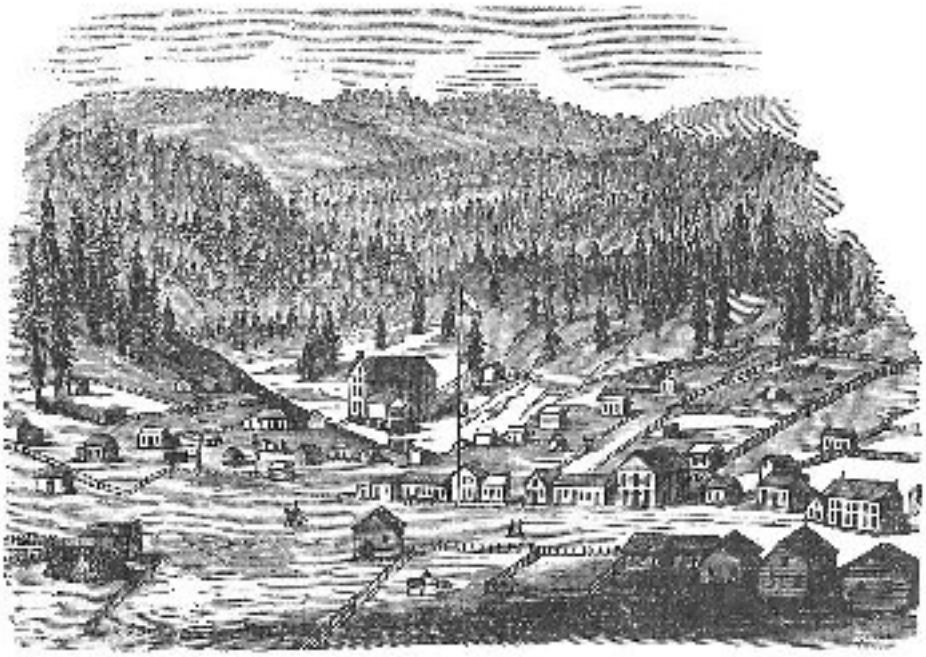
Carson County, Utah and Nevada Territories



GENOA.

The Utah Territorial Legislature created Carson County in 1854 but it was not organized until the following year. It was the primary unit of local government in western Utah and Nevada Territories until the creation of nine counties by the Nevada Territorial Legislature in 1861. The government of Carson County, Utah Territory, 1855-1861, was vested in three bodies: the County Court, the Probate Court, and the Recorder/Clerk. When Carson County became part of Nevada Territory, the records were entrusted to Orion Clemens, Secretary of the Territory as archives of the Territory in 1861.

The Utah Territorial Legislature's act of 1854 gave Governor Brigham Young authority to appoint a probate judge to organize Carson County. On June 15, 1855 Young named Elder Orson Hyde as Probate Judge. Henry W. Niles was appointed by Hyde to be Clerk of the Probate Court; however, he resigned and on March 3, 1856, Stephen A. Kinsey was appointed Clerk of the Probate Court and ex-officio Recorder. His appointment as Recorder was confirmed by an election of October 1858 and he retained this office until 1861. For many years, the Carson County Records were known as "Kinsey's Records."

For a complete index to these records, consult Marion Ellison's book *An Inventory and Index to the Records of Carson County, Utah and Nevada Territories, 1855-1861*

, published by the Grace Dangberg Foundation, Inc., 1984.

Photo: Sketch of Genoa, 1860, from "Notes and Sketches of the Washoe County," *Hutchings' California Magazine*
, April 1860.

Records of Carson County, Utah and Nevada Territories

The Carson County, Utah Territory, records are in two formats: bound volumes and loose documents. The documents were submitted by parties of interest and copied into the official record volumes by the Recorder or his assistants. These records have also been microfilmed; the film is available at the Nevada State Library.

County Court:
The County Court consisted of the Probate Judge and two selectmen and functioned like a county commission or board of supervisors. The court received petitions regarding and made decisions about land, water, and timber rights; and roads (toll, wagon, bridges, and gates). In addition to determining the location of county roads, this court also located school districts.

Probate Court:
Presided over by a probate judge, the Probate Court oversaw the administration of estates of deceased persons and also functioned as a lower civil court, hearing divorce cases and contract disputes.

County Recorder:
The County Recorder's office was responsible for receiving and caring for legal filings such as mining and real estate deeds, surveys, pre-emption claims, powers of attorney, mortgages, water and toll road claims, foreclosures, town and other plat maps, bonds, leases, and agreements.

- Brief History from Political History of Nevada
- First Records of Carson Valley, 1851
- County Court

- Probate Court
- Recorder
- Miscellaneous Records
- Utah and Nevada Territorial Records on Microfilm