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A HISTORICAL STUDY OF SILVER REEF:

SOUTHERN UTAH MINING TOWN

L-2

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of History

Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Alfred Bleak Stucki

August 1966

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INTRODUCTION

While a number of short articles and histories of Silver Reef have been written, they tend either to be anecdotal in character or to emphasize the merely sensational aspects of the mining camp. These writings have failed to investigate some of the most basic sources of information concerning this highly interesting mining epic in Southern Utah. Therefore, there remains a real need for a thoroughly researched and documented history of Silver Reef -- a need that this thesis tries to meet.

Comments about Silver Reef are scantily recorded in Mormon pioneer diaries, journals and records. James G. Bleak, Mormon historian for the Southern Utah colonies, makes only passing mention of the considerable Gentile population in this isolated area. The close contacts between the two peoples were real enough, and could not be avoided; thus, they should not be ignored. However, Bleak probably considered Silver Reef not only outside his assignment but also outside his interests. The Silver Reef boom was only a passing episode which lay primarily outside the pioneers' goals and dreams. Nevertheless, valuable information has been gleaned from Mormon sources, although even modern Mormon writers have ignored or minimized the Mormon-Gentile conflicts of Silver Reef perhaps to avoid embarrassment on either side. Research has revealed no personal records of the miners deposited in libraries and archives in Utah, but further investigation, if possible, amongst privately-owned papers may uncover such records. However, it is likely that they are sparse.

Although the writer has been able to find few personal records relating to Silver Reef, a wealth of information has been found in newspapers and mining journals. The Silver Reef Echo and the Silver Reef Miner, newspapers printed in the town, have been most valuable sources because in that era of personal, no-holds-barred journalism they show much flavor and feeling that is absent in modern periodicals. The Pioche Record of Nevada filled in many items that transpired before the Silver Reef papers were established. A few residents of Silver Reef and Leeds have written articles of considerable value to this writer as were also the interviews with a number of persons who lived at Silver Reef. The Harrisburg Mining District Records have disclosed pertinent information concerning the origin of the mines.

With the above brief introduction to the problem, then, this thesis attempts to present a social, political, and economic history of the boom years of Silver Reef, with special attention to the situation of a non-Mormon community surrounded by a Mormon pioneer population.

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND OF SILVER REEF

During the brief period between 1876 and 1890 Silver Reef was considered one of the most lively mining camps in Utah. The story of 1,500 hardy miners and camp followers locating in an isolated Mormon area is noteworthy in the annals of Southern Utah history.

Locality and Description

Silver Reef is situated in Washington County, southwestern Utah, about two miles north of the little farming community of Leeds and eighteen miles northeast of St. George. It can be reached by leaving Interstate Highway #15 just north of Leeds. Only two habitable buildings stand today in this ghost town: the Rice Building and the stately old Wells Fargo Building. Many rock foundations of the business district of the once bustling mining camp have survived, although time has almost obliterated the streets.

The town whose streets were paved by nature was built on a boulder-covered ridge. It is located at an elevation approximately 4,000 feet. Just north of the ghost town is the beautiful blue Pine Valley Mountain rising some 10,324 feet above sea level, capped by more than 3,000 feet of semi-crystalline material (trachyte-porphry) which once was molten lava.¹ About four miles south of Silver Reef is the

¹Arthur F. Bruhn, Your Guide to Southern Utah's Land of Color (Salt Lake City: Wheelright Lithographing Company, 1952), p. 34. See map of Washington County, Utah, Appendix E.

Virgin River, running in a southwestern direction.

The silver-bearing sandstones of the area, in a geological sense, are among the most interesting mineral deposits ever discovered. "They contain the only known occurrence of commercial bodies of silver ore in sandstone in the United States."² They also contain deposits of copper, vanadium, uranium and very small traces of gold.

Bruhn states that: "The silver-bearing sandstone of Silver Reef was exposed at the surface by the action of compressional forces, which operated from the east and west in such a manner that the earth's crust was bent upward in a magnificent fold or anticline."³ Erosion has worn away the dome of this anticline, leaving prominent hogbacks on either side. This is known as the virgin anticline. Silver-bearing sandstone lies on three sides of the anticline; viz., on the east, north and west of Leeds with the open end to the southwest. The protruding ribs are called reefs. The most prominent of these reefs is the White Reef, which forms the west side of the horseshoe. Underlying the White Reef is the Buckeye Reef and under it the Butte Reef. The east side of the horseshoe is called the East Reef. It was from these reefs that the rich sandstone silver was taken. On the extreme south end of the East Reef no silver has been found; while on the west side, low grade ore has

²Paul Dean Proctor, "Geology of the Silver Reef (Harrisburg) Mining District, Washington County, Utah," Utah Geological and Mineralogical Survey Affiliated with the College of Mines and Mineral Industries, Bulletin 44, (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah, April, 1953), p. 4.

³Bruhn, op. cit.

been found in places up to and past the towns of Harrisburg and St. George, a distance of over twenty miles.⁴

The town of Silver Reef was situated near to and just east of the White Reef and the Buckeye Reef. These two reefs had the richest mines in the area. Between these two reefs ran the little mountain stream known as Quail Creek. Its waters have been used for irrigation of the fields of Leeds since its founding.

Climate

The Silver Reef region is semi-arid; the winters are mild, allowing for the cultivation of figs, pomegranates, almonds, pecans and other crops that require a mild climate. The summers are hot, with the temperature rising above 100°. "Rainfall at Anderson's Ranch, two miles north of Leeds, averages 12.69 inches per year over a twenty-seven year period."⁵

Historical Background

For a better understanding of the factors influencing this study of Silver Reef, and in order to see the social and economic influence it had on Southern Utah, it is necessary to study the early history of the area.

As early as 1849, Southern Utah was explored under the direction of Governor Brigham Young with view to its occupation and settlement. Between 1854 and 1861, most of the present towns of Washington County were

⁴Charles M. Rolker, "The Silver Reef District, Southern Utah," The Engineering and Mining Journal, XXIX, No. 1 (Jan. 10, 1880), pp. 25-6.

⁵Proctor, op. cit., p. 7.

settled by pioneers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The hot arid climate was soon found suitable for the cultivation of cotton and by 1861 the sparse Mormon out-post settlements in the region were reinforced by a major drive to develop cotton production. In that year Brigham Young called over three hundred men and their families to settle in communities along the Virgin River and to build a new town, St. George.⁶ St. George soon became the largest community in the area, with a population in 1870 of 1,142.⁷

The settlers began at once to grow cotton, but soon found that most of their land was needed to raise food. Their story of hardship is one of the heroic episodes of Utah history. Their attempts to control the Virgin River and bring its waters to the land for irrigation were fraught with continual difficulty and expense. They suffered crop losses from grasshoppers, lack of water and early frosts. With the coming of the railroad and the end of the Civil War, cotton no longer held promise as a money crop. It could be produced much cheaper elsewhere; money was scarce. Almost all trading was done in kind; even taxes were paid with produce.⁸

This economic hardship was somewhat relieved by the introduction of grape growing and wine making. Wine particularly found a ready market

⁶Andrew Karl Larson, I Was Called to Dixie (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News Press, 1961), p. 102.

⁷Hazel Bradshaw (ed.) Under Dixie Sun (Panguitch, Utah: Garfield County News, 1950), p. 437.

⁸Andrew Karl Larson, The Red Hills of November: A Pioneer Biography of Utah's Cotton Town (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1957), p. 165.

in the nearby mining town of Pioche, Nevada, which became active about 1865. Wine making was encouraged by the Church authorities in order to relieve the extreme poverty in the area. While addressing the Relief Society of St. George in 1874 Brigham Young declared:

Gather the grapes, have a few general places at which to make wine. First, by lightly pressing make a white wine. Then give a heavier pressing and make colored wine. Then barrel up this wine; and, if my counsel is taken, the wine will not be drunk here, but will be exported.⁹

Supplying the mines with produce became an important source of cash income for the small struggling Mormon communities of Southern Utah.

Background of Mining

The story of mining in the early days of Utah is unique. This is largely due to the teachings and practices of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints which were under constant criticism during this period. Brigham Young, President of the Church, was the most powerful figure in Utah and a number of the Federal authorities of the territory saw him as a usurper of their authority. They felt that the Church had too much power over its members and they worked actively to put down Mormon control. Colonel Patrick Edward Connor, who in 1862 occupied Utah with a small detachment of California volunteers, saw mining as an opportunity to break Mormon control of the region. He believed that precious metals could be found in Utah and when found they would attract

⁹James G. Bleak, "Annals of the Southern Utah Mission, Book A" (MS typewritten copy, Brigham Young University Library), p. 254. Hereafter cited as Bleak, Annals.

enough people into the territory to render the Mormon vote ineffective; thus taking local control from the hands of the Mormons. In a letter to Colonel R. C. Drum, San Francisco, dated July 21, 1864, he said:

As set forth in former communications, my policy in this territory had been to invite hither a large Gentile and loyal population, sufficient by peaceful means and through the ballot box to overwhelm the Mormons by mere force of number, and thus wrest from the Church, disloyal and traitorous to the core, and absolute and tyrannical control of temporal and civil affairs, or at least a population numerous enough to put a check on the Mormon authorities.¹⁰

That Colonel Connor was serious in his attempt to develop this theory, is attested to by the following:

Connor was anxious to promote mining in the region, not only to uncover mineral wealth but to induce the entry of non-Mormons. . . He guaranteed protection to prospectors and even ordered that "soldiers of the several posts be allowed to prospect for mines, when such course shall not interfere with the due and proper performance of their military duties." Connor himself discovered several mines and organized mining companies and mining districts. After his release from the Army in 1866, he pursued mining interests in the region.¹¹

This started a keen rivalry and a mission for mining in Utah which between 1865 and 1882 opened almost every important ore deposit in Utah primarily by Connor's men.

On the other hand, Brigham Young seems to have included in his plans for colonization the twin goals of isolation and self-sufficiency. Isolation would permit the Church to avoid persecution; self-sufficiency

¹⁰B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), V, p. 61.

¹¹LeRoy R. Hafen and Carl Coke Rister, Western America, the Exploration, Settlement and Development of the Region Beyond the Mississippi (second edition; New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc.), p. 346.

was the key to building the economic kingdom of the Saints.¹² He promoted the mining of iron, coal and base metals, but precious metal mining with its consequent booms and rushes was actively discouraged and opposed. He did not propose to have the Saints turn away from the plan of colonization and settlement vital to the "building of the Kingdom" to follow manna to the gold fields. Brigham Young had successfully stopped any large scale Mormon participation in the California gold rush.

The mother mining camp of Silver Reef was Pioche in Lincoln County, Nevada. Most of the miners of Silver Reef came from Pioche, and the Mormon-Gentile atmosphere that later existed in Southern Utah was set by the contact they had had in Pioche.¹³

Mormon settlers in the Pioche area were the first to discover silver there but no development was attempted until Colonel Connor sent a detachment of men into the area to prospect.¹⁴ Then it seems that the Saints decided to locate claims in an attempt to keep the Gentiles out.

In the Pioche Record we find the following:

. . . and in order to get the balance of power in the district they suddenly turned miners, and Erastus Snow the Mormon high priest of Southern Utah came from St. George, accompanied by a host of "Saints," and proceeded immediately upon their arrival to locate the country . . . and thus crowd out the Gentiles.¹⁵

¹²Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will be referred to as Mormons or Saints throughout this paper; non-members will be referred to as Gentiles.

¹³Pioche Record, December 10, 1876. This newspaper was published at Pioche, Nevada, and was anti-Mormon during this period concerned.

¹⁴Bleak, Annals, pp. 160-62.

¹⁵Pioche Record, op. cit.

In accordance with Mormon practice, the locations were laid out in squares but all the locations were declared irregular by the Gentiles and thus were dropped.¹⁶ There were feelings between the Mormons and non-Mormons as a result which ended with the Mormon farmers having to leave the country. In spite of this poor relationship, Pioche in time proved to be an economic ray of sunshine to an impoverished southern Utah. Although the market was limited and a great distance away, Pioche provided the best outlet for the Mormon farmers' produce. Wine, fruit, vegetables, livestock, and timber found ready buyers at Pioche. It was not long before this economic activity became even more intense as the discovery of the Silver Reef shifted it nearer the center of the Mormon settlements.

¹⁶Thomas Hinckly Thompson, Reproduction of Thompson and Wests History of Nevada 1881 with an introduction by David F. Myrick (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1958), p. 476.

CHAPTER II

THE HARRISBURG MINING DISTRICT

The little mountain stream called Quail Creek first attracted the Mormon settlers to the area around Silver Reef. Near the point where this creek runs into the Virgin River, Moses Harris made a settlement in the spring of 1859.¹ Two years later the settlers moved further up the creek and occupied a site known as Harrisburg. This little farming community's resources were few and were limited by lack of good land and water. By 1864 there were only 128 souls living in Harrisburg, cultivating a paltry thirty-seven acres of land.² In seeking more land the settlers moved about three miles to another area also watered by Quail Creek which became known as Leeds.³ By 1870 Leeds had a population of one hundred and four persons.⁴

An accidental discovery made by John Kemple was soon to change the peaceful atmosphere of all the small struggling Mormon towns of Southern Utah. He came from Montana in 1866 with a herd of horses and stayed for the winter in Harrisburg at the home of Orson B. Adams.⁵

¹Marietta M. Mariger, Saga of Three Towns (St. George: Washington County News, [n. d.]), p. 7.

²Bleak, Annals, p. 167.

³Mariger, op. cit., p. 25.

⁴Bradshaw, op. cit., p. 120.

⁵Marietta M. Mariger, personal interview, Leeds, Utah, July 28, 1962. She lived at Leeds during the Silver Reef boom and knew personally Orson B. Adams.

Kemple, an experienced prospector, had assaying equipment with him, and spent considerable time in the area prospecting. In 1868, purely by accident, he found silver float near Harrisburg that assayed over \$17,000 to the ton; however, he had difficulty in locating its source. In 1870 he discovered mineral on the White Reef which is near Harrisburg and Leeds.⁶ His findings were unique in that silver was found in sandstone, which at that time was considered impossible.⁷ This fact slowed down the process of locating the rich source of his samples. Kemple could not find a vein which he knew to have silver in paying quantities. He reported that there was very little confidence in his findings at an early date, and assayers refused to assay the ore. H. H. Smith, an assayer living in Shaunty, Beaver County, received some rich specimens of ore from John Kemple, and after looking at them he said, "Kemple must be crazy to ask me to assay a sandrock."⁸ The specimens were later tested by a less skeptical mineralogist and showed values of thousands of dollars per ton. The local people of Harrisburg and Leeds were well aware of Kemple's finds and became rather excited about the prospects of rich silver in the area.

⁶Silver Reef Miner, October 29, 1878. Silver float refers to ore which is detached from its source.

⁷Mining Review, (Salt Lake City), March 15, 1904. Silver had been found in sandstone in German mines hundreds of years before. Copper had been found in Russia and Chihuahua and Sinaloa, Old Mexico, also in sandstone; but the deposits had never been found in paying quantities. In 1870 these facts were generally unknown to most prospectors. It was believed impossible that precious metals could be found in sandstone.

⁸Silver Reef Miner, October 29, 1878.

Union Mining District

Under the leadership of John Kemple, the Union Mining District was organized in February, 1871, with Samuel Hamilton as recorder. Sixteen claims were recorded between February, 1871, and October 12, 1872.⁹ Most of them were recorded under the names of from three to fifteen persons, with the names of their wives often showing in the claims. Among the Mormon pioneers from Harrisburg and Leeds who made claims were William Robb, Orson B. Adams, Samuel Hamilton, Elijah Fuller, William Leany, Brigham Y. McMullen and E. W. Ellsworth. From St. George were listed: E. G. Woolley, Richard I. Bentley, James Andrews, Erastus Snow, and others.¹⁰ In addition, many settlers from Toquerville and Washington made claims. Of course, John Kemple was prominent in the location of these claims; however, the claims were never developed.

Due to the partial destruction of the old mining claims book, it is impossible to tell the exact location of these claims. It appears that they were near Harrisburg on outcroppings at the south end of the formation later known as the White Reef. These claims were found to be rather low in silver content and were all abandoned; consequently, Kemple, it is reported, went to the White Pine District in Nevada.¹¹

⁹Harrisburg Mining District Record Book A, Location of Claims 1871-1876, Washington County Court House, St. George, Utah. pp. 7-16.

¹⁰Idem.

¹¹Mark A. Pendleton, "Memories of Silver Reef," Utah Historical Quarterly, III (Oct. 1930), p. 106.

Harrisburg Mining District

The rich samples which John Kemple had found near Harrisburg were not easily forgotten. He returned in 1874 and took the lead in the organization of a new mining district which was called the Harrisburg Mining District. At a meeting in the Harrisburg school house, June 22, 1874, the organization was effected:

On motion it was moved that this district be known as the Harrisburg Mining District, and shall be bounded as follows to wit: Commencing at the Harrisburg school house and running from there in a due east course six miles distance from thence in a due north line six miles, and from thence in a due west line twelve miles, from thence in a due south line twelve miles, and from thence in a due east line twelve miles and from thence in a due north line six miles to the place of beginning, embracing an area of twelve miles square or one hundred and forty-four square miles. The Harrisburg school house being the center of said District.¹²

A committee of three was elected for the purpose of drafting a code of laws and constitution to govern the district. Orson B. Adams was elected president of the district; W. J. Earl, secretary; John Kemple, recorder. The meeting was then adjourned until two o'clock the following day when they unanimously adopted a code of laws prepared by John Kemple, Orson B. Adams and Wilson Daily. Some of these laws were as follows:

(1) No location shall be more than fifteen hundred feet lineal measure and three hundred feet wide (2) only one location could be made by a person or persons on a ledge or lode (3) a notice must be posted on all locations telling their extent (4) a stake or monument must be built on all locations (5) the location must be recorded within fifteen days after it was located (6) one hundred dollars work must be done on each location a year (7) assessment work must be completed each year which required a shaft five feet square and fifteen feet deep to be worked for each location (8) an annual meeting was to be held on the 3rd day of June each year to elect a

¹²Harrisburg Mining District Record Book A, pp. 7-16.

recorder and carry on other business (9) changes in the laws could be made by a two-thirds vote of the miners in this district who were present at the meeting.¹³

The first claim recorded in the new mining district was as follows:

Said location commencing at a monument and notice being placed on the ledge about three hundred yards southwest from O. B. Adams house (Harrisburg) and running from thence in a northerly direction (1500) feet. This ledge shall be known as the Pride of the West Ledge and the Kemple Company. Located June the 18th 1874. Recorded June the 26th 1874. Locater John Kemple.¹⁴

Twenty-two additional claims were made on the Pride of the West Ledge, all by people residing in the vicinity of Harrisburg and Leeds, between June 18 and August 5, 1874.¹⁵ The Pride of the West Ledge (later known as the White Reef) contained some of the richest mines of Silver Reef.

It is an interesting fact that two of these claims were made by women. The first, named the Pride of the West Ledge and the Susann Company, was located June 29, by Susann Adams, Margaret J. Hamilton, Sarah C. Hamilton, Mary J. Meeks, Esther Ashbey, Susann Harris, Lorana Daily, and Elizabeth S. Ellsworth of Harrisburg. The same day another group of women, mostly of the Leany family of Harrisburg, located the

¹³Ibid., pp. 22-25.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 50.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 51-78. Listed below are the next seven claims in the order they appeared: (2) No 1 south, Pride of the West Ledge and Adams Co. O. B. Adams (3) No 2 south, Pride of the West Ledge and Leany Co. William Leany, Sr. (4) No 3 south, Pride of the West Ledge and Harris Co. William Harris (5) No 1 north, Pride of the West Ledge and Dixie Co. Samuel L. Adams (6) No 2 north, Pride of the West Ledge and Dodge Co. Walter E. Dodge (7) No 3 north, Pride of the West Ledge and Pymm and Paddock Co. John Pymm and B. F. Paddock (8) No 4 north, Pride of the West Ledge and Ashbey Co. Richard Ashbey.

second named the Pride of the West Ledge and the Ettie Company.¹⁶ This flurry of locations was not followed by any substantial amount of work. Apparently, John Kemple, who sank a fifty foot shaft on the Shaunty claim in 1874, was alone in this effort.¹⁷

The Salt Lake Tribune verified that the Mormons organized the Harrisburg Mining District but did not believe in working the mines as they felt the time had not come to work precious metals.¹⁸ It is possible that these Latter-day Saint miners located the area in order to prevent an influx of outsiders from coming into the area. The Tribune reflects this belief in the following: "Mineral was first discovered in 1870, but owing to the Mormons securing control without attempting developments for the avowed purpose of 'keeping out the Gentiles' the country acquired no notoriety until 1875."¹⁹

Another point to consider is that the Mormon leaders expounded strongly against running to the mines during this period. In January, 1873, Brigham Young warned the people in Conference in St. George, "to stay at home and work for themselves and not be running to Pioche and other mining camps and turn their attention to the building of the Church of God."²⁰

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 58-60.

¹⁷Silver Reef Miner, October 29, 1878.

¹⁸Salt Lake Tribune, May 2, 1876.

¹⁹Ibid., January 1, 1877.

²⁰Orson Welcome Huntsman, "Diary" (MS Typewritten copy, The Brigham Young University Library), pp. 69-70.

Charles L. Walker recorded in his personal journal:

Bro. Joseph W. Young spoke on the importance of our being one as a people, and the folly of lending our aid to build up the cities of the Gentiles. In the afternoon at a general Priesthood meeting called by Bro. Brigham Young. . . he asks them if they were willing from that time forth to seek with all their might, means, and ability to build up the Kingdom of God upon the earth and feel hence forth it shall be the Kingdom of God or nothing, and not build up the cities of the Gentiles, but labor for Zion . . . then Pres. Young said if you are willing to do this, and to let God dictate you thro [sic] his Servants; enter into a covenant with him this day, and witness before him by raising the right hand up to the square.²¹

James G. Bleak, Pioneer Historian of the Dixie Mission, reported that President Erastus Snow, apostle in charge of the Dixie settlements, stated during the Pioche mining period, "that for the future, he wished any man that would go to the western mines as a miner to be cut off from the Church."²² With these exhortations against mining being taught, coupled with the fact that the Saints made no attempt to develop the mines near Leeds and Harrisburg, it is the opinion of this writer that there was a plan to keep the Gentiles out of Silver Reef. If so, then apparently it proved successful for about five years.

After the first claims of the district were made, no location was recorded for seven months. All of the original claims on the White Reef were abandoned except one, the Pride of the West Ledge and Dodge Company, which was located by Walter E. Dodge and later patented.²³ According to

²¹Charles L. Walker, "Journal" (MS typewritten copy, The Brigham Young University Library), p. 567.

²²Bleak, Annals, p. 196.

²³Mariger, personal interview.

Richard V. Wyman, past head of the operations of the Western Gold and Uranium, Inc. at Silver Reef, the first location on the White Reef was made on what is now known as the Wonder Claim.²⁴

In March, 1875, three locations were made by Elijah Thomas, an early Mormon pioneer (a member of the famed Mormon Battalion who had been present at Sutter's Mill when gold was discovered) and John S. Ferris of Leeds.²⁵ They located the rich Leeds Mine which had paying quantities of chloride of silver in place. The next six claims were made by Gentile miners from Pioche, Nevada, who probably had learned of the rich locations made by Thomas and Ferris. Foremost among these were Joseph M. Coschina and his brother Victor who made their first claim April 26, 1875. They located the Bonanza, the Emily Jane, and the Maggie. Robert Shaky of Pioche located the Stormont.²⁶ From this time on the word spread rapidly and an influx of miners from the outside were attracted to Leeds and Harrisburg.

The Coming of William Tecumseh Barbee

Word of silver in sandstone in Southern Utah had also spread to Salt Lake City; hence, the Walker Brothers, well-known merchants and mining men of that city, sent their agent, William Tecumseh Barbee, to investigate the claims. He took Thomas McNally and Ed Maynard, an

²⁴Idem.

²⁵Mining Review (Salt Lake City), June 30, 1903, p. 26.

²⁶Harrisburg Mining District Record Book A, pp. 81-88.

assayer, with him. In a letter written August 9, 1875, to the Salt Lake Tribune, Barbee reported that the Pride of the West Ledge was a white sandstone dyke from one hundred fifty to two hundred feet high, running north and south, pitching west at a forty-five degree angle. It could be traced for six and one-half miles. This sandstone dyke was found to be rich in silver. One piece had assayed at \$19,000 per ton. He further indicated that "the country was the most unlikely location for mines he had ever seen, but since the silver was there, he was not complaining."²⁷ Barbee wrote to the Salt Lake Tribune a few days later from Harrisburg and declared:

Becoming tired of the monotony of Salt Lake City, I concluded to take a stroll into the wilds of Southern Utah, in search of the filthy lucre, which someone says is the root of all evil. After the usual haps and mishaps consequent on a journey of 350 miles with pack animals, I arrived in this city several days ago, and have been examining some of the most singular situated mines I have ever seen in my mining and prospecting experience.

The general formation of the country seemed to be sandstone (both red and white) interspersed with small belts of granite, and occasionally a little slate shale and soap-stone, and an abundance of sand hills. The sandstone is often found on top of granite, and occasionally we find the granite setting on a sandstone base. It is the last place a miner would ever look for mineral and yet it is here in abundance.²⁸

On August 23, 1875, Barbee recorded the Barbee mine for himself and the Walker claim for Joseph R. Walker.²⁹ He returned to Salt Lake City in September to lay in supplies and report his findings. Walker Brothers had no faith in the new mines and upon the advice of their mining experts

²⁷Salt Lake Tribune, August 9, 1875.

²⁸Ibid., August 18, 1875.

²⁹Harrisburg Mining District Record Book A, pp. 99-100.

turned their claims over to Barbee and refused to finance him further.³⁰ Barbee returned to Southern Utah, October 15, 1875, and brought with him Thomas McNally, Will Lusk, Pete McKelvy and Jake Sprout.³¹

In November a resident of Leeds, Joe McCleave, was hauling wood when his wagon skidded, tearing up soft rock for several feet. Barbee was lucky enough to pass by, stopped to examine the exposed earth and found it to be rich in chlorides and horn silver. This was soon to become his famous "Tecumseh" claim which gave him the capital to work his other claims. It was a small vein but very rich and easily worked.³² He and J. H. Sprout recorded the claim December 3, 1875, and during the next two months a number of other rich claims were located by Barbee.³³

Barbee decided to make the most of his good fortune, so he obtained a town site patent to the flats just west of Tecumseh Hill naming it Bonanza City. He set up his own operations at this point and tried to induce its growth as a real estate investment. This he called "the embryo metropolis of Southern Utah."³⁴ Barbee reported that within three weeks of its birth the town could boast of an assay office, blacksmith shop, sampling works, boarding house and several small dwellings. There soon would be a miner's supply and outfitting store built. Other news from the district indicated that:

³⁰C. W. McCullough, "There's Life in the Old Girl Yet: Ghosting in Utah's Mining Camps," Utah Magazine, II (Feb. 1937), pp. 26-28.

³¹Silver Reef Miner, December 31, 1881.

³²Pendleton, op. cit., p. 106.

³³Harrisburg Mining District Record Book A, pp. 108-9.

³⁴Salt Lake Tribune, December 19, 1875.

On the northeast end of Tecumseh Hill is Silver Flat which is chuck full of little chloride veins. To the east is Silver Reef and Silver Butte Hills where one can dig up ore as easily as a farmer can dig potatoes. Some of the ore from the East Camp was assayed and it created quite a stampede. One hundred Saints and sinners located five to ten miles of sandstone. Silver here is in sandstone. Come prepared to get out of the country if you do not like it.³⁵

Barbee continued to send vivid reports and a flood of prospectors soon staked out the country for miles around.

On December 8, 1875, Barbee shipped his first ten and one-half tons of ore to Salt Lake City. The ore assayed \$502 to the ton because it had been sorted and only the high grade ore had been shipped. Within forty-five days he made a second shipment for which he received \$7,000. After this he made smaller shipments to Salt Lake until July, 1876. He realized \$17,000. in all for his ore milled in Salt Lake City. On July 8, he made a trip to Pioche to investigate the possibility of shipping ore to that place for milling and found that he could obtain better rates. "Salt Lake charged the old Reno rates, and involved shipping rates of from \$45 to \$50 per ton, while the shipping rates at Pioche were \$30 per ton. Pioche allowed seventy to seventy-five percent of assay value, and charged \$20 per ton besides for milling the ore."³⁶ Barbee realized \$23,000 from the ore sold to the Pioche Mills.³⁷

By February, 1876, Bonanza City had a general store run by C. C. Branhan and was doing a big business. The Bonanza Hotel had been

³⁵Salt Lake Tribune, December 19, 1875.

³⁶Rolker, op. cit., pp. 25-6.

³⁷Idem.

erected and was crowded to overflowing with boarders and transient travelers. Barbee related that the country was wild with excitement and many miners were coming from Pioche, Lincoln, Star, and surrounding districts in Nevada. "Even the Mormons were getting chloride and horn silver on the brain. Give us a railroad and we will make the country blossom like two roses instead of one."³⁸

The Mines

Others were having some success though not as spectacular as Barbee. Twenty-nine claims were recorded in 1875, a number of them by local prospectors and the balance by men who came from Pioche, Salt Lake and elsewhere.³⁹ C. W. Pinkham in a letter to the Pioche Record reported that he was living with the family of a Mr. Dodge who treated him very kindly and that he and Mr. Dodge had located a rich claim next to Barbee on the White Reef.⁴⁰

By 1877, events were developing rapidly. The Tecumseh Mining Company had a large force of men at work and had taken out large quantities of rich chloride and horn silver. The Silver Crown Mining

³⁸Salt Lake Tribune, February 13, 1876.

³⁹Harrisburg Mining District Record Book A, pp. 77-183. In 1875, claims were made for the following persons: William T. Barbee, Will Luck, Thomas Y. McNally, Edward Maynard, Jake H. Sprout, Pete McKelvey, Joseph M. Coschina, Victor Coschina, Robert Shaky, C. W. Pinkham, P. Lillienkyoldt, Elijah Thomas, John S. Ferris, Daniel M. Thomas, Alden A. M. Jackson, Comadore Pery [sic] Listen, David Rodgers, Sr., Solend Foster, Ira S. McMullen, L. L. Randall, A. G. Randall, William Sterling, John Steel, William Harris, A. E. Dodge, Alma Truman Angell, William Robb, Robert Stapley, W. L. Kykes, and Edwin R. Lamb.

⁴⁰Pioche Record, December 8, 1875.

Company had let a contract for an incline of fifty feet and expected a bonanza. Deputy United States Marshal Kirby had struck a bonanza in his mine and was preparing to ship ore. New mines were being discovered and located on the east end of the horseshoe which was called the Morning Star Reef or the River Reef. Samuel Bagley and others were removing a large body of ore from this reef and were preparing to ship it to Salt Lake City.⁴¹ The opening of the River Reef was giving hope to late-coming prospectors.

In March the mines of the area had the appearance of a rock quarry. The Tecumseh claim was mined by an open cut for sixty feet long and thirty feet wide; also the Buckeye was stripping on the top. A large number of miners were in the district, and locations on the River Reef were being made. Kirby, Pym, Crawford and Paddock had erected an arastra mill at the head of Barbee Gulch capable of crushing two tons of ore per twelve hours.⁴² The mill was soon producing small quantities of bullion, but due to limited quantities of quicksilver, production was not great.⁴³

⁴¹Salt Lake Tribune, February 13, 1876.

⁴²Idem. The Pioche Record, May 5, 1877, describes this type of milling as follows: "Several arastra mills were erected during the history of Silver Reef. The arastra mill was a large stone about three feet high, and ten inches wide. It had heavy iron bands around it and weighed about 3,000 pounds. This stone was rolled around in a circular channel made from rock, a horse or stream of water being the means of power. Ore was thrown into the channel and crushed as the rock rolled around. The silver was then separated from the ore by the amalgamation or leaching process. This process was first used by the Spaniards."

⁴³Ibid., May 5, 1876.

The Salt Lake Tribune reported the owners and the value of the ore of the various mines as follows: The Tecumseh owned by Barbee was located on Silver Flat and was yielding \$350 to \$570 to the ton. Forsyth and Robinson owned the Buckeye which had shipped ore valued from \$60 to \$600 in silver. The Hard Scrabel, owned by Barbee, Lusk and Maynard, was the deepest mine in the vicinity with a shaft of forty feet and assayed at \$105 to \$126 to the ton. Joseph Coschina and Company owned the Bonanza which assayed \$158 per ton in silver. The Silver Point, Silver Flat, Chloride Chief and the Silver Crown were valued at \$75 to \$200 to the ton. The Susan owned by Kirby, Pym, Crawford, and Paddock had an open cut thirty feet long and had ore on the dump which assayed from \$100 to \$4,000. They also owned the Apostate which yielded ore \$160 to \$300 to the ton.⁴⁴

Claims worked in this period were called "poor man's mines," because they could be worked with very little capital. The Salt Lake Tribune reported: "More crude wealth has been developed in a shorter period of time, considering the number of men engaged than any other mining district on the continent. Nine out of ten men who have assayed their fortunes are now in possession of good properties."⁴⁵ In a letter to the Salt Lake Daily Tribune, Judge Barbee (as he was called) said:

Some have said that I have been drawing an over-done picture of Southern Utah for the purpose of inducing an immigration to this

⁴⁴Salt Lake Tribune, April 1, 1876.

⁴⁵Ibid., March 25, 1876. See Appendix B for location of Silver Reef Mines.

country. Our mines do not depend on Salt Lake City, San Francisco, or Eastern capital. Our mines are our capital; our banks are sand banks; we draw on them at will, and our drafts are never dishonored. We have no board of directors to consult, nor sinecure officers to pay. We are indifferent to whether there is an immigration.⁴⁶ Southern Utah and Arizona will be thoroughly prospected this season.

In spite of the fact that the mines were easily worked and the ore very rich, the "poor man's mines" were beginning to feel the need of capital. Judge Barbee had been over-rating the conditions and except for himself, few men were making money. The main problem that faced the miners was the long distances required to ship the ore either to Salt Lake City or to Pioche. Only the very richest ore could be shipped and it was very difficult to determine which was the richest ore. No one seemed to be able to tell rich ore from lesser ore with any degree of accuracy unless the ore was assayed. High grade ore could be shipped but most of it was being dumped to await the erection of a mill. All agreed that the future of the mines depended on the erection of a good stamp mill.

The Coming of the Mills

The first large mill to be erected was the J. N. Dupaix and Spicer Mill. In July, 1876, Spicer came from Pioche to Toquerville and was superintending the erection of the eight-stamp mill which was being constructed on Ash Creek about a mile and a half below Toquerville, and about one and a half miles from the Virgin River.⁴⁷ Water from Ash Creek was to be used to turn the turbine wheel which had a fall of thirty-four

⁴⁶Ibid., April 5, 1876.

⁴⁷Pioche Record, July 15, 1876.

feet. Progress and development of this mill was slow, however, it was reported about ready to start running in December, 1876.⁴⁸ This venture had an early failure, due to the distance required to haul the ore.

Big capital was slow to take an interest in Silver Reef mines because mining men did not have faith that the unique sandstone deposits could be very extensive. Many believed that they would prove surface in character, and some feared to sink a shaft because they might find little of value below. Spicer felt that the mines were not being developed properly until Joe Lemon sunk a shaft to prove the mines.⁴⁹ He reported in the Pioche Record newspaper that:

Joe Lemon, Sheperd, Shirley and John _____ . . . went right to work not fearing sandstone, soap-stone, grindstone, nor any other stones. Scientists did not believe there was any value to these mines. Let no longer science with her crusty notions deter sensible men from giving credit to the worth of our horn silver grindstones, horn silver sandstones, silver glance whet stones; silver sandstones got ahead of them for once.⁵⁰

Outside capital was first attracted to the Harrisburg Mining District by the actions of Hyman Jacobs and Louis Sultan, merchants of Pioche. They received some samples of ore from Mr. Shepherd of the Shepherd and Lemon mine and sent them to Charley Hoffman, who at the time was superintendent of the Almaden Quicksilver mines a few miles from San Jose, California. Hoffman soon came to Pioche with Professor Janney whereupon Jacobs took them to Leeds. They brought back some samples

⁴⁸ Salt Lake Tribune, December 17, 1878.

⁴⁹ Pioche Record, August 11, 1876.

⁵⁰ Ibid., July 15, 1876.

which were assayed by A. H. Emanuel (who later became mayor of Tombstone, Arizona). The assays ran so high that Hoffman did not believe them and thought they had been salted.⁵¹ He then asked Emanuel if he could use the equipment to run the assays again. Emanuel left his shop and allowed Hoffman and Janney to take over. After checking the chemicals, they ran the assays again and had results similar to Emanuel's results. "It took some hard thinking for Hoffman and Janney to overcome their skepticism, as it was claimed by all geologists that silver could not exist in sandstone."⁵²

In August, 1876, Charles Hoffman and John Ely, a well-known mining man of Nevada and California, went to Leeds to further investigate the mines. They were very pleased with what they saw. The vertical shaft of the Shepherd and Lemon mines showed that the veins went deep into the ground. If the mines were more than surface they would "stake high on the reef. You know what these men do if they get four aces."⁵³ Hoffman was the man who started the development of San Francisco interest in the mines.

Elijah Thomas, the man who first located rich silver in place (meaning not detached from the original source) in the Harrisburg District, was forced off his claim by an armed force under the direction of Hoffman. The Mining Review reported that ". . . Hoffman, took forcible

⁵¹"Salted" is mining jargon meaning the planting of rich ore so as to give the appearance of a valuable deposit.

⁵²Mark A. Pendleton, "Naming Silver Reef," Utah Historical Quarterly, V (Jan. 1932), p. 31.

⁵³Pioche Record, July 18, 1876.

possession of Mr. Thomas's locations and forbid him coming on the ground on penalty of death."⁵⁴ Suit was brought against Hoffman in the District Court at Beaver and the judgment was finally awarded to the plaintiff; however, an injunction was granted and Thomas, not having the capital, was unable to carry on with the proceedings. He lost title to the ground when the statutory life of his location notice expired. It is reported that Thomas refused an offer of \$100,000 for his claim while the property was in litigation. His price was \$300,000.⁵⁵ The claim that Thomas lost became part of the Leeds mines owned by the Leeds Mining Company of San Francisco.

The organization of the first big mining company of Silver Reef was reported in the Pioche Record as follows:

The Leeds Mining Company was organized and incorporated yesterday, with the following directors: A. Borland, L. L. Robinson, W. L. Oliver, George D. Roberts and S. F. Gashwiler. There are 60,000 shares. The company has purchased two mines in the Leeds District, Utah, and a mill at Pioche, which will be immediately moved to the mines. Reports from the district are of a very flattering character and the owners of the Leeds stock think they have a bonanza. Among the subscribers to the stock are H. P. Livermore, J. H. Redington, J. B. Randal, L. L. Robinson, S. F. Gashwiler, J. C. Wedderspoon, W. L. Oliver, A. Borland, George D. Roberts, J. N. Chrisman, E. G. DeCrano, Henry Janin, Louis Janin, and J. L. E. Kelley.⁵⁶

The Leeds Company purchased the Shepherd and Lemon plus two or three other mines. The Salt Lake Tribune stated: "This company will awake the slumbering denizens of this vicinity from their lethargy."⁵⁷

⁵⁴Mining Review (Salt Lake City) June 30, 1903, p. 26.

⁵⁵Idem.

⁵⁶Pioche Record, October 14, 1876.

⁵⁷Salt Lake Tribune, November 4, 1876.

Charles Hoffman became the superintendent of the Leeds Mining Company; and the Old Maggie Mill from Bullionville near Pioche, Nevada, was purchased and shipped to the Harrisburg District.⁵⁸ It was erected under the direction of Hoffman on the west side of the White Reef not far from the company's mines. A number of Mexicans, headed by Pedro Vallejo, son of the famous General Vallejo, was sent to rebuild the ten-stamp steam powered mill which started operations February 1, 1877.⁵⁹ The Leeds Company also purchased the Bonanza Mine for \$50,000 from Joseph Coschina and Company.⁶⁰

Additional Mills

The Christy Company was organized under the leadership of California men, namely, William H. Graves of San Francisco, and William M. Lubbock of San Jose. They purchased the Tecumseh and other mines from William T. Barbee and built a mill just southeast from Silver Reef.⁶¹ Barbee used the money derived from the sale of the Tecumseh and also financial assistance from Walker Brothers to erect the Barbee and Walker mill at the north end of the White Reef.⁶² This mill was sold later to the Barbee and Walker Mining Company of New York. The Stormont Mill was

⁵⁸Pioche Record, December 10, 1876.

⁵⁹Pendleton, "Naming Silver Reef," p. 31.

⁶⁰Salt Lake Tribune, December 10, 1876.

⁶¹Harrisburg Mining District Record Book L, Record of Claims, Washington County Courthouse, St. George, Utah, pp. 563-64.

⁶²Rolker, op. cit.

erected on the Virgin River about four miles from Leeds by Hunter and Gross of Salt Lake City. A millrace, one mile in length, brought the waters from the Virgin River to the turbine wheel.⁶³ A little town, called Babylon and consisting of the homes of twenty families, was built up around the mill.⁶⁴ The mill was later sold to the Stormont Silver Mining Company of New York.

All of the above mentioned mills used the pan-amalgamation process to extract silver. In this process, the ore was crushed, then mixed with quicksilver which formed an amalgam. The silver was then separated from the mercury in a retort where the mercury was driven off by heat and later condensed in water to be used again.

When the first outside capital interest began to look toward the Harrisburg District as an opportunity for investment, it caused a great deal of excitement. Mines began to change hands rapidly and many were bonded. Several new mines were being located and according to the Pioche Record not a few old locations were relocated or jumped.⁶⁵ Mines that would not pay before the mills came, were now in a position to be classed as valuable property.

By 1880, six hundred and forty claims had been recorded in the Harrisburg Mining District, but only about one hundred and fifty were owned at that time.

⁶³Pioche Record, April 28, 1877.

⁶⁴Mariger, op. cit. For further information concerning the mills, see Appendix C.

⁶⁵Pioche Record, November 10, 1876.

⁶⁶Department of the Interior, Census Office, Tenth Census of the United States: 1880 Precious Metals, XIII (Washington: Government Printing office, 1885), Appendix 1.

CHAPTER III

SILVER REEF

William T. Barbee's hopes for Bonanza City, "the embryo metropolis of Southern Utah" were never realized. Before the mills were erected, the number of prospectors and miners in the area hardly justified the building of a new city. Bonanza City shared the new population with the already established towns of Harrisburg, Leeds and Toquerville. Leeds had a small influx in population so the concensus was that it would become the center of mining operations in the new district. Even Barbee built a store at Leeds.

The Pioche Stampede

Two factors changed the situation in the Harrisburg District during the fall of 1876: first, mining operations in Pioche were at a standstill; and second, San Fransisco capitalists were taking an interest in the Harrisburg District.

It was believed that Pioche's days were numbered, so, owners, business men and workers were looking to the Harrisburg District as their next field of labor.¹ Pioche business men were watching closely development in Southern Utah. Mr. Musgrove of the Pioche Record newspaper went to Leeds proposing to establish a newspaper, but found the prospects discouraging.² Peter Harrison and Joseph Rich, business men, found that

¹Pendleton, "Naming Silver Reef," p. 29.

²Pioche Record, August 11, 1876.

the mines required further development before business prospects would be promising.³

On October 18, 1876, a plat for a new town site was laid out, locating the new site about a quarter of a mile above Bonanza City on a boulder-covered, sage brush slope.⁴ Hyman Jacobs of the Pioche firm of Jacobs and Sultan, was the first to establish himself on the new town-site. It was he who gave it the colorful name of Silver Reef.⁵ Jacobs packed all of his goods, dismantled his store at Pioche in sections, shipped them to Silver Reef and there reassembled his store. The town-site was owned by the soon to be announced Leeds Mining Company of San Francisco, and Jacobs was their agent to sell town lots.⁶ When it was known in Pioche that the Leeds Mining Company of San Francisco was buying mines and intended to have a ten-stamp mill running by February of the next year, the city began to move to Silver Reef en masse.⁷ The famous Pioche Stampede was on! By the hundreds men came in carriages, buckboards, heavy wagons, carts and on foot.⁸ Interestingly enough the rush was not for mining claims but for business locations. Pioche merchants passed

³Pioche Record, November 8, 1876. See Silver Reef town plat, Appendix E.

⁴Silver Reef Echo, February 24, 1877.

⁵Pendleton, "Naming Silver Reef," p. 29.

⁶Salt Lake Herald, November 24, 1876.

⁷Salt Lake Tribune, December 18, 1876.

⁸Ibid., November 22, 1876.

Bonanza City by and Silver Reef grew rapidly. The lots were priced at \$400 and were advancing daily as they changed hands. The size of the lots was 25 x 100 feet. Main street was 100 feet wide and other streets were 75 feet wide.⁹ The rush from Pioche continued through the months of November and December which the Pioche Record reported as follows:

Wm. O'Dougherty and Jimmy Lynch departed for Toquerville in a buggy on Monday morning. Mike Delaney, Johnny Dugan, Jack Smith, Pat Clark, Jno. Leany, Jno. Williams, Charley Hopkins, Frank Lawson and _____ Newton, left on Mormon teams on Monday. Col. Gifried reports that the principal emigration to Toquerville is from Pioche, few or no persons coming from other directions. Accommodations are not to amount to anything. Take all necessaries along.¹⁰

Early in November the Salt Lake Stage Company, Gilmer and Salisbury, made arrangements to change the route of their line to run direct from Pioche to Leeds, thence to Salt Lake City, returning the same way. This alteration was to accommodate the increased travel to the new district.¹¹ Jack Gilmer personally came south to work out the details. Soon stage lines from Pioche and the north had all the passengers they could carry and roads were lined with private conveyances loaded down with incoming miners.¹² When Silver Reef was but three weeks old it had a population of two hundred fifty to three hundred hardy miners and business men.¹³ It was estimated by some who reported in the Salt Lake

⁹Salt Lake Herald, November 24, 1876. For town plat see Appendix E.

¹⁰Pioche Record, November 15, 1876. Toquerville here refers to the Harrisburg Mining District.

¹¹Ibid., November 17, 1876.

¹²Salt Lake Tribune, November 22, 1876.

¹³Ibid., December 3, 1876.

Tribune that by spring at least six thousand people would be in the Leeds area.

In November the simple announcement that "there has been heavy discoveries this week in the Leeds mines" fed and encouraged the rush.¹⁴ Other business men who left Pioche for the Harrisburg District were Pete Heintzelman and P. Lehigh who had a grocery store in a canvas tent at Bonanza, and Mrs. Grambs who set up a restaurant at Leeds. Julius Hoffman had his assay tools packed up and shipped by Mormon teams to Silver Reef. Peter Harrison shipped an immense load of furniture, cloth and bedding to the new store he was building in Silver Reef. On another trip he had two Mormon teams loaded with goods for his store. J. J. Halpin closed his store in Pioche and moved to Silver Reef where he started his business again. Jim Leffingwell took bar fixtures from Pioche intending to open a saloon. Miss Kate Dougray shipped a large amount of restaurant utensils for her place in Silver Reef. Others who went were A. H. Emanuel, Dr. Lee, Charles Raymond, Billy Goodman.¹⁵ From a letter written by Spicer and published in the Pioche Record the following is reported:

Speculation is running high; corner lots are all the rage, mines are almost forgotten. Saloons, corrals and restaurants is what everybody wants now. Many, however, think themselves in big luck if they have

¹⁴Pioche Record, November 17, 1876.

¹⁵Ibid., taken from different issues between November 17, 1876, and December 15, 1876.

blankets and grub. Men are coming here every day, even from as far as California. Pioche has done well for this country and still keeps doing. Pioche was a big place or else there is no one left there except Judge Bishop. Everybody else whom I know is over here or on the road coming. Town building is all the rage. I hear it said that arrangements are being made so that everybody can have a corner lot. Silver Reef City is the great attraction now; eight frame houses, fourteen tents, six stone foundations and lumber for a dozen houses is the start they have now. There are a great many men here who can find no work. Don't all come at once, unless you bring your blankets and plenty of grub.¹⁶

Joseph E. Johnson, a Mormon pioneer from St. George, described prominent men found at Silver Reef during this period in a very favorable manner. He described John Ely as a "genial and social gentleman" who had made millions in mining in Nevada and had traveled to England and French Guiana, where he had speculated in mines. Mr. Janin, who was superintendent of the Leeds Mining Company, was found to be "a gentleman and energetic, fair business man," who was respected by all parties. J. B. Van Hagan who was operating with Judge Barbee was considered to be a man of "energy and sterling determination." He had been the police magistrate at Pioche and was "distinguished as having kept his scalp unharmed and his judicial seat amid the roughest in the heyday of Pioche." William T. Barbee was held to be a "gentleman of culture and affability." It was also reported that J. W. Wright, and J. Finlayson, millionaires who were connected with the State Bank of Nevada were there.¹⁷ He further describes the community as follows:

As to the class of miners and business men at and about these mines, it has never been our lot to see brought together so many hundreds of

¹⁶Pioche Record, December 10, 1876

¹⁷Salt Lake Herald, November 24, 1876.

mining population as free from poverty and dissoluteness. All seem able to pay their way, to have business and go after it with a will, and the camp as a whole seemed rather a community of gentlemen than a camp of rough miners; in fact, a great part of the mining population is sinew and muscle of the laboring and trading men of Pioche, now nearly deserted.¹⁸

The Pioche Stampede had the inevitable result of over-populating Silver Reef. Work was scarce, money was hard to find, and there would be little of either until the mills were constructed. Miners and workers were advised to stay away unless they had supplies. A deluge of miners expected from Salt Lake City led John H. Ely to comment in the Salt Lake Daily Tribune, "people are coming in every day from all directions. We don't want anyone without money. There are enough poor devils here now."¹⁹ Laborers were advised to have several months supply when they came to Silver Reef, and it was reported that hundreds of men were camping out without shelter.²⁰

Fifty or more buildings were erected in Silver Reef during November and December 1876. Many were cheaply built, but filled with merchandise. Buildings were being constructed at the rate of two or three a day.²¹ Twenty-five to fifty teams loaded with lumber, shingles, goods and produce were arriving every day. Lumber was sold in large quantities from the wagons for \$40 a thousand feet; shingles, \$5.00; hay, \$40 per ton; and flour

¹⁸Idem.

¹⁹Salt Lake Daily Tribune, December 19, 1876.

²⁰Salt Lake Tribune, December 9, 1876.

²¹Salt Lake Herald, December 15, 1876.

fifty cents per pound.²² Mormons were furnishing the lumber and produce because they could do it cheaper than anyone else.²³

Two outstanding buildings of Silver Reef were built during this period. The first was built by John Rice, Wells Fargo Agent, and was famed as being one of the finest stone buildings in southern Utah. It was used as the Wells Fargo and Co. Bank and Express office. Later it became the store for the Woolley, Lund and Judd Company. The other was the Harrison House, built by Peter Harrison and was nearly an exact counterpart of the San Jose House. Here the finest accommodations in southern Utah could be found.²⁴

When four months old, Silver Reef could boast a population of one thousand people. It was second in size only to St. George in Washington County. On its main street could be found nine saloons, three restaurants, one lodging house, four assay offices, one notary public, two barbours, one hardware store, five general merchandise and clothing houses, one billiard saloon, one furniture store, one printing office, two painters, two butchers, two bakers, one news depot, an express office, three shoe shops, one cabinet shop, one cigar and tobacco store, one magistrate's office, one drugstore, and several attorney's offices, one commission house, and three Chinese laundries, plus a number of other business places. Two breweries were being built, one above the town on the creek, and the other where the

²²Idem.

²³Salt Lake Tribune, December 19, 1876.

²⁴New York Engineering and Mining Journal, February 15, 1879, p. 188.

ditch crossed the Buckeye Reef.²⁵

Silver Reef became of age in February when a post office was opened. Benjamin H. Paddock, Esq., was appointed postmaster with C. E. Jabson [sic], assistant postmaster. Later Herman Krause served as postmaster. The post office was housed in the same building with the Silver Reef Echo newspaper which was published by Joseph E. Johnson of St. George.²⁶ Its first and only issue was February 24, 1877, after which it was sold and became the Silver Reef Miner.

Two other townsites were laid out about the same time as Silver Reef. One to be known as Chloride City was located about one-half mile west of Leeds; the other to be about five miles northeast of Leeds near the Rio Virgin River, but neither was developed.²⁷

Bonanza City, located just south of Silver Reef had about twenty-five houses, two stores, two saloons, a stable and hay yard, blacksmith shop, notary and assayer office and a Chinese grocer. Its central location and flat terrain were a better site for a city than that of Silver Reef thus some felt that it would yet grow to be the center of business. Silver Reef and Bonanza soon grew together and both became known as Silver Reef; however, Bonanza was called Bonanza Flats while Silver Reef was called the "Rock Pile" by the people of Bonanza. X

²⁵Silver Reef Echo, February 24, 1877. For Silver Reef business "poem" see Appendix C.

²⁶Idem.

²⁷Salt Lake Herald, February 24, 1876.

Leeds, as well as Bonanza City, had lost out to Silver Reef and many of the businesses that established temporary operations at Leeds moved to Silver Reef. The telegraph office moved from Leeds to Silver Reef in March, 1877.²⁸

Development of Silver Reef

Great expectations were held for the future of Silver Reef. It was the opinion of some it would become the biggest mining camp in the Rocky Mountains. There was little doubt of the richness of the mines for the Echo boasted, "We have ores sufficient for a dozen mills for time indefinite."²⁹ Actually, only four big mining companies established themselves at Silver Reef and when their mills were operating the population leveled off to approximately 1,500 people.³⁰ This was a respectable sized town for such a remote area during this period being about the same size as Park City or Bingham.³¹ The Engineering and Mining Journal describes Silver Reef in 1879 as the most beautiful and romantic mining camp in Utah Territory. It was substantially and neatly built up with frame and stone buildings having an extremely lively and prosperous appearance, and was considered one of the most successful mining camps in

²⁸Salt Lake Herald, November 24, 1876.

²⁹Silver Reef Echo, February 24, 1877.

³⁰The Engineering and Mining Journal, February 15, 1879, p. 115.

³¹Bingham and Park City were important mining camps in northern Utah.

the country.³²

The Compiled Laws of Utah for 1878 gives an account of the incorporation of Silver Reef by the Legislative Assembly; however, this incorporation never actually became law and the town was never incorporated.³³ Another attempt was later made which failed also because the mining companies and business men who feared taxation opposed the movement.³⁴ Town officials were Deputy Sheriff Joseph Hoag who was the town constable during most of its active history (he handled with outstanding courage the many problems which arose) and Justices of the Peace Kiv Phillips, Benjamin Paddock and J. N. Louder.

Silver Reef Miner

The Silver Reef Miner newspaper was an excellent example of free thinking newsmanship for its period. The reporting was colorful and always supported a cause. John W. Pike and his brother Edward Pike were co-owners of the Miner from October, 1879, until they sold out in April, 1881.³⁵ It was published at first weekly, then bi-weekly and tri-weekly before slipping back to weekly status. Under the editorship of Edward Pike, the paper was styled as the "only newspaper in Southern Utah."

³²The Engineering and Mining Journal, February 24, 1877. For pictures of Silver Reef, see Appendix D.

³³Compiled Laws of Utah, I (Salt Lake City: Herbert Pembroke, Book, Job and Legal Blank Printer, 1888), pp. 532-35.

³⁴Silver Reef Miner, February 11, 1882.

³⁵Ibid., April 6, 1881.

In general, its policy was to support the business element, to support the miners against the big companies and to advertize the advantages of the town of Silver Reef. It opposed Chinese labor and the Chinese people as a race. It opposed vigorously the Mormon authorities and supported the Gentile element as would be expected from a Gentile paper. It continually ridiculed the Beaver Chronicle, published in Beaver, Utah, calling it first the "Beaver Barnacle." Later insult was added to injury by calling it the "Chronic Hell" for the Miner considered the Chronicle the organ of the Mormon Church in Southern Utah. It also poked fun at the Salt Lake Tribune which it called "The Trombone." The following is an example:

For good, square, out and out lying the editor of the Salt Lake Trombone lays head and ears, especially ears, over any man this Territory or the Coast ever knew. In fact, he is a bigger liar than old Tom Pepper ever dare be, and there is more of the 'tother end of an equine in his composition than could be found in a whole band of Ben Tasker's horses. "Give the devil his due," you know even if he is the scrub editor of a scrub newspaper like the Salt Lake Trombone.³⁶

The Silver Reef Miner further evidenced its low esteem of the anti-Mormon editor of the Salt Lake Tribune by writing:

Some imaginative Wahoo connected with the Salt Lake Tribune office has written "an expose" of the Mormon Endowment House mysteries, and to make the thing appear as if it were really and truly a "lifting of the veil" by one who has been through the ecclesiastical mill, the thing is signed "Mrs. G. S. R., Nephi, Sept. 24, 1879." Now, honest Injun, Mr. Tribune, wasn't that long winded and tastefully illustrated "expose" written right in your own office and by one of your own employees?

³⁶Silver Reef Miner, October 22, 1879.

And isn't it composed of three-fourths imagination and one-fourth extract of beadle? And ain't you ashamed of yourself to impose on the good nature of your readers by printing three or four columns of such fraudulent trash to the exclusion of all legitimate local news? Be honest about it, neighbor, and astonish yourself by telling the truth for once in your life.³⁷

The Miner became much less strident after its purchase in 1881 by James N. Louder whose policy it was to put out an excellent paper with much less name calling. George E. Miles stated that the new editor of the Silver Reef Miner was a courageous man who printed what he considered to be the truth regardless of the impending results.³⁸ Sol Wixman was the last editor of the Silver Reef Miner, which suspended publication early in 1883.³⁹

The Great Fire

Almost every mining town seems to have had its great fire; Silver Reef was no exception. The newly organized hook, ladder and bucket brigade saved the Christy Mill and part of the town when cordwood, valued at \$1,500 and belonging to Bishop Crosby of Leeds, was burned. Later the town was not so fortunate when on May 30, 1879, combustible materials ignited under the lumber sidewalk near Wiest's Barbarshop. The result of this fire was a loss of a quarter of million dollars in the heart of Silver Reef.

³⁷Silver Reef Miner, October 1, 1879.

³⁸George E. Miles, personal interview, St. George, Utah, July 29, 1962. Mr. Miles worked at Silver Reef in the 1880s.

³⁹Andrew Jenson, (comp.) "Silver Reef" St. George Stake Records, S to Z (Church Historian's Office), p. 6.

Some of the finest establishments in the town were burned to the ground.⁴⁰ Captain Lubbock of the Christy Company was appointed chairman of a committee to clean up the town and make it fire-proof. Rubbish was cleaned, stove pipes put in order, and a new fire engine ordered.⁴¹ One month later the Barbee and Walker Mill followed the heart of the town and burned at an estimated loss of \$50,000.⁴² Within three weeks another considerable fraction of Silver Reef disappeared in smoke and flames again when half of upper China Town burned to the ground. Arson was suspected. From this time great care was taken to prevent arson and the Miner suggested that "somebody may yet test the strength of a rope with the weight of their body if things continued."⁴³ The town and mill were rebuilt as soon as possible with many improvements made in the process.

China Town

The Chinese of Silver Reef, numbering about one hundred persons, provided needed services in restaurants, laundries, and grocery stores.⁴⁴ They were an interesting people to the residents of Leeds with their queues and unusual dress. Colorful burials were much enjoyed by the

⁴⁰Silver Reef Miner, May 31, 1879. Some of the establishments destroyed were Jacob and Sultan, \$8,000; J. H. Cassidy, \$8,000; Mat Coschine, \$1,000; Pete Clancey, \$2,000; Peter Harrison, \$30,000; I. Schwartz, \$10,000; and Mrs. K. Hanrehan, \$2,000.

⁴¹Ibid., June 25, 1879.

⁴²Idem.

⁴³Ibid., July 23, 1879.

⁴⁴Ibid., May 24, 1879.

Indians, who under the cover of darkness, carried away the foods placed on the Chinese graves to feed the departed spirits.⁴⁵

The white population held the Chinese in contempt, for their pig pens, slaughter house and meat markets caused much cursing when the wind was blowing the wrong way.⁴⁶ They were accused of selling fire water to the Indians and withholding their services when the city was burning in the great fire.⁴⁷ Silver Reef miners, along with most of the laboring West during this period of history, considered Chinese cheap labor one of the draw backs to the growth of the country. They rejoiced with the passage of the Federal anti-Chinese legislation of 1882.⁴⁸

Condemnation was also meted out for the comfortable retreats in China Town for the white devotees of the opium habit which seemed to do a flourishing business.⁴⁹ In the Silver Reef Miner is reported the following:

About 5 o'clock Sunday morning last a frame building owned by China Joe, was destroyed by fire. The house stood on the east end and north side of the Centre Street, over the creek and at the time the blaze broke out the asiatic owner was in bed with a woman, and a white woman at that, too. The loving couple had barely time to get out of the door before down came the shebang with a crash. In fact, Joe got out with his pantaloons in his hand, while his susy anna gained the street

⁴⁵Mariger, Saga of Three Towns, p. 98.

⁴⁶Silver Reef Miner, August 27, 1881.

⁴⁷Ibid., May 13, 1881.

⁴⁸Ibid., March 24, 1882. This legislation suspended for twenty years the entrance of Chinese laborers into the United States and prohibited the admission of Chinese to citizenship.

⁴⁹Ibid., January 10, 1880.

almost as naked as she was born. Both of them were slightly burned. Under the floor of the building the Chinaman had sometime previously secreted 142 boxes of opium, worth \$15 per box, and the smell arising from the burning of this drug nauseated everybody who came within sniffing distance of it. No one knows how the blaze originated, but the Chinaman thinks somebody applied the torch to smoke out him and his girl. Anyhow, his loss is \$2,000 by the fire, and he is now sloshing around town the maddest Chinaman this side of Hong Kong.⁵⁰

The Chinese lotteries in Silver Reef continued week in and week out, but most distasteful of all to the residents of Silver Reef was Chinese slavery. The attempt of Hop Lee to return a runaway Chinese slave girl to servitude by advertising a reward of \$50 for her return brought this notice to the Silver Reef Miner:

Quite an excitement took place in the Chinese part of town last Thursday afternoon, caused by the sudden disappearance of one of the Chinese damsels belonging to Hop Lee and valued at the high price of \$700. A search was made for the woman and she was not found. A brilliant idea struck Hop--he would advertize his loss in the Miner and offer a reward to anyone returning the woman. Wending his way to the office he gave us an advertisement which read as follows: "China woman she leab camp you sabe? You put in papah that me pay \$50 and no questions asked anybody bring her back; me no care, Injun, nigger, white man, pay em \$50." A little later some boys found her in a house hiding and captured her and took her to the Chinese part of town to Hop Lee and demanded \$100 reward. Hop Lee started up town and made a complaint to the Sheriff in the following style: "I say I pay \$50; they want \$100; I no pay 'em--I say take the gel. In papah office I say I give \$50 to nigger, Injun, white man bring my woman back; d-d fellows want to get rich at once. You come along." On arriving at Hop's dark domicile the woman's captors were still there, keeping the Chinaman from taking possession of the disputed property by a free display of six-shooters. A compromise was soon effected however, which resulted in the Chinaman paying \$50, and the Chinawoman being returned to her owner--to be again the victim of one of the most debasing and cruel systems of slavery that ever disgraced the lowest form of civilization.⁵¹

⁵⁰Silver Reef Miner, October 29, 1879.

⁵¹Ibid., June 14, 1879.

Feelings toward the Chinese in 1881 brought about the stoning of Chinese houses, a practice condemned by the Miner. Without a doubt, the Chinese were the most misunderstood people of Silver Reef and the fine services they rendered at the time were little appreciated. Mariger states that after the decline of Silver Reef, a Chinaman by the name of Sam Gee came from San Francisco to exhume all the Chinese dead and ship their remains in tea chests to the land of their ancestors.⁵²

The Catholic Church

The Catholic population predominated in Silver Reef due to the large number of Irish working in the mines and mills. The census of 1880 shows that about a quarter of the population was born in Ireland.⁵³ Many of these workers had previously lived at Pioche, Nevada, where Father Lawrence Scanlan was their priest. Father Scanlan had been born and trained in Ireland and came to America after his ordination June 28, 1868. He was assigned to be pastor at Pioche and under his direction, a church and hospital were built. He won the love of the rowdy mining camp and by holding to a strict teaching of reform he created a large congregation of faithful followers.⁵⁴ By the time Silver Reef was booming Father Scanlan was the missionary rector over the Salt Lake parish. Silver Reef fell under his jurisdiction which made

⁵²Mariger, Saga of Three Towns, p. 98.

⁵³Nels Anderson, Desert Saints (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1942), p. 430.

⁵⁴Robert J. Dwyer, "Pioneer Bishop: Lawrence Scanlan 1843-1915," Utah State Historical Quarterly, XX, No. 2 (April 1952), p. 140.

the Catholics there very happy. In 1877 he visited Silver Reef on horseback and in 1878 he sent Father Dennis Kiely to be the local priest who soon reported that the miners were prepared to build a church.

Father Scanlan visited Silver Reef again in November 1878 and personally directed the raising of funds for the new church. Within four months a neat, attractive frame building was completed and dedicated as St. John's Church.⁵⁵ Services were first celebrated Easter Sunday, 1879, with the singing of the Missa Cantata.

The first Catholic High Mass for the people of Silver Reef was celebrated in the St. George Mormon Tabernacle by invitation of the Mormon authorities, Apostle Erastus Snow and Stake President J. D. T. McAllister. This took place while the Catholics were waiting for their church to be completed at Silver Reef. At first, Father Scanlan demurred saying there could be no appropriate music, but choir leader, John M. McFarlane, told him that the St. George Mormon choir could render the songs if they had the music. The music for "Peter's Mass" in Latin was furnished and within two weeks the Mormon choir was able to sing the Kyrie Eleison, Gloria and Credo in Latin to the satisfaction of everyone concerned.⁵⁶

The Latter-day Saints in great numbers attended the Catholic Mass and were very satisfied with the fine manner in which Father Scanlan

⁵⁵Dwyer, op. cit., p. 148

⁵⁶W. R. Harris, The Catholic Church in Utah (Salt Lake City: The Intermountain Catholic Press, 1909), p. 332.

conducted himself.⁵⁷ He won for himself the esteem and good will of all. Before the Mass, he explained the meaning of the vestments used and also preached a sermon taking for his text, "True adorers of God shall adore Him in spirit and truth." He started his sermon by making the remarks, "I think you are wrong, and you think I am wrong, but this should not prevent us from treating each other with due consideration and respect."⁵⁸ This incident was a fine experience for the people of St. George who had been isolated for many years from contact with other religions.

Even before the Catholic church was completed, a hospital had been planned. The hospital was started for which the miners agreed to contribute one dollar a month to its support; consequently, Father Scanlan requested five Holy Cross Sisters to staff the hospital. The building was a rough lumber building on a stone basement foundation with rooms for the Sisters in the basement. It was ready for operation in September, 1879. T. C. Porjade met the Sisters, who had come from South Bend, Indiana, in Salt Lake City and escorted them down to Silver Reef.⁵⁹ The cost of the hospital was \$2,149.07--all of which was raised by donations. Monthly donations for support of the hospital were \$200, which enabled the Sisters to make a small addition to the hospital.⁶⁰ Later as the donations became

⁵⁷Adolfus R. Whitehead, "Diary," (typewritten copy in possession of Edna Bently, St. George, Utah), p. 42.

⁵⁸Harris, op. cit., p. 332.

⁵⁹Silver Reef Miner, July 23, 1879.

⁶⁰Ibid., September 24, 1879.

harder to collect, the hospital had a struggle.

The average number of patients was about thirty-seven a year. Sister M. Euphrosine was Sister Superior assisted by Sister M. Anicetus, Sister M. Bernard, Sister M. Leonard and Sister M. Benita with Sister M. Bernard as hospital administrator.⁶¹ Father Scanlan was responsible for the establishment of the rules and regulations for admittance to the hospital.⁶²

The Sisters opened a day school, called St. Mary's, in the church and there Sister Superior Euphrosine taught. Later Sister Febronia and Sister Regas replaced her.

After the hospital and the school were operating, Father Scanlan returned to Salt Lake and sent Father Heyde to take charge of Silver Reef.⁶³ He immediately set about to raise money for the construction of a tower for the church. He did this in part by giving lectures on Rome, the Crusades, and his travels in Africa for which he charged one dollar per lecture.⁶⁴

⁶¹Mariger, op. cit., p. 114.

⁶²Silver Reef Miner, December 8, 1880. Rules and Regulations:
1. Admissions must come provided with a card or note from his superintendent to the Sister Superior. 2. Must present to the Sister Superior a certificate from one of the residing physicians stating his sickness, and at least the testimony of two citizens as to his indigence. 3. No miner unwilling to have one dollar a month deducted from his wages toward the maintenance of the hospital shall have a right to admittance. 4. No other shall be admitted into the hospital unless willing and giving a certain assurance that a payment of \$10 per week will be made by himself or friends. 5. No one must enter as a patient into the hospital without having previously given his name, occupation, age and residence of relatives and friends, to the Sister Superior.

⁶³Silver Reef Miner, October 22, 1879.

⁶⁴Ibid., January 31, 1880.

The tower was constructed by Mormon labor from St. George which caused some objections. The Silver Reef Miner made the following comments:

While the Miner would of course prefer to see home workmen patronized in preference to those who deposit their tithes in the Church coffers, still, if those who contributed to the tower fund are satisfied to have the work done by Mormons--as Father Heyde says they are--"they pays their money and they takes their choice."⁶⁵

In the tower was placed a four hundred pound bell which was "baptized" on December 27, 1879.⁶⁶

Father Heyde served as priest for Pioche also which he visited frequently. He was replaced by Father O'Connor in March, 1881, who in turn was replaced by Father Thomas Gallagher, the last priest to serve in Silver Reef.

The church, hospital and school rendered fine services to the town and these institutions became centers of culture greatly benefiting the mining community. The choir was the pride of the church. The school supplied, in form of programs and dramas, social benefits for the youth as well as adults. As Silver Reef declined, there were no longer enough miners to support the hospital, so in 1883 it was closed. The sisters were recalled to Salt Lake City.⁶⁷

Protestant Religions

The Protestants were represented in Silver Reef by many faiths,

⁶⁵Silver Reef Miner, November 29, 1879.

⁶⁶Ibid., December 27, 1879. "Baptism of the new bell will be solemnized at the Catholic Church tomorrow at 7:00."

⁶⁷Dwyer, op. cit., p. 149

most of which were never well established. The Protestant population was probably never large enough in any one denomination to justify a building.

A Protestant Episcopal parish was established by Bishop Tuttle of Salt Lake City and named "Grace Church" but neither was a chapel built nor a minister named. The church simply functioned by ministers visiting from Salt Lake.⁶⁸

In 1881 the Presbyterians organized a church at Silver Reef with Rev. E. N. Murphy of Chicago as resident minister. He worked with Arthur B. Corte who spent most of his time with mission schools in St. George, Washington, and Toquerville where attempts were made to convert Mormons. The Silver Reef Miner reported it in this manner:

Services were held at Citizens Hall on Saturday. Reverends Corte and Murphy officiating. The attendance was very large. Some had to stand. Mr Murphy will continue his labor here, and Mr. Corte will continue to wrestle with the ungodly at St. George and surrounding settlements.⁶⁹

These mission schools enrolled a few Mormon children in each town but failed to convert anyone. It was reported that ten scholars were enrolled in the Presbyterian school, taught by Miss Fanny R. Burke, at Toquerville. Presbyterian meetings were usually held in the school house and a fine choir was organized to meet their needs.⁷⁰

Sentiments in mining towns were not always favorable to religion. Comments from the Pioche Record reveal the feelings of some:

⁶⁸Silver Reef Miner, April 17, 1880.

⁶⁹Ibid., May 25, 1881.

⁷⁰Ibid., February 11, 1881.

Rev. Arthur B. Corte lectured in the School House the other evening on "Religious Difficulties, and How to Meet Them." With due difference to Mr. Corte who is undoubtedly conscientious in his effort to do good, we are pained to say that the lecture was utterly without point, poorly rendered and dishwatery in the extreme.⁷¹

Rev. Murphy was highly respected at Silver Reef and remained there until the failure of the mills at which time he moved to Mt. Pleasant.⁷²

Many ministers of various churches stopped to preach in Silver Reef but never made permanent establishments. Rev. Frank D. Sankey of the Salvation Army passed through Silver Reef with the corps of workers, winning the following comment from the Silver Reef Miner:

Several citizens have been fixing up their shot-guns during the past week, and the probabilities are that the Rev. Frank D. Sankey's corps of the Salvation Army, who made the angels (spirits) weep with their melodious racket the other night, will be very careful in their future operations.⁷³

In addition to the already mentioned sects, the followers of the Re-organized Church of Jesus Christ were active in Silver Reef for a time while trying to convert the Utah Mormons.

Mormon Church Activities

Utah Mormons made an attempt of proselyting among the Gentiles by holding meetings every week in Silver Reef. Missionaries for this purpose came from St. George, Leeds and Toquerville. These meetings were held

⁷¹Pioche Record, February 19, 1881.

⁷²Wain Sutton, Utah Centennial History, II (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1949), p. 685.

⁷³Silver Reef Miner, May 1, 1880.

weekly during most of the history of the town but with very little success. At times large numbers turned out to hear the Mormons teach, but meetings were discontinued because of lack of attendance. In a letter written by Bishop George H. Crosby of Leeds to the St. George Stake President, we find the following:

Dear Brother McAllister:

I received a card from Brother Joseph Orton stating that he and fellow missionaries would be at Silver Reef to hold meetings on Thursday, 26th inst. and I write to say that, in my opinion, (in which Brother Wixom is agreed) I would not send any more at present; as Brother Wixom gave out general notice; had the house lighted, etc. and not one soul came, except the brethren from Toquerville. Brother Wixom states this has been the case for two or more meetings, and I think it labor thrown away. But I will do my part, if you think best to try again. It cost something to get the house lighted, etc., and I feel that we have done enough for them when not one soul will come out.

Please let me know soon what we had better do; also, let Brother Orton know as I have not answered his card.⁷⁴

In keeping with the foregoing, the meetings were suspended.

Public School

Plans to develop a public school in Silver Reef started in 1879 when the Silver Reef and Leeds school district elected A. T. Moore, W. P. Poole and Peter Harrison as trustees.⁷⁵ At that time it was determined that there were seventy-five children of school age between six and seventeen years residing in Silver Reef.⁷⁶ In January, 1880, the Miner requested the

⁷⁴Jenson, op. cit.

⁷⁵Silver Reef Miner, October 15, 1879.

⁷⁶Idem.

trustees to resign, stating that proper announcement of their candidacy had not been given before the election. The Miner opposed raising money for the school until they resigned.⁷⁷

The Silver Reef Educational Society held a meeting in the Harrison House in February, 1880, and elected J. A. Turrill, R. T. Gillespie, Julius Sultan, Julius Wagner and A. T. Moore as trustees. They made abortive plans to build a twenty-five feet by fifty feet school house.

Another organization was effected in June, 1880, wherein Patrick Clark was elected for a one year term; Dr. C. Mantor for a two year term; and Col. E. A. Wall for a three year term as school trustees.⁷⁹ Under these trustees a school house was completed with public donations and readied for occupancy in January, 1881. Miss Carrie Walker was the first teacher-principal and seventy pupils were registered. Miss Walker proved to be an excellent teacher and the school soon built a good reputation. The school was free of tuition and money was raised by entertainments and donations of social groups as well as private contributions.

Since the following school term started in October with eighty-five students, Mrs. Ada Hall and Miss Minnie Carbis were added to the faculty.⁸⁰ A school tax of one percent on property owners residing in Silver Reef was voted by unanimous vote for the support of the school. G. W. Morehouse

⁷⁷Silver Reef Miner, January 24, 1880.

⁷⁸Ibid., February 7, 1880.

⁷⁹Ibid., June 15, 1880.

⁸⁰Ibid., December 31, 1881.

was appointed to collect the tax which proved to be a rather difficult fete to accomplish.⁸¹ Property of non-resident owners, including all the mining companies, could not be taxed for school purposes.⁸² Mrs. Ada Hall was replaced by Miss Bernetta Halpin, in May, 1882, for the remainder of the term and at the end of the school year Miss Carrie Walker resigned her position as school principal.

Statement of receipts and expenditures for the school year ending June 30, 1882, were as follows:

Received from school tax	\$	777.20	
Received from county		148.80	
Received from concert		164.80	
Received from dramatic entertainment		106.00	
Received from mining companies		96.00	
		<u>1,292.80</u>	
Paid for teachers	\$	937.80	
Collecting tax		55.00	83

For the term starting October 14, 1882, with an enrollment of sixty pupils, J. W. Martin was the new teacher and he was assisted by his wife. With the decline of Silver Reef, the school house was removed to Leeds where it was used for many years and still stands today.⁸⁴ X

Social Life

The social rounds of the Silver Reef miners included horse racing,

⁸¹Silver Reef Miner, October 11, 1881.

⁸²Ibid., June 10, 1882.

⁸³Idem.

⁸⁴Mariger, Saga of Three Towns, p. 98.

shooting matches, cock fighting, drama, with drinking and gambling in the saloons. It was quite natural that one of the first sports to be found was horse racing. This sport was developed to quite a high degree with people from all over southern Utah in attendance. The first race was held in April, 1877, and was preceded by a foot race, sack race and wheelbarrow race with the Indians. The big attraction was single dash of a half-mile for a purse of \$100. The entries were: Lizzard, the favorite, owned by Scott; animals owned by Al Grant, Ed Clark, Henry Clark, George Boyd; together with two Mormon mustangs. The Pioche Record reported the race:

J. B. Van Hagen acted as judge. Clark's and Scott's animals were the favorites in the pools sold. Boyd's horse got the start and kept it up until near the end, when one of the Mormon mustangs caught up and passed Boyd's animal in a jiffy, winning the race and the purse, and causing the pool money to steer clear from what was though to be its legitimate destination. All the pools were paid the same night in John Cassidy's saloon. So endeth the first but we hope not the last horse race at the town of Silver Reef.⁸⁵

The sweepstake purse at the Silver Reef track at times was as high as \$600 which attracted a great number of racing people. Foot races between squaws and buck Indians were often held as preliminaries to the races. On one occasion a fight between a half-grown lynx and a number of dogs was held in which the lynx was beaten.⁸⁶ Shooting matches were also held at the race track and were very popular for a time. Col. E. A. Wall became known as the outstanding marksman at Silver Reef. These activities resulted in the formation of a rifle club.

⁸⁵Pioche Record, April 28, 1877.

⁸⁶Silver Reef Miner, February 14, 1880.

One popular place for dances was Welte's Beer Gardens where the Santa Clara Brass Band first played and later the Silver Reef Brass Band. After the school house was completed, most of the finer dances, such as the Calico Ball, the Masons's Ball, or the Odd Fellows Ball, were held in that building. Other dancing places included the Metropolitan Dance Hall and the Alhambra Hall where the hurdy-gurdy dances took place.⁸⁷

Some form of entertainment always appeared available--either from vaudeville troupes coming through, local drama clubs, or vocal and instrumental concerts. Organization of the Social Dancing Club, Literary Society and the Drama Club show the interest and desire to bring culture of high quality into the town. The free public school and the Catholic school provided much of the entertainment in the areas of spelling bees, programs, and drama.

Social life at its highest seemed to be centered around the lodges of the Masons, and the Odd Fellows (both had large memberships) and the Good Fellowship. In 1879, J. B. Van Hagen was elected president of the Masonic Association, with H. S. Lubbock, vice-president; Gibson Clark, secretary; W. T. Barbee, treasurer; and N. E. Rice, tyler.⁸⁸ During the following year permanent organization of the Odd Fellows was effected with J. M. Lynch, president; Michael Griffin, vice-president; George Miller,

⁸⁷The favorite place of entertainment for the miners was the saloon where men could dance sometimes with the hurdy-gurdy girls (ordinarily not prostitutes) provided by the house.

⁸⁸Silver Reef Miner, June 21, 1879.

treasurer; and C. F. Bowen, secretary.⁸⁹ In addition, the Good Fellowship Lodge No. 6 Ancient Order of United Workmen was organized with Gibson Clark, M. W.; and J. N. Louder, recorder.⁹⁰ A reading room for the latter club was established at Silver Reef.

Althea Gregerson Hafen, daughter of Andrew F. Gregerson, prominent freighter of Silver Reef, indicated that Silver Reef had its social elite enjoying all the fashionable finery of the day.⁹¹

Anti-Social Problems

A difference of opinion exists concerning the rowdiness of Silver Reef. Some reports say it was one of the tamest and cleanest towns in the West; while others say it was as rough as any mining town of that period.⁹² There is no question that violent crimes were common at Silver Reef. In the early days claim jumping caused some trouble; therefore, a committee was organized to deal with the problem. The Pioche Record recorded the following citizens' meeting:

A meeting of the law abiding citizens of the Harrisburg Mining District was held Jan 25th 1876. . . to take into consideration the propriety of organizing a mutual protective society of miners league to protect the legal rights of all parties interest in mines or lands in Harrisburg Mining District and vicinity. Judge W. H. Crawford of Washington was elected chairman of the meeting. T. Y. McNally was elected secretary. W. T. Barbee stated--a report had widely circulated that certain parties were unlawfully relocating or jumping mines. . . . W. T. Barbee offered the following preamble and resolution:

⁸⁹Silver Reef Miner, October 13, 1880.

⁹⁰Ibid., December 16, 1880.

⁹¹Althea G. Hafen, personal interview, St. George, Utah, July 29, 1962.

⁹²Rex Sterling, personal interview, Hurricane, Utah, August 5, 1962.

"Where as it has been currently reported that certain parties are now in this district who avow their intention to jump and relocate mining claims and who are, as it is currently reported, tearing down monuments and destroying mining notices and, as we are led to believe, are determined to run this district by force of arms, and whereas such proceedings would be detrimental to the mining and other interests of this district, and would in all probability end in a reign of terror and bloodshed in our midst. Resolved, that we deprecate any acts of lawlessness and violence and that we respectfully request any party or parties that they refrain from encroaching upon the legal rights of any citizen. Resolved that we submit to the arbitration of laws of our country in regard to the possession and title of our lands and mining property."⁹³

Nevertheless, a number of claims were jumped with resulting gun play.

One of the great nuisances of the camp was the mining speculators who represented themselves as agents for wealthy men, supposedly willing and ready to advance money and credit. They would succeed in getting mines bonded to themselves for a period of three to six months. They would approach new arrivals with the object of selling them into partnership in the bond, providing the stranger would advance them money enough to pay for board and whisky for a month or so.⁹⁴

Since the city was never incorporated, problems arose due to the lack of adequate law enforcement. In 1881 and 1882 a rowdy element began to operate in Silver Reef following the strike. They would rob miners' cabins by day and celebrate with rowdiness by night. The Miner reported that "It has come to the point where almost nightly and even in broad daylight peaceable citizens are bushwacked and assaulted for the slightest cause or provocation. Lawlessness and hoodlumism go unrestrained. The officers

⁹³Pioche Record, February 2, 1876.

⁹⁴Ibid., May 5, 1877.

lack either the courage or incentive to act.⁹⁵ It is also reported:

Almost daily and nightly occurrences of the most disgraceful and violent character are witnessed upon our streets and about our popular resorts. Life and property seem at the mercy of the lawless class, who in open day plunder unprotected dwellings and resort to unrestrained violence, and make night a bedlam scene of bloodshed and riot. This condition of things is growing monotonous in the extreme, and coming as it does from new importations.⁹⁶

The problem seems to have been brought under control considerably by the efforts of James Louder in his articles in the Silver Reef Miner, but a rough element continued operations until the decline of the town.

A poorly timed stage robbery occurred a few miles from Silver Reef once when Andy Clothier was driving the stage coach. The stage coach was stopped and the Wells Fargo Company treasure box, containing only fifteen dollars, was handed over to the bandits. The largest robbery committed was the one in which \$1,500 worth of bullion was taken from the Barbee Mill. C. Blake Boyden, mill foreman, was accused of the deed.

Suicide was common at Silver Reef--at least six in six years were reported. The Pioche Record gave the account of the second incident in this manner:

We have had another suicide--that of a man named Tom Stevens. An overdose of morphine was the means employed. He was an Englishman by birth and worked for the Leeds Mining Company. This is the second suicide, which was a grand success.⁹⁷

Murder was even more common than suicide with at least ten men losing

⁹⁵Silver Reef Miner, October 1, 1881.

⁹⁶Ibid., October 15, 1881.

⁹⁷Pioche Record, May 5, 1877.

their lives in six years. The first incident occurred when Pete Deegan was killed by John Carnes, a barkeeper. The fatal fracas occurred in French's saloon where Carnes was employed. Deegan had made some remarks, which were offensive to Carnes, about a woman, Dolly Varden. Deegan was warned not to repeat them, but the words were repeated and this led to a quarrel. Deegan picked up a tumbler, hit Carnes with it, and then started to run. Carnes then shot Deegan twice, killing him.⁹⁸

The most notorious murder at Silver Reef was that of Michael Carbis, which grew out of strong feelings between the Irish and Cornish miners. The Irish were at Silver Reef first, but a number of mine bosses considered them trouble makers and preferred the Cornish miners when they entered the camp.

Col. W. I. Allen, superintendent of the Stormont, was one who preferred the Cornish miners and replaced the Irish at every opportunity. Col. Allen gave instructions to Carbis, the shift-boss in the California Mine, to get rid of Tom Forrest whom he considered a trouble maker.⁹⁹ The day after Forrest was fired, he accosted Carbis while he was proceeding to work and invited him at the muzzle of a six-shooter into a cabin to settle with him. Mr. Carbis replied that he had no settlement to make, that he wanted nothing to do with him. Forrest placed the pistol in his pocket and drew a long dagger from its sheath, rushed upon Carbis and stabbed him in the right side, then ran. Forrest hid in the Tecumseh mine tunnel where he

⁹⁸Pioche Record, August 3, 1878.

⁹⁹Mariger, Saga of Three Towns, p. 99.

was tracked down with the aid of Indians, arrested by Deputy Sheriff Hoag, and placed in the City jail. Carbis died at five o'clock that evening.

The Pioche Record reported his burial as follows:

Michael Carbis was buried on Tuesday, October 5th, by the Masonic Association, of which he was a member. The Odd Fellows Association also turned out in full force. The mines and the mills were all closed down for the day. Over 500 people followed the body of Mr. Carbis to the grave. The Masonic burial service was read in an impressive manner by Mr. Edward Cutts. The greatest sympathy is felt by all for the bereaved family.¹⁰⁰

On the same day of the burial, Tom Forrest was taken by Sheriff Hardy to St. George and placed in the county jail. About three o'clock the next morning, Sheriff Hardy was walking in front of the jail while Frank Bently was on guard in front of the cell in which Forrest was confined. Suddenly Sheriff Hardy was surrounded by about fifty masked and armed men who demanded the keys of the jail. Upon Hardy's refusing to give up the keys, they covered him with shotguns and pistols, threw him to the ground and took the keys. Upon entering the jail, they disarmed Bently and put a rope around Forrest's neck. They dragged him out and undertook to hang him on a telegraph pole in front of the building. This act being unsuccessful, they took Forrest to a cottonwood tree about a block from the jail, flung the rope over a strong limb and hauled him up. The Pioche Record stated, "Justice, swift and sure, was meted out to him, although without the sanction of the law courts."¹⁰¹ The body of Forrest was given a decent burial in the cemetery at St. George. The Mormons of St. George

¹⁰⁰Pioche Record, October 9, 1880.

¹⁰¹Ibid., October 12, 1880.

were horrified by the incident.

Another Silver Reef tragedy was the Diamond-Truby duel, a product of Col. E. A. Wall's financial troubles which resulted when the vein in his Kenner mine came to an end due to a fault. Col. Wall was unable to meet a large indebtedness to the Christy Company; subsequently, Captain Lubbock of the Christy Company brought suit to dispossess Col. Wall. Pending a final decision, the Court issued an order closing the mine. Deputy U. S. Marshal John Diamond served the papers to Jack Truby, foreman of the Kenner, and tried to enter the mine. Truby stopped him saying that they would obey the order of the court, but, he had no authority to enter the mine. The admonition to get off and stay off brought a bitter feeling between the two men. Within a few days at a session of the Justice of the Peace Court, Truby entered with his hat on. Diamond ordered him to take it off, whereby Truby invited him outside to repeat his words. As Diamond stepped out he asked for Truby's gun. Truby started shooting his .41 caliber pistol and Diamond returned the fire also with a .41 caliber pistol. Both men were killed; both had several wounds of .41 and .45 caliber pistol slugs indicating that more than one man was shooting on each side.¹⁰²

Another double killing was that of Harry Clark and a faro dealer named Saxey. While playing cards, each accused the other of cheating and drew their guns simultaneously. Both were shot in the heart.¹⁰³

The William Rafferty killing shows the lynch spirit that existed

¹⁰²George E. Miles, personal interview.

¹⁰³Mariger, Saga of Three Towns, p. 102.

at Silver Reef. Herbert Steele was employed by the Silver Reef Miner until he went on a drunken debauch and was fired. Soon after, he was at Cassidy's saloon, where he began wrangling over the payment of some drinks. The Miner reported John Quillan's version of the incident as follows:

I called Steele back and told him we were not in the habit of keeping accounts and that we did not do a credit business. He then told me he did not owe me more than a half dollar; some words passed between us, and he said that I had acted the dirty, d--d sucker with him about that fifty cents--this was repeated three or four times. I finally told him I think I am pretty near as good a man as you are. He said, that may be, but you treated me like a d--d dirty sucker. I then struck him in the face, he kind of staggered back, and I was following him up when I heard the report of a pistol. I rushed in on him and tried to get the pistol from him, and several of the boys got around him.¹⁰⁴

As a result of the fighting, William Rafferty, an innocent bystander was killed. Immediately after the arraignment of Herbert Steele in the Justice's Court, a crowd gathered on the corner of Main and Center streets for the purpose of taking summary vengeance upon Rafferty's slayer. At this time, Captain Henry Lubbock dashed up on his pacer and urged the people to commit no rash act that would disgrace them and the camp, but to stand for law and order. Father Galligan then urged the people to do no murder.¹⁰⁵ The illegal proceeding gradually lost its momentum, and after several hours devoted to discussion, wise counsel was allowed to prevail and the crowd melted away.

The acts of men such as Hank Parish, who worked in the Christy Company indicates somewhat of the law problem at Silver Reef. Parish was

¹⁰⁴Silver Reef Miner, February 4, 1882.

¹⁰⁵Pendleton, "Memories of Silver Reef," p. 103.

reported to have killed nineteen men in his day, one of these being at Pioche. Most citizens were afraid of him especially when he was drunk and tried to bully people.¹⁰⁶

Another character of ill fame was J. A. Bateson who attempted to kill the Catholic priest. When apprehended he said that he regretted that he had failed and further stated, "I inteded to kill him at the altar."¹⁰⁷

Silver Reef was probably much like other mining towns of this period; however, it may have had more problems due to inadequate law enforcement. Lawlessness apparently increased as the town grew older. Augustus P. Hardy, Washington County sheriff, was highly respected by Mormons and non-Mormons. In spite of living some twenty miles away, he courageously carried out his responsibilities.¹⁰⁸

Stories and Legends

The uniqueness of silver in sandstone has fired the imagination of many. A number of stories connected with sandstone silver have further romanced Silver Reef. Most commonly told is the Grindstone story.

It is related that silver was first found in sandstone when a resident of Leeds made grindstones from slabs quarried from what later became the famous Tecumseh Ledge. While they were being peddled in Pioche, Nevada, one grindstone fell from a wagon and broke in half. Some of the

¹⁰⁶George E. Miles, personal interview.

¹⁰⁷Silver Reef Miner, August 21, 1880.

¹⁰⁸George E. Miles, personal interview.

miners in the area took part of the grindstone to be used in a test of the honesty of a local assayer whom they called "Metaliferous Murphy." He had been thus named because he found precious metals in almost everything he tested. The miners pulverized a piece of the grindstone and gave it to "Metaliferous" to assay for precious metals. His returns showed two hundred ounces of silver per ton. To the miners this was proof that he was crooked because everyone knew that silver was never found in sandstone. One version of the story says that the enraged miners took "Metaliferous" out and hanged him. Another version states that he was told to leave town while the going was good, and since having found the source of the sandstone, he went to Leeds and located the rich silver deposit.¹⁰⁹ Mariger states that her father who lived at Leeds knows this story to be basically true and that the grindstones were made by Alma Angell and sold in Pioche by a man named Jennings. Murphy did come to Leeds but mining operations were already under way when he arrived.¹¹⁰ She also stated that Alec Colbath and John Kemple, Jr., knew the story to be true.¹¹¹ George E. Miles who lived in Silver Reef in 1881 until 1888 states that he never heard the story while he worked there; further, if it were true, it was not the original discovery of Silver Reef.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹Pendleton, "Memories of Silver Reef," p. 104.

¹¹⁰Mariger, personal interview.

¹¹¹Mariger, Saga of Three Towns, p. 94.

¹¹²George E. Miles, personal interview.

Another story tells of a stranger who, while passing through, was caught in a bad storm. He asked for shelter at one of the houses of the settlers in Leeds, and while standing over the fire place warming himself, he noticed drops of white metal oozing out from the sandstone rocks which made up the fireplace. He picked some of these drops up and after finding where the sandstone had come from, he ran out into the night to take the drops to a place where they could be tested. He found them to be silver and had no trouble locating a claim.¹¹³ This story is doubted because the identity of the stranger has never been established.

The frog story brought interesting speculation to the miners of Silver Reef in 1881. The story as told by the Silver Reef Miner is as follows:

A live frog was found in the Barbee and Walker mine at a depth of 360 feet from the surface. The miner who found him said, "I had put off a blast and cleared away the rock and was spotting a place for another hole with a pick; but the rock appearing somewhat soft, I continued to pick and opened up a cavity about as large as my fist, and out jumped the frog." It was well developed, natural-looking lively frog about two inches in length. A careful inspection revealed the fact that it had no mouth. After 36 hours it expired.¹¹⁴

The frog was on display at the Miner's office and a number of guesses were made as to how long it had been entombed in the sandstone.

The Petrified Forest Cave story, recorded by the Pioche Record, tells of Henry Freudenthal and Louis Hassell, chloriders in the Thompson and McNally mine, who were putting a hole into unusually bare rock when

¹¹³Pendleton, "Memories of Silver Reef," p. 105.

¹¹⁴Silver Reef Miner, August 27, 1881.

suddenly the entire face of the drift before them gave way into a black abyss two hundred feet deep. Mr. Hassell, who was turning the drill at the time, instantly sprang backward thereby saving himself from being carried downward with the huge mass of rock. They were astonished at the immense cave before them. Two hundred feet overhead could be seen by candle-light, the dome-like ceiling. Two hundred feet below, firm and upright, stood a forest of huge trees. Ropes were procured and the chloriders descended into the forest which was found to be petrified. On some of the trees strange characters were inscribed. Various mosses, also petrifications appearing green and life-like, covered the ground. All these petrifications carried silver assaying as high as \$200 per ton. A number of people visited the cave including Judge A. H. Parker, Mining Engineer.¹¹⁵ The petrifications of course were mined for their silver thus destroying the remarkable cave. Many petrified materials which often ran high in silver content, were found at Silver Reef.

¹¹⁵Pioche Record, January 1, 1881.

CHAPTER IV

MORMON-GENTILE RELATIONS

The Gentiles soon let it be known that they opposed the Mormon authority in Utah and the practice of the Mormon Church in general. One may draw a general conclusion from many articles in both the Silver Reef Miner and Pioche Record newspapers as to the expressions of the Gentiles' attitudes as follows: certain elements openly made fun of the Mormon people and their ways; leaders of the Church were extensively ridiculed; the temple and what it stood for was ridiculed; bitter opposition to the practice of polygamy; support of any program to take local political control from the Saints; belief that the local county authorities were misappropriating public funds.

That the ordinary Saint was at best deceived, that he was a tool of the Priesthood, and at worst, that he was a slave of the Church was accepted by many without question. The name "Yaps" was attached to the Mormon boys and many a good joke was passed about the local fellow's ignorance.¹

The Gentiles were contemptuous of the Mormons' lack of sympathy with mining. To them a people who would not support this activity could hardly be imagined. When they heard that the leaders of the Church had said that the mines would be opened in the Lord's due time, they stated

¹Mariger, personal interview.

that "Barbee had brought the time with him--that Christ was too slow."²

The following record indicates that the Gentiles keenly observed and commented upon the activities of the General Authorities of the Mormon Church:

The "Twelve Apostles" passed through Leeds today on their way down, not dressed as were the "Apostles" of old with sandals and gowns and wading knee deep through the sands deseret, none of them hungry or thirsty; on the contrary, they came along in style, riding through Leeds in seven carriages, drawn by blooded stock. They look fat and slick, dressed up in the good, old fashioned farmer style, and if their saintly noses do not belie them Dixie wine tells its tale.³

As John Taylor, Orson Pratt and Brigham Young, Jr., traveled through southern Utah, the Silver Reef Miner commented: "Of course, they will not fail to take in the Reef, and as the hurdy-house will be running by the time they get down here, the girls will no doubt make it lively for the revelation sharps and show them how to make the tithing fly."⁴ The miners at Silver Reef felt that the Mormons had no right to show indignity at the "wicked" conditions there when they themselves practiced polygamy.⁵

To the miners the teachings of the Church were out and out lies as shown by a letter of Isaac Duffin of Toquerville, a missionary to England. According to the letter, Duffin had blessed a child and by so doing, its arm had been healed. The Silver Reef Miner commented: ". . . he had never performed a miracle in Utah and it shows that Mormons are composed

²Pioche Record, April 24, 1879.

³Ibid., April 7, 1877.

⁴Silver Reef Miner, November 15, 1879.

⁵Pioche Record, November 20, 1880.

of two classes--knaves and fools, and under no other circumstances would such brazen falsehoods be tolerated."⁶

With the rapid growth of Silver Reef came the idea that the Gentiles would soon be able to out-vote the local Saints and take over control of the county. This was expressed by Barbee in a letter to the Salt Lake Daily Tribune:

It is estimated that by spring at least six thousand people will have gathered at Leeds and Toquerville and then look for gentile rule in Washington and Kane Counties. A gentile probate judge setting up his office between the prophet's tithing house and the temple in St. George would likely have a bad effect on the old bilk's health. Hurrah for Leeds and her hardy miners who braved the prophet's bowie-knife, and laid the foundations for a prosperous gentile community in Southern Utah. We hope they will use Brigham's new temple for a smelter.⁷

Since Silver Reef failed to grow as here anticipated, Gentile control was never realized. The Silver Reef Miner's solution to the Mormon problem was to split the Utah Territory and to give part to Idaho, Colorado, and Nevada. The editor reasoned that Beaver, Frisco, Silver Reef, and St. George would then be in Nevada; consequently, they would no longer be ruled by high handed Mormon authority, and by laws framed by polygamists who were hostile to the government, hostile to the Gentile element and hostile to mining. The Miner stated that if this was done "the increasing business in the St. George temple could be effectually checked and Nevada justice would soon find a way to freshen the memory of endowment house officials and

⁶Silver Reef Miner, June 8, 1881.

⁷Salt Lake Daily Tribune, November 25, 1876.

compel them to haul down their black flag of hostility."⁸

Many of the Saints viewed with apprehension the sudden establishment of a non-Mormon mining community in their midst. To them it was inevitable that Mormon-Gentile conflicts of northern Utah would be transferred to southern Utah. As previously stated, the Saints may have tried to take up the land and keep the Gentiles out. After this failed, Brigham Young advised in a conference at St. George to let mining for precious metals alone and to spend no time and means in that direction. "This is a command for you right from heaven."⁹ According to the Pioche Record, Brigham Young said that the Devil showed the Gentiles the mines at Silver Reef, that the Lord was about to allow the persecution of the Saints again and that they should prepare themselves and expect persecution from the influx of Gentiles that were coming into the area. He taught that the "mines at Silver Reef were a delusion and a snare, that more money would be expended on them than there would be derived from them and that the Gentiles before long would be tired of them."¹⁰ His attitude toward Silver Reef was again expressed at the dedication of the St. George temple:

Perhaps brethren and sisters, you will not get my meaning, but now to work and let these holes in the ground alone and let the Gentiles alone, who would destroy us if they had the power. You are running after them and some of our brethren are putting their wives and daughters into their society and will go to the devil with them too if they do not look out. I would not have a dollar on the earth if I

⁸Silver Reef Miner, May 21, 1879.

⁹Levi Mathers Savage, "Diary" (MS typewritten copy, The Brigham Young University Library).

¹⁰Pioche Record, November 24, 1876.

had to get it there. . . Well, now some of the Elders are running after those holes in the ground and I see men before me in this house that have no right to be here. They are as corrupt in their hearts as they can be and we take them by the hand and call them brother! You will go to hell, lots of you, unless you repent.¹¹

At a meeting held in Leeds, Wilford Woodruff, Erastus Snow and Brigham Young, Jr., voiced the concern of the Church in regard to the effects of mining operations upon the Saints of that town. They advised the people not to mingle with the miners, ". . . nor unite with them in dancing parties, and not to retail wine to them, but to sell it by the barrel."¹² The leaders had no objection to the Saints selling farm produce but they did not want them retailing to the miners materials which were badly needed to build up permanent colonies. Priddy Meeks of Harrisburg upon finding himself in very poor circumstances sold his water rights (for a very good price) to the miners in spite of this advice. He hesitated at first because it was against his beliefs to sell to the Gentiles. He stated:

It now forcibly occurred to my mind to take the money from the Gentiles for the same reason that David ate the shew bread; although that was against the law it was to keep himself from starving and this was the sole reason that caused me to sell out to the Gentiles. Alma Angell and Joseph Wilkinson posted right off to St. George to tell President Young what I had done. President Young said to them these words, "I don't blame Brother Meeks one particle." So that settled the question with them. The man paid me \$75 per acre which set me right again, and I moved to Orderville.¹³

¹¹Deseret Evening News, January 13, 1877.

¹²Salt Lake Herald, December 29, 1876.

¹³Priddy Meeks, "Journal of Priddy Meeks. . ." Utah Historical Quarterly, X (1942), pp. 196-7.

A letter written to the Deseret Evening News from St. George dated November 27, 1876, reassured the northern Saints that only the unthinking portion of the people of St. George was affected by the Silver Reef fever. The solid part of the community preferred to stay at home and build up home industries.¹⁴ Indeed such men were considered rather weak when they went to Silver Reef to set up business. Among them was Joseph E. Johnson who established a drug store in Silver Reef and put himself in the mainstream of economic development.¹⁵

John R. Young of Orderville expressed his feelings about the weakening effects of contact with Silver Reef in this manner:

I am glad that brother A _____ and H _____ have gone back to Leeds. All who come to Orderville hankering for leeks and onions, and the flesh pots of Egypt, will assuredly be dissatisfied and go away. It requires faith to enable a person to overcome selfishness; and all who gather here expecting to make lead horse in the team will be disappointed and when the disappointment comes, it will cause them to feel the water is not good, and they will sigh for the soft streams of Ramaiah and prefer to labor in the brick kilns of Pharoah on the shores of Silver Reef.¹⁶

The teachings of the leaders were plain on the subject; and although the faithful followed, still there were many exceptions.

Work and Business Contacts Between Mormons and Gentiles

While the Saints taught against mining they were by no means slow to take advantage of the economic blessings which the mines brought.

¹⁴Deseret Evening News, November 27, 1876.

¹⁵Larson, op. cit., p. 443.

¹⁶John R. Young, Memoirs of John R. Young (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1920), p. 160.

Certain items could be supplied by the Saints cheaper and better than by anyone else and the miners were happy for this service. An extensive business was soon established supplying rock salt, lumber, cordwood, coal, hay, meats, ice, wine, fruits and vegetables to the miners. Saints contracted to supply cordwood for the five steam mills which sprang up. Rock salt was brought from St. Thomas for processing ore; ice from Kanarra; vegetables and fruits from every community in Southern Utah. Toquerville, Washington and Santa Clara supplied wine which was very poor in quality.¹⁷

James G. Bleak of St. George states: "The general run of prices for products have been: corn, 3¢; turnips, beets and parsnips, 2¢; beans, 5¢; onions, 5¢ to 10¢; flour, \$4.00 to \$4.50; butter, 30¢; eggs, 30¢; potatoes, 2½¢; and hay, \$20 a ton."¹⁸ In addition to this, the Saints operated a \$3,000 per month freighting business.

This happy arrangement, whereby both Gentiles and Mormons received economic benefits, broke down prejudice on both sides and in the end brought a better understanding between the two groups.

Joseph E. Johnson, the afore-mentioned druggist, set up a newspaper, The Silver Reef Echo. The drug store had some success but because the miners refused to buy a Mormon newspaper, it failed after producing only one issue. He sold it to the Gentiles for \$550; it subsequently became the

¹⁷Silver Reef Miner, June 12, 1880.

¹⁸Caroline S. Addy, "James G. Bleak, Pioneer Historian of Utah," (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of History, The Brigham Young University, 1953), p. 113.

Silver Reef Miner.¹⁹

Employment of the Saints in the mines at first was practically nil, not because employment was discouraged by the Church, but because the Gentiles simply refused to hire Mormons. The Miners Union opposed the hiring of local miners, so that when rumors were heard that some mine superintendents planned to hire local help at a lower rate of pay, the reaction was violent. The Silver Reef Miner pointed out that if the Mormons were hired for lower rates, it would be to the exclusion of the resident Gentile population. "This proposal, if made, is in every way base, injurious to the public interest, and entirely characteristic of these latter-day slave owners."²⁰ A warning was then given to the Church leaders that "their interest would best be served by keeping to their ecclesiastical knitting and no further attempts to become rich at the expense of the Gentile community."²¹ Later in 1881 when the strike took place, the Miners Union feared that local Saints would come in and take over the jobs. This fear is shown in the following:

Local able bodied "yaps" of Toquerville are expecting to get employment in our mines. In fact it is reported that one of our embroyo mine superintendents has already promised a number of these "dividend producers" a show as soon as work resumes.²²

The Union lost the strike and from then on an increasing number of local

¹⁹Rufus David Johnson, J. E. J. Trail to Sundown: Cassadage to Casa Grande 1817-1882 (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1961), p. 441.

²⁰Silver Reef Miner, July 30, 1879.

²¹Idem.

²²Ibid., May 11, 1881.

boys did find work at the mines. Since irrigated land in Washington County was limited, many young men were no longer satisfied with struggling on a few acres when \$3.50 per day could be made at the Reef.

A shift in Church attitude appears to be evident after 1880. It was the consensus of Mormon Church members who had been associated with Silver Reef in its later period that there was no objection on the part of the Church authorities to members working at the mines.²³

Mormon-Gentile Social Relations

Although Mormons in general avoided most of the Gentile social activities, there were some notable exceptions. Much to the exasperations of the miners, a Mormon owned horse won the first race held at the new track.²⁴ A Mormon boy out-shot the finest example of Gentile marksmanship. Colonel E. A. Wall, distinguished and popular with the miners, had out-shot all comers until a boy called Napoleon Bonaparte Roundy from Kanarra appeared. In their first rifle match for \$100 Wall took a two point handicap, and Roundy won the purse by one point. The next week a large crowd gathered to see the rematch. This time Wall gave the Kanarra boy one point on a purse for \$200. The Miner reported the match as follows:

Sunday's shooting bee between Col [sic] Wall and Napoleon Bonaparte Roundy for \$200 a side, drew a large crowd of interested spectators to

²³Persons interviewed were: George E. Miles, Albert Miller, Althea Gregerson Hafen, all of St. George, Utah; Henry Gubler, LaVerkin; Rex Stirling and Robert P. Woodbury of Hurricane; Marietta M. Mariger, Leeds. These personal interviews occurred between July and August, 1962.

²⁴Pioche Record, April 28, 1877.

the racetrack. The Match was shot at 200 yards range, twenty pops each, Wall giving Roundy one point to start with. The following were the scores: Wall, 82; Roundy, 81. It was declared a tie and the contestants proceeded to decide the business by shooting it over again. This time Napoleon won. Total: Wall, 71; Roundy, 79. Yea, verily, but Mormonism is true.²⁵

On the edge of town the Mormon wood haulers had a camp. After the day's work was done, the boys would often go up into town to see what was going on. In most cases they were just on-lookers.²⁶ When it was reported by anyone that young Mormon boys were falling into Gentile society and drinking, Bishop Crosby of Leeds was asked to investigate and help those persons if possible.²⁷

As the social and economic association became greater, so inter-marriages became inevitable. It was considered tragic that a girl should marry out of the Church by many Mormons; nevertheless, such marriages did take place. "Mormonizing" was the term to indicate courting Mormon girls and Toquerville seems to have been the favorite place for this activity.²⁸

The Pioche Record reported a Mormon-Gentile marriage in this manner:

Wedding reception at Stormont Boarding-house. By Rev. A. H. Parker. Mr. Joe Poulson and Miss Julia Clauson were duly tied together. All the pretty girls, along with the ugly fellows of Toquerville, were present. Parker did the grand thing. He kissed every girl in the room, drank wine, danced, sang, and with a tear on the end of his nose and a

²⁵Silver Reef Miner, March 6, 1880.

²⁶John Taylor Woodbury, Vermillion Cliffs: Reminiscences of Utah's Dixie (Published by the Woodbury Children, 1933), p. 36.

²⁷J. D. T. McAllister, "Diary" III, 1871-81 (Typewritten copy in The Brigham Young University Library), p. 36.

²⁸Pioche Record, January 15, 1881.

lonely feeling inside his bosom, he retired to his bachelor quarters.²⁹

Mormon-Gentile marriages often ended in divorce or desertion. Those who deserted Mormon girls were dubbed "Winter Mormons" by the Pioche Record:

A Winter Mormon is generally an honest miner who drops into a Mormon village some cold winter, is suddenly taken with a strong religious fever, gets baptized in a hurry, falls in love, gets married and as soon as spring sets in, he remembers that he has business elsewhere; accordingly steals a horse and disappears. Mormon girls who associate with Gentiles against the wishes of the Saints are termed "stem-winders."³⁰

The daughter of Joseph E. Johnson is a case in point. She secretly eloped with James Cassidy because her father disapproved of the marriage. After having a number of children, Cassidy left the family to mine in Africa stating that if he did not return within six months, his family was to consider him dead. He was never seen again.³¹

Mormon-Gentile Political Problems

The division of the Mormon and non-Mormon people into two political camps in Utah started a long, hard battle on the part of the non-Mormons to wrest some measure of local control from the Mormons. The Liberal Party was composed mostly of Utah miners and non-Mormon merchants; the Peoples Party was made up of the Mormon people. The Liberal Party was well developed at Silver Reef and rallies were held for every election campaign. Plans to

²⁹Pioche Record, January 4, 1881.

³⁰Ibid., May 5, 1877.

³¹Johnson, op. cit., p. 497. This material was verified by an interview with George E. Miles of St. George, Utah, July 29, 1962. He worked at Silver Reef in the 1880s. He stated that it was common for Mormon-Gentile marriages to end in desertion.

take over political control of Washington County by the Gentiles were formulated early in Silver Reef history. Undoubtedly the Mormon leaders seriously considered the reality of these plans. The Gentiles soon accused the Mormons of planning irregular methods of keeping control. From the Salt Lake Daily Tribune we read:

It is the settled intention of Brigham to stretch the boundary lines of Washington County as as to include a number of neighboring settlements and thus avert the impending danger. Furthermore, until the Legislature can meet and annex Iron to Washington County, the Priesthood will make it a point to call in large numbers of Saints to St. George to spend election day with the Prophet of the Lord. It is to be hoped that the Gentiles of Leeds will be alive to the situation, and prepare themselves to send a member to the next legislature, and elect such county officers as the law requires.³²

Although Silver Reef was a new and exciting silver strike, the mining area itself was not large enough to draw in a great population. The population never reached fifteen hundred people. The only accurate figures concerning the population of Silver Reef are found in the 1880 census. These give the population as 1,146 persons.³³ The Mormon population of the county was approximately 3,200. It probably was impossible for the Gentiles of Silver Reef to out-vote the rest of the county unless the city grew to be at least twice its size.

In the 1878 elections the Peoples Party polled 606 votes while only one vote was polled for the Liberal Party. The returns of two precincts were thrown out for irregularity; the two precincts being Silver Reef and

³²Salt Lake Daily Tribune, November 22, 1876.

³³United States Bureau of the Census, Tenth Census of the United States: 1880, Population (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 353.

Leeds.³⁴ The citizens of these towns made some protest, but since they would not have carried the county even if their votes would have been counted, the matter was dropped.

Early in the year of 1880, Erastus Snow of St. George introduced in the Territorial Legislature a bill to change the boundaries and county seat of Kane County which was Toquerville.³⁵ The western section of Kane county would be given to Washington county and the county seat would be moved to Kanab. Toquerville along with several other small towns would be in Washington county. The bill passed both houses of the Legislature and while waiting for the signature of Acting Governor Thomas, the Silver Reef Miner branded it as an attempt on the part of the Church leaders to increase the voting power of the Mormons. It stated:

The object of the bill is to cut off a large section of Kane County and add the same to Washington County in the latter of which Silver Reef is situated. All of this, of course, is very kind of Beautiful Snow; in fact we are afraid that if the Legislature had much longer to run the old fossil would die of enlargement of the heart. . . and what a grand coup d'etat the bill would be in the event of the Gentiles of Silver Reef ever getting down to their work and making an effort to run the county. Why, Toquerville and two or three more settlements might be the salvation of this part of the Kingdom.

But, alas for the bill
And alas for Snow
And bully for Thomas's
Little veto!

For that gentleman will set down on the measure like a thousand of brick [sic]. Officially speaking Apostle Snow can then pack his gripsack and retire to his hole in St. George. And we may add, it

³⁴Territorial Executive Records, Abstract of the Legal Returns of the General Election Held In Washington County, August 5, 1878 (Utah State Archives).

³⁵Silver Reef Miner, February 14, 1880.

would be no irreparable loss to his community if he would draw the excavation in after him.³⁶

Acting Governor Thomas did not sign the bill, probably because of the pressure from Silver Reef.

In the election of 1880, the Peoples Party polled 713 votes to the Liberal Party's 177 votes.³⁷ Almost all of these votes were from Silver Reef and as can be seen, at this time there was no danger of Silver Reef out-voting the rest of the county.

On February 16, 1882, the United States Congress passed the Edmunds Bill which turned over to a commission, appointed by the President, all registration and election officers in the Territory of Utah. A provision of this law provided that people married in plural marriage could not vote or hold public office.

In March, 1882, the Utah Legislature passed the bill which extended the boundary line of Washington county about twenty-five miles to the east. Nine small towns with a population of about 1,347 persons were affected.³⁸ Since the Edmunds Bill had just been passed whereby many Mormons would lose their vote, it would appear that the Saints were trying to strengthen their vote in Washington county. The whole idea takes on a different view however when it is found that the people of Silver Reef themselves petitioned the changing of the boundary line. In January, 1882, the following

³⁶Silver Reef Miner, February 14, 1880.

³⁷Salt Lake Daily Tribune, November 9, 1882.

³⁸Laws of the Territory of Utah, Twenty-fifth Session of the Legislative Assembly, 1882, p. 100.

petition was sent to the Council and House of Representatives of the
Legislative Assembly of Utah Territory:

Petition by the residents of Silver Reef, Washington County, request that your honorable body will appropriate the sum of five thousand (\$5,000) dollars for the purpose of building a new road from what is known as the Black Ridge in Kane County, Utah Territory, to Silver Reef, Leeds, Harrisburg, Washington and Saint George in Washington County and also respectfully request that all that portion of Kane County, Utah, lying west of the due north and south line drawn through what is known as the narrows of the Rio Virgin a short distance east of the town of Shonesburg be detached from Kane County and attached to Washington County.

In the last four years without territorial assistance we have built and kept in repair our roads, have built up and established a flourishing town of more than a thousand inhabitants. The inconvenience arising from the said road lying in the two counties of Washington and Kane would be reconciled by the annexation of the territory before described from Kane County to Washington County and the whole of the road from the Black Ridge south being under the jurisdiction of one county would very much facilitate the repairing and keeping it in order. While the population of the settlements on the Rio Virgin from Shonesburg to Toquerville who have to use the road as their own thoroughfare in their commerce with the northern counties would assist in keeping it in repair as of right they should do, and thus all diverse interests in the use of the said road and its repair be removed.³⁹

The road over the Black Ridge was in great need of repair and its upkeep was an important economic factor in the mining operation. Three miles from Silver Reef the Black Ridge road crossed from Washington county into Kane county. Whereas all residents of Washington county used the road extensively as their main link with the north, only a small portion of Kane county had need of it. Also, Kane county had an extremely small population and was unable to keep the road in good repair. Washington county would be

³⁹ Petition by the residents of Silver Reef, Washington County, to the Council and House of Representatives of the Legislative Assembly of Utah Territory, Territorial Executive Records, Utah State Archives, January, 1882.

able to put more money into the road as well as being much more interested in its upkeep.

Already the mines at Silver Reef were declining so that economic consideration took precedent over political consideration with regards to the change of the boundary. Inasmuch as the Silver Reef citizens were now petitioning for the passage of the bill, it was passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor into law. As a result the Black Ridge road would be in Washington county and its upkeep would be better attended to. Even the Silver Reef Miner backed the measure:

Two petitions to the Legislature, both of the greatest importance to our citizens, are now being circulated for signatures. One asks for a small appropriation towards improving the main road to the north and a change in the east boundary of the county. The other is for an act of incorporation for this city. Both are greatly needed, and should be sustained.⁴⁰

Soon after the bill was passed a shorter and much improved road was located over the Black Ridge to Silver Reef.⁴¹

The fact that the Mormon vote was materially increased by the annexation of part of Kane county did not seem to trouble the Gentiles at this time. It may be that the Liberal Party had no real hope of ever being able to out-vote the Mormon population.

The communities that were added to Washington county were New Harmony, Bellevue, Toquerville, Virgin, Grafton, Springdale, Shonesburg,

⁴⁰Silver Reef Miner, January 14, 1882.

⁴¹Ibid., October 21, 1882.

Rockville and Duncans Retreat.⁴² Geographically speaking, the above towns which were on the Virgin River naturally lay within Washington County and were separated by mountains from the rest of Kane county. Kanarra, which was in Kane county originally, was given to Iron county.⁴³ If additional votes had been the only concern, Kanarra would probably have been added to Washington county also.

In the November election of 1882, the Liberal Party made its greatest campaign to elect officers for Washington county. Under the leadership of James N. Louder the party held large rallies in Silver Reef, Toquerville and St. George.⁴⁴ The rallies in Toquerville and St. George were well attended by members of the Peoples Party, but they had little effect. Many of the members of the Peoples Party could not vote because of the test oath which was administered by the Utah Commission. In this oath the person had to swear that he was not practicing plural marriage. In spite of the oath, the Peoples Party easily out-voted the Liberal Party of Silver Reef--777 votes to 219 votes.⁴⁵ In 1884, the Gentile vote of Washington county was 50 votes and the Mormon vote was 670.⁴⁶ From this we find that the population of Silver Reef was falling fast. By 1890 the population of Silver Reef was negligible due to the closing of most of the mines and mills.

⁴²Department of the Interior, General Land Office Map of Territory of Utah, 1876. Photostatic copy in the Utah Historical Society Library.

⁴³Idem.

⁴⁴Deseret Evening News, November 5, 1882. For report of speeches made at political rallies, see Appendix B.

⁴⁵Idem.

⁴⁶Utah Commission Book "B" 1884-87, Utah State Archives, p. 366.

CHAPTER V

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE MINES

Silver Reef mines had their initial success because very rich ore was found near the surface which required little capital for development. However, the area was remote, with no railroads and poor wagon roads. The continual shipments of ore to Salt Lake (approximately three hundred miles) and Pioche, Nevada, (about one hundred miles) was prohibitive. It was necessary for the ore to assay at least \$200 to the ton to make these shipments worthwhile and there was a limited amount of such ore. William T. Barbee's rich Tecumseh claim made it possible for him to ship more than others, but it was apparent from the beginning that mills would be necessary for the success of most mining ventures. Capital to erect mills was not to be had among the first owners and it soon became their desire to attract outside interests. Such interests were at first slow to invest in Silver Reef because they were suspicious of stories of silver coming from sandstone, but at a later date this unique condition attracted attention and capital. When it became evident that the deposits were not just surface, capitalists from San Francisco and Salt Lake took a keen interest in the mines. Later New York capitalists also invested heavily.

Some of the economic factors which were favorable to the attraction of capital were:

1. The mines in most cases would be purchased cheaply.
2. The sandstone ore was easily milled.

3. An abundance of timber and cordwood was near at hand.
4. Available water at Quail Creek was near at hand.
5. The country was already pioneered, and roads, though poor, had been built.
6. Cheap Mormon labor could supply lumber, wood and freighting.
7. Mormon farm produce was reasonably priced.

The best producing mines of Silver Reef soon came under the control of four mining companies. These were the Leeds Silver Mining Company, the Christy Mining and Milling Company, the Barbee and Walker Company, and the Stormont Silver Mining Company. The first two were owned by San Francisco interests and the other two were controlled by New York capital.

The Genesis of Silver Sandstone

During the late 1870s and early 1880s Silver Reef enjoyed a brief period of national attention as the leading mining journals debated their theories of the origin of Silver in sandstone. The New York Engineering and Mining Journal published a number of major articles between 1879 and 1881 on Silver Reef mines. An important article by Charles Rolker, December 25, 1880, was featured by the San Francisco Mining and Scientific Press. The Census Report of Precious Metals gave a basic discussion on the mines in 1880. The Director of the Mint Report discussed the theories of sandstone silver in 1881 and 1885. The book, Mines, Miners and Mining Interests of the United States, published in 1882, discussed in detail Silver Reef sandstone.

Three basic theories were offered. The first stated that since the area was in close proximity to former volcanic centers, metal solutions came from below in the form of hot springs and deposited the silver in the porous sandstone, the sandstone already having been formed before the silver

was deposited. This was the theory of Charles Rolker of San Francisco. The second theory is that the metals were placed in the sandstone at the time it was being formed and was precipitated from metallic solutions from above. This theory was held by Professor J. S. Newberry of Columbia University. A third theory was that streams running over the sandstone beds after they had been formed carried the metal from some other source and deposited it in the sandstone from above. This was the theory of Mr. Cazin of New York. The first theory had widest acceptance.¹ The debates advertized the mines widely and attracted New York capital.

The companies started their existence under very favorable prospects, and success was predicted by everyone. The silver was there in great abundance and it was expected that additional companies and mills could also develop at a fine profit.

Economic Problems

The Leeds Mining Company was the first to run into difficulty. This company stopped operations after twenty months having produced \$790,000 worth of silver.² Some of the Silver Reef people believed that there was no excuse for the mill stopping, and theorized that inside manipulators of the company were trying to get the price of the stock down so that they could snatch it up for much less than it was worth. Others felt that the company's trouble was due to gross mismanagement on the part of the

¹William Ralston Balch (comp.), The Mines, Miners and Mining Interests of the United States in 1882 (Philadelphia: The Mining Industrial Publishing Bureau, 1882), pp. 224-27.

²Silver Reef Miner, December 31, 1881.

Board of Trustees.³ The real reason seems to be that the mill was running low grade ore valued at sixteen dollars to the ton, which simply was not profitable. Better ore was not to be found in the mines. The company continued for a time but was never again a paying venture.

The Fault Theory

A major problem which confronted the Christy Company was the theory held by some that the Buckeye Reef was faulted from the White Reef. Since the Christy's mines were all on the Buckeye Reef, it was expected by many that their rich mines would come to an end when the fault was reached. The evidence of the fault was established by the general resemblance in the two reefs. The Census report stated that the two reefs had a general resemblance in the following manner:

A series of red and gray sandstones and sandy shales, with bands of greenish and red clay shales of the most marked characteristics and above all, the occurrence of fossil plants and silver ores in certain beds of similar appearance in each led many to suppose that the Reefs were the same and cut off by a great fault.⁴

In 1880 Captain Henry S. Lubbock, superintendent of the Christy Company, made an extended trip of five months to New York for the purpose of selling the Christy Company to New York interests. While he was there the Silver Reef Miner newspaper published materials concerning the theory

³Silver Reef Miner, October 8, 1879.

⁴Department of the Interior, Census Office, Statistics and Technology of the Precious Metals (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885), p. 478.

of the fault and accused Lubbock of being on a mission to sell worthless mines whose ores would at any time give out. The fault theory was illustrated in the newspaper as follows:

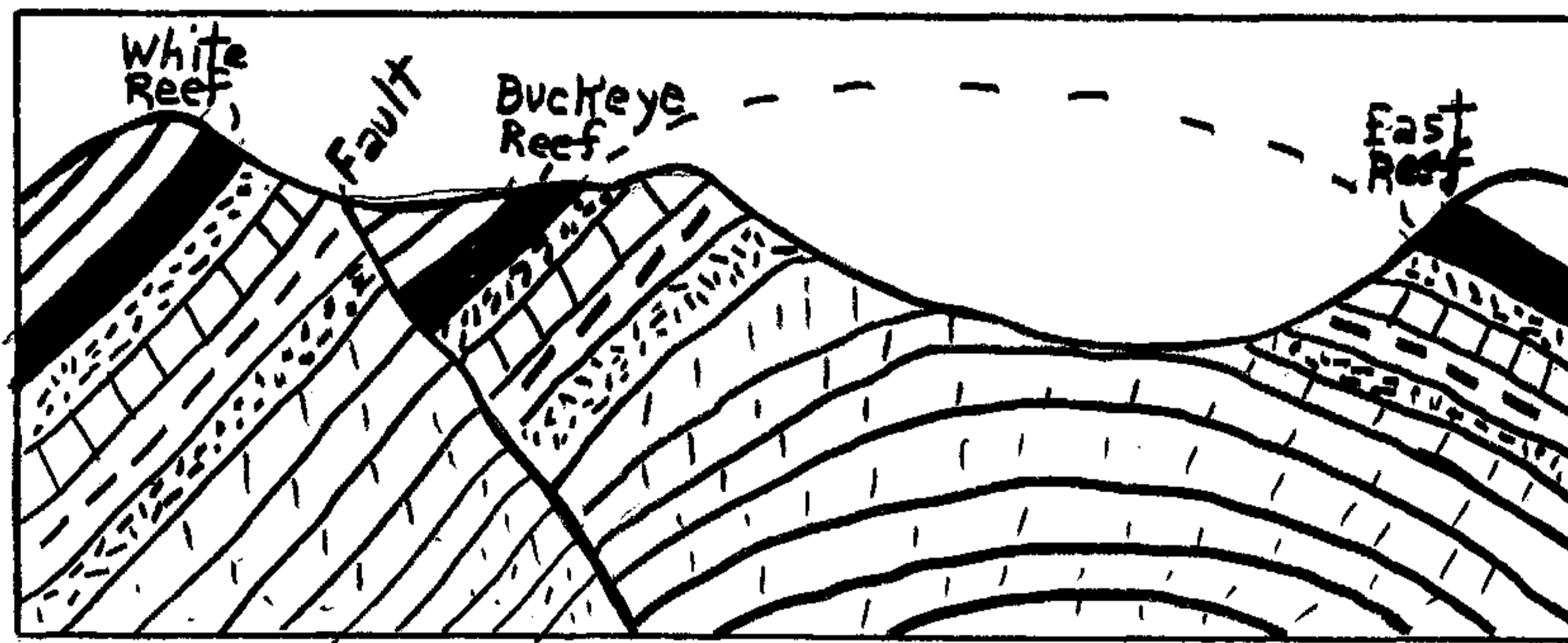


FIGURE 1

BUCKEYE REEF SHOWN AS FAULTED OFF FROM THE WHITE REEF

Even though the Christy's mines were among the richest of Silver Reef, it is indeed possible that the company officials feared that the mines would end with the fault at a not too great depth and desired to sell for that reason. Whatever their reason, they were unable to sell because of the publicity the fault theory was given by the Miner newspaper. Lubbock returned from New York embarrassed and started a libel suit against the Miner's two owners, Edward and John Pike. He also claimed that he was being blackmailed by the Pike Brothers and had been informed that the obnoxious articles would not be published if he would pay \$3,000. The Pike Brothers were arrested and released on bond of \$2,000 each.⁵ The resulting feelings were sometimes referred to as the

⁵Silver Reef Miner, Septebmer 22, 1880.

Miner's war on the Christy Company. The editors claimed that for their articles on the fault theory they received the following anonymous threatening letter:

Let me tell you that your time is short, unless you stop your damned slandry on the Christy and Capt. Lubbock. You can probably crawl out of your lawsuit but you can't find a hole small enough to crawl into to get away from us, we will clean out your lying paper and you with it if you don't hush up and be careful. We don't want to hurt you scrubs if we can help it but if you publish anything about the lawsuit look for the Avengers.⁶

The Pike Brothers answered this threat by stating, "We will permit no man or any number of men to clean out this shebang while a round of ammunition can be procured wherewith to defend it."⁷ They then embarked on a program of defending themselves and making fun of the Christy Company's lawyer, Gibson Clark, through their newspaper. They taunted Clark as though he were the cause of all their troubles. While the trial was waiting, they printed statements in their newspaper. Representative is the following:

On the next Saturday will be the anniversary of the birthday of Kwan Tai, a Chinese god. The Chinese are determined to keep the devils away by fire-crackers. They can use Gibson Clark to shoot off his mouth if the fire-crackers don't work.⁸

In the same issue of the Silver Reef Miner an engraving is found

⁶Silver Reef Miner, April 10, 1880.

⁷Idem.

⁸Ibid., June 12, 1880.

which indicates the contempt with which the Pike Brothers held for Gibson Clark. It is as follows:

This beautiful engraving represents him (Gibson Clark) on his way to Beaver to prosecute the libel suit recently instituted against the Miner.⁹

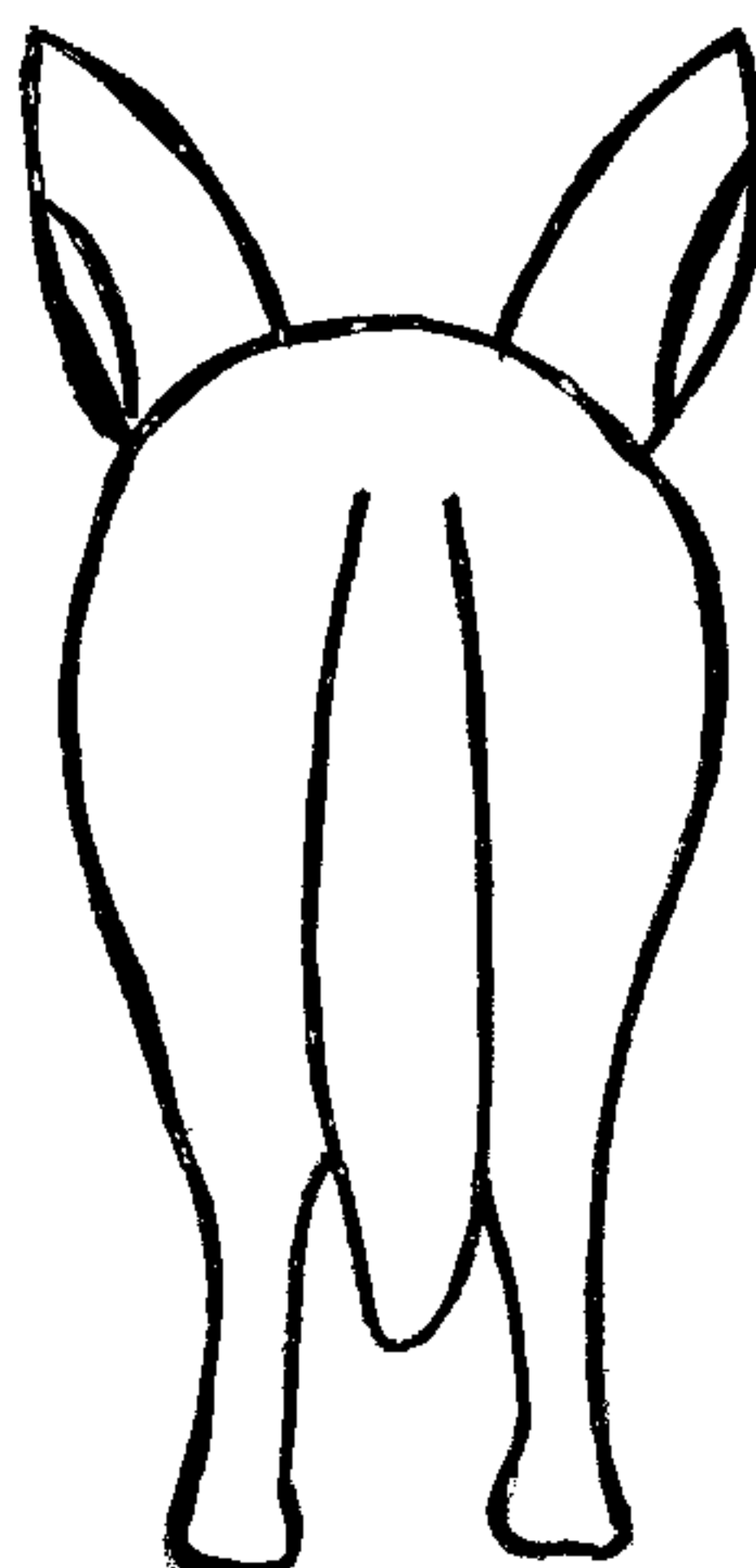


FIGURE 2

SILVER REEF MINER'S ENGRAVING REPRESENTING GIBSON CLARK

The case which was tried in the District Court at Beaver was won by the Pike Brothers. Soon specialists came to believe that there was no fault because close examination revealed certain dissimilarities between the two ore bed reefs. It was concluded that the Buckeye Reef ran under the White Reef.¹⁰

Even though most experts came to believe that the fault did not exist, nevertheless, the theory put a shadow over the Christy Company which stopped further investments in its property as well as other mines on the

⁹Idem.

¹⁰Department of the Interior Census Office, op. cit.

Buckeye Reef.

The action of the newspaper shows in part the undaunted spirit of newspapers of that period. They spoke out for what they believed. It also indicates the power with which a newspaper in a mining town can affect the economic status of the mines.

Labor and Wages

At \$4.00 per day underground Silver Reef miners were making more than other miners in the Territory. Other districts were paying \$3.50 per day, but the remoteness of Silver Reef and the favorable conditions under which the mines were opened demanded the highest wages.

In February, 1880, steps were taken by miners to organize a union.

The Silver Reef Miner reported the meeting as follows:

The meeting was called to order by J. B. Wood. P. H. Shea was elected President, and C. C. Reynolds, Secretary. President Shea, in a few words, explained the object of the meeting and subsequently a preamble and resolutions further explanatory of that object, was read by secretary Reynolds and adopted by the meeting without a dissenting voice. All miners in sympathy with the meeting were next requested to sign a paper with a heading to that effect and in a short time the signatures of 110 men graced the roll. It is understood that the constitution and by laws of the Virginia Miner Union or so much thereof as may be applicable to this district will be adopted at the next meeting.¹¹

A permanent organization was effected later in the month with Matthew O'Loughlin as president. From this time on regular meetings were held and the Union became an active organization.¹² A hall was purchased

¹¹Silver Reef Miner, February 14, 1880.

¹²Ibid., February 21, 1880.

for the headquarters where socials were held frequently.

The Strike

The labor strike at Silver Reef has long been regarded as the beginning of the end for the camp. On February 1, 1881, miners of the Buckeye Mine of the Stormont Company, upon arriving at work were notified that thereafter they would be required to work for \$3.50 per day. This they refused to do and went back to town. After holding a meeting at one o'clock, they marched over to the Barbee and Walker mine where they were joined by Union members working there, then proceeded back to the Buckeye where they stopped all operations by taking possession of the mine. Later in the day they resigned possession of the mine to Sheriff Hardy. Thus started what may have been the first organized labor strike in Utah. The result of the strike was that two hundred men remained idle for three months.¹³

It soon became apparent that Superintendent Allen of the Stormont Company had proposed to both the Barbee and Walker Company and the Christy Company that they reduce wages together, claiming that the ores being extracted were not profitable at the \$4.00 per day wage level. Captain Henry S. Lubbock of the Christy Company refused to join, but the Barbee and Walker Company agreed to cut wages with the Stormont Company.¹⁴

The Union issued a circular requiring every miner in the district

¹³Ibid., February 2, 1881.

¹⁴Pioche Record, February 5, 1881.

to become a member of the organization before the fifteenth of February; consequently, the membership grew to three hundred.¹⁵

By the end of the month, the Silver Reef Miner reported that negotiations between the companies and the miners had failed:

Negotiations toward a compromise seem to have been broken off, and, as matters now stand, it is simply a freeze out game. If the Stormont property is not on a dividend paying bases (as claimed), it is probable that the mines and mill will remain shut down for a lengthy period, and a severe test made of the strength of the Miner's Union.¹⁶

The feelings and attitudes of the miners are reflected in a letter written by the Union to the Salt Lake Tribune:

It is not the object of this communication to argue the merits of capital and labor, for we know the former is the ungrateful off-spring of the latter. Miners' trade takes longer to master than others. It takes more strength and endurance. He ends up broken when he should be in the flush of manhood. Danger is ever present . . . the Miners feel about the same way to the superintendents as a mule to his driver. We feel that aversion to the working man is innate in Gen. Ogden (superintendent of Barbee) while we regard Col. Allen and Major Leyson as devoid of sympathetic feeling. Why didn't they come before the Union and say they earn no profit and that everything had to be cut down on instead of letting the men come to work with their dinner pails and say you can't go down unless you will go for \$3.50 a day. Could have at least told us the night before--treat us like mules, this is the way they have ever delt with us.¹⁷

The Tribune, the Salt Lake Herald and the Deseret News supported the companies while the Silver Reef Miner and the Pioche Record supported the Miners's Union. The Tribune reminded the miners that while the Comstock paid \$4.00 per day, their miners were working in "living hell" whereas

¹⁵Silver Reef Miner, February 5, 1881.

¹⁶Ibid., February 23, 1881.

¹⁷Salt Lake Tribune, February 9, 1881.

conditions at Silver Reef were excellent.¹⁸

By the end of February, rumors that the Christy Company would join the other two companies in the cut in wages led to desperate action on the part of the Union. A meeting was held and a committee of twelve men were appointed to wait upon Colonel Allen, superintendent of the Stormont Company. He was ordered to leave town by an armed force. His request for three hours preparations was denied, and within five minutes was escorted by twelve mounted men out of Silver Reef.¹⁹

The Silver Reef Miner commented that, "It was a desperate measure, and one which the circumstances hardly justify, especially when it is remembered that Mr. Allen is only the agent of the Stormont Company."²⁰

The Grand Jury of the Second Judicial District soon indicted some of the officers and members of the Miners's Union for their action against Allen. On the 16th of March, a mounted posse of thirty Mormon men from St. George armed with shotguns, suddenly dropped into Silver Reef. Under the direction of U. S. Deputy Marshal Arthur Pratt, Sheriff Augustus P. Hardy and Deputy Sheriff Hoag, they proceeded to the Barbee and Walker mine and there arrested several of the leaders of the Miners's Union, locked them in jail and placed a strong guard around it. Others were also rounded up without resistance or violence.²¹ Since the jail was not large enough

¹⁸Idem.

¹⁹Pioche Record, March 5, 1881.

²⁰Silver Reef Miner, March 2, 1881.

²¹Ibid., March 16, 1881.

to hold them all, some were lodged in the Rice Building. A line was drawn around the building and those under arrest were told that they would be shot if they crossed the line. All saloons were closed by order of the Sheriff.²²

On the following day, they were taken under guard to Beaver by wagon, where they were to be tried for riot, conspiracy and false imprisonment.²³ They were defended by Arthur Brown, one of the leading attorneys of the Territory. The Union lost the case and thirteen of the strikers were convicted; three of these were released on bail and the others taken to the Utah Territorial Penitentiary. Later they were sentenced as follows: Matthlew O'Loughlin, fined \$75, and twenty days imprisonment; Joe Carr, \$50 fine; the remaining eleven, fined \$100 each.²⁴

Since many miners left Silver Reef during the strike for Tombstone, Arizona, and other mining districts, business in Silver Reef came to a stand still. The Silver Reef Miner stated:

'Tis a sad reminder of fallen greatness when we contrast the Silver Reef of a year ago with that of today. Then the hum of busy industry pervaded every corner of our camp; today 'tis still and quiet.²⁵

The Pioche Record sarcastically stated the condition as follows:

Business during the week under review has been fairly active, a prominent merchant having sold a spool of thread, a paper of pins,

²²George E. Miles, personal interview.

²³Silver Reef Miner, March 30, 1881

²⁴Ibid., September 3, 1881.

²⁵Ibid., April 20, 1881.

two boxes of paper collars and a small bottle of rouge.²⁶

In April the Union held a meeting to discuss their problem. After long deliberation they voted to accept the \$3.50 per day wage. Nearly everyone lost because of the strike and it is claimed that the town was never the same.²⁷ Many Cornish miners came in and replaced the Irish; in addition, Mormon help became more common in the mines. The Christy Company operated during the strike smoothly and greatly benefited by lowering its wages also when the Union gave in. The Stormont Company lost the most because its most valuable mine was flooded when the striking miners turned off the pumps. Although the strike lasted only three months, it was five months before the Barbee and Walker and Stormont mills started operating again.²⁸ Thereafter business and mining operations functioned once again.

²⁶Pioche Record, April 9, 1881.

²⁷George E. Miles, personal interview.

²⁸Silver Reef Miner, July 18, 1881.

Production

The greatest production of Silver Reef came during the first six years of the operation of the mills during which better than \$5,000,000 worth of silver bullion was produced.²⁹ This amount represents approximately one-sixth of Utah's total silver production for that period.

The next eighteen years produced only \$2,500,000 in silver. Production trends can be seen in the following table:

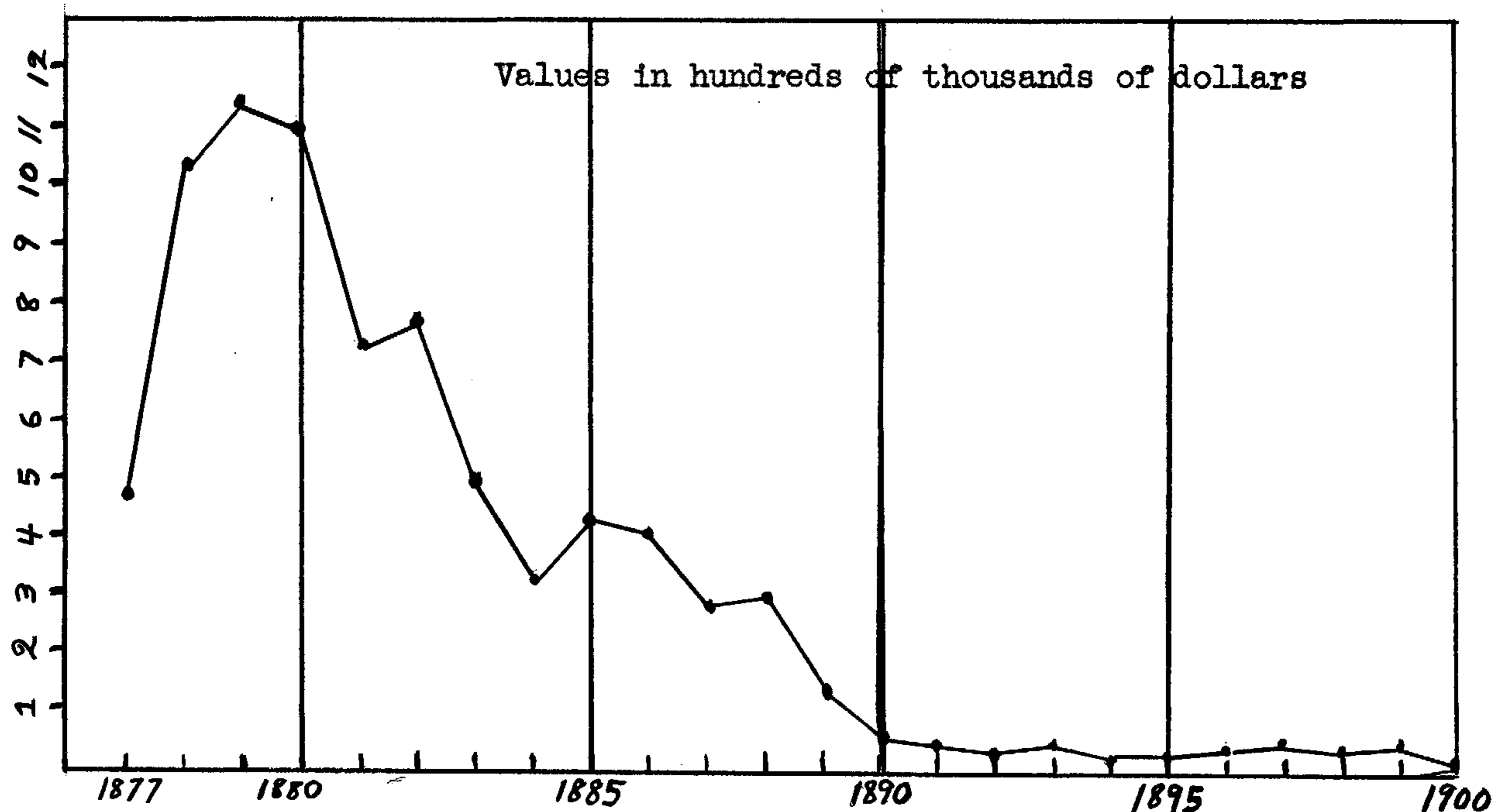


FIGURE 3

VALUE OF SILVER PRODUCED AT SILVER REEF BY YEAR

After 1882 the Barbee and Walker Company and the Stormont Company were never again successful operations; however, the Stormont Company continued operations off and on until 1887 under a new organization

²⁹Silver Reef Miner, compiled from quotations taken between 1879-1882.

called the Stormont Mining Company of Utah.³⁰ The Christy Company continued operations until March, 1889, when it was no longer able to make a profit.³¹ During the period between 1885 to 1888 much of the production was due to the leasers who did the mining and had the ore run through the company mills as custom work.

The average cost of mining and reduction of ore varied a little in each company but in general it ran about sixteen dollars to the ton.³² Leasers were able to mine and reduce the ore for as little as ten dollars per ton.³³

Proctor gives the total production of the camp as \$7,823,000 for the period between 1875 and 1910.³⁴ This agrees closely to the Wells

³⁰Salt Lake Tribune, January 1, 1885.

³¹Ibid., January 1, 1890.

³²Ibid., January 1, 1881. The average cost of mining and milling at the Christy Company was given as follows:

For labor and salaries, per net ton	\$7.46
Power tools and supplies	.91
Total mining per ton	<u>\$8.37</u>
Labor for milling per ton	\$2.85
Blue Stone 2.1 lbs. at 15 cents	.31
Mercury 1.22 lbs. at \$48.09	.58
Salt	.51
Fuel and coal	1.31
General supplies	.87
Hauling	.73
Contingent and legal expenses	.41
Total milling cost per ton	<u>\$7.57</u>
Grand Total Mining and Milling	\$15.94

³³Mariger, Saga of Three Towns, p. 91.

³⁴Proctor, op. cit., p. 77.

Fargo reports given in the Tribune checked by the writer. Mr. Alec W. Colbath who acquired most of the Silver Reef properties in 1916 claimed that Silver Reef produced nearly \$18,000,000.³⁵ This sum cannot be supported by the evidence found by this writer. Based on ounces produced as reported by Wells Fargo in the Silver Reef Miner and the Salt Lake Tribune, plus \$90,000 for production during 1875-76; along with \$53,994 for 1901-1910, production amounts to a grand total of \$7,533,379.30. In the 1950s the Western Gold and Uranium, Inc., is reported to have taken over \$250,000 out of Silver Reef.³⁶

The constant decline in the value of silver was one of the discouraging problems for the Silver Reef companies. In 1877, the average price of silver was \$1.20 per ounce. By 1883, the price had dropped to \$1.11. Thus ore valued at \$16.80 per ton in 1877 would be worth \$15.54. When the Christy Company ceased operations in 1888, the same ore would have been worth only \$13.02 per ton at ninety-three cents per ounce. Leasers could still make a profit, but company operations were unprofitable. This drop in price of ore was only one of several factors which brought about the decline of Silver Reef. As the mines became deeper, of course, the cost of mining was greater. In some of the best producing mines on the Buckeye Reef water was encountered, which added to the cost. As the nearby Juniper forests were depleted, cordwood haulers demanded more for their wood which was necessary to keep the steam mills

³⁵Mariger, Saga of Three Towns, p. 93.

³⁶Mariger, personal interview.

and steam hoisting works running. In short, while the cost of mining was growing, the price of silver was falling; but most important of all, the deeper the mines, the lower the grade of ore produced.

The Kenner Mine, owned by Enos A. Wall, is a case in point. It was the largest independently owned mining operation at Silver Reef, producing a great quantity of high grade ore. When the high grade of ore failed, Wall was unable to pay his employees. He was forced by an angry mob to flee the Reef with the prophetic words, "Boys, the time will come when I will pay you \$2.00 for every \$1.00 I owe."³⁷ After making millions at Bingham Canyon, Wall was able to keep his promise.

Wolley, Lund and Judd

As the mining companies ceased operations, they were leased by the famous St. George pioneer firm of Wolley, Lund and Judd. These men were running a successful mercantile establishment at Silver Reef. They leased and operated the Stormont mill and mines in 1888. Under the name of the La Virgin Company, they operated both the Stormont and the Christy mills and mines the following year.³⁸ Between 1891 and 1896 most mining was done by independent leasers and when enough ore was gathered, a mill run was made by Wolley, Lund and Judd. In 1893 they converted, at the expense of \$25,000 the Barbee and Walker mill to a water-powered mill which proved to be unprofitable; and were never able to recover their

³⁷Mariger, Saga of Three Towns, p. 104. This story was confirmed by Albert Miller in a personal interview.

³⁸Salt Lake Tribune, January 1, 1890.

investment. The population of Silver Reef had been dwindling since the strike so that by 1890 it was almost a ghost town with a population of only 177 persons.³⁹

Attempts to Revive Silver Reef

The Brundage Company of Cleveland, Ohio, in 1898 bought out Wolley, Lund and Judd and planned to revive the camp, but the continued decline in the price of silver stopped their plans. Mariger states that the last mill run was in 1908.⁴⁰ Alec W. Colbath raised \$160,000 and purchased most of the leading properties of Silver Reef in 1916; later he sold controlling interest to the American Smelting and Refining Company who performed extensive development work on the Buckeye Reef. The exciting account of the dangerous tunneling under the California Mine and tapping its bottom in order to drain the water is a noteworthy story. It gave great satisfaction to the miners who accomplished the feat without loss of life.⁴¹ The company ceased its work when the depression of 1929 hit, and the price of silver fell to 26¢ per ounce.

The Western Gold and Uranium, Inc., purchased many of the old mines in 1950 and shipped out considerable uranium ore. A mill was erected where

³⁹Department of the Interior Census Office, Report of Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1895), p. 344.

⁴⁰Mariger, Saga of Three Towns, p. 93.

⁴¹Rex Stirling, Hurricane, Utah, personal interview, August 5, 1962. Mr. Stirling was born and raised in Leeds, Utah, and was employed by the American Smelting and Refining Company.

silver concentrates were produced and shipped. No high grade ore as in the old days was found. Jack Howell, Western Gold and Uranium, Inc. official, stated that the operation was a paying business; but that the company owned better properties in which they were investing and therefore ceased operations at Silver Reef in 1958.⁴² Mining authorities agree that Silver Reef still contains considerable silver and may yet have a prosperous future.

Economic Effects on Southern Utah

Silver Reef brought economic blessings, which can hardly be over-estimated, to Southern Utah. It brought the first prosperity the pioneer settlements had enjoyed. Here at the very door-step of the towns lay a cash market for their hay, grain, meats, eggs, wine and garden produce. As far north as Ephraim and Manti, butter and eggs were packed in flour and oats and shipped the two weeks' journey to Silver Reef where they brought a better price than on the Salt Lake Market.⁴³ Supplying cordwood, lumber and rock salt gave many others employment. Almost all of the ore hauling was handled by men of the surrounding communities and a freight trade worth \$3,000 a month was conducted by St. George interests at the Reef.⁴⁴ George E. Miles stated that the town of Santa Clara

⁴² Jack Howell, personal interview, Silver Reef, Utah, August 24, 1958.

⁴³ Elsie M. Moffitt, "Early Day Freighting in Sanpete County," Kate B. Carter (comp.) Heart Throbs of the West (Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1949), p. 81.

⁴⁴ James G. Bleak, Southern Utah Mission History Record 1881-1887 (Ms Typewritten copy Church Historian's Office), pp. 313-15.

was built up from the farmers's produce sold at the Reef.⁴⁵

Many considered the mines an economic god-send which came in a dark hour to aid their efforts in building up the land.⁴⁶ Whereas almost all who invested in the mines lost money in the end, the local people made fine profits. Even local Mormons who invested heavily in business at Silver Reef lost; but those who followed the church leaders's original instructions of supplying the miners with their home-grown produce only, became the real beneficiaries.

Was the economic advantage enough to off-set the moral disadvantage of a rough mining element? It probably was because the Saints for the most part did not become a part of the mining community.

A considerable economic benefit to nearby towns was the availability of building materials as the Silver Reef buildings were demolished. Albert E. Miller stated that much of the lumber and timbers used in the new town of LaVerkin came from Silver Reef.⁴³ The buildings of the ghost town were dismantled, only to reappear as houses, barns, bridges, or just fences in the adjacent communities. The hospital, pulled down in 1889, became the home of Bob Lund in St. George. The Catholic Church was moved to Leeds, became the recreation hall. The Silver Reef Free Public School, upon being moved to Leeds, continued to serve as the school building there. Even the smoke stack from the California Mine Hoisting Works was utilized in that it became a fifty foot irrigation

⁴⁵George E. Miles, personal interview.

⁴⁶Idem.

⁴⁷Albert E. Miller, personal interview, St. George, Utah, July 29, 1962.

flume over the volcanic wash near Santa Clara. The boiler was used for the Dixie College heating plant at St. George. In this manner the once bustling mining town of Silver Reef disappeared.

While in the process of tearing down a building he intended to move to his ranch, Peter Anderson discovered a hidden cache of \$2,000 in gold coin. The building had been used as a dance hall; the proprietor having been killed by a half-crazed drunken woman. His money remained his secret until Anderson stumbled upon it. The discovery spurred other citizens on to ransack the remaining buildings in hopes of being equally successful.⁴⁸

The immediate economic advantages of Silver Reef were plainly evident, but, there is little evidence today to indicate these advantages were lasting. Following the decline of Silver Reef the people had very little economic advantages which could be accredited to Silver Reef. No industry of lasting quality was added to Southern Utah. Brigham Young seems to have prophesied correctly when he stated in 1876 according to the Pioche Record, "The mines at Silver Reef were a delusion and a snare, that more money would be expended on them than there would be derived from them, and that the Gentiles before long would be tired of them."⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Albert E. Miller, personal interview. George E. Miles also confirmed this story in his interview.

⁴⁹ Pioche Record, November 24, 1876.

CONCLUSIONS

The discovery and beginning of Silver Reef have been confusing to many who have often heard a number of conflicting reports. John Kemple was the first to locate mineral in the area, but the part the Mormon pioneers played has been largely overlooked. This study has revealed that the Latter-day Saints were very actively engaged in locating claims and organizing the mining districts. Even Erastus Snow, apostle to the southern colonies, recorded a claim despite the fact that he, along with other Church leaders, was teaching against the mining of precious metals. It seems possible, as the Salt Lake Tribune claimed, that the Mormons took up the claims to monopolize the mining ground, to keep the gentiles out of the area, and to suppress the mines. Most of the Mormon claims were never developed.

William T. Barbee of Salt Lake is usually given credit for being the next on the scene and opening up the mines, but the miners of Pioche, Nevada, made a number of rich claims and started development before he arrived. It is probably true, however, that he attracted attention and capital to the area and in effect became a publicity agent for the mines.

The famous Pioche Stampede occurred when the announcement was made that San Francisco capital was investing in the mines and that mills would be built soon. However, the Stampede, wherein the town moved to Silver Reef en masse, was not a stampede for mines but for business locations. The town of Silver Reef did not spring up spontaneously,

rather it was a result of a real estate promotion on the part of the Leeds Mining Company of San Francisco.

Some reports have placed the population of Silver Reef as being over 3,000 people, but it probably never reached more than 1,500 at its peak. During most of the boom days the available records show that the population was slightly over one thousand. It was a bustling, rowdy and typical mining town of that period. Nevertheless, one contribution of this thesis is to point out that cultural institutions such as schools, churches, and civic clubs were developed to serve the miners in this remote community. Hubert H. Bancroft stated that the town was incorporated and indeed, laws of incorporation were passed, but this writer has discovered that these laws were never put into effect, and thus the town suffered from lack of government and law enforcement.

The intercourse between the Chinese and Americans presents an interesting array of problems involving the meeting of two widely different cultures. Despite racial problems, the peoples involved did provide valuable services for each other.

Mormon leaders opposed members of the Church associating with Gentiles, either in a labor capacity or on a social basis. The majority of the Saints heeded this admonition; a minority ignored it. Toward the end of Silver Reef this policy seems to have been modified so that laboring at the mines was not condemned. However, the local Saints from the very first supplied lumber, cordwood, and farm produce which benefited both the mining operations and the local economy.

In general, Silver Reef miners opposed the Mormon Church and its

policies. They supported the Liberal Party of Utah in all of its activities and made a feeble attempt to take political control of Washington County. However, the boundary line change in Washington County in 1882 was not primarily an attempt on the part of the Mormons to save the country from Gentile rule as has been asserted by some writers; but it was an economic move to improve road conditions in Southern Utah and was fully supported by the Gentiles at Silver Reef.

That silver had been found in sandstone was believed to be impossible and at first discouraged investment in the mines, but later served to attract attention nationally. New York investors were attracted mainly because of this national attention. This study points out the organization of the Miners Union and its activity during what may have been the first strike in Utah. It is believed that the outcome of this strike had disastrous effects on not only Silver Reef but on all of Washington County.

Although estimates in varying degrees place the total production of silver as high as \$18,000,000, still, available records indicate that between \$7,500,000 and \$8,000,000 are more likely to be the total production. The principle producing mines were the Tecumseh, the California, the Barbee and Walker, the Buckeye, the Savage, and the Leeds group.

The decline of the mines has been attributed to the strike, the fall in the price of silver and the exhaustion of high grade ore. While the first two may be important, contributing factors, the latter is the basic reason for the decline.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

The Christy Mining and Milling Company

The Christy Mining and Milling Company was organized under the leadership of William H. Graves of San Francisco, California and William M Lubbock of San Jose, California. The company was owned by ten private individuals of that state. On April 23, 1877, Lubbock and Graves purchased from William T. Barbee and John H. Ely the following mines: The Tecumseh, the Chloride Chief with water rights, the Silver Crown, the Silver Point, the Silver Flat, and a number of lots in Bonanza City. The company was incorporated during the fall of 1877 with a capital stock of \$6,000,000 in 60,000 shares. It was a closed corporation and its stock was never placed on the market.¹

A five-stamp mill was constructed southeast of Silver Reef and started operating in January, 1878, with Lubbock as superintendent of the mines and mill. The Company owned 10,000 feet of mining ground and nineteen acres of agriculture land. The Silver Reef Miner estimated the total investment as follows:

Cost of mill	\$36,000	
Steam hoisting, pumping and drilling machinery	8,000	
Cost of Tecumseh and Silver Flat Mines	14,000	
Cost of California Mine	20,000	
Cost of Maggie Mine	16,000	
Cost of Manhattan Mine	1,000	
Other Mines	2,000	
Total Investments	<u>\$97,000</u>	2

¹Silver Reef Miner, May 28, 1877.

²Ibid., July 3, 1880.

Of the four large companies operating in Silver Reef, the Christy Company was by far the most successful. From the Silver Reef Miner we find the following:

The New York Mining Record wants to know, you know, "Whether the Christy may be expected ever to pay a dividend," Yes pard, a good many of 'm and good sized ones, too. In fact, the Christy pays dividends all the time; but as the stock is held exclusively by a closed corporation of ten or twelve San Fransiscans, and not a share on sale at any price the lucky owners don't bother about publishing notices of dividends, but just quietly get together and whack up the profits. They have been doing it for a long time past, and in all probability they will continue doing it for a long time to come; until they all become millionaires.³

Within sixteen months of operations, the Christy Company had produced \$95,000 in net profits which was almost enough to cover the entire original investment.⁴ The company continued as a steady producer until 1888 with much less financial difficulties than any of the other companies. The mill processed about forty tons of ore a day and produced one silver brick, worth approximately \$2,000, every two days. During its most prosperous years twenty mill hands and about forty miners were hired receiving monthly wages totaling \$8,000, approximately.⁵

The original Christy Company ceased operations in 1888 and the mill was leased to W. M. Nesbitt and then later, to Wolley, Lund and Judd.⁶ While in the hands of the original Christy Company it produced about \$2,500,000 in silver.

³Silver Reef Miner, October 15, 1879.

⁴Ibid., July 3, 1880.

⁵Salt Lake Tribune, January 1, 1879.

⁶Ibid., January 1, 1892.

The Pioneer Mill

The Pioneer Mill, owned by the Christy Company, was built and running by October, 1877. It was a three-stamp, steam-powered mill located below Leeds. It ran until June, 1879, when it was purchased by the Stormont Mining Company and was dismantled. Parts of it were used in the Stormont Mill.⁷

The Stormont Silver Mining Company of New York

The Stormont Mill was erected by Hunter and Gross of Salt Lake City in May, 1877.⁸ The mill was constructed on the Virgin River about four miles south of Silver Reef. It was a ten-stamp, power-operated mill with a millrace one mile long which brought the water from the Virgin River. This mill went into production July 4, 1878, at a cost of \$55,000.⁹

In 1879, Hunter and Gross sold out to New York interests, and the Stormont Silver Mining Company of New York was incorporated July 19, with a capital stock of \$1,500,000 in 150,000 shares. Its mines were the Stormont, Buckeye, the Thompson and McNally, patented, as well as the Last Chance, Savage and part interest in nine unpatented mines.¹⁰

The Stormont Mill had a greater capacity to mill ore than the other Silver Reef mills, but the cost of processing ore was higher due to the four miles distance required to haul the ore. A tramway from the mines

⁷Rolker, op. cit., pp. 25-6.

⁸Mining Review (Salt Lake City), June 30, 1903.

⁹Department of the Interior, Census Office, "Statistics and Technology," op. cit., p. 479

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 479-80.

to the mills was planned to carry the ore, but it was never constructed.

After the strike, the Stormont Company ran into financial trouble for which the Silver Reef Miner blamed John R. Bothwell and William S. Clark, business managers of the Company.¹¹ After 1882, the company continued limited operations until 1887 when it came under a new organization called the Stormont Mining Company of Utah.¹²

The Barbee and Walker Mining and Milling Company

William T. Barbee started to build a mill and develop his Barbee and Walker claims of about 2,714 lineal feet at the north end of the White Reef with financial aid from Walker Brothers of Salt Lake City.¹³ He took into partnership with him, J. S. Van Hagen, a miner of Pioche who was superintendent of the mines while Barbee was in charge of building and operating the mill.¹⁴

The five-stamp, steam-powered mill was wisely located at the mouth of the mine which eliminated the cost of ore hauling. The company also owned fourteen acres of agricultural land to assure water rights. The mill was completed and set in operation in March, 1877, and paid for itself in the first twelve months of operation.

Barbee and Van Hagen decided to sell the Barbee and Walker Mine

¹¹Silver Reef Miner, March 29, 1882.

¹²Salt Lake Tribune, January 1, 1885.

¹³Silver Reef Miner, July 3, 1880.

¹⁴Pioche Record, November 22, 1876.

and Mill. Some have reported that the two men were not compatible and even carried guns because of their distrust of each other; however, it would seem that the main reason for selling was that it was to their advantage to sell out at this time.¹⁵ Barbee went to the Hombolt area of Nevada and started the Barbee District while Van Hagen moved to Salt Lake City.

In the Silver Reef Miner newspaper the organization of the new Barbee and Walker Silver Mining Company of New York was announced as follows:

The personnel of the New York Company (new Barbee and Walker) to whom the Barbee and Walker property, in this district, was recently sold, is as follows: President, Milton S. Latham; Vice-president, R. L. Ogden; Treasurer, Francis A. Fogg; Secretary, D. L. Loucks, Trustees--M. C. Latham, Elisha Riggs, Francis A. Fogg, D. L. Loucks, and R. L. Ogden. The capital stock of the company is placed at \$1,000,000 in 100,000 shares at the par value of \$10.¹⁶

Richard L. Odgen was sent to be the resident director of the mines for the new company. He launched a general program of improvement by introducing the first telephone (which was considered quite a novelty) in Silver Reef in the Barbee and Walker mine. He also brought in the new improved air-compressor drills which were regarded as a forward step and represented one of the most recent developments in mining.¹⁷

The initial success of the company was promising for within six months the company had paid out \$60,000 in dividends and had made

¹⁵Mariger, personal interview.

¹⁶Silver Reef Miner, September 24, 1879.

¹⁷Ibid., November 17, 1880.

\$30,000 in improvements from its profits. Company stock was quoted at \$41.60 a share.¹⁸

On January 1, 1880, the miners of the Barbee and Walker Company, along with the miners of the Stormont Company, went on strike. These two companies had agreed to cut the wages of the miners from \$4.00 per day to \$3.50 per day and the wages of the mill hands and other workers in proportion. After the strike the Barbee and Walker Company continued until December, 1882, when the high grade ore became exhausted; thus the company fell into financial embarrassment. Unable to pay its debts, the property of the company was sold at a marshal's sale.¹⁹

¹⁸Idem.

¹⁹Ibid., December 30, 1882.

APPENDIX B

The Silver Reef Miner, dated October 28, 1882, reported the political talks given at the Liberal Rally as follows:

The Liberal Rally -- The first meeting of the Liberal Campaign in Washington County opened up in the Citizens Hall last evening in this city, the signal for gathering being music by the Brass Band. After some preliminary remarks Col. W. I. Allen was chosen Chairman and Mr. T. K. Stevens Secretary. Col. Allen arose to explain the nature of the meeting in a brief neat speech, and introduced Judge J. N. Louder, who commenced by reviewing the Liberal Party in Utah for the last fourteen years. Said that he respected the belief and opinion of every honest person of the Peoples Party and thought that the most good could be done by showing the young the error of their ways. Referred to the rule of the Liberal Party in Tooele County, and said as he was one of the officers of that county at the time, he knew that they were maligned and misrepresented in regard to the misappropriation of public funds.

Zera Snow Esq. was the next speaker. Said he had been raised in Utah and knew the ins and outs of affairs in this Territory from a mere boy. Respected the religious belief of the dominant party, and while he believed the masses sincere in their convictions the practice of Polygamy in the fact of existing statues prohibiting the same.

Judge Gibson Clark next occupied the floor,--dwelt principally upon the present condition of Utah politics of church and state. Said that the Peoples Party denied the charge that the church ruled the state here, but, said he, "I will attempt to show my hearers that the opposite is the case." He then proceeded to criticize the action of public men in church capacity, laying particular stress upon the idea that what John Taylor personally desired in political matters was the law to all classes of the "Mormon" community. Made some severe criticising remarks in relation to a sermon J. D. T. McAllister, in the town of Kanara [sic] some months ago.

Judge E. D. Hoge was next introduced to the assembly. Eulogised the remarks of the former speakers and endorsed what had been said. Had been a citizen of Utah for seventeen years and was well posted, he said, on the situation of Utah matters. Detailed to his hearers how the Liberal Party had struggled for their rights here for fourteen years. Said that fourteen years and a month ago the party was organized and the opposition they had met from that day to the present; but, nevertheless the "rag-tag-and-bob-tailed" party, as they are generally termed, had steadily increased in numbers and power till the dominant party begin to realize the danger that beset them, in a political sense, in this bright, beautiful silver bound territory. Said the Peoples Party, to-day, were indebted for their

present condition and circumstances, to the Gentile element, who had made it possible for them to subsist and support their families in this land. The Judge frequently soared aloft as upon eagle wings of eloquence, with now and then a dart upon an imaginary foe that seemed to assail him like the toothache at a funeral.

Mr. W. Lany, by request, made a few remarks and received more applause than all the rest of the speakers, which he seemed to understand as an evidence of ridicule more than commendation. The Band occasionally played stirring strains of music for the edification of all present, which was highly appreciated by the entire throng. The meeting then adjourned.

The Silver Reef Miner, dated November 4, 1882, reported as follows the rally of the Peoples Party of Washington County:

Peoples Party Speak--the Peoples Party of Washington County held a political meeting in this city, Thursday evening, at which time several of the leading men of St. George were speakers.

At 6:30 p.m. a torch light procession was formed at the corner of Gillespie, Lund and Co's store, headed by the Silver Reef Brass Band, and marched to the tune of "Through Georgia" up to Main St. to opposite the Post Office and thence down the same street to the Harrison House, thence west to the Central Hall where a large assembly had gathered to listen to the speeches.

After the assembly were seated Chairman G. H. Crosby, of Leeds, stated the nature of the meeting and introduced Hon. Erastus Snow who commenced his speech by congratulating the citizens of Silver Reef on the general good order and enterprising spirit that had been maintained in the camp barring one or two exceptions, since the mines had been opened in this section, and trusted the same feeling and course would be maintained in the future.

He then, in a powerful and interesting speech, referred to the present situation of Utah affairs. Said the people commonly called "Mormons" settled in the Great American Basin when this western country was Mexican soil and on their arrival here, unfurled the national flag and took possession of the country as American citizens . . . he told of Mormons colonizing Utah and the . . . Recent legislation has made polygamy a crime and the Supreme Court of the land has ruled it constitutional and there is no other way than submit to the inevitable decree, however unjust it may appear, to those whose right it was, to worship and believe as conscience dictates. Regretted to see and hear the honorable men of our nation lending their influence and ability for the purposes of religious persecution against a small handful of people who were practising simply a divine right. We rest our cause with God and have no fears of the final results.

D. H. Cannon was the next speaker. . . Had lived and sojourned in other States and Territories and found Utah and her people, as far as

the "Mormons" are concerned, patriotic and law abiding, as much so, as any place he had visited. The Peoples Party desire only their just rights and privileges as any other portion of the country claimed.

Judge MacFarlane made a short address in which he denied the charge of non-progression of the Peoples Party and went on to show that more had been done, under unfavorable circumstances for advancement than the history of any other Territory in the Union could produce.

. . . At the close of the Judge's speech, Judge Louder asked that fifteen minutes be granted Gibson Esq. on behalf of the Liberal Party, to reply, which was cordially granted, after which Mr. J. C. Bentley of St. George, made a few closing remarks and the meeting adjourned.

APPENDIX C

In the Silver Reef Miner dated September 30, 1882, appeared the following "poem" which reveals the variety of business establishments found at Silver Reef:

Rise early in the morning
That the Comet you may view
Don't stop for an extra toilet
But buckle your blasted shoe.

Before you get your breakfast
If your stomach gets the jerks
Start quick for the Capitol
On the gentlemanly Quirks.

If your stomach keeps on kicking
And you're thirsty as before
Just call on Brother Miller
And get a little more.

You're heeled now, fully heeled--
For coffee, eggs, and ham
Rush like lightning to the Harrison
or Cosmopolitan.

Be seated, take it cool
When you've finished, 'tis not far
Down to Elder Jordon's
To get a good cigar.

When your smoke-stack's fully going
Don't stop to talk of "taff"
But rush on down the street
To the lightning telegraph.

Send your love a sweet epistle
Why you didn't write before--
And if you haven't got a love
Why-send for a dry goods store.

If, perchance, you have a wife,
The following rules obey
Buy shoes and prints from Sager's
Who's just across the way.

Gillespie, Lund and Company
 Are leaders in their line
 They have furnishings for a quartz mill
 Down to a ball of twine.

J. J. Halpin keeps the hardware
 And supplies for Silver Reef
 While Charlie on the corner
 Keeps pork and veal and beef.

J. A. Turrill deals in groceries
 Provisions, hay and grain
 While Dr. Nichols pulls out teeth
 And puts new ones back again.

There's also Stevens and Harrison
 At the upper end of the street;
 They are dealers in dry goods
 And merchandise complete.

Huston and West of Bonanza
 Do a rustling business this fall
 If you want to make good bargains
 Just give this firm a call.

Call on Bros. Lund and Pearson
 Dealers in beef and swine
 Remember their supplies are carted
 To the remotest house or mine.

If by this time you are thirsty
 From a heated scalding day
 Take a spin to the brewery
 Or call on John Pendray.

McDonald runs a drug store
 McKinney has one too,
 If the baby gets the colic
 You all know what to do.

Just run for soothing syrup
 Don't let the darling fret--
 Take a funnel to give the contents
 'Twill cure the babe, you bet.

Exchange is kept by Levy
 Uncle Johnson the Lunch O. K.
 Moss Wolf has the clothing store
 Booth takes shadows that stay.

If the broom-stick gets to prancing
When you've been out late at night
Dr. Mantor, the good Samaritan
Will set the bones all right.

Now if any of you have been missed
In our crooked-legged rhyme
Will try and give you an extra puff
When we grind out some next time.

APPENDIX D

Plate 1



Figure 4. Silver Reef



Figure 5. Center Street Business District



Figure 6. West Street, Silver Reef



Figure 7. Wells Fargo Building, Silver Reef

Plate 3

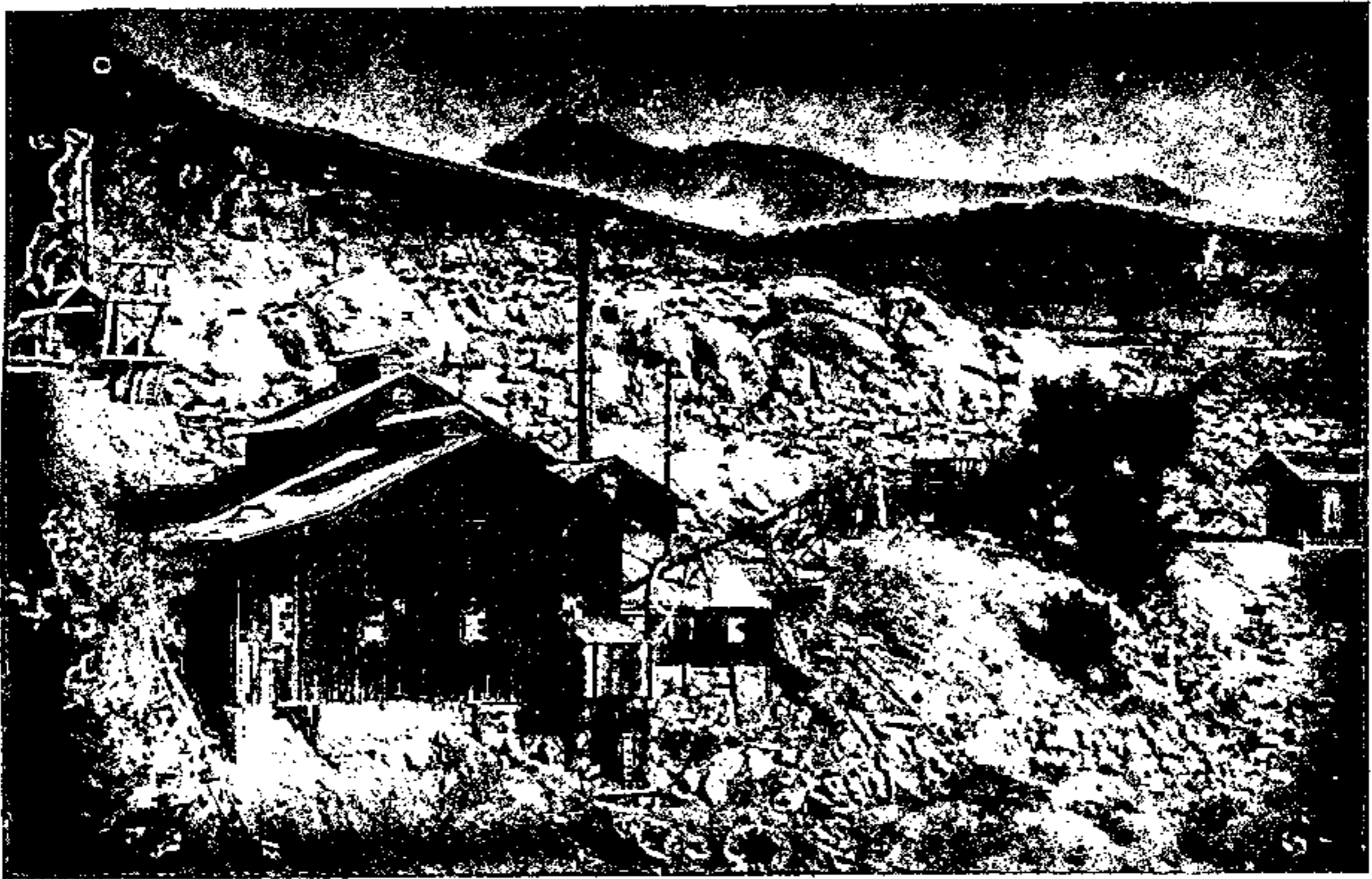


Figure 8. Barbee and Walker Mill

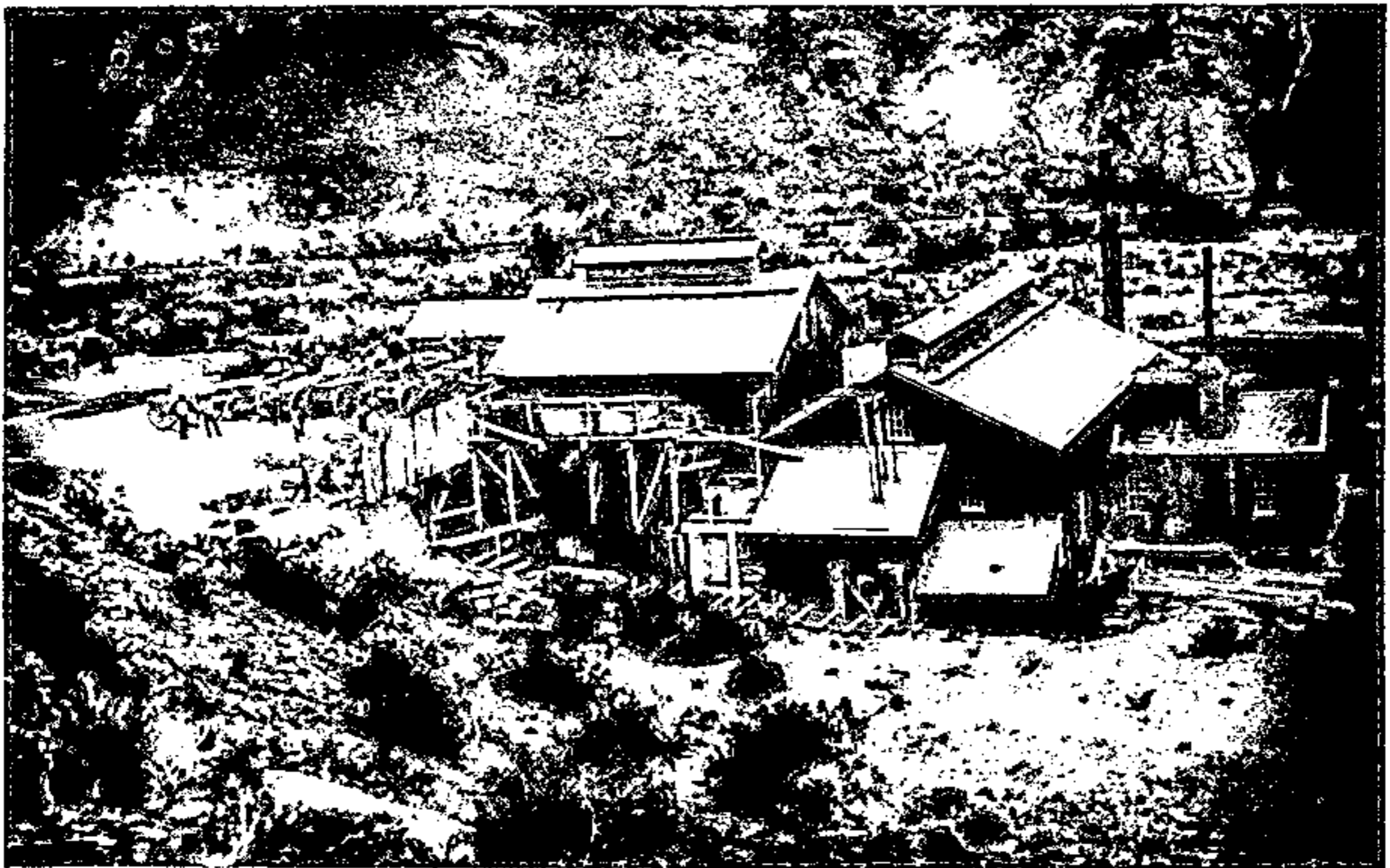
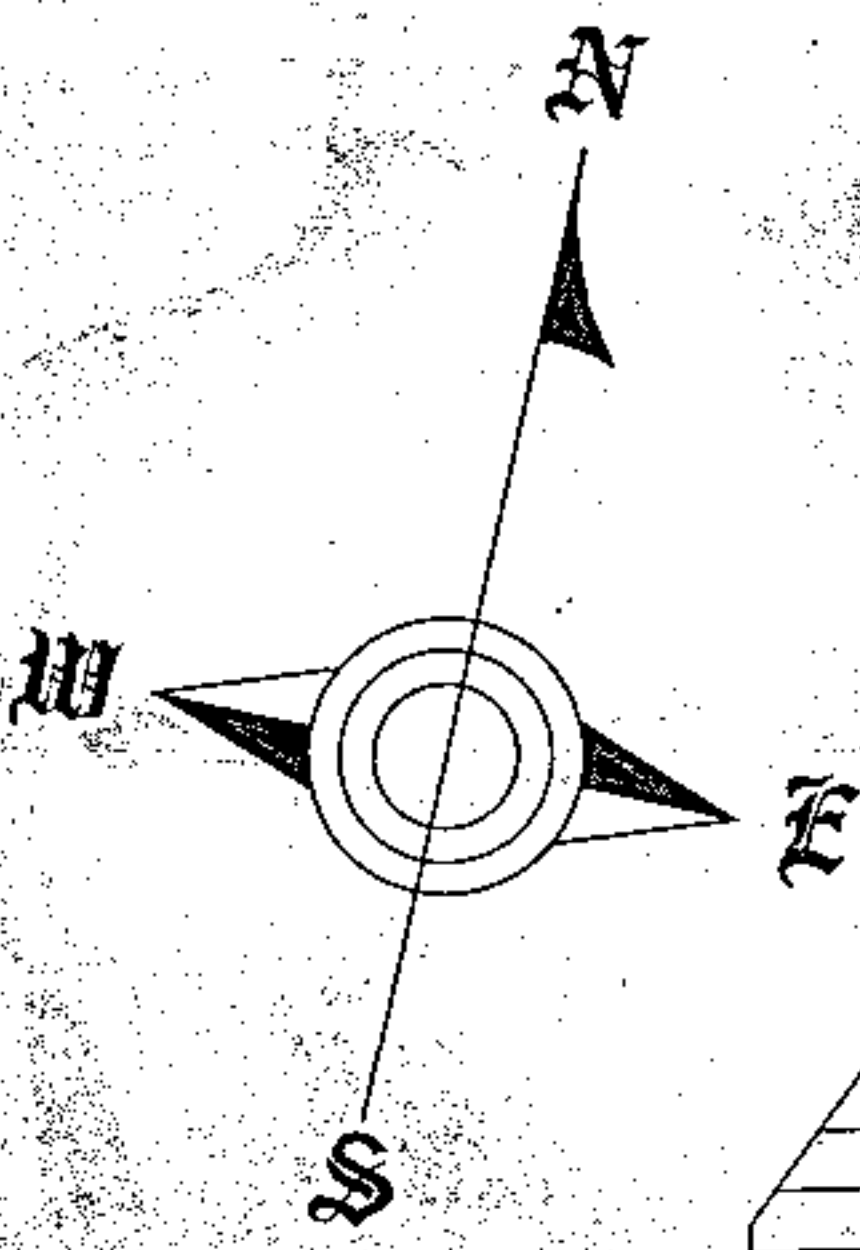


Figure 9. Stormont Mill on the Virgin River

APPENDIX E



Jordan Home
Heckathorn & Miller
Nesbitt home
K.J. Hanley
J.N. Louder
Elzira Martine
Henry Siegel, Jr.

Ellen M. Smith
Frederick Blomquist
J.N. Louder
home

Phillip Barnhart
Silas West
Russell Scott
WEST & SCOTT LIVERY STABLES

Amelia Roderdy

ST. CLAIR ST.

E Marks home
Mary Carr
Katy Dougray
Tom Gillette
Alter Huetelmann
Presbyterian Church
Herman Krause

I.O.O.F. Hall
Ellen Richie
Louis Myers
Louis Marier
Fritz Adolphus
Manuel Garcia
Marcus Sinclair
John Pandray
John Absalom
Adrian Hecker
Good Fellowship Lodge No. 6 Hall
Gilmer & Salisbury

Russ Scott
Forsha Home
C. Harrington

BARBEE ST.

Isaac Forderick
School House
T.C. Poyjude
Geo. Moorehouse
Maggie Grundy

Jacobs & Siffen
Warehouse and
Wooler Magazine
Rene Welch
Silver Reef
Miner
Printing office
Blacksmith
Jacobs & Siffen
Connell's Hairdressing
Uden Barber Shop
Wholesale & Retail
Chas. & Walton
Chinese Saloon & Dry
Warders Schantz
Wegeler Goldberg
P. Chasny Store
W.S. McCormick
Mer J. Cassidy
Harrison House
Hotel

Leeds Mining Co. etc
Loop's Saloon
W.T. Barbee, etc.
J.B. Van Hagan
Exchange Saloon
Post Office
Richards & Termain
Wool & Jordan Store
John Diamond Saloon
Herman & Marshall
J.H. Cassidy
Saloon
Star Saloon
Wholesaleman
Kejudo
Royal Spencer
Byron Collins
Thomas Prince
J. Wise

Star & Leo Wette
Jon B. Smith
Harroun Home
M. Gull Home
Burt Home

CENTER ST.

John Dugan
Cornelia Dyker
Emilio L. Stamer
Isabel R. Ogden
H.S. Lubback
J. Halpin

Johnson Drug Co.
Meyers Goods
Cosmopolitan Restaurant
Carter & Boyd
J.A. Terrill Store
Wells Fargo & Co.
Waltz, Lund & Judd
J.H. Cassidy
Alfred Grant
Silver Reef
Miner Union

Case Drug Store
Millers Elk Horn Saloon
Halpin Hardware
Richards & Termain
Pitt & Jacques Hall
Sanford Jacques
R.A. Spencer
George Miller
Christy M.M.Co.

Jail
Louis Franklin
Jose Herrera
Wm. Mayer

BOYD

Johnson Barbee
Dr. Stordanson
R. Gillette
Gillette, Lund & Co.
H.S. Lubback
Platham Mining Co.
Geo. Moorehouse
Somer Bailey

J.H. RICE
Barns & Stables
Chas. Amond
J.H. Rice
Lucinda Lee
Empire Market
Wich Lake Hop
Wu Long

Baile & Smith
Keain Morris
John P. O'Brien
W.J. Allen
Statement Mining Co.
Louisa Myers
Ellen Ritchey
Christy M.M.Co.
Mary Caldwell
Kooly, Lund, & Judd
Conrad

Christy Mill
Christy Mining & Milling Co.

VAN HAGAN ST.

Sam Kee
Catholic Church
Hospital

Wu Long
Tong Sang Jeng
Joseph Jackson
Henry Beer
Jacobs & Siffen

Christy Mining & Milling Co.
Mill
Tailings

Christy Mining & Milling Co.
Mill
Tailings

PADDOCK ST.

Bentura Corrales
Bentura Corrales

J.N. Baker

McDonald home
Ripras home

Christy Mining & Milling Co.
Mill
Tailings

CENTENNIAL ST.

Frank R. Carter

Frank R. Carter

Frank R. Carter

Property Owners on BONANZA FLAT
 J. Huston
 E. Maynard
 Isaac Long
 Isaac Lemon
 Sam Miller
 W.J. Spurr
 W.F. Potter
 W.C. Hall
 S. West
 Thomas McMillan
 Ed Hing
 Teresa Pock
 Chas. Westover
 Peter Mahunkin
 B.H. Scott
 William I. Barbee

Silver Reef Utah 1879

F.R. Carter & Geo. C. Boyd
 1876
 J.M. MacFarlane
 County Surveyor
 1878

Plate 2

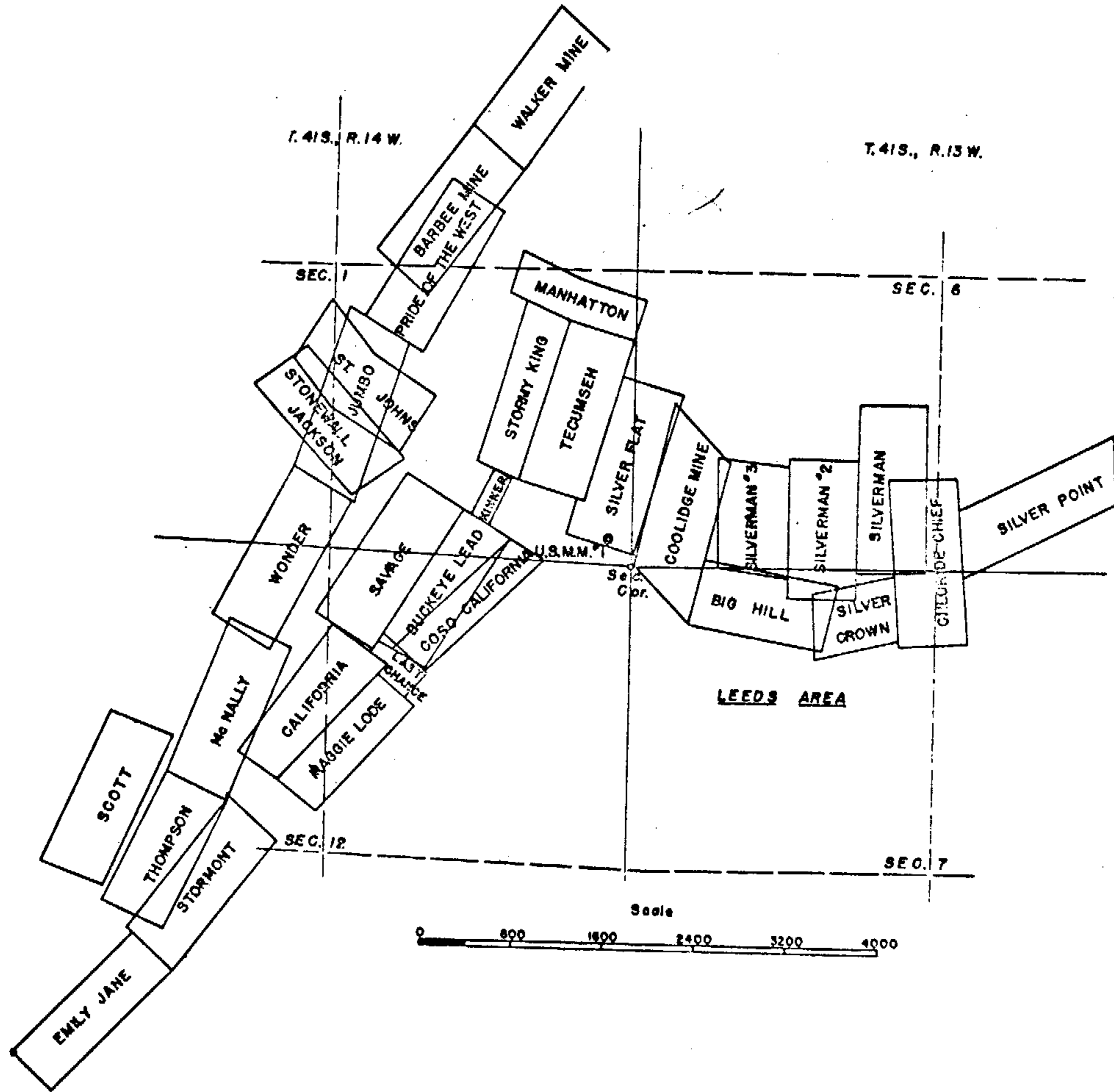
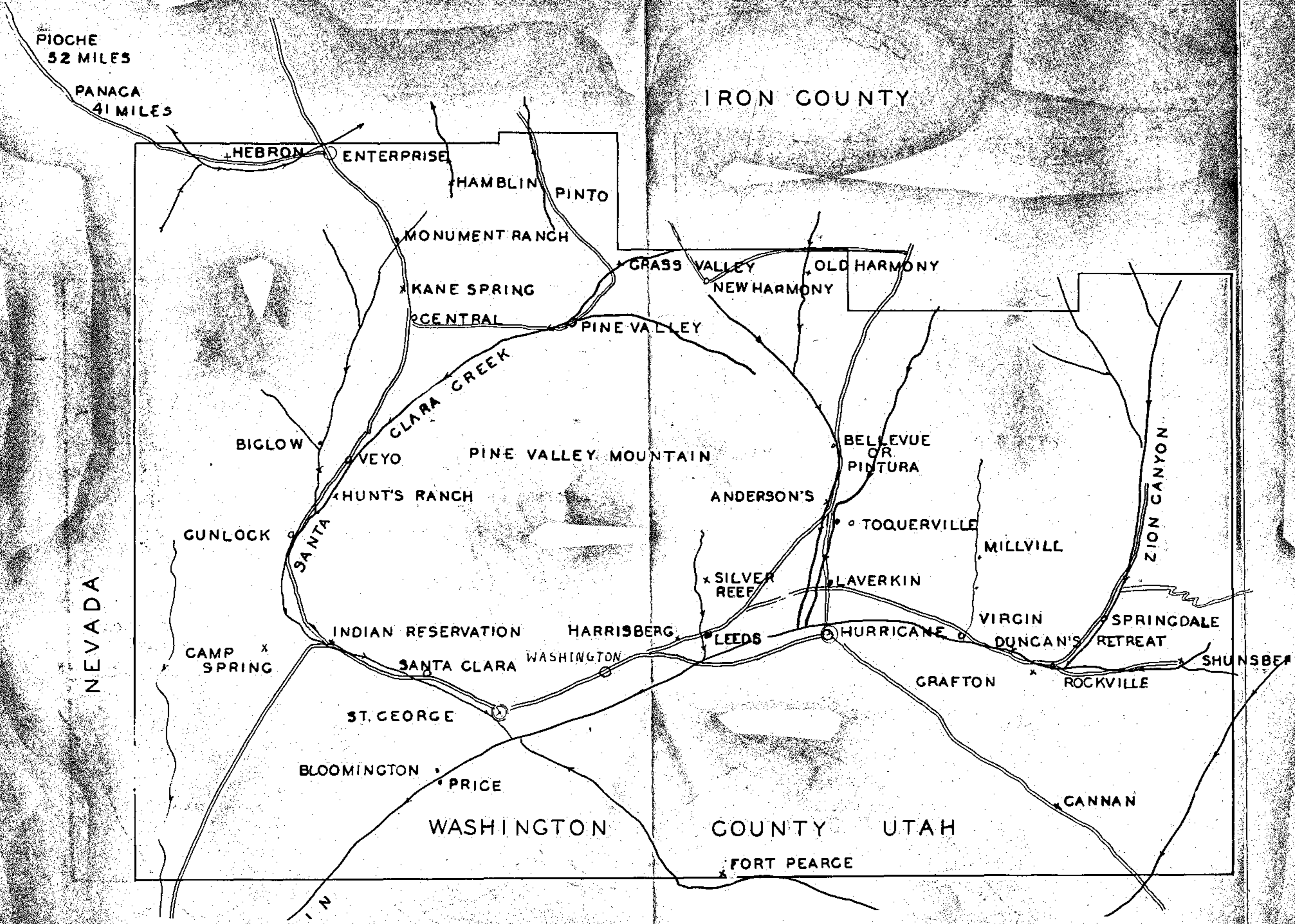


Figure 11. Location of Mines of Silver Reef.



PIOCHE
52 MILES

PANACA
41 MILES

IRON COUNTY

HEBRON

ENTERPRISE

HAMBLIN

PINTO

MONUMENT RANCH

GRASS VALLEY

OLD HARMONY

KANE SPRING

NEW HARMONY

CENTRAL

PINE VALLEY

CLARA CREEK

BIGLOW

VEYO

PINE VALLEY MOUNTAIN

BELLEVUE
OR
PINTURA

HUNT'S RANCH

ANDERSON'S

TOQUERVILLE

GUNLOCK

MILLVILL

SANTA CLARA

SILVER REEF

LAVERKIN

ZION CANYON

NEVADA

CAMP SPRING

INDIAN RESERVATION

HARRISBERG

LEEDS

HURRICANE

VIRGIN

SPRINGDALE
DUNCAN'S RETREAT

SANTA CLARA

WASHINGTON

GRAFTON

ROCKVILLE

SHUNSBERRY

ST. GEORGE

BLOOMINGTON

PRICE

WASHINGTON

COUNTY UTAH

GANNAN

FORT PEARCE

ABSTRACT

The discovery and beginning of Silver Reef have been confusing to many who have often heard a number of conflicting reports. John Kemple was the first to locate mineral in the area, but the part the Mormon pioneers played has been largely overlooked. This study has revealed that the Latter-day Saints were very actively engaged in locating claims and organizing the mining district. Even Erastus Snow, apostle to the southern colonies, recorded a claim despite the fact that he, along with other Church leaders, was teaching against the mining of precious metals. It seems possible, as the Salt Lake Tribune claimed, that the Mormons took up the claims to monopolize the mining ground, to keep the Gentiles out of the area, and to suppress the mines. Most of the Mormon claims were never developed.

William T. Barbee of Salt Lake is usually given credit for being the next on the scene and opening up the mines, but the miners of Pioche, Nevada, made a number of rich claims and started development before he arrived. It is probably true, however, that he attracted attention and capital to the area and in effect became a publicity agent for the mines.

The famous Pioche Stampede occurred when the announcement was made that San Francisco capital was investing in the mines and that mills would be built soon. However, the Stampede, wherein the town moved to Silver Reef en masse, was not a stampede for mines but for business locations. The town of Silver Reef did not spring up spontaneously, rather it was a result of a real estate promotion on the part of the

Leeds Mining Company of San Fransisco.

Some reports have placed the population of Silver Reef as being over 3,000 people, but it probably never reached more than 1,500 at its peak. During most of the boom days the available records show that the population was slightly over one thousand. It was a bustling, rowdy and typical mining town of that period. Nevertheless, one contribution of this thesis is to point out that cultural institutions such as schools, churches, and civic clubs were developed to serve the miners in this remote community.

The intercourse between the Chinese and Americans presents an interesting array of problems involving the meeting of two widely different cultures. Despite racial problems, the peoples involved did provide valuable services for each other.

Mormon leaders opposed members of the Church associating with Gentiles, either in a labor capacity or on a social basis. The majority of the Saints heeded this admonition; a minority ignored it. Toward the end of Silver Reef this policy seems to have been modified so that laboring at the mines was not condemned.

In general, Silver Reef miners opposed the Mormon Church and its policies. They supported the Liberal Party of Utah in all of its activities and made a feeble attempt to take political control of Washington County. However, the boundary line change in Washington County in 1882 was not primarily an attempt on the part of the Mormons to save the county from Gentile rule as has been asserted by some writers; but it was an economic move to improve road conditions in Southern Utah and

was fully supported by the Gentiles at Silver Reef.

This study points out the organization of the Miners Union and its activity during what may have been the first strike in Utah. It is believed that the outcome of this strike had disastrous effects on not only Silver Reef but on all of Washington County.

The decline of the mines has been attributed to the strike, the fall in the price of silver and the exhaustion of high grade ore. While the first two may be important, contributing factors, the latter is the basic reason for the decline.

Aug. 28, 1966
Date

Eugene E. Campbell
Chairman, Advisory Committee

Russell R. Rich
Member, Advisory Committee

Eugene E. Campbell
Chairman, Major Department