



**JOHN  
SPARKS**

NATIONAL COWBOY HALL of FAME  
and Western Heritage Center

405/478-2250 1700 NORTHEAST 63rd STREET OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA 73111

National Cowboy Hall of Fame  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

ELECTED TO NATIONAL COWBOY HALL OF FAME  
In Oklahoma City  
January 5, 1958

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NEVADA: John Sparks, 1843-1908; one of the biggest ranchers of the west; twice governor of Nevada; steady influence in the new century's fights of federal vs. state functions in western lands.

Born in Mississippi, Sparks went with his family to West Texas at the age of 14 and from that time on, except for his Civil war service in the Confederate cause, he was a leader of the range cattle industry.

In 1868 he went to Nevada to expand those ranching activities and before many years passed, his cattle numbered 70,000 head, constantly bred up from Longhorns because he was one of the first westerners to use imported purebred sires of the British breeds.

First elected governor of Nevada in 1902 on a Fusion party ticket, Democrat Sparks was reelected four years later, at that time the second man to receive two consecutive terms as Nevada governor.

His administration coincided with the Teddy Roosevelt era, when the federal government was felt by many to be impinging on state's rights in the matter of western lands, much of it held by the federal government, and Sparks was a stabilizing influence for opposing factions in those arguments.

He was always a cattleman and so honest in his private business and public dealings that the nickname "Honest John" was applied to him. It is said that when he lost an election to the U. S. senate by three votes--when state legislatures were making those choices--he refused to accept an election certificate if a recount gave him the office, if a single penny was spent in his support.

rancher, developer of plains country; JAMES C. DAHLMAN (1856-1930), Omaha's cowboy mayor—a cattleman and former sheriff of Dawes County who contributed much to the development of his community and state; GEORGE WARD HOLDREGE (1847-1926), railroad builder and rancher who promoted better agriculture in his area; MORELL CASE KEITH (1823-1899), early day stage and freight operator, one of the first large scale ranchers in western Nebraska; MOSES PIERCE KINKAID (1854-1922), lawyer, jurist, Congressman whose 'Kinkaid Act' allowed 640 acre homestead; FRANK J. NORTH (1840-1885), scout, first Sand Hills rancher, showman, stabilizer of wild country; WILLIAM A. PAXTON (1837-1907), early railroad building contractor, legislator, business and civic leader; BARTLETT RICHARDS (1859-1911), rancher, cattleman, banker, civic leader.

#### NEVADA

PEDRO ALTUBE (1827-1904), 'father' of Basques in America, rancher and cattleman, Spanish Ranch founder; LEWIS R. BRADLEY (1806-1879), second governor of state, builder and leader; HENRY HOLLOWELL CAZIER (1885-1963), civic-minded rancher and electric power developer whose enterprise contributed to development of his state; WILLIAM H. MOFFATT (1875-1963), a native Californian who owned extensive ranching and packing interests in both Nevada and California, and is called the guiding spirit in development of Nevada's livestock industry; JOHN SPARKS (1843-1908), rancher on vast scale, twice governor, states' rights fighter in western expansion; WILLIAM MORRIS STEWART (1827-1909), attorney who helped form Territorial government and the state's constitution, counsel for great mining interests, served as Nevada's attorney general and six years as state's first U. S. Senator, wrote the 15th amendment to U. S. Constitution and led fight for remonetization of silver; DANIEL C. WHEELER (1840-1915), a rancher, early purebred breeder, renowned civic worker.

#### NEW MEXICO

HOLM OLAF BURSUM (1867-1953), well known rancher who led statehood movement and was chairman of Constitutional Convention; JOHN S. CHISUM (1824-1884), trail blazer, trail driver, creator of a fabulous empire in free range days; VICTOR CULBERSON (1863-1930), cattleman whose skill built a vast spread, national stockmen's official; JAMES FIELDING HINKLE (1862-1951), a cattleman and banker who served his community and state as mayor, legislator and governor; SOLOMON LUNA (1858-1912), large scale cattle, horse and sheep rancher, generous in community support; LUCIEN B. MAXWELL (1818-1875), first of the cattle barons from a small but adventurous beginning; THOMAS EDWARD MITCHELL (1863-1934), pioneer cattleman and horse breeder, introduced first registered Herefords to New Mexico; BURTON C. MOSSMAN (1867-1956), handler of a million cattle, noted free enterpriser, state builder; CHARLES M. O'DONEL (1860-1933), manager of great Bell Ranch for 34 years—one of the most staunch cattlemen of New Mexico history serving as leader of both state and national cattlemen's associations; CHARLES SPRINGER (1858-1933), rancher, lawyer, principal writer of New Mexico Constitution, pioneer road builder.

#### NORTH DAKOTA

J. M. 'MURT' BUCKLEY (1878-1962), early-day cowboy, horseman and foreman of the great HT ranch who later, as owner of his own ranch, contributed much to his community's development—famed for his fairness and good humor; WILLIAM CONNOLLY (1861-1946), charitable rancher who encouraged better ranching and self-reliance, his faith and ingenuity 'turned desert into paradise'; MATT CROWLEY (1875-1955), ranchman, conservationist, official who left an indelible mark in his community; ALEX CURRIE (1859-1937), famed horse and cattle breeder, prophet of balanced agriculture; JAMES WILLIAM (BILL) FOLLIS (1865-1950), rancher who left a heritage of courage, honesty, generosity and integrity—loved and emulated by all who knew him; JOHN W. GOODALL (1857-1931), rancher, frontier sheriff, philanthropist; FRANK KEOGH (1877-1955), well-known early day rancher who did much to organize and advance the welfare of his region; DANIEL MANNING (1845-1914), horse breeder, rancher, pillar in area civic affairs and range industry; WILSE L. RICHARDS (1862-1953), for 60 years leader of the cattle industry, depression burned in 1923, he built again on the ashes; DR. VICTOR H. STICKNEY (1855-1927), pioneer doctor, first and only physician for years in western Dakotas who also left his mark as stockman, banker and civic leader; ANDREW VOIGHT (1867-1939), pioneer rancher noted for hospitality to Indians and whites alike.

#### OKLAHOMA

OTTO BARBY (1865-1954), homesteader in 'No Man's Land' who stayed when weaklings burned out, conservationist; JAMES A. CHAPMAN (1881-1966), oil pioneer of the Southwest whose philanthropies have greatly advanced educational, charitable and health institutions of the region; CHARLES F. COLCORD (1859-1934), rancher, town and city builder, civic leader; EDWARD KING GAYLORD (1873-1974), editor, publisher, founder of a business empire—Devoted builder of Oklahoma whose career parallels Oklahoma's growth from 1903 onward; THOMAS GILCREASE (1890-1962), oil man, founder of Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art in Tulsa, farmer, rancher, real estate dealer, banker, philanthropist; HENRY CHARLES HITCH, SR. (1884-1967), cattle rancher, wheat farmer, stock investor, successful entrepreneur; JAMES K. HITCH (1855-1921), cattleman, farmer, developer of Oklahoma panhandle, pillar of stability for the region; BEN JOHNSON (1896-1962), ranch operator, champion roper, a living link between historical events that tied old west into the new; LYNN RIGGS (1899-1954), author and playwright, whose play GREEN GROW THE LILACS was the basis for the famous musical OKLAHOMA that has contributed much to Western American folklore; SEQUOYAH (George Gist) (1760-1844), Cherokee Indian who, although completely un-schooled, invented the syllabary (alphabet) which made his people literate; WILLIAM M. TILGHMAN (1854-1924), cattleman, frontier peace officer in Kansas and Oklahoma for fifty years; CHARLES H. TOMPKINS (1873-1957), trail driver, champion roper, showman, highway planner; REVEREND SAMUEL AUSTIN WORCESTER (1798-1859), mis-

*Names in Hall - now  
Fred Dressler, also.*

A SAMPLING OF ARTICLES WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN THE SPARKS QUARTERLY

The Sparks Family Coat of Arms.  
The Origin of the Sparks Name.  
Persons Named Sparks Listed on the 1790 Census of the United States  
Daniel Boone and the Sparks Family.  
The Revolutionary War Pension Papers of Persons Named Sparks (several issues).  
Sparks Marriage Bonds in Surry and Wilkes Counties, North Carolina.  
Sparkses in Kentucky as Listed on the Census Records of 1800, 1810, 1830 & 1850.  
Col. William Crain Sparks of Texas and His Descendants.  
The Sparks Family of Pittsylvania County, Virginia.  
Sparks Families in Tennessee as listed on the 1820 and 1830 Census.  
James Sparks, Sea-Captain of Philadelphia, and His Family.  
Sparks Families in Texas as Listed on the 1850 Census.  
The Sparks Family of Orange, Culpeper, and Madison Counties, Virginia.  
The Sparks Family of Rockingham County, North Carolina.  
Sparks Marriages in Maryland Before the Civil War.  
John Sparks (1717-1802) of Gloucester County, New Jersey.  
Sparks Data in Early New Jersey Wills.  
History of the Martin P. and Thomas H. Sparks Families of Georgia.  
Record of Sparks Births in Kentucky, 1852-1862.  
Josiah Sparks of Baltimore County, Maryland, and His Descendants.  
The Story of Thomas Hunter Sparks (1814-1863) of Georgia.  
The Descendants of William Sparks (died 1816) of Putnam County, Georgia.  
Sparks Families in Indiana as Listed on the 1820, 1830, and 1850 Census.  
Thomas Sparks, Political Exile to Maryland in 1716-1717.  
Family of Albert Cyrus Sparks, 1830-1915.  
Early Sparks Records in Connecticut.  
Sparks Families in Alabama as Listed on the 1850 Census.  
James Sparks (1802-1866) of South Carolina and Alabama and his Descendants.  
Descendants of Solomon Sparks, Jr., (died 1817) of Wilkes County, North Carolina.  
Soldiers Named Sparks Who Volunteered for the Union Army in Michigan.  
John Sparks (ca.1755-1826) of Union County, South Carolina, and His Descendants.  
Sparkses in the War of 1812, Bounty Land and Pension Applications (spread over many issues).  
Henry Sparks (1753-1836) of Owen County, Kentucky, and His Descendants.  
Jeremiah Sparks (ca.1765-1840) of Georgia and His Descendants.  
Matthew Sparks (died 1793) of North Carolina and Georgia.  
Zachariah Sparks (died ca. 1781) of South Carolina.  
Sparkses Listed on the 1850 Census of North Carolina.  
Amos Sparks (1785-1867) of Maryland and His Descendants.  
Civil War Soldiers from Ohio Named Sparks.  
James Sparks (ca.1670-1736) of Spotsylvania County, Virginia, & His Descendants.  
Descendants of James Sparks (1813-1903) of Wright County, Missouri.  
Sparks Marriages in Kentucky (1776-1870). (several issues).  
Solomon Sparks (1767-1838) of Adams County, Ohio.  
Jonas Sparks (died 1805) of Rowan County, North Carolina & His Descendants.  
Persons Named Sparks Living in Iowa in 1850.  
John Sparks (1755-1834) of Newberry Co., S.C., & Washington County, Georgia.  
Isaac Sparks of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, & His Descendants.  
Henry Sparks (1773-1860) of Madison County, Virginia.  
The Sparks Family of Keene Township, Ionia County, Michigan.  
Descendants of Robert and Elizabeth (Shaw) Sparks, of New Brunswick and Minnesota.  
John Sparks, born 1755, died 1831, Franklin County, Alabama.  
John Ford Sparks, 1799-1871, Shelby County, Kentucky.  
Descendants of Hardy Sparks (born ca.1797) of North Carolina and Indiana.  
Sparks Families of Lewis County, Kentucky.  
Descendants of Thomas Sparks (1790-1869) of New York.  
Sparks Records from California Cemeteries.

John Sparks----- Governor of the State of Nevada from 1903 to 1908.

Born in Mississippi, August 30, 1843,--- Died in office May 22, 1908, the first year of his second term. He was the first governor since Bradley to be elected for two terms. He was a Confederate soldier and an old cattle man, and was known as "Honest John Sparks."

On March 15, 1905 the Legislature incorporated the town of "Sparks," giving it a complete city charter. (Named after Governor Sparks.)

The following is a tribute paid to Governor Sparks by President Stubbs of the University of Nevada:

"By race and breeding he was a man of the South. Though born in Mississippi, and spending his later years in Nevada, nevertheless he was a devoted son of Texas, a state that he has loved with a peculiar and passionate devotion. As a citizen he was public spirited, generous to a fault, high minded and sensitive to the slightest criticism. His courage was beyond question; his strength of will a pre-dominate characteristic. Elected to the governor's office twice by large majorities in which votes from all parties were mingled, his public life and his public acts are beyond any just criticism. Mistakes he doubtless made, often deceived in men, for he was not a critical judge of men, but his administration of public affairs was free from every taint of scandal and graft. He had well-settled principles which enabled him to guide safely the State in times of need and in times of the warfare of different interests."

Taken from the record as given in the book entitled,

NEVADA

by

James G. Scrugham

(Former Governor..)

- John Sparks -  
1843 - 1908.

" - and now the time has come to say farewell,  
farewell to you who lived and died by the name  
of Honest John".

Those were the closing words of the man who gave  
the eulogy ~~of John Sparks~~ at the funeral services  
of Governor John Sparks of Nevada.

His widow, his daughters and his three sons  
all knew it was the richest heritage he could  
have left them. And during that journey of but a  
few <sup>more</sup> moments <sup>from</sup> from the chapel to the house - a  
journey of slow steps <sup>to</sup> the unceremonial beat of  
"Hear ye my God to thee", it seemed as if his whole  
life passed before us, and that the evangelist had  
chosen well - and that we need not wish to  
add change - it was Honest John!

John Sparks was born in the state of ~~Mississippi~~  
Mississippi, on August 30<sup>th</sup> - 1843.