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PASSWORD

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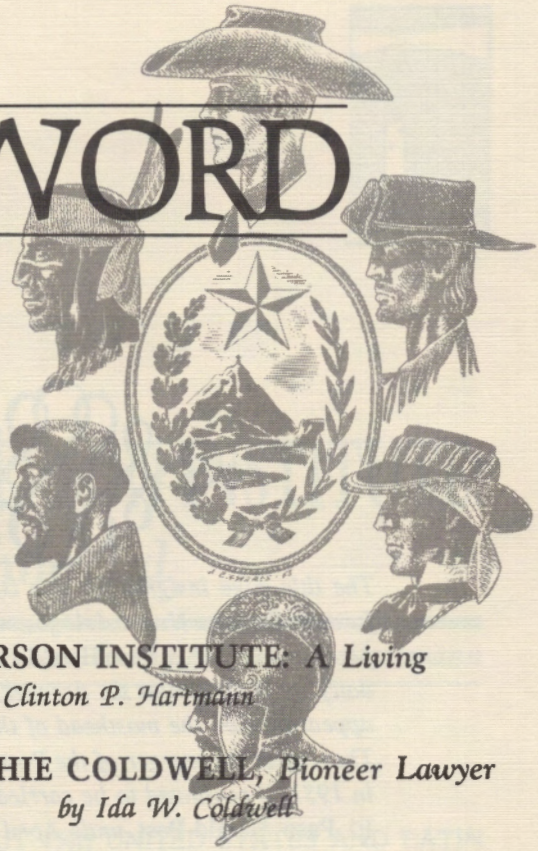

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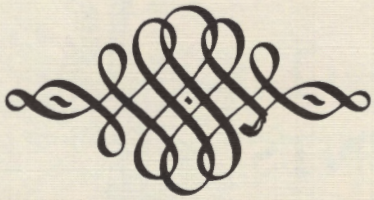

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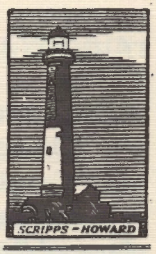

LYDIA PATTERSON INSTITUTE:
A Living Memorial

by Clinton P. Hartmann

THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES AND LATIN America, there are businessmen, lawyers, ministers, educators–people in all walks of life–who fondly refer to their alma mater as "La Lydia." They are speaking of Lydia Patterson Institute, located at 517 South Florence Street in El Paso, Texas.

The Institute traces its beginnings to the turn of the century when Protestant missionary zeal was at its height, both in Mexico and in the southwestern United States. In El Paso, these efforts focused on the Second Ward, or "El Segundo Barrio," and eventually resulted in a nucleus of Protestant churches and schools being established in the area where most of the population was of Mexican descent.[1]

As early as 1892, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, one of several denominations vigorously pursuing missionary work, had discussed plans for an "institution of higher learning in the Southwest, suitable to the needs of New Mexico and Mexico."[2] What exactly the church officials had in mind then is not known, but on December 8, 1913, over twenty years later, Lydia Patterson Institute opened its doors. Millard Patterson, a wealthy El Paso lawyer and property owner, donated the original land and building to the Board of Missions of Methodist Episcopal

Church, South, located in Nashville, Tennessee. The deed, dated December 3, 1913, provided seven lots for the school site on the east half of Block 113, Campbell Addition, between South Campbell and South Florence, and Third and Fourth Streets. In deeding the land to the church for the "sum of One Dollar," he stipulated that "the property conveyed is to be used for the education and religious training of boys and young men and as soon as may be convenient, for the preparation of young men to preach the Gospel of Christ in Mexico" and, further, that the "building which has been erected upon the lots mentioned shall be called in memory of his sainted wife 'Lydia Patterson Institute.'"[3]

Earlier in 1913, a verbal contract to build the school was made between Patterson and contractor Henry T. Ponsford.[4] The building was completed later that year and, according to a report, was "now used as a Bible School and day school for Mexican children."[5]

The original discussions called for a three-story building, but the final decision was for a building of two stories and a basement, rectangular in shape, faced with red brick, common at the time. The basement housed the kitchen and dining room, a small gymnasium, a heating plant, and laundry facilities. The president's office, five classrooms, a large room for chapel services, and an auditorium were on the first floor, and the second floor contained small apartments for the faculty, a small dormitory, and bathrooms. The building was described as "modern in every particular, handsomely furnished throughout and...finished in highly polished hardwood. From the parlor to the class room every known convenience has been installed.... It is estimated that the cost to have been about $50,000," comparable to the cost of public schools being built at the time.[6]

The Reverend Lawrence Reynolds, a veteran missionary who had worked in San Luís Potosí and in Durango, Mexico, arrived sometime in 1914 with his family to take over as president, or superintendent, of the school, which had been operated in the meantime by the Reverend John F. Corbin.[7] In August, Reynolds announced that day-school students, as well as boarders, would be accepted, and all would be taught by a "capable faculty." He added that the Board of Missions would pay the "expenses of operation" until the school became self-supporting.[8]

One might ask what motivated Millard Patterson to make this substantial gift, later valued at $75,000 in church and school records. We cannot be sure, but since the school is a memorial to his wife, Lydia, it would

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Clinton P. Hartmann, *recently retired from the El Paso Public Schools as a Consultant in Social Studies, is the principal of Lydia Patterson Institute. He is also Associate Editor of* Password.

be helpful to look at her life for answers. She was born Lydia Buckler in Fleming County, Kentucky, either in 1850 or 1851[9] to a family of four girls and four boys. The Bucklers later moved to nearby Mason County where, sometime after the Civil War, Lydia married Samuel D. Ball of Maysville. To this union was born a daughter, Zuelma Mae. In 1872, the Balls left Kentucky and moved to Sherman, Texas, where one of Lydia's older brothers, Clarence N. Buckler, resided and was the town's mayor during the period 1883-1886.[10]

LYDIA PATTERSON, 1851(?)-1909
(Photo courtesy Lydia Patterson Institute)

It is presumed that Samuel D. Ball died shortly prior to 1883[11] because in that year Lydia and her daughter left Sherman and traveled to El Paso, where another brother, Julius A. Buckler, had migrated, arriving on Christmas Day, 1880. On March 4, 1883, Lydia joined the recently organized Trinity Methodist Church.[12]

In 1886, Lydia's brother Clarence also left Sherman to join his sister and brother in El Paso. The brothers were both lawyers and would become well known and respected leaders in the legal community of the growing city.[13] Julius was a law partner of Millard Patterson, and presumably it was through this relationship that Lydia met Patterson. They were married on November 9, 1886, by the Reverend William P. McCorkle, Methodist Episcopal Church, South.[14]

As a member of Trinity Methodist Church, Lydia became interested in missionary work in "El Segundo Barrio." She especially enjoyed working among the children, helping them learn to read. Few records remain about her church activities and charitable works, but when added to the memories of oldtimers and to statements made in a court hearing contesting her will, they present a portrait of a deeply religious woman and devoted Methodist–one who was sincerely interested in the welfare of the less fortunate. Her daughter said of her, "Her chief aim in life, I think, was to exhort everyone to believe in Christ." On November 5, 1896, during a revival meeting, she read a paper outlining how a local rescue circle for "poor unfortunate girls could be linked to and benefit from the parent organization." She was probably referring to an organization headed by the evangelist Charles E. Crittendon, who was conducting a revival in El Paso at the time. On different occasions she was elected president and vice-president of women's missionary societies at Trinity Methodist Church and helped pay for a church organ.[15] Also, she served on a sixteen-member committee of civic-minded women who helped supervise a "Kitchen for the Poor" organized by local ministers and supported in part by the City of El Paso.[16]

Lydia's granddaughter, Mrs. Maxwell D. Taylor of Washington, D.C., was only eight years old when Lydia died, but Mrs. Taylor remembers "that we went to Sunday dinner with her every week, and she had a frequent and happy laugh."[17] Modesto A. Gomez, a longtime resident and merchant of South El Paso, recalled several years ago that it was a common sight to see her driving around "El Segundo Barrio" in her horse-drawn buggy. Another image of Lydia comes from a 1909 newspaper article, which reported that she had some "narrow escapes" when her phaeton was overturned by horses frightened by automobiles.[18]

Lydia was acquainted with the Reverend Mr. Corbin, who was instrumental in the organization of El Mesias M. E. Church, South, at 525 S. Stanton Street, and (in 1901) the Effie Edington School for "Mexican girls and young ladies," which met in the church's undercroft. There is no documented evidence that she was involved in the work of these institutions, but both of them are relevant to the school later established in her name. Many of the students enrolled at "La Lydia" regularly attended El Mesias M. E. Church, and the Effie Edington School merged with Lydia Patterson Institute in 1933. The building, which had housed the Edington School, located at 1215 E. San Antonio Street,[19] continued to be used for additional classrooms and living quarters for students and faculty until the 1960s, when it was razed to make room for a housing development.

Lydia Patterson did not live to see all the fruits of her labor–for she died at the age of 58 on April 8, 1909, after a two-year illness with cancer.[20] She was buried the following day (Good Friday) in Evergreen Cemetery,[21] the funeral services conducted at Trinity Methodist Church, and carriages were "waiting for every friend who may wish to follow the casket to the cemetery." Members of the county, district, and federal bar associations were dismissed to attend the funeral out of respect to her husband.[22] Shortly after Lydia's death, one of her closest friends, Mrs. Carrie Race, testified that Lydia's "life was religion and her purpose in life was to help the suffering." Mrs. Race added that Lydia "knew nothing about business,"[23] contrary to claims made later on.

Nine days after the funeral, on April 17, Lydia's will, dated January 13, 1909, was filed in the county clerk's office.[24] On June 16 its validity was challenged in a civil suit, brought into county court by John A. and Zuelma Happer[25] against the executor of the will, Millard Patterson, Zuelma's step-father. For almost two weeks, the six-man jury heard testimony concerning Lydia's state of mind and health at the time the will was executed and her relationship to the members of her family and to the doctors, nurses, and other visitors during her illness.

The Happers contended that the physical and mental suffering Lydia had endured during her final months, along with the frequent administration of drugs to ease the pain, had impaired her ability and competence to make a valid will. They also contended that the will had been made in secret and that her husband's law firm (Buckler, Woodson, and Patterson) had taken advantage of the situation, Millard Patterson being a "man of strong mind and stubborn disposition."[26]

Why were the Happers dissatisfied with the will? The answer lies in its terms.[27] Lydia's share of the estate (one-half) amounted to at least

$150,000. Of this, only $20,000, plus some personal items went to her daughter. Each of the three Happer children and Winfield Buckler, Lydia's invalid brother, received $5,000. Various nieces and friends, including a Reverend Alexander Hamilton Sutherland and one Frances Montague, principal of the Edington School, were given several hundred dollars each. The Sixth Item in the will left the remaining property to Lydia's husband and named him executor. It was this item that probably upset the Happers enough to contest the will, although they must have realized that their family affairs would become public knowledge. Oddly enough, there was no mention in the will of a bequest to establish a school or mission, nor of any donation to any church.

The trial created somewhat of a sensation.[28] It was front-page news in the daily newspapers, covered in detail, even citing the names of "society" women who attended as "spectators." Most of the testimony came from a stream of doctors and nurses, but some focused on the Reverend Mr. Sutherland, who was present at Lydia's death. He testified that he had known her for many years, that they were close friends who discussed mostly religious matters, and that "her aim in life was to be a Christian and to help the church." He added that "she contributed to benevolent institutions and helped the poor" and "never went to card parties or dances." He described himself as a minister of 42 years, five of which were served in Mexico. He said that he had lived in El Paso since 1906 and that he had never sought aid from Lydia for himself, but had asked her for money to buy a printing press. One of the defense lawyers, Woodson (Patterson's nephew, who also represented Patterson in court), testified that Sutherland had told him that the suit was "the doings of Jack Happer."[29]

The jury could reach no decision, and Judge A. S. J. Eylar dismissed the case on June 26. The case was appealed to the 41st District Court, where it was heard in March, 1910, but without a jury. After hearing the evidence, the judge ruled in favor of the defendant, Millard Patterson, and against the Happers. The will was probated as filed; and on May 30, 1910, Patterson presented the court with receipts for the disbursements he had made in carrying out the terms of the will.[30]

It is said that the Reverend Mr. Corbin, a witness for the defense at the trial, convinced Patterson to make the initial gift for the founding of the Institute.[31] Corbin, described as a "tireless minister and zealous evangelist," had founded other schools and churches in Mexico and the Southwest. Years later he was remembered as a "frontier minister for 45 years...who knew the value of a ransomed soul from poverty, ignorance,

and apathy."[32] In the 1914 El Paso City Directory, he is listed as the superintendent of the Mexican Mission School on South Florence, probably referring to Lydia Patterson Institute. In 1920 he was living in the Patterson home while the Pattersons (Millard had remarried) were in California. If Corbin did indeed convince Patterson to donate the original gift, his powers of persuasion must have been remarkable, for Patterson was a staunch member of the First Christian Church.[33]

When the Institute opened in September of 1914 for its second academic year, the president, Lawrence Reynolds, reported that few students showed up–said to be due to the "disturbed conditions in Mexico and excessive rains in the mountains."[34] After the students did arrive, one of the teachers supposedly remarked, "Tan grandotes y no saber leer!" (So big and they can't read!) Despite these drawbacks, the goals "to educate Mexican youths in Christian service...regardless of their religious beliefs, all denominations being welcomed" and "to offer a most excellent opportunity for the young men to receive a thorough education amid Christian surroundings and an atmosphere of the highest morality" remained intact.[35] To achieve these goals, the Institute offered courses in English, Spanish, Bible, music (vocal and instrumental), Commerce, and Physical Culture.

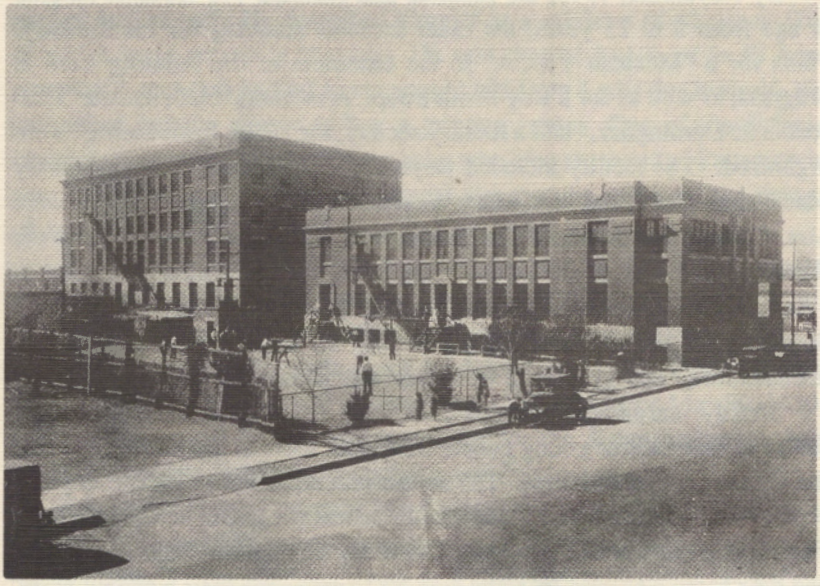
By November, 1915, the Institute had enrolled 140 students ranging in age from 5 to 25 years, the older students studying for the ministry. Plans for a "Mexican YMCA" in the basement of the building were in progress, as well as for a Boy Scout troop. A mothers' club, named "Club Josefa de Dominguez," and a literary society, the "Club Justo Sierra," were organized. The faculty included Reynolds, J. C. Delgado, Miss Charley Mae Cunningham, and Mrs. Mary W. Watson. Lower-grade teachers were Mrs. Corinne Smith, Mr. Villal Pando, Mrs. Lawrence Reynolds, and the Reverend and Mrs. J. A. Smith.[36] By 1916, the enrollment increased to 170, the YMCA was in operation, and 13 young men were living in the dormitory.[37] At the school closing on May 25, a program of piano solos, declamations, and gymnastic exercises was presented.[38]

Shortly, enrollment reached over 200, and LPI became not only a center of learning for young people from both sides of the border, but also the focus of social activities. The auditorium served as a "performing arts center" with pageants and literary and musical programs being presented. The dining room was the scene of birthday celebrations and receptions, and the chapel was used by some couples to exchange their wedding vows. The Institute also became the base from which numerous Methodist and other evangelical workers operated on their way in and out of Mexico for various assignments, and it was headquarters for delegates to the "Con-

ferencia Mexicana del Occidente Metodista."[39]

As the Revolutionary activities intensified in Mexico, many missionaries and their families, both Anglo and Mexican, fled to El Paso. Some of these found haven at LPI, including Mrs. Mary Watson and the Reverend Messrs. Corbin, Fitzgerald, Ortega, and Reynolds. Abel M. Gómez and Cosme C. Cota, reputed to be two of Pancho Villa's "secretaries," came to El Paso, attended LPI, and became Methodist ministers. The influx of Mexican laborers and their families into El Paso to take advantage of the burgeoning economy throughout the Southwest also contributed greatly to the rapid growth of the school. The need to enlarge the physical plant became urgent.

In 1918 during the centenary of Methodist missionary work in the United States, the increased fervor it generated helped create an "awakening of new zeal." At a large Methodist gathering in Marfa, Texas, in May, 1919, three brothers–Tom, Arthur, and W. B. Mitchell–donated $45,000 to LPI in memory of their parents, Frank and Jennie Mitchell.[40] This generous donation helped build a four-story annex across the alley from the original building, providing dormitory space for 100 students, vocational training facilities–shops for teaching skills such as tailoring, print-



A view, c. 1921, from South Florence Street of the original building housing Lydia Patterson Institute and, across the alley, the Mitchell Annex. *(Photo courtesy Lydia Patterson Institute)*

ing, carpentry, shoe repair–and an auditorium/chapel seating over 1200, a gymnasium, eight lecture rooms, and a swimming pool in the basement–truly an "oasis in the desert." A tunnel underneath the alley connected the two buildings. The cornerstone was laid on October 10, 1920, and the building was occupied in September of the following year.[41]

Although Bible study had always been emphasized as part of the curriculum, a separate theological department for training ministers was added in 1920 by the Reverend R. E. Stevenson, vice-president of the Institute. This department distinguished the Institute from other local parochial schools, and for many years its graduates formed the majority of pastors in the Rio Grande Conference of the Spanish Methodist Church in New Mexico and Texas. Recently, a former ministerial student recalled that in the 1960s these students lived in a residence on San Antonio Street, where they trained for the ministry, took their academic courses at Texas Western College (now The University of Texas at El Paso), and ate their meals at LPI.[42] As equal-opportunity educational programs became available to Hispanics, prospective ministerial students began to attend colleges closer to their homes, and the pre-ministerial program was ultimately eliminated.[43]

Increased enrollment also led to a branch of the regular school being established in Juárez, classes meeting in the basement of El Divino Salvador Methodist Church. The Reverend José Espino and two teachers constituted the faculty, carrying on the educational activities there from 1922 until 1925, when the Mexican government closed all schools conducted in religious edifices. At about the same time, Douglass School, a public school for blacks, located at 515 S. Kansas in El Paso, was purchased by the Methodists and was turned into a Mexican Community Center. Three rooms were used by the Institute for overflowing classes.[44]

For many years, LPI students were active in some of the Spanish-speaking churches, serving as Sunday School officers, teachers, and as members of choirs and orchestras and the Epworth League (a young people's organization).[45]

According to Mary W. Watson, the "special English" program was far ahead of its time. She wrote in 1964, "Today the most advanced pedagogical theories advocate the taking of a student where he is and teaching him to advance as rapidly as he can. Teachers at Lydia Patterson were doing that fifty years ago. The early preacher students were of such varied backgrounds that each one was taught individually and advanced as rapidly as possible."[46]

The world-wide Depression of the 1930s took its toll at the Institute

as elsewhere. Instruction outside the main buildings was suspended, some classrooms were closed, and the course offerings in the commercial department and industrial shops were curtailed. Only the "dry cleaning" complex, which was self-supporting, remained open. Some teachers found employment elsewhere, and girls boarding at the San Antonio residence were moved to the apartments in the original Institute building.

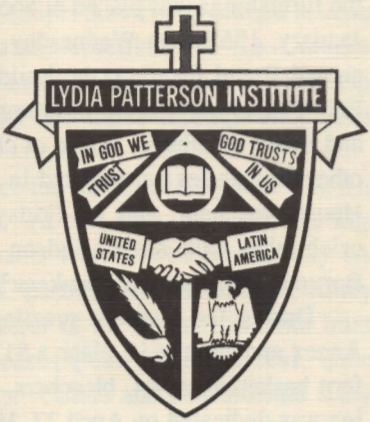
Even before the Depression, obtaining sufficient financial resources to keep LPI operating presented a problem. The school year 1928-1929 must have been crucial. Bernice Marshall, the wife of Herbert C. Marshall, who was serving as president at the time, described the situation. "School was just out for the summer...and many things needed to be done before classes could be opened in September. He [Mr. Marshall] found no money in the school's bank account, many outstanding bills with business firms, and absolutely no credit available. Using his own money and with the able help of several young men and boys staying over in the dormitory for the summer, he went to work. Needed improvements and some repairs were made.... A full set of books was set up, filling a long-felt void."[47]

It was during Marshall's tenure that a youngster, José Cisneros, enrolled and was assigned part-time work to pay for tuition. In 1985, years after Cisneros had become a renowned artist and illustrator, he paid tribute to Marshall in these words: "Through his influence and mediation I was legally admitted as a permanent resident to these United States where I have enjoyed the sacred right to live, to work, to worship, to be myself. I consider that occasion the turning point of my life."[48]

The policy of providing as many scholarships as possible to needy students continues to this day. The goal of a Board policy is to provide at least 25% of the students with some type of grant-in-aid.[49] In return, the students perform a variety of jobs at the school, such as janitorial maintenance, or cafeteria duties. Tuition rates are kept far below those of other private schools in the area. These rates contribute about one-third of the operational cost, the remaining expenses financed by the church and by individual donations.

During the 1930s, the principal of the High School Department, Mrs. R. E. Stevenson, recognized that the high school would have to meet the accreditation requirements of the State of Texas so as to give its graduates access to colleges and universities. LPI therefore introduced a standard college-entrance curriculum, and in 1936 the Texas Education Agency accredited the LPI High School Department.[50] In 1968, LPI also became a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

On January 16, 1950, the Institute, owned by the South Central



Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church, incorporated under the laws of Texas with a constitution and by-laws to govern its business. The by-laws provided for a Board of Trustees to run the affairs of the school, its membership consisting of ministers and laypersons from each of the episcopal areas within the Jurisdiction (composed of eight states stretching from New Mexico to Nebraska). The first Board met on May 24, 1950,[51] with 16 members present. Today there are about 35 members, including some from Juárez. Annual meetings are held in El Paso, usually in the late spring. At these meetings the Board hears reports on the school's status and establishes policies and goals for the ensuing year. It appoints or removes the president, manages the school properties, sets a budget, authorizes construction and repairs, and administers other affairs of the school. The faculty and staff are appointed by the president with the Board's approval.[52]

In 1960, a new president, Dr. Roberto Pedraza, arrived at LPI and observed that the buildings were old and in need of repair and that the student enrollment at 700 was taxing the facilities. He vowed to do something about these deficiencies. After the Board received Dr. Pedraza's report, it announced a $2M expansion program. Originally, the plans called for moving the senior high school to North Mesa Street where a 29-acre site was purchased accordingly–a plan later abandoned. The second phase was to replace the old campus with new buildings,[53] and implementation of this proposal went forward immediately. For the next two years, a fund-raising campaign ensued, and by the spring of 1964 architectural plans had been completed by the El Paso firm of Kuykendall and McCombs. The plans depicted a two-story building covering the entire east side of Block 113 with 21 classrooms, a twelve-sided chapel, a library, offices, and a cafeteria–all under one roof. Ground-breaking ceremonies took place on Tuesday, April 7, 1964, and among other remarks, Dr. Pedraza called the occasion a "historical event [that] marks the end of 50 years of service...to the educational needs of Latin-American youth."[54]

Construction began immediately under the supervision of Ray Ward & Son, contractor for the building. Estimated cost for the building and

the furnishings was placed at $650,000, and completion was scheduled for January, 1965. On Wednesday, April 28, 1965, in conjunction with the annual Board meeting, the building was consecrated. The Mattie Allen Fair Chapel was named in honor of one of LPI's outstanding benefactors and Board members. A host of church officials, including six bishops, and other dignataries participated in a chapel service. On Thursday an Open House was held, and on Friday a Pan-American Fiesta concluded the celebration with Mayor Judson Williams of El Paso and Mayor Felipe Borunda of Juarez as speakers.[55]

During the business meeting, the Board voted to raze the Mitchell Annex and erect in its place a $175,000 gymnasium with a 14,000 square-foot basketball court, bleachers, and additional classrooms.[56] The building was dedicated on April 27, 1967, during the presidency of Dr. Alfredo Nañez. Its Associate Architects & Engineers were Kuykendall & McCombs and Davis, Foster & Thorpe; the contractor was C. A. Goetting.

Enrollment for the next decade remained at over 600 students per year, the majority commuting to and from Juarez. Although there were no longer dormitory facilities, a few students from other Latin American countries continued to attend. As students' interests began to shift toward college preparation, more emphasis was placed on better-qualified staff, new curriculum offerings, and higher academic standards.

In the early 1980s, the plummet of the Mexican peso had a devastating impact on enrollment, which dropped to a dangerous low of fewer than 300 students. There was serious discussion of closing the school. Most church leaders, however, remained optimistic about its future, and by 1989, its enrollment had bottomed out and was slowly increasing. In his report to the New Mexico Annual Conference in 1988, Dr. Alfredo T. Grout Q., current president, stated: "Lydia Patterson Institute is vibrantly alive and deeply involved in the Ministry through which her personnel have been serving Christ for the past three quarters of a century."[57]

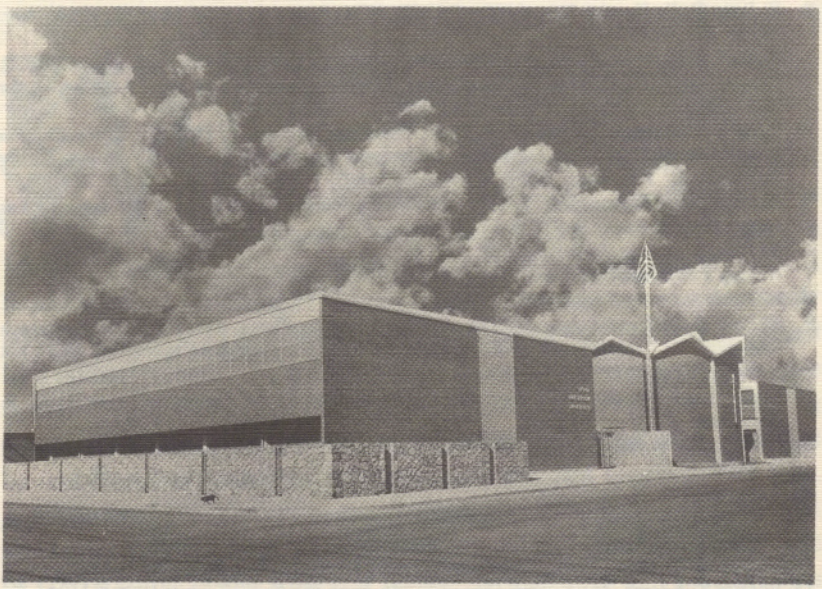
Throughout the years, LPI has adapted its curriculum to meet the ever-changing needs of its patrons. Evening classes, especially for learning English, were conducted for many years. When the General Conference of the Methodist Church decided to require all future ministers to receive Seminary training, the Ministerial program was discontinued. In the 1960s the elementary grades were phased out, as were the vocational courses and the separate commercial department. Today the academic offerings consist of the high school and English-as-a-Second-Language, this latter program operating in the summer months as well.

Religion plays a vital role at the school: four semesters of religion

are required for graduation, and weekly chapel services, weekend retreats, and a Religious Life Committee (a club) contribute to the Christian experience. As expressed by the Coordinator of Religious Life, "the hope and intention is that Christian faith and life move through all classes, groups, and activities...."[58]

Athletics have been emphasized since the school's inception. The first basketball team was organized in 1918. At one time, all the major high school sports were offered, and LPI teams were represented at city and district matches. Today, the LPI "Lions" participate in basketball, volleyball, and cross-country events as a member of the Texas Christian Interscholastic League. Overflowing trophy cases speak to their success. Other programs have flourished over the years. Choirs and instrumental music have played an important role. Piano and guitar lessons have been included in the curriculum, and small orchestras were active from time to time. In past years, the choir traveled extensively in the states of the South Central Jurisdiction and to Ciudad Chihuahua, Mexico.

LPI published its first annual in 1942 and named it *The Pattersonian*. Its first editor was Johnnie R. Villanueva and in his Foreword he wrote: "If this volume serves in future years to preserve the atmosphere and happy



Lydia Patterson Institute as it appeared in 1965, when the new (and present) building was opened and dedicated. *(Photo courtesy Lydia Patterson Institute)*

memories of your 1941-42 school year at L. P. I., the staff...will feel that their efforts have been amply rewarded."

Likewise "La Lydia" itself preserves "happy memories" for the thousands of students who have been a part of this vital institution. For 75 years, LPI has truly served as a living memorial to Lydia Patterson by continuing to serve the people she loved.

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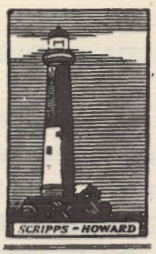
NOTES

1. Mario T. Garcia, *Desert Immigrants: The Mexicans of El Paso,* 1880-1920 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), 219-221; Alfredo Nañez, *History of the Rio Grande Conference of the United Methodist Church* (Dallas: Bridwell Library, SMU, 1980), 58-65.
2. *El Paso Daily Herald,* Oct., 1892; Feb. 20, 1894; Sept. 11, 1895; Mar. 15, 1899; Apr. 28, 1904.
3. County of El Paso, Texas, Deed Records, Warranty Deed 60548, Book 226, 629-630; Central Appraisal District, El Paso, Texas, Mapping Section, Campbell Addition of the Big Book.
4. Luisa J. Castorena, "Glimpses of Lydia Patterson Institute," 1985, 13. Manuscript in possession of author. Cited hereafter as Castorena ms. Fred T. Hervey, "Tribute to Henry T. Ponsford," *Password* XXV, 4 (Winter, 1980), 146.
5. *El Paso Daily Herald,* Dec. 8, 1913. Over the years the stated value of the donation has varied from $25,000 to $75,000.
6. *El Paso Morining Times,* Aug. 23, 1914.
7. *Worley's El Paso City Directory,* 1914, 487.
8. *El Paso Morning Times,* Aug. 23, 1914.
9. *El Paso Daily Herald,* Apr. 8, 1909; *El Paso Morining Times,* Apr. 10, 1909; Evergreen Cemetery, El Paso, Record of Interments, 30. Lydia's tombstone is marked 1850, but newspaper accounts give the date as 1851.
10. Letter dated Jan. 20, 1989, from H. J. Friend, City Clerk, Sherman, Texas, to C. P. Hartmann.
11. *Ibid.* Friend states, "There are no death records on file in Grayson County for a Samuel D. Ball."
12. Castorena ms., 9.
13. J. Morgan Broaddus, Jr., *The Legal Heritage of El Paso* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1963), 132-133, 216, 225, 231.
14. County of El Paso, Texas, Marriage Records, Filmstrip Roll 279, Frame 716.
15. Verdon r. Adams, *Methodism Comes to the Pass* (El Paso: Trintiy United Methodist Church, 1975), 47, 79.
16. Cleofas Calleros, *El Paso–Then and Now* (El Paso: American Printing Co., 1954), 60.
17. Letter dated April 29, 1989, from Mrs. Maxwell D. Taylor, Washington, D. C., to Clinton P. Hartmann.

(Notes continued on page 134)



WILLIAM MICHIE COLDWELL,

Pioneer Lawyer and Civic Leader

by Ida W. Coldwell

WILLIAM MICHIE COLDWELL ARRIVED IN EL Paso on Christmas Day, 1872. He was seventeen years old, having been born on June 25, 1855, at Michie's Landing, Arkansas. His father, Nathaniel Colbert Coldwell, had been appointed Collector of Customs by President Grant, and the family had traveled across Texas from Austin in an army ambulance, accompanied by a military escort. The wheels of this conveyance were reported to have been originally on the coach of Lord Cornwallis, the British general during the Revolutionary War. According to the story, they had been purloined by one Hamilton Ledbetter, a Tennesseean who had fought in that War.

William Michie's father was a lawyer. He had served as a Justice on the Texas Supreme Court, and discussions on law were a frequent topic of conversation in the Coldwell home. It was from him that William Michie and one of his brothers, Colbert Nathaniel, learned a great deal of their early law. William Michie was admitted to the practice of law in 1874, at the age of nineteen, in San Elizario. Soon afterwards, he opened

a law office in a one-story adobe house located on the corner of San Francisco and Santa Fe Streets in El Paso.[1] Not perhaps the ideal community for a young attorney to begin his career, for–as one historian puts it–El Paso was "a lawless town," where "Gambling, drinking, shooting and killing flourished."[2]

William Michie had begun a diary in Navasota, Texas, when he was about fourteen years old; and he continued writing entries through the 1880s. This diary contains vivid descriptions and wry comments on life in the El Paso area of those "lawless" frontier times. An April, 1880, entry is a telling example: "Passing Brinkerhoff's quarters, I heard the report of a pistol, the howl of a dog and immediately felt a sharp concussion on the right side of my abdomen. The bullet passed through the dog, glanced from the ground and struck me in the lower vest pocket where its force was deadened by a Mexican dollar." The entry of April 22, 1879, reads: "Lee Campbell was murdered last night which I greatly regret as he died owing me the price of eight drinks. We might have spared a viler man." Another entry describes an incident that occurred when William was a law partner of James P. Hague. It records that a man rushed into the office and discharged a pistol, fortunately missing William Michie.

Gunplay was apparently so commonplace in the El Paso of those times that William Michie didn't bother to chronicle all of his bullet-dodging experiences. Unrecorded, for example, is an episode that in later years was recalled by Commander Harold Coldwell, William Michie's youngest son: "When the Editor of the *El Paso Herald* incurred the displeasure of a prominent gambler and was threatened with drawn pistol in front of the newspaper office, W. M. Coldwell covered the hasty retreat of the Editor up the steps of the newspaper office on the second floor."[3]

Commenting on less perilous events, William Michie wrote on May 17 (year unknown): "I go to Ysleta this morning to pass a week in the society of lawyers, to live on beans and chili and sleep with the bed bugs and generally to enjoy myself." On the 21st we read: "Came back yesterday. My forebodings were but too well justified by the event. Everybody drunk, Judge, Clerk and Attorneys. Such are the Blessings of universal suffrage and free institutions."

When "institutions" are so "free" that one's life hangs on a Mexican dollar in one's vest pocket and gamblers can shoot at editors on the street,

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Ida W. Coldwell, *a native of Navasota, Texas, has resided in El Paso since 1950. For several years she was active in the Parent-Teachers Association of the El Paso County Schools and in Planned Parenthood. She is the wife of Judge Colbert Coldwell, current president of the El Paso County Historical Society.*

the time has come to abolish the offending institutions. William Michie Coldwell, along with a few other El Paso citizens, faced the problem squarely and took action. As a leader of the Reform Group which sought to end open gambling and the brazen lawlessness in El Paso, he prepared a bill which was adopted by the State Legislature in 1905 prohibiting the gambling by injunction. With attorney Wyndham Kemp he prevented passage by the Legislature of a bill which would have forced the separation of El Paso County from Texas and its absorption into New Mexico Territory.[4]

WILLIAM MICHIE COLDWELL
Citizen of El Paso from 1872, when he arrived at the Pass as a boy of seventeen, until his death in 1927 *(Photo courtesy Judge and Mrs. Colbert Coldwell, El Paso)*

Another of his accomplishments was a successful battle to force contractors to disgorge thousands of dollars that they had embezzled from the fund appropriated for the construction of the courthouse in 1886.[5] He was assisted by his law partner, J. P. Hague, in this campaign. In 1907, during the time he served as City Attorney, he negotiated the first contracts for city paving with the Bitulithic Company. He traveled as far as San Francisco, Chicago, and New York to negotiate the sale of bonds for this project.

As a member of the city council, he assured the passage of an ordinance stating that no single householder could be charged in excess of one dollar for water. The year was 1897. This ordinance led to the acquisition by the city of the Watts Water Works and the long struggle for pure water-rights in this area.[6] Further, he was one of the aldermen who helped obtain the right-of-way for the railroad which became known as the El Paso & Southwestern.[7]

Although essentially self-educated, William Michie was a learned man. According to reports, he was "a voracious reader,...his ordinary reading time being until about 2 o'clock in the morning." He taught himself eight languages–Sanskrit, classical Greek, modern Greek, Latin, French, German, Portuguese, and Italian; and he subscribed to Greek, Italian, and Portuguese newspapers which he read regularly. A friend of his once remarked on William Michie's "powerful and original mind with its insatiable thirst for knowledge."[8] William Michie was also a prolific writer, committing his pen to such diverse subjects as commerce, war, public schools, Egypt, the ocean, and chess. And he wrote poetry too. He was made an honorary member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy for his poem "The Last of My Mother's Name," which commemorated his seven uncles, all of his mother's male siblings, who had participated in and were killed fighting in the Civil War. He was named for the youngest of them, William Michie, a boy soldier of fifteen.

William M. Coldwell was noted for his wit, which could be acerbic and even directed on occasion at himself. Some years ago, the late Wyndham K. White recalled meeting William Michie one Sunday morning while he (young Wyndham) was riding downtown on his bicycle to get the morning papers: "I felt someone looking at me. I turned and there was Judge William Coldwell, top hat, white tie, tails, cane, and gloves, looking very stern.... I knew I had to say something, so I said, 'Judge, you sure look nice.' He said, 'You have within your scope a southern gentleman reduced to his very best.' He had been out all night and was just coming in."[9]

In 1901 William Michie delivered a speech before the first meeting of the El Paso Bar Association. Entitled "Law and Lawyers in the Sage and Chapparal Days, or How Civilization Came to El Paso," it was later published and is included in the Lone Star Edition of The World's Best Orations. The speech describes the rampant lawlessness that prevailed in El Paso during the final three decades of the nineteenth century. And it more than describes. Through its author's skillful use of wit and irony, the speech explores the reasons for that prolonged state of lawlessness. In the manner of a Jonathan Swift, it employs ridicule to expose a people's stubborn indifference to the process of law and the institution of civil order.

William Michie began his address with seeming guilelessness. He purported to recollect how he came to be admitted to the Bar in El Paso County: "The fraternity had a keen eye for merit–they detected mine.... It is true that one of the members of the examining committee held office under my father; another had borrowed $5 from me the day before (it was all I had–he asked me for $10), and the third was a constitutional and skeptical misanthrope in the last stages of a mortal malady, who hated this world and feared no other. But these factors were not the basis of their report; at least, they did not mention them."

Moving on to describe "the practice of law in those antediluvian days," William Michie announced that his remarks on that topic would be "necessarily brief" (like "the essay on the snakes in Ireland"): "...there was very little litigation in a country where land had no value, men no credit, and it was a breach of manners to mention the criminal code. It is true we had most of the paraphernalia of justice–judges, sheriffs, lawyers and juries; nothing lacking except clients, and if a few were found it was a practical impossibility to get the judge, sheriffs, juries and attorneys all sober at the same time so as to constitute that majestic and collective whole denominated a court."

Gathering satirical steam, William Michie proceeded to describe the "shocks" that occurred when "Tom Falvey came to the country as district attorney....and...ravaged in our midst." With spectacular success, it would seem. "The road to Huntsville was one long procession of downcast convicts. The hillsides resounded with the flying footsteps of those who fled to escape.... Arizona and New Mexico date their growth from Falvey's District Attorneyship. The population of Fort Stockton fled in a body.... San Elizario lost 200 in a single night, and the population of the county...decreased twelve hundred. The second ward had but three voters left; ...grass grew rankly on the dirt floor in front of Ben Dowell's bar."

"Then," continued William Michie, "Patience was exhausted. The few survivors...gave the too-zealous District Attorney the choice of a vigilance committee or the district judgeship. He chose the latter." That problem solved, attempts were made "to resume the ancient life, but half-heartedly.... For two months, there was but one man killed between here and Limpia; and he was an overland passenger who took a drink from his flask without first inviting the stage driver."

Now William Michie was ready to tell his listeners How Civilization Came to El Paso: "Ben Dowell died. The next day Roy Bean crossed the Pecos bringing with him the law and the latest bill of costs. Then came the avalanche of railroads, telegraph lines, high five democratic primaries, ward heelers, and all the other paraphernalia of civilization and metropolitan society."

William Michie ended that address before the first meeting of the El Paso Bar Association with a flourish of sparkling irony: "All things die; poetry and romance, song and saga disappear.... There are golf links in the plain of Marathon; summer hotels at Delphi; a switchboard railroad on the Roman forum; a national bank on the site of the saloon where Conklin died in the prettiest gun fight ever seen in El Paso. [And] nightly the Salvation Army lassies pass the hat on the very spot where Studenmeyer [sic] demonstrated the superiority of the hip shot."

In 1884 W. M. Coldwell had married Miss Stella Brinck. The ceremony was performed in St. Clement's Episcopal Church, housed at the time in its original frame structure located on what is now Mesa Street. Stella Brinck was reportedly the first Norwegian to live in El Paso. Seven children were born of this union: Julia, Ballard, Phillip, Katherine (Rina), Colbert, Hugh, and Harold. Four of William Michie's and Stella's grandchildren live in El Paso: William C. and Hamilton Collins, sons of Julia and William Collins; Colbert Nathaniel Coldwell, son of Leora and Harold Coldwell: and Colbert Coldwell, son of Eleanor Eubank and Ballard Coldwell. Eleanor (Nena) Coldwell Shapleigh, a daughter of Eleanor and Ballard, was a lifetime resident of El Paso until her death in 1984. Katherine Coldwell Slutter, also a daughter of Eleanor and Ballard, is the oldest living descendant of William Michie. She resides in New York City.

William Michie Coldwell died of a heart attack on July 5, 1927. Immediately, tributes to him poured forth from his fellow attorneys and friends–as, for example, these words from attorney Richard F. Burges: "Judge William Michie Coldwell was a great man and a great citizen. His general knowledge was certainly unsurpassed and probably unequaled in

(Continued on page 156)

EXTRA! EXTRA!

World War II Hits the Streets of El Paso

by Robert L. Reid

"**extra** *n* (ca. 1793) something...additional...as:...a special edition of a newspaper"
–Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary

TO A TEENAGER ABOUT TO ENTER THE TEXAS College of Mines and Metallurgy (now The University of Texas at El Paso), the summer of 1939 was for me the best of all possible worlds: favorite cousins from Indiana on an extended visit, picnics at Hueco Tanks and White Sands, a walking tour through Carlsbad Caverns (no elevators then), movies at the Wigwam or the Crawford or the sumptuous Plaza–with maybe a stop at the Five Points "Oasis" for an ice cream soda on the way home. The past was but prologue to a delightful present stretching into an infinite future of youthful happiness.

I recall reading that Europe was enjoying, that year of '39, one of the most glorious summers in memory: London, Paris, Berlin, Rome–far away places where sunlight and moonbeams fell gently on Trafalgar

Square, Notre Dame, the Brandenburg Gate, the Colosseum.

"Cry 'Havoc,' and let slip the dogs of war."

–Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, III, i

But no peaceful sunlight or soft moonbeams fell within the Chancelleries of the great European Powers. Adolf Hitler, Fuehrer of the Third Reich (which he had proclaimed would last a thousand years) was demanding the return of Danzig and the Polish Corrider. He was shouting that this territory had been "torn away from Germany by the Versailles *Diktat*," the "dictated" Treaty of Versailles. In Great Britain, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain was befuddled. About one year earlier, in September of 1938, he had returned from the Munich Conference and had told his cabinet he knew Hitler would keep his word ("no more territory for the Reich") because Herr Hitler "is a gentleman; he helped me with my coat." In France, a hesitant Premier, Edouard Daladier, was attempting to hold together a coalition government in a divided nation. As for Italy, its bombastic Duce, Benito Mussolini, the "Sawdust Caesar," had seized Albania that spring in an attempt to keep up with Hitler.

Now *where* was Albania? I had not learned that in Austin High School. Either my teachers had neglected to inform me, or I had not listened. On April 7, 1939, I learned the location of that small country: the *El Paso Herald-Post* issued an Extra edition about the Italian invasion.

El Paso Herald-Post

EXTRA

PRICE 5 CENTS

VOL. LIX, NO. 83 EL PASO, TEXAS, FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 1939

ITALIANS INVADE ALBANIA; SMASH DESPERATE DEFENSE

Tiny Kingdom Seized By Duce

"Read all about it!" shouted the youthful runners throughout the streets of my city. I sacrificed a nickel to read about Albania and its King Zog and Il Duce sending troops across the Adriatic Sea. (A map was there to enlighten my geographical ignorance as I read and reread...and pondered

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Robert L. Reid, *Professor of History and Chairman of the History Department at Baylor University, is a native of El Paso. He has resided in Waco, Texas, since 1948, except for periods of study in England and one year of teaching at the American University in Beirut, Lebanon. Among his many academic honors, he holds the 1978 Minnie Stevens Piper Award for Excellence in Teaching.*

the meaning of it all.) So began, on that April afternoon, my collection of Extra editions of El Paso newspapers.

"Master, master! news,...and such news as you never heard of!"
–The Taming of the Shrew, III, ii

It is part of the nature of the human mind to want to know about current happenings–and if especially good, or bad, to know quickly. Throughout the history of Western Civilization both public and private organizations and individuals have taken cognizance of this compelling desire.

Almost twenty-five centuries ago, in 490 B.C., Pheidippides ran the some twenty-two miles from the battlefield at Marathon to the Athenian Acropolis and shouted fhe glorious news of the Persian defeat: "Athenai Nike!" ("Athens victorious!") In 60 B. C. Julius Caesar established the *Acta Diurna*, or *Daily Happenings*, to be attached to the walls of the Tabularium–the Public Records Building, for the edification of the citizenry. In the Middle Ages town criers (or bellmen) posted official proclamations at the guildhalls. In 1556, Renaissance Venice initiated the *Notizie scritte*, for which readers paid a fee (*gazetta*).

The first English newspaper, *Coronte, or, Weekly News*, appeared in London in 1621 ("coronte" - "current"). Colonial Boston saw the publication of the first newspaper in America, *Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick*, on September 25, 1690, to be "furnished once a month (or if any Glut of Occurrences happen offtener)." Although the Royal Governor suppressed the newspaper four days later (its publisher, Benjamin Harris, had fled England for printing a seditious article), from the words "Glut of Occurrences" would evolve the Extras of subsequent years. Extras became an established part of the American scene, so much so that they continued to be published for many years after radio had substantially usurped their function. Lots of people were like me, I guess. They liked to *read* about EXTRAordinary happenings and to hold in their hands the medium of communication, the very EXTRA itself–ablaze with gigantic headlines and smelling wondrously of fresh ink.


El Paso Herald-Post

Home Edition

VOL. LIX, NO. 210 EL PASO, TEXAS, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1939

Complete Text Adolf Hitler's Speech Announcing War Is On Page 5

WAR!

BRITISH ORDER HITLER TO GET OUT OF POLAND

Ultimatum Is Given To Germans

SECOND EXTRA

The El Pa

59th YEAR—No. 246 ★★★★ EL PASO, TEXAS, SUN

FRANCE, GERM

England Formally Dec

London Prime Minister Tells Public Of News; Asks God's Blessing

London, Sept. 3—(Sunday)—(Delayed by Censor)—Air raid sirens sounded an alarm in London today at 11:32 a. m. (5:32 a. m., E. S. T.).

The whole city was sent to shelters by the wail of the alarm but all clear signals were sounded 17 minutes later.

London, Sept. 3 (Sunday) (Delayed By Censor) (AP). — Prime Minister Chamberlain today proclaimed Great Britain is at war with Germany after expiration of a British ultimatum to Germany to withdraw her troops from Poland.

The deadline expired at 10 a. m. Greenwich mean time (3 a. m. Mountain Time)

"You can imagine what a bitter blow it is to me," the Prime Minister told the nation in a radio broadcast.

"The actions of this man (Hitler) show convincingly that he will never do otherwise than use force in the attainment of his will.

"Consequently we are at war with Germany," he said.

"I am certain right will prevail."

The Prime Minister, speaking from No. 10 Downing Street, said he could not believe there was "anything more or anything different" that he could have done.

Up to the last, he said, it would have been "quite possible to have arranged a peaceful and honorable settlement with Germany."

But, he added:

"Herr Hitler would not have it."

French Ultimatum At 9 A. M., El Pas

Paris, Sept. 3 (AP).—France gave Germany until 5 p. m., French summer time (9 a. m. Mountain Time) today to reply to her ultimatum demanding that German troops leave Poland or find herself at war with France.

French Ambassador Robert Coulondre delivered the note in Berlin at nooh (4 a. m., Mountain Time), it was announced officially, declaring France would go to the aid of Poland if a satisfactory reply was not received by the hour stated.

France's lag behind Britain in going to war was explained by the fact that French forces were nearer Germany and could go into action more quickly while Britain needed

Mussolini Pays U Consideration To

Rome, Sept. 3 (AP).—Premi urrent consideration to Italy's po British declaration of war against

Diplomatic sources indicated counting on Italy to remain neutr on Germany's side.

They cited as evidence in this publicly by both Prime Minister Daladier to Il Duce's peace efforts.

Italian defense measures ag continued in such a manner, howe Rome government foresaw the pos ment in a general European war.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

laso Times

5 Cents | 10 A.M. EDITION

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1939 | Full Leased Wire Report of The Associated Press (AP)—The United Press (UPI)—International News Service—Central Press | 16 PAGES

MANY AT WAR

eclares Hostilities Start

natum Expired l Paso Time

gave sum- Time) m de- leave with Coul- Berlin ner). it laring of Po- as not in g y th hearer actio eede

a few more hours to mass her effectives.

At the moment that Coulondre entered the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin Foreign Minister Daladier went to Elysee Palace to confer with President Albert Lebrun.

France waited tensely but calmly as the last sands of peace ran out. Streets of Paris virtually were deserted.

Most Frenchmen had joined their regiments under the general mobilization order which went into effect yesterday.

Women and children had been taken to refuges in the country following repeated appeals of the government for evacuation of the capital.

ys Urgent To Crisis

.—Premier Mussolini today gave taly's position in the light of the against his axis partner, Germany. ndicated Britain and France were ain neutral rather than go to war

e in this direction the tributes paid linister Chamberlain and Premier efforts.

ures against war bombardments ner, however, to indicate that the the possibility of Italy's involvean war.

Deadline Set By Paris Passes, No Word From Berlin; Hitler Talks

Paris, Sept. 3 (AP).—France's ultimatum to Germany for withdrawal of troops from Poland expired at 5 p. m. (9 a. m. Mountain Time) without word of a German reply, thus automatically putting France in a state of war against her ancient enemy, Germany.

New York, Sept. 3 (AP).—The Brooklyn Navy Yard today radioed all ships and naval posts that: "England and France are now at war with Germany. Govern yourselves accordingly."

Hitler Announces He Is On Way To Front; Tells Soldiers 'God Will Favor Us'

New York, Sept. 3 (AP).—In a short wave broadcast to his armed forces, Chancellor Hitler said today "I am now on my way to the Eastern Front."

This information was picked up by NBC engineers monitoring German Broadcasts.

"I shall there supervise the German forces," Hitler said.

"News fitting to the night,
Black, fearful, comfortless, and horrible."

–King John, V, vi

Thursday, August 31, 1939, around eleven at night: the back-to-school dance at Austin High School. Although all the members of our crowd would be entering college that fall, we went to the dance (perhaps for a final goodbye to the old days). As the mirrored ball rotated and reflected the soft lights, and the band played civilized music, the news drifted from couple to couple–"Germany has begun an invasion of Poland." A member of our crowd remarked to a cluster of us, as the drum rolled a prophetic beat, "War is beginning over there. I wonder what it means for us." Looking back on that moment, I am reminded of a line from James Thomson's poem "City of Dreadful Night": "In the midst of our joys veiled melancholy sits enthroned."

The next day, and for the next several days and nights, the headlines were big, the Extras were numerous. Young boys shouting the word, pausing to collect nickels as they lightened their burderns–and then more racing through the streets, conveyers of the "Glut" of extraordinary "Occurances":

Warsaw and Other Cities Raided from Air;
Invasion Meets Fierce Resistance

ITALY REFRAINS FROM FIGHTING
Duce Suggests Parley

ALLIES WARN REICH TO HALT

U. S. TO STAND ON NEUTRALITY

We El Pasoans also read in our newspapers that a disenchanted Chamberlain prepared to face an angry House of Commons: "gentleman, *you* said; a *tyrant*, we say." We further read of the despair in Daladier's voice as he pleaded, "We must honor our commitments." And on September 3, 1939, we learned that God was on both sides of the conflict. Perplexity compounded.

EXTRA The El Paso Times 5 Cents SUNRISE EDITION

BRITAIN DECLARES WAR

Paris Also Assumed to Be at War With Germany

CHAMBERLAIN DENOUNCES HITLER

I'll never forget the excruciating thrill of anticipation and the simultaneous sense of foreboding I felt when I would hear in the distance the high, shrill, tantalizing cry "EXTRA! EXTRA!" I would instantly drop whatever I was doing, grab my nickel, and rush toward the sound. Once, I remember, I was in the grocery store buying a few items for my mother. Just as I approached the check-out counter, I heard it–the magnetizing, insistent shout: "EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!" Hastily I inventoried my grocery basket. The can of baking powder (five cents) would have to go.... We didn't have biscuits for breakfast the next morning. But I had my Extra. Indeed, I still have it.

Another time (this was in the spring of '40), I was studying late into the night, struggling with French verbs in preparation for a test in Dr. Bachmann's course. Suddenly, through the stillness of the spring night, came the cry–urgent, high-pitched, reiterated: "EXTRA! EXTRA!" I ran from the house, found the young newsboy, and dropped my nickel into his ink-stained hand. I believe I failed Dr. Bachmann's test the next morning. I couldn't conjugate the French verbs for thinking of the French people whose soil along the Meuse River was being trampled by the heavy jackboots of Nazi soldiers.

GERMANS SMASH INTO FRANCE; FLANK BELGIANS' FORTS AND BREAK DUTCH DEFENSE LINES

THOUSANDS FALL IN BATTLE

From September, 1939, and on, the world was turned upside down; and my city, with the rest of the nation, and the world, would never be the same. Fifty years ago, the newsboys of El Paso shouted their wares as they raced from the corner of Mills and Kansas Streets in every direction to the limits of the city: Sunset Heights on the west, Kern Place on the northwest, the mostly unpaved streets of Morningside Heights on the northeast, Austin Terrace on the east, Washington Park on the southeast, and south to the Second Ward and the Rio Grande. Those young citizens–messengers to fellow citizens–were the Pheidippides of ancient Athens, carrying *Daily Happenings* to be posted in old Rome, town criers of medieval times, collectors of Venetian *gazettas*, dispensers of "Gluts of Occurrences." El Pasoans of my generation remember them, and we honor them, for they too became part of the seamless garment of history.☆

18. Castorena ms., 79n; *El Paso Morning Times*, June 23, 1909.
19. *Worley's El Paso City Directory*, 1921, 72.
20. County of El Paso, Texas, Register of Deaths, Book 6, 428.
21. Evergreen Cemetery, Record of Interments, 30.
22. *El Paso Daily Herald*, Apr. 8, 1909; *El Paso Morning Times*, Apr. 10, 1909.
23. *El Paso Morning Times*, June 17, 1909.
24. County of El Paso, Texas, Probate Court Minutes, Vol. 16, 460-468, 1262 in probate.
25. John A. Happer and Zuelma Mae Ball were married Dec. 2, 1896. They had three children: Lydia, Mary, and John Millard Happer. County of El Paso, Texas, Marriage Records, Book 4, 261, Filmstrip 278, Frame 1219.
26. *El Paso Daily Herald*, June 22, 1909.
27. County of El Paso, Texas, Probate Court Minutes, Vol. 16, 460-468, 1262.
28. The contest hearing is reported in the *El Paso Daily Herald*, June 17-19, 21-26, 28, 1909, and in the *El Paso Morning Times*, June 17-20, 22-27, 1909. Summaries are found in El Paso County Probate Court Minutes, Vol. 17, 292-300, and in 41st District Court Minutes, Book 7, 234 (Cause 7876).
29. *El Paso Daily Herald*, June 22, 1909. The remark was stricken from the record.
30. 41st District Court Minutes, Book 7, 234; 533-535.
31. On June 4, 1913, J. F. Corbin sold Millard Patterson Lots 4-10, Block 113, Campbell Addition (presently the site of LPI) for "one dollar"; on Apr. 30, 1913, Corbin sold Patterson Lots 3-7, Block 67, Magoffin Addition, for "one dollar."
32. Castorena ms., 8; Nañez, 85-87; José Espino, *Perfiles* (El Paso: 1963), 54.
33. El Paso County, Texas, Probate Court Minutes, Vol. 91, 491-498; Vol. 92, 436. Millard Patterson's Will.
34. *El Paso Daily Herald*, Sept. 10, 1914.
35. *El Paso Morning Times*, Aug. 23, 1914.
36. *El Paso Daily Herald*, Nov. 24, 1915.
37. *Ibid.*, Jan. 1, 1916.
38. *Ibid.*, May 25, 1916.
39. Castorena ms., 13-15.
40. *El Paso Morning Times*, May 16, 1919; *El Paso Daily Herald*, Nov. 27, 1919.
41. *El Paso Daily Herald*, Oct. 4, 1920. The cornerstone is now embedded in the floor of the Gymnasium.
42. Raul Muñiz, telephone conversation, Sept., 1988.
43. "Statement of History and Mission," *Policy Handbook, Lydia Patterson Institute*, 6-7.
44. Castorena ms., 23.
45. *Ibid.*, 24.
46. Mary Watson, "Early History of Lydia Patterson Institute," *Nueva Senda*, Julio de 1964, Año 39, No. 3, 19.
47. Castorena ms., 58-60.
48. José Cisneros, letter to Luisa J. Castorena, Nov. 5, 1985.
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• CASE UNSOLVED •

The Mysterious Death of WILLIAM A. RANK, JR.

by Art Leibson

WHERE DID WILLIAM A. RANK, JR. RECEIVE HIS death blow? In California? At El Paso's Airport? Or in downtown El Paso? And was the motive robbery, jealousy, or...? These are questions that have never been answered. The murder case has remained unsolved for more than 40 years. Rank, the 31-year-old son of a prominent El Paso businessman, had opened a business in Buena Vista, California, and was en route to Amarillo to take charge of moving his wife and son to the West Coast. His father had gone to California to help his son establish the business and had driven him to the airport at Burbank, where the younger Rank had boarded a plane for El Paso.

Rank, Jr. was a six-foot, well-built, handsome man and he had wired a co-ed at the College of Mines (as UTEP was then called), asking her to meet him at the airport. His plane was three hours late, but the 18-year-old student was waiting. When she first saw Rank, she later told detectives, he seemed to be walking stiffly and had a bruise over his left eye. The elder Rank said later that he had seen no bruise and that his son had behaved normally when they parted at the Burbank airport.

Together, Rank and the co-ed went to the Hilton Hotel, where in the postwar housing shortage of 1946 no rooms were available. He left his luggage at the Hilton, sought unsuccessfully for a room at the Hotel Paso del Norte, and finally located lodging at the Gateway Hotel.

Shortly before 3:00 p.m., the couple were drinking ale in the Green Frog Lounge, at 323 North Oregon Street, when Rank suddenly screamed and fell to the floor. The girl was badly frightened and left the Lounge as soon as Rank recovered. Ted Bishop, a patron of the Green Frog, reported later that Rank, when able to speak, had asked when they would arrive in El Paso. Assuming Rank had had too much ale, Bishop assured him that he was in El Paso. Bishop then left the Lounge.

Shortly before 4:00 p.m., Rank picked up his luggage at the Hilton and checked in at the Gateway. Soon afterward he was seen by an

acquaintance, Mrs. George W. Hoadley, who told of meeting him on North Oregon Street, near Mills Street. She noticed that he was walking slowly and seemed to be in a daze. He was holding his head and shoulder far back and his right arm was hanging backward.

By evening, Rank was in good humor when he met another friend in the Hilton Drug Store at 7:30. She said she had looked at her watch as she left him to cross Mills and attend a movie. She said he was walking slowly and seemed tired.

A large theater crowd had gathered at the Plaza and Ellanay Theaters and their lights were flashing brightly on El Paso's brightest corner, but no one saw Rank in the doorway of the clothing store in the Blumenthal Building, then located just behind the Hilton Hotel and since torn down. Finally, a woman saw him lying there and notified police.

Answering the call were Patrolmen C. C. Henry and Addison Long, an old friend of Rank's, who said the man was conscious but in a daze. Had he been slugged, possibly a second time, in the one-block Sheldon Street? Rank, Sr. said his son had left California with $100 in cash. When taken to the hospital, he had a single one-dollar bill. But an expensive watch was still on his person.

At City-County Hospital, Rank was in a delirious condition. A fellow patient said he kept shouting, "Put 'em up!" Attendants had to place him under restraint. He later was transferred to another local hospital, where he died without regaining consciousness on November 21, 1946.

Rank, Sr. immediately posted a reward of $1,000 for the arrest and conviction of the assailant, a reward that was never claimed.

For a week the case moved through the usual maze of questioning suspects, and interest ran high. Then the public's curiosity lagged, and the killing dropped back into the limbo of unsolved crimes. Among those questioned, on a theory that jealousy might have been the motive, was a boyfriend of the co-ed who had met Rank at the airport, but he was quickly cleared.

Rank had no history of epilepsy that could account for the bruise noticed by the co-ed, possibly from a fall on the plane, and also for his collapse in the Green Frog. The autopsy found death to have been caused by a massive skull fracture and a cerebral hemorrhage. It also found a bruise on the left arm. The time of the attack could not be fixed, but the autopsy report indicated that Rank could not possibly have lived more than 24 hours after receiving the blow.☆

Art Leibson, *an attorney-turned-newspaperman, authors a weekly column in the* El Paso Times. *This article is the second in a series.*

The CEMETERY TRAIL

A Tour of History and Traditions in the El Paso Valley

by Marta Estrada

YSLETA, SOCORRO, AND SAN ELIZARIO ARE THREE of the oldest communities in the El Paso area. Ysleta and Socorro developed from missions established respectively at each site in 1680 as a consequence of the Pueblo Revolt which had occurred in the late summer of that same year.[1] The little village of San Elizario grew up around a Spanish *presidio* founded exactly two hundred years ago on the *Hacienda de los Tiburcios*.[2]

From their beginnings, these communities have had predominantly Catholic populations of Hispanics with Indian and Spanish roots. Through the centuries the communities have experienced radical changes in political jurisdiction from one country (Spain) to another (Mexico) to yet another (the United States). The single institution which has been constant is the Catholic Church. And on occasion Mother Nature has played havoc with the buildings housing that Church in the respective villages. The Ysleta Mission was swept away in the devastating flooding of the Rio Grande in 1740, and there is evidence that it was partially destroyed in the flood of

1829,[3] which most certainly washed away the Socorro Mission and numerous homes throughout the El Paso Valley.[4] The church at San Elizario was severely damaged by fire in 1935. Each time disaster has threatened the survival of these churches, the people have come together to rebuild or restore the buildings.

Another demonstration of the people's faith may be observed in each of the community's cemeteries. Indeed, the cemeteries at Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario reveal not only the people's faith but also many aspects of their culture and history. Terry G. Jordan, who holds the Walter Prescott Webb Chair in History and Ideas at the University of Texas, reminds us that "Graveyards, after all, reflect the customs, beliefs, handicrafts, and social structure of the survivors"; and he contends that "In our rural burial grounds we find one of the last viable refuges of folk culture, with all the antiquity, timelessness, and continuity implied by that term."[5]

The Spanish word for *cemetery* is *camposanto*–literally, "saint's field" or "blessed field." And this word expresses the nature of Catholic cemeteries. They are considered sacred grounds. The land must be blessed before it can be designated a *camposanto*, a place where may be buried the mortal remains of those who were faithful in life. The sanctity of burial grounds was very strong in medieval Spain, and the "traditions of sanctified cemeteries and church burial passed intact to the Spanish colonial frontiers,"[6] including the El Paso Valley.

The cemetery at Ysleta, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, is located on South Zaragosa Road. It is named for the Ysleta church, which in 1852 was designated Misión de Nuestra Señora del Monte Carmelo (though the Tiguas still refer to it as the Misión de San Antonio, the name it was given in 1744, its original name having been Misión de Corpus Christi de la Ysleta del Sur).[7] Mount Carmel is the Catholic Cemetery of the Diocese of El Paso, stretching out through acres of well-kept grass, many of the grave markers containing set-in-place vases for flowers. It is more "citified" and "modern" than the cemeteries at San Elizario and Socorro, but it nevertheless displays many of the venerable customs and beliefs of the people who have lovingly laid their dead in its sacred precincts. It is a place of astonishing color–and seemingly all the graves are adorned with flowers. Such "flourish of color," as one scholar puts it, is typical of Mexican cemeteries and seems to express a reaffirmation of life.[8] And Professor Jordan points out that the use of color in sacred contexts has

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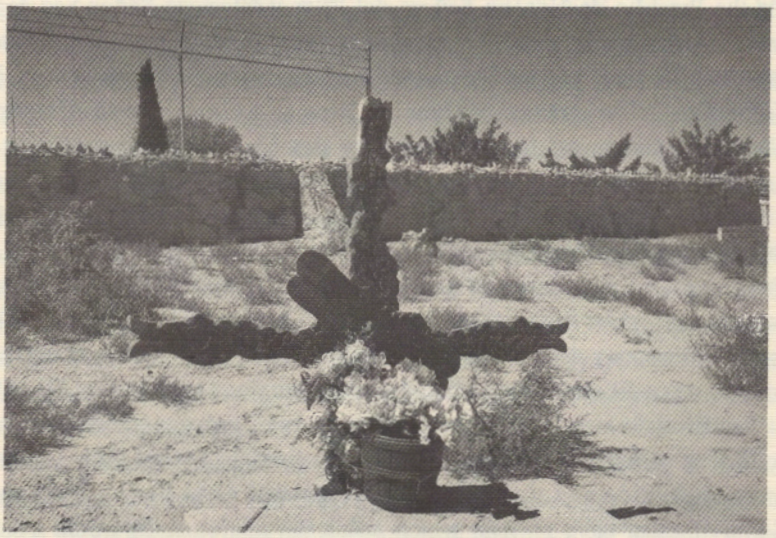
precedent in pre-Columbian Mexico, "where even the huge pyramids once bore bright paints."[9]

At one corner of the Mount Carmel Cemetery is the no-longer-used Tigua cemetery. Enclosed by a rock fence, the cemetery dates back to the early 1860s and is the oldest in the area.[10] It presents, superficially, a sharp contrast to the groomed and colorful Mount Carmel. Being unused, it is grassless and unkempt, a barren-looking sweep of some three acres with an occasional mesquite bush and salt cedar tree. On closer inspection, however, the cemetery shows the same tender regard for the dead by the living as does the splendor of Mount Carmel–perhaps, if possible, even more so in that most of the grave markers (whether of stone, wood, or metal) were handmade and hand-lettered, some of them beautifully carved or stenciled with representations of roses, doves, and other decorative features. Many of the graves are mounded, some show the remains of wooden or cement curbing, and others are enclosed by a now-sagging picket fence (cerquito). And scraps of fading color dot the landscape, remnants of once-bright paint applied to a hand-hewn *recuerdo* by a loving son or husband or granddaughter. This old section also presents a very interesting traditional feature of Mexican burial customs. The graves are not oriented in one direction. Some face north, others east, and others in yet different directions. Professor Jordan theorizes that "this disorder in death reflects



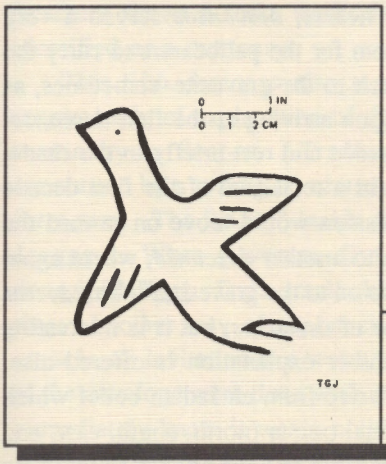
A handwrought gravemarker in the old Tigua Cemetery, Ysleta, Texas. *(Photo by Clinton P. Hartmann)*

the unplanned pattern of the traditional Mexican village, with its Indian roots, so that graveyard and village alike remained conservative refuges from the geometry of the *conquistadores.*[11]

There was a chapel within the walls of the old Presidio of San Elizario–and no doubt a cemetery. But the site of that chapel and its *camposanto* has yet to be discovered and identified. The present church at San Elizario was built in 1877-1887 and was extensively restored after the 1935 fire.[12] Originally the cemtery was located adjacent to the church, virtually surrounding it. The church records indicate that the body of Juanita Escajeda Carreon was the last to be buried in that cemetery, in 1884. Sometime after this date, the cemetery was closed, and a new cemetery was blessed at a site off Thompson Road, several miles from the church. Later, a large portion of the old cemetery was needed to accommodate the parish hall, and most of the graves were moved to the new cemetery. Father Ernest J. Burrus, S. J., remembers the removal, and he states that the graves of several nuns and Jesuit priests were moved at the time, though it is believed that some graves were not moved. Only one small piece of vacant land remains of that old cemetery, a sort of triangular section located at the corner of Socorro Road and Church Street. In 1936, this area became the site of the Texas State Historical Landmark monument for the Presidio de Nuestra Señora del Pilar y Glorioso Señor San José, which *presidio* was actually located near El Paso del Norte and antedated the establishment of the San Elizario *presidio* on the *Hacienda de los Tiburcios.* The graves of Juanita Escajeda Carreon and Gregorio Naciaceno Garcia are located very near that Landmark monument.

The San Elizario Cemetery (off Thompson Road) contains all the traditional features of the Mexican-American cemetery–a separate section for the graves of children, the lack of uniformity in compass orientation of the graves, an abundance of artificial floral decorations, and the casual presence of native flora (rather than planned bushes and shrubbery). This latter feature may derive from "the semiaridity of the Hispanic countries" or from a "traditional Amerindian desire for harmony with Nature."[13] Also at San Elizario may be seen the popular types of grave markers, each one reflective of ancient custom, yet individualized to accord with personal preference. Some of the headstones are painted royal blue or bold pink. Some of them have a *nicho* which holds the miniature figure of a saint colorfully arrayed in painted robes. Several of these markers are described by Professor Jordan, who included the El Paso Valley "Cemetery Trail" in his extensive field research on Texas graveyards. Among those

described is a 1980 sky-blue wooden cross bearing a carefully carved dove on the upper bar. Jordan goes on to explain that the dove "is a persistent symbol in Mexican-American funerary folk art and probably represents the soul winging heavenward," noting further that the dove "also has more ancient, long-forgotten ties to the Mediterranean love/mother goddess," which (he feels "certain") "reached Hispanic Texas by way of Spain and Mexico."[14]



Ascending dove, based on a rubbing made at San Elizario Cemetery. *(Reproduced from* Texas Graveyards: A Cultural Legacy *by Terry G. Jordan, with permission of the publisher, University of Texas Press)*

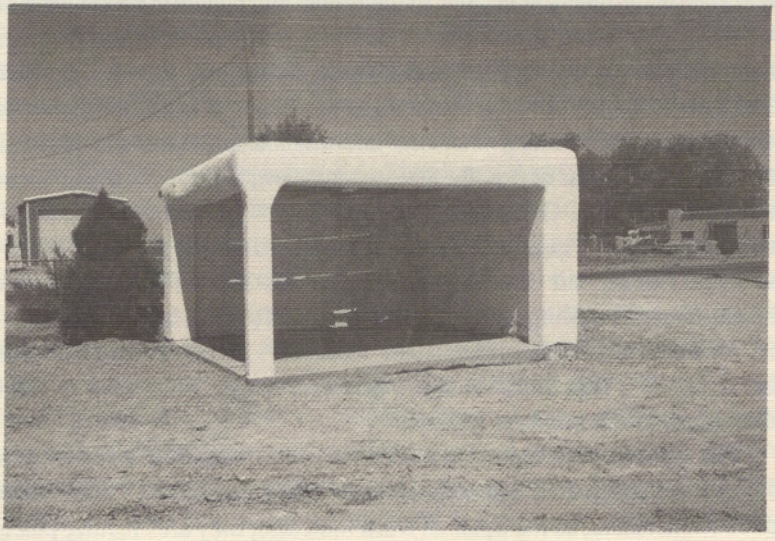
The *camposanto* at Socorro lies in front of the church, La Purisima, and about one block away. As Professor Jordan points out, it visually greets the faithful as they leave the church after mass and thus serves as a reminder of the sanctity of the burial ground.[15] In respect of its location, La Purisima Cemetery is similar to the traditional Catholic cemetery which was usually adjacent to the church building–most often in the front yard of the church. It was opened and blessed on August 1, 1891, by Father E. V. Lebreton, pastor of La Purisima at that time. It is the third cemetery which has served Socorro. The first one was located at the site of the first permanent edifice to house the Socorro mission, a site which was located in 1981 by Dr. Rex Gerald, Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Texas at El Paso, who also directed the excavation of the site. The second cemetery at Socorro was located at the rear of the present church building, dedicated on August 1, 1843, by the guardian of the El Paso del Norte Franciscan monastery, Fray Andrés de Jesús Camacho. The first burial in that second cemetery is recorded as having taken place on February 11, 1846.[16]

The present cemetery at Socorro is unique in that it has *descansos*, four of them altogether, one at each corner of the cemetery. They are small adobe shelters and, as the Spanish word indicates, they are "resting places." Until well into this century, they were a regular feature of cemeteries throughout Mexico and Spain. In 1976, representatives from the Spanish government declared the Socorro Cemetery to be the only one in the area

that closely resembles the cemeteries in Spain, largely because of these resting places.

Before the days of the motorized hearse, *descansos* served a very useful purpose. It was always the custom for the pallbearers to carry the coffin on their shoulders from the church to the gravesite–sometimes, as at Socorro, a considerable distance. Upon arriving at the first *descanso*, the pallbearers would set down their burden and rest briefly in the shade, meanwhile joining the other mourners in a recitation of the first decade of the rosary. Then the funeral procession would move on toward the gravesite, which route might take them to another *descanso*, where again rest and prayer would take place. And so on to the gravesite.[17] This seems a reasonable explanation of the purpose of *descanos*, but it is interesting to note that in the El Paso Valley another explanation is offered also. According to oral tradition, *descanos* derive from an Indian belief which holds that they represent the four cardinal points (north, south, east, and west) and thus enable the soul of the deceased to have an idea as to where his remains are finally laid to rest.

There was at one time a fifth *descanso* located near the main entrance to the church. Socorro resident Beatriz Solis vaguely remembers there being a little shelter resembling the ones in the cemetery, and she remembers that it was to the right of the entrance. An old photograph of the



One of the four ***descansos*** at the Socorro Cemetery. *(Photo by Clinton P. Hartmann)*

church shows an adobe shelter to the left of the entrance, and this might have been the fifth *descanso*. However, a floor plan of the original structure shows a room to the left, but within the church structure and identified as a mortuary.

This fifth *descanso* also served a useful purpose, one that perhaps requires a brief explanation of the funeral preparations which used to be customary in Socorro. Traditionally, the death of a parishioner was announced by a tolling of church bells. A distinct sound would be heard for a man. The "mazo" inside the bell would ring donggg... donggg... donggg.... When a woman died, there would be a continuous donggg, donggg, donggg. For a small child the smaller of the church bells would ring. Another way of announcing a person's death was to send out an *esquela*, an invitation to a wake, usually hand delivered. The outer edges of the envelope were done with a black border so that the recipient would immediately know it was a notification of someone's death.

Immediately after the death, the priest would be summoned, and while the members of the family awaited his arrival on horseback from Ysleta, they would prepare the body. Even though there were mortuaries in El Paso by the 1880s, they did not serve the Lower Valley. No embalming methods were used in the Mexican-American communities because the people were not aware of this practice. The body was simply dressed in the best clothes available. A vigil was held all through the night, and the body was never left alone. Meanwhile several men in the village–neighbors and friends of the family–made the coffin, "tomando café con piquete" (drinking coffee spiked with hard liquor). Older people in the Valley still remember the rasp of the saw and the sound of the hammer as the nails were driven into the wood. When the coffin was finished, the body was placed inside and probably was carried to the fifth *descanso*, where the wake continued until the priest arrived to say the funeral mass. Burials took place as promptly as possible. When the coffin was lowered into the grave, it was the custom to pick up a handful of dirt and gently cast it into the excavation as a final goodbye–together with a whispered "May you rest in peace." Many of the grave markers at Socorro and the other Lower Valley cemeteries are inscribed with the first letter of each word in the Spanish rendering of that phrase: D E P. (Descanse en paz.)

Professor Jordan states that his investigation of rural graveyards in Texas leads him to conclude that they "are not primarily for the dead, but for the living."[18] This writer tends to accept his conclusion on the basis of her small study of three rural cemeteries in the El Paso Lower Valley. In each of the *camposantos* at Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario, the people

still gather on All Souls' Day to sweep and clean and beautify in joyful remembrance of loved ones. In each cemetery may be seen the creations of village artisans–here, a rose patiently cut and shaped from a tin can and set to "bloom" upon a wooden cross; there, a mosaic fashioned from shards of tile and a dab of cement; over yonder, a star fashioned from pieces of scrap metal and "shining" with the name of a loving family's "nina"; in each corner at La Purisima, the adobe *descanso* where relatives and friends would rest and pray together in its welcome shade. Everywhere in these "blessed fields" are testimonials by the living–demonstrations of the people's faith and devotion, poignant expressions of ancient custom and honored tradition.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to the many people in San Elizario, Socorro, and Ysleta who allowed me an interview for this article: **ANN ENRIQUEZ** and **ANA OPORTO**, who provided me with dates and names; **SANTIAGO FRESQUEZ, IGNACIO APODACA, BEATRIZ SOLIS, SANDY ESCARCIGA, JACOBA ESTRADA,** and **JENNY GONZALEZ** for their contributions on local customs. I also most especially thank **DR. REX E. GERALD**, Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at The University of Texas at El Paso, for his invaluable support and encouragement.

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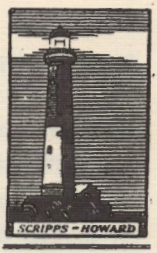
2. W. H. Timmons, "The Presidio of San Elizario, 1789-1851," *Password*, XXXIII, 3 (Fall, 1988), 107-115.
3. W. H. Timmons, "The Church of Ysleta–Recent Documentary Discoveries," *Password*, XXVIII, 3 (Fall, 1983), 115.
4. Burrus, 147-148.
5. Terry G. Jordan, *Texas Graveyards, A Cultural Legacy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), 4, 7.
6. *Ibid.*, 65-66.
7. Timmons, "The Church of Ysleta," 113, 116.
8. Sara Clark, "Grave Decoration in Mexican-American Cemeteries of New Braunfels, Texas: Especially the Use of Sea Shells," Paper, photocopy in possession of Terry G. Jordan, cited by Jordan, 80.
9. Jordan, 80.
10. Stan Steiner, *The Tiguas: The Lost Tribe of City Indians* (New York: Crowell-Collier Press, 1921), 65.
11. Jordan, 70.
12. Burrus, 145.
13. Jordan, 74.
14. *Ibid.*, 83, 84.
15. *Ibid.*, 67.
16. Burrus, 148-149.
17. Letter to Kay Harris from Cleofas Calleros, October 11, 1970.
18. Jordan, 1.



The NEWS at the PASS— ONE CENTURY AGO

(July–September, 1889)

by Damon Garbern

THE SUMMER OF 1889 SAW FIREWORKS, TROUBLE in China and the spectre of a "Chinese threat," water problems, and a lackadaisical School Board. First, "Our Natal Day" was celebrated "With Great Eclat" along with bottle rockets, pinwheels, and serpentines–and possibly with even lesser "eclat." July Fourth was a multi-day celebration featuring three-mile bicycle races, church picnics, and a Trotting Race open to "all local horses not known to do a mile in 3:40 or better." A large crowd of visitors from Deming, Tucson, Fort Hancock, and other points were expected to share in the festivities. Businesses were expected to close at 11:00 a.m. so "our clerks should be given the opportunity to celebrate with the rest of us Americans." A "Grand Pyratechnics Display" was promised which would include a mammoth fireworks balloon soaring to 100 feet with all its artillery cannons in action.

Fireworks of another kind erupted at City Hall. On July 6, the new mayor, Richard Caples, met for the first time with the City Council and

outlined the areas he wished to address during his administration:

1. The water question–being the most important with which we have to deal
2. The fire department
3. The police force–enlarging it
4. Building a school for colored children
5. Street maintenance and improvement
6. Improving sewer system and increasing connections
7. Having a new, more accurate city map drawn.

Mayor Caples then proceeded to make some courtesy appointments, expected of every mayor. Alderman True broke into the mayor's announcements saying he was not going to allow courtesy appointments, and the second set of fireworks for July was unleashed, an even greater "pyratechnic display" than the one two days earlier. The following exchange illustrates a typical council meeting:

> Alderman Merrick nominated G. E. Bovee for Clerk; Alderman Johnson nominated O. B. Bell; Alderman Papin stated that Bovee was objectionable to democrats; Alderman Kitchen wanted Bovee elected solely because he WAS objectionable to democrats.

Every item, issue, appointment became a partisan matter with its attendant wrangling and bickering; and the fireworks set off at the first council meeting never were diffused that summer.

The China question first appeared when monsoon rains hit Hong Kong with some 29 inches inundating the colony in a day and a half. A deluge of another kind was feared by some Americans, as evidenced by an interview held by a *Times* reporter at the Grand Central Hotel. A Captain Gibson of Alabama was on his way home from California, and had nothing but high praise for El Paso at the expense of San Francisco, which he downgraded because of its high Chinese population and "tightfisted business practices." He also warned the El Paso reporter of the "Chinese Syndicate" which had bought up vast holdings in Baja, California, rich with harbors, fishing, and mining. This Syndicate, pronounced Gibson, was ready to "repeat the story of the Goths and Vandals in Europe" and overrun the United States with millions of Chinese invaders. The Captain would no doubt be pleased to feel some vindication a hundred years later, although this latter "yellow peril" comes garbed in a three-piece suit

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Damon Garbern, *El Paso Public Schools Consultant, Vocal Music-Theatre Arts, and the author of this regular* Password *feature, was born in El Paso in a house across the street from Trinity Methodist Church, a house his father had refused to buy in the belief that the town would never grow "this far north."*

carrying computer chips. In any event the *Times* reporter did not appear unduly alarmed and no banner headlines warned of impending invasion.

Water and the lack of it or the finding of more of it remained a constant worry to El Pasoans. In addition to being Mayor Caples' top priority item, it was on the agenda of the federal government. Major Anson Mills was testing the Rio Grande river bed for bedrock so that a sixty-foot high dam could be built above El Paso. This was a relatively easy task for the major because the river was dry throughout the summer of 1889. Major Mills was also concerned with the new dining room at the Grand Central Hotel, of which he was part owner. "When it is completed and furnished Sam Eckel (hotel manager) will have one of the most beautiful dining rooms in the Southwest."

In related water news, Chairman Merrick of the Acequia Commission reported that there was no water in the acequia or the river, and he submitted a resolution to abolish the commission. Alderman Johnson assured him that water was en route to El Paso, and the resolution was laid over.

The editor of the Silver City *Enterprise* wrote: "The oft repeated report of the scarcity of water in El Paso has not been exaggerated in the least. A reporter of this paper passed a few days in that city, and it was as much as he could do to get sufficient water to quench his thirst. The Rio Grande is dry as powder." The *Times* editor replied: "It would take several lakes of water to quench editor Cobbs' thirst the next morning after his arrival in El Paso. He either did not take any water or he was too full to know water from good old rye. Not desiring to have our confidence in editor Cobbs' veracity shaken, we believe that he did not want any water in El Paso."

Finally, at the end of September, a bond election was held to sell $23,000 in water works bonds. It passed overwhelmingly with "Only 19 voters (trying) to give El Paso a black eye. We have the names of several of them and will preserve them for reference in the future."

The education of El Paso's children was not a priority item in the late summer of 1889. Bus routes did not have to be determined. TEAMS or other state-wide test scores did not have to be compared or mulled over. But the School Board did need to submit a budget to City Council. In spite of repeated requests for the budget, the Board remained unable to get a quorum to transact official business. Finally, the three members of the Board who did meet recommended that the City Council adopt a levy of fifty cents per $100, based on an estimated tax list of $6,000,000. The following "informal" budget was submitted:

Salaries, (Superintendent, ten teachers, and a janitor)		$16,650.00
Repairs and improvements		1,000.00
Library and educational apparatus		500.00
Fuel		300.00
Water		500.00
Supplies (stationery, chalk, ink, erasers, brooms)		500.00
Incidentals (printing and drayage)		250.00
Rent (for Mexican Preparatory and colored schools)		500.00
		20,200.00
Complete contract on new bulding	$6,636.00	
Extras on same	500.00	
Furniture for same	1,064.00	
Grounds, outhouses	1,000.00	9,200.00
For additional wing to match one being built	14,000.00	
For colored school	3,500.00	17,500.00
		46,900.00
Less cash on hand	13,300.00	
Less estimated receipts from State	3,600.00	16,900.00
Balance to be provided for		30,000.00

Aside from these few items (and whatever was happening in the rest of the world, like prize fights in Louisiana, the wedding of the Prince of Wales' daughter, and other trivial matters) El Paso enjoyed a rather sleepy summer. The *Times* had to beg for news: "Don't forget the editor when you have a news item.... If you have company, tell us if you're not ashamed of your visitors.... If you have a social gathering of a few friends, bring around a cake, six pies, or a ham–not necessarily to eat but as a guarantee of good faith. We mention these little things because we want the news." So starved was the *Times* for news that many columns were filled with such items as "William Hamilton, affable, popular postmaster at San Elizario, was in the city yesterday."

The performing arts did not go unreported in that summer of '89–as witness these comments on Adelaid Moore's local appearance in *Love Story*: "Bad as the play was, it was a jewel compared to Adelaid Moore's acting. The *Times* asks but one favor of [Myar's Opera House] Manager Stewart and this is to bar his door against Moore and her blonde whiskered brother when they come this way. This reporter suffered through the misery of seeing her in JULIET. However, we will have two fine minstrel troupes here this season."

El Paso a hundred years ago–ah, who wouldn't want to go back to that time when the Star Stables could offer "UNDERTAKING/Blacksmithing, Woodwork, and Carriage Painting Neatly Done" and one could dine at Delmonico's Restaurant for fifty cents including a half bottle of wine for each person.☆

LET THERE BE TOWNS: Spanish Municipal Origins In The American Southwest, 1610-1810 *by Gilbert R. Cruz.*
College Station: Texas A & M Press, 1988. $24.95

This valuable book makes significant contributions to an understanding of the first two centuries of Spanish conquest in Meso-America and the Borderlands for four prinicipal reasons. First, the author does not follow the popular practice of using only "ethnic resources" to re-interpret flawed "Anglo history," his employment of varied sources increasing the objectivity and utility of his material. Second, unlike many historians, Cruz takes into account the indigenous peoples and cultures already in place when the Europeans appeared: he lays a pre-historical groundwork upon which succeeding events are re-enacted. Third, the author sees the development of cities, missions, and presidios as a *process* rather than a sequence of unrelated events and chronology, this view affording a meaningful analysis of institutional developments which lends insight into grassroots conflicts, power struggles, and competing ideologies. Fourth, to explain the Spanish impact on the New World in general and the Southwest Borderlands in particular, Cruz added a third institutional pillar–"community" to the more well-known institutions of missions and presidios.

The excellent organization of the material also adds to the book's effectiveness. The first chapter establishes the background–the forcible meshing of European institutions with New World indigenous cultures. Each of the next five chapters is devoted to a contemporary city which originated between 1610-1810: Santa Fe, El Paso del Norte, San Antonio, Laredo, and San Jose/Los Angeles. The final two chapters turn to the general role of community institutions in the long-range impact of Spanish colonization. They explore the political conflicts between the Crown and private interests. The treatment of the populist movements within the *cabildo* (the source of local judicial systems and referee between overlap-

ping jurisdictions) is especially fascinating in that it points out the functional complexities of the communities.

Equally fascinating are the discussions of the five cities. The ethos of Santa Fe, for example, is shown to have derived from two important factors: (1) its establishment as a potential center of mining wealth, the dearth of which led to its development as a center for the production of woolen and cotton goods, and (2) its infrequent caravan contact with the distant city of Chihuahua, leading to its isolation from its southern ties and its consequent vulnerability to Anglo western expansion. El Paso del Norte is described as a transportation stop on the Chihuahua-Santa Fe trade route, where a mission was established very early, but not a presidio–until later, when the population had increased considerably. These two communities are examples of the varied patterns of founding and development which gave present-day Borderland cities a distinctive multicultural flavor.

The only serious flaw in the book might be the author's failure to treat in depth Spain's early mining operations, a truly vital institution. These operations, necessitated by Spain's power strugle with her European neighbors and her empty treasury, led directly to the initiation of towns or to the support of older missions and presidios.

Let There Be Towns should be listed as required reference for students researching the Southwest or the Borderlands–and as a must-read book for anyone who would like to know about "Spanish Municipal Origins in the American Southwest."

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RANGE WARS Heated Debates, Sober Reflections, and Other Assessments of Texas Wrting *edited by Craig Clifford and Tom Pilkington.* Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1988. $22.50

For several decades now, Texans have been waging a new kind of range war, this one involving Texas writers who shoot from the lip instead of the hip.

It really all began in 1941, the year the Texas Institute of Letters presented its first award for the "best book of fiction" written by a Texan or about Texas, hopefully but not necessarily both. A writer named George Sessions Perry received the first award for his novel *Hold Autumn in Your Hand.* Two other events happened that year: Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, and the United States formally entered World War II. These last two events

terminated, but the range war of Texas still rages and enrages.

The issues in this range war are mostly questions. Does Texas have real writers? Must a Texas writer be native born? Do expatriates count? Can a smart aleck newcomer become a Texan? Can someone in cowboy boots become cultured? Can a Texan define literature? Can he or she read or write real English prose? Does jealousy exist among the literate?

These are only a few of the questions A. C. Greene had to answer when he issued *The 50 Best Books on Texas* in 1951. His list was not confined to any one genre, for it included fiction, biography, natural history, and ranching. Sensibly, he limited his number to half a hundred, a total which has withstood the onslaught of time.

Now we have a new backward glance in a collection of essays, all of which deal with Texas writers and their books. The essay titles alone can start a battle. For example, "Ever a Bridegroom: Reflections on the Failure of Texas Literature," voiced by Larry McMurtry in September, 1981, and published the next month in *Texas Observer*. It was the bomb heard 'round the state when McMurtry asserted, " Texas has produced no major writers or major books." His only possible exception was Katherine Anne Porter, whose claim to fame in Texas is sometimes as hard to find as is her birthplace, Indian Creek.

Other tantalizing titles include: "What Does It Take to Be a Texas Writer?" by Clay Reynolds; "Palefaces vs Redskins: A Literary Skirmish" by Don Graham; "The Republic of Texas Letters" by Marshall Terry. A total of ten essays are guaranteed to make blood pressures rise as high as the University of Texas Library tower when, like a string of firecrackers, the authors berate the muse in Texas. Even though Texas may not have a Henry James, it does have some H. L. Menckens, at least in this volume of essays.

EVAN HAYWOOD ANTONE
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RARAMURI SOULS: KNOWLEDGE AND SOCIAL PROCESS IN NORTHERN MEXICO ***by William L. Merrill.*** Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989. $24.95

In this remarkable work on the Raramuri (Tarahumara) Indians of northern Mexico, Merrill delineates Raramuri soul conceptions (central to their world view), the ramifications of these conceptions in theory and practice, and their transmission within Raramuri society. The book is a powerful antidote to much of the prior literature on the Raramuri, which

depicts them as stolid materialists, except when befuddled by alcohol, who are retarded philosophically, theoretically, and aesthetically. Merrill demonstrates the existence of a rich, integrated cosmology, intimately related to soul conceptions.

The author commences with an excellent summary of the social structure of the Raramuri, agriculturists and herders of the Sierra Madre Occidental, living in widely-dispersed small *ranchos*, tied together by a diffuse network created by inter-*rancho* drinking parties and by gatherings at rituals in "*pueblo*" centers established by missionaries during the colonial period. He then discusses the long Raramuri history of resistance, retreat, and partial accommodation to Spanish and Mexican societies.

Next Merrill describes Raramuri cosmological and soul conceptions, as revealed in informal familial discussions and as expressed formally and publicly in sermons by *pueblo* leaders at the *pueblo* center on Sundays and Catholic holidays and in performance by native doctors and others during curing and mortuary rituals which often accompany *rancho* drinking parties. What emerges is a conception of a universe divided into three levels (heaven, inhabited by God and his wife as well as lesser beings, generally conceived as good; earth, inhabited by humans and a variety of other beings; and the Underworld, inhabited by the Devil and his wife and others, generally conceived as evil), where all animate creatures have souls derived from the breath of God or the Devil. Each individual has multiple souls, or what amounts to the same thing–a single, divisible soul. Sleeping and dreaming, inebriation, illness, and death are explained variously as resulting from changes of state of some or all in-dwelling souls, from the wandering or loss of the souls, or from their capture by a sorcerer or evil spirit.

Merrill attributes the Raramuri consensus regarding cosmological and soul conceptions to the logical integration of the Raramuri ideological system, its lower-level, more concrete concepts presupposing certain general principles, and also to the public performance of ritual which expresses fundamental aspects of the ideology and thus places constraints on individual interpretation. On the other hand, variability in lower-level interpretations is made possible by the fact that lower-level concepts are only suggested by, rather than deduced from, higher-level concepts.

This book is absolutely crucial for anyone interested in the Raramuri, and constitutes an extremely interesting, innovative contribution to the field of cognitive anthropology.

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CENSUS OF 1841 FOR YSLETA, SOCORRO AND SAN ELIZARIO ***edited by Lucy F. West and Mary A. Sarber.*** El Paso: El Paso Historical Commission, 1988.

As the title indicates, this publication is a census. It lists the names of the 2,850 people who lived in three El Paso Lower Valley communities in the year 1841. The format consists of four columns on each page which include the name, age, marital status, and occupation of each individual. Most male heads of families are classified as farm workers. Women and children are listed under the name of the person caring for them, a few women being listed as owning property. Various males and females are identified as servants; others as beggars, needy, or poor. In each settlement lived a few skilled artisans, such as tailors, blacksmiths, hatters, carpenters, cobblers, silversmiths, and teamsters. A conclusion easily deduced from this census is that there were very few propserous families in Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario in 1841.

Although there are neither passages of interpretation nor analytical conclusions, those interested in the socio-economic history of the El Paso area will find this publication a valuable research tool.

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THE RAGGED REBEL: A Common Soldier in W. H. Parson's Texas Cavalry, 1861-1865 ***by B. P. Gallaway.*** Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988. $19.95

David Carey Nance was nobody important. He was just a boy from Rocket Springs, Texas. But the recounting of his Civil War service is a poignant story of one soldier's inner struggle between his firm belief in God's commandment "Thou shalt not kill" and his sense of patriotic duty.

Young David had a deep aversion to slavery, but he strongly rejected the interference of the distant Federal government in States' Rights and viewed the act of the Confederacy as a righteous rebellion. Despite his father's objection and his own biblical convictions, David enlisted in the Fourth Texas Dragoons.

After months of uneventful duty in Texas, the Dragoons were redesignated the Twelfth Texas Cavalry and transfered to Louisiana. In the first battle, David was wounded three times. During his recovery, he rethought his biblical convictions, and with reservations, returned to his unit. His next assignment at a gunpowder plant ended in disaster when an explosion destroyed the plant, killing most of the workers and badly

burning David. He concluded that God had spared his life, and he rejoined his unit for a period of non-combat duties such as hunting wild hogs to be processed into Army food, scouring the forests for military deserters, working in a carding mill which processed wool for uniforms, and escorting ammunition trains.

When the Twelfth Texas Cavalry was ordered to Arkansas, David seemingly ignored his vow not to kill and actively participated in the fighting. Twice wounded, he considered this as punishment from God, and renewed his vow not to kill. Eventually he rejoined his unit, and completed the war without further military action.

This scrupulously researched biography of a "common soldier" is important for the light it sheds on the role of mounted troops in the Western Confederacy and for the way it presents the Civil War through one man's personal "civil war."

COLONEL (RET.) JAMES W. WARD
Director, Council of America's Military Past

LITERATURE & LANDSCAPE: WRITERS OF THE SOUTHWEST ***by Cynthia Farah.*** El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1988. $35.00

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the character Theseus ponders the marvel of artistic creativity and observes that "the poet's pen/...gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name." El Paso's Cynthia Farah also ponders the nature of literature. Her interest, however, focuses not on the transformation of Vision into a concrete image of place and "name," but rather on the ways in which "local habitation" may inspire and implement Vision.

To each of fifty writers who live in the Southwest–novelists, scholars, poets, essayists, historians, playwrights, et al–she posed a single question: "What role has the Southwestern landscape played in compelling you to write?" The result of her work, pursued over a period of four years, is a book of striking beauty and arresting insights. It is a compilation of fifty thoughtful answers, each answer accompanied by a Farah photograph which stunningly projects a sense of the writer's vital force.

The answers to the question, each one phrased in the individual writer's unique voice, indicate that the Landscape exerts a considerable influence on the Literature produced in the Southwest. To poet Jim Sagel, for example, "...this landscape of chiseled red mesas and aging mountains endlessly fascinates me, never leaving my writing alone, always dancing

into the picture." Historian Marc Simmons finds "the Southwest, particularly New Mexico, a place where past and present meet–cojoin–to produce an atomosphere highly conducive to the creative process." Novelist Arturo Islas calls the desert "a spiritual metaphor for my work." Western writer/historian David Lavender is struck by the "Tensions" which "are a fundamental part of the scenery" and which help him to explore and to comprehend the ongoing natural process of conflict and resolution. And poet Joy Harjo pronounces the Southwest a "beautiful and bittersweet country...that triggered the curious and terrifying place within me that forces me to write."

Literature and Landscape received the 1987 C. L. Sonnichsen Book Award from Texas Western Press. And deservedly so. Its unusual blend of candid disclosures and brilliant photographic portraiture offers a fascinating probe into the wonder of the creative process.

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DESERT ARMY; FORT BLISS ON THE TEXAS BORDER *by Leon Metz.* El Paso: Mangan Books, 1988. Pp. 205. $19.95

The writing of local history is a daunting task, insisting that its author weave a credible narrative in which the lives of common folk are made to appear as important as they no doubt believed themselves to be. The larger world, in which extraordinary human beings, epic conflicts, and megaforces move, must on occasion intrude: wars, revolutions, the random consequences of government policies, like the proverbial bear in the house, has the effect of riveting one's attention. But the trick is to balance the two: maintaining a sharp focus on the community while demonstrating how, on those pivotal occasions, outside forces have reordered its life. Leon Metz, one of the most prolific of Southwestern historians, has succeeded to a remarkable degree in achieving this balance.

The subject is Fort Bliss, whose history, as Metz early on acknowledges, is so interwoven with El Paso's, that the two cannot truly be separated. It is all here: from waystation on the Rio Grande for European explorers of the 16th Century to a major U.S. and Allied Military installation at the end of the 20th century. With wit, a lively and engaging style, well-drawn personality sketches, and excellent illustrations, he takes us through the several stages of the Fort's growth, documenting its

reciprocal, but not always harmonious, relationships with the nearby community of El Paso. As the publisher notes, much of what is here first appeared in an earlier pictorial volume, but the author has added new material and a new introduction. Altogether, it is a fine example of the local history genre, and beyond that a "good read" as well.

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WILLIAM MICHIE COLDWELL...*from page 126*

this community. I esteem it one of the privileges of my life to have officed next door to him for a generation."[10] Another friend called William Michie "an honor to his profession" and went on to praise his "honesty as a public official and his fearlessness as well."[11] Another pointed out that "For two generations Judge Coldwell was actively engaged on one side or the other in a large proportion of the important legal cases tried in the El Paso courts."[12]

One of the many newspaper articles that appeared at the time of his death referred to William Michie Coldwell as "the last of the 'old stage' pioneers" and emphasized his contributions to "the growth and civic development of El Paso."[13]

NOTES

1. *El Paso Times*, June 6, 1927.
2. Nancy Lee Hammons, *El Paso to 1900* (El Paso: The University of Texas at El Paso, 1983), 57.
3. Harold Coldwell, notes written in June, 1969, for the Coldwell family.
4. Anson Mills, *My Story* (Washington, D. C.: Byron S. Adams, 1921), 253.
5. S. J. Freudenthal (Piedmont, California), letter to *El Paso Herald*, July 23, 1927. For discussions of the financial irregularities surrounding the construction of the 1886 El Paso County Courthouse, see the following articles by Art Leibson: "One Century Ago (January-March, 1885)," *Password*, XXX, 1 (Spring, 1985), 27; "Our Town–One Century Ago (April-June, 1885)," *Password*, XXX, 2 (Summer, 1985), 86; and "Our Town–One Century Ago (July-September, 1885), " *Password*, XXX, 3 (Fall, 1985), 128.
6. Harold Coldwell, notes.
7. *El Paso Herald*, July 5, 1927.
8. *Ibid.*, July 6, 1927
9. *El Paso Herald-Post*, November 12, 1979.
10. *El Paso Herald*, July 6, 1927.
11. Freudenthal, letter to *El Paso Herald*, July 23, 1927.
12. *El Paso Herald*, July 6, 1927.
13. *Ibid.*

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