

# PASS WORD



OF THE

EL PASO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# PASSWORD

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# PASSWORD

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## CONTENTS

	Page
THE BORDER MEETING OF PRESIDENTS TAFT AND DIAZ By Charlotte Crawford .....	86
CIUDAD JUAREZ AND THE ESCOBAR REVOLUTION By Daniel B. Cullinane .....	97
REVOLUTIONARY EL PASO: 1910-1917 Part Two of Three Parts By Mardee Belding de Wetter .....	107
THE EVOLUTION OF EL PASO COUNTY By Richard K. McMaster .....	120

## BOOK REVIEWS

Nordyke, <i>John Wesley Hardin</i> , by C. L. Sonnichsen.....	123
De Zavala, <i>The Alamo</i> , by Albion Smith.....	124
CONTRIBUTORS.....	125
HISTORICAL NOTES.....	127

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## THE BORDER MEETING OF PRESIDENTS TAFT AND DIAZ

. . . . . by Charlotte Crawford

The "Most Eventful Diplomatic Event in the History of the Two Nations," according to a banner headline in the *El Paso Herald*<sup>1</sup>, took place in El Paso on the morning of October 16, 1909. The occasion was the exchange visits of William Howard Taft and Porfirio Díaz, presidents of their respective countries. Later a biographer of Taft minimized the event with the terse remark that "Taft and Díaz formally greeted each other, formally sipped champagne and formally parted."<sup>2</sup> At the time, however, the meeting was attended with all the pomp and formality of an old-world court. It was a veritable pageant of military splendor, social brilliance, courtly formality, official protocol, and patriotic fervor.

The meeting, the first in history between a president of the United States and a president of Mexico, was suggested by Mr. Taft. In a note to President Díaz on June 25, 1909, Mr. Taft wrote that he was planning a trip to the Southwest in September and October and that he was desirous of the pleasure of meeting the President of Mexico at El Paso or at some other convenient place on the border.<sup>3</sup> President Díaz replied that he would gladly accept the invitation provided the meeting could be arranged sometime after the convening of the Mexican Congress on September 16.<sup>4</sup> Then followed an exchange of correspondence between the two governments regarding American and Mexican protocol.

The entire proceedings for the meeting were planned in detail by the State Department in Washington and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Mexico City.<sup>5</sup> Even "the words that were spoken and the toasts that were offered were the result of diplomatic exchanges. There were a few additional exchanges of informal observations of a personal character to give an otherwise cut and dried program a color of naturalness."<sup>6</sup>

Besides the diplomatic correctness to be observed, the governments made elaborate arrangements for the protection and safety of the two presidents. "Thousands of troops lent dignity to the exchange of visits and served as a

<sup>1</sup>October 16, 1909.

<sup>2</sup>Henry F. Pringle, *The Life and Times of William Howard Taft* (New York, 1939), 11, 700.

<sup>3</sup>"President of the United States to the President of Mexico, June 5, 1909," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1909*, 425.

<sup>4</sup>"Meeting of Mexico to the President of the United States, July 6, 1909," *Ibid.*, 426.

<sup>5</sup>"Meeting of President Taft and President Diaz on the Border between the United States and Mexico, October 16, 1909," *Ibid.*, 425-30.

<sup>6</sup>*The Galveston (Texas) Daily News*, October 17, 1909.



The Taft-Díaz meeting. The picture was taken in front of the Customs House, Juárez. Captain Butt is standing to the rear and left of Díaz.

(Blumenthal Collection—Courtesy *El Paso Times*.)

precautionary measure against any possible accident or unpleasant circumstance.”<sup>7</sup> Ten carloads of soldiers arrived in El Paso on the morning of October 15 from Fort Sam Houston. Hundreds more from Fort Clark were encamped in the

<sup>7</sup>*El Paso Herald*, October 16, 1909.

Cotton Addition.<sup>8</sup> Local police, augmented by two hundred fifty extras sworn in for the occasion, more than two hundred deputy sheriffs, and a contingent of Texas Rangers gave added protection.<sup>9</sup> The troops, including the Third Cavalry Regiment at Fort Bliss, and the local and state peace officers were under the command of General Albert Myer of the Texas Department.<sup>10</sup> Thus for a day El Paso was virtually under martial law.

The United States Secret Service gave additional protection. Agents were in constant attendance upon President Taft and also on guard at the entrance and in the corridors of the St. Regis Hotel and in the Sheldon Hotel where the President was a guest for two hours on Saturday afternoon.<sup>11</sup> The Santa Fé Street bridge was closely watched by a double guard of agents posted on both sides of the Rio Grande. The chief of the secret service, John Wilke, sat facing the President at the breakfast arranged for him at the St. Regis Hotel. Other agents sat close by.<sup>12</sup>

President Díaz was given similar protection. Ignacio de la Barra, congressman and special representative of the Mexican government, spent six weeks in El Paso and Juárez making arrangements for the entertainment and for the safety of his chief of state.<sup>13</sup> Mexican troops under the command of Brigadier General Gregorio Ruiz were encamped behind the Mexican Central Depot, while five hundred *Zapadores*\* were assigned a vacant lot near the station for their pitched tents. An artillery unit was quartered near the present site of the Benito Juárez monument.<sup>14</sup> Several other precautions were taken to insure the safety of the Mexican President. Arrangements had been made for the President to stay at the Ochoa residence but later it was thought best that he stay at the customs house where an apartment was prepared for him. A guard of *Zapadores* was stationed in front of the customs house and a detachment lined the front wall of the building. The President's personal bodyguard, the *Guards Presidencial*, patrolled the sidewalk in front of the building.<sup>15</sup>

Another problem confronting the two governments was that of the neutrality of the El Chamizal zone. This was the "disputed territory on the Ameri-

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<sup>8</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 15, 1909.

<sup>9</sup>*El Paso Herald*, October 16, 1909.

<sup>10</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 16, 1909.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, October 17, 1909.

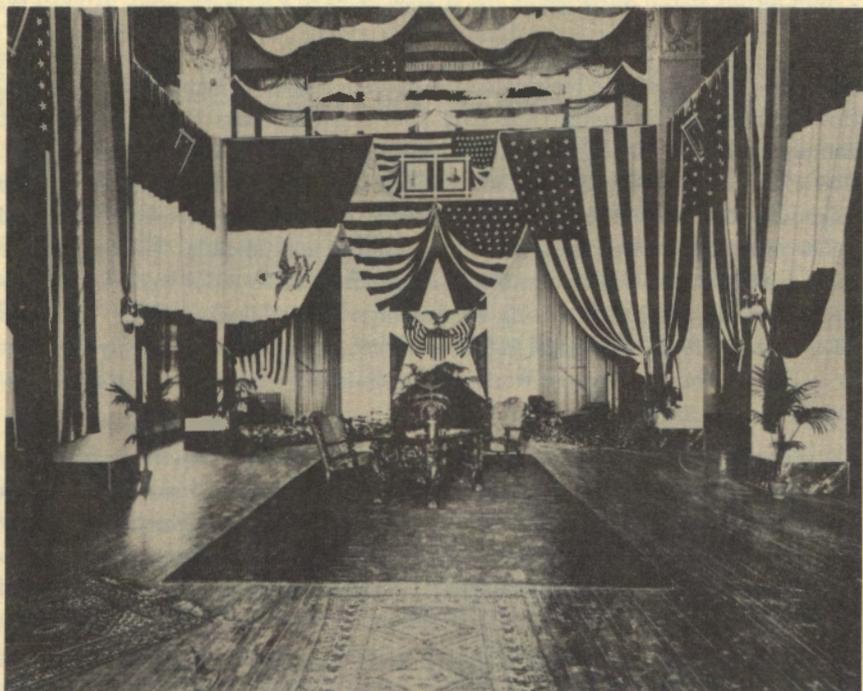
<sup>12</sup>*El Paso Herald*, October 16, 1909.

<sup>13</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 18, 1909.

\*According to the *Diccionario Enciclopédico Abreviado*, "*Zapadores*" is "a military term, used in the plural, for technical troops of the corps of engineers in charge both of the construction of roads, bridges, etc., for the use of the army itself and of the destruction of those of the enemy." (Editor's note.)

<sup>14</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 15, 1909.

<sup>15</sup>*El Paso Herald*, October 15, 1909.



The El Paso Chamber of Commerce decorated for the Taft-Díaz meeting.  
(Courtesy of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce.)

can side of the river abutting the Rio Grande.<sup>16</sup> A revised protocol sent by Acting Secretary of State, Alvey A. Adee, to the Mexican Chargé, Señor Davalos, provided for the following solution:

It is understood between the Mexican foreign office and the Department of State that for the sake of convenience the El Chamizal region, which lies between the cities of El Paso and Juárez, shall be considered for this occasion neutral territory, and that there shall be no flags of either nationality displayed therein.<sup>17</sup>

According to the arrangements, as President Díaz passed through the zone his troops were to fall out with the exception of an escort of twenty cavalymen. The President and his party would then pass between double files of United States infantry, the troops standing at "Present Arms."<sup>18</sup> The same procedure was to be followed when President Taft returned the visit, the President, his

<sup>16</sup>*The Galveston Daily News*, October 16, 1909.

<sup>17</sup>"Acting Secretary of State to Mexican Charge, October 15, 1909," *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1909, 426.

<sup>18</sup>*The Galveston Daily News*, October 17, 1909.

party and a cavalry escort passing through a double file of Mexican soldiers.<sup>19</sup>

The morning of Saturday, October 16, found El Paso dressed for the gala occasion. The streets and buildings were decorated with pennants, flags, bunting, flowers, and electric lights. The City Hall and the Court House were almost entirely covered with red, white, blue, and green bunting and floating banners. The City National Bank, the Post Office, and the Sheldon Hotel were also splendidly decorated.<sup>20</sup> Miles of streets were decked with festoons of color and lights and with signs of welcome in both English and Spanish. The San Jacinto Plaza was likewise decorated and massed on three of its sides were four thousand school children, each waving an American and a Mexican flag. "El Paso's decorations were all individual effort, and though not forming a unity of effect as in Juárez where the whole work was supervised by the Mexican government, they made a creditable showing."<sup>21</sup>

President Taft's special train pulled into the Union Station yards shortly after nine on the morning of the sixteenth. It then proceeded slowly to Oregon Street where the President and his party alighted and were greeted by Mayor Joseph U. Sweeney and a delegation of El Pasoans. After formal presentations the two groups went directly to the St. Regis Hotel where breakfast awaited them.<sup>22</sup>

The breakfast guests were standing when President Taft and his party entered the hall. They applauded heartily as he took his seat on the dais with Mayor Sweeney and Governor Campbell of Texas on his right and Governor Creel of Chihuahua and Secretary of War Dickinson on his left. The elaborate breakfast, which was served to one hundred fifty guests, cost the El Paso citizens twenty-five dollars a plate. During the course of the breakfast a number of prominent citizens of Texas and Mexico were introduced to the President, but there were no speeches, although Mayor Felix Barcenas of Juárez extended a formal invitation to Mr. Taft to visit his city.

The large dining room of the St. Regis, which had been closed to the public for a week, presented a scene of indescribable beauty. Curtains were drawn and the room was illuminated by clusters of electric lights. Mr. Taft's elevated table was decked by a bank of red, white, and blue flowers. Along each of the three tables running the length of the room was a winding garland of flowers through which glowed the light from hidden electric light bulbs. Festoons of red, white, blue, and green bunting were draped on the walls and ceiling, the green paying tribute to the Mexican guests.<sup>23</sup> American flags covered

<sup>19</sup>*El Paso Herald*, October 16, 1909.

<sup>20</sup>"Entrevista Díaz-Taft," *Cronica Ilustrada* (Mexico, D. F., 1909), 81.

<sup>21</sup>*The Galveston Daily News*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>22</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>23</sup>*El Paso Herald*, October 16, 1909.

the front of the President's table as well as the snow-white pillars in the room. To commemorate the event, guests at the President's table were presented with gold match boxes while similar ones in silver were given to the other guests. The President himself was given a large gold box of special design.<sup>24</sup>

The breakfast over, Mr. Taft rose from the table with a formal "Good Morning, Gentlemen," left the hall with his aide, Captain Archibald Butt.\* The guests applauded as the President walked between two files of soldiers through the lobby of the hotel to his car.<sup>25</sup> As he emerged from the hotel entrance he was greeted by the four thousand school children singing "My Country 'Tis of Thee." The President entered his car and was driven around the Plaza, bowing and smiling to the children. He was then driven to the Chamber of Commerce building.<sup>26</sup>

At the Chamber of Commerce President Taft awaited the arrival of President Díaz. He sat in a private room talking with members of the El Paso Committee and one of the committee, Mr. J. A. Harper, discussed the El Chamizal dispute and then brought up the importance of the Elephant Butte Dam project to the people of the El Paso valley. Mr. Taft asked that Mr. Harper write out the particulars of the proposed dam and send them to him at his brother's ranch near Corpus Christi, that there he would give the matter his personal attention while he enjoyed a brief rest following his visit to San Antonio on Sunday and Monday.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile President Díaz was making his entrance into the United States. His carriage which had been brought from the presidential stables in Mexico City, was equipped with gold hubs and gold mounted doors and drawn by sleek black horses with gay cockades.<sup>28</sup> Passing under a handsome white arch bearing the inscription, "Welcome Díaz-Taft, Bienvenido," the President and his escort halted at Seventh and Santa Fé streets, the border of El Chamizal.<sup>29</sup> There the chief executive of Mexico was greeted by the Secretary of War, Mr. J. H. Dickinson, the personal representative of President Taft, Governor T. M. Campbell and his staff, General Myer and his staff, and Mayor Sweeney. As President Díaz stepped from his carriage a salute of twenty-one guns roared from Batteries A, B, and C of the Third Field Artillery. Mr. Díaz then entered the carriage of the Secretary of War and the escort formed in the following order: General Myer and his staff, the Third Army band, a squadron of cavalry, the presidential

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<sup>24</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 17, 1909.

\*Captain Butt, then a Major, went to a watery grave when the *Titanic* sank in 1912. (Editor's note.)

<sup>25</sup>*El Paso Herald*, October 16, 1909.

<sup>26</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>27</sup>*Idem*.

<sup>28</sup>*The Galveston News*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>29</sup>"Entrevista Díaz-Taft," *loc. cit.*, 82.

carriage, and carriages for the President's personal escort and for Governor Campbell, his staff, and Mayor Sweeney.<sup>30</sup>

The procession moved briskly along Santa Fé to Fifth Street, east on Fifth to El Paso Street, north on El Paso to San Francisco, and along San Francisco to the Chamber of Commerce. All along the way the President was greeted with cheers and shouts of "Viva Díaz." He acknowledged the greetings with bows to the right and left.<sup>31</sup>

At eleven o'clock a bugle call announced the approach of President Díaz. Captain Butt escorted President Taft to a position midway in the auditorium and facing the door. About six minutes later President Díaz, escorted by Governor Campbell and Mayor Sweeney and accompanied by his aide and staff, appeared in the doorway. The Mexican President was attired in the full dress of a Division General and decorated with numerous medals. He wore gold lace at his

throat and cuffs and a gold sash around his waist. In his hand he carried his white chapeau.<sup>32</sup>



The chair President Taft broke when he sat down to talk with Díaz. The seat has been replaced but the crack in the right arm is still visible. The chair is still in use at the El Paso Chamber of Commerce. (Photo by Lucky Leverett.)

In contrast to the formality and pomp of the ceremony, the handclasp of the two chiefs of state and the exchange of courteous greetings were marked by simple and cordial informality. President Díaz expressed high regard for the man who had accomplished so much in the Philippines and in Cuba and who was the Chief Executive of so great a nation as the United States. President Taft in turn said that he was glad to know the man who was responsible for making Mexico a great nation. Both dwelt upon the cordial relations existing between the two countries, and declared that this meeting merely typified the strength of the bonds of friendship.<sup>33</sup> President Taft then presented Postmaster General Hitchcock to President Díaz whereupon General Manuel Cosío, Minister

<sup>30</sup>*The Galveston Daily News*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>31</sup>*El Paso Herald*, October 16, 1909.

<sup>32</sup>"Entrevista Díaz-Taft," *loc. cit.*, 82.

<sup>33</sup>*The Galveston Daily News*, October 17, 1909.

of War, was presented to President Taft.<sup>34</sup>

To the great disappointment of many El Pasoans all invitations which had been issued for the meeting of the two presidents had been recalled. The state departments of the two nations had assumed the position that the meeting was purely a state function and that no spectators were to be present.<sup>35</sup> Thus only members of the presidential staffs were in attendance at the meeting in the Chamber of Commerce. These included J. H. Dickinson, Secretary of War; Frank H. Hitchcock, Postmaster General; Governor Campbell of Texas, and a few other state officials; Captain Archibald Butt, President Taft's military aide; and the President's assistant secretaries, John Hays Hammond, Dr. J. J. Richardson, and Wendall Michler. President Díaz was accompanied by General Manuel G. Cosío, Minister of War; Olegario Molina, Minister of Commerce; Enrique C. Creel, Governor of Chihuahua and former ambassador to the United States; Colonel Pablo Escandon, chief of the military staff; and Ignacio de la Barra of the Mexican committee of arrangements.<sup>36</sup>

After formal introductions President Taft turned to Mr. Díaz and said, "I shall be very glad of having the pleasure of taking you and Governor Creel, who interprets so well and who is my personal friend, into an adjoining room for just a few minutes."<sup>37</sup> After they retired champagne was sent in. They remained together about twenty minutes but, according to official reports, nothing of political or diplomatic importance was discussed.<sup>38</sup> Immediately after the private meeting President Díaz and his staff returned to Juárez, and within an hour President Taft and his staff were on their "way to Juárez to repay the call."<sup>39</sup>

In passing to Juárez the presidential party followed the same route and the same procedure as had the Mexican group. Crossing the boundary over the Santa Fé Street bridge the American President was met at the customs inspector's office by General Cosío, Brigadier General Ruiz, Governor Creel and Mayor Barcenás. Entering a carriage that awaited him Mr. Taft was driven down Juárez Avenue to the customs house. He found the little frontier town a mass of waving color. The rough adobe walls of the buildings had been literally covered with red, white, blue and green decorations. Juárez Avenue had been transformed into a continuous court of honor with garlands of flowers and colored banners looped from one towering white pillar to another. The avenue was lined with cheering crowds and with hundreds of school children singing

<sup>34</sup>Jose F. Godoy, *Porfirio Díaz* (New York, 1910), 227.

<sup>35</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>36</sup>Godoy, *Porfirio Díaz*, 224-5.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, 226-7.

<sup>38</sup>*The Galveston Daily News*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>39</sup>Godoy, *Porfirio Díaz*, 227.

"America." Upon Mr. Taft's arrival at the customs house a Mexican band broke into the strains of "The Star-Spangled Banner."<sup>40</sup>

President Díaz awaited the American President in the reception hall to the right of the main entrance of the customs house. This had been decorated as the "green room." There the Mexican President presented his son, Colonel Porfirio Díaz, Jr., and his nephew, General Felix Díaz, to President Taft. Mr. Taft was so impressed with all the ceremony that he said to Díaz: "I received you as a true republican, but you receive me as an emperor."<sup>41</sup> After a brief interview the two chief executives with their aids stepped outside to the front of the building under a scarlet canopy and posed for a picture.<sup>42</sup> Taft and his party then returned to El Paso.

The largest and most spectacular procession of the day was formed when President Taft returned from Juárez. Military, civic, fraternal, and patriotic organizations fell in behind the presidential party and moved through downtown El Paso to Cleveland Square. There the President and his party alighted from their carriages and reviewed the remainder of the parade. The procession which lasted an hour and a half included United States troops of all arms composing the garrisons at Fort Bliss, Fort Clark, and Fort Sam Houston; military institute cadets; the national guard; uniformed societies and fraternal orders; military and civilian bands; Confederate and Spanish-American War Veterans; and about fifteen hundred members of Mexican societies in El Paso.<sup>43</sup>

At the close of the parade President Taft made his only speech during his visit to El Paso. He said in part:

For the first time in history, except once, and that was when Theodore Roosevelt stepped over the border in Panama [1906], when we were so mixed up on the Zone with Panama that it did not seem to be quite stepping out of the country, a president of the United States has stepped upon foreign soil and enjoyed the hospitality of a foreign government . . . The prosperity of the United States is largely dependent upon the prosperity of Mexico, and Mexico's prosperity depends upon ours, at least, in this part of the country . . . An event like this that marks the undying friendship of the two countries is one in which any who takes part may well have pride.<sup>44</sup>

President Taft left the speaker's stand as the Fort Bliss band played "Auld Lang Syne" and repaired to the Sheldon Hotel where a suite had been arranged

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<sup>40</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>41</sup>"Entrevista Díaz-Taft," *loc. cit.*, 79.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>43</sup>*El Paso Herald*, October 16, 1909.

<sup>44</sup>*The Galveston Daily News*, October 17, 1909.

for him. He attended to some matters of state, rested a short time, and was ready at 5:30 to be escorted to the banquet in Juárez.<sup>45</sup>

For the banquet the Juárez customs house had been transformed into a reproduction of one of the famous salons of Versailles. The walls of white and gold were hung with rich red draperies. Large paintings of George Washington and Hidalgo hung on the walls back of the presidents' chairs. The two presidents with their staff and newspapermen occupied a large center table while the remainder of the one hundred fifty guests were arranged around it.<sup>46</sup> The room was illuminated by hundreds of electric lights partly hidden by masses of vari-colored flowers. Three carloads of flowers had been brought from Guadalajara, and they filled the room with their beauty and fragrance. The tables were set with gold and silver service which had belonged to Maximilian and was valued at a million dollars. Cut glass valued at two hundred thousand dollars had also been brought from Chapultepec Castle. Special tables had been made to fit the fine linens from the presidential palace. The dinner was prepared and served under the supervision of President Díaz' chief steward and his chef who had formerly been chef to the King of Spain. It was claimed that the Mexican government spent fifty thousand dollars remodeling and decorating the customs house for the occasion.<sup>47</sup>

The host and his guests sat down to dinner at six o'clock while the orchestra Lerdo de Tejada played soft music. Presidents Taft and Díaz sat side by side and conversed partly in Spanish and partly through interpreters who stood directly behind their chairs. President Taft had retained much of the Spanish he had learned in the Philippines.<sup>48</sup>

As President Díaz rose to give a toast, a hush of expectancy fell upon the room. When he concluded, his words were translated into English. President Taft then rose and it was several minutes before he could proceed. Cheers rang through the flower-decked room. His toast was translated into Spanish. During the banquet gold goblets were presented to each of the presidents by Felix Martinez as gifts from the City of El Paso.<sup>49</sup>

Shortly before eight o'clock the ceremony was over and President Taft made his way back to American soil through a blaze of light and with an escort that changed at the bridge from Mexican to American. The group boarded their special train and left immediately for San Antonio. That day,

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<sup>45</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>46</sup>*Idem.*

<sup>47</sup>*The Galveston Daily News*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>48</sup>"Entrevista Díaz-Taft," *loc. cit.*, 80.

<sup>49</sup>*El Paso Morning Times*, October 17, 1909.

October 16, marked the climax of President Taft's tour around the country and was perhaps the most strenuous he had.

At eleven o'clock the same evening President Díaz left Juárez in the presidential train amid cheers of the people and the boom of cannon. He had been acclaimed with spontaneous enthusiasm on this his first public appearance in Juárez. "The humble Mexican laborers vied with the splendidly dressed Mexican women on the balconies in their demonstration of enthusiasm."<sup>50</sup> This could be variously interpreted as a demonstration of loyalty to the man himself, or as an expression of intense national feeling. At any rate, Porfirio Díaz, President of Mexico for the seventh time, received a great ovation from the people of Juárez.<sup>51</sup>

Mr. Lee Orndorff through Mrs. Camille Kibler Craig of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce has given our Society a rare and valuable collection of material pertaining to the Taft-Díaz meeting. Included in the gift are thirteen photographs, invitations to the meeting issued by *El Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores* and by the United States Department of States, the menu for the breakfast served at the Hotel St. Regis (see above, page 90), and the menu for the dinner served in Juárez (see above, page 95).

The breakfast menu which was printed in booklet form follows:

DEJEUNER

Martini Cocktail Frappe	Apollinaris
Batons Souffles au Parmesan	Tournedos sur Croustades a la Trianon
Macedoin de Fruits en Surprise	Mousse Glacee a la Mexicaine
Bouillon de Clovis a la St. Regis	Petits Fours Varies
Truite de Riviere Saute Meuniere	Cafe Special
Cigares: La Internacional, ("Presidents")	Cigarettes

The dinner menu was engraved in script on a gold-embossed card:

	<i>Consomme Regence.</i>
<i>Chablis Moutanne</i> 1898	<i>Paupiettes de Brochet a la Olga.</i>
	<i>Timbales a la Palermitaine.</i>
	<i>Filets piques a la Varin.</i>
<i>Chateau Bob-air</i> 1893	<i>Chaud-froid de Volaille a l'Estragon.</i>
	<i>Quartiers de Chevreuil aux deux Sauces.</i>
	<i>Salade Charboniere.</i>
<i>Champagne</i> <i>Veuve Cliquot Brut</i>	<i>Asperges Sauce Suedoise.</i>
	<i>Gateaux Napolitains.</i>
<i>Liqueurs.</i>	<i>Cafe. The.</i>

<sup>50</sup>The *Galveston Daily News*, October 17, 1909.

<sup>51</sup>On Friday afternoon, October 15, President Díaz laid the cornerstone of the one hundred twenty-five thousand dollar monument to Benito Juárez.

## CIUDAD JUAREZ AND THE ESCOBAR REVOLUTION

. . . . . by Daniel B. Cullinane

On Sunday, March 3, 1929, revolution came once again to Mexico. Most writers of that period seemed to see some significance in the date. The following day, Monday, March 4, Herbert G. Hoover was inaugurated President of the United States. It was believed that the revolutionists planned their revolt to coincide with the change of government and, with a quick coup, present the United States with a *fait accompli* which President Hoover would have no choice but to accept.<sup>1</sup> The leaders fully expected that it would take President Hoover at least a week to gather up the reigns of government and make decisions which might adversely affect the revolution. In that time, they confidently believed, the rebel armies would be able to overthrow the existing government of Mexico and place their own man in the president's chair as a military dictator. As we shall see, neither of these things happened. In the first place, Portes Gil, the interim President of Mexico, acted with great speed to suppress the revolution; and secondly, President Hoover acted with unexpected promptness and firmness in support of the constitutional government of Mexico.

As noted above, the revolution broke out on Sunday, March 3. On that date a group of regular army generals and colonels took up arms against the federal government in ten of the thirty states of the republic. The states were widely scattered, extending from Vera Cruz on the coast east of Mexico City to Coahuila and Sonora in the north. The states involved were Vera Cruz, Jalisco, Oaxaca, Nayarit, Zacatecas, Nuevo Leon, Durango, Sinaloa, Coahuila and Sonora.<sup>2</sup> In each state the pattern was very much the same—the military commander or governor, usually a general, defected from the regular army and, in most instances, took with him all the federal troops under his command. The troops seldom knew that they were rebels but were led to believe that they were fighting a revolutionary government in Mexico City. Although the rebels immediately began a recruiting campaign, there was no great rush to enlist in the cause, and seldom did the rebel generals have more troops than those that defected. Furthermore, the generals had difficulty holding these, for as the ex-federals eventually learned the true nature of the revolution, entire companies and battalions returned to the federal ranks. Later several rebel generals made deals with the federal government for returning their

<sup>1</sup>"The Vicious Circle of Mexican Revolutions," *The Living Age*, April, 1929, 90.

<sup>2</sup>"Shots Beyond the Rio Grande," *Literary Digest*, March 16, 1927, 11.

commands to the federal forces. Some of these, however, were undoubtedly influenced by their desire to be on the winning side.

At first each rebel leader seemed to be on his own in his respective state but gradually a central command emerged under General José Gonsalo Escobar, former commander-in-chief of the state of Coahuila.<sup>3</sup> Other leaders playing prominent parts in the revolt included General Jesús Maria Aguirre, military commander of the state of Vera Cruz, who conducted the revolutionary operations in that state;<sup>4</sup> his brother, General Simón Aguirre; another General Aguirre who operated for a time around Nogales in Sonora; Governor Fausto Topete of the state of Sonora, who was second only to Escobar in the revolutionary command; and General Francisco Manzo, also of Sonora.

At the head of the federal government in Mexico City when the revolution broke out was Elias Portes Gil who was serving as interim president. General Plutarco Elias Calles had completed his term as president late in 1928, and General Obregón had been elected in a constitutional election to succeed him. Subsequent to Obregón's election but prior to his inauguration he was murdered by a political foe. The Mexican Congress then selected Portes Gil to act as interim president for a term of fourteen months, during which time a new election was to be held to elect a permanent president.<sup>5</sup> Both Gil and Obregón were political associates of ex-president Calles, but Gil was unique in that he was the first civilian to become president, thereby breaking a precedent of long standing that the president be a general. The fact that Portes Gil was not an army man was one of the causes of the rebellion, as the clique of army generals who had controlled Mexico for many years hated to see their power and prerogatives slipping away from them. Indeed, one writer referred to the revolution as a "Presidential Preference Primary, Old Style."<sup>6</sup>

President Portes Gil acted promptly to put down the revolt. His first act was the appointment of Calles as Secretary of War, giving him complete freedom of action.<sup>7</sup> Calles immediately announced that he would take the field personally as commander-in-chief of all federal forces and that he would wage a vigorous campaign to suppress the rebellion. At that time Mexico was in better financial condition than she had ever been and thus was able to procure necessary supplies, armament, ammunition, transport, airplanes, et

<sup>3</sup>"Taking Sides Against the Rebels in Mexico," *Ibid.*, March 23, 1929, 7.

<sup>4</sup>Charles W. Hackett, "The Mexican Rebellion," *Current History*, April, 1929, 140.

<sup>5</sup>"Shots Beyond the Rio Grande," *loc. cit.*, March 16, 1929, 11.

<sup>6</sup>Duncan Aikman, "A General's War," *The Outlook and Independent*, March 27, 1929, 488.

<sup>7</sup>Hackett, *loc. cit.*, 140.



General José Gonsalo Escobar. The picture was taken in the general's railroad car headquarters.

(Blumenthal Collection—Courtesy *El Paso Times*.)

*cetera*, taking advantage of President Hoover's promise to sell the government of Mexico all needed arms and equipment.

This was the first war in which Mexico used aviation and radio and both of these were to have an important effect on the outcome of the revolution. Both sides took to the radio without delay and flooded the air waves with their respective propaganda. At first and for some time thereafter it was almost impossible to evaluate radio and newspaper news of the progress of

the war as both sides made extravagant and diametrically opposite claims of success.

As stated above, the Mexican government was in excellent financial condition and thus was able to support its field forces with the necessary matériel. The rebels, on the other hand, had little except what they had taken with them into the field. This generally consisted of rather meager garrison supplies which were soon exhausted under campaign conditions. They were also seriously short of funds. However, these problems were quickly solved. Cattle and farm produce were requisitioned to such an extent that the native population was left in dire straits after the rebel troops moved on. To replenish funds, the banks were the rebel's first objective. The commanding general in occupying a city or town would promptly ascertain the total amount of the bank's reserve fund and then force a loan of exactly that amount. In Monterrey alone the rebels "borrowed" \$345,000. from the banks.<sup>8</sup> Forced taxation was also used to raise funds. Large industries were visited and their books examined to determine the amount of annual taxes usually paid by the companies. With this information a tax assessment of a year or two in advance would then be collected. Another important source of income for rebel commands was possession of a port of entry, such as Juárez, which gave an opportunity to collect the custom duties.

According to a custom of long standing among Mexican generals of that era, all funds were held and disbursed personally by the commanding general. When military reverses forced a commander to flee, usually to the United States, the funds and everything else which was movable went with him. Many generals, however, did not wait until it was time to flee before safeguarding their future, but sent large sums of cash across the border for deposit in United States and Canadian banks. Another method by which avaricious generals could protect their future was the "\$50,000. Cannon Ball,"<sup>9</sup> an expression which has been attributed to General Obregón. It simply meant that every general had his price and that it was often much cheaper for the federals to pay a large sum of money to a rebel general for which they bought his command. The deal might include amnesty for the general and his return to the Regular Army, but usually the receiver took his cannon ball and fled to asylum in the United States. During the operations near Naco, Sonora, General Olachea, a Yaqui Indian, defected with his command of 1,500 Yaquis, all former federals. He was permitted to retain his command under the federals and was active later in the federal defense of Naco. No one ever learned the amount of his cannon ball. During the rebel attack on the city of Mazatlan,

<sup>8</sup>Aikman, *loc. cit.*, 488.

<sup>9</sup>Duncan Aikman, "\$50,000. Cannon Balls," *Harper's Monthly*, July, 1929, 244.

the rebel General Manzo conducted his part of the attack with such reluctance that he was easily repulsed by the federals. Immediately after the battle he fled to the United States where he never seemed to be in need of money.

All during the revolution there were many Mexican federal agents in El Paso and other border cities opposite Mexican cities held by the rebels. All of these agents carried briefcases well filled with cannon balls. During the time when Escobar's troops were withdrawing to Juárez from the south, there was a paymaster general who was carrying the payroll for a brigade which was then fighting at Reforma. When news finally filtered through that his brigade had been completely wiped out, the paymaster left for the United States and the payroll went with him.<sup>10</sup>

As previously noted, ten states were involved in the rebellion but most of the fighting took place in the east coast state of Vera Cruz, the states of Sinaloa and Sonora in the west, the state of Durango, and the northern border states of Nuevo Leon, Coahuila, and Chihuahua. In Vera Cruz General Jesús Maria Aguirre took the field with the 3,000 federal troops of his command, converted to revolutionists largely without their knowledge. Federal troops in Mexico City remained loyal to the government and General Calles dispatched a force of 2,000 men to destroy Aguirre. At first General Aguirre had some local success but when his men learned from radio appeals and from leaflets dropped by federal airplanes that they were in revolt against their legal government, a large number deserted Aguirre and rejoined the federal forces. This deflection cut Aguirre's strength to 600 men and he was no longer able to hold out. After a bloody battle fought on March 7 in Vera Cruz, that city fell to the federals and Aguirre and his staff fled to the hills. By March 14, however, one general and three colonels of Aguirre's staff had been captured, court-martialed, and shot. Aguirre himself was captured on March 18, and after a court martial, was executed by a firing squad three days later.<sup>11</sup>

Elsewhere in Mexico there were two principal theatres of action, one consisting of the states of Nuevo Leon, Coahuila, Durango and Chihuahua, and the other of the states of Sinaloa and Sonora in the northwest. Military operations in both of these theaters commenced in the south, with General Calles' federals advancing from Mexico City. Some of the earliest fighting in these areas took place in Sonora around Nogales. However, General Topete took Nogales during the early days of the rebellion and this sector quieted down and did not become active again until the closing days of the war.

Since Ciudad Juárez was the largest city on the United States border and the most important port of entry, it early became a target for the rebels. At

<sup>10</sup>*Idem.*, 249.

<sup>11</sup>*El Paso Times*, March 3 to 22, 1929.

the start of hostilities Juárez was occupied by the customary small peacetime garrison under the command of General Manuel J. Limón. With most of that part of Mexico between Juárez and Mexico City occupied by the rebels, Juárez was isolated from federal aid. On March 6 General Matias Ramos arrived in Juárez from Mexico City to assume command of the garrison and take charge of the city's defenses. Since direct communication with Mexico City was impossible, General Ramos had to fly to one of the lower Rio Grande cities and from there by United States commercial aviation to El Paso where he crossed the Rio Grande into Juárez.<sup>12</sup>

Juárez, meanwhile, prepared for an attack. Hasty entrenchments were dug around the perimeter of the city and machine guns were mounted in strategic positions. The civilian population was highly excited and there was much excitement and activity in El Paso as well. The United States Army Command at Fort Bliss was alerted as was also the Border Patrol, Customs, and the Immigration Service. The commanding general of Fort Bliss was Brigadier General George Van Horn Moseley and his immediate superior was Major General William Lassiter, commander of the VIII Corps Area with headquarters at San Antonio, Texas. General Lassiter was responsible for border protection from the Gulf of Mexico to the California state line. General Moseley was in constant contact with General Ramos in Juárez, taking every precaution to prevent incidents which might violate United States territory or international law. It was practically impossible to have any extensive fighting in Juárez without rifle fire and possibly artillery fire crossing the river, thus causing casualties and property damages in El Paso.<sup>13</sup>

On March 7 reports were received in Juárez that the rebels were approaching the city from the south. The next morning, Friday, the rebels attacked at dawn. Fort Hidalgo on the outskirts of the city surrendered at the first approach of the rebels and the fighting moved into the streets of the city. The small federal garrison was unable to hold off the invaders but many soldiers were posted on the roof-tops of downtown buildings to snipe at the rebels. Four officers and fifty men fortified themselves in the Hotel Rio Bravo on Juárez Avenue. Most of the soldiers were posted on the roof of the hotel and when the rebels attacked, the officer in command, calling on his men to follow him, rushed down the stairs to the attack. Only three officers followed; the soldiers, feeling that discretion was the better part of valor, departed by the fire escape in the rear. Three of the four officers were slain.<sup>14</sup> There was considerable shooting on both sides with small arms

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, March 7, 1929.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, March 3 to 8, 1929.

<sup>14</sup>Aikman, "\$50,000. Cannon Ball," *loc. cit.*, 247.

but casualties were remarkably light. 16th of September Street and Lerdo Avenue were badly peppered with rifle fire, and many horses were killed. Total casualties among the military were nine dead and seventeen wounded. One United States citizen, a bartender named Barnes at the Mint Cafe, was killed while asleep in his bed in the St. Louis Hotel.<sup>15</sup>

Considerable rifle fire crossed the river causing casualties and property damage in El Paso. In the center of the downtown business district the thirteen story El Paso National Bank building received so much rifle fire that it was necessary to move the personnel from the upper stories. Many homes in south El Paso, nearer the river, were pockmarked with bullets and the city's two casualties occurred in that area. A three year old girl was killed and a seven year old boy was badly wounded. It was generally conceded that casualties would have been heavier in El Paso if General Moseley had not acted as he did. During the battle General Moseley crossed into Juárez and persuaded General Ramos to surrender the city. Ramos agreed to do so if General Moseley would grant asylum to him and his troops. In accordance with the agreement, General Ramos, his staff and troops, and their families, baggage, riding horses, and some motor transport, were checked across the International Bridge by the Immigration Service. Military personnel were permitted to keep their arms, but were required to surrender their ammunition which was impounded at Fort Bliss.<sup>16</sup> All refugees and their impediments were moved to Fort Bliss by army motor transport where they were interned in two large riding halls. They were well treated, being permitted to mount their own guard and being supplied United States Army rations and forage for all persons and animals. They were never treated as prisoners. Meanwhile, General Murrieta assumed command of Juárez for the rebels.

Later, the federal troops interned at Fort Bliss were repatriated when they were badly needed to reinforce the federal garrison at Naco, Arizona. They arrived in Naco on April 6, having traveled by a Southern Pacific troop train which carried 295 military personnel, 46 women, 33 children, 37 horses and some motor transport vehicles. Governor Phillips of Arizona strongly protested to the VIII Corps Headquarters and to Washington against what he termed an "invasion" of his state, but the movement was completed before anything could be done to stop it.

The day of the battle was a field day for tourists and local citizens who rushed to building tops and the Scenic Drive, high on the mountain side over the city. Students from the Texas College of Mines in El Paso rushed across

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<sup>15</sup>El Paso Times, March 9, 1929.

<sup>16</sup>Idem.



Escobar rebels. This picture was taken in Juárez.  
(Blumenthal Collection—Courtesy *El Paso Times*.)

the river to offer their services as stretcher bearers.<sup>17</sup> As soon as the shooting stopped Americans rushed across the river en masse to stick their fingers in bullet holes in walls and make life miserable for the bartenders with their countless questions.

On April 1 Calles attacked Escobar and General Caraveo at Jimenez. The rebels were defeated but were able to disengage themselves and retreat northward to Reforma station. Calles overtook Escobar at Reforma and there the bloodiest battle of the revolution was fought, resulting in 2,000 casualties.<sup>18</sup> The leaders, however, were able to escape towards Rosalier ahead of the pursuing federal cavalry.

The battle of Reforma was the beginning of the end for the rebels. Escobar decided to withdraw into Sonora where the main strength of the rebels was located. The withdrawal was made by rail to Juárez where Escobar arrived

<sup>17</sup>"What Are the Mexicans Fighting Over," *loc. cit.*, 11.

<sup>18</sup>Froylan C. Manjarrez, "La Crisis de la Violencia," *La Jornada Institucional* (Mexico, D.F., 1930), 123.

with five troop trains carrying his entire command. After a brief servicing stop in the border city on April 6, all five trains departed for Casas Grandes en route to Sonora. While in Juárez Escobar ordered that all taxi cabs in the city be taken to the railroad yards. By nightfall 87 taxis were in the yards and all were loaded on a sixth train that also left for Casas Grandes. Escobar likewise left Juárez, probably by air, but before he departed he proclaimed himself the Provisional President of Mexico.<sup>19</sup>

The federals moved into Juárez without a fight and then followed two days of rioting and looting. However, the city government was quickly re-established, the mayor installed, and everything soon returned to normal. Other border towns including Zaragoza twelve miles east of Juárez were also occupied by the federals. The rebel garrison at Ojinaga, opposite Presidio, Texas, defected to the federals after a battle in which two officers and ninety soldiers were killed.

With the retreat from Juárez the revolution was practically ended. The rebels held only one stronghold, Nogales, but the city was completely surrounded by the federals on the Mexican side and on the north by the International Boundary line fence. Brigadier General Cocheu, recently arrived from Naco, was in command of all United States forces and he was greatly concerned over the situation. In an attempt to prevent certain United States involvement he offered his services to both sides as a mediator, and his offer was accepted. The conference was held on April 30 in Nogales, Arizona. The rebel leaders agreed to surrender their troops if the federal government would agree to spare their lives and the lives of the lesser leaders who were then in Nogales. After discussing the terms with President Portes Gil in Mexico, the federals accepted the surrender proposals and the revolt was over.<sup>20</sup>

General Escobar was not present during the surrender negotiations. He had disappeared several days earlier and there was some conjecture on both sides of the border as to his whereabouts. He had his own airplane and was reported to be in several places at the same time. Actually he crossed the border and surrendered to officers of the United States Immigration Service.<sup>21</sup> He was held briefly and released. He later joined his wife and family in Los Angeles. Except for the generals who were executed in Vera Cruz, practically all rebel generals escaped capture by crossing into the United States.

The Escobar Revolution was never popular. The people of Mexico were more enlightened than in the past and saw the revolution for what it was,

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<sup>19</sup>*El Paso Times*, April 3 to 9, 1929.

<sup>20</sup>Charles W. Hacket, "Collapse of the Mexican Rebellion," *Current History*, June, 1929, 499.

<sup>21</sup>*El Paso Times*, May 3, 1929.

an attempt on the part of a handful of selfish generals to take over the government for their own benefit. All during the rebellion practically everyone believed and feared that the close of hostilities would be followed by a long period of banditry and guerrilla warfare by the defeated troops. This had been the classic pattern of Mexican revolutions in the past. But thanks to the government's enlightened policy this was not the case. Amnesty was granted to all ranks below that of general and a few senior colonels. In addition the government put the surrendered troops on special trains and sent them to their homes at government expense. Twenty-four hours after the truce was signed at Nogales there was not a rebel soldier to be seen anywhere.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Personal knowledge of the author who was a Captain of the 10th United States Cavalry stationed at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, and guarding the border at Nogales during that period.

# REVOLUTIONARY EL PASO: 1910-1917

. . . . . by *Mardee Belding de Wetter*

## Part Two of Three Parts

The year 1912 was ushered in by El Pasoans in typical Southwest fashion. There were celebrations, private parties and church services. In the hearts of the people there was thanksgiving. Peace had come to Mexico and all was quiet along the Rio Grande. But the peace was merely the lull before the storm. Within a month it would be broken by a counter-revolution.

The immediate cause of the uprising was an order issued by President Madero reducing the three companies of the Juárez *cuartel* from one hundred men each to forty-five. On February 1 the Juárez troops revolted against the Madero government and set themselves up as *Zapatistas*.<sup>1</sup> Immediately a large number of non-combatants fled to El Paso, bringing their household goods in nondescript carriages and buggies. Fifty Chinese and five Japanese were less fortunate. These Asiatics had suffered greatly at the hands of the *Zapatista* rebels but they were barred from entry into the United States by the Oriental Exclusion Act. Finally, in desperation, they appealed to the United States officials at the Santa Fé Street bridge and were allowed to stay in the immigration building. The Juárez postoffice was again transferred to El Paso and the owners of keno halls and other business deposited their money in El Paso banks.

The confusion in Juárez was considerably increased when the *Zapatistas* again changed their allegiance and claimed to be *Vasquistas*\* and Juárez became the headquarters of the provisional government of the *Vasquista* faction. At the time Emilio Vasquez Gomez was in San Antonio, Texas, where he had fled after promulgating the *Plan de Tacubaya*, the doctrine or platform of his party.

El Pasoans now thought they had had enough of the revolution and wired Governor Colquitt of Texas about the border conditions. Colquitt in turn wired President Taft:

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<sup>1</sup>Followers of Emiliano Zapata who recruited Indian peons from the sugar plantations to make war on the *hacendados* in the state of Morelos.

\*Followers of Emilio Vasquez Gomez. The Vasquez brothers, Francisco, called the "Brains of the Revolution," and Emilio broke with Madero because he forced Emilio out of the De La Barra cabinet and because Gustavo Madero succeeded in imposing Pino Suárez in the vice presidency in place of Francisco. (Editor's note.)

My advices indicate serious conditions at Juárez opposite El Paso . . . . I ask that you give directions to the War Department to protect citizens of Texas from the firing of Mexican bandits across the border.

Instead of the protection asked for, President Taft gave permission to Madero to move Mexican troops over Texas soil by way of El Paso to Juárez. Mayor Kelly opposed the movement. Indeed there was so much opposition throughout the state that Governor Colquitt refused to permit Madero's men to enter Texas.

It was at this time that the people of Juárez were thrown into a panic. They feared American intervention and their slumbering dislike of *gringos* was aroused when a score of United States soldiers mistakenly entered Juárez on a street car. On the morning of February 15 a Lieutenant Fields and nineteen men were ordered to proceed to the Santa Fé Street bridge to relieve a detachment there on duty. In carrying out his orders the lieutenant started for his destination on the street car. The route of the car was south on Stanton Street and into Juárez where it turned to come north to the Santa Fé bridge and the American side. But Fields did not know the route and assumed that he was entitled to ride all the way to his destination. Thus in his ignorance he crossed into Mexico. As punishment the lieutenant was subjected to a court martial.<sup>2</sup> But this did not prevent the citizens of Juárez from holding a demonstration in front of the American Consulate.

This incident was the first indication of a growing distrust between the peoples of the two border cities. But it did not prevent Mexican refugees from crowding into El Paso. The hotels were packed and, according to the *Times*, "unescorted women with children and babies wandered from hotel to hotel in vain attempts to secure accommodations." The excitement in El Paso also permeated the valley residents. Reports from the district around Anthony, New Mexico, indicated that ranchmen were excited over threats made by Mexican residents that in case of American intervention in Mexico they would arm themselves and take possession of the Valley.

Juárez was now a city fortified by a small number of *Maderistas* who had replaced the mutinous *Zapatista-Vasquista* rebels. But the town was seriously threatened by General Ynez Salazar's *Vasquista* army which was at Bauché within striking distance of Juárez. El Paso officials were aware of the situation and Sheriff Peyton Edwards issued the following notice:

Notice to all citizens having arms. As Sheriff of El Paso County, I will issue commissions to all responsible citizens to carry arms as

<sup>2</sup>Acting Secretary of State to Mexican Ambassador, February 26, 1912, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1912, 726.

members of a posse; to protect the lives and property of citizens of El Paso.

Thus El Paso assumed the appearance of an armed camp. In addition to the deputized civilians, the troops from Fort Bliss were ordered into the city and special trains brought an additional thousand soldiers. Excited crowds thronged the streets. The United States Government sent warnings to Madero that no bullets must again fall on American soil. The worried Madero, to prevent American intervention, ordered the Juárez garrison to surrender should there be danger of a fight. Consequently, four hundred *Vasquistas* under General Salazar entered Juárez on February 27 without firing a shot.

Confusion was now paramount. Salazar wasted no time in sending Jenero Ceniceros as *Vasquista* consul to El Paso. Enrique C. Llorente remained as the Madero consul. Yet such confusion did not show the true extent of anarchy in Mexico. Pascual Orozco\* turned traitor to his old chieftain, Madero, and established himself as head of the rebels in Chihuahua. Pancho Villa, loathing Orozco, remained "loyal" to Madero and was joined by Abraham Gonzales. Gonzales was provisional governor of Chihuahua under Madero, as was provided for in the peace plan, but he was chased out of Chihuahua City by the insurgent Orozco. General Orozco chose as his symbol the red flag and his men were known as "Red Flaggers." Thus Chihuahua was seething with rebels fighting the Madero regime. The Red Flaggers under Orozco and Salazar held Chihuahua City and Juárez and most of the intervening country. Pancho Villa fought them whenever he could, but he was decidedly weaker.

There now appeared in El Paso the most famous soldier of fortune to engage in the revolution. Known as the "Fighting Jew," Sam Dreben was born in a ghetto in Russia. His one ambition had been to be a soldier. He worked his way to America and before he was twenty-one was wearing the uniform of the United States Army in the Philippines. After crossing into Mexico from El Paso Dreben joined Salazar and the Red Flaggers. He was promised five hundred dollars a month and his fighting was worth it.<sup>3</sup>

There was so much happening that El Pasoans could give little attention to the sinking of the *Titanic*. Dr. Emilio Vasquez arrived and immediately crossed into Juárez where a special envoy of Pascual Orozco formally appointed him Provisional President of Mexico. The seat of his government was to remain temporarily in Juárez.<sup>4</sup> Power Roberts, a one-time police sergeant in

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\*Pascual Orozco, snubbed by Madero in making appointments, began an armed revolt against his former chief on March 3, 1912. (Editor's note.)

<sup>3</sup>Major Richard Burgess' Scrapbook, *Company A and the World War*, 90-A, 97.

<sup>4</sup>Consul Edwards in Juárez to Secretary of State, May 4, 1912, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1912, 809.



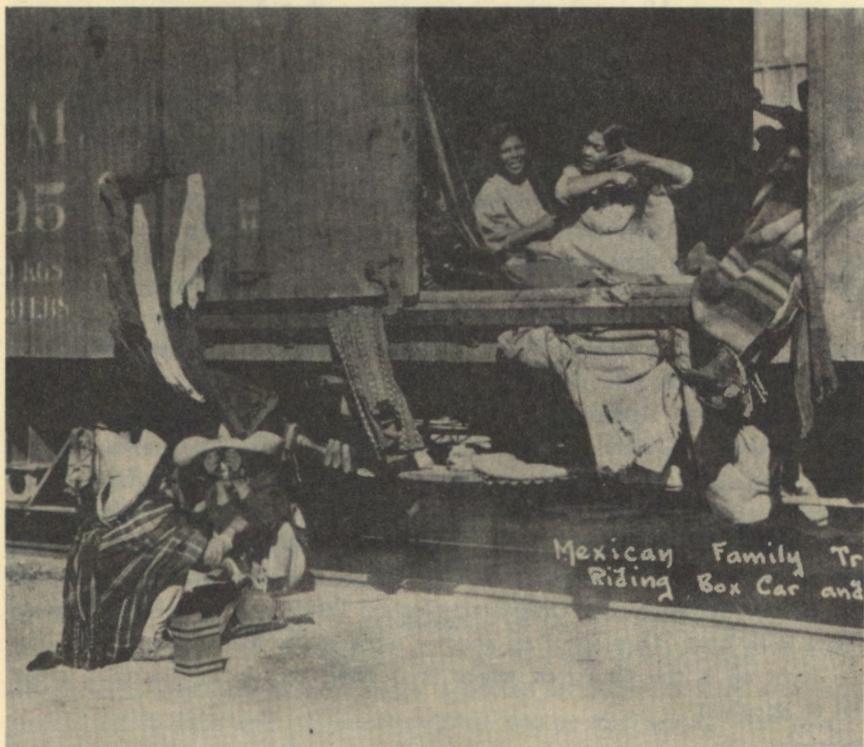
#### PRESIDENT HUERTA AND STAFF

(Richard K. McMaster Collection—now owned by the El Paso Historical Society.)

El Paso, was arrested as a Madero spy after being inveigled to Juárez by trickery. His arrest was attributed to the spite of Jenero Cenicerros, Red Flag consul in El Paso, whose "consulate" had been searched by Roberts and federal secret service men. Mayor Kelly was infuriated by this overt act of animosity. He told Juan Terrazas of Chihuahua: "As long as I am mayor of the city of El Paso, I am not going to see one of her citizens treated in such manner. Here you have been in our city for some time and we haven't arrested you and sent you off to Washington." Roberts was soon released and returned unharmed to El Paso. Meanwhile, Gonzalo Enrile, chief and arch conspirator of the Chihuahua Red Flag rebellion, was arrested at the Santa Fé Street bridge when he sought refuge in El Paso. He was wounded and fleeing from his wrathful and former adherents. At the same time, General Jose de la Lux Blanco, commanding the *Maderistas* in Sonora, arrived in El Paso for a conference with the Madero consul, Llorente. Señora Pascual Orozco also managed to cross the river into El Paso to join the "Orozco colony" on south Oregon Street where lived the family of General Orozco's father. Señora Orozco tried to cross the Santa Fé Street bridge under a false name, was recognized and

turned back. She then drove her buggy to the Stanton Street bridge where she gave her true name and was admitted. Guillermo Terrazas, grandson of General Luis Terrazas, the Chihuahua multimillionaire, was arrested in El Paso on the charge of carrying a pistol. Prominent Red Flaggers continued to deposit their money in El Paso banks. They all wanted to secure their valuables in a safe place before the Red Flag downfall. The collapsing rebels continued to smuggle ammunition. A boat was kept near Peace Grove for that purpose. It was carried up and down the river in a wagon and launched at pre-arranged points. Because it was never launched twice from the same place it was not captured.

Refugees of all sorts continued to arrive in El Paso. A special train from Chihuahua brought members of the Red Flag legislature and their families. General Victoriano Huerta had succeeded in defeating the rebels. Orozco's men continued to desert from Juárez to El Paso, crossing the river below the



Mexican families traveled with their soldier-husbands. The picture was taken in Juárez.

(Richard K. McMaster Collection—now owned by the El Paso Historical Society.)

city at Washington Park and at other points. Most of these men had no means of support and sought employment at the railway agencies. Many Mexicans who had been scornful and derisive of the United States were now trying to obtain entrance into El Paso. Among them was Adolfo Fuentes who was once convicted of vagrancy in El Paso and given twenty-four hours to leave the city.

United States nationals who had been making their homes in Mexico were also forced to flee to El Paso for safety. Many were from the lumber camps at Madera, Chihuahua where Dr. .... was the American physician. He with the group of Americans had to make their way out of Chihuahua City. One of the group went ahead of the train on a handcar with a white flag. The refugees were held in Chihuahua for nearly a week before they were permitted to leave for the border.<sup>5</sup> At the same time forty other refugees from Chihuahua City arrived, the wife and children of the American Consul, Marion Letcher, being among them.<sup>6</sup>

A much larger group of refugees were the Mormons. There were about fifteen hundred of them. All of their property and wealth lay in Mexico.<sup>7</sup> El Paso took care of them as best she could. In an old abandoned lumber shed on Magoffin Avenue, between Cotton Avenue and the Texas Pacific railroad tracks, nearly five hundred women and children were given shelter. The city health department sent representatives to vaccinate them for smallpox, but very little could be done for their comfort.

By August 16 Orozco and his Red Flag army were destroyed. A large number of the rebels came to El Paso or otherwise evacuated Juárez for other parts of Chihuahua. The *Maderistas* immediately began arriving in Juárez to take over the city. Approximately twenty-two hundred Federal soldiers under the command of General Joaquín Téllez entered Juárez. They were greeted by the ringing of church bells and by cheering citizens. El Paso Mexicans formed a parade to Juárez to express their welcome. General Téllez called on General Steever, the commanding general of Fort Bliss, and General Steever returned the call. On September 3 General Victoriano Huerta arrived in Juárez to inspect the retrieved city. Once again General Téllez came to El Paso bringing Huerta with him. They spent an hour or more at the Mexican consulate and then went on a shopping tour where their fancy uniforms attracted a great deal of attention.

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<sup>5</sup>Interview with the doctor who asked that his name not be used.

<sup>6</sup>Edith O'Shaughnessy, *A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico* (New York, 1916), 96.

<sup>7</sup>Testimony of Junius Romney, "Investigation of Mexican Affairs," *Document No. 285, 66th Congress, 2nd Session*, 11, 2576.



The coach General Terrazas used to escape to El Paso.

In a poorer condition, Colonel Pascual Orozco, Sr., father of the Red Flag commander, was brought to El Paso from Marfa. He was handcuffed and coatless when he arrived at the Union Station. A number of Madero supporters gathered to meet him and follow him to the jail, yelling derisively, "*Viva Orozco.*"

Red Flaggers continued to concentrate in El Paso. The smaller hotels and rooming houses were crowded with well dressed Mexicans who had escaped with funds. An Orozco *junta* continued to function. Sam Dreben slipped into El Paso and, with another soldier of fortune, Tracy Richardson, made his way to a quiet hotel. The city was filled with federal spies and Dreben and Richardson barricaded themselves in their room. Soon, however, Dreben was off again, this time to Douglas, Arizona, as a federal spy.<sup>8</sup> Luís Terrazas III also arrived in the city. He had been wounded firing a machine gun in Orozco's Red Flag army and had to come to the United States for treatment. Most of his family were living in El Paso at the time.

Thus a hodgepodge and conglomeration of people formed the population of El Paso at the end of 1912—citizens of El Paso, defeated Red Flaggers, federal spies, *Científico* plotters, ousted American nationals, uprooted Mormons, professional soldiers, and gun-runners. There was no trust among these groups, only intrigue and suspicion.

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<sup>8</sup>Major Richard Burgess' *Scrap Book*, 90-A, 97.

The year 1913 was to see Pancho Villa rise to a position of supreme importance in northern Mexico. At the beginning of the year, however, Villa was out of favor with the Madero government because of charges of insubordination made against him by General Victoriano Huerta. General Huerta had forbidden Villa to loot an American-owned ranch in Chihuahua but Villa had ignored the order. For so doing Villa found it necessary to come to El Paso where he made enticing propositions to Madero for a pardon. Villa offered to find and slay Pascual Orozco. But the *Maderistas* were not quick to accept the offer. General José de la Blanco also found it convenient to come to El Paso. He had been reported killed by the rebels, decoyed to his death by a woman. He had actually been a rebel prisoner but had been able to escape. Once in El Paso he refreshed himself with all the luxuries of civilized life. He had a pompadour haircut, a beard trim, and a bath at a barber shop on San Francisco Street.

Although the Orozco Red Flaggers had been defeated and forced to evacuate Chihuahua, the Orozco *junta* continued to function in El Paso. Indeed it became very active and began recalling the Red Flaggers who, having fled to El Paso, had obtained jobs on the railroad. These rebels returned to El Paso in groups and crossed at various points along the river into Mexico. The *junta* met informally every evening, in groups of five only, in order to avoid arrest by United States Secret Service agents.

The greatest drama of the revolution, however, was being enacted in Mexico City. Madero's star was setting and rebels were fighting in the streets of the capital. Bernardo Reyes was killed and Felix Díaz, nephew of Porfirio, was threatening Madero's regime. Madero named Victoriano Huerta his commander-in-chief. Huerta seized his opportunity. He bought off Díaz, executed Gustavo Madero, and surreptitiously had Francisco Madero and Pino Suárez assassinated. He then named himself provisional president of Mexico. These lightning-like changes stunned both the Mexican people and the United States Government. Immediately the American congress prohibited the transportation into Mexico of all kinds of provisions. No flour, potatoes, bread, shoes, saddles or feed for animals could be taken across the river. The residents of Juárez complained bitterly.<sup>9</sup>

With the death of the Madero brothers the Madero party became non-existent. Little more than a piece of crepe hanging from the door of his adobe headquarters in Juárez remained of Madero and his dreams. The idealism of the revolution was gone and in its place was selfish greed. Many of the older Mexican leaders were being replaced by younger men. Emilio Vas-

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<sup>9</sup>Jose Fernandez Rojas, *De Porfirio Diaz a Victoriano Huerta* (Guadalajara, 1913), 144.

quez Gomez, who had last come to El Paso on his way to being proclaimed provisional president of Mexico, once more came to the city. But this time he stayed at a hotel of the cheaper class and declined interviews.

The Gomez *junta* in El Paso was replaced by a new and powerful one, the Carranza Constitutionalist *junta*. Indeed it was important enough to cause General Huerta to send a peace commission to treat with it. Eduardo Hay, a major in the *insurrecto* forces under Madero, also came to El Paso to join the Carranza crowd. He was considered one of the strongest organizers of the Constitutionalists. Sam Dreben who had gone to Mexico City from Douglas in the capacity of a Federalist spy, was smuggled into El Paso where he was hired by the Constitutionalists to run guns. Pancho Villa who had remained in El Paso as a "neutral refugee," also threw in his lot with Carranza and was appointed commander of the Constitutionalist forces in Chihuahua. Revolutionary leaders from Coahuila, Sonora, and Chihuahua met in El Paso for a conference. These revolutionary activities were not effectively prohibited in El Paso nor is it certain that President Wilson wanted them stopped.

With so much renewed talk of revolution, Juárez again became jittery. It feared an attack by Pancho Villa. The Huerta army strung barbed wire on posts set at right angles to the river bank. El Paso was also preparing for the battle. When Madero captured Juárez, El Paso was a novice in the art of making revolutions pay. Now she sold reserved seats on the roofs of the tall buildings. One location sold for a dollar a chair and another sold a glimpse for a quarter. The battle was not guaranteed but a refund was promised should the battle not take place. The battle was long awaited but did not come. Villa was fighting in the south and El Pasoans settled down to note that Elephant Butte Dam was forty-eight per cent completed.

Meanwhile the United States Government placed an embargo on arms for both Huerta and Carranza troops. But both sides continued their smuggling. President Wilson repeatedly refused to recognize Huerta as president and sent a special agent, John Lind, to Mexico City to try to bring about some semblance of peace. Failing, Lind remained in the capital as a special observer. At the same time Wilson warned Europe that the Mexican crisis was purely an American affair.

American refugees continued to flee from Chihuahua. Other Americans were kidnaped and held for ransom. The two most famous kidnap cases were those of H. L. Stephenson, vice president of the Palomas Land and Cattle Company, and A. W. McCormick. These two men were each held for ten thousand dollars which was paid by friends. Upon being released they came to El Paso. Members of the Terrazas family who were in Chihuahua at this time were try-

ing desperately to escape to American safety. But Huerta Federals who then held Chihuahua would not permit them to leave. Robbery of Americans in Juárez became common. Juárez officials permitted the thieves to operate so long as they bought a license. But in spite of all of these outrages, El Paso remained a haven and a refuge, extending hospitable arms throughout the crisis. For instance, Señora Francisco Villa held a "formal reception for her husband's friends on the Día de Independencia" at the Roma Hotel on El Paso street. At the same time Villa was murdering American nationals in Chihuahua.

Meanwhile President Wilson demanded that Huerta resign as president of Mexico. In every conceivable way but all out war the United States intervened in Mexico. The United States gained the support of Great Britain whose prime minister, Herbert Asquith, notified Huerta that England supported Wilson. So it was but one more blow to a dying regime that Huerta lost Juárez.

It was thought that Villa was in the interior of Chihuahua. Instead, under cover of darkness, he had surrounded Juárez. At dawn his men made a concerted attack and the Federals were so demoralized that they offered no resistance. Juárez was Villa's in a day. The battle began very suddenly and not all the refugees made it across the bridge to safety. One American was killed. Said Villa, according to the *Herald*:

Tell the people of El Paso for me, that I regret deeply the death of the American auto driver in this battle. I have no idea of the exact manner in which he met his death. Say also that I will continue to protect American lives and property in the future as I have always done in the past. I feel that the sympathy of the United States is with our cause.

Only in his final statement was Villa correct. The United States was definitely on the side of Carranza and Villa. But it had an exaggerated idea of its importance in Mexican internal affairs. As the remaining Madero brothers said, "Only God, with the help of the United States, can save Mexico."

Bullets had fallen thick and fast in El Paso during the battle. Several buildings were struck. One messenger boy was wounded in the hand. A showcase in front of the White House was shattered by a bullet. But the neighborhood most disturbed was Sunset Heights which lay closer to the fighting.

When the battle was over Americans began trooping to Juárez to count broken windows and look for their yard men among the prisoners. A group of women approached the *cuartel* and heard a volley which they supposed was a rifle squad at practice. A prisoner within the gates warned them back casually and

uttered the equally casual remark that perhaps the señoras would not care to come closer, since just now the victors were shooting the prisoners. 'That was the twenty-first you heard just now.' One woman, held by the man's incredible poise, felt it necessary to answer his courtesy with its like. 'Good Gracious, they're not going to shoot you, are they?' Then came 'Quien sabe?' his smiling reply. At that moment a guard touched him on the shoulder. With a sweeping bow and a flourish of his *sombrero* he was gone and a moment later, the ladies, fleeing down the street, heard the twenty-second volley.<sup>10</sup>

Mayor C. E. Kelly and Pancho Villa held a meeting at noon on November 15 on the Stanton Street bridge in order to establish amicable relations between the neighbor cities. However, the American cavalry still patrolled the border.

After the capture of Juárez the entire state of Chihuahua fell into Villa's hands. There were conflicting reports of the cruelties and kindnesses of Villa. Pedro Huerta, a thirteen year old veteran of the Constitutionalist campaign, approached his idolized Villa and saluted. "General, I come to ask if I may accompany you to Chihuahua." Pancho looked the little fellow over and said, "Boy, weren't you wounded at Tierra Blanca?" The veteran showed his bandaged shoulder. Villa said tenderly, "No, no, you should be in bed right now. Wait for five or six days and then you may come to Chihuahua."

Just as this little Mexican wanted above all else to go to Chihuahua, there were many others who wanted to leave Chihuahua. Pancho Villa had made Chihuahua a hell for Spaniards and for all persons of wealth. General Luís Terrazas and his family were among the latter group. Don Luís was an old man now. He had been one of the generals of Benito Juárez for which service he had obtained the beginning of his kingdom in Chihuahua. Now he knew that he could not save his land from Villa's grasping hands and so he collected as much of his wealth as he could and set out in twenty wagons for the United States.<sup>11</sup> After being detained temporarily at Ojinaga by federal officials, he was allowed to cross the river at Presidio and continue to El Paso. In El Paso Terrazas rented the home of Senator Albert B. Fall. But not all of his family had escaped in time. Luís Terrazas, Jr., his son, was held in Chihuahua as a prisoner of Villa.

The Spanish refugees who had great wealth in Chihuahua, were now penniless and driven from their homes. Consul Letcher notified the State Depart-

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<sup>10</sup>Anonymous, "Ringside Seat for Mexican Revolution," *Literary Digest*, April 13, 1929.

A newspaper correspondent, Norman Walker, delayed the battle of Juárez a day by telling Villa that the World Series, then going on, would crowd him off the front page of the newspapers. Interview with W. H. Fryer, November 7, 1945.

<sup>11</sup>Louis Stevens, *Here Comes Pancho Villa* (New York, 1930), 157-68.

ment of their situation and urged that financial aid be requested from the Red Cross for relief at El Paso."<sup>12</sup> The business men and the Chamber of Commerce of El Paso made plans for the care of the refugees. The American Red Cross stated through its director, Mr. Bicknell, that any amount of money necessary to aid the Spanish refugees would be sent to the El Paso Red Cross agent. The Spanish refugees did receive good care in El Paso and in appreciation the Spanish Ambassador, Juan Riaño, wrote the State Department:

I have just heard of the arrival of the Spanish refugees from Chihuahua at El Paso, Texas, and I wish to express the deep appreciation of my Government and of myself of the magnificent reception which has been extended to them by the Chamber of Commerce of El Paso, and of the feeling which have prompted the charitable citizens of that town to give every help and assistance to my compatriots in their distress.<sup>13</sup>

With the wealthy citizens of Chihuahua out of his way, Villa proceeded to confiscate their property.<sup>14</sup> He was determined to gain their wealth for himself and become the thing he claimed to hate, the wealthy feudal lord. Villa kept Don Luís Terrazas, Jr., asking ransom of five hundred thousand pesos of his father. Terrazas did not have that large sum in El Paso so his son was tortured to reveal the hiding place of the Terrazas gold.<sup>15</sup> Actually some of the Terrazas gold was hidden in Chihuahua. When Don Luís heard that Villa was coming he dumped about five hundred thousand dollars in gold into a hollow column on the front of his bank. Villa forced this information from Luís, Jr., and when the column was broken open, the gold poured forth.<sup>16</sup> But even this did not prevent Luís' suffering through many more months of imprisonment at the hands of Villa.

The Terrazas family lived well in El Paso, much better than other refugees and the ordinary citizens. Mrs. Jeanie M. Frank tells the story of one of the young Terrazas boys. He was late to class one day and she asked him why. He requested that he might tell her in private but she refused. So, redfaced, he said, "My valet was not there this morning and I could not find which clothes to wear." Another Mexican boy was late that same day and he was asked why. He told Mrs. Frank in private, "You see, my mother is a washwoman and I had to deliver some clothes before I came to school."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Consul Letcher to Secretary of State, December 11, 1913, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1913*, 902.

<sup>13</sup>Spanish Ambassador to Counselor of Department of State, *Ibid.*, 906.

<sup>14</sup>O'Shaughnessy, *A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico*, 96.

<sup>15</sup>Stevens, *Here Comes Pancho Villa*, 157-78.

<sup>16</sup>Interview with W. H. Fryer, November 13, 1945.

<sup>17</sup>Interview with Mrs. Jeanie M. Frank, Cloudcroft, New Mexico, June 28, 1945. Mrs. Frank taught English in El Paso High School for two generations and is one of the best known and loved citizens of El Paso.

Thus it was a packed and crowded, refugee-filled El Paso that celebrated Christmas in 1913. There was much speculation as to whose star would rise or set in the coming year. But Villa's star still shone brightly.



Pancho Villa and his wife. The picture was taken in El Paso.  
(Richard K. McMaster Collection—now owned by the El Paso Historical Society.)

## THE EVOLUTION OF EL PASO COUNTY

. . . . . by *Richard K. McMaster*

El Paso County, at one time acclaimed the largest county, in the largest state, in the greatest republic in the world, has maintained its stature of distinction despite several reductions in its boundaries.

Although the Republic of Texas claimed all land south and west of the Rio Grande, it was never able to exercise jurisdiction over the El Paso area which remained under the authority of Mexico until the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. Even then the Texas-New Mexico boundary was in dispute, and Texas was unable to extend its authority westward. While nominally a part of Bexar County, the El Paso region was governed by officials of the Territory of New Mexico who operated under the Mexican code of law.

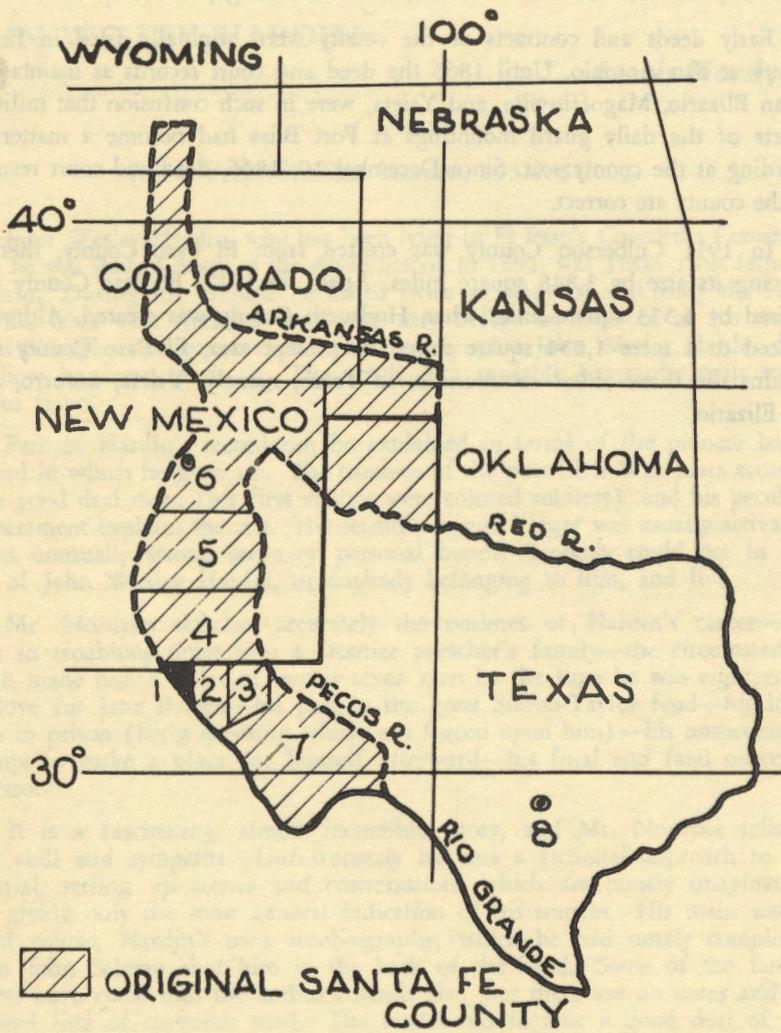
On March 15, 1848, the Texas Legislature created Santa Fé County and made Santa Fé the county seat. This county extended from the Rio Grande to the 42nd parallel of North Latitude. It began at the junction of the Rio Puerco with the Rio Grande, extended up the Rio Grande to its source, thence due north to the 42nd parallel, then along the boundary established by Spain and the United States to where the 100th meridian of West Longitude intersects the Red River, up the Red River to its source, thence in direct line to the source of the Rio Puerco, and down the Rio Puerco to its juncture with the Rio Grande.<sup>1</sup>

The following year Santa Fé County was sub-divided into four counties, namely, Santa Fé, Worth, Presidio, and El Paso. The first reduction in the newly-created El Paso County took place when the Texas Legislature accepted the Compromise of 1850. By this act of the United States Congress, Texas received \$10,000,000. and in return gave up its claim to what is now one-half of New Mexico as well as portions of Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma, an area comprising some 125,000 square miles. The 32nd parallel of North Latitude became the northern boundary of El Paso County which was now reduced to 9,435 square miles.<sup>2</sup>

The county seat after early beginnings at San Antonio and Santa Fé, was first established at San Elizario. In 1854 it was moved to Magoffinville for a short period then returned to San Elizario where it remained until 1866 when it was removed to Ysleta for several months. After again being returned

<sup>1</sup>H. P. N. Gammel, *The Laws of Texas 1822-97*, 111, 95.

<sup>2</sup>Brinkley, *The Expansionist Movement*, 127.



(1) El Paso County 1958; (1, 2) El Paso County until 1917; (1, 2, 3) El Paso County until 1911; (1, 2, 3, 4) El Paso County in 1850; (5) Worth County in 1850; (6) Santa Fe County 1850; (7) Presidio County 1850; (1 to 7 inclusive) Santa Fe County in 1849; (8) Bexar County seat.

to San Elizario, it was next moved in 1873 to Ysleta where it remained for ten years. In 1883, following a close vote which had been instigated by Ysleta,<sup>3</sup> the county seat was moved to El Paso, its final resting place.

Early deeds and contracts of the county were originally filed in Bexar County at San Antonio. Until 1866 the deed and court records as maintained at San Elizario, Magoffinville, and Ysleta, were in such confusion that military reports of the daily guard mountings at Fort Bliss had become a matter of recording at the county seat. Since December 10, 1866, deed and court records for the county are correct.

In 1911 Culberson County was created from El Paso County, thereby reducing its size by 3,848 square miles. Again, in 1917, El Paso County was reduced by 4,533 square miles when Hudspeth County was created. Although reduced to a mere 1,054 square miles, its present area, El Paso County still contains the three oldest communities in Texas, namely, Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario.

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<sup>3</sup>The state law provided that a county could vote only once in ten years for the removal of a county seat. In 1883 the city of El Paso was growing rapidly because of the railroads which had entered the city two years previously. Ysleta, however, had a larger population and she felt that she could win the election and thus guarantee her retention of the county seat another ten years. Thus she instigated the voting. But El Paso voted non-residents and practiced multiple voting to win.

# BOOK REVIEWS

JOHN WESLEY HARDIN

*Lewis Nordyke*

(New York: William Morrow, 1957. \$4.00)

John Wesley Hardin, who has been lying in El Paso's Concordia Cemetery since he was shot to death in the Acme Saloon in 1895, was Texas' most famous gunman. During his lifetime he killed twice as many men as Billy the Kid, and his feats with firearms were legendary before he was out of his teens. Lewis Nordyke sets out to explain not merely what John Wesley Hardin did, but how he came to do it. The result is a readable biography with some serious flaws.

Part of Hardin's record can be explained in terms of the pioneer background in which he grew up. The troubles of the post-Civil War years account for a good deal more (his first victims were colored soldiers), and his peculiar temperament explains the rest. His sensitive trigger finger was usually activated by an unusually strong sense of personal honor. Nobody could get in the way of John Wesley Hardin, or anybody belonging to him, and live.

Mr. Nordyke sketches accurately the outlines of Hardin's career—his birth in troublous times into a frontier preacher's family—the circumstances which made him a killer of twenty-seven men by the time he was eighteen—his love for Jane Bowen—his part in the great Sutton-Taylor feud—his long years in prison (for a shooting which was forced upon him)—his unsuccessful attempt to make a place for himself afterward—his final and fatal move to El Paso.

It is a fascinating, almost incredible, story, and Mr. Nordyke tells it with skill and sympathy. Unfortunately he uses a fictional approach to his material, setting up scenes and conversations which are mostly imagination and giving only the most general indication of his sources. His main source is, of course, Hardin's own autobiography, which he had nearly completed when John Selman shot him in the back of the head. Some of the family papers have come into the author's hands also, but there are no notes and no detailed lists of materials used. The reader has to take a good deal of the story on faith.

To this reviewer (who has done considerable looking into the Hardin story himself), it seems that there is a still greater flaw in the book—a failure to penetrate deeply enough into John Wesley Hardin's mind. Perhaps only a psychiatrist could do it, for the man was a psychological curiosity second to none, but the effort should have been made. He had something approaching delusions of grandeur about himself. He never once admitted that he committed murder and seems honestly to have felt that what he did was always

done for the best interests of society. "The best people said I had done a good thing," was the kind of remark he would make about a particularly atrocious killing. His letters to his family are full of religious feeling and he acted as superintendent of the Sunday School when he was in prison.

Mr. Nordyke is right in saying that Hardin "remains an unfathomable mystery." It is too bad that he leaves Hardin as mysterious as he found him.

*Texas Western College*

C. L. Sonnichsen

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## THE ALAMO

*Adina de Zavala*

(San Antonio, Texas: The Naylor Company, 1956. \$2.00)

The Alamo, known to the Spaniards as Mission San Antonio de Valero, was founded by the Franciscan fathers in 1718 to provide an industrial school and religious training for the Indians. Its use as a mission commenced to decline about 1763, but the chapel continued to be used as such until 1825. After this date it was used as a dwelling place for civilians and by armed forces. The term "Mission" ceased to be applied to it, and it became known simply as "The Alamo."

After the Republic of Texas Army captured San Antonio in 1835 the Alamo was fortified to resist the advancing army of Santa Anna. The memorable siege that followed is too well known to need any mention here. From that time until after the Civil War the buildings were used by military forces for storage.

In 1879 the Catholic Church disposed of its interest in the property, with the exception of the Alamo Church, to H. Grenet. In 1883 the State of Texas bought the Alamo church, which was placed in the custody of the city of San Antonio.

A number of interesting legends of ghosts are preserved in the story of the Alamo.

Miss Adina de Zavala, about the turn of the century, organized the Texas Historical and Landmarks Association as an auxiliary to the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. The function of these societies was to mark and preserve historical sites. They were very active in preventing the destruction of parts of the Alamo by individuals who sought the site for commercial reasons.

The book is somewhat difficult to read due to the factual nature of the contents, but it serves as an excellent reference to those seeking authentic information about the history of the Alamo.

*El Paso, Texas*

Albion Smith

# CONTRIBUTORS

Charlotte Crawford was born in Houston, Texas, but has lived most of her life in El Paso. She attended the University of Southern California, the University of California, and the University of Mexico. She received her B.A. and M.A. (History) degrees at Texas Western College. For the past several years she has served as Dean of Girls at Austin High School, El Paso.

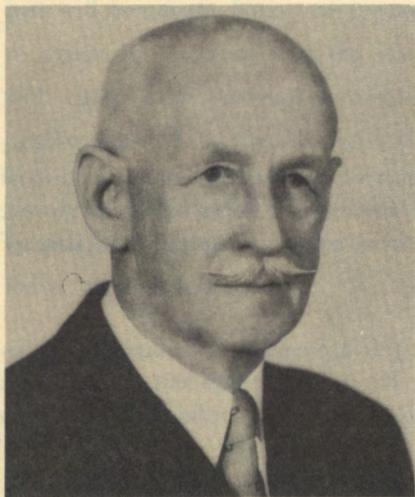


CHARLOTTE CRAWFORD

Colonel Daniel B. Cullinane, U.S.A. (Ret.) is a native of Concord, Massachusetts, where he was born in 1890. He enlisted in the Massachusetts National Guard at the age of seventeen and was commissioned a 1st Lieutenant in the United States Army at the beginning of World War I. Much of his army service was with the cavalry at Mexican border posts. Foreign service

tours included France in World War I, Puerto Rico, and Korea and Japan in World War II. He commanded a squadron of the 10th United States Cavalry on Border Patrol in Arizona during the Escobar Revolution of 1929, and served in the First Cavalry Division at Fort Bliss from 1929 to 1934.

After retiring from the Army in 1950, Colonel Cullinane attended Texas Western College where he received a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts (History). The present article was taken from a seminar paper he submitted towards his master's.



COL. DANIEL B. CULLINANE  
U.S.A. (Retired)

Mardee Belding de Wetter is the daughter of the late C. D. Belding who contributed greatly in time, effort and money to the development of Texas Western College. For further biographical data and a photograph see *PASSWORD*, V. III, No. 2 (April, 1958), page 82.



MAJOR RICHARD K. McMASTER  
U.S.A. (Retired)

Major Richard K. McMaster, U.S.A. (Ret.) is a frequent contributor to *PASSWORD*. The map which accompanies his article was drawn by him after considerable research. He is a graduate of the United States Military Academy and the author of a book, *Polo For Beginners And Spectators*, published in 1954 by the Exposition Press, New York.

Dr. C. L. Sonnichsen is the Chairman of the Department of English at Texas Western College and the author of a number of books on the Southwest. His latest book, *Ten Texas Feuds*, was reviewed in the April, 1958, issue of *PASSWORD*.

Colonel Albion Smith, U.S.A. (Ret.) is a frequent contributor to *PASSWORD*. He was recently appointed by the Society's president, Mr. Jack C. Vowell, Jr., chairman of a committee to make tape recordings of interviews with El Paso pioneers.

# HISTORICAL NOTES

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee of the El Paso Historical Society, after a painstaking study, announces that the Society is spending over two hundred dollars more each year than it receives from membership dues. If this situation is allowed to continue it will mean the bankruptcy of the reserve fund built up with the donations of Life Members. This in turn will mean the cessation of the publication of *PASSWORD* which the committee considers the backbone of the Society.

So far as the Committee can determine, no other historical society distinguishes between "single" and "married" memberships. The El Paso Society, as you know, makes a two-dollar distinction. There are 258 "single" members, and at three dollars a year each, this hardly covers the cost of printing and mailing the quarterly. An increase of two dollars annually for "single" members will permit the Society to operate in the "black." The Finance Committee recommends, therefore, that the distinction be abolished and that beginning with 1959 all memberships be five dollars, with the exception of institutional memberships which would remain at three dollars.

The Finance Committee also recommends that a hard-selling and organized membership drive be conducted for 1959 and that a determined search be made for more life members.

Chris P. Fox, *Chairman*  
Jack C. Vowell, Jr.  
Mrs. W. W. Schuessler  
E. H. Schwartz  
Eugene O. Porter

Readers of *PASSWORD* will remember the excellent two-part article by Colonel George Ruhlen, "Brazito—The Only Battle in the Southwest Between American and Foreign Troops," published in Volume II, Nos. 1 and 2 (February and May, 1957).

Colonel Ruhlen has submitted another article to your editor, "Fort Hancock—Last of the Frontier Posts." It will be published in the January, 1959, issue of *PASSWORD*. Regarding Fort Hancock, Colonel Ruhlen writes: "It wasn't much of a fort and the Indians never shot flaming arrows over the stockade walls, but I think it should be properly honored as an incomplete case study of a small Army post on the border at the turn of the century. The incidents probably are more significant to an Army officer than others as it is not difficult to read between the lines of some of the official correspondence and divine all that went on that was unsaid—and some of it is as timely as yesterday's paper." Continuing, Colonel Ruhlen notes that "The Hancock article is of interest as every bit of the data used was obtained from original source documents in the National Archives . . . . The post and regimental returns are of course the most accurate source of information as to dates, names and places; the letters between the characters who ran them are sometimes priceless in their verbiage, and as so often occurs one gains an insight into the men who wrote them."

In "digging" in the National Archives Colonel Ruhlen came upon some interesting and important information concerning Fort Bliss. A letter dated January 27, 1854, and written by Colonel (Bvt. Brig. General) John Garland, commanding the Department of New Mexico, to the Adjutant General of the Army, suggested the name for the fort at El Paso: "If it is designed to make a permanent Post at El Paso, it will be named of course by the Honorable Secretary of War but if temporary I had contemplated calling it 'Fort Bliss.'" A few days after this letter was written, General Order No. 4, Headquarters of the Army, AGO, dated 8 March 1854, designated the post at El Paso as Fort Bliss.

"As you probably know," Colonel Ruhlen continues, "it was named for Bvt. Lt. Col. William Wallace Smith Bliss, who died 5 August 1853, at the time, I believe, Adjutant General of the Division of Missouri. He was a USMA graduate of 1833, Zachary Taylor's aide and adjutant during the Mexican War, and later his aide when Zach was President. I suspect Garland was trying to do a bit of apple polishing when he suggested the name, although he may have been a good friend of Bliss."

Another interesting letter Colonel Ruhlen discovered in the National Archives was dated at Fort Fillmore on 17 August 1851 and written by E. V. Sumner to S. W. Magoffin: "A post of three companies will be established at the Cottonwoods midway between Dona Ana and El Paso and an Officer's guard of 20 men will be left near each of these towns . . . orders of the guard are imperative that rents must cease . . . . If you feel inclined to furnish quarters for one of these guards without rent at your place 1½ miles below El Paso, I will place it there . . . . The guard will consist of one half horse and one half foot. I have a post to establish north of Taos after which I will visit El Paso. With great pleasure I accept your invitation."

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## PURPOSE OF THE SOCIETY

To promote and engage in research into the History, Archeology, and Natural History of West Texas, Southern New Mexico, Eastern Arizona, and Northern Mexico; to publish the important findings; and to preserve the valuable relics and monuments.