



## Negotiating National Borders

*In the early nineteenth century, after two centuries of European colonization, most of North America was still a world of porous borderlands rather than sharp borders. European mapmakers drew Spanish claims with assertive lines, and the 1819 Adams-Otis Treaty defined a Spanish-U.S. boundary—soon to become the U.S.-Mexico boundary—that stretched from the Mississippi Valley to the Pacific Coast. The Southwest had transitioned, in the terminology of Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron from their essay in Chapter 1, from borderlands to bordered lands.*

*But these were paper boundaries; on the ground, people visited, traded, raided, hunted, and married across imperial and national demarcations virtually at will. A more formidable border came to the Southwest in 1848, when the United States and Mexico agreed on a new boundary in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Yet, as earlier, the old borderland ways persisted. People, goods, and ideas crossed the international border, frustrating metropolitan dreams of discrete sovereign spaces. Indeed, various groups—Indians, slaves, smugglers, outlaws, laborers, migrants—found the new border useful for their own, sometimes subversive purposes.*

*By crossing the border, their members could win access to things—plunder, markets, freedom, salaried work, land—that were not readily available on the other side. Moreover, they could also evade official control, because often the agents of law and enforcement lacked their transnational mobility. These border crossings exploited the paradoxical nature of the U.S.-Mexico boundary, which often curbed the actions of nation-states more than it did those of their malcontents. Like the borderlands that it was meant to stamp out, the border sustained quiet accommodations, informal economies, and places of refuge that existed outside the effective reach of institutional power. The U.S.-Mexico border region remained a fugitive landscape that the distant centers of national power could neither fully understand nor fully pin down.*

*The U.S.-Mexico border was not the only international boundary to emerge from the early nineteenth-century nation-building projects in the West. In 1818, the United States and Great Britain set the middle section of their North American border along the 49th parallel. In 1846, after a heated dispute over the Oregon Country, the boundary was extended from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific, again along the 49th parallel. At first glance, the U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canada borders have little in common. The former was forged in a major war that lingers in historical memory; the latter was a product of diplomacy*

that averted an international war. The former evokes images of illegal immigrants, drug traffic, border patrols, migrant deaths, and waste trade, all underwritten by a yawning wealth gap; the latter, the world's longest non-militarized border, is associated with light security measures, bustling commerce, and Niagara Falls. Yet there are also similarities, which were especially pronounced in the nineteenth century when the borders were still new and highly permeable. Much like the U.S.-Mexico border, the U.S.-Canada border arbitrarily divided long-existing communities, and like its southern counterpart, it has held different meanings for different peoples. For government agents, it was a boundary separating two sovereign political entities. For native peoples and the Métis—descendants of marriages between native women and French-Canadian fur traders—it signified opportunity and sanctuary, a line that allowed them to evade national policies that aimed to keep them in place. Like the U.S.-Mexico border, the U.S.-Canada border failed to create inviolable national spaces. Rather, it spawned a transnational space that stretched across the border, defying the exclusionary territorial logic of nation building.

This chapter explores the ways in which diverse communities dealt with these new borders in the decades after their creation. Some borderlands groups refused to accept the legitimacy of the borders as they were drawn, fighting for their own continued autonomy, their own visions of peoplehood, and their own territory. Armed rebellions erupted in both the Mexico-U.S. and Canada-U.S. border regions from the 1840s to 1870s, requiring the intervention of the federal military forces of all three nations. Independent Indian peoples, including the Comanches and the Apaches, whose raids deeply influenced the U.S.-Mexico War, succeeded in defying conquest for decades. Equally important, a wide range of people found uses for international borders that governments had never anticipated. American slaves knew full well that crossing borders into Canada and Mexico could bring them a freedom unimaginable in the South or even in the free states of the United States. Mexican laborers bound by debt found similar opportunity in the United States, and similarly aggravated their masters when they fled. Even some of the native peoples most victimized by national expansion could use borders to their own benefit. The sharp and unambiguous appearance of the young borders on maps masked a reality that was much more complicated—and more interesting.

## DOCUMENTS

The willingness of different groups to uproot themselves and move across international boundaries invested borders with meanings that generals, diplomats, and treaties did not anticipate. The first three documents explore the ways that visions of freedom prompted American slaves and Mexican laborers to cross borders. In Document 1, William Wells Brown, an escaped slave, abolitionist, and author, describes the appeal that Canada, then still a part of the British Empire, held for American slaves. In Document 2, Frederick Law Olmsted recounts the glimpse into the world of escaped slaves in Mexico that he had while visiting the Mexican border town of Piedras Negras, Coahuila, in 1853. In his widely read travel book, Olmsted, a passionate opponent of slavery, recorded slaves' experiences in Texas, their motives for escape, and their prospects for a new life south of the border. What did border crossing mean for people enslaved in the United

States? Do you think that conditions in Canada and Mexico were as good for those who fled as Brown and Olmsted assume?

If some felt that they had to leave the United States to find freedom, then others chose to cross borders into that country. In the early 1870s, the Mexican government established a commission to investigate problems on its northern frontier, especially extensive livestock theft and raids mounted from U.S. soil by both Indians and Anglo-Americans. The commission received extensive complaints from large landowners in the North about the flight of their servants to Texas, where wages were higher and where debts that kept many in conditions of peonage in Mexico could not be collected. Document 3, an excerpt from the commission's report, summarizes the impact of this flight on the Mexican North. How do the authors characterize fugitive laborers, and is this characterization believable? To what extent do these complaints echo the earlier complaints of Texas slaveholders that Sean Kelley describes in the essay to follow?

National authorities also found that independent Indian peoples still traveled and made war across the new borders. In the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the U.S.-Mexico War, American authorities committed themselves to suppressing "incursions into the territory of Mexico" by Comanches, Apaches, and others. Three years later, as Document 4 shows, they had abandoned this effort, unable to subdue independent Indians. This letter from U.S. Secretary of State Daniel Webster to the U.S. ambassador in Mexico reveals just how little control either country had over most of their shared border. Why was the border region so hard to subdue? Were these Indians meaningfully "United States Indians," as Webster calls them?

Native peoples would use borders to their advantage even as they were being dispossessed and forced onto reservations, as Documents 5 and 6 illustrate in the case of Lakota leader Sitting Bull and Apache leader Geronimo. In 1876, the Seventh Cavalry of the United States Army under George Armstrong Custer attacked a Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho Indian village near the Little Big Horn River on the northern Great Plains. Outnumbered, the Seventh Cavalry was destroyed in a battle that sent shock waves across the United States. The government sent thousands of soldiers to the area, forcing most of the Indians to surrender. Sitting Bull, a Hunkpapa Lakota leader and holy man, refused to submit and instead led his band across the border into Canada, where the U.S. Army could not pursue them. He and his followers crisscrossed the border to hunt bison and avoid government authorities on both sides of the border until 1881, when starvation forced their surrender to U.S. authorities and confinement on a reservation in the United States. In October 1877, General Alfred Howard Terry of the U.S. Army visited Sitting Bull in Saskatchewan and offered a pardon in exchange for moving into a reservation in the Dakota Territory. Document 5 presents some of this exchange. What knowledge did Sitting Bull and other Lakotas demonstrate of the border? Why might they have been so warm toward the British officers present? Document 6 is an 1884 interview with General George Crook, who a year earlier had been sent to Arizona to rein in Geronimo and his Chiricahua Apache followers, who had left their Arizona reservations and returned to raiding on both sides of the border. The U.S. military finally secured the surrender of

Geronimo and a few dozen followers in 1886, after nearly a quarter of the nation's standing army was deployed to the Arizona-Sonora borderlands in pursuit of Geronimo. What made Apaches so difficult to conquer, and what role did the U.S.-Mexico border play in this? Why did Crook rely so much on Apache scouts in his efforts?

Indians were not the only ones who defied the control of national authorities. Document 7 presents extracts from two proclamations that Juan Nepomuceno Cortina, a rancher and political leader, delivered in 1859 in south Texas near the Mexican border, calling Tejanos to resist their abuse, dispossession, and economic marginalization by Anglo-American newcomers. In the early 1850s, when the Texas-Mexico border remained little more than a line on a map, Cortina had done business and engaged in politics on both sides of the boundary; virtually unregulated, the border was a site where both Anglos and Tejanos could pillage, trade, campaign, and seek retribution with little official supervision. But Cortina's border-straddling existence became increasingly difficult with the consolidation of Anglo-American hegemony in south Texas in the 1850s. In 1859-61, amidst rising tensions in the region, Cortina led a paramilitary Tejano force against local militias, Texas Rangers, and Mexican and U.S. troops in two conflicts. What is his attitude toward the United States and Anglo Americans? Is he entirely critical? Is it clear whether he considers himself a Mexican or an American?

In 1869, two years after the establishment of the Canadian Confederation, the Canadian government appointed William McDougall as the governor of Northwest Territories, provoking resistance from the Métis inhabitants along the Red River of the North. Led by Louis Riel, the French-speaking Métis prevented the English-speaking McDougall from entering the territory, created a provisional government, and opened direct negotiations with Ottawa over the establishment of a separate province. Although this bold gambit resulted in the formation of Manitoba, with provisions for bilingual society and for the preservation of Métis landholding, Anglo-Canadian dominance of the new province led most Métis to migrate west in search of continued freedom. Many would again rebel against the Canadian government in 1885 under the leadership of Louis Riel. (Some, as the Gerhard Ens essay in this chapter describes, found refuge in the United States.) In Document 8, issued in both English and French, Riel explains the basis of Métis actions in 1869. What is his basis for resisting Canadian authority? What is his attitude toward Canada? In what ways is he similar to Cortina?

## 1. Escaped Slave Describes Appeal of Canada, 1847

... I was hired to Capt. Otis Reynolds, as a waiter on board the steamboat *Enterprize*, owned by Messrs. John and Edward Walsh, commission merchants at St. Louis. This boat was then running on the upper Mississippi. My employment on board was to wait on gentlemen, and the captain being a good man, the situation was a pleasant one to me;—but in passing from place to place, and seeing

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William Wells Brown, *Narrative of William W. Brown, a Fugitive Slave, Written by Himself*. (Boston: The Anti-slavery office, 1847), 31, 84, 104-105, 109-110.

new faces every day, and knowing that they could go where they pleased, I soon became unhappy, and several times thought of leaving the boat at some landing place, and trying to make my escape to Canada, which I had heard much about as a place where the slave might live, be free, and be protected.

... The anxiety to be a freeman would not let me rest day or night. I would think of the northern cities that I had heard so much about;—of Canada, where so many of my acquaintances had found refuge. I would dream at night that I was in Canada, a freeman, and on waking in the morning, weep to find myself so sadly mistaken.

“I would think of Victoria’s domain,  
And in a moment I seemed to be there!  
But the fear of being taken again,  
Soon hurried me back to despair.”

... [During his flight North] I found that I was about fifty or sixty miles from Dayton, in the State of Ohio, and between one and two hundred miles from Cleaveland, on lake Erie, a place I was desirous of reaching on my way to Canada. This I know will sound strangely to the ears of people in foreign lands, but it is nevertheless true. An American citizen was fleeing from a Democratic, Republican, Christian government, to receive protection under the monarchy of Great Britain. While the people of the United States boast of their freedom, they at the same time keep three millions of their own citizens in chains; and while I am seated here in sight of Bunker Hill Monument, writing this narrative, I am a slave, and no law, not even in Massachusetts, can protect me from the hands of the slaveholder!

... [After escaping to the North] It was my great desire, being out of slavery myself, to do what I could for the emancipation of my brethren yet in chains, and while on Lake Erie, I found many opportunities of “helping their cause along.”

It is well known, that a great number of fugitives make their escape to Canada, by way of Cleaveland; and while on the lake, I always made arrangement to carry them on the boat to Buffalo or Detroit, and thus effect their escape to the “promised land.” The friends of the slave, knowing that I would transport them without charge, never failed to have a delegation when the boat arrived at Cleaveland. I have sometimes had four or five on board, at one time.

In the year 1842, I conveyed, from the first of May to the first of December, sixty-nine fugitives over Lake Erie to Canada. In 1843, I visited Malden, in Upper Canada, and counted seventeen, in that small village, who owed their escape to my humble efforts.

## 2. Frederick Law Olmsted on Slaves Escaping to Mexico, 1857

We told him, that being about to make a short trip into Mexico, we had called on him to pay our respects, and at the same time offered him an informal passport, we had obtained of the Mexican consul at New York. He called the young

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Frederick Law Olmsted, *Journey Through Texas; Or, a Saddle-Trip on the Southwestern Frontier* (New York: Dix, Edwards, and Company, 1857), 322-325.

man who had received us at the door, and asked him to read the passport, and then told us he was glad we had taken this precaution, for such was the state of the country, he should otherwise have been under the painful necessity to deny us permission to travel in it. He then inquired by what route we had come from New York; and on our mentioning Natchitoches, in Louisiana, he asked, with interest, how that town now appeared, and what was its present population. Thirty years ago, he informed us, he was a lieutenant in the Spanish garrison there.

After half an hour's conversation, Woodland being our interpreter, he conducted us into the adjoining room. It was less than half the size of the first, and had a projecting window, not glazed, but strongly barred. Six beds, with patchwork coverlids, more or less highly ornamented, were set around the sides of the room, which also contained several packing-boxes, doing duty as wardrobes, and a table with writing materials.

Following his example, we reclined upon the beds, while his clerk made a lengthened examination of us, and recorded our age, birth-place, residence, occupation or profession, state (married or single), religion, our purpose in visiting Mexico, the route we proposed to follow, our proposed destination, the time we expected to spend in the country, a minute description of our persons, etc., to a copy of which we were requested to append our signatures. The original was then given to us, on payment of the very moderate fee of twelve-and-a-half cents; and we were told that one copy of it would be retained in the capitan's official bureau (which appeared to be a small box, distinctly labeled, "COLGATE'S PEARL STARCH—NEW YORK"), and that the other would be sent to the city of Mexico. Woodland told us, that a few weeks before, he had called with a gentleman who had been obliged to pay three dollars apiece for the passport of every man in his company.

### RUNAWAY SLAVES IN MEXICO

As we turned a corner near the bank, we came suddenly upon two negroes, as they were crossing the street. One of them was startled, and looking ashamed and confounded, turned hesitatingly back and walked away from us; whereat some Mexican children laughed, and the other negro, looking at us, grinned impudently—expressing plainly enough—"I am not afraid of you." He touched his hat, however, when I nodded to him, and then, putting his hands in his pockets, as if he hadn't meant to, stepped up on one of the sand-bank caverns, whistling. Thither, wishing to have some conversation with him, I followed. He very civilly informed me, in answer to inquiries, that he was born in Virginia, and had been brought South by a trader and sold to a gentleman who had brought him to Texas, from whom he had run away four or five years ago. He would like right well to see old Virginia again, that he would—if he could be free. He was a mechanic, and could earn a dollar very easily, by his trade, every day. He could speak Spanish fluently, and had traveled extensively in Mexico, sometimes on his own business, and sometimes as a servant or muleteer. Once he had been beyond Durango, or nearly to the Pacific; and, northward, to Chihuahua,

and he professed to be competent, as a guide, to any part of Northern Mexico. He had joined the Catholic True Church, he said, and he was very well satisfied with the country.

Runaways were *constantly* arriving here; two had got over, as I had previously been informed, the night before. He could not guess how many came in a year, but he could count forty, that he had known of, in the last three months. At other points, further down the river, a great many more came than here. He supposed a good many got lost and starved to death, or were killed on the way, between the settlements and the river. After they had learned the language, which did not generally take them long, if they chose to be industrious, they could live very comfortably. Wages were low, but they had all they earned for their own, and a man's living did not cost him much here. The Mexican Government was very just to them, they could always have their rights as fully protected as if they were Mexicans born. He mentioned to me several negroes whom he had seen, in different parts of the country, who had acquired wealth, and positions of honor. Some of them had connected themselves, by marriage, with rich old Spanish families, who thought as much of themselves as the best white people in Virginia. In fact, a colored man, if he could behave himself decently, had rather an advantage over a white American, he thought. The people generally liked them better. These Texas folks were too rough to suit them.

I believe these statements to have been pretty nearly true; he had no object, that I could discover, to exaggerate the facts either way. They were confirmed, also, in all essential particulars, by every foreigner I saw, who had lived or traveled in this part of Mexico, as well as by Mexicans themselves, with whom I was able to converse on the subject. It is repeated as a standing joke—I suppose I have heard it fifty times in the Texas taverns, and always to the great amusement of the company—that a nigger in Mexico is just as good as a white man, and if you don't treat him civilly he will have you hauled up and fined by an alcalde. The poor yellow-faced, priest-ridden heathen, actually hold, in earnest, the ideas on this subject put forth in that good old joke of our fathers—the Declaration of American Independence.

### 3. Mexican Government Complains of Laborers' Fight to the United States, 1873

The *ranchos* of Texas swarming with fugitive servants from Mexico, whose habits and inclinations are not of the best, have always fostered a element of demoralization which, added to that already existing in Texas, has caused evils on either bank of the river. The Mexican shore has suffered a triple loss: in the absence of men, considered as an instrument of labor; in the capital, which at the time of his flight the servant owes his master (a positive loss of capital), for in order to secure

the services of these men it is necessary to advance their salaries; and lastly, through the depredations committed by these men, who after their flight dedicate themselves to the theft of horses from the grazing lands with which they are well acquainted, in order to dispose of the animals to speculators, who purchase the stolen goods without scruple, and even hire these men to commit the crime.

The immense losses suffered by the Mexican frontier, through the flight of servants, may be computed at over one million [pesos] a year ...

From less than one half of the municipalities of the two states [Nuevo León and Coahuila] referred to, which have furnished data upon this matter, there appears to have fled into Texas, since 1848 to the present, two thousand eight hundred and twelve servants, who have transported thither their families numbering two thousand five hundred and seventy two persons. The liabilities of two thousand and twenty eight of these fugitives from proprietors of Nuevo Leon, amount to a sum of ... \$255,996.80 [pesos] and that of the others, who are from Coahuila, amount to ... \$123,120.80 [pesos].

Nearly half a million of [pesos] of actual loss; but it is not so much the loss of money that attracts the attention of the Commission, as that of labor to places where the population is sparse, the lack of men being a loss of capital to the country, considered as they are instruments of labor.

Dr. Engel, a famous German statistician, calculates that it requires the sum of one thousand one hundred and twenty-five dollars to place a person of either sex in a condition to become a producer. If under this rule, an estimate is made of the amount lost by the Mexican frontier, including the debts of the fugitives, we have a sum of ... \$15,429,623, an amount which does not include any elements except those which ought to be considered and which refers to the double character of producers and consumers borne by the five thousand two hundred and eighty-four person emigrating from Mexico, to escape the labor to which they were in duty bound.

The United States, whose prosperity is in a great measure accountable to this personal capital or labor furnished by other countries to augment its wealth, cannot have benefitted much by that acquired from Mexico, for, unfortunately, they bring with them a vicious element which, added to that of the floating population congregated there from all parts of the world, and composing a considerable mass of the inhabitants, imperils the preservation of good habits of order and peace, as is demonstrated by the existing demoralization in the State of Texas.

The fugitive servants referred to are for the most part criminals, for they always steal before fleeing or have already been prosecuted for other crimes, and it is only reasonable to suppose that in the United States, where they take refuge, they do not maintain any better conduct. These criminals and others of another class, especially the cattle thieves who have managed to escape, all reside in Texas ...

Freedom of labor having been established as a constitutional principle, the institution of *servants*, once a specialty and considered necessary on a frontier, cannot today be sustained, nor would it be advisable, either morally or economically considered. But the annoyances endured, and the evils involved are of the



most paramount interest to both frontiers, as regards the peace and harmony of each. The matter deserves consideration, and a stop should be put to the abuses, by laws, which properly enforced, would close the door to the system of roaming, which is indulged in by the people of the states of Nuevo Leon, Coahuila, and Tamaulipas, towards the frontier of Texas.

The institution of field labor having undergone a radical change, by action of law and a better knowledge of true economy, the old system is fast disappearing. Whilst this change is taking place, the energies of the authorities should be employed in causing, directly or indirectly, the return of servants, by means of extradition, when they have committed robberies or other crimes, and by the collection of debts in Texas. This last might be effected through the public agents charged with facilitating extradition, agreeably to the principle proposed by the Commission.

When it will be known to the fugitives that Texas is no longer a place of refuge where they can flee with impunity, after swindling their creditors, the tide of emigration will be diminished on the part of men who, by their habits of idleness, are no less pernicious to the state of Texas than to the frontier of Mexico, and beneficial effects will be enjoyed by all parties through the advantageous measures which may be adopted, to produce this result.

#### 4. U.S. Government Seeks Release from Treaty Obligation to Control Indian Raids into Mexico, 1851

Daniel Webster, Secretary of State of the United States, to Robert P. Letcher, United States Minister to Mexico, August 19, 1851.

Sir: The President deems it of the utmost importance that we should be released from the stipulation in regard to Indians contained in the 11<sup>th</sup> article of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ... [They] are unlimited in duration and impose upon this government the obligation to prevent and punish the depredations of United States Indians in Mexico ...

There can be no doubt that the inhabitants of the northern States of Mexico have suffered severely from Indian depredations since the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo went into operation, and the Mexican government has complained of them both in representations to our Legation at Mexico and to this Department. It is understood that they suffering parties intend to ask amends from this government for the losses and injuries which they have sustained ... The hostile acts of the Indians whose homes are in the territory ceded to the United States by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, have not been confined to Mexican citizens only, but have probably been as frequent, as destructive and as barbarous on citizens of the United

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Daniel Webster, Secretary of State of the United States, to Robert P. Letcher, United States Minister to Mexico, Washington, Aug. 19, 1851, in *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States: Inter-American Affairs, 1831-1860*, vol. IX, Mexico, 1848 (mid-year)-1860, William R. Manning, pp. 89-92 (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1937).

States, especially of North Western Texas, New Mexico, and California ... It is obvious that along a frontier of such an extent, most of it a rugged wilderness, without roads of any kind and impassable, not only by wheeled vehicles but perhaps even by horses, no means which could have been employed since the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo went into operation, would have sufficed to prevent incursions of United States Indians into Mexican territory. The subsistence, forage, and ammunition of the troops must necessarily have been conveyed from one or the other extremity of the line of boundary, and without roads, this would have been impracticable. It is also notorious that that part of the boundary which extends from the Rio Grande to the Gila [roughly modern-day El Paso to central Arizona], and which is not a natural line, such as those rivers afford, has not yet even been marked. This would in any event have rendered it uncertain where a road for the conveyance of our military stores ought to have been constructed or where our troops should have been posted. The probability, also, that savages dwell on both side of at least this part of the line, would render it uncertain, in the absence of land marks, whether depredations from that quarter have been committed by United States of Mexican Indians.

The objects which Mexico sought to encompass by the 11<sup>th</sup> Article of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, will in all probability be accomplished with as much certainty and as soon, by means of the ordinary Indian policy of the United States as if that Article were to remain in operation. That policy has generally been successful. As the territories of the nomadic tribes have been narrowed by the advancing tide of civilization, the savages have been restrained by the military force which has preceded or accompanied the settlers, or by means of treaties stipulating peace, which the Indians have found it for their interest to observe. The same course will be pursued in respect to the Indians mentioned in our treaties with Mexico. The vastness of the regions over which they roam, may be an obstacle to its comparative success there, but if the white population shall spread over them with anything like the rapidity with which it has occupied the Indian territory in other quarters of the Union, its ultimate triumph within a reasonable time will be sure.

## 5. Sitting Bull Crosses into Canada to Elude U.S. Authorities, 1877

Department of the Interior, Washington City, September 6, 1877

GENTLEMEN: The President desires you to proceed at your earliest convenience to Fort Benton, and thence to a point on our northern frontier, from which the present encampment of the Sioux chief, Sitting Bull on British

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Report of the commission appointed by direction of the President of the United States under instructions of the Honorable the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Interior, to meet the Sioux Indian chief, Sitting Bull, with a view to avert hostile incursions into the territory of the United States from the Dominion of Canada (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1877), vol. 2, pp. 6-8.

territory, is most easily accessible. At the frontier you will be met by a detachment of mounted Canadian police, detailed by the Government of the Dominion of Canada for your protection.

It is the object of your mission, undertaken at the suggestion of the Government of the Dominion, to ascertain what danger there may be of hostile incursions on the part of Sitting Bull and the bands under his command upon the territory of the United States, and, if possible, to effect such arrangements, not unacceptable to the Government of the Dominion, as may be best calculated to avert that danger ...

In the month of February last, Sitting Bull and his bands engaged in armed hostilities against the United States, and pursued by our military forces, crossed the boundary line of the British possessions, for the purpose of escaping from that pursuit. At that time the fugitive Indians appeared to be well armed, but their ammunition was so nearly exhausted that they were no longer able to continue the struggle. Under such circumstances they took refuge on British soil, where the troops of the United States could not follow them without violating the territory of a friendly power. It is reported, and there is good reason for believing, that these hostile Indians have availed themselves of the protection and security thus enjoyed to replenish their stock of ammunition, and thus to enable themselves to resume their hostilities against the United States as soon as they may find it convenient to do so.

Fort Walsh, October 17, 1877

The commission assembled at 3 o'clock p.m. in Major Walsh's quarters ... The Indian Chiefs were then brought in ... General Terry then read to them the propositions ...

The President has instructed us to say to you that he desires to make a lasting peace with you and your people ... and he has instructed us to say that if you will return to your country, and hereafter refrain from acts of hostility against its government and people, a full pardon will be given to you for all acts committed in the past ... Of all of the bands which were at war with the United States a year ago, this band of yours, which has sought refuge in the British possessions, is the only one which has not surrendered; every other one has come into some of the agencies established for the Sioux nation ...

We ask you to take these propositions into consideration; to take time, consult together, and to weigh them carefully. When you have done so, we shall be glad to meet you and receive your answer.

Sitting Bull then said: For 64 years, you have kept me and my people and treated us bad; what have we done that you should want us to stop? It is all the people on your side that have started us to do all these depredations. We could not go anywhere else, and so we took refuge in this country. It was on this side of the country we learned to shoot, and that is the reason why I came back to it again ... I was raised in this country with the Red-River Half-Breeds [Métis], and I intend to stop with them. I was raised hand in hand with the Red River

Half-Breeds, and we are going over to that part of the country, and that is the reason why I have come over here. (Shaking hands with the British officers) ... You have got ears, and you have got eyes to see with them, and you see how I live with these people? You see me? Here I am! If you think I am a fool you are a bigger fool than I am. This house is a medicine-house. You come here to tell us lies, but we don't want to hear them ... Don't you say two more words. Go back home where you came from. This country is mine, and I intend to stay here, and to raise this country full of grown people. See these people here. We were raised with them. (Again shaking hands with the British officers.) That is enough; so no more. You see me shaking hands with these people.

"Nine," a Yankton Indian, who joined the Santee band that left Minnesota some years ago during the [1864] massacre, said, after shaking hands all around: I have shaken hands with everybody in the house. You come over here to tell lies on one another. I want to tell you a few, but you have got more lies than I can say ... There are seven different tribes of us. They live all over the country. You kept part of us over there, and part of us you kept on this side. You did not treat us right over there, so we came back over there. The people sitting around here, you promised to take good care of them when you had them over there, but you did not fulfill your promises ...

A squaw named "The-one-that-speaks-once," wife of "The-man-that-scatters-the-Bear," said, I was over to your country; I wanted to raise my children over there, but you did not give me any time. I came over to this country to raise my children and have a little peace. (Shaking hands with the English officers.) That is all I have to say to you. I want you to go back where you came from. These are the people that I am going to stay with, and raise my children with.

## 6. General Crook Describes Difficulty of Capturing Geronimo, 1883

Q: What is the direct cause of your late campaign against the Apaches into Mexico?

A: In the month of March [1883] those Apaches, who we now hold as prisoners made raids through Arizona, killing citizens, depredating, and committing all kinds of outrages to such an extent that the entire country was aroused, and the people so incensed that it was absolutely necessary that something should be done.

After they had spread terror through the country and had moved further south, I had information that they were coming back to renew their raids, and of course there was only one way to stop that, and that was to go down and meet them in their strongholds, because it is impossible to catch a raiding party of Indians while they are on the rampage. I was satisfied that they could not be brought into the

reservation unless we punished them, and I felt that if we could not locate them from this side, it would be necessary to extend the expedition into Mexico.

When I found that they had gone so far into Mexico, I went to Sonora for the purpose of having an understanding with the Mexican authorities, and did it upon my own responsibility. We found the people kindly disposed, and they assured us that they would do everything in their power to assist us.

To supply my expedition I got all the pack mules I could raise in that country—about 350. I obtained two months' rations to guard against any possible contingency, for I did not want to stop at a critical moment for want of food ...

Q: How was your force divided with respect to Indian scouts and soldiers?

A: I had forty-two soldiers, 193 Indians, and fifty packers, but the latter I did not include in my fighting force.

Q: What is the distance from the border to the rendezvous of the Apaches in the Sierra Madre Mountains?

A: About two hundred miles, and one hundred miles from the railroad to border.

Q: And it required how much time to march to the place where you discovered the Apaches?

A: We started from the border on May 1 and arrived on the fifteenth of the month.

Q: What method of strategy did you adopt in pursuing the savages?

A: Of course, my plan in fighting Indians is first to locate them. When located we make forced marches and attack them. You cannot surprise them with a large command, particularly in a mountainous region, where they occupy positions overlooking many miles of territory. When we got to within twenty or thirty miles of where they were located, I sent Captain Crawford in with the Indian scouts, who carried with them three days' rations and blankets, which were strapped to their backs, in order that they might more readily climb precipices and canyons, the mules and soldiers remaining in the rear. It was a case of playing Indian on Mr. Indian.

Q: By what means did you locate the hostiles?

A: Our Apache scouts told us where they were. Peaches, our leading scout, said they were in there somewhere.

They hid on these peaks until nearly starved and then started forth on their raids. The raid they made in March was divided, one band being sent to Sonora to steal stock and another to Arizona to get ammunition, but they got so little from the people whom they killed that they carried out no more than they brought in. Geronimo led the party through Sonora, and Chatto headed that which went through Arizona.

Another evidence of their success in predatory warfare is the fact that about 120 bucks have paralyzed all business interests for hundreds of miles around their rendezvous and have totally depopulated that country ...

## 7. Juan Cortina Condemns Anglo Americans for Land Theft, 1859

An event of grave importance, in which it has fallen to my lot to figure as the principal actor since the morning of the 28th instant; doubtless keeps you in suspense with regard to the progress of its consequences. There is no need of fear. Orderly people and honest citizens are inviolable to us in their persons and interests. Our object, as you have seen, has been to chastise the villainy of our enemies, which heretofore has gone unpunished. These have connived with each other, and form, so to speak, a perfidious inquisitorial lodge to persecute and rob us, without any cause, and for no other crime on our part than that of being of Mexican origin, considering us, doubtless, destitute of those gifts which they themselves do not possess.

To defend ourselves, and making use of the sacred right of self-preservation, we have assembled in a popular meeting with a view of discussing a means by which to put an end to our misfortunes....

Innocent persons shall not suffer—no. But, if necessary, we will lead a wandering life, awaiting our opportunity to purge society of men so base that they degrade it with their opprobrium. Our families have returned as strangers to their old country to beg for an asylum. Our lands, if they are to be sacrificed to the avaricious covetousness of our enemies, will be rather so on account of our own vicissitudes. As to land, Nature will always grant us sufficient to support our frames, and we accept the consequences that may arise. Further, our personal enemies shall not possess our lands until they have fattened it with their own gore.

It remains for me to say that, separated as we are, by accident alone, from the other citizens of the city, and not having renounced our rights as North American citizens, we disapprove and energetically protest against the act of having caused a force of the national guards from Mexico to cross unto this side to ingraft themselves in a question so foreign to their country that there is no excusing such weakness on the part of those who implored their aid....

There are, doubtless, persons so overcome by strange prejudices, men without confidence or courage to face danger in an undertaking in sisterhood with the love of liberty, who, examining the merit of acts by a false light, and preferring that of the same opinion contrary to their own, prepare no other reward than that pronounced for the "bandit," for him who, with complete abnegation of self, dedicates himself to constant labor for the happiness of those who suffering under the weight of misfortunes, eat their bread, mingled with tears, on the earth which they rated.

If, my dear compatriots, I am honored with that name, I am ready for the combat.

The Mexicans who inhabit this wide region, some because they were born therein, others because since the treaty Guadalupe Hidalgo, they have been attracted to its soil by the soft influence of wise laws and the advantages of a free

government, paying little attention to the reasoning of politics, are honorably and exclusively dedicated to the exercise of industry, guided by that instinct which leads the good man to comprehend, as uncontradictory truth, that only in the reign of peace can he enjoy, without inquietude, the fruit of his labor. These, under an unjust imputation of selfishness and churlishness, which do not exist, are not devoid of those sincere and expressive evidences of such friendliness and tenderness as should gain for them that confidence with which they have inspired those who have met them in social intercourse. This genial affability seems as the foundation of that proverbial prudence which, as an oracle, is consulted in all their actions and undertakings. Their humility, simplicity, and docility, directed with dignity, it may be that with excess of goodness, can, if it be desired, lead them beyond the common class of men, but causes them to excel in an irresistible inclination towards ideas of equality, a proof of their simple manners, so well adapted to that which is styled the classic land of liberty. A man, a family, and a people, possessed of qualities so eminent, with their heart in their hand and purity on their lips, encounter every day renewed reasons to know that they are surrounded by malicious and crafty monsters, who rob them in the tranquil interior of home, or with open hatred and pursuit; it necessarily follows, however great may be their pain, if not abased by humiliation and ignominy, their groans suffocated and hushed by a pain which renders them insensible, they become resigned to suffering before an abyss of misfortunes.

Mexicans! When the State of Texas began to receive the new organization which its sovereignty required as an integrate part of the Union, flocks of vampires, in the guise of men came and scattered themselves in the settlements, without any capital except the corrupt heart and the most perverse intentions. Some, brimful of laws, pledged to us their protection against the attacks of the rest; others assembled in shadowy councils, attempted and excited the robbery and burning of the houses of our relatives on the other side of the river Bravo; while others, to the abusing of our unlimited confidence, when we intrusted them with our titles, which secured the future of our families, refused to return them under false and frivolous pretexts; all, in short, with a smile on their faces, giving the lie to that which their black entrails were meditating. Many of you have been robbed of your property, incarcerated, chased, murdered, and hunted like wild beasts, because your labor was fruitful, and because your industry excited the vile avarice which led them. A voice infernal said, from the bottom of their soul, "kill them; the greater will be our gain!" Ah! This does not finish the sketch of your situation. It would appear that justice had fled from this world, leaving you to the caprice of your oppressors, who become each day more furious towards you; that, through witnesses and false charges, although the grounds may be insufficient, you may be interred in the penitentiaries, if you are not previously deprived of life by some keeper who covers himself from responsibility by the pretense of your flight. There are to be found criminals covered with frightful crimes, but they appear to have impunity until opportunity furnish them a victim; to these monsters indulgence is shown, because they are not of our race, which is unworthy, as they say, to belong to the human species. But this race, which the Anglo-American, so ostentatious of its own qualities, tries so

much to blacken, depreciate, and load with insults, in a spirit of blindness, which goes to the full extent of such things so common on this frontier, does not fear, placed even in the midst of its very faults, those subtle inquisitions which are so frequently made as to its manners, habits, and sentiments; nor that its deeds should be put to the test of examination in the land of reason, of justice, and of honor. This race has never humbled itself before the conqueror, though the reverse has happened, and can be established; for his is not humbled who uses among his fellow-men those courtesies which humanity prescribes; charity being the root whence springs the rule of his actions. But this race, which you see filled with gentleness and inward sweetness, gives now the cry of alarm throughout the entire extent of the land which it occupies, against all the artifice interposed by those who have become chargeable with their division and discord. This race, adorned with the most lovely disposition towards all that is good and useful in the line of progress, omits no act of diligence which might correct its many imperfections, and lift its grand edifice among the ruins of the past, respecting the ancient traditions and the maxims bequeathed by their ancestors, without being dazzled by brilliant and false appearances, nor crawling to that exaggeration of institution which, like a sublime statue, is offered for their worship and adoration.

Mexicans! Is there no remedy for you? Inviolable laws, yet useless, serve, it is true, certain judges and hypocritical authorities, cemented in evil and injustice, to do whatever suits them, and to satisfy their vile avarice at the cot of your patience and suffering; rising in their frenzy, even to the taking of life, through the treacherous hands of their bailiffs. The wicket way in which many of you have been often-times involved in persecution, accompanied by circumstances making it the more bitter, is now well known; these crimes being hid from society under the shadow of a horrid night, those implacable people, with the haughty spirit which suggests impunity for a life of criminality, have pronounced, doubt ye not, your sentence, which is, with accustomed insensibility, as you have seen, on the point of execution.

Mexicans! My part is taken; the voice of revelation whispers to me that to me is entrusted the work of breaking the chains of your slavery, and that the Lord will enable me, with powerful arm, to fight against our enemies, in compliance with the requirements of that Sovereign Majesty, who, from this day forward, will hold us under His protection. On my part, I am ready to offer myself as a sacrifice for your happiness; and counting upon the means necessary for the discharge of my ministry, you may count upon my cooperation, should no cowardly attempt put an end to my days. This undertaking will be sustained on the following bases:

First. A society is organized in the State of Texas, which devotes itself sleeplessly until the work is crowned with success, to the improvement of the unhappy condition of those Mexicans resident therein; extermination their tyrants, to which end those which compose it are ready to shed their blood and suffer the death of martyrs.

Second. As this society contains within itself the elements necessary to accomplish the great end of its labors, the veil of impenetrable secrecy covers



"The Great Book" in which the articles of its constitution are written; while so delicate are the difficulties which must be overcome that no honorable man can have cause for alarm, if imperious exigencies require them to act without reserve.

Third. The Mexicans of Texas repose their lot under the good sentiments of the governor elect of the State, General Houston, and trust that upon his elevation to power he will begin with care to give us legal protection within the limits of his powers.

Mexicans! Peace be with you! Good inhabitants of the State of Texas, look on them as brothers, and keep in mind that which the Holy Spirit saith: "Thou shalt not be the friend of the passionate man; nor join thyself to the madman, lest thou learn his mode of work and scandalize thy soul."

### 8. Métis Defy Canadian Rule, 1869

Whereas it is admitted by all men, as a fundamental principle, that the public authority commands the obedience and respect of its subjects. It is also admitted that a people, when it has no government, is free to adopt one form of government in preference to another, to give or refuse allegiance to that which is proposed...

Now, therefore—

1<sup>st</sup>. We, the representatives of the people in council, assembled at Upper Fort Garry, on the 24<sup>th</sup> November, 1869, after having invoked the God of Nations, relying on these fundamental moral principles, solemnly declare, in the name of our constituents, and in our own names, before God and man, that from the day on which the Government we had always respected abandoned us, by transferring to a strange power the sacred authority confided to it, the people of Rupert's land and Northwest became free and exempt from all allegiance to the said Government.

2<sup>nd</sup>. That we refuse to recognize the authority of Canada, which pretends to have a right to coerce us, and impose upon us a despotic form of government, still more contrary to our rights and interests as British subjects than was that Government to which we had subjected ourselves through necessity up to a certain date.

3<sup>rd</sup>. That by sending an expedition ... charged to drive back Mr. William McDougall and his companions, coming in the name of Canada to rule us with the rod of despotism, without a previous notification to that effect, we have acted conformably to that sacred right which commands every citizen to offer energetic opposition to prevent his country being enslaved.

4<sup>th</sup>. That we continue, and shall continue, to oppose, with all our strength, the establishing of the Canadian authority in our country under the announced form. And in case of persistence on the part of the Canadian government, we

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Alexander Begg, "Declaration of the People of Rupert's Land and the Northwest," in *History of the North-West*, vol. 2, pp. 416–417 (Toronto: Hunter, Rose, and Company, 1894–95).

protest beforehand against such an unjust and unlawful course: and we declare the said Canadian Government responsible before God and men for the innumerable evils which may be caused by so unwarrantable a course. Be it known, therefore, to the world in general, and to the Canadian government in particular, that as we have always heretofore successfully defended our country in frequent wars with the neighboring tribes of Indians who are now on friendly relations with us, we are firmly resolved in future, not less than in the past, to repel all invasions from whatsoever quarters they may come.

And, furthermore, we do declare and proclaim, in the name of the people of Rupert's Land and the North-West, that we have, on the said 24<sup>th</sup> of November, 1869 ... established a provisional government, and hold it to be the only and lawful authority now in existence in Rupert's Land and the North-West which claims the obedience and respect of the people.

That meanwhile we hold ourselves in readiness to enter into such negotiations with the Canadian Government as may be favorable for the good government and prosperity of this people.

## ESSAYS

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Borderlands had long compromised slavery in North America by offering places of refuge from bondage. In the antebellum United States, slaves fled the southern plantations to the North; earlier, in colonial North America, they mostly pushed to the South. For over a century, Spanish Florida represented a refuge for runaway slaves—both African and Native American—from Carolina, Georgia, and other English colonies. In the Southwest, the border between Mexico and Texas played a similar emancipatory role. Although most Americans thought of Mexico as a weak and backward nation, slaves had reason to see it in a different light: Mexico had abolished slavery in 1829, within a decade of gaining its independence, while slaveholders still dominated the highest offices in the United States. Human beings who were property North of the Rio Grande belonged to nobody but themselves on the South side. In the first essay, Hartwick College Professor Sean Kelley analyzes the flight of slaves from Texas to Mexico. Texas slaves, he shows, paid close attention to Mexican politics and understood well that they might gain their freedom by crossing the border. They did so by the thousands, angering and frightening their masters. Even decades after the abolition of slavery, African Americans in Texas and Oklahoma remembered this exodus and understood the border as a marker of freedom and racial equality.

In the second essay, Gerhard Ens, professor of history and classics at the University of Alberta, discusses how the Métis people of the northern Great Plains negotiated the U.S.-Canada border that cut across their territory and how they eventually had to choose between the two nation-states. It is a story that overturns usual assumptions. One revelation is how meaningless the border was to the people living near it, and for how long. For half a century, the boundary, unmarked and widely ignored, had little effect on the Métis, who continued to live and hunt on both sides of it, providing food and hides for the fur trade

industry they helped expand to the West. Unexpected, too, was the choice the Métis made when forced to give up their transnational existence. The United States Indian policy is often contrasted with the supposedly more benevolent and humane First Nations policy of Canada. Why did the boundary initially matter so little for the Métis, and why, in the end, did it come to mean so much? Why did the Plains Métis abandon Canada, the place of their origin and home for numerous Métis communities, for life in the United States, a country whose government did not grant them status as a distinct people?

In the third selection, Samuel Truett, professor of history at the University of New Mexico, examines the Arizona-Sonora borderlands in the late nineteenth century, when the region emerged as the world's leading copper producer. Truett describes the wide range of people who found opportunity in these borderlands, from Anglo-American mining executives and their families, Mexican miners, and Yaqui Indians, to polygamist Mormons fleeing the U.S. government. The Mexican and U.S. governments and some of their nations' most powerful corporations tried to control and transform this region. The wide-ranging Apaches had been confined on reservations, railroads had arrived, corporate finance and management were in place, and deep craters dotted the landscape around Bisbee, Nacozari, Cananea, and other mining towns. But Truett underscores just how incomplete and messy these efforts were, even by the early twentieth century. Fluid borderlands refused to become a domesticated transnational landscape of extraction. Borderlanders continued to live, move, work, and consume in ways that confounded state and corporate designs. Their resilience kept human life in much of the region local, mobile, informal, and beyond the grasp of would-be modernizers, anticipating the labor strikes, racial violence, and worker mobility that would destabilize the copper borderlands in the new century. Decades before aggressive mining exhausted ore reserves and the Great Depression collapsed copper prices, the transnational industrial ties that once knit the southern Arizona and northern Sonora together were already fraying.

## Slavery and the Texas-Mexico Border, 1810–1860

SEAN KELLEY

In September 1851, six years after Texas was annexed by the United States and fifteen years after independence from Mexico, Guy M. Bryan, politician and slaveholder of Brazoria County, wrote his brother-in-law in response to a proposal to swap a tract of land for a slave. Bryan seems to have liked the idea and planned to inspect his brother-in-law's slave that evening, but a disturbing rumor prompted him to reconsider. "The negroe he has got Mexico in his head," he wrote, referring to the prospect of seeing the slave escape to the south, adding, "on this account I may not buy." The record is silent on whether Bryan went ahead with the deal, but his dilemma reveals something of the nature of slavery

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Sean Kelley, "Mexico in His Head: Slavery and the Texas-Mexico Border, 1810–1860," *Journal of Social History* 37 (Spring 2004): 709–723. Reprinted by permission.

in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands: enslaved residents of Texas invested the border with a set of meanings that formed the core of an oppositional culture, shaping numerous acts of resistance.

Historians of Texas slavery have long recognized that Mexico attracted and harbored refugees from the state's plantations. But in chronicling the efforts of enslaved Texans to reach freedom in Mexico, scholars have overlooked two important issues. First, they have generally treated the border itself as an unproblematic given, ignoring not only the conflicts that resulted in the frequent redrawing of the boundary between the U.S., the Texas Republic, and Mexico/New Spain, but also the changing significance of the border that accompanied each shift. The issue warrants serious consideration. National boundaries delineated the scope of state power, which, through military support and the passage of slave codes, was vital to the maintenance of slavery. A second, and closely related issue is the ability of enslaved Texans to project a definition of the border. They did not simply react to the various redrawings of the border; in the crucible of their own interpretive communities they invested the border with liberationist significance, helping to set off a chain of events that resulted in Texas independence and the establishment of a slaveholding republic. Ironically though, the drawing of a clear border between slavery and non-slavery only inspired more flight toward the Rio Grande.

If historians of Texas slavery have largely ignored the issue of borders and boundaries, historians of Mexico and the U.S. West certainly have not. The concept of a borderland has evolved considerably since Herbert Bolton first envisioned it in the early 20th century as the meeting place of rival European empires in western North America. Cultural and literary critics, such as Gloria Anzaldúa, have seen the borderlands as a "third country in-between" Anglo-American and Mexican cultures, characterized by a high degree of hybridity and resistance. Although most historians have embraced Anzaldúa's concept of a cultural borderland, her tendency to treat it as continuous and timeless has generated calls for greater historical specificity. In response, Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron have proposed a three-part typology consisting of "frontiers," "borderlands," and "bordered lands," with each ideal type defined by the degree and nature of state control over the area in question. Frontiers, according to Adelman and Aron, are simply meeting places of peoples; borderlands are the meeting places of empires; bordered lands are the formally recognized meeting places of sovereign states. The succession of one form by the other, they argue, had important consequences for those "in between," presenting them with different sets of problems and opportunities.

In Texas slaves created different meanings for the border as it moved. We may divide the process by which the Mexican border became associated with nonslavery into four periods. In the first, which lasted until approximately 1820, the geographic boundary between the United States and New Spain (soon to be Mexico) was undetermined. Because slavery was legal in both areas, slaves did not attach any particular significance to the border, although some fled to Texas recognizing that it would be difficult for masters to pursue runaways into Spanish territory. The second period, approximately 1820 to 1829, saw

the beginnings of plantation slavery, but as yet only a faint connection between Mexico and the idea of freedom. The third period, 1829 to 1845, saw tensions escalate between Anglo Texans and the Mexican government over a number of issues, including slavery, resulting in the establishment of an independent slaveholding republic and culminating in the annexation of Texas as a slave state, solidifying once and for all the linkage of Mexico with freedom. Thousands of slaves acted on this vision and fled across the Rio Grande. Finally, in the years after emancipation, the image of Mexico symbolized not only a collective history of resistance to slavery, but also served as a reminder that the racial hierarchies of the postwar South were by no means natural, inevitable, or just.

The Mexican War for Independence, which began in 1810, altered the region's relationship with slavery in two ways. First, by bringing into existence a Mexican state, the war focused attention on the U.S.-Mexico boundary. Napoleon's sale of Louisiana in 1803 set off a round of claims and counter-claims between the United States and Spain. An 1819 treaty between Spain and the United States settled the matter two years before Mexican independence, and the newly created state accepted the boundary, which ran from the Gulf up the Sabine River, westward along the Red River, then through the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Coast. Despite grouching from some Anglo-Americans who felt their claims had been ignored (and who mounted occasional filibustering expeditions), the border held. Coahuila-Texas had passed from "borderland" to "bordered land," to borrow Adelman and Aran's term.

The creation of a Mexican state raised a second issue, which, combined with the newly drawn boundary, lent a special texture to slavery in the region. Though ultimately rather conservative, the Mexican state was forged in a revolutionary atmosphere hostile to slavery. Father Hidalgo's 1810 *Grito de Dolores*, traditionally seen as the catalyst of the independence movement, contained an explicit call for the institution's abolition. That same year, José Maria Morelos, Hidalgo's eventual successor, called for an end to slavery, along with the distinctions of indio, mestizo, and mulatto. As the Hidalgo movement lost momentum in the 1810s, the reluctance of some liberals to interfere with masters' property rights prevented decisive action against slavery. But with no Mexican slaveholding interest to register objection, antislavery rhetoric persisted into the 1820s, if for nothing more than symbolic reasons.

New Spain had been a haven for fugitive U.S. slaves for some time before the establishment of a formal boundary with the United States. Even before the formalization of a U.S. New Spain border in 1819, U.S. diplomats complained to Spanish officials that Mississippi Valley slaves, were escaping to the region west of the Sabine River.

With the formalization of the border in 1819, followed two years later by Mexican statehood and Anglo/African-American colonization, the geographic logic of slave flight changed. Coahuila-Texas was now a slave-owning society. For runaways and those contemplating flight, the Sabine no longer constituted the practical limit of the slaveholders' reach. Two options emerged for fugitives. Some, it appears, sought freedom even further south in Coahuila or Tamaulipas, drawn perhaps by the lingering antislavery rhetoric of the Hidalgo movement

and the war for independence. In the actions of these fugitives we can detect the early linkages between the image of Mexico and ideas of freedom, although not yet as strong as they would be in the 1830s. One Anglo resident recalled Jim, a slave on John McNeel's plantation in the 1820s, who "openly announced his determination to leave, and, acting on impulse, threw down his hoe and started away." McNeel's son, Pleasant, aimed his rifle at Jim and threatened to shoot him if he did not return to work. Jim continued on his way, and Pleasant McNeel promptly shot him dead, which undoubtedly strengthened whatever connection his slaves may have made between Mexico and antislavery. It can hardly be coincidental that when the Mexican Army approached the Brazos in 1836, the McNeel family lost "a great many of there Negroes."

Although they left no direct evidence of their thoughts or reactions, Texas slaves undoubtedly took note of the ongoing conflict between the Mexican government and Anglo settlers on these issues, especially slavery. Ironically, the Mexican government's commitment to antislavery was inconsistent, and its antislavery measures frequently fell victim to the desire to populate Texas and make it profitable. Time and again, officials undercut their own antislavery policies by permitting exceptions and reinterpretations. What mattered, however, was not the government's stance on slavery per se, but how the slaves themselves interpreted the government's equivocations.

And equivocations they were. The declarations of Hidalgo and Morelos, the strongest expressions of Mexican antislavery, were null and void after the collapse of their movement in the 1810s. The political struggles of the 1820s muddied the waters even further, as both state and federal governments steered an erratic and often-conflicting course on the issue of slavery. Disputes between federalists and centralists over the scope of the Mexican state made it difficult to know which jurisdiction took priority. Between 1823 and 1829, national authorities decreed the following: a prohibition of the foreign slave trade (1823); the emancipation of slave children under fourteen (1823); an extra, grant of land to settlers who brought in large numbers of enslaved laborers (1823); a reconfirmation of the proslavery article in the national colonization law (1824); the abolition of the internal slave trade (1824); the abolition of slavery in Mexico (1829); and the subsequent exemption of Texas from the abolition decree (1829). The state government at Saltillo was equally erratic. Among its decrees were: a six-month period during which slaves could be brought into the state (1824); a six-month sunset period for slave importations (1827); a post-nati emancipation law (1827); a law providing for the emancipation of ten percent of the slaves on any estate undergoing sale or transfer (1827); and a contract labor law that allowed Anglo slaveowners to sign their bondsmen to ninety-nine year indentures, essentially undercutting all previous antislavery legislation (1827).

Anglo slaveowners took advantage of the confusion to bring more slaves into Texas, but through its equivocations, the Mexican government had actually weakened slavery in a variety of ways. Most of the slave societies of the Western Hemisphere sought legitimization of the institution from the state in the form of a slave code. Nineteenth-century Anglo Southerners in particular were accustomed to a rather extensive body of statutory and case law that shaped all aspects

of the master-slave relationship. If bondage were to be replicated in Texas, the obligations of the master-slave relationship would require legal definition. In addition, since slavery required community acquiescence, the relationships between the free members of society to each other's slaves needed to be spelled out. How, for example, would society treat interference by one free person with another's slaves when the law did not sanction the right of the first to hold slave property? An unambiguous body of slave law was economically essential since slaves represented not only labor, but capital as well. Could they be mortgaged in order to raise money? Were slaves real or personal property? How would the succession of titles proceed? Were there any limits on the domestic or international sale of slaves? Could slaves be seized and sold for debt? Did slave families have legal standing? Could slave children be separated from their mothers? Mexican law, while failing to abolish the institution outright, gave little support to the master-slave relationship.

Mexican equivocation on slavery would have been inconsequential if the interpretive community of slaves had not endowed Mexico with special significance, one that helped inspire overt acts of resistance. Throughout the New World, slaves appropriated whatever language they encountered and turned it to their own ends. This tendency of slaves to reinterpret the pronouncements and political rhetoric issuing from distant sources that made Mexican rule intolerable to slaveowners. In the hands of slaves, the idea of Mexico was transformed into a symbol of non-slavery, much as Christianity and revolutionary France had been reinterpreted by enslaved Africans a generation before.

There can be little doubt that the various pronouncements on slavery issuing from Saltillo and Mexico City led Texas slaveowners to view the Mexican state as a potential threat. Although the presence of the Mexican state was minimal in the Anglo regions of Texas, masters did all they could to shield their bondsmen from its influence. Such was the experience of a state expedition that traveled to Texas in 1828 amid fears of Anglo secessionism. That May, a small detachment led by General Manuel Miet y Terán happened past Bernardo Plantation, where, despite the sweltering May heat, its members received a frosty reception from Texas' first and wealthiest planter, the normally hospitable Jared Groce. After grudgingly giving the soldiers some corn for fodder, Groce refused the party food or shelter, leaving it to camp underneath some trees. Taking the hint, the interlopers left the following day.

If masters increasingly viewed the Mexican state as a threat to their interests, slaves soon demonstrated that they saw it as an ally. In 1835—1836, the simmering tensions between Anglo settlers and the Mexican government boiled over. A number of issues, not the least of which was slavery, lay behind the rift. As the Mexican army approached the Austin Colony in 1836 to put down what had become an open rebellion, thousands of Anglos fled toward the U.S.-Mexico border at the Sabine River with their slaves, an event memorialized in Texas history (usually without any sense of irony) as the "Runaway Scrape." An unknown, but certainly sizable number of slaves ran the opposite direction. Ann Thomas, wife of slaveholder John Thomas, began her flight with nine slaves. Three were immediately seized by other Anglo settlers for her husband's debts, leaving her with six.

Within a week, four of the men fled to the Mexican army, "being promised their freedom on doing so," as Ann Thomas surmised. The only slaves who remained were two women, who may have deemed the risks of camp life, including possible harassment and abuse, not worth taking.

Slaves who reached Mexican lines did not always see their dreams of freedom realized. Some of the fugitives were freed and sent further south, as was the case with the fourteen families encountered by General José Urrea's forces in April 1836, whom he "sent free" to Victoria. Other commanders were not as liberal. According to Urrea, General Vicente Filisola returned several runaways, including a man who had served as his own coachman, to Anglo slaveholders as he retreated from Texas. Moreover, Filisola also seems to have permitted slaveholders to enter Mexican camps to recover stolen property, including slaves. As with Mexican legal support for slavery, actual military policy did not consistently grant freedom to the enslaved. Yet, as with the issue of legality, what mattered was not the actual policy, but the significance slaves attached to Mexican equivocation. To them, the Mexican Army was an army of liberation.

The most dramatic expression of the linkage between the ideas of Mexico and freedom came in the form of a slave revolt in October 1835. As the army approached the fast-developing plantation district on the lower Brazos River, the enslaved population rebelled. Virtually all that is known about the incident is contained in a letter dated October 17 from B. J. White to Stephen F. Austin, which read in its entirety:

I now have some unpleasant news to communicate, the [sic] negroes on Brazos [sic] made an attempt to rise. Majr Sutherland came on here for a few men to take back, he told me—John Davis returned from Brazoria bringing the news that near 100 had been taken up and many whiped nearly to death some hung etc. R.H. Williams has nearly Kild one of his.—The carancawa Indians is in the Navidad country killing (stealing) etc.

[signed] B.J. White

PS—The negroes above alluded to had devided [sic] all the cotton farms, and [sic] they intended to ship the cotton to New Orleans and make the white men serve them in turn [sic]

The militia, it seems, managed to quell the disturbance without too much difficulty. But the incident again shows the potential power of the slaves' vision of Mexico.

With the Brazos slave rebellion crushed and the Mexican army expelled, Anglo Texans established an independent, slave-holding republic. Delegates to a constitutional convention approved several proslavery clauses, guaranteeing the right to hold slave property, the right to import slaves from the United States, and forbidding free blacks to enter or reside in Texas without the special authorization of the legislature. Earlier legal ambiguities on the succession of slave property, the status of slave families, and other points of law soon vanished as the legislature and courts elaborated on the slave code. The border between



the Texas Republic and Mexico, now drawn along the Rio Grande, finally became the unequivocal boundary between slavery and freedom that black Texans had imagined years earlier. In 1845 the United States Congress voted to annex Texas, then fought and won a war to put permanent rest to Mexican claims to the area between the Nueces the Rio Grande. Enslaved Texans would hardly have celebrated the consolidation of the new slave regime, but its very existence stemmed partly from Anglo fears that the institution could not exist under Mexican sovereignty. If slave flight during the U.S. Civil War presented U.S. authorities with the fait accompli of self-liberation, propelling Lincoln and Congress toward the revolutionary policy of emancipation, the flight of Texas slaves helped provoke the opposite sort of revolution in Texas—a proslavery one.

Although the border between slavery and freedom was redrawn, it was not erased; Texas and Mexico were still “bordered lands.” The boundary persisted on maps, in practice, and in the minds and memories of enslaved Texans. The most telling evidence is the stream of runaways that continued beyond independence and annexation and persisted through the antebellum period, aided at times by both Mexicans and Anglos. In 1844 a reputed horse thief named Jesse Blades and an accomplice named Robert Redding, alias Lascum, confessed plotting to “seduce” ten slaves from six different Brazoria County estates into paying \$100 each for safe transport to Mexico. The effort failed “owing to the want of means to defray necessary expenses, and to the repentance and failure of some negroes.” Nine of the ten were soon captured by authorities, and a tenth, a man named Dennis, was seized after hiding out for a week.

The number of slaves who managed to survive the long and hazardous journey to the Rio Grande is almost certainly in the thousands. On an 1854 visit to Piedras Negras, a small town on the Mexican side of the river, Frederick Law Olmsted reported seeing several former Texas slaves. One, a native of Virginia who had come to Texas with his master, spoke Spanish fluently, was a member of the Catholic Church, and had traveled throughout northern Mexico. The fugitive estimated that forty slaves had come through the town in the preceding three months. Some of the former slaves scattered and married into local families, but Olmsted also reported hearing of a community of runaways settling a few days outside Piedras Negras and comprising a virtual maroon colony. “The Mexican Government was very just to them,” Olmsted quoted his informant, adding, “They could always have their rights as fully protected as if they were Mexicans born.”

Texas and U.S. officials understood that ignoring the southward hemorrhage of slaves deprived the state of valuable labor and destabilized its plantation system. Both the state and private individuals launched expeditions to recover fugitives but found that Mexican opposition limited their effectiveness. Among the failures was the expedition of James H. Callahan, who led Texas Rangers into Piedras Negras in 1855 in pursuit of a group of Lipan Apaches, with a second goal being the recapture of runaways. A Mexican force soon expelled Callahan, and his rangers burned the town of Piedras Negras as they left. State officials also pressed the United States government to negotiate an extradition treaty, but that effort failed as well.

Flight was not the only form of border-oriented resistance to persist after annexation. In 1856, officials in Colorado County, in Central Texas, uncovered what they believed was a plot by 200 local slaves to kill all the white men and "make wives" of the women. A search reportedly turned up a stockpile of pistols, long guns, ammunition, and bowie knives. A vigilance committee hanged the three men accused of being the ringleaders, while the lives of the rest were spared. As with so many other incidents, the border figured prominently. According to county officials, the rebels had resolved to "fight their way to a 'free state' (Mexico)." In addition, officials claimed that every Mexican in the county, "without exception," was involved in the plot. One man in particular, known only as Frank, was reputed to be one of the leaders, prompting officials to conclude "that the lower class of the Mexican population are incendiaries in any country where slaves are held, and should be dealt with accordingly." This sentiment translated into the expulsion of all Mexicans from Colorado and several nearby countries. Although it is difficult to say for certain how much of the plot was real and how much was a figment of Anglo imaginations, it demonstrates the continuing linkage of Mexico and antislavery in master-slave discourse.

The consequences of this linkage were felt in a variety of ways. In a simple economic sense, the loss of several thousand bondspersons was felt on the ledgers of the state's slaveowners. If we accept one contemporary estimate of 4,000 successful runaways by 1855, the aggregate loss works out to approximately 3.3% of the slave population. If the true number of successful escapees were only half that, it would still represent a noticeable proportion of the labor force. Even recaptured fugitives temporarily deprived their owners of labor, further cutting into productivity and profits. One Bastrop County master paid slave catchers \$200 to track two fugitives 750 miles to the Rio Grande, only to hear that the slaves had "escaped & not [been] found." It is easy to understand why planters like Guy M. Bryan, quoted at the beginning of this essay, thought twice before purchasing laborers who had "Mexico in their heads." Other planters undoubtedly shared Bryan's apprehensions and factored the possibility of flight into their economic calculations.

The effects of flight to Mexico were not confined to the realm of economics, nor were they limited to the fugitives. For those who remained behind, Mexico appeared, rightly or not, as a republic built on a more inclusive model of citizenship. The image persisted in countless retellings of the slave experience, although with the end of slavery the meaning of the border shifted from one of freedom to one of racial equality. Almost seventy years after emancipation, Felix Haywood of San Antonio told a WPA interviewer, "In Mexico you could be free. They didn't care what color you was, black, white, yellow, or blue. Hundreds of slaves did get to Mexico and got on all right. We would, hear about 'em and how they was goin' to be Mexicans." Coming from a man who had experienced not only slavery, but the stifling racism of the Jim Crow South, Haywood's Mexico was a perfect inversion of the world north of the border, a poignant critique of a nation that liked to see itself as more progressive and enlightened than its southern neighbor.

The end of slavery in 1865 may have slowed, but it did not halt the flow of black Texans across the border, as the case of former slave Sallie Wroe's father demonstrates. During the Civil War, Wroe's father escaped by paddling a bale of cotton across the Rio Grande. He returned after the war, but finding his chances poor in post-emancipation Texas, he returned to Mexico, earned some money, and used it to buy clothing for his family on his return. Although the border no longer marked the spatial division between freedom and slavery, it could still be put to good use by those who understood how to manipulate it.

Texas slaves were not unique in attaching liberationist significance to the world beyond the boundaries of their own. The tendency was especially pronounced during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as interpretive communities of slaves received, translated, and appropriated the language of liberty and freedom in settings ranging from Virginia, to Saint Domingue, to Bahia. None of this is to suggest that slave communities were incapable of generating subversive ideas internally; the history of New World slave resistance demonstrates clearly that they were. In fact, the very notion of interpretive community suggests that members drew on an internal and pre-existing collective experience in their encounters with metropolitan ideas and texts. Among these texts were political boundaries, not only the Mexican border, but the Haitian coast, the Mason-Dixon Line, the Ohio River, and eventually the picket lines of the Union Army. Slaves were among the world's most persistent border crossers.

### **The Border, the Buffalo, and the Métis of Montana**

GERHARD J. ENS

In the late 1860s and early 1870s, large numbers of Plains Métis began to move into Montana to exploit the last large herds of buffalo in North America. The Métis are those descendants of native women and European men who forged a new identity in the fur trade that was neither Indian nor white. These Métis communities arose in various geographic locations such as the Great Lakes, Upper Missouri, Red River, and the Canadian Northwest. The Plains Métis who could be found almost anywhere on the northern plains were a buffalo-hunting variant of this "New People." Most of these Métis had their origins further east, and many were Canadian or British by birth. The temporary *hivernants* or wintering communities that the Métis established in Montana during this period became the basis of more permanent Métis communities in the 1880s when the United States/Canadian border became even more impermeable and the buffalo disappeared. They stayed in Montana even though the American government gave no recognition or rights to the Métis as a separate people. The questions this chapter addresses are why many of these Plains Métis, largely of Canadian or British origin, chose to stay on the American side of the border after the

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buffalo disappeared, and what role the border and national consciousness played in the choice of whether the Métis would become American or Canadian.

The Plains Métis had been borderland people for more than fifty years in the Canadian and American Wests before the 1870s, and to the extent that they recognized the border as a meaningful entity, it was a "white" or "English" construct to be manipulated. The Métis lived, worked, and hunted on both sides of the line, and they recognized its existence only when it was to their benefit. After 1870, however, the border began to play an ever-increasing role in their identity.

Before the 1870s the American/British border on the northern plains was of little consequence to the Métis who exploited the buffalo herds in this region. The Plains Métis who first came to prominence in the Red River/Pembina region began to spread westward in the 1840s and 1850s as the buffalo withdrew from the more easterly parts of the northwestern plains and as the number of the Red River Métis rapidly increased from 3,646 in 1835 to 12,000 in 1870. By the 1850s and 1860s their wintering villages could be found anywhere in the ecological zone where the buffalo wintered, irrespective of the international boundary.

The Convention of 1818, which had established the forty-ninth parallel as the boundary between the United States and the British possession, went largely unrecognized by the native peoples of the northern plains. For the Métis, the main repercussion was that the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), realizing that their post along the border was now in American territory, moved the Pembina post to the Red River Settlement and put pressure on the Roman Catholic Church to relocate the Pembina mission to Red River, bringing the Métis with them. The HBC feared that if left at Pembina the Métis would take advantage of their new citizenship to flout the company's monopoly and go into the trade themselves. Even though the majority of the Pembina Métis did relocate to Red River in the British Territory, they lived and hunted where they wished and where it was safe to do so. Given that the Plains Métis' way of life was almost wholly dependent on the buffalo—they acted as provisioners for the fur trade and later became heavily involved in the buffalo robe trade—the Métis traveled as far as necessary to find the herds they needed. In the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s they hunted in Sioux territory as far south as Devils Lake and as far west as the Grand Coteau. They had permanent villages in the Red River Settlement, Pembina, and St. Joseph. By the 1850s and 1860s they were hunting as far west as Wood Mountain, Milk River, and the Cypress Hills, and the distance from their former villages necessitated the establishment of temporary wintering villages near the buffalo and where there was enough shelter and wood to allow them to survive a winter on the plains. From the 1850s onward these wintering villages stretched from the Souris (Mouse) River in the east to the Cypress Hills in the west and from Devils Lake in the south to the North Saskatchewan River in the north. They survived in these locations because of their kinship connections to surrounding Indian bands (Sioux, Ojibway, Cree, and Assiniboine) and their military prowess.

From the time the Métis began expanding southwestward in the 1840s there were almost yearly conflicts with Sioux. By 1858, however, the Chippewa

(Ojibwa), Métis, and Dakota met in a Grand Council north of the Sheyenne River and west of Devils Lake to set tribal boundaries and establish peace among the three groups. The Métis were recognized as a legitimate band in the region and were represented by Jean-Baptiste Wilkie of St. Joseph (aka Norbexxa) and allowed to hunt in Sioux territories. The other factor that reduced Sioux/Métis conflicts was the "Minnesota Massacre" of 1862, which put the Sioux at war with the U.S. Army. The Sioux needed allies among the British Métis, who were their main trade source for guns and ammunition, and in 1863 the Sioux traveled to St. Joseph to reaffirm the peace treaty. Although these treaties significantly reduced the hostilities between the Sioux and Métis and allowed the Métis access to buffalo hunting grounds north and south of the border, the expansionary nature of both the Métis and Sioux in these years led to sporadic conflicts into the 1870s.

Before the 1870s the border was no impediment to the Métis, who manipulated it for their own purposes. The history of the Métis' use of the international boundary is a study in itself, and so I will provide only one example. When the Red River Métis heard that the U.S. government was planning to negotiate a treaty with the Pembina and Red Lake Chippewa, many decided to relocate to the American side of the boundary to take advantage of the benefits of this treaty. During the negotiations, the Métis claimed that "it was they who possessed the country really, and who had long defended and maintained it against the encroachments of enemies." The treaty that was signed between the United States and the Pembina Chippewa on September 20, 1851, however, did not include the Métis as signatories, as the government believed it should not deal with people whom it regarded "as our *quasi* citizens." The government negotiator did stipulate that he would not object "to any just or reasonable arrangement or treaty stipulation the Indians might choose to make for their benefit." As a result the Chippewa inserted a clause into the treaty that \$30,000 be given to their Métis relatives. The treaty, however, was not ratified by Congress, and many of those who had claimed U.S. residence returned to the Red River Settlement in British Territory. The Métis' cavalier attitude toward the border was expressed more explicitly to Gen. Isaac-Stevens, who was exploring a route for a railway from the Dakota plains in the summer of 1853. The first group he encountered was from Pembina, but the second group, led by a hunt chief named De L'orme (Delorme), had come from the Red River Settlement in British Territory. De L'orme told Stevens that they had a right to hunt in American territory, being residents of the territory on both sides of the boundary line. Stevens reported that "they claim the protection of both governments, and the doubt as to the position of the boundary makes them uncertain as to the government upon which they have the most claim. During the hunting season they carry with them their families and their property. Many children are born during these expeditions, and they consider that children born upon our soils during the transit possess the heritage of American citizens."

By the 1860s, however, the boundary was becoming of increasing importance in Indian/white relations. Advancing American settlement, Sioux hostilities in Minnesota, and the Canadian government's interest in acquiring the British

Northwest made the border a major factor in determining the responsibilities of the various governments in recognizing and protecting the rights of the various Indian groups in the region. As both the Métis and Indians were increasingly using the border to shield themselves from reprisals by the 1870s, it is not surprising that both governments would want better control of the border region. Within a few years the western boundary between the United States and Canada had been surveyed, and both the U.S. Army and the Canadian North-West Mounted Police were patrolling the border, significantly limiting cross-border traffic. These factors, combined with the southwestward retreat of the buffalo, would increasingly force the Plains Métis to choose a U.S. residence.

These developments brought the Plains Métis into Montana for the first time. Wintering villages had begun to appear in the 1840s at places like Turtle Mountain, Souris Basin, Riding Mountain, Wood Mountain, and along the Assiniboine, Qu'Appelle, and Saskatchewan rivers. They were a response to the westward retreat of the buffalo herds and the changing nature of the fur trade on the Upper Missouri River. Before 1840 the Plains Métis of Red River had secured most of the pemmican, dried meat, buffalo robes, and leather they required from the summer and fall buffalo hunts out of Red River and Pembina. Beginning in the 1840s, however, the buffalo retreated further and further west, and the Métis hunters had to travel hundreds of miles before even spotting a herd. Buffalo robes became increasingly important in the fur trade of the Missouri at this time. Beaver stocks had been depleted, and buffalo robes found lucrative markets in New York, Montreal, St. Paul, and St. Louis. These robes consisted of the skin of the buffalo with the hair left on and the hide tanned. Prime robes, those taken from November to February and in excellent shape, fetched good prices of ten to twelve dollars per robe by the 1870s. The Métis responded to this new market by smuggling their furs and robes across the border to American traders.

Beginning in the late 1840s and accelerating in the 1850s and 1860s, observers began to notice an increase in Métis' wintering communities west of Red River and Pembina in response to these new economic opportunities. While it was still possible to winter in St. Joseph in the 1850s and be close enough to the winter range of the buffalo to get winter robes, it was certainly no longer possible to do so wintering in the Red River Settlement or Pembina. As a result, more and more Plains Métis began spending their winters in small temporary communities west of Red River, where they could hunt the buffalo in winter. By the late 1860s and early 1870s, even the Métis of the settlement of St. Joseph were leaving en masse to winter on the plains. As time went on, these wintering villages moved in a southwesterly direction following the retreat of the northern herd, and by the 1870s, the orientation of most Plains Métis was south of the border. In 1878 prairie fires swept a wide area of grassland in the boundary region between Montana and what today is Alberta. The buffalo moved south, and what was left of the northern herd remained south of the border between the Milk River and the Judith Basin. The large herds never returned to Canada. Not only were the last remnants of the northern herd concentrating in northern Montana, but increasing military vigilance along the international boundary by

both the U.S. Army and the NWMP forced the Métis to choose an American residence. While the U.S. Army and the NWMP were primarily interested in stopping the arms and whiskey trade that was stirring up Indian hostilities, this increased border vigilance also ended the Métis' practice of taking their buffalo robes across the border to traders at Fort Benton. Given these factors, it became much more convenient for the Métis to claim American residency.

The Métis had begun wintering in Montana in the 1860s, locating their communities on the Milk River where the Riviere Blanche branches off into Canada. By the early 1870s, Métis settlements were springing up all over the Milk River country. Father Lestanc, who had built a mission at Wood Mountain for the Plains Métis, was forced to relocate to Montana because most of his group had left Wood Mountain. In 1871 he reported that there were sixty families wintering at Riviere Blanche, and by 1873 his camp alone had ninety families. He noted that no one knew precisely where the border was or if they were living in American or Canadian territory. George M. Dawson, traveling with the British Boundary Commission in 1874, met numerous Métis groups between Wood Mountain and Montana, and noted that Wood Mountain had "seen its palmy days. Buffalo & Indians already too far west. Most of the families speak of wintering next at Cypress Hills." On July 19, 1874, he visited a Métis camp on the Milk River that numbered two hundred lodges and two thousand horses. This group of Plains Métis was wintering on Riviere Blanche well within the United States, and he noted they traded their goods via the Missouri River posts.

The presence of these Canadian Métis in Montana worried the U.S. Army and Indian agents. Convinced that the Métis from Canada were trading whiskey and guns to the Sioux and using the border to shield themselves, the U.S. Army resolved to eliminate this traffic. According to A. J. Simmons, the Indian agent of the Milk River Agency in Montana, the Métis had "urged Sitting Bull to resist the construction of the North Pacific Rail Road. So long as Sitting Bull's people remain hostile they have the exclusive trade and barter with them from which they derive large profits and so long as these Indians can procure ammunition from this source, it will be found a serious obstacle in the way of their effecting peace with the Government."

On October 19, 1871, the Seventh Infantry stationed at Fort Shaw was ordered to proceed to the Milk River where this large group of "British" Métis had established their wintering villages. The Seventh Infantry was ordered to destroy all trade goods and drive the Métis out of the country. The army arrived at the Riviere Blanche on November 1, finding a camp of several hundred Métis. The settlement, consisting of houses and lodges scattered along four or five miles of the creek, was captured without any resistance. The houses of the two traders, consisting of nine buildings, as well as the whiskey and trade goods valued at \$10,000 were all burned, and John Kerley was arrested. The Métis were told that they were in violation of American law by selling liquor and ammunition to Indians, and they were thereby helping the Indians to make war on the United States. They were ordered to leave the country and not return. The Métis, for their part, argued that the whiskey and ammunition were the property of

white traders who had only recently joined them, and they had lived on the plains (including the United States) all their lives. Besides, they argued, they could not move north because the plains were burnt. They begged to be allowed to remain, promising they would allow no traders among them. In consideration of their good conduct on this occasion, and because the destruction of the entire camp would have inflicted great hardship and suffering, the Métis were allowed to remain in their settlement if they obeyed American laws.

This and other encounters with the U.S. Army convinced many Plains Métis that American residence and citizenship were crucial not only to hunting the buffalo but also to being able to trade buffalo robes to American posts along the Missouri. When 140 Métis were stopped by the U.S. Army in Montana in 1879 and asked what nationality they were, all but 10 replied they were American. The 10 who declared they were British were escorted across the border, and the others were advised to go to the Judith Basin.

By 1882 the buffalo herds had disappeared, even in Montana. This represented a real crisis for the Plains Métis, and they were faced with hard decisions as to what to do next. Those who had close kinship connections to tribal groups in Montana, such as the Blackfoot and Flathead, went into treaty. Some Métis who had come to Montana from Manitoba and North Dakota went back and reinvented themselves as the Turtle Mountain Chippewa and took treaty in 1892. Others moved north to Canada and took scrip (a negotiable certificate entitling the holder to receive an allotment of public land) after 1885, but a large number, despite their British Canadian roots, remained in Montana and refused to leave.

Those Plains Métis who remained in Montana after 1882 did so not only because there were employment opportunities but also because a significant number had come to see the United States as a homeland—something the Canadian Northwest no longer was. By the late 1870s and early 1880s, the border had become more than a line on a map; it had become something of a state of mind with its own mythology. This new way of looking at the border and the Canadian Northwest had begun shortly after the Riel Resistance in Red River and the transfer of the British Northwest to Canada in 1870, and it crystallized with the military suppression of the Riel Rebellion in the Northwest in 1885.

With the arrival of troops in Red River in the summer of 1870, the increasing pace of Canadian immigration to Manitoba, and the delays in fulfilling the land grants to the Métis promised in the Manitoba Act, many of the Plains Métis came to believe that they had been treated unjustly by the Canadian government. This feeling only increased as the government was slow to acknowledge Métis rights in the Northwest. By 1873 numerous reports were coming back to Alexander Morris, the lieutenant governor of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, that the Indians and Métis of the Canadian Northwest were full of anxiety regarding the intentions of the Canadians toward them. Robert Bell, who wrote a report for Morris on the state of the West, noted that the notion that "the English have ceased to be their friends appears to be fostered ... if not promoted by the half breeds." The Métis, he wrote, wanted nothing to do with surveys, treaties, railways, or settlement, and they considered the Canadians



cowards. When Pascal Breland was appointed by the Canadian government to investigate the presence of Sioux at Wood Mountain, he met with numerous Plains Métis who eventually would settle in Montana. He was informed that the state of affairs on the plains was critical and dangerous. In regard to the Métis, Edward McKay told him that the Métis, who lived and hunted on both sides of the border, had little respect for the Canadian government and were close to taking the law into their own hands. They were spreading rumors that the Canadian government wanted to exterminate the Indians and rob them of their country. The Métis, he said, "have so little public spirit that it is utter nonsense to depend on them for assistance." The talk of them being loyal, he said, "is outrageous as the majority don't know what it means and most of them scorn the idea.... Louis Riel is still their idol and should he or any smart fellow come out to lead them there will be a grand row.... They are becoming bolder every day under the inactive policy of the government and if the call be given a rebellion worse in every respect than the last will spread like a fire on the plains." Many of the most troublesome Métis, he noted, were those who had left the British Territory several years earlier to live on, the American side. They had recently returned to Wood Mountain to excite the Métis and Indians against the Canadian government and British rule. They promised assistance from the United States if the Métis and Indians could not prevent the Dominion from disposing of their lands.

This discontent was evident as far north as St. Albert on the North Saskatchewan River. A large group of St. Albert Métis wintering at Buffalo Lake told Bishop Grandin in 1875 that "we know too well that we have nothing to hope from the Canadian Government except ill will and contempt. Rather than be ill treated (browbeaten) like our parents, we have decided to locate ourselves on the territories of the United States." Grandin refused this request, but noted the Métis were still planning to head south and cross the boundary when the time was right.

These simmering hostilities continued throughout the 1870s, and when Louis Riel returned to the West in 1878, he quickly saw the potential for a new offensive against the Canadian state. From his base in Carroll, Montana (a settlement in the heart of the badlands or "breaks" of the Upper Missouri near the Judith Basin), Riel planned an invasion of Canada by the Métis allied to various Indian bands. This invasion would be the prelude to the establishment of a Confederacy of Métis and Indians in the Canadian Northwest. Riel sent for Ambrose Lepine, his former adjutant-general from Red River days, who agreed to meet Riel at Fort Assiniboine in late 1879 or early 1880. Archbishop Taché, aware that Lepine had gone west to meet Riel and aware of the potential trouble the two could create, contacted Lepine and warned him not to meet with Riel. Not wanting to offend the Catholic Church, and aware of the risk to his own safety if he got involved with Riel again, Lepine returned to Manitoba without meeting Riel. As he wrote Taché, it would not take a very large spark to light a fire in the West, as the Métis were very unhappy with how they were being treated by the Canadian government. To Riel he wrote that he was not prepared to sacrifice more for the Métis, as he had already seen the noose at close hand and was not prepared to risk all again.

Riel was just as unsuccessful in persuading the Montana Métis and Indians to support his plan, and after a year or two he moved on to other projects. Riel's plan to attack Canada and establish a Métis and Indian Confederacy, farfetched as it may have been, does indicate the Métis' discontent with the Canadian government and provides some explanation for why the Métis of Montana had no interest in returning to Canada after the buffalo disappeared.

These Montana Métis, the remnant of the buffalo-hunting Plains Métis, settled in railway towns along the line of the Great Northern Railway (Fort Buford, Poplar, Oswego, Wolf Point, Havre, Chinook, Harlem, Malta, Glasgow, Kipp, Box Elder). Given that the Great Northern ran parallel to the Milk River, some of these towns such as Malta, Havre, and Glasgow were, in fact, very close to old Métis wintering sites. As railway towns they offered the Métis jobs as construction workers, dirt movers, wood choppers, and buffalo bones collectors. Others settled away from railway centers where it was still possible to hunt small game and farm (Dupuyer, Teton River, Sweetgrass, Choteau). Still others settled at Lewis town, Fort Benton, St. Peters, St. Ignatius, Augusta Hill, and Fort McGinnis, either homesteading, working as laborers on ranches and farms, or freighting. Some indication of the distribution and concentration of former Canadian Métis living in Montana comes from scrip applications by the Canadian government between 1900 and 1904 from Métis living in the United States.

One of the larger Métis settlements in Montana was located in the Judith Basin at Spring Creek (now known as Lewistown). It was settled by Plains Métis buffalo hunters led by Pierre Berger. These families originated in the Red River/St. Joseph region of Manitoba and North Dakota. As the buffalo had retreated westward, this Métis band had relocated first to Wood Mountain and then to Milk River. By 1879 they were wintering on the Milk River between Harlem and Chinook, but with the herds growing smaller every year Pierre Berger began looking for a better location to winter and a location where his people might settle permanently. The larger wintering camps on the Milk were breaking up, and so Berger and twenty-five families decided to move to the Judith Basin where the last big herds were located and where there were other small game and lots of timber. Here they hunted the last buffalo. When these disappeared, they took up homesteads. Within a few years they were joined by other Plains Métis hunters from the Milk River, increasing the settlement to more than 150 families. This latter group had been told by the U.S. Army to leave the country or settle somewhere permanently. These Métis raised stock or worked on area ranches after more settlers moved in.

The 1885 North-West Rebellion was the crystallizing event that changed a transborder people into the Montana Métis who regarded the border as protection from the Canadian government. After the Canadian military crushed Riel's forces at Batoche in the spring of 1885, hundreds of Indians and Métis fled south to escape persecution. These Métis, settling among the Métis who had been in Montana for at least a decade and a half, reinforced the mythology of the evils of the Canadian government. Approximately sixty Métis refugee families settled on Dupuyer Creek south of Blackfoot Reservation, and another group chose the south fork of the Teton River near Choteau. Hiding in the canyons for fear of

being sent back to Canada, these Métis lived off the land, hunting small game, "woodhawking," selling buffalo bones, and working on area ranches and farms. Their anti-Canadianism and fear of deportation stayed with the Montana Métis for good reason. In 1896 the American government decided to solve the social problems created by these "indigent" Canadian-born Crees and Métis by forcibly shipping them back to Canada. In all, 537 persons were shipped by rail to Canada, but almost all returned, slipping back across the border over the next few weeks.

Those Plains Métis who settled permanently in Montana had, over the course of a decade and a half, been transformed from a borderland people into American Métis. They willingly and deliberately chose an American residence and citizenship, at least in part, because of their belief that they had suffered an injustice at the hands of the Canadian government and that their rights and livelihood were better protected in the United States. They believed this despite the fact that the American government did not recognize the Métis as a separate group and accorded them no special political or economic rights. By 1885 the border had assumed almost mythical status as protection from persecutions by the Canadian state. This history of the Plains Métis should give pause to those historians who still hold the belief that the Canadian West was settled peaceably and that the Canadian government treated its native peoples more generously than the United States. For the Montana Métis, the demons of the "Western Civil War of Incorporation" were the Canadian state and military. They chose incorporation in the American body politic.

## Passages into the Sonora-Arizona Borderlands

SAMUEL TRUETT

Shadows are worlds in motion; to appreciate them, we must trace their passages. When the U.S. mining engineer Morris B. Parker came from Chihuahua to Sonora in 1900, he took a passage familiar to many miners in the colonial era, from the old trade center of Casas Grandes through the Pulpito Pass to the highlands of northeastern Sonora. Squeezing through this "rough, rocky bottle-neck" in a rickety buckboard, he paused at Colonia Oaxaca, a new Mormon colony on the Bavispe, before pushing on to his destination, the mining region below Naco. Four years later, a traveler like Parker would have taken a train north to El Paso, east to Douglas, and south into Sonora on the Phelps Dodge rail network. In May 1900, however, Douglas was still Whitewater Draw, a rural landmark beyond the industrial frontier. Pulpito Pass, open to mule and wagon, was the shortest way to Sonora. Except for the nearby Carretas Pass, the next road across the sierras lay a thousand miles to the south.

Parker's journey was far from unusual. He was one of many mining engineers who shuttled back and forth between New Mexico, Chihuahua, Arizona,

and Sonora at the turn of the century to sell his expertise to miners. He began his borderland odyssey as a teenager in the 1880s, when he moved with his family to White Oaks, a gold mining town in southern New Mexico. By the 1890s, he and his neighbors had begun to look to Mexico. "I was lured into that cornucopia in 1895," Parker later recalled, "and from then until 1932 a goodly portion of my time was spent below the border." In 1898, as William Cornell Greene was peddling mines on Wall Street, Parker became superintendent of the San Pedro mine, 125 miles southwest of El Paso near the Sierra Madres of Chihuahua. It was here that he was called west in 1900 to assess the wealth of Sonora.

Parker's journey offers a snapshot of Sonora on the brink of a new industrial age. Two things that stand out in his diary are times and distances. From Colonia Morelos, he and his partner headed for Fronteras, twenty miles west as the crow flies, but seventy miles for mule and buckboard, which had to swing north to avoid one of Sonora's many mountain ranges. Driving "by ruts and gullies" through pastures, mescal ranches, and customs outposts, they finally hit Ochoa's wagon road between Naco and Nacozari. Suddenly the world spun into motion. At meal stations spaced to match the speed of freighters, they dined with captains of industry. Louis D. Ricketts breezed by en route to Nacozari, as did John P. Ramsey, manager of the Rio Grande, Sierra Madre, and Pacific Railroad. Like Parker, Ramsey was "looking over country" but with a bolder eye: he envisioned himself driving rails west across the sierras from Chihuahua and thus knitting together northern Mexico into a larger, industrial whole.

With Phelps Dodge's machine dreams still "bogged axle deep in the black adobe soil" of Sonora, such talk must have seemed like idle chatter. This was still a profoundly local world, bound together by modest desires. North of Nacozari, "where we expected to get B'fast and didn't," Parker found Americans struggling to make ends meet with "a small rattle trap stamp mill." In Cumpas, south of Nacozari, he dined with a doctor who had found his way into Mexican society by marrying a local woman. In Moctezuma, he was the guest of the old-timer George F. Woodward and his Mexican wife, who was "very kind and feeds us *fine!*" His journey revealed a different sort of human landscape than that oriented around the industrial pace of Ochoa's wagon road. These rural pathways, structured by economic isolation, family ties, and local custom, had changed little since the 1820s, when Moctezuma and Cumpas residents guided Robert Hardy and Simon Bourne through the haunted remains of former empires.

The road one took made all the difference, but so did the starting point. Another pilgrim in Sonora at the time was Maud Kenyon-Kingdon, the young wife of George Kingdon, a mining engineer of Parker's cohort. Kingdon had served his apprenticeship in Arizona and Mexico, prospecting and supervising mines, at times traveling, like Parker, to inspect properties. Maud met him in the Arizona copper town of Globe and joined him on a new path. "We unfurled our sails upon life's matrimonial sea and anchored across the Mexican border in one of the remotest, uncivilized little towns," she wrote of a move around 1903 to Pilares, where George found work as a superintendent. It was a "barren, desolate

place," she wrote. Douglas was booming, and Phelps Dodge was laying tracks south, but not yet to Pilares. "Roads were forced to surrender to the rough and winding footpaths" winding up "precipitous slopes," she recalled of her new home, a "wild spot" she could hardly regard "without some trepidation."

Above all, this was a world of men. "I was about the first American woman that had ever come to this place," she wrote. She pressed George to make her feel at home. Mexicans were "put to work with spades, pickaxes and dynamite" to excavate a garden, and "in the matureness of time we had a garden blooming in wondrous profusion," she wrote. Embellished with a new rosebush, a Madeira vine around the veranda, and rows of "thrifty cottonwoods" nearby, it made for "a most attractive setting—a veritable garden spot . . . and this was home." Yet Maud felt hemmed in. "Violent gales," she noted, "howled around our premises in weird, uncanny sounds, portending, as it were, some dark omen, some hidden tragedy awaiting this unsuspecting land." A ravine opened behind their house, and here miners played cards at night. They "were a law-breaking gang of thieves," she feared, addicted to "a vile and poisonous beverage of their own distillation, and which would likely result in some terrible feud.

Yet in time the copper borderlands became more fixed and less confined for the likes of Kenyon-Kingdon. In 1913, after a hiatus in the States, George took a job in Cananea. "It was a violent shock" to think of returning to Mexico, Maud wrote, but Cananea was not what she expected. The streets were "wide and very well laid out," and "the homes for American people were attractively built." Their house had a manicured lawn, Chinese servants, and French doors opening onto "verandas, walks and sweet-scented flower gardens." Cananea was a larger town than Pilares, but in a decade the borderlands also had changed. Her "haven of refuge" in a land controlled by others had now become a cosmopolitan crossroads, managed—or so it seemed—with her own dreams in mind. "It was so very civilized," she happily admitted. "An unruffled world, it seemed, stretched its length before us."

Cananea's metropolitan intensity also attracted others. Coming to Cananea was like "entering another world," wrote Jesús Corral, who moved there as a child from the small mining town of La Dura in southern Sonora. Compared to La Dura, it seemed like a lost city of gold. "American and Mexican money flowed freely," Corral recalled. "The smell of luscious fruits and the din of silver dollars on the counter, as miners were being paid at the end of a week's work, made this place far different from the sleepy towns where [my] family had been before." Like Maud and George, Jesús saw the shift from hinterland to core as a migration from danger to safety, for southern Sonora in the early 1910s was beginning to spiral into a renewed cycle of ethnic violence among Yaqui Indians and Mexicans. "Fear of Yaqui raids was far from everybody's mind" in Cananea, he wrote. In terms of its economic promise for working families and its isolation from ethnic warfare, it was "a mecca for those desiring a better life."

If Jesús Corral, Maud Kenyon-Kingdon, and Morris B. Parker took different roads into the borderlands, they had at least this in common: their worlds were in constant motion. Places like Nacozari and Cananea were stopping places on larger, transnational circuits that knit together local spaces: gardens and dance

halls, meal stations and rural hosts, the refuge and quaking earth of Billy Goat Hill. The itinerary of the Corral family linked the contested countryside to a working-class mecca and eventually pointed farther north. After toiling under Chivatera Ridge, Jesús's brother, Emilio, frequented the male refuges of Cananea's pool halls. "It was there, where men gathered, that he heard that farmers in the United States were recruiting large families to help harvest cotton crops in Arizona and California," Corral wrote. "That announcement presented an alternative to the Corral family. We now had a choice." If Parker chased nature's bounty over hill and dale, and Kenyon-Kingdon settled for French doors in a wild land, the Corrals ultimately chose the "open fields" of Arizona as the final stop on their journey of toil.

These roads were as diverse as those who took them, and they suggest a human side to the borderlands that we miss by perusing contracts, annual reports, and booster tracts. They also suggest the *range* of transnational tales: U.S. mining engineers stringing together disparate landscapes on a tenuous scientific thread; Yaqui and Mexican villagers working and fighting for traditional homelands; Chinese servants working to sustain a new life abroad; mining directors and railroad builders seeking to wring dividends from a rebellious land; *rancheros* and *mescaleros* chasing more modest dreams at the edges of the copper borderlands; immigrants passing through to the other side; worlds of women and men, their work, play, fantasies, and fears.

Such relationships approximated the modern electrical grid that Thomas Edison manufactured from copper in the late nineteenth century. Circuits of human energy led in all directions, yet each strand had its own logic and bundle of connections. Each was linked to discrete places, the human equivalent of transformers, insulators, pole lines, switchboards, and generators. It was a network that made connections and also created distinctions. Yet the analogy of electrical networks only goes so far, for unlike systems conceived by the Edison Electric Company and Westinghouse, these were anything but static fixtures. Spatial coordinates shifted over time as Mexicans, Americans, Yaquis, Chinese, and others migrated between spaces that corporate and state elites could see—smelters and mines, company towns, corporate reports, censuses—and "subterranean" spaces of ethnicity, culture, and family: regions of refuge from the official gaze. These unseen worlds burrowed beneath the more visible arteries of capital and state power to provide the essential human bedrock of the borderlands.

At a basic level, the rise of industrial mining mapped a modern world on frontier foundations. From a Mexican perspective, copper mining promised to help reorganize a landscape that was already generations old. As Mexican entrepreneurs entered the new corporate realms of Cananea and Nacozari, they sought to regenerate and improve upon older pathways with the help of outsiders. And yet there was more to the story than new immigrant pathways being mapped onto older Mexican foundations, for part of the story is also about Mexican migrations. If copper corporations required massive inputs of energy in the form of hoisting machinery, concentrators, mills, smelting furnaces, and railroads to carve up places like Pílares Mountain and the Cananeas and get their pieces to market, they also needed more human labor than the local countryside could

provide. To transform the U.S.–Mexico borderlands, Phelps Dodge and the CCCC needed to remake the region's Mexican population.

This process began as early as 1902, when the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad began to ship carloads of Mexicans south into Sonora to build the Nacozari road and work in the mines and smelters of Pilares and Nacozari. Local accounts about the workers' origins are vague, but they probably came via El Paso from Chihuahua, Durango, and other states on the far side of the Sierra Madres. Unlike the Sonora Railway, which was not extended south of Sonora until 1907, the Mexican Central Railroad below El Paso tapped the entire central plateau of Mexico and its vast pool of labor. In 1903, additional workers came from Chihuahua to complete the Nacozari Railroad. The road's labor contractor, Enrique Rodriguez, also supplied crews around Naco, and many of his men, whom he assembled at El Paso, were newcomers even to Chihuahua. Many had traveled hundreds of miles from villages in southern Mexico to take advantage of new industrial wages at the Arizona–Sonora border.

Cananea managers also had to reassemble "native" labor from afar. In 1903, CCCC officials noted that even though workers were arriving daily from all over Sonora, the company had also imported labor from Baja California. Like Phelps Dodge and its contractors, the CCCC manufactured mobility to pin their mining landscapes down. If this seemed paradoxical, it was a contradiction that workers willingly took advantage of. The Mexicans bound for the Lucky Tiger, a gold mine near Nacozari, benefited from the railroad journey but to the company's dismay kept moving. "No amount of herding would keep the gang intact," a reporter later noted. Some "skipped out" before the train reached the station. It was hard to keep these workers tied down, Greene acknowledged, "as they are never satisfied." In a climate of high demand for labor, they "work for a few days in one place and then go to another camp and so on," pursuing tales—and there were many—of higher wages elsewhere.

If corporate elites grumbled about Mexican mobility and opportunism—they also found that putting workers in place once they got to camp was anything but straightforward. For labor may have seemed to move as freely (and, indeed, as abstractly) as capital, but spatial and cultural distinctions mattered. In 1905, the CCCC imported miners from Aguascalientes and San Luis Potosí, Mexico, to the Cananea mining camp of Buenavista, only to find that local Sonorenses ridiculed their appearance, dress, and habits. The mining manager, Arthur S. Dwight, finally asked Cananea's chief of police, Pablo Rubio, to post a policeman near their new homes "until they have acclimated to their new surroundings and made the locals understand they're here to stay."

Ethnicity, class, and nationality also inflected urban divides in Sonora. Entering Cananea by train, one passed through the town on the mesa, upwind from the smelter. Here Kenyon-Kingdon and her cohort had their French doors, Chinese servants, and lawns. "Life in a Mexican mining town for an American group is rather like an Army outpost in that they adhere as far as possible to their own customs, and life is not so different from that of the United States," recalled Mildred Young Wallace, the daughter of CCCC Secretary George Young "There were breakfasts, luncheons, numerous afternoon and evening ... parties,

tennis, dances at the American Club, horseback rides and moonlight picnics." Mexico entered this world, but in a selective fashion. The center of town was the plaza, where Wallace remembered "listening to the band concert and watching the slowly-moving throng" and admiring "the gaily dressed *señoritas*, with their *dueñas* or chaperones." Here Americans encountered Mexico, but not the Mexico that most Mexicans saw when they came to Cananea.

To get to this Mexico, one had to continue to the edge of the mesa and wander down into working-class Ronquillo or climb to mountain barrios such as Chivartera. Like Chihuahua Hill and Tintown, these were regions of refuge. This was especially true for the camp of Buenavista, a nerve center of Cananea's labor movement. Like Chihuahua Hill, mining camps and shelter-side homes were perilous places, as Jesús Corral's mother knew well. Pneumonia killed in Chivatera, "where the accommodations for the miners are of a primitive character" but also near the smelter. "When anyone living in the vicinity of the smelter is afflicted with the disease," a resident wrote, "it is almost certain that death will follow" since "fumes of sulphur prevent the curing of the lungs." This was far from the Mexico where Mildred Young lived. "My wife and daughters go about the streets at will unattended," George Young bragged. For his family and others, Mexican Cananea lay beyond the pale: a mere shadow of the familiar and domesticated landscapes of Anglo-American Mexico.

These borders were especially clear in Pilares, where an artificial terrace half-way up the mountain divided the camp in two halves. "The Mexican town swarmed up to it and covered it," wrote the mining engineer Ralph Ingersoll in the 1920s, "but above, the odd hundred feet before the topography came to a sharp point at the top, was reserved for the American quarter." Here were "attractive" houses on a "fashionable thoroughfare," each with a garden, "where the almost-green grass and peach- and fig-trees were neatly fenced off from the roving burro." Each had "a Mexican girl to help out, and every modern convenience included in a realtor's paean of praise—electric lights, hot and cold water, and two minutes' run (down-hill) to work. In the morning the vegetable man, a withered old Chinaman, came along with a string of burros loaded with fresh vegetables, and the wife stood at her gate and selected what she wished, and argued with the huckster, in the six or eight Spanish phrases she had picked up."

Ingersoll likened Pilares to white settler enclaves of the British Empire. "I have read of Englishmen who go into the wilderness and, living there, dress for dinner, play cards in the evening, and build golf-courses on Sunday," he wrote, but Anglos at Pilares played another game. Most "came from Main Street towns," where "they had not amounted to much socially," he wrote, "but when they journeyed into a foreign land ... there was not the, slightest doubt that they were all used to much better things, much more exclusive friends, and in general an entirely different (and higher) rung of the social ladder." Here in the American colony, transnational dreams became imperial fantasies.

It is hard not to see Anglo houses—prefabricated abroad, designed for a life on the interior—as a metaphor for the U.S. transnational experience. This was a world of refuge, patrolled by the paternalism of corporate capital. Phelps Dodge even prepared a guide to help new U.S. employees navigate Pilares.



It introduced newcomers to special American rentals, hotels offering board, a market selling beef from the company's ranch, the company store, the Chinese peddlers selling produce door to door, how to get home deliveries of wood and milk. One could remain completely inside, like Maud Kenyon-Kingdon and the U.S. wives in Ingersoll's portrait. Phelps Dodge also managed mobility with special railroad passes, available at its local office. The Nacozari Country Club and Nacozari Boole Club offered other refuges bounded by class, culture, and language. The paternalism of company towns was familiar to mining engineers, but in Mexico it had an additional purpose: to keep them from getting lost in a foreign land.

Mexican spaces were less contained and less managed. Held together by culture and family ties, they were also supported by pathways that wandered off the corporate map. Like Anglo enclaves, Mexican barrios served as refuges: not because corporations sheltered them, but because they pushed them to the margins. Mexicans moved in and out of focus, tracing shadow circuits that met in Zacatecas Canyon, Tintown, Buenavista, and Chivatera Ridge. These pathways ran through the male spaces of the mines, smelters, and pool halls and the domestic spaces of the company homes, where extended families came together for work, fiestas, or casual visits. For those from Chihuahua and beyond, these circuits were often far-reaching and attenuated. In Sonora, they formed sinews of a regional community that ran south along the Yaqui, Sonora, and San Miguel valleys, a community that had changed little in its geographical contours since Mexican and Oyata grandparents had cycled in and out of Tubac.

One saw these regional lifelines in Huépac, an Oyata-Mexican outpost one hundred miles south of Cananea and Nacozari. Huépac's fields, pastures, and orchards fed a few local mining ventures, but workers and products also took a longer road to the copper mines. Unsettled conditions often triggered migrations: floods in 1914 and 1926, for instance, washed away much of Huépac's land, pushing farmers to become miners. Conversely, the periodic reduction of workforces in Cananea and Nacozari could push miners south toward rural safety nets. The roads between city and country were in constant motion, and mobility just as often reflected good times. When conditions were flush in Cananea and Nacozari, the roads teemed with livestock, cheese, meat, and agricultural surpluses heading north from Huépac and nearby villages to feed miners. The children of farmers thereby consumed the fruits of their families' lands as industrial workers, while sending wages south to help keep the other half of the regional community alive.

If copper mines anchored regional communities in place, so did their mercantile adjuncts. Howard Carroll Groton, a sales representative of the Phelps Dodge Mercantile in Nacozari, learned about these commercial ties in the 1920s. He saw them from the tail end of the Nacozari railroad, where trains unloaded carloads of corn, flour, coffee, and lard from the United States, fine thread from Glasgow, and every ten months or so a full carload of cigarette papers from Italy. The Phelps Dodge wholesale trade in Sonora was enormous. At any given time, "thirty or forty pack animals" were in line behind the warehouse from villages to the south, Groton recalled. Freighters "always had a certain amount

of trading to do as soon as they hit camp." They peddled *panocha* (brown sugar cakes), *carne seca* (dried meat), cheese, oranges, squash, tobacco, molasses, and chickens, most of it ending up at the company store for resale. They then loaded up green coffee, sugar, lard, flour, rice, cigarette papers, candles, plows, dynamite, fuse and caps, roofing iron, kerosene, lace, thread, and cloth before returning south.

Yaqui Indians also wove the mines and smelters of Cananea and Nacoziari into broader transnational circuits, migrating from lowland villages in the Yaqui River delta of southern Sonora to copper towns along both sides of the border to supplement the annual harvests. Their migration from lowland to *sierra*, from farm to mine, built on a colonial strategy of moving between their Jesuit mission towns on the Yaqui River delta and mines in the Oyata and Pima highlands.

Yaquis moved between village and mine well into the nineteenth century, but their relationship to Mexico became increasingly volatile. They resisted efforts to open up their homeland to development, and by the twentieth century, battles for the Yaqui homeland raged as *brancos*, or "hostile" Yaquis, launched raids from the mountains to defend their lands while *pacíficos*, "peaceful" Yaquis, worked in mines and haciendas. They drifted not only between village and wage work, but also between imposed categories of *branco* and *pacífico*.

Yaqui mobility and resistance led to pathways that resembled the roads taken by Mexicans and Opatas but that were harder for outsiders to pin down. In every respect, this was fugitive terrain: it was based on relations of mobility, it was invisible to most Americans and Mexicans, it drew on shifty categories, and it often harbored fugitives from the law. As a land of shadows, it also provided refuge and power. Morris B. Parker snatched glimpses of this autonomous realm at Pilares, whose Yaqui workers "were quick to learn and, after a short period of training made excellent miners, the best in Mexico." Mine managers paid a premium for this labor, for twice a year, during the planting and harvesting seasons, Yaquis "simply stopped work and went home." All managers could do was anticipate the exodus and cope. Before they left, the company had Yaquis break up as much ore as possible, so that in their absence others could carry out the less skilled work of shoveling the broken ore and bringing it to the surface.

These migrations made it hard not only to manage time, but also to police space, for unless managers were careful, fragments of the mining landscape also flowed south. One year Parker found some of the canvas hose that ran air into the shafts was missing. When Yaqui workers returned from the harvest, they were wearing canvas pants, "stiff, uniform in circumference, baggy, and wearing quality to last a lifetime." When accused of pilfering, "the only reply was a mischievous grin—'*Muy buenos pantalones, señor*'—the Yaquis considered their trousers a big joke." During these migrations, drill steel also ran low. Yaquis allegedly used the steel for planting sticks, but that was not all: "Yaqui blacksmiths forged this steel into weapons of war, knives, machetes, spear and arrow points," Parker wrote, "many of which were among the weapons used by the Yaquis in their revolt against the state and federal troops." Technologies of development from one borderland were thereby used to resist capital and state power in another.

Yaquis also converted their industrial wages into weapons of resistance, "Every one of them who comes to Arizona and works, goes back to Sonora with either a rifle or ammunition," claimed one mining entrepreneur. Yaquis working in Douglas bought guns from U.S. merchants, and most probably came from the Copper Queen Mercantile. This commerce, proposed President Díaz in 1906, contributed greatly to the prolongation of Yaqui campaigns, causing the unnecessary deaths of both Mexicans and Americans. Yet when the Díaz regime began to deport Yaquis to the Yucatán peninsula later that same year, many U.S. entrepreneurs pointed the finger at Mexico. Hunger forced the Yaquis "to the trails and roads to plunder," insisted one: "they cannot work in the mines or on the ranches; they cannot cultivate their lands or raise cattle." Consigned to the shadows, "they must either rob or die of starvation."

As Yaquis were driven underground by Mexican efforts to make them outlaws in their own land, many crossed the border into Arizona. Refugee pathways to the north, which built on previous networks between U.S. mines and fields and Yaqui villages in the Yaqui River delta, eventually gave rise to new communities north of the border, such as Pascua Village and Barrio Libre in Tucson and Guadalupe in Phoenix. From these "expatriate" communities, Yaqui migrants sustained cultural, religious, and family ties to villages in Sonora. Like many of their Mexican and Anglo-American neighbors, they were relatively free to cross the border well into the twentieth century, and many would continue to do so to their advantage.

In this world, even the dominant dialect trailed off into the shadows. Americans remade their lives with power and privilege in Cananea and Nacozari, but in the copper hinterlands, beyond the pull of copper and steel, gravity weakened. Here one found an exile community of immigrants who crossed borders—like the Chinese—as refugees from worlds of exclusion. In 1882, weeks before voting to exclude Chinese, the U.S. Congress passed the Edmunds Act, outlawing polygamy. In 1884, federal marshals began making arrests in Utah, Idaho, and Arizona, where Mormons practiced plural marriage as one of the cardinal Mormon doctrines. As marshals swept through Mormon country to impose new domestic laws at home, many Mormons, like their Chinese neighbors, began to take their families and households abroad.

William Carroll McClellan was among these refugees. A resident of the Mormon enclave of Pleasanton, New Mexico, he was in constant fear of Indians, since "Geronimo and his renegades were on the rampage." But U.S. marshals were also "invading remote frontiers, bent on arresting every man having more than one wife." Ironically, McClellan soon took a path familiar to Geronimo, leading south into the Sierra Madres. Here, church officials hoped, polygamists might find "a place of refuge under a foreign government." Starting at the Mormon town of St. David—along the San Pedro near Tombstone—a party left for Chihuahua in 1885, camping near Casas Grandes. After gaining permission from the Díaz regime, church officials bought land on the Casas Grandes and Piedras Verdes rivers and in the nearby highlands, where they created six new colonies: Colonias Díaz, Juárez, Pacheco, Dublán, García, and Chuhuichupa.

In 1892, Mormons expanded into Sonora after colonists bought two hundred square miles of land on the Bavispe River from the customs officers and landowners Juan Fenochio and Emilio Kosterlitzky. They founded Colonia Oaxaca at the mouth of Púlpito Pass in 1893, followed by Colonia Morelos, established just to the north in 1900. Both places appealed to the exiles precisely because they were so isolated.

One could measure its isolation by Parker's grueling trip from Colonia Oaxaca to Nacozari or the equally long journey to the nearest railhead, across the Púlpito Pass into Chihuahua. This was "a pioneer road," wrote one Mormon: "It was solid rock for miles and in places it was like a staircase." One point, called The Squeeze, was nightmarish for wagons. "I could only take one wagon at a time, taking it to the top of the mountain, leaving it, and going back after the next," explained another resident. "High mountains tapped with snow, dark canyons where wild beasts made their lair," and "wild" Indians encircled this distant realm, embellished another writer.

Yet, for exiles who wanted "a place where they wouldn't be mixed up with [the] outside," these newcomers were remarkably well connected to the world around them. Connections started at home: the trademark brick buildings of Colonia Morelos, whose facades were made of local clay fired in local kilns, were supported by frames harvested in the pine forests of Chihuahua. Their doors, window frames, porch pillars, and lathed ornamental dowels came from workshops in Colonia Juárez, across Púlpito Pass, roofs were topped with pine shingles from the towering Sierra Madres, and plaster was made from gypsum from mountains in southwestern New Mexico. Compared to the Anglo-American homes of Pílares, prefabricated in California, these were local spaces—but not nearly as local as Mexican adobes farther south along the Bavispe, in the Opatamexican villages of Bavispe, Bacerac, and Huachinera.

In the end, these nomadic pathways were not much different from those taken by Chinese, Yaqui, Mexican, and Opatas. As difficult as it could be, this was also a world of possibilities. Mormons such as the Haymores gravitated to rural work, moving from the Turkey Track Ranch of Sonora to the Empire Ranch of Arizona to the Ojitos Ranch in Chihuahua. William Claude Huish, Isaac Alldredge, and David Alvin McClellan cycled through mines and smelters in Sonora, and in Chihuahua they hauled goods, cut trees, and laid track for Greene's mining and timber empire. It was an uneven world, one in which, like freighters crossing Nacozari Creek, one had to keep moving. Men like David Alma Stevens could hardly stop to breathe. He started out as a freighter in Chihuahua, shifted to railroad construction, and then hit the Cananea-Nacozari freighting boom. After that, he returned to Chihuahua, where he farmed, freighted, and raised cattle, barely making ends meet. In 1905, he hauled supplies for the Kansas City, Mexico, and Orient Railroad in Chihuahua and then crossed the Sierra Madres to do the same work for the Southern Pacific. The intense heat finally drove him back across the *sierras*, where he finally came to rest on a farm near Casas Grandes.

As he drifted, Stevens covered terrain that would have been familiar to Morris B. Parker, Maud Kenyon-Kingdon, Jesús Corral, Hop Sing, the Yaqui

Indians of Pílares, and countless others who came to call the borderlands home at the turn of the century. Yet even though they had landmarks in common, each of these travelers charted different journeys, set off from the others by culture, class, ethnicity, nationality, and any number of individual idiosyncrasies. What they had in common was the nature of their traffic: these were all people in motion, turning border space to their own ends and stirring up endless clouds of human sediment that both nurtured and obscured transnational space. It nurtured this space through dreams, labor, and cultural exchanges that motivated and underwrote economic development, but it obscured this space because at the end of the journey, the local worlds made more human sense than the expanding networks of rails, mines, capital, and contracts that connected nations to each other.

Many things set these worlds apart. Borders often emerged from the uneven and unequal relationships of development: some people moved to the centers of power, and others were pushed to the margins; some anchored their lives in smelters and cities, and others toiled at the rural frontiers. Yet even the ragged edges of the copper borderlands had ways of empowering people by creating regions of refuge, autonomy, and mobility that allowed people to inhabit the region on their own terms. Mormons followed their own path by moving between mines, roads, and utopian villages on the Bavispe; Yaquis took similar journeys to preserve autonomy and power vis-à-vis the Mexican state; rural and urban Chinese entrepreneurs found ways to maintain both legal and illegal webs of commerce and migration; and Mexicans, Opatas, Yaquis, and even Mormons frequently left the industrial borderlands during planting and harvesting seasons to sustain safety nets for an unstable modern world in which jobs and wages came and went. Indeed, as it had for generations, mobility offered the best means for living in a world at the margins of state, entrepreneurial, and corporate power.

Ultimately, these separate seen and unseen worlds underscored the gap that still persisted between corporate and state dreams of pinning the borderlands down, and the complicated, messy, and ever-shifting worlds that people called home. The more power corporate and state elites tried to exert over the region—the more space their rails, mines, and smelters consumed—the more it slipped from their grasp. The lustrous dream of the modern world cast a series of long shadows, and these shadows, some feared, seemed to be taking on fugitive lives of their own.

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