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Fading Silver: The Territorial Cup, the Arizona Foot Ball League and the Mystery of the History

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Cover Page Footnote

Mr. Spindler would like to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Philip Vandermeer and Linda Brown for their thoughtful comments and Roger Myers' assistance in locating University of Arizona student newspapers.

Fading Silver: The Territorial Cup, the Arizona Foot Ball League and the Mystery of the History

Robert P. Spindler

ABSTRACT

New evidence regarding the Arizona Foot Ball League Championship Cup enhances our understanding of its' provenance as the oldest intercollegiate rivalry trophy in the United States. The story of the Territorial Cup and the 1899-1900 Normals' football season offers many insights into territorial Phoenix history, archival preservation, memory and symbolism.

Arizona football fans have long agonized over the legendary rivalry between The University of Arizona and Arizona State University that began with the first ever confrontation on November 30, 1899. The symbol of that rivalry, known as the Arizona Territorial Football League Championship Cup, or Territorial Cup, has recently been reintroduced to football fans and the media, but new information uncovered by the ASU archivist about the league championship and the trophy presents a very different story about the place of the aged silver icon in Arizona collegiate sports history.

Football in the 1890s was a game of brute force and deception. The offense was mostly composed of running plays emerging from scrum-like "line bucking" at the line of scrimmage, and most games were low-scoring, defensive battles. In the late 19th century Arizona football was an emerging sandlot sport conducted by teams associated with specific territorial towns or athletic clubs. Local residents signed up to play scrimmages and more formalized competitive games, often learning the rules and skills as they played. Game officials were most often local citizens of stature selected by the coaches for their honesty, integrity and familiarity with the rules.

Early news coverage of Phoenix football is found in 1893 when the Phoenix Athletic Club sponsored a team that played against a group of British citizens; the game was presented in news accounts as "Britishers vs. Athletics." Other early news coverage cited teams from Prescott, Phoenix, and Tempe, the latter not to be

confused with the Arizona Territorial Normal School team known as the “Normals.”¹ The Arizona Territorial Normal School, now Arizona State University, was founded in 1885 and enrolled 119 students in 1899. Phoenix High School immediately became a local football powerhouse in this period even though the school was established in 1895 with an opening class of only 90 students. The Phoenix Indian School operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs opened in 1891. More than seven hundred students, many recruited from outside central Arizona, endured overcrowded and oppressive conditions at the Indian School in 1899.²

In 1897 local interest in football exploded with a number of games anticipated and sometimes covered in the *Arizona Republican* newspaper. The first and only game Normal School played that year was against Phoenix High School, while Phoenix Indian School battled Tempe and Prescott, and Fort Huachuca travelled over 180 miles from southeast Arizona to confront the “Phoenix club.” The play of the Phoenix Indian School team against Prescott was lauded as “more scientific,” featuring their famous “revolving wedge” that was “said to be an Indian invention.”³

On December 27, 1898, Phoenix High School lined up against the Phoenix Indian School at “Phoenix park” (now Eastlake Park) “for the championship of the territory.” The pre-game publicity indicated “the High School hasn’t been beaten for three years” and they lived up to the hype, defeating the Indian School 12-10.⁴ This territorial championship was an unofficial designation of reputation rather than the result of an organized tournament or league. Until 1899 football in the valley was an informal and largely recreational activity that drew hundreds of curious spectators and spawned local rivalries, especially between the High School and the Indian School. Normal School’s eleven were ambitious newcomers to the fray.

Football at the Arizona Territorial Normal School had begun in 1896 with a practice squad coached by Frederick “Cap” Irish, an ambitious science teacher and military science commander. Like most early football squads, the 1896 Normals had little in the way of uniforms or protective gear. Early accounts describe the Normals’

1. “Local Briefs,” *Arizona Republican*, October 5, 1893, 5; “Local Briefs,” *Arizona Republican*, October 11, 1893, 5; “Touch Down: A Brisk First Half Between the Britishers and the Athletics,” *Arizona Republican*, October 17, 1893, 5.
2. *ASU Statistical Summary 1984-85 Centennial Edition* (Tempe, AZ: Office of Management and Financial Analysis, Arizona State University, 1985), 58 (The Centennial Edition of the ASU Statistical Summary contains historical enrollment data); “Welcome to the Phoenix Union High School Alumni Association Website,” Phoenix Union High School Alumni Association, <http://www.puhsaa.org/history.htm> (accessed April, 2014); Robert A. Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935* (Norman, OK: Oklahoma University Press, 1988), 64.
3. “Foot Ball at the Park,” *Arizona Republican*, April 4, 1897, 4; “Foot Ball Today: Prescott and the Indians Will Battle for Blood,” *Arizona Republican*, November 25, 1897, 4; “Hot Foot Ball Today: The Huachucas and the Phoenix Eleven at the Park,” *Arizona Republican*, November 25, 1897, 4.
4. “High School vs. Indian School,” *Arizona Republican*, December 23, 1898, 5; “High School Wins: Exciting Football Contest Yesterday Afternoon,” *Arizona Republican*, December 28, 1898, 7.

first competitive game in 1897 against the Phoenix Indian School, in which they were defeated in a high scoring contest 38-20. The Normal School did not field a varsity team in 1898, and so by the fall of 1899 they accumulated their skill and experience through scrimmages, watching other Phoenix teams and reading the rule book.⁵

The first account of the Normals' 1899 football season was written by journalist Ernest J. Hopkins and founding university archivist Alfred Thomas, and later corroborated by longtime ASU publicist Dean Smith.⁶ Their work presented lengthy direct quotations from news coverage of 1899 football games. In the absence of surviving football league or team records, and given the few surviving Cap Irish papers, our knowledge of Normals' football in this period derives from coverage presented before and after game day in the daily newspapers of the home team and visitor cities. However some known citations to news coverage in the Phoenix *Enterprise* and other early newspapers cannot be located today. Other cited articles missing from the microfilm or online editions survive only because interested individuals collected and preserved them in scrapbooks and personal collections. Given the rarity of surviving contemporaneous hardcopy newspapers and decaying, incomplete and un-indexed microfilm editions, verifying and expanding our knowledge of early collegiate football in Arizona is a challenging prospect to this day.⁷

The story of the 1899 Normals' football season and the origin of the Territorial Cup, as told by Hopkins, Thomas and later Smith, begins with a lengthy transcription of news coverage of the first game against the Phoenix Indian School played "on the Normal grounds yesterday" [October 21, 1899]. The source of the coverage is attributed to a *Tempe News* article pasted into the Normals' star fullback Charles "Charlie" Haigler's scrapbook. The account is notable for a detailed account of the entire game and the first description of the Normals' team colors: "the Normal team had rooters galore, with a waving mass of colors of maroon, old gold and white." The Indian School's "revolving wedge" offense featuring fullback Bararages Buck made

5. Dean Smith, *The Sun Devils: Eight Decades of Arizona State Football* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University Alumni Association, 1979), 6; "Foot Ball At The Park: Phoenix High School Defeats the Normal 8 to 0," *Arizona Republican*, April 4, 1897, 4.
6. Ernest J. Hopkins and Alfred Thomas, Jr., *The Arizona State University Story*, (Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University, 1960); Alfred Thomas became founding university archivist in 1971, long after publication of this monograph. Dean Smith, *The Sun Devils: Eight Decades of Arizona State Football*, (Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University Alumni Association, 1979).
7. Most of the news coverage sources presented here were located through the ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Arizona Republican database available to students and faculty at the Arizona State University Libraries. The author reviewed over 100 online Arizona Republican articles about Phoenix football from 1893-1900 that can now be located as a result of improved character recognition technology applied to ProQuest's microfilm editions. Some known citations of relevant articles in Phoenix newspapers are unavailable, and gaps in the surviving newspaper editions exist in the ProQuest database and in the available microfilm editions at Arizona State University's Archives and Special Collections.

progress in the first half until the Normals defense finally stopped them. Second half action featured a lengthy run from scrimmage by Haigler resulting in a five-point touchdown and an extra point. The coverage cited the final score of 6-0 for the Normals and concluded with the important statement that “both teams were well satisfied with the decisions and say it was a good clean hard-fought game.”⁸

The Hopkins-Thomas and Smith books briefly cover the next game of the Normals’ 1899 season against Phoenix High School on November 4th, citing the prize of a “fine Spalding ball” awarded to the victorious Normals who prevailed again with a 6-0 score. News coverage claimed that the High School was “outclassed and out played at every point” and confirmed that this was the second game “played under the auspices of the Arizona Foot Ball League.”⁹

The inaugural football game between the University of Arizona and the Normals was celebrated by the Hopkins-Thomas and Smith volumes as the climax of the Normals’ season, but it was also the third major historical event in a rivalry that continues to embroil not only the two schools but the cities of Phoenix, Tempe and Tucson. The University of Arizona was legislatively founded on the same day in 1885 as the Arizona Territorial Normal School, the result of political intrigue in the “Thieving Thirteenth” Territorial Legislature of 1885 and competition amongst boosters for Phoenix, Tucson and Tempe for location of the Normal School, The University of Arizona, and the state insane asylum. Phoenicians celebrated the acquisition of the insane asylum with its substantial legislative appropriation, while Tucsonans were initially disappointed in securing the university. Tempe citizens rallied around the Normal School, and they subscribed funding and donated twenty acres of land for the institution as required by the founding legislation.¹⁰

In 1889 the city of Phoenix became the capitol of the Arizona Territory when the government was moved from the city of Prescott, Arizona by the action of the 15th Territorial Legislature. Citizens of Tucson were again disappointed in losing the capitol to Phoenix since their city was larger, much older and had previously served as the territorial capitol from 1867-1877.¹¹ While the 1885 controversy amongst the three cities served as the cornerstone of this rivalry, in 1889, Tempe was not a contender for the territorial capitol and Phoenicians were reluctant to associate

8. Charles Haigler Papers, University Archives, Arizona State University Libraries, USM-68; *Arizona Republican*, October 22, 1899, 6; Hopkins and Thomas, 135-137; Smith, 6.

9. Charles Haigler Papers, USM-68, 85. The unattributed news clipping was likely from the *Tempe News*.

10. Hopkins and Thomas, 33-68, 70-71; Stephanie R. DeLuse and Denise E. Bates, *Arizona State University* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2012), 10-12.

11. Tucson’s 1890 population was 5,150, while Phoenix boasted 3,152; United States Census Bureau, “Table 3. Arizona - Race and Hispanic Origin for Selected Large Cities and Other Places: Earliest Census to 1990,” <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0076/AZtab.pdf> (accessed April, 2014). The history of Tucson is presented by the city at http://www.tucsonaz.gov/history/tucson_history (accessed April, 2014).

themselves with the farmers on the “South Side.” By the mid-twentieth century, and especially after the 1958 “name change” controversy that pitted the University against the Tempe school, the rivalry became a competition of two metropolitan areas that was expressed on the collegiate gridiron.¹²

The first “Big Game” was played on a sunny Thanksgiving Day at the Carrillo Gardens in Tucson, November 30, 1899. Carrillo Gardens was Tucson’s first public park and it featured fruit trees, spring-fed ponds and a dusty clearing big enough for a football field.¹³ In 1899 the University was the larger institution, enrolling 161 students compared to the Normal School’s enrollment of 119.¹⁴ The University team was formed in October and they had played two previous games against a Tucson club team. They arrived in new silver or white uniforms with thick horizontal sage green stripes.¹⁵

The Normals, who wore black sweaters with a white letter “N” and some padding reportedly said to have been stitched into the players’ sweaters and pants by their girlfriends, travelled by “special excursion” train to Tucson and were met at the station by a delegation of university students who “royally entertained” them at the new university dormitory. The *Tempe News* provided detailed coverage after the game on December 2, 1899, noting “many brilliant individual and team plays calling for rounds of applause from the crowded grand stand and side lines.” After a slow start the Normals, said to be much larger than the University team, moved to within an inch of a touchdown but they were stopped by the University elevens’ amazing goal line stand. After an exchange of possessions the first half ended with no score. In the second half Normals’ fullback Haigler “woke up” and “plunged through the line as one of the spectators remarked ‘like a thousand brick’ [sic] and made repeated gains with three and four opponents hanging to him.” The Normals scored a touchdown in the first fifteen minutes of the second half and then missed the kick for the extra point. Soon afterward, team captain Walter Shute scored another touchdown and the extra point was added, making the score 11-0. Later the teams resorted to a lengthy exchange of kicks and fair catches, one of which landed near the Normals’ goal and

12. Hopkins and Thomas, 279-305.
13. Mary Levy Peachin, “Carrillo Keeps One of Tucson’s First Family-owned Businesses Going,” *Inside Tucson Business*, August 2, 2013, http://www.insidetucsonbusiness.com/community_lifestyle/carrillo-keeps-one-of-tucson-s-first-family-owned-businesses/article_6c4a71f8-fadc-11e2-8d9e-0019bb2963f4.html (accessed April, 2014); “Carrillo Gardens, 1885-1903,” http://www.sandario.com/walking_carr_gardens.pdf (accessed April, 2014).
14. Hopkins and Thomas, 33-68; Stephanie R. DeLuse and Denise E. Bates, 10-12; “The University of Arizona’s Enrollment History,” Office of Institutional Research and Planning Support, http://oirps.arizona.edu/files/Student_Demo/enrollment_old_current.pdf (accessed April, 2014).
15. “Athletics – Foot Ball,” *The Sage-Green and Silver*, 2(1):9-10 (October 1899); “Athletics – Foot Ball”, *The Sage-Green and Silver*, 2(2):11 (November 1899); “Athletics: Football”, *The Sage-Green and Silver*, 2 (5?):10-11 (February 1900). The November edition referred to the first game between the University team and Tucson as a “practice game,” but the February 1900 edition cited both games, the subsequent game against the Normals and a later game against the Tucson Indian School, and a season record of 2-1-1.

resulted in a safety for the University when Jack Stelzriede was unable to return the kick from the end zone. The final score of the historic contest was 11-2, and after the game the victorious Normals joined the University boys in a Thanksgiving dinner.¹⁶

This contest, the first “Big Game” that initiated a football rivalry as fierce as any in collegiate sports, remains one of the great moments of Arizona State University and The University of Arizona sports history. But the Arizona Foot Ball League championship and the Territorial Cup, now celebrated as the symbol of that rivalry, was not secured by this gridiron victory. Hopkins and Thomas wrote, “The Normal School cleaned up that 1899 season by winning the championship,” stating that the Normal squad won the championship “that Fall.” Dean Smith stated that coach Irish scheduled “three games” for the Normals that year, and asserted “The Territorial Championship Cup, sponsored by the new Football League of Arizona, was at stake.”¹⁷ Recently uncovered news coverage of Normals’ football from 1899 and 1900 presents a more complicated story of that fateful football season.

The Arizona Foot Ball League appears to be the first formal football organization in Arizona. Founded in a meeting at the Adams Hotel in Phoenix on September 30, 1899, the league originally consisted of Phoenix High School, Phoenix Indian School, and Arizona Territorial Normal School. Officers of the league were “Captain J.L.B. Alexander, President; Professor F. M. Irish of the normal, Secretary; and Professor Kraemer of the high school, Treasurer.” The news article anticipated that the University and one of the teams from Prescott would join at a later date and that a schedule of games would include a series at Eastlake Park and a Thanksgiving game.¹⁸ Some of the controversy surrounding the founding of the league was connected to selection of combatants for the Thanksgiving game in Phoenix, which was expected to bring significant ticket sales revenue.

The Normals’ first league-sponsored game was their victory against the Indian School on October 21, 1899, described above. Their second game, verified by Charlie Haigler’s scrapbook annotation, was against Phoenix High School on November 4. Pregame reporting amplified the excitement by identifying the matchup as the “first game of the series,” (meaning the series of league games scheduled for Eastlake Park in Phoenix) and that “The eleven winning the greatest number of games will be awarded a cup, an Insignia of championship honors.” Postgame news coverage offered a detailed account of the Normals’ 6-0 victory. The “Normals played a smashing game from the start,” meaning their offense played a physical running game that pushed the high school defensive line backwards, especially in the second half

16. Tempe News, December 2, 1899, in Charles Haigler Papers, USM-68, 89-90; “Eleven to Two,” *Arizona Daily Star*, December 2, 1899; *The Sage-Green and Silver*, 2(2):11 (November 1899); *The Sage-Green and Silver*, 2(5?):11 (February 1900).

17. Hopkins and Thomas, 135, 140; Smith, 6.

18. “A Football League: Formed at the Hotel Adams Conference,” *Arizona Republican*, October 1, 1899, 4.

when the Normals scored their only touchdown. “At least three-fourths of the game was played in High-school territory.”¹⁹

But while the traditional story reports that the Normals were undefeated going into their third game against University’s team on November 30, 1899, new evidence shows a more complex story. The Normals played the Indian School a second time on November 18th at Eastlake Park. Haigler’s scrapbook does not include news coverage of this game (possibly explaining Hopkins-Thomas’ and Smith’s omission), but it is now available in digitized editions of the *Arizona Republican* online. Between 800 and 1,000 spectators crowded the park for this controversial rematch that was dominated by the Indian School. The extraordinary front-page news account entitled “Umpired by Rooters” made damaging comments regarding poor officiating, the subtitle making the doubly insensitive remark “The crowd said the aborigines were conquered by uninformed officials.” The controversy was associated with a drop kick by the Indian School that was called a punt and touchback rather than a point scoring field goal by the officials, who were apparently influenced by vocal Normals fans. The final score given at the game and presented by the newspaper was 6-5 in favor of the Normals, although the reporter editorialized that “There is but little question that the Indians were fairly entitled to the game.” The account of the game in the “South Side” column of the *Arizona Republican* barely acknowledged the controversy and cited other decisions by officials that favored the Indian School. Afterwards Indian School Superintendent McCowan threatened to withdraw from the league.²⁰

The outcome was in fact challenged at a league meeting in Phoenix on November 23, 1899, and the game was retrospectively awarded to the Indian School. The “South Side” columnist complained that “the High School and Indian School representatives, being a majority of the league membership, simply threw aside the Spalding rules, the decisions of the referee and umpire, and...jointly reumpired the game.” The column did not cite a final score, but the columnist quipped, “Though they steal the score, they were defeated by witty generalship.”²¹

As a result of the successful appeal, the Normals’ record going into their fourth game of the season against the University eleven was 2-1. While Tempe and Tucson press excitedly promoted the upcoming game in Tucson, the focus in Phoenix was on the confrontation scheduled for the same day between the Phoenix High School and the Phoenix Indian School:

19. Charles Haigler Papers, USM-68, 85.

20. [Advertisement], *Arizona Republican*, November 18, 1899, 4; “Umpired by Rooters,” *Arizona Republican*, November 19, 1899, 1; “South Side,” *Arizona Republican*, November 19, 1899, 6.

21. “South Side,” *Arizona Republican*, November 25, 1899, 6.

All dissensions in football circles and all the effect of the decision of the Arizona Football League in awarding the last normal-Indian School contest to the Indian eleven has been lost in the great interest shown in the coming Thanksgiving football game between the high school and Indian teams... The high school team has had a little hard luck... but the manager promises a surprise... to those who were slightly disappointed in the playing of the high school in the game with the normal.²²

Thus, while the epic 1899 gridiron match between the Normals and the University stands as the first milestone in the long history of Arizona collegiate football competition, the Normals' record going into that game was different than previously reported. Further research shows that it also was not, as previously believed, the final game of the 1899 season. On December 9th the Normals met Phoenix High School for a second time in the fifth game of the Eastlake Park series. News coverage describes a bitterly fought defensive struggle resulting in a scoreless tie. Prominent Phoenician Charles Christy served as umpire while a young Carl T. Hayden, recently returned from Stanford University, was referee.²³

Phoenicians did not have to wait long for a rematch between the Normal eleven and the high school, which was played at Eastlake Park on Christmas Day. This game is distinct from the game between the Normals' second team and a club called the Phoenix Monarchs played on December 23rd. In the rematch the Normals dominated the high school team from start to finish, compiling the surprising and decisive score of 27-0. The Arizona Republican eulogized the formerly dominant football team by admitting any chance for the high school to win the "championship trophy offered by the Arizona Foot Ball League" is gone.²⁴ While the Normals proved their mettle in this classic gridiron battle, the Arizona Foot Ball League championship and its prize of silver hardware were apparently still up for grabs. Despite the Normals' record of 4-1-1, fans looked forward to the final game of the season against the Indian School eleven to decide the matter beyond question.

22. "Football Tomorrow: the Indians and the High School in Great Feather," *Arizona Republican*, November 29, 1899, 8.
23. "Foot Ball Today: The Normals and the High School in a League Game," *Arizona Republican*, December 9, 1899, 8; "South Side," *Arizona Republican*, December 9, 1899, 6; "An Interesting Game: A League Foot Ball Contest at the Phoenix Park Yesterday," *Arizona Republican*, December 10, 1899, 8.
24. "South Side: Tempe," *Arizona Republican*, December 22, 1899, 6; "South Side: Tempe," *Arizona Republican*, December 24, 1899, 6; "Victorious Normals: Mopped the Park With the High School Team," *Arizona Republican*, December 26, 1899, 4; "Normals Win Again," Charles Haigler Papers, USM-68, 91. This unattributed news clipping in the Haigler Papers was likely from the *Tempe News*. "South Side: Tempe," *Arizona Republican*, December 26, 1899, 6. This post game coverage from the Tempe correspondent continues to deny the result of the successful Indian School appeal of the November 18th game, erroneously indicating the only game the Normals did not win was the tie against the High School.

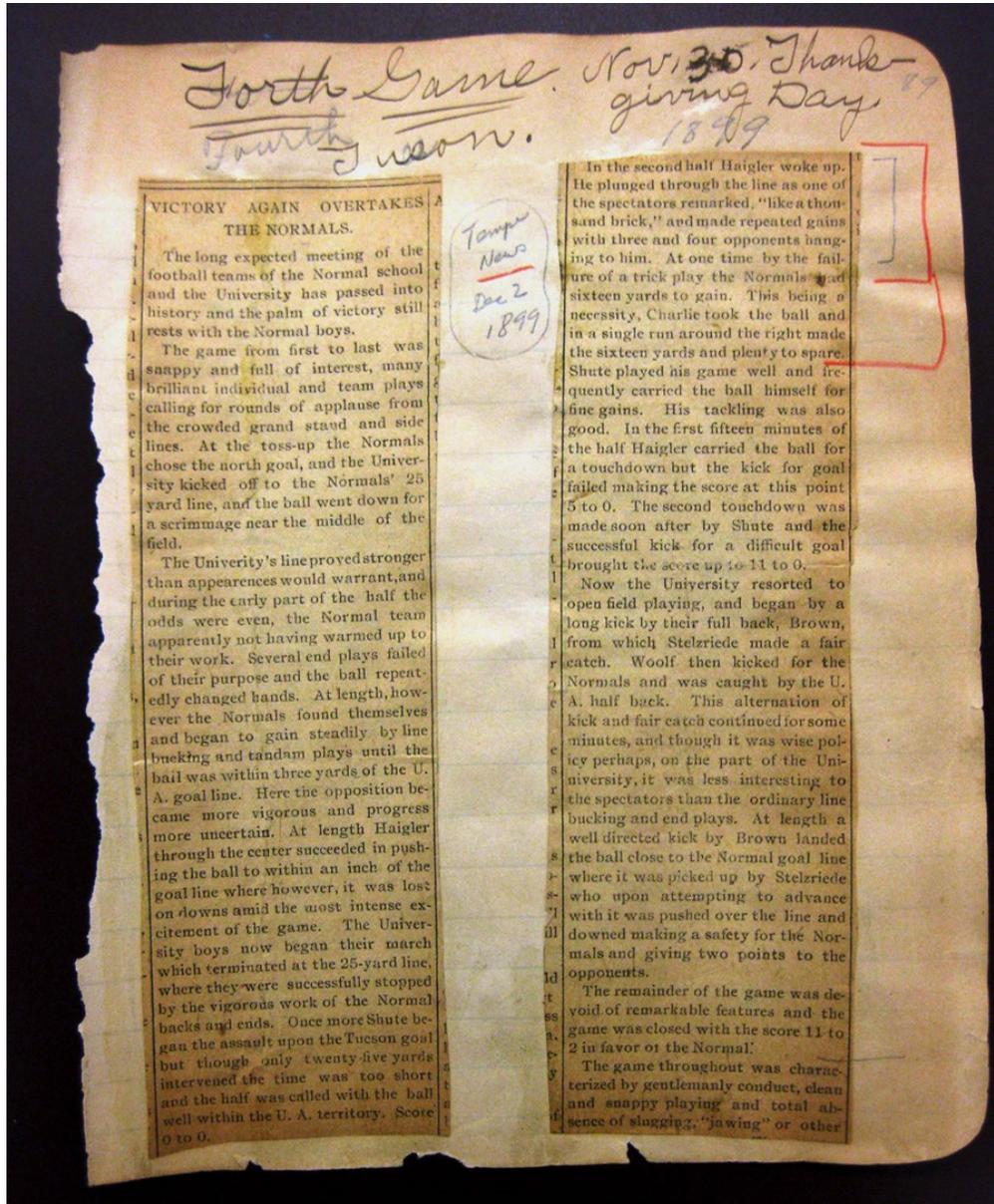


Figure 1. *Tempe News* coverage of the first Big Game as presented in Charles Haigler's scrapbook. Note the designation "Forth Game." Charles Haigler Papers, USM-68, University Archives, Arizona State University Libraries.

On January 20, 1900, the rivals faced each other for the third time. The game at Phoenix was preceded by a contest between the Phoenix Indian School and the famous Carlisle Indians, which was observed by the Normal football squad. Preparing for their final game of the season against the Normals, the Phoenix Indian School

team adopted Carlisle's offense but the abrupt change and a measles epidemic were blamed for the Indian School's 17-0 loss. Brief news coverage of the game lamented the Indians' loss and applauded the Normals' improvement.²⁵ The "South Side" column on January 21st gave a more detailed description of the Normals' decisive victory, noting that all three touchdowns were scored by Haigler. "This game gives the Tempe normal foot ball team the championship of the territory and they have thereby won the cup given by the Arizona foot ball league, which has been ordered and is expected to be here in a few days." The columnist continued by erroneously claiming the Normals won seven games that season, noting the successful appeal of one game and omitting the tie against the High School team.²⁶ The Normals' record for 1899-1900 was in fact 5-1-1.

On Friday January 26th, the Normal team and the faculty, students and many fans gathered at Old Main for the award ceremony, where "the Olympian victors were crowned with a wreath of olive sprigs tied with the winning team's beautiful colors, white, maroon and old gold." Professor Irish, representing the league, unveiled the trophy and presented "the beautiful silver loving cup" to Captain Walter Shute. Shute thanked the faculty and students of the Normal School and the people of Tempe, and he wisely highlighted the vocal support of the Normal School girls, who "won at least half the battle."²⁷

Likely the next day, the Normal football team posed for a photograph with the Territorial Cup on the grand staircase at the front of Old Main. In a vintage contemporaneous print of the photo preserved at Arizona State University's archives, the cup and its features are clearly visible. There are different versions of this photo in existence; some versions bear the year "99" written on the grand staircase bannister. Another depicts an owl on a leash seated on the low step alongside the cup, leading some to assert that the team was known as the "Owls," but this name does not appear in historical news accounts or official documents of the Normal School.

The league purchased the Territorial Cup from Taunton, Massachusetts silversmiths Reed & Barton. According to their representative the same cup appears in their 1910 catalog and was valued at \$20. It stands about eight inches tall and is composed of silver plate over "Britannia base metal." Recent examination of the cup's construction indicates the base metal was stamped in the shape of a flower with petals, where the petals were bent upwards and welded together so that the center of the flower becomes the base. The feet and handles were subsequently welded onto

25. "Normal Victory: Foot Ball Champions of the Arizona League," *Arizona Republican*, January 21, 1900, 4; Trennert, 77.

26. "South Side: Tempe," *Arizona Republican*, January 21, 1900, 6.

27. "South Side: Tempe," *Arizona Republican*, January 28, 1900, 6.

the sides. The cup bears an engraved inscription “Arizona Foot Ball League 1899 Normal.”²⁸



Figure 2. The 1899 Normals football team seated on the Grand Staircase outside Old Main with the Territorial Cup, January 1900. University Archives Photographs, Arizona State University Libraries.

The post-game journey of the Territorial Cup presents an unsolved mystery since no records were found documenting the location of the cup after the award ceremony and the posed photograph at Old Main. The January 21, 1900, “South Side” column that celebrated the final Normal victory predicted the cup “will be placed in the normal halls along with other trophies of the school.” I have speculated that the cup likely resided in the school President’s office, but the actual location of the cup

28. Rose Minetti to Robert Spindler, email communication, July 31, 2001; Territorial Cup donor file, University Archives, Arizona State University Libraries. Minetti forwarded Scott Van Note’s communication from Susan Kindberg of Reed and Barton identifying the cup from their 1910 catalog. Cup construction was described to the author in 2001 by Tom Bollinger of Arizona Bronze as the cup was being prepared for replication.

remained unknown from January 1900 until Minister Ken Falk and ASU Professor Mac Bohlman discovered the cup in September, 1983, in “the closet of the First Congregational Church of Tempe...at 101 E. Sixth Street.”²⁹ No evidence has emerged describing how and when the cup was brought to the church. After the trophy was found, Arizona State University President Russell Nelson indicated that plans for a permanent display would be made, and the cup became part of the ASU’s University Archives. It was placed in the former dining room of the historic President’s Residence, then occupied by the University Archives. Between 1984 and 1995, when the University Archives vacated the building, hundreds of visitors who conducted research in the Archives reading room could have seen the cup on display in the glass-enclosed corner pantry cabinet.



Figure 3. The Territorial Cup as it appeared in 2013. Photo by Tom Story, Media Relations Photographs, University Archives, Arizona State University Libraries.

29. “South Side: Tempe,” *Arizona Republican*, January 21, 1900, 6; Bill Adair, “1899 Trophy of 1st Game Found in Church,” *Tempe Daily News*, November 26, 1983, A-1.

In the fall of 1995, ASU's University Archives was contacted by Lennée Eller of the Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport Museum and invited to place a display of historical materials regarding ASU football history at the airport. The invitation was made in preparation for the expected arrival of thousands of fans who would attend Super Bowl XXX at ASU's Sun Devil Stadium. After evaluating security and environmental conditions at the airport, exhibits curator Rose Minetti selected the Territorial Cup for the display and it was installed there for public viewing in October, 1995.

That fall, The University of Arizona alumnae Jon Alquist and Frank Soltys Jr. were travelling through the airport and noticed the cup on display. They consulted the NCAA record books and determined the Territorial Cup was the oldest intercollegiate rivalry trophy in the United States. The determination was later confirmed by NCAA official Rick Campbell. They imagined the cup could be placed in the planned Jim Click Hall of Champions at The University of Arizona (UA) campus to celebrate the forthcoming 100th anniversary of the first Big Game in 1999.³⁰ In 1998 a UA representative contacted me in my capacity as ASU University Archivist and asked if the trophy could be placed on permanent loan at the Click Hall of Champions, but I politely declined and the matter was laid to rest for a time.

Alquist and Soltys continued to lobby for the cup with the University of Arizona Alumni Association, and their determination was rewarded in the summer of 2001. On June 26, 2001, I received a call from Dr. Christine Wilkinson, then Vice President of Student Affairs at Arizona State University (ASU). In that phone call Dr. Wilkinson relayed ASU President Lattie Coor's decision that henceforth, the Territorial Cup would be shared between the UA and ASU such that each year the winner of the rivalry game would be awarded the trophy. Dr. Wilkinson and I discussed preservation and security concerns, and production of a replica for use in public events and on field celebrations. On July 20th representatives of both universities met at Wilkinson's office to organize a celebration to "reestablish" the cup and develop a process for sharing the cup and ensuring its protection.³¹

There was no discussion regarding the accuracy of prior historical research about the 1899 football season or the origins of the storied hardware. In the absence of a university historian, the office of the University Archivist has been the trusted source of historical information about ASU for decades. I met founding university archivist Alfred Thomas shortly after my arrival at ASU in 1988. I admired the numerous and massive volumes of historical documentation Thomas assembled and distributed, and considered him the most knowledgeable source of ASU's history. I continued the tradition established by prior archivists Thomas and Edward Oetting of providing fact

30. Michele A. Schultze, "A Territorial Treasure: Collegiate Football's Oldest Rivalry Trophy," *Arizona Alumnus*, Fall 2001, 60-62.

31. Email communications between Christine Wilkinson and Robert Spindler, June 26 and 27, 2001; "1899 Territorial Championship Cup, UA/ASU Meeting, July 20, 2001," Territorial Cup donor file, University Archives, Arizona State University Libraries.

-checking services and historical narratives for use by university publicity offices, the Alumni Association and university executives. As plans for the Territorial Cup celebration proceeded, I reread the accounts by Hopkins, Thomas and Smith and noted their lengthy quotations from the 1899 football news coverage. I reviewed the subsequent football rivalry news coverage that repeated the research published in 1960 and 1971. Confident that the published historical information was reliable, I turned to the archival concerns of preservation, security and access.

In August 2001, representatives of both universities worked together to plan for future cup exchanges and production of a replica. Michele Schulze of the UA Alumni Association contacted the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) to discuss the possibility of future police escorts or police transportation of the cup between cities in the event the cup needed to travel; the DPS eventually denied the request. Spindler and Minetti investigated having a replica made at the ASU Art Department, and then turned to local atelier Arizona Bronze to have an accurate silicone casting made directly from the cup. The universities agreed to share the cost of the replica, and the original was returned from the casting in time to make an appearance at the Arizona Board of Regents September meeting at ASU.³²

In early November I distributed the first draft of a "Territorial Cup Protocol" to the joint universities planning group. This document asserted the Territorial Cup as property of Arizona State University but also codified President Coor's direction that the winner of the Big Game would receive the cup each year for public display. It presented rules for handling, security and preservation of the fragile hardware, designated the replica for use in celebrations and media events and identified specific offices in the libraries of each university that would take responsibility for the hardware each year. I proposed that the replica be awarded to the losing team for display so that each institution had either the original cup or the replica on display at all times. The proposal was not accepted and so the document was edited to direct that the Big Game winner receive both the original cup and the replica. The "Territorial Cup Protocol" was signed by ASU President Coor and UA President Likens after the game in December 2001. Another official recognition of the rivalry icon was issued on November 8th in the form of a gubernatorial proclamation from Arizona Governor Jane Dee Hull.³³

Months of collegial and effective planning among representatives of the two universities and local and regional media attention culminated in a joint pre-game brunch reception held at Old Main on the ASU Tempe campus. The event was

32. Email exchanges, August/September 2001, Territorial Cup donor file, University Archives, Arizona State University Libraries.

33. Robert Spindler email to Clifford Papin, Michele Schulze, Mark Brand and Christine Wilkinson, November 6-7, 2001; Proclamation entitled "Arizona Territorial Football Championship Cup," Office of the Governor, November 8, 2001, Territorial Cup donor file, University Archives, Arizona State University Libraries.


ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

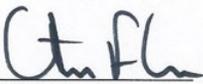
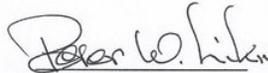
**TERRITORIAL CUP PROTOCOL
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA**

STUDENT AFFAIRS

DEC 6 2001

ASU
TEMPE, AZ

- 1) The original 1899 Arizona Territorial Football League Championship Cup shall henceforth be known and referred to in all media as the "Territorial Cup". (TC) A replica of the original cup has been manufactured and will be known and referred to in all media as the "Territorial Cup Replica" (TCR).
- 2) The TC has been and will continue to be the property of Arizona State University (ASU), Property Control Number _____ . ASU loans this cup to the University of Arizona in accordance with all the terms of this protocol.
- 3) UA and ASU have shared the cost of TCR manufacture and ASU has provided a travel case for the TCR. The TCR and case are hereby gifted to the University of Arizona (UA), Property Control Number _____ . UA loans this cup to ASU in accordance with all the terms of this protocol.
- 4) The ASU contact person for all questions relating to the TC or the TCR shall be the University Archivist, ASU Libraries, Box 871006, Tempe, AZ 85287-1006. 480.965.3145 This individual will take full responsibility for ensuring the security and preservation of the TC or TCR while in the possession of ASU.
- 5) The University of Arizona (UA) contact person for all questions relating to the TC or TCR shall be the Special Collections Team Leader, University of Arizona Library, 1510 E. University, Tucson, Arizona 85721 520-621-6433 (phone) 520-621-9733 This individual will take full responsibility for ensuring the security and preservation of the TC or TCR while in the possession of UA.
- 6) Each year the TC and the TCR will be awarded to the winner of the ASU/UA football game for the purpose of public display. In case of a tie game, the TC and the TCR will be displayed at ASU.
- 7) ASU and UA will provide a publicly accessible display case and intercampus transportation that meets archival requirements for security and preservation to be established by the ASU and UA contacts listed in protocols 4 and 5. The display will include appropriate captioning that distinguishes the TC from the TCR.
- 8) The TC shall **only** be used for public display in the cases described in protocol 7 above. The TCR shall be used for all on and off field activities, ceremonies, events and other displays. ASU and UA shall entertain requests to borrow the TCR for events of their respective institutions.
- 9) The TC should **always** be handled with white cotton gloves and should **never** be cleaned. The TCR may be handled with gloves to preserve the finish and may be cleaned as needed using an appropriate silver cleaner or polish.

 _____ Lattie F. Coor President Arizona State University	Date 12/6/01	 _____ Peter W. Likins President University of Arizona	Date 12/17/01
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Department of Archives and Manuscripts
Arizona State University Libraries
P.O. Box 871006, Tempe AZ 85287-1006
480.965.3145 FAX 480.965.9169
www.asu.edu/lib/archives/damage.htm

Figure 4. The Territorial Cup Protocol signed by university presidents Coor and Likins. Donor Files, University Archives, Arizona State University Libraries.

convened on the morning of November 23, 2001, just before the 75th renewal of the great football rivalry between UA and ASU. The Territorial Cup was celebrated in the historic Carson Ballroom, likely the same site where the Normal eleven first received the trophy on January 26, 1900. A battle of the university bands ensued, and the cheerleaders flew through the air amidst blue and red and maroon and gold decorations. After I recounted the story of the first game, UA President Peter Likins and ASU President Lattie Coor made remarks and then they held the trophy high, proudly presenting the tarnished silver vessel to the applauding football fans.

Since 2001, I have been annually called upon to present the media with the story of the Territorial Cup, copies of the relevant photographs, and contextual documentation about the cup and the history of ASU. In the fall of 2013, the continuing media inquiries led me to create the Territorial Cup Collection in the *ASU Digital Repository* to facilitate distribution of the available information.³⁴ In an effort to present as much documentation as possible I made a concerted effort to read and acquire the original newspaper coverage of the three-game 1899 football season we had celebrated for decades. I was able to acquire most of the 1899 news articles cited by Hopkins, Thomas and Smith from microfilm at the ASU Libraries and the Arizona State Archives. In an attempt to locate new details from 1899 I decided to search online news databases in November of 2013, even though my online searches in previous years were unsuccessful. In the week before the 2013 “Big Game” additional 1899 news articles about football appeared in the *ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Arizona Republican* database that appeared to contradict the previous research. Ironically, I was finding these citations at the moment an *Arizona Republic* reporter contacted me for additional details. I could only confirm the traditional story at that time, although I did indicate to the reporter that new unconfirmed information was emerging. In December I found over 100 *Arizona Republican* citations for news articles regarding football in Phoenix from 1893 through January 1900, and a very brief reference in the Hopkins and Thomas book to Charlie Haigler’s scrapbook that substantially change our understanding of this history.

The story of the Territorial Cup and the 1899-1900 Normals’ football season offers many insights into territorial Phoenix history, archival preservation, memory and symbolism. The diligent research of authors Hopkins, Thomas and Smith was apparently inhibited by limited access to and search ability of early *Arizona Republican* newspapers. Hundreds of pages of poorly microfilmed newspaper articles presented in small fonts can now be examined in very short order given advances in technology. It’s notable that only one of the articles examined (the Normals vs. Indian School controversy) appeared on the front page of the *Arizona Republican*. Almost all of the most important articles were found in back pages under generic column titles such as “South Side.” Nevertheless it appears Hopkins, Thomas and Smith did not question Charlie Haigler’s scrapbook inscription that presented the 1899 Normals vs.

34. The Territorial Cup Collection is available at <http://repository.asu.edu/items/18872> (accessed April, 2014).

University game as the “Forth game.” Given the available technology, we can now learn much more about the early history of Phoenix from many other news articles depicting football games played by the Phoenix High School, the Phoenix Indian School and other local or visiting teams.

Preservation and interpretation of important historical icons such as the Territorial Cup are other significant features of this story. Evidence presented here, especially the eyewitness news account of the Territorial Cup award ceremony at Old Main, enhances authentication and our understanding of the provenance of the storied hardware, but the mystery of how the cup was removed from the university campus and found in the local church remains unsolved. Legends regarding purported thefts of other ASU historical objects such as the first ASU Victory Bell await further investigation, and they raise questions about the willingness and ability of most institutions to identify and protect their historical icons and objects. The role of the university archivist in providing accurate and timely historical research services might be considered, especially since that important work may compete with prompt delivery of core archival services. Finally, the assignment of symbolic value to the Territorial Cup as the icon of the great football rivalry between two Arizona universities could be questioned since the hardware was awarded for winning the league championship and not as a direct result of winning the first “Big Game.”

While the direct connection between the trophy and the rivalry is weakened as a result of the revised 1899-1900 Normals season record, the assignment of historic and symbolic value to an object or a place has always been an action of choice and interpretation by groups of recognized authority. The Territorial Cup is our oldest artifact of sports memorabilia, and the first game against the University of Arizona was a key moment in that 1899-1900 football season. Our universities have chosen this aged hardware as the symbol of a great historical event and a continuing sports rivalry. We can still celebrate history through the identification of icons that remind us of our fading past and the common heritage that binds us, at times unwillingly, together.