SPENCE'S PALACE STATION:
HISTORY IN THE BRADSHAW MOUNTAINS

By
Ray Jackson
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1309 West Orange Drive
Phoenix, Arizona 85013
AUTHOR'S NOTE

In gathering material for the history of Palace Station, I was never able to adhere to any formula or standard method of research. I simply went in whatever direction I could, following whatever lead I had. Interviews with various family members, notably Irene McDonald, Jean Hebb, and Rose Pattison, provided much valuable information. For the sake of scholarship, I usually corroborated facts from interviews with other sources. This was not to doubt anything the interviewees said, but to lend the work a more solid credibility.

This work is a collection of facts, with virtually no speculation. Rather than give each paragraph an "umbrella" footnote (generalizing references in an entire paragraph), each fact is noted, as I hope this project can be used as a springboard for future research. Also included in the footnotes are content notes, adding related information to the facts. Hopefully, the extensive footnoting is not too distracting for the reader.

I've provided a large selection of appendix materials for a better understanding of the text. These materials will better acquaint the reader with the Spences and Palace Station. Some of the appendices are loaded with facts and information, such as the maps, diagrams, and family tree, whereas the rest of the offerings are included for the sake of interest, such as the photocopies of documents and pictures. Also, there is an appendix detailing the death of Annie Beck, a short exposé which reveals some new information.

Researching and writing the history of Palace was tedious and exhausting, but satisfying nonetheless. Assembling this initial collection of research was quite a chore, and there is still much more work to be done; but that must be left for other history students. The accomplishments of this work are significant and I feel fortunate to have been involved with it. It is a rare opportunity to make a valuable contribution to history.

In the six months it took to research this material, several institutions proved themselves invaluable to me. These places include: Arizona Historical Foundation, Tempe; Arizona Historical Society, Tucson; Arizona State Library, Archives, and Genealogy, Phoenix; Bradshaw District Ranger Station, Prescott; Supervisor's Office, Prescott National Forest, Prescott; Western Postal History Museum, Tucson; Yavapai County Courthouse, Prescott; Yavapai County Recorder's Office, Prescott. In addition to being excellent sources for information, all these collections were staffers with pleasant and helpful people.
Obviously, there are a great many individuals whose help I am deeply appreciative of, the majority of which are descendants or relatives of A.B. and Matilda Spence, including: Jean Hebb, Rose Pattison, Sonya McDonald, Ed Poley, Bob Poley, Barbara Geissler, Bill Sandler, Carrie Soriano, and Marlene Keller. Among the non-family members who deserve recognition are Dorothy Fleming, Barry Humbert, Susan Jester, and Peggy Vandergon.

Finally, I must acknowledge the major contributions of Irene McDonald and Doug Vandergon. Irene, the granddaughter of A.B. Spence, is an amazingly vital, sincere, and pleasant lady. A genuine pioneer, Irene's experience is matched easily by her class. Doug has lived at Palace Station for over a decade while working for the Forest Service, and is probably as much a part of Palace as the Spences. Concerning Palace, Doug is an intense and committed man, which is the primary reason behind Palace's excellent modern presentation. He makes good waffles, too. Both Irene and Doug are fine individuals and the Bradshaw Mountains are richer with their presence.

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I
INTRODUCTION

The Spence family and Palace Station played an integral role in the mining bonanza which occurred in the Bradshaw Mountains during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Centrally located on the primary road system through the Bradshaws, Palace Station was available to the majority of the population involved with the mining boom and no doubt served them in any one of a number of capacities.

Palace Station today is quiet and beautiful. Amid its pastoral setting, the century-old building provides a magical link to the past. Nestled in the heart of the Bradshaws, Palace is surrounded by the vast Prescott National Forest, sheltered from modern man by miles of virtually unpopulated land, a grand buffer of mountains and trees. After braving the tedious backroads leading to Palace, the persistent traveler is treated to a glimpse of a previous era. Aided by the careful maintenance and the pleasant landscaping of Palace, the imagination unleashes a wave of romanticized thoughts on frontier life. It is hard not to admire the Spences, who fearlessly came to the West and carved out an existence on the edge of civilization. Enduring hardships, they built and ran a successful stage stop and raised eight children. The imagination further infers that during the entire time the Spences
occupied Palace, they proudly upheld the American qualities of hard work, honesty, and morality.

The Frontier Myth -- the "Little House on the Prairie" concept -- permeates American society. Frontier idealism is an important and popular part of our value system. Palace Station appears to support the Frontier Myth of the ideal pioneer family, but more significantly, it is a legitimate link to Arizona's territorial heritage.

However, the essence of myth is rarely the substance of history, and trying to determine genuine historic reality often disappoints idealized pre-conceptions. Myth can be confused with reality by interpreting the research to arrive at undisturbing, and often inaccurate, conclusions. Fortunately, the quest for historical accuracy is backed by an underlying passion for truth. This passion calls for as perfect a recreation of history as possible, despite the fact that pre-conceived ideas are hard to release, with personal conviction being even harder to deny.

This work results from an effort to recreate the history of Palace Station by assembling the facts into three areas. First -- the historical significance of Palace: various factors such as the road, the location on the road, types of traffic, and services offered at Palace help discern what role the station had in the Bradshaw Mountain mining bonanza. Second -- the Spence family: a brief history emphasizing the years at Palace (1878-1912) which proves the family successful by many
standards, although close examination reveals that many problems facing modern families also existed on the frontier. Third -- the cemetery: as a critical facet of Palace Station history, a priority was placed on determining the facts surrounding the burials there, with the primary focus on identification.
"Come one and all," invited A.B. Spence as he advertised his newly built stage station in July, 1878.\textsuperscript{1} Spence named it Palace Station, boasting it was one of the best stations in Northern Arizona. The Arizona Weekly Miner endorsed the station when it reported that "... (Spence's) arrangements are complete, and travelers will find they have a good place to stop."\textsuperscript{2} Palace Station was located in Crook Canyon,\textsuperscript{3} at the halfway point on the direct road from Prescott to the incredibly wealthy Peck Mine. From there, the road went on to the prosperous Bradshaw and Tip Top Mines. In 1878, the Bradshaw Mountains were in the early stages of a tremendous mining bonanza which would last into the new century.\textsuperscript{4} The significance of the Palace Station stage stop was due to several factors: location, types of traffic, and services offered.

It would be difficult to overstate the importance of the route on which Palace was located. The road was designated as Road District No. 1 by the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors in 1899, and up to that point had been referred to as either the Prescott-Peck Road or the Prescott-Crown King Road; today it is known as the Senator Highway.\textsuperscript{5} The road was a crucial link between Prescott and the prosperous mining districts in the central, south and southeast Bradshaws. The road proceeded
generally south out of Prescott to the Senator Mine and Mill, up through the pass near Mt. Union, down into Crook Canyon, past Palace Station, over Longfellow Ridge, and into Goodwin. From Goodwin, the road drops directly south to a point near Battle Flat where it forks. The southeasterly fork goes across Battle Flat to Alexandra and the Peck Mine, then down to Bradshaw, Tip Top and Gillette; the southern fork goes through Hooper, and then to Crown King or Minnehaha.

The development of Road District No. 1 corresponded with the development of the major mining interests in the Bradshaws. First, in 1876, the Senator and Crook mining operations prompted the construction of good road as far as Crook Canyon. Then, the tremendous success of the Peck Mine and the growth of its camp, Alexandra, led to the construction of the Prescott-Peck Road in 1877-1878. Finally, in the late 1880's, several prosperous mining operations in the Crown King area necessitated the Prescott-Crown King Road, which split from the Prescott-Peck Road near Battle Flat. The road from Prescott to Goodwin, branching off to either Alexandra or Crown King, represents the core of Road District No. 1.

In addition to being situated on the most important road through the Bradshaws, Palace's location on that road was extremely advantageous. All the traffic destined for the central, southern and eastern Bradshaws was channelled down through a corridor in Crook Canyon, past Palace, and then on through Goodwin, where traffic could dissipate into two major
routes and several other minor ones. Similarly, any northbound traffic from the southern end of the district bottlenecked at Goodwin, moving through the Crook Canyon Corridor then on to the northern mills or Prescott. The consolidation of traffic made the Prescott to Goodwin stretch of Road District No. 1 the busiest road in the Bradshaws, with Palace Station serving it in the Crook Canyon Corridor.

The types of traffic moving by Palace can be divided into three categories: ore and freight wagons, stagecoaches, and postal service. Ore and freight wagons and pack trains were the earliest traffic to maneuver down the rugged mule trails which were the forerunners of Road District No. 1. Even before the large scale operations took over, the small mining camps needed ore and freight moved. The Crook Mill contracted out to process ore from around the area in 1876, and ore came up in a steady stream from the south. 8 Also in 1876, the owners of the Peck Mine purchased the Aztlan Mill six miles south of Prescott, freighting their ore there. 9 Before opening Palace Station, A.B. Spence operated a ranch at the Palace site in 1877. 10 He must have been impressed by the numerous pack trains and wagons heading south with supplies and freight, and then returning northbound laden with ore. Spence probably assisted the slow moving freighters as they passed by his ranch.

The slow moving ore and freight traffic successfully handled business in the Bradshaws until 1877. Although
essential in opening up the rugged mountains, travel was slow
and uncomfortable. Mining operations were growing and the
mining camps around them were growing also. The increasing
civilization in the Bradshaws required swifter, smoother
transportation. Improvements were made on the Prescott-Peck
road in 1877, and that summer, buckboards began making the
thirty mile trip to Alexandra, usually in one day. More
improvements were made on the road in 1878, and stagecoaches
began running regularly and at capacity.12

The advent of stagecoach traffic was a critical point in
the development of the Palace Station stage stop. Before 1878,
the traffic moving by Spence's ranch consisted mostly of
freight -- supplies or ore. Spence probably had occasion to
assist a driver, help him fix a wagon, or pacify a mule. But
in 1878, the new road brought passengers, and a market to
service these passengers appeared. Spence's ranch became
Palace Station, and the Spences became stationkeepers.

Another development coinciding with the advent of stage-
coach traffic was increased postal activity. Since postal
contracts were handled by existing means of transport, whether
it be mule, ore wagon, or stage, it did not constitute a
significant addition to the traffic by Palace as such. But the
increase in postal activity indicates the growth of the
population centers, suggesting a heavier flow of traffic to
accommodate the trade and commerce to these communities.
Post offices had been established at Goodwin and Bradshaw as early as 1874. Bradshaw, south of Alexandra and accessible only by horsetrail, had generally poor postal service. But growing populations demanded better postal service and it was delivered with better roads. By the time Alexandra (1878), Gillette (1878), and Tip Top (1879) began receiving mail, service to the southeast leg of Road District No. 1 was regular. The southern fork of the road began handling mail routes in 1888 to Crown King, adding Minnehaha (1892) and Hooper (1899).

Summarizing the trend of post office operations south of Palace offers an idea of how quickly traffic picked up on Road District No. 1. In 1875, only two post offices were operating south of Palace. That figure doubled in 1878, grew to five in 1879, seven in 1880, and peaked at ten in 1881 and 1882. Through the 1880's, no less than six post offices were in operation at any one time south of Palace.

To this greatly increased volume of traffic, the Spences offered all the basic services of a stage station. The layout of Palace Station roughly encompassed two acres. The main cabin was approximately 30' x 25' and was divided into two sections. The original north section is constructed of large hand-hewn logs, two stories high. The bottom floor was a greeting area and saloon, with a small bedroom for the Spences on the west end. A wooden stairwell led to the sleeping quarters upstairs. The south end of the main cabin housed the
dining room and kitchen. Originally set up as a cook tent, the south room was constructed of planking when lumber became readily available in the 1880's.

Running along the north and west side of the main cabin are various structures. To the north was a well. Along the west side was a vegetable garden, flower garden, bunkhouse, cold storage area, chicken house, and a blacksmith shop. Further to the south and east were the barns, stables, and corral. All of these structures were probably completed by the mid-1880's, with some being finished by 1878.

Two other structures appeared in 1895 and 1896. In 1895, after Clinton Beck married Florence Spence, he built a cabin just north of Palace Station near where the creek crosses the road. Although Beck died in 1899, Florence continued to live in the cabin until 1912. In 1896, with the death of Richard J. Lambuth, the cemetery came into use. The Spence family had been fortunate enough to live in the area for nearly twenty years before they needed a cemetery, but they were to find frequent use for one from 1896 to 1911.

Palace Station offered all the basic services of a frontier stage stop, successfully catering to a variety of customers. The stagecoach passengers rarely spent the night there, for stages were expected to make the trip between Prescott and Alexandra or Crown King in a single day. But stages stopped to rest the horses and for the passengers to enjoy a meal from the kitchen or a drink from the bar.
Before too long, the passengers were back on the stage, roaring down the road towards their destination.

Other customers using the facilities of Palace Station included ore packers and local miners. Ore packers with their slow wagons and even slower mule trains, were often overnight guests, as were local miners. The Palace Station saloon was undoubtedly a popular local watering hole. Gambling provided fast entertainment, as did the company of a few sporting ladies from town, whose visits usually coincided with the miner's paydays.

In addition to the basic services of a stage stop, Palace Station apparently operated as a post office from March, 1881, to October, 1882. Matilda Spence was the postmaster, with the official name being the Hassayampa post office. It is not clear why the post office did not carry the Palace Station name, but there is little doubt it was housed there. An archeological excavation in 1980 of the Palace Station floor turned up so many postal-related artifacts, one archeologist speculated the family ran a post office. On voter registration rolls through the 1880's, A.B. Spence lists his residence as Hassayampa, changing it to Palace Station in the 1890's. An 1892 USGS map locates Hassayampa in the vicinity of Palace Station, but the overall information about the terrain is so inaccurate there is no way to use it as a reference. There is no evidence to suggest that the Hassayampa post office was anywhere but Palace Station.
The Hassayampa post office transacted a high volume of business. During the only full business year the post office was open, August, 1881 to July, 1882, Matilda Spence was compensated $131.41.32 Postmaster compensation was directly proportional to postal traffic. By comparison, during the same year other Yavapai County postmasters received $93.83 (Alexandra), $62.66 (Wickenburg), $103.00 (Bradshaw), and $20.33 (Walker). Yet, in October, 1882, the Hassayampa post office was discontinued. Presumably, the office closed because Matilda Spence resigned, as there was enough business to maintain it.

From 1885 to 1894, the two oldest Spence daughters kept autograph books, capturing more than 150 signatures of Palace Station patrons. The signatures included those of influential Prescott businessmen such as W.C. Bashford, William Buffum, W.R. Morgan, F.M. Murphy, W.J. Mulvenon, and Dr. George Vickers. Politicians were represented by Nathan Oakes Murphy and Alex O. Brodie, who were both territorial governors. Prominent mining men like H.H. Helm, James Roach, and the nationally known W.P. Blake also inked their names in the books, along with dozens of other less notorious names of local miners, including Robert Dougherty, James Hart, Fred Robbins, and George Braswell.

From 1878 to 1898, business at Palace Station boomed, but towards the end of the century, traffic through the Crook Canyon Corridor began to subside. One indication of the
declining traffic was the developing trend of post office closures. After its original expansion in the early 1880's, the post office situation stabilized for several years. Then, a trend of closures developed on the southeastern leg of Road District No. 1. In 1884, mail was discontinued to Bradshaw, then Gillette (1887), Tip Top Mine (1889), Bueno (1893), Tip Top Town (1895), and Alexandra (1896). The closure of Alexandra signaled the discontinuance of all postal activity on the southeastern leg of Road District No. 1.

However, while the offices on the southeastern leg were closing, on the southern leg of Road District No. 1 post offices were opening at Minnehaha (1892), Hooper (1899), and Oro (1904). But the Hooper post office was discontinued in 1902, followed by Goodwin (1905), and Oro (1907). By 1908, only two post offices remained south of Palace Station on Road District No. 1 -- Minnehaha and Crown King. In 1910, Minnehaha was closed, and Crown King remained as the last post office on the once heavily traveled Road District No. 1. At that point, traffic to and from Crown King and Prescott either went by rail through the old Cordes junction, or by the road through Walnut Grove and Kirkland Junction.

The mining operations shut down and the towns they fostered became ghost-towns. Alexandra, one of the most prosperous towns in the territory in the 1880's, was completely deserted by 1899. Without the mines, there were no ore wagons; without the towns, there were no supply wagons.
Stagecoach business to the mining towns became unnecessary. Traffic dwindled to a fraction of the volume in the 1880's and 1890's. Road District No. 1 fell into disrepair from lack of use. By 1912, the old County Road District was virtually abandoned due to its dilapidated condition. In 1913, Matilda Spence sold the rights to Palace Station to rancher Fred Edwards for ten dollars.
III

THE SPENCE FAMILY

Alfred Barnum Spence was born in 1833 in North Carolina. At the age of 11, he moved with his parents to Missouri. He spent 15 years in California as a young adult before returning to Missouri, where he met and wed Matilda Elizabeth Lambuth in 1869. Matilda, the oldest daughter of Richard J. and Mary E. Lambuth of Muhlenberg County, Kentucky, was born in 1850. The Spences had two daughters while in Missouri, Belle in 1870 and Ida in 1873.

In the spring of 1875, the Spence family joined thirty other families on a wagon train headed for California from Springfield. The wagon train pulled into Fort Whipple near Prescott in November and the Spences, deterred by Indian hostilities further west, decided to stay in the Prescott area along with ten or twelve other families.

After the family arrived in Prescott, A.B. Spence held various jobs. First, he worked at a saw mill on Groom Creek. Then, late in 1876, he and a partner ran a pack train between Prescott and Alexandra. Also, Spence was befriended by T.M. Alexander, one of the discoverers of the Peck Mine and the namesake of Alexandra. Spence worked for him, starting a dairy at Alexander's ranch south of Prescott in 1877. By this time, Spence had already established his own ranch in Crook
Canyon two miles south of the Crook Mill.\textsuperscript{51} While A.B. divided his time between Alexander's ranch and his own, Matilda socialized with the Alexanders; at one point she went with them to a dance at Alexandra.\textsuperscript{52} In November, 1877, the first child born to the Spences in Arizona Territory was born at Alexander's ranch.\textsuperscript{53} They named the baby girl Florence, and in 1879, another girl, Myrtle, was also born at Alexander's ranch.\textsuperscript{54}

The last four Spence children, two boys and two girls, were born at Palace Station: Maud (1881), Leroy (1883), Elsie (1886), and Willis (1887).\textsuperscript{55} In seventeen years of childbearing, Matilda had six girls and two boys.

Growing up on a frontier stage stop could be a difficult experience for the children. Palace Station was a saloon in part, probably fostering many types of drunken revelry, especially on paydays. And A.B. could be strict with the children -- on one occasion he disciplined Belle by shutting her in a small upstairs room and padlocking the door for an entire day.\textsuperscript{56}

Yet, the children grew up with most of the trappings of youth. They owned pets: a mule named Kit,\textsuperscript{57} two squirrels named Punch and Judy, a pair of orphaned foxes,\textsuperscript{58} and assorted dogs.\textsuperscript{59} They also had toys to play with: dolls, doll toys, marbles, puzzles, harmonicas, rubber balls, and trinkets such as small metal animals.\textsuperscript{60} Since the nearest school was at Goodwin, Matilda educated the children completely at home and
reading was a popular activity. Also, as the girls grew older, they became aware of girlish romance. Ida's autograph book contains clippings of sentimental lyrics from the newspaper and the pages are stained by flowers whose blooms bled when they were pressed. Some century-old skeletons of flowers remain between the pages today.

It would seem that through the 1880's and 1890's, A.B. and Matilda had their hands full. In addition to running a stage stop on the busiest road in the Bradshaws, they were raising eight children. Yet, the Spences supplemented their income by working other jobs into their rigorous schedules. For A.B., these other vocations meant spending periods of time away from Palace while he located mining claims, ran his livestock on the open range, and even did some trapping. But mining was the biggest distraction from his responsibilities at Palace, as the claims he filed were spread throughout a relatively large geographic area. A.B. began filing claims after Palace opened in the summer of 1878. That fall, he located his first placer claim on the land where Palace was built. Until then, he had no formal claim to that property. A year later, with T.M. Alexander, he located the Bodie Mine claim four miles south of Palace. The Bodie was the only significant mineral discovery A.B. made, but he did not realize any profit from it. After a considerable amount of difficulty, Alexander and Spence sold the Bodie to a large mining company with the capital to develop it into a moderately successful operation. Overall, A.B.
found more than 40 claims before he retired in 1905, with his most active prospecting taking place between 1881 and 1888, when he filed 21 locations.66

With A.B.'s prospecting and ranching taking him away from Palace at times, Matilda was left running the station and raising the children. In March of 1881, when her fifth child was barely three months old, she became the postmaster of the Hassayampa post office at Palace. She continued her role as postmaster for eighteen months, while raising the children and running the station almost singlehandedly (A.B. discovered seven claims during this same time period). It is not clear why the post office was discontinued in October of 1882, as it was handling a relatively large amount of mail. Presumably Matilda resigned; traffic by Palace was increasing with each day indicating the necessity for a post office, but she was six months pregnant with her sixth child. However, the closure of the Hassayampa post office may have been due to other reasons.

The children were getting older, and soon they were starting families of their own. Belle, the oldest, was also the first to marry. On December 30, 1889, four days after her nineteenth birthday, she married William Johnson, a big Danish immigrant who was fourteen years her senior.67 Johnson was a mule-skinner for General George Crook during the Indian wars.68 The Johnsons moved over Longfellow Ridge to own and operate the Bueno stage station two miles south of Goodwin.69
But Belle became involved in a scandalous divorce. In 1902, Johnson moved south to the Hooper area and opened a saloon at Pine Flat. He sued for divorce in 1903, contending Belle committed adultery with John Crume. Belle flatly denied the charge, but it was discovered as fact in the trial. William was granted the divorce on September 15, 1904.\(^{70}\)

Six weeks after the divorce, Belle married John Crume.\(^{71}\) Crume was running the Minnehaha-Prescott stage when he met Belle at Bueno Station in 1900.\(^{72}\) During the time Johnson was in the Hooper area, Crume opened a saloon near Bueno at Turkey Creek.\(^{73}\) Belle had five children while married to Johnson, and one with Crume. It was revealed later than Crume actually fathered the last two children previously thought to be Johnson's.\(^{74}\)

The second oldest daughter, Ida, was the oldest Spence to marry. Waiting until the ripe age of 24, she married Harry Aplustill in 1897.\(^{75}\) They had no children.

The life of Florence proved to be the saddest of the Spence children. At 17, she got permission to marry Clinton Beck in 1895.\(^{76}\) Beck, a handsome and industrious young miner, built a small cabin north of Palace for them to live. There, the Becks had three children, two boys and a girl, before Clinton was killed in a mining accident in 1899.\(^{77}\)

Ten months later in Prescott, Florence, now 22, married a 43 year old hostler named Bud Dozier.\(^{78}\) They moved into the cabin near Palace, and Dozier tried prospecting. By this time,
Florence had regained a reputation as a heavy drinker which she maintained until she died in 1937. Sometime shortly after 1902, Dozier left Florence, going to Southern Arizona where he ranched until his death in 1934. Abandoned, Florence continued to live in the Beck cabin. The Beck children were no longer with her: the oldest son was adopted out to a couple in Walnut Grove, the daughter was being raised by Matilda at Palace, and the youngest son was living with the Crumes, who were then in Mayer.

Between 1903 and 1911, Florence had six more children, despite the fact that Dozier deserted her early in that period. Two of the children died, and she gave the three youngest boys up for adoption in 1912. She kept Annie, her oldest daughter. A remarkably beautiful girl, Annie was only sixteen years old when she apparently shot herself to death in 1920.

The fourth Spence daughter, Myrtle, married Frank Olin in 1899. At the time she was married, Myrtle already had a twenty-month-old baby who took the Olin name, although Olin was not his father. By Olin, Myrtle only had one child, which died as a baby before mid-1900.

Maud, the fifth daughter and the first born at Palace, married Thomas Thompson on February 8, 1898, at Bueno Sta-

19
boy, died before he was a year old. The Thompsons were a well-known and respected family. Thompson became the deputy sheriff of Mayer in 1902, holding that position until his death in 1933.91

Leroy, the sixth Spence child and the oldest boy, married Margaret Aplustill in 1906.92 Margaret was the daughter of Harry Aplustill, Ida's husband, from a previous marriage.93 Leroy and Margaret had two daughters, both born at Palace.94 They lived a short distance down canyon from Palace.95

Bert Evans married the last of the Spence girls, Elsie, in 1905.96 When he met Elsie, Evans was hauling ore out of Crown King on mules. After the Evans were married, they lived in Prescott, Mayer, and Kirkland, following Bert's various jobs as a miner, a water-well driller, teamster, barber, and a mechanic. Bert and Elsie had six children together.97

The youngest Spence, Willis, was the only one not to marry. He spent his entire life in the Prescott-Crook Canyon area ranching and mining, leaving only for a short stint in the Army in 1918.98 During his last years in Prescott, he was known as an excessive drinker.99

By the time A.B. Spence died in 1908, his children had been involved in nine marriages, but only one, the Olin's, took place at Palace Station. Of the others, seven were performed in Prescott, and one at Bueno station. Eight children started lives and families of their own, precipitating a variety of results. The success of the Thompson family sharply contrasts
the sadness of Florence's life; Belle, despite the scandal she endured, successfully raised six children, as did Elsie; Ida's marriage was childless, and the Olins raised only Myrtle's illegitimate child; and of the boys, Leroy married his brother-in-law's daughter and remained close to Palace to help Matilda, and Willis spent his life as a confirmed bachelor.

After selling Palace Station in 1913, Matilda Spence moved to Prescott, where she died in 1929. Leroy and Margaret Spence buried her in Prescott Mountain View cemetery, although some family members maintain that Matilda wanted to be buried at the Palace Station cemetery.
IV
THE PALACE STATION CEMETERY

Today, all that remains of Palace Station are the main cabin and the cemetery. The bunk house, hen house, cold storage building, blacksmith shop, barns, and stables were torn down. All that is left of the Beck cabin are some foundation pieces. Most of the attention Palace Station receives is for the statuesque main cabin. Renovated and landscaped by the Forest Service, it is an impressive reminder of the area's frontier heritage. The cemetery has been fenced and the graves, although discernable, are unidentified except for one. So, while the restored main cabin, once featured on the cover of Arizona Highways (March, 1980), receives frequent visitors and is occupied year-round by a Forest Service employee, the cemetery, filled with the history of more than a dozen graves, is mostly ignored.

The Palace Station cemetery lies 150 yards northeast of the main cabin, and measures approximately 50' x 60'. Of the fifteen graves it contains, twelve are distinct and three are vague. The grave furthest north and west, "A" on the diagram, is the largest. It has a small sandstone headpiece with no identifiable writing on it. Grave "B", the only grave with a headstone, is that of Richard J. Lambuth. The rest of the graves are noted by piles of rocks, mounds, or depressions.
The cemetery is moderately grown over with a scattering of small trees and low shrubs.

The following chronology has been assembled with the eight burials that have been documented. In addition to the remains of the eight people determined as being in the Palace Station cemetery, several others are interred there, but may never be identified. The chronology is based on thorough research, but is by no means exclusive.

Until 1896, the Spence family had no need for a cemetery. They had been living at the same location for more than seventeen years, a long period of time for a large family on the frontier to avoid death. But death visited early that year, and the funeral of Richard Lambuth established the Palace Station cemetery.

Richard Lambuth was born in 1826 in Tennessee. He was farming in Kentucky in 1850 when his seventeen year old wife, Mary, gave birth to Matilda, their first child. During the Civil War, Lambuth fought for the South. In the 1890's, he went to visit Matilda and his two other daughters, Mrs. Emma Hatcher and Mrs. B.F. Peters, in the Bradshaw Mountains. It was there, at the age of 70 in 1896, that he died at Turkey Creek, presumably at the residence of B.F. Peters. The Lambuth burial was the only grave in the cemetery for almost two years. On the south side of the grave are the remains of two fence posts, which probably housed the gate of a small fence around the grave as it stood alone.
The next time the cemetery was used was in late February, 1898. Maud Thompson, only seventeen and only a month after her wedding, had a stillborn baby boy at Bueno Station on February 26.\textsuperscript{107} The baby was taken over and buried at Palace.\textsuperscript{108}

Maud and Thomas Thompson tried again, but their second child was the third body placed in the cemetery. On June 12, 1899, Maud gave birth to a girl in Prescott.\textsuperscript{109} Four days later, on June 16, Nellie died of "icturus monatorium."\textsuperscript{110}

The funeral of Clinton Henry Beck took place the following month. On July 19, the handsome young husband of Florence Beck was working in the Buster Mine, one mile southeast of Hooper, when he accidentally drilled into an undetonated charge of explosives.\textsuperscript{111} He was killed instantly and his body horribly mutilated.\textsuperscript{112} A man was sent to Prescott for a coffin, and on the return trip, he picked up a few stout-hearted members of the Spence family, including Maud Thompson, to clean up the remains.\textsuperscript{113} Maud took care of the most difficult details of the unpleasant task, and the body was taken to Palace and buried on July 21.\textsuperscript{114} Clinton was 29 years old when he tragically died, leaving a wife and three children, the youngest of which was only two months. This event drastically affected Florence, only 21, and her life was never normal again.

The next burial which took place in the Palace Station cemetery was that of the third child of Maud and Thomas Thompson in 1903.\textsuperscript{115} Ernest Edwin Thompson was born in Prescott on June 28, 1902.\textsuperscript{116} He was a sickly baby most of his
life and on February 16, 1903, Maud and her sister-in-law, Anna Thompson, took him to Los Angeles. There, on February 28, Edwin died of cholera after only being sick for twenty-six hours. While preparing for the funeral, Maud heard that the graves at the cemetery in Los Angeles had a tendency to fill with water, so she decided to bring Edwin's body back to Palace. Returning to Prescott by train on March 1, the Thomsons proceeded to Palace where the baby was buried the next day. The death of the eight month old baby left the Thomsons childless, being the third child they had lost. It is not surprising that Belle noted in a letter how hard the Thomsons, especially Thomas, took the death.

The next funeral took place on July 3, 1903. Florence Dozier's baby boy died at 8:00 a.m. from "inflammation of the bowels"; he was buried at four that afternoon.

The next documented burial occurred in 1908. The builder of Palace Station and the patriarch of the Spence family, Alfred Barnum Spence, died at Palace at 7:00 a.m. on April 21. He had been suffering from a lingering illness for two years which, combined with his advanced age of 75, finally overcame him. In his thirty-plus years at Palace, A.B. saw his ranch on a rugged mule and ore wagon trail become a stage station on the busiest road into Prescott. He saw his eight children mature and give him twenty-two grandchildren. And, shortly before his death, he witnessed the boom of the 1880's and 1890's in the Bradshaws subside as traffic by Palace
dwindled. A.B.'s funeral on April 22 was a largely attended event, with many coming to pay their respects to one of the true pioneers of the area.\textsuperscript{125}

In 1911, the last interment took place at the Palace Station cemetery. After their first three children died, Maud and Thomas Thompson had five more children between 1903 and 1910.\textsuperscript{126} Their final child, Ernest Keith, born June 17, 1910, took ill and died in Mayer sometime in 1911.\textsuperscript{127} The baby's body was placed in a small casket with coins on his eyelids and was viewed by family and friends in Mayer.\textsuperscript{128} Maud left her other four children with friends, and she and her husband went to Palace for the funeral.\textsuperscript{129} There were no further burials in the Palace Station cemetery after 1911.

In addition to the documented remains in the Palace Station cemetery, other burials may be reasonably assumed. Sometime around 1900, Frank and Myrtle Olin probably had a baby buried there.\textsuperscript{130} Besides the one known to be there, Florence Dozier may have had a second baby laid to rest at Palace.\textsuperscript{131} And Elsie Evans could have one, possibly two, children buried there.\textsuperscript{132}

The cemetery at Palace Station, like the main cabin, reveals much of frontier history. During its prime, the main cabin was a vibrant place full of the activities of a family forging a living in the midst of a mining bonanza. Yet, in the cemetery lay the harsher realities of frontier life. The majority of the graves were babies, a painful fact for child-
bearing women during that time. Childbirth was not necessarily a happy occasion, and saddened parents often had to bury their hopes with their children. At the cemetery, Maud and Thomas Thompson placed four of their babies in the ground. Also in the cemetery, young Florence Beck buried her husband, after his death shattered her life in an instant. And finally, the cemetery received the elderly, Richard Lambuth and A.B. Spence.
V

CONCLUSION

The history of Palace Station provides an excellent assessment of pioneer life. The facts offer honest insight into the reality of history, but a proper interpretation requires an unbiased view. The main culprit distorting historic reality is also the most subtle -- the influence of the Frontier Myth. Within the context of the Frontier Myth, there is an immediate conflict with the history of Palace Station. A portion of Palace Station history supports the myth: the Spences were a hardworking family making the most of their frontier opportunities. After settling on the edge of civilization, they endured many hardships to pursue their dreams and raise a family. However, the remainder of Palace history disputes the Myth: adultery, alcoholism, illegitimate children, divorce, and the spectre of a father who may have mistreated his daughters. Palace also housed an outpost saloon, harboring gambling and prostitution at times. Yet, the conflict is not the simple disagreement of the facts concerning Palace Station versus the Frontier Myth, but rather how the Myth presents the unfavorable evidence.

The Frontier Myth is essentially a morality which society imposes on the past, generally at the expense of historical accuracy. The imposed morality develops a subtle bias which
deems everything either black or white, eliminating gray areas; this perspective distorts and interferes with the reconstruction of historical reality. Material favoring the Myth is endorsed heavily, material disputing the Myth is perceived as unacceptable. By relinquishing the notion of a gray area, the inevitable prejudgments concerning morality and immorality disrupt the effort to honestly assess history. Looking for truth in the rigid moral context of the Frontier Myth is like forcing a square peg into a round hole; the sharp angles of reality do not mesh with the smooth curves of myth.

The Frontier Myth restricts the interpretation of history to a simplistic perception of right and wrong, and the only solution is to identify the Myth as a source of bias and then abandon it. Without the stiff moral framework of the Myth, the reader gains more freedom in interpreting the facts and, therefore, more insight. The resulting historical clarity may not be as comfortable as the ideals of the Myth, but it is undoubtedly more accurate.

Without the romanticized notions of pioneer life offered by the Frontier Myth, the reality of mining boom in the Bradshaws becomes apparent. Settlement in the Bradshaws was blatant mass exploitation, limited only by a remote location and crude technology. The population growth accompanying this exploitation included a large portion of societal outcasts, whose influence was compounded by the complete lack of any spiritual guidance in the area. It is reasonable to assume
that immoral activity was rampant in the Bradshaws. In this light, the situations at Palace Station concerning the Spence family are not all that exceptional.

This view does not offer excuses for the less desirable facts of Palace Station history; rather it recognizes the prevailing attitudes and conduct of that time and place. The worst offense the Spences can be accused of is being human and dealing with the hardships and realities of pioneer life within their humanity. They were real people confronted with many of the same problems facing families today, which they handled with varying degrees of success. The morality, or lack thereof, is secondary to the fact that the Spences coped with the harshness of pioneer life, while operating a significant and prosperous business and raising a large family, both difficult tasks on the frontier. The Spences should not be idealized, but they should be respected for their persistence and courage.

For some, Palace will always inspire peacefully romantic thoughts of a more pleasant era long gone. But for others, Palace is a testament to the hard reality of pioneer life: a brutish, problem-plagued existence of too many tragedies and too few joys. Palace is a reminder that the basic conflicts of human nature are timeless, troubling those in modern cities as well as on rural frontiers. Let the romantics idealize, dreamily contemplating the magic of Palace Station in its beautiful setting. The enlightened, however, will see that the
The genuine legacy of Palace Station is a quiet representative of the courage of those who patiently endured the hardships of pioneer life.
VI
NOTES


2. Ibid., 12 July 1878. Both the advertisement and the article mention Spence building Palace with the assistance of Mr. Kent. Kent could possibly be William Kent, locator of the Crook Mine. This name does not appear again in connection with Palace Station or the Spence family.

3. It was traditionally thought Crook Canyon received its name for being a favorite bivouac spot for General George Crook while he was subduing hostile Indians in the area. However, it is more likely the area became known as Crook Canyon due to the success of the Crook Mine and Mill. There was no documentation found identifying the canyon as such until July, 1874, when the Crook claim was first filed.


5. Yavapai County, Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Meeting of 10 March 1899; see Appendix C, figure 1.

6. Arizona Weekly Miner, 3 December 1875, and 14 January 1876.

7. Ibid., 15 June 1877, and 24 May 1878. The Miner has much information regarding the Prescott-Peck Road: editorials emphasizing the need for the road (17 December 1875); suggestions for routes (14 January 1875); details of the organizational meeting for the road effort (1 April 1876); records of survey efforts (21 and 28 April 1876); and proposals for bids (6 April 1877). It must be remembered that although the Miner was being a good citizen promoting a road which would greatly benefit Prescott, the road also benefitted the Miner, increasing circulation and broadening its political base.

8. Ibid., 22 December 1876.

10. Arizona Weekly Miner, 6 April 1877.

11. Ibid., 15 June 1877. The company which used the buckboards was Bernard & Rarick, running on a weekly basis.

12. Ibid., 24 May and 5 July 1878.


14. Ibid., p. 73.

15. Ibid., pp. 82, 102, 131.

16. Ibid., pp. 94, 106, 114.

17. Ibid., pp. 81-138. Although the number of post offices is a good indicator of population growth and related traffic, a more accurate assumption would be based on postmaster compensation, as each postmaster is paid a fee directly proportional to the amount of mail he handles. This information is available at the Western Postal History Museum, Tucson, Arizona.


19. One of A.B. Spence's claims, the Great Mistake, reveals that Chase's sawmill was only four miles east on the Peck Road. Yavapai County Recorder's Office.

20. Osborne interview; Prescott Courier, 4 April 1980; see Appendix C, figure 2.

21. A stereoptican picture, dated 1878, does not show the bunkhouse, as later photographs do, but does show the chicken house. Picture on file at Sharlot Hall Museum, Prescott, Arizona.

22. The site of the Beck cabin has been confirmed by the Osborne interview; notes from interviews of Elsie Spence Evans by Susan Vandergron (1977-1979); and Irene Thompson McDonald (granddaughter of A.B. Spence), interview with Ray Jackson, July 1987; see Appendix C, figure 2.
23. Osborne interview; McDonald interview.

24. Prescott Courier, 24 April 1896; see Appendix C, figure 2.

25. Evans interviews.


29. Fleming letter. Until this paper was researched, it was not known that there had been a post office at Palace Station.

30. Great Registers, Yavapai County Recorder's Office.

31. Prescott grid, 1892 (reprinted 1911), Map Collection, State Capitol Building, Phoenix, Arizona.

32. Official Register of the United States, Containing a List of Officers and Employees in the Civil, Military, and Naval Service, 1883, Western Postal History Museum, Tucson, Arizona.

33. Ibid.

34. Autograph books were obtained from Bob Poley of Prescott, great-grandson of A.B. Spence; see Appendix G, figures 1, 2.

35. Theobold, pp. 81-138.

36. Ibid., pp. 97, 101, 102, 131.

37. Ibid., pp. 106, 114, 117.

38. Ibid., pp. 103, 106, 117.

39. Ibid., p. 114.


41. Prescott Journal-Miner, 31 August 1912.

42. Book of Deeds, 89, p. 626, Yavapai County Recorder's Office; see Appendix F, figure 2.
43. Prescott Journal-Miner, 24 April 1908; Spence Family Bible, Ed Poley, Prescott, Arizona; see Appendix D.

44. Prescott Evening Courier, 15 April 1929; U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Kentucky, Muhlenberg County, Subdivision #2, Mormom Genealogical Library, Mesa, Arizona; Spence Family Bible.

45. Spence Family Bible; Prescott Evening Courier, 18 November 1942.

46. Prescott Journal-Miner, 24 April 1908; Prescott Evening Courier, 15 April 1929, 21 June 1937 and 11 November 1942; There is some speculation that the Spence family may have arrived in Prescott in 1873, but the 1875 date agrees with all the facts. There is no written record of the Spences in Arizona Territory before the Arizona Territorial Census, 1876, page 53, State Archives, Phoenix.

47. Osborne interview; Prescott Courier, 5 March 1973.

48. Osborne interview; Evans interviews.

49. Arizona Weekly Miner, 22 December 1876.

50. Ibid., 6 April 1877.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Arizona Daily Miner, 30 November 1877; Prescott Evening Courier, 21 June 1937.


56. In an interview with Jean Crume Hebb, Belle's daughter (by Ray Jackson, October, 1987), Mrs. Hebb explained that Ida had told her how mean A.B. could be to the girls, and the reason why the Spence girls married so young was to get away from their father. The incident with the padlock occurred on March 18, 1888, with Belle's handwriting still visible on the back of the door where she recorded her protest.

57. Evans interviews.

59. All but one of the available early photographs of Palace Station contain dogs.

60. All of these items, or portions of these items, were uncovered during the 1980 archeological excavation. Fleming letter.

61. Evans interviews; McDonald interview.

62. Spence's locations were generally 2-6 miles from Palace, although some were in the Pine Grove mining district, near Hooper.

63. Yavapai County Recorder's Office; see Appendix F, figure 1.

64. Ibid.


66. Yavapai County Recorder's Office.

67. Spence Family Bible; Yavapai County Clerk of the Court, Yavapai County Courthouse, Prescott, Arizona Prescott Evening Courier, 19 March 1919.

68. Osborne interview; Prescott Evening Courier, 19 March 1919.

69. Osborne interview.

70. Johnson v. Johnson, 1904, #3719, Yavapai County Clerk of the Court.

71. Yavapai County Clerk of the Court.


73. Prescott Courier, 4 March 1903.

74. Hebb interview; Osborne interview; McDonald interview; Rose Crume Pattison, interview with Ray Jackson, August 1987.

75. Yavapai County Clerk of the Court.

76. Ibid. See Appendix F, figure 3.
78. Arizona Weekly Journal-Miner, 30 May 1900; Yavapai County Clerk of the Court; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Mormon Genealogical Library.
79. McDonald interview; Pattison interview; Hebb interview; Charles Bones, interview with Ray Jackson, August, 1987.
80. Bud Dozier, Clip Book, Arizona Historical Society. No one in the family ever knew what became of Dozier after he left Florence, maintaining only that he had died.
81. Hebb interview; McDonald interview; Pattison interview.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid.; U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Arizona Territory. Belle Johnson to William Johnson, January 30, 1903, Letter #3, case #3719, Yavapai County Clerk of the Court. This letter indicates Florence was single by 1903; see Appendix F, figure 5.
84. Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910; Juvenile Order No. 7, November, 1912, Yavapai County Superior Court. The boys were committed to the Children's Home Society of California in Los Angeles.
85. Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910; McDonald interview.
86. Arizona Daily Journal-Miner, 2 November 1920; Prescott Evening Courier, 1 November 1920. See Appendix A.
87. Yavapai County Clerk of the Court; Arizona Daily Miner, 13 September 1899.
88. Hebb interview; Pattison interview; McDonald interview; U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Arizona Territory.
89. Hebb interview; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900.
90. Yavapai County Clerk of the Court.
91. McDonald interview; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900; Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910.
Yavapai County Clerk of the Court; see Appendix F, figure 3.

McDonald interview.

Ibid.

Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910; Evans interviews.

Yavapai County Clerk of the Court.


Prescott Courier, 28 March 1938.

McDonald interview; Pattison interview.

Prescott Evening Courier, 15 April 1929.

McDonald interview. Mrs. McDonald, who was closely involved with the funeral arrangements, maintains the only reason Matilda was not buried at Palace was due to Margaret's interference. The Pattison and Hebb interviews confirm this, though Evans does not (Prescott Courier, 4 April 1980).

See Appendix C, figure 4.

Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Kentucky.


Ibid.; It was commonly thought Lambuth came to Arizona with the Spence family in 1875; however, Lambuth does not appear on census rolls or voter registration documents. Lambuth's obituary (Prescott Courier, 24 April 1896) states he had only been in the area a short time, and that he was survived by a Mrs. Hatcher, a Mrs. Peters, and a Mrs. Spence.

Prescott Courier, 24 April 1896; Lambuth died at Turkey Creek and Peters is the only familiar name there in either the 1896 Great Register or 1910 Federal Census.

Record of Births and Deaths, p. 40, Yavapai County Recorder's Office.

McDonald interview.

110. Record of Births and Deaths, p. 46.


112. Ibid.

113. McDonald interview; Arizona Daily Gazette, 21 July 1899.

114. Ibid.; Obituary Book, p. 50.

115. McDonald interview.


117. Ibid., 16 February 1903.

118. Ibid., 28 February 1903.

119. McDonald interview.

120. Prescott Daily Herald, 2 March 1903; McDonald interview.

121. Belle Johnson to William Johnson, Letter #4, case #3719 (evidence), Yavapai County Clerk of the Court.

122. Ibid., Letter #2, 4 July 1903; see Appendix F, figure 6.

123. Prescott Journal-Miner, 22 April 1908.

124. Ibid.

125. Ibid., 24 April 1908. However, in the Hebb interview, Mrs. Hebb stated that due to the abuses some of the daughters suffered from their father, not all of them went to the funeral.

126. McDonald interview; Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910.

127. McDonald interview; Territorial Birth Certificate, Yavapai County Recorder's Office.

128. McDonald interview.

129. Ibid.
130. Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900; Hebb interview. Myrtle Olin had one baby which died before June, 1900.


132. Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910; Hebb interview. The census reports that not only did Elsie have two babies who died between 1900-1910, but her marriage to Bert Evans was her second. Mrs. Hebb recalls Elsie as having an illegitimate child buried at Palace, with the father being a miner named Jim Turner.