

David Fenchler, Colorful, Robust E. P. Figure, Dies

David Sylvester Fenchler, 83, one of El Paso's colorful citizens, the original owner of the famed Eruption mine of Chihuahua, died at his Hot Springs, N. M., home yesterday. Funeral services will be held tomorrow at 2 p. m. in Peak-Hagedorn Chapel with the Elks in charge. Burial will be in Evergreen cemetery.

Elks will be pallbearers.

Mr. Fenchler was the eldest of four brothers who figured in El Paso's and Juarez's early, robust days. They built a comfortable fortune. The other brothers were the late Will H. and Fred Fenchler of El Paso and Louis D. Fenchler of Juarez. They owned property in El Paso and in Juarez.

Mr. Fenchler, bachelor, had lived in Hot Springs since 1924, where he enjoyed his lifetime outdoor sports of fishing and hunting.

He was born in Evansville, Ind., in 1858. He came to El Paso in 1882, following the brothers who came to El Paso with the building of the railroad.

The brothers owned the property which was the old Tivoli gambling hall on 16th of September street in Juarez, now the site of a Mexican government school. They retained the old home of Louis Fenchler,

next door to the old Tivoli. The house, part of David Fenchler's property, was occupied as the first American Consulate in Juarez.

The brothers operated a cattle firm and a packing plant in Juarez.

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DAVID FENCHLER TAKEN BY DEATH

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in the days of the border free zone.

The Eruption Mine, 90 miles southeast of El Paso in a bandit-infested district of Chihuahua, had a history worthy of a novel. In that history figured its wealth in great chunks of lead and silver, the attacks of Villistas and the capture of prominent El Pasoans. Money poured into El Paso from the mine until it played out.

Won on Wheel

In 1907, the Eruption Mine was placed on the roulette wheel in Juarez because taxes had not been paid. David Fenchler won the mine. He held the property until 1916, when the late D. Bruce Smith of El Paso obtained the option for \$50,000. David, Fred, and Louis Fenchler retained a little less than 50 per cent of the stock.

Then followed the exciting era and the capture by Pancho Villa of Mr. Smith and the late E. F. Knotts of El Paso, president of the Eruption Co. They were released after two weeks when ransom was paid. Mr. Knotts, however, was not released until C. L. Baker of the American Smelting & Refining Co., provided money as an advance on ore receipts. Bandits gave no more trouble on the word of Villa.

Eight thousand tons of ore, averaging 42½ per cent in lead, was shipped by wagon between 1917 and '18 to Villa Ahumada.

Mr. Fenchler is survived by two sisters, Mrs. M. K. Gutting of El Paso, and Mrs. Henry Seymour of Evansville, Ind. His niece here is Mrs. Alice Morriss. His nephew, Wilfred Seymour of Canutillo.