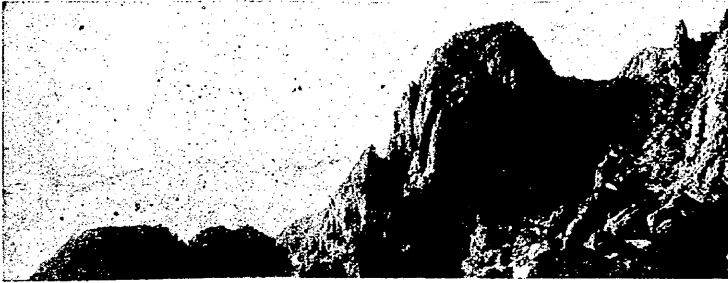


## EL PASO OFFERS MOUNTAIN CLIMBING WITHIN HER CORPORATE LIMITS

Increasing interest on the part of El Pasoans as well as Tourists is being shown in the Franklin, Organ and Hueco Mountains contiguous to El Paso; climbing being an appetite stimulator and sleep producer.



by  
Gladys Wilden

### Six Main Peaks

Mt. Franklin is almost one-quarter of a circle in shape. There are six main peaks. Starting at the El Paso end, the fourth one is called High Peak, the next is called Center Franklin, while the sixth and most eastern peak, is called Antony's Nose. The peaks range from 5,000 to 7,152 feet above the sea level.

Of the six peaks, Center Franklin is the highest, while Antony's Nose comes next. There is a geological similarity between High Peak and Antony's Nose, as you find a red rock formation in the inside curve of each, although gray rock predominates. Limestone is to be found also.

No fossils are to be found on the eastern slopes of these peaks, but they may be picked up almost anywhere on the western slopes.

There is vegetable earth, covered for the most part with grass, on Center Franklin, but on Antony's Nose and High Peak there is little beside decaying rock and fossils. This is especially true of High Peak.

There are two saddles. One is between High Peak and Center Franklin, and the other is between Center Franklin and Antony's Nose. The latter is called Canutillo saddle.

### Beautiful View.

McGilligan canyon runs between Mt. Franklin proper and a shoulder of secondary importance called the "Sugar Loaf," the southern part of which rises rather abruptly just north of Highland Park. The canyon rises gently to a saddle between the third and fourth peak from where you can get a beautiful view of Canutillo, Vinton and the Rio Grande. Most any color of rock may be found in this canyon, white, green, red, some of which is a bright brick red and every shade of gray to black.

A broad, grassy, gently sloping valley, called Fusselman's canyon, gradually ascends to the saddle between High Peak and Center Franklin. Very little actual climbing is necessary to reach the ridge

if this route is taken. Generally speaking, it runs east and west. Its entrance is on the east side opposite Tobin.

These are the main canyons. They are found on the west side of the mountain, much as the creases in one's hand are found in the palm, rather than on the back.

### Many Springs.

There are many springs in Mt. Franklin. Baxter Springs is found in an arroyo near the base of Center Franklin, about two-thirds of the way from Fusselman's canyon to the ridge. Huge cottonwoods grow near Baxter Spring. They shoot straight up for many feet before they branch out. Cottonwood Spring is found at the foot of Center Franklin, about midway between the saddles. Its water has an iron taste and a rusty look. When almost frozen it tastes of sulphur. A huge cottonwood grows near it; for this it was named. Mundy Spring is found farther west on Center Franklin, but on about the same level as Cottonwood Spring. Canutillo Spring is on the western side of the mountain about eight minutes' walk from Canutillo Saddle. It is surrounded by huge trees. It never fails to have water all the year round. A little below Mundy Spring and farther west is Box, or Nopal, Spring. Still farther and a little above Mundy Spring is an abandoned tin mine.

### Numerous Cacti.

Numerous cacti grow on the mountain. Among them is the Spanish dagger, also called the Lechuguilla. From it a fibre called Istle is obtained, which is used to make rope. Animals are fond of eating it. It ceases to grow at a certain height, and grows only where there are rocks.

Another kind of cacti is the Nopal, commonly called the "Prickly Pear." There are

three varieties of this plant. The kind that grows on the rocky sides of the mountain and in its canyons has a fruit which is purplish crimson inside and out, and is very good to eat. The needles are very small, and the leaves are large and fat. Cactus candy is made from them.

Going farther up the mountain the Yucca is found. It is the first cactus to blossom in the spring. It grows on the first slopes as soon as you get away from the plain. It is very clannish and grows in groups.

The greasewood or creosote bush, which has an annual amount of rosin, is found in great abundance on the mountain. Its blossoms are small and yellow, and are followed by tiny fuzzy gray balls.

### Suggests Cat's Paw.

Another cactus called Pitilla grows on the mountain. The smallest of this species is like a gray cat's paw. The largest have hooked points and very tiny blossoms. These blossoms are replaced by red oblong fruit with a sourish taste, very much like that of the Pomegranate.

Sotol, another kind of cacti, thrives where the red rock is rather far advanced in decay, and can stand little water. It has a smell that reminds one of ripe wheat.

There is a plant of the Viznaga family that has a shiny green skin and waxy blood red blossoms. It grows in clumps. They are found on rocky hillsides where canyons start, all over the mesa and shoulders, but never on the ridges.

There is a cactus suggestive of a huge cat's paw which looks very velvety because of its many thorns. It is found in gray, bright salmon pink and brown. All have blossoms, some of which are pink, whitish green or yellow. The petals are delicate and have thin plaited edges like a Nopal.

Later the viznaga is found. It is a plant resembling a beehive, but is green and covered with thorns. It sometimes grows to very great size. The whole top

(Continued on page 84)

