

PHOTO: CIVIL WAR\  
RECONSTRUCTION.

In the aftermath of the American Civil War many people struck out for the western promise of prosperity. In the South, especially, they were leaving homes and an economy that were devastated.

PHOTO: TUCSON.

In contrast, the town of Tucson, Arizona was a bustling economic and cultural gem. And, as such, represented the paradise in the West that so many emigrants were seeking. Many of the pioneers who settled there came north from Mexico, and with their Spanish heritage created an oasis of European style civilization in the hostile, rugged wilderness of the western desert.

PHOTO: TUCSON COLONY.  
(PRESIDIO)

The colony of Tucson was started in 1775 by Spanish speaking settlers. It soon became a presidio of the Spanish king, meant to protect the Spaniards of New Spain from their Native American enemies and European foes.

PHOTO: BOURKE.

Captain John Bourke of the Third Cavalry was serving with General George Crook when he visited Tucson in 1870.

BOURKE: "Tucson, the commercial entrepot of Arizona and the remoter Southwest - Tucson, the Naples of the desert... whose maidens were more charming, whose society was more hospitable, merchants more progressive, magazines better stocked, climate more dreamy, than any town from Santa Fe to Los Angeles."