

ALFRED PORTER COLES

ALFRED PORTER COLES, the extent and importance of whose business operations have made him one of the most prominent citizens of El Paso and of western Texas, is today the president of the American National Bank. He is also connected with the cattle industry, and his real estate operations have exceeded in volume those of any other man in the city. He was born on a farm in Wilson county, Tennessee, July 5, 1861, being a son of J. F. and Susan (Holt) Coles. His preliminary education was acquired in the common schools, and he afterward pursued a preparatory course in Cumberland University at Lebanon, Tennessee, after which he entered the Vanderbilt University, where he completed his education in the spring of 1885. Returning then to his native county he engaged in teaching school there for about three years, after which he started in El Paso, Texas, in search of health, reaching his destination on the 22nd of April, 1888. Here he secured employment as a clerk in a grocery store, in which he continued for about a month. He next became engaged in taking stock subscriptions for the building of the White Oak Railroad, which at that time had been completed for a distance of only ten miles, and the enterprise had been then abandoned. Mr. Coles afterward became interested in the real estate firm of Newman & Russell in 1889, was admitted to a partnership, and subsequently became sole proprietor by purchasing the interest of the other partners. He also acquired the business of another firm engaged in dealing in real estate and fire insurance, and was thus occupied until the late '90s, when the firm of A. P. Coles & Brothers was established. Mr. Coles at one time handled nearly one-third of the real estate in El Paso, including three of the best subdivisions of the city, which have all been sold at the time of this writing. The most important real estate transaction with which he has been connected was the improvement and sale of the Franklin Heights addition, Mr. Coles being secretary and agent of the company controlling this property. Indeed, this is the most important real estate undertaking in the history of El Paso, and during one year he handled property here to the value of one million dollars. The firm now handles more down-town property than any other individual or company in the city, and Mr. Coles is himself the owner of a number of pieces of valuable business property, including the Coles Building, one of the finest in the city, while in other parts of the city he likewise has various realty holdings. He is thoroughly informed concerning the prices of property, its probable rise and depreciation, and has constantly watched the market, so that he has been enabled to make judicious purchases and profitable sales. In connection with his brothers, J. F. and O. C. Coles, and W. W. Turney, he is extensively interested in the cattle industry, and together they own a large ranch in El Paso county. On the 1st of January, 1905, the American National Bank opened its doors for business with a capital of two hundred thousand dollars, and Alfred P. Coles was elected its president, and the bank now has about a million dollars in deposits.

On the 3rd of January, 1893, in El Paso, was celebrated the very happy marriage of Mr. Coles and Miss Nellye Bell, a native of Montgomery, Alabama, and a daughter of Mrs. L. M. Bell, a niece of Judge W. M. Pierson, one of the pioneers of El Paso. Fraternaly Mr. Coles is a Mason, having taken the degrees of the Scottish Rite and also of the Mystic Shrine. He was one of the organizers of the Toltec Club, its vice-president for two years and president for one year. He was among the first sons of Tennessee to come to this section of Texas and was one of the organizers of the Tennessee Society in El Paso. He has a firm faith in the future of the city, as is indicated by his extensive investments here. For almost eighteen years he has been numbered among its most prominent and progressive citizens and may well be termed one of the founders of modern El Paso, for he has been the promoter of many of its leading business enterprises. His connection with any undertakings insures a prosperous outcome of the same, for it is his nature to carry forward to successful completion whatever he is associated with. He has earned for himself an enviable reputation as a careful man of business and in his dealings is known for his prompt and honorable methods, which have won him the deserved and unbounded confidence of his fellow men. With peculiar fitness for the lines of business which he has taken up, marked success has followed his efforts. He is distinctively a man of affairs and one who has wielded a wide influence and not only has he won prosperity for himself and not only has contributed to the city's growth and improvement, his labors being actuated by a spirit of direct and immediate serviceableness.

B. B. Paddock, *History and Biographical Record of North and West Texas* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1906), Vol. I, pp. 577-578.

The small college just south of Las Cruces had been in existence for a decade without a formal chapter of alumni. At the meeting on May 24, 1898, Alfred M. Holt, Joseph Bennett Jr., Oscar C. Snow, Elgin B. Holt, Albert H. Peterson and Fabian Garcia voted to establish the organization, and in doing so created what would become New Mexico State University's Alumni Association as we know it today.

- **Twichell, L. L.** — of Fargo, [Cass County](#), N.Dak. Republican. Alternate delegate to Republican National Convention from North Dakota, [1936](#). Still living as of 1936.