

THE TOMBSTONE STAGECOACH LINES, 1878 - 1903:
A STUDY IN FRONTIER TRANSPORTATION

by

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STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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To Aunt Bee,
whose generation remembers.

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PREFACE

The student who turns his attention to the subject of early transportation on the Arizona frontier will note an abundance of published material which has been written on such subjects as the camel experiment, Butterfield's Overland Mail, Wells, Fargo & Co.'s Express, riverboats and railroads. The dramatic and romantic aspects of transportation history have appealed to most writers; significantly, the more work-a-day operations of freight haulers and short-line stage companies have been seriously neglected. This undue lack of scholarly attention may be explained in part by a paucity of surviving records dealing with such businesses. The researcher seeking information on small stage lines--such as those which served Tombstone--encounters frustrating problems. He has to depend heavily upon many partial sources: city and county records, business directories, census reports, travelers' "handbooks" and guide books, maps, photographs, letters, reminiscences, periodicals and newspapers. In this study of the Tombstone stagecoach lines, all these sources and more have been employed to glean information.

If the scarcity of source material has been a deterrent to research in this field, it does not imply that the subject is unimportant. Rather, the situation serves to show that these stage lines, and the valuable services they performed, were taken so much for granted by contemporaries that they rated little more attention than we, today, give any public conveyance. In their heyday, before the railroads, these stagecoach companies served as the prime, and frequently the only, mode of transportation. Throughout the last two decades of the century, they continued in this role, though they fought a losing battle against progress. One by one, the stage lines died as the railroads extended their network, mining districts faded, and people turned more and more to private conveyances. The history both of Tombstone and of its stagecoach lines followed this pattern. The town provided a typical example of an outlying community for which the stage was the main link to the outside world. Transporting passengers, mail and express, the lines contributed directly and indirectly to the frontier economy through cycles of prosperity and depression spanning a period of a quarter of a century.

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ABSTRACT

In 1877 a very rich silver deposit was discovered in southeastern Arizona. The "Tombstone District," as it was named, rapidly developed as the most productive and wealthiest mining area in the Territory. In November of 1878, J. D. Kinnear pioneered a stage line from Tucson to Tombstone. The stagecoach business was so profitable that other entrepreneurs soon entered the field. "Trade wars" between the rival lines resulted in lower fares and better service. Only the most resourceful of the companies survived the heated competition.

Tombstone experienced alternate periods of activity and depression, which invariably affected stage traffic. The early booming economy of the town suffered serious setbacks from Indian outbreaks, a plague of crime and violence, the advancing railroad, a series of disastrous fires, discovery of water in the rich mines, and the vicissitudes of the silver market.

The nationwide depression of the 1890's made Tombstone a virtual ghost town. Stage service to the town continued on a greatly curtailed basis until the revival of mining activity in 1901. There was a brief

period of prosperity for the sole remaining stage line.

In 1903 a railroad branch was extended to Tombstone,
ending the twenty-five year era of the stagecoach.

CHAPTER I

"AND MORE PEOPLE COMING . . ."

To the overland traveler of the early 1850's, the mountainous country of the far Southwest presented a difficult barrier on the way to the rich gold fields of California. It was a land of forbidding climate, devastating deserts and hostile Indians. Its inhabitants spoke a foreign tongue and practiced strange customs. With very few settlements, and even less "civilization," this was a wasteland to be crossed as best one could; not a place to tarry. But, the trails which passed through the formidable wastelands south of the Gila River (then in northernmost Mexico) were used with increasing frequency by overland travelers to the far West. It soon became evident that despite its difficulties this was the best all-weather route for a transcontinental wagon road and railroad to California. In 1854, the desire to build such a road led to the Gadsden Purchase.

Shortly after the United States took possession of southern Arizona, enterprising individuals sought to reopen the old Spanish and Mexican mines in the area.

The success of these ventures attracted the interest and capital of Eastern businessmen. The region thus gained importance for its own sake; there was now a demand for transportation, not only through to California, but also into Arizona itself. Though sectional problems delayed the building of the desired railroad, in 1857 the San Antonio and San Diego Mail Line somewhat inefficiently pioneered a stagecoach route across Arizona, still a part of New Mexico Territory.¹ Following in its path in 1858 came John Butterfield's famous Overland Mail Company. For three years, this company brought regular mail and passenger service into and through southern Arizona.² Coincidental with the beginning of the Civil War, the Overland Mail Company's contract was changed to the central route. In the spring of 1861, service along the southern route, through Arizona, was discontinued. Hundreds of men involved in this endeavor removed the

1. See: Emmie Giddings Mahon and Chester V. Kielman, "George H. Giddings and the San Antonio - San Diego Mail Line," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, Vol. 61, no. 2 (1957) 233; and Phocion R. Way, "Overland Via Jackass Mail in 1858: The Diary of....," William A. Duffen, ed., Arizona and the West Vol. 2 (1960) 35-53, 147-164, 279-292, 353-370.

2. For a history of this company see: Roscoe P. and Margaret B. Conkling, The Butterfield Overland Mail, 1857-1869, (3 vols.) Glendale, California, 1947.

company's stock and supplies, leaving the Territory without mails or public transportation.³

During the war, further mining discoveries north of the Gila River brought hopeful prospectors into the vast unknown area of central Arizona.⁴ As news of these strikes spread, increased interest in Arizona led to efforts to attain territorial status separate from New Mexico. Untiring efforts brought success; on February 24, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed the act which created the Territory of Arizona.⁵ Government was established, and the way was open for an influx of adventurers into the new gold and silver districts. But the "rush" was forestalled by an almost complete lack of public transportation. Because of the war, federal troops had been withdrawn, leaving virtually no protection

3. Oscar O. Winther, "The Southern Overland Mail and Stagecoach Line, 1857-1861," New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. 62 N. 2 (April 1957), 106.

4. Gold deposits were found at La Paz and Rich Hill in 1863. In the same year, Henry Wickenburg discovered gold and silver in the Vulture Mountains. See: H. H. Bancroft, History of Arizona and New Mexico, 1530-1888, San Francisco, 1889, 497-500, 578-581.

5. Charles D. Poston and Sylvester Mowry, who both had substantial mining interests in southern Arizona, were instrumental in the efforts to attain territorial status for Arizona. For a history of the formation of the territory see: B. Sacks, Be It Enacted: The Creation of the Territory of Arizona, Phoenix, 1964.

from the Apaches.⁶ Tucson, Arizona's major community, was almost isolated, and most of the nearby mines were abandoned. Finally, late in 1867, southern Arizona was again linked with the East by a stage line. A year later, the Arizona Stage Line connected Tucson with California via the Colorado River camps of Ehrenberg and La Paz.⁷ Other stage companies followed, and the next two decades brought a flood of miners, merchants, ranchers and small entrepreneurs. Stage, express and freight lines were established to serve the needs of newly discovered, but often short-lived, mining districts.

In 1876, the Southern Pacific Company began building eastward from Los Angeles, promising swift and practical transportation directly into the heart of Arizona's mining bonanzas. The long awaited railroad foreshadowed the end of the stagecoach era. Even before it had crossed the Colorado River, the "Iron Horse" had begun to devour the profitable routes of its predecessors, but in their forced retreat, the stage lines continued service into Arizona. Since transportation on this booming frontier was a prime necessity, the trains,

6. (Prescott) Arizona Miner, March 9, 1864.

7. John and Lillian Theobald, Arizona Territory Post Offices and Postmasters, Phoenix 1961, 38f. As early as 1864, Prescott, the new territorial capital, had been served by mail lines. Passenger service between Santa Fe and Prescott began about 1866.

bringing additional people, in fact increased traffic for the Arizona stage lines. Some companies found it necessary to purchase more coaches and additional stock. In certain areas new companies were also established, though their proprietors knew from the outset that they would serve only briefly.⁸ Meanwhile, the railroad pressed on, by mid-1877, approaching Arizona's west border.⁹

On a late summer's day in the same year, an itinerant stage driver and prospector stood on a hill overlooking the San Pedro River and squinted through a pair of field glasses. Edward L. Schieffelin, late of

8. The Kerens and Mitchell Company, Southern Pacific Mail Stage Line, established in 1874 as a major stage line between San Diego and Mesilla (on the old Butterfield route) lost its California business as the railroad advanced eastward. Yet, the increasing numbers of passengers brought to the Arizona border by the trains created a heavy, though brief, demand for coach service to Arizona towns and mining districts. In 1878 the Kearns and Griffith Company, an outgrowth of the Kearns and Mitchell firm, established eastward service from Yuma. In less than a year, the railroad would also make this service obsolete, but the immediate opportunity was so great that ten new stagecoaches were ordered from the factory in Concord, New Hampshire, to accomodate the heavy business for as long as it should last. (Tucson) Arizona Star, September 19, 1878; Hiram C. Hodge, Arizona as it is; or The Coming Country, New York, 1877, 204, 205; and Richard J. Hinton, The Hand-Book to Arizona, New York, 1878 (Reprinted edition, Tucson, 1954) 370f.

9. David F. Myrick, "Railroads of Arizona" Brand Book XII, The Westerners, Los Angeles Corral, 1966, 22.

Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Nevada and California, had recently come to the promising valleys of southern Arizona. After prospecting for a time with little success near the newly established Camp Huachuca,¹⁰ Schieffelin hired out as a guard for two men who were working the old "Bronco" Mine.¹¹ Now scanning the valley for Indians, Schieffelin studied the landscape with his field glasses for any sign of formations worth prospecting. With considerable interest, he noticed outcroppings in the hills some nine miles to the northeast, near the foot of the Dragoon Mountains. When he checked the area, he found some "promising pieces of 'float'" which, later assayed, proved to be very high quality ore. The following winter, with the help of his brother Al, and Richard Gird, a skilled engineer and

10. Ray Brandes, Frontier Military Posts of Arizona, Globe, Arizona, 1960, 40.

11. "History of the Discovery of Tombstone, Arizona, as told by the Discoverer, Edward Schieffelin," typed manuscript on file in the Ed Schieffelin collection, Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society (hereinafter cited as A.P.H.S.). The Brunkow Mine was discovered in 1859 by Frederick Brunkow, a Prussian geologist, mineralogist and mining engineer, employed by the Sonora Exploring and Mining Company at Tubac. Brunkow and three companions were killed at this mine on July 23, 1860, by Mexican employees, apparently for the first run of bullion from the mine. The mine lay idle during the Civil War, but in the late 1860's and 1870's a number of men attempted to work the claim. Some seventeen men were said to have lost their lives there, and the "Bronco" became notorious for its history of violence. Though the mine never produced any rich ore, Brunkow had noted that "in that belt would be discovered someday vast mineral treasures." Charles D. Poston, "In Memoriam", Tucson Arizona Weekly Star, February 19, 1880.

assayer,¹² Ed Schieffelin located the fabulously high grade ore bodies which he named the "Lucky Cuss," "Tough Nut" and "Contention" mines. These claims were the nucleus of what developed into the Tombstone Mining District. The great excitement over Schieffelin's discoveries brought a rush of miners all intent in staking out claims in the area. Several small camps, such as Richmond and Watervale, sprang up and vied for the distinction of the principal townsite. But, it was a settlement on "Goose Flat" which became the town known as Tombstone.¹³

Tombstone grew "like Topsy," with miners, and their usual followers, flocking to the site. A visitor to the camp, late in its first year, described the bustling, chaotic scene and the character of those attracted to it:

On the principal street, lined with adobe buildings, large tents, and frame structures, we find nearly every other building is a saloon.... Some are full of rough-looking men, miners and others with quite a sprinkling of red-nosed bloated

12. Richard Gird and Al Schieffelin had been working for the Signal Mining and Milling Company on the Big Sandy River in Mohave County. Gird had been offered general superintendency of the company. The ore sample found by Ed Schieffelin was so rich, and the prospects so promising, that Gird gave up a certain future with the company, outfitted an expedition with his own money, and left with Al and Ed Schieffelin to prospect the unknown and Indian infested country to the south. "Schieffelin Ms."; Sharlot M. Hall, "The Man Who Found His Tombstone", Out West Vol. XXVI, no. 3 (March 1907), 216-233; Richard Gird, "True Story of the Discovery of Tombstone", Out West Vol. XXVII no. 1 (July 1907), 39-50.

13. "The Private Journal of George Whitwell Parsons". Ms., A.P.H.S., February 23, 1880. (Cited hereafter as "Parsons' Diary".

looking gentry, plainly belonging to the ancient order of the mining camp bummer.... Gambling is in full blast, and the monotonous calling of numbers, with the occasional cry of "Keno," in a stifling atmosphere of stove-heat, unwashed humanity, whisky fumes, and a cloud of tobacco-smoke in the midst of the crowd, is soon sufficiently satisfying to induce retreat; and the sweet air of heaven on emerging is so refreshing that it sets a person wondering where the fun comes in to induce men to work like horses only to spend their money in such places as so many foolish, hard-working yet honest-meaning miners do.¹⁴

Elsewhere, the visitor's attention was attracted to the sounds of dance music and an illuminated sign marked "VARIETIES":

We enter a very large framed tent, probably 100 feet long. A liquor-bar is on one side, and several tables for gambling on the other; but business does not appear to be very brisk. The crowd is a motley one, --mingled Mexican and white, mostly dirty and ill-dressed, and some half-drunk.. The music (!) is from a room at the far end of the structure, where four women and several men are dancing, or rather stumbling and rolling through a quadrille. The atmosphere is dusty and abominable, but they dance away nevertheless, --the men inanely grinning, the women evidently dancing as a matter of business.... All are homely; and, with the evidences of worthlessness and probably disease stamped on their faces, they form a ghastly picture of LOW TYPE IMMORALITY.¹⁵

It was a "hard crowd" in a lawless camp, as one new resident observed. A "model town", he noted sarcastically, and added tersely in his diary:

14. Adolphus Henry Noon, "A Visit to Tombstone City", Chicago Tribune, January 5, 1879. (Typescript of the article in the Special Collections of the University of Arizona Library.)

15. "Parsons' Diary", February 17, 1880.

Shooting this A.M. and two fellows in afternoon attempted to go for one another with guns and six shooters - but friends interposed. No law other than Miner's and that doesn't sit and deliberate but acts at once.... Talk of killing again tonight. Everyone goes heeled. Jumping claims great cause of trouble.¹⁶

Yet, despite the picture of depravity and lawlessness painted by early visitors, the new town was not without a better side. Adobe buildings were going up in every direction, according to one account. Handsome stores were being fitted up as stocks of goods arrived. A newspaper, the Weekly Nugget, had been publishing a "lively paper" since October of 1879. There were already two drugstores, several lawyers and three or four doctors. "And more people coming," said an observer, "and it looks as if they were coming to stay, for the improvements, though not of marble or with brown-stone fronts, are durable, and intended to be permanent."¹⁷

At the south edge of the town, nestled in the low hills among a tangle of claims, were the all-important

16. Noon, "A Visit to Tombstone City".

17. See: "Topographical Map of Tombstone Mining District, and Richmond Town Site and Water Works," drawn by S. M. Allis, April, 1879. (Reprinted by Donald H. Bufkin, 1964). It is interesting to note that the Tombstone town site does not appear on this early map. For a good indication of the mines in relation to the town, see also: United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey Maps, "Tombstone District, Arizona, edition of 1906, reprinted 1948," and "Tombstone and Vicinity, edition of January 1908, reprinted 1948."

mines. Here, there was constant activity, and a cacaphony of noise: monotonous sawing and hammering of carpenters; clanking of the miners' picks, sledges, drills and shovels; the squealing of wheelbarrows and ore carts. Above the ground and below, in the shafts, drifts and cuts, men toiled to expose veins of silver. The huff and hiss of the steam hoist and the creak of the slow capstain indicated the raising of the ore in great buckets to the surface. A few miles away, at Contention, more men were hard at work on masonry footings and the great framework that would house the reduction plant. This twenty-stamp mill, with capacity for expansion to double that size, was the first of nine such works, whose unceasing roar in the years to come would reverberate across the valley of the San Pedro.¹⁸ Here, the interested capitalist could learn that the bullion product from the mines served by this mill alone would amount to some \$200,000 per month.¹⁹ Tombstone was already booming--"And more people coming...."

18. Noon, "A Visit to Tombstone City"; Thomas R. Sorin, Hand-Book of Tucson and Surroundings, Tucson 1880, 14. According to Sorin, the Contention Mill was completed March 14, 1880. For a good description of the reduction processes of a stamp mill see: Richard W. Fulton, "Millville - Charleston, Cochise County, 1878-1880," The Journal of Arizona History, Vol. VII, no. 1 (1966) 13f.

19. Noon, "A Visit to Tombstone City".

CHAPTER II

HO, FOR TOMBSTONE!

It was mid-October, 1878. A small party of travelers had set out from Silver City, New Mexico, bound for the rumored bonanzas of southern Arizona's newly discovered mining camps. In the lead of a motley procession of riders and wagons was a "Concord" coach,¹ drawn by a pair of mules, and driven by an enterprising Ohioan. This was his first trip through the wilds of Arizona, and he had taken on three passengers. The three, "representing the Celestial Empire," were kindly accomodated by the driver without charge, provided they would walk up all high hills to relieve his mules.

"To see that trio tugging up those hills, ques [sic.] pendant, was highly amusing," remarked one member

1. A Concord coach is the term generally applied to stagecoaches built in Concord, New Hampshire, by the Abbot-Downing Company. There were a variety of styles of these coaches, the most common of which is the classic Western stagecoach. In this case, the coach was most probably the type known as the "Mud Wagon", a light, open bodied coach with canvas top and roll-down canvas sides. For excellent, illustrated descriptions of these frontier conveyances see: Nick Eggenhoffer, Wagons, Mules and Men, New York, 1961, 158-169.

of the party,² who went on to describe the driver of that stagecoach:

Our leader, Mr. Kinear [sic.], was a perfect overland traveler. He would awaken us by singing in low, soft notes, 'Three O'clock and all is well,' repeating this until all were awakened and upon their feet ready for fight or flight. Had it not been for his intrepidity and coolness we would perhaps have never gotten through the perilous mountains, passes and canyons, as there were and are about five hundred of Uncle Samuel's red wards off from their reservations hovering over the route we traveled.³

John Delamore Kinnear was 38 years old when he journeyed to the mining frontier of southern Arizona.⁴ He knew there would be great need for transportation to the new mining camps and intended to capitalize on the

2. Anita Rose, "Glimpses of Border Life in Arizona, 1878-1879", correspondence from San Simon, Arizona Territory, October 16, 1878, to Nevada, Ohio Enterprise. Typescript copies on file at the Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society.

3. Ibid. (Tucson, October 24, 1878.) Renegade Chiricahua Apaches had been on a rampage for more than a year, going on and off the Warm Springs Agency and San Carlos Reservation almost at will. Mail and regular transportation westward from Silver City had all but halted. Vigorous action against the Indians by the Sixth Cavalry in Arizona, New Mexico and Old Mexico finally put a stop to the outbreaks in September of 1878. Although the members of this overland party may not have known it, the danger was, by this time, passed. See: Lt. Col. W. H. Carter, From Yorktown to Santiago with the Sixth U. S. Cavalry, Baltimore, 1900, 189-199 passim.; Andrew Wallace, "Gen. August V. Kautz and the Southwestern Frontier," unpublished Ms. (1967) in the Library of the A.P.H.S., 198-201.

4. Tenth United States Decennial Census, 1880. Enumeration Schedule, Pima County, Arizona. (Hereafter cited as "1880 Census").

demand. He reached Tucson October 18, 1878,⁵ and found a bustling little business community, hot, dusty and dirty. The population was about 6,000, only about 250 of whom were Anglos. The houses were of adobe; the streets were narrow. Rooms and horses were expensive and hard to find. Talk centered on the rich mining discoveries in the Tombstone and Santa Rita mining districts, the resulting rapid increase of immigration, and the large trade being built up with Sonora and Old Mexico.⁶ Tucson seemed the ideal place to locate and establish a transportation service to one of the outlying mining districts. Kinnear soon visited Tombstone and began to form his plans for a stage line. Within a month of his arrival in Tucson, he had investigated the ninety-five mile route to this camp.⁷ He acquired stock to supplement his two "fine" mules, and set up improvised ticket offices in Tucson's Palace and Cosmopolitan Hotels. By mid-November, he was

5. Anita Rose, correspondence from Tucson, October 24, 1878. A comment by diarist George Hand for these days reads, "Dull, nothing new, Town full of strangers." Diary of George O. Hand, October 20, 1878. Ms. in the Library of the A.P.H.S.

6. Anita Rose, correspondence from Tucson, October 24, 1878.

7. The original route, by way of Tres Alamos, was between ninety and ninety-five miles long, going to Tombstone. The return trip to Tucson was considerably shorter. The straightest route to Tombstone was about seventy-five miles. Cf. Sorin, Hand-Book of Tucson, map.

offering once-a-week service to Tombstone. In his initial newspaper advertisement, Kinnear boasted with enthusiasm, "Sam Childs to act as agent, conductor and driver, which alone is sufficient guarantee of giving satisfaction to the public."⁸

On Tuesday mornings, after the arrival of the daily east and west mails at 8 o'clock, Sam Childs would head Kinnear's stagecoach out of Tucson. Traveling at a comfortable pace of about five miles an hour, he would arrive at Cienaga, site of an old Butterfield station, twenty-five miles out,⁹ in time for lunch. After this stop, the coach headed around the point of the Rincon Mountains and down the San Pedro Valley to the outpost of Tres Alamos. There, a ranch, post office and military telegraph station was located at the "lower crossing"

8. Tucson Arizona Citizen (weekly), November 16, 1878. The identity and character of the charming Mr. Childs remains otherwise a mystery. This initial advertisement contains an obvious error, as it notes the coach "will leave Tucson Tuesdays and return Wednesdays. Leave Tombstone Fridays and return Wednesdays." The coach, in fact, left Tombstone Fridays returning to Tucson Saturdays, not Wednesdays. (The ad was corrected December 14.)

9. See: Conkling, The Butterfield Overland Mail, Vol. 2, 152f, Vol. 3, Plate 63, for descriptions of the Cienaga Station.

of the river.¹⁰ At the ranch under the "Three Cotton-woods" the passengers spent the night. At seven o'clock the next morning, the Tucson bound coach of the National Mail and Transportation Company would pull into the station from the East.¹¹ Mail, express and passengers for the Tombstone District were transferred.¹² Kinnear's coach then crossed the river and headed south, thirty-five or forty miles to Tombstone, arriving there sometime Wednesday afternoon. The following day, the stage office in J. B. Allen's store became a scene of activity. Miners and businessmen came in with express orders to be filled in Tucson, while passengers reserved seats for the return

10. E. A. Eckhoff and P. Riecker, "Official Map of the Territory of Arizona", 1880; Sorin, Hand-Book of Tucson, map; Will C. Barnes, Arizona Place Names, University of Arizona General Bulletin No. 2, Tucson 1935, 451.

11. The National Mail and Transportation Company, a subsidiary of the Great Southern Overland Mail Company of St. Louis, began operations between Santa Fe, Mesilla, Silver City and Tucson in October of 1878. The Tucson agents for the company were the firm of Tully and Ochoa. Tucson Arizona Star (weekly), October 24, 1878.

12. There was no regular U. S. Mail contract for the Tombstone route at this time. The Tucson Arizona Citizen of November 2, 1878, complained that there was no mail service to the Tombstone and Santa Rita Districts, except through the courtesy of private individuals. When Kinnear began running his stages two weeks later, it is possible that the firm of Kerens and Mitchell subcontracted with him to deliver the mails to Tombstone. Express matter required no government contracts, and was handled on the local level by individual stage companies or express agencies.

trip.¹³ Early Friday morning, the stage pulled out of Tombstone and headed westward to the San Pedro. It passed the new mill and town at Contention City, and turned northward along the river back to Tres Alamos. There, passengers again spent the night. The next morning, Saturday, they continued the journey westward to Cienaga Station for lunch. Late in the afternoon, or early in the evening, the coach with its weary travelers pulled into Tucson.¹⁴ It was a long, slow and boring trip. But, for most people it was the only way to get back and forth between Tucson and Tombstone.

A number of enterprising ranchers and property owners along the various trails between Tucson and the Tombstone District recognized the potential value of the tourist and immigrant trade. Early in January of 1879, William Ohnesorgen, owner of the old Butterfield stage station on the San Pedro, some fifteen miles south of Tres Alamos, refurbished the old buildings, put them in "complete repair," and offered "excellent meals and neat rooms and beds...for the traveler." In addition, a store connected with the station was supplied with "a complete stock of such goods as will be required by

13. Arizona Citizen, November 16, 1878.

14. Ibid.

Miners, Farmers, and the Traveling Public generally."¹⁵
 Others sought to shorten the route, build stations and toll bridges across the river, and gain for themselves a share of the travelers' money. Such advertisements as this began to appear in the papers:

To Tombstone via Mountain Springs. By traveling this route to Tombstone, you save 6 miles with good gravel road. This road crosses at the Water Holes, and avoids all the bad places. At Mountain Springs Station, hay and grain for stock and Fluids and Solids for the enlightened Animal.¹⁶

Another short cut, the "Mason cut-off", offered travelers a saving of twenty miles in the distance between Tucson and Tombstone, and a crossing of the San Pedro on a "Good New Bridge at the old Wallen Crossing 15 miles above Ohnesorgen's."¹⁷

New conveniences were a definite advantage, and Kinnear made arrangements for the use of William Ohnesorgen's San Pedro Station as a way stop.¹⁸ This route reduced travel time to seventeen hours--a definite improvement over the previous journey of twenty hours and an overnight stay.

15. Ibid., January 11 and January 18, 1879; weekly Arizona Star, January 30, 1879; Cf. Conkling, The Butterfield Overland Mail, II, 149f, for a description of the San Pedro Station.

16. Arizona Citizen, February 8, 1879.

17. Ibid., February 1, 1879.

18. Ibid., January 11, 1879.

The public was still not satisfied. A Tombstone correspondent for the Arizona Star complained early in 1879 that:

The Mail arrived at the unearthly hour of one o'clock this morning when everybody is of course fast asleep. I should think with any sort of horses, say with three changes, it could be made in daylight instead of coming at snail's pace and keeping passengers seventeen hours on the journey.¹⁹

Sometimes the stage did not make the trip in the seventeen hours--or even in the old period of twenty hours. On one occasion in February, the Arizona Citizen complained that "The stage did not arrive till 7 o'clock this morning: it started from Tucson at 7 yesterday morning."²⁰ Such criticism did not hinder the success of the "Tucson and Tombstone Mail and Express", as the line was now called. In fact, it soon became evident that Kinnear would have to increase his service to meet the demand. After only ten round trips, he doubled his runs. Now, the coach left Tucson Mondays and Fridays, and Tombstone Wednesdays and Saturdays, making two complete trips each week. In addition, he established a permanent business office in B. W. Rice's Drug Store,

19. Correspondence from Tombstone signed "Omeo" in the Tucson (daily) Arizona Star, January 31, 1879.

20. Arizona Citizen, February 8, 1879. This undue delay may have been caused by a storm which is mentioned elsewhere in the same newspaper.

opposite the L. M. Jacobs Company on Congress Street in Tucson.²¹ For this office he hired an agent in the person of H. C. Walker to sell tickets and take express orders. The fare was set at ten dollars each way.²²

Kinnear's profitable "carriage trade" did not go unnoticed. A rival appeared almost immediately to contend for the lucrative Tombstone passenger business. The new "Pioneer Tombstone Stage Line" was established by a young merchant, A. J. Cadwell.²³ This line offered travelers the benefit of "good horses and conveyances" on the single round trip a week.²⁴ The main office was in Cadwell and Stanford's Store on Allen Street in Tombstone. In Tucson, offices for the line were located in the Star Livery Stable, on the corner of Meyer and Pennington

21. (Daily) Arizona Star, January 12, 1879.

22. Arizona Citizen, January 18, 1879; and (weekly) Arizona Star, January 30, 1879.

23. Andrew J. Cadwell, a twenty-two year old Californian, and James O. Stanford, a seventeen year old native of New York, had opened a general merchandise store in Tombstone, 1880 Census, (Tombstone). The first advertisement for the Pioneer Tombstone Stage Line appeared in the (daily) Arizona Star, January 12, 1879, under "New Advertisements". It may have been in operation prior to that time, however, for this ad noted that the line had been "restocked and taken over by A. H. Cadwell," (perhaps a brother, but of whom no record can be found).

Streets.²⁵ Cadwell's stage took a different and somewhat shorter road to Tombstone. His route ran south from Cienaga, followed the east side of the Santa Rita Mountains past the Empire and Mescal Ranches, along the north end of the Mustang Mountains to Turner Station (later Huachuca Siding) in the vicinity of old Camp Wallen. At Turner's the passengers spent the night, coming into Tombstone the next day.²⁶ The fare, a challenge to the old line, was set at seven dollars each way.²⁷ Kinnear appears to have taken little notice of the competition. The Pioneer Line certainly did not hurt his business. In the late spring there was sufficient demand to warrant Kinnear's adding an extra coach. For more than a month in March and April he ran four round trips each week.²⁸ Cadwell's efforts, despite a fare three dollars lower than

25. According to contemporary newspaper ads, the Star Corral and Livery Stable was owned by J. D. Vaughn. The business continued to thrive long after Cadwell's Pioneer Stage Line had passed from the scene.

26. Eckhoff and Riecker Map, 1880; and Sorin, Hand-Book of Tucson, map; for a description of this route, which was far more scenic than the usual road, see: the (weekly) Arizona Star, March 27, 1879.

27. (Daily) Arizona Star, January 12, 1879.

28. Arizona Citizen, March 14, 1879, to April 18, 1879, when the trips were cut back to three a week. During this period, coaches left Tucson Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays, and left Tombstone Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, traveling the route in seventeen hours.

that established by Kinnear, lasted only a few months. The Pioneer Tombstone Stage Line faded from the field, but a new and more serious rival was on the horizon.

Another young man who aspired to be a stage line entrepreneur was Kinnear's own agent, Howard C. Walker. This slightly built South Carolinian was 27 years old, somewhat a dandy, and living high (it would seem) in Tucson with three young female housekeepers.²⁹ He quit his job with Kinnear in September to form a new stage line in partnership with William Ohnesorgen, the young German rancher and owner of the San Pedro Station. Ohnesorgen was a square-set, genial Hanoverian whose character seemed to fit the meaning of his name (literally, "without worries"). At the age of 18, he had broken away from his family, immigrants to Texas, and for adventure had come to Arizona in 1868. At first, he had been employed in Tucson as a carpenter and as a clerk in Morris Lesinsky's store.³⁰ His brother, who had also come to the Territory, in 1874 had purchased from J. G. and J. J. Duncan, J. L. Renshaw and L. W. Fowler the stage station on the San

29. 1880 Census, Tucson.

30. Portrait and Biographical Record of Arizona, Chicago, 1901, 968; "reminiscences of William Ohnesorgen" as told to Mrs. George F. Kitt, October 22, 1929, typed manuscript on file at the A. P. H. S. (Hereinafter cited as "Ohnesorgen Reminiscences").

Pedro River (about three-quarters of a mile downstream from present Benson). Young "Billy" was sent to take charge of the place.³¹ The ranch and station, built originally by the Overland Mail Company in 1858, was situated where the great Overland Mail road crossed the San Pedro.³² It was a very fertile and choice location. For several years, Ohnesorgen had supplied army troops with forage and provisions, and stage lines and freighting teams with hay and grain. On the ranch, he raised cattle, and for a time, sheep.³³ Billy Ohnesorgen's twinkling eyes and full face were familiar to overland travelers in the 1870's, and though they could not spell his name, his place was a well-known and welcome stop for all.

On September 15, 1879, the partnership of "Ohnesorgen and Walker" was formed to be "in the business of carrying on a general stage line between the City of Tucson and Tombstone Mining District."³⁴ The

31. "Ohnesorgen Reminiscences"; 1880 Census, Tucson; and Arizona Citizen, March 7, 1874.

32. Ibid.; and Conkling, Butterfield Overland Mail, II, 149f.

33. "Ohnesorgen Reminiscences".

34. County Records of Pima County Arizona, on file in the Office of the County Recorder, Miscellaneous Records, Book 1, 716-718. (Hereinafter cited as Pima County Records.)

formal contract of agreement was to last exactly one year. It was known, the Southern Pacific Railroad building eastward from the Colorado River would have crossed Arizona by then. This would likely end the demand for stagecoach transportation between Tucson and Tombstone. Until that time, the co-partners pledged equally of their resources, attendance, and efforts to the enterprise, "and do their... best endeavors and to the utmost of their skill and power exert themselves for their joint interest, profit, benefit, and advantage...."³⁵ The Tombstone office, like Kinnear's, was located in Allen's store. Walker himself was to serve as the Tucson agent in an office on Congress Street, just opposite Safford, Hudson & Company's Bank. Ohnesorgen built a bridge of heavy timbers over the San Pedro crossing on his ranch. The cost of this undertaking was \$950, and to help offset this, Ohnesorgen charged a toll.³⁶ Since early January, Kinnear had used Ohnesorgen's San Pedro Station as a way stop. Now, he was obliged to look elsewhere for a station and a new route. The previous March, Kinnear had purchased a well site, known as Ash Spring, on the north end of the Whetstone Mountains. This

35. Ibid.

36. Notice in the Arizona Citizen, August 8, 1879; Tombstone Weekly Nugget, October 2, 1879; and "Ohnesorgen Reminiscences."

he developed as his new way-station, on a road crossing the river at the "Upper Crossing", near the present town of St. David.³⁷ This new route of Kinnear's shortened the total distance by about eight miles, which somewhat offset the advantages of Ohnesorgen's bridge. Ohnesorgen and Walker undoubtedly had been developing their plans for some time, for within only a very few days of the signing of the partnership agreement, arrangements for offices had been made, coaches and stock had been purchased, and the co-partners had launched their new stage line to Tombstone.³⁸

Howard Walker and William Ohnesorgen had little practical experience in running a stage line, but the demands and the opportunities were so great that they were determined to make as much money as they could, before the advancing railroad pushed them out of business. The rivals began an aggressive campaign to take customers away from Kinnear's Tucson and Tombstone Mail and Express Line. The enthusiastic pair had four hundred posters printed to announce the new stage line. These were distributed and displayed along the entire route.³⁹

37. Pima County Records, Deeds, Book 4, 732; Eckhoff and Riecker Map, 1880; and (weekly) Arizona Star, September 25, 1879.

38. (Weekly) Arizona Star, September 25, 1879.

39. Ibid.

Their initial newspaper advertisement proclaimed: "Through by daylight; time 13 hours; over the best roads in Arizona, crossing the San Pedro at Ohnesorgen's Bridge. No detention on account of high water. Lowest freight rates and careful handling." They offered a fare "reduced to \$7.00."⁴⁰ Faster time and lower fares---this was a direct challenge to Kinnear. This rival, offering in addition three trips a week, could not be ignored. So began a great trade battle, much to the delight of the traveling public and the newspapers:

Yesterday morning /Friday, September 19/ in front of the Post Office the new line by Ohnesorgen and Walker bid for travel at \$7. While Kinnear, the proprietor of the old line bid under to the tune of \$4, and as both coaches were filled to overflow long before the hour of departure, many passengers were turned away without benefit of low fare and fast time. At 7 A.M. Kinnear's coach rolled out with four spanking horses in perfect trim for the contest. A few moments thereafter, the new line with four large sleek mules struck out for their trial trip to Tombstone. The former takes the new road, via Ash Spring; the latter, via Ohnesorgen's. It is a matter of interest which will make the quickest time. The old line has the advantage of having its stock trained to the work. The mules are fat and have not been in harness for some months, but a few days will bring them down to their work. Both lines are a credit to their owners.⁴¹

40. This initial advertisement appeared in the (weekly) Arizona Star, September 18. The line made its initial run the next day.

41. (Weekly) Arizona Star, September 25, 1879.

Kinnear's experience and his veteran stock "in perfect trim for the contest" stood him in good stead in this first of many such races. His coach loaded with nine passengers pulled into Tombstone in a record time of eleven hours and forty minutes.⁴² The contest was close, however; Tucson attorney Webster Street, traveling on Ohnesorgen and Walker's similarly loaded coach, claimed they would surely have won, but for some slight misfortunes. "We unfortunately lost a nut from the fore wheel which came off, letting our coach turn over. Fortunately, no one was hurt and after thirty-five or forty minutes delay, we pushed on only to lose more time by taking the wrong road."⁴³ On the return trip, the new line, with no problems, successfully outdistanced the old, making the trip in ten and a half hours, and arriving in Tucson at five-thirty in the afternoon, some four hours ahead of schedule.⁴⁴ As the competition grew hotter, Howard Walker complained that some vandal had apparently defaced and torn down most of the four hundred posters put up along the way by his line, and he offered a reward of ten

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.; and Daily Arizona Citizen, September 24, 1879.

44. (Weekly) Arizona Star, September 25, 1879.

dollars for the arrest and conviction of the culprit.⁴⁵

Public sentiment seemed to be on the side of Ohnesorgen and Walker. "Opposition is the life of business", Lawyer Street noted, "We think Mr. Walker deserves the thanks and a share of the patronage of the public...."⁴⁶ "The traveling community are certainly under obligations to Mr. Walker for the improvements, the shortening of the time and reduction of the fare," stated the editor of the Star.⁴⁷

"The new stage line reduced the fare. Patronize it," echoed the first edition of the new Tombstone newspaper.⁴⁸ Competition resulted in immediate improvement in the service. Now, six coaches each week ran to and from Tombstone. This was a great convenience to the traveling public, as was evidenced by the fact that the coaches were loaded to capacity for each trip.

Throughout the month of September, the rivalry continued, one victory going to the old line, the next to the new opposition. The contestants were well matched, and though they traveled by different routes, after some seventy-five miles and ten or eleven hours on the road, the two coaches would sometimes come in only five

45. Ibid.

46. Daily Arizona Citizen, September 24, 1879.

47. Arizona Star, September 25, 1879.

48. Tombstone Weekly Nugget (Vol. 1 no. 1) October 2, 1879.

minutes apart.⁴⁹ The races stimulated travel and business. They also provided amusement and excitement for the people, but for the horses and mules they were exhausting. As an observer noted:

The stage stock looked somewhat tired, but none too much for business. This is a fast age and a fast people especially on the Pacific Coast, and the people like fast lines, opposition stage lines that try to accomodate the traveling public.⁵⁰

But a number of perceptive business people, though pleased that the competition had lowered the fares and freight rates and shortened travel time, began to realize that it was a waste of effort to have two filled stagecoaches running the same day and no coaches the next day.⁵¹ There followed talks and a logical agreement by the two lines to make the trip on alternate days. The Ohnesorgen and Walker stages now left Tucson Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, and Tombstone Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Kinnear's trips were made Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from Tucson, and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from Tombstone.⁵² This arrangement, in effect, gave daily service between the two towns. The competition cooled, briefly, the races ended, and the drivers slowed their

49. Tucson Arizona Daily Star, September 26, 1879.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. Weekly Nugget, October 2, 1879.

teams. But, the customers had been spoiled. No longer did the racing stages arrive in the early evening, and no longer could businessmen answer letters by return mail.⁵³

Simultaneously, another development created a considerable problem with the mails. An Eastern mail speculator was successful in obtaining from the Post Office Department a contract to carry the mails from Tucson to Tombstone.⁵⁴ There had not previously been a specific contract for this, and Kinnear had been carrying the mail on a sub-contract basis. Beginning October 1, 1879, the new contractor, one Edward Gannon,⁵⁵ set up a stage line, primarily for the purpose of delivering the mail. The route, specified by the contract, was a circuitous one, passing through the Empire Ranch, Camp

53. Ibid.

54. Arizona Daily Star, September 26, 1879.

55. Official Register of the United States, containing a list of Officers and Employees in the Civil, Military, and Naval Service on the First of July, 1881, (Vol. II, Post-Office Department and the Postal Service.) Washington, 1881, 65. Hereinafter cited as Official Register of the United States, 1881. Edward Gannon had "Star Route" mail carrying contracts (i.e. other than railroad) in Pennsylvania, Ohio, several in Florida, and two in Arizona. Gannon did not advertise his stage line in the newspapers, and although they refer to this line, the papers never mention the name of the line or the location of the office. The Arizona Daily Star of October 12, 1879, notes that the Tucson agent for the line is a man named B. A. Fickas. See above n. 12 for the situation as it existed before the Gannon Line began its postal service.

Huachuca and Charleston.⁵⁶ Some were leary of the change, even before it was effected. "It would seem from the contract price," (\$800 a year) warned the editor of the Star, "that the government speculator will have to carry the mail on his back and make better time than the 'rivals' to get into Tombstone on time."⁵⁷ The pessimism was not unfounded, and within a week of the beginning of the new mail line, the forebodings became complaints from both ends of the road. Mail was now coming in six hours behind schedule, and twelve hours later than Kinnear had previously delivered it.⁵⁸ Within three weeks the citizens of Tucson and Tombstone had petitioned the Post Office Department for a change, or a new and direct postal route to Tombstone.⁵⁹ But, despite continuing complaints, some

56. Arizona Daily Star, September 26, October 12, 1879; the Daily Arizona Citizen, in a "Post Office Directory", October 30, 1879, noted that the mails arrived from Tombstone, Empire Ranch, Camp Huachuca and Charleston at seven a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and departed at seven a.m. Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. This route was approximately the same traveled by Cadwell's earlier Pioneer Line. See above, n. 25.

57. See above n. 12; Arizona Daily Star, September 26, 1879. The contract salary was actually \$849 per annum. Official Register of the United States, 1881, II, 65.

58. Arizona Daily Star, October 8, 1879.

59. Ibid., October 8, 22, 1879.

calling the situation an "outrage and insult",⁶⁰ no changes were made for a full five months.

As the problem with the mails became more and more difficult, the stage line proprietors sought to alleviate the situation by offering private mail delivery through their own express services. To the great convenience of the local business people, mail was picked up, carried and rapidly delivered between Tucson and Tombstone at a cost of five cents a letter.⁶¹ Postal matter coming from or going to other points, however, was limited to the slow, thrice-weekly trips of Gannon's line. Now, more than ever, express and freight services were dependent upon the two major lines, and here also the competition had resulted in improvement. Kinnear offered a reduction in his freight rates from five to three cents per pound, "cheaper than any other mail line in Arizona."⁶² At this time, he also moved his Tucson operations from Rice's Drug Store into the local Wells Fargo office in the Loard & Williams Building. He then hired Claude Anderson as agent to replace H. C. Walker. Anderson had for some time also been the Tucson agent for Kerens

60. Ibid., November 30, 1879.

61. Ibid., October 8, 1879; and Parsons' Diary, February 18, 1880. The regular postal rate was 3¢ a letter.

62. Weekly Nugget, October 2, 1879.

and Griffith's Southern Pacific Mail and Stage Line, and representative for Wells, Fargo & Company.⁶³

The mine owners, notably the Gird and Schieffelin interests, were among the first to benefit from the improved freight express. From the inception of Kinnear's line, the principal mining and milling companies tried to negotiate an arrangement for the transport of bullion (refined silver and gold) by stage to Tucson. Kinnear had steadfastly refused to carry this dangerous cargo, so the miners, themselves, were obliged to haul the heavy bars of precious metal. The slow wagons bristled with their own guards, protecting shipments valued up to twenty-five and thirty thousand dollars.⁶⁴ By the first of November, the new competition had driven the Tucson and Tombstone Mail and Express to seek all the business and prestige it could get. Kinnear concluded an agreement with the Tombstone Mill and Mining Company and the Corbin and Gird Mills to carry the valuable ingots on his stagecoaches.⁶⁵

63. Daily Arizona Citizen, October 29, 1879.

64. Schieffelin Ms.; Arizona Daily Star, October 18, 1879.

65. Schieffelin Ms. It is not clear what type of protection Kinnear was able to offer for this shipment. There is no substantial evidence that he had a Wells Fargo contract at this time.

Travel to the Tombstone District continued to increase; John Kinnear recognized the demand by inaugurating daily service on his stage line at the end of October. In addition, he began to enlarge and improve his way station at Ash Springs on the north end of the Whetstone Mountains, to better accomodate the increasing numbers of travelers.⁶⁶ Billy Ohnesorgen and Howard Walker took up the challenge. Adding a brand new and "elegant" coach to their line, on November 10 they also began daily runs.⁶⁷ The trade battle entered a fierce new phase of seemingly "no holds barred" competition. A number of incidents of sabotage were reported by Ohnesorgen and Walker. A "splendid" four horse team was poisoned at their corral in Tucson, apparently not killing them, but making them unfit for use. On November 12, Ohnesorgen and Walker's Tucson agent, A. B. Leach, reported four mules and two horses "strayed or stolen" and offered a reward for information as to their whereabouts.⁶⁸ Two days later, Marshall Williams, agent for the same line at Tombstone, discovered that an axle nut had been removed during the

66. Arizona Daily Star, October 30, November 14, 1879.

67. Ibid., November 7, 1879.

68. Ibid., November 12, 1879.

night in an apparent attempt to upset or break down the stage at the outset of the race the next morning. Under the heading "A Bad Business", the Star reported the dastardly deed, and directing a subtle accusation at Kinnear, noted with alarm:

This is the second occurrence of this kind, and it is to be hoped some means may be found to catch the villains..... Who perpetrates these outrages? Who or what prompts and pays for them? The perpetrators will be caught and punished if there is detective skill and law in the territory.⁶⁹

The races began anew, with each line harnessing six-horse teams in order to make better time. Coaches now came in as a matter of course, in eleven, ten and even nine hours. The rivals were no longer able to "sell" speed alone. They began to turn their attention to the convenience and comfort of the passengers. With a fancy new advertisement, picturing a stagecoach a full gallop, Kinnear boasted:

This route which is the BEST and Shortest, is over a beautiful rolling country and for many miles passes through fine groves of timber, while magnificent mountain scenery relieves the monotony generally accompanying stage travel.⁷⁰

The description can only be termed most generous, but it serves to illustrate that John D. Kinnear was certainly

69. Ibid., November 16, 1879.

70. Ibid., November 20, 1879.

an imaginative salesman. The new line, not to be outdone, guaranteed "a more comfortable ride over better roads," and moreover, they reduced the fare to five dollars.⁷¹ The price war began in earnest, as Kinnear met this reduction, then lowered his fare to four dollars each way, and his freight rates to one and a half cents per pound.⁷² At the same time, he launched a campaign to demonstrate that he was a progressive business man who had the interests of the public foremost in mind. First, for the convenience of the location, he moved his Tucson agency for the stage line into the Palace Hotel on Meyer Street, the largest in town. There, in a remodeled and spacious office, he was able to afford the traveling public, stopping at the hotel, "all the accommodations incident to a railroad station."⁷³ Having also improved his station at Ash Springs, Kinnear now undertook to build a short-cut road from that place to Contention City. This cut-off, completed in mid-December, saved a distance of some eight miles, and considerably shortened the traveling time.⁷⁴ To serve the growing camp of

71. Ibid., December 7, 1879; and (weekly) Arizona Citizen, November 29, 1879.

72. Arizona Daily Star, December 5, 1879.

73. Ibid., December 5, 6, 1879.

74. Ibid., December 7, 21, 1879.

Contention, Kinnear established an office there, hiring as his agent the genial John McDermott, proprietor of the "Bank Exchange" (a saloon).⁷⁵ Further, with an eye for public relations, "The Old Pioneer", as Kinnear was becoming known, set about gathering an exhibit of minerals from the Arizona mines. These fascinating and colorful "rocks", to which he actually owed his livelihood, Kinnear placed on display for the public in his Tucson office.⁷⁶ It was a clever "drawing card", and one which was appreciated by the community, gaining publicity and admiration for him. Lastly, in mid-December, at the height of the competition, the Tucson and Tombstone Mail and Express reduced its fares to a ridiculous low of three dollars, each way.⁷⁷

Ohnesorgen and Walker were unable to match all of Kinnear's fast-moving improvements, but they responded to his challenges with an aggressive campaign of their own. For the benefit of businessmen and travelers in the lower San Pedro Valley, the Globe-Tres Alamos mail route was extended south to Ohnesorgen's Station. Buckboards were added to connect with the Tucson and

75. Ibid., December 11, 1879.

76. Ibid., December 13, 1879.

77. Ibid., December 18, 1879.

Tombstone coaches.⁷⁸ This mail was carried by a reliable private express, for which the line was well known, and which was praised as being "in all respects similar to Wells, Fargo & Co.'s."⁷⁹ It may have been this superior express service which was responsible late in December for the Tombstone and Corbin mill and mining companies discontinuing their contract with Kinnear (after only two months) and awarding a new contract with Ohnesorgen and Walker's line to carry bullion from the mills to Tucson.⁸⁰ The partners did not stop at these improvements. They established an agency in Los Angeles to promote their line at the greatest source for potential customers. This was the embarkation point for the Southern Pacific Railroad, which was now bringing increasing numbers of Californians to Southern Arizona.⁸¹ They further sought to lure passengers by

78. (Weekly) Arizona Citizen, December 13, 1879.

79. Arizona Daily Star, November 7, 1879.

80. Daily Arizona Citizen, December 30, 1879. This source notes that under the new contracts, the first consignment of bullion was to arrive the same day. An earlier newspaper story, in the Arizona Daily Star, December 21, noted that on the previous day (December 20) H. C. Walker had dropped a bullion brick while unloading it from his stage and had smashed some bones in his foot. The line must, therefore, have been carrying bullion at least ten days earlier.

81. (Weekly) Arizona Citizen, December 27, 1879.

promising them better meals, more comfortable and faster passage, and by carrying them "as cheaply as any line that advertises." To compete with the price battle waged by their rival, they met his reductions all the way down to the low of three dollars.⁸²

The great trade battle was a boon to passengers and merchants, but the month of December must have been very difficult for the two stage lines and their proprietors. At three dollars per ticket and one and a half cents per pound of freight, neither company was making money. In fact, Billy Ohnesorgen was obliged to mortgage his ranch for the sum of three thousand dollars to recoup the losses he had suffered, and to stay in business.⁸³ Toward the end of December, it became evident that the all-out price war had failed, that neither side was going to succeed in driving the other out of business, nor could either stand the financial losses any longer. Finally, the rival stagemen got together to settle the matter, and on Christmas Day they announced a compromise. Fares for both lines were set at seven dollars each way, and freight at three cents per pound.⁸⁴

82. Arizona Daily Star, December 18, 1879.

83. Pima County Records, Mortgages, Book 3, 431-433.

84. Arizona Daily Star, December 25, 1879.

Even with this agreement, competition never flagged. As the old year ended, Ohnesorgen and Walker purchased another fine new four-horse Concord coach, and extended their line from Tombstone on to Charleston.⁸⁵ Kinnear continued to improve and shorten his route, finally reducing it to only sixty-five miles.⁸⁶ Though the travel time was not substantially changed, he impressed his passengers by attaching an odometer to the wheel of the coach, demonstrating graphically the number of miles they had saved by taking his short cuts.⁸⁷ The advertising battles raged on, with continuing emphasis on "reduced fares", convenience, good food, comfort, speed, and still, scenery:

Don't forget the old reliable stage line for Tombstone, J. D. Kinnear, proprietor. This is now and always has been the shortest and pleasantest route. To strangers who having passed over the desert, from Yuma to Tucson, tired and disgusted with alkali plains, and slow coaching, are [sic.] always pleased when they ride over this line. The grass, timber and mountain scenery on this route are always interesting to the traveler. Take this line; any comfort assured, no eggnog in the bill.⁸⁸

85. Daily Arizona Citizen, December 30, 1879.

86. This is according to his advertisement in the Arizona Daily Star, March 16, 1880. If true, Kinnear's route was even shorter than the route of the modern highway, which is sixty-nine miles from Tucson to Tombstone.

87. Daily Arizona Citizen, January 16, 1880.

88. Arizona Daily Star, January 3, 1880.

The cross-country races also continued, with both stages leaving at seven o'clock each morning. Lashes cracking, they rattled down Tucson's narrow Meyer Street and cut out across the valleys, down the canyons and up the hills. A passenger on Ohnesorgen and Walker's coach, writing in his diary, described the ride to Tombstone in these words:

Six of us on top with driver....I sat on back seat facing rear. Pleasant day. Twenty-five miles out--we changed horses at Cienaga Wells and bowled along pleasantly another 25 miles to Ohnesorgen Station on the mesa where we took six horses and new driver. Orders to drive fast to beat opposition stage. Fine driver but he had to be very cruel to horses to obey orders consequence was we made the 16 miles to Contention Mills in an hour and a half about 11 miles an hour. Horses on dead jump all of the time and nearly dead when we arrived at C. Afraid one leader will die. Up hill and down on dead run. Fine for us but death to horses. Four new horses the remaining ten miles from "C". Up hill we had to get off and out--12 or 13 passengers--and walk up one hill. Reached Tombstone about 6:30 behind the opposition nearly an hour.⁸⁹

The mail service between Tucson and Tombstone continued to be slow and erratic, despite the fast stage travel. After months of complaints, the original contractor, Edward Gannon, ceased carrying the mail. James Stewart, a Californian with many interests in Arizona

89. Parsons' Diary, February 17, 1880.

stage and mail lines,⁹⁰ took over the route on a temporary basis. In January of 1880, Stewart attempted to negotiate for a regular contract.⁹¹ By mid-February, however, he had received no response from the Post Office. As he was under no contract obligations, he discontinued his mail service between Tucson, Huachuca and Tombstone.⁹² The Post Office immediately sent a special agent from San Francisco to investigate the situation and arrange for a temporary contract to restore the regular delivery of mail. The agent, J. H. Mahoney, toured the contract route, visiting Tombstone, Charleston, Huachuca and Patagonia.⁹³ During

90. James Stewart had been the general superintendent of the California and Arizona Stage Company in the 1870's, and of its successor Gilmer, Salisbury, & Co., which ran stage lines in central and northern Arizona. He continued an active interest in a number of Arizona stage lines until in 1886, well-known and respected, he retired to his ranch in San Bernadino, California. See: John and Lillian Theobald, Arizona Territory Post Offices & Postmasters, Phoenix, 1961, 42, 43, 45, 49; and the Prescott Journal Miner, August 2, 1886.

91. Daily Arizona Citizen, February 18, 1880. Stewart had offered to serve this route on a contract basis for an annual salary of \$1500. The Post Office ignored his offer, possibly due to its general disfavor of any new contracts at this time because of investigations into a rash of "Star route" frauds.

92. Ibid., February 18, 20, 1880. Stewart's cessation of delivery forced the Post Office to take action.

93. Arizona Daily Star, February 21, 1880. (The town of Patagonia was not on this mail route, but it was in need of service also.) Jeremiah H. Mahoney was a "Post Office Inspector on Mail Depredations," Official Register of the United States, 1881, II, 11.

this trip, Mahoney was apparently impressed with the enterprise of Ohnesorgen and Walker, and upon his return to Tucson, February 20, he telegraphed to Washington a recommendation in favor of this line. The Postmaster at Tucson, C. R. Drake, received an immediate reply, affirming the recommendation and awarding a contract, commencing the same day, to Howard C. Walker.⁹⁴

Walker wasted no time putting the order into effect. Draping the stagecoach with American flags--it was also George Washington's birthday--he put the mail pouches aboard,⁹⁵ and admonished the driver to beat the opposition this day at all costs. The colorful coach was sent on its way. The horses thundered eastward, and late in the cold and rainy afternoon, to resounding cheers of spectators, the mud-spattered stage came into Tombstone at full run, just ahead of Kinnear's, with Old Glory,

94. Arizona Daily Star, February 22, 1880. The recommendations to and instructions from the Post Office Department in Washington must have been transmitted by telegraph, for Drake was notified of the contract on the day following Mahoney's return to Tucson. Notice was probably received February 21, allowing Walker to make preparations and decorate the coach for its early start the next morning (February 22). This contract was apparently subject to final confirmation, for the Office Register of the United States, 1881, II, 65, lists Walker's contract as dating from June 1, 1880. His annual compensation of \$500 was considerably lower than Stewart's offer of \$1500.

95. Parsons' Diary, February 22, 1880; and Arizona Daily Star, February 29, 1880.

fluttering triumphantly.⁹⁶ There was, of course, much excitement, but more important than the race was the gratitude of the communities to Ohnesorgen and Walker for having at last secured a regular mail service between Tucson and Tombstone. A Tombstone miner happily penned in his diary, "Regular mail at last."⁹⁷ A correspondent to the Arizona Daily Star wrote to the editor L. C.

Hughes:

A few days ago the Walker and O---, I cannot spell it, call it horsnwaggle [sic.] line comes in wrapt in glory and American flags, and having on board the United States mails. This mail service, direct from Tucson, was secured for us by the energetic ability and exertion of O & W., for which as well as low fares and quick time the public are indebted to them. Don't you cut this out, Hughes,⁹⁸ for it is not a puff, only doing justice to an institution which is deserving of the Tombstone patronage. I say this and I always patronize the Kinnear line, but then I don't always practice what I preach.⁹⁹

The new mail contract enhanced Walker's prestige and added measurably to the success of the company, yet at the same time it denoted the high-water mark of the booming Tucson to Tombstone stage line business.

96. Ibid.; Correspondence from Tombstone dated February 27, 1880.

97. Parsons' Diary, February 22, 1880.

98. L. C. Hughes, editor of the Star, and obviously partial to Kinnear.

99. Arizona Daily Star, February 29, 1880.

The ring of hammers and clank of iron, as the Southern Pacific Railroad approached Tucson from the West in March of 1880, signaled the final stand of the "New" and the "Old" Tucson and Tombstone Stage Lines. The days of the great contests were over. The proprietors knew their heyday was passing, but with the railroad bringing people in ever-increasing numbers, both coaches plied their daily routes, "loaded to the guards."¹⁰⁰ It would be only a matter of time till the rails had passed Tucson, and the stagecoaches would have a shorter run, and consequently a lower fare, but the stage men were determined to endure as long as possible. Only William Ohnesorgen was unwilling to continue the gamble against the railroad. On March 9, 1880, after five months, he sold his interest to Walker.¹⁰¹ The two friends dissolved the partnership that was to have lasted a year, and Billy Ohnesorgen turned his attention back to the ranch on the San Pedro. Ohnesorgen & Walker became H. C.

100. Ibid., February 22, 29, March 2, 4, April 3, 9, 1880, all comment on the heavy traffic. The coaches, in fact, were frequently overloaded by the agents, who sold as many tickets as possible for each trip. On at least one occasion, Kinnear's coach upset on this account, and injured passengers. Correspondence to the Star from Contention City, April 3, sternly warned, "More care on the part of all concerned in carrying passengers should be exercised. If stage coaches have not the capacity to carry safely without overcrowding them let there be more coaches."

101. "Notice of Dissolution of Partnership", Ibid., March 9, 1880; and Ohnesorgen Reminiscences.

Walker & Co., proprietors of the "New Tucson & Tombstone Daily U. S. Mail Line."¹⁰² There was no longer any question as to the supremacy of this line, which now carried the mail and the bullion shipments from the Tombstone mines. Walker, known as a "rustler, and in every way up to his business,"¹⁰³ exploited his enviable position in every way possible to attract more passengers. In Tombstone, he hired as his agent Marshall Williams, a well known personality and purveyor of "cigars, watches, toys, fine cutlery, and fancy stationery".¹⁰⁴ In the newspapers, Walker inserted large, fancy advertisements, boasting that his was "the only line running six-horse Concord coaches," over the "smoothest and most comfortable" route.¹⁰⁵

On March 17, 1880, the construction train of the Southern Pacific Railroad reached Tucson.¹⁰⁶ Three days later, the first regularly scheduled trains began running. The "Ancient and Honorable Pueblo" welcomed the long-awaited railroad and its officials with a great

102. Arizona Daily Star, March 12, 1880.

103. Ibid., March 10, 1880. The term "rustler" in this sense is equivalent to "hustler", and does not mean a cattle thief.

104. Ibid., March 19, 1880.

105. Ibid., March 12, 1880.

106. Ibid., March 18, 1880.

"Jubilee" ceremony, complete even to a rousing cannon salute and a silver last spike.¹⁰⁷ The Kerens and Griffith Southern Pacific Stage Line, which had been reduced to shuttling westward from Tucson to the Terminus, folded its operations and went out of business. Howard Walker seized the opportunity to purchase all its stock and coaches. The inventory consisted of "twenty-four horses, six passenger wagons, two eleven-passenger wagons, one seventeen-passenger coach and one buggy, the latter for Mr. Walker's use along the routes."¹⁰⁸ At the same time, Walker, who was becoming quite a capitalist, signed a contract with Wells, Fargo & Co. to carry valuable freight and treasure shipments, consigned to that agency for protection.¹⁰⁹ Most of the month of April, both the old and the new Tucson and Tombstone lines were kept busy with heavy passenger loads. By April 23, the railroad had completed tracks twenty-seven miles eastward to Pantano, the first of a series of proposed

107. Ibid., March 21, 1880. The silver spike is an object of some interest. It was a gift of Richard Gird, superintendent of the Tombstone Mill and Mining Company, made "by his own hand" from the first bullion produced by the Tough Nut Mine.

108. (Weekly) Arizona Citizen, March 27, 1880.

109. Ibid., April 8, 1880; and Arizona Daily Star, April 3, 1880 (letter from Contention City dated March 31, 1880.)

stations between Tucson and the New Mexico border.¹¹⁰
With the establishment of regular passenger, mail and freight by rail to this station, the stage lines of Kinnear and Walker retreated to the new "Terminus" and began the shortened trips from Pantano to Tombstone.

110. Arizona Daily Star, April 22, 1880. Pantano (a Spanish word for swamp) was located on Cienaga Creek, about two miles east of the old Cienaga Station, which the new railroad grade had passed over and destroyed. See: "Official Map of Pima County Arizona, 1893" compiled by George J. Roskrug; and Byrd H. Granger, Will C. Barnes' Arizona Place Names, Tucson, 1960, 274.

CHAPTER III

SANDY BOB AND OTHERS

The tired traveler gazed out the window of the railroad coach at strange and slowly-passing scenery. To one so accustomed to the cool, damp climate of San Francisco, the jarring ride on new track, the desert heat of early June, and the alkali dust which crept in through the wooden casings of the closed windows were all new and trying experiences.¹ After three days and nights of unpleasant traveling, the train had stopped at the drab, flat, treeless adobe town of Tucson. This well-known "ancient pueblo" was a disappointing sight, but at least the hard journey was nearing an end. After breakfast, the train headed eastward for the end of the tracks, and two hours later the engine hissed and squeaked to a halt beside the unfinished depot at Pantano. It was a dismal, sun-baked place with little more than a few buildings. On the north side of the tracks were an adobe ranch and corral which had been homesteaded by

1. From the reminiscences of John Pleasant Gray, typed Ms. on file at A.P.H.S.

the brothers, Lyman and William Wakefield.² Nearby, a large store had recently been built by A. J. Davidson to accomodate railroad passengers. Beside this stood a little lean-to, housing a saloon which was run by William Wakefield.³ Indian squaws trudged past carrying great bundles of gramma grass on their heads. The store keeper purchased this as feed for horses. So also did the firm of Tully and Ochoa, who had a large freighting operation from the end of the rail line to the out-lying mining districts.⁴

Some thirty people scrambled off the train; beside the track, four stagecoaches waited to take on customers for points beyond Pantano. Weston R. Ingram's coach offered passage to Patagonia and Harshaw,⁵ but on this morning no one was going that direction, and his coach went away empty. For the Tombstone-bound travelers, the coaches of Kinnear, Walker, and a line run by a new competitor, Edward Swift, stood ready. Swift, a New

2. Reminiscences of Edward L. Vail and those of Alexander J. Davidson, typed Ms. on file at A.P.H.S.

3. Reminiscences of Alexander J. Davidson. The freighting firm of Tully and Ochoa, which owned most of the land around Pantano, did not want their employees to have liquor, and did not stock it in their own supply stores there. The Wakefields apparently saw no reason for temperance and managed to have on hand ample liquor for anyone.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.; Daily Arizona Citizen, June 18, 1880.

England Yankee, was offering a cut rate of five dollars for the trip,⁶ but his coach was smaller and, perhaps, slower--if that were possible. All the coaches were loaded with express and baggage, packed with passengers, and started on the seven hour trip to Tombstone. The discomfort of the weary passengers was relieved only by the long grades where the horses had to walk, and the riders could get out of the coach, stretch their legs, and stroll alongside.⁷ At the first stop, a good hearty supper was served. It did much to relieve everyone and put them in a better frame of mind for the remainder of the trip.⁸ About sundown, the coach neared Tombstone, and the driver cracked his whip over the horses, urging

6. Arizona Daily Star, April 14, June 4, 1880. Edward J. Swift was a fifty-nine year old widower, and a native of Massachusetts, 1880 Census, Tombstone. His line probably did not last as long as the advertisements, which continued in the Arizona Daily Star through September of 1880. Swift was later variously employed as a miner and by general merchandising companies in Tombstone, according to the Cochise County Great Register of voters for 1882, and Tombstone newspapers. In 1887, at the age of sixty-two, Swift was seized by his beard and beaten to death by a saloon keeper in an argument over a liquor bill contracted by the Tombstone Volunteer Fire Department, of which Smith was a member. Tombstone Daily Prospector, May 18, 1887.

7. John P. Gray reminiscences.

8. Ibid. The stop in this case was Ohnesorgen's Station.

them to a gallop. With this final flourish, the stage rolled up Allen Street and stopped before the Cosmopolitan Hotel. A crowd of people had already gathered to meet the incoming passengers and mail.⁹

Among those arriving in Tombstone from Pantano that fourth day of June, 1880, was Robert Crouch. A native of Ohio, this stern-faced, forty-nine year old widower was a typical frontier adventurer.¹⁰ At the age of eighteen he had left his family, then living in New York, and had run away to California to seek his fortune. His success in the gold fields was meagre, so for a livelihood he turned to driving a stagecoach. He had settled first in the transportation center of Marysville, county seat of Yuba County, on the Feather River. Later, he had moved to Colusa, seventy-five miles north of the state capital, on the Sacramento River, and finally he took his family to San Francisco.¹¹ Crouch, like many others, heard of the great opportunities in the booming camp of Tombstone, where people were coming in numbers

9. Ibid.

10. Oral and written testimony of Mrs. Frank Reynolds, San Francisco, California, and Mr. Raymond Robson, Corte Madera, California, daughter and grandson of Robert Crouch. Interviews and correspondence with the author, July-September, 1965, and May 1966.

11. Ibid.

to seek their fortunes. Leaving his motherless children in the care of a spinster aunt, he came east to the Arizona frontier.¹² It must have been a peculiar sensation for this man, who had driven a stagecoach in California for most of his life, to find himself in a barren and unfamiliar land riding a crowded coach to a strange town. Nonetheless, Crouch saw an opportunity here to establish his own stage line and compete for the trade of large numbers of people coming, just as he had, from the railroad to Tombstone. The newcomer set about acquiring stock and a coach, and setting himself up in the business of running a stage line.

From Pantano (or "Cienaga Station", as some die-hards still called it) to Tombstone, the stages kept up their daily runs throughout the months of April, May and until mid-June when the railroad reached the San Pedro River near William Ohnesorgen's station. Even in this short time, Walker, the "rustler", continued to improve his line. Having received a confirmed mail contract from the Post Office,¹³ he set about expanding his route. To avoid having to deliver the mails to

12. Ibid.

13. Official Register of the United States, 1881, II, 65; and Arizona Daily Star, April 3, 1880.

Patagonia and Harshaw by way of Tombstone, he established a tri-weekly line from Tucson to Cienaga, Patagonia, Harshaw, and the new Washington Camp.¹⁴ He built a new station near the Empire Ranch for the accomodation of this line.¹⁵ At Contention City, he purchased a substantial building, and moved that office from the temporary tent previously used by the line.¹⁶ On April 24, shortly after receiving a contract from Wells, Fargo & Co., Walker changed the name of his line to the "Arizona Mail & Stage Company", and secured the services of Charles A. Bartholomew as a general superintendent.¹⁷ Walker had built his stage line into an important transportation company, with agencies now located at Tucson, Tombstone, Patagonia and Charleston. This expansion was an expensive undertaking, however, and Walker found it necessary to borrow \$2500 from Tucson merchant Sam Hughes.¹⁸

14. Arizona Daily Star, April 30, 1880.

15. Tombstone Epitaph (weekly), May 1, 1880.

16. Pima County Records, Deeds, Book 7, 3; a photograph of the tent office of the Ohnesorgen & Walker line is on file at A.P.H.S.

17. Arizona Daily Star, April 24, 1880; according to the 1880 Census for Pima County, Charles A. Bartholomew, a native of Ohio, was forty years old at the time, married and living "in the country" somewhere outside of Tombstone.

18. Sam Hughes Collection, A.P.H.S. (Account book #1, 36.) The loan made to the Arizona Mail & Stage was payable in four months.

Sweating track crews of Chinese coolies continued their eastward toil under hot spring skies. By the middle of June, the railroad had reached the site of the second planned station, about three-quarters of a mile from the San Pedro River and a mile south and west of Billy Ohnesorgen's station.¹⁹ This was an important location, for it lay at a natural crossing of the east-west road from Tucson to Silver City, New Mexico, and the north-south road between the busy Globe Mining District, in the Pinal Mountains of Maricopa County, and Tombstone and other districts along the San Pedro. Further, the railroad hinted that this location would be a junction point for a future branch line to the port of Guaymas, Sonora.²⁰ Workmen began construction of a large depot to accomodate an expected heavy volume of freight and passenger traffic, especially to the mines, mills and towns of the upper San Pedro Valley. The town planned at the site was to be named Benson, in honor of Judge John Benson of San Francisco, a friend of Charles Crocker, the president of Southern Pacific Railroad.²¹

19. Arizona Weekly Star, April 22, 1880.

20. John P. Gray reminiscences.

21. Arizona Weekly Star, April 1, 1880; and Granger, Barnes' Arizona Place Names, 30. There is some confusion as to Benson's name--it may have been William B. Benson.

The streets and blocks were laid out and surveyed, and then town lots were offered for sale at a public auction on June 21. A special excursion train from Tucson was run to the new town for the sale that day. Regular railroad service continued thereafter.²² Once again the stage companies were forced to shift their operations-- from Pantano Station to Benson. The run from Benson to Tombstone was only twenty-four miles.

At this time the two old competitors, Kinnear and Walker, found it to their advantage to collaborate and make things easier for themselves. The trains reached Benson between 3 and 4 a.m., but the stages made no effort to accomodate the Tombstone-bound passengers until a much more reasonable hour of the morning.²³ Having first raised freight rates to a high five cents per pound, the stage lines now raised the passenger fare to an exorbitant ten dollars for the twenty-five mile trip.²⁴ Furthermore, they slowed down their teams so

22. Arizona Daily Star, June 13, 1880.

23. Ibid., June 30, 1880. Passengers were obliged to wait from three until seven in the morning when the coaches departed.

24. Ibid., April 11, July 8, 1880. Even after the compromise between the two rivals on December 25, 1879, the fare for the entire Tucson to Tombstone stage trip had only been seven dollars, and the freight rate had been no higher than three cents per pound. See above n. 102.

that the trip took nearly twice the normal time. The traveling public and the businessmen were outraged, and within a week of the beginning of the Benson to Tombstone runs bitter complaints were pouring into the stage offices from Tombstone and Tucson. The Star aired these complaints and asked the stage lines to take note and make the improvements called for.²⁵ Meanwhile, the former rivals talked of merging their lines to operate as a single company. Having no real competition, they remained oblivious to the public demands for better service. When another week passed with no improvements, the editor of the Star blasted the stage men for their lack of consideration and responsibility:

There is no excuse for such a state of affairs. Enterprise and a willingness to accommodate the public would so arrange the stage lines that they would leave Benson immediately upon the arrival of the train. The distance being short, they could reach Tombstone at about 9 a.m., and as the train leaves Benson at about 11, [p.m.] the stages ought to make connection by leaving Tombstone at 6:30.... [This] would give business men at least nine hours to transact business on the same day of their arrival at the latter place and instead of the traveler being on the road fourteen hours, as now, the trip would be made in just half the time. This wrong ought to be righted at once; it is a public necessity.... Gentlemen meet the situation.²⁶

25. Arizona Daily Star, June 30, 1880.

26. Arizona Weekly Star, July 8, 1880.

The Walker-Kinnear combination proceeded to consolidate their lines and make the operation more efficient. As there was no longer any competition, it was arranged that Walker's large six-horse coach would carry all passengers, the mail, and the Wells, Fargo "treasure box."²⁷ Kinnear's coach was relegated to the lowly station of following along with only the express matter and the heavy freight.²⁸ Happily, the proprietors took notice of the complaints and somewhat improved their service. The new schedule allowed about six hours in Tombstone between the arrival of the stage at eleven in the morning and its departure at five in the afternoon.²⁹ This change avoided travel to and from Benson in the hottest hours of the day. But, because of the inconvenient railroad schedule between Tucson and Benson, there remained the unhappy traveler who had "the luxury of leaving Tucson in the middle of the night to make this short trip, and on his return likewise repeat the dose."³⁰ Furthermore,

27. Arizona Daily Star, July 13, 1880.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid. This also allowed business men to answer their letters by return mail. Kinnear's coach continued to leave for Benson at 2 p.m. as before, carrying any passengers who wished to leave at that hour and wait in Benson until the train departed for Tucson at 10 p.m.

30. Ibid., July 18, 1880.

the fares remained high, and criticism continued.³¹

The Kinnear-Walker monopoly on the Benson-Tombstone route soon had competition.³² By now Robert Crouch had secured a coach and stock, and had established his own "opposition" line, accomodating passengers to the railroad at Benson. Kinnear and Walker at first paid little attention to the newcomer; opposition was nothing new, and they had so far been successful in "crowding out" such small lines. But "Sandy Bob", as his friends had dubbed Crouch for his red hair and freckled complexion, was a man who knew his business. Thirty years "on the box" in California had given him more experience than all his competition put together. Furthermore, Crouch had a fierce determination to succeed, which made him a force to reckon with.³³ His first run was made on June 21, 1880, the day town lots were to be auctioned off by the railroad at the newly created site of Benson.³⁴ It must

31. Ibid.

32. There was continuing competition with W. R. Ingram's Tucson and Patagonia line on the Pantano - Patagonia - Harshaw route.

33. Interview by the author with Mrs. Frank Reynolds, daughter of Crouch, May 6, 1966.

34. Arizona Daily Star, June 13, 1880. John P. Gray in his reminiscences remembered the date of this occurrence as July 4. Actually, it took place two weeks earlier on June 21.

have been a discouraging trip for Sandy Bob, who was driving his own well-loaded "mud wagon" coach behind four spanking grey horses.³⁵ The proud newcomer was overtaken by Walker's six-horse stage. Whipping his horses, Crouch tried desperately to pass and regain the lead. His efforts were to no avail, and in humiliation Sandy Bob and all his passengers were forced to "eat dust" the whole way.³⁶ This inauspicious beginning, perhaps, made Crouch even more determined than ever to "turn the tables" on his powerful competitors. It was difficult for the new rival to get a start, but by serving his customers well and offering a low fare, Sandy Bob earned respect and his patronage steadily grew.

By means of the merger, Howard Walker had, for all practical purposes, absorbed his main rival, for he was virtually running both his line and John Kinnear's. He had expanded the Arizona Mail and Stage Company and essentially eliminated his major competition. Now, in mid-September, matters seemed to be running smoothly, and Walker took the train for San Francisco to purchase new stock for his enlarged stage lines.³⁷ During his

35. John P. Gray reminiscences.

36. Ibid.

37. Arizona Daily Star, September 23, 1880.

absence, however, trouble began to brew. On Walker's other route, between Pantano, Patagonia and Harshaw, W. R. Ingram's stages had been giving him very heavy competition, complete with races and a price war.³⁸ While Walker was in California, Ingram decided to expand his operations to include his own opposition line on the Benson-Tombstone road. Ingram's Tucson and Patagonia Mail and Stage Company established new agencies at Tucson, Harshaw, Benson and Tombstone. On September 22, he invaded Walker's "territory".³⁹ It so happened this very day that Ingram launched his new enterprise, Walker returned from San Francisco.⁴⁰ As he stepped off the train at Benson to board his own stage, he was no doubt startled and displeased to see the smart Concord coach of the new opposition taking on passengers for Tombstone.

38. Ibid., July 18, 1880. By this time, Walker had reduced his fare from Pantano to Harshaw to only one dollar, and though the distance on this route was almost twice that between Benson and Tombstone, because of the competition and the fast driving, the stage time was only an hour longer.

39. Ibid., September 22, 1880. Ingram had hired as his Tombstone agent G. W. Chapman, who had been Kinnear's agent there before the merger. At that time, Marshall Williams, Walker's agent, retained the Tombstone office. Despite Chapman's popularity in the town, he was transferred to the company's office at Benson where he remained until Ingram hired him and returned him to Tombstone.

40. Ibid., September 23, 1880.

Walker soon discovered that the competition with Ingram was not his only problem. It was, perhaps, the least of his worries. Upon his return, he was apparently confronted by his "silent" partner, John Kinnear, with the sudden demand for a greater voice in the management of the operation. Although he had invested some \$3500 in the joint enterprise, Kinnear had not previously acted as an equal partner.⁴¹ Moreover, Walker was still indebted to Sam Hughes for \$2500. The trip and the two car-loads of new horses purchased in San Francisco added to his debts.⁴² Now, Walker was obliged to draw up an agreement to indemnify to Kinnear for his investments. This virtually turned over to Kinnear control of the Arizona Mail and Stage Company.⁴³ Under the terms of the agreement, Walker would receive a salary amounting to \$150 per month, and Kinnear would take possession of all the company's stagecoaches, horses, equipment and personal and real property in Benson, Tombstone and

⁴¹. County Records of Cochise County, on file at the office of the Cochise County Recorder, Bisbee, Arizona. Miscellaneous Records, Book 1, 200, Transcribed from Pima County Records. (Hereinafter cited as Cochise County Records.)

⁴². See above n. 18; and Arizona Daily Star, September 23, 1880.

⁴³. Cochise County Records, Miscellaneous Records, Book 1, 200.

Harshaw. Kinnear would now run the line his way, paying all the bills and retaining all the profits, until his investment had been paid off, with interest.⁴⁴

Now dictating the company policies, John Kinnear immediately sought to negotiate an agreement with the new and bothersome rival, Weston Ingram. A compromise was soon reached, whereby the Arizona Mail and Stage Company would withdraw its competitive line on the Pantano to Harshaw route, and in turn, Ingram's Tucson and Patagonia Mail and Stage Company would halt its opposition runs between Benson and Tombstone. The settlement was an amicable one, and on October 5, 1880, each company went back to a virtual monopoly in its own territory.⁴⁵ This situation taken care of, Kinnear seized another opportunity to further extend his line. The little copper mining camp of Bisbee, twenty-five miles southeast of Tombstone, in the Mule Pass Mountains, had come into

44. Ibid.

45. Arizona Daily Star, October 5, 1880. This was less than two weeks after Ingram had started his opposition line. Ed Swift, who had been running a small line to Tombstone, depending somewhat upon Ingram's facilities, apparently ceased operations at this time also, for his last advertisement appeared in the Arizona Daily Star, October 8, 1880.

its own.⁴⁶ The population was more than two hundred, and growing: Bisbee was in need of stagecoach service.

Kinnear and Walker secured a mail contract for this route on November 20. The Arizona Mail & Stage Company began running a tri-weekly stage, via Charleston and around the southern end of the Mule Pass Mountains, to Bisbee.⁴⁷

Kinnear now turned his attention to putting the company on a sound business and financial basis. The strength of his hand was apparent when he demoted the former "boss" to the position of vice-president and general superintendent for the line.⁴⁸ B. Frank Hall, a man of some prominence, and with important mining interests in

46. Bisbee, or "Mule Pass" as it was also called, was founded in 1877. The town was named after Judge DeWitt Bisbee, an early stockholder in the mines there. Cf. Granger, Barnes' Arizona Place Names, 30. The Arizona Weekly Star, October 7, 1880, noted that the population of Bisbee was 200. For the history of Bisbee see: Opie Rundle Burgess, Bisbee Not so Long Ago, San Antonio, 1967; Annie M. Cox, "History of Bisbee, 1877-1937," MA Thesis, University of Arizona, 1938. William Walter Newkirk, "Historical Geography of Bisbee, Arizona," MA Thesis, University of Arizona, 1966.

47. Arizona Daily Star, November 20, 1880. The road from Charleston to Bisbee was about forty miles long, and it took the stagecoaches eight hours to make the trip. There was stage line service to Bisbee as early as October. Arizona Weekly Star, October 7, 1880.

48. Arizona Daily Star, November 2, 1880. The line continued to be popularly called H. C. Walker's Line.

Tombstone, was made the new president of the company.⁴⁹ In another move to add prestige and respectability, Theodore L. Stiles, a well known Tucson attorney, counselor at law, and at the time, Republican candidate for the office of Probate Judge, was appointed to serve as the company's secretary and treasurer.⁵⁰ Kinnear himself assumed no special office, but he was without a doubt quietly running the well-structured and professional looking front.

As the fame of Tombstone's wealth spread, the railroad continued to bring a steady stream of fortune seekers into southern Arizona. Benson, the gateway to this bonanza, was a lively spot. By December of 1880, the population had reached three hundred, and the town could claim a hotel, a livery and feed stable run by Billy Ohnesorgen, five mercantile houses, four blacksmith shops, the usual complement of saloons, and such niceties as a bakery, a barber shop, and a carpenter and

49. B. Frank Hall, a Kentuckian, owned part of the South Extension of the Grand Central Mine, but he seems to have had no other qualifications for the position of president of the stage line. Ibid., October 23, 1879; and November 2, 1880. See also the B. F. Hall biographical file, A. P. H. S.

50. Arizona Daily Star, September 29, November 2, 1880; G. W. Barter, Directory of the City of Tucson for the year 1881, San Francisco, 1881, 108. (Herein after cited as Tucson City Directory, 1881.) Tombstone Epitaph, May 1, 1880.

cabinet shop.⁵¹ The town's main business was that of forwarding freight. During the months of November and December, the railroad had delivered more than fifteen million pounds of cartage to the Benson depot for distribution to the growing camps and towns of the San Pedro Valley. The amount of freight, mostly in the form of bullion and merchandise, shipped back to Tucson from Benson in the same period amounted to only slightly less.⁵²

Business was lively for all concerned, and it was not surprising that soon there was another new stage on the Tombstone road. "N. Smith's Fast Freight and Passenger Line" offered passage from Benson for \$2.50--considerably less than the four dollar fare charged by the other two lines.⁵³ "Opposition is the life of trade," Newton Smith boasted,⁵⁴ and once again it proved

51. Arizona Weekly Star, December 23, 1880.

52. Ibid.; and Arizona Daily Star, December 21, 25, 1880.

53. Newton Smith's first advertisement appeared December 25, 1880, in the Arizona Daily Star, but the same paper, in an article on Benson, December 21, indicated that the fares were occasionally reduced even further, "Three daily stages arrive and depart from Benson to Tombstone, fare \$4. When competition runs warm it comes down to \$1 and \$2." This was a mere pittance in comparison with the \$10 fare charged by the Kinnear-Walker monopoly just five months earlier. (See above n. 24.)

54. Arizona Daily Star, December 25, 1880.

to be true. Crouch and Kinnear were forced to meet the competition.

Sandy Bob had already been hard at work improving his own line. From Wells, Fargo & Co. he had purchased an enormous old six-horse Concord coach. This vehicle, which he brought over from California, was a real veteran, having seen thirty years of service on the Pacific Slope. Crouch had often driven it in his earlier days on the box; now he was proudly driving it again. The coach, designed to carry twelve passengers inside and nine more outside, was known to have accommodated as many as thirty at a time. It was upholstered in russet leather and broadcloth and beautifully painted--a red body, straw-colored wheels and undercarriage, and black trim. On the top of each door was painted "U. S. Mail," and their center panels were livened with scenic views. Elaborate striping and gold leaf scrollwork completed the decoration. Across the headrails, in large gilt letters was the name "MODOC."⁵⁵ This grand wagon

55. The origin of the name "MODOC" is somewhat obscure. One account says that the coach was built in 1849, that it and a sister coach, the "MOHAWK" were sent from Concord, N. H., around the Horn to California for use by the Pioneer Express Company, later absorbed by Wells, Fargo & Co. In 1903, a sister-in-law of John Kinnear wrote that the name was derived from early use of the coach in Modoc County, California. Both accounts agree that at one time it ran between Sacramento and Carson City (and/or Virginia City), Nevada. According

was easily the largest and handsomest stagecoach in Tombstone. Without a doubt, it added much prestige to Sandy Bob's name.

But, neither Crouch nor N. Smith could match the resources of the Kinnear-Walker combination. The Arizona Mail & Stage Company responded to the new challenge by offering daily runs out of Tombstone in all directions-- to Benson, Charleston, Huachuca, Harshaw, Contention and Bisbee.⁵⁶ Stage traffic continued very heavy for all three lines as the Tombstone boom raged on. Production of mines in the District rose to a staggering two and a

to legend, it was in the Modoc that Horace Greeley made his famous trip from Carson City to Sacramento, with the redoubtable Hank Monk driving. The Modoc had been held up and its treasure stolen "more times than any other stage that ever ran in the West"; and three drivers had been shot from its boot, the last on the Tombstone-Benson run. The Modoc was in general service on the Tombstone road from the time Sandy Bob brought it to Arizona until 1895. It was semi-retired in that year because of a dwindling number of passengers and thereafter used only on special occasions. Harriet A. Lusk, "The 'Modoc' Stage", (1903) holograph in the A.P.H.S.; Charles B. Tarbell, to Mr. Opha Moore, April 16, 1903, typed copy in the collection of Mrs. Burton Devere, Tombstone; Photograph of the Modoc coach at Fairbank in 1889 in the collections of the Tombstone Courthouse Museum.

56. The Tombstone Epitaph (daily), January 4, 1881.

third million dollars.⁵⁷ The year 1880 rolled to a close on a high road of prosperity.

By the beginning of 1881, Tombstone was approaching its zenith. With a population of some 4,000, it was the second largest town in the territory and could boast about 600 dwellings, two churches, two newspapers, and numerous saloons and other business establishments.⁵⁸ Some 650 miners toiled in the mines of the district; another 150 men worked in the mills at nearby Contention City and Charleston-Millville, and a hundred children of these families went to schools in Tombstone.⁵⁹ By the time the first month of the new year had passed, the population had jumped to 5,000.⁶⁰ There was a pressing need for better government for this mass of people, and on February 21, 1880, the town of Tombstone was incorporated and became the seat of the newly created county

57. B. S. Butler, E. D. Wilson, C. A. Rasor, Geology and Ore Deposits of the Tombstone District, Arizona, University of Arizona Bulletin, Arizona Bureau of Mines, Geological Series no. 10, bulletin no. 143, 1938, 49. (Hereinafter cited as U. of A. Bulletin no. 143.)

58. Ibid., 43. The U. of A. Bulletin erroneously calls Tombstone the largest city in Arizona; in this period, no town was larger than Tucson. The population of Tombstone in June was about 2,220; 1880 Census, Tombstone.

59. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 43.

60. Tucson and Tombstone General and Business Directory for 1883 and 1884, Tucson, 1883, 107.

of Cochise.⁶¹ The town and its mines expanded by leaps and bounds as capital poured into the district from California and the eastern states. The boom was such that a railroad to this, now the major mining district of the territory, was considered a prime necessity. The firm of Gilmer, Salisbury & Company, who had considerable stage line interests in northern Arizona and Nevada, began making the necessary arrangements and preparations for building a railroad from Benson to Tombstone.⁶² Despite the continuing prosperity of the district, and the unquestionable need, the railroad scheme of Gilmer & Salisbury failed. The stage lines and freighting companies were left to their profitable business, plying

61. Acts and Resolutions of the Eleventh Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Arizona, Prescott, 1881. Act no. 39, to incorporate the City of Tombstone, 37-78; Act no. 7, to create the County of Cochise (approved February 1, 1881), 4-7.

62. Arizona Daily Star, December 19, 1880; and David F. Myrick, Railroads of Nevada and Eastern California, Berkeley, 1962 (2 vols.), I, 90, 173, 685. This was not the first attempt to build a railroad to Tombstone. In April of 1880, the Arizona & Mexico Railroad & Telegraph Company had begun work on the same route, but failed for lack of finances. See: David Myrick, "The Railroads of Southern Arizona: An Approach to Tombstone," Journal of Arizona History, Vol. 8 No. 3 (1967), 162f.

the road up the San Pedro, supplying the town and connecting it with the railhead.⁶³

The year 1881 marked a turning point in the history of Tombstone. The mines were producing thousands of tons of rich ore each month. The mills refined bullion in unprecedented amounts. Profits soared, and stockholders realized increasingly handsome dividends.⁶⁴ Paradoxically, the town suffered. Law and order were practically non-existent. Outlaws went on a wild rampage, robbing and killing almost at will. Rustlers preyed freely on the stock of outlying cattle ranches. In this period, brief though it was, Tombstone earned a reputation for blood, "thunder" and infamy, which it could never live down. To the transportation business, it was a time fraught with danger and marred by tragedy. Holdup men, the scourge of the road, sought an easy share in

63. Both Jack Gilmer and Monroe Salisbury visited the location and personally made the arrangements. Grading work was to begin at once, and the line was to be completed rapidly, but for some reason, probably financial, the proposed railroad was never built.

64. For the exact statistics on ore and bullion production see: William P. Blake, Tombstone and its Mines, New York, 1902, 63-67. The peak month was August of 1881 when the net value of the bullion production for the District totalled \$151,279.15. Dividends disbursed during the year of 1881 amounted to over \$3,000,000.

the wealth of the district, and accidents and upsets were not at all uncommon to the increasing stage travel.⁶⁵

In March of 1881, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad linked with the Southern Pacific at Deming, New Mexico. Agreements were negotiated by the Santa Fe to use Southern Pacific rails into Arizona.⁶⁶ Benson now became the junction point of the promised line south to Guaymas. The New Mexico & Arizona Railroad, a branch of the Santa Fe, was built southward toward Contention City and Tombstone on the first leg of the line to the Mexican border.⁶⁷ This time the railroad was a reality. The end of the Tombstone-Benson stage route was in sight. Then came a staggering blow to the prosperous economy. On June 22, 1881, Tombstone suffered a disastrous fire which left much of the town a smoldering ruin of charred wood, twisted tin and broken, crumbling adobe walls.⁶⁸

65. These subjects are discussed at length in Chapter IV.

66. David F. Myrick, "Railroads of Arizona," Brand Book XII, The Westerners, Los Angeles Corral, 1966, 26; Myrick, "Railroads of Southern Arizona," 156f.

67. Ibid., 164f. The line was built slowly and did not reach Contention until January of 1882. A little south of that place, the tracks turned westward toward Calabasas, and contrary to expectations, they were never extended east to Tombstone.

68. Parsons' Diary, June 22, 1881 (including newspaper clippings from the Tombstone Epitaph concerning the fire).

The fire was ruinous to many of the smaller businesses which were without insurance. The spirited townspeople began to rebuild immediately, but on the very heels of this fire came another shock. In July, water was discovered at the 520 foot level of the Sulphuret Mine, and the miners were forced to stop tunneling at that depth.⁶⁹ The extent of the water problem was not fully realized at first, although there were some suspicions of greater trouble. The bright forecasts of endless prosperity for the District had suddenly clouded.

Stage traffic into Tombstone slackened somewhat because of the unstable situation. The problem was compounded by discovery of rich silver deposits a hundred miles to the south in Mexico. New mines were opened in the Arizpe district of northern Sonora. Many Tombstone miners, discouraged by the fire and conditions of general lawlessness, left for the new mining frontier in Mexico. By February of 1882, this emigration was sufficient to warrant the establishment of stage service. Chester W. Pinkham, a Tombstone miner, became the proprietor of the new Tombstone and Sonora Stage Line.⁷⁰ Weekly, the Pinkham coach traveled south from Tombstone to the old

69. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 43.

70. The Weekly Epitaph, February 13, 1882; Cochise County Great Register, 1882.

Mexican customs house at San Pedro. From there, it continued to Bacoachi and Arizpe on the Rio de Sonora. Within a month, the line was extended some thirty miles southeast to new mines at Las Delicias on the Rio Moctezuma. Travel to Mexico was lively, and the coach, with Pinkham at the reins, often left Tombstone "loaded to the guards."⁷¹

Howard Walker, "the rustler" who earlier had been such a strong competitor must have lost confidence in the future of Tombstone. He turned his remaining interests in the Arizona Mail & Stage Company over to Kinnear, and went back to Tucson to take up interests in mining.⁷² Throughout the remainder of the year, Robert Crouch, Newton Smith and John Kinnear kept up a hot rivalry, vying for passengers and express business. Rumors in September that Kinnear and Crouch had merged their companies brought forth a vehement denial from the latter, who issued a statement saying, "'Sandy Bob' wishes it distinctly understood that he has no connection whatever with Kinnear & Co's. line. He runs his own coaches and

71. The Weekly Epitaph, February 14, March 6, 20, 1882; The Arizona Daily Star, March 4, 1882.

72. The date and terms of this transaction were not recorded, but the last apparent trace of Walker was his listing in the Tucson City Directory, 1881, 111.

pays his own bills."⁷³ A month later, however, the burden of running a network of stage lines had finally become too great for Kinnear to manage alone. On November 29, he sold a major portion of the line to his agent, William W. Hubbard,⁷⁴ and William D. Crow, a journalist who had joined Hubbard in the venture.⁷⁵ Included in the sale price, which totaled \$3,800, were twenty horses and a like number of sets of harness, one coach, distinguished by the name "Nelly Boyd",⁷⁶ one nine-passenger coach

73. The Daily Nugget (Tombstone), September 13, 1881. This point was important to Crouch, and he emphasized it in his advertisements for months.

74. W. W. "Billy" Hubbard was formerly a clerk under the U. S. Army paymaster. In mid-October, 1881, he went to work as Kinnear's agent in the Tombstone office, then located under Brown's Hotel on the corner of Allen and Fourth Streets. The Daily Nugget, October 16, 1881.

75. Great Register, Cochise County, 1882. Tucson and Tombstone Directory, 1883-1884, 124.

76. It was common practice to name the large Concord stagecoaches. On the "headrails" or sides of the coach, above the door and windows, the stage line proprietor would often have painted the name of the locality, a landmark, a famous mine or a prominent person, e.g., the "Modoc". In this case, the particular coach was named in honor of the first theatrical star to visit Tombstone, Nellie Boyd, a nationally known actress from Chicago. With her dramatic troop, she performed on Tombstone stages in November of 1880 and made a profound impression on the entire town. See: Pat N. Ryan, "Tombstone Theatre Tonight," The Smoke Signal, no. 13, The Westerners, Tucson Corral, 1966, 53, 54. Although the pun is atrocious, one can speculate that Kinnear intended more than honor to the name in painting "Nelly [sic.] Boyd" on his "stage".

(probably a mud wagon), a "jerky",⁷⁷ a spring wagon and various assorted curry combs and brushes.⁷⁸ With this equipment, the newly formed W. W. Hubbard & Company now took over the tri-weekly runs to Bisbee and the daily line to Camp Huachuca, while Kinnear continued to make his daily trips to Contention and Benson.⁷⁹

The formal agreement between Kinnear and Hubbard & Crow, unusual in itself, gives a rare insight into the financial arrangements of a stage line involved in the carrying of U. S. mail and Wells, Fargo & Co's. express. The routes to Bisbee and Fort Huachuca were transferred from the Arizona Mail & Stage Co. to W. W. Hubbard & Co. The latter were now obligated to maintain the schedules contracted earlier by Kinnear and Walker.⁸⁰ Although the Arizona Mail & Stage Co. continued to receive payment for the contract services, they agreed to reimburse the new company for its share of the work. Hubbard & Co. would carry the Wells Fargo treasure box between Tombstone and Charleston daily, for which they would receive

77. A "Jerky" is a light, two-seat open coach with a canvas top, capable of carrying four or at most five persons. For an illustration of this vehicle see: Eggenhoffer, Wagons, Mules and Men, 162.

78. The contract of sale is found in the Cochise County Records, Miscellaneous Records, Book 1, 319.

79. Ibid., and The Daily Nugget, December 2, 1881.

80. Cochise County Records, Miscellaneous Records, Book 1, 319.

a credit of \$15.00 per month.⁸¹ In addition, they were to carry the box from Charleston to Bisbee three times a week. This distance was about four times that between Tombstone and Charleston, and so even though fewer trips were made, the monthly credit for this route amounted to thirty dollars.⁸² The sub-contract for delivery of the mails was considerably more lucrative. For the daily runs between Tombstone and Charleston remuneration was set at \$50.00 per month. The mail contract for the tri-weekly trips from Charleston to Bisbee paid an additional \$78.00.⁸³ There were provisions for fines and penalties to be levied against the stage line in the case of delays or non-delivery of the mail or express. W. W. Hubbard & Company incurred the liability for any carelessness on their part.⁸⁴

By the spring of 1882, Tombstone had somewhat recovered from its earlier misfortunes. The burned-out

81. Ibid. The credit was applied against a balance of \$1800 owed Kinnear by Hubbard.

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid.

84. Ibid. Non-delivery of either the Wells Fargo box or the mail was a very serious failure, and in fact was listed as sufficient cause to automatically nullify and void the contract, causing the entire operation to be forfeited by Hubbard and returned to Kinnear.

section of the town had been rebuilt, and the wild outlaw elements, recently so active in Cochise County, had now quieted down. The mines and mills continued their production of wealth at an even greater pace than before.⁸⁵ The New Mexico & Arizona branch of the Santa Fe Railroad reached Contention City and continued its advance toward Tombstone,⁸⁶ and the stage lines continued to realize good profits from heavy passenger loads to the still growing camp. But in the midst of prosperity, "Lady Luck" again turned her back. Late in April of 1882, a general Apache outbreak brought death and destruction to the settlers of the San Pedro Valley and seriously hindered travel through southern Arizona.⁸⁷ Then in rapid succession, the tragic and disheartening occurrences of the

85. Blake, Tombstone & its Mines, 63-69; and U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 49. 1882 was the peak year for the Tombstone mines: the total production value that year soared to \$5,202,876.

86. The first passenger train made the trip to Contention on January 11, but regular service was not scheduled until February 1. Even at this time there was speculation as to whether the railroad would go through Tombstone or bypass it. Arizona Weekly Star, January 12, 1882; The Weekly Epitaph, January 16, 1882; Myrick, "Railroads of Southern Arizona," 162f.

87. Parsons' Diary, April 21-May 31, passim. There were a number of sporadic outbreaks from the San Carlos Reservation in the wake of the celebrated Cibicue Creek affair of August-September, 1881. Cf. Ralph H. Ogle, "Federal Control of the Western Apaches, 1848-1886," New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. 15 No. 3 (July 1940), Chapter VII, 294-304.

previous year repeated themselves. The shaft of the Grand Central Mine, third largest in the District, was stopped at the water level in April,⁸⁸ and on May 25, Tombstone was swept by a second devastating fire, even worse than the first.⁸⁹ Many businesses were bankrupted by the losses. A severe depression set in almost immediately, and numerous establishments untouched by the flames slowly died for want of patronage.

So seriously was John D. Kinnear affected by the fire and the prospect of the advancing railroad that the ashes of Tombstone had scarcely cooled before he put his entire stage line up for sale.⁹⁰ Sandy Bob, who had become increasingly competitive before the fire,⁹¹ had not lost his faith in the community. He undoubtedly

88. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 43.

89. Parsons' Diary, May 30, 1882; Arizona Daily Star, May 26, 27, 1882.

90. The Weekly Epitaph, June 3, 1882. Kinnear advertised for sale one 17 passenger Concord coach and five mud wagons of varying sizes, "at reasonable prices."

91. The Traveler's Guide, a newspaper published in Tombstone, was distributed free to all passengers on the train from Benson to Contention. Sandy Bob made good use of the advertising and "fill" space of this newspaper. In addition, for the convenience of passengers, he had apparently made arrangements with the New Mexico & Arizona Railway to place a ticket agent aboard the trains. In this way, he would have a chance to sell tickets even before the train reached Contention. Tombstone Traveler's Guide, April 19, 1882 (only known surviving copy on file at A.P.H.S.)

wanted to buy the six stagecoaches that Kinnear offered to sell, but apparently he was financially unable to do so. Somehow, the two former rivals must have worked out an arrangement, for the merger so persistently denied by Sandy Bob only a few months earlier now became a reality. Kinnear continued as proprietor, with Crouch at first acting as business manager of the Arizona Mail & Stage Company.⁹² The strength of Sandy Bob's determination for success once again was very much in evidence. Almost immediately, he put an extra two-horse mud wagon on the Contention run to meet renewed competition by Newton Smith.⁹³ The depressed economic situation did not alter his plans to expand the line. Since Hubbard and Crow had retired from the field,⁹⁴ Crouch and Kinnear, early

92. Tucson and Tombstone Directory, 1883-1884, 146.

93. George Hand's Diary, June 2, 1882 (written at Benson); and The Weekly Epitaph, June 21, 1882. The fare on Crouch's line was not advertised, but Smith was offering a fare of \$1.00 to Contention. Smith's line, in operation since December of 1880, finally went out of business in the last week of September, 1882.

94. In January of 1882, after less than two months in the stage business, Hubbard and Crow sold their title and interest in the line, with the same contract conditions, to Jerome Edwin Parker, Cochise County Records, Miscellaneous Records, Book 1, 320. By June 1882, Hubbard was involved in mining operations in Sonora, and Crow soon after became director and proprietor of the Tombstone Daily Republican. Cf. The Weekly Epitaph, June 17, 1882; Tucson and Tombstone

in July, purchased property in Charleston for a new and larger stage office, and by August, the Arizona Mail & Stage Company was again offering a daily coach to Charleston and Huachuca, and tri-weekly runs to Hereford and Bisbee in addition to the accomodation service to the railroad at Contention City.⁹⁵

Through the hot summer months of 1882, as Tombstone struggled to heal its scorched economy, the railroad continued its slow progress south from Contention. Rumors were rampant that because of trouble and litigation with the Southern Pacific, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad was planning to build a direct line from Deming, New Mexico, west across Arizona (through Tombstone) and through northern Sonora, Mexico, to San Diego. Although much of this was wishful thinking by

Directory, 1883-1884, 124, 146; Estelle Lutrell, Newspapers and Periodicals of Arizona, 1859-1911, University of Arizona General Bulletin no. 15, Tucson, 1950, 56. In the Great Register of Cochise County for 1882, Parker listed his age as 32 and his occupation as a clerk. He apparently did not keep the line very long either, but as there was no contract of transfer from him, it is possible that he defaulted in mail or Wells Fargo deliveries and returned the operation of the line to Kinnear--especially considering the inventory of Kinnear's coaches after the fire (see n. 90 above).

⁹⁵ The Weekly Epitaph, August 26, November 4, 1882. Crouch initiated service to Bisbee by a shortcut via Mule Pass, over a wooden toll road built by the Copper Queen Mining Company. For a good description of the stage ride to Bisbee via this road see: Burgess, Bisbee Not so Long Ago, 32-40.

the townspeople, newspaper articles lent credence to these stories.⁹⁶ Tombstone anxiously awaited completion of the railroad which would make it the gateway to and from Mexico on the Santa Fe main line. Already, the town envisioned the rich trade which would accompany its new importance. By July, grading work from Contention had progressed to within two and a half miles of Tombstone.⁹⁷ The completed rail line was expected to reach town by mid-September. Meantime, at Junction City (Fairbank)⁹⁸ on the San Pedro, track crews worked westward to the Santa Cruz Valley. At Calabasas,⁹⁹ they turned south and proceeded up the valley to the Mexican border.¹⁰⁰ There, in late October, the New Mexico & Arizona branch of the Santa Fe linked with the Sonora Railway Limited to Guaymas.¹⁰¹ In the next month

96. Ibid., February 27, August 5, 1882; Myrick, "Railroads of Southern Arizona," 163.

97. Tombstone Daily Epitaph, (Bancroft Library), May 10, July 8, 16, 1882.

98. Fairbank was named for N. K. Fairbanks, organizer of the Grand Central Mining Company, and a stockholder in the New Mexico & Arizona Railroad, Granger, Barnes' Arizona Place Names, 37.

99. Ibid., 315.

100. Myrick, "Arizona Railroads", 26.

101. Ibid., and The Weekly Epitaph, October 28, 1882; Myrick, "Railroads of Southern Arizona", 164f.

regular trains ran between Benson and the Gulf of California.¹⁰² Still, there was no railroad to Tombstone. The grading had suddenly been halted in August,¹⁰³ and despite all the speculative talk and hope, it slowly became evident that the work would not continue.

Tombstone's economy sagged even further as its great expectations of a station on the transcontinental system of the Santa Fe Railroad faded away. The disappointed town was again forced to realize its dependence upon the stage lines. For their part, the coaches went on serving the community. Running routine and now lack-luster trips, they continued carrying mails, express and passengers to and from the neighboring towns and the railroad. By late 1883, the water had become an increasingly expensive problem; production of the rich mines fell drastically.¹⁰⁴ Tombstone had passed its prime.

John D. Kinnear was one of those who had witnessed the meteoric rise and fall of the town. At the

102. The Weekly Epitaph, November 18, 1882.

103. Ibid., October 7, 1882. This article noted that grading had been suspended, about six weeks earlier, within two miles of the town.

104. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 49. Work in the Grand Central was temporarily halted until pumps could be installed to drain the shaft. But production never again reached the levels of 1881-1882, and for 1883, the total amounted to \$2,881,900, only about half that of the previous year.

age of 46, this "Old Pioneer" of Tombstone stage entrepreneurs had weathered five stormy years in the transportation business. He himself had slipped to the rank of minor partner in the firm of Robert Crouch & Co. Now, there was so little hope for the future that he decided to give up even that interest. Turning the reins over to Crouch completely, Kinnear retired to his ranch in the Whetstone Mountains.¹⁰⁵ So it was that Sandy Bob, as sole survivor, became the proprietor of the Arizona Mail & Stage Company, and the king of Tombstone's stagecoach business.

105. District Court, Second Judicial District, County of Cochise, Microfilm in the office of the Clerk of Superior Courts, (cited hereinafter as "Cochise District Court."), Judgement Roll, Case 716, filed March 24, 1883. The date that Kinnear gave up his interests entirely was not recorded, but most likely this occurred in late 1883 or 1884.

CHAPTER IV

ON THE ROAD

To visit Tombstone, the new great mining-camp, of doleful cognomen but lively characteristics, is the recognized duty of every one exploring, investigating, or interested in Arizona, this new field of American enterprise; so of course, I went to see¹ and judge for myself,--for many men have many minds.

In its prime, this mining camp "of doleful cognomen" stood out as the newest and richest silver discovery in the West. Prospectors, gamblers, business men, adventurers and wanderers "pulled up their stakes" wherever they were and headed for the booming town. Typical of the many who recorded their impressions of travel by Western stagecoach, those who ventured on the road to Tombstone have left accounts richly flavored with excitement. Even in an era when horse transportation was taken for granted, travel by stage was for many a particularly thrilling experience. People from far and wide, motivated by reasons as varied as their backgrounds, were lured to wild mining camps like Tombstone. Men, women and children from every walk of life, every degree of temperament and temperance, and in all conditions of cleanliness rode the

1. A. H. Noon, "A Visit to Tombstone City."

stagecoach. Colorful descriptions of such characters in their picturesque settings have contributed much to the aura of romance which has grown up around this means of transportation. At the same time, they have slanted its significance toward the realm of adventure and away from that of necessity.

On the pre-railroad frontier, the stagecoach was the only form of public conveyance. In lively times, when passenger traffic was heavy, almost anything with wheels and seating capacity for two or more persons became a "stagecoach". The various Tombstone stage lines used all sorts of vehicles, from buckboards to mud wagons to the great lumbering Concord coaches.² To accomodate the traveling public, these vehicles departed for their destinations at all hours of the day and night. This was especially true after the advent of the railroad, for the schedules of stage lines to outlying communities were almost entirely dependent upon those of the trains.

2. For descriptions of these vehicles see: Eggenhoffer, Wagons, Mules and Men, 146, 158f, 162f, 166f. The term "stagecoach" was often used loosely to mean almost any passenger wagon, but undoubtedly the stereotype of the "Tombstone stage" is Sandy Bob's "Modoc". Its classic Concord profile, the mystery of its name and the many exaggerated claims made about its history have maintained this popular image even up to present times. Long after stagecoaches had disappeared from the Tombstone scene, the name of the Modoc and that of Sandy Bob have been remembered and perpetuated as symbolic of all the stages and stage lines ever connected with the town.

The trip by coach was slow, usually boring, and even a short run was likely to be tiring. Yet, for all but the seasoned traveler rest or sleep aboard the moving vehicle was next to impossible.³ The leather "thorough-brace" of the Concord coach was the best suspension system yet devised for absorbing the road shock of "pot-holes", rocks and ruts, but it produced a rolling, pitching and swaying motion not unlike that of a ship in heavy seas.⁴ The inevitable coach-sick passenger was a curse to his companions, especially in the crowded compartment where nine to twelve people sat facing each other with their knees interlocked. In addition, there were ever-present the discomforts of heat or cold, mud or dust, and the dangers of runaways, upsets, Indian attacks and holdups. These hazards and annoyances, common to stage transportation all over the frontier, were of course experienced by travelers on the road to Tombstone.

Throughout the West, stagecoach drivers enjoyed a reputation for being a breed apart from other

3. George Parsons, in his Diary for February 8, 1880, described a miserable night's stage ride from the railroad terminus at Casa Grande to Tucson, a distance of some seventy-five miles. Although he was very tired, Parsons had to hang on in a very uncomfortable position to keep from falling off his crowded seat on top of the coach.

4. For an illustration of the thoroughbrace suspension system see: Eggenhoffer, Wagons, Mules and Men, 160f, 169.

frontiersmen. They were commonly dubbed "Jehus" after the Biblical king of Israel who drove his chariot "furiously".⁵ Distaff passengers lauded them as perfect gentlemen and "Knights of the Whip". But perhaps their true character was better displayed in the absence of ladies, when the tongue could be loosed to crack a string of profanity even sharper than the lash. A good driver-- a true "reinsman"--was the product of years of training and experience, for much skill was required to handle teams of four and six horses. During the gold rush, scores of drivers came to California from New England, the birth-place of the Concord coach and the great stage driving traditions.⁶ In the 1870's and 1880's, as railroads became the primary mode of transportation in California, displaced coaches and teams were brought into Arizona by proprietors of new and growing stage lines. Many drivers also came eastward to this new frontier where they were now much in demand. The hot, dry roads of the Southwest were a dismal and unpleasant change for most California drivers. But they seem to

5. II Kings, 9:20, "...and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Numshi; for he driveth furiously."

6. For an excellent discussion of the New England driving traditions see: Capt. William Banning and George H. Banning, Six Horses, New York, 1930, 360-375; and Ralph Moody, Stagecoach West, New York, 1967, 22-28.

have adapted themselves to the additional hardships without losing any of their distinctive characteristics, and perhaps they even gained a few. From the native Mexican drivers, the New England "silk-poppers"⁷ learned at least one new trick, as a passenger observed: "Our driver threw stones at his horses, as is done in Mexico, that is at the leaders, which were beyond the reach of his long lash. A single stone was made to 'carom,' such was his skill, and served for both."⁸

It was the driver's prerogative to assign the favored seats, and the passengers invited to sit up on the box were lucky, indeed. It was an envied place, for the driver usually had the latest gossip and intelligence on a wide variety of subjects. Often, he was the first dependable source of information for the eager newcomer. No doubt, the barage of repetitious questions frequently provoked him to "size up" the tenderfoot and give appropriately disturbing answers. Some "Jehus" entertained

7. John A. Rockfellow, Log of an Arizona Trail Blazer, Tucson, 1933, 55, characterized the driver as "...an artist in his line...called a 'silk popper', in contradistinction to the mule skimmers and bull whackers... And he surely can 'pop the silk', swinging the long lash over his head and bringing it to a pop over the leaders of his team thirty feet ahead." (This is a feat well-nigh impossible for the strongest arm and the longest whip.)

8. W. H. Bishop, "Across Arizona," Harper's New Monthly Magazine, March, 1883, 494.

their passengers with hair-raising stories about the perils of the road, few of which needed much embellishment. One passenger, about to board the stage for Tombstone, watched with anxiety as a guard, Winchester in hand, climbed up and posted himself by the Wells Fargo box:

The driver began to relate robber stories. This stage had been stopped and "gone through" twice within the past six months. The experience was enlivened on one occasion by a runaway and turn-over, and on the other by the shooting and killing of the driver. Of this last feature his successor spoke with a disgust not unnatural. He would have the line drawn at drivers.⁹

If such tales were not enough to discourage the traveler, there were always the dreariness and discomfort of the ride. As another passenger could attest, it was particularly miserable for those inside the coach. "Jammed like sardines on the hard seats...[we left] Pantano, creeping much of the way, letting the horses walk, though miles of alkali dust that the wheels rolled up in thick clouds, of which we received full benefit." But, in reply to the passengers' complaints, "the driver said that was his daily job which made us ashamed of our weakness."¹⁰

9. Ibid. Though this article was not published until March of 1883, it is clear from the context that Bishop visited Tombstone in November of 1881.

10. Gray Reminiscences.

In the winter of 1880, Adolphus Henry Noon, a journalist for the Chicago Tribune, climbed aboard the stagecoach at Tucson to go and see the booming camp of Tombstone.¹¹ On the coach were among others men typical of the capitalists coming to investigate the rich new mining strikes--Mark Macdonald, "the Ursus-Major of the San Francisco Stock-Board," John King Luttrell, mine owner and former United States Senator from California,¹² and other "lions"--all traveling to see "those eccentrically-named mines: the Lucky Cuss, Tough Nut, Contention, etc.," which had begun to attract national attention.¹³ Gazing out the open window of the jostling coach, Noon viewed the countryside, and characterized much of the road as "barren" and "uninviting," though in some places it passed through pleasant "park-like country, oak and mesquit [sic.] trees, with miles upon miles of the finest kind of grass." "At times it is dusty," he continued in his description, "and my fellow passengers' tobacco smoke--three of them inside the coach, smoking like

11. Noon, "A Visit to Tombstone."

12. Noon identifies him only as "Senator Luttrell." See: Biographical Directory of American Congressmen from 1774-1961, Washington, 1961, 1243.

13. Noon, "A Visit to Tombstone."

steam-engines--is not delightful, but all are good-natured and full of information, and I live through it."¹⁴

The stagecoach turned southward and rattled along up the San Pedro Valley to Contention City. There the continuous dull roar of the great stamp mills reverberated day and night. Contention was typically endowed with its fair share of saloons, some with picturesque names such as the "Head-light," the "Dew-drop" and the "Bank Exchange," where for a time the stage office was located.¹⁵ Here, the passengers stopped for lunch. Food at these stations was notoriously bad, and it may have been at just such a meal that A. H. Noon observed a Chicago "drummer" refuse a dish of overcooked "territorial beans" with results which he felt worth recording:

[The salesman] rose indignantly from the table and demanded that food of a character suited to his stomach and his dignity should be provided for him. At this juncture, a gentleman with tangled locks, a slouched hat, a blue shirt, and cow-hide boots put his hand behind him, and producing a large Colt's revolver, which to the drummer appeared to be three feet long, pointed the same at his left eye and said, in a hoarse voice: "Stranger, eat them beans." And he did eat them,--he ate heartily, and he says his dyspepsia has all left him: and, if there is anything now that he is particularly fond of it is a dish of beans.¹⁶

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.; Arizona Daily Star, December 11, 1879; see below n. 23.

16. A. H. Noon, "Before the Railroad," Chicago Tribune, November 15, 1879.

After lunch, a fresh team, consisting of six horses, was harnessed to the coach, for out of Contention the road became very steep.¹⁷ Now the traffic and the dust increased, as the coach began to meet wagon trains strung out along the road. Giant high-sided freighters lumbered along, hauling thousands of pounds of supplies, machinery and merchandise toward Tombstone. From the other direction, long teams of mules or oxen pulled huge ore wagons, linked in twos and threes, from the mines near the town to the mills down along the river.¹⁸

"We pass many dead soldiers," (empty whiskey bottles), journalist Noon observed, "and their mournful remains are frequently visible under a tree or by the dusty roadside." But, despite such obvious signs of civilization, there was a notable lack of settlement along the route, with the exception of the stage stations and "a little Mormon affair" (St. David) on the San Pedro River. Between Contention and Tombstone, however, three small camps caught Noon's attention, "which three places, a fellow-passenger assured me, rejoiced in the popularly-

17. It was at this point that the male passengers often had to get out and walk, when the horses were unable to pull the heavily loaded coach up the hill. See Parsons' Diary, February 17, 1880.

18. Bishop, "Across Arizona," 494f.

bestowed names of 'Hog-em', 'Gouge-em,' and 'Stink-em.'
Possibly," he speculated, "these titles will eventually blossom into Roseville, Diamond City, etc. At present the locations look primitive enough to suit any name."¹⁹ Nearer the town, another passenger made note of advertisements painted on the few wayside fences, "Go to Bangley and Schlagenstein's. They Are The Bosses, You Bet."²⁰ As Tombstone itself came into view, on one of the bare hills a large circular water tank, painted with a "mammoth advertisement," stood out as the most impressive landmark. The "outskirts" of the town consisted of huts and tents, some with adobe chimneys and wooden doors, and at a glance, "A burly miner could be seen stretched upon his cot in his windowless cabin, barely large enough to contain it."²¹ At last, as the coach came to the edge of town, the driver cracked his

19. Noon, "A Visit to Tombstone." "Gouge-Eye," or more properly "Watervale", was the first town located in the Tombstone District. The second town, "Hog-em," lay on a ridge below the Grand Central and Contention Mines. It was founded by John B. "Pie" Allen who built a store there. See: Reminiscences of Robert A. Lewis, on file at the A.P.H.S. "Stink-em" was just outside of the town of Tombstone. Its main attraction seems to have been a saloon called the "Pick-em-up." See: Parsons' Diary, February 23, 1880.

20. "Bangley and Schlagenstein's" is apparently a fictitious name, for no such firm can be found in the Tombstone newspapers or directories of the time.

21. Bishop, "Across Arizona," 495, 497.

whip over the plodding horses, forcing them to run, and entering Tombstone pretentiously as though they had traveled the entire distance at a break-neck pace.²²

Late in January of 1882, Endicott Peabody, then a young Episcopal minister, traveled to Tombstone. His lucid account of the journey provides a typical tender-foot's impressions on the road. Arriving from the East after seven days on the train, Peabody disembarked at Benson, "about as wretched a place as you can imagine." Surveying the village, he described it as "a line of wooden shanties and adobes...inhabited by roughs and Chinese who are in great force in this part of the country and a very unclean element they are." At the station, the stage for Tombstone was awaiting passengers. To the young man, accustomed to seeing stylish trotters pulling fancy "turn-outs" on the brick and cobblestone streets of Massachusetts, the sight of this coach was dismaying. "A dilapidated old affair," it seemed to him, "covered with dust and drawn by 4 decrepit looking horses driven by Sandy Bob as the coachman was named." Without asking permission, Peabody naively took one of the choice seats. "I climbed to the top," he said, "intending to see the country and though requested to descend

22. Gray Reminiscences.

was firm in my decision as you know I sometimes am, and remained." Describing the ride into Tombstone, he continued:

The first part of the journey was through a flat sandy country covered with brown grass interspersed with many cacti and a stubly undergrowth--not particularly picturesque--But in the distance were rugged hills and up these our way lay--The passengers outside were Seth Cook--a Calif. millionaire, a Major on his way to the frontier fort probably Huachuca and a Jew aged peddler who was most entertaining. The driver after recovering from sulkiness caused by so heavy a load became very chatty and gave us a graphic description of his experience 3 weeks before when he was 'stood up' (as they call robbing here) by 2 highway robbers.²³ The stage ahead of us which carried the express had two armed messengers and I expected certainly an adventure but, as is usually the case, it did not come. After a six hours' drive through very bold country we arrived at Tombstone. On the outskirts were tents and the usual adobe huts and shanties but as we came into the middle of the town I found it more of a place than I expected. The main street is long and has several two storied buildings in it and most of the others tho' small are well built--altho' they are for the most part "gin mills" as they call saloons here.²⁴

The arrival of the daily stagecoach was an important occasion in Tombstone. The townspeople, many of whom

23. The robbery occurred on the night of January 7. See below n. 79.

24. All quotations are from a letter written by Peabody from Tombstone January 30, 1882 (two days after his arrival). It is quoted in Peabody of Groton by Frank D. Ashburn, New York, 1944, 50. Endicott Peabody remained in Tombstone six months. Two years later, he became headmaster of Groton School of Groton, Massachusetts. He held this position, gaining the highest respect, until his retirement in 1940.

had left their families and friends far away, were ever anxious for mail from "back home". Business men always expected important correspondence--bills, payments, and small items of merchandise ordered from Tucson. Miners awaited word of possible investments in their claims, or financial help from families and friends.²⁵ The mine and mill foremen from time to time nervously anticipated the arrival of the payroll for their men, and everybody was interested in hearing the latest news from the rest of the Territory and the country. The town's newspapers were dependent upon this for much of their own copy. Occasionally, the stage would bring important people: a famous theatrical company, or a magician, an Eastern capitalist looking for good investments, a mining magnate checking his interests, territorial legislators, or even the governor.²⁶ Most often the coach was loaded with

25. Parsons' Diary gives intermittant hints of this. See his entires for March 22, 30, April 2, 1880.

26. Ex-governor (1869-1877) Anson P. K. Safford, one of the original investors with the Schieffelins, Gird and Corbin, made a number of trips to Tombstone as early as 1878. In September of 1881, John J. Gosper, Secretary to Governor John C. Fremont and acting in his absence, came to Tombstone to investigate rampant lawlessness. On March 27, 1882, Governor Frederick A. Tritle arrived by stage to spend a week in Tombstone, again investigating the lawless situation there. Tritle was actually the first acting governor of the Territory to visit the town. See: Schieffelin Ms.; Weekly Epitaph, April 3, 10, 1882; Parsons' Diary, August 4, 1880, March 27, 1882; and Gary L. Roberts, "The 'Cow-Boy Scourge'," Brand Book of the Westerners, New York Posse, Vol. 9, no. 2 (1962), 28f.

miners, traveling salesmen, or aspiring business men coming to the "new excitement" to seek their fortunes, perhaps having tried and failed to achieve that in other mining camps.

If the stagecoach was due in at a reasonable hour, before late evening,²⁷ a crowd would begin to gather shortly before the arrival time. Waiting for the mail was something of a social event. It was a chance to visit with other members of the community, exchange pleasantries, trade stories and tell of the day's activities at the mines or in the town. The crack of the whip, the thudding of hooves and the rattle of harness chain signaled its arrival as the coach clattered up Fremont Street and stopped in a swirl of dust at the corner of Fourth. There, at the Post Office, the driver threw down the mail sacks,²⁸ and some of the passengers got out. The Postmaster picked up the sacks, and as the crowd began to queue up at the delivery window, the stage went on down Fourth Street to Allen and deposited the remaining passengers at the hotels. The town marshal was usually on hand and saw to it that all exposed

27. Parsons' Diary, April 6, 10, 23, 1880.

56. 28. Rockfellow, Log of an Arizona Trail Blazer,

firearms were put away.²⁹ Those travelers "lighting" for the first time at Tombstone, got a thorough looking-over by other less recent arrivals. If the motley crowd liked what they saw, the "glad hand" was extended in welcome. For some, however, the first impression must have been a bit dismaying. An unwritten law against derbies and "plug" hats was enforced by rowdy miners, and any newcomer unfortunate enough to be wearing such an item was destined to lose it. The rougher elements would have their fun by knocking it off and then kicking it back and forth along the ground until it was not worth recovering. If the owner was a good sport and lucky, the crowd would pitch in to help replace the hat with the "regulation" soft felt slouch hat worn by most of the men.³⁰

In times of heated competition between two rival lines, the ride was apt to be more interesting and exciting (and perhaps more dangerous) for the passengers. The drivers, usually sober, plied the whip to their

29. Gray Reminiscences. On April 18, 1881, the Town Council of Tombstone passed Ordinance no. 9, "To provide against the carrying of deadly weapons." On file at the City Clerk's Office, Tombstone. In an attempt to counteract an increasing number of crimes and incidences of shootings, Mayor John P. Clum on December 10, 1881, issued a proclamation cancelling all firearms permits after January 1, 1882, and subjecting applications for new permits to his personal approval. Tombstone Epitaph (daily), January 10, 1882.

30. Gray Reminiscences.

horses, and in attempting to outdo the competition, they rolled their coaches at top speeds. On the rough, rutted dirt roads the chances of breakdowns, upsets and other accidents were considerably increased. The possibilities of such an unfortunate occurrence were even greater if the equipment were old or inadequately cared for. In the case of the Tombstone stage lines, most of the coaches and harness had been purchased second or third hand from defunct lines in California, having already had many years of use and abuse before the railroads pushed them on to Arizona's farther frontier.³¹ As with any vehicle, a stagecoach demanded constant attention and maintenance. The moving parts, particularly the wheel hubs, required frequent greasing to avoid the overheating and "seizing" of the metal surfaces due to excess friction. The numerous bolts in the body and undercarriage periodically required tightening, as they would vibrate loose on the rough roads. As wood parts shrank from the dryness of the climate, metal parts were left even looser. The leather thoroughbraces of the suspension system, and the harnesses constituted other potential sources of trouble. After a period of hard use, the leather, heavy as it was, would wear thin in places and eventually

31. See above n. 8; Ch. II n. 108.

give way if not repaired or replaced. If any of these dangerous conditions went unnoticed or were allowed to continue and worsen, something could easily break or fall off while the coach was rolling. If this happened, and it frequently did, the result could be a very serious mishap.

Aside from a few blatant acts of sabotage at the outset of the Ohnesorgen & Walker - Kinnear rivalry,³² there were numerous instances of mechanical failure which caused (at the least) considerable inconvenience to the passengers and drivers of the stagecoaches involved. A typical incident occurred on the first run of Ohnesorgen & Walker's stage from Tucson to Tombstone. As the fully-loaded coach raced along behind four spanking mules, a front axle nut worked loose and fell off. The wheel rolled away, and the coach overturned, scattering people and baggage in the dust. Fortunately, no one was hurt, but some thirty or forty minutes were lost as the driver and passengers worked to right the vehicle and put the wheel back on.³³ Not only did the accident cause Ohnesorgen and Walker to lose the race, but it was indeed an humiliating experience for the new stage

32. See above Ch. II n. 68, 69.

33. See above Ch. II n. 43.

line trying hard to prove its worth and impress its first customers. Some months later, Kinnear's coach from Tombstone was rolling along some six miles out from Tucson when suddenly it lurched forward as a front wheel dropped off. The coach bucked and dragged to a halt. The driver climbed down, thankful that it had remained upright, and with the help of the passengers he began the search along the dusty road for the lost axle nut. At that moment, Ohnesorgen & Walker's stage, running behind, came thundering upon the scene. The driver (apparently in a charitable mood) reined his team to a halt and climbed down to join in the search. Meanwhile, the horses on the Kinnear coach, left alone, saw no reason not to continue their interrupted journey into Tucson, where their evening hay and oats awaited them. Starting up at full gallop, the team ran some three miles, dragging the empty vehicle along on three wheels. As they attempted to pass a slow-moving freight wagon, the coach swayed and turned over in a smashing, splintering wreck. This time the damage was too great to repair on the road. Kinnear's passengers and driver had little choice but to accept the generous offer of a ride into Tucson on the rival coach, and perhaps even pay the fare, also.³⁴

34. Daily Arizona Citizen, January 12, 1880.

Billy Ohnesorgen and Howard Walker may still have been chuckling over this incident when a week or so later their own coach broke down nine miles west of the San Pedro Station. Now, the situation was reversed, but unfortunately their rival was not on hand to return the favor. The driver and his passengers had to walk for help to the nearest ranch (Wakefield's) some five miles southwest around the north end of the Whetstone Mountains.³⁵ There, the driver borrowed a wagon, and he again resumed the journey with the mail and his passengers riding in the hard bed. An extra coach had meantime been sent from Tucson to investigate the delayed arrival. About six miles out, it met the group in the wagon, and for the little remaining distance relieved the footsore and weary travelers.³⁶

The first reported accident involving injuries to Tombstone passengers occurred near Contention City on a clear, bright, moon-lit night in late March of 1880. Kinnear's coach, overloaded and apparently driving fast, lost a wheel, or perhaps broke a leather thoroughbrace. The result was a serious upset, injuring three or four passengers. A doctor was sent out from Tombstone as

35. Wakefield's can be seen on the Official Map of Pima County, Arizona, 1893, drawn by George J. Roskrue.

36. Daily Arizona Citizen, January 21, 1880.

soon as word of the accident reached the town. At the scene, he treated and released all but one of the injured. That unfortunate sufferer spent an additional week or so convalescing in Contention City. This accident caused concern about the sadly neglected safety of passengers, and an editorial warned the stage lines against continuing their unsafe practices.³⁷

Perhaps the word of caution was heeded, for fewer accidents were reported thereafter, and of those several could even be called "unavoidable". The road from Benson to Tombstone ran for a good distance along the banks of the San Pedro River. During the summer rainy season, the thick layer of dust was frequently turned into a sea of deep and treacherous mud. When this happened, a "runner" went ahead of the coach to test the surface of the road.³⁸ The scout of course got his boots full of mud, and for all his trouble, the system was not infallible. In early August of 1881, two accidents befell Kinnear's coaches, one loaded full with "eastern passengers". Both mishaps were caused by the deplorable condition of this road. In the slippery mud, the wheels slid

37. Arizona Daily Star, April 3, 1880. George Parsons, in his Diary for October 24, 1880, noted that the preacher, Joseph McIntyre, was too sore from a stage upset (his third one) to preach his customary long sermon.

38. Parsons' Diary, October 24, 1880.

sideways into deep ruts, and the top-heavy coaches, through no fault of the drivers, toppled over into the quagmire. The passengers who had been riding outside in the rain were probably thrown clear; those inside bounced against each other and the interior of the coach and stood a greater chance of being injured. All were left shaken, bruised, rainsoaked and muddy, and one, Judge Warren Earll of Tucson, suffered a broken arm.³⁹

The four and six horse teams which pulled the stagecoaches back and forth along the road, day in and day out through mud and dust, became quite accustomed to all the everyday sights and sounds of the trail. They knew the road by heart--every twist and turn, every grade and gully. Usually these docile, even-tempered and hard-working animals were not easily startled. Occasionally, however, something out of the ordinary would "spook" one or more of the team. Then the frightened horses were apt to bolt and run. A runaway was a wild and frightening experience, but a good driver could usually control the team in time to prevent it from becoming serious. Always in time of danger, his first consideration was supposed to be for the passengers. The record of Tombstone

39. The Daily Nugget, August 3, 7, 1881. Warren Earll is listed as an attorney at law with the firm of Earll, Smith, Campbell & Robinson in the Tucson City Directory, 1881, 69.

stagecoach drivers for fulfilling this responsibility is admirable. Only one man is known to have dropped the lines and jumped off, leaving his charges on the careening coach to fend for themselves.⁴⁰

One peculiar and nearly serious runaway occurred right within the town of Tombstone. William Tecumseh Sherman, Commanding General of the United States Army, visited Tombstone on April 7, 1882, in the course of a ten-week inspection tour of military installations in the West.⁴¹ Arriving in the evening by army ambulances, the members of Sherman's party were ceremoniously greeted in front of the Grand Hotel on Allen Street. A gala reception was in progress as the daily stage pulled into town from Contention City. As usual, the driver deposited the mail at the Post Office and let his passengers off near the hotels. He was carefully guiding the horses through the crowded street on the way to the stables

⁴⁰. This incident occurred during a robbery on October 8, 1881, Arizona Weekly Star, October 13, 1881. For details, see below p. 116.

⁴¹. The Weekly Epitaph, March 6, April 10, 1882; Parsons' Diary, April 7, 1882. Ostensibly, Sherman's visit to Tombstone was social. Actually, he was also investigating the severe problems of lawlessness in Cochise County and reporting his findings directly to President Chester A. Arthur. James W. Richardson, (comp.) Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1902, Washington, 1907, Vol. VIII, 102. Strangely, General Sherman makes no reference to this inspection tour in his annual report to the Secretary of War.

when General Sherman, from the balcony of the hotel, completed his address to the citizens. The townspeople responded to their distinguished guest with a great roar of cheering. The sudden thundering applause was a new and terrifying sensation for the stage horses. In the midst of the throng, they whirled about--almost tipping the coach--and charged back down Allen Street in the direction from which they had come. The driver, certain that the empty coach was about to overturn, jumped off leaving the team to run. After several blocks, one of the horses stumbled and fell, dragging the whole runaway rig to a staggering halt in a cloud of dust and a tangle of harness, hooves and wheels.⁴²

During the heyday of stage travel to and from Tombstone, the most frightening experiences to befall the unlucky traveler were likely to be those suffered at the hands of the highwayman. The great wealth generated by the booming camp invited many who did not care to earn their livelihood by conventional means. Among these

⁴². The Weekly Epitaph, April 10, 1882. Such incidents were rare; there was not another runaway of this nature for some six years. In that second incident, a departing coach had pulled up to the stage office and was about to take on passengers for Bisbee when the horses bolted and ran. They raced around the block four times before smashing into an overhanging awning, taking off most of the top of the coach. Fortunately, as in the earlier incident, no one was hurt. Tombstone Daily Prospector, September 23, 1888.

were stage robbers who made their appearance early in the history of Tombstone. Even in the days before the stage-coaches began carrying the valuable shipments of gold and silver bullion it was not uncommon for a coach to be stopped and "gone through". Typical of these early robberies was the one which occurred on a night in mid-September of 1879. Kinnear's coach was laboring up the hills between Contention City and "Gouge-Eye" (Watervale) when it was suddenly halted by the sharp command of two masked men, wielding double-barreled shotguns. The driver and seven passengers aboard had their pockets emptied, and their satchels ripped open and rifled. The bandits took about one hundred dollars in cash, but strangely enough, they returned to the passengers their watches and left completely untouched the mail sacks and the express box. The two robbers then made good their escape into the night. They headed north, but apparently doubled back and rode directly into Tombstone where they spread the word that the in-bound stage had been held up. When the coach at last arrived in town, the news of the robbery was already on the streets, and the bandits were long gone.⁴³

This incident was one of a rash of such hold-ups which generally plagued the Territory during this time. The San Francisco Post, quoted by the Daily Arizona

⁴³. Arizona Weekly Star, September 18, 1879.

Citizen, noted with some undue exaggeration, "Highway robbery is so frequent in Arizona that one is half inclined to think that the whole male population takes to the road occasionally by way of recreation."⁴⁴ In actuality, there were perhaps no more than ten such stage robberies during the year,⁴⁵ but the problem was serious enough to prompt Wells, Fargo & Co. to offer rewards of \$300 for the arrest and conviction of robbers of their express matter, and to evoke from the acting governor of the Territory what journalist A. H. Noon referred to as "The Gospel according to St. Gosper," namely, conspicuous notices in Post Offices offering a reward of \$500 to any person who killed a highway robber-- the "most suitable and eloquent moral sermon ever addressed to that class of human vermin."⁴⁶

Despite such incentives, the situation worsened, for the population and wealth of the Territory was growing much faster than adequate law enforcement. Among other crimes, stage robberies became more frequent. The

⁴⁴. Daily Arizona Citizen, December 16, 1879.

⁴⁵. Ibid.

⁴⁶. Noon, "Before the Railroad." During the frequent and lengthy absences of Governor John C. Fremont (1878-1882), his secretary, John J. Gosper, became acting Governor. Cf. Bert Fireman, "Fremont's Arizona Adventure," American West, Vol. 1, Winter 1964, 8-19.

added lure of silver and gold bullion carried on the stages from Tombstone made them even more susceptible to hold-ups, and although the mills attempted to minimize this possibility by increasing the weight of these bars to about 200 pounds⁴⁷--too heavy to be carried away on a horse--even this measure was not always sufficient to foil the determined thief. As an example, one morning in late August of 1881, J. D. Kinnear & Co's coach from Tombstone drove up to the platform of the railroad depot in Benson, and as usual, the Wells Fargo messenger began unloading the bars of silver bullion, hauling them with a hand cart into the station for transport by railroad to Tucson. During the one or two minutes he was in the building with one load, bold bandits somehow made off with one of the heavy bars, valued at about \$2,000. Despite a thorough search of the area, and a subsequent reward offered by Wells Fargo of \$450 for the return of the silver and \$300 for the arrest and conviction of the robbers, they apparently made a successful getaway.⁴⁸

Lawlessness was growing to alarming proportions in Cochise County. From ranches in the San Pedro and

⁴⁷. Daily Arizona Citizen, January 8, 1880; G. W. Goodale, "Reminiscences of Tombstone," in the Tombstone Epitaph, October 30, 1925.

⁴⁸. The Daily Nugget, August 20, 1881.

San Simon Valleys, cattle rustlers--or "cow-boys" as they were commonly called--raid the ranges of southern Arizona and northern Sonora, stealing mules, horses and cattle, changing the brands and reselling them in other parts of the Territory or in Mexico.⁴⁹ In Tombstone itself, the exploits of a handful of gamblers, gunmen and other petty criminals seemed to overshadow the good work of the great majority of industrious merchants and miners. Civil authority was weak and concentrated largely against such minor offenders as drunkards, cheating gamblers and street fighters. Among the officers of the law were Sheriff John H. Behan,⁵⁰ Deputy U. S. Marshal Virgil W. Earp, and his brother Wyatt, from time to time a policeman, detective and deputy sheriff.⁵¹ The latter two, well-known as gamblers, saloon keepers and gunmen, were political enemies of the sheriff. They were also known to bend the law to suit their needs, enforcing those

49. Roberts, "The 'Cow-Boy Scourge'," 28.

50. John Harris Behan Biography File at the A.P.H.S. Behan was the first sheriff of Cochise County. He was a Democrat and received the backing of The Nugget, edited by Harry Woods, the undersheriff.

51. Earp Family Papers at the A.P.H.S.; statement by Wyatt Earp, November 16, 1881, in Justice's Court, Township No. 1, Cochise County, A. T., before Wells Spicer, J. P. - Territory of Arizona vs. Morgan Earp et al. Transcript printed in The Daily Nugget, November 17, 1881. (Hereinafter referred to as "Earp's Hearing.")

particular ordinances they chose to call upon, especially against their antagonists. Nor were they above using their offices in other ways to further their political and financial ambitions.⁵²

In the early spring of 1881, members of the Earps' gang and some of the cow-boys joined in planning a stage-coach robbery of major proportions. Large consignments of money were sent on occasion from Tombstone into Tucson. As currency and coin were not only negotiable but also more easily stolen than heavy bars of bullion, it was customary to keep such shipments secret. The gang, however, had a source of information. The local agent for Kinnear's line and for Wells Fargo was Marshall Williams,⁵³ a good friend and confidant of the Earps. Another of the brothers, Morgan, had also been employed by Wells Fargo as a shotgun messenger since October of the previous year.⁵⁴ Through one of these two men, the Earps, who were doing the planning, learned of a shipment of about \$26,000 in specie to be sent by stage in mid-March to

52. Ibid.; Roberts, "The 'Cow-Boy Scourge'," 29.

53. See above Ch. II n. 104.

54. Morgan Earp was hired by Wells, Fargo & Co. as a shotgun messenger about mid-October of 1880. He replaced his brother Wyatt, who resigned that job when he was appointed to the office of Deputy Sheriff (Pima County) Tombstone Epitaph, October 20, 1880, as recorded by Douglas D. Martin, The Earps of Tombstone, Tombstone, 1959, 6.

Benson. Several of the cow-boys were to carry out the hold-up, and it was arranged that Morgan Earp would ride as messenger. He would offer no resistance, and the robbery would be safe and easy. But, on the appointed day, March 15, Robert Paul, the senior Wells Fargo messenger and detective, suddenly decided to take Earp's place as guard. A gruff giant of six and a half feet, Paul was well known and feared by road agents.⁵⁵ Realizing that he would never surrender the treasure box without a fight, the plotters decided that they would have to ambush and kill him to carry out the hold-up. This would be very dangerous, as Paul was noted for his bravery and deadly accuracy with guns. The job would require a man equally as cool, and as sure a shot. John H. "Doc" Holliday, another member of the gang, seemed to fit the role. Hastily arming himself with a Henry rifle and a revolver, he rented a fast horse and rode out to serve as assassin.⁵⁶

The stagecoach was to leave at eight in the evening. Shortly before the departure, Marshall Williams loaded the strongbox into the boot, and eight or nine

55. Gray Reminiscences; Robert Havelin Paul biographical file, A.P.H.S.

56. Arizona Weekly Citizen, March 20, 1881; Arizona Weekly Star, March 24, 1881; Reminiscences of Francis J. Vaughan on file at the A.P.H.S.

passengers climbed aboard. With his double barreled shotgun in hand, Bob Paul mounted the box, and the driver, "Budd" Philpot,⁵⁷ cracked the whip. The coach rattled out over the low hills toward Contention. Some ten miles from Tombstone the hold-up men had picked a spot where the road crossed a deep wash which would slow the horses to a walk. There they waited anxiously. The night was cold and blustery, and patches of snow lay on the ground. Philpot had been driving nearly two hours, and the coach was in fact not far from the ambush site, when he asked Paul to trade places with him and take the lines so he could warm his hands. The stage passed Drew's Station⁵⁸ and descended into the deep gulch. As the team started to pull up the opposite incline, a masked man stepped out of the brush on either side of the road, and one called for the driver to "hold". At the same instant, Holliday took careful aim and fired at the guard. But it was Philpot, not Paul, who toppled forward between the wheel horses, shot nearly through the heart. "I

57. Eli "Budd" Philpot was a typical California stage driver who had left his wife and four children in Calistoga and come to work in Arizona. Arizona Weekly Citizen, March 20, 1881.

58. Drew's Station was a short distance north of Contention. See" Eckhoff & Reicher Map of the Territory of Arizona, 1880.

don't hold for anyone," bellowed Paul.⁵⁹ He grabbed the shotgun and emptied both barrels in the direction of the bandits, at the same time laying the whip to the team. Already badly frightened by the gunfire and Philpot's falling body, the horses jumped forward, pulling the stage up the draw at a run. The dismounted robbers could only level a volley at the dark form of the disappearing coach in the desperate hope of killing a horse. Some twenty shots were fired in vain; the attempt had failed, and the bandits fled the scene. A mile down the road, Paul regained control of the frightened team, and he then discovered that one of the passengers, Peter Roerig, had been mortally wounded.⁶⁰ Again whipping the horses, he raced on to Benson where he put the coach and the treasure into safe hands. Then he jumped on a horse and started back in pursuit of the robbers.

News of the murders and attempted hold-up was flashed to Tombstone by telegraph. Sheriff Behan at once formed a posse with Marshall Williams, the Earp brothers and several others and left to join Bob Paul in search

59. Arizona Weekly Citizen, March 20, 1881.

60. Ibid.; Arizona Weekly Star, March 24, 1881. Peter Roerig is said to have been a French Canadian, on his way to Montana to look after mining interests there. He was apparently sitting on top of the stage and was shot in the back. None of the other passengers was injured.

of the criminals. Following their trail down the San Pedro, within a few days the officers surprised and arrested a suspected accomplice near Redington. This man identified the three cow-boys as Bill Leonard, Harry Head and Jim Crane.⁶¹ He also implicated Holliday and five other silent accomplices. Behan and Williams took custody of the suspect and returned him to Tombstone, where less than a week later he escaped.⁶² In the meantime, the search for the three cowboys continued up and down the San Pedro, Sulphur Springs and San Simon Valleys. Finally, after two weeks of fruitless tracking, the posse crossed into southwestern New Mexico. There they became lost in the desert, and lacking food and water they were forced to abandon the chase.⁶³

61. The man arrested was a cowboy named Luther King, supposed to be on his way to deliver ammunition and information to the robbers. Arizona Weekly Citizen, March 27, 1881. John Pleasant Gray was personally acquainted with Jim Crane, and from him learned the details of the robbery. According to Gray, Billy Leonard had been a watchmaker in New York City before he developed lung trouble and came West. Gray Reminiscences.

62. Parsons' Diary, March 28, 1881; Arizona Weekly Citizen, April 3, 1881. King apparently had the aid of accomplices. He was not recaptured.

63. A long article with detailed accounts of this chase appeared in the Arizona Weekly Star, April 7, 1881. The three robbers were never captured. Leonard and Head were killed in Hachita, New Mexico, by reward hunters. Crane was apparently on his way into Tombstone to surrender to the sheriff when he was killed by a gang of Mexican rustlers. Gray Reminiscences; Arizona Weekly Star, August 25, 1881.

After the murders of Philpot and Roerig, travelers became somewhat timid, and the number of stagecoach passengers to Benson dropped off sharply. Kinnear sought to allay the fears of his customers by adding to the line a "large and powerful" bullion wagon. This would follow the passenger coach to Benson, carrying all mail and express matter, baggage, treasure and bullion.⁶⁴ Despite this precaution, there was little security for the traveling public, as the road agents continued their profitable activities. On September 8, two masked men held up the Bisbee stage. Without firing a shot, they took \$2500 from the Wells Fargo box and about \$750 from the four passengers.⁶⁵ Just one month later, five highwaymen stopped the stage bound from Benson into Tombstone. The driver, doubtless recalling the fate of Budd Philpot, jumped from his seat and fled. The abandoned team likewise took fright and ran wildly off down the road. The careening coach smashed into a bank, overturned, and the horses broke loose, continuing their flight. The robbers resumed their business, extracting from the eleven shaken

64. Arizona Weekly Citizen, April 10, 1881.

65. The Daily Nugget, September 10, 1881; Testimony of Levi McDaniels, the stage driver, at a preliminary hearing in Tucson, October 20, 1881, before U.S. Commissioner T. L. Stiles: Territory of Arizona vs. Peter Spence and Frank C. Stilwell, recorded in The Daily Nugget, October 22, 1881.

passengers about eight hundred dollars.⁶⁶ Customary rewards were offered for arrest and conviction of the perpetrators, and the customary posses comitatus galloped out in "hot pursuit".⁶⁷

John J. Gosper, the acting governor of the Territory, finally came to Tombstone to make a personal investigation.⁶⁸ He sent a lengthy report on the problem of lawlessness to the Secretary of State James G. Blaine, but other than this his visit accomplished little. Not long after his departure, a bitter and violent feud developed between the cow-boys and the Earp faction over the stage hold-ups of March 15 and September 8.⁶⁹ The growing hatred finally erupted in a deadly gunfight late in October.⁷⁰ After that infamous incident, the cow-boys set out with vengeance to eliminate everyone closely

66. Arizona Weekly Star, October 13, 1881.

67. The Daily Nugget, September 10, 13, October 12, 1881; Arizona Weekly Star, October 13, 20, 1881.

68. Roberts, "The 'Cow-Boy Scourge'," 28f.

69. Testimony of Joseph I. Clanton and Wyatt S. Earp, "Earp Hearing," The Daily Nugget, November 13, 14, 17, 1881.

70. Ibid. This was the street fight of October 26, 1881, often called the "battle of the O. K. Corral". Three of the cowboys were killed. The Earps were vindicated of the blame in the subsequent hearing, which lasted for thirty days. "Earps' Hearing", The Daily Nugget, December 1, 1881.

associated with the town gang.⁷¹ High on their list was John P. Clum, Mayor of Tombstone, publisher of the Epitaph, and a strong friend and supporter of the Earps. On the night of December 14, Clum left Tombstone by stage-coach for a Yuletide visit to the East. Only a short distance out of town the coach was ambushed. The desperados fired wildly into the darkened passenger compartment in hopes of killing the mayor--along with the other passengers. The plot was unsuccessful, for the intended victims escaped the hail of bullets unharmed.⁷² The lawless rampage continued, however, and three days after Christmas an attempt was made to murder Virgil Earp on the streets of Tombstone.⁷³ Then on January 6, bandits attacked W. W. Hubbard's Bisbee stage in broad daylight. In a running battle, the hold-up men succeeded in downing one of the horses and stopping the coach. From the Wells Fargo box they seized the entire payroll for the Copper

71. George Parsons in his Diary for December 17, 1881, noted that Sheriff John Behan and others had received threatening letters; The Weekly Epitaph, February 13, 1882, revealed that Judge Wells Spicer and others had received "open post cards" warning them to leave town; see also: John P. Clum, "It All Happened in Tombstone," Arizona Historical Review, Vol. 2, No. 3 (October 1929), 56, 62f.

72. The Tombstone Epitaph, December 19, 1881; Clum, "It All Happened in Tombstone," 52-62, 67-70.

73. Parsons' Diary, December 28, 1881; Clum, "It All Happened in Tombstone," 62, 71f.

Queen mine at Bisbee--about \$6,500. They they took another fine horse from the team before allowing the driver to continue.⁷⁴ Wells Fargo immediately offered rewards of \$500 for each of the robbers and one-fourth of all the money recovered. But this time there was little excitement, and no organized effort was even made to capture the bandits.⁷⁵

By late 1881, Wells Fargo & Company had become alarmed over their recurrent losses in Cochise County. The Company's chief detective, Col. James B. Hume,⁷⁶ was called in from San Francisco to investigate operations of the Tombstone office and the stage lines which carried their express. Hume was already in Tombstone when hold-up men struck the Bisbee coach a second time, taking the Copper Queen payroll. That brought the company's losses to \$9,000 on the Bisbee route alone.⁷⁷ The investigator

74. The Tombstone Epitaph, January 8, 1882. Shortly after this hold-up, Wells, Fargo & Co. withdrew its express service from the Bisbee line. With the loss of this valuable contract, the owners, W. W. Hubbard and W. D. Crow, were apparently unwilling or unable to continue operation. Within ten days of the robbery of their stage, they had sold the line to Jerome E. Parker for an undisclosed amount. (See above Ch. III n. 94.) Cochise County Records, Miscellaneous Records, Book 1, 319.

75. The Tombstone Epitaph, January 8, 1882.

76. See Edward Hungerford, Wells Fargo: Advancing the American Frontier, New York, 1949, 105-107.

77. The Tombstone Epitaph, January 16, 1882.

telegraphed to San Francisco advising his employers to discontinue their services on these lines, as profits were too meager to justify the risks. For a while, there was speculation that Wells Fargo would even close its Tombstone agency, but orders came back for Hume to withdraw the company's protection on the Bisbee line only--for the time being.⁷⁸ Accordingly, he closed that office, removed the supplies to Tombstone, and prepared to return to California. The night of January 7, he boarded Sandy Bob's accomodation coach for the railroad. Halfway to Contention--about one o'clock in the morning--the stage was stopped by a pair of bandits, and Hume suddenly had an opportunity to study the robbery problem at first hand. Dignity notwithstanding, the famous detective was unceremoniously "stood up" along with the other passengers and relieved of a pair of fine pistols.⁷⁹

This ironic incident brought to the scene Crawley P. Dake, Federal Marshal for the Territory. Dake, however, was a close friend of Wyatt Earp, and his

78. Ibid.; Arizona Daily Star, January 12, 1882.

79. The Tombstone Epitaph, January 8, 1882.

half-hearted actions were ineffectual.⁸⁰ By February, the "cow-boy curse" of Cochise County had become a national issue.⁸¹ The situation reached a climax when Morgan Earp was murdered, and his brothers in turn loosed a vendetta against the suspected cow-boy killers. The entire Earp clan and their cohorts then fled the Territory with the law, the cow-boys and the finally aroused citizenry on their heels.⁸² The new governor, Frederick A. Tritle, stormed into Tombstone on March 27, determined once and for all to restore law and order. Governor Tritle spent a week studying the problem and making arrangements with the new Deputy Marshal, J. H. Jackson, to set up a company of militia.⁸³ On April 9, General

80. Parsons' Diary, January 25, 1882; Roberts, "The 'Cow-Boy Scourge'," 29, 36. Dake was replaced as U. S. Marshal by Zan L. Tidball about six months later. Arizona Weekly Citizen, July 16, 1882.

81. The Tombstone Epitaph, February 13, March 7 (daily), April 24, 1882; First Annual Message to Congress of President Chester A. Arthur, December 6, 1881, his Message to Congress, April 26, 1882, and Presidential Proclamation of May 3, 1882, all published in Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, VIII, 53f, 101f, 122f.

82. Parsons' Diary, March 19, 23, 25, 27, 1882; The Tombstone Epitaph, March 27, April 5, 17, 1882; account of deputy sheriff under John H. Behan, William M. Breakenridge, Helldorado, Boston, 1928, 172-179.

83. Parsons' Diary, March 27, 1882; The Tombstone Epitaph, April 17, May 6, 1882. In his Message to Congress on April 26, 1882, President Arthur noted that Governor Tritle had asked that provision be made by Congress for a temporary volunteer militia to supplement the regular peace

of the Army William T. Sherman arrived in Tombstone, ostensibly for a visit. His presence also added influence to the movement to restore order. Meanwhile in Washington, President Chester A. Arthur was receiving communications from Sherman. On the strength of the general's reports, the President transmitted to Congress a message on the state of affairs in Cochise County and asked that military forces be allowed to assist the civil authorities in enforcing the law. On May 3, he issued a proclamation sternly warning the Arizona outlaws that thenceforth their wicked ways would not be tolerated.⁸⁴ The Earp half of the trouble-causing element had already left the Territory, however, and all the additional attentions were superfluous. The cow-boys quickly quieted down, and peace returned to Cochise County.⁸⁵

officers of the Territory. The President, himself, proposed the use of regular Army troops in the capacity of a posse comitatus to aid the civil authorities. Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, VIII, 102.

84. Richardson, Messages and Papers of the Presidents, VIII, 101f, 122f; The President's proclamation was met with indignation by Arizonans, who felt the issue was one of local concern. See The Tombstone Epitaph, May 6, 1882.

85. Breakenridge, Helldorado, 179.

CHAPTER V

DOWNHILL RUN

Tombstone was just recovering from the "cow-boys" and trying very hard to live down its bad reputation¹ when even more serious problems arose. In April of 1882, the shaft of the Grand Central Mine reached the water level, and the miners were forced to halt their downward progress.² In May, the town suffered its second devastating fire, which was followed by a severe depression. The mine owners were still optimistic. Even now the physical and economic problems did not seem insurmountable. Large steam pumps were brought in from San Francisco and installed in the flooded shaft of the Grand Central. These engines were capable of raising 21,000 gallons an hour, but to the amazement and dismay of the engineers, the water level was hardly affected.³ Meantime, the

1. Scarcely a month after the Earps had left the Territory, one Tombstone newspaper was giving reassurance to immigrants. The Travelers' Guide, distributed free to incoming railroad passengers, noted with unwarranted optimism, "The population is the most peaceable and hospitable that a stranger met with, and it is seldom that any crimes are committed in this place, rumors to the contrary notwithstanding." Travelers' Guide, April 19, 1882.

2. University of Arizona Bulletin no. 143, 43.

3. Blake, Tombstone and its Mines, 17.

Contention shaft had also reached the water and stopped. A massive pumping plant--double the capacity of that in the Grand Central--was shipped into Tombstone and erected at the Contention Mine. By early 1884, the pumps of both mines were removing a million and a half gallons of water a day.⁴ The water dropped, but still the drainage was inadequate. At last the seriousness of the problem became evident.

As might be expected, the economic conditions of the entire community reflected those of the mines. This applied especially to the stage lines, for as the "boom" slowed, travel to Tombstone quite naturally slackened. Despite the depressed conditions in the latter months of 1882, Sandy Bob Crouch must have shared the optimism of the mine owners. Though his only rival, Newton Smith, went out of business in September,⁵ Crouch actually expanded his own line. Late in August, he began running coaches to Charleston, Huachuca, Hereford and Bisbee, in addition to his regular service to Contention.⁶ Sandy

4. Ibid.

5. The last advertisement for N. Smith's Opposition Stage Line appeared in The Tombstone Epitaph, September 23, 1882.

6. The Tombstone Epitaph, August 26, 1882.

Bob now had a virtual monopoly on stagecoach transportation in Cochise County. But, as the water problems continued to plague the mines, the optimistic outlook clouded and stage travel dropped off. When profits faded, Crouch began looking for ways to reduce expenses. Within a year his line between Charleston and Huachuca had begun to lose money. There was no Wells Fargo contract for this route, and relatively few passengers traveled it. The following October, Crouch abandoned service to Huachuca.⁷

Meanwhile, Sandy Bob was seeking other ways to reduce his expenses. The stage line was frequently used to transport the constable or deputy sheriff and prisoners from Bisbee to the jail in the County Courthouse at Tombstone. In payment for this service, the County was accustomed to giving Crouch warrants drawn on the treasury. But during the hard times the value of this County scrip had gone down. It was worth only about 80 cents on the dollar, and the recipient waited six months to collect even that.⁸ Early in January of 1883, Crouch refused to accept any more warrants in payment for transportation of the prisoners. The county was unable to pay cash, and

7. The Tombstone Republican (weekly), October 27, 1883.

8. Ibid., January 6, 1883.

there were no facilities for them in Bisbee. Consequently, a number of prisoners, among them a murderer, were set free.⁹

At the same time, Sandy Bob resorted to an economy measure as drastic as it was unusual. When the quarterly city license for the Arizona Mail and Stage Company came due on January 1, 1883, Crouch simply refused to pay it.¹⁰ This was peculiar, for previously he had not shirked this responsibility.¹¹ Now, he apparently used this tactic only as a means of stalling for time and the hope of more favorable economic conditions. To collect the tax, the city was forced to sue Crouch and John Kinnear, by now the minor partner of "Robert Crouch & Co." The quarterly license fees amounted to five dollars for each of three "two-horse stage lines," and ten dollars for one "Class

9. Ibid.

10. A complaint lodged by the Justice of the Peace against Robert Crouch et al. March 24, 1883 charged that since January 1, 1883, he had refused to pay the city license tax. See n. 15 below.

11. The city license for stage lines amounted to \$40.00 per quarter. Up until August 1, 1881, both Crouch and Kinnear had been paying this fee. On that date, the city council voted to reduce Crouch's license fee to \$13.33 in consideration of the fact that he had only one coach, whereas Kinnear was running three. Minutes of the Tombstone City Council, August 1, 1881, on file in the office of the City Clerk, Tombstone Courthouse.

1 four-horse stage."¹² As the defendant, Crouch put forth a few feeble arguments. He claimed that the tax was, in effect, not a license but a means of collecting revenue, and therefore invalid. He further contested the power of the city council to collect any tax from his company. As a "government agency" (carrying the United States mails) he claimed the stage line was not subject to local taxation.¹³ For three of the four quarters of the year 1883, Crouch failed to pay the city business license. Each time a separate complaint was filed by the Justice of the Peace, and each time a separate law suit was instituted against him. In the end, the city won the cases. Crouch was ordered to pay the overdue license fees--with interest--and court costs. The judgements, however, were not delivered until May of 1884, which might have given Crouch the additional time he needed.¹⁴

As the Grand Central and Contention continued to struggle with their pumping problems, the economic

12. District Court, Second Judicial District, County of Cochise, Judgement Roll (civil) case 716. In the office of the Clerk of Courts, Cochise County Courthouse, Bisbee, Arizona.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid. (The cases were appealed from the Justice Court to the District Court.) Cases 652, 716, 772, Judgement Book I, 492, 487, 489. Final judgements May 23, 1884. The judgements against Crouch amounted to \$172.70, including interest and court costs.

condition of the district steadily deteriorated. Although the smaller mines continued to operate, and even a number of new properties were developed, the bullion product for 1883 dropped to only half that of the previous year.¹⁵

Tombstone was staggering. Costs for installing new machinery had been an enormous blow to the mining companies. The inadequacy of the pumps now portended additional expense. The mine owners were forced to reduce wages of the miners from four to three dollars a day. The miners' union refused to accept this and called a general strike. On May 1, 1884, the mines closed.¹⁶ The pumps were stopped, and the deep shafts were allowed to fill with water. Some four hundred miners were suddenly out of work. To add to the woes of the town, on the 10th of May, Hudson & Co's. Bank, the major financial concern for both Tucson and Tombstone, failed. Many unfortunate citizens lost what little savings they had. The infuriated miners went on a rampage. They threatened destruction of the hoisting works and other property of the mining companies, which they blamed for the bank's failure. It required the pleas of influential citizens,

15. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 49.

16. Patrick Hamilton, The Resources of Arizona, (third edition), San Francisco, 1884, 156.

the protection of a hundred special deputies under the sheriff, and troops from Fort Huachuca to restore order.¹⁷ The town foundered in a depression for four months. Finally those miners who had not left the district dissolved the union and returned to work for the lower wages offered by the companies.

In these troubled times, once again, Mexican silver lured many Tombstone miners. The town of Nacozari, some fifty miles below Bisbee, became a new center of mining attention. In the fall of 1884, R. C. Shaw, superintendent of the Luna Mine at Tombstone, and Michael Donovan, a Willcox blacksmith, joined in establishing the Arizona and Sonora Stage Company.¹⁸ This enterprising pair intended to capitalize upon the demand for transportation to the Mexican mines. They secured contracts to carry the mails and Wells Fargo's express, and in October they began making weekly runs between Tombstone and Nacozari. As Tombstone foundered in depression, the new district prospered. The staging business to Nacozari was brisk, and

17. Arizona Weekly Star, May 15, 1884. The bankers blamed the financial instability of the mining companies for the failure. The mining companies naturally blamed the bank. Hamilton, Resources of Arizona, 1884, 156.

18. Tucson and Tombstone Directory, 1883-1884; Cochise County Great Register, 1884; Tombstone Cochise Daily Record, October 18, 1884.

the line early boasted of using a four-horse Concord coach to accomodate passengers.¹⁹

The Tombstone boom was definitely over. By the end of 1884, some of the mills were forced to close down. The total output of the mines shrunk to less than half the production of the previous lean year.²⁰ A ray of hope appeared in the summer of 1885. A new line of steam pumps was installed in the Grand Central mine. These huge machines were capable of raising as much water as all those previously placed in both mines. The new pumps were finally set to working July 4, 1885.²¹ They quickly controlled the water, and the sinking proceeded a pace. Below the water level a very rich strike was encountered in the Contention mine.²² This at last seemed to insure stability for the future of Tombstone. But before this ore could be developed, some of the pumping equipment broke down, and more delays ensued. By this time the finances of the town were in such bad condition that warrants drawn on the general fund were not worth even half their face

19. Ibid.

20. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 49.

21. Arizona Daily Star, June 6, August 5, 7, 1885.

22. Ibid., August 14, September 16, 1885; Blake, Tombstone and its Mines, 18.

value.²³ Throughout the latter months of 1885 and into 1886, new Indian troubles and a lack of Eastern capital for continuing investment worked to cripple the economy of the town still further. In addition, a large migration of Chinese from California moved into southern Arizona at this time. The extremely low wages for which they would work forced many Tombstone residents out of the meagre jobs that remained. By the end of January, the public schools had even closed for lack of money. The population of the town had dwindled to a fraction of its former size.²⁴

Some development went on, nevertheless, and in the spring of 1886, interest in the Tombstone mines suddenly picked up. The new pumping equipment was now working successfully, and once again the future looked bright. The resulting travel into the town increased measurably, and early in April two new stage lines appeared. Simon

23. Arizona Daily Star, August 5, 7, 1885.

24. The Daily Tombstone, January 9, 29, March 9, 12, May 20, 1886. The January 9 issue of this paper noted, "If it were not for the Indian troubles Tombstone would have four or five hundred people within her limits.. .." It does not seem likely that this figure could be correct. Perhaps it was a misprint and should have read thousand, instead of hundred, or perhaps the editor was referring only to the number of working men in the camp.

Gallen, a former miner,²⁵ was the first to enter into competition with Sandy Bob. He set up an "office" in Bradshaw's saloon on Allen Street and offered accomodation service for passengers to Fairbank. In addition to the standard boasts of "first class stock and coaches and increased speed," Gallen reduced his fare as a challenge to Crouch.²⁶ Within a few days, another stage line had opened an office in the Willows Saloon down the street. The proprietor of this line, Kimball C. Taft, offered "emigrant or third-class" service to Fairbank for only 25¢.²⁷ Sandy Bob had struggled hard to gain control of the Tombstone stage business, and he was determined to maintain his superiority. There ensued "a small railroad war", as one newspaper characterized it:

The new line cut the rate from the former price of \$1.50 to \$1.00, and Sandy Bob saw the cut and went one better, and now he hauls passengers without money and without price and if the war

25. The Cochise County Great Register for 1884 and 1886 lists Simon ("Sime") Presley Gallen as a miner. In 1886, at the time he started his stage line, he was forty-five years old.

26. The Daily Tombstone, April 9, 1886.

27. Ibid., April 9, 13, 1886. Kimball C. Taft, commonly called "Tim", was thirty-eight years old. For several years prior to this time, he had been employed by Sandy Bob Crouch as a driver for the Arizona Mail and Stage Line. Cochise County Great Register, 1884, 1886; Tucson and Tombstone Directory, 1883-1884.

continues, he will doubtless throw in a chromo of Geronimo.²⁸

The strong rivalry continued. But, unfortunately for the proprietors of the three stage lines, interest in the Tombstone district began to weaken again.²⁹ Then, on May 26, another disastrous fire destroyed the hoisting works and the massive new pumps of the Grand Central Mine.³⁰ The bright outlook of the beleaguered town and its water-logged mines had suddenly gone up in smoke. The mine owners had suffered a loss of more than a half million dollars. There was no hope of rebuilding the Grand Central any time in the near future. Alone, the pumps of the Contention were insufficient to hold back the water. As a final crushing blow, the price of silver began to decline.³¹ Erstwhile inhabitants of Tombstone left by droves to seek work at active mines in other

28. The Daily Tombstone, April 12, 1886. (The word chromo was a common abbreviation for chromolithograph.)

29. Ibid., May 20, 22, 1886.

30. Ibid., May 27, 29, 1886.

31. The blow to the economy of the city was so severe that the city council immediately lowered the appraised valuation of property by some \$300,000 to ease taxes and thereby hopefully keep people from leaving. Ibid., May 28, 1886. By early June the price of silver on the Eastern market had dropped from a high of \$1.20 per pound to 98¢. It continued to decline, and at the end of August it had reach a low of 90¢. Ibid., June 11, 12, October 2, 1886.

parts of the Territory. The stage lines to the railroad at Fairbank had a final hour of prosperity.

After this great exodus, the stage business became very light. "Sime" Gallen dropped out of competition.³² Gilbert S. Bradshaw,³³ in whose saloon Gallen had located his stage office, joined with Kimball Taft in a new enterprise. About the first of June, the two formed a partnership to run a stage line to Bisbee. They spent the rest of the month making preparations and fitting up a "handsome coach." The partners effected an agreeable arrangement with Sandy Bob, who discontinued his own service to Bisbee. They moved their office into that of

32. In mid-September of 1886, Sime Gallen with a partner located a gold mine near Antelope Springs, east of Tombstone. On September 20, Gallen left town to work the mine. Later, he established a ranch on the San Pedro River near the Mexican border. In 1890, he was running a stage line from Tombstone to the mining camp of Oso Negro in Sonora. His wife carried on a dressmaking business and ran the Palace Hotel in Tombstone. The Daily Tombstone, September 18, 20, 1886; The Tombstone Prospector (daily), January 12, April 3, 1894; The Cochise County Great Register for 1902 lists Gallen as a miner, fifty-nine years of age, and living in Tombstone.

33. Gilbert Sutton Bradshaw was at this time thirty-seven years old and a native of Canada. He had come to Tombstone some years earlier and had been variously employed as a miner, stockman and saloon keeper before he went into the staging business with Taft. Bradshaw was somewhat a "man about town" and a popular figure. He had been elected president of the Rescue Hose Company, a position of considerable social significance. Tucson and Tombstone Directory, 1883-1884; Cochise County Great Register, 1884, 1886.

the Arizona Mail and Stage Company, and on the first of July they began operations.³⁴ Bradshaw quit his "liquid refreshment business" and took the "ribbons" himself. With Sandy Bob offering no competition, the new line thrived.³⁵

Meanwhile, Sandy Bob was himself occupied in the development of a new opportunity which had arisen in Sierra County, New Mexico. In July, he went there to investigate the possibilities of setting up a stage line from the railroad at Lake Valley to the booming camp of Kingston, 27 miles away. This was an old mining settlement which had not attracted much attention until June of 1886, when a very rich strike was made there.³⁶ This new excitement attracted many people from Tombstone, which

34. The Daily Tombstone, June 4, 23, July 2, 1886.

35. Ibid., July 3, 1886; Tombstone Prospector, April 21, 1887, June 15, 1888. The Bradshaw-Taft line continued in operation for several years. On October 30, 1889, the Tombstone Prospector reported that Bradshaw was dying of consumption in Fresno, California. Years later, Tim Taft was noted as being the proprietor of a stage line between Fronteras and Nacozari, Sonora (south of Douglas, Arizona). Ibid., March 8, 1902.

36. Lake Valley was the railhead of a branch line of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, some 45 miles northeast of Deming. Kingston, another 27 miles north of Lake Valley, lay on the eastern slopes of the Nimbres Mountains. The Daily Tombstone, July 27, 1886; Santa Fe Daily New Mexican, July 16, 1886.

seemed at the time to have lost all hope of recovery. The Lake Valley, Hillsboro and Kingstone Stage Line had been operating for a number of years, and was well established.³⁷ Even so, the situation looked promising to Crouch, who decided to establish opposition. Now that he was freed of the Bisbee line, Sandy Bob spent much of July and August traveling back and forth to Kingston and making preparations there.³⁸ Nor did he confine his efforts to Kingston. In August, he put on a line of coaches running tri-weekly from Tombstone to Fort Huachuca.³⁹ Unfortunately, neither of these new ventures was successful. There was little response to the Fort Huachuca line, and within three weeks, Crouch discontinued this service.⁴⁰ The Kingston strike quickly died out. Many of the miners took Sandy Bob's stage back to the railroad and returned to Arizona. The Lake Valley, Hillsboro and Kingston Stage continued

37. William Swilling Wallace, "Short-Line Staging in New Mexico," New Mexico Historical Review, Vol. 26 (April 1951), 92.

38. The Daily Tombstone, July 20, 21, 26, August 2, 3, 9, 16, 1886.

39. Ibid., August 23, 1886.

40. Ibid., September 11, 1886.

to run, but at the end of the summer, Crouch dropped his opposition line and brought his equipment back to Tombstone.⁴¹

Crouch's business went from bad to worse, and he was forced to supplement his income by other means. For a time, he tried selling eggs and fancy breeding chickens.⁴² In September he mortgaged his ranch, stage station and mining properties in the Mule Mountains south of Tombstone.⁴³ Finally, in an attempt to save money and keep the line rolling, Sandy Bob went back to driving the stage himself. It was no mean chore, for he had never lost his fondness for handling horses. Even when he had

41. The exact date that Crouch discontinued his Kingston line is not certain, but by November, Kingston was reported as being "very dull." Ibid., November 10, 1886; Wallace contended that the Lake Valley, Hillsboro and Kingston line had no competition. This was obviously not so, but apparently neither line ever advertised in the contemporary newspapers. Wallace, "Short-Line Staging in New Mexico," 93.

42. Sandy Bob gained a reputation for being quite a "chicken fancier." He specialized in selling setting eggs for such pure breeds as Golden Spangled Polands, Silver Spangled Hamburgs, Black Polish with white crests, Wyandots, Lang Shangs, and Dark Leghorns. Even in this enterprise, he was not immune to competition. Henry Campbell, a saloon proprietor, started a similar business, which the newspaper delighted in calling an "opposition" hennery. Crouch continued to advertise his setting eggs until he left town some nine months later. The Daily Tombstone, January 29, April 22, 30, 1886; The Daily Tombstone Epitaph, February 9, 1887.

43. The mortgage, to Charles W. Leach on September 28, 1886, secured for Crouch \$5,000, payable in twelve months. Cochise County Records, Mortgages, Book 2, 428.

several drivers in his employ, he often took the "ribbons" himself. His son Charlie, who was 21 years old, and had been foreman of his father's ranch of three years, moved to town and rode shotgun.⁴⁴ In spite of these desperate measures, within a very few months, even Sandy Bob had to give up. He was a game businessman to the end. As a last gasp, he offered a coach run early in December to "the new excitement at Stein's Peak, New Mexico."⁴⁵ Finally, on January 6, 1887, he sold the line to his former shotgun messenger, Robert Darragh.⁴⁶ At the age of 56, Sandy Bob retired to his ranch in the Mule Mountains near Bisbee.⁴⁷

44. The Daily Tombstone, October 7, 29, 1886.

45. Ibid., December 3, 1886.

46. Robert Darragh, a Canadian by birth, had come to Tombstone in the early 1880's from Yuba County, California. He was employed as a freighter until 1886, when he took a job with Wells, Fargo & Co. as an express messenger. He was 32 years old at the time he took over the stage line from Sandy Bob. Cochise County Great Register, 1882, 1884, 1886; The Daily Tombstone, May 22, September 1, 1886. The sale price of the Arizona Mail & Stage Co. was \$4,000. For this amount, Sandy Bob gave up all his interests in the property and equipment of the business, and all mail and express contracts. In addition, he pledged his good will and promised never to run an opposition line against the new owner. Cochise County Records, Bills of Sale, Book 1, 286, 287; Deeds, Book 9, 153.

47. This ranch had been purchased by Crouch in 1883 and placed under the management of his eldest son, Charlie. Herds of fine blooded cattle were raised there, orchards were planted and vegetables and watermelons grown. Troubled by lingering financial problems in June of 1887, Crouch again mortgaged the ranch and cattle, now

Bob Darragh ran the Arizona Mail & Stage Line only a little more than a year. During that time he had comparatively few passengers--most of whom were leaving Tombstone. On March 9, 1888, he sold his interests in the company to Charles D. Gage and Martin D. Scribner, the Tombstone agent for Wells Fargo.⁴⁸ Six months after

to Ben Williams, a banker and friend from Bisbee. The Depression of 1893 was accompanied in southern Arizona by a crippling drought. Sandy Bob's ranch was severely affected, and apparently this time Williams could not help him. Crouch was bankrupt. With the financial loss, he also forfeited his prestige and many friends. Shortly after, his son Charlie, recently married, died suddenly. Sandy Bob left the Territory an embittered man and disappeared completely. Not until 1900 did his daughters in San Francisco finally locate him. Through Wells, Fargo & Co. he was traced to the town of Ameca, Jalisco, Mexico, where he was again engaged in the stage business. He had established a stable and was running coaches from the railroad terminus to Guadalajara, 55 miles away. At the ripe age of 70, he was carrying on the tradition which had begun a half century earlier, and which was to continue until his death at Guadalajara in 1908. See: Robert Crouch Biographical File at A.P.H.S.; Cochise County Records, Deeds, Book 5, 269; Book 9, 213; and family records courtesy of his daughter, Mrs. Frank Reynolds, and his grandson, Mr. Raymond R. Robson.

48. Cochise County Records, Deeds, Book 9, 289; Bills of Sale, Book 1, 348. During the time Darragh was running the stage line, he also served, briefly, as a special deputy U.S. Marshal, Tombstone Daily Prospector, April 13, 1887. In 1892, Darragh was working for a large contracting firm in the northern part of the Territory. By the end of 1893, he was reported to have moved to Phoenix. Tombstone Prospector, June 29, 1892; December 29, 1893. Charles Diggles Gage had come to Tombstone in 1879 at the age of 21. During his many years at the camp, he had worked as an assayer. Martin Demaret Scribner was

the new owners took over, a fire destroyed the Occidental Hotel, which since 1883 had housed the stage office.⁴⁹ Apparently undaunted, the partners moved the Arizona Mail & Stage Line in with Wells, Fargo & Co's office on Fifth Street. Scribner continued, as before, to act as the express company's agent, and Gage officiated as clerk and agent for the stage line.⁵⁰

The local economy remained depressed until 1890, when the price of silver suddenly increased to more than a dollar an ounce.⁵¹ There was a flurry of activity in the mines. The town enjoyed a new influx of people and a rapid financial recovery. In this period, several new stage lines appeared, and almost as quickly, disappeared. Sime Gallen, earlier the proprietor of an "opposition"

thirty-five years old when he and Gage purchased the stage company. He had been appointed the Tombstone agent for Wells, Fargo & Co. on July 3, 1885, and he continued to serve in this capacity even after he became co-owner of the Arizona Mail & Stage line. Cochise County Great Register, 1882, 1884, 1886, 1890, 1892; Cochise County Records, Miscellaneous, Book 2, 540.

49. Wallace W. Elliott (comp.), History of Arizona Territory, San Francisco, 1884, 241, and preceeding illustration; Arizona Daily Star, September 15, 1888. The hotel was never rebuilt, and its charred ruins remained a blight on Allen Street until after the turn of the Century.

50. Tombstone Daily Prospector, October 6, 1888; Cochise County Great Register, 1890, 1892.

51. The price climbed to \$1.05 and remained fairly stable until late in 1891, when it began another rapid decline. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 45.

line to Fairbank, now set up a weekly stage from Tombstone to the mining camp of Oso Negro in northern Sonora.⁵² New silver mines were also opened up at Turquoise, some sixteen miles east of Tombstone in the Dragoon Mountains. In the first week of June, Finis E. Braly, a Tombstone rancher, and Arthur A. Kemp, a miner from Turquoise, established a stage line to serve that fast-growing camp.⁵³ Meanwhile, Gilbert Bradshaw's Bisbee stage line had changed hands. The new owner, Alfred L. Brooks, ran the line energetically for about a year. In late August of 1890, he suddenly gave it up and offered his stock and coach

52. See above n. 32. Oso Negro was not far from present Cananea. See: Almada, Diccionario de Sonora, 543. By July of 1890 the Oso Negro line was well established. There is scant mention of it in the newspapers, but with each trip it brought in one or two bars of bullion. The line was still in operation in August of 1891. Tombstone Epitaph, July 26, 1890; Tombstone Prospector, August 29, October 27, 1890; August 30, 1891.

53. Braly, 21 years old, also kept cows and sold milk in Tombstone. His partner, Kemp, was 33 and a native of England. Braly later moved to Turquoise and went to work in the mines, while Kemp went to the Sulphur Springs Valley and became a carpenter. By the beginning of 1894, Turquoise was almost a ghost town. See: Barnes, Arizona Place Names, 460; Cochise County Great Register, 1890, 1892; Tombstone Epitaph, May 31, June 7, 1890; Tombstone Prospector, August 15, September 3, 1890; January 23, 1894; Arizona Kicker, March 7, 14, 1894.

for sale.⁵⁴ Leonard A. Engle, a Bisbee miner, apparently purchased the equipment and continued service between Tombstone and Bisbee until March of 1892.⁵⁵ By that time, the price of silver had declined again, and activity in Cochise County slackened.

Gage and Scribner had been operating the Arizona Mail & Stage Company for five rather uneventful years,

54. Bradshaw probably died of "consumption" late in 1889 or sometime in 1890. See above n. 35. In the fall of 1889, Brooks made a number of improvements in the Bisbee line. He added a larger coach and more horses, making the run in less time (5½ hours) on "elegant roads." In the summer of 1890, the elegant roads were so often washed out and so rough that Brooks stopped running his stages, and shortly thereafter he offered the line for sale. Tombstone Prospector, September 21, 25, October 30, 1889; August 10, 23, 28, 30, 1890. In the Cochise County Great Register of 1892, Brooks was listed as being 42 years old and working as a messenger at Tombstone.

55. Beginning on September 22, 1890, Engle offered service three times a week, with a "fast two-horse rig." In November, he reduced the fare from \$3.00 to \$2.50. Engle had been running his line for a year when competition appeared. Ben F. Smith advertised a semi-weekly "fast freight and passenger wagon" between Tombstone and Bisbee, beginning September 6, 1891. Despite his reduced fare of \$2.00, Smith's line seems to have failed almost immediately. On June 6, 1891, Engle's stage was stopped by two Mexican bandits. They took \$42.00 and a watch from Engle, who was driving, and 50¢ from a passenger. The haul was very light, but the holdup caused quite a stir, for it was the first stage robbery in Cochise County in many years. After the stage stopped running, passengers to Bisbee were forced to take the longer and more expensive route--by stage to Fairbank, then by the Arizona & Southeastern Railroad around the south end of the Mule Mountains to Bisbee. Cochise County Great Register, 1890; Tombstone Prospector, September 22, November 14, December 26, 1890; March 3, 1892; Tombstone Epitaph, June 7, September 6, 13, 1891; Myrick, "Railroads of Southern Arizona," 166.

when in 1893 the entire country was seized by a panic and depression. The struggling town of Tombstone was hit especially hard when the silver market dropped to 71¢ an ounce.⁵⁶ The crowds who had gathered in 1890 and 1891 left in such numbers that sometimes it took two coaches at a time to take all the passengers to Fairbank. "Charley" Gage, who had been in the camp since its earliest days, also gave up the fight. He sold his interests in the line, and with his family moved to San Francisco.⁵⁷ Ralph A. Smith, who for several years had been a teller with the Bank of Tombstone, took Gage's place as agent in the stage office.⁵⁸

By December of 1893, the economy of the town had so deteriorated that the office of the Arizona Mail &

56. In the month of October, 1893, the price of silver fell from 83½¢ to 71 3/4¢ per ounce. Tombstone Prospector, October 1, 28, 1893.

57. Charles Gage left for San Francisco on July 23, 1893. For a time he worked in the Oakland office of Wells, Fargo & Co. In October, he and his wife were reported to have located in Los Angeles. In July, 1902, he returned to Tombstone. The city council granted him a franchise to construct and operate an electric light plant, gas works and an ingenious refrigerated air-cooling service (which was never built). Gage stayed on as general manager of the Tombstone Improvement Company, owners of the gas and light plant. Tombstone Prospector, July 22, August 9, October 24, 1893; June 11, 1902 (City Ordinance 69). William Hattich (ed.), Tombstone in History, Romance and Wealth (souvenir illustrated edition of the Tombstone Daily Prospector), April, 1903, 31.

58. Tombstone Prospector, July 22, 1893; Cochise County Great Register, 1892.

Stage Co. with that of Wells, Fargo & Co. was removed from its location on Fifth Street and placed in the bank building. There, Smith resumed his duties as the single cashier--in addition to those as agent for the stage line.⁵⁹ In the first months of 1894, silver was selling for less than 60¢ an ounce. The miners' wages were cut to a ridiculous \$2.50 a day, and some of the mines closed down entirely.⁶⁰ By May, the nation-wide depression had caused the failure of more than a hundred banks. In that month, the Bank of Tombstone was also forced to close. The office of Wells Fargo and that of the stage line remained in the building as the sole occupants.⁶¹

The struggling stage line was dealt another severe blow in the summer of 1894. Sudden heavy rainstorms in this rainy season frequently caused bad "chuck holes" and wash-outs along the roads. In early August of that year, a particularly severe cloudburst created serious flash floods throughout Cochise County. The San Pedro River overflowed its banks. In some places, it reached a width of nearly a mile. Railroad tracks between Tucson, Benson, and Fairbank were washed out, as were many roads. Water

59. Tombstone Prospector, December 2, 7, 1893.

60. Ibid., January 2, February 26, June 22, 1894.

61. Ibid., May 7, 1894; April 29, 1895; The Arizona Kicker, May 16, 1894.

in some washes rose to a height of ten feet, and the storm created long delays for both rail and stage transportation. The town of Fairbank, itself, was inundated. Many of the adobe buildings simply melted, and the corrals and sheds of the Arizona Mail and Stage Line were completely swept away in the torrent. The stage company, already beset with financial problems because of the depression, was unable to do any immediate rebuilding.⁶²

By the mid-90's the depression had forced almost all the smaller mining companies out of business. At the end of 1896, even the Tombstone Mill and Mining Company halted its operations.⁶³ Activity in the district dwindled to a very few mines operated by lessees. Tombstone was nearly a ghost town of burned out and boarded up buildings. Dust lay thick in once bustling and noisy interiors. Few people strode the board sidewalks, and even fewer horses and wagons appeared on the streets. Behind the dismal appearance, however, there was activity. Under the leadership of Eliphalet B. Gage, the Grand Central Company began quietly acquiring the independent mines in the district.⁶⁴ The great depression eased

62. The Arizona Kicker, August 1, 8, 1894.

63. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 46.

64. Ibid; Hattich, Tombstone in History, Romance and Wealth, 10, 18.

toward the end of the decade, and the prospects for the revitalized Grand Central mines brightened once again.

The century drew to a close with a note of new optimism for those "old-timers" who had stayed in the lifeless town during the long depression. One of these long-time residents, Charles B. Tarbell, foresaw a period of renewed activity for the tired stage coaches. On the first of June, 1899, he acquired the Arizona Mail and Stage Company from M. D. Scribner.⁶⁵ Tarbell was an opportunistic businessman, who had been variously occupied in Charleston and Tombstone as a hotel keeper, merchant, justice of the peace, express agent and undertaker.⁶⁶ By the time he purchased the stage company, there was little left of Sandy Bob's once proud enterprise. For a price of \$800, Tarbell received title to three six-horse coaches, one jerkey, and "nine horses (more or less)".⁶⁷ In addition, contracts for carrying the United States mails and

65. Cochise County Records, Bills of Sale, Book 2, 297.

66. Tarbell had opened the first hotel in Charleston, in 1882. He was, perhaps, best known as Tombstone's undertaker, in which capacity he served for thirty years. Tarbell remained in Tombstone until 1918, when he moved to California. He died in Long Beach on February 21, 1926, at the age of 74. Cochise County Great Register, 1882, 1884, 1886, 1890, 1892, 1898, 1902, 1904; Tombstone Epitaph, February 25, 1926.

67. Cochise County Records, Bills of Sale, Book 2, 297.

Wells Fargo's express were transferred with the sale. In all probability it was these contracts alone which had kept the stages running during the years of depression. Now, the stage business began to pick up again as investors, miners and traveling salesmen drifted into Tombstone. Under Tarbell's direction, the coaches were repainted, new stock was acquired, and the bedraggled Arizona Mail and Stage Company regained some of its old pride and respectability.⁶⁸

The town's economy continued to improve steadily. In 1901, the remaining assets and properties of the Tombstone Mill and Mining Company and the Contention Company were merged with the now powerful Grand Central Company to form the Tombstone Consolidated Mines Company.⁶⁹ As the price of silver recovered, the newly formed corporation obtained financial backing from the wealthy Development Company of America.⁷⁰ Once more investment capital flowed into Tombstone. The mines hummed with activity as a huge single shaft was sunk, and gigantic new pumping engines were installed in the shaft. The huff

68. Tombstone Prospector, April 1, 24, 1902.

69. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 46; Blake, Tombstone and its Mines, 19.

70. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 46; Hattich, Tombstone in History, Romance and Wealth, 19.

of steam hoists, the whirl and clack of winch cables, the banging of iron and the shouts of men once again resounded across the Tombstone hills. The great pumps began lowering the water table, and the deep shafts were drained sufficiently to continue work.⁷¹ Wearing boots and so'westers, the men went down to dig in the wet rock, and again the famous old mines yielded up their rich ore. As the investors had hoped, the Tombstone Consolidated Mines were doing well; the district was bustling again.

A new boom was upon the town. Miners and businessmen returned, and the stage line enjoyed a new period of prosperity. Soon, travel was brisk enough to invite competition. On March 3, 1902, William Blackburn, Jr.⁷² set up a freight and transfer service. Having secured two "substantial wagons," the young man proposed to transport passengers "to any point within a radius of 25 miles."⁷³ At the same time, he offered to deliver freight and express and store baggage and goods. With some optimism, "Blackburn's Transfer and Job Work Company"

71. Ibid.; Ibid., 10-17.

72. William Blackburn, Jr., was the son of a well-known Tombstone saddle and harness-maker. Tombstone Prospector, February 28, March 3, 1902.

73. Ibid., March 3, 1902.

presently became "Blackburn's Line of Easy Stages."⁷⁴ As usual, the new company initiated an advertising campaign and lowered its fares to Fairbank.⁷⁵ But the Arizona Mail and Stage Line was well established, and Charles Tarbell apparently did not feel the need to meet the challenge from this upstart. His fares remained high. By now the old-time glamor and spirit was gone from the business. No longer did the stage generate excitement as in days past. They were tolerated as an inconvenience in a modern age of faster and better means of transportation. Despite the revival of travel to Tombstone, the days of its stagecoaches were numbered.

In the summer of 1902, as tired coaches plied the road to Fairbank, the railroad again looked toward Tombstone. Now there was an opportunity for investment which would provide handsome returns. The Consolidated Mines, with solid financial backing, seemed assured of success. But, there were no longer any reduction mills operating in the district. Ore taken from the mines had

74. Ibid., June 3, 1902; Handbill advertisement for Blackburn's stage line, c. July 1, 1902, on file in The Library of A.P.H.S. By this time Charles W. Blackburn was listed as proprietor of the line, and his son William was manager.

75. Ibid. Despite Blackburn's efforts, his stage line did not last long. The last mention of it appeared in the Tombstone Prospector, July 29, 1902.

to be hauled by wagon to the railhead for shipment to El Paso--this was troublesome and expensive.⁷⁶ The El Paso and Southwestern Railroad sent its general manager to Tombstone in July. The time was ripe; he began immediate negotiations for rights of way.⁷⁷ Very soon afterward, grading work was begun on the nine-mile stretch between Fairbank and Tombstone. The end was in sight for the out-dated stage lines. Late in November, 1902, however, work halted short of completion. Skeptics wondered if the frustrations of 1882 would be repeated, but on March 9, 1903, workmen began laying track.⁷⁸ A little more than four weeks later the branch line was completed. The revitalized town was jubilant and bursting with self-congratulation. At long last it was connected with the "outside world" and the Twentieth Century. Tombstone had its railroad.⁷⁹

76. U. of A. Bulletin no. 143, 46.

77. Myrick, "The Railroads of Southern Arizona," 168.

78. Ibid., 168f; see above Ch. III 80-82.

79. Ibid., 168, 169. The last rails were actually put down on March 25, but the official date of the beginning of railroad service to Tombstone was Easter Sunday, April 12, 1903. On that date excursion trains came in from Tucson, and the celebrations were held. The stage continued to run up until that day. The Tombstone American, April 12, 1903 (Vol. 1, no. 1 - only known copy on file in the Library of the A.P.H.S.)

The old stage was harnessed for its last daily run to Fairbank. On this day six white horses graced the black leather traces, but they only accented the worn and battered condition of the ponderous Concord coach. The rig reined up in front of the new Hotel Nobles, which was gayly bedecked with colorful bunting. Thirteen dapper gentlemen, their beards combed and sporting their "Sunday best," clambered atop the stage. The scene was faintly reminiscent of the good old days when the stagecoach used to come in with its thoroughbraces sagging--"loaded to the guards." The Mayor positioned himself in the favored "shotgun" seat, and the rest tried to look nonchalant as they sat on the iron baggage racks. Someone raised a bottle in salute. The photographer snapped his shutter. An image was recorded for posterity.⁸⁰ From their awkward perch, some of the passengers scrambled down, favoring the softer seats inside for this last sentimental ride. A newly arrived, but enthusiastic journalist surveyed the scene. With sensitivity for the feelings of the townspeople, he penned a fitting epitaph for the Tombstone stagecoach:

80. Photograph, "Last trip of old Modoc stage," on file in the Library of the A.P.H.S.

The historic, oft-robbed stage passes into oblivion today so far as Tombstone as concerned. Goodbye old coach, goodbye! Never again will the masked knight of the road call thee to a halt! No more will thy jostling body cause us to wish it was dinner time, thirty minutes after having eaten our breakfast. We shall miss thee, old coach, but we're glad to see you go.⁸¹

It was Easter Sunday, 1903. Electric lights illuminated the freshly painted interiors of Tombstone homes and business establishments; telephones jangled on their walls. Bicycles and horseless carriages scattered chickens and children on rutted territorial roads. The El Paso and Southwestern locomotive chugged over shiny rails, pulling excursion cars filled with happy people. Its raucous, screaming whistle was tied down as it approached the celebrating town.... On Fremont Street, a crusty old driver shouted to his team and slapped the long leather reins. Harness ruffled, trace chains drew taut; the antiquated "Modoc" stagecoach creaked and clattered through the dusty streets of Tombstone and into history.

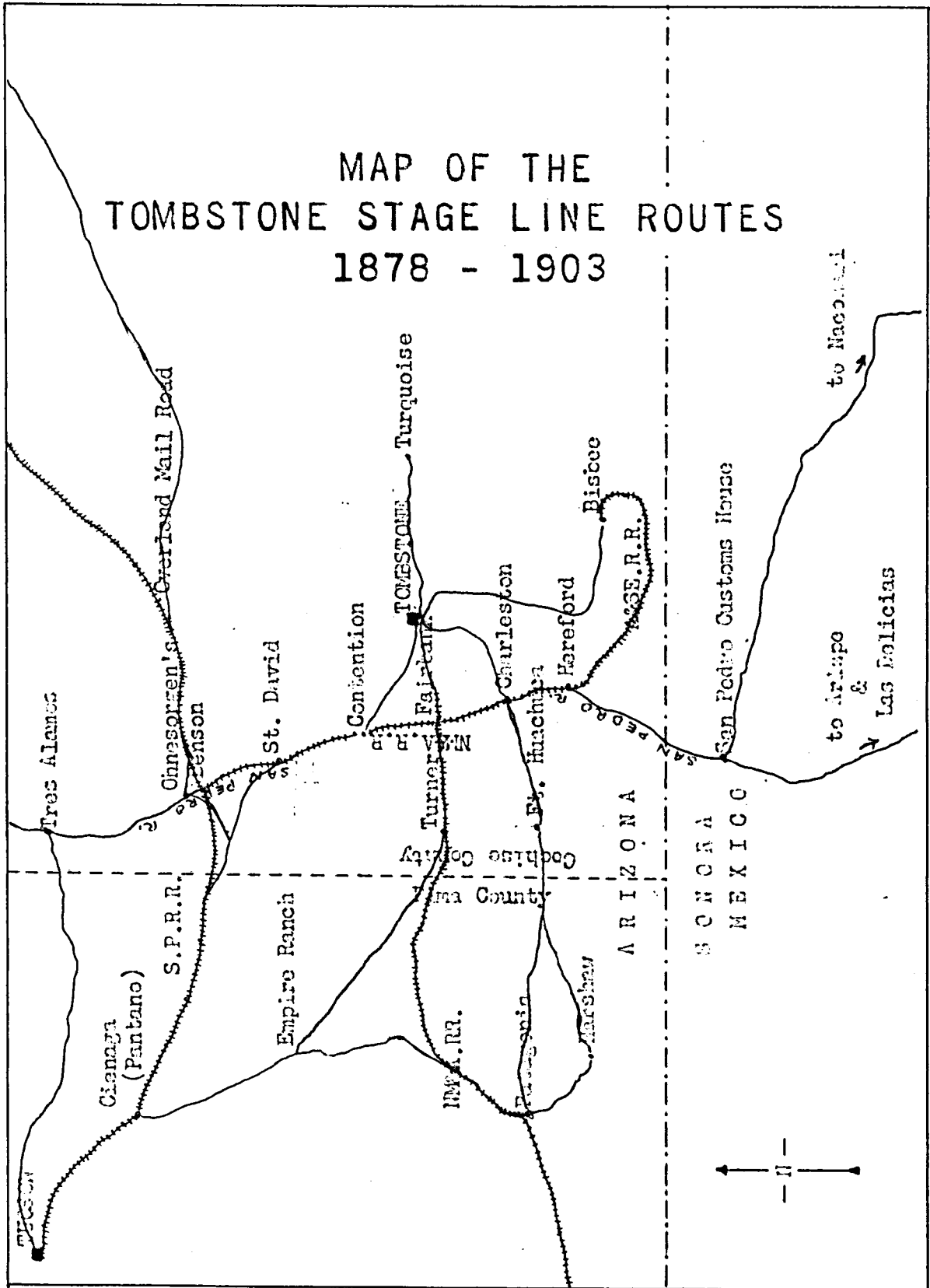
81. The Tombstone American, April 12, 1903.

APPENDIX A:

MAP OF THE TOMBSTONE

STAGE LINE ROUTES

1878 - 1903



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