



East Texas Historical Journal

A Publication of the East Texas Historical Association

Volume 55 Issue 1

Article 5

2017

Aberdeen, Scotland; Gilded Age Labor; & the Reconstruction of the Texas Capitol

Carolyn White
Stephen F. Austin State University

The East Texas Historical Journal is a publication of the East Texas Historical Association (ETHA). The ETHA is a membership organization founded in 1962 to support research into the unique histories of East Texas and to educate and engage others in the effort.

More information about the ETHA is available at www.easttexashistorical.org

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ethj>



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

[Tell us](#) how this article helped you.

[Provide feedback](#) to ETHA.

Recommended Citation

White, Carolyn (2017) "Aberdeen, Scotland; Gilded Age Labor; & the Reconstruction of the Texas Capitol," *East Texas Historical Journal*: Vol. 55: Iss. 1, Article 5.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ethj/vol55/iss1/5>

This Article has been accepted for inclusion in the East Texas Historical Journal by an authorized editor of ETHA and SFA. This Article is brought to you free and open access by the Journals at SFA ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact cdsscholarworks@sfasu.edu.

Aberdeen, Scotland; Gilded Age Labor; & the Reconstruction of the Texas Capitol

BY CAROLYN WHITE



Scots Working on Granite for Capitol. Photograph courtesy of the Texas State Library and Archives. Owner Accession # 1932/5-72.

Carolyn White is the Program Director for Liberal and Applied Arts at the Academic Assistance Resource Center (AARC) at Stephen F. Austin State University

Flames engulfed the Texas Capitol Building on November 9, 1881. Of course, no one seemed to mind. In fact, many were relieved that the structure, completed in 1853, was destroyed, forcing the Texas Legislature and Governor Oran Roberts to find funds to build a replacement.¹ As Frederick W. Rathjen writes, "The only real tragedy of the fire was the total loss of a considerable volume of records dating back to the days of the Republic. The building itself was an eyesore and the only ones having cause to lament its passing were the bats who were left homeless."² Whether tragic or timely, the immediate need for a new Capitol pulled Texas closer to Scotland and into the Gilded Age in new ways.

For most Texans, knowledge of how Texas built the current Capitol follows a particular narrative, as follows. By the 1870s, the first Texas Capitol building had grown out of favor and fallen into disrepair. Without available funding, the state legislature voted to construct a new Capitol through the sale of three million acres of west Texas public lands. A syndicate from Chicago eventually received the contract to build the Capitol and developed the XIT ranch on the lands Texas used as payment.

During construction, contractors and state leaders changed the exterior stone from limestone to granite, causing contractors to face a labor shortage when granite cutters went on strike rather than work with convict labor. Eventually, the contractor imported stone cutters from Scotland to complete the building. Despite many challenges throughout construction, the state dedicated the Capitol on May 16, 1888, but remaining structural issues meant the contractors were not released until December of that year. Given its history and size, the Capitol remains a unique Texas treasure.³

This particular account gives minimal – if any – significance to individuals and events outside the State of Texas. The use of Chicago contractors becomes noteworthy merely because they later organized the XIT Ranch, and Scottish stone cutters arrive without consideration for how they were chosen or why

they agreed to take the job. Therefore, this tale fails to place the Capitol's construction within a broader national and international context or consider long-term effects and consequences of construction. The reconstruction of the Texas Capitol following the fire in 1881 connected Texas to broader American Gilded Age patterns of skilled labor migration as well as legal challenges between labor organizations and business owners regarding this migration. Therefore, the new Capitol caused Texas to become a central location for Gilded Age labor upheaval between American organized labor, skilled migrant laborers, business owners, and the United States government in a way unimaginable before the Capitol project.

The Texas Capitol consumed by fire did not start out despised by most Texans as an architectural "eyesore." Instead, American architecture styles changed following the Civil War, reflecting changing cultural attitudes as well as innovations in building technology. Most Gilded Age architecture was designed to display wealth and prestige, and those involved in construction sought profits along with the creation of new structures.⁴ Texans' desire for a more massive, imposing structure for their state Capitol than the 1853 Greek Revival building represented this change in attitude.⁵

Chicago, in particular, became famous during the Gilded Age for experimentation in architectural designs for both public buildings and private residences. Chicago's architectural prominence benefited and grew from two conditions: a transportation network strengthened by Civil War re-routing of train traffic and the 1873 fire which destroyed much of downtown. Chicago thus enjoyed access to materials, capital, and a need for new buildings which could employ the most current architectural styles and technological innovations.⁶ Thus, the Texas Capitol construction project drew from architecture styles and construction methods developed outside the state.

Yet, factors other than changing architectural preferences impacted construction of the Texas Capitol. Gilded Age

economics also affected both the decision to build the Texas Capitol and the ability to do so. During the late 1870s and early 1880s, the entire United States recovered from a depression, and northerners' interest and ability to invest in southern states increased with both the end of Reconstruction and improved economic conditions.⁷ In Texas, however, this economic recovery did not translate into additional capital for a massive building project. Following the Civil War, the state had little money, and few individuals or businesses had enough capital to complete a project of this size. What Texas lacked in capital, it made up for in land. Under Governor Oran Roberts, the state legislature voted to fund construction of a new capitol building through the sale of public lands.⁸

Choosing an architect, given the state's minimal funding, proved a major challenge for the project. In 1881, Texas called for architects to submit plans for a new state capitol, with the winner to be chosen in a contest. This way, the state avoided paying an architect for any planning time, and since some had criticized the planning and completion of the first state capitol as an "insider-job," the Texas Capitol Building Commission opened the contest to a national audience. Participation was minimal, however, since the commission offered meager prize money. As William Elton Green explains, "The commissioners offered the paltry sum of \$1,700 for the winning entry and no prizes for second and third choices, a decision that revealed their naivete about architectural fees and reflected, at the same time, the conservative view toward government spending held by Governor Roberts and most other Texans, together with large numbers of southerners."⁹ After few entries and much debate, the Capitol Building Commission selected the design of Elijah E. Myers of Detroit. Myers was well acquainted with architectural designs for this type of structure, although rarely of this magnitude since Myers previously designed the Michigan State Capitol in Lansing and several other public and private buildings.¹⁰

With a design chosen, the State of Texas accepted contracting

bids from mid-1881 through January 1, 1882, and received only two. Eventually, Mattheas Schnell of Rock Island, Illinois, beat A. A. Burck of Rockdale, Texas, for the Texas Capitol contract.¹¹ The fact that anyone in Texas submitted a bid at all seems impressive due to the general lack of banking facilities and capital within the state at the time. As W.G. Kerr explains, "In 1880, on the eve of the arrival of British land and mortgage money, Texas banking facilities numbered 13 national banks and some private houses. Their deposits were £400,000."¹² Yet, upon closer examination, the choice of a Texas Capitol contractor likely resulted less from the financial standings of the two bidders and more from bribery. During the bidding process for the Capitol contract, one of the Capitol Building Commissioners – N. L. Norton (who later resigned in 1884) – accepted a bribe of \$5,000 to award the contract to Schnell over Burck.¹³ Within five months (January to May 1882), Schnell transferred all of his interest and obligations in the contract over to the firm of Taylor, Babcock, and Company of Chicago, Illinois.¹⁴

Before the transfer, Governor Roberts accepted letters of recommendation for the Chicago investors prior to reassigning the contract, notably from the Governor of Illinois, Shelby Cullom, who provided a recommendation for the ability of C.B. Farwell, John V. Farwell, Abner Taylor, and A.C. Babcock to cover construction costs. Cullom writes, "I have known each of these gentlemen for many years. They are wealthy men, and I feel sure are worth altogether from two million to three million dollars. A bond for one million dollars signed by these gentlemen I would accept as perfectly satisfactory if presented to me for approval as governor of Illinois." In a post script, he offers to add another million dollars to the value of the bond, if necessary, to secure the contract with the State of Texas.¹⁵

The willingness of the governor to vouch for the men of the Capitol Syndicate is hardly surprising given the Syndicate members' political connections. Of the four main investors of the Capitol Syndicate, Amos Babcock and John B. Farwell did

not hold public office. John Farwell's brother, C.B. Farwell, served as a United States Senator for the State of Illinois, and Abner Taylor, a former Colonel and the Head Contractor for the construction of the Texas Capitol, served as an Illinois representative in the United States House of Representatives.¹⁶ Frederick W. Rathjen describes the Capitol Syndicate members as follows: "These associates were all remarkable men, who, ... engaged in politics and finance, and promoted many great individual projects. Although the building of the Texas capitol was a large undertaking, it is probable that Taylor, Babcock, and Company regarded it as just one of many grandiose schemes."¹⁷ In other words, the Capitol Syndicate represented the strong Gilded Age interconnections of business and government, and while Texas viewed the Capitol's construction as monumental, it was only one piece of a much wider pattern of construction and business speculation for the era.

However, political connections could not spare the Capitol Syndicate from economic difficulties during the early years of construction. Although excavation began in 1882 and foundation work in 1883, the economic depression from 1883 – 1885 meant the Capitol Syndicate could not sell the three million acres of Texas land for a profit, let alone cover the construction costs.¹⁸ Debates on materials caused further delay and economic concern, especially when Abner Taylor (by this time Chief Contractor) realized the Oatmanville quarry outside Austin could not provide enough limestone of adequate strength and uniformity to meet the original plans' design of a limestone exterior. A quarry in Bedford, Indiana contained limestone of proper quality, but Texans, led by Governor John Ireland, rejected this option and insisted on the use of Texas materials.¹⁹

By 1885, Taylor suffered financially from both construction delays and the national recession. Therefore, he agreed to use donated Texas granite from outside Burnet in exchange for convict labor and an extension of the completion deadline. Because Taylor compromised on the use of Texas granite, the

Texas Capitol Building Commission arranged for the use of 500 Texas prison convicts as granite cutters. Taylor paid 65 cents per day for food, clothing, and guards for this labor.²⁰ Ruth Allen explains best why Taylor agreed to this arrangement. "...the Capitol Syndicate protested their inability to fulfill their contract even though failure meant forfeiture of a quarter of a million dollars. Relief was offered in the form of convict labor from the state prisons which might be used to quarry the stone and build the railroad necessary for transportation from Burnet to Austin."²¹ In other words, the Capitol Syndicate benefited financially from the agreement as failure to meet the original deadline would have incurred high penalties and fees for Taylor and the Syndicate, and the state provided further financial relief through an extremely cheap and abundant labor source. Soon after the arrangement of the new contract, Abner Taylor appointed Gus Wilke (also of Chicago) as sub-contractor of the entire Capitol project.²²

Although economics encouraged Taylor to change the exterior from limestone to granite, the decision coincided with a rise in the popularity of granite in Chicago construction. Throughout the 1880s, granite (often from either Maine or Minnesota) became a noticeable feature of influential Chicago buildings such as the Board of Trade (1883-85); the Home Insurance Building (1883-85); the Rookery (1885-87); and the Auditorium Building (1886-90).²³ *Inland Architect*, a publication based in Chicago, described the growing use of granite within the city: "The use of granite in the construction of modern buildings is of comparatively recent date. A decade ago, its use was hardly noticeable in Chicago. Today, however, one can scarcely find a substantial building that has been built within the past few years that has not more or less in it to give it either strength or ornamentation, or both."²⁴ Therefore, while economic considerations certainly played a role in Taylor's willingness to change from Texas limestone to granite, the increased use of granite in Chicago may have also influenced Taylor's decision. Regardless of the cause, Texas's move to a granite exterior coincided with architectural trends of the time period.

Meanwhile, owners of the Granite Mountain quarry in Texas clearly calculated the benefit of donating the granite for the Capitol. Prior to use for the Capitol, the quarry (located just outside present-day Marble Falls, Texas) lacked a railroad connection, which meant it lacked a cost-effective, reliable route to markets. As part of the agreement to donate granite, the convict labor contracted to Taylor built a narrow gauge railway from the quarry to the Austin and Northwest Railroad connection at Burnet, Texas.²⁵ A connection to railroad transportation along with the growing use of granite in a variety of American industries meant the quarry could become a profitable venture.²⁶

The Capitol construction project was not the first time the state of Texas allowed contractors to use prisoners as labor. Between 1883 and 1912, Texas leased prisoners to contractors willing to pay for them. The state saved money through this system because of decreased daily prisoner costs (since contractors paid living expenses of the prisoners) and the ability to avoid building new prisons.²⁷ The housing situation, in particular, made the state leasing system attractive to Texas lawmakers. In 1886, Texas's two prisons in Huntsville and Rusk together could hold 1,600 of the 3,000 state prisoners of the time.²⁸ The prisoner lease system was hardly unique to Texas as all southern (formerly Confederate) states used some form of the leasing system during the late nineteenth century.²⁹

The Granite Cutters' National Union strongly objected to the use of convict labor in the Burnet granite quarry. The Union feared their members would train convicts in the Burnet quarry at a fair wage only to be completely replaced by the cheaper convicts once they obtained the necessary skills. A letter in the *Granite-Cutters' Journal* from September 1885 described the American granite cutters' position against convict labor.

If 200 granite cutters work with, and teach 100 convicts the trade the probability is that in twelve months time there would be but 100 granite cutters and the number of

convicts would be increased to 200, and in a years time there would be 300 convicts, and no free granite cutters whatever employed on the job, for if free granite cutters learn the convicts the trade, after the first lot is taught they will be put to teach other convicts, and thus drive out free labor altogether, for we have been reliably informed that the state officials of Texas have agreed to supply the contractors with 500 convicts.³⁰

Gus Wilke, informed of union objections, stated he needed 100 granite cutters but would hire either union or non-union labor. In a letter to the Granite Cutters' National Union, (also printed in the September 1885 *Granite-Cutters' Journal*) Wilke wrote, "I will not permit you, nor any society, to dictate whom I shall employ, whether they be convicts or free labor."³¹ The vote of 500 to 1 in favor of a boycott meant granite workers could not work on the Capitol building and remain in good standing with the union.³² The Capitol Assembly Knights of Labor, upon learning the Granite Cutters' National Union had "declared the Texas State Capitol a scab job," voted to assist the granite cutters' in the strike by also boycotting the job and providing aid to those stonecutters already working on the job who wished to find other employment.³³

This antagonistic relationship between organized labor and business owners/supervisors was hardly unique to the Gilded Age and neither was the importation of foreign skilled labor that followed. During the Gilded Age era of nativist sentiment and restrictive immigration legislation, labor organizations sought United States government action specifically against skilled migrant laborers. Trans-Atlantic skilled labor migration occurred after the Civil War largely because the country needed labor. In fact, the United States Congress passed the Act to Encourage Emigration in 1864. The height of this migration occurred within the Gilded Age as skilled laborers moved between the United States and Europe to enjoy higher wages and lower living expenses in

the United States. For example, a British worker could come to the United States during the busy season for his craft (spring and summer for construction), earn a great deal of money, and live cheaply in his home country with his family for the remainder of the year.³⁴

When migration of skilled labor began, weak and unorganized American labor unions accepted foreign skilled laborers in good standing with the unions of their home country. When American trade unions grew stronger and competition for jobs increased, these unions pressured foreigners to join. Fees from United States unions hit migrant skilled laborers especially hard and discouraged them from joining American unions in addition to their home unions.³⁵

Similar trade unions often communicated across the Atlantic, especially American and British trade unions, but skilled migrant laborers increasingly ignored such information, especially regarding to strikes. Migrant laborers quickly learned the economic value of strikebreaking as they came to America and made money without affecting their British union standing. At the end of the American work season, they found employment for the British work season; thus, they maintained a full year of work. At times, the British unions encouraged emigration to the United States for a work season to relieve the British labor market of surplus workers.³⁶

In 1885, labor organizations (especially the Knights of Labor) succeeded in getting Congress to pass the Foran Act.³⁷ The act made it illegal for businesses to hire foreign laborers abroad and help cover the cost of their journeys to the United States to perform a particular job. The act did not prevent workers from coming to the United States on their own for the height of the season for their industry and being hired by businesses upon arrival. Therefore, most United States companies likely felt the law would have little, if any, effect upon their hiring practices. Labor organizations, however, thought the law was an important step in preventing skilled foreign labor from serving as strikebreakers.

Of course, when encouraging the legislation in Congress, labor organizations employed nativist language rather than pro-labor rhetoric to encourage passage of the act.³⁸

Despite the passage of the Foran Act (or Alien Contract Labor Law), American labor struggled to gain legitimacy and have many of its concerns addressed by government officials in the Gilded Age. Organized labor's minimal success gaining protection against skilled migrant labor occurred because of a broader existence of nativism within American society, not because of a pro-labor stance by many Americans. Meanwhile, laborers in the Gilded Age struggled with deteriorating working conditions. As Gilded Age corporations grew in size and power and high immigration rates provided an abundance of cheap labor, workers maintained less and less control over their job situations and living conditions. Because of this, Gilded Age workers began to band together through a variety of labor organizations to balance the power of business owners and improve their situations. Early labor attempts for change were rarely successful, but their continued efforts created a dynamic of aggression and hostility between business and labor throughout the era.

Texas was not immune to the labor organization and demonstrations of the Gilded Age, but it also did not witness activity on the scale of the Northeastern or Midwestern industrial centers. During the 1877 railroad strike, Galveston became the main location of unrest within the state as Galveston workers protested low and inadequate wages by walking off jobs around the city on July 27, 1877. The strikes began with dock workers in Galveston's harbor and spread to day laborers and washerwomen seeking better working conditions.³⁹ Galveston differed from other Texas cities at this time both in its connections and available capital, conditions which existed because of its role as a shipping point for cotton. As Clifford Farrington describes, "Many factors contributed to Galveston's commercial success - the port's location, the vision and commercial acumen of local businessmen, investment by northern capital and the federal government, expanding

railroad networks, and the production and demand for cotton all played their part."⁴⁰

As the Gilded Age continued and Texas industries developed, labor unions entered the state, beginning with the Knights of Labor in 1882.⁴¹ A variety of labor disputes occurred within Texas throughout the 1880s, but most were job specific and quickly over without any major changes. As John Spratt describes, "The last quarter of the century was punctuated by labor disturbances, but, while some of them were important and of major proportions, most of them appear to have been nothing more than manifestations of fits of temper between a worker, or workers, and foremen."⁴² The main exception came in the railroad industry as the Knights of Labor organized the Southwest Strike against Jay Gould in 1886. The strike began in Marshall, Texas, and ended in defeat for the Knights of Labor.⁴³

Even within an era of labor organization and unrest in Texas, the Texas Capitol boycott differed from other labor movements within the state. Unlike spontaneous demonstrations which provided most of the state's labor unrest, the Capitol boycott was coordinated between two national organizations: the Granite Cutters' National Union and the Knights of Labor. The strike against the Texas Capitol granite yard differed even from the large-scale Southwest strike as it involved the use of skilled labor from outside the United States, the violation of federal law, and the attention (and eventually the direct intervention) of the federal government in the legal proceedings.

Faced with the loss of his labor force, Gus Wilke actively recruited workers from Aberdeen, Scotland. He sent his agent, George Berry, to procure replacement workers in the spring of 1886, a clear violation of the Alien Contract Labor Law (or Foran Act) which made it illegal to hire workers abroad for employment in the United States.⁴⁴ Once in Scotland, Berry advertised in the Aberdeen newspapers for granite cutters and blacksmiths for construction of the Texas Capitol. For example, a notice from the *Aberdeen Evening Express* read, "WANTED, 50 more Granite Cutters. – Apply at Spare

Room, Northern Friendly Hall, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. To-Morrow (Saturday). – George Berry.”⁴⁵ Eventually, between recruitment through newspaper advertisements and a meeting at the Northern Friendly Society Hall on April 12, Berry recruited eighty-six men (both stonecutters and blacksmiths) to travel to Austin, Texas on April 15, 1886.⁴⁶

By the time of Berry’s recruiting trip, Aberdeen was well-established on both sides of the Atlantic as a leading location for the quarry of raw granite and the creation of finished granite products. A variety of factors allowed Aberdeen, Scotland, to dominate the trans-Atlantic granite industry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Because the region contained abundant granite deposits, laborers in Aberdeen had a great deal of experience and developed improved methods of granite production. Nineteenth century Aberdeen, although economically diverse, became identified with the trans-Atlantic granite trade and developed markets for the stone outside Scotland, and Aberdeen labor migrated to the United States to develop that country’s granite industry. By the late nineteenth century, a variety of recruitment and reporting measures existed in Aberdeen which reinforced the trans-Atlantic granite trade connection for most aspects of society, specifically labor, management, and the general public.

Granite is an extremely hard, naturally occurring stone formed when magma cools within other, older rocks. Several mineral deposits define granite, mainly quartz, feldspar, and mica. The specific proportion of these minerals, as well as the color of the feldspar, determines the properties and color of individual granites. Granite deposits occur throughout Scotland, and at one time at least seven regions supported quarry operations; however, nineteenth century Aberdeen became the focal point of the Scottish granite industry. The Aberdeen region contains a wide variety of granites which meant Aberdeenshire quarries produced granites of different colors and textures. Of the most prominent quarries – Rublislaw (Figure 1), Kemnay (Figure 2), Corrennie, Peterhead, Sclattie, Persley, Dyce, Cairncry, Dancing Cairns, Toms Forest, Tillyfourie, Hill of Fare,

Biresmohr, and Invergelder – each produced a distinct stone. Also, the granite deposits in the Aberdeen region were easier to split and provided more granite capable of polishing (or polishing stone) than other Scottish deposits, and the Aberdeen harbor allowed for rapid and inexpensive transport of granite products.⁴⁷

The sheer volume of granite available in the Aberdeen region also allowed it to dominate the nineteenth century market. The fourteen specific quarries listed represent only a portion of production since at one time the region supported sixty quarry operations.⁴⁸

Due to the abundance of deposits, Aberdeen used granite as a building stone long before the nineteenth-century growth of the granite trade. Castle Fraser and Crathes Castle were constructed in the late medieval period, and St. Machar's Cathedral in Old Aberdeen was built in the fifteenth century. Because of the stone's hardness, builders gathered from surface granite deposits for these structures, and granite did not become a common building material in Aberdeen until the eighteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, granite became a recognizable feature of Aberdeen as the industry made advancements in quarrying, stone cutting, and polishing techniques.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, Aberdeen granite became widely used locally due to city growth. City planners sought to more closely tie Aberdeen to the harbor rather than the Old Aberdeen region of the city, and thus cleared slums and built bridges, roads, and public buildings of granite.⁵⁰ (See Figures 3 and 4 for images of Old Aberdeen and the newer section of the city near the harbor.) Outside markets for Aberdeenshire granite also developed in the early nineteenth-century as cities, especially London, absorbed Aberdeen granite for their expansion, specifically to use as "paving setts, kerbstones, and building stones." The construction of British harbors, such as the one in Newcastle, also relied on Aberdeen granite.⁵¹

Following the American Civil War, a United States market for Aberdeen granite memorials developed. In Boston and New York especially, the wealthy considered it fashionable to use

Aberdeen granite in memorials.⁵² By this time, Aberdeen had a decades-long history of creating granite memorials, especially of polished stone, since in 1830, Aberdonian Alexander Macdonald created a machine-based technique for polishing granite which cut down the time (and thus cost) of creating a polished stone.⁵³ Therefore, the combination of locally diverse granite deposits and technological advancement made Aberdeen the center of the Scotland / United States granite trade in the late nineteenth century.

Even so, the connection between Aberdeen and the United States involved more than the trade of granite. A migratory labor pattern developed between the two locations as the United States sought skilled granite workers to develop local granite operations following the American Civil War. Aberdeen, given its long history with granite and large-scale granite production, provided the necessary labor for the fledgling United States industry. Marjory Harper describes this situation as follows: "American labour at this time was inadequate and, for its skill-value, expensive; hence Scottish masons were in particular demand, often being employed as instructors to train a native labour force."⁵⁴ Most United States granite operations first emerged in New England, but other deposits discovered in the South, Midwest, and California also relied on Scottish labor.⁵⁵ Aberdeen masons worked the quarry in Aberdeen, Colorado, and also cut granite for the Mormon Temple in Salt Lake City, Utah.⁵⁶ Overall, skilled labor during the late nineteenth century was in demand, and business owners paid well to entice a skilled labor force to travel to the United States.⁵⁷ Once begun, the seasonal migration of men between Aberdeen and the United States became a regular feature of the granite industry. Masons and other granite workers spent winter months in Aberdeen preparing stones for the United States. When these stones were shipped in the summer months, granite workers also migrated to the United States for employment. Workers became part of this migratory pattern because they wished to earn the highest wages possible,

and some planned to accumulate money while working in the United States to open their granite yards in Aberdeen.⁵⁸

Employment for the Texas Capitol job differed from the traditional seasonal migration pattern between Aberdeen and the eastern and midwestern United States in both location and length as Berry offered eighteen months of work instead of the typical summer season. Despite the differences, several factors may have influenced Aberdeen granite cutters' willingness to accept employment on the Texas Capitol job. Although a new location for migration, Texas was not the first southern state to attract workers from Aberdeen. At the informational meeting held April 12, 1886, Mr. Robert Hall of Aberdeen spoke of his experience (four years in America, some of this time in South Carolina) as a positive one, and he believed Texas likely had a similar climate given its similar latitude.⁵⁹ Therefore, although work in Texas was new, work in the southern United States, in general, was not completely foreign. Economic conditions in Aberdeen in 1886 also likely influenced granite cutters' willingness to accept a job in Texas. Stories in the Aberdeen newspapers in both April and May 1886 describe a depressed state of trade.⁶⁰ The issue of a depressed Aberdeen trade was even raised at the Capitol information meeting. As the *Aberdeen Journal* reported, "Looking to the dull times through which the granite cutters were passing – he [Robert Hall] had not seen the times so bad in Aberdeen for 20 years – he regarded this as a grand opportunity for many who were idle. It would also benefit those who stayed at home."⁶¹ In other words, employment in Texas benefited the men who accepted the job since they would be employed, and it helped granite cutters who stayed behind in Aberdeen as it decreased competition for jobs at home.

Regardless of why Aberdeen granite cutters accepted employment, the question remains why Gus Wilke chose Scottish workers (specifically workers from Aberdeen) as strikebreakers over other available sources of labor. Since most labor migration from Aberdeen went to the Northeastern and Midwestern region

of the United States, migration to Texas in 1886 was both an extension of and a deviation from the established pattern. Perhaps, as Marjory Harper argues, Wilke chose Aberdeen workers because they were the best in their craft at the time.⁶² However, Harper's reasoning does not explain why Capitol contractors viewed American workers as adept and capable prior to the boycott and Scottish workers as superior afterward. An established pattern of skilled labor migration between Texas and Aberdeen did not exist before Texas Capitol construction (and in fact never developed), so this also does not explain the choice.

Likewise, Scottish settlement and investment in Texas does not appear relevant in the decision toward Scottish granite cutters. In the late nineteenth century, Texas became a popular location for Scottish capital investment in ranching operations. The Edinburgh-based Prairie Cattle Company, Limited became the first British joint-stock company involved in Texas ranching in 1880. Other similar corporations included the Texas Land and Cattle Co., Ltd., the Swan Land and Cattle Company and the Matador Land and Cattle Co., Ltd. Most funding for these enterprises came from Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen. In addition to their role as foreign investors, Scots served on-site as ranch managers and other positions for these ranching operations.⁶³ If the investment connection reached into the construction and granite industries, it seems likely these workers would have been recruited much earlier – especially before American workers – since Scottish investment in Texas ranching was well established before Taylor's decision to use granite in 1885.

Wilke most likely turned to granite cutters from Aberdeen when faced with a labor shortage because of previous construction projects in the Midwest – an area which did maintain a skilled migrant labor relationship with the Aberdeen granite industry – made him aware of this Scottish labor source. Wilke's father owned a construction business in Chicago, and together they worked on multiple Chicago projects following the Chicago fire as well as a building on the campus of the University of Michigan at Ann

Arbor.⁶⁴ Also, it seems the boycott made recruitment of Scottish workers cost effective whereas such a cost was prohibitive when an American labor force seemed available.

Once Wilke hired workers from Aberdeen, American organized labor attempted to stop these strikebreakers from reaching Texas. The American Granite Cutters' Union sought George Berry's arrest in New York for importing contracted labor, but the U.S. District Attorney in New York did not comply due to insufficient evidence. By the time workers produced necessary proof, the Scots had traveled from New York to Texas. Before their departure, however, American union members persuaded twenty-four of the eighty-six Aberdeen workers to participate in the boycott. In exchange for not working in Texas, the American Granite Cutters' Union employed these men in the American northeast.⁶⁵

For the Scottish recruits, the Texas Capitol job often failed to meet expectations for employment, wages, and working conditions. When George Berry recruited workers in Aberdeen, he indicated men would have a year and a half of work.⁶⁶ Yet, the last payroll voucher specifically for "Stonecutters" occurred in May 1887. For the remaining months of 1887 and through to completion in 1888, payroll records indicate a few specifically designated stonecutters working on the Capitol grounds. This change in payroll seems to indicate that most of the granite cutting work was completed and the granite yard at Burnet no longer operated.⁶⁷ Meanwhile, although Berry recruited workers with the expectation to receive between \$4.00 and \$6.00 per day (depending on the speed of the individual worker), some apparently did not earn \$1.00 per day. Also, the blacksmiths hired in Scotland slowed the stonecutters' work by not properly sharpening tools. Many stonecutters thus lost valuable working time by going back to have their tools repaired.⁶⁸

Further, the climate proved difficult for some of the stonecutters. The men were unprepared for working in 90-degree heat, and the *Galveston Daily News* described the first day of

work. "The men started work Wednesday morning, and the clatter of hammers and tools was quite lively until after 2 P.M., when they began to stop work by twos and threes, not being able to endure the sun, and at 6 P.M., there were not a dozen at work. Since then, they have worked by fits and starts, and from present appearances, it is doubtful whether their labor will form an important part in the erection of the Austin Capitol."⁶⁹

Throughout construction, work at the granite quarry just outside present-day Marble Falls (during construction of the Capitol referred to as Graniteville) and the granite yard at Burnet remained separate. The granite quarry was mostly staffed with the convict labor arranged by contractor Abner Taylor and the State of Texas, and a yard for cutting stone also existed at the quarry for convicts to do some stonecutting work.⁷⁰ In a seemingly rare exception to this separation, some Scottish stone cutters initially went to the Graniteville quarry instead of Burnet because the Burnet yard did not contain enough stone to keep everyone busy.⁷¹

As the Scottish workers adjusted to the Texas climate, the Knights of Labor and the American Granite Cutters' National Union continued to coordinate their efforts on the Capitol boycott and subsequent legal proceedings against the Capitol Syndicate. In an attempt to enforce the boycott, both organizations employed blacklists of men who worked in the Burnet granite yard. The Granite Cutters' National Union included a blacklist of those men who came with George Berry in their coverage of the Scots' arrival in May 1886, and by August 1886, the Knights of Labor collected and circulated a list the Scottish granite cutters imported specifically for the Texas Capitol job.⁷² As the Capitol neared completion, another blacklist appeared in the *Granite-Cutters' Journal* in June 1887 to remind others not to hire these men. This later list included the Scots specifically recruited from Aberdeen (as appeared in the Knights of Labor circular) as well as a list of all other workers who worked on the Capitol once the boycott began.⁷³

In addition to coordinating blacklists, the American Granite

Cutters' Union and the Knights of Labor cooperated to bring charges against Gus Wilke and the Capitol Syndicate for violation of the Alien Contract Labor Law. As soon as the Scottish workers arrived in New York, the American Granite Cutters' Union collected evidence from the men who chose not to continue on to Texas, including affidavits, Wilke's letter of introduction for George Berry in Aberdeen, proposed price lists and room and board charges once in Burnet, and steamer tickets through to Galveston. The Granite Cutters' Union then forwarded this information to the Texas Knights of Labor to pursue prosecution. As the *Granite-Cutters' Journal* explained, "The documents [those just listed] having been sent to D.A. [District Assembly] 78, of Texas, our Brothers of the K. of L., who are in this fight with us, will undoubtedly push the matter there, General Secretary Frederick Turner having promised to send word to the Chairman of the Executive Board of D.A. 78, to push the matter."⁷⁴

The Texas Knights of Labor apparently did "push the matter" forward as charges were filed against Gus Wilke and all four members of the Capitol Syndicate (John Farwell, Charles Farwell, Abner Taylor, and Amos Babcock) in July 1886 in the United States Federal District Court in Austin, Texas. Although each of the sixty-four cases (one for each Scottish immigrant hired abroad and brought to Texas) was a separate entity, they were combined in such a way for the trial that a guilty verdict for one would equate to a guilty verdict for all. Yet, rather than prosecute the cases immediately, the trial was postponed for a year to August 1887, and the trial was postponed again in August 1887 to August 1889.⁷⁵

Again, the Knights of Labor chose to help the American Granite-Cutters' Union pursue legal action for the Texas Capitol job. As soon as the case was postponed the first time, the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor voted to provide \$5,000 to help prosecute the Capitol Syndicate for violation of the Alien Contract Labor Law. Following the second postponement, lawyers hired by the Knights of Labor collected testimonies of the Scottish granite cutters still at Burnet once it became obvious work would be

completed and they would seek other employment before the cases actually came to trial.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, before the cases actually came to trial, Gus Wilke actively tried to prevent the Scottish granite cutters from providing evidence against him. The *Granite-Cutters' Journal* of September 1886 reported, "We are also informed that Gus Wilkie has been around among the saloon keepers and others of Austin asking them not to contribute anything towards the fund for prosecuting him and the Syndicate. Also, they refuse to settle with any of the imported Scotchmen who want to leave Burnet unless they sign a paper that they were not brought over under contract by Berry the scab hunter."⁷⁷ One granite cutter, Peter Smith, even testified that Wilke went to several of the Scottish granite cutters in a local saloon and offered to get them into the Stone Cutters Union without paying the entrance fee in exchange for their favorable testimony.⁷⁸

The attention on the Capitol project for a labor law violation was unique for Texas during the Gilded Age. The use of Scottish stonecutters on the Texas Capitol, with Wilke's violation of federal law, became a national political issue and highlighted the widespread use of foreign contract labor and Alien Contract Labor Law violations. The House of Representatives eventually formed a Select Committee to investigate violations of the law which met in New York City in July 1888. Testimony covered a wide range of industries and nationalities involved in violations, and the Texas Capitol project received specific attention. Josiah Dyer, Secretary of the American Granite Cutters' National Union, testified on the illegal importation of Scottish granite cutters for the Texas Capitol job and presented evidence collected by the Granite Cutters' National Union in New York and other Northeastern states. The committee also interviewed two of the recruited Scots: David Dawson (spelled Dorson in the recorded testimony) who worked at Burnet for several months, and James Anderson who chose to stay in the Northeast for work rather than continue to Texas.⁷⁹

In spite of legal proceedings and labor-relations issues, work on the Capitol continued. By July 1887, the exterior and interior walls were essentially finished, and work focused on completing the dome and remaining interior details. This work continued throughout the year, and by May 1888, the Capitol was deemed ready, and the building was dedicated May 18, 1888. A leaking roof meant the contractors had additional work to get the Capitol in acceptable condition, and it was not until December 8, 1888 that the Capitol Board fully accepted the building and the contractors were released.⁸⁰

During construction and even after completion, the Texas Capitol project impacted those associated with construction. The destinations of most of the Scots after construction of the Capitol are unknown, but a few left a record of their plans or actions after work in Texas through court testimony. Of those with documented plans, most migrated to the granite production regions of the Northeast or Midwest or returned to Scotland. Notable exceptions include Thomas Kesson who planned to go to Georgia, Robert Robertson who planned to go to Australia, and George Kelman who planned to stay in Texas as long as he found work. Two (the two who testified before a House Special Committee) found work in the Northeast and planned to become United States citizens. Three Scottish stonecutters died while in Burnet, and their fellow Scots erected a granite monument in the Burnet Cemetery (Figures 5 and 6).⁸¹

For the Capitol Syndicate, construction of the Texas Capitol translated into ownership of the XIT ranch, a project with perhaps the longest-lasting impact for Syndicate members.⁸² The trial for violation of the Alien Contract Labor Law had minimal long-term effects since the trial ended favorably for the Chicago men. By 1889, all charges against Syndicate members were dropped, and only Gus Wilke remained on trial for violation of the Alien Contract Labor Law. In August 1889, Wilke plead guilty to the charges and was sentenced to pay \$64,000 plus court costs. Eventually, through intervention by a North Dakota senator and

President Harrison, Wilke only paid \$8,000 plus court costs.⁸³ The Farwell Brothers and Gus Wilke conducted another, smaller project around the Brazos River and the Velasco, Texas area under the company name Brazos River Channel and Dock Company. Although this project suffered some legal challenges as well, the project proved to be of a much smaller scale and notoriety than the Texas Capitol.⁸⁴

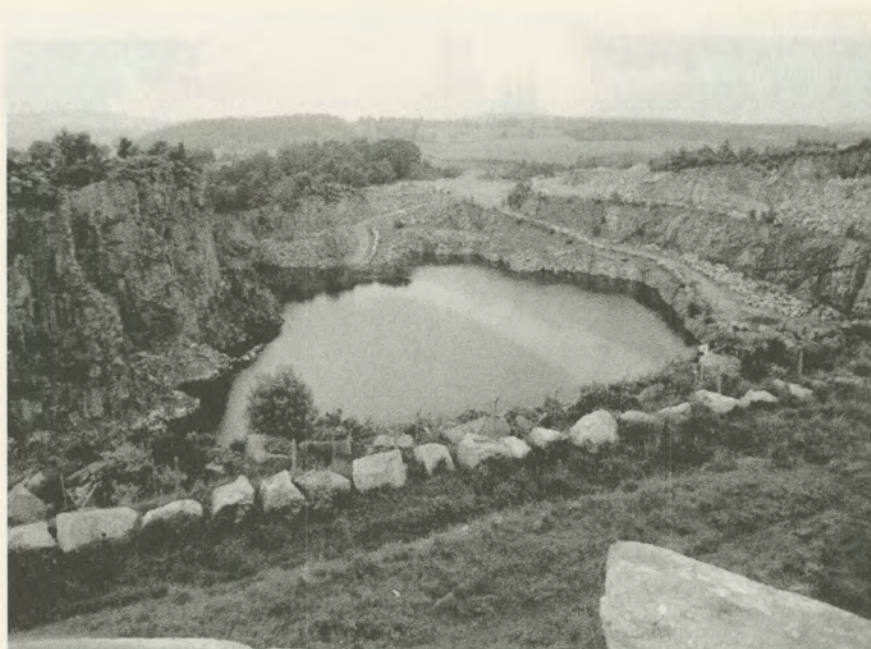
Most of the connections between Aberdeen, Scotland, Gilded Age labor, and Texas due to reconstruction of the Texas Capitol proved temporary. The ranching connections between Scotland and Texas strengthened as the Capitol Syndicate organized their 3,000,000 acres of Texas land into the Capitol Freehold Land and Investment Company, Limited, in London.⁸⁵ The granite industry connection between Scotland and Texas, however, failed to continue once the men recruited by Berry moved on from Texas. For Texas during the Gilded Age, the state's general lack of manufacturing and strongly integrated industries (outside a few exceptions in Galveston or along the railroad lines) meant labor organization and unrest within the state continued to be relatively minimal and localized (rather than tied to national organizations), especially when compared to the industrial centers of the Northeast and Midwest. The attention given to Texas by the federal government over violation of the Alien Contract Labor Law, then, also was an anomaly rather than the beginning of a trend for the era. Politically, the end of the case against Wilke and the Capitol Syndicate meant Texas faded from the national spotlight on the issues of immigration and foreign contract labor. It would not be until the early twentieth century – specifically through the growth of the oil industry – that Texas would become and remain a feature in American economics and politics on a national level.

Construction of the Capitol connected Texas to Scotland and the American Gilded Age in ways previously unseen within the state. The United States and Scotland maintained a variety of connections by the late nineteenth century, especially with

immigration and capital investment. Scotland's economic position during this era proved extremely influential in the growth of United States business ventures, and for Texas this translated into a strong relationship between Scottish financing for Texas ranches. Building the Texas Capitol deepened this relationship between Scotland and Texas (if only temporarily) as the established migration pattern of skilled granite workers between Aberdeen, Scotland, and other regions of the United States entered Texas. The use of a Chicago subcontractor likely forged the (short-lived) granite industry relationship between Aberdeen, Scotland, and Texas. Even Chicago's architectural trends of the time period may have influenced how the Syndicate approached the Capitol construction project. Meanwhile, the Capitol Syndicate members entered Texas as wealthy, politically connected individuals during an era of extreme labor unrest. Therefore, connections formed in the Midwest entered Texas through Capitol construction and eventually impacted the national labor movement. Following construction and dedication of the Capitol, some relationships remained and strengthened while others faded. The ties between British investment and Texas ranching grew as a British syndicate controlled the XIT Ranch. The granite industry relationship failed to continue as Texas did not become a regular destination for skilled migrant granite cutters from Aberdeen, Scotland. The economic and political connections between the Midwest and Texas also faded, although they did not completely disappear. It would be several years before Texas again connected to business and labor issues on a national scale – this time permanently – with the discovery of Spindletop and the growth of the oil industry.

Figure 1

The Rubislaw Quarry in 2010. Photograph from the author's personal collection. This quarry operated from 1741 through 1969 and provided most of the gray granite used in the construction in newer sections of Aberdeen. See Graeme Robertson, "A Short History of the Aberdeen Granite Industry," a lecture presented to the Aberdeen and North-East Scotland Family History Society, May 19, 2007, Aberdeen, Scotland.

Figure 2

The Kemnay Quarry in 2010. Photograph from the author's personal collection. The quarry is currently active, largely for aggregate. The most recent use of the quarry's granite for dimension stone was for the Scottish Parliament building in Edinburgh. Jenny Brown, personal e-mail communication with the author, August 22, 2011.

Figure 3

View of High Street in Old Aberdeen from the campus of the University of Aberdeen, King's College. Photograph from the author's personal collection.

Figure 4

View down Rosemont Viaduct in Aberdeen. Photograph from the author's personal collection.

Figure 5

View of the monument to Scottish stonecutters who died at Burnet, located in the Old Burnet Cemetery, Burnet, Texas. Photograph from the author's personal collection.

Figure 6



View of the inscription for the Scottish stonecutters' monument. Photograph from the author's personal collection. Inscription reads as follows:

ERECTED
by their fellow workmen
in memory of
GEORGE MUTER

who died 13th of June 1886
Aged 23 Years

Also

JOHN SMITH
who was drowned 27th of June 1886
Aged 27 Years

Also

GEORGE MOIR
who died 15th of October 1886
Aged 22 Years

Cut of Burnet
Granite

(Endnotes)

1. Willard B. Robinson, "Pride of Texas: The State Capitol," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 92, no. 2 (October 1988): 228-32.
2. Frederick W. Rathjen, "The Texas State House: A Study of the Building of the Texas Capitol Based on the Reports of the Capitol Building Commissioners," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (April 1957): 437-38.
3. Michael McCullar, "Building born amid difficulties," *Austin-American Statesman*, H8-H9, May 1, 1988.
4. Leland M. Roth, *American Architecture: A History* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2001), 211.
5. Robinson, "Pride of Texas," 227-31.
6. David P. Handlin, *American Architecture* (New York: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1985), 121-22.
7. Sean Dennis Cashman, *America in the Gilded Age: From the Death of Lincoln to the Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, 3rd ed. (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 234-39.
8. Rathjen, "Texas State House," 433-41.
9. William Elton Green, "'A Question of Great Delicacy': The Texas Capitol Competition, 1881," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 92, no. 2 (October 1988): 259.
10. Green, "Question of Great Delicacy," 254-68. Green details other architects' plans and the debate surrounding the decision. For additional information on E. E. Myers personally and his other projects, see Paul Goeldner, "The Designing Architect: Elijah E. Myers," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 92, no. 2 (October 1988): 271-88.
11. Rathjen, "Texas State House," 436-38.
12. W.G. Kerr, "Scotland and the Texas Mortgage Business," *Economic History Review* 16, no. 1 (1963) 95, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2592518>.

13. May 15, 1885 minutes of the Capitol Building Commission / Folder 3 / Box 2-10/440 / Capitol Building Commission Records / Texas State Library and Archives. Hereafter, Capitol Building Commission Records will be abbreviated CBCR, and Texas State Library and Archives will be abbreviated TSLA.
14. Rathjen, "Texas State House," 438. On December 11, 1888, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported S. B. Burke – brother to A. A. Burke (note the different spelling from Rathjen's article; also a different spelling for Snell from Rathjen's Schnell) - sued Abner Taylor in the District Court of Travis County for what he viewed as the lost profits for his brother not receiving the Capitol contract (the firm S.B. Burke now controlled). The outcome of the case is unknown by the author. This was not Taylor's first venture into construction contracts. As early as 1869, Abner Taylor formed a corporation – Snell, Aiken & Co. – with James Aiken, Thomas Snell, and James Snell to carry out construction work for the railroads. This partnership ended badly, and Aiken sued the other company partners for money owed the firm by the other men. See *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 6, 1875, page 7, "The Courts."
15. Letter from Gov. Cullom to Gov. Roberts / Folder 10 / Box 2-10/437 / CBCR / TSLA.
16. Ruth Alice Allen, "The Capitol Boycott: A Study in Peaceful Labor Tactics," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 42, no. 4 (April 1939): 316. These personal connections to the federal government eventually proved decisive when President Harrison reduced Gus Wilke's court fees for violating the Alien Contract Labor Law from \$64,000 plus court costs to \$8,000 plus court costs. See Allen, "Capitol Boycott," 323, 339.
17. Rathjen, "Texas State House," 438.
18. Marjory Harper, "Emigrant Strikebreakers: Scottish Granite Cutters and the Texas Capitol Boycott," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 95, no. 4 (April 1992): 470-71.
19. Rathjen, "Texas State House," 443-48.
20. Harper, "Emigrant Strikebreakers" 471.
21. Allen, "Capitol Boycott," 317.
22. Rathjen, "Texas State House," 448.

23. Joseph M. Siry, *The Chicago Auditorium Building: Adler and Sullivan's Architecture and the City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 117; 153. Specific dates for the Auditorium Building also from Handlin, *American Architecture*, 129. The Capitol boycott was hardly the only incident of labor unrest in the granite industry. The Auditorium Building struggled to get necessary granite from 1887-88 due to labor disputes in the quarries. See Siry, *Auditorium Building*, 171-72. Later, in 1892, the Newberry Library also faced difficulties getting the granite necessary for the structure. In this case, it is unclear if labor relations or granite yard mismanagement were the cause. Various letters / Folder 2, "Architect Correspondence 1888-1892," / Box 1 / Cobb Building Construction Records / Newberry Library.
24. "Mosaics," *Inland Architect* 9, no. 8 (June 1887), 84.
25. Harper, "Emigrant Strikebreakers," 472. For more information on the railroad connection between the granite quarry and Austin, see Joubert Lee Greer, "The Building of the State Capitol: 1882-1888," (master's thesis, University of Texas, 1932), 128-44. Greer devotes an entire chapter to the development and construction of a railroad connection between the granite quarry, Burnet, and Austin.
26. Letter printed in the December 1886 issue of the *Granite Cutters' Journal*. Copied from a letter from Lawrence Foley, International President of the Granite Cutters' International Association of America, to Ben L. Owens, Research Assistant [to Ruth Alice Allen], dated August 29, 1938. Located in Folder 1 / Box 2E309 / Labor Movement in Texas Collection / Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin. From here forward, Labor Movement in Texas Collection will be abbreviated LMTC, and Dolph Briscoe Center for American History will be abbreviated DBCAH. The stonecutter sent to investigate the Burnet quarry wrote, "The Burnet Quarry is without a doubt the finest in the United States. ... The prospects are good for Burnet Quarry to do a good business after Wilkie [letter's spelling] gets out."
27. Donald R. Walker, *Penology for Profit: A History of the Texas Prison System 1867-1912* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1988), 79-82. Note that prior to this system, Texas experimented with allowing contractors to run the prison system entirely, but it was decided the state missed out on revenue with the leasing arrangement with a

South Texas company from 1878-1883. For more on this earlier lease arrangement, see Walker, *Penology for Profit*, 46-77.

28. Walker, *Penology for Profit*, 91.
29. Walker, *Penology for Profit*, 191. Eventually, the leasing system lost favor in Texas and other states as Progressive Era investigations into living conditions for prisoners involved in the lease system encouraged reforms.
30. Letter printed in the September 1885 issue of the *Granite-Cutters' Journal*. As seen in a letter from Lawrence Foley to Ben Owens / Folder 1 / Box 2E309 / LMTC / DBCAH.
31. "The Austin State Capitol," printed in the September 1885 issue of the *Granite-Cutters' Journal*. As quoted in a letter from Lawrence Foley to Ben L. Owens / Folder 1 / Box 2E309 / LMTC / DBCAH. Given the national nature of this labor dispute and the public focus that followed, Texas prison officials began to question the long-term use of the lease system. According to Donald R. Walker, "The enthusiasm the granite cutters demonstrated in their opposition to the use of prison labor and the national notoriety focused on the Texas case generated a lengthy discourse by state prison officials on the rationale for working prisoners and the proper disposition to be made of convict labor." Walker, *Penology for Profit*, 90.
32. Allen, "Capitol Boycott," 319.
33. Resolutions passed by the Capitol Assembly Knights of Labor 2182 dated December 3, 1885. In a letter from Lawrence Foley to Ben L. Owens / Folder 1 / Box 2E309 / LMTC / DBCAH.
34. Roger David Simon, "The Birds of Passage in America, 1865-1914," Master's thesis, (University of Wisconsin, 1966), <http://minds.wisconsin.edu/handle/1793/31078>, 1-45. Although Simon focuses his research on the migration of British skilled labor, this pattern was true for other groups. For information on the migration of Italian skilled stonemasons, for example, see the following: Patrizia Audenino, "The Paths of the Trade: Italian Stonemasons in the United States," *International Migration Review* 20, no. 4 (Winter 1986): 779-95, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2545736>. Note that unlike the British workers, however, these Italian workers typically left home for a period of at least a year or several years for the United States. There was also a seasonal

migration from this particular community in Italy to other regions in Europe.

35. Simon, "Birds of Passage," 24-45 and 62-74.
36. Simon, "Birds of Passage," 24-45. The use of strikebreakers in the Gilded Age was not limited to the use of skilled migrant laborers. As Joshua L. Rosenbloom describes, strikebreakers were widely used in the late nineteenth century in a variety of industries which required both skilled and unskilled labor. For examples of recruitment of strikebreakers from within the United States, specifically see page 201 of the following resource. Joshua L. Rosenbloom, "Strikebreaking and the Labor Market in the United States, 1881-1894," *Journal of Economic History* 58, no. 1 (March 1998): 183-205, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2566258>. For additional examples of American businesses hiring foreign laborers as strikebreakers, see Rebecca Edwards, *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age, 1865 - 1905* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 214.
37. Note that this particular act is also referred to as the Alien Contract Labor Law by historians such as Ruth Alice Allen and Marjory Harper. Both terms may appear throughout this article.
38. Catherine Collomp, "Immigrants, Labor Markets, and the State, a Comparative Approach: France and the United States, 1880-1930," *Journal of American History* 86, no. 1 (June 1999): 54-59, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2567406>.
39. Robert S. Shelton, "Built by the Irishman, the Negro and the Mule: Labor Militancy Across the Color Line in Post-Reconstruction Texas," *East Texas Historical Journal* 46, no. 2 (Fall 2008): 15-26.
40. Clifford Farrington, *Biracial Unions on Galveston's Waterfront, 1865-1925* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2007), 2.
41. Randolph B. Campbell, *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 310.
42. John S. Spratt, *The Road to Spindletop: Economic Changes in Texas, 1875-1901* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1955), 233. For additional information on labor organizations in Texas during the Gilded Age, see Ruth Allen, *Chapters in the History of Organized labor in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Publication, 1941).

43. Spratt, *Road to Spindletop*, 242-44.
44. Harper, "Emigrant Strikebreakers," 466-467; 473.
45. *Aberdeen Evening Express*, April 2, 1886, page 3.
46. Harper, "Emigrant Strikebreakers," 474-75. Note that eighty-six is considerably less than the 150 he apparently wanted to recruit. See advertisement in *Aberdeen Evening Express*, April 12, 1886, page 1 for a "meeting of the 150 GRANITE CUTTERS who are about to Depart for Austin, Texas...". Another recruitment attempt occurred through an agent based in Aberdeen in June 1886, and 15 of 30 requested granite cutters arrived in Austin. It does not appear anyone responded to the October recruitment effort. See Harper, "Emigrant Strikebreakers," 480 for information on these additional requests for Aberdeen labor.
47. "The Granite Industry of Scotland: The Aberdeen Tradition," *The Quarry Managers' Journal* 45, no. 11 (November 1961): 433-37.
48. Tom Donnelly, *The Aberdeen Granite Industry* (Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen, 1994), 51. See Table 3.1.
49. Donnelly, *Aberdeen Granite Industry*, 1-8. Donnelly provides in-depth information on the technological advancements of quarrying and stone cutting here which will not be discussed in detail. For more information on this aspect of granite work, see Donnelly's full analysis.
50. John Smith, "The Growth of the City," in *Aberdeen 1800-2000: A New History*, ed. W. Hamish Fraser and Clive H. Lee, 22-46 (East Lothian, Scotland: Tuckwell Press, 2000), 22-26.
51. Donnelly, *Aberdeen Granite Industry*, 35.
52. Donnelly, *Aberdeen Granite Industry*, 40.
53. Marjory Harper, "Transient Tradesmen: Aberdeen Emigrants and the Development of the American Granite Industry," *Northern Scotland* 9 (1989): 53-54.
54. Harper, "Transient Tradesmen," 57-58.
55. Harper, "Transient Tradesmen," 57.
56. Ferenc Morton Szasz, *Scots in the North American West, 1790-1917* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 86.

57. Donnelly, *Aberdeen Granite Industry*, 129-30. Donnelly explains this situation of high labor mobility and enticement through higher wages occurred within Aberdeen as well as between Aberdeen and international markets.
58. Donnelly, *Aberdeen Granite Industry*, 130. For specific examples on the wage and cost of living differences between Scotland and the United States, see Select Committee of the House of Representatives, *To Inquire into the Alleged Violation of the Laws Prohibiting the Importation of Contract Laborers, Paupers, Convicts, and Other Classes*, 50th Cong., 1st sess., 1888, House Misc. Doc. No. 572, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1888, 148-51. Accessed from a printed copy through GoogleBooks at http://books.google.com/books?id=ek8TAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gb_s_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.
59. "Aberdeen – Emigration of Granite Cutters to the United States," *Aberdeen Journal*, April 13, 1886, page 4. Note that the same story ran under the title "Emigration of Granite Cutters to the United States," in *Aberdeen Evening Express*, April 13, 1886, page 2.
60. See *Aberdeen Journal*, April 5, 1886, page 2; and *Daily Free Press* (Aberdeen), May 8, 1886.
61. "Aberdeen – Emigration of Granite Cutters to the United States," *Aberdeen Journal*, April 13, 1886, page 4.
62. Harper, "Emigrant Strikebreakers," 465-66.
63. Szasz, *Scots*, 78-102. This is an extremely brief overview of the investment connection between Scotland, Texas, and other parts of North America. This connection will not be covered in detail since it does not appear to have directly impacted the decision to use granite cutters from Aberdeen for Texas Capitol construction. For more information on this ranching / investment connection, please see the following resources: W.G. Kerr, *Scottish Capital on the American Credit Frontier* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1976); and William Martin Pearce, *The Matador Land and Cattle Company* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964).
64. Vivian Elizabeth Smyrl, "Wilke, Gustav," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fwiam>), accessed June 27, 2011. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

65. "Gus Wilkie, The Law Breaker," *Granite-Cutters' Journal* 10, no. 110, page 3. Note that Wilkie employed stonecutters on the project both before and after the arrival of Aberdeen-recruited stonecutters. The exact nationalities and backgrounds of these other strikebreakers is unknown. For these names, see the Capitol payroll records (Box 2-10/444 and Box 2-10/445 / CBCR / TSLA) or the *Granite-Cutters' Journal* blacklist of all the Texas Capitol strikebreakers (*Granite-Cutters' Journal* 11, no. 123 (June 1887): 4.) Payroll vouchers provide the best source of information on the stonecutters at Burnet. They indicate stonecutters often received a premium for their work – essentially a bonus paid and recorded separately, and from May 1886 through September 1886, Scottish stonecutters were labeled separately from other stonecutters in the yard as "Scotchmen." Note, however, that these payroll records are at times incomplete (such as November 1886 and February 1887) or completely missing (such as December 1886 and January 1887).
66. "Aberdeen – Emigration of Granite Cutters to the United States," *Aberdeen Journal*, April 13, 1886, page 4.
67. Payroll vouchers / Folder 1 / Box 2-10/446 / CBCR / TSLA. Folders 1-8 / Box 2-10/447 / CBCR / TSLA.
68. Harper, "Emigrant Strikebreakers," 475, 479.
69. "The Scotch Granite Cutters: How They are Faring at Burnet – Things Not as Lovely as Might Be," *Galveston Daily News*, May 13, 1886. Reprinted in the *Granite Cutters' Journal*, Volume 10, No. 111, June 1886, page 3. For more information on average wages and boarding charges for granite cutters and blacksmiths, see Harper, "Emigrant Strikebreakers," 478-79. Granite deliveries to the Capitol grounds seem to indicate the Scottish granite cutters did eventually have an impact, however. Pages 17-154 (various) / Folder 4 / Box 2-10/451 / CBCR / TSLA. For example, Page 48 lists between 16 and 27 carloads of granite for the months of March and April 1886. Page 58 records 89 carloads by May 8, 1886, and Page 74 lists 106 carloads dressed and 3 carloads of rough granite by June 10, 1886. Carloads of dressed granite continue to be over 100 for the remainder of 1886.
70. Burnet Quarry payroll voucher / Folder 1 / Box 2-10/444 / CBCR / TSLA. This is only one example of the Burnet Quarry payroll indicating this separation. Similar entries occur throughout 1886 and 1887.

71. May 1886 report in the *Granite-Cutters' Journal* / In a letter from Lawrence Foley to Ben L. Owens / Folder 1 / Box 2E309 / LMTC / DBCAH.
72. "Gus Wilkie, the Law Breaker," *Granite-Cutters' Journal* 10, no. 110 (May 1886): 3. J. Geggie, Chairman of the Capitol Assembly No. 2, 182, Knights of Labor, "A Circular issued by the Austin Assembly of the Knights of Labor, August 10, 1886." Printed in Ruth Allen, *Chapters in the History of Organized Labor in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas, 1941), 83-84. Note that the *Austin Daily Statesman* re-printed this circular on August 11, 1886.
73. "Texas Scabs," *Granite-Cutters Journal* 11, no. 123 (June 1887): 4-5. Note that these blacklists were not always accurate. They don't appear to change to reflect the additional recruits Wilke received from Scotland in June 1886 (since two of the men who died at Burnet in June and July do not appear on any of the lists), and they also do not reflect the death of George Moir who died in October 1886 but appears in the *Granite Cutters' Journal* blacklist in June 1887.
74. "Gus Wilkie, the Law Breaker," *Granite-Cutters' Journal* 10, no. 110 (May 1886): 3.
75. Allen, "Capitol Boycott," 321-22. The case numbers were 2020 and then 2026-2088. Each incident would mean a fine of \$1,000 plus court costs under the Alien Contract Labor Law. The case was postponed the second time for two years largely because Congress failed to appropriate money for the court to move forward. In a letter dated April 25, 1887 from Austin, Texas, from W.H. Johnson to J.B. Dyer (General Secretary of the American Granite-Cutters' National Union), Johnson reports, "As it is, the attorneys for the syndicate here remarked that they expect the case will never come to trial. What they base their conclusion on, I cannot make out whether it is the court will not transact any business for some time, or that they may still postpone on some account, or that because one of the syndicate, Mr. Farwell, is Senator from Illinois, and so may have the means of defeating justice, is more than I can say." In letter from Lawrence Foley to Ben L. Owens / Folder 1 / Box 2E309 / LMTC / DBCAH.
76. Allen, "Capitol Boycott," 322-323. For the exact phrasing of the Knights of Labor resolution to provide funding for prosecution, see Allen, *Chapters*, 83.

77. September 1886 report in letter from Lawrence Foley to Ben L. Owens / Folder 1 / Box 2E309 / LMTC / DBCAH. For the exact phrasing of the statement the Scottish men were asked to sign, see Allen, *Chapters*, 57-58. Also, note that the reasons the men signed the paper varied. Andrew Durner testified, "I signed the paper but was sick at the time, and didn't believe in it. When I was doing it all the rest had signed it up to that time and I didn't think it was much harm in me putting down my name on it." As quoted in Allen, *Chapters*, 80. (It is interesting to note this same Sept. 1886 *Granite-Cutters' Journal* reports, "We are informed that Jay Gould is backing the Capitol Syndicate of Austin, Texas, in the case for importation of contract labor, and his lawyer is defending them." Also from a September 1886 report in a letter from Lawrence Foley to Ben L. Owens / Folder 1 / Box 2E309 / LMTC / DBCAH.)
78. Notes for Case no. 2086, Peter Smith / Folder 2 / Box 2E309 / LMTC / DBCAH.
79. Select Committee of the House of Representatives, *To Inquire into the Alleged Violation of the Laws Prohibiting the Importation of Contract Laborers, Paupers, Convicts, and Other Classes*, 138-51. Note that Dyer himself was originally from England. It is also interesting (whether coincidence or not) that the Committee met in July 1888, after the official dedication of the Texas Capitol.
80. Rathjen, "Texas State House," 454-62. Rathjen goes into great detail about the changing plans for the Capitol dome to make the structure sound as well as the debates and difficulties in getting the Capitol building truly completed and accepted.
81. Original court documents could not be located. Therefore, for court testimony regarding the Scots' plans after construction, see the following resources: Miscellaneous notes on court testimony / Folders 1 and 2 / Box 2E309 / LMTC / DBCAH. Partial testimonies for several Scottish workers are published in Allen, *Chapters*, 62-81. For additional information on John Smith's death, see the *Aberdeen Evening Express*, July 13, 1886, page 2. For House Committee testimony, see Select Committee of the House of Representatives, *To Inquire into the Alleged Violation of the Laws Prohibiting the Importation of Contract Laborers, Paupers, Convicts, and Other Classes*, 50th Cong., 1st sess., 1888, House Misc. Doc. No. 572, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1888, 146-151. Accessed from a printed copy through GoogleBooks

at http://books.google.com/books?id=ek8TAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false. The monument is located in the Old Burnet Cemetery in Burnet, Texas.

82. J. Evetts Haley, *The XIT Ranch of Texas and the Early Days of the Llano Estacado*, new edition, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953). Pages 38-68 and 214-26 in particular address ownership and legal aspects of the XIT Ranch. For information focused on the daily operations of the XIT Ranch, see Cordia Sloan Duke and Joe B. Frantz, *6,000 Miles of Fence: Life on the XIT Ranch of Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961). Pages 4-7 examine the Capitol Syndicate and the Capitol Freehold Land and Investment Company, Limited, in particular.
83. Allen, "Capitol Boycott," 323-24. Organized labor viewed this political intervention and circumventing of the law unfavorably, and wrote to President Harrison expressing their protest (partially quoted by Allen). Also, note that this was not the only instance where the Alien Contract Labor Law was not fully enforced, as judgments in guilty verdicts were often reduced. See *El Paso Times* article from March 13, 1890 printed in Allen, *Chapters*, 86-87.
84. "Claim the Pledges were Broken," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 27, 1892, page 3.
85. Deed Records for the Capitol Freehold Land and Investment Company / General Register House / National Archives Scotland in Edinburgh, Scotland. Access number GB234:GD2/409. Although based on London, company shareholders also came from Scotland as one of the individuals involved in the transfer of land from the Syndicate to the Investment Company was from Aberdeen.