

Otis Coles, EP Pioneer, Dies At 83



OTIS COLES

Otis Coles, 83, the man often described as being an essential part of the story of El Paso's development, died suddenly in his home at 2915 Wheeling Ave., Friday morning.

The 83-year-old head of the city's oldest real estate firm attended to his usual business duties Thursday and died apparently of a heart attack.

Mr. Coles was born in Lebanon, Tenn., attended Cumberland University and came to El Paso in 1895. His first job was night clerk in the old Pierson Hotel.

He was the third brother of the Coles family to come to El Paso and, after a short cattle ranching venture in the Hueco Tanks area, he joined Alfred P. and Franklin Coles in the Coles Brothers Real Estate firm in 1891.

Otis Coles endeared himself to people throughout the Southwest with his tales of the early

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days. He could describe the streetcar conductors who did small shopping for residents along the line and remembered the echo of the blacksmith's hammer against anvil resounding through what is now the heart of El Paso.

He was an eye witness to major development in El Paso, having been primarily responsible for many subdivisions such as Campbell, Finley, Castle Heights, Emory Way and the Country Club. He is credited with building the first road from Five Points.

Among the many large real estate transactions effected by Mr. Coles were the sale of El Paso Electric Co. Building, the Banner Building and the old Federal Courthouse to the Kress Co. He was agent for the old El Paso and Northeastern Railroad.

Mr. Coles also played an important role in the growth of Texas Western College, having been responsible for acquiring the Frank B. Cotton estate holding valued at \$10 million in three West Texas counties for the benefit of TWC.

Mr. Coles was president of El Paso Pioneers' Assn. and a director of El Paso Historical Society. He was a past president of El Paso Real Estate Board and the Chamber of Commerce, life member of the Elks' Club, a 32nd degree Mason, a Shriner, and member of the Country Club and First Church of Christ, Scientist.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Elizabeth H. Coles, and two sons, Otis C. Coles Jr., of Shreveport, La., and Alfred P. Coles III, of La Jolla, Calif.

Funeral arrangements were pending with Harding and Orr Montana Avenue Funeral Home.