

# PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

---

VOL. VIII - No. 4

WINTER, 1963

*Published quarterly by THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY*

*EUGENE O. PORTER, Editor*

*JACK C. VOWELL, Associate Editor      CARL HERTZOG, Design Editor*

*MRS. PHYLLIS MAINZ, Book Editor*

Correspondence in regard to articles for *PASSWORD* should be directed to  
DR. EUGENE O. PORTER, Texas Western College, El Paso, Texas

All books and correspondence regarding Book Reviews should be sent to  
MRS. PHYLLIS MAINZ, 2512 San Diego, El Paso, Texas

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Mrs. Paul Heisig, *Secretary*, 1503 Hawthorne, El Paso, Texas.

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DUES ARE DUE

*for 1964*

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## HALL OF HONOR BANQUET

THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY held its third annual Hall of Honor banquet at Hotel Paso del Norte on Wednesday evening November 20. Almost three hundred members and their guests were in attendance. Honored guests included Mrs. Margaret Schuster Meyer, Dr. Frank Schuster and Dr. Stephen A. Schuster, children of the honoree Mrs. Eugenia M. Schuster; and Mrs. Ben Decherd of Dallas, daughter of Judge and Mrs. Thomason.

Members of the General Committee who contributed greatly to the success of the affair included Mrs. W. W. Schuessler, General Chairman, Mrs. Jack C. Vowell, Jr., Mrs. Barbara H. Baltz, Mrs. Frank Feuille, III, Mrs. Frank Hunter, Mrs. Margaret Schuster Meyer, and Mr. Carl Hertzog.

The Chairman of the Social Hour Committee was Mrs. Maurice Schwartz. She was ably assisted by Mmes. L. W. Hewitt, J. Burges Perrenot, F. Cathcart Melby, W. W. Hawkins and Paul Heisig.

Mr. Chris Fox, the Society's treasurer, served as master of ceremonies; Carl Hertzog provided the printed program and the Hall of Honor scrolls; and Rabbi Floyd S. Fierman gave the invocation.

The keynote address was given by Mr. Conrey Bryson, President of the Society. The Rev. B. M. G. Williams gave the Schuster award address; and Richard C. White the Thomason award address. Mrs. Margaret Schuster Meyer accepted the award on behalf of her late mother. Judge Thomason made a touching and even humble acceptance speech which truly emphasized his greatness and further endeared him to the people of El Paso.

### *Hall of Honor Address: The El Paso Character*

*by CONREY BRYSON*

THE COMMITTEES who deal with weighing the nomination for the El Paso Hall of Honor necessarily deal with the subject of character — character as related to an environment. The classic interpretation of the effect on the American character of the American frontier has long been considered to be that of Frederick Jackson Turner.<sup>1</sup> To quote a typical sentence: "This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character." There have been several important re-appraisals of Turner's work. One of them, deserving

special attention when we consider El Paso character, is Dr. Rex Strickland's paper "The Turner Thesis and the Dry World,"<sup>2</sup> presented before the Southwestern Social Science Association in Dallas, April 16, 1960. Certainly this work, which probes the motives and actions of men who came to "the harsh, dry, and exacting desert of the southwest" compels us to search for something special in their character, and equating the Turner Thesis with the Strickland Synthesis, ask ourselves what kind of people came to El Paso, what they brought to the frontier, what the frontier did to them — and what kind of character emerged from this synthesis.

Another El Paso writer on the frontier and its dominators, Dr. Joseph Leach, pictures the "Typical Texan"<sup>3</sup> as a Kentuckian only more so — the word "Kentuckian" meaning not necessarily a man from Kentucky, but any adventurous western American. The Texan was the extreme of this type. As Joseph Wood Krutch said of the road-runner, "he is not adjusted to his environment. He is triumphant in it."<sup>4</sup> What then shall we say of the American who came as far west as you can come in Texas — so far that we consider Dallas a part of the refined East, and are secretly delighted when Midland is pictured as something of an outpost of Yale University.<sup>5</sup>

To this westernmost part of Texas, citizens of the young United States of America came early. Zebulon Pike made his journey through El Paso del Norte in 1807, thirteen years before Moses Austin made his first visit to Texas to found a colony. And Hugh Stephenson was riding through the future site of his Concordia settlement and toward his mining claims in New Mexico in 1824, in an area of which the Texans to the east had little or no knowledge. But these visitors to the dry world found here a civilization which antedated the Virginia and Plymouth colonies on the Atlantic coast. Through this civilization the Magoffin wagon-trains were moving before Texas gained its independence from Mexico. Such was the isolation of the El Paso area from the state of which it later became a part. This isolation on the one hand, and attachment to the more ancient culture on the other, has had its part in shaping the El Paso character.

This factor was quite as important as the frontier in the moulding of democracy along the Rio Grande. Social classes spanned the river. Indeed, early day El Paso depended to a large measure on neighbouring Paso del Norte, later Juárez, as the source of many of its social formalities. Such continuous social contacts with a foreign neighbor served as one more leveling influence on such social classes as existed on the El Paso frontier. While no American society is classless, it can nevertheless be said that the El Paso character forbids any such

conception as New York's "four hundred," or even a strict definition as to who is "society" and who is not.

Remoteness from other American cities has been a matter of pride for the Paseño. Its thread runs through our history — James Magoffin serving meals to his guests worthy of the finest tables in New York and Baltimore<sup>6</sup> — Samuel Schutz walking the entire distance from the east coast to El Paso to begin his successful business career — Flora Hague bringing El Paso's first piano across the plains by freight-wagon before the railroads came.<sup>7</sup>

Such a society has never been content to accept Turner's brash statement that "the frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period in American history." There have been new frontiers to challenge the El Paso character in every year of its history. We live every day in the knowledge that things can be changed for the better. The customs and restrictions that have bound us to the past have always been under challenge. The river and the waters beneath the desert have been put to use for the sustaining of a major city and the fertile valleys surrounding it. The challenge of educating a large population from the heritage of other languages and customs has been met with conspicuous success. These and others, each in its own sphere, have been frontiers — and it was more than merely the available space that brought Professor Goddard to this area for pioneering yet to be climaxed in man's first visit to the moon and the other planets. The El Paso character insists upon new frontiers and thrives upon their discovery and conquest.

Our sunny land of "room enough" has its own effect on men and women whose native outlook causes them to seek for better days. A land where any one of the 365 days of the year is likely to be one of blue skies, sunshine, and magnificent vistas, cannot but serve the optimistic spirit. If the weather becomes oppressive, wait until tomorrow. If fortune frowns, tomorrow she may smile. Medical science of recent years has tended to de-emphasize the role of climate in healing — but the record of El Paso's climate in the healing of the sick is too well authenticated to be doubted.<sup>8</sup> It may be that a quiet spirit and a hopeful attitude are among the best things the doctor can prescribe. The historian could perform a worthwhile service by simply cataloguing the men and women who came here sorely afflicted with tuberculosis or other ailments, and stayed to become community leaders. The roll would be equally long of those who came here suffering financially, socially, or emotionally and found the way to recovery.

In summary, some of the elements of the El Paso character are a

willingness to enrich our community character through the acceptance of men and women from varied backgrounds and from all parts of the world; a confidence that there are always new frontiers to be discovered and conquered; and an optimism that overcomes both physical disability and the weakness of the spirit.

As we again call the roll of the El Paso Hall of Honor, let us briefly note how each has displayed his own facet of the El Paso character:

JAMES WILEY MAGOFFIN — 1961. He brought to the American frontier the example of gracious living and culture.

LAWRENCE M. LAWSON — 1961. He served for half a century on the vital frontier of water development in the arid southwest.

RICHARD F. BURGES — 1962. Refusing to recognize that things cannot be changed, he served to give us a cleaner city, better laws, and a richer culture.

MAUD DURLIN SULLIVAN — 1962. On the frontier of literature and learning, she helped to establish El Paso as an important station.

B. M. G. WILLIAMS — 1962. He breathed the confidence that the world will be better tomorrow and has done his part to make it so.

Tonight we add to the list the names of EUGENIA M. SCHUSTER and ROBERT EWING THOMASON, and in the tributes paid them you will find further delineation of the El Paso character.

#### R E F E R E N C E S

1. Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York, Henry F. Holt, 1920).
2. Rex W. Strickland, *The Turner Thesis and the Dry World* (El Paso, Texas Western Press, 1960).
3. Joseph Leach, *The Typical Texan* (Dallas, Southern Methodist University Press, 1952).
4. Joseph Wood Krutch, *The Voice of the Desert* (New York, Wm. Sloane, 1954), 31.
5. John Bainbridge, *The Super Americans* (New York, Doubleday, 1952), 41.
6. John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora and Chihuahua* (New York, Appleton, 1854), Vol. II, 402.
7. Lillian Hague Corcoran, "He Brought the Railroad to El Paso," *Password*, Vol. I, No. 2 (May, 1956), 51.
8. Eugene O. Porter, "No Dark and Cold and Dreary Days — El Paso, Texas, As a Health Resort," *Password*, Vol. IV, No. 2 (April, 1959), 71.

## *Biographical Sketch of Mrs. Eugenia M. Schuster*

by THE REV. B. M. G. WILLIAMS

WE ARE HONORED in naming EUGENIA M. SCHUSTER to a place in El Paso's *Hall of Honor*.

Mrs. Schuster was born on January 5th in the year of Our Lord 1865 in Budapest, Hungary, the country that strived so hard to free itself from the iron hand of Russia only a few years ago. She was educated in Vienna and it was there that she met Dr. Schuster, which caused both of them to become in love with one another, and in due time to be married. While in Vienna she was a pupil of Frantz List, and when Johann Straus first publicly played his Vienna Walzes, she had the joy and privilege of dancing to the music.

Dr. and Mrs. Schuster came to the United States in 1891 and settled in Kansas City where he had accepted the position of chief surgeon for the Consolidated Kansas City Smelting and Refining Company. Three years later, in 1894, the young couple came to El Paso where Dr. Schuster had accepted a similar position with the American Smelting and Refining Company, better known to us as the A. S. & R. Soon after their arrival Mrs. Schuster was asked how she liked El Paso. Her reply was: "I like to see a young city grow!" That to me was a very tactful answer, as I also saw it in 1894. Be that as it may, she did tremendous work towards making it grow and in the right way. Meanwhile, in the year of their arrival at the Pass of the North, Dr. and Mrs. Schuster became citizens of the United States.

Mrs. Schuster was an unusual woman. Cultivated and erudite, she had many and diverse talents. She spoke five languages fluently. Her interest in literature led her to organize the Shakespeare Reading Club. She was also an active member of the First Presbyterian Church.

In 1902 Mrs. Schuster together with her husband and some others established that which we today know as the old Providence Hospital, the forerunner of the present and magnificent Providence Memorial Hospital. The old Providence was the first non-secretarian hospital in El Paso. It also offered the first Nurses Training School of any hospital in the city. Mrs. Schuster herself had the further distinction of organizing the Graduate Nurses Association of Texas.

In 1905 Mrs. Schuster was president of the Woman's Club of El Paso and led that group in urging more parks for the city. She was also one of the organizers of the Associated Charities and served as that organization's first vice-president. We who were here at that time know what a truly great institution it was. Its annual Charity

Ball was a thing of great beauty in addition to producing much revenue for the association.

During the Mexican Revolution in the years 1916-17, Mrs. Schuster together with Mrs. Alberto Madero whose husband was a nephew of President Madero, organized "Amigo Listo" which in English means "Ready Friends." There were thousands of refugees from Mexico who were allowed to come to El Paso. The military at Fort Bliss built a stockade for them and supplied them with tents. However, food was a huge and constant problem and the two ladies I have mentioned were courageous enough to ask Pancho Villa, who was at that time in control of Juárez, for an interview. Upon their arrival in Juárez, General Villa graciously received them by bowing very low and by asking them what he could do. They explained the position of his own people, who were refugees, and their dire need of food. General Villa promised to send a carload of beans daily, a promise he faithfully kept as long as he was in control of Juárez and the northern part of Mexico.

Mrs. Schuster's desire to help those unfortunate refugees revealed the fact that she was internationally minded and always willing to help any who stood in need of help.

In the year 1919 she founded the El Paso Pan-American Round Table and was made its first Director-General. At the close of her first term of office, the members urged Mrs. Schuster to become the permanent Director-General but she declined the honor in the firm belief that an organization dies if it does not have new blood at its helm. Perhaps it is safe to say that among her many civic endeavors, the Pan-American Round Table was closest to her heart. This was evidently the thinking of its members for, in 1937, despite Mrs. Schuster's original reason for declining, they made her Director-General for life.

Among the many high spots in this lady's civic life there is one that made her exceedingly happy, and that was when she was named El Paso's Mother for the year 1939. Incidentally, she was a great mother to her own family, prior to being made El Paso's.

Notwithstanding her many self imposed obligations to the city she loved and "watched grow" she also saw to it that her family was well cared for. She, together with her husband, gave to each of their four children a sound education. We today are enjoying the "heredity" of the second, third and fourth generations of this estimable one-time mother of El Paso.

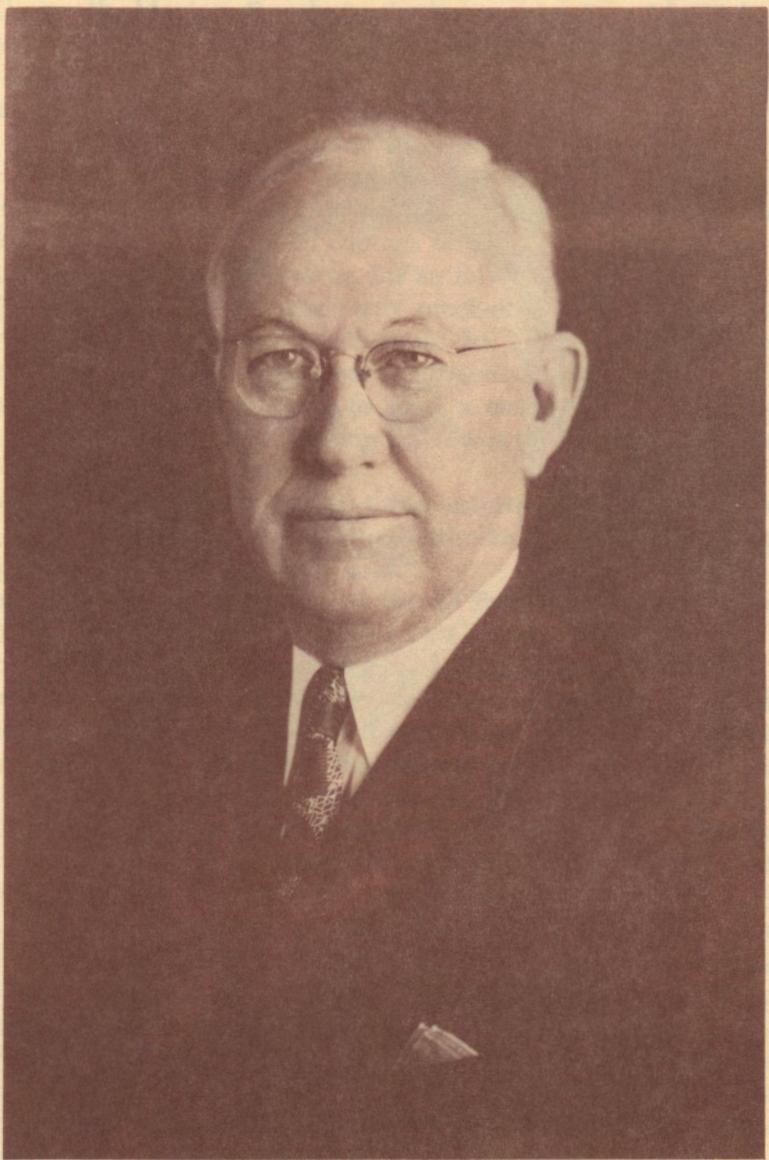
Due to Mrs. Schuster's amazing ability to do so many things so well, there are several other activities that I should like to expatiate but space in the *PASSWORD* will not permit. Therefore I can only refer

In these briefy. One such activity took place in 1913, when the  
group of members of the El Paso County Medical Association



**MRS. EUGENIA M. SCHUSTER**

Cañon City, Texas, were invited to speak at the dinner which was one of the pioneer dinners of North Texas. The accepted public schools of Garza County, Texas, and its surrounding towns, from which school he still now



# ROBERT EWING THOMASON

to them briefly. One such activity took place in 1933-34 when she served as president of the El Paso County Medical Auxiliary.

In 1939 Mrs. Schuster gave a dinner and reception for officials of the Pan-American Round Table together with those of the Southwestern Sun Carnival Association. It was held in the ballroom of the Hotel Paso del Norte. This occasion was highlighted by messages from the President of the United States and the President of Mexico. Our own Congressman, the Honorable R. E. Thomason, delivered a message from Stephen Early, secretary to President Franklin Roosevelt, as follows: "The President asks me to send his cordial greetings to all who participate in the Sun Carnival, with best wishes that the celebration will promote friendship and good will and the spirit of the good neighbor." Elias Colunga, Consul of Mexico, brought President Lazaro Cárdenas' congratulations. Our neighbors' President particularly expressed appreciation of Mrs. Schuster for the fomenting of friendly relations between Americans and Mexicans.

In 1945 at a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Pan-American Round Table of El Paso, mayor Dan Duke presented Mrs. Schuster with a key to the city, expressing gratitude for her unselfish devotion to El Paso and her promotion of international good will.

This brings to a close a feeble effort to portray the civic life of a talented and internationally minded lady who lived in El Paso from 1894 to 1946.      "Her children arise up, and call her blessed."

### *The Honorable Robert Ewing Thomason*

by RICHARD C. WHITE

THERE ARE a few gifted men whose lives read like a book, each chapter filled with new adventures and events and peopled with the great, the near great, the ordinary in a pageant crossing some of the brightest years of our great nation. Such a life has been that of Judge Robert Ewing Thomason. His life to date has spanned some of the richest and most critical periods in our country's history. He has been a part of it and, at various phases of his life, certainly helped guide in appreciable measure the course of our City, State and Nation.

Judge Thomason was born on May 30, 1879, in Shelbyville, Tennessee, like many another Texan of prominence, and then moved to Gainesville, Texas, when only one year old. His father was one of the pioneer doctors of North Texas. He attended public schools in Cooke County, Texas, and later was graduated from Southwestern University at Georgetown, Texas, from which school he also now

holds an honorary LL.D. degree. He graduated from the law school of the University of Texas and returned to Gainesville where he was County and District Attorney for four years.

In 1912 he moved to El Paso for his health, where for many years he was a member of the law firm of Lea, McGrady, Thomason and Edwards. In 1917 the people of El Paso County elected him to the House of Representatives of the State of Texas, and after only one term, in 1920, he was unanimously elected Speaker of the House, an unprecedented achievement.

As a member of the State Legislature, he was the author of the Clean Election Law, requiring every voter to make out his own ballot and was very active in obtaining adequate appropriations for the newly established College of Mines, now Texas Western College. It was during his service in the Legislature and while speaker, that women were given the right to vote, the workmen's compensation law was passed, and the State Highway Commission was established.

In 1922 he became the only El Paso resident ever to run for the governorship of Texas in a very close race. In 1927 he was elected Mayor of El Paso against long-time entrenched opposition, and during his very successful term of office from 1927 through 1931 the El Paso Natural Gas Company, Standard Oil Refinery, Texas Company Refinery, and Phelps-Dodge Refinery were established in El Paso, and El Paso's first airport was built.

The first traffic lights were installed and Rim Road Addition was planned and paved. In 1931 during the dark days of the depression, he was elected to Congress where he served continuously for 17 years, until appointed United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas in 1947, by President Harry S. Truman.

As a freshman Congressman he was appointed to the important Military Affairs Committee and throughout his Congressional career contributed in innumerable ways to the economy of West Texas.

As Congressman he was author of the Bill establishing Big Bend National Park, author of the bill establishing Fort Bliss National Cemetery, author of the Thomason Act to give qualified young reserve officers permanent commissions in the regular Army, and was active in obtaining many millions of dollars to build military installations in and around El Paso, now among the largest in the Nation. He was an outstanding member of the House Military Affairs Committee, and was in large measure responsible for the continued improvement of this area for a great military center. He also rendered outstanding service in his courageous and sometimes discouraging battle to prepare this Nation for the defense of freedom in World

War II. At the time of his ascension to the bench for the United States District Court for the Western District of Texas, he was ranking member of the Armed Services Committee and a member of the joint Senate and House Committee on atomic energy.

As United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas, covering the El Paso, Pecos and Del Rio Divisions, Judge Thomason handled some 35,000 civil and criminal cases (including immigration). Many of the cases were of unusual importance. Among these were those of Clinton Jencks, alleged Communist, Leon Bearden, airlines hijacker; and Billie Sol Estes. He also naturalized 9,000 aliens.

On June 1, 1963, Judge Thomason retired, two days after his 84th birthday, and changed his status to that of Senior Judge. As Senior Judge, however, he is still active in the processing of many important and final legal matters in cases for the Western District of Texas.

Judge Thomason has been a long-time member of the First Presbyterian Church, and was Chairman of the Building Committee for the new Brown Street Church. He is a 33rd Degree Mason, a member of Kappa Sigma Fraternity, and also of the honorary legal fraternity, Phi Delta Phi.

His wife is Abbie Mann Thomason; his son William Ewing Thomason lives in Bryan, Texas; and his daughter, Isabelle Thomason Decherd lives in Dallas, Texas. He has five grandchildren.

On the occasion of the celebration of Judge Thomason's 80th Birthday, a telegram was received from President Dwight D. Eisenhower which read as follows: "I am delighted to learn of the honor being paid Judge R. Ewing Thomason, El Paso's First Citizen, and for years of outstanding and widely respected public service. For more than two decades I have prized the friendship of Judge Thomason when he was in Congress and as a senior member of the Committee on Military Affairs, and then of the new Armed Services Committee. All who knew him respected his sound judgment and objectivity, his ability and industry and his unswerving dedication to the Nation's security and welfare. The tributes being paid to him on his 80th birthday, so richly earned through his years of faithful service pleases me very much indeed. I gladly join in those tributes to my admired friend." Signed: Dwight D. Eisenhower. He also received congratulations from his close friend, former President Harry S. Truman.

The truest value of a man can be assessed by what others spontaneously say about him. I shall borrow from the Congressional resignation from the House of Representatives, wherein for seven sincere and warmhearted pages of recorded testimonial his colleagues, both Democrat and Republican, appraised his worth as a

Record of July 22, 1947, on the occasion of Congressman Thomason's legislator, as a patriot, and as a man.

Congressman Sam Rayburn, later Speaker, said this of his Friend: "He is the type and character of man who not only gives loyalty but elicits it from other people. . . . I have known many patriotic and outstanding Members of the House of Representatives, but I have never known one more patriotic, more outstanding in service, and love, and loyalty to his country than Ewing Thomason."

Congressman Andrews of New York stated: "During the long period of the war no member of this House or the Military Committee made a more direct contribution in ability, fidelity, and patriotism to the successful prosecution of the war."

Congressman Mahon of Texas stated: "It has been given to few men to serve mankind so well and so successfully. There is a reason for this — that reason can be found in his wholesomeness of character and personality, in the depth of his moral and intellectual integrity, in his innate sense of fairness, in his tremendous capacity for understanding his fellowman. All who know him recognize the fact that there is something about him which is indefinably fine — something which makes people love and respect him."

Congressman Lyndon Johnson of Texas, now President of the United States said: "Ewing Thomason's rugged honesty, great intellectual capacity, sturdy character, and unusual political acumen have permitted him to make a great contribution to his country's history."

Congressman Combs was prophetic and accurate in his remarks, when he said, "He is a learned lawyer who can understand and interpret the law, but what is even more valuable he has a deep sense of justice and right. He will dispense justice without bias. Rich and poor, the powerful and weak, will alike receive his just consideration. Added to all that is his vast capacity for human understanding and kindness which insures that he will never abuse the tremendous powers that will be lodged in his hands as a Federal Judge by using them arbitrarily."

Certainly as much as any man, in the paraphrase of the Hall of Honor criterion, Judge R. E. Thomason, outstanding man of character, vision, courage, and creative spirit, has consistently done the unusual which deserves to be recorded, and has made El Paso County better for having lived in it. He has influenced over a period of years the course of history of El Paso and brought honor and recognition to the El Paso community. He has directed us toward goals, and merits being remembered by all men as an exemplary guide to our future.

# THE HART'S MILL POST: 1880-1893

by RICHARD K. McMASTER

[EDITOR'S NOTE: At a formal ceremony on November 7 Richard C. White, El Paso County Chairman of the Texas State Historical Survey Committee, serving as master of ceremonies, placed a plaque on one of the buildings of old Fort Bliss at Hart's Mill. Major General Tom V. Stayton, Commanding General, U. S. Army Air Defense Center, made a few appropriate remarks on behalf of the Fort Bliss community; and Major Richard K. McMaster (Ret.) gave the history of the post. The 424th Army Band played a number of well-chosen selections. Major McMaster's paper, with the addition of two footnotes supplied by the editor, follows.]

THE SELECTION of Hart's Mill for the location of Fort Bliss was approved by Act of Congress on February 4, 1879 and deeds for transfer of the land, 135 acres, obtained from the heirs of Simeon Hart, were executed in September of that year. This, the fourth location of Fort Bliss, extended along the bank of the Rio Grande for 1,000 yards where the river narrowed at the gorge between the mountains, the south end being near the Hart home just above the dam.

Congress appropriated only \$40,000 for the grounds and buildings so construction was performed by troop labor. As a consequence, work was frequently interrupted by expeditions against the Indians who were unhappy with Reservation life and were breaking away to raid on both sides of the border. Nevertheless, detachments were moved from the town to the new location as buildings were completed in 1880.

The barracks and hospital were on the north side of the parade ground which sloped down towards the officer's line along the river. This was no frontier post for in 1881 the Southern Pacific Railroad laid its tracks just north of the barracks, and the Santa Fé went directly across the parade ground.

Although the Apache leader Victorio had been killed in 1880 by the Mexican Army, other renegade bands led by Chato, Geronimo, Loco and Nana were still to be contended with. This being a problem for mounted troops, Fort Bliss became a station where cavalry patrols rested and refitted between expeditions. With the surrender of Geronimo's band in 1886 such activity came to an end.

On March 1, 1890 an Act of Congress authorized the Secretary of War to sell Fort Bliss and, with the proceeds from the sale and other funds not exceeding \$150,000 to select suitable grounds of not less than 1,000 acres within 10 miles of El Paso and to construct a new post. The present site on La Noria Mesa was selected and bids for

construction of the post were asked on April 23, 1891. It was not until October 1893 that the new Fort Bliss was ready for occupancy.

Mrs. Robert L. Howze, writing in the El Paso Historical Society's *PASSWORD* in 1958,<sup>1</sup> recalls arriving at the Hart's Mill post by troop-train in 1884. Her father, Major Hamilton S. Hawkins, commanded the two-company battalion of the 19th Infantry that unloaded on the gravelly, dusty parade ground. All the buildings were built of adobe and were without plumbing. Closets were provided behind each set of quarters and barracks. Water was supplied by a water-wagon which sucked the water up from the river and delivered it into barrels at each house. It was liquid mud and had to be settled and dipped into other barrels. Transportation to town was by buckboard drawn by two mules, serving the whole garrison.

Dr. Walter N. Vilas (Vylas), grandfather of Colonel Walter Stevenson of El Paso, arrived here in 1879 from Red Wing, Minnesota to serve as Contract Surgeon to the Army at Fort Bliss. After completing his contract at Hart's Mill he remained in El Paso practicing medicine until 1912 when he retired and moved to California. He served as the County Health Officer and as a member of the School Board. Vilas School is named in his honor.

Another descendant of the Hart's Mill post is Major General George Ruhlen<sup>2</sup> now on duty in Pakistan. He is the grandson of Captain George Ruhlen, Constructing Quartermaster, who disposed of the Hart's Mill post and built the 1893 post on the mesa.

#### R E F E R E N C E S

1. "Recollections of Old Fort Bliss," *Password*, Vol. III, No. 1 (January, 1958), 30-34.
2. With the exception of Major McMaster himself no one has published so many articles in *Password* on the military history of the Southwest as has Major General George Ruhlen.

## *The Smelting Works As Remembered by Noel Longuemare*

*by CHARLES SAFFORD DE WETTER*

THERE HAS BEEN a great deal in the paper recently on the possibility that our Smelter might close because of the lack of lead ore. The Smelter is of great importance to El Paso and has been since its beginning.

Mr. Noel Longuemaire, who lives in Ysleta today, worked at the Smelter from 1896 to 1906 as metallurgical bookkeeper. I interviewed him for the information in this article.

The El Paso Smelting Works, later called The Consolidated Kansas City Smelting and Refining Company, was founded in 1887 by Robert Towne.<sup>1</sup>

It was situated three miles northwest of the city on an elevated plateau overlooking the Rio Grande. The first furnace was blown in in 1887. By 1890 it had six furnaces.

The Smelter was the largest business in El Paso. There was nothing to compare to it. It was a separate community from El Paso. It was divided into two sections: American and Mexican. The Mexican Section was centered around the General Store owned by E. M. Bray and next to it was a pond used for cooling water for the Smelter. The sand below the Smelter was empty of houses as it was flooded every year by the Rio Grande.

The Santa Fé Railroad had a depot below the Smelter where Nick Stuppi had a house built high off the ground. He was the station master and sold tickets for ten cents to El Paso. The train made one trip a day. Most people used horses and buggies to make the trip to town. Henry Darden, half Negro, drove into El Paso twice a day for the Smelter.<sup>2</sup>

In 1901 fire almost destroyed the Smelter.<sup>3</sup> It was rebuilt and opened in 1902 when an official of the company gave this interview:

"We employ about 1,200 men and with their families the community approximates 3,000 souls. The death rate is a trifle less than that of El Paso. All this, too, despite the immense amount of smoke and fumes that are poured out of the stacks and seem so deadly but are not.

"Since the coming of Dr. Schuster three years ago, we have rigidly enforced our strict sanitary regulations until we have a very neat and cleanly settlement.

"We have a black list and if garbage is seen in or near a house the

occupants are put on the list or the men living there may not work until the place is thoroughly clean. We have no sewage systems, but everything is carried away in carts early in the day.

"We have our school where the children are taught and our hospital where the men are cared for in case of accident or sickness."<sup>4</sup>

In 1894 papers were signed for a new hospital at the Smelter, one story and modern to cost \$1,650.00.<sup>5</sup> It was at this hospital that my great grandfather, Dr. Henry Towne Safford, served as resident surgeon.<sup>6</sup>

The Smelter was the world's largest custom smelter with ore coming from Mexico, Arizona and New Mexico. The ore contained debits like sulphur and silicon and credits like gold, silver, iron, lime and magnesium. There were 4 to 5 ounces of gold to each ton, and about 400 ounces of silver to each ton and 98 per cent or more of each ton was lead. Then, as now, this was a lead smelter dependent on lead ore. Today it is the lack of this ore which threatens to close the Smelter, so long an important part of El Paso.

#### R E F E R E N C E S

1. Noel Longuemare was born in Las Vegas, New Mexico, and grew up in Socorro, New Mexico. In 1888 he came with his family to El Paso when the population was about 5,000. He lives in Ysleta today.
2. El Paso *Times*, January 1, 1890.
3. El Paso *Herald*, July 10, 1901.
4. *Ibid.*, January 29, 1902.
5. *Ibid.*, May 25, 1894.
6. *Worley's Directory of the City of El Paso*, 1900, 266.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: This year marked the Society's second annual essay contest for El Paso school children. The judges selected Charles de Wetter's article as the best among the several submitted and the editorial board, following a precedent set last year of publishing the winning paper, is happy to print the article.]

## LADY BULLFIGHTERS

by HALDEEN BRADDY

In Borderland (El Paso, Texas, and Juárez, Mexico) the melding of two cultures, Anglo-American and Spanish, had produced at mid-century a new folk custom, lady bullfighting in the *Plaza de Toros*. There, amid isolated boos and general cheering, a modern figure stepped into an ancient pastime of facing a maddened bull — the slender figure of an adolescent girl.

Though oldsters complained that the new sport ridiculed traditional bullfighting, Texan fans in ever increasing numbers crossed into Mexico over the International Bridge. By taxi, in sports car or private automobile, and on foot, they went to see the latest Border spectacle, a brave girl *versus* a goring bull. A Mexican poet, Alberto de la Rosa, overcome with enthusiasm, wrote

*Olé, your feminine figure,  
Olé, of elegant distinction,  
Is magnified before the bull,  
And exclamations arise  
Of astonishment and admiration.*

1

Joy Blair, a native of Burk Burnett, Texas, aged twenty-two, illustrated the flaming degree to which the feminine fever for the bullring attained. Undeterred by her five-foot stature, Joy more than once pitted her strength in the blood and sand. But she never relinquished her amateur standing. Her explanation of the newest Border sport, uninfluenced by professional considerations, had a ring of truth to it.

Women first became *toro*-minded, Joy said, in response to the great literary publicity given to male tauromachians. They read writers like Hemingway but especially Barnaby Conrad's article on a renowned fighter, "The Death of Manolete," in *Reader's Digest* (April, 1951) and his exciting novel, *Matador* (1952). Another book which promoted the boom was *Lady Bullfighter* (1954), by the well-known *torera* Pat McCormick, who as a "cute blonde" co-ed once attended Texas Western College. She subsequently taught bullfighting to the late actor, James Dean. Pat at first had only successes with no setbacks or gorings, so that all the girls, tomboys and lady-like debutantes, too, wanted to become Pat McCormicks. The single most

important early factor to create enthusiasm, however, was the popularity of the movie version of *The Brave Bulls* (1949), by the native El Pasoan, Tom Lea.

What attracted American girls, Texans in particular, to the sport was its pageantry. They liked, Joy said, the noise and the color, the sound of "Olé! Olé!" ringing in their ears, together with the bright flashing to and fro of the crimson cape before the angered bull. They liked the costumes which they wore, the clutching grip of embroidered pants tight on the soft roundness of their buttocks, the short buttoned coat around their frilled shirts, and especially the flat black hat, or *Córdoba*, atop their knotted-up hair. They liked the money, too. But they loved the notoriety, the newspaper editorials, the magazine articles, the encomiums over the radio, and their pictures full and live on television. Grandma helped to carve western culture from a frontier, mama voted women's benefits into the federal constitution, and daughter simply could not take the comforts of civilization. Modern girls wanted something different. They wanted it as rugged as possible; therefore something masculine. They had created a stir by wearing shorts, a furor by wearing jeans; had startled the sports world by appearing as wrestlers; and had raced motorcycles, automobiles, and airplanes in cross-country derbies. Still these activities lacked danger, wanted death and blood. Nothing would satisfy them except that ancient gory custom born in the Old World—bullfighting.

The International Club at Texas Western College, Joy continued, served to quicken the interest of young women who had not yet come directly in contact with Spanish culture in its unadulterated, raw state. They heard about fullfighting and decided to see it; they saw it and decided to try it. Enthusiasm for the sport spread everywhere. Professor Ray Past, of Texas Western, even lectured on the technique of the sport at the Unitarian Church.

Long before this, novices had sprung up all about the campus: Petite Pat Hayes, from out of town, became one of the first Texas Western co-eds to start training and to take lessons from the experts. Julie Williams, an El Paso girl, began at the same time. Hitherto Julie had distinguished herself at the college as a brilliant student and a talented poetess. Now this promising member of the intelligentsia changed into a burning enthusiast for bullfighting. Quite some time before Pat McCormick came upon the scene to capture fame and win for herself a satisfying income as a professional *torera*, Julie Williams commenced publicizing the subject until it became the campus rage. She sought to draw the backing of people far and near, trying once to interest *Mademoiselle*, the magazine for young ladies, in what was

occurring in the border country. At that time nobody outside of El Paso appeared to share the enthusiasm of the Texas *toreras*. Chagrined, Julie threw away her book and pen, got married, and later moved to New York, to remove herself from a scene that quickly attracted the spotlight of international attention.

On the border Señor Alejandro del Hierro first taught the art of bullfighting to girls in Juárez, Mexico. Himself a masterly technician, Señor Hierro gave the girls excellent instruction, introducing them to a strict regimen of conduct and insisting on the significance of rigid training. He tried and succeeded in getting down to basic principles with them, teaching in recent years such celebrated *toreras* as Pat McCormick and Joy Marie Price. He gained his success by sticking to business, by keeping his eyes off the girls and on their performances, by drilling them in the fundamentals of passing the cape and thrusting the sword. For his reward, he had young *toreras* who sparkled with bounding health, who owned quick flashing eyes and vigorous alert minds—who epitomized poise. As one result of his success, other schools for girls began to open. Today the new profession of being *maestro* to tauromachians has moved far south of the Rio Grande, down to the capital at Mexico City. There one recently opened near the central airport. It had a tiny ring but considerable atmosphere. Adjoining it stood a bullfight museum and a typically Mexican restaurant. Classes met on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; the *novillada* fights took place on Sundays at 5:30 p.m. (4:30 p.m., El Paso time). Señor Hierro started something when he first placed his female protégés in the arena of blood and sand.

What psychological factors lie behind women's love for the world's most dangerous game? Joy Blair, known under the alias Julia Burnett in the arena, said that it was not a love interest, though many people thought that perhaps the girls experienced some deep yearning for the *matadors*, the *picadors*, or the *toreros*. She stated further that the girls disliked being hurt, none of them deriving any kind of inner gratification from the masochistic experience of being knocked down in the dirt by a bull or being gored by one of his horns. Nor did the death motive figure as the paramount factor. Joy admitted that women have a secret knowledge of death, since nature has conditioned them to pass within its shadow when they bear children; but she pointed out that most ranch women early condition themselves to handling domestic animals, to throwing them down and branding them, and to seeing them die.

Joy had ready answers for a series of questions about the girls, pointing out that men and women fighters differed somewhat. She

said that a girl group from Argentina who came to Juárez seemed particularly concerned about their toilette, about their powder and lipstick.

"What about a girl's hair?"

"None of them cut their hair to fight better. They are all concerned with their appearance, but the hair is nothing to worry about. You pin it back in a pony tail, put on your hat, and there you are," she said.

"How did you feel in the ring?"

"O.K. I was all right. When I got knocked down, I was not worried about being stepped on. I was worried about getting dirty. It is hot and dusty out there, and the dirt sticks to you."

"Do the girls get tired of the same costumes?"

"No, not much. Bette Ford came out in the Juárez ring in a pink suit. It was breaking tradition, for standard colors are black, brown or gray. The *aficionados* didn't like it."

"But they like women bullfighters?"

"Yes, they do," Joy replied. "A long time ago old folks objected to women's polished fingernails, to wearing earrings, and to having bobbed hair; but they got used to it."

"Do male and female fighters wear the same suits?"

"No. Women avoid wearing heavy *traje de luces*, or the suit of lights, because it makes their hips look broad. They wear a short coat, or *traje de corto*, and tightly-fitting Spanish pants."

"What do women dislike most about bullfighting?"

"Few of them like the kill," Joy said. "All of them get a definite physical thrill or sexual gratification out of it. They are drawn to death. Some of them draw artistic satisfaction from fighting, but these are few. I don't like the kill. I have never killed a bull. I can do all of it except kill the bull."

"What kind of sublimated experience do they have?"

"Maybe they all don't have it. I knew one nymphomaniac; her conscience drove her to punish herself, possibly to kill herself, because she had a guilt complex. Some are cold, cool, calculating. They want the money and have no emotional reactions. All of them have to be gymnastic. They are all tremendously body conscious."

"What can a woman gain from bullfighting?"

"It has more than fad value," Joy said. "At first girls are awkward; then they gain balance. The equipment weighs like lead and at first is only a burden. Later it seems one half as heavy. At first girls drag the equipment; later they wield it gracefully. Bullfighters make graceful dancers. The sport is good for the health and fine for the figure."

A girl must avoid getting fat and stay mentally alert. It is exhilarating to be always in the open air and sunshine."

"Do girls mimic the men?"

"No, indeed. All of them must stay feminine; none of them become Lesbians; in fact, femininity is emphasized. A woman is perfect for the sport because she is so aware of her body. The proximity of a goring horn to tear their flesh makes them full of physical awareness."

"Do they have a sense of physical triumph?"

"Yes," Joy answered. "Their primitive sense of victory is as strong as a man's. But hardly any of them have a sense of blood lust. Most *toreras* regard a bloody, messy fight with disgust and nausea. Their reaction from a victory is one of sheer physical exhaustion."

"Do they compare themselves with men?"

"They do not equate themselves with men. A woman thinks she can do what a man can do but doesn't talk about it. A woman has as much courage as a man. Maybe she lusts more for audience approval. She knows that most of her audience is male and knows that she will get more attention than a masculine bullfighter. To tell the truth, the women usually get the little bulls. Some cheating and burlesquing in bullfighting is possible for the *torera*; but probably not as much as with the men. Men have longer training periods and learn to fake with more skill."

"Why do girls surpass *toreros* in popularity?"

"Feminine pulchritude," Joy said. "The male audience focuses its eyes on the girl, not on the animal."

Night club performers and strip-teasers, according to Joy Blair, have their fans all right, but not nearly so many as the *toreras*. Highlights in the bullfighting careers of two or three of them may show why they have stolen the spotlight from other female border entertainers.

The quest for adventure, the longing for diversion, emotions which animated the majority of the border dwellers, had brought a new sport to the Rio Grande. Border women were strong and capable enough to compete with the men. To understand these people, it was necessary to recognize that the women had physical stamina in abundance and that they had originality enough to make a fresh approach to a sport traditionally cultivated by men only.

A young lady who in 1951 played second bassoon with the far-famed El Paso Symphony sought, in 1954, to achieve individual renown as a *novillera*. Gifted Patricia Hayes, born in Des Moines, Iowa,

calls San Angelo, Texas, her home town. Her brother, Bill C. Hayes, lives in El Paso, where after his school days he learned to fence from Francis A. Ehmann and later won one of Texas' fencing championships. Patricia, folks say, got her bullring sword talent from her brother Bill. A border beauty, Patricia made a big splash during the fifties in the Latin-American world of *la fiesta brava*.

Unlike most other Texas *toreras*, Patricia Hayes has fought, not in the border towns from Tijuana to Reynosa, but within the interior of Mexico itself, before native crowds. Her first *corrida* came, it is true, at Villa Acuña, a few miles below Del Rio, Texas, where she whacked an ear from her bull as a reward for her victory. Her main fights have occurred in the state of Jalisco, at the resort city of Acapulco, and in Irapuato, near Mexico City.

Her triumphant appearance in Jalisco brought her the praise of Raul Zubieta, director of the weekly bullfight magazine *Ecos*. At Acapulco she received repeated ovations for her strategy, winning plaudits for being the only girl bullfighter to set the *banderillas* (barbed hooks) into her animal's shoulders before making the kill. That smoldering Sunday afternoon in Acapulco the bull knocked her down in the dirt. Patricia arose, refused to be taken from the ring, and fought on with grim determination to win. A few weeks later she appeared at Acapulco once more. In this *corrida* the bull struck her down six times, gored her in the leg, and reduced her almost to hysterics. But again as before Patricia refused to yield in the terrifying battle for survival, staying on to conquer the bull—and cheat death. Yet later, at Irapuato, the blond *Norteamericana* established herself in the minds of *aficionados* as the daring damsels who never cries quit.

In her first year as a *torera* Patricia Hayes made a dozen public fighting appearances and killed fifteen *toros*. South of the border, the Lone Star charmer enjoys a reputation for bravery second to no other *novillera*, having more than once reentered the ring with bandaged wounds to finish the contest and dispatch her animal. In the dance macabre of *toro y torera*, Patricia has gained the respect of such trainers as Carlos Suarez and Raul Muñoz, such performers as *matador* Luis Procuna and *novillera* Rosa Berta Martinez, and such *empresarios* as Don Neto and Dr. Alfonso Gaona.

Patricia Hayes became interested in facing *el toro* in much the same way as the other girls. She was mainly influenced by reading books and seeing movies. She read the novels of Barnaby Conrad, Ernest Hemingway, and Tom Lea. As for the movies, she said: "I

saw *Blood and Sand* at least four times, and of course *The Brave Bulls* and *The Bullfighter and the Lady*."

By 1960 Patricia had achieved worldwide renown, having visited the capitals of Europe, fought in North Africa, and displayed her talents in Spain and Portugal.

## 3

The perfect symbol of feminine pulchritude at Texas Western College a few years ago was lissome, petite Joy Marie Price. Another blonde, Joy Marie came to the Pass from Odessa, Texas. Before she came to college, she had never seen a bullfight. She told a reporter from the *Herald-Post* that "A friend of mine took me to my first *corrida* and introduced me to some of the *novilleros*. I knew then that I wanted to fight bulls—as soon as I could."

Joy Marie Price became the third co-ed bullfighter on the border, Pat McCormick, of San Angelo, being the first and Joy Blair, of El Paso, the second. Although a major in journalism at Texas Western, literature played no major role in her decision to enter the arena. The determining factor with her, as with many subsequent novices, was the scene of combat itself. Her favorable reaction to the spectacle of blood, sweat, and bulls bellowing in agony looms remarkable in view of her stature and daintiness.

About one-tenth the size of her four-footed opponents, the tiny *torera* (five feet, five inches tall) weighs only ninety-seven pounds, whereas most bulls opposing women load the scales at from 600 to 800 pounds. Blue-eyed, yellow-headed Joy Marie Price in 1955 owned the distinction in bullfighting annals of being the *novillera* lightest of weight. They breed them bold way out West! Joy Marie yields a weight advantage to her competitors, but none of them outmatch her in ambition, determination, or raw courage. Seeing only her attractive face and not her fighting heart, one might hold that she belonged, not to the bullring, but to her former college dormitory organization, the Bell Hall Belles.

Joy Marie took bullfighting lessons from the best trainers on the border. Famous Alejandro del Hierro, the first schoolmaster to Texas *toreras*, initiated her into bullfighting society. Señor José Antonio Luna, a *novillero*, became her second teacher. When last heard of, she was still making an occasional ring appearance and still taking lessons from experienced tutors. According to reports, the name of her third manager was Jimmy Corbett, of Chicago. Her newest

manager is Don Francisco Gutiérrez, Empresa of the Jimínez arena.

Of late years she has had several fights, one unlucky appearance being at Phoenix, Arizona, in 1954. Then she failed to conquer her animal, and American law prohibits the bull to be killed. "He knew just what to expect," she said afterward. "He stayed away from the *muleta* (red rag attached to a short stick) and aimed for me. He picked me up and threw me down. Then he walked on me. I was just bruised. They got me out of the ring before anything worse happened." Since that date, her experiences have been memorable. She won two exciting combats in the interior of Mexico at Durango and Canatlan. Yet later, she fought in Mexico at Parral, winning out over the bull and cutting from him the winner's trophy, a blood-stained black ear.

Joy Marie has the qualities of the enthusiast. "There are," she said, "those who believe women should not fight. We will prove to them that we can become artists just as men do. We want to show the world that women bullfighters are more than novelties."

In the history of bullfighting Joy Marie Price has already secured a place for herself. She long will be remembered as one of the tiniest *toreras* ever to enter the bullring. She may later achieve greatness, as her erstwhile teachers predict, for everybody reports her an apt pupil.

#### 4

Living at the westermost tip of Texas, *Paseños* represent West Texans in the superlative degree. The fabulous Georgiana Knowles might well be called the most novel of the Texas *toreras*. She alone proudly sports the unique title of "*Rejoneadora*," lady bullfighter on horseback.

Long an El Pasoan, she came to the border from Tucson, Arizona, where she was born. Reared and educated at the Pass, Georgiana exhibits in her person, her inventiveness, and her inbred daring the native lady *torera* at her flamboyant best. When recently interviewed, her mother, Mrs. Mary I. Knowles, said that Georgiana rode horses at two and a half years of age and that as the child grew older, she showed increasingly a distinct taste for all things Mexican. In her last year in high school Georgiana saw the movie of *The Brave Bulls* and decided there and then to enter the bullring. From the start, the citizens of Mexico liked the *simpatica* Texas girl, with her pretty face and large green eyes. Deriving from many racial stocks, American Indian, English, Irish, Italian, and Spanish, she proved a natural at-

traction on the International Border, where people of varied lineage felt they had strong claim on at least some of her unusually fiery spirit.

Being seriously burned on her back when a child, Georgiana endured hardships in her girlhood and triumphed over adversity. Uncowed by her accidental burning, she developed into a fearless young woman with a firm will and much determination. She lived mainly out of doors and waxed strong in the El Paso sunshine. Of sturdy physical construction when she reached twenty-one, Georgiana outstripped most other girls in athletic prowess. It required strength and agility to wield a heavy *rejon* (javelin) while riding bareback, for in the arena she appeared *montado en pelo*, with only a leather strap to hold herself in place astride the horse. Throughout her training period her actions bespoke those of a champion.

What she first learned to do included manipulations of the heavy cape from atop her *toro*-trained steed and placement of two *banderillas* (fancy barbs) in the shoulders of the bull while both bull and horse were in rapid motion. Sometimes the horse slipped, fell, and received a goring. More than once the bull's charge against her horse jostled her to the ground. On all occasions she rose to resume the struggle, until finally her healthy body and steel nerves carried her to graduation: she now stood ready for the fight for keeps.

Riding a white horse which she uses only for the *paseo* (opening parade), Georgiana cut a fine figure as she entered the arena. The first figure sighted by the spectators, she introduced the bullfighting pageantry of the afternoon. As the air filled with parade music and the rhythmic beat of drums, Georgiana sparkled with excitement, her impressive white horse prancing majestically about for all the world to see. A born equestrienne, the talented *torera* put on a show second to none in sheer grace and exotic beauty. Afterwards, in *la fiesta brava* itself, Georgiana changed to her famous horse "Tony," a handsome palomino which she and her favorite tutor, the celebrated David "Tabaquito" Siqueiros, acquired from the fabulous King Ranch of South Texas. Then, when the contest started, her adroitness in handling a horse under pressure came fully into play. She vibrated with excitement in the foreknowledge of her role, for she knew that she must either kill or be killed. So far, she has ever emerged victor, amid the inspiring cries of cheering, riotous throngs.

Georgiana has fought all over the Mexican Border, virtually its length and breadth from Matamoros to Tijuana. She began fighting at Juárez under the tutelage of sage Siqueiros, described in sporting circles as "one of the brainiest, most dependable men in bullfighting

today." Her successes there carried her to further glories in her appearances at Nogales, Nuevo Laredo, Piedras Negras, Matamoros, Mexicali, Mexico City, and Villa Acuña. Easy to look at, vivacious Georgiana, whom the Mexicans call "Georgina," created a sensation when she killed her first bull from horseback. She thereby wrote a spectacular page in the history of border bullfighting that will be long remembered.

Her sterling performances have brought Georgiana Knowles deservedly excellent publicity. At the Pass, where the art dates from early times, a girl really has to show something to draw an encomium from the newspapers. On July 4, 1955, the *El Paso Herald-Post* had this to say about "Georgina":

She has made history as the only American girl to fight on horseback.

She is the first American girl to fight in the Plaza in Mexico City, the first to do capework atop a horse, and the first and only fighter to place *banderillas* from horseback with both hands.

About the same time a wide public was converted to bullfighting by her local appearance on television, where she displayed her proficiency in using Spanish and flashing her all-conquering smile. She is *muy simpatica*, and the Latins cannot resist her.

For a little Texas girl, Georgiana Knowles has golden prospects, a ceiling unlimited.

## 5

The round of ovations given Texas girl bullfighters on the border and in the interior of Mexico soon brought a bevy of young feminine devotees from all parts of the United States to the Pass of the North. One of the first *toreras* to take bullfighting lessons locally came from Phoenix, Arizona, and bore the attractive name, Colleen Davis. She quickly mixed in with the bullfighting crowd, trained industriously, and made such a splendid debut in the Juárez ring that she decided to remain on the border to cultivate her hobby. Another *torera*, Ruth Massey, came to the Pass from Anaheim, California. She took lessons from the masterly Señor Hierro and made a fine showing in her public exhibitions in Juárez. She has continued to devote much of her time to the sport and now rates high in the esteem of her instructor as well as in the eyes of local spectators. Ruth Massey has a heavier physique for fighting than Colleen Davis but not so much arm reach. Another bright newcomer, Gloria Clark, traveled to the border from afar, from the city of San Francisco. She has not yet established herself among

local fans, but her admirers swear by her talents. Brighter still, Carla Lee, an Arizonan from Phoenix, won attention in history at Juárez in May, 1956, when she appeared in the traditional suit of lights (*traje de luces*), the costume usually worn by male bullfighters only. All four of these pretty *tauromachians* remain enthusiastic about the ring. They have notably promising futures for girls of college age. None of the beauteous bevy ever before showed an athletic inclination. It took the stimulation of bullfighting to awaken their latent talent, and the sport is still pulling them into the ring, sometimes from even such bewitching places as Hollywood. Actresses there have cultivated the sport, not to promote films, but for their own enjoyment.

Much favorable publicity centered on the local custom of pitting beauties against bulls when starlet Connie Moore, of Wichita, Kansas, manifested an ambition to become a lady bullfighter. Like other girls before her, Connie caught the bug from reading a lot of books about bullfighting. Living in Hollywood at the plush Studio Club, Connie one day startled the other starlets by rehearsing the bullfighter's actions with a bathrobe. She explained then that she first became involved in bullfighting after her graduation from high school in Wichita when her uncle took her to Juárez, where she met a retired *matador*. It was this *matador* who arranged for her to work out with calves in Mexico. A year later she moved to Hollywood, so she could be near the fights at Tijuana. Recently she quit her job as a secretary in order to devote all her time to *tauromachy*, arranging for lessons from Budd Boetticker, film director, who used to fight bulls. She told Aline Mosby, United Press Correspondent, that she hoped to realize an ambition by staging a fight in Mexico City. With Connie, the arena has become a deep-seated obsession. "I'll hate to kill the bulls," she said, "But it's something I have to accomplish. It's a fight within yourself."

The appeal of the ring has reached yet more distant regions. One of the newest *toreras* hailed from Detroit, Michigan. Her name was Virginia A. Romain. On January 6, 1956, she wrote a letter in the editorial columns of *Colliers*, saying that she had made three trips in the past three years to Mexico City and that she planned to make a debut in the spring at La Plaza Mexico. According to her, some of the border beauties "are making a ridicule of a sacred and traditional art." Virginia will be entering fast company when she starts competing with the established band of bullfighting beauties. Her letter, however, has a spirited chord in it; and spirit galore is precisely what it takes for a girl to face the ferocious charge of a maddened bull.

Meanwhile, the sultry *señoritas* down in Mexico have not been

exactly standing still. For a long, long time Conchita Cintrón has been fighting the bulls. Conchita, born in Chile of parents from the United States diplomatic corps, lays claim to being the first woman bullfighter in history. Another beauty from below the Rio Grande, Juanita Aparicio, a native of Mexico, has recently won top acclaim in Latin America. A *señorita muy linda*, Juanita de Los Reyes, of Guadalajara, has fought six or eight times in Mexico. She appeared once with the American girl, Joy Marie Price, in an international contest at Delicias. Bullfighting fever has affected both Mexican and *gringa* lovelies.

## 6

The current favorite among American newcomers on the border, Bette Ford (born Betty Dingdeldein, in McKeesport, Pennsylvania) creates a din of applause, mingled with wolf-whistles, when her graceful figure strides majestically into the ring. She has all the poise of a ballet dancer, an attribute probably deriving from her earlier experience as a fashion model. Her endowment includes a natural and self-confident bearing, much of her aplomb resulting from her dramatic roles on television and in Broadway plays. All these qualities, together with a warm personality, have made Bette Ford the sensation of the southern border.

From the first, Bette displayed a native bent for bullfighting. Though petite, she possessed unusual strength. Healthy to the core, she glowed with physical exuberance even in her first public appearances, when she rocked the spectators on their ears with her parade of skill and courage. In her third contest, at Juárez, she competed with two male performers, Ramón Tirado and Paco Sanchez. That day Sanchez narrowly missed death when he stumbled and missed on the thrust, landing before the bull, face down in the dirt; and Ramón Tirado fared still worse, receiving ten inches of goring which hospitalized him for thirty days. Bette, on the other hand, outfought her rivals by killing her two bulls. The second bull tossed her three times into the air and almost gored her, but after each fall she rose in response to the cries of her fans: "Get him, Bette. Kill him." Showing unparalleled determination, she went on to dispatch the bull with two thrusts of her sword. Then she accepted an ear and made *una vuelta*, a ceremonial strut about the ring, amid the roars of the crowd.

After that, Juárez belonged to her. The spectators threw hats and flowers at her feet. Autograph seekers mobbed her before she could leave the ring. At the *cantinas* that evening the topic on the lips of

everybody was the daring of that paragon of female fighters, the nonpareil Bette Ford.

Celebrity reached Bette the hard way, after disappointment. Early in her career she took a mauling and heard for the first time the crushing clarion of boos amid the cheers. That Sunday in Juárez the manager pitted her against a black animal named "Modista." Twice she lost her cape and stood there *desarmada* (disarmed). Then she missed several passes, to hit the dust, to feel the heavy hooves of the bull bruising her flesh. Scrambling to her feet for the *suerte suprema* (death stroke), Bette was knocked flat again but, like a true-born wrangler, clung to the bull's nose in a protective move to come up unscathed. After that, she killed the bull but remembered him as a bad one.

In one of her top Juárez fights, Betty drew "Rafaelillo" (Raphael), a large animal with what the Mexicans term a *bizco* (cross-eye), a horn crumpled over one eye. Experts labelled him dangerous because of his deformity. As she made her first *veronica* (switch of the cape), "Rafaelillo" hooked to the right and lifted her into the air. Bette landed on her feet to resume battling. With an angry series of *derechazos* (right moves), such high and low passes as *manoletinas* and *pasos por alto*, she maneuvered the bull for the kill. From all sides she heard the urging of the crowd: "Make love to *el toro*, Bette. Kill him, honey!" In her first effort she connected with the *suerte suprema*. Again the spectators cried, "*Vuelta! Vuelta!*" Then as before, Bette, with a bull's bloodstained ear, pranced triumphantly, her gladiatorial heart shining in her face, about the ring's wide circumference.

Creating a perfect uproar every time she steps into the arena, Bette would be a full show all by herself. Away from work, this winsome girl epitomizes modesty. Her surprising humility stems from sincere emotion. "I'm a ham," she often says. But Bette the charmer stands for a great deal more than that. She has so much of the genius required that she converts everybody who sees her into a bullfighting fanatic. A really stupendous spectacle, featuring beauteous Bette at the focus, would overflow the stands, with or without the bull. Nobody showed surprise, therefore, when Bette Ford married a few years ago.

All of her objectives, before her marriage, lay within the ring. Nothing sham ever attached itself to Bette Ford, and she left a mark in the history of bullfighting. The only American girl who ever fought afoot in the Plaza de Toros in Mexico City, the largest in the world, Bette inoculated the border blood stream with a permanent serum, heightening the ever-burning pulse of a sports-loving populace.

"I'm determined," she said a few years back, "to be the best woman bullfighter in the world, no matter how many years it takes."

According to her backers, Bette succeeded in doing just that before she left the arena forever.

*Olé tu femenina figura!  
Olé! de elegante distinción  
Ante el toro se agiganta  
Y exclamaciones levanta  
De asombra y admiración.*

The custom of lady bullfighting, meanwhile, had established itself on the border. This new institution recently has attracted more and more female performers. Younger devotees included the pert Dixie Lee. At Nogales, Arizona, on August 16, 1959, this pint-sized girl gave the customers an exciting afternoon by her display of courage in fighting and killing her bull. Dixie Lee fought on after being twice tossed to the ground by the hooking animal and once gored in the fleshy part of the hand below the thumb. And the fiery *Sorena*, Rosita Barrios, hailed from Los Angeles, California. Rosita, who trained under the famous Patricia McCormick's handler, Alejandro, fought in ten formal *corridas*. Miss Barrios maintained that bullfighting is not a sport, but an art and a spectacle. All her interests focussed in the bullring. Beautiful though she is, Rosita claimed that she had rather kill bulls than date men. An El Paso girl, Patricia Chagra, would like to inherit the cape of the noted Conchita Cintron, who retired at the age of thirty-one. Miss Chagra admired the "Portuguese style" of opposing the bull with the fighter mounted on horseback, a style preferred by Conchita Cintron. These three youngsters, Misses Lee, Barrios, and Chagra, afforded proof of the continuing fascination of the new border pastime.

As time goes by, other young girls also will turn their backs on the feminine tasks of the world as they seek to take their places as skillful beauties of the bullring.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### YOUNGER BROTHERS

By Carl W. Breihan

(San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1961. \$5.95 - 266 pp.)

The author, Carl Breihan, has written a number of books dealing with violence in the old west. This book should be of interest to readers of *PASS-WORD* since there was a great deal of similarity between life in Kansas and Missouri during this turbulent period and our own Southwest, particularly New Mexico. His previous publications include *The Complete and Authentic Life of Jesse James*, *Badmen of the Frontier Days*, *Quantrill and His Civil War Guerillas*, and *The Day Jesse James was Killed*.

This story revolves around the lives of Cole, James, Bob, and John Younger. The eldest of the four, Cole, was born in Missouri in 1844. James, John, and Robert were born in that order and only Cole played a prominent role in the early part of the Civil War. The Younger family was sympathetic with the Confederacy from the outset and Colonel Henry Washington Younger, the father of the Younger brothers, was a slave owner. Colonel Younger was also one of the wealthiest men in Missouri prior to the Civil War.

Breihan argues that one of the main reasons Cole and his brothers turned to crime was that they were forced to do so because of the activities of Union troops and Kansas "Jayhawkers." Cole served in the Civil War with Quantrill's guerillas and later along with his brothers became an outlaw.

Particularly interesting was the relationship between the Younger and the James brothers. According to the author, Cole liked Frank James but had absolutely no regard for Jesse. Apparently, too, Breihan accepts the arguments of Cole and Jesse that they were often accused of many crimes in which they were not involved. Quite often Cole Younger and Jesse James would write letters to newspapers and file affidavits protesting their innocence when charged with some particular act. In addition, Jesse would sometimes deny his own role and accuse Cole instead.

The first bank robbery generally thought to have been engineered by the Jameses and Youngers occurred on February 13, 1866, at Liberty, Missouri. This is also considered to be the first robbery of its type committed by a group of organized outlaws. These same men were accused of having made the first attempted train robbery at Adair, Iowa, in July, 1873.

Of some interest to those of the Southwest is a brief description of the San Antonio stage robbery in April, 1874. Students of the subject, including

Breihan, feel that the James brothers were involved but not the Youngers. This was an unusual event for the Jameses as well as the Youngers carried on most of their activities in the Middle West.

Shortly after the attempted Northfield, Minnesota raid on September 7, 1876, Cole and his remaining brothers were caught. John had been killed in 1874; Bob died eventually as a result of fatal wounds suffered at Northfield. Cole and Jim served in prison until 1901 when they were released on parole. Jim committed suicide in 1902 and Cole died a natural death on March 21, 1916.

*Texas Western College*

— JAMES C. HARVEY

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#### THE MUNICIPALITY IN NORTHERN MEXICO

*by Leonard Cardenas, Jr.*

#### THE CHAMIZAL SETTLEMENT: A View From El Paso

*by Gladys Gregory*

(El Paso: Texas Western College Press. Paper, \$1.00 each.)

These two booklets are, respectively, Number 1 and 2 of Volume I of "Southwestern Studies" which are issued quarterly by Texas Western College. Dr. Cardenas is an Instructor in Government at TWC. The material for his study was taken from his doctoral dissertation at The University of Texas. Dr. Gregory is a retired Professor of Government at TWC. Her study was likewise taken from her doctoral dissertation with additional material to bring it up to date.

In his study of the municipal organization of our sister republic Dr. Cardenas notes that indigenous community laws, customs and governmental institutions had little influence in northern Mexico because the Indian tribes were in the nomadic stage of culture. Rather, it was the Spanish municipality, the roots of which lay in the free city-state, the *civitas*, that was established in Mexico. This institution had been implanted in the Iberian peninsula during the days of Roman occupation and had become so deeply rooted in the minds and habits of the Spaniards that neither the Visigothic nor Moslem conquests and occupations which extended over eight centuries were able to destroy it.

Dr. Cardenas also notes that the colonial town in Mexico differed in several ways from the colonial town in Anglo-America. In the first place the Mexican town was created consciously in accordance with a prede-

terminated plan. It usually had an individual founder who selected the site, marked the place for the central plaza, the church, and the town hall, and appointed the members of the *ayuntamiento* or town council. All of this was accomplished in accordance with royal edicts spelled out in minute details. The English town, on the other hand, was allowed to blossom and develop of its own accord with very little if any interference from the crown.

From this introduction the author traces the growth and development of the municipality through Mexico's several constitutions — 1822, 1824, 1835, 1837, 1843, 1857 and 1917. He emphasizes the fact that "a principal cause of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 was the popular dissatisfaction with the abusive and oppressive *jefes políticos*." And he further points out that the chief objective of the Constitution of 1917 was to enhance the political status and autonomy of the *municipio*.

In her study of the Chamizal problem Dr. Gregory notes the capriciousness of the Rio Grande. The forces of nature, "like the witches in Macbeth," she writes, "have brewed an evil influence destined to defeat the best of human intentions." Seven United States Presidents have wrestled with the problem — Taft in 1913, Coolidge in 1925, Hoover in 1931 and again in 1933, and F. D. Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower and then Kennedy.

This capriciousness of the river is more easily realized when one looks at the river's course in 1827 when José Ponce de León received his famous land grant from Mexico. That grant is now the heart of downtown El Paso. At that time the river flowed in front of his house, considerably north of its present course. It wound through and across the area now occupied by the principal streets of the business district — Mills, San Antonio, and Magoffin — and continued eastward through Manzana, Stevenson, and Rosa, passing along the present site of the Standard Oil and Texaco refineries, and on towards the town of Ysleta which was on the Mexican side of the river.

In conclusion Dr. Gregory notes that the accord reached by Presidents Kennedy and López Mateos "should materially advance the well-being of both communities at the Pass of the North, reducing the physical barriers between them and stimulating the development of mutual interests, both economic and cultural."

These two studies are real contributions to a better understanding of their respective subjects and to scholarship in general. Dr. Gregory's study is greatly enhanced by the inclusion of a map of disputed areas and the surrounding country. Both the authors and the TWC Press should be highly commended.

## CONTRIBUTORS to this ISSUE

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CONREY BRYSON was recently elected for a second term as President of the Society. His election was not only an act of appreciation on the part of the Society for the tremendous accomplishments of his administration but also the expression of a desire that our Society shall continue to grow and progress. For a picture and biographical data see *PASSWORD*, Vol. III, No. 1 (January, 1958), 42.

THE REV. B. M. G. WILLIAMS is Rector Emeritus of St. Clements Episcopal Church. He was elected to the Society's Hall of Honor in 1962. For information concerning his dedicated life, see Conrey Bryson's address nominating our "Uncle Bert," in *PASSWORD*, Vol. VIII, No. 1 (Spring, 1963), 15-17.

RICHARD C. WHITE is a past President of our Society. He is a native born Paseño. He was educated in El Paso and at The University of Texas where he studied Law after having served in the Pacific with the Marines. He also served several terms in the House of Representatives of the Texas Legislature.

DR. HALDEEN BRADDY is Professor of English and also Research Professor at Texas Western College. He is the author of a number of books and also of a number of articles published in *PASSWORD*. For a picture and further details see *PASSWORD*, Vol. II, No. 1 (February, 1957), 28.

RICHARD K. McMASTER is recognized far and wide as an authority on the military history of the Southwest. A letter notifying him of a recent honor read in part as follows: "Pursuant to the unanimously favorable action of the Board of Governors, it is my privilege to announce your election to membership in 'THE COMPANY OF MILITARY HISTORIANS.' Incidentally, the second and enlarged edition of Major McMaster's *History of Fort Bliss* has just reached the book stores.

CHARLES SAFFORD DE WETTER, son of Mr. and Mrs. (née Mardee Belding) Peter de Wetter, was born in El Paso on January 9, 1950. He attended Mesita school and is at present in the eighth grade at Coronado Intermediate where he is an honor student. Charles has traveled extensively with his grandmother, Mrs. Dee Belding, having visited Egypt, Greece, the Holy Land, Italy, Alaska and western Canada.

Mr. Noel Longuemare who is quoted extensively in his article, was a close friend of Charles' great-grandfather, El Paso physician Dr. Henry Towne Safford.



DR. JAMES C. HARVEY is an Assistant Professor of History at Texas Western College. He received his doctorate in history at The University of Texas.

## HISTORICAL NOTES

### Fourth Annual Contributing Author's Contest

#### Don't Forget to Vote

Enclosed with this issue is a Postcard Ballot for members to use in selecting the three best articles in the 1963 Volume VIII of *PASSWORD*.

The prizes are: \$100 for the article receiving the greatest number of votes; \$50 for second; and \$25 for third.

All ballots must be in the hands of the committee not later than February 1, 1964.

### Southwestern Books of 1963

For the serious student of Southwestern history a new publishing firm in Albuquerque, Horn and Wallace, has provided several long-scarce items of basic reference. The latest of these is the two-volume set of Twitchell's *Leading Facts of New Mexican History* (1911) which has been kept under lock and key in most libraries for the last 25 years. The facsimile reprint required a sizable investment: 1,200 pages, with all maps and illustrations of the original edition. The set is well worth the \$25 price. Incidentally, the printing and binding were done in El Paso.

Another reprint of a scarce major work was published by the same firm, with interesting new Introductions: Bancroft's *History of New Mexico and Arizona* (1889). The Introduction to Arizona is by Barry Goldwater, and the Introduction to New Mexico is by Clinton P. Anderson. You may be surprised to know that both these busy Senators take time to be more than amateur historians. Both have extensive book collections, and have contributed important writings on the history of our area. The Bancroft reprint is another thick book (829 pages) and sells for \$15.

Horn and Wallace are new to the publishing business but not new to books and history of the Southwest. Calvin Horn is in the oil business but has found time to serve in both houses of the Legislature, write many articles on New Mexico history, and author a new book, *New Mexico's Troubled Years*. This is the story of the territorial governors, and has a foreword by John F. Kennedy. (239 pages, \$6.)

William S. Wallace is librarian of Highlands University at Las Vegas. He has edited several books on Western history including *The Land Between* (Diary of Dr. James Schiel, 1853-54) which was written in German, and translated by Dr. Frederick W. Bachmann of Texas Western College.

Also Wallace had the idea and energy to separate from the more than 200 volumes of *The War of the Rebellion* all papers and documents concerning New Mexico, and publish them as *Confederate Victories in the Southwest* and *Union Army Operations in the Southwest*. Both were published in 1961 for the Civil War Centennial.

A more recent publication by Horn & Wallace is *Southwestern Book Trails* by Lawrence Clark Powell of UCLA. Dr. Powell writes a regular column for *Westways* magazine on Books of the Southwest and is himself the author of several books and bibliographies. In this book he gives credit to several El Paso authors and artists, and to Texas Western Press. Good reading lists are separated by chapters into interesting categories.

— CARL HERTZOG

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