

### CHAPTER 3. HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Initial research at the park focused upon transcontinental railroad history (Ketterson 1969; Ketterson and Utley 1969; Utley 1960) and was oriented almost exclusively toward park significance and reconstruction of the 1869 historic scene – the May 10 act of driving the Last Spike. Appleman (1966) and Utley (1960) provided the historic documentation for establishment and initial development of the National Historic Site, and Ketterson's (1969) base maps were the foundation for the National Park Service 1968-1969 reconstruction of the May 10, 1869 historic last spike scene. Unfortunately, this research was pressured and rushed because of the need to complete the reconstruction by its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary on May 10, 1969. And around the time of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, Ketterson suggested that his track layout reconstruction was erroneous (Ketterson 1977). Subsequently, historic photographs, aerial photographs, and archeological investigations (Anderson and Ketterson 1978a, Jones 1979) have documented the correct alignment of the tracks, the location of the there-to-fore elusive Union Pacific wye (Figure 3.1), and the actual meeting point where the Union Pacific grade joined with the Central Pacific grade (not the site where the last spike was driven).

In the early 1970s, the National Park Service initiated preparation of a Master Plan for the park. This effort included National Park Service Archeologist Anderson, whose responsibility was to provide cultural information for the plan. Because of the many campsites and other on-the-ground features that had been noted by park staff, this effort also resulted in a reconnaissance-level survey of park resources, evaluation of then-available historic records, location of the UP wye and actual meeting point of the CP and UP grades, and preparation of the park's first cultural resource base map (Anderson and Ketterson 1978b). Also, in the early 1970s park Interpreter Ellis LeFevre, who had informally located a number of the construction worker camps, carried out informal test excavations on several historic features at Promontory Summit, including what he believed to be the roundhouse that had been built by the Southern Pacific (LeFevre 1974).

In the late 1970s, the park was preparing to receive working replica Central Pacific Jupiter and Union Pacific 119 locomotives. The greatest needs were to turn the reconstructed railroad track into a functional roadbed and track and to construct a locomotive storage/maintenance facility (engine house). It was decided to further archeologically investigate the actual track alignments in the headquarters area – especially the Union Pacific siding (Jones 1979) - and to correct the earlier, erroneous reconstruction. The decision was also made, with Anderson on the Planning Team, to make use of the historic Union Pacific wye to enable the locomotives to “turn around,” and to be the site of the locomotive storage/maintenance facility. Because the “tail” of the wye where this facility was built was a cut, it served as an effective means of lowering the profile of this two-story building and lessening its impact on the historic scene. Several options for building non-historic track alignments to a storage facility were considered, but were rejected because of their intrusive, confusing, and non-historic nature (National Park Service 1978). It finally was determined that “continuity of use” of the historic railroad wye, analogous to continued use of a historic structure for its original purpose, would