

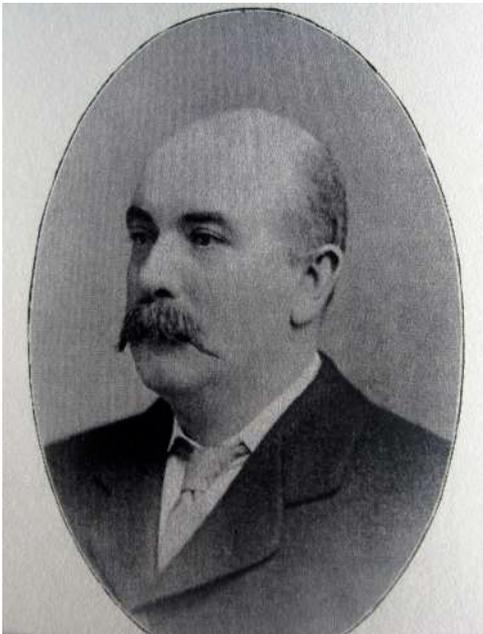
Hall, Hooper, Hoover and the Sons of Gwalia

By ALWYN EVANS

Despite considerable research on the gold communities of Victoria, academic studies of the Welsh elsewhere in Australia are sparse; the Welsh in Western Australia are particularly unchronicled. Even Welsh-born mine owner, labour leader and politician Alfred Morgans, for a brief period premier of Western Australia, has been neglected.¹ Lewis Lloyd comments perceptively on the anonymity of the Welsh in Australia and David Lucas suggests that numbers were obscured by lack of differentiation between English and Welsh nationalities in censuses.² Numbers of Welsh people in Western Australia at the turn of the century were certainly low; Susan Hart suggests there were only 909 Welsh-born individuals on the 1901 census, the majority being in the gold fields and Colliefields.³

Yet one Welshman, George William Hall, was certainly significant in early Western Australian mining history, and has not received appropriate recognition. This is partly because his early success at the Sons of Gwalia gold mine was eclipsed by later failures at Wiluna, and eventual departure from Australia into obscurity. However, he is also overshadowed by US President, Herbert Clark Hoover, whose later accomplishments, have in the popular view largely usurped Hall's achievements.

Figure 1: *George W. Hall c. 1898.*



Source: Souvenir booklet for Sons of Gwalia Company launch, 28 March 1898. Author's Archive.

This article explores the political importance of Hoover, the first volume of Nash's biography, Hoover's own autobiography, observations and press releases, that led to his role in the Sons of Gwalia mine being significantly inflated, with equivalent diminution in Hall's contribution. Much has been written retrospectively about Hoover and Australian mining; in contrast there is virtually nothing about Hall since his death in 1915. For those who wish to read further, his full history can be read in a biography, *From Wales to Gwalia*.¹

In this article it will be argued that a side-by-side analysis of their respective involvements shows the importance of his contribution to the to the development of gold mining in Western Australia and to the historiography of Welsh involvement in Australian mining. Whilst acknowledging

Hoover's capabilities as a precociously-able mining strategist, and his later major role in Western Australian mining, this paper redresses the balance in credit towards Hall for the development of the Sons of Gwalia mine.

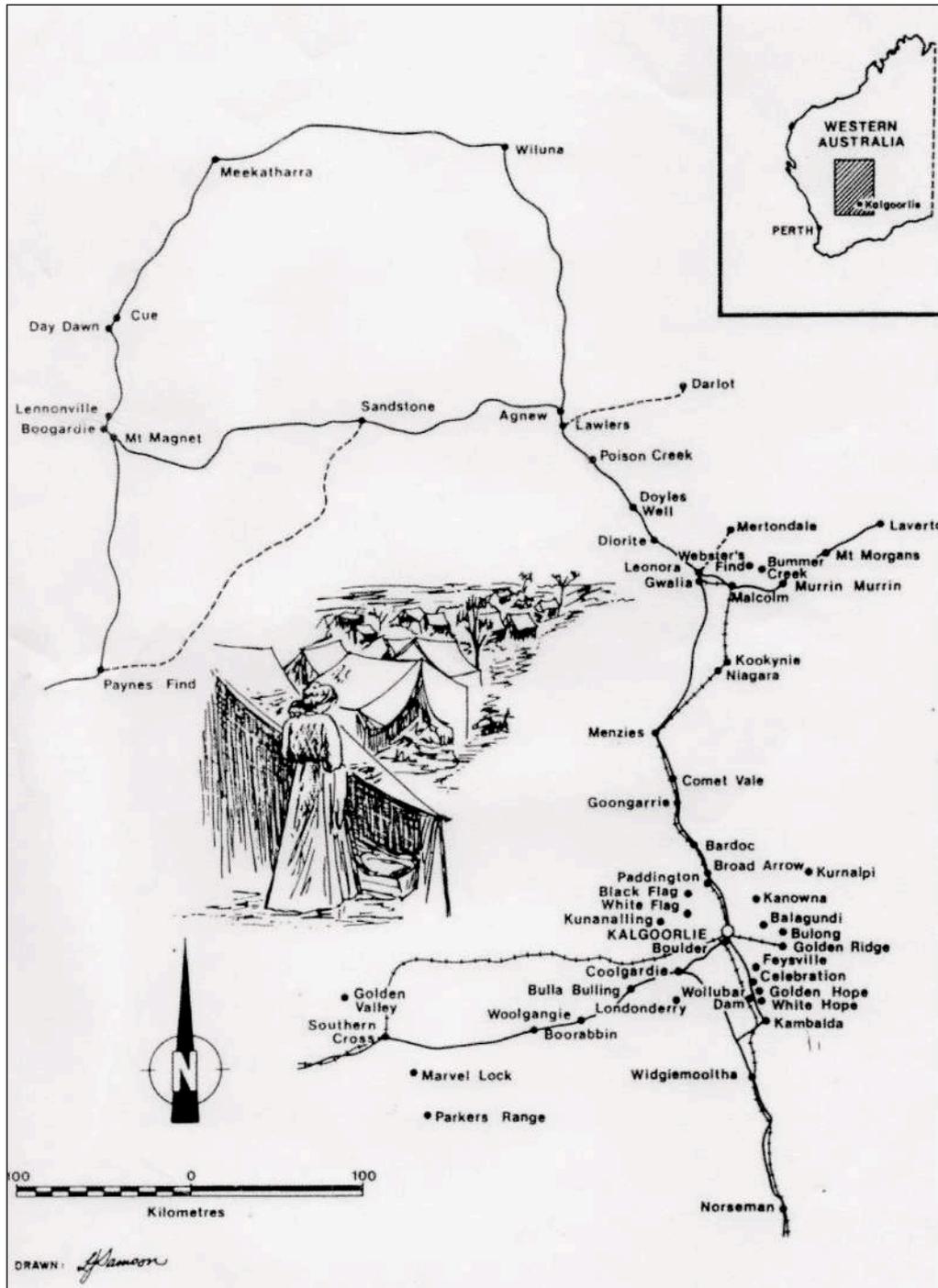
George William Hall pursued an unusual route into gold mining. Brought up in Aberdare, South Wales, after gaining early experience in nearby coalmines he moved to Swansea, where he worked as a journalist. Starting as a popular columnist on the *Swansea Herald*, he rose over the 1880-90 decade to be editor in credit of a Radical Liberal newspaper, the *Cambria Daily Leader*, Wales' oldest daily. Over the same period, he developed a formidable reputation as a lecturer in geology; a fervent autodidact, Hall improving himself by reading widely, particularly on geological matters. During William Pritchard Morgan's Merthyr by-election campaign in 1888, he and his newspaper supported the maverick candidate, and they became bosom friends. Morgan, elected as Liberal MP at this by-election, had achieved notoriety and a reputed fortune as a lawyer, newspaper editor and gold mine speculator in Queensland. Though attractive socially, he was a wily and self-promoting controversialist. After returning to Wales in 1883, he teamed up with veteran gold mine developer T.A. Readwin at Gwynfynydd mine in North Wales, and immediately after squeezing out Readwin for an unpaid debt, he made a rich strike in 1888. He recruited Hall as company manager, who thus gained further mining experience as a geologist and company secretary for the Gwynfynydd owners, British Gold Fields. Morgan was ousted from the Gwynfynydd board of directors in 1894, and Hall left with him.

Morgan then set up the London and Westralian Mines and Finance Agency in September 1895 to purchase Australian gold-mining leases. He and Hall sailed for Australia with an experienced team of Welsh gold-mining men from Gwynfynydd, intending to use Hall, with his mining and geology experience as the company's Western Australian consulting engineer. They arrived in Albany in November 1895⁴ but their timing was not of the best. The short-lived boom from 1893 onwards was petering out, and influential Dutch financier and journalist Van Oss warned that investment capital was ending up in promoters' pockets rather than being spent on mines.⁵ Morgan rapidly took up 120 options on gold-mining leases, and set Hall to evaluate their potential. Continuing to move rapidly, he left for South Australia to negotiate land deals, before moving on to his China interests, returning to Parliament in Britain by the Easter of 1896 and leaving Hall to run matters.

Hall's work-rate during the following period was prodigious. It is inconceivable what the changed circumstances meant for this 40-year-old city dweller, since temperatures as he travelled through untracked bush were often over 45°C. During his first seven months in Australia, apart from visiting mines in the Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie fields, he investigated claims in the Norseman goldfield, the Fraser Range and Widgiemooltha, before heading up past Ora Banda, Yerilla and Niagara, out to Mount Margaret and Laverton and up as far as Lawlers - an area almost 1,000 km south to north - through extremely inhospitable and often trackless territory. In a later interview for the *British Australasian*, he stated that he had 'cut the first buggy track through a great deal of this then almost unknown country' around Lawlers, but did not

purchase anything until he could ‘grasp the conditions under which gold occurred and under which the ground could be profitably worked’.⁶

Map 1: Eastern Goldfields Location Map.



Source: Courtesy of Moya Sharp and the Outback Family History website:
<http://www.outbackfamilyhistory.com.au/>

His first purchase, up and running by July 1896, was the North Star, at Malcolm. This he described as a consistent mine that would pay respectable dividends. The same month, while examining poor quality ‘shows’ further north, he heard around a campfire about the Sons of Gwalia in the Leonora area. Attracted by the connection of the name

to his native Wales, he examined it.⁷ The three prospectors, Carlson, White and Glendinning, worked for a Welsh consortium led by Coolgardie shopkeeper Thomas Tobias, who had returned to Wales in 1895 for the National Eisteddfod in Llanelli.⁸ The consortium members there agreed to contribute £200 each to Tobias' venture, but after he expended £500 on equipping the expedition, they reneged on their agreement. The three prospectors continued on a profit-sharing basis, but Tobias wanted his money back and was eager to sell.

Figure 2: *Thomas Tobias (and his brother Ernest), consortium leader financing the prospectors at the Sons of Gwalia claim.*

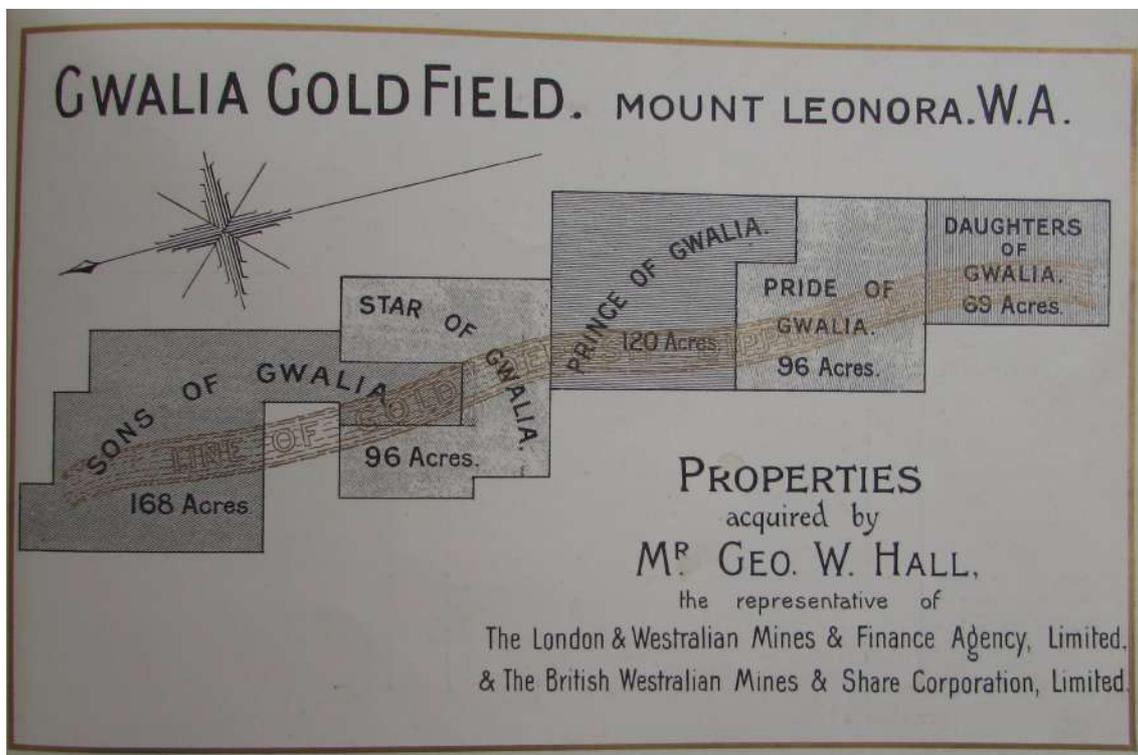


Source: Courtesy of the Gwalia Mining Museum.

Hall visited the claim and sampled the ore, testing it at the North Star. Jack Carlson said years later that they were then down about 18 feet,⁹ but the nearest public crusher was 64 miles away in Menzies, so the claim could not at that stage have been considered a developed 'mine'.¹⁰ Hall was immediately convinced of its potential, and because of the similarities of the rock formation, considered it could be 'another Hannan's'; Hannan's Reward was the outstanding strike at that time in Western Australia.¹¹ This description of the Sons of Gwalia recurred regularly in the contemporary press, as well as Western Australian Department of Mines' reports, creating widespread interest and exposure.

Hall acted swiftly, travelling overnight to Menzies to catch the coach to Coolgardie, where he initially offered Tobias £2,000,¹² the purchase of the claim being completed on 13 August 1896, for £5,000, with a down payment of £2,000.¹³ Hall made it clear in his later speeches that this was his own decision, and his own money was used to make the purchase and buy equipment. Scrutiny of the Sons of Gwalia leases further shows Hall's enterprise. Of the seven 24-acre plots subsequently sold to Bewick, Moreing, only the original claims, blocks 190 and 207, were bought in the names of the London and Westralian Mines and Finance Agency.¹⁴ Hall pegged out in his own name three further adjacent blocks on the southerly line of the lode and two more for his manager, Alexander Wilson Castle. Thus both would become major beneficiaries from any future sale.¹⁵

Figure 3: *Sons of Gwalia leases, together with four other 'Gwalia' leases, initially retained by Hall's company, but eventually sold off to Bewick Moreing. These enabled the expansion of the mine in its peak years.*



Source: Author's copy - souvenir booklet for the Sons of Gwalia Company launch, 28 March 1898.

Castle, a highly-experienced mining man, was employed as manager at the Gwynfynydd mine during the period when Hall was company secretary. Previously, he had worked as an erection engineer for Fraser and Chalmers in Nevada, Colorado and California and accrued other experience in Ecuador, Swaziland and Canada.¹⁶ He had arrived at Albany in June 1895, working for Fraser and Chalmers as manager in Widgiemooltha for another Welsh entrepreneur, Llewellyn Williams.

He and Hall formed the ideal partnership, Castle, the older, experienced mining man and a tough negotiator on contracts, was happy to stay in the background and get on with work. Complementing this, Hall, the very capable geologist, was an outgoing

personality adept at using his journalistic expertise to ‘boom’, or ‘puff’ the mine, and attract finance. By March 1897, Castle was Sons of Gwalia manager, and re-established the second-hand ten-stamp mill and Berdan and Wheeler pans that Hall had purchased.¹⁷ A headframe was erected for the innovative inclined main shaft, and from June 1897 onward the mine was in full production, employing a workforce of 110 men.

This mine became, until the modern gold-mining era, the second richest in Western Australia, and was worked until 1963; it has been re-opened, and is currently in full production. Hall claimed 2 to 5 oz. to the ton from the first crushings, and his ‘Hannan’s’ comparison attracted a flurry of newspaper publicity, influential speculators soon picking up the message.¹⁸ The more attention Hall could obtain, the better the chances of attracting the financial investment that a small and poorly-capitalized company like the London and Westralian needed. Well aware of this, he ensured he was always available for interview, but it helped that reports by reputed surveyors and geologists confirmed Hall’s opinion.¹⁹ Edward Hooper, managing agent in Western Australia for management and investment company Bewick, Moreing and Company Ltd., would have known about the Sons of Gwalia from the publicity orchestrated by Hall and through mine inspection reports, long before he sent the young Herbert Hoover to the mine.

Figure 4: *Sons of Gwalia, c.1900.*



Source: Courtesy of State Library of Western Australia, 019343P

In October 1897, the *Inquirer* (Perth) devoted two full columns to the 6,300 oz. of gold produced hitherto by the Sons of Gwalia and North Star batteries, and gave Hall’s views on the prospects for development of the district, of which he was already being described as ‘the pioneer’.²⁰ His concern for ‘his’ district of Leonora showed in the same month’s *Coolgardie Miner* where he commented optimistically on the prospects of local mines, and praised the district’s potential for crop cultivation. The reporter suggested, ‘When the railway goes through, the Northern District will be much easier of access and consequently more under attention. That the latter will result is in a

great measure due to the foresight, energy and pluck of Mr Hall'.²¹ The official Department of Mines report for 1897 describes the Sons of Gwalia as 'a splendid property, by far the best in this goldfield', and this is echoed in several contemporary newspapers.²² The report showed the mine produced 77 per cent of all the gold in the Mount Malcolm District in 1897, and it was because of its importance that the goldfield was divided, with the Sons of Gwalia as the principal mine of the new Mount Margaret goldfield.

Figure 5: *George W. Hall and Alexander W. Castle in Hall's 4-in-hand 'buggy', or waggon, near the Sons of Gwalia mine in 1897.*



Source: Courtesy of State Library of Western Australia, 28661P.

It is only at this point that Herbert Hoover appears. A not yet 23-year-old graduate of the newly-established Stanford University, he was recommended to Charles Moreing by USA-based Louis Janin for a post in the Coolgardie office, and arrived in Albany on 13 May 1897.²³ It is around Hoover and his role in the Sons of Gwalia in 1897-8 that an 'establishment myth' for the mine developed. The publication of his memoirs in 1951 was the main factor in reinforcing perceptions that still persist, that it was Hoover who was responsible for the 'discovery', purchase and development of this mine. This skewing of perspective in turn masks the importance of Hall and Castle, and adds to the misleading perceptions that Hoover, deliberately or otherwise, fostered regarding the Sons of Gwalia.

However, neither the facts, nor Hoover's memoirs support these perceptions. It is known that a number of Western Australian experts, including F.G. de Visme Gipps,

Ludwig Diehl, J.W. Edols, J.L. Sherlaw and Western Australian Government surveyor, De Vries, had examined the mine immediately following Hall's purchase in 1896, well before Edward Hooper and Hoover became involved. These were respected geologists, surveyors and metallurgical chemists, working either for the Department of Mines, or investigating mines for investing bodies in London, and Edols' detailed report was used in the Sons of Gwalia launch prospectus in January 1898. With the mine attracting considerable interest, it is far more likely that it was one of these who would have made the initial recommendation to Hooper for Bewick, Moreing to investigate further. Alexander Matheson, a Perth financier and mine machinery seller, who was a Bewick, Moreing partner, had also visited Sons of Gwalia before the American had even taken up his post at Coolgardie.

Hoover's early activities in Western Australia were, in his words, 'engrossed with our mine managers in laying out plants, planning development work, ordering American equipment, and examining new prospects'.²⁴ The last part was true; his initial employment was as an 'inspecting engineer', using his geological expertise to evaluate the prospects of new mines, and also writing reports on a several existing mines. Someone so inexperienced is unlikely, whatever his precocious ability, to have been involved in the other activities described. He himself claimed his first employment for Bewick, Moreing was as acting manager for Hannan's Brownhill mine. Nash, however, detailed a number of earlier activities as 'inspecting engineer' for the London and Western Australian Exploration Company, the exploration 'arm' of Bewick, Moreing. Just like Hall, therefore, his main initial activity was travelling into the goldfield areas, examining and identifying claims for his employers to purchase. Like Hall, he also had a tremendous capacity for work, and matched Hall's coverage of extensive tracts of country, inspecting claims and potential purchases. Where he showed his particular capability at that period was in the detail, clarity and accuracy of his reports.

Hoover's activities on his return to Western Australia after 1901 have received considerable critical study. Nash's biography emphasises American engineers' activities in the 'industrialisation' of goldmining, by transforming gold extraction through driving down production costs. He also outlines the problems Hoover faced in establishing systematic American mining methods on return from China to a Western Australia that 'had lost much of its luster' [*sic*]. Nash's detailed biography provides much well-sourced information on the Sons of Gwalia, and corrects many misapprehensions, but in doing so presents an over-positive view of Hoover's earliest days in Australia.²⁵ Jeremy Mouat's 'Just Now the 'Merican expert is the Prominent Man' illustrates how American-trained mining engineers changed production costs and methods in the goldfields.²⁶ Both Richard Hartley and Ronald Limbaugh have written extensively on Bewick, Moreing at the turn of the century, and also examined Hoover's contribution to development of the Sons of Gwalia Mine.²⁷ Jeremy Mouat and Ian Phimister's detailed revisionist study queries his version of events in both Australia and China.²⁸ Blainey in 'Herbert Hoover's Forgotten Years' similarly questions the veracity of Hoover's claims.²⁹ Hoover and Hall's respective roles are revealingly illuminated in Edward McGowan's unpublished thesis and his extensive article in *Australian Mining*, which

argues strongly that Hoover overstated his part in purchasing the mine.³⁰ However, starting with the 1920s period, when he became internationally known as a philanthropist, financier and politician, the story, which persists even to this day, entered widespread circulation that it was he who had ‘discovered’ the Sons of Gwalia.

When examining sources in detail, a different picture emerges. As far back as 1896, Hall had been well aware that a major injection of capital and machinery was needed, though early Sons of Gwalia crushing at North Star provided some capital to finance equipment purchase, and Castle soon brought into action the Sons of Gwalia battery. The first crushing of 780 tons at Gwalia produced 727 ozs.³¹ Hall claimed that the old-fashioned 10-stamp mill crushed more than some mills with 30 and even 40 stamps. The outstanding early yield showed a total of 3,847 tons treated for a return of 5,667 oz. valued at £22,000, yielding £5.15s.11d a ton.³² At the dinner for the launch of the newly-floated Sons of Gwalia Ltd. on 28 March 1898 at the prestigious London ‘Hotel Cécil’, Hall was to describe the reef as ‘the longest shoot of consistent pay ore I have seen in the whole of the Western Australian field’, and said that he paid off his personal commitment of £8,000 for the purchase and equipment within the first month, with 2,010 oz. of gold.³³

Though the gold ore was always described as ‘soft and easily milled’, Hall knew that the old 10-stamp mill needed replacement. Efficient recovery of gold from the tailings required a cyanidisation plant to treat the tailings, particularly as the shaft entered the more complex ore in the lower levels. The *Coolgardie Miner* suggested that it was ‘quite within the range that the Gwalia will see the first 100-stamp mill in the colony’, and Hall was even quoted in Coolgardie newspapers predicting a 200-stamp crusher might be needed.³⁴ To gain more capital, in late 1896 W. Pritchard Morgan, London and Westralian’s major shareholder, had approached the company’s representative, Messrs. Birkbeck, Hoffmann and Jowett, on the London market.³⁵

It was only from mid-1897 that Bewick, Moreing actively engaged with the Sons of Gwalia. The London-based company, consulting engineers for mining companies during the Western Australian boom of 1894-6, was by then acting for 64 companies in Western Australia.³⁶ The company moved increasingly into management of the mines it advised, and also purchased mines to manage, its two representatives with power of attorney in Western Australia until early 1898 being Edward Hooper and Alexander Matheson. When Hooper left to become a partner in Bewick, Moreing in January 1898, Welshman, Ernest Williams, who had extensive experience in South Africa, was to replace him.

Press frenzy reached a new level of intensity in November 1897 when the sale of the mine to the London and Western Australian Exploration Company was announced, accompanied by Hall’s ‘booming’ and ‘boosting’ that suggested up to 7 oz. for some crushings.³⁷ In stressing the similarity of the reef to the well-established and fabulously rich Hannan’s Brownhill strike, he made sure that prospects of continued success were laid before potential investors.

Hoover was to complain early in 1898 that the ‘eyes were being picked out of the mine’ and suggested to Castle an alternative strategy be adopted, by changing to the American short ton. At 2,000 pounds this was 240 pounds less than the conventional

ton, so making the ore per ton appear richer.³⁸ Castle could have thus shown apparently improved production for shareholders, and ensured maximum publicity. He was unprepared to act, and it was not until Hoover took over as manager in May that he introduced this subterfuge. Castle was also stockpiling ore for processing when a cyanide plant had been established to deal with the tailings; in the meantime, Hall included the potential yield of the tailings in any figures released for publicity purposes.

Though Castle did not seek exposure as Hall did, he was also feted; at the Christmas dinner in Malcolm in December 1897, the chairman toasted the ‘Guest of the Evening’, ‘stating that the success of the mine was largely due to that gentleman’s ability as a manager. It was possible for a man to make the most of a bad mine, but lots of men would make a mess of a good one’. He was described by his staff as ‘loved and respected’.³⁹ Another Leonora banquet on 1 July 1898, paid tribute to his managership of Sons of Gwalia, and opening up the Star of Gwalia.⁴⁰ He was presented with an inscribed gold watch and an illuminated address at a dinner in Malcolm chaired by Warden Burt, the governmental arbiter on all matters for Mount Margaret goldfield.

Hall was also lionised at a Leonora banquet before leaving for the new company launch in London:

Mr Hall, responding to the toast of his health said he was never more surprised in his life when they discovered that they had organised a reception committee to give a banquet to welcome his return (...) He then began to remember a few little things he had been able to do for the place. He asked them not to thank him for having opened a mine in their midst (laughter). In bringing his energies to opening up the Sons of Gwalia he was not actuated by any philanthropic motives. The mines were opened up as a speculation—as a means of profit.⁴¹

He referred to his negotiation of a £2,000 civic amenities grant for a post and telegraph office, and stressed the ignorance of Perth-based officials of the importance of the district. His theme, as always, stressed his commitment to the north-eastern goldfields and the need for proper legislative representation for the Mount Margaret field.⁴² He also shared Herbert Hoover’s later emphasis, saying:

Low grade mines compel the exercise of economy, and economy was of the greatest benefit to capital and labour (...) Flotation did not make a mine; it was a question of production and profits.⁴³

The mine itself was down to 200 ft when sold, and was producing well, under the able management of Castle. Hall had also ensured among his crew a number of the Welshmen who had arrived in Australia with him, among them Edward Williams, Bangor Jones and a Captain Roberts; all these had worked with Castle at the Gwynfynydd mine.⁴⁴ During its entire development period the mine was regarded as ‘being worked by Welshmen’.⁴⁵

Castle’s key contribution cannot be over-emphasised. As manager of Sons of Gwalia, he faithfully carried out the policy of Pritchard Morgan and the London and Westralian Mines and Finance Agency, to ensure large extraction profits, while Hall ‘boomed’ the mine to sell as a going concern. Since the upper oxidized lodes provided

rich returns, these were the focus of activity, with the more complex ore being left for treatment after installation of the cyanide plant. Hoover, even before he took on the mine managership, was not happy with this policy.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, he, too, was under orders from Bewick, Moreing-dominated directors to maximize profits, since the London and Western Australian was unwilling or unable to produce the promised capital.

Critics often argue that Hoover's longer-term view of the mine provided the blueprint for successor managers. However, his claims should in no way diminish Hall and Castle's pioneering roles in the north-eastern goldfields, as epitomized by development of the Sons of Gwalia. It was undoubtedly Hall who opened up the whole Mount Margaret goldfield, and Hoover was far less influential at that period than his memoirs suggest. Most contemporary sources quote Hall as the first manager, and say that Castle took over when Hall went to London in early 1898. In reality, throughout the development period, Hall was the public face of Gwalia, the 'front man', but Castle, the practical mining man, was the *de facto* day-to-day manager.⁴⁷

It is through cables between Edward Hooper, and Bewick, Moreing in London that the purchase of the Sons of Gwalia is best tracked.⁴⁸ The London office on 18 August 1897 cabled instructions:

E. Hooper or H.C. Hoover examine 'Sons of Gwalia' and 'North Star' Malcolm and adjacent properties. Telegraph as soon as possible report(s) The value of each property separate. Do you advise purchase in order to get control of see Hall at once with regard to act promptly.⁴⁹

Hooper replied the following day that they were unable to proceed for 8-10 days and asked if Hessert, his Coolgardie deputy, could undertake the examination. Bewick, Moreing replied the same day, 'Mt Malcolm reports it is of the greatest importance must have E. Hooper or H.C. Hoover will wait 10 days'.⁵⁰ Thus it can be confidently asserted that Hall had requested one of these two people who had previously seen the mine, and that they shared Hall's opinion. This viewing would have been no earlier than July 1897, when Hoover, on a scouting expedition, visited Leonora. Hoover, like Hall, was a geologist; after starting a mechanical engineering course at Stanford, he transferred after a year to a geology course, though, again like Hall, he was later described as a 'mining engineer'. He, like Hall, would have had a detailed knowledge of geology and would have come to the same conclusion as Hall about the mine. However, despite having practical experience in mines during vacations, his memoirs' claim that he worked for three years in mines was a considerable exaggeration.⁵¹

On 1 September, Bewick, Moreing, London cabled, 'Refer to your cable of 28th full instructions given Mr Hall August 25th. Fresh instructions have been given today'; Hall was very much involved in the sale. A detailed cable on 11 September 1897 included Hoover's initial report on the mine.⁵² Another company, however, was still in contention, since even on 18 November Bewick, Moreing's Coolgardie office cabled 'Barnett representing the Mines Selection Syndicate examining Sons of Gwalia if not in order telegraph'. This confirms Nash's suggestion that Hall and Pritchard Morgan were still negotiating with others until the last minute. The cable spurred Bewick, Moreing to

action, telegraphing ‘Mr Barnett inspection is not in order owner send instructions by wire put a stop to We wish your report by wire as quickly as possible direct to Messrs. Pritchard Morgan and Co, London’.⁵³ The mine had been bought on 17 November.

A cable to London on 22 November confirmed Hooper and Hoover were still at Menzies, adding, ‘when do you wish us and to whom shall we telegraph report “Sons of Gwalia”’. Finally on 26 November, the full report was produced, with more detail and specificity than the 11 September account.⁵⁴ The typed and signed copy shows it was indeed Hoover who produced this final report, but as both were at Menzies (only 64 miles or 102 km from Sons of Gwalia) this argues strongly that both had visited the mine, and that Hoover was obeying instructions of London and Hooper, not working on his own initiative. Hooper in letters to C.M. Harris in 1947 and 1948 stated that it was he who had inspected the Sons of Gwalia on 26 September 1897 and recommended purchase. However, the subsequent letter confirmed,

It would seem that after protracted discussions with Hall and an examination of the data provided by him, I instructed Hoover to sample the mine and make a report to me thereon. On receipt of this report I cabled London recommending purchase of the property.⁵⁵

So, the key factors in the purchase were Hall and Hooper’s discussions on the mine, which Hoover’s report corroborated. Memory of events over such a long period of time is often skewed and inaccurate; Ernest Williams, Hooper’s successor, later claimed that he bought the mine on Hoover’s recommendation. Indeed, by the time Hoover became president elect of the USA, Australians queued up to be associated with him, as seen notably in Sir John Kirwan’s sycophantic 1928 paper on Hoover in Western Australia.⁵⁶ Hooper *en voyage* to London early in 1898, speculated that Matheson ‘would like it thought that he planned the whole business and was alone responsible for the flotation’.⁵⁷ L.P. Menzies, an ‘outback purveyor of tall tales’, also claimed that Hoover was his assistant in surveying the mine.⁵⁸

We can conclude, therefore, that far from being the primitive workings of a few Welshmen, Hoover’s memoirs suggest the mine was already well-developed and well-known in mining circles. The 10 January 1898 flotation prospectus confirms this, saying ‘The properties were discovered by Welsh [*sic*] Prospectors in the summer of 1896, since which date a large amount of development has been carried out’. Furthermore, it was Pritchard Morgan’s company, at Hall’s instigation, that had actively sought a financial partner to support necessary developments. Newspaper stories of the period consistently attributed the credit for acquisition to George Hall, and the negotiation with Bewick, Moreing the result of an approach by Pritchard Morgan.⁵⁹ Early in 1897, Hall had reported:

Workmen employed are very anxious to put their savings in her [the mine] when she is floated, and I have promised them that if she is floated, the staff will have shares. I trust the Board will endorse this promise.⁶⁰

Throughout the December 1897-November 1898 period, analysis of the new local paper, the *Malcolm Chronicle and Leonora Advertiser*, highlights the contribution

of Hall and Castle. Castle was principal guest at two celebration dinners, where speakers unequivocally praised him and Hall, the first given by Sons of Gwalia and North Star employees and the second by Leonora's public figures just before Castle was due to depart for a visit home to Wales.⁶¹ During the same period, the *Malcolm Chronicle* reported Hall being feted at no fewer than four further banquets. In February, he was referred to as 'One of the men who has opened up the district and has been the means of bringing money into this country'. Another speaker at the same dinner commented, 'The Chairman remarked that when he [Mr Hall] came here it [Leonora] was a very small place. The fact was (...) that there was no place at all (laughter)'. Surveyor James L. Sherlaw also confirmed he had sampled the mine twelve months previously and reported favourably.⁶² In May 1898, the local paper quoted the whole of Hall's interview in London with the *British Australasian*, detailing discovery and development of the Sons of Gwalia mine.⁶³ At another celebratory banquet in Leonora on return from London, Hall announced more capital investment, and in October 1898 he was once more described as 'The pioneer of the Mount Malcolm and Leonora Districts'.⁶⁴ It is not surprising that the town of Leonora boasts a Hall Street and a Castles Street.⁶⁵ Neither is it a coincidence that a later *Western Argus* records that the first child born in Leonora was George Castles Leonora Pollock.⁶⁶ There is, of course, also a Hoover Street.

The flotation prospectus, with a share issue of £300,000, said that the London and Western Australian were selling the leases at a profit to Sons of Gwalia Ltd, with £250,000 in paid up shares, allowing a working capital of £50,000 for the mine.⁶⁷ The London and Westralian as minority shareholders received a third of the shares.⁶⁸ Their cash payment was a further £50,000, with Bewick, Moreing's London and Western Australian also guaranteeing the £50,000 for capital equipment.

However, as all shares had been subscribed, and the vendors were taking the whole purchase consideration in shares, the prospectus was issued for public information only. This deliberate 'boomster' ploy by London and Western Australian ramped up the price, making shares difficult to obtain except at a premium, so any shares available traded immediately after the company launch at over twice their face price. Though Hooper's letters to Hoover show that London and Western Australian directors were anxious to make a quick profit, they were hampered by lack of market activity. Yet by December 1899 they only retained 43,459 shares, so there had been considerable profit-taking.⁶⁹

Hall stated at the Hotel Cécil launch dinner in London that 'Bewick, Moreing take [the Sons of Gwalia] over tomorrow'. Though Nash suggests they were general managers from 17 February, a telegram of 3 March, cancelling their previous directive, confirmed that Castle should still follow London and Westralian instructions, with Bewick, Moreing as consulting engineers.⁷⁰ Castle continued as manager until 1 May, and he and Hall still had a significant say in the overall direction. At the 7 May 1898 meeting of the Sons of Gwalia, chairman Cyril Wanklyn noted that Castle's managership had increased ore reserves from 15,000 tons in November to 30,000 tons in April.⁷¹

Hall subsequently inspected the Sons of Gwalia mine several times for his own company, the minority shareholders. Before the November 1901 general meeting, he reported increased output and increased percentage of gold because of Hoover-initiated developments. How far this was reality, or the result of Hoover's ploy of measuring percentage using the American 'short ton', or Hall 'booming' to promote the share value, is uncertain. However shareholders accepted his views unquestioningly. Hall's judgement was lauded at other Sons of Gwalia Company meetings; though Edward Hooper in a personal letter to Hoover said he did not trust Hall, this was far from the opinion of the majority of his fellow-directors.⁷² By the time Premier Sir John Forrest visited Leonora in 1901, Mount Margaret Goldfield had overtaken Coolgardie to become second only to Kalgoorlie as a gold producer.⁷³ Without doubt, this was the period when Hall's public image was at its zenith.

In contrast, public awareness of Hoover during his managership was minimal. Coolgardie newspapers praised his skills, but the *West Australian's* emphasis was more equivocal, stating, 'The Sons of Gwalia, which is now under the management of Mr Hoover, recently connected with some large mines in America, was acquired by Mr G.W. Hall in 1896 on behalf of the London and Westralian'.⁷⁴ The *Inquirer and Commercial News* confirmed that, 'American experts (...) have endorsed the statements that the formation is identical with that at Hannan's, and equally rich and extensive'; it is clear Hoover was the 'American expert'.⁷⁵ References to Hoover in the Leonora local press were perfunctory. Apart from one interview before becoming manager, Hoover's main newspaper exposure was in August 1898 as defendant in a court case over an unpaid contract, with judgement for the plaintiff. The same paper recorded the first fatal accident at the Sons of Gwalia, caused by newly-introduced work practices.⁷⁶ The most extensive Hoover-originated press report during his managership, in a Perth newspaper, was the sole occasion Hoover claimed he recommended the purchase of the Sons of Gwalia.⁷⁷ Though Nash in his biography asserts that Hoover did not consort with news reporters, he was always ready to publicise himself. Hooper's letters to Hoover also show Hoover had asked him to 'put his name around'; Hooper instead chose to emphasise his own role and played down that of Hoover.⁷⁸

In his memoirs, Hoover stated that when he was appointed manager: 'I at once undertook vigorous development of the mine and the installation of a large metallurgical plant'.⁷⁹ His initial reorganization was certainly substantial—by 9 May 1898, he had instituted single-hand working, had increased hours from 44 to 48, and negotiated to bring in Italian labour, which he regarded as cheaper and more efficient. However, Hoover's first actions, increasing working hours, reducing workers underground and recruiting Italians, led to Bewick, Moreing becoming nervous about Union conflict and the danger of strikes.⁸⁰

In terms of gold production, little changed, though more work was carried out at significantly lower cost, but with no profitability increase. Indeed, without Castle's good work, Hoover would not have had sufficient stock of ore to mill. It was definitely the 'reliable Mr Castle' who had continued development, blocking out significant quantities of ore for crushing by the proposed new 50-stamp battery. This was in

accordance with Bewick, Moreing's instructions in February 1898 to 'push development work with all rapidity (...) it is the desire of the Directors to keep up the grade of crushing until after this meeting'—the grand 'launch' on 28 March. There was considerable correspondence between Bewick, Moreing in Coolgardie and Castle on these matters from February to May.⁸¹

Hoover certainly planned the new treatment plant, initiated the brick-built assay offices, planned moving the shaft further south and prepared to erect another headframe.⁸² Plans were also laid for power from boilers fired by local mulga, and electric lighting. However, it was still Castle who had to implement matters. The mine letterbook lists equipment he ordered, and bills he submitted for materials, which needed referral by Hoover to Coolgardie for payment approval.

Hoover was continually constrained by restrictions placed upon him by agent Ernest Williams and detailed scrutiny from London directors, through their company secretary T.W. Wellsted. Despite Hoover's ultimatum in the 26 November 1897 cable 'cannot undertake responsibility (...) unless entire management designing machinery and plant in our hand', he lacked freedom of action throughout his managership; every act was examined, queried and often over-ridden.⁸³ Every major decision needed Ernest Williams' approval and all reports had to be sent via Coolgardie to London. Williams, though extremely capable, was of the micro-managing type, always stressing that Hoover was the superintending manager, answerable to himself, the general manager.⁸⁴

The whole process of takeover between the three companies between January and May 1898 was tense.⁸⁵ Castle continued to stope out ore, while Hoover wanted to close the mine down to develop the new main shaft. However, Edward Hooper reminded him this would take a large slice out of working capital and would depress the market.⁸⁶ Castle ensured everything not included in the bill of sale was charged to the Sons of Gwalia Company account, and Hoover also disputed many of the Sons of Gwalia bills as the responsibility of the London and Western Australian.⁸⁷ Castle's final accounting of the value of gold due to Bewick, Moreing was not completed until June, when he presented a figure of over £9,000 profit since the sale in November 1897; disputes on billing of purchased items continued until August 1898.

The extreme ill feeling between agent Ernest Williams and his American engineers is chronicled in Walter Liggett's hostile but well-researched Hoover biography, and in Nash's own account. Hoover certainly fell out with Williams as Liggett describes, and there was indeed a conspiracy in which Hoover played a leading role.⁸⁸ The acerbic nature of Hoover's correspondence to Coolgardie in the mine letterbook, and particularly the numerous letters he received from fellow American engineers such as Goldstone, manager at Bewick, Moreing's Consolidated Murchison, confirm this.⁸⁹ The battles over these months, as Ernest Williams attempted to rid himself of the 'damned Yankees', resulted in even Edward Hooper's patience being tried, reproving Hoover several times for his 'most decided prejudice against Mr W'.⁹⁰

Hoover hated the environment in Australia and said so in a letter to his brother Theodore.⁹¹ In his frequent correspondence to Hooper, he asked when he would carry out his promise to find him another placement.⁹² Though he originally pressed for a USA post, Hooper ensured that Moreing sent him to China, because relationships

between Hoover and Williams deteriorated so much. Neither did Hoover's friend and favoured successor Goldstone follow him in post, for Williams appointed Harry James, a fellow Welshman based in Coolgardie, as manager.⁹³

The mine reports over the following two years show steady decline as barren ground was hit, and refinancing was needed to purchase the adjacent Gwalia Consolidated leases. Worse, the *Sun* highlighted the appalling record of accidents and deaths at 'The Grisly Gwalia', a direct result of Hoover's initiatives, and condemned the 'misleading, not to say lying statements by Hoover to boom the shares and rig the market'.⁹⁴ At a disputatious shareholder meeting in June 1901, the chairman, Cyril Wanklyn, had to admit that crushing that month showed results half those of two years' previously, and admitted that writing down the value of accounts was necessary as the company was in a state of 'temporary financial paralysis'.⁹⁵

In fact, from 1897-1902, the first six managers averaged only 10 months in the post. In that time 298,945 tons were treated for a yield of £652,408 at 43s/7d per ton. Dividends totalled only £61,800, with the directors borrowing to pay these, while no dividend being paid in 1902. George Hall did not mince matters in condemning how 'his' mine was run. He was scathing about the top-heavy management pattern, a problem of which Hoover had been warned in 1898 by Wanklyn. It was 1902 before new manager W.J. Loring reduced the payroll by half by firing the multiplicity of bosses whom Hall described as 'wandering about'. In a *British Australasian* interview, Hall said:

The Sons of Gwalia was noted as being the most over-bossed mine in the whole field, and if you walked through the place you might have imagined you were in a community of city clerks, so immaculate were the heads of the interminable departments got up. When the new manager Mr Loring had sized things up, he reckoned that he was going to be the only man to wear a stiff collar and the others would have to turn to, put on soft shirts, and work.⁹⁶

Loring reduced manpower by between 300 and 400 and as a result Hall could say, 'the Sons of Gwalia is now earning a profit of from £8,000 to £10,000 a month'. His reforms were far more to Hall's taste than Hoover's style of management, and justifiably so, for during Loring's 18 months' tenure, the mine treated 50,112 tons for a yield of £360,115, or 72 shillings a ton, with dividends of £79,500.⁹⁷

Even more damaging, Hoover's (or, more accurately, Feldtmann's) proposed cyanidisation plant was not fully operational until 1901. The 10-stamp battery was not replaced by a 30-stamp until 1902; even then it was not the new one Hoover had requested.⁹⁸ The proposed full 50-stamp battery, forecast through a succession of increasingly critical Sons of Gwalia Company meetings, did not operate fully until 1903.

As Pritchard Morgan pointed out in a stormy 1899 meeting, Bewick, Moreing failed to deliver the promised capital to develop the mine.⁹⁹ Despite London and Western Australian's commitment to provide £50,000, shareholders were never called on for the full paid-up value, with only 6s/6d in the pound being called up in the first 18 months. Instead, the mine's profit was used to subsidise setting-up costs. From 17

November 1897 to the end of 1898, £5,000 was spent on salaries and expenses; administration costs exceeded that spent on mining and development. Paddon, representing the London and Westralian, stated that the Sons of Gwalia ‘had got one of the best mines and one of the worst set of directors in the world’.¹⁰⁰ As a result, any profits that shareholders might have expected were channelled into maintaining Bewick, Moreing’s other activities, and replacing the promised capital investment. Letters in the Bewick, Moreing file and the Sons of Gwalia letterbook throughout 1898 demonstrate Bewick, Moreing’s major cash flow crisis at the time. As Hooper wrote to Hoover:

the bulk of the shares (...) are held by the Exploration Co. and they consequently have to pay the calls thereon as required for working capital. Now if you out there shut down the mill for nine months or a year (...) you will see that this will take a very large slice out of the working capital and depress the value of shares. As I have said, the Exploration Co have to supply this working capital, and they unfortunately have not got too much ready cash so that such a proceeding would perhaps put them in a hole.¹⁰¹

Hoover was constantly denied permission to spend, or had to re-negotiate local bank overdrafts. He had far from a free hand.

Figure 6: *‘Hoover’ House, from Mount Leonora.*



Source: Author’s archive.

Many will still assert that Hoover laid the long-term foundations for Sons of Gwalia, vital to the longevity of the mine, and his vision for the mine is also not in doubt.¹⁰² However, the early effects of his period as a manager were: labour troubles because of his employment of Italians, cutting wages and increasing hours; over-management and bureaucracy; dangerous mining practices; shareholder discontent at lack of dividends, and a succession of short-term managers, of whom Hoover stayed the shortest. Only in 1902, did Loring’s good work recover the mine’s financial viability. Loring, described in one newspaper as being similar to George Hall in nature, was a far better manager of men than Hoover, and implemented his development plans

effectively.¹⁰³ Hoover was undoubtedly a brilliant strategist and planner; no one can doubt his later influence on Bewick, Moreing in Western Australia. However, it is argued strongly that his importance lay from 1902 onwards, in introducing production methods based on lowering working costs and costs of treatment, and a common-basis accounting system so he could compare production across mines, and increase supervision on mine managers.¹⁰⁴

Up to the period of Hall's death in 1915 and into the 1920s, all accounts show that Hall, and Hall alone, was credited by the British and Australian press and mining world for developing the mine and opening up the goldfield. There was no contemporary mention of Hoover's restructuring and development of Sons of Gwalia. Hoover's period as manager was marked by far less success, both in development and in financial benefit to his employers, than he claimed, and that most commentators credit.¹⁰⁵ He overstated his salary significantly, and though his autobiography stated he 'was carried for a small percentage interest', the letter from Ernest Williams giving him notice of termination made it clear that his share of the profits was nil, since there had been no profits.¹⁰⁶

In the 7 May 1898 meeting of the Sons of Gwalia Company, Edward Hooper referred to a private letter received from Hoover, which said, 'The mine is developing phenomenally and we have an entirely new lode nearly 5ft. wide assaying 30 dwts'.¹⁰⁷ The following three years far from fulfilled this promise, and it seems that Hoover's grandiose plans for development, and the structures and organisation that he set up, caused the crisis that continued to affect the mine until Loring took over. However beneficial the long-term implementation of Hoover's plans may have been to the future prosperity and longevity of the mine, the shorter-term effects were negative.

It is not profitable to surmise how successful the mine would have been if Hall, who had opposed his directors' decision to sell the majority interest, had got his way. In the short term, it would have benefited shareholders more; however, it is doubtful whether the mine would have had the same longevity. The London and Westralian Mines and Finance Agency was in the business of taking short-term profits, not developing for the long haul. In addition, despite Hall and Castle's local popularity, it is unlikely they would have been able to sustain the mine over the crises that were to come in the share capital market, or attract the finance to carry it through barren spells in 1901-2.

Conclusion

So how did Hoover's role become so inflated, with resultant diminution of Hall's contribution? By the early 1920s, references to Hoover's association with the Sons of Gwalia became more regular, and Hall's was proportionately diminished.¹⁰⁸ I would suggest three reasons for this. First, Hall, though prominent in mining in Western Australia throughout the next decade, never again had the same success as with Sons of Gwalia. Though he developed another potentially massive mine, Gwalia Consolidated at Wiluna, the complexity of its ore and lack of investment drained his resources, and it closed down, though reopened most successfully by Claude de Bernales in the 1920s

and 30s. Abortive, costly ventures with Pritchard Morgan in China and Japan ended with Hall's returning to the scene of his first involvement in gold-mining, Gwynfynydd, in Wales, where he died in an accident in 1915.

Much more important was Hoover's growing international reputation. Throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s, references associating him with the mine became more frequent. The key period, however, was when his memoirs were first serialised in *Colliers Journal*, New York, and an Associated American Press (AAP) release was widely disseminated in Australasian newspapers in February 1951. From here on, the overstatements in this press release became embedded in the public and media minds, asserting that Hoover alone had been responsible for the acquisition of the Sons of Gwalia.¹⁰⁹

Many newspapers reproduced inaccuracies propounded in the original American release, such as the 'fact' that Hoover built the manager's house. (He commissioned it, and laid foundations, but it was his successor, Welshman Harry James, who completed it).¹¹⁰ Several stated that he installed a 50-stamp mill and cyanide plant; the latter, first proposed by George Hall, was not operative until 1901, and the 50-stamp did not function until 1903. What is striking is that several sections of this AAP release of February 1951, and its inaccuracies, are re-quoted verbatim from 1951 even to the present day. Even those that do not quote the detail make the assumption that Hoover was the discoverer of the mine.

Figure 7: *Herbert Clark Hoover*



Source: Courtesy of State Library of Western Australia, 000890D.

Hoover in his introduction to his *Memoirs* says '...myths sometimes good and sometimes not appear as to all persons who enter public life. Whether the myths are good or bad, they do not contribute to the store of truth'.¹¹¹ As Blainey comments perceptively in *Herbert Hoover's Forgotten Years*, 'Preliminary study of untouched records (...) suggests that he allowed some old myths to remain and in hoeing others he tilled soil in which new myths could grow'.¹¹² The Sons of Gwalia certainly reflects this, since from 1951 onwards, as Hall's role was largely forgotten, so Hoover's was magnified.

Thirdly, one cannot underestimate the effect of George H. Nash's biography on the majority of subsequent critical perception of Hoover, which has reinforced popular misconceptions. Nash gives extensive coverage to many of the matters referred to above about Hoover and the Sons of Gwalia. But his writing invariably presents matters from his protagonist's point of view; no doubt others will say the same about my writing on Hall. One can understand his approach; after all, Hoover is his subject, he devoted a massive three-volume biography to him, and his account certainly provides an excellent account of Hoover's key importance for Bewick, Moreing, after his return to

Australia. However, I contend strongly that for Nash to give such importance to him during the earlier six months' tenure as manager of Sons of Gwalia does lack perspective.

Nash's remarks that 'The goldfields in the mid-nineties were swarming with (...) men who thought they were mining experts - or pretended to be', can equally be considered an appropriate depiction of Hoover during his first period in Australia.¹¹³ He was, after all, an inexperienced 23-year-old, sporting a beard to pass himself off as being considerably older, so as to be considered for the post of mine manager, for which he needed to be at least 30 years old.¹¹⁴

Nash admits that the earliest references to Hoover on his arrival in Australia are laced with many inaccuracies, but still considers that his 'background and ability were impressive enough'. For instance, he accepts there is no truth in Hoover's assertion in a letter to his cousin in June 1897 that at that date the Sons of Gwalia belonged to Bewick, Moreing.¹¹⁵ He also finds no evidence that Hoover had any say in recommending the purchase price. Indeed, this would have been totally inappropriate; despite Hoover's later financial acumen, at this stage his company's trust in his expertise would not extend thus far. Neither is there any record of Hoover's price recommendation in Bewick, Moreing files, and Nash seemed to accept this.

One has to suggest that Hoover's perception of events was significantly coloured, whether through defensiveness over the many controversies in his public life, or hazy memory in old age, or even an ingrained dislike of Welshmen caused by early experiences with Williams; more probably, a combination of the first two.¹¹⁶ For him, the mine represented an extremely small feature in a long and controversial career; indeed, within his *Memoirs*, he devoted only one and a half pages to it. However, he himself stated that the Sons of Gwalia represented his first ever assumption of authority and responsibility; one would have expected his recall of such a key event to be more accurate.

In summary, it has been argued in this paper that Hoover significantly overstated his contribution to the acquisition and development of the Sons of Gwalia mine. Many other surveyors and engineers of greater experience and status than himself had visited and reported before him, and the mine was already well known as a major find in Western Australian goldfield circles. It is only retrospectively, because of his later fame, that Hoover's role in the purchase, managership and early progress of the Sons of Gwalia mine has been so inflated at the expense of the reputations of Alexander Wilson Castle and George W. Hall. It is about time the balance was re-adjusted.

Acknowledgments

The support of Professor Bill Jones, Cardiff University, my supervisor for the M.Phil. degree from which this article is drawn, is gratefully acknowledged. Many thanks also to Peter Bridge, Hesperian Press, for publishing *From Wales to Gwalia*. Jan Keating and Deborah Watkins, descendants of Hall and Castle respectively, deserve thanks for support and assistance with the thesis, as does the late Dr Richard G. Hartley for his invaluable comments on the book draft. Finally, the referees are thanked for their perceptive comments.

Endnotes

- ¹ G.S. Reid, & M.R. Oliver, 'Mr Alfred Edward Morgans', in *The Premiers of Western Australia: 1890-1982*, University of Western Australia Press, Perth, 1982.
- ² Lewis Lloyd, *Australians from Wales*, Gwynedd Archives and Museum Service, Gwynedd County Council, Caernarfon 1988, p.9; David Lucas, *The Welsh, Irish, Scots and English in Australia*, Canberra: Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs, p. 20.
- ³ Susan Hart, *Hiraeth: a History of the Welsh and the Welsh Free Church in Western Australia*, University of Western Australia, Perth, 2010, p. 44.
- ⁴ *Sons of Gwalia Complimentary Dinner to George W. Hall*, souvenir booklet, pp. 18-19, papers of G.W. Hall 1895-1988, Battye Collection, MN 1519, Acc. 4797A/5, State Library of Western Australia (hereafter SLWA). These are listed as Alexander Wilson Castle, Percy Durant, Captain Roberts, Edward Williams, Mr Savill and John Jones.
- ⁵ S.F. Van Oss, 'The Westralian Mining 'Boom'', *The Nineteenth Century and After: a monthly review*, vol. 40, issue 237 (Nov 1896), pp. 711-720.
- ⁶ *Inquirer and Commercial News* (Perth), 3 July 1896.
- ⁷ 'Gwalia' from mediaeval Latin 'Wallia', used as an archaic name for Wales.
- ⁸ *Sunday Times* (Perth), 26 November 1929; 8 March 1936.
- ⁹ Unit conversions used in this paper are as follows: 1 inch = 25.4 mm, 1 foot = 0.3048 m, 1 mile = 1.609 km, 1 ton (long) = 2,240 pounds (lbs) = 1.01604 tonnes; 1 troy ounce = 20 dwt = 31.10348 g; 1 ton (long) = 1.01604 tonnes; 12 pence = 1 shilling; 20 shillings = 1 pound (£).
- ¹⁰ *Sunday Times* (Perth), 29 June 1941; 12 November 1944.
- ¹¹ The Hannan's Brownhill Gold Mine company in Kalgoorlie was the first major successful flotation of Bewick, Moreing's London and Western Australian Exploration Company Limited, formed in 1894.
- ¹² *Sons of Gwalia Complimentary Dinner to George W. Hall*, souvenir booklet, George Hall's speech, p. 23, MN 1519, Acc. 4797A/5, SLWA.
- ¹³ John Hamill, *The Strange Career of Mr Hoover under two Flags*, William Faro, New York, 1931 p. 44; State Record Office, Perth, (hereafter SRO Perth), Transfer of lease covenant, Sons of Gwalia, consignment 964, file 1896/5705.
- ¹⁴ Bewick, Moreing and Company Ltd. reflects the original two partners, Thomas John Bewick and Charles Algernon Moreing. The comma between their surnames is retained in the abbreviated company name of Bewick, Moreing.
- ¹⁵ Consignment 964, file 1896/5705, SRO Perth.
- ¹⁶ Dennis A. Cumming and Richard G. Hartley, *Westralian Founders of Twentieth Century Mining*, Rossmoyne, WA: Richard G. Hartley 2014, p. 23; *Western Ancestor, Journal of the Western Australian Genealogical Society*, March 1988, pp. 18-19, under the name of Coral Haymet, (plagiarized from the work of Deborah Watkins).
- ¹⁷ *Coolgardie Miner*, 6 March 1897.
- ¹⁸ *Coolgardie Miner*, 13 December 1897; *Malcolm Chronicle and Leonora Advertiser*, 22 January 1898, 19 March 1898.
- ¹⁹ *Malcolm Chronicle and Leonora Advertiser*, 5 February 1898.
- ²⁰ *Inquirer and Commercial News* (Perth), 29 October 1897.
- ²¹ *Coolgardie Miner*, 19 October 1897.
- ²² *Report of the Department of Mines, Western Australia No. 25*, 1897, Government printer, Perth, 1898, p. 60; *Inquirer and Commercial News* (Perth), 29 October 1897.
- ²³ Albany Water Police Office *Inward Report, RMS Victoria*, 13 May 1897; *Western Mail* (Perth), 21 May 1897.
- ²⁴ Herbert C. Hoover, *The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover, 1874-1920, vol.1, Years of Adventure* Macmillan, New York, 1951, p. 30.
- ²⁵ George H. Nash, *The Life of Herbert Hoover; the Engineer*, Norton & Co., New York, 1983, pp. 55-84, 226-232, and pp. 608-9, end-notes 104,116, 118.
- ²⁶ Jeremy Mouat, ' "Just Now the 'Merican expert is the Prominent Man": American mining engineers and the Australian mining industry 1880s-1910s', *Journal of the Australasian Mining History Association*, vol. 6, 2008, pp. 136-149.
- ²⁷ Richard G. Hartley, 'A History of Technological Change in Kalgoorlie Gold Metallurgy 1895-1915', Ph.D. thesis, Murdoch University, 1998; Richard G. Hartley, 'Bewick, Moreing in Western Australian Gold Mining 1897-1904: Management Policies & Goldfields Responses', *Labour History* 65, November 1993, pp. 1-18; Ronald H. Limbaugh, 'Pragmatic Professional: Herbert Hoover's Formative Years as a Mining Engineer', 1895-1908, *Mining History Journal*, 11, 2004; Ronald H. Limbaugh, "There is a game against us": W.J. Loring's Troubled Years as Bewick-Moreing Company's General Manager and

Partner in Western Australia', 1905–1912, *Journal of Australasian Mining History*, vol. 2, 2004, pp. 90–114.

²⁸ Jeremy Mouat and Ian Phimister, 'The Engineering of Herbert Hoover', *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 77, no. 4, 2008, pp. 553–58.

²⁹ Geoffrey Blainey, 'Herbert Hoover's Forgotten Years', *Business Archives and History* 3, 1963, pp. 53–63.

³⁰ Edward E. McGowan, 'Herbert Clark Hoover and the Origins of the Sons of Gwalia Gold Mine', *Australian Mining*, 16 June 1969, pp. 62–67.

³¹ *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 12 August 1897.

³² *Ibid.*, 1 April 1913.

³³ *Malcolm Chronicle and Leonora Advertiser*, 5 February 1898; *Sons of Gwalia Complimentary Dinner to George W. Hall*, p. 25; Papers of G.W. Hall 1895–1988, MN 1519, Acc. 4797A/5, SLWA.

³⁴ *Inquirer and Commercial News* (Perth), 29 October 1897, quoting *Coolgardie Miner* (n.d.).

³⁵ *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 29 March 1913; Papers of G.W. Hall 1895–1988, MN 1519, Acc. 4797A/5, SLWA.

³⁶ Hartley, 'A History of Technological Change in Kalgoorlie Gold Metallurgy 1895–1915', Ph.D. thesis, Murdoch University, 1998; Hartley, 'Bewick, Moreing in Western Australian Gold Mining 1897–1904', pp. 1–18, *Labour History*, no. 65, November 1993.

MN 1519, Acc. 4797A/5,

³⁷ *Sons of Gwalia Complimentary Dinner to George W. Hall*, papers of G.W. Hall 1895–1988, p. 25, SLWA.

³⁸ Bewick, Moreing letter to Castle, 28 February 1898, MN 0294/1, Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA; Sons of Gwalia Letterbook, May 31, 1898, p. 207, MN 270, microfilm 1460A.

³⁹ *Malcolm Chronicle and Leonora Advertiser*, 31 December 1897.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 3 December 1897; 2 July 1898.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 5 February 1898.

⁴² *The Cambrian* (Swansea), 5 October 1900. Hall recalled how Sir Edward Wittenoom, had assisted him in obtaining a telegraph post office for Mount Malcolm.

⁴³ *Malcolm Chronicle and Leonora Advertiser*, 5 February 1898.

⁴⁴ Monograph by George Stewart Beresford, at 20 years old Sons of Gwalia's first assayer, Manuscript PR 7631, SWLA.

⁴⁵ *West Australian* (Perth), 23 October 1923.

⁴⁶ Cable 21 January 1898 (Coolgardie Office) to Bewick, Moreing, London, Lalor deposit, MN 0294/1, Acc. 4793A/18, SLWA; cable Bewick, Moreing, London 20 January 1898, 192C, SLWA

⁴⁷ *Sun* (Kalgoorlie), 11 August 1901.

⁴⁸ Cable transcripts, files of Bewick, Moreing, container, Hoover Presidential Library [hereafter HPL], West Branch, Iowa, Bewick, Moreing Collection, Hooveriana, 1; correspondence, vol. 12, Bewick, Moreing papers, MN 270 Acc. 1614; Lalor Deposit, MN 0294/1 Acc. 4793A/18, SLWA.

⁴⁹ Bewick, Moreing Cable 131C, Perth Office Telegraph Book, 18 August 1887, HPL.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Nash, *The Life of Herbert Hoover, the Engineer*, pp. 42–50.

⁵² Bewick, Moreing cable of 11 September 1897, HPL; also at MN 270 Acc. 1614A and MN 0294/1, Acc. 4793/18, SLWA.

⁵³ A full version of the cable would read as follows: 'Mr Barnett[']s inspection is not in order. [We are now the] owner[.] Send instructions by wire [to] put a stop to [his inspection]. We wish your report [to be sent] by wire as quickly as possible direct to Morganatic [Messrs. Pritchard, Morgan and Co., London].

⁵⁴ Nash, *The Life of Herbert Hoover, the Engineer*, p. 65; copy of Hoover's cabled report also reproduced in Sons of Gwalia prospectus, 11 January 1898, MN 294, Acc. 1734A/6, SLWA.

⁵⁵ Leader donation, letters, Edward Hooper to C.M. Harris, 17 November 1947 and 8 April 1948, MN 0294, Acc. 1734A/8, G.M.S, SLWA.

⁵⁶ *West Australian* (Perth), 6 November 1928; reproduced in *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 7 October 1946.

⁵⁷ Letter, Edward Hooper to Herbert Hoover, 22 February 1898, *en voyage* to London, Bewick, Moreing papers, MN 0294/1, Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA.

⁵⁸ L.R. Menzies, *A Gold Seeker's Odyssey*, Hesperian Press, 2004 reprint of 1937 edition.

⁵⁹ For example, *West Australian* (Perth), 23 October 1923.

⁶⁰ Sons of Gwalia Ltd. Prospectus, 11 January 1898, incorporating De Visme Gipps report (28 October 1896), Edols' report (5 December 1896), and this extract from Hall's reports (1896–97) to the London and Westralian Mines and Finance Agency, 20 January 1897.

⁶¹ *Malcolm Chronicle and Leonora Advertiser*, 21 December 1897.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 5 February 1898.

-
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, 21 May 1898, quoting *British Australasian* (London), 24 March 1898.
- ⁶⁴ *Inquirer and Commercial News*, 28 October 1898.
- ⁶⁵ Alexander Wilson Castle was known, in the Australian fashion, as ‘Castles’.
- ⁶⁶ Henry Harris, *Reminiscences of by-gone Menzies by the Old Fossicker*, and *On the Northern Field*, 1907-8 and 1937, reprinted Hesperian Press, Carlisle, WA, 2009, p. 44.
- ⁶⁷ Advertisement, ‘Sons of Gwalia’ Prospectus, *Saturday Review*, vol. 85, issue 2203, 15 Jan 1898 and both subsequent weeks’ issues.
- ⁶⁸ *Sons of Gwalia Complimentary Dinner to George W. Hall*, pp. 12, 26, papers of G.W. Hall 1895-1988, MN 1519, Acc. 4797A/5, SLWA.
- ⁶⁹ *British Australasian*, 7 December 1899, cited in Nash, *The Life of Herbert Hoover: the Engineer*, endnote 133, p. 610.
- ⁷⁰ Nash, *The Life of Herbert Hoover: the Engineer*, p. 6; Bewick, Moreing to Alexander Castle, 3 March, 1898, SLMN 270, Acc.1614A, SLWA, ‘We [Bewick, Moreing controlled companies] have not taken over yet you must obey Morganatic [London & Westralian] as before in Sons of Gwalia matters I hereby cancel my letter of the 23rd re agreement[.] we act [as] consulting engineer only. Mr Durant and self agree in above also you look after [Gwalia] No.1 South am writing fully’.
- ⁷¹ *Capitalist*, 7 May 1898, First General Meeting of Sons of Gwalia Company, Ltd.
- ⁷² Letter, Hooper to Hoover, 19 May 1898, Bewick, Moreing papers, MN 0294, Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA, ‘Hall told me a little time ago that [London and Westralian] proposed to pay another dividend... I am inclined to distrust anything he says, and it is very likely that he is selling out his own interest instead of buying more shares’. Hooper lost out substantially by selling his and Hoover’s London and Westralian shares just before that company declared a dividend, see Letter, Hooper to Hoover, 3 June 1898, MN 0294 Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA.
- ⁷³ *West Australian*, 5 January 1901, said that the gold yield in 1900 of 141,523 oz. was almost 60,000 oz. up on 1899.
- ⁷⁴ ‘The Leonora Country’, *West Australian* (Perth), 4 October 1898, ‘...the Sons of Gwalia group rank foremost in the van... a gold mine in the truest sense of the word’.
- ⁷⁵ *Inquirer and Commercial News* (Perth), 14 January 1898, quoting *The Australasian Mail*, 2 December 1897.
- ⁷⁶ *Malcolm Chronicle and Leonora Advertiser*, 6 August 1898.
- ⁷⁷ Leader donation, *Perth Morning Herald*, n.d. cutting, G.M. MN 0294, Acc. 1734A, SLWA.
- ⁷⁸ Hooper to Hoover, letters, 22 April and 6 May, 1898, MN 0294/1 Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA.
- ⁷⁹ Hoover, *The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover, Years of Adventure, 1874-1920*, p. 33.
- ⁸⁰ Bewick, Moreing letter, May 6 1898, Sons of Gwalia papers, MN 270, Acc. 1614A, SLWA, cited in Mouat and Phimister, ‘The Engineering of Herbert Hoover’, *Pacific Historical Review*, University of California, vol. 77, no. 4, 2008, p. 558, fn. 15.
- ⁸¹ Bewick, Moreing cables and letters to Alexander Castle, February to April 1898, MN 270, Acc. 1614A, SLWA.
- ⁸² C.W.F. Turnbull, *Looking Back, Gwalia-Leonora 1895-1963*, Leonara Gwalia Historical Museum Ltd., Perth 1990, p. 3.
- ⁸³ For example, Sons of Gwalia papers, May 1898, Bewick, Moreing, Coolgardie Office, MN 0294/1, Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA, ‘Mr Williams is of the opinion it will be impossible to get this Winding Engine delivered to Sons of Gwalia earlier than December next’.
- ⁸⁴ Bewick, Moreing (Williams) to Hoover, 27 April 1898, MN 0294/1, Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA.
- ⁸⁵ Particularly letter, 14 October 1898, T.W. Wellsted, Company Secretary, Bewick, Moreing to Coolgardie Office, MN 0294/1 Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA.
- ⁸⁶ Letter, Hooper to Hoover, 19 May 1898, MN 0294/1 Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA.
- ⁸⁷ Sons of Gwalia Letterbook, numerous letters to the Coolgardie office of Bewick, Moreing, MN 1110, Acc. 1460A, SLWA.
- ⁸⁸ Walter W. Liggett, *The Rise of Herbert Hoover*, HK Fly Company, New York, 1931, reprint Lightning Source UK, 2010, pp. 60-64.
- ⁸⁹ Extensive correspondence to Hoover from his attorney, Lester Hinsdale and from his American mining colleagues, D.P. Mitchell, G.B. Wilson, Dunsford, Lewis Goldstone, and between Goldstone and Edward Hooper, show warfare unabated, and Hoover at the centre of it, MN 0294/1, Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA.
- ⁹⁰ Letters, Hooper to Herbert Hoover, 26 July 1898; 23 September 1898, ‘I am very sorry to note the aggrieved attitude you are adopting against Mr Williams. You can’t imagine how depressing it is to note all these petty grievances...’, MN 0294/1, Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA.
- ⁹¹ Letter, Herbert Hoover to Theodore Hoover, Coolgardie 1898 box file 1, Australia 1897-98, Hoover Papers, Hoover Presidential Library, cited in Jeremy Mouat and Ian Phimister, ‘The Engineering of

Herbert Hoover', p. 560, fn. 20, 'I am damned glad to get out of here I can tell you. You would need to know the country to appreciate it. Nothing could be worse; my whole stay has been a nightmare in a dozen regards'.

⁹² Letter, Hooper to Hoover, 7 August 1898, 'Two [letters] received in one day' said Hooper, MN 0294/1 Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA.

⁹³ *Y Drych*, 22 June 1899; Letter, Hooper to Goldstone, 20 January 1899, MN0294/1 Acc.4793A/1A, SLWA; Williams' Coolgardie cable 11 November 1898 confirmed James appointment had not yet been authorized by London, and Hoover as a result had to continue in post until 21 November, MN270 Acc.1614A/1, SLWA.

⁹⁴ *Sun* (Kalgoorlie), 23 December 1900, 20 January 1901, 11 August 1901.

⁹⁵ *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 22 July 1902.

⁹⁶ *British Australasian*, 6 November 1902, quoted also in the *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 30 December 1902.

⁹⁷ *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 1 April 1913.

⁹⁸ Letter, Hooper to Hoover, 29 July 1898, MN 0249/1, Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA. 'I have practically agreed that the 30 stamp mill with engine and boiler power for 40 stamps currently lying at Fremantle shall be erected at the mine... I can imagine you and Williams kicking at this'.

⁹⁹ *Inquirer and Commercial News* (Perth), 7 July 1899. This is reinforced by a telegram to Hoover from Bewick, Moreing London, asking 'What do you estimate working expenses next three months. Can you finance without assistance', telegram 5c, MN270, Acc. 1614A/1, SLWA.

¹⁰⁰ *Inquirer and Commercial News* (Perth), 7 July 1899; *Leonora Miner*, 10 July 1899.

¹⁰¹ Letter, Hooper to Hoover, 19 May 1898, MN 0294/1, Acc. 4793A/1, SLWA.

¹⁰² For example, Richard G. Hartley, 'Mining and Processing at the Sons of Gwalia Mine' in Lenore Layman and Criena Fitzgerald (eds.), *110° in the Waterbag*, Western Australian Museums in association with the Leonora Research Project, 2012, p. 126, 'While he [Hoover] held that post for less than a year, subsequent mine managers had to implement his plans for the mine'.

¹⁰³ *West Australian*, 23 October 1923; *Southern Cross Times*, 27 October 1923, 'He [Loring] was like Hall in many ways, but had a much wider mining experience'.

¹⁰⁴ Richard G. Hartley, 'Mining and Processing at the Sons of Gwalia Mine', p. 127; Glenn Vent, 'The standardization of Bewick, Moreing Cost Accounts' in Garry D. Carnegie and Peter W. Wolnizer (eds), *Accounting History Newsletter, 1980-1989* and *Accounting History, 1989-1994: A Tribute to Robert William Gibson*, New Works in Accounting History, Garland Publishing, New York and London, 1996, pp. 63-80.

¹⁰⁵ Nash, *The Life of Herbert Hoover: The Engineer*, p. 82. From August to October 1898 the mine produced a surplus of £7,620; compared with Hoover's November 1897 forecasts for the mine of 'profits in sight £75000'. This was minimal, and yet Nash admits it was quadruple the previous quarter's profit.

¹⁰⁶ Ernest Williams' letter to H.C. Hoover, 17 October 1898, Bewick, Moreing papers, MN 270/1, SLWA.

¹⁰⁷ Report of Meeting, *Mining Journal, Railway and Commercial Gazette*.

¹⁰⁸ *Southern Cross Times*, 27 October 1923, *West Australian* (Perth), 3 May 1929 and *Kalgoorlie Western Argus*, 21 July 1931, epitomise the change in balance of perceptions.

¹⁰⁹ *Launceston Examiner*, 19 February 1951, *Barrier Miner* (Broken Hill), 19 February 1951 and *Sunday Times* (Perth), 18 February 1951 among many others across Australasia.

¹¹⁰ Sons of Gwalia Letterbook, 25 November 1898, MN 270, microfilm 1460A, SLWA.

¹¹¹ Hoover, *The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover, Years of Adventure*, p. v of Introduction.

¹¹² Blainey, 'Herbert Hoover's Forgotten Years', p. 54.

¹¹³ Nash, *The Life of Herbert Hoover: The Engineer*, p. 56

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 50 and endnote 83. Charles Moreing had requested someone for the Australian post who was to be at least 35 years old

¹¹⁵ Hoover to Harriet Miles, cited in Nash, *The Life of Herbert Hoover, the Engineer*, p. 64.

¹¹⁶ Hoover was 76 years old when his *Memoirs* were published.