Introduction

> Arizona was one of the finest lands in the world and all they lacked was plenty of water and good society.
>
> —attributed to Samuel Woodworth Cozzens.[1]

Mid-nineteenth-century Arizona was not a separate or distinct place at all. Instead, this remote and often violent region was part of New Mexico Territory, which had been created in 1850. The original New Mexico Territory included most of present-day Arizona, then labeled "Santa Ana County," as well as portions of present-day Colorado and Utah.

Spanish Exploration

From the beginning, the European experience in Arizona was about souls, silver, and gold, but not necessarily in that order. During the spring of 1539, a Franciscan missionary entered the Tombstone region of southeast Arizona looking for the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola, a myth originating in about the year 1150 during the Moorish conquest of Spain holding that seven bishops had fled to a far away land with all their riches. The Spanish explorer Francisco Vasquez de Coronado doubted this place even existed, yet taking no chances on missing a fortune, he led a fruitless two-year expedition seeking the mythical cities of gold in 1540-1542[2] and passed within a few miles of rich silver deposits that later would be mined in the Tombstone area.[3] Some forty years later, the former Inquisition officer Antonio de Espejo turned west from the vicinity of Albuquerque into present-day Arizona but failed to find any mineral wealth. Finally in November 1598, conquistador Juan de Onate ordered an expedition to the vicinity of present-day Prescott, where at last rich silver ore was discovered.

The focus of Spanish exploration returned to religious purposes with the arrival of Franciscan missionaries at various Hopi settlements in 1629. Fifty-one years later, in response to the Inquisition and labor exploitation, the natives launched the Great Pueblo Revolt in present-day New Mexico, which prompted the brown-clad monks to seek evangelistic opportunities elsewhere. Eventually, a series of rudimentary Jesuit mission stations known as *visitas* were established to the south in Sonora.

One story relates that in 1736, huge boulders of native silver weighing up to 2,500 pounds were found on a ranch owned by Bernardo de Urrea. The boulders were covered by oak trees and thus referred to as *aritzona*, roughly translated as “the good oak.” Silver in significant quantities was also discovered that year at a small village about twenty-five miles southwest of present-day Nogales, called Ali-Shonak, perhaps a Tohono O’odham word for “place of the small springs.” The Spanish corruption of this term, “Arizonac,” eventually was corrupted again perhaps to become Arizona.[4] A presidio (fort) was built there in about 1751 following a Pima Indian uprising. Later, the presidio was reestablished at present-day Tucson, setting the stage for ranching and mining operations as well as the founding of new missions. At about the same time, a second military presidio was established in 1775 near the later site of Fairbank.[5]

This was all accomplished before a treaty with the

Apaches was arranged in about 1780. When the treaty was repudiated following the establishment of the Republic of Mexico in 1821, the Apaches and other tribes began raiding settlements throughout present-day Arizona, a tradition that continued into the 1880s.[6] Indian raids were particularly devastating for the cattle ranchers. The Hopi Indians, also in what is now Arizona, had grazed cattle centuries before the Jesuit missionaries copied their practices even as they sought to convert the natives to the new religion.[7] The Apaches resented the wide-ranging cattle grazing enjoyed by their new neighbors and contained such efforts in the Santa Cruz Valley. Thus, even though by the late 1840s, parts of southern Arizona were inhabited by feral cattle, there was no large-scale ranching there until after the Civil War.

One of the cattlemen of that era driving herds to California from Texas was stern New Englander Henry C. Hooker, founder of the Sierra Bonita Ranch in the Sulphur Spring Valley, a well-watered place close to two Indian reservations and two military forts. Hooker had established his Arizona Territory cattle ranch with the proceeds from the sale of five hundred turkeys to mining camps in Nevada. Later, he briefly employed Henry McCarty, known to history as "Billy the Kid." Hooker owned about eleven thousand head of cattle by the mid-1870s, according to one report.[8] Smaller ranchers established themselves near present-day Prescott, Wickenburg, and Phoenix. Hooker shared the Arizona grasslands with the Middleton and Ellison families of Pleasant Valley and the Tonto Basin, who began operations in the mid-1870s.

Sheep grazing, which Arizona tribes began in the 1600s, accelerated with the European arrivals. By 1890, approximately seven hundred thousand sheep populated the Arizona Territory.[9]

The Republic of Mexico Era

Among the first Anglo-Americans to explore the region in the 1820s was Kentuckian James Ohio Pattie, whose account of frontier exploration in the Southwest and California is today considered a mixture of fact and fiction.[10]

The American war against Mexico in 1846 brought Col. Stephen Watts Kearney and his Army of the West to seize the region. Kearney was a son-in-law of William Clark of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Kearney was ordered to seize the region and he did so, but only after sending a secret emissary ahead from Bent's Fort on the Arkansas to Santa Fe with financial inducements for New Mexico governor Manuel Armijo, who soon skedaddled. This arrangement set the stage for the triumphant entry of the American army into Santa Fe on August 18, 1846, accompanied by some four hundred wagons loaded with merchandise.[11]

Three months later, a detachment of some five hundred men accompanied by a small group of camp followers forced their way into the dusty little adobe village called Tucson, forcing the Mexican commander to flee south to Mission San Xavier without firing a shot. This was the Mormon Battalion led by Capt. Philip St. George Cooke, which had been tasked to build a road across the desert from Santa Fe to California. Cooke is considered "the father of the U.S. cavalry" and was father-in-law to the famous Confederate general J. E. B. Stuart. At the direction of Brigham Young, five companies were recruited under Cooke, with the leadership cadre including Lt. George Stoneman, who later became governor of California. The battalion was mustered into service on July 16, 1846, at Council Bluffs, Iowa, and opened a southern wagon route for travelers through Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona which terminated in San Diego.[12] The battalion fought its only engagement on the San Pedro River in southeastern

Arizona on December 9 when several wild bulls there charged the column, killing several mules. One bull was shot six times before it succumbed to rifle fire.[13]

A Sergeant Tyler recorded that in places along the march, "the men . . . had to pull at long ropes to aid the teams [of horses]. The deep sand alone without any load was enough to wear out both man and beast." On November 18, near a place Tyler described as the "Mimbres," he observed, "no matter where you cast your eye, a most beautiful, grassy plain attracts your vision, stretching out as far you can discern."[14]

The expedition found some four to five hundred inhabitants and two hundred soldiers at the Tucson presidio. The commander, Captain Comaduran, initially refused to surrender but eventually permitted the American column to march though the town and on to the junction of the Gila and Colorado Rivers.[15] When the battalion arrived at the San Diego Mission on January 29, 1847, Captain Cooke observed, "History may search in vain for an equal march of infantry."[16]

A year later, Mexico recognized the annexation of Texas; ceded present-day Arizona, California, and New Mexico; and relinquished parts of present-day Colorado, Nevada, and Utah to the United States in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.[17] The United States had offered to purchase much of northern Mexico, including some seaports, for fifty million dollars at the conclusion of the Mexican War but settled for some thirty thousand square miles[18] and slowly established a presence in this vast emptiness. Soon, prospective miners, pioneers, and adventurers began traveling in large numbers across Arizona on the southern route to the California gold rush.

On Christmas Day, 1851, two American surveyors, alongside soldiers occupying Fort Yuma, narrowly survived death at the hands of the Apaches. They were spared when one of the surveyors was recognized by an Indian girl he had saved in the desert two years before. The fort had been established in October 1849 on the California side of the Colorado River across from present-day Yuma, Arizona. Fort Defiance was established two years later in northeast Arizona about twenty-five miles from Gallup, New Mexico. The Defiance cadre resisted a large-scale Indian attack on April 30, 1860, only to abandon the place with the commencement of the American Civil War. Fort Buchanan was established in 1856 south of Tucson, and Fort Mohave three years later, providing the rest of the scant American military presence in the Arizona portion of New Mexico Territory.[19]

An Early Arizona Outlaw

Legend has it that a Dr. Able Lincoln established a ferry at Yuma Crossing in about 1850 and made some $60,000 ($1.5 million today) taking gold prospectors on their way to California across the Colorado. This soon drew the unwelcome attention of an outlaw with an eye for profit. John Joel Glanton was a veteran of the east Texas Regulator-Moderator War and leader of his own gang of adventurers. He forced Lincoln to take him in as a partner in the ferry operations but both Lincoln and the Glanton gang were supposedly killed by enterprising Yuma Indians competing with them for ferry customers.[20]

Soon thereafter, rudimentary steamboats began to ply a route to Fort Yuma. The *General Jessup* began operations in 1852, hauling as many as fifty tons of freight at the profitable rate of fifty dollars per ton. A military vessel described as a “water-borne wheelbarrow” joined the tiny fleet five years later, setting the stage for Lt. Joseph Ives to become the first known white man to reach the bottom of the Grand Canyon.

One year earlier, former naval officer Edward "Ned" Fitzgerald Beale of the U.S. Corps of Topographical Engineers had been directed to build a wagon road through northern Arizona. The year 1857 marked the first stage runs across Arizona, from San Antonio to San Diego. The principal town in the 1850s was Tucson, which had a civil population of about one hundred residents after the Mexican garrison departed in March 1856.[21] American dragoons arrived eighteen months later.

Confederate Arizona Territory

Much of what we know today as southern Arizona and New Mexico was first organized as a Confederate territory, created in 1861 after federal soldiers fled the area at the beginning of the Civil War. Since strong secessionist sentiment existed in that region at the beginning of hostilities, a secessionist convention was held at Mesilla, New Mexico Territory, on March 16, 1861, and pro-Southern Texas forces took possession of that town on July 25. The "Battle of Mesilla," launched by the small but bold Second Texas Mounted Rifles, prompted federal forces under Maj. Isaac Lynde to flee north. On August 1, Col. John Baylor formally issued a Proclamation to the People of the Territory of Arizona, taking possession of present-day southern Arizona and New Mexico for the Confederacy. Southern legislation implementing these measures was passed in January 1862 and the Confederate territory was officially created by proclamation of Confederate president Jefferson Davis on February 14.

This state of affairs was short lived. The Battle of Glorieta Pass, in northern New Mexico, a two-day engagement in late March, has been described by some historians as the "Gettysburg of the West" even though it involved few troops.[22] At the conclusion of the engagement, Texans led by Maj. Charles L. Pyron and Lt. Col. William Read Scurry departed for Texas via Santa Fe. Although an April 15 engagement known as the Battle of Pichacho Pass or Pichacho Peak was a draw, the eventual demise of Confederate Arizona Territory was readily apparent. Five months after the Davis declaration, Union forces arrived at Mesilla, forcing the Confederate territorial government into a comfortable yet humiliating exile at San Antonio.

Confederate and Union interest in present-day Arizona had been prompted by the need for roads and trails westward to California, as well as the prospect of mineral wealth which turned remote places like Gila City and Tubac—near Tucson—into boom towns in the late 1850s. Pres. Abraham Lincoln signed the Arizona Organic Act, making the land within present-day Arizona a United States territory, on February 24, 1863. Territorial governor John N. Goodwin located the first capital at Fort Whipple primarily because Tucson was perceived as a haven for former secessionists. The first location was succeeded by Prescott (1864), Tucson (1867), Prescott again (1877), and finally Phoenix (1889).

The largest population regions in the first ten years after the American Civil War were Tucson and nearby Tubac, followed by Yuma, La Paz, Ehrenberg, Gila City, Prescott, and Wickenburg.[23] The sparse 1866 population of Arizona Territory consisted of 5,526 whites and Hispanics as well as 25,000 Native Americans.

Despite the small population, lawlessness had prevailed in the new territory for many years. During 1857 and the following year, there were a number of murders at Tucson. Danger and corruption were everywhere. In April 1871, U.S. Marshal Edward Phelps was killed by Mexican bandits. His successor, Isaac Q. Dickason, abandoned his office and died as a bookkeeper in Deadwood, South Dakota, after embezzling twelve thousand dollars in federal funds.[24] On

September 2, 1879, Deputy U.S. Marshals J. H. Adams and Cornelius Finley were murdered by outlaws south of Tucson.[25] Lawmen were not the only ones susceptible to the perils of the West. Gila River ranchers were sometimes compelled in that era to abandon their homes because of Mexican and American outlaws. The John Baker family was massacred in 1871 in the Gila Valley only about a year after a deputy U.S. marshal stationed there was killed in a bar fight over a barmaid.[26] A series of notorious highwaymen, notably including Bill Brazelton, who had arrived in 1877 from California as the owner of a show troupe, also roamed the territory.

The "Cowboy" Problem

Soon, Mexican authorities alerted American officials about Arizona outlaws selling stolen horses in Mexico. The governor reported early the next year that the cowboy element numbered about one hundred. The first leader, alleged to be Robert Martin, was replaced by Newman H. "Old Man" Clanton, whose sons included Phineas ("Phin"), Joseph Isaac ("Ike"), and William ("Billy"). The cowboy host included Tom and Frank McLaury, John Ringo, and "Curly Bill" Brocius, who has often been identified, or perhaps mis-identified, as William Graham.[27]

In July 1879, cattle stolen in Mexico were reportedly being offered to Americans about fifty miles from the border. Two Pima County deputy sheriffs found stolen stock at Fort San Carlos and offered to pursue the rustlers for a fee.[28]

Rancher Sam Aaron later recalled encountering John Ringo and some seventy others camped among the tall pines of the Chiricahua Mountains. Frank and Tom McLaury eventually provided holding pens for such cattle acquisitions at their new place, established in late 1880, about twenty-five miles east of Tombstone in Sulphur Spring Valley.[29] The McLaury location was four miles south of Soldier's Hole, a crossroads near the White River. Sam Aaron claimed that the rustlers would steal as many as two thousand cattle in Mexico, near Sonora, and then sell them at two to three dollars a head. However, mining rather than ranching became the impetus for Arizona settlement.

Early Arizona Mining

The first prominent Anglo miner in the San Pedro Valley near Tombstone was Charles DeBrille Poston[30] (b. 1825), a Kentucky native who had first migrated to San Francisco. Poston (Posten) was recruited by a French mining syndicate to prospect in southeastern Arizona. His expedition survived an 1854 shipwreck in the Gulf of California and journeyed to the Santa Cruz Valley south of Tucson, where they found promising silver deposits.[31] Poston eventually returned to California, reported to the syndicate, and then incorporated the Sonora Exploring and Mining Company with Maj. Samuel P. Heintzelman, whom he had met at Fort Yuma.

Life was not easy at the mining operations Poston developed near Tubac, the old presidio which Poston and his men occupied and rehabilitated, but there were certain amenities made possible by the purchase of the Avoca Ranch nearby:

> Supplies to feed the miners . . . were easily obtainable. Wild game—quail, ducks and deer—abounded in the vicinity, so that even a poor hunter could keep the dining table well supplied with meat. Poston hired a German gardener who fenced in and cultivated a field with irrigation water from the Santa Cruz River, thereby providing fresh vegetables. . . . The company's table, open and free of

> charge to travelers, became famous for the richness and diversity of its spread. Of this period at Tubac, when Arizona was still a part of New Mexico Territory and civil officials of all types were virtually unknown, Poston later reminisced, "we had no law but love and no occupation but labor. No government, no taxes, no public debt, no politics. It was a perfect state of nature."[32]

Apparently conditions were too perfect. Archbishop Jean Baptiste Lamy of Santa Fe learned of this idyllic state and tasked Fr. Joseph Machebeuf to investigate. Poston had assumed the role of an early day Judge Roy Bean.[33] The mining manager celebrated the rites of marriage, baptized children, granted divorces, and executed criminals, as the *alcalde* (magistrate) of that pueblo. Business was good since Poston charged nothing for marriages and sometimes hired the bridegroom after the nuptials. Father Machebeuf reportedly resolved the sacramental dilemma by blessing the marriages already performed on the assurance that Poston would stop performing the rites of the church.[34]

One of Poston's employees opened a competing mine in 1859. The Brunkow, sometimes whimsically described as the Bronco or Broncho, eventually was considered to be jinxed since the original owner, Frederick Brunkow, and two later proprietors met violent deaths there. Brunkow was a graduate of the school of mines at Freiberg in Saxony. He fled Germany after the Revolution of 1848 and began his Arizona mining career near Tucson with the Sonora Exploring and Mining Company. Brunkow later started the St. Louis Mining Company and selected a spot on the San Pedro River to begin operations. He hired a number of Mexican nationals from Sonora for his operations, as was common. On July 23, 1860, the Mexican employees slaughtered nearly everyone at the mine. This was also common, but the danger had apparently been overlooked in the Brunkow business plan. Only the cook was spared, supposedly because he was Catholic. Brunkow partner William M. Williams discovered the massacre of Brunkow; Williams' own brother, James Williams; and J.C. Moss after returning from a trip to Fort Buchanan, some fifty miles away, for supplies. He found Brunkow at the bottom of a well with a rock drill stabbed into his body.[35]

In spite of such dangers, other adventurers looked for opportunities in the region. One Henry Crabb even attempted to establish a new government in Sonora but he and his followers were eradicated by military force. Soon, some Anglos attacked a band of Apaches, prompting Cochise to begin raids throughout the Santa Cruz Valley, culminating in yet another destruction of the presidio at Tubac as Charles DeBrille Poston and his mining partners fled for their lives.[36]

Milton B. Duffield, a colorful United States marshal in territorial days, became owner of the Brunkow Mine on October 23, 1866, by means which are a mystery to this day. Eventually, Duffield was mortally wounded attempting to reclaim the ill-fated mine from a competitor; Mr. Joseph T. Holmes resolved the dispute on June 5, 1874, by emptying both barrels of a shotgun into Duffield's cranium after "fair warning." Holmes was convicted of manslaughter but escaped from prison and was never seen again.[37] Duffield did not own the mine at the time of his death, or so it seemed, since his housekeeper, Mrs. Mary E. Vaughn, told the Tucson citizenry that trespassers were not welcome there in a July 4, 1874, advertisement in the *Tucson Citizen.* The Pima County Book of Mines revealed to anyone interested that Duffield had transferred ownership to Mrs. Vaughn about a year earlier, perhaps to avoid creditors.

There were some eleven thousand mining claims in Arizona by 1876, in three principal regions: Mohave County, the Prescott area, and the Globe-Superior area, which hosted the Silver King mine.

A Place Called Tombstone

Some noted in 1879 that outlaws of southern Arizona Territory were protected by Mexican authorities, and about thirty-six stage and mail coach holdups occurred in this era.[38] Much of the crime occurred in the region around Tombstone. The settlement had been started by Pennsylvanian Edward L. "Ed" Schieffelin, who had entered his own mining claim two years before. He later described at length how it all happened[39]:

> In January 1877, I outfitted in San Bernardino, with two mules and all the necessary apparatus for prospecting and left there after outfitting, with twenty-five or thirty dollars in money, going to what is called the Hualapai country, on the borders of the Grand Canyon, not far from Hackberry. While I was there prospecting, a company of Hualapai scouts enlisted to go into the southern part of the Territory scouting for Apaches. I had been there about two months and had not found anything, and thinking that it would be a good opportunity to prospect, to follow the scouting party about through the country and thus be protected from the Indians, I went down with them and arrived at Camp Huachuca about the first of April.

He became acquainted with several of the soldiers and took short trips through the country alone, coming back to the camp. He discovered that he could not prospect while with the soldiers, so he struck out alone.[40]

> Whenever I went into Camp Huachuca for supplies on one of my trips, some of the soldiers would frequently ask me if I found anything. The answer was always the same that I had not found anything yet, but I would strike it one of these days in that country. The Indians at that time were very troublesome, and many settlers were killed previous to and during the year. Several times in reply to my remark

> that I would eventually find something in that country, the soldiers said, "Yes, you'll find your tombstone," and repeated that several times. The word lingered in my mind, and when I got into that country where Tombstone is now located, I gave the name to the first location that I made. On the organization of the [mining] district it was called Tombstone from that location.

Soon, he had an opportunity to help a contractor working on the old Brunkow Mine, near the present site of Tombstone. From his vantage point guarding the operation, he could see what were later known as the Tombstone hills and noticed "a number of ledges in the neighborhood, all running in the same direction, about northwest and southeast." Later, he explored the nearby hills and "found some float."[41] What happened next reveals a great deal about how casual mining camp conversations sometimes developed into partnerships:

> That night I came into the camp of the two men, who were going into Tucson the next day. . . .One of them, William Griffith . . . proposed to furnish me with provisions and to have such assays made as were necessary, to pay for recording, etc., if I would locate a claim for him at the same time I located one for myself. . . . To this I agreed and told him that one of us should build the monument and the other have the choice of claims; that I would not have any partners, as he knew, from what I told him before, several times while we were at work. This was agreed upon and the two men went the next day into Tucson.

Griffith changed his mind regarding the claim. Instead he made a Desert Act[42] claim with more potential. While Griffith returned to Tombstone, Schieffelin kept himself busy by finding two claims, later called the Tombstone and the Graveyard. Griffith also turned down the opportunity to prospect those mines but eventually helped record the

Tombstone claim, even as Schieffelin faced dim prospects.

> I was now reduced to the last extremity; without provisions, almost without clothing, and with but thirty cents in money. There was plenty of game at hand, and I subsisted on the deer I killed. After a few days, I thought my best plan was to hunt up my brother Albert, whom I had last heard of working in the Silver King Mine. . . . He had some money, and we could have assays made, and could obtain supplies. . . .
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> About that time the company sent a man named Richard Gird[43] to the Signal Mine[44] to assay for them, and he erected a little office and started his furnace. My brother Al was acquainted with Gird. . . . One day Al took some of the ore to Gird. . . . After looking at the ore, Gird asked where it had come from. Al replied that he did not know that I had brought it there from the southern part of the Territory. "Well," said Gird, "the best thing you can do is to find out where that ore came from, and take me with you and start for the place."

Later, Gird assayed samples which ranged in value up to two thousand dollars per ton, the richest find to that date in southeast Arizona. The Schieffelin brothers and Dick Gird departed the Signal Mine on February 14, 1878, for the Tombstone claim, prompting curiosity and even some rivals. A site nearby had been called Watervale or Waterville but shifted about two miles to the southeast to occupy Goose Flats, an elevated slice of open desert over the Tough Nut mine. Soon the place was called Tombstone. Schieffelin also brought in the Lucky Cuss and Tough Nut mines that year.

Yet another legendary mine of the area was the Contention, for which a small adjoining hamlet was later named. The Contention was so called because prospector Hank Williams claimed it as his own, until Richard Gird and the Schieffelin brothers pointed out that this was a joint claim which must be divided as agreed.[45] It was part of the Grand Central claim, which had been established on March 27, 1878.[46] The Contention was sold in May 1878 and yielded $5 million in ore by 1886.

Schieffelin had incorporated the Tough Nut and Corbin Mill and Mining companies by early 1879 and departed on another prospecting venture. When he returned to the Tombstone area in February 1880, he discovered that investors were soon to arrive from Philadelphia. They bought the Schieffelin brothers' interest in the Tough Nut mine for $600,000 ($13 million today). The Tombstone mine, for which the most famous town in the American West had been named, was sold for a few hundred dollars. Although wealthy, Schieffelin died seventeen years later while still prospecting, this time near Canyonville, Oregon.[47]