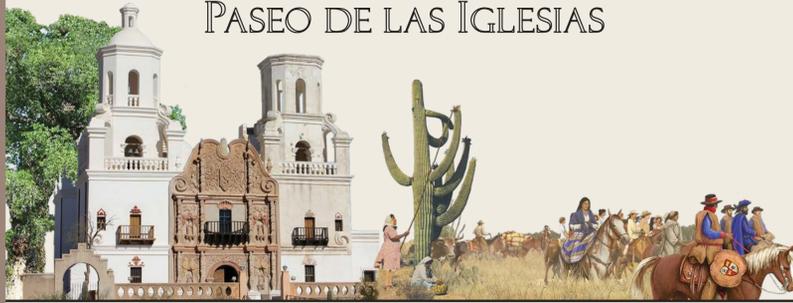


HISTORIC USE OF THE RIVERINE LANDSCAPE



The Mexican military left the Tucson Presidio fortress in March 1856, two years after the Gadsden Purchase made southern Arizona part of the United States.

Many people began to move to the region from the eastern United States and Mexico, exploring economic opportunities. Among these were the Rowlett brothers, William and Alfred, Virginia natives skilled in operating grain mills. They saw the mule-powered mills in Tucson grinding wheat and corn into flour and decided to build a dam on the Santa Cruz River and construct a more efficient water-powered mill. Throughout the American Territorial period (1856–1912), the water in this stretch of the river would serve many purposes – running the mill, making beer, swimming, fishing, and irrigating crops.



◀ Price family hayride at their ranch, circa 1956. Courtesy of the Price family



▲ Marlin and Rosario Price at their ranch in the late 1960s. Courtesy of the Price family



▲ A view west across Silverlake to the Silverlake Hotel, 1880–1895. Courtesy of Arizona Historical Society, Case 38, Places-Tucson-Silverlake

◀ Ad for the Silverlake Hotel and Excelsior Brewery, Arizona Weekly Star, June 10, 1880

◀ Ad for Rowlett's Flour Mill, Arizonian, October 27, 1859

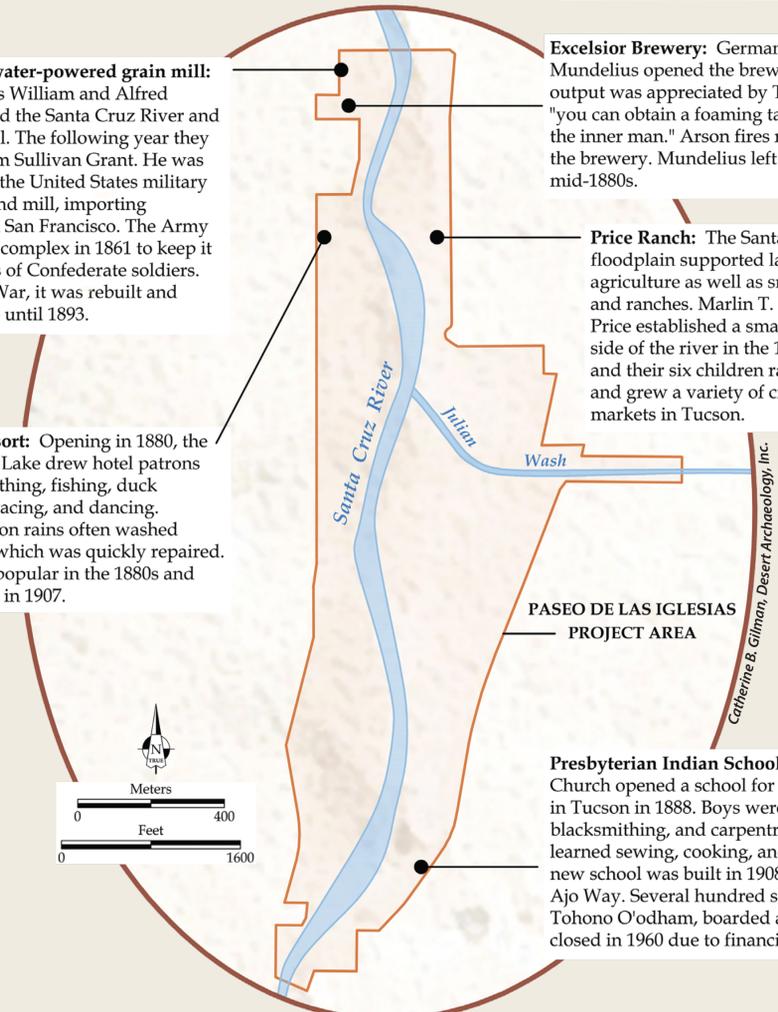
Tucson's first water-powered grain mill: In 1859, brothers William and Alfred Rowlett dammed the Santa Cruz River and built a grain mill. The following year they sold it to William Sullivan Grant. He was hired to supply the United States military and built a second mill, importing machinery from San Francisco. The Army burned the mill complex in 1861 to keep it out of the hands of Confederate soldiers. After the Civil War, it was rebuilt and remained in use until 1893.

Silver Lake Resort: Opening in 1880, the waters of Silver Lake drew hotel patrons who enjoyed bathing, fishing, duck hunting, horse racing, and dancing. Summer monsoon rains often washed away the dam, which was quickly repaired. The resort was popular in the 1880s and 1890s. It burned in 1907.

Excelsior Brewery: German-born Conrad Mundelius opened the brewery in 1879. His output was appreciated by Tucson residents: "you can obtain a foaming tankard of beer to wet the inner man." Arson fires repeatedly damaged the brewery. Mundelius left Tucson in the mid-1880s.

Price Ranch: The Santa Cruz River floodplain supported large-scale agriculture as well as smaller family farms and ranches. Marlin T. and Rosario (Ortiz) Price established a small ranch on the east side of the river in the 1940s. The couple and their six children raised hogs and cattle and grew a variety of crops they sold to markets in Tucson.

Presbyterian Indian School: The Presbyterian Church opened a school for Native Americans in Tucson in 1888. Boys were taught farming, blacksmithing, and carpentry, while girls learned sewing, cooking, and housekeeping. A new school was built in 1908 along modern-day Ajo Way. Several hundred students, mostly Tohono O'odham, boarded at the school. It closed in 1960 due to financial problems.



▲ Photograph of a river near the Tucson Indian School in Tucson (Ariz.). Courtesy of Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records, History and Archives Division, Phoenix, #04-6714