

The Figural F&G Licenses Issued by White Pine County, Nevada – Part One

by David R. Torre, ARA

Today we shall begin exploring one of the more eye-catching areas of the Fish and Game hobby – one which is still ripe for original research. It is hoped that this introduction might motivate other collectors to help me elucidate some parts of the story for which I remain uncertain. In the meantime, I will get the ball rolling! Although avidly pursued by a relatively small group (a couple of dozen?) of hardcore collectors located primarily on the west coast for well over a half century, information has always been hard to come by – even harder than the items themselves. I am talking about the metal hunting and fishing licenses issued by both the state and the counties of Nevada from 1909 through 1917.

The small number of collectors specializing in this area (trying to get every license from every year) can be attributed to the fact that these metal licenses were issued in low quantities and have always been difficult to locate and to acquire. Because of their scarcity and, as one long-time collector and picker put it – a *sentimental feeling* among Nevada collectors – people have a hard time parting with them. Therefore, patience and perseverance are requisite to playing the long game.

Apart from one for which about 100 unused remainders were found in a storage shed belonging to a former county clerk (and subsequently entered the collector market; 1917-18 Storey), Nevada metal licenses seldom show up on eBay or in internet auctions.

We are talking *old school collecting* here – lots of phone calls, driving long distances to meet with other collectors in person, attending bottle shows (as many surviving examples have been dug) and coin shows (a cross-over interest), all in the hopes of adding a new piece or two of treasure...

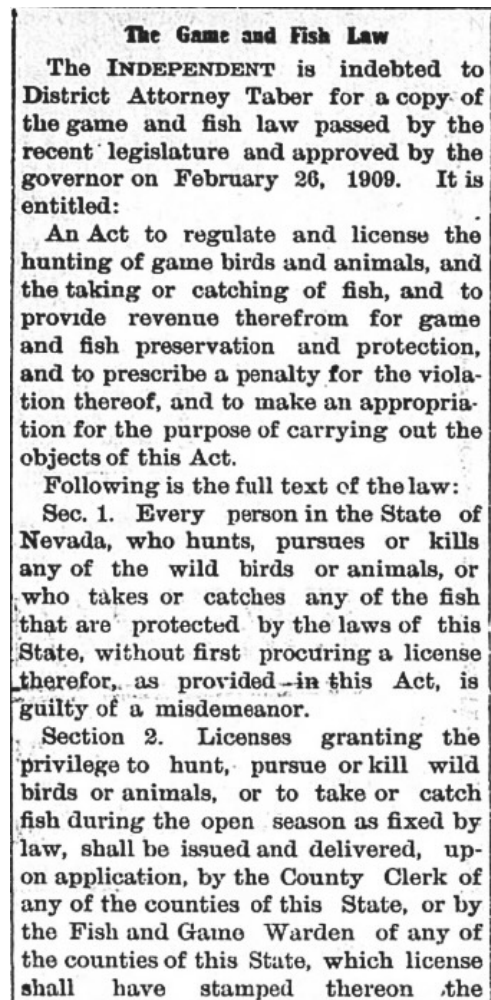


Their pursuit exemplifies one of our hobby's greatest attributes – that being *an exciting thrill of the hunt adventure*. While attempting to put together a comprehensive collection of these artifacts is not for everyone (those who have stuck with it for 30-50 years have collections numbering 30 -100 pieces), I have found that most F&G collectors – especially the ones focused on stamps – are thrilled to acquire just one or two pieces for their collection or exhibit.

For collectors desiring to acquire only representative examples of Nevada metal hunting and fishing licenses, three special pieces stand out as consensus favorites, so they will be the focal point of this series – **the figural licenses issued by White Pine County from 1914 – 1917.**

Nevada Requires Licenses to Hunt or Fish

In the big picture, Nevada was a relative latecomer in requiring sportsmen to obtain a license. In 1909, **after 28 states or territories had already done so**, Nevada became one of *nine states* to begin issuing hunting and fishing licenses. Altogether – Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Texas and West Virginia became the largest “entering class” in U.S. wildlife conservation history (see Figure 1)



words "Hunting license No.... State of Nevada. Expires February 28, 19...." with the registration number and appropriate year stamped therein. Said licenses shall be prepared and furnished to the County Clerk by the Board of County Commissioners, which Board shall take receipt therefor by number and quantity from the County Clerk, and the County Clerk shall be responsible therefor and shall account for the same to the Auditor of said county every three months after receipt thereof.

Section 3. The license herein provided for shall be issued as follows:

First. To any citizen of the United States who is a bona fide resident of the State of Nevada, upon the payment of one dollar.

Second. To any citizen of the United States, not a bona fide resident of the State of Nevada, upon payment of ten dollars.

Third. To any person not a citizen of the United States upon the payment of Twenty-five dollars.

Section 4. Every person applying for and procuring a license as herein provided, shall give to the county clerk his name and resident address, which information shall be by the clerk or board entered in a book kept for that purpose, and provided by said board of county commissioners, together with a statement of the date of the issuance, the number of license issued to such person, by age, height, race, and color of the eyes and hair.

Section 5. All licenses issued as herein provided shall be valid, and shall authorize the person to whom issued, to hunt, pursue and kill game birds and animals and to take or catch fish during the open season fixed by law, on and from the first day of March, 1909, until the date of expiration stamped thereon, but no license shall continue in force for a period longer than one year.

Section 6. All moneys collected for licenses as provided herein, shall be paid into the county treasury to the credit of the Game and Fish Preservation Fund, which fund is hereby created, and the moneys in said fund shall be applied to the payment of the expenses incurred in the prosecution of offenders, and for the revenue to pay fish and game wardens and deputies when necessary to hire a deputy fish and game warden or wardens.

Section 7. Not more than one license shall be issued to any one person for the same fiscal year, except upon an affidavit by the applicant that the one issued has been lost or destroyed, and no licenses issued as herein provided shall be transferable, or used by any other person than the one to whom it was issued.

FIGURE 1. SECTIONS 1-7 OF THE NEW NEVADA GAME AND FISH LAW;
REPRODUCED IN AN ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN *THE DAILY INDEPENDENT*
(ELKO, NEVADA) ON MARCH 27, 1909.

Surrounding States Already Issued Licenses

By 1909 all of the states surrounding Nevada (except Arizona which started in 1913) were already issuing hunting and fishing licenses. These included California, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Utah (see Figures 2-6):

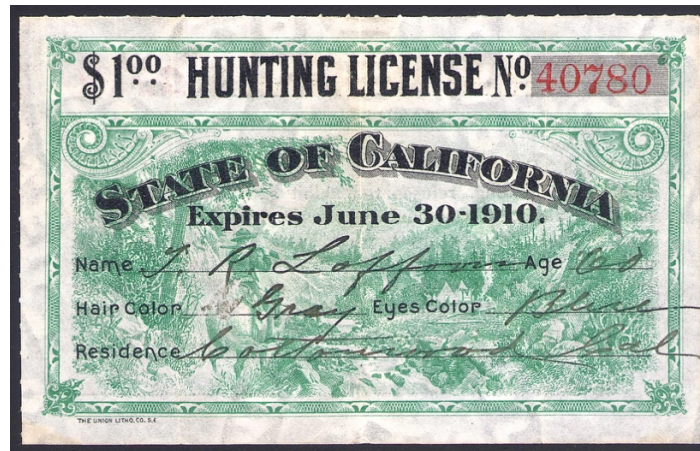


FIGURE 2. 1909-10 CALIFORNIA RESIDENT HUNTING LICENSE.

A detailed hunter's license from Union County, Oregon. The top left has "No. 23" and the title "Hunter's License." Below this, it says "STATE OF OREGON, } ss. COUNTY OF UNION." The license holder is Arthur Hallgath, a resident of Elgin, County of Union, State of Oregon. The license fee is \$1.00. The license expires December 31, 1909. The County Clerk, Ed Wright, has signed and affixed the seal. The license is not transferable. A description of the licensee is provided: Age 42 years, Height 5 feet 6 inches, Weight 140 pounds, Complexion Med, Color of hair Brown, Color of eyes Brown. Other distinctive marks and scars are noted as none. The license is framed by a decorative border and has "REPUBLICAN PRINT" at the bottom.

FIGURE 3. 1909 UNION COUNTY, OREGON HUNTER'S LICENSE.

LEADER PRINT, GOODING, IDAHO

STATE OF IDAHO
Fish and Game License Class 10A

Nº 45435

The holder hereof Alfred C. Anderson
is hereby permitted to pursue, hunt and fish within the State of Idaho, subject to the limitations and restrictions of the Game Laws of the State of Idaho.

I hereby certify that I am 44 years of age, 5 feet and 9 inches tall, weight 150 pounds, Fair complexioned, Brown hair and Blue eyes, and that my residence is Henry, Ida
County of Bannock, State of Ida

Dated Sept 29 at Soda Springs, Idaho.

Signature of Applicant: Alfred C. Anderson
Signature of Officer: H. Drewery
Title of Officer: J. P.

The Receipt of \$1.00 for this License is hereby acknowledged.

The Holder of this License will kindly report to the State Game Warden, at close of Season, the number of Game taken under this License

FIGURE 4. 1909 IDAHO FISH AND GAME LICENSE.

No. F 7119

RESIDENT AND CITIZEN'S
Hunting and Fishing License
MONTANA

This is to Certify, That Albert
is a Citizen of the United States or has declared his intention to become such and a bona fide resident of Lat
State of Montana, and is hereby duly LICENSED to hunt, take, kill, catch, or have in his possession, any of the Game Animals, Game birds, or Fish of this State at a time and in a manner not prohibited by law.

This license is not transferable and expires on the 31st DAY OF DECEMBER, 1909. It must be shown to any Game Warden or Peace Officer upon demand and the licensee must identify himself if requested by such officer.

DESCRIPTION OF LICENSEE

Licensee's Signature: Albert B. Richard Residence: his father's Ranch
P. O. Address: Lat; Business: _____
Age: 4; Height: 5 ft., 5 in.; Weight: 103 lbs.; Color of eyes: blue; Color of Hair: dark; Distinctive Marks: none

Signed Henry Chase
State Game and Fish Warden.

H. W. Cunningham
State Auditor

I hereby Certify, that I have issued this license to the within named licensee and find him to be a Citizen of the United States or has declared his intention to become such and a bona fide resident of the State of Montana according to the provisions of Sec. 1070 of the Revised Codes of Montana of 1907 and Section 1070 of the Revised Codes of Montana as amended by Session Laws of 1909 and that said licensee has paid me the sum of one (\$1.00) dollar for the same.

Dated this 6 day of July, 1909
County of Lat

Justice of Peace: John T. [unclear]

SHIPPING DIRECTIONS ON OTHER SIDE

FIGURE 5. 1909 MONTANA RESIDENT AND CITIZEN'S HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE.

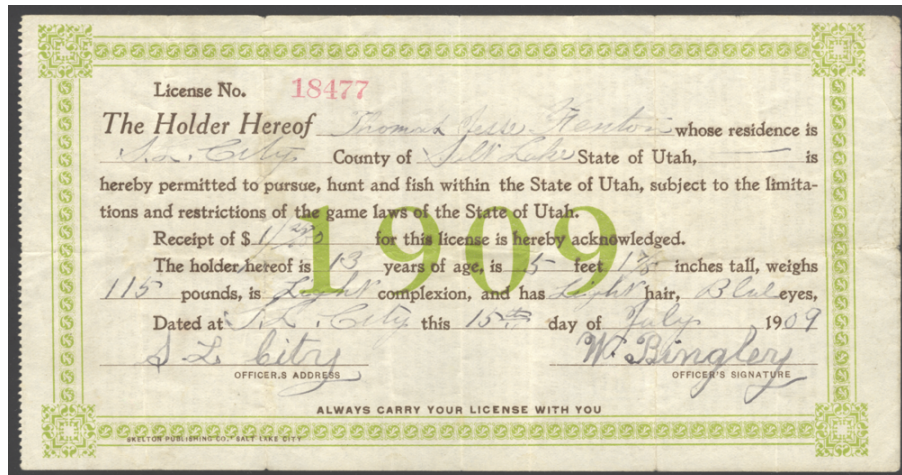


FIGURE 6. 1909 UTAH LICENSE TO HUNT AND FISH.

While all of the above were printed on paper, there existed a precedent for issuing metal hunting licenses. The first two issued by California, in 1907-08 and 1908-09, were made from aluminum (see Figures 7-9). For more on this, see *California Hunting & Fishing Licenses – Part One*.



FIGURE 7. TYPE I 1907-08 CALIFORNIA HUNTING LICENSE.



FIGURE 8. TYPE II 1907-08 CALIFORNIA HUNTING LICENSE.



FIGURE 9. 1908-09 CALIFORNIA HUNTING LICENSE.

When the Nevada Fish Commission put in their Bill to license hunting and fishing, they modeled it after California and Oregon game laws (see Figure 10).

LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

LEAD CALENDAR—

Neither branch was very busy today. In the senate Alex Wise was given a job as assistant clerk. The fish commissions bill asking for a hatchery at Verdi was introduced, and Tallman put in the \$60,000 bill for legislative expenses, which was passed.

In the House, the speaker announced his standing committees. Eight more jobs are wanted for the faithful and will be provided as some members have sons and daughters who need the money. The fish commission put in the bill to license hunting and fishing, modelled on the California and Oregon laws; Curtain put one in to allow the governor to appoint for vacancies in county offices; and Winter put in one to establish an experiment farm in Elko county. Boyds bill to create two more jobs in the senate was passed.

FIGURE 10. ARTICLE IN *THE DAILY APPEAL* (CARSON CITY, NEVADA)
ON JANUARY 20, 1909.

As the 1908-09 California Hunting License was current at the time, it was natural for Nevada to copy them – and they did. The California discs were produced by Patrick & Company of San Francisco. Nevada purchased their *state* hunting licenses for 1909-1910 from Patrick and they are virtually identical to the California licenses from the previous year (see Figures 11 and 12).



FIGURE 11. ORIGINAL ENVELOPE FOR A 1908-09 CALIFORNIA HUNTING LICENSE.

Conservation Pre Stamp Licenses

1908 California, 1909 Nevada and 1909 New Mexico Licenses

Early in the 20th Century materials other than paper or cloth were used for licenses. These included various metals (aluminum, copper, and brass). California Licenses were first issued in 1907, Nevada Licenses in 1909 and New Mexico issued its' first Territorial Hunting Permits in 1909. In 1909, California changed from metal to paper licenses. Along with the New Mexico permits from the same year, these were the first *fully pictorial* licenses issued in the U.S.



1908-09 California Aluminum
Resident Hunting License



1908-09 California Copper
Non-Resident Hunting License
Finest of two examples recorded



1909-10 Nevada Aluminum
Resident Hunting License

HUNTER'S LICENSE.

No. 411 \$ 1.50

TERRITORY OF NEW MEXICO,
DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH.

THIS CERTIFIES THAT Harlon Thurman, a resident of
Carlsbad New Mexico, has paid the sum of One and 50/100 Dollars
for a General HUNTING LICENSE, and is entitled to hunt Larger & Small Game
in the Territory of New Mexico, in conformity with law, during the season of 1909.

DESCRIPTION OF LICENSEE—Age 29 years, height 6 feet and 5 inches, weight 165
color of hair Light, color of eyes Gray

Dated Sept 1st, New Mex.,
Carlsbad NM Sep 1 1909

Harlon Thurman Signature. By Thomas P. Gable Warden,
A. R. Quinn Deputy.

This license is not transferable, does not authorize transportation or sale, and must be in possession of the licensee while hunting. Opportunity to inspect and copy must be afforded to any officer authorized to demand the same.

1909 New Mexico paper Territorial Hunter's License *First Territorial License issued in the United States*
Less than five examples recorded

FIGURE 12. A PAGE FROM WILL CSAPLAR'S WATERFOWL EXHIBIT SHOWING 1908-09 CALIFORNIA RESIDENT AND NON RESIDENT HUNTING LICENSES AND A 1909-10 NEVADA RESIDENT HUNTING LICENSE.

If you read **Section 3 in Figure 1** above, you find that the Nevada Game and Fish Law allowed for licenses to be manufactured for issue to three classifications of sportsmen:

“First. To any citizen of the United States who is a bona fide resident of the State of Nevada, upon payment of one dollar [Resident].’

“Second. To any citizen of the United States, not a bona fide resident of the State of Nevada, upon the payment of ten dollars [Non Resident].’

“Third. To any person not a citizen of the United States upon the payment of twenty-five dollars [Alien].”
Licenses were not required of women, of children under the age of 14, or of persons hunting on their own land. *It should be noted that prior to enacting the new game law, there was a great deal of animosity toward sportsmen from the surrounding states (non residents) entering Nevada and depleting the state’s natural resources. The following is an excerpt from an editorial piece which appeared in the January 21, 1909 The Daily Appeal, “A high license [fee] for non-residents and strict enforcement of [game] laws would do much toward preserving game in this state.”*

A 1909 Nevada resident license is shown in Figure 12, a non resident license in Figure 13 and no alien license has been recorded from 1909.



FIGURE 13. 1909-10 NEVADA \$10 NON RESIDENT HUNTING LICENSE.

I have in my collection another very rare and unusual 1909 Nevada Hunting License that has long been a puzzle to both myself and my Nevada license collector friends. In lieu of a fee there is a *star* (see Figure 14). While doing research for this blog I realized that **Section 7 of the 1909 Game and Fish Law** actually allowed licenses to be issued to a fourth classification:

“Not more than one license shall be issued to any one person for the same fiscal year, except upon an affidavit by the applicant that the one issued had been lost or destroyed [Duplicate]....”

If my hunch is correct, Nevada would have had only one type of duplicate license manufactured for issue to *all three classifications of sportsmen* – thus **a star was placed where the fee was normally embossed** in the aluminum to maximize its utility.



FIGURE 14. 1909-10 NEVADA DUPLICATE HUNTING LICENSE.

It is interesting to note that around this same time (1910) the Bureau of Engraving and Printing began to issue “**star notes**” to replace notes that had been misprinted or damaged. The replacement notes were indicated by a star before or after the serial number (see Figure 15).

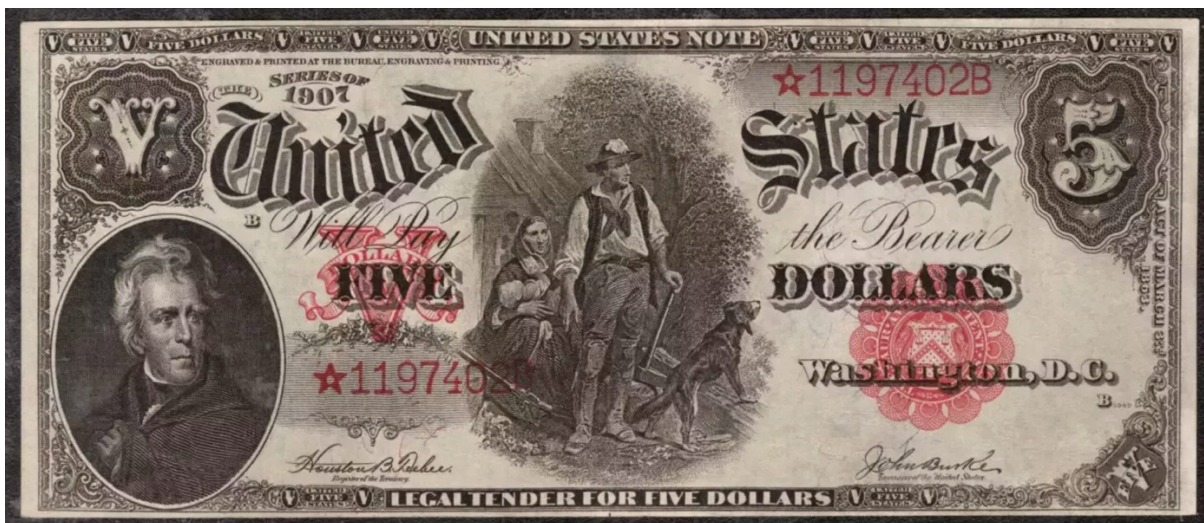


FIGURE 15. REPLACEMENT OF A SERIES 1907 \$5 NOTE WITH A STAR NOTE. COURTESY OF KEARNEY COIN CENTRE.

State Licenses Were Used Temporarily

Although I cannot find this in print to reference, *I am now fairly certain the state-issued licenses were always intended to serve a stop-gap purpose.* **Section 2 of the 1909 Game and Fish Law** stated:

“Licenses granting the privilege to hunt, pursue or kill wild birds or animals, or to take or catch fish during the open season as fixed by law, shall be issued and delivered, upon application, by the County Clerk of any of the counties of the counties of this State, or by the Fish and Game Warden of any of the counties of this state...”

Further, **Section 6** stated:

“All moneys collected for licenses as provided herein, shall be paid into the county treasury to credit of the [County] Fish and Game Preservation Fund, which is hereby created, and the moneys in said fund shall be applied to the payment of expenses incurred in the prosecution of offenders, and for the revenue to pay fish and game Wardens and deputies...”

In other words, **by law all licensing of hunters and fishermen in the State of Nevada was to be conducted at the county level.** It seems that for a period of time, the state obtained the aluminum discs embossed “State of Nevada” from Patrick & Co, and distributed them to the various county commissioners, as needed.

The Figural F&G Licenses Issued by White Pine County, Nevada – Part Two

Today we shall take a look at some of the metal hunting and fishing licenses issued by Nevada counties starting in 1909. First, a little Nevada county background. Originally what is now Nevada was part of the greater Utah Territory. In 1861 the new Nevada Territory was created and the Nevada Territorial Legislature formed **nine original counties**: Churchill, Douglas, Esmeralda, Humboldt, Lake, Lyon, Ormsby, Storey and Washoe.

In 1909 and 1910 there were 15 counties in Nevada: Clark, Churchill, Douglas, Elko, Esmeralda, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lincoln, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Ormsby, Storey, Washoe and White Pine. In 1911 Mineral was formed from Esmeralda, **bringing the number to 16**.

In 1919 (after the Nevada metal licenses had been discontinued) the lower half of Humboldt County became Pershing County – the last county to be formed in Nevada. In 1969 Ormsby County was consolidated with Carson City to form the independent city of Carson City. (see Figure 1).



FIGURE 1. CURRENT NEVADA COUNTY MAP (2024).

It took different periods of time for each of the 16 counties to get their own F&G programs started and to begin issuing their own licenses. **Lander was the last county to begin issuing licenses, for the 1913-14 seasons.**

Thus, following the 1912-13 seasons, the aluminum state licenses would no longer have been needed by any of the counties and discontinued. In fact, *no Nevada State Hunting License after 1912-13 has been recorded.*

Counties Begin to Issue Their Own Licenses

At least two counties, **Churchill and Lyon**, began issuing their own licenses soon after the state law (see Part One) went into effect – in time for the 1909-10 H&F seasons. Between 1909 and 1917, several counties would order their licenses manufactured in the form of a fob so that it could be readily attached the watch straps, hat bands and suspenders common to the period (see Figure 2).



FIGURE 2. 1909-10 LYON COUNTY HUNTING LICENSE FOB.

There is another early Nevada metal license that has puzzled collectors. It closely resembles the 1909 State licenses, to include the same border design, the embossed "STATE OF NEVADA" and expiration date of Febby [sic] 28, 1910 – however it is much smaller (1.5" vs 1 7/8"), manufactured out of brass instead of aluminum and resembles a token (see Figure 3). A handful of these can be found in collections today.



FIGURE 3. 1909-10 WHITE PINE COUNTY? HUNTING LICENSE.

After researching this blog, I now believe it is possible that the brass license above may have been issued by White Pine County for a short period of time in the Fall of 1909. Let's have a look at two articles which appeared in *The White Pine News* in 1909. The first is interesting because in addition to establishing the number of state licenses which had been sold in White Pine County by July 20 (403), it states:

"Only one non-resident license costing \$10.00 has been issued but none has been secured by foreigners [aliens], as they do not like the idea of separating themselves from \$25.00 which is the amount it costs them to fish and hunt in this state (see Figure 4)."

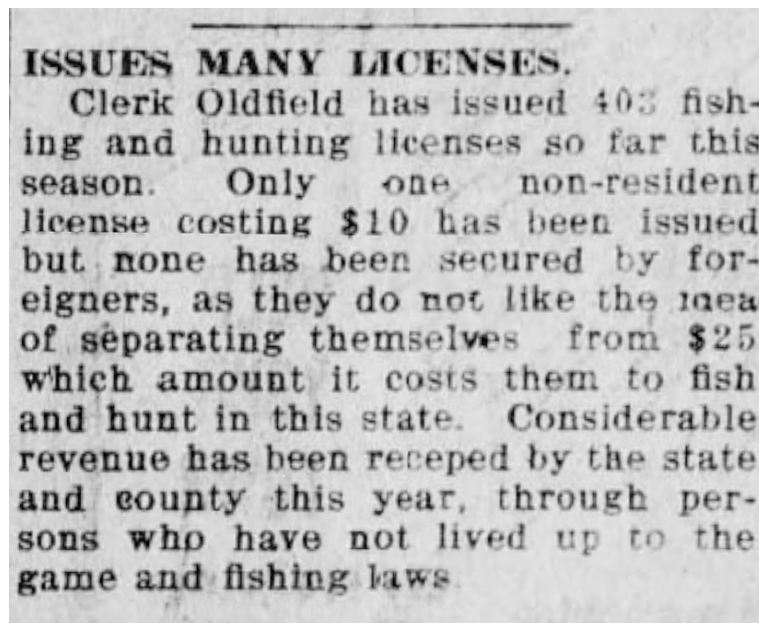


FIGURE 4. ARTICLE IN *THE WHITE PINE NEWS* (ELY, NEVADA) ON JULY 20, 1909.

This helps to explain why the Nevada metal non resident and alien – or as long time collectors reverently refer to them, the “tens and twenty-fives” are so difficult to acquire!

The second article, dated two months later on September 18 is important to my theory about the brass disc shown in Figure 16; it states:

“... Up until the present time 597 licenses have been granted by the county clerk, **and the supply of tags has fallen short, that the clerk has placed an order for an additional number of tags** (my emphasis, see Figure 5).”



FIGURE 5. ARTICLE IN *THE WHITE PINE NEWS* ON SEPTEMBER 18, 1909.

As Churchill and Lyon counties were already contracting to have their own licenses manufactured by this point in time, is it possible the White Pine County Commissioners followed suit, and the result was the brass discs shown in Figure 3?

It makes sense that if the Commissioners were contracting to produce a state “knockoff” they would try to make it conform as closely as possible not only to the original aluminum discs but also the “letter of the law.”

If you read the middle of **Section 2 in Figure 1** above, you will find:

“... which license shall have stamped thereon the words ‘Hunting license No.... State of Nevada. Expires February 28, 19....’ with **the registration number** [my emphasis] and appropriate year stamped therein.”

The brass license shown in Figure 3 is the only Nevada state or county license recorded that contains all the specifications in the law, to include *the registration number*.

Another possibility is that the County Commissioners requested additional licenses directly from the state – but they no longer had any stock on hand. Rather than attempt to have a very small number of licenses manufactured and shipped by Patrick & Co. in San Francisco (at a time when White Pine had already exhausted their supply and needed them yesterday) *the State Commissioners* then went to a local manufacturer in Reno? Additional research is needed to help solve this mystery!

More Counties Join In

By the 1910-11 seasons, at least 12 of the 15 Nevada counties were issuing their own hunting and fishing licenses (based on examples recorded, see the table below). Remember, Mineral was not formed until 1911. It is assumed Elko, Lander and Nye counties were still issuing sportsmen aluminum discs embossed with the current expiration date supplied by the state.

COUNTY	1909-10	1910-11	1911-12	1912-13	1913-14	1914-15	1915-16	1916-17	1917-18
Clark		X	X	X	X	X	X		
Churchill	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Douglas		X	X	X	X	X		X	
Elko			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Esmeralda		X	X		X	X	X		
Eureka		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Humboldt		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Lander					X	X		X	X
Lincoln		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Lyon	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Mineral			X	X				X	
Nye			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Ormsby		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Storey		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Washoe		X	X	X	X	X	X		X
White Pine		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

We now get to see the earliest example recorded of a \$25.00 Nevada alien metal license, issued by White Pine County for 1910-11 (shown curtesy of a long time collector who wishes to remain anonymous – see Figure 20). It was manufactured to be a fob, much like the Lyon County license shown in figure 6.



FIGURE 6. EXTREMELY RARE 1910-11 WHITE PINE COUNTY ALIEN HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FOB.

Between 1910 and 1917, the vast majority of Nevada counties ordered their H&F licenses to be manufactured from many different types of metals, including aluminum, brass and copper and **in a wide variety of shapes and sizes**. This is an aspect serious collectors find so very appealing – the diversity of the pieces in a sizable collection. However, from the standpoint of fish and game licensing and enforcement there was something more significant at work here.

According to an article which appeared in the *Reno-Gazette-Journal* on February 26, 1914, with the headline “NEW LICENSES IN READINESS... The design [size and shape] differs from last year’s in order to not give the warden or his assistants need for minute inspection.”

Now let's take a look at some of the different Nevada county licenses that were issued between the 1912-13 and 1914-15 seasons (see figures 7-11):



FIGURE 7. 1912-13 EUREKA COUNTY HUNTING LICENSE MADE TO PLACE ON SUSPENDERS.



FIGURE 8. 1912-13 LINCOLN COUNTY RESIDENT HUNTING & FISHING LICENSE FOB IN THE SHAPE OF A SHIELD.



FIGURE 9. RARE 1912-13 MINERAL COUNTY RESIDENT HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FOB, ON A LEATHER STRAP.



FIGURE 10. RARE 1913-14 WHITE PINE COUNTY NON RESIDENT (BRASS) HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FOB IN THE SHAPE OF A STYLIZED HORSESHOE. COURTESY OF PHIL BEGUHL.



FIGURE 11. FANCY 1914-15 DOUGLAS COUNTY RESIDENT HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FOB IN THE SHAPE OF A ROSE?

It should be noted that, with the exception of the “odd” Non Resident, Alien or Duplicate Nevada metal licenses – in other words, when talking about typical *resident* licenses – those issued by **Mineral County** (as shown in Figure 9 above) **were issued in the lowest quantities** and thus are the most highly coveted by advanced collectors today.

The only sales figure I could find for Mineral County was for the 1915-16 seasons (53 licenses). A census conducted by a collector ten years back shows **four licenses for all years (1911 – 1916), total**. This did not include mine (obtained later) and probably one or two others, but you get the idea. When discussing them with a long-time collector he told me they were “worth their weight in gold.”

The Figural F&G Licenses Issued by White Pine County, Nevada – Part Three

From the map in [Part Two](#), you can see that White Pine County is located in eastern Nevada along the middle of the Utah border. It is a particularly remote location and this has famously led to U.S. Route 50, which runs through the county seat of Ely, to be known as the “Loneliest Road in America” and the “Road to Nowhere.”

Although White Pine County encompasses 8,886 square miles, making it the 5th largest in the state by area – the population is only 8,788 (2022) or *less than one person per square mile*. Named after the Pines that flourished in the region, it was formed in 1869 by splitting Lander County into two. Ely became the county seat after the original, Hamilton, was destroyed by a fire in 1887.

Ely was established in 1878, originally a stagecoach stop and trading post along the Pony Express and Central Overland Routes, the latter a transportation route connecting Salt Lake City, Utah and Carson City, Nevada. **After copper was discovered in White Pine County in 1906**, Ely would become a boomtown (see Figures 1 and 2).



FIGURE 1. THE STAGE ARRIVES IN ELY IN 1906. COURTESY OF WESTERN MINING HISTORY.



FIGURE 2. ELY, NEVADA IN 1906. COURTESY OF *WESTERN MINING HISTORY*.

It was **copper** that would soon play a major role in our story. The County Commissioners came up with a new use for White Pine copper that has delighted collectors of fish and game stamps and licenses for well over a hundred years now. The reddish-brown metal, due to its inherent malleability and ductility, **proved to be ideal for molding and manufacturing intricate shapes**.

Can You Make Us a Realistic Horseshoe?

At this time **A. Carlisle and Co. of San Francisco** had, through a series of acquisitions and mergers, including the Hayden Printing Company and venerable Britton & Rey Lithographers, recently become one of the leaders in the graphics arts industry in the western United States. For more on A. Carlisle & Co., see *California Hunting & Fishing Licenses – Part Five*.

Prior to the seasons of 1914-15, the White Pine County Commissioners approached A. Carlisle and posed this question: “If we furnish you with a supply of copper, can you manufacture our new licenses **in the form of a realistic horseshoe?** (as opposed to the stylized one produced the year before out of brass and shown in Part Two, Figure 10).”

The answer to the question was clearly yes (see Figure 3) and a newspaper article which appeared in the Sunday, April 12, 1914 issue of the *White Pine News Weekly Mining Review* indicates the Commissioners remitted \$66.30 to A. Carlisle for "hunting licenses."



**FIGURE 3 1914-15 WHITE PINE COUNTY RESIDENT
HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FOB.**

Of the three figural licenses issued by White Pine County between 1914 and 1917, the resident license shown in Figure 3 above is a popular choice among collectors desiring only one or two representative examples of Nevada metal licenses for their collection. It also offers the advantage of not being as difficult to acquire as those that followed.

The Next Figural License Was a Real Corker!

Apparently emboldened by their splendid success, prior to the 1915-16 seasons the Commissioners approached A. Carlisle once again and upped the ante, “**Can you make our licenses in the form of a Labrador Retriever?**” For Carlisle, nearing the apex of their craft, again the answer was yes (see Figure 4).



FIGURE 4. 1915-16 WHITE PINE COUNTY RESIDENT HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FOB.

The resulting copper fob was a masterwork – featuring tapered edges with embossed fur that evoked a realistic Lab and undulating lettering that complimented the form of its head – epitomizing the golden age of American F&G licensing (1895-1920). Of the three figural licenses, the “dog” is a true pleaser and, therefore, *always* been the consensus favorite among collectors.

One of the Last Nevada Alien Hunting and Fishing Licenses

As previously discussed, the number of **non resident** and **alien** licenses issued in Nevada between 1909 and 1917 was ridiculously small. This explains why the total number of examples recorded (**non resident and alien combined**) for all 16 counties in collections today is less than 20.

After comparing serial numbers for White Pine County resident, non resident and alien licenses in collections and on the internet, I believe that starting at least as early as 1913-14, 1000 total licenses were initially manufactured each year – of which **994 were resident and the remaining six (numbers 995-1000) divided somehow between non resident and alien** (see Figure 5).



FIGURE 5. 1913-14 WHITE PINE COUNTY RESIDENT, NON RESIDENT AND ALIEN HUNTING H&F LICENSES. THE RESIDENT LICENSE WAS DUG BY A BOTTLE COLLECTOR AND ALL THREE ARE FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES.

Further, if they ran out of licenses late in the year and reordered, it would have almost certainly been only resident licenses (200 additional were ordered in November of 1913 per the *White Pine News Weekly Mining Review*). The fact is, they hardly ever sold a non resident or alien license.

As luck would have it (probably because they are unused remainders that found their way into the collector market), two examples of the 1915 White Pine County Alien Hunting and Fishing License have been recorded (see Figure 6).



FIGURE 6. EXTREMELY RARE 1915-16 WHITE PINE COUNTY \$25 ALIEN HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FOB.

Starting in 1917, Nevada passed a new game law in which the **third provision of Section 61** provided:

“In no case shall a hunting license be issued to any such person not a citizen of the United States” (my emphasis, see Figure 7). Therefore, it is possible the two 1915-16 White Pine County Alien Hunting and Fishing Licenses may be the latest metal alien licenses to have been recorded.

HUNTING LICENSES CANNOT BE SOLD TO ALIENS

The discovery that the game law passed by the last legislature absolutely prohibits any person not a citizen of the United States from hunting in Nevada has thrown consternation in the various foreign quarters in Washoe county, and, according to reports, in all sections of the state.

With the state duck law providing for an open season beginning next Monday practically all the foreigners in Reno and adjoining localities had made preparations to bombard the birds on the opening day. But the state game law provides otherwise. That section of the law relating to hunting and fishing licenses, after designating how much resident and non-resident citizens shall pay for those privileges says:

"In no case shall a hunting license be issued to any such person not a citizen of the United States."

Section 61 of the fish and game law is the section that indicates to whom and for how much hunting and fishing licenses shall be issued. It provides:

"First—To any citizen of the United States, who is a bona-fide resident of the state of Nevada upon the payment of one dollar for a fishing license and one dollar for a hunting license.

"Second—To any citizen of the United States, not a bona fide resident, upon the payment of five dollars for a fishing license, or five dollars for a hunting license.

"Third—To any person not a citizen of the United States, upon the payment of fifteen dollars for a fishing license. In no case shall a hunting license be issued to any such person not a citizen of the United States.

"Fourth—A license of fifteen dollars shall be charged to any one engaged in market fishing."

FIGURE 7. AN ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN THE RENO-GAZETTE-JOURNAL ON SEPTEMBER 28, 1917.

A. Carlisle at the Top of Their Game

For the 1916-17 seasons, the County Commissioners requested A. Carlisle manufacture licenses in the shape of a horseshoe similar to the one shown in Figure 3 – **with the addition of a hunting rifle laying across it.**

The third and final White Pine County copper license is the most intricate – featuring a detailed and entirely realistic rifle. The rifle's craftsmanship represents the apex of Nevada Hunting and Fishing License manufacturing – a lofty place that would seldom be approached in U.S. fish and game licensing. Alas, the miniature rifle was fragile and, therefore, missing from the majority of examples found in collections today (see Figure 8).



FIGURE 8. 1916-17 WHITE PINE COUNTY RESIDENT
HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FOB.

Nevada Metal H&F Licenses are Discontinued

Prior to the 1917-18 seasons, the Nevada State Legislature passed a bill that effectively ended the run for Nevada metal hunting and fishing licenses. An article appeared in the March 28, 1917 issue of the *Reno Gazette-Journal* which discussed the the new law in detail.

Under the heading **Double License System Established**, the article basically stated that Nevada counties were to discontinue issuing combination hunting and fishing licenses and begin issuing **separate hunting and fishing licenses** for residents, non residents and aliens (fishing only).

In addition, the new licenses were to be modeled after the paper licenses being issued by California and include “a detailed description of the purchaser” (see Figures 9, 10 and 11).



FIGURE 9. 1917-18 CALIFORNIA RESIDENT HUNTING LICENSE.



FIGURE 10. 1917 CALIFORNIA RESIDENT FISHING LICENSE.

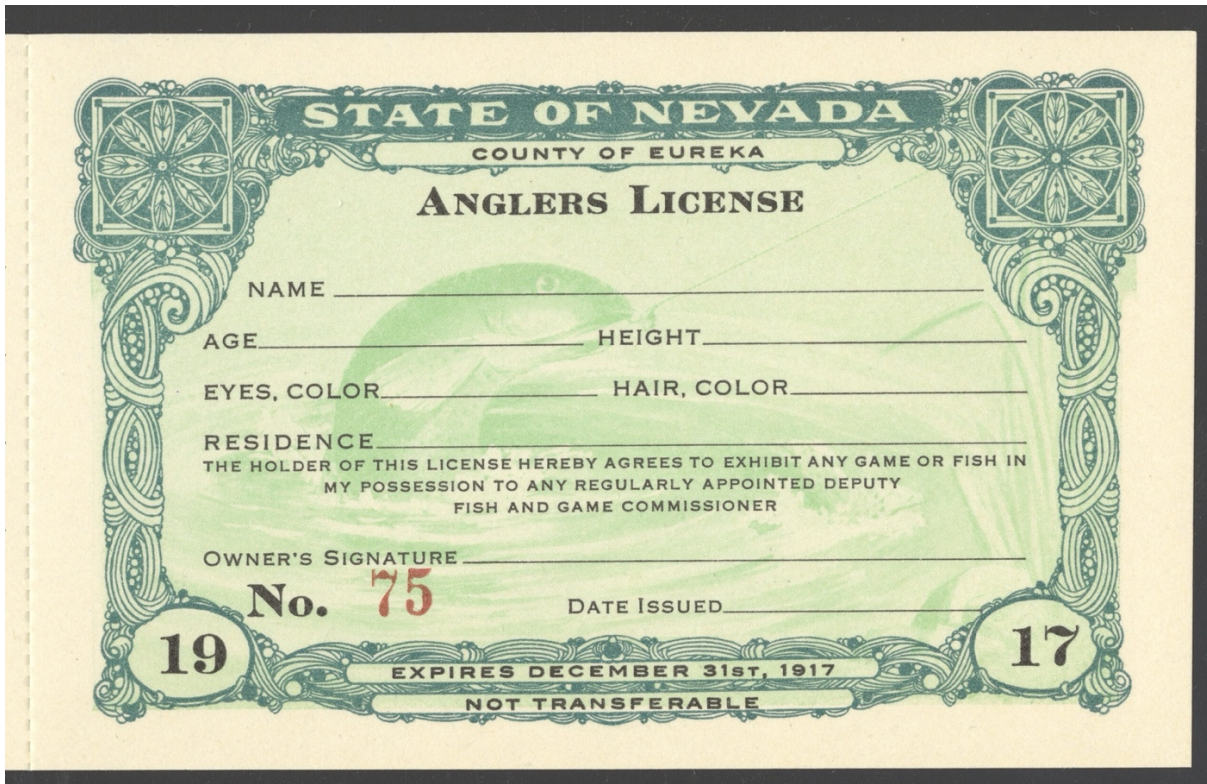


FIGURE 11. 1917 EUREKA COUNTY RESIDENT FISHING LICENSE.

I imagine this new law was an attempt to crack down on “license sharing.” The hand-written descriptive details (height, eyes color and hair color) and the owner’s signature would accomplished this purpose – while by necessity make metal licenses obsolete.

The Nevada counties were much quicker in 1917 to meet the new licensing requirements than in 1909. Only six of the 16 counties had metal licenses manufactured for the 1917-18 seasons: Churchill, Elko, Lander, Ormsby, Storey and Washoe. **For the 1918-19 seasons there were none.**

White Pine County & A. Carlisle’s Legacy

The figural licenses issued by White Pine County from 1914 through 1917 represent the best of the Nevada metal license period. Their amazing workmanship and eye-appeal allows them to transcend their intended utilitarian function and, inasmuch as they were intended to be displayed by sportsmen and observed by a game warden from a short distance, may be viewed today in much the same light as vintage jewelry – as close as we get to real fish and game treasure!

Holding the power to enchant and capture the imagination of all ages, they continue to develop curiosity about different areas of our hobby in long-time F&G collectors and help attract new ones to join in.

In 1917 A. Carlisle & Co. moved from San Francisco to Reno, where they continued printing paper hunting, fishing and trapping licenses for most of the Nevada counties for decades. They are still in business today.

I hope you have enjoyed learning about the metal licenses issued by Nevada. As stated in the introduction, I am not an expert in this area and due to the scarcity of reference material it was necessary to go to primary sources (the newspapers) for much of the information presented here.

I know other collectors can add to this body of work and would encourage you to contact me with things I may not have gotten completely right or missed altogether. In the meantime I would like to thank Phil Beguhl, Ron Bommarito, Bob Ferraro, Marty Hall and Fred Holabird for their time and help in preparing this series of posts.

