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## Two Photographs and Their Stories of New Mexico's Statehood

David V. Holtby

**E**arly in the afternoon of Saturday, 6 January 1912, thirteen guests from New Mexico joined Pres. William Howard Taft in his private office. The twelve men and one woman, along with four cabinet secretaries, braved the chilly thirteen degree temperature and arrived at the White House under an overcast sky. Inside the White House, everyone undoubtedly warmed up when the president signed the proclamation approving New Mexico's entry into the Union. Taft spoke but two sentences: "Well, it is all over, I am glad to give you life," and pausing to smile, he added, "I hope you will be healthy." Taft was the last of fifteen presidents to preside over New Mexico as a U.S. territory, and his eighteen words both acknowledged the government's patrimony and ended six decades of hard political labor aimed at attaining self-rule. Several photographers captured the occasion, and soon the picture would hang in

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1

New Mexico's twenty-six county courthouses. The guests went outside and posed for another photograph on the White House steps.<sup>1</sup>

President Taft likely spoke off the cuff. The allusions to a birth and a new creation may have been the obvious metaphors for the event, but today his words seem unduly paternalistic. What went unsaid is noteworthy. He ignored New Mexico's three-hundred-year history under three different national flags in addition to its three millennia of continuous indigenous occupation. With five words—"Well, it is all over"—Taft brushed aside six decades of delays and disappointments that stemmed largely from inaction or obstruction in Washington, D.C. Also, his words summarily dismissed decades of carping and misrepresentations by opponents of statehood—as if these, too, had never occurred or were insignificant. In a ceremony that lasted less than five minutes, perhaps the most important omission is that Taft made no reference to his decisive role in securing statehood for both New Mexico and Arizona, the latter entering the Union on 14 February. Following his election on 3 November 1908, Taft began a political battle for New Mexico statehood. The decisive moment arrived a year after his election when he told Sen. Albert J. Beveridge, chair of the Senate Committee on Territories, to end his eight-year obstruction of New Mexico and Arizona statehood. Taft expected him to be a good "Administration Republican" and to fall in line with the support of statehood. Senator Beveridge and Congress passed the necessary enabling bill, which the president signed on 20 June 1910. Then, on 6 January 1912 at 1:35 PM, New Mexico drew its first breath as a state.<sup>2</sup>

The two photographs recording the arrival of New Mexico statehood are documents no less important to "read" than the proclamation signed that wintry afternoon (see ill. 1 and ill. 2). Each one offers a separate narrative. Presidential or executive power is the dominant theme of the ceremony in Taft's office, and the point is reinforced in the composition of the photograph. The image positions the witnesses in the shadows and on the periphery. But a definite shift in political authority had occurred. By signing the proclamation, Taft both ceded unchecked federal authority and ushered in an era of popularly elected state officials. On the White House steps, a new hierarchy of power determined the alignment of those present at the signing: state officials in the first row, citizens behind them, and senior federal officials in the last row, with their respective tiers corresponding to new responsibilities in a three-way partnership.

The photographs are celebratory and self-congratulatory and they deliberately exclude two key people: former president Theodore Roosevelt and Senator Beveridge (ill. 3 and ill. 4). Both politicians will always loom large in any account of how New Mexico became a state. Also missing are



ILL. 1. PRESIDENT WILLIAM H. TAFT SIGNING THE PROCLAMATION OF NEW MEXICO'S STATEHOOD ON 6 JANUARY 1912  
*(Photograph courtesy Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Digital Collection, image no. hec2009007180) Also reproduced in Ralph Emerson Twitchell, Leading Facts of New Mexican History, 5 vols. (1911-1917, repr.; Albuquerque, N.Mex.: Horn and Wallace, 1963) 2:596.*



ILL. 2. PHOTOGRAPH OF NEW MEXICANS ON THE STEPS OF THE WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE STATEHOOD CEREMONY IN PRESIDENT TAFT'S PRIVATE OFFICE  
*(Photograph courtesy William A. Keleher Collection, [PICT 000-742-0256], Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico)*



ILL. 3. PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT, AN OFFICIAL PORTRAIT IN EARLY JANUARY 1908 WHEN HE HAD FOURTEEN MONTHS REMAINING IN OFFICE

*(Photograph courtesy Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Digital Collection, image no. 2009633122)*



ILL. 4. SENATOR ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE, REPUBLICAN OF INDIANA, EARLY IN HIS TENURE AS CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TERRITORIES FROM DECEMBER 1901 TO MARCH 1911

*(Photograph courtesy Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Digital Collection, image no. ggb2006005978)*

representatives of four groups tallied in the census of 1910: Nuevomexicanos (155,155); Native Americans (20,575); African Americans (1,628); and Asians (504). The European American population was 149,439, or 45.6 percent of the territory's 327,301 residents. The photographs also present a greater gender imbalance than existed in the New Mexico Territory: in 1910, 114,295 men and 92,257 women comprised the population aged fifteen and older, or 12.5 men to every 10 women. Finally, the photographs contain no children, but youngsters under the age of fifteen constituted 37 percent of the total population in 1910, a proportion consistent across the West, where they "made up a substantial part, in some places a majority, of western settlers."<sup>3</sup>

While the photographs skew the narrative toward the European American experience, two questions restore a balanced perspective: What was the significance of statehood to New Mexico and its citizens, and how does the past inform the understanding of developments now and in the future? At the outset, we can give one brief answer to each question. First and foremost,

entering the Union conferred political independence—an end to federal control and the beginning of home rule. Statehood, according to the *Las Vegas (N.Mex.) La Voz del Pueblo* newspaper, meant “No longer will [we] be governed from afar like a foreign colony.” For New Mexicans, statehood completed a political decolonization in which the people’s liberation came in being full citizens and not occupied subjects. As New Mexicans rejoiced, Felipe Maximiliano Chacón, poet and journalist, penned “To New Mexico, On Being Admitted as a State.” Acknowledging the struggle endured by those “who have suffered / With you numerous disappointments” and “The unjust insults of many years,” he proclaimed, “A glorious and shining star” had been placed “Forever on the American Flag.” He urged the people to “See that honor writes your story,” and he greeted the new era with “An enthusiastic chorus of hurrahs,” and the cry, “Long live New Mexico, the State.”<sup>4</sup>

The sixteen individuals gathered on the White House steps appear subdued as they shed the old order of territorial status for the bright future of home rule and popular sovereignty. This transition of power defined new political responsibilities, and a century later issues of governance in New Mexico that had roiled the territory still recur in the twenty-first century: stewarding economic development and natural resource use; instituting wise environmental practices; ensuring cultural continuity amid great shifts in technology and market forces; and creating political processes that curb corruption and promote government of, for, and by the people.

### Statehood’s Political Stories

Growth and experimentation preceded 6 January 1912, all the while inspiring people—both present and absent in the photographs—to work toward adding New Mexico’s star to the U.S. flag as the forty-seventh state. When finally achieved, statehood heralded a new political era in both New Mexico and the nation’s capital. In these two images, the White House is far more than a backdrop. It is, in fact, a quintessential symbol of federal power, and it has a commanding presence in both photographs. During the height of the Progressive Era, the final push for statehood coincided with an unprecedented expansion of government programs that remade the landscape of New Mexico after 1900. Millions of acres were set aside as federal forest reserves, and the federal government initiated irrigation and reclamation projects that brought both water and tens of thousands of new settlers—mostly homesteaders—between 1900 and 1910. Moreover, the government’s dam building also pumped more than fifteen million dollars into New Mexico in a dozen or so years. That infusion of federal money prepared people to

seek even more government projects that would enhance both their quality of life and their economic fortunes.<sup>5</sup>

The photographs also suggest a political separation between Arizona and New Mexico that Congress had never acknowledged. For decades Congress had linked the territories of New Mexico and Arizona whenever statehood was addressed, and the enabling bill of 20 June 1910 still yoked the two territories together. Congress crafted a single political process for state formation and applied it to both territories. Once Taft signed the enabling bill, Democratic-controlled Arizona and Republican-dominated New Mexico wrote, approved, and forwarded their respective constitutions to Congress and the president. But almost immediately it was clear that the two territories would not complete the required steps in a similar fashion or on the same schedule. Stark partisan differences emerged in and portended major complications for the two territories, especially on the issue of granting direct citizen influence in the state's political life. The most divisive issues concerned voter-created checks on government through initiative, referendum, and the recall of elected officials, particularly judges. All three stood at the heart of political reform in the Progressive Era.

President Taft opposed these measures, especially recalls. Shortly before the New Mexico constitutional convention in early October 1910, Taft dispatched his most trusted political advisor, Pmstr. Gen. Frank H. Hitchcock, to meet with key delegates in Albuquerque. Hitchcock had been traveling to New Mexico on Republican Party business since 1907, and on the president's behalf, he explained Taft's objections to the three issues and "its probable effect with reference to [the constitution's] rejection or otherwise by the President." As a result, only a watered-down referendum process was included in New Mexico's constitution, but Arizona embraced all three Progressive reforms: the initiative, referendum, and recall. Voter approval followed on 21 January 1911 in New Mexico and 9 February in Arizona. Only in New Mexico, though, did rancor erupt over allegations of fraudulent voting. Congress later investigated the charges and dismissed them. But when the congressional bill accepting the two constitutions finally reached the White House on 15 August, Taft vetoed it. In the following two days, intense negotiations produced an agreement between the president and congressional leaders to put statehood back on track. Arizona voters had to rescind the recall clause, and New Mexicans had to vote on—but were not required to accept—a less restrictive process to amend their constitution. Following House and Senate approval of this agreement, Taft signed the legislation into law on the Monday afternoon of 21 August. On 7 November, Arizona and New Mexico voters approved the respective modifications to their constitutions. But Arizona

proved incorrigible on the issue of recall. In November 1912, Arizona voters amended their constitution to reinstate it.<sup>6</sup>

Political brinkmanship over statehood did not end with New Mexico acceding to the president and the August dictate by Congress. A telegram arrived in Santa Fe from Washington D.C. on Thursday night, 4 January 1912, and delivered dismaying news: statehood could not go forward. Shortly afterward the White House canceled the 10:00 AM ceremony set for Friday. The headline in the *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Morning Journal* on Saturday, 6 January, read: "STATEHOOD ONCE MORE HELD UP / LITIGATION THIS TIME." The Department of Justice had intervened in an attempt "to recover lands in New Mexico alleged to have been acquired wrongfully by the Alamogordo Lumber Company." The dispute involved land and timber rights in Otero County sold by New Mexico Territory in 1901. Six years later, the Justice Department began filing lawsuits to challenge timber and land sales in Otero County and elsewhere in the territory, which had been negotiated between 1901 and 1906. The litigation continued until the eve of New Mexico statehood when the Justice Department thwarted the event. In response to a recent ruling by a territorial district court that remanded the Alamogordo Lumber Company case to New Mexico's state judicial system, the Justice Department sought to protect its jurisdiction and pursue the lawsuit in federal court. Federal lawyers persuaded President Taft, an expert on constitutional law and a future chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, to withhold his proclamation of statehood until New Mexico Territory provided written assurance that this case would continue in federal court. The telegram announcing the government's demand poured ice water onto celebrants toasting New Mexico's final hours as a territory and reminded them of all that was objectionable about territorial status: they were under the thumb of the federal government. Acting quickly, Territorial governor William J. Mills obediently yielded to the ultimatum and forwarded the required papers to the Department of Justice, and after a day's delay, the rescheduled signing ceremony took place.<sup>7</sup>

The photograph shot inside the White House contrasts markedly with the second one taken on the White House steps following the signing ceremony. The interior image shows the president sitting at his desk with the proclamation and a duplicate spread before him, but the faces of almost all of the witnesses are not discernable. Outside on the steps, all sixteen attendees are visible, and their outerwear conveys the brisk Washington weather. Thirteen of the sixteen individuals have been identified and the names of two others can be inferred. New Mexico legislators stood on the first row: from the left, Harvey B. Fergusson, Democratic congressman; William H. Andrews, Republican territorial delegate; George Curry, Republican congressman;



and John Baron Burg, Democratic state legislator and Albuquerque attorney. From the left in the second row are Amasa B. McGaffey, prominent in western New Mexico's lumber industry; Edith (Talbot) Barnes, daughter of a politically prominent Phoenix businessman and wife of Will C. Barnes; Mabel (Fox) McGaffey, daughter of an Albuquerque jeweler and wife of A. B. McGaffey; Will C. Barnes, head of the Forest Service grazing division; John Roberts, aide to George Curry; Charles Curry, Curry's son; and Ira M. Bond, Washington correspondent for various New Mexico newspapers. In the top row on the far left is James G. Darden, a lobbyist representing New Mexico businesses. The next two men are most likely Sect. of Interior Walter L. Fisher and Postmaster General Hitchcock followed by Arthur C. Ringland, the district [regional] forester for New Mexico and Arizona. An unidentified man stands at the end.<sup>8</sup>

Three individuals not present at the signing ceremony played decisive roles in the statehood struggles of New Mexico and Arizona during the preceding decade. The first was Republican senator Beveridge of Indiana, who used his position as chair of the Senate Committee on Territories between 1901 and 1911 to delay statehood for partisan political reasons. In his campaign of



ILL. 5. SENATOR NELSON W. ALDRICH, REPUBLICAN OF RHODE ISLAND, IN HIS FIFTH AND FINAL TERM (1905-1911) (Photograph courtesy Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Digital Collection, image no. hec2009003326)

obstruction, Beveridge did the bidding of the most powerful man in the Senate, Republican Nelson W. Aldrich of Rhode Island, who is the second figure notably missing in the photographs (ill. 5). Distinguished political historian Lewis L. Gould explained that, beginning in 1901, "an attempt to obtain the admission of the territories of Arizona and New Mexico ran into the determined opposition of Senator Aldrich and the Republican leadership." Elected to his fourth Senate term by his state's legislature in 1898, Aldrich controlled all committee assignments; that power also permitted him to act as the gatekeeper of legislation introduced to the Senate chamber and to determine which bills reached the Senate floor for final deliberation. His loss of power under Democratic president Grover Cleveland's second

administration (1893–1897) had remained a bitter memory. The six new states admitted to the Union in 1889 and 1890 had voted overwhelmingly for Cleveland. Aldrich’s biographer, Nathaniel Wright Stephenson, notes, “He had burnt his fingers once admitting States that proved a danger to his party, and he did not propose to do it again.” Accordingly, Aldrich appointed the ambitious Beveridge to chair the Senate Committee on Territories in December 1901 with the understanding that he was to stall all efforts to grant New Mexico, Arizona, and Oklahoma statehood. Beveridge jealously guarded the power and prerogatives of Aldrich and like-minded senators from the Midwest and New England until 1907 when Oklahoma entered the Union. Thereafter, he blocked the arrival of new senators from New Mexico and Arizona until both he and Aldrich had exited Congress.<sup>9</sup>

Neither Aldrich nor Beveridge ever publically acknowledged their political motives, although newspapers openly discussed them. Instead, the two senators dredged up accusations, such as “lack of fitness,” to justify denying statehood to southwestern territories, especially New Mexico. Beveridge railed endlessly about how Nuevomexicanos retained their Spanish language and Hispanic culture and had not assimilated into Anglo American society. In 1903 he declared that New Mexico’s “enormous ‘Mexican’ preponderance in population, whose solidity [after] fifty years of American influence has not changed[,] is the chief reason against the admission of that territory.” Beveridge repeatedly rationalized his actions to himself and others:

I did not show any disposition to please and conciliate; [upon my saying] that you rather gently chided me for it; that I turned to you and said that you did not understand me; that I did not care a snap of my fingers whether I stayed in public life or not unless I could do things for the people; that it wasn’t material whether the people appreciate enough what I did for them or even knew of it—the chief thing was the doing of the work. . . . [W]hether I drop dead tomorrow or thirty years from now, I want to know in my heart and to have the record show that I have been of some use to the cause of righteousness and justice.<sup>10</sup>

This self-appointed guardian of “righteousness and justice” had significant domestic legislative accomplishments—in food safety, child labor, and conservation—but he maligned Nuevomexicanos solely to serve political expediency. Such tactics led one historian of his home state to observe the following: “[Beveridge] believed almost nothing very deeply, and nearly everything he did believe deeply was false or base.” In fact Beveridge’s shallowness was unremarkable among Senate Republican leaders between 1900

and 1910. Yet even the Republican leaders of the Senate faced declining support among their public constituents. Historian Samuel Eliot Morison later observed, “Their orations, once listened to by enraptured audiences, now seem but sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.”<sup>11</sup>

Former president Theodore Roosevelt is the third figure absent from the photographs. In the months leading up to the election of 1908, Roosevelt wrote thirteen private letters to Taft, his hand-picked successor. In these communications, he offered candid—and cordial—advice on how to win the election and succeed as president. Roosevelt’s implicit assumption was that Taft would continue all his policies and, in effect, act as his political proxy. Within fifteen months after Taft’s inauguration, however, a public rift, evident in their differences over wilderness conservation, opened between them. In fact Taft had not sought a fight with Roosevelt and actually applied much of what he suggested—even recognizing the importance of the West in the upcoming election—in the letters from 1908. While statehood for New Mexico and Arizona never received explicit mention in their correspondence, Roosevelt urged Taft to attend to the western states as a check on a drift toward Democratic voting. In the presidential election of 1908, the newest state, Oklahoma, went to Democrat William Jennings Bryan. Taft understood the importance of holding onto Republican-oriented states in the West from Roosevelt’s letters and his own experience. In the election of 1912, New Mexico represented such a prospect while Arizona leaned toward the Democratic Party.<sup>12</sup>

The election results of 1912 sorely disappointed Taft. Creating the Bull Moose Party, Roosevelt ran for president against him. New Mexico and Arizona voted overwhelmingly for the Democratic presidential candidate, Woodrow Wilson. New Mexico’s popular vote divided as follows: Wilson, 41.4 percent; Taft, 35.9 percent; Roosevelt, 16.1 percent; and the Socialist Eugene Debs, 5.8 percent. Despite losing in New Mexico, Taft actually fared better among its voters than among voters nationwide, where Taft received just 23 percent to Roosevelt’s 27 percent. During the election of 1912, Beveridge, the *enfant terrible* of statehood, reprised his spoiler’s role and served as a key advisor to Roosevelt.

A cruel irony exists when contrasting actions taken by Roosevelt and Taft in pursuit of statehood. Taft provided decisive leadership and imposed his will on a recalcitrant Congress, especially the Senate. He secured statehood whereas Roosevelt failed. Taft succeeded because he exerted the very executive leadership that Roosevelt talked about so much but never brought to bear on New Mexico statehood. Yet today historians remember Roosevelt’s critique of Taft’s presidency—that his successor was ineffective and weak—a

theme hammered home in speeches during the presidential election of 1912 when Roosevelt's Bull Moose Party drained votes away from Taft's re-election bid and consigned him to a one-term presidency.<sup>13</sup>

Today, Taft receives no lasting credit for his political adroitness in securing statehood for New Mexico and Arizona, and Roosevelt is forgiven for his inability to deliver on his promises and for pushing joint New Mexico and Arizona statehood for nearly five years. The different approaches taken by these two presidents mirrored a divided mind in the Republican Party. Prior to 1912, the Republican Party endorsed statehood for New Mexico and Arizona territories in 1896, 1900, and 1908. In 1904, amid much turmoil over uniting Arizona and New Mexico as one state, they dropped all mention of expanding the Union. Yet with three Republican presidents occupying the White House beginning in 1897—William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and William Howard Taft—and with commanding majorities in both the House and Senate up to March 1911, one question is inescapable: why did Republicans take so long to deliver on their promise of statehood? A large part of the response lies in Senator Beveridge's obstructionist tactics, but that is an incomplete and unsatisfactory answer.

#### Exercising Presidential Power

The nature of Taft's and Roosevelt's presidential leadership must be understood by first considering the differences between how they used advisors. Roosevelt addressed himself to this matter immediately after winning re-election in November 1904. He wrote letters to two close friends—George H. Putnam, his publisher, and Owen Wister, novelist and author of the recently published *The Virginian*—chiding them for questioning why he deferred to certain powerful Republican senators who were not aligned with his administration's policies. In brusque and defensive language, Roosevelt lectured Putnam about the necessity of respecting the power and authority of all U.S. senators, including recently deceased Pennsylvania Republican, political boss, and ardent statehood advocate Sen. Matthew S. Quay:

I have dealt with Quay and with all similar men, not because I regard them as making me President, not because I had anything selfish to expect from them, but because, not being a fool, and having certain policies for the welfare of the Republic at heart, I realized I could succeed in these policies only by working with the men of prominence in the Republican party. The Senators, under the first article of the Constitution, are the official advisors whom I must consult.<sup>14</sup>

Roosevelt deferred to the Senate and even allowed Republican senators to oppose him on statehood year after year. From the outset of Roosevelt's presidency in 1901, the Senate's internal divisions over statehood trumped the president's desire to enlarge the Union. In contrast President Taft cajoled and coerced the Senate to follow his lead on statehood. He never publicly diminished the Senate's important role, but he also applied pressure on its members. Throughout 1909 and 1910, he repeatedly pledged in public to honor his party's statehood plank, and in private he leaned hard on Senator Beveridge and others to follow his lead. He spent the late summer and early fall of 1909 cajoling Beveridge as well as wooing New Mexicans. In a day-long train trip with five stops in the New Mexico Territory in mid-October, he made his strongest public pledge to date. One trumpeted in an *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Morning Journal* headline: "PRESIDENT WINS HEARTS OF ALL NEW MEXICANS / MOST POWERFUL MAN IN NATION STANDS AS CHAMPION OF STATEHOOD." During his visit, Taft also pointedly dismissed those politicians and pundits who carped about New Mexico Territory's lack of "fitness." Drawing on his own experience as governor of the Philippines nearly a decade earlier, he mentioned his own facility in what he deemed a "beautiful language" and then at some length praised the "Spanish descended people" for their "hospitality and kindness, generosity and courtesy." He found Nuevomexicanos a high-minded group, "loyal to the flag and able to serve their country when it is necessary." He also outlined his plans to make statehood a legislative priority in the upcoming Sixty-First Congress. But not everyone in New Mexico embraced Taft, and trenchant doubt about his ability to deliver on his pledge was published in the Democratic-leaning *Las Vegas (N.Mex.) La Voz del Pueblo*.<sup>15</sup>

Taft acted as legislator-in-chief when he sparred with Congress over a bill enabling statehood. In this effort, his indispensable whip became Postmaster General Hitchcock, who is unquestionably the all-but-forgotten pivotal figure in steering statehood through Congress in the years 1909 through 1911. Entirely consistent with his quiet role is that he is unidentifiable in the official photograph of President Taft's signing the proclamation. Just as the dim lighting conspired against a clear photograph, shadows likewise shroud much of Hitchcock's political work, particularly at crucial moments in the process. But he had the ear and the confidence of President Taft. Hitchcock also allied with Delegate Andrews, who helped write the enabling bill and enlisted his own powerful allies for its support. Principal among them was his close friend, Pennsylvania senator Boies Penrose. After Senator Aldrich's departure in March of 1911, Penrose became the new Republican power in Congress. In addition to Hitchcock impressive credentials as Taft's liaison

to Congress, he had earned the loyalty of the president and congressional Republicans while chairing the Republican National Committee during Taft's successful campaign in 1908. Today, if Hitchcock is remembered, it is because he was the first postmaster general to recognize the potential of airplanes to move mail faster. He also secured a spot in history when he became the first government official to pledge publicly to the children of America that all their letters to Santa Claus would be delivered.

But how had he worked to promote New Mexico's statehood? An answer emerges from the results of a meeting President Taft and Hitchcock had with Senator Beveridge at the White House on Saturday, 29 January 1910, to discuss statehood. Taft and Hitchcock agreed to allow Beveridge a free hand in revising the enabling bill the House passed in January, and the following Tuesday the White House announced an agreement with leaders of the Senate and House over five of the president's legislative priorities for the next five months. Statehood for New Mexico and Arizona headed the list of bills to be shepherded through Congress by the end of June. Swift action began barely two weeks later when Beveridge opened his committee's hearings, and in the second week of March, the Senate Committee on Territories approved the enabling bill and forwarded it to the full Senate. Beveridge soon told friends in Arizona: "The bill will surely pass this session. The kickers cannot stop it. The opposition is small and dissolving. Arizona and New Mexico will become states."<sup>16</sup>

Why had Beveridge changed his mind on the statehood issue? Hitchcock, as President Taft's negotiator, played a decisive role in swaying the senator in many private discussions. But the true measure of Hitchcock's political savvy was evident in his ability to keep Beveridge on track, even after the American public discovered in late March 1910 that, for several weeks, Taft had been actively conspiring to oust Beveridge at the April convention of Indiana Republicans. Taft had carefully timed his effort to ensure that Beveridge's committee approved the enabling bill on 10 March before he started to undermine the senator in his home state. In early April, after Beveridge and allies saw clearly that he would be his party's Senate candidate, he openly split with the president in a major speech criticizing Taft's economic policies, particularly his high tariffs.<sup>17</sup>

Hitchcock stood in the middle of this very public political feud, with the fate of New Mexico statehood hanging in the balance. He still had to guide the enabling bill through the full Senate, where it went into a queue of more than nine thousand bills. Hitchcock's task grew much more complicated in late March, in part due to the rift between the president and Beveridge but also because President Taft, changing his legislative priorities, placed a railway

bill ahead of statehood as his first goal. Over the next two and half months the Mann-Elkins Act, which reduced and regulated rates charged by the railroads, occasioned much jostling between Democrats and Republicans, and also triggered clashes within the president's own party over his approach to economic issues. Beveridge and other Republicans loyal to former president Roosevelt refused to vote for a railway bill, thus forcing Hitchcock and the president to turn to the Democrats for support. In this political wrangling, statehood became the crucial bargaining chip used by Hitchcock to cobble together a "deal" that would pass the Mann-Elkins Act. In exchange for their support, Democrats received assurances that statehood would also come to a final vote, pursuing a long-time Democratic legislative priority to add new states in the belief they would send Democrats to the Congress. The Mann-Elkins Act cleared the Senate in early June, and as work began to reconcile the House and Senate versions the statehood bill moved forward. Taft and other supporters quickly realized that Beveridge had to be on board for it to pass. As a result, Taft ceased ostracizing Beveridge, and brought him and Hitchcock to the White House for a private discussion in mid-June. In a late-evening session of Congress on Saturday, 18 June, both the Mann-Elkins Act and the statehood enabling bill cleared each chamber. President Taft immediately signed the Mann-Elkins Act at 10:15 PM, but waited until Monday, 20 June 1910, to sign the enabling legislation.<sup>18</sup>

The extent to which Hitchcock navigated the final passage of the enabling bill in such roiled waters is hinted at in a letter Beveridge wrote on the day the president signed the bill: "The people of the two new states ought to know how much Frank Hitchcock did to secure the passage of this bill. During the present session no man has been so powerful and effective a friend of statehood as Mr. Hitchcock." The senator also noted that "his name has, of course, not gotten into the public prints." Hitchcock left public service after Taft's defeat in 1912, and he had a long and highly successful career as a corporate attorney in New York City. As time passed, he remained interested in New Mexico and reportedly "owned the controlling interest" in a newspaper, the *Las Vegas (N.Mex.) Optic*, in 1929. Following the November election of 1912, Indiana's Democratic-controlled legislature replaced Beveridge with John W. Kern, a Progressive reformer and key ally of the incoming president, Woodrow Wilson.<sup>19</sup>

When Taft stepped into the presidency, the Democratic Party was on the rise. In the elections of 1908, it sent 171 members to the House and 32 to the Senate. Two years later, Democrats captured the House with 230 seats and made a strong showing in the Senate with 43 members. As Taft began his third year in office on 4 March 1911, the political landscape had changed. For



the first time, ten states— five of which were located west of the Mississippi River—sent a Republican and a Democratic senator. This split occurred when states enacted reforms that would later coalesce into federal law as the Seventeenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. These reforms mandated the popular election of U.S. senators after 31 May 1913. The Democratic Party's ascendancy culminated in taking over the White House and both chambers of the Congress in the November elections of 1912. But in 1909 and 1910, Taft read correctly that the parties' shifting numbers and the resulting political realignment meant that he needed to work with Democrats. Statehood and the Mann-Elkins Act were the first fruits of that collaboration. Each side traded support for a key piece of legislation, and Taft's quid pro quo brought a political change that had long eluded New Mexicans.<sup>20</sup>

Taft was one of three presidents between 1901 and 1920 who augmented their political power. This shift began with Roosevelt's conservation policies and the subsequent expansion of executive departments to advance that agenda. The process continued under Taft and is evident in his maneuvering to secure passage of the enabling act. It is particularly visible in his presidential veto of August 1911, when he forced Congress and the territories to accept his terms for the admission of new states. Yet neither Roosevelt nor Taft increased presidential power as much as Democratic president Woodrow Wilson did during and after World War I. In many respects, the Senate's rejection of the Treaty of Versailles—passionately advocated by Wilson—in 1919 and the nation's election of Warren G. Harding in 1920 began a thirteen-year roll-back of presidential power.

Viewed in this context, New Mexico's entry into the Union was at about the midpoint in the rise of presidential power during the early twentieth century. Yet a wide gulf separated Roosevelt and Taft in their exercise of presidential authority, and these differences had implications for their approaches to statehood. Roosevelt acted independently when no law could be found to restrain him, invoking executive orders to create national forests and national monuments. He also had a tendency to play fast and loose with public lands by arguing that "the ends justify the means." Taft, a constitutional lawyer, would have none of it. Generally speaking, he insisted on working with Congress on conservation policies and public land issues. These differing styles of governance—namely legal and constitutional requirements versus free-wheeling administrative mandates—led to a public and heated dispute between Sect. of the Interior Richard A. Ballinger, a Taft appointee, and Gifford Pinchot, chief of the U.S. Forest Service and a Roosevelt-era holdover. The controversy led to Taft's dismissal of Pinchot in 1910, an act that contributed to a rupture of the Republican Party in 1912.<sup>21</sup>



Does Roosevelt's decision to mount a third-party challenge through his Bull Moose candidacy in 1912 have any connection to Taft's success in securing New Mexico and Arizona statehood? The short answer is "yes." From the time Roosevelt returned from his fifteen-month trip to Europe and Africa, disembarking in New York on the day Congress approved statehood (18 June 1910), he began finding fault with Taft's actions. Slowly, he moved from private expressions of disappointment, to public criticism, and then to an outright break in late March 1912. The antecedents of the rift were fully evident in a letter Roosevelt wrote to a long-time friend in late August 1911. "I have been much disappointed in Taft," he declared. "But like many another man, though a most admirable lieutenant, he is not particularly wise or efficient as a leader. As was probably inevitable, he . . . [became] very anxious to emphasize the contrast between our administrations by sundering himself from my especial friends and followers, and appearing therefore as the great, wise conservative."<sup>22</sup>

Roosevelt packed into those sentences three grievances that intersect with statehood: the first two stem from Taft's political tactics and legal principles, while the third simply suggests a bruised ego. Almost immediately upon taking office, Taft "sundered himself from my especial friends," Roosevelt complained, most particularly, from one of Roosevelt's oldest and most-trusted political allies, Senator Beveridge. The charge that Taft sought to "appear as the great, wise conservative" was a two-fold criticism. Roosevelt recoiled over what he regarded as Taft's coziness with "such national Republican leaders as Nelson Aldrich and Boies Penrose," who were beholden to eastern "railroads and industrialists." These two senators and their mutual friend Delegate Andrews had played important roles in the final push to secure statehood in 1910; perhaps no action was more decisive for statehood than Aldrich's about-face to throw his support behind Taft. Moreover, Taft's hostility toward the referendum, initiative, and recall flew in the face of Roosevelt's well-known support for these Progressive-backed expressions of popular sovereignty. Finally, the charge that Taft was "not particularly wise or efficient as a leader" shows more than a hint of sour grapes. A good friend who spent an evening with Roosevelt in the early spring of 1912 noted his "egotism, faith in his own doctrines, fondness for power and present hostility to Taft." The contrast between Taft's success in attaining statehood and Roosevelt's failure to do so heightened the latter's desire to complete unfinished business as president. When his dinner companion asked him why he wanted a third term, Roosevelt replied, "It is complex. I like power; but I care nothing to be President as President. I am interested in these ideas of mine and I want to carry them through."<sup>23</sup>

Roosevelt, as one distinguished historian noted, tended toward “a self-centeredness” that blinded him from looking closely at people and events. As a consequence, he misread the country’s support for him in the election campaign of 1912, and was oblivious to what tactics worked in getting legislation through Congress. Roosevelt wanted another chance to push his legislative agenda, but he had not adapted his approach. For example, with final approval of statehood awaiting Senate action in late May 1911, Roosevelt wrote his long-time friend Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge to urge him to “take a special interest” in the matter and to expect a visit from former territorial governor George Curry seeking his support. But such entreaties would have no more influence in 1911 than had any of the pressure Roosevelt applied to Beveridge during his presidency. The times required the hardball interparty maneuvering that Taft used.<sup>24</sup>

### New Mexicans Enter the Congress

A few influential New Mexicans took note of Hitchcock’s prominent role in securing statehood. Among them was Albert B. Fall, a lawyer, territorial legislator from Otero County, and recent convert to the Republican Party. He viewed with considerable suspicion the growing influence Hitchcock exerted and his friendship with Delegate Andrews. In a correspondence with novelist and former New Mexico cowboy Eugene Manlove Rhodes just after Taft’s meeting with Hitchcock and Beveridge at the end of January 1910, Fall wrote: “I stated clearly that New Mexico would not be admitted until Mr. Hitchcock was convinced that he had control of the political situation; that I was correct in this statement I think events as reported by the associated press have conclusively established.” Thirteen months later, Rhodes informed Fall from New York: “I would like to be posted on the present political situation in N.M.: I would like to have data on which to base a dig—not an attack—but a sly and oblique little dig, at Mr. Hitchcock. Is he still political dictator of N.M.?” Fall and Rhodes recognized that Hitchcock could be a formidable foe during the political maneuvering to select the new state’s two U.S. senators; Fall coveted one of these seats. Intense machinations would surround the selections.<sup>25</sup>

The news of statehood was just a few days old when Andrews boarded a train in Washington’s Union Station to return to New Mexico and begin lobbying for one of the senatorial appointments. The backroom maneuvering had begun well before he departed. At the state’s constitutional convention, Fall and Thomas B. Catron, a former congressional delegate and longtime political kingpin in New Mexico, saw to it that the new constitution autho-

rized the state's legislature to appoint New Mexico's two U.S. senators. The New Mexico legislature would be among the last state assemblies to elect U.S. senators prior to ratification of the Seventeenth Amendment, which guaranteed their direct election by voters.<sup>26</sup>

Andrews joined a crowded field of a dozen political aspirants, all political heavy weights of the late territorial era. Among Republicans were Fall, Catron, Andrews, and former territorial governor L. Bradford Prince. Democrats joining the fray included newspaper owner Félix Martínez and attorney A. A. Jones, both longtime local party leaders from the Las Vegas, New Mexico, area. The legislature convened in mid-March 1912 and cast eight ballots between 19 and 28 March to winnow the aspirants to two. The sixth ballot is illustrative of the vote distribution, with the two Democrats—Martínez and Jones—leading a field of thirteen; Fall was third, Andrews fourth, and Catron in sixth place.<sup>27</sup>

The legislature's actions comprise an epilogue to decades of the most characteristic features of territorial politics: chaotic factionalism and electoral fraud. The first and last ballots typify the deeply flawed selection process. The first ballot on Tuesday, 19 March, occurred against a backdrop of monumental skullduggery, which set the tone for the week ahead. Fall and his supporters, in collusion with his occasional law partner Elfego Baca, had four Nuevomexicano delegates committed to Andrews arrested on trumped-up charges that they had been bribed. After several days in jail, forced resignations, and endless rumors and accusations, a fifteen-member inquiry commission exonerated them and restored them to their seats. Accounts of the deal-making behind the eighth and final ballot on Thursday, 28 March, remain confusing and contradictory, but this much is clear: Republican support for Andrews shifted during a late-night meeting on 27 March, and Republican leaders, particularly National Republican Committeeman Solomon Luna, forced him to step aside. Doing so brought substantial gain to Catron and a lesser one to Fall. Republicans and Democrats who had supported Andrews transferred their allegiance. Some other Nuevomexicano Democrats likewise aligned behind Catron and Fall. These late-night shifts in support resulted in the legislature electing Fall and Catron on 28 March. Thereafter Andrews, New Mexico's last territorial delegate, slipped into obscurity, receiving fragmentary mentions over the next seven years. He moved to Bernalillo County and raised some cattle, registering his brand on twenty-six steers in 1914. Sometime later, he moved to southeastern New Mexico hoping to find oil. His search failed, and he died penniless in Carlsbad in 1919. His remains were shipped to his native Pennsylvania for burial.<sup>28</sup>

Andrews, Hitchcock, and Taft are little remembered today for their aid in securing New Mexico statehood. In fact none are commemorated on a New

Mexico map. Geographer Robert Julyan has noted, “Place names are the language in which the nation’s autobiography is written.” Curry and Catron have counties named for them (in 1909 and 1921, respectively), and the McGaffey’s are memorialized in two place names near Gallup. The cartographic amnesia regarding Hitchcock and Taft is all the more puzzling when their contributions are stacked against six less successful statehood advocates who are commemorated in county names: McKinley (1898); Otero (1899); Luna (1901, for Solomon Luna); and Quay, Roosevelt, and Tarrant (1903). The latter was named for a Pennsylvania financier and key backer of Andrews.<sup>29</sup>

The citizens of New Mexico sent two congressmen to the House of Representatives: Democrat Harvey B. Fergusson and Republican George Curry. Each had served the New Mexico Territory in previous official positions, Fergusson as territorial delegate from 1897 to 1899 and Curry as governor from August 1907 to March 1910. While Fergusson opposed and Curry supported the new constitution in January 1911, they maintained amicable relations in Washington. Prior to joining the recently convened first session of the Sixty-Second Congress, both men went immediately from the White House to the Capitol on 6 January 1912 to present their election certificates to the House clerk. The enabling bill had granted the new state two representatives, but when census data gathered in 1910 became available and Congress reapportioned seats in 1911, it allocated New Mexico only one representative. Late that Saturday afternoon, Fergusson and Curry appeared in the office of the Speaker of the House, Democratic Representative James Beauchamp “Champ” Clark of Missouri, one of Fergusson’s longtime friends. With Curry having outpolled Fergusson by 163 votes, Clark stated: “Well, Harvey, that puts the shoe on the other foot. We need you here and if you must have a Republican colleague, I am glad it is Governor Curry, who has made many friends in the House during his fight for statehood.” Both Fergusson and Curry joined the House, and congressional reapportionment for New Mexico was put on hold until the election of 1912.<sup>30</sup>

Accompanying Curry to the Speaker’s stand for his oath of office on Monday, 8 January 1912, was Illinois Republican and minority leader James R. Mann, who had been part of the negotiation to link his co-sponsored railway bill to a vote on statehood two years earlier. The bill’s other co-sponsor, West Virginia senator Stephen B. Elkins, formerly a New Mexico territorial delegate in the mid-1870s and long-time associate of Catron, did not live to see statehood formally arrive. On Sunday, 7 January, the House convened to hear seven eulogies to Elkins. No one from New Mexico spoke.<sup>31</sup>

Mutual respect and collegiality prevailed between Fergusson and Curry even at a time when the Democrats and Republicans in Congress were

at odds over military spending. In the second session of the Sixty-Second Congress, Curry introduced the first federal appropriation for an air force. Fergusson actively and Speaker Clark tacitly supported Curry's bill. The chair of the House Committee on Military Affairs opposed the bill, and a similar measure had been voted down in the previous Congress, but out of respect for his friend Curry, the chair allowed hearings to proceed. Curry sought a quarter-million-dollar appropriation, but the House committee approved just ten percent, or \$25,000. A few days later, the House, sitting as a committee-of-the-whole, took up the Army Appropriations Bill, and the Democratic majority leader allowed Curry to speak briefly in favor of funding the air force. His advocacy produced an increase to \$75,000 on a voice vote. Four years later, on the eve of America's entry into World War I and with Representative Clark still the House Speaker, Congress passed a \$600 million appropriation for the U.S. Army Air Force. In a very real sense, Representative Curry laid the indispensable groundwork for the Air Force's presence in New Mexico. Before he died in Albuquerque in 1947, he witnessed the Army Air Corps receive vital training and support during World War II at the city's military airfield. Representative Fergusson was legislatively active as well. In June 1913, as a member of the House Committee on Public Lands, he voted in favor of a bill to supply water to San Francisco by building Hetch Hetchy Dam in Yosemite National Park. Likely sympathetic to California's water needs, Fergusson spoke dismissively of opposition efforts, including those by the Sierra Club. President Wilson signed the bill later that year, but his signature did not silence the critics.<sup>32</sup>

Curry bowed out of electoral politics after fourteen months in Congress, and Fergusson served an additional term before losing a re-election bid in November 1914. When he left Congress in early March 1915, Fergusson immediately began work as a personal assistant to his long-time friend Sect. of State William Jennings Bryan. Fergusson's electoral loss weighed heavily on him, as did ill health, dwindling finances, and a loveless marriage. On an early June night in 1915, two days after Bryan had resigned from the cabinet, Fergusson went into his backyard in Albuquerque and took his own life.<sup>33</sup>

#### Federal-State Relations and the Environment

In theory statehood meant the federal government ceded direct political control over local affairs, but the presence of two U.S. Forest Service officials in the statehood photographs suggests that agents of the executive branch still oversaw and protected federal interests in New Mexico. The regulations they wielded imposed a new kind of regime over New Mexicans and their state.

From 1900 to 1941, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and its largest agency, the Forest Service, became the most visible — and powerful — government agency in New Mexicans' lives. Since the Spanish colonial period, New Mexico's inhabitants had been dependent on access to forests and rangelands for their livelihood. The photograph taken on the White House steps encapsulated this relationship, albeit one transformed by modernity, by positioning Amasa B. McGaffey, a timber entrepreneur, near Forest Service administrators Will C. Barnes and Arthur C. Ringland.

Born in Vermont in 1870, McGaffey came to New Mexico in the early 1890s. He worked briefly on the railroad before starting his own business as a salesman of cookware and glasses. His wholesale and retail experiences soon brought him to the attention of a New York firm that owned a number of trading posts on the Navajo Reservation. He became the firm's local manager in 1901 and traveled over northwest New Mexico and northeast Arizona to supervise these trading posts. Within several years, he had opened his own general stores, which were tied to the emerging lumber industry near Thoreau, New Mexico. But he retained an interest in Indian goods, and by 1904 he became president of Benham Trading Company in Albuquerque, which had a large store in Los Angeles, California. McGaffey, however, was not content to sit on the fringes of the timber industry as a retail merchant with a half-dozen camp stores. Soon, he entered directly into the logging business. In 1905 he delivered 150,000 railroad ties to the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF), and the next year he supplied them with more than 100,000 ties as well as "a large amount of bridge timber."<sup>34</sup>

Timber in New Mexico was a key commodity from 1900 to 1930. Unlike small-scale, labor-intensive agriculture in New Mexico, commercial logging was a large-scale corporate endeavor requiring substantial capital investment in equipment, infrastructure, and manpower. This shift to a capital-intensive enterprise was evident in the list of lumber-company incorporations and the summary of stock offerings from 1910. That year nine New Mexico lumber companies sought to lure investors with stock offerings totaling \$10,135,000. Such sums were necessary to comply with the terms set by the Forest Service regarding timber sales, which included surety bonds of at least \$10,000 and proof of access to capital to set up a sawmill and build spur rail lines to haul away cut logs for finishing into wood products.<sup>35</sup>

For his part, McGaffey made no stock offering in 1910. In the previous two years, he had secured money from investors in Chicago and California for his McGaffey Contracting Company and his Santa Barbara Tie and Pole Company. He built McGaffey's Contracting Company on a succession of ever-larger contracts with the AT&SF over nearly three decades. By 1910 he

was annually supplying AT&SF a million railroad ties, a quantity sufficient for 308 miles of track. Timber from lands ceded to the railroad in western New Mexico furnished lumber for some of the ties, but the vast majority came from trees cut in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in northern New Mexico.<sup>36</sup>

McGaffey tethered his business to the railroad's needs, prospering handsomely from the relationship. His business formula enabled him simultaneously to ride out the inevitable ups and downs of business cycles and to cope with the federal government's ever-growing regulations. Perhaps most decisive in his good fortune was the nearly insatiable demand for railroad ties. When McGaffey began his timber business, the railroads had operated for several decades in the West, and the roadbed and track were in need of replacing, upgrading, and modernizing. In 1903, after a period of consolidation and refinancing, the AT&SF route extended from California to Chicago. A dozen years later, the railroad embarked on another massive construction project that laid a second set of tracks across Arizona and New Mexico, an expansion propelled by the competition from freight-hauling ships passing through the recently completed Panama Canal. Beginning in 1915, railroad lines such as the AT&SF responded by increasing capacity and reducing freight rates.

The AT&SF provided McGaffey with lucrative contracts and access to its private land in western New Mexico. But his timber business also depended on the goodwill of the U.S. Forest Service. During its heyday, logging grew in tandem with the era of national forests, which coincided with the final contest over and delivery of New Mexico statehood. The first national forest reserves were set aside in 1891 to preserve valuable timbered areas for unspecified future use. Six years later, President McKinley signed legislation spelling out three intentions of the forest reserves: to protect watersheds, preserve timber, and provide lumber for local use. New Mexico's first reserve was the 311,040-acre Pecos River Forest Reserve, designated in the General Land Law Revision Act of 1891. The Gila River and Lincoln Forest reserves followed in 1899 and 1902, respectively. Under President Roosevelt, a full-blown conservation movement emerged, largely directed by Pinchot. The movement emphasized making productive and "wise use" of natural resources to reverse the post-Civil War trend of their wanton destruction by extractive industries such as logging. In February 1905, the General Land Office of the Department of the Interior ceded administrative responsibility over forest reserves to the newly formed Forest Bureau, headed by Pinchot, within the Department of Agriculture. By the summer of 1908, a renamed U.S. Forest Service oversaw eight National Forests in New Mexico and three others extending across its borders into Arizona and Colorado. That summer a newly opened regional office in Albuquerque administered more than twenty million acres.<sup>37</sup>

Although critical to conservation in the United States, the national forest movement further weakened Nuevomexicano land grant communities. In 1897 the U.S. Supreme Court decision *United States v. [Julian] Sandoval* declared communal lands part of the federal public domain. Eventually, thirty-two million acres were expropriated in New Mexico; among the losses were several million acres transferred to the Carson National Forest. But the Supreme Court's ruling in 1897 culminated rather than initiated the profound economic and social re-orientation affecting Nuevomexicanos and their land grants. For twenty years following the arrival of the AT&SF in 1879, the railroad's voracious timber cutting significantly reduced forested common lands, especially on the eastern slopes of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and around Las Vegas. Land grant heirs abetted the railroad's encroachment on common lands. On the Las Vegas Grant, for example, the locally powerful brothers Eugenio and Margarito Romero profited handsomely for more than two decades by cutting and selling timber to the railroad from the grant's common lands. *Las Gorras Blancas* (the White Caps), a vigilante band of Nuevomexicanos active in the Las Vegas area from 1889 to 1890, opposed the Romero brothers. They repeatedly destroyed Eugenio Romero's property and even tried to murder him in his home while he was sleeping.<sup>38</sup>

The federal government's conservation movement required Forest Service officials to monitor and regulate timber cutting in the newly organized national forests. Some loggers bristled at such oversight and tried to evade it, but unsuccessfully. McGaffey, however, nurtured a working relationship with Forest Service officials in New Mexico. By 1909 he had accepted their supervision of his logging operations, particularly during the dangerous work of moving log booms down the Rio Grande. Three years later, he participated in the first formal Forest Service land exchange in New Mexico. This swap transferred acreage in the Zuni Mountains to the Forest Service while McGaffey secured land for a logging operation near Las Vegas. At the same time, the Forest Service and the AT&SF negotiated new rules for McGaffey's logging practices. The agreement set the terms by which the "cutting of timber on the railroad sections by the McGaffey Contracting Company will be done in accordance with the methods and practice of the service." A "forest officer," paid for by the railroad, supervised all logging operations on its private holdings in the Zuni Mountains to ensure compliance with federal rules for cruising, reseedling, and slash disposal. The regulations applied to the railroad's lands were the same standards as those enforced in "a national forest timber sale." For its part, the railroad publicly acknowledged "the advantage of practicing [scientific] forestry on its extensive holdings and has taken this as an initial step toward carrying out that policy." Despite these



good intentions, by the time statehood arrived, widespread and unregulated cutting had already caused extensive environmental damage in both the Zuni Mountains and the Sangre de Cristos.<sup>39</sup>

After statehood and especially in the late 1920s, McGaffey faced increased economic pressure from three market forces beyond his control: diminished demand from the railroads, a tightening credit market, and a shrinking pool of federal lands on which to log in the Southwest. He expected the latter two pressures to ease when he boarded a commercial flight out of Albuquerque on 12 September 1929 to meet with financial backers in California. The meeting concerned a timber sale on the Navajo Reservation. But the plane never arrived. It plowed into Mount Taylor, and McGaffey died in one of the first commercial aviation crashes in America.<sup>40</sup>

Seventeen years earlier, Will C. Barnes and McGaffey stood near one another on the steps of the White House, separated by their wives. The Barnes family had ended twenty years of cattle ranching just five years before the photograph was taken. They sold their herd in the late summer of 1906, after six years of leasing one hundred thousand acres “of the finest grazing land I [Barnes] had ever seen” situated on the Maxwell Land Grant in northern New Mexico. That range land differed markedly from the “overgrazing and abuse” that he had encountered in northern Arizona when his herds had foraged on the open range. Gradually, Barnes became convinced that existing unregulated practices undermined and threatened the future of cattle ranching in the West. When he sold his holdings in September 1906, he heeded the advice of his wife, Edith, and accepted an offer from Chief Forester Pinchot to become a grazing specialist for the Forest Service in Washington, D.C. Barnes would retire as the chief of grazing in 1928.<sup>41</sup>

In 1913 Barnes published a study that amounted to a proto-environmental critique of livestock grazing on both the open ranges of the arid West and the public lands in national forests. His extensive descriptions of vegetation, coupled with practical advice on successful grazing techniques, came from a deep understanding of the need for what he called “a system of controlled grazing on the national forest ranges.” Only with such programs, Barnes posited, could the cattle industry and federal government reverse the damage from erosion and overgrazing. He optimistically predicted, “There is little doubt that under proper care the ranges may be restored to their old values.” Invoking a regenerative theory, he declared, “All that Nature asks is time to heal up and cover over the scars left by man’s misuse of her bounty.” Barnes and other managers or scientists of his generation in the U.S. Forest Service understood the urgency of stopping and reversing the deterioration of arid rangelands, including those in New Mexico, even if their attempts to do so

were imperfect. While subsequent federal research addressed the complexity of ecosystem restoration, the greatest immediate challenge was opposition among western cattle and sheep interests, or as Barnes put it, “men who had in the past been practically masters of the range by virtue of their might.”<sup>42</sup>

The Forest Service decreed regulations that aroused suspicion and outright hostility. Beginning in the late 1890s, the Department of Agriculture imposed extensive regulations to combat tuberculosis in cattle and scabies in sheep, and after 1905 the Forest Service enacted further controls as part of a permit system that regulated grazing on national forests. For example, livestock owners had to pay a minimal fee of a penny or so annually for each animal authorized to graze under a permit that extended from one year to ten years. For the first time, the federal government told New Mexico livestock owners the location, number, and practices to follow when they grazed their animals on public lands. The foresters distributed information with forms, flyers, and signage in Spanish and English. Federal regulations, for example, prescribed the placement of salt licks; Nuevomexicanos holding permits received flyers in Spanish admonishing them: “The regulations regarding salt licks for the animals will be strictly enforced. The failure to provide salt licks for grazing animals . . . will be considered a breach of contract and will result in cancellation of the grazing permit.” In reality expulsion rarely occurred; instead, the Forest Service used stern warnings to gain compliance. These government regulations on public land abruptly shifted the prevailing balance of power and precipitated threats and violence against forest rangers for more than two decades. The government, however, did not back down, and as necessary, rangers met force with force, doling out justice through arrests and convictions.<sup>43</sup>

Livestock raisers gradually proved tractable to government regulations but not before they exacted a major concession. Once their livestock grazed on federal land, they forced the Forest Service to protect the animals from predators such as wolves, bears, and mountain lions. Within a few years of its creation, the Forest Service launched predator-reduction programs, and in 1911 a young Aldo Leopold accepted this new assignment at the Carson National Forest. Although he later renounced the hunting and killing of predatory animals, he willingly and capably participated in their extermination over a number of years. For decades these efforts allied the Forest Service and, more specifically, the Department of Agriculture’s Predatory and Rodent Control Branch of the U.S. Biological Survey, with livestock associations in what became an ecologically disastrous policy.<sup>44</sup>

Between 1905 and 1920, rangers also helped homesteaders. The Forest Service’s grazing permits favored them over corporations, a policy that ran

counter to its treatment of timber interests. Barnes explained that permits for homesteaders were “generally based on the number of stock which the average settler can care for in connection with his homestead and support himself and family in a modest way.” This preference for “the little fellows” over “the larger men” resulted in “the little fellows coming to the front” in numbers of permits received throughout the national forests. In 1912 New Mexicans held grazing permits for about 95,000 cattle and 650,000 sheep.<sup>45</sup>

Barnes and Arthur C. Ringland shared a commitment to aid “the little fellows.” In particular, Ringland tried to help Nuevomexicanos following the loss of their traditional rights in the wake of the ruling in *United States v. [Julian] Sandoval* (1897), which transferred common lands to the federal government. Born in Brooklyn, New York, but raised in nearby Montclair, New Jersey, Ringland worked in Washington, D.C. for two years in the government’s Forest Bureau prior to entering Yale University and earning his undergraduate degree in forestry in late spring 1905. He spent the next year in Capitan, New Mexico, working as an assistant in the Lincoln National Forest, and then two years, mostly in Washington state, administering the Forest Homestead Act. In December 1908, Pinchot elevated Ringland to district forester in New Mexico because of his skillful implementation of the forest homestead legislation. He had a long, distinguished federal career in many capacities and lived into his early nineties.<sup>46</sup>

On 11 June 1906, U.S. senators and other elected officials throughout the West forced Roosevelt to sign the Forest Homestead Act to aid land owners displaced by the creation of national forests. Through homestead claims, the law restored to individuals arable public lands along with grazing and private-use timber rights in national forests. Moreover, priority for claims went to anyone who had recently or currently occupied lands within a national forest and used them for agricultural purposes. This provision acquiesced to de facto squatting but also enabled Nuevomexicanos to make homestead claims on the common lands they had used prior to federal takeover. The Forest Service surveyed and determined the suitability of lands for homesteading, and the Department of Interior’s General Land Office handled the requisite paperwork.<sup>47</sup>

The program began modestly. In late 1910, the Carson National Forest listed as open for homesteading a total of 1,598 acres available in four areas of the forest. The Pecos National Forest similarly returned thousands of acres to residents of the former San Miguel del Vado Grant near Las Vegas. Soon, thousands of entries on homesteads were filed for lands in national forests throughout New Mexico, and for the fifteen months between March 1913 and June 1914, a total of 200,528 acres in national forests in New Mexico were

“restored as homesteads entries.” Implementation of the Forest Homestead Act in concert with the preference for small-scale farmers and livestock grazers permitted some Nuevomexicanos to eke out a living for several decades after the loss of communal holdings. But Barnes and Ringland administered an emerging federal conservation effort that confronted more problems and constraints than they had the knowledge or ability to solve. Despite these limitations, the two Forest Service officials carried out policies that buffered some Nuevomexicanos from the adverse effects of losing their communal lands.<sup>48</sup>

In a larger sense, their efforts epitomized the transfer of power that is the leitmotif in the two photographs taken on 6 January 1912. Direct federal control yielded to regulatory oversight, and state and federal officials along with citizens collectively shared responsibility for managing New Mexico’s affairs. It is fitting that the statehood photographs were taken in January, a month named for the Roman god Janus, who faced both past and future. Similarly, statehood demarked what had ended from what was beginning, but its story continues.

## Notes

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5. *Las Cruces (N.Mex.) La Estrella*, 28 de agosto de 1915, 1–2.

6. James R. Mann to Hitchcock, 7 October 1910, r. 401, microfilm (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1969) William Howard Taft Papers, 1915–1953, Presidential Papers Series, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress [hereafter Taft Papers, PPS, MD, LC]; Mark E. Pry, “Arizona and the Politics of Statehood, 1889–1912” (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 1995); and *New York Times*, 16 August 1911, 6.
7. *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Morning Journal*, 6 January 1912, 1; and U.S. Spec. Atty. Edward P. Holcombe to Secretary of the Interior, 19 August 1908, box 731, Office of the Secretary of the Interior, Territorial Papers, Record Group 126, National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, Maryland [hereafter RG number, NARA II].
8. Group photo of prominent New Mexicans, photograph, William A. Keleher Collection (PICT 000-742-0256) Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico [hereafter Keleher Collection, CSWR]; and H. B. Hening, ed., *George Curry, 1861–1947: An Autobiography* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1958), verso 257.
9. Lewis L. Gould, *The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt*, American Presidency Series, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. and Sean Wilentz, eds. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 109; and Nathaniel Wright Stephenson, *Nelson W. Aldrich: A Leader in American Politics* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1930), 210. On Nelson W. Aldrich’s loss of power between 1893 and 1897, see Stephenson, *Nelson W. Aldrich*, 76–103. Stephenson interviewed Albert J. Beveridge shortly before the latter’s death in 1927, and he spoke candidly about Aldrich, see Stephenson, *Nelson W. Aldrich*, 266 and 463 n. 8.
10. John Braeman, *Albert J. Beveridge: American Nationalist* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 85; and Albert J. Beveridge to Victor Murdock, 7 September 1908, box 162, Beveridge Papers, MD, LC.
11. John Bartlow Martin, *Indiana, an Interpretation* (1947; repr., Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 270; and Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Oxford History of the American People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 731.
12. The *Philadelphia (Pa.) Evening Bulletin* printed these letters between 15 and 31 October 1932. They were written between 29 June and 10 November 1908. For a discussion of politics in the West, see Theodore Roosevelt to William H. Taft, 11 July 1908, Correspondence Clippings, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard College Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. The letter of 11 July 1908 is also reproduced in *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, ed. Etling E. Morison, John Morton Blum, and John J. Buckley, 8 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951–1954), 6:1123–24, 1124 n. 2.
13. Two recent studies of the campaign of 1912 and election are, in order of importance, Lewis L. Gould, *Four Hats in the Ring: The 1912 Election and the Birth of Modern American Politics* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008); and James Chace, *1912: Wilson, Roosevelt, Taft and Debs—The Election that Changed the Country* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004).
14. Roosevelt to Putnam, 15 November 1904, r. 336, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, 1780–1962, microfilm (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1967) Presidential Papers Series, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress [hereafter Roosevelt Papers, PPS, MD, LC]; and Roosevelt to Wister, 19 November 1904, Roosevelt Papers, PPS, MD, LC.

15. *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Morning Journal*, 16 October 1909, 1; and *Las Vegas (N.Mex.) La Voz del Pueblo*, 23 de octubre de 1909, 2, and 30 de octubre de 1909, 1.
16. *New York Times*, 3 February 1910, 2; U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Territories, *Statehood. Hearing Before the Committee on Territories, United States Senate, on the Bill S. 5916 . . .*, 61st Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1910). In a conciliatory tone at the beginning of the hearings, Beveridge acknowledged the contentious reception statehood had received in the previous four congresses: “The majority of [the] committee gladly take both the blame and praise.” *Ibid.*, 4. Beveridge’s telegram to Arizona is found in the *Los Angeles Times*, 13 March 1910, V 15.
17. Butt, *Taft and Roosevelt*, 1:299–301. On Beveridge’s political maneuvering in the spring of 1910, see *Christian Science Monitor*, 2 April 1910, 1; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 7 April 1910, 4; *New York Times*, 10 May 1910, 13; *Washington Post*, 15 June 1910, 4; and William H. Taft to Nelson Aldrich, 12 May 1910, r. 502, microfilm, Taft Papers, PPS, MD, LC.
18. John Milton Cooper Jr., *Pivotal Decades: The United States, 1900–1920* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990), 168. For an early account of the “deal” linking the Mann-Elkins Act and the enabling bill, see *New York Times*, 20 May 1910, 5. For the views of the Democratic senator negotiating the deal, see *The Washington Post*, 15 June 1910, 3. On the economic issues at play in the railroad bill, see the contemporary analysis by Harvard economist William Z. Ripley, *Railroads: Rates and Regulation* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1913), 557–78.
19. Albert J. Beveridge to Ralph Ely, 20 June 1910, box 179, Beveridge Papers, MD, LC. On newspaper ownership, see Miguel A. Otero to Bronson M. Cutting, 4 December 1929, box 8, Bronson M. Cutting Papers, 1890–1950, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
20. Mann-Elkins Act, 61st Cong. 2d. sess., 36 Statute 539, enacted 18 June 1910.
21. For a re-interpretation of presidential and national power in the early twentieth century, see William J. Novak, “The Myth of the ‘Weak’ American State,” *American Historical Review* 113 (June 2008): 752–72. A standard account of the Ballinger-Pinchot conflict is James Penick Jr., *Progressive Politics and Conservation: The Ballinger-Pinchot Affair* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1968).
22. Theodore Roosevelt to Cecil Arthur Spring Rice, 22 August 1911, in *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 7:332–35, quote 334.
23. Alfred D. Chandler Jr., “The Origins of Progressive Leadership,” in *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 8:1464. For information on Roosevelt’s arguments in favor of expanding citizen participation, see Theodore Roosevelt to Charles Dwight Willard, 28 April 1911, in *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 7:250–57. An assessment of Roosevelt’s mood is in Robert Grant to James Ford Rhodes, 22 March 1912, in *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 8:1456–61. Grant quotations are on 1457, 1459.
24. David H. Burton, *Taft, Roosevelt, and the Limits of Friendship* (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2005), 144. My critique of the Roosevelt-Taft split cites only contemporary correspondence, but it is influenced by two recent studies, although neither makes special reference to statehood. For a similar discussion to mine, see Edmund Morris, *Colonel Roosevelt* (New York: Random House, 2010), 116–86, especially 131–32; and Burton, *Taft, Roosevelt, and the Limits of Friendship*, 80–100, 140–44, in which his discussion of personality, role reversal, and legal inter-

- pretations have exact counterparts in my analysis. For an example of Roosevelt's old-style leadership, see Theodore Roosevelt to Lodge, 23 May 1911, in *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 7:269. A counter argument on the issue of the president's political tactics can be made in terms of his key legislative priorities, especially early in his second term. See Edmund Morris, *Theodore Rex* (New York: Random House, 2002), 449–60.
25. Fall to Rhodes, 2 February 1910 and 9 March 1911, box 8, folder 27, A. B. Fall Family Papers, Manuscript Collection 8, Archives and Special Collections, Rio Grande Historical Collections, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico.
  26. Proclamation, November 1910, box 732, Office of the Secretary of the Interior, Territorial Papers, RG 126, NARA II.
  27. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 25 March 1912, 2.
  28. *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Morning Journal*, 19 March 1912, 1; Larson, *New Mexico's Quest*, 300; "Brand Registrations, 1914," box 30, folder 413, Governor William C. McDonald Papers, Collection No. 1959–094, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico [hereafter NMSRCA]. The scant biographical data for his final five years are from the on-line inventory of the William H. Andrews Collection, MSS 19 BC, CSWR, UL, UNM, Albuquerque, New Mexico.
  29. Robert Julyan, *The Place Names of New Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), vi.
  30. Hening, *George Curry*, 272.
  31. *The Washington Post*, 8 January 1912, 4.
  32. Hening, *George Curry*, 272–74; Committee on Public Lands, *Hearing on Hetch Hetchy Dam Site*, 63rd Cong., 1st sess., 25 June 1913, 15; *New York Times*, 7 March 1915, 8; and William A. Keleher, *Memoirs: Episodes in New Mexico History, 1892–1969* (1969; repr., Santa Fe, N.Mex.: Sunstone Press, 2008), 38.
  33. Robert F. Gish, *Frontier's End: The Life and Literature of Harvey Fergusson* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 92–100. I am indebted to Dr. Calvin A. Roberts for information on Fergusson's demise.
  34. George Washington McGaffey, *The Genealogical History of the McGaffey Family* . . . (Bradford, Vt.: Opinion Press, 1904), 69–71. For McGaffey's early contracts with the AT&SF, see *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Morning Journal*, 26 January 1906, 5.
  35. All lumber company incorporations are tabulated from the report by the Secretary of New Mexico. Secretary of the Territory, *Corporation Filings, Territory of New Mexico, 1910* . . . (Santa Fe: New Mexico Printing Company, 1911), 3–16.
  36. In the Sangre de Cristos, some logging took place at over ten thousand feet and required building five miles of narrow gauge logging railroad to transport logs out of the high country. *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Morning Journal*, 7 January 1910, 3; and William deBuys, *Enchantment and Exploitation: The Life and Hard Times of a New Mexican Mountain Range* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985), 227–28. On early logging in the Zuni Mountains, see Vernon J. Glover and Joseph P. Hereford Jr., *Zuni Mountain Railroads, Cibola National Forest, New Mexico* (Albuquerque, N.Mex.: USDA Forest Service, Southwest Region, 1986). Another history of "industrial timbering" in this era is in Kurt F. Anschuetz and Thomas Merlan, "Industrial Timbering," chap. 7 in *More than a Scenic Mountain Landscape: Valles Caldera National Preserve Land Use History* (Fort Collins, Colo.: Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, 2007).



37. Theodore Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (1913; repr., with a new introduction by Elting Morison, New York: Da Capo Press, 1985), 408–36, quote 411. Two indispensable studies of the U.S. Forest Service on the occasion of its centennial in 2005 are Harold K. Steen, *The U.S. Forest Service: A History* (Revised Centennial Edition; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004); and Samuel P. Hays, *The American People and the National Forests: The First Century* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009).
38. Anselmo Arellano, “The People’s Movement, *Las Gorras Blancas*,” *The Contested Homeland: A Chicano History of New Mexico*, ed. Erlinda Gonzales-Berry and David R. Maciel (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000), 59–82.
39. *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Morning Journal*, 31 July 1910, 10; and 13 May 1911, 5. The land exchange is discussed in U.S. Congress, *Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, 1913* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1913), 178–79. On new forestry practices, see *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Morning Journal*, 12 December 1912, 8.
40. A case history of market forces and their adverse impact on a Southwest logging company in the 1920s is found in “Montezuma-New Mexico Lumber Company, 1917–32,” box 110, U.S. Forest Service Division of Forest Management, RG 95, NARA II. On McGaffey’s death, see *Socorro (N.Mex.) El Defensor del Pueblo*, 13 de septiembre de 1929, 1; and *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal*, 13 September 1929, 1. For this incident in aviation history, see Mark Thompson, “TAT Crash, 1929,” *New Mexico Office of the State Historian*, <http://www.newmexicohistory.org>.
41. Will C. Barnes, *Apaches and Longhorns: The Reminiscences of Will C. Barnes* (Los Angeles, Calif.: Ward Ritchie Press, 1941), xi–xxii, 182–87, quote 183.
42. Will C. Barnes, *Western Grazing Grounds and Forest Ranges: A History of the Live-Stock Industry as Conducted on the Open Ranges of the Arid West, with Particular Reference to the Use Now Being Made of the Ranges in National Forests* (Chicago, Ill.: Breeder’s Gazette, 1913), dedication page, 234, 225.
43. For examples of federal regulations on the Taos Forest Reserve in 1908, including instructions about salt licks, see “*Regulaciones para pastar*” (Grazing Regulations), box serial no. 14019, folder 49, Governor L. Bradford Prince Papers, 1744–1922, Collection No. 1959–174, NMSRCA; USDA scabies inspection reports for 1906, box 7, folder 6, de Bremond Family Papers, Manuscript Collection 155, Archives and Special Collections, Rio Grande Historical Collections, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico. Will C. Barnes recounts his own hostility toward federal regulations and rangers as a cattle rancher and that of other stockmen in New Mexico and Arizona, noting how in later years, as a representative of the Forest Service, he too enforced grazing permits. See Barnes, *Apaches and Longhorns*, 198–204. For two other descriptions of forest rangers imposing regulations in New Mexico in the first two decades of the twentieth century, see deBuys, *Enchantment and Exploitation*, 237–42; and Robert R. White, “Artists of Territorial New Mexico, 1846–1912,” (PhD diss., University of New Mexico, 1993), 189–90. President Roosevelt regarded ex-Rough Riders, volunteer cavalymen whom he had recruited primarily in the West and commanded during the Spanish-American War, as excellent candidates to be forest rangers, see Brinkley, *The Wilderness Warrior*, 323, 331.
44. Aldo Leopold, “The Road to Game Restoration: Game Hogs, Varmints, and Refuges,” in *Aldo Leopold’s Southwest* (1990; repr., Albuquerque: University of New Mexico



- Press, 1995), 17–19; and David E. Brown and Neil B. Carmony, eds., *Aldo Leopold's Southwest*, 22–25.
45. Barnes, *Western Grazing Grounds*, 224, 234; Brinkley, *The Wilderness Warrior*, 676; and *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Meeting of the New Mexico Cattle and Horse Growers' Association* (Las Vegas, N.Mex.: n.p., 1918), 51.
46. Arthur C. Ringland, *Conserving Human and Natural Resources*, interview by Amerlia R. Fry, Edith Mezirow, Fern Ingersoll, and Thelma Dreis, Regional Oral History Office, transcript, Bancroft Library (Berkeley: Bancroft Library, University of California, 1970), 1–39, 119–341. For the online version, see <http://www.archive.org/details/conservinghumanoringrich>.
47. Ringland, “Conserving Human and Natural History Resources,” 41–58, 69–71; and Hal K. Rothman, *On Rims and Ridges: The Los Alamos Area Since 1880* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 85, 92–95.
48. *La Revista de Taos (N.Mex.)*, 9 de diciembre de 1910, 3; G. Emlen Hall, “San Miguel del Bado and the Loss of the Common Lands of New Mexico Community Land Grants,” *New Mexico Historical Review* 66 (October 1991): 415–23; and Secretary of the Interior, *Reports of the U.S. Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended 30 June 1914* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1915), 113. Nationwide, an estimated 1,405,000 acres of restored forest-homesteads were reported for the same period. *Ibid.*, 145.