



**City of San Bernardino
Historical and Pioneer Society
P.O. Box 875, San Bernardino, CA 92402**

LIBRARY NEWS NOVEMBER 2010

By Richard D. Thompson, Librarian

**PROFESSOR EDWARD LEO LYMAN:
HISTORIAN, AUTHOR, LECTURER, EDUCATOR**

It is fortunate for those who enjoy reading about San Bernardino's past that, in mid-life, Leo Lyman came to have an interest in preserving local history. To date he has written twelve books, either published or in the works, edited another two, and has turned out an additional two-dozen or more scholarly articles. Not all of these histories focus on our local area, but many do.

Dr. Lyman's writings cover many aspects of history—economics, religion, education, agriculture, irrigation, etc.—but he has especially concentrated on the development of transportation infrastructure for a part of the western United States. Three books in particular are devoted to the development of wagon roads: *Guidebook: Mormon Historical Sites in the San Bernardino Area*; *Arduous Road*; and *The Overland Journey from Utah to California*. Other books have portions covering the subject: *San Bernardino: The Rise and Fall of a California Community*; and the two desert books, *The Story of Victor Valley* and *History of Victor Valley*. Many of his scholarly articles are on this subject, but one in particular is a personal favorite, "Outmaneuvering the Octopus: The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe," which has to do with issues relative to the Santa Fe Railroad.



Edward Leo Lyman

Of special interest to Professor Lyman are the Spanish Trail and the Southern Route, a corridor of transportation that was crucial for commercial development. The "Southern Route" was the Mormon name for the road between Salt Lake City and Southern California. Early Californians usually referred to it as the Mormon Road, the Salt Lake Road, or, during the automobile period, the Arrowhead Trail. Lyman has made a distinction between the Spanish Trail (a pack trail) and the Southern Route (a wagon road) because, although they generally follow the same route for a considerable distance, the wagon road has to depart from the trail when the grades get too steep, or for other reasons. His studies on this route are tantamount to a history of Interstate 15, which follows for the most part the alignment of the Spanish Trail and Southern Route, and which to this day has a tremendous impact on the economy of the West.

Lyman and Larry Reese, who was the photographer for *Arduous Road*, traveled this entire route, all 800 miles of it, either by driving or walking. Now that is dedication, the kind of dedication that comes from a man who is passionate about his work.

Edward Leo Lyman was born in Delta, Utah, in 1942. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in history from Brigham Young University in 1966, and earned his master's degree in history from the University of Utah in 1967. In 1969 he moved to Riverside, California, where he taught high school, and it was then that he became an avid student of the local history of this area. This was only natural, since in 1851 his great-great-grandfather Amasa Lyman, along with Charles C. Rich, founded the City of San Bernardino.

In 1981, Lyman received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Riverside, after which he became a teacher at Victor Valley Community College while also serving as an adjunct professor at various California universities. It is to the benefit of many that he taught local history at Victor Valley College for 21 years before moving to Utah in 2004. And that is how it came to be, in brief, that a gifted educator, with top academic credentials and an avid interest in local history, turned to first studying, and then to writing and lecturing on the subject.

At the April meeting of the Mohahve Historical Society, Dr. Lyman gave a talk on his just-published book, *History of Victor Valley*. Prior to this it had been thought that Stuart Kellogg, the much-respected former feature writer for the *Daily Press*, might come out of retirement to write a book review. When that failed to materialize, I asked Lyman about it, and he responded that Kellogg was critical of the book, stating there was an overemphasis on Mormons, so the *Daily Press* decided to run a review written by someone else. I agree that he dwells on the Mormon part of local history, but that should not be unexpected, considering his Mormon heritage in San Bernardino. He is an accomplished historian and author, not to mention a gifted lecturer ("the walking history book," as a San Bernardino *Sun* columnist called him), whose contribution to San Bernardino's history is invaluable.

BOOKS BY DR. EDWARD LEO LYMAN

1. *Political Deliverance: The Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood*. By Edward Leo Lyman. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986. x, 327 pp., [12] pp. of plates. ISBN 0252012399

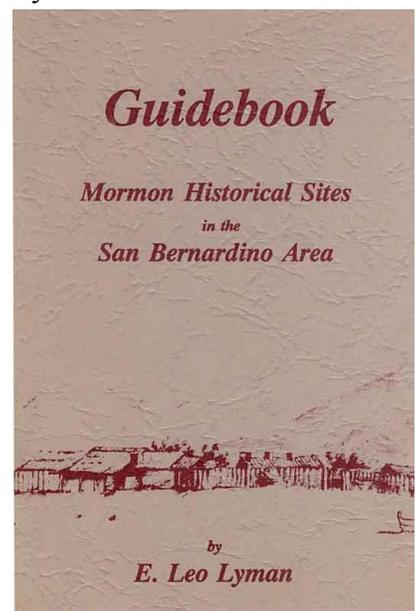
Lyman's dissertation for his doctorate. I have not read this book as yet.

2. *Guidebook: Mormon Historical Sites in the San Bernardino Area*. By E. Leo Lyman. Compiled for use in conjunction with the Mormon History Association Annual Meeting. Claremont, CA, May 30, 1991. Photographs and five maps. Wrappers.

Small booklet with brief descriptions of 28 pioneer sites. This is reminiscent of local historian Arda Haenszel's self-guided tour booklets, and, in fact, uses some of the maps from her publications.

3. *San Bernardino: The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, By Edward Leo Lyman. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996. xiii, 469 pp. ISBN 1560850671

This is the first scholarly history book to be written about the City of San Bernardino; that is, taking the Copernican view,



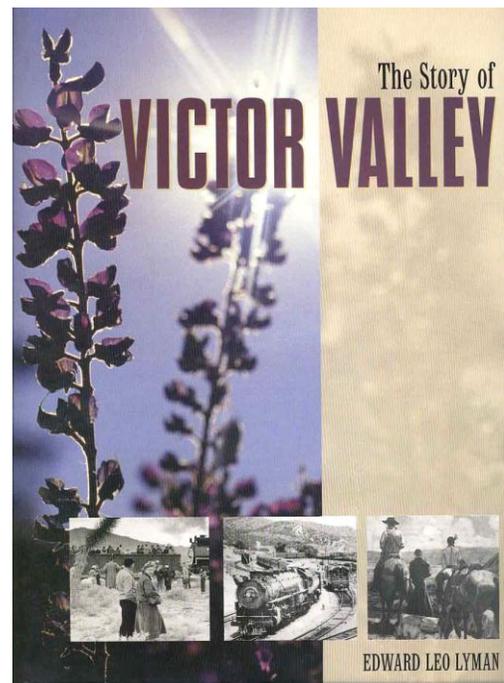
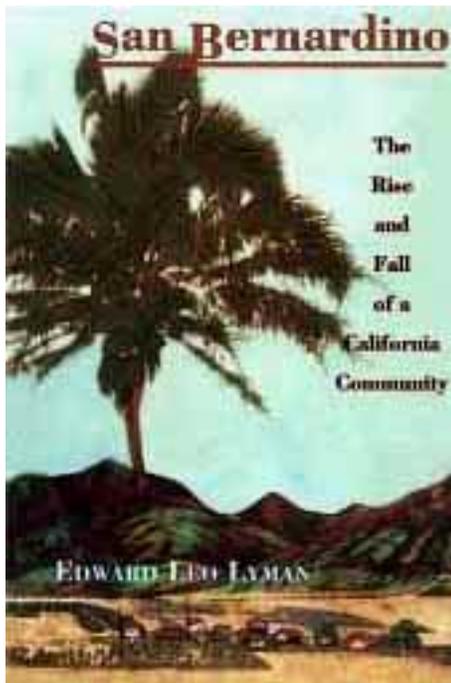
with San Bernardino as the center of interest and other communities in the region but satellites rotating around it. Some might object that George and Helen Beattie wrote a scholarly book on the city, but *Heritage of the Valley* is about the entire region, and much of its story covers the period before there even was a city. Lyman's book is about the founding of San Bernardino and only those peripheral people and events that are needed to form an understanding of how it came about.

Rise and Fall covers the period when the Mormons reigned supreme, 1851-1857. It is a history of people and events leading up to the creation of the community, and of the departure of a high percentage of the faithful to Utah when commanded to do so by their leader Brigham Young. The detail in this book—the people, the places, all of the events—is breathtaking. It hardly seems possible that a colony on the edge of the frontier could be so well documented.

An excellent, succinct review of the book by local historian Arda Haenszel is quoted as follows on the dust jacket: “At last an author with local background, scholarly training, and rare access to invaluable original sources. The remarkable contemporary journals add a personal, human touch.”

4. *A History of Millard County*. By Edward Leo Lyman and Linda King Newell. Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1999. xx, 452 pp. ISBN 0913738387

On Millard County, Utah. I have not read this book.



5. *The Story of Victor Valley*. By Edward Leo Lyman. Carlsbad, California: Heritage Media Corp., 2000. 127 pp. ISBN 1886483477

Lyman calls this his “picture book” on Victor Valley. It varies from his usual scholarly work in that it is directed toward a broader audience. It is comprised of historic photographs interspersed with text. One could enjoy this book just by perusing the photos and with very little reading. This is a formula since popularized by Arcadia Publishing. At the

time of publication in 2000, there was no overview of High Desert history. That there was a market for such a book was proved when the book quickly sold out.

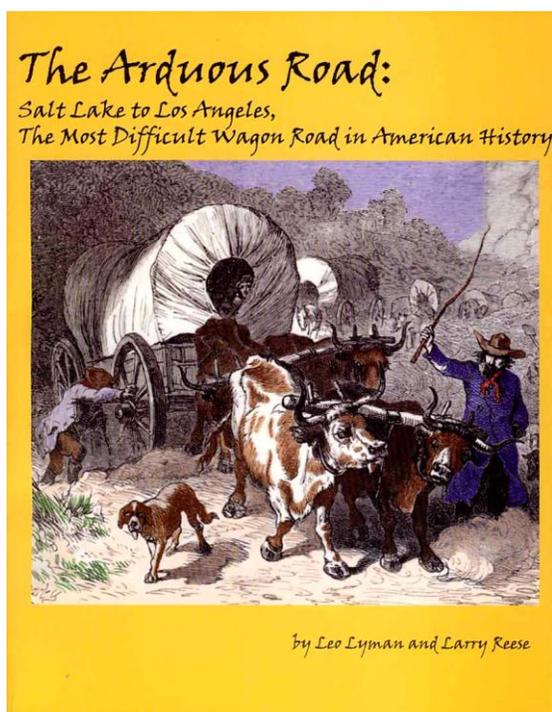
In the back of the book are profiles of some of the leading industries and businesses of the area. Although these are essentially paid advertisements, they give a good peek into the business community of the era and, I predict, will become only more interesting as time moves on.

Despite the popular nature of the book, it is nevertheless a very good history and could be used by teachers, tour guides, lecturers, etc. It covers several communities over an extended period of time, so in that sense it is the very opposite of Lyman's San Bernardino book, which is an in-depth study of one community over a short period of time.

Lyman was very generous with the proceeds from this book. He was president of the Mohave Historical Society at the time, and donated all the profits to that organization. He also undertook other fundraising events at that time and put the Society in much better financial shape than it had ever been previously.

6. *The Arduous Road: Salt Lake to Los Angeles, the Most Difficult Wagon Road in American History.* By Edward Leo Lyman and Larry Lee Reese. Victorville, CA: Lyman Historical Research and Publishing Co., 2001. viii, 108 pp. ISBN 0970952503

The name of this book comes from Western historian Dale Morgan, who was working on a book on the subject at the time of his death. He tentatively called it "Gold and the Arduous Road." The road he refers to is the "Southern Route," as most Mormons called it. This has the drawback of being the same name used by other historians when referring to the route across Arizona/New Mexico that connected California to Texas.



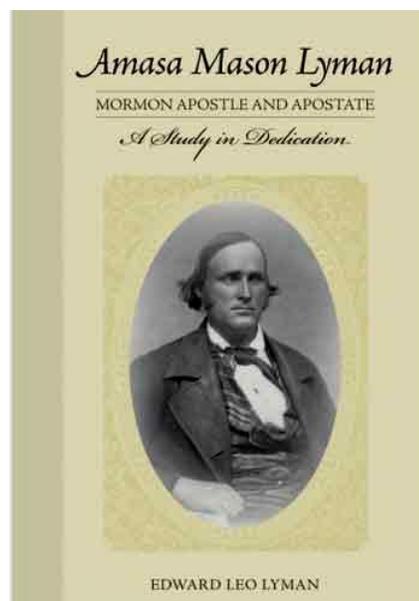
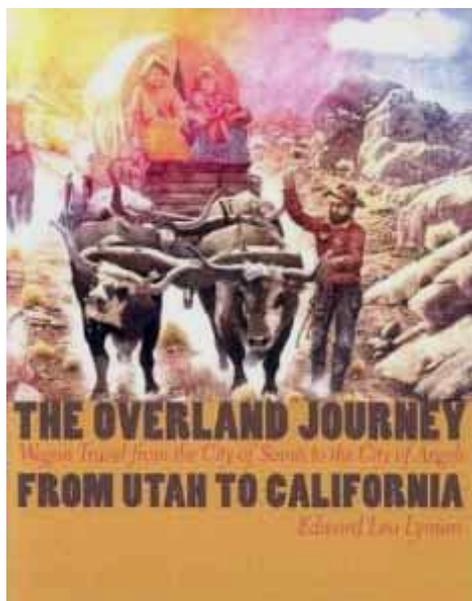
I believe this book was intended as a guide for wagon train re-enactors retracing the route of the 1851 trip from Salt Lake City to San Bernardino. The re-enactment, a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the trek, took place in 2001. Lyman had been working on the subject and planned to publish the more scholarly work, *The Overland Journey from Utah to California* (see No. 7 below), but time ran out. He and photographer Larry Reese determined to do a photo essay and *Arduous Road* is the result. The authors investigated the 800-mile route and have shown that the wagon road is not always on the same alignment as the

earlier pack-train route known as the Spanish Trail. The points of variance are highlighted.

There are maps and over 150 historic and contemporary photographs, so that the road aficionado can retrace the route.

7. *The Overland Journey from Utah to California: Wagon Travel from the City of Saints to the City of Angels*. By Edward Leo Lyman. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2004. xvi, 288pp. ISBN 08741-75011

This is the scholarly version of *Arduous Road*. It has more text and fewer photographs, is heavily annotated and has an extensive bibliography. In this book Lyman expands on the theme that runs throughout much of his writing, and that is the development of transportation. He tracks the history from the days of the missionary padres to the coming of the railroads, and provides the background for the development of that major transportation corridor of today, Interstate 15.



8. *Amasa Mason Lyman, Mormon Apostle and Apostate: a Study in Dedication*. By Edward Leo Lyman. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2009. xvi, 646 pp. ISBN 0874809404

I believe this wonderful history is the best of Lyman's books—his masterpiece. It is astounding how he was able to follow his ancestor around the fringes of civilization (the man often plunged deep into the wilderness) and give detailed accounts of Amasa's experiences. Frequently, Lyman has a quote from some obscure source on what was said in general, and, on occasion, what was said exactly.

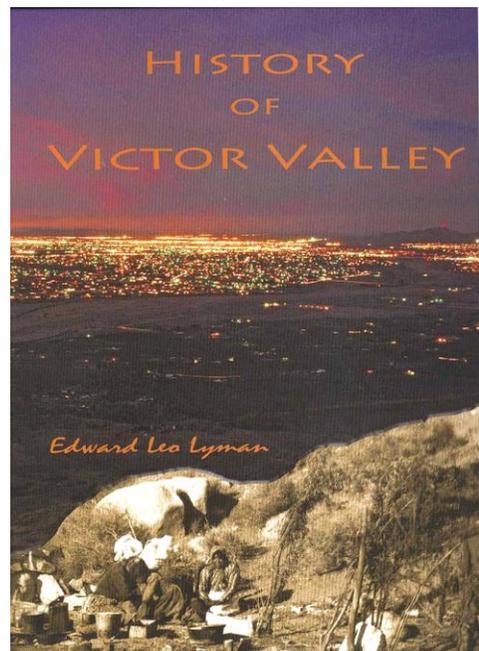
Amasa was an itinerant preacher in the early days of the Mormon religion, a religion which began at a time when there was a surfeit of new spiritual enterprises. This means that Lyman not only had to write a biographical piece on the comings and goings of Amasa, but also had to trace the growth and development of the teachings of the Latter-day Saints. It is admirable that even though he knew this intellectual history would be scrutinized and criticized, by friend and foe alike, he courageously addressed some of the dark issues surrounding Brigham Young, a man who is held in very high esteem by many Mormons.

Although Lyman previously wrote about the Mormon period in his publication, *San Bernardino: The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, this book has new material in the chapter on San Bernardino. This makes it a desirable addition to a local history collection.

9. *History of Victor Valley*. By Edward Leo Lyman, Victorville, CA: Mohahve Historical Society, 2010. vii, 409pp. ISBN 0970952516

This is a history that in many ways is just as amazing as the biography of Amasa Lyman. It is huge in scope, both in the area it encompasses and in its time frame. It covers all of the upper Mojave River drainage basin (the area now known as the “High Desert”), and the timeline begins with prehistoric Indians and continues right up to the present. To write a book this comprehensive about the High Desert was a Herculean effort. Plus, the task is even more daunting when you consider that in order to write a history of this region, the information has to be wrung from original sources—deeds, law suits, newspaper articles and a myriad of other documents—because there are few secondary sources to draw from to get information, or just to check your accuracy.

When Lyman was teaching local history at Victor Valley College, his students accepted his invitation to help him research the history of the High Desert. He combined his and the students’ work, and put it into a readable form. For the general public, this has to be the most important work that Dr. Lyman has done. It gives a history where none existed, and generations of historians and students will rely on the information provided in this book.



TO PURCHASE A COPY OF *HISTORY OF VICTOR VALLEY*, CONTACT FRAN ELGIN AT franelgin@verizon.net

JOURNALS EDITED BY LEO LYMAN

10. *No Place to Call Home: The 1807-1857 Life Writing of Caroline Barnes Crosby, Chronicler of Outlying Mormon Communities*. Edited by Edward Leo Lyman with Sue Ward Payne and S. George Ellsworth. Utah State University Press, 2005. 574 pp. ISBN 087421601X
11. *Candid Insights of a Mormon Apostle: The Diaries of Abraham H. Cannon, 1889-1895*. Edited by Edward Leo Lyman. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, July 2010. Limited edition, 800 pp. ISBN 1560852100

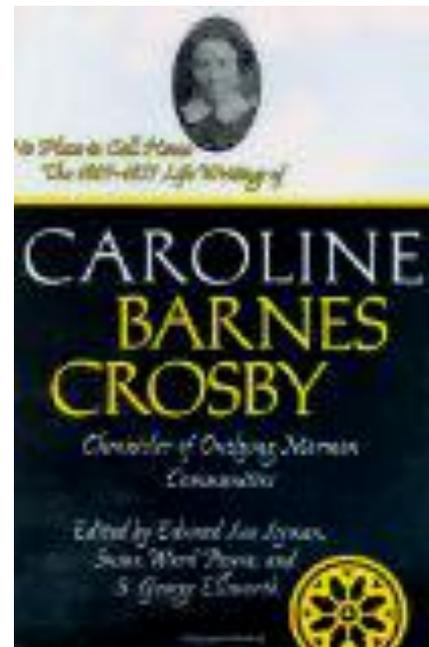
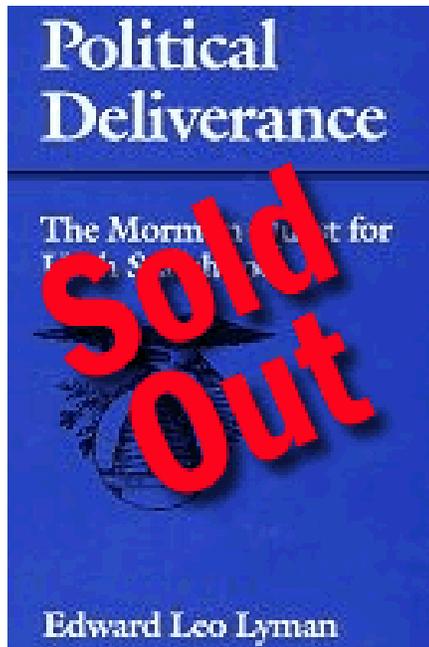
BOOKS IN PROGRESS

12. “Utah’s Struggles for Statehood, 1849-1896,” submitted for publication to the University of Utah Press, August 2009.
13. “A History of the Southern Paiutes”
14. “History of the Silver Reef, Utah, Mining Camp”

A SELECTION OF SCHOLARLY ARTICLES

Here are a few Leo Lyman articles on local history that you might like to look into.

1. "Outmaneuvering the Octopus: The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe." *California History*, Vol. 67 (June 1988), pp. 94-110.
2. "From the City of Angels to the City of Saints: The Struggle to Build a Railroad From Los Angeles to Salt Lake City." *California History*, Vol. 70, No. 1 (Spring 1991), pp.76-93.
3. "The Arrowhead Trails Highway: The Beginnings of Utah's Other Route to the Pacific Coast." *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 61 (summer 1999), pp. 242-64.
4. "The Arrowhead Trails Highway: California's Predecessor to Interstate 15." *Southern California Quarterly*, Vol. 81, No. 3 (fall 1999), pp. 315-40.



Left: Leo Lyman's Ph.D. dissertation. Right: The journal he edited with Sue Payne and George Ellsworth. Although *Political Deliverance* is shown as sold out, new and used copies are available on line at Amazon.com