

*The Strange But True Story of an
Improbable Metropolis*

Eduardo Pagán, Ph.D.

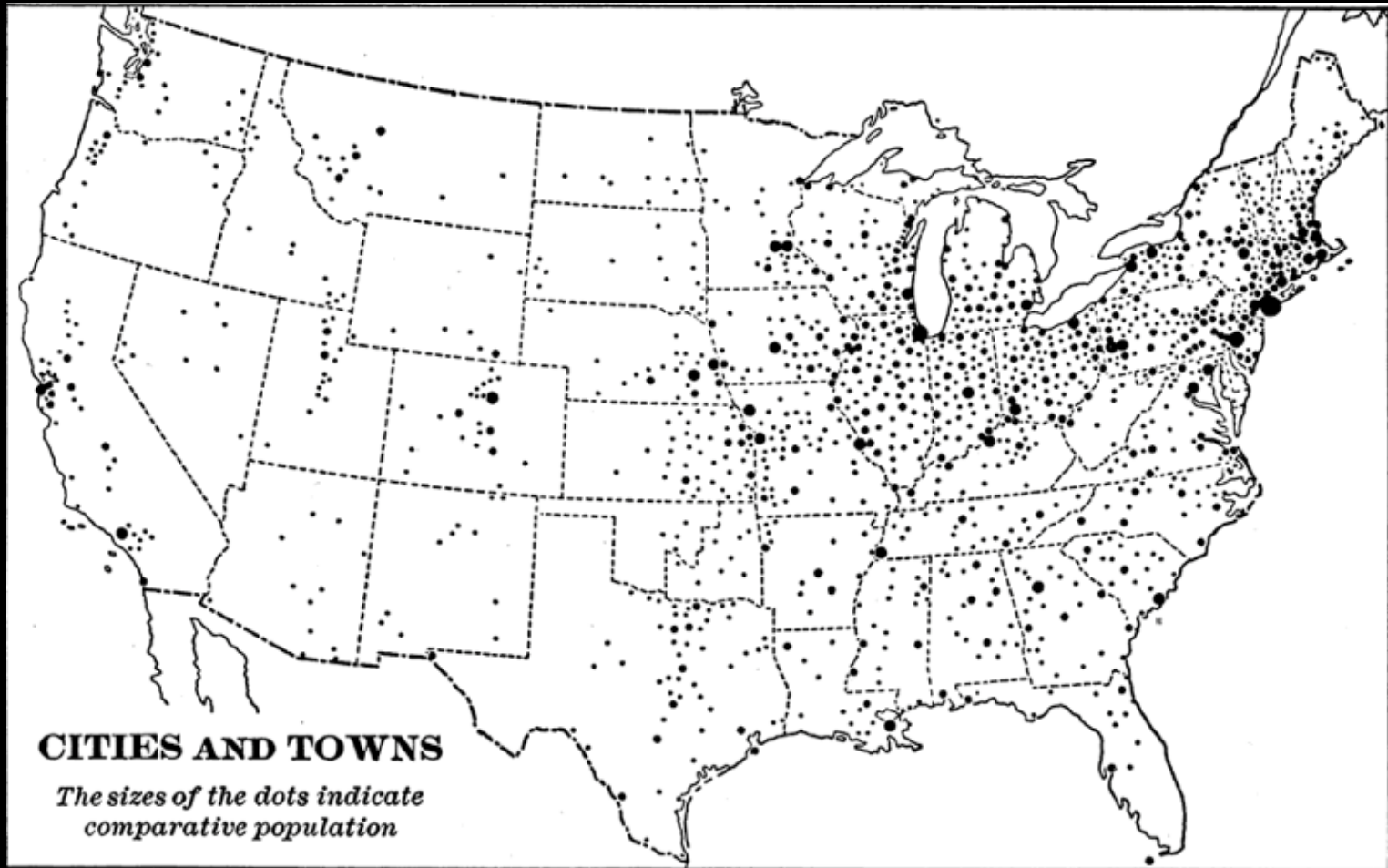
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Why is Phoenix an Improbable Metropolis?

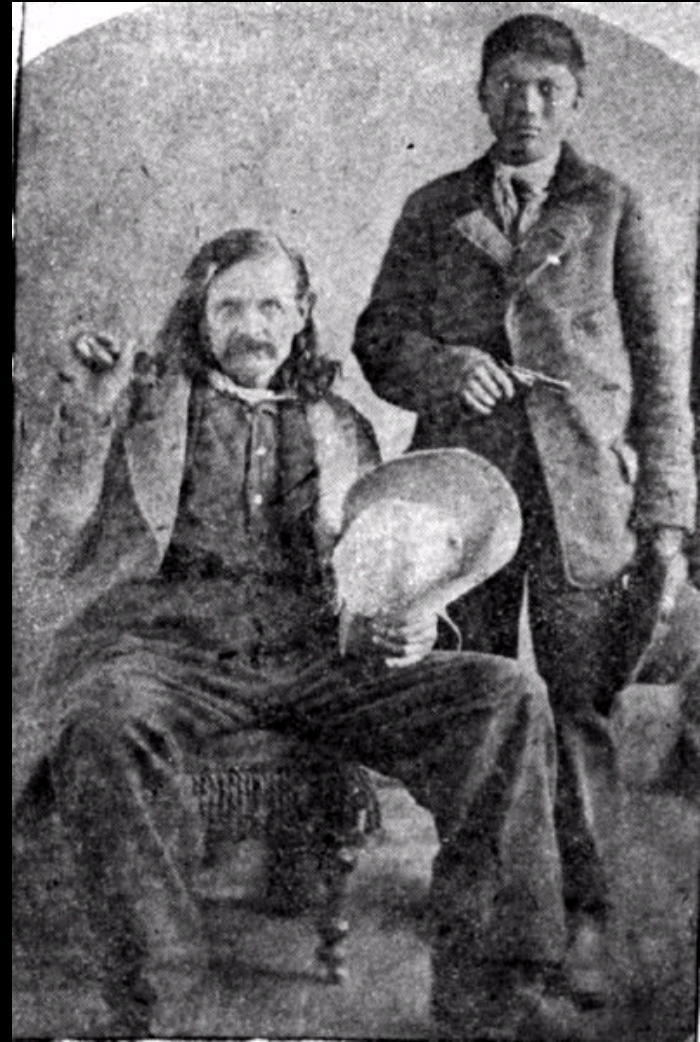
- The rise of cities
 - Prior to 19th century: *water was critical*
 - Some cities arose along trade routes
 - After 19th Century: technology becomes increasingly important
 - In travel, human comfort, and water control
 - Geography is still important, but in a different way

Demographic Concentrations, 1895



Phoenix's Debt

- Jack Swilling of North Carolina is often credited with the founding of Phoenix
- Indians and Mexicans were *already living* along the Salt River when Swilling arrived!



- The Piipaash and Akimel O'otham (Maricopa and Pima) protected Swilling's small settlement, about four miles northwest of Hayden's Ferry in 1867
 - Swilling hoped to harvest feed to sell to Fort McDowell
 - Swilling organized companies to rebuild Hohokam canals

Directions



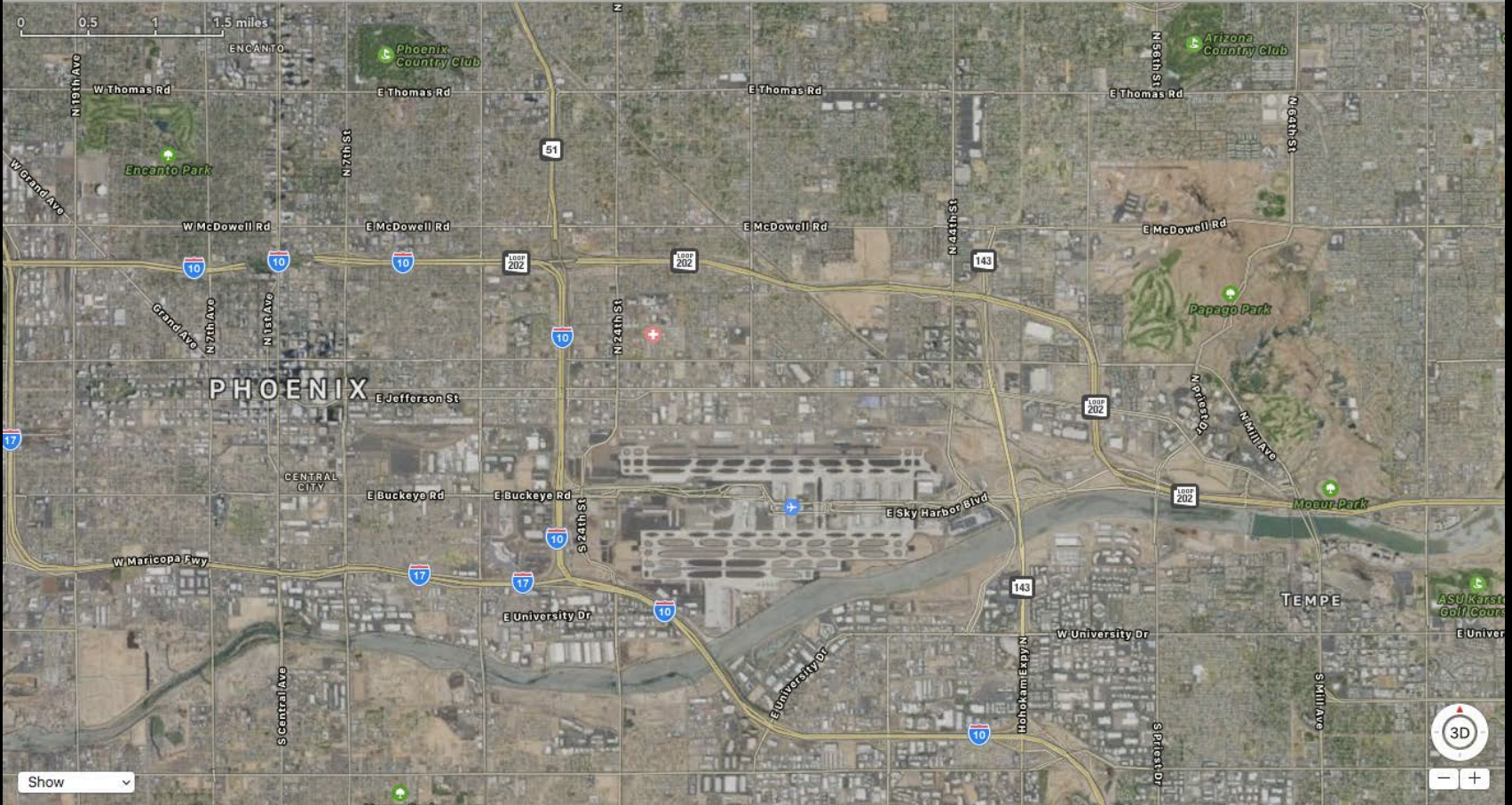
Search for a place or address

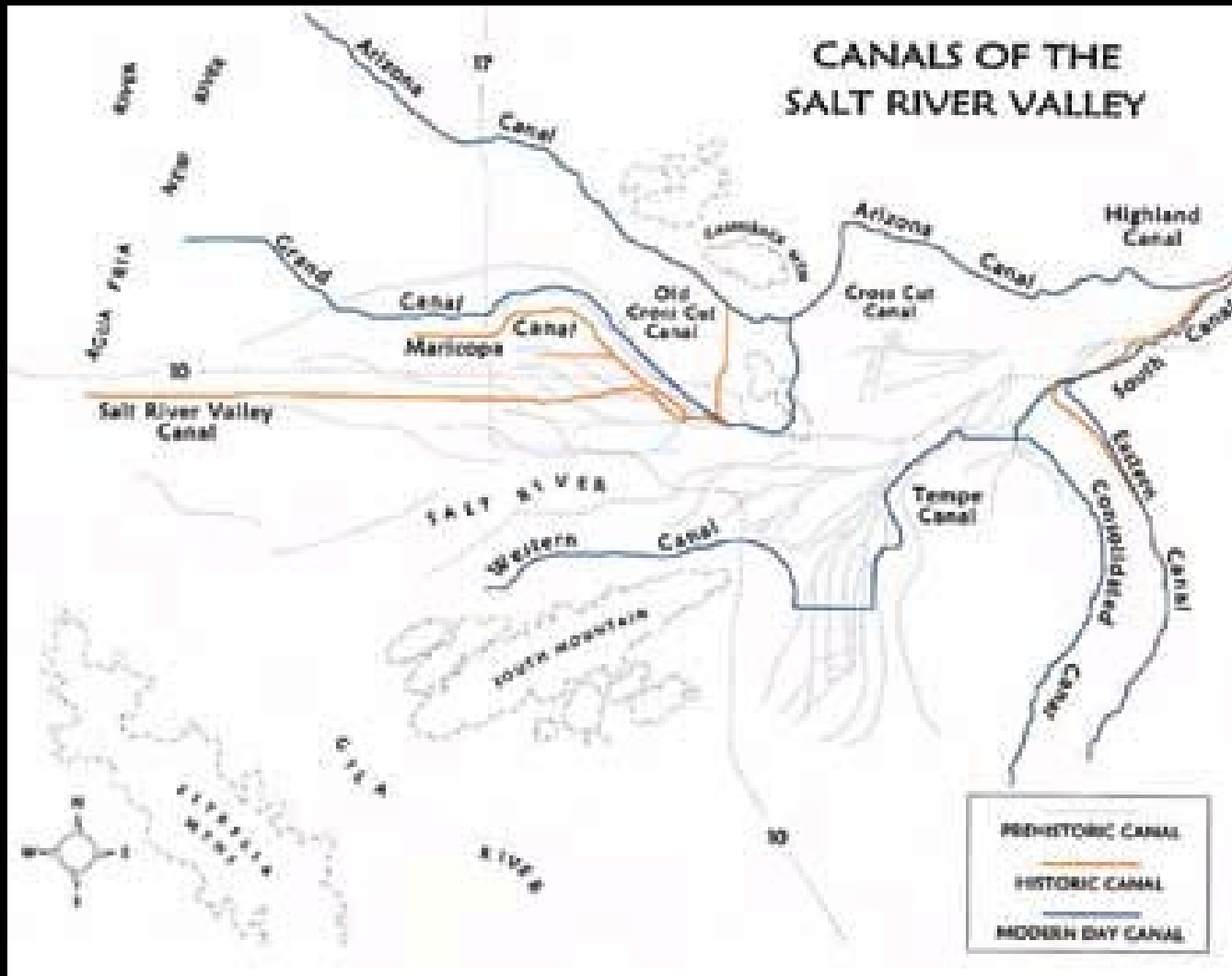


Map

Transit

Satellite





Modern canals following Hohokam canals allowed for the growth of the suburbs of Phoenix

Residents of Early Phoenix

- Mix of Civil War veterans, miners, Mexican expatriates, and Indians
- Census records in 1870 and 1877:
 - Half of the Phoenix population was from Mexico
 - First newspapers were bilingual
- Mexican and Indian laborers powered the development of infrastructure

Mexican and Indian Laborers Helped Reconstruct Canals Along the Salt River

- Helped first survey of 1870
- Leveled and maintained first public streets of Phoenix
- Graded the roadbed and laid the tracks for the Maricopa and Phoenix Railroad





Early Phoenix looked like traditional Southwestern settlements
Blacksmith and wagonmaking shop at First Avenue and Adams Street

Bi-Cultural Phoenix

- First school began with 20 children in a corner of the county courthouse, 1872
- Original curriculum taught in Spanish and English



Ruth Sullivan and students of the Wilson School,
1900

What Transformed Phoenix?

1870: ~250

2015: 1.5 million+

-
1. Railroads/transportation technology
 2. Harnessing water

1. Railroads

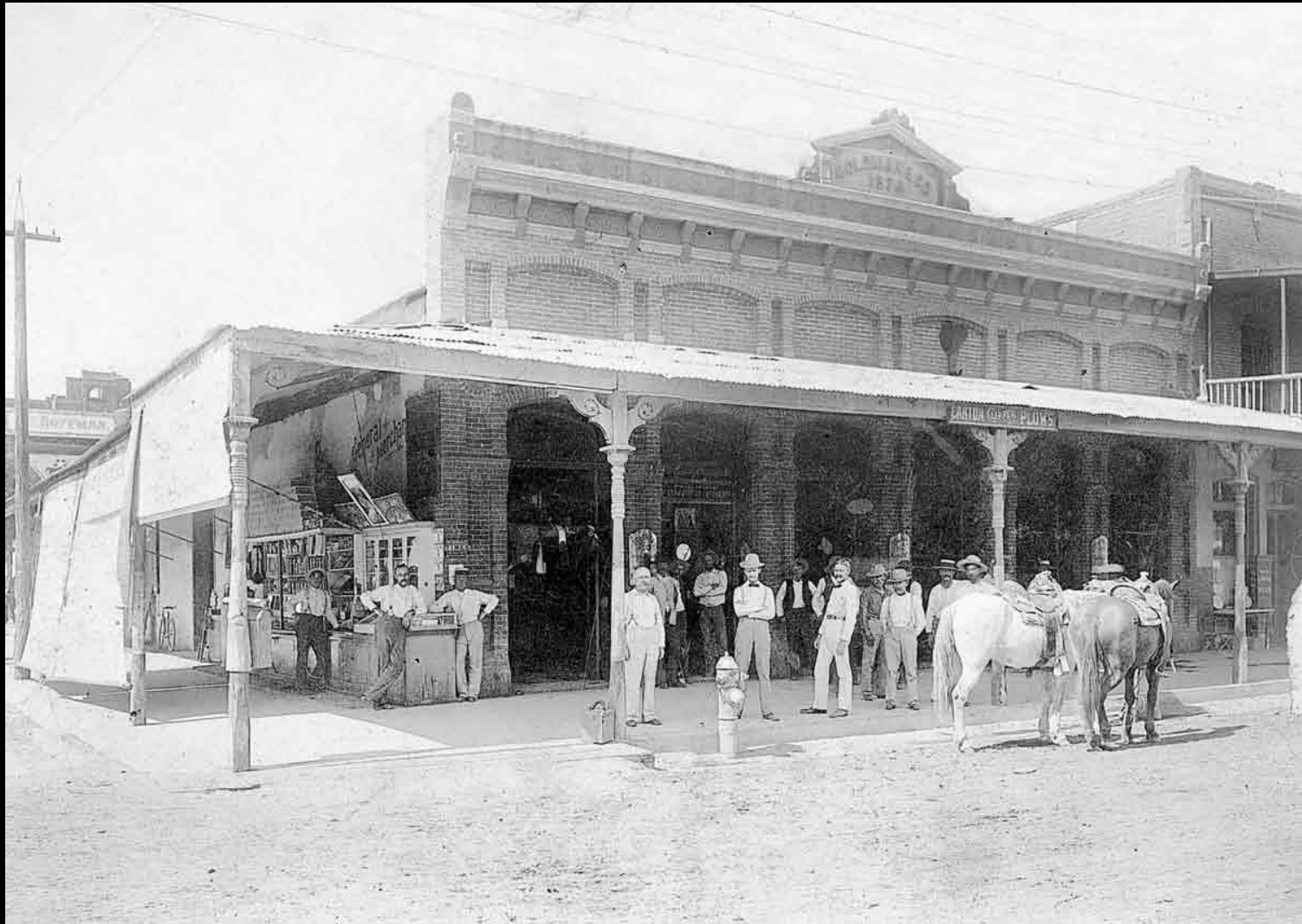
- President Lincoln and Congress strongly supported the Pacific Railway Act of 1862
 - Privately-chartered, federally-backed railroads: the Union Pacific and Central Pacific
- Transcontinental railroad accelerated the settlement of the West by white homesteaders
 - Maricopa and Phoenix Railroad connected Phoenix to the Southern Pacific Line in 1887

Railroads Brought Two Key Changes to Phoenix:

1. Railroads tied Phoenix to national markets
2. Railroads provided accessibility to Phoenix

Architectural Changes Reflect Cultural Changes

SOUTHWESTERN ADOBE STYLE GAVE WAY
TO VICTORIAN STYLE



Changes in Architecture:
Goldman Brother's Emporium, circa 1880



The Maricopa County Courthouse on Washington Street between First and Second Avenues in the late 1880s



The original Adams Hotel, built by JC Adams in 1896



The Arizona Territorial Insane Asylum on 24th and Van Buren streets,
late 1880s

Social Changes After Railroads Came:

- By early 1900s: relations between English-speaking and Spanish-speaking Phoenicians deteriorated
 - Railroads made mutual dependency unnecessary
 - Mixed marriages and inter-ethnic business partnerships became less common
 - Segregation became more common
- Anglos oriented their cultural focus to their east and west rather than to their south

2. Harnessing Water

- Floods repeatedly devastated the Salt River Valley in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Territorial representatives joined other Western states to lobby Congress for assistance in constructing reservoirs
- Newlands Act of 1902 authorized the building of a dam along the Salt River about 80 miles northeast of Phoenix



Floods reach the state capitol building



The “Cave Creek Flood” of 1905

- Lands north of the Salt River become more desirable, and more expensive, because of elevation
- Lands south of the river became less desirable
- South Mountains hem in city expansion; no such impediment northward

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