PASSWORD

THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. XXII, No. 1 EL PASO, TEXAS SPRING, 1977

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PASSWORD

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Conrey Bryson, *Editor*

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ORAL HISTORY

LAW ENFORCEMENT IN EL PASO

EDITOR'S NOTE: The tape recorder has added a new dimension to the gathering and recording of history. It is hoped that this example of a tape-recorded program will prove a stimulus to the recording and transcription of interviews with persons who can provide important background to our historical knowledge.

The following is a transcript of a program presented before the quarterly meeting of El Paso County Historical Society October 24, 1963. The program was transcribed under the direction of Dr. C. L. Sonnichsen, then head of the English Department of Texas Western College.

PARTICIPANTS

Allen G. Falby, Moderator, long time motorcycle captain with the El Paso County Sheriff's Department. Later El Paso County Sheriff, City Alderman, and Manager of the Southwestern Sun Carnival.
Chris P. Fox, Sheriff of El Paso County, Manager and President of El Paso Chamber of Commerce, and now Public Relations Consultant of the State National Bank.
Mrs. Callie Fairley, veteran police-woman of the El Paso Police Department.
Tony Trujillo, for many years constable of the San Elizario area.
E. A. (Dogie) Wright, former Border Patrolman, Texas Ranger, and Past President of Former Texas Rangers. Sheriff of Hudspeth County until his retirement.
Only Sheriffs Fox and Wright are living in 1977.

MR. FALBY: My first contact as a peace officer in El Paso came under Sheriff Seth Orndorff,[1] and I think my first arrest was one of the most outstanding. I arrested no other than Tom Lea, perhaps our best criminal attorney, and he was in company with former Chief of Police Peyton Edwards. Well, that was quite a go round. Tom Lea told the judge (Burt Rawlings was our Justice of the Peace at that time), "I can beat this case, but this fellow was so nice and polite about it, I believe I'll just pay the fine." And then they got into a hassle as to whether or not he could beat the case, and I thought we were going to have to tie them, but he finally agreed to pay the fine.

Then my next, my very next arrest, I know was one of my bosses, Joe Williams, who was a County Commissioner and at the El Paso National Bank at that time. I don't know how, but I did. And then, too, at that time when I went to work Ben Levy and Maurice Schwartz signed my bond, and I think the reason they did was because some of the creditors wanted to get paid and officers in those days had to furnish a bond for performance of their duty.

Of course we had our serious moments in law enforcement and then we had our lighter moments; and of course without some humor, law enforcement would be a grim business indeed. It's a risky business. I think this is proved by the plaques of the different departments of law enforcement agencies here in El Paso commemorating the men who gave their lives in line of duty. I know there was one year when there were thirteen officers killed and wounded in El Paso County. That was state, federal, city and of course, county. And when the Volstead Act went into effect (I think they slipped that in while most of us were in the Army in

World War I), it was unenforceable, but everyone made an effort of some kind. That, I think, caused the death of more officers in the line of duty than any other one factor in this Southwestern area, because of our border location here with the river and the active smuggling that went on. It was big business, and much money involved — expensive automobiles for transportation, and expensive loads of liquor.

I wanted first, though, to call on one of our panel members, and I think the ladies should always be first. Mrs. Callie Fairley went to work in our El Paso Police Department in 1924, and Callie for a time was known as "the moocher." Every policeman she saw, or she knew, she wanted a dollar. These people had to have help—these runaway girls—and they had to be sent home. There were no agencies providing money for this type of purpose. Those we did have never had any money. Very often, they referred these people to us, the law enforcement agencies, and then it was up to the law enforcement agencies to refer back or get them out of town. Callie is a spry 83-½ years of age and she went through the early days of our law enforcement here. And Callie, I wanted to ask if you wouldn't tell us a little bit of something about the experiences you had with those young ladies that were far, far from home, were lost, were on the very verge of being in serious trouble. Would you mind telling us a little bit about some of your experiences.

MRS. FAIRLEY: I do not mind at all, but my big surprise is "what am I doing here?" Captain Falby, those were mighty trying times and we had many, many girls that were run-aways from home, not El Paso homes, but sometimes far east, north and west. They were not the type of girls that you would lock up—that you wanted to turn the key on—and there was no finances to help anybody; and that was why I obtained the name of "the moocher." But allow me to say that the officials of both the county and the city, if they could dodge me, they did, but they never met me face to face and refused. So I could always manage to get fare and enough for them to eat on, such as hamburger, coffee, or something till they got home. Sometimes you heard from the parents of the girls and you felt you had done good.

On one occasion, this Madeline and I—I worked with her; that is, we worked together at the clinic. I was under J. D. Riegar and I was assigned to investigate the VDs from the clinic—but we took a girl that we thought was very worthy and we took her to Van Horn—gave her fare, money to get along on, to be sure she was out of town. When we came back to what was then the County Hospital, she was crawling out of a truck. She beat us back. However, I didn't ever have to pick her up any more, I'll say that.

Then, of course, we had a rougher class of girls. We had underworld women, and the trying time was when the Government decided to have

segregation. I mean that was a busy time and a trying time. Let's say a fighting time. You did awfully well if you got through the night without one fight. But it was accomplished and with the aid of the men, the officers and all, and Mother Warren, who was an angel.[2] She paid for a room at one of our downtown hotels by the month, so when I found a worthy girl, a girl that I felt was worth the while, I could put her in that hotel room and she would have a meal ticket till we could raise enough money to send her home. So, between the good hearted officers—and let's not just say the good hearted officers—we have a few men in this town, business men, that were very, very liberal, but they did not ever give me that money. The money was sent in to a superior officer. The Chief was there, telling who it was for and what it was for. So we got help.

Callie Fairley, El Paso Policewoman, 1924-51. (Courtesy Gerald Stowe and Leon J. Fairley)

In my twenty seven years of experience, I enjoyed my work, though it was long, hard hours and many trying times. But we had right here in this city young ladies—they are grandmothers now—that we interviewed and through Mother Warren and I; and they have lovely homes, girls, and college, and they are doing fine, so you feel like you have had some reward out of the rough edges of El Paso's rough times.

MR. FALBY: Callie used to carry a pistol, too. Callie had a heavy purse. She would say, "Here, hold this a minute," and when you did, why—

MRS. FAIRLEY: May I add that it would not have been necessary to carry that pistol if it wasn't for the gentlemen friends on the street that wanted to take the girls' part and the girls didn't even know them. I was solo; I didn't have a partner. Once in a while I kinda felt like I might need it, but didn't have to use it.

MR. FALBY: We have another member of our panel who is an old timer I'm sure many of you know. He hardly needs an introduction —Sheriff Dogie Wright. You know Dogie Wright started out here in the Border Patrol—and came here as a Ranger, a Texas Ranger. Then he was the Sheriff, and is now, in Sierra Blanca, Hudspeth County. But there used to be kind of a guessing game and the peace officer was always the second guesser. He had to wait until the other fellow made the move and often times he paid for that—for waiting—by losing his life. Because the other fellow had to make the move as to resisting arrest, whatever it might be that he had in mind. So you had to be a second guesser. And one of the good second guessers was Dogie Wright; and Dogie, I wish you would tell us some of your experiences; because he had to be responsible for law enforcement in smaller communities where they didn't have the assistance of officers from other agencies. They were on their own and they had it all to themselves. They had to make decisions, and they had to be split second decisions. Dogie, will you please tell us something of your experience.

SHERIFF WRIGHT: Well, I came to El Paso in 1924. I came out of South Texas. Actually when I came here I was kind of going to quit the business. I ran into an old friend of mine, out on the street—Grover Webb, who was Chief of Customs. And of course he brought the proposition "Why don't you join the Border Patrol?" They had just organized the Border Patrol, and of course that done it. I just walked down to the Santa Fe bridge. Jeff Perkins was the first Chief of the Border Patrol and he told me to get on the scales. He said, "I don't know whether you are tall enough or not," but I just got under the line. I was 23 years old. Course, El Paso was somewhat different than I'd been used to. Laredo, Brownsville, El Paso were jammed up here on this river, and what made El Paso such a hot spot in the prohibition days was the fact that in Juarez they had the only distillery of whiskey in Mexico. Therefore they came in here from Kansas City, Dallas, Denver, and lots of places over the United States and it was big money. By the time they got that liquor back to Kansas City, why it was thirty or forty dollars a quart—that was prohibition days—good whiskey. Therefore, when you got something valuable, you were going to fight over it. That's just what happened. When the Border Patrol was organized, that throwed another group of men on this

Dogie Wright, U.S. Border Patrolman, near Straus, New Mexico, 1925.

river and they began to tighten up, and that's when the fun started. And, as Captain Falby said, there were many men killed here, a lot of good men during these days.[3]

In comparison even with the old days, I think we produced and developed some of the finest officers in the country in this El Paso area. There were wonderful men like Steve Dawson, Thad Pippin, and "Pidgy" Scotten. A lot of good men lost their lives. They didn't like to talk about it; they didn't like to make a hero out of anybody. Therefore there weren't many heroes made. But it will come out some day. I believe that the prohibition era, along the Mexican border, was the most difficult and the most trying time in the history of the border.

MR. FALBY: Thank you, Dogie. It was an odd thing that when the Border Patrol was organized, they had some motorcycle officers. They had some County motorcycle officers and I was one of them. And they had a fellow by the name of Jolly?

SHERIFF WRIGHT: Jolly. That's right.

MR. FALBY: Well, it got so that up around the Smelter area, if you stopped a fellow on the highway at night and gave him a ticket and you told him to turn out his lights, they would take a shot at you from the other side of the river. They had some liquor cached out there somewhere, and they didn't want any interference. So we used to have to follow a fellow till we got him a little farther up the road and had some protection from the buildings and so forth, but people wouldn't realize that at that time that they were dependent on a couple of fellows on motorcycles to work that river.

We had some funny experiences down there. I know Dogie will remember one fellow we had here who was a two gun man, not like my friend Tony here, but a talkative two gun man and he came here from Philadelphia. He shot this one and he shot another one, and oh, it was terrific! So we decided to take him down into the bosque and give him a taste of that. I and this other fellow, we took him down there, and there was a lot of bamboo grew down there and tall reeds. We finally got him ahead of us, and the idea was that we were to fire a few shots and then see how long it would take him to get back to the motorcycles on the highway. Well, we ran into a smuggling deal down there with Joe Davenport and Mr. Carnes and Bill Massey. They had a big load of liquor that was right in the middle of the river, and this fellow had a new Durant car ready to load it; and we ran into that and we fired our shots. But the Customs officers thought the Mexicans had opened up on them, and they opened up and we were in the middle, and we beat the two gun man back to those motorcycles. He must have got lost out there somewhere. We made a direct line.

And down in the area of San Elizario, I know that you read in the paper not so long ago about our friend here, Tony Trujillo, Deputy Sheriff, Constable of San Elizario, and I mean Constable in the rough days of the bootlegging era. Tony had a very peculiar position. The majority of those smugglers lived in San Elizario and right across the river is San Isidro, and Tony had to be rather neutral on the Volstead Act if he wanted to continue to live and continue in his job down there as Deputy Sheriff. And there were battles, you might say weekly. There was a grand place for loading down there. They had access from Juarez to get the liquor to the river — not too much water in it at times there — and so it was quite a focal point and got the smugglers away

from area close in to Juarez and El Paso here. I saw Tony down there one time and I said, "Tony, I see you're a two gun man now," and he said, "No, that was the other fellow's." I knew when he said that the extra pistol was the other fellow's that there had been some action of some kind. But Tony, during the time I was going to ask you to tell us about, I think there was more war than since the Salt War around this San Elizario area and I . . .

MR. TRUJILLO: Yes, there were more bootleggers than custom officers. We had more bootleggers than officers — they even shot — well, they kill somebody every week. They kill one custom officer and they kill two or three bootleggers but they couldn't get rid of them. There were too many, too many. There was a man over there — we call him a bootlegger king — from San Elizario, and this man was shipping booze to Chicago in cars and trains so he had to have lots of help. That's the reason why the law couldn't keep up with them.

MR. FALBY: Well, I remember down there, Tony, that when Fred Griffin was down there in San Elizario, you got shot and I think we all had some trouble.

MR. TRUJILLO: But Fred Griffin wasn't down there when this man shot at me, though.

MR. FALBY: No. I know, but he was there later to take care of that job, I betcha, if I remember.

MR. TRUJILLO: He took care of it later on.

MR. FALGY: There was one incident down there in which we all lost a very good friend, one we were all very fond of was "Pidgy" Scotten and in that fight down there — were you in that deal, Tony at that time? Tell us about that. I've forgotten. I remember some of the incidents. We answered a call and they were all down there in a field that had been irrigated and they couldn't stand up in that mud, or work the bolts on their rifles.

MR. TRUJILLO: That was Scotten.

MR. FALBY: Yes, "Pidgy" — "Pidgy" Scotten.

MR. TRUJILLO: He was shot right there on the river.[4]

MR. FALBY: There were several. Seven men came over from Juarez to San Elizario.

MR. TRUJILLO: Yeah, he got in too close and there were seven men from the other side and they had mausers, but this man walk up to them and they give him a mercy shot — shot him in the head — that's what they call a mercy shot.

MR. FALBY: I think people don't realize, too, that, at that time, that far back, the customs officers and other officers working were under high powered rifle fire. The smugglers were supported by the so-called

mounted customs across the river who had every right in the world to be there and were legally constituted officers on the other side, but they *did* support them. And whenever you heard that high-powered rifle, why you knew that they really had some enforcement on the other side too. They weren't after the bootleggers, they were giving them protection. Covers, covers we called them.

Well, thank you Tony, and of course I wouldn't call on Chris! I haven't worked for him in a long time but I know you are all acquainted with him and I want to say that in my experience in law enforcement he is the finest peace officer El Paso ever had. He did more for the peace officers in this area and in Texas than any other man I know of. He was a great organizer. One thing I'm reminded about in Chris' experience is he had the first uniformed Sheriff's Department in the United States. He organized the first rural school boy patrol in the United States, and if that hadn't worked, there were a lot of people would have had to leave town, but it worked. The National Safety Council was against it and other organizations. But all his officers had opportunity for training. Chris sent them to the best schools and then conducted schools here. I think it was one of the first training programs both in the Police and Sheriff's Department, and they are interchangeable. And then, too, he built up a relationship between the different peace officers. You know, we used to arrest each other — different departments. There was a little jealousy here and a little strife occassionally, and Chris overcame all that. He had the Sheriff's Jamboree and he also educated the public on the problems of law enforcement. We had them come and visit our county jail and we had law enforcement exhibits at Liberty Hall, primarily for the young people, but they brought their parents and it was the parents that we couldn't get out of there. They would stay and see all the different exhibits and one thing or another. He had exhibits from all over the United States.

This was an era here in which law enforcement really got on its feet. Chris had his fingers always, of course, in many pies; and when cases had lain dormant for a long time, Chris delighted in reviving them. Of course, both of us as Sheriffs had a reputation. If we didn't solve a murder, no one else could, either. We really fouled it up to where there couldn't anything more be done with it. That was the end.

But we had an occasion here that I always thought was rather unique. Well, I have a photograph of this exchange that was made at the bridge and I'll try to follow the script of a little bit of it. It was made down at the International Bridge, when they exchanged a man convicted in this country of a murder for a man convicted of murder in Mexico. Neither of them was a citizen of the country where he committed the murder and both of them were sentenced to the death penalty. This all started

some years before Chris was in law enforcement.

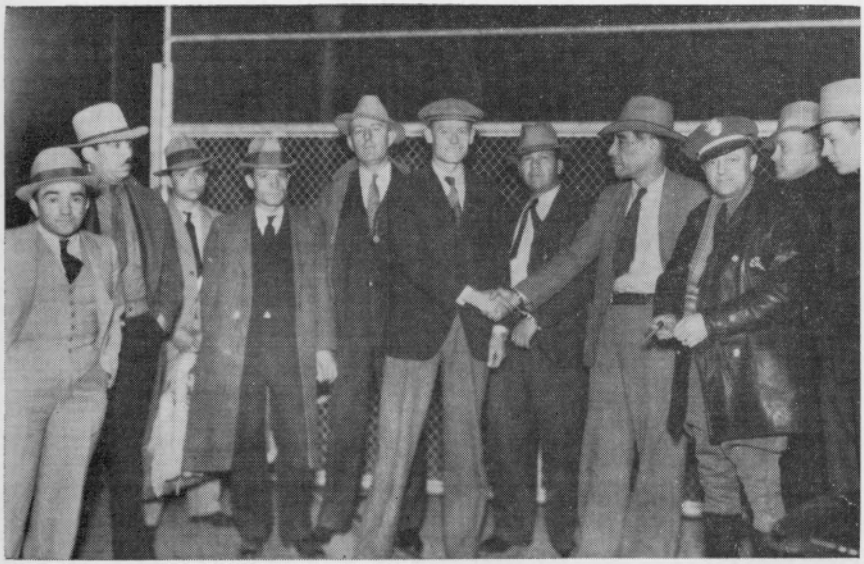
On March 18, 1924, five bandits attempted to hold up the G. H. and S. A. payroll at the yards out on Octavia Street. These bandits were led by a — thought I would never forget his name — but — Manuel Villareal. I happened to get involved in this deal accidentally. They had gone into the restaurant there in the yards and sat in there and when the payroll drove up (it was from the Federal Reserve Bank and Mr. W. H. Meers was one of the guards. Charlie Bittick was one of the guards, and there was a teller by the name of William Laird who was with them); the bandits just came out of that restaurant and opened fire without any challenge of "hands up" or anything. They just started shooting. Mr. Meers was killed and Charley Bitticks was seriously wounded. Mr. Laird, the teller, was wounded and a bystander by the name of Anastacio Lopez was killed. Well, when the shooting started why three of the bandits fell, out of five. They managed to get to the car but they didn't get the money. It was eighteen thousand dollars as I remember. One of these bandits was delayed. He was shot in the leg and he got on the back end of this car. It was an old Dodge touring car with those iron disc wheels.

I had stopped out at Octavia Street and Texas and went into a plumbing shop there, and I heard all this shooting and I came out. This car was just going down Texas Street and Joe Stovall, who was a sergeant in the Police Department then, now long retired and passed on, was driving a car down the street by himself, but firing with his left hand down the street, and where those bullets hit I don't know. So I started out on the motorcycle — didn't know what had happened — but they had made arrangements, pre-arrangements, to cross at Eucalyptus Street, and they were crossing there then, and this fellow fell off and was captured before he got across. This José Carrasco was sentenced to the death penalty here in El Paso and then he got a second trial and was given a life sentence. Villareal never was captured.

Mr. Meers had a son, Jeff Meers. Jeff had gone over to Juarez on several occasions and he went to this restaurant, and he had made inquiries one or two different times about this Manuel Villareal. He went into this restaurant and a waiter there told him, "You see that waiter over there? He is the fellow that killed your father." Well, Jeff came back over, as I remember, and got his father's pistol; came back over to Juarez, to that restaurant, and shot and killed this waiter, who proved not, of course, to be the man. It was — what was that fellow's name? — Antonio Visconti. Well, there was high feeling in Juarez and he almost faced a firing squad there, and they had to take him to Chihuahua to the state penitentiary to prevent his being lynched in Juarez. They had made several attempts to get in that jail.

Well, an appeal was made to Chris by Jeff Meers' mother, after he was in office, and so Chris was a prime mover in making this exchange. Carrasco served about nine years of that sentence in Huntsville and Meers was down in Chihuahua City. Well, I was going down there after stolen cars. Chris would send me down on that job and then I would be loaded with a change of underwear and clothing for Meers. We had another prominent El Paso gentleman — I won't mention his name — in the penitentiary down there on a false charge, and I also carried supplies to him. Then I became so well acquainted with those officers that they let me take them to the Palacio Hotel, run by Mr. Winston Pettus, and I would let them eat two or three steaks at a time and then once or twice they let them stay over night. There was quite a go-between there, but all this time this negotiation was going on between — I believe it was Governor Ross Sterling and Governor Quevedo — through Chris' good offices and his ability to get people together. This exchange was made on the bridge at three thirty one morning, April 20, 1933. It was all very secretive because there was still feeling in Juarez against Meers. This was a man with a large family that had been killed and so it had to be pretty well kept under cover, so that was why it was three thirty in the morning that we made that exchange. Now, I don't want to do all the talking for Chris because you will want to hear about his experiences as the Sheriff of El Paso County.

MR. FOX: It was nice talking to you, Allan, and we got some things leveled off a little bit. El Paso has had a long history of important problems that have been dealt with by many fine, sturdy, good men and the big proof of all this was that out of it came a community such as we have today. We have our problems now, but in that year — I would say from the early 1900s through the 1940s, maybe a little later on — El Paso was a cauldron, as it were, where we were challenged by all the elements that came into the picture, and I think Allan was rather modest in his statement. Prohibition did inflict its toll upon us to a far greater extent than we realize perhaps today. It wasn't so much since the time I came in. Before that, smuggling was more or less considered a legitimate endeavor, conducted and carried on by men of worth and character. They would go over across the river and make their deal for so many hundred cases, so much a case, deliver it and store it on our bank. Then they got these hoodlums that came in from the East and North and they didn't believe in carrying on a legitimate legal transaction like that. They would wait till these folks got their liquor over here on this side. Then they would hold them up or kill them or hijack



EXCHANGE AT THE SANTA FE BRIDGE, 3:30 A.M. April 20, 1933
Left to right: Victor Prieto, Juarez Attorney; Ernesto Belez, Mexico Federal Police; Ed Terrazas, representing Chihuahua Governor Quevedo; Ben Endlich, representing Governor Quevedo; Chris P. Fox, Sheriff of El Paso County; Jeff Meers; Frank Escajeda, Deputy Sheriff; Jose Carrasco; Captain Allan G. Falby, Texas Highway Patrol; ..... Elliott, News Reporter (Times); Jim Shepperd, News Reporter (Herald Post).
(From Allen G. Falby Collection, UT-El Paso Archives)

them; take their money — take it away from them.

So it was terribly involved, but I doubt if there is a section of the United States or a segment of the U.S.-Mexican border from Brownsville to San Diego that had focused on it, during twenty, thirty, forty years, more active enforcement problems — grueling, bloody trouble — than there were in this area. Allan Falby, Dogie Wright, Tony Trujillo and all those others that moved into that picture made a much greater contribution than society has given them credit for, and that goes for those who preceded them and some who followed in the more recent years. So that's about all the contribution I have to make. As the hour moves on, there will probably be some questions you will want to ask of our moderator, who is fully competent and capable of answering them. And I'll tell you, there wasn't a finer police officer in this country than this boy right here.

MR. FALBY: He got me into this and now he's going to stick me with the questions. You know, Chris had two deputies that received the Carnegie hero medal and a thousand dollars each. Had a boy that fell

in a volcanic hole up there in south New Mexico, up near Aden — Berlyn Brixner — and two of the boys had let him down in this volcanic hole with a rope, and of course that jagged metal cut the rope and we were called to come up there to get this boy out. Well, he had fallen about a hundred and fifteen feet. The Geographical Society later made a survey up there and they never found the bottom of it. Fortunately in that hundred and fifteen feet he had fallen where the opening had split. There were two tunnels going down. We got two boys, Frank Scherer and Bert Morris. Frank was on the Highway Patrol end of it and Bert was a clerk in the office, and they were the smallest of our group so we made slings and let them down in there. They didn't know what they were going to be faced with, but we got them down there and they found this boy and he had a broken leg. We'd made a sling affair and then we couldn't hoist them. We didn't have enough people to pull them up out of there. That was rather disconcerting, with them down in that hole. But they have both passed on to their reward and I wanted to mention that they were recognized and given the Carnegie Hero medal.[5]

MR. FOX: I got to put in one more here now before I get out of this thing. As long as you are telling lies, I might just as well, too. But I think this is telling the truth. Dogie, I think, was there. Allan was there I'm sure. Tony was down at San Elizario, trying to keep the peace and put the dignity of the community on a paying basis. Callie was probably singing hymns somewhere, but anyhow I was on my way home one evening, and we got it over the radio that there was a big shooting deal down on Piedras and — where was Walthall killed? Piedras and Durazno?[6]

MR. FALBY: Yes.

MR. FOX: So we moved in there and pretty soon all the enforcement officers in the area were down there and one very fine border patrolman was killed and another one badly injured. The two had been interrogating a suspicious car they had lined up. So we got to doing a little talking around there and a boy came up to me and said "I think you will find that so-and-so in that house." No relative of yours, Tony, so don't worry about it, nor of mine either at that time. So, we got the group and we went down here right in back of city-county hospital. So Fighting Fox the Imperial Sheriff decided he would take over and reconnoiter this place. I told the boys "We will get around here." There was a light on the back porch and a high wind caught it. And I said, "I'll get up there on top of that barn" — it was a chicken coop — "and if anything happens, if I see anything" (some of these fellows were apparently wounded), I'll let you know somehow or another." So everyone deployed around and I got up on top of this chicken coop and the roof gave way and I came down. I

had this blunderbus in my hand and hit the tree and fired off a few random shots. I lit down in the middle of that chicken coop, and it wasn't chewing gum either, folks.

But anyhow, we fell back and re-organized and later on that evening we picked them up. As Allan said, there is always a laugh somewhere along the line.

MR. FALBY: We always had interesting and tragic things. And before we close, I want to say we would be glad to answer any questions if we can. And looking back through some of the old reports, there were some tragic things. We had two people in El Paso County that were involved in hit-and-run accidents. They thought they had killed a pedestrian. Before they found out the truth of the matter, they went on home and they both committed suicide, and both pedestrians recovered. But, if you have any questions, we're not going to swear to tell the truth, but we will try to answer if we can.

MRS. FAIRLEY: If Allan will hush long enough for you to ask them.

MR. FALBY: Well, I'm the moderator, Callie.

FROM THE FLOOR: Mrs. Fairley, were you the one that instigated the whipping of people that needed whipping instead of something else?

MRS. FAIRLEY: No, not guilty.

FROM THE FLOOR: Wasn't there a whipping chair used on knucklehead teenagers once upon a time?

MRS. FAIRLEY: No, not in my time—when I went to work . . .

FROM THE FLOOR: Mrs. Fairley, this was one of the things that Chris Fox and Captain Falby used to scare us with.

MRS. FAIRLEY: Well, I'll tell you. You know we had a little dark room at that city jail and all of you—you probably were in it—you were threatened within an inch of your life and shown the strap, but it never was used on you. We knew better than that.

MR. FALBY: Well, I want to thank the panel and you folks for your kind attention. We have appreciated it and enjoyed being with you.

NOTES

1. Seth B. Orndorff was elected Sheriff in 1916, and served six consecutive terms, a record broken only this year by Sheriff Mike Sullivan.
2. "Mother" Warren was Mrs. John Warren, who, with her husband served for 15 years with the Salvation Army in El Paso. She died in Los Angeles in 1942.
3. Plaques at Border Patrol Headquarters in El Paso show eight Border Patrolmen killed in the El Paso area in the prohibition era. They were Clarence M. Childress, 1919; Charles Gardner, 1922; Frank H. Clark, 1924; Thad Pippin, 1927; Benjamin T. Hill, 1929; Ivan E. Scotten, 1929; Bert G. Walthall, 1933 and Doyne C. Melton, 1933.
4. Ivan E. "Pidgy" Scotten was a member of a prominent El Paso family. The nickname "Pidgy" was a schoolboy reference to his small stature. He was killed in the San Elizario area July 20, 1929.

5. Chris P. Fox recalls that Scherer and Morris were about to give up the search when they spied Brixner's arm reaching out of the bat guano into which he had fallen. After the rescuers had helped bring him toward the surface, they finally were able to scramble out themselves with the help of the crew outside. "They were a mess," said Mr. Fox. The incident occurred December 14, 1932.
6. Bert G. Walthall was killed December 27, 1933.

Prior to 1959, El Paso candidates for Mayor had to survive a Democratic primary as well as a general election. In an editorial favoring the elimination of the primary, the *El Paso Times* pointed out, "The mayor of El Paso receives $9,600 a year. Of this he must pay back $2,400 each two years as a filing fee for his office to help finance the Democratic Primary. Former Mayors joining in the plea to eliminate the City Democratic Primary were Tom E. Rogers, Dan L. P. Duke, Dan Ponder, Fred Hervey, and U. S. District Judge R. E. Thomason." A charter amendment dropping the Primary carried 7,089 to 4,577.

—William J. Hooten, *Fifty Two Years a News Man,* 152

"Generally an Indian who has extra money will not keep it as cash. It has no aesthetic attraction for him, so he buys jewelry because it appeals to him. Then, when he needs money for, as an example, a pair of shoes, he pawns some article of jewelry for the amount of money he needs. Later, when he has money again, he redeems his pawn. Another use of pawning is as a safety deposit box. At times an Indian may accumulate so much jewelry that he feels it is a temptation to others. He can place it in pawn for a small amount and then redeem it whenever he wishes to wear it."

—Lurline Coltharp, "Names in a Pawn Shop," *Password,* XI, 7.

The El Paso City Directory for 1889 lists five newspapers and periodicals published in El Paso: *El Paso Daily Times, El Paso Daily and Sunday Herald, El Paso Daily Tribune, The Bullion,* a weekly, published in the interest of mining, and *El Paso Negro Journal,* weekly.

Password, XII, 117

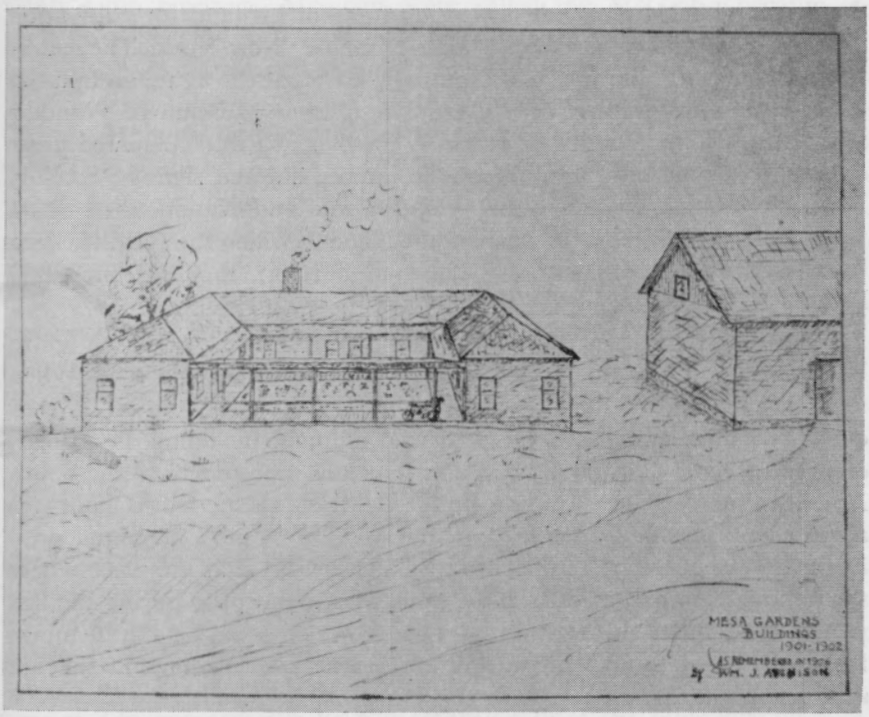
On December 8, 1976, the El Paso City Council declared the St. Regis Hotel in El Paso to be unsafe for occupancy and ordered it closed within ninety days. When it opened in 1905, the St. Regis was El Paso's finest. When President William Howard Taft arrived in El Paso October 16, 1909, for his visit with President Porfirio Diaz of Mexico, he was welcomed with a sumptuous breakfast at St. Regis dining room. (See *Password,* III, 86.)

EL PASO'S PETRIFIED GIANT

by ROBERT N. MULLIN

The highest point within the limits of El Paso in the 1890's and early 1900's was McGinty Hill, perched atop of which was a pavilion where in hot weather during the last years of the nineteenth century El Pasoans had enjoyed a view of the city, fresh air, and a mug of cold beer. The polite name of the place was Mesa Gardens, though it was generally called McGinty Hill.* The "gardens" consisted of a lone cottonwood and a few struggling chinaberry trees. The great feature of the place was nothing less than the figure of a petrified giant.

Many memories were revived this summer (1976) when William J. Atchison of Lansing, Michigan, sent me a drawing he had made outlining the buildings on the flat top of McGinty Hill when it was the home of the Atchison family in 1901-2. In 1901 and the years immediately following, our family had been, successively, on north Mesa Avenue,



Mesa Gardens, as remembered
by William J. Atchison in 1976.

north El Paso Street, north Santa Fe Street and Prospect Avenue, all within easy walking range of McGinty Hill. The youngsters in the area never seemed to tire of trudging up the hill to gaze at the giant; Preston and Maxey Roberts, Bill Walz, Horace Stevens and his young cousin, Lawrence, Lloyd Williamson, Clarence Harper, Earl and Eldridge Murphy, Mark Anthony, Dale Utt and Tom Dwyer are among the names remaining in my memory. I particularly recall those whom I knew best were the Coldwell brothers, Philip, Colbert, Hugh, and "little brother" Harold. The eldest of the Coldwell brothers, Ballard, liked to tantalize the rest of us with vague hints of what he knew about the mysterious naked figure, between six and seven feet tall, and broad in proportion, which lay serenely in the shade of the covered porch of the most southerly of the two buildings at the top of McGinty Hill. It was not until the figure had long disappeared from view that Ballard revealed the story told him by his father, the scholarly Judge W. M. Coldwell, who had been an active member of the McGinty Club.

According to Judge Coldwell's findings a farmer had uncovered the the figure with his plow when clearing some of his land for cultivation near the community of Cardiff, near Syracuse, New York. The enterprising Phineas T. Barnum had eventually acquired the figure and placed it on display at his New York City "Magnificent Museum of Wonders from Around the World." The "newly discovered fossil" attracted great crowds, and when the fever of public interest showed signs of cooling, Mr. Barnum let it be known that scientists who had examined the figure were not in agreement as to the period of time in which the Cardiff Giant had lived. Their estimates, said showman Barnum, ranged from 1,000 B.C. to 10,000 B.C.[1]

When interest in Mr. Barnum's stone man subsided, the figure fell to hard times and was finally acquired by a small traveling circus. When the circus reached El Paso, it went broke and the owners sold off all they could, including wagons, horses and wild animals, including, by at least one report, some alligators, "wild and ferocious monsters from the South American jungles." According to Judge Coldwell, the pertrified giant was acquired by assayor Dan Reckhart, the McGinty Club's perpetual president, who presented it to the club which enshrined it at the place where the organization gathered for most of its weekly meetings during the last years of the nineteenth century, a place to which many of the members frequently went to cool off during afternoons and evenings in the hot summer months.

The club's membership included most of the town's prominent business and professional men, especially those who "appreciated good music and good beer". Music, not liquid refreshment was the tie which held

the group together, according to Owen P. White, El Paso newspaper man and later an editor of Colliers Magazine, who said that the club prided itself on never having had a meeting at which any member consumed more than a moderate amount of alcoholic beverage.[2] In its heyday the McGinty Club boasted of between 200 and 300 members, all devoted to music, popular and classical. There was a choir notable for its singing of hymns, and several quartets which rendered humorous songs, popular airs and classical compositions. There was a string orchestra as well as a tipica orchestra which specialized in the music of Spain and Mexico. Then there was a brass band which led many a parade and often played concerts at the little bandstand in the Plaza. Some local merchants of Chinese ancestry were club members and on occasion played music on oriental instruments. The club had no bylaws but it was an unwritten rule that nothing gloomy, or even too serious, must mar the program at any barbeque, supper party or other club gathering. Good humor was the keynote of the club's sessions. Music was their compelling interest, but wit and practical jokes were the spice of any of the McGinty Club meetings. Members were called the McGintys because of their favorite song, a then-popular ballad about the misadventures of a mythical deep sea diver; one line of the chorus was:

"Down went McGinty to the bottom of the sea.
He must be very wet, for they haven't found him yet."

As time went by, the climb up McGinty Hill seemed to the club members to become a little steeper each year, and by the end of the nineteenth century the hill was deserted and the club activities were held in such downtown places as Chopin Hall, Reckhart's "opera house" or on several auspicious occasions the Myar Opera House.[3] In 1900 the "pavilion" northernmost and larger of the two buildings atop McGinty Hill (a U-shaped structure surrounding a patio at the open end of which the building's two wings were connected by a roofed walk) was altered to serve as a residence. The smaller building was converted into a carriage house and stable with four or five stalls for horses and a milk cow. In 1901 and part of 1902 the house was occupied by Andrew Atchison and his family.[4] The Atchison's son William, a lad about twelve years of age, was my good friend who had prestige among the neighborhood boys not only as a house-mate of the mysterious stone giant, but also because of his adventures when he and his pony "Chapo" were delivering afternoon newspapers to subscribers in the area near the American Smelting and Refining Company plant up-river from El Paso. The trips were not without hazard. On one occasion he was returning from the high hills west of the Rio Grande, riding along the railroad right of way toward the river, when a young *Mexicano* jumped out and seized the pony's bridle. He

demanded to know where Will was going; when the answer was simply, "Home," the other fellow barked, "No, you're not," and brandished his knife, announcing: "I am going to kill you." Possibly the approach of some other persons caused the intended killer and horse thief to change his mind; at any rate, he released his hold of the bridle, and young Will, much shaken, made his way home safely.[5]

Many El Paso boys ten years of age or older, including sons of families in financially comfortable circumstances, earned their spending money by working after school hours and during vacation periods. Some sold newspapers and others had routes delivering newspapers to subscribers. Riding my pony, "Two Bits", I was assistant delivery boy for the bookstore of Blakesley, Freeman and Fennell, which became Wilkins' International Book and Stationery Company during my employment, and which later became the Norton Brothers store.[6] I disliked making deliveries to the Reckhart Assay Office because the fumes there upset me. One eye-opening experience was an early-morning delivery to a "parlor house" on Utah Street, the Red Light district.

C.O.D. deliveries were scarce, but I remember once taking a collect delivery of some books in "lungers' Tent Town" east of Mt. Franklin. The occupant of the tent was suffering a hemorrhage when I arrived, the blood gushing as a stream from his mouth. A man from a neighboring tent was trying to look after him and told me I would have to return the next day to make the delivery. It was a long ride from South El Paso Street to Highland Park, and I was glad to hear the neighbor say that if I would leave the books he would see to it that someone brought the money to the store—and sure enough, the money came the very next day.[7] Just before Christmas I was given a package to deliver to the Magoffin home, where I had been invited to a children's party not long before. The package was one of those oversize art calendars which were in vogue at the time; a thirty-inch picture of a beautiful lady, with a small pad of date sheets below. This was not a collect delivery but at the same time I was given a fat box of writing paper and a copy of the Police Gazette for delivery to a house near the Magoffin's. The sales slip on this package was plainly marked in red letters, C.O.D., but the man of the house was not at home, and the gracious young lady who answered the door told me she would ask her father to mail a check to the store. When I returned to the store without the money, Mr. Freeman, usually a soft-spoken and kindly man, gave me a first-class scolding. It did no good for me to say that we were sure to receive the check, that the customer was a friend of my father's and was a Big Man in town, United States Collector of Customs, no less. Mr. Freeman was not impressed. He told me to go back and collect the money, that if I did not he would be tempted to teach me a lesson by deducting a dollar each week from

my pay until the amount was paid. Afterward, Mr. Freeman made it a point to tell me that the check had never been sent by the customer but that there had been no skim-offs from my wages, and he hoped I had learned a lesson. I had, indeed, learned that Public Figures can be idols with feet of clay.

There were no Boy Scout troops or Y.M.C.A. at El Paso during the first few years of the twentieth century. The playground and battleground for youngsters living in the territory of the domain of the Petrified Giant was a sandhill just west of El Paso Street, between Upson Avenue and the E.P. & S.W. railroad right of way and extending west past what later became Buchanan Street. North Santa Fe and West Missouri streets passed over, not through, the hill. There was a period when "rock fights" (stone-throwing conflicts) were regular occurrences every Saturday afternoon, when the "Santa Fe gang" boys from the southwestern part of town near the Franklin School and the Santa Fe railroad yards, invaded this mound and were opposed by lads from the vicinity of McGinty Hill, the "Sunset gang."

Tradition has it that the first U. S. Army troops assigned to the Pass of the North, four companies of the 3rd Infantry, had their encampment on the brow of this hill, overlooking the settlements on both sides of the Rio Grande—before the completion of permanent quarters for the military immediately west of the present San Jacinto Plaza, construction of which had been started by Benjamin Franklin Coons in 1849.

McGinty Hill underwent a nose-bob operation when the twentieth century was still new. El Paso was enjoying something of a population boom. Vacant lots suitable for home building within easy walking distance of the business center of town had become scarce, and it was decided to lop off the top of McGinty Hill, leaving it only slightly higher than the bordering streets, Rio Grande to the north, Corto and Boulevard on the west. (What was later called Yandell Boulevard or Yandell Drive was first called simply Boulevard. During the last days of the stone giant's reign over McGinty Hill there was an interesting directional sign next to the tar-and-gravel sidewalk in front of Widow Smith's house at the point where North Santa Fe Street surrendered its identity and became what was later named Yandell Boulevard or Yandell Drive. This was a small wooden sign upon which was painted a human hand with the forefinger pointing northward, and the words, "W. Boulevard St." I did not then understand why my father smiled when he pointed out the sign; Boulevard Street seemed to me as proper a designation as Santa Fe Street or Oregon Street.)

The neighborhood children watched with interest the demolition of the buildings and the shaving off, layer by layer, of the hill with scrapers pulled by mule teams, and the earth hauled away in wagons. But the

climax came when we watched the removal of our stone man.

The petrified giant passively resisted all efforts to lift him until a kind of timber scaffold was erected, equipped ropes attached through a combination of pullies. Ropes were passed under the figures's bed, and a team of horses hoisted it up and swung it around for deposit onto the bed of a wagon. Just then, though, came the shocking tragedy. As the figure swung through the air with the greatest of ease, one of the ropes broke and the burden fell to the ground with a big thud, and the whole removal process had to be done all over again. The fall, alas, had broken off both the legs at the knee, exposing not a bone, but a thick iron bar. It was a shocking and disillusioning sight. Our beloved petrified giant was, indeed, merely a man of plaster.

In later years it was reported that the Cardiff giant was being displayed at Chihuahua, Mexico. Some of us at El Paso expressed youthful disdain for our neighbors to the south, so gullible as to pay *diez centavos* to see a hunk of plaster, only a phony old giant with patched up legs.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Contemporary evidence from early day El Paso indicates there were two sites known as "McGinty Hill." One was a rocky hill just north of San Francisco street, hard by the assay office of Dan Reckhart, the McGinty Club's only President. Here the club members erected Fort McGinty, site of many a sham battle and fireworks display.

The other site, to which Mr. Mullin refers, was more properly known as "Mesa Gardens." Here the McGinty Club gave their welcoming ceremonies, in music and fun, for just about every convention that came to El Paso in the 90s. The Club's memorable ties to the site decreed that it be popularly known as McGinty Hill long after the other McGinty Hill had been leveled to provide some needed "fill" for the site of the present Union Depot. Mesa Gardens, located just off West Yandell (then West Boulevard) is the present site of the Embassy Apartments.

The Cardiff Giant hoax, along with many other fun making enterprises of the McGinty Club are covered in the forthcoming book, *Down Went McGinty, El Paso in the Wonderful Nineties*, by Conrey Bryson, to be published in 1977 by Texas Western Press.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Apparently the massive figure, which intrigued El Pasoans until the metal rods in its legs exposed it as no petrified human, was not the true or original "Cardiff Giant" but was a plaster replica, a graduate of Barnum's Museum and the little traveling circus which deserted it at El Paso. What is probably the most authentically documented account of the Cardiff Giant appears in Edmund Wilson's book, *Up State New York, Records and Recollections of Northern New York,* published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux, New York, 1871. According to Wilson an "imaginative charlatan" named George Hull employed two Chicago sculptors to

carve the ten feet, four inch statue from a huge block of gypsum quarried in Iowa. Hull spent $2,600 for the production and exploitation of the figure. A would-be alchemist and dedicated fundamentalist, Hull "took seriously the statement in Genesis 6.4 that is translated in the King James Bible as 'there were giants in the earth in those days' " and he undertook to prove that the bible statement was correct, and incidentally, to earn a few shekels for himself. To make his presentation more credible, Hull roughened the surface of his statue with coarse sand and "produced artificial pores by hammering it with a block of wood studded with darning needles, and in order to make the figure look old, he drenched it with sulphuric acid. A year after the Giant had been buried, in October, 1869, his accomplice, the owner of the farm, hired men to dig a well at the spot, and their spades, about five feet down, hit the stone giant . . . the imposture was made to seem more plausible by the many fossils found in the vicinity, and the Onondaga Indians were reminded of their legendary stone giants they had sometimes been able to trap in pitfalls." Wilson also quotes James Dunn's article, *The True Moral and Diverting Tale of the Cardiff Giant,* published by the New York Historical Association, n/d, and Barbara Franco's article on the same subject published by that association in October, 1869. The statue was to be seen at the farm for a 25¢ admission fee, before a three-quarter interest was sold for $30,000 to entrepreneurs from Utica and Syracuse. When the authenticity was challenged by academic experts Oliver Wendell Holmes bored a hole behind the figure's ear to prove that it was merely a statue, but "very wonderful and undoubtedly ancient". The two Chicago sculptors then publically confirmed the figure's origin. After it was displayed in Albany and Boston, "P. T. Barnum had a plaster replica made, and showed it in New York as genuine." Wilson continues: "Eventually it was acquired by the New York Historical Association and was exhibited in a pit where it lies as if stiffened by death . . . I visited it not long ago and found it in a state of deterioration . . . while exposed in the coverless pit it had suffered from the terrible winters . . . Poor Old Giant!"

2. White, Owen P., "Although the club's avowed objects were 'to put down lawlessness and to put down liquor' intoxication at a club gathering meant that the guilty man was automatically dropped from the membership role." Letter to this writer April 17, 1946.
3. Chopin Hall, a theatre-like building, was on the south side of Myrtle Avenue, between Kansas and Campbell streets; Reckhart's Opera House was a large room, without a stage, above the Reckhart Assay Office; Myar's Opera House on El Paso street, just south of Overland, was one of the great theatres of the west. It burned in 1905.
4. Andrew Atchison, formerly superintendent of the Indian School at the Mescalero Reservation in New Mexico, was associated with my father, J. P. Mullin, in operating a private school in the building on the northwest corner of Santa Fe street and Upson Avenue, formerly the home of the Rio Grande Training School sponsored by the Congregational Church. The Mullin-Atchison school taught bookkeeping, shorthand and typing as well as subjects taught in general academies, history, grammar, mathematics, etcetera. Graduates in the latter courses were qualified as teachers in the public schools. For a time, this school was called the El Paso Normal and Commercial College, but students in the academic courses were few and trainees in accounting and stenography made up most of the student body. When Dr. M. P. Schuster acquired the building, the school then known as the International Business College moved to the former quarters of the El Paso Club, the northern one-third of the top floor of the two story brick Mills Building facing San Jacinto Plaza. In 1908 when arrangements were made to demolish the old structure and make way for the later twelve-story Mills Building, the school took over the top floor of the three-story Coles Block on the corner of San Antonio and Oregon streets; the White House Department Store occupied the first and second floors of the elevatorless building. Today, few, if any, El Paso business institutions other than the State National Bank, can boast of so many years of continuous service as can the International Business College.
5. Letter to writer, December 16, 1975.
6. The older and larger of El Paso's two bookstores was located on the western side of South El Paso street, facing the junction with San Antonio street.
7. See "Health for Sale", by Chris P. Fox, PASSWORD, XXI, 4, Winter, 1976.

HISTORICAL MEMORIES CONTEST

Chairman Leonard Goodman, Sr., of the annual Historical Memories Contest, sponsored by the El Paso County Historical Society, has announced the winners of the 1976 contest. Winner of first place was Mrs. Alexine Bartz for "Smallpox and the El Paso Pest House"; second place went to Mrs. Lucy Read for "Memories of Mexico in the days of Villa"; and third place to Karl O. Wyler for his "Long Before T-V." Five honorable mention winners, each to receive a year's membership in the El Paso County Historical Society, including subscription to *Password* are: Leola Freeman, Ina Warren, F. Keith Peyton, Herminia Gonzalez and Mrs. J. Burges Perrenot.

The three winning entries follow. The honorable mention winners will appear in subsequent issues of *Password*.

HISTORICAL MEMORIES CONTEST WINNERS.
Left to right: Karl O. Wyler, third place; Lucy Read, second place; Alexine Bartz, first place; Leonard A. Goodman, Sr., Chairman.

(Photo courtesy *El Paso Times*)

SMALLPOX—AND THE EL PASO PEST HOUSE

by

ALEXINE BARTZ

It was a cold afternoon in El Paso December 7, 1914. I was walking home from school and began to feel sick and very cold. When I reached home, I told my mother I wanted to lie down where it was warm. I could not eat any supper, and as my mother and father were doing up the supper dishes I became much worse. I began to burn up with fever and started vomiting.

My mother then looked in a home medical book to try and figure what I was coming down with, since my brother Albert Thomas and sister Margaret a year previous had chicken pox; but the blisters and rash I had were different from what they had. Far into the night my mother and father talked it over and thought perhaps I had smallpox. The next morning Dr. Huffecker, the County health doctor, said it was smallpox and I would have to be taken to the pest house.

The house would have to be fumigated and quarantined and a sign put out in front to give warning of smallpox within. My father would not be allowed to work, and all groceries would be left at the front door.

My mother dressed me, put on my coat and bonnet, and told me to be a brave little soldier—not to cry, and I could take my doll "Gypsy" with me. The doll had black hair and eyes and wore a bright red dress. My father took me out to the pest house which was near the stockyards in the eastern part of El Paso, on the outskirts of the city where there was much desert land.

The pest house was an old adobe building with much framework on the long two floors of it. Only a few scraggly trees were here and there without any grass or foliage of any kind. Mr. and Mrs. O'Connor were in charge, and Mrs. O'Connor was very kind to me. She gave me a small room adjoining their living quarters. I was very sick and in bed about ten days and had to be given a bath in a solution that would help heal the blisters more quickly. After I was up and around, Mrs. O'Connor took me to the long wards; many sick people of all ages were there. The wards had all shades drawn during the day as sunlight seemed to hurt the eyes. All the patients were of Mexican descent and I was the only Anglo American in the pest house.

One night when I was much better, I heard a commotion outside my window in the huge yard surrounding the place. I put on my coat and slipped out the door into the biting cold of the late night. On high lamp posts, gas lamps gave off an eerie, gloomy, yellow light into the dark night. I stood close in the shadows of the corner of the building and saw ten wooden boxes laid out in a row. Presently several men came out,

bearing sheet covered bodies and laid them in the boxes one by one, then placed the boxes on horse drawn wagons and slowly lumbered out of the old picket gates and on to the cemetery.

In after years, when I was in high school, this memory of that night stood out in my mind like a page out of one of Charles Dickens' novels.

I was so anxious to be home for Christmas and was delighted to leave December 24 towards evening. Snowflakes were softly coming down when I came home to my wonderful mother and father, brother and sister, for the happiest Christmas of my childhood.

MEMORIES OF MEXICO IN THE DAYS OF VILLA

by

LUCY READ

I am Lucy Read, daughter of George Rosling and Bernabe Gonzalez. I was the fourth child born to my parents on May 31, 1906 in San Buena Ventura, Mexico.

My father was born in Cambridge, London, England on August 29, 1860. Being an adventurous young man, he joined the British Navy when he was seventeen years old and later became a commander on the British ship, *Alexandria*. Mother was born on April 11, 1881 in San Buena Ventura, Mexico. She was the lovely young niece of Abraham Gonzalez, governor of Chihuahua, Mexico and ex-minister of the cabinet of President Madero.

When Father left the navy, the attraction of the silver mines lured him to Mexico; consequently he became owner of a silver mine in Pilares De Teras.

While on a business trip to San Buena Ventura, Father was invited to a social dance. It was on this occasion that he met Mother. He fell in love with the blue-eyed lady and courted her for a year before they were married.

They settled in Mother's home town where he bought the most beautiful home, which consisted of eighteen rooms, two gardens, and a swimming pool. Seven children were born and raised here in the 1900's. My four brothers George, Charles, Henry, and Fred; my two sisters; Agnes, Flora and I enjoyed memorable years here.

Father was loved by almost everyone because of his friendly manner and generosity. On Christmas he would set up tables in front of our home to lay out articles of clothing, shoes, and groceries to give to the poor.

It was such fun for us as children to travel in those days. Father worked his mines while we stayed home. He would see us every four to five

months, but whenever he was too busy to make the trip, Mother would take us to visit him. We traveled by covered wagons that were pulled by two teams of horses. One wagon was reserved for our food, bedding, and clothing and the other for transporting the family. I was seven years old the time we came through the Pulpit Canyon, and remember being lost for three days because the canyon was so steep. We had to dismantle the wagons to bring everything down into the canyon and then reassemble and repack them. It took us ten days to arrive in Pilares.

One of the most terrifying experiences of my childhood was when the notorious Mexican bandit, Francisco (Pancho) Villa, entered our lives. Early in the morning of February 1916, during the absence of Father, the *Villistas* raided our home. We awoke to the sound of shattering window glass, the pounding of doors, and the angry voices of Villa and his men demanding to know where our father was. Villa began questioning Mother and started pushing and mistreating her. Mother answered that Father was in Sonora, but he did not believe her and went about searching our home.

When he couldn't find Father, Villa gave orders to post guards in all the doorways and windows, so none of us could escape. He said that he would punish us. My older brother, George, who was fifteen years old, disguised himself as an old lady and dressed into some of Mother's clothing. He escaped through the back garden exit where no guards had been posted. There he ran to Sierra Madre to seek help.

I was crying for fear of what he would do to us and kept hanging onto Mother's skirt. Just then, Villa reached out to me and pulled my hair. I still recall his very words; "Now *guerita,* (fair one) you never see your gringo daddy anymore." He grabbed Mother and threw her to the floor where she fainted. I ran to one of the guards asking for a glass of water for Mother, but his reply was. "I'm sorry. Don't get too close to me, and don't let my General see you talking to me because he will kill us both."

One guard came over and told another, "General wants you to pour the oil on the family so we can burn them alive." The other fellow said, "Oh no, I just can't do that. What about the poor children?" The reply was; "General said, the whole family." Within minutes some of Villa's soldiers arrived with two wagonloads of coal oil to carry out instructions.

Earlier that day, one of my uncles who lived a few blocks away, took note of the suspicious activities and sent a telegram to Casas Grandes asking for help for our family. He was informed that a party of Carranzistas, who were in pursuit of Villa, were due to arrive in our town.

All this time, Villa's men were stealing everything in sight such as clothes, shoes, blankets, and jewelry. What they couldn't take they went about destroying. Soon Villa's soldiers were running back and forth opening cans of coal oil and pouring it over our home and furniture.

Just as they were ready to pour the oil on us, we heard the roar of cannon fire. At this interruption, Villa's soldiers made a run for their horses which were tied to the trees surrounding our house. They left our belongings scattered all over the place as they didn't have time to take what they had planned on stealing.

One of Villa's men walked toward us with a gun in his hand, and with a threatening tone said. "You'll escape from being killed this time, but remember, next time, you will all be killed." He rode away on his horse and left us trembling.

Shortly, the Carranzistas arrived to render aid. The party had orders to accompany us to Casas Grandes where a special military train would be waiting to take us to Juarez.

On our arrival, Mother got in touch with Father by wire at his residence in Sonora, asking him to come immediately to Juarez. Next day, when Father arrived, he was quite upset when he was told about our ordeal with the *Villistas.* So we stayed in Juarez a few days until Father made arrangements to go to El Paso. In El Paso we stayed at the Hotel Orndorff which is now the Hotel Cortez.

When things were back to normal in Mexico, we decided to go back. Our home was still in bad shape and in need of repair due to the destruction that had taken place, so we made the necessary repairs and were pretty well organized again. We heard rumors that Villa would again try to kill us if we returned home.

In the year 1916, we heard that the United States, with the permission of President Carranza of Mexico, was sending an expedition into Mexico to pursue Villa because of a raid that occured in Columbus, New Mexico where he killed seventeen men. These forces consisting of ten thousand men were led by the American Brigadier General, John J. Pershing.

My father used to keep the British and Mexican flags flying over our home. Most of the revolutionaries that passed by seemed to have great respect for him as they would always stop and salute the flags. When General Pershing arrived in our town, he set camp about five miles from the city limits. The first trip Pershing made into town, he saw our flags and came over and introduced himself to Father. Since Father was the only foreigner in town, they became fast friends and Father extended an invitation to General Pershing and the Red Cross officers to stay in our home. Soon, they began to stay over weeks at a time, and we began to feel as if they were part of our family.

General Pershing took a liking to me since I was about the same age as one of his daughters. He would sit me on his lap and tell me that I looked a lot like one of his little girls, who at that time was living in San Francisco, California with the rest of his family. It was always a special treat for my sisters, brothers, and me when he would bring us candy

from the U.S.A. I can still taste the delicious striped peppermint candies. Father valued General Pershing's friendship and to show his appreciation, would hold dances in our patio for the American soldiers so that they could have a good time and get acquainted with the people of our town.

Pershing was unsuccessful in his attempt to catch Villa and in the year 1917, received orders from the United States to withdraw his troops and leave Mexico for an overseas assignment. He advised Father to leave Mexico for awhile as our lives were still in danger. Father agreed and we made plans to leave in the company of Pershing and his soldiers.

Our trip to Columbus, New Mexico was very enjoyable but we parted company and settled in Old Mesilla on a large farm. During that time, we found out that Villa had burned down our home and destroyed our cattle; so there was nothing to go back to. Father was very sad during this period and became ill and depressed. Eventually he lost the silver mine in Sonora.

In Old Mesilla where we attended school, we met the Albert Fountain family who were owners of the Old Mesilla Theater. The boys and girls of the Fountain family were gifted musicians and they enjoyed giving benefit shows to raise funds for the Tortugas Catholic Church. I would at times perform along with them and appear at the Colon Theater in El Paso. My sisters Agnes, Flora, and I would sing and dance to the musical arrangements of the Fountains.

I grew into a young lady and at the age of fifteen, married Salvador Montes, a young man from La Union, New Mexico. We were wed in Las Cruces on July 22, 1922 and made our home in La Union, where we bought a small farm and lived there for ten years.

Three children were born to us on the farm; Gloria, Dora, and Eva Montes. Our youngest child, Salvador Jr. was born later in Freeman Clinic, in El Paso.

Our decision to move to El Paso was to start a fuel and feed store. Our business was successful as people in those days depended on the items we sold such as alfalfa, all kinds of animal feed, cedarwood and coal kindling for coal and wood stoves.

I was divorced in 1938, and had four children to support. It was very difficult for me to find work during the depression because I had no work experience except as a housewife, and jobs were scarce. I finally found work as a seamstress for the W.P.A. This was a government program for widows and divorcees. I earned forty-eight dollars a month and stayed two years until the program ended.

An opportunity came to me in 1945 to work at Southwestern General Hospital as a nurses aide, and in 1950, I earned my diploma as an L.V.N. The hospital was a home away from home for me, and I loved every minute of my twenty-eight years there.

I met and grew to love so many wonderful people; doctors, nurses, patients, orderlies, and office personnel. A happy atmosphere existed in our hospital staff, and we loved each other like one big family.

By then my children were grown and married, and I was fortunate enough to see some of my grandchildren and great grandchildren born there; most of whom were delivered by Doctor Jesson L. Stowe. When my grandchildren were sick, they would say they wanted to go to Grandma Lucy's hospital so I could take care of them.

Those were the happiest days of my life, working at Southwestern General Hospital. I still miss the work, but I had to retire in 1972 because of poor health.

I am very happy to have such a wonderful and beautiful family; my four children, sixteen grandchildren, and eleven great grandchildren, and I thank God for all the wonderful blessings he has given me.

LONG BEFORE TV

by

KARL O. WYLER

I was born in El Paso, in a house which, in 1906, was located on the Southeast corner of Missouri and Oregon Street. By 1907, this house and the one next to it had been razed, and work started on the construction of the YMCA Building, officially opened March 25, 1908. Since I have lived in El Paso during these intervening years, I have many memories, historical and otherwise, and I offer these vignettes of events in my memory, such as

The visit of General "Blackjack" Pershing to El Paso. He was a guest staying at the U. S. Stewart home on Magoffin at Cotton, the present site of a Catholic Monastery. As a Boy Scout of 12 or 13 years of age, and living not far from the Stewart home I wanted to see General Pershing, so with a "spit and polish" appearance, I went to 1401 Magoffin and saw the General sitting on the front porch alone. I stood by a tree in the front yard for several minutes, and then General Pershing came to where I was standing; I gave him my best Boy Scout salute and he returned it; he spoke with me for a few minutes; we saluted again and I left—it was quite a thrill for me.

Remember the Callis Baker Players at the Texas Grand Theatre? They were professional actors and actresses who presented a new stage play each week. Billy Morgan was a lead player, and after the Callis Baker Players had disbanded, Billy remained in El Paso and contributed his talents to the Little Theatre in El Paso as Director. It was my pleasure to

have participated in several of the plays presented at the Womans Club and Scottish Rite Auditorium. And who can forget the minstrels at the Crawford Theatre on North Mesa?

It was always a pleasant Sunday afternoon to go to the Band Concert at Fort Bliss, in the 1916-1920 period. Taking the Fort Bliss Street Car downtown, you could ride to Fort Bliss for 5c; go to the bandstand on the Parade Grounds and hear a fine band concert program. Returning to town, we would go by the Elite Confectionary, corner of Texas and Mesa for a bag of their delicious peanut-brittle, or one of the "baseballs" consisting of ice cream covered with chocolate.

"Osaple Days" in El Paso were quite exciting—especially the night parade when it seemed everybody participated. We youngsters, on bicycles were welcomed if they were decorated—and believe me we did that with crepe paper, lights and flags—Sort of the fore-runner of Sun Carnival Days—(you already know, I'm sure, that Osaple is El Paso spelled backwards.)

El Paso High made some sports history when the basketball team of 1921 won the State Championship! Luther Coblentz was coach and when the coach and team returned to El Paso it was quite a celebration. Especially in view of the fact that a year or two prior, Phoenix beat El Paso High 100 - 0!

North Stanton Street was a test strip for cars along about 1920. Since there was no level place at intersections on Stanton, it was a long hill and a difficult pull for cars of that day. When contemplating the purchase of an automobile, new or used, it was tested on Stanton Street. If you could make it to the top in high gear, it was a pretty good car. As I remember it, the Model T's couldn't make it and few other makes could make it without shifting gears.

The battle skirmish between the armies of Carranza and Pancho Villa in Juarez, provided a lot of excitement in El Paso. A number of El Pasoans, including this writer, went to a vantage point in Sunset Heights, and looking through binoculars, could see soldiers falling from the water tower then located in near-downtown Juarez. Several stray bullets came into El Paso, including one that made a hole in the plate glass at the White House Department store on Mills Street.

The flu epidemic of 1918 was, to say the least, a horrible experience. During that time, Fort Bliss soldiers brought many flag-draped caskets on Artillery Caissons from Fort Bliss, down Pershing Drive, and Montana and to the old Depot. And of course there was always the unmounted horse, with the boots turned backward dangling from the saddle and a band playing a funeral dirge. As a young boy, I did not truly realize how serious the epidemic had become, until it reached my family. The threat of a Swine Flu epidemic in 1976-77 is lessened because of the advance of

medical science, for which we can all be grateful.

The early days of radio broadcasting in El Paso were exciting I believe, for to hear music and talk coming through the air was phenomenal. In late 1921 and early 1922, a broadcasting station was constructed at the Mine and Smelter Supply Company on San Francisco Street. The studio was a small room on the second floor in the back, and it was in this room that I entered the broadcasting field. In 1922 the station (WDAH) was sold to Trinity Methodist Church, and the transmitter was moved to the Church, with the antenna on the Church roof. The station was used for Church Services on Wednesday evening, Sunday morning and Sunday night. In 1925, KFXH was established in Five Points by W. S. Bledsoe who had opened a store, selling radio sets, since the early 1920's had seen many stations begin operation over the United States, the first one of which was KDKA Pittsburgh in 1920. Over KFXH we broadcast the world series of 1925, and most listeners used earphones and crystal sets. I recall visiting the Central Fire Station during one of the games, and the men were listening with the earphones, but had made a paper cornucopia and placed on each ear piece so that more could listen. Chief J. B. Wray came in and ordered the men to stop listening for fear they could not hear an alarm. In June 1929 WDAH was leased to Eagle Broadcasting Company and moved to the Del Norte Hotel Roof, and KTSM began operations in August 1929, the stations sharing time during the day and evening. Broadcasting has grown tremendously in the intervening period—an increase in the power of the stations; an increase in number of stations.

Fifty or sixty years ago, even though there were many automobiles in El Paso, horse drawn vehicles were very much in use. The dairies were using horse drawn milk wagons, making their deliveries in the early hours of the morning, and the clop-clop of the horses hooves on the ground or pavement, together with the tinkle of the milk bottles being delivered were interesting and welcome sounds in the night. The horse drawn ice-wagons gave us "kids" an opportunity to scoop up a handful of ice to crunch; the "vegetable man" with his horse drawn wagon made his rounds of the neighborhoods with fresh vegetables of all sorts, and the house-wife would need only go to the curb in front of her house for vegetable shopping. The wagon made the "rounds" regularly, and on time so one could tell rather accurately when it was due, but the tinkle of a bell announced its arrival. The Express Wagon, pulled by two large horses, was a familiar sight; there were the small wagons, delivering bread, meat and other products. But the increased use of automotive power was rapid, and the faithful horse was retired to pasture.

About the time of the end of World War I, there were quite a few "jitneys" being operated in El Paso. These were private automobiles, Model T's I think, with a home-made sign in the windshield simply

stating "JITNEY", which indicated one could ride for a "Jitney" (slang for a 5c piece.) Anyone who had a car could get into the business of transporting passengers. These "jitneys" would travel on the busy streets, perhaps where people were waiting for street cars and pick up their passengers and take them to their destination. They were particularly well patronized during any inclement weather, and perhaps led to the beginning of the taxi business in El Paso.

Interurban Railway from El Paso to Ysleta was operated by the El Paso Electric Company, and each interurban car was larger and heavier than the regular street cars. Stops on the way to Ysleta were such stations as Bosque, Washington Park, Cinecue Park, Cadwallader, and West Ysleta. A round trip to Ysleta was a nice Sunday afternoon trip through the valley of vineyards and trees, or perhaps a stop to buy vegetables at the many farms in the area; or to attend one of the festive dances at the West Ysleta Country Club. The Interurban was also a casualty of the automobile age.

Street car transportation has been in the news lately, but many of us have memories of the street cars "in the good ole days." The Park Line to Washington Park and other lines to Fort Bliss, Second Ward, Sunset, Government Hill, and Manhattan. Many of us "old timers" remember the "side tracks" on each of the routes, where a street car going one way, could go into a "side track" to permit the car coming in the opposite direction to pass. This was needed since there were only single tracks. While the schedules of the cars were rather accurate, there were those times when a considerable delay was encountered and one car just waited for the other. On arrival at the side track, there was the usual wave by the motorman and conductor of each car to each other, the wave of the passengers, and the clang of the bell and you were on your way again. It might be mentioned here that, during Halloween especially, a favorite trick of some youngsters was to pull the trolley wheel from the overhead wire, rendering the street car inoperative until the conductor replaced the trolley. When the smaller one-man operated cars began operation, the motorman was required to replace the trolley. And then there were those who soaped the tracks on those lines going up or down hill, such as Manhattan and Sunset Heights; and there was glee among the boys who did it, particularly watching the consternation of the motorman.

As stated before, perhaps these short comments on earlier years in El Paso will cause others to remember these and many other events. El Paso was a fine city in the "good ole days"; it still is, in spite of its problems, and I'm proud to be a native of the "Pass of the North."

SOUTHWEST ARCHIVES

A "Harem-scarem corner of Heaven" The Letters of Eugene Cunningham, as found in the W. H. Hutchinson Collection

by LILLIAN COLLINGWOOD

Several years ago, The University of Texas at El Paso Library acquired a very large assortment of papers from one W. H. Hutchinson, a member of the history faculty at Chico (California) State College, but better known as the biographer of western novelist Eugene Manlove Rhodes. Thinking that the collection would offer some interesting material on the late nineteenth century New Mexico which Rhodes had used as the setting for many of his novels and short stories, your servant began to examine this W. H. Hutchinson Collection.

And she was not disappointed. The New Mexico of Pat Garrett and Oliver Lee, of John Wesley Hardin and John Selman, of the young A. B. Fall leaps from the musty pages of Mr. Hutchinson's carefully preserved papers. Here also are notes and letters pertaining to that so mysterious disappearance of one Colonel A. J. Fountain and his nine-year-old son, a case which our own C. L. Sonnichsen vivifies in *Tularosa* and which Mr. Hutchinson himself further explores in his short "investigative study" entitled *Another Verdict for Oliver Lee.* So maybe there is a little disappointment: this particular New Mexico has already been unfolded to us. We know about the feuds and the gunmen, the political struggles, the "unsolved crimes," the violence, the flamboyant court trials, Well, let's look further. Perhaps we can find something on Rhodes himself. But, again, there is a bit of disappointment. For we find nothing that Mr. Hutchinson didn't use in his biography of Rhodes. But, wait a minute: here are two thick folders of papers, bearing the label "Eugene Cunningham Correspondence." Ah! It sems that Mr. Hutchinson has been interested in more than one western novelist — another Eugene, author, we dimly recall, of even more novels and stories than Eugene Manlove Rhodes.

Eugene Cunningham. A little research gets him into perspective. He was a very prolific writer of "westerns." Furthermore, he lived in El Paso for a time, back in the 1930's, conducted an advertising agency from an office in the Mills Building, served as editor of the book review column of the *El Paso Herald Post,* and wrote perhaps eight or more of his novels right here in El Paso. Now, here is material to look into.

The "Eugene Cunningham" folders turn out to be filled with letters, masses of letters, from Cunningham to Mr. Hutchinson. A quick glance through the bundle shows that the letters cover a period of eleven years — from July 14, 1946, to September 27, 1957.

Our first view of 'Gene Cunningham comes to us from Mr. Hutchinson, who initiated the correspondence with a formal letter, a carbon of which is happily included in the collection:

> I certainly enjoyed our conversation and hope that in the days and years to come we may have many more. You talk my language. Regardless of what you may think of my business acumen and my profound lack of knowledge about the publishing business, I appreciate your frankness in speaking out and telling me just how many

kinds of a left-handed, triple-distilled, rancid, young idiot I seem in this regard.

Well! The arrogance of the fellow! But, then, probably Mr. Hutchinson didn't know anything about the publishing business. And probably he needed this sort of straight talk. I believe I'm going to like this Eugene Cunningham, who tells it like it is — and gets by with such "frankness," furthermore. I believe he speaks my language too. And so — I begin to read his letters.

At first, the letters are sort of normal length — a typed page or two (on very handsomely printed letterhead with his name, quite large, and his San Francisco home address). And then the letters get longer and yet longer, running sometimes to five or six single-spaced typed sheets. And how he's enjoying writing those pages. What fun he has playing with words — twisting them, spinning them like tops, turning them to the light so as to watch the reflections bounce this way and that, teasing them to obey his every whim. And what does he talk about in all these letters? Absolutely everything: the novel he's currently working on ("I'm patting the last two chapters into shape"); the "toings and froings" of his grown children; his head-on collisions with Hollywood studios, with which, apparently, he never makes any satisfactory arrangements for the filming of his works; his scathing opinions on the deteriorating quality of magazine fiction ("stories smooth enough to get by, stories that are no worse one than another, that almost might have been turned out in the same factory, Hartschaffnerandmarxized style"); his own philosophy of writing: "YOU HAVE GOT TO GET DOWN TO FUNDAMENTALS and build up from Character and/or Situation, letter by letter, word by word, YOUR OWN equation, explanation, of the Why and How . . . . You have got to be egotistical enough — egocentric enough anyway — to want to see your own hammer-marks on your output even if that output is crude . . . . 'A poor thing (maybe) but MY OWN!' is the ONLY motto for a writter."

And then his health begins to fail and, also, the creative energy which had powered some ten million words of published output. But his compulsion to set words to paper continues unabated. His letters grow longer, less structured — almost incoherent — though still sparkling with flashes of verbal lightning as he thunders the limitations on his activities. But he never whines or complains or feels sorry for himself. He talks about his failing health, of course, but in terms so impudent as to dispatch the thought ("Sometimes I do think, on those tingles and tangles, that [doctors] order giving up tobacco, alcohol, salt, simply because they know how to PRONOUNCE 'm' ").

Nor does he ever sentimentalize during these last years of his life, though his mind turns more and more to the past, particularly to his associations with other writers. He speaks long and brightly of his great friend 'Gene Rhodes, for whom, he grins, "I re-NAMED NEW MEXICO *RHODESIA.*" On one occasion, and a propos of nothing, he remembers the time that "A certain rodeo official-for-hire drifted into El Paso and . . . . remarked that he'd gone out to see Erle Stanley Gardner . . . . He told me several incidents — such as remarking Erle leave living room . . . . go upstairs for an hour, return with remark that he had just written a novelette."

No longer able, apparently, to "pat chapters into shape," the ailing 'Gene Cunningham still has his visions: "Walking cliffs this morning — into head

replacing vacuum popped shortstory notion." And he still maintains the obstinate individuality that drove his "own hammer-marks." Responding to an invitation to join a proposed organization of Western writers, our 'Gene pronounces: "Being so . . . . lobo-on'ry I never did take much to groups and every time I got into one it cost me money."

Money — or rather the lack of it — preoccupies him during these final years, a fact we have already inferred from the increasing shabbiness of his stationery: he's dazzling out his words now onto the backs of advertisements and form letters he has received. But the image of an old, sick man being so frugal provokes no sorrow in us, somehow. We see exactly what he sees — that every side of blank paper is a precious thing, a place to attach those silvery verbal webs. And again he does not whine. Poverty is a fact of life which, like any other, invites word-play: "In a frantic effort to keep el lobo at a respectful distance, ie, where he won't drool on my shoes, I started a radio program over the local station . . . ." And, one day, pondering, as it were, on what does and doesn't have value, he spoof-writes his own epitaph:

> HE NEVER MADE ANY REAL MONEY or EVER HAD ANY FUN SPECIAL or SEEN HIS NAME ON BEST SELLER LIST or— BUT GOD! HE WAS *DURABLE.*
>
> TALKATIVE AND EGOCENTRIC . . ., STILL HE NEVER EGOTIZED THROUGH HIS NOVELS, STOPPING THE HERO'S THUDDING RIDE. TO VILLAIN'S DOWNFALL TO SAY: Dear Reader, it is MY opinion—
>
> and it seems no more than RIGHT to me that there should be for ARTISTS like same a special Harem-scarem corner of Heaven

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle* obituary, written by Mr. Hutchinson (and included among the Cunningham letters), Eugene Cunningham died October 18, 1957. If he suffered during his last days, no one ever knew it. Up to the very end, he was doing his thing — putting words to paper in his own joyful and exuberant way. On September 27, 1957 — exactly three weeks before his death — he was at the old stand, his typewriter, igniting his verbal fireworks. A short note, this last missive to his friend "Hutch," and it pops off in a sassy little postscript: "Remember: it's a wrong worm that has no yearning."

Now, you knew, any man who, on the eve of his death, is still thinking about the importance of "yearning" has just got to deserve — at the very least — a "Harem-scarem corner of Heaven." And I wish that somebody would read these letters and use them as a springboard for a biography of Eugene Cunningham, writer of "westerns," linguistic acrobat, feisty curmudgeon, and human being extraordinaire.

What is probably the oldest wood frame in El Paso is still standing and in good condition at 817 Olive Street. The house was built in 1882 by Captain Thomas J. Beall, pioneer El Paso lawyer. It was built of California redwood.

—*Password,* XVII, 39.

HERITAGE HOMES OF EL PASO

by HARRIOT HOWZE JONES

"HOOVER HOUSE"

Hoover House
(photo by M. G. McKinney)

The impressive mansion at 711 Cincinnati Street was built in 1917 for Mr. and Mrs. Richard Moberly Dudley.

Richard M. Dudley was born in 1862 near Waco, Kentucky, his father was a Baptist minister, and president of a small Baptist college. Dudley attended this college and then taught school in Chillicothe, Missouri for a short time. Following this he had a job with a contracting firm in New York but soon went into business for himself. In 1896 he married Miss Fanny Moore, of Tarrytown, New York and two years later went to Mexico and entered into contracting business with Will Ryan. They built the old Chihuahua-Pacific Railroad and later The Mexican Northwestern Railroad.

The Dudleys came to El Paso in 1912. Mr. Dudley organized the Texas Bank and Trust Company, which later merged with the First National Bank. He became interested in politics and was a Texas State Representative for two terms, and then a State Senator. Before his second

term as Senator was over he resigned to run for mayor of El Paso, which office he held from 1923 to 1925. Within weeks the City budget was balanced. A new Stanton Street Bridge was opened during his tenure, and the designation of right-of-way streets, a new step in local traffic handling, was established. Stop and Go lights appeared at busy intersections. An ordinance was passed barring children under sixteen from driving.

The "Golden Jubilee," celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of El Paso as a City, took place during his first year in office. This was very festive, with athletic events, balls and a parade. There was a Jubilee Queen, Miss Nancy Beall Williams, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph F. Williams.

Mayor Dudley had been shocked at the strong emergence of the Ku Klux Klan in El Paso, in fact he ran on an anti-Ku Klux Klan ticket, and fought relentlessly what he called "A hell-born organization—a breeder of strife—everything *but* American." Dudley was re-elected to office after his first term, without opposition, the first time this had happened in El Paso, but in April of 1925 he entered the hospital for sudden surgery and six days later, on May 2, 1925 El Paso's beloved mayor died.

According to El Paso City Directories, after Mr. Dudley's death the house had many occupants, some for a very short time. Mrs. Dudley was still living there in 1927, then in 1928 Mr. and Mrs. Frank Murchison lived there for a year, after that Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Ryan III were occupants for two years. Mr. and Mrs. Tomas F. Blanco spent seven years in the house, from 1931 to 1938. The house was vacant for a year and from 1940 to 1942 Mr. and Mrs. J. M. McConnell and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Phillips were joint tenants. The house was bought by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Thompson Hoover in 1943.

The house is rectangular, symmetrical, two stories with a full basement. There is a green tile roof, with wide overhang. The house is plastered and was originally of a medium tan color, with white trim. Now it is painted an all-over gray-green color, without contrasting color trim. A portico is upheld by Ionic pillars and pilasters. Above this is a small balcony. The downstairs windows are decorated at the top, and two of the upstairs windows are actually French doors, opening onto small wrought iron balconies. On either side of the main structure there is a one story wing.

Inside there is a large hall, with triple windows opposite the front door, which always gives a pleasant feeling of light and space. The staircase rises from this hall. At the right there is an opening into the very large drawing room. The fireplace in this room has a very handsome mantel. Behind this room, at the back of the house, there is a small music room.

The library also opens from the drawing room, and it is in one of the wings. This room has dark wood paneling and fireplace mantel, and of course many bookcases.

To the left of the hall is the dining room, one might reasonably call it a banquet room. Under this room there is a relic of Prohibition days—a strong cement store room in the basement. The only entrance to this was, and is, a trap door in the floor, which was always covered by a large rug. Beyond the dining room, in the other wing, there had been a large screened porch. This was glassed in by Mr. Hoover and is a charming and cheerful place, flooded with sunshine and with many flowering plants flourishing even in coldest winter. Upstairs there is a sitting room over the downstairs hall, and four bedrooms and two baths. There are two servant's rooms, one upstairs and one down stairs, behind the kitchen.

One thing recalled by people who knew the Hoovers was that at Christmas time, besides the enormous tree, sparkling and beautiful, which stood in the drawing room, and the gay "decking the halls with boughs of holly" they always had, hung from the little balcony above the front door, twelve large red plastic stockings. Running down these, white letters spelled out the names of their twelve grand-children. Lights behind the stockings made them glow as the plastic was translucent. Other colored lights and greenery completed the attractive effect. Mr. and Mrs. Hoover were devoted to their family, and all the grand-children spent every week-end with them, from the time they were babies.

Robert T. Hoover was born in Houston in 1891. He came to El Paso as a High School lad, his father was Superintendent of Southern Pacific Railroad. He was in banking for a time and then became interested in cotton—planting and merchandising. In this he was eminently successful. He married the former Louisiana Livesay. They had three children: Robert T. Jr., Joseph Renick and Louann, now Mrs. Richard H. Feuille, and the afore-mentioned twelve grandchildren.

Mr. Hoover died in 1960, and in 1965 Mrs. Hoover moved to a smaller house and deeded the mansion to the University of Texas at El Paso to serve as the residence of the president.

The first president to live in Hoover House, as it is now named, was Dr. Joseph M. Ray, and incidentally the Rays continued the tradition of hanging red stockings above the door at Christmas, with the names of their own children. Then Dr. Joseph Smiley was president and he and Mrs. Smiley lived there. At present it is occupied by Dr. and Mrs. Arleigh B. Templeton.

A few years ago Mrs. Josephine Clardy Fox left her fortune and all of her beautiful possessions to the University. Many of these treasures now adorn Hoover House. These include much antique furniture, most of it

from Europe; tapestries, magnificent paintings, sculpture, oriental rugs, collections of porcelain, silver, crystal. It is quite like a museum.

At the time that the University acquired the property the building was valued at $52,000 and the block of land on which it stands at $25,000. Since then a great deal of money has been expended on it for repair, remodeling, furnishing and air-conditioning. A large cement parking place was constructed behind the house, a swimming pool was put in and a high wall to ensure privacy for the pool and patio.

It is unlikely that any other University president in the United States has the privilege of living in a more beautiful and charming residence than Hoover House.

In 1916, attorneys of West Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico combined to form the Tri-State Bar Association. Peyton F. Edwards of El Paso was the first president; Edward L. Medler of Las Cruces, general vice-president; W. R. Reber of Las Cruces, first vice-president, D. A. Richards of Douglas, Arizona, second vice-president and E. C. Wade, Jr., of El Paso, secretary and treasurer.

—J. Morgan Broaddus, *The Legal Heritage of El Paso,* 177.

The highest point in the Franklin Mountains is North Franklin Peak, elevation 7,200 feet, located north of Trans Mountain Road.

—*El Paso, A Centennial Portrait,* 24.

Major Surgeon William Beaumont, for whom William Beaumont Army Medical Center was named, served under Colonel Zebulon Montgomery Pike in the attack upon York, Upper Canada, in the War of 1812, a battle in which Pike lost his life. Pike was the first United States citizen to visit El Paso. He had come here in 1807, a prisoner of the Spaniards.

—*El Paso, A Centennial Portrait,* 136.

The major force in securing designation of Carlsbad Caverns as a National Monument, and then as a National Park, was Major Richard Fenner Burges of El Paso.

—Barbara Hooten Luckett, *Password* XV, 83.

BOOK REVIEWS

CRAZY WOMEN IN THE RAFTERS

Memories of a Texas Boyhood

by PAUL PATTERSON

(Norman Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, $8.95, 242 pps.)

Reviewed by DALE L. WALKER

If there is a funnier, more evocative — better — storyteller in the State of Texas than Paul Patterson of Crane, I would dearly love to have his or her books to compare to "Sam McGoo and Texas Too," "Pecos Tales," and Patterson's newest, "Crazy Women in the Rafters."

"Crazy Women" has to do with the J. D. Patterson family, amongst whom Paul was the sixth child ("little for my age and dumb for my size," as Paul's brother John, called "Sog," told him), and the 36 moves they made in the period 1900-1924. The moves ranged from 200 yards — from Upland, Texas, jail to the Upland, Texas telephone office — to 200 miles, from Roscoe, Texas, to Balmorrhea, Texas, and they gave young Paul Patterson a taste of farm and ranch country Texas which he can put on the printed page about as good as anybody ever has.

A person grows to love the Patterson people, from Ralph and Blanche and Sog and Madge and Fush and Paul and Gwen, and of course, Mama and Papa, right down to Old Philip, the "dog of pedigree, dog of low degree, dog of no degree, who knows?" Who could not love a Mama of whom it could be said: "Then there was Mama to whom my every wish was an executed order. And whither Mama went, there went I, scarcely allowing her the privacy of the privy. To me Mama was an epitome of brilliance, beauty, and good grooming. But in time I was to discover that this was only partially the case. Brilliant, yes, and beautiful, but well-groomed only when Aunt Embelle Pollard came down and fixed her up." And who could not love a Papa who had an incurable case of the "goyonders," and who, with Mama, had a combined attendance in the School of Hard Knocks of some 189 years "with no absences, few tardies, and still fewer whimperings or complaints." And a Papa who lived to over 97, spent only two hours (the last two) in a hospital, and whose prescription for longevity was "Keep your bowels open and your mouth shut."

Paul Patterson is superb at what he does here, bringing life one rich slice of rural Texas life of some five or six decades ago, and he has that rare gift of the true, very near poetic, storyteller, in landing on the precise image, the precise combination of words, that make things seen as they are read. An old covered wagon evokes a certain image but how it is sharpened in Patterson's hands: "An old Rock Island wagon with its tattered canvas bonnet, wash-tub earrings, and stovepipe necklace." And of a move from a wide-open ranch to a manicured farm, this: "After Uncle Will's out-and-out ranch, lively kids, raunchy greyhounds, and miles of broad open baldies to romp in, Granddad Pollard's sandy land farm was quite a letdown — plowed ground as far as the eye could sweep. Not only that but a yard all littered

up with sissy flowers and herbs and blooming shrubs. Not only no place to play but no time to do it, what with all one's strength and energies sapped up in toting long-snouted pots to irrigate the place."

This is a special book for Texans but it will be loved by anybody who remembers times past with undiminished fondness and who reveres that still-magic word of our language — "family."

THE MESILLA GUARD

by NONA BARRICK and MARY TAYLOR

(El Paso: Texas Western Press, University of Texas at El Paso, Southwestern Studies, Number 51, $3.00).

During the latter years of my activities at the University of Texas at El Paso I frequently met in the archives room of the library two charming and industrious women busily intent reading the microfilmed *Archivos de Ciudad Juarez.* Nona Barrick and Mary Taylor, I learned, were residents of Las Cruces and Mesilla interested in finding the origins of the two communities which have played so large a part in the history of the middle Rio Grande valley, *Rio Intermedio.* Since, from time to time, I have seen published excerpts incorporating the results of their inquiries and have found them historically authentic and stylistically attractive.

The Mesilla Guard is an example of what patient research and literary craftsmanship can achieve, emerging as No. 51 of the Southwestern Studies. The monograph is far more than just a local history project — it is in microcosm an account of the struggle between Mexican frontiersmen and Apaches for the control of the Spanish borderlands. It details the barbaric and bloody racial war to the death in which neither contestant asked or gave quarters.

Mesilla was established in 1849 by settlers who came up the river from the environs of El Paso del Norte, notably Senecu and San Lorenzo; these were joined the next year by residents of Dona Ana fleeing the newly organized jurisdiction of the United States which had bereft Mexico of its lands north and east of the Rio Grande by the terms of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. *De jure,* Mesilla was thought of as a part of the Canton Bravos, Chihuahua, but *de facto,* it was a semi-independent enclave.

The *guardia móvil* was a local device created years earlier in Chihuahua and Sonora to protect the villagers against their inveterate enemies, the Apaches. The states were bankrupt and the national government powerless in the aftermath of the Mexican War. At Mesilla, as elsewhere, the guard was made up of a group of kinsmen led by Esmeregildo Guerra, a man of Pueblo descent, one of a large body of relatives, fathers, sons, uncles and nephews. To ride with the guard gave one prestige in the adobe community and his status did not suffer diminution after 1854 when Mesilla passed into the hands of the American territory of New Mexico.

Against them, the Apaches, dispossessed of their lands that they had occupied from time out of memory and driven back into the recesses of the Organ, Sacramento and White Mountains, retaliated with savage ferocity. The *vecinos* were cut down in their bean patches and corn fields, their children carried into the captivity, and their flocks and herds stolen. In

turn, the *guardia* took gory revenge as the raids flowed and ebbed from mountain to river and river to mountain.

In this fierce melange it is difficult to fix the blame nor does Barrick/Taylor try to do so; surely there is enough for all concerned. After the American assumption of power over Mesilla, Dr. Michael Steck, the Indian agent at Ft. Thorn, thought he knew the culprits; he sought indictments against the members of the Mesilla Guard for two severe massacres of Apaches under his care. The court presided over by the formidable Kirby Benedict freed the thirty-six men from the charge of murder. While the trial was still in progress, Governor Abraham Rencher appointed Meregildo Guerra captain of the Mesilla Company of the territorial militia and thus his fellows attained an official standing.

This is history as it should be written. The editorial board should be commended on its choice of the Barrick/Taylor study for its authenticity, organization and felicity of expression. They have used primary sources; they have structured their story symmetrically and with logical subordination of the secondary to the primary theme; and, finally, they write with a fine regard for the usages of our English speech. The excellent line drawings are by Kenneth Barrick of the New Mexico University art department, husband of one of the authors.

El Paso, Texas REX W. STRICKLAND

FROM THE EDITOR'S BOOK SHELF

THE SILVER MAGNET

by GRANT SHEPHERD

(New York, E. P. Dutton and Co., 1938)

Some twenty years ago, when the *barrancas* southwest of Chihuahua were being widely pictured as rivaling the Grand Canyon and being largely unexplored, I received a call from John S. Curtiss, retired El Paso stock broker, saying "Come on over to the house, I've got something to show you!"

What he had to show me was *The Silver Magnet,* telling of the operation of a silver mine at Batopilas, down in the heart of the *barrancas,* discovered by the Spaniards in 1632 and reopened nearly 250 years later by one Alexander Robey Shepherd, father of the author. I read the book hurriedly, wrote some reports for radio and television, and returned it Mr. Curtiss. Before leaving for Washington, I managed to pick up a copy for myself from book dealer Clark Wright. After two years in Washington, it dawned upon me suddenly who Alexander Robey Shepherd was. He was the last Governor General of the District of Columbia.

In retrospect, "Boss" Shepherd seems to have done more than any other man to change Washington from a dusty, muddy, swampy capital, threatened with abandonment, to one of the world's most beautiful cities. But in so doing he spent home thirty million dollars. This might be considered pin money to Congress today, but in the late 1870s an angry Congress decided that Shepherd was a malefactor of high degree and that only Congress was fit to run the District of Columbia.

So, disgraced among many of the political leaders of Washington, "Boss" Shepherd set out on a new career. It was 1880, (the railroads would not reach El Paso for another year) when the whole Shepherd family set out on an expedition comparable to a voyage to the moon: a forty day trip that started by rail to St. Louis and San Antonio, then by various wheeled vehicles through Forts Concho, Stockton and Davis, on to Presidio and across the Rio Grande and over desert and mountains to Chihuahua. A hundred miles west of Chihuahua, the wagon road played out, and on mule-back the Shepherd family rode for six days down the corkscrew trails that wound their way eventually to the *Rio Batopilas* and the old mining village where "Boss" Shepherd and his family would spend the rest of his days.

The book is an enchanting portrayal of life in Mexico as the Porfirio Diaz regime is coming to power. Grant Shepherd was an admirer of Diaz and obviously considered him one of Mexico's great benefactors, not a popular viewpoint at the time the book was pubblished, nor today.

In Mexico, Alexander Robey Shepherd was *El Patron Grande,* "the big boss," beloved by his Mexican employees at the isolated silver mine. He cared for them in sickness and in health. There were no minimum wages, but there was an abundance of tender, loving fringe benefits. Once every month a train of mules would start up the 185 miles of winding trails, laden with silver bullion, the fruits of a month's work under Shepherd's direction.

A delightful chapter details the celebration of Christmas in Batopilas, with abundant presents for all, an amazing supply of food and drink, and the family gathered around the piano singing carols. A piano? How do you get a piano down to Batopilas? Well, you haul it to the end of the wagon road at Carichic. Then you cut two long straight pine poles and put one on either side of the piano in its wooden box. The poles are tied securely to the piano. You put four Indians on the two front poles and another four on the back poles. They squat. You say *"vamonos!"* — and they pick up the piano and carry it 185 miles to Batopilas.

Up over these same trails, late in the book, the sorrowing employees of *El Patron Grande* carry his casket, many vying for the privilege of lifting a precious burden. It is carried to the stage-coach, then to Chihuahua and the railroad, into El Paso, and on to Washington, D.C., where the remains of Alexander Robey Shepherd are interred in a mausoleum in Rock Creek Cemetery.

El Paso, Texas CONREY BRYSON

The first session of a Federal Court in El Paso was convened April 6, 1885, with E. B. Turney presiding as District Judge and A. J. Evans acting as United States Attorney. Local attorneys admitted to practice before the court were: Zeno B. Clardy, Frank Hunter, A. G. Foster, Wyndham Kemp, William Coldwell, Allen Blacker and C. Q. Stanton.

—J. Morgan Broaddus, *The Legal Heritage of El Paso,* 152

PUBLICATION NOTES

El Paso historian Dr. Rex W. Strickland puts some legends to rest in "The Birth and Death of a Legend" in the Fall 1976 issue of *Arizona and the West*. The legend, magnified by many including Colonel Philip St. George Cooke, deals with one John Johnson who led a band of about 20 men from Sonora to New Mexico, where there were troubles with marauding Apaches. One of their leaders was Juan Jose Campa, who had violated a treaty and led raids on nearby villages. Johnson lured the Indians to his camp with the offer of a gift of flour, then opened fire when they lined up to divide the gift.

Various versions of the story have the dead ranking from 20 to 400. To glean facts and discard fiction, Strickland enlisted the aid of a great grandson of John Johnson, Luis Encinas Johnson, Governor of Sonora from 1961 to 1967. A yellowed newspaper clipping, words to an old ballad, and old letters all serve to shed light on the legend.

Strickland concludes that "John Johnson was a brave and violent man and the product of a turbulent age, but the evidence does not convict him of sadism nor resort to treachery in his fight with Juan Jose and his renegades."

Ben Alexander, who played Officer Frank Smith in scores of episodes of *Dragnet,* came to El Paso as a child star in 1924 to make what was intended as an epic western entitled *Sundown.*

—Eugene O. Porter, *Password,* XV, 89.

The original Liberty Bell was exhibited in El Paso on November 15, 1915, on its way back to Philadelphia from the Panama Pacific Exhibition in San Francisco.

—Eugene O. Porter, *Password,* XVI, 7.

"Here is a strip of the United States, and the only one, which receives sunshine eighty percent of the time that the sun is above the horizon. The authority for this is not some super-salesman, but the federal weather bureau, which, from computations covering fifty years or so, has plotted a zone that begins in the Rio Grande Valley below El Paso, Texas, extends westward across the southern end of New Mexico and Arizona, crosses the Colorado River, and culminates in Death Valley, California. Squarely athwart this Eighty Percent Belt and pouring its waters down the middle of it, lies the Gila."

—Ross Calvin, *River of the Sun,* 4

ACTIVITIES OF YOUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The annual membership drive, under direction of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gorman, Jr., brought the Society 91 new members. Mrs. Gordon Frost, Membership Secretary, reports current membership at 842, including 83 life members. The Society will soon publish its 1977 yearbook with a membership directory. Of our individual members, 69 live elsewhere than El Paso, in 16 states and two foreign nations. *Password* is received regularly by 52 colleges, universities and public libraries from coast to coast.

EUGENE O. PORTER MEMORIAL AWARD

The second annual Eugene O. Porter Memorial Award for the best article in *Pasword* during 1976 goes to Janet Y. (Mrs. Hans E.) Brockmoller for her article, "Dr. William Martin Yandell" in the spring issue. Other articles rated highly by the judges included "The Saga of Maurice J. McKelligon" by Chris P. Fox, "Red Rock Canyon Cross" by Dorothy Ward and "Pat Garrett's Daughter and El Paso's Song" by Ruby Burns. In Volume XXI, *Password* published the work of 21 authors, 13 of them new to its pages.

Mrs. Brockmoller will receive an award of $100 from the "Eugene O. Porter Memorial Fund," established to honor the editor of *Pasword* for its first nineteen years. Further contributions are invited to assure continuation of this annual award.

HISTORICAL WRITING CONTESTS

Again in 1977, your Society offers cash prizes in two other contests. The Frank W. Gorman Memorial Contest, financed by the Gorman family in memory of Mr. Gorman, offers prizes for the best essays by 7th grade students, based on their own historical research.

The third annual Historical Memories Contest, for persons over 65, will be announced this summer, with closing date in October. The Society offers prizes of $100, $50, and $25, with five honorable mention entries to receive memberships in the Society, with subscriptions to *Pasword*.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS, 1977

Quarterly Meetings:
March 6
May 26
August 25
October 27

Hall of Honor Banquet: November 20, El Paso Country Club.
Board Meetings: First Tuesday of each month.
Other activities sponsored by the Society will be announced in the newsletter, *El Conquistador*.

BOOK SALES

Two changes have been made regarding the books which the Society offers for sale. First, state sales tax (5%) must be paid by residents of Texas. Heretofore, your Society absorbed that cost. Second, in response to past recommendations, your Book Sales Committee will now provide for sale of books other than those listed periodically in the Society newsletter *El Conquistador*.

And, as far as possible, savings comparable to that on listed books will be offered on "special orders."

Books may be ordered from Book Sales Chairman, M. G. McKinney, telephone 565-8784, or from El Paso County Historical Society (attention: Book Sales) Post Office Box 28, El Paso, Texas 79940.

NEW MEMBERS, 1977

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Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Azar
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Malcolm Webb III
Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Windle
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Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Womack
Yale University Library

LIFE MEMBERS, 1977

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Mrs. Emily H. Vowell
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Mr. and Mrs. Lewis P. Walker, Jr.
Mrs. R. Sam Watkins
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Young

El Paso's first Municipal Airport was dedicated September 8, 1928. Before its completion, private and commercial planes flying through El Paso used the Army's Biggs Field.

—Stacy C. Hinkle, *Password* XVII:10.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

ROBERT N. MULLIN, a charter member of the Society, came to El Paso in 1901 at age eight. He has been a valued contributor to *Password* through the years. A former El Paso city alderman, he now resides in California.

ALEXINE BARTZ was born in El Paso in 1908. Her mother had come here to seek treatment for tuberculosis. (Her mother died January 27, 1977 at age 94). Alexine grew up in the old Boone home near Washington Park. She was one of the first graduates of Loretto Academy at its present location. She credits her journalism teacher, Sister Celestine, for giving her an interest in writing.

LUCY READ, born in Mexico of an English father and Mexican mother, moved to El Paso in the 1940s. She was a nurses aid and nurse at Southwestern General Hospital from 1945 to 1973.

KARL O. WYLER, President and General Manager of the Tri-State Broadcasting Company (KTSM Radio and Television) is El Paso's pioneer broadcaster, with a career spanning 55 years. He has served in many positions of civic leadership including city alderman, President of the Chamber of Commerce, and President of the Rotary Club.

LILLIAN COLLINGWOOD, Assistant Professor of English at the University of Texas at El Paso, has written many book reviews for *Password,* and since 1973 has edited its regular Southwest Archives section.

HARRIOT HOWZE JONES has been writing Heritage Homes of El Paso since 1973, the year in which she edited *El Paso, a Centennial Portrait,* published by the Society. She is the wife of Col. Crampton Jones and daughter of Major Gen. Robert L. Howze, former commander of Fort Bliss.

REX W. STRICKLAND is Professor Emeritus of History, University of Texas at El Paso. His scholarly editing of W. W. Mills' *Forty Years at El Paso* helped to make it a landmark in El Paso historical publications. His interest in old Mesilla is evidenced in his article "My Love Affair With the Mesilla Times," *Password,* XX, 117, Fall, 1975.

DALE L. WALKER is Director of News and Information for the University of Texas at El Paso. He is the author of several books and a recognized authority on such literary subjects as Jack London, Tarzan, and Sherlock Holmes.