

site of the Lennox mercantile store, and broken beer bottles and a dugout shelter are all that remains of Sam Wing's saloon. Union is now part of the Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park. The site is patrolled by State Park rangers who try to protect what is left of the site from further vandalism.

## UPPER TOWN (Carrolton)

### DIRECTIONS:

Located in Upper Six-Mile Canyon, six miles north of Hot Creek. No passable roads reach the site.

Upper Town was a small settlement that sprang up in 1867 soon after the twenty-stamp Old Dominion Mill was put into operation to process ore from Hot Creek and Tybo. The mill burned down in late 1867, with damage of over \$90,000. It was decided not to rebuild the mill, and Upper Town was quickly abandoned. There were never more than ten people at the mill site, and nothing substantial was built there. Only very faint stone foundations now mark the site of the mill.

## VAN NESS

### DIRECTIONS:

From Barcelona, backtrack for 1 mile and then exit right. Follow this extremely rough road for 2 miles to Van Ness.

Van Ness was a small mining camp 2 miles from Barcelona. The camp was owned and run by the Raymond Van Ness Mining Company. C. E. Van Ness, both president and manager, had his offices in Tonopah. The other two officers of the company, secretary-treasurer Dr. William Reece and construction engineer P. Shelby, were both from Los Angeles.

The company had six claims in the district and began working them in the early 1920s. The claims consisted of cinnabar ore mixed with granite and shale. The ore contained a high concentration—almost 5 percent—of mercury. The workings of the company included two shafts, both approximately 100 feet deep. The shafts followed a vein of ore varying in width from 4 feet to 6 feet. In 1929 Van Ness Mining built a 40-ton Gould rotary furnace to help smelt the mercury out of the ore. That same year the company became active in the Ellendale

district. The cinnabar ore slowly ran out, and by 1935 the camp was abandoned.

There are a number of interesting ruins at Van Ness. The two mines retain most of their workings. Ruins of a number of miners' cabins are scattered around the mines. I was told the ruins of an old Spanish fort were half a mile north of Van Ness, but after trudging through the area for a number of hours, I was not able to locate it; perhaps someone else will be luckier and find this rare relic of early Nevada history. The road to Van Ness is very rough and had a number of washouts. It is passable only with four-wheel-drive.

## WAHMONIE

### DIRECTIONS:

Located inside the Las Vegas Bombing and Gunnery Range, 35 miles southeast of Beatty. Off-limits to the public.

Early activity in the Wahmonie district was extremely limited. Some small discoveries were made in 1904. A small mine, the Hornsilver, was opened but closed after only two months. It was not until W. R. McRae (McCrea) and Mark Lefler, who were traveling by automobile, discovered a lode of high-grade silver and gold ore just south of the old Hornsilver Mine that sustained activity came to the district.

McRae and Lefler made their discovery in February 1928. By mid-March there were over 200 people on the flat below the Hornsilver Mine. The district grew rapidly because of Wahmonie's accessibility by automobile. During the first months of Wahmonie's existence, the town was made up of only tents. There were a number of stores and saloons, all operating out of tents. The Gilbert brothers, who also ran a grocery store in Wahmonie, built an electric light plant to serve the small town. A post office opened on April 2, 1928, and Wahmonie reached its peak soon after. During the summer of 1928 Wahmonie's population was as high as 1500, but this figure dropped very quickly during the fall. Almost 1500 claims were made in the Wahmonie area, but only a few were good producers.

Five mining companies were active in Wahmonie during its short period of prominence. The major one was the Wahmonie Mines Company, incorpo-

Hall, S., 1981, A Guide to the Ghost Towns and Mining Camps of Nye County, Nevada 137

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rated on March 5, 1928, with George Wingfield, prominent in Nye County's mining history, as president. The company purchased the claims of Wahmonie's founders, McRae and Lefler, plus four other claims: Buckhorn No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 and the Jumbo. The Hornsilver Mine was reopened and dug to a depth of 500 feet, with over 1300 feet of lateral tunnels. The ore from the mine had as much as 20 ounces of gold and 650 ounces of silver per ton. The company installed a 25-h.p. hoist and a compressor at the mine. But the excitement was short-lived, for the ore quickly ran out. The Wahmonie Mines Company struggled into 1929 but soon folded.

Another prominent company in Wahmonie was the Original Wahmonie Gold Mines Company, which purchased eight claims in the district in March 1928. These claims included two at Kane Springs, the Black Metal claims, the Big Boy, the Duke, the Little Girl, the King and the Prince Ajax. The richest of the eight was the Kane Springs group, which had two shafts (180 feet and 60 feet) and produced ore with half an ounce of gold and 36 ounces of silver per ton.

The remaining three companies were only minor contributors to Wahmonie's production total. The Wahmonie Development Company, incorporated in March 1928, purchased the Victory Six claim,



This 1928 photo shows the boom town of Wahmonie, a "flash in the pan" that faded almost as soon as it had formed. (*Nevada Historical Society*)



Wahmonie was expected to boom, at least by this office that sold lots in the town. (*Nevada Historical Society*)



half a mile south of Wahmonie. The company also leased the Buckhorn No. 3 claim from the Wahmonie Mines Company but had to give up the lease after only two months. The company was run by W. Fording, Frank Richardson and W. H. Thomas, all from Tonopah. Nothing of value came from the claims, and the company quickly faded into oblivion.

The next company that tried to scratch a profit was the Wahmonie Monterey Mines Company, formed in March 1928 with Joseph Snelson as president. The company purchased the Monterey claims and the Early Bird group. After losing its Early Bird option in July 1928, the company continued to work the Monterey claims until mid-1929. Financial troubles then forced the company to fold.

The last company to work the district was the Reorganized Booth Mining Company of Goldfield, Nevada. It was a latecomer to the district, not arriving until May 1928, a few months after the initial excitement. The company had originally been incorporated in 1912 and had a number of claims in the Goldfield district. In 1928 the company decided to expand by buying a two-year lease from Wahmonie Mines Company on the Buckhorn No. 3

claim, recently abandoned by the Wahmonie Development Company. The lease stipulated that the Booth company would receive 100,000 shares of Wahmonie Mines Company stock only after the Booth company had sunk a 300-foot shaft and completed 600 feet of branching tunnels. The Booth company fulfilled the requirements, but no worthwhile amounts of ore were uncovered and the company left the district in May 1929.

Departure of the Booth company signaled the end of Wahmonie. The post office closed on April 30, 1929; the district was practically empty by the end of 1929. Only a handful of people remained behind, patiently searching for ore that was not there. By 1931 everyone had given up and the district was abandoned.

The only substantial building ever at the townsite was a wooden boardinghouse. The site is only a few miles from Yucca Flats, the atomic testing site. Wahmonie has not had any visitors since the Las Vegas Bombing and Gunnery Range was incorporated in 1950. Now probably not even the ghosts dare to haunt the site.

This is one of the better remains at Warm Springs. Not too much of real historical interest is left in the small town.

