WASHINGTON, D. C., January 1906—The perfunctory congressional hearings had droned on for hours when Oakes Murphy rose to speak. The portly ex-Governor of Arizona Territory was red-faced angry. He accused the representatives of not listening to the pleas of the Arizonans present. He asserted that orders from President Theodore Roosevelt to shackle Arizona to New Mexico as one state in a joint statehood bill was meant to deny Arizona its political rights. He accused the congressional power brokers of New England of defeating a shift of power to the Far West. He labeled the House hearing a farce. Murphy’s outburst caught the chair of the Committee on Territories by surprise and the Arizonan was soon in a shouting match with its members.

Chairman Edward Hamilton banged the gavel and reprimanded Murphy on how he should address the august body of which he at one time had been a member. But to the press, Murphy’s outburst was the beginning of the worst days of the battle against joint statehood. Newspapers from coast to coast quoted Murphy highlighting the plight of the territory.¹

The previous month, President Roosevelt had urged the Congress to no longer delay passage of a bill providing for combining Arizona and New Mexico into one state and to allow immediately for the new single state to enter the Union. Over the next month, congressmen who had sworn never to vote to join Arizona to its neighbor were met with a combination of “Teddy’s” big stick and Speaker of the House “Uncle Joe” Cannon’s pressure and his rewards of office—some called them bribes—to line up behind the jointure bill.

By the time Murphy and the Arizonans appealed to the House committee to reconsider, as Murphy said, “the cinch was in.” On January 20 the jointure bill appeared on the floor of the House and passed within four days. The bill quickly crossed the Capitol’s halls into the waiting arms of Albert Beveridge, chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Territories. His glowing review and recommendation on the joint statehood bill (some called it his “holy cause”) on January 28 suggested a quick
passage in the Senate and subsequent signature into law by the President. The political entity called Arizona was about to be erased from the map.

For a generation Nathan Oakes Murphy had been the loudest booster for Arizona statehood. A genial, five-feet eight-inch skilled politician, he had served in the territory’s two highest posts, elected and appointed. Through his wit and congeniality, plus, as one author wrote, a subtle forceful drive (and occasional angry outbursts), he had championed home-rule. Under territorial status, its residents were second-class citizens, unable to vote for the president or to have voting representatives in Congress. They were ruled by inept presidential appointees in the highest posts, and dictated to by congressional oversight of any legislation. They were denied rights and privileges available to most Americans.

THE MURPHYS COME TO ARIZONA

During the 18th century the Scotch-Irish ancestors of Frank and Oakes Murphy left Northern Ireland to farm the rocky soil of Maine. In 1856, shortly after Lucy and Benjamin Franklin Murphy married and began raising a family of nine, the mass migration of Yankees to the upper Midwest uprooted them to the shores of Lake Michigan. Their son Nathan Oakes had been born in Jefferson, Maine, on October 14, 1849, as well as his brother Frank Morrill on September 4, 1854, but they were raised in the deep woods of upstream Cato Township, Wisconsin.²

The boys learned hard work around the mill and multiple jobs in logging camps and in the growing lake town of Manitowac. Their mother, herself educated and a talented writer, ensured her family was to be better educated. Oakes, after finishing high school, spent the gray winters of 1866–’69 teaching in a one-room township school house. At the same time the family became fanatical adherents to the cause of the newly formed Republican Party—birthed in Wisconsin in 1846. The Murphy clan was Republican to the core. In 1877 twenty-three-year old Frank headed to Arizona Territory and soon found himself driving a buckboard stage to the short-lived, silver boom camp of Tip Top. Within a few years he had found a new home in the territorial capital of Prescott. When his brother Oakes arrived in April 1883, they formed F. M. Murphy & Brother, a brokerage firm meant to sell lands and mines. Prescott was beginning three decades of mining expansion, and the brothers had set up shop at an opportune moment.

They bought the hydraulic gold mines of Lynx Creek, then turned around and sold them to a British company. They orchestrated the sale of the failed Jerome copper mines to Montana millionaire William Andrews Clark, who tapped into the fabulously rich United

Frank M. Murphy
Verde deposit. They befriended Dr. James Douglas, the Canadian just beginning his career with Phelps, Dodge, and his sons Walter and Jimmie—important later in many of their schemes. And they negotiated the sale of the Congress Gold Mine to a Mississippi River fleet owner, Joseph “Diamond Jo” Reynolds, who helped Frank on his way to his first million dollars.³

OAKES ENTERS ARIZONA POLITICS

Business was soon secondary when Oakes became the private secretary of the Republican governor Frederick A. Tritle in 1883, with whom he helped rejuvenate the territory’s Republican party. Oakes pushed Frank into running for Yavapai county sheriff, for which, Frank later recalled, he “fortunately failed of election.”

During the late 1880–’90s, Democrats controlled nearly all local and territory-wide elected posts. The Republican revival in Arizona didn’t go well until 1888 when Benjamin Harrison (an Indiana Republican) was elected President. Harrison appointed Conrad Meyer Zulick to be governor, but former governor Tritle helped Oakes Murphy get the appointment as territorial secretary (equivalent to lieutenant governor). As territorial secretary he jumped into his life-long cause, the admission of Arizona as a state to the Union, working hand-in-hand with Marcus A. “Mark” Smith, the territory’s Delegate to Congress on a statehood bill.

In an interview with the press in Chicago, Murphy said, “The old mythic idea about droughts, deserts, Indians, and outlaws are being rapidly exploded by the actual facts.” Arizona had boundless mineral wealth and, with irrigation, its farms would be as bountiful as Kansas.⁴ Murphy was optimistic about statehood since Congress seemed on a statehood creation spree—six northern tier states (North and South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, and Washington) gained admission in 1889.

In 1892, while in Washington D.C. lobbying for statehood, Oakes Murphy was appointed as Arizona Governor by President Harrison, and in June he took Smith’s statehood bill to the National Republican convention. Working with Senator Joseph B. Foraker of Ohio and others in a resolutions committee, he failed to get a statehood plank adopted but succeeded in inserting one for arid lands legislation. Rushing back to Washington to help push the statehood bill, a naïve Murphy was surprised when it faltered in committee. One more effort in the winter 1892–’93 failed to budge the Senators.

The Arizonans unwisely had held firm to the government subsidy of silver mining through the rallying cry for free and unlimited coinage of silver—and inserted such a declaration in the draft state constitution of 1891. No Congress would accept such a policy, with the nation bound for a gold standard, where silver would be devalued. Arizona’s silver mining industry collapsed in the resulting crash of silver market prices.⁵

FROM GOVERNOR TO DELEGATE

With the election of the Democrat Grover Cleveland as president, and with the national shift in administration, Governor Murphy found himself out of office in April 1893, but he was not finished.

In the spring of 1894, Oakes Murphy determined to run for Delegate to Congress, a position considered the property of the incumbent Democrat Mark Smith. But the depression of 1893 and the rise of the Populist Party brought forward a charismatic young politician, William “Buckey” O’Neill. O’Neill had been a Republican and a friend of the Murphys until he made corporations, especially railroads, targets for criticism and
tax reform. In an unusual three-way campaign, O’Neill took enough votes away from the Democrat J. C. Herndon that Murphy won (Smith had wisely declined to run). Thus Murphy would serve as Arizona Territory’s non-voting member of Congress from March 1895 to March 1897.

Delegate Murphy immediately began working the halls in Washington for a revised statehood bill (without “Silverite” language). As before, the bill passed the House but found an unfriendly Senate tabling the statehood issue. Without support from the Cleveland administration, the bill died. A frustrated Oakes decided that he would not run again for the thankless job of non-voting Delegate.

In Washington there thrives a disease known as Potomac Fever. Once caught, there is no cure, and Murphy had it. No out-of-office politician with it can avoid the annual return to the banks of the Potomac River for the winter session of Congress. After December 1895 Murphy may have returned to Arizona to glad-hand constituents and cronies or delve into assisting his brother in mines, railroads, irrigation projects and resorts, but for the rest of his active career he would find himself each December again at the nation’s capital.

GOVERNOR AGAIN

When war was declared with Spain in April 1898, a harried President William McKinley found Oakes Murphy on his doorstep and, as the story goes, offered him the now vacant governorship of Arizona on the spot. He did not wish to be distracted and Murphy was given no option but to agree to serve a four-year term. That’s the story. However, Murphy’s friendship with McKinley’s Secretary of War, Russell Alger, who was a director in brother Frank’s railroads and mines, may have given Oakes the entrée and a nudge to return to the territory’s highest office. Back in Phoenix, one of his first acts was the preparation of the governor’s annual report, which justified and called for immediate statehood for Arizona. “The progress in the Territory,” he wrote, “in population, in wealth, and the development of material resources has been remarkable.” He made his case in one sentence: “The rapidity with which Arizona has developed from a primitive frontier region into one of the most progressive, enlightened, and law-abiding communities of the Union is neither understood nor appreciated by Eastern representatives, otherwise the boon of self-government would not now be denied us.” The thick volume was part of an overall strategy, slowly developed, that would end in statehood.

The maturing politician knew what Arizonans needed: the strong support of the McKinley administration; a Republican Delegate to Congress with connections; and friends and champions in Congress who would ensure final success. In June 1900 the delegates from Arizona to the Republican Party National Convention had inserted into the party platform, with the help of Oklahoma and New Mexico delegates (and with the friendly assistance of Senator Joseph Foraker) a commitment plank for statehood for the territories.

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The Arizona delegation also made a vocal point to pull the bandwagon for Roughrider Theodore Roosevelt for vice-president. The previous year, during the first reunion of veterans of the 1st Volunteer Cavalry, Colonel “Teddy” had told his old troopers that “you can count on me” to support statehood for the territories. The Murphy brothers also courted President McKinley in orchestrating a well-publicized trip through Arizona in May 1901 as part of the president’s Western tour. In Phoenix, Governor Murphy found the president hesitant to give a strong endorse-
ment but friendly enough to aver that state-
hood would be deserved in time. 8

Meanwhile, the contest for Delegate to
Congress fell on Oakes shoulders. A Repub-
lican victory would send a message to the
McKinley administration and Republican-
controlled Congress that a new state of
Arizona would be allied with the Grand Old
Party. Murphy first courted Richard A. F.
Penrose, Jr., owner of the Commonwealth
Mine in Cochise County, to run for
Delegate—his brother was Senator Boies
Penrose of Pennsylvania, one of the
most powerful members of Congress.
Penrose declined the
honor, but agreed his
brother would support
the statehood bill. 9

With the Democratic
Party in turmoil over
the possibility of running two candidates,
Murphy decided, unfortunately, to run for
the office himself. His campaign message was
simple: he would bring statehood.

The press treated Murphy unmercifully. He
was the target of the nastiest of accusations,
all false. Oakes Murphy wrote to a friend in
October 1900 that “political demagogues [are]
circulating falsehoods about me seeking to
prejudice the people.” 10 The Democrat
territory failed again to vote a Republican into
office. The successful candidate, Mark
Smith, to his credit when it came to statehood,
was a bipartisan ally.

Senator Albert Beveridge

During the lame duck session, 1900–1901,
both Murphy and Smith were in Washington
testing the waters for statehood. The follow-
ing October, Governor Murphy called a rally
for statehood in Phoenix, which passed
resolutions for immediate statehood. Oakes
put them in his pocket and in December of
1901 optimistically
headed for the
Potomac. 11

Few Arizonans doubted
statehood legislation
would soon coast to an
easy victory. The
Governor and the
Delegate both were in
Washington D. C.,
optimistically aiding
where they could the
movement of the new
statehood bill through
the House. It passed
May 9, 1902. Senator
Mathew Quay of
Pennsylvania, urged by
friends in New Mexico,
was ushering the bill
through the Senate.
With the statehood goal
apparently about to be realized, the Arizona
Republican newspaper cheered, “Statehood
has no more consistent and untiring champion
than N. O. Murphy.”

The Democratic press similarly praised Mark
Smith. One can catch a hint of expectant
senators in the making. Murphy’s four year
term as governor would end July 1, 1902, but
he remained active in the statehood debates.

Unfortunately, as Murphy had to report back
home, the bill had been sidetracked in the
Senate Committee on Territories. 12
The fate of events can turn subtly or catastrophically. On September 6, 1901, an assassin fatally shot President McKinley, elevating the untested Roosevelt to the White House. Another shift occurred in the Senate. That winter, a first term senator from Indiana, Albert Beveridge, a Roosevelt protégé replaced the chair of the Senate Committee on Territories. Arizonans were about to enter a period of trial. The statehood bill was stalled by Beveridge who declared that his committee needed more information. The grapevine said he opposed the bill because, among other things, it would probably bring in two Democrats into the Senate if Arizona gained statehood.

Reacting quickly, Murphy sent a letter assuring Beveridge that “Arizona would be safely Republican.” As for U. S. Senators, “there would be no question of the outcome.” In a more strongly worded letter, the editor of the Arizona Republican, owned by Frank Murphy, wrote that Republican Senators would be elected because the railroads and mining corporations ran the territory. Because the legislature would select Senators, corporations would influence the outcome. He added the astonishing information that men in the legislature “are of very ordinary timber and easily controlled. It has always been easy for these corporations to get through any legislation they desired in their interests.” Beveridge blandly responded to both that Congress would pass the bill not because of party considerations, but “purely on its merits.”

**BEVERIDGE’S ‘INVESTIGATION’**

During the congressional recess Beveridge led an investigating committee through Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona. One senator later recalled that Beveridge told the committee members before departure that he planned not an investigation but a condemnation. Between November 16 and 19 they briefly visited Prescott, Phoenix, Tucson, and Bisbee. At the request of the new Republican Governor, Alexander Brodie, a Rough Rider friend of the President, Oakes Murphy met the party in Phoenix while brother Frank’s Congress mine manager, William Staunton, escorted the party the entire time it toured the territory. As Staunton took Beveridge to the 3,050 foot level of the Congress mine and through the gold mill he thought Beveridge bored and inattentive. “On the train,” wrote Staunton, “Beveridge dozed most of the time, with his hat over his eyes and his back to the window.”

When delivered to Congress in December 1902, the Beveridge report stated that Arizona and New Mexico were not prepared for statehood; that Arizona was but a mining camp filled with saloons, gamblers, and people of low morals. Worse, corrupt corporations, some of them connected to the big political bosses controlled the legislature, and were looking for more government largess with statehood. The Murphy arguments were turned back on them.

**BEVERIDGE VERSUS ARIZONA**

The now ex-Governor Murphy reported to his brother that Beveridge was but a tool for the more powerful Eastern Senators—Nelson Aldrich of Rhode Island, Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts, and Orville Platt of Connecticut. The power brokers wanted to fend off the growing political power of the West. Aldrich had helped the six states gain statehood in 1889, but was burned when their interests came into conflict with the Northeast. He had no desire to see a repeat. They had found the right chair for the committee on territories, for Beveridge conducted his fight against statehood with the righteous air of a zealot who had found sin. In hindsight it is obvious that Beverage was just as committed to stop Arizona statehood as Oakes Murphy
was committed to see a new star added to the flag.

THE ‘JOINTURE’ BATTLE BEGINS
During the winter of 1902–1903, Oakes Murphy, in editorials in the *Washington Post* and *Arizona Republican*, kept Arizonans apprised of the movements in Congress. He cursed the junior Senator from Indiana, praised the maneuvering of Senator Quay, and then reported the disturbing news, in January 1903, of a proposed new compromise bill that would join Arizona and New Mexico together as one state. While the Quay-Beveridge battle in the Senate stalled the statehood bill, the second proposal brought reaction from Arizonans. Murphy kept Governor Brodie informed and suggested he call for resolutions to let Congress know the opinion of Arizonans on jointure. Anti-jointure resolutions came into Washington from cities, counties and various associations and clubs, and the miners of the Humbug district of south Yavapai County sent a sarcastic resolution stating they were opposed to being “joined to New Mexico for statehood purposes, to Alaska for judicial purposes, and Puerto Rico for education purposes.”

In February 1903 the territorial legislature passed a resolution which stated that if a jointure bill passed, Arizona should be allowed to vote separately on the acceptance of a state constitution, in effect killing the bill. Murphy encouraged the resolution, while Mark Smith cursed it for suggesting Congress might think Arizonans supported joint statehood. Fortunately, the 1903 session ended without action. Oakes Murphy retreated to Arizona, where he was involved in several business deals with his brother.

OAKES TAKES TIME OUT
Frank’s multi-million dollar holding company, the Development Company of America (DCA), had an interest in the land selected for a monumental dam on the Salt River. Because the federal government had passed legislation supportive of irrigation projects, Oakes helped sell the company’s interest in the dam site. He also negotiated the five million dollar deal to create the Imperial Copper Company under the DCA and to acquire the rich copper mines at Silver Bell, near Tucson. The broker’s fee provided for a comfortable life style. But his divorce from wife Nellie in September 1903 was the most shocking news. Democrat newspapers announced as cause “intemperance” on the part of the ex-governor, while Republican press accounts cited abandonment, a Victorian euphemism for having gone their separate ways. By December 1903 he was back in Washington readying for the next statehood fight, all the while courting Miss Emma Sells of Washington, who would become his second wife in April.

BEVERIDGE SNUBBED BY OAKES
After a famous snub of Beveridge—refusing his handshake in the capital one day, the equivalent at the time of a challenge to a duel—Oakes departed for a six-month honeymoon in Europe and the Mediterranean with his new wife. By that time, the political squabbles over joint statehood had diminished as the presidential election campaign of 1904 progressed. Before the campaign had fairly begun, Governor Brodie, a stout opponent of jointure, revealed to Arizonans that Roosevelt was not committed to jointure, and that Arizona statehood—jointure or otherwise—would not be a plank in the Republican Party platform for the fall contest. Roosevelt, however, wisely kept it from becoming a campaign issue as he gained election. After the election Brodie could be guaranteed the governor’s chair for four more years but in December he announced his resignation and returned to the ranks of the U.S. Army as a major, foretelling what Arizonans feared. President Roosevelt would become an advo-
cate for joint statehood—a position Brodie could not defend.

In the 58th Congress, in the winter of 1904–1905, Oakes Murphy and Delegate John Wilson, soon to be replaced by Mark Smith, worked now to kill a statehood bill that would link Arizona to New Mexico. A new challenge had come from New Mexico: the dominant Republican Party there had split, with a majority now supporting jointure. Many New Mexicans thought this was their only chance, after so long, for statehood. Also, because New Mexico had double the population of Arizona, it would control the politics and culture of the new state. Frank Murphy in a private letter cursed the turncoats who, if they had stayed the course, would have guaranteed statehood for both—now it looked like statehood for none.

**BEVERIDGE’S VISION FOR ARIZONA**

Senator Beveridge brought the bill out of his committee in December 1904. During the debate the following February, he read before the Senate his “Arizona the Great” speech: imagine a territory of 262,300 square miles, second only to Texas; a territory stretching 630 miles from the Great Plains to the Pacific states. He praised the new state in all the terms Murphy had used to justify single statehood for Arizona. Except, Beveridge added, the prosperous Arizonans though less numerous could help civilize the backward uneducated, non-English speaking Hispanics of New Mexico.

Through a series of bipartisan efforts an amendment was added to Beveridge’s bill in order to give Arizonans a chance to defeat joint statehood. Frank Murphy and his wealthy backers, with access to Senator Joseph Foraker, strove to give Arizonans a voice. Foraker, a long-time colleague of Oakes, worked with the Arizonans to draft an amendment that would allow Arizona a separate vote on the acceptance of any joint state constitution. If they voted against the new state constitution it could not go into force. Because of this Foraker Amendment, the bill returned to a conference committee where it died. But Murphy warned this was only the first round of a major battle.

**DUELING CONVENTIONS**

In a bi-partisan call to arms the territorial Republican and Democrat central committees organized an anti-joint statehood convention in Phoenix. On May 9, 1905, six hundred participants organized an Anti-Joint Statehood League. Headed by Governor Joseph Kibbey (Brodie’s replacement) with Frank Murphy a vice-president, the league set up statewide committees of correspondence. Various committees were formed to prepare for the oncoming battle. Writings by Oakes Murphy were compiled into an anti-joint statehood pamphlet and the league distributed other literature, ribbons and pins.

In opposition, a pro-joint statehood convention met in Tucson. “Little James,” a fictional Salt River Valley country boy who had taken up the quill pen (actually “Uncle Billy” Spears, a reporter from the Arizona Republican) covered the convention of about sixty. Little James reported that they praised “Senator Beverage”[sic] and his Arizona the Giant speech, and had organized themselves a Giant Arizona League. Former governors Louis C. Hughes and Myron H. McCord led the Giantists. They signed a memorial praying Congress not to vote on the question. Uncle Billy’s account mocked the small movement in a widely read weekly column in the Republican.

**A MORE FAVORABLE TOUR**

More significant was the publicity stunt pulled off by Frank Murphy. He had courted Congressman James Tawney of Minnesota to bring a group of congressmen on an unofficial
tour of Arizona. In October, through E. H. Harriman of the Southern Pacific, James Douglas of the El Paso & Southwestern, and himself as president of the Santa Fe, Prescott & Phoenix, Murphy orchestrated a first class railroad excursion, with private cars, the best Pullman cars, and more. The tour included the best of dinners, the best of schools, and the fashionable parts of Tucson, Phoenix, and Prescott, with a stop at the Grand Canyon. Murphy the promoter set up special events at his Tombstone mines, an underground feast in a copper mine, a horseback jaunt through the pines at the end of his new railroad to Crown King south of Prescott, and banquets and speeches throughout the territory.

Outside journalists with the Tawney tour gathered information about the universal opposition to joint statehood. More important were the words of the Congressmen themselves who, as some declared, opposed joint statehood—news captured by the press across the country. Congressman Henry Adams of Wisconsin stated he had “voted for joint statehood but never would again.” Frank Murphy predicted to colleagues that any joint statehood bill would die in the next session of Congress.

TR FINALLY TAKES A STAND

Oakes returned to Washington in time for the opening of Congress and heard President Roosevelt’s shocking message urging immediate passage of an Arizona-New Mexico joint statehood bill. Roosevelt also called for the joining of Oklahoma Territory with Indian Territory into one state. Powerful lobbies arrived to support the New Mexico and Oklahoma cause. The news reverberated like a summer thunderstorm across parched Arizona. Oakes Murphy, Delegate Smith, and others sent word to the Arizona Anti-Joint State League to hurry and send delegates to Washington to present a unified voice in opposition.

Merchants Morris and Baron Goldwater, Cattle Association head Dwight Heard, farmer Dr. Alfred Chandler, attorney Robert Morrison and two dozen others arrived to show that not just miners and railroad men opposed joint statehood. Governor Kibbey once more called for resolutions from across the territory. Frank Murphy met with E. H. Harriman in New York, and received agreement that Harriman would have his lieutenant in Arizona, Epes Randolph, call a meeting in Tucson to lead in sending resolutions. He similarly had James Douglas of Phelps Dodge, Senator William A. Clark, and more corporate friends issue statements in the press opposing joint statehood.

In late December 1905 Frank Murphy hosted the delegates to a strategy dinner at the Raleigh Hotel in Washington. Murphy and his mining partner, E. B. Gage, helped defray the expenses of the delegation. Delegate Smith was there as well as Oakes Murphy to represent the Phoenix board of trade; Walter Douglas of the Copper Queen Mine arrived to represent industry; and Henry Robinson of Youngstown, Ohio, and Pasadena, California, attorney for Ohio steel companies and Murphy’s DCA, arranged meetings with Senator Foraker. The Arizona delegates agreed that Frank Murphy, however, was to stay in the background because he represented mines and railroads, and the merchants, cattlemen and farmers, chaired by Heard, would prepare for the hearing with the House.

All that clout failed to hold the pressure on the House. As mentioned at the beginning of this essay, President Roosevelt and Speaker Cannon’s force pushed the bill through. After witnessing the spectacle, Frank Murphy’s partner and the assistant secretary to the Republican National Committee, Victor Mason, wrote “I believe you would be perfectly dumbfounded to learn of the meth-
ods followed by the President and the Speaker of the House to whip the so-called insurgents in line.” Their effort to push joint statehood, he added, “was little short of infamous, and if pursued by other people either in or out of official life would be plainly termed bribery.” In January 1906, Frank Murphy telegraphed the Arizona Republican that Congressman Tawney had “turned on us, but we will beat them in the Senate.” On January 28, “Little James” wrote for his readers not to worry: “Sentar Beverage’s Big State Bill” is about to meet Senator Foraker’s “Big Club.”

The news of the statehood fight had gained national attention. Some prominent magazines and newspapers praised joint statehood, while others commented on the president’s and Uncle Joe Cannon’s “infamous” actions. And reporters touring Arizona found overwhelming opposition among all classes of people. Several journals allowed Westerners to voice their opinions. In the February 3 issue of Outlook Ernest Lewis of Phoenix explained that sentiment and love of home were at heart of the issue. Threaten any other commonwealth with loss of its autonomy and expect a similar outcry.

MISS SHARLOT HALL’S REACTION

Sharlot Hall, Arizona’s official historian, reacted through poetry. She had just edited a special Arizona edition of Charles Lummis’ Out West magazine when she read the news stories of “fair Arizona” being denied entry into the sisterhood of states, of a plan to shackle Arizona to New Mexico as the only acceptable plan for entry, and the cry of Arizonans that it would be far better to remain a territory than succumb to that fate. Miss Hall captured the passion in her poem “Arizona,” that begins:

No beggar she in the mighty hall where her bay-crowned sisters wait;

No empty-handed pleader for the right of a freeborn state;
No child, with a child’s insistence, demanding a gilded toy;
But a fair-browed, queenly woman strong to create or destroy . . .

Hall’s poem, first read to the Phoenix Woman’s Club, soon appeared in Murphy’s Arizona Republican newspaper. A copy was sent to Delegate Smith, who read it on the floor of the U.S. House. Afterward newspapers and magazines, coast to coast, reprinted her plea.

The Murphys, Delegate Smith, and their allies, Henry Robinson of Ohio and Senator Alger of Michigan, met with Senator Foraker. Through him, Frank Murphy wrote the president of the Santa Fe Railroad, “[I] think we have the joint Statehood Bill well in hand in the Senate.”

SENATOR FORAKER’S AMENDMENT

Foraker was one of the leading Republican “insurgents” opposed to President Roosevelt’s liberal proposals and had been enlisted in the joint statehood fight after the death of Senator Quay. The Murphy group’s strongest wish now was to force the Foraker amendment, which gave Arizonans a chance to vote independently for or against joint statehood if the joint statehood legislation were passed. Frank Murphy, however, told the Arizona Republican that they no longer wanted a complicated vote nor a constitutional convention, but a straight yea or nay vote on joint statehood. Foraker’s amendment as thus simplified was introduced in the Senate and attached to the joint statehood bill.

The insurgents held the day, and the Senate passed the amended bill March 9, with 42 for it and 29 opposed. “Arizona is Free,” proclaimed the Republican. Spontaneous celebration broke loose from Bisbee to Kingman.
In Prescott Foraker’s photograph was hoisted; in Tucson bells rang and there were cheers in the streets; and in Phoenix citizens were in a momentary shock before the celebration began. The amended bill went to a House-Senate joint committee to either kill it, again, or forward for approval and presidential signature—either choice agreeable to Arizona.

Governor Kibbey joined the fray and almost lost his job owing to pressure by Beveridge, but the politically astute Teddy Roosevelt called Beveridge off. He did not appoint territorial officials to do his bidding, nor did he replace them for voicing an opposing opinion. Governor Kibbey met with President Roosevelt, who inferred that he would not interfere with the final deliberations, a blow to Beveridge. When, next, Senator Nelson Aldrich met with Roosevelt the press announced the powers that be were going to allow Arizonans a referendum on their own fate. Historian Jay Wagoner suggests Kibbey influenced the last revision to the Foraker amendment before its passage, providing for the vote not at a special election, but rather during the general election in the fall.

**ROOSEVELT SIGNS JOINTURE BILL**

On June 16, 1906, President Roosevelt signed the joint statehood act declaring that he hoped Arizonans would take this opportunity to become a state; otherwise, he threatened, there would be a long continued wait as a territory. A week later, ex-Governor Murphy stopped in the pro-jointure stronghold of Albuquerque and let New Mexicans know that Arizonans would “overwhelmingly vote against joint statehood.” He began the fight with speeches and pamphlets, including one in collaboration with Governor Kibbey—Arizona deserved to retain its identity. He said “The notion of a ‘Greater Arizona,’ with the elimination of Arizona, does not appeal to her people. For years she has asked to be admitted . . . And she does not believe that a just nation will exercise a power to punish her for her temerity in asking for her own.” The campaign for the vote was on.

E. E. Elinwood, head of the territorial Democratic Party, worked with the Murphys and other Republicans in opposition. Elinwood, a former lawyer for Frank Murphy, now attorney for Walter Douglas and the Copper Queen mining company, organized a joint Democrat and Republican convention to be held in Bisbee, with much work beforehand to ensure only anti-jointure delegates would be selected to attend. This bipartisan club later offered up a weak Republican opponent to Smith, who won reelection in the fall. More importantly, the bipartisan meetings erected a platform opposed to joint statehood and initiated the campaign to defeat the measure in the November 6, 1906 election.

**AZ VOTERS REJECT JOINTURE**

The bipartisan leadership brought all they could to bear against the possibility of loss of an independent Arizona and they were overjoyed when the election resulted in an overwhelming vote against joint statehood, nearly five to one opposed. The Arizona vote as officially reported to Congress was 3,141 for (or 16% of the vote) compared to 16,265 against (a whopping 84%), sending a strong message to Speaker Cannon, President Roosevelt, and Senator Beveridge. New Mexico approved jointure, 26,195 to 14,735, but the vote when compiled together with Arizona’s still shows the measure defeated by 1,664 votes.

After the election Senator Beveridge threatened that Arizona wouldn’t see statehood for fifty years. President Roosevelt, however, was swayed at the outcome; to save face, his defenders blamed Beveridge for misinforming the president. By late 1907, after giving the State of Oklahoma life, Roosevelt was letting
WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Would joint statehood have been a good thing for Arizona? Probably not. By 1906, Arizona had forty-three years of separate political identity from New Mexico and its previous tie as part of New Mexico Territory that lasted for a dozen years (September 1850–February 1863) was never workable. To Arizonans the joint statehood idea made no sense. It was a political maneuver to keep Democratic Arizona out of the Union, a scheme even Teddy Roosevelt would later regret.

With McKinley’s death in 1901, congressional power brokers were able to delay Arizona statehood for a decade. Beveridge, Roosevelt’s Congressional lead on the issue, was defeated for re-election in 1910 and did not see Arizona’s first senators seated.23 His Greater Arizona plan would have created a much different state, one dominated by the New Mexico Republican padrons (power brokers) for a half century.

The hero of this story may be Senator Joseph Foraker of Ohio, one of the “insurgent Senators” who opposed many of President Roosevelt’s policies; he joined the fight and inserted the amendment which gave Arizona its chance to let its outrage be known and felt.24 Foraker’s ties to the Murphy Republicans were critical. The Murphys helped organize the Republican opposition in the territory and nationally, used the press, pamphlets, meetings and rallies to bring attention and the vote, while Foraker courted Congress including Democrats to win the day. It was a phenomenal alliance: Delegate Smith keeping the House Democrat caucus in line; Governor Kibbey courting and informing President Roosevelt of the territory’s and nation’s attitude until TR’s resolve for jointure weakened; and the Murphys—the governor and the industrialist—joining their influence in the corporate and political arenas to gain victory.

Marcus Smith, ally in the campaign against joint statehood and long-time Delegate to Congress, became one of Arizona’s first Senators. Because he outlived his contemporaries he was often asked to share the story of the statehood fights. The old Democrat, fond of the singular personal pronoun, seldom mentioned his Republican cohorts, the Murphy brothers.22
In what was one of the great bipartisan campaigns in Arizona history, Arizonans voted for and retained their separate political identity, thus avoiding the fate of oblivion that would have occurred through joint statehood. Many individuals helped “Save Arizona,” but among the critical leaders were the Murphy brothers, Frank and Oakes.

ENDNOTES

1 Murphy’s outburst would be purged from the official record of the meeting; see Committee on the Territories, Statehood for Arizona and New Mexico, January 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 1906 (Washington: G. P. O, 1906).
2 The future governor was named after his maternal grandfather but always was called “Oakes.”
4 Inter Ocean, October 28, 1887.
5 Mark Pry “Arizona and the Politics of Statehood” discusses the first convention and the first bill, as does Larson, New Mexico’s Quest; on the Republican convention, see AP reports in various issues, on-line newspapers, June 1892, Genalogybank.com.
6 Wagoner, Arizona Territory, gives the standard explanation.
10 N. O. Murphy to A. F. Banta, October 6, 1900, Murphy file, Sharlot Hall Museum, Prescott.
11 Arizona Republican February 27, 1901; January 14, 1902.

14 Senator Heitfeld to Marion Dargen, February 20, 1936, Dargen papers, Southwest Collection, University of New Mexico.
16 Arizona Republican, February 19, 1903; Prescott Courier, February 20, 1904.
18 Victor Mason to Staunton, January 26, 1906, Staunton Collection.
19 F. M. Murphy to Victor Morawitz, Willard Hotel, January 26, 1906, Santa Fe collection.
20 Pry, “Arizona Statehood,” passim; Larson, Quest, passim. The opposition press cried out, Roosevelt was offering Arizonans not a square deal, but the hidden big stick. Albuquerque Journal quoted in Prescott Morning Courier, June 30, 1906.
24 Many credit Foraker for saving Arizona, see “Arizona’s Debt to Foraker,” Tucson Daily Citizen, May 15, 1917.