

Helen J. Stewart

1854-1926



Helen Jane Wiser was born on April 16, 1854 in Springfield, Illinois, to Hiram and Delia Gray Wiser. On April 6, 1873, Helen married Archibald Stewart in Stockton, California. By this time, Mr. Stewart had already abandoned a freighting business and a wood ranch near Pioche, Lincoln County, Nevada to focus on cattle ranching. This photo was taken one year after her marriage to Archibald.

In 1879, Stewart loaned \$5,000 in gold to Octavius D. Gass, taking the isolated Las Vegas Ranch as collateral. By 1881, Gass had defaulted on the loan, and Stewart foreclosed. In 1882, Archibald decided to move his family to the ranch in the Las Vegas Valley until he could sell it. Stewart profitably operated the ranch, selling beef, vegetables, fruit, and wine to the miners in the Southern Nevada camps until his murder at the nearby Kiel Ranch 1884.

Following her husband's death, Helen became extremely proficient as a rancher and a businesswoman. Realizing that someday the land in the Las Vegas Valley would become of value, she began buying land adjacent to her ranch. By 1890, she was the largest landowner in Lincoln County, which at that time included present-day Clark County.

For more information on Helen J. Stewart and other important Nevada Women visit:
<http://www.unr.edu/nwhp/biographies.htm>

