

# PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

---

VOL. XVI—No. 2

SUMMER, 1971



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# PASSWORD

Published quarterly by The El Paso County Historical Society  
EUGENE O. PORTER, EDITOR

VOL. XVI, No. 2

EL PASO, TEXAS

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## LAND FOR SALE

The Atlantic and Pacific Railroad Company in 1885 offered 20,000,000 acres of land for sale in New Mexico and Arizona. The land, in alternate sections, extended entirely across the territories of New Mexico and Arizona between the 34th and 36th degrees of north latitude. It was 650 miles long and 80 miles wide and included some of the best grazing and agricultural lands of both territories.

According to an advertisement in the *El Paso City Directorate*, 1888, "The company [was] prepared to make sales of its grazing lands in quantities of 50,000 acres or more, at prices ranging from one dollar (or less for larger quantities) to one dollar and a half an acre, upon payment of one-fourth the purchase value at date of sale, the remainder in payments as may be agreed upon, bearing 6 per cent interest, and irrigable agricultural lands in river valleys in sections of 640 acres (or less) at prices ranging from two dollars and a half and upwards per acre."

*Published quarterly by The El Paso County Historical Society*

EUGENE O. PORTER, *Editor*

BUD NEWMAN, *Archival Editor*

HARRIOT HOWZE JONES, *Editor, Heritage Homes*

Correspondence in regards to articles and books for review  
should be directed to

DR. EUGENE O. PORTER, 4323 Emory Rd., El Paso, Texas 79922

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## ORIGIN OF THE SOCIETY

by LEON C. METZ

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Because of the large number of new members we thought it appropriate that a short account of the origin of our Historical Society be published. The editor on behalf of the Society wishes to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Leonard Goodman, Sr., for his unprecedented accomplishment as Chairman of the Membership Committee.]

The El Paso County Historical Society officially dates from the evening of January 19, 1954 when a select group of historically minded Paseños met in the Victory Room of the old Chamber of Commerce building on San Francisco Street. The meeting had been called by Mrs. Willard W. (Louise) Schuessler, Chairman-Director of the Women's Department of the Chamber of Commerce. Each year the Chairman-Director adopts a program or project for the Department and Mrs. Schuessler adopted as her project the organization of an historical society.

The first general meeting of the Society was held a few weeks later, on April 26, at which time Mrs. Schuessler explained the purpose of the Society and appointed a committee with Mr. Allan Sayles as chairman to draft a constitution and by-laws. Mrs. Schuessler continued to serve as the Founding President until the general meeting of July 26 when the constitution and by-laws were adopted and the late Mr. Paul A. Heisig, Jr. was elected president.

Incidentally, the constitution with the amendments and by-laws were published in *PASSWORD*, V. xi, No. I (Spring, 1966), 32-36. The constitution remained unchanged from that date until the spring of this year when it was amended for the second time by the Board of Directors. The Society at its general meeting at Radford School for Girls on May 13 approved the amended document and voted to publish it together with the by-laws and the membership list in a brochure.

The idea of a historical society touched the imagination of El Pasoans and in no time at all there were 75 charter and 240 regular members. By August, 1954, the number had reached nearly 600 and by the following February almost 700. At that time, husbands and wives were counted as separate members. Annual dues were three dollars a person and five dollars a family. Today the membership exceeds 850 and the dues are \$7.50 annually. A life membership is \$150.

Much has been accomplished by the Society since its inception. To give but three examples, the first mule-drawn street car to run between El Paso and Juárez was restored and placed on permanent display in downtown El Paso. Another was the placing of the Southern Pacific engine "Old 3420" at its permanent location in the small park directly





MRS. W. W. SCHUESSLER



in front of the Union Passenger Station in May, 1956, on the 75th anniversary of the coming of the railroads to El Paso.

The Society's crowning achievement, however, is its quarterly publication, *PASSWORD*. This magazine alone, many believe, justifies the Society's existence. Dr. Eugene O. Porter was appointed editor in 1955 (a position he still holds). He with the assistance of Dr. Carl Hertzog who served for several years as design editor, and artist José Cisneros who conceived and drew the cover design, made *PASSWORD* "a thing of beauty." This together with the excellence of its contents have won it high honors. The American Association for State and Local History, for example, pronounced *PASSWORD* the best publication of a local historical society in the United States and Canada and gave it an AWARD OF MERIT.

The purpose of the Society, as stated originally by Mrs. Schuessler, remains unchanged: "To promote and engage in research into the History, Archeology, and Natural History of West Texas, Southern New Mexico, Eastern Arizona, and Northern Mexico; to publish the important findings; and to preserve the valuable relics and monuments."

Since its organization in 1954 the Society has been under the direction of fifteen presidents, as follows:

Mrs. Willard W. Schuessler	FOUNDING PRESIDENT
Mr. Paul A. Heisig, Jr.	1954-55-56
Mr. Frank Feuille, III	1957
Mr. Jack C. Vowell, Jr.	1958-59
Mr. John B. Neff	1960
Dr. Joseph Leach	1961
Congressman Richard C. White	1962
Mr. Conrey Bryson	1963-64
Mr. H. Gordon Frost	1965
Col. H. Crampton Jones	1966
Mr. Fred J. Morton	1967
Mr. Barry O. Coleman	1968
Mr. Fred W. Bailey	1969
Mr. Stephen W. Kent	1970
Mr. Leon C. Metz	1971



# WHO KILLED PAT GARRETT—AND WHY?

by ROBERT N. MULLIN

El Pasoans who are intrigued by murder mystery stories can exercise their powers of deduction on one real-life baffler close to home—the sensational killing of Pat F. Garrett. The mystery is still unsolved today. What follows here is intended to submit the evidence. Let the reader render the verdict.

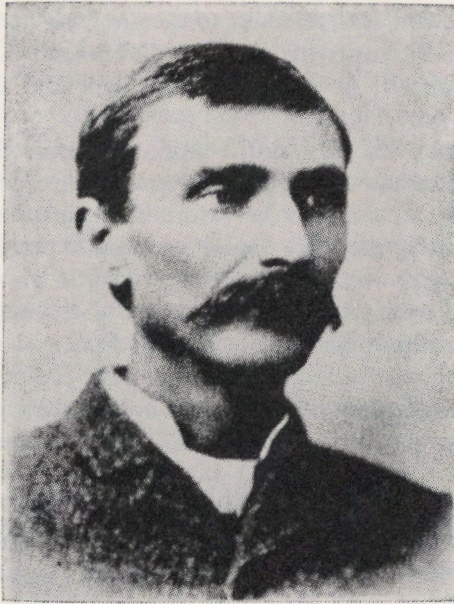
The undisputed facts are that on the morning of February 29, 1908, Garrett and a man named Carl Adamson were driving in Garrett's buckboard along the road from Organ to Las Cruces, New Mexico. A short distance from Las Cruces they overtook a man on horseback, Jesse Wayne Brazel, and a few minutes later Garrett was shot dead. The body, covered with a carriage robe, was left where it had fallen near the south side of the road. Brazel tied his horse behind the buckboard and, with Adamson, drove Garrett's team of sorrel mares into Las Cruces where he surrendered and was locked up in the Doña Ana County jail.

## THE VICTIM

Pat Garrett, renowned as the slayer of Billy the Kid, had been sheriff of Lincoln County, New Mexico, and was afterward appointed sheriff of Doña Ana County; still later he had secured appointment as Collector of Customs at El Paso. Known as a brave man and a generous one, he had won some very loyal friends, but by the very nature of his work as a law officer, and perhaps by something in the nature of the man himself, he had accumulated a rather formidable assortment of enemies. Feeling toward him was such that he had failed to be re-elected sheriff in both Lincoln and Doña Ana counties, and the hostility of certain El Pasoans was evinced by the bitterness of the attacks on his character and conduct while Customs Collector, which they registered in Washington.

When President Theodore Roosevelt terminated his services as Collector of Customs, Garrett left El Paso and made his base of operations at what had originally been known as the Budd Lee house, a mile-and-a-half southwest of the once-booming little community of Gold Camp in Doña Ana County. He had acquired the place in May, 1899, by paying the then-resident, Dave Wood, \$200 for a quit claim deed. The house was adjacent to Sinking Spring, so-called because the water, when it flowed at all, disappeared into the ground a short distance away. It was in the public domain, held by Lee merely by "possessory right," which implied the right to graze livestock on the surrounding public land. Later



*Pat Garrett*

on Garrett filed a mining claim on some public land in Bear Canyon, about seven miles by road northeast of Sinking Spring. In the light of what happened afterwards it is possible that he might have lived longer if he had never acquired the land in Bear Canyon.

Pat Garrett was no man to give up easily. When he lost his job at El Paso he undertook the breeding of quarter horses and soon afterward also acquired some cattle at the Sinking Spring ranch. When the ranching venture failed to prove notably remunerative Garrett augmented his income by operating a "butcher pen" for a while at the town of Organ, west of San Augustine Pass. He was, however, unable to pay Las Cruces businessman Martin Lowman a debt which was secured by a mortgage on his ranch and livestock. Lowman had twice granted extensions but refused to grant a third and served notice of intent to foreclose. It was then that W. W. Cox of the neighboring San Augustine ranch came into the picture; he paid the \$3,567 due Lowman and filed the customary instrument indicating that he was now the mortgage holder.

Cox's action made it possible for Garrett to remain in possession of his ranch, but within a year the misfortune which had plagued the man so much of his life, struck again. On May 26, 1906, the sheriff of Doña Ana County served a writ of attachment on all Garrett's "lands and chattels," including, of course, the improvements and livestock at Sinking



Spring. The attachment was pursuant to a court judgement of \$1,783.18 obtained by the Albuquerque Bank of Commerce. Once again Cox stepped into the breach; he paid the bank debt and Garrett was not deprived of his ranch.

It is estimated that \$5,500 was the amount advanced by Cox to pay the bank and to pay a several years accumulation of delinquent taxes, but the exact total can not now be determined, since only the nominal One Dollar is stated in the bill of sale Cox took as security. This bill of sale, signed by Garrett and his wife, conveyed title to William W. Cox for "all cattle and horses . . . belonging to us." Lest further attachments be served, the few cattle remaining at Sinking Spring were moved to the San Augustine ranch for safekeeping. Said Bert Judia, foreman of the ranch, "Mr. Cox cautioned me to keep an eye on the cattle and see that they did not disappear. He did not put his brand on them."<sup>1</sup>

### THE PLOT OF THE STORY

Working at the Cox ranch was a young cowboy, Wayne Brazel. His mother had deserted her family while he was still a youngster, and he had had scant contact with his father Jesse, a prospector in the Gold Camp district who, up until his death in 1906, was off prospecting in the mountains most of the time. Cox gave Wayne a job when he was barely fifteen and he literally grew up on the San Augustine ranch. It is small wonder that Cox and his wife came to take the place of the young fellow's real parents. His devotion to them played no small part in the tragedy ahead.

In 1907 the teacher at the Organ District school at Camp was pretty Olive Boyd, nineteen year old daughter of Milton A. Boyd, highly respected rancher and businessman of Shamrock, a community on the opposite side of the Tularosa Basin.<sup>2</sup> Wayne won out over her other suitors and the two became engaged to be married. No wedding date could be set however, since the groom-to-be was unhappily aware that his pay as a cowboy would never be enough to provide the kind of a life he wanted for his family.

Being neither a gambler nor a drinker, Wayne had saved some money, though not nearly enough to go into the cattle business on his own, his long-held dream. To prepare for marriage he set on a venture that would require a more modest capital outlay, raising goats on a substantial scale. Even this, though, required more money than he could scrape together, and he turned for help to A. P. "Print" Rhode, Mrs. Cox's brother. The two formed a partnership and began buying small herds of goats wherever they could, paying from \$3.50 to \$4.00 a head. When their funds were depleted they secured a small loan from W. W. Cox.



Cox, however, did not propose to have goats pastured on his range; like most cattlemen, he believed that close-cropping goats and sheep would eventually destroy the grass. Fortunately, the question of pasturage posed no problem. A few miles north of Rhode's home at Gold Camp, on the other side of Black Mountain, there was good grass "going to waste" in Bear Canyon. It was land on Garrett's mining patent, and Garrett welcomed the revenue the five-year lease would bring.

Brazel and Rhode had not said how they proposed to use the land but since both men were identified with cattle-raising, Garrett naturally assumed they wanted it for grazing cattle, and he was not at all happy when he learned that goats, not cattle, were pastured in Bear Canyon. The matter came to a head when he was approached by a man who introduced himself as Carl Adamson, a Pecos Valley rancher, representing a man who was interested in leasing both the ranch and the Bear Canyon property. The man, said Adamson, was J. P. Turner of Fort Worth, Texas,<sup>3</sup> who wanted to fatten cattle he was bringing from Mexico for his ranch in Oklahoma. To make the prospect even more attractive, there was an intimation that Turner might be interested in buying the property later on.

To give immediate possession, Garrett, of course, would have to get the goat raisers out of Bear Canyon. In an amicable meeting at Garrett's home, Brazel agreed to cancel the lease provided he and his partner were relieved of their investment in the goat herd. It may be surmised that Brazel and Rhode were aware that their landlord was not in a position to make such a purchase and they may have been surprised when Carl Adamson said that in order to conclude the proposed deal, he himself would buy the goats. The problem was apparently solved, but shortly later Garrett's hopes were dashed. The final estimate placed the herd as perhaps numbering as many as 1,800, but Adamson stated positively he would buy no more than 1,200, a number he said he had originally understood to be involved. Garrett had failed to get rid of his tenants by court action, and now the prospect of cancelling the lease through a purchase of the goats also faded. The outlook appeared bleak for Pat Garrett but he did not give up hope.

So matters stood on February 28, 1908. On that Friday morning Carl Adamson was staying close to Pat Garrett at the Sinking Spring ranch. "J. P. Turner," the man supposed to be so anxious to lease Garrett's properties, was presumably at Las Cruces. "Print" Rhode and the Mexican herders were in charge of the goat herd in Bear Canyon, in the absence of Wayne Brazel. Brazel was at the San Augustine ranch where for several days he had been "helping out," as he sometimes did when the ranch was shorthanded.



"Wayne Brazel was helping us shoe horses at the San Augustine ranch," said Bert Judia, when a note addressed to Wayne was delivered at the ranch house in the late afternoon.<sup>4</sup> Olive Boyd, the Gold Camp schoolma'am, spending the week-end with her friend Lena Cox, took the note to Wayne where he was working beside the blacksmith shed. The note, signed by Garrett, reportedly named a time and place where Brazel must meet him and come to an agreement one way or another, and then go together to Las Cruces to meet the man who was waiting to take over the ranch. The note set the time as ten o'clock the following morning; the location specified was a place called "the Junction," in Alameda Arroyo where the road between Organ and Las Cruces joined a side road from the ranches east of town. The note was later identified by Deputy Sheriff Felipe Lucero as being in Garrett's handwriting but in view of what followed the plan was doubtless suggested by Carl Adamson.

The stage was set.

On Saturday morning Wayne saddled a horse named "Loco" from the Cox corral and set out for the meeting with Garrett. It was a coolish day and his sheepskin-lined canvas coat was buttoned up tightly. He did not wear the fancy embroidered Mexican sombrero that was his favorite, but a black "work hat" against the gusty sand-laden wind. As was his custom when he rode afield, he carried a pistol and a saddle gun. That fact is not particularly significant; when men of the ranches rode abroad they habitually were armed on the chance of spotting some of the varmints that preyed on the livestock.

Wayne rode through the San Augustine Pass and the village of Organ without stopping. His pace was leisurely; he was early for the appointment. Beyond Organ he encountered another horseman, by some reports his partner, "Print" Rhode, but saw no one else until he was overtaken about seven miles from downtown Las Cruces by a buckboard drawn by a team of sorrell mares, carrying Garrett and Adamson. There was some discussion between him and Garrett as they rode along for a couple of miles, when Adamson suggested a rest stop. The events which presumably followed were related in testimony at the preliminary hearing and later at Wayne Brazel's trial. What really happened at this lonely spot is the crux of the mystery.

After coroner W. C. Field and a jury had viewed the dead man's body and examined the scene of the killing, the remains were taken to Las Cruces in Clarence Snook's spring wagon. A preliminary hearing was called for March 3, and continued the following day. All the testimony was in English, although the presiding officer, Justice of the Peace Manuel Lopez, was understood to speak only Spanish. The coroner's jury



report, introduced at the hearing, stated that evidence indicated that Garrett "had gotten from the buggy to relieve himself at the time he was killed." Significantly, the report stated that the victim had removed the glove from his left hand but still wore a heavy leather glove on his right, or "trigger finger" hand. All six shells, loaded with birdshot, remained in his Burgess folding "pump" shotgun; the weapon had not been fired.

Coroner Field testified that an autopsy showed that Garrett had been shot in the back of the head and also from the front, the latter apparently after he had fallen, as the bullet had entered from the front, near the stomach, and had ranged upward to lodge in the back, between the shoulder blades. The coroner's jury concluded that Patrick F. Garrett had met his death as the result of pistol wounds inflicted by one Wayne Brazel.

The one known witness, Carl Adamson, was on the stand three quarters of an hour, questioned and cross examined by prosecutor N. C. Frenger and by defense attorney William Southerland, but his testimony confused rather than clarified the circumstances of the actual shooting. It seems that he had been "looking the other way" when the shooting occurred.

Witnesses called for the defense included ranchman James A. Baird, Organ saloon keeper Jeff Ake, and John Beal of the Territorial Mounted Police, stationed at Deming. None of them had seen the shooting but testified on matters bearing on it.

Wayne's own testimony, essentially the same as he later told his prospective father-in-law, Milton Boyd,<sup>5</sup> and later repeated at the trial, was completely unconvincing. It was in substance that Garret had jumped from the buckboard in a threatening manner and Brazel had shot him in self defense; that at the sound of the gunfire, Garrett's horses had jumped violently, catching Garrett's long coat in the buggy wheel, causing him to spin around as he was struck. Apparently this was intended to explain why the bullet entered the back of the victim's head. If, as has been claimed, Wayne Brazel had been hired to enact a role in the assassination, his employers had overlooked coaching him on one vitally important matter: what story he was to tell. One Las Cruces man was quoted as remarking: "That fellow may be a top hand with cattle but he's a damned poor liar."

On the strength of Wayne Brazel's own statement that he had killed Pat Garrett, Justice Lopez bound him over for action by the Grand Jury. On April 13 that body returned an indictment charging that "he, the said Wayne Brazel, did on the twenty-ninth day of February, 1908, in Doña Ana County, Territory of New Mexico, with force and arms in and upon one Patrick F. Garrett, there and then with a certain pistol,



loaded with gunpowder and various leaden bullets, did kill and murder said Patrick F. Garrett." Brazel was immediately released on \$10,000 bail furnished by "all the old timers,"<sup>6</sup> including Las Cruces merchant John H. May, rancher Jeff D. Isaacks, rancher W. W. Cox, J. W. Taylor, F. H. Bascom, J. S. Quesenberry, and George W. Freeman.

Although many cases were tried in the Third District Court at Las Cruces in the year that followed, for some unexplained reason the case against Wayne Brazel was not called for trial until April, 1909. Frank W. Parker was the presiding judge. District Attorney Mark B. Thompson led the prosecution. Territorial Attorney General James M. Hervey attended the sessions but took no part, saying privately that he was not convinced that Brazel was guilty.<sup>7</sup> The defense was presented by H. B. Holt of Las Cruces, assisted by an attorney from El Paso, Albert Bacon Fall. Witnesses for the prosecution included Felipe Lucero, Dr. W. C. Field and two members of the coroner's jury, Fay Sperry and Cesario Pedragon.

Wayne Brazel's testimony and that of other witnesses was essentially the same as that brought out at the preliminary hearing. There was one glaring omission and this caused considerable eyebrow lifting. Carl Adamson, the one known witness to the shooting, was not called on to testify, although he was available.<sup>8</sup> Another, also available but not called to the stand, was Frederick W. Fornoff, Captain of the Territorial Mounted Police. In his investigations immediately after the shooting he had made an interesting discovery north of the road on the sandhills which rimmed the arroyo. About fifty feet from where Garrett's body had fallen there were fresh horse droppings and hoof marks, plus two freshly expended rifle cartridge shells.<sup>9</sup> That testimony might have cast some shadow of doubt on Dr. Field's supposition that Pat Garrett had been shot with a pistol at close range.

Another matter also caused some eyebrow-raising. The people who jammed the courtroom had been waiting for the prosecution to set off its expected bombshell. Thompson had reportedly subpoenaed copies of telegrams from the Western Union files, sent and received by Brazel, Adamson, Rhode and Cox, giving irrefutable proof a plot to kill Pat Garrett. Either there actually were no such telegrams or, if there were they were not damaging, or perhaps there was some other reason for not introducing such evidence.

The attorneys presented their closing arguments. The jury listened to Judge Parker's instructions and retired to consider the evidence. The Judge withdrew to his chambers. He had hardly finished smoking a pipeful of tobacco when the jury reported. The verdict: Not guilty.



## THE REAL MYSTERY

The acquittal of Wayne Brazel did not solve the question of who actually did the killing, and why. In fact it renewed the deluge of conjecture and contention that had begun the very day of the shooting. In El Paso, where Garrett had lived until recently and where some of the others involved were well known, the air was thick with rumors, opinions and "inside information."

One rumor was that a plot to have Garrett killed had been hatched at a secret meeting in the St. Regis Hotel. A recently published book<sup>10</sup> lists the names of those presumably present: William W. Cox, his brothers-in-law Oliver Lee and A. P. Rhode, his close friend Jim Gililand as well as his attorney Albert B. Fall. This list also names Mannie Clements and two of his relatives, Carl Adamson and James P. Miller. This writer recalls a slightly different version of the supposed meeting, it being held in the law office of A. B. Fall in the Guarantee Trust building, and without Miller or Adamson being present. According to this account, Clements was called in and engaged to arrange for his brother-in-law, "Kill-er" Jim Miller to come from Ft. Worth for the job.

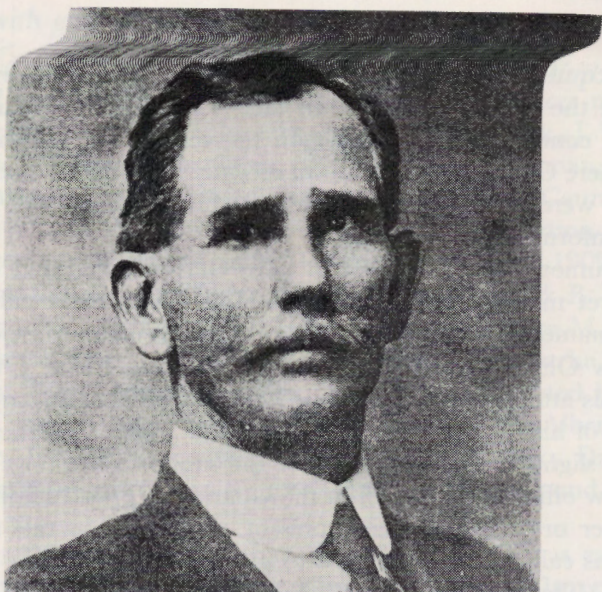
W. W. Cox and Oliver Lee were by no means the only ones who may have wanted Pat Garrett removed from the scene; there were also others who, in varying degrees, were his ill-wishers. Regardless of whether or not a meeting was held, and if so, who attended it, the fact remains that the circumstances indicate clearly that Pat Garrett was lured to that isolated spot in Alameda Arroyo for one purpose—his death.

## SOME CONJECTURED SUSPECTS

*W. W. Cox.* Since relations between W. W. Cox and Pat Garrett were known to have been something less than cordial, it is not surprising that Cox's name was prominent on the list of those who might have wanted Garrett put away. Before jumping to a final conclusion, though, it may be well to heed the words of the American political figure who used to say "Let's look at the record."

In casting about for possible motives, neighbors remembered how angry Cox had been in the summer of 1899 when he returned to his ranch and learned that then sheriff Garrett and deputy José Espalin had invaded the Cox home and killed an unarmed young man named Reed\* in the kitchen where he was helping Mrs. Cox with the dishes. Seeing two men with drawn pistols burst into the room, Reed had turned to run when he was shot dead. Garrett later explained that it appeared the young fellow was leaving to get a gun. Today it makes no difference that the wrong man was killed. An exceptionally large reward had been offered in Greer County, Oklahoma, for an escaped murderer named





W. W. Cox

Norman Newman, and the sheriff had reason to suspect that the wanted man was at the San Augustine ranch. Garrett never collected the reward. Newman was described as a man in his middle or late thirties and Reed appeared hardly more than half that age. When the body, embalmed in El Paso and shipped to Oklahoma, was viewed by the Greer County authorities it was not identified as Norman Newman. It was bad enough that the raid had been staged when Cox was away from the ranch, but the thing which angered him most was that his wife, witnessing the killing, suffered a severe shock.

But W. W. Cox was a man of action and it seems incredible that if he wanted to retaliate he would have waited more than eight years before acting.

Another theory is that Garrett was killed because W. W. Cox wanted his ranch. This offers a quick and easy answer to the question of motive. Perhaps too quick and easy, when one considers the facts.

The Cox range, extending all the way from the watershed of the Organ mountains to Cox's Well at the foot of the Jirallas, was already so vast that "he didn't know what to do with it all." True, there was water part of the year at Sinking Spring, but if Cox had wanted the property in the first place he could have had it when Budd Lee was offering his rights for sale at \$200. Or he could have filed on the then-unfiled-on 160 acres of public land around the spring. And, most significantly, in later years he could have acquired the ranch merely by foreclosing the delin-



quent mortgage he held on the property. It would not have been necessary to kill Pat Garrett in order to obtain his little ranch.

The belief that Cox wanted the Garrett place gained credibility when he did eventually take title. When nearly a year had passed after Garrett's death, with no prospect of the mortgage debt ever being paid, and the ranch had been long abandoned, Cox had little choice but to take title to the property. It was understood that he voluntarily gave Mrs. Garrett a small amount over the mortgage debt, but this is not a matter of record.

If—and this is a big IF—W. W. Cox conspired to have Pat Garrett killed, he must have had some motive which no one has even been able to discover.

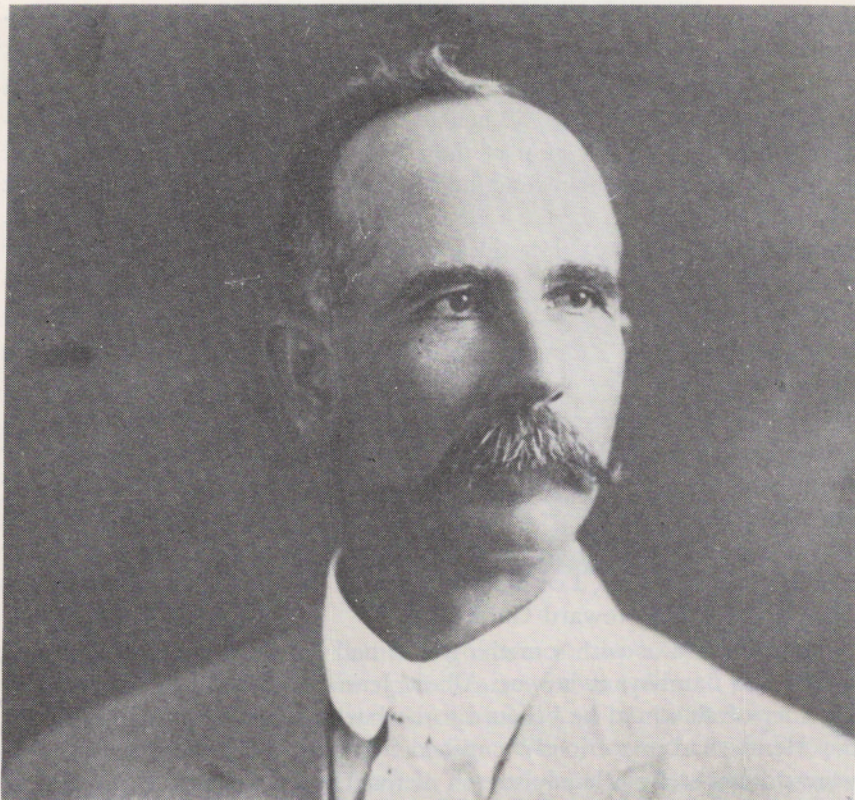
*Oliver Lee.* It is not surprising, either, that W. W. Cox's brother-in-law, Oliver Lee, received the attention of those who were talking and guessing about who might have planned the killing of Pat Garrett. Cox's big spread on the eastern part of the Tularosa Basin matched that of Cox on the west. Their two wives were sisters and the two men were close friends. Too, like Cox, Lee had some reason for having considerably less than kindly feeling toward Garrett.

The trouble was with something that had occurred back in February, 1896. The flamboyant lawyer, Albert Jennings Fountain, a compulsive hounder of all whom he believed to be lawbreakers, along with his little boy Henry, had mysteriously vanished from the face of the earth as they were driving along a lonely stretch of road beside the White Sands. The disappearance — unquestionably a murder — had occurred immediately after he had presented a grand jury with evidence he had gathered, and secured an indictment against Oliver Lee, charged with rustling and brand-burning. These charges were later dismissed but Lee soon faced a more serious charge—he was accused of the murder of Albert and Henry Fountain.

In the two years that followed, Lee was not taken into custody, although a \$10,000 reward was offered for the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the murder of Fountain and his son. Then, on April 12, 1898, Sheriff Pat Garrett made an affidavit implicating Oliver Lee and his alleged accomplices, Bill McNew and Jim Gililand, and secured a bench warrant for their arrest. Just before dawn on July 13, Garrett and a posse surrounded Lee's ranch house at Wildey's Well. It had been a warm night and Lee and Gililand were sleeping on the flat roof of the ranch house. Lee afterward described what happened:

"The first thing I knew, just about daybreak, the Garrett posse was shooting at us from the top of the shed, with Garrett, Kent Kearney, José Espalin, Ben Williams and Clint Llewellyn in their crowd. Garrett,





*Oliver M. Lee*

Kearney and Espalin were standing on the roof of the shed. Ben Williams was up on a dirt water tank, shooting. The first thing I knew they had shot my bed all to pieces. Garrett had shot at us three times, and he started to shoot without calling on us to surrender. I had understood that Garrett was usually cool, but that day he lost his head and missed all three shots.

"I had a man, Madeson, working for me, who was sleeping in the room I usually occupied when at the Wildey Well ranch. The first thing Madeson knew, as he told me later, was that Garrett was in his room and had a gun rammed against him. When Garrett discovered that he hadn't found me he said to Madeson, 'If I find him [Lee] I'll kill him'."<sup>11</sup>

In the return fire, Kearney was mortally wounded and the attackers withdrew. By some miracle of chance, both Lee and Gililand were unscathed. Neither sought revenge in the years that followed. Why then should a man like Oliver Lee, if he had a score to settle, have waited almost nine years to do something about it? The only answer—a very



weak one—is that in 1907, supposedly Garrett was looking for evidence that would again charge Lee with the killing of the Fountains. True, the reward offered for their slayers had never been officially withdrawn, but it was well known that usually an acquitted person could not be tried again on the same charge—and Lee had been tried and declared innocent in June, 1899.

*Carl Adamson.* Immediately after the killing of Pat Garrett many questioning fingers were pointed toward Carl Adamson. This was not without reason, even aside from the fact that it was he who accompanied Garrett to the place where he was killed. Adamson was related by marriage to Both Mannie Clements and Jim Miller. It was Adamson who told Garrett the tale of the pretended cattleman and the imagined cattle being taken from Mexico to a non-existent ranch in Oklahoma. He had been a cowhand on the Clements (not Mannie) ranch in Eddy County and could hardly have had any four thousand dollars or more to pay for the 1,200 goats he said he was willing to buy.

If coroner Field was correct in believing that Garrett had been killed by a pistol bullet and that the bullet from behind had emerged above the victim's right eye, Adamson would seem the most likely suspect. Garrett was a tall man, 6'4", and it would have been easier for a man standing near him to fire such a shot than it would be for one not so close, mounted on a horse. And the marksmanship would have been more remarkable if a pistol had been fired from fifty feet away, on the higher ground bordering the arroyo, the place where the empty cartridge shells were later found. A pistol or a rifle bullet fired either from the higher level or by a man on horseback, would have tended to range down rather than upward when it struck the victim.

Adamson was in the penitentiary at Santa Fe, serving a term for smuggling Chinese from Mexico into the United States, when Brazel was placed on trial in April, 1909. A great many people wondered whether there was some particular reason why the one presumed witness was not brought to Las Cruces to testify. That is a good question.

Will Isaacks, who lived not far from the place of the killing and was one of the first to arrive on the scene, was acquainted with most of the people and circumstances involved. He stated flatly that "Adamson did the job," and that Deputy Sheriff Lucero shared that belief.<sup>12</sup>

*"Print" Rhode.* A. P. Rhode was, of course, one of those who may have had both motive and opportunity for disposing of Garrett. However, there was no evidence, or even general suspicion, that he did the shooting, even though his stake in the problem of the goat ranch lease was the same as Brazel's, and he was reportedly seen in the neighborhood the morning of the killing.



*Jim Baird.* Among the several who were said to have a possible motive was James Baird, whose ranch was some miles north of the Garrett place. One of the rumors circulating around El Paso was that he had been pistol-whipped by Pat Garret in a Las Cruces saloon. However, Las Cruces folk who knew both men and who kept abreast of what was going on in the town, dismissed this story. "Jim Baird was *muy hombre*," said one, "strong as an ox and not afraid of hell or high water . . . I can't imagine anyone crazy enough to try to beat him up."<sup>13</sup> This opinion was shared by others, including Wayne Brazel's friend, Will Isaacks.

*Wayne Brazel.* During the years following Garrett's death, knowledgeable El Pasoans expressed various opinions as to who was behind the killing of Pat Garrett and as to who had done the shooting. On one point many, if not most, seemed to agree: that it had not been Wayne Brazel who pulled the trigger. The prevalent thought was that his confession was an impulsive act to protect someone he thought, or knew, was responsible.



Wayne Brazel in typical cowhand dress of his day in contradiction to the fancy garb worn by TV and movie cowboys of today.

This opinion was shared by the dead man's loyal friend, New Mexico Governor George Curry, who wrote: "Captain Fornoff went to the scene after the killing. His report to me differed materially from that of the local sheriff and medical examiner, and confirmed some information I had obtained, that Brazil [*sic*] was the victim of a conspiracy, rather than the killer."<sup>14</sup> After Brazel's trial, Territorial Attorney General James M. Harvey, listening to the testimony but declining to participate in the prosecution, made a very pertinent observation: "[Brazel] was too anxi-



ous to show he did it."<sup>15</sup>

Whether or not Wayne Brazel did the shooting, he may have been involved in conspiracy if there is any truth in an unconfirmable rumor circulating later, to the effect that just before the shooting he and Adamson had exchanged pistols. It is hard to understand, though, how this could have been accomplished without being observed by Garrett. By all accounts, Adamson and Garrett had been together not only since they left the ranch but during the previous day at the Garrett ranch. A man of Garrett's experience would surely have been on his guard if he had witnessed such a suspicious move, but he obviously was not on his guard when he stepped from the buckboard to relieve himself and was shot from behind.

It would appear much more likely that when Wayne Brazel left the San Augustine ranch that morning he didn't know what he was getting into. Bert Judia, the ranch foreman, said: "When Wayne went to meet Pat Garrett the next morning, he saddled up a horse named 'Loco'. We called him that because whenever he heard gunfire he jumped and bucked like crazy. There were twenty or more horses in the corral, and Wayne had too much sense to pick out a gun-shy horse if he had any idea he was going someplace where there might be any shooting."<sup>16</sup>

One thing, at least, is undisputed: Wayne Brazel was the one who killed Pat Garrett—he said.

*Jim Miller.* For anyone in the Southwest wanting to hire an assassin, "Deacon" James P. Miller was a good selection. He was a real pro, effective, and clever in arranging his alibis in advance. His "cover" was as manager of a small but respectable hotel, and he was noted for his fervor when he joined in the hymn-singing at the church services which he attended regularly when not away from home practicing his favorite trade. His luck was uncanny; he was repeatedly acquitted on those occasions when he was caught and tried. After the Garrett killing, however, his luck ran out; at almost exactly the same time Wayne Brazel was tried and acquitted for the murder of Pat Garrett, Jim Miller and some of his fellow exterminators were lynched in Ada, Oklahoma.

Concerning Jim Miller's role in the killing of Pat Garrett, Dee Harkey, Pecos valley rancher-lawman, had this to say:

"I am certain in my own mind that Miller killed Pat Garrett, because he went to my ranch in Roosevelt County, N. M. and borrowed one of my horses from Joe Beasley, who was working for me, and rode the horse into Otero County where Pat Garrett was killed that night. He then rode the horse back to my ranch. The trip killed the horse.

"I asked Beasley, 'What killed this horse?' and he told me about lending the horse to Jim Miller. He said 'Miller rode over and killed Pat





*Jim Miller*

Garret, and told me what he had done. He said if he was ever indicted for it, he was going to expect to show by me that he was here at your ranch at the time Pat Garrett was killed.' "

Dee Harkey's account may well be essentially true but some flaws are apparent. The killing was not in Otero but in Doña Ana County, and occurred in mid-morning, not at night. No horse that ever lived could have left the Harkey ranch and reached the Las Cruces neighborhood, three hundred miles away, the same day. The Harkey account sounds entirely probable, except for the time element.

Miller had been seen on the streets of El Paso a week before the shooting, and in the First National Bank and the Park Hotel at Las Cruces thereafter. He was not a hard man to notice and remember; his garb was that not seen every day in these towns, "a cross between a preacher and a dandy." It has been pointed out that his favorite weapon was a shotgun; it seems reasonable, though, that a man would have chosen a rifle if he expected to pick off, from some distance away, one particular man in a group of three. Jim Miller was around at the time all right, but was it he or was it someone else who left those cartridge shells behind the rim of Alameda arroyo?



## CONCLUSION

Whomsoever to-day's mystery-solver has concluded to be guilty, here are a couple of parting thoughts to ponder: 1. While various "solutions" were being offered in 1908, there was the sage comment of the city editor of the *El Paso Herald*, to wit, "The best way to attract attention from a guilty man is to point the finger at someone else";<sup>17</sup> 2. One-time New Mexico resident W. T. Moyer,<sup>18</sup> a respected attorney who was not given to making statements he could not back up, swore that he had in his possession irrefutable proof-positive of the identity of the man who did the shooting, and *it was one whose name has never been mentioned as the killer.*

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2. Shamrock, originally called Dogtown on account of the large prairie dog villages which also gave its name to nearby Dog Canyon, was later known as Camp City or merely Camp, Camp being the name of the proprietor of the community's general store. Later it became Shamrock and in 1915 the name was changed to Valmont.
3. *El Paso Times*, March 1, 1908.
4. Judia et Ball, "The Real Pat Garrett."
5. John Edgar Boyd, Sr., Brazel's friend and brother-in-law, in a conversation with this writer at his home at South Laguna, California, March, 1967. Other information is gleaned from this writer's correspondence with Boyd over a period of several years.
6. Tape recorded interview with Will Isaacks by Lou Benchley at Las Cruces, June 21, 1952. The writer has a copy of the tape.
7. George Curry, *Autobiography*.
8. Federal Court Records, Alamogordo, New Mexico. On December 14, 1908, Adamson was found guilty of smuggling Chinese into the United States and sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment.
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10. Colin Rickards, *How Pat Garrett Died*.  
\*Editor's Note: For a detailed account of the Reed killing, see Robert N. Mullin, "Pat Garrett—Two Forgotten Killings," *PASSWORD*, V. x, No. 2 (Summer, 1965), 57-62.
11. William A. Keleher, *The Fabulous Frontier*. In 1912 when Ben Williams and T. B. Cunningham had offices in the First Mortgage Building, El Paso. This writer asked Williams about the Wildey Well fight. He did not care to talk about it but did say that "It wasn't the way some people tell it."
12. Isaacks, Recorded Interview.
13. Gus Griggs, conversation with this writer, Las Cruces, *circa* 1920. (Date of notes illegible.)
14. Curry, *Autobiography*.
15. Letter dated January 25, 1958 to Lewis A. Ketring from Charles R. Brice, a close friend and associate of Judge Hervey. A copy of letter in this writer's files. See also James Madison Hervey, "The Assassination of Pat Garrett," *True West Magazine*, March-April, 1961.
16. Judia et Ball, "The Real Pat Garrett."
17. Gallie Martin to J. P. Mullin, summer, 1908.
18. W. T. Moyer, Denver, Colorado, to whom this writer was referred by Denver attorney Fred Mazzulla. Moyer pointed to a packet of papers in his office safe, saying that under oath he would swear that the documents contained absolute proof of guilt. He refused permission for the documents to be examined and refused to reveal their contents, saying that they must remain secret but that they "would be made public at the proper time." Fred Mazzulla has had possession of the papers since Moyer's death and is quoted as placing a \$5,000 price for their publication.



## THE SHOOTING OF BIG ALICE ABBOTT

by KENNETH A. GOLDBLATT & JAMES MICHAEL RUSSELL

EL PASO OF 1886 was a city on the threshold of modernization: Gas, electric, telephone, and water service had been installed, while paved streets and sidewalks and a sewage system were on the way.<sup>1</sup> Some cultural growth in the form of theaters and opera houses was being made by jerks and starts.<sup>2</sup> The coming of the railroad in 1881 had brought an influx of money and population. All classes and types streamed into the area—doctors, lawyers, workingmen, salesmen, gamblers, whiskey peddlers, and land speculators, gunmen, and prostitutes, to name but a few. In a word, business was good and El Paso was on the move.

But even as El Paso took on the trappings of a modern city, it continued to shelter corrupt elements that were its frontier heritage. The number of vice peddlers grew with the town, and increased in proportion to the money and customers necessary to support them. A "reform league" had been founded in 1883 but, at that time, none of El Paso's citizens had seriously considered tampering with what they believed to be the firm economic bases of El Paso's prosperity — the saloons, the gambling houses, and the prostitution parlors. Their interest was directed toward the political status quo, not moral reform. As C. L. Sonnichsen recalled in his excellent history of the area, *Pass of the North*, "nobody even thought of disturbing the dispensers of vice and liquor."<sup>3</sup>

During this period "sin" provided a substantial portion of the city's revenue through both taxes and fines. Whether El Paso's leading citizens actually condoned these immoral activities is perennially a subject of debate, but city records still exist which prove that the vice-peddling establishments enjoyed a certain amount of legal recognition nonetheless.<sup>4</sup>

The sinners were the persons around whom much of the frontier romance developed. They were the actors in a colorful pageant of western history which our more genteel historians have chosen either to forget or to ignore. The most frequent mention of this portion of the spectacle naturally appears in the court records—usually the criminal prosecutions—that still exist from the frontier period. In these sources, the newspapers, some diaries, and a few oldtimers' reminiscences, were preserved the day-to-day occurrences of the Old West. The bulk of these incidents are uninteresting lists of arrests for drunkenness, arguments, fist fights, financial squabbles, and the like. Occasionally, however, some episode appeals to the researcher for its amusement value as much as for its historical significance. One such incident is the shooting of Big Alice Abbott.

Alice was the first of several major El Paso madams of the period just prior to the turn of the century. She arrived at the Pass of the North in the fall of 1881. Another, Etta Clark, followed her into residence in El Paso's wide-open red-light district shortly thereafter.<sup>5</sup> They were, as one



might readily imagine, immediate successes. Big Alice was a massive beauty who could be persuaded to admit she weighed 195 pounds.<sup>6</sup> In *Pass of the North*, Dr. Sonnichsen recalled that "a reporter in 1886 spoke of her magnificent physique without any hint of satire. Etta, on the other hand, he describes as a 'voluptuous redhead' with a temper to match her hair, a lyric figure, and a way with some of El Paso's better-headed businessmen."<sup>7</sup>

In 1886, the red-light district of El Paso—called "the line" and "the district"—was located on Utah Street, which is now South Mesa. All of the bigger "parlor houses" were located in this area. In later years Etta managed a sumptuous thirty-two-room mansion located on the southwest corner of South Mesa and Second Streets that rose in part from her profits. Fitted with all mahogany furniture, its cost has been estimated at \$75,000, but that was another era. In 1886, Etta commanded a substantial house on the same spot, but one of more moderate proportions. Alice's house sat directly across the street.<sup>8</sup>

As might be expected in a land where men heavily outnumbered women and paid handsomely for their company, rivalry between the bigger houses became intense. Although Alice and Etta were doing well in spite of the stiff competition, being good businesswomen both madams wanted to do even better—in both quantity and quality. For this reason they, like every other frontier "landlady," tried constantly to get new girls by importation, by recruitment and, when no other source of new girls was available—by enticing a popular local attraction to change her business residence. This practice, called "roping," was a common source of ill feeling among the frontier's hostesses, and Alice and Etta were not exceptions. The inconvenient locations of their houses, across the street from each other, did not allow Alice and Etta to enjoy the most congenial of relationships.

The natural consequences of such a conflict of economic interests in this almost civilized society was violence. And while it bubbled and gurgled just under the surface for a while, trouble was not far away. When it came, it made the usual bickering, arguments, scuffles, and hair-pullings among the girls on "the line" look like garden party conversations. The situation finally erupted on April 18, 1886.

On that particular night, one of Alice's girls, Bessie Colvin, was behind in her "rent" in the amount of one hundred and twenty-five dollars.<sup>9</sup> Alice's none-too-subtle reminders had only served to anger Bessie, who had become more unhappy as the debt extended. On the evening in question, Bessie was somewhat short of temper — due in part to a healthy intake of an indeterminate quantity of the local redeye. The added aggravation of Alice's nagging brought their financial situation to a climax.



About 8:30, Bessie marched across the street to Etta's house. When she returned fifteen minutes later, Bessie informed Alice that she was moving out.<sup>10</sup> In the middle of the ensuing argument, which lasted another fifteen minutes, Bessie bolted across the street toward Etta's. Alice was right behind her while two of her more faithful girls, Nina Farrel and Josie Connely, followed in hot pursuit. Unfortunately for Alice, Bessie got to Etta's house before Alice got to Bessie.

Alice, however, refused to allow the slammed door to be the end of it, and hollered and pounded for Bessie until Etta opened the door. When it opened, Alice saw Etta facing her with a two-foot, brass gas-lighter in her right hand.<sup>11</sup> According to Bell Springer, one of Etta's girls and an eyewitness to the exchange, it was Etta's custom to carry the gas-lighter with her at all times during the evening.<sup>12</sup>

"What do you want?" asked Etta who was already unhappy with Alice's ruckus.

"I want to see Bessie," was Alice answer.

As Etta replied, "Well, Bessie doesn't want to see you," Alice looked past her, down the hall, to see Bessie walk out of Etta's room.

"It doesn't matter whether or not she wants to see me," Alice yelled, and burst through the door, pushing Etta aside.<sup>13</sup>

Retreating, Etta raised the gas-lighter saying, "I don't want you to come into my house." At the same time, Bessie squealed, "Don't let her get me, Miss Etta, she will hurt me."<sup>14</sup>

Undaunted by Etta's threatening posture, Alice doubled a fist and jabbed Etta, saying, "I owe you that anyway. . . . I have always had it in for you anyhow. Every new woman I get, you try to rope her away." While Etta denied the accusation and refused to retreat any further, Alice grabbed and shook her, screaming "I'll kill you, you bitch, you and your little bitch of a sister!"<sup>15</sup>

In the midst of this scuffle with Etta, Alice managed to grab Bessie who had run to Etta's aid. While Alice screamed "Bessie, I want you to come home," and tried to pull her out of the house, Etta broke free and made for her bedroom. Meanwhile, Bessie reached for the nearest door frame and held on.<sup>16</sup> Before Alice could pry her loose, Etta stomped back out of her bedroom with a .44-caliber revolver in her hand. "Miss Alice," said Etta coldly, "I want you to leave my house," to Alice who was still on the porch.

"I won't go and you can't put me out" was Alice's reply, as she stepped back toward the entrance of the house. Etta had been no match for the heavier and taller Alice even when she was armed with the brass gas lighter, but the pistol gave Etta the game. Almost before Alice could take another step, smoke enveloped the women as black powder exploded.



Alice said, "My God, I'm shot!" as she fell backward off the porch. Then Etta recoiled the pistol and fired again, but the second shot missed as Alice tumbled down the front steps.<sup>17</sup>

Alice was carried across the street to her house and a local doctor, A. L. Justice, was summoned. He examined the victim, treated her for a gunshot wound of the lower abdomen and removed the bullet from the rear of her clothing.<sup>18</sup> A lesser woman might have died from such a wound, but Alice recuperated within a few weeks.

Copies of the El Paso *Herald* of April 20, 1886, have disappeared from local files, but local historians claim that the issue recounted the story in gory detail under a banner headline which claimed Alice suffered the wound in "the public arch." Said Sonnichsen of the incident: it was "a more accurate statement of the fact, perhaps, than the one intended."<sup>19</sup>

Sonnichsen also discovered an interesting sidelight to the case. As he tells the story:

In 1936, . . . Frank Wells Brown added another episode to this story. He told Marshal Hail of the *Herald-Post* that the editor of the old *Herald* in 1886 was an Irishman named Brady who indulged in some "witty remarks" about Alice and Etta at the time of their trouble. The *Herald* file is incomplete for this period, but Mr. Brown (who was co-owner of the paper) indicated that the "public arch" error was involved. The morning after the story appeared, Etta descended upon the *Herald* office, armed with a big pistol and accompanied by a female friend bearing a bull whip. Brady happened to be out at the time, but he was scared when he heard about the visitation and asked Brown what he should do. "I bought him a ticket to Albuquerque," Brown concluded, "and I have never seen him since."<sup>20</sup>

Had Alice died of her wound, Etta might have been hanged, for she was brought to trial in the El Paso County District Court in May, 1886, on a charge of assault with intent to murder. Witnesses paraded through the courtroom and, except for Dr. Justice, took sides according to their place of residence: Alice's girls told her side; Etta's girls told the other. On May 14, the jury chose to believe Etta, and returned a verdict of "not guilty."<sup>21</sup>

The end of the squabble was not in sight, however, for Alice wanted her revenge. In the years that followed, two attempts were made to set fire to Etta's house. At about three-thirty in the afternoon of July 12, 1888, a third attempt succeeded and Etta's house caught fire and burned to the ground during the girls' afternoon siesta. The girls managed to save themselves, but all their possessions went up in smoke, resulting in a total loss of over \$7,000. A \$1,000 reward posted by a part owner of the building and by the Board of Underwriters for the capture of the arsonists resulted in the arrests of Alice Abbott and three employees, Bill



Johnson, Will Ragland, and John Duncan. On August 18, 1888, the quartet was charged with arson. Alice's bail was set at \$1,000.<sup>22</sup> The disposition of the case remains uncertain, however, for no further mention of it appears in the records. Apparently the case was dropped for lack of evidence.

Such events as the shooting of Big Alice, while both interesting and colorful, provided the basis for the final rejection of the sporting element by El Paso's genteel citizens. The violence of the late 19th century became more repugnant to El Pasoans as the business district grew less dependent upon the trade of the district and the customers it attracted. Gradually, pressure for reform increased, and the sporting element realized its welcome in El Paso was quite threadbare. By the end of the first decade of this century, open vice, sin, and corruption were fast becoming pages of El Paso's history. Although such activities never completely disappeared from the city's life, they ceased to be significant problems to the administrators of modern El Paso, and became instead memories of its misty romantic past.

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3. C. L. Sonnichsen, *Pass of the North* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1968), 348.
4. *Ibid.*, 278. See also *Minutes of the City Council* of El Paso for the 1880's. These books are available in the Southwest Room of the El Paso Public Library.
5. Sonnichsen, *Pass of the North*, 287.
6. Criminal Court Records, Case 705, District Court of El Paso County, Texas, May, 1886, Testimony of Alice Abbott, 1. (Cited hereafter as "Testimony.")
7. Sonnichsen, *Pass of the North*, 287-88.
8. "Last of Parlor Houses Comes Down," *El Paso Herald-Post*, June 25, 1958, 13. All of these establishments have been torn down to make way for city improvements and the expanding legitimate business district. All that remains of them are fragmentary written accounts and some contemporary photographs.
9. Testimony of Nina Farrel, 4.
10. Testimony of Alice Abbott, 1.
11. *Ibid.*, 1-2.
12. Testimony of Bell Springer, 7.
13. Testimony of Alice Abbott, 2.
14. Testimony of Bell Springer, 5.
15. The accounts differ as to exactly what Alice said to Etta. Alice later denied threatening Etta's life. See the trial testimony, *passim*.
16. Testimony of Bell Springer, 4.
17. Exactly where Alice stood when the shot was fired was also the subject of considerable dispute in the legal battle that followed. Alice and her girls claimed she was outside the house, while Etta and her sympathizers claimed the shot was fired while Alice was still in the house.
18. Testimony of Dr. A. L. Justice, 1.
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# ON TO WHITE OAKS: THE STORY OF THE EL PASO AND NORTHEASTERN RAILROAD

by WILLIAM T. RABE

## PART TWO OF TWO PARTS

### THE DENVER SHORT LINE AND JAY GOULD

Even though the Kansas City, El Paso and Mexican Company was in the hands of a receiver, talk of a railroad to White Oaks persisted. A group of interested persons came up with the idea of a railroad that would connect Denver and El Paso via White Oaks. John Evans, former governor of Colorado, spoke of the needs of an independent line connecting Denver and El Paso: "There is a point in this independent idea that it will not do for us to neglect. The lines independent of control by long eastern roads are our great need."<sup>55</sup> The ex-governor was behind a plan that would give Denver an outlet by rail to the Gulf of Mexico by way of Galveston and to Mexico by way of El Paso.<sup>56</sup>

El Paso needed no inducement to be convinced that a railroad to Denver via White Oaks was a good idea. Other towns including Denver, Pueblo, Trinidad, Las Vegas and White Oaks were equally convinced that such a project would be of great advantage to themselves and the other towns on the line. The *Denver Republican* advised its readers, saying: "Denver people ought to keep deep interest in the project for the railroad from Trinidad to El Paso via Las Vegas and White Oaks. It would give this place competition against the A.T. & S.F. for the trade of Las Vegas and El Paso. The road would give Denver an outlet to Mexico where she could sell her manufactures, especially mining machinery in larger volumes."<sup>57</sup> The city of Santa Fe visioned the benefits of such a project. The *Santa Fe Daily New Mexican* expressed its feelings about the proposed rail line in an editorial which read: "There is just one more thing to bring the capital city a veritable boom this fall, and this is the extension of the Denver and Rio Grande road south into the mining districts of Cerillos, Dolores, Golden and San Pedro and thence on to Albuquerque and via Abo Pass and White Oaks to El Paso."<sup>58</sup>

The stage was now set for El Paso to make the most of this opportunity, for it was announced by a group of El Paso backers of the proposed Denver-El Paso road that a railroad convention would be held in the city to discuss the projected railroad. Invitations were sent out to Denver, Trinidad, Las Vegas and White Oaks for the convention which was to start in El Paso September 21, 1891.<sup>59</sup>



All the towns which were invited sent enthusiastic delegations to the convention. El Paso's delegation of twenty-five members worked hard in every respect to make the convention a success. Among the delegates from El Paso were such staunch supporters of the railroad as Charles Davis, C. R. Morehead, A. M. Loomis, H. L. Detwiler, Juan S. Hart and S. J. Freudenthal.<sup>60</sup> Delegates were told that the Denver-El Paso road would have nothing to fear from competition, for it would be much shorter, and none could have more ample connections at both ends of the line.<sup>61</sup> The length of the line would be 460 miles from El Paso to Trinidad versus 516 miles via the Santa Fe railroad.<sup>62</sup> The northern terminus would tap eight thousand miles of roads, and at the southern end connections would be made with roads totaling four thousand miles.<sup>63</sup> This so-called air line route between Denver and El Paso would possess the best grades and alignment possible to find through New Mexico, and it would cross through the richest portion of the territory without being a parallel route to the Santa Fe system. The convention ended on a note of optimism, and its purpose achieved, the delegates returned home and began pushing the project along all points of the proposed line.<sup>64</sup>

Denver now became the focal point, and as a direct result of the convention held in El Paso, articles of incorporation were filed for the Denver and El Paso Independent Railway Company on March 18, 1892.<sup>65</sup> President of the new company, known unofficially as the Denver Short Line, was ex-governor John Evans. Joseph Magoffin of El Paso was on the executive committee.<sup>66</sup> O. L. Houghton, of Las Vegas and chief surveyor for the road, said that the line could be built in eighteen months at a total cost of construction and equipment of seven million dollars.<sup>67</sup>

The survey of the line was soon completed and it was agreed that construction on the road would start simultaneously from Trinidad and El Paso, with connections between Denver and Trinidad already available.<sup>68</sup>

In the meantime Jay Gould came to El Paso for an extended visit, and while in the city he purchased the properties and franchise of the defunct Kansas City, El Paso and Mexican railroad.<sup>69</sup> This action dealt the death blow to the newly formed Denver Short Line, and subsequent mass meetings and promotional schemes were of no avail in reviving the project.

Jay Gould was now the man in the spotlight. His purchase of the Kansas City, El Paso and Mexican company from the receiver for fifty thousand dollars had everyone guessing as to what his plans were.<sup>70</sup> It had been rumored two years previously that Gould was interested in purchasing the road when Judges Magoffin and Davis, acting as representatives for the receiver in a meeting in Dallas, had made a proposition to him concerning its sale.<sup>71</sup>



Looking to the future of El Paso and praising Mr. Gould's purchase, the *El Paso Times* published the following remarks:

The Wall Street Wizard has taken a hand in the upbuilding of El Paso along with his own interests and proposes to put White Oaks coal into El Paso as fast as unlimited means can lay track and build locomotives. The move yesterday means that Mr. Gould will put a force of men at the work of construction at once with this city as headquarters and base of supplies. It means the rapid development of the agricultural interests . . . between this point and White Oaks. It means the putting of coal into El Paso at one half its present cost and the establishment of manufacturing enterprises. It means that El Paso will be the fuel depot of the Mexican Central, the Texas and Pacific, the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio and the Southern Pacific railroads . . . It means with all these such an era of solid prosperity as no western town has ever known.<sup>72</sup>

After investing ten thousand dollars in the Williams mines and claims at White Oaks, Gould began a tour to the north with Denver as his goal.<sup>73</sup>

This tour started talk as to what was in store for the El Paso and Northern, the new name given the old railway company.<sup>74</sup> Gould's visit to Santa Fe caused talk to the effect that his plans were to build a line south through the heart of New Mexico and southern Colorado connecting Pueblo and Crede, Colorado with Cerillos and White Oaks, New Mexico with an outlet at El Paso.<sup>75</sup> More comment on Gould was that he reportedly purchased the Pecos Valley railroad which had been projected on to Albuquerque. This would indicate that Mr. Gould intended to develop a system in New Mexico to serve as a feeder for the Texas and Pacific.<sup>76</sup> The most grandiose story attributed to Mr. Gould's stay in El Paso involved his conversation with Collis P. Huntington who had made a stopover in El Paso. Originators of the story claimed that Gould and Huntington planned to form a gigantic railroad monopoly whereby the two men would control east-west rail traffic.<sup>77</sup>

Mr. Gould had expected to resume construction on the White Oaks line following the receiver's sale, but after complete investigation into the possibilities had washed his hands of the deal and pocketed his loss.<sup>78</sup>

## EDDY BUILDS THE EL PASO & NORTHEASTERN RAILROAD

The fulfillment of the White Oaks project was largely due to the work of one man, and that man was Charles Bishop Eddy. Eddy organized and promoted the company that finally was able to get the financial assistance necessary for the construction of the White Oaks railroad.



During the time he had helped to promote and build the line of railroad from Pecos, Texas to Carlsbad and on to Roswell, Charles B. Eddy had been urged on a number of occasions to undertake the promotion of a railroad that would serve western Lincoln county and eastern Doña Ana County, New Mexico.<sup>79</sup> Eddy had served as a director on the Kansas City, El Paso and Mexican railroad, and by 1895 he had developed an active interest in reviving the defunct project. He arrived in El Paso from New Mexico along with his brother John A. who had come down from Denver. The two came to town in November, 1895, and went into consultation with J. L. Bell who held a franchise to build a railroad from El Paso to White Oaks.<sup>80</sup> Aware of the past difficulties of parties who previously tried to run a line to White Oaks, Eddy visualized a railroad that would pay its way hauling coal from White Oaks mines where it could be sold to the railroads and to the mining and smelter operations in west Texas, New Mexico and Arizona.<sup>81</sup>

Eddy needed now to persuade enough capital investors that his plan was a sound one. He went to New York, interviewed George Jay Gould, and acquired from him the ten miles of track and the ten miles of roadway that had been graded.<sup>82</sup> The Texas and Pacific interests had tried in 1895 to revive the abandoned El Paso to White Oaks project, but finally gave up the idea of building into New Mexico.<sup>83</sup> Knowing that the Texas and Pacific no longer desired an extension into New Mexico, Eddy went to Rock Island officials with his plan and pointed out that a line could be built from Liberal, Kansas to Clayton, New Mexico to connect with the proposed White Oaks road, which he promised to extend eventually to Clayton.<sup>84</sup> The Rock Island people knew Eddy's proposal would result in a route 250 miles shorter than any existing road between Chicago and El Paso, and they also knew that it would give them a gateway to the Mexican trade. The Rock Island negotiators were non-committal, but they did not discourage Eddy's plans.<sup>85</sup> He went to El Paso, posted ten thousand dollars with the city council on September 20, 1897, as evidence of good faith, in return for a railroad franchise through El Paso, the money to be forfeited if construction was not started on the line to White Oaks within ninety days.<sup>86</sup>

Before going east to obtain capital, Eddy had worked for more than two years on the plans of rehabilitating the White Oaks road. Careful studies were made of the coal and gold mining properties at White Oaks and Salado, the cattle industry and the timber resources of the Sacramento mountains.<sup>87</sup>

Successful in his efforts to interest eastern capitalists in his railroad project, Eddy arrived in El Paso on April 14, 1897 with a party of distinguished visitors whom he accompanied to the White Oaks country to



examine the possibilities of a railroad. In the party were Colonel Henry M. Boles, a capitalist from Scranton, Pennsylvania; W. A. Lathrop, general superintendent of Lehigh Valley Coal Company of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania; Benjamin S. Harmon, attorney from New York; Clarence D. Simpson, coal operator from Scranton; George Dickinson, former general manager of the Union Pacific railroad; Commodore G. C. W. Lowery, president of the Vanderbilt Mining Company, a large stockholder in the Rock Island and other railroads; M. M. Gillam, newspaperman for Pennsylvania.<sup>88</sup> Eddy's efforts bore fruit: He sold his idea to these people from back east and they agreed to back his railroad plans. By November 1, 1897 Eddy had incorporated the El Paso and Northeastern Railroad Company.<sup>89</sup>

The incorporators were Clarence D. Simpson of Scranton; Charles B. Eddy of Eddy, New Mexico; G. C. W. Lowery, Rudolph T. McCabe, Benjamin S. Harmon and John Davis all of New York. The officers elected included Charles B. Eddy, president; C. D. Simpson, vice-president; John A. Eddy, secretary; W. A. Hawkins, counsel.<sup>90</sup> It was announced that the road was to be 170 miles in length, of which twenty-six miles would be in Texas and the remainder in New Mexico. From El Paso the road would be built to Fort Bliss, then to the Tularosa valley, on to the foothills of the Sacramento mountains and then north to the coal fields of Salado and White Oaks. John Eddy was to be in charge of construction of the railroad.<sup>91</sup>

Charles Eddy immediately purchased twenty-seven miles of steel rails from the owners of the Chispa railroad, an abandoned line that had been built into the San Carlos coal properties in Presidio county, Texas.<sup>92</sup> The contract for the first eighty-five miles of line was let to George S. Good and Company of Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, and one hundred teams started grading the right of way on November 30, 1897. The contract for ties and timber was let to William Cameron and Company of Waco, Texas. Eddy rented two engines, one from the Santa Fe and the other from the Kansas Midland.<sup>93</sup>

Construction work on the El Paso and Northeastern railroad was carried out vigorously. By February 1, 1898, the construction gangs had crossed the Texas line into New Mexico, twenty miles from El Paso. Before the railroad reached New Mexico, attorney W. A. Hawkins filed for record in Las Cruces and Lincoln a five million dollar mortgage to secure a bond issue on all the property of the company in Doña Ana and Lincoln counties.<sup>94</sup>

From the Texas-New Mexico boundary line the El Paso and Northeastern followed a survey that went along the foothills on the east side of the Jarilla mountains. The line continued northward to a townsite



laid out by surveyors and called Alamo Gordo, which was shortly contracted to Alamogordo, reaching the new townsite on June 15, 1898.<sup>95</sup>

In order to obtain timber from the Sacramento mountains, a branch of the El Paso and Northeastern was incorporated at Santa Fe. The name of this branch was the Alamogordo and Sacramento Mountain Railway Company.<sup>96</sup> La Luz, New Mexico became a boom town as the railroad approached. Men worked in and out of the town on contracts for 300,000 railroad ties which were being sawed from timber of the Sacramento mountains. Then grading started out of La Luz on the Alamogordo and Sacramento Mountain branch line which was to extend four miles below La Luz to the summit of the Sacramento mountains, a distance of about twenty-five miles.<sup>97</sup> The Alamogordo and Sacramento Mountain branch line was one of the most tortuous standard guage railroads in the country. It was said to be one of the steepest and crookedest railroads in the world using standard guage, side rod steam locomotives. Many of the curves on this branch line were as sharp as thirty degrees, and much of the grade on the upper end exceeded five per cent. Its sixty-one timber trestles totaled 5244 lineal feet in the thirty-two miles of track winding up into the Sacramento mountains. One of the trestles supported two thirty degree curves and was known as the "S bridge."<sup>98</sup>

The branch line left the main line at Alamogordo Junction and proceeded in an easterly and then southerly direction; although it used all compass directions a number of times. At one station named Toboggan a switchback was necessary to climb out of one of the narrow canyons. Trains climbed a total of 4753 feet from Alamogordo to the end of the line at Russia, 9076 feet above sea level.<sup>99</sup>

The first section of 20.6 miles from Alamogordo to Toboggan was built in 1898 and 1899. The next 7.4 miles to Cox Canyon was completed in 1900. From Cox Canon another 4.5 miles of track reached to Russia in 1903, and there the rails connected with tracks of a lumber company. Logs were the principal freight, going down to the mills at Alamogordo.<sup>100</sup>

The coming of the railroad to Alamogordo and La Luz caused a wild scramble for government land. Homesteaders filed on four thousand acres of public domain near La Luz within a few days after the railroad reached there.<sup>101</sup> The railroad company took options on nearly one hundred ranches in the Sacramento mountains which the company proposed selling to Pennsylvania farmers who were brought in to settle the country.<sup>102</sup>

Construction work came to a standstill after the road reached Alamogordo and lagged for several months, but by July, 1899 the track of the



El Paso and Northeastern had reached Three Rivers, eighteen miles above Tularosa, and within a month, White Oaks lay only thirty-two miles away. On August 3, 1899 White Oaks junction on the Carrizozo flat was the terminus of the line.<sup>103</sup>

The people of White Oaks, having waited patiently for nearly twenty years for a railroad were disturbed by rumors that the railroad would go elsewhere instead of to their camp. These fears proved correct. Instead of heading toward White Oaks, construction was started on a branch line from White Oaks Junction over to the Salado coal fields. Eddy had studied reports by men he sent out to examine the coal fields of White Oaks and Salado. These reports indicated that the Salado fields contained coal in more abundance and of better quality. From the information supplied in these reports Eddy decided to bypass White Oaks and extend his line to the Salado coal fields instead. So confident of the Salado fields was Eddy that he even brought a number of coal miners out from Pennsylvania to work in the fields. But the venture in the Salado coal fields turned out to be a failure despite the findings of Eddy's field men. The coal of the Salado fields was soon mined out, yet Eddy could not bring himself around to running a line over to White Oaks; he felt that after the failure to produce sufficient coal at Salado the White Oaks people would now dictate hard terms on coal royalties if he should run a line over to their fields.<sup>104</sup>

Regardless of the gloomy situation relative to the coal supply, Eddy received assurances from investors back east that they would finance an extension of the railway north and east from the White Oaks country. The White Oaks and Kansas City Railroad Company was incorporated under the laws of New Mexico, with incorporators and objectives identical with those of the El Paso and Northeastern.<sup>105</sup>

Eddy spent many months at the turn of the century negotiating with officials of the Rock Island railroad, urging them to commit their road to extend their line from Liberal, Kansas to Clayton, New Mexico to which latter point he expected to build. Eddy's arguments were so persuasive that the Rock Island decided to build into New Mexico and started to survey to Clayton on July 11, 1900, from a point about one hundred miles west of Liberal. The surveyors finished the survey in ten months, but abandoned the original plan of running a line to Clayton; instead, the line was run to a point near the present town of Tucumcari. Following the advice of locating engineers, the Rock Island completed a line from Liberal, Kansas to Dalhart, Texas, a distance of 111 miles, by June 20, 1901.<sup>106</sup>

Charles B. Eddy began extending his line on January 15, 1901 from Carrizozo to Santa Rosa on the Pecos river. On an ironical note White



Oaks was left off the main line. The citizens of White Oaks hoped then for a branch line, but even this was never built.<sup>107</sup>

The extension of the El Paso and Northeastern railway from Carrizo to Santa Rosa was hampered from lack of a satisfactory water supply. Nowhere along the 128 mile right-of-way could water suitable for use in boilers be found. The water could not be made suitable for steam by treatment either, and conditions rapidly reached the point where the traffic could not be handled successfully. Locomotive boilers would constantly scale up from having used the alkali water. Water would foam profusely in the boilers making it difficult for trainmen to maintain proper water levels. Staybolts would snap thereby causing water leaks, and in many cases the fires in the fireboxes would become extinguished.<sup>108</sup>

Despite the difficulty of obtaining satisfactory water for its locomotives and construction slowdowns which resulted from this condition, work was finally completed, and on February 1, 1902 the junction was made with Rock Island at Santa Rosa. Charles B. Eddy was on hand that day to drive the last spike linking the El Paso and Northeastern railroad and the Rock Island lines.<sup>109</sup> Thus at last El Paso had its line to the White Oaks country, and even more important a direct connection via the two rail systems to Chicago.

### CONCLUSION

The El Paso and Northeastern railroad was built during the great railroad construction era which followed the Civil War and which lasted until the early 1900's. The El Paso and Northeastern was an example of the way in which railroads during this era were promoted, financed and constructed. By similar methods rails crossed the county and branched out to nearly every settled area in the nation.

In the case of the El Paso and Northeastern all efforts to get the line built failed until a promoter possessing the persistence and fortitude of Charles B. Eddy appeared on the scene.

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## HISTORY—WRITING CONTEST

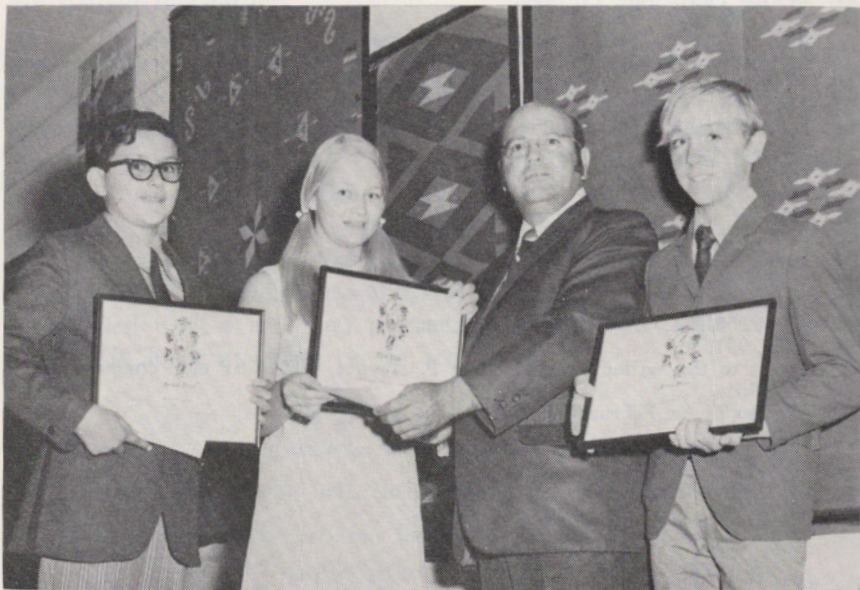
This year marked the tenth anniversary of the history-writing contest which is sponsored by the Historical Society for seventh grade students of the public and parochial schools of El Paso County. The prizes are \$75 for first place, \$50 for second and \$25 for third. In addition to the money prizes the three winners are each presented with a certificate of achievement and the winning paper is published in *PASSWORD*. Mr. Leon C. Metz, the Society's president, presented the prizes and certificates at the general meeting of the Society held on May 13 at the Radford School for Girls.

In this year's contest the names of the winners together with the titles of their articles, the names of their schools and other information follows:

First place went to William Tullius for his article: "Evolution of a Building." It is the story of Our Lady of the Valley School which William attends and where his principal is Sister Mary Catherine and his teacher is Mr. Moniz. William lives with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Tullius, at 8526 Alderete.

Second place went to Victor Villanueva for his paper: "Early Education in El Paso." He attends Coldwell School where his principal is Miss Pearl Crocket and his teacher Mr. Joseph Maguire. Victor resides with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ernesto Villanueva, at 4100 Altura.

One statement in Victor's article is of unusual interest: "In 1887, the first graduating class consisted of one boy, Prentis George Robinson. The school board felt that it would be better to have another graduate and chose Miss Kate Moore. It was also decided that she would return the next year to finish her high school studies."



### CONTEST WINNERS

*Left to right: Victor Villanueva, Cindy Shugart, Dr. James M. Day, Chairman of the Contest Committee and Associate Professor of English at UTEP, and William Tullius.*

*Photo by Cmdr. M. McKinney.*



The third place was won by Cindy Shugart for her paper: "The Story of a House." Miss Shugart attends St. Clement's Episcopal School where The Reverend Harland M. Irvin is Headmaster and Mrs. Alma Zimmer her teacher. Cindy lives at 5705 Pebble Beach with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thorne Shugart.

Incidentally, Cindy wrote of the home of former United States Senator Albert B. Fall. The house, located at 1725 Arizona, was built in 1906 in a sort of contest with "Mr. Turney, a junior member of his law firm, and Mr. Ainsa, a good friend," to see who would have the "most elegant" house in El Paso. And the winner? "Mr. Ainsa's house," Cindy tells us, "was found to have the most beautiful exterior, Mr. Turney's the most beautiful brocade and velvet walls, and Mr. Fall's the most beautiful parquet floors, Venetian glass, and marble fireplace."

It is interesting to note that Cindy's maternal grandmother was born in the house and her mother spent her youth there.

The house was sold in 1949 or 1950 to the Jesuit Fathers for a retreat. Today it is a boarding house.

The winning article follows:

## EVOLUTION OF A BUILDING

by WILLIAM TULLIUS

Since I am a member of Our Lady of the Valley Church, I have always been interested in the colorful history of the original building. Most church buildings were built for a church. Not so of Our Lady of the Valley. The building began as the private West Ysleta Country Club. Later this club was bought by Mr. Ponder, whose son Dan was to become Mayor of El Paso. Though the name "West Ysleta Country Club" was still used, the club was no longer a private club. Big dinners and dances were held weekly with big name bands playing the music. It was the "in" place for the teenage crowd.

Several of the people I talked to said that what added to the evening of dancing was the beautiful, fun trip to and from the club on the Inter Urban Streetcar Line. This streetcar connected El Paso and Ysleta. Both sides of the track were lined with huge cottonwood trees, which changed colors in the Fall.

The club itself was on several acres of grassy land with trees and shrubs. Many El Pasoans enjoyed a Sunday drive down the Valley to picnic on the club grounds or under any one of the beautiful cottonwood trees that grew so plentiful along the way.

Mr. Ponder died in October, 1928. With her three sons gone from home, Mrs. Ponder found she could not run the club alone. She mortgaged the property in 1930 and lost it in 1937. The next nine years the property changed hands six times.

In one of these changes the club became Cherry Land Dance Hall. Beer was sold on the premises and an older crowd took over from the teenagers. The reputation of the place fell rapidly.

So it was a surprise to everyone when the property was bought from Frank Candelaria on November 24, 1945 as the site for a new church. This property was chosen because the existing building could be remodeled for a



church and hall suitable for the small congregation and the land around the building would be ideal for a large church and a school as the need arose. What had been the big kitchen in the Ponder home and the bar in the Cherry Land Dance Hall became the altar in the new church. This church was named Our Lady of the Rosary of the Valley, later called Our Lady of the Valley.


The parishoners were anxious to start a school, so old St. Margaret's was used from 1947 to 1951. The new school was built with eight classrooms. By 1954 eight more classrooms had been added. The present church was added to the original building in 1949. The convent for the Sisters was built in 1954.

All that was lacking was the new living quarters for the priests. The new rectory was added to the original building, and their old quarters became meeting rooms. This is the property as it now stands. In all stages it played an important part in the history of growing El Paso.

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Mr. Robert McDowell—8523 Alderete St.—859-7396  
 Mrs. John Garnand—8321 Parkland Dr.—778-4718  
 Mrs. W. J. Reynolds, Sr.—8023 San Jose Rd.—598-7382  
 Mrs. Jack Ponder—4010 Flamingo St.—542-0202  
 Mr. Jack Ponder—4010 Flamingo St.—542-0202  
 Mrs. P. L. Gratten—200 Davis St.—859-7346  
 Southwest Title Company—424 Texas St.—544-3322

Tenth Anniversary Booklet—Our Lady of the Valley—8600 Winchester—859-7939




Jointfir Family (Gnetaceae)—this is a family of peculiar shrubs called by various common names, including desert tea, Mormon tea, and jointfir. They are related to the pine family, but they cannot be said to produce cones since the fruits consist merely of one or more seeds enclosed by several or many scales. The stems are pointed and hollow, and the leaves are reduced to two or three scales at each joint of the stem. The stems of these plants are sometimes steeped as a substitute for tea. They were formerly much used for this purpose by the Mormons. All members of the family found in the park belong to the genus *Ephedra*.

McDougall and Sperry, *Plants of Big Bend National Park*



The Mansos Indians lived in El Paso (Juárez), the Suma in San Lorenzo, the Tigua in Ysleta, and the Piros in Senecú and Socorro. All were founded in historic times.



THE TOMBSTONE MINES, the most productive of all in Arizona, were discovered in 1878 by Ed. Schieffelin, a Pennsylvanian by birth. He named them for "the dismal forebodings of his friends on his departure from Fort Huachuca."



## BOOK REVIEWS

### EDITORS MAKE WAR: Newspapers in the Secession Crisis

by DONALD E. REYNOLDS

(Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, \$10.00)

In mid-April 1860, virtually all newspapers of the future Confederate states believed in preserving the Union, provided that Southern "rights," as they conceived them, could be protected. One year later all but a handful of the same journals had endorsed the Confederacy. During those intervening months there was "constant shifting and overlapping" of editorial viewpoints with four categories discernible in the drift towards unanimity. There were the "secessionists" which actually urged withdrawal; the "radical southern-rights" which believed that secession should depend upon some future Northern aggression; the "moderate Southern rights" which defended Southern rights but emphasized the need of preventing the election of a Republican President; and, finally, the small category of "Unionists" which minimized the apparent dangers to the country and extravagantly praised the Union.

What caused all but a handful of Southern journalists to change their editorial attitudes within the short span of twelve months? The author admits that "to generalize is risky" but, he believes, the evidence shows that a combination of four major events brought about the change—the "Texas Troubles," the election of Lincoln, the secession of South Carolina and the lower South, and the failure of compromise.

The "Texas Troubles," also called the "Texas Flames" and the "Dallas Plot," grew out of sensational reports of costly fires which occurred almost simultaneously on July 8 in Dallas, Denton, and Pilot Point. In each of these towns the fires began mysteriously on a hot Sunday afternoon. And although the moderate papers denounced the reports and insisted that "Rumor had burned almost every town in Texas," the people became convinced that the fires were the work of abolitionists in league with slaves.

"It is impossible," the author concludes, "to exaggerate the role of the Southern press in fanning the hot-weather flames of the Texas prairie with a roaring inferno of terror that swept the whole South." Thus alleged incendiaryism in Texas, followed by abolitionist scares in other states, "served to refocus the attention of the Southern press upon Lincoln," and to set the stage for the last month of the campaign, when the predominant question was: "Would the South submit to Lincoln's election?" History records, of course, that the answer was "No."

Dr. Reynolds, Associate Professor of History at East Texas State University at Commerce, is to be congratulated for an important book. Should he never publish another item, his place in the world of scholarship is secure.

*University of Texas at El Paso*

—Eugene O. Porter

### IRON AFLOAT

by WILLIAM N. STILL, JR.

(Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971, \$10.00)

This story of the Confederate Armorclad Warships will appeal to readers with an interest in the Civil War, the Confederacy, Naval or Military his-



tory. Professor Still's scholarly research has filled a long neglected gap in Civil War and Naval History.

The book brings out the neglect of Confederate President Davis ("not impressed with the necessity of building ships"); yet notwithstanding a low priority on the meager resources of the Confederacy, five major seaports (a major objective of the Union from the start) were not taken by the Union forces until the last six months of the war. Two of those seaports were taken by land forces, two indirectly from pressure from rear, and one, Galveston, did not have an armorclad. The armorclads were used primarily for harbor and river defense and their construction was the major Confederate naval policy.

This work combines battles, economic, social, labor, political, naval and military history. It is a story of farsighted, brilliant, capable and brave men along with some stupid, incapable and cowardly ones, and their triumphs and disasters.

On July 11, 1861, Confederate Secretary of the Navy, Stephen R. Mallory (resigned Chairman, United States Senate Naval Affairs Committee), ordered the *Merrimack* to be rebuilt into an armorclad. At this time only England and France possessed armorclads and the Union *Stevens Battery* armorclad had been abandoned for several years and was still on the stocks. Only one ship of the U. S. Navy, the *Fulton*, fell into the hands of the Confederacy at Secession of the States, not counting the partially destroyed and burned *Merrimack*. Secretary Mallory's letter of May 10, 1861, stated: "I regard the possession of an iron armored ship as a matter of the first necessity . . . If we follow their [the United States Navy] example and build wood ships . . . [they] will be easy prey . . . to her comparatively numerous steam frigates."

The book is illustrated with drawings of 14 armorclads and nine maps of harbors, rivers and approaches to battle areas.

The Confederate government contracted for approximately 50 armorclads, of which 22 were placed in operation and played an important role in the conflict.

*El Paso, Texas*

—GILBERT B. CARTER

## SAN ANTONIO STAGE LINES 1847-1881

by ROBERT H. THONHOFF

(El Paso: Texas Western Press, Southwestern Studies, No. 29, \$2.00)

The stagecoach era in Texas lasted roughly thirty-five years, from 1847 through 1882. During that period more than fifty different stage lines operated in and out of San Antonio. In fact, the City of Saint Anthony was like Rome, to paraphrase the author, all roads led hither, all roads hence.

It is true that a few stages operated in Texas during the Republic, 1836 to 1846, but they were confined to East Texas. The land around San Antonio had been largely depopulated during the Revolution and settlers were slow in returning. With the discovery of gold in California, however, and the subsequent gold rush of the 1850's, lines of communication and transportation were extended westward.

Few stage lines in the entire West were operated without mail contract which were let periodically by the United States Post Office. The first con-



tract for transporting the mail between San Antonio and El Paso was awarded in 1850 to veteran stage operator Henry Skillman. The fabled W.A.A. "Bigfoot" Wallace was one of Skillman's drivers. The fare from San Antonio to El Paso was \$100.00.

Skillman lost his federal subsidy in 1854 to David Wasson. His line failed to function, however, and after three years James Birch was awarded a four-year contract at \$149,000.00 a year for semi-monthly mail service between San Antonio and San Diego, California. It was this stage line, incidentally, that was taken over, upon Birch's death the same year, by James H. Giddings and Robert E. Doyle and became known as the "Jackass Line" or "Trail." (For a more complete story of the Giddings-Doyle line see Emily Giddings and Emmie Mahon, "The Jackass Trail," *PASSWORD*, V. ii, No. 3 (August, 1957), 91-96.

During the Civil War the United States mail stage lines were successfully converted to Confederate lines, only to be reconverted at the end of the war. By the year 1882, however, the stagecoach era in Texas was all but over. The previous year the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railroad began building westward where it met the eastward building Southern Pacific in January, 1883. With the joining of these two roads Texas had a transcontinental link to California.

This short monograph is well researched and well written. And the sixteen pages of reproductions of newspaper advertisements add greatly to the book's completeness and interest.

*University of Texas at El Paso*

—Eugene O. Porter



THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT imported two loads of camels for the Camel Corps, U. S. Army. The first arrived in May, 1856, and consisted of thirty-four animals while the second arrived in January, 1857, and consisted of forty-one.



At the turn of the century there were an estimated two million wild horses roaming the Western plains and mountains. They were descendants of the tough, small mustangs brought to the horseless new world by the Conquistadores 400 years ago.



Ethnological knowledge of a people is obtained by direct observation. Archaeological knowledge is obtained from a study of their houses and manufactures left after they have disappeared.



## HERITAGE HOMES OF EL PASO

### The Hoffercker House

Lyman W. Hoffercker came to El Paso from Pennsylvania in 1900. He brought his wife and baby daughter, Merle. Mr. Hoffercker worked as a contractor and builder, and in 1908, with some advice and help from his good friend Henry Trost, he designed and built his handsome home at 1514 Montana Street. It was one of the earliest houses built in that area.

The house is of light tan and consists of three floors and a basement. Four white Ionic columns support the portico. The front door opens into a large square vestibule. An unusual feature of the house is a swinging door of leaded "Art" glass which opens into the center hall. On the right of the hall are front and back parlors, a fireplace in the back one, and on the left of the hall a large dining room with fireplace. Back of that is a pantry and kitchen. There are four bedrooms on the second floor and a billiard room on the third. Adjoining the house at the back is the first private swimming pool to have been built in El Paso. It is enclosed, with a sliding glass roof. Black and white tiles line the pool, going half way up the walls, the rest of the walls being glass.



*THE HOFFECKER HOUSE*



Mr. Hoffecker was an artist as well as a builder. He did exquisite work with inlaid wood on tables, screens, and wall plaques. In 1933 he designed a half dollar coin commemorating the Old Spanish Trail of 1535. The obverse side has the head of a cow, referring to Cabeza de Vaca, and the reverse side a yucca tree and a map showing the Old Trail. Mr. Hoffecker went to Washington to supervise the minting of the commemorative coin. Anyone who invested in enough of these at fifty cents each would reap a tidy profit today as they sell for over \$200 each.

Merle Hoffecker married Benners B. Vail, an Army officer. When Colonel Vail retired, the couple returned to El Paso to live in Mrs. Vail's childhood home. The house is headquarters for her many friends on New Year's Day, as the porch and lawn make wonderful grandstand seats to watch the Sun Carnival Parade and to partake of Mrs. Vail's charming hospitality.



#### OLD SPANISH

*This coin commemorated the four hundredth anniversary of the overland trek of the Cabeza de Vaca Expedition through the gulf states in 1535. L. W. Hoffecker designed the coin.*



THE LUMBEEES of Maryland number over 30,000 and constitute the largest Indian group in the United States, except the Navaho.



CAMP VERDE near Bandura, Texas, was headquarters for the Camel Corps, U. S. Army.



PINE TREES have the best ring structure for dating. Other trees do not show the influence of weather so plainly or grow under such favorable conditions that the rings are so nearly the same size to be useless for study.



# SOUTHWEST ARCHIVES

by RUBY BURNS, Guest Editor



*Student archivist Gilda Pena holding theater program from the Josephine Clardy Fox Collection.*

Unsuspected treasure for the lovers of theatre in the United States, specifically New York theatre, where the lights of Broadway have dazzled the world, was uncovered when the papers of Mrs. Josephine Clardy Fox were brought to the Archives Room of the University of Texas at El Paso.

For it was discovered that Mrs. Fox, an inveterate theatre-goer on her regular visits to New York, had collected and preserved theatre programs for a period spanning almost 50 years. It is a fascinating pursuit to browse through these programs, as I have done while working on a biography of Mrs. Fox to be published by the University. Immortal names of actors,



producers, entrepreneurs and theatres that flourished then disappeared from the New York scene, are to be found here.

Mrs. Fox was a serious student of music in her younger years and there are numerous programs of operas and concerts among the papers, but the theatre programs, with their uniform size and format, were perfect for collecting. And whatever else may be said about Mrs. Fox, all agree she was an avid collector.

Not only the names of actors, the plays and theatres, but the advertising in these programs affords one a window through which to observe the era of about 1905 to the late 1950's. A sample taken from a box holding perhaps 300 programs, proclaims the schedule of the Empire Theatre at Broadway and 40th where on Monday, April 22, 1918, that First Lady of the theatre, Ethel Barrymore, was appearing in a comedy in four acts, "The Off Chance." Also noted in the cast is another name of renown, that of the lovely Eva Le Galliene. The producer was Charles Frohman.

Sharing space on the frontispiece with the Empire announcement is an advertisement of the Lyceum Theatre at which David Belasco was presenting "Tiger Rose", a "play of the Great Northwest" by Willard Mack. By the next year, 1919, Belasco had his own theatre, the Belasco, at which on December 29 he presented Lenore Ulric in a "play of the New China" titled "The Son-Daughter." Belasco was co-author with George Scarborough.

Previously, in 1918, the Astor Theatre, where the Messrs. Lee and J. J. Schubert held forth, was presenting Clifton Crawford starring in a new musical play, "Fancy Free." Other featured actors were Marilyn Miller, Harry Conor and Ray Raymond.

Appearing regularly in the programs of that day were two interesting columns, "What the Men Will Wear", and "What the Women Will Wear." The latter, written by Cora Moore, is illustrated by a sketch of a lady wearing "a dainty room gown," whatever that may be. It begins: "However the fashion makers may have restrained their fancy in other directions they seem to have allowed it free reign in the matter of negligees and glissairs, for the new ones are adorable—and different." Different, indeed are the glissairs and other fashions in the ads, as seen through 1971 eyes.

Anna Held in flowing theatrical costume endorses Adam's Black Jack Chewing Gum, which she declares the boys in the trenches prefer, and says she forwards some to them every month. In one full page ad, patrons are admonished to "Invest in Liberty Bonds."

The Josephine Clardy Fox papers have required many hours of arduous work in classifying and filing. This has been done under the direction of Gilda Pena, who just when she thought the job was finished, found the tables in Archives overflowing with a tremendous new load, including yellowed and water-soaked material found in a hidden storage place at the Fox home.

Many materials of wide interest have come to Archives and the University Library from the Fox estate. The Library has received something like one thousand books, including several Fore-edge books, embellished with paintings on the gilt edges of the pages, a rare and almost forgotten art. More may be written about these books in a future article.



## HISTORICAL NOTES

### The Butterfield Overland Stage

When the Butterfield Overland Mail Company inaugurated its trans-Mississippi stage system, it built stations along its route. The stations were, for the most part, low, square, adobe or stone buildings, with protecting enclosures. Where Indians were hostile, four or five well-armed men, hostlers, cooks, etc., were placed at a station. Meals were served the passengers, the fare generally consisting of bread, coffee, meat, and sometimes beans. The cost was usually fifty cents.

"Various experiences of passengers have been preserved in the writings of several travelers. These narratives give us a rather vivid picture of what it was like for the individual to travel in a stagecoach for a period of days.

"The fatigue of uninterrupted traveling by day and night, in crowded and at times ill-smelling coaches, affected many of the passengers not only physically but also psychologically. Cases have been cited where passengers not only lost contact with reality, but actually became raving maniacs. Several factors converged to give rise to these psychotic states in some of the unfortunate travelers. In the first place, it was difficult, if not impossible, for some passengers to fall asleep in a confined sitting position; and the lack of sleep often produced near-delirium. Added to this was often anxiety neurosis over possible attacks from the Comanches and Apaches. Under these conditions, any occurrence which startled a passenger out of his state of somnolence was at once imagined by him as likely to be taken for an Indian as for a friend.

"With some of the travelers this acute anxiety reached the point where their own safety and that of their fellow passengers made it necessary to leave them at the first station stop, where sleep usually restored them before the arrival of the next semi-weekly coach. Nevertheless, at times some of those affected became so violent that they jumped from the coach, and wondered off to a death from thirst and starvation in the desert. The drivers commonly referred to these temporary demented states of the passengers as the 'starts.' To be sure, only a small per cent of passengers developed the 'starts' in any acute form; but when it happened, a profound and lasting impression of the occurrence was left with all concerned.

"A final inconvenience that faced the traveler who booked passage over the Butterfield line should be mentioned. Upon entering the desert of the Southwest, the traveler soon was troubled by the absence of potable water. Much of the water found in the region was of a saline flavor; and in many of the streams, such as the Gila River, it was almost completely brackish. The alkali in the water in turn affected all passengers more or less as a purgative, but the effects wore off in a few days.

"Before booking passage, many prospective travelers sought information on how they should dress for the trip and advice on the type of equipment they should carry. In reply to numerous inquiries of this nature, one newspaper in California offered certain suggestions. If possible, the paper pointed out, the passenger should be careful to learn who were to be traveling companions. A good-humored, considerate set of passengers, it was wisely advised, could render the trip quite agreeable. As for one's armament, a Sharp's carbine and one hundred cartridges, along with a Navy revolver and two pounds of balls and caps, were considered absolutely essential not only by



the newspaper but by seasoned wayfarers. As for clothing, the editor recommended a pair of thick boots, woolen pants and a half dozen pairs of thick woolen socks. The traveler was also urged to carry with him six undershirts, three woolen overshirts, and a 'wide-awake' hat. A cheap sack coat, a soldier's overcoat, one pair of blankets in summer and two pairs in winter were considered indispensable, together with a pair of gauntlets, a small pack of needles, a paper of pins, a sponge, a hair brush, a comb, and a bar of soap. The toilet articles were to be carried in an oil silk bag. Two pairs of thick drawers and three or four towels rounded out the list of suggested items."

—R. A. Mulligan, in *The Smoke Signal*  
(The Tucson Corral of the Westerners, Spring, 1965)

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WHEN THE UNION FORCES regained control of Texas at the close of the Civil War, they found a herd of sixty-six camels, the remains of the pre-war Camel Corps, U. S. Army. The camels were sold by sealed bid in March, 1866, at thirty-one dollars a head.

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The War with Mexico posed a question that the Americans of the next decade could not evade. Was it the Manifest Destiny of the United States to spread slavery or freedom.

—Handlin, *The History of the United States*

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THERE WERE 17 CHINESE OPERATED laundries in El Paso in 1896, according to the city directory for that year.

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THERE WERE FIVE CHURCHES in El Paso in 1885—the Episcopal, Baptist, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and Methodist.

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THE TOTAL ASSESSED valuation of El Paso County for the year 1884 was \$6,638,800.

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THERE WERE SIX DRUG STORES in El Paso in 1895.

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THERE WERE ONLY THREE DENTISTS in El Paso in 1895—A. H. Whitner and A. E. and C. C. Brown.



## CONTRIBUTORS to this ISSUE

LEON C. METZ, a native of West Virginia, is the President of our Society. For further information see the Contributor's column for the Spring, 1971, issue of *PASSWORD*.

ROBERT N. MULLIN is a native El Pasoan now retired and living in South Laguna, California. He is well-known to students of Southwestern History for his writings in the field, several of which have been published in *PASSWORD*, and also for his unexcelled collection of material on the Lincoln County War. For additional information see the Contributor's column in *PASSWORD*, Vol. XV, No. 4 (Winter, 1970), 149.

KENNETH A. GOLDBLATT should be very well-known to readers of *PASSWORD* because of his several articles and also for his book reviews. A graduate of the University of Texas at El Paso (A.B. and M.A., English) he is at present teaching at the University of Maryland where he is also taking work towards his doctorate in English. In a recent letter to the editor, Mr. Goldblatt stated that he has accepted a summer appointment to teach a class in English Literature in a Turkish city on the Black Sea.

WILLIAM T. RABE, a native El Pasoan, received his A.B. and M.A. (History) at the University of Texas at El Paso. For more personal data see the Contributor's column for the Spring, 1971, issue of *PASSWORD*.

GILBERT B. CARTER is a Registered Public Surveyor and a Registered Professional Engineer. During World War II he served as an officer aboard a submarine. His article, "The Ancient Art of Surveying" was published in *PASSWORD*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (Fall, 1966), 127-131. For further personal data see page 144 of the volume cited.

RUBY BURNS recently retired as Society Editor of *The El Paso Times*. She is currently researching a biography of Mrs. Josephine Clardy Fox. Your editor hopes that he may be permitted to publish some of the chapters from the biography before they are printed in book form.