

James Keogh Dies At Age of 87

James Thomas Keogh Sr., a pioneer tradesman who saw a land of promise in the raw Southwest of the 80s, died yesterday in a hospital. He was 87.

The record of the West was written by these men who come out of the East with mules and sample packs to bring civilization to a new frontier. Mr. Keogh was one of the first.

He was born in St. Louis, Mo., and went to work in a hardware store to help his mother when he was 11 years old. He worked in the supply room and filled orders for roller skates.

Mr. Keogh at 20 went West with his sample pack of hardware supplies.

He rode a train to Kansas City, where the railroad ended. From there he went by stagecoach to Las Vegas, N. M. The stagecoach stopped there.

At Las Vegas the young salesman hired a mule. He visited the little-out-of-the-way mining towns, the rough cow camps and the small settlements of New Mexico.

The trip usually required 18 months of travel. The hardware salesman with his stories of what was happening in the outside world

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was always welcome to the mountain folk.

Sometimes he saw famous bad men who were hiding in the mountains out of reach of the law. They liked the kid from the east.

They sometimes warned him. "Keep your mouth shut, boy, and you'll live longer," he recalled. Mr. Keogh outlived the badmen.

As America moved to settle the new territory. Mr. Keogh moved with them. By this time the railroad had been built as far as Las Cruces, the wide-space-in-the-road that everyone thought would be queen city of the border some day

Met James A. Dick

Mr. Keogh had traveled down to a neighboring settlement by the Franklin Mountains, a settlement that formed a pass to the north.

Meanwhile he had moved his family to Las Vegas and later to Albuquerque. In Las Vegas he became friends with another man later to become one of El Paso's outstanding business men, James A. Dick Sr.

In 1882, he brought his family to El Paso, the "city of promise." The "city" in those days was a few wooden business buildings, a lot of fancy saloons, and a few real honest-to-goodness homes.

Opened El Paso Store

He opened up a hardware store in El Paso and the business prospered. Mining tools and implements were needed to develop the Southwest.

Mr. Keogh became a member of the Episcopal Church. He was a life member of the Elks Lodge, and a member of Masonic Bodies.

He was president and treasurer of the Becker-Keogh Hardware Co.

One of his oldest friends was the late Gus Momsen whom he met during his early-day business trips to El Paso.

List of Survivors

Mr. Keogh is survived by two sons, James and Etheridge W. (Pat) Keogh of El Paso; a daughter, Mrs. Mildred Keogh Taylor of Teaneck, N. J.; a sister, Mrs. Annie K. Fox of Dayton, Ohio, and six grandchildren, James Timothy, Thomas Patrick and John Michael Keogh, all of El Paso, and Miss Mary Louise Taylor, Miss Jane Keogh Taylor and James Spencer Taylor of Teaneck N. J.

Funeral arrangements were pending with Hagedon-Harding Funeral Home.