



Julia's Unequivocal Nevada Klampout #46

Porter Springs

clamber year 6030

Brought to you by
Julia C. Bulette chapter 1864,
E Clampus Vitus

Researched and fabricated by
Jeffrey D. Johnson XNGH Clamphistorian at chapter 1864
w/ Mateo Del Norte XNGH Techno Oligarch

Envisioned by
Noble Grand Humbug Gary 'Dusty' Mack

Dedicated to
Marshall Fey 1869 to 2025
2025 c.e.

ABSURDITY, n. A statement or belief manifestly inconsistent with one's own
opinion.

I gave no sign; but I made up my mind that if the auctioneer's brother's funeral
took place while I was in the Territory I would postpone all other recreations and
attend it. Sam Clemens, XPBC



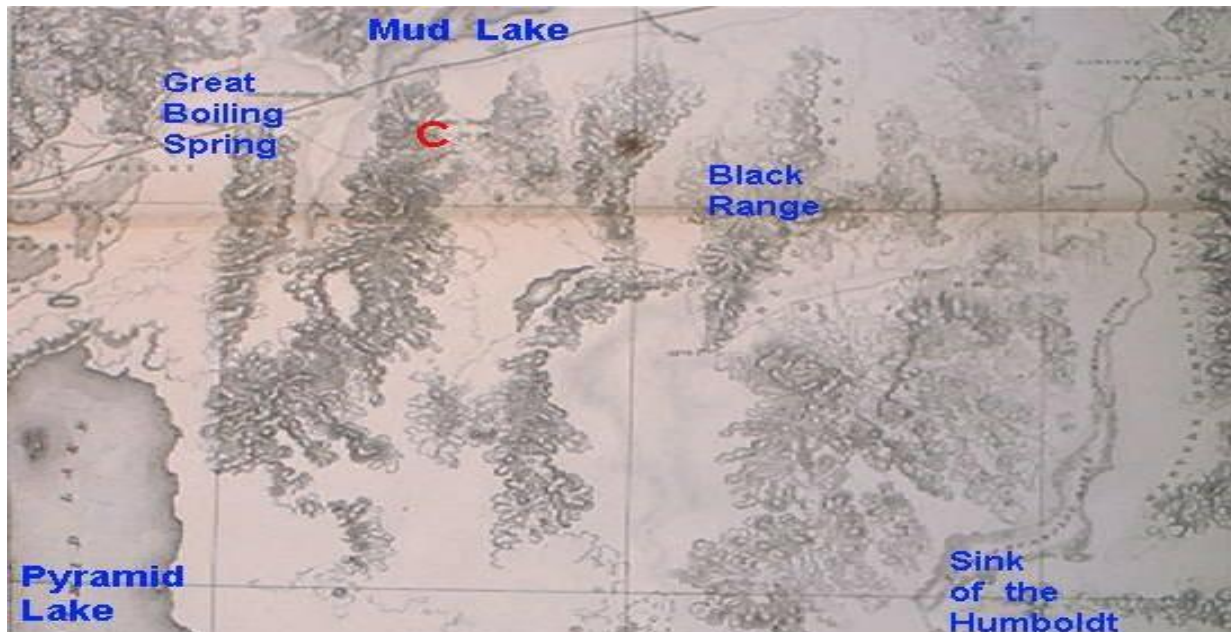
Julia's Unequivical Nevada Klampout
By Myron G Oliver, XPBC XNGH, PXP and X Litterbug

“With a "k", the first JUNK trek and chartering was August 30 and 31, 1980, at Star City with a plaque dedication to that mining camp. At the little park in Unionville another plaque dedication took place, two of the last four markers erected before the state program was deleted. This trek was referred to as 1st Julia Junkett,

On the last full weekend in August, we have a Klampout at a historical place. A ghost town, military fort, emigrant road or trail, mining camp or some other area of historic value.

It is a two-night camp out with the historic tour on Saturday. You bring your own food, booze and you can participate in the cooking contest Saturday night, Trophy's will be awarded for first, second, and third place winners for best cuisine on JUNK. The current humbug will pick a place of his choice with historical interest for his JUNK trek. He will help with the history and research for the upcoming trek. At the camp site, with camaraderie, history talks, storytelling and lies, Saturday night is the Auction starring the infamous Brett ‘Shortround’ Stockwell. Articles are of historic value, or not, the money received from this auction goes into the Moran Building Fund to fund the work and maintenance on the ECV building in Virginia City.

First time new members receive a sheepskin certificate with their name, the place and the date, a JUNK badge with place name hanger bar. Everybody receives the JUNK book on the historical area we are at, written by the Clamphistorian and his accomplices. Previous junkies receive the event place hanger bar. The price is 20 dollars for first time trek members and 10 dollars for old junk trek members. The money stays in the junk trek fund. It pays for the metal place hanger bars, the books, sheepskins and trophies. This is a break-even endeavor, a nonprofit project. Find a list of all the JUNK treks to date in the back of this publication.



The Ground Squirrel Eaters

The local Paiute tribe was the Küpadökadö. They lived along the shores of the Humboldt Sink and River and their territory included the mountains and Valleys North of Lovelock. Their first contact with Americans were Joseph R Walker's Bonneville Exploration party in 1833. They are federally recognized as the Lovelock Paiute Tribe

STARTING POINT OF THE APPLGATE TRAIL EARLY HISTORY

By Peter Van Alstyne XSNGH

In 1846 the Applegate brothers, Jesse and Lindsey led a group of men from the Willamette Valley, in Oregon, in search of a new route to reach their valley. At this time the established trail to Oregon had to be taken by the Snake and Columbia Rivers to the Dalles. At this point the emigrants would either leave their wagons behind or float them down the Columbia River on rafts, which in many cases was very dangerous. Another thing that prompted the locating of a new trail was the possibility of war with Great Britain over boundary disputes between Canada and the United States. Great Britain at this time had control of various posts (Hudson Bay Company Posts) at Fort Vancouver, Fort Nez Perce and Fort Hall. With these routes blocked, if the United States had entered a war with Great Britain the United States would need an avenue by which troops and supplies could be moved. On the other hand, it provided a means by which the settlers living in the war areas would have an escape route.

There were earlier attempts by others to locate a new trail, but these were all fruitless. When Applegate and his men set out they had a fairly good idea of the route they were going to take. They obtained as much information as they could from Hudson Bay Company employees. One of the members of their party was "Black" Harris, a mountain man, who may have had previous experience with the area. Jesse Applegate obtained a map drawn by Peter Skene Ogden, an earlier explorer of the area. The maps he drew proved to be very accurate in the areas they traveled. He had Captain John C. Fremont's reports of his 1843-44 expedition. He possibly read of Fremont's travels through Nevada and Oregon. Applegate at one time had been, and still was a professional engineer, he also owned a "Burts Solar Compass" and whether he took it with him is not known. While traveling a trapper's trail between Oregon and California the party met a group of French Canadians and half-breeds. The men they encountered, directed them to turn east from the trail, and cross the Cascade Mountains, by way of the present Green Springs Summit on State Highway 66. From the information they had gathered, the explorers knew the approximate location of the Humboldt River. Their plan was to intersect the Humboldt as near as possible to the 42nd parallel. (The present-day Oregon and Nevada state lines)

The explorers succeeded in finding a route, much of it was planned in reverse of how the route would be traveled. They reached the Boiling Springs at Black Rock. It was at this point they divided, one party headed almost due south, the other party under Jesse Applegate, headed southeast towards a gap in the mountains, it was here that Rabbithole Springs was found. Both groups changed their direction of travel from an eastward course at Black Rock probably in hopes of finding water. They probably headed in a southern direction hoping to run into the Humboldt River where it was thought to flow. Both groups encountered a pretty rough time of it, without water or feed for their animals, they at last reached a spot on the Humboldt about 10 miles south of present Lovelock, and 50 to 60 miles south of where they wanted to intersect the California Emigrant Trail. The group traveled up to a spot on the Humboldt River and California Trail where it was possible to start their proposed southern route to Oregon. The day they found the start of their route was approximately July 21st, 1846.

THE TRAVELERS

The trail was located and opened in 1846 Late in August of that year the first travelers began to use the route Some 90 to 100 wagons comprising of 450 to 500 people made the journey. Why did these people and others venture on a route that had not been traveled or proved? It may have seemed safer to take a chance on a new trail than risk the perils of the Humboldt route. From Lassen Meadows to what is now Lovelock was nothing but desert with soft ground, poor water, and no grass. Beyond this lay the dreaded Forty Mile Desert and the Sierra Nevada Mountains which would have to be climbed. Some of the people who traveled this were pioneers who were looking for the promised land in California or Oregon and later on were gold seekers looking for a quicker route to the goldfields. The question arose which of the two roads shall we pursue, follow the old road-the advantages and disadvantages of which we are pretty well informed; or shall we risk the new one of which we know nothing, except from unreliable reports.

The Applegate Trail, later re-named the Applegate Lassen Trail, left the Humboldt River at Lassen Meadows (now Rye Patch Reservoir) and headed northwest to the base of Antelope Mountains where they found Antelope Spring (later referred to as Willow Spring). Sometimes the emigrants met with disappointment when they came to the springs. Some turned back to the Humboldt River to take the old route.

From Willow Springs they proceeded through a gulch a few miles. From here they went left and ascended Majuba Mountain to water at one of the three springs located 1/2 to 3/4 miles up the slope. Sometimes Willow Springs was bypassed in favor of the bigger springs. From Antelope Springs the trail led to Rabbit Hole Springs. At Rabbit Hole Springs again they found little water and no grass. From here the

emigrants could look across flat desolate desert lakebed for 25 miles. What they saw was the Black Rock Desert.

NOBLES' EMIGRANT TRAIL

Peter Van Alstyne XSNR

The founding of Nobles Emigrant Trail proved to be a major breakthrough in the development of Northern California. This route helped contribute to the founding of the towns of Susanville and Redding. Portions of it later would become a stagecoach route from Chico, California, to Silver City and Boise, Idaho. Later on some of the trail became important freight routes.

William H. Nobles discovered the route while searching for gold in 1851. Nobles came to the Honey Lake region with a band of 80 men in the spring of 1851. At this point the party broke up, but Nobles continued eastward searching for gold. In his quest, he came to the Applegate Trail at Black Rock Point in the Black Rock Desert. He realized at this point that he had stumbled on a new route to California which was easier to travel, and a much more direct route to Northern California. He returned the way he had come and continued westward around the base of Lassen Peak (St. Joseph as it was called then) and came to Mill Creek. From already established roads the route continued to a crossing on the Sacramento River then on to Shasta, California, where the route was to finish.

The route of the original trail followed the Applegate Trail to Black Rock Point, from here it ran westward across a finger of the Black Rock Desert and dropped south and paralleled the Black Rock Desert and came to Granite Springs which had both water and grass. From here it went to Hot Springs at Gerlach, and proceeded to the Granite Range, where they could use the watering places on the western edge of Smoke Creek Desert. From here they went to Smoke Creek Canyon, then to the lower end of Smoke Creek meadows, then on to Rush Creek. From here the trail went south and west at Mud Springs and then on to Honey Lake Valley, then proceeding to the Susan River at Susanville. The route then left Susanville (Roop's Fort) going to the northwest to Feather Lake, where it joined up with the Lassen Trail. From here the travelers had the choice of either going to Shasta City or taking the older trail to Lassen's Rancho. Later on, the route had an important improvement by the opening of a cutoff from Rabbithole Springs to Granite Springs. With this new shortcut, the perilous journey to Black Rock Point was no longer necessary. This discovery was credited to two prospectors in 1856.

There was no doubt that the Nobles Route proved to be the easiest of all the routes into California. During the 1850's and 60's, it was used as a favorite route for both emigrants and cattle drives, and for a while was considered a possible route for the transcontinental railroad. With the founding of this route by Nobles, it surely must have saved hundreds of lives, of the brave emigrants, who came west looking for gold or the promised land.

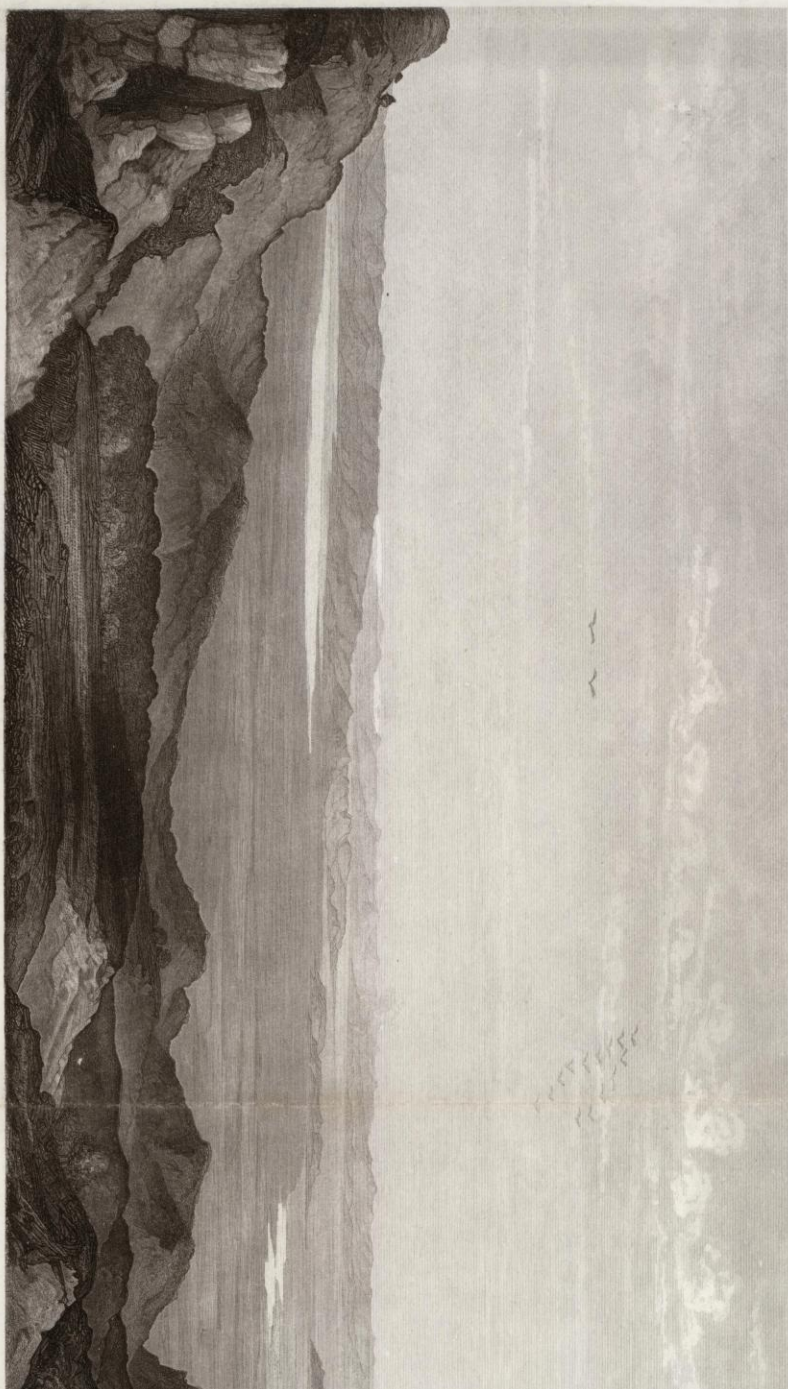
From the editor, (The Public was left with a distaste for the Truckee route after 1847 Donner debacle. Nobles discovered that there was no mountain barrier at all between Honey Lake and the Humboldt River. While water was limited, there was no single stretch longer than twenty-five miles between springs (unlike the forty-mile stretch of waterless desert on the Truckee and Carson routes).

Pacific Railroad Survey, from the Clamphistorian

The United States had roughly 529,000 square miles of new territory they knew virtually nothing about. In March 1853, Congress passed the Pacific Railroad Survey Act, which demanded a full report from the secretary of war, Jefferson Davis, on all practical routes for a railroad that would connect the East to the Pacific Ocean. Lt. Ed Beckwith took over Capt. John W. Gunnison's 1853 39th parallel survey in 1854 after The Captain was murdered at Sevier Lake in Utah Territory.

Beckwith's route through the area left the Humboldt downstream from Rye Patch, crossed a low saddle south of Majuba Mountain and North of the East Trinity Range. Sage Valley has a good grade for a Railroad but they had to move up to what's now Poker John's Spring for water. The next day the Exploration crossed from Sage to Granite Springs Valley, South of the 7 Troughs Range and fortunately discovered the oasis of Porter Springs, the only wet spot for 30 miles. Next day they crossed the shoulder of the Selenite range. Beckwith sent his lithographer to engrave the view from the top, the first known image of the Black Rock Desert. From there they followed what became the Western Pacific mainline from Gerlach to Phil then around into the Smoke Creek Desert crossing straight across from Bronte. He explored a route across the Madeline Plains and down to the Pit River to Redding. Most speculation for the transcontinental RR followed Beckwith's survey North around the High Sierra till the discovery of the Comstock in 1859. Western Pacific was built along his Black Rock Desert route, following the Nobles trail Fifty years later.

U.S.P.R. EXP. & SURVEYS 41° PARALLEL.



C. SCHUCHMAN from THE KODAK PRINTING

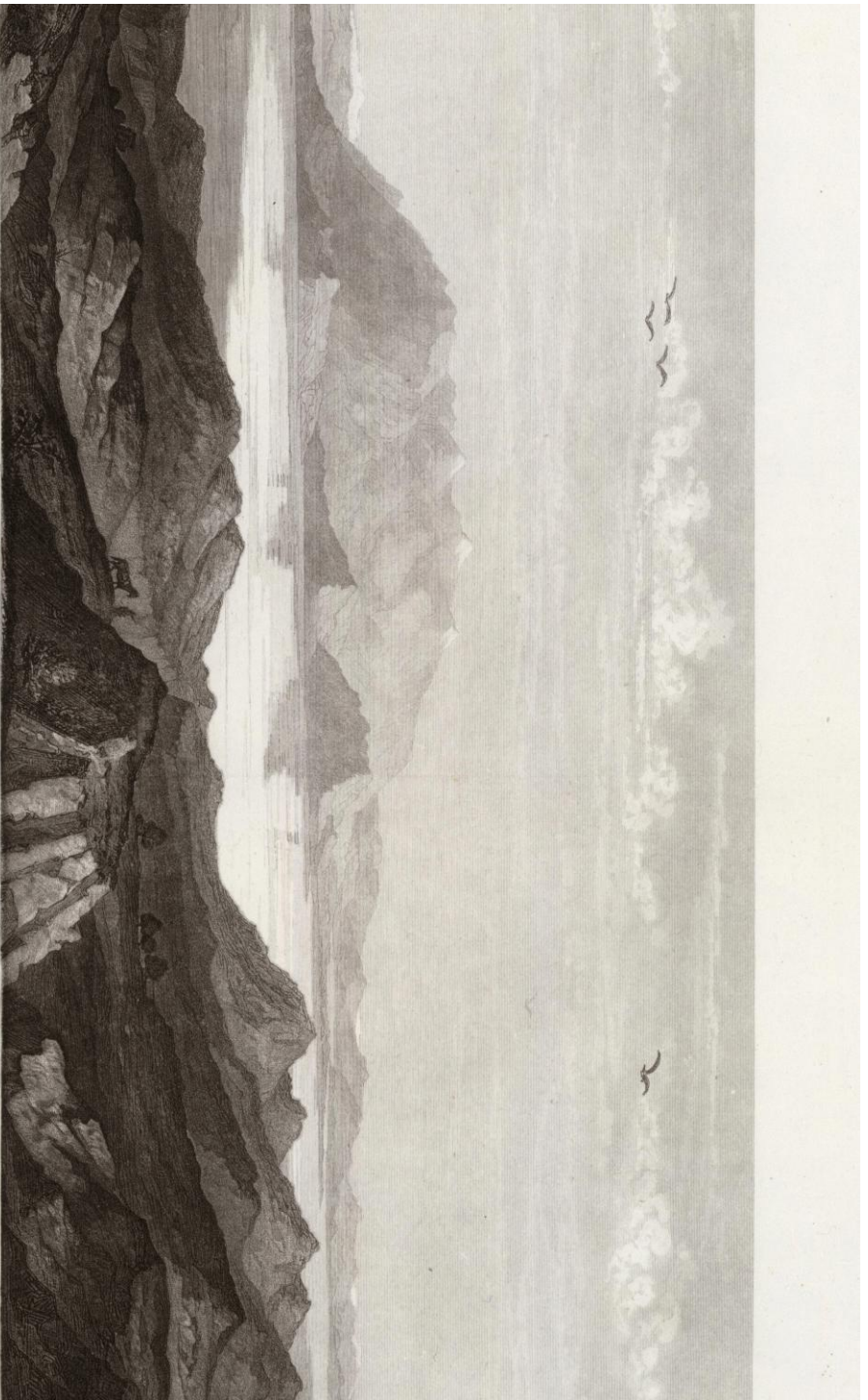
31° 4' N 12°

ENTRANCE TO MARSHALL PASS. — EASTERN BASE OF THE SIERRA NEVADA.

CAMP JUNE 14, 15 & 16.

MOUNT OBSERVATION. —

GREAT BOILING S



VALLEY OF THE MUD LAKES.

SHOWING EIGHTY TWO MILES OF THE PROPOSED RAIL ROAD LINE.

JUNE 14TH AT 9 A.M. FROM MUD LAKE PEAK.

1864.

LOOKING WEST FROM

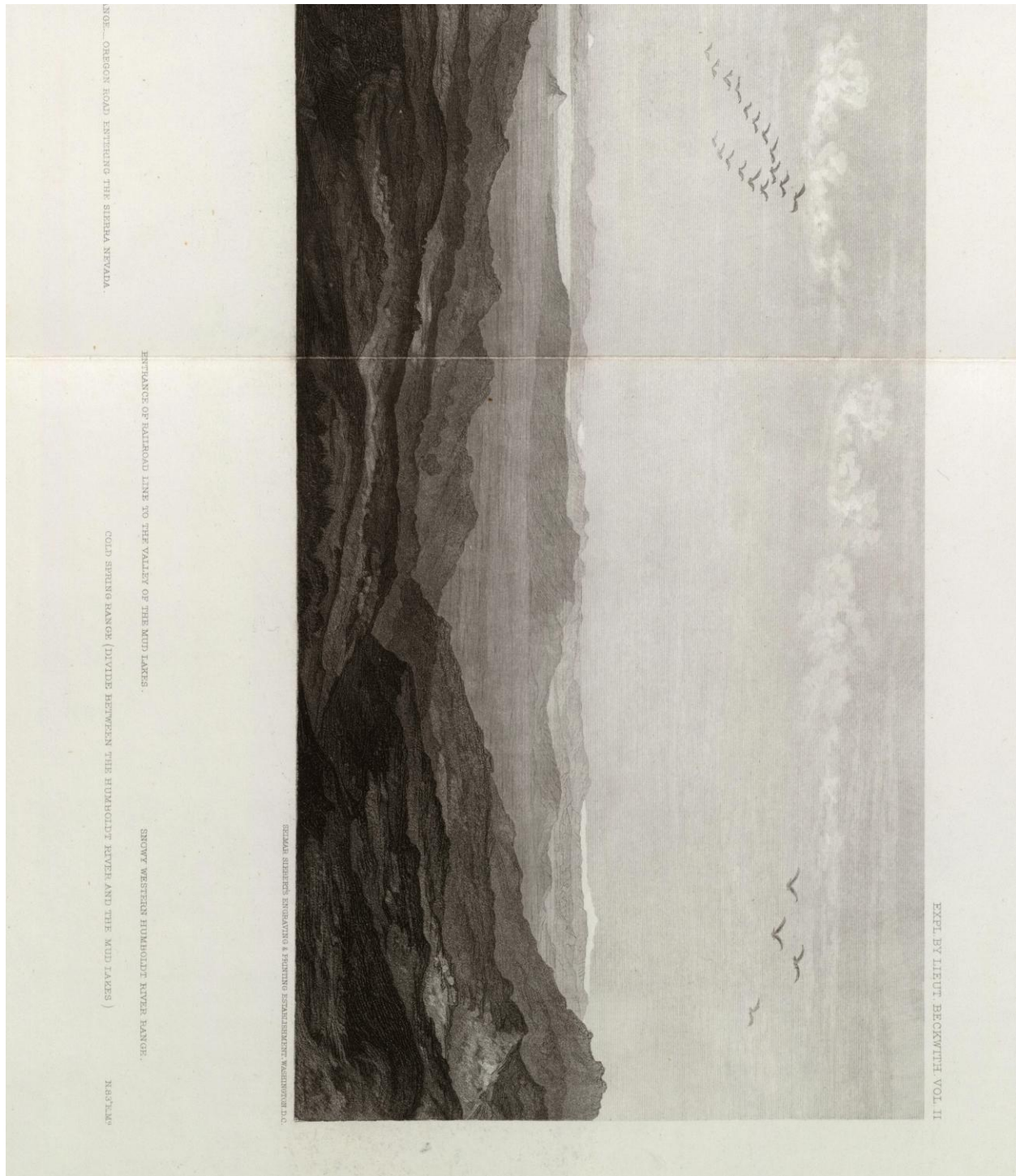
BLACK ROCK M.

OF THE SIERRA NEVADA.

POINT.

c

SEE MAP.



Beckwith's report 1854

June 10.-We crossed the (Humboldt) river by a small wagon-boat brought with us for the purpose and descended the stream 3.51 miles to camp Fine droves of cattle, which had been wintered near Great Salt Lake, passed today on their way to California, and one or two large flocks of sheep are

but a few miles behind them. Latitude of camp, 40° 42' 03". (On the River downstream from Rye Patch)

June 11.-Our last camp (On the 9th) was in a large bottom of coarse grass-the last found on this river above its sink-known to emigrants as Lassen's Meadows, (Imlay) in which the river terminates its general western course, and turns south for 40 miles, where it reaches the marshy lake in which it disappears. Immediately north of the meadows there is a detached mountain range, a few miles in length, behind which there is said to be a favorable passage to the west, leaving the river, of course, a few miles above where we returned to it, but in sight. The same passage is entered by the west end of the mountain by a northwest course from yesterday's camp. It is by this line that Noble's (And Applegate's) route to California, followed to some extent by emigrants, leads to Mud Lake, (Black Rock Desert) and it is believed to be the most favorable route for reaching that lake from the river; but its eastern portion did not appear so favorable to us as one further to the south, which we followed after ascending the highest mountain in the vicinity, and examining the connections of the respective passes westward. By the one we followed We descended the course of the river for 9.64 miles, and then bore off to the southwest over the foot-hills of a mountain just west of this part of the river. (His latitude for Camp on the tenth is 9,5 miles from somewhere in Lassen's Meadows which is known as the Pit Taylor reservoir. This is the description of leaving that stretch of the Humboldt River heading due West over a low divide into Sage Valley.)

Still further to the south, the country becomes more open, and no obstacle could be seen to approaching Pyramid Lake on the general level of the Basin; but this would have taken us too far to the south for our present purposes, if it could be avoided, and we therefore followed what appeared the best route. The soil of the valley and foot-hills was of ash-heap friability; but as we ascended the broad, open mountain depression it became firm, being formed from the disintegrations of granite rocks. The ascending grades to the summit of this pass are, for the first 9.64 miles from our morning camp, 16.20 feet per mile; but, from the formation of the hills, the distance can be increased to diminish the succeeding grades, which average 23.20 feet per mile for 7.86 miles; 64.30 feet per mile for 6.93 miles; and 97 feet per mile thence to the summit, 5.50 miles distant. The width of this depression, in its narrowest part, exceeds one and a half miles. We were obliged to leave it, however, to find water and grass, encamping on a granite peak to the south, and several hundred feet above it, where the grass was abundant, and a small spring furnished a sufficient supply of water. (Poker Brown Spring in the Trinity Range)

June 12.-The pass to the west is equally as broad and open as to the east, with a descending grade of 87.20 feet per mile for 10.55 miles, and of 30.50 feet to the mile for the next 4.68 miles; and thence to the succeeding valley, 1.85 miles, 73.50 feet per mile. This (Sage) valley extends far to the south, and doubtless to the east to Humboldt river, passing to the south of this mountain, and west to Pyramid lake. It extends, however, only 12 or 15 miles to the west, opposite the point where we entered it. The western portion (Granite Springs Valley) of it is entirely barren, and in the spring

is doubtless covered with water. To the north the plain of the valley ascends considerably, and becomes narrow, not exceeding two miles in the narrowest portion. It was late in the afternoon when we entered it, and we could nowhere see any indications of water. We therefore turned northward, and were gradually approaching the west side of the valley when we discovered a bunch of willow-bushes on its east side-an unfailing sign of water in this country-where we found a small spring, (Porter Springs!) and scattered grass in the plain two miles below. The plain was level for 2.55 miles by the path we followed, and ascended 21 feet per mile for 8 miles to where we left it to encamp. The mountains about us are not elevated enough to retain snow at this season, and are very dry and destitute of timber. The rocks in the higher parts are coarse granite, but lower down are shale, and hard dark-red trachytic strata. The day has been cool, with a high southwest wind and slight showers. Day's march, 28.75 miles.

June 13.-From our morning camp our path lay west to a depression, two or three miles wide, in the succeeding ridge, from which we descended northward over the base of hills extending towards the western valley, directing our course to an open passage in the next western range, at the foot of Mud lake, or rather through which that lake extends, to the foot of the Sierra Nevada. Finding, however, that we should not be able to reach it before night, it was necessary to leave the barren sage plain, and ascend the mountain to the west, (The Selenite's) to find a camp. But although the grass was abundant, we were unable to find water. Several slight showers during the day, however, prevented great thirst, and one at evening moistened the grass for our animals. The most eastern of the miry plains, called Mud lakes, lies 11.75 miles directly north of the camp. Its southern border is followed by Noble's road, (Jungo Road today) which follows one of the most favorable lines by which the passes we are approaching in the Sierra Nevada can be reached from the east, and in the event of future surveys being conducted in this part of the basin, it is worthy of examination. In crossing the valley which extends to this lake, in approaching camp, we passed over a high mass of rolling hills, which should have been avoided by extending our course to the west in the earlier part of the day; or in leaving the preceding pass, we should have maintained our level by travelling on the east side of the valley, and thus have avoided the descent and rise indicated by the profile, for though the grades are not heavy, they are to some extent unnecessary. As before stated, the depression crossed in the ridge this morning is broad, and can be ascended by a line at least twice as long as the direct one followed by us, which would make it entirely a practicable grade in its unimproved condition for a railroad. From the centre of the valley east of that pass, we ascended 69.80 feet to the mile; and thence to the summit, 1.37 miles, the ascent was 207 feet to the mile. For 2.55 miles west of the summit, the descent was 40.30 feet per mile; and the average ascent for the next 7.04 miles, 44.40 feet per mile; while the change of level indicated by the barometers in the succeeding 2.54 miles was but 43 feet. Day's march, 24.12 miles.

June 14.-We crossed the mountain on which we had encamped, immediately to the west, and descended to a branch of Mud lake. The soil of these plains is very light, and our animals sink quite as deep in many of the parts, dry upon the surface, as in the wet and miry portions. The maze of lakes is liable to mislead you in regard to the character of these mudflats. It is true, there is a small

sheet of water upon the surface of a small portion of the most eastern of them, and upon the most southwestern also; but their general character is precisely that of the Desert west of Great Salt lake—a plain of mud, more or less miry at intervals, destitute of vegetation, with a surface, especially when recently moistened by rain, presenting at a little distance a perfect resemblance to a sheet of water. It is here and there incrustated with salt, but not to the extent of the desert referred to. The first branch of these plains which we crossed was 6.90 miles in width. At this point we crossed Fremont's trail of 1844, leading from the Boiling springs (Gerlach) to Pyramid Lake. We then travelled along the north end of one of the ranges or spurs of mountains terminating in these plains. I experienced great difficulty in ascending it a few hundred feet on horseback, its composition being in many parts precisely that of the plain, into which, of course, it is washed by every shower. Granite is, however, found in the same mountain, and vegetation in some parts, but there is none upon the friable surface. It was late in the day when we arrived on the eastern border of the second branch of the plain, and it was very doubtful whether we could cross it. There was no alternative but to try it, however, and sleep in the mud if we failed; for, although on a lake, we were without water, nor could any sign of it be discovered, nor of grass. Taking a few men with me, therefore, I at once set off, leaving the party to follow with Captain Morris, if I should not turn back in a short time. But although the road was heavy, we experienced no difficulty in crossing this branch of the lake for ten miles to the foot of the Sierra Nevada. The sun was bright, although the day was very smoky, (Smoke Creek Desert? Beckwith avoided the popular Noble's trail to Susanville, with a series of Springs and stations, instead following a route on the North slope of the Fox Range, The Western Pacific was built here 50 years later.) and the reflection severe upon our faces and eyes. When in the centre of the plain, we were gratified by the sight of bushes and of green vegetation in the mountain we were approaching, indicating the position of springs and of small streams; but the streams did not reach the lake, and we experienced much difficulty in ascending to them, as they were upon a terrace, in front of which the ascent was very steep, and so covered with blocks of trachytic rocks, that it was only after great exertion that our animals were driven over them to water and grass. We were here upon the Noble road, which follows the north shore of the lake by the Boiling springs. In descending to Mud lake north, from the valley east of our morning camp, the grade is 76.60 feet per mile for 11.75 miles, and thence to our present camp, or indeed to any point upon the borders of these plains, the change of level is merely nominal. Day's march, 25.27 miles; altitude above the sea, 4,118 feet.





Edward Griffin Beckwith Frederick Wilhelm von Egloffstein Frederick W Lander

Edward Griffin Beckwith

Born June 25, 1818 in New York, E. G. Beckwith graduated from West Point in 1842. He served in the Artillery in Georgia and recruited volunteers for the Mexican War. He could have died from yellow fever at Tampico Mexico. Though he survived, it took a toll on his health. From 1853 to 1857 he was occupied with the Pacific Railroad Survey serving under John Williams Gunnison till Gunnison's death in 1853.

Beckwith assumed command and the party wintered in Salt Lake City. He surveyed the route that ultimately became the Union Pacific from Wyoming to Ogden and studied the flotsam and jetsam of the great Salt Lake over the winter. In May he received orders to proceed west along the 40th latitude along the Humboldt River and surveyed the Black Rock desert and passes around the North end of the Sierras. Word of Beckwith's arrival at Fort Reading came as a complete surprise. Whether Theodore Judah of Central Pacific RR fame and Beckwith actually met in California is unknown, but it seems likely that Judah would have gone out of his way to meet Beckwith once news of his arrival in California made it into the press. Should introductions have been necessary, Judah had two usable connections. His brother Henry, who had been a year behind Beckwith at West Point, (although in 1854 Henry Judah was off fighting Indians in northern California). The more likely source of introduction between Judah and Beckwith was the railroad's banker, William Tecumseh Sherman, a classmate of Beckwith's at West Point. As it happened, all the vouchers for the expedition had been made out in Gunnison's name. With Gunnison dead, Beckwith was unable to

payoff the expedition's employees. It is known that Beckwith arranged a loan from Sherman to cover the Expedition's debt. Beckwith was also involved with constructing military roads in Nebraska and Kansas, between 1857 and 1859.

Beckwith was promoted captain May 12, 1855, and served during the Civil War from 1861 to 1865, he was mustered out a major on May 31, 1866. He died at Clifton, New York, in 1881, and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.

Frederick W. Von Egloffstein

Born 18 May 1824 Baron F. W. von Egloffstein was serving in the Prussian army as a lieutenant in 1846 when he left for the United States. He would resign his commission in 1847. He was a military man, explorer, mapmaker, realtor, landscape artist and engraver. He was the first person to employ ruled glass screens, together with photography, to produce engravings. Egloffstein was hired as a topographer for the last Western expedition of John Charles Frémont, 1853-54. He left the expedition in Parowan, Utah, after near starvation and exposure in the mountains and went to Salt Lake City. There he joined the survivors of the Gunnison–Beckwith Expedition under Lieutenant Edward G. Beckwith, producing maps and panoramas of Utah, Wyoming, Nevada and California, published in the *Pacific Railroad Reports*. In 1857-58 Egloffstein worked on the Joseph Christmas Ives expedition up the Colorado. When the War began in 1861 Egloffstein, was elected colonel the 103rd New York Volunteer Infantry, wounded in battle in late April 1862, in North Carolina. He returned to Germany in 1878, living till 1885.

Frederick William Lander

Born in Massachusetts in 1821, he was an explorer, surveyor, engineer, poet and general in the Union Army during the Civil War. He went to military school in Vermont and became a civil engineer. The United States government employed him on Pacific railroad surveys. In his 1856 report to Congress of his 'Reconnaissance of a Railroad Route from Puget Sound via South Pass to the Mississippi River', he expressed his fear of the vulnerability of west coast to British seizure as a reason for a railroad. He also reported from an engineering standpoint that by the time the new Railroad was built the entire thing would need to be replaced from the wear and tear of the endeavor.

He engineered the overland wagon route through Wyoming in 1858. In 1860 the Pyramid Lake Indian War forced the renegade bands North into the Black Rock desert. Lander personally made peace with Numaga and the bands so he could finish his job of improving the last stretch of the Fort Kearney Honey Lake national Wagon

Road that followed Nobles old trail. He expanded the water availability at Trego, Rabbit hole and Willow Springs and straightened the road saving several miles.

Lander married English-born stage actress Jean Margaret Davenport in San Francisco in October 1860. Lander served with distinction on secret missions as a volunteer on the staff of General McClellan. He was promoted to brigadier general of volunteers on May 17, 1861. A hero at the Battle of Ball's Bluff, he was badly wounded the next day. About 2 weeks later he was stricken by a "congestive chill." Lander died from complications of pneumonia at Camp Chase, (West Virginia) on March 2, 1862. Lander County Nevada is named for him

Porter Springs

Gary D. Mack NGH

Porter Springs is a small, but historically significant, site known for its natural springs, mining activity, and its role as a cultural and recreational area. It is located in Pershing County, Nevada, approximately 31 miles northwest of Lovelock.

Prehistoric and Native American Use

Porter Springs has been a vital oasis in the arid Granite Springs Valley for centuries, surrounded by the vast "sagebrush ocean" of northern Nevada. The springs provide a reliable water source, making it a significant campsite for the Paiute people, who utilized the lush riparian habitat for sustenance and shelter long before Europeans showed up.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the springs supported Native American communities for centuries, offering water, vegetation, and a haven for wildlife in an otherwise harsh desert environment.

19th Century - Early Exploration

The first documented non-Native visitor to Porter Springs was Lieutenant Edward Griffin Beckwith, who camped at the site in 1854 while surveying the 41st parallel as part of a broad effort to map potential routes across the American West. His visit marked the springs as a notable waypoint for explorers and travelers.

Mid-20th Century - Mining Era

Porter Springs gained prominence in the mid-20th century due to mining activities. In the mid-1950s, Ellis K. Farnum and his family relocated two wooden cabins from

nearby Tunnel Camp to Porter Springs and constructed a small tungsten mill to process ore from their Holiday Mine. Between the 1950s and 1962, the mill produced approximately 3,000 tons of tungsten, a critical mineral used in industrial applications.

The Farnum family also created ponds and installed a spring-fed irrigation system to support apple trees, cottonwoods, and willows, enhancing the site's oasis-like quality. After the mill ceased operations in 1962, the site reverted to use as a wilderness campsite.

Additionally, the Porter Spring Claims, located nearby at an elevation of 4,692 feet, were identified as a gold mining site, though specific production details are sparse.

The site is classified as an "occurrence" with an unknown mining method, suggesting limited or exploratory activity compared to the tungsten operations.

The broader Seven Troughs Range, where Porter Springs is located, was heavily prospected, with nearby ghost towns like Vernon, Mazuma, Seven Troughs, Farrell, and Placerites also tied to mining activities.

2018-Present - Modern Development

In 2018, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) transformed Porter Springs into the Porter Springs Recreation Area, a 640-acre site designated for public use.

The grand opening occurred on April 28, 2018, highlighting the area's natural and historical significance. BLM installed a fence to protect the riparian habitat and shade trees, added picnic tables, fire rings, a vault toilet, and a gravel parking area, and designated spaces for walk-in tent camping inside the fenced area with vehicle camping outside it. Interpretive signs were also added to educate visitors about the site's Native American history, mining past, and ecological value.

The recreation area is celebrated for its biodiversity, particularly as a premier birding site in northern Nevada. Over 130 species of local and migratory birds, including warblers, flickers, and red-tailed hawks, have been observed, earning it recognition as a birder's paradise. The site's springs and ponds also support livestock, wild burros, and other wildlife, and helps preserve the area's trees and ensure water availability for both wildlife and grazing partners like adjoining C Punch Ranch.

Seven Troughs

Skeeterpeter Van Alstyne XSNR

EARLY ACCOUNTS

Originally called the Pah-tson Mountains on the Fortieth Parallel Survey the mountains are now known as the Seven Troughs Mountains. On early maps the range was recorded as the Stone House Range. The name Seven Troughs came from seven watering troughs that were built in 1894 by Frank M. Ward, a sheep rancher, who used them to water his stock. Early in 1905 rich deposits of gold and silver ore were found at the base of Seven Troughs Mountains. Later on in that year and during 1906 and 1907 other discoveries were made that lead to the formation of the Seven Troughs Mining District.

A Blacksmith, from Lovelock, by the name of Joe Therien is credited with the first discovery of gold and silver ore in the Seven Troughs area. Upon his return to Lovelock he showed some of his prized ore to some of the local residents. They in turn rushed to the area and located claims. According to L.A. Friedman, Therien himself had failed to locate any claims. Louis A. Friedman was the dominant figure in the Seven Troughs Mining District. In the spring of 1906 he was operating a mine at Fairview and earlier that year had grubstaked three prospectors from the Goldfield area that were bound for the Seven Troughs region. On July 4th He abandoned the festivities and rushed to Seven Troughs. Amateurs bickered over their prospects, and he bought them all out. Not long after his purchase of the claims Friedman associated himself with a number of Utah mining men. It was this group that incorporated under the name Seven Troughs Mining Company, later to be known as the Fairview Mine.

Other early locators in the area was William Stauts who in the winter of 1905-1906 located nine claims along the sides of the canyon in Seven Troughs. The three claims lying south of the canyon, known as Lookout Nos. 3,5, and 6, became the property of the Seven Troughs Therien Gold Mines Company; the next three immediately adjoining and on the north side of the canyon formed the Mazuma Hills Mining Company. These were. Lookout Nos. 1,2, and 4. The most northerly three claims, called Outlook Nos. 1,2, and 3, were purchased by the Mazuma Hills Extension Mining Company. At about the same time, O.T. Owens and Frank Crumpacker made another discovery, just to the south of Lookout No. 6. These men together with Joseph Therien, the Lovelock blacksmith and machine shop owner, had located the Ivor and Idwal claims during the summer of 1905. They then added the Llewelyn and Idris claims, forming a group of claims immediately contiguous to the southerly and

easterly boundary of the ground acquired from Stauts by the Seven Troughs Therien Gold Mines Company.

According to Friedman, the owners of the aforementioned claims were without funds for developing purposes. Having liked what he saw Friedman purchased the claims for \$75,000, half of which was paid in cash, and the balance in ninety days. Shortly thereafter, the Friedman group organized a corporation known as the Kindergarten Mining Company. Friedman explained the origin of the name in this fashion: "The name of the Kindergarten Mining Company was derived in a rather peculiar way. He at one time, had an argument with his superintendent regarding the work being done, in what he considered to some extent an unminer like manner, and the superintendent told him: "If you would furnish me miners instead of those dubs that I have working here, I could do miner like work, but I am running a regular kindergarten here." That was the cause of the corporation being named the Kindergarten Mining Company, as at that time miners were extremely scarce, and the camp being new and with so much territory to be prospected, and located, that all the good experienced miners were spending their time in that manner, and in a good many instances, farm hands were used for miners." Later Friedman and his associates purchased the ground known as the Lookout Group (Lookout Nos. 3,5 and 6) for \$5

Coming in from Lovelock through Sage Valley a traveler would have seen three towns. The town farthest south was Vernon (now only walls from the jail still stand); the next, at the mouth of Seven Troughs Canyon, was Mazuma, and a few miles farther to the north was the town of Farrell. Upon reaching Mazuma and going up the canyon, the traveler would, in about a mile and one-quarter, come to the town of Seven Troughs. The four towns, in the order of their development, were Vernon, Mazuma, Seven Troughs, and Farrell.

SEVEN TROUGHS MINING DISTRICT (2)

With the gold and silver discoveries in Seven Troughs Canyon it was only natural that a town would spring up close to where they worked. In 1907 town lots in the town of Seven Troughs would range between \$250 and \$500 each. In that year a Post Office was established and would continue to do business until its closure in 1918. There were also saloons, stores, hotels, and had a population of 350. There was even talk of building a railroad from Lovelock to Vernon and then continuing on to Seven Troughs.

When the town was first plated, water for domestic use had to be hauled in by wagon from most probably Seven Troughs Canyon. Later the Kindergarten Mining Company sank a shaft several hundred feet deep and ran cross cuts in different

directions, which collected all the surface and percolating waters. From the shaft the water was pumped up into a wooden-stave supply tank several hundred feet above the surface of the ground at the shaft. From this tank the water flowed by gravity to other tanks and places of use.

SEVEN TROUGHS MAIL

Myron G. Vino Oliver

A post office was established July 18, 1907 and serviced the area for some eleven years and on February 15, 1918 was discontinued. The mail then was sent to Lovelock. All this was Humboldt County until March 18, 1919 when Pershing County was established.

Seven Trough Mountain range extending north from Granite Springs Valley in west Pershing County is a mining district and a community at the mouth of Seven Troughs Canyon. Leads on the east slope of the range, now being mined is Tungsten, where gold was discovered in 1905 in this district. First gold ore was shipped out on December 31, 1906. Saloons, church and the Post Office was soon to follow.

It's interesting to note, that on earlier Nevada maps, about 1920 and before that Lovelock is spelled with an "S", Lovelocks. In 1859, George Lovelock discovered deposits of silver on the east slopes of the Trinity Mountain range some ten miles north of Lovelock. In June of 1863, the Trinity Mining District was formed and George Lovelock built and operated a hotel and a couple of other small businesses, this place was called Lovelocks.

Right after the turn of the century it was another big Boom for the state of Nevada. Thousands of people were prospecting the state in 1908. New claims and camps were springing up everywhere. Lovelock and Winnemucca became the center of many revivals and discoveries. Among them were Rosebud, Chafey, Jungo, Rochester, Copper Canyon, Midas, Mazuma and Seven Troughs.

VERNON

During 1907 and until August 1908, Vernon was the chief settlement in the district. At one time it had two stores, two boarding houses, three saloons, two assay offices, two real estate and broker's offices, a livery and feed stable and a post office. Mail service in Vernon operated between October 31, 1906 and continued to July 31, 1918. Today very little evidence remains to indicate that a thriving mining town had existed at Vernon. The only thing that remains is a block house jail which is in a state of decay.

FARRELL

Farrell was situated about five miles north of Mazuma at the mouth of Stone House Canyon. Farrell was named after Jack Farrell, who made a supposedly sensational strike adjacent to the townsite. Ore production was minor in this area. The 1907-8 and 1912-13 Nevada Directories made no mention of Farrell, and very little mention of the town was found in the newspapers after 1910. It no doubt became a ghost town after about 1911, although mining operations continued in that area for a number of years afterward.

TUNNEL CAMP

Tunnel Camp, or New Seven Troughs as it was sometimes called, never gained the status of a town, and it never was the intention of the Friedman interests to have other than a well-equipped company camp at the site. The camp was established during the latter part of 1926, when work began in earnest on the 11,900 foot Deep tunnel. The camp contained a number of houses, a bunkhouse, and company store; several of the structures had been hauled from the abandoned Vernon townsite. A large galvanized tin building housed the power plant, and by the summer of 1930, a modern 100-ton cyanide mill had been built.

HALFWAY HOUSE

Situated at the north end of Trinity Pass, this change station was a resting and watering place for the stages passing between Lovelock and the Seven Troughs Mining District. Built around 1906 and located about 13 miles northwest of Lovelock the Halfway House was about the half way point between Vernon and Lovelock. The operation ran for several years servicing the tired travelers of the area. Today only depressions remain where buildings once stood.

MAZUMA

Situated at the eastern base of the Seven Troughs Range was Mazuma. The town was started in the later part of 1907 but grew rapidly in 1908. At one time Mazuma was the most prosperous town in the area. At the early age of six weeks, Mazuma had a mercantile house, three restaurants, a lodging house, five saloons and two assay offices. In early 1907, the Bank of Mazuma was organized, with Senator George Nixon and Major Richard Kirman as the principal stockholders. (Nixon served as U.S. Senator from 1905 to June 5, 1912 when he died and Richard Kirman became Governor of Nevada in 1935 and served for one term.)

Of all the towns in the Seven Troughs Mining District Mazuma was the leading town of the area. This was partially due to the excellent water supply. Water from four springs near the head of Burnt Canyon was piped down to a settling basin made of concrete. From here the water flowed three-quarters of a mile through four-inch pipe to a concrete reservoir 24X40X10 feet deep. From here the water flowed four and one-half miles through four-inch pipe to a 50,000 gallon redwood tank on a hillside above Mazuma.

In 1908 the Mazuma Hills Mining Company erected a ten stamp amalgamation mill. Also in 1908 the town had a population of 600 people. In most mining towns in Nevada their demise usually came from a fire or by people leaving when the mines peter out. Mazuma's demise came from a very disastrous flood; one of the most damaging in Nevada history, not only in property loss, but in loss of lives.

On July 18, 1912, eight people were killed in the town of Mazuma by this huge flood and one death occurred in Burnt Canyon. With the exception of two stores, the town's business district was completely destroyed and never re-built. The Lovelock Review-Miner reported: "Mazuma Devastated by Cloud Burst-Eight Killed and Property Loss of \$150,000-By Wall of Water Twenty Feet High."

E.H. Bennett, assayer for the Coalition, was watching the storm from the door of his office and gave the following description:

"The torrent rushed down the canyon, playing havoc with everything touched until it reached the head of Main street, Mazuma. At the bend just above Preston's store it came upon the home of the Kehoe's."

The children were in the road in front of the house playing. With them was Perry Gillespie, son of Mr. Gillespie, manager of the Darby Ore Reduction Company. Mrs. Kehoe and the children were all caught by the flood and but one remains to tell the story. The town was never rebuilt. Today while traveling through this area rock foundations from buildings can still be seen.

ARABIA

The Arabia District was located by George Lovelock in 1859. A Stetefeldt furnace was built on the Humboldt River at old Oreana a station on the Central Pacific Railroad 9 miles away to treat the ores of the Montezuma mine in 1867. It was erected after unsuccessful attempts had been made to reduce the ore in stamp mills. Reportedly, the ore was so rich that each ton of silver also produced a half ton of lead. The Montezuma produced \$455,000 in silver and 3150 tons of lead. The lead was taken to San Francisco and made into pellets for shotguns and other uses in a tall tower.

CHOLONA

At 460 miles from the Ferry Building in San Francisco, Cholona is the halfway point on the Western Pacific Railroad to Salt Lake City. Reno Evening Gazette, April 28, 1910, Page 3. Head-on train collision during a sandstorm between Cholona and "Hot Springs" (presumably Trego). This was the first head-on train collision on the WPRR. One train was a gravel train, the other a freight train.

TREGO

Trego is a siding on the Western Pacific Railroad East of Ronda. The area near the springs was seasonally occupied, till 3300 years ago when it was under water. About 1400 years ago the area was reoccupied as the climate dried out. Structures were found by archeologists. Test excavations showed significant depth and cultural features. In 1856, Ladue Vary and Fred Hines discovered the springs when they took a short cut from Granite Creek across the playa towards Rabbithole Spring. When they arrived at the Humboldt River, they met a wagon train on the Nobles Trail. Vary and Hines told the emigrants about the spring, and the emigrants took the shortcut and the Nobles trail was adjusted accordingly. "Hot Spr" appears on the 1857 map "Map of the Western Division of the Fort Kearney South Pass and Honey Lake Road" at that location. Ladue founded Deep Hole in October of 1856 and then later founded Varyville. The 400 foot long trench was initially hand dug by a group led by Frederick_W._Lander in 1860.

The siding was named for Albert Trego, a realtor agent and member of the Board of Directors of the Western Pacific Railroad (Denver). Passenger service began in 1910. An April 29, 1912 newspaper article states that Borax in the water from Trego was the cause of a train engine boiler explosion that killed three people east at Antelope.

In 1920, a man was murdered at Trego. Gerlach Constable Scott Butler was shot in the leg on a train after arresting Manuel Hernandez at Jungo. 1921, three unidentified bodies were found buried at Trego. In June, 1922, there was interest in these bodies when a body was discovered in a shallow grave near Gerlach. Joseph Romeros was convicted in the Gerlach killing.

In 2020, the BLM posted warnings stating "The spring water has tested positive for E. Coli, Fecal Coliforms and Vibrio Cholera. The public is advised to avoid bathing or any type of contact with the spring water. The springs have a temperature of 187F.

SULPHUR MINING DISTRICT

Petey Poo Van Alstyne XSNR

Around 1868 a Paiute Indian found small amounts of yellow rock that had been brought to the surface by burrowing badgers. The indian's name was Indian George. Indian George was fascinated with this yellow material and took some to Humboldt to show around. The mineral was unknown to Indian George, but was well known to two prospectors named Feely and Nord. The two promised the Indian a horse, a saddle and blankets if he would show them where he found this strange-looking yellow rock. The Indian did lead them to where he had found the sulfur. Feely and Nord located the ground and posted their notices and proceeded working their claim and formed a mining partnership under the names of Feely and Nord.

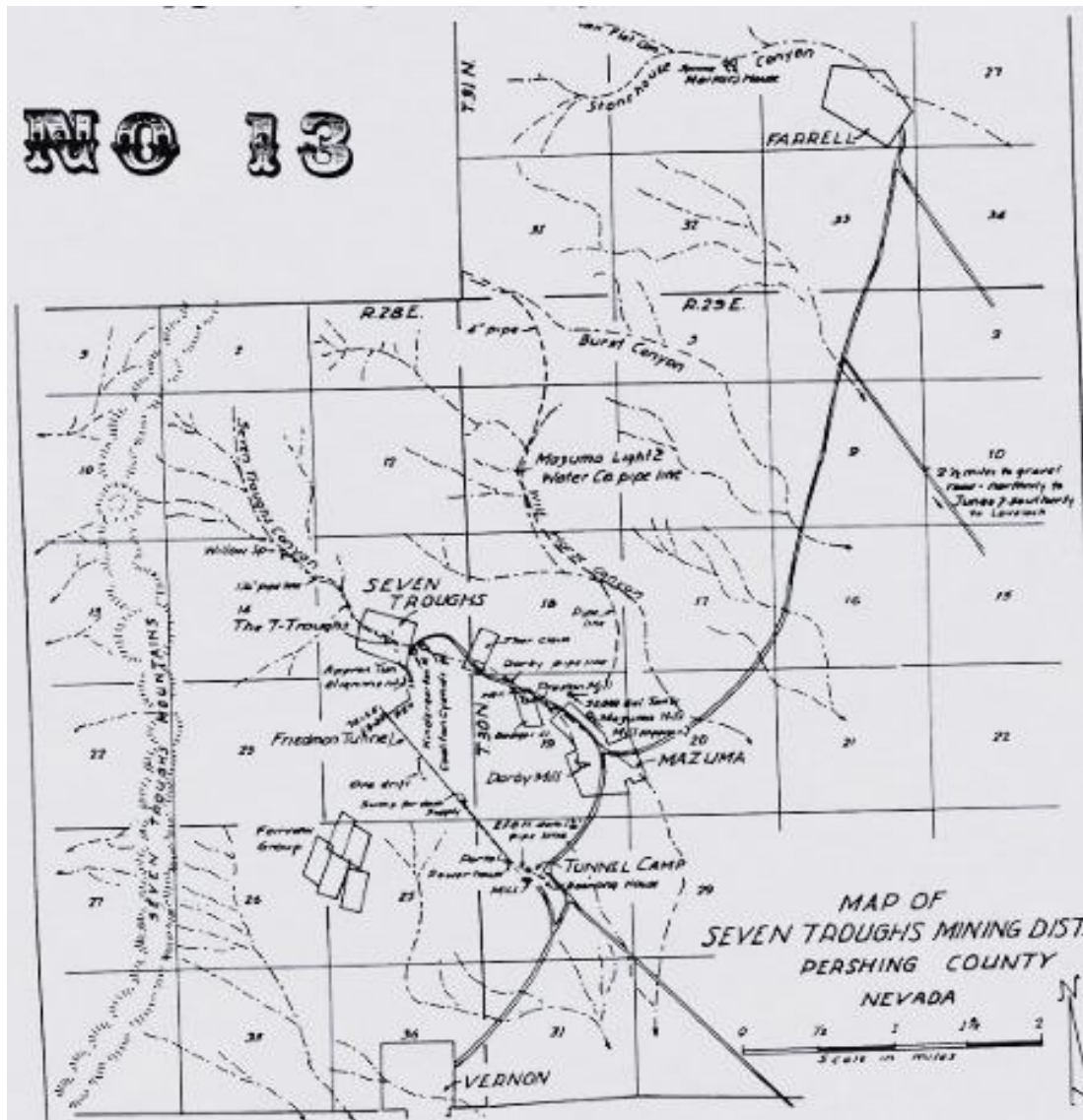
Not long afterwards, the two had a disagreement, and they began to quarrel among themselves. On a hot July afternoon, a fight took place between them. The partnership between them ended when Nord killed Feely. The law from Humboldt County went after Nord and captured him. He was tried in Winnemucca for the murder of his partner. He was found guilty and the judge sentenced him "to be hanged by the neck until dead". The sentence was carried out.

After this, the area was operated by Chinese and other owners and leasers for several years. These hearty souls brought their water in from several miles away and hauled their sulfur 35 miles to Humboldt House, on the Southern Pacific, for shipment. Russell, who printed a paper on Sulphur in 1882 for the New York Academy of Science, visited the area and noted that about six tons of sulfur per day was being mined. He marked that the sulfur that was being taken must have been high grade. This had to have been due to the crude methods of operation and the enormous difficulties.

For several years the area was abandoned. Some mining was done, but never amounted to much, until Isadore Zellerbach bought the property in 1899. It was Zellerbach who organized the Nevada Sulphur Company, making himself president and Louis Bloch secretary and general manager. Marcus M. Baruh headed up mining operations. The operation was a money maker and lasted for several years. In 1917, the Nevada Sulphur Company was purchased and Arthur J. Crowley was placed in charge. The Nevada Sulphur Company operated until 1920. During this time they mined 35,000 tons which contained better than 30% ore. In 1920 Crowley took an option with the Red River Lumber Company on the property and worked the mines for several years with good success.

One large advantage point the mine had was that their shipping point was in Sulphur which was on the main line of the Western Pacific Railroad. This was reached by a very good wagon road only 1½ miles away. The shipping area had a siding which was added along with a warehouse. If you are wondering about Indian George, he was never paid by Feely or Nord, and one would have to guess that he probably out-lived them both! Mining continued here into the 1970's.

On the evening of June 13, 1955, just before 9:00 p.m., the California Zephyr derailed near Sulphur, Nevada at milepost 476. A rainstorm hit the area a short time before, causing the ballast to wash out under the track as the train passed over. Remarkably, the locomotives at the head-end, and the Vista Dome observation car at the tail-end remained on the rails. There were no major injuries, and only a few minor injuries.



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Blasts in the Past + "Gone to Silver Hills"

1980 MYRON G OLIVER,+ STAR CITY-
UNIONVILLE

1981 SKIP PENNINGTON+, MANHATTEN

1982 BILL KENNEDY, KENNEDY

1983 JIM CRONN+, PINEGROVE

1984 GEORGE COURSON,+ LEADVILLE

1985 DOUG WALLING, BERLIN

1986 DAVID WOOD, ROCHESTER

1987 JOE LEPORI, AURORA

1988 BILL SAWYER+, SULPHUR

1989 MIKE MILLER, MILLER'S STATION

1990 RED BEACH+, SHAMROCK

1991 BOB RODGERS+, COMO

1992 RON WALSH, SEVEN TROUGHS

1993 DANNY COSTELLO, THE REAL
NATIONAL

1994 JIM GROWS+, DESERT WELLS

1995 DANIEL BOWERS, HIGH ROCK
CANYON

1996 PETER VAN ALSTYNE+, FAIRVIEW

1997 EDDY GONZALES, GRANTSVILLE

1998 JOHN DORNSTAUDER, HUMBOLDT
CITY

1999 KEN MOSER, BELMONT

2000 VAL COLLIER+, PEPPER SPRINGS

2001 CHUCK MURRAY+, NIGHTENGALE

2002 MARC BEBOUT,+NEW PASS MINE

2003 AL NICHOLSON, IONE

2004 RON THORNTON, FLETCHER

2005 J D PATERSON, APPLGATE-LASSEN
TRAIL

2006 WALT SIMMEROOTH, NEVADA
CENTRAL RR.

2007 JEFF JOHNSON, ADELAIDE

2008 OWEN RICHIE+, TYBO

2009 KARL SMALL,+ DUN GLEN

2010 DAN WESTON, KINGSTON

2011 RUSS BREAM, SMOKE CREEK

2012 JESS DAVIS,+ FREMONT'S CASTLE

2013 CLIFF McCAIN, KNOTT CREEK

2014 BOB STRANSKY, JARBIDGE

2015 TIM PEARCE, WHISKEY FLAT

2016 KEVIN BRECKINRIDGE, COMSTOCK

2017 REID SLAYDEN, WONDER

2018 DOC ASHER, SILVER PEAK

2019 VIC MENA, SILVER PEAK II

2020 MATTHEW EBERT, 120 E BY 42 N

2021 FRED ELDRED, SPRING CITY

2022 TRAVIS. STRANSKY UNIONVILLE #69

2023 ROB DAY NEVADA COPPER BELT RR

2024 CARL DAVISON WILSONVILLE