After gold was discovered in California, thousands of people began to come west. They came by wagon and on horseback. They walked through rain, snow, and blazing sun. Dreams of finding gold nuggets carried them across Nevada’s driest deserts. People stopped to look for gold in Nevada until miners found a wide strip of precious metal buried deep in Nevada soil.

Early prospectors searched for gold along rivers and in canyons. They worked from dawn until dusk and often slept only a few feet away from where they worked.

- 1855
  - Mormon settlers open Fort Las Vegas.
  - Lead is discovered at the Potosi Mine.

- 1856
  - Chinese workers create Nevada’s first Chinatown.

- 1857

- 1858

- 1859
  - The Comstock Lode is discovered.
  - Virginia City becomes a boom town of the West.

- 1860
  - Square-set timbering is invented.
  - The Pony Express begins.
Discovery at Gold Canyon

Thousands of people traveled through Nevada on their way to find gold in California. One emigrant party stopped along the Carson River, where one man discovered a few gold specks. It wasn’t enough gold, though, to convince the group to stay in Nevada. Soon, miners in other places heard about the find. By spring, nearly 100 men were searching for gold in a place called Gold Canyon.

Some miners reported that an old prospector was already living in Gold Canyon when they arrived. A trading post was opened at Hall’s Station where miners held a New Year’s Eve dance.

Later, Chinese workers from California were hired to dig a long ditch that would take water to Gold Canyon. They started Nevada’s first Chinatown. Eventually, the town became known as Dayton.

When mining towns first began, there were not many places for people to gather. One-room trading posts or saloons were also used as meeting or dance halls.
The Chinese were hard workers. They often worked for lower wages than white workers. They were also neat and clean, and they stayed out of trouble.

Laws Against the Chinese

Most miners didn’t like the Chinese workers who moved to Nevada. They spoke a different language and had different customs. The Chinese also lived a different lifestyle and were willing to work for lower wages than white workers. Because of this, many miners were fearful that Chinese workers would take away their jobs.

They began treating the Chinese unfairly. They even passed laws to keep the Chinese from working in the mines or from owning mining land. The Chinese were only allowed to do things like wash laundry, chop wood, and cook meals for others. These were the lowest-paying jobs people could have.

Sometimes people’s feelings about the Chinese turned violent. Angry white people burned homes and often beat the Chinese workers or the people who hired them.

Sadly, the poor treatment of the Chinese happened throughout much of the West. Even the U.S. Congress passed laws again the Chinese that made it impossible for immigrants to come to the United States.
A Home in Carson Valley

Some of the first people to settle in the desert valleys of the Rocky Mountains were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Sometimes they were called Mormons. They were also one of the first groups to settle in Nevada’s Carson Valley. A few traders built a trading post, or small log store, near the base of the Sierra Nevada. They called it Mormon Station. It attracted many travelers and gold seekers on their way to California. The trading post carried basic supplies like flour, beans, and bacon. Travelers also traded with Mormon settlers in the area.

Carson Valley’s first government came about because of these early settlers. They hoped to bring a little law and order to the area, which in those days was part of the Utah Territory. Brigham Young was the territory’s first governor.

In time, other settlers started new trading posts in Eagle Valley and along the Humboldt and Carson Rivers. People along the eastern foothills of the Sierra Nevada began farming. They grew wheat, hay, barley, and vegetables. They planted fruit trees and raised milk cows and chickens. Some raised cattle and sheep, and others opened a sawmill nearby. Eliza and Israel Mott started the very first school in the Carson Valley in the kitchen of their home. The teacher of the school was a woman named Mrs. Allen.

Years later, as the area grew, its name was changed to Genoa.
Activity

What Makes a Place a Settlement?

Today many people in Nevada disagree over where our state's first settlement started. Some say it was Mormon Station, now called Genoa. Others say our state's first settlement grew up in and around Gold Canyon, now called Dayton.

Now that you have read a little about both places, see if you can learn more. Search the Internet, or look for articles about each place. Then make a list that describes each settlement. Talk with your teacher and classmates about the kinds of things that you think make a place a settlement.

What do you think?

Pretend you are opening a trading post in the early days out west. What supplies would you sell to your customers? Where could you get your supplies? How would you bring them to your trading post?
A Fort at Las Vegas

Brigham Young sent another group of settlers from Utah to open a trading post and mission just south of the Utah Territory. Spanish traders had already named the area Las Vegas, which means “the meadow.” Fresh grasses grew wild there, and water bubbled up from underground springs. It was a good place to rest and water tired horses.

When the Utah settlers arrived in the area, they worked hard to make it feel like home. They planted gardens and built a small adobe fort that became the supply station and center for the rest stop. Thousands of people traveling the Old Spanish Trail stopped to rest and feed their animals there.

Mormon settlers were also interested in teaching area natives about their religion. Some tribes listened to their message, but others did not.

In another nearby area, one group of men opened a small mining camp where they mined lead. At first, they wanted to make metal tools and bullets, but the lead they mined was too soft. These problems and many others were hard on the settlers. After three short years, most of them left the fort and went back to Utah.
**Muddy Valley Settlers**

Other Mormon families were sent by Brigham Young to settle near the Virgin and Colorado Rivers. They farmed the rich soils of the Muddy Valley. The towns of St. Thomas, St. Joseph, and the port of Callville were a few of the places they settled.

With plenty of river water nearby and mild winter weather, the farmers grew many crops. They planted beautiful orchards and hundreds of acres of cotton. The farms in the area were part of what the settlers sometimes called the “Cotton Mission.” They grew cotton and then hauled it to Utah so it could be made into cloth. They sent other crops to communities in Utah as well.

![Muddy Valley Settlements](image)

Brigham Young told the Mormon settlers in the Muddy Valley that growing cotton for the church was as important as preaching the gospel.
Steaming Along the River

The Callville settlement was mostly a steamboat port, named after its founder Anson Call. Mormon leaders hoped transporting supplies and converts by steamboat would be faster and safer than travel by land. The settlers built a landing, a large warehouse, a post office, and many other buildings.

Transporting supplies along the lower Colorado was already happening when the Mormon settlers arrived. Steamboats, paddleboats, and barges made their way up the river from the Gulf of California. They delivered supplies to the miners in El Dorado Canyon and other small ports along the river.

Getting steamboats up the river to Callville, though, was very difficult. Not many could make it through the narrow canyons and white-water rapids of Black Canyon.

One steamboat named the Esmeralda used a steam winch to get through the dangerous waters. Strong cables clipped to iron rings in the walls of the canyon pulled the boat upstream.

But problems like these kept Callville from becoming the port Mormon leaders and settlers had hoped it would be. Settlers moved away from the towns along the river. Soon the railroads made travel by land safer and faster. Even the U.S. Army who built a fort at Callville, later abandoned it.

Now the towns of Callville and St. Thomas are completely covered by the waters of Lake Mead.
Delivering Mail

Carrying mail across the western frontier was a dangerous job. The mail traveled once a month between Salt Lake City, Utah, and Sacramento, California. A pack train of mules and a few brave men made the trip over the Sierra into the Carson Valley. Heavy winter snows and Indian attacks were a problem from the beginning.

One man named John “Snowshoe” Thompson strapped 10-foot boards to his feet to help him cross the snowy mountains. Carrying a heavy pack, he could glide through the trees, reaching Genoa in five days or less.

Stagecoaches began traveling through Nevada as early as 1851. Sometimes it took three or four weeks for a letter from the East to reach Nevada by stagecoach.

Snowshoe Thompson skied from California over the mountains to Genoa carrying 60 to 80 pounds on his back. The trip usually took three to five days.

Making a Place in Nevada
Riding the Pony Express

Sending mail out west took a very long time before trains and airplanes were invented. To speed up delivery, one company started a new service called the Pony Express.

About 80 young men were hired to ride from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Sacramento, California. Riders had to be small. Most weighed less than 125 pounds. They ranged in age from 11 years to just over 40. The company gave each boy a place to stay and food to eat. Riders were also given a small Bible and asked to swear an oath, or a promise.

The trip from Missouri to California was over 2,000 miles long. Riders rode from 75 to 100 miles each. They carried a leather mail pouch called a mochila. Riders stopped to change horses every 10 to 15 miles at relay stations spread out along the trail.

Most relay stations in the East were already being used as stagecoach stops. Out west, many new stations were built. Sometimes tents or dugouts were used as stations. Some stations were built with adobe bricks.

This painting by Frederick Remington shows how quickly Pony Express riders changed from one horse to another.

Nevada, Our Home
Carrying the Mail Through Nevada

There were 29 relay stations across the Nevada desert. William “Billy” Fisher was one of the first Pony Express riders hired to carry the mail through eastern Nevada and parts of Utah. Once he rode 300 miles in 30 hours to warn stations about coming Indian attacks. Another time he got lost while carrying the mail through a snowstorm.

After stopping to rest under some trees, Fisher fell asleep. He awoke when a rabbit began licking his face. Nearly frozen to death, he and his horse made their way toward the light of a distant cabin. When the old man opened the door, Fisher fainted on the doorstep. The old man took him in and let him rest. The next day Fisher got back on his horse and continued on with the mail.

The Pony Express lasted only about 18 months before the invention of the telegraph put it out of business. Sadly, the owners lost money, but the Pony Express became an important part of history.

What do you think?

At first, sending a letter by Pony Express cost $5 for a half ounce. Later, the price went down to $1 for a half ounce. Why do you think the Pony Express charged by the weight of a letter? How does that compare with what it costs to send a letter today?
The Telegraph

The invention of the telegraph made sending messages across the country faster and safer. Men began putting up telegraph wires and poles from town to town and city to city. The telegraph did not carry voices like a telephone. It sent and received tapping sounds that were part of a code. Each group of long or short taps stood for a letter. The short taps were called dots, and the long taps were called dashes.

The tapping was done on something called a telegraph key. When telegraph operators were receiving a message, they wrote down the letter that went with each sound. Then they put the letters together to reveal the message.

Samuel Morse was the man who developed the system. The code used to translate messages became known as the Morse Code. People called operators were specially trained to send and receive the code. A good operator could tap out 35–40 words a minute. People wanting to send a message had to pay for each word. Because of this, most messages were very short.

Workers laid hundreds of miles of telegraph poles and wires from California to Nevada and beyond.
**Activity**

**Practicing Morse Code**

Do you think you can tap out a message in Morse Code? Here's a fun way to try it out. Go through this chapter and pick out one vocabulary word. Keep it a secret! Write down the word and then translate it into Morse Code using the chart on the right. Pretend you are a spy sending a secret password to another spy. Here are four possible ways you could send your password:

1. Use a pencil to tap out the word on your desk. Make sure the short and long sounds are clear. Allow your partner time to write down each letter.
2. Say the code out loud. Try saying “dit” for the short sounds and “dah” for the long sounds.
3. Clap it out with your hands. Go slow enough for your partner to write down the letters.
4. Use a flashlight and a piece of paper. Keep the light covered; then uncover it quickly for a short sound or slowly for a long sound.

Did you understand what your partner was telegraphing to you? Try another vocabulary word to see if it goes faster! Then try sending your partner a whole sentence in Morse Code. Be sure to tell your partner that when you pause it means you are starting a new word.

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Samuel Morris shows off the telegraph at the Academy of Music in New York.

**Memory Master**

1. Which early town was Nevada’s first Chinatown?
2. Name three things settlers did to make a living when they came to Mormon Station.
3. What name did Spanish traders give their resting spot?
4. What does the name mean? What metal did Mormon settlers mine near Fort Las Vegas? Did they hope to use it?
5. How long did the Pony Express deliver mail?
Mining in the West

News of gold in California brought thousands of gold seekers to the West. Most prospectors, or miners, only stopped in Nevada on their way to California. Prospectors look for valuable metals, or minerals, in the ground. Minerals are things that are mined, like gold, silver, and salt. They are usually mixed with rock, dirt, sand, or gravel. Miners call this mix ore.

Panning for gold was slow, back-breaking work. Prospectors used flat bottom pans to scoop up water, earth, and gravel from the bottom of a stream. As they moved the pan in a circle, the water spilled over the sides of the pan. Then they could see gold dust or gold nuggets mixed in with the dirt and gravel. Many prospectors got sick from standing knee-deep in freezing water day after day.

When they found something valuable, prospectors staked a claim. This means they measured the area and then recorded it at the nearest government office. They did this to keep others from stealing it, but it didn’t always work. People who stole someone else’s claim were called claim jumpers.

Prospectors hauled many tools and supplies to Nevada’s goldfields.
Trying Their Luck in Nevada

As the rush for California gold began to slow down, miners came to try their luck in Nevada. Most were using placer mining methods to gather gold and other minerals from our rivers and streams. Panning for gold was one of the earliest placer mining methods prospectors used. Another method, called sluicing, allowed miners to sift through more dirt in less time.

Sluicing was done with a series of wooden boxes. Each box had a downhill slope and was slightly lower than the one before. Gallons of water were needed to sift the dirt and gravel away from the gold. As the water flowed through the box, the dirt, sand, or gravel washed away. The heavier pieces of gold fell into the ridges at the bottom of the box.

One group of Nevada miners had trouble with thick black sand that clogged their sluice boxes. Some prospectors threw the black sand out. Later, they learned the sand was filled with silver ore. The miners soon discovered it was the richest silver ore ever found in the United States. They called it the Comstock Lode.

A Prospector’s Life

Prospectors were very unassuming people. Sometimes they spent their entire lives looking for precious metals, like gold and silver. They often wandered through the mountains or deserts for months at a time with only a few basic supplies. They packed things like food, clothes, blankets, and a pick and shovel.

Most prospectors lived in small, rough cabins built from branches, stones, and sagebrush. They ate simple foods, like potatoes, dried beans, meat, and coffee. They looked for gold from sunup to sundown. Some tried searching where no one else had looked. Some sold or traded everything they had for a night drinking or gambling in ne saloons. Then their search started all over again.
The Comstock Lode

Many people took part in the discovery of the Comstock Lode. One of them was James Fennimore or “Old Virginy.” Fennimore and a few other prospectors found one end of the lode in an area called Gold Hill. What they found was a strip of gold mixed with silver. The biggest part of the strike, though, was found in a place called Six-Mile Canyon.

Two Irish miners digging in the canyon found gold sand in a spring. When they dug under the stream, they hit a large vein of gold and silver. A vein is a pocket of minerals found in rock. The names of the men were Patrick McLaughlin and Peter O’Reily. They called their find the Ophir Mine.

After going to town to celebrate their find, McLaughlin and O’Reily came back to find a man named Henry Comstock at the spring. Comstock claimed the land and spring were owned by him. The two Irish miners didn’t want problems, so they split their find with Comstock. Later the find was named after Comstock.
The Rush to Nevada

With the discovery of the Comstock Lode, miners from California began pouring into Nevada. The rush of people helped create new towns like Virginia City, Gold Hill, and Silver City. As the towns grew, life for the area’s earliest miners began to change.

Life in the Mining Towns

Mining towns were rough places in the beginning. There were saloons and gambling houses, where miners spent much of their time and money. Some towns had horse races, concert halls for singers, plays, and dancing animal acts.

Mining towns were also places where people from many different countries came. One man, named J. Ross Browne, wrote about what he saw in the mining towns of Nevada.

In the course of a day’s tramp we passed parties of every description and color: Irishmen ... American, French, and German foot-passengers, ... carrying their packs on their backs; ... Mexicans, driving long trains of pack mules, ... women in men’s clothes, ... whiskey peddlers, organ grinders, ... all stark mad for silver.

At first, most of the miners were single men. Those from faraway countries worked hard to send money to their families. Later, families with children moved into mining towns too. More homes were built, and schools for the children sprang up. In a few short years, the small tent camp of Virginia City had become a town of more than 5,000 people.

Blasting Caps

Life in the mining towns often very dangerous. Blasting caps were one of worst dangers. Miners used them to set off sticks of dynamite. Dynamite sticks made from explosive materi. The caps were filled with sn amounts of blasting powder. Sometimes children played with blasting caps they found ly around. According to one man “about one boy per week would scratch off the end of a blasting cap.” The cap would explo and the boy holding it would lose the tip of his thumb or sometimes his whole finger. Hill and Virginia City had m boys with missing fingers.

Virginia City was a very busy place during the peak of the mining boom. Records say over 22,000 people once lived in the city. This photograph shows a stagecoach parked in front of Wells Fargo & Co. on C Street.
day in Virginia City, in the saloons on C Street, you can take a walk back in time. Portraits of some of the town’s famous citizens line the walls. A famous face on the wall is that of James Fenimore Cooper, also known as Old Finney. Finney was one of the first prospectors in the area. He is credited with naming the town when it was just a tent city.

The story goes that one night, having been drinking too much, Finney broke a bottle of liquor and named the town after his home state of Virginia. From then on, early miners called the settlement Virginia City. When the word leaked that silver could be found in the area, the town was soon populated with fortune seekers. Virginia Town became Virginia City almost overnight.

Life on the Comstock

Virginia City during the Comstock boom was an exciting place to live. It was the most important settlement between Denver and San Francisco. Miners worked day and night. The whole town buzzed with activity. There were shop owners, saloon keepers, teachers, and preachers. The city also had its share of trouble. People fighting, stealing, and breaking the law were just a few of the everyday problems.

There were also many interesting people living in Virginia City. One man named John Mackay found large silver deposits nearby. It was actually one of the biggest silver deposits in all of North America.

Nevada, Our Home
America. Mackay used much of his money to help people in need. Later, his fortune was used to help build the Mackay School of Mines at the University of Nevada in Reno.

Two famous writers also lived in Virginia City for a time. Mark Twain and Dan DeQuille were young reporters for one of Virginia City’s newspapers. It was called the Territorial Enterprise. They wrote about things that happened during the Comstock days. Some of their articles were printed in newspapers across the country and around the world. Both men wrote books about life on the Comstock. Thousands of people learned more about frontier life by reading their books.

Mark Twain

Some people call Mark Twain one of America’s best-loved authors. His real name was Samuel Clemens. He wrote wonderful stories like The Adventures of Tom Sawyer; The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. People of all ages have enjoyed his stories.

He first came to Nevada to work as a clerk for his brother Orion Clemens. For a short time, he also tried his luck as a prospector with the hope of becoming rich. But he never did strike it rich. He began using the name Mark Twain when he was writing for the Territorial Enterprise. Roughing It is the book he wrote about life in Virginia City.

Here is a sample of what he wrote:

There were military companies, brass bands, banks, hotels, theatres, open gambling palaces, fights, murders, inquests, a whiskey mill every fifteen steps, half a dozen jails, some talk of building a chu
Building Better Mines

Not long after the discovery of the Comstock Lode, miners learned they had to dig deep shafts and long tunnels to get the ore out. The Comstock’s ore deposit was larger and deeper than any other find had been. A deposit is a natural pocket of minerals found in the earth.

Miners also found it difficult to keep the deep tunnels of the Comstock from caving in on them. Soon a system was created to help stop cave-ins. This system would later be used in mines around the world.

These miners were drilling for silver in the Comstock Mines, 1650 feet underground.

It was very dark and often hot for miners working in underground tunnels.
Square-Set Timbering

Early methods used by miners to keep the tunnels from caving in didn’t always work. At first, logs about 20 feet long were placed in the roofs of the tunnels. Then posts were used to hold the logs up. Sometimes miners bolted logs together because the tunnels were so long.

The miners soon realized the logs and posts weren’t strong enough to prevent cave-ins. There were still too many people who died when a tunnel collapsed, or caved-in.

One mining company hired a German man to help solve the cave-in problem. His name was named Philipp Deidesheimer. He was an engineer who began making boxes with 4-6 foot logs, or timbers. He called them cribs. The cribs could be stacked on top of each other or placed side by side. They were very strong and could hold up the top and sides of a tunnel. Sometimes cribs were filled with rock to make them more stable.

Deidesheimer’s invention was called square-set timbering. It helped make underground mines much safer. Before long, all the Comstock mines were using square-set timbering. This method was used to make mines safer all over the world.

More Dangers

Underground mines had many other dangers besides cave-ins. As miners went deep in the earth the air was hot and hard to breath. It was also bad for their lungs. Pockets of hot air sometimes reached 100 degrees or more.

Falling rocks and explosions from old sticks of dynamite were also common causes of injury or death. Sometimes dynamite left by early miners blew up without warning.
Sutro’s Tunnel

Adolph Sutro was another man with a great idea. He came up with a way to solve the floods in Comstock mining tunnels. Miners working underground in tunnels that were very deep often hit pockets of boiling water trapped in the earth. When hot water flooded the tunnels, the miners had to close the mines to pump out the water.

Sutro’s idea was to dig a tunnel that would connect to all the other tunnels. It would serve as a drain to pull the hot water out of the flooded tunnels and onto the desert floor. Sutro would charge the mine owners to use the tunnel.

He also planned to open a mill where the rock would be crushed to help separate it from the silver. With all these services, he hoped to start a new town, called Sutro.

But the tunnel took nine long years to complete. By then, most of the Comstock mines were running out of ore. Sadly, the tunnel wasn’t used very much.

Sutro later sold his part of the project and moved to San Francisco, California. He became the mayor of that city and opened his famous Sutro Baths.
Pyramid Lake War

One early spring, problems between Nevada Paiutes and white settlers got worse. It happened when two Native American girls were kidnapped by white men. To get back at the kidnappers, angry Paiutes burned down the local trading post. Three white men died in the attack.

Problems like this continued to create angry feelings between the Paiutes and the white settlers. Soon, fighting broke out at Pyramid Lake. Paiutes led by Chief Numaga killed 76 white men and wounded 29 others. These attacks made nearby settlers even more frightened.

Before the month was out, soldiers and many volunteers went to war against the Paiutes. This time, many Paiutes were killed, and the remaining tribe members backed away from the conflict.

For the next two years, feelings of fear and anger kept native Paiutes and white settlers apart. Then Governor James Nye and two Northern Paiute chiefs came together as a sign of friendship and peace. Even though Chief Numaga led his people against the settlers, he tried to teach them to live in peace. Once when counseling his people, he told them:

You would make war upon the whites. I ask you to pause and reflect. The white men are like the stars over your heads. You have wrongs, great wrongs that rise up like those mountains before you, but can you, from the mountain tops, reach and blot out those stars? Your enemies are like the sands in the bed of your rivers; when taken away they only give place for more to come and settle there. . . . I love my people; let them live; and when their spirits shall be called to the Great Camp in the southern sky, let their bones rest where their fathers were buried.

Today, Pyramid Lake is part of Paiute Reservation. It is a very important resource for tribe members. They manage fishing and other activities at the lake.

Memory Master

1. Name three minerals found in the ground.
2. What is claim jumping?
3. Name two placer mining methods.
4. Whose nickname was Old Pancake?
5. Why were blasting caps so dangerous?
CHAPTER 6 REVIEW

Consider Character

Early prospectors and settlers to Nevada faced many difficulties. Crossing the deserts and living off the land took strength and perseverance. There are many examples of people in this chapter who showed these character traits. Now, do some research about another person in Nevada who showed strength and perseverance. Pick someone from history or someone living in Nevada today. Give two examples of how they showed these traits. If you need to, go back and review the character trait definitions at the end of chapter 1.

Geography Tie-In

Do you remember what put the Pony Express out of business? Why do you think this mail item was called the Pony Express? Using the map on pg. 109, answer the following questions:

What is the title of the map?

Which states are shown on the map?

Which city is the farthest western stop?

For a letter to go from Marysville to Salt Lake City, which states would it have to pass through?

If you lived in Reno, Nevada, which city on the trail is your closest stop?

What does this map NOT show?

Why do you think the Pony Express is an important part of history?
Technology & Tie-In

Pretend you were a miner living during the Comstock period. Do you think the placer mining methods were the best ways to search for gold? Research other mining methods or see if you can invent a new way to mine for gold. Remember, you have to use the materials and resources found during the 1850s and 1860s. But you can still use the ideas and creativity you have today. What would you call your invention?

Activity

The Comstock Lode Had a Load!

Do you know the difference between the homonyms load and lode? A load is a group of things, like a load of firewood. A lode is a deposit of valuable ore found in a rock formation. You've probably never heard the word lode before unless you know a little about mining. What other words in this chapter are words you would know if you were a miner? Maybe you would like to have been a miner during the Comstock days. What other words would you need to understand to be a miner? Using the “Words to Understand” at the beginning of Lesson 2, make a “Miner's Dictionary”. For each vocabulary word, write a definition or draw a picture to help you remember what it means. Trade your completed dictionary with a partner to see if you are both ready to stake your claim!
Humboldt Station was one of the stations we had been looking for some hours, because it meant a stop. But when we got out of the cars, the scent of supper fled. Four hundred feet above the sea stood a brilliant green clover field, young grasses and vegetable gardens adorned the little house. There was a fountain, which splashed in the sun.”

— Hunt Jackson, 1887

**Timeline of Events**

- 1859: Basques begin settling in Nevada.
- 1860-1865: The Civil War
- 1861: Nevada becomes our nation's 36th state.
- 1862: Abraham Lincoln is re-elected.
- 1864: Gold and silver are discovered in Austin.
- 1865: The U.S. Congress adds land to Nevada's eastern border.