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Family History Paper

The pungent smell of *menudo*, a Mexican soup, always reminds me of Christmas morning. As a child I hated the smell and never understood why my grandfather and father insisted on eating this wretched concoction (it is made with tripe, a.k.a. cow stomach) every year. In addition to the *menudo*, my family would always serve *chile con carne* with *tamales* on Christmas Eve. Despite my pleadings for normal American holiday food, my grandfather explained that this ritual was a valuable family tradition that stretched back for generations and that it was important that we continue to honor it. I loved and admired my grandfather, so every year I would manage to choke down a few mouthfuls of the *tamales*, though I never touched the *menudo*. Years later I now understand and appreciate the importance of this tradition, and why my grandfather insisted on continuing it year after year. Despite the Irish origin of the name, the Tully family is one of the oldest Hispanic families in Tucson, Arizona. The Tully's are one of the last *Tucsonenses*, a group of middle-class Mexican families that were responsible for shaping Tucson's destiny in the nineteenth century. Generation after generation of the Tully family has served the Tucson community as it grew from a small outpost in the Sonoran desert to a booming border metropolis. Our earliest ancestor, Carlos Hopkins Tully, is likely responsible for instigating the Mexican tradition of serving *chile con carne*, *tamales*, and *menudo* on Christmas in the Tully family. Born of an Anglo father and Mexican mother, Carlos chose to

associate with and celebrate his Mexican heritage. Through his expertise in journalism and education, Carlos joined other Tucsoners and became a leading advocate for the Mexican-American community in late nineteenth century Tucson as the increasing Anglo population changed the dynamic of the town.

On August 20th, 1775 in a valley full of cacti, rattlesnakes, and coyotes in the Northern Sonoran desert, a group of Spanish speaking pioneers from New Spain, lead by Irishman Don Hugh O'Connor, founded a *presidio* (garrison) in what is now Tucson, Arizona. Don O'Connor had been charged with inspecting and realigning the array of presidios between Sonora and Texas, intended to keep the Indians from raiding Southern Spanish settlements.¹ In those early years, the presidio was inhabited and maintained by multi-ethnic (though predominantly Mexican) settlers who were familiar with the many challenges of the Sonoran desert. These tenacious settlers battled drought, floods, scorching temperatures, and frequent Apache raids while carving out a precarious existence in the Tucson basin. These early settlers had a rough and dangerous life in which they were all too familiar with scarcity, isolation, and hardship. Early Anglo visitors passing through the presidio considered the lifestyle primitive and backwards and considered the people who lived there "ragamuffins".²

The Tucson presidio remained in Spanish territory until the Gadsden Purchase of 1854, when it was transferred to United States territory. By this time, the early Mexican settlers had endured decades of Apache raids, the

¹ Sonnichsen, C.L., *Tucson* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), 7.

² Sheridan, Thomas. *Los Tucsoneses* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1986), 18.

Mexican War for Independence and the Mexican-American war, as well as debilitating epidemics ranging from cholera to gold fever. The majority of the settlers in Tucson welcomed U.S. control and greeted the arrival of the Americans with enthusiasm.³ The annexation of the Southwest as part of U.S. territory also brought Tucson into the expanding economy of the United States. Due to its isolation and hostile climate, Tucson never experienced the flood of Anglos greedy for gold or land; a frequent pattern in other Southwestern territories such as California and Texas. Most Anglos who passed through Tucson pursued safer and more promising frontiers such as Los Angeles, San Francisco or Phoenix. However a few Anglo settlers decided to stay in Tucson and prospered from their associations with the established Mexican community. One of these men was Pinckney Randolph Tully, the adopted father of Carlos Hopkins Tully.

Pinckney Randolph Tully was a wealthy and powerful pioneer who served in several political offices in the Arizona territory and was also a successful businessman. P.R. Tully was born in Mississippi in 1824 and travelled west with his family on the historic Oregon Trail in 1845.⁴ However, the trip was cut short when Pinckney's father died in Western Missouri. Afterwards Pinckney traveled the Southwest on his own, residing in Santa Fe and later Las Cruces, New Mexico before settling in Tucson. In Las, Cruces Pinckney met his future

³ Sheridan, 30

⁴ Tucson Unified School District, "TUSD History. The First Hundred Years: The Boom Years 1950-1960," <http://www.tusd.k12.az.us/contents/distinfo/history/history17.html>.

business partner Estevan Ochoa, a famous and influential Mexican-American in the Tucson community and part of the Tucsonenses. The two men formed the freighting business Tully, Ochoa, & Company, which became one of the largest and most successful businesses in the Arizona territory in the later half of the 19th century. Pinckney eventually settled in Tucson in 1858 where he assimilated in the Mexican community and married a Mexican woman. However, while in Las Cruces Pinckney also befriended Charles Hopkins, a fellow Mason. According to the family's oral history, Pinckney promised Hopkins that should anything happen to him Pinckney would look after his young son Carlos.⁵ When Charles Hopkins passed away in 1865, Tully followed through on his promise and adopted the eleven-year old Carlos.

Carlos Hopkins Tully was born in 1853 in Las Cruces, New Mexico from a Mexican-Anglo marriage. His father was Charles Hopkins, a pioneer from Rhode Island who married Antonia de la O of Dona Ana, New Mexico. Antonia died while Carlos was still an infant, so he was placed in the care of another Mexican family until he was old enough to travel with his Anglo father. When Pinckney Tully adopted Carlos in 1865, he recognized the young boy's scholarly aptitude and sent him to St. Michael's College in Santa Fe, where he studied from 1865 until 1869.⁶ When Carlos graduated, he had many opportunities to choose from. He could easily have followed his adopted father in the freighting business, which was prosperous and lucrative at the time. He could also have taken his

⁵ Mike Tully interview, Dec. 6, 2009.

⁶ Sheridan, 147

education and skills to a major urban center such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, or even back to the East Coast. Instead, Carlos decided to return to Tucson and identified himself with the Mexican community in town. For the rest of his life, Carlos became a strong advocate for the Mexican community in Tucson and was known as one of the most active educators and intellectuals in southern Arizona.⁷

By the time Carlos returned to Tucson in 1869, the small presidio had expanded into one of the more prominent settlements in the southwest, due in a large part to the efforts of the Tucsonenses, a series of middle and upper class Mexican families residing in Tucson. Contrary to the experiences held by Mexicans in Texas or California, Tucsonenses held considerable economic and political power in the Tucson community. Mexicans in Tucson became merchants, politicians, artists, and intellectuals, and transformed an isolated Sonoran outpost into an oasis of middle-class Mexican society in the U.S.⁸ They were respected leaders within the Mexican community and throughout Arizona, and played a considerable role in the development of metropolitan Tucson. Tucsonenses served on the city council, Pima County Board of Supervisors, and territorial legislature. Estevan Ochoa, Pinckney Tully's business partner, even became the only Mexican elected mayor of Tucson after the Gadsden Purchase.⁹ Tucsonenses pioneered public and private education in Tucson, as well as establishing local newspapers for the bilingual and bi-cultural community. The

⁷ Sheridan, 148

⁸ Sheridan, 2

⁹ Sheridan, 2

proximity to Mexico allowed Tucsonenses to remain close to their Hispanic roots, which encouraged them to resist discrimination and maintain cultural traditions. Carlos Tully quickly rose to prominence among the Tucsonenses by assuming leading roles in education and Spanish language journalism.

Contrary to the successful and comfortable lives of the Tucsonenses, the majority of Mexicans in Tucson were members of the working class. As Tucson expanded throughout the later half of the nineteenth century it depended on a cheap and abundant supply of labor to support its economic growth. The agricultural and mining industries in the southwest created a large demand for inexpensive and unskilled labor. Mexicans proved to be the primary source for this labor pool since Asian labor began to be excluded from the U.S. and Mexicans represented a majority of the population in the southwest, a population which only replenished itself year after year with new immigrants. Most Mexicans in Tucson had a very different experience than the middle-class Tucsonenses. They worked the most labor-intensive jobs with poor pay: field workers, miners, railroad workers, and *vaqueros* (cowboys). As new settlement patterns were established within Tucson, Mexicans found themselves living in neighborhoods that suffered from municipal neglect. Their children did not receive equal treatment in Tucson schools and were often disadvantaged by linguistic and cultural barriers. While Tucson never implemented legally mandated discrimination, institutionalized political and economical subordination began to develop. As Tucson's economy expanded with its population, the

majority of Mexicans found themselves at the bottom of the social hierarchy with Anglos gaining more and more power.

Carlos Tully became a strong advocate for the Mexican-American community in Tucson. Early in his career, Carlos published a series of Spanish language journals which emphasized Mexican pride and unity. His first endeavor, *Las Dos Republicas*, was published in 1877 and was the first Spanish language newspaper in Tucson it was dedicated to “the defense of the interests of the numerous Spanish race in this Republic of the United States.”¹⁰ Unfortunately, Carlos was not much of a businessman and *Las Dos Republicas* folded after only two years. For several years, Carlos continued his attempts at a successful Spanish language newspaper, following with *La Colonia Mexicana* (1885), *La Alianza* (1889), and *La Voz* (1895). Each of these subsequent publications followed in the thematic footsteps of *Las Dos Republicas*, but failed to achieve any sort of longevity.

It was through his efforts in education reform where Carlos was most successful and well known. In addition to publishing journals, Carlos attempted to make a living as translator, census taker, and private tutor for both Spanish and English students.¹¹ However, as his career progressed and the publishing business declined, Carlos found himself more involved with education in the Tucson community. Recognizing the discrimination and disadvantages facing Hispanic students, he began to lobby for improvements in school finance,

¹⁰ Sheridan, 148

¹¹ Sheridan, 148

curriculum, and teacher training. Using the available resource of his journals, Carlos emphasized the importance of education within the Mexican community:

School will reopen tomorrow and we exhort parents to send their children to them reminding them [parents] of their imperious obligation to provide for them [children] an education that can be acquired without any expense, classes being open to everyone that understand the need to educate the masses, and wants to take advantage of the opportunity.¹²

Carlos' efforts in education were publicly recognized when he was appointed as the superintendant of Tucson's public school system, a position he held for four years. The greatest achievement of his administration was the graduation of the first class from Tucson High School in 1893, a significant and highly lauded event in the community:

The High School graduation exercises at the opera house last night brought out an immense concourse of people—the house hardly had standing room, and seats for late arrivals were out of the question. It must have been very gratifying to Professor Tully, principal of the school, to see so much interest manifested by the people of Tucson, and on the other hand, those who attended remarked, by frequent applause, their appreciation of the exercises as an outcome of the skillful handling of the pupils by the principal and his assistants.¹³

Carlos stepped down from the position of superintendant in 1895, but continued to work off and on as a teacher in Tucson schools until he retired in 1914.¹⁴

Throughout his life, Carlos never faltered in his commitment to the Mexican community in Tucson. In addition to his accomplishments in education, Carlos used his knowledge and reputation to assist in legal disputes within the Mexican community and between Mexicans and Anglos. Though he lacked the

¹² Carlos Hopkins Tully, *Las Dos Republicas*, September 2, 1887

¹³ *Arizona Daily Star*, May, 1893.

¹⁴ Sheridan, 148

official training and never directly represented Mexicans, Carlos referred to himself as a “two-bit” lawyer when mediating legal disputes, since he never asked for more than two-bits in payment.¹⁵ Carlos also translated Arizona laws into Spanish in order to make them more accessible to the Mexican community. In 1894 he became one of the founding members of *Alianza Hispano-Americana*, joining other prominent Tucsonenses in establishing the first and largest *mutualistas* (mutual aid societies) in the United States in response to the rising tide of racist sentiment and discrimination in Arizona.¹⁶ Carlos passed away in March of 1923 at the age of 70. Born into both the Mexican and Anglo worlds, Carlos transformed himself into one of the most energetic representatives of Tucson’s bilingual, bicultural society.

The efforts of Carlos Tully created a more equitable existence for Mexican-Americans in Tucson, and his legacy continues to this day. In 1956 Tucson Unified School District erected Tully Elementary School in his honor. In addition, subsequent generations of the Tully family have pursued careers in the newspaper industry and education. My great-grandfather Albert Tully worked as a printer for the Tucson Citizen for most of his life, and his son Joe, my beloved grandfather, followed in his footsteps. However my father Mike Tully is most similar to Carlos in his efforts. Over the course of his career my father has worked as a broadcast journalist, an educator, a lawyer, and writer among many other things. He has worked for Tucson Unified School District, the University of

¹⁵ Tully Interview

¹⁶ Sheridan, 148

Arizona, and now Pima County. A prevailing theme of his career has been using his skills to help those less fortunate in the community, much like Carlos did a hundred years earlier. My father holds a deep love for Tucson, which has always been evident in his work. I have him to thank for teaching me about our family history and for instilling in me a strong sense of pride for our name and our heritage. I know understand that when we eat *menudo* on Christmas morning, it is not only to honor our Hispanic heritage, but also honors and remembers the efforts of our ancestors for the work they did to help the Mexican community and for the service they gave to the city of Tucson. This year when I go home for winter break, I am looking forward to that pungent aroma of *menudo* cooking on Christmas morning now that I understand the full meaning behind the tradition. Who knows? This may even be the year where I finally sprinkle some cilantro on that bowl of soup and dig in.

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