

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Nevada	
COUNTY: Lander	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 11/11/32.0023	DATE 11/23/71

1. NAME

COMMON:
Austin Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Austin

STATE Nevada	CODE 32	COUNTY: Lander	CODE 015
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Multiple public and private

STREET AND NUMBER:
Town of Austin

CITY OR TOWN:
Austin

STATE: Nevada	CODE 32
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Lander County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Austin

STATE: Nevada	CODE 32
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Nevada Historical Sites

DATE OF SURVEY: **1968** Federal State County Local

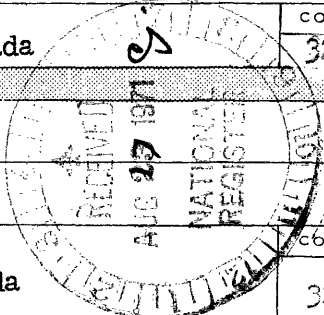
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: **University of Nevada
Desert Research Insititue-Center for Western
Studios**

STREET AND NUMBER:
North Virginia st

CITY OR TOWN:
Reno

STATE: Nevada	CODE 32
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SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: _____
COUNTY: _____
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER: **11/11/32.0023**
DATE: **11/23/71**

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

AUSTIN

Austin is located almost in the geographical center of Nevada, on U.S. Highway 50, 179 miles east of Reno. After rich silver ore was discovered in Pony Canyon in May, 1862, a rush to the site occurred and resulted in the formation of two towns - Clifton, at the mouth of Pony Canyon, and Austin in the canyon itself. Clifton had the advantage of a level townsite but Austin was closer to the mines. After a road was built eastward into Austin, constructed by men willing to obtain a free lot in Austin in exchange for their work, it absorbed Clifton. Later, Clifton became the terminus of the Nevada Central Railroad, and a three-mile separate line was run into Austin.

By the summer of 1863, Austin and the Reese River Mining District had a population of about 2000 persons. In the fall of that year, Austin was made the seat of Lander County. The town was typical of early Nevada mining camps, in terms of ethnic composition. Large numbers of English and Irish immigrants were residents.

After 1864 Austin became a trading and commercial center, not only for nearby mining districts but also for mining camps as far away as Elko and Lincoln Counties. Gradually, Austin acquired most of the features of a city, including a gas works, for lighting.

The Shoshone Indians had previously lived in the locality, and the town became the site of large Indian festivals. These drew Shoshone from Battle Mountain and the Ione, Reese River, Smith Creek, and Edwards Creek Valleys. Some Northern Paiute Indians also journeyed to these events, from as far away as the Walker River and Walker Lake.

By 1872, after much silver had already been extracted from the district's mines, the Manhattan Silver Mining Company had acquired many mining properties and worked them on a systematic basis for the next fifteen years. Net production by this one company from 1872 to 1887 was fifteen million dollars.

The building of the Nevada Central Railroad into Austin in 1880 aided mining developments and enhanced Austin's position as a commercial center. Operations slowed after 1887, but during the 1890's, New York interests, headed by J.G. Stokes, actively worked mining properties in the Reese River District. The twentieth century statewide Nevada mining boom did not significantly revive Austin.

Many historically interesting buildings remained in Austin in 1966, including the Gridley Store which was the place of origin for the famous "Sanitary Flour Sack". This flour was auctioned off originally in Austin and proceeds went to the U.S. Sanitary Commission, a Civil War equivalent of the Red Cross. Later, Gridley toured the United States, selling and re-selling the sack. Over \$275,000 was eventually raised by his campaign.

continued

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **Between 1862-1900**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Incredible Austin: An "unspoiled relic of the past" was born in 1862 when a horse kicked over a rock in the mouth of Pony Canyon revealing rich silver ore that caused a rush of people to the area.

In a year's time over 5000 rugged individuals were living here. Within 2 years a peak of 10,000 or more were Austin residents and staking claims for miles around what is now the town.

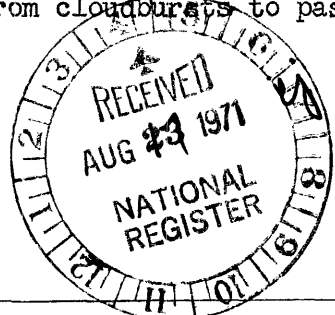
Over \$50 million in silver ore was taken out before the major decline took place.

Not only was Austin the mother of at least 30 other mining towns in all directions, but it was the seat of a vast area including Lander, Eureka, Elko and White Pine counties, plus a part of Nye county. Austin outlived nearly all of the towns it mothered.

The following points of interest are listed as being the major features:

International Hotel: The oldest hotel in Nevada and one of the oldest in the West. The International was moved piece by piece from Virginia City in 1863. Famous for its old ballroom and dining room, it was the center of many wild discussions of the riches, the failures and the exciting events of the times. It housed numerous adventurous people and many joyous and festive occasions were held there during its past.

The outside stairway in the center of the block, just east of the International Hotel is the remaining one of many that were constructed to be raised from the upper stories to allow the boulders and debris from cloudbursts to pass under them.



continued:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Nevada Historical Sites by Brocke D. Mordy & Donald L. McCoughey
 University of Nevada -Desert Research Institute-1968
History of Nevada by Thompson & West -Howell-North Books-1958
 Berkeley, California
Nevada's Turbulent Yesterday by Don Ashbaugh-Westernlore Press 1963
 Library of Congress No. 63-13925

Nevada Ghost Towns & Mining Camps by Stanley W. Paher-Howell-North Books
 1970 Berkeley, California

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES							
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	117°	05'	00"	39°	30'	00"	°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	117°	03'	30"	39°	30'	00"						
SE	117°	03'	30"	39°	29'	15"						
SW	117°	05'	00"	39°	29'	15"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **748 ±**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Not Applicable			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Central Nevada Resource Conservation and Development Project
 Albert Neu-USA Soil Conservation Service (RC&D Project Coordinator)**

ORGANIZATION **Application prepared for:**
Central Nevada Resource Development Authority DATE **10-14-70**

STREET AND NUMBER:
P.O. Box 38

CITY OR TOWN: **Austin** STATE **Nevada** CODE **32**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name *E. Crabbite*
 Title *Administrator N.S.P.S.*
 Date *7-13-71*

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest A. Curran
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
NOV 23 1971

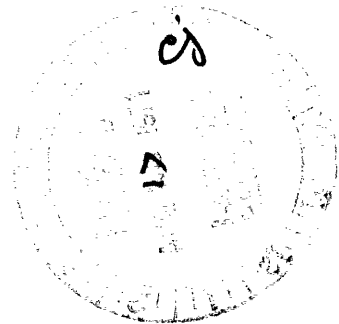
Date _____
 ATTEST:
William J. Bennett
 Keeper of The National Register
 Date **NOV 23 1971**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

The Old Engine House at Austin is all that remains of the Nevada Central Railroad, which ran from there to the Southern Pacific's mainline at Battle Mountain. The International Hotel is one of the oldest hotels in the West. Built in 1859-60 at Virginia City, the structure was moved to Austin in 1863. Stoke's Castle is an interesting stone building on the western edge of town. It was constructed as a summer home by the Stokes family in the 1890's/

Several other structures from Austin's early period are still present, such as: the Methodist Church, Lander County Courthouse, Nevada's oldest bank building, and the early home of Emma Nevada, a nineteenth century opera star. Nevada's oldest continuously-published newspaper, the Reese River Reveille, was published in Austin, and first appeared in 1863. Its two most famous editors were Myron Angel and Fred Hart. It is currently printed in Tonopah.

Source: Nevada Historical Sites, 1969



Nevada's oldest bank building was built of sturdy brick made in Austin. Although the bank moved up the street in 1962, it had been in the building for 99 years. The bank in Austin is the same bank and is a branch of the oldest bank in Nevada.

Old City Hall, now American Legion Building here, housed the city government in the middle sixties when Austin was the second largest city of Nevada. The offices were on the second floor, the lower floor was the police station. The city seal (now lost) showed a reproduction of Gridley's sack of flour and the figure \$5000 encircled by the words "Sanitary Fund". Many major decisions were made there and some notable things only talked about. If only the walls could reveal the past, how interesting it would be.

Lander No. 8 of the Masonic Lodge, the oldest Masonic Order in Nevada, joined forces with I.O.O.F. No. 9 of Austin to build their fine brick building in 1867. This 100-year-old building is still the home of the two lodges. Many festive occasions have been held there.

The Reese River Reveille building was the last home of the 105-year-old paper before moving to Tonopah. Its continuous publication for the 105 years was not easy due to serious fires and floods that occurred. However it has been continuously bringing the news of local and national interest in the same personal way for these many years.

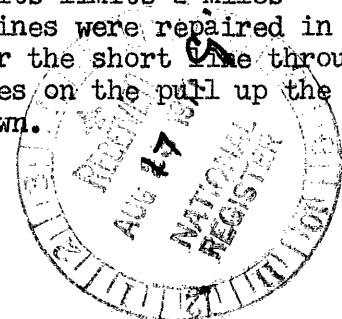
The only paper that has issues on file dating back to Territorial days. Late issues available in town.

Court House: One of the plainest but sturdiest buildings in the State, built in 1869 after a frame structure moved from Jacobsville had become too small. Since Jacobsville had the first county seat, Austin had to wrest it from them by a political move. Austin has had to use several political maneuvers over the years to hold the county seat.

The old court room still has the original 97-year-old "pot belly" stove.

St. George Episcopal Church: Consecrated in 1878, was financed by a single passing of the collection plate on Easter Sunday in 1877. The Reverend Blaskiston swept the small congregation with his enthusiasm and eloquence to bring forth the pledges. Funding included cost of building, the retaining wall, and the pipe organ which was shipped around the Horn and brought by wagon from San Francisco. The organ is still used when an organist is available. Ask to see this fine old edifice which is used regularly.

Engine House: The only remaining structure of the Nevada Central Railroad, a narrow gauge road that caused the town to extend its limits 2 miles one afternoon to meet a construction deadline. Engines were repaired in this old building and it was the end of the line for the short line through Austin called the "mules relief" which replaced mules on the pull up the canyon from the Clifton Mine on the west edge of town.



Mine "dumps": The piles of earth seen around the old engine house and on all sides of Austin come from the many shafts and tunnels in the hill. One tunnel extends from west to east-the entire distance across town. Other tunnels follow the ore bodies in whatever direction the ore extended. Some of these "dumps" or "tailings" contain a percentage of minerals that were too low in value for processing the early days. Plans are being made to reprocess some of these "dumps" due to present improved mining techniques.

Gridley Store: A grocery store owned by Reuel C. Gridley. A public spirited citizen, Reuel Gridley lost an election bet so had to carry a 50-pound sack of flour fully decorated with ribbons and banners the length of the town of Austin to the tune of "John Brown's Body." When the march was over, the sack of flour was returned to central Austin and placed upon the auction block with the announcement that the proceeds would go to the "Sanitary Fund" - a charity which sought to relieve suffering created by the Civil War. The sack of flour was sold and re-sold netting \$6000 the first day. Gridley took the sack of flour to many towns and cities throughout the west auctioning and re-auctioning until over \$175,000 was raised.

So great was the fame of the Sanitary Sack of Flour that Austin adopted its replica for the City Seal and Coat of Arms.

Gridley died in poverty 5 years later devoting his time to the worthy cause.

The Methodist Church: (not presently used was built in 1866. One of the oldest and probably the finest of its day, the building played a leading part in the community as a church and a lecture and entertainment hall. The church received sizeable donations of mining stock which the canny pastor pooled into the "Methodist Mining Company." The stocks were sold in the East to get the money that was used to build the present church that extends its spires.

Truly an interesting landmark of Austin, Nevada.

Early Home of Emma Nevada: Still intact and occupied by a member of a pioneer family. Emma Wixon, daughter of a pioneer Austin doctor, started her singing career in the Methodist choir. She sang to the music of the blacksmith forge, to birds and then sang "John Brown's Body at the parade of the famous Gridley sack of flour.

She sang at dedications and other affairs until she entered Mill Seminary where she continued to study music.

She went to Europe in 1877 and studied in Vienna and then began her rise to fame as an opera singer. She sang at the coronation of King George V and was a favorite of Queen Victoria who gave her a diamond necklace.

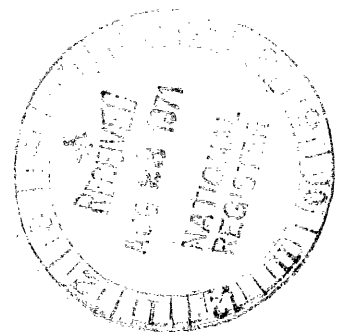
She will be long remembered in Nevada.

St. Augustine Church (Catholic): Considered the Mother Church for the numerous communities in the area, held its first services of Midnight Mass Christmas Eve 1866.

Remains standing in midtown as proudly as the day it was completed. Services are presently conducted here.

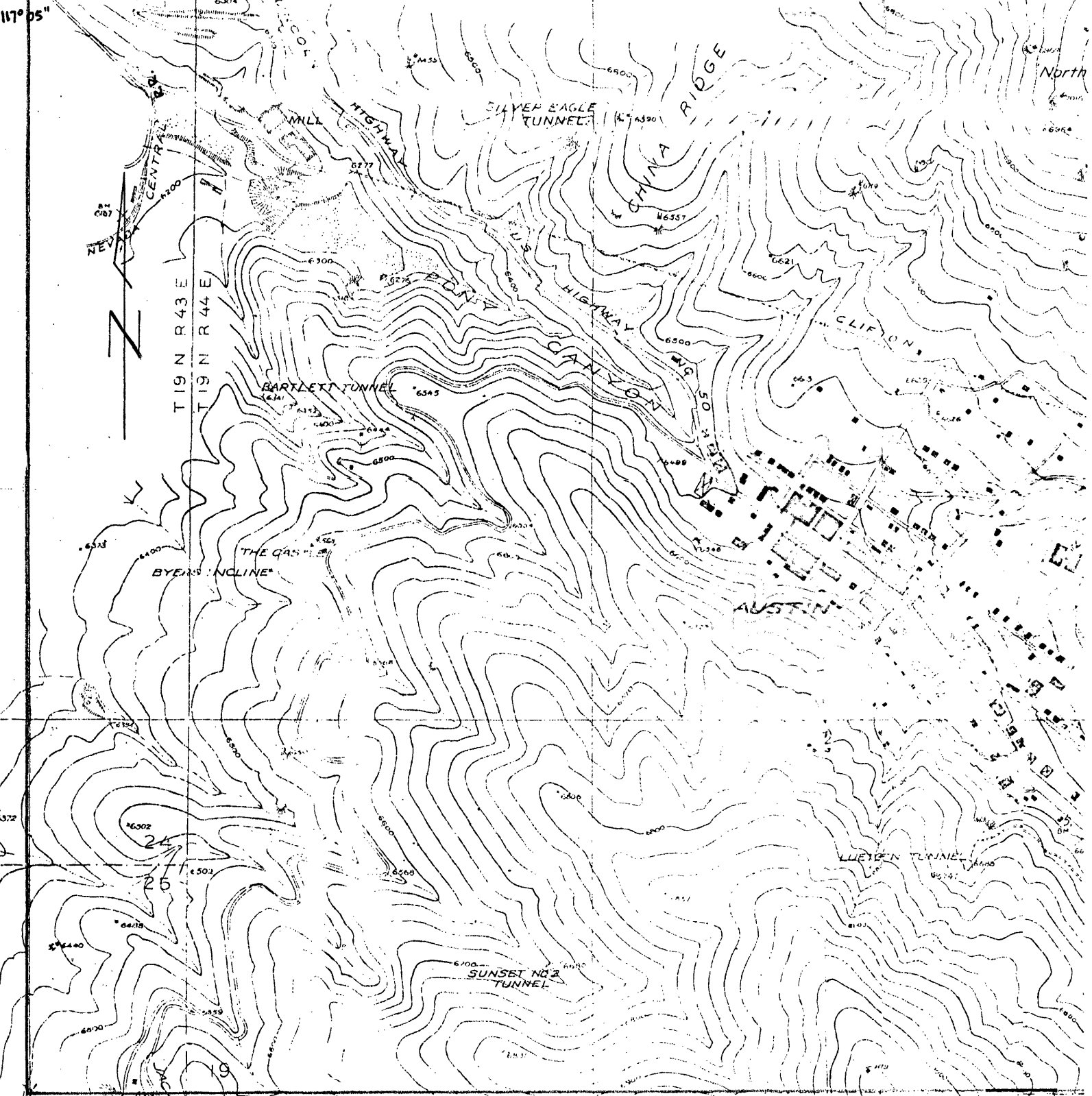
Stokes Castle: Fabulous in its day. It is built of hand hewn native granite. The castle was constructed in 1897 for Anson Phelps Stokes, an eastern financier, who built the Nevada Central Railroad. Although hardly used, the castle differs as much from any buildings in the towns of the west. Its construction was unique for its day and in fact remains a curiosity.

Its prominent location makes it an observation point overlooking the Reese River Valley. Local townspeople plan to light the castle to make it the beacon leading to Austin for night travelers. The castle can be seen for miles from south, west and north.



117° 05"

North

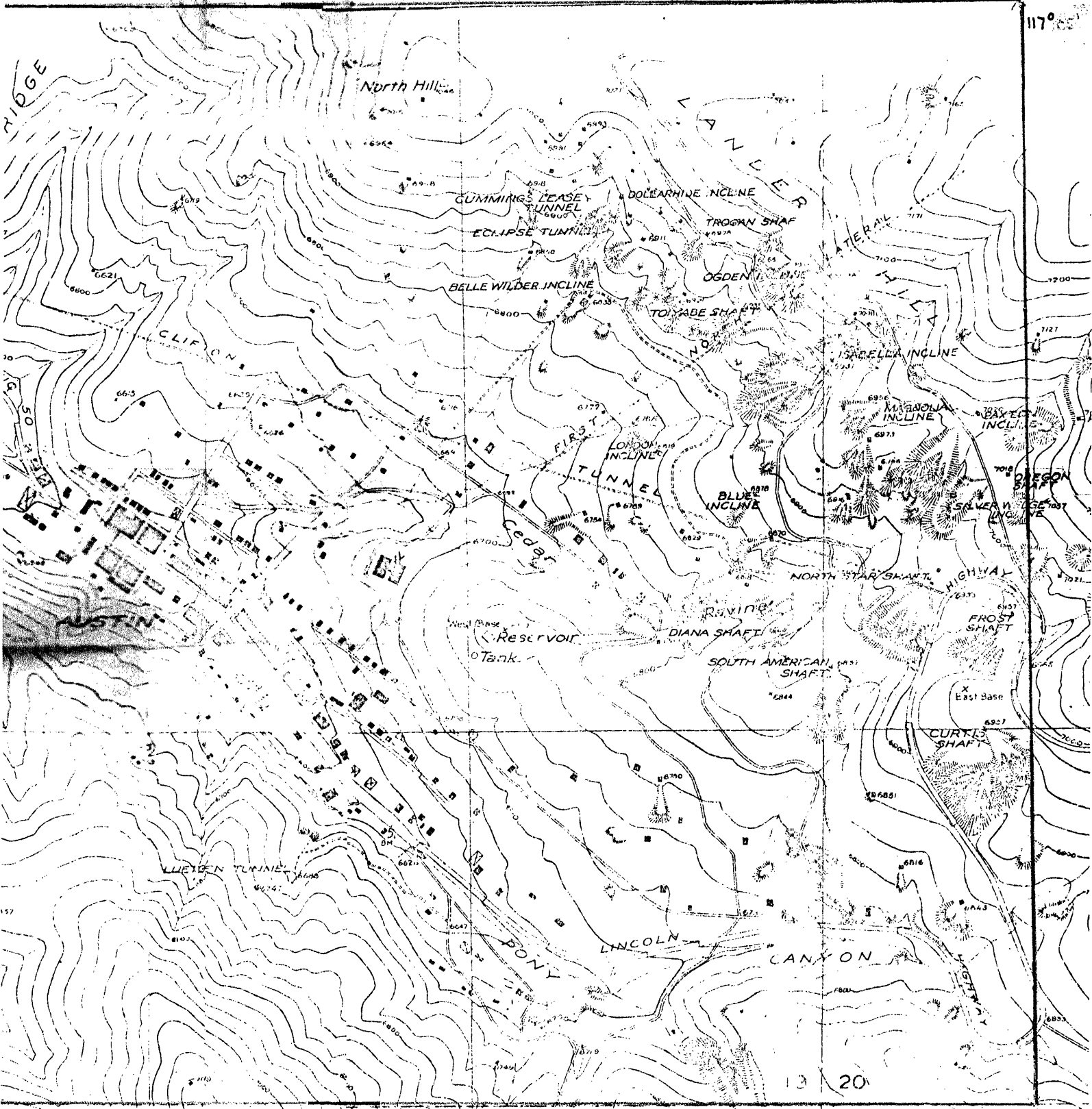


30
 GENERAL LOCATION MAP
 Austin, Nevada
 SCALE 1" = 400'
 APPROX. 747.77 ACRES

AUSTIN - REISE RIVER I
 1937 BY U.S.

BUFFALO SHAFT
 29° 15'
 JACKSON SHAFT

SILVER C. TUNNEL



AUSTIN-REISE RIVER MINING DISTRICT MAP

1937 BY U.S.G.S. 1:4800

117° 15'

29° 15'

UNION SHAFT 30 23