Cropped off the Land, Imprinted in the Imagination: Railroad Photography, Native Americans, and the American West, 1860–1880

Alessandra N. Link

> The question isn't whether we love photography, but instead why we love it so much. From the Curtis stills to our own Kodak chrome slides and Polaroid prints and Camcorder tapes, it's obvious we are a people who adore taking pictures and having pictures taken of us. So it should hardly be a surprise that everything about being Indian has been shaped by the camera.
>
> –Paul Chaat Smith[1]

On May 10, 1869, Andrew J. Russell photographed a handshake that would loom large in the American consciousness for the foreseeable future. The official photographer of the Union Pacific Railroad, Russell was charged with capturing the completion of the nation's first transcontinental railroad. In the image two locomotives face one another, surrounded by laborers and business leaders (fig. 1). The chief engineers of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific join hands in the center of the photograph, symbolizing the union of East and West, of rival corporations. Chinese laborers—tasked with the bulk of transcontinental construction—are notably absent. Native Americans—whose land the road of steel and wood charged across—are nowhere to be seen. Yet, by the end of May, Native Americans would figure prominently in an adaptation of Russell's photo. Inspired by Russell's infamous handshake photo, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly* published an image of two locomotives, hands extending from their engines, prepared to embrace. Men perched atop the train cars cheered (fig. 2). In the foreground, Indian peoples flee the scene on horse and foot. "Does Not SUCH a Meeting Make Amends?" the caption read. The *Frank Leslie* illustration referred to the amends between rival corporations and

[1] Paul Chaat Smith, *Everything you Know About Indians is Wrong* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 4.

recently warring U.S. regions. As the depiction of fleeing Indians suggests, there was little room for making amends with the original inhabitants of the American West.[2]

In the nineteenth century, both railroad expansion and photography influenced relations between the U.S. and Native Americans in powerful ways. While scholars have often dealt with these two technological developments separately, photographs and railroads have a shared history—a history that structured depictions of Native Americans in the nineteenth-century West.[3] Railroad photography—images produced of or for railroad companies—sought to make meaning of the railroad and the little-known lands and peoples it traversed. Beyond subject matter, aesthetic composition, or consumer response, a key site for analysis in this arena sits in the transition of photographs such as Russell's across time and through various media. By tracking the transition of railroad photographs from wet plates to printed images, the changing depictions of native peoples shifts into focus.

These photographs and the myriad illustrations they influenced depict native peoples as antithetical to the modern industrial nation embodied in the railroad. They celebrate and measure the distance between an allegedly pre-modern people and the modern industrial creed cast in steel and running on steam. Many railroad photographs also foreground western landscapes—landscapes ripe for Euro American expansion and settlement. These landscape images circulated widely after the Civil War, in large part because they celebrated railway expansion whilst promoting an allegedly uninhabited region amenable to white settlement. By analyzing these transformations, therefore, it becomes increasingly clear that these representations of native

[2]Glenn Gardner Willumson, *Iron Muse: Photographing the Transcontinental Railroad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 1, 133–34. While Willumson expertly points to the relationship between the two photos, he neglects to consider the addition of Indian peoples and buffalo.

[3] For studies of railroad expansion see Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011); and Richard Orsi, *Sunset Limited: The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Development of the American West, 1850–1930* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2007). Martha Sandweiss's work remains at the forefront of scholarship on photography in the region. Martha Sandweiss, *Print the Legend: Photography and the American West* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2002).

peoples and western landscapes served an American expansionist impulse in the post-Civil War era. Images of "antimodern" Indians and sublime western spaces lured Americans westward.

As the steel rails charged into western lands in the late 1860s, Euro Americans struggled to agree on a federal program for native peoples. The administration of Ulysses S. Grant called upon a bevy of white, Christian reformers to enter newly formed reservations and oversee Indian affairs. Grant's proposed "peace policy"—advanced in 1868—met considerable resistance in Congress. This contest over who would control Indian policy and, more importantly, what such policy would look like, ran well into the 1870s. As one recent study of Indian policy in the second half of the nineteenth century reveals, the political atmosphere regarding native peoples was defined by contestation, not consensus. Indian policy advocates often held conflicting visions for the Indians who inhabited the recently railroaded West. That very uncertainty is revealed in the often-contradictory depictions of indigenous Americans that appeared in published form.[4] From savage barriers to passive spectators, Native Americans depicted in railroad imagery pointed to a larger national uncertainty about the fate of native nations.

All of these published images, however, faced substantial edits and additions from illustrators, photographers, and journalists. From the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, through the passage of the Dawes Allotment Act in 1883, original photographs of Native Americans were consistently left out of guidebooks and promotional literature of the West. Illustrations derived from photographs constituted the more common medium for native representations, allowing for manipulation to meet the needs of the American public consciousness. Direct representations of the photos captured by these railroad photographers

[4] For post–Civil War debates over Indian policy, see Cathleen D. Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers: A Social History of the United States Indian Service* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 19; C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa, *Crooked Paths to Allotment: The Fight over Federal Indian Policy after the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); and Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).

circulated as stereographs, but rarely made it into popular news outlets or book-length projects without substantial editing.[5]

By following the paths these images took (and didn't take), it becomes clear that the alteration of railroad photos was hitched to an expansionist national program. Railroad companies had an economic interest in expansion. Their money was tied up in the dream of western settlement. Without settlement, without tourism, the Union Pacific, Central Pacific, and other companies would flounder. Therefore company officials, railroad photographers, and illustrators crafted a specific image of expansion. One that, like the Frank Leslie cartoon, was about making amends rather than causing conflict, about creating compelling contrasts between pre-modern and modern life. These railroad images celebrated American industrial progress—a progress that left little room for America's original inhabitants.

The Translation Process: the Crooked Paths of Railway Photographs

By following the circuitous routes of railroad photographs in the later half of the nineteenth century, three main forms of image use shift into focus. First, many of these images, including pictures of native peoples, were used to fund the struggling photographers' enterprise. Stereographs—cards with two identical images placed side by side to create the illusion of three-dimensional depth—circulated among railroad workers, small town westerners, and easterners eager for "real" depictions of an imagined place. These stereographs created a local and national culture of consumption that pre-dated the rise of large-scale "national tourism" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[6]

---

[5] This will become especially clear in my analysis of newspaper representations, which wholly favored illustrations for their visual depictions. *Harper's Weekly*, microfilm, Norlin Library, University of Colorado at Boulder, Boulder, Colorado [hereafter Norlin Library]; and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, microfilm, Norlin Library.

[6] Both Alfred A. Hart and William Henry Jackson worked to sell stereographs in an effort to continue their photographic endeavors. Mead B. Kibbey and Peter E. Palmquist, *The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A. Hart, Artist* (Sacramento, Calif.: California State Library Foundation, 1996); and William Henry Jackson, "Diary of W. H. Jackson While Photographing Along the Line of the Union Pacific Railroad, June 29 – Sept. 26, 1869," William

Second, many of these railroad photographs were utilized for the self-promotion of the railroad photographer.[7] While a bevy of historical works have tracked specific images produced by railway photographers across published mediums, few have seriously considered the ways in which the image crafters sought to alter and circulate their own work.[8] In most cases, these photographers faced considerable economic hardship. While these men garnered national attention for their work in their lifetime, that popular recognition did not always ensure a steady paycheck.[9] By publishing their own written works—occasionally featuring their photographs—these men sought to make a profit in a growing guidebook and promotional literature industry.

Third, many of these images made it into guidebooks or news outlets, but often as drawings derived from the original photographs.[10] Some of these guidebooks ignored photos of native peoples, opting for western landscape images instead. In other instances native peoples were drawn onto landscape photographs, frequently as peripheral figures that added a human dimension to an otherwise static image. More often then not, these guidebooks wrote about Native Americans—leaving out any pictorial representations. In a postwar world characterized

---

Henry Jackson Collection, 1875–1942, Mss. 341, History Colorado, Denver, Colorado [hereafter WHJ Collection, History Colorado]. For more on the notion of "national tourism," see Marguerite Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Press, 2001), 3-5.

[7] Andrew J. Russell, Alfred A. Hart, and William Henry Jackson published their own accounts of travel along the rails, at times incorporating their images while also adding to the written literature on Native Americans in the region. See Alfred A. Hart, *The Traveler's Own Book* (Chicago: Horton & Leonard, printers, 1870, repr. 1975); William Henry Jackson and Howard R. Driggs, *The Pioneer Photographer: Rocky Mountain Adventures with a Camera*; William Henry Jackson, *Time Exposure: The Autobiography of William Henry Jackson* (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1940); and A. J. Russell and Union Pacific Railroad Company, *The Great West Illustrated in a Series of Photographic Views across the Continent Taken along the Line of the Union Pacific Railroad, West from Omaha, Nebraska* . . . (New York: Union Pacific Railroad Co., 1869).

[8] See Anne Hyde, *An American Vision: Far Western Landscape and National Culture, 1820-1920* (New York: New York University Press, 1990); Martha A. Sandweiss, *Print the Legend: Photography and the American West* (Yale University Press, 2002); and Willumson, *Iron Muse*.

[9] Jackson in particular discusses at length his ongoing financial concerns. See, Jackson, *Time Exposure*.

[10] This paper will explore a series of guidebooks, the *Frank Leslie Illustrated Weekly*, and *Harper's Weekly*. See George A. Crofutt, *Crofutt's Trans-Continental Tourist's Guide* . . . (New York : George A. Crofutt, Publisher, 1873); Ferdinand V. Hayden, *Sun Pictures of Rocky Mountain Scenery* . . . (New York: Julius Bien, 1870); Henry T. Williams, *The Pacific Tourist* (New York: H. T. Williams, 1876); and William H. Rideing, *Scenery of the Pacific Railways, and Colorado: With Map, and Seventy-One Illustrations by J.D. Woodward. Woodward, John Douglas, 1846-1924* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1878).

by uncertainty, the "real" Indian depicted in these railroad images could not meet both the imaginative and the conflicting sentiments that saturated the American public consciousness.[11] The Reconstruction era "Indian Problem," therefore, manifested itself in the myriad, contradictory, and imaginative images of native peoples that piqued public interest.

These final two uses of native imagery share a common theme: alteration. The railroad photographs featuring Indian peoples *and* railroad-related material are not put directly into print without revisions, without adjustments. Besides their circulation as stereographs, these photos were not directly incorporated into guidebooks, promotional literature, or news publications. This suppression of peopled landscapes, paired with the tendency to favor illustration and editing, re-cast common conceptions about landscape art in the nineteenth century and the rise of antimodern Indian imagery at the turn-of-the-century.

Re-imagining the "Antimodern" Indian and the "Golden Age" of Landscape Photography

Art historian Angela Miller has compellingly argued that landscape painting—an immensely popular nineteenth-century art form—sought to tie nationalism to the tangible product of scenery. Embodied in paintings of landscapes, she suggests, was a confined sense of nation. In this paintings nationalism was rooted in a space and place—it became a tangible form, not simply a social process. Miller explains that far from idolizing the nation's democratic nature, landscape paintings sought to organize the white middle class around a shared mission. "By midcentury, landscape art, far from being the expression of an expansive democracy," Miller writes, "was a cultural endeavor directed at consolidating a middle class social identity utterly bound up with the civilizing mission."[12]

---

[11] See Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers*; Genetin-Pilawa, *Crooked Paths to Allotment*; and Robert Utley and Wilcomb E. Washburn, *Indian Wars* (New York: Mariner Books, 1977, repr. 2002).
[12] Angela Miller, *The Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825–1875* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993), 10-11.

Many historians of western photographs have deemed the post–Civil War moment the "golden age of landscape photography." Drawing on Miller's foundation, this study of railroad photography reveals that the "landscape moment" in U.S. photographic history is tied directly to the deliberate suppression or alteration of photos populated by native peoples. As Miller suggests, this middle-century moment was about making amends, about building bridges across the lines drawn in the Civil War. But, as railroad photography reveals, it was also a moment to gaze westward and project the civilizing mission outward. The West—the railroad—would be the salve to the Civil War's wounds. Part of realizing this dream meant suppressing the perceived "barriers" to expansion—Native Americans. While much of the photographic material at the time featured unpeopled landscapes, it is also in the suppression of photos of a peopled West that likely catered to this particular interpretation of postwar photography. On the rare occasions when these images of Indians are published, they are separate from the railroad, and are often considered contributions to the salvage of indigenous cultures destined to vanish in the looming exhaust of the locomotive.[13]

Another body of scholarship focuses on photography has laid important groundwork for understanding its influence on U.S. history. Yet here, little has been said about the relationship between railroad photography and representations of Native Americans. Alan Trachtenberg's *Reading American Photographs: Images as History* (1990), Martha Sandweiss's *Print the Legend: Photography and the American West* (2002), and Glenn Willumson's *Iron Muse: Photographing the Transcontinental Railroad* (2013) stress the significance of photographs as

[13] Weston J. Naef and James N. Wood coined the period from 1860 to 1885 the "golden age of landscape photography." See Weston J. Naef and James N. Wood, *Era of Exploration: The Rise of Landscape Photography in the American West, 1860-1885* (Boston: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1975), 12; Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*, 184; and Hyde, *An American Vision: Far Western Landscape and National Culture, 1820-1920*. William Henry Jackson's *Descriptive Catalog of North American Indians* is a notable outlier in its compilation of native images. Yet, as my later analysis will reveal, the catalog sought to preserve artifacts of a native community that was "vanishing" in the wake of western colonization.

historical artifacts worthy of analysis, pointing to the ways in which photographs act as both "purveyors of information" and "creators of myth."[14] All three authors explore how captions and text make meaning out of the images that often serve myth-making enterprises in the region. "Photographs are not simple depictions but constructions," Trachtenberg writes, "the history they show is inseparable from the history they enact."[15] While Trachtenberg only briefly touches on western imagery, Sandweiss and Willumson center their narratives on the region. Sandweiss is also interested the changing meaning of photographs as they move into new narrative spaces. [16] Yet, while Sandweiss dedicates an entire chapter to photographic presentation of native peoples in the late nineteenth century, only a subtle connection is made between railroad photographs and representations of indigenous peoples.[17]

The work of Sandweiss, Tracthenberg, and Willumson also share an emphasis on the relationship between the subject and the audience—between, in Trachtenberg's words, the history that photographs "show" (the subject) and the history that these photos "enact" (consumer responses).[18] This paper builds on this methodology by highlighting the process whereby photographs are translated and made available for public consumption. There is deliberateness to the editing process here that can more tangibly locate the intentionality behind image-making and circulation. While all of these authors have addressed the innumerable ways in which any single image can be interpreted, the editing process reveals a deliberateness that warrants a more thorough evaluation.[19]

---

[14] Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*, 9.
[15] Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Mathew Brady to Walker Evans* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990), xvi.
[16] Willumson, *Iron Muse*, 8; and Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*, 2.
[17] Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*, 207–272.
[18] Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, xvi.
[19] "All photographic meaning is contingent on the viewer's understanding," Sandweiss cautions, "an intellectual or visceral empathy shaped through culture, through experience, through the memory of other images." Sandweiss,

An analysis of railroad photographs also intersects with a large body of scholarship on tourism and antimodernism in the West. For example, Lea Dilworth's *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (1997) explores tourism in the Southwest from the 1880s through the 1920s. Dilworth links southwestern image-making to railroad expansion amd a growing tourist industry in the region. The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe, for example, worked to cultivate an image of the region that depicted Indians "as ruins, ritualists, and artists."[20] This imagery did not draw from a concrete engagement with native peoples, but was instead a product of Euro American commercial desires and—according to some scholars—anxieties about modern industrial advancement. Tourist corporations, Dilworth claims, "constructed a version of Indian life that reflected and spoke to American middle-class desires and anxieties."[21] In much of this literature, Native Americans emerge as objects of consumption for non-Indians. The antimodern Indian emerges here as a in-demand product for turn-of-the-century Euro Americans.

The depiction of indigenous peoples, according to much of this literature, is of antimodern roadblocks to the civilizing force of a railroaded (white) America. Native peoples are viewed as a people doomed to vanish. In these interpretations, the antimodern Indian acted as salves to Euro American concerns about the "over civilization" of American society in the wake of large-scale industrialization. The railroad represented all of these things: industrialized

---

Print the Legend, 10. See also Willumson, *Iron Muse*, 10; and Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, xv-xvi.

[20] Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, 1997), 3. For more studies on tourist imaginings of Native peoples and western spaces, see Erika Marie Bsumek, *Indian-Made: Navajo Culture in the Marketplace, 1868-1940*, CultureAmerica (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Phoebe S. Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2008); Hal Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000); Marta Weigle and Barbara A. Babcock, eds., *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway*, First Edition (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996); and David M. Wrobel, *Promised Lands: Promotion, Memory, and the Creation of the American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002).

[21] Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest*, 79.

progress, rationality, and civilization—"progress." One historian considers this rise of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century embrace of the antimodern a sort of "cultural asphyxiation of the affluent," wherein upper and middle class Americans ambivalent with the direction of American society sought experiences with antimodern or primitive peoples.[22]

What a deep study of railroad image transformations reveals, however, is a deliberate manipulation of imagery in an effort to facilitate expansion—whether it be the expansion of non-Indian settlement or non-Indian tourism. It also points to an earlier moment of antimodern image-making that was tied not to anxiety, but to a larger civilizing, imperial mission. Railroad photography was available for American consumption well before the rise of western tourism. By following the published (or unpublished) paths of photographs produced by railroad photographers, an earlier manifestation of the "antimodern Indian" presents itself. One that was not tied to anxiety or nostalgia, but to a deep-seated hope in the promise of expansion to heal the wounds of Civil War.

From Civil War to Steel Rails: Andrew J. Russell, William Henry Jackson, and Alfred A. Hart

Who were these men steadying their gaze behind the camera? As hired hands of the corporate railroad enterprise, photographers worked within a set of corporate expectations. As visitors to foreign region, they also fit their own assumptions and experiences with native peoples into their frames, often fashioning these images to a constructed sense of themselves as "pioneers" or significant scientific recorders of the West.[23] The image-making process—the translation process—begins with these itinerate craftsmen who meandered along the tracks of the transcontinental.

[22] Ibid., 3–5; and T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), xii.
[23] Jackson and Driggs, *The Pioneer Photographer: Rocky Mountain Adventures with a Camera*.

Three railroad photographers figure prominently in this study of railroad photographs: Andrew J. Russell (1829–1902), William Henry Jackson (1843–1942), and Alfred A. Hart (1816–1908). The Union Pacific formally hired Andrew Russell in 1868 to photograph construction from Cheyenne, Wyoming Territory, to Promontory, Utah Territory.[24] William Henry Jackson also photographed along the Union Pacific's growing track system in 1869, to "fulfill an order for 10,000 stereographs." While the Union Pacific did not officially hire Jackson, many of his photographs were purchased by or donated to the Union Pacific.[25] Working eastward from California, Alfred A. Hart photographed along the Central Pacific annually from 1864 to 1869. Between 1866 and 1870, the Central Pacific bought photographs of its lines exclusively from Hart.[26] One other photographer also enters this story—albeit briefly. John Carbutt, hired by the UP Vice President Thomas Durant, photographed a celebration of the Union Pacific tracks arriving at the 100th meridian in 1866.[27]

Of this group, both Russell and Jackson were veterans of the Civil War. Russell was an official photographer and illustrator of the military road system, which included railroad construction. In fact, many of Russell's images filled military reports on the status of railway construction during the war.[28] Jackson, meanwhile, enlisted in the army shortly after fighting broke out. Assigned as a staff artist, he drew maps and scenes of camp life.[29] Much like their

[24] Barry Combs, *Westward to Promontory: Building the Union Pacific across the Plains and Mountains; a Pictorial Documentary* (Palo Alto, Calif: American West Pub. Co, 1969), 16.
[25] "Guide to the William Henry Jackson Collection, 1875-1942," WHJ Collection, History Colorado.
[26] There is still no official documentation citing Hart as the official, hired photographer for the Central Pacific. But it is clear that Hart provided the company with a large volume of images that make up the existing Union Pacific archives. Kibbey and Palmquist, *The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A. Hart, Artist*, 15; and Willumson, *Iron Muse*, 30.
[27] Combs, *Westward to Promontory*, 14–15.
[28] Susan Danly and Leo Marx, eds., *The Railroad in America Art: Representation of Technological Change* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), 94.
[29] "Guide to the William Henry Jackson Collection, 1875-1942," WHJ Collection, History Colorado; and William Henry Jackson, *Time Exposure: The Autobiography of William Henry Jackson* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1940), 43-83. Alexander Gardner was also a prominent Civil War photographer who was hired by the Union Pacific

later work as railroad photographers, these Civil War artists focused on depicting points on a landscape, be it the dead, transportation vehicles, or railroads. Their Civil War images were made amidst incredible violence, and sought to depict a landscape altered by man, by death, by industrialization (fig. 3). They documented sites of loss yearning for reconstruction—for making amends. From early on, Russell recognized the photography's role in documenting the war. "The public do not and cannot realize the part that the camera served in bringing down the facts of the late war for future history," Russell later recalled, "one cannot look back but with wonder and admiration on those few industrious painstaking men."[30] For Russell, documenting the war was tied to capturing a profound moment of loss. He was aware that his work would act as a record of the war—it would harbor the "facts" and preserve the war's memory.

While Russell and Jackson assisted in providing important information for the Union army, in the West they would also be important information gatherers for railway corporations and the federal government. As one historian of photography in the postwar period writes, the photographer in the West acted as "an adjunct of science, industrial enterprise, and imperial expansion."[31] The West in the late 1860s and 1870s was embroiled in violence much like the East had been during the Civil War. As Euro Americans pushed westward into Indian Country fighting erupted across the West. Many native nations refused the federal government's attempts to confine indigenous communities onto reservations in order to free up land and resources for Euro American settlement. Railroad surveying parties in the 1850s faced repeated attacks by local Native Americans, as did construction crews in the late 1860s. One special correspondent for *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, photographer Ridgeway Glover, was found scalped on the

---

in 1876 to follow the UP's eastern division railway, departing from Kansas. See Robert Taft, *Photography and the American Scene: A Social History, 1839-1889* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 278.

[30] Andrew J. Russell, "Photographic Reminiscences of War," *Anthony's Photographic Bulletin* (1882), 212.

[31] Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs*, xvi.

prairie in 1866. Russell, Hart, and Jackson were no doubt aware of the turbulent environment they entered into as photographers. For Jackson and Russell in particular, working within an atmosphere characterized by violence was not something new.[32] "In those stirring days of the seventies, the Indians were not yet quite tamed," the introduction to one of Jackson's autobiography states, "nature still held sway over the western mountains and valleys and plains." Jackson would later recall an encounter with potentially hostile Utes while serving as the official photographer for the U.S. Geological Survey in 1873. After riding into their camp and exchanging gifts, Jackson and his team left unharmed. The possibility of encountering unfriendly Indians did not deter these photographers, however. "To be able to bring out," Jackson would later recall, "at the cost of such dangerous work, the photographs that were to give the world something of a thrill, was a privilege."[33]

The day-to-day toil associated with photographing along the rails also taxed Jackson, Russell, and Hart. In the post-Civil war period wet-plate photography was the method of the moment. The wet-plate, or collodion, process required the creation of a thin, light-sensitive film on a sheet of glass that could be exposed in the camera. Unlike the daguerreotype process that came before it, wet-plate negatives could produce multiple prints. In order to transform the negatives into sellable photos, however, these railroad photographers had to carry heavy boxes of glass plates, chemicals, and solutions, along with a hooded box or small tent. The entire photographic outfit meant these artists often moved at a slow pace, even though their work required travelling long distances away form the rails to capture geological points of interest and, occasionally, the neighboring indigenous communities.[34]

[32] Naef and Wood, *Era of Exploration*, 44.
[33] Jackson and Driggs, *The Pioneer Photographer: Rocky Mountain Adventures with a Camera*, vi.
[34] Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*, 125. William Henry Jackson, "A Visit to the Los Pinos Agency, 1874," *Colorado Magazine* XV, no. 6, November 1938, Colorado History, Denver, Colorado, 203.

In many cases, the negatives these railroad photographers crafted would be transformed into stereographs. Stereographs involved placing similar prints side-by-side on a card, creating a sense of depth that was supposed to invite the viewer to inhabit a place they had likely never seen.[35] In each case, the photographers chose the captions that they placed on these stereographs, often selling them to willing customers they met along the rails. Jackson mentioned repeatedly over the course of his photographing expedition that he would stop and sell pictures, often of Native Americans, to railway workers and local townsfolk. Frequently, he would have to wait until he earned enough money selling his stereographs before he could re-stock his photographic supplies.[36] "The stereoscope," Jackson later recalled of the late sixties, "was on the threshold of a tremendous and long-enduring popularity." An order for 10,000 stereoscopes of the railroad, Jackson claimed, convinced him to pack up and follow the railroad grade west.[37] Similarly, Alfred A. Hart advertised the sale of his Central Pacific stereographs in the 1870 Sacramento city directory (fig.4).[38] Both artists relied on the sale and production of stereographs in order to continue their photographic excursions.

The work of Jackson, Hart, and Russell, however, carried corporate value along with commercial value. As photographers of the railroad, each of these men sought to capture the transformation of the western landscape, while also charting the construction of the transcontinental. Collectively, the majority of their images focus on railroad construction and the relationship between the locomotive and the landscape. Sweeping landscape photographs that many hoped would attract tourists to the region would ultimately become the prized possession of UP and CP officials. Indeed, many photographs of western features such as Monument Rock,

[35] Sandweiss, *Print the Legend*, 140.
[36] Monday June 28, Tuesday June 29, William Henry Jackson, "Diary of W.H. Jackson," WHJ Collection, Colorado History.
[37] Jackson, *Time Exposure*, 176.
[38] Kibbey and Palmquist, *The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A. Hart, Artist*.

Donner Lake, and Great Salt Lake assisted in promoting landscapes that would eventually charm thousands of tourists.[39]

Jackson, in particular, would build a strong reputation as a landscape photographer. Photographing along the rails he met Ferdinand V. Hayden, the geologist and renowned surveyor of the American West. For the better part of the next decade, Jackson was hired by the survey team to photograph points of geological interest on various survey routes. Writing to a friend years later, Jackson would lament his emphasis on capturing the western landscape. "Reading over these old notes," he wrote, "there comes over me a great regret that in those early days I was so engrossed in photographing inanimate things." He added, "I think I would now prize more highly good pictures of individuals we encountered, or associated with, than of the things we did photograph. The one remains for all time, the other passes away and may be forgotten."[40]

It remains a perplexing conclusion from a man who did in fact photograph numerous American Indians. Other photographers along the track would also divert their gaze form the rails and capture the communities that resided nearby. The images of native peoples these photographers took along the way convey a documentary or portrait-like quality. Hart's *Piute* [*sic*] *Indians* and Russell's *Indian Squaws and Papooses* portray native peoples in groups (fig. 5 and 6). Hart's image appears staged, perhaps taken in a studio. In this image the Paiutes are divorced from the western landscape, gazing into the camera. Russell, however, appears to meet

[39] Partial collections of the Hart and Russell stereographs can be located on the Library of Congress's website. See, Andrew J, Russell, "Stereographs along the Union Pacific railroad from the series Union Pacific R. R., views, across the continent, west from Omaha," 1868–1869, LOT 3057, online at http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/coll/item/2005684168/; and Alfred A. Hart, "Official Photographs of the Central Pacific Railroad construction, between 1862 and 1869," LOT 11477, online at http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/coll/item/2004681374/. The most comprehensive publication of Hart's railroad images is in Kibbey and Palmquist, *The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A. Hart*.

[40] Letter to Thomas R. Dawson, 15 February 1922, Box 1, Correspondence of William Henry Jackson, 1921-1938, Mss. VIII-13, History Colorado, Denver, Colorado.

his subjects in their home, the blurred figures suggesting that they were less than willing to simply gaze into the camera for the required exposure time.

Other stereographs produced during their time along the rails convey a particular narrative about the relationship between native peoples and the "civilized progress" that the railroad embodied. The industrial creed woven into these images suggests that indigenous communities were facing an indomitable foe—a foe that they met with awe and wonder. Hart was particularly adept at conveying this message. His *Indian Viewing Railroad from the Top of the Palisades, 435 miles from Sacramento* and *Shoshone Indians Looking at Locomotive in the Desert* place native peoples in conversation with the railroad (fig. 7 and 8). In *Indian Viewing Railroad* Hart offers a sense of enclosure, the deep valley framing the solitary indigenous man as the steel tracks charge through the landscape. The caption notes the distance from Sacramento, likely serving to place the progress of the Central Pacific's construction, while also suggesting that they were in a place far from urban industrial life. *Indians Looking at Locomotive in the Desert*, meanwhile, depicts a group of Shoshone standing, awestruck, at the expansive industrial apparatus before them. As one railroad historian wrote, Hart's depiction presents the Shoshone as "impotent bystanders observing the progress of American settlement.[41]"

Hart elaborates on this anti-modern/modern binary in his captions and settings for other railroad photos. In *Poetry and Prose: Scene at Monument Point North end of Salt Lake*, a wagon train passes by the locomotive, these diverging methods of transportation heading in opposite directions (fig.9). Hart clearly saw a "poetry," perhaps an irony, in the oppositional pairing foregrounded in the image. In a series of stereographs, Hart is even more direct in his discussion of Euro American progress—"Advance of Civilization." In one particular image—*Advance of Civilization. Scene on the Humboldt Desert*—Hart set his camera atop a railroad car,

[41] Willumson, *Iron Muse*, 39. See photo appendix for location of stereographs.

photographing the vast desert while simultaneously minimizing all that passes along the tracks below (fig.10). In another, railroad tracks split the scenery, inviting the viewer to follow the rails—the rails that break up the landscape in both a literal and figurative sense (fig.11).[42] In both images the perspective Hart takes is meant to enhance the thrill of the stereograph. They emphasize movement and depth in a way that departed drastically from the popular landscape paintings of the time. Meant to enhance the sensory experience with the image, this perspective enlivened the scenery in ways that landscape paintings had not.[43]

Collectively, these railroad stereographs take a visual account of Indian life in the West, while also pointing to the contrasts between landscape and industry, between Indian and non-Indian. Hart worked especially hard to integrate his images into a larger industrial creed. One the one hand, these images suggest that these photographers considered their work to be of a documentary cast, aiding in the pictorial collection of a region and its inhabitants that remained unfamiliar to the majority of Americans. Yet, in Hart's case, the photograph itself was charged with a significant narrative quality, and his stories were ones of Euro American civilization, advancement, and technological power. Hart's images championed American expansion, much like the landscape photos of all three photographers sought to but an allegedly unpeopled landscape on display for the Euro American public.

In the 1870s, Russell's railroad images would go on tour. Using a glass plate projector, Steven J. Sedgwick, a sometime photographer and seasoned lecturer, used a series of Russell's Union Pacific images along with some of his own in talks he delivered about the East. While speaking mostly about "a land preeminently distinguished in its magnificent scenery," Sedgwick

[42] See appendix for images and locations of images.
[43] Angela Miller explains that landscape paintings of the nineteenth century associated scenery with the mind. "The mind and imagination," she explains, "were seen as imprinted with the sensory data of particular environments." See Angela Miller, *The Empire of the Eye*, 9.

did include a "Groups and Indians" series of photographs that included eight photos of native peoples. Yet, it is hard to know who took all of the photos Sedgwick used. In his presentation he cared less about attributing the images to a particular photographer and more about captivating his paying customers with scenes and peoples inherently unfamiliar to eastern Americans.[44]

Sedgwick, however, capitalized on showing a fleeting image to a paying audience. It is worth considering how these initial images would also be re-packaged and sold in other venues, particularly published monographs and promotional literature. A close look at the publications authored by Russell, Jackson, and Hart reveals that they too sought to cash in on the promotion of the West. In many instances, these images would help these photographers promote themselves as seasoned artists and/or experts on the West.

Personal Promotion: The Published Works of Russell, Hart, and Jackson

William Henry Jackson produced a series of autobiographies that placed him firmly within the mythic construction of a "pioneer"—a rough-and-ready artisan whose individual experience in the West differed drastically from those of his eastern companions. Indeed, Jackson had a colorful life, trying his hand at bullwhacking in the 1860s, photographing the West for the Hayden surveys in the 1870s, and traveling the globe with the World's Transportation Commission as their official photographer in the 1880s. Andrew J. Russell authored a book on the West that was funded by the Union Pacific, titled *The Great West Illustrated* (1869). For his part, Alfred A. Hart produced *The Traveler's Own Book* (1870), his contribution to a robust and profitable guidebook literature that flourished after the transcontinental was completed. And William H. Jackson—adept at fashioning himself as a great western adventure—wrote three

[44] S.J. Sedgwick, *Announcement of Prof. S. J. Sedgwick's Illustrated Course of Lectures and Catalogue of Stereoscopic Views of Scenery in All Parts of the Rocky and Sierra Nevada Mountains Between Omaha and San Francisco: Taken by the Photographic Corps of the U.P.R.R.*, Fourth (Newtown, N.J.: S.J. Sedgwick, 1879), Western History and Genealogy, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado.

autobiographies over the course of his life: *Notes from the Diary of a Bullwhacker* (1923), *The Pioneer Photographer: Rocky Mountain Adventures with a Camera* (1929), and *Time Exposure: the Autobiography of William Henry Jackson* (1940). In each instance these publications promoted their photographic work and helped them earn a living. Yet within these works and the captioned images they contain, one can glean a sense of the ways in which the photographers themselves contributed to a discourse of indigenous peoples in the American West. [45]

Writing to a friend shortly after the completion of the transcontinental railroad, Russell spoke of a mending nation, "the continental Iron Band now permanently unites distant portions of the Republic." Enthusiastic about what the railroad would accomplish, Russell noted that this "Iron Band" would open up "the vast, unpeopled plains and lofty mountain ranges that now divide East from West."[46] It was and remains a striking statement from a man who photographed those who inhabited the lands the rails charged through. Yet Jackson's published work put forth a similar theme of an unpeopled West. According to the preface, Russell initiated the arrangements for *The Great West Illustrated*, "fully convinced that the most comprehensive manner in which a positive and substantial knowledge could be offered on a subject which heretofore has given data only vague and insignificant." The book contains a series of Russell's photographs, each annotated by the author. None of Russell's images of Native Americans are included. *The Great West*'s emphasis on landscapes and geological formations suggest that Russell and the Union Pacific were primarily concerned with the agricultural, mineral, and commercial value of the region. In this instance, Russell, presented himself as a data collector of

[45] Jackson, *Time Exposure*; Jackson and Driggs, *The Pioneer Photographer: Rocky Mountain Adventures with a Camera*; Hart, *The Traveler's Own Book*; Russell and Union Pacific Railroad Company, *The Great West Illustrated.*
[46] Russell quoted in Danly and Marx, *The Railroad in American Art*, 93.

the region, a scientific observer who expertly captured the commercial possibilities of the West.[47]

Similarly, Hart elected to publish his 1870 guidebook without any images of Native Americans. Meant to serve as a practical guide to railway travel in the West, Hart's *The Traveler's Own Book* contained a series of maps charting the course of railway travel from Chicago to San Francisco. Hart described the various western climates, the myriad stations, and the best places to find food and shelter while traveling the rails. He mentions Native Americans in passing, noting that in Ogden, "are often seen the Indians of the Shoshone tribe, with all their paint and feathers." Notably, the abundance of images Hart captured of native peoples along the Central Pacific do not make the jump from stereograph to published guidebook. Hart's emphasis on the practicalities of railway travel resulted in his decision to forgo photographs in his work. In the work of both Russell and Hart, images of Indians do no enter the published text.[48]

Jackson, however, was long-winded when it came to his experiences with Indians. In the mid-1860s, Jackson and his brother crafted a sign for their portrait studio in Omaha that featured natives (fig. 12). Hoping to attract customers intrigued by the local Indian communities, Jackson and his brother Ed adapted a painting by F.O.C. Darley, titled "When Pawnee Meets Sioux." In the image two warriors clash violently, one cast in dark colors, the other atop a white horse.[49] In 1877, Jackson produced an annotated collection of his Indian photographs, alongside other well-regarded photos of Native Americans in the late nineteenth century. In this published forum, Jackson worked with Hayden to salvage the documentary records of native peoples. Their embrace of this "salvage" element pours through Hayden's preface to the collection. "Now that

[47] "Preface," Russell and the Union Pacific, *The Great West Illustrated.*
[48] Hart, *The Traveler's Own Book*, 23.
[49] Photo of Jackson Bros. image on insert next to page 174 in Jackson, *Time Exposure*.

the tribal relations of these Indians are fast being successively sundered by the process of removal to reservations," Hayden intoned, "the value of such a graphic record of the past increases year after year."[50] Jackson's *Descriptive Catalog of North American Indians* (1877) is a product of an age in which many mainstream Americans and the nascent ethnographic profession embraced a salvage method rooted in the belief that Native Americans would eventually fade into obscurity.[51]

Yet, it is notable that the majority of his written work was produced in the early twentieth century, when a national tourist industry exploded in the West. In his two autobiographies, published in the early twentieth century, Jackson included images of Native Americans from his work as the survey photographer with the Hayden surveys in the 1870s. In both cases, these images take on a documentary quality, but are paired alongside detailed encounters with Paiutes, Shoshones, and Utes. Jackson tended to emphasize native leaders such as Tush-a-qui-not (Ute) and Washakie (Shoshone) in his photo selections for his published works.[52] Yet these depictions of Indians as curiosities of Jackson's past evoke no deep sense of anxiety about modern American society. Jackson thought his encounters with Native Americans made him a unique frontiersman, a "pioneer" many folks of the early twentieth century would find novel and thrilling.

Collectively, these understudied publications, authored by the very photographers whose images grace the pages, provide a unique opportunity to glean a sense of the ways in which they

---

[50] William Henry Jackson, *Descriptive Catalog of North American Indians*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1877), Western History and Geneology, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado, iii.
[51] See Lee D. Baker, *Anthropology and the Racial Politics of Culture* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010); and George Stocking, *Delimiting Anthropology: Occasional Inquiries and Reflections* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001).
[52] Photo of Tush-a-qui-not located on the insert to next to page 227 in Jackson, *Time Exposure*. Photo of Washaskie in Jackson and Driggs, *The Pioneer Photographer*, 87.

utilized and, oftentimes, prevented images of native peoples to enter into public view. Few have considered the ways in which the initial generators of the art worked to edit and curate their products. They tend to follow the image more than the producers of that very image. Yet what this reveals is that just as railroad companies curated images to promote railway expansion and, by extension, national expansion. So too, on a micro level, did these photographers construct and alter their images in order to meet their fiscal needs. They shaped their work to a local desires and national moods.

Yet, most surprising is the lack of photographs produced in these publications. Both Russell and Hart left their Indian photographs out of their written work, publishing their books shortly after their excursions along the transcontinental. Jackson—writing decades later in the early twentieth century—was acutely aware of the cultural and commercial value placed on native peoples at that time period. Capitalizing on a particular cultural moment, he wrote extensively on Indians, and a few of his photos, mostly of indigenous leaders, made it into print. There was a frankness to the photograph that did not easily lend itself to the adventurous tales of western exploration woven into Jackson's work. The constructed lives of Native Americans in text did not easily coexist with the deliberateness, the starkness of Indian photographs.

Guides to an (soon-to-be) Unpeopled Place: Promotional Literature and Native Americans

This lack of publishing of native subjects from the railroad collections was not solely limited to the publications of these photographers. Other guidebooks and promotional literature tended to minimize—or outright ignore—images of Indians. Ferdinand V. Hayden's guidebook for travel along the Union Pacific, *Sun Pictures of Rocky Mountain Scenery* (1870), used several of Russell's UP landscape photographs. Hayden does, however, comment on Native Americans on

occasion, employing much of the same image of the disappearing native that would be later projected in the *Descriptive Catalog*. "Omaha," Hayden wrote, "tends to perpetuate the name of the tribe of Indians now fast passing away, which once owned this region."[53] Hayden encouraged would-be travelers to visit nearby reservations to witness the "remnants" of Indian life. Along with these suggestions, Hayden offers detailed depictions of native life and customs, providing an ethnographic record based upon his travels to the region.[54]

Lawrence and Houseworth, a prominent printing house in San Francisco, California, advertised a series of photographs of the Central Pacific railroad in 1870, the same year Hayden's *Sun Pictures* was released. This collection, which housed the majority of Hart's photographic work, featured 135 stereographs. Again, no native subjects were included in the collection. Historian Anne Hyde also mentions that this advertised collection featured no pictures of the desert. In both cases, she suggests, these western promoters shied away from images that would appear foreign to an eastern audience. In the name of promotion, photographs of Native Americans were largely left out of published tourist-oriented texts in the later half of the nineteenth century.[55] In each case, native peoples are cropped out of the photographic conversations about the railroad and the West, in an effort to focus on the commercial and geological value of the region.

While most of the original photographs taken by these railroad photographers did not appear in published literature in the later half of the nineteenth century, images of Native Americans were not entirely absent from promotional literature and news outlets reporting on

[53] Ferdinand V. Hayden, *Sun Pictures of Rocky Mountain Scenery* . . .(New York: Julius Bien, 1870), p. 19, Western History and Genealogy, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado.
[54] Ibid., 19, 24, 43.
[55] Hyde, *An American Vision*, 87.

railroad expansion in the West. Despite the advancements in photographic technology by the mid-nineteenth century, many guidebook authors and newspapers favored illustrations. In many cases, illustrations drew inspiration from the works of these railroad photographers. In other cases, Indian people were written onto illustrative interpretations of railroad related photographs—as was the case with the famed Russell image at Promontory Point.[56] The transformation of these photographs into embellished drawings can tell us a lot about the ways in which the photographic baseline was manipulated in an effort to imprint a particular image of native peoples into the American imagination.

An illustration of the Shoshone leader, Washakie, is featured in a popular 1873 guidebook, *Crofutt's Trans-continental Tourist's Guide* (fig.13). In all likelihood, this image was drafted from William Henry Jackson's photograph of Washakie, taken in 1870 while photographing the Hayden survey. Jackson is not referenced in relation to the image, but the similarities are remarkable (fig.14). In Jackson's rendering, Washakie is seated in front of a large teepee. A Shoshone child rests against the teepee, sheltering his face from the sun with his hands. It is unclear what object Washakie rests on, but he is facing Jackson, a hat in his hands. In the *Crofutt's* image, Washakie is seated in a Victorian-style wooden chair, set against a white backdrop, said hat in his lap. In the guidebook's illustration, Washakie is taken out of his larger socio-cultural context—he is removed from the landscape. Washakie is isolated from any association with land and is presented instead as an individual worthy of the reader's scrutiny. This is a powerful transformation of Washakie: from a man seated among his people in his tribal

[56] Martha Sandweiss has incisively picked up on this tendency to favor illustration, although she does emphasize that these illustrations were often derived from photographs, as is the case with many of the images produced by these railroad photographers. See Sandwiess, *Print the Legend* 323-324; and T. C. McLuhan, *Dream Tracks: The Railroad & The American Indian 1890-1930*, First Edition (Random House Value Publishing, 1987), 23.

space, to a figure divorced from his larger socio-cultural context, from his association with a particular place.[57]

Other guidebooks similarly adapted photographs by Hart, Russell, and Jackson. William H. Rideing published a guidebook in the same year as Croffut, titled *Scenery of the Pacific Railway and Colorado* (1873). In this publication, J.D. Woodward sketched the seventy-one illustrations included in the book. In one illustration, titled "Giant's Butte Green River," Woodward sketched an Indian canoeing on the Green River, with "Giant's Butte," also known as Citadel Rock, towering in the background (fig.15). The figure is dwarfed by the immense rock structure. Apart from the large and imposing image of Citadel Rock, the scene casts a pleasant air of untouched, lush wilderness—the Indian paddling stoically among this landscape of abundance.[58] Again, Woodward likely drew his images with the help of photographs taken by Russell and Jackson. Both railroad photographers captured Citadel Rock from another angle, along the railway lines that they followed west (fig. 16 and 17). In both images, the railroad is foregrounded in the scene, with an imposing rock formation drawing the eye upward towards its peak. In the images, the railroad is at once dwarfed by the natural landscape, but also in the process of molding it to its will, shaping the earth to meet the needs of industrialized travel.[59] Woodward's painting, meanwhile, conveys a sense of lush abundance, a lone native dwelling in this verdant scene. It is a stark contrast to the desolate landscape that both Russell and Jackson

---

[57] You can find a digitized image of the Jackson photo online at the Princeton University Digital Library, http://pudl.princeton.edu/objects/s1784m18j. For the Washakie illustration, see George A. Crofutt, *Crofutt's Trans-continental Tourist's Guide* (New York: George A. Croffutt, 1873) vol. 5, p.53, Western History and Genealogy, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado. The *Croffut's* guidebook for railway travelers also displays a series of illustrations derived from Hart's photographs of the Central Pacific railroad. In most instances these illustrations mirror the landscapes that Hart photographed. Yet, on occasion, the illustrators peopled the landscapes Hart had otherwise left empty. For the most part the "people" inserted in these scenes were representations of tourists enjoying the landscape, or workers laboring on the tracks.

[58] Rideing, *Scenery of the Pacific Railways, and Colorado*, 17.

[59] See appendix for location of images.

photographed. In this instance, the Indian becomes a useful symbol of an untapped wilderness. In Woodward's attempt to make the landscape attractive to would-be visitors, he places a calm, noble Indian among a deceptively fertile landscape. The Native American, in this rendering, becomes part of Woodward's curated image of the region—a region he and Rideing sold to the larger American public.

Alteration remains the common theme among these guidebooks and promotional publications. The stark realism of the photograph rarely found a home within a literature bent on selling an imagined place. While Lawrence and Houseworth elected to avoid images of Indians altogether, Rideing opted to illustrate an imaginary place in the West. Embellishment, it seems, better served the larger program of selling the West.

Many Indians for Many Men: Newspaper Images and an Indecisive America

The news media also altered railroad images to present particular narratives about native peoples. In the late 1860s, a woodcarving was produced for circulation in the German press. The image depicted the arrival of the Union Pacific to the 100th meridian, 247 miles from its starting point in Omaha, Nebraska. The woodcarving was inspired by the photographs of John Carbutt, the photographer tapped by the Vice President of the Union Pacific, Thomas Durant, to take photos of the seminal occasion. Durant sought to drum up support (and investments) for the Union Pacific by staging an elaborate ceremony and ride to the 100th meridian. Durant invited a bundle of distinguished guests, including reporters from every major newspaper, an English earl, a French marquis, and the Union Pacific directors. This UP celebration included a live band and a staged "Indian attack," meant to entertain the wealthy travelers. By hiring a group of Pawnee warriors to pose as Sioux seeking to attack the train, the UP officials sought to convey an image

of a domesticated indigenous population—a people that were part of the UP spectacle, not formidable foes of American expansion. Carbutt captured the mounted Pawnee warriors, posing in front of the railroad in *Group of Pawnee Warriors and Palace Cars of U.P.R.R.* (fig.18).[60]

The visual representation that would receive the most publicity, however, would be the woodcarving derived from Carbutt's image of the directors of the Union Pacific standing beneath the wooden sign marking the 100th meridian (fig. 20). In the woodcarving for the image Indians are drawn in, along with other spectators (fig. 19). In the image the natives appear as peripheral figures, perched on the outside of the group of people, observing the spectacle—not part of it. It is a drastically different image from Carbutt's photo of the Pawnee, a large group standing directly in front of the railroad looking outward. One could interpret the image to be conveying a sense of the Pawnee as defenders of the locomotive, the mounted warriors guarding the steam-powered machine. In another reading, the Pawnee appear as the anti-modern contrast to the machine wrought in steel and iron. Similar to Hart's images of the Shoshone, this image of the Pawnee could also convey an antimodern/modern binary. The woodcarving, however, presents a small number of native peoples. They are clearly dwarfed by the non-Indian population and are placed outside of the historic event. In this image the natives appear to be peripheral to the story of railroad advancement, which differs drastically from Carbutt's image that places the Pawnee at the center of the photograph—at the center of the railroad story.

What of news outlets in the U.S.? How were these railway photographs incorporated into the narratives of railway construction and travel in the West? The popular *Frank Leslie Illustrated Weekly* often provided landscape and construction images adapted from Russell's

[60] Combs, *Westward to Promontory*, 14–15. See also William Brey, "Carbutt and the Union Pacific's Grand Excursion to the 100th Meridian," Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum, online at http://www.cprr.org/Museum/Stereo_World/Carbutt/index.html.

railway photographs.[61] Images of native peoples, however, were largely illustrative constructions of the artist's imagination. These illustrations evoke a variety of Indian stereotypes—from the degraded beggar, to the violent foe of civilization. On the one hand, the paper published elaborate drawings of indigenous violence in the West, a taboo topic in the guidebook and promotional literature in the late nineteenth century. In one image, "An Incident on the Plains—A Passenger Train on the Pacific Railroad Attacked by a War Party of Indians," Sioux warriors fire at an imposing locomotive (fig. 21). The train charges forward, inciting chaos as it throws the attackers and their horses into the air. [62]

In other instances these images depict Native Americans as docile, iterant beggars. One image from the November 1873 issue of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly* presents a group of Shoshone asking for money at the local railway station. "One of these is a scene that so frequently presents itself on the road," the paper states, "[a] group of Indian beggars who solicit alms at the stations."[63] In another station scene Indians are mounted on horseback, set apart from the mass of non-Indian passers-by. They are also situated on the outside of the group, looking in, much like the woodcarving of the 100th meridian ceremony (fig. 22).[64]

While these images from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly* tack from docile depictions of needy natives to violent images of hostile warriors, in each case the "*Frank Leslie* Indian" is one of incompatibility. As either degraded, needy wards, or violent foes, Indians are viewed as an anachronous people. Departing from the guidebook literature's emphasis on native peoples as curiosities, these news images paint the Native Americans as peripheral, and often oppositional

[61] A series of Russell's images can be found in the March 26, 1870 edition of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, Issue 756.
[62] *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, July 09, 1870, Issue 771, Norlin Library. See also September 12, 1968, for another image of a raid.
[63] *Frank Leslie Illustrated Weekly*, November 8, 1873, Issue 45, Norlin Library.
[64] Ibid., December 12, 1869.

figures. They are on the sidelines of U.S. expansion, if not viciously attempting to stand in its way.

On July 10, 1869, *Harper's Weekly* published a similar image of incompatibility, drawn from recent Indian attacks on railroads in the region. In the illustration, an Indian lies across the rails, knife in hand (fig. 23). A locomotive is fast approaching through the rocky landscape, seemingly unaware of the Indian awaiting its arrival. "All Hail and Farewell to the Pacific Railroad," the caption reads. The illustration introduces the reader to the latest news reports of Indian attacks on trains in the West. "Indians have begun to tear up the rails," the accompanying article states, "to shoot passengers and conductors." "At least the poor victim," the writer adds, "has found the vulnerable spot in his tyrant."[65] It's worth noting that this image doesn't clearly predict an outcome. Will the Indian succumb to the Iron Horse? Will he successfully execute his plot? Holding a major tension in play, this *Harper's* image casts the Indian "victim" as a cunning figure. Even if he does not prevail against the locomotive, the image reveals that Native Americans have located a modern vulnerability—the rails of the locomotive and the unarmed passengers. The railroad's efforts to organize the West—its desire to make amends and to order the region—appears to be on the verge of chaos.

Editing for Expansion: Conclusion

As many of the *Frank Leslie* and *Harper's Weekly* reports suggest, railroad expansion ignited a firestorm of violence in the region. Native communities across the Trans-Mississippi West took up arms, un-hinged rails, and raided locomotives—making a powerful stand against the railroad. In many ways, native peoples put forth an oppositional image of themselves. For most Native Americans in the West, the railroad would not be met with the celebratory cries and festivities

[65] *Harper's Weekly*, July 10, 1869, Norlin Library.

akin to those Russell depicted in May of 1869. As many historians have made clear, railroads often spelled disaster for Indian communities—dispossessing them of their lands, eroding their political sovereignty, ravaging a landscape they depended on for sustenance.[66]

For those who composed these images—those who snapped the image, who captioned the stereograph, who drew native peoples—the oppositional image of the American Indian proved amendable to a nation's expansionist program. As the pulverized road of steel, wood, and rock stretched across the region, Americans saw the promise of a new land, ripe for settlement or an extended sojourn. Photographs of railway imagery set against the western landscape or native peoples were meant to mark and celebrate the distance between the two—between an untapped, premodern landscape and a modern, industrial train, or between a premodern peoples antithetical to all things embodied in nation's great Iron Horse and that very horse, presaging the ultimate "civilizing" of an untamed region.

While many historians of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would attribute the construction of an antimodern Indian to the turn of the century anxieties about industrial progress, this paper reveals that the railroad images of decades earlier were tied to expansion, not anxiety.[67] The formation of the antimodern Indian as a powerful cultural symbol was born in the proto-progressive, expansionist impulse of various photographers and image-makers. In an effort to "sell" the West—to sell travel on the newly constructed transcontinental—the antimodern (and thereby anti-railroad) Indian acquired cultural currency. While the images may have been myriad, their oppositional nature ensured the railroaded West would be amenable to Euro

[66] For more on the impact of the railroad in Indian country, see H. Craig Miner, *The Corporation and the Indian: Tribal Sovereignty and Industrial Civilization in Indian Territory, 1865-1907* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1976); and Utley and Washburn, *Indian Wars*.

[67] Trachtenberg's other historical publication, *The Incorporation of America*, speaks to this tendency to equate the development of antimodern imagery with American concerns about the rapid urbanization and industrialization. See Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Macmillan, 2007), 4-8.

American settlement. In the cultural consciousness of many Euro Americans, there was simply no means for the Indian to coexist with the Iron Horse.

In this trip through stereographs, published work by railroad photographers, guidebooks, promotional literature, and newspapers, a striking absence is made apparent. What is perhaps most surprising is that the three images that directly place Indians in a frame with a locomotive or rail ties—Hart's images of the Shoshone and Indian at the Palisades, and Carbutt's image of the Pawnee in front of the palace cars—never make it into published works in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. While these images certainly circulated as cheap stereographs for local consumption, they were never written into larger published works on the region. Throughout this time period the American imagination prevailed over the seemingly "real" depictions offered up in the Hart and Carbutt photos. The landscape images of Russell, Hart, and Jackson saturated the photographic marketplace, while images of native peoples were often wrought in pen and ink.

It was in this suppression of peopled photographs that the "golden age" of landscape photography was built. Picturing an unpeopled West brightened business prospects for those investing in the promise of white American settlement beyond the 100th meridian. While many historians have coined the later half of the nineteenth century the "golden age of landscape" photography, this study reveals that the circulation of landscape photographs was wedded to the suppression of peopled scenes of the West. [68] Thus, by following the crooked paths of railroad photographs, it becomes increasingly clear that post-Civil War image-making served an expanding nation. Ambivalence was superseded by the promise—the fabled progress—manifested in the railroad. Native peoples, as the *Frank Leslie* cartoon implies, would have to flee the scene.

[68] Naef and Wood, *Era of Exploration*, 12.

Appendix: Images

Fig. 1. Andrew J. Russell, *East Shakes Hands With West at Laying Last Rail*. May 1869. Accessed at Library of Congress [hereafter LOC], here.

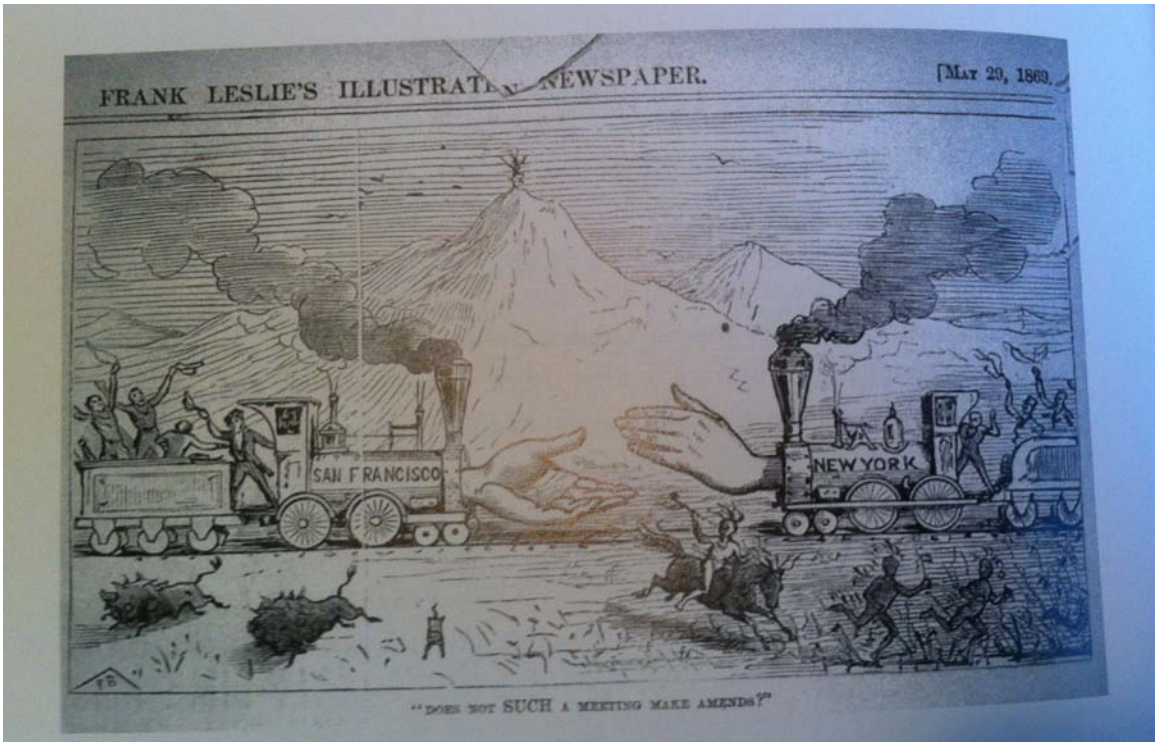
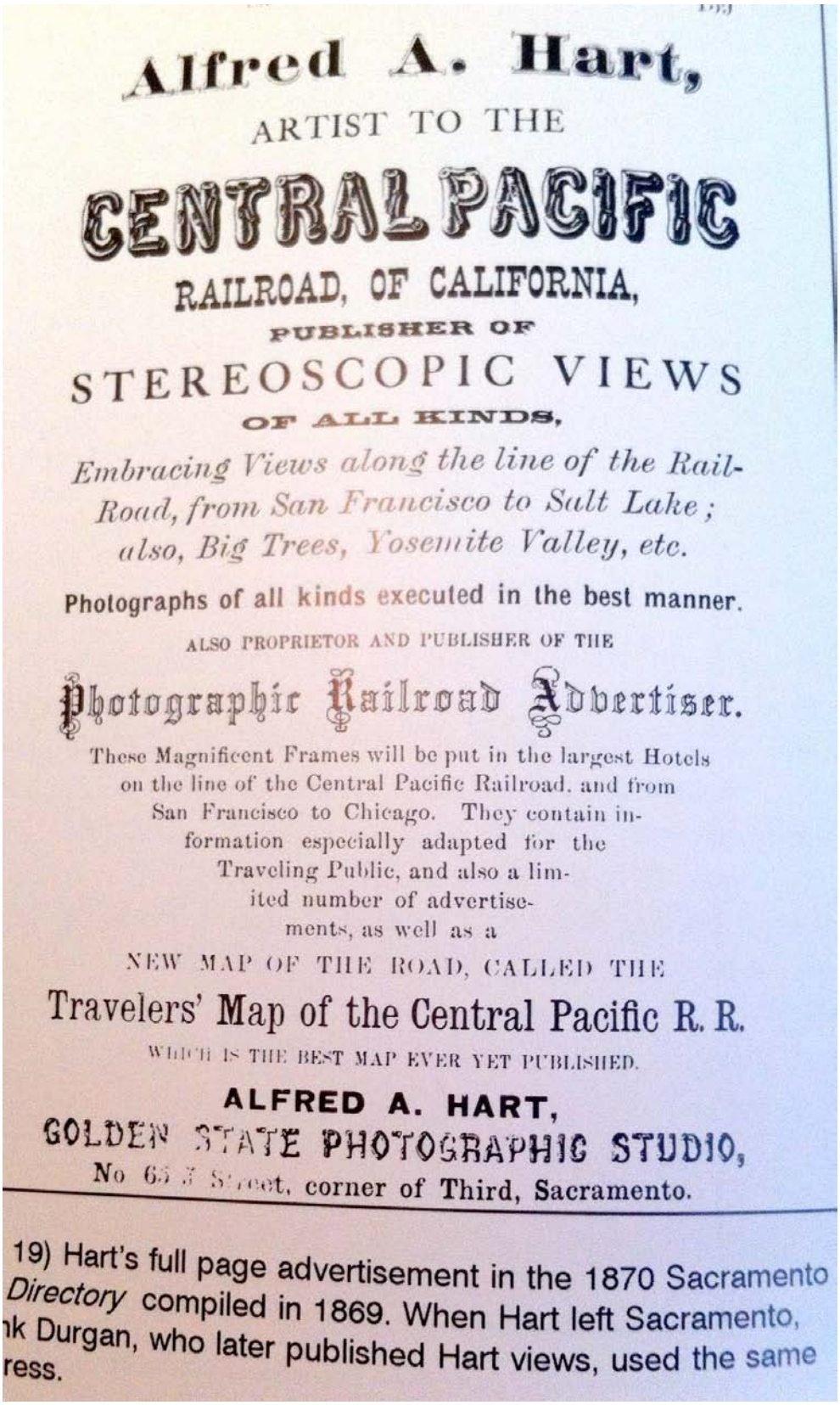


Fig. 2. "Does not Such a Meeting Make Amends?" *Frank Leslie Illustrated Weekly*, taken from Willumson, *Iron Muse*, p. 134.


Fig. 3. Andrew J. Russell, *Railroad Yard Ruins*, 1865[?]. Accessed at the LOC, here.



19) Hart's full page advertisement in the 1870 Sacramento *Directory* compiled in 1869. When Hart left Sacramento, nk Durgan, who later published Hart views, used the same ress.

Fig. 4. Alfred A. Hart Advertisement for Railroad Stereographs, in Kibbey, *The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A. Hart*.

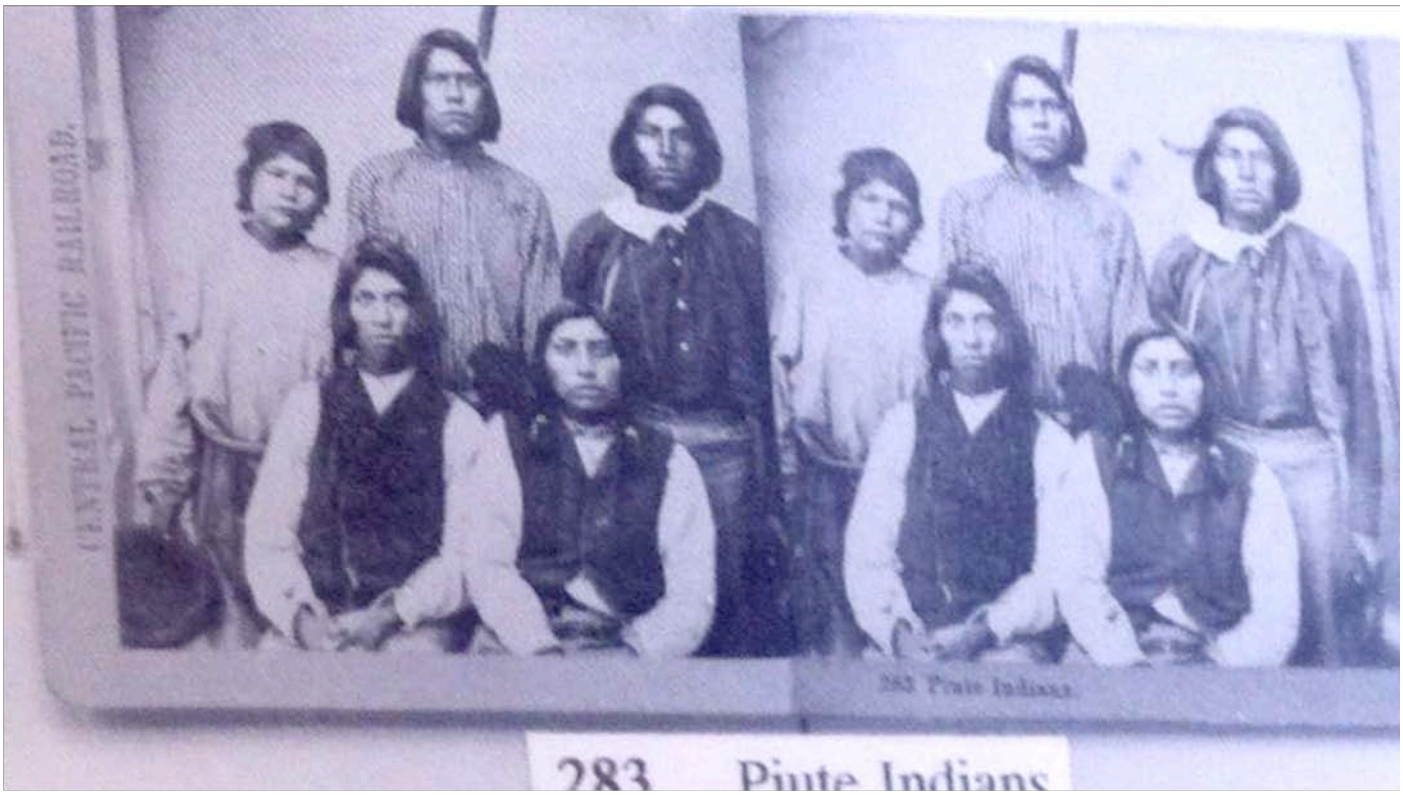


Fig. 5. Alfred A. Hart, *Piute Indians*. In Kibbey, *The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A. Hart*.

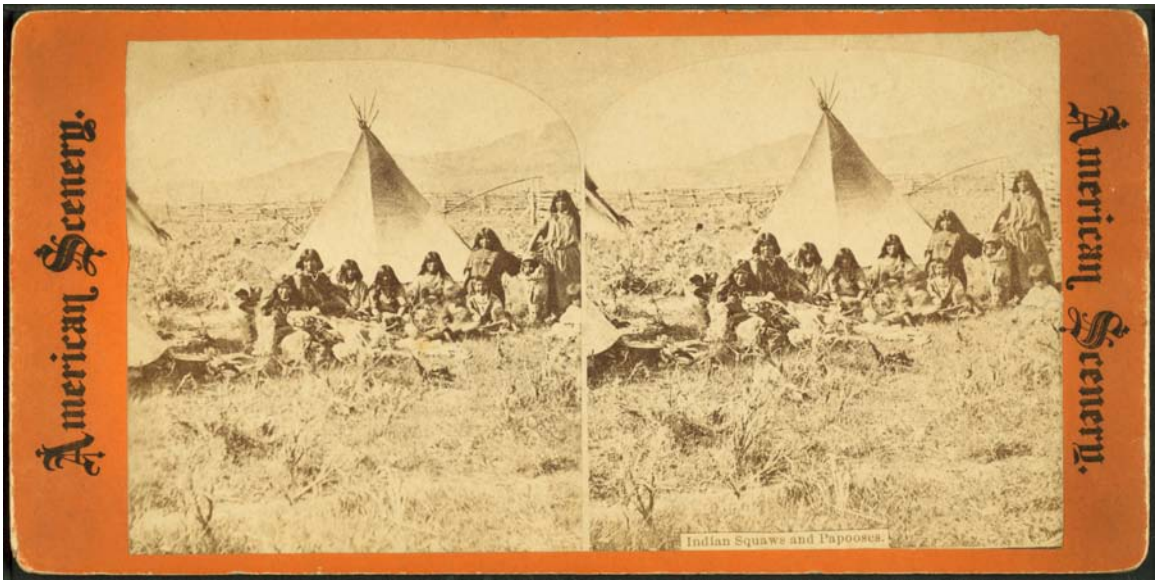


Fig. 6. Andrew J. Russell, *Indian Squaws and Papooses*. Between 1868 and 1870. Accessed at LOC, here.

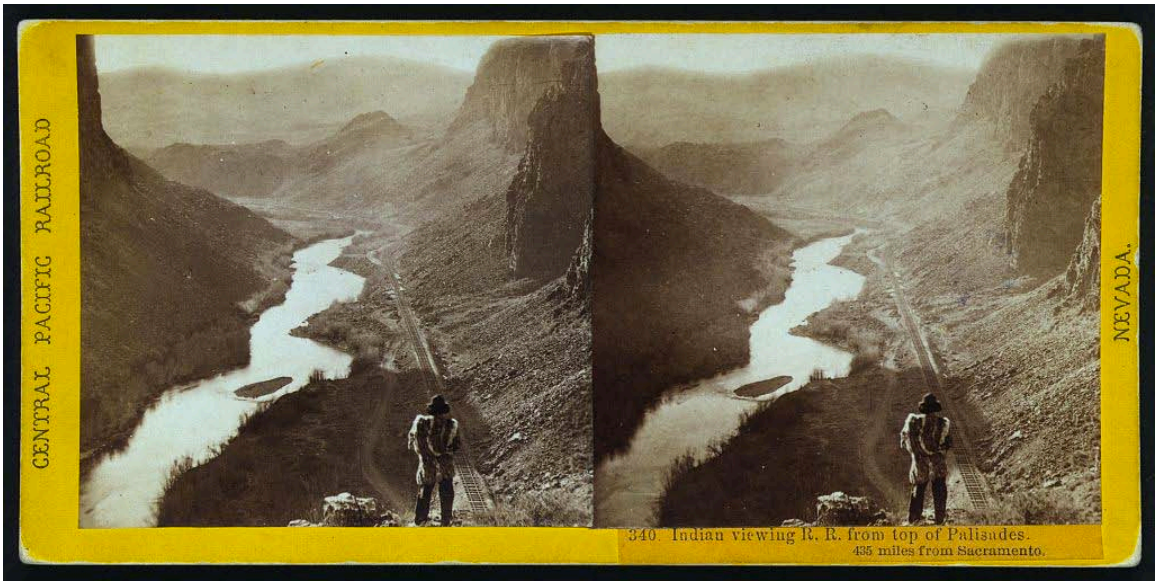


Fig. 7. Alfred A. Hart, *Indian Viewing Railroad from Atop the Palisades. 435 Miles from Sacramento*. Between 1865 and 1869. Accessed at LOC, here.

(Fig. 41) Alfred Hart: No. 323 *Shoshone Indians looking at Locomotive on the Desert.* Probably taken shortly after rails reached Winnemucca, on October 1,1868. This locomotive, named CHAMPION, appears to be a fast passenger type built by McKay & Aldus of Boston in late 1867. The headlight is unusual, and a coat (Hart's?) is under the right cowcatcher brace.

Fig. 8. Alfred A. Hart, *Shoshone Indians look at Locomotive on the Desert*. October 1868. From Kibbey, *The Railroad Photographs of Alfred A Hart*, p. 66.

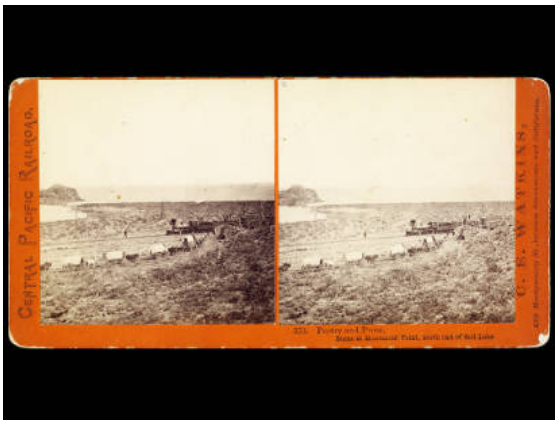


Fig. 9. Alfred A. Hart, *Poetry and Prose Scene at Monument Point, north end of Salt Lake*. n.d. Accessed at the Huntington Digital Library, here.

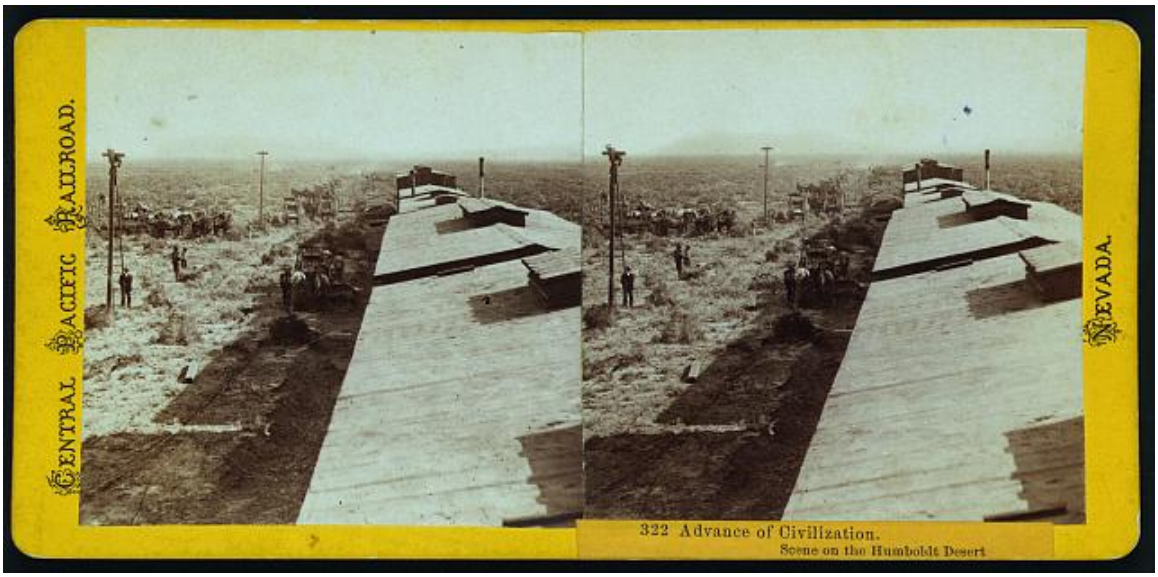


Fig. 10. Alfred A. Hart, *Advance of Civilization. Scene on the Humboldt Desert*. Between 1865 and 1869. Accessed at LOC, here.

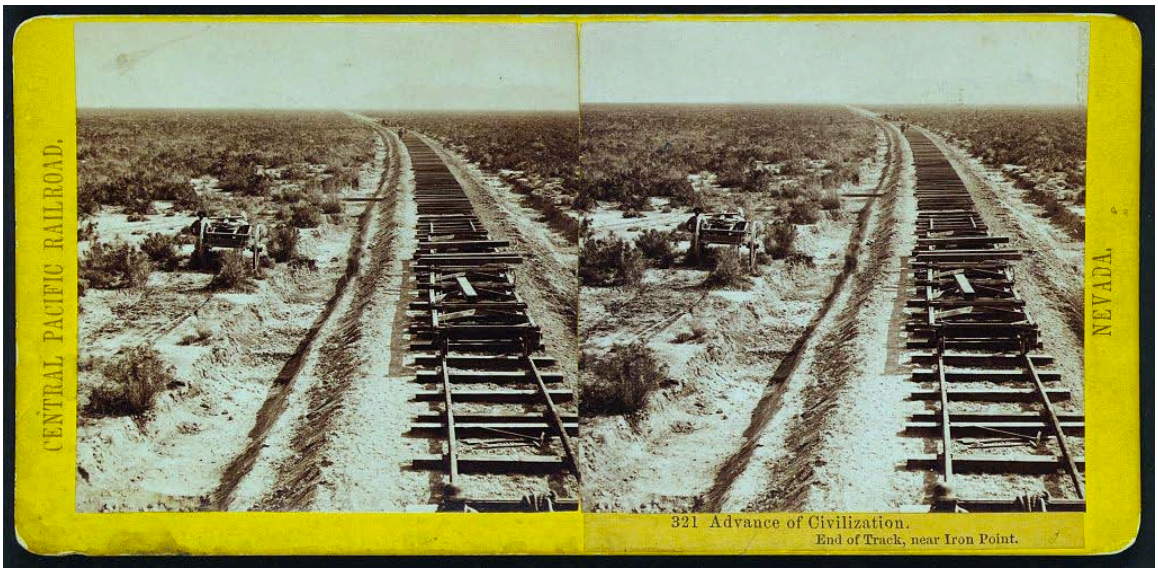


Fig. 11. Alfred A. Hart, *Advance of Civilization. End of Track. Near Iron Point*. Between 1865 and 1869, Accessed at LOC, here.

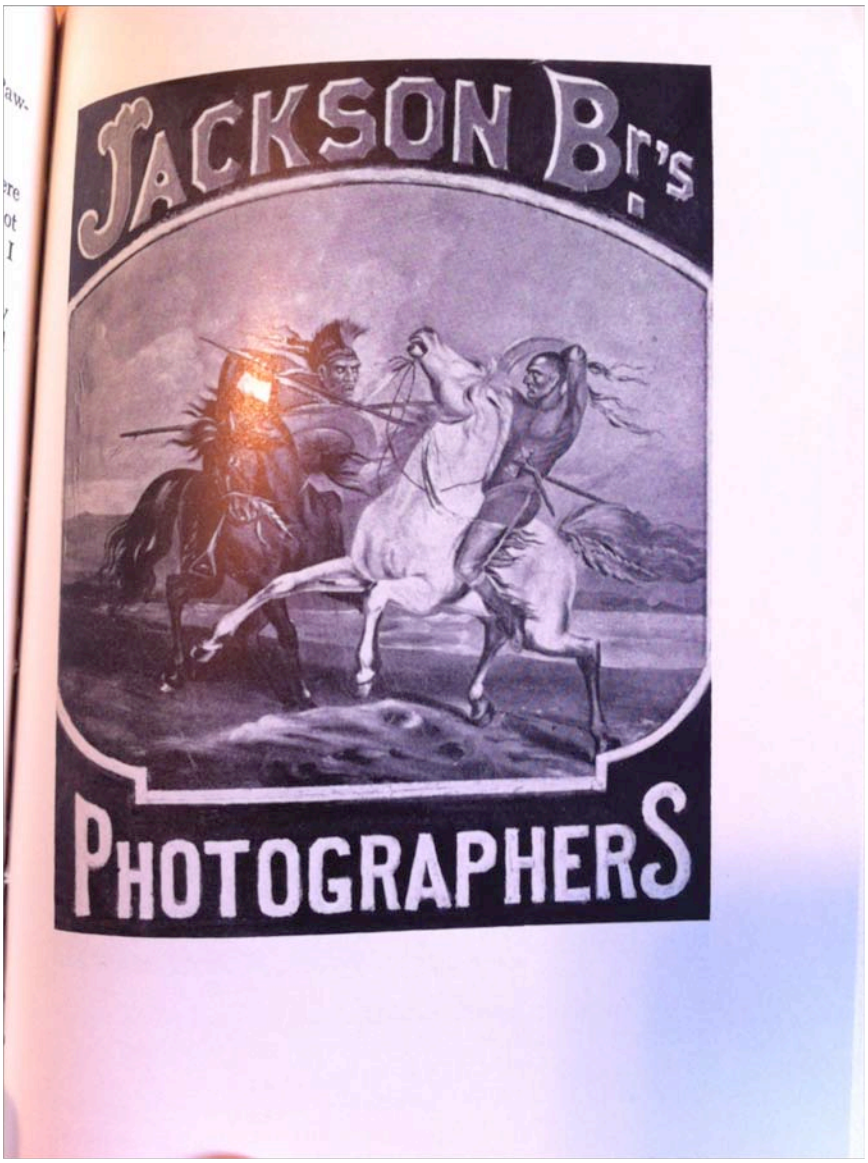


Fig. 12. Jackson Bros Company Image, from Jackson, *Time Exposure*. Insert next to p. 174.

WASH-A-KIE, Peace Chief of the Shoshone Indians.
(From photograph by Savage & Ottinger, Salt Lake City.)

Fig. 13. "Washakie," in Croffut, *Croffut's Guide*, p. 53.

Fig. 14. William Henry Jackson, *Washakie, Shoshone*, 1870. Accessed at Princeton University Digital Library, here

Fig. 15. “Giant’s Butte, Green River,” Rideing, *Scenery of the Pacific Railways*, p. 17.

Fig. 16. Andrew J. Russell, *Citadel Rock, Green River Valley*. 1868. Accessed at LOC, here.

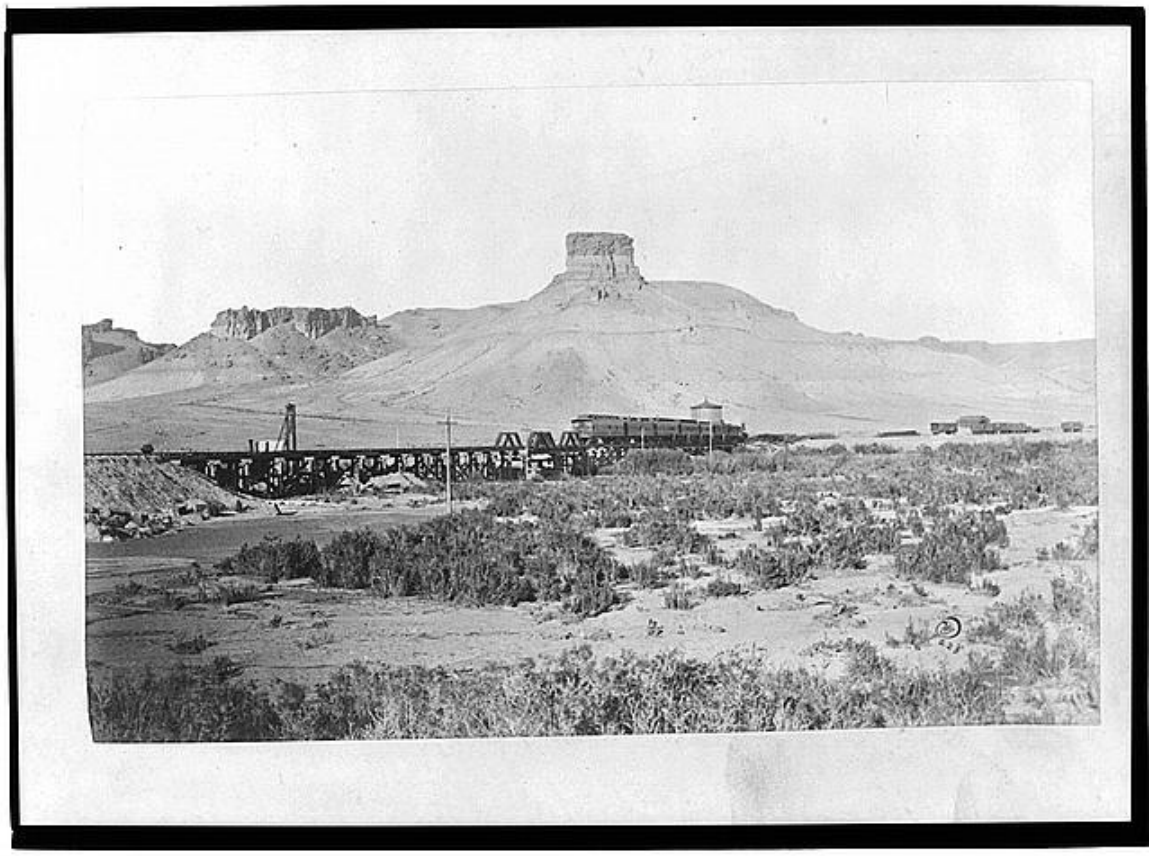


Fig. 17. William Henry Jackson, *Railroad Bridge near Citadel Rock*, between 1870 and 1878. Accessed at LOC, here.

Fig. 18. John Carbutt, *Group of Pawnee Warriors and Palace Cars of U.P.R.R.*, 1866. Accessed through Wikipedia Commons, here.

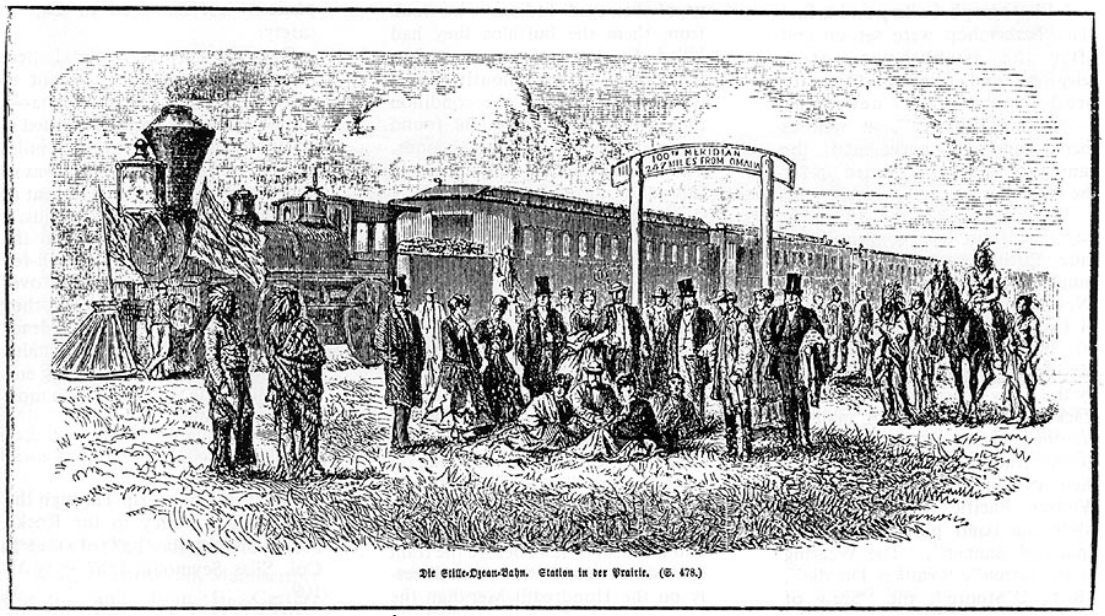


Fig. 19. Wood Carving of 100th Meridian Celebration. Nebraska Historical Society. Accessed at the CPRR online museum, here.

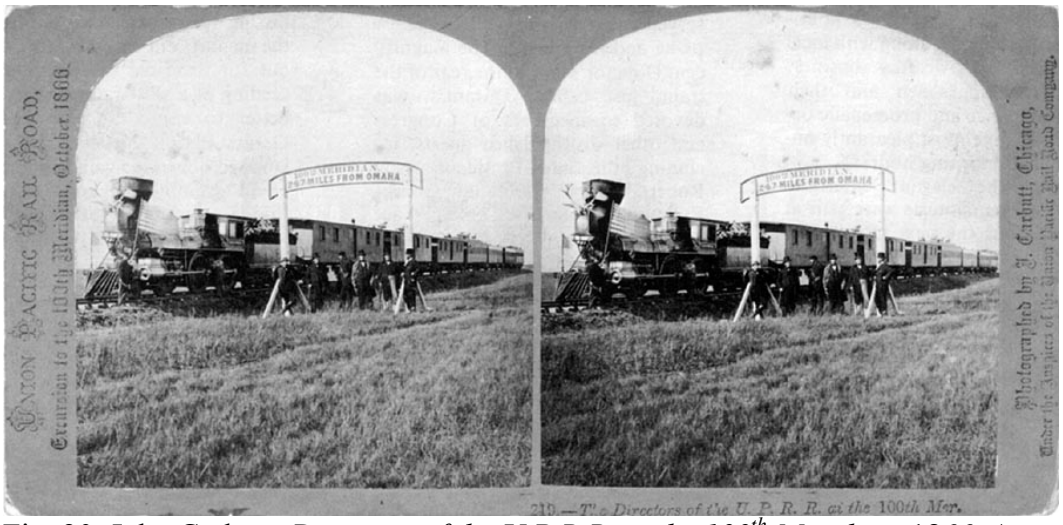
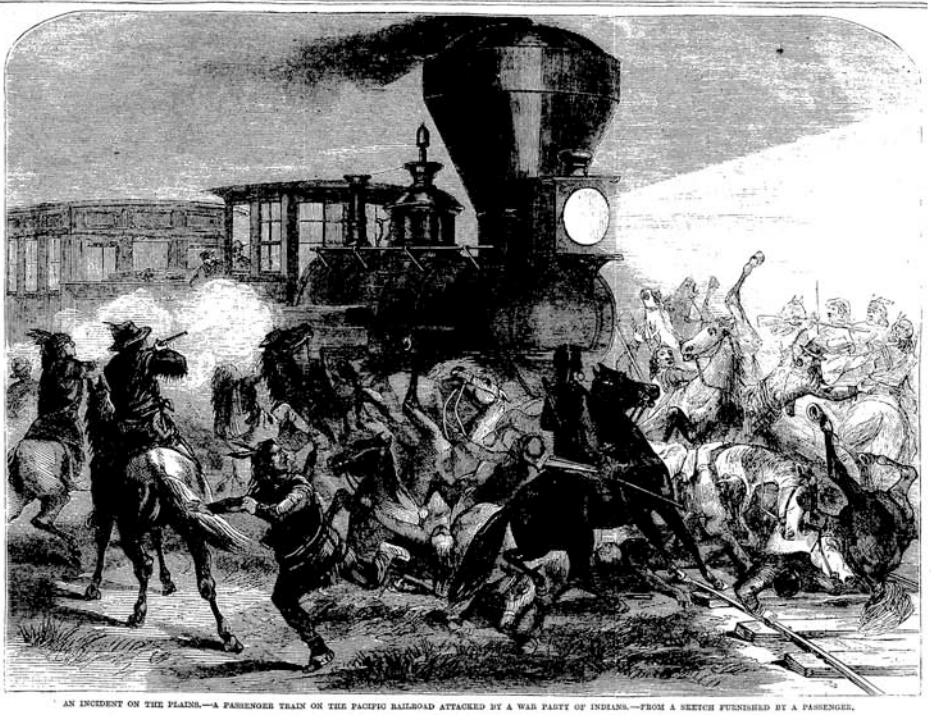


Fig. 20. John Carbutt, *Directors of the U.P.R.R. at the 100th Meridian*. 1866. Accessed at LOC, here.



AN INCIDENT ON THE PLAINS.—A PASSENGER TRAIN ON THE PACIFIC RAILROAD ATTACKED BY A WAR PARTY OF INDIANS.—FROM A SKETCH FURNISHED BY A PASSENGER.

A PASSENGER TRAIN ATTACKED BY A WAR PARTY OF INDIANS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the plaintive assertion of the Indian chiefs that their tribes want peace, and that on the withdrawal of the United States regulars from certain localities, and the removal of certain forts, they will give themselves entirely to agricultural pursuits, such incidents as the one we have illustrated will do more toward preventing the consummation of their wishes than any promises to the contrary. A passenger train bound east from Cheyenne, Wyoming Territory, on the evening of June 14th, was assaulted by a squad of mounted Indians, who fired upon the travelers through the windows. No persons were injured, neither was the train damaged. Sixteen horses belonging to the party were killed, and a large amount of robes, bows, arrows, etc., scattered along the track. These cases of lawlessness fully justify the presence of well-armed and mounted soldiers; for common humanity, no less than the demands of business, requires the safe passage of every train from Omaha westward.

SIOUX CHIEFS AND WARRIORS.

DURING the recent visit to Washington of the Sioux delegations—the Brules, headed by Spotted Tail, and the Ogallallas, by Red Cloud—Mr. Brady, the photographer, but not without much persuasion, succeeded in inducing the Brule chiefs and warriors, who rejoice in the names of Bear Skin, Red Fox, Red Dog, Rocky Bear, and Living Bear, to stand and sit long enough to have their faces and persons photographed. Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, and other Sioux, on being invited, declined, alleging, if they submitted, the Great Spirit would be angry with them, and they would die. They were, however, finally induced to stand before the camera, but, at the critical moment, their superstitious notions got the better of their judgment, and they became so uneasy that their features were blurred, and therefore of no value. Despairing of convincing Red Cloud and Spotted Tail of the improbability of the Great Spirit being angry with them for having their pictures taken, Mr. Brady permitted them to go back to their native wilderness as they had left it—unphotographed.

Red Fox. Bear Skin. Red Dog. Rocky Bear. Living Bear.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—PORTRAITS OF RED DOG AND OTHER PROMINENT INDIANS OF THE SIOUX NATION.—FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRADY.

CHINESE IN MASSACHUSETTS.

THE presence of a large body of Mongolians in a shoe-factory at North Adams, Mass.—brought there on contract by that indefatigable importer of Chinamen, Mr. Koopmanschap—has caused unusual interest among all classes connected with mechanical pursuits throughout the country.

Some time ago, the proprietor of the shoe-manufactory at North Adams, Mr. Sampson, quarreled with his workmen about the compensation to which they claimed they were entitled, and the operatives, backed by a powerful trade organization, the Knights of St. Crispin, put aside their lapstones, and declared they would not submit to the reductions in their scale of prices their employé demanded. Of course they had a right to retire from the shop, and Mr. Sampson the same right to fill the places vacated by these persons as he thought would work for such compensation as he was disposed to give. Finding he could not employ men of the Caucasian race, Mr. Sampson communicated with Koopmanschap, who, without unnecessary delay, forwarded a "large invoice, in fair condition," of Chinamen.

These strangers seem to be intelligent, apt to learn, and industrious. They are engaged for a term of years, at a low rate of wages.

They appear to be quite contented with their lot. They have thus far proved their ability to make good shoes; but they appear greatly puzzled when

Fig. 21. "An Incident on the Plains—A Passenger Train on the Pacific Railroad Attacked by a War Party of Indians," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, July 09, 1870.

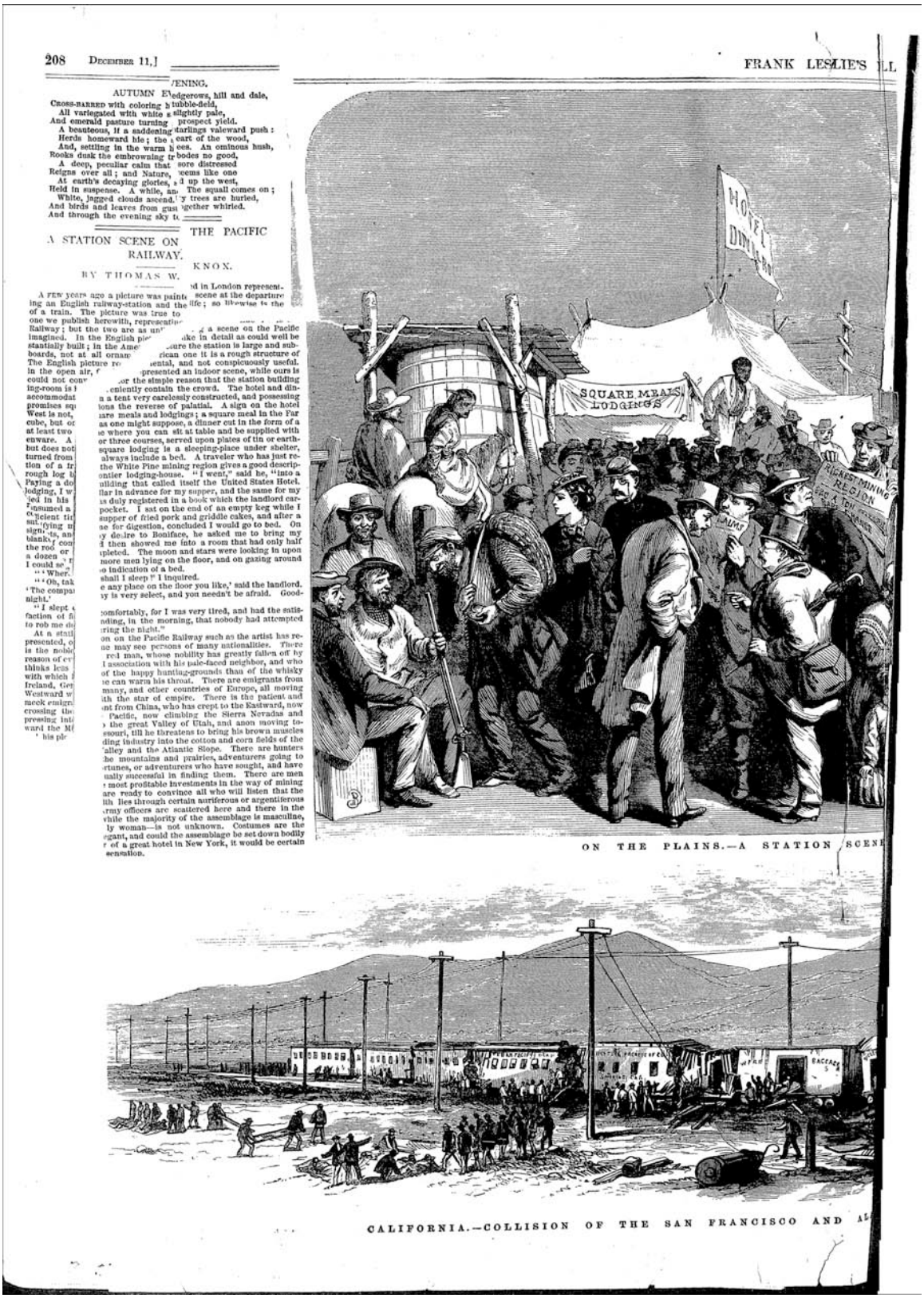


Fig. 22. "On the Plains—A Station Scene," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, December 12, 1869.

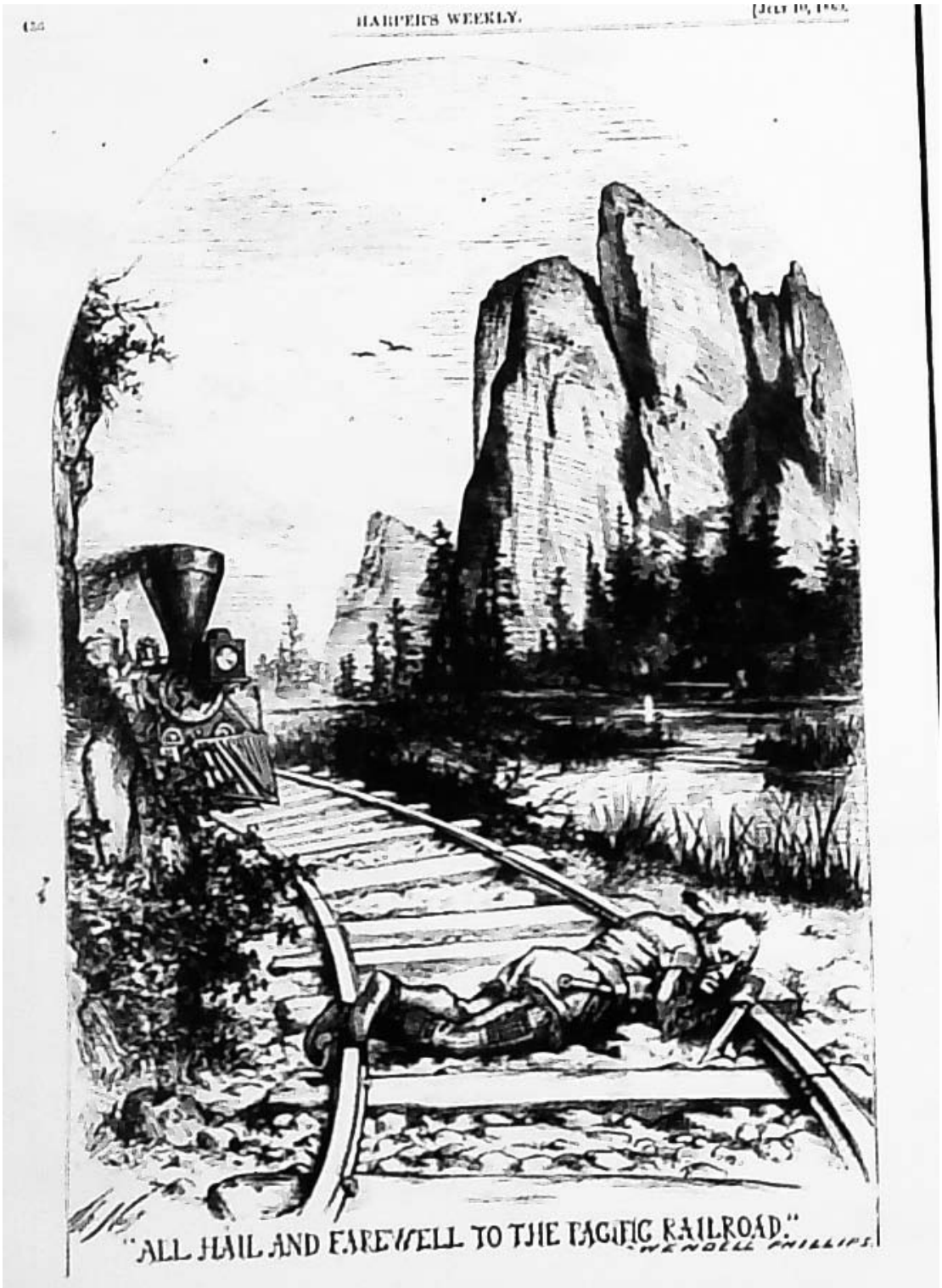


Fig. 23. "All Hail and Farewell to the Pacific Railroad," *Harper's Weekly*, July 10, 1869.