

## PERCY M'GHEE, SR., AUTO VICTIM

### Police Make Probe Of Monday Tragedy

#### One Man Being Held As Car Corresponding To Number Taken By Witnesses Is Located In Lower El Paso By Officers.

FOLLOWING an automobile tragedy at 7:45 a. m. Monday in which Percy McGhee, sr., pioneer El Pasoan, met death, police officers took into custody Francisco Cuellar and an Oldsmobile car, the number of which, it is claimed, corresponded with that of the machine which struck Mr. McGhee and continued on.

Cuellar told officers that he was asleep in his home, room 3, 418 East Third street, at the time of the accident. He stated, however, that the car may have been used by his brother, Evaristo Cuellar, who lately returned to El Paso from Denver.



PERCY M'GHEE, SR.

City detectives are in the Cuellar home awaiting the return of Cuellar's brother for questioning, according to detective Capt. F. L. Armstrong and traffic Capt. Stanley Good.

**Automobile Did Not Stop.**

Mr. McGhee met death as he was walking across San Francisco street in the 300 block. Wheels of the car passed over his body, death being instant, in the opinion of physicians who examined Mr. McGhee at the emergency hospital. The automobile, according to a number of witnesses, did not stop, but continued on, turning sharply down a side street and directing its course toward the river.

D. O. Brock, engineer, and J. L. Hiltensider, fireman of Southern Pacific passenger train No. 101, witnessed the accident. Leaving from the cab of their engine, the two engineers copied down a number of a car which they had seen strike Mr. McGhee and continue on. They stopped the train and gave the number to police.

The number, it is said by police officers, corresponded with that on the front and rear of the Cuellar automobile which they seized in the 400 block of East Third street.

**Questioned By Police.**

Cuellar when questioned by the officers maintained that he had been asleep at the time of the accident. His wife also made a statement of the same order although supplementing it with the belief that the car could have been taken out in an automobile accident in which the driver of the car did not even stop to determine if he had hurt his victim.

Detailed to the case while every angle was closely studied. The death of Mr. McGhee, a man who had taken a prominent part in the city's welfare and growth for many years proved a deep shock to everyone. That he met his death in an automobile accident in which the driver of the car did not even stop to determine if he had hurt his victim

(Continued on page 2, column 1.)

### Percy McGhee, Sr., Victim Of Accident; Driver Of Car Fails To Halt After Crash

(Continued from page 1)

proved an impetus to the grim resolve of the police to sift every fact until the driver of the car was brought to punishment.

**Saw Car Hit Mr. McGhee.**

According to S. J. Pauline, 811 North Mesa avenue, a service car driver, Mr. McGhee had just left the curb near the triangle (foot) building, and was crossing toward a drug store at 215 San Francisco street.

"I looked up just as the car struck the man," said Mr. Pauline.

**Driver Looked Back.**

"I saw him fall and both wheels

on the right side of the auto passed over him. The driver of the car stopped and looked back. When he saw the man in the street, he speeded away; evidently he was frightened.

"It looked to me like both the driver and Mr. McGhee were looking at a team with a maul wagon, which was trying to run away, and while their attention was attracted, Mr. McGhee walked into the path of the car, and the driver did not see him."

**Six Feet From Curb.**

"There is no street intersection there, where the accident took place. Mr. McGhee was about six feet from the curb when the car struck him. Two men picked Mr. McGhee up and carried him to a bench in front of the drug store. He was lying there under difficulty."

Officer W. J. Ford went to the scene and brought Mr. McGhee to emergency hospital, where he expired before the arrival of city surgeon J. A. Hasty.

**Verdict Withheld.**

Cornor H. H. Hawkins held the inquest and withheld the verdict pending an investigation. The body was sent to the Peak-Hagerdon company. Shortly after 8 o'clock, Mrs. May McGhee, wife of Percy McGhee, Jr., arrived at police headquarters. Mrs. McGhee was bitter in denunciation of careless driving.

**Early Monday** Mr. McGhee, Jr., left his home en route to the high school. He had car trouble on the way, and it was several hours before he was notified of his father's death.

With the death of Mr. McGhee Monday, four persons have met the same tragic fate since January 1.

**A Life of Service.**

Mr. McGhee gave much of his life after he came to El Paso to public service. He was instrumental in organizing the Y. M. C. A. here and became its first president in 1905. He has since held various positions with the organization, serving in late years voluntarily and for the pleasure he derived from the work. He has organized many boys' clubs

under the "Y" was teacher of the Peace Bible class for four years, has been active in the Live Wire, H. Y. and Employed Boys' clubs.

**Known as "Dad" McGhee.**

He resided at Fort Bliss and also at Marfa as Y. M. C. A. secretary where he was affectionately known to the soldiers as "Dad" McGhee. He has been Santa Claus for them every Christmas for the past several years.

Mr. McGhee was born in Tusculum, Ala., in 1860 and came to Texas when he was 10 years old. Most of his education was received in Brownwood and Austin. He served as peace officer for many years and first passed through El Paso in 1880. In October, 1882, he was married to Miss Mary Carter in Waco. He came here to live in 1900 and was connected with the Payne-Baden Coal company.

**Former City Clerk.**

The city council appointed him city clerk April 16, 1907, and with the resignation of mayor J. H. Sweeney on April 28, 1910, councilman W. E. Robertson was chosen as mayor and Mr. McGhee named to fill the vacancy in the council. He continued as councilman until mayor C. E. Kelly, serving until 1915. Mr. McGhee was manager for the Lauer Lumber Co. from 1912 to 1917 and ran against Seth Orsdoff for sheriff in 1915.

**Was Active in Church Work.**

Mr. McGhee has been active in church work, first being connected with the First Presbyterian and in late years with the Westminster Presbyterian churches where he has held offices. At the time of his death he was employed by the Gateway club as collector.

Surviving are his widow and a daughter, James B. Porter, both living at 508 Cliff street; a son, Percy McGhee, Jr., city building inspector, and a brother and sister, Henry McGhee and Mrs. H. Watson, living in Waco.

**Helped To Curb Gambling.**

Lives and property of El Paso citizens were made safer by the efforts of Mr. McGhee and a group of citizens in the days when gambling was wide open and every man's law was his own.

These men organized themselves into a secret order to fight open gambling to a finish and the battle was won. Mr. McGhee was secretary and treasurer of the organization and took an active part in its activities.

**Great Aid To Organization.**

"Mr. McGhee had a great deal to do with the success of the organization," said the former president. "He was a most efficient secretary and kept the records accurately."

Detectives were hired to watch the games and those who took part. Most of the chief leaders were in town belonged and the activities were kept entirely secret. It culminated in a meeting in one of the public halls. So many came that the building would not hold them all, it was only a short time afterwards that open gambling was abolished.

Mr. McGhee was always vitally interested in clean morals and the right standing. He took an active part in church and Y. M. C. A. work.

Mr. Watson H. Pauline will preside at the funeral in Westminster Presbyterian church Tuesday afternoon at 2:30 and burial will be in Evergreen cemetery. The following will be pallbearers: E. A. J. Seddon, Bradford Hardie, Jr., G. N. Hix, G. E. Kelly, Dr. Willis W. Wain, and Tommy Thompson.