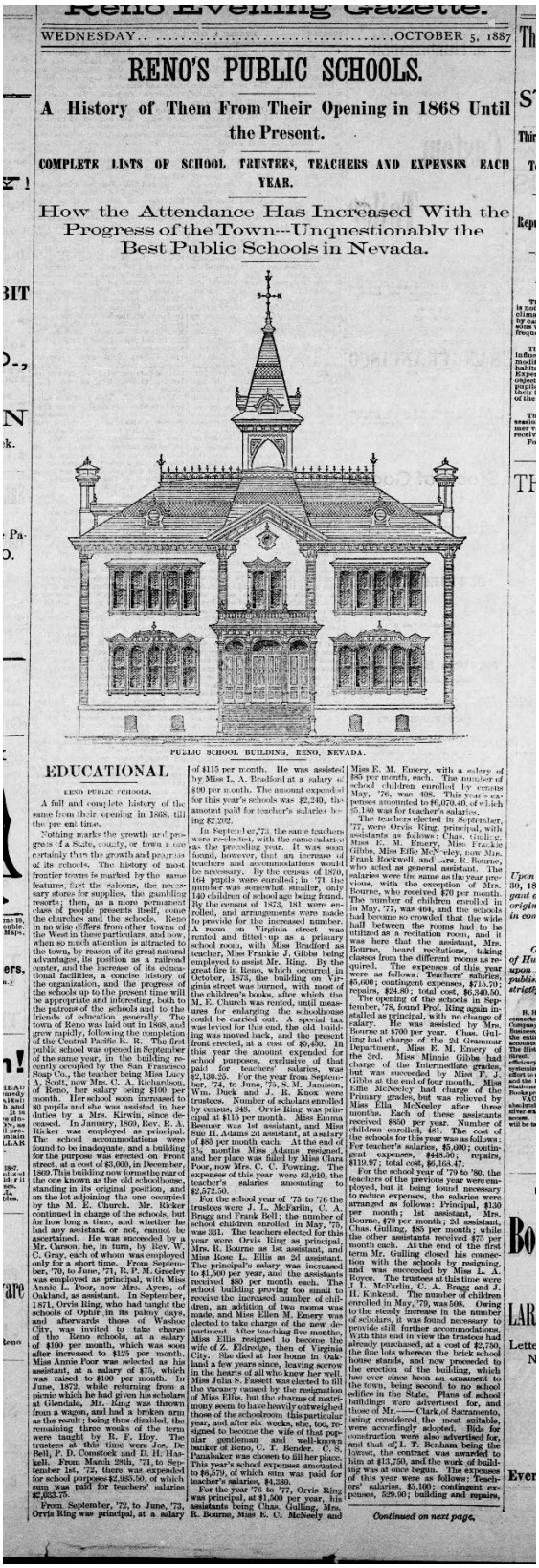
"Reno's Public Schools, A History of Them From Their Opening in 1868 Until the Present." *Reno Evening Gazette* (Reno, Nevada) October 5, 1887.



Reno Evening Gazette.

WEDNESDAY.....OCTOBER 5, 1887

RENO'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

A History of Them From Their Opening in 1868 Until the Present.

COMPLETE LISTS OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES, TEACHERS AND EXPENSES EACH YEAR.

How the Attendance Has Increased With the Progress of the Town---Unquestionably the Best Public Schools in Nevada.

PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING, RENO, NEVADA.

EDUCATIONAL

RENO PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

A full and complete history of the same from their opening in 1868, till the present time.

Nothing marks the growth and progress of a State, county, or town more certainly than the growth and progress of its schools. The history of most frontier towns is marked by the same features, first the saloons, the necessary stores for supplies, the gambling resorts; then, as a more permanent class of people presents itself, come the churches and the schools. Reno in no wise differs from other towns of the West in these particulars, and now, when so much attention is attracted to the town, by reason of its great natural advantages, its position as a railroad center, and the increase of its educational facilities, a concise history of the organization and the progress of the schools up to the present time will be appropriate and interesting, both to the patrons of the schools and to the friends of education generally. The town of Reno was laid out in 1868, and grew rapidly, following the completion of the Central Pacific R. R. The first public school was opened in September of the same year, in the building recently occupied by the San Francisco Soap Co., the teacher being Miss Lucy A. Scott, now Mrs. C. A. Richardson, of Reno, her salary being $100 per month. Her school soon increased to 80 pupils and she was assisted in her duties by a Mrs. Kirwin, since deceased. In January, 1869, Rev. R. A. Kicker was employed as principal. The school accommodations were found to be inadequate, and a building for the purpose was erected on Front street, at a cost of $3,000, in December, 1869. This building now forms the rear of the one known as the old schoolhouse, standing in its original position, and on the lot adjoining the one occupied by the M. E. Church. Mr. Ricker continued in charge of the school, but for how long a time, and whether he had any assistant or not, cannot be ascertained. He was succeeded by a Mr. Carson, he, in turn, by Rev. W. C. Gray, each of whom was employed only for a short time. From September, '70, to June, '71, R. P. M. Greeley was employed as principal, with Miss Annie L. Poor, now Mrs. Ayers, of Oakland, as assistant. In September, 1871, Orvis Ring, who had taught the schools of Ophir in its palmy days, and afterwards those of Washoe City, was invited to take charge of the Reno schools, at a salary of $100 per month, which was soon after increased to $125 per month. Miss Annie Poor was selected as his assistant, at a salary of $75, which was raised to $100 per month. In June, 1872, while returning from a picnic which he had given his scholars at Glendale, Mr. Ring was thrown from a wagon, and had a broken arm as the result; being thus disabled, the remaining three weeks of the term were taught by R. F. Hoy. The trustees at this time were Jos. De Bell, P. D. Comstock and D. H. Harkell. From March 28th, '71, to September 1st, '72, there was expended for school purposes $2,985.50, of which sum was paid for teachers' salaries $2,653.75.

From September, '72, to June, '73, Orvis Ring was principal, at a salary of $115 per month. He was assisted by Miss L. A. Bradford at a salary of $90 per month. The amount expended for this year's schools was $2,240, the amount paid for teacher's salaries being $2,202.

In September, '73, the same teachers were re-elected, with the same salaries as the preceding year. It was soon found, however, that an increase of teachers and accommodations would be necessary. By the census of 1870, 164 pupils were enrolled; in '71 the number was somewhat smaller, only 140 children of school age being found. By the census of 1873, 181 were enrolled, and arrangements were made to provide for the increased number. A room on Virginia street was rented and fitted up as a primary school room, with Miss Bradford as teacher, Miss Frankie J. Gibbs being employed to assist Mr. Ring. By the great fire in Reno, which occurred in October, 1873, the building on Virginia street was burned, with most of the children's books, as well. The M. E. Church was rented, until measures for enlarging the schoolhouse could be carried out. A special tax was levied for this end, the old building was moved back, and the present front erected, at a cost of $5,450. In this year the amount expended for school purposes, exclusive of that paid for teachers' salaries, was $2,120.25. For the year from September, '74, to June, '75, S. M. Jamison, Wm. Dark and J. H. Knox were trustees. Number of scholars enrolled by census, 248. Orvis Ring was principal at $115 per month. Miss Emma Beemer was 1st assistant, and Miss Jan H. Adams 2d assistant, at a salary of $85 per month each. At the end of 3½ months Miss Adams resigned, and her place was filled by Miss Clara Poor, now Mrs. C. C. Powning. The expenses of this year were $3,910, the teacher's salaries amounting to $2,572.50.

For the school year of '75 to '76 the trustees were J. L. McFarlin, C. A. Bragg and Frank Bell; the number of school children enrolled in May, '75, was 331. The teachers elected for this year were Orvis Ring as principal, Mrs. R. Bourne as 1st assistant, and Miss Rose L. Ellis as 2d assistant. The principal's salary was increased to $1,500 per year, and the assistants received $80 per month each. The school building proving too small to receive the increased number of children, an addition of two rooms was made, and Miss Ellen M. Emery was elected to take charge of the new department. After teaching five months, Miss Ellis resigned to become the wife of D. Eldredge, then of Virginia City. She died at her home in Oakland a few years since, leaving sorrow in the hearts of all who knew her. Miss Julia S. Fassett was elected to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Miss Ellis, but the climate proving gloomy seem to have heavily outweighed those of the schoolroom this particular year, and after six weeks, she, too, resigned to become the wife of that popular gentleman and well-known banker of Reno, C. T. Bender. C. S. Panabaker was chosen to fill her place. This year's school expenses amounted to $6,579, of which sum was paid for teacher's salaries, $4,380.

For the year '76 to '77, Orvis Ring was principal, at $1,500 per year, his assistants being Chas. Gulling, Mrs. R. Bourne, Miss E. C. McNeely and Miss E. M. Emery, with a salary of $85 per month, each. The number of school children enrolled by census May, '76, was 408. This year's expenses amounted to $6,070.40, of which $5,130 was for teacher's salaries.

The teachers elected in September, '77, were Orvis Ring, principal, with assistants as follows: Chas. Gulling, Miss E. M. Emery, Miss Frankie Gibbs, Miss Effie McNeely, now Mrs. Frank Rockwell, and Mrs. R. Bourne, who acted as general assistant. The salaries were the same as the year previous, with the exception of Mrs. Bourne, who received $70 per month. The number of children enrolled in May, '77, was 464, and the schools had become so crowded that the wide hall between the rooms had to be utilized as a recitation room, and it was here that the assistant, Mrs. Bourne, heard recitations, taking classes from the different rooms as required. The expenses of this year were as follows: Teachers' salaries, $5,030; contingent expenses, $775.70; repairs, $24.80; total cost, $6,340.50.

The opening of the schools in September, '78, found Prof. Ring again installed as principal, with no change of salary. He was assisted by Mrs. Bourne at $700 per year. Chas. Gulling had charge of the 2d Grammar Department, Miss E. M. Emery of the 3rd. Miss Minnie Gibbs had charge of the Intermediate grades, but was succeeded by Miss F. J. Gibbs at the end of four month. Miss Effie McNeeley had charge of the Primary grades, but was relieved by Miss Ella McNeeley after three months. Each of these assistants received $850 per year. Number of children enrolled, 461. The cost of the schools for this year was as follows: For teacher's salaries, $5,200; contingent expenses, $448.50; $119.97; total cost, $6,168.47.

For the school year of '79 to '80, the teachers of the previous year were employed, but it being found necessary to reduce expenses, the salaries were arranged as follows: Principal, $130 per month; 1st assistant, Mrs. Bourne, $70 per month; 2d assistant, Chas. Gulling, $85 per month; while the other assistants received $75 per month each. At the end of the first term Mr. Gulling closed his connection with the schools by resigning, and was succeeded by Miss L. A. Royce. The trustees at this time were J. L. McFarlin, C. A. Bragg and J. H. Kinkead. The number of children enrolled in May, '79, was 508. Owing to the steady increase in the number of scholars, it was found necessary to provide still further accommodations. With this end in view the trustees had already purchased, at a cost of $2,700, the fine lots whereon the brick school house stands, and now proceeded to the erection of the building, which has ever since been an ornament to the town, being second to no school edifice in the State. Plans of school buildings were advertised for, and those of Mr.—— Clark, of Sacramento, being considered the most suitable, were accordingly adopted. Bids for construction were also advertised for, and that of I. T. Benham being the lowest, the contract was awarded to him at $13,750, and the work of building was at once begun. The expenses of this year were as follows: Teachers' salaries, $5,100; contingent expenses, $29.90; building and repairs,

Continued on next page.

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NEVADA—Continued.

$18,418.14; interest on bonds, $1,360; total, $25,308.54.

1880 and '81. The new building was opened for the reception of pupils in September, 1880, with the following corps of teachers: Orvis Ring as principal and teacher of High School, at $1,300 per year. Miss Lottie Warner 1st Grammar, and Miss L. A Royce, 2nd Grammar, at $850 apiece. Mrs. R. Bourne, 3d Grammar, at $800. First and 2d Intermediate, Miss E. M. Emery and Miss F. J. Gibbs, at $750 per year each. The primary grades, now to be taught in the old school house, were under the care of Miss E. C. McNeeley and Miss Sadie Wilson, at $750 each. At this time, N. J. Roff was elected as janitor at a salary of $35 per month. How faithful he has been in the discharge of his duties is evidenced by the fact that he has ever since been employed in the same position, but happily for him, with an increased salary. At the end of the second month of this term, Mrs. Bourne resigned. Miss Emery was promoted to the position thus made vacant, and Miss M. E. Grippen was chosen to fill her place. Miss Emery's health failing soon after, she gave up her position, and it was filled for two months by Miss Mary A. Taylor. Miss Emery went to San Francisco in the hope of regaining her health, but the hope was in vain. She shortly after died, a victim to consumption, greatly regretted by those to whom she had endeared herself by the uniform kindness and cheerfulness of her disposition. All this time the population of Reno was steadily increasing, and quite a town had grown up on the south side of the Truckee. Parents here found it very inconvenient to send their children so far to school, and urgently demanded a schoolhouse on their side of the river. To meet this demand, the building, known since as the "South Side School," was constructed, and opened in March, 1881, with Miss Genie Payne as teacher, at a salary of $65 per month. The expenses of this school year were as follows: Teachers' salaries, $5,410; contingent expenses, $812.01; building and repairs, $8,824.80; interest on bonds, $1,720; total, $1,767.81.

1881 and '82. The schools opened in September, '81, with the following teachers: Orvis Ring, principal and High School teacher, at $120 per month; S. D. Bristor, 1st Grammar, Miss Mary Henry, 2d, and J. A. Sands, 3d, at $75 per month each; Mrs. E. J. Knowlton and Miss Genie Payne, 1st and second Intermediate; Miss E. C. McNeeley and Miss Sadie Wilson, 1st and 2d Primary; Miss Ella Bishop, South Side school, each at a salary of $65 per month. The schools were more prosperous and satisfactory than usual this year, owing to better facilities enjoyed. They had been graded so that each teacher had his or her work well in hand. Five hundred pupils had been enrolled in the schools, and the census returns gave the number between 6 and 18 years, as 548. This year's expenses were as follows: Teachers', $8,034.85; contingent expenses, $1,006.07; repairs, $43.19; interest on bonds, $1,720; Total, $11,104.11.

1882 and '83. The trustees at the opening of this school year were J. L. McFarlin, J. H. Kinkead and D. D. Bowen. The teachers elected by them were as follows: Nelson Carr superseded Prof. Ring, who had labored so long and earnestly for the best interests of the school, as principal and teacher of High School, at $1,200 a year salary; E. E. Winfrey, Elmer Sickafus, Miss J. Brown, 1st, 2d and 3d Grammar, at $750 each; Mrs. E. J. Knowlton, Miss Genie Payne, 1st and 2d Intermediate; Miss E. E. McNeeley, Miss Sadie Payne, 1st and 2nd Primary, at $650 each; Miss Minnie Gibbs, South Side, at $700 a year. In connection with the Primary schools a Kindergarten department was opened, with Mrs. Ella Scoville as teacher, at $50 per year. At the end of three months, Prof. Carr resigned, and Miss E. J. Brown was appointed to the vacancy thus created. Mrs. Cornelia Haile being elected to fill the position made vacant by the promotion of Miss Brown. The number of school children enrolled this year was 561. The expenses of the schools were as follows: Teachers' salaries, $7,018.10; contingent expenses, $1,449.96; repairs, $1,379.50; library, $43.30; interest on bonds, $1,640; total, $11,527.36.

1883 and '84. The schools opened in September, '83, under the superintendency of Prof. Granville F. Foster, of the Southern Illinois Normal University, whose services had been secured by Trustees W. H. Gould, Dr. F. R. Waggoner and C. L. McFarlin, at a salary of $1,800 per year. The teachers under him were Prof. F. M. Alexander, principal, Mrs. Hale and Miss Bolen, in the High School. The Grammar departments seem to have been done away with, the work being done in the so-called High School. Mrs. C. J. Knowlton was placed at the head of the Intermediate grades, the other teachers being Alonzo C. Webb and Miss Frank L. Grippen. Miss Effie McNeeley, Miss Sadie Wilson and Mrs. Mary S. Boden had charge of the Primary schools, and Miss Minnie Gibbs of the South Side school. In December Miss Brown resigned her position, and Miss Mary S. Boden was elected to till the vacancy. In May, '84, Prof. Foster resigned, and her place was filled by Miss Miriam Michelson. In March of the same year the High Section school was discontinued, and the services of Mrs. Scoville were therefore no longer need. The amount expended for the schools this year was as follows: Teachers' salaries, $8,098.75; contingent expenses, $1,215.29; building and repairs, $907; library and apparatus, $91.90; interest on bonds, $1,564; total amount, $11,866.94. Number of children enrolled by census of May, '83, 561.

1884 and '85. At the election of November, '84, Geo. H. Taylor and W. H. Gould were elected trustees of the School District No. 10, Dr. Waggoner being a hold-over. He soon resigned, and S. M. Jamison was appointed in his place. Professor Alexander, who had passed his vacation in the Eastern States, returned with his wife, whom he had married in his absence. He had been elected as principal of the High School, Prof. Foster having accepted a position in California. Mrs. Alexander and Mrs. Haile were teachers in the High School. The other teachers were as follows: Mrs. M. S. Boden, E. J. Knowlton, M. E. Harley, Misses Frances A. Farmer, Alice Bates, Effie McNeeley, Miriam Michelson and Minnie Gibbs. The salaries paid were the same as the two years previous, $75, $70 and $65, with the exception of that paid the principal, which was now $125 per month. In January, '85, the attendance in the High School being very light, it was decided to dispense with one teacher, Mrs. Haile. For the same reason, this department was closed at the end of May. Prof. Alexander and wife resigned, and returned to their eastern home. The other departments ran on very smoothly without any principal, until the usual time for closing. The number of children enrolled by the census of '84 was 568. Amount expended for schools this year: Teachers' salaries, $7,750; contingent expenses, $1,381.19; repairs, etc., $408.80; library, $4.50; interest on bonds, $1,485; total amount, $11,029.49.

1885 and '86. For the school year of '85 and '86, Prof. Orvis Ring, who had been for the past three years principal of the Winnemucca schools, was again invited to take charge of the Reno schools. He accepted the position, at a salary of $1,500 per year, with the following corps of assistants: Miss F. A. Farmer, High School; Mrs. M. S. Doten, Mrs. E. J. Knowlton, 1st and 2d Grammar; Misses Selina Burston, Flora Northrop, Martha Turner, 1st, 2d and 3d Intermediate; Misses Effie McNeely and Miriam Michelson, 1st and 2d Primary; Miss F. L. Grippin, South Side school. In April, '86, the Misses McNeely and Michelson resigned, and their places were filled by Miss Margaret E. McIntosh and Miss Lizzie Unruh. This year's expenses were: Teachers' salaries, $7,900; contingent expenses, $1,493.52; repairs, $1,217.55; library and apparatus, $112.85; interest on bonds, $1,404; total amount, $12,-227.94.

1886 and '87. This year the same teachers were employed as at the close of the previous year, with the same salaries, with the only exception that Principal Ring now received $1,800 a year. The census of May, 1886, reported 606 children of school age, 582 being enrolled on the registers of the schools. In January, '87, another department was opened, a mixed grade, with Miss S. A. Harris as teacher, at $65 per month. At the close of the schools in June, '87, four young ladies graduated from the High School, with appropriate ceremonies. The cost of the schools for this year was as follows: Teacher's salaries, $8,440; contingent expenses, $1,282.53; repairs, etc., $818; library, etc, $56; interest on bonds, $1,320; total cost, $11,-916.53.

1887. The schools opened this year August 29, with twelve teachers employed, at an aggregate cost of $955 per month, making, with the salary of the janitor, $65 per month, a total of $1,020 per month, exclusive of all other expenses. The teachers are: Orvis Ring, principal; Miss F. A. Farmer and Mrs. M. S. Doten, High School; Miss S. A. Harris and Mrs. E. J. Knowlton, 1st and 2d Grammar; Mrs. H. M. Atwood, Miss Flora Northrop and Miss Ada F. Lackey, 1st, 2d and 3d Intermediate; Miss Emma Cutting, Mixed Grade; Miss M. E. McIntosh and Miss L. Unruh, 1st and 2d Primary; Miss F. L. Grippen, South Side. Janitor, N. J. Roff. The Board of Trustees consists of the following gentlemen: Chairman, W. H. Gould; Clerk, Geo. H. Taylor; long term Trustee, S. M. Jamison. These gentlemen are active in the discharge of their duties, and do all in their power to advance the best interests of the town, through its public schools. These were never more prosperous, as to attendance and progress, than at the present time. By the census taken in May, 777 children, between the ages of 6 and 18, were enrolled. At least 20 new scholars presented themselves for classification on the opening day, and the first two days of the term were spent in examinations for this purpose. The schools are now well graded; the course of study is much the same as that followed in other schools of the State, and will compare favorably with those of older and longer established schools. As arranged, it will require eight years to complete the Primary, Intermediate and Grammar grades. The books used in these departments are: Swinton's Series of Readers and Grammars, Swinton's Word Book in Spelling, Harper's Elementary and School Geographies, Eaton's Arithmetics, Nos. 1 and 2, Smith's Physiology and Hygiene, Ridpath's U. S. History, Spencerian Copy Books, Bartholomew's System of Drawing. In the High School Course, requiring three years to complete, the studies of the preceding years are reviewed and laid aside. Bookkeeping is taught through the entire course. Higher Arithmetic, Algebra, English History and Literature, Rhetoric, Physical Geography, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Zoology, and Latin, are also embraced in this course. Written examinations are held at the end of every term, and no scholar is allowed to pass from one grade to another, without a certificate of promotion.

SUMMARY.

Since the opening of the schools in September, 1868, nineteen years have passed. How the town has grown in that time may be seen from this history of its schools. Three school buildings have been erected, in which 38 different teachers have been employed. The total cost of the schools to the end of June of this year has been $161,987.04, of which the teachers have received $87,850.70. Some of the best teachers have been, at different times, in the schools, and by laying the foundations for future usefulness in the rooms where they afterward became teachers. Of those who who have crossed to the other side of the dark River, none are more universally regretted than are the sisters, Frankie and Minnie Gibbs. The former died in March, 1885, and the latter, who was now the wife of Brewster Coffin, died in April, 1887. Nowhere does the sun shine on brighter-eyed, more intelligent, capable, or, as a rule, better behaved children than are to be found in Reno. Too much cannot be done in the way of fitting them to become the citizens and legislators, the fathers and mothers of the future. All, therefore, are interested in the institutions of learning in our midst; and one and all should do whatever lies in their power to aid, encourage and advance the progress and prosperity of our public schools.

Fine Jewelry.

Miller, the Jeweler of Sacramento, will send by mail or express any article of jewelry that may be ordered, and will guarantee satisfaction as well as if the purchaser was present in person. His house has a reputation second to none in the State.

Endorsed by President Brown, of the State University of Nevada.