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## COOLIDGE AND THOREAU: FORGOTTEN FRONTIER TOWNS.<sup>1</sup>

*By* IRVING TELLING\*

**M**OST historical studies concern successful men or communities, yet similar attention to failures can contribute to an understanding of some historical processes. The Atlantic & Pacific Railroad, building across western New Mexico and Arizona between 1880 and 1883, opened that territory for settlement. Men and women who followed the call of opportunity to this new area planted villages beside the tracks: Grants, Mitchell (Thoreau), Coolidge, Gallup, Holbrook, Winslow, and others. The sites known today as Coolidge and Thoreau in New Mexico receive attention here for the insight they furnish into such problems as how towns appeared in this wilderness, what factors might bring life or death to these places, and how the settlers reacted to this struggle for community survival.

The railroad region was young in the years after 1881. Until later developments created an economic pattern of settlement, no one could tell upon whom the gods might smile or which village they would ignore. A sense of civic insecurity accordingly haunted those who dwelt in these new centers since events beyond their control might prove vital to their welfare. Construction of additional buildings or stockpens and the presence of locomotive shops were symbols and tangible evidence of the permanence of one's community and business investments.

Boosterism may have helped to promote local interests, it certainly served to reassure apprehensive citizens by quieting their doubts. Newspapers entered into this game

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with a will, using such terms as "wide awake," "thriving," and "lively" to describe each settlement. A news item of 1882, when Coolidge was a "mere village," exemplifies both this uncertainty and advertising:

This town is very quiet . . . and its citizens have settled down as if they meant to stay. No place on the Atlantic and Pacific railroad affords a more pleasant resort these hot days . . . than Coolidge. . . . Now is a good time for Albuquerqueans to come and spend a few days with us.<sup>2</sup>

Rivalry between towns also derived from the uneasiness of the early days. Extension of trade in one place might mean a potential lost opportunity for another. The growth of this center could well cause that one's eclipse. Indeed, as matters turned out, Gallup became the metropolis of a region which included Thoreau, thus limiting the latter's possible development. Citizens of one hamlet wished their "enterprising" neighbors "all the luck possible" but refused to admit anything but their own superiority. When Holbrook boasted of her school and court house in 1883, Gallup quickly retorted:

Holbrook will have to show up something better than a "teacher with a life diploma" or a third class court house before she can compete with Gallup.<sup>3</sup>

When they began, Coolidge and Mitchell appeared to have as good chances as Gallup or Holbrook to flourish, yet they have left little but faint memories. Their unpredictable decline and death brought home to others the fate that might befall their rivals and revealed how thin was the line between prosperity and extinction.

When the Atlantic & Pacific construction crews reached the location chosen for the first division point 136 miles west of Albuquerque, they found themselves at Bacon Springs, near the ranch of William Crane (better known as Uncle Billy). The latter, a scout for Kit Carson on the Navaho

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2. *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, August 19, 1882.

3. *Ibid.*, December 25, 1883.

campaign of 1863, had remained behind as a rancher, supplying Fort Wingate with hay and beef, cutting lumber for the Zuni Indian agent, and operating a station on the Santa Fe-Prescott stage line.<sup>4</sup> Uncle Billy proved so helpful to the railroaders that they presented him in 1886 with a lifetime pass and the rest of section 7 in which he had earlier secured a homestead.<sup>5</sup>

Although G. B. Anderson describes Bacon Springs as "a live and progressive town even before the advent of the railroad," this is probably retrospective exaggeration.<sup>6</sup> The post trader at Fort Wingate long served as storekeeper for stockmen, and Crane's stage station doubtless filled most other needs. The railroad really made the place important. Track-laying crews arrived in the middle of March 1881, pausing to build temporary quarters and pile up materials for the next stretch. A telegraph office and section house had already appeared in April, when Lieutenant John G. Bourke rode out from Albuquerque in a caboose "jammed with passengers most of them smoking villainous pipes." At Cranes Station,

all tumbled out to get a cup of coffee and a sandwich in a "saloon," doing business in a tent alongside the track. The coffee was quite good and the sandwiches fresh; the shaggy haired men behind the bar were courteous and polite . . . and reasonable in the charges. . . .<sup>7</sup>

4. Albuquerque *Daily Citizen*, April 6, 1900; George B. Anderson, ed., *History of New Mexico Its Resources and People* (2 vols., Los Angeles, 1907), II, 836; National Archives, Records of United States Army Commands, Ft. Wingate, Letters Received, William Crane to Gen. George P. Buell, June 24, 1880; Pueblo Agency MSS (Albuquerque), Benjamin Thomas to William Crane, October 23, 1880.

5. *McKinley County Republican*, December 15, 1904; Santa Fe Pacific Tract Book (Albuquerque), West Ranges X to XV, 481; Department of the Interior, Land and Survey Office (Santa Fe), Tract Book of Range 14 West.

6. Anderson, *op. cit.*, II, 836, 839. The springs were on Crane's ranch, although a settlement of that name was recorded one mile northwest in 1881. Apparently the name designated some kind of settlement before the railroad's advent since details from Fort Wingate sought AWOL's there in 1880. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Division of Engineering (Albuquerque), Field Notes of the Survey of the Subdivisional Lines of Township 14 North, Range 15 West (June 4, 1881) and of Township 14 North, Range 14 West (June 10, 1881); National Archives, Records of United States Army Commands, Ft. Wingate, General and Special Orders, Orders No. 122, December 26, 1880; Orders No. 127, December 31, 1880.

7. *Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad Company . . . for the Year Ending December 31, 1880* (Boston, 1881), 13-15; Lansing B. Bloom, "Bourke on the Southwest," *NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW*, XI (1936), 78-79.

The station name became Coolidge in March 1882, honoring T. Jefferson Coolidge, a director of the Atlantic & Pacific.<sup>8</sup> The community was on its way.

Construction continued at the division point. By 1885 the company owned a depot, water tank, roundhouse and turntable, coal chute, eating house (replacing the tent saloon), some eight other buildings, and five cottages for personnel. This property had a value of \$35,831, nearly three quarters of that of the buildings at Winslow, the next division point, and over five times those at Gallup.<sup>9</sup> The railroad gave the little settlement a real sense of permanence, and as early as December 1882 Coolidge began to "present the appearance of a town, instead of a mere village."<sup>10</sup>

Attracted by these customers, businessmen soon moved into town. J. D. Ellis, with his partner, Harmon, established a livery stable and butcher shop in mid-1882 near Zeiger and Marshall, proprietors of the "best fitted bar in Western New Mexico."<sup>11</sup> A Canadian, John B. Hall, joined Charles M. Paxton, of Pennsylvania, to start a general store which so prospered that they erected a larger adobe building in August 1883. Charles L. Flynn soon opened a rival emporium.<sup>12</sup> Charles Lummis found Coolidge in 1884 "the only town of one hundred people . . . between Albuquerque and Winslow," and three years later the Albuquerque *Morning Democrat* reported, "Coolidge is sharing the general prosperity of the southwest, as evidenced by a row of buildings just completed and occupied by various business enterprises."<sup>13</sup> One of these may have housed "our tonsorial artist" who was prepared to trim mustaches in March 1888.<sup>14</sup> Two months later Mrs. J. Leahey opened a dressmaking shop, while Mrs. Irene

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8. Letter from F. B. Baldwin, Valuation Engineer System, The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company, to author, July 6, 1951.

9. *Ibid.* The Santa Fe Railway curio business is said to have begun when Herman Schweitzer sold items like petrified wood at the Coolidge Harvey House in 1882. Interview with T. W. Cabeen.

10. *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, December 2, 1882.

11. *Ibid.*, December 15, 1882; October 22, 1882.

12. Anderson, *op. cit.*, II, 839; *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, August 10, 1883.

13. Charles F. Lummis, *A Tramp Across the Continent* (New York, 1892), 205; *Albuquerque Morning Democrat*, August 2, 1887.

14. *Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, March 14, 1888.

Lewis ran a rooming-house for some time before 1890.<sup>15</sup> John J. Keegan's lunch stand did a "rushing business" at least a year before 1890, when the settlement contained three saloons, two stores, and several residences.<sup>16</sup>

While the merchants regarded railroaders as their steady customers and found trade "a little dull" between pay days, ranchers, lumbermen, and soldiers helped to liven business.<sup>17</sup> Cattlemen used Coolidge as a shipping point, supply depot, and place for relaxation. One stockman in 1886 even drove his herd from distant St. Johns, Arizona, to ship it from Coolidge.<sup>18</sup> The citizens had a lively interest in range conditions and eagerly repeated rumors that some ranchers might build storage pens in the town.<sup>19</sup> Roundups brought the "jolly 'punchers'" to Coolidge in large numbers at least once a year, and the "'wild and desperate cowboys' with their six shooters strapped about their waists" who loitered at the station thrilled eastern dudes traveling through.<sup>20</sup>

Lumbering on the Zuñi Mountains south of Coolidge began with the tie contractors in 1881. Then James and Gregory Page came from Ontario, Canada, to establish a mill and lumber yard at Coolidge. Having skimmed the cream off this market by the mid-80's, Gregory Page moved west to Winslow, where he opened "one of the largest and best billiard rooms, club rooms and saloons to be found along the railroad."<sup>21</sup> Henry Hart, recently of Liverpool, England, with his partner, W. S. Bliss, in 1889 installed "extensive machinery at their mills south of Coolidge." Bliss joined

15. *Ibid.*, May 8, 1888; April 21, 1890.

16. *Gallup Gleaner*, May 22, 1889; *Gallup Elk*, March 1, 1890.

17. *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, August 19, 1882.

18. Ft. Wingate, Letters Received, Smith Carson Co. to Comdg. Off., May 8, 1886. Holbrook was the customary shipping point for the St. Johns region; see: "From Ash Fork to Albuquerque," *The Southwest Illustrated Magazine*, II (Feb., 1896), 24; *Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, October 11, 1897; John Dougherty, Atlantic & Pacific Railroad, Report, June 30th 1894 (typescript in Baker Library, Harvard Business School), 16.

19. *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, December 8, 1882; August 10, 1883.

20. *Gallup Elk*, May 17, 1890; *Albuquerque Morning Democrat*, June 18, 1887.

21. Anderson, *op. cit.*, II, 839, 842; *Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, January 30, 1890; *McKinley County Republican*, August 1, 1908; *Gallup Herald*, July 24, 1920; Land Office, Tract Book of Range 15 West, shows James Page filed five miles southwest of Coolidge in 1883 but relinquished his claim June 20, 1885.

J. M. Dennis soon after in another lumbering enterprise on the mountain.<sup>22</sup> Until their disappearance in the mid-90's, these two firms added to Coolidge's prosperity.

Soldiers from Fort Wingate spent their money in the little town, but as usual the citizens had to pay a price for this trade. In 1882 a corporal, having indulged too freely in Coolidge wet goods, created "a disturbance, during which he shot in the leg, a citizen named Wilson." For this a court martial reduced him to private.<sup>23</sup> Seven years later an irate citizen complained that a drunken soldier had annoyed his wife, to which Colonel E. A. Carr replied:

I would be glad if the authorities of Coolidge would cinch any of my men who misconduct themselves; but it is my experience that the saloonkeepers are too glad to get the soldiers money, to allow them to get into trouble when drunk on their liquor.<sup>24</sup>

The military not only caused trouble but furnished help when others misbehaved. The community's first few years were a time of violence as men drifted into the area, "some of whom were really bad and others . . . thought they were or . . . wanted to be."<sup>25</sup> In February 1882 the law-abiding element engaged in a gun-fight with these desperadoes—the result: three outlaws and one deputy sheriff killed, two wounded citizens lying in the Wingate post hospital.<sup>26</sup> Three months later John B. Hall, justice of the peace at Coolidge, sent a frantic telegram to the fort:

The civil law is unable to cope with the gamblers here—they make night hidious [sic] last night and stole a wagon load of beer from Railroad company—For [sic] troops at Holbrook—there are about fifteen in all—can you help us?<sup>27</sup>

22. Gallup *News-Register*, June 14, 1889; *Gallup Gleaner*, December 24, 1889.

23. Ft. Wingate, General and Special Orders, Orders No. 145, September 11, 1882.

24. National Archives, Records of United States Army Commands, Ft. Wingate, Letters Sent, Col. E. A. Carr to A. J. Brown, December 29, 1889.

25. "In the Early Days at Coolidge," *Santa Fe Employes' Magazine*, II (1908), 399.

26. National Archives, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Ft. Wingate, Record of Medical History of the Post, February 1876 to June 1889, 158.

27. Ft. Wingate, Letters Received, John B. Hall to Gen. L. P. Bradley, May 9, 1882.

On this or an earlier occasion, the Atlantic & Pacific threatened to recall "the whole of the construction gang of several hundred men" to level the town unless stolen barrels of beer were returned.<sup>28</sup>

Despite such alarms and excursions, Coolidge enjoyed many attributes of a more civilized life. One of these was easier communication. As early as May 1881 the settlers had their own post office, the job of postmaster passing around among such merchants as John B. Hall, Charles Paxton, and Charles Flynn.<sup>29</sup> The trains also gave quick access to the outside world, as did their accompanying telegraph line. But the hazards of this improved transportation became apparent as early as December 1881, when a smallpox epidemic, spreading quickly along the railroad, struck little Coolidge and ravaged it for eight months.<sup>30</sup> But Dr. E. M. Burke was on hand to tend the sick—though he proved to be the only physician to settle there.<sup>31</sup>

From the early days the citizens were interested in all manner of diversions. In December 1882 "the renowned John Kelly and estimable wife" presented "the first real musical treat" in the town to a full house. Dancing proved popular, and the "young people" rarely missed an opportunity to "heel and toe it, spin and whirl" at "social hops." The Kelly's concert, indeed, was spoiled for some when Mrs. Reilly "refused to perform on the organ for those who wished to dance after the show was over."<sup>32</sup> The disreputable element present in those days caused some concern. Guests at a dance given by "the people in high life in Coolidge" had to show "proper credentials as to their moral standing" (whatever these might be). This procedure appeared "as it should be, as such an example will doubtless cause a good reform in Coolidge circles."<sup>33</sup> While parties were of "fre-

28. "In the Early Days at Coolidge," *loc cit.*, II, 400.

29. National Archives, Records of Post Office Department, Records of Appointment of Postmasters, XLVIII, 692; LVIII, 264, 320.

30. Ft. Wingate, Medical History, 154; *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, August 19, 1882.

31. Anderson, *op. cit.*, II, 839; *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, November 8, 1882.

32. *Albuquerque Morning Journal*, December 15, 1882.

33. *Albuquerque Daily Journal*, December 24, 1882.



quent occurrence," many men indulged in more virile pleasures. John Keegan assumed the responsibilities of president of the Coolidge Gun Club in 1889, and the railroad crews organized an "aggregation of sluggers . . . to play ball" that same year.<sup>34</sup>

The settlement was never large enough to justify legal organization as a town, but almost from the start it formed a part of Precinct No. 23 in Valencia County, regularly electing a justice of the peace and constable. Apparently the voters did not always choose wisely, for Constable John D. Ellis skipped town with the public funds less than two months after the polling in November 1882.<sup>35</sup> Officials on the Rio Grande evidently cared little about the geography of this distant region which actually lay in Bernalillo County. In 1886 the postal authorities changed their records. Two years later Coolidge requested recognition as a Bernalillo County precinct, but nothing came of this although county boundaries remained unchanged until 1900.<sup>36</sup>

Coolidge showed every promise of a prosperous future now that it was a well developed community, but its fate was sealed in 1889, when a Santa Fe engine made a run four times the usual hundred-odd miles.<sup>37</sup> Gallup had long looked with envious eyes at its neighbor's prosperity and hoped "for the removal of division headquarters . . . from Coolidge to this place" to diversify the coal town's economy.<sup>38</sup> In February 1890 the change occurred, and Coolidge fell victim to technological progress.

"What was Coolidge's loss is Gallup's gain, and here we are, only the old stone roundhouse and a few of the best of us left . . .," lamented one who remained behind that May. The town died in a blaze of glory one week later when all the

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34. *Gallup Gleaner*, May 22, 1889; September 28, 1889.

35. Proceedings of Valencia County Commissioners, A-2, *passim*. Absence from the county court house of the first volume, covering the years to 1889, makes it impossible to know when the precinct was set up—probably in 1881.

36. Records of Postmasters, LVIII, 320; *Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, April 10, 1888; Charles F. Coan, "The County Boundaries of New Mexico," *The Southwestern Political Science Quarterly*, III (1922-23), 260-69.

37. *Gallup Gleaner*, May 1, 1889.

38. *Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, January 10, 1888.

buildings but the depot and Harvey House burned down.<sup>39</sup> The latter did not follow the freight division offices to Gallup until October 1895, but most of the trainmen shifted in 1890.<sup>40</sup> With them came the merchants, and Gallup now took over as supply center for the ranchers.<sup>41</sup> Discontinuance of its night telegraph office in 1892 merely emphasized Coolidge's diminishing importance.<sup>42</sup> In April 1890 Uncle Billy Crane had assumed the duties of postmaster, and by 1896 even the name of Coolidge disappeared when the Post Office Department reverted to Cranes.<sup>43</sup> By that time the Atlantic & Pacific valued its buildings there at little more than \$11,000, but one fourth of Gallup's collection and one tenth of Winslow's.<sup>44</sup>

The rest of the story is soon told. Uncle Billy Crane continued to live at his ranch, served as justice of the peace in 1903, and died in December 1904 at the age of eighty.<sup>45</sup> The railroad remembered the hero of Manila Bay in 1898 by renaming their station Dewey but changed to Guam two years later. Two Indian traders opened a store there in 1899, re-establishing the post office which passed through many hands until it was discontinued in 1919.<sup>46</sup> The trading store, under changing ownership, not only dealt with the Navahos in the vicinity but with the small ranchers and farmers on the neighboring mountains. Finally it moved away in 1913, and Guam presented "a rather deserted appearance . . . but a memory of the once busy city which existed here during the early eighties."<sup>47</sup> In 1926 Berton I. Staples settled nearby to build up a business in Navaho crafts and, good Republican that he was, named the new post office Coolidge "in honor of

39. Gallup *Elk*, May 17, 1890; Albuquerque *Daily Citizen*, May 24, 1890.

40. Gallup *Gleaner*, October 26, 1895; Gallup *Elk*, March 1, 1890.

41. Interview with Palmer Ketner.

42. Gallup *Gleaner*, April 16, 1892.

43. Records of Postmasters, LVIII, 264; XC, 289.

44. F. B. Baldwin to author.

45. McKinley County *Republican*, January 17, 1903; December 15, 1904.

46. F. B. Baldwin to author; Records of Postmasters, XC, 289, 291, 407; McKinley County *Republican*, November 23, 1901.

47. McKinley County *Republican*, January 22, 1903; September 1912 Special Supplement, 23-24; June 6, 1913.

the president." Gallup's editor, aware that the name was not new in the area, confessed, "We do not know for whom the first Coolidge was named."<sup>48</sup> *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

Settlement at Thoreau resulted from the timber on the Zuñi Mountains—acres and acres of tall yellow pine. Several small operators had long worked this resource to supply railroad ties, but the most spectacular of the lumbermen were Austin W. and William W. Mitchell, brothers from Cadillac, Michigan. They bought a small kingdom of 314,668 acres from the Atlantic & Pacific in June 1890 at two dollars an acre.<sup>49</sup> When the brothers inspected their enterprise in June 1891, they found two dozen engineers running lines for rails into the forest while others were laying out a townsite and reservoir.<sup>50</sup> The plant was to be "on a much more extensive scale than any other in this part of the country, and with a sufficient capacity to make lumber enough to supply the whole southwest." That November contractors came from Colorado to build the reservoir south of the new town of Mitchell, which was already "a flag station a few miles west of Chaves."<sup>51</sup>

The next year (1892) saw the company hit its stride. The Mitchells concluded an agreement with the Santa Fe Railroad to ship twelve million feet of lumber annually in return for "favorable rates over the entire . . . system" and the purchase of "all their ties and lumber supply from the Mitchell Bros. for their entire southwestern system of road."<sup>52</sup> By April melting snows were filling the reservoir when a carload of machinery arrived.<sup>53</sup> A cog-gearred, narrow-gauge mountain engine appeared in May, and "as the mill machinery is nearly all in place, business will begin

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48. *Gallup Herald*, November 19, 1926; Records of Postmasters, XC, 357.

49. McKinley County Records, Book E, 219.

50. *Gallup Elk*, June 10, 1891; June 24, 1891.

51. *Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, October 5, 1891; November 5, 1891.

52. *Gallup Gleaner*, January 2, 1892.

53. *Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, April 13, 1892; April 26, 1892.

here in real earnest soon."<sup>54</sup> By mid-summer the sawmill was running with a capacity of thirty million feet a year, and the planing mill was "in course of construction."<sup>55</sup>

This new community scarcely made a good start before it died. The flag-station of November 1891 was a booming settlement six months later. The camp then contained about 150 people whose needs brought optimistic merchants to the scene. F. W. Heyn, "well know ex-Albuquerque furniture man," opened a general merchandise business, "building a commodious store room, on what is to be one of the most prominent street corners in the new town." The first wholesale liquor dealer from Albuquerque "could only pass his best sample bottle," in the absence of saloons, but a "'dead line' dive" was ready for customers just east of the camp, and another was soon to compete on the west.<sup>56</sup> By June a restaurant, the Mitchell House, and a "chop house on the short order plan" were feeding the hungry, while "Mr. Heyn, the merchant," prepared to erect his two-story structure. Even "a young physician" had arrived in May. Two more business places were going up in August as well as several residences.<sup>57</sup>

The Atlantic & Pacific entered into the spirit, moving their station in the spring of 1892 from Chaves, four miles to the east. They were prepared to rob Coolidge of its "dining station" also, "had the lumber business been a success."<sup>58</sup> Chaves, an early and none too savory whistlestop serving cattlemen, had acquired a post office in 1886 which was expected to follow the depot "as soon as government permission shall have been obtained," but the lumber kings quit too soon. Mitchell did not enjoy its own mail service until 1898.<sup>59</sup> County authorities proved equally wary. Enthusiasm led "67 of the inhabitants of the new town of Mitchell" to petition for a new precinct in July 1892, but the county commission-

54. *Gallup Gleaner*, May 28, 1892.

55. L. B. Prince, *Report of the Governor of New Mexico to the Secretary of the Interior. 1892* (Washington, 1892), 24.

56. *Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, April 26, 1892; May 12, 1892.

57. *Ibid.*, May 24, 1892; June 21, 1892; August 10, 1892.

58. *Ibid.*, May 12, 1892; Dougherty, *op. cit.*, 13.

59. *Ibid.*, May 12, 1892; Records of Postmaster, LVIII, 320; XC, 291.

ers felt the move premature. Not until March 1899 could fifty "residents of Mitchell and vicinity" thus organize themselves.<sup>60</sup>

In mid-September 1892 the Mitchells abruptly closed the works and returned to Michigan, leaving word that "they expect to resume work . . . probably some time next spring."<sup>61</sup> Although two springs came and went, the saw-mill remained silent. As an Atlantic & Pacific inspector reported, "The Company did not operate beyond three months, when they got disgusted and shut down."<sup>62</sup> The land reverted to the railroad in February 1893, and six years later the once-promising region was "an ocean of 'departed greatness.'" The *Daily Citizen* explained that, having made a

total investment of several hundred thousand dollars, which they soon found the home market would not support, and railroads would not give rates to make shipments possible, they retreated in good order and now all that is left is a shack or two, and their lands, the timber of which there is yet no demand for. . . .<sup>63</sup>

The Southwest apparently could not absorb lumber on such a scale, and the railroad's parlous financial condition (approaching bankruptcy) did not permit granting special rates.

After the Mitchells, this area passed several years in comparative quiet. The Hyde Exploring Expedition, organized by the wealthy, Harvard-trained Hyde brothers in 1896 to uncover the Pueblo Bonito ruins, contributed a new name, replacing the memory of the lumbermen with that of a Massachusetts philosopher—Thoreau. Until 1902 the Hydes' large business in Indian products required three warehouses and a store in Thoreau.<sup>64</sup> In 1903 the American Lumber Com-

60. Bernalillo County Commissioners, Journal "B," 258; "C," 253.

61. Albuquerque *Daily Citizen*, September 23, 1892.

62. Dougherty, *op. cit.*, 13.

63. Albuquerque *Daily Citizen*, December 23, 1899.

64. Records of Postmasters, XC, 291; Albuquerque *Daily Citizen*, December 23, 1899. On the Hyde Expedition see: Clark Wissler, "Pueblo Bonito as Made Known by the Hyde Expedition," *Natural History*, XXII (1922), 343-54; Frances Gillmor and Louisa W. Wetherill, *Traders to the Navajos* (Boston, 1934), 49; Joseph Schmedding,

pany, of Albuquerque, acquired the Mitchell holdings. This new market persuaded A. B. McGaffey to move from Albuquerque to take over the Hydes' old store. He, too, went into lumbering, so Thoreau experienced a rebirth.<sup>65</sup> Based on trade with ranchers, lumberjacks, and Navahos, the little community grew slowly during the first three decades of the twentieth century.<sup>66</sup> A hotel, movie theater, and soda fountain, when added to the two garages, two filling stations, and two general stores, gave the place a prosperous air.<sup>67</sup> But Gallup had been the recognized hub of the eastern Navaho country since the end of the nineteenth century, thanks to its position as a coal town, railroad headquarters (temporarily), wholesale center for the Indian trade, and county seat (after 1901). Gallup proved able to survive the great depression of the 'thirties, while Thoreau could not with its essentially small shopkeeper economy.

West central New Mexico was a frontier land of opportunity opened up by the railroad—for those who could best guess the coming course of events. Professor Schlesinger has pointed out that on earlier American frontiers "every cluster of log huts dreamed of . . . eminence."<sup>68</sup> So, too, along the Atlantic & Pacific tracks, settlers gambled on the future greatness of their communities. Alas, not all these high hopes were realized. The new villages seemed at first to have equal chances for importance. Winslow was, like Coolidge, a division point. Holbrook served as distribution and shipping center for a more extensive region than did Coolidge but lacked the latter's railroad facilities. Gallup

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*Cowboy and Indian Trader* (Caldwell, Idaho, 1951), 111-12, 180-81; *McKinley County Republican*, August 17, 1901.

The Sage of Waldon Pond, in his scorn for this world's glory, might have been amused to learn that New Mexicans found his name an "unpronounceable foreign appendage" and today call it "Therew." *Albuquerque Daily Citizen*, December 23, 1899.

65. *McKinley County Republican*, April 16, 1903; July 20, 1903; October 8, 1903.

66. *Ibid.*, April 7, 1906; September 1912 Special Supplement; *Gallup Independent*, November 6, 1925.

67. See Note 3 and *Gallup Independent*, April 15, 1927; April 29, 1927; *Gallup Herald*, June 27, 1929; interview with Eugene Lambson. McGaffey sold his store in Thoreau about 1926.

68. Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Paths to the Present* (New York, 1949), 217.

provided commercial and entertainment services for the nearby coal miners, just as Mitchell's merchants hoped to do for the lumbermen. Each town catered to the needs of men engaged in a particular activity upon which the citizens therefore depended for their prosperity (later, Thoreau performed a similar function but for too small a market to assure an important growth). But decisions by distant railroad executives or the state of lumber and coal markets might spell prosperity or doom for these places—as the fates of Coolidge and Mitchell showed all too clearly. This ominous possibility beyond local control tinged all plans with insecurity and lay behind the vigorous boosterism and rivalries. Only when a place like Gallup developed a more diversified economic life and served a wider region of more varied activities did the uncertainty begin to disappear.