

# Story of "Battle-Born" Nevada

(Continued from Page One)

between those pioneer silver miners and the Utah Territorial government under Governor Brigham Young. A movement was started to create the Territory of Nevada out of Carson County Utah. Such an Ace was passed and approved the last day of the administration of President Buchanan.

The coming of the Lincoln Administration was immediately met with the problem of secession. Among other disturbing matters came reports that the attitude of the State of California was in serious doubt and might cast its lot with the Confederacy. If it did so, it might quite, probably carry with it the entire West Coast comprising the great precious metal mining section of the nation, a most powerful adjunct in any time of war. How to keep in touch with the situation and obtain reliable information which would necessarily be delayed in transmission pending the completion of the telegraph line then under construction across the mountains and desert, presented another serious problem.

From known recorded history other incidents are deductible. Shortly following the inauguration of President Lincoln there was presented the matter of the appointment of the Governor of the Territory of Nevada. James W. Nye, of the City of New York, who had never been west of the Mississippi river, was the appointee. He had been a Judge of a New York Court; had served as the first President of the then recently created Metropolitan Board of Police of New York City. With William H. Steward, Secretary of State in the Lincoln Cabinet, he had stumped the then so called Western States, comprising the Great Lakes and Mississippi Valley regions, in the first Lincoln campaign. The conclusion naturally follows, that a conversation occurred between President Lincoln and Secretary Steward respecting the appointment as affording an opportunity of having some one in that far West region who had the energy and ability to ascertain and who could be relied upon to furnish reliable information. The circumstances appear to afford conclusive proof that Secretary Steward in effect said to President Lincoln: "I know the man for the place if he can be induced to accept, he is James W. Nye. He is a man of force of character, of learning and ability, a leader among men and I'll say is the best stump speaker in the United States." Nye was appointed and accepted, notwithstanding the salary inducement as fixed by Congress was but \$1,500 per year.

Governor Nye arrived by Overland stage at Carson City in June 1861, and a month later the Secretary of the Territory, Oren Clemmons, arrived from his home in Missouri bringing with him his younger brother, Samuel Longhorn, who was destined to become world famous as Mark Twain. Governor Nye got busy at his big job immediately. The first thing was to get the Territorial government organized including the election of a Legislative Assembly to enact laws. The Assembly, comprising a Council and House of Representatives, was elected and convened for its first session October 1, 1861. Governor Nye delivered an address at its opening making one of his characteristic, forceful, eloquent, convincing, patriotic, speeches, as well as including recommendations for legislation.

A few excerpts from his address will throw some side lights on this then "tenderfoot," as the newcomers of the Far West were called, and why he is accorded a place along with Thomas Star King, the orator clergyman of San Francisco, in keeping California steadfast for the Union during the War between the States, and why President Lincoln felt he could rely on Nevada to maintain the Union of States. The following quoted therefrom: "In the conflict now waging between the seceding states and those that remain loyal to the Union, there is no such thing as neutrality. All must, and will participate, to a greater or less extent, and the infantile voice of this Territory will be heard on one side or the other; and in order that we may determine correctly, let us look impartially at the position of both, and make up our minds from admitted facts."

"... If you so speak, the youngest of the heirs to this richest of inheritances, it will cause a thrill of joy throughout this now agitated country. Say by your action, that young and feeble as you are you will stretch out your arm and shield your Government from the parricidal blow now aimed at it. ... the day is not far distant when those who now differ with you in sentiment will bless you for so speaking."

"One of the most important duties that will devolve upon you is the establishment of a system of Common Schools. A government like ours, that rests upon the basis of universal intelligence, cannot exercise too much care, or vigilance, in providing for a mental and moral culture of its youth."

"The consequences attendant upon the almost universal habit or practice of carrying concealed or deadly weapons, by the citizens of

this Territory, lead me to recommend that some law be passed making it a penal offense to carry them, fully believing that human life will be much safer by prohibiting the use than by tolerating it."

"I also recommend that laws be passed for the regulation of the sale of intoxicating liquors ... a proper regard for the well-being of society, demands that the sale on Sunday or the Sabbath ... should be prohibited ..."

"I particularly recommend that you pass stringent laws to prevent gambling. Of all the seductive vices extant, I regard that of gambling as the worst ..."

The Territorial Assembly was given an opportunity to speak to the Nation. The Assembly met just as the last gap in the transcontinental telegraph line, which was within the Territory of Nevada, was about to be closed. To the Assembly was extended the privilege of sending the first transcontinental telegram. Committees of the two Houses presented a draft of the proposed telegram and approved and sent the day the line was completed, October 23, 1861. The telegram read:

"Nevada Territory, through her first Legislative Assembly, to the President and People of the United States, greetings:

"Nevada for the Union, ever true and loyal. The last born of the Nation will be the last to desert the flag. Our aid to the extent of our ability, can be relied upon to crush rebellion."

Nevada lived up to that telegram. It accepted the burden of statehood to accomplish a great national purpose but that is not the whole story. That was not the first call for aid. It had raised troops of volunteers to fight the warring Pah Utes. Major Ormsby had been killed and his troop defeated shortly following a similar fate which befell Major Lassen, for whom a National Park, a Mountain Peak and a County in California are named. A second battle at Pyramid Lake forced the Indians to retreat. Later in the Spring of 1863, Governor Nye received a call from General Wright, then Commanding General of the Pacific coast with headquarters at San Francisco, which read:

"The Indian disturbances along the line of the Overland Mail Route east of Carson City, threaten the entire suspension of our mail facilities, as well as preventing any portion of the vast emigration approaching from the East reaching Nevada. My force immediately available for operation on that line is small. ... I would earnestly recommend that one or two companies of Cavalry be promptly organized and prepared for muster into the service of the United States. It is impossible for us at this moment to purchase horses and equipment. Each man will have to furnish his own horse."

What did it mean if the Overland

Mail Route were closed? It was the last remaining means of reaching the Pacific Coast. Ships had ceased to reach ports in California via Cape Horn or the Isthmus of Panama because of naval disasters on the Atlantic. If the Indian uprising closed the Overland Route, it meant also the closing of the telegraph line which closely bordered it. How serious was the situation from a military viewpoint is evidenced by the fact that most of the regular troops stationed on the Pacific Coast had been transferred across the continent for Civil War service.

The Territory of Nevada responded to the first call with four troops of Cavalry. Then in December following came a second call for two more troops of cavalry and a regiment of infantry. The raising of more troops was a serious problem not only because of the lure of the desert hills where mines of gold and silver might be found, but the pay of the soldier, small as it was, was in greenbacks worth sixty cents on the dollar, while the medium of exchange on the Pacific Coast in all business transactions was in gold and silver coin. In addition commodity prices in the Territory were a hundred per cent higher than was the case in the Far East. The situation was met by an act of the Territorial Legislature providing for

additional pay of five dollars in coin per month to each soldier. More soldiers were induced to enlist. Finally the third and last call upon Governor Nye was made at Virginia City by Major General Irwin McDowell, who deemed the situation warranted his presence upon the line of warfare. The Territory raised a regiment of cavalry and a battalion of infantry, a total of 1180 men. With their aid the Overland Route was kept open.

So Nevada had some actual experience with battles before it became the Battle-Born. Fighting with Indians isn't the whole story either. Faith had to be kept with the soldiers for the extra pay promised. That required \$110,000. The faith was kept. It required a bond issue which for interest paid has no parallel in history. Here are the varying rates per cent per annum: 24, 18, 15, 12, 9 until the year 1879. Therefore for a half century the State paid upon a State bond issued to the State School Fund five per cent. Then the National Government reimbursed the State for money and interest thus expended in excess of half a million dollars.

So much for the high lights of why Nevada was made a State, though after the lapse of nearly three-fourths of a century it has never been able to reach the hundred

thousand mark in population. Just in conclusion here are a few facts of interest which in a way dovetail into the story.

Back of the Speaker's chair in the State Assembly Chamber at Carson City hangs a portrait of Abraham Lincoln. Take a look at a five dollar bill and you will see a copy of this portrait. When General Horatio King, son of a member of President Lincoln's cabinet, first saw it in the artist's studio in New York City, he remarked: "It deserves to be the accepted likeness for all time." So deserving it has become. It was purchased by the State from the great American artist, Charles M. Shean, as a fitting means of observing the State's fiftieth anniversary.

If Nevada is the Omega State in population, the Alpha State, at least, is not in a position to criticize. They were New Yorkers who played leading roles in its drama of statehood. The names of the more distinguished have been mentioned. When the constitutional convention met, eie-

ven of the delegates, one-third of the total number, were natives of the State of New York. When the constitution was ratified and approved, and the State Government organized, Governor Nye was promoted to the United States Senate. Another quotation from Mr. Dana furnishes the answer to any possible criticism:

"I have sometimes heard people complain that Nevada is superfluous and petty, not big enough to be a State; but when I hear that complaint I always hear Abraham Lincoln saying, 'It is easier to admit Nevada than to raise another million soldiers.'"

McNAMEE IN ELY ON BUSINESS  
Leo A McNamee spent Wednesday in Ely attending to legal matters.

PITTMANS VISIT IN BOULDER CITY  
Mr. and Mrs. Vail Pittman of Ely spent the week-end in Boulder City visiting with Mrs. Pittman's parents and sister, Dr. and Mrs. George Brewington and Miss Frances Brewington.

BELLIS' VISIT  
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Bellis and young son were week-end visitors in Las Vegas from Ely.

BRUCE BECKLEY VISITS PARENTS  
Bruce Beckley of San Francisco spent the week-end in Las Vegas visiting with his parents and enjoying the Heldorado.

RETURN HOME  
Mrs. Frank Scott and little son, Richard, have returned to their home in Del Mar, California after a brief visit at the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Stephens.

LEAVE FOR OKLAHOMA  
Mrs. R. T. Baskin and daughter, Betty, have gone to Tulsa, Oklahoma for the summer.

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1935 FORD V-8 TUDOR SEDAN Nice rubber, paint and mechanical condition. Its ready to go. Someone will get a real buy in this car at ... <b>\$275</b>	1934 PONTIAC "8" 4-DOOR SEDAN A real nice roomy and comfortable family car. Reconditioned motor. Good Rubber. Mohair upholstery. Drive it, you'll like it ... <b>\$295</b>
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