

DEATH CLAIMS MRS. M'HATTON, LOCAL PIONEER

Through Unlucky Marriage,
She Figures in World-
Wide Sensation.

Mrs. Martha A. McHatton, 80 years old, and for 38 years a resident of El Paso, died early Wednesday morning at a local hospital. She lived at 1108½ East San Antonio street. For many years, Mrs. McHatton was the only woman member of the El Paso chamber of commerce. Surviving are one son, William B. McHatton, of Los Angeles, and one daughter, Mrs. Margaret Peale, of Ashbury Park, N. J. Funeral arrangements will not be completed until relatives now en route have arrived.

An Unfortunate Marriage.

Mrs. McHatton, by reason of an unfortunate marriage, figured in an

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PIONEER RESIDENT DIES; WAS ONLY WOMAN IN C. C.

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incident that was the talk of two continents, back in 1903.

J. J. Craig, a palmist, who had been figuring prominently in El Paso, married Mrs. McHatton and the two went to London, where she furnished the money with which he redeemed diamonds worth a king's ransom, which he had in pawn. They had belonged to a former wife of Craig's and were known as "The Tuck diamonds."

Returning to the United States with the wealth, Craig and wife failed to declare the diamonds, it was alleged, and the stones were seized in El Paso by United States customs officials. Lengthy litigation followed.

Craig's plea, or at least that of attorneys fighting the case for Craig, disappeared when the diamonds were seized, was that, the diamonds having been originally sent from the United States to England, were "domestic diamonds" in the sense that they had once paid duty, and did not need to be declared when brought back from England. This was proved eventually and the stones were released by the government.

Craig brought them into the United States by way of Canada and the fact that he took a roundabout journey to get them in was cited by the United States in its attempt to forfeit them.

Left Local Firm to Fight.

After reaching El Paso, Craig secured an advance of money on the diamonds from Silberberg Bros., in whose possession they were at the time of their seizure by Pat Garrett, collector of customs at El Paso. This forced Silberberg Bros., to make the fight for the jewels. After taking the case to the United States court of appeals at New Orleans, they won the case and the diamonds. At that time the stones were worth about \$50,000. Today the stones would be worth \$125,000, it is declared.

The collection consisted of a necklace containing 192 diamonds ranging from a carat to two and a half carats and a brooch containing diamonds aggregating 30 or 35 carats.

Silberberg Bros. sold the brooch later, in fact, to a California woman. The diamonds in the necklace were removed and sold separately and are scattered all over the southwest at present. Many El Paso people possess one or more of the "Craig diamonds."

An Innocent Party.

Mrs. McHatton was an innocent party to the entire transaction and filed suit for divorce against Craig shortly after their return here from Europe. The divorce was immediately granted.

Newspapers of two continents printed stories of the great diamond sensation and Sunday papers printed pages of the past life of Craig as an adventurer in England, France, Egypt and even in the Orient.

The whereabouts of Craig has never been learned since he left El Paso when the diamonds were seized.