



## Guide to the Nevada Mining Photograph Collection

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
<b>Collector:</b>	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Libraries. Special Collections and Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Nevada Mining Photograph Collection
<b>ID:</b>	PH-00361
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1868 to 1937
<b>Physical Description:</b>	2.58 Cubic Feet (13 hanging folders, 8 flat files, and 1 oversized box)
<b>Physical Description:</b>	21.86 Linear Feet
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	The Nevada Mining Photograph Collection depicts mining activities, miners, and mining towns in Nevada from 1868 to 1937. The photographs primarily depict the towns of Tonopah, Nevada and Goldfield, Nevada, including mills, buildings, mine shafts, and panoramic views of the landscape. The photographs also depict Beatty, Lost City, Delamar, Candelaria, Winnemucca, Virginia City, Rhyolite, Elko, and Reno, Nevada. The photographs also include portraits of early settlers in Nevada, Native Americans, children, parades, celebrations, and funerals.

### Preferred Citation

Nevada Mining Photograph Collection, 1868-1937. PH-00361. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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## Historical Background

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In 1859, a party of prospectors on their way to the California Gold Rush discovered a large deposit of silver ore near Virginia City, Nevada that was later named the Comstock Lode. This discovery spurred the "rush to Washoe" in 1860. The lode extended down the side of Mount Davidson and miners engineered a new way to remove the precious silver and gold from less valuable base metals. The miners in Northern Nevada developed the Washoe pan process, which mechanically agitated the unrefined ore with wood, water, and machinery. This new technology required large

sums of money and pushed out small-time miners, paving the way for financiers from California to establish mining corporations. From 1860 to 1861, the population of Nevada nearly tripled and this economic growth contributed to Nevada attaining statehood in 1864. This prosperous mining industry in Nevada lasted until roughly 1878 and helped shape the state, pushing the borders east and south. Discoveries of gold and silver in Belmont and Eureka in Nye County, Hamilton in White Pine County, and Pioche in Lincoln County initiated smaller mining rushes into eastern and central Nevada. However, the boom and bust economy, a drop in silver prices, the unbalanced gender ratio, and fluidity of the immigrant population led to social instability and the mines began to steadily decline in the 1880s.

Mining in Nevada experienced a second precious metal boom just after the turn of the twentieth century when miners discovered silver and gold in Tonopah and Goldfield, and later in the Bullfrog District, in central Nevada. This second mining boom, lasting from 1900 until 1923, differed from the first in a few important ways. Rather than the chaos of hundreds of individual mining stakes, mines, and mining companies that characterized the earlier Comstock period, mining enterprises in Goldfield and Tonopah were consolidated into nationally financed corporate mining conglomerates such as Tonopah Mining Company and Goldfield Consolidated Mining Company, which controlled mines, mills, and railroads. The invention of the automobile connected isolated mining sites, mining technology advanced, and a better functioning system of local and state governance helped control lawlessness. However, miners of this period often suffered from silicosis, a type of lung disease triggered by the inhalation of silica or quartzite dust. Nevadans referred to the Delamar Gold Mine, located in Lincoln County, as the "widow-maker" due to the prevalence of silicosis during the mine's active years (1896 to 1902).

The most successful mining during this period was executed in central Nevada, in Nye and Esmeralda counties. Prospectors unearthed gold in Goldfield in 1902 and continued to excavate gold until approximately 1923. Violent incidents of labor unrest attributed to the Western Federation of Miners and the International Workers of the World (Wobblies), and the equally violent union busting by the mine owners, disrupted the mining activities in Goldfield to the point that President Theodore Roosevelt reluctantly sent federal troops to Goldfield at the request of Governor Denver S. Dickerson to assure public peace in 1907. Miners established smaller mining camps in Southern Nevada, in Searchlight for example, and miners discovered large deposits of copper in Northern Nevada in White Pine and Lyon counties. The second mining boom ended around 1923 when the Federal Government terminated the Pittman Act, a government subsidy that guaranteed the price of silver during the First World War.

Copper surpassed silver and gold as the top exported mineral in Nevada after the 1920s. The federal government's need for copper during World War I caused a growth in the copper mining industry in Northern Nevada. This demand for base metals like copper for industrial production marked another shift in the mining industry. Similarly, the Federal Government required Nevada's great mineral wealth during World War II. One of Southern Nevada's largest exports during World War II was magnesium, used in the production of aluminum alloy munitions casings and airplane parts. Basic Magnesium Incorporated established magnesium ore mining operations in Nye County, constructed a refining plant in Clark County, and operated from 1941 to 1944.

During the post-war period, Nevada mining companies continued extracting base metals used in industrial production (like magnesium and copper) and expanded these operations, mining minerals like gypsum in Clark and Washoe counties; diatomite in Pershing and Storey counties; and iron, tungsten, zinc, lead, barite, borax, scoria, limestone, silica, sand, perlite, and fluorspar. During the Korean War (1950-1953), war production again required these minerals and metals for use in weapons and machinery. After many successful years of production, the copper mining industry declined and eventually collapsed by the 1970s.

In the late 1970s, prospectors, with the help of geologists, discovered a large amount of gold, though microscopic and mixed with undesirable elements, in Ely, Nevada. The nature of the gold deposit required modern excavation machinery and refining technology to extract the gold from open-pit mines. This gold rush lasted from the 1980s through the 1990s. The mining industry continues steadily into the present day, with mines across the state removing minerals, base metals, precious metals, and semi-precious gemstones from the Nevada landscape.

Sources:

Driesner, Doug and Alan Coyner. *Major Mines of Nevada 2009: Mineral Industries in Nevada's Economy*. Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology Special Publication P-21. 2010.

Elliott, Russell R. *History of Nevada*. Lincoln: University of Nevada, 1973.

Hulse, James W. *The Silver State: Nevada's Heritage Reinterpreted*. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2004.

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## Scope and Contents Note

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The Nevada Mining Photograph Collection depicts mining activities, miners, and mining towns in Nevada from 1868 to 1937. The photographs primarily depict the towns of Tonopah, Nevada and Goldfield, Nevada, including mills, buildings, mine shafts, and panoramic views of the landscape. The photographs also depict Beatty, Lost City, Delamar, Candelaria, Winnemucca, Virginia City, Rhyolite, Elko, and Reno, Nevada. The photographs also include portraits of early settlers in Nevada, Native Americans, children, parades, celebrations, and funerals.

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## Arrangement

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Materials remain in the order they were received.

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## Administrative Information

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### Access Note

Collection is open for research with the exception of materials that are closed in accordance with Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 383.011-383.540. Restrictions are noted at the file level of this inventory. Portions of this collection are digital and available online.

### Publication Rights

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Materials were donated in 2017; accession numbers 2017-034, 2017-035. In 2021 and 2022, materials were purchased from Vigilante Rare Documents; accession numbers 2021-040 and 2022-080.

### Processing Note

Materials were processed by Special Collections staff. In 2015, as part of a legacy finding aid conversion project, Lindsay Oden wrote the collection description in compliance with current professional standards. In 2017, Maggie Bukowski processed the 2017 addition. Tammi Kim processed and updated the finding aid for subsequent additions in 2021 and 2022.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Collections

The following resources may provide additional information related to the materials in this collection:

Nevada Mining Collection, 1842-1966. MS-00011. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

UNLV University Libraries Collection on Goldfield, Nevada, 1906-1958, 2009. MS-00010. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Tonopah-Goldfield Mining Photograph Collection, 1901-1905. PH-00023. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

United States Bureau of Mines Photograph Collection, 1936-1980. PH-00276. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Ronald and Rosemary Thome Collection of Goldfield, Nevada Postcards, 1950s-1970s. PH-00209. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Nye County, Nevada Photograph Collection, 1880-1990. PH-00221. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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## Names and Subjects

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- Mines and mineral resources
- Tonopah (Nev.)
- Beatty (Nev.)
- Goldfield (Nev.)
- photographs
- Stereographs
- Postcards

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## Collection Inventory

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Title/Description	Containers	
Beatty, Nevada, 1905 May 30 (0361_0001) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
Union Pacific Railroad Company workers constructing railroad to connect with main line at Boulder Junction with Boulder City, Nevada, approximately 1930-1931 (0361_0002) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
Group sitting on a porch, undated (0361_0003) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
Horse freight team hauling supplies from Manville to Beatty, Nevada, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0004) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )		

	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
Horse freight team hauling supplies from Manville to Beatty, Nevada, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0005) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
Horse freight team hauling supplies from Manville to Beatty, Nevada, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0006) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
Horse freight team hauling supplies from Manville to Beatty, Nevada, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0007) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
Archaeological site of an infant burial showing pottery, Lost City, Nevada, undated (0361_0008)  Restricted: Materials are closed in accordance with NRS 383.011-383.540. Inquire with Special Collections for more information.	box SH-046	
Remains found in Lost City, Nevada, undated (0361_0009)  Restricted: Materials are closed in accordance with NRS 383.011-383.540. Inquire with Special Collections for more information.	box SH-046	
Excavation of Lost City, Nevada, undated (0361_0010) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
Pottery, Lost City, Nevada, undated (0361_0011) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
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Spanish-American War soldier Cy E. Johnson on his horse Jay at Camp Thomas (Chickamauga), 1898 June 27 (0361_0014) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
Portrait: Cy E. Johnson taken after the Spanish-American War, 1898 (0361_0015) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
Portrait: Cy E. Johnson in Goldfield, Nevada after returning from a prospecting trip in Death Valley, California, 1906 (0361_0016) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
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	oversized box SH-066	flat file 01
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Panorama of Goldfield, Nevada with locations identified, taken from the Goldfield Ledge Mining Company, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0139) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	flat file 02
Panorama of a mining town, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0146) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	flat file 02
Panorama of a mining town, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0147) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	flat file 02
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Panorama of a mining town, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0149) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	flat file 02
A group of people gathers around a fire, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0150) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	flat file 02
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Miners in Rawhide, Nevada, 1908 (0361_0152) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	folder 12
Postcard: stage crossing the desert going to Goldfield, Nevada, 1906 July 03 (0361_0153) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	folder 12
Mine under construction, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0154) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	folder 12
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Postcard: miner inside a mine, captioned "Walt in Baby Flo", approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0156) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	folder 12
Postcard: Florence Mine, Goldfield, Nevada, approximately 1900-1910 (0361_0157) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	folder 12
Postcard: New Florence Mill, Goldfield, Nevada, 1909 November 10 (0361_0158) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	folder 12
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Construction of the Goldfield Consolidated Mining Company in Goldfield, Nevada, approximately 1907-1908 (0361_0161) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	folder 12
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Elementary schoolhouse students and teacher Clarice Bateman, Tonopah, Nevada, 1907 (0361_0169) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	folder 12
Elementary schoolhouse students and teacher Clarice Bateman, Tonopah, Nevada, 1908 (0361_0170) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	folder 12
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