Water, Culture, and Progressive Politics:

Albin and Elizabeth DeMary and the Minidoka Reclamation Project, 1905-1920

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by

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In July 1904 thirty-three year-old Albin C. DeMary traveled from his home in Boise, Idaho, to the Reclamation Service's newly opened Minidoka tract.[1] DeMary's duties as clerk of the U.S. Assay Office alerted him to the Reclamation Service's first Idaho irrigation project. Proposed in 1903, the project would provide water to the arid sagebrush plains of southern Idaho's Snake River desert. DeMary returned with an enthusiastic vision for Minidoka's commercial future and with a steadfast commitment to reclamation. "The character of the soil is such that the establishment of a beet sugar factory upon the tract would prove an unbounded success," DeMary told a Boise newspaper reporter. He and his companions, DeMary emphasized, had been "struck" by "the absence of lava rock . . . upon the entire 60,000 acres."[2] Within a year of his visit to the project, DeMary moved his parents and his wife of four years, Elizabeth Layton DeMary, to Minidoka, where he established a homestead three miles northeast of present-day Rupert.

DeMary's optimism, characteristic of a generation of early irrigation entrepreneurs in the arid West, stemmed from the notion that government aid could do what individual investors could not–turn Idaho's windswept, lava-rock-strewn desert into an agrarian oasis. Federally-funded irrigation projects, DeMary and other boosters like him reasoned, would provide small farmers an unprecedented opportunity for economic independence. DeMary's Commercial Club and Water User's Association, along with his wife's Culture Club, represent the political and cultural influence that young, educated settlers exercised in newly established irrigation communities during the settlement period (1870-1920). The efforts of the DeMarys and their like-minded associates–a self-styled Protestant "elite"–influenced the formation of city government, shaped community policy, and blurred the line between the separation of men's "political/civic sphere"

and women's "domestic sphere."[3] The activities of the Commercial, Culture, and Water Users' associations reflected the political and social values of Progressive reform; their methods married coercive and positive environmentalist approaches to social change.[4] Dusty and desperate, reclamation towns offered middle-class reformers an unique opportunity to shape business and social environments.[5]

After arriving on the Minidoka tract in 1905, Albin DeMary quickly built a modest house on his claim, where he and Elizabeth began raising their four-year-old daughter, Dorothy. A photograph from this period shows Elizabeth and Dorothy DeMary standing on the packed dirt outside of their one-room house, dressed in their finest clothes and hats, seemingly oblivious to the blowing dust and sagebrush surrounding them. Their ability to look beyond the dust to an agrarian paradise transcended economic development; the future held more than accessible water–it also possessed a Progressive culture. Reclamation promised to turn the desert into an "irrigated Eden," but new irrigation towns offered the promise of cultural, as well as land, reclamation.[6] The creative work produced by Elizabeth DeMary's Culture Club resided at the center of cultural construction on the Minidoka Project. The creative expressions of Rupert clubwomen reflected the unique circumstances of settling an arid land, and provided a contrast to the progress narrative articulated in booster literature. Through their literary practices, Culture Club members redefined and shaped cultural perceptions of the irrigated landscape.[7]

DeMary's background as a reporter for the Idaho Statesman and as clerk of the U.S. Assay Office, and his degree from Illinois College, rapidly distinguished him as one of the Minidoka project's elite settlers. When the U.S. Land Commissioner for the newly platted town of Rupert resigned in April 1906, under suspicion of fraud and embezzlement, DeMary received an

appointment to succeed him. DeMary held the office until 1924, and throughout his tenure served as an informal liaison between the Minidoka settlers and the Reclamation Service. His various roles as land commissioner, charter member of the Rupert Commercial Club (became the Rupert Chamber of Commerce in 1917), and founding member of the Minidoka Settlers' Association (later the Minidoka Water Users Association, and one of the earliest water users' organizations in Idaho and the Intermountain West), gave DeMary the authority to influence Rupert's business environment. At the same time, he negotiated with federal officials to achieve control of reclamation water for Minidoka settlers. Like many Progressive reformers, DeMary believed in the scientific management of resources, and he remained committed to the ideal of federal reclamation. He also believed that once the service completed a project, local control of water became essential for business development. Reclamation could provide both agricultural and commercial opportunities, but only if local settlers and businessmen exercised authority over the project.[8]

While Albin DeMary worked to achieve local control of the Minidoka reclamation project, his wife, Elizabeth DeMary, labored to provide the project's fastest-growing community–Rupert–with an urban, Progressive culture. DeMary seemed intent on proving that an early twentieth-century reclamation town did not have to exhibit the abhorrent cultural characteristics of many frontier outposts. Elizabeth DeMary was salutatorian of her class at MacMurry College, Jacksonville, Illinois, in 1893, and she had further literary training at the University of California and the University of Chicago. Throughout her life she published poetry, essays, and travel articles. Her work appeared in many local and national publications and anthologies, including Times Magazine, The Reclamation Era, Seeing Idaho, Sunlit Peaks, Poems

of the Northwest, Homespun, and The Book of American Verse. Before coming to Rupert, DeMary organized the South Boise Improvement Society, which applied Progressive "city beautiful" principles to a section of the state's capital city. Reclamation towns, however, offered the kind of aesthetic and social control that could never exist in an established community. Rupert possessed none of the problems "city beautiful" adherents associated with older, decaying environments.[9]

The land that the DeMarys chose to homestead represented a tiny portion of the Minidoka project, designed to encourage agricultural settlement in the arid regions of the Snake River Plain in southern Idaho. The sagebrush desert and lava fields of the south-central Snake had long intimidated potential homesteaders. Oregon Trail diarists told of the dust and heat of southern Idaho–for overlanders the trail through what would become Idaho's "Magic Valley" signified only hardship, an obstacle to bypass on the way to the Willamette Valley. Because of its lack of appeal to homesteaders, the area did not experience large-scale agricultural settlement until late in the nineteenth century. Much of this late-arriving settlement, moreover, came from the west, not the east. Homesteaders who reached Oregon and California too late to procure land in those regions turned back to try their luck in the arid interior regions. The first non-Indian settlement in the Minidoka area began in the 1880s and 1890s, when small numbers of farmers and ranchers came to the region and settled near the Snake River. Farmers like Henry Shodde constructed private irrigation systems, some under the homestead provisions of the Desert Land Act of 1877, using water wheels in the river's flow to irrigate up to about two-hundred acres. With its vast elevation variation, hot summers, and a yearly rainfall of between nine and twelve inches, the Snake River Plain defeated most individual and private irrigation enterprises.[10]

The failure of private and state irrigation projects provided federal reclamation adherents with the ammunition to lobby for a federal reclamation act. The national bill came in 1902 with congressional approval of the Newlands Act, a bold measure which created the United States Reclamation Service and authorized the federal government to finance and construct large-scale irrigation projects in the arid West.[11] After passage of the Reclamation Act, the Interior Department withdrew 130,000 acres of land from homestead filings north and south of the lower Snake River to create the Minidoka tract. Crews, including an all-female survey group, arrived to survey the Minidoka Dam site in March 1903. In April 1904 the Interior Secretary appropriated $2,600,000 for the construction of a dam, spillway, canal system, power house, and pumping mechanism at Minidoka, making it the seventh project funded under the Newlands Act. The Reclamation Service entered into a contract with Bates-Rogers Construction Company, Chicago, in August 1904 and within the year work on the dam commenced. Bates-Rogers completed the dam and its supporting structures in 1909; at that time the project's irrigation water impacted approximately 45,000 acres. It was during this initial phase of construction that Albin DeMary, along with his father and two other interested businessmen, visited the Minidoka project and became enthusiastic about the economic prospects of the region north of the Snake River–the territory that, through DeMary's influence, became Minidoka County in 1912.[12]

Homesteaders appeared in the Minidoka area almost immediately after the Reclamation Service chose the site. Most of the early inhabitants of the project associated themselves with the Rupert town site, though the Reclamation Service also created the towns of Heyburn and Paul as part of the project. The Rupert Pioneer announced in November 1905 that "Rupert is on the map, and is out for business, all she can get in a legitimate way." The boosters had their eye not only

on the land north of the Snake River, at that time part of Lincoln County, but also on development opportunities south of the river, in Cassia County. ". . . No ordinary stream will be permitted to become a barrier in extending Rupert's commercialism," the Rupert paper warned the neighboring community of Burley in 1905. "Eight months ago a sagebrush plain, inhabited only by coyotes and long-eared jacks," the Pioneer continued, "now, at the close of eight months, a city of 400 inhabitants, a school of a hundred scholars, a business aggregation of 64 concerns, an opera house, two secret orders, a Methodist Church, a Sunday school, a lawyer to get people out of trouble . . . a doctor to cure people of their ills, and a glorious future that no man can doubt."[13]

Albin and Elizabeth DeMary committed themselves to securing that "glorious future." Elizabeth DeMary's influenced the cultural climate of Rupert primarily through her founding of the Culture Club. Rupert's unformed social structure held great promise for DeMary and her associates, for they could engage in municipal *building* rather than in mere "Municipal Housekeeping," the term then applied to women's club reform.[14] Instead of battling existing institutions, they *were* the institution. Considered "the first rural community woman's club in Idaho," the Culture Club heralded Rupert's entrance into the Idaho Federated Women's Club movement. The General Federation of Women's Clubs, founded in 1890, served as a national umbrella for women's organizations. Though wide-ranging in size, location, and membership, the federated clubs shared a commitment to education, literacy, political activism, and environmental beautification. The clubs enjoyed their greatest membership in urban environments, but may have had their greatest influence in rural environments. Isolation, blowing dust, unrelenting sun, and scarce water led many women on the reclamation frontier to seek female companionship through

the club movement. Throughout the irrigated West, these groups supported public libraries, city parks, and restrictions on certain behaviors, including sidewalk spitting and alcohol consumption. The Culture Club and other federated clubs advocated a conservative political role for women, based on the moral exceptionality of women, rather than a more radical equal rights position. They also took the majority of their membership from the ranks of white, Protestant, and well-educated women. The General Federation of Women's Clubs motto "Unity in Diversity" referred not to the diversity of the women but to the variety of clubs–few immigrant, African-American, American Indian, or Hispanic American women were invited to join the ranks.[15]

Women's clubs in the reclamation West were particularly lacking in diversity. In places like Rupert, where everyone started out in the same dusty shack, "keeping up appearances" placed additional emphasis on associating with the "right people." By the early twentieth century, a certain level of consumption was required to maintain middle- or upper-class status, consumption that was often unattainable on the sagebrush flats. The household manual *Our Home, Or Influences Emanating from the Hearthstone*, published in 1899, warned housewives that appropriate furnishings were essential for the proper rearing of children: "It is as much the duty of parents, then, to adorn and beautify their home as it is to keep the moral atmosphere of that home pure."[16] Nineteenth-century sentimental novels portrayed the degraded and "uncivilized" conditions of frontier life. Irrigated "frontier" women attempted Victorian and Progressive domesticity without gas lighting, indoor plumbing, or household help, at a time when their urban peers experienced a revolution in home convenience. To avoid the grim demise of female protagonists in Victorian sentimentality–to lose status, refined taste, and thus authority–middle-class women in irrigated settlement communities founded literary societies.[17] If

their living conditions placed them among the laboring masses, their creative endeavors set them apart from both the irrigated landscape and from association with the working class. The societies also formed the basis for a political voice that influenced living conditions for all residents on the sagebrush plains.

Elizabeth DeMary and six other women inaugurated Rupert's Culture Club at the home of Anna LaRue, the wife of another of Rupert's first homestead filees and businessmen, in October 1905.[18] The club chose to limit its membership to eighteen, ostensibly because it planned to meet exclusively in private homes, and committed itself to the cultural and artistic advancement of Rupert. The club did not welcome immigrants or Catholics. The group held its second meeting in the DeMary home, but by the spring of 1906 moved some of its meetings to the (relatively) prestigious dining room of the Rupert Hotel, located on the town square. At the first meeting, club members signed a petition requesting that the State Traveling Library include Rupert on its schedule. The traveling library, founded by the Columbian Club of Boise in 1893, became the primary source of literary material for over two hundred Idaho communities by 1905. Hosted by women's clubs throughout the state, the traveling library illustrated the connection between literacy, education, class and culture that infused rural women's groups. The Culture Club claimed the traveling library, which first visited Rupert in 1906, as an early victory in its perceived struggle against frontier illiteracy and degradation.[19]

The Culture Club engaged in a variety of other civic programs, and actively encouraged the literary and artistic pursuits of its own members. The group funded a lyceum lecture series, sponsored an art exhibit, lobbied for women's public restrooms, and spawned a plethora of other women's clubs, including the Clionian Club, Fortnightly Club, Rupert Civic Club, and Merry Go

Round Club.[20] In advocating the institution of public restrooms, the club supported more that a mere place for a lady to use private facilities. Public restrooms for women corresponded to a value system of domestic consumption–in order for women to shop in town, they needed to have access to a private place. Women's lounges offered an escape from street grime, and a place in which to gather, where literature and reading could be placed for the pleasure of the cultured woman. Restrooms also enabled farm women to come to town with the knowledge that there would be somewhere to rest and, perhaps, to read.[21] To further expand the minds of Rupert's populace, Culture Club women also leant their support to Rupert's Opera House and Dramatic Association, which hosted its first production in November 1905. The only such venue south of Boise, the opera house reflected the cultural idealism of Rupert's clubwomen. When it first opened the town newspaper declared that the theater was "designed in such a manner that between acts out of town people can gaze upon it and be convinced that their wants can be supplied in our city."[22]

The ladies of the club did not, however, want *all* needs to be met in Rupert. The club discouraged alcohol consumption and participated in the elimination of Rupert's "Red Light District." Village trustees and "a large number of citizens," the Rupert Pioneer reported in September 1906, met to discuss the town's "social evil." The group decided to inform red light district occupants that they had twenty-four hours to leave town or face arrest and fines; the "social evil" responded by leaving on the night train.[23] Saloons also became a target of the Progressive spirit in early Rupert. In November 1909, three of the original Minidoka reclamation towns–Rupert, Heyburn, and Acequia–passed legislation making the selling of alcoholic beverages illegal within town limits.[24]

Elizabeth DeMary's club drew upon the irrigated landscape to portray Rupert as a uniquely progressive urban center. Yearly "moonlit excursions" to Minidoka Dam married the ideals of the Culture Club to the optimism of reclamation.[25] A photograph housed at the DeMary Memorial Library in Rupert indicates that the Culture Club held meetings in the verdant, irrigated backyard of the DeMary home. Eight well-dressed women in hats sit near an arbor while Elizabeth DeMary serves tea and cookies from a white-clothed table.[26] In giving her 1907 presidential address to the Culture Club, Elizabeth DeMary declared that the club, like reclamation water, was responsible for breaking "the unspeakable quiet of the desert." Reclamation water turned the desert green; Progressive women's clubs provided the appropriate social and cultural landscape. The club had grown in membership "until a name upon our roll is a coveted possession," DeMary explained in her 1907 presidential speech, because "our aim is one of mutual helpfulness and a reaching out for those things which broaden and enrich life." "Our vision is not bounded by the endless sage brush and the encircling hills," DeMary continued; "We have penetrated beyond." The 1907 banquet ended with a series of lecture presentations by Rupert's elite settlers. Topics included "A Little Journey in the World: A Contrast of Naples, Italy, and Minidoka, Idaho," "Reminiscences on Roast Turkey," and "Art in a Shack." The latter speech emphasized the need for culture even in a "humble shack" in a "bleak desert."[27] DeMary later described her cultural contribution in the Reclamation Record. Every reclamation woman, she emphasized, "had made a great sacrifice to come to this new land in order that she might help to create in the desert a new garden."[28]

The literary practices–the reading, writing, and poetry–maintained by the Culture Club, and other irrigated settlement women's clubs, reflected and defined cultural perceptions of the

irrigated landscape. DeMary's poem *Irrigation* appeared in the Reclamation Era magazine, and illustrates the connection between women's literary work and the "reclaiming" of the desert:

> Oh, Mesa, with those wise clear eyes of old
> Could you have dreamed this vision to behold?
> Long aeons you have gazed across the plain
> And Man's control have held in high disdain
> But now where gone are deer and antelope
> The stubborn sage that clung to every slope
> The caravan that wound its weary way,
> The lurching stage that would not brook delay?
> Again where vanished tribes of warriors bold
> Who bravely fought these native trails to hold?
> Gone to oblivion, and through the land
> A magic wand is Irrigation's hand.
> From distant ports skilled birdmen
> wing their flights
> While desert dark gives way to myriad lights;
> Where once the drifting dunes of sand held sway
> The children gather flowers as they may,
> And tapestries are spread o'er all the fields
> Where yellow ripening grain abundance yields
> Oh, Mesa, with those wise clear eyes of old
> Could you have dreamed this vision to behold?[29]

Like DeMary, Irene Welch Grissom, a clubwoman appointed Idaho's Poet-Laureate in 1923 "in response to the request of the State Federation of Women's Clubs," portrayed a gendered irrigated landscape in her work. DeMary's desert is transformed by "Man's control"; Grissom's desert yields to masculine engineering:

> A dreamer comes–as dreamers will–
> To watch the swirling torrents spill
> Between the steep, black lava walls,
> And on the foaming, crashing falls.
> He sees the desert, vast and grand,
> Give way before a man-made land,
> The sparkling streams flash here and there,
> And life is springing everywhere.[30]

With the desert's greening comes feminine influence; DeMary's "children gather flowers as they

may," while Grissom's irrigated landscape is dotted "with houses set in misty green, And church spires lifted high."[31] These gendered portrayals defined the position of women's clubs on the irrigated frontier. First, men tamed the desert with engineering marvels. Then, women "settled" the new "garden" by introducing the elements of civilization–children, homes, and churches.[32]

In providing a forum for women's views, supporting women's literacy and education, and by sponsoring women's creative practices, the Culture Club indirectly supported other Progressive reforms, including suffrage. No evidence exists that the club openly endorsed national suffrage. Indeed, many Minidoka settlers viewed the group as narrow and elitist. But, as the first women's organization on the Minidoka Project, the club inspired a host of other organizations that supported more radical reforms. The Federation of Women's Clubs, of which the Culture Club was a member, endorsed suffrage at its 1910 national convention.[33] A photograph of the Rupert square, taken during the early 1910s, reveals that the reclamation community hosted a suffragette parade. Finely dressed women march down the dusty street, carrying signs with slogans such as "Rupert for Suffrage" and "Votes for Women." The parade appears to be well-attended; rows of men and women line the streets of the square. Minidoka Project suffragettes already possessed the right to vote, because Idaho became the fourth state to grant that right in1896. Rupert's suffrage parade suggests that women in states and communities that already had the vote were essential in procuring the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. They actively lobbied for a right that they already possessed, so that women who could not safely fight for that right would eventually possess it as well. Many of the women who already had the vote lived in the arid West, the area served by the Reclamation Act. Wyoming (1869), Utah (1870), Colorado (1893), Washington (1910), California (1911), Oregon (1912), Arizona (1912),

Montana (1914), and Nevada (1914) all granted full suffrage to women before 1920. Women in reclamation communities used their unique relationship with the federal government to support national suffrage. Reclamation communities received unprecedented federal attention; suffrage advocates used this attention to lobby for women's voting rights.[34]

Elizabeth DeMary's influence extended beyond the cultural landscape to the built environment. Rupert's central green, the only town square in the state of Idaho, recalled the city squares of Midwestern towns, where both DeMarys spent their childhoods. The Reclamation Service platted Rupert in 1904; by 1905 businesses had sprung up on four streets facing a square, where reclamation officials planned to dig the first well on the Minidoka tract. Settlers called the town Wellfirst, or Wetfirst, until the service officially changed the name to Rupert.[35] The earliest businesses to locate on the town square did so illegally, as the lots were not appraised and sold until 1907 and 1908. Pressure from concerned citizens, like the DeMarys, helped to maintain the integrity of the square throughout 1905 and 1906, despite problems with squatters and a lack of water. When, during the spring of 1906, an enterprising businessman attempted to erect a building in the center of the square, a group of concerned citizens formed a committee to halt the construction. Albin DeMary participated in the group, which convinced Cal Masterson to move his building and collected six dollars in donations to help fray the cost of relocation.[36]

In June 1907, with the first irrigation water in sight, Rupert surveyed, cleared and graded its streets and planted poplar trees throughout the central green. "In the center will be a circle of 75 feet in diameter surrounded by trees," the paper explained, "in which seats will be placed for summer lounging, and to which walks will lead diagonally from each corner, and one from each side of the four side centers." To further enhance the irrigated landscape of the town square,

town trustees forbade carriage traffic on the immediate side streets, so that women would not have to step over steaming clumps of manure, and instituted an ordinance requiring teams to be "properly tied either to a hitching post or suitable weight." In 1910, Rupert's trustees procured contracts to build sidewalks around the square; the town voted to pave its streets in 1919. By 1947, the Minidoka County News declared, "no city of comparable size in Idaho has as many hard-surfaced streets as the City of Rupert, and every one of them oiled since 1919!" The Rupert town square remains a testament to the Edenic idealism of reclamation settlers. An elite corps of Rupert founders managed to make the city green a priority, even in when water was scarce and intended for crop irrigation, not aesthetic use. In January 2001 the National Park Service listed the Rupert town square and its surrounding historic district on the National Register of Historic Places.[37]

Albin DeMary's influential civic organizations overlapped and complimented the efforts of the Culture Club, blurring the lines between the political and domestic spheres of men's and women's activity. In February 1906 DeMary and twenty-three other men, many fledgling Rupert business owners, gathered at the Benton building on the square to form the Commercial Club. The group committed itself to procuring a water works, electric power plant, flour mill, sugar factory, and graded city streets. Throughout the 1910s and early 1920s, DeMary and his colleagues never missed an opportunity to further Rupert's business environment. The establishment of the Amalgamated Sugar Factory between the towns of Rupert and Paul in 1917 provides an example of the Commercial Club's accomplishments. The Minidoka project's vast acreages of irrigated land and small family farms attracted the Amalgamated Company; the Commercial Club provided the push to bring the plant to Rupert. The Commercial Club helped

convince Minidoka farmers to appropriate over 5,000 acres for sugar beet production. DeMary's organization also secured the right-of-way for a road leading directly from Rupert to the processing plant. Throughout 1917, the Commercial Club collected donations to compensate farmers for the land they surrendered for the road.[38]

In spite of victories like the traveling library, Rupert town square, and sugar factory, organized optimism and boosterism did not create the kind of cultural agrarian paradise that the DeMarys envisioned. The Minidoka Project remains one of the most successful in reclamation history–Rupert and the other project settlement communities are still viable communities with economies based on irrigated agriculture. But the DeMarys were not successful in fending off the "frontier image," or in preventing dangerous settler squabbles. Elizabeth DeMary's club activities, could not, in the end, produce a permanent Protestant-controlled culture. In many ways, the idealism of Progressive settlers like the DeMarys stemmed not from actual successes, but from the desire to *appear to be succeeding* in their efforts to turn irrigation projects into Progressive garden oases. Observations by visitors to the project during the first decade illustrate the difficulty of this endeavor. Henry A. Wallace, who toured the Minidoka project in 1909 as part of his investigation of irrigated farmland for the family journal *Wallaces' Farmer*, found little to praise in Rupert and its surrounding farmland. Wallace attributed the slow development of irrigation and urban culture in the Minidoka area to the very fact that it was a federal project–as opposed to the more developed, private Carey Act project in Twin Falls. "Rupert is a government townsite [sic], and shows the effects of it," Wallace wrote, "for it is one of the most dilapidated little towns which I have ever seen." The newspaper man's description must have horrified Rupert's boosters:

> All the buildings are little square frame affairs with just enough ambition to be painted. The ramshackle buildings are arranged on four sides of a square which has a fine stand of blue grass and white clover which the town hasn't had energy enough to mow. There are a few poplar and locust trees which may make some shade some day.

After observing the Rupert square, Wallace toured the countryside and interviewed individual homesteaders, many of whom expressed frustration with the landscape and with reclamation. "At first we didn't get water when the government promised it to us," a woman from Iowa told Wallace, "then when we did get water the wind was so strong that we could hardly get anything seeded down before the wind would come along and blow it out or cut it down." The owner of a three-year old claim, a man from Montana, explained that Minidoka farms had a ramshackle appearance because "these people around here are not a very high class of irrigators." Most of the homesteaders came to the country without capital, and "for the first two years they had an awful hard time hanging on, for the water wasn't ready yet and on their own places there wasn't anything but sage brush . . . then when the water did come they didn't have enough money to fix their land right, and they just stuck in their crops haphazard." Another settler complained of the wind, and to illustrate told Wallace the already mythic story of the Minidoka project. A man on one side of the project, the tale went, planted a garden. The wind came up and blew it fifteen miles, across the river, to another settler's claim, who then raised the garden himself.[39]

Despite Wallace's grim observations and disgruntled interviewees, he looked beyond the poverty of the present to a prosperous, well-watered future. Wallace saw potential in the Minidoka soil, even as he wrote that "it is a backward country, the people are without money, and there is no booming whatever." The country "should grow steadily," he predicted, "and a thickly populated little farming community should develop here." He also shared Albin C. DeMary's Progressive commitment to scientific solutions. While the town and homesteads disappointed

Wallace, the Minidoka dam did not. The structure "is a tremendous affair," Wallace proclaimed, with "3,200 feet of spillway" on the south of the main dam which makes up "the prettiest part of the whole thing." Wallace's description of the concrete spillway as creating a "beautiful parabola in going over" mixed natural imagery with scientific accomplishment, an integral characteristic of the reclamation vision. Terms like "tremendous," "prettiest," and "beautiful" presented Wallace's Midwestern readers with an image of the Minidoka Dam as a natural wonder.[40]

Wallace's research uncovered the contradictions inherent in the reclamation vision.[41] Homesteaders desired government-supplied water, but they wanted to control it; claimants took advantage of accessible land, but they didn't possess the capital to develop it; settlers envisioned an agrarian Eden but lived in one-room houses on plots of blowing dirt; Progressive ideals competed with the needs of immigrant farmers; and a growing schism between middle-class irrigation professionals and impoverished farmers threatened the cooperation necessary to make reclamation work. These problems reached a fever pitch during the early 1910s, creating the need for settlers' and water users' associations to negotiate directly with the Reclamation Service. DeMary served as the settlers' representative throughout this period. As reclamation settlers and government officials institutionalized the patterns of irrigation on the Minidoka tract, Progressive ideals began to take a back seat to water allocation, control, and development.

From the project's inception, the conflict between vision and reality contributed to the disillusionment of settlers and deteriorating relations between the Reclamation Service and water users. The geographic characteristics of the Minidoka project created difficulties for water users. Most of the land suitable for a gravity-flow canal system lay on the north side, or Rupert side, of the Snake. Terrain on the south side of the river necessitated construction of a pumping system

to lift the water to farmland. Construction of both the gravity canals and the south side lifts proceeded slowly, while reclamation officials struggled to work out the complex allocation and payment schedules of both sides of the river. Settlers who filed and moved onto their claims waited for several years before they received irrigation water. The dam at Minidoka reached partial completion in the fall of 1906, but a scarcity of available labor forced delays in the construction of the north side canals, which did not deliver water until July 1907. Many north side settlers planted seed in anticipation of water that year, but did not receive it in time to save their crops. North side settlers complained, but they were fortunate; on the south side, settlers waited until 1912 and 1913, when reclamation officials completed the lift stations.[42]

Dam and lift completion inaugurated new problems. In November 1906, only two months after Minidoka dam began service, the Snake River shrunk to a trickle. The Rupert Pioneer declared that "for many miles below the Minidoka dam, there was hardly enough water flowing to float a toothpick." Dam gates were closed and ferry service was interrupted until reclamation officials released water from the Minidoka reservoir, Lake Walcott. Canal erosion and seepage wasted irrigation water, which bled the Snake dry. By 1906, the Reclamation Service employed one water master and eleven "ditch tenders" or "ditch riders," to monitor canal banks for bank erosion. During the early years of the project, before the canal banks were packed solid and sodded, waves created by southern Idaho winds constantly threatened to wash out their banks. Ditch riders patrolled about six miles each of the main canals. If they encountered a wash or bank erosion, they notified the service and made the necessary repairs. Seepage, or water leakage through soil infiltration, represented a more insidious, and invisible, threat to water control. Nearly 100,000 acre-feet of water seeped out of canals on the Minidoka project's north side in

1912. Even after the early settlement years, seepage and erosion continued to haunt Minidoka settlers, necessitating the eventual lining of main canals with stone and mortar or concrete.[43]

Other unexpected environmental consequences accompanied the Minidoka construction. Canal digging and field plowing stirred up enormous clouds of dust, which combined with strong southern Idaho winds to make the project nearly uninhabitable. Dust settled in homes, destroyed machinery, and blocked out the sun, requiring the use of oil lamps during the middle of the day. "When we looked toward the west," Minidoka settler Gerhard A. Riedesel recalled of a 1914 dust storm, "we saw a dark, threatening wall of dust advancing with a vertical front perhaps 1,000 feet high, extending from the southwest to the northwest as far as we could see." Riedesel's family sought cover in the house, but the "dust sifted through the cracks around the door and windows and soon the entire floor and all the furniture were covered with a dusty, dry, gritty layer of yellow silt." Respiratory problems plagued Minidoka homesteaders. Dry winds and dust often forced farmers to reseed, as they did across the project in 1908 and 1909. Since most settlers lived in one- or two-room houses, often without adequate windows or door frames, homesteaders could not escape the fine silt that invaded their private oases.[44]

Frustrated by delays and dust storms, settlers eager for water found that once they had it, they couldn't get rid of it. Water seeped out of the canals only to cause saturated fields to flood. Drainage on the north side of the Snake presented as great an engineering challenge as construction of the original gravity canals, forcing water users to pay additional funds to the Reclamation Service in order to finance the construction of miles of ditches. "Funny, how we hurried to get water on the land and then had to spend a lot of money in drainage to get it off again," Albin DeMary recalled in a 1944 letter to a former reclamation official. "Just now,"

DeMary added, “we have the promise of another drain a mile south of Rupert to take care of some wet land.” By 1909, more than 10,000 acres of Minidoka soil were no longer arable because they were *too wet*. In August 1909 the Reclamation Service began construction of a $400,000 surface drainage system in order to regulate the elevation of the sub-water. Surface drainage ditches did not provide adequate relief, so the service added drain wells and pumping stations to remove excess water. More than seventy miles of drainage ditches had been dug on the project by 1912.[45]

Settlers on the north side battled drainage problems, while on the south side pump division, settlers found that they had to construct their own lateral canals when the service diverted part of the Minidoka Project’s funds to the Boise-Payette Project. Beginning in 1906, the service envisioned a cooperative effort between water users, who were supposed to dig the lateral, or sublateral, irrigation ditches connecting individual farms to the main canals. The service organized more than four hundred local districts to complete the work, but did not always get the cooperation it sought. Farmers competed with each other for completion of their section of the lateral ditches. Homesteaders hired someone else to build their section of the lateral canal, leaving their neighbors to complete the task on their own. Disagreements between neighbors over lateral water distribution, in some cases, turned violent. In July 1908, a settler referred to only as Mr. Landford, and his neighbor, John Fleming, had a heated argument over who would have the use of the lateral water on that day. Landford prevailed; Fleming went home to plan his revenge. The following morning, Fleming hid himself in a field of alfalfa and waited for his neighbor, the father of three, to arrive to check his ditches. When Landford approached, Fleming shot and killed him. Fleming received the sentence of death by hanging, but it was later reduced to life.

The guilty Minidoka settler served twelve years in the state penitentiary.[46]

Dust storms, water shortages, settler rivalries and reclamation policy combined to create near rebellion on the Minidoka project in 1911. Some discouraged water users relinquished their improved claims for sums ranging from $400 to $4000 (for eighty acres), while others worked through the settler association to achieve control of reclamation water. Settlers openly questioned the authority of the Reclamation Service, despite the fact that their very existence on the desert tract depended on the service. In March, one settler lamented in the Pioneer-Record that the Reclamation Service's "charges for operation and maintenance are assessed against the settler without his consent and expenditured [sic] without his knowledge." "No function of this United States government is self-contained enough, or big enough," J.D. Akins continued, "that it can trample with impunity the rights of its humblest citizens." Settler anger increased in April when the service revealed that it intended to issue a new contract replacing the original water charge of $22.00 per acre with a charge of $26.00 per acre. Albin DeMary's commercial club rushed to form a committee to draft a statement to send to Idaho Senator William Borah, decrying the new policy and demanding graduated water payments "without any strings." Ignoring the fact that Minidoka businesses and farms had been the beneficiaries of the government's construction projects, the club issued a public statement declaring that if the service had overspent on construction, then it "should stand the loss the same as any individual would have to stand it. . ." The Minidoka Water Users Association, which replaced the first settlers' organization, joined with the Commercial Club in rejecting the new contract. DeMary, acting on behalf of both the Commercial Club and the Minidoka Water Users Board of Directors, prepared a series of resolutions to unite the settlers in their opposition. DeMary recommended that the

settlers agree to the new contract, provided that the service publish an itemized schedule of its operation and maintenance expenses; offer the settlers a graduated scale for water right payments; give the settlers fair representation in the management of the project; and pledge itself to help secure passage of legislation giving settlers patents to their lands (as it stood, patents could only be issued after water users had paid for their water right in full).[47]

The water users succeeded in prompting the Interior Department to send "legal representatives" to Rupert in May 1911 to meet with Albin DeMary and other members of the board. On May 23 Morris Bien and Philip H. Wells met privately with DeMary and several other men from the water users executive committee; later in the evening they held a public hearing. The executive meeting lasted several hours and threatened to erupt when one board member accused local reclamation officials of making false statements. DeMary outlined the settlers' position, emphasizing that "a good many of the settlers when they filed on this project . . . believed that the government would take it and operate it at its expense." Now, DeMary explained, the settlers resented what they viewed as "improper use of money in the operation and maintenance of the project." Reclamation officials made no apologies for the policies of the service, noting instead that "it is easy to say that this should have been done better. . . . Everybody knows if they look back, they could have done differently." Still, the federal officers concluded that they intended to "work up a public notice . . . that will settle everything."[48]

Albin DeMary's proposals and his representation of the settlers at the water users meeting did not meet with the satisfaction of all of the project's farmers. Some settlers refused to participate in the association, which they viewed as a self-interested, elitist institution. "We are sick and tired of the antics of the men who style themselves the Minidoka Water Users

Association. . .," P.O. O'Rourke bellowed in an editorial in the Pioneer-Record: "There will be no treaty making [sic] with the truce breakers, there will be no surrender." Despite the opposition of settlers like O'Rourke, DeMary and the water users could claim at least some of the credit when Interior Secretary Walter L. Fisher and Reclamation Director Frederick Newell visited the project in September 1911. Fisher and Newell met with the water users and listened to their grievances; by October, the water users had a new contract which addressed some of the settlers' concerns. The new contract allowed for graduated payments and divided water and drainage payments equally throughout the project. It also grandfathered any settler who had an original contract at the $22.00 per acre rate. Interior Secretary Fisher refused to reconsider the loathsome $26.00 per acre amount, however, and he further maintained that the authority of the Reclamation Service could not be divided by providing for official representation of the water users in the governing body of the agency.[49]

The new contract and visit by reclamation officials met with criticism in the Pioneer-Record; one editorialist declared that "this city was inflicted last Tuesday with the presence of a bunch of high reclamation officials, whose visit amounted to about as much as _____(fill in the blanks for yourself)." Nonetheless, the new contract heralded a better relationship between the water users and the Reclamation Service. The years following 1911 were good ones for Minidoka farmers. By 1913, DeMary estimated that 8,700 people lived on the project, which also boasted 1,684 farms at an estimated value of $6,454. DeMary's boosterism paid off when, in November 1914, voters on the Minidoka Project voted to make Rupert the seat of Minidoka County. DeMary's 1913 history of the project credited the Interior Department with giving settlers "more latitude," extending the time for water payments, and limiting the number of

cancellations made on homestead entries. DeMary also recognized his wife's efforts at shaping the culture of the reclamation community. Several women's clubs engaged in "serious literary work," DeMary noted, and exerted "a large influence in moulding [sic] the character of the citizenship."[50]

DeMary's efforts at forming an influential water users association laid the groundwork for future organizations, including the Minidoka Irrigation District, founded in 1917, and the Burley Irrigation District, formed in 1918. The power these groups wielded, however, declined by the late 1910s. As more watered acreage was added to reclamation projects along the Snake River, competition for water from homesteaders outside of the Minidoka tract increased. Scientific engineering complicated the river's flow, and made water allocation for all Snake River users more complex. Throughout the 1910s, water users upriver, in Rigby and Idaho Falls, decried what they viewed as unfair allocation of the water to "Magic Valley" (Minidoka and Twin Falls) users. Reclamation officials attempted to preserve the Minidoka project's water in the Jackson Lake reservoir (completed in 1907 and expanded in 1910 and 1916), but this allocation had to travel downstream, *past* Idaho Falls and Rigby farms, to reach Rupert farms. The service could not specifically identify, of course, what part of the living river was Minidoka water. Conflicts up and down the Snake resulted in the creation of intra-cooperative water users associations. Groups like the Snake River Committee of Nine utilized attorneys, water engineers, and relations with the Bureau of Reclamation (the Reclamation Service became the Bureau of Reclamation in 1923) to negotiate water allocation between projects on the upper and lower Snake. At the same time, the bureau increasingly relied on technical experts to manage its projects, particularly after construction of American Falls reservoir in 1927. These trends limited the ability of small,

project-oriented settlers' groups to negotiate, like the Minidoka Water Users did in 1911, directly with the government agency.[51]

Changes in the political environment also affected the Culture Club. Like many federated women's clubs, the group disbanded during World War I. Competition from other women's organizations, the transfer of club goals from cultural advancement to the support of the war effort, the debate over women's suffrage and pacifism, and a perceived linkage between socialist groups and organized women's clubs hurt attendance nationwide.[52] The demise of the Culture Club may also have been reflective of a population shift on the project. Despite Albin DeMary's best efforts to expand reclamation on the north side of the river and to attract businesses to the city, by 1920 it became clear that the community on the southern side of the Snake River, Burley, would outstrip Rupert in population and become the premier commercial center on the Minidoka tract. Burley's proximity to Twin Falls, Paul, and Heyburn gave it a strategic, geographic advantage. Between 1920 and 1930, the town of Rupert lost population, dropping from 2,372 to 2,250 inhabitants. Some of DeMary's commercial projects, moreover, conflicted with the values of his wife's Culture Club. The Amalgamated Sugar Factory stimulated the production of sugar beets; sugar beet farmers employed children to do the monotonous hoeing that beets required, at a time when federated clubs worked to limit child labor. Snake River farmers hired immigrant workers, changing the original demographic structure of reclamation towns like Rupert. German and Russian Catholic immigrants came in large numbers to take advantage of homestead claims, particularly on the "North Side" of Rupert, where it was found that a natural aquifer made dryland farming possible. These immigrants found the kind of opportunity advocated by Progressive women's clubs, but, at the same time, their presence diluted the influence of Rupert's elite

Protestant settlers. Moreover, these new immigrants failed to adhere to the domestic and cultural standards maintained by clubwomen. By the 1920s, the Idaho State Federation of Women's Clubs was advocating a firm stance on the issue of immigration and Idaho communities. "Throughout the Federation this term emphasis was on Americanization," the Federation's historian explained, "for war had shown the need for assimilating into American life the foreign born upon her shores."[53] It may have seemed to Elizabeth DeMary that the urban social "evils" she tried to escape–child labor, corporate influence, Eastern European immigration, poverty–had followed her to the desert.[54]

The efforts of Elizabeth and Albin DeMary to create a locally-controlled irrigated oasis with a Progressive culture on the Minidoka project revealed the complex ideology underlying reclamation settlement. Albin DeMary's careful negotiations between water users and the Reclamation Service, his relentless support of commercial enterprises, and his involvement in southern Idaho's earliest water users association made Rupert the business center of the Minidoka project until the 1920s. In founding the Culture Club, Elizabeth DeMary created one of rural Idaho's first women's organizations. Her support of Progressive aesthetic values helped to preserve Idaho's only town square. Rupert's opera house staged the only live musical performances south of Boise; its streets played host to suffrage parades; its elite Protestant founders outlawed houses of prostitution and saloons; and its paved streets offered shaded, manure-free walking. Through their literary practices, clubwomen shaped and defined cultural perceptions of the irrigated landscape. The reality of life on the sagebrush flats, however, often interfered with the Progressive vision. Rupert's position as the lead Minidoka city faded as the relationship between local water users and the Bureau of Reclamation became more complex. By

the mid-1920s, large, multi-project water user's organizations had overshadowed their smaller, project-based antecedents. New reclamation dams and reservoirs, population growth, and greater demand for power generation limited the relative power of small users' associations in reclamation settlement towns. The demise of the DeMary vision for Rupert paralleled a decline in the relative authority of small water users. During the settlement period, however, the DeMarys demonstrated that water users and reclamation homesteaders possessed a considerable amount of authority in determining the shape of their projects and the cultures of their towns.

[1]This paper is based on research conducted for a larger manuscript using the Albin C. DeMary Manuscript Collection at the DeMary Memorial Library in Rupert, Idaho. DeMary collected government documents, personal photographs and letters, newspaper articles, and publications on Idaho and the Rocky Mountain West until his death in 1977. He donated the funds for the construction of Rupert's city library, built in 1958, which houses the manuscript collection and the library that he compiled and also donated. Elizabeth DeMary's papers are also held at the city library, as well as her personal book collection. Elizabeth died in 1942; after her death, Rupert's history became DeMary's focus and passion. Madelyn Player was extremely generous in allowing me access to her private library and manuscript collection, which also aided in the research for this paper. Albin C. DeMary Manuscript Collection [DMC], DeMary Memorial Library, Rupert, Idaho.

[2]As quoted in Susan E. Williams, "An Urban Study of Rupert, Idaho" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Kent State University, March 1963), 54-57. See also "Minidoka County Grew Fast After 'Late Start' in Idaho," in Minidoka County News, The Minidoka Story: The Land and the People (Rupert, Idaho: Minidoka County News, 1963; Reprint, 2001), 1-2. The Minidoka Story is comprised of reprinted newspaper articles from the Rupert Pioneer and other early papers. I will give page citations for the reprint, rather than citations for the individual articles.

[3]Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," American Quarterly XVIII (1966): 151-174; Elizabeth York Enstam, *Women and the Creation of Urban Life: Dallas, Texas, 1843-1920* (Texas A & M University, 1998).

[4]Paul Boyer, Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 189-190.

[5]Minidoka County Historical Society, A History of Minidoka County and Its People (Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1985), 185-86. For a general treatment of Progressive politics and ideals, see Alan Dawley, Struggles for Justice: Social Responsibility and the Liberal

State (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991).

[6]"Photograph of Elizabeth and Dorothy DeMary," circa 1906, DeMary Photograph Collection, DMC.

[7]Anne Rugles Gere, Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women's Clubs, 1880-1920 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 1-16.

[8]Minidoka County Historical Society, A History of Minidoka County and Its People, 185-86; Albin C. DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922, March 29, 1906, April 5, 1906, Unpublished Typed Manuscript, DMC, DeMary Memorial Library, Rupert, Idaho. DeMary's History of Rupert is comprised mostly of typed transcripts from the area's earliest newspaper, The Rupert Pioneer. My citations give the dates that DeMary assigned his manuscript entries.

[9]For a brief biography of Elizabeth DeMary, see Minidoka County Historical Society, A History of Minidoka County and Its People, 185. For a discussion of the ideology of Progressive urban planning, or "positive environmentalism," and its relationship to social control, see Paul Boyer, Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1978), especially 220-232.

[10]There were, of course, exceptions to this pattern of failure. The Carey Act, passed by Congress in 1894, provided that each state containing "desert land" as defined by the Desert Land Act (1877) could select up to 1 million acres for reclamation. The land would be held by states "in trust" for homesteaders; the land was available as long as the states found a way to irrigate it. States could either construct their own irrigation projects or hire private companies to do the work, for a price per acre set by the state. One of the Carey Act's greatest successes occurred in Twin Falls, Idaho, located approximately forty-five miles west of Rupert. There, Ira B. Perrine headed the largest private irrigation project in the United States. Indeed, Idaho eventually contained three-fifths of all land irrigated under the provisions of the Carey Act. For an overview of the Desert Land and Carey acts, see Donald J. Pisani, To Reclaim a Divided West: Water, Law, and Public Policy 1848-1902, Histories of the American Frontier, Ray Allen Billington, ed. (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1992), 88-89, 251-272; and Tim Palmer, The Snake River: Window to the West (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1991), 53-111. For a brief examination of pre-1902 irrigation projects in Idaho, see Carlos A. Schwantes, In Mountain Shadows: A History of Idaho (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 163-166. For a contemporary observer's comparison of the Minidoka Reclamation Project with the Twin Falls Project, see Richard Lowitt and Judith Fabry, eds., Henry A. Wallace's Irrigation Frontier: On the Trail of the Corn Belt Farmer, 1909 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 158-166. Minidoka County News, The Minidoka Story, 1; Congress, Senate, "National Irrigation Policy–Its Development and Significance," 76th Cong., 1st Sess., Senate Document No. 36, 2, DMC; Department of Interior, 21st Annual Report of the Reclamation Service (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 63, DMC.

[11]For a detailed examination of the politics surrounding passage of the Newlands Act, see Pisani, To Reclaim a Divided West, 273-325. The full text of the Reclamation Act can be accessed

through the Center for Columbia River History website, located at http://www.ccrh.org/content.htm.

[12]Burley Irrigation District Home Page, Burley Irrigation District History, http://www.cyberhighway.net/~bid/history.htm; Eric A. Stene, "The Minidoka Project," Fifth Draft, Bureau of Reclamation History Program, Research on Historic Reclamation Projects, 1997, Bureau of Reclamation DataWeb, http://dataweb.usbr.gov/html/minidoka1.html; DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922, February 22, 1912, March 14, 1912, April 4, 1912; Minidoka County News, The Minidoka Story, 1.

[13]DeMary, History of Rupert 1905-1922, November 9, 1905, December 28, 1905, October 19, 1905, February 15, 1906.

[14]Karen J. Blair, The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914 (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1980), 73-75.

[15]Vernetta Hogsett, The Golden Years (Caldwell: Caxton Printers, 1955), 1-7; 98; Sandra Haarsager, Organized Womanhood: Cultural Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1840-1920 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 179-182.

[16]Charles E. Sargent, Our Home, Or Influences Emanating from the Hearthstone (Springfield, Massachusetts: The King-Richardson Company, 1899), 367.

[17]See Lori Merish, Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth-Century American Literature (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 1-27.

[18]Frank LaRue was elected City Treasurer of Rupert in 1909. See Minidoka County Historical Society, A History of Minidoka County and Its People, 11.

[19]DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922, October 19, 1905; The Minidoka County News, The Minidoka Story, 2; Vernetta Murchison Hogsett, The Golden Years: A History of the Idaho Federation of Women's Clubs (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1955), 365; Haarsager, Organized Womanhood, 161-165.

[20]DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922, December 23, 1915; Minidoka County News, The Minidoka Story, 2.

[21]Gail McDonald, "The Mind a Department Store: Reconfiguring Space in the Gilded Age," Modern Language Quarterly Volume 63 (June 2002): 227-250.

[22]"Joe Ruggles' Was First Play at New Opera House in Rupert," The Rupert Pioneer, November 23, 1905, reprinted in Minidoka County News, The Minidoka Story, 31.

[23]DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922, September 20, 1906.

[24]The measure passed by a vote of 274 to 107 in Rupert. See Minidoka County Historical Society, A History of Minidoka County and Its People, 12.

[25]Another example of the cultural romanticization of irrigation can be found in the art and writings of Mary Hallock Foote, perhaps Idaho's best-known nineteenth-century female writer. Foote accompanied her engineer husband to the Boise Valley, where he worked for a number of years on a failed irrigation project. Some of her work can be viewed at the Idaho State Historical Society, 1109 Main Street, Boise, Idaho. For a published example of her work, see Schwantes, In Mountain Shadows, 164-165.

[26]This unlabeled photograph is displayed in the reading room at the DeMary Memorial Library, Rupert, Idaho.

[27]Haarsager, Organized Womanhood, 148, 332-336. Details of the Culture Club's first annual banquet can be found in DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922, January 3, 1907.

[28]Elizabeth DeMary as quoted in U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Reclamation Record 7 (February 1916): 60-61; also quoted in Mark Fiege, Irrigated Eden: The Making of an Agricultural Landscape in the American West, Foreword by William Cronon (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 222*n1*.

[29]*Irrigation* was published in the Service's journal, Reclamation Era. I found it taped to the inside cover of Elizabeth DeMary's book Sunlit Peaks, housed in the DeMary Manuscript Collection at DeMary Memorial Library in Rupert, Idaho.

[30]From *The Passing of the Desert*, in Irene Welch Grissom, The Passing of the Desert (Garden City, New York: Country Life Press, 1924), 2.

[31]From *The Mirage*, in Grissom, The Passing of the Desert, 3.

[32]Mark Fiege discusses the various cultural myths associated with irrigation in Irrigated Eden: The Making of an Agricultural Landscape in the American West (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 171-202.

[33]Hogsett, The Golden Years, 41.

[34]The photograph of the suffrage parade is the private property of the James Goodman family, Rupert, Idaho. The photograph is reproduced in Minidoka County News, The Minidoka Story, 8. For more about the founding of Rupert's Methodist Church, see A.M. Lambert, "Church History on Project," in DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922. For information about another of Rupert's social clubs, the Pansy Club, see Mrs. C.B. Burgher, "Flowers Nurtured in Sheltered Spot Gave Pansy Club Its Name," in The Minidoka Story, 10. The Pansy Club supported the Boise Children's Home and the American Red Cross.

[35]The source of Rupert's name has been cause for much speculation by regional historians. The Reclamation Service did not keep a record of the sources for all of its place names.

Contemporary historians suggested that it was named for a prominent writer of the time period, Rupert Hughes, though Hughes later denied the assertion. Another theory suggested that it was named for Prince Rupert of the Hudson Bay Company. Albin C. DeMary unsuccessfully attempted to uncover the origins of the town's name during the 1940s, by writing to retired reclamation officials. See Minidoka County News, The Minidoka Story, 2; J.T. Burke to A.C. DeMary, October 25, 1944, Letter Scrapbook, DMC, DeMary Memorial Library, Rupert, Idaho.

[36]A 1906 photograph of the Rupert square shows four rows of frame wood buildings surrounding a completely treeless, grassless plot of dirt. See "Early Rupert Scenes," in Minidoka County News, The Minidoka Story, 39; Minidoka County Historical Society, Scrapbook of Rupert, Idaho: Articles and Pictures, 5, Minidoka County Musuem, Rupert, Idaho.

[37]DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922, June 6, 1907, June 13, 1907; Minidoka County Historical Society, Scrapbook of Rupert, Idaho, 5; "Rupert Square Had Sidewalks Built in 1910," in Minidoka County News, The Minidoka Story, 14; U.S., Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Listings, January 26, 2001, http://www.cr.nps.gov/NR/listings/20010126.htm.

[38]Many of Rupert's current residents are not as pleased with the sugar refinery as its earliest residents were. Some current residents blame the plant for Rupert's large number of unskilled, low-paying agricultural jobs. Others complain about the stench and air pollution caused by the plant. Minidoka County Historical Society, A History of Minidoka County and Its People, 11; DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922, May 23, 1917.

[39]Lowitt and Fabry, Henry A. Wallace's Irrigation Frontier, 144-152.

[40]*Ibid*., 154-157. Mark Fiege examines the interplay of "myth, metaphor and the irrigated landscape" in Irrigated Eden, 171-202.

[41]For an examination of the patterns of modern state control of resources, and the inherent difficulties in their "organization of nature," see James C. Scott, Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

[42]Department of Interior, 15th Annual Report of the Reclamation Service (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916), 157; Ralph W. Maughan, Historical Highlights of Cassia and Minidoka Counties (Rupert, Idaho: Privately Printed, 1990), 5-9.

[43]DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922, November 8, 1906; Minidoka County Historical Society, A History of Minidoka County and Its People, 10; Fiege, Irrigated Eden, 28.

[44]Riedesel as quoted in Maughan, Historical Highlights of Cassia and Minidoka Counties, 19-20; Minidoka County Historical Society, A History of Minidoka County and Its People, 14.

[45]As stated by Ralph Maughan, "wet and swampy areas where no crops will grow" remain to the present on the Minidoka project. Burley Irrigation District Home Page, Burley Irrigation District

History, 5, 7; Department of Interior, 15th Annual Report of the Reclamation Service, 157; Albin C. DeMary to J.T. Burke, October 17, 1944, Letter Scrapbook, DMC; Maughan, Historical Highlights of Cassia and Minidoka Counties, 10.

[46]Charles Coates, "Federal-Local Relationships on the Boise and Minidoka Projects, 1904-1926," Idaho Yesterdays 25 (Summer 1981): 2-9; Maughan, Historical Highlights of Cassia and Minidoka Counties, 9; Fiege, Irrigated Eden, 127-128; Minidoka County Historical Society, A History of Minidoka County and Its People, 10-11.

[47]DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922, March 9, 1911, April 6, 1911, May 18, 1911.

[48]"Stenographic Report of Meeting of Board of Directors of the Minidoka Water Users Association with Bien and Wells," May 23, 1911, in DeMary, History of Rupert, 1905-1922.

[49]*Ibid*, August 31, 1911, October 5, 1911.

[50]*Ibid*, August 31, 1911, January 1, 1914, November 5, 1914.

[51]For an extensive discussion of the Snake River Committee of Nine and other cooperative organizations, see Fiege, Irrigated Eden, 25-27; 81-116.

[52]Hogsett, The Golden Years, 98.

[53]Hogsett, The Golden Years, 90.

[54]Williams, "An Urban Study of Rupert, Idaho," 59. Leonard J. Arrington addresses the population growth of Idaho's twentieth-century agricultural communities in History of Idaho, Volume I (Moscow: University of Idaho Press, 1994), 471-532.