

FREIGHTING ON THE CHIHUAHUA TRAIL

It is said that nothing is more typical of civilization than its roads, and every road has a history. We have given much of the history of the principal roads crossing the country west of the Pecos, the Butterfield and San Diego-San Antonio routes. But it remained for August Santeleban to leave the most complete record of the Chihuahua Trail in his book, "A Texas Pioneer."

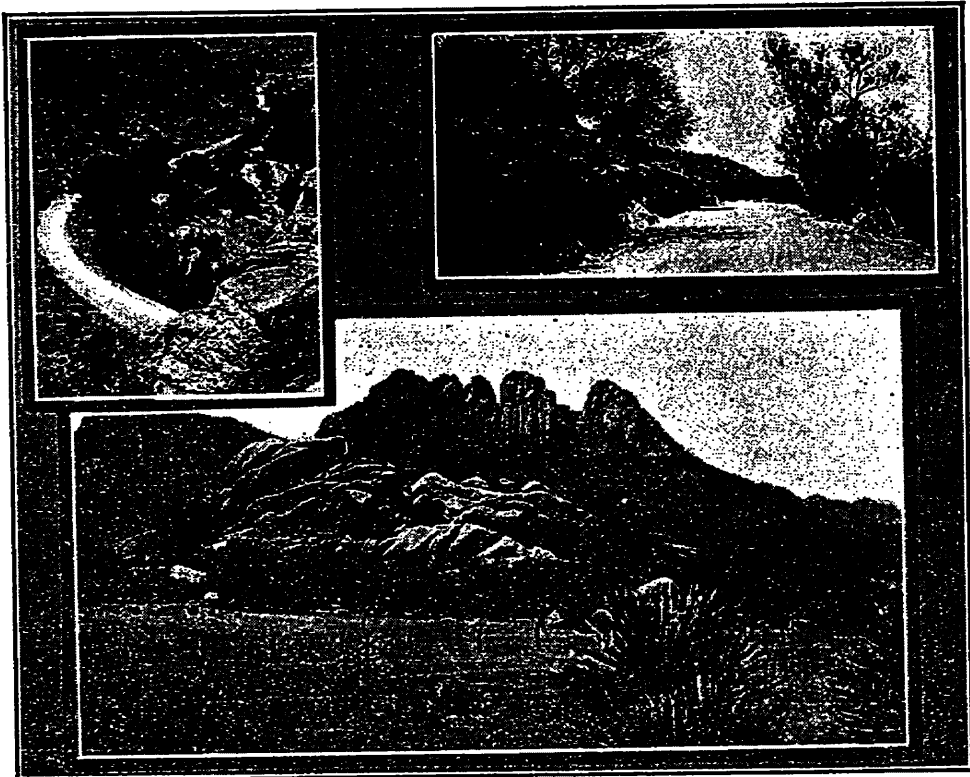
THRILLING TRIPS OVER THE CHIHUAHUA TRAIL

August Santeleban was among the trail breakers of the West. He stated in his book, "A Texas Pioneer": "I commenced my first trip from Indianola, Texas, to Chihuahua, Mexico, in December, 1869. I was not personally acquainted with the route beyond Fort Clark, Texas, but, as I traveled with Mr. Froboese's train to Fort Stockton, I felt no uneasiness on that account, because I had men in my employ, who were familiar with all watering places along the route. The road passed through Goliad, San Antonio, Uvalde, Fort Clark, San Felipe Springs and up Devils River to Camp Hudson to Beaver Lake, where the road left Devils River Canyon and ran in a northwest direction to Howard Well on to Fort Lancaster on the banks of Live Oak Creek, about one mile from the Pecos River. There was a ford on the Pecos about four miles above Lancaster, where the road

entered Presidio County. From that point it was forty miles to Fort Stockton. The road dropped off the Pecos River Barricade immediately back of Fort Lancaster, and the grade is almost perpendicular. How loaded freight wagons ever made it up is a mystery. This route was three hundred miles shorter from Indianola to Chihuahua, than the one by Boerne, Fredericksburg, Fort Concho, and El Paso.

At Fort Stockton the Chihuahua Trail continued on the Overland Trail to Leon Water Holes, nine miles West of Stockton, where it turned southwest to Leoncita, on to Koker-not Springs through Paisano Pass to Antelope; from there to San Esteban, down Alamo Water Shed to Presidio.

Santeleban delivered his cargoes to merchants in Chihuahua. From that point he went to Parral, where he loaded his wagons with bars of silver and crude copper ore, belonging to F. Statfort, of Parral, and returned to Chihuahua where the silver was coined



VIEWS ON DAVIS MOUNTAINS STATE PARK HIGHWAY