 10 percent.⁴⁵⁵

In March 1933 work was started on a 5.5-mile stretch of highway from Reno to Huffaker's at a cost of \$94,000. The project was to replace the highway which was "only 18 feet wide and decidedly bumpy" with a 21-foot pavement of "the asphalt concrete type",⁴⁵⁶ and on June 24, 1933, the Purdy Highway was officially dedicated at impressive ceremonies held on the state line 14 miles north of Reno. The Reno Evening Gazette described the event:

Hundreds of Nevada and California residents stood in a sagebrush flat under a hot sun for more than an hour to witness the event. Many automobiles decked with flags lined both sides of the road and the speaking platform carried Nevada and California state flags. Several airplanes landed on the dry lake in tribute to the dedication. Free beer, served by merchants of Reno, added interest to the affair⁴⁵⁷ and stirring music was played by the Reno municipal band. Governor Balzar spoke and then drove the first car into Nevada over the new highway and the caravan followed into Reno. There was a big parade in Reno on arrival.⁴⁵⁸

An irate taxpayer on August 12, 1933, wrote the Gazette:

There must be something about the county court house and its surroundings that causes the good hard-hearted men we have uniformly elected to the job of county commissioners to lose their equilibrium.

The field is a wide one, but we do not need to go farther than the court house yard for the trees, and not farther than the entrance door and the dome for the bronze. Periodically someone saws the tops of the trees off, and last winter the worthy county commissioners started to remove three trees. Fortunately the sap began to run before the last one was moved.

There is something about the bronze dome and bronze trim to the windows and doors that is like a burr under a shirt. Architects and artistic people spend a good deal of money for the soft inimitable coloring of bronze or copper with certain alloys which the air colors by natural process.

The dome of our beautiful court house is covered with sheet bronze, and all agree that it was beautiful. A few years ago one of our restless county commissioners had it painted white, probably to make it look like tin. This, it is said, resulted from a trip to Carson City where he admired the dome of our capitol. This job was said also to have been done by some itinerant steeplejack. Derision of taxpayers had its effect and the paint was then scraped off. The bronze had just gotten its beautiful rich color again, when some more restless county commissioners proceeded to gild it with some sort of tawdry coloring. Perhaps someone had been down to San Francisco and seen the cheap gilt colored dome of the city hall.

Not satisfied with gilding the dome, now it seems the bug is so strong that they are beginning to polish the trim around the doors and windows, so as to look like brass, or maybe it is preparatory for a job of gilding.

If these jobs were necessary, perhaps the taxpayers, including the several hundred who are delinquent because

they are unable to pay their taxes, would not complain, but they are not only useless, but worse than useless-- and something should not only be said about it, but done about it.

Some of these restless county commissioners are also now considering rebuilding and enlarging the court house, the jail, the sheriff's residence, and possibly other ambitious projects. The tempting bait dangled in our faces is that the United States government will contribute thirty per cent toward the cost. Perhaps we can get along for awhile as we are, at least until this delinquent tax list is cut down to one or two pages in the newspaper.⁴⁵⁹

The pay cuts for elective officers didn't remain in effect for very long. By a two to one vote of the commissioners, effective October 1, 1933, the salaries of all elective officers and deputies were returned to their former levels. But the county clerk's office continued on a half-time basis, and salaries of other county employees were not increased.⁴⁶⁰ About 700 families were on the relief rolls in Washoe County in November 1933, and up to November 3, 1933, 15,000 pounds of salt pork supplied by the Federal Government had been distributed in the county.⁴⁶¹

Anticipating the repeal of the prohibition amendment, the county commissioners on November 17, 1933, at a special meeting fixed the county license fees for the sale of intoxicating liquors at a lower rate than those to be charged in Reno and Sparks. The chairman of the board of county commissioners defended the modest license fees: "Places in small towns like Verdi, Wadsworth or Gerlach, can't afford to pay a high license. High licenses will mean bootlegging and hip pocket peddling, and also will mean that small saloon operators cannot make a living."⁴⁶² Subsequently, the county voiced no objection to women acting as bartenders, although Reno ruled against such employment.⁴⁶³

By the end of 1933 it was reported that 335 men who had been on the county's relief rolls were employed on federal relief projects -- mostly road construction work on the Pyramid Lake road and on county roads near Gerlach, Wadsworth, Verdi and Sparks. The employees were limited to 30 hours a week or total pay per week of \$18. One hundred seventy-five women were employed on other projects.⁴⁶⁴

Completed in March 1934, at a cost of \$140,000 exclusive of furnishings, the "new" Washoe General Hospital contained eight wards and 20 private rooms.⁴⁶⁵ In the same month, the new post office building was completed and occupied,⁴⁶⁶ with dedication by Postmaster General James A. Farley following on July 23, 1934.⁴⁶⁷

In 1935 the Nevada legislature authorized the county commissioners to issue \$500,000 of noninterest-bearing county bonds for the construction of works and improvements for up-stream storage of the waters of the Truckee River system (Boca Dam)⁴⁶⁸ and, after an approving election, to issue \$285,000 of county bonds to repair the existing courthouse, sheriff's office and jail.⁴⁶⁹

The Reno Evening Gazette in January 1935 suggested that the county grand jury investigate the county hospital, which then had 59 employees. According to the board of county commissioners, both the general hospital and the indigent hospital attached to it had been operated in a wasteful and extravagant manner. Declaring that the new board of hospital trustees were converting the hospital into a political institution, 470 physicians were also up in arms.

In March 1935, the grand jury reported that because of the settling of the county jail it was possible to lock only one cell block door,⁴⁷¹ and in another vein urged the board of county commissioners to take steps to reduce the relief rolls of the county and put craftsmen to work on construction projects

"whereby they will legitimately and honestly earn the money received for their work and labor."⁴⁷²

Declaring that "there is too much turmoil in the hospital," and charging that the county hospital had been made a political football, the medical superintendent of Washoe General Hospital resigned in May 1935.⁴⁷³

Under the aegis of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, construction work on an 18-hole county golf course (the present Washoe County golf course) began on May 22, 1935. The site was on the land formerly used as a municipal airport, the Ramelli ranch which had been acquired by the county for \$6,750, and a portion of the old golf club. A seven-acre site was purchased for \$100 for a storage reservoir for the golf course water system. By September 25, 1935, 200 men were working on the project, which required the digging of 10 miles of trenches for the irrigation system and construction of an earth-filled dam. All of the land, valued at about \$150,000, was donated by Washoe County, cost of the materials was shared by the county and the F.E.R.A., and the federal agency furnished all the labor Reno contributed \$3,000.⁴⁷⁴

Speeding on the county road between Reno and Sparks (later part of U S. Highway 40) caused one citizen and taxpayer to complain in October 1935:

It should be possible to stop the terrific speeding that is being practiced on the county road between Reno and Sparks. Since the new boulevard was built between the two cities it has been turned into a veritable speedway. It is almost impossible to turn into one of the business places or homes or the residents there to visit their mailboxes without serious danger. More accidents and deaths will result if it is not stopped, for it is a thickly settled territory and requires cautious driving.⁴⁷⁵

As authorized by the 1935 legislature, the board of county commissioners called a special election on December 7, 1935, to determine whether the county should issue \$285,000 of courthouse improvement bonds, but the bond question failed to pass. Property owners voted 1,236 to 842 against the question, nonproperty owners voted in favor of issuing the bonds, 569 to 398.⁴⁷⁶ Continuing to attempt to effect economy in county government, the commissioners in December 1935 abolished the office of county road inspector and county health officer, a combined job created in January 1935. This reduction in force saved the county \$112.50 a month plus a \$15 monthly vehicle allowance.⁴⁷⁷

At a special election held April 7, 1936, voters of the Washoe County Irrigation District and the Newlands Project ratified the Truckee River Agreement,⁴⁷⁸ which approved the construction of the Boca Dam to store 40,000 acre-feet of water and obligated Washoe County taxpayers to pay construction costs of \$500,000 over a 40-year period.⁴⁷⁹

The county commissioners, anticipating completion of the new golf course, employed a golf course manager in May 1936 at a monthly salary of \$150.⁴⁸⁰ The county also took an option from E. L. Hall on 38 acres as an intended site for a recreation park and lake. Upon exercising the option, the county was to pay \$7,000, with an additional \$2,000 subscribed by adjacent landowners and Reno merchants. The lake, now named Virginia Lake, was to be created by the damming of the Cochrane Ditch and was expected to cover 28 acres. In September 1936, the county exercised the option, with park development to be a Works Progress Administration project.⁴⁸¹

Deciding that an enlarged public airport was required, the board of county commissioners in September 1936 signed an agreement with United Air Lines by which the county and the airline were each to pay \$18,000 toward the purchase of 250 acres.

The airline was to deed the airfield to the county, and the Works Progress Administration was responsible for the improvements. Upon its promise to maintain the field, United Air Lines was to be granted a nonexclusive use of the airport for 25 years without payment of rent. In November 1936, the county commissioners and the airline abandoned plans for airfield enlargement, but United Air Lines subsequently purchased 260 acres and began work to enlarge the field. And condemnation suits which had been instituted by the county were dismissed.⁴⁸²

On October 11, 1936, nine temporary holes of the new golf course were opened for play with approximately 100 golfers participating.⁴⁸³ The next day, a contract was signed for construction, at a cost of \$30,898, of the third wing on the Washoe General Hospital.⁴⁸⁴ Describing as excessive the costs charged for indigents' care at the county hospital (\$1 a day per patient), the county commissioners suggested the enactment of legislation at the forthcoming 1937 session to give the board some measure of control over the actions of the hospital trustees.⁴⁸⁵ In 1937 control of the county hospital was placed in the hands of a hospital board, the commissioners levying taxes only and the hospital trustees taking complete charge of the care of all indigent persons, a drug dispensary was installed, and it was admitted that divided responsibility for administration had caused previous friction.⁴⁸⁶

Agitation to bar women from wearing shorts on the new golf course caused some public discussion in July 1937, but the commissioners decided to "skip the question."⁴⁸⁷ August 1937 saw the commissioners award a contract for construction of a county garage on the county hospital grounds at a cost of \$23,803, and decide that the garage at the rear of the courthouse was to be used to store county records.⁴⁸⁸ At that time, county buildings and their contents were valued at \$1,015,000.⁴⁸⁹ A contract for a 24-room addition to the county hospital was awarded at a cost of \$51,111.⁴⁹⁰ Having been reconstructed and enlarged

with three asphalt-covered runways at a cost of \$415,000,⁴⁹¹ the United Air Lines airport occupied 509 acres.

Dedication ceremonies were held on September 10 and 11, 1937, in commemoration of the completion of the new airfield and three new bridges over the Truckee River in Reno -- the Wells Avenue bridge and the Lake and Sierra Street bridges.⁴⁹²

In October 1937 the county physician had the temerity to ask the commissioners for an assistant, reporting that in September 1937 he had treated 1,001 county patients in their homes or at the county hospital; but the commissioners took no action on his request.⁴⁹³ Apparently, no taxpayer raised the question of the legality of expenditure of public funds when the board (1) voted a retired gardener \$10 a month to feed more than 1,000 destitute quail, the county supplying the grain;⁴⁹⁴ and (2) donated \$125 for lumber to complete the ski jump at Galena when promised that the "Galena course will be one of the finest in the west."⁴⁹⁵ Much to the surprise of county officials, the Federal Bureau of Prisons in 1937 ranked the Washoe County jail as among the best 25 percent of city and county jails in the United States.⁴⁹⁶

In 1938 complaints surfaced concerning the operation of the county golf course, a group of patrons claiming that the course was not being cared for properly, that they should have a controlling voice in management of the course, and that caddies should be allowed in the main clubhouse. To avoid further discussion, the county commissioners proved that the course was still in the hands of the Works Progress Administration.⁴⁹⁷

The commissioners in 1939 publicly took on the Washoe County legislative delegation, ordering the closing, effective March 1, 1939, of the Washoe County golf course, the Virginia Lake park and the Galena Creek recreation center, while accusing the legislative delegation of refusing to recommend park and recreation legislation. The delegation had asserted that the commissioners

had operated the golf course and parks without legislative authority, and the board countered that its actions had been taken to relieve unemployment. A week later, agreement was reached by legislators and commissioners concerning the contents of bills authorizing certain golf course and park projects.⁴⁹⁸

During March 1939 the daily average of indigents in the county hospital was 116, and in April 1939 the board of hospital trustees gave notice to the county commissioners that the county indigent hospital and home would be closed because the indigent fund was depleted. The Reno Evening Gazette urged a grand jury investigation in May 1939:

For no very long period of time have the hospital trustees and the county commissioners enjoyed harmonious relations since the general hospital plan was placed in operation about 10 years ago. The commissioners say the management of the hospital has disregarded sound business principles in conducting its affairs and has permitted the general hospital to create large deficits which are made up in part by taking money from the indigent hospital fund.⁴⁹⁹

The 1940's

By 1940, 32,476 people inhabited Washoe County Reno residents numbered 21,317, while Sparks and the unincorporated area each had about equal numbers--5,318 in Sparks and 5,841 in the unincorporated area.

In January 1940 it was revealed that the county commissioners had expended \$39,185 for construction of the new golf course reservoir.⁵⁰⁰ Two tennis courts were to be constructed at the golf course with the assistance of the Works Projects Administration, which was to provide the labor, and materials were to be furnished by the county.⁵⁰¹

World War II imposed a low key on county politics and projects. But with the termination of the war, the Nevada legislature began to play catch-up in an attempt to provide for many county projects deferred because of war shortages. In 1945 the legislature directed the county commissioners to appoint a county engineer⁵⁰² and authorized the creation of and expenditure from certain building funds derived from surpluses accumulated during the war.⁵⁰³ Also the county commissioners were authorized in 1945 to issue \$750,000 of county bonds for an addition and improvements to the county hospital.⁵⁰⁴

The efforts of the county commissioners did not go unrewarded, for in 1949 their salaries were increased by the legislature to \$200 a month.⁵⁰⁵

The 1950's

The results of the decennial census of 1950 showed a record population growth for Washoe County (32,497 people constituted Reno's population, 8,208 individuals resided in Sparks, and 9,500 persons were located in the unincorporated area) totaling 50,205. Long plagued by the problem of what to do with the state fairgrounds and its dilapidated horse barns, the 1951 legislature directed the state board of agriculture, acting for the state agricultural society, to execute a 50-year lease with Washoe County.⁵⁰⁶ And on November 4, 1952, at a special county election, \$250,000 of county bonds were authorized to be issued for the enlargement and repair of the county hospital, now designated the Washoe Medical Center.⁵⁰⁷

In 1953, authorization was given by the legislature for the county commissioners to contract with the United States and its agencies for the removal of the reefs in the bed of the Truckee River,⁵⁰⁸ and the commissioners employed an attorney to revise and compile the county ordinances, a job never before undertaken.⁵⁰⁹ The commissioners loaned the bronze doors of the

front entrance of the courthouse in September 1953 to the Nevada Historical Society.⁵¹⁰ And the U.S.S. Washoe County was launched in July 1953.⁵¹¹

In answer to heavy demand, the 1956 legislature authorized the county commissioners to issue \$100,000 of county bonds for additional facilities at the Washoe Medical Center.⁵¹² Mrs. Henry Ritter received the final payment of \$7,800 on July 20, 1956, from the county for the purchase of Bowers Mansion, which is today a county park.⁵¹³ In 1956, after successfully demonstrating the need for a county juvenile detention home, the League of Women Voters caused the county commissioners to finance a study in conjunction with the City of Reno,⁵¹⁴ and in the same year the commissioners ordered the district attorney to make a complete study of county management.⁵¹⁵

The county commissioners were authorized by the 1957 legislature to issue after an approving election: (a) \$2,000,000 of county bonds to construct and improve the courthouse or the county jail or both;⁵¹⁶ and (b) \$200,000 of county bonds for erection of and furnishing a juvenile detention home.⁵¹⁷

After adoption on June 5, 1957, of a resolution establishing the position of county manager,⁵¹⁸ the board on August 30, 1957, appointed Washoe County's first county manager.⁵¹⁹ A board resolution adopted September 20, 1957, established his administrative functions.⁵²⁰

The 1959 legislature authorized the county commissioners to issue \$150,000 of county bonds to pay for enlargement of the Washoe Medical Center, providing federal money was made available for the project.⁵²¹ And when the 1957 juvenile detention facility construction bonds proved to be insufficient in amount, the 1959 legislature, concluding that the additional authorized amount would not be so great as to require a resubmission of the question to the qualified electors, authorized the county commissioners to issue without an election \$275,000 of additional county bonds for completion of the project.⁵²²

The Washoe County fair and recreation board was created in 1959.⁵²³ A construction contract for a 13,100-square-foot county health and welfare building at Kirman and Second Streets, Reno, was awarded on April 6, 1959, at a cost of \$226,918.⁵²⁴ On April 27, 1959, the county manager was placed in charge of all county departments administered by department heads appointed by the county commissioners.⁵²⁵ Pursuant to NRS 439.570, a county health district and district board of health were created on June 5, 1959,⁵²⁶ and by a vote of 82 to 3 the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District was organized on September 5, 1959.⁵²⁷ Finally, after years of argument, pleas and criticism, a new county jail construction contract was awarded November 10, 1959. At a cost of \$1,029,575, the new jail was to be erected at the corner of South Sierra and Court Streets in Reno.⁵²⁸

The 1960's

The population of Washoe County more than doubled in the decade between 1950 and 1960--from 32,497 to 84,743--with Sparks experiencing a dramatic growth of more than 100 percent, from 8,208 in 1950 to 16,618 in 1960, and the unincorporated area increasing from 9,500 in 1950 to 16,655 in 1960. The 1960 legislature authorized the county commissioners to issue \$2,000,000 of county bonds, \$1,500,000 of which had been previously authorized by an election in 1957, to improve and construct a county jail (\$1,400,000) and courthouse (\$600,000).⁵²⁹ After the county had been administered by a three-man board of county commissioners for 99 years, the legislature in 1960 increased the number of Washoe County commissioners from three to five. In February 1960 the board awarded a construction contract for a juvenile detention facility, now called Wittenberg Hall, in Reno, containing 12,800 square feet and costing \$273,648.⁵³⁰

Minutes of meetings of the county commissioners for 1961 indicate the problems of the board in approving routes for the

interstate highway system, creation of a county fire department and the selection of a convention hall site. The Incline Village General Improvement District was created effective May 31, 1961,⁵³¹ and on August 8, 1961, the county commissioners adopted a resolution creating a public works commission of 11 members to study and prepare a long-range program for the building, planning and development of public buildings and to make recommendations for the care, preservation and remodeling of those already existing.⁵³²

By proclamation the county commissioners ordered that November 25, 1961, be set aside by the citizens of Washoe County as a day of observance of the centennial of the county, and further ordered that "due and appropriate ceremonies" be conducted at Washoe City, where a suitable monument was to be erected containing a time capsule enclosing items of historical interest.⁵³³

The county park system was expanded in November 1961, with acceptance by the county commissioners of an offer from the then state highway department to grant to the county Crystal Peak Park (also known as Verdi Glen Park) in Verdi.⁵³⁴

In April 1962 the Fleischmann Foundation of Nevada offered Washoe County \$1,000,000 for the construction of a new public library building, provided that the county or the City of Reno make available a site for the building. The sum of \$200,000 was also offered to cover operating expenses for a limited period. The commissioners accepted the offer.⁵³⁵

Claiming that nothing had been done about golf balls landing on his property from the 11th tee of the Washoe County golf course, the owner complained to the commissioners in May 1962.⁵³⁶ Gerlach experienced a plague of mosquitoes in July 1962, and the commissioners ordered the county "smoke blowing machine" to be taken to Gerlach for use in an experimental demonstration against the insects.⁵³⁷ In the fall of 1962, a \$35,000 shop building contract was awarded for construction at Incline Village.⁵³⁸

On January 19, 1963, the county commissioners accepted a bid of \$1,899,100 for construction of an addition to the courthouse, conditioned on the 1963 legislature's authorizing the board to issue \$1,000,000 of county bonds.⁵³⁹ The legislature responded favorably, allowing the issuance of \$1,250,000 of bonds, without an election, to pay for enlargement of the courthouse for \$1,000,000 and construction of a branch county library in Sparks for \$250,000.⁵⁴⁰ In addition, legislative approval was given for Washoe County to issue \$1,000,000 of county bonds without an election for acquisition of public parks, playgrounds and other recreational facilities.⁵⁴¹ A 2,880-square-foot sheriff's office at Incline Village and the 68,450-square-foot addition to the courthouse were built in 1963.

The years 1964 to 1967 saw a continued flurry of public works projects in Washoe County. The Sparks branch library, containing 14,200 square feet at a cost of \$226,000, was completed in 1964; in 1965 a new Federal Building on Booth Street in Reno was occupied;⁵⁴² county road department improvements in 1966 included a new shop (\$218,000) of 14,900 square feet in the Boynton Lane complex and a 1,056-square-foot caretaker's residence and garage costing \$16,000 located in the same complex; a \$51,588 construction contract for a clubhouse at the Stead Golf Course (now Sierra Sage Golf Course) was awarded September 25, 1967;⁵⁴³ and on July 17, 1967, contracts for improving Davis Creek Park (\$165,454.41) and restoring Bowers Mansion (\$87,455) were awarded.⁵⁴⁴

On June 5, 1967, county bonds totaling \$6,750,000 were sold for the purposes of improving the Washoe Medical Center at a cost of \$5,000,000 and acquiring and improving county parks for not to exceed \$1,750,000.⁵⁴⁵ Pursuant to authorizing statute, the county public works department was created on June 15, 1967, bringing together under the direction of a director of public works several county support departments, including building inspection and the county engineer.⁵⁴⁶ The county commissioners

gave permission for the Nevada Historical Society to install the bronze doors from the courthouse (loaned to the society in 1953) in the new society building erected on the campus of the University of Nevada in Reno.⁵⁴⁷

Public works construction continued at a rapid pace in 1968: A caretaker's residence and a concession stand at Bowers Mansion Park were authorized at a cost of \$27,929;⁵⁴⁸ a 5,700 square-foot concrete block and prefabricated metal storage building at the county corporation yard at a cost of \$45,211 was begun;⁵⁴⁹ and courthouse overcrowding was to be relieved by the award of a \$680,845 construction contract for a county administration building.⁵⁵⁰ Construction of a \$325,362 livestock pavilion, barns and restrooms at the fairgrounds was authorized on August 26, 1968;⁵⁵¹ a new 7,083-square-foot clubhouse at the Washoe County golf course was begun at a cost of \$133,779;⁵⁵² and at the general election held November 5, 1968, \$675,000 of county bonds were approved by the voters for an addition to Wittenberg Hall, the juvenile detention facility.⁵⁵³

On June 16, 1969, the first county public defender was appointed.⁵⁵⁴ In compliance with an order of the county commissioners which declared that July 21, 1969, should be observed as a day of participation honoring the United States astronauts for their anticipated landing on the moon, all county offices were closed on that day.⁵⁵⁵ The first county comptroller was appointed by the county commissioners in August 1969;⁵⁵⁶ the county road department became a division of the public works department in September 1969;⁵⁵⁷ and on October 6, 1969, a contract for \$78,496 was awarded for the construction of a data processing center (now management information services) in the basement of the new administration building.⁵⁵⁸

The 1970's

By 1970, Washoe County's population had increased to 121,068--72,863 lived in Reno, 24,187 in Sparks and 24,018 in the unincorporated area. In that year, the county commissioners constructed in Gerlach, at a cost of \$13,330, a new jail and justice's court of 590 square feet;⁵⁵⁹ Wittenberg Hall was expanded by 13,600 square feet at an expense of \$588,927;⁵⁶⁰ the Sierra Sage golf course was expanded for an outlay of \$261,683;⁵⁶¹ and a construction contract in the amount of \$457,400 was awarded for the establishment of a recreation area at Warrior Point, Pyramid Lake.⁵⁶²

Having spent in excess of \$725,066 on improvements at the fairgrounds since 1958, the county commissioners, to protect their investment, induced the Nevada legislature in 1971 to extend the term of the fairgrounds lease to March 2050.⁵⁶³ And a county special election was called for June 8, 1971, the county commissioners seeking voter approval to issue bonds for a courthouse addition (\$3,500,000), an extension of the Sparks library (\$200,000) and construction of an Incline Village branch library (\$500,000); but the voters refused to authorize the bonds.⁵⁶⁴ Articles organizing a council of governments were adopted by the county commissioners and councilmen of the Cities of Reno and Sparks in August 1971.⁵⁶⁵

On February 10, 1972, the need for suburban fire protection in the populated area of the county was answered by the creation of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District,⁵⁶⁶ and the design of a complete system for inventory control for fixed assets was instituted in the same month.⁵⁶⁷

In June 1972, the Washoe County Sheriff's Department Employees Association became the first employees' association to be recognized by the county commissioners.⁵⁶⁸ A county management analyst was appointed on October 5, 1972.⁵⁶⁹ As a result of

pressure applied by the Environmental Protection Agency, the Crystal Bay General Improvement District at Lake Tahoe was created in November 1972, and on the same day an interlocal agreement was executed among Washoe County, Reno and Sparks for the operation of the district health department.⁵⁷⁰

The Stead branch library was opened in April 1973,⁵⁷¹ and in the same month consultants were employed to conduct an office space study.⁵⁷² A central receiving and disbursing system was instituted for the county⁵⁷³ and a merit personnel system adopted in 1973;⁵⁷⁴ and a female animal control officer,⁵⁷⁵ a registrar of voters,⁵⁷⁶ and a second justice of the peace for Reno Township were appointed.⁵⁷⁷

In 1974 a procedure was instituted for the conduct of sales of tax-delinquent real property held in trust by the county treasurer.⁵⁷⁸ And the board of county commissioners were pleased to receive the results of the independent audit in January 1974. The auditors, reporting for the fiscal year 1972-1973, remarked:

* * * expenditures were held under budget in all major funds, primarily as a result of improved controls over the hiring of personnel and the acquisition of capital assets. * * * Notable progress in county personnel administration and accounting had been made over the year, which was better than had been anticipated.⁵⁷⁹

A construction contract was awarded in April 1974 for the extension of Mayberry Drive and a bridge across the Truckee River at a cost of \$1,459,750.⁵⁸⁰ Living up to its quixotic reputation, Fate, in the early hours of a day in May 1974, caused an intoxicated truck driver hauling a load of fresh strawberries to strike an abutment of the old Mayberry Bridge, resulting in its collapse and destruction.⁵⁸¹

On May 10, 1974, the Gerlach General Improvement District was created;⁵⁸² the county commissioners were ordered by the Nevada Tax Commission on May 28, 1974, to respond before July 1, 1974, with a plan designed and intended to achieve an assessment

ratio of 35 percent of full cash value with respect to the taxation of property;⁵⁸³ and in June 1974 the county commissioners established procedures for the accounting and control of fixed assets of the county through the use of a property control system and created a county purchasing department and a district court administrator.⁵⁸⁴

As a partial answer to the demand of the Nevada Tax Commission for a plan for the equalization of assessments, Washoe County and the Cities of Reno and Sparks in January 1975 signed a contract with consultants for the development, operation and maintenance of a computer-assisted appraisal system.⁵⁸⁵ In support of the system, the 1975 legislature appropriated \$106,000 to be applied over a two-year period.⁵⁸⁶

At the same time, the county commissioners directed the county manager to make the proposed county building complex the county's number one priority for 1975;⁵⁸⁷ and master planning for a complex at the fairgrounds in Reno began on March 5, 1975.⁵⁸⁸ Having received an allocation of \$600,000 of federal money for the construction of a county public health center, the county commissioners borrowed \$600,000 by short-term financing to begin construction on the fairgrounds site.⁵⁸⁹

Pursuant to authorizing state statute, the county commissioners created the office of county coroner on July 7, 1975.⁵⁹⁰

With the approval of the Nevada Tax Commission, the county commissioners on March 25, 1976, sought a short-term loan of \$1,650,510 to finance the construction of the welfare, heating and finance center buildings on the fairgrounds site as well as clubhouse remodeling and expansion at the Washoe County and Sierra Sage golf courses.⁵⁹¹ In June 1976 the county issued its first economic revenue bonds for \$10,000,000 to finance water facilities to be used by the Sierra Pacific Power Company in the furnishing of water available on reasonable demand to

members of the general public.⁵⁹² A contract for the construction of the health, welfare and central heating buildings on the fairgrounds site was awarded on August 16, 1976, for \$2,074,156;⁵⁹³ and in September 1976 county voters approved the issuance of \$1,500,000 of county bonds for the construction of a senior citizens service center at the fairgrounds.⁵⁹⁴

In 1977 an unofficial census indicated that the population of the county had more than doubled since 1960!⁵⁹⁵ The 1977 legislature created the Washoe County Airport Authority to operate the regional airports⁵⁹⁶ and authorized the use of 13.5 acres of the fairgrounds in Reno as a Washoe County building complex site.⁵⁹⁷ The Washoe County golf course clubhouse and parking lot were expanded in January 1977 at a cost of \$117,524.⁵⁹⁸ And evident need for construction of a branch public library at Incline Village led the county commissioners to purchase land and accept an adjoining parcel from Boise Cascade Home and Land Corporation as a library building site.⁵⁹⁹

Concerned that the Washoe County jail and the Reno city jail were in need of both immediate and long-term expansion, the grand jury reported on May 11, 1977, that currently both the county jail and the Reno city jail were often overcrowded,⁶⁰⁰ and recommended that:

1. In consideration of the rapid rate of growth which the community was experiencing, planning for expansion of these facilities should be begun immediately;

2. Consideration be given to moving the Washoe County jail to enlarged facilities outside of the Washoe County courthouse; and

3. Consideration be given to the consolidation of all jails within the county into a new central jail facility.

During the last three months of 1977, the county commissioners awarded a \$1,616,300 construction contract for the senior citizens service center,⁶⁰¹ instituted a formal risk management

program,⁶⁰² executed an agreement with the Bureau of Land Management for establishment of a sanitary disposal site near Gerlach,⁶⁰³ and awarded a construction contract for a finance center at the county building complex in the amount of \$2,834,365.⁶⁰⁴ By 1978, the county's road division in the department of public works was repairing and maintaining 2,320 lane miles of roadway.

The 1980's and the Future

In 1980, at the time of the last decennial census, Washoe County's population had increased to 193,623. Reno approached 100,000, Sparks counted 40,780, and the unincorporated area totaled 53,142. The growing areas of Sun Valley,⁶⁰⁵ Lemmon Valley,⁶⁰⁶ Palomino Valley,⁶⁰⁷ Spanish Spring Valley,⁶⁰⁸ Cold Springs,⁶⁰⁹ Mogul,⁶¹⁰ and Verdi⁶¹¹ now present a multitude of problems for the county commissioners. Creation of general improvement districts is an answer, in part, to the provision and management of water, sanitation and transportation.

Two district judges were added in 1982, bringing the total in Washoe County to nine judges. The 1981 legislature imposed spending limitations upon the county commissioners, thus deferring the completion of the county building complex and other capital improvements; the justices' courts were made courts of record; and the oft-repeated suggestions of the grand jury relative to construction of a new county jail are being considered again, after the voters defeated the question at a 1980 election.

"Healthy growth" in terms of employment, population and income is predicted for Washoe County for the next decade. One forecast predicts that the population will rise to 323,000 in 1990.⁶¹² Grand juries will continue to comment upon the inadequacies of local government; newspapers will undoubtedly

continue to taunt and abuse local officials, while the citizens will continue to question the honesty and ethical standards of local political officers. Nonetheless, Washoe County and its counterparts will continue to be viable units of government wherein the citizens have direct contact and communication with their county commissioners, and despite the fact that "politics is perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is thought necessary."

Russell W McDonald

May 1982

F O O T N O T E S

Symbols in Notes: To shorten citations in the Notes, the surnames of authors have been used to identify bibliographical entries containing full titles of books and texts cited, and the following symbols have been used to identify some other publications and documents:

- BCC.Minutes of the Washoe County Board of
County
Commissioners
- C.J.S.Corpus Juris Secundum
- CMA.Carson Morning Appeal
- CTCarson Tribune
- DNDeseret News
- EDS.Eureka Daily Sentinel
- ESEastern Slope
- EUEsmeralda Union
- GHN.Cold Hill News
- HR.Humboldt Register
- MDA.Marysville Daily Appeal
- NRS.Nevada Revised Statutes
- NSJ.Nevada State Journal
- RCReno Crescent
- REG.Reno Evening Gazette
- RRR.Reese River Reveille
- SDSparks Dispatch
- TETerritorial Enterprise
- WTWashoe Times

1. DeGroot, p. 5.
2. Elliott indicates a range for the Northern Paiutes which included most of Nevada west of 117°30' west longitude. Elliott, p. 26.
3. "The aboriginal Washo territory extended from Honey Lake to Sonora Pass, the western boundary following the crest of the Sierra while the eastern boundary ran from Sonora Pass north along the crest of the Pine Nut Mountains, passing west of Virginia City, then north to a few miles east of Reno, and then northwest to Honey Lake." Elliott, p. 26.
Carlson explains that the tribal name Washo, from "Washiu" or "Wasiu," means "person." Ratay states that there are several meanings given to the word -- "tall bunchgrass," "rye grass" and "to work." Carlson, p. 2; Ratay, pp. 7, 12.
4. William S Williams, known as "Bill" or "Old Bill" to his contemporaries, a tall, gaunt, red-haired mountain man and guide, was born in 1787, grew up in Missouri and was an itinerant Baptist minister before becoming a trapper and trader. In 1843 Williams swung through the West from Bent's Fort to the Columbia River and back to Santa Fe. He served as a guide in John C. Fremont's third and fourth expeditions. Williams was killed by Indians in 1849. Lamar, p. 1273; Elliott, p. 40.
5. Elliott, p. 40.
6. John Charles Fremont was born in Georgia in 1813. In 1838 he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the United States Corps of Topographical Engineers and subsequently made a virtual circuit of the entire West. Fremont joined the Americans in California in the Bear Flag Rebellion against Mexico in 1846. After court martial, he resigned from the army and led another expedition financed with private sources. In 1850-1851 he served as a United States Senator from California. Named nominee of the Republican Party in 1856, he lost the election for President; was made a major general in the Civil War; was nominated again for the presidency, but withdrew before the election; and retired from public life only to become penniless. In 1878 he was appointed governor of Arizona Territory, resigning in 1881. He died in 1890. Lamar, p. 406 et seq.

7. Pyramid Lake is the largest remnant of ancient Lake Lahontan. Fremont described the lake as "a sheet of green water, some twenty miles broad. It broke upon our eyes like the ocean." Thompson & West, p. 24.
8. In October 1844 the Stevens-Murphy party named the river Truckee for the Piute who had guided them across the Twenty Mile Desert. "Nevada --Guide to the Silver State," American Guide Series (Portland: Binsfords and Mart, 1940), p. 139.
9. In 1845 the trail was rerouted to avoid the difficult Truckee River canyon above the Truckee Meadows. The new trail left the Truckee River near Verdi proceeding west to Truckee's (Donner) Lake via Dog and Stampede Valleys. Hunt, p. 179.
10. Carlson, p. 10.
11. Jesse Applegate (1811-1888) sired 13 children. He and his brothers, Charles and Lindsay, and their families, set out for Oregon in 1843, settling upon arrival near the Dalles, Oregon. In 1846 he explored and opened a difficult but not impossible route from Fort Hall, Idaho, via Nevada and northern California to the Willamette Valley, Oregon. He never was elected to major political office. Lamar, p. 37 et seq.
12. Carlson, p. 11.
13. Hunt, p. 67.
14. Peter Lassen emigrated from Denmark to the United States in 1830. For 10 years he was a blacksmith and merchant in Missouri, departing for California via Oregon in 1840. He built California's first sawmill near Santa Cruz. Returning to Missouri in 1847, Lassen guided an immigrant party to California in 1848. He was killed in April 1859 while prospecting in the Black Rock country, and his remains were removed to Honey Lake. Raymond W. Miller, "'Uncle Pete' Lassen--Pioneer Mason, Prospector and Builder," The New Age, Vol. xxv, No. 4 (April 1977).
15. High Rock Canyon, named for its high rock walls, was utilized by Fremont in 1843, the Applegate brothers in 1846, and Peter Lassen in 1848 Carlson, p. 134.
16. Carlson, p. 11.

17. Report of the Debates in the Convention of California on the Formation of the State Constitution (Washington, D.C.: 1850), p. 170.
18. Ibid., p. 186.
19. By 1861 Junction House was a busy crossroads --the eastern terminus of the Henness Pass road and the Donner turnpike, the southern terminus of the Beckwourth Pass toll road, and the northern terminus for the turnpike to Washoe City. REG, March 27, 1976; Paher, p. 39.
20. Thompson & West, p. 39.
21. Discovered by William Nobles, the road left the Lassen route at Black Rock and went west into the Honey Lake area Carlson, p. 11. Hunt states that "the original Nobles' Trail followed the Applegate-Lassen Route to the Great Boiling Springs at Black Rock Point. It then cut westward across a finger of the Black Rock Desert and dropped south along the eastern base of the Granite Range to water and grass at Granite Springs. From there it proceeded past the Hot Springs at Gerlach (discovered by Fremont in 1844) and rounded the point of the Granite Range to move along the watering places on the western edge of the Smoke Creek Desert * * * and on to Honey Lake Valley and the Susan River at Susanville." Hunt, p. 237.
22. The route was discovered and opened by James P Beckwourth in 1851 and first traveled by emigrants in 1852. After leaving the Truckee Meadows the route ran through Lemmon and Cold Springs Valleys and then northerly along Long Valley Creek to Beckwourth Pass. Hunt, p. 247.

James Pierson Beckwourth, a black mountain man, worked for various Rocky Mountain fur companies, fought in the Seminole War, settled near Pueblo, Colorado, in 1842, ran a saloon in Santa Fe in 1846, and with the discovery of gold was off to California in 1848. Beckwourth formed a company to lay out a wagon road through the mountains from Bidwell's Bar in 1851. For a few years he operated a ranch, trading post and hotel for emigrants at the summit of Beckwourth Pass. He died in 1866 or 1867. Lamar, p. 85 et seq.
23. Paher, p. 37; REG, March 27, 1976.
24. Lord, pp. 16-17.

25. Statutes of California 1852, p. 193. See also Lillard, p. 56; and Charles Kasch, "Klamath County, California," 34 California Historical Society Quarterly, p. 365 et seq.
26. Thompson & West, p. 623.
27. Located on the Big Bend of the Truckee River and on a trail used by the emigrants, Wadsworth, earlier known as Lower Emigrant Crossing, was laid out in 1868 by Central Pacific Railroad officials and named in honor of James Samuel Wadsworth, a Civil War general who was killed in the Battle of the Wilderness in May 1864. The Gold Hill News described Wadsworth in 1869: "The town is dead and gives but little promise of a very healthy resurrection during the present century. There is little or no building going on, the place not half populated and pretty much everybody is shaking temporarily with the ague. The only life ever exhibited in the town is when a train of cars from the East or West stops there, when the most ambitious and energetic men of the town gather along the platform of the depot with their lower jaws hanging down, both hands in their pockets, and there they stand shaking as long as the cars are in sight. Even the dogs look shaky, careworn, broken down and dejected, hardly able to stand up and bark." Despite the pessimism of the Gold Hill News, until 1905 Wadsworth was the most important railroad town in the state and the "second town" of Washoe County. In the 1870's the resources of Wadsworth consisted of railroad expenditures, its freighting business, mining connections, fish trade, stockraising and agricultural products. The railroad company had large and extensive works there, employing over 150 workers and artisans. The population was then estimated at between 600 and 700. The Nevada State Journal reported that there were no lawyers or doctors living there, which accounted "in a great measure for the healthfulness of the climate and peace and quiet which has ever made Wadsworth an exception to the average Nevada town." The town became very lively in 1902 thanks to unwelcome guests. "Virtually every train brought in its complement of hoboes." By 1905 the railroad shops had been moved to Sparks, and "even stores and houses went along on the flat cars." With the town cut off from the main line of the railroad and practically deserted, numerous domestic cats became wild and fearlessly roamed the streets. When the former inhabitants removed to Sparks the cats were left behind. The Nevada State Journal reported that "the droves of former pets were becoming more

- daring and numerous every day." Where once upon a time houses lined the streets all that remained was a row of rusty water pipes, the streams from which were flooding the streets. On all sides there was nothing but desert and desolation one hotel and two saloons managed to do all the business in a town that formerly supported 20 or 30 saloons and a dozen restaurants. Wadsworth managed to survive. Lying adjacent to U.S. Highway I-80, the town today has a justice of the peace, a constable and a small business district. Elliott, p. 113; Carlson, p. 240; GHN, Sept. 1, 1869; REG, Jan. 3, 1880; June 19, 1929; NSJ, July 21, 1875; Feb. 27, 1877; Dec. 20, 1904; March 1, 1905.
28. F M Willis in REG, June 15, 1935.
 29. Thompson & West, pp. 37-38.
 30. Edward C. Ing was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1820. He came to Carson County, Utah Territory, from California, and after mining in Virginia City he and John Owens established a trading post on the Truckee River near Glendale, locating a ranch in the Truckee Meadows. He served as a member of the first Nevada territorial house of representatives in 1861, was one of the organizers of School District No. 6 at Glendale, Washoe County, in 1863, and represented Washoe County in the 1863 constitutional convention. He died prior to 1866 Hummel, p. 5.
 31. Drytown continued to exist and do a healthy freight business with Benton, Ione and Silver Peak until 1880, at which time the Carson and Colorado Railroad captured the freighting and "Drytown naturally dried up and blew into Wadsworth." Hummel, p. 17.
 32. Crystal Peak, located at the foot of Dog Valley grade on the big flat three miles above Verdi, allegedly took its name from the two peaks visible from the top of the grade in California or from a mountain lying west of the site containing crystallized gold quartz. The Crystal Peak company, which owned lumber and mining interests 10 or 15 miles west, laid out a town in 1864. Coal of poor quality was found in Dog Valley in 1864, and considerable development work was done in the few subsequent years before the mines were abandoned. On July 1, 1864, the Gold Hill News reported there were 45 to 50 houses in the town, three hotels and five saloons, and building was rapidly progressing. The Eastern Slope in 1866 described Crystal Peak as

"a quiet town in itself, and although pleasantly situated, and the surrounding scenery almost magnificent, it would present a very 'Sleepy Hollow' sort of appearance were it not for the immense travel that passes over this great thoroughfare to and from California, and from which the people here derive a moderate pecuniary benefit." Travel over both the Henness Pass and Donner Lake roads in the early days passed down the Dog Valley grade through Crystal Peak to the bridge north of Verdi and then on to the Truckee Meadows. Early in 1868 Crystal Peak was the scene of a busy term of prosperity, which with the passing of the Central Pacific Railroad on to the east was to be brought to a close. The town had then for about two years been an extensive depot for the furnishing of supplies and timber necessary for the railroad's construction. "Hopes had been sanguine that the line of the road would, out of deference at least to its elderly respectability, pass through its streets. But such was not to be the case. The Central Pacific ran the line a mile southward with the Truckee River between the rails and the town. The doom of Crystal Peak, a town that once contained a population of 1,500 inhabitants, was sealed by the railroad. The whiskey business held out to the last, Crystal Peak supporting two saloons and a brewery in 1875. But the town disappeared rapidly due to the double process of dismantling and decay, leaving only an old cemetery and a few rock foundations." Thompson & West, pp. 641-642; Carlson, p. 91; ES, July 21, 1866; NSJ, June 4, 1873; Jan. 21, 1875; REG, Sept. 2, 1916; Nov. 16, 1931.

33. Verdi, sometimes called the descendant of and successor to Crystal Peak, lies about 10 miles west of Reno on the Truckee River. Originally designated as O'Neil's Crossing, it was the site of one of the traversal points on the river for travel to the Comstock Later named Verdi by railroad officials for Guiseppe Verdi, the Italian operatic composer (although incorrectly pronounced Vur'dī instead of Ver'dē) when the Central Pacific Railroad line reached the area in 1868, the town became an ice storage and busy lumbering center for the primary purpose of supplying ties to the railroad. What is alleged to be the first train robbery in the West occurred near Verdi in 1873, then described by the Nevada State Journal as "quite a centre for the wood and timber trade and quite a manufacturing point. The present population is probably in the neighborhood of 200 persons." Formed in 1900, the Verdi Lumber Company became Verdi's chief resource and mainstay --a "lumberman's

- paradise" by 1902. The company's timber supply came from Dog Valley and timber reserves were estimated to last 15 years. The mill had the capacity of producing 120,000 board feet in 24 hours, employed 25 men on a shift and operated eight months of the year. Verdi's zenith was reached in 1910 despite devastating fires in 1902 and 1903. The year of the "big fire" was 1916, when 42 houses burned. In 1926 the sawmill, storage yard and round house went up in flames. Verdi slumbered on, and today enjoys limited industrial activity, a justice of the peace and constable, a vigorous and active volunteer fire department, modern education facilities and a modest growth of population restrained by limited domestic water and sewer facilities. Thompson & West, pp. 647-648; Carlson, p. 238; NSJ, June 4, 1873; REG, Feb. 29, 1904.
34. Orson Hyde was born in Connecticut in 1805. Baptized a Mormon in 1831, he was confirmed under the hands of Joseph Smith, the Prophet. In 1835 he was chosen one of the Twelve Apostles. He went on several missions for the church -- to England in 1837 and to Jerusalem in 1840. From 1846 to 1847 he was in charge of the Millennial Star, then returned to the United States where he published the Frontier Guardian in Kaneshville (now Council Bluffs), Iowa. He moved to Utah in 1853, was in charge of Fort Supply in the Green River country in present Wyoming, and in 1855 led several missionaries to Carson Valley. Here he organized Carson County and acted as probate judge. He returned to Utah, where for many years he was a member of the territorial legislature. Hyde died in Spring City, Utah, November 28, 1878.
35. Thompson & West, p. 623. Mrs. Cowan divorced Cowan and married Lemuel Sanford ("Sandy") Bowers. They built the Bowers Mansion near Washoe Lake in 1864. Now restored, the mansion and its adjacent grounds are a county park. Carlson, p. 57.
36. Pleasant Valley, now proposed as the site for a large luxury recreational resort, is a small valley located southwest of Steamboat Valley. See Carlson, pp. 192, 219.
37. Isaac Newton Roop, born in Maryland in March 1822, came to California in October 1850. Subsequently he engaged in farming and trading in Shasta County and ran the Old Dominion, a public house. From 1852 to 1853 he was post master in Shasta, and when fire destroyed his property in

- 1853 he removed to Honey Lake Valley, locating the land upon which Susanville now stands. He was named postmaster of Susanville in 1859, and in the same year was elected provisional governor of the proposed Territory of Nevada. He was a member of the Nevada territorial council in 1861 and was admitted to practice law in Nevada Territory in January 1864. Elected in 1865, he served two terms as district attorney of Lassen County, California. He died in Susanville on February 14, 1869. Roop County, Nevada Territory, was named for him. Shuck, pp. 405-410.
38. William Newell Davis, Jr., "The Territory of Nataqua," 21 California Historical Society Quarterly, p. 225 et seq.
39. There are several explanations as to how Franktown received its name. Ohmert states that "when Franktown was settled there was some debate as to what to call it. A man by the name of Frank Poirier was present at one of these discussions and said, 'oh, name it Franktown after me.' And Franktown it was named and has been thus known ever since." Audrey Winifred Ohmert, "The Significance of the Nomenclature in Washoe County, Nevada," Second Biennial Report of the Nevada Historical Society 1909-1910 (Carson City: 1911), p. 84; Carlson, p. 116; says Franktown was named for Poirier, but Ratay, pp. 120-121, asserts that the settlement was named for Frank Bentley, born August 14, 1856, in honor of his being the first white child born in Washoe Valley.
40. DeGroot, p. 13; Ratay, pp. 120-121. After the discovery of the Comstock a brisk demand for wood and lumber kept Franktown going and the nearby Dall Mill increased both its population and business. By 1862 the Reese River Reveille (October 31, 1862) reported that Franktown then had "many superb frame houses instead of the hewn log structures which formerly constituted the town." Franktown and vicinity in 1864 had about 500 inhabitants, but suffered a relapse when the quartz milling business fell off, and in 1872, on the completion of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, the hamlet became a depot for the shipment of timber. By 1879 it was described as "another one of the 'has-been' camps * * *. A few drowsy looking drones blink their sleepy eyes underneath their slouchy hats and lazily drag their listless limbs through the prodigal street of sand, comprising the only street." EDS, October 10, 1879. A dirt dam was constructed in 1880 to impound the waters of Franktown Creek in the Little Valley reservoir about two and a half miles above Franktown at an elevation of

about 4,000 feet above the town. On February 1, 1881, the dam was expected to break, and the Franktown inhabitants moved out to escape the threatened danger. REG, February 1, 1881. The next day the dam gave way, precipitating the whole volume of the water down upon uninhabited Franktown. The breast of the flood was 25 to 30 feet high when it reached the townsite and left less than half a dozen buildings standing amidst a wide expanse of sand and debris. NSJ, February 3, 1881; REG, February 9, 1881. Following the breaking of the dam, the board of county commissioners petitioned the Nevada legislature for an appropriation of \$5,000 for the relief of those rendered destitute by the breaking of the dam. The legislature magnanimously appropriated \$750. Statutes of Nevada 1881, ch. 30, p. 42. In addition to the property damage caused by the flood, a colony of nearly 100 polecats encamped in the underbrush of the ravine were reduced "to sausage meat in a moment." The odor of the slaughtered animals "came down on the wings of the wind and for several days people could scarcely breathe within a mile of the unfortunate city." CMA, August 26, 1883.

41. Thompson & West, p. 624.
42. Ratay, p. 134.
43. Lord, p. 19.
44. Thompson & West, p. 642; Carlson, p. 120. In 1860 Stone and Gates built at the river crossing a bridge which was destroyed by flood; and in 1862 Washoe County constructed a free bridge on the site. The Glendale Hotel, ultimately a large, two-story frame building with a very spacious bar and billiard room, was erected about 1857 and demolished in 1909. Prior to the erection of the old Lake House (on the site of Reno's present Riverside Hotel), the Glendale Hotel was the only place in the county where accommodations could be had. GHN, November 5, 1867; REG, July 27, 1909. Glendale enjoyed an enviable reputation as a place of resort. Groves of cottonwoods and the quaint seclusion of the place served to attract many Virginia City visitors. It was the literary and social metropolis of the Truckee Meadows during 1866 and 1867, and the home of "Onion Charlie," a successful onion grower. Ultimately, the new town of Reno absorbed Glendale's business and the community vanished from sight. The Glendale school house, now a

museum, was recently moved to Reno and is located adjacent to the Convention Authority buildings on South Virginia Street. REG, March 22, 1877; November 4, 1915; February 21, 1920.

John F Stone, born in Boston or New York, had lived in Alpha, Nevada County, California. He settled in the Truckee Meadows in 1858, moved to Dutch Flat, and died in San Leandro, California, in 1887. His partner, Charles C. Gates, was born in 1830 in Vermont or Massachusetts. In 1867 he filed an action in Reno to dissolve the partnership. Gates died March 17, 1879, from the kick of a horse, and is buried in the Hillside Cemetery, Reno.

45. Hummel, p. 30. In 1861 Fuller built a bridge over the Truckee and was granted a legislative franchise to collect tolls. He sold to M. C. Lake.
46. R L Fulton, "Reminiscences of Nevada," First Biennial Report, Nevada Historical Society 1907-1908 (Carson City: 1909), p. 81.
47. The executive order of President U.S. Grant was not made until 1874. Sessions S Wheeler, The Desert Lake (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1967), p. 74.
48. Thompson & West, p. 625.
49. REG, March 27, 1976.
50. Elliott, pp. 92-93.
51. DN, Nov. 14, 1860.
52. The area taken from the Territory of Utah to form the new territory was exactly coextensive with Carson and Humboldt Counties of Utah Territory.
53. Thompson & West, p. 625.
54. Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1861, ch. XXIV, pp. 50-51.
55. The county, as a unit of government, is older in point of time than either the state or the town Government by means of counties has existed in England since an early date and in all the United States, with a few exceptions, since their settlement. 20 C.J.S. Counties §2 (1940). A county is a subdivision of the state organized for judicial

and political purposes. It is a political organization of certain of the territory within the state, particularly defined by geographical limits. Schweiss v First Judicial District Court, 23 Nev. 226, 45 Pac. 289 (1896). Subject to constitutional provisions which limit the power of the legislature and regulate the exercise thereof, the county is subject at all times to legislative control. Pershing County v Sixth Judicial District Court, 43 Nev. 78, 181 Pac. 960, 183 Pac. 314 (1919).

56. The boundaries of Washoe County were redefined by the legislature in 1965, 1967, 1969, 1973 and 1977. NRS 243.340. For boundary changes between Storey and Washoe Counties, see NRS 243.335, and between Washoe County and Carson City see Statutes of Nevada 1969, ch. 213, pp. 287-346, as amended.

57. Thompson & West, p. 631.

58. Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1861, ch. LXXXVIII, §14, p. 291.

59. Carlson, p. 151; REG, March 27, 1976. Winnemucca Lake, east of the Lake Range and west of the Nightingale Mountains, during high water periods was largely fed by the overflow from Pyramid Lake through a slough connecting the two lakes. The lake was about six miles wide and 35 miles long, about 30 feet lower than Pyramid Lake, and in 1882 was about 80 feet deep. In 1877 a little steamer, the William Jamison, was operating on Winnemucca Lake. The lake contained fish until 1934, and finally became dry in 1939. In 1888 the Territorial Enterprise reported that "some very fine trout are now being brought to this city [Virginia City] from Winnemucca Lake. They are much smaller than the trout caught in Pyramid Lake, all being young, but they are very thrifty and fat. Indeed they are as fine and sweet as ordinary brook trout." REG, Sept 29, 1877; Wheeler, p. 126.

Honey Lake, now located in Lassen County, California, derived its name originally from the sweet substance found, as the early settlers thought, exuding from the heads of wild oats in the area. But the "honey" was not exuding from the oats. The substance was deposited by the honey dew aphid, gathered by the Indians and made into a sort of molasses. Gudde, p. 136.

60. Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1861, ch. LXXXVIII, §14, p. 291.

61 Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1861, ch. XL, pp. 125-129. There was established in each organized county in the territory a board of commissioners consisting of three qualified electors to hold office for three years. The board of county commissioners was required to hold four sessions annually at the county seat on the first Mondays of April, July, September and December. No session could be continued for a longer period than six days. The county clerk was designated as clerk of the board of county commissioners. Extra sessions of the board were authorized not to exceed three days each. The commissioners were authorized to receive \$5 per day for each day they were "necessarily employed in transacting the county's business and 25 cents a mile for every mile traveled in going to and returning from a meeting of the board." The several boards of county commissioners were authorized and required: (1) To provide for the erection and repairing of courthouses, jails and other necessary public buildings for the county; (2) to lay out, discontinue and alter county roads and high ways; (3) to grant business licenses; (4) to fix the amount of taxes to be assessed and cause the same to be collected; (5) to audit the accounts of county officers; (6) to have the care and management of county property; and (7) to have the entire superintendence of the poor. Appeals from decisions of the board of county commissioners could be made to the district court.

A board of county commissioners, a creature of statute, has only such powers as are expressly conferred upon it or necessarily implied from those expressly given. First National Bank v Nye County, 38 Nev. 123, 145 Pac. 932 (1914). The board occupies a unique but very important function in organized county government. In its status as the representative or agent of the county it exercises executive, legislative and limited judicial powers.

62. Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1861, ch. LI, pp. 178-180. The law required that every poor person, unable to earn a livelihood, in consequence of bodily infirmity, idiocy, lunacy or other cause, should be supported by responsible relatives. But a person who became a pauper from intemperance or other bad conduct was not entitled to support from any relation except parent and child. Orphans and other minors could be bound as apprentices to "respectable" householders of the county. The commissioners could also build or rent workhouses for the accommodation and employment of paupers. Abandonment of a pauper in the county could result in a forfeiture of \$100.

63. Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1861, ch. LXIII, p. 266, granted G. W. Huffaker and others a franchise to construct a plank and turnpike road from Virginia City to Steamboat Valley. Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1861, ch. LXXV, p. 292, authorized D. M. Geiger and J. H. Tilton to build a public toll road from the Truckee Meadows to Virginia City.

64. The town of Ophir was located three miles south of Washoe City and one mile north of Franktown. Here, in 1861, at an expense of \$500,000, the Ophir Mining Company erected a quartz mill and reduction works to be near timber and mountain streams. The establishment covered fully an acre of ground. To reach the Ophir Mill from the Comstock, Washoe Lake was spanned by a picturesque brass-mounted red bridge about one and one-half miles in length, which went up in flames in 1871.

In the spring of 1861 the Ophir Mining Company sold part of its large holdings in Washoe Valley for a townsite near the works. As soon as the lots were surveyed they were purchased at sound prices, and the town of Ophir, second in size only to Washoe City, was built up very rapidly. At its peak the town contained from 600 to 800 inhabitants. In 1862 the town of Ophir "was as lively a place as could be found anywhere. Times were lively, shooting scrapes and fights were daily occurrences, teamsters were as numerous as sands of the sea, gambling became second-nature to the people, and the very name became a synonym of life." The territorial legislature in the same year granted a franchise for 10 years to certain individuals to lay distributing water pipes in the public streets of Ophir, the board of county commissioners being authorized to fix the rates charged for water. In October 1863, the Reese River Reveille reported that "Ophir town has spread out into the proportions of a large village, with hotels, saloons and stores in great numbers." The quick decline of lumbering and mill activity in the mid-1860's led to the end of Ophir, and the completion of the mills on the Carson River was a death blow to Ophir's prosperity. In 1865 the Gold Hill News reported that decay had "sadly touched her portals. A few men, with a Rip Van Winkle stare, saunter around a dilapidated pair of rum-mills, but the day of her greatness has gone forever." With tongue in cheek the editor of the Eastern Slope, published in Washoe City, reported in 1866 that "Ophir * * * has been quite lively the last few days. Yesterday we had a dog fight, and the day before two strangers passed through on their way to Excelsior, but as they didn't stop overnight they were not rolled." In 1872 the big mill was dismantled, leaving a "magnificent ruin of

- granite walls and piles of tailings," and in 1875 a single family resided amid the town's vast emptiness. In June 1876, when the Federal Court Building (now the Nevada State Library) was under construction, the hand-hewn granite blocks of the Ophir Mill were used for the building's foundation and front steps. Thompson & West, pp. 643-644; Carlson, p. 182; Lyman, pp. 138-139; Ratay, p. 269; Paher, p. 43; Lord, pp. 122-123; NSJ, July 28, 1882, June 29, 1895, Oct. 22, 1961; GHN, Sept. 27, 1865; TE, May 7, 1875; REG, Feb. 10, 1879.
65. In the spring of 1860, organizers of the Galena Mining District laid out the mining camp of Galena in the Steamboat Hills at the foot of Mount Rose about 14 miles south of Reno and three miles northwest of Washoe City. The mines were abandoned when the ore proved to be too base and the amount of silver too small to be worked to advantage. Galena then became a flourishing lumber camp. Around the town and upon the range of mountains north and east, fine timber grew in profusion. It was cut in enormous quantities and manufactured at the numerous sawmills, built to supply the demand, which encircled the town. An estimate of population during the peak of activity in 1863-1864 was "about a thousand souls," while another set the figures of "about 450 men, 40 women and 45 children." Hauling lumber from Galena to Virginia City by ox team did not seem to encourage temperance nor discourage profanity it was reported that there was something about the liquor of Galena that could make a chicken thief out of a saint. On May 27, 1865, Galena was destroyed by fire during a Washoe zephyr, but was soon rebuilt, only to disappear as soon as the timber became exhausted. The Meadow Lake mining excitement took away a large share of the population and many left for the newly located sawmills at Crystal Peak. Answering the question "What killed the place?", an old-timer said: "Nothin' in particular, it just died as natural as life. When the timber was all cut off they built mills over nearer to the mines and the place was busted it went down as fast as it went up, nobody couldn't sell nothing'; so folks left their houses and 'vamoosed the ranch.'" Thompson & West, p. 643; Paher, p. 41; Carlson, p. 117; GHN, Dec. 5, 1864; NSJ, Jan. 3, 1892; Jan. 15, 1902; REG, Feb. 13, 1886; Dec. 11, 1891; Nov. 19, 25, 1915; Feb. 7, 1920.
66. In June 1860, the Marysville Daily Appeal described Washoe City as the principal lumbering "emporium" of the territory with 15 sawmills, using both steam and water power. The

same newspaper later reported that since June 1860 "a well built town of about 100 houses has sprung up at the north end of Washoe Valley. It now has 3 hotels, 3 stores, 4 saloons, 3 blacksmith shops, 3 hay yards, one butcher shop, several carpenter shops and a large quartz mill at the north end of the town." The editor of the local news paper boasted: "Washoe City is the best town in Nevada Territory. It has the most generous, whole-souled men, the kindest and prettiest Eves, the fastest horses, the best lands, the purest whisky, and, in fact, more of everything, money excepted, than any other town on this side, or the other, of the Sierras. But seriously, we know of no place, not excepting places of older growth, that a prudent economical man could find, in which he could more surely and safely accumulate a fortune. Business of all kinds is good and increasing, and with our water privileges, our lumber, ever in demand, our fertile lands and healthy climate, we feel very safe in saying Washoe City is, at no distant period, to rank A No. 1 among the established institutions of this progressive county." Washoe City in the '60's was a wide-open town for gambling and drinking "pioneer" whiskey --a place where men stopped to "whoop 'em up" and then press on to the Comstock. When laid out, the original town plat contemplated and reserved a block in the center for a courthouse and jail, blocks and lots were set aside for schools and churches. Surveys were made for a complete system of waterworks, and all "went merry" for a time. A large brick courthouse, the finest and most substantial in the territory, was erected in 1863, "showing the inhabitants of the county to possess an amount of public spirit not found in some of the more populous and wealthy counties." In 1865, the year of its greatest prosperity, Washoe City had a population of about 2,000. But milling and lumbering faltered as early as 1865, and the completion of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad to the Carson River in 1869 destroyed what was left of the town's mainstays. Washoe City faded away rapidly. In 1879 the Eureka Daily Sentinel asked: "Where now is all its former glory? * * * A few old buildings remain, but they are gone to decay, and lean about in a dissolute way, like pioneers of '49, decrepit from age and dissipation, proclaiming their royalty by boasting of the liberal days they lived in, and the good times once enjoyed are considered recompense sufficient for a life wasted! * * * Even the church is dismantled, the belfry deserted by the pigeons, the bellrope unravelled, and the whole structure like the

town, has literally gone to the devil." Thompson & West, pp. 646-647; Paher, p. 43; MDA, June 29, 1860; Jan. 16, 1862; HR, April 9, 1864; EDS, Oct. 10, 1879; GHN, April 29, 1864; REG, Dec. 21, 1901.

67. In 1860 John M. Hunter operated a successful hotel at the south end of a bridge built at a crossing point of the Truckee River midway between Reno and Verdi. The bridge was carried away by high water in 1862, but the Henness Pass Toll Road Company rebuilt it. In 1870 James Mayberry, who had manufactured the windows and doors for the state capitol, purchased Hunter's Station with extensive adjoining farmland. When Hunter moved to Santa Barbara, California, after the sale, Hunter's Crossing was renamed Mayberry Crossing.
- In 1872 the toll bridge franchise expired, and the bridge became a free bridge maintained by Washoe County .Mayberry sold the ranch property to John Sparks prior to Sparks' election as Governor of Nevada. A few years ago an intoxicated truck driver, hauling a load of strawberries, demolished the Mayberry Bridge. Thompson & West, p. 643; Carlson, p. 140; NSJ, Dec. 30, 1879; Sept. 30, 1917; REG, May 15, 1929.
68. Mill Station, a little community of log houses, was one of the first logging and fluming depots in Washoe Valley. Wood from the mountains to the south and west of Washoe valley was flumed to Mill Station and from there freighted to the Comstock. By 1881 only a few houses remained. Ratay, p. 68.
69. Huffaker's seven miles south of Reno commemorates Granville W. Huffaker, a Mormon and native of Kentucky. After driving cattle from Salt Lake City to the Truckee Meadows, he settled there in 1858. In 1860 Langton's Pioneer Express established an office at Huffaker's, and in 1862 a post office was located there with G. W. Huffaker as postmaster. A staunch Democrat, he was described as "a noted Secessionist" during the Civil War, but his southern sympathies did not prevent his appointment as Washoe County treasurer in 1875 and his election as a Washoe County commissioner, which office he held from 1882 until 1886. Huffaker died January 6, 1892.
- In 1862 a reporter for the Marysville Daily Appeal stated that "at Huffaker's we came upon a rodeo, where some 3,000 head of cattle are gathered upon the hillsides and parties of men from this section of country between Virginia and Honey Lake are separating their stock and branding them.

There is great noise and confusion as the horsemen run with shouts hither and thither, driving the half-demented cattle; and at Huffaker's the bar-room, corrals and yard are full of men laughing, swearing, trading and drinking. This scene opens our eyes to the fact that right here in Nevada Territory feed for cattle is plenty, and we are agreeably disappointed to find milk and beef good and cheap in Virginia City." In 1875 Huffaker's Station was the most active and lively camp in Washoe County. About 100 men were at work on the V-flume being constructed by the Pacific Wood, Lumber and Flume Company to bring lumber from the Sierra Nevada to Huffaker's. The flume, on completion, was 11 miles long, running from Huffaker's at the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, to the head of Hunter's Creek. Some 35 carloads of lumber daily left the yard at Huffaker's, and other material --merchandise, hay, machinery and ice-- accounted for another 20 to 40 carloads daily. The community consisted of an unofficial post office, store, school and produce station. By 1881 the flume had been torn down and the glory of Huffaker's had departed. Thompson & West, pp. 628, 643; Carlson, p. 138; Myrick (Vol. 1), p. 157; Paher, p. 41; MDA, June 28, 1862; NSJ, March 20, 1875; Jan. 7, 1892; REG, May 13, 1881.

70. Steamboat Springs, named for the hot mineral springs 11 miles south of Reno, was located in 1860. Dr John I. Ellis (1819-1872) built a hospital there in 1862 with accommodations for 34 patients and erected several bath houses. In the prosperous days of the Comstock, Steamboat Springs was the greatest pleasure resort in Nevada. Quite a town sprang up when the Virginia and Truckee Railroad was completed to this point from Reno in 1871, and the town disappeared upon the completion of the railroad to Carson City. Bad management of the resort caused the Territorial Enterprise to comment in 1875: "The rapidity with which this place of resort is growing into favor, despite the drawbacks attending it, is truly astonishing. The place is most miserably managed." In 1877 new owners "erected an elegant two-story hotel, neatly furnished, and also a fine restaurant. * * * They have six nicely furnished cottages, Saratoga style, where those who wish can have a quiet home of their own. The baths are the crowning feature of the spot." A visitor from Eureka in 1879 remarked: "I observed in passing that Steamboat Springs continues to puff and that, sitting on the hotel porch, were the usual number of old rum-blossomed stiffies from Virginia City, blinking their rheumy eyes at the train, and doing penance for their sins by daily ablutions in the sulphurous baths,

preparatory to their final resting places " A dozen different persons tried to revive the resort during the period 1890-1900 but without success, and most of the buildings were destroyed by fire in 1901. The Reno city council in 1914 granted a 50-year franchise to the Steamboat Springs Mining and Development Company to lay mains and pipes under Reno's streets to supply steam and hot water from Steamboat Springs. Water was to be brought to Reno within two years. But the city council denied a requested extension of the franchise in 1917. A suggestion of utilizing hot water from Steamboat Springs to heat Reno residences was again proposed in 1982. Today Steamboat Springs has a post office and a growing population housed in mobile home parks and single-family residences. Thompson & West, pp. 644-645; Carlson, p. 223; TE, May 4, 1875; EDS, Oct. 10, 1879; NSJ, July 1, 1877; REG, April 22, 1901; March 19, 1908; Jan 26, 1914; March 6, 1917.

71. Lying north of Reno and northeast of Peavine Mountain, Lemmon Valley was named for Fielding Lemmon, who had a fertile ranch there, fed by springs from the mountain. His ranch was an overnight stopping place for travelers. A sizable community now exists in Lemmon Valley. Carlson, p. 154; Myrick, Vol. 1, p. 351.
72. Carlson, p. 151; Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1862, ch. V, p. 6.
73. Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1862, ch. I, pp. 1-2, ch. IV, pp. 4-5, ch. LI, pp. 47-48, ch. LXXIV, pp. 74-75, and ch. LXXV, pp. 75-76, granted toll road franchises:
 - (1) From Rush Creek Flat east to Smoke Creek, then north east to Deep Hole Station in Lake County.
 - (2) From Pea Vine Springs east.
 - (3) From G. W. Lathrop's ranch in Roop County east to High Rock Springs.
 - (4) From Lake View House in Washoe County northeast to the toll road from Virginia City to the Ophir Works.
 - (5) From Washoe City to Galena to the northwest end of Lake Bigler (Lake Tahoe).
74. Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1862, ch. XXVIII, p. 19.
75. Elliott, pp. 74-75.
76. Joseph Thompson Goodman, born in New York in 1838, came to California in 1850. Prior to 1861 he was a staff member and contributor to the Golden Era, a San Francisco magazine. In

1861 he came to Nevada Territory, purchased the Territorial Enterprise, which he published and of which he was editor until 1874. He sold the newspaper, purchased a seat on the San Francisco Stock Exchange in 1877, was publisher and editor of the San Francisco Evening Post from 1875 to 1876, and in 1882 was a prominent settler in the Nevada Colony in Fresno, California. Later, he moved to Alameda, California, where he died in 1917. Goodman devoted many of his later years to a study of the Mayan language. One author commented that "for years Joseph T. Goodman was a commanding figure in Nevada journalism. He did more to form the high spirit of the press in that region than any other man of the profession."

77. NSJ, Feb. 10, 1892.
78. Thompson & West, p. 626.
79. The February 28, 1863, issue of the Washoe Times carried the following notice:

Proposals for a Calaboose

Notice is hereby given, that proposals will be received at the County Clerk's Office, for thirty days from the date hereof, for the construction of a Calaboose, according to the plans and specifications now on file in said Office, at the expiration of which time the work will be let to the lowest responsible bidder, for cash, on the completion and acceptance of the same.

Chas. C. Conger
Clerk Board Commr's.

80. WT, Sept. 19, 1863.
81. Paher, pp. 38-39; Carlson, p. 188. On December 4, 1873, the Reno Crescent declared the town of Peavine to be "as lively a little camp as can be found--21 buildings in town now and two more underway, over 200 men in camp, mostly at work, but little stealing done, some whiskey drank [sic], no cutting or shooting so far, no man for breakfast, though there are rumors of war."
82. Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1864, ch. CXXVII, p. 159. There may be a county without a government of its own State ex rel. Leake v. Bladell, 6 Nev. 40 (1870).

83. Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1864, ch. II, pp. 2-3, ch. XXIII, p. 26, and ch. XXIV, p. 27. Toll road franchises were granted from:
- (1) The old Geiger road to Washington City, thence north to the Truckee Meadows;
 - (2) The Red Bluff road east to Deep Hole Springs in Roop County; and
 - (3) The waters of Pea Vine Creek to the town of San Antonia.
84. E. F. Dunne, a lawyer from Humboldt County, and James H. Sturtevant, a farmer from Washoe County, urged that the new state be named "Washoe." Charles W. Tozer from Storey County countered: "My colleague is in favor of the name of Washoe on the ground of euphony. I take issue with him there. In my opinion, it is a miserable, guttural, meaningless word * * *. It is certainly a very harsh sounding word, and its meaning. I have never yet been able to learn, either from the aborigines themselves, or from those who are acquainted with their language." Marsh, pp. 33-34.
85. Nev Const., Art. VI, sec. 5; Art. XVII, secs. 6, 13.
86. Thompson & West, p. 626. On November 19, 1864, the clerk of the board of county commissioners, S. A. Mann, inserted the following notice in the Washoe Weekly Star: "All indigent sick persons requiring the aid of the county are hereby notified that there is a Hospital in Washoe City, now in rediness [sic] to receive patients, and no accounts for services or medical attendance will be allowed after this date unless the person or persons requiring assistance are unable to be removed."
- Stephen Allison Mann, consistently referred to as S. A. Mann, the first county clerk of Washoe County, was born in Vermont in 1837. A law partner of Thomas Fitch, one-time Nevada Congressman, he practiced law in Washoe City, Belmont and Salt Lake City. From 1869 to 1870 he was secretary and acting Governor of Utah Territory. He returned to Washoe County, practiced law, and on September 13, 1881, died in Reno of dropsy due to hard drink. He is buried in the Hillside Cemetery there.
87. Ratay, p. 100; NSJ, June 8, 1895.
88. Statutes of Nevada 1864-1865, ch. XXXIV, pp. 141-143, ch. XXXVII, pp. 145-147. Toll road franchises were granted from:
- (1) Galena to the junction of the Pleasant Valley road and Ophir Grade crossing Brown's Creek; and
 - (2) Virginia City to Washoe City.

89. Carlson, p. 62; Ohmert, p. 90. Buffalo Meadows, named for what is known as buffalo grass growing about the flat west of Smoke Creek Desert in Washoe County, began in 1865 as a center for a stockraising district.

90. Thompson & West, p. 641; Carlson, p. 42; Ohmert, p. 82. Subsequently absorbed by Reno, Auburn was laid out in 1865 because of the presence of the Old English Mill. The Gold Hill News of May 11, 1865, reported that "an agent for a wealthy English company has erected the building for a large quartz mill on the Truckee, about 2 miles from the station of Stone and Gates. The machinery, consisting of 36 stamps and 20 pans and settlers, is being put in position." On December 30, 1865, the Eastern Slope commented: "Auburn is a town rapidly growing into importance around the works of the English Company on the Truckee River. * * * Some idea of the prospects of the new town * * * may be gathered from the fact that the Company are now preparing a thousand acres of land to be seeded in the spring, three hundred of which will be sown with wheat, they have also attached to their immense water power a flouring mill, with sufficient capacity to flour all the wheat that may be produced on the meadows." The planting was a success, for the Eastern Slope of July 31, 1866, reported, "hundreds of acres of wheat and oats are ripening, where one year ago only sagebrush blossomed." After absorption by Reno, the name Auburn was lost. The five-mile English Mill Ditch, abandoned in recent years, crossed the south east corner of the present county fairgrounds and continued to the east. The mill is said to have operated as late as the early 1890's.

91. ES, March 17, 1866.

92. ES, April 7, 1866. County commissioners were fair game for the early (and present?) Nevada press. The Gold Hill News of February 7 1868, carried the following item:

Tom Corwin once had a vexatious case in which certain county commissioners were mixed up. Old Bloody got a little excited, turned to a lawyer standing near, and rolling up his tawny eyes, remarked:

"H., do you know what the office of county commissioner was created fore?"

"No," replied H.

"Well," returned Tom, "I can tell you. Our forefathers were wise and sagacious. They knew that in every county there would be at least three first class d---d fools who would be eternally hunting for

some contemptible little office, and they created the office of county commissioner especially to gratify them. And I never knew it to fail that they got it."

93. ES, Feb 10, 1866.

94. ES, Feb 2, 1867.

95. ES, Feb 23, 1867.

96. Charles North Harris was born in 1839 in New York. He served in the Civil War, being seriously wounded at the Battle of Bull Run in 1861. Nephew of John W. North, who was an associate justice of Nevada's territorial supreme court, Harris came to Washoe City in 1864 and joined his uncle in a law partnership. Harris was elected as district judge for Washoe County in 1866, and served in that capacity from 1867 to 1874. In 1876, President Grant appointed him Registrar of the United States Land Office at Carson City. Subsequently, Harris served as a newspaper editor and practiced law in Carson City. He died in San Francisco in 1902. "A man of thoroughly independent and strong traits," he had several encounters with the board of county commissioners of Washoe County.

97. ES, July 20, 1867.

98. The Eastern Slope of August 24, 1867, protested; "The ten thousand --more or less --head of hogs that daily and nightly forage through our streets constitute a nuisance that ought to be abated. Neither bolts nor bars are proof against them, they go over, under or through fences with a facility that is perfectly marvelous --except when one attempts to drive a razor-back specimen out of an enclosure, when it takes at the very least an hour for it to find a 10-foot opening. We think it would be much better if people would keep fewer hogs and more pork."

99. ES, Dec. 21, 1867.

100. ES, May 16, 1868.

101. RC, July 25, 1868.

102. RC, Aug. 8, 1868.

103. The town was named for General Jesse L. Reno, a Union officer who was killed at the battle of South Mountain, Maryland, in 1862. Thompson & West, pp. 634-635; Elliott, p. 112; Carlson, p. 201; REG, June 14, 1913; March 22, 24, 1932; NSJ, Jan. 16, 1977. "Argenta" was the name first selected for the new town. ES, April 11, 1868.
104. ES, May 9, 1868.
105. Thompson & West, pp. 634-635.
106. An editorial writer of acknowledged ability, John C. Lewis was born in New York in 1820. In 1846 he published the No License, a New York newspaper, and in 1850 he departed for California, where he became postmaster at Nelson Creek. He was a county supervisor of Plumas County, California, in 1855, and in 1857 was one of the publishers of the Plumas Argus in Quincy, California. Moving to Nevada Territory, he published the Silver Age and Post at Carson City, was a member of the territorial legislature in 1862, and was admitted to practice law in the territorial courts in 1864. He moved to Washoe City in 1865, first publishing the Washoe Weekly Times and then the Eastern Slope. Lewis sold the Reno Crescent in 1875 and died in Reno in March 1883. He used the nom de plume "Snarleyow."
107. Thompson & West, pp. 634-635.
108. RC, Aug. 22, 1868.
109. EU, Sept. 19, 1868. The Reno Crescent editor countered with the following: "A correspondent of the San Francisco Times, passing over the line of the Central Pacific, pays his respects to Reno in a column of gibberish. He says of our location that we are situated in the midst of a frightful plain, etc , and then he describes our gamblers and our 'bad girls.' Oh, well, he is not to blame, there is no sand in San Francisco, no gamblers, no women but ladies. But what a courageous fellow to trust himself in such a dangerous place, what a lucky fellow to get away with a whole skin, and with virtue unimpaired! But let him go, we suppose if we were to go to San Francisco people there would laugh at us for a barbarian, but if a countryman appears green in the city a city man coming to the frontier is very liable to make a damned fool of himself." RC, Aug. 29, 1868.

110. RC, Aug 1, 1868.
111. Paher (thesis), 193 pp.; Thompson & West, p. 636.
112. RC, Dec. 19, 1868.
113. Ibid.
114. RC, July 10, 1869.
115. RC, Aug. 14, 1869.
116. Thompson & West, p. 626; Paher (thesis), p. 11; NSJ, Nov 30, 1870; Hess v County Commissioners of Washoe County, 6 Nev. 104 (1870).
117. The Reno Crescent of December 31, 1870, announced: "Let us rejoice because one of those civilizing, humanizing, moralizing, christianizing institutions --commonly known as cockpits, has been established in our town. The first fight came off yesterday, and we are informed that the contestants behaved in a manner creditable at once to themselves and their owners. This highly interesting and moral exhibition was witnessed by the bon ton of our city. The great moral lesson taught was to the effect --'that the battle is not to the strong nor the race to the swift' -- little fellow licked. We do not know that the meeting opened with prayer or closed with the doxology, but they made noise enough to discount any ordinary camp meeting we ever attended."
- The Reno Crescent in the same issue also reported that "a nondescript three-wheeled institution made its appearance on our streets this week. The motive power is the rider, and it is navigated velocipede style. The institution is just as useful as it is ornamental, and will supercede other and older methods of traveling about the same time that men habitually lift themselves over obstructions by their boot-straps. A young gent in town, while exercising his muscle, collided with the corner of Henry Menke's store, carried away the awning and greatly demoralized himself. Should they come into general use it will be found necessary to round the corners of the streets and generally adopt curved instead of straight lines."
118. NSJ, Dec. 10, 1870.
119. NSJ, Dec. 31, 1870.

120. NSJ, Dec. 17, 1870.
121. Henry Hudson Beck, long-time Washoe County politician and a prolific writer of letters to the editor, was born in Ohio in 1835. He learned the cobbler's trade and came to Nevada Territory in 1860, conducting a mercantile business in Ophir, Franktown and Washoe City and superintending the construction of the reduction works at Ophir. He served as a justice of the peace in 1862-1863, an assembly man from Washoe County in 1864-1865, 1866, 1871, 1888 and 1894, and was an unsuccessful candidate for state senator in 1875 and 1878. He was twice elected county commissioner --in 1863 and 1896. Beck moved to Reno in 1876, engaged in the mercantile business, was superintendent of the Riverside Mill (a flour mill) and erected the Reno Reduction Works. A Reno newspaper described Beck as "the village growler and the self-appointed guardian of the county treasury." An elementary school in Reno is named for his daughter, Jessie Beck.
122. Statutes of Nevada 1871, ch. XIII, p. 59.
123. Hess v Pegg, 7 Nev. 23 (1871).
124. Paher (thesis), 193 pp.
125. Thompson & West, p. 627.
126. NSJ, May 6, 1871. Similar arguments with much more levity were advanced by the Reno Crescent on May 13, 1871: "It will not do to locate [the courthouse] near the river because the rush of the waters will so confuse weak minds that the judge might be unable to see the point, in a legal argument without a point. [The courthouse should not be located] on a business street, lest the hum and bustle of the marts of commerce, exchanging dimes for peanuts and bit whisky, should distract the attention of grave jurors and learned attorneys, to the great detriment of litigants and clients. They [the county buildings] should not be located near the railroad, lest the hissing of steam, the clangor of bells and the crash of iron wheels on an iron road bed, should drown the silver voices of our honey-tongued attorneys. They should not be located at the mouth of the Donner Lake Pass, lest the mighty winds that rush down from Sierras' Summit should drive eloquence, logic and law eastward to 'waste its sweetness on the desert air.'"

127. Thompson & West, p. 627.
128. NSJ, July 8, 1871.
129. NSJ, July 15, 1871.
130. Septimis Fred Hoole was born in New York about 1824. A Mexican War veteran, he arrived in California prior to 1851, eventually settling in Eureka North, Sierra County, in 1859, then moving to Marysville in 1862. He came to Nevada Territory in 1863, where he established the Mechanics' Mill, a sash and door factory, in Virginia City. In 1869 he moved his sash and door factory to the new town of Reno, and in 1870 he was an unsuccessful bidder for the construction of the State Capitol in Carson City. After construction of the Washoe County Courthouse, he constructed the Masonic Temple in Reno and owned the Reno Brick Yard in 1872. Hoole was superintendent of the work for the aborted construction of the new state prison near Reno in 1874, conducted a drug and paint business in Reno in 1876, and was declared a bankrupt in 1878. In 1879 he was the editor of the Reno Evening Record, a short-lived venture, and, when he lost two houses in the Reno fire of 1879, he moved to Bodie, California, where he published the Bodie News. He appears to have departed Bodie prior to 1882, constructing a church in Alturas, California, and eventually settling in Seattle, Washington Territory.
131. In 1870 Reno was split over the incorporation issue. On January 14, 1871, Reno's citizens voted overwhelmingly against incorporating the town. One citizen said: "A large portion of our community oppose incorporating the town of Reno, on the ground that no very great good can be obtained by such a course of procedure, [incorporation] is an expensive humbug we have managed to get along very well for the past two or three years, and this anxiety to be an old hen before you are a chicken will not work well." NSJ, Jan. 14, 1871.
132. On June 5, 1872, after two weeks, when \$3,000 had been expended on the construction job, an action seeking an injunction to stop the work was filed in the United States District Court but was soon withdrawn. Thompson & West, p. 627; Paher (thesis), 193 pp.
133. NSJ, March 4, 1871.

134. Thompson & West, p. 628. The bonds bore interest at the annual rate of 12 percent. The issue was retired in 1882.
135. NSJ, June 22, 29, 1871.
136. RC, Feb. 3, 1872.
137. NSJ, March 23, 1872.
138. RC, June 8, 1872.
139. RC, July 13, 1872.
140. Reprinted in NSJ, May 11, 1872.
141. NSJ, March 12, 1873.
142. NSJ, March 13, 1873.
143. NSJ, March 12, 1873; Thompson & West, p. 627.
144. Thompson & West, p. 627.
145. NSJ, March 12, 1873.
146. RC, Feb. 13, 1873. Two statutes (Statutes of Nevada 1864-1865, ch. XIX, pp. 110-115; and Statutes of Nevada 1869, ch. LXVI, p. 115, now NRS 3.100) supported Judge Harris' position. The statute provides that whenever the county commissioners neglect or refuse to provide and furnish an office for the use of the district judge, the district judge may make an order requiring the sheriff to provide and furnish such office. Inherent power of the court, growing out of and necessary to the exercise of its constitutional jurisdiction, has been resisted by Nevada boards of county commissioners over the years, with the commissioners losing the battle. See: State ex rel Kitzmeyer v Davis, 26 Nev. 373, 68 Pac. 689 (1902); Young v Board of County Commissioners, 91 Nev. 52, 530 P.2d 1203 (1975); City of N Las Vegas ex rel Arndt v Daines, 92 Nev. 392, 550 P.2d 399 (1976); and Golberg v Eighth Judicial Dist. Court, 93 Nev. 614, 572 P.2d 521 (1977).
147. RC, Feb. 27, 1873.
148. RC, May 1, 1873.
149. RC, Feb. 27, 1873.

150. RC, Jan. 23, 1873.
151. RC, Jan. 23, 1873. On January 30, 1873, the Reno Crescent reported: "The question as to the right of M. C. Lake to take toll on his bridge remains in status quo, and on Saturday last again culminated in a blockade. The Evans brothers attempted to cross a band of cattle, refusing to pay toll. Lake persistently refused to open his gate, and all communication, for some hours, between the north and south side of the river was cut off, foot passengers, even being unable to cross. A warrant was sworn out against Lake for obstructing the public highway, under which he and one or two of his employees were placed under arrest, when the parties in charge of the cattle proceeded to break open the gate, and the blockade was raised. Such affairs as this are a disgrace to the community, and without any delay, the proper steps should be taken to set this question at rest."
152. RC, April 17, May 1, 1873.
153. RC, July 10, 1873; NSJ, July 23, 1873.
154. See Note 69.
155. William Webster, born in Scotland in 1832, moved with his parents to Iowa in 1843 and later to Nevada Territory. He practiced law in Washoe City, representing the Washoe City residents who opposed moving the county seat to Reno in 1870. He moved to Reno in 1871 and continued to practice law in Reno until his death in December 1901. Webster served as district attorney of Washoe County in 1866 and as school board trustee for several years. He was editor and publisher of the Nevada State Journal for many years, and was a member of the reception committees which welcomed U. S. Grant and his wife to Reno in 1879 and Susan B. Anthony in 1895.
156. Leonard Coates Savage, Nevada pioneer, was born in Maine in 1834. He moved to California in 1850, mining at San Juan, Nevada County, and at Downieville. In 1859 he came to Utah Territory, settling in Virginia City, where he acquired mining claims which he sold to George Hearst and others in the 1860's. He also purchased and developed farmlands in the Truckee Meadows near Glendale, and in 1862 he was elected county assessor of Washoe County and built a toll road from Glendale to Ragtown. During 1867

- he conducted a large store at Glendale. Subsequently, Savage moved to Oakland, California, where he died on February 3, 1878.
157. Statutes of Nevada 1873, ch. CXXII, pp. 215-219.
 158. NSJ, Nov. 18, 1874.
 159. See Note 81. Poeville, sometimes denominated Peavine, Poe City or Podunk, was located about 10 miles northwest of Reno. It was named for John Poe, allegedly a cousin of Edgar Allen Poe, who discovered the Paymaster lead about 1874. For the ensuing five years the camp was the theater of extensive mining and prospecting. The town became "a thriving little burg" of about 500 people. REG, June 23, 1934; Thompson & West, p. 644; Carlson, p. 192.
 160. NSJ, Jan. 10, 1874.
 161. Wheeler, p. 76.
 162. NSJ, Aug. 8, 1874.
 163. NSJ, Sept. 1, 1874.
 164. NSJ, Nov. 24, 1874.
 165. NSJ, Jan. 8, 1875.
 166. NSJ, Feb 18, 1875. Hoole wrote the editor on February 19, 1875: "They charge indirectly that I have squandered \$15,000. I say it is false, in letter and in spirit, and assert there was no evidence before that Committee on which to base so malignant a falsehood." NSJ, Feb. 19, 1875.
 167. NSJ, March 6, 1875.
 168. CT, Nov. 2, 1875.
 169. Statutes of Nevada 1875, ch. XLIX, pp. 101-102.
 170. NSJ, Sept. 12, 1875. Three bids were received by the commissioners and all were rejected. The old bridge continued to do service for two years longer Thompson & West, pp. 627-628.
 171. Thompson & West, p. 641; Carlson, p. 60; Paher, p. 39.
 172. NSJ, Dec. 27, 1876.

173. NSJ, Dec. 30, 1876.
174. Pyramid City was divided into Lower Pyramid and Upper Pyramid. Lower Pyramid contained two saloons, a store, a boardinghouse and a stageline with daily service to Reno. Upper Pyramid, a smaller camp, was located about two miles above Lower Pyramid. It contained a hotel, a store and several dwellings. Paher, pp. 35, 37; Carlson, p. 196.
175. CT, July 21, 1876.
176. REG, March 31, 1876.
177. Thompson & West, pp. 628-629. The commissioners issued \$5,000 of bonds pursuant to the authority of the 1875 act but the bonds were never negotiated and were canceled as money was received from tax collections. No interest on the bonds was paid.
178. REG, Dec. 29, 1876.
179. REG, Jan. 8, 1877; NSJ, Jan. 10, 1877. Today, the Nevada Mental Health Institute and a portion of the equipment yard of the State Department of Transportation occupy the site. Pursuant to legislative approval, the prison walls were torn down in 1901, and the stone was used for repairs and buildings for the University of Nevada and the state's mental institution. Six feet of the wall were left to form a reservoir for the mental hospital. NSJ, Sept. 10, 1901.
180. Statutes of Nevada 1877, ch. CXXIV, pp. 199-200.
181. Statutes of Nevada 1877, ch. XXIX, pp. 71-72.
182. Thompson & West, pp. 627-628; REG, July 31, 1877.
183. REG, July 31, 1877.
184. REG, Aug. 1, 1877.
185. NSJ, June 9, 1877.
186. NSJ, Oct. 25, 1877.
187. REG, Oct. 3, 1877.
188. REG, Jan. 3, 1877.

189. NSJ, Feb. 17, 1877.
190. NSJ, Nov. 13, 1878.
191. Thompson & West, p. 631. In 1913 the gallows on which Rover was executed were used in the construction of chicken coops and outhouses at the county hospital. REG, Jan. 11, 1913.
192. Statutes of Nevada 1879, ch. CI, pp. 107-108.
193. Thompson & West, p. 640.
194. REG, April 10, 1879. Public health and safety attracted the attention of the Reno Evening Gazette on June 10 and July 10, 1879. The editor cautioned: "People living near the ditches should be very careful about throwing filth into the water. The folks all over the meadows have to drink and cook with the water in the canals, and, although it purifies itself very fast in running through its gravelly bed, yet none of us would like to have the source of our own supply contaminated, and we should be equally thoughtful of others." The "601" continued to be active in June 1879 according to the Gazette: "Last Saturday night the Vigilantes were out again, this time in a some what different role than heretofore. The tar bucket did not figure, but the 'cat-'o-nine tails' did. A nest of sixteen vags was captured a short distance west of town, near the river. Their offense was selling whisky to the Indians. They were ordered to disrobe, and when nearly naked, a sound thrashing was administered to all, after which they were ordered to leave town in a hurry and not show themselves again under penalty of a worse punishment. The whole affair was very quietly conducted, showing that '601' must be thoroughly organized, and all the more a terror to evil-doers."
195. REG, April 11, 1879. The editor, noting that "the fine fallen women have invaded Virginia Street, and are now plying their foul trade right under the eyes of the whole community. One cannot go down Virginia Street without seeing their painted faces at the door or window. It is disgraceful and disgusting," he continued, and recommended that "this class of women should be driven to more secluded portions of the town, if they cannot be gotten rid of entirely." The board of county commissioners reacted on May 17, 1879, by enacting Town Order No. 8, which provided in part: "Any person or persons who shall keep or rent

any house of ill-fame, hurdy-house or house of prostitution on the alley leading from Virginia Street to Center Street, and known as 'Douglas Avenue,' shall be deemed guilty of committing a nuisance * * *."

196. NSJ, Aug. 31, 1879.
197. REG, March 26, 1879. Again on July 11, 1879, the Gazette continued to press: "Reno has an abundance of liquor saloons that are provided with comfortable seats, are well lighted and made in every way attractive for idlers. There are many places in this town where a young man can spend his money freely and have nothing but a 'swelled head' on the next day to show for his expenditure. But at present a stranger looks in vain for a reading room or library. Reno needs a good free reading room more than anything else. Such an institution would do more to keep young men from drinking and gambling than all the temperance lectures that ever were delivered here."
198. REG, March 3, 1879.
199. Statutes of Nevada 1879, ch. LV, pp. 61-62.
200. EDS, Oct. 10, 1879.
201. REG, Dec. 31, 1879.
202. REG, Feb. 10, 1880.
203. REG, Jan. 25, 1881.
204. The editor was Washoe County pioneer Henry Hardy Hogan, M. D. Hogan had been born in Vermont in 1834, attended a college in Albany, New York, and studied medicine at a medical school in Burlington, Vermont. He enlisted as a private in the New York infantry for service in the Civil War and was discharged honorably on account of disability in 1863. Arriving at Ophir, Nevada Territory, in 1864, he resided there until moving to Reno when that town became the county seat. Hogan took a great interest in politics, serving in the Nevada legislature from Washoe County during the 1871, 1875 and 1895 sessions. In 1881 he established and edited the Plaindealer, a weekly and later a twice weekly Greenback paper, which suspended operations in 1884. The newspaper was revived in 1895 and lasted until 1899. On his death in Reno in 1902, Hogan was one of the oldest physicians residing in Nevada. Henry H Beck, a long time friend and political associate, eulogized: "I knew

- him in the halls of legislation on three separate occasions, in a position which not only tries men's souls but their consciences as well. * * * He was always unassuming. Hypocrisy, pretense and duplicity were foreign to his nature." NSJ, March 21, 1902.
205. The Pavilion, a community hall, was located near what is now the intersection of First and Center Streets, currently the site of the parking garage of the First Interstate Bank of Nevada.
206. Plaindealer, July 23, 1881.
207. REG, Feb. 18, 1881. The Gazette commented: "The board of county commissioners rejected the bill of Sanders and Neale for burying the Indian woman who was killed by the cars last month. The charge was \$10 for digging the grave, providing a coffin and getting up in the night to take care of the body. Cheap enough, surely. Upon what grounds the bill was rejected we cannot understand. Does the Board intend to let dead Indians lie in the streets unburied?".
208. Plaindealer, Dec. 31, 1881.
209. Statutes of Nevada 1881, ch. XLII, pp. 59-63. The law provided, among other details, that the asylum should have sufficient capacity for the care of 160 patients and had to be completed within 15 months after February 24, 1881.
210. NSJ, May 10, 1881, reprinting an item from the Eureka Leader.
211. REG, Dec. 10, 1881.
212. Myrick, Vol. 1, pp. 425, 428. Crystal Bay was named for the clear water of the bay. Carlson, p. 91.
213. Plaindealer, Jan. 11, 1882.
214. On June 9, 1882, the Reno Evening Gazette described the asylum building as very conveniently arranged from basement to roof. "It is divided into 6 wards--2 on each floor --and each ward will accommodate 30 patients. The kitchen is in the basement of the north wing. The bakery adjoins the kitchen, the laundry is in the northeast corner of the basement, the boiler room is also in the basement. The building will be lighted by gas manufactured

- from naphtha. The physician's residence is a nice little two-story cottage situated about 400 feet from the main building."
215. REG, July 2, 1882.
216. REG, Nov 11, 1882. The editor graphically described conditions: "Filth and nastiness hold high carnival in the back streets and alleys of Reno. * * * There is scarcely an alley and town that is not a reeking cesspool of garbage and offal that emits an effluvia in comparison with which the putrifactions of a slaughterhouse exhale savory odors."
217. NSJ, March 8, 1882.
218. Carlson, p. 141; Myrick, Vol. 1, pp. 428-430. The company's sawmill was located on Mill Creek. In 1891 about 200 men were employed in Incline. In the 1890's the forests were about logged out and in 1894 the mill and railroad were moved to Overton (later named Hobart Mills), California. Today the Incline Village-Crystal Bay area is comprised of a general improvement district, a fire district, a township with a justice of the peace and constable, and a considerable population of vacationing and permanent residents.
219. Statutes of Nevada 1883, ch. LII, pp. 76-77.
220. Nev Const., art. 17, §5; Statutes of Nevada 1883, ch. IV, p. 12; Koontz, p. 80. In 1883 Roop County was "but a long strip of barren unoccupied land" containing less than 100 whites. Thompson & West, pp. 563-565; REG, Nov. 9, 1909. A Nevada State Journal reporter once commented: "We don't particularly envy the individual who is compelled to take a trip up through that lonesome section." NSJ, Aug. 1, 1874. At the time of the consolidation of the counties, about two dozen ranches existed where hay and grain were raised and horses and cattle grazed on wild hay and bunch grass. Some of the settlements were the Milk Ranch once owned by George L. Winters, son of horse racing fancier Theodore Winters of Washoe Valley, Fish Springs, Round Hole, Sheephead, Buffalo Salt Works, Buffalo Meadows, Smoke Creek, Lost Creek, Long Valley, Deep Hole Springs and five or six ranches on or near Pyramid Lake. The only qualified officer in the county was a justice of the peace. J. N. Mullen conducted a stage station 32 miles from Reno right on the boundary line of the counties. REG, Mar. 29, 1880.

221. REG, Jan. 29, 1883.
222. NSJ, May 25, 1883.
223. NSJ, Jan. 30, 1884.
224. NSJ, April 17, 1884.
225. Statutes of Nevada 1885, ch. LXXII, pp 75-76.
226. NSJ, Jan 18, 1885.
227. REG, March 22, 1886. Candidates for admission had to be at least 15 years of age, produce a certificate of good moral character and pass a creditable examination in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, English grammar, and descriptive and physical geography. Profane language was forbidden, and the use of ardent spirits by students, gambling, card playing, frequenting saloons or billiard rooms, associating with any person of known vice or dissolution, and riotous and noisy behavior were absolutely prohibited.
228. REG, Aug. 28, 1886.
229. Statutes of Nevada 1887, ch. XLI, p. 48.
230. NSJ, May 29, 1887.
231. REG, March 13, 1888.
232. NSJ, Dec. 23, 1888.
233. NSJ, July 29, 1888. The first public school opened in Reno in September 1868 with one teacher and 80 pupils.
234. Statutes of Nevada 1889, ch. XLI, pp. 41-42.
235. See Note 71.
236. Statutes of Nevada 1889, ch. CIX, pp. 99-100.
237. REG, Jan. 23, 1889.
238. REG, March 19, 1890.
239. Statutes of Nevada 1891, ch. LXXIII, pp. 86-87.
240. Statutes of Nevada 1891, ch. LXXVII, p. 90.

241. Francis Griffith Newlands (1848-1917) was born in Mississippi, attended Yale and Columbian College Law School(now George Washington University). He came to Nevada in 1888 and subsequently served as a Congressman and United States Senator from Nevada until his death.
242. Murray D. Foley was born in New Brunswick, Canada, on October 22, 1849. He came to Hamilton, Nevada, via California in 1867 and removed to Eureka in 1870. Called the "Adonis of the Senate," he served as a state senator from both Eureka and Washoe Counties. He was interested in mining and banking, being the president of the Bank of Nevada in Reno. Alice Maude Hartley accused him of the paternity of her unborn child, and when he offered no assistance she dispatched Foley on July 26, 1894, by shooting him in the stomach. She was tried for murder, convicted and spent some time in the state prison.
243. The 1891 franchise was amended in 1893 to provide that the work had to commence before July 1, 1894. Statutes of Nevada 1893, ch. XXI, p. 127.
244. See Note 71.
245. Statutes of Nevada 1891, ch. LXXVI, pp. 88-89.
246. NSJ, Feb. 13, 1891.
247. REG, Feb. 26, 1892.
248. Ibid.
249. NSJ, Aug. 1, 1892.
250. Statutes of Nevada 1893, ch. C, pp. 107-108.
251. Statutes of Nevada 1893, ch. XL, pp. 35-36.
252. Statutes of Nevada 1891, ch. XLVI, p. 52.
253. REG, June 5, 1894.
254. NSJ, Aug. 14, 1894.
255. REG, July 10, 1894.
256. NSJ, Feb. 8, 1895.
257. REG, March 9, 1895.

258. NSJ, Nov. 1, 1895.
259. Statutes of Nevada 1895, ch. LXXIX, pp. 72-73.
260. NSJ, March 1, 1896.
261. Statutes of Nevada 1897, ch. XLVIII, pp. 50-61.
262. NSJ, April 13, 1897.
263. Statutes of Nevada 1899, ch. LXIV, p. 84.
264. REG, March 14, 1899.
265. Osburn v Beck, 25 Nev. 68, 56 Pac. 1088 (1899).
266. Carlson, p. 242; Myrick, Vol. 1, p. 32. Wedekind sold his mine to Governor John Sparks. In 1901 Wedekind (or Wedekind City) had a store, machine shop, assay office, boardinghouse. Paher, p. 35.
267. REG, July 7, 1900.
268. NSJ, May 17, 1900.
269. NSJ, Sept. 4, 1901.
270. REG, Sept. 27, 1901.
271. NSJ, April 28, 1901.
272. REG, Feb. 14, 1901.
273. Statutes of Nevada 1901, ch. XVIII, pp. 28-29.
274. Statutes of Nevada 1901, ch. XCVII, pp. 100-109.
275. REG, May 1, 1901.
276. REG, Feb. 14, 1901.
277. Frank Herbert Norcross, born in Washoe County in 1869, was a member of the first graduating class of the University of Nevada in 1891, county surveyor of Washoe County in 1890, school teacher, Georgetown University law school graduate in 1894, district attorney of Washoe County, and in 1897 was an assemblyman. Norcross led the movement to establish the free public library in Reno. He later served as a Nevada supreme court justice and as judge of the United States District Court in Nevada.

278. 1901 Carnegie (1835-1919) sold his steel business to the United States Steel Corporation for \$250 million, and thereafter, through the Carnegie Corporation of New York and other agencies, he disposed of \$350 million in support of public library buildings, scientific research, international peace and the reward of heroic acts.
279. NSJ, March 29, 1902.
280. NSJ, June 20, 1902. In reporting the selection of the site, the Nevada State Journal commented on the magnificent opportunities which the Truckee River afforded for beautiful building locations. "The heart of Reno could be converted into a riverside beauty spot, and the free public library the nucleus of the prettiest town in the West," a suggestion which fell on the deaf ears of city officials for many years.
281. NSJ, Dec. 6, 1902.
282. Statutes of Nevada 1903, ch. CII, pp. 184-198. The 1903 charter was materially amended in 1905. See Statutes of Nevada 1905, ch. LXXI, pp. 98-140.
283. Statutes of Nevada 1903, ch. C, pp. 180-181.
284. Statutes of Nevada 1903, ch. CXVI, p. 210.
285. Statutes of Nevada 1903, ch. XXII, pp. 43-45. This act set apart and dedicated the property to the public as a site for a free public library building and for library purposes. The site was to be under the exclusive control, management and possession of the board of library trustees of Reno School District No. 10.
286. Statutes of Nevada 1903, ch. LXIV, pp. 89-90. From the proceeds of the sale of the bonds, \$20,000 was to be expended for building the new county hospital and \$30,000 was to be used to redeem county scrip then outstanding against the county general fund and to repair and improve the courthouse.
287. NSJ, Sept. 22, 1903.
288. NSJ, Dec. 13, 1903.
289. The town was named in honor of Edward H. Harriman, president of the Southern Pacific Railroad. He objected to the use of his name, and on May 27, 1904, the name was

- changed to Sparks in honor of John Sparks, then Governor of Nevada. Carlson, pp. 131, 221; REG, June 19, 1929.
290. See Note 27.
291. Carlson, p. 221; Myrick, Vol. 1, p. 34.
292. The town was named for Elias Olinghouse, a former teamster, who moved to the area and raised sheep. He purchased and operated several mining claims in the district Olinghouse died in Reno on December 5, 1913. Carlson, p. 180; Myrick, Vol. 1, p. 52.
293. Carlson, pp. 160, 180. The settlement was called McClanesburg in the late 1890's for Brooks McClane, a discoverer of ore deposits in the area.
294. Statutes of Nevada 1913, ch. 171, p. 225.
295. REG, June 4, 1904.
296. REG, Oct. 7, 1904.
297. REG, June 9, 1904.
298. NSJ, July 7, 1904.
299. Ibid.
300. NSJ, Dec. 24, 1904.
301. The town had come into official existence on April 23, 1904, with the filing of the town plat with the county recorder of Washoe County. See Sparks Town Ordinance No. 104.
302. NSJ, Jan. 1, 1905.
303. Statutes of Nevada 1905, ch. LXXXII, pp. 155-158.
304. REG, June 5, 1905; NSJ, Oct. 3, 1905. But see REG, Jan 27, 1906. The bridge was accepted January 27, 1906. Total cost was \$44,700.
305. REG, May 25, 1905; NSJ, July 8, 1905.
306. SD, Jan. 21, 1905.
307. NSJ, Jan. 1, 1905.

308. SD, Jan. 24, 1905.
309. SD, Feb. 25, March 1, 1905.
310. SD, March 11, 1905.
311. Statutes of Nevada 1905, ch. LXXXIII, pp. 158-186. The 1905 special charter, with amendments, continued in effect until 1949 when a new charter was enacted Statutes of Nevada 1949, ch. 180, pp. 372-406. In subsequent years two new charters were adopted See Statutes of Nevada 1971, ch. 545, pp. 1142-1160, extended to July 1, 1975, by Statutes of Nevada 1973, ch. 735, p. 1508; and Statutes of Nevada 1975, ch. 470, pp. 724-746.
312. SD, March 15, May 3, 1905.
313. SD, March 11, 1905.
314. Carlson, p 96; Myrick, Vol. 1, p 38; John M Townley, Turn This Water Into Gold-The Story of the Newlands Project (Reno: Nevada Historical Society, 1977), pp. 33, 36.
315. REG, March 6, 1906.
316. The Mapes Hotel is now located on the site.
317. REG, June 29, Oct 9, 1906.
318. NSJ, July 17, 1906. In 1892 a county road had been constructed at a cost of about \$5,000, but insufficient travel led the county to abandon any maintenance. "The snows of winter gradually demolished the road which was about 25 miles long via Galena Creek. It passed between Mount Rose and Slide Mountain over the low pass, thence through Tahoe Meadows, striking the lake at Incline."
319. Carlson, p. 119.
320. Statutes of Nevada 1907, ch. LIV, pp. 102-103.
321. NSJ, Feb 24, 1907.
322. Statutes of Nevada 1907, ch. CXXXIV, pp. 298-300.
323. NSJ, Feb. 24, 1907.

324. NSJ, March 14, 1907.
325. REG, Dec. 12, 1907.
326. NSJ, Feb. 24, 1907.
327. NSJ, May 29, 1907.
328. REG, Aug. 14, 1907.
329. REG, Aug. 10, 1907.
330. REG, March 18, 1907, NSJ, March 19, 1907.
331. REG, Feb. 19, 1908.
332. REG, June 12, 1908.
333. NSJ, June 19, 1908.
334. REG, Nov. 25, 1908.
335. REG, Aug. 3, 1909.
336. NSJ, July 19, 1909. In July 1909 the commissioners inspected the roadway in a Doris automobile in order to satisfy themselves that the repair and reconstruction was a feasible proposition. "They had good luck and had no trouble in climbing the grade without mishap." On August 7, 1909, two commissioners in a Doris made the round trip from Reno to Incline. The outgoing trip took over five hours, but the trip back was made in four hours and 45 minutes. NSJ, Aug. 8, 1909.
337. REG, April 27, 1909.
338. REG, March 31, 1909.
339. Statutes of Nevada 1909, ch. XC, pp. 92-97.
340. REG, July 13, 1909.
341. NSJ, April 8, 1909.
342. REG, June 5, 1909.
343. Ibid.; Statutes of Nevada 1909, ch. CLXXX, pp. 229-241.

344. REG, June 12, 1909. The county clerk's seal, authorized by Laws of the Territory of Nevada 1864, ch. CX, p. 148, was previously used as the seal of the county.
345. Myrick, Vol. 1, pp. 318-319; REG, Nov. 9, 1909.
346. Carlson, p. 154.
347. REG, Feb. 12, 1910.
348. REG, Feb. 26, 1910.
349. REG, June 11, 1910.
350. REG, March 21, 1910.
351. REG, July 27, 1910.
352. Ibid.
353. REG, Sept 16, 1910. Some of the categories and numbers of delinquencies were Petty larceny, 24; running away from home, 22; cigarette smoking, 58 (55 boys and 3 girls); shooting craps, 18; playing pool, 38; incendiaries, 8; horse-stealing, 1; carrying firearms, 6; grossly immoral, 15; and drunks, 5.
354. REG, April 18, 1911.
355. REG, May 1, 1911.
356. REG, May 10, 1911.
357. REG, June 1, 2, 1911.
358. NSJ, May 26, June 28, 1911. Charles Carroll Goodwin was born near Rochester, New York, in 1832. "Goodwin's versatility served him as a schoolteacher, merchant, miner, lawyer, jurist, politician and orator. " After a variety of experiences in California he moved to Washoe City from Plumas County, California, in 1861, and in 1863 he served as justice of the peace at Galena, was editor of the Washoe Times and was elected a Washoe County probate judge, continuing as a district judge upon adoption of the Nevada Constitution until 1866. During his residence in Nevada Goodwin served in an editorial capacity with the Territorial Enterprise, the Reno Crescent, the White Pine News and the Inland Empire, and was the Republican nominee for Congress

- from Nevada in 1872 Goodwin moved to Salt Lake City in 1880, where he became editor in chief for the Salt Lake Tribune, a position he was to occupy until 1901, and served as a member of the 1895 Utah constitutional convention. He died in 1917.
359. REG, July 31, 1911. Steel cells for the new Gerlach jail arrived July 31, 1911.
360. Statutes of Nevada 1913, ch. 202, p. 277.
361. REG, May 21, 1914.
362. REG, Dec. 31, 1914.
363. REG, Jan. 25, 1915.
364. Statutes of Nevada 1915, ch. 238, pp. 357-360. This bridge, following its construction, was known as the "cattle bridge." Specifications for the bridge were itemized in the law. The bridge was 22 feet wide, contained high enclosing walls and a 4-foot sidewalk on the west side, and had one driveway suitable for general traffic and the safe passage of livestock. Driving motor vehicles on the bridge proved to be hazardous, and it was subsequently demolished after many years of service.
365. REG, Feb. 4, 18, 1915.
366. REG, March 20, 1915.
367. REG, April 7, 1915.
368. Massey was elected a justice of the Nevada Supreme Court and served from 1897 to 1902, when he resigned to accept appointment as a United States Senator vice George S. Nixon. He served as senator from July 1, 1912, to March 4, 1913.
369. REG, May 4, 1915.
370. NSJ, April 19, 1915.
371. REG, May 11, 1915; NSJ, May 12, 1915.
372. REG, May 18, 1915.

373. REG, June 24, 1915.
374. REG, Nov 6, 1915. The Industrial Workers of the World, referred to as the I.W.W., was a revolutionary industrial union organized in 1905 as a protest against craft unionism and the conservative policies of the A. F. of L. The organization split in 1908, one branch endorsing industrial unionism, the other, the socialist wing, advocated political action in the class struggle.
375. REG, Nov. 5, 1915.
376. REG, Dec. 7, 1915.
377. REG, April 4, 1916.
378. REG, Oct. 16, 1916.
379. Statutes of Nevada 1917, ch. 199, pp. 387-389.
380. Statutes of Nevada 1917, ch. 218, pp. 407-410. The legislature included a condition precedent before the act became effective. Organization under the state's drainage laws of either one general drainage district or two drainage districts, one on the north side and one on the south side of the Truckee River, was required, and the district or districts had to promise to cooperate with the county to provide for further enlargement and deepening of the river channel as the state engineer deemed necessary.
381. REG, Jan. 15, 1917.
382. REG, March 15, 1917.
383. REG, April 7, 1917.
384. REG, Nov. 27, 1917.
385. REG, Oct. 22, 1917.
386. REG, Nov. 27, 1917.
387. Statutes of Nevada 1919, ch. 134, pp. 248-251.
388. Statutes of Nevada 1919, ch. 189, pp. 339-342.
389. REG, July 12, 1919.

390. Carlson, pp. 50, 240. Beulah was near Vya, which is located near the junction of State Routes 8A and 34 in Long Valley near the California boundary. Vya is named for Vya Wimer, the first baby born in the valley.
391. REG, March 1, 1919. Hill's efforts were apparently the last efforts to separate Washoe County and reestablish Roop County, although the name "Roop" emerged briefly from 1965 to 1971, used in the name of a legislative district. See: Statutes of Nevada 1965 (special session), ch. 2, pp. 1-8, and Statutes of Nevada 1971, ch. 647, pp. 1519-1527. In 1979 the residents of Incline Village made a determined but unsuccessful drive to separate the Lake Tahoe portion of Washoe County as a new county.
392. REG, Nov. 6, 7, 1919.
393. REG, Jan. 6, 1920.
394. REG, March 5, April 6, 1920.
395. REG, May 10, 14, 1920.
396. REG, July 13, 1920.
397. REG, Sept. 9, 1920.
398. REG, June 4, 1920.
399. Statutes of Nevada 1921, ch. 186, pp. 278-280.
400. Statutes of Nevada 1921, ch. 209, pp. 308-310. The State of Nevada was to contribute one-half the construction costs and the board of county commissioners could not sell the bonds unless \$150,000 was raised and made available to the department of highways by individuals or organizations in California or any state or states other than Nevada.
401. REG, Jan 3, 4, 17, 1921.
402. REG, April 18, 1921.
403. REG, Feb. 17, 1921. The Gazette described the "giant new hangar," a square of 100 feet with no supporting central columns, possessing the ability to house six of the larger type mail planes, as a departure in design from

the homely buildings ordinarily employed in housing air craft. The landing field to the south of the hangar was 1,200 feet from north to south, and 1,300 feet from east to west.

404. REG, April 18, 1921.
405. Ibid.
406. Ibid.
407. REG, Nov. 9, 1922.
408. REG, July 8, 1924.
409. Carlson, p. 108.
410. REG, May 26, 1924. The aerial tramway was recently dismantled.
411. Carlson, p. 108.
412. Statutes of Nevada 1925, ch. 195, pp. 342-343.
413. Statutes of Nevada 1925, ch. 23, pp. 27-29; Statutes of Nevada 1925, ch. 124, pp. 200-201.
414. REG, June 26, 1925.
415. REG, July 28, 1925.
416. The exposition was held in 1927. The California Building in Idlewild Park in Reno is the only remaining permanent building of the exposition.
417. Statutes of Nevada 1927, ch. 31, pp. 51-54. The board of governors of the exposition had expended \$34,391 in excess of available funds, the county commissioners had over expended by \$3,000. The 1928 legislature directed the county commissioners to negotiate a loan to pay off the overruns. Statutes of Nevada 1928, ch. 3, pp. 3-4.
418. REG, Jan. 18, 1927.
419. REG, July 2, 1928.
420. REG, July 13, 1928.
421. REG, July 20, 1928.

422. REG, Sept. 14, 1928.
423. Statutes of Nevada 1929, ch. 143, p. 185.
424. Statutes of Nevada 1929, ch. 168, pp. 268-272.
425. REG, April 9, 1929.
426. Edwin Ewing Roberts was born in Sutter County, California, in 1870. He taught school at Hollister, California, and Empire, Nevada, was admitted to the Nevada bar in 1899, was district attorney of Ormsby County from 1900 to 1910, and served as Nevada's Congressman from 1911 to 1919. Unsuccessful in his bid for election to the U S Senate, he practiced law in Reno from 1920, serving as Reno's mayor from 1923 until his death in 1933.
427. REG, April 23, 1929.
428. REG, April 26, 1929. Control of the land had been vested by the legislative act of 1903 in the board of library trustees of Reno School District No. 10.
429. REG, June 19, 1929.
430. REG, Dec. 25, 1929. The main county public library was to remain in the state building until 1966, when it moved to its present building, a gift of the Max C. Fleischmann Foundation of Nevada. In 1929 the library had more than 20,000 volumes, with a large number of unbound magazines, papers and other material stored in the basement of the old building. The entrance to the library in the state building was located on Center Street. Bookshelves filled the west end of the "big hall," the distributing counter and desk being placed in the middle of the room. On the east end were the reading tables and the children's reading room, offices of the librarian and the meeting room for the trustees were located in the south wing. The total space occupied by the library was 8,700 square feet. REG, Jan. 11, 1930.
431. REG, March 5, 1930..
432. Statutes of Nevada 1931, ch. 42, pp. 49-51. On June 19, 1931, a contract was signed by the commissioners for the construction of the Sparks library at a cost of \$17,383. The balance of the bond proceeds was to be used for furnishings. REG, June 19, 1931.

433. Statutes of Nevada 1931, ch. 105, pp. 175-176.
434. REG, Jan. 10, 1931.
435. REG, March 12, April 4, 1931.
436. REG, Aug. 1, 1931. In 1932 the district court ruled that the hospital trustees had exceeded their authority, but, prior to the rendition of the court's opinion, the hospital trustees had awarded a construction contract for a smaller building costing \$93,165. REG, March 19, 1932.
437. REG, Aug. 24, 1931. This section of the highway was but 18 feet wide in 1931.
438. REG, Nov. 9, 1931.
439. REG, Nov. 12, 1931.
440. REG, Jan. 5, 1932.
441. REG, March 19, 1932.
442. REG, June 30, 1932.
443. REG, July 6, 1932.
444. REG, July 8, 9, 1932.
445. REG, Aug. 23, 1932.
446. REG, Sept. 14, Oct. 13, 1932.
447. It was not until 1943 that the county treasurer was ultimately relieved of responsibility in connection with the loss. Statutes of Nevada 1943, ch. 24, pp. 35-36.
448. Statutes of Nevada 1933, ch. 30, pp. 25-26.
449. REG, Jan. 5, 1933.
450. REG, Jan. 11, 1933.
451. REG, Jan. 17, 1933.
452. REG, Jan. 20, 1933.
453. REG, Feb. 1, 1933.

454. REG, Feb. 11, 1933.
455. REG, Feb. 8, 1933.
456. REG, March 24, 1933.
457. Six hundred seventy-two bottles of 3 2 beer, which had just been legalized, were consumed.
458. REG, June 24, 1933.
459. REG, Aug. 12, 1933.
460. REG, Oct. 20, 1933.
461. REG, Nov. 7, 1933.
462. REG, Nov. 18, 1933.
463. REG, Dec. 7, 1933.
464. REG, Nov. 29, Dec. 13, 1933.
465. REG, March 15, 1934.
466. REG, March 3, 1934.
467. REG, July 23, 1934.
468. Statutes of Nevada 1935, ch. 17, pp. 22-24.
469. Statutes of Nevada 1935, ch. 178, pp. 381-382.
470. REG, Jan. 9, 11, 1935.
471. REG, March 20, 1935.
472. REG, March 16, 1935.
473. REG, May 7, 1935.
474. REG, May 21, Aug. 1, Sept. 27, 1935.
475. REG, Oct. 22, 1935.
476. REG, Dec. 9, 1935. Under the state bond law then in effect, a question had to carry by a majority of property owners and nonproperty owners each voting on the question.
477. REG, Dec. 30, 1935.

478. The vote in Washoe County was 209 to 13, in the Newlands Project, 295 voted "yes", 195 voted "no ".
479. REG, April 8, 1936. The bonds were actually issued in February 1937. See REG, Feb. 16, 1937.
480. REG, May 6, 1936.
481. REG, May 20, Sept. 21, 1936.
482. REG, Sept. 22, Nov. 13, 1936.
483. REG, Oct. 10, 1936.
484. REG, Oct 12, 1936.
485. REG, Dec. 5, 1936.
486. REG, Jan. 20, 1937. On February 27, 1937, the Reno Evening Gazette reported: "For several years the Washoe County Hospital, which is administered by a board of five persons elected by the people, has been recklessly and extravagantly managed, according to repeated charges made by the county commissioners and other responsible officials of the county government. Its management, they say, has been unbusinesslike and its operating costs out of all proportion to the services it has rendered." REG, Feb.27, 1937.
487. REG, July 21, 1937.
488. REG, Aug.6, 1937. In September 1937 the hospital board was asked to move a hogpen then located near the site of the new county garage. REG, Sept. 7, 1937.
489. REG, Aug. 7, 1937.
490. REG, Aug. 7, 1937.
491. REG, Aug. 17, 1937.
492. REG, Sept. 9, 11, 1937.
493. REG, Oct. 6, 1937.
494. Ibid.

495. REG, Nov. 20, 1937.
496. REG, Dec. 4, 1937.
497. REG, Dec. 7, 1938.
498. REG, Feb. 18, 23, 1939.
499. REG, May 20, 1939.
500. REG, Jan. 20, 1940.
501. REG, April 6, 1940.
502. Statutes of Nevada 1945, ch. 17, pp. 25-26.
503. Statutes of Nevada 1945, ch. 11, pp. 20-21, authorized the county commissioners to transfer from surplus and the salary fund to the postwar reserve fund an amount not to exceed \$500,000 and accumulate moneys from year to year until January 1, 1955, when the funds could be expended for remodeling and constructing additions to the county jail and courthouse. The county commissioners, pursuant to Statutes of Nevada 1945, ch. 100, pp. 155-156, were also authorized to create a hospital reserve (building) fund from surplus in the hospital fund. Moneys were allowed to accumulate from year to year and could be expended for remodeling and additions to the county general hospital.
504. Statutes of Nevada 1945, ch. 243, pp. 473-475.
505. Statutes of Nevada 1949, ch. 87, pp. 100-110.
506. Statutes of Nevada 1951, ch 251, pp. 366-367. Six acres of the fairgrounds were released to the state board of military auditors in 1955 on the condition that an armory would be constructed on the site. Statutes of Nevada 1955, ch. 11, pp. 13-14.
507. BCC, Nov. 4, 1952.
508. Statutes of Nevada 1953, ch. 345, p. 625.
509. BCC, April 6, 1953. The compilation was adopted by the commissioners August 5, 1955. See BCC, Aug. 5, 1955.
510. BCC, Sept. 21, 1953.

511. The U.S.S. Washoe County was designated as LST-1165. As of 1974 the ship was still in active naval service but had been modified to handle bulk cargo and was no longer considered available for assault purposes. A history of Washoe County was requested from the county commissioners by an officer aboard the U.S.S. Washoe County on February 6, 1961. See BCC, Feb. 6, 1961.
512. Statutes of Nevada 1956, ch. 17, pp. 35-37.
513. BCC, July 20, 1956.
514. BCC, Nov. 20, 1956; Sept. 25, 1957.
515. BCC, Dec. 5, 1956.
516. Statutes of Nevada 1957, ch. 30, pp. 31-33.
517. Statutes of Nevada 1957, ch. 67, pp. 96-99. The bonds were authorized to be sold at an election held September 2, 1958.
518. BCC June 5, 1957. The annual salary was set at from \$5,000 to \$9,000. The statute recognizing the office of county manager or county executive (NRS 244.125 et seq.) had been amended by the 1957 legislature deleting original educational qualifications and increasing the maximum annual salary to \$15,000.
519. BCC Aug. 30, 1957. The county manager assumed his duties on September 5, 1957.
520. BCC, Sept. 20, 1957.
521. Statutes of Nevada 1959, ch. 221, pp. 259-262.
522. Statutes of Nevada 1959, ch. 464, pp. 822-825.
523. BCC, Feb. 5, 1959. There had been a purported organization in 1955. See NRS 244.640 et seq.
524. BCC, April 6, 1959. The building is presently used as the county morgue and to house administrative offices of the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District.
525. BCC, April 27, 1959.

526. BCC, June 5, 1959.
527. BCC, Sept. 5, 1959.
528. BCC, Nov. 9, 1959.
529. Statutes of Nevada 1960, ch. 99, pp. 116-119.
530. BCC, Feb. 15, 1960.
531. BCC, May 20, 1961.
532. BCC, Aug. 8, 1961.
533. BCC, Nov. 22, 1961.
534. BCC, Nov. 6, 1961.
535. BCC, April 20, 1962. The new library, containing 43,360 square feet, was completed in 1965 at a cost of \$1,202,000.
536. BCC, May 5, 1962.
537. BCC, July 5, 1962.
538. BCC, Oct. 25, 1962.
539. BCC, Jan. 19, 1963.
540. Statutes of Nevada 1963, ch. 104, pp. 115-118.
541. Statutes of Nevada 1963, ch. 188, pp. 296-302.
542. REG, March 27, 1965.
543. BCC, Sept. 25, 1967.
544. BCC, July 17, 1967.
545. BCC, June 5, 1967.
546. BCC, June 15, 1967.
547. BCC, March 27, 1967.
548. BCC, March 15, 1968.
549. BCC, March 29, 1968

550. BCC, March 29, 1968. An error in the low bid resulted in an award to the next lower bidder for \$727,000 on April 18, 1968. The building, containing 31,936 square feet, was ultimately completed at a cost of \$807,000.
551. BCC, Aug. 26, 1968.
552. BCC, Oct. 25, 1968.
553. BCC, Nov. 15, 1968.
554. BCC, June 16, 1969.
555. BCC, July 18, 1969.
556. The office of county comptroller was created by the 1969 legislature. The comptroller performs the duties of a county auditor.
557. BCC, Sept. 25, 1969.
558. BCC, Oct. 6, 1969.
559. BCC, Jan. 26, 1970.
560. BCC, June 15, 1970.
561. BCC, Sept. 5, 1970.
562. BCC, Aug. 5, 1970.
563. BCC, March 19, 1971; Statutes of Nevada 1971, ch. 295, p. 526.
564. BCC, April 16, June 15, 1971.
565. BCC, Aug. 16, 1971 .
566. BCC, Jan. 17, 25, 1972.
567. BCC, Feb. 25, 1972.
568. BCC, May 5, 1972. Conditional recognition was given on May 5, 1972. Formal recognition occurred June 16, 1972.
569. BCC, Oct. 5, 1972.
570. BCC, Nov. 27, 1972.

571. BCC, April 16, 1973.
572. BCC, April 25, 1972. The report was completed September 25, 1973.
573. BCC, July 5, 1974. In May 1974 Washoe County received an award from the National Association of Counties for the county's pioneering effort in this field of county finance.
574. BCC, Oct. 5, 1973.
575. BCC, Aug. 15, 1973.
576. BCC, Sept. 5, 1973.
577. BCC, Oct. 25, 1973.
578. BCC, Feb. 5, 1974. The county received another award from the National Association of Counties for this procedure.
579. BCC, Jan. 18, 1974.
580. BCC, April 5, 1974.
581. BCC, May 28, 1974. The county accepted \$160,000 from an insurance company in October 1976 in settlement for the destruction of the bridge. BCC, Oct. 25, 1976.
582. BCC, April 25, 1974.
583. BCC, May 28, 1974.
584. BCC, June 5, 1974.
585. BCC, Jan. 6, 1975.
586. BCC, May 15, 1975.
587. BCC, Jan. 6, 1975.
588. BCC, March 5, 1975. A contract for the development of the plan was signed October 27, 1975. BCC, Oct. 10, 1975.
589. BCC, June 5, 1975.
590. BCC, July 7, 1975.
591. BCC, March 25, 1976.

592. BCC, June 25, 1976.
593. BCC, Aug. 16, 1976.
594. BCC, Sept. 16, 1976. The vote was 18,385 for the issuance and 6,212 against.
595. According to the unofficial count in 1977, Reno had a population of 94,564, Sparks, 38,606, the unincorporated county area, 37,443, the entire county, a population of 170,613.
596. Statutes of Nevada 1977, ch. 474, pp. 968-977.
597. Statutes of Nevada 1977, ch. 52, pp. 123-126.
598. BCC, Jan. 17, 1977.
599. BCC, March 7, 1977.
600. The grand jury observed that on a monthly basis the average daily population of the county jail (constructed in 1964) had already twice exceeded its actual capacity --a substantial overcrowding with all of its ominous implications.
601. BCC, Sept. 13, 1977.
602. BCC, Sept. 27, 1977.
603. BCC, Oct. 18, 1977.
604. BCC, Dec. 13, 1977.
605. Carlson, p. 226. Sun Valley lies west of Spanish Spring Valley.
606. See Note 71.
607. Palomino Valley was formerly known as Warm Springs Valley Carlson, pp. 241, 248.
608. Spanish Spring Valley is north of Sparks. Carlson, p. 221.
609. Cold Springs lies about 15 miles northwest of Reno. The community originated as a designated station of the Nevada & Oregon Railroad Company about 1881. Myrick, Vol. 1, p. 345.

610. Carlson, p. 169. Mogul lies about seven miles west of Reno.

611. See Note 83.

612. REG, Aug. 29, 1981.

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