

PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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WINTER, 1964

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Published quarterly by THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EUGENE O. PORTER, *Editor*

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EUGENE O. PORTER, *Editor*

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

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

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HALL OF HONOR BANQUET

THE SOCIETY held its fourth annual Hall of Honor banquet at the International Club on Sunday evening, November 29. Approximately three hundred members and their guests were in attendance. Mrs. G. Ralph Meyer served as General Chairman of the Banquet Committee and was ably assisted by several sub-committees, as follows:

Reservations, Mrs. Paul Heisig, Chairman, and Mrs. Arthur Gale, Co-chairman, assisted by Mrs. W. W. Hawkins, Mrs. Leland Hewitt, Mrs. Willard Schuessler, and Mrs. H. Crampton Jones.

Dinner Arrangements, Mrs. Maurice Schwartz and Mrs. J. Burges Perrenot, Co-chairmen; Social Hour, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Thompson and Mr. and Mrs. J. Page Kemp, Co-chairmen; and Selections, Dr. Eugene O. Porter, Chairman.

Decorations were under the Chairmanship of Mrs. Richard G. Miller. Members of her committee included Mrs. Frank Feuille, III, Mrs. Jack Resen, and Mrs. Joseph Walton. Incidentally, Mrs. Ruby Burns, society editor of the *El Paso Times* described the decorations as follows: "Silver candelabra holding twisted pink tapers and dripping with shaggy pink mums decorated the speaker's table. Bouquets of the lovely pink flowers were in the rooms. Single large tapers and clusters of fresh grapes decorated the other tables."

Among those at the head table were Mr. Conrey Bryson who, as president of the Society, presided and gave the opening address, and Mrs. Bryson; Mr. Clifford M. Irvin who gave the award address for the late Mr. Hughey, and Mrs. Irvin; Mr. A. H. Hughey, Jr., son of the honoree, and Mrs. Hughey; Mr. Frank Hunter who gave the award address for Mrs. Howe, and Mrs. Hunter; honoree Mrs. Howe; Federal Judge and Mrs. R. E. Thomason; Congressman-elect Richard C. White who conceived the idea of the Hall of Honor, and his wife Kathy; County Judge and Mrs. Glenn Woodard; the Reverend B. M. G. Williams who gave the invocation; and Mr. Chris Fox who served as Master of Ceremony, and his wife Gladys.

Out of town members or guests included the Herbert Hunts of Dallas; Mrs. Tom Charles, author and president of the Alamogordo (New Mexico) Historical Society; Drs. Carl and Annemarie Tyre of Mesilla Park, New Mexico; and Mrs. Christine Amador Ursua and her son Quito of Las Cruces.

Hall of Honor Address: Vast Horizons

by CONREY BRYSON

IN LEAVING EL PASO for a while, one of the things we soon begin to miss is the distant horizon. From a good vantage point in our home town, we can see Old Baldy, snow-capped, in the high Sacramento mountains to the north. To the east, beyond Cerro Alto in the Huecos the dim outline of Guadalupe peak a hundred miles away, the highest spot in Texas. An equal distance to the west, the cone shaped outline of Cook's Peak rises out of the New Mexico desert — and to the south you can see the sand-dunes on top of a distant plateau on the road to Chihuahua. We shall find the houses and trees and rolling hills that so often form the horizons of the east to be confining to the eye and to the spirit.

The distance of the horizons, the bigness of the land in the southwest, is often a frightening thing to the newcomer. It must have been particularly awe-inspiring and fearsome to those who saw it first. Tom Lea has both painted and described this awesome majesty in his new book, *The Hands of Cantu*. Describing the view spread out before a pioneering expedition into the unknown northland in 1580, he wrote: "The revealed and visible enormity of earth's space and sky's space dwarfed and shrank us, a horseback company, to pinpoint size. . . . In the sunstruck glitter of the long-lasting days we sat our saddles as if riding adrift, cast from the reasonable confines of countable time and calculable space."¹

The bigness and the seeming emptiness of our land make the newcomer seek for shelter and things he can tie to in the wide and lonesome and windswept country. But there comes a day when the vast horizons offer freedom rather than fear, and the sun becomes a friend rather than an oppressor. Then the distances beckon us to adventure, and the desert and mountain slope become a stage for unfettered dreams.

The dreams have taken many forms. There was the wild dream of Peter Kern, expressed in the Kern Symbolic Gate that marked the entrance to El Paso's Kern Place — a gate of tri-skelions and tetra-skelions, of swastikas and swavastikas, and 333 electric lights. A wild dream — but Kern Place was built and El Paso has continued to climb the mountain, and Peter Kern continued to dream. "On the crest of Crazy Kat mountain," he wrote, "Mr. Kern expects to erect a beautiful chalet called Castle Kern. Hither on the warm summer nights will the people of the lower sections of the city go to recreate,

1. Tom Lea, *The Hands of Cantu* (Boston, Little-Brown, 1964).

and cool their heated brows, and quaff the nectar of the Gods. In the artificial lake to be made in Palisades canyon below, they can enjoy aquatic sports. In the wintertime it will be the Mecca for the thousands of northern tourists who will visit this southwestern sunland. Below their feet, the visitors to Castle Kern will have the most glorious vista in all the southwest.”²

“Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”³ There is something about the high desert air that gives a lift to the spirit and wings to the vocabulary. On May 8, 1888, a state convention of firemen, one of the first big conventions ever held in El Paso, was greeted by Juan Hart, publisher of the *El Paso Times* and Captain of Hose Company Number One, El Paso Volunteer Fire Department. He told the assembled firemen: “You have come today to the very edge of the seemingly boundless state of Texas, and here you have found a city that is the last outpost in this far-flung arm of American Civilization, a city whose tall and silent spires shall eloquently preach to the advancing stranger the nature of the land he trods, where freedom is the essence of life; and charity and law the safeguards of our liberty, while progress and civilization make each subject of the nation a King. We are engaged in a self-imposed duty and, firemen of Texas, in coming here today you encourage us in our worthy labors. By your homage to our city today, you have kindled a flame which defies your utmost skillful efforts to extinguish. For it is a flame of love that burns deep in our hearts beyond the reach of your most ingenious implements. The heat of the flame has purified us, and made us worthy of this occasion.”⁴

Only 23 years later, in 1911, the dreams were taking shape in concrete and steel. The twelve story Mills Building was being hailed as the city’s first real sky-scraper and the frontispiece of the 1911 report of the Chamber of Commerce showed two pioneers and an Indian, squatted by a campfire in 1826, and seeing beyond the smoke a vision of a great city of many skyscrapers and lofty spires. And H. D. Slater, editor of the *El Paso Herald* wrote for the report, “El Paso may truly claim and ever hold title as the center and metropolis of the great southwest.”⁵

The fulfillment of that Chamber of Commerce dream was dated 1926. It was a little earlier, 1923, when El Paso real-estate man Ray Sherman, later to become one of the city’s best-loved Mayors, won first prize for his oration at a real-estate convention in Houston. The subject was “My Home Town,” and Mr. Sherman began it — “In the

2. Peter E. Kern, *Kern Genealogy* (El Paso, Peter E. Kern, 1917).

3. Joel 2:28.

4. *El Paso Times*, May 9, 1888.

5. El Paso Chamber of Commerce, *Prosperity and Opportunities in El Paso and El Paso's Territory* (El Paso, Chamber of Commerce, 1911).

words of Paul of Tarsus at Jerusalem, 'I am a citizen of no mean city.' El Paso is the workshop of the new southwest, the back door of Texas, the front door to New Mexico and Arizona, the ground floor of opportunity and the skylight to heaven. . . . We who live there, who have there our hopes and our all, believe in its future, love it for its present, and honor its traditions. We know that it has come up against formidable odds and that the courage and labors of an earlier generation make life sweeter and pleasanter for us there today — for I say to you with the utmost earnestness that it has taken blood and it has taken lives to build El Paso."

"Born of strong men's hopes, it is the pioneer's dream city come true, a realized vision at the desert pass, a castle in the air that God let stay — the City of the Lily in the Valley of the Rose."

But the dreams of men and the words that expressed them had to be accompanied by deeds, lest they become as evanescent as the mirages that come and go in our deserts. In this Fourth Annual Hall of Honor Banquet then, we come anew to the task of honoring those whose achievements and service are especially deserving of being remembered now and in the years to come. Two more names will be added tonight to the roll of those who have accepted the challenge of our vast horizons, planted their dreams in the desert soil and nourished them to fulfillment.

It is my privilege again to call the roll of the El Paso Hall of Honor — men and women who have extended the horizons of achievement to match the vast horizons of the land on which we live.

JAMES WILEY MAGOFFIN — 1961. At Paso del Norte, he laid some of the first foundations for a great city in an expanding nation.

LAWRENCE M. LAWSON — 1961. He dreamed of the desert blossoming as the rose, and spent half a century in fulfilling those dreams.

RICHARD F. BURGES — 1962. In a frontier town, he extended our horizons of education, art and culture, and law.

MAUD DURLIN SULLIVAN — 1962. That our past should not be forgotten, she helped to preserve its record.

B. M. G. WILLIAMS — 1962. He has marked by his own living the horizons of a better, happier life.

EUGENIA M. SCHUSTER — 1963. She extended the horizons of good neighborliness and service to mankind.

ROBERT EWING THOMASON — 1963. In three branches of free government he established horizons of integrity for all men to admire.

Tonight we shall add to the list the names of ALLEN HARRISON HUGHEY, and Mrs. W. D. HOWE, and in the tributes paid them we shall find other vast horizons for our emulation and achievement.

Biographical Sketch of Mrs. W. D. Howe

by FRANK H. HUNTER

THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY is indeed honored to name Mrs. W. D. Howe to The El Paso Hall of Honor.

Mrs. Howe was born July 9, 1876 in Brandon, Mississippi, but for us her life really started when at the age of ten she came to El Paso with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Shelton, in 1886. At that time there was only one school, called "Central" school, and Marie Hobson Shelton graduated from that school in 1894. El Paso was, at that time, a dusty sprawling village of several thousand hardy souls, with no paved streets, and private housing was at a premium. As a matter of fact, it seemed to this little girl that almost every building in town was a saloon, as her mother had issued strict orders that she was never to walk in front of a saloon, but was to cross the street, and her route to and from school was a zigzag of almost double the distance.

As El Paso grew, so did the little girl, and as a young lady she participated in the social whirl of El Paso and Fort Bliss during what we have come to know as "The Gay Nineties," yet still she found time to teach in the first public kindergarten in the State of Texas. Just a few years ago, Mrs. Howe, together with Mrs. Robert Lee Howze, gave a program at the Historical Society meeting telling us of the many gay and wonderful events of early El Paso, particularly in connection with Fort Bliss.

In 1898 Marie Shelton married a young lawyer, Walter Dunn Howe, and after a honeymoon to St. Louis they returned to El Paso to live and raise a family. Judge and Mrs. Howe had four children, Marion Howe Broaddus, who passed away a few years ago, Ethel Irene Howe, now Mrs. James Rogers, Walter S. Howe and Richard E. Howe. Mrs. Rogers and Walter are with us tonight, but Captain Richard E. Howe of Eastern Airlines is unable to attend, but we know he is here in spirit sharing with us this tribute to his mother.

But this is only the beginning; there are ten grandchildren, Nancy, now Mrs. Herbert Hunt of Dallas, and Francis Broaddus (Skippy), the children of Marion; Nita, now Mrs. Crawford Kerr, Betty Rogers, Caroline Rogers (Stevie), and James Rogers, Jr., the children of Ethel Irene; and Richard's four children, Robert Shelton, Judy, Richard and David Maury Howe, named after the late Maury Kemp. Add to this sixteen great-grandchildren, and then the long list of those who married into the Howe and Shelton families and their descendants, and there are over two hundred like Boots Irvin and Jane Perrenot,

and myself, who are privileged to call Mrs. Howe "Aunt Marie". Not all of these are here tonight, and it is just as well, because a family reunion for this lady would leave no room for interlopers and johnny-come-latelys like Chris Fox.

But raising a family was only part of the work Mrs. Howe had to do. The community in which she lived had to be raised as well. She has been the President of two PTAs, El Paso High and the old Sunset school. As a matter of fact, she was requested to be the President of the El Paso High PTA by the then Principal, Mr. A. H. Hughey. She has been the President and an active worker in Womans' Club of El Paso, and President of the Womans' Organization of the First Presbyterian Church, where for years she sang in the choir and taught Sunday School. Her activities and accomplishments throughout the years in these organizations would make a book in themselves, but for now, suffice it to say that El Paso is a better place in which to live by reason of the projects of these organizations.

Then, in 1934, in the depth of the depression, Mrs. Howe was elected Chairman-Director of the Womans' Department of the Chamber of Commerce. Like most communities during that time, El Paso was gripped by fear and business was almost at a standstill. Confidence had to be restored, and Mrs. Howe and the women of the Chamber started out to do just that. Mr. A. B. Poe was induced to donate an old house out at 1810 East Yandell, and with the help of Mrs. Mabel Welch, an El Paso Architect, and the donation by many of labor and materials, the project was qualified for financing under the new FHA law. The building material people gave tickets for a drawing for this house for each \$1.00 of purchase of building materials, and at the drawing at El Paso High School stadium, a crowd of 15,000 attended and the house was won by Mrs. J. L. Burks of 4318 LaLuz Street. This project pointed the way toward renewed activity in building, as well as refurbishing run-down property under FHA financing, and confidence in a community that sorely needed it was restored. It is doubted that any of the builders and mortgage bankers of today who so glibly exude confidence in this growing community realize the debt they owe to the first FHA project in El Paso and Mrs. W. D. Howe.

Mrs. Howe is also a charter member of The Pan American Round Table, Woman's Auxiliary of Texas Western College and the Woman's Auxiliary of the Bar Association and our own El Paso County Historical Society. In 1960, she was named Mother of the Year by the Junior Womans' Club. She has actively participated in the Community Chest and United Fund and is on the Board of the Community Concert



MRS. W. D. HOWE



ALLEN HARRISON HUGHEY

Association, so it is not surprising that with all this devotion to her community, we find this lady actively participating in politics over the years. Her husband, Judge Walter Howe, was re-elected to the 34th District Court for over thirty years, but even if her husband had not had to stand for reelection periodically, Mrs. Howe would have been active in the political campaigns of the community. She has served as Co-Chairman of the Womens' Democratic Committee, and in 1960 was appointed by Mr. Richard White as Co-Chairman of the Womens' Division for the Kennedy-Johnson campaign. Mrs. Howe's political interest started when, as a little girl, she stayed in line and kept running back so that she shook hands with President Benjamin Harrison three times, and from that beginning down to the receipt of a get-well card signed by the Presidents of the United States and Mexico when they were here for the Chamizal ceremony, Mrs. Howe's contribution to this community and the nation has been recognized by Presidents and precinct workers alike.

The friends Mrs. Howe has acquired through the years of participating in the social, religious, educational and political activities of this community, are so many it is impossible even to estimate their number. Most of us are prone to measure our wealth in terms of money and property, but the true wealth and the only wealth we will ever possess is the love and affection of family and friends, which must be bought with service to our fellow man. It is a distinct pleasure, therefore, to present to the Society, the wealthiest woman we know — Mrs. W. D. Howe.

Biographical Sketch of Allen Harrison Hughey

by CLIFFORD M. IRVIN

I AM HAPPY to be here tonight. I'm not indulging in the usual platitude—I'm truly happy to be here. The reason is that I am comfortable in this group, and my assignment is to praise a man with whom I was always most comfortable and for whom I had the highest regard.

Last week I was in McKee's office in Los Angeles and while visiting with Chester Wright, who in his years comes between me and Chris Fox, I told Chet that I had been honored by the request to talk about Allen Harrison Hughey at this meeting. Chet beamed and said, "You know I always admired Mr. Hughey," and our conversation carried on from that cue. For quite some time our reminiscences ran freely and our laughter at points was unrestrained over the many incidents

of our sometimes misguided adolescence and the guidance we had received from Mr. Hughey from time to time, all of which was to our betterment.

I cannot better the word picture that C. W. Webb painted in his booklet, "Portrait of A. H. Hughey, Superintendent of El Paso Public Schools, 1919 to 1951," that was published on Mr. Hughey's retirement. That portrait is in your archives. As to facts and accomplishments, I can add little to it, but perhaps on this occasion of the Historical Society's honoring him posthumously, I can touch on a few of the many facets that reflected his character and his capacity.

Mr. Hughey died March 11, 1961, having been retired ten years from the office of Superintendent of the El Paso Public Schools. He was the seventh Superintendent of the El Paso School System and served in that capacity from 1919 to 1951.

Born on a farm near Fayetteville, Tennessee, on July 14, 1881, except for three years in government service and four years practicing law, he spent his entire career as an educator, starting as a rural teacher in Tennessee before he had entered Vanderbilt University, where he obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1903. In that year he became President of Weatherford College in Texas, which position he held until 1906. He then took an educational job with the United States Geological Survey in Washington and while there attended law school until he received his law degree from George Washington University in 1908. In 1909 Mr. Hughey was admitted to the Texas Bar, coming to El Paso to practice law. He had offices with R. E. Thomason, now Senior United States District Judge. While practicing law, Mr. Hughey was instructor in the public schools in 1911 and 1912, and in 1914 he became Principal of El Paso High School.

During the two years before he was appointed Principal at El Paso High School, Mr. Hughey evidenced his breadth of knowledge, his cultural background and his ability both in organization and executive execution, so that after having had two rather ineffective Principals in the two prior years, the School Board agreed on Mr. Hughey's appointment as Principal, beginning with the 1913-14 school year, and the quality of his administration became apparent immediately. Having made an outstanding record as debating coach and mathematics teacher, he went on to many administrative "firsts," record-keeping, curriculum adjustments, and, most important of all, the development of a faculty that could both merit and command the respect of the citizenry.

Some 15 teachers joined him in his objectives, but in gaining them, Mr. Hughey eventually depended on that group of class-room teach-

ers whom he termed the "Immortal Seven" in an article written but unpublished until Mr. Webb's "Portrait" was printed.

In the light of subsequent developments under the Gilmer-Aiken Law in Texas and similar legislation in other states, I think it very interesting that just before Mr. Hughey was promoted to the office of Superintendent, El Paso High, then the only high school, had a faculty with degrees in the subject matter taught from sixteen United States and three foreign major colleges and universities in addition to the more closely related University of Texas, Baylor University and New Mexico institutions.

As an educator, Mr. Hughey believed strongly in the qualification of the classroom teacher and that the teacher should be well grounded in the subject taught. In the high evaluation of a classical education and breadth in the humanities he was not adverse to vocational education. Rather, he fostered it for those pupils of lesser aptitudes. In all phases he was willing to give a teacher his head in an experimental program or a method innovation where the plan was well thought out. He would not dampen the teachers' enthusiasm where there was probability of success.

The development of educational theories and practices and the countrywide trend in the improvement of the teacher's lot, not only salary levels but such important things as tenure, led to the introduction of the Gilmer-Aiken Bill, patterned after similar laws in other states and which subsequently became law in Texas.

Mr. Hughey's concepts of personal responsibility, sociology and economics, were such that he could not accept the philosophy of the Gilmer-Aiken Law, which in substance took away from those rich counties and gave to the poor counties by the use of an economic index. The Gilmer-Aiken Law did not meet Mr. Hughey's standards, as it did not meet the standards of many of us.

Nevertheless, then, as now, the "have nots" outnumbered the "haves," the teachers' lobby was large and effective, and Gilmer-Aiken became the law of the land. When this occurred, Mr. Hughey showed one of his fine qualities. He turned the page, as it were, analyzed the facts as applied to our district, and immediately instituted a program wholeheartedly supported by his school Board for teachers certificated but without a degree to obtain a Bachelor's Degree, and under the schedule of the law, a higher salary, and those with Bachelor's to obtain a Master's Degree and a higher salary, thus gaining for our teachers and our community a return of dollars from our state taxes by virtue of the higher technical qualifications of our faculty.

Those who disagreed with Mr. Hughey charged him in a derogatory way with being a politician. I can assure you from personal experience that he was a politician and a good one. He masterminded the construction of El Paso High School and he worked towards it from every angle, whether it be in a discussion with downtown business men, the then Superintendent of Schools, the school Board, the faculty or the student body. In November, 1913, the *Tatler* carried a student editorial to the Gentlemen of the School Board, stating, "We have not noticed any move recently toward a new high school. We have been needing a much better building — we need it now." The editorial continued that the students were "looking forward longingly toward the day when we can gather in an auditorium that will seat us all" and closed with the invitation that any Board member was welcome at any time to discuss the matter before the student body, for "nothing could be more entertaining." I have no doubt but that Mr. Hughey inspired that editorial and that he was playing politics. On the other hand, I never saw him play dirty politics. To the contrary, he conducted himself in a manner exemplified by his dressing down one of his central office men for "coloring" a report on the results of one of his administrators whom Mr. Hughey knew would have to be relieved of his duties at the end of the school year. This subordinate was trying to curry favor by distortion and Mr. Hughey would have no part of such tactics.

When Superintendent R. J. Tighe resigned in 1919 and Mr. Hughey was promoted to Superintendent of Schools, the same dynamic qualities and managerial ability were soon evident. He was a thinker, a pioneer and a strong character.

Again on the political side, Mr. Hughey was charged with picking a school Board. I believe that is true but not in the sense that the words imply. Historically, El Paso has been blessed with school Boards consisting predominately of deeprooted, straight thinking men and women, and the relationship between the Board and the Superintendent throughout Mr. Hughey's tenure was one of candor, and I believe on both the Superintendent's side and the Board's side, any suggestions for interim appointments or possible candidates were on the level of seeking the best material. From my personal experience, I can tell you that at no time did Mr. Hughey exert pressure on me or a Board of which I was a member. Relationships were such that in discussing problems of finance, instruction or personnel, we thought out loud. There was never an attack on a personal basis.

In Mr. Hughey's tenure we experienced the disturbance of World War I, the backwash of the panic of 1920, and the very serious prob-

lems of the great depression. That we enjoyed a decline in population in the 30's did not offset the financial problems and anguish in maintaining a system when tax collections were delinquent and hand to mouth existence a requirement of the day.

In discussing his career, I believe too little has been said of the problems and accomplishments in development of education among our Latin Americans. We here in El Paso have experienced the greatest and most effective program in Americanization of which I know. Many of us here can remember when not ten percent of our high school students were Latin Americans, and we recall full well the great problem in the early years of Bowie High School in making a pupil speak English. When Bowie was established some 35 years ago, most of the working class of Latin Americans were but slightly educated in an elementary sense and many were illiterate. Many spoke no English and females — even little girls five or six years of age — wore rebozos. What a dramatic change today. Basic English for those born in El Paso is no longer a problem. Children of Bowie graduates are graduating from Bowie and the other high schools. The major difficulties of the language barrier, the cultural differences are behind us. This tremendous undertaking in education, the bridging of the gap, was administered under the skilled guidance of Allen Harrison Hughey.

Apart from any politics, Mr. Hughey had his problems in social and human relations when he took over as Superintendent. El Paso was just starting its development as a city. It was an era of conflicts and insofar as the schools were concerned, no firm guiding principles had been established by the administration or, as in later public relations, by the Parent-Teachers' Association in coordination with the schools.

In the late twenties and early thirties our social and political structure was disturbed and in some aspects torn apart by the Ku Klux Klan movement. All human intercourse was affected and the school Board and administration were not untouched. Undoubtedly, Mr. Hughey's executive capacity obviated many deep wounds.

And there was the time in which welfare and youth activity groups were extremely active organizationally. In youth groups the line of demarcation between the responsibility of the schools and the concepts of separation of church and state was not clear, but with his sound background in logic, philosophy and the laws under which we operate, Mr. Hughey guided our schools and our citizenry to the sound and accepted policies we continue to follow.

Within our city from time to time our leading newspapers attacked

Mr. Hughey. They never moved him from his course of what he felt was right and on his retirement both leading newspapers praised him.

Mr. Hughey's stature was not only recognized locally but also statewide and professionally as an educator countrywide. I believe his philosophy was best expressed in a 1948 address to his teachers:

"In school, out of school, in the city and elsewhere, shun as you would a plague the faultfinders, the pessimists, the cynics, the agitators, the selfseekers for power and influence over others, the wise-acres who can learn nothing and forget nothing. Whatever is the matter with the world, in El Paso, Texas, in Texas, in the United States, or all over this sphere, it is the most wonderful world you ever saw and perhaps the most wonderful world we will ever see, and it is earnestly calling for good teachers, good leaders, good minds, good spirits, and for men of good will rather than for the demoralized festering individuals which afflict this country to some extent and the rest of the world to an alarming extent."

"The heart of the future of El Paso is in your classroom. The minds of those who will attend to your welfare in your old age are in your classroom. The habits, the thinking, the prosperity and the happiness of the future are sitting before you and me. How can we be indifferent or entertain the thought of mediocrity or defeatism?"

This was the thinking of Allen Harrison Hughey.

SAN ELIZARIO: A CENTURY OF HISTORY

by EUGENE O. PORTER

THE PERIOD OF HISTORY immediately following the transfer of the Presidio of San Elizario to the Hacienda de los Tiburcios might be called the "Silent Years." Secondary works such as the numerous volumes of Bancroft have very little to say about San Elizario, and the Juárez archives refer to it only spasmodically. Even then the documents are seldom important. For instance, a letter dated February 15, 1780 stated that "Sgt. Prudencia Contreras is pardoned but he has to get married to some woman within ten days." What the sergeant did to warrant this drastic punishment was not revealed. In February a year later another letter tells of two prisoners who escaped from San Elizario. "They [were] Padilla and an Indian. Some one," the letter added, "must do their work."

The moving of the presidio very likely got under way in February, 1780, the month the removal order was issued, because there are several letters of that date in reference to the transfer. One letter dated February 15 stated that a squad of ten men would escort the carts that were to take supplies to the presidio at Tiburcios. (Incidentally, in the Juárez documents the terms "Presidio at Tiburcios" and the "Presidio of San Elizario" are used interchangeably.) Another letter of the same month requested that "20 people or at least 15 if possible" and a "blacksmith to take charge of the armory, house, shop and tools" be sent to Tiburcios. But most of the documents during these early years are, as noted above, unimportant to the historian, like the one which merely stated that Paulino Valdez is "barred from San Elizario for a period of 8 years." And the one dated at Chihuahua in July, 1792, and addressed to the Lieutenant Governor at Paso del Norte, advising him "to send the three Comanche women which the Mescaleros del Norte had, to their relatives and to charge their expenses to the storekeeper at San Elizario."

There are, however, three documents of interest because of their dates and also because they were signed by Juan Antonio de Arce who, it will be remembered, was addressed as captain of the presidio in the removal order of February 14, 1780. The first of these, dated May 27, 1792, stated that there "remains in this post to work in the material plant [making adobes] the prisoner Juan Cristoval Marión of New Mexico, and Luciano Ximenes. The first prisoner until the guards come for him and the second until the end of July." The second letter, dated June 27, 1792, reads as follows: "There remains

in this presidio the prisoner that you held here to work for six months at the material plant—Juan Antonio Telles." And the third, dated September 6, 1797, was addressed by Arce to the "Lt. Gov. Fran[cisco] X. de Uranga" in Paso del Norte. "I am sending you with the soldier José García of this Company," Captain Arce wrote, "4 rifles and 4 pairs of pistols that were to be replaced. . . ."

The most important document discovered thus far aside from the 1780 removal order was signed by Pedro Mora at the headquarters of the *comandancia general* in Chihuahua and addressed to the Lt. Governor at Paso del Norte. It offers further proof that the presidio of San Elizario was moved to the Hacienda de los Tiburcios:

TO THE LT. GOV.—Not having found in the Comandancia General the document of decision that says what to do with the ranch and lands of Tiburcios, the old owners, when the presidial company was moved to its present site, I am advising that if they are found in your possession to take them and remit immediately to me testimony word by word of the exact content and in case of not having understood nor signed any instrument, inform me distinctly and clearly if there was a concurrence with the Lt. Colonel Don Francisco Martinez and the captain Don Francisco Antonio de Arce as to the rent that was paid by the residents and owners of the ranch of the Tiburcios and to see if we received the lands and other possessions and to verify the transfer of the presidio and the establishment of a new [illegible] under its protection. Expressing yourself distinctly and clearly the names and surnames of the ones that the [illegible] and [illegible] of the lands that belong to each one and their respective boundaries.

Chihuahua, 5 Sept. 1792

[signed] PEDRO MORA

Another letter is of interest because it described the uniform of the presidial soldier at San Elizario. Dated October 9, 1792, the letter was written by Juan Bautista de Anza, Governor of New Mexico and addressed to Lt. Governor Don José de Arrieta at Paso del Norte. The soldier was to wear *Chupas* or "skirted shirt" under a *casaca* or long blue military coat with white buttons, blue pants of *paña* or woolen material, a *tripe* or sash across the chest, a blue cape and a *sombrero neoro* which could mean a gold-colored or yellow hat but more likely was a pointed hat shaped something like a helmet.

Concerning the presidio itself with its high walls, chapel, quarters and other buildings, the sources do not reveal the time necessary for its construction. However, hauling the clay and sand to the construction site, making the mud into bricks and giving them time to dry cannot be done with the speed of lightning. Actually, the making of adobes is a slow and laborious process. The clay and sand are put

into a pit. (There is no exact formula but today most of the adobe bricks are composed of one-third sand and two-thirds clay and are usually referred to as "sand adobes".) Water is added to the pit and then the men with their bare feet and heavy hoes work the mixture into a sticky substance. When the mud "seems" right, straw is added and the working continues until the materials are thoroughly mixed. The mixture is then shoveled into forms and allowed to dry just enough to be handled without danger of cracking or crumbling. This takes two or three days. The bricks are then removed from the forms and stacked on edge so that the drying process can continue. The size of the bricks vary from region to region but the "old standard" was four inches by eight by sixteen. Such a brick weighed thirty pounds.¹

It will be recalled that the removal order advised the *comandante* of the presidio to make the people of Tiburcios "see in general concurrence the big advantage that will result" from the presence of the troops. The writer of the order very likely had in mind the community's economy as well as the protection the troops would offer. Although the soldier's pay was much lower than it is today, at least it did swell the town's income as did also the sums spent locally for maintaining the troops.² These factors surely helped to account for the fact that San Elizario became second only in population to Paso del Norte in the El Paso district. Incidentally, enlistments were for ten years with eighteen years of service required for retirement on half-pay for disability. But the pensioner was often retained indefinitely in service for want of a replacement. There was also a system of retirement for longevity. For this eight *maravedís* were deducted from each *peso* of the soldier's pay for the *fondo de invalidos* or retirement fund, and a somewhat larger deduction was taken from the officer's pay for his retirement fund called *fondo de montepio* and also *montepio militar*. The soldier also received a lump-sum bonus when he retired or was honorably discharged. For this another deduction was taken from his pay and placed in the *fondo de retención*. Then there was a *fondo de gratificación* which was an allowance for each man in the company per year for miscellaneous expenses.³

To return to the presidio, however, its only purpose was to protect the inhabitants from the Indians but in this it was unsuccessful, as the several reorganizations of the northern defenses prove. Consequently a new tack was decided upon in 1785. The program was enunciated by the viceroy, Conde Bernardo de Gálvez. He pointed out that the Apaches were skillful warriors and horsemen, and that they had no homes or towns to defend and no armies to be defeated.

Nevertheless, he insisted, war must be waged without cessation on all hostile tribes but warfare alone, he added, must fail in the future as it has in the past. In view of this he proposed that the Apaches be encouraged to develop an appetite for intoxicating liquors and for luxury goods. In addition, firearms and powder, "always of inferior quality," should be sold without fear, "for it was an error to suppose a gun in the hands of an Indian to be a more deadly weapon than the bow and arrow." Also, Gálvez proposed, the different tribes must be "incited in every possible way" to a warfare of extermination among themselves.⁴ Later, he recommended the giving of gifts to those Indians who kept the peace.

There are no records to show whether this policy worked. But then there are no records of serious depredations and outbreaks during the remainder of the eighteenth century and the early years of the next. Nor are there any records to show that the Apaches made rapid progress in being exterminated, in becoming drunkards or in developing an insatiable taste for Spanish luxury.⁵ However, the transformation of the viceroyalty of New Spain into the Republic of Mexico with the resultant party strife, maladministration and corruption in government led in the north to indifference and desertion among the unpaid and neglected presidial troops. This decline in strength among the garrisons led to partial and sometimes total abandonment of some of the presidios and consequently the Indians renewed their operations. In despair some of the northern states offered bounties for Apache scalps — one hundred dollars for a male scalp, fifty for a female and twenty-five dollars for that of a child.⁶ With this inducement foreigners as well as friendly Indians joined in the human hunt. One of the more notorious was a Scotch trapper named James Kirker who organized a company of scalp hunters. When the Apaches proved too fleet and cunning, however, Kirker and his men turned to peaceful Indians. As a result, as one writer noted, there were "more murders committed in a month than Apaches could have done in a year."⁷

In line with the reorganization of the defense program as a result of the *visita* of José de Gálvez, there were also a number of governmental and economic reforms. The alarming growth of drunkenness⁸ and other forms of debauchery among the natives and the overlapping jurisdiction among the various colonial officials made reform necessary. The governmental reforms were part of an attempt to bring about centralization and therefore to fix responsibility. This led to the introduction of the *intendencia*, a new type of political subdivision. The *intendencia* was invented, so to speak, in France by Cardinal Richelieu to serve as a check on the provincial governors. Philip V,

the first of the Spanish Bourbons, introduced the system into Spain. The first *intendencia* in America was established in 1764 in Cuba. From there the system spread to the four viceroyalties. In New Spain twelve *intendencias* replaced the eighteen *gobiernos* or governments.

The *intendencia* was governed by an *intendente* assisted by two *asesores* who were appointed by the king from a list composed of those who had passed a competitive examination. The powers and duties of the *intendente* were many and varied. He combined in himself political, judicial, military and financial powers. He was the *alcalde mayor* or mayor of the capital city of his *intendencia*; the chief justice of the *Causa de Justicia* or supreme court; the head of the *Causa de Guerra* whereby he was responsible for the subsistence of the troops, their management, pay and quarters, and the repair and maintenance of fortifications; the chief of the *Causa Policía* which in responsibilities was very much like the Texas County Court; and, finally, he was chief of the *Causa de Hacienda* which was charged, among other things, with regulating the government monopolies of gun powder, mercury, playing cards, paper and snow and ice for refrigeration, and with the collection of the *alcabala* or sales tax and the tax on *pulque*.

With independence, however, the system of *intendencias* was abolished, the constitution of 1824 providing for a federal union of states patterned after that of the United States. New Mexico, which had been one of the *Provincias Internas*, was joined to Chihuahua and Durango to form the *Estado Interno del Norte*. But Durango opposed this arrangement because the capital was to be in Chihuahua. Consequently Chihuahua⁹ and Durango were each made into a state and New Mexico into a territory. At the same time San Elizario and the other pueblos in the area of the Pass — Paso del Norte, San Lorenzo, Senecú, Ysleta and Socorro — were divorced from New Mexico and joined to Chihuahua. There San Elizario, Socorro and Ysleta remained until the river tossed them upon the Texas shore, probably in 1838.¹⁰ There is, however, one regret for these changes. As part of the state of Chihuahua the towns were like adopted children. The chroniclers of New Mexico had no reason to record their happenings and Chihuahua had no interest in recording her own.

To return, however, to the *intendencias*, these, it must be noted, were divided into *partidos* or districts governed by a *subdelegado*. When the system of states was adopted, the *partidos* were retained. Each took its name from its "capital" city. Thus the *partido* for the El Paso area was officially called *El Partido del Paso*. The other pueblos in the district were San Elizario, Senecú, Ysleta, Socorro and San

Lorenzo. The *jefe político* or chief political officer of the district was the *alcalde mayor*, and the political officer of each town was the *alcalde*. Thus San Elizario was no longer a presidio but a presidial town with an organized civil government.

How long San Elizario remained a presidial town is now known. There is evidence that the troops were withdrawn in 1814 during the War for Independence. This could be true because the most northern province touched by the war was Guanajuato, "the cradle of the revolution," but war came to that province only because of its mining resources.¹¹ Moreover, the constant revolutions which followed independence also passed by the people of the extreme north. In fact, the northerners showed no interest at all in the affairs of their southern brothers. Life continued as usual and with each change of government the people changed their loyalty as they changed their shirts.

Be that as it may, it is known that troops were stationed in San Elizario in 1835. A letter dated May 28 of that year and written by the *jefe político* at Paso del Norte to the *alcalde* at Ysleta, stated: "I have just received the information from the *alcalde* of San Elizario and the commandant of that point that the enemy [Indians] has driven off all the horses and cattle they found by the other bank of the river, which properly belongs to the same post; in view of the fact, make ready 15 men from the town of Ysleta and 15 from that of Socorro, which force will be placed at the disposition of the commandant of the afore-mentioned presidio, in order that the latter, according to the order which was sent to him by the inspector and commandant of this section, may go to inspect said tracks."¹²

By the way, the *alcalde* of San Elizario in July, 1835, was Don José Ignacio Ronquillo and the *comandante* of the presidio was Lt. Don Luis Rey. In the orders of the *jefe político* of the El Paso district to the above-named officials there were several references to the "old" presidio, "El presidio viejo de S. Elceario."¹³ Perhaps this marks the origin of the legend that would make San Elizario a product of the seventeenth century.

And speaking of legends, there is another, just as widespread, to the effect that the large house, now in ruins in San Elizario, was a viceregal palace or, if not that, certainly a governor's palace. As pointed out above, the most important civil officer in San Elizario was the *alcalde* who was a combination of mayor, justice of the peace, and a board of public works. It is true that during the colonial period New Mexico had a governor and a lieutenant governor but their respective seats of government were Santa Fé and Paso del Norte. Both

officials, however, were subordinate to the *commandante general* of the *Provincias Internas* in Chihuahua City, "a state of things," Bancroft believed, "which has led modern writers into some confusion, causing them to include some of the southern officials in their lists of governors, just as they brought several viceroys of New Spain to rule the province of New Mexico."¹⁴

But to reutrn to the presidio, there is evidence that the troops were withdrawn from San Elizario before Mexico's war with the United States. With the war American troops occupied the post from time to time until after the Civil War. It was occupied in 1847, for instance, by some of Doniphan's men. In September, 1849, Companies I and K of the 3d Infantry moved into the fort and remained until September 28, 1851.¹⁵ For the next twelve months Company C of the 3d with two officers and forty-three enlisted men commanded by Captain William E. Johns garrisoned San Elizario.¹⁶ Previously, in 1850, an inspector visited the post and made the following report: "From El Paso I went to San Elizario, 25 miles below on the Rio Grande, This having been an old presidio under the Mexican government. There were public quarters but in very dilapidated condition. The enlisted men of the company of infantry which constituted the garrison occupied such of these as had been put in habitable condition, private quarters being rented for the officers."¹⁷

During the Civil War two companies of the 1st California Infantry occupied the former presidial post but abandoned it on January 3, 1863. Then Captain French's Company A, 1st Cavalry, California Volunteers, moved into the post but was relieved from duty in time to march to Las Cruces so that it could be mustered out of service on August 31, 1864.¹⁸ They were replaced, however, by another outfit from California. Thus California troops were the last to be stationed in San Elizario. Perhaps some of the soldiers had previously passed through the village in 1849 on their way to the gold fields.

Meanwhile the war between Mexico and the United States was no sooner ended than Texas began to organize her western territory. An act of the state legislature of January 3, 1850 approved the creation of the three counties of El Paso, Worth and Presidio,¹⁹ and Major Robert S. Neighbors, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Texas, was appointed by Governor Peter Hansborough Bell to effect the organization. Neighbors reached El Paso in February of the same year and a month later reported to Governor Bell that El Paso County was duly organized, that officers were elected and that the county seat was San Elizario. At the time San Elizario had a population of 1200 whereas El Paso had only two hundred residents.²⁰ In 1854 the county

seat was moved to Magoffinsville for a short period but was returned to San Elizario where it remained until 1866 when it was moved to Ysleta for several months, only to be returned to San Elizario. In 1873 it was again moved to Ysleta where it remained for ten years before being transferred permanently in 1883 to El Paso.²¹

While San Elizario was the seat of El Paso County one man was sentenced to death and hanged. At that time those sentenced to death in Texas were executed in the county in which they were convicted. (Since 1917, however, all executions are carried out at the state penitentiary.) Out of San Elizario's only hanging a legend developed. It was the summer of 1868 and the dryest within memory. The man was Bartolo Mendoza and he was convicted of the murder of his step-daughter, a crime he admitted. The night before the execution, one of the guards entered his cell and said, "You will soon be face to face with God. Won't you please tell Him to send us a little rain?"

As Josefina Escajeda described the incident: "The next day dawned bright and clear. Not a cloud could be seen. The sun seemed to grow hotter with each moment that passed. At three o'clock it beat down mercilessly on the procession that was slowly making its way to the gallows.

"Father Borrajo walked with the prisoner. As the priest intoned the prayers of the litany, the people joined in the responses. Slowly, praying as they went, the procession moved on.

"At last they reached the gallows. With steady steps Bartolo mounted the platform, accompanied by Father Borrajo. He knelt to receive the priest's blessing. Then he got up, looked around him, and took his place. The noose was adjusted. In a second the trap had been sprung.

"Hardly had he been pronounced dead when the sky began to cloud. By the time the procession with his body reached the church, a few drops of rain were falling. Before long it was raining hard, and the rain continued through the night and all next day.

"Can anyone doubt that the soul of Bartolo Mendoza went straight to heaven?"²²

To return to reality, however, the most tragic event in the long history of San Elizario was the Salt War of December, 1877. The records in regards to this bloody episode, to quote Owen White, "are clouded with prejudice, misrepresentation, fear and malice."²³ Too, the incident in all of its aspects has been exhausted by several writers.²⁴ For these reasons a mere statement of the background of the incident will be given here.

Ninety miles east of San Elizario are the Guadalupe salt lakes. Between the two points there was not a drop of water. The salt

haulers, therefore, would carry water in barrels to what was known as the "half-way station." There they would rest, water their horses and leave sufficient water for their return trip. They would then push on to the lakes, load their wagons and rest their teams for a couple of days. On their return trip they would consume the remainder of the water they had left at the station and then proceed to San Elizario.²⁵

Under the Spanish and Mexican governments the residents of the towns on both sides of the Río Grande were given the free use of the salt deposits. Naturally the people believed that this right was continued when the salt lakes were transferred to the United States by the Treaty of Guadalupe. Thus when Charles H. Howard located some of the salt deposits with Texas land script and endeavored to exact pay for any salt taken, "war" resulted. In the course of the incident, one man was murdered and five killed by mob action.²⁶

The Salt War contributed greatly in bringing to a close a century of history for San Elizario. Many of the persons involved in the affair crossed the river to escape possible punishment. Too, with the moving of the county seat, San Elizario lost much of her importance. But the death blow was administered by the railroads when, in 1881, they by-passed the former presidial village in favor of El Paso.²⁷ San Elizario, isolated, slipped back into the stream of historical anonymity — a picturesque little village with ruins of a civilization that is gone forever. *Sic transit gloria.*

R E F E R E N C E S

1. William Arthur Oden, Jr., *Mud, Sticks and Stones: The Use of Native Building Materials in the El Paso Area* (unpublished Master's Thesis, Texas Western College, 1959), 15-20.
2. See Porter, "The Founding of San Elizario," *PASSWORD*, IX, No. 3 (Fall, 1964), 93 for number of personnel at a presidio and the annual payroll.
3. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco, 1884, 2 vols.), I, 636 fn. 22.
4. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas* (San Francisco, 1884, 2 vols.), I, 648-649. Bancroft believes that Gálvez' Indian policy may have been due partly to a terrible epidemic in 1784-1785. Within a three-month period 900 persons died in Chihuahua City alone and 1200 died in the El Paso district. The epidemic extended to animals and birds as well as persons. *Ibid.*, I, 658 fn. 42.
5. *Ibid.*, I, 650.
6. *Ibid.*, II, 595-600.
7. *Ibid.*, II, 601 fn. 75.
8. The first prohibition law in the Americas was put into effect in Mexico as part of the reforms of Charles III.
9. Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, II, 587. The state of Chihuahua adopted its constitution on December 7, 1824, under the name of "The Supreme Government of the Free State of Chihuahua."

10. Senecú and San Lorenzo are now in "greater" Juárez. The original San Lorenzo, founded in 1683, may have been in the vicinity of Guadalupe, D. B., thirty-five miles south of Juárez, before it was moved nearer to the Pass.
11. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico, 1530-1888* (San Francisco, 1889), 307.
12. Elsie Campbell, *Spanish Records of the Civil Government of Ysleta, 1835* (unpublished Master's Thesis, Texas Western College, 1950), 51.
13. *Ibid.*, 68.
14. Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico*, 248.
15. *The Secretary of War's Report for 1851* (Washington, 1852), 238.
16. *Ibid.*, 237.
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18. Richard K. McMaster, *Musket, Saber, & Missile: A History of Fort Bliss* (El Paso, 1962), 18-23.
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20. Nancy Lee Hammons, *A History of El Paso County, Texas, 1900* (unpublished Master's Thesis, Texas Western College, 1942), 48 *et seq.*
21. Richard K. McMaster, "The Evolution of El Paso County," *PASSWORD*, III, No. 3 (July, 1958), 120-122.
22. Josefina Escajeda, "Tales of San Elizario," *Puro Mexicano* ed. J. Frank Dobie (Texas Folk-lore Society, Austin, 1935), 134.
23. Owen White, *Out of the Desert: The Historical Romance of El Paso* (El Paso, 1923), 113.
24. See especially C. L. Sonnichsen, *The El Paso Salt War of 1877*, published by the Texas Western College Press in 1961. Dr. Sonnichsen's study first appeared as a chapter in his *Ten Texas Feuds* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1957). A much shorter account was written by Col. Albion Smith, "The Salt War of San Elizario," *PASSWORD*, I, No. 1 (February, 1956), 4-7.
25. James B. Gillett, *Six Years With the Texas Rangers, 1875 to 1881* (Austin, Texas, 1921), 192-193.
26. Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, I, 519 *et seq.*
27. For the story of the railroads coming to El Paso see Joseph Leach, "Farewell to Horse-Back, Mule-Back, 'Foot-Back' and Prairie Schooner: The Railroad Comes to Town," *PASSWORD*, I, No. 2 (May, 1956), 33-44.

*An Incident of the Escobar Revolution**

by MILTON L. BURLESON

ON THE EVENING of March 8th, 1929, while I was acting postmaster in El Paso, Texas, I received a telephone call from the postmaster in Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, which is located just across the Río Grande River from El Paso. He told me that General José Escobar, who was the commanding general in charge of the Mexican Army at Chihuahua City, Chihuahua, had started a revolution in northern Mexico, that he had already captured several other large towns and was now proceeding towards Juárez, and that he should reach there late that afternoon with a large army. The Juárez postmaster then added: "I know that he can easily capture Juárez as there is only a small garrison of soldiers stationed here. This fact causes me to ask a favor of you: that is, let me bring to the El Paso post office this evening for safe keeping all the Juárez post office valuables, such as our cash, stamps, money order forms, both foreign and domestic, registers and other valuable records, so as to prevent them from falling into the hands of General Escobar who, I feel, will confiscate everything of value when he captures Juárez."

I told the Juárez postmaster that I would be glad to comply with his request, as we had an extra vault in which I would store his valuables until they were needed. I placed one restriction on him, and that was that all valuables were to be placed in strong locked containers or in lead sealed Mexican mail sacks. In that way, I pointed out, no sacks could be opened or his things bothered without detection. This he agreed to do. Later that evening the Juárez postmaster again telephoned me, saying that he would be late in arriving as it was taking him longer than he had anticipated to prepare the valuables as I had requested. Consequently I told him that I would wait in my office late that evening if necessary to receive his property. He finally arrived about one hour late with all items properly sacked and boxed. I received his valuables without giving him a receipt or asking their approximate value or contents, and placed them in our post office vault.

That same evening General Escobar came into Juárez by train and, after a small skirmish with the troops of the Juárez garrison, captured the city with the loss of only a few soldiers, even though the Juárez garrison reported the loss of some 15 soldiers killed and wounded.

*For an account of General Escobar's capture and occupation of Juárez, see Daniel B. Cullinane, "Ciudad Juárez and the Escobar Revolution," *PASSWORD*, III, No. 3 (July, 1958).

General Escobar immediately took over all government and privately owned large buildings, including the empty Juárez post office.

On the following morning Postmaster Silvestre came to my office and was very happy that he had brought the Juárez post office valuables to my office for safe keeping, otherwise, he said, they would be in the hands of General Escobar or some of his officers. I naturally agreed with him that he had used good judgment, as I knew what previous captures of Juárez by revolutionary generals had meant to the Mexican Government.

Postmaster Silvestre came to my office almost every day during the following week, and then I noticed a falling off in his visits. The next thing I noticed was a change in his attitude towards General Escobar. His resentment of him was almost gone, so I suspected that some of General Escobar's followers were working on him to join the revolution and open the post office. A few days later I found out that my suspicions were correct, as on his next visit he said, "I have been talking with General Escobar about me taking the Juárez post office supplies back to Juárez, the ones that I gave to you, and opening the post office for him. I really believe he is going to win the revolution and will soon capture all of Mexico and he will then be president of Mexico." He then added, "I have the Juárez mail truck here in El Paso and I will be here at your office in the morning to get the valuables I left with you." I was naturally surprised and disappointed in him, in fact I was almost dumbfounded. I waited a few moments in order to collect my thoughts before I answered and then I looked him straight in the eye and said, "NO, you cannot have them because when you brought these valuables to my office you were a representative of the Federal Government of Mexico that my government recognizes, and today you are representing a revolutionary general that my government does not recognize." He looked at me in utter disappointment and chagrin and said, "You did not give me a receipt for this equipment and valuables — no official record was made of them, you and I are the only persons that know about our agreement. I am sure it will mean nothing to you personally whether you keep these post office supplies or give them back to me."

I told him that that was true, and then he said, "I feel sure General Escobar will aid you financially if you will give them back to me." He then asked me if I would accompany him on the following morning to Juárez to talk with General Escobar. My answer to him was — if General Escobar wanted to talk to me he would have to come to my office as I would not go to Juárez. I again told him he could not have the Juárez post office valuables, as he had convinced me that

I was right in my refusal to give them back when he suggested a financial bribe from General Escobar. Postmaster Silvestre left my office in a huff and much disappointed at the result of his call. I did not see him again until I sent for him to come and witness the final disposition of the valuables that he had left with me. This transaction will be explained later.

When Postmaster Silvestre left my office I suddenly realized that I had taken over without record or authority the post office valuables of a postmaster serving in a foreign country which could cause international complications. Now that I had these valuables what would I do with them. This question bothered me the rest of the day and that night, because I knew that I would have to square my actions not only with my own Post Office Department in Washington but also with my postmaster who was out of the city at that time. I even thought about giving the supplies back to the Juárez postmaster as the easiest way out. In that way I would have no explaining to do to anyone, but I quickly dismissed that thought as I knew that would not be right. After further thought I decided to wire the Post Office Department in Washington and tell them all about my transaction with the postmaster of Juárez — that I still had the valuables in question in a vault here in the post office and to please advise me what to do with them. On the following day I received a telegraphic reply saying: "Turn over the Juárez post office valuables that you are holding to the Mexican Consul in El Paso." This was good news to me and I felt much relieved. In the meantime Postmaster Kramp returned to El Paso and he too approved of my judgment in handling this most unusual situation.

Now the question arose: how could I protect myself from some future claim from the former postmaster of Juárez or the Mexican Government, that I had not turned over to the Mexican Consul all the valuables that the Juárez postmaster had left with me, as I had no record of their contents or their value. It was then I decided to get in touch with Postmaster Silvestre and ask him to come to my office and witness my "turn over" of these supplies and valuables to the Mexican Consul. This he agreed to do, so on the morning of April 10th, 1929, the Mexican Vice Consul Enrique Liekens and Postmaster Silvestre with their assistants met in my office where we made delivery of all the valuables that had been left with me for safe keeping. The "turn over" was quite exciting. At times heated arguments frequently arose between Postmaster Silvestre and the Mexican Vice Consul over the Escobar Revolution. At one time I had to threaten to call a police officer to quiet them. I had to keep our Spanish trans-

lator, Saul Paredes, in the room with them during the entire transaction so as to know what each side was saying and to know whether or not Postmaster Silvestre was satisfied that I had turned over all the valuables he had left with me, to the Mexican Consul. Postmaster Silvestre told me before he left that he was sure I had turned over all the valuables he had given me, but that he still thought I should have given them back to him, rather than to the Mexican Consul.

The Escobar Revolution lasted only a short time. The Escobar forces held Juárez only a little over a month and most of northern Mexico only about three months during which time the Mexican armies were closing in on him from their headquarters in Mexico City. General Escobar still maintained his headquarters in Chihuahua City from which point he decided his revolution was going to fail; so he chartered a private plane and flew to Canada and thus ended his unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the government of President Calles. The Escobar Revolution was the last of the many major revolutions that occurred in Mexico after the overthrow of President Diaz in 1911.

Now let us see what happened to Postmaster Silvestre. After the Escobar revolution failed, Silvestre remained in El Paso for about five years and then decided it would be safe for him to return to Juárez. But he was wrong. Immediately upon his return he was arrested as a traitor to the Mexican Federal Government and taken to the penitentiary in Chihuahua City where he was tried, convicted and sentenced to be shot. But the former postmaster had many friends in both Juárez and El Paso and they knew that he had been under severe strain when he picked Escobar as a winner. Consequently petitions circulated in Juárez and El Paso, asking that the Federal Government reduce his sentence. This petition was presented to me and I signed it. I was glad to do so for I had known Silvestre for many years and our relations had always been friendly. I knew he had made a mistake in choosing a loser rather than a winner. As a result of these petitions Silvestre's sentence was reduced to ten years in the federal penitentiary.

Some months after the Escobar Revolution, President Calles sent a special representative to El Paso to thank me personally for saving his government what, in his words, would have been a tremendous financial loss of almost a million pesos.

On July 24th, 1963, I decided to go to Juárez and talk to the present postmaster about the exact dates of the Escobar Revolution before I wrote this article. To my pleasant surprise I found out that the present postmaster, whose name is Ismael Arriolla Moya, was a clerk

in the Juárez post office at the time of the Escobar Revolution. He said that there were about 40 employees in the Juárez office at that time, that about half of them were sympathetic with Escobar and that the others remained loyal to the Federal Government. He, of course, was one of those who remained loyal. He said that he had worked in the Juárez office continuously since the Escobar Revolution and had been promoted to postmaster the previous year. He added that he wanted to thank me personally for his government for not turning over the Juárez post office valuables to Silvestre.

Several months after I was appointed postmaster of El Paso in 1933, Postmaster General James A. Farley visited me and when I told him my story of saving the Mexican Government what would have been a loss of a million *pesos*, he said that was one of the most interesting stories he had ever heard and that it could not have happened anywhere in the world except El Paso. In my 47 years as an employee of the El Paso post office, as a clerk, assistant postmaster and then postmaster, I had no other experience that equaled this one.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE NAVAJO: A PEOPLE IN TRANSITION

by Jane M. Christian

(El Paso: Southwestern Studies, Vol. II, No. 3, 1964, Texas Western Press. \$1.)

This is another monograph in the Southwestern Studies series which are issued quarterly by the Texas Western College Press. Actually it is Part One of a two-part study. The second part, No. 4 of volume II, will be published early in 1965.

The author, a candidate for the doctorate in anthropology at the University of Texas, has had a life-long interest in the Indian and especially in the Navajo. Thus, although her study is factual, she writes with sympathy and understanding. Her thesis is aptly expressed in the sub-title, *A People in Transition*. She traces the development of the Navajo tribe under pressures of various kinds from the outside, particularly from the government in Washington. And she gives special attention to the policies of the Indian Bureau and their effects upon the Navajo.

A better appreciation of Mrs. Christian's work may be gained by quoting some of her headings: "Land of the Navajo," "Four Tribal Adjustments," "The Nature of Navajo Culture," "Aboriginal and Social Organization and Mores," and "Conquest and Subjugation," to name only a few. One interesting fact concerning the Navajo is that they are steadily increasing in number. At the time of their conquest (1868) they numbered no more than six thousand. In 1890 their number was estimated at twenty thousand and in 1930 at fifty thousand. The annual increment is 4.7 per cent.

The book is well written and the six photographs and the double-page map of Navajo country add greatly to its interest and value.

Incidentally, the Southwestern Studies have been so well received that already some of the back issues are selling at premium prices.

Texas Western College

— EUGENE O. PORTER

THE RAILWAYS OF MEXICO: A Study on Nationalization

by John H. McNeely

(El Paso: Southwestern Studies, Vol. II, No. 1, 1964, Texas Western Press. \$1.)

This enlightening little booklet describes the development of the railroad system in Mexico from the first operational track — the 13 kilometer Vera Cruz to El Molino line inaugurated in 1850 — to the recent opening

of the Chihuahua-Pacifico line from Presidio, Texas, to Topolobampo, Sonora, by president Adolfo Lopez Mateos in 1961. As the subtitle implies, McNeely concentrates his attention on the policies and attitudes of the various Mexican governmental leaders in their dealings with the American, British, and other foreign companies that obtained or attempted to obtain concessions to build railroads in Mexico.

Old timers and students of Paso del Norte area history will be particularly interested in the section entitled "General Villa's Use of the Railroads." Villa's successful invasion of Ciudad Juárez by train in 1913 and his later successes at Torreón and elsewhere, as well as his difficulties with Carranza, are mentioned and references are given for those wishing to pursue the details further. Several photographs from the Aultman collection provide pictorial evidence of the part the railroads played in the Revolution.

The struggle of the Mexican government to achieve stability and national recognition is well illustrated in this publication. The gradual acquisition of the numerous rail lines by the federal government according to a plan devised by Porfirio Diaz, able Minister of Finance, Jose Ives Limantour, was one method chosen to strengthen the general resources of the country. In this context nationalization of the railroads was a logical alternative — whether or not one agrees with this policy is directly dependent on one's point of view. McNeely and the Texas Western College Press are to be congratulated for having presented an unbiased account of one phase of the growth pains of our sister republic.

El Paso Centennial Museum

— REX E. GERALD

NOTE: This pamphlet has had such wide distribution that it is already "out-of-print" and scarce.

COFFINS, CACTUS AND COWBOYS

by Joe Parrish

(El Paso: Superior Publishing Company, 1964, 93pp. \$1.50.)

Coffins Cactus and Cowboys is exactly what its author purports it to be — "the exciting story of El Paso from 1536 to the present." Not a history in the true meaning of the word, it is instead a highly condensed chronology designed for the casual reader. The history of El Paso is not buried in obscurity, ergo: those interested in more detailed accounts of the events described herein may pursue at length the histories outlined in the bibliography.

Joe Parrish has written in a breezy, journalistic style the story of El Paso's beginnings, from the first visitation by Europeans in 1536, a full

century before the English first stepped foot on Plymouth Rock, up to and including an understandable account of the bewildering Chamizal controversy. Oft-told tales of persons and events, many of which have gathered momentum with each re-telling, have been clarified, some with pathos, some with humor.

Mr. Parrish has seen fit to omit portions of the city's history as being too scholarly for a study of this type; namely, the 18th century concerning which ample records are available for the interested researcher. Likewise, the story of the never ending water problem has been placed in one chapter, rather than spread throughout the study where, in all probability, it rightfully belongs. The story of the famous gunfighters of the west has also been included in one chapter, since their lives are intertwined to an extent that precludes separation. This treatment does not detract from the work; in fact, it makes it more colorful as the casual study it was intended to be.

This little book is amply and interestingly illustrated with line sketches by Russell Parks, who also designed it; photographs and maps pertinent to the history are also included.

— MARY ELLEN B. PORTER

El Paso, Texas

CONTRIBUTORS to this ISSUE

CONREY BRYSON is completing his second year as President of the Society. He will be missed not only by the Society but also by the entire Southwest because he is to be domiciled to Washington, D. C., where he will serve on the staff of Congressman Richard C. White. Conrey has promised to do some writing for *PASSWORD* and it is our sincere hope that he will find the time to do so. Meanwhile his many, many personal friends as well as the thousands of friends he has made through his TV and radio programs over KTSM-TV wish him the best of luck.

CLIFFORD M. IRVIN is a third generation El Pasoan and a third generation school-board member, his father, Dr. E. H. Irvin, and his Grandfather, Dr. O. C. Irvin, having also served on the board. Mr. Irvin's association with Mr. A. H. Hughey, the subject of his talk, was both as a student and as a school-board member. Irvin High School in Northeast El Paso was named for the Irvin family.

FRANK H. HUNTER is a native El Pasoan. He attended Texas Western College (then the College of Mines) and received his law degree from the University of Texas. He has practised law in El Paso for the past twenty-four years. His wife Monica who is also very active in our Society, was born in Pennsylvania and was graduated from Wheaton College in Massachusetts. The two met in New York City.



MILTON L. BURLESON is a native Texan, having been born in Kirk, Limestone County, on January 24, 1884. He came to El Paso to work for the old El Paso & North Eastern Railroad Company, but went to work for the post office instead. He entered the postal service on July 1, 1906 and remained forty-seven years until October 1, 1953 when he retired. During that long period he served as a clerk, Assistant Postmaster, and Postmaster, serving in the latter capacity for more than twenty years.



HISTORICAL NOTES

MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTS

President Johnson and President Adolfo López Mateos of Mexico met in the center of the Stanton Street bridge just over the international line on the United States side on Friday morning, September 25, 1964. They then motored to Bowie High School for the ceremony unveiling a marker depicting the settlement of the 100-year-old Chamizal dispute. Each president delivered an address. Among other things President Mateos said: "This is the first time the presidents of the United States and Mexico have met not to examine any of the problems between the two governments but to rejoice in a victory of international friendship, achieved through cordial, honorable negotiations."

This historic photograph was presented to the Society by Mrs. Enriqueta de Bayona and her son Gastón who is a student at Texas Western College.

The following is a resolution passed by the El Paso Woman's Club in recognition of Mrs. Walter D. Howe's election to the Society's Hall of Honor:

Whereas one of our members, Mrs. Walter Dunn Howe has been chosen by the El Paso Historical Society to its' Hall of Fame

Whereas Mrs. Howe joined the Woman's Club of El Paso in 1900

Whereas she served as President of the Woman's Club in 1925-1926

Whereas she was a faithful and energetic civic leader through the years

Whereas she was nominated by the Junior Woman's Club for the "Mother of the year" in 1960

Be it resolved that the Past Presidents' Club of the Woman's Club of El Paso do hereby honor her with this resolution — and further be it resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to the El Paso Historical Society, to the family of Mrs. Walter Dunn Howe, and that this also be admitted to the files of the Woman's Club of El Paso.

Respectfully submitted the 4th day of November 1964.

(Signed) MRS. W. W. HAWKINS

MRS. A. E. PONSFORD

MRS. R. E. CUNNINGHAM

ACQUISITIONS

Mr. Jack F. Findlay who will be remembered by the readers of *PASSWORD* for his excellent article, "The Exit of Toribio Huerta," Vol. VII, No. 2 (Spring, 1962), has presented the Society with three rare and valuable publications. They pertain to the "American and British Pecuniary Claims Arbitrations" concerning the Rio Grande and the Elephant Butte Dam. One of the volumes is entitled: *American Lawlessness — Some Particulars of an Official and Judiciary Crime*. The Society wishes to thank you, Mr. Findlay.

The recent issue of *Western Review* (Vol. I, No. 2, Fall, 1964) should be of interest not only to members of our Society but also to all El Pasoans. Listed as "A Journal of the Humanities" and published by Western New Mexico University, Silver City, it contains an article written by Nanette M. Ashby and titled "Hertzog Books." The author calls Carl Hertzog "one of America's most distinguished book designers." The article includes two photographs of Mr. Hertzog, a number of illustrations taken from books designed or published by him. Mr. Hertzog is design editor of *PASSWORD*.

Another article in the same issue of *Western Review* is written by our Society member, Dr. Haldeen Braddy, Professor of English at Texas Western College, and titled "Artist Illustrators of the Southwest: H. D. Bugbee, José Cisneros, and Tom Lea." The article contains several illustrations which have been published by the three men. The artists are too well known to warrant further comment although it might be well to add for the new members of our Society that Mr. Cisneros designed the beautiful and symbolic cover of *PASSWORD*.

Another Society member recently honored is John Porter Bloom. The Archivist of the United States has announced the appointment of Dr. Bloom to the staff of the National Archives as specialist in the history of the American West and editor of the *Territorial Papers*.

Dr. Bloom was Assistant Professor of History at Texas Western College before he resigned to accept a position with the National Park Services where, as staff historian, he was editor of the National Survey of Historic Sites and Building series. Dr. Bloom is also a founding member of the Western History Association which he serves as Secretary-Treasurer.

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