

# Ignatius Gaal, 90, Pioneer, Dies; Stirring Days In County Recalled

Ignatius George Gaal, 90, pioneer resident and political leader of El Paso county, and who for 70 years was superintendent of the El Paso City-County hospital, died at Providence hospital yesterday.

Mr. Gaal was born at Somolnok, Hungary. There he was educated in the lower grade schools and studied medicine under the famous Dr. Jacob Heidel, of the general hospital at Vienna. He came to the United States in 1865 and after a few months in New York moved west, settling first in Ohio and then moving to the Kansas plains. He laid out the town of Hanover and a part of the city of Waterville, Kansas.

Two years later he moved to California, where he became connected with the Central Pacific railroad, now a part of the Southern Pacific lines. Tiring of California and seeking adventure, Mr. Gaal, in 1880, came to El Paso, then the town of Franklin. A year later the railroads were built into El Paso.

**Buy 6000 Acres.**  
Immediately after coming here Mr. Gaal purchased 6000 acres of valley land. He did not take over the management of his farms for several years, preferring to remain at work in the Southern Pacific shops. Later he left the railroad company and took over the management of the

Robinson & Carvins furniture store on what later became known as San Antonio street.

In 1883 he purchased another block of property at Ysleta, then the county seat of El Paso county, and at that time the largest city in the county. He established a general merchandise store there and engaged in general contracting for the Southern Pacific.

## Enters Politics.

Mr. Gaal's first activity in politics began when the movement to change the county seat from Ysleta to El Paso was launched. His efforts were unsuccessful, however, and in 1885 the county seat was moved here.

About the same time the movement to move the county seat was launched, Mr. Gaal found himself and Pablo Romero, a naturalized American citizen, to be the only Republicans in the county. The two men launched the first movement to form a strong Republican party in the county.

In 1886 he became a candidate for county commissioner on the Republican ticket, but was defeated by a small majority. Two years later he was elected mayor of Ysleta, and a commissioner from his precinct by a majority of six to one. He was elected mayor of Ysleta for three successive terms.

As mayor of Ysleta, Mr. Gaal

was actively interested in the construction of the Lewis and Clark irrigation ditch to serve the town. He was opposed in the project by many residents of the vicinity and by officials of another irrigation company. Trouble over the irrigation ditches became an issue between two political parties and soon bitter feelings, which resulted in rioting, broke out.

Mr. Gaal and his family, attacked by members of the opposing party, barricaded themselves in the Gaal residence and for several hours engaged them in a gun battle. The attackers eventually were driven off by Gaal's followers. His re-election as mayor of the city in 1894 was considered a vote of confidence by the citizens of the community.

## Has U. S. Job.

From 1891 to 1895, besides his duties as mayor of Ysleta, Mr. Gaal served as deputy collector of customs under Webster Flannagan, collector for the El Paso district. He served seven years as president of the Ysleta school board, and was active in having Ysleta made an independent free school district.

Mr. Gaal was married in Sacramento to Miss F. O. A. Rademacher. He is survived by three sons, Charles B., Frank R., and George W. Gaal; a daughter, Mrs. Lillian M. Eden, and two grandchildren, Ignatius G. Gaal, and George F. Eden, all of El Paso. Funeral arrangements are pending with P. J. ...