

Dear 'Native' Nevadan:

B Fulkerson

I swaggered Fifth-Generation Nevadan around until a friend said that means you came from the takers of my homelands.

Never thought Buffy Sainte Marie sang *welcome, welcome immigrantes* to us Natives.

Nevada born, 1960:

One hundred years

since the Pyramid Lake War

ended in massacre

for my people to straight up take

land from a peaceful people

whose kindness toward settlers crossing Nevada deserts ensured their survival.

Nevada born, 1960:

One hundred three years since

Reno's "first permanent resident"

built the first house in the valley

"three quarters of a mile this side of Huffakers"

in the spring of 1857.

Nevada born, 1960:

Ninety-five years

since the Mud Lake Massacre,

local papers urging settlers to

let loose the dogs of war, and cry havoc

And Sarah Winnemucca wrote:

The soldiers rode up to their encampment and fired into it and killed almost all the people that were there. Oh it is a fearful thing to tell but it must be told. Yes it must be told by me. It was all old men women and children that were killed for my father had all the young men with him at the sink of Carson on a hunting excursion or they would have been killed too.

After the soldiers had killed all but some little children and babies still tied up in their baskets the soldiers took them also and set the camp on fire and threw them into the flames to see them burn alive. I had one baby brother killed there. My sister jumped on father's best horse and ran away.

As she ran the soldiers ran after her but thanks be to the Good Father in the Spirit land my dear sister got away. This almost killed my poor papa. Yet my people kept peaceful.

Nevada born, 1960:

Forty-nine years since

The last Indian massacre in the United States, 220 miles northeast of here. Shoshone Mike's granddaughter, Mary Jo Estep, was the only survivor. She died in 1992 and only learned of her origins in 1975.

Nevada born, 1960:

Three years since

Indians would not be arrested for being in Nevada towns after dark, I know only thanks to the late Adrian C. Louis, Lovelock Paiute poet. Carson Valley sundown siren in 2023 is a proud native Nevada tradition reminding us who we are.

Native Nevadans today have serious pioneer cred like me. My people were an Oregon Trail wagon train captain whose son brought the first threshing machine to come up the Willamette River & traded it for a sawmill

A Modoc County logger & freighter

A Virginia City tool dresser who could tell metal by tasting it

A Suffragette who loved to dance

A Nevada Assemblyman in 1903

All charismatic, whiskey loving, good white people.

Not European descendants hailing from the Bronze Age, like Marlow's conquerors in Heart of Darkness:

The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those (different from ourselves) is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much.

Grandpa Metzker owned six northern Sierra sawmills, Tahoe Timber in west Reno where Patagonia is now, milled 22-25 million board feet per year alone.

My earliest memory is driving up what I always thought was the Dog Valley road but could've been anywhere in the Sierra, barely peering above the truck's dashboard at beams of dust through giant sunlit evergreens, four or five of us on the bouncing bench seat and me trying to stay out of the way of the giant stick shift that with each push of the squeaky clutch ground the gears & changed the engine noise, aromatic of cigarettes, sweat, sawdust, jerky, alcohol, and gasoline.

In two decades, 600 million board feet of timber were cleared from Carson City to the Truckee River canyon, all the 600 year-old giants now beneath the Comstock:

For a distance of 50 or 60 miles all the hills of the eastern slope of the Sierra have been to a great extent denuded of trees of every kind—those suitable only for wood as well as those fit for the manufacture of lumber for use in the mines. (William Wright, 1875)

Stanford University,
the Pacific Stock Exchange
my first truck & tuition were
Sierra cedar, pine and fir
Of the Wašiw and Numu.

Repair.
We and those
who brought us here
guests on sacred land.
fellow pioneer.



From right to left: Unknown man standing; Jennie House Crosby; two unknown women; James Crosby; Uncle Dewey Crosby (their son); Bob Cowles. His mother was a photographer in Wadsworth who took this photo. Wadsworth, circa 1906. Mules' names lost to history.