

THE “ARIZONA VIEWS” OF FRANCIS ALBERT HARTWELL

by
Jeremy Rowe

IT IS HARD TODAY to understand the incredible commitment and efforts made by Arizona’s pioneer photographers. Their work required them to carry their entire studio as they traversed the territory. On horseback, or in buggies, they carried with them cameras and tripods, dark-tents, floor coverings, backdrops, reflectors, chemicals (and often the water for processing), not to mention glass plates for making photographs.

The collodion wet-plate process used throughout most of the nineteenth century was difficult enough in milder climates. In the hot, dry Arizona desert, it became torturous. Imagine working in a small, cramped, dark tent filled with ether fumes and with no ventilation; trying to coat and prepare a plate, then hurrying to expose and process it before the plate dried. There were additional challenges—carrying the delicate glass negatives back to the studio and, once there, making photographic contact prints without chipping or breaking the thin glass plates. One mispacked box, or stumbling pack mule, could destroy days, or weeks, of work. A clumsy photographer, or his assistant, could easily shatter an irreplaceable negative—destroying forever the image it contained.

These early photographers also had to be continually vigilant for fires that periodically consumed the wooden buildings that

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made up the frontier camps and towns where they worked. These disastrous events were far from rare. Scores of western photographers, including Carlos Gentile, Carleton Watkins, and C. S. Fly of Tombstone, lost major portions of their work to studio fires.

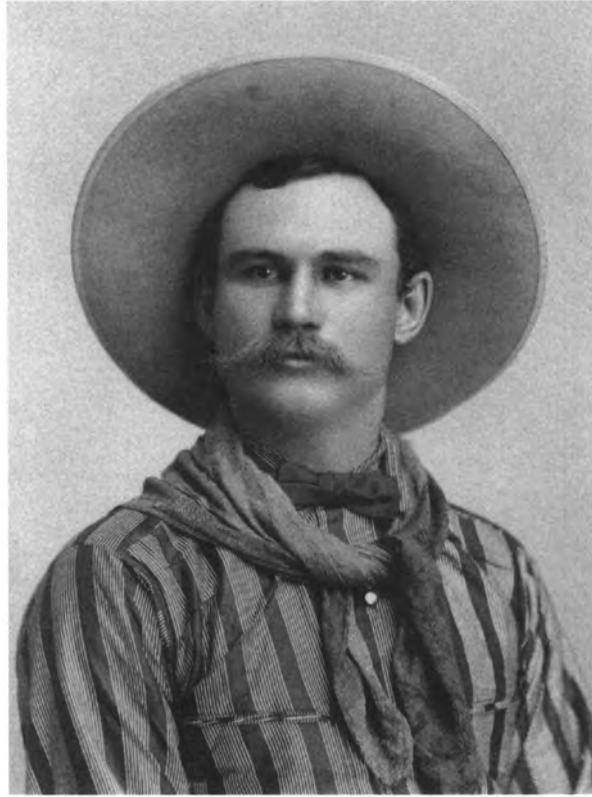
I am fascinated by the lives of nineteenth-century Arizona photographers. Many years of collecting, researching, and exploring historic Arizona images has helped me appreciate the scope and breadth of the efforts of these early Arizona photographers, and the significance of their legacy. Unfortunately, because crediting their images has been the exception rather than the rule, many of these pioneers have been forgotten. Understanding their lives, the processes they used, and the era in which they worked is critical to better understanding Arizona history and the history of photography.¹

Francis Albert (Frank) Hartwell is one of the unsung photographers who left a significant legacy of images tracing the roots of Arizona Territory. Born in North Crosby Township, Leeds County, Ontario, Canada, in April of 1852, Frank was likely the son of twenty-seven-year-old laborer George Hartwell and his twenty-year-old wife, both of whom were still living in Leeds in 1861.²

Little evidence of Hartwell's early life, including his first marriage and where and how he learned photography, has been located. Frank first surfaces in the U.S. census as a photographic assistant to John A. Todd of Sacramento in the late 1870s. Todd was an artist and photographer who had arrived in California in 1853, and dabbled in a variety of occupations before learning photography from William Dickman, in whose studio he worked. Todd opened his own studio in Sacramento around 1866. Although the business changed locations several times, it operated in the same general area for almost twenty years.

Frank Hartwell is listed in the 1880 Sacramento census as a photographer, about thirty years of age. His second wife, Lizzie, age twenty, and son Byron, age six, are listed as living with Frank. It is not clear where two other children, twins Clarence Asher and Sidney Albert, from his first marriage, were living at the time. The 1880 and 1881 Sacramento city directories list F. A. Hartwell, photographer (residence at 1013 2nd Street), working with John A. Todd, photographer, living and working at 316 J Street.

Whether recruited away, or moving for other reasons, Frank left Sacramento for Tucson in 1881. Soon after his arrival in April



Francis A. Hartwell self-portrait. Cabinet card, ca. 1890.

of 1881, Hartwell was hired by leading Tucson photographer Henry Buehman, and joined his stable of studio operators.³ Buehman had learned photography from Bradley & Rulofson, who ran one of the finest studios in San Francisco. Prior to coming to Tucson, Henry operated a studio in Visalia, California, and traveled as an itinerant photographer throughout the West.

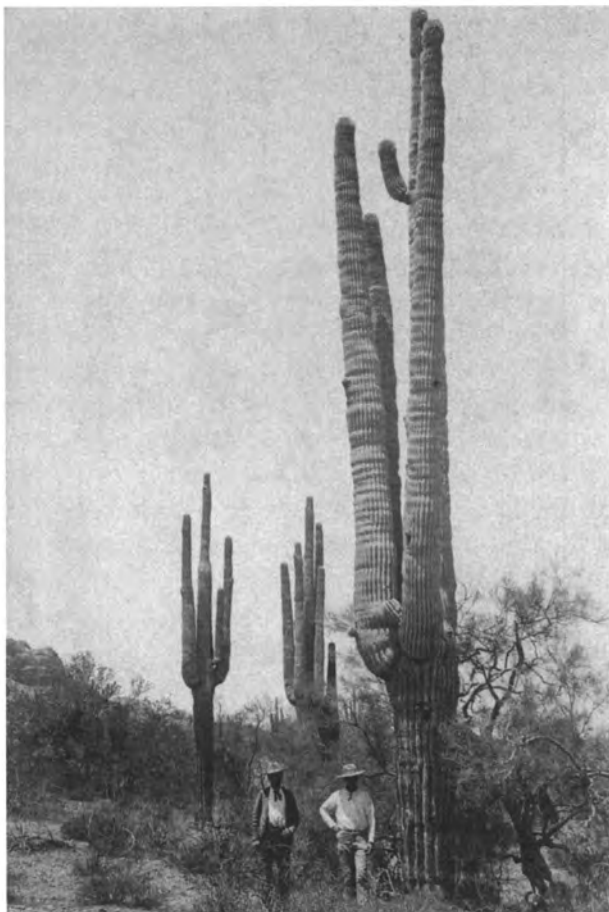
Arriving at Tucson in early 1874, Buehman initially worked out of the studio established and operated by Adolpho Rodrigo. Henry purchased the studio and began operating it as his own on June 4, 1874. Aggressive and talented, Buehman quickly became the town's leading photographer. He gradually expanded his business, employing various operators and assistants as he strove to provide Tucson with all the services expected of a major metropolitan

photographic studio. Buehman quickly recognized the quality of Hartwell's work and, by August of 1882, Frank had become one of the top assistants in the Buehman studio.

After a decade operating out of Rodrigo's primitive studio that had served both local and itinerant photographers, Buehman built a substantial new building at 105 Congress Street. The Elite Restaurant occupied the ground floor, while Henry's photographic operations filled the second floor. Buehman took great pride in the breadth of his work, its artistic quality, and the range of formats and finishing options that he was able to provide his customers. An advertisement in the *Tucson Daily Citizen* on August 25, 1882, noted that: "Mr. Buehman, the owner is a photographer of over 17 years experience and together with his assistant Mr. F. A. Hartwell is versed in every style of photographic and painter's art, and in their new gallery have every facility possible for the making of fine pictures either in India ink, oil, watercolors, crayon or pastel of any light shade or color. The taking of babies [*sic*] pictures, which are made a specialty, are done almost instantaneously, and work in all cases is guaranteed. The Ladies are invited to call at the gallery and make a personal inspection."

Frank Hartwell, an equally passionate and talented photographer, made important contributions to both the scope and quality of studio photography in Tucson. Like Buehman, strongly committed to community service, Hartwell was active in fraternal groups and served in many appointed and elected offices throughout his life in Arizona. For example, Hartwell and Buehman were both charter members of the Arizona Lodge No. 1 of the Ancient Order of United Workmen (A.O.U.W.), which was founded about the time Frank arrived in Tucson. Up to this point, Frank had retained his Canadian citizenship, but apparently comfortable working in Buehman's studio, he applied for and obtained U.S. citizenship on July 25, 1882.⁴ He immediately increased his involvement in the Tucson community, serving on the A.O.U.W. Reception Committee. He later was active in Apache Lodge No. 8.

As recognition for the quality of Hartwell's work grew, so did Buehman's reliance on his chief operator. In the 1883 issue of *Photographic Times and American Photographer*, Buehman announced to a national audience his full partnership with Hartwell. Soon, the imprint on most of the photographs produced by the studio read



Two men (possibly Henry Buehman and Francis A. Hartwell) pose as “staffage” to provide a reference for gauging the height of a massive Saguaro cactus. Cabinet card, Buehman and Hartwell photographers, ca. 1888.

“Buehman & Hartwell.” (Although Buehman’s stereographs from this period appear to have been made primarily from Buehman’s own earlier photographs, and continued to read “Buehman & Co.,” some were also produced under the Buehman & Hartwell imprint.) Unfortunately, there is little evidence that helps determine which of the “Buehman & Hartwell” partners made any particular image, or whether any photograph produced during this era was actually

produced by one of the many assistants or operators employed by the studio.

Buehman's studio offered the Tucson community mounted photographs in a range of popular sizes and styles, including cartes-de-visite and cabinet cards, as well as the ever-popular stereographs. It also produced a huge body of photographs documenting the development of Arizona Territory. Most of these images were original work, but like most photographers of the time, Buehman freely copied and resold (usually without permission) photographs made by others when he saw a potential market. Examples of such "pirated" images identified to date include several Randall & Wittick images of Geronimo and other Apache notables taken at Fort Apache, and a series of Plains Indian portraits clearly copied from the work of other photographers.

In addition to his passionate involvement in photography, like many pioneer Arizonans, Hartwell had an interest in mining. During 1883 and 1884, he periodically took time away from the studio to prospect in the Amole District west of Tucson.

Eighteen eighty-four was a tragic year for Frank's family. He lost the twin boys from his first marriage, reducing the family to three—Frank; his wife, Lizzie; and their son, Byron.

Hartwell's interest in serving the Tucson community extended from his lodge membership to elected office. He served as Second Ward councilman in 1884-86, and was re-elected to the position in 1887. Ever the entrepreneur, Hartwell expanded his business interests beyond photography, including operating a chicken farm in 1888.

Meanwhile, Buehman & Hartwell saw the potential for new business 100 miles north, in the growing community of Phoenix. To capitalize on the opportunity, Hartwell moved to Phoenix in July of 1889 and opened a branch of the Buehman & Hartwell gallery on West Washington Street. While serving as principal photographer in the Phoenix studio, Hartwell periodically returned to the main studio in Tucson. The May 19, 1890, edition of the *Tucson Daily Citizen* noted one such visit with the comment that Frank was in town to "visit his friends in Tucson." But his visit may have had another purpose. Within a few days, the Buehman & Hartwell partnership was dissolved and Hartwell quickly returned to Phoenix, where he established his own photographic studio in a brand new building.

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The May 23, 1890, Phoenix *Arizona Republican* described the new Hartwell Gallery in an article entitled “Fred Scofield’s Very Pretty Little Building”:

On his lot on Maricopa Street facing the Plaza, Mr. Fred Scofield has just about completed erection of the handsomest one-story brick business house in Phoenix.

The building is small, twenty-five feet front by seventy-five feet in depth, but is elegantly finished. It has been leased for three years by photographer Hartwell, and was especially designed for a gallery.

The front is very ornate, with a handsome galvanized iron cornice. The interior of the building is divided into a reception room, 20 x 18 feet, from which open the retouching and operating rooms—the latter a large apartment 40 x 17 feet, fitted with skylights and with all the modern convenience. The building was put up by contract by Corlett & Phillips, and will cost when completed \$2,000.

Whether Lizzie traveled to Phoenix with Frank, and what transpired between them, is not known. On November 3, 1890, a few months after moving into his new gallery, Frank married his third wife, Helen A. (Dell) Hill (b. January 1864 in Michigan).⁵ The couple eventually had three children: Luella (b. 1893), Francis A. (b. 1896), and Albert F. (b. 1897).



Arizona pioneer Charles Debrille Poston poses in front of the Hartwell Studio. An explorer, miner, and first Arizona delegate to the U.S. Congress, Poston fell on hard times late in life and roamed the streets of Phoenix with his mules until he was provided with a small pension in 1897. He died a pauper on June 24, 1902. Boudoir cabinet card, F. A. Hartwell photographer, ca. 1895.

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Hartwell's business grew as he successfully competed with other pioneer Phoenix photographers, including George Rothrock. The winter floods of 1891 provided Hartwell with an opportunity to make and market unique images. His photographs of the raging Salt River gained him significant notoriety that substantially increased the visibility of his photographic work in and around Phoenix. The February 26, 1891, *Arizona Republican* noted that: "Photographer Hartwell has a large number of fine views taken while the flood was on and having calls for them faster than he can print them."

Interestingly, a group of photographs showing the washed-out railway bridge across the Salt River at Tempe demonstrates the collaborative side of the photographic business. Several images depict photographers Rothrock and Hartwell posed with a party of friends, or assistants, on the remnants of the bridge. These images were sold as 5" x 8" boudoir photographs, with several identical images appearing on the mounts of both studios—some marked with the Rothrock imprint and others with the Hartwell imprint. Whether this relationship commenced at the time the photographs were first made, or emerged later as Hartwell needed to increase his print production to meet demand, is not known. Clearly, at least



Adobe remained a popular and economical building material in Phoenix well into the twentieth century. This scene of an adobe plant shows the process of forming and drying bricks. A test wall stands at the left of the image. Boudoir cabinet card, F. A. Hartwell photographer, ca. 1895.

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for this event, Rothrock and Hartwell acted more as collaborators than competitors, and freely shared their work.

In April 1891, the Arizona Press Association hired Hartwell to document its meeting in Prescott. The *Prescott Courier* carried a tongue-in-cheek description of the challenge the group posed for the photographer. "It would be difficult to find 11 such sickly looking fellows as compose this body," the newspaper joked, and then proceeded to praise Frank's "wonderful feat" in capturing the group. "All in all," the *Courier* concluded, "Hartwell did well to preserve his camera and his reputation."⁶

Unfortunately, a portrait Hartwell made of the Arizona Press Association a few years later received less praise. The image may have been an example of a rare mistake—an unintentional double exposure. The Prescott newspaper described the portrait as "splendid," but noted that the printed copies included what appeared to be a "spirit" of the Arizona attorney general that "spoiled the sale . . . , since nobody cares for hem [sic]."⁷

From his Phoenix studio, Hartwell continued traveling around the territory, adding to his photographic portfolio. In June of 1891, he visited Florence and Globe, making images of the area and offering portraiture for residents of the booming communities. The *Arizona Republican* wished him a pleasant trip and offered its glowing recommendation of his photographic skill.⁸

Frank also continued compiling images of the Salt River Valley. In October, he visited the Bartlett ranch, near what is now Glendale. Originally homesteaded as the Saguaro ranch, the spread had grown to about 2,000 acres and was one of the largest ranches in the valley. The *Republican* continued to promote Hartwell's work, noting that his views of the Bartlett orchards were "especially fine."

Despite what appears to have been a minor setback with his group portrait of the Arizona Press Association, Hartwell's reputation continued to grow. Within two years of opening his gallery, the *Arizona Republican* escalated its praise of his work in an article aptly entitled "Artistic Photography":

Phoenix is Fortunate in having a real artist in their midst. F. A. Hartwell, the artistic photographer who has done all the photographs for the Republican's illustrated edition, has reserved all the negatives for future use.

Those who sit can order photos from the same negatives if they desire. In doing the work for The Republican, Mr. Hartwell deserves much credit, as he has spared no pains and taken great interest in the work.

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Besides the individuals he sit [*sic*] he has made a large number of views of the Salt River Valley, all of which surpasses anything of this character ever seen in the valley. Among the many new views that he has made in and around Phoenix, are some dozen or more on the Grand Canal and on the Salt and Verde Rivers, all of which are new and are very pleasing pictures, which not only show the vast water resources of the valley and advertises [*sic*] the country, but also shows we have artists in the West that will compare or surpass anything in the East.

On Memorial Day Mr. Hartwell secured some very fine street views in Phoenix, showing the Parade, and they no doubt beggar description. The court house and square in one of them shows it off to better advantage than has ever been done before. The Throng of people on the streets gives Phoenix the appearance of a very large city.

Mr. Hartwell has a very large collection of Photographs throughout the Territory. All the old ruins, missions and scenery, together with the different Indians he has made a special effort to secure.

These efforts of late, however, have been directed to the Salt River Valley, and it is his earnest endeavor to show up her beauty to the world with his camera.

He has put in a great deal of his time out on ranches, photographing stock, grain fields, and herds of cattle, etc. The people of Phoenix should appreciate Mr. H. and they no doubt do, as his gallery is always filled with people ordering his work or admiring the many photographs on exhibition in his showcases.

Everybody should call and sit and he will guarantee satisfaction.

The Hartwell studio built a portion of its reputation on Frank's ability to document business and fraternal group meetings. Ever-larger groups required bigger cameras to produce the large images that were becoming popular and to provide a competitive advantage over other photographers in the area. Though photographic enlargement was possible, most photographs during this era were still produced as contact prints. This process involved production of a glass negative the same size as the final print. After processing and drying, the negative was placed in a printing frame, with a sheet of photographic paper; exposed to sunlight; and "printed out" until the desired exposure was reached. Finally, the print was "fixed" to eliminate its sensitivity to light, washed, dried, and mounted. As larger-sized portraits became popular, the low-contrast enlargements produced by using primitive solar enlargers usually required heavy airbrushing and hand retouching. These images became known as Crayon Portraits, in recognition of the amount of artistic interpretation involved.

By 1893, the Hartwell studio had acquired a new camera capable of producing negatives significantly larger than the 5" x 7" stereo cameras or 6 ½" x 8 ½" full-plate cameras typical of the era.

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With this equipment, Frank continued to document life in the rapidly growing Salt River Valley and market images of other territorial subjects. An advertisement in the January 18, 1893, Tucson *Arizona Daily Star* promoted his collection:

F. A. Hartwell, the artist and photographer of Phoenix, has in stock a large number of the most attractive photos of interesting Arizona scenes, especially of central Arizona, including many of the beautiful spots of Salt River Valley, also mountain scenery. Hartwell's gallery of Art is one of the best equipped in the territory.

Whether the ad was a catalyst is unclear, but soon after it ran Hartwell received a substantial contract to produce a series of photographs on behalf of the Arizona World's Fair Commission for presentation at the Columbian Exposition opening later that year in Chicago. Salt River Valley business leaders saw Hartwell's photographs as an innovative component of their effort to make the country aware of investment opportunities and to showcase the valley's rich agricultural capacity.

As part of the project, in April, Hartwell traveled to Tempe and Mesa to photograph the public schools and the Arizona Territorial Normal School (now Arizona State University). He completed his work for the commission in July, producing a set of photographic views of Arizona subjects on impressive 9" x 16" mounts. Included were images of the Salt River Valley, giant cacti, oranges, orchards, vineyards, the Arizona Falls, Palm Avenue, cattle ranch scenes, and views of interesting public buildings. Praised for their scope and artistic quality, the photographs were placed on public display in Phoenix before traveling to Chicago for exhibition. The Phoenix Chamber of Commerce launched a fund-raising effort to purchase and display the exhibition after it returned from the fair. In its description of the World's Fair exhibition, the *Republican* noted the wide range of subjects and the unusually large size of Hartwell's prints:

The photographs are of extra size, 9 x 16, and represent various products and many interesting views of the Salt River Valley. Among them are the giant cacti, orange orchards and vineyards, the Arizona Falls, Palm Avenue, cattle and ranch scenes, and views of the more interesting public buildings. The photographs were taken by Mr. Hartwell's large camera.⁹

In December 1893, Hartwell produced a tongue-in-cheek image that boosters quickly seized on to promote Phoenix and Arizona's



Promotional photograph showing five men posed coatless, eating watermelon, drinking lemonade, and relaxing among palm trees and cactus near downtown Phoenix. Boudoir cabinet card, F. A. Hartwell photographer, Christmas 1893.

climate. It shows five men posed around a table topped with fruit in a “typical” Phoenix yard. All are in shirtsleeves, standing next to a yucca plant and shaded by a palm tree. Two of the men are eating watermelon, one sips lemonade, and a hatless man holds a large fan. A sign proclaiming “Merry Christmas, Dec. 26-93, Phoenix, Ariz.” conveys the message that the winter holiday in Arizona is dramatically different than, and clearly preferable to, Christmas celebrations elsewhere in the country.

Portrait photography typically provided the foundation for successful local photographic studios. By the mid 1890s, Hartwell had become the portrait photographer of choice in Phoenix. His studio produced a broad range of formats, ranging from cartes-de-visite to Boudoir cards, but was particularly known for 4 ½" x 6 ½" cabinet cards. Many of the iconic images of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Arizona notables now held in institutional collections and by pioneer families are cabinet cards produced by the Hartwell studio.

The studio’s growing reputation drew commissions from throughout central Arizona, including contracts to photograph business meetings and organizations such as the Dental Registration



An unidentified Chinese businessman poses with a desk he brought into the studio to demonstrate his prosperity. Hartwell built a good reputation in the Chinese community after taking identification photographs that enabled Gila Bend Chinese to comply with the 1892 Geary Act. Cabinet card, F. A. Hartwell photographer, ca. 1898.

Board and the territorial legislature. In September 1893, the Peoria Canal Company commissioned Hartwell to document its operation in Gila Bend. The community liked Hartwell and his work well enough that it hired him to photograph local Chinese residents in compliance with the 1892 Geary Act that required people of Chinese descent to carry a photographic registration form with them at all times.

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The fact that his Phoenix studio made many images of Chinese individuals and families suggests that Hartwell made a good impression with the local Chinese community. One striking image shows a proud Chinese businessman dressed in his finest attire and posed by a desk that he had brought into the studio as an iconic prop.

As his reputation grew, Hartwell continued to take advantage of every opportunity to broaden his catalog. He traveled frequently throughout the territory, seeking new subjects in emerging mining camps and communities like Jerome, and documenting famous attractions such as San Xavier and Tumacacori.

In May of 1894, Hartwell photographed a huge mule train passing through Phoenix en route from Tombstone in southern Arizona, where mining was waning due to flooding, to the new mines near Congress in the Bradshaw Mountains. More than 100 mules were fed at the Grand Avenue Corral and shod at P. H. Colye's blacksmith shop at Five Corners. The large number of animals and brief layover kept blacksmiths and farriers working into the early morning hours. Local merchants took advantage of the empty wagons heading north, loading them with hay and grain to advertise their ability to supply the growing community at Congress.¹⁰



Prospectors provision in Phoenix before setting out to strike it rich. Although "Lost Dutchman" Jacob Waltz died in 1891, his legend continued to draw scores of adventurers to explore the mountains surrounding Phoenix. Boudoir cabinet card, F. A. Hartwell photographer, ca. 1895.

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As in Tucson, Hartwell was active in Phoenix community affairs. He served on jury duty in November of 1891, and was elected fire policeman at the January 1894 meeting of the Phoenix Engine Company. He also served on boards of directors for the La Fiesta Committee and the Phoenix Cycle Club.

One reason for Frank's interest in the Cycle Club may have been his son Byron. At twenty years of age, Byron had become quite an athlete. One of his first serious sporting preferences was bicycle racing. Through most of 1895, local papers regularly carried stories of Byron's individual and team racing efforts in both Phoenix and Tucson.

As Arizona continued its rapid growth, construction documentation became another branch of Hartwell's successful photographic businesses. In February 1895, Frank received a commission to document the construction of the Agua Fria Dam.

Although they operated far from the big city hotbeds of photographic innovation, Arizona photographers closely followed emerging styles and trends. To build demand and keep clients buying their products, photographers continually strove to produce to create new "styles" by experimenting with formats, mount sizes, and photographic techniques. Trade journals were filled with new offerings such as Newport Panels, Paris Panels, Promenade Cards, and Swiss Mounts. Some of these innovations fell by the wayside, while others became the hot new style of the year. Hartwell quickly adopted many of these popular sizes and formats to boost his business.

Although virtually all nineteenth-century photographic processes were monochromatic, there was strong interest in finding ways to reproduce photographs in color. Initially, coloring was applied by hand, using ink, watercolors, and dyes. In the 1890s, a photo chrome process that added color to black-and-white photographic images was developed in Switzerland and licensed by the Detroit Publishing Company, which distributed it under a subsidiary, the Detroit Photographic Company.

Hartwell was an early adopter of the new color process. The April 6, 1895, *Arizona Republican* mentions that Hartwell had recently produced a "group chromo" [likely a photographic chromolithograph] of the Arizona Orchestra. In addition to adding color, one benefit of chromolithographs was the ability to produce numerous

copies at relatively little expense. The *Republican* article goes on to note that Hartwell's chromos would be "framed and placed in various places of amusement" around the Valley.

As awareness of Hartwell's work grew, Frank expanded his interaction with other photographers and with publishers who began to make his work available to larger audiences. Whether to share the new "chromos," to compare notes, or to discuss potential business collaboration, a few days after the "chromo" notice in the *Republican*, Hartwell met with local photographer Fred Feldman in Tucson.¹¹

In August of 1895, Hartwell embarked on a Santa Fe Railroad excursion to California. The trip clearly was an effort to expand his photographic business. At about this time, Frank was involved in negotiations for using several of his Arizona territorial photographs as illustrations for William E. Smythe's article, "The Conquest of Arid America," in the *Century Illustrated Magazine*.¹² Hartwell's work also illustrated an article on Arizona irrigation in the *San Francisco Daily Call*.¹³

At the same time, competition for business was fierce in the rapidly growing Salt River Valley. By the mid-1890s, several photographers had established operations in Phoenix. Beginning on September 22, 1895, and running for a month, Hartwell offered half-off coupons for his popular cabinet photographs that included a studio sitting. Coincidentally, the new Beattie photographic studio had begun advertising in the *Arizona Republican*.

The ephemeral nature of photographic materials was brought home to the Hartwell studio during the summer of 1896. Ironically, unlike many of his peers who lost their negatives to breakage and fire, Frank saw most of his early work destroyed in natural disaster uncommon to the Arizona desert—rain. A leaky roof during a summer monsoon allowed rainwater to ruin several thousand negatives and photographs stored at the Hartwell studio.¹⁴

As busy as he was, Hartwell enjoyed an active social life. In January of 1896, he was appointed to the Phoenix Republican League Club's Registration and Order of Business subcommittees. He also added significantly to his fraternal connections, becoming a member of The Knights of Khorassan, El Yemamah Temple No. 65, D. O. K. K. Phoenix Lodge No. 2, B. P. O. Elk's Lodge, and the Knights of Pythias Phoenix Lodge No. 2. A new facet of Frank's personality surfaced when he took on the role of the bachelor in

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the farce, "Wanted, A Cook."¹⁵ Even so, Hartwell's dedication to his photographic craft was paramount, as he completed portraits of the Fifth Irrigation Congress.¹⁶

Increased competition eventually sparked a battle over who could produce the largest photographic print. By 1897, Hartwell had acquired a 20" x 24" camera that allowed him to generate impressive and extremely detailed scenic, landscape, and group portraits. He used the massive camera to make a large portrait of an irrigation congress meeting in Phoenix in January of 1897.¹⁷ At least one other studio, Messinger and Altenburgh, competed for business with their own 20"x 24" camera. The partners posed with their collection of large cameras as the focal point of their advertisements, and proudly posed in person, with their big camera, in photographs made at locations across the territory. One image shows one of the two photographers working with the huge camera at the bottom of the Grand Canyon.¹⁸

Frank pulled another coup when he was the first photographer to make portraits of a new national celebrity, James Stevens. A miner from Colorado working at Goldfield, near the Superstition Mountains, Stevens had been trapped by a cave-in at the Mammoth mine. His ordeal began on July 3, 1897, and lasted for twelve days and ten hours. The efforts to sink a rescue shaft became a significant news event as the trapped miner's feeble tapping came and went. At the time Stevens was rescued, no man had survived so long underground. His hometown paper, the *Central City (Colorado) Register Call*, estimated that Stevens had lost seventy pounds, weighing less than one hundred pounds when he was finally rescued. By the time Hartwell took his portrait, Stevens had regained almost twenty pounds and had recovered enough strength to return to his family in Nevadaville, Colorado.¹⁹

In addition to commissions for group business portraits, Frank saw another potential market in images documenting the lives of local Native Americans. His work with the Salt River Pima/Maricopa, both at his studio and in their community east of Phoenix, was particularly rich. Hartwell's photographs included strong individual and group portrait studies, as well as documentary fieldwork showing dwellings, churches, and daily life on the reservation.

Hartwell and one of his assistants accelerated efforts to document the Salt River Pima/Maricopa with a photographic excursion



F. A. Hartwell and other entrepreneurial photographers took advantage of the interest in images of Arizona's Native Americans. Hartwell enticed this group of Pima and Maricopa "warriors" to pose with an unidentified Anglo cowboy at his studio during the Phoenix Indian and Cowboy Festival. Boudoir cabinet card, F. A. Hartwell photographer, ca. 1898. This image later appeared as an Albertype printed postcard, published by The Berryhill Company, Phoenix, A. T., ca. 1908.

to the reservation in January 1898. The *Arizona Republican* carried an extensive description of the trip, made with a visiting editor from Canada, under the headline "Posing the Red Man—Phoenix Camera Fiends Swoop Down on the Maricopa":

A party composed of Frank A. Hartwell the Phoenix photographer, Charles J. Dossick his assistant, William Ruttinger editor of the Journal [illegible] Ontario Canada to the Maricopa Reservation. The trip was full of incidents. A dog was killed by accident, a horse was foundered and a quail was killed by one of the party. All of these things are mentioned incidentally to show the enterprising crowd. Mr. Dossick handled the camera and to tell about his troubles would take columns. He struggled with the Indians, giving them tobacco, money, good will and everything else, and with his persuasive power, together with the money and tobacco, he managed to get them to pose for his pictures. Photographer Hartwell was very much pleased with Mr. Dossick's work in handling the Indians and says he will take some pride in developing the negatives taken on the trip.

Several views were taken during the tour at the orange grove and at the falls on the canal [Arizona Falls]. Mr. Ruttinger will send these to his home in Canada.²⁰



Unidentified family of Papago (Tohono O'odham) potters in the Hartwell studio. This image was probably taken by studio operator Charles J. Dossick. Boudoir cabinet card, ca. 1898.

The photographers were apparently pleased with the resulting negatives. Charles Dossick made another trip to the reservation on January 16 to make additional images.

The following month, on February 24, Hartwell received another commission. He and James H. McClintock—an important Arizona pioneer who operated a news bureau in Phoenix and later became state historian and author of *Arizona, The Youngest State*—visited the Normal School in Tempe. Hartwell made photographs of the grounds and buildings, including panoramic views and images



Unidentified Pima man (misabeled as "Apache") with the results of a bird hunt. Probably taken by studio operator Charles J. Dossick. Cabinet card, ca. 1898

taken with his massive 20"x 24" camera. A number of these images eventually appeared in the school catalog. Hartwell printed the photographs using the relatively new half-tone process that was one of the first successful methods for the large-scale reproduction of photographs. Ever Hartwell's booster, the *Republican* noted that: "the enterprising photographer is turning out some excellent views of the normal school. They are in various sizes from a 22" x 28" to a very small size and reflect much credit on the artist."²¹

The term "stereopticon" has been misappropriated over the years, often being used to describe a viewer for stereographs—the stereoscope. Originally, stereopticon referred to what is today known as a lanternslide projector. In the days before photographs could be reproduced in quantity, and when the largest cameras were rarely as large as 20" x 24", the ability to project a large lanternslide image to a group of viewers was especially impressive. Usually,

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stereopticon lanternslides were produced from one side of a stereo negative. However, many photographers, including Hartwell, also produced slides from other format negatives and images. In March of 1898, the ladies of Phoenix's First M. E. Church promoted a lantern slide show that included some of Hartwell's images.²²

Hartwell's growing business led to further expansion of his staff. This time, he added a full partner to his cadre of studio operators. Born in April of 1864 in Illinois, H. L. Hammaker was twelve years younger than Hartwell. As is the case with many photographers of this era, little information has surfaced about where or how he learned his trade. Prior to his partnership with Hartwell, Hammaker had been active as a well-regarded photographer in Los Angeles and Pasadena, California. Within a month of his arrival in Phoenix, Hammaker was joined by his wife, Alcenia, and seven-year-old son, Rex, at the family's new home in Phoenix's Second Ward. The June 1, 1899, issue of the *Arizona Republican* praised the new collaboration and provided one of the few descriptions of Hammaker's work in California:

"The Only Two" Have gotten together at last. H. L. Hammaker, one of the most expert and artistic photographers in California has just formed a partnership with F. A. Hartwell, who is regarded as having no superior anywhere on the coast. This combination of artists has been under contemplation for more than three years and has been effected only within the last week. Most Arizonans who have visited the coast lately are already familiar with Mr. Hammaker's work. He was located for a long time in Los Angeles and later Pasadena. It is seldom that two photographers of such skill and reputation are associated and now that they are, the art loving people of Phoenix are justified in expecting much.²³

A month later, Hartwell & Hammaker demonstrated their interest in promoting Arizona as a place for business development by pledging \$25 to an advertising fund extolling the virtues of Phoenix, the Salt River Valley, and Maricopa County.²⁴ The partners also produced a number of photographs of the Indian and Cowboy Festival that were used to promote Phoenix and the Salt River Valley for years to come. The images included studio portraits of participants, as well as photographs of rodeo events that included mock stagecoach robberies.

Phoenix's growth continued to attract photographers who opened new galleries. In November 1898, the Baptist Boys' Social held an event to showcase the work of these local photographers. The "immense" display featured some of the best work of studio operators



Participants at the 1898 Phoenix Indian and Cowboy Festival rodeo. Note the shadow “self-portrait” of Hartwell in the center foreground. Boudoir cabinet card, F. A. Hartwell photographer, ca. 1898.

M. W. Mealey, Frank Hartwell, J. P. Rhodes, and A. E. Messinger and William Altenburgh, as well as a number of amateur photographers, some of whom exhibited more than 100 pictures each.²⁵

The Salt River formed a natural dividing line between the north and south sides of Phoenix. Long after bridges simplified cross-river travel, residents continued to use the boundary to describe the social and cultural differences between the two communities. In 1899, the *Republican* hired Hartwell to work with C. M. Zander on a special spring edition showcasing life on the south side of the river. The issue that appeared in April incorporated “views of public buildings, business blocks, handsome residences, and the best ranches and every point of interest.”²⁶ The *Republican* lavished special praise on Hartwell for his photographic work:

Although the south side has no photographer, this locality does not suffer in the least. F. A. Hartwell of Phoenix is perhaps known universally on the south side and is liked as well as he is known. . . . Most people on the south side have their work done in the Hartwell gallery. Reasonable prices and work absolutely first quality is the keynote of Mr. Hartwell’s business success.²⁷

Just two months after forming his partnership with Hartwell, Hammaker was apparently able to manage the studio on his own,

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affording Hartwell the opportunity to undertake a series of photographic excursions around the territory. At the end of July, Hartwell, accompanied by an able corps of assistants—Marshal Hooker, McWilliams, Stoner, and Solomon—left Phoenix on a photographic day trip that stopped first at Hot Springs Junction and then proceeded to Box Canyon, north of the Gila River and east of Florence.²⁸

Two months later, in mid September, Hartwell and *Arizona Republican* special correspondent C. M. Zander began an extended trip to take promotional photographs along the lines of the Santa Fe, Prescott & Phoenix Railway and the Santa Fe Railroad in northern Arizona. Likely based on his earlier success in making large photographs to promote Arizona at the Columbian Exposition, Hartwell had been hired to produce a series of 16" x 20" photographs to illustrate a report being produced by Governor Nathan O. Murphy. Future plans for the images included their use in advertising by the Santa Fe, Prescott & Phoenix Railway. Zander and Rothrock left Phoenix on September 21 and stopped at Castle Hot Springs,



The Santa Fe, Prescott & Phoenix Railroad was incorporated in 1891 and linked Phoenix and Prescott in 1895. The line provided passenger, freight, and mail services between the two cities and access to the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad via Ash Fork. Boudoir cabinet card, F. A. Hartwell photographer, ca. 1898.

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the tufa quarries at Kirkland, and various mining camps as they documented the railroad route.²⁹ By September 27, the pair had photographed Big Bug and Lynx Creek on their way to Prescott. The duo eventually traveled as far north as Williams, before returning to Phoenix on October 5. The *Weekly Republican* noted that “correspondent Zander had collected stories and background,” while Hartwell produced a “nice collection of negatives.”³⁰

Phoenix hosted a number of regular social events promoting the Salt River Valley. The Phoenix Midwinter Carnival, for example, emphasized the region’s mild winter weather and agricultural productivity. By the mid-1890s, the Phoenix Cowboy and Indian Fair and the Merchant’s Free Street Fair had joined the carnival in celebrating the valley’s commercial prospects. All three events quickly became popular subjects for amateur and professional photographers. Hartwell and fellow photographer Martin W. Mealey were both members of the seventy-five-person committee that planned and coordinated the big December 1899 Midwinter Carnival. J. P. Rhodes, A. E. Messinger and William Altenburg, M. W. Mealey, and



Uniformed male students and their teachers pose in front of recently completed buildings on the Phoenix Indian School campus established in 1891 between Central and Seventh streets north of Indian School Road. The school quickly grew to become the largest Indian school in the Southwest and the second largest in the nation, with more than 900 students. Boudoir cabinet card, F. A. Hartwell photographer, ca. 1898.



Phoenix Indian and Cowboy Festival parade, looking west down Washington Street past the twin towers of the Anderson Building (later the Berryhill Building). Boudoir cabinet card, F. A. Hartwell and H. L. Hammaker photographers, ca. 1899.

the Hartwell & Hammaker studio produced scores of photographs of all these events.³¹ The images were reproduced and sold as original photographs, and appeared as half-tone prints in various publications. Hartwell and Hammaker's images of Phoenix and the Salt River appeared in the February 24, 1900, issue of *Arizona Graphic*.

In July of 1900, a major fire decimated downtown Prescott, almost completely destroying Whisky Row and the surrounding business district. Frank Hartwell was apparently one of the photographers who raced north to document the aftermath of the blaze. Although no images bearing Hartwell's imprint have been identified to date, a number of photographs of Prescott's smoldering remains exist with the imprint of Thomas Bate. Bate, who eventually took over the Prescott studio of Erwin Baer, was an operator in Hartwell's studio at the time of the fire. It is not known if Bate accompanied Hartwell when the photographs of the Prescott fire were taken, if he traveled to Prescott and made the images on his own, or if, at some point, he acquired the negatives made by Hartwell or other photographers.



Remnants of Prescott after a major fire, started by a miner's candle in the Scopel Hotel, decimated "Whisky Row" and almost all of the other buildings in the downtown business district on July 14, 1900. Note the façade of the Palace Saloon at the left of the image. Silver print, F. A. Hartwell studio operator and Thomas Bate photographer, July 1900.

Sports continued to consume a significant part of Hartwell's leisure time. In addition to his notoriety as a bicyclist, Byron Hartwell had built a reputation as a baseball player. As Byron's baseball career flourished, and his team became more successful around the territory, they became the subjects for marketable photographs. The *Arizona Republican* noted that: "Hartwell & Hammaker got an excellent picture of the whole gang just as the gang appeared at the game (visiting rooters for the Los Angeles 'Elks' and the Phoenix/Los Angeles Baseball game). It is a fine group and the artists have colored each individual true to life. The pictures are large and make a splendid souvenir. They are on sale at the studio on Second Street."³² It appears that Frank shared his son's enthusiasm for baseball. An item in the *Arizona Republican* observed that "lithe F. A. Hartwell was one of the potential members of a new Phoenix baseball team."³³

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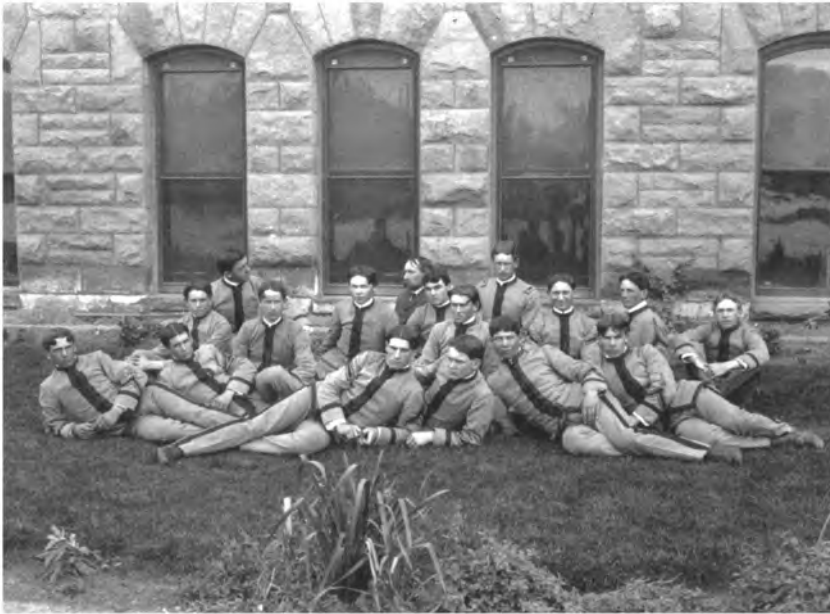
By 1901, escalating competition among photographic studios was driving down the price of photographs. The availability of roll film to replace the cumbersome collodion photographic processes, inexpensive hand-held cameras, and an exploding amateur interest in photography further eroded the commercial market. Advertisements began to fill local papers, offering sales, discounts, and promotions in an attempt to lure business back to the studios. A November 21, 1901, Hartwell & Hammaker advertisement promised: "We mean what we say. If you expect to give your photo as a Christmas present you cannot afford to loose a day, as we are sure to be busy anyway."

In April and May of 1902, Hartwell and Hammaker escalated their advertising campaign in the *Arizona Republican*, offering discounts of up to 40 percent for purchases of a dozen photographs.

By October, Hammaker and Hartwell began exploring yet another potential revenue source—offering processing and printing services for amateur photographers. The October 18, 1902, *Arizona Republican* carried an ad requesting that: "Tourists—Those wanting Kodak Work see Hartwell & Hammaker, 29 South Second Street." By November, Hammaker and Hartwell offered "Kodak Finishing done with the best results." Their fall advertising blitz featured such tag lines as: "Go to Hartwell & Hammaker for the latest style photographs"; "The Latest Art Specialties, Rich and Beautiful Hartwell & Hammaker"; "Hartwell & Hammaker Recognized leading Photographers of Arizona"; "Come and look at our work. It speaks for itself and is the real thing"; and "Hurry! Hurry!! Hurry!!! And get your photos if you want them for Xmas."

That winter, Hartwell received a commission to photograph Territorial Governor Alexander Brodie's visit to the Normal School. On December 11, Frank "got some fine views of the governor and his party, the dormitory, the various school classes, the football team, the military cadets, the basketball team, the students as a body, the buildings, and the grounds and numerous other interesting scenes."³⁴

Hartwell and Hammaker continued to invest in advertisements in an effort to remain viable in the exploding amateur market. In the process, the vocabulary of their ads became increasingly trendy, as they sought to expand into new markets. One classic example, from 1903, proclaimed: "Hartwell & Hammaker —Photographic



Group of male students posed in front of Old Main at the Tempe Normal School (now Arizona State University). Mounted silver print, F. A. Hartwell photographer, ca. 1901.

Gallery, is where the swellest [*sic*] photographic work is done.” Still, the pair managed to obtain occasional contract work. Hartwell photographed the fifty members of the Phoenix Board of Trade at their May 1904 meeting .

Hartwell saw his earlier work creating lanternslides for stereopticon presentations as another potential revenue stream. Accordingly, he produced a series of lanternslides for the Phoenix Board of Trade to illustrate Reverend W. H. Bagby’s promotional lectures to eastern audiences. The intention was to show the development of territorial Arizona and to “make it clear to his audiences that this valley is peopled with real white men who wear cloths [*sic*] just like the business men of the east.”³⁵

The following month, Hartwell began exploring yet another model for keeping his business afloat. The June 4, 1904, *Arizona Republican* carried an ad for “three or four competent agents” to assist in marketing Hartwell’s photographs and photographic services. Apparently, it failed. The following month, Hartwell ran a

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special notice stating that "Parties holding my coupons must positively *call and have their sittings made on or before the 17th of July, 1904.*"³⁶

Hartwell's last major commission was for the Santa Fe Railroad. In August of 1904, he photographed the Phoenix & Eastern Railroad and the community of Kelvin. Later that year, Hartwell began training another photographic assistant, Mrs. Ellye Irwin. Once again, his efforts to shore up the business seem to have failed. Mrs. Irwin apparently took advantage of Hartwell's tutoring, only to leave the studio and open her own business in Mesa in 1905.

Although his public visibility waned, Hartwell remained active photographically. Notably, he produced an *en banc* portrait of the members of the Arizona Supreme Court, prior to the retirement of Justice George Russell Davis.³⁷ Always seeking new revenue sources to help support his business, in May 1905 Hartwell began carrying miniature paintings, including German watercolors and India-ink miniature portraits to augment his photographic offerings.

As his photographic business declined, Frank's interest in mining revived. He was an early promoter of the Gavilan mining district, twelve miles north of Phoenix. The *Republican* observed that: "He is very enthusiastic over the mining claims in that district and predicts that with development it will become one of the principal districts of the territory."³⁸

While Hartwell struggled to compete and keep the studio afloat, in May of 1906 a representative of the Hartwell studio returned to a popular subject and long-term client, the Territorial Normal School. Hartwell photographs of the senior class, new buildings, and students graced the school's annual catalog.

Postcards were another potential source of revenue. The cards had become extremely popular after postal regulation changes in 1901 reduced the cost and permitted images and correspondence on a single card. In the days before telephones, interest in using and collecting postcards exploded as a way to keep in touch with friends and relatives. Drug stores, stationers, mercantile stores, and even photographic studios offered racks of printed and photographic postcards to take advantage of the new market.

The Berryhill Company moved into the Anderson building, which had previously been home to the Heyman Furniture Company, at 48 E. Washington, on the corner of Washington and First Street, in downtown Phoenix. To boost sales and help market their

new business, the Berryhill Company sought photographs that they could reproduce as printed postcards. Hartwell saw this as an opportunity to capitalize on the photographs he had produced since his tragic flood. He provided more than 100 images of Arizona, emphasizing Phoenix and the Salt River Valley, that were colored and printed as postcards under the Berryhill label, beginning about 1907. Without understanding that these images had originally been produced by Hartwell, or that most had been made almost a decade earlier, most of these postcards are incorrectly identified today as having been produced in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Nineteen seven was another tragic year for Hartwell. In July, he was hit by the platform of a streetcar. Later that year, likely while he was still recovering from the streetcar injury, Hartwell contracted pneumonia. He never fully recovered his health and passed away on June 20, 1908, from kidney disease. He is buried in Phoenix's historic Evergreen Cemetery.

Hartwell's family and staff continued to operate the photographic gallery, at 29 S. Second Street, until September 5, 1908, when it was sold to Martin W. Mealey. Mealey, in turn, sold the studio to John Branch, who as late as 1912 was still taking advantage of Hartwell's reputation. Branch advertised himself as the proprietor of "Hartwell's Studio," which was still listed under that name in the Phoenix business directory.³⁹

Frank's wife, Helen, is listed (perhaps erroneously) in the 1910 Arizona census as divorced and living with her son, Albert, in Mesa. Hartwell's family (wife Helen, daughter Luella, and sons Byron and Albert) remained in Phoenix until 1914. By 1920, Helen was identified as widowed and living in Los Angeles. By 1930, she had moved to Glendale, California. Son Byron passed away in Idaho, at the age of seventy-seven, in 1949. Daughter Luella passed away in Los Angeles, at the age of fifty-eight, in 1951. Son Albert died at age seventy-nine in Roseville, California. Helen was the longest-living Hartwell family member, passing away at age 102, near where she had been born, in Silver Springs, Maryland, in November 1981. Whether she retained any of Hartwell's photographs, if they were dispersed, or where they may be today is unknown.

During his twenty-six-year photographic career, Francis Hartwell produced thousands of images on his travels through the Arizona Territory. Unlike most of his peers, he apparently never

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produced any stereographs, one of the most popular nineteenth-century photographic formats. However, the distribution of his images as postcards was innovative and ground-breaking for its time. Despite the loss of most of his early photographs in the 1896 studio flood, Hartwell's work lives on in the prints that survive in family collections. His portraiture and commercial work, as cabinet cards and mounted photographs, provides significant documentation of Arizona's early development, and places Hartwell firmly in the pantheon of state's major pioneer photographers.

NOTES

1. By finding and examining original copies of historic photographs, and by encouraging print reproductions to include photographic mounts when they carry photographic imprints and to credit the original creator on reproduced images, it is possible to identify specific photographers. I feel that understanding their lives, the processes they used, and the era in which they worked is critical to better understanding their work. This information is also critically important in order to accurately date and identify historic images, another important foundation for interpreting pioneer photographs and evaluating their place in Arizona history.
2. Ontario, Canada, Census, 1861, sheet 20, line 38.
4. U. S. Naturalization Records, July 25, 1882, p 345.
5. Maricopa County Marriage Book, Volume A-1, p. 117.
6. *Prescott Evening Courier*, April 14, 1891.
7. *Weekly Journal Miner* (Prescott), August 30, 1893.
8. *Arizona Republican* (Phoenix), June 21, 1891.
9. *Ibid.*, May 20, 1893.
10. *Prescott Journal Miner*, May 2, 1894.
11. *Arizona Republican*, April 9, 1895.
12. *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, vol. 50 (May 1895-October 1895), pp. 85-99.
13. *San Francisco Daily Call*, December 15, 1895.
14. *Arizona Republican*, July 15, 1896.
15. *Ibid.*, December 23, 1896.
16. *Ibid.*, December 18, 1896.
17. *Weekly Phoenix Herald*, January 14, 1897.
18. Images in author's collection.
19. *Arizona Republican*, July 27, 1897.
20. *Ibid.*, January 11, 1898.
21. *Ibid.*, February 28, 1898.
22. *Ibid.*, March 8, 1898.
23. *Ibid.*, June 1, 1899.
24. *Ibid.*, July 15, 1899.
25. *Ibid.*, November 5, 1898.

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26. Ibid., March 16, 1899.
27. Ibid., April 1, 1899.
28. Ibid., July 30, 1899.
29. *Arizona Weekly Republican*, September 21, 1899.
30. Ibid., October 5, 1899.
31. Ibid., December 7, 1899.
32. *Arizona Republican*, October 5, 1900.
33. Ibid., July 31, 1901.
34. Ibid., December 13, 1902.
35. Ibid., May 19, 1904. According to the *1903 Phoenix Directory*, Reverend Bagby and his wife lived at 431 W. Washington.
36. *Arizona Republican*, July 14, 1904.
37. Ibid., April 6, 1905.
38. Ibid., May 13, 1906.
39. *1912 Polk's Arizona Pictorial Gazetteer and Business Directory*.

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