1993

Ignored and pardoned : the women of Yuma Prison, 1876-1909

Jule Ann Bishop Turner
San Jose State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses

Recommended Citation

Turner, Jule Ann Bishop, "Ignored and pardoned : the women of Yuma Prison, 1876-1909" (1993). *Master's Theses*. 653.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.c2e7-mka5>
https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses/653

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Master's Theses and Graduate Research at SJSU ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of SJSU ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@sjsu.edu.

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

U·M·I

University Microfilms International
A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600

Order Number 1354168

Ignored and pardoned: The women of Yuma Prison, 1876–1909

Turner, Jule Ann Bishop, M.A.

San Jose State University, 1993

Copyright ©1993 by Turner, Jule Ann Bishop. All rights reserved.

U·M·I

300 N. Zeeb Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

***IGNORED AND PARDONED:
THE WOMEN OF YUMA PRISON,
1876 - 1909***

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of History

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Jule Ann Bishop Turner

August, 1993

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Dr. Charles Keserich

Dr. Eric Cummins

Dr. Billie Jensen

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

IGNORED AND PARDONED: THE WOMEN OF YUMA PRISON, 1876 - 1909

By Jule Ann Bishop Turner

This thesis investigates the treatment of women incarcerated in Arizona Territorial Prison at Yuma between 1876 and 1909. Comprising less than one percent of the total prison population in a thirty-three year period, their collective confinement appears to have been an embarrassment to the prison officials. Prior to the turn of the century, the women were poorly housed and largely ignored while officials waited an appropriate interval before requesting pardons for these unwanted inmates.

Through the use of records and reports written by prison officials, a picture evolves of the reluctant keepers who merely tolerated the twenty-nine women who were sentenced to Yuma. While receiving relatively light sentences for major crimes, the female prisoners suffered more from acts of omission rather than commission. There simply was no place for them in the prison structure.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to acknowledge with deepest gratitude the guidance and assistance provided by: Dr. Eric Cummins, whose knowledge of prison history has been invaluable in the conception and research of this thesis; Dr. Billie Jensen, whose expertise in women's history has provided sterling guideposts for comparison and evaluation; and Dr. Charles Kesperich, whose technical advice and direction brought about the finished work.

Grateful appreciation is extended to the present and former staff of the Yuma Territorial Prison State Park for providing access to records, archives and photographs. In addition, individual thanks belong to staff members, Linda Offney, William Ochs and Creola Blackwell, who graciously imparted their time and knowledge to make the research pieces come together.

Historians Frank Love, Clifford Trafzer, Mary Ben Kerckhoff, and Brian Sandwich are acquaintances established only through their written works, but their research in Yuma and Arizona history is gratefully acknowledged.

Dedicated

To Tim for helping me start this journey,

To Tami and Jim for paving the way.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF FIGURES	.ii
INTRODUCTION	1
IN THE BEGINNING	4
INAUSPICIOUS UNVEILING	.16
THE APPEARANCE OF PROGRESS	.28
CELLULOID HISTORY	41
PARDONABLE OFFENSES, EVERY ONE	.64
19TH-CENTURY MENTALITY VERSUS 20TH-CENTURY MORALITY.	.84
APPENDIX A: GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION, FEMALE PRISONERS	96
APPENDIX B: DIRECTORY OF FEMALE PRISONERS	97
APPENDIX C: ARIZONA CENSUS FIGURES.	.100
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	.101

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Map of Arizona Territory, 1876	13
2. Arizona Territorial Prison	14
3. View of prison from Fort Yuma, California	15
4. Restored six-man cell at Yuma	27
5. Restored cell block & "dark cell" door	27
6. View of the prison library	38
7. The "reading garden" in the prison yard	38
8. "Sallyport" or main entrance to prison	39
9. Views of adobe wall and wire fence	40
10. Jennie McCleary, 1893	56
11. Georgie Clifford, 1894	56
12. Exie Sedgemore, 1897	57
13. Pearl Hart, entry photos, 1899	58
14. Pearl Hart, standing guard, 1899	59
15. Pearl Hart in "proper" attire	59
16. Pearl Hart with wildcat kitten	60
17. Male prisoner work party, c. 1900	61
18. Elena Estrada, Pearl Hart & Rosa Duran, c. 1902.	62
19. Alfrida Mercer, entry photo, 1901	63
20. Female Sentence Lengths: 1878 - 1899	92
21. Female Sentence Lengths. 1900 - 1909	93
22. Female Prisoner Census by Crime Category	94
23. Female Prisoner Time Line	95

***IGNORED AND PARDONED:
THE WOMEN OF YUMA PRISON,
1876 - 1909***

INTRODUCTION

The inmates of Arizona Territorial Prison at Yuma were disparate, and one particular segment of that population was treated in direct relation to that disparity. Over the thirty-three year period of the prison's existence, women comprised less than one percent of the total prison population. To say they were treated differently than the men, does not mean to imply their treatment was better.

The women in prison dressed as if they were still free. Until about 1899, they served shorter sentences than the men for the same crimes, but they were housed poorly and generally ignored, whenever possible. Around the turn of the century, when Victorian ideals began to fall by the wayside, conditions for the women in the prison changed dramatically.

There was no common ground between the public perception and the private reality of the females in prison. In the first twenty years of the prison's history, the public rhetoric produced by the Board of Prison Commissioners and the Superintendent presented a picture diametrically opposed to reality. During this period, the authorities gave the impression that the female prisoners needed and received special

treatment. In actuality, they were treated poorly and denied the basic necessities of physical and mental comfort which were provided to the men.

With the arrival of the twentieth-century, the tenor of prison reports made a complete about-face. The public image became hard line toward female prisoners and the length of their sentences. Privately, the women were finally being accorded a modicum of equality and comfort from a physical standpoint. This inconsistency may be attributed to the exigencies of survival in a rugged territory which had little compassion for weakness.

Historical myth has focused on men in the American West, leaving the impression that women were insignificant in the over-all scheme of the settlement of trans-Mississippi America. A great injustice to women was perpetrated by the movie industry. In a special issue of *Life* magazine, Richard Slotkin wrote: "Motion pictures were invented just as the real frontier was passing away, and they became our most important medium for translating fact into myth."¹ In retrospect, myth has done an injustice to the women of the American West.

Roger McGrath, UCLA History Professor, said that "women of the West were just like the men. They were entrepreneurial, bold, courageous, adventurous and intelligent. The women had to be all those

¹ Richard Slotkin, "Gunsmoke and Mirrors," *Life*, special issue, "The Wild West Yesterday & Today," April 5, 1993, 63.

things the men were *in spades*." Western women were not all "ruffles and domesticity."² In 1849 only ten percent of the pioneers heading West were women. By 1859 fifty percent were women and, according to Dee Brown, author and historian, one in every five was pregnant.³ In spite of the myths, women in prison were not unknown in the United States. The Eastern states had female houses of detention in the eighteenth century, and the chain gangs of the Tennessee State Penitentiary of the mid-1800s were a study in female abuse. In fact, the inception of American prison history followed closely upon the heels of the first European settlements in the Northeast.

² *The Real West*, television documentary series, "Wild, Wild Women," (Arts & Entertainment Network, 1992).

³ *Ibid.*

IN THE BEGINNING

The penitentiary system is strictly a Quaker creation, and any discussion of American prison history would be incomplete without a perspective on the Quaker concept of punishment for moral transgressors. The Quakers adhered to a strict moral and religious discipline which they endeavored to impose on the populace. The Quaker solution to moral transgression was a period of meditation and penitence during which the soul of the sinner would be cleansed and elevated to social acceptance. The domicile used for the period of penitence was known as the penitentiary. The sentence of the individual was spent in total isolation with only a Bible for companionship. Rather than renewing and uplifting the penitent's spirit, the extended solitary confinement often proved detrimental to the sanity of the imprisoned.

In spite of the drawbacks inherent in the penitentiary system, the Pennsylvania State Penitentiary became the model for international penal reform. Negley Teeters,⁴ John D. Shearer,⁵ and Harry Elmer Barnes⁶

⁴ Negley Teeters, *They Were in Prison, A History of the Pennsylvania Prison Society, 1787-1937* (Philadelphia: John C. Winston Co., 1937).

⁵ Negley Teeters and John D. Shearer, *The Prison at Philadelphia, Cherry Hill, The Separate System of Penal Discipline 1829-1913* (New York: For Temple University Publishing by Columbia University Press, 1957).

⁶ Harry Elmer Barnes, *The Evolution of Penology in Pennsylvania, A Study in American Social History* (Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith, 1968).

established the credentials of the prison in their detailed accounts of penology in Pennsylvania. The cause and repression of crime has been a source of hundreds of studies on the psychological traits of the criminal. Possibly even more numerous are the sociological studies which have shaped the foundations of prison reform over the past two hundred years.

Far from perfect, the system of female incarceration in America cried out for reform for 150 years before significant and worthwhile changes were made. The New York City House of Detention for Women imprisoned "women" as young as eight years old in the 1800s. The crime may have been as minor as being a homeless orphan. Another may have stolen a loaf of bread because she had nothing to eat. The detention authorities endeavored to place the inmates in household employment, but they felt that if the child was under ten years old, she lacked the maturity and discipline to be an effective worker.

The Tennessee State Penitentiary in Nashville held female prisoners as early as the 1830s, and some of those women were hired out to work on chain gangs alongside men on the railroads, mines and plantations. (This practice was ended in 1886 when all females were returned to the main prison at Nashville.)⁷

⁷ *Report of the Warden, Superintendent and Other Officers of the Tennessee State Penitentiary to the Forty-Sixth General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, December 1888* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce, Printers to the State, 1889), 11.

Prior to the Civil War, the census of the Tennessee Penitentiary was almost exclusively white. Free blacks were imprisoned occasionally, but their numbers were few. After 1865, race was the primary female housing concern in the Tennessee prison. Segregation existed between the black and white female prisoners, but this was to be expected in a region which had been at the nucleus of a war over slavery.⁸

While segregation was evident in the cell assignments of male prisoners at the Arizona Territorial Prison in Yuma, race may have been a greater consideration affecting the incarceration of the females. While the female population west of the Mississippi River in the last half of the nineteenth century was overwhelmingly of European descent, only nine of the twenty-nine women were listed on prison records as Caucasian. The natural tendency might be to assume that this irregularity occurred due to a hesitancy on the part of all-white, male juries to sentence white females to prison, but this was not so in the beginning. The first two females to be sentenced to Yuma were Caucasian. Since the Territory had been a part of Mexico only three decades before, a lopsided Mexican population might also be assumed. Modern speculation and assumptions aside, there was apparently no intention of ever housing females of any race in the prison. Quite simply, the rapid growth

⁸ Nicolas Fischer Hahn, "Female State Prisoners in Tennessee: 1831-1979," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 39 (Winter 1980): 485.

of the Territory altered the plans of the Territorial Legislature. From the beginning, there was very little about the Arizona Territorial Prison at Yuma that could be considered normal in the annals of prison history.

The Eastern and Southern prisons in the United States were located where crime was the most conspicuous: Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Detroit, Nashville. The Philadelphia and Detroit prisons were particularly large, imposing structures which covered several city blocks and conveyed the feeling of security. The small, adobe structure built at Yuma was neither secure nor imposing. While Yuma was not out of the mainstream of America, it was most certainly out of the mainstream of the Arizona Territory and its centers of crime. In the end, its location proved to be its undoing [Figure 1].

Yuma's location, at the juncture of the Colorado and Gila Rivers at Yuma, Arizona, was geographically critical to the settlement and growth of Southern California from as early as 1825. The sedimentation deposited a few miles below this merger had built a natural fording point, and the granite bluffs on both sides of the confluence of the rivers narrowed the channel to make the width traversable by ferry. This was one of the few safe passages into Southern California. Immigrants traveling the northern route entered the state by crossing the Sierra Nevada near Lake Tahoe, but this was an inaccessible route for four to six months in the winter.

The recorded history of Yuma Crossing precedes by sixty-seven years the establishment of the first colony at Jamestown in 1607. In 1540 Spanish explorers traveled northward from Mexico searching for the Seven Cities of Cibola. Instead of gold, they found the Quechan, Yuma and Mohave Indians, sand dunes, and desolation. For over four centuries, Yuma's reputation has been maligned by travelers and soldiers alike.

In 1875, the year in which prison construction was begun, Lieutenant Sylvester Mowry wrote to a friend: "Fort Yuma is a hell of a place. More than 200 miles from anywhere in the midst of an Indian country -- hotter than hell -- and not a sign of anything for amusement."⁹ Being "200 miles from anywhere" was one of the prime reasons for the demise of the prison and its ultimate removal to Florence, Arizona, in 1909.

[See Appendix A for Geographic Distribution of Female Prisoners]

The first three Territorial prisoners sent to Yuma in 1875 may have been witnesses to the day when Fort Yuma lived up to its reputation as "the hottest military post in the United States." On July 2, 1875, the temperature "stood 113 degrees in the shade" for two hours. Standing on the bluffs above the Colorado, the fort and prison should have been cooled to some extent by the river [Figures 2 & 3]. The cooling effects

⁹ Frank Love, *Hell's Outpost, A History of Old Fort Yuma* (Yuma, AZ.: Yuma Crossing Foundation, Inc., 1992), 1.

of the Colorado River may have been the only attributes appreciated by the local inhabitants who described the river water as "too muddy to drink and too thin to plow."¹⁰

When gold was discovered near Sacramento in 1849, the Colorado River at Yuma became the most southerly entrance to California. The westward movement gained momentum, and in just one year of the Gold Rush, an estimated sixty thousand gold seekers caught their first glimpse of California at or near Yuma Crossing.¹¹ Most of these hopefuls were from the southern states from Texas to Georgia and they had followed the trail along the Gila River out of New Mexico as their most direct route to the gold fields.

When the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo officially ended the war with Mexico on February 2, 1848, the negotiated U.S.-Mexico border lay far north of the Yuma Crossing. Since the new border also placed the hoped-for southern railroad route in Mexican Territory, it was necessary to return to the bargaining table. The result was the 1853 Gadsden Purchase which moved the U.S. border to a point several miles south of Yuma. This enabled surveyors to expand their explorations of the far Southwest and advance the plans for California's future.

¹⁰ Ibid., 2.

¹¹ Mary Ben Kerckhoff, *The Old Customhouse (Quartermaster's Residence at Yuma Crossing)* (Yuma, AZ.: Sun Printing Company, 1976), 3.

After the shallow draft steamboat opened the Colorado River for shipping in the 1850s, a Customhouse had to be established at Yuma Crossing for the collection of duty on goods which arrived by water. The stern-wheelers, which eventually made their way up the Colorado as far as Call's Landing, Nevada, could draw no more than two feet of water and still make the trip successfully. Freight was on-loaded in San Francisco and brought around the tip of Baja, through the Gulf of California, Sea of Cortez, and into the mouth of the Colorado River. At this point, known as Port Isabel, it was off-loaded to the shallow-draft stern-wheelers and taken up-river for distribution throughout Arizona.

This supply system worked so well that it was used to initiate the Quartermaster Depot after Fort Yuma was established in 1850 under the direction of Major Samuel P. Heintzelman. The need to fight the Apaches and protect the settlers resulted in the military build-up of the 1870s and 80s. At that time more than half of *all* U.S. Army forces were stationed at the twenty-six forts and camps in Arizona. The Quartermaster Depot was moved across the river to the Arizona side and all of these units were supplied from the river freight originating at the San Francisco Presidio. The Yuma Depot kept a six-month supply of clothing, food, ammunition and other goods to distribute to posts in Arizona, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico and Texas.

Yuma's importance to California and the military in the Southwest was obvious, but until 1875 it was just another small town on the Terri-

torial landscape as far as other Arizonans were concerned. The efforts of Arizona Territorial legislators, Jose Maria Redondo and David Neahr, changed the way Yuma was viewed by the inhabitants of the entire Southwest, not just Arizona Territory.

Two agenda topics which were occupying much of the time of the Legislature of the Arizona Territory in 1874-75 were the sites for a college and a prison. The wanton and intemperate atmosphere of some portions of the Territory had begun to overshadow the qualities which civic leaders wanted the Territory to exhibit. The mining towns were particularly troublesome. When combined with the relatively large military force, the Indian problems, and the majority of the populace who spoke only Spanish, the problems were magnified out of all proportion to the population. Miners who had come to Arizona expecting great wealth found themselves impoverished and were willing to go to illegal lengths to get what they wanted. Indians and whites fought and killed each other over possession of tribal lands. Federal laws were regularly broken. The territory needed a prison.

Redondo and Neahr wanted to bring the economic benefits of the prison to Yuma, but its geographic location in relation to ninety-five percent of Arizona's population made it a political impossibility. The Yuma legislators were not to be deterred by impossibilities. The bill establishing the prison in Phoenix had been discussed and the date set for voting. Prior to the scheduled vote, Redondo and Neahr took pen

and ink, scratched through the word "Phoenix" and inserted the word "Yuma" for the prison location. The vote was taken without the bill being read again, and without anyone realizing the location had been changed. Suddenly, Yuma was the site of the new Arizona Territorial Prison.

Most Arizonans were angry, but the residents of Phoenix were later placated by the establishment of a college which eventually became known as Arizona State University. That was the beginning of the prison, and the preamble to a thirty-three year political and editorial battle to have the prison moved to a more centrally-located site within the Territory. In retrospect, politics took second place to a situation they had not considered. They failed to plan for the changes that would evolve because of twenty-nine Arizona women, some of whom had not even been born yet.

Figure 1. Arizona Territory, 1876

Figure 2. Arizona Territorial Prison on the bluff above the Colorado River. Picture shows the buildings which were constructed outside the prison walls, i.e., Superintendent's home, guard's quarters, and stables, which occupied ground between the prison walls and the river.

Photo courtesy of Yuma Territorial Prison State Park

Figure 3. View of prison taken from Fort Yuma, California.
Colorado River is in the foreground.

Photo courtesy of Yuma Territorial Prison State Park

INAUSPICIOUS UNVEILING

The initial appropriation of twenty-five thousand dollars for construction of the prison was based upon the availability of building materials in Phoenix. The forests in the mountains around Prescott would have provided plentiful lumber, but the only trees within two hundred miles of Yuma were the cottonwoods that grew along the banks of the Colorado River. Yuma had only two readily available building materials: rock, and the clay for making adobe bricks.

Having had little time to prepare themselves for the establishment of the prison at Yuma, the new Board of Prison Commissioners, consisting only of Redondo and Neahr, began to solicit the assistance of the local residents.

At the first meeting of the Board of Prison Commissioners, the two of them elected Redondo as Chairman. Then Neahr made a motion that the Chairman, Redondo, be authorized to secure the use of the Yuma County Jail to confine Territorial prisoners on and after May 1, 1875.¹² Since they were the only two members of the Commission, the motion was passed, unanimously. Submission of bids was requested for supplying daily board to the prisoners while at the jail, and William H. Burke, who submitted the only bid, was selected.¹³

¹² Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Prison Commissioners, April 5, 1875. Prison Records, 1875 volume.

¹³ Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Prison Commissioners, April 26, 1875. Prison Records, 1875 volume.

At the May 24, 1875, meeting of the Commissioners, the announcement was made of the procurement of a ten-acre prison site at the junction of the Gila and Colorado Rivers.¹⁴ Necessary prison articles were purchased on credit, but the bills for those leg irons and lamps would not be paid until the July meeting of the Board since they had determined that bills could only be examined, approved and paid at the quarterly Board meetings. Occasionally, the bills were not paid until several months later in spite of the fact that the Board had a new secretary, H.N. Alexander. At the request of Redondo and Neahr, Mr. Alexander had been appointed by the Governor to fill the third seat on the Board of Prison Commissioners.¹⁵

A contest was held for the design of the prison and a prize of one hundred fifty dollars was awarded to A.L. Grow, a local resident, who had competed against architects from as far away as San Francisco.

By July 17, 1875, there were three territorial prisoners housed in the Yuma County Jail.¹⁶ The prisoners resided in the jail while building their new "home." By July 1, 1876, one prisoner had been discharged upon completion of his sentence, but five new prisoners had been added. The remaining seven men were transferred to the newly com-

¹⁴ *Arizona Sentinel*, May 24, 1875.

¹⁵ Report of the Secretary of the Board, May 1, 1875 to July 1, 1877 to A.P.K. Safford, Governor of Arizona Territory. Prison Records, 1877 volume.

¹⁶ "Proceedings of the Board of Territorial Prison Commissioners Regular Meeting, July 5th," *Arizona Sentinel*, July 17, 1875.

pleted prison from the Yuma County Jail. The state of "completion" is dubious since the prisoners were constantly occupied "getting out stone for the building," excavating, and grading the prison grounds.¹⁷ Even the security of the prison was questionable. The solid adobe wall, which eventually was eight feet wide at the base and fifteen feet high, had not been completed around the prison. Instead, the prison grounds were partially enclosed by a wooden fence which required the full weight of the prisoners on the leeward side to keep it from blowing down in a high wind.¹⁸

The prison population was entirely male. The first mention of a woman in the Superintendent's and Commissioners' reports was on July 5, 1876, when the Board approved two bills submitted by Mrs. Mary Forrest for "\$8.33 and \$33.11 for making clothing."¹⁹ By December 31, 1876, the prison incorporated buildings big enough for prison rooms, kitchen, dining hall, office and guard rooms. The biggest problem from

¹⁷ Report of the Secretary of the Board, May 1, 1875 to July 1, 1877 to A.P.K. Safford, Governor of Arizona Territory. Prison Records, 1877 volume.

¹⁸ William Ochs, park guide, Yuma Territorial Prison State Park, interview by the author, June 22, 1991, Yuma, Arizona.

¹⁹ List of Bills Submitted, July 5, 1876, Semi Annual Report of the Board of Territorial Prison Commissioners from July 1, 1876 to December 31, 1876. Prison Records, 1876 volume.

the Commissioners' perspective lay in the fact that there were no work shops to keep the prisoners busy and all work had to be done outside of the prison walls.²⁰

The prison, which faced Fort Yuma, California, was northeast of the town whose notoriety would be tied to the reputation of the prison throughout the twentieth century.

Arizona was three thousand miles removed from New York City and Boston, but the Victorian influence was felt even in the Southwest. In a Territory with few women, the social tone of the newspapers in the 1870s portrayed women as fragile beings to be treated tenderly. And women were expected to live up to this image. Most historians in the first half of the twentieth-century left two perceptions of women in the West. One was the gentle, self-effacing pioneer wife in bonnet and apron, gazing toward the western horizon, ready to follow her man. The other was that of the raucous prostitute plying her trade at the local saloon. Was there a different perception of women in nineteenth-century Arizona Territory? Was there a female "class" system in Arizona, or did the line between good and bad become a blur in a territory hungry for feminine influence?

During the first fifteen years of the prison's existence, life throughout the Territory was tenuous due to the natural hardships of

²⁰ Ibid.

the frontier and, to a greater extent, due to the Indian Wars.²¹ This may provide an explanation of why the line appears to be blurred in favor of the prostitutes. Prior to 1900, women in almost all environments were generally viewed as frail flowers who were not really responsible for their circumstances. Even prostitutes were gently labeled as "fallen" or "soiled doves."

With this concept in mind, it is not surprising that the Territorial Prison at Yuma was originally envisioned with no thought given to housing female prisoners. As the prison population increased, the cells sometimes held as many as six men each in wall-hung, three-rack bunks which occupied cubicles approximately six by eight feet [Figure 4]. The only place where a prisoner might find himself alone was in solitary confinement. Variouslly known as the "dark cell" or the "snake pit," it was a steel cage inside of a cave cut out of the hill [Figure 5]. Even the dark cell was not solitary since it might be occupied by two to five people at a time.

When compared to the massive penal institutions and the women's houses of detention in the East during this same period, Yuma Prison was purportedly not a fit habitation for women. There were no accommodations built for women and none were planned.

²¹ David Lavender, *The Southwest* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1980), 198.

When the Arizona Territorial Legislature voted the appropriation to build a prison for the Territory's hardened criminals, the legislators were a little naive and shortsighted. While seeking to establish a prison to house Arizona's "hard cases," they failed to anticipate the possibility that some of the residents would be the softer, feminine variety. In November of 1878, two years after the prison opened for business, twenty-year-old, Ireland-born Lizzie Gallagher forced them to think along different lines.

The *Arizona Sentinel* at Yuma reported on May 25, 1878, that "a soldier was killed here last evening. Stabbed in the heart. We prefer to hear the evidence before giving particulars."²² Having ascertained the particulars, the *Sentinel* of June 1st provided a concise description of the occurrence.

The soldier stabbed on the 24th was James Moriarty, private of Co. G 6th Cav. lately from Camp Grant; the girl arrested on suspicion of having dealt the blow gives the name of Lizzie Gallagher. An inquest was held the same evening and continued the following day, when the examination took place before Justice Brinley. Defendant waived an examination which was overruled, several witnesses were examined, and sufficient evidence produced to cause the accused to be held to await the action of the Grand Jury. The weapon that is supposed to have given the wound is in the hands of the Sheriff and was produced in court.²³

Frontier newspapers had a tendency to be verbose regarding politics and too concise where newsworthy details were concerned. The townsfolk dealt in the local gossip so there apparently was little reason

²² *Arizona Sentinel*, May 25, 1878. Published at Yuma, Arizona.

²³ *Arizona Sentinel*, June 1, 1878.

to put it into print. "Reminiscences of Early Days in Yuma Told By Old-Time Printer, G. Melendez" provided the details of the killing, when his recollections were published by the *Yuma Daily Sun* and the *Arizona Sentinel* on March 8, 1937. Melendez wrote:

One of the very first women prisoners was a woman named Lizzie. In about the middle of the block where the Western Union is now located, one, Frank Jones, ran a variety show and after the show was over, he always had a dance and the usual monte games. It seems that a drunken soldier insulted Lizzie at the dance hall and in her fury, she killed him. Lizzie was tried, convicted and sentenced to the Territorial Prison in the year of 1877, but did not remain for a long term.

Actually, Lizzie was sentenced to the prison in November 1878 for a term of "fifteen months imprisonment at hard labor" for her manslaughter conviction.²⁴ Her prison residency was thwarted by Superintendent George M. Thurlow, who refused to admit her. In addition to not having appropriate quarters to house females, the superintendent felt that the prison conditions, which lacked the necessary female amenities, would be too hard on a woman. The prison assigned Lizzie Gallagher prisoner number 26, before she was returned to Yuma County Jail to continue serving her sentence.

The seventeen male prisoners in residence were housed in cells which lacked doors and windows. The entrance to each was a steel-

²⁴ *The Arizona Star*, November 28, 1878. Published at Tucson.

barred gate which left the cell open to the elements. The prisoners were subjected to inclement winter cold and stifling summer heat. In Yuma, the weather fluctuated between the extremes.

While Lizzie languished in the county jail, construction was begun on suitable quarters for women. Eleven months later, on October 1, 1879, the red-headed Miss Gallagher became the first female resident "on the hill."

Either her reputed fiery, Irish temper made her too difficult to handle in an all-male establishment, or her good behavior overwhelmed the prison authorities. One month after being moved to her new cell at the prison, the following was recorded in the Territorial Papers on November 22, 1879:

And whereas, a petition has been presented to me signed generally by the good and responsible citizens of Yuma, asking the remission of her further punishment upon satisfactory grounds and on account also of her youth and good conduct during solitary confinement.

Now therefore for the reasons above given and because her pardon is strongly urged by the Judge before whom she was tried, I, John C. Fremont, Governor of the Territory of Arizona do hereby grant full pardon to the said Lizzie Gallagher and direct that she be set at liberty.²⁵

Apparently, as far as the authorities were concerned, seven weeks in the reputed "hell-hole" of Yuma Prison was adequate punishment for

²⁵ Territorial Papers, Territory of Arizona Executive Department, November 22, 1879. In the Territorial Papers of 1879 microfilm, reel 1, frame 0092, Arizona State Archives, Phoenix.

manslaughter when added to the time she had spent in the Yuma County Jail. In spite of her sentence and the judge's intentions, Lizzie never served "hard labor" or any other kind.

In his "Reminiscences," G. Melendez wrote of Lizzie's life after her pardon:

She had a friend, a man named Brown, I believe, and this man was carrying on a kind of traveling saloon business along the road when the railroad came from California to Yuma, supplying the workers of the road with liquor. Brown came over to Yuma and married the woman, and with some influence brought to bear in her behalf, procured Lizzie's release and they went towards Tucson, following the camps, still conducting a "traveling saloon."²⁶

So Lizzie was released and left Yuma, but not until she had made her presence felt at the prison. The Territory was equipped to handle female prisoners, but it was three and one-half years before they were again faced with the challenge.

Between 1879 and 1892, only four women took up residence behind the walls "on the hill" in Yuma. The subject of proper quarters to house female prisoners came up every time a woman was in residence. Each report of the Superintendent and the Board of Commissioners stated that proper facilities were being "excavated," "built," "constructed" or "planned" whenever a female prisoner was admitted. When the female was discharged, either the work stopped or the new facilities were used to house male prisoners.

²⁶ G. Melendez, "Reminiscences of Early Days in Yuma," *Yuma Daily Sun & Arizona Sentinel*, March 8, 1937.

When Manuela Fimbres was incarcerated at Yuma, she was pregnant. In the 1891 "List of Prisoners and Cell Assignment[s]," prisoner number 572, Manuela Fimbres, is listed, not by cell number, but by the notation, "cave in yard." Thirteen years after receiving its first female prisoner, the best that the Arizona Territorial Prison could provide its lone female resident was a cave in the prison yard. Considering its stated location, it may have been accessible to anyone. It is ironic that the September 30, 1891, Superintendent's Report to the Board stated: "The female ward is yet in course of construction and I hope to have it ready for occupancy during the incoming quarter." Manuela Fimbres was discharged the next day, October 1, 1891, and left the prison with her son, Louis. The Board's report for the last quarter of that year makes no mention of Manuela's pardon; however, it was noted that Ed Lopez was given "8 days in solitary for entering the *woman's* ward." Since Manuela was discharged on the first day of the quarter, why would Lopez have been put in solitary for entering her cave, unless it occurred the day she left? Another explanation might be that the women's quarters were simply off-limits and he may have gone in when the area was empty.

Two years later, when Jenny McCleary arrived, apparently nothing had changed. The facilities for women were again inadequate or non-existent. The Superintendent and Board of Prison Commissioners were more concerned with the sale of prison-made hemp rope, religious

services, repair of the blower to cool the prison cells, and the ever-present problem of opium and morphine addiction. Jenny's entry into residence went unnoted in prison reports. She does, however, hold a place in Yuma Prison history as the first woman whose prison photograph still exists [see Figure 10].

Figure 4. Restored six-man cell as it currently appears at the Yuma Territorial Prison State Park, Arizona.

Figure 5. Dark cell lies beyond white door at end of restored cell block.

THE APPEARANCE OF PROGRESS

Prior to 1900, the common thread woven through the history of the female prisoners was that of neglect. Proper quarters, gainful employment and a female matron were omitted from the lives of the female prisoners. The prison commissioners and superintendent gave lip service to the construction of "proper" women's quarters, but the Territorial Legislators never actually saw the structures which were mentioned in the Quarterly Reports.

During 1884-85, the blacksmith shop, engine room and electric dynamo, carpenter's shop and a manufactory for shoes, bedding and clothing were constructed inside the prison walls. Additionally, the prisoners built new offices for the Superintendent and Prison Commissioners outside of the prison walls and added an extension to the dining room to expand the accommodations for two hundred prisoners. Separate rooms were established for "official business of the sub-officers." Even the livestock was ensured comfortable housing with the completion of a new stable.²⁷

Repairs and improvements were constantly in progress to the hospital, latrine, guard's apartments, grounds and fences around the

²⁷ Annual Report of Proceedings at the Penitentiary: 1884-1885. F.S. Ingalls, Superintendent, Yuma, AZ. Prison Records, 1885 Volume.

Superintendent's residence and storage rooms for provisions. And yet, the February 1, 1893, report to the Governor, mentioned the female quarters only in passing.

Owing to the overcrowded conditions of the cell house, which during the hot summer months was very severe upon the prisoners, it was necessary to excavate additional cell rooms from the bank in proximity to the hospital and five roomy and well-ventilated cells were constructed in addition to those already built for the accommodation of female prisoners.

Prison reports made frequent mention of the construction of a library for the improvement of the prisoners' mental condition. Libraries were an uplifting concept in the minds of the public, so it appears that frequent mention of their construction and plentiful supply of books instilled public and political confidence in the work of the Prison Commissioners. And they never failed to mention that the library doubled as a chapel on Sundays to provide moral nourishment for the redemption of the prisoners' souls. No politically motivated individual would dare to doubt the acceptability of providing education and spiritual enlightenment for the prisoners. If the women's quarters were questionable, they could at least point with pride at the religious and intellectual training being provided *to the men*.

The library was not devoid of female literature. The May 1891 inventory listed 1530 books and magazines which displayed a surprising number of volumes whose titles would appeal to female readers. Seven volumes of poetry represented the works of the English writers Tennyson, Dryden and Scott. The inventory included *A Memorial of Susan B.*

Anthony, Ambitious Woman, Miss Leighton's Perplexities, Woman to the Rescue, and *Old Fashioned Girl* by Louisa May Alcott. *Harper's* and *Scribner's* magazines were generic reading where gender was concerned, and this held true for most of the volumes in the library. They were of an educational nature and spanned the intellectual chasm from a first grade *McGuffey Reader* to foreign languages and philosophy.²⁸ Without a list of available reading matter, the female prisoners would have had to depend on the turnkey to select their reading material for them. They were supposedly not allowed in that portion of the prison which contained the library. The men took their reading material into the "reading garden," an open courtyard which was encircled by oleander bushes that provided shade to the tables and benches furnished for the male prisoners' use [Figures 6 & 7].

It was normally the civic minded women of Yuma and the wives of the prison personnel who provided the library and religious services. They were frequently praised in quarterly reports "for their unselfish and charitable services in behalf of reform."²⁹ The reports generated for the Tennessee State Legislature on the prison at Nashville make

²⁸ Prison Inventory, May, 1891. Prison Records, 1891 Volume.

²⁹ "Third Quarterly Report of the Board of Prison Commissioners. Territorial Prison, Yuma, A.T., September 30, 1893," *Arizona Sentinel*, October 7, 1893.

nearly identical statements on the humanitarian efforts of the Nashville matrons who helped to reform the moral fiber of the Tennessee prisoners.

Since women were, ostensibly, not allowed to visit the prisoners at Yuma, the presence of female reformers inside the walls was noteworthy. With one exception, no mention is made of women being present to assist the female prisoners. That exception was the accounting of bills paid to the mid-wife or nurse who cared for Manuela Fimbres following the birth of her son in the prison. If the local civic-minded women were allowed to provide support to the male prisoners in their charitable efforts, were the women allowed to avail themselves of this same comfort? And, if not, why not? According to the available information, the female prisoners were not allowed outside the confines of their quarters except to work in the tailor shop.³⁰ This would have been the most blatant form of discrimination.

Only male visitors were allowed into the prison, as evidenced by a sign at the main gate [Figure 8]. They were charged twenty-five cents each for admission. On January 1, 1893, Alice McInernay, Prison Librarian, submitted the Librarian's Report to the Superintendent, her husband, the "Hon. M. McInernay," in which she accounted for library funds and inventory. From May 2, 1891, to January 1, 1893, the tenure

³⁰ Creola Blackwell, historian, Yuma Territorial Prison State Park, interview by author, March 6, 1993, Yuma, Arizona.

of her position, \$78.25 had been collected for the library fund from three hundred thirteen visitors, all male.³¹ No mention is made of concessions granted for male visitors to female prisoners. There may have been none. Given the restrictions on the females' movements within the prison, a suitable location for the supervised visits may not have been available. Such isolation would have been a form of solitary confinement. The male prisoners serving time in solitary for short intervals would have had as much contact with guards or the superintendent as the women experienced for the entire duration of their sentences. Their meals were served in their cells and not in the dining hall. Their only contact with others would have been in the tailor shop where they went to work on an irregular basis.

It is clearly possible that the female prisoners were considered to be just a minor inconvenience in the beginning. The first time that two female prisoners were in residence simultaneously was in 1895. No mention is made of the presence of Jennie McCleary or Georgie Clifford in either the Superintendent's or Prison Commissioners' Reports for 1895. Superintendent F. S. Ingalls describes in great detail all of the improvements made to the prison but there is no mention of construction of the women's quarters. These were the first two females incarcerated

³¹ Librarian's Report, January 1, 1893. Prison Records, 1893 volume.

since Manuela Fimbres vacated the premises in 1891. If past actions were any indication, the women's quarters would have reverted to men's quarters after Manuela Fimbres' departure.

This period marked the beginning of the end for the "ignorance-is-bliss syndrome" which consumed the prison authorities when female prisoners were involved. This also marked the end of the Indian Wars following the capture of Geronimo and the return of the Apaches to the Reservations. This may have contributed to the changing perception of the females in Yuma. As Territorial society stabilized, the line dividing the female classes gained clarity.

Prisoners had been listed generically on reports prior to this time. The last name and crime were noted, but the sex and first name were omitted. In some instances, not even the last name was noted, if the prisoner was female. The report would simply say a "prisoner" was brought in from Pinal or Maricopa County. By referencing the admittance date of the females, it can be readily noted which prisoner's name was omitted.

In the eighteen-year period from 1876 to 1894, the prison received six female prisoners, none of whom were housed in suitable quarters at the prison. By 1895 the inevitable had to be confronted. From 1895 to 1897, six more women were received within the walls. The same number appeared between 1899 and 1902, but by the advent of the twentieth century, spacious quarters had been built for the women. Their pres-

ence was felt strongly among the prison population and, unfortunately, they were placed on display to the male prisoners by way of a chain link fence which separated the male and female exercise yards.

A model of the prison was constructed for display purposes when the old prison grounds became an Arizona State Park. The plaster model displayed a secure area in which the women were housed and the women's yard was shown to be surrounded by a thick adobe wall. Later, when photographs were discovered in the Archives, the model proved to be inaccurate where the female yard was concerned.

The females' commodious new quarters were dug out of the hill on the east side of the prison yard and three large rooms with cement floors were built. Each room opened onto their private yard which was separated from the men's yard, not by an adobe wall, but by an eight-foot chain link fence [Figure 9]. The prison rules stated that the male prisoners could not approach the fence, but the "look but don't touch" rule caused more problems. If the solid adobe wall had been built to shield the presence of the women, one young man would not have served three-days in the dark cell for "flirting" with the female prisoners.³²

When the chain link fence was built, it met two adobe walls. One was perpendicular to the chain link, and the other was a continuation of

³² "Crime and Punishment," permanent park display, Yuma Territorial Prison State Park.

that same wire fence. For some inexplicable reason, the adobe walls were only two feet high at the juncture. This could hardly have been secure for the women, and it would most certainly have been strong temptation for the men. Since there is no date on the photograph of the fence in Figure 9, it is possible that this condition existed at a time when no females were in residence. How long this structural condition existed is unknown, but the exigencies of the situation are obvious in the pictorial history within the current prison park.

The times and attitudes were changing. In the Biennial Report of the Superintendent to the Governor for the period July 1, 1900, to July 1, 1902, the statistics were no longer generic. Of the 281 prisoners housed at Yuma, the "Sex and Nationality" section of the report stated that 278 were male and 3 female. Of these, "123 are white; 132 Mexicans, 16 Indians, 8 Negroes, 1 Chinaman and 1 Japanese; 261 are Territorial and 20 are United States Prisoners."³³

Statistics had apparently become important on every front. The reports went so far as to state the daily average ration per capita furnished to the prisoners. They received: "beef, 11-1/2 oz.; Bacon 1/2 oz.; beans 2-1/4 oz.; onions 3/4 oz.; fruit 1/2 oz.; rice 1/2 oz.; potatoes 6-1/2 oz.; rolled oats 1/4 oz.; cornmeal 3/4 oz.; coffee 1/2 oz.; sugar 1/4 oz.; tea 1/4 oz." It should be noted that either there was an error in

³³ Biennial Report of the Superintendent to the Governor, July 1, 1902. Prison Records, 1902 volume.

the unit of measurement (oz.) or the consumption of some commodities was so infrequent that when averaged out on a daily basis the stated quantity became a ridiculously meager amount, such as one-half ounce of fruit. The Superintendent also noted the quantities of soap used in the laundry weekly (one hundred fifty pounds), the kitchen (twelve pounds), the bath house (ten pounds) and the engine room (two pounds), plus six cans of lye used in several departments.³⁴

This sudden fixation with statistics may be misleading. The women may have gained in importance only on a superficial level based on the Superintendent's predilection for number crunching. Detailed statistics existed in the Tennessee State Penitentiary in the early 1880s so this would not have been simply a new twist in penology. Superintendent Herbert Brown established a pattern for future reports, and his successor, William M. Griffith, continued the statistical theme in his March 31, 1904 Quarterly Report. Of the two hundred ninety prisoners "on hand at close of quarter," there were "124 white males, 144 Mexican males, 1 Mexican female, 14 Indian males and 7 negroes."³⁵

The Tennessee statistics divided prisoners between black, white, male and female. Particular attention should be paid to the several divisions of ethnicity important in the Arizona statistics, i.e., white, Mexican, Indian and negro. Mexicans and Indians were two categories

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Quarterly Report of the Superintendent to the Governor, March 31, 1904. Prison Records, 1904 volume.

probably not present in the Tennessee prison, but Arizona statistics defined ethnicity further with the Chinese and Japanese prisoners being considered separately.

If nothing else, this twentieth-century change ensured that history would be aware of the presence of women at the prison. This classification of prisoners indicates that women were no longer totally ignored, if only on paper.

Figure 6. View of the prison library

Figure 7. The "reading garden" in the prison yard.

Photos Courtesy of Yuma Territorial Prison State Park

Figure 8. Built in 1885, the "sallyport" was the main entrance to the Arizona Territorial Prison. The name was derived from the Spanish *salir puerto*, the door to go out. To the right of the entrance is the sign which stated: "Only Adult Male Visitors Admitted." c. 1909

Photo Courtesy Yuma County Historical Society

Figure 9. (Top) Portion of the adobe block wall being constructed around the prison. (Bottom) Lower right corner shows women's cells dug out of the rock, and the chain link fence which divided the women's prison yard from the men's yard. Ventilation pipes for the cells protrude from the top of the hill.

Photos courtesy of Yuma Territorial Prison State Park

CELLULOID HISTORY

There are fourteen volumes of individual prisoner records, newspaper accounts and official superintendents' and physicians' reports at the Yuma Territorial Prison State Park. These provide what physical descriptions remain of those first four female prisoners. There are no pictures of Lizzie Gallagher, May Woodman, Allegracio deOtero and Manuela Fimbres.

The practice of photographing incoming prisoners was commenced by order of the Board of Prison Commissioners at their April 7, 1884, Board Meeting; although Allegracio deOtero and Manuela Fimbres entered the prison after that time, no photographic negatives have been found for them. Photographs, taken upon entry into the prison, are extant on twenty-five of the twenty-nine female prisoners who took up residence at Yuma.

The photographs were taken by E.A. Bonine for two dollars each. The charges by Bonine are listed in each quarterly report of bills paid by the Board until 1887. After that, no further account appears until Superintendent Murray McInernay's First Quarter Report to the Board of Prison Commissioners in 1892:

In order to perfect the record of convicts, and for a more extended description of the confirmed criminal classes, I have had the negatives of all the prisoners taken and one print of each made, which will be placed with other descriptions of them, and in case of escape will be the means of identifying them. This system of record was adopted by the Board of Prison Commissioners in 1884 and a perfect set of prints made at that time but since that time the custom has

not been closely followed, owing to the fact that the resident Photographer left Yuma and it was not convenient to send abroad when only a few prints were to be taken. I have also purchased a Camera and photographing outfit and in future will keep the record up at a very nominal expense with one of the convicts as artist.

The original glass negatives of the prisoners' entry photographs were transferred to the Archives when the prison was moved to Florence, Arizona, in 1909. In recent years, the boxes of glass negatives were rediscovered and, because of their historical importance, new negatives were made and the photographs reprinted. Unfortunately, the glass negatives were inadvertently destroyed after the new photos were made.³⁶

On June 30, 1893, the Superintendent reported that "a new photographic outfit, of cost about one hundred dollars, should be provided, the present camera and appurtenances being practically useless."³⁷ Since this was purchased the year before, the question arises as to how it could have been rendered "practically useless" in such a short period of time.

The photographic evidence provides a wealth of information on female prisoners, information which would otherwise have been lost to history. This is where the aberration in the Yuma women's prison fashion first appears. The lengthy trek to reach Yuma from all the judicial

³⁶ Linda Offney, park guide, Yuma Territorial Prison State Park, interview by the author, June 22, 1991.

³⁷ Quarterly Report of the Superintendent to the Board of Prison Commissioners, June 30, 1893. Prison Records, 1893 volume.

districts in the state, except for the local court, meant that prisoners arrived tired, dirty and disheveled. From all indications in the photographic evidence, male prisoner pictures were taken on arrival or shortly thereafter. Did this apply to the women as well?

Two of the first female photographic images preserved from the era are those of Jennie McCleary and Georgie Clifford, whose sentences for aggravated assault and manslaughter, respectively, coincided between March and November, 1894. Within four months of each other, Jennie and Georgie were both tried and convicted in the Fourth Judicial District, Flagstaff, Coconino County, Arizona, by Judge Jonathan J. Hawkins.

The photos of both Jennie McCleary and Georgie Clifford display young women who are bathed, combed and well-dressed. The bodices of both women's clothing are of similar style and material. Each was dressed in the then-current Eastern fashion of what appears to be white or light-colored batiste shirt-waist blouses replete with ruffles and puffed sleeves [Figures 10 & 11].

Most prisoners arrived in Yuma by train from the center of the state, but they had to travel by stage to reach a rail head. This was particularly true for prisoners arriving from the north and northeast. The three hundred fifty mile trip to Yuma from Flagstaff would have taken about nine days, and the prisoners were accompanied by the sheriff or a deputy. Travelling several days by stage was a grueling

experience for all travelers, but it may have been more difficult for the female prisoners. The stagecoaches carried nine people in three seats inside the coach, forcing six of them to sit with knees interlocked with the passengers sitting opposite them. Sleeping was done in an upright position, and even the rest stops provided little or no privacy for the women from their keepers.

Even with the approach of the twentieth century, travel in Arizona was not an easy accomplishment. The lack of comfortable housing, and the ruggedness of terrain and temperature, forced women of every class and circumstance to make adjustments in their mode of dress and standard of living. In 1874, the wife of a young Army lieutenant made the foray into Arizona Territory to her husband's frontier post. Having gone up the Colorado River by boat, she and her belongings were transferred to "a comfortable large carriage, known as a Dougherty wagon, or, in common army parlance, an ambulance" for the two-month trip to Camp Apache.

In her book, *Vanished Arizona*, Martha Summerhays described her experiences. Upon leaving the river and heading east she wrote,

The first day's march was over a dreary country; a hot wind blew, and everything was filled with dust. I had long ago discarded my hat, as an unnecessary and troublesome article; consequently my head was now a mass of fine white dust, which stuck fast, of course. I was covered from head to foot with it, and it would not shake off, so, although our steamboat troubles were over, our land troubles had begun.³⁸

³⁸ Martha Summerhays, *Vanished Arizona* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), 48.

Mrs. Summerhays' account precedes the opening of the prison at Yuma by only two years and antedates the first female prisoners by four years. Transportation had not changed appreciably in those four years. The subsequent construction of the Southern Pacific Railroad vastly improved transportation between east and west, but it did little for the north-south routes. Thus, travel could be both arduous and circuitous for future residents of the house "on the hill" at Yuma, as the prison was called.

Contrary to the normal prisoner costume of the period, the women of Yuma prison did not wear uniforms. In both eastern and southern prisons, the women usually wore drab grey or brown dresses. In Arizona, they wore whatever they brought with them and, if the duration of imprisonment exceeded the duration of the fiber, they wore what the prison could procure for them.

In an August 28, 1897, issue of the *Arizona Sentinel* regarding what the newspaper termed the "frail prisoners," the subject was clothing:

Assistant Supt. Aspinwall of the prison is the only ladies man on the hill. It is his duty to look after the wants of the female convicts of whom there are three, of more or less dangerous characters, who have heretofore been a source of much annoyance and displeasure to the guards and management, owing to their scraping proclivities. In some manner, however, the assistant superintendent, either by his kindness, good looks or winning ways, has won the confidence and good graces of the frail prisoners, and now they will not even speak to anyone else connected with the management of the institution. Mr. Aspinwall has promised to have their wardrobe replenished as their wearing apparel is somewhat frayed, and even behind prison bars they have not lost any of the feminine pride, a desire to dress

as well as anybody. The assistant superintendent proposed to see that the girls are dressed as well as possible under the circumstances, but says they will have to leave off the frills of fashion until they are released from his care.³⁹

The three "ladies" referred to were Maria Moreno, Teresa Garcia and Trinidad Montano who served sentences ranging from ten months to one year. The "scraping proclivities" mentioned by the paper most likely referred to the propensity of Teresa and Trinidad to get into fights. For at least one of these altercations, their prison records indicate they experienced three days of solitary confinement.

If the women mentioned in the newspaper article refused to speak to anyone but Mr. Aspinwall, it may have been more for lack of contacts than a predilection for his "winning ways." For the duration of their sentences, the potential for conversation was restricted to the superintendent, assistant superintendent and the turnkey. It was a situation closely akin to solitary confinement if there were no other female prisoners in residence, because there was no female matron either.

What was needed for proper care of women's clothing and what was available in an institution designed for men were unrelated. Time was provided for prisoners to do laundry, and the wash house provided equipment necessary to maintain heavy cotton and wool prison uniforms, but nothing else. Depending on the number of dresses each woman brought, their initial condition, and the care taken of the clothes, one

³⁹ *Arizona Sentinel*, August 28, 1897.

year is an inordinately short amount of time in which clothing could become "frayed." The care taken of the clothes probably played a large part in their condition.

The Superintendent's Prison Diary, which was kept for the years 1876 to 1885, exhibits a constant and unalterable routine. Monday through Friday the prisoners worked. On Sunday they rested, but Saturday was reserved for the prisoners to wash clothes and clean cells. Each prisoner had to wash his own clothes; this was unlike the Tennessee State Penitentiary where the female inmates did all of the prison laundry.

In a Prison Inventory conducted May 2, 1891, the enumeration of the wash house included: 6 washbuckets, 6 tin tubs, 8 washboards, 1 boiler, 1 tin boiler, 3 hat irons, 2 washpans, 250 feet clothes lines, 6 dozen clothes pins, 3 tables, 3 boxes, 3 benches, 1 shovel, and 7 pounds of soap. This is a meager quantity of laundry supplies and equipment to handle the needs of over two hundred prisoners, even if they only changed clothes once a week.⁴⁰ The prison laundry facilities were inadequate and primitive for the time. In contrast, the pages of the 1897 Sears, Roebuck catalogue were loaded with the modern conveniences of washing machines, wringers, mangles, flat irons, polishing irons, and hand laundry steam generators. Availability was certainly not a problem, but budget constraints may have been. Newspapers of the era had

⁴⁰ Prison Inventory, May 2, 1891. Prison Records, 1891 Volume.

frequently complained that the monies appropriated by the legislature for the improvement of the prison were not being utilized by the Governor and the Board of Control.⁴¹

Female vanity would have had to be assuaged with clothes which had been washed but not ironed. The only pressing equipment listed in the prison inventory were the three smoothing irons in the tailor shop. The apparent fragility of the fabric exhibited in the pictures of Jennie McCleary and Georgie Clifford would not have withstood the rigors of washboard and boiler treatment every week.

By 1899, the new prisoners were dressed more appropriately for prison life in sturdier fashions with fewer frills. The material in both the blouses and dirndl skirts appears to be of heavier cotton for longer wear and simpler upkeep. However, in 1897, there appears one aberration which almost defies description.

Exie Sedgemore, who was sentenced from Pima County for "assault with a deadly weapon," presented the picture of fashionable society. Her guilt may have been questionable, but her station in life appears to be solidly above the average as evidenced by her entry picture. Her prison photo imitates a formal portrait taken of a socially elite matron elegantly attired in a lingerie dress trimmed with lace, ruffles and fabric flowers [Figure 12]. (Lingerie dresses received their name "because they were made of various plain or patterned cottons and linens and

⁴¹ *Arizona Sentinel*, November 20, 1901.

ornamented with such underwear trimmings as ruffles, ribbon beading, bows, embroideries and lace. [They] were worn for most daytime occasions in the summer, particularly in resorts like White Sulphur Springs [West Virginia] in the early 1890s."⁴²) A lingerie dress should have been a rarity in the West where the environment and conveniences called for more serviceable clothing.

The summer daytime temperature in Yuma ranged well over one hundred degrees. Fortunately, Exie Sedgemore was sentenced October 1, 1897, and pardoned on December 12, 1897, just ten weeks into her winter resort vacation. Her gubernatorial pardon, received from Governor Myron H. McCord, was requested by the leading citizens of Tucson including ten jurors, the jury foreman, the Tucson District Attorney, the U.S. District Attorney, the sheriff, U.S. Marshall, sixteen Grand Jury members, the Constable and the Probate Judge. The lady was not without influence, but the source of her money and power is unknown.

The care requirements for the Sedgemore dress would have included hand-washing without a washboard, bluing, starch, a flat iron, a polishing iron and a fluting machine for the ruffles to keep the dress up to standards. With no evidence to the contrary, it must be assumed that clothing of this type would have been packed away upon arrival at

⁴² Caroline Rennolds Milbank, *New York Fashion, The Evolution of American Style* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1990), 38.

the prison with the wearer changing to apparel more appropriate to conditions. She may well have had nothing more appropriate if her social status was what it appears to have been.

At the opposite end of the spectrum was Pearl Hart who holds the distinction of committing the last stage coach robbery in the United States. She became nationally-known for the singular exploit which caused her to become an inmate at Yuma. Many pictures of Pearl Hart exist in the prison archives, but only two were actually taken at the prison. Her entry picture was taken in a simple dress and showed both a front and a profile [Figure 13].

Based on her exploits, she had become a romanticized fantasy, and with the assistance of John Brisben Walker of *The Cosmopolitan*, and William Randolph Hearst of the *New York Journal*, she managed to turn her infamy to profit. Stories about Pearl were always in demand. The October, 1899 issue of *The Cosmopolitan* carried a personal interview on the perils of Pearl titled "An Arizona Episode."⁴³ The pictures which accompanied the article were taken at the jail in Tucson, but the article implied that one picture was taken as she stood guard at her hideout [Figure 14]. In another fantasy photograph she was dressed up as a

⁴³ "An Arizona Episode," *The Cosmopolitan* 27 (October 1899): 674-77.

very proper young woman [Figure 15]. No one seemed to notice that the article and photographs, ostensibly generated at Yuma Prison, were published more than a month before Pearl's Yuma confinement.

The *Arizona Graphic* of January 27, 1900 carried an article on Pearl Hart in which her spacious accommodations in the hoosegow were described. Between November, 1899 and October, 1900, she was the only female prisoner, which would account for the following:

Pearl occupies a cell as large as an ordinary bedroom, which is excavated in the hill side, and she has a "houseyard" in which to take her constitutional whenever she is minded. Fortunate is the offender who commits his offense in Arizona and receives his punishment in the Territorial Prison at Yuma. The discipline at Yuma smacks as military, but it has no aspects of prison, except in the "stripes," which the East has almost been [*sic*] abandoned except as a mark of bad behavior.⁴⁴

The "publicity" picture which accompanied the article showed Pearl sitting in a contrived pose on her bed. She wore loose-fitting men's trousers and shirt with patterned suspenders. In her lap she held a wildcat kitten [Figure 16]. Pearl had requested "stripes" from the prison authorities. She wanted a piece of the men's striped uniform material to make herself a dress to look more like the male prisoners. Her request was denied. The only indication that Pearl may have partially succeeded in her request is a picture taken in the female prison yard in 1902 with Elena Estrada and Rosa Duran. This picture is now a popular postcard for sale in Yuma stores. Pearl wore a dress of dark

⁴⁴ *Arizona Graphic*, January 27, 1900. Transcript in Prison Records, 1900 Volume.

material through which there is a light-colored vertical zigzag stripe, not at all like the wide gray and white horizontally striped uniforms of the male prisoners. Their loose-fitting trousers and shirts were made in the prison tailor's shop from material purchased at Levi Strauss in San Francisco. The men also wore light-colored, broad-brimmed hats with a medium height crown.

The men had two sets of prison photographs made. The first was taken upon entry into the prison. The men then had their heads and beards shaved and another set of pictures was taken. (The Superintendent made an exception to this rule: the ten Mormon polygamists, who served their sentences at Yuma, were not required to under-go this procedure.) Photo opportunities were plentiful at the prison. With few exceptions, the pictures taken of the male prisoners were posed in the practice of the period. Archival group photographs show male work parties in lock-step formation in the prison yard [Figure 17], and others were posed in front of the "sallyport" or in the "reading garden" as was shown in Figures 7 and 8.

The previously mentioned 1902 picture of Estrada, Duran and Hart, was posed in the women's yard. Duran is holding the guitar in a manner which appears to have been dictated by the photographer rather than a position in which she was comfortable [Figure 18].

The prison apparel worn by Alfrida Mercer for her photo was a true phantasm in the desert [Figure 19]. Arriving at Yuma in November,

1901, she was photographed wearing a beaded cape over her dress. If the cloak was velvet, as it appears, there was no way to clean or maintain it within the walls. It would have required both cleaning solvents and steam to keep it wearable. The thirty-seven year old Mrs. Mercer had been convicted of adultery under the Edmunds-Tucker Act of the United States. Since adultery was a Federal crime and Federal prisoners had to be confined in the territorial prison, she was remanded to the same prison in which her eighteen-year-old paramour, Frederick Crosley, was confined. He and his mother had testified against her in court to obtain her conviction. Upon her removal to Yuma, Mrs. Mercer's husband, Steve, and their children, moved to the town and awaited the end of her sentence. This was a tremendous degree of spousal devotion since he had also testified against her in court.⁴⁵ With the presence of her family at the foot of the hill for the duration of her five-month confinement, it is quite possible that they took care of her clothing and simply brought her fresh garments on visiting days. Since only adult males were admitted as visitors, her husband would have been the only possibility. Again, however, the question arises as to whether or not the women were allowed male visitors.

The disparity between the treatment of male and female prisoners at Yuma was marked in several ways but, visually, the most obvious was in the way the women were allowed to dress. The men wore prison

⁴⁵ *Arizona Sentinel*, November 20, 1901.

"stripes" which were made in the tailor shop, but the women wore the clothing they had brought with them. The prison provided new wearing apparel for the women when their own dresses wore out. In view of the generally short times served by female prisoners, the demand for new clothing should have been marginal. For the women, the longest time served was forty-nine months. The shortest term was two months. Of the twenty-six that completed their sentences in Yuma, the average sentence served was 14.3 months. This includes one prisoner, Pearl Eiker, who was the only woman to die while in prison.

The women were allowed to make their own clothes from material provided in the prison, and they worked in the tailor shop making uniforms for the men. There was already a demonstrated proclivity toward physical violence. Eight of the women had been convicted of manslaughter, five of aggravated assault or assault with a deadly weapon, and one was there for murder. In spite of this, they were allowed to use scissors, a potentially dangerous weapon. Prisons in states farther East would have exercised greater caution.

If there was a distinct female class system, it went through dramatic changes around 1900. From a nineteenth-century perspective, women were to be quiet and unassuming. The concept of two women brawling in the prison yard would have been incomprehensible two decades before this occurrence. It is not that these activities did not occur in Eastern or Southern prisons. Arizonans just had different

expectations of the female population.

The authorities' unconventional, trusting attitude toward the female inmates could provide an explanation for the minimal sentence lengths of the women prior to 1900. Almost every sentence meted out to the women prior to 1900 was pardoned by the Governor at the request of the Prison Superintendent. Five of the first seven female inmates had committed murder or manslaughter. One of the seven had sold liquor to the Indians; she was the only one to serve her full sentence. A pardon seemed to be the inevitable conclusion for most of the female inmates.

Figure 10.
Jennie McCleary,
1893.

Figure 11.
Georgie Clifford, 1894

Photos courtesy of Yuma Territorial Prison State Park

Figure 12. Exie Sedgemore, 1897

Photo courtesy of Yuma Territorial Prison State Park

Figure 13. Pearl Hart, prisoner #1559, entry photos, 1899

Photos courtesy of Yuma Territorial Prison State Park

Figure 14. Pearl Hart standing guard for *The Cosmopolitan*, 1899.

Figure 15. Pearl Hart in proper attire for *The Cosmopolitan*, 1899.

Photos courtesy of Yuma Territorial Prison State Park

Figure 16. Pearl Hart with wildcat kitten on her bunk, ca. 1900

Photo courtesy of Yuma Territorial Prison State Park

Figure 17. Prison work party photographed c. 1900.
Male prisoners made their own prison uniforms from fabric manufactured
by Levi Strauss & Company in San Francisco.

Photo Courtesy Yuma County Historical Society

Figure 18. Left to right: Elena Estrada, Pearl Hart & Rosa Duran in women's prison yard, c. 1902

Photo Courtesy Yuma County Historical Society

Figure 19. Alfrida Mercer wearing beaded velvet cape; entry photo, 1901

Photo courtesy of Yuma Territorial Prison State Park

PARDONABLE OFFENSES, EVERY ONE

When "the irrepressible May Woodman, of Tombstone notoriety," arrived in May of 1883 to serve a five-year sentence for manslaughter, the prison administration was faced with double trouble.⁴⁶ They not only had to contend with keeping the beautiful Miss Woodman in prison, they were also faced with the indefatigable efforts of her mother, Mrs. McIntyre, who was determined to see her daughter pardoned. With Mrs. McIntyre on the job, the Territory did not stand a chance.

The problem began with a practical joke in Tombstone, Arizona Territory, in February, 1883. Billy Kinsman had been living with May Woodman for several months. As a prank, Billy's friends placed an article in the *Tombstone Epitaph* to the effect that Billy and May were announcing their wedding. Billy was not amused and publicly stated that he would not marry her. May became incensed at this public humiliation, and at 10:00 a.m. on February 23, 1883, "William Kinsman, a well known sporting man, was killed while standing in front of the Oriental Saloon." She said that "she was driven to it by abuse received from Kinsman."⁴⁷ It proved the adage that "hell hath no fury like a woman scorned."

⁴⁶ *Arizona Daily Star*, February 25, 1883. Published at Tucson.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

The *Arizona Sentinel* in Yuma announced the jury's guilty verdict and on May 25, 1883, noted: "May Woodman was convicted of manslaughter in Tombstone and sentenced to five years in the Penitentiary by Judge Pinney." The Judge stated in court that, even though he was sympathetic to May because she was a woman, he could not let that cloud his judgement. He abhorred the "custom so prevalent in this country of using weapons on slight pretext for the purpose of redressing wrongs [and it] must be stopped." Judge Pinney informed her that her term at the penitentiary might be utilized "in preparation for a higher and better life." The Judge's sympathies may have been colored by Miss Woodman's reaction when he refused the motion for a new trial. Upon receiving the sentence she turned angrily to the Judge and said: "May God curse you forever!"⁴⁸

The ordeal of the trial and, ultimately, the verdict were apparently more than Miss Woodman could emotionally handle. On May 26, 1883, a Tucson newspaper announced:

From our Tombstone exchanges we learn that on Tuesday night last, May Woodman, recently sentenced to the penitentiary for manslaughter, again attempted self-murder by taking poison. Dr. Goodfellow was called immediately, and soon placed the unfortunate woman out of danger. For some days past a mixture of chloride hydrate and morphine had been administered to produce sleep. This medicine, instead of taking when administered by her attendants, she carefully saved until quite a quantity of the deadly drug had accumulated. The fact of her taking an overdose probably saved her life.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ *Arizona Weekly Citizen*, May 26, 1883. Transcript in Prison Records, 1883 Volume.

⁴⁹ *Arizona Daily Star*, May 26, 1883.

What her attempted suicide could not accomplish, her mother could. Her mother, who is referred to only as Mrs. McIntyre (or Mrs. C. McIntire), hired an attorney to help her work for a full pardon from Governor Trittle. She organized what could be referred to as a grass roots campaign to have her daughter freed. In the first two weeks of August, the Territorial Capitol at Prescott was flooded with letters and petitions pleading for May's release. Included in the two hundred signatures on one of the petitions were nine of the twelve jurors who had convicted her. Of the remaining three, two were out of the Territory, and one, Eli Dickerson, stood by his original decision and refused to sign.

At May's request, Dr. M.F. Price, the prison physician, wrote a letter of encouragement to Mrs. McIntyre. He ended by saying: "May has won, by her good actions and ladylike conduct, the good will, I think, of all the officers of the Prison."⁵⁰ Again, the female classification of "lady" appears for the purpose of reinforcing a mother's faith in the goodness of her daughter.

The Governor was out of town, so Acting Governor H.M. Van Arman acquiesced to the numerous requests for May's pardon. The story does not end there. The letter of conditional pardon was signed on August 22, 1883, less than three months after her arrival at the prison; how-

⁵⁰ Dr. M.F. Price letter to Mrs. McIntyre, [no date]. May Woodman file. Yuma Territorial Prison State Park.

ever, the pardon was not to take effect until March 15, 1884. May had almost five months to remain incarcerated. This delay helped touch off a scandal at the prison. The *Arizona Sentinel*, in a piece of "investigative reporting" which was a rarity in Arizona Territory, published a refutation of an announcement in a rival newspaper, the *Prescott Miner*. On November 24, 1883, the paper printed both the accusation and its findings:

If current reports be true a scandal of some magnitude will soon be made public in connection with the present territorial prison administration, the irrepressible May Woodman, of Tombstone notoriety, having become *enciente* [pregnant] since her incarceration in that secluded retreat by the Colorado. MINER

To ascertain the truth or falsehood of the statement made in the above paragraph, a representative of the SENTINEL visited the prison, and interviewed the prison authorities. Aside from the emphatic denial of the superintendent, the warden and the woman herself, we are convinced that under the circumstances such a condition of affairs would be impossible. The woman is kept under as strict discipline as the rest of the prisoners, occupies a cell which is inaccessible from others, and the key of her cell, after locking up at night, is deposited in a safe to which no one has access except the turnkey. Of course this report was started simply to injure Capt. Ingalls, the superintendent of the prison, and has no foundation except in the imagination of some brute to whom a pure thought is an absolute stranger.

The *Arizona Sentinel* had many occasions over the thirty-three years of the prison's existence in Yuma to jump to the defense of the prison authorities. In this case, their conclusions may have been totally accurate. If May Woodman was pregnant, she hid it quite well, because she received her conditional pardon, as agreed, on March 15, 1884. Making no mention of the "scandal" four months earlier, the *Sentinel* of

March 22, 1884, noted that: "Last Saturday May Woodman was released from the penitentiary upon a conditional pardon: - that she at once leave the territory, never to return. She went to California on the first train, Tuesday noon."⁵¹ Putting prisoners on the first train out of Yuma was standard procedure for the prison authorities. A one-way ticket was provided to Banning, California or Casa Grande, Arizona. The destinations were later changed to Los Angeles and Tucson when it was found that prisoners again returned to crime when they were stranded in small towns which had no work to support them.

The morphine and chloride hydrate which was administered to May Woodman as a sleeping aid in Tombstone Jail was not an oddity in nineteenth-century Arizona Territory. Of the twenty-nine women admitted to the prison, three were addicted to morphine and/or opium. Eighteen listed an addiction to tobacco. Only five said they had no addictions, and for five others the information was not complete in the prisoner data ledger. Intemperance was considered a "habit" rather than an "addiction" for prisoner information purposes, and eleven prisoners acknowledged that they imbibed.

The worst addiction was probably that of Georgie Clifford, prisoner number 947, who was admitted on March 24, 1894. At the brothel where she worked, Georgie had purportedly slipped arsenic into a customer's cup of tea. Having an eight-grain-a-day morphine habit, her recol-

⁵¹ *Arizona Sentinel*, March 22, 1884.

lections of the evening's events were hazy. Although this addiction may have been the *cause of her imprisonment*, it almost certainly was not the *cause of the crime*. In her case, it appears to have been a nineteenth-century "frame." On the prison records, Georgie's occupation was listed as "laborer," but her laboring was done at Amy Powell's house of prostitution in Williams, Coconino County.

Georgie's alleged victim, Peter Perry, died of an overdose of morphine on the night of December 26, 1893 at Amy Powell's "house." During the evening, he had been served numerous drinks by one of the "girls," Lillie Taylor. This fact was attested by Amy, Lillie, and Georgie. Later that evening, Perry was with Lottie Williams, a morphine addict of ten years duration. According to the motion for new trial filed by her attorneys, Georgie testified in court that she

left Lottie Williams with Perry at a late hour in the night on the [26th] day of December, 1893, and that when she returned then to her room, she found Lottie Williams with Perry attempting to give an emetic, very soon after which she discovered Perry's death, when she awoke the inmates of the house and went for Dr. Johnston.⁵²

During the night, Lottie Williams left town and was never seen again. The Sheriff testified that he went into the state of California in search of Lottie but he could not find her, so Georgie was arrested for the crime. It is difficult to establish the reasons for his conclusions,

⁵² Motion for New Trial in the Case of the Territory of Arizona vs. Georgie Clifford. Court Records for the District Court of the Fourth Judicial District, Territory of Arizona, County of Coconino, March 23, 1894. Filed by J.W. Ross and George Reimensnyder, attorneys. Coconino County Archives, Flagstaff, Arizona.

but it appears to have been based on the fact that Georgie was also a drug user. Lottie had shown Georgie the needle mark where she had injected the morphine into Perry, but her knowledge of the needle mark may have also served to incriminate her.

When it was time to impanel a jury, the attorneys had difficulty finding impartial jurors. Men were called to serve on the jury, but out of the nineteen summoned, only five were sworn. One was excused by the Court, six by the prosecution and seven by the defense. A twenty-minute recess was called while the summons was announced for more jurors. The questioning of potential jurors began again and five more were rejected. Finally, twelve "good and lawful men" were seated to decide the fate of Georgie Clifford.⁵³

The court records do not indicate the cause of the difficulty in impaneling a jury, but impartiality may have been an issue. It stands to reason that in a fairly small mining town a large number of the men would have been acquainted on a very personal level with Georgie or some of the other *residents* of Amy Powell's "house."

The objectivity of the jury may have been immaterial in this case. The prosecution produced a "surprise witness" without informing the defense attorneys. This witness was J.E. Farnsworth, one of the local

⁵³ Transcript, Territory of Arizona, Plaintiff, vs. Georgie Clifford, Defendant, District Court of the Fourth Judicial District of the Territory of Arizona, Case No. 92 in and for the County of Coconino, March 22-23, 1894, Richard D. Stockton, Official Court Reporter. Coconino County Archives, Flagstaff, Arizona.

pharmacists. He testified that Georgie Clifford and one of her attorneys, J.W. Ross, had brought a package into his drug store and asked him to weigh it. When Farnsworth asked what it was, they allegedly told him it was morphine. He then testified that Ross and Clifford stood in front of him and discussed the contents of the package with Clifford telling Ross that the morphine was a "third part as much" as she had given Perry to kill him.

There was rigorous cross-examination in which Farnsworth's credibility was challenged. The defense wanted the attorney, Ross, to testify in refutation, but the judge refused to allow the testimony of Ross or any of the other people whom Farnsworth had said were there at the time. Farnsworth's testimony stood alone and unchallenged. Georgie Clifford was convicted of manslaughter the same day her trial began. Three jurors swore affidavits stating that they based their guilty vote on Farnsworth's singular testimony. A motion for new trial, which was filed immediately following the guilty verdict on March 22, 1894, was denied on March 23rd. Georgie was sentenced to three years and six months at Yuma.⁵⁴ She took her eight-grain "habit" with her to the prison.

The explanation for the ease with which she was apparently wrongfully convicted may have been her addiction, her profession, or

⁵⁴ Ibid.

simply that she was a woman. Justice was eventually served by her pardon, but lasting damage was already done. On February 19, 1895, eleven months after Georgie Clifford's sentence began at Yuma, Governor Louis C. Hughes was persuaded to pardon her, not because she was innocent but because having females at the prison was still difficult for prison authorities. In the Proclamation of Pardon, he wrote:

Whereas the application for pardon is recommended by Supt. of Prison and Board of Prison Commissioners on the grounds of exemplary conduct and for the further reason that the said Georgia [*sic*] Clifford is the only female prisoner at present in confinement in the Prison, making her confinement virtually solitary. It further appearing that the applicant was not the chief offender in the crime for which she is imprisoned, and that the more guilty party had escaped.⁵⁵

Naturally, the one committing the crime would be "more guilty" than the one who had found the body and been aware of the crime. The *Arizona Sentinel* of February 23, 1895, noted that "the poor fellows deprived of their liberty in the Territorial Prison were remembered on Washington's birthday by the Governor of Arizona granting the following pardons: Estevan Montoya, *Georgie Clifford*, William Jones."⁵⁶ She was just one of "the poor fellows."

A temporary good resulted from her imprisonment. The prison physician worked with Georgie to overcome her morphine and opium addiction and by the time she left the prison, she was down to one

⁵⁵ Arizona Territorial Prison Records, 1895. In the Georgie Clifford file. Yuma Territorial Prison State Park.

⁵⁶ *Arizona Sentinel*, February 23, 1895.

grain a day. Unfortunately, even one grain a day was too much and the habit persisted. The remainder of her life can be traced by newspaper accounts throughout the state even though they were not always totally correct.

The *Arizona Republican* of August 23, 1896, carried an article about Georgie, whose name was then Georgia Redmond. She had applied to the court in Phoenix for the arrest of a man named Frank Serrano.

She stated that the previous evening she wanted to enjoy herself and had \$100 in gold on her person. Serrano knew of this fact and persuaded her to give him the money for safe keeping until her "debauch" was over. She consented and yesterday morning had a conversation with him about the money and told him to keep it for her until evening. In the afternoon she asked for the return of the money, but he denied that she had given him a cent, insinuating that she was dreaming or was drunk. She applied to Justice Johnstone but that official told her that as there was no positive proof that she turned the money over to Serrano, he could not issue a warrant.⁵⁷

Georgie's life went from bad to worse and she had a new last name. Whether the name change was a return to her maiden name or if she married in the interim is unknown. "Georgie Redmond, the morphine fiend," was again in jail on May 5, 1897 for cutting Henry Rubenstein with a knife. She was "sent to the asylum" on May 6, ran away on May 25, was returned a short time later, and was discharged on June 25, 1897. On October 24, 1897, the *Arizona Republican* announced "Georgia Redmond Dead: The End Came of Morphine at Crittenton Home."⁵⁸ A

⁵⁷ *Arizona Republican*, August 23, 1896. Published at Phoenix.

⁵⁸ *Arizona Republican*, October 24, 1897.

miraculous resurrection must have occurred, because the same newspaper announced on February 28, 1898, that "Georgia Redmond is in the county jail again. She was arrested yesterday morning on a warrant sworn out by the City Jailor charging her with an attempt to burn up the municipal house of detention. She had kindled a fire on the floor."⁵⁹

She was in and out of jail, in and out of the insane asylum, and constantly suffering the ravages of drug use. The picture taken of her upon entry into the prison at Yuma, shows a lovely, delicate face set with enormous, clear, light eyes and framed with blonde hair. She appeared as the picture of innocence. When she was taken to court on May 5, 1897, a none-too-kind reporter noted that "she was as nearly a physical wreck as a living woman may be. She was emaciated, the skin drawn tightly over the bones of her face and her hair was merely a dirty yellow thatch."⁶⁰

⁵⁹ *Arizona Republican*, February 28, 1898.

⁶⁰ "Sent to the Asylum: A Proceeding Showing a Great Deal of Goodness in This World," *Arizona Republican*, May 6, 1897.

At this point a new division of the female classes begins to appear in newspapers in the Territory. Women were being described as "morphine fiend,"⁶¹ "she-devil," and "frenzied murderess."⁶² They were no longer the fragile creatures of the Victorian era. They were quickly becoming recognized as wanton criminals.

What happened to the beautiful twenty-year-old woman who was wrongfully convicted of manslaughter in a Flagstaff court? No account of Georgie Clifford Redmond's death has been found, other than the one which was premature. Research will continue, but the story of her fate must temporarily remain in limbo.

Georgie Clifford was not the only apparently "innocent" female sent to the prison at Yuma. One other bordered on "not as guilty." Exie Sedgemore was convicted of assault with intent to commit murder at Tucson. The alleged shooting victim was Lillian Harmon, who swore out a warrant for Exie's arrest. From court testimony it appears that Lillian and Exie had quarreled, so the former drove to the home of the latter to continue the argument. When Exie came to the door, she was confronted by Lillian. An argument ensued and, according to her own testimony, Exie took a revolver and fired it into the air twice to frighten the irate Miss Harmon. Harmon insisted that Sedgemore had fired the gun directly at her, but missed.

⁶¹ *Arizona Republican*, October 24, 1897.

⁶² *Arizona Sentinel*, October 10, 1896.

The sheriff investigated the area and "after the most careful and diligent search no trace of either bullet could be found" in the wall of the hotel across the street or in Miss Harmon's carriage which was parked directly behind her.⁶³ Thomas F. Wilson, the resident across the street, stated that no bullet had struck the house; unfortunately, when the case came to trial, Wilson was in California and could not return to testify until October 1, 1897. The Judge refused a request for continuance. Whatever her original intention in firing the gun, Exie Sedgemore found herself bound for Yuma for a period of three years beginning on the first day of October, 1897.

The good citizens of Tucson were outraged. A petition to the Governor was circulated among the interested parties at the trial and was signed by eighteen members of the Grand Jury and the jurors in the case. A second petition containing the signatures of 205 citizens of Tucson was submitted. And a third petition was signed by constables, sheriffs, marshalls, attorneys, judges, court reporters, doctors, dentists, the Pima County Treasurer and the U.S. District Attorney.⁶⁴ Along with a letter of introduction, these petitions were hand delivered to the Gov-

⁶³ Petition to Governor McCord dated November 9, 1897 from the citizens of Tucson, Arizona in support of a pardon for Exie Sedgemore [no date]. Copy in Sedgemore file, Yuma Territorial Prison State Park.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

ernor, Myron H. McCord, on December 17, 1897, by Miss Eva Blanchard, Exie Sedgemore's friend. On December 18, the Governor signed an immediate pardon for Exie Sedgemore.⁶⁵

The announcement of her release and return to Tucson sounded more like a social announcement than a news item in the *Arizona Republican* of December 22, 1897: "Miss Exie Sedgemore, for whose pardon a petition was extensively signed about a month ago, returned to Tucson Monday. Miss Eva Blanchard went to Yuma and accompanied her home." Her bearing and demeanor in the prison photo were a portent of her Yuma experience.

Unlike Georgie Clifford and Exie Sedgemore, most of the women who ended up in the prison had open-and-shut cases. This was the condition of Maria Moreno, a sixteen-year-old Yuma girl. The *Arizona Sentinel* on October 10, 1896 printed a part of the Court Proceedings in the case.

Maria Moreno - charged with murder. The jury brought in a verdict of manslaughter. About four months ago she shot and instantly killed her sixteen year old brother [court records say fifteen years old] for no provocation whatever. She had been dissipating for some little time and keeping bad company. Her brother was expostulating with her when she took offense and killed him as above stated. The jury recommended her to the mercy of the court. The evidence went to prove that she was weak minded as are also her younger brothers and sisters. She received a sentence of one year and one month.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Gubernatorial Pardon. Copy in Exie Sedgemore file, Yuma Territorial Prison State Park.

⁶⁶ *Arizona Sentinel*, October 10, 1896.

In the original news story on July 4, 1896, the same newspaper was very graphic in their description of the young boy lying on the ground "with one side of his face blown off" by the double-barreled shotgun she had used. The report continued:

The "she devil's" work accomplished she threw the gun down beside the dead boy and turned to make her escape. The mother made her appearance on the scene and grasped her daughter by the hair and endeavored to hold her, but the frenzied murderess soon disengaged herself and ran through a saloon into an adjoining room where she remained until taken to jail by the officers.⁶⁷

Even at the age of sixteen, Maria Moreno was no longer considered the sweet, innocent but was a "she-devil" and "frenzied murderess." Public opinion was with the "good" boy who was only trying to save his sister from turning "bad." Although sympathetic to the girl, the citizens of Yuma clearly thought she was out of her mind. Whether due to her age or her mental condition, she was released from prison on September 8, 1897, after serving eleven months of her thirteen month sentence. In another sad ending and without explanation of cause, the *Arizona Sentinel* on July 29, 1899, stated: "Maria Moreno, a girl about twenty years of age, died Monday and was buried Tuesday evening. Maria will be remembered as the girl who killed her brother some two or three years ago."⁶⁸

⁶⁷ *Arizona Sentinel*, July 4, 1896.

⁶⁸ *Arizona Sentinel*, July 29, 1899.

As mentioned previously, the most famous of the twenty-nine women who were incarcerated at the prison at Yuma was Pearl Hart. Dressed in men's clothing and accompanied by a man named Joe Boot, she led the hold-up of the Globe to Florence stage on July 15, 1899. The stage left Globe shortly after daylight on July 15th and headed south toward Florence. After completing thirty miles of a particularly mountainous, rocky grade and crossing numerous sandy washes, the stage finally reached Cane Springs where the driver made a rest stop. The passengers had barely touched the ground when the two road agents rushed in with guns drawn. After cleaning the passengers of watches, jewelry and about four hundred dollars in cash, they mounted their horses and rode at a full gallop to the south. There was one thing of which Henry Bacon, the stage driver, was sure: one of the robbers was a woman.

Sheriff W. T. Armstrong sent a telegram to the sheriff of Pinal County at Florence, a posse was formed, and the woman-hunt began. Pearl could not show herself at any of the ranches so it was up to Joe to procure food and supplies and to keep Pearl apprised of the progress of the posse. Pearl Hart had a tobacco and morphine habit which was her undoing. She ran out of cigarettes and sent Joe out to buy more. He was spotted, fit the description of the male robber, and was followed back to the hide-out by the sheriff, who arrested both of them. When arrested, she still wore the man's rough shirt and blue overalls,

which was her costume at the time of the robbery.

There were no accommodations for women at the jail in Florence so Pearl was transferred to Tucson to await her trial. Aided by an unknown accomplice, she escaped from jail but was later recaptured in New Mexico. When Pearl and Joe were tried separately in November, 1899, Joe got thirty years at Yuma. Pearl flirted outrageously with the all-male jury and was judged "not guilty." The Judge was furious with the jury, convicted Pearl for stealing Henry Bacon's revolver during the hold-up, and sent her to Yuma for five years. This was a dramatic change in sentence length when compared to sentences of less than a year for murder and manslaughter just five years prior to Hart's conviction.

She was spoiled, demanding, flirtatious, and purely cussed as far as prison officials were concerned. The prison had a pet dog which had given birth to several puppies, all of whom had free run of the prison yard. Pearl asked the Superintendent to let her keep Judy and the pups in her own cell. The Superintendent refused, saying that he did not want the poor innocent animals corrupted by Pearl's obscene language. Wild cats were more suited to Pearl's personality.

She used her incarceration time to establish her future. The interview she gave to *The Cosmopolitan* magazine while at Tucson had piqued the nation's interest.⁶⁹ In prison, she wrote poetry on the theme of her innocent childhood, "When She Was Young and Knew No Sin Before the Tempter Entered In," and penned the following on her outlaw experience.

The Girl Bandit

The sun was brightly shining on a pleasant afternoon
 My partner speaking lightly said, "The stage will be here soon."
 We saw it coming around the bend and called to them to halt
 And to their pockets we attended, if they got hurt it was their
 fault.

While the birds were sweetly singing and the men stood up in line,
 And the silver softly ringing as it touched this palm of mine,
 There we took away their money but left them enough to eat,
 And the men looked so funny as they vaulted to their seats.

Then up the road we galloped, quickly through a canyon we did
 pass.
 Over the mountains we went swiftly, trying to find our horses grass.
 Past the station we boldly went, now along the river side,
 And our horses being spent, of course we had to hide.

In the night we would travel, in the daytime try and rest,
 And throw ourselves on the gravel to sleep we would try our best.
 Around us our horses were stamping, looking for some hay or grain.
 On the road the Posse was tramping, looking for us, all in vain.

One more day they would not have got us but my horse got sore &
 thin.
 And my partner was a mean cuss so Billy Truman roped us in.
 Thirty years my partner got; I was given five.
 He seemed contented with his lot, and I am still alive.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ John Brisben Walker, ed., "An Arizona Episode," *The Cosmopolitan* 27 (October 1899): 674-77.

⁷⁰ Poem contained in Pearl Hart file. Yuma Territorial Prison State Park.

She was building her reputation for a stage career after her release. And she built it very well. When she left the prison on December 15, 1902, she went to work as an actress. She had achieved her dream. There was only one point she had not considered when planning her future. She apparently had no talent. While her reputation brought people in, her acting drove them out.

Pearl's story is long and arduous and has been expounded in books, articles and at least one movie over the past ninety years. She was rumored to be working in a cigar store in Kansas City, or married to a wealthy rancher and living in Arizona, or laboring as a prostitute in St. Louis. The truth about Pearl's life after Yuma may never be known, but historians continue to research, and writers continue to fictionalize. There is one thing for sure: she was the female star of the play which was the history of the Arizona Territorial Prison at Yuma.

There were many bit players at the prison during its thirty-three year existence. Some were innocent, but most were guilty. Some crimes were major, and others leave one wondering why they were sent to prison. Some lives were destroyed by the experience, but at least one gained fame, if not fortune, for having been there. In spite of the twenty-nine stories which peppered the history of the women of Yuma prison, one thread is woven through the fabric of their history. They were female in a Territory which was in short supply of feminine influ-

ence. And, until about 1896, no matter what their crime, guilt, profession, or habits, from outward appearances, it seems they were still considered ladies by the men in the Territory.

With the approach of the twentieth century, the perception of females in prison began to change. Females were no longer in short supply in the Territory, but the greatest percentage of prisoners came from the cities. The population had shifted from miners, soldiers, cowboys and prostitutes to family-centered communities. A prime example of this change in attitude was the establishment of Glendale, Arizona, in 1892 by William and Laura Murphy, members of the Brethren Church. "William J. Murphy hated the Demon Rum with a burning passion. His wife, Laura, was not only a teetotaler, she also would not allow tobacco, playing cards, or dancing in her house." And, because the Murphys "were so puritanical, Glendale was founded as the only town in sinful Arizona Territory where a parched sojourner could not buy an alcoholic drink." Murphy wanted to keep the citizens of Glendale "safe from sin" in a "haven for the righteous."⁷¹

That blurred line which had separated the female classes had suddenly become distinct. Almost overnight, the tolerant mentality of the 1800s ran headlong into the self-righteous morality of the early twentieth-century.

⁷¹ Dean Smith, "Safe From Sin," *Arizona Highways* 68 (February 1992): 24-27.

*NINETEENTH-CENTURY MENTALITY
VERSUS
TWENTIETH-CENTURY MORALITY*

The turn-of-the-century brought a change in attitude. The "fallen doves" and "frail flowers" of the preceding decades had become the criminal element. Women were getting into fights in prison and being confined to solitary. On September 15, 1902, Elena Estrada and Rosa Duran were placed in the dark cell for five days of solitary confinement for fighting.⁷² Four women were arrested and convicted of adultery under the Federally-mandated Edmunds-Tucker Act. Suddenly it was an era of loose women and uptight men. These females were no longer homebodies who placed husband and children above their own wants and desires. Someone was going to have to pay for this moral upheaval, and those paying were the women who were sentenced to the prison. Prison sentences became longer. The average female sentence between 1878 and 1895 was ten months for crimes of murder and manslaughter [Figure 20]. By 1900, adultery gained an average sentence of nine months, and the time served for murder had increased to forty-nine months [Figure 21].

⁷² Prison Records of Elena Estrada and Rosa Duran. Yuma Territorial Prison State Park.

Men and women had always served inequitable sentences for the same crimes. In separate incidents, Allegracio deOtero (female) and Feliciano Gomez (male) were both convicted of the Federal crime of selling liquor to Indians. Allegracio received a ten dollar fine and two months in prison. Feliciano was fined two hundred dollars and was sentenced to two years in prison.⁷³

By the turn-of-the-century, the perception of the guilt and intent of female criminals had changed in the eyes of judges and juries. These women were no longer the misguided, he-done-her-wrong, fragile prairie flowers. These were hardened criminals who had offended the sensibilities of the populace.

The women had not changed. There was still prostitution, murder and assault, just as there was prior to 1900 [Figure 22]. The greater numbers of women in the prison can be attributed to their greater numbers in the Territory. Rather than being based on a change in the severity of the crimes themselves, the increased sentence lengths appear to have developed in direct relation to the judge's or jury's perception of the crime as an affront to law-abiding citizens. Notoriety often produced an increased sentence for the convicted party.

The greatest affront to the sensibilities of the Arizona Territorial citizens was that of Bertha Trimble, who was convicted of rape in 1902.

⁷³ Leo W. Banks, "Yuma's Territorial Prison," *Arizona Highways* 69 (March 1993): 12-15.

Court testimony given by Bertha's daughter revealed that the mother had held her daughter down while the step-father had raped the twelve-year-old girl. The outraged jury sentenced both of them to *life* imprisonment. Six months later, Bertha Trimble was released by order of the Supreme Court and put on a train bound for Mexico. Her husband gained his freedom after two years based on testimony from the family doctor which refuted what the girl had said in court. Their guilt or innocence may never be known, but newspaper editorials throughout the Territory indicated that their release had been prompted by Mr. Trimble's "fair and comely sister," who had worked her wiles on the Governor to achieve pardons for both of the Trimbles. Whether or not the editorials presented factual information, it should be remembered that previous editorials were the initial cause of the rage that gripped the Territory during the trial. Having no other source of information, the citizens of Arizona were heavily influenced by the power of the press. And it was those same citizens who sat on the juries and decided the guilt or innocence of the accused.

While the increase in female numbers at Yuma Prison seems to have taken a sudden rise [Figure 23], a comparison should be noted. The female population of the Tennessee State Penitentiary at Nashville remained at a fairly constant six percent of the total prison population. With a customary prison census of about eight hundred inmates, there

were usually about fifty-five women in residence.⁷⁴ By contrast, women comprised only one percent of the Yuma prison population over its entire thirty-three year history. Between 1876 and 1909, there were 3,069 prisoners at Yuma; 3,040 were men.

The female element was gaining equality with men in sentence length. Men served nine to twelve months for polygamy; women served four to nineteen months for adultery. One case, which drew a sentence of nine months, was particularly scandalous, even for Arizona. The notorious woman was Angelita Berdusco.

Angelita, described by the press as a young "grass widow," had run off with Carlos Martini, a vaudeville performer. Angelita and her under-age sister left on the train with Martini and his assistant, Joseph Irenjo. The quartet was picked up in Wickenburg after telegrams were sent to all the train stations along the route. The men, who had been using aliases, were charged with "child stealing." The rape charges against Irenjo, a.k.a. Yreneo Romero, were dismissed when he agreed to marry the younger sister, but Berdusco and Martini were tried and convicted of adultery. The *Arizona Republican* on October 23, 1908, announced: "Alonzo Martini, the magician, and Angelita Berdusco, who had eloped and were captured at Wickenburg, pleaded guilty to a

⁷⁴ *Report of the Warden, Superintendent and Other Officers of the Tennessee Penitentiary to the Forty-Sixth General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, December 1888* (Nashville: Marshall & Bruce, Printers to the State, 1889), 146.

violation of the Edmunds Act and were each sentenced to ten months in the county jail."⁷⁵ That same newspaper gleefully announced in its June 6, 1909, issue that "Higinio Berdusco, who at the last term of the Phoenix district court, sent his wife to the penitentiary for violation of the Edmunds Act, is now on trial for a similar charge and will probably follow his spouse to the territorial prison."⁷⁶

Women had broken free of their traditional roles and perceptions. They had nationally-famous role models. "Calamity Jane," who was born in 1850, had "tackled the men's frontier like a man. She dressed, worked, gambled, shot, scouted, trapped and drove a team." Working from Montana to Arizona and Kansas, she was a strong female presence in the Territory during the tenure of the prison. On the opposite end of this femininity spectrum during the same period of time was "Little Sure Shot," Annie Oakley. Although she never lived west of the Mississippi River, a male writer for the Springfield, Massachusetts *Republican* lamented that women across the nation "assumed airs of contented superiority" because of Annie Oakley's esteem.⁷⁷

As the direction of American womanhood began its epic change, the female prisoners of Yuma did not experience as dramatic a transition as might be expected considering the national climate. Most significant in

⁷⁵ *Arizona Republican*, October 23, 1908.

⁷⁶ *Arizona Republican*, June 6, 1909.

⁷⁷ *The Real West*, television documentary series, "Wild, Wild Women" (Arts & Entertainment Network, 1992).

the evolution of female penology in Arizona is the minimal change in treatment of female prisoners. As the line of morality sharpened to divide the female classes, the prison system was forced to create a structure in which the women's presence had to be recognized. Whatever their intentions, this should have been more than a cell in lieu of a "cave in the yard." It should have been more than equitable sentencing, although the women might have wished for a little less equality in this area. There was still no female matron and no gainful employment. The women still remained in virtual, if not actual, solitary confinement although their increasing numbers made the atmosphere less lonely.

The most significant change in the treatment of female prisoners was a move toward equality rather than reform. A review of Arizona Territorial Statutes at the Arizona State University Law School Library produced no records on prison reform which would have caused this change. After 1897, no pardons were issued to women from Yuma Prison. Only two paroles were granted after 1901, and those were from the newly-built prison at Florence where the remaining females were transferred. After 1900, ten women served full sentences, one was discharged by order of the Supreme Court, and one died. Prior to 1900, two female prisoners served full sentences. One was Allegracio deOtero, who served two months for selling liquor to Indians; the other was the ten months served by Isabella Washington, who threw her new-born

baby into the canal at Tempe. On prison records, the sentence of Maria Moreno is listed as expired; however, the sixteen year old girl was sentenced to thirteen months for killing her brother and actually only served eleven months. She may have received time off for good behavior.

What then, if anything, did the female prisoners at Yuma attain in the arena of prison reform? In its thirty-three year history, accommodations for females became more comfortable and spacious, and their prison sentences became longer. Considering the pre-1886 conditions in the labor branches of the Tennessee State Penitentiary, this is not a negative consideration.

Sensationalist journalism over the past century has labeled the Arizona Territorial Prison at Yuma a "hell-hole." Diametrically opposed to this slanted journalistic perception of life at the prison is the "country club on the Colorado" image which was purveyed by politicians and editors throughout the Territory. It would appear that actuality does not take the middle-ground. For the male prisoners who had access to the library, religious services, gainful employment, a market for their crafts, and visitors on a regular basis, the "country club" image may be more accurate. For the females who suffered the deprivations brought about by their isolated confinement, no work, no money, and total dependence upon the prison authorities for perquisites, the Yuma prison experience seems to verge on the "hell-hole" reputation.

The West had a different philosophy from the rest of the country. A dozen western states gave the vote to women before the first Eastern state did. Women first served on juries in the West. As author/historian Dee Brown put it: "Women in the West threw off the shackles of the system because they had to fight for survival. They were out there alone and they realized for the first time in their lives they were free. They could do what they damned pleased."⁷⁸ What some of them did was murder, assault, steal, burn houses, and rob a stagecoach. For these crimes they were sent to the Territorial Prison at Yuma. Did the punishments suit the crimes?

Not all of the testimony has been presented to history's jury. The final verdict must remain in limbo until the experiences of all 3,040 male prisoners at Yuma can be evaluated in relation to the conditions resident among the females. Only then can the final judgement be made of the prison as either heaven or hell on the Colorado.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Figure 20.

Figure 21.

**Female Prisoner Census
Distribution By Crime Category**

1876 - 1900

1900 - 1909

Figure 22.

FEMALE PRISONER TIME LINE
ARIZONA TERRITORIAL PRISON - YUMA
Exhibiting Solitary and Concurrent Sentences

Figure 23.

APPENDIX A

FEMALE PRISONERS BY COUNTY OF TRIAL
ARIZONA TERRITORIAL PRISON, YUMA
1876 - 1909

APPENDIX B
DIRECTORY OF FEMALE PRISONERS

Listings display:

Prison #	Name County of trial	(Age)	Crime & date received at Yuma Method & date of release Actual time served
#26	Lizzie Gallagher Yuma County	(20)	Manslaughter: Nov. 11, 1878 Pardoned by Gov. Fremont: Nov. 26, 1879 Served 12 mos., 2 weeks
#168	May (Mae) Woodman Cochise County	(27)	Manslaughter: May 30, 1883 Pardoned by Acting Gov. Van Arman: March 15, 1884 - Served 10 months
#401	Allegracio deOtero Pima County	(70+)	Selling liquor to Indians: October 19, 1886 Fined \$10.00 and 2 months sentence Sentence expired - Dec. 17, 1886
#572	Manuela Fimbres Pima County	(21)	Murder: March 30, 1889 Conditional pardon by Gov. Murphy: Oct. 1, 1891 - Served 2 yrs. 7 mos.
#919	Jennie McCleary Coconino County	(27)	Aggravated Assault: November 8, 1893 Pardoned by Gov. Hughes November 29, 1894 - Served 1 year
#947	Georgie Clifford Coconino County	(20)	Manslaughter: March 26, 1894 Pardoned by Gov. Hughes February 22, 1895 - Served 11 months
#1103	Isabella Washington Maricopa County	(19)	Manslaughter: November 14, 1895 Sentence expired - September 14, 1896 Served 10 months
#1125	Susie Smith Maricopa County	(27)	Receiving stolen goods: Nov. 18, 1895 Pardoned by Gov. Franklin September 28, 1896 - Served 11 mos.

#1224	Maria Moreno (16) Yuma County	Manslaughter: October 9, 1896 Sentence expired - September 8, 1897 Served 11 months
#1225	Teresa Garcia (18) Pima County	Receiving stolen goods: Oct. 7, 1896 Pardoned by Gov. McCord October 2, 1897 - Served 1 year
#1254	Trinidad Montano (18) Maricopa County	Burglary: December 4, 1896 Pardoned by Gov. McCord October 7, 1897 - Served 10 months
#1326	Exie Sedgemore (25) Pima County	Assault/deadly weapon: Oct. 1, 1897 Pardoned by Gov. McCord December 19, 1897 - Served 2 months
#1559	Pearl Hart (28) Pima County	Robbery: November 11, 1899 Paroled by Gov. Brodie December 15, 1902 - Served 37 mos.
#1685	Elena Estrada (25) Pima County	Manslaughter: October 20, 1900 Paroled by Gov. Nickols November 26, 1904 - Served 49 mos.
#1816	Alfrida Mercer (37) Maricopa County	Adultery: November 15, 1901 Sentence expired - April 14, 1902 Served 5 months
#1818	Rosa Duran (16) Yavapai County	Grand Larceny: November 15, 1901 Paroled by Gov. Brodie December 15, 1902 - Served 13 months
#1919	Bertha Trimble (37) Graham County	Rape: October 20, 1902 Discharged: Order of Supreme Court April 21, 1903 - Served 6 months
#1933	Jesus Chacon (19) Graham County	Arson: October 27, 1902 Sentence expired - August 26, 1903 Served 10 months
#2219	Kate Nelson (38) Cochise County	Adultery: December 16, 1904 Sentence expired: July, 1906 Served 19 months
#2616	Pearl Eiker (20) Cochise County	Manslaughter: July 1, 1907 Died: January 10, 1908 Served 6 months

#2645	Francisca Robles (37) Maricopa County	Assault/deadly weapon: Nov. 2, 1907 Sentence expired: July 1, 1909 Served 20 months
#2757	Saferina Garcia (25) Graham County	Felony: May 1, 1908 Sentence expired: March 1, 1909 Served 10 months
#2833	Ada Parks (22) Coconino County	Grand larceny: September 25, 1908 Sentence expired: July 29, 1909 Served 10 months
#2842	Pinkie Dean (20) Yuma County	Assault/deadly weapon: October 10, 1908 Transferred to Florence, AZ. Sentence expired: October 9, 1910 Served 2 years
#2871	Angelita Berdusco (23) Maricopa County	Adultery: August 25, 1908 Sentence expired: May 17, 1909 Served 9 months
#2905	Eulogia Bracamonte (35) Maricopa County	Assault/deadly weapon: July 19, 1908 Sentence expired: June 7, 1909 Served 11 months
#2942	Angelica Sonoqui (29) Maricopa County	Adultery: March 4, 1909 Sentence expired: July 3, 1909 Served 4 months
#3063	E.M. Bridgeford (40) Cochise County	Grand larceny: June 30, 1909 Transferred to Florence, AZ. Paroled by Gov. Sloan: Sept. 9, 1910 Served 15 months
#3066	Fannie King (19) Gila County	Manslaughter: June 30, 1909 Transferred to Florence, AZ. Paroled by Gov. Sloan: Dec. 25, 1910 Served 18 months

APPENDIX C

**ARIZONA CENSUS FIGURES
1870 through 1910**

	Total	Male	Female	White	Black	Other*
1870:	10,000	7,000	3,000	10,000	< 500	n/a
1880:	40,000	28,000	12,000	35,000	< 500	5,000
1890:	88,000	50,000	38,000	56,000	1,000	31,000**
1900:	123,000	72,000	51,000	93,000	2,000	28,000
1910:	204,000	118,000	86,000#	171,000	2,000	31,000

* The make-up of this category is questionable.

** This figure *may* include Indians who were not counted in prior years.

This represents a 2866% increase in female census between 1870 & 1910.

WOMEN AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL ARIZONA CENSUS

1870:	1880:	1890:	1900:	1910:
30.0%	33.3%	23.1%	24.1%	23.7%

Source: *U.S. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970. Bicentennial Edition, Part 1.* Washington, D.C., 1975.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arizona Daily Star. (Tucson): 1878 to 1910.

Arizona Republican. (Phoenix): 1878 to 1907.

Arizona Sentinel. (Yuma): 1875 to 1909.

Arizona Territorial Papers of 1879. Executive Papers. Arizona State Archives.

Arizona Territorial Prison - Yuma. Prison Records. Volumes: 1875 to 1910. Yuma Territorial Prison State Park, Arizona.

Arizona Territorial Prison - Yuma. Prisoner Files. Yuma Territorial Prison State Park, Arizona.

Bancroft, Hubert Howe. *History of Arizona & New Mexico, 1530-1888*. Albuquerque: Horn & Wallace, Publishers, 1962.

Banks, Leo W. "Yuma's Territorial Prison," *Arizona Highways* 69 (March 1993): 12-15.

Barnes, Harry Elmer. *The Evolution of Penology in Pennsylvania, A Study in American Social History*. Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith, 1968.

_____. *The Repression of Crime, Studies in Historical Penology*. Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith, 1969.

Bean, Walton and James J. Rawls. *California, An Interpretive History*, 5th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1988.

Beck, Warren A. and Ynez D. Haase. *Historical Atlas of the American West*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989.

Berk, Richard A., Sheldon L. Messinger, David Rauma, and John E. Berecochea. "Prisons as Self-Regulating Systems: A Comparison of Historical Patterns in California for Male and Female Offenders." *Law & Society Review* 17, no. 4 (1983): 547-86.

- Chanin, Abe and Mildred Chanin. *This Land, These Voices, A Different View of Arizona History in the Words of Those Who Lived It*. Flagstaff, AZ.: Northland Press, 1977.
- Coconino County Court Records, Fourth Judicial District, Arizona Territory, March 23, 1894.
- Hahn, Nicolas Fischer. "Female State Prisoners in Tennessee: 1831-1979." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 39 (Winter 1980): 485-97.
- Harris, Jean. *They Always Call Us Ladies: Stories from Prison*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988.
- Kerckhoff, Mary Ben. *The Old Customhouse (Quartermaster's Residence at Yuma Crossing)*. 2d ed. Yuma, AZ.: National Assistance League of Yuma, 1983.
- Lauer, Charles D. *Tales of Arizona Territory*. Phoenix: Golden West Publishers, 1990.
- Lavender, David. *Bent's Fort*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1954.
- _____. *The Southwest*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1980.
- Love, Frank. *Hell's Outpost: A History of Old Fort Yuma*. Yuma Crossing Publication Series. Yuma, AZ.: Yuma Crossing, 1992.
- Luchette, Cathy and Carol Olwell. *Women of the West*. Library of the American West series. Herman J. Viola, ed. New York: Orion Books, 1982.
- Melendez, G. "Reminiscences of Early Days in Yuma," *Yuma Daily Sun & Arizona Sentinel*, March 8, 1937.
- Milbank, Caroline Rennolds. *New York Fashion, The Evolution of American Style*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1990.
- Mitford, Jessica. *Kind and Usual Punishment, The Prison Business*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973.
- Pitt, Leonard. *The Decline of the Californios. A Social History of the Spanish-Speaking Californians, 1846-1890*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966.
- Rafter, Nicole Hahn. *Partial Justice: Women, Prisons, and Social Control*. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1990.

Report of the Warden, Superintendent and Other Officers of the Tennessee Penitentiary to the Forty-Fourth General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, December 1884. Nashville: Albert B. Tavel, Printer to the State, 1885.

Report of the Warden, Superintendent and Other Officers of the Tennessee Penitentiary to the Forty-Sixth General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, December 1888. Nashville: Marshall & Bruce, Printers to the State, 1889.

Rothman, David J. and Sheila M. Rothman, eds. *Women in Prison.* New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987.

Sandwich, Brian. *The Great Western, Legendary Lady of the Southwest.* Southwestern Studies No. 94. El Paso: The University of Texas at El Paso, 1991.

Slotkin, Richard. "Gunsmoke and Mirrors." *Life*, special issue, "The Wild West Yesterday & Today," April 5, 1993.

Smith, Dean. "Safe From Sin." *Arizona Highways* 68 (February 1992): 24-27.

Summerhays, Martha. *Vanished Arizona, Recollections of the Army Life of a New England Woman.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979.

Teeters, Negley. *They Were in Prison, A History of the Pennsylvania Prison Society, 1787-1937.* Philadelphia: John C. Winston Co., 1937.

Teeters, Negley and John D. Shearer. *The Prison at Philadelphia, Cherry Hill, The Separate System of Penal Discipline 1829-1913.* New York: For Temple University Publishing by Columbia University Press, 1957.

The Real West, television documentary series, "Wild, Wild Women." Arts & Entertainment Network, 1992.

Tombstone Epitaph. (Tombstone, AZ.): 1881 to 1883.

Trafzer, Clifford E. *Yuma, Frontier Crossing of the Far Southwest.* Wichita, KS.: Western Heritage Books, Inc., 1980.

Walker, John Brisben, ed. "An Arizona Episode," *The Cosmopolitan* 27 (October 1899): 674-77.