

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

### IDAHO LEGISLATURE

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The first session of the Idaho legislature had to enact a civil practice act (166 pages in the printed laws), a criminal practice act (92 pages), and a probate practice act (69 pages), all approved February 1, 1864, as well as a 34-page criminal code, a 39-page act establishing county offices, and a 50-page revenue act, all of which were approved February 4. In addition, a large group of general laws and special laws were enacted. General laws did everything from regulating elections, discouraging fraudulent conveyances, providing for location of quartz mining claims, and protecting wild game, to arranging for preservation of files of all newspapers and to prohibiting "the sale of Ardent Spirits, Fire arms, or Ammunition, to Indians." Local and special laws included acts creating counties, incorporating cities, and authorizing a large number of toll roads, toll bridges, ferries, and a telegraph line. A few utilities, such as an illuminating gas company for Idaho City and a mining ditch company for Grasshopper Creek (now in Montana) were also authorized. Altogether, the first session of the Idaho legislature had a busy sixty days. The bulk of their work, though, only lasted for part of a year: the second session which met late in 1864 decided that the first session codes were defective and ought to be replaced. This was done, although to limited advantage, since the second session's codes were not printed until after the third session completed its labors—and then the territorial secretary stole the printing money and escaped to Hong Kong, so that the unpaid printer held back the printed Idaho Code in San Francisco for several years while he waited for his money. In the meantime, everyone could only wonder what Idaho's laws were.