

James Leffingwell

James Leffingwell was born about 1832 in Pennsylvania.¹ He was a business man of large resources in Pennsylvania, but came west to California about 1852. In 1863, James Mr Scott are retail liquor dealers in Austin, Lander, Nevada. James is listed in the Austin tax lists from 1863-1866.² In November 1864, James was elected Lander County sheriff.³ He had an office in the court house⁴ and served in that position until 1871. He requested and was granted a leave of absence in 1865, and the county auditor was authorized to pay him \$3,500 from general county funds for the years 1865-1866 in which he served.⁵ One of his acts as sheriff was the arrest of two men charged with stealing horses in California.⁶

In 1872 he erected a "first-class saloon for the entertainment of the traveling public" on Commercial Street in Elko, Elko, Nevada.⁷ On the 1875 census, he was a miner, living in household of H Levy in Lincoln, Nevada.⁸ The Pioche newspaper reported that he left Pioche for Toquerville⁹, taking bar fixtures with the intention of opening a saloon in Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory.¹⁰ In 1877, he shot himself in the foot while carelessly handling a pistol.¹¹ He leased his Elk Horn Saloon to George Miller in May 1877 and sold it to him in September 1878.¹²

On the 1880 census, he is widowed (wife unknown), living in Tuscarora, Elko, Nevada.¹³ By 1892, he was a watchman for Beckwith and Lauder store in Evanston, Uinta, Wyoming.¹⁴ In May 1894, a Union Pacific work train run by J W Cain, conductor, and William Gorman, engineer, was working at Echo Station, between Castle Rock and Wasatch, in Utah Territory with a force of about 38 men, eight cars, and a caboose. About 11:30 they started to push in Wasatch to sidetrack for dinner. Freight train 21 west-bound should have been flagged to stop, but by error, ran past Wasatch and crashed into the work train, killing James Lewis and James Leffingwell, and injuring several others. Leffingwell and Lewis were evidently smothered by dirt and gravel fallen out of three cars that piled upon each other.¹⁵ James was a well-known man in the west, and a prominent figure in local politics and business generally.

Research by Elaine Young, PhD, 2016

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¹ Nevada State Census, 1875; United States Census, 1880.

² U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918.

³ nvahgp.genealogyvillage.com/Lander/history.html

⁴ U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995.

⁵ The Journal of the Assembly during the First Session of the Legislature of the State of Nevada, 1864-5, p. 331; The Journal of the Senate, 1865, p. 275; Statues of the State of Nevada, 1871, p. 67; Reports of Decisions of the Supreme Court of the State of Nevada, Volume 7, 1872, pp. 68-72.

⁶ *Reno Gazette-Journal*, 5 August 1978, p. 5.

⁷ *Sacramento Daily Union*, 17 August 1872.

⁸ *Nevada State Census*, 1875.

⁹ *Silver, Sinners and Saints*, by Proctor and Shirts, 1991, p. 49.

¹⁰ *A Historical Study of Silver Reef: Southern Utah Mining Town*, by Alfred Bleak Stucki, p. 34.

¹¹ *Pioche Weekly Record*, 7 April 1877.

¹² Dr. Robert Schuyler.

¹³ United States Census, 1880.

¹⁴ *News-Register*, 2 June 1894, p. 3; *Rock Springs Miner*, 31 January 1895.

¹⁵ *News-Register*, 2 June 1894, p. 3; *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 30 May 1894, p. 1; *Salt Lake Herald*, 1 June 1894, p. 8; *Deseret Evening News*, 31 May 1894, p. 1.