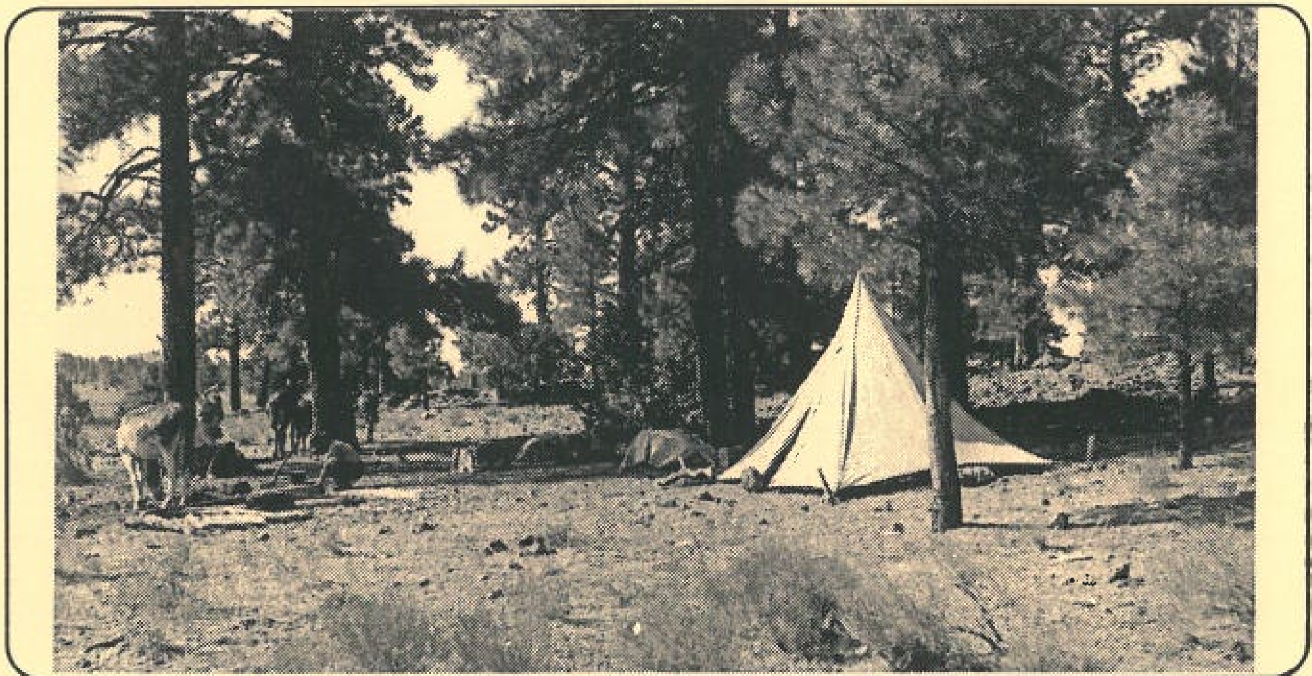
THE BASQUES IN ARIZONA FROM SPANISH COLONIAL TIMES TO THE PRESENT



A Component of the Arizona Historic Preservation Plan

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December 1991

Errata

The following corrections and additions were supplied by the Arizona Wool Producers Association (AWPA) in March of 1993:

Pages 6, 13, and 16: "Aha" should be spelled "Aja". On page 6, add Otondo, Erramuzpe, and Eraso to the list of Basque families in Arizona.

Page 7: Contrary to Kemper and Madrid (1990: 16), AWPA states that Miguel Echeverria, not Fermin Echeverria, was the co-owner (with Salvador Erramuzpe) of the ranch forfeited to the United States government in 1921.

Page 8: Contrary to Kemper and Madrid (1990: 19), AWPA states that "Jorajuria" is the correct spelling of this Basque family name.

Page 15: AWPA believes that a second Basque boarding house existed in Phoenix. Its address is unspecified.

Page 16: Dates for Jose Antonio Manterola are (1923-1956). "Marcos" is the correct spelling of the family name, not "Marco"; Jean Etchamendy should read "Jean Baptiste Etchamendy"; and Y. Otondo should be "J. Y. Otondo".

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The Basques in Arizona from Spanish Colonial Times to the Present: A Context for Preserving Their Material Culture*

Introduction

This report provides a framework for identifying and preserving properties in Arizona associated with the European ethnic group known as the Basques. We, as a state, have been slow to recognize the achievements and contributions of this group to our history. Since the oversight began in Spanish Colonial times, it is fitting that we should pause on the occasion of the Columbian Quincentennary to assess the role of the Basques and to take measures to preserve the remains of that heritage. Basque presence in Arizona has produced a rich and distinctive, but often subtle, material culture. The material culture is threatened by its extremely fragile nature and by our inability to recognize and appreciate it.

Narrative: Basques in Arizona and the West

Who are the Basques? This question has perplexed scholars to the extent that many consider Basques to be the mystery people of Europe (Ott 1981: viii). Contributing to the mystique is that fact that the Basques, or *Euskaldunak* as they call themselves, speak a language (*Euskera*) not clearly related to any other European tongue and possess a serological profile highly distinctive from that of surrounding groups. Their unique blood profile (the highest incidence of the Rh factor in the world and an extremely low incidence of type B blood) has suggested to some geneticists and physical anthropologists that the Basques may be the descendants of an extremely early European group (Chalmers, Ikin, and Mourant 1949; Boyd 1950).

The Basque homeland, known as *Euskal-Herria* or by its political name *Euzkadi*, consists of a roughly triangular wedge of 8000 square miles bordering the Bay of Biscay and straddling the Pyrenees mountains (Figure 1). Three French provinces (Labourd, Basse-Navarre, and

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*Prepared by Pat Stein, State Historic Preservation Office/Arizona State Parks.

First printing 1991. Prepared with the assistance of a matching grant-in-aid from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

Soule) and four Spanish provinces (Navarra, Alava, Vizcaya, and Guipuzcoa) comprise this homeland, the traditional capital of which is Guernica. The Spanish and French provinces of *Euzkadi* share a common religion, Roman Catholicism, but today differ radically when viewed from an economic perspective. The four Spanish provinces are highly industrialized and enjoy one of the highest per capita incomes of any area of the Iberian peninsula, while the three other provinces remain some of the most underdeveloped areas of France (Douglass 1970: 14).

Traditionally, the *Euskaldunak* were rural people who farmed and raised livestock. Each family lived on a farmstead that sustained the family and passed upon the death of the owner to a single heir. A rigidly impartible inheritance system (whereby wealth could not be divided among heirs), coupled with the fact that most tillable Basque land was occupied before the seventeenth century, set the stage for Basque emigration (Douglass 1970: 14-15). The disinherited sought their fortunes in far corners of the world where the lifestyle was riskier but the potential payoffs greater than at home.

On the eve of the European "discovery" of the Americas, the Basques were already well-established as mariners and mercenaries (McCullough 1945: 18; Douglass 1979a: 217-234). *Euskaldunak* served on Columbus' crews and were merchants, missionaries, and conquistadors in the initial years of New World exploration, ca. 1492-1511. By one estimate, between the years 1520 and 1580 fully 80 percent of the vessels on the American run were either Basque-owned or operated (Douglass 1979a: 221). Throughout the Spanish colonies and until the end of the colonial period, Basques continued to play a major role in the exploration and settlement of the Americas, a role out of all proportion to that group's small percentage within Spain's Iberian population. In the northern reaches of New Spain, a region which includes Arizona, prominent Basques included Juan de Ugalde, Joseph Urrutia, Jacobo Ugarte y Loyola, Cristobal de Onate, Juan de Onate, and Juan Bautista de Anza (Douglass 1979a: 221-222; Douglass and Etulain 1981: 40). Unfortunately, Basque contributions to the Age of Discovery have been largely overlooked by historians, with some exceptions (among them Officer 1987)

The most notable and surprising legacy of early Basques to our state might be found in the very word "Arizona". Two widely accepted notions of how our state got its name hold that the term derives from the Spanish *zona arida* (dry region) or the Papago *ali shonak* (place of the small spring). William A. Douglass, a leading scholar on Basques in the New World, has proposed quite a different theory (Douglass 1979a). Noting that "Arizona" or "Arizonac" originally referred to a rich silver deposit in Sonora, and documenting that Basques were involved in the

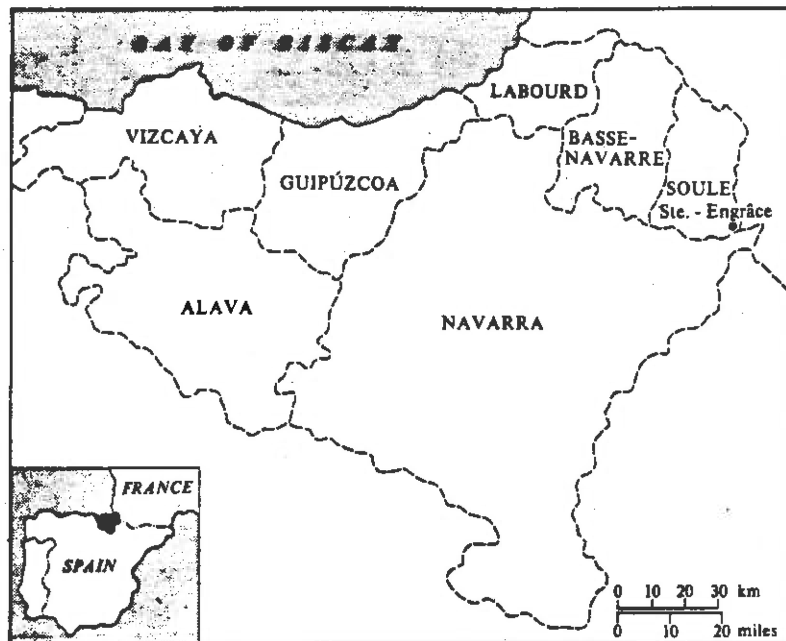


Figure 1. Basque provinces in Spain and France (from Ott 1981)

mining excitement there, Douglass postulates that "Arizona" may well have derived from the Basque *arriz ona* (the good or valuable mineral ore), *arritza ona* (the good or valuable rocky place), or even *aritz ona* (the good or valuable oak). To justify the third etymology, Douglass demonstrates that Basques were culturally conditioned, perhaps more than any other ethnic group, to recognize and be impressed by the wide variety of Quercus spp. found in Sonora.

Basque immigration to the New World continued long after Spanish colonization ceased. Lenient immigration policies and fierce labor needs prompted a great movement of *Euskaldunak* to Uruguay and Argentina in the 1830s, where they engaged in the most menial of occupations on the expanse of plains known as the pampas. By the 1840s, several thousand were involved in the sheep industry -- tending flocks, working in meat-salting plants, and operating packing plants. When the 1848 discovery of gold gave all the world a reason to immigrate to California, many Basque from the Old World and South America moved there as well, seeking their fortunes in mines. For most, the gold fields proved disappointing, but the burgeoning California population provided golden opportunity of another kind: a ready market for meat and other food products. The Basques in particular seized this opportunity by helping large landowners develop the sheep industry. By the late 1870s, well over a thousand Basque were tending flocks in California (Douglass 1977: 79).

Lane and Douglass (1985: 26-27) paint the following picture of the California sheep industry in the nineteenth century:

> ...sheepherding was the region's most denigrated occupation...Persons of all stripe herded sheep at one time or another. In the nineteenth century there were Chinese herders, for herding was one of the few occupations afforded willingly to them. Indians and Mexicans herded sheep as both a way station in their assimilation and as a symbol of their inferior status. Anglos served as guardians of the bands as a last resort. The sheep camp became a refuge for the failed individual, a place of repose for the alcoholic, a hideout for the desperado, a self-imposed purgatory for the masochist, an escape for the introvert. For many it was the final thin line of defense against assuming the hobo's lot. An occasional Greek, Italian, or Portuguese immigrant followed the woolies to gain a first foothold in a new land before moving on to a more sedentary life. Only the Basques came to regard herding as a vehicle for advancement.

Their dedication toward animals in their charge, plus their acceptance of hard work under isolated conditions, gained for the Basque a reputation as sheepherders *par excellence*. Although some Basque engaged in other pursuits such as mining and farming, by the turn of the century the *Amerikanuak* (Basques in the New World) had become the most prominent group within the California sheep industry (Douglass 1977: 79).

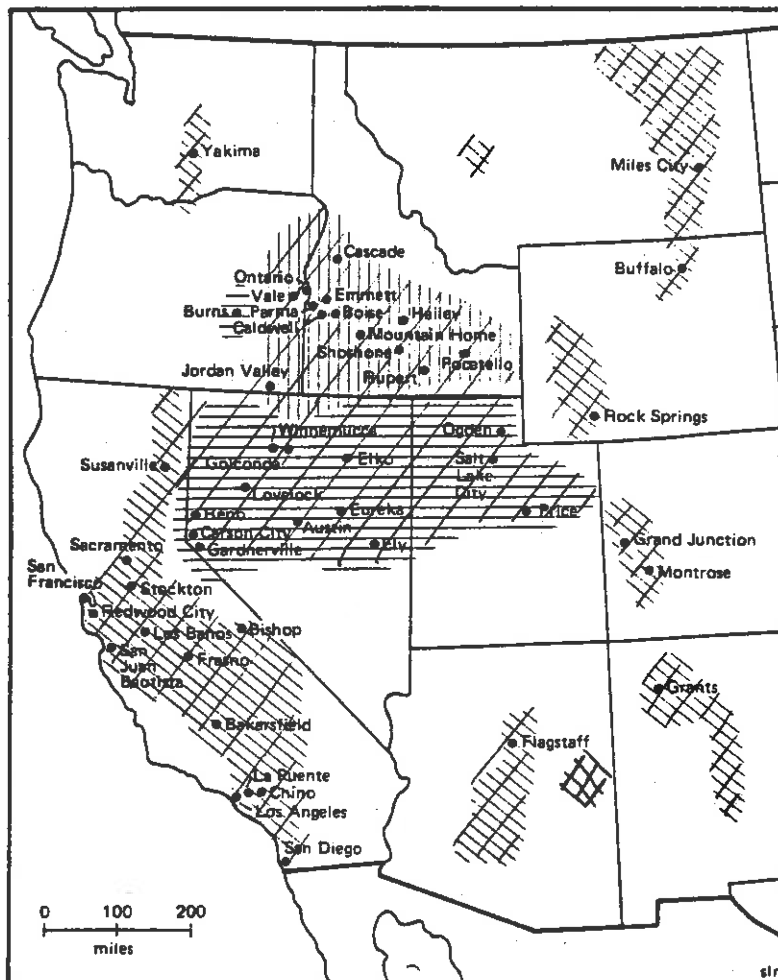
Some scholars credit the *Amerikanuak* with the New World development of transhumance, the seasonal migration of men with livestock between mountain and lowland pastures (Gomez-Ibanez 1967). The yearly cycle would begin with the renewal of the flock, when ewes bore their lambs in the spring. When mothers had been shorn and the offspring branded, all would be trailed to high country where the sheep would graze during summer and early fall. When diminishing forage or inclement weather threatened, the herd would be driven to pens in lowlands for the winter. On the trek to the lowlands, bands would be sorted and combined; aging ewes and excess lambs were sent to market and replacements were substituted from among other stock. In mid-winter, rams would be trucked to the desert and kept with the bands long enough to breed with all ewes. Finally, bands would be moved to the relative sanctuary of lambing grounds, and the cycle would begin again (Lane and Douglass 1985: 77-79).

Basque shepherds advanced economically in the following manner. Typically, the new immigrant would tend sheep on a three or four year contract and take part of his salary in ewes, running those sheep alongside those of his employer. Once his own flock became large enough to

support him, the Basque would break away from the parent flock and employer-patron, seeking his own range either through private lease or by moving into unclaimed territory. Not all Basques could cope with the hard life of a shepherd (some turned to other professions or returned to the Old World), but those who managed to endure the lifestyle often arranged for kinsmen or fellow villagers from the Old World to join them as they tended the flocks of others and amassed sheep of their own. Small-scale itinerant outfits which formed through this "budding" process were disdainfully called "tramp" operations by settled ranchers. Nonetheless, the worker who became a tramp operator was no longer called simply a "sheepherder" or "shepherd"; the term "sheepman" was now applied to him, marking his transition from laborer to entrepreneur.

Basque herders exemplified these patterns of transhumance and economic advancement as they spread from California to other parts of the West. Droughts and increasingly heavy demands on grazing lands in California prompted sheepmen to drive their flocks to interior basins such as

Figure 2. Areas of Basque settlement and transhumance in the West (from Douglass and Bilbao 1975)



those found in Arizona and other western states and territories (Figure 2). The date of the first entry of Basque herders into Arizona Territory is uncertain: Haskett (1936) estimates it occurred in the 1870s, while Kemper reckons a late 1890s or early 1900s date. It is not known how many Basques herded in Arizona for only short terms, never to return, but among the many families who stayed and prospered were the Manterolas, Asos, Echeverrias, Auzas, Ohacos, and Ahas.

In Arizona as elsewhere in the West, permits and fees strictly regulated the grazing of sheep on government lands and the driving of stock between lowlands and uplands. For example, in 1906 in Arizona, sheep could graze on Forest land for 5 to 8 cents per head for the summer season. Cattlemen and horse ranchers thought the fee structure unfair, as they were charged 20 to 35 cents per head for the summer season or 35 to 50 cents per head for the whole year (Barstad 1988: 21). They expressed their displeasure in numerous ways. Claiming, perhaps with some accuracy, that the driving of sheep disturbed cattle and horse interests along the route, cattlemen arranged for the formation of strictly controlled driveways to regulate the width of the swath over which the flock traveled and the speed at which it moved. Disgruntled cattle and horse ranchers could sometimes twist the arm of a local official to order, at whim, a sheep dip. A costly practice, ostensibly to control disease, sheep dipping had the effect of economically breaking many a tramp operator (Douglass 1970: 22). Disputes between settled ranchers and tramp sheepmen also led to the enactment of special taxes on the latter in some areas of Arizona and the West. Not all tramp operators were Basque, but the majority of them were, and ranchers' discontent with their itinerant competitors often generalized into discrimination and ill-feeling toward all Basques.

Simmering troubles between tramp operators and settled ranchers culminated in a decisive victory for the latter with passage of the Taylor Grazing Act. The 1934 Act abruptly ended the era of the tramp operator by denying access to public lands to those operators who did not own deeded private property (such as ranch headquarters). This is not to suggest, however, that Basque involvement in the sheep industry ended in the mid-1930s. This did not occur, for two reasons. First, as immigration laws and quotas would allow, Basque continued to enter the West to tend the flocks of others. Second, those *Amerikanuak* who had acquired ranches and homesteads prior to the Act were now able to acquire grazing allotments thanks to the Act (Douglass 1970: 21). Thus, Basque families who operated sheep businesses from deeded private property often saw their economic conditions improve under the Taylor Grazing Act. A particularly notable success story was that of the Espil brothers (Peter and Louis), who amassed 8500 sheep and grazing rights to 48,000 acres in the San Francisco Mountains above

Flagstaff. By the late 1970s, Espil ranch had become the single largest sheep outfit in Arizona (Schmidt 1976: 14).

In removing tramp operators from the western landscape, Douglass (1977: 79) argues that the Taylor Grazing Act incidentally removed a main cause for discrimination against Basques in the West. Thereafter, they came to be appreciated more by the wider society for the strength of body and soul (*indarra*) they displayed in their dedication to one of our nation's most lonely and thankless occupations. They were welcomed into communities as productive contributors. There were no social or legal restrictions dictating where they could live, so they were not segregated into enclaves. Without the racial barriers that some other ethnic groups encountered in the West, the Basques experienced few barriers to upward mobility and acculturation.

A variation on the pattern described in the preceding paragraph was experienced by Basques in Arizona. Kemper (1990: 18) notes that a serious obstacle to upward mobility encountered here by Basques as well as non-Basques was the Alien Land Act of 1921, an Arizona statute stipulating that only citizens or aliens eligible for citizenship could "acquire, possess, enjoy, transmit, and inherit" real property (State of Arizona 1928: 647-648) Following passage of the law, many applications by Spanish Basques for citizenship were rejected because applicants had refused to serve in the U.S. armed forces during World War I (Douglass and Bilbao 1975: 304). The government's view that Basques were aliens ineligible for citizenship was heightened by the fact that all Basques were regarded as migrant laborers who intended to return to the Old World once they had fulfilled their contracts in America. Unfortunately for aliens, the 1921 statute was enforced, often by local lawmen at the urging of envious neighbors. For example, in 1921 the Basques Fermin Echeverria and Salvador Erramuzpe tragically lost a ranch at Munds Park, south of Flagstaff, when the government discovered they were not citizens (Kemper 1990: 16).

Basque sheepmen in Arizona devised a clever strategy to circumvent the discriminatory legal system. Aliens joined with citizens to form sheep partnerships based on trust, honor, and fair dealing. The citizen would act as the legal trustee for the aliens and hold all property and assets on their behalf. Partners would contribute equally, then share equally in company profits and losses. No ethnic groups other than the Basques are known to have operated sheep companies in this manner.

The Ohaco Sheep Company provides the best-documented example of this practice (Kemper 1990). Formed in 1923, the company combined the assets of one citizen with three aliens. The

citizen, a French-born Basque named Michael Ohaco, held all assets, including land, livestock, and bank accounts, in trust for Spanish-born Basques Jose Antonio (Tony) Manterola, Fermin Echeverria, and Mario Jarajuria. The sheep company prospered in the 1920s, survived the 1930s Depression, and was still owned by its original four partners into the 1940s. The practice helped the latter three men gain an economic foothold while they were legally vulnerable and undergoing the lengthy process of becoming U.S. citizens; Echeverria and Manterola were naturalized in 1938 and 1939, respectively, but Jarajuria never achieved citizenship because he was illiterate. Throughout the twenty year partnership, the high ethical standards shown by Ohaco as the steward for his fellow Basques was remarkable (Dr. Robert Kemper, personal communication).

The history of the *Amerikanuak* in Arizona and the West during the past five decades has been marked by changing, conflicting, and confusing immigration laws and quotas, summarized well by Douglass (1970, 1977) and Lane and Douglass (1985). The Basque sheepherder is today a vanishing breed, a function both of his entry into more lucrative fields and his replacement by more impoverished herder-emigrants, mostly from Mexico and Peru (Douglass 1980). By the late 1980s, many Basque sheepmen in Arizona and the West had cashed out of the industry, investing their capital in restaurants, motels, and other enterprises. However, the role of the Basques in developing and maintaining our state's sheep industry continues to be apparent; today, three members of the board of the Arizona Wool Producers' Association are from Basque families who nurtured the industry from its infancy through maturity.

Several points should be noted in closing this section. Historical records such as census surveys, immigration documents, and newspaper accounts have generally not mentioned the Basques, referring to these immigrants only as "French," "Spanish," "European," or even "Mexican". The result is that much *Amerikanuak* history has been lost. Therefore, it is difficult if not impossible to estimate how many Basque were ever in Arizona and other parts of the West. One scholar estimates that Basque-Americans, including first, second, and third-generation members, never numbered more than 50,000 (McCall 1968: 46); another writer (Laxalt 1957) places the figure closer to 60,000. Despite differences of opinion about population figures, there is consensus that nowhere in the West did the Basque ever constitute a majority of the population. Even in areas of considerable Basque settlement--Jordan Valley, Oregon; Boise, Idaho; Los Angeles County, California; Elko, Nevada, to name a few such areas--the Basque had a quiet presence that usually went undetected by neighbors. Despite these factors, the little information available on *Amerikanuak* suggests that their contribution to

Arizona and the West has been strong and undeniable, first as conquistadores of the colonial era and later as quiet heroes of the sheep industry.

Areas of Basque Use and Settlement in Arizona

Publications about Basque Arizonans could be counted literally on the fingers of one's hand. They consist of Schmidt's 1976 piece on the Espil family, Peterson's 1978 documentation of a shepherd's life; Douglass' (1979a) treatise on the naming of our state, Bassett's 1983 account of her trek with herders, and Kemper's 1990 history of the Ohaco sheep partnership. The 1976, 1978, and 1983 works are brief magazine articles. The 1979 and 1990 works by Douglass and Kemper, respectively, stand as the only examples of scholarly publications on the topic. Even if one includes a 1988 monograph by Barstad, which deals with the Arizona sheep industry rather than with Basques, per se, then it is still accurate to say that literature on the topic of Basques in Arizona is slim indeed.

Fortunately, a growing body of literature in the form of unpublished archaeological reports is slowly documenting Basque presence in Arizona. Most of these studies have been conducted in advance of federal undertakings, especially timber sales, as required by federal law.

From these various sources, the following is known about areas of Basque use and settlement in Arizona. The transhumant lifestyle of Basque sheepherders took them seasonally to and through a rather large central portion of our state extending from and including the San Francisco Peaks on the north to the desert around Casa Grande on the south, and from the White Mountains on the east to the desert around Tacna on the west (Figure 3). If there was a community where Basques were most populous, it appears to have been Flagstaff (Douglass and Bilbao 1975: 430-431). Flagstaff had assumed a leading role in the sheep industry when the Arizona Sheep Breeders and Wool Growers Association was formed there in 1886; the headquarters of the sheep industry remained there through the 1930s. A promising center in which the immigrant could find employment, Flagstaff was also a likely place in which a Basque newcomer could contact family members or fellow villagers who had preceded him to the New World.

Barstad's (1988) study provides a detailed look at the extensive area traversed by one Basque sheep operation during the course of a typical year. Tony Manterola came to Arizona in 1910 and herded for various companies in the Flagstaff area while trying, at first unsuccessfully, to establish his own business. In 1923, he succeeded in becoming a partner in the Ohaco Sheep

Company of Winslow-Holbrook (see preceding section). In 1945, he sold that interest and purchased the Flagstaff Sheep Company, which then held the Woody Mountain Allotment on the Coconino National Forest, the Mooney Mountain Allotment, Hawkins Pasture Allotment north of Red Lake, and the Chalk Mountain Allotment in Bloody Basin. Manterola added the Pete's Cabin

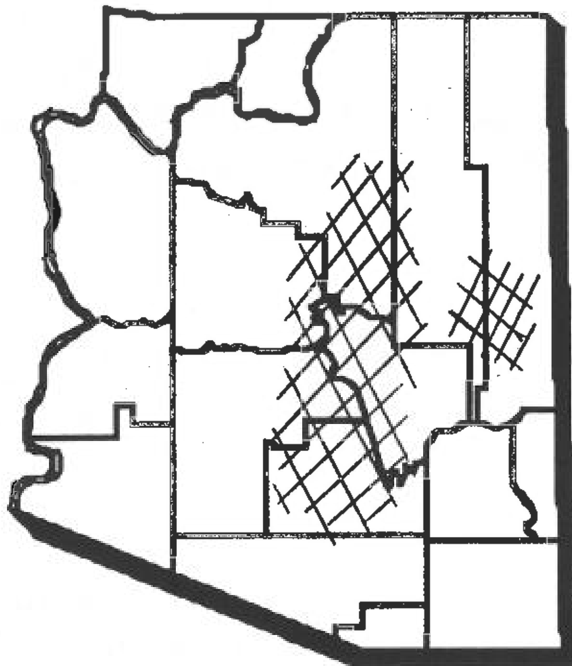


Figure 3. Areas of Basque Settlement and land use in Arizona.

Allotment in 1950, and by 1951 held permits for 6,387 sheep. Tending so great a number of animals required a "split operation". Some ewes were wintered in the irrigated pastures around Casa Grande, trucked northwest to Mayer after lambing season, then driven farther north to summer in pastures on the Beaverhead-Grief Hill Driveway. Other ewes were lambed at Bloody Basin, driven in the spring via Tangle Creek Driveway to Cordes Junction, and thence up the Beaverhead-Grief Hill Driveway to graze in the Coconino National Forest for the summer. This basic pattern was repeated for more than three decades.

Property Types Associated with the Basques in Arizona

Six property types are known to have been associated with Arizona's Basques. A seventh property type, occurring widely in the West but not yet observed in our state, might also be present here. Certainly some of these property types, such as sheep camps and ranch houses, were common to non-Basques as well as Basques. However, the majority of the property types

described in the following paragraphs are unique to Arizona's *Amerikanuak* and form a distinct pattern of material culture.

1. **Sheep camps** -- resting places for herders tending sheep -- are the best known and probably the most common property type associated with Basques in Arizona (Figure 4). As the result of cultural resource studies conducted by the Coconino and Kaibab National Forests, several camps have been recorded in Coconino County, particularly on the north and west sides of the San Francisco Peaks. Forest Service archaeologists have positively identified these camps as Basque through informants as well as through tree- and wood-carvings which contain Basque names or words. Some Basque camps have been found to contain "tree furniture" (makeshift cots, chairs, tables, etc. built into trees), lunate hearths, and peculiar, ladder-like wooden devices, the function of which is unknown (Linda Farnsworth, personal communication). Rarely are the remains of shelters found at sheep camps; historical photographs (pictured in Lane and Douglass 1985) reveal that the shepherd often hauled from camp to camp a wagon containing his bedding, cooking gear, veterinary supplies, and other necessities.

Although some camps were used year after year, none tended to be used for a long period in any given season because it was necessary to keep the sheep moving, both to provide fresh pasturage and to keep the animals' weight down to condition them for breeding. The practice of keeping the band in a near-perpetual state of motion was called "trailing sheep" (Kemper 1989: 2-3).

2. **Aspen art** (dendroglyphs) is another common Basque property type found in the higher elevations of Arizona (Figure 5). Successive waves of *Amerikanuak* herders carved their names and messages in aspen groves, and, through time, the groves have become galleries of Basque expression. Lane and Douglass (1985: 59-61) describe the mental state giving rise to such art:

> While it is possible to catalogue the tangible dangers threatening the sheep band and its custodian -- dangers such as drought, blizzard, predation, snake bite, accident, and illness -- the herder's major adversary is the less palpable burden of sheer boredom...In a real sense they are "putting in time," and time weighs heavily upon a man's soul in the solitude of the open range. Herders sometimes speak of the necessity of slowing down their mental process in order to avoid becoming bitter or anxious as they contemplate the seemingly interminable procession of months or years remaining on a contract.

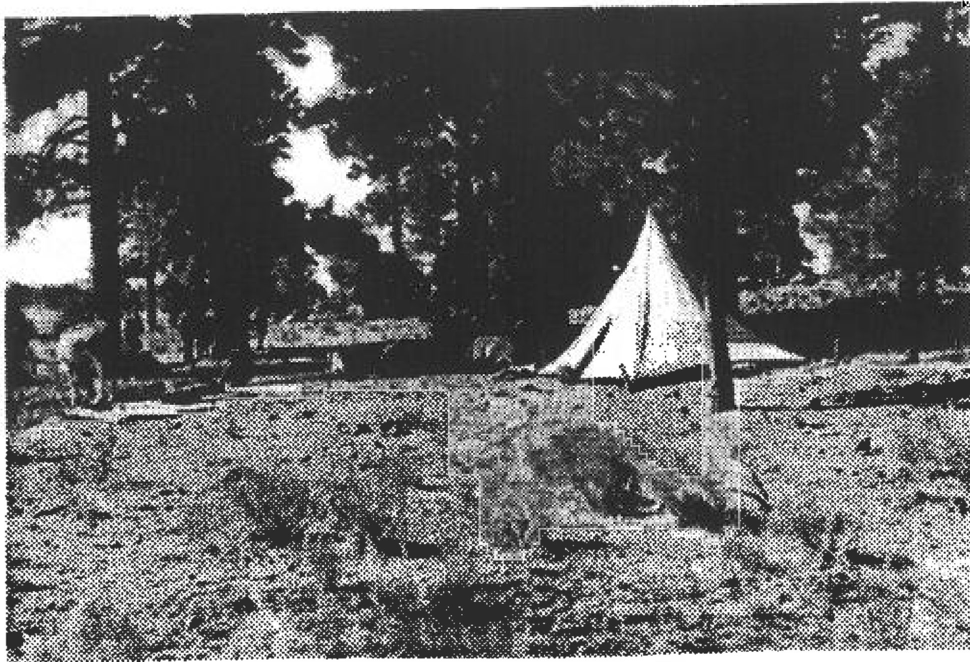


Figure 4. Basque sheep camp in northern Arizona

Figure 5. Basque aspen art (from Lane and Douglass 1985)

Aspen art is thus, according to Lane and Douglass, the herder's antidote to loneliness. As each successive herder sees the messages left by those who have come before him, he enjoys the illusion that he is not alone.

Typical carvings include the herder's name or initials, his province of origin (commonly Labourd, Basse-Navarre, Soule, Navarra, Alava, Vizcaya, or Guipuzcoa), the year he carved his name, and patriotic sayings, particularly those expressing Basque nationalism (Lane 1971; Beesley and Claytor 1978). Common expressions with political connotations are "*Gora Euskadi*", "*Guernica*" (spelled various ways), and "*Iruracbat*". Sometimes the calligraphy is executed in remarkably flowing script, considering the wooden medium in which it was executed. Graphic representations of women, animals, hands, and crosses are also common.

Sometimes a good clue concerning the ethnic origin of a dendroglyph is provided in a carved name. But how does one recognize a name as Basque? There is no easy and foolproof means of doing this. Some Basque family names appear unusally long (at least from an Anglo-Saxon perspective), containing a noticeable number of "u's", "x's", double "r's", "gui's", "chea's" or "etch's", and some "z's". Family names such as "Aguirrebategui" and "Urreiztieta" are cases in point. Other names are short and rather symmetrical, beginning and ending in a vowel: Aso, Auza, Aha, Ohaco. But many Basque bear names indisguishable from those of their Spanish or French countrymen: Martinez, Aleman, Baca. Thus, one should not rely on a name alone to identify a glyph as Basque; instead, one should also consider associated clues such as glyphs indicating the carver's place of origin.

Some writers have emphasized the aesthetic appeal of this form of folk art (Lane 1971; Beesley and Claytor 1978). Indeed, it is almost magical to come upon a grove of quaking aspen, golden in autumn's light, its dendroglyphs stretched through time and the growth of bark into almost abstract forms. From a research standpoint, carved aspen groves have no less historical value than hotel ledgers, both being records of use of a place by people through time. In some aspen stands, for example, one can detect when Basque herders were replaced by herders from Central and South America (Linda Farnsworth, personal communication). In this sense, dendroglyphs help document the common laborers who helped build the West.

3. The loneliness of the Basque shepherd's life also finds expression in "**stone boys**" (in Basque, "*harrimutilak*" or "*ari mutila*"). According to Lane and Douglass (1985: 63) and Muldoon (1976), these stone mounds serve no apparent purpose other than to occupy the shepherd's time and focus his sanity as he tends the woolies. Stone boys apparently differ from

the stone monuments (reported by Mercier and Simon-Smolinski 1990: 22 and Peterson 1978: 8-9) built along trails: the latter signal shepherds where to find the trail or a good campsite. No examples of stone boys have been recognized in Arizona, but they have been reported in other western states, where their association with Basques has been well established through oral history.

Stone boys occur often, although not always, on wind-swept ridges almost anywhere Basque tended sheep. The piles range from a few feet to many feet in diameter and may occur in groups. No artifacts have been reported with stone boys, although it is reasonable to assume to historic items such as cans and broken glass might be found with them. The size of rocks within a stone boy may range from fist-sized to a size one might think no single human could move, unless one realizes that traditional Basque forms of play emphasize great strength and stamina. Contests to lift and carry huge stones are common events at Basque festivals here and abroad (Lane and Douglass 1985: 106, 115).

Stone boys are a property type needing further investigation in Arizona. Archaeologists should be alert to the possibility of their occurrence and should devise a means for positively identifying them. Stone boys could be mistaken for rock piles associated with some forms of Native American agriculture. Alternatively, they could be mistaken for historic features such as homestead claim markers or cairns built by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Failure to identify *harrimutilak* properly could contribute to inaccurate reconstructions of prehistoric and historic land use.

4. The Basques have an expression for a shepherd who has stayed with his flock so long that he shuns the company of humans: it is called being "sheeped" or "sagebrushed" (Douglass 1970: 20). To counteract the unfortunate side effects of too long on the range with ovines, shepherds considered it important to "go to town" and enjoy its civilizing influences. This would generally happen in the fall after lambs had been shipped to market and bands of ewes had been consolidated for breeding. And there was, for the Basque, an institution in town where he could enjoy the conviviality of his countrymen and recharge his ethnic batteries: the Basque **hotel-restaurant/boarding house.**

Boarding houses were homes for the single Basque herder in the off-season. Owned and operated by *Amerikanuak*, boarding houses were places where the herder could speak his native tongue, enjoy the cuisine of his homeland, and maybe find a wife. Some boarding houses even offered

their patrons economic assistance. They were safe harbors for the Basque immigrant as he made his adjustment to American life (Douglass 1979b; Mercier and Simon-Smolinski 1990).

In Arizona, only one Basque boarding house is currently known (Douglass and Bilbao 1975: 430-43; Figure 6). Poorly documented, this modest, single-story bungalow stands on Flagstaff's South Side. Sanborn maps suggest that it was built between 1910 and 1916. It is possible that additional Basque boarding houses may exist in Arizona, but none have been revealed through historical research.

As Basque shepherds disappeared from the western landscape, the boarding houses which had served them evolved into general tourist accommodations or went out of business. The former occurred with the Flagstaff property. It became the "Tourist Home" sometime following its purchase by non-Basques in 1919. At Tacna, Arizona, a hotel-restaurant is today owned and operated by Basques, but it caters to the general public and is not of historic vintage. Thus, the Tacna property is not representative of the historic property type described in this section.

5. Perhaps the most distinctive property type associated with Basques is the **pelota fronton** (in Basque, *pilotaleku*), a ballcourt in which a game akin to jai alai (the Basque national pasttime) and handball was played. In traditional Basque villages pelota frontones are ubiquitous:

> In every Basque village, however small, is found the triple symbol of the race: the church, the cemetery, and the pelota court, symbolizing faith, tradition, and hard vigorous outdoor life (McCullough 1945: pp. 14).

The pelota court found its way to the New World with Basque immigrants. Courts were often built in areas having sizeable Basque populations. Sometimes the owners of Basque boarding houses would erect them next to their lodging, so the courts would serve as an additional enticement to potential patrons. In some areas of the West, such as Los Angeles, play on the pelota court became the key context in which Basques expressed and defined their ethnicity (Eagle 1979).

A two-volume publication on pelota (Bombin and Bozos-Urrutia 1976) emphasizes that the game has many variants and has been played in courts of different shapes and sizes. In the United States, two of the best-documented courts occur in Jordan Valley, Oregon (Walton 1972), and in Mountain Home, Idaho (Hibbard 1972); both structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In Arizona, only one pelota court is presently known

(Mallea 1990; Figure 7). It is in Flagstaff, adjacent to the Basque boarding house mentioned above. A two-sided variety of pelota court (with a garage forming a nubby third side), it is constructed of sandstone with walls at least 10 feet high and handsome buttressing on the exterior. Some local Flagstaffers still refer to the court as "la cancha" (Meehan 1990), a Spanish term meaning ball court or playing field (Mallea 1990).

6. It was the dream of many an upwardly mobile shepherd to become a sheepman who owned one or more ranches, complete with **ranch houses and related outbuildings**. Ranches assumed crucial importance following passage of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, which closed federal lands to tramp operators. Successful Basque sheepmen were sometimes able to acquire several properties, and it was not unusual for an operator to split his residence between a wintertime ranch in the lowlands and a summertime ranch in the uplands.

Basque ranches are known to occur in Arizona, yet none have been formally inventoried by preservationists. The following list indicates some of the sheepmen who operated in Arizona; when known, approximate dates and ranch bases of their operations are also shown:

- Jose Antonio (Tony) Manterola (1923-present): Glendale-Peoria; Bloody Basin; south of Flagstaff; Casa Grande after 1945
- Frank Auza (1959-present): Flagstaff; Tacna
- Mike Ohaco (1910s-1954): Winslow-Holbrook; Wickenburg (now a cattle rancher)
- Miguel Echeverria (1910s-1923)
- Fermin Echeverria (1910s- ?)
- Salvador Erramuzpe (1910s- ?)
- Mario Jaramuria (1920s- 1950s)
- Phillip J. Echeverria (1945-1966)
- Jean Etchamendy (1949-1978; 1981-present): north of Phoenix, St. Johns
- Jose Echinique (1940s)
- Ramon Aso (1910s-1940s): Flagstaff
- Gumersindo Marco
- Manuel Aha (1920s- ?): Buckeye
- John Aleman
- Jean Pierre (Pete) Espil (1960s-1980s): north of Flagstaff; Litchfield Park
- Louis Espil
- Nemesis Gammiochipi (1910s- ?): Flagstaff

- Y. Otondo (1910s- ?): Flagstaff
- Frank Satrustegui (1910s- ?): Flagstaff
- Domingo Uhalde (1910s- ?): Flagstaff.

A more systematic list might be generated by inspecting the files of the Arizona Wool Growers Association, some 25 boxes of archival material housed at the Special Collections Library of Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff.

7. **Rocked-in trailers**, also associated with Basques, form a curious footnote to the architectural history of the West. They were built by shepherds who were able to amass enough resources to put together a modest home in town or on the outskirts of town. The herder would purchase, lease, or squat on a small parcel of land, install a trailer (mobile home), gradually build a carport over the top of the trailer, and then enclose one or more sides of the carport with malpais masonry (Figure 8). The front (street side) of the carport would often be left open so that the owner could remove the trailer from its shell if he needed to relocate. As the shepherd became more settled and needed more living space, he would attach wood-frame rooms, masonry rooms without trailer cores, or even more mobile homes. Rocked-in trailers are not among the most aesthetically pleasing forms of architecture, but are interesting markers of Basque assimilation into western culture. Several examples of this property type have been observed in Flagstaff. None are of historic age, dating, rather, to the 1950s and 1960s. They may occur in other areas of the state, although none are presently known to the author. Also unknown is whether Basques were the only people to have built this form of housing.

A few other property types merit a brief reference here. Several properties used by the Basque have not been listed above because they were used equally by other ethnic groups and relate more strongly to the historic context of sheepherding in Arizona than to Basque culture, per se. These include sheep driveways, bridges, sheep dip structures, and pens/chutes where sheep were counted or loaded onto trains or trucks. An excellent discussion on the context of such properties may be found in Barstad's (1988) publication on the Verde River sheep bridge and the sheep industry in Arizona.

Preservation Issues and Recommended Management Strategies

The National Register of Historic Places (see insert) is our nation's official list of properties considered worthy of preservation. Many properties associated with Basque culture in Arizona qualify for the National Register because they are at least fifty years old, possess integrity, and

are significant under one or more of the National Register criteria. Virtually all of them face threats and pose challenges: without preservation assistance, many of them will disappear This section outlines some of the major factors threatening them and suggests actions the SHPO and other entities should undertake to assure that a representative sample of some, if not all, Basque resources will be preserved.

ISSUE 1: The complex of the Basque boarding house with pelota court in Flagstaff is perhaps the strongest and most distinct historic marker of Basque ethnicity in our state. Community surveys in other Arizona towns amid sheepherding country (Williams, Winslow, Holbrook) have thus far failed to find evidence of similar buildings and structures. The integrity of the Flagstaff property is not the best that could be hoped for, but the exceptional nature of this complex in Arizona probably renders it eligible for the National Register. Not currently threatened by construction projects, the complex is probably endangered more by the community's lack of awareness of its significance.

Strategy 1: The SHPO should prepare a National Register nomination for the property. In order to list this private property on the Register, the SHPO will need to get consent from its owner. If owner permission is denied, SHPO should still prepare National Register documentation but ask the Keeper of the National Register for a Determination of Eligibility.

Strategy 2: SHPO should work with Flagstaff's Main Street program, the Flagstaff Historic Sites Commission, and the Northern Arizona Branch of the Arizona Historical Society to build community awareness of the resource and to create a climate favorable for its preservation.

ISSUE 2: Many sheep camps are located on land owned by the federal government, much of it USDA Forest Service land. Because they are located at high altitudes, sheep camps are particularly vulnerable to high-altitude undertakings such as timber sales. Pursuant to federal regulations, forest archaeological staff routinely and conscientiously conduct surveys to locate and record significant cultural resources. Such resources are then marked for avoidance. There is ample evidence in the form of archaeological clearance reports that sheep camps, particularly ones of historic age (more than 50 years old), are being given consideration and protection in the face of federal undertakings.

Strategy 1: The USDA Forest Service and other federal agencies should continue to record and protect historic sheep camps.

Strategy 2: Other public entities should record and protect historic sheep camps under their ownership or control.

ISSUE 3: Because sheep camps tend to be situated at high altitudes, a related Forest management factor comes into play which should be mentioned here. In accordance with Forest Service policies, timber sale project areas are intensively surveyed by Forest Service archaeologists when the areas are located at or below the pinyon-juniper transition line, but are usually sample surveyed when they fall above it. The knowledge guiding this policy is that the density of archaeological sites in general in Arizona tends to be far greater at and below the transition line than above it. Sampling areas above the transition line helps Forest archaeologists focus their time and attention on areas needing greater cultural resource attention. On the negative side, this policy may be acting to the detriment of types of sites which tend to be found at high altitudes, sheep camps included. On the positive side, the policy ensures that at least a sample of sites from all ecological zones will be protected and preserved for the future.

Strategy 1: The Forest Service should continue its current policy of sample surveying those project areas which are above the pinyon-juniper transition line. While not an ideal policy from the limited perspective of Basque sheep camps and other high-altitude cultural resources, the policy does ensure that some, if not all, such sites will be recorded and preserved. Overall, the current policy also helps Forest personnel channel their limited time and money to areas where it will do the most good. It should be noted, too, that types of projects that have a high impact on the land, dixie harrowing, road construction, and so forth, are intensively surveyed by Forest archaeologists whether they occur above or below the transition line.

ISSUE 4: Aspen art is threatened not only by undertakings such as timber sales, but more so by the mortality of the trees on which it is carved. While some stands of aspen art may be eligible for their information content (criterion "d" of the National Register) or for their value as folk art (criterion "c"), trying to preserve them in situ would be an exercise in futility, as aspen trees have an average life span of only 60 to 80 years. Management strategies might more feasibly be directed toward recording rather than preserving outstanding examples of Basque dendroglyphs.

Strategy 1: During surveys, archaeologists should note on topographic maps any isolated or more extensive occurrences of aspen art they encounter. Cultural resource managers should then pool this data in order to formulate a comprehensive study to record outstanding examples

of the art. Stands with particularly great historical value or that express high artistic value should be targeted. Such a study is currently being conducted in Nevada by researchers from the Basque Studies Institute at the University of Nevada, Reno. With encouragement from managers and archaeologists here, perhaps the Nevada study could be extended in this direction.

Strategy 2: The SHPO should help cultural resource managers acquire funding for this study.

ISSUE 5: The Basque property type called "stone boys" (*harrimutilak*) have not yet been recognized in Arizona but may occur here. In states where they have been reported, their function is unclear. The age of such features is also difficult to determine. While it is doubtful that stone boys are eligible for the National Register, a special study of them seems justified.

Strategy 1: When working in areas of Basque sheep camps and aspen art, archaeologists should consider the possibility that some unnatural piles of rock may, in fact, be stone boys. Comparative data from archaeologists working in other western states should be sought. Oral historical research should be undertaken to help determine their function and cultural affiliation.

Strategy 2: The Forest Service should consider targeting a particularly interesting locality of sheep camps, aspen art, and stone boys for public interpretation. The Forest should also consider nominating one outstanding concentration of Basque features and sites to the National Register as a district.

ISSUE 6: As more and more sheepmen are leaving the industry, the Basque sheep ranch is disappearing from Arizona. Some Basque ranch houses with associated outbuildings may be eligible for the National Register, but a comprehensive survey has never been conducted to determine this.

Strategy 1: In the absence of a Basque organization here, the SHPO should contact the Arizona Wool Producers (formerly Growers) Association and seek its cooperation in inventorying historic Basque ranches in Arizona. The association includes several people of Basque heritage on its board of directors and executive staff. The association might be able and willing to provide the names of potential informants to interview and ranches to record for this study.

Strategy 2: Upon completion of the inventory study described above, the SHPO should prepare a Multiple Property Documentation Form for nominating eligible Basque ranches to the National Register of Historic Places.

ISSUE 7: While rocked-in trailers may be significant in marking the adaptation of Basque herders to a more sedentary lifestyle, none appear to be of sufficient age yet to qualify for the National Register.

Strategy 1: The SHPO should record one or more rocked-in trailers simply to add information on this unusual architectural style to the state inventory. No further management treatment is warranted at this time. Should representatives of this property type ever attain sufficient age (50 years), SHPO should formally evaluate them for National Register eligibility.

ISSUE 8: Knowledge of the Basques in Arizona and their material culture is hampered by a lack of published and unpublished material on the subject.

Strategy 1: Students searching for thesis or dissertation topics should consider Arizona Basques as a subject worthy of attention.

Strategy 2: Scholars should conduct and record interviews with Arizona's surviving Basques. Oral histories should be transcribed and placed in major libraries throughout the state. Copies should also be sent to the Basque Studies Institute in Reno.

Strategy 3: A historian or scholar in a related profession should study the archives of the Arizona Wool Growers Association and write a history of the association. Such a document would shed light not only on the sheep industry but also on Basque involvement in it.

Acknowledgements

The author is indebted to Robert Kemper, Jose Mallea, Joseph Meehan, Paige Gordon Phifer, Donald Watts, and Susan Wilcox for providing some of the data used in this study. The author would also like to thank the following individuals for reviewing an earlier draft of this document and providing valuable comments: Teri Cleeland, Bruce Donaldson, Linda Farnsworth, Robert Giebner, Ann Howard, Shereen Lerner, Robert Munson, Kay Reed, and Elisabeth Ruffner.

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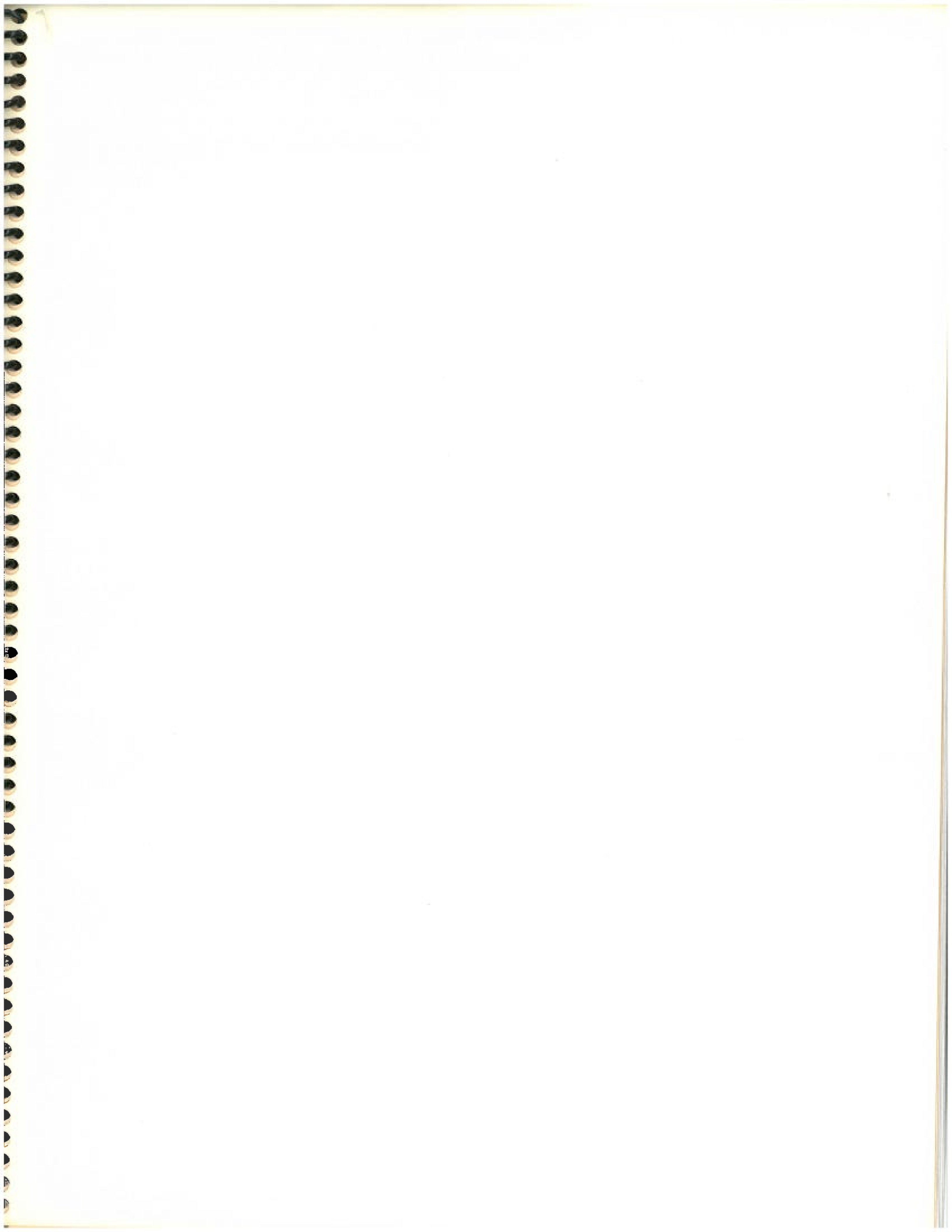

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