During the summer of 1931, a team from Harvard began exploring the rich archaeology of the Tavaputs Plateau and the Uinta Basin. The Claflin-Emerson Expedition, as it was known, was an ambitious venture that required some 400 miles of horseback travel. The expedition produced information of great value to other researchers that remained unpublished and essentially untouched for decades. In the spring of 1989, Jerry Spangler “stumbled upon” his first Claflin-Emerson Expedition site in Nine Mile Canyon, “A series of round, semi-subterranean pit houses on a bench overlooking the valley floor. Below one pit-house floor, we excavated the burial of a child. . . . At the time, I did not know that it was one of the many sites the Claflin-Emerson team first visited in 1931 in Nine Mile—no one did—because we did not have access to their 1931 field journals and they never published a report.” 1

In the first article of this issue of Utah Historical Quarterly, Spangler joins with James Aton in revisiting the sites explored by the Harvard team and recreating the social aspects of this “last great horseback adventure in the history of American archaeology.”

In our third article, Sheri Wysong ponders how Pruess Lake, a small feature on the Utah-Nevada border, came to be named for Charles Preuss, a cartographer who never visited it. Through careful comparison of historical maps, Wysong reaches a fascinating, complex answer. It involves many of the explorers and mapmakers of the nineteenth century—including William Ashley, Jedediah Smith, Charles Preuss, and David H. Burr—and a second lake, Beaver, that no longer exists. The history of the naming of Pruess Lake and its connection to Beaver Lake hints at efforts to honor Charles Preuss and teaches about the shifting representation of geography in the American West.

Fourth, we present a collection of speeches and essays that consider two difficult moments in American history: the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II and the use of the atomic bomb. Written by a scholar of the Japanese-American experience, the founder of the Topaz Museum, an attorney who argued Korematsu v. United States (1983), and a lifelong liaison between Japan and American, these pieces ask how we can thoughtfully deal with the past in public forums.

Our fifth piece, an update from the Fife Folklore Archives, discusses the background of the Cache Valley Utah Drug Court Oral History Project. This significant public history project used oral history methodology to preserve the experiences of drug court participants. Finally, as with too many recent numbers of UHQ, the spring issue closes with a memorial to a great scholar of Utah history.

Notes