Deep Human History
in Escalante Valley and Southern Utah

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Southern Utah is a land of spectacular canyons and high plateaus that resisted Anglo exploration and settlement until well after the mid-nineteenth century. Historian Jerry Roundy has described the region north of the Colorado and south and east of the Wasatch Plateaus as a blank spot on maps as late as 1868. The first European explorations came via Mormon militiamen who traveled through the region in 1866 at the height of the Black Hawk War. Then, in 1871 Jacob Hamblin visited Escalante Valley as he attempted to supply the Powell Expedition but failed as the Escalante River was mistaken for the Dirty Devil. Almon H. Thompson made a similar journey the following year and camped for a time in the valley. Mormons finally settled Escalante town in 1875; nearby Boulder was not established until 1889.

A Brigham Young University archaeology student stands next to prehistoric rock art near North Creek Shelter in Escalante Valley.

The authors want to thank property owners Jeff and Joette Rex for their gracious hospitality and for permission to excavate the site. Much of the site remains undisturbed, protected, and potentially available for future research. We acknowledge and thank the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument staff for in-kind support on the project. Financial and resource support came from the Charles Redd Center and College of Family Home and Social Sciences at Brigham Young University, the Anthropology Department and Graduate and Professional Student Association, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and the National Science Foundation Award No. BCS-0818971.

1 Jerry Roundy, Advised Them to Call the Place Escalante, (Springville: Art City Publishing, 2000), 12.
2 Roundy, Advised them to Call the Place Escalante, 136.
But this ruggedly captivating landscape was not foreign to earlier peoples. In fact, ethnographic and archaeological research on the headwaters of the Escalante River has found clear evidence that people were drawn to the region as early as any place in Utah—as much as ten thousand years ago. Archaeological excavations at pre-European settlements in and around Escalante Valley began as early as the 1920s. Particularly important was the work done in advance of the construction of the Glen Canyon dam in the 1950s, which resulted in the University of Utah’s excavations at the Coombs site in Boulder and the subsequent establishment of Anasazi State Park. Most recently, archaeologists have uncovered the earliest known evidence of human presence in the valley and are exploring what their lives and world was like thousands of years ago.

In recent times small bands of Southern Paiute roamed the Circle Cliffs, the southern flanks of the Aquarius Plateau, and along the Straight Cliffs that mark the northern margin of the Kaiparowits Plateau. Ethnographer Isabel Kelly referred to these linguistic relatives of the Utes as the Kaiparowits Band of the Southern Paiute. Central to their territory was the well-watered Escalante Valley, known as Potato Valley to the early pioneers, most likely due to the presence of Solanum janesii, or wild potato.

The valley is surrounded on three sides by highlands: the Black Hills on the north, Big Flat on the east, and the Straight Cliffs on the west and south. The Escalante River, formed by the confluence of Upper Valley Creek, Birch Creek, and North Creek, flows through town and is refreshed and enlarged east of town by Pine Creek. Flatter lands known as the Escalante Desert stretch to the southeast toward the Colorado River and the Hole-in-the-Rock trail made famous by early pioneers on their way to establish Bluff, Utah in 1880. Mormons scouting the valley prior to

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5 See Isabel Kelly, *Southern Paiute Ethnography*, Anthropological Papers No 69 (Glen Canyon Series No. 21). (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964) for details on the native peoples that frequented the region; Also Jerry C. Roundy provides some early accounts of encounters of Southern Paiute peoples in Potato Valley, Roundy, *Advised Them to Call the Place Escalante*, 79.

6 J. Bamberg, A. Del Rio, A. Huaman, M. Martin, A. Salas, J. Pavek, S. Kiru, C. Fernandez, and D. Spooner, “A Decade of Collecting and Research on Wild Potatoes of the Southwest USA.” *American Journal of Potato Research* 80 (2003):159-72. This identification was also confirmed by Terry Tolbert, a botanist with the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.

settlement encountered wintering Paiutes who acted as guides for the newcomers. Before Anglo arrival, the Kaiparowits Paiute subsisted on wild foods leaving farming to those at lower elevations. Traces of their presence are seen in rock art panels and occasionally material items such as brown ware pottery and small arrow points are found in archaeological sites dated to this most recent pre-European past.

Evidences of earlier and denser populations are abundant throughout the region, however. These include remnants of farmers called the Fremont and Anasazi (or Ancestral Pueblo) by archaeologists. The genetic relationship between the Paiute and these earlier farmers is not clear, but studies to date suggest the Paiute are not related to either the Anasazi or Fremont, but moved into the region within last one thousand years. Anasazi farmsteads dot the top of Fifty Mile Mountain, and Anasazi State Park celebrates and interprets one of several Puebloan villages in Boulder Valley. Interacting with and occupying the area just prior to the Anasazi were the Fremont. These Fremont farmers are discussed later, but this paper initially focuses on a much earlier time, shortly after the close of the Pleistocene era. The story of the earliest people is told relying on the sequence of material remains left at a specific place: the juncture of North Creek and other headwaters of the Escalante River, just a few miles west of Escalante.

An aerial view reveals the wisdom of living at this location. To the north are vast uplands culminating in the massive Aquarius Plateau while broad lowlands lie south and east. This was and is a strategic location from which people had access to both lowland and upland plants and animals and the assurance of permanent water. It was here that Almon Thompson and his crew camped coming and going on their adventurous trek to the mouth of the Dirty Devil in the early 1870s, and it was here that Isaac Riddle established an early grist mill a few years later to supply Escalante townspeople with flour.

And it is here that archaeologists from Brigham Young University discovered North Creek Shelter, a deep archaeological site that is providing

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6 Roundy, Advised Them to Call the Place Escalante, 80. The Kaiparowits Southern Paiute bands are now largely merged with the Kaibab or the Paiute Tribe of Utah with headquarters near Kanab area and Cedar City respectively.


8 The final report on the archaeological work at what is now Anasazi State Park can be found in: Robert H. Lister and Florence C. Lister, The Coombs Site, Part III. Anthropological Papers No 41. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1961).

9 The Pleistocene is that era marked by massive ice sheets across much of North American and which persisted until roughly ten thousand years ago after which climates shifted toward a warmer and drier regime. Following the Pleistocene is the Holocene, the geological epoch of our time. Together the Pleistocene and the Holocene are known as the Quaternary.
information on the earliest known human
presence in Escalante Valley and on the
Colorado Plateau. Much of the site lies at the
base of a southwest-facing sandstone cliff, although pottery fragments,
debris from making stone tools, animal bone fragments, and darkened soil
from millennia of cooking fires are scattered down the slope from the cliff
for a considerable distance. These surface artifacts do not occur randomly
but are patchy as they likely represent remnants of houses and discrete areas
of human activity. A few pinyon and juniper trees grow on the slope along
with serviceberry and Fremont barberry bushes. A dense stand of Gambel’s
oak flourishes at the slope base along the east edge of the North Creek
flood plain.

Site discovery and exploration began in 2003 when a student on the
BYU archaeological field school mentioned that her relatives, the Rex
family, had an archaeological site on their property at the mouth of North
Creek. That precipitated a visit to the family who generously allowed
access. That initial visit found the abundant surface artifacts, rock art, and
Fremont-age granaries mentioned above. All this is located a few hundred
feet upslope from the Rex home. With landowner permission, archaeolo-
gists began excavations in the summer of 2004 and quickly discovered the
exceptional site depth. Work continued on a seasonal basis until 2008.

Archaeologists attempt to narrate human history through the study
of abandoned houses and discarded materials left behind which were
then buried by later occupations and/or geological action. In Utah it is
only after European arrival in the 1700s that Utah’s history is preserved through writing, although people have lived here for millennia. Insights into earlier times come from archaeology and Native American oral traditions. The value of places like North Creek Shelter lies in the stacked layers of human occupation that tells the tale of change in the human experience through associated artifacts, site improvements, and climatic information. Sorting through those layers is like flipping quickly though a picture book to animate otherwise inanimate or still photos. The many layers of deposition at this site were (and are) derived from sands and silts carried by rainfall and snow melt from the mesa top above the site. These water-borne sediments flowed down vertical cracks in the cliff and across the site area burying debris, storage pits, and fire hearths abandoned by the last group to occupy the shelter. These artifacts are tactile remnants of human presence that illuminate our understanding of the quest for food, shelter, personal adornment, and technological innovation. Occasionally archaeologists find artifacts or other evidence that hint at human relationships or even beliefs. Rock art, burial practices or clay figurines, which are common in Fremont occupations, are thought to offer glimpses into ancient belief systems, but often the true function of these items is problematic and requires thoughtful speculation.

History implies a time-sequent narration and archaeologists often prioritize tracking change over time. The following discussion relies on labels regional archaeologists use to sort temporal change and to characterize lives of past peoples.

Archaeologists have labeled the earliest time in Utah’s human history the Paleoarchaic (the ancient old period), which is represented by the deepest human occupation at North Creek Shelter found over eleven feet below current ground surface. This level dates to eleven thousand years ago. Information from this time is scarce; in fact, there are currently no other

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12 Eric Wolf in his well known text, *Europe and People without History*, (Berkeley: University of California 1982) draws attention to non-literate societies such as those who visited North Creek Shelter. Wolf notes that people lacking written records were often excluded from history texts in Europe, but they clearly played an active role in affecting the historical trajectory of European nations and whose societies were in turn affected by contact with Europeans. Archaeology is a discipline that reveals the history of non-literate societies, although many archaeologists investigate cultures with written records.

13 This geological study is contained in Thomas H. Morris and Tanner C. Hicks, “Sedimentology and Depositional History of North Creek Shelter, Escalante Valley, Ut.” (Ms on file, Department of Anthropology, Brigham Young University, 2009).

14 For an excellent foray into understanding Fremont societies and belief systems through archaeology see the recent text by Steven R. Simms and Francois Gohier, *Traces of Fremont* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010).

15 This largely follows the work of Phil Geib in his temporal sequence for southern Utah presented in Glen Canyon Revisited, Anthropological paper No. 119. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1996) 26. It should be noted that Geib does not mention the Paleoarchaic as no sites from this early period were known at the time. The dates for this period are based on work at North Creek Shelter.

16 This date represents actual calendar years. To get this date a radiocarbon age of 9960 ± 60 BP was adjusted or calibrated using tree ring counts. The dates in this article are all expressed in tree ring calibrated ages to provide true age.
sites dating to this period known on the Colorado Plateau. Sites of similar age are known in the Rocky Mountains and the Great Basin, however, and have yielded evidence that this was a time when people relied on wild foods to sustain life.17

People using North Creek Shelter during this earliest period would have seen a different world from that seen today by site visitors. Rather than the scattered pinyon pines and juniper now present, one would see Douglas fir and aspen trees. Pine and juniper were present too, although the pine may have been ponderosa or limber pine rather than pinyon.18 In other words, the valley would have been more like the upper slopes of Boulder Mountain, a cooler, wetter landscape with aspens and conifers common. This reconstruction is possible by the identification of wood charcoal from the early site levels. The conclusion that climates were wetter is also based on geological study which tells us that the earliest levels built up rapidly due to increased rain and snow amounts. This scenario of cooler, wetter weather was widespread across southern Utah at the close of the

17 See Bonnie L. Pitldado, Late Paleoindian Occupation of the Southern Rocky Mountains (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, Boulder, 2003), and Jesse D. Jennings, Prehistory of Utah and the Eastern Great Basin, Anthropological Papers No. 98, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1978) for more on early sites in the region.

18 Dave Rhode of the Desert Research Institute in Reno, Nevada, has tentatively identified ponderosa pine charcoal from the early levels at the site.
Pleistocene as other studies have concluded that Douglas fir and aspen forests were as much as a thousand feet lower in elevation than their modern range.19

Early hunters pursuing prey in this rich landscape were successful at capturing deer but also smaller animals: beaver and marmots, ducks, blue grouse, and, surprisingly, turkey. The latter is represented by only a few bones, but those remains tell us turkey was present in southern Utah very early in the Holocene, about 10,500 years ago. This suggests that wild turkey was native to southern Utah. The absence of turkey in later deposits may be a consequence of changing climate and the loss of habitat preferred by turkeys. To date turkey bones have not been found in the more recent past—after two thousand years ago—north of extreme southern Utah.21

These early hunters used the atlatl, a throwing stick used to propel a three-foot-long wooden shaft tipped with unique stemmed stone projectile points. Artifacts and bone scrap from one level tell the story of successful hunters who brought their prey to the shelter where they and probably other family members butchered the animal, stripped the meat from bones with sharpened stones, and, using rounded river cobbles as hammer and anvil, cracked long bones open to remove the nutritious marrow. Meat not consumed immediately was dried and mixed with fat and berries for future use. Tools were routinely resharpened and new ones made resulting in the generation of thousands of small stone flakes mingled with other debris. An ashy hearth area adjacent to the scatter of bones, tools, and cobbles is evidence of these activities. The abundance of tools and quantities of resharpening flakes along with the amount of bone suggests people stayed here for a time, perhaps as much as several weeks. Charred seeds from weedy plants were also recovered, perhaps evidence that women and children were present.22 Traditional roles for women in hunting and gathering societies was plant procurement and processing, although they and children certainly did some hunting, especially of smaller animals. A cobbble with remnants of red ochre provides a hint that people were using this mineral for body painting or rock art. Red ochre or hematite was mined, pounded into a powder, and mixed with animal fat to make a greasy pigment that appears in many ancient contexts in Utah.

19 See Julio Betancourt, “Late Quaternary Plant Zonation and Climate in Southeastern Utah,” The Great Basin Naturalist 44 (1984):1-35. Betancourt’s research relies on the analysis and dating of packrat middens which are formed by these small animals when they pile sticks and other plant parts in sheltered locations where they preserve for millennia.

20 Newbold, “Faunal Analysis at North Creek Shelter,” 75.


22 Traditional roles for women in hunting and gathering societies was plant procurement and processing, although they and children certainly did some hunting, especially of smaller animals. For more on such roles see Robert L. Kelly, The Foraging Spectrum: Diversity in Hunting and Gathering Lifeways (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995).
Another Paleoarchaic level consisted simply of a large oval hearth, a few cobbles, stone cutting or scraping tools, and bones lying close to the back of the shelter. Close by the hearth were two bone tube fragments carefully cut, smoothed, and decorated with regularly spaced incisions cut at right angles to the long axis. The two pieces were made from the long bones of a large bird. These are the only ornaments found in either the Early Archaic or the Paleoarchaic levels at the shelter. The tubes are at least five inches long and may have been used as hair decorations or perhaps strung as part of a necklace. For some reason these beads were left behind, likely because they were broken, but they represent a very human interest in personal adornment.

What insights into the lives of these earliest Escalante pioneers do these few scraps of bone and tools provide? The relatively small artifact assemblage and the discrete hearth tell us the stay in the shelter was short, probably a few days and nights, while carrying out a successful hunt. The animal bones found around the hearth represent at least two deer and a cottontail rabbit. The size of the deer bones suggests the specimens were certainly males, and very large males. Several antler fragments are evidence that this visit was in the fall, a time when deer were in their prime. A single canine tooth from a large dog or wolf was found as well. Whether this tooth was from a hunting aide or pet or a souvenir from an encounter with a competing predator is unknown. Wood rat and squirrel bones were also
found but were not burned indicating they were not eaten but were later intruded into this level naturally. Stone implements include sharp tools and cobbles used to butcher and crush long bones and the hearth and burned bones conjure up images of cooking meals and tossing the bones to the side. A stone point fragment lay on this surface, perhaps broken on the hunt and discarded while refurbishing the atlatl dart with a new point. Numerous stone flakes scattered across the area are mostly small specimens generated while resharpening hunting and butchering tools in preparation for the next hunt.

Many of the Paleoarchaic stone tools on this level and in the site generally were crafted from locally available material such as the Morrison petrified wood so abundant in nearby Petrified Forest State Park. Knappers also made use of obsidian from sources near Milford, located nearly eighty miles to the north and west. The glassy stone made up about seven percent of all the toolstone at the site telling us it was an important material. If we can assume that obsidian was mined by the people who frequented the site, it is evidence that Paleoarchaic peoples roamed rather widely.

The archaeology of these deepest levels at North Creek Shelter tells us that people used the site for temporary shelter and a place to butcher, cook, and consume prey and other foods, make and sharpen tools, and make materials for personal expression. For the most part they did not stay long—a week or two at a time during the warmer months of the year is a reasonable guess. There was no evidence of clothing, although the recovery of deer and beaver bones means the skins of those animals were available for such use. Nor was there any evidence of houses at this site during this early period.

About one thousand years after the earliest use of the site there are changes in the kinds of artifacts found at North Creek Shelter, and there are subtle changes in climate. Archaeologists have labeled this time the Early Archaic (early old period). One important change or innovation is that projectile points were notched rather than stemmed. These notched points, commonly referred to as Pinto, are abundant in the Early Archaic levels as are the bones of deer and, increasingly, mountain sheep. Although still used with atlatls, these projectiles were hafted by sliding the points into slotted rather than socketed foreshafts as was likely the case with the stemmed points. Notched points were secured by sinew while socketed points were held in place with pitch mixed with ash. Local materials,

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23 The chipped stone artifacts from North Creek Shelter, including obsidian sourcing analysis results, are described in Mark Bodily, “Residential Mobility of Paleoarchaic and Early Archaic Occupants of North Creek Shelter (42GA65863): An Analysis of Chipped Stone Artifacts” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 2009).

especially Morrison petrified wood, were still the preferred raw material for making stone tools. Obsidian use diminished in the Early Archaic, although the same sources were used and the much smaller amounts may suggest this glassy volcanic material came to the site by trade rather than by direct procurement.

Also present for the first time in the Early Archaic are grinding stones, both manos (hand stones) and metates (the underlying grinding slab), which we used to process small seeds into a coarse flour. The seeds came from plants such as Indian rice grass, dropseed, and other plants. These are the earliest evidences of the growing importance of small seeds in the diet of people living on the Colorado Plateau. Native people continued to gather these seeds into the historic period.25

The Early Archaic occupations were also notable for containing small to medium sized pits and at least one bell-shaped storage pit. Most pits had reddened rims and sides from roasting foods, although just what was being cooked is not yet known. The most recent Early Archaic occupation, about nine thousand years old, contained a possible post hole and a flat, compact, and heavily reddened (from burning) “floor” which sloped up on the edges. This suggests the occupants had dug a basin and perhaps roofed the area; in other words, there may have been a crude house or shelter built here. Also present on this surface were numerous pits and two small, circular hearths. These Early Archaic hearths were in decided contrast to the larger, more amorphous hearths found in the earlier occupations. The probable house and cooking pits are evidence that people stayed at the site longer and the storage pit tells us they planned to return. All combine to indicate that people were moving around less than in the Paleoarchaic period.

Although the appearance of grinding stones and roasting pits imply a broadening of the diet compared to the earlier period, hunting remained an important activity. Animal bone analysis found that hunters were even more focused on large game than in the Paleoarchaic period. The large numbers of the Pinto projectile points along with scrapers and cutting tools for processing animal remains reinforce the importance hunting. Hints of a changing climate are also present in the animal bone assemblage as moun-
tain sheep become more common and duck and beaver bones are no longer found. This suggests conditions were drying since desert mountain sheep prefer more arid habitat.  

Clearly the Early Archaic was a time of change. New tools for processing plant foods appear for the first time, notched projectiles replace stemmed types, pits are built for roasting foodstuffs, and there is even a possible shelter built at the base of the cliff. These changes indicate that family groups were using the site in a different way. Although short visits undoubtedly continued, the investment in such facilities as pits and a shelter of sorts are evidence of longer stays, perhaps for a month or more. The changes appear dramatic given the nature of archaeological deposits, but they likely occurred over centuries rather than decades. Why people adopted one kind of projectile point over another, changed their diets, and moved around less is likely linked to climate and the associated shifting availability of food items. The arrival of new peoples with differing histories and local innovation are possible explanations as well.

The drying climate in southern Utah resulted in the more moisture-lov-
ing plant communities moving gradually up in elevation. On- or near-site vegetation changed from Douglas fir and aspen to the pinyon and juniper, scrub oak, service berry, and Fremont barberry found in the area today. The rate of deposition at this site slowed dramatically resulting in the near absence of definable site use episodes. Instead of the clean breaks with red banding of the lower levels, site deposits are heavily churned and darkened by charcoal from numerous cooking fires. The dark sediments along with the presence of grinding stones, animal bone fragments, and stone tools demonstrate continuing human visitation. These frequent visits undoubtedly contributed to the mixing of site deposits making artifact associations very difficult. The discovery of ceramics and burned corn cob fragments intruded into seven thousand year old levels containing atlatl points and one-handed manos is clear evidence the deposits were badly mixed. Archaeological research elsewhere has demonstrated that corn and pottery co-occur with the bow and arrow rather than with atlatls. These factors

26 The animal bones from the early levels of North Creek are described in Bradley Newbold, Paleoindian Lifeways of Paleoarchaic Peoples: A Faunal Analysis of Early Occupations at North Creek Shelter, Utah, (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 2009). For details of mountain sheep behavior and habitat preference see Valerius Geist’s excellent book Mountain Sheep: A Study in Behavior and Evolution (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

27 Again see various in Betancourt, “Late Quaternary Plant Zonation”
make it difficult to determine much about this period, except there may have been at times when visitation was either non-existent or very light. Radiocarbon ages from a hearth immediately above the level yielding the seven thousand year old date, for example, are just one thousand years old, leaving a gap of several thousand years. This pattern of reduced site use in the middle Archaic period is not unusual in southern Utah, however.\textsuperscript{29} It is possible that human populations were smaller and settlement choice shifted away from lowland sites due to the warming and drying of the middle Holocene. At one thousand years ago, however, site use increased dramatically due to the presence of the farming societies referred to earlier.

The farming period in Utah is often referred to as the Formative and subsumes both Fremont and Anasazi cultures. Fremont remains, often consisting of mounds formed by collapsed houses and abundant gray ware pottery, are present over much of northern and central Utah while the extreme southern portion of the state was occupied by the Anasazi or Ancestral Puebloan.\textsuperscript{30} The Fremont label comes from the research of

\textsuperscript{28} See Phil R. Geib and Peter W. Bungart, “Implications of Early Bow Use in Glen Canyon,” Utah Archaeology 2 (1989):32–47. This article demonstrates that the atlatl endured until about A.D. 200 in central Utah.

\textsuperscript{29} See discussion of this pattern in Geib, Glen Canyon Revisited, 31.

\textsuperscript{30} Anasazi is here used to refer to Ancestral Puebloan peoples due to its more familiar usage and for brevity, although the terms are interchangeable.
Harvard-affiliated archaeologist Noel Morss who, in 1928 and 1929, excavated sites along the Fremont River that yielded evidence of farming. In this sense these sites are similar to Anasazi sites to the south, but they differ in several ways. Morss’ work and that of later researchers now recognize Fremont sites based on distinctive, mostly gray ware ceramics, pithouses, unusual footwear (furred moccasins), clay figurines, and a style of ornaments distinct from the Anasazi but wide spread across the Fremont area. Contact and trade with neighbors was common at this time given the presence of marine shell and turquoise ornaments and Anasazi style pottery. The farming strategy in Utah flourished during the first few centuries after the birth of Christ and continued until about A.D. 1300.

The onset of the farming period in the Escalante region began at least by A.D. 200 according to research by BLM archaeologist Douglas McFadden. Although the Fremont raised fields of corn, beans, and squash, they continued to hunt and gather wild foods as dietary supplements, a strategy that increased in importance during bad crop years. Research in the upper Escalante River drainage has found that the period between about A.D. 800 to A.D. 1100 was a time of dense human population. Virtually every knoll in Escalante Valley contains vestiges of Fremont people, mostly in the form of gray ware pottery and remnants of slab-lined houses.

Fremont style artifacts and constructions are abundant at North Creek Shelter. Several Fremont-aged storage granaries, for example, are present in the cliff niches above the excavation area. These facilities were ingeniously crafted of stone, adobe, and small timbers for storing corn and other materials and are abundant in protected areas in Escalante Valley. In addition to the granaries, pottery sherds and arrow points scattered over the site area and down the slope mark a strong Fremont presence. Similar artifacts as well as many pieces of burned corn cobs and kernels came from the site deposits. Excavators discovered clay-rimmed and stone-lined hearths as well as clay figurines and *Olivella* shell beads which must have been traded from the west coast. Carefully built clay-rimmed hearths are rare outside of houses, but two were found here. It appears that the Fremont leveled at least a portion of the site to accommodate their needs.

Fremont people also hunted, although analysis of the bones from Fremont levels found more rabbit and fewer deer and mountain sheep remains compared to the early periods. And many bones are broken into

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34 See for example Harris, *The BYU Escalante Drainage Project 2003*, as well as references in that report for more on the archaeology of the upper Escalante River drainage.
small fragments, a pattern that implies people were boiling the bones to extract nutritious grease. The increase in rabbit remains hints at declines in larger game. And they hunted not with atolls but with the more recognizable bow and arrow. Although no bow or arrow fragments were found at the site, the much smaller and lighter weight arrow points associated with the Fremont occupation are direct evidence that they used this new weaponry system.

Anasazi style sherds, painted and corrugated types, were present as well, although it is not clear whether the Fremont traded with the Anasazi for pottery vessels or if they were left by Anasazi peoples occupying the site. The fact that most of the Anasazi style ceramic pieces are corrugated utilitarian wares suggests they were not trade wares; therefore, Anasazi presence is likely. It is known that Escalante Valley experienced an influx of Anasazi peoples in the eleventh century AD and most likely spent time at this convenient and attractive location. Anasazi occupations are evident in the valley due to the presence of an Anasazi style pithouse and abundant Anasazi style sherds on a small knoll overlooking the river just west of Escalante town. The uppermost levels at North Creek Shelter also contained evidence that Southern Paiute peoples had spent time here, but material evidence was sparse. This evidence included both brownware pottery fragments and a few small arrow points made in a style known to date after A.D. 1300. Historic visits by native peoples were also visible in the form of rock art in

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35 This conclusion is based on the assumption that hunters will pursue large game rather than small game if the larger animal is available and declines in large game in archaeological animal bone assemblages are often interpreted to mean that overhunting of the larger animals has occurred. For more on this topic see John M. Broughton, “Declines in Mammalian Foraging Efficiency during the Late Holocene, San Francisco Bay, in Prehistoric California: Archaeology and the Myth of Paradise”, ed. L. Mark. Raab and Tom Jones, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2004), 34–52.


37 The reports on these sites have yet to be completed, but the paper cited in Footnote 32 describes this work.

38 Richard N. Holmer and Dennis G. Weder, “Common Post-Archaic Projectile Points of the Fremont Area.” In Fremont Perspectives, Selected Papers No. 16, ed. David B. Madsen, (Salt Lake City: Antiquities Section, Utah Division of State History), 55–68.
several places on the cliff face. Some panels depicted mounted horsemen painted with red ochre like that found on the stone cobbles in the deepest levels of North Creek Shelter dating thousands of years earlier.

North Creek Shelter contains the earliest evidences of human presence on the Colorado Plateau, but several other locations contain intriguing insights into a time just prior to human arrival. In the 1970s Jesse Jennings from the University of Utah probed the depths of Cowboy Cave in Canyonlands. The deepest layers here yielded tantalizing glimpses of late Pleistocene environments. Excavators found the dung of mammoth, bison, horse, camel, and sloth as well as two tips of mammoth tusks, and bison and elk bone. These remains date between 12,000 and 14,000 years ago, but predate the earliest human use of the cave by at least 3500 years. Becham Cave, also in Canyonlands, contained massive deposits of mammoth and ground sloth dung dated to twelve thousand or more years ago as well. But, like Cowboy Cave, no evidence of humans is present at that time. These finds document a very different world than that seen in Canyonlands today where a sparse Colorado pinyon and Utah juniper woodland community is present.

Archaeological research in eastern Utah and northern Arizona has found that people were widespread but few in numbers a millennium after the earliest levels at North Creek Shelter, or about nine thousand years ago. Sites such as Sand Dune and Dust Devil caves near Navajo Mountain on the Utah–Arizona border and Atlatl Rock Cave and Tsosie Shelter in northern Arizona, and others all contain evidence of human occupation dating to this time but the artifact yield from the earliest levels was sparse. Jennings in his studies of Cowboy and Jim Walters cave documented human presence in the region nearly nine thousand years ago but found few artifacts or constructed facilities such as hearths or pits dating to that early period.

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27 W. Geoffrey Spaulding and Kenneth L. Peterson, “Late Pleistocene and Early Holocene Paleoecology of Cowboy Cave;” Jennings, Cowboy Cave, 163-78.


29 Jesse D. Jennings, Cowboy Cave. Phil R. Geib and Ed A. Jolie have recently re-evaluated the date from the Walters Cave sandal and have concluded it dates after nine thousand calendar years before present. For more insights, see their paper “Direct Evidence of Early Dietary Expansion on the Colorado Plateau: Interpreting the Constituents of Human Feces,” Paper presented at the 75th annual conference of the Society of American Archaeology, St Louis, March 29, 2010.
In the Great Basin physiographic region of western Utah near the Utah/Nevada border are three archaeological sites with occupations that predate North Creek Shelter. These sites, Smith Creek Cave, Bonneville Estates Rockshelter, and Danger Cave reinforce and complement findings at North Creek Shelter, but with differences. Significantly, the excavators of both Smith Creek Cave and Bonneville Estates Rockshelter found the remains of now-extinct animals: camels in Smith Creek Cave and carnivores in Bonneville Estates. In neither case are humans or artifacts clearly associated, however. No such animals were found in North Creek Shelter. Additionally, the animal bones from the earliest levels at Bonneville Estates Rockshelter are mostly from sage grouse and small mammals. Although mountain sheep, pronghorn, and deer remain present, they are fewer in number suggesting hunters in that region were focused primarily on smaller game. Finally, all three of the Great Basin cave sites just mentioned are totally dry or protected from any moisture meaning that all debris people discarded or lost is preserved including basketry, clothing, moccasins or other organic material. North Creek Shelter, on the other hand, is not dry. It is flooded periodically by rainfall and runoff as described earlier; consequently, only stone, bone, clay, and shell artifacts are preserved. None of the three dry sites just mentioned contain the multiple separable occupations discovered at North Creek Shelter, however.

North Creek Shelter is significant for many reasons. It is the only Paleoarchaic age (pre-11,000 years old) clearly layered archaeological site documented and explored thus far on the Colorado Plateau. It contains multiple, discrete layers of human occupation dating to the Paleoarchaic, Early Archaic, and Fremont periods that provide details of the human

44 Two sites in western Utah, however, are slightly earlier: Smith Creek Cave in the Snake Range on the Utah-Nevada border has been dated to at least 10,420 ± 100 radiocarbon years on cordage, clearly a cultural object; earlier dates have been obtained on ecofacts from this site apparently associated with stemmed projectile points. Danger Cave on the outskirts of Wendover, also on the Utah-Nevada border, dated to 10,310 ± 40 radiocarbon years on charcoal from a hearth on Lake Bonneville gravels. A fairly recent summary of dates and findings at Smith Creek Cave is in Alan L. Bryan and Donald R. Tuohy, “Prehistory of the Great Basin and Snake River Plain to About 8,500 Years Ago.” ed. Robson Bonnichsen and Karen L. Turnmire Ice Age Peoples of North America, (Corvallis: Center for the Study of the First Americans, Oregon State University Press, 1999), 249-63. For a recent assessment of Danger Cave dates see David Rhode and Lisbeth A. Louderback, “Dietary Plant Use in the Bonneville Basin during the Terminal Pleistocene/Early Holocene Transition,” Paleoindian or Paleoarchaic: Great Basin Paleocology at the Pleistocene/Holocene Transition, eds., Kelly E. Graf and David N. Schmitt. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2007), 231-47. A number of additional papers discuss the findings and early dates from these two important sites, but the serious researcher can consult the references in these papers.


experience for those times. More importantly, the surfaces with their array of tools and other debris allow detailed reconstruction of what people were doing in that place at that time. Few sites offer such a unique opportunity to reconstruct ancient human behavior at this level of detail. Many of these activities are known from other places on the Colorado Plateau but not at this level of resolution.

But the ultimate importance of North Creek Shelter lies in the story it has to tell of a very early period in Utah’s human history. It is a story that unfolded with each scrape of the trowel, and it is a story uncommonly rich in material detail when considered alongside archaeological sites of similar age from the arid west. Yet, piecing those details together to produce a full, engaging history is challenging as many details are still missing. No people (burials) were found here, so there is no basis for insights into health, stature, demographics, injuries, or other very human concerns. The absence of more perishable items such as wooden artifacts, basketry, or clothing leaves a significant gap in what is known of the material life of those who stayed at North Creek Shelter. Nonetheless, important insights into weaponry, diet, site function, and environmental conditions were recovered. Further, the finely stratified character of the deposits and the numerous radiocarbon dates allow archaeologists to narrate how those details vary through the passage of time.

As a consequence of the research at North Creek Shelter, regional human history is now pushed back to 11,000 years ago. At that time a sparse, pioneering population used this favored locale regularly for short periods as a safe haven to refuel, recuperate, and plan for future forays into their rich, but potentially hostile world. They relied solely on wild foods for sustenance and had great success in hunting the large deer whose bones were so common around the fire hearths. Beaver, ducks, marmots, and grouse remains and other evidences portray a cooler time with aspens, conifers, and slower moving streams nearby. Gradual changes in the array of hunted animals found at the site, especially the arrival and increasing number of mountain sheep and pronghorn bones along with the disappearance of ducks and beaver, mark climatic drying and a decline in available moisture. Accompanying those changes are the shift from one style of stone point (stemmed) to another (notched) and the arrival of grinding stones. These new tools seem to arrive together and relatively suddenly at ten thousand years ago. Projectile points increase in number, evidence of a greater reliance on large game, a trend reinforced by abundant deer and sheep bones. The grinding stones tell of increasing reliance on small seeds, a strong pattern that continues throughout the subsequent levels.

What spurred these changes? Why would plants, especially the small seeds that seem so hard to gather, emerge as important dietary items? The explanations for such change offered by archaeologists range from innovation and adaptation to new environmental circumstances, in this case, increasing aridity, to an influx of new ideas or approaches to exploiting
those environmental circumstances. The origin of new ideas could be local or from contact with neighbors, a pattern referred to as cultural diffusion. The apparent suddenness of the changes documented at North Creek Shelter would favor the latter explanation. Hopefully other sites of similar age will be found to support or refute the findings at North Creek Shelter.

After nine thousand years ago the story is blurred as the sharply defined levels characteristic of the lower strata are absent. That very absence is evidence that climates continued to shift toward increasing aridity as level separation was dependent on sediment buildup from storm runoff; hence, the lack of discrete levels signals declining precipitation. Site use continued, however. That is clear as the soil is darkened by charcoal, and artifacts and animal bones are common; however, artifacts known to be from very different time periods are mixed in these levels making interpretation of findings difficult. Associated dates fall in the eight to six thousand years ago range, and recovered projectile points support some use of the site during that time. So far, however, there is very little evidence of occupation after six thousand years ago until about twelve hundred years ago. The excavators are cautious about proclaiming there is no site use at that time as additional work, especially in another location on site, could find remains dating to the missing period.

Occupation resumes much later with a flurry of activity during the Fremont period. About twelve hundred years ago farmers descend on North Creek Shelter, a rather late arrival given the much earlier evidence for farming in the Escalante River drainage cited previously. The Fremont left much for archaeologists to discover as material goods expand significantly during this period, largely due to the more settled life of Fremont peoples. The granaries, formal hearths, and ceramics found on site all support the conclusion that these people spent considerable time here. Better evidence for more lengthy stays may be buried nearby since it is possible that pit houses are present on the lower slope. If pit houses are present, as hinted at by the granaries in the cliff and soil stains in several places, some people likely resided here year around. North Creek Shelter was clearly home to at least a few Fremont families during this period. And the lives of those families were dramatically different from those who stayed at the site thousands of years earlier. They raised crops and invested
considerable effort in a place where they intended to stay by building storage facilities and probably houses.

But Fremont life was not static, and the story becomes more complicated by about A.D. 1050. This may have been a time of some social and political turmoil as research around Escalante Valley has demonstrated that Anasazi people, probably from the Virgin River region, made their appearance as Anasazi style ceramics appear in the uppermost Fremont levels at North Creek Shelter. By A.D. 1100 Fremont style goods and houses were not longer made suggesting the Fremont withdrew from the valley. There is no evidence in Escalante Valley of conflict, but Coombs Village at nearby Boulder was destroyed by fire, and the condition of the skeletal remains from one burial strongly argues that the individual met a violent death, most likely from multiple blows to the head.47 Coombs Village was not re-occupied. Within a century or two, certainly by seven hundred years ago, these farmers either gave up raising crops or moved out entirely as evidence of farming disappears.

The story from North Creek Shelter doesn’t end with the Fremont demise. There are no more burned corn cobs, and, although ceramics and arrowheads are still made by later peoples, the style of pottery and arrow points are very different. The remnants of these most recent users of North Creek Shelter are very scarce. Only a few sherds and stone points remain to testify of their passing through. But they are enough to document that passing with certainty.

North Creek Shelter is but one small window into a distant time and caution is in order before generalizing too broadly from one perspective. Life in those very early times was highly variable depending on environmental setting and social circumstances. As other early sites are discovered in the region, the views presented here will most likely be refined. But for the moment, the data from North Creek Shelter are all we have to reconstruct some notion of the human experience in that eleven thousand year-old world. The cumulative message from the regional archaeology is one that people were following a hunting and gathering way of life designed to survive in an arid landscape. That pattern persisted for thousands of years until the farming strategy emerged, persisted for a millennium and a half, only to have the hunting and gathering pattern adopted again by the Southern Paiute people.48 This persistence is a tribute to the durability of these ancestors of modern native peoples.

The early finds at North Creek Shelter were largely a surprise. Excavations began with the intent of exploring how the Fremont would

47 A detailed discussion of these details can be found in Christy G. Turner and Jacqueline A. Turner’s text Man Corn: Cannibalism and Violence in the Prehistoric American Southwest, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1999), 178-82.
have used a sheltered locale that presumably contained no houses. The intent was to compare these findings with the research being done at nearby Fremont sites with houses. The discovery of a place situated fortuitously so that natural process of deposition preserved a finely stratified history dating to a time not previously known for eastern Utah was lucky and unique. But unique discoveries occur with regularity in archaeology; it is often the case that what is found is not what was expected. Each archaeological site holds great potential for a new and fresh understanding of human history. It is for these reasons that books synthesizing archaeological findings and insights are in a perennial state of flux. The North Creek Shelter experience has taught us, once again, to be protective of all archaeological remains and to be cautious in assuming that we know what they have to tell us about the past.
“Only Bullets Talk
Now:” Tse-ne-gat, Polk, and the 1915 Fight in Bluff

By ROBERT S. MCPHERSON

The dawning of the twentieth century over Sleeping Ute
Mountain was anything but bright. Shrouded in the depressing
pallor of the two preceding decades of broken promises, conflict,
and degradation, the Utes at their Navajo Springs Agency,
Colorado, viewed dimly a future offering troubled hope. To the Weenuche
their new agent, Joseph O. Smith, was the only person in position to voice
their needs loud enough for bureaucrats in Washington to hear. They were
drowning in misery on a high country desert with few outsiders ready to
toss a lifeline. Smith faced the problems squarely and did what he could for
those on the reservation, but as for the Utes
and Paiutes living in southeastern Utah, they
were on their own. These Indians wanted
nothing to do with a reservation void of ade-
quate resources and inhabited with many
people who did not welcome them.

This troubled corner of southeastern Utah
had already seen its fill of violence. The battle
at Pinhook Draw (1881), the fight at Soldier

(Tse-ne-gat portrait) Tse-ne-gat
(āinigatt—“Silver Earrings”—
1888-1922) was known on the Ute
agency roles as Everett Hatch,
son of Polk (Billy Hatch). Not
nearly as truculent as his father,
Tse-ne-gat nevertheless provided
the tinder for the 1915 fight.

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Crossing (1884), and the Beaver Creek massacre (Dolores, Colorado—1885) left festering sores between Colorado cowboys and off-reservation Utes. A mid-grade inflammation also existed between these Indians and Mormon settlers who had taken prime lands for agriculture and livestock grazing. This resulted in the Indians begging, borrowing, or butchering anything not tied down to replace what they had lost. The military, although as sympathetic to Native American views as those of the white settlers, had tried to keep the mix from boiling over, been fairly successful, but were withdrawn by the early 1890s. Hopefully, with the turn of the century, much of the violence was now put to rest as it had been elsewhere in the American West. The twentieth century brought hope that issues and scores were settled.

For the next fifteen years, however, low-grade cultural brushfires singed relations between the settlers in Bluff, Blanding, and Monticello and their neighboring Utes, each group weary of perceived loss. Cattlemen on the range sought in vain livestock that had ended up in the Indians’ lander. They did find, however, mutilated cattle left for dead; stolen horses in Indian camps; Utes begging at their door for food; and horses, sheep, and goats in their gardens or on their range. Their range—that was hardly how the Indians saw it. This land had been theirs since the time of creation and now white interlopers had taken it, claiming the water holes, utilizing the grass for livestock, occupying the best lands in canyon and on mountain, killing all the game, trampling plants used for food and medicine, and generally dispossessing the people of their birthright. While much of this type of concern in other parts of the United States ended by the turn of the century, raw nerves were still a part of daily affairs in southeastern Utah.

The government was not oblivious to the problem as news of tussles between groups and petitions for removal reached agents then made their way to state and federal officials. Two different government investigations in 1908 alone, reported the unrest. Something had to be done to get events under control, move unsupervised bands of Indians to the Navajo Springs Agency in southwestern Colorado, and end the dispute over the public domain. Certain Indian names surfaced in reports outlining resistance to any such action. Polk, Tse-ne gat, Benow, and Posey were at the top.

Two examples of how they resisted will suffice. In 1905, Albert R. Lyman and his family pitched a tent in what would soon become the town of Grayson later renamed Blanding. Not only did this remove a favorite camping spot from the Ute inventory, but it also served as another

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jumping-off point for additional cattle interests. More people, more livestock, more lost range increased the pressure on Indian resources. By 1907, Grayson joined Monticello and Bluff as nodes of Mormon ranching and agriculture, further irritating the Utes. On October 30 in Grayson, Lyman received word from some passing Utes that Polk’s horse was grazing in one of the settler’s pastures. Lyman tied the horse to a fence near a store and sent word for Polk to come and get it. In a short while, the Ute’s son, Tse-ne-gat (~ínigatt) also known as Everett Hatch, retrieved the horse and put it back in the pasture. Lyman confronted him and again secured the horse to the fence, but before too long, Polk and son loomed out of the darkness. They berated Lyman in the best broken English they could muster while sticking the barrel of a Winchester rifle in his face. There was little Lyman could do and so the horse went back into the pasture until morning. The angry settler went to Monticello to get the sheriff, but eventually dropped the charges. Sore feelings continued to fester even after Lyman talked to Mancos Jim, the recognized leader in the area, who condemned Polk’s actions.

Montezuma Canyon stretches east of Monticello and Blanding, the site of a second occurrence. That fall four cowboys, Dick and John Butt, Johnny Scott, and Jake Young, all from the KT outfit, were driving cattle from Tin Cup Spring toward Nancy Patterson Park. The cowboys destroyed a brush fence made by the Utes and were now moving the cattle to greener pastures. The Indians, who included Johnny Benow, Polk, Posey, Wash, and Mancos Jim, were camped at Nancy Patterson. As the cows approached their village, the Indians mounted horses, waved blankets, and yelled, turning the cattle back down the trail. One cow fell to its death, while both groups became increasingly irate as they exchanged hot words over the cowboys’ claim to Ute pastureage. Benow drew his rifle, while Dick Butt moved forward with quirt in hand. Cooler heads prevailed as one of the cowboys grabbed Butt’s reins, turned the groups’ horses around, and followed the cattle down the canyon. Butt wanted to try again the next day, but his companions refused to become further entangled in the dispute.

A flurry of letters followed that outlined attitudes on both sides. J. F. Barton, one of the owners of the KT, wrote to the governor of Utah, John C. Cutter, asking that something be done to remove the “Colorado Utes”

1 Tse-ne-gat had four names. The one most often appearing is a misspelling of Tūsí-nūga-ʔa-t, translated as “Silver Earrings” which he often wore. I have chosen to use this name because it is how it appears in the literature of the day. Some writers (see Forbes Parkhill, The Last of the Indian Wars) have thought the name translated as “Cry Baby” given when he was a child and fell into a fire. The other three names by which he was known were Everett Hatch, Pa-woo-tach, and Coffee, the latter mentioned by Chester Cantsee. See Chester Cantsee interview with Gregory Thompson and Floyd O’Neil, March 22, 1980, OH-00, 776, White Mesa Ute Oral History Project, American West Center, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

2 Albert R. Lyman, Journal, 1907, October 30-31, 1907, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, 161-64.

from San Juan County. Barton considered the incident in Montezuma Canyon representative of the Indian problem which had been “worked on for several years.” The unstated problem was how to obtain use of Ute grasslands. Utah Senator Reed Smoot contacted the governor advising him and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Francis E. Leupp, that “[I]n the case of the Indians, there is an absolute right to have their lands used for their purposes, and it is a matter of plain justice to allow the development and use of the property.”

In the meantime, Sheriff J. H. Wood from Monticello started an investigation he hoped would bring the offending Utes to justice. When he arrived in the canyon with his posse, he found only the families and their livestock, but no leaders. The Indians claimed that their agent had said they could live off the reservation, which to Wood and others from San Juan County smacked of dereliction of duty. The sheriff asserted that the Indians leased their reservation lands to Colorado stockmen then came to Utah to “prey upon the property, especially sheep and cattle, of the citizens of this county.” Given past events, it is not surprising that Governor John C. Cutter, prompted by a petition signed by 108 citizens of San Juan County, launched his own investigation. The petition complained that Navajos on the south and Colorado Utes on the east were using lands that did not belong to them and that there were also two bands—Johnny Benow’s in Montezuma Canyon and Mancos Jim’s in Allen Canyon—that needed to be removed to the Southern Ute Agency. By keeping the Indians on the reservation, they would be better served plus learn respect for the law. A. W. Ivins, as a representative of the governor’s office, recommended exactly

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1 J. F. Barton to Governor John C. Cutler, December 23, 1907, LHR, (n.p).
2 Reed Smoot to Cutter, January 17, 1908, LHR, (n.p.).
3 J. H. Wood to Cutter, January 17, 1908, LHR, (n.p.).
4 Petition to Governor John C. Cutter, Fall, 1907, National Archives, Record Group 75, Letters Received, Consolidated Ute Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs. [Hereafter cited as Letters Received—BIA.]
what the citizens requested with a caveat that if the Indians were not placed on the reservation, they should at least be given lands away from white settlements and have a government agent to supervise them.\footnote{Cutler to Leupp, June 3, 1908, Letters Received—BIA.}

The government was stymied. With no clear infraction of the laws concerning the public domain, Indians resistant to distant relocation, and pressing issues already a concern on reservations in Colorado, there was not a lot of enthusiasm for removal. Special Investigator Levi Chubbuck and Agent S. F. Stacher held a meeting on February 26, 1909, with Polk, Posey, and Benow’s band members in Bluff, many of whom camped on the outskirts in tepees and wickiups. The government proposed to the Allen Canyon group that the La Sal National Forest provide some of the land they had just left for their summer quarters. Although the quality of the land was highly questionable from an agricultural standpoint, they were happy with it. Winter homes could also be established on ten to fifteen acre parcels in Bluff on the west side of Cottonwood Wash with an agent stationed there to supervise. All of the Utes felt this was acceptable, but the Indian Office never acted upon the suggestion.\footnote{A. E. Potter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 27, 1908, White Mesa Ute History Project, American West Center, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah. [Hereafter cited as WMUHP]; Stacher to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 23, 1937, Letters Received—BIA.} While a local agent also did not materialize, the National Forest did “set aside the allotment for the said Mancos Jim and his little band of Indians and all trespassers will be dealt with according to law.” At the beginning of November 1913, Bluff cattlemen drove their livestock from Blue Mountain through the Utes’ property on the way to winter range. When Mancos Jim showed one of the trespassers a legal permit for the land after some cattle broke down fences and trampled crops, he was laughingly told, “Heap crazy talk; no government papers,” then ignored.\footnote{Howard M. Patterson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 19, 1915, WMUHP.} Carl Stockbridge, Assistant Forest Ranger, threatened with a federal trespass suit if it continued.\footnote{Carl Stockbridge, “To Whom It May Concern,” November 14, 1913, Letters Received—BIA.} But there were larger storm clouds looming on the horizon.

Polk and Tse-ne-gat initiated a string of events the next year that eventually reached the White House and President Woodrow Wilson, at a time when the country was embroiled with incidents along the Mexican border and Europe fought World War I.\footnote{Forbes Parkhill, The Last of the Indian Wars (New York: Crowell-Collier Press, 1961) has written an entire account of the 1915 fight in Bluff. Heavily dependent upon newspapers and with no citations, the book introduces a number of errors while also providing new information. It is good for a general overview but the reader also needs to be careful of some of its detail.} The affair started simply enough in mid-May when two Utes approached Superintendent Claude C. Covey stationed at the agency at Navajo Springs. They reported a body buried in a wash southwest of Cowboy Springs in Colorado six miles north and six miles east of the New Mexico and Utah state lines.\footnote{Claude C. Covey to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 14, 1914, WMUHP.} The agent, a coroner,
and an attorney went with a group of Indians to determine identity and manner of death for this man killed in March 1914. Articles on the body quickly confirmed that he was Juan Chacon, an Hispanic herder returning home to New Mexico with a large paycheck earned in Utah. He had fallen in with some Utes, spent the night at Mariano Springs in successful gambling, and then was ambushed by a member of the group, Tse-ne-gat, who he had played cards with.

Ute testimony from five individuals painted a detailed picture of how events unfolded. One man, Ca-vis-it'z Son, told of returning from the agency when Tse-ne-gat reined in next to him and inquired if he had seen Chacon and how far ahead was he. The Mexican had passed that way just a short while before; Tse-ne-gat said he was going to kill him and when asked why, replied it was for the large amount of money Chacon was carrying. Three other witnesses testified that while they were looking for cattle near Sleeping Ute Mountain, they heard three shots from a .30-30 rifle in rapid succession so hastened to see what was happening. They ascended the crest of a hill in time to see Tse-ne-gat pulling and pushing something into a ravine, but once he knew they spotted him, he mounted his horse, took in tow a second animal, and quickly rode toward the agency. Upon investigation, the three Utes found the body of Chacon lying face up in the wash with three bullet holes in him. They did not report their find because the agent was on a trip and “we were afraid of this
Indian and his father as they are known as bad men, the father, Polk having killed a number of Indians, including two of Rooster’s sons and that we now fear that he will try to kill us for having told this... we believe that Polk knows that the Mexican was murdered, that Polk and his son have said that they would kill Indians or white men who tried to arrest them.” 17
Other witnesses confirmed all that had been told, one man saying that when he ran into Tse-ne-gat heading toward the agency, he had made the comment, “I did not think anybody saw me.” 18
Superintendent Covey sent word for Tse-ne-gat to come in to discuss the matter; he and his father almost did but turned around before reaching Navajo Springs and returned to Allen Canyon. Polk or Billy Hatch, as he was known on tribal rolls, struck fear into the hearts of the Utes at Towaoc and was believed to hold supernatural power that made him bullet-proof. 19
“Billy Hatch is said to have killed five or six other Indians. The Indians living here received word that the Hatches, with a number of friends, were coming to the agency in force and if an attempt was made to arrest young Hatch and take him away they will kill anyone making the attempt.” 20 The agent realized his Indian police were totally ineffective in a situation like this and could not officially operate off the reservation so suggested that a U. S. Marshal serve the warrant to arrest Tse-ne-gat.
In September Deputy Marshal David Thomas appeared in Bluff, confronted Tse-ne-gat in Frank Hyde’s store, but failed to arrest him, fearing there would be an uprising and bloodshed. To the locals, this just emboldened an already impudent father and son, especially considering that there were “thirty men ready to help the marshal if necessary and that they could have taken him without serious resistance.” 21 From the marshal’s perspective, the townspeople were “unwilling to cooperate... for fear that if assistance was rendered, revenge might be taken on some of the people later,” and so he returned empty handed. 22 Tse-ne-gat was allowed to go to his camp with the understanding that he would surrender the next day, but when the time came, he refused and said he would resist any attempt to take him. The marshal, feeling unsupported by the white community and outgunned by the Indians, chose discretion and departed. 23
Mormon Stake President and cattlemaster L. H. Redd met in Salt Lake City with Lorenzo D. Cæel, Special Agent for the Scattered Bands of

16 Covey to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 18, 1914, WMUHP.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 According to Stella Eyetoo who met Polk and knew of him, he had a “bullet proof power” called “tuppwiwu-puwa-ga-pügaät” that insured that no matter how many times he was shot, the rounds would just bounce off of him.
20 Covey to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 29, 1914, WMUHP.
21 Kumen Jones, et al. to Cato Sells, September 28, 1914; Covey to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 26, 1914, Letters Received—BIA.
22 Aquila Nebeker, to Covey, December 4, 1914, Letters Received—BIA.
23 William W. Ray to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 2, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
Indians in Utah, and Governor William Spry to determine what could be done. Creel had met Tse-ne-gat on a number of occasions and concurred that something needed to happen before serious conflict resulted. Louisa Wetherill, John Wetherill’s wife and trader in Kayenta, knew Tse-ne-gat well enough to go to Bluff with a group of Paiutes from her area to ask him to surrender. He absolutely refused. Local papers questioned how the murderer of Juan Chacon could hold the authorities at bay for eight months with no decisive action. Around this same time, James E. Jenkins replaced Covey as superintendent at Navajo Springs, inheriting a pot of trouble about to boil over.24

By now, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Indian agents in both Colorado and Utah, the U. S. Marshal’s Office, Governor Spry, and local citizens were well aware of the Indian resistance, more symbolic than real, mounting in San Juan County. In their view, the irritating pimple of Polk, Tse-ne-gat, and perhaps, thirty followers, needed to be pinched before the infection spread, and it needed to be done quickly and with stealth. But stealth was elusive. Colorado and Utah newspapers soon became aware of actions underway and reported in great detail, some of which was fiction but made interesting reading, any plans

they heard. Portrayed as an old fashion Indian war, the yellow press leaped into action. Any type of operational security flew out the window. In the early part of February, Marshal Aquila Nebeker went to Cortez to raise a force he could deputize and move into Utah without alerting the Indians. Its mission: Capture the twenty-seven year old Tse-ne-gat and avoid fighting the estimated twenty-five warriors who sided with Polk. The marshal expected a hard battle. The number of Indians who might resist quickly inflated to fifty then seventy-five and eventually one hundred fifty, as newspapers amplified their stories.25

The marshal next traveled to Grayson to recruit local men, many of whom were ranchers, and to be closer to his objective. He also sent five men to Bluff to spy on the Indians and track their movements. In the meantime, twenty-six Colorado volunteers under Deputy Sheriff A. N. Gingles, camped in McElmo Canyon during a major snowstorm. Many of these men had been involved in brushes with the Utes and were ready to polish their tarnished record of previous defeats. Rumors were rampant, declaring that the Indians had been forewarned, were digging entrenchments, and had vowed to fight to the last man—all of this in spite of Nebeker “having taken elaborate and effective measures to conceal the fact of his destination from everyone but those sworn to secrecy when he left Salt Lake.”26 He apparently forgot to swear in the newspapers revealing his every move. Fortunately, the Utes did not read.

The storms, said to bring the heaviest snowfall in twenty years, continued blowing in during the next week, leaving an accumulation in some instances of four feet in northern San Juan. Jenkins had traveled from Colorado in this weather to be the first Indian agent arriving in Bluff on February 22, the day after, as he put it, “the eggs had been scrambled,” while Lorenzo Creel traveled from Salt Lake City by train to join him. Jenkins felt that he could get Polk and Tse-ne-gat, in spite of the warrants, to come in to the agency peacefully, but if Nebeker was going to do something he should at least wait for the weather to mellow. Jenkins assumed responsibility for the two Utes and their band although he recognized that they were not registered at the Navajo Springs Agency. One of his primary goals was to separate visiting Colorado Utes from those Utes and Paiutes who had never enrolled on his reservation. Estimating there were about fourteen adult males in Polk’s group, comprised primarily of the Hatch, Whyte, May, and Posey families, Jenkins complained that “it was a serious mistake to permit other departments to undertake the handling of Indians. They don’t understand the Indians and the Indians resent the interference of officials other than their own agents.”27

27 James E. Jenkins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 19, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
Wayne H. Redd from San Juan agreed. He knew the Polk and Posey groups, who had worked for many of the people in Bluff. He felt, “The Indians are known to be friendly and there are only a few perhaps who would fight. The Indians are in no condition to aid Tse-ne-gat to resist arrest. Their ponies are poor at this time of the year and the snow on the ground leaves them with no surplus food sufficient to last them in a siege.”

Contrary to reports of entrenched Indians preparing for battle and Polk selecting defensive terrain, the Utes were actually strung out over a three mile distance, from Sand Island to Bluff. Many of their camps occupied the south facing sand dunes below the bluffs because the snow did not accumulate for any length of time. If Polk were expecting trouble, he did not show it since his camp was just to the west of Bluff with some of his people living near the Navajo Twin rock formation on the other side of town.

In spite of those suggesting a more cautious approach, Nebeker moved forward with his plan. He placed strict censorship on the use of phones by civilians and posse members in Grayson and Bluff, greeted the deputized Colorado volunteers on February 20, traveled that night to Bluff, and began a partial encirclement of Polk’s camp on the west side of Cottonwood Wash at first light, February 21. Chester Cantsee recalls his parents returning from Bluff to their camp near Posey’s home at Sand Island the day before the attack. They commented there were “different kinds of horses” in town but did not attach any particular significance to

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28 “Nebeker to Demand Surrender of Indian,” Salt Lake Herald Republican, February 19, 1915.
them until the events of the next day. According to Gingles, when the marshal’s force reached the wash, it split, with half heading north the other west in order to encircle the small encampment where Polk and Tse-ne-gat had been playing cards most of the night. The converging elements awoke the camp dogs whose barking gave the first indication that something was amiss. Gingles tells of “Poke and his boy in front of the wickup dancing, whooping, and yelling” before they opened fire on the posse then dashed with another Indian north up the wash to take a position behind a sand-bank. From there they delivered a steady fire as members of the posse maneuvered.

Joseph C. Akin crawled to a high part of an embankment and raised his head to get a fix on a target. In a split second before lifting his rifle, a bullet entered his head over his left eye and lodged behind his right ear. Less than two minutes he was dead. Years later, Polk claimed the kill, telling trader Ira Hatch how he still had the old Model 35 Winchester that he had used. The man was far away and so Poke “used all of his sights and the bullet landed on line but about twenty-five yards short. The next time he shot he used the end of his barrel for a sight and shot the man right between the eyes.”

The rest of the posse west of this fighting encountered Posey and others, coming from their camp at Sand Island. Once Posey was in range, he shot José Cordova through the torso and began skirmishing against the rest, eventually breaking contact to return to the women and children. Frank Pyle recalled that “the rest of that morning there was no organization, white men and Indians were just shooting everywhere. . . . Posey’s men cut five of the white men off from their horses and took them. The five men escaped and walked back to Blanding.” Uriah Butt, a young boy at the time, remembers how the “cowpunchers” did not want to remain out there much longer and so came to his house for breakfast. When Polk realized he was not under pressure, he with others gained a defensive advantage by climbing into the rocks nearby. “Those three Indians stood up there on the hill and motioned to the Bluff people to come up and fight. A whole bunch of us fellows were out in the street; I was just a kid, but I was out there among them, and the Indians could have shot all of us. They could have killed some of us if they had kept shooting, but they didn’t keep shooting.”

There were also Indian fatalities. Many of the Utes just wanted to stay out of the fracas. Chicken Jack, unarmed, was making his way to town,

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31 Chester Cantsee interview.
32 “Testimony of Mr. [A. N.] Gingles,” March 1, 1915, W MUHP.
34 Frank Pyle, “The Uprising of Polk and Posey in 1915,” William Evans Collection, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
crossing Cottonwood Wash, when he ran into members of the posse, who gunned him down. To Alma Jones, “He was a favorite Ute in this area. He was friendly to everybody. He was no trouble; he never did get into any trouble at all.”

During the initial outburst, Jack Ute dashed into the open to rescue his six year old daughter caught between the two skirmishing sides; both sustained wounds. Fortunately, other Indians were allowed to surrender and come under protective custody. Eventually six men—Jack Ute, Havane, Joe Hammond, Jack Rabbit Soldier, Noland May, and a Mexican Bruno Seguro—were incarcerated in the dance hall on the second floor of the San Juan Co-op.

Two days after the fight began Havane, who like Posey was Polk’s son-in-law, felt threatened by all of the talk and behavior he was seeing. Convinced he was about to be murdered, he slipped off his handcuffs and ran to the window, hoping to leap to the ground twenty feet below. A guard named Honaker, shot and mortally wounded Havane with a .45 caliber revolver, the concussion from which was powerful enough to blow out all of the kerosene lamps on that floor and to leave a large gaping wound in Havane’s kidney and spleen. Twenty-three year old Charles Burke from Cortez, acting as a reporter for the Rocky Mountain News, went to Doctor E. E. Johnson who had arrived from Cortez, Colorado, and obtained a hypodermic needle filled with sedative. He recorded the scene.

I went down there [Co-op] and he was lying on the floor. I said, “Havane, how are you?”

“Oh heap sick, heap sick, heap sick.”

And I said, “Well I’m going to give you something to make you sleep. Pretty soon sleep.” I rolled up his sleeve and gave him a shot . . .

“You my friend,” and I said yes. I told him as best I could that I wasn’t there to do any fighting. I was not a friend of the white man, a friend of the Utes, see.

He said, “Well you kill ‘em. Me heap sick, you kill ‘em me, please kill ‘em me.”

It was a pitiful scene.

Havane died three days later. Alma Jones, whose father, Kumen, had worked with the Indians around Bluff for thirty-five years, said: “There were two peaceful, unarmed harmless men who lost their lives.”

There were also members of the posse actively searching and questioning local Utes who might be assisting or at least know what the hostiles were doing. Edward Dutchie remembers as a toddler the fear four men brought to his home as he, his brother, sister, and mother awoke at daylight. “Early in the morning my mother awoke me. She got me on her lap and held me down. She told me to keep quiet and don’t cry. I saw riders outside . . . four people on horses with guns lying across their saddles. Before I could say anything, holler or anything like that, my mother put her hand over my

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36 Shumway, et al., Cowboys and Indians, 44.
38 Ibid.
mouth. . . . She was afraid the white men were going to kill her. She thought they might take us away or maybe kill us right there. So that is when we moved out.”39 By the next day after the attack, all of the Utes had fled down the San Juan River to Comb and Butler Washes where they remained for sometime without further engagements.40

A second group of “106 friendly Utes” were camped nearby in Butler Wash then moved to town to avoid association with those fighting. Navajo scouts from the Northern Navajo Agency in Shiprock escorted them. As the Indians conversed, the “friendlies” learned they were actually slated to only pass through Bluff on their way to the Ute Reservation. “They halted in their march and refused to come in. Leaders of the band declared rather than leave their ancestral hunting grounds they would resist the white authorities and join Old Polk and his bunch of renegades.”41 Further suggestion of their removal was quickly swept under the rug.

Nebeker began depending on local help. He recruited the services of Mancos Jim who he sent to the fighters asking that they surrender peacefully, but they let it be known they would fight to the death. One eyewitness said of Mancos Jim, “He was one of the Mormon’s main men to trust. He’d come in to town and then he’d go back and tell what they wanted him to tell some of these Indians. He always worked in the dark [because] he didn’t want anybody to follow him.”42 Nebeker also sought help from Grayson and Monticello, the former providing seventeen, the latter twenty-nine men ready to fight, raising the total posse size to over seventy. Newspapers carried the word that Bluff was surrounded, imminent danger, and help needed, encouraging people from southwestern Colorado to further mobilize. Nebeker requested from Superintendent William T. Shelton at Shiprock twenty Navajo policemen to assist with tracking. They arrived in Bluff on the 25th, just as Nebeker suspended field activities to give Jenkins and Creel an opportunity to work with the Utes.43 Besides, now that the initial hysteria was over, the cut telephone lines between Bluff and Grayson restored, and the flight of the Indians to the west an accomplished fact, the white participants felt comfortable remaining close to Bluff for the next two weeks, in spite of what the press churned out for a good story. Newspapers also falsely reported that Posey had killed his brother, Scotty, who wanted to go to Bluff to surrender.44

40 Frank Pyle, “Uprising.”
42 John Perkins interview with Charles S. Peterson, n. d., Library, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.
The night of the initial attack, Lorenzo Creel arrived in Moab. Spurred on by the news, the agent “traveled alternately from stage to stage by wagon, sled, sled to wagon, through mud often hub deep, and again in snow from three to four feet deep, with but little sleep until we reached Bluff on the night of the 24th.” The next day he, Jenkins, interpreter Jim Allen (Ute), and “Catomber” a Ute policeman, went in search of non-combatant Indians. Creel found evidence strewn along the pathway of hasty flight which convinced him that they had fled in sheer terror, since “the posse and citizens did not seem able to draw the line between combatant and peaceful Indians.” Fifteen miles outside of Bluff the party encountered an old Indian acting as a lookout. Once he determined this group meant him no harm, others joined them, shaking hands all around then listening to Jenkins’ message that the Navajo Springs Agency was a refuge with food and assistance readily available. Eventually, all but Mancos Jim agreed to go, but the next day, he too fell in with the departing group of sixty Indians under Jenkins’ and Ute police supervision. Creel bid farewell and returned to Bluff to collect the property and livestock as well as the sick Utes left behind by those fleeing. He also urged that regular troops be brought in to handle the situation, feeling that the posse members were “a bunch of greenhorns out for glory.” Before this was enacted, a better solution appeared.

On March 1, Nebeker summarized the situation. He believed he now

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For over a month, the posse camped in Bluff at this site. Newspapers characterized the town as a fortress under siege. While this exciting journalism sold papers, there was little actual threat.

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44 “Ute Reported Slain by Posey for Mutiny,” Salt Lake Herald Republican, February 27, 1915.
45 Lorenzo D. Creel to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 13, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
faced fifty Indians under Polk and Posey, fifteen to twenty of whom were warriors, the rest women and children. Mancos Jim’s band numbered 115 while another group of about fifty in the McElmo area was peaceful. All of these groups “commingled.” Those at large, however, had checkmated the posse. The same day that Nebeker made his assessment, Brigadier General Hugh L. Scott, Army Chief of Staff, was implementing his own plan of action. He received plenary powers to draw upon government resources of the War Department and Indian Office and legal rights granted by the Justice Department in order to convince the Indians to surrender of their own volition. He also requested that the Navajo Bizhóshi, whom he arrested the previous year, meet him at Bluff to assist in negotiations. A living testimonial of Scott’s character and veracity could go a long way. With President Woodrow Wilson directing his subordinates to support these efforts, Scott started to the field on March 3 with approvals in hand, arriving in Bluff with his aide Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Michie and orderly Private Paul Randolph on March 10. Nebeker received word of Scott’s role; the newspapers, noting the shift, congratulated their “boys who have done their full duty and done it well;” and the five manacled prisoners boarded the Denver Rio Grande Railroad for Salt Lake City to stand trial.

Now it was Scott’s turn to assess the situation. Louisa Wetherill, who with her husband John was operating the trading post at Kayenta, had been in communication with Polk’s group. She sent a telegram asking for assurance that the father and son would not be hung if they surrendered. Could Scott guarantee them a fair trial? Creel and Jenkins reported that the Indians had crossed the San Juan River and were now around Douglas Mesa. The people in Bluff were afraid for the general and quoted what a Navajo had heard Polk promise to Nebeker—“Only bullets talk now.”

Undaunted and unarmed, Scott set off the next day with John Wetherill, Bizhóshi, and four other Navajos as well as the two agents and his aides.

Hardy Redd, son of L. H. Redd—original settler and prominent rancher of Bluff, predicted failure saying that the Indians would withdraw and that when the weather cleared, they would go to Navajo Mountain where they would never be found. But Redd had a grudge to bear, noting that the previous summer, Posey had drawn a gun on him when the cattlemen let down the bars of the Indian’s fence in order to drive livestock through. His

44 Nebeker to Attorney General, March 1, 1915, WMUHP.
45 Secretary of War to Attorney General, March 2, 1915; Scott to Secretary of War, March 2, 1915; Woodrow Wilson to Secretary of War, March 2, 1915; Scott to War Department (telegram), March 11, 1915, Record Group 94, Adjutant General’s Office—Letters Received, National Archives, Washington, D. C.
47 Scott to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 11, 1915; Cato Sells to Scott, March 11, 1915, Letters Received—BIA; “Only Bullets Talk—Polk,” Salt Lake Herald Republican, March 11, 1915.
take: “We would like to see the Indians driven out of this country.”\textsuperscript{52} Redd was right about one thing—it would be some time before Scott encountered the Utes. The general established a headquarters at Mexican Hat and waited for a parley. In the meantime, Nebeker bid farewell to his posse who returned home on March 19. The next day, Scott sent a telegram to the Secretary of War: “Successful. Have four Paiutes desired by Marshal Nebeker, and at their desire am personally conducting them to Salt Lake to turn over to Marshal Nebeker.”\textsuperscript{53}

People were elated. Scott explained what happened and how Bizhóoshí had played an important part. At first the Navajo and his two sons hesitated to go, reciting a story about how since the beginning of time, Paiutes were mean. Scott cajoled him into agreeing after promising “that when we were both killed we would be buried together.”\textsuperscript{54}

Once the party reached the trading post at Mexican Hat, they found only Arthur H. Spencer and family. Eventually Wetherill and Scott recruited a Paiute from Kayenta to find Polk and Posey and invite them to come in for a talk. Several days elapsed before the messenger returned with news

\textsuperscript{52} “Scott Unarmed Goes to the Piutes,” Salt Lake Herald Republican, March 13, 1915; “Indians will Soon Scatter,” Salt Lake Herald Republican, March 16, 1915.

\textsuperscript{53} “Scott Fails to Find Renegades,” Salt Lake Herald Republican, March 17, 1915; “Nebeker Posse Ordered Home,” March 19, 1915; Scott to Secretary of War, March 20, 1915, Record Group 94, Adjutant General’s Office—Letters Received, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

that the next day, the “outlaw Indians,” about thirty in number would be in. They were, but not before carefully glassing the situation from afar and posting armed lookouts on the surrounding mesas. After listening to their complaints, Scott asked them what they were going to do and welcomed, “We are going to do just what you tell us to do.”

With this music in his ears, Scott agreed to accompany the four recalcitrants to Salt Lake City to insure that they had a fair trial and that Tse-ne-gat successfully arrived in Denver for his hearing. In the general’s mind, he was going to “prevent those four Indians from being legally murdered.” Just as clear in Scott’s mind was the belief that when the posse attacked these Indians, they had made no attempt to identify themselves, show a warrant, or give any explanation. The Colorado cowboys attacked the Indians and they just defended themselves. John D. Rogers, local cattlemen, latter tells of how Polk explained this fact to him long after the incident was over.

Praise poured in for Scott, who enjoyed the dramatic situation. The Secretary of War sent congratulations, as did the Adjutant General of the Army, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and President of the United States. The Indian Rights Association, an eastern organization dedicated to insuring fair treatment of Indians across the United States, was also quick to applaud, believing the Red Men had an advocate looking out for their welfare. But the Utes captured even more of the spotlight. From the time they arrived in Moab, then Thompson to board the train for Salt Lake City, press coverage ran continuously. The train ride was a new experience, the reporter playing on the “curious savage theme.” Scott, “The White Father,” assumed a paternal role with the Indians, who admired him and depended on his friendship, remaining close to their advocate. The large crowd at

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56 Scott, Some Memories, 538.
57 Ibid.
58 John D. Rogers interview with Michael T. Hurst, April 29, 1972, CR.C-J6, Posey War Oral History Project, Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 5.
the station in Salt Lake City, jockeyed for position to catch a glimpse of the prisoners sporting dark glasses when they got off the train.

Their reunion with the other Utes awaiting them in their cell was a “genuine joy” countermanded only by the sadness they felt at Scott’s eventual departure for the East. There were car rides in a Studebaker Six, church services in LDS and First Church of Christ chapels, and a deputy marshal caught by reporters learning the Ute “war dance.” The daily walks about the city were enjoyable, except for Polk who suffered from rheumatism. And a few weeks later, when Tse-ne-gat went to a hospital in Denver for treatment of tuberculosis, the newspapers were sure to report his reaction to a white female nurse—“Me no sabe white woman. She funny, she heap pretty—no got man.” All of this publicity played off the theme of the “quaint” noble savage coming to the big city and receiving an education in twentieth century life. Until they left, the Indians received frequent billing.

On a more serious side, the government released the seven Indians in Salt Lake City to return with Superintendent Jenkins, having promised to remain at Navajo Springs, forsake their connection with southeastern Utah,

\[59 \text{ "Redmen are Lodged in Salt Lake Jail," March 25, 1915; "Indians Will Say Farewell Today to ‘Good White Father’ General Scott," March 26, 1915; "Scott Bids Reds Farewell," March 27, 1915; "Indian Warwhoops Reverberate Through Corridors of Jail," March 31, 1915, all Salt Lake Herald Republican; "Tse-ne-gat Tickled with Hospital," Denver Times, April 20, 1915.} \]
encourage others in their band to join them, send their children to school, and no longer carry weapons. All signed or placed their thumb print on the paper in agreement. “Old Polk put his hand on his heart and declared he now saw clearly that he had been blind before, that his heart was bad, but that he now knew his duty and would do it.” The group went to what had now become the new agency at Towaoc, a few miles north of the old Navajo Springs facility. Tse-ne-gat, still facing trial and badly sickened with tuberculosis, departed for Denver, entered Saint Anthony’s Hospital, and received a five-year prognosis for his life.

While Tse-ne-gat’s trial is an interesting study in the complexity of external sources affecting the legal system, there are a number of other salient points to also consider. Both sides made every effort to exert pressure through expert testimony that played well in the press as well as the court. Before the trial started, U. S. District Attorney General Harry B. Tedrow traveled to Towaoc and Bluff to gather evidence and evaluate the strength of his arguments. He correctly divined that if it were just a matter of presenting evidence, he had a very strong case. He was also a realist. Recognizing that the victim was a Mexican, Scott a hero who sided on behalf of Tse-ne-gat, the Ute people were afraid of Polk, the interpreters struggled to make their points, and the defendant was gravely ill, this all added up to an emotionally biased case in favor of the defense. “The old time prejudice against Indians has been replaced in the locality of the trial by a general feeling distinctly in the defendant’s favor. Denver representatives of Eastern Indian Societies [Indian Rights Association] are much interested in Hatch and his case.” All of the evidence indicated Hatch was guilty, but convincing the jury would be another story.

During the collection of eyewitness statements in Bluff, Polk, Posey, and twenty other men appeared at the hearings and intimidated those providing information against Tse-ne-gat. Jenkins was supportive of these two leaders, even suggesting that they might become part of the agency police force, while at the same time publicly declaring his opinion that the defendant was innocent. The agent could also take no actions against witchcraft or other “methods peculiar to themselves [Indians] to intimidate witnesses,” giving an open hand to Polk’s faction. Indeed, there were even white men afraid to testify against Tse-ne-gat, knowing full well that both Polk and his wife might appear on behalf of the defense. The Attorney General in Washington, D.C., intervened to insure Jenkins would keep the two testifying sides separate at all times and would not allow them to influence each other.

60 “Sworn Oath,” District of Utah, witnessed April 10, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
61 “Indians Agree to be Peaceful,” Salt Lake Herald Republican, April 13, 1915.
62 Jenkins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 14, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
63 Jenkins to Utah Attorney General, April 22, 1915, WMUHP.
64 Henry McAllister to U. S. Attorney General, May 6, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
65 Jenkins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 5, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
66 Harry B. Tedrow to Attorney General, June 25, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
The trial started on July 6, ended on July 15, with Judge Robert E. Lewis presiding and Henry McAllister, Jr. and Charles L. Avery serving for the defense. The latter’s strategy was to discredit the witnesses, who testified of Tse-ne-gat’s actions on the day of the murder. From Tedrow’s perspective, the defense received a great deal of help from Jenkins, who took one of the Indians, Harry Tom, to Avery’s office and coached him. Antonio Buck, interpreter for the defense, offered him money; Jenkins had made his pro-defense position clear which threatened the Indians under his charge; and Tom became confused with some of the questions, responding to only the parts he understood. The prosecutor also claimed that Jenkins had not followed instructions and had brought only a portion of the information requested from the agency files; the superintendent also went to the scene of the crime, fired a rifle three times then reported in court that the person accompanying him stationed at the place where the body was found could not hear the shots, discrediting the Indian witnesses; finally, Jenkins claimed that the three Utes testifying for the prosecution belonged to Mariano’s faction, were untrustworthy troublemakers, and at odds with Polk’s band. Subsequent testimony by Covey, the previous agent, and local whites countered this assertion, saying these men were of good character and entirely credible. Tedrow concluded that Jenkins had done this because of his promise to Polk that the trial would turn out favorably for his son; if it did not, the Indian would exact revenge, a theme mentioned a number of times during the trial.67

Arthur H. Spencer’s trading post located near Mexican Hat Rock on the San Juan River. Here, Brigadier General Hugh L. Scott waited until Polk and his band agreed to come in for peace talks.

67 Tedrow to Attorney General, July 15, 1915, WMUHP.
The defense enjoyed a strong ally in the press. Billed as “the most thrilling criminal trial ever held in Denver,” activities inside and outside the courtroom grabbed the public’s attention. Titles and subtitles captured the imagination: “Mother of Tse-ne-gat Braves Terrors of Railroad Engines to Be at Son’s Side” [Polk was subpoenaed to appear but refused], “Mournful Eyes Turn on Mother,” “Indian Simplicity Baffles the Court,” and “Existence of Feud Admitted by Agent,” fueled the fires of public spectacle. Written like a dime novel, the text reeked with description.68

‘Ma Polk’ mother of the defendant [was] brown, worn, aged; this Indian mother watched the opening proceedings ignorant of what was being said, what was being done, her twinkling black eyes fixed steadily on the melancholy face of the young man at the head of the table in the middle of the room. Now and again Tse-ne-gat turned his mournful eyes toward his mother. For long moments they gazed at each other, then the glance was broken, not by a smile of sympathy, but by a woman lifting the loose end of her red calico sleeve and wiping her lip. ‘Ma Polk’ is dressed to kill in turkey-red calico edged with orange yellow. She wears white leather moccasins and her bronze colored hands are covered with silver rings set with stunning turquoise.69

Nine days from the start, the twelve-man all-white jury reached its verdict of not guilty, following seven hours of deliberation. Tse-ne-gat and his mother remained unmoved after the pronouncement, but they were the only ones. Antonio Buck, interpreter for the defense, grasped the hand of his friend; Mary Baker, graduate of Haskell and court interpreter; smiled broadly; each juror shook his hand in congratulations; Scott, when he received the news that night, expressed approval, declaring he knew Tse-ne-gat was innocent; crowds of people in the corridors surged around the Indian, giving an ovation; and no doubt the “women in Denver [who had] sent red neckties and pink stockings, love notes and sweetmeats,” were elated.70 As for Tedrow, he fumed and demanded an investigation into Jenkin’s behavior; Juan Chacon’s widow “sprang up like a tigress and went for Tse-ne-gat,” only to be stopped by a deputy; and those who had testified for the prosecution shuddered at what this tacit approval would mean back in southeastern Utah.71

All that remained was a dramatic farewell from Denver. Tse-ne-gat boarded the train the next day with a “string of cheap medals pinned on one side of his breast,” no doubt as he had seen Scott attired, with an American flag draped over his other shoulder. “Ma Polk” sported a new dress that had safety pins attached all over the front. In one hand she carried an American flag and in the other a bag in which well-wishers, many of whom were women, placed presents and food. Her son took his

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68 “Indian Accused of Murder Sits in Court of Paleface,” Denver Post, July 6, 1915; Hatch’s Counsel Ready to Spring Surprise in Case,” clipping found in Letters Received—BIA.
69 Ibid. “Indian Accused.”
70 “Tse-ne-gat is Freed by Jury,” Rocky Mountain News, July 15, 1915; “Jury Frees Tse-ne-gat, Ute Shows no Emotion,” clipping found in Letters Received—BIA.
position on the rear of the last car and bid farewell to the people of Denver while, according to the newspaper, "Polk, his father, wait[ed] in the front of his tepee, his aged eyes shaded from the sun, watching for his son."\textsuperscript{[72]}

Polk may have been facing east and awaiting his son, but where he had pitched his tepee was becoming an issue. The Utes who had gone to Salt Lake City returned and went to the reservation, but soon traveled with Jenkins to San Juan to get their wives and possessions. Polk declared he was going to stay in Utah until he heard how his son fared in the trial, as others also remained, retrieved their hidden arms, obtained ammunition from caches and Navajo friends, and hesitated to go to the reservation. Jenkins left them to return on their own since their livestock was poor, estimating they would be back in a week or ten days.\textsuperscript{[73]} The white community, unhappy the Indians were still around, felt the whole incident had been handled poorly. As reports of events in Salt Lake City then later Denver filtered back, many believed the vocal advocacy of the Indian Rights Association and federal bungling were at the roots of their problems.

\textit{The council at Mexican Hat strengthened Scott's belief that the Utes had not intended to cause trouble. Attacked by a group of armed men who provided no identification, concerned about women and children in their midst, and with no chance to calmly address their situation, the Utes defended themselves as best they could. Scott promised protection if they surrendered peacefully.}

\textsuperscript{[72]} "Tse-ne-gat is Freed by Jury."

\textsuperscript{[73]} Jenkins to Scott, April 28, 1915; A. H. Spencer to Scott, April 29, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
When Tedrow was in Bluff on May 6 collecting information for the upcoming trial, he learned that Posey and his group were sullen and outspoken about how they did not want to go to the reservation and did not intend to stay long once they got there. One young warrior grabbed Kumen Jones, Mormon bishop and elderly advocate for Indians, and shook him with frustration. Still, to their credit, all of the Utes, except Polk, arrived at Towaoc with one day to spare before the appointed time. Ten days later, Jenkins reported that all of the Bluff Indians were present for ration day and that the fuss about their being off reservation was just more “yellow press” encouraged by “vicious white men” anxious to make trouble for Indians.”74

The Superintendent changed his tune the next day in a telegram to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. That morning, a group of travelers encountered Posey and fifteen Utes leaving the reservation for Allen Canyon, driving their sheep. “He is very untruthful and irresponsible and should be disciplined for breaking parole. . . . Recommend marshal be notified and requested to apprehend Posey and return him to jail. . . . Posey is half Mexican and half Piute; very unpopular with rest of tribe; his arrest and incarceration would have wholesome effect.”75

To the public, however, Jenkins maintained an image of control. He went on record in mid-June stating the rumors about friction in Bluff were false, that he had given the Indians permission to go off the reservation temporarily to collect possessions and pick up their families, but he also “estimated that it may take a year or two to complete the transfer of all effects and people to the agency but it will be accomplished as fast as possible.”76 Besides, he had “many letters from residents of Grayson, Monticello, and other places from people who desired he send them Indians to help on ranches.”77

Like the Ute story of the Creator learning that people were let out of the bag and now lived about the land, the federal government began to realize that getting Posey and Polk to stay on the reservation was becoming an impossible mission. Polk, camped near James M. Holley’s store in McElmo Canyon, showed up on the reservation for ration day, but the rest of the time went where he wanted. Mancos Jim had left Towaoc with a dozen people in search of water and grass for their livestock. Posey did not even pretend to be on the reservation. Bluff, Allen Canyon, Mexican Hat, Douglas Mesa, Navajo Mountain—he returned to all of his old haunts with his band of twenty-five to thirty followers and took up his old practices of demanding food at the cabin door or appropriating a cow for dinner. The

74 Tedrow to Attorney General, May 6, 1915; Jenkins to David S. Cook, May 6, 1915; Jenkins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 1, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
75 Jenkins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 2, 1915, WMUHP.
76 “Supt. Jenkins Denies Reports of Indian Troubles,” Montezuma Journal, June 17, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
77 Ibid.
men in Bluff feared leaving their families to go out on the range to tend cattle and wondered if the previous fight had accomplished anything.76

As 1915 came to a close, people tallied the results from the past decade-and-a-half. Important lessons had been learned, but were not necessarily the ones desired. The Utes in southeastern Utah lived in an untenable position. The reservation due to lack of water and other resources could not support them and the people already there were not anxious to receive them. At the same time, the hunting and gathering way of life was shattered, forcing the Indians to depend on the white settlements to provide food and commodities, but they were un-welcomed. Any livestock the Utes owned were in direct competition for grass and water on the public domain. Ties to the land were just as strong, but much of it was inaccessible because of cattlemen, federal agencies, and farmers who did not understand and had little sympathy for the original inhabitants.

Indeed, from the white man’s perspective, the Indians were a nuisance at best and a threat at worst. The recent conflict bore testimony that outside

76 W. W. McConihe to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 13, 1915 and October 22, 1915; Jenkins to Indian Office (telegram), September 23, 1915, Letters Received—BIA.
help only made matters more difficult, people beyond the Four Corners area did not really understand the wards they were championing, and the Utes were now more aggressive since they had beat the white man on his own terrain—the courtroom. Albert R. Lyman, one of a number of witnesses called to Denver to testify for the prosecution, summarized what he had seen during the trial when he wrote: “All the evidence was minimized, overlooked, or ignored by the daily papers. I was never so thoroughly disgusted with a court procedure in my life. The Indian Rights people had no eyes to see, ears to hear, nor hearts to consider the sorrowing parents and the broken hearted wife [of Juan Chacon].”75 The result in Lyman’s eyes was the creation of what he called “scot-law killers,” who gave rise to more problems.

For the next eight years the fever of annoyance rising at times to hatred continued. In 1923, one more shooting incident, incorrectly known as the Posey War, erupted into more killing and a “final solution.”80 It was the first and last time that the Mormon citizenry prosecuted an armed conflict as an organized group against the Utes, much to the Indians’ surprise. The victory led to the off-reservation Utes receiving allotments in Allen

Canyon and eventually on White Mesa, eleven miles outside of Blanding. Polk in his old age became increasingly docile, Posey died in the conflict bearing his name, while tuberculosis had killed Tse-ne-gat before the final fracas even started. A theme persistent throughout the conflict, however, was that the mistakes of the 1915 fiasco would not be repeated; outsiders from start to finish had mismanaged the arrest and trial of an upstart warrior who was never punished. There was to be no Colorado cowboys, no federal marshals, no Indian Rights Association, no General Scott, and no sympathetic juries. And for the most part there weren’t. The complexity of the past gave way to a local display of power that ended a more than forty year protracted conflict. In a sense, Tse-ne-gat and Polk may have triumphed in 1915, but the Utes paid a later price in 1923 when once again “bullets talked.”
Utah’s Mammoth Statehood Flag

By JOHN M. HARTVIGSEN

For nearly a half century Utahns worked and struggled to achieve statehood. A number of petitions were submitted to Congress seeking statehood and each time Congress rejected them. Finally, in 1894 Congress approved Utah’s petition. While there were several reasons for Congress rejecting Utah’s petitions for statehood and reducing the size of the Utah territory, a central allegation repeatedly charged Mormons with disloyalty to the United States. This perceived disloyalty resulted from, among other things, the unique relationship of church and state in the territory. The issuance of the Manifesto in 1890 by LDS Church President Wilford Woodruff announcing that no longer would polygamous marriages be sanctioned significantly changed this relationship and Congress upon Utah’s last petition for statehood agreed and in 1894 approved Utah’s Enabling Act.

With the approach of formal admission to the Union on January 4, 1896, Utah’s citizens set about to public show their loyalty and fidelity to the United States with a large statehood celebration. A statehood celebration committee was organized and a small group of women was asked to sew an enormous patriotic banner, an American flag that was to be hung on the south side of the Salt Lake Temple from 1897 until about 1903.

The Utah Statehood Flag was

hung on the south side of the Salt Lake Temple from 1897 until about 1903.

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1 For more on the lengthy struggle for statehood, see Edward Leo Lyman, Political Deliverance: the Mormon Quest for Utah Statehood, (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1986); and William P. MacKinnon, “Like Splitting a Man Up His Backbone;”: The Territorial Dismemberment of Utah, 1850-1896,” Utah Historical Quarterly 71 (Spring 2003) 100-24.
from the ceiling of the Salt Lake Tabernacle during the inauguration ceremony and the celebration of statehood then hung on the south wall of the Salt Lake Temple. Although this gigantic flag has been briefly mentioned and pictured in a few books and articles, the fascinating story of the Mammoth Utah Statehood flag has remained largely unknown.

Celebrating with large flags and flying banners were not new in Utah and Mormon history. Even before the Mormon pioneers arrived in the Great Basin, there were discussions about raising banners honoring the Kingdom of God and the raising of large flags. On one occasion at Winter Quarters, Nebraska, in late February of 1847, Brigham Young raised a question about flying a large flag: “What of a flag would [be] 16 [feet] by 8 [feet] [be] on a [mountain] — 5 miles off. I think 90 [feet] by 30 [feet] better.” Within a few days after the arrival of the Mormon pioneers in the Great Salt Lake Valley, a banner, much smaller in size than what Young had mused earlier, was flown on Ensign Peak, which overlooked the Great Salt Lake Valley. Two years later, as part of the first celebration of the arrival of the pioneers to the valley, Zina D. Huntington Young and other women were asked to sew a large sixty-five-foot long flag which was displayed on a 104 foot pole installed next to the Temple Block Bowery. A flag of that size in 1849 Salt Lake City was significant. Its design was not a traditional Stars and Stripes, but was that of the Provisional State of Deseret.

At this early date of 1849 and for years later, the quantity of fabric needed to sew an immense flags was more in demand for making useful

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3 Minutes of meeting held Friday, February 26, 1847, at Winter Quarters, Brigham Young Papers, LDS Church Archives. The flag discussed was the “Ensign of the Nations;” however, the size of contemplated flags appears to have been followed in the manufacture of other flags of the time.

4 Marilyn Higbee, ed., “A Wary Traveler: The 1848-1850 Diary of Zina D. Huntington Young,” Journal of Mormon History 19 (Fall 1993): 113, also “24th of July, at Great Salt Lake City,” Frontier Guardian, September 19, 1849. Huntington gives the length as sixty feet while the Frontier Guardian and other sources state a length of sixty-five feet, a large flag given either measurement. The saints established the State of Deseret in 1849. A year later Congress established the Utah Territory, which legally replaced the pioneers’ State of Deseret.

5 Only a vague description of the Flag of Deseret as having blue and white stripes is found in the Journal of Charles Benjamin Darwin, A Journal of a Trip Across the plains from Council Bluffs, Iowa, to San Francisco, July 1849, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
items such as clothing. Yet, pioneer women produced other large flags including one that measured thirty by eighty feet for the 24th of July celebration in 1850. For the July 4th and July 24th Pioneer Day celebrations in 1851, the pioneers made a large Stars and Stripes, which measured “forty-five feet by fourteen and a half [feet] in breadth, with the American eagle stretching its wings on an area of ten feet square…” These large banners, which continued to be made and flown each year for several years were often dubbed “mammoth” flags, and were a mainstay for pioneer celebrations. Following this tradition a truly mammoth flag seemed appropriate to celebrate Utah’s entry into the Union.

In late 1895 Utahns prepared for the long awaited day when Utah would become a state. The Enabling Act, which provided for Utah’s admission, finally passed Congress in July 1894, which enabled the citizens of the state to hold a constitutional convention, adopt a state constitution, hold elections in November and elect state officials, and congressional representatives. With statehood eminent, excitement grew, a general committee and other committees were formed to plan the statehood celebration. “Politics,” reported Spencer Clawson, a prominent Utah Republican party member and later a member of the Utah Jubilee committee, “will cut no figure in the general rejoicing.” He and Margaret Caine, a prominent Democrat, as members of the decorating committee promoted the idea of a big flag to celebrate the big day. Margaret Nightingale Caine had led Utah’s campaign for women’s suffrage, while her husband, John T. Caine, had served as Utah territory’s congressional delegate (1883–1893) and ran in 1895 as the Democratic Party’s unsuccessful candidate for governor.

Other members of the committee were less enthusiastic about such a massive flag and warned that a huge flag would be too expensive. Initially, Margaret Caine gave into their fears when she found little support when she asked prominent merchants for donations. However, her fears for the project changed when she did receive a $250 contribution from George M. Cannon of the general celebration committee. Others soon embraced Clawson and Caine’s enthusiasm. Hyrum B. Clawson, chairman of the general committee and father of Spencer Clawson, announced, that an American flag will be made and outlined its design: “We will make an American Flag so the people of Utah will see for the first time the 45th star, the Utah star, placed on the blue ground of our beloved American flag.”

The $250 contribution purchased 1,296 yards of good quality bunting. Since Spencer Clawson was a buyer for ZCMI, it is likely that he was able

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4 Clarissa Y. Spencer, quoted in “Utah and Her Neighbor States Receive Statehood,” Heart Throbs of the West, comp. Kate B. Carter 12 Vols. (Salt Lake City: Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, 1940), 2: 92.
to purchase the cloth for the flag at a wholesale price of about nineteen cents a yard. Nevertheless, the $250 paid only for the material. Volunteers were necessary to sew the flag and George Romney and a number of employees at the ZCMI clothing factory along with six women recruited by Mrs. Caine agreed to make the massive flag. Of the six women only one is known, the unmarried twenty-year old Margaret Glade whose brother David Glade marked and cut the cloth.

The pattern of stars used for the large statehood flag was not the arrangement that would finally be adopted by the federal government for the forty-five star flag. At the time, various patterns of stars were found on U.S. flags used by the army and navy and produced by civilian flag makers. When Wyoming entered the Union in 1890 as the forty-fourth state, for instance, the typical version of the flag showed four rows of seven stars sandwiched between two rows of eight stars. However, an unusual variant

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11 Today that amount of cotton bunting, at a wholesale price of between $2.15 and $2.50 a yard, would cost about three thousand dollars. Fabric composition and widths used in flag manufacture have changed over the years, making exact comparison difficult. Approximate current costs were provided by Colonial Flag Company of Sandy, Utah.

12 Zion’s Cooperative Mercantile Institution, commonly known as ZCMI, operated the largest clothing factory west of Chicago employed over three hundred people. Margaret Glade Sontag, ZCMI: America’s First Department Store (Salt Lake City: ZCMI, 1991), 44.

13 Margaret Glade married Hyrum H. Derrick in 1901. Although Mrs. Derrick lived to the age of ninety and raised a family of six successful children, for Margaret Glade Derrick this became a signal event of her life. Years later, Margaret often spoke to church groups, schools and civic organizations about her role in the making of the flag. At her death articles appeared in both Salt Lake daily newspapers; headlines acknowledged her as “Maker of Historic Flag.” See “Maker of Historic Flag Dies,” Deseret News, February 1, 1977, and “Death Claims Maker of Historic Flag,” The Salt Lake Tribune, February 1, 1977. Interview with Ali Derrick, Margaret Glade Derrick’s daughter-in-law by author on November 10, 2010.

for the forty-four star flag is found in one private flag collection which displays forty stars in three concentric rings around a single star with four stars, one in each corner of the canton to complete the design.\(^\text{15}\)

In 1896, with Utah’s admission to the Union, five different versions of the forty-five star flag were offered.\(^\text{16}\) One sketch added Utah’s star to the third row, while two added the forty-fifth star in the fourth row, and another drawing added the star to the fifth row. The fifth newspaper illustration—although it was captioned as a “forty-five star flag”—was actually an incorrectly rendered forty-four star flag where Utah’s new star had not been actually added. With all of the inconsistency and confusion, calls for a uniform forty-five star flag were sounded. An article under the headline “The Flag of the Union Made Richer by Utah,” in The Saint Louis Republic on January 12, 1896, found, “The arrangement of the stars and stripes of Old Glory is an official affair, and regarded as an important one, and is put in charge of a special board of army and navy officers [sic]. While it has not yet been officially and finally decided, it is probable that the new star will occupy the blank space which now exists in the fifth row from the top, nearest the flagstaff.”

The typical forty-four star flag, adopted after Wyoming became a state in


\(^{16}\) Heber M. Wells, Scrapbooks, 1895-1900, Mss A 1313-1, Utah State Historical Society.
1890, had four rows of seven stars sandwiched between two rows of eight stars. The plan emerged whereby a star would be added to each of the four middle rows when later it was expected that Utah, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona would be the last four states admitted.17 However, in August of 1895, Secretary of War Daniel S. Lamont issued an order adding Utah’s star to the design of the forty-four star flag placing the forty-fifth star “to the right of the fourth row from the top.”18 Nevertheless, seven months later yet another design for the forty-five star flag received final presidential approval when both Secretary of War Lamont and Secretary of the Navy Hilary A. Herbert agreed to a common design for both the army and the navy. With Utah’s admission as the forty-fifth state, the American flag design would be three rows of eight stars alternating with three rows of seven stars.

Work commenced on the Utah Statehood Flag and volunteers worked a full week for eight to ten hours a day under considerable pressure to finish the flag in time for the statehood inauguration program on January 6, 1896. They followed the August 1895 design ordered by Secretary of War Lamont. The starry pattern, however, included one change. Utah’s star, the forty-fifth star, would be larger than the others. The placement of the larger star on the American Flag followed an earlier flag design in Utah dating back to 1851 that when a new state joined the Union a larger star in a group of stars symbolized a new state rising to join the other states in the flag’s starry constellation.19 So, instead of the pattern of six alternating rows of eight and seven stars which eventually became official, the union on the Utah’s statehood flag displayed rows of eight, seven, seven, eight, seven and

19 *Desert News*, August 19, 1851. This practice was not unique to Utah and was followed in other areas of the nineteenth century west. As one collector explains, “These large stars represent the newest state to enter the Union and add great character and boldness to flags of all eras. Anthony Izzo “Rare Flags,” http://www.rareflag.com (accessed November 4, 2010).
eight stars with Utah’s rising larger star beaming brightly. Reflecting a good measure of acceptance of this practice, The Ohio State Journal reported simply, “Old Glory Smiles.”

Thus, the approval of the standard design for the forty-five star flag came four weeks after Utah’s admission date (January 4, 1896) and after the statehood celebration had taken place. Frank J. Cannon, Utah Territory’s last congressional delegate, received the first two forty-five star flags made by the War Department, which he forwarded to Governor Wells and LDS Church President Wilford Woodruff in late February of 1896. “There has been a short delay” reported the Millennial Star later that April “of making public this news, owing to the fact that it was not definitely settled that the design on the flags would be permanent.” The article concluded, “It [the flag] has now been officially adopted . . .” The Deseret News commented, “The uncertainty as to the arrangement of stars on the United States flag, which had to be changed by reason of the admission of Utah to the Union, has at last been settled by agreement of the secretaries of war and navy, and the approval of the president.” With this agreement the standardization of the flag’s design had a beginning. However, an exact flag design as we know it today would not come into being until sixteen years later with the adoption of the forty-eight star flag.

20 “Old Glory Smiles,” The Ohio State Journal, Columbus, Ohio, January 7, 1896.
Strangely, the design for the forty-five star flag did not actually become official until July 4, 1896, when in accordance with an 1817 law: “That on the admission of every new State into the Union, one star be added to the union of the flag; and that such addition shall take effect on the fourth of July next succeeding such admission.” 

With the statehood announcement, Utahns were too excited to wait and the pattern used for the Utah statehood celebration would not be the one eventually adopted though it did have forty-five stars. For proud Utahns their forty-five star flag was good enough.

The decorations committee members were not the only ones to jump the gun by displaying a forty-five star flag before July Fourth. The Salt Lake Tribune claimed that one of its employees, Benjamin Midgley, also raised the state’s first forty-five star flag over the newspaper’s offices before the Fourth of July. Other downtown businesses flew the American flag in honor of statehood on July 4th as well. A reporter for the Boston Transcript described other flags then being flown in the downtown area, “Looking down the street I see lavish decorations on its business hocks, flags floating from hundreds of roofs, and one immense flag stretched between the topmost spires of the temple, visible for miles around.”

The War Department version of the forty-five star flag.

The record does not indicate who decided on the statehood flag’s exact dimensions. At any rate, Utah’s forty-five star celebration flag was large enough to dwarf the mammoth flags of Utah’s early years with each of the thirteen stripes measuring six feet in width. The stripes were joined together

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24 Kathryn D. Groesbeck, “Applications for Statehood Had been Rejected Many Times Prior to Year 1896,” Sunday Herald, January 9, 1966, 9A.
using double flat-felled seams, giving the flag added strength. “Placing the stars on the blue ground was the hardest and most tedious work,” Mrs. Derrick later admitted.26 The stars measured three feet from tip to tip. Utah’s larger star was added to the fourth row next to the stripes. Each of the forty-five stars was double appliquéd on six-foot squares of blue bunting, and then the squares were sewn together to form the union; thus the flag was double sided with appliquéd stars appearing on both sides. Different sources give slightly different dimensions. Considering the various dimensions, the size of the parts and gauging from photographs of the flag, a good set of measurements materializes. The flag measured a whopping seventy-four feet wide and one hundred and thirty-two feet long, with the blue union alone measuring forty feet square. Its weight is unknown, but it took four to five men to carry the folded flag.

It was perhaps the largest flag in the world, which a boast is easily made, but not easily proven. Certainly, there had been some large flags in American history. The Star Spangled Banner which flew over Fort McHenry, during the War of 1812, for instance, measured thirty by forty-two feet, and was defiantly made “so large that the British [had] no difficulty in seeing it from a distance.”27 Nonetheless, the Mammoth Utah flag was at the time unusual in its size, and it may have been the first to claim the title of largest flag in the world.28

Utah’s large flag held the title of largest flag until the J. L. Hudson department store in Detroit made a larger flag in 1923, which measured ninety by two-hundred feet. Years later in 1949, Hudson’s department store replaced their large flag of 1923 with one that measured 104 feet by 235 feet. It is significant that Utah’s flag held the record for so long, about twenty-seven years.29

25 “Utah’s First Inaugural,” The Transcript, Boston, Massachusetts January 14, 1896.
26 Derrick Interview.
28 Around the turn of the twentieth century and after, other flags began to claim the title, but all were smaller than Utah’s flag. One flag, for example, displayed on the building of Denver’s Daniels and Fisher Store about 1905 claimed to be the “Largest American Flag in the World.” Nevertheless at fifty-five by one hundred fifteen feet, it was only about sixty-five percent as large as the Utah Statehood flag. The accompa-
The statehood celebration committee had a plan to display a massive statehood flag before the sewing of it began. Margaret Glade Derrick recalled: “We who worked on the flag were not told where it would be placed. We knew that it could not be placed on a pole.” Margaret Caine and Spencer Clawson knew that the inauguration ceremony would be held in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, and knowing the architecture of the building, they visualized a way to make the most of the building’s most impressive attribute. The historic domed structure, built between 1864 and 1867, required no internal columns to support its arched roof, and the expansive ceiling presented a unique opportunity. The enormous flag as visualized by Caine and Clawson was undoubtedly planned to cover the ceiling of the Salt Lake Tabernacle. The ceiling was just the right size to accommodate the flag, and pillars would not be a hindrance. While Utahns saw this effort as a way to honor their new state, the nation, and the American flag, today the display of a flag covering a ceiling is prohibited by the United States Flag Code.

It took some doing to hoist the finished flag to the Salt Lake Tabernacle.
John Starley, Temple Square head gardener and a crew of men first laid out the flag over the benches where Alice Calder, Mary McAdams and Bernice McAdams sewed rings on the back of the flag in locations that coincided with vent holes in the Tabernacle’s ceiling. Ropes were then attached to rings and the ropes were run through the ceiling holes. Starley’s crew then hoisted the massive flag to the ceiling, covering the entire ceiling of the Tabernacle from the organ pipes on the west to the balcony on the east. Workers also constructed a special electric light fixture with an opening the shape and size of Utah’s star which was placed directly behind the Utah’s star. At just the right moment during the inaugural ceremony on January 6, the light was turned on for Utah’s Forty-fifth Star to shine brightly in the banner’s blue.

Fredrick Kesler, one of the attendees at the statehood event, wrote his impressions of the ceremony:

I attended the great inauguration ceremonies at the [Salt Lake Tabernacle] at 12 noon in which the Great Building was packed, every available space being occupied. It was that 14,000 persons were within the walls of the building. The building was very elaborately and tastefully decorated for the occasion which was of no ordinary moment. The Largest American Flag ever made, its exact size being 150 feet long and 75 feet wide, was stretched out at full length on the ceiling overhead. The additional star of the newly born state of Utah was very conspicuous, a small electric [light] being ingeniously fixed so the bright light shone on the new star.

Margaret Glade Derrick, one of the flag’s makers, wrote of her impression seeing the massive flag hung from the ceiling of the Tabernacle:

There was nine feet of space between the dome of the Tabernacle and the flag. When the air circulated through the space, it caused the flag to ripple across the ceiling. WHAT A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT!

As I watched the flag as it rippled across the ceiling tears filled my eyes and a lump came in my throat. I felt this flag was saying, “Proudly I wave over you, home of the brave and land of the free.”

Displaying the massive American flag was not just a one time event. A year later, Utah celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the arrival of the Mormon pioneers to the Great Salt Lake Valley. Spencer Clawson, who had been instrumental in creating the large American flag, was president of the 1897 Pioneer Jubilee. He arranged for the flag to be hung from the south wall of the Salt Lake Temple. Although the flag was longer than length of the temple, when hung from the east and west towers on the south wall, there was a little draping of the flag. Yet, it was still a breathtaking sight.

The placement of the field of blue on the east portion of the temple wall was backwards and for some observers they saw it as Mormon defiance of

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32 Gwen Starley Matheson, Biographical sketch of John Starley, typescript, Mss A 714, Utah State Historical Society.
33 Fredrick Kesler, Diaries, Volume II, Diary II, January 6, 1896, p. 1, Special Collection, University of Utah Marriott Library. The entry has been edited to conform to modern spelling and punctuation.
34 Derrick Interview.
the federal government. As noted, rule dictating placement of the starry union to the west portion of the wall—on the flag’s own right—did not exist in 1896, and the rule governing the display of the United States flag hanging on a wall was not adopted by the National Flag Committee until 1923.

There is no record explaining why the flag was hung in this manner. Margaret Derrick Lester, daughter of Margaret Glade Derrick, suggested that because the rings were sewn on the back of the flag, it had to be displayed on the temple with the stars to the west. Since the back or reverse of the flag is the side viewed in photographs, it appears not be correct. The flag, as already noted, had two sides. The double appliquéd stars were visible on the front and back of the flag. Pictures of the flag suspended from the ceiling of the Tabernacle show the front or obverse of the flag. Pictures showing the flag hung on the wall of the Salt Lake Temple show the back or reverse of the flag. If the flag had had only one side, the side seen in tabernacle photographs, then it would have been necessary to hang the flag on the temple wall with the stars to the west. So, it was by choice that the stars were hung to the east. This manner of display makes sense when considered in context. The stars of the blue union where placed next to the east spires at the front of the temple, which are the tallest and most important features of the building. The east central tower was intended to symbolically serve

as the flagpole upon which the mammoth flag was raised.\textsuperscript{36} Hanging the U.S. flag on the side of the Salt Lake Temple was intended to honor the flag and the nation, and it exhibited pride not rebellion.

The 1896 statehood flag continued to be displayed until about 1903 on the South wall of the Salt Lake Temple on appropriate holidays as a sign of Utah’s pride in its national flag. However, the years of display and storage accelerated its deterioration. While the flag was made with strong seams and of good quality material, the sewn seams could not withstand the weight. As it hung on the side of the temple, the weight of the flag tore rips in the fabric. Photographs show the mammoth flag with long tears along its stripes. Damp storage in the basement of the tabernacle and in a greenhouse where it was also stored caused the cloth to mildew, and when it could not be cleaned or repaired, the flag could no longer be displayed. Utah’s mammoth statehood flag was respectfully destroyed by burning on a corner of the Temple grounds. John C. Starley, son of the temple square head gardener who was in charge of hanging the flag in the

\textsuperscript{36} Interestingly, two modern examples of flag display—unforeseen in 1923—place the flag in a way that appears to be in contradiction to the rules of the U.S. Flag Code: U.S. flags painted on aircraft tailfins and flag patches worn by American troops in the right sleeve of the U.S. Army Combat Uniform. In both cases the flag is shown as if it were flying from a staff. This situational display is in the spirit of the display of the Utah’s 1896 flag on the wall of the Salt Lake Temple with the stars placed to the flag appears to be flying from the buildings tallest towers.
tabernacle in 1896, helped burn the flag.37

While it may be a disappointment that the flag was not saved, its size and condition made its preservation a daunting challenge for any museum. Why then was not at least a swatch of fabric or souvenir fragment retained? Although such patches were cut from the Star Spangled Banner and other nineteenth century flags, no portion of Utah’s mammoth flags appears to have been saved.

Today only written descriptions and a few photographs remain of Utah’s Mammoth Statehood Flag. Still the flag and its story remind us of the excitement felt by Utah’s people as they illuminated the nation’s forty-fifth star, Utah’s star, while they sang Utah’s original and then newly composed state song: “Bright in our banner’s blue, Among her sisters true, She proudly comes to view, Utah we love thee!”38

| Selected Large Flags Compared to the Utah Statehood Flag |
|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| NAME                          | YEAR Made     | HOIST (Width) | FLY (Length) | STAR Diameter | STRIPE Width | YARDS Cloth | WEIGHT         | COST            |
| U.S. ARMY Garrison Flag       | Currently in Use | 20’          | 38’          | 7’            | 9’            | ---          | ---            | ---             |
| Fort Niagara Garrison Flag    | 1802          | 36’          | 48’          | ---           | ---           | ---          | ---            | ---             |
| Star Spangled Banner          | 1813          | 30’          | 42’          | 2’            | 2’            | 400          | ---            | $405.90         |
| Utah Statehood Flag           | 1896          | 74’          | 132’         | 3’            | 4’*           | 6’           | 1,296          | $250.00         |
| Daniel & Fisher Store Flag    | 1905          | 55’          | 114’         | 2’            | 4’2’          | 1,450        | 500 lbs        | ---             |
| Mulford Flag                  | 1900          | 65’          | 100’         | 2’8’          | 5’            | ---          | ---            | ---             |
| Manchester N.H. Flag          | 1914          | 50’          | 95’          | 3’            | 4’            | ---          | ---            | ---             |
| J.L. Hudson Flag #1           | 1923          | 90’          | 200’         | ---           | ---           | ---          | ---            | ---             |
| J.L. Hudson Flag #2           | 1949          | 104’         | 235’         | 6’            | 8’            | 2,038        | 3/4 ton        | ---             |

*The 45th Star, representing Utah, was larger than the other stars on the Utah Statehood Flag.
--- Information is insignificant or unknown.

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37 He was reportedly the last living person to handle the flag. See Matheson, Biographical Sketch.
Fast Revolutions: Bicycles, Paved Paths, and the Creation of a Middle-Class City in Salt Lake, 1890–1903

By TED MOORE

When bicycles were introduced to the American public in the late 1870s, they were expensive, dangerous, and regarded as toys of the wealthy and upper-middle class. Beginning in 1890, however, a new type of bicycle was manufactured called the “safety cycle.” This new machine was lower to the ground and much easier to ride and more importantly, to stop, compared to the big-wheeled “high mount” bicycles then in vogue. The “safety cycle” was much less expensive to manufacture, making it more affordable for most Americans. The bicycle sparked both a transportation and social revolution throughout the nation.¹

The initial scarcity of bicycles, combined with an upper-class concern for proper public decorum, meant that bicycle-pedestrian

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A shipment of bicycles arrives on February 26, 1917 at the J.W. Guthrie Company store located at 228 East 200 South in Salt Lake City.
BICYCLES, PAVED PATHS

accidents and general complaints against bicyclists riding recklessly were rare. As the cycling craze swept across urban America the price of bicycles dropped, allowing first the middle, then the working class to purchase bicycles in larger numbers and raised questions about the proper place for riding bicycles. In Salt Lake City the growing number of cyclists, in combination with dirt streets, led to conflict. During the late fall and early spring bicyclists took to the sidewalks in increasingly larger numbers as the unpaved city roads combined with rain and melting snow to turn streets into muddy impassable quagmires. Even during dry months, a sprinkling of rain caused the dust to cake on bike wheels, making the machines nearly impossible to pedal. An alternative to the dirt streets was riding on sidewalks. The pedestrian and cycle traffic soon became a serious problem as collisions occurred more frequently. The rules of rider etiquette had not yet been codified into custom or law. Public safety issues prompted the city government to pass ordinances regulating bicycle usage. Although the city lawmakers’ primary target was the “scorchers,” or cyclists that rode too fast on the roads and the sidewalks, all bicycle owners were affected.

At its outset, most in the upper- class had used the bicycle as another way to publicly distinguish themselves from the rest of society, but some middle-class reformers came to see in the bicycle another means to “Americanize” the immigrant and working class, in part by controlling how public spaces would be utilized. These reformers included as part of their vision for a better American society an orderly, physically fit, and culturally refined public. They used the bicycle, both literally and figuratively, as a vehicle to promote their middle-class behavioral standards and expectations.

The bicycle, however, was embraced by many different groups of people who attempted to derive their own meanings from the new technology. In the process, they too were able to help shape how public spaces would be used. For example, the lower-middle and working class discovered that the bicycle could give them greater control over their lives in terms of being able to live further from the workplace as well as how they spent their leisure time. Women, too, gained a new sense of freedom in a number of ways that challenged accepted societal gender roles.

The story of the bicycle is thus an important part of Salt Lake City’s history as it helps illuminate the growing class divisions and even gender roles during a time when the city was in the midst of an economic, social, and political transformation. The laws that eventually governed bicycle usage were not only meant to ensure public safety and order, their implementation mirrored a broader national movement that attempted to better define already developing social hierarchies and establish guidelines for minimum standards of individual public behavior. Thus, the history of bicycles and the movement to pave Salt Lake’s roads at the end of the nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth centuries is part of a broader movement to create an “American” middle-class city and middle-class
citizens through efforts to determine how the city’s public spaces would be defined and utilized.³

By 1890 Salt Lake City and the state of Utah were dealing with many of the same challenges as the rest of the nation. Industrialization and immigration helped create larger wealth discrepancies, pollution and overcrowding, and what many believed to be the dilution of American ideals and culture. In Salt Lake City these issues were further complicated by the unique dynamics in the city because of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the predominant religion. Mormons had been encouraged for several decades to avoid, as much as possible, economic and political relationships with “gentiles” or those who were not of their faith. As a result, the church developed an economic system that attempted to make individuals and congregations independent of the broader national industrial capitalist system. This was done through cooperative neighborhood industries and a campaign to boycott eastern-manufactured goods and “gentile” owned stores. Church members were also encouraged to help each other and to even equalize their material wealth to a degree through tithing and other charitable donations. Salt Lake City demographics reinforced this sense of cooperation as neighbors and church congregants were a blend of socioeconomic classes who lived in the same neighborhood and worshiped in the same church building.³

By the decade of the 1890s, this communal economic system began to change as Mormon and “gentile” merchants and other business owners started collaborating both economically and politically for the common

² Robert H. Wiebe, The Search for Order, 1877-1920, (Hill and Wang: New York), 1967; John Henry Hepp, The Middle-Class City: Transforming Space and Time in Philadelphia, 1876-1926, (University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia), 2003. Wiebe, in his seminal work, made the argument that between roughly 1880 and 1900 a new type of middle-class was being created. This group, affected by the chaos from uncontrolled rapid urban growth, European immigration and industrialization, attempted to create order out of the seeming chaos. This started in their own ranks through the professionalization of many jobs such as doctors, engineers, and even historians. They did this in part to also garner legitimacy for these newly created professions, which in turn, also elevated this same group in society financially and socially as people that society could look to in order to solve the urban ills of the time. Salt Lake in 1890 was generally seen as a place lacking in civility, primarily due to issues over polygamy and many of its leaders began the process of trying to change the city’s reputation so that it too, could be considered an “American” city. The Salt Lake Commercial Club under its secretary Fisher Sanford Harris helped organize the “See America First” campaign that not only promoted western tourism as an act of patriotism, but Utah specifically. See for example: Marguerite S. Shaffer, See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940, (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 27, 37-38; and Mark Daniel Barringer, Selling Yellowstone: Capitalism and the Construction of Nature, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002). In addition to the Commercial Club, others were actively trying to reshape the city and improve its national reputation. Some of these men included: Frederick Heath and J.R. Walker— the owners and promoters of the Salt Palace, W.A. Neldon— founder and president of Neldon-Judson Wholesale Drug Company and one-time president of the chamber of commerce, and Jacob Moritz— vice-president of the Salt Lake Brewing Company. Additionally there were several women who attempted to improve both the physical appearance of the city through parks and municipal tree plantings and to socially uplift the population through the arts such as painting, sculpting, and classical music. They did this through the numerous women’s clubs that existed in the city. One of the primary women in this regard was Alice Merrill Horne.

goal of incorporating Utah into the national economy through statehood. As this was done, more wealth poured into the territory and church members began to self-segregate along economic lines at a much faster rate, creating distinct wealthy and upper-middle-class neighborhoods and church congregations. 4

City residents also began to embrace the growing national trends towards commercialized recreation that were helping to shape a new culture of consumer capitalism. Along with embracing the consumer-capitalist system, the well-to-do accepted a broader philosophy that equated being American with being middle-class. Certain kinds of material goods helped to publicly distinguish members of this class and they willing embraced this emerging consumer-driven lifestyle. 5

By the 1890s, socialites in the largest American cities heavily weighted the outward, physical appearances of both individuals and cities as a way to determine their middle-class “American” identity. Consequently, as Salt Lakers purchased items such as bicycles that they believed demonstrated a middle-class status, they understood that they were literally buying in to this American image. Yet efforts of Americanization meant a little more to Salt Lakers than simply purchasing consumer goods, it also meant behaving in a class-specific way and that applied to long-time residents as well as recently arrived immigrants. The process to define and enforce proper behavior for all classes is demonstrated in Salt Lake City’s regulation and eventual licensing of bicycles and their owners.

The first bicycles in America cost upwards of one-hundred fifty dollars (the average worker earned less than five hundred dollars annually) and were difficult to ride. They were labeled “boneshakers” due to their metal wheels, lack of suspension, and the poor roads. As the technology evolved, high mounts became popular, but were still difficult to ride as the front wheel measured as much as fifty-two inches in diameter. Although these early models were fairly expensive, they offered their owners freedom: the

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4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., p. 6-9.
6 From personal fashion and owning more material goods, these purveyors of consumer culture wanted to transpose this materialistic vision onto the physical city itself. As Marina Moscovitz explains: “Rather than a level of earnings, the standard of living increasingly became defined through consumer goods and the spaces established and maintained to contain these goods. Purchasing power, not income, became the measure by which Americans evaluated their status. The physical environment—how it is organized, used, and represented—becomes a means of gauging the less tangible shared attributes of a community that calls itself the middle class. The shared material markers of the standard of living were particularly important in providing a sense of middle-class identity.” Marina Moscovitz, Standard of Living: The Measure of the Middle Class. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 4, 12.
7 David Herlihy, Bicycle: The History. (Yale University Press: New Haven, 2004), 76, 110, 250-251, 255. The first “bicycle” in the U.S. was introduced in 1865 by a Frenchman named Pierre Lallement although another Frenchmen named Pierre Michaux, who introduced his bicycle in 1867, has been given credit for the modern day invention. Some Americans prior to 1865 used a device called a velocipede that had the shape of a bicycle, but did not have pedals and was propelled somewhat like a scooter. With the introduction of the “safety cycle” the price dropped to between seventy-five and one hundred dollars before bottoming out at twenty-five dollars by the early 1900s due to overproduction.
freedom from the timetables of trains, streetcars, and work, and the freedom to escape the noise and pollution of the city and explore the countryside on the rider’s own terms. Finally in 1885 a new design was introduced called the “safety cycle.” Its frame resembled that of the modern bicycle with tires smaller in diameter. As prices decreased for the new bicycle, sales increased and the number of bicycles in the nation doubled between 1890 and 1891.7

As the number of cyclists grew, middle-class reformers initially saw the new machine as a tool to help reform society and Americanize the immigrant masses. Consequently reformers believed that the bicycle as a “poor man’s carriage,” would completely transform society by democratizing transportation. Still others argued that the bicycle would help improve the nation’s morals in that it “will take men away from the gambling rooms and rum shops, out into God’s light and sunshine.”8

The cycling craze affected Salt Lake City as much, or even more than most cities. In 1881 bicycles were noted infrequently. However, by 1893, the city had four bike shops and four years later the city boasted eight bicycle retail shops and two bicycle manufacturers.9 In addition, department stores sold bicycles. In 1894 there were more than eight hundred bicycles on the municipal streets while just two years later that figure was twenty-five hundred. Local sales soared to more than six thousand new bikes annually between 1897 and 1900. Officials estimated that by 1900 half of the city’s fifty thousand residents owned bicycles and that almost every family in the city owned at least one bicycle.10

Prior to 1892, however, the mere possession of a bicycle automatically distinguished the owner as a person of substantial means, and wealthy Salt Lakers were quick to use the bicycle to further distinguish themselves publicly through cycling clubs. One of the earliest and most prominent of these organizations was the Social Wheel Club. Records of the club date to 1890 when bicycles were on the cusp of becoming affordable. One of the club’s more popular activities was to take train excursions to rural locales, like Park City or Murray, and then cycle back to Salt Lake City for a dance or other social activity.11 Club members were often quick to extol the idea that they belonged to an exclusive group comprised of some of the city’s more well-to-do by pointing out that applicants, even to be considered for membership, had to be recommended by at least two “leading citizens” of the city. Membership was expensive with the train fare for weekly

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8 Ibid., 110.
9 Salt Lake Tribune, June 23, 1881, and March 25, 1894. See also Salt Lake City Directory, (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1893), 932-33; Salt Lake City Directory, (Salt Lake City: R.L. Polk & Co., 1898), 839.
10 Salt Lake Tribune, March 10, 1895, April 10, 1896 and May 27, 1900; Salt Lake Herald, May 23, 1900. These figures for bicycle ownership are even more impressive given the fact that the city’s unemployment rate was as high as 47 percent between 1894 and 1897. See, Alexander and Allen, Mormons and Gentiles, 127.
excursions, annual membership dues of three dollars, plus fifty cents monthly.  

In addition to the Social Wheel Club, other cycling clubs formed specifically because of the bicycle, or, for existing clubs, adopted the bicycle as a summer-time pursuit. The “It” club, for example, was compromised of young, single, mostly middle-class University of Utah students who sported distinctive dark green and orange uniforms. The Opal Club was originally a social and literary group whose activities prior to adopting the bicycle consisted of piano concerts, balls, and gatherings to discuss literature. While the club did continue pursuing these activities in the winter, its summer gatherings were almost exclusively for riding bicycles. 

In addition to social gatherings, the middle-classes used the new machines to flee the noise and pollution of the city for the solitude of the countryside. One writer editorialized that the bicycle’s “effect upon the development of cities will be nothing short of revolutionary,” predicting that the bicycle would soon replace the streetcars and eliminate all city noises. To this point, the Social Wheel Club actively encouraged people to go for rides in the suburbs and the countryside and to “Leave [their] cares behind and go out for an enjoyable time.”

Some commentators predicted that the bicycle would in fact become a great nationalizing tool as it afforded easier access to the countryside. On the open road cyclists found fresh air, exercise, fellowship, and access to new places by using the bike in conjunction with the train. Some reformers

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11 Salt Lake Tribune, September 7, 1890.
12 Ibid., September 27, 1891.
13 Ibid., June 10, 1900; Deseret News, March 4, November 4, 1899, January 5, and May 18, 1901.
14 Salt Lake Tribune, August 3, 1890; Herlihy, Bicycle, 259.
15 Salt Lake Tribune May 21, 1892.
16 Herlihy, Bicycle, 264.
believed that increased contact with nature would help to “soften” the attitudes and behavior of the urban masses, especially immigrants, and help to instill in them a greater civic pride and increased patriotism. As one editorial declared, “Treading the wheel is about the best way to clear the cobwebs from a man’s brain, to fill his lungs with air, rejoice his eyes, broaden his understanding and increase his knowledge of his own beautiful land.”  

As the bicycle became more affordable and available with a substantial used bicycle market, it offered a new freedom of movement for a broader segment of the population with many in the working classes using it as their primary form of transportation. In 1894 the Salt Lake Tribune commented that, “It is a common sight nowadays to see artisans, mechanics, and laboring men with their dinner pails or tools strapped to the handle bars, pedaling away to their work or returning at night, converting an otherwise tiresome journey into a means of recreation and sport.”” Workers organized their own cycling clubs, such as the YMCA Cycling Club, with open enrollment, virtually no dues, and popular excursions to local parks.

The bicycle craze also had a transformative impact on many of Salt Lake’s females as they, too, took to the wheels in large numbers. For example, one local newspaper article remarked that between 25 and 50 women’s “high grade” bicycles had been sold in the city in a single week in the spring of 1895. It also noted that the women patrons were “very

17 Salt Lake Tribune, August 3, 1890; Herlihy, Bicycle, 259.
18 Salt Lake Tribune, March 25, 1894.
19 Ibid., June 11 and July 16, 1899
knowledgeable” when it came to understanding the gearing and other components on the bikes.20

Other articles were not as positive and reflected the gender-based stereotyping of the period. In an article from the Chicago Chronicle reprinted in the Salt Lake Tribune in August 1896, the writer painted a less than flattering image of a woman cyclist, “She plunges and wobbles from curb to curb with a charming indifference to wheelmen and pedestrians alike, and cautious riders invariably turn down side streets at her approach.” According to the article, even after women learned to master the machine they still ignored the rules of the road by, “cutting between two cyclists going the other way, riding down the wrong side of the road, and disputing the right-of-way with everyone.”21

Some encouraged women to learn to ride promising “the sooner our girls learn to exercise their limbs and muscles by bicycling, the sooner will they acquire that physical development and that purity of complexion which…cosmetics can never provide.”22 For many women in the city,

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20 Ibid., March 10, 1895.
21 Ibid. August 23, 1896.
22 Ibid., August 3 and September 7, 1890.
especially those without young children, the bicycle represented the potential for greater independence and freedom on many fronts. Many of the clubs, like the Social Wheelmen, were mixed-gender and some, such as the Iroquois Club, had at least one woman on its executive committee. The “It” club consisted of single young women and men who often rode, unescorted, up City Creek Canyon.23

Women who rode were expected to adhere to middle-class dress standards. One newspaper article highlighted a woman’s riding ensemble that included dark-blue Turkish trousers that went just below the knee, worn under a skirt with a blue cap that, “completed the most attractive cycling suit that anybody had ever dreamed of.”24 Nevertheless, women were successful in their push for less physically restrictive clothing. One commentator noted that women were buying shorter and less cumbersome dresses to be able to ride the new machines, while another explained that women’s bicycle clothing had become more close-fitting and “free from whalebones.” The bicycle and the newer fashions gave women more physical freedom while offering them the opportunity to more freely commute from place to place without relying upon streetcars, horses, carriages, and men.25

In addition to women cyclists influencing the class and gender-based standards of clothing and fashion for themselves, others deftly turned the new invention and the gendered stereotypes to their own purposes. A few women used accepted gender-based fashion, clothing, and domestic responsibility issues as an ally when it came to fighting for paved bike lanes in the city. They argued that the amount of money that they would save in dry cleaning costs by paving roads would more than offset a proposed yearly tax to pay for the paths.26

As men and women from all socio-economic groups embraced the new

23 Ibid., June 11 and July 16, 1899, June 10, 1900.
24 Ibid., August 3 and September 7, 1890.
25 Ibid., September 7, 1890 and March 10, 1895.
26 Ibid., April 24, 1896.
technology, many local department stores such as ZCMI and Auerbach also seized on the bicycle’s popularity to encourage consumption by offering bicycle carrier delivery services to their customers that also served as an inexpensive form of advertising the bicycles they sold in their stores. Advertising also included occasional races around downtown for messenger boys offering store goods like gold watches, cases of root beer, bicycle tires, hams, and sacks of flour as prizes.27

Other Salt Lake companies followed the example of the department stores in sponsoring races. In fact, the amount of sponsorship money available in the city to professional racers made Salt Lake City one of the two most important centers of track cycling in the nation. During the last decade of the nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth century track cycling became one of the most popular sports in the nation and the city became the home to three outdoor tracks, or velodromes, (one each at the Salt Palace, Saltair, and Calder’s Park), in addition to another track in Ogden. Between 1900 and 1913 some of the best riders from Europe and Australia, and most of the best riders from the United States routinely converged on the city every spring to race for fame and fortune.28

Local road races became more popular and some developed as an annual

27 Ibid., March 25, 1894, April 15 and May 27, 1900; Salt Lake Herald, May 16, 1900. The idea of using bike races to promote goods or a company became quite common as evidenced by two still popular road races, the Tour De France and the Giro D’Italia, which were initially organized by newspapers as a way to promote and increase their circulations.

28 The local sports pages of the newspapers are replete with information on this subject. Champions such as Floyd McFarland, Iver Lawson, and the most famous of all, Marshal “Major” Taylor all raced in the city at some point. The track at the Salt Palace was one of the fastest in the world as numerous world records were broken and set there.
tradition, as was the case with the race from Salt Lake City to the Lagoon Amusement Park near Farmington. In 1896 the resort began sponsoring an annual Memorial Day Race from Salt Lake City sixteen miles north to the park. The race quickly became a popular event, and the organizers did their best to add some flair each year to keep it that way. When the resort partnered with the Salt Lake Tribune and the Social Wheel Club in 1900, the newspaper promoted the race as the first time in the history of the sport, a Chinese national, named Yee Wing Choi, would compete. On another occasion the Tribune advertised that an observation train would run parallel to the race route, thus allowing spectators to watch the leading riders.29

For the 1908 race, one hundred riders competed for forty-eight prizes donated by local businessmen and worth more than five hundred dollars. The prizes included a set of bicycle wheels that were valued at fifty dollars for the winner, “one fine fish pole” worth eight dollars for the eleventh place finisher, and a bicycle bell for the person that finished in thirty-sixth place. The Salt Lake Tribune predicted that five thousand passengers would ride the train to watch the 1908 race. While this was an overly generous estimate, there were too many spectators and not enough seats on the train,

29 Salt Lake Tribune, May 27, 1900.
so many people had to sit on the roofs of the passenger cars to witness the spectacle.30 The race was still going strong in 1914 as eighty-one riders participated and a fourteen-year-old named Clifford Holbrook, who started with a fifteen-minute handicap, won the race.31

By 1892, as the bicycle became more and more a part of city life, local government was forced to address the rights of bicyclists on public thoroughfares and necessary restrictions on bicycle riders. Salt Lake City did not begin paving its roads until 1900 and cyclists often times took to the sidewalks to avoid the muddy roads that make bicycle riding extremely difficult if not impossible.32 Conflict became more intense as some cyclists gained a reputation for riding at high speeds on the sidewalks. These “scorchers” were criticized, not only for riding fast and causing pedestrian/bicyclist collisions, but also for their seeming callousness towards everyone else. One editorial complained that “scorchers, simply by ringing a bell, expected everyone to get out of the way, and [never] dismounted when approaching a large group of people on the sidewalk.”33 Speeding bicyclists were just one of the many complaints leveled against riders. Some residents felt that cyclists, particularly those of the working class, lacked discipline. Members of the Social Wheel Club for example publicly complained that some bicyclists “were guilty of going on sixty mile rides on Sundays. As a result of the rides, they would be stiff and sore on Monday and unable to work as productively.” Members of the exclusive club claimed that bicyclists were permitted to ride on city sidewalks because of the influence of club members on the city council, but warned that if the “uncivilized behavior” did not end, they would use their influence to ban bicycles from the sidewalks altogether.34

The issue gained the attention of City councilman Frederick O. Horn in 1892 when he was struck by a cyclist while walking on a sidewalk. He proposed banning bicycles from all city sidewalks. Horn explained to his fellow councilmen that while walking on the sidewalk he heard a voice exclaim, “watch out!” He ignored the warning and a couple seconds later found himself in a collision with a cyclist. The councilman then remarked that the offender “had the nerve to ask him why we (the councilman) did not get out of the way.” Two fellow councilmen joined him in his complaint, one of whom objected to, “a big wheel, five feet high [that came] whizzing by him like a snake in the grass.” Others on the council, however, defended the bicycle, arguing that it was just a few individuals who were engaged in the irresponsible behavior. They pointed out that

30 Ibid., May 24, 30, and 31, 1908.
31 Ibid., May 31, 1914.
32 Ibid., May 21, 1892.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
many people were moving to the city from out of state for health reasons and these newcomers had taken up cycling as part of their recuperation. Thus, they reasoned, any biking restrictions could discourage others from moving to the city.\textsuperscript{35}

Horn’s concerns over personal safety were valid; nevertheless, his proposal brought immediate protests from fifty-two bicycle owners who blamed pedestrians for the accidents. This group argued that pedestrians did not understand that when a bicyclist rang his bell, he was not telling them to get off the sidewalk, but to simply move to the right and that the cyclists “would take care of the rest.”\textsuperscript{36}

As the number of incidents increased, the city council passed legislation in 1894 making it illegal to ride on many of the downtown sidewalks between the months of May thru October under the penalty of up to a twenty-five dollar fine per offence. Proponents of the law argued that cyclists’ bells were ineffective because they competed with the noise from streetcars, peddlers, scissor grinders, barrel organs, and many other cacophonous devices, thus rendering the bells useless and pedestrians unawares and unprotected.\textsuperscript{37}

Most riders were not happy about the sidewalk ordinance even though the restrictions did not permanently ban them from all sidewalk riding. As a compromise, a citizens’ group proposed reserving one side of the street and sidewalks just for bicycles. This idea was rejected when businessmen argued they would loose customers if pedestrians were limited to one side of the street. Another citizens’ group alternately suggested that bicycles be licensed and taxed at a cost of a dollar per year. Proponents of this idea reasoned that the fee would allow the city to pay for paved bike paths in the streets and also make it easier for pedestrians to identify reckless cyclists.\textsuperscript{38}

Bicyclists complained that they were being treated as second-class citizens, arguing that the pedestrians controlled the sidewalks while horses, carriages, and streetcars ruled the streets. Some blamed novice riders for the accidents, while others claimed the accidents were the fault of a few careless young people. As the debates continued, the municipal police announced that they were going to launch a “crusade” and levy stiff fines on those who rode recklessly.\textsuperscript{39}

Most cyclists were united in their contention that the city should pave the streets, or at least create a paved bicycle lane, but they could not agree on how best to fund the paving. For city officials, it would be a difficult undertaking even though the city had appropriated 1.5 million dollars as

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., October 9, 1892.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., October 26, 1892 and March 25, 1894.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., March 27, August 29, and September 9, 1894.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., December 10, 1894.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
part of an unrealistic promise to pave every Salt Lake City street in two years. Salt Lake City roads, which measured one hundred and thirty-two feet across, were wider than those in most cities. This meant that paving a mile of road in Salt Lake City often cost two to three times the amount in other cities.\footnote{Deseret News, January 3, 1900.} In addition, the city government had recently committed itself to building and maintaining a reliable and healthy water and sewer system, which was an expensive proposition. The tax on the proposed hydrological system would increase the financial burden on private homeowners and businesses that were already paying for sidewalk and street construction and maintenance.\footnote{Ibid., April 16, 1910.}

Another factor in the slowness of the city to pave the streets was the influence of the streetcar lobby that feared a decline in ridership because of paved roads, which could potentially encourage more people to ride bikes. It successfully convinced the state legislature to pass a law stipulating that Utah’s municipalities could not pave more than three miles of road per year.

By 1896 the proper place for bicycles had not been resolved. In that year several prominent citizens, including the Utah Governor Heber M. Wells, lodged a complaint and petitioned for a revised ordinance that would have banned cyclists from riding on the north side of Brigham Street (South Temple). The Social Wheel Club introduced a counter-measure again calling for a one-dollar licensing fee to be used to pay for a police officer on a bike, for all bicycles to carry a tag for easy identification, and for fines of three to twenty dollars for a speeding offense.\footnote{Salt Lake Tribune, April 10, 1896.}

Cyclists were split on the issue of what amounted to an additional tax. Most of the members of the Social Wheelmen Club favored the licensing proposal, but some, even in the club’s leadership, opposed it. Others, like
the owner of the Salt Lake Cycle Company, agreed with the tax but also felt that bicycles should still be allowed on all sidewalks during the October through May period when the streets were muddy bogs. Other bicycle merchants and owners were against the tax outright. They argued that they already paid taxes to maintain the sidewalks and the streets and that this amounted to a “double-tax.” They also complained that the four-mile-per-hour maximum speed limit that the city imposed on them made it too hard to remain upright. (Bicycles during this time period were single speed, with a fixed gear, and built so that one could not “free wheel,” so the rider had to continuously pedal in order to stay upright).  

One “paved road” proponent argued that the real problem was the lack of enforcement of the laws on the books. The writer claimed that in 1895 prosecution was rigorous and there were almost no incidents, but that in 1896 the police did little, consequently several accidents occurred. He suggested that the fines from stricter enforcement could be used to build bicycle paths.  

The main reason that the police “did little” in 1896 to monitor bicyclists is that the city council voted against devoting an extra mounted policeman to patrol Brigham Street for speeding cyclists. The city finance committee argued that the municipality could not afford the cost, and instead recommended that the wheelmen pay a three hundred dollar “fee” to cover enforcement of the ordinance. The committee further recommended that “In default of their doing this within a reasonable time, we see no other way for the protection of pedestrians than to recommend that bicycles be excluded from the sidewalk on the north side of Brigham Street from the Eagle Gate to “L” Street.”

As the debate heated up, the division between the bicyclists widened. In an attempt to close the rift, the president of the Social Wheel Club organized a mass meeting to discuss the bicycle ban on Brigham Street. Dr. O.B. Hewett tried to persuade everyone present that a tax was in their best interests, but things broke down with more than half the attendees abandoning the meeting and organizing their own caucus where they adopted a different set of resolutions. One of the malefactors defiantly stated that he was not going to, “wear a tag like a dog,” while others reiterated their objections of double-taxation. This group resolved that stricter enforcement of the existing laws was needed, while also acknowledging that their ability to use the sidewalks was due to the goodness of the city’s government and its citizens.

Meanwhile, at the first meeting a representative from the state chapter of the League of American Wheelmen came forward in support of stricter

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43 Ibid., April 11, 1896.
44 Ibid., April 12, 1896
45 Salt Lake City Commission Minutes Book, 9 June 1896, #1180, p. 345.
46 Salt Lake Tribune, April 18, 1896.
enforcement and against the tax. Dr. Hewett retorted that the League of American Wheelmen was “an eastern-based organization that did not have the interests of western cyclists at heart,” but still benefited from taxing those same riders through membership fees. He further argued that the “better class” of bicyclists supported a tax and licensing system.47

The split between the two groups highlights both the attempts and resistance to regulating bicyclists’ behavior and the class divisions embedded in the debate. The one-dollar per year fee was not a serious financial strain for most riders. The issue, rather, began to revolve around ideas of power and control. The “better class” of cyclists supported licensing and regulation, approving of more police who would be equipped and dedicated to monitoring and influencing the behavior of a specific group of people, and also having an easier way to identify lawbreakers. Those who were opposed to the tax and stricter regulations felt that the laws were discriminatory, in part because they were geared towards protecting pedestrians, buggies, and those who rode horses, while they ignored the rights of bicyclists who by this point were now well represented by the middle and working class.48

A Salt Lake Tribune editorial recognized that the bicycle was no longer a luxury, but had become a necessity for most city residents who used bicycles for business and commuting. Many could travel home for a hot lunch at noon. Those who lived in the city’s outskirts could easily commute to and from work without the assistance of the streetcars.49

In the 1899 city election a more restrictive ordinance banning any sidewalk riding appeared on the ballot. In a Salt Lake Tribune sampling of public opinion, most agreed that bicycles did not belong on the sidewalks, but that the city should provide paved bicycle paths. One person stated that, “Salt Lake is the only city of its size on earth that contains only two miles of paved streets. The bike has come to stay, so the proper thing to do is to provide for wheels as we do for other vehicles. The sidewalk is not the place for them.” Another man complained that, bicyclists, “frequently run at the rate of twenty-five miles per hour. One of them came within an ace of killing my little girl only a few days ago. Certainly they ought to be kept off the sidewalks. The city should provide a place for them.” Finally, an admitted cyclist offered that, “I ride a wheel, but bicycles ought to be excluded from the sidewalk. It is true that most riders, probably nine-tenths of them, could ride without endangering the public. It is the tenth one that we have to guard against. The public ought to be protected by providing a separate track.”50

The debate over the proper spaces for bicycles would continue into the twentieth century. Many cyclists themselves believed that the problem of

47 Ibid., April 24, 1896.
49 Salt Lake Tribune, April 12, 1896.
50 Ibid., September 3., 1899.
“scorching” was limited to a small percentage of riders, and that that small group was younger and either from the lower-working class, or the sons of the wealthy who felt that they were above the laws. Others felt bicyclists were being singled out, noting that those on horseback or in horse-drawn wagons often rode on the sidewalks without being subject to special fees or prohibitions. Bicyclists also noted that the city had designated the middle of Main Street for speeding horses, yet restricted bicyclists’ speeds even on the city roads to eight miles an hour.\(^{31}\)

Although bicycle owners were divided over the tax and licensing issue, enough came together to be an influential group in municipal politics. With a “no-bicycle-riding-on-any-sidewalks” ordinance on the municipal docket, along with a provision that would have fined violators anywhere from two to twenty-five dollars per offense, John Sharp, the head of the Utah chapter of the National Cycling Association, warned that

If the council passes a resolution which compels the riders to take to the roads, it must also make provision for roads that the cyclist can ride on. But if the council does not do this, the wheelmen will be heard from. They can be a power politically once they are organized. This organization will come when their rights are abused and the councilmen who take part in the deprivation of those rights will be the sufferers at the polls.\(^{32}\)

Some office seekers were paying attention. Arthur Barnes, the democratic candidate running for mayor spent part of his Labor Day campaigning at various recreational venues. He attended the horse races held at Calder Park, then he made it to the Labor Federation party at Lagoon, then to Garfield beach and the Ancient Order of Workingmen gathering, and then finally to the Salt Palace Saucer (Velodrome) where he declared that the sidewalks should be for the cyclists and that those who still walked could use the streets. At each venue, he changed his attire before arriving in an attempt to win over the working-class voters. For example, he wore a golf cap, white and blue sweater, knickerbockers and cycling shoes at the bicycle track while at the Labor Federation celebration he sported blue overalls and brogan shoes.\(^{33}\)

The threats from the cyclists did have an effect on the council as the proposed 1899 ordinance was passed in 1900 with some concessions to cyclists. It did not levy an outright ban on riding on all sidewalks, but the law was complicated, and a bit confusing. It created restrictive but confusing districts that permanently banned riders from the sidewalks where paved roads were present, but it did not provide any protections for the riders. For example, the ordinance prohibited bike riders

On the north side of South Temple street, from the Oregon Short Line depot east to O street, on the south side of South Temple street from West Temple street east to State

\(^{31}\) Ibid., May 21, 1892, September 3, 1899, and May 27, 1900.

\(^{32}\) Salt Lake Herald, May 23, 1900.

\(^{33}\) Salt Lake Tribune, September 6, 1899.
street. On the north side of First South street from First West street east to Tenth east street. On the south side of First South street from Garfield Beach Depot east to Second East street on the south side of Second South street from the Rio Grande Western passenger depot east to Second East street.54

As complicated as the law was, it did make provisions for the city to construct bicycle “strips” in the middle of the roads in the restricted districts, still, cyclists complained they still lacked protections under the new law pointing out that if an individual on a horse or in a wagon decided to use or even block the bicycle lanes, they could do so without the fear of being fined or arrested. By contrast, the wheelmen complained that if they were caught on the sidewalks, they would be fined and arrested. They believed the new ordinance supported a double–standard and some even labeled it “class legislation.”55

The bicycle strips were not constructed however, and cyclists grew increasingly frustrated and better organized. In 1901 a group called the Wheelmen’s Protective Association nominated its own candidates for the mayor’s and other municipal offices encouraging its members to vote

54 Deseret Evening News, July 18, 1900.
55 Ibid., July 9, 1900.
against all Republican and Democratic candidates. The cyclists wanted paved bicycle paths built on the city’s roads and were determined to settle for nothing less. The political challenge was effective as both the Republican and Democratic Parties bowed to the pressure with promises that “If elected, within one year they would have cinder bicycle paths, five feet in width on various streets including South Temple, Main Street, 2nd, 4th and 8th South streets, and West Temple.”

In exchange for this pledge, the cyclists agreed not to ride on the banned sidewalks between November 1 and April 30 and to only ride on designated sidewalks strictly for the purpose of getting to the bicycle paths. The chief of police was also given authority to appoint special policemen from among the wheelmen to help enforce the laws if he deemed it necessary. This provision meant that the bicyclists would literally be forced to police themselves. Finally, the bicyclists also agreed to pay the dollar per year licensing fee for the construction and maintenance of the paths that were five feet wide and eight inches above the roads.

In 1903 a revised ordinance banned bicycles on most of the downtown sidewalks between April and October, limited riders to four miles per hour for the sidewalks that they were permitted to use, and ten miles per hour on the city streets. The cyclists had to keep at least one hand on their handlebars and both feet on the pedals at all times and could not exceed eight miles per hour on the bike lanes. Bicyclists also had to install a license plate on the front of their machines and keep it clean for easy identification. Anyone who violated any of the new laws was subject to as much as a one hundred dollar fine and or one hundred days in jail.

As bicycle owners became a political force, a series of compromises were finally struck regarding its usage. City leaders were able to enact a series of regulations, including taxing and licensing bicycles. They believed that these efforts would not only solve the problems created by the “scorchers,” but would train people how to properly act in public. These legislative compromises meant, too, that the city was forced to begin constructing paved bike paths and roads. The political concessions thus demonstrated that the working class had some power to shape the physical city, which ironically expanded democratic participation, just not necessarily in the ways reformers had envisioned. For their part, reformers accepted the compromises because they believed that this would make the city more orderly and therefore one pedal-stroke closer to fulfilling their democratic vision of it becoming middle-class and thus “American.”

56 Ibid., October 28, 1901.
57 Ibid., and Salt Lake Commission Minutes Book, April 1901, Bill no. 379.5.
58 George L. Nye, City Attorney, compiler, Revised ordinances Of Salt Lake City, Utah Including All Ordinances of a General Nature in Force December 11