

Five books that should be in every Nevada library

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Browne, J. Ross and James W. Taylor, 1867, *Reports Upon the Mineral Resources of the United States [for the year 1866]*. Washington: Government Printing Office. 360 pages.

John Ross Browne (1821-1875) was a journalist who explored the American West during its expansion era and in the late 1860s became a government contract agent reporting to the treasury department on the mineral resources of the Pacific slope. His 1867 *Reports*, co-authored with James Taylor, provided the first comprehensive evaluation of the mining industry in the then-recently opened West, and as such remains a primary document on the subject.

Read a copy of the *Reports* online:

http://books.google.com/books?id=ajc-AAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

Fremont, John Charles, 1845, *Report of the Exploring Expedition in the Year 1842 and to Oregon and North California in the years 1843-1844*. Washington: Gales and Seaton for the U.S. Senate.

Although Fremont's *Report* was published as a Congressional document, it was rapidly consumed by the general public eager to learn about the resources of the American West, and that intense interest fueled the Manifest Destiny movement, a belief held by many Americans that they had a divine right to occupy the-then recently explored lands. The resulting surge in migration also marked the beginning of more than a century of conflict with Native Americans.

Heizer, Robert F. and Martin A. Baumhoff, 1962, *Prehistoric Rock Art of Nevada and Eastern California*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Heizer and Baumhoff catalogued an abundance of prehistoric rock art, pecked, scratched and painted figures on natural surfaces, the patination of which places the rock art's authorship between 1,000 and 5,000 BC. With a few instances of apparent Puebloid influence in southern Nevada, the remainder of the rock art has no discernable relationship to any other prehistoric culture, making this volume a valuable document that raises more questions than it answers about Nevada's cultural heritage.

King, Clarence, 1876, *Geological and Topographical Atlas Accompanying the Report of the Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel*. Washington, D.C.: Julius Bien.

King's "Great Atlas," as cartographic historians refer to it, is significant for two reasons: it is the product of the first scientific exploration of the natural resources of the American West and it is a remarkable medium in its own right. Four of the ten elephant folios — two geologic and two topographic — relate to the Nevada Plateau and Nevada Basin. The topographic maps feature "hachuring," a system of short, disconnected lines drawn in the direction of the slopes to represent relief. Today, topographic maps employ contour lines at set intervals and/or degrees of shading to denote relief.

View a copy of the *Atlas* in the University of Nevada-Reno's online digital collection:

<http://contentdm.library.unr.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/hmaps&CISOPTR=4826>.

Nevada Emigrant Trail Marking Committee, 1975, *The Overland Emigrant Trail to California — A Guide to Trail Markers Placed in Western Nevada and the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California*. Reno: Nevada Historical Society.

This utilitarian guide to emigrant trail markers placed over the course of several years in the 1960s is a tribute not only to the California-bound emigration but to the dedication of the Committee's lead authority and driving force, Dr. Everett W. Harris. Although many of the trail markers have succumbed to vandals and the elements, the story they tell is preserved in the pages of this important document. Other publications of similar nature have appeared in recent years, but the present title is the go-to document for tracing the overland trail across the northern Nevada desert and into the Sierra Nevada Mountains.