PASSWORD

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EUGENE O. PORTER, *Editor*

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Contents

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EUGENE O. PORTER, *Editor*

JACK C. VOWELL, JR., *Associate Editor* CARL HERTZOG, *Design Editor*

Correspondence in regard to articles for PASSWORD should be directed to DR. EUGENE O. PORTER, Texas Western College, El Paso, Texas

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AN OLD TIMER'S REMINISCENCES OF GRANT COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

by OSCAR W. WILLIAMS

(Annotated by SAMUEL D. MYRES, *Texas Western College)*

THE FOLLOWING LETTER, with annotations, is from a book now in preparation on the life and writings of Judge O. W. Williams, pioneer lawyer, surveyor and historian of the Southwest. After coming to Texas from Illinois in 1877 and surveying on the Staked Plains for more than a year, Williams moved to the mining field of Shakespeare, Grant County, New Mexico. There he was active as a miner – none too successfully – during 1879-1881.

By 1885 Williams had settled at Fort Stockton, Texas, where he served for some time as deputy county surveyor and as county judge of Pecos County. Eventually he became a leading lawyer of West Texas. Meanwhile he recorded his experiences and observations in a series of letters and pamphlets that today constitute a unique collection. His writings may properly be regarded as authentic source material relating to the last phase of Southwestern frontier history.

The letter printed here was Williams' first effort as a writer. It appeared originally in the *Southwest Sentinel*, Silver City, January 31, 1885, and was reprinted in the *El Paso Times*, January 20, 1887.

The incidents mentioned in the letter occurred in the 1850's and 1860's, some twenty to thirty years before Williams went to New Mexico. He received the stories from George M. Frazer, pioneer Southwesterner, who knew them at first hand. Since Williams only sketches the high points of Frazer's account, the annotations have been added to fill in the details and place the account in its proper perspective.

Fort Stockton, Texas
January 17, 1885

Editor Southwest Sentinel

Dear Sir:

I send you for publication the following narrative of incidents in the early history of that portion of New Mexico now known as Grant County. It is an interesting recital, but my chief aim in sending it to you is to draw from other Old Timers similar accounts.

The history of Grant County has yet to be written, and something should be done to prepare the facts for the writer. The men who have helped to make this history are fast passing from life and carrying with them the memory of events which should be preserved in more accurate form than that of camp and fireside stories. And if the record, which I have drawn from the lips of the Old Timer whose narrative follows, shall serve to draw from others further details of the early struggles and enterprises of Grant County, I shall have accomplished my purpose.

George M. Frazer, the Old Timer to whom I have referred, after service in the Mexican War, arrived in El Paso, Texas, in September, 1849.[1] Joseph E. Johnston, afterward of Confederate fame, under order from U. S. authorities had opened a road (which afterward became the Overland stage road) from San Antonio to El Paso,[2] and Mr. Frazer came with him on the trip, which lasted three months.

At the time Mr. Frazer arrived in El Paso, there was only one house on the site of present-day El Paso. It was a large adobe, built in Mexican fashion with an open court in the center, and it was occupied as a ranch by a man named Coons.[3] It was situated about where the old Central Hotel stands. The Government rented this building for military headquarters, and the post was commanded by Jefferson Van Horne of the Third Infantry.[4] The corral for the government horses was made by a circle of government wagons after the style of the African *kraal.* There was also a little Mexican stone mill on an *acequia,* about where Ben Schuster's new store now stands.[5]

Mr. Frazer remained in El Paso until March, 1850, when he went to Socorro, New Mexico.[6] During this time a great many people came into the new camp. About this time the Gilletts, well known in the section, settled in El Paso.[7] Charles Thayer, now of Santa Fé, also came to Socorro – a boy fresh from the Boston bakeshops.

Socorro was then quite a village, and was occupied by the Second Dragoons, commanded by Colonel Charles May, noted for a famous charge in the Mexican War.[8] Mr. Frazer remained here until June, 1850, when he went to Santa Fé. In the fall of 1850, Judge Hezekiah Johnson[9] and one Chastine (who was afterwards killed in the Exchange Hotel at Santa Fé by Jim Houston) brought some gold dust to Santa Fé. They claimed to have washed it out of San Francisco River just above where it empties into the Gila River.

The dust was alluring, and a party of about seventy men, one half Americans and the other half Mexicans, was organized to make an expedition. Tobe Love was elected captain, and Henry Dodge, afterward killed by Navajos while acting as their agent, was selected as lieutenant.[10] Mr. Frazer joined the party. Henry Carpenter, afterwards a resident in Tijeras

Canyon near Albuquerque, was also in the party. Everyone was well armed and well equipped, as the route ran through a noted Indian country.

The company left Santa Fé in February, 1851, and marched down the Rio Grande as far as Lemitar, a village about twelve miles above Socorro. Here there was a trail used by parties going to California, which left the valley and ran about west to the Tularosa River, followed the Tularosa, then crossed to the San Francisco, then down the San Francisco to the Gila, then down the Gila beyond the Pima villages, etc.[11]

Before leaving Lemitar, the party was joined by Captain Holt, a former merchant of Socorro. He had very bad health at the time; and when the company commenced to march, a man was detailed to travel by his side in order to see that he did not meet with accident. About three days out from Lemitar, he died in his saddle without a word of complaint and fell to the ground dead.

The company continued its march without further incident until one morning on Tularosa River they suddenly ran on to an Indian encampment. The Indians fled to the hills. The company was halted instantly and camp made. The Indians were seen in the hills, and after considerable signalling they were induced to come closer, so that by means of a Mexican interpreter a palaver was had with them. The Indians spoke the Mexican language. The chiefs proved to be the noted Mangas Coloradas and his brother.[12] Mangas, after informing the company that all this country was his and that he had many people, demanded the object of the white man's visit. Being informed that they were hunting gold, he told them there was much gold in the country, but none for the white men. After further parley he agreed to meet them in a day or two, and bring some cattle, etc., for a trade.

Mangas met them in a day or two farther down the trail and, true to promise, brought along some cattle, sheep and mules – all of which were purchased by the party.[13] But Mangas was dressed very differently at this interview than at the former. He was attired in a military suit given him by some military commission at Santa Rita. It was an officer's suit, with artillery stripes and with only one epaulet, the other having been lost.[14] Mangas at this time was about forty years of age, about six feet tall, and weighing probably 180 pounds; a man of good figure, large head and broad face. He spoke good Mexican but no English.

The company arrived a few days later at San Francisco River, and, locating the place where the first gold dust had been found, about eight miles above the mouth of the river, entered into prospecting vigorously. Pans and rockers had been brought from Santa Fé, and the dirt was dug up and carefully panned for a long distance up and down the river. The dirt showed "color" but no "pay" was struck. The party finally hid and

buried their rockers and many of their pans, and crossed over the country to Santa Rita.[15]

At that time, Santa Rita was a government post under command of Major Morris, of the Third Infantry. There was no work going on then in the Santa Rita mines. Led by the representations of an old Mexican, who told the usual story about the former working of the mine and its abandonment on account of Indian troubles, the company went to San José, near Santa Rita, and commenced work there in a tunnel of quartz. This mine was then known as San José Mine.[16] After working at it some two or three weeks and finding nothing satisfactory, the party disbanded and went back to Santa Fé.

In 1860 the Pinos Altos camp was booming, and every conveyance came in loaded.[17] There was no regular stage line to the place, but a private express ran from Mesilla to the mines. The post office was called Pine Forest, and the private express charged twenty-five cents for each letter carried between Pine Forest and Mesilla. Mr. Frazer moved to Pinos Altos, and some time after coming to the mines, he took charge of this private express and ran it.

The first man killed in the new camp was Bill Dyke; he was killed at Lock and Stienthal's saloon. He was station-keeper at Cow Spring for the Overland stage company.[18] He was killed by a party of several men, among whom were Will Taylor, Colonel Sturton and Tom Hampton. Several of the others in the saloon brawl were arrested and confined in jail at Mesilla. The jail was built of large logs placed upright and bound together. One night a mob came to this jail and, by shooting through the crevices, killed two of the prisoners and desperately wounded the third, who, however, finally recovered.[19]

During these times considerable lawlessness prevailed, and Indians and outlaws made times lively. On one occasion Mr. Frazer, while coming from the mines to Mesilla with his express loaded, found some persons lying dead in the road in Magdalena Canyon. They proved to be Billy Watts, a former owner of Hot Springs; one Hager, from Palmyra, Missouri; and two Mexican women, mother and daughter. It was afterward ascertained that they had been murdered by a party of Mexicans under one Guerra, a sort of desperado from Mesilla. Hager had killed Guerra during the fight.[20]

About June, 1860, a desperate fight occurred in Cooke's Canyon, often referred to in that section. At that time the El Paso and San Diego mail route was run by George Giddings of San Antonio, Texas. It had not yet been discontinued on account of the Civil War.[21] The route then ran to Mesilla, Cooke's Spring, Cow Spring, etc. Since the Indians were very troublesome, each stage was accompanied by six or eight armed guards.

A stage left Mesilla in this month, westbound, in charge of Fried Thomas, and accompanied by Bob Aveline, Johnny Purtell, Roeschler of San Antonio, Wilson, young Mills (a brother of Major Mills of the Tenth Cavalry) and another man whose name I have forgotten. Alejandro Degare of Paso del Norte, Mexico, was freighting from the Hanover copper mines to El Paso. On his way, he found the coach, overturned and rifled, about one mile west of Cooke's Spring. Following up the trail of its occupants, he found their bodies on top of a peak about one-half mile south of the road.

On learning this, Colonel Baylor sent Mr. Frazer with a detail of fifteen men to examine and report all that could be learned. Mr. Frazer found the bodies of Mills, Roeschler, Purtell and Aveline on top of the peak and inside a stone fortification about two feet high. Wilson's body was about 150 yards distant. The bodies were not mutilated, and only two or three were scalped. No writing was found to tell the story of the fight – nothing except mute testimony of the dead bodies. Inside the stone fortification was a shelter of cedar boughs apparently made for protection against the sun, and probably for a wounded man. No Indian bodies were found. The dead bodies were buried on the hill, just as they were lying. Afterwards the story came up from Mexicans in the neighborhood of Janos that Mangas Coloradas and Cochise were both in the fight, lasting three days, with a loss of forty men; that Cochise remained another day and finally killed all.[22]

A short time after this, "General" Wordsworth, who had the title under some appointment from the Confederate government, came from Tucson with his wife and several others east to join the Confederates. At the divide at the head of Cooke's Canyon, just above where Victorio's son was killed four years ago, the party was attacked. Wordsworth was killed here, but the others escaped.[23] Wordsworth's wife afterward married Jack Martin, who owned the noted well at Aleman, on the Jornada.[24]

The fortunes of war carried Mr. Frazer east; after this and since the war he has lived here at Fort Stockton.

I sincerely hope this may call out others of the Old Timers to put on record the details of the Early Timer's story in Grant County, and that the materials may thus be gathered to give every schoolboy in the county the opportunity to know the story.[25]

Respectfully,
O. W. Williams

Note: On the following pages we have the privilege of printing the scholarly annotations prepared by Dr. S. D. Myres for the forthcoming book on the writings of O. W. Williams about the Big Bend of Texas and his earlier experiences on Great Plains.

ANNOTATIONS AND COMMENTS BY SAMUEL D. MYRES

1. At the time Williams wrote this letter, G. M. Frazer was a leading rancher of Pecos County. Following the Civil War, he served as a member of the board which the Texas Legislature set up in 1871 to organize Pecos County. He was also the first county judge, assuming his duties in 1875. Frazer later operated a ranch on the New Mexico border. *Fort Stockton Pioneer,* Sept. 17, 1908; C. G. Raht, *The Romance of Davis Mountains and Big Bend Country* (Odessa, Tex., 1963), 215-216, 226.

2. Brevet Lt. Col. J. E. Johnston of Virginia, a hero of the Mexican War, was in command of the U. S. Topographical Corps charged with surveying the upper and lower routes from San Antonio to El Paso. He later joined in the efforts to find a suitable transcontinental railroad route and became a partisan of the line along the 32° parallel. For essential details and maps, see W. H. Goetzmann, *Army Exploration in the American West,* 1803-1863 (New Haven, 1959), 227-238, 246-247, 268, 276, 296, 363.

3. Benjamin F. Coons, born in St. Louis in 1820, came to the Southwest in the early 1840's, where he became a trader and freighter. In June, 1849, he built a store on land leased from Juan María Ponce de León, whose ranch included much of present-day El Paso. Coons failed in his business ventures and eventually settled in California. For accounts of Coons, see J. R. Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua* (New York, 1854, 2 vols.), I, 123-124, 126, 192-193; R. W. Strickland, "Six Who Came to El Paso: Pioneers of the 1840's," *Southwestern Studies* (No. 3, Fall, 1963), I, 7, 12-19.

4. Major Van Horne, in command of the 6th Company, 3rd Infantry, arrived in El Paso, Sept. 8, 1849. He received orders to support the officials of New Mexico until the Texas-New Mexico boundary could be established. H. H. Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico* (San Francisco, 1890), 441; J. M. Broaddus, *The Legal Heritage of El Paso* (El Paso, 1963), 32-33. Van Horne helped Boundary Commissioner Bartlett restore order at Socorro, near San Elizario, during an outbreak of ruffians in 1850, and assisted him in other ways. *Personal Narrative,* I, 146-146, 161-164.

5. The *El Paso Business Directory* (Albuquerque, 1885) lists Ben Schuster, merchant, as located at 6 South El Paso Street. Schuster, born in Westphalia, Germany, came to the United States in 1869, settling first at Santa Fé, New Mexico. In 1879, with his brother Bernard, he opened a general-merchandise store "in a one-storey adobe building on the east side of El Paso Street between Overland and San Antonio Street." In 1892 he moved to Mexico, where he died in 1927. *El Paso Times,* July 3, 1927; Dec. 13, 1935.

6. Socorro, New Mexico, is almost due north of El Paso on the road to Albuquerque and Santa Fé. The town is located on the site of the Piro Pueblo; it is built around a Franciscan mission established in 1598. Socorro was the center of much Spanish-colonial history, including the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. The present settlement is based on grants from the Spanish crown made in 1817. The discovery of silver

nearby in 1867 caused the town to grow rapidly until the middle 1890's when the price of silver declined. There is still considerable mining in the area. Farming and ranching thrive. The New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology is located here. Joseph Miller, *New Mexico: A Guide to the Colorful State* (New York, 1943), 251-253; G. B. Anderson (ed.), *History of New Mexico, Its Resources and People* (Los Angeles, 1927, 2 vols.), II, 610-614. For early descriptions of Socorro and the nearby town of Lemitar, see George H. Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains* (New York, 1848), 184-185.

7. Henry Smith Gillett and John Smith Gillett, brothers born in Missouri, came to El Paso in 1849 and opened a mercantile store as partners. Being Confederate sympathizers, they lost their business when Union troops occupied El Paso. H. S. moved to Silver City in 1870 and recouped his fortune in merchandising. J. S. did not fare so well and, according to W. W. Mills, took to drink. R. W. Strickland (ed.), *Forty Years at El Paso, 1858-1898, by W. W. Mills* (El Paso, 1962), 12, 134-135, 181.

8. Charles A. May was breveted major, May 8, 1846, for gallantry at the battle of Palo Alto, Texas. On Feb. 23, 1847, he was promoted to colonel for his performance at the battle of Buena Vista, Mexico. He resigned his commission, April 20, 1861. May died on Dec. 24, 1864. M. L. Cummins, "W. G. Freeman's Report on the Eighth Military Department," *The Southwest Historical Quarterly* (No. 1, July, 1949), LIII, 205.

9. According to Dr. Myra Ellen Jenkins, Senior Archivist, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fé, Judge Johnson was "a very important and well-known person" at the time. He moved to Albuquerque about 1860, and later served in the Territorial Legislature and as Judge of the Second Judicial District. He was also proprietor and editor of the *Río Abajo Weekly Press*, which began publication on Jan. 20, 1863. Johnson died in May, 1876. Letter, Dr. Jenkins to S. D. Myres, April 1, 1965. See also *An Illustrated History of New Mexico* (Chicago, 1895), 78; A. W. Poldervaart, *Black-Robed Justice* (Santa Fé, 1948), 83, 85, 87, 94; J. M. Stoney, *Lighting the Candle* (Santa Fé, 1961), 28, 227.

10. Henry L. Dodge served as an Indian agent in the 1850's. At one time he was in charge of Fort Defiance, established to control the Navajo. C. C. Coan, *A History of New Mexico* (Chicago, 1925, 3 vols.), I, 361, 364; Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico*, 675.

11. This trail ran to the north of the route of Philip St. George Cooke and the Mormon Battalion, established in 1846. See Cooke, *The Conquest of New Mexico and California: An Historical and Personal Narrative* (New York, 1878), *passim*. The party swung broadly along the present-day routes of Highways 60, 12, and 180, southwestward to the Gila River.

12. Mangas Coloradas ("Red Sleeves") was a Mimbreño Apache chief from the Santa Rita mining area east of Silver City, who was then ranging northwestward. In 1862 Mangas joined with Cochise at Apache Pass to resist the California troops under General J. H. Carleton then seeking to reopen communication with the East. The following year, Mangas was killed at Apache Tejú while a prisoner of the American garrison. F. C. Lockwood, *The Apache Indians* (New York, 1938), 89-95, 100-130, 137, 140, 143-145; F. W. Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico* (Washington, 1912, 2 vols.), I, 317, 799.

13. This meeting apparently took place in Catron County, north of Grant County, an area long dominated by the Apaches.

14. The suit that Mangas wore may have been the "full suit of blue broadcloth" which Commissioner Bartlett had a tailor make for the Indian chief. "Mangus [*sic*] was mightily pleased with his suit, which consisted of a frock coat lined with scarlet and ornamented with gilt buttons. His pantaloons, at his request, were open from the knee downwards, after the fashion of the Mexicans, with a row of small fancy buttons on one side, and a broad strip of scarlet cloth on the other side from the hip downwards. A white shirt and red silk sash completed his dress. . . . He insisted on wearing his shirt outside of his pantaloons; and all of my efforts to reverse the arrangement were without effect." *Personal Narrative,* I, 319-320.

15. The party turned southeastward, likely passing by La Ciénaga de San Vicente ("The Marsh of Saint Vincent"), later to be the site of Silver City, en route to the mines at Santa Rita. The U. S. Boundary Commission occupied Santa Rita for some time but left in October, 1851. The Army established Fort Webster for the protection of the miners and garrisoned it with dragoons from Fort Fillmore, near Las Cruces. The mines were temporarily closed because of trouble with the Apaches. *Ibid.,* I, 300-325.

16. The Santa Rita military district was in charge of the Third Infantry, plus one company of dragoons, both commanded by Major G. Morris, with headquarters at Fort Webster. M. H. Thomlinson, "Forgotten Fort," *New Mexico Magazine* (No. 11, 1945), XXIII, 14, 39, 41. The San José Mine, located in the Bayard Mining District near Santa Rita, produced gold, silver and copper up to 1869. It was thereafter worked intermittently. In 1928 the American Smelting and Refining Company took it over, operating it until 1947. E. C. Anderson, *The Metal Resources of New Mexico and Their Economic Features Through* 1954 (New Mexico State Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources, Bulletin No. 7, 1957), 60.

17. Pinos Altos ("Tall Pines"), a semi-ghost town, is located eight miles northeast of Silver City. Although there was some placer mining in the area during Spanish colonial times, the big strike occurred in 1860. The important Mountain Key Lode was located in 1861. The place became one of the most productive, and one of the wildest, mining centers of the era. Inventory of the County Archives of New Mexico, No. 9, *Grant County,* 43-44; Dale Collins, *Frontier Mining Days in Southwestern New Mexico* (M.A. Thesis, Texas Western College, 1955), 10, 68, 71; E. C. Anderson, *The Metal Resources of New Mexico,* 70-71; F. A. Jones, *New Mexico Mines and Minerals* (Santa Fé, 1904), 29-33; R. S. Allen, "Pinos Altos, New Mexico," *New Mexico Historical Review* (No. 4, Oct., 1948), XXIII, 302-332.

18. Cow Spring ("Ojo de la Vaca") is located sixteen miles north of the Mimbres River in Luna County, New Mexico, near the border with Mexico. The spring had long been a watering place for travellers. Roads from California and Mexico crossed here. General Cooke and Commissioner Bartlett both stopped at the spring to rest and obtain water. Bartlett, *Personal Narrative,* I, 243-244, 361; Cooke, *The Conquest of New Mexico and California,* 128-129. Today only a few stones of the old stage building remain. A windmill has recently been used to lift water from the spring, which has gone underground. R. P. and M. B. Conkling, *The Butterfield Overland Mail,* 1857-1869 (Glendale, Calif., 1947, 3 vols.), II, 122-123.

19. Hank Smith, who later settled on the High Plains of Texas at Tasker's Ranch, was in the saloon during the confused fight in which Harrington, Bill Dick (Dyke), John De Long and a Mexican woman were killed and Will Taylor was seriously wounded. The incident is graphically described in Hattie M. Anderson (ed.), "Mining and Indian Fighting in Arizona and New Mexico, 1858-1861: Memoirs of Hank Smith," *Panhandle-Plains Historical Review* (No. 1, 1928), I, 92-93.

20. William Hager, operator of a sawmill at Pinos Altos, and William Watts, one of the proprietors of Hot Springs, were killed, along with two Mexican women who were with them. Frazer's express, coming from the mines, encountered the four bodies in Magdalena Canyon soon after the attack. Considerable mystery surrounded the crime, as its perpetrators could not be readily identified. *The Mesilla* (Arizona) *Times,* April 13, 1861. (File in possession of Dr. Rex Strickland, Texas Western College.)

21. George Giddings was the assignee of David Wasson, who in 1854 received the first mail contract for the San Antonio-Santa Fé route. Giddings was one of the leaders of early transportation in the Southwest. He was noted for his encounters with Indians and for the interesting accounts he gave of these incidents. During the Civil War, he acquired the abandoned property at Fort Stockton. He also secured control of the San Antonio-to-San Diego mail line, but lost it because of his sympathy for the Southern cause. Conkling, *The Butterfield Overland Mail,* I, 90-91, 96-99; II, 17, 62.

22. According to a contemporary account, the following were killed: Conductor Free Thomas, Joe Raocher, M. Champion, John Portell, Robert Alvin, Emmett Mills and John Wilson. "They were general favorites in the Río Grande Valley, and their loss spreads a general gloom over the community." *The Mesilla Times,* July 27, 1861. Cochise, joined by Mangas Coloradas, had gone on the warpath to avenge a wrong allegedly inflicted on the Indians by Lt. G. N. Bascom of the U. S. Army. At the time of their death, the white men were looking for Cochise in an effort to placate him. G. H. Giddings estimated that the Apaches damaged his stageline to the extent of $231,720. E. G. W. Mahon and C. V. Kielman, "George H. Giddings and the San Antonio-San Diego Mail Line," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* (No. 2, Oct., 1957), LXI, 220-237. For a revised appraisal of Bascom's part in this episode, see Andrew Wallace (ed.), *Pumpelly's Arizona* (Tucson, 1965), 127-133.

23. William C. Wordsworth was a prominent resident of Sonoita Valley, in the Gadsden Purchase, preceding the Civil War. Governor Lewis S. Owings of the Provisional Government of Arizona named Wordsworth a major general of the militia, essentially an organization on paper. Wordsworth, a lawyer, was a member of the convention of 1860 held to establish the Provisional Government of the Territory. B. Sacks, M.D., *Be It Enacted: The Creation of the Territory of Arizona* (Phoenix, 1964), 133, 134, 136, 153. As a rancher, Wordsworth supplied Fort Bliss with cattle. Anderson (ed.), "Memoirs of Hank Smith," 80-86. In Dr. Sack's opinion, Wordsworth was killed between the 1st and 10th of August, 1861, by a band of Apaches under the immediate command of José Mangus. Letter to S. D. Myres, March 14, 1965.

24. In 1848, while living in Orange, Texas, Wordsworth met Esther Cox Delano at the nearby town of Beaumont. Several years later they were married and moved to

Arizona, arriving probably in 1857. After Wordsworth was killed, she married Jack Martin, who operated the well located at the town of Aleman, New Mexico, east of the desert known as *Jornada del Muerto*. The place was a stop on the Butterfield stage running from Mesilla to Santa Fé. By 1913 Mrs. Esther Martin had moved to Hermosa Beach, California, where she lived with her daughter. Letter from Dr. Sacks cited in preceding note. (Dr. B. Sacks is a director of the Arizona Historical Foundation, Phoenix.)

25. Several accounts dealing with the early history of Grant County have appeared since Williams issued this call. One of the best of these is a series on Shakespeare, the mining town, as it was during Williams' residence there, written by Mrs. Emma M. Muir, *New Mexico Magazine* (1948), Vol. 26, Nos. 7-10. Another sound and readable study is C. K. Naegle, *The History of Silver City, New Mexico*, 1870-1886 (M.A. Thesis, University of New Mexico, 1943).

OWEN PAYNE WHITE

El Paso's First Writer of Renown

by JOHN GORDON KNIGHT

[The material for this article was obtained through interviews with the late Mr. White's sister, Mrs. O. S. Osborn, who has resided in El Paso since early childhood; and Carl Hertzog, who knew Mr. White in 1924.—The Author.

This article was first published in *El Burro* (March, 1965), and is reprinted here with the kind permission of the author and of Professor John J. Middagh, Director of Student Publications, Texas Western College.—The Editor.]

OWEN P. WHITE wrote the second most important history of El Paso (the first being *Forty Years at El Paso,* by W. W. Mills) entitled *Out of the Desert, The Historical Romance of El Paso,* published by the McMath Company in 1923. This book is now a rare collector's item, as are all his others: *Them Was the Days; Trigger Fingers; Lead and Likker; A Frontier Mother; My Texas, 'Tis of Thee;* and *Autobiography of a Durable Sinner* (Owen's story of himself).

White, the second of three children, was born on June 9, 1879; he was one of the first anglo babies born in El Paso. (He always claimed he was the first.) He first saw daylight in a little abode hut at the corner of Mesa and San Antonio Streets. Lerner's ladies department store presently stands on the site of the long-gone adobe dwelling.

Owen's parents met in the territory of Colorado shortly after the Civil War. Owen's father, Alward White, was a rancher at that time, although he was rather unsuccessful at that occupation. Mr. White was born and reared on the eastern shores of Maryland. He attended the University of Maryland, where he received his training in the field of medicine and eventually earned his M.D. Mrs. White, whose maiden name was Katherine J. Payne, hailed from Petersburg, Virginia. Alward White and Katherine J. Payne married shortly after their first meeting. For a honeymoon, they drove to his ranch on the Platte River in a buckboard. After their first child, Alward, was born, they left the ranch and the Colorado territory. The family moved on to Tucson and the territory of Arizona. Mr. White got a job as collector of customs. He and his family had hardly let the dust settle

around them when they decided to move to Ft. Bayard, New Mexico, near Silver City. At Ft. Bayard, White finally hung up his shingle when he became attached to the Army Medical Corps as a surgeon. The family lived at Ft. Bayard for several months whereupon Dr. White decided that they would move down to El Paso, a wild border town and an army outpost.

They settled for a while in El Paso del Norte, a little sunbaked town whose adobe dwellings, along with those of the neighboring Mexican village of Juárez, bordered the Río Grande. After Owen's birth here at the Pass of the North, the Whites moved back to Tucson where their only daughter, Leigh, was born. Their final move was back to El Paso where White set up practice as a doctor.

Owen attended public school at old Central, which later became known as El Paso High. He graduated from it on the 27th of May, 1896. Commencement was held in Myar's Opera House. Shortly after graduation, Owen went to Austin where he enrolled at The University of Texas. He studied there for only a short time before dropping out and returning to El Paso. Later in life he attended New York University, where he studied law. He never graduated from college. Meanwhile, after his return from Austin and The University of Texas, Owen began working in an El Paso bank. Shortly after, he began writing.

World War I saw Owen leave El Paso for the East. He enlisted at Camp Lee in Virginia. He served as a sergeant in the Army Medical Corp in France. Serving and attending to the wounded, he was fortunate in not being wounded himself.

After being discharged at the war's end, he returned to his banking job in El Paso. It was here that he met an attractive employee of the bank named Hazel Harvey. They began to see much of each other after banking hours. Mike, as Owen called Hazel, hailed from Chicago. They fell very much in love and were soon married.

During the summer of 1923, Owen was doing odd jobs around El Paso. He wrote poems for the El Paso newspaper and worked on *Out of the Desert*. Mr. McMath, the book publisher, sent a copy of *Out of the Desert* to the *New York Times Magazine* book editor, whom he did not know and did not have influence with.

The *Times* liked the book and gave it a big review. This brought White to the attention of the *New York Times*. Shortly before the inauguration of Ma Ferguson, as Governor of Texas, the *Times* wired him asking if he would cover the event. He informed them that he would. They liked his coverage and invited him to come to work for them. Owen and Mike established residence in Kew Gardens. They

were never to return to the great Southwest and The Pass of the North, except for visits.

White later changed to the *Brooklyn Eagle*. His big break came when he was offered a position on the staff of *Collier's Magazine* as associate editor, a position he was to hold for the next twelve years. His stories of the Southwest such, as *Trigger Fingers* and *Them Was The Days,* were published in *Collier's.*

Frontier Mother, the story of his mother and father, was published first in serial form in *Collier's Magazine* and later in a hard-bound edition. Most of Owen's stories in *Collier's* were published in book form and are now collector's items. In literary circles, Owen was becoming well known for his poetry as well as for his historical writings.

Owen received national publicity when he and *Collier's Magazine* were named defendants in a half-million dollar libel suit brought againt them by R. B. Creager, a political boss in Brownsville, Texas. In his own life story, *The Autobiography of a Durable Sinner,* White made certain remarks linking Creager to a big political scandal in Hidalgo County, of which Brownsville is the county seat. While in Brownsville for the trial, White's life was threatened on several occasions. He was offered a body guard because the city didn't want "his blood smearing up the pavement." Creager, however, lost his suit against White and *Collier's Magazine.* This added much to Owen White's reputation and helped in sales of his books, especially the one that had been responsible for all the fuss. The chapter dealing with Creager, however, was left out in subsequent issues of the book.

Another humorous episode in White's life was the result of the governor of Louisiana, Huey P. Long, being socked in the mouth by an unknown assailant while he was washing his hands in the Sands Point Bath House in New York. This incident brought much amusement and pleasure to thousands in our country. Long at the time was a United States Senator from the State of Louisiana. White instigated the striking of a gold medal to commemorate the event, the socking of "His Piscatorial Majesty, Senator Huey P. Long, King Fish of Louisiana."

White continued to write with great success and authority on the southwest and its inhabitants. In the 1940's he developed cancer of the throat. His operation was completely successful according to the doctors; however the cancer had spread to his lungs. He continued to write until hospitalization and a weakened condition made it impossible to wield a pen. On the seventh of December, 1946, death stilled his pen forever. At the time of his death, he was working on a historical book called *The Old Trails West of the Mississippi.* The

unfinished manuscript, as well as many other mementos of his literary career, were given to the Texas Western College Library by his widow. Thus ended the career of one of El Paso's most famous and controversial sons. He will be long remembered by El Pasoans and chroniclers of the Southwest for his contributions to the literature of the Southwest.

Following are two unpublished poems by Owen Payne White:

A SOUL'S SOLILOQUY

Today the journey is ended,
I have worked out the mandates of fate.
Naked, alone, undefended,
I knock at the uttermost gate.

Lo the gate swings wide at my knocking;
Across endless reaches I see
Lost friends, with laughter, come flocking
To give a glad welcome to me.
Farewell, the maze has been threaded,
This is the ending of strife;
Say not that death should be ended,
Tis but the beginning of life.

(no date)

DEATH

Tis death, I hear his footfalls as he now draws near
But in my soul they wake no thought of fear.
Tis rather that I welcome as a friend,
This somber spectre who but comes to bring an end
To life with all its troubles and its cares,
Who comes to close mine eyes and wipe away my tears.
Who comes to tell me that there is beyond
A home where love doth rule and other loves respond,
I do not fear, I rise and now embrace,
This dreaded spectre in whose pallid face,
I read as plain as if twere writ in fire,
That only after death can man have life's desire,
And now as death draws near, and o'er my couch doth bend,
I clasp with trusting love, his hand, my truest friend.

(16th of February, 1901)

PAT GARRETT — *Two Forgotten Killings*

by ROBERT N. MULLIN

THE SENSATIONAL KILLING of Billy the Kid has, through the years, overshadowed other events in the career of Pat Garrett. Two other killings with which his name was identified have, except in the recollections of his contemporaries, been almost forgotten.

THE FIRST – 1877

The earliest reported is the story of an immigrant boy from Ireland.[1] His name was JoeBriscoe. Making his way into northeast Texas from New Orleans, he found work as a farm hand. But picking cotton on the Joe Darty place wasn't exactly what young Briscoe had pictured as life in the romantic American West, and when he heard that a buffalo hunting party was being organized nearby, he sought out one of the men who had been employed as a hunter. The man's name, he learned, was Garrett.

Pat Garrett's career as a buffalo hunter had commenced in 1875, after he quit his job as a cowboy with a Kansas-bound cattle drive and secured for himself and his pal, Luther Duke, employment with W. Skelton Glenn who was in Dennison, Texas, organizing a buffalo hunting party. Though the 25-year old Garrett had no previous experience in the work, he became "a fairly good hunter," good enough, anyway, to be continued in Mr. Glenn's employ on a series of hunts until early in 1878 when the buffalo ranges in the Texas Panhandle had been pretty well "hunted out."

Pat Garrett was a good story teller and his description of life and adventure on the buffalo range so excited young Joe Briscoe that he begged to be taken along. Though the boy frankly acknowledged that he was a "green horn," Skelton Glenn was so impressed with Joe's gay and friendly personality that he offered no objection to the lad's "joining up."

When the party stopped at Ft. Griffin[2] for outfitting, Mr. Glenn somewhat reluctantly agreed to Garrett's request to be taken in as a junior partner in the outfit, and thereafter Garrett was to be in charge when Glenn was not on hand. One such occasion arose when the party had penetrated the buffalo country and made camp west of the Double Mountains. Glenn found it necessary to leave Garrett in charge while he made the 27-mile ride to Camp Reynolds,[3] the nearest point where he could secure a replacement part for a gun which Garrett had broken. Returning on the evening of the second

day, he was met near the camp by the cook, Gundy Burns. The cook had bad news.

From Burns and from Ed O'Bierne,[4] a visitor at the camp, Glenn learned what had happened that morning. It seems that while Burns was mixing dough for the breakfast biscuits, Joe Briscoe, a stickler for cleanliness, had taken a piece of soap and gone to the nearby pool to scrub his handkerchief, a bandana such as the men sometimes wore over the lower part of their faces as a protection from the dust and sand. He then sought to dry the handkerchief by holding it up to the cook's breakfast fire, remarking that there wasn't much use trying to get anything really clean in the muddy water. Pat, more truculent than usual that morning, baited the boy, saying, in effect that nobody but a damned Irishman would be stupid enough to try to wash anything in that water.

The boy could take teasing and joking without losing his good humor, but on the slur at the Irish, he flared up. Angered by what he considered the impudence of the boy's retort, Garrett attacked him with his fists, knocking him down. Joe tried to strike back, but missed. Garrett then went to the wagon, got a .45 pistol, and shot Joe Briscoe dead.

There being no doctor, lawyer or public official within many miles, the hunters held an unofficial inquest over the body of the dead man. The question of whether the victim had fallen to the ground, or was in the act of falling when he was shot, was raised when the corpse was examined; the bullet had entered the right side of his body at the belt-line and had ranged upward, coming out on the left side near a pocket in his vest. The shot had been fired at such close range that the clothing around the wound was scorched.

Joe Briscoe was buried on the prarie near the spot where he fell.

Immediately after the killing, Garrett had taken flight, riding away on one of Glenn's best horses. It was not until two days later that Glenn encountered Pat, some distance from the camp. Garrett was hungry and cold from exposure in the previous night's violent rain storm. The two returned to camp. Garrett, obviously remorseful, excused his act by saying that he feared Briscoe was about to reach for an axe which was lying nearby. He was anxious to proceed west with the party. Glenn, however, was positive in his insistence that Pat must go back to Ft. Griffin and give himself up, and this Garrett agreed to do. After an absence of several days, he returned, saying that he had reported the killing to the authorities but that the latter had declined to hold a hearing or investigation of any kind. Perhaps Glenn believed this story – in any event he allowed Pat to rejoin the party.

After Garrett's return, Gundy Burns became nervous and suffered from lack of sleep, until he finally quit his job and left the country. Back in Ft. Worth he later confessed: "All I'd been able to do since Briscoe's death had been to watch Garrett, wondering if any minute he might kill me too, as I was the only witness."

The hunting was poor, and even poorer when they had moved farther west and north to a new base camp at Casas Amarillas.[5] In mid-February (1878) Glenn determined to explore the possibilities even farther north and west, and taking with him two of his hunters, Pat Garrett and Nick Ross, made the hundred-odd mile ride to Taiban in New Mexico.[6] Here they learned that their search was fruitless, but decided that before returning to Texas they would pay a visit to the little community of Ft. Sumner, a few miles to the west. For Pat Garrett, this was a fateful decision.

Garrett had never ceased to brood on the killing of young Briscoe. It may be surmised that this may have had some bearing on his decision not to return to Texas. True, the prospects at Ft. Sumner were not promising; upon their arrival Nick Ross had learned at the one public eating place, Beaver Smith's, that meals cost 50¢ each. The three could muster only about one dollar between them and had to content themselves with buying a little bacon, flour and coffee, and cooking it over an open fire. Not only was Garrett broke, but the chances of finding gainful employment in the tiny community appeared nil. However, when Glenn and Ross turned their faces toward home, Garrett elected to remain at Ft. Sumner. Here, a little more than three years later, was destined to occur an event which was the climax of Pat Garrett's career, one upon which his reputation was thereafter to always rest – the killing of another young man, Billy the Kid, whose fame made him as conspicuous as Joe Briscoe was obscure.

THE LAST – 1899

The last killing in which Pat Garrett was named took place the first week in October, 1899, at W. W. Cox's San Augustin ranch in the Organ Mountains of New Mexico, slightly more than eight years before Garrett himself was killed.[7]

It all started one day some months before when Mr. Cox was branding calves in the old rock corral near the springs. Bill McCall was roping and tieing; Jim Heston was marking; Mr. Cox was directing operations and lending a hand to the others when necessary. A dust covered rider on a weary horse rode up to the corral, observed the proceedings briefly and then, without a word, jumped over the fence and pitched in to help.

The stranger was a wiry fellow of not more than medium height, who looked to the others to be about twenty years old. (Mrs. Irene Cravens McNelly told this writer that as a young girl, she, as a visitor at the Cox home, was present when the stranger was killed, and that he looked to be about sixteen years of age. Newspaper accounts of his death estimated his age as twenty-three. Bill McCall, who was working in the corral when the stranger arrived, told Mr. Jim Cox and this writer that the newcomer appeared to be not more than twenty years old.) When the branding was finished, the young man told Mr. Cox that his name was Reed and that he was looking for work. W. W. Cox was known for never refusing a helping hand and, though he needed no more ranch hands at the time, he told Reed he could go to work around the house. Mrs. Cox was expecting a baby and could use some extra help in the housework. Besides, Mr. Cox was impressed with the cut of the young fellow's jib.

During the two or three months he was at the Cox ranch, Reed did his work well and minded his own business. Employees at the ranch wondered why a fellow who'd obviously had experience with cattle, was content to work as a houseboy, but he seemed content with his job, and they asked him no questions.

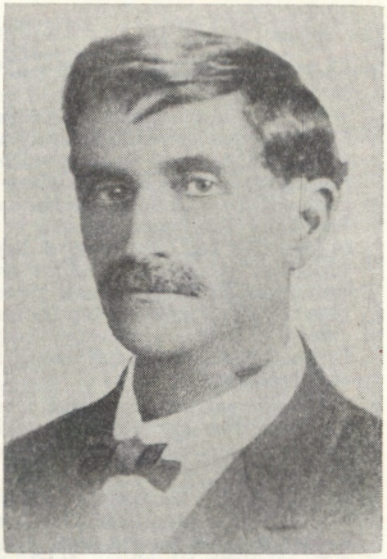
Meanwhile, officials in Greer county, Oklahoma, were looking for one Norman Newman, charged with robbing and murdering his partner and hiding the body in a "shallows," in November, 1898. Attracted by the substantial reward offered, many men were on the lookout for Newman. One of these, J. B. Smith of Amarillo, Texas, picked up a rumor that Newman was hiding out in Doña Ana county, New Mexico. Proceeding to Las Cruces in September, ostensibly "looking for grass," he secretly interested Sheriff Pat Garrett in the search. Garrett recalled that a stranger answering Newman's general description was employed at the Cox home.

Sheriff Blaylock of Greer county was notified and arrived in short order. Although one local account names Smith as accompanying Garrett when he went to apprehend the suspect, it was Blaylock, according to newspaper reports, who went with the sheriff and deputy José Espalin to the Cox ranch on October 7th.

Espalin rode horseback, while Garrett and his companion drove the sheriff's buckboard out the old dirt road through Alameda canyon and across the San Augustin "saddle" to the Cox ranch, some 27 miles distant. Mr. Cox was absent in Old Mexico at the time, and the other men folk were all away from the ranch house when the Garrett party approached. Espalin's horse and the buckboard were left behind a rise in the ground, well out of sight of the house, as Garrett and Espalin

went forth to reconnoiter. Their companion did not accompany them.

After carefully looking over the ground, the two men entered the gate in the high adobe wall which enclosed the patio on the west side of the house. Crossing the patio with guns drawn, they entered the open door of the kitchen. Reed was washing dishes and Mrs. Cox was busy nearby.



PAT GARRETT
(courtesy C. L. Sonnichsen)

At Garrett's command, "Throw up your hands or I'll kill you," Reed whirled as if to escape, and was knocked down by a pistol blow on the head. As the officers were trying to handcuff the prostrate man, the noise of the struggle aroused A. B. Fall's pet bulldog which had been sleeping on the porch outside. Jumping through the open French window, the dog sprang to attack the intruders. As they were fending off the dog's attack, Reed made a dash for the door leading to the "butcher shop," a kind of roofed-over breezeway where fresh meat was hung. The "butcher shop" connected the main building with a small adjacent wing which housed the ranch commissary—where a pistol usually reposed on a shelf behind the counter.

Reed never made it. Two shots rang out almost simultaneously. One missed, lodging in the wall just to the right of the door. The other found it's mark.

Reed's body was placed on the bed of the sheriff's small buckboard, the head resting under the seat and the lower legs dangling behind. Here a gruesome touch was added. When the party reached Las Cruces it was discovered that the dead man's feet and lower legs had been badly cut and bruised by the ridges of the high-center road.

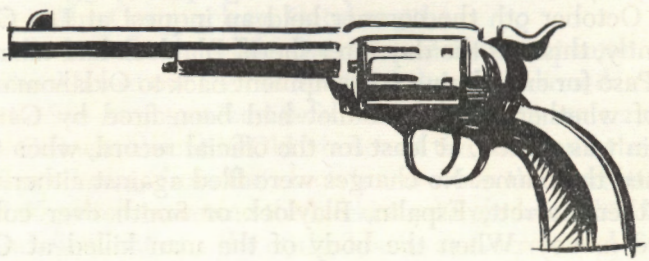
On October 9th the coroner held an inquest at Las Cruces. Significantly, this was the day after sheriff Blaylock had taken the body to El Paso for embalming and shipment back to Oklahoma. The question of whether the fatal bullet had been fired by Garrett or by Espalin was settled, at least for the official record, when the deputy assumed the blame. No charges were filed against either man.

Neither Garrett, Espalin, Blaylock or Smith ever collected the reward money. When the body of the man killed at Cox's ranch

reached Oklahoma, the authorities there refused to pay the reward offered for Newman. In the minds of many New Mexicans this raised a question – a question which will now probably never be answered: Was the man killed at the Cox ranch in October, 1899, indeed Norman Newman, the Oklahoma killer?

REFERENCES

1. Facts of the buffalo hunting trip are largely from "Pat Garrett as I Knew Him on the Buffalo Ranges," an unpublished manuscript by W. Skelton Glenn. Little is known of Glenn's life other than the understanding that he was a boy-soldier in the Confederate army, was living in northeast Texas during the 1870's, was a buffalo hunter and later a stockman. In 1905 he lived for a time at Roswell, N. M., and by 1910 was making his home in El Paso, where he had a room on Newman street. At that time, in association with Bert Judia, he was engaged in the buying of horses and mules at Parral and elsewhere in the state of Chihuahua. In February, 1965, Mr. Judia stated to Mrs. Eve Ball, that some of the stock purchased included animals presumably "liberated" by Pancho Villa for conversion into cash to support his revolutionary activities. Glenn left El Paso, presumably for the Pecos valley, but returned to El Paso two or three years later. He is supposed to have died somewhere in East Texas around 1924. The manuscript was presented to this writer by Mrs. Charles (Clara) Bryan, Glenn's good friend who nursed and cared for him during a prolonged period of ill health at El Paso.
2. Ft. Griffin, one-time army post, was a community located near the northern line of Shackleford county, Texas, something less than a hundred miles by road, west of Ft. Worth, and then the largest and most important town between Ft. Worth and El Paso.
3. Camp Reynolds, known also as Reynolds City or Rath City, was a hunter's trading post on the old Mackenzie Trail, southeast of Double Mountain, about twelve miles northwest of the present town of Hamlin, in what is now Stonewall county, Texas. J. Evetts Haley is authority for the fact that this supply post was established in 1876 by Charlie Rath in association with Lee & Reynolds of Dodge City, Kansas, but was abandoned some two years later when most of the great herds of buffalo had been slaughtered, and Mooar Brothers, along with other big hunting outfits, moved away.
4. Ed O'Bierne was co-proprietor of Ft. Griffin's most notorious dance hall.
5. Casas Amarillas consisted of ancient man-made caves in the bluff near the head of Yellow House canyon, approximately forty miles northwest of the modern city of Lubbock. At the caves, the hunters were interested to discover the remnants of some old entrenchments and the marks left by bullets on nearby rocks. From their camp here, by some reports, the hunters ranged as far north as Tascosa.
6. A small group of native New Mexican houses, about fifty miles in from the New Mexico-Texas line, west of the present community of Clovis.
7. Facts of the Reed killing are based on interviews with Mr. Jim W. Cox and with Mr. William McCall, April, 1964, as well as with Mrs. Ida (Irene) Cravens McNelly, July, 1964. Newspaper accounts consulted include the El Paso *Herald*, October 9th, 1899.



The Bob Fitzsimmons - Peter Maher Fight

As told by an eye-witness, LUKE BRITE,
to VIRGINIA RIDOUT KLAUS *and* OPAL CRANOR WILCOX.

"HOW DID YOU LIKE THE PICTURE?," I asked the Old Timer, as we sat sipping our coffee after the showing of "The Westerner" at the little neighborhood theatre.

"Well, they sure had to draw a lot on their imagination for some of those scenes," he replied, "and if you ask me, I think Bob Fitzsimmons and Peter Maher did more to put Langtry, Texas on the map than did Lilly Langtry."

"Were you there, Luke?," I asked him, and with a twinkle in his eye he assured me that he certainly was and also that prize fights fifty years ago with Honest John Kelly and One Eyed Connolly in the ringside seats were nothing like the society affairs of today.

In the year 1896 Dan Stuart announced in the border town of El Paso, Texas a Fight Carnival for February fourteenth. El Paso citizens had raised a purse of $10,000, a big purse in those days, with the provision that a series of fights ending in the heavyweight bout between Fitzsimmons and Maher was to be held in or near the town.

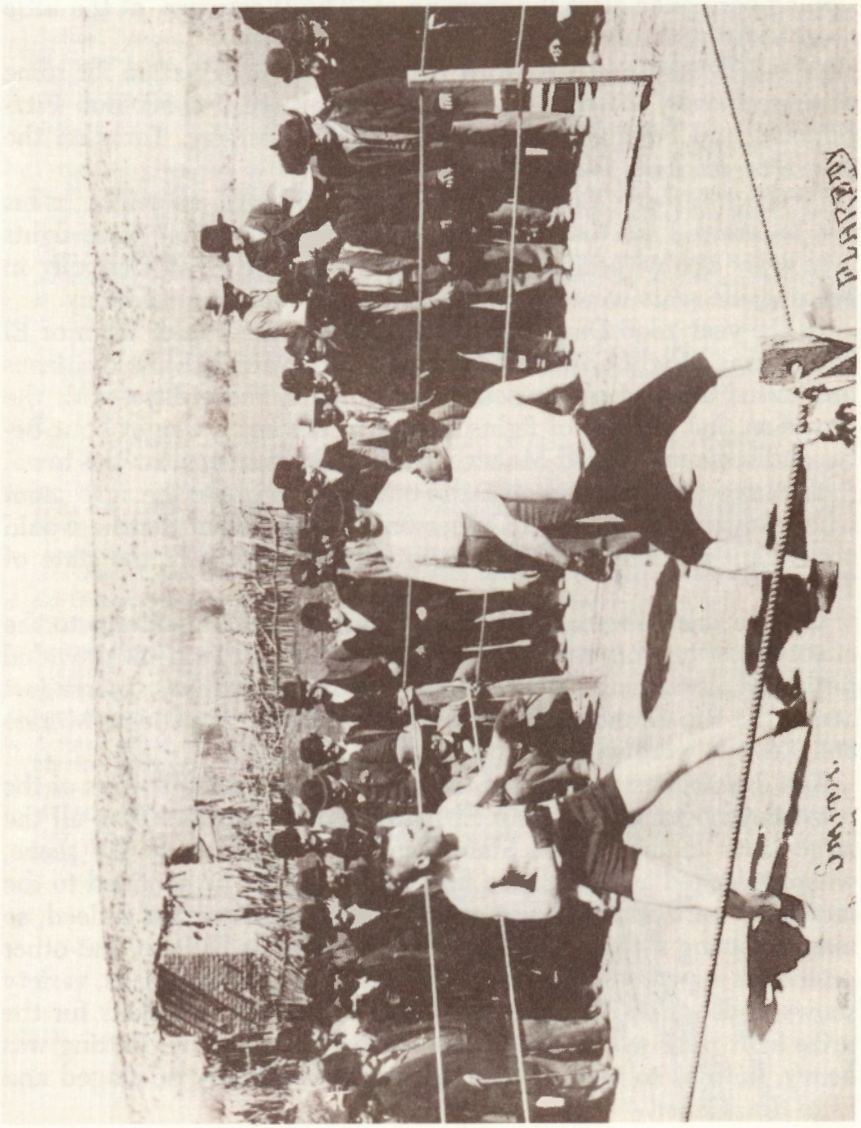
The ink was hardly dry on Dan Stuart's signature to the agreement when Governor Charles A. Culberson issued an edict that he would not permit the fights to be held within the borders of the state of Texas.

Despite this gubernatorial edict, Stuart issued a manifesto to the effect that the fights would be held "in or near El Paso" as provided for in the agreement. Of course, there were alternatives. Juárez just across the Río Grande in Mexico and the territories of New Mexico and Arizona were within easy reach.

Ten days before the date of the fight the fans and followers of the prize ring began to drift into El Paso. Also newspapers from all the large cities in the United States sent their reporters to the scene, where it looked as though the fighting would not be confined to the men who were advertised to appear in the roped arena. Indeed, so many sporting men and gamblers were drawn to El Paso that other promoters appeared on the scene to open new gambling halls, variety shows, rodeos and in Juárez, to promote bull fights. Tickets for the prize fight were selling from twenty-five dollars and up. Betting was heavy, both as to where the fight would eventually be staged and as to the winner.

Peter Maher began training at Las Cruces, New Mexico, forty-five miles northwest of El Paso, and Bob Fitzsimmons established his training quarters in Juárez, where he and Nero, his pet lion, became the objects of much curiosity.

Edison's kinetoscope, one of the first moving picture machines, was rushed through the manufacturing process and completed especially to photograph this heavyweight championship fight. This was also a



big factor in attracting wide-spread attention to the El Paso Fight Carnival as at that time no moving pictures had yet been made. This machine, it was announced, could take "forty pictures a minute," and the newspapers proclaimed it "undoubtedly one of the greatest inventions of the age."

When it seemed certain that Dan Stuart intended to go through with the fight as scheduled, Texas Rangers were ordered to El Paso to prevent it; the Arizona National Guard was mobilized to stop it from being held in that state; Federal and State officials gathered in Las Cruces, New Mexico; Mexican troops were dispatched to Juárez, and delegate Tom Catron of New Mexico, rushed a bill through Congress barring prize fights in the territories of the United States. But Dan Stuart maintained his poker face and said the fight would be held, neither denying nor confirming a current report that Bat Masterson was bringing one Hundred Pinkerton detectives to El Paso to aid in pulling off the fight.

On February tenth, Adjutant General Mabry slipped into El Paso with ten grim and well armed Texas Rangers. During the next ten days others arrived with Captain McDonald. General Mabry conferred with the Governor of New Mexico who came in person to size up the situation. He then announced that "The Texas Rangers will act on all soil in dispute between Texas and New Mexico, and the United States and Old Mexico."

This announcement quieted the rumor that the fight would be held on disputed territory as a means of evading the authorities.

About this time Bat Masterson arrived from Denver, Colorado, and a United States Marshal with twelve deputies came from Santa Fé, New Mexico. John L. Sullivan came as a spectator.

Meanwhile, Colonel Parker, in command at Ft. Bliss, issued orders that no officers should leave the Post after six o'clock p.m. The Governor of Arizona then ordered additional companies of the National Guard to San Simon, where one report said the fight would be held. The *Tucson Citizen* protested in the following language: "Of all the Tom Foolery the Territory of Arizona has ever been guilty of, the worst is sending the Arizona Militia to chase jack rabbits up and down the San Simon valley. The idea of ordering out three or four companies of militia to stop a couple of windy pugs from pummelling each other is a ridiculous farce."

The kinetoscope and the lumber and canvas for the arena were loaded in box cars. The fight crowd hung around El Paso expectantly in hotels, saloons, and gambling halls until midnight on February thirteenth, expecting that the fight would be held ahead of schedule.

But on the day set for the fight it was announced that Maher had developed eye trouble, "having got some alkali dust in one of his orbs," and that the fight would be postponed three or four days. Consequently, the five preliminary bouts were canceled. The town grew restless. Texas Rangers followed Fitzsimmons in El Paso, and Maher was shadowed by Deputy Marshals in Las Cruces.

Resentment grew over the presence of the Rangers without a request from the sheriff, and the El Paso City Council passed a resolution condemning the Governor for sending them. To this protest General Mabry replied: "When I saw in the papers that Masterson was going to have a hundred men at the ringside, the inference was that these men were going to violate the law. That is what brought me and my men to El Paso."

On February twentieth, a report came from Galveston, Texas that Maher and Fitzsimmons would take a steam tug with a barge in tow and go three or four miles out into the Gulf of Mexico to fight. The kinetoscope interest, it was said, was willing to pay the purse and all expenses. Then on Thursday the following notice was posted at Dan Stuart's office: "Persons desirous of attending the fight will report to Headquarters to-night at 9:45. Railroad fare for the trip will not exceed twelve dollars." Possibly Dan Stuart and the Railroad officials were all who knew the destination.

But Judge Roy Bean and his "Law West of the Pecos" had fixed everything. Didn't his sign on his Jersey Lilly Saloon read "Ice Cold Beer and Law West of the Pecos"? What better place for this outlaw fight to be held than where both law and beer were served to suit the customer?

Now the town of El Paso became wild with excitement. A great crowd gathered at the station, many of the fans bringing baskets of food for the trip. No one knew where they were going but "they were on their way."

General Mabry with two Captains and Half of the Ranger force boarded the train. It carried three hundred passengers and this number was increased along the route.

When the train reached Langtry, Texas it stopped and the fight fans were directed by Judge Roy Bean to the Río Grande, about one half mile from town. The men followed a narrow cow path down the side of the cliff where Judge Roy Bean had erected a pontoon bridge for them to cross the river. The arena had been hurriedly constructed on a sand flat on the Mexican side, with cliff or jagged rocks towering high on either side. This proved a financial disaster to the promoter as most of the fans either stood or found seats on the nearby rocks and cliffs.

The Texas Rangers could not interfere on foreign soil, and the Mexican soldiers were many miles away. In fact, the Rangers themselves became the most enthusiastic of the spectators.

The gong sounded, and the fight was on!

The kinetoscope refused to function.

Fitzsimmons at one hundred and sixty pounds, tall and thin with powerful shoulders, met Peter Maher, that physical giant of one hundred and eighty pounds. Fitzsimmons scuffled to the center of the ring and ducked and watched for an opening. Maher swung a quick right to Fitzsimmon's jaw and immediately Fitzsimmons ducked and set a short right crashing to the point of the big Irishman's chin. Maher went down as though he had been hit with an axe, rolled over and was counted out.

There were some who said the fight was won by an accidental blow; but the Old Timer opined: "Bob seemed to win all his fights with those 'accidental blows' ".

The Old Timer recalled among the spectators at the fight many prominent names in the making of our nation's history. A nationally prominent sporting man journeyed all the way from New York to see the fight. He hung around El Paso and vicinity for days waiting for the fight to be pulled off. He paid a fabulous price in New York for a ringside seat. He boarded the train with the others, and reached the ringside to witness the big event. As the fighters reached the ringside, he pulled a cigar from his pocket and turned to another "ringsider" seated on a rock behind him, for a light. When he turned to the ring again the fight was over.

The fight that the troops of a great state, two territories, and a foreign country had failed to stop; a fight that had aroused a great nation and had been the means of creating special legislation at Washington; a fight that for a time had threatened to cause "gunplay" that might have had the gutters of El Paso running red with blood, lasted just one minute and twenty-five seconds, and Judge Roy Bean, that genius of Law and Rascality had found the place where it could be pulled off.

To fight fans of other days, it wasn't the fight itself that constituted the principal attraction so much as the atmosphere that surrounded the fight game – an atmosphere that is missing today. The mere fact that the spectators might be chased from pillar to post by authorities supported by state troops – authorities who today are the most prominent among the spectators at the Championship Fights – only served to add zest and picturesque abandon to this popular sport.

OLD BUCK AND I. A Cow Country Idyl

by Carlysle Graham Raht

(Odessa: The Rahtbooks Company, 1964, 208 pp. $5.50.)

Old Buck and I is not so much the story of a boy and his horse as it is a testimonial to the fabulous memory of its author; a memory that spans with crystal clarity a period of nearly eighty years. It is also the story of the part played by the horse on the working ranches of the 1880's.

Carly Raht was not more than seven hands high when his father presented him with Old Buck. Two factors made the presentation necessary: little Carly cried for Old Buck and his own horse "Polecat" had just turned outlaw. There wasn't much else to do.

Old Buck was already a trained cow pony when Carly's father brought him down from the Indian Nation; he soon became known as the fastest horse on the ranch. He was also the smartest. He was as crafty as a fox, as sly as a kitten and as loveable as only a horse can be. It was difficult at times to say which was master, the boy or the horse.

Carly Raht's childhood on the great spread where he grew up was peopled with characters which would enchant today's child – characters so vividly enlivened by memory that they seem to stride across the pages in flesh and blood. There was Dan Earle, ranch foreman, Billy Gilbert the bronc twister, Dave Pickett, top hand, Jim Gilbert the top roper and many lesser cowboys without whom no working spread can operate. There was also Queenie Bryant, the negro cook and her husband Seminole Ned. Seminole Ned was an Indian who had trailed down from the Indian nation with the cows. "Like a lot of Seminoles, he was part darky too, and in his younger years had been an army scout on the Mexican border, during the Indian wars." He was a giant of a man and Carly's father, six feet tall himself, could walk under the Indian's outstretched arm. Seminole Ned and Queenie's two offsprings, Little Jimmy and Betty, were the only playmates Carly knew except Old Buck.

In *Old Buck and I* Carlysle Raht has done what his father, "The Boss," had told him to do. He has written a book which tells how the cattle business could not amount to much without the horse; he has told about day to day ranch life as it was lived in the 80's and 90's. He has written it without plot, "for life has no plot." He has made a story of the cowhorse in the days before the automobile, when it took a hard riding horse from dawn to dusk to cover the distance a car can make today in an hour. He

has made a story for children to read, as well as adults. He has written these things as they actually happened, without blow-up or fiction, for there was enough excitement in that time to make interesting reading. He has written a story of his first true love, Old Buck.

This reviewer is the proud possessor of a deluxe edition of the book, warmly inscribed on the flyleaf "To Dr. and Mrs. Eugene Porter, from Old Buck and I, Christmas, 1964." It was a deeply appreciated gift, Old Buck, and we thank you.

— Mary Ellen B. Porter

El Paso, Texas

"BUCKSKIN FRANK" LESLIE

by Colin Rickards

(El Paso, The Texas Western Press, 1964, 45 pp. $4.00.)

"Buckskin Frank" Leslie is the story of a Western gunman written by an Englishman, Colin Rickards, who has never visited the United States. However, the author's geographical remoteness has not prevented him from writing with historical accuracy, sympathy and clarity.

Certainly the story of Buckskin Frank, whose origin remains as obscure as his demise, should not be vanished to oblivion because he was one of a breed, whose smokey guns were a violent and bloody part of the Western saga. In narrating the colorful, but at times obscure, story of Nashville Franklin Leslie, a fast gun of the Arizona Territory in the 1880's, the author combines the skills of thorough researcher and literary artist. The result is an interesting account of Buckskin Frank and many members of the quasi-underworld living in Tombstone, including his special friend, Johnny Ringo. Coming to life in the narrative are some of the inhabitants of "The Town Too Tough To Die," including the Earps, John H. "Doc" Holliday, William Barclay "Bat" Masterson and Luke Short. Among such notorious neighbors Buckskin Frank earned a reputation as a dangerous fellow and a good man to leave alone. Tombstone's sharp-shooters respected him and the gun he carried in a special swivel holster. Wyatt Earp rated Buckskin Frank Leslie and "Doc" Holliday as the speediest and deadliest men with a six-gun that he ever knew. As a pastime, Buckskin useed to "shoot round his wife, May," for target practice. With his next wife Mollie, his pistol shooting resulted in her deliberate murder and his conviction for this crime. Subsequent to his release from the territorial prison as a result of a pardon in 1896, Buckskin boastfully admitted to a friend, J. H. Macia: "I killed thirteen men and never once saw the inside of a prison. It was

my fourteenth that caused all my trouble. But then, my fourteenth was a woman."

Buckskin's bloody trail apparently disappeared in California where he settled at the turn of the century. As a derelict, drifting octogenarian he simply vanished.

"Buckskin Frank" Leslie was published originally in the *Southwestern Studies* in the summer of 1964. In book form the study has been expanded by the addition of an additional chapter plus drawings and photographs. Basically, Mr. Rickard's book sheds no new light on Southwestern history, nevertheless, it is a modest contribution to the story of the Wild West. Utilizing original and secondary sources, which are adequately and conveniently footnoted, Rickards has written a very readable narrative of interest to the casual reader and the serious student. The value of the book is further enhanced by the drawings of Russell Waterhouse and rare photographs. Typography, format and binding are in keeping with the high standard characteristic of Carl Hertzog. Certainly all these factors make this little volume, which has a limited publication of 405 copies, a collector's item.

— Alice Dwyer

El Paso, Texas

Gifts to the Society

Mrs. Arthur C. Hobble of 600 Blacker, El Paso, has presented to our Society a colored print, dated 1846, of the "Death of William Henry Harrison." The picture shows the dying president in bed surrounded by Daniel Webster, Secretary of State, Thomas Ewing, Secretary of the Treasury, E. Granger, Postmaster General, the physician, the niece and nephew of the dying man, and the Rev. Dr. Hawley.

President Harrison's last words are quoted as: "I wish you to understand the true principles of the Government. I wish them carried out. I ask nothing more."

To Civil War Buffs

It is an editorial policy that only those books which treat of the Society's area of interest, the immediate Southwest, be reviewed in PASSWORD. But we received for review two excellent books on the Civil War and we decided that Civil War Buffs among the Society's membership might like to know about them. Thus the following notices.

The first book, *The Southern Generals,* published by Duell, Sloan & Pearce, was written by Colonel Red Reeder who is well-known among army men in El Paso. He is a graduate of West Point where he was a classmate of Major Richard K. McMaster, himself the author of *Musket Saber Missile: A History of Fort Bliss.* Colonel Reeder, incidentally, is the author of eighteen books which include *The Mackenzie Raid, The Story of the Civil War, The Story of the Revolutionary War, The Story of the War* 1812, and *The Northern Generals* which is a companion volume to his most recent book.

In *The Southern Generals* Colonel Reeder deals with the skilled as well as the incompetent, "not in straight biographical sections but in a flowing narrative that follows them through action after action so that the reader is treated to the vast panorama of their part in the war." He notes, however, that all were hampered by President Jefferson Davis whose "incompetence, plus their bad organization, lack of communication, personal rivalries, and other disruptive factors were instrumental in the defeat that lead to surrender at Appomattox." The book's value is further enhanced by nine illustrations and eleven maps.

And this brings us to the second book, *Appomattox: The Last Campaign.*

Written by Burleign Cushing Rodrick and published by The Philosophical Library, Inc., this volume deals as much with peace as with war. In fact, it is devoted largely to "the armistice negotiations, the peace terms and the goodwill and friendship that developed between the two armies following the surrender."

Those readers of American history who, as the publisher notes, seldom become "weary of re-reading such legendary stories as the seige of the Alamo, the Custer massacre, and the story of Appomattox," have awaiting them two highly rewarding experiences.

Mr. Rodrick, by the way, is also the author of *Doctrine of Necessity in International Law* and *American Constitutional Custom.* Both are considered by scholars as authoritative in their respective fields.

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Another book that should interest all Texans is Winston Bodies, *A Portrait of Pancho,* a biography of J. Frank Dobie. It is published by the Pemberton Press, 1 Pemberton Parkway, Austin, Texas. The regular edition sells for $5.95 a copy but a special edition, limited to 150 numbered, autographed, leather-bound, slipcased copies, sells for $25 each.

The following excerpt from the text is an attempt to "explain" this complex yet simple man that was J. Frank Dobie:

"What about Dobie the rebel, the maverick – did protest ever become a habit with him? There is no doubt society, say in the form of the news media, accommodated his truculence, and egged him on. As a militant liberal Democrat, Dobie sometimes was misread, even mislead. He was called a radical. But whatever postures he might get into, such as the support of the Progressive Party in 1948, basically Dobie was an unfettered champion of academic, economic, and any other kind of freedom – of civil rights and the democratic process."

Who Remembers the Great Jack Rabbit Hunt of 1892?

The picture on the opposite page is part of the Colonel Walter Stevenson Collection which he has kindly loaned to the Society.

CONTRIBUTORS *to this* ISSUE

DR. SAMUEL D. MYRES is a Native Texan, having been born in Sweetwater. He received his A.B. and M.A. degrees from Southern Methodist University and his Ph.D. (government) from The University of Texas. He also has a Diploma from the Institut de Hautes Etudes, Geneva and a LL.D. (honorary) from Trinity University. Before coming to Texas Western College where he is Professor of Government and editor of the College Press, he was chairman of the Department of Government at S.M.U. and also served as editor of the *Southwest Review*. He has done extensive research and writing in the fields of United States, European and Latin American government and history. He is a son of the late S. D. ("Tio Sam") Myres of El Paso.

JOHN GORDON KNIGHT was born in El Paso in 1936. He attended the old Morehead Elementary School and El Paso High School where he was graduated in 1955. He has studied at Santa Monica City College, University of California at Los Angeles and at Texas Western where he received a B.A. in Health and Physical Education in August, 1964.

ROBERT N. MULLIN was born in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1893 but moved with his family to Las Vegas, New Mexico and then, in 1901, to El Paso where, in 1912, he was graduated from El Paso High School. He is now retired and lives in California. Readers of PASSWORD will remember his excellent and meaningful article, "David Meriwether, Territorial Governor of New Mexico: A Sidelight on the Mexican Boundary Controversy of 1853," Vol. VIII, No. 3 (Fall, 1963). Also see page 115 of that issue for a picture and further information concerning Mr. Mullin.

VIRGINIA RIDOUT KLAUS grew up in the Marfa Country but has resided in El Paso for the past eleven years. She is the mother of two children, a son William who is in Burgess High School and a daughter Virginia. Luke Brite who was an eye-witness of the fight and co-author Opal Cranor Wilcox are both deceased.

ALICE DWYER, a Native El Pasoan, teaches history at El Paso High School where she is the Department Chairman. She is presently completing her dissertation for her doctorate in history at The University of Texas.

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