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PASSWORD

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This issue’s “title-page insignia,” sketched from a photograph taken in 1890, depicts one of the public services available to the citizens of El Paso at that time: “rapid transit” in the form of mule-drawn streetcars, the car shown making its scheduled way along St. Louis Street (now Mills Avenue). The sketch is the work of Sheryl S. Montgomery, who serves Password as its graphic artist.
AN 1890 VIEW
of El Paso’s Business Prospects

by Francis L. and Roberta B. Fugate

HERE IS NO MORE HEALTHY PLACE ON THE continent than El Paso .... This city is, no doubt, destined to become the great commercial and political metropolis of a vast region, embracing all of northern Mexico, Arizona, New Mexico, and western Texas.” Thus reported Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper on October 18, 1890.

In mid-1890 the New York-based newspaper had dispatched to Texas a private train loaded with journalists to write “The Narrative of a Two Months’ Trip to the Most Prosperous and Promising State in the Union.” The train, consisting of a “palace-car” dubbed Mayflower and a baggage car, arrived in El Paso on Wednesday, July 2, from the south via the Mexican Central Railroad. The journalists were apparently astonished at what they found in El Paso. In their report (published some three months later), they expressed their wide-eyed wonder: “A little more than nine and less than ten years ago, there were less than 200 persons here, all told; no railroads, no modern improvements, nothing but a few old adobe structures, and the town was almost unworthy of a name. Today, it has five railroads, all great trunk lines, a certain promise and prospect of others, and a population of nearly 12,000 as wide-awake and intelligent people
as can anywhere be found. A few of the old buildings are left, and [adjacent] are business blocks, as substantial and elegant as can be found in Texas.”

The reporters noted that property had been virtually worthless prior to the coming of the railroads: “A Texas steer or a mustang pony, or even a Chihuahua dog, or, in extreme case, a ‘yaller dog,’ or a red wagon, or a pair of jacks, or a bob-tail flush, were good and current exchanges for a valley farm, or a dozen blocks of city property.”

During the previous four years, the reporters explained, the growth of social and cultural amenities had included churches “of all denominations,” “first class” public schools, a theatre, and “one of the finest opera houses in Texas.”

Nor did the journalists neglect to describe the town’s public works: “an ample system” of street railways, “two of which are now international, connecting it with the Paso del Norte by bridge across the Rio Grande”; water works “at such elevation above the city that the pressure gives first-class protection against fire, as well as a bountiful supply of water for all purposes”; volunteer fire department; gas works; electrical works; and a full system of telephones and telegraphs.

The journalists’ tabulation of public buildings and facilities was impressive: a Federal court house; custom house; a “commodious” city hall; “a jail of the most approved and modern construction, having cost $35,000”; “the finest court house in the State, constructed at a cost of $100,000”; a fair grounds and racetrack; and a “handsome” public park.

The report also stated that the recently completed 1890 census had tabulated more than seventy “establishments of productive activity in El Paso, the list headed by three national banks “in high standing, very prosperous, and with large deposits.” Two hotels, one of which cost “over $100,000,” provided for the comfort of travelers. An ice factory and refrigerator had a capacity of forty tons daily. There was a transfer company as well as two “first-class” livery stables. Other commercial facilities included a foundry and machine shops, planing mills, union stockyards, roundhouses, and extensive machine and repair shops. Three

Francis L. Fugate, and the late Roberta B. Fugate were a husband-and-wife team who collaborated on a number of books, the most recent being Roadside History of New Mexico (1989) and Roadside History of Oklahoma (1991). published by Mountain Press, Missoula, Montana. Mr. Fugate, the recipient of several prestigious awards for his many published works, is a professor emeritus of English at the University of Texas at El Paso and a past president of Western Writers of America. Mrs. Fugate, who was a teacher with the El Paso Public Schools, had retired in the mid-1970s and was active in civic affairs.
daily and four weekly newspapers, one of which was a livestock and mining journal, were keeping the citizenry abreast of activities.

On that Wednesday, July 2, the visiting journalists were met by a five-man committee headed by Judge Joseph Magoffin, president of the El Paso Progressive Association, and were escorted on a carefully planned tour. Obviously, Judge Magoffin did not want interference by members of the local press, for on the very day of the journalists' arrival an El Paso Times reporter complained that he had been unable to learn anything of the plans to entertain the visitors.

The next day, Thursday, July 3, the journalists boarded their "palace car," and the little train departed at 1:30 in the afternoon. It had been a whirlwind tour, but on Wednesday evening they had found time to attend a band concert performed by the Fifth Infantry band and staged in the plaza.

The visitors presented impressive credentials. From Frank Leslie's there were Russell B. Harrison, Proprietor; Truman G. Palmer, Manager; George E. Burr, Artist; and W. L. Smith, stenographer. Other newspapers were represented: Theron R. Keator, New York Tribune, New York Press, Philadelphia Times, and Cincinnati Commercial-Gazette; J. C. Daniels, Helena (Montana) Journal; Roy Keator, Kansas City Times and Boston Herald; C. L. Saunders, Omaha Bee; and Henry Erlet, who claimed to be representing some 4,200 northern and eastern weekly newspapers.

Judge Magoffin and his committee would have a long wait to see the results of the tour. But those results turned out to be well worth the wait. On October 18, 1890, the "Third Texas Edition" of Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper contained more than a tabloid page extolling the virtues

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Logotype of the special supplement of Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper of October 18, 1890, which featured El Paso as "The Mexican Gateway of Western Texas." (Courtesy Francis L. Fugate)
of El Paso, illustrated by two full pages of drawings. Readers were told to address inquiries concerning the city to "The Progressive Association."

The lengthy commentary revealed that the visitors had been most impressed by the two large smelters. It stated that the smaller of the two, the International Smelting Company, represented an investment of $75,000 and had a capacity of eighty tons daily. The larger, forerunner of the present smelter, was the El Paso Smelting Works, then a branch of Consolidated Kansas City Smelting and Refining Company. According to the journalists, it represented an investment of $351,000 and had a capacity of 260 tons daily. During 1889 it had turned out $3,500,000 "in bullion." These statistics were followed by glowing details: "The plant for this establishment, which would do credit to any city, is beautifully situated at the foot of a very bold and rugged mountain, and on a high tableland fronting and overlooking the river; this tableland embraces about 1,400 acres, and is all the property of the company. They have their own perfect system of water supply, in the pumping station and engine on the bank of the river; their own electric works; the tracks of the two great railroad systems, the Southern Pacific and A. T. & S Fe, connecting here with all the systems, have been extended to their works; they have their railroad and telegraph station and telephone connections with their city office, natural dumping grounds for their slag, limestone in abundance close by, and the ores of all northern Mexico, Arizona, New Mexico, and Western Texas at their command."

The reporters took a reading on El Paso's financial state. The city's debt was $95,000, at 6% interest. The taxation rate was twenty-five cents per $100 for general purposes and fifty cents for schools. The total assessment was over $6,000,000.

Two "flourishing building associations" were aiding in the development of the city. The El Paso Development Board, forerunner of the Chamber of Commerce, had recently bent its efforts toward keeping the United States Government from moving the Fort Bliss troops to Fort Selden. Judge Magoffin's Progressive Association was raising $8,700 to buy 1,000 acres of land which the city had promised as a new location for the expanded military post.

In 1890 Fort Bliss stood along the river at the Hart's Mill site, where the Hacienda Restaurant is presently located. At that time plans called for "an entirely new" sixteen-company post four miles from the city on "Lanoria Mesa." The Government had appropriated $200,000 for buildings, and construction was underway. Frank Leslie's reporters hazarded the prediction that this move would mean an increase in population of
Sketches of 1890 El Paso features as they appeared in the October 18, 1890, special supplement of Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper. From top to bottom: El Paso Smelting Works, the residence of Dr. W. A. Alexander, Dr. Alexander’s wine cellar, the Vendome Hotel, a view of El Paso Street. (Courtesy Francis L. Fugate)
between 2,000 and 3,000 and a disbursement of from $40,000 to $50,000 a month. They described Lanoria Mesa as an area of "not less than 1,000,000 acres," about 150 feet above the city, and covered with a heavy growth of nutritious grass, mostly black grama—"there is none better, either for summer or for winter grazing." They explained that the area was being promoted by "an association of gentlemen" who were ecstatic over "an inexhaustible deposit of pure water" at a depth of 217 feet. Experiments were being conducted on this tableland "with horticulture, wine-culture, agriculture, and stock-raising." The reporters agreed with the ecstatic gentlemen that this tableland would "sustain population and colonization."

The tour on July 2 had included a visit to the establishment of Dr. W. A. Alexander, a retired army surgeon who was raising grapes and making wine in the Lower El Paso Valley. Dr. Alexander wined the delegation and received a generous write-up: "He turned his scalpel into a pruning hook, and is now the great grape-grower and wine-manufacturer of the Rio Grande. He has a beautiful home in this charming valley, about 400 acres of land, 25,000 grape vines, 25,000 fruit trees and a variety of other crops, and a store of about 30,000 gallons of wine."

The artist accompanying the journalists unlimbered his sketch pad to record the scenes.

At that time, Anson Mills was trying to promote the construction of a dam three miles above town, about where the railway bridge now crosses the river, to control the river and provide for irrigation. Judge Magoffin had carefully briefed the visitors on troubles with floods and the advantages of the dam. The reporters bought the story in its entirety. They dubbed the Rio Grande "the American Nile" and painted an impassioned picture of the effect of the dam: "And now this sturdy young giant [El Paso] is asking, and will get, a million or so for the construction of a great international dam across the Rio Grande, to impound its waters during flood season, for the purpose of supplying water to irrigate the magnificent alluvial valley of 250,000 acres below, which stretches itself out for a distance of ninety miles to Old Fort Quitman." This valley, the reporters explained, was "now imperfectly supplied with irrigation, and sparsely settled—a few Mexican towns and settlements only intervening, with a population of about 8,000, but capable of supporting 100,000." Further, the dam would help "to adjust and fix the boundary between Mexico and the United States, now and always heretofore a very uncertain thing, as during every flood season the Rio Grande becomes a very much swollen and capricious stream, caring nothing whatever for treaties, surveys, or any other sort of claim to jurisdiction, defying even Uncle Sam, now robbing
Sketches of 1890 El Paso features as they appeared in the October 18, 1890, special supplement of Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper. From top to bottom: 1. a view from the Vendome Hotel, 2. head of the irrigating canal on the Rio Grande, 3. a view of San Antonio Street, 4. Wells-Fargo Express Company's Bank Building, 5. the Court House, 6. Lanoria Mesa. (Courtesy Francis L. Fugate)
him of thousands of his broad, alluvial acres and bestowing them upon our good Mexican neighbor, and in turn robbing Mexico and bestowing it upon Uncle Sam, who is already gorged with land; then overflowing our lands and tearing down trees and bridges and destroying whole miles of railroad track and, in fact, behaving according to its own sweet will."

*Frank Leslie's* echoed the proposal for the dam which Anson Mills had sent to the Secretary of State in 1888: "This dam of seventy feet in height will impound the flood waters in a grand reservoir of twenty miles in length and five miles in width. Their flow can then be regulated to a fixed and definite volume, and the boundary will thus become permanently fixed. Great irrigation canals will supply water to the whole valley, and in the interval between here and the dam, where the fall is great, there will be a heavy water power, and the seat of many mills and manufacturing enterprises. And lastly, and more important than all, the great and growing international question between Mexico and the United States of the absorption by us of the waters of the Rio Grande, which, sooner or later, must find some solution, peaceful or otherwise, which is gradually robbing Mexico of her ancient and vested rights and privileges, and depopulating her great valley opposite below here and impoverishing her people."

Finally, the *Frank Leslie's* reporters agreed with Anson Mills: "There
is no other settlement of this question with Mexico possible. Honor, respect, and duty toward Mexico, international comity, the adjustment of the boundary, demand, and the needs of this great valley and this city require, and will certainly secure, the construction of this great dam.”

Both the reporters and Anson Mills were wrong. There was another solution. The dam was not built three miles above El Paso. The farmers of the Mesilla Valley took a dim view of the idea of flooding their land. Elephant Butte Dam was eventually built a hundred miles upstream.

Another irrigation project was afoot in the Lower Valley. At a cost of $150,000 the El Paso Irrigation Company was promoting a 31-mile ditch with an average width of 25 feet on the bottom. The reporters wrote: “All kinds of grasses known, and particularly alfalfa, flourish here; of the latter, four to five crops are cut from the same ground each year.” They went on to say that the soil and climate were “perfectly adapted” to apples, peaches, plums, apricots, grapes, quince, nectarines, almonds, pecans, prunes, strawberries, raspberries, and gooseberries. They predicted that El Paso merchants would realize $100,000 from “this year’s” grape crop alone, not counting that which would be reserved for making wine.

During their July visit, the reporters had apparently interviewed Dr. William Yandell, El Paso County physician and health officer, who had praised El Paso’s salubrious climate, which, it would seem, had practically put him out of business. They quoted Dr. Yandell: “Since El Paso began to grow [in 1882] several thousand children have grown up here, and not one has developed consumption or asthma. Furthermore, eight out of ten asthmatics are entirely relieved, and the other two benefited.”

The reporters found “East El Paso”—a “beautiful suburb” just outside the city limits—the most promising residential area: “East El Paso is easy of access, being connected with El Paso by two railroads running daily trains, a street railway, and a broad macadamized road extending from El Paso far down the valley, forming Alameda Avenue, the central street along which the principal residences are located. This street is a most popular driveway, and is the direct route to the fair grounds, the military post, and the old Spanish town of Ysleta, older by several years than either Santa Fe or St. Augustine.”

Unmindful of their inaccuracies, the reporters swept on: “The popularity of this suburb as a desirable place of residence is attested by the large number of brick residences already built and in process of construction, and its neat and attractive brick depot and post office. Here the asthmatic, the consumptive, and those suffering from lung trouble find instant relief. The clear dry air, the cool breeze and warm sunshine, with the elevation
of thirty-seven hundred feet, combine to make it a paradise for the invalid. Those of delicate health, unable to stand the rigors of the Northern winters and not desiring the life and noise of the bustling city, can rest here in health and security. Easy of access, healthful, without blizzards, cyclones, or sunstrokes, East El Paso is destined to become the most popular residence city of western Texas."

The final paragraph of the article was worth all the wine Dr. Alexander and his wife had poured: "In conclusion, we found El Paso a most attractive place. Its history, its unique position, its many advantages commercially, its opportunities for capital, labor, investment, enterprise, its sewerage system and every element of progress, the kindness and hospitality of its people, its well organized society, law, order, good government, its agriculture, horticulture, grazing, and its minerals, its peculiarly charming climate, free as it is from every dangerous epidemic, mild and invigorating, pure, pleasant, and salubrious, where yellow fever and the cholera germ cannot exist, where sunstroke is unknown, where refreshing sleep can always be had, where nature, so skillfully and wisely supplemented by art, has made almost a perfect sanitarium, probably unsurpassed by any in the world— we leave with regret. It gives much promise for the future, and we shall watch it with much interest, and shall recommend it as having great merit and advantages."☆

Two hundred million years ago

an ocean covered the Chihuahuan
desert. Scorpions and tarantulas
splashed in its tidal pools,
and dripping tumbleweeds
washed up on sandy shores.
Out in the depths
roadrunners swam,
dodged Spanish dagger and prickly
pear, as gleaming schools
of lizards left ocotillos
swaying in their violet wake.

—Renee Berta
Tribute to
VERNUS CAREY

by Wallace M. Lowenfield

THE STORY OF VERNUS CAREY IS THE STORY OF a gifted man who spent his entire life giving to others. And it is also, in a sense, a never-ending story. For what Vernus gave to others were qualities of character—self-confidence, for example, and a strong sense of fair play. They are qualities that endure in the many people whose lives he touched. And these people, in turn, reach out and help others to find their own strengths and talents.

Vernus Carey arrived in El Paso from Indiana in 1914 with his widowed mother, Etta Carey, when he was twelve years old. To help his mother, he sold newspapers on the streets of El Paso. He was small for his age and often ridiculed because his name was spelled V-E-R-N-I-C-E. Sometimes, in fact, he found it necessary to defend himself with his fists. Fortunately, however, he fell under the tutelage of Doc Holm at the YMCA. It was indeed fortunate, not only that one young boy found a father figure and a friend who would guide him and help him choose his life’s work—the “Y” program—but fortunate also for El Paso, which would greatly benefit from that life’s work.

Vernus served the YMCA for forty-four years, thirty of those years
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VERNUS M. CAREY
(1902-1987)
as its general secretary. A partial list of the many programs that Vernus initiated and implemented during his long career with the YMCA will give you an idea of his vision and his accomplishments.

He started the YMCA Leaders Club, which became for many El Paso youngsters their earliest training in helping others to grow. During World War II, he started the Teen Canteen, one of the most outstanding youth projects ever established in the history of the city. He rebuilt and directed Skyline Camp near Cloudcroft, New Mexico. He started the Indian Princesses for mothers and daughters and the Indian Guides for fathers and sons. He raised over two million dollars for the new YMCA building on Montana Street. He started the Gray Y Athletic League for baseball and football outside of the "Y." He organized the 50/50 club for young married couples. He initiated a physical education program for downtown businessmen. He organized High Y for boys and Tri High Y for girls. He opened the all-male YMCA to girls. (That's when we started wearing swimming trunks.)

Vernus was not content merely to serve his community through his YMCA Leadership. He also gave his time and energy to a number of civic endeavors. He was a longtime and vigorous worker with the Sun Carnival Association and with the Sheriff's Posse. In this latter association, his love of young people led him to sponsor and direct horse shows for children. And not long after, he started the Kids Rodeo in El Paso. Also, he was active for many years in the downtown Lions Club.

And besides all this, Vernus was a member of the Valley Congregational Church and a devoted family man. In 1926 Vernus had married Mary Louise Simpson, who he always said was the prettiest thing in town, plus being a pretty good basketball player. Vernus and Mary Louise became the parents of a daughter, Joan (now Mrs. Jim Goodman of La Luz, New Mexico) and, in time, the grandparents of Joan’s three children.

Needless to say, Vernus was interested in all forms of athletics. Indeed, it was through competitive sports that he was able to instill in many young people such qualities as respect for others and the graceful acceptance of both victory and defeat. He himself excelled in the sport of pugilism—maybe because he had been called upon as a boy to defend himself with his fists. He was a southwest boxing and wrestling champion and, for these and other accomplishments, he was inducted into the El Paso

Wallace M. Lowenfield, a longtime resident of El Paso, is a graduate of Dudley Elementary School, El Paso High School, and the Texas College of Mines (now The University of Texas at El Paso). He has been associated for many years with the El Paso firm of Casa Ford.
Athletic Hall of Fame. Along this same line, it was Vernus Carey who arranged for the first Golden Gloves tournament in El Paso.

These are the cold statistics that record some of Vernus Carey's contributions to our community. But to know the man, we need to hear a few excerpts from letters which were received in support of his nomination for the award now conferred upon him posthumously: induction into the El Paso County Historical Society Hall of Honor.

From MRS. BRYAN W. BROWN: Mention the name of Vernus Carey to any of the people who remember him and you will see smiling faces and sparkling eyes and remarks such as "What a wonderful person he was!" His enthusiasm, frankness, and honesty inspired the young people he worked with. He expected the best from them and was seldom disappointed. There were always sessions for the underprivileged, and they came away knowing they had been privileged to learn respect for themselves, for others, and for nature.

From BARBARA KASTER: I am among the thousands who can say Vernus Carey made a difference in my life. He continually encouraged us to try new things, to mount the horses with pride and strength, to shoot with accuracy, to learn the names of all the wild flowers, to laugh with people and find joy in their company, and to take the deepest pleasure from nature. The hidden lesson in all of this was, of course, to build self-esteem and to have regard for other people.

From FRANK MANGAN: Some of my fondest memories are those summers spent at Skyline Ranch. As camp director, Vernus taught us more than any other human being could have—about nature and how to get along with, and appreciate, the other campers. Because of his unique ability to make everyday things colorful and interesting, I can to this day identify on sight practically every living plant that grows in the beautiful Sacramento Mountains of New Mexico.

From AL O'LEARY: I knew Vernus Carey for over fifty years and had the pleasure to work with him at the El Paso YMCA for nearly thirty years. He had a genuine interest in young people, and he touched the lives of literally thousands of youngsters, many of whom are now, or have been, El Paso's leaders in education, medicine, law, and politics.

From BUD LASSITER: Most of us came to the "Y" attracted by athletics at about the age of ten years. That some became outstanding athletes is verified at least in part by the 1941 Texas Miners Basketball team, which won the first championship of any Miner team, in any sport. Seven of those players started together as a leaders team at the "Y." All members of the team played in leagues run by Vernus. But the fact that
he took little boys and girls, and through various stages developed them into responsible adults who have contributed so much to El Paso’s growth and culture is Vernus Carey’s greatest contribution.

From KATHRYN WAFER: Vernus was a wonderful influence for good on the young people of El Paso, from every section of town. Through games, exercise, and dance, he taught young people sportsmanship, morals, and good citizenship. Through his camps in Cloudcroft, he also taught them personal reliance, fair competition, and how to care for animals.

From FLO AND JACK YOUNG: Vernus and Mary Louise sponsored a young married couples club before the big war, World War II. We looked forward to every meeting just to be with them. After the war, for those of us who were fortunate enough to return to El Paso, the Careys kept the club going. They helped many couples to adjust to married life again. They formed basketball and volleyball leagues to keep us all coming back to the “Y.”

And now I offer my personal tribute....

I can’t remember when I did not know Vernus Carey. I’m sure I was a very small boy when I first met him at the YMCA.

Vernus accepted a personal responsibility for every kid who ever walked through the “Y.” He knew that there was an inherent good in every person and that it was somehow his task to bring it out. He was a father confessor, a mentor, a disciplinarian, a guide, a spiritual leader, a teacher, and a judge...boy, did you hate to be judged by Vernus if you were doing something wrong!

Vernus felt that it was his duty—indeed, his sacred obligation—to develop the YMCA program in El Paso and also the YMCA camp in New Mexico. He had to see these organizations grow and do the job for which they were intended. The development of body, mind, and spirit was the “Y’s” job, and therefore Vernus’s job. It was no accident that the boards of directors of the “Y” during Vernus’s tenure were the premier boards in the city. Were these boards filled with outstanding, community-minded citizens because of the cause or because of Vernus Carey?

A very large number of El Paso youngsters were privileged to grow up knowing this man who was always good, always honest, always sincere, and always the same. He was the rock we could rely on. And to this day thousands of El Pasoans stand proudly and securely upon that rock. How better to judge a man than by the lives of the people he influenced.☆
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CHARLES H. LEAVELL
(An original portrait by Giitings, © Copyrighted)
Tribute to
CHARLES H. LEAVELL

by Tom Lea

TONIGHT MY GREAT PRIVILEGE AND MY DELIGHT is to share with you the bestowal of a much deserved honor upon a cherished compadre. Charles Leavell has been my close friend for half a century. Through all those years, his wife, Shirley, and my wife, Sarah, have been as strong in their friendship as Charles and I have been in ours. The four of us, in a long time of living, have drawn together in deep and lasting affection.

Charles Leavell is a true El Pasoan. He was born here. He went to school here. He began his work here. Continuing it, he founded, developed, and still maintains a highly successful business here. For decades, he has been one of our town’s outstanding citizens, participating in El Paso’s civic, business, cultural, and welfare activities. At the age of eighty, he is still going strong, still interested, still active, still participating. He is an inspiration to all who know of his life, his career, and his continuing involvement in the affairs of his city and his country.

He is a self-made, well-made man.

He was born in El Paso on February 26, 1911, son of the late Charles H. Leavell, Sr., and Mabel Walton Leavell. Together with his three sisters—
Imogene, Kate, and Josephine—he grew up in a home on Federal Avenue.

In childhood Charles fought a harsh battle and won a noble victory over a crippling opponent, tuberculosis of the bone. That victory left him with a game leg. But it built into him a power of will, a confidence in himself and his own hardihood, a conviction, lasting to this day, that enough resilience to misfortune can convert adversity to advantage.

In 1929 he graduated from El Paso High School and went to Stanford University. Four years later—in the deeps of the Great Depression—he came home to El Paso with a degree in electrical engineering. Making his way, he found employment first with El Paso Natural Gas Company, then in the office of the International Boundary & Water Commission, then at Peterson Lumber Company.

To Charles Leavell, 1937 and 1938 were years of auspicious portent. In 1937 he married Shirley Terrell, and in 1938 he founded C. H. Leavell & Company—both ventures destined for great and sustained success.

In the time allotted to me here, it’s not possible to sketch even roughly the story of Charles Leavell’s professional performance at the head of the firm he created in modest circumstances, guided, and directed, to great success, in a highly competitive field. Suffice it to say here that by the year 1967 C. H. Leavell & Company was ranked eleventh in the nation for volume in heavy construction. The company had spread its activity from a local enterprise centered in El Paso to an organization—still centered in, and directed from, El Paso—performing work world-wide, sometimes alone as sole contractor, more often as a joint venture with construction giants such as the Utah Company, Morrison-Knudson, Peter Kiewit Sons, and many others.

The structures built by C. H. Leavell & Company are very, very many, their purposes as diverse as their locations, from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Monrovia, Liberia—bridges, skyscrapers, missile sites, banks, dams, river locks, hotels, nuclear power plants, port wharves, schools, NASA test facilities, hospitals, telescope domes, water treatment plants, churches, shopping centers, post offices—just name it, Charles Leavell has probably built one! To see the sort of thing he’s built here in El Paso, look at the State National Bank Building, the First Baptist Church on Montana Street, the Education and Engineering Building on the campus of The University of Texas at El Paso.

Tom Lea, the renowned artist and writer, was inducted into the El Paso County Historical Society Hall of Honor in 1975. The address in tribute to him on that occasion was delivered by Charles H. Leavell, who described "my true friend" Tom Lea as a "native of the city of El Paso, [whose] life and art have thrived in the sun burned realm beneath our mountain."

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I think often about what must go on inside my friend Charles' skull, and the satisfaction he must feel as a creator, remembering the shapes of structures, raised by his own know-how, to stand stout and useful and proud against the sky.

Charles Leavell as a builder is a man of national note: in 1972 the Engineering News Record named him "Man of the Year"; in 1984, the Associated Builders and Contractors, honoring their colleague, named him "Champion of Free Enterprise."

His long labors and astute business ventures have brought substantial reward, and he has made himself a wealthy man; he has also been an exceedingly generous man, both with his money and his time. He has served as advisor for countless civic endeavors in all areas of life in El Paso, the cultural, the political, the financial, and the social welfare concerns of his community. He has been the chairman for many fundraising drives, and he has served—or is still serving—on the Boards of State National Bank of El Paso, Pan National Group, MBank El Paso, Property Trust of America, El Paso Museum of Art Acquisition Board, Lee and Beulah Moor Children's Home, YWCA Advisory Panel, YMCA, United Way of El Paso, El Paso Treatment and Research Center, El Paso Symphony Orchestra, Renaissance 400, and Advisory Council at The University of Texas at El Paso.

Outside El Paso he has served on the Boards of Rio Grande Industries, Inc., Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad, University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, and New Mexico State University Foundation.

Among the numerous honors which Charles has received here in his home town are the 1968 "Outstanding Citizen" award from the National Council of Christians and Jews, the Conquistador Award from the City of El Paso in 1971, the "Outstanding Graduate of the Class of 1929" awarded by El Paso High School in 1979. To honor Charles's seventy-fifth birthday, the Mayor of the City of El Paso issued a proclamation designating February 26, 1986, as "Charles H. Leavell Day."

Ever since that grandly auspicious occasion in 1937 when Shirley Terrell became Shirley Leavell, Charles Leavell has held in his fortunate heart, and shared his eventful life with, a beautiful wife, who is not only his tireless helpmate, but his dearest companion, his wisest counselor and critic, his stoutest partisan. Charles and Shirley are blessed by a daughter, Mary Lee (now Mrs. Stewart Pinkerton), and a son, Charles S. (Pete) Leavell, of Boulder, Colorado. And there are four grandchildren.

How would I describe the outstanding character and personality of Charles Leavell? I would say he is a man of great energy and generosity,
tough-minded in defense of his beliefs, yet fair-minded too, with an unfailing sensitivity and sympathy for others. He listens. Possessed of a strong sense of humor, he is familiar with irony without bitterness. He has a keen sense of adventure, and the enjoyment of it. He is a natural leader with ability to organize events and procedures, and inspire teamwork in his fellows. He has worked hard for El Paso and for those things in which he believes. He is still working hard for them.

Charles and I have traveled many trails together, afoot and horseback. We've sailed together in little boats and big ships. We've ridden together in pickup trucks and limos, taxicabs and jeeps. We've traveled by train and we've flown together in floatplanes, jet lines, private aircraft and helicopters. We've been together in a lot of places. We've shared exalted moments in the snowy tops of the Wind River Mountains. We've listened to the windsong in the rigging sailing the "wine dark sea" of Homer's Ilia. We've ridden with gauchos on the pampas of the Argentine. We've even been around to both at the same time lean on the Leaning Tower of Pisa!

My friends, I know the man well, and I present to you with great delight a great El Pasoan—CHARLES H. LEAVELL!☆

The EUGENE O. PORTER MEMORIAL AWARD

Password is pleased to name Fred M. Morales as the recipient of the 1991 Eugene O. Porter Memorial Award for his article "Chihuahuita: A Neglected Corner of El Paso," published in the Spring issue. This $100 Award, established in 1975 in memory of the journal’s founding editor, is presented annually to the author of the article which, in the opinion of the editorial board, affords particularly clear insights into a significant aspect of this region’s history.

In close contention for the 1991 Award were several other articles, each one accorded high praise for the choice and treatment of its subject matter: "The Gallinas Massacre and the Death of Captain James Graydon" by Jerry Thompson (Spring); "Sam Dreben: Warrior, Patriot, Hero" by Hymer E. Rosen (Summer); "El Paso del Norte: Regional Election Center, 1813-1821" by Richard Baquera (Fall); and "The Ysleta Historic District: A Historical and Architectural Perspective" by Herbert C. Morrow and Karen Morrow (Winter). Special commendation is also given to Cynthia Farah for her engaging presentation (in the Summer issue) of Owen P. White’s essay "El Paso," originally published in The American Mercury of August, 1924.
A NEW LIGHT
on the September Rebellion of 1922

by Art Leibson

IN THE EARLY 1920s MEXICO WAS STILL VERY unsettled in the wake of the revolution that had rocked the country throughout the previous decade. Because of the unrest, the United States had not recognized the administration of General Álvaro Obregón, who took over the presidency after leading a revolt that included the assassination of his predecessor, Venustiano Carranza.

The nervousness was being felt in Juárez, where General J. J. Méndez was commander of the garrison. In late September, 1922, Méndez was forced to discipline a Captain Feliciano Val Verde for insubordination. Early on the morning of September 30, Méndez was awakened in his residential quarters by a call informing him that Val Verde was leading a local revolt, followed by many men from the garrison. Méndez soon discovered that one of Val Verde's first acts had been to storm the Juárez jail and free some two hundred prisoners, arming those willing to join his revolt, and that other prisoners had broken into saloons and, fortified with liquor, were heading back into the streets to smash savagely any opposition they might meet.
Méndez quickly rallied the loyal remainder of his command, and with the help of many civilians drove off the rebels and broke the back of the revolt. The main battle was over in two hours, with mopping-up operations continuing the next day as reinforcements arrived in Juárez from Chihuahua. Some of the leading rebels were shot without a trial. Another fifty-nine were taken to Chihuahua for trial by a military court. Their fate was never announced, but conviction of rebels, like traitors, almost invariably resulted in execution.

The horse ridden by Val Verde was found in the hills opposite El Paso's smelter, the footprints leading to the river's edge. But Val Verde was never found. It was known that he had a number of relatives and friends in the El Paso area, and it was surmised that they helped shield him until he could escape to some remote hideout.

General Méndez was the man of the hour, the hero who had rapidly crushed an uprising that had cost a number of civilian lives. The press glorified his victory and wherever he went he was lionized and begged for his signature, a practice usually reserved for theatrical personalities. But now a question arises: Was Méndez really the star of the show? The El Paso press, reporting on the fighting, mentioned casually that Sam Dreben was among those who participated on the loyalists' side. Dreben, soldier of fortune and Texas' most decorated hero of World War I, had settled down to selling insurance in El Paso, the only real home he ever had in America. He had spent many years in Mexico fighting for and against the rebels and also had worked for the Mexican Secret Service. Was he just another soldier in the revolt of 1922? Not if you believe Major S. B. Philpot, who was Fort Bliss adjutant at the time and whose version of the events was recently found in a back issue of the Fifth Corps News. An excerpt from Major Philpot's article tells the story.

At one a.m. on the morning of Sept. 30, 1922, I was notified by telephone at my quarters in El Paso that the Juárez Federal Garrison had revolted, seized Fort Hildago and the jail, and had armed and released 200 murderers and thieves. I at once phoned instructions to the International Bridge, notified General Howze at Fort Bliss, then phoned Sam Dreben at the Sheldon Hotel (forerunner of the Hilton) that I would be

*Editor's note: For a biography of Sam Dreben, see Hymer E. Rosen, "Sam Dreben: Warrior, Patriot, Hero," Password, XXXVI, 2 (Summer 1991), 89-96.

Art Leibson, a frequent contributor to Password, is an attorney-turned-journalist. Now retired from the El Paso Times, he continues to research and write about a favorite interest: the history of the El Paso region.
by for him in five minutes, that there was a battle on the other side.

When Sam climbed in my car at the Sheldon I'll never forget the
glitter in his eyes. He scented the fight like an old battle horse. He
pounded me on the back and told me what he would have done to me if
I had not awakened him. As we stopped a few moments at the International
Bridge to give some further instructions to the sentries to allow no
Americans to cross to Mexico or no Mexicans to enter the U. S. until the
revolt was settled, Sam was impatient to proceed and hurled something
to a bridge guard that "we didn't need any more Americans in this fight—
that there would be enough as it was."

Sam at once took charge of the Mexican civilians who were tumbling
out of their houses with their rifles and made disposition like the fighter
he was. At six a. m., when the fighting began, Sam was the only cool man
in sight. The chipping of the plaster off the walls of the buildings about
Sam, by the bullets of the revolting Forty-Third Mexican Infantry and
Twenty-Sixth Cavalry, which were advancing up through the railroad
yards, received no more mind from Sam than if they had been a sprinkle
of rain, and not as much. For Sam, in the case of rain, would have looked
for a raincoat for he was a very careful dresser.

When the killed amounted to thirty-eight and the wounded three times
as many among the civilian fighters and the few remaining loyal troops,
and things began to look black, Sam never faltered. He kept up a constant
stream of laughter and Spanish jokes. A lull came at seven a. m. and
General Mendez asked Sam to go to El Paso and get him all the arms and
ammunition he could buy. Sam mounted a truck, drove through the bullet
bespattered street, shaking his fist at the enemy, and drove to El Paso. In
a few minutes he was back with eighty-four high-powered rifles and 2,600
rounds of ammunition (over 200,000 rounds according to The El Paso
Times) from a wholesale house. He halted his truck and under fire issued
them out to his men.

That action, according to Major Philpot, quickly turned the tide. The
rebels were routed, many of the freed prisoners were rounded up, and the
garrison once more secured. Sometime later Sam Dreben received the
thanks of the Mexican Government for his work in putting down the revolt.

And on the day after the rebellion, Sam received the thanks of General
Méndez—though quite unofficially. By a curious coincidence, Sam was
once again in Juárez on the night of October 1, but not as an invited guest.
He was there as a participant in an elaborate plot to kidnap and smuggle
into the United States one "Little Phil" Alguin, wanted for the murder of
ART LEIBSON

a Los Angeles policeman and presently living in Juárez safe from extradition (since the United States did not recognize the existing Mexican Government).** In spite of the battle that had taken place on September 30, the long-planned kidnap caper could not be postponed. The wheels were in motion and had to go forward. Only to run headlong into a crash—with the result that Sam and Company (one of whose members was El Paso’s Chief of Detectives) were hauled off to the Juárez jail. While an angry mob was demanding the conspirators’ blood and threatening to storm the jail, a call went out to General Méndez for help. He immediately sent troops to surround the jail continuously until the Americans were released.

Thus it happened that General Méndez promptly—although uncereemoniously—expressed his gratitude for Sam’s service on the previous day. A service which according to Major Philpot was critical to the Loyalists’ victory. And as things turned out, the September Rebellion of ’22 was Sam’s last hurrah. He retired from Action that fall, and three years later he was dead, brought down at the age of forty six by a dosage mistakenly administered by a doctor’s assistant.☆

**Editor’s note: For a detailed description of the occurrences connected with the kidnap plot, see Art Leibson, The Kidnapping of Little Phil,” Password, XX, 3 (Fall, 1975), 99-110.

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SIEGE at HUECO TANKS

by Wayne R. Austerman

IN A COUNTRY WHERE SAND WALKS ON A RISING wind and a gray haze of thorn is often the best offering the earth can bring forth, men mark early and well the few places where water seeps from the rock and gives both an end to thirst and the great grace of a little shade. Such havens are painfully scarce when a traveler leaves the slim course of the Rio Grande below El Paso, but at the end of a day’s journey by horseback to the northeast a jumble of columnar rocks rises from the desert floor to mark the site of such a welcome halting ground.

The Spanish called it “Cerro Hueco,” and Texan cattlemen and overland emigrants knew it as “Silver Mountain” or, redundantly, as “Hueco Tanks.” The Kiowa Indians still recall it as “Tso-doi-gyata-de-dee,” or “the rock house (cave) in which they were surrounded.” Today it is a state park. For centuries past it was by turns a place of calm refuge and a disputed rendezvous for all the peoples who claimed the land around the Pass of the North.

The place now called “Hueco Tanks” was known to the Indians as early as ten thousand years ago, and successive phases of Amerind culture contributed to the shards of chipped flint and fragments of pottery that
littered the floors of caves in the surrounding mountains by the time the first stones were quarried for the temples of Sumer.1

One of the earliest European references to the oasis dates back to the administration of Don Diego José de Vargas, governor of New Mexico, who established his capital at Paso del Norte in February, 1691, while he prepared to march north and reclaim his province from the rebellious Pueblo Indians. In March, 1692, he dispatched a scouting party to ride northeastward from the Pass to reach Hueco Tanks and penetrate the wilderness as far as Guadalupe Peak.2

The Spanish recovered their hold on New Mexico, but over the next century they continued to face Indian troubles in the form of raids launched by the Comanches who roamed the plains east of the Pecos. Also the local tribes in New Mexico felt the pressure exerted by the aggressive Comanches, who would dominate the Southern Plains for still another hundred years. By January, 1778, the authorities in El Paso were reporting that bands of Apaches who had been pushed southward from their home range by the encroaching Comanches had camped at "El Cerro Hueco," and wished the protection of the Spanish against their enemies.3

Nearly six decades later a band of the Comanches' equally predatory allies, the Kiowas, found themselves embroiled in a battle at the tanks that would enter the folklore of three cultures in a variety of versions. Through some happy quirks of fate, historians and anthropologists were later able to assemble a remarkably detailed account of the event, which loomed as large in the Indians' history as the Alamo or Bataan does in ours. Not only do we have a fair idea of exactly what happened during that bitter encounter in the Huecos, but we actually have a picture of one of the chief participants. Coincidence, tribal pride, and an artist's curiosity have combined to preserve a moment in time from a century and a half ago.

In the summer of 1834 the First Regiment of United States Dragoons followed Colonel Henry Dodge out from Fort Gibson in the Oklahoma Territory on a mission to the plains country of the Southwest. The Dragoons were to explore the region and impress the resident Indian tribes with the power of the United States government while winning their good will. Artist George Catlin accompanied the column to produce a written and visual record of the people and land it encountered. By late July the

Dr. Wayne R. Austerman, a frequent contributor to Password and other historical journals, is also the author of Sharps Rifles and Spanish Mules: The San Antonio-El Paso Mail, 1851-1881 (Texas A & M University Press, 1985). Formerly an instructor of history at The University of Texas at El Paso, he now resides in San Antonio.
Dragoons had crossed the Washita and had entered the prairie beyond to reach a large Pawnee village. There Colonel Dodge held a conference with chiefs from the Pawnees, Comanches, and Kiowas. Catlin reveled in the opportunity it gave him to capture the tribesmen in his sketches.

The artist was particularly impressed with the Kiowas, calling them "a much finer looking race of men, than either the Comanches or Pawnees—are tall and erect, with an easy and graceful gait—with long hair, cultivated oftentimes to reach nearly to the ground. They have generally the fine Roman outline of the head...." He was struck by the dignity and bearing of the tribe's principal chief, Teh-toat-sah (Dohasan), whom "we found to be a very gentlemanly and high-minded man, who treated the dragoons and officers with great kindness.... This distinguished man, as well as several others of his tribe, have agreed to join us on the march to Fort Gibson."4

Colonial Dodge's diplomacy resulted in the signing of a treaty between the Kiowas and the United States on May 26, 1837. The Indians agreed to respect the persons and property of American citizens who passed through their territory; but, in company with the Comanches, they continued to regard Mexico and the infant Republic of Texas as fair fields for their continuing raids. From the time of Dohasan's meeting with Catlin until his death in 1866, the chieftain would play a prominent role in the course of his people's bloody relations with Mexico and Texas.5

Dohasan, whose name meant "Little Bluff," claimed a war range for his tribe that stretched from eastern Colorado to far below the Rio Grande. Not surprisingly, the Kiowas sometimes chose to strike at the settlements in the El Paso area. So it was in the winter of 1836-37, when ten Kiowa braves left their village near the junction of Wolf Creek and the North Fork of the Canadian River to ride southwest past the

George Catlin's sketch of Dohasan. (Courtesy Dr. Wayne R. Austerman)
WAYNE R. AUSTERMAN

Wichitas and launch a raid on the Pasunko (Paseños). Guadal-onte (Painted Red), a noted warrior, led the band. Dohasan accompanied him, along with To-edalte (Bid Face), Dagoi, Au-tone-a-kee, Tsone-ai-tah, Kone-au-beah, (Au-tone-a-kee’s brother), and two other braves. Several of them were members of the Ko-eet-senko, the elite warrior society of the tribe.⁶

Ranging down from the Llano Estacado and fording the Pecos at Horsehead Crossing, the Kiowas arrived on the Rio Grande to find that the Paseños were alert and ready to fight at the first sign of an Indian raid. The frustrated braves prowled about the outskirts of El Paso del Norte for a day and then swung back to the northeast. As they neared the Hueco Mountains in late evening, Guadal-onte looked back and saw a column of Mexican troops and militiamen raising a pall of yellow dust as they rode in pursuit of his band. The Mexicans were already within a mile of the braves and closing the gap quickly with their fresh horses.

Guadal-onte raised his quiät and urged the warriors to make a run for the mountains. Au-tone-a-kee argued with him, saying that after a long ride it would be a disgrace to return home without even having met the enemy. There was a brief debate, and then the Kiowas halted to make a stand in the open. As the Mexicans drew closer, it became clear even to Au-tone-a-kee that the braves were outnumbered by at least four to one.

Swallowing their pride, the warriors rode hard for the rocks. With the Mexicans on their heels, they thundered into the amphitheater of the tanks and sought refuge in one of the side canyons that branched off from the main trail. Spotting a cave that ran back under a sheltering overhang, all but one of them dismounted and scrambled through a pool of water to seek cover. The trailing brave tried to take his horse into the cavern with him, but the Paseños arrived and fired a volley with their escopetas that caught him in the open. The horse fell dead, and the rider suffered a severe wound. The other Indians quickly dragged him into the cave.⁷

The Mexicans instantly deployed around the Kiowas’ refuge, taking positions among the rocks and on the heights overlooking the cave and the waterhole near its entrance. They kindled fires on the rim of the canyon to illuminate the area below, and when one of the Indians tried to crawl down to the pool for water that night they drove him back with gunfire. The parched braves could only lick up drops of moisture that beaded the walls of the cave or hunt for pockets of rainwater that had collected in the rocky crevices of their prison.

The siege lasted for six days and nights. A blue haze of powder smoke drifted over the canyon as musket balls whined off the rocks to leave bright
A recent snapshot of the entrance to the Kiowas' cave refuge. (Courtesy Dr. Wayne R. Austerman)
splashes of lead in their wake. Dogwood shafts tipped with flint or
hammered hoop-iron whipped out from the cave whenever a Mexican
showed himself too long. By the last day the Kiowas were in grim straits.
Their supply of dried meat was gone, and even the bloated carcass of the
dead horse was beyond their reach. The wounded man, Au-tone-a-kee's
brother, had died, and there was no place to bury him.8

Even the Ko-eet-senko warriors were beginning to despair when one
of their comrades crawled far back into the cave and suddenly shouted that
he could look up and see blue sky. Stealthily, they enlarged the fissure
in the stone until it was big enough to admit a man's body. A quick look
outside confirmed that it opened some distance away from the rim of the
canyon. However, their exultation faded when a brave stuck his head out
for another glimpse and drew fire from an alert soldier. The ugly whine
of ricochets filled the narrow opening as the braves scrambled back and
then heard it being plugged with dirt and boulders.

Soon afterwards they were surprised to hear a voice calling out to them
in the Comanche language, assuring them that the Paseños were going to
throw some food down into the cave because they hoped to capture the
Kiowas alive. A few minutes later the braves heard something strike the
ground at the mouth of the shelter and rushed forward to find a half-dozen
angry rattlesnakes writhing toward them. Mocking laughter accompanied
another volley of musketry as the Indians scrambled to kill the snakes.

By that time, another brave had been wounded, and Tsome-ai-tah lost
his temper. He blamed Au-tone-a-kee for their predicament, and taunted
him by drawing a knife and cutting off his scalplock. Turning to the rest
of the Kiowas, he called on them to die in the open like warriors instead
of starving to death in the dark gloom like a family of trapped badgers.

The Indians knew that anything was preferable to remaining entombed in the mountain, and they followed Tsone-ai-tah’s example by trimming the buckskin fringes from their leggings, which were braided into a rope. That night they lashed their bows to their waists and waited tensely as Dohasan hugged the shadows and crawled out of the cave to reach the lip of the rock overhang. In single file the rest followed him out in a last desperate try for freedom or an honorable death. A sentry saw a dim blur of movement and fired. Within seconds the canyon was filled with stabbing orange flashes and the snarling whistle of musket balls.

To-edalte fell with a gaping hole in his chest, and Kone-au-beah took a bullet in the leg but hobbled after his comrades. Another brave clutched a wound and fell senseless. The others could not stop to help him and pressed onward down the canyon, seeking a way out as their enemies followed along, firing blindly at every sound.

Dohasan saw a dwarf cedar growing out from the rocks above and hauled himself up by grabbing its gnarled tangle of roots. He then used his rope and extended bow to help the others clamber up while the escopetas’ loads sang past their ears. Six braves made it up the canyon wall to safety, and then there was only Dagoi left to climb the rope. He was wounded and lacked the strength to make the effort. The Mexicans were close behind them and there was no time for his companions to help him. Dagoi calmly sat down with his back to the wall. His voice rose in eerie counterpoint to the gunfire as he chanted the death song of the Ko-eet-senko:

    I live, but I shall not live forever,
    Mysterious Moon, you only remain,
    Powerful Sun, you alone remain,
    Wonderful Earth, only you live forever.

A few moments later a ripple of shots echoed back over the Huecos and Dagoi’s chant ended.⁹

The Mexicans found the other wounded Kiowa still lying where he had fallen. They scalped him and carried him to their camp on the mesa above. In the morning, still dazed and bleeding, he was dragged by a horse until the animal was winded. Somehow the brave continued to live, although he was clearly delirious. When he asked for food, his captors cut a piece of flyblown meat from the dead horse and stuffed it into his mouth, laughing in delight when he gagged on it. When he asked for water, they smeared mud on his face. The Paseños had been fighting the Indians
for over two centuries, and they had no pity for a captive Indian. He was roughly tied to the back of a horse and taken back to the settlement to provide further entertainment.

Guadal-onie, Dohasan, and the rest ran for hours across the desert until they reached another canyon, where they sheltered until the following night. Leaving the canyon, they pressed on to a rendezvous where they had earlier left their spare horses and supplies in the care of two boys. Humiliated by their defeat, but still glad to be alive, the Kiowas headed north for their home country. The next day they reached the summit of a landmark known as "Sun Mountain," and paused to examine Kone-au-beah's wounds, which were festering. Death seemed inevitable for him, and his comrades knew that the hated Pasunkos might yet continue their pursuit. They had no choice but to make him as comfortable as possible and then ride away, leaving him close to a spring.10

The surviving warriors returned to their village with nothing to show for their raid but the tale of their escape. The dead were mourned amid the customary keening, wailing, and self-mutilation by their kin. Dohasan sat glumly in his tipi and unrolled the supple deerhide robe that served his people as a scroll for their history. To the other figures that covered its surface he painted on the symbolic depiction of a dead brave that marked the failed raid and its losses to the tribe.

The drama that had begun among the pools and cairns of Hueco Tanks had not yet ended, and its final episodes helped to embed it even more deeply in Kiowa folklore. Three days after Kone-au-beah's companions left him behind, a band of Comanches bent on a foray into Mexico found the warrior as he lay near death. They nursed him until he was well enough to be carried in a travois. By the time his rescuers reached his home village, he could ride astride a pony to receive the welcome due to one who had returned from the dead. Kone-au-beah lived for another dozen years and became one of the Kiowas' major religious figures during that time, for while he had lain near death he had experienced a series of spiritual visions that continued to guide him after he returned to his tribe. The Kiowa Lazarus could trace the beginning of his special rapport with the Great Spirit back to the musket ball that had nearly killed him at Hueco Tanks.11

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The Kiowa calendar symbol for the Hueco Tanks fight and the death of To-edalte. (Courtesy Dr. Wayne R. Austerman)
The other brave who had been wounded and captured during the fight experienced equally miraculous luck. Several years later the Kiowas were camped on the Arkansas River when they were stunned to see this man ride into camp. Covering the scar on his head from the scalping was an ornate silver plate. Given the admittedly savage dictates of the time and place, the story he related was incredible. Upon being taken to El Paso, he had fully expected to furnish sport for his captors by means of a very unpleasant death. Strangely, however, a Mexican gentleman had taken pity on him and had adopted him. After a time, the Mexican had given the young man his freedom and had sent him off to join his people with his saddlebags stuffed full of gifts. The tribe christened the returned brave Hone-geah-tau-te, “Silver Headplate.”

Memories of the battle at Hueco Tanks endured among El Pasoans as well. When Commissioner John R. Bartlett of the Mexican-American Boundary Survey visited the area in 1851, he received a greatly embellished account of the affair, as did Captian John Pope of the United States Army Topographical Engineers on a visit to the site three years later. Both versions told of how 150 “Apaches” were trapped in the little canyon and slain by the Mexicans.

The cool shadows and refreshing pools of the tanks continued to attract wayfarers long after the Kiowas’ blood had dried on the rocks. The expedition of John S. Ford and Robert S. Neighbors from Austin to the Pass in 1849, as well as Captain Robert S. Marcy’s earlier road survey from Doña Ana, New Mexico, to Fort Smith, Arkansas, paused there. Emigrant trains and freighters came in their wake. By the early 1850s Texas cattlemen were driving herds west along the northern route across the state to El Paso and California. Hueco Tanks, or “Silver Mountain,” as the landmark was commonly known, became a favored stopping place for the cattle and their drovers. At least one herd ran into serious trouble there. In June, 1853, Indians swooped down on the camp and drove away many of the herd. Only three of the thirteen men who gave chase survived the Indians’ ambush.
Two views of Hueco Tanks. Top, the sketch which appears in John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1854); bottom, a recent snapshot of the same site sketched by Bartlett’s artist in 1851. (Courtesy Dr. Wayne R. Austerman)
By 1858, the Butterfield Overland Mail Company had built a sturdy rock-and-adobe station that withstood both Indian depredations and droughts at the tanks until the coming of the Civil War forced the stage line to close its Texas route. Even then, travelers found the structure a useful shelter.\textsuperscript{15}

Twenty years after the Butterfield crews left the tanks, the Indian threat had been eliminated in Texas, and the frontier period was drawing to a close. But the landmark figured still again in one of its final violent episodes. In 1881 a Texas Ranger named Chipman deserted from Captain George W. Baylor’s company at Ysleta and rode downriver to steal some horses from ranches in the Socorro area. A posse of \textit{vaqueros} rode after Chipman as he drove the animals northeastward across the desert, pausing briefly to water them at the Huecos. The renegade then swung northwest to head into the mountains. The Mexicans caught up with him on the New Mexico line, only about five miles from the tanks. A gun fight flared, and Chipman killed two of the \textit{vaqueros} before the others shot him down.\textsuperscript{16}

In the years that followed, Hueco Tanks came under private ownership as part of a ranch owned by the Silverio Escontrias family. When a graded road was built out to the mountains early in this century, the area became a favorite place for El Pasoans to hold their outings. After an extended period of wrangling and debate, the tanks were purchased as part of a block of public land, and in 1969 the area was designated a state park.\textsuperscript{17} It boasts an abundant variety of desert wildlife, an outstanding array of Indian rock paintings that date from pre-Columbian to nineteenth-century periods, and a largely unspoiled atmosphere of tranquility and natural beauty. When the moon rides high over the Huecos and the creosote scents the air after an evening shower, even Dagoi’s spirit must be glad that it found a final resting place amid the sentinel stones of the shadowed caves.\textsuperscript{☆}

\textbf{NOTES}


SEIGE AT HUECO TANKS

Mexico, 1777-87 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1932), 63-64; Williams, 136, 149, n. 15.


6. Mooney, 270, 302; Wilbur S. Nye, Bad Medicine & Good Tales of the Kiowas (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 36, 277-78. There is some vagueness about the precise date of this incident. The calendar history kept by Dohasan and another one produced by Set-t'An, which is largely copied from the older chief's effort, both cite the death of To-Edalte while on a raid into old Mexico. Another tribal tradition places the El Paso raid in 1839, but such an event was not cited on the calendar. Nye's informants placed the El Paso raid and Hueco Tanks episodes "about 1837." The author's version is a composite of these sources. A check of the Periodico Oficial De Chihuahua for the period of the mid and late 1830s failed to disclose any references to the Kiowas foray along the border. The Mexicans often referred to Dohasan as Cierrito, or "Little Mountain." For the sites of the Kiowas' winter camps see Alice Marriott, The Ten Grandmothers (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1945), 15. The Ko-oet-senko warrior society is discussed in Mooney, 284-85; Mayhall, 11, 138, 176, 190; and Colin Taylor, The Warriors of the Plains (New York: Arco Publishing Company, Inc., 1975), 70.

7. Nye, Bad Medicine & Good, 36-37; Mooney, 302-03.

8. Nye, Bad Medicine & Good, 37; Binion, 39-40.

9. Nye, Bad Medicine & Good, 37-40; Mooney, 303-04.

10. Mooney, 304; Nye, Bad Medicine & Good, 40-42; The presumed location of the Kiowas' cave refuge is easily located in the Hueco Tanks State Park. From the parking area on the northwest side of the recreation area, a brief walk to the southwest will take the visitor into the Cañon de la Virgen, in the East Mountain area of the park. A masonry dam blocks the mouth of a side canyon there. A short distance behind the dam to the southeast is the cave. Mismarked "Comanche Cave," it is listed as Site No. 6 in Binion's Landmarks guide. The cave's interior features both ancient pictographs and more recent inscriptions, such as "Watter hear." Clearly visible is the marking, "BOB SWARTZ**JACOB LEWIS & C*W*TUNCATE JUNE 10*1853."

11. Nye, Bad Medicine & Good, 41-45.

12. Ibid.


14. J. W. Williams, "Marcy's Road from Dona Ana," West Texas Historical Association Yearbook, XIX (October, 1943), 131; Clarksville Standard, October 1, 1853; Anonymous, "Wagon Trails and Cattle Herds on the Trail in the 1850s," West Texas Historical Association Yearbook, XXX (October, 1954), 146-47.


THE COLUMBIAN QUINCENTENARY

El Paso Documentary II
The Benavides Memorial

by W. H. Timmons

Editor's Note: W. H. Timmons, Professor Emeritus of History at The University of Texas at El Paso and the author of the prize-winning book El Paso: A Borderlands History (Texas Western Press, 1990), has prepared this article as the second in a series in observance of the Columbian Quincentenary marking the 500th anniversary of Columbus' discovery, which at length resulted in two and a half centuries of Spanish rule in the American Southwest. Reproduced, opposite, is the title page of the Memorial of Fray Alonso de Benavides, published in 1630.

One of the most important documents on New Mexico and the El Paso area in the first half of the seventeenth century is the Memorial of Franciscan friar Alonso de Benavides. Appointed custodian of New Mexico, Benavides greatly expanded the missionary work in New Mexico, including the building of new churches and convents, and even undertook the propagating of the gospel among the wild Apaches in present southwestern New Mexico. He served the area with great energy and devotion until his departure in late 1629. Returning to Spain, he presented his Memorial to Fray Juan de Santander, commissary-general of the Indies, and it was printed in 1630. By 1634 it had been translated into French, Dutch, Latin, and German, an indication of the high regard in which it was held in Europe.

The first translation of the Memorial into English was made by Dr. John G. Shea in 1894. His manuscript translation was incomplete, imperfect, and even labeled "incompetent" by historian Charles Lummis, who added, however, that the translator probably never intended it for publication. Yet after it was purchased by the Lenox Library, it was printed under the title Memorial on New Mexico in 1626 [sic]. Twenty-five copies were printed, one of which is in the proud possession of the El Paso Public Library.

What is usually regarded as the definitive edition of the Memorial of 1630 was privately printed in Chicago in 1916 from a translation into English by Mrs. Edward E. Ayer. Shortly after the Ayer translation appeared, however, it became known that Benavides had revised and
MEMORIAL

QUE FRAY IVAN
DE SANTANDER DE LA
Orden de san Francisco, Comisario General
de Indias, presenta a la Magestad Catolica
del Rey don Felipe QUARTO
nuestro Señor.

HECHO POR EL PADRE FRAY ALONSO
de Benavides Comisario del Santo Oficio, y Custodio que ha
sido de las Provincias, y conversiones del
Nuevo-Mexico.

TRATASE EN EL DE LOS TESOROS ESPIRITUALES, y temporales, que la divina Magestad ha manifestado
en aquellas conversiones, y nuevos descubrimientos, por
medio de los Padres desta serafica Religion.

CON LICENCIA

En Madrid en la Imprenta Real. Año M. DC. XXX.
Rewritten his work on New Mexico, incorporating new information which he had received from the missionaries whom he had left behind. The new material, contained in twenty-five appendices, was in time found to be as important as the original Memorial of 1630. The Revised Memorial of 1634, edited by Frederick Webb Hodge, George P. Hammond, and Agapito Rey, was published by the University of New Mexico Press in 1945.

With regard to the coverage of the El Paso area by the original and revised editions, two points should be made. First, Benavides was obviously fascinated with the Manso nation, who lived along the Rio Grande near the historic Pass of the North. Although the Mansos had strange customs and habits, wrote Benavides, they were ready for conversion in his opinion. Therefore, he said, a mission should be established in one of their rancherías, which would serve not only for the salvation of their souls, but would also make the road to New Mexico safer, and would stimulate the development of the mineral resources in the region. Secondly, as Benavides pointed out in his revised Memorial, he was extremely enthusiastic about the future possibilities of the area about the Pass of the North. Here are his own words:

If anyone should wish to found at his own cost a town at the Pass of the Río del Norte which is midway to New Mexico, royal authorities and powers should be sent to the viceroy of Mexico regarding the privileges that might be granted to him and that he might demand. That pass is extremely important both for keeping open that trail and for the conversion of the many savage nations in that region. Your Majesty would be greatly benefited by the foundation of such a town and by the production of the mines and farms that may be established there.

Because the wheels of Spanish civil and ecclesiastical administration moved slowly in the seventeenth century, it was 1659 before Benavides’ recommendation that a mission be established at the Pass of the North became a reality. In that year there was founded the mission Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, which still stands in downtown Cd. Juárez, the present building being the oldest structure in the area.

Finally, it should be noted that while some scholars have labeled Benavides’ Memorial promotional and propagandistic and his statistics unreliable, the fact remains that his work still stands as the primary source of information for New Mexico and the El Paso area in the early seventeenth century.*
EL PASO IN THE EARLY 1900s WAS A SMALL BUT growing community, attracting newcomers from all parts of the world. One of the groups of immigrants which helped to shape the city in those years was the Chinese community. For the most part, the people in this group were quiet and unassuming, extremely respectful of their cultural traditions and the standard behavior patterns of their new homeland. One of them, however, was a woman who dared to defy convention in the interest of fighting for what she believed to be right. Her name was Herlinda Wong Chew.

Mrs. Chew's background included an interesting mixture of cultures, and was a source of great pride for her. The daughter of a Chinese father and an Aztec mother, she was born and reared in Guadalajara, Jalisco. She received the traditional formal education for girls at that time—schooling through the sixth grade at a convent—and she was taught embroidery, sewing, and other household arts. The early years of her life were quite closed and sheltered, but she was a very curious person who wanted to know more than her education afforded her. She therefore read as much as she could. Furthermore, because her father was a successful hotel owner
in Guadalajara, the family had many European friends, and Herlinda learned to speak English at an early age besides being fluent in Chinese and Spanish. The experience of meeting people from several different backgrounds at her father’s hotel provided a good basis for the type of work she would later undertake.

Herlinda met her future husband, Antonio Chew, in Guadalajara. As the oldest son in his family, he had been sent to Mexico at a young age in order to work to help support his family in China. He embraced his adopted culture wholeheartedly, even to the extent of taking mariachis to serenade Herlinda during their courtship. He and Herlinda married when she was in her late teens. Eventually the Chews made their way to the United States-Mexico border, where in time Herlinda would make important contributions in the areas of immigration, women’s issues, social work, business, and civic affairs.

When the Chews arrived in Ciudad Juárez, they opened a grocery store, *La Garantía*, on one of the main streets there. She assisted her husband in all aspects of the business—partly because of necessity and partly because of the learning opportunities. While working in the store, she became interested in immigration issues. Recall that in the early 1900s it was virtually impossible for Chinese to enter the United States legally. However, Mrs. Chew was able to obtain local crossing cards on a daily basis for shopping purposes. This was how she first became acquainted with United States immigration officers in El Paso and, because of her personable character, was able to establish a good relationship with them.

This amicable relationship paid excellent dividends on one occasion during the Mexican Revolution. It so happened that *La Garantía* was located next to a *cantina* frequented by Pancho Villa’s men. Some of these men were also customers of the Chews’ store. One day they told Herlinda that Villa was coming into town and that there was going to be a bloody battle. They advised her to cross to the United States with her family for the duration of the battle. She went to the United States immigration officials, told them what she knew, and asked whether she could bring her family and “a few [of her] people” to El Paso until the battle was over. One of Mrs. Chew’s daughters, Herlinda Leong, recounts the story:

[Mother] said, I guarantee you that after the battle is over, they will all [go] back."

[The official] said, “Well, we may be able to arrange it. About how many people do you expect to come across?”

Sarah E. John, a native of El Paso and a graduate of The University of Texas at El Paso, is a part-time instructor of history at El Paso Community College. She also serves as an administrator in the Ysleta Public Schools GED Testing Program.
And she said, "About two hundred."
And he said, "Mrs. Chew, if we let two hundred people cross the bridge, we'll start a panic!"

However, an agreement was negotiated. The Chew family and some friends waited at the bridge, and as the battle began they were allowed to cross to El Paso. To her friends later, she often dramatically recounted how they had to run across the border under fire and how she carried two of her children in her arms as the bullets whizzed by.

It was at about this time that Mrs. Chew became involved in immigration issues. Since she had secured the trust of the immigration office, she was allowed to borrow books from them on immigration law. She studied these books carefully and soon discovered the one way whereby Chinese could immigrate and become United States residents—and that was as merchants. She promptly made formal application, and by the early 1920s the Chews were able to move to El Paso.

Once here, they established the New China Grocery on Overland and Stanton Streets. At first, Mrs. Chew helped in all phases of the business, working side by side with her husband. But as the store became well established, she began actively to pursue her interest in immigration matters. In time, she became an unofficial immigration agent. Another of Mrs. Chew's daughters, Gloria Yee Dong, remembers, "My recollection
of her is that she was always down at the immigration office, dragging me along. She was always doing business, and she would talk and talk. She’d finish talking to someone, she’d meet someone else, and start talking to them.” Herlinda Leong adds that her mother was rearing her eight children during these years.

Mrs. Chew’s immigration activities included assisting many Chinese to cross into the United States and also to obtain visas for visits to China. Often she acted as an interpreter in cases involving Chinese immigrants. She also helped Chinese men who had been living in Mexico to travel through the States on their way back to China. She worked out a program with the immigration service whereby she and Mr. Chew would post a bond for these men, escort them to San Francisco by train, and guarantee that they would depart for China from there. This service also opened the door to another business venture for the Chews—as passenger agents for the Southern Pacific Railroad. While not on the payroll, they did receive train passes for themselves and their family throughout the ‘20s and ‘30s.

The extent to which Mrs. Chew was well-versed in immigration regulations came to light years later when, after her death, her daughters Herlinda and Gloria were each offered a scholarship to attend Radford School by Dr. Lucinda Templin, the school’s director. According to Herlinda Leong, Dr. Templin had said, “I’m doing it for your mother. I admired her.” Dr. Templin frequently told people that Mrs. Chew was one of the foremost local authorities in immigration law.

In addition to her work with immigration matters, Mrs. Chew always had a deep and sincere desire to help women, especially minorities or the poor. Her concern may have developed as a result of some of her experiences in China when she went back to meet her husband’s family for the first time. His family lived in a small village outside of Canton, and one of the first cultural differences she noticed was that the men and the women did not eat their meals together. The men ate first, and the women ate later in the kitchen. But Mrs. Chew refused to follow this custom; she took her meals when the food was served to the men. She bravely moved out of the village and into Canton, where she supported herself by tutoring two young wealthy Chinese girls in English. While her action may not seem unusual to us today, remember that this was more than eighty years ago—and in a country steeped in tradition and conservatism, especially where women were concerned. Her daughter Herlinda Leong thinks “that’s why Mother was always so concerned about women who were not able to take care of themselves as she did.”

On her last trip to China in the 1930s, Mrs. Chew was able to identify
many Mexican women who had been deserted by their Chinese husbands, as their marriages weren’t recognized legally in China. It all started when she happened to meet one such Mexican woman who told Mrs. Chew how she had been abandoned and had been forced to beg on the streets to survive. This same woman told Mrs. Chew about several other women who shared her fate. Mrs. Chew immediately took action. She had the persistence and determination to find as many of these women as she could, and eventually gathered information on approximately seventy women in the Canton area who shared similar circumstances. She then sought out the nearest Mexican consul, informed him of the plight of these women, and helped them and their children to return to Mexico.

Even in El Paso, Mrs. Chew made sure that many of the women she met—some of whom were married to Chinese men—were informed about where they could receive adequate health care, as well as any legal benefits they were entitled to.

Mrs. Chew also liked to relate to her children the story of a young Chinese boy she adopted in Mexico. He had been sent to Mexico to work to send money home, but had been robbed and betrayed by the people who were to assist him. She found him almost starving, and decided to adopt him as her son. The Chew children were very close to him and called him Taiku—“big brother” in Chinese. His name was C. M. Po, and later he was able to establish a grocery business in El Paso.

Mrs. Chew also made her mark in the business arena. Besides helping run the family’s grocery business, she was instrumental in strengthening independent grocers throughout the city. When chain grocery stores were first becoming a force in El Paso, all of the independent grocers—Chinese, Syrian, Mexican, Anglo, and any others—were finding it hard to compete with them. Mrs. Chew developed the idea of forming a wholesale outlet of all the independent grocers so that they could buy in quantity and thus sell at competitive prices. From this idea grew the Western Grocery, a coalition of these independent grocers.

In another business-related capacity, Mrs. Chew was appointed to serve on the code authority for the NRA (National Recovery Administration), mostly representing minority groups. In addition, she served as the only female member of the El Paso Merchant’s Association. And as another of her contributions in the civic area, Mrs. Chew gave talks at meetings of local organizations (for example, the American Association of University Women) on such subjects as business, women, and Chinese culture. One year she was even asked to be a speaker at New Mexico Military Institute. What was the subject? The Progress of Women!
And what kind of influence did she have on her family? First, because she herself came from varied backgrounds, she instilled in her children a strong sense of pride in their three cultures—Chinese, Mexican, and American. In this way she helped her children develop confidence in themselves and a profound respect for all ethnic identities. She also made it clear that all her children were expected to take advantage of a college education—both the boys and the girls. “And we thought that’s what everybody did. There was just no question about it,” says Herlinda Leong.

Mrs. Chew’s influence on her children was such that several of them went into social work or a profession related to the welfare of others. Gloria Yee Dong says, “I think my brother Wellington was very influenced by my mother. When he went into law, he helped people who were down and out.” As many El Pasoans know, Wellington Chew especially took cases involving the mistreatment of women and those involving minorities. Mrs. Chew’s daughters followed closely in her footsteps as well. Herlinda Leong entered the field of education, eventually becoming a superintendent of schools in California, while Gloria Yee Dong became a public welfare and social services administrator for Los Angeles County. And Mrs. Chew’s legacy continues in two of her grandchildren who are El Paso attorneys. Both David Wellington Chew and Linda Yee Chew work in immigration law.

How would Herlinda Leong and Gloria Yee Dong like their mother to be remembered? Dr. Leong says, “One thing that I admired in my mother was her desire to be self-sufficient and a person in her own right. But most of all, I admired her concern for other people and her desire to be an active contributing member of the community. Not until after her death did I fully understand that she found her greatest joy in doing for others.” Ms. Dong adds, “And her care for people. She cared so much for other people.”

Busy, Outgoing. Friendly. Excellent conversationalist. Great sense of humor. Interested in people. Wonderful story teller. These words and phrases all describe this early El Paso civic leader and businesswoman. El Paso is indeed fortunate that she graced this city with her vibrant personality and that this city was the recipient of her talents and varied contributions.☆

Author's note: This article is based on an oral history interview with Dr. Herlinda Leong and Ms. Gloria Yee Dong, conducted by Sarah E. John and Judith John Lopez on July 20, 1991, at the home of David Wellington Chew, Mrs. Chew’s grandson. Additional information was provided by another of Mrs. Chew’s daughters, Grace Got.

Dr. Joan Jensen, Professor of history and director of the Women's Studies program at New Mexico State University, is a leader in tracing and evaluating the history of rural women in America. The essays in Promise to the Land show Jensen's gift for research and her keen ability to relate the histories of individuals and groups to larger cultural and economic contexts.

Half the essays are previously published, the earliest in 1977 when rural women were seldom written about, particularly from Jensen's perspective of their economic contributions. The other essays are new and move "in new directions, to biography and autobiography, to iconography, and a linking of professional work to the more personal, emotional context that gave rise to them." Farm women have always worked, Jensen knows, and they did more than provide food, health care, and other goods and services for their own families. Whether they made and sold butter, earned cash from gardens, crafts, or other labor, or took in boarders, the income women brought in often made farm survival possible.

The essays provide vivid representative glimpses into the lives of women in diverse circumstances—from the pueblo women of Gran Quivira and the Salinas Valley in New Mexico before and after the arrival of the Spanish to plantation women—both white and black—in Maryland to early immigrant women such as her grandmother in Wisconsin. Other essays show that when domestic spinning and weaving were replaced by the textile industry, or when butter-making became commercialized, women adapted with alternate products to sell.

One of my favorite essays (originally published in 1986) is "Crossing Ethnic Barriers in the Southwest: Women's Agricultural Extension Edu-
cation, 1914-1940," in part because it shows the impact one individual can make in improving conditions for an entire region. When Fabiola C de Baca Gilbert was Home Demonstration Agent of Santa Fe County in 1929-1940, she worked with Hispanic, Anglo and Indian women and girls, encouraging them in farm productivity, labor exchanges, and handicrafts, at the same time introducing new technology and a new pride in themselves. Her efforts improved health and prosperity throughout northern New Mexico and promoted a decrease in ethnic and gender segregation.

But every essay here is interesting and informative and adds to our understanding of the often undocumented and undervalued roles of rural women in America, roles which have been, and remain, crucial in making the rural unit functional.

LOIS MARCHINO
Department of English, The University of Texas at El Paso


Edward Burleson might legitimately be characterized as the most illustrious second fiddle in pioneer Texas history. The highest office he ever attained was vice-president of the Texas Republic, and although he was never comfortable as a politician, he was a presidential candidate in 1844 and spent years in Texas legislative service. He was the most respected military leader of his time and place, Sam Houston not excluded. It is amazing that he has virtually slipped from sight and that only now do we have a full-scale biography.

Born near Asheville, North Carolina, in 1798, Burleson moved with his family to Tennessee, to Alabama, to Missouri, and back to Tennessee before migrating to Texas in 1830. At once he was caught up in the political and military strife of that time. He led Texas troops at the battle of Gonzales, the siege of Bexar, and in the San Jacinto campaign. With the war over, he was elected to the lower house of the first congress and served in one house or the other of the Texas congress or legislature until his death in 1851. But military duty continued. He assisted in putting down the so-called Cordova Rebellion, a joint Mexican-Indian venture to stir trouble in Texas. When Mexico forces appeared twice in San Antonio in 1842, Burleson quickly reached the scene to take charge. He also led retaliatory action against Indian war parties. When Texas entered the Union, Burleson was elected to the state senate and, while in office, became a veteran of the Monterrey campaign

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in the Mexican War. His death at fifty-three was the occasion for creating the Texas State Cemetery in Austin. In all, a remarkable life, and this biography fills a sizeable void in Texas historiography.

The tragic death of co-author Jenkins, while this work was in progress, no doubt created problems for co-author Kesselus, who had to finish the task. There are occasional gaps in continuity for those who might be approaching this subject "cold." At one point Stephen F. Austin is alive, well, and functioning, and then, some pages later, he is referred to in the past tense. References to upstream, downstream, left bank, and right bank are inconsistent and therefore wholly confusing. A map of Burleson's home territory around Bastrop as well as a map of his wider area of operations would have been helpful in avoiding this confusion.

Minor reservations notwithstanding, Texas history scholars and enthusiasts are going to have to find room on their shelves for this one.

AL LOWMAN*
Stringtown, Texas

*Editor's note: The reviewer's homeplace is situated on General Burleson's San Jacinto land grant near San Marcos.

TREASURES OF HISTORY II: Chaves County Vignettes by Elvis E. Fleming and Ernestine Chesser Williams (with additional articles by Lynn I. Perrigo and Peggy L. Stokes). Roswell: Chaves County Historical Society, 1991, $23.95/$9.95

For any historian, one of the most difficult tasks is to perceive those things which people of former times took for granted and therefore seldom recorded. This collection of vignettes dealing with the history of the Pecos Valley area of Southeastern New Mexico (each vignette originally published as a monthly article in the Roswell Daily Record) uneartths many elusive treasures—principally from documents housed in the archives of the Chaves County Historical Society. Both the Record and the Historical Society are to be commended for recognizing the value of such an undertaking, and the splendid result should encourage other area newspapers to follow suit immediately rather than later regret their lack of vision.

One striking feature of Treasures is in its variety and scope of subject matter: from the early rural schools in Chaves County to Peter Hurd's controversial portrait of LBJ; from the architectural details of a log cabin built by hand and without nails in 1878 to the impact upon the area of the Prisoner of War Camp located at Orchard Park in the 1940s. There is something for everyone, and I disagree with the modest statement in the Preface that the vignettes were "written more for public enjoyment than
for scholars." Indeed, Marc Simmons, one of New Mexico's premier historians, owns up to having found numerous gems in Treasures II—for example, the discovery that "in frontier days the word 'Pecos' was sometimes used as a verb."

Of the more than fifty vignettes, about one half are devoted to individuals who left footprints in the area—people like Buck Powell, who played a little-known but not insignificant role in the Lincoln County War; Sophie Poe, whose Buckboard Days (1936) merits "a place among other books by pioneer women that are at last becoming recognized as an important part of the literature and history of the American West"; and such sheriffs as Charles C. Perry and Charles L. Ballard, two of those chameleon-like characters (so numerous in frontier times) who turned from lawmen to outlaws and outlaws to lawmen.

The two major contributors to the volume are Elvis Fleming, a member of the history faculty at Eastern New Mexico University since 1969, and Ernestine Chesser Williams, a retired public school teacher who augments some of her findings with her memories of oldtimers and long-ago events. Their excellent work, as well as that of the other contributors, is enhanced in many of the articles with historical photographs. In addition, Lyle Tucker of Roswell graced the contents with his imaginative sketches.

Copies of the book can be ordered from Chaves County Historical Society (200 N. Lea, Roswell, NM 88201) at the prices listed plus $2.00 for postage and handling.

And—at the risk of being redundant—to the publishers of local area newspapers: find it in your vision to emulate the Roswell Daily Record's contribution to history.

HERB SECKLER
Bent, New Mexico


First published in 1884, this well-written account of Texas pioneers and rangers by a third-generation Texian and second-generation ranger furnishes an outstanding supply of information. The book includes accounts of Indian battles as told to Sowell by individuals who participated, ancedotes of the early Anglo history of Texas, and Sowell's personal recollections of his service as a Texas Ranger.

The 1884 title page of the book reads: "With a Concise Account of the Early Settlements, Hardships, Massacres, Battles, and Wars, by which
Texas was Rescued From the Rule of the Savage and Consecrated to the Empire of Civilization.” A less extravagant description of the book’s purpose is contained in the author’s modest statement that “I am not attempting to write a history of Texas but of the battles and adventures of the pioneers.”

About forty years ago J. Frank Dobie observed that “Sowell will one day be recognized as an extraordinary chronicler.” As one reads the interesting narratives in this book, the truth of that prediction is well fulfilled. In the years since Dobie wrote, Sowell’s works have become increasingly important to historians searching for eye-witness and firsthand accounts of the lives of the pioneers and rangers. John H. Jenkins in his 1983 Basic Texas Books calls Sowell’s Pioneers and Rangers “one of the basic sources on the vicissitudes of the pioneer settlers in Texas...and one of the best of all first-person ranger campaign narratives.”

Sowell was in his thirties as he wrote this account of “what is as yet the unwritten history of Texas.” Although he was knee-deep in action, he recognized the need to record his experiences, as well as those of older informants.

The book is a facsimile of the 1884 edition, but it is printed clearly and is comfortably readable. And actually the “old-time” typography performs a valuable function. It transports the readers back to 1884 and continues to remind them graphically that all these happenings occurred “only yesterday”—within living, reliable memory.

Appended to this edition is an index which will prove helpful to the historian engaged in research and to the general reader on the hunt for an ancestor or a Texas Ranger who lived and fought and maybe died during those perilous decades when Texas was being “Consecrated to the Empire of Civilization.”

HENRY D. GARRETT, M. D.
El Paso

El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1991, $10.00

Interviews with forty-seven students, professors, and administrators combine to paint a unique portrait of The University of Texas at El Paso from its beginning to the present. The idea for the book was conceived in 1983 by President Haskell Monroe, a history professor by training. The
work was completed in 1990.

The recounting begins with the late Fred Bailey, who attended the "School of Mines" when it was located out by Fort Bliss, beyond the end of the streetcar line. The school opened in 1914 with twenty-seven students and three faculty members. The story ends with an assessment of today's University of Texas at El Paso by President Diana Natalicio.

And it is a story, starting with the days when every professor knew every student by name and vice versa, the days when professors would lend students money for tuition and books, the days when female students dared not wear slacks to school, the days when there were so few enrolled that practically every student had to become an athlete for games and meets with local teams such as El Paso High School. (Sometimes there were no substitutes and the coach played to fill out the football team.)

The story progresses from the School of Mines through the institution's life as Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy, Texas Western College, and finally The University of Texas at El Paso. The diversity of accounts provides insight into practically every aspect of student and faculty life from many viewpoints: the high jinks of engineering student initiations, friction between engineering students and "peedoggies," life in Vet Village after World War II, student unrest during the Vietnam War, the attitudes of Mexican-American students, the first black students, NCAA championships.

Some who came did not like El Paso. There was C. L. Sonnichsen, who joined the faculty in 1930 because he needed a summer job. He did not intend to stay; "It was really a wretched place." Forty years later "Doc" Sonnichsen retired.

There are contrasts. There was the president who was heard to say: "I hire teachers just like I'd buy mules, as cheap as I can get them." And later there was the ex-Miner pro-football player who returned to El Paso to become a business executive: "I got as good an education from UTEP as anybody else in the country [got] at the same time."

Today some three-fourths of the university's students are the first in their families to attend college. As Diana Natalicio puts it: "We feel that those students who come to us with aspirations for a four-year degree deserve a real chance."

This volume provides an understanding of the development of the relationship between The University of Texas at El Paso and the community which nurtures it. It is a "must" read.

FRANCIS L. FUGATE
Professor Emeritus of English, The University of Texas at El Paso
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