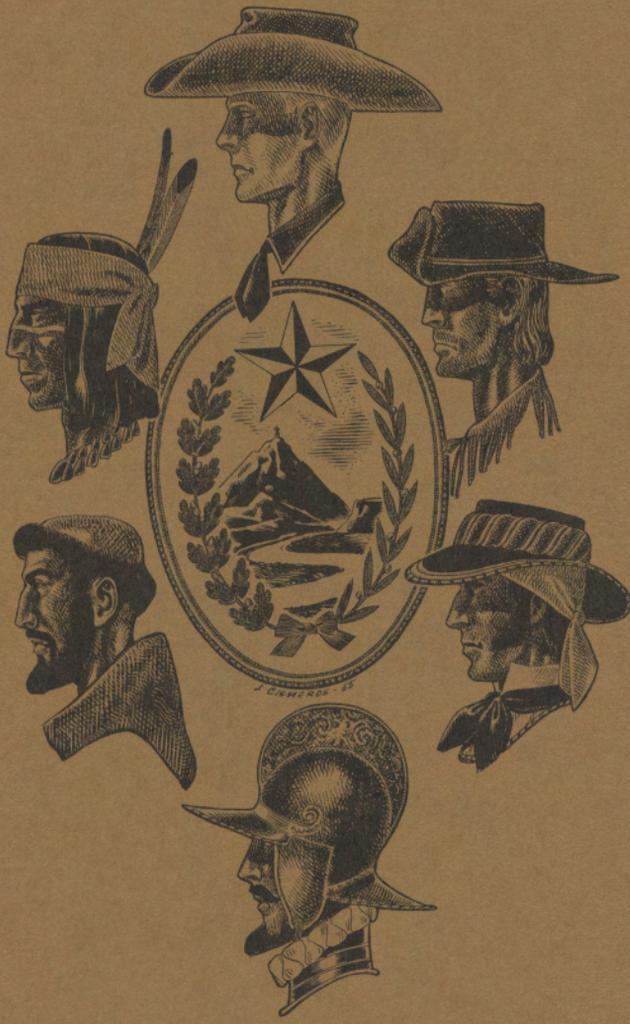


PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. XI - No. 2

SUMMER, 1966

PASSWORD

Published quarterly by THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EUGENE O. PORTER, Editor

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Contents

<i>A Beleaguered People – The Mennonites of Mexico</i> By WALTER SCHMIEDEHAUS, tr. by J. B. Jackson	47
<i>The Magoffin Homestead</i> By HARRIOT HOWZE JONES	61
<i>The Fourth in El Paso – 1895</i> An. by EUGENE O. PORTER	70
<i>Book Reviews</i>	76
GOODMAN, <i>A Western Panorama, 1849-1875</i> – KENNETH A. GOLDBLATT	
HOLLON, <i>The Great American Desert</i> – ROBERT E. RIEGEL	
CAZNEAU (Montgomery), <i>Eagle Pass or Life on the Border</i>	
JENKINS, <i>Southwestern Art</i> – EUGENE O. PORTER	
<i>Historical Notes</i>	81
<i>Contributors to this Issue</i>	84

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Published quarterly by THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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A BELEAGUERED PEOPLE

The Mennonites of Mexico

by WALTER SCHMIEDEHAUS

tr. by J. B. JACKSON

[EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was taken from the book *Ein Feste Burg*, written in German by Herr Walter Schmiedehaus and published in 1948 by G. J. Rempel (Imprenta Rempel, capo 22, Cd. Cuauhtemoc, Chih.). Herr Schmiedehaus has lived in Chihuahua City since 1923. He is a business man, the Consul for West Germany, and the former Secretary and President of the Chihuahua Historical Society.

Mr. J. B. Jackson, Editor of *Landscape*, a magazine published in Santa Fe, New Mexico, translated this material into English and wrote the first paragraph as a short introduction. His translation is being published here with his kind permission.]

THE HAZARDS OF PIONEERING have changed in the last half-century; the identity of the frontier community is threatened less by a hostile environment than by irresistible social and economic forces. Mr. Walter Schmiedehaus, member of the Chihuahua Society of Historical Studies, has known the Mennonite Colony for many years; his book, "Ein Feste Burg," from which this article is extracted, is a detailed history of this remarkable pioneering venture.

The Mennonites at present living in the State of Chihuahua in Mexico migrated to that country under the official English name of the Old Colony. As far as I have been able to find out the Old Colonists did not themselves invent the term. They were so called at a time when their conservatism set them apart from those who had begun to interpret their inherited teachings in a more liberal manner. We may here point out that the so-called Old Mennonites in the United States migrated from the Palatinate directly to Pennsylvania almost two centuries ago, and that the Amish Mennonites came to the United States from Alsace and Switzerland. Neither group is to be confused with the Old Colonists, who moved to Russia in the XVIII Century, then to Canada, and finally to Mexico.

Menno Simons, the founder of the Mennonite sect, lived in Holland from 1492 to 1559. The sect developed rapidly even during his lifetime, despite bitter persecution. It was not simply one of the many splinter churches of the early Reformation; spiritually if not racially the Mennonites are the descendants of the Waldensians, a sect founded in 1177 by Petrus Waldus of Lyons. The Waldensians remained in the Catholic fold, it is true, but they studied the Bible themselves, preached the gospel in word and deed, and sought the restoration

of the purity of the church by the voluntary assumption of poverty. According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* the original Mennonites maintained a form of Christianity "which owes no authority outside the Bible and the enlightened conscience, limits baptism to the believer, and lays stress on those precepts which vindicate the sanctity of human life and of a man's word." Such are still the guiding rules of Mennonite behavior. The last two articles of faith entailed their refusal to bear arms or to take oaths — thus disqualifying themselves from public office.

Even during the lifetime of Menno, factionalism and disunity developed among his followers. History therefore distinguishes between Dutch, Prussian, and Russian Mennonites, Mennonites in Switzerland, Moravia, southern Germany and North America. The Old Colonists of Chihuahua are descendants of the Dutch or North German group. I would assume that most of them are of Frisian stock, a belief borne out by their appearance, their temperament and by many of their customs.

Because of incessant persecution during the XVI Century a large number of Mennonites left Holland and Friesland for East Prussia near the lower Vistula. That is why our Mennonites in Mexico still look upon Prussia as their true homeland; it was there that they were first allowed to form themselves into a society.

What was to become the traditional Mennonite occupation of pioneer farming originated in Prussia. It was here that they first undertook to reclaim marshes, build dikes and drainage ditches and put virgin land under cultivation. Here it was that persons who, especially in Holland, had had other trades and professions first came into contact with the land.

There did not evolve in Prussia that feature of Mennonite life which later was to become so characteristic: the colony, or the well-defined farm-village. Most farmers lived separated from their neighbors; the compact settlement did not exist. So the community was more a spiritual entity, defined less in terms of town or village than in terms of a township or parish.

In the Mid-XVIII Century Prussia began to exert increasing pressure on these communities occupying strategic frontier positions yet nevertheless refusing to bear arms and resisting incorporation into a military and centralized state. In 1763 the Mennonites decided to accept the invitation of Catherine II of Russia to settle in that country. A special inducement was permission to live in self-contained groups, build their own churches and schools, and even govern their local affairs. The Mennonites accordingly established colonies near the

Dneiper in the Ukraine; and here it was that the genuine Mennonite colony and the Mennonite village came into being. The first reception was far from friendly. The Russian neighbors stole from the newcomers, and wandering bands of gypsies and other nomads made the countryside unsafe. The lonely farmstead, customary in East Prussia, proved dangerous and impractical, and it was decided to group the scattered farms in a compact settlement. There was a broad main street bordered by farmsteads, each one surrounded by a fence. Trees were planted along the street for shade and for protection against the weather. In the center stood the school and the church.

The original settlement expanded and created daughter villages, and at the end of a hundred years the Mennonites had become numerous and rich. They remained, however, isolated from the society around them. In 1870 the Russian government instituted universal military service and proposed educational reforms which threatened to deprive the Mennonites of their independence in school matters. Despite efforts of compromise on both sides, several of the oldest Mennonite communities reluctantly resolved in 1870 to migrate once again, this time to Canada, where the authorities not only offered land in Manitoba but offered to pay their way. Between 1871 and 1880 some 15,000 Mennonites crossed the Atlantic from Hamburg to Canada.

The Canadian Interval

The sojourn of the Old Colonists in this part of the New World lasted fifty years. It made no impression on their beliefs and practices, and only a slight impression on their farming methods.

As had been the case in Russia, the land placed at the disposal of the settlers soon proved too small, and new colonies were established to the west in Saskatchewan. For many years all went well; and then the issue which was eventually to cause still another migration came to the fore: the question of the schools. The Canadian government had originally agreed to allow the Mennonites their own traditional German language school system. After the first World War, however, efforts were made to introduce the teaching of English into the curriculum. In 1919 the more conservative among the Mennonites — the group later to be known as the Old Colonists — protested against this violation of the contract.

The answer to every petition was the refusal of the government to modify its stand. The issue was then settled; migration was the only solution.

Though the decision had been taken, it was not easy to see the next step. Whither? The question was now more difficult to answer

than it had been fifty years before. The offers which were made to the Mennonites by various states and nations were not compassionate; they were inspired by economic consideration. For that reason caution was doubly necessary. Mississippi, Minnesota, both wanted to sell the Colonists large tracts of land; so did Florida. Six representatives of the group made a four months' trip to investigate possibilities in South America, only to return discouraged. In 1921 another group travelled through Mexico.

They were offered (at a price) land in Sonora, and again near Tuxpan. They were received by President Obregon, who assured them in writing that if the Mennonites decided to settle in Mexico they would: one, not be compelled to do military service; two, they would under no circumstances be obliged to take an oath; three, they would have complete freedom to practice their religion and to live according to their church precepts; four, they would have complete freedom to establish and control their own schools with their own teachers; and five, that the government would raise no objection to their complete control and management of their own property and internal economic affairs.

Finally the delegates returned to Canada with the announcement that approximately 230,000 acres of land had been bought for \$8.25 an acre at San Antonio de los Arenales in the State of Chihuahua.

San Antonio de los Arenales, or San Antonio of the Sand Dunes (now called Cuauhtemoc) is today the most important center in the entire mountain portion of Chihuahua. It lies at an altitude of 6,200 feet, overlooking the valley of Bustillos from the west; in a region where the whole landscape seems to take one last deep breath before rising into the Sierra Madre with its enormous mountain ranges, deep canyons and abrupt cliffs. You clearly perceive the strategic value of the location when you stand on the mountain back of the last houses and gaze to the east and north and west. From these heights the cowboys or vaqueros of the rich landowner could oversee the cattle for miles without difficulty, and when the railroad was put through here in the last years of the XIX Century the adobe huts of the cowhands were the first to be built. They were still standing when the Mennonites arrived.

San Antonio was a camp and a shipping point. Cattle raising was the only use this gigantic countryside was ever put to during the time of Porfirio Díaz. And indeed Chihuahua was long known not only as a mining state but as a state of cattle raising and cattle export. The great cattle fortunes — like most other fortunes — naturally vanished completely during the Revolution, which lasted roughly from 1910

to 1920, though the after-effects lasted much longer. Only during the last few years has the country begun to raise cattle again. Even the Mennonites have now turned to cattle raising to supplement their traditional farming. But when they arrived in 1922 the number of cattle in the entire region was scarcely worth mentioning.

The Zuloaga family, from whom the Mennonites bought their land, owned more than 1,500,000 acres, most of it in the vicinity of San Antonio. They had long since ceased to live there, however, and the land lay empty and deserted. The only reminders of the earlier herds of cattle were the bleached bones lying here and there on the range.

In another sense San Antonio was an historical spot; six years before the arrival of the Mennonites, in 1916, General Pershing, leader of the American Punitive Expedition in search of Pancho Villa, established his temporary headquarters here.

Discovering Mexico

On the first of March, 1922, the first train of immigrants left Manitoba, and together with five other special trains reached San Antonio in the middle of the month.

When we think of immigrants a dramatic picture at once presents itself, a scene like the one so often witnessed in the great European ports or in the ports of entry of the New World: of pale, sickly and harassed men and women and children, surrounded by bundles of miserable belongings. But the migration of the Mennonites from Canada to Mexico resembled this not at all. They had money and were proud to pay for the journey; they brought their poor with them. The movement of the Old Colonists was a large-scale and costly undertaking. Passenger cars and pullmans were provided as well as freight and cattle cars. Thirty or forty cars in one train was by no means unusual, nor was it unheard of for them to pay \$30,000 for a special train.

Each family brought with them, in addition to household belongings, a team or two of horses, a few milk cows, chickens, geese, hogs, farm machinery and seeds of whatever crop they hoped to grow. They also brought lumber and materials for building their houses and barns after the Canadian style; it was not until a few years later that they discovered the advantage of adobe. So the construction of the first villages got under way at once. The land was surveyed and the main streets laid out. Each village was to have land enough for ten to thirty farm-families, the farms ranging in size from 80 to 400 acres, though the average was and still remains about 160 acres. Very few of the farmers now hold all their land in one plot; their

fields are distributed at varying distances from the farmstead. A characteristic of every village was the common pasture, consisting of about 40 acres per family. Strictly speaking, the land belonged to one of two holding companies or corporations, who still to this day maintain title. The land was divided by them into individual farms, but the farmers themselves held no title or deed, and could not mortgage their holdings. State and Federal taxes were collected from the companies, who in turn collected from the individuals.

With astonishing speed the first village arose, and where there had once been only the monotonous and treeless prairie there soon stood the houses and barnyards of Kleefeld, Rosenthal, Rosengart, Blumen-gart and Schanzenfeld. Other villages followed in short order. When I came to San Antonio in 1923 the plans for most of the present-day villages had already been drawn up.

The field work started without delay, and the sod of the "Steppe," as the Mennonites called the countryside, was broken. In a wilderness where never a plow had been seen, more and more long dark furrows appeared, and these gradually expanded into fields. It was at this juncture that the pioneers met one of their first serious difficulties. The soil was so gravelly and shallow that the shares of the bottom plows which they had brought with them soon became dull and worn. It was some time before disc plowing was introduced. They had left behind them in Canada some of the richest and deepest soil in the world; here the soil was six to nine inches in depth, and in fertility it could only be rated medium to poor.

At first the farmers tried the methods they had known before: they planted wheat. One crop failure after another ensued until they saw that wheat had no place in this country. Flax was also tried, and while it did not do badly the market was too limited. So they resorted to raising the main crops of the region: corn and beans. Yet even here they had much to learn. The corn had to come from good, uniform and acclimatized stock, and the harvested beans had to be carefully sorted or the wholesalers would either not buy them or pay too low a price. "Ojo Cabra," "Bayo Rata," "Mantequilla," "Pinto" and all the other varieties had to be studied and their yield tested. All this could not take place overnight, and in the beginning there were many disappointments and much despair.

Added to this were the entirely new climatic conditions. The heavens were extraordinarily sparing of water. The climate was in fact typical of a desert intermountain country. The temperatures were never extreme, but the humidity was low and the danger of frosts lasted well into May. The growing season was of 150 days. The rain-

fall was not only scanty, it was highly unpredictable and varied greatly from year to year, from fourteen inches to twenty-eight. Most of it came in July, August and September, so that the growing season was actually much shorter, especially when the winter snows and spring rains had not provided enough moisture by planting time. The farmer learned that corn should be planted during the last half of May, and oats at the beginning of June.

When at last the rainy season came, the rain poured down with such violence that not infrequently the seeds were literally drowned. From the mountains the water descended with such fury that arroyos and stream beds, dry the rest of the year, became all at once foaming rivers that flooded the fields in many places and made roads impassable for days and even weeks. This meant building drainage ditches and embankments, and to protect the roads, ditches had to be dug and bridges built.

This typical Mexican rainy season was something quite new. But it was also beautiful; was there a spot on the earth where the sky appeared more immense and splendid than over the valley of the Bustillos? Almost overnight the brown prairie was clad in bright green. Flowers blossomed not only in the gardens but across the entire undulating plain. Weeds proved to be more of a problem here than in Canada, for they only started to grow during the rainy season, and thus competed with the crops for moisture and light. This hazard the farmers overcame by tilling the fields after the seeds had been sown, thus destroying much of the weed growth beforehand.

In the fields the grain now grew fast; beans flourished like weeds, and oats, after an unpromising beginning, shot up with astonishing speed. The cattle knew good times once again, finding rich pastures. They were hidden up to their bellies in the prairie grass. Their grazing season lasted for three or four months; after that the range was too dry, and the cattle had to be fed. For that reason corn became one of the Mennonites' most important crops when they changed over to diversified farming and cattle raising.

After the rainy season came the end of summer, and then a wonderful autumn with a harvest time lasting until December. In Canada snow had lain for months in winter; in Mexico it was a rarity, and when it came it was welcome for the moisture it provided. The winters were cold, but not nearly so cold as in Canada. But frequently they lasted into April even May, and though the days would then be warm, at night there were frosts which killed the fruit. Dry winds and storms ushered in the spring; dust devils moved across the fields, and the hill of San Antonio was often completely hidden in dust

and haze. No house could be kept clean for long; the fine sand penetrated everywhere.

Spring and summer were dry and brought only occasional reviving showers. Not infrequently after the end of winter there fell not one drop of moisture. But at last the time of deliverance came, the time of rains, and every where life revived.

One thing was certain: no matter how different the Mexican seasons might be, the climate was healthy and good. Throughout the entire year you could work and be active. There was no need for outside help, no need for Indian peons as there was further south where Europeans could not work in the heat. Moreover there were none of those pests that are found elsewhere in Mexico; there were no fever-breeding swamps or jungles; there was no malaria. There were no clouds of fleas as in Michoacan; no scorpions as in Durango. And there were no flights of grasshoppers to blot out the sky, and devour the crops. Here it was possible to live and work, and fight against the usual enemies of the farm world: weeds that drank too much moisture, hawks and other predators that robbed the hen-houses at night, coyotes that slipped down from among the rocks to attack the young stock. This was as it should be; such things kept you alert; they were part of farming everywhere in the world.

To be sure, the land left much to be desired. It had cost far more than it was worth. Even after a very few years it had begun to erode badly in places, losing so much topsoil that some fields had to be abandoned to weeds. Many of the complaints often heard seemed reasonable in view of the productive wheatland left behind in Canada, and in view of what the Mennonites often heard concerning the fabulous richness of the land further south. Down there they harvested twice a year. The Indians poked a hole in the unplowed soil, dropped two or three kernels of corn in it, and the seed came up and yielded with astonishing exuberance. Trees grew without being cared for, and produced fruit which here in the north you could only get by paying hard cash.

But what of that? Such an earthly paradise was not made for northern peasants, accustomed to work hard the whole year long. Those first delegates had well known what they were doing when they chose the bleak Mexican north with its barren landscape rather than the rich south. They had sought out for their people a place where they could work and live, not one where they would grow indolent and forgetful.

Blumenort, the first of the Mennonite villages, lies ten minutes to the north of Cuauhtemoc. Further north lie other villages, some forty

of them in all. Their corrugated metal roofs and their tall windmills shine from afar in the clear mountain air. Each one is clearly distinguishable, yet they are all much alike. Each is divided by a broad street, on both sides of which are the dwellings; behind them are the fields. It is the same village that existed more than a century ago in Russia. In almost everyone of them there is a store, and in all of them a church and a school.

Water is the magic word in this dry landscape, windmills or motor pumps draw it from the ground and distribute it to gardens, dwellings and stables. There is as yet not enough accurate information of the geology of the area to make a more general drilling of wells possible; water is struck at thirty feet and then at more than three hundred. The cost of levelling land, drilling wells and installing pumps is too great for many farmers to undertake irrigation farming, and at present most of them are satisfied with watering a small patch of orchard and vegetable garden. Both of these do much to supplement a somewhat monotonous diet.

House and farm yard are orderly and clean. Barns, sheds, stables, oven and well, workshops surround the barnyard from which a road leads to the village street. The dwellings, like the Lower Saxony peasant house in Germany (except that these are constructed of adobe), are joined to the stables and are frequently under one and the same roof. The livestock appear well fed and well cared for; they are important elements in the domestic economy.

In the last years the Mennonites have gone over to diversified farming, though they started by raising field crops only. Since the change their income has greatly increased. Dairies and cheese factories within the colony provide an outlet for the milk; the proceeds from the sale of butter, cheese, eggs, lard, ham and bacon today constitute a large part of their earnings.

The Present Scene

In the dwelling itself the clock seems to have been set back two centuries. On the polished surface of the floor are reflected the old-fashioned furnishings. Wooden bedsteads are heaped to the ceiling with great puffs of down. In contrast to the usual stern avoidance of all color or design, the furniture is painted red or yellow. Most of the poorer families have houses with unpainted or dirt floors, and there are bathrooms in only a few of the most prosperous homes.

The Old Colonists wear their traditional costume, appropriate to the earnest character of a strict religious sect. It is neither picturesque nor beautiful; humility and the thought of mortification have in-

fluenced its design, even at the expense of practical considerations. With the men the old-time costume is less usual than with the women, chiefly for reasons of economy. On workdays they wear the unlovely but useful overalls; on Sundays they exchange them for the black suit of their forefathers. They wear neither mustache nor beard.

Each of the two main territorial divisions of the Colony has its religious leader, an Elder, and as lay leader a Superintendent. Each village has its Magistrate, subordinate to the two other authorities, who maintains order in his community. The highest instance is of course the Church. The entire miniature state is completely theocratic; important problems are laid before the so-called Assembly of Brethren, and no weighty decision is ever taken without the approval of the preacher and Elder. The notion that the organization of the Mennonite colony is communistic ("high-minded" communism, of course) is completely erroneous. Except for the controls of the holding companies, each man is master of his fields, of his farm enterprise, of his home, and no one can talk him out of this independence. The right to dispose of his possessions belongs to him and to him alone. He sows and reaps what and how he likes; he sells his produce when, where and at whatever price he chooses.

At the center of every village, spiritually as well as geographically, stands the church.

One is struck with the absence of exterior and interior ornament in the Mennonite church building, a trait harkening back (no doubt) to the iconoclasm of the Reformation. Churches were always the first edifices to be erected wherever the Mennonites settled, and a great number of them date back to the beginning of the Colony when they still used lumber brought from Canada. The Sunday service lasts for a long time and is primitive in character. The sermons, strongly imbued with the Old Testament spirit and delivered by lay preachers, are likely to astonish the outsider by their ponderous mysticism; they are frequently interspersed with prayers. When the service is over, many a stranger leaves with a feeling of depression; it is hard to discover here any spark of consolation or of inspiration, and equally hard not to feel that here reigns Jehovah, the stern God of the Old Testament. A heavy and oppressive inherited burden is placed upon young shoulders. And yet one must first of all be a Mennonite oneself, speak Low German as they do, till the land, lead their simple and unassuming life, if one is to understand how such a church can in its manner bestow peace and healing. In any event the Mennonites appeared satisfied with their lot.

"In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread." The words

apply not only to adults but to the young. That is why play and light-heartedness are not encouraged among the children. At an early age the children learn the seriousness of life. Even the small ones must help around the farm, drive the cows, feed the pigs or tend the still younger brothers and sisters. The decorated Christmas tree is something no Mennonite child has ever seen. Its banishment from the home is part of the general avoidance of show and ostentation, and the tree is further condemned as a survival of paganism.

The Old Colonists are taught not to display their worldly goods, and to imitate the poor in their behavior and manner of life. Money and wealth are by no means forbidden and are indeed as eagerly sought after here as among other mortals, but they are not to be used for personal luxury. Almost everything "worldly" is in consequence forbidden in the Colony. There is no music, no singing — other than church singing — no dancing, not even folk dancing. No jewelry, no theatre, no games or sports; no holidays with parades and flags, no taverns, no bowling or cardplaying among the men. But there are many who enjoy hunting, and the time for these men comes in the late fall when the long files of wild duck appear over the Laguna de Bustillos and when grey geese come from northernmost Canada on their way south, and thousands of heron people the shores of the lake and the nearby cornfields. Many a good shot rises in the early dawn, hitches up his buggy, and drives out to bag some of this game.

For the automobile is another thing forbidden to the Old Colony. And why in fact should these farmers need a car? Whether it takes one hour or three to reach town or to visit a cousin in a remote village is of no consequence in the tempo of the Colony. No one need smile because the Mennonites are forbidden private cars and yet often have the most modern farm machinery, tractors and gasoline engines. There is no real contradiction here: machines are meant for work, but a private car is a superfluity.

On the whole, it may be said that the Old Colonists lead a life which is extremely narrow and, despite its religious overtones, materialistic. Yet for all the repressions they seem to know how to get good and even some pleasure out of existence.

Some visitors, to whom the Colony is merely a tourist curiosity, express the greatest admiration for the Mennonites; others find them backwards, abnormal, and even hopeless. Both are wrong; but if the indiscriminate admirers do no harm, those who talk contemptuously of the Mennonites bring them into disrepute.

What these critics overlook are the Mennonites' accomplishments here in Chihuahua. These cannot be obvious to persons seeing the

Colony in its present flourishing condition. To create a home in the wilderness, in a harsh and unknown country, step by step in peaceful but unremitting struggle — that is something which only the pioneer can know. Yet these things are far from new to the Colonists; they were part of their long journey through Russia and Canada as well as Mexico.

What are the problems which face them? Some of them are social, others are economic. Their religious principle of non-violence disturbs their friends as well as their enemies. Then in their reliance on the Scripture, the Old Testament is very much to the fore. By far the most common names for men are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They like to compare themselves to the Children of Israel, and a whole series of Old Testament usages are common among them. Even their speech is affected; they like to call it "haggling" (*schachern*) when it is merely a matter of bargaining. There have been complaints of unethical business practices among the Mennonites, who in money matters are always deadly earnest. One commentator wonders if this trait is not connected with the reverence of the Old Testament. Was not Esau cheated by his own brother? Obviously the combination of Old Germanic characteristics with the inflexible and obscure utterances of the Bible can produce remarkable results. Most of these accusations are, however, the result of misunderstanding or ignorance. The average Mennonite is an honorable and truthful person.

A more serious accusation is that the Mennonites lack any political or national conviction. Yet what kind of patriotism can a group of men possess who for more than two centuries have had no country of their own? Since the time of Luther they have been permitted to live isolated from every political influence or tie. They have always conscientiously fulfilled their obligations and contributed their best, but their inner convictions and the manifestations of those convictions are a different matter. They have always been welcome to the new country at first; but eventually those inner convictions have caused trouble. To put it in a word; the stumbling block has been and continues to be their uncompromising loyalty to their German heritage.

They have not only preserved their German customs, their German speech, their German school and Bible, they have treasured them like holy objects, as inseparable parts of their existence, as the foundation of their identity. Never have the Old Colonists spoken any language but their native German, for they know that a foreign language is the entering wedge of foreign ways. They have tried to reproduce and preserve as accurately as possible the old social and economic systems

that their forefathers established. Their settlement in villages, their pattern of building arrangement, their dress, their church and community organization, their system of land holdings, their attitude toward education are all reflections of an inflexibly conservative attitude. It is the tragedy of these wandering settlers that these cherished beliefs of theirs invariably lead to conflict with the legitimate interests of the country where they are living as guests.

We have seen that all modern improvements and even necessities are banned from the Colony lest they exert a progressive (and hence undesirable) influence. Telegraph and telephone facilities, several times offered, have been refused. Radio is entirely outlawed. "Worldly" newspapers are not exactly forbidden but they are not encouraged. Papers or periodicals in any language other than German are never read, with perhaps a few exceptions. How many of today's Mennonite youth learn enough in the old-fashioned and rudimentary schools to read a book easily or to understand its contents? Very few; yet new ideas cannot be introduced without a higher standard of literacy.

As for the problems of their economic well-being, they are several, though we can only mention them briefly here. The soil is relatively poor, and is threatened with erosion and depletion. Lacking sufficient rainfall, the farms can only increase their production by means of expensive irrigation. Much of the present prosperity of the Mennonites has been based on the abnormally high prices for agricultural products that have prevailed since the war. Mechanization, more and more essential in a commercial type of farming, is costly, especially in Mexico where all agricultural machinery has to be imported. Finally there is the problem of overpopulation.

Where can the young Mennonite farmers go? The chief reason the Colony is strong and has been able to maintain its identity and play an influential role in Mexican life is that it has remained compact; it is important and homogeneous enough to influence its environment. All Old Colonists agree that the community must be maintained in its present geographical form for as long as possible, and that expansion into the immediate surroundings rather than daughter colonies at a remote distance is the only desirable solution to the problem of population growth.

It is surprising how few young people have left the Colony during the more than thirty years in Mexico. Yet there is a sizable number of individuals and families who have wandered away. Some were in search of adventure, or of better economic opportunities, others were dissatisfied or unable to make a living in the villages. Two or three married Mexican wives, others have found employment with Mex-

ican landowners. There are now more than 25,000 Mennonites near Cuauhtemoc, making it one of the largest of the Mennonite colonies.

The dilemma of a rural proletariat exists even in this isolated society. In every village you can find from two to a dozen heads of families who do not own land but who work for others. Wealth is increasing, but so is poverty. In 1946 a 72,000 acre tract to the north of the present colony was bought and twelve new village sites laid out; these were quickly pre-empted. Many well-to-do individuals have bought ranches of several thousand acres for raising cattle. In a region like this, well suited to stock raising, the Mennonites may well see the wisdom of buying enough land for a communal operation. This would be a sensible solution, in view of the fact that pastures and feed are scarce, and that aside from a few local dairy processing plants, the sole income of this growing community is, and will probably always remain, farming.

It is natural to ask, have the Mennonites succeeded in Mexico? Certainly, many settlers have less today than they once had, and many mournfully remember the days when their pockets were stuffed with dollars. Many have suffered heavy losses which they have so far not been able to recoup. But there is no one of good will and courage who knows how to work who is impoverished today, and many possess the farms and belongings which they once only aspired to. That is why it is wrong to say, as some still do, that the money brought to Mexico has been lost. The Colony is there, the villages, the houses, the livestock, the equipment are there and so is the land, which, each year more intensively cultivated, is now too restricted for the increased population.

The time has passed when many still wished to return to Canada. Certainly the Colony has paid a high price for its mistakes. The unknown country, the unknown climate, the frequently unwise choice of seeds and crops, and the impractical methods all made for losses, quite apart from the cash which vanished in the Russek Bank failure of 1923 in Chihuahua City, and the Depression of the 30's. On top of these disasters there were the first crop failures and years of uncertain prices. Now there is the depression of population.

But have conditions ever been much different in any new settlement? And to be a pioneer does not mean that a man calculates in dollars or pesos how much he spends or loses. It means to be one who opens the way. It means to sacrifice personal gain and well-being, even life itself, for something which stands higher: a goal, an idea, a faith and a future: not his own future but that of his family and children and his people.

THE MAGOFFIN HOMESTEAD

by HARRIOT HOWZE JONES

THE MAGOFFIN HOMESTEAD, an adobe hacienda, was built in 1875 by Joseph Magoffin. At the time it occupied four acres of land. Today, however, on only one and a half acres, it is dwarfed by a high-rise apartment building and surrounded on three sides by low-rent bungalows for the aged. Yet the house still echoes to the music of long past festivities when dashing young Army officers, spurs clanking at their heels, mingled with the belles of old El Paso. The homestead has known births and deaths; wedding parties and children's laughter; joy and sorrow; and it is still lived in by members of the Magoffin family. One member, Octavia Magoffin Glasgow, a granddaughter of the builder, enjoys two distinctions: (1) living in the house in which she was born, and (2) living in a house flanked by streets bearing two of her names — Octavia Street and Magoffin Avenue.

Miss Glasgow lives with her parents, Brigadier General and Mrs. William J. Glasgow. Mrs. Glasgow is the daughter of the original owner. In her nineties now, "Miss Josie," as she is known to old-timers in El Paso, "Mrs. G.," as the General always calls her, is spry and charming. She loves the old place where she grew up and loves to tell about it. The General, a graduate of the United States Military Academy in the class of 1891 is, at the age of 100, the alert, interested and interesting "Oldest Living Graduate" of West Point and as such is revered by cadets and by graduates all over the world. Every June the First Class (Seniors) comes to Fort Bliss from West Point for a short course in guided missiles, and a delegation of cadets along with their commandant always calls to pay their respects.

We sons of today, we salute you,
you son[s] of an earlier day.
We follow, close order, behind you,
where you have pointed the way!*

The first member of the family to come to El Paso was James Wiley Magoffin, grandfather of Mrs. Glasgow. He built a hacienda and trading post near what is now the corner of Magoffin Avenue and Willow Street (a plaque marks the place). The name of Magoffinsville was given to the settlement. There had been small Army garrisons in the vicinity of El Paso before that time but the post estab-

*The Corps, West Point Hymn.

lished at Magoffinsville was the first to be named Fort Bliss. There was a most friendly relationship socially between the post and the Magoffin home. It was also a center of hospitality for travelers to and from Santa Fe and California. Later the river, the Río Grande, which has a history of meandering, began to encroach on the buildings and Fort Bliss was moved to higher ground. Magoffin was an important supplier to the Confederates during the Civil War. When it was over, his property was confiscated. He died in 1868 at the age of sixty-nine at his daughter's home in San Antonio.

Joseph Magoffin, son of James Wiley Magoffin, after finishing his education in Kentucky and St. Louis, came to Magoffinsville in 1856 and remained there with his father and his family until he joined the Confederate forces in 1861. He returned to El Paso in the late sixties. He, his wife, and their small son were the only representatives of the family then in El Paso, and in true Magoffin style, he was soon one of the leading figures of the small village. He served as County Judge, served four terms as mayor, was Collector of Customs several times between 1871 and 1901 and was vice-president of the State National Bank at its beginning in 1881. As had been the tradition in the home of his father, the Magoffin home became the center of hospitality for natives, travelers and Fort Bliss officers and their families. When a group of gentlemen from St. Louis came to El Paso to arrange for the establishment of a bank, some brought their wives and daughters and these were entertained at the homestead. Among those in the group were Mr. John O'Fallon, who brought his wife, and Mr. H. L. Newman, who brought two young lady daughters and a friend. Possibly in the group were Mr. John C. Orick, Mr. Noble, Mr. A. F. Shapleigh, and Mr. Thomas Rankin. All of these gentlemen were owners of original stock in the State National Bank. Also it was Joseph Magoffin who entertained Mr. Jay Gould and his two daughters when they arrived in a special car soon after the completion of the Texas & Pacific Railroad in 1881.

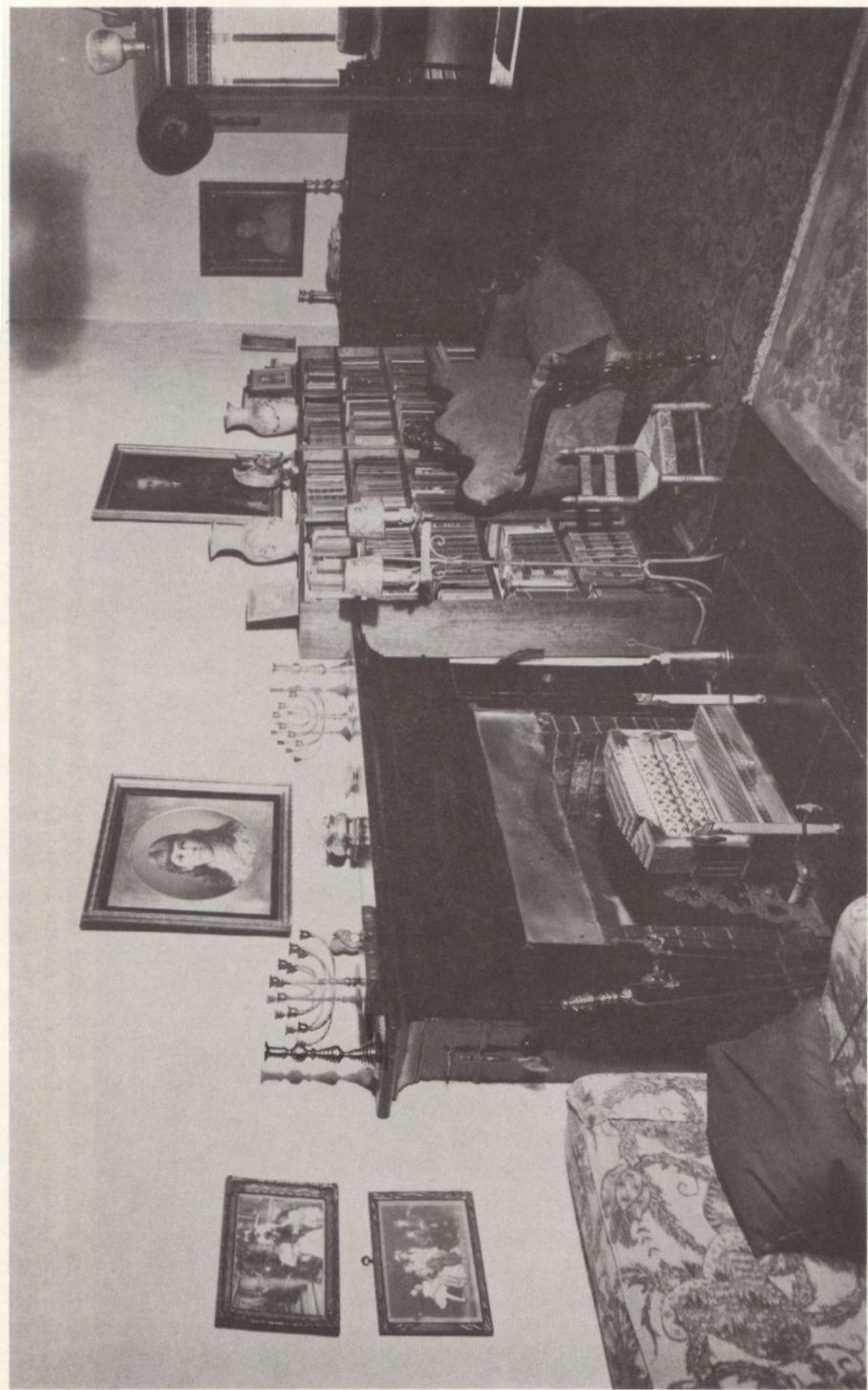
Returning to the Magoffin homestead, it should be noted that it is built of adobe (sun-dried brick). The outside walls are four feet thick while the interior partitions measure two feet. The beams, floors and woodwork are of hand-hewn wood which was brought by wagons from Mesalero, in the mountains about 100 miles north. The house is 105 feet long, and built on three sides of a square. In the main building the ceilings are fourteen feet high. The foot-thick roof is adobe, covered with waterproof material. It was necessary to have large beams every two feet to hold up this great weight. There is no



THE MACOFFIN HOMESTEAD



LIVING ROOM — Portraits, left to right: Octavia Glasgow; William Lucker, painted by his aunt, Octavia; John Bartlett; Harriet Glasgow Lucker; James Wiley Magoffin.



LIBRARY -- Pictures: two family groups, over mantel Josephine Magoffin (Glasgow) as a little girl, over bookcase Joseph M. Glasgow, painted by Octavia Glasgow, little Mexican girl painted by Octavia Glasgow.



WEDDING OF 2ND LT. WILLIAM J. GLASCOW AND JOSEPHINE R. MACOFFIN, November 29, 1896 - Left to right: James W. Magoffin II, brother of the bride, Lt. George D. Moore, Miss Annette Dwyer, Lt. Sam Reber, Miss May Cresson, Lt. J. H. C. Lazelle, Miss Katie Moore, Lt. Frank Winter, the Bride, the Groom, Charles Richardson, Mrs. Joseph Magoffin, Mrs. Annette Dwyer, Joseph Magoffin and Jim Dwyer.

basement and no furnace. In the rooms were fireplaces which formerly burned wood but now hold natural gas heaters. Because of the hot summers almost every home in El Paso now has some sort of air-conditioning, but in this old house, with its thick walls and high ceilings, it is not needed. The nights are cool and in the summer months the windows are all closed in the morning and the shutters drawn to keep out the sun. Thus the dim interior is cool from the coolness of the night before.

There is a patio where stands a guardian angel statue. In summer it is delightful to sit out there in the evenings under the stars, and in winter, on sunny days (and most days *are* sunny in El Paso) the walls protect from the wind, and one may sit out under "skies already haunted by spring," as Benét puts it.

The main living room runs the depth of the house, with squares of stained glass bordering the double front and back doors. The front door opens onto a long, tree-lined walk leading to Magoffin Avenue, the back door onto the patio. The windows are very tall, casement type, with deep window seats where people may sit, or where blooming plants are kept. Opposite the fireplace hang three portraits; in the center is one of Harriet Glasgow Lucker, deceased daughter of the Glasgows. On either side are those of James Wiley Magoffin and John Bartlett. Bartlett was the first United States Boundary Commissioner to plot the boundary between Texas and Mexico. These two portraits were painted in 1852 by Henry C. Pratt, artist of the Commission.

The furnishings date, in some cases, from the time of the original owner. Among these is a dining table which, with all its leaves, can seat twenty-six. Other furniture, including rugs, pictures, ornaments and books were gathered by the Glasgows in their travels in the Army, which included stations all over the United States, the Philippines, the Orient, and Europe. All Army homes, incidentally, contain a variety of objects from all over the world, which makes them far more interesting than homes arranged by a professional decorator.

Mrs. Glasgow still sleeps in the bed in which her son Joseph and her daughter Octavia were born. It is a huge bed of mahogany, with a wooden canopy which reaches the fourteen-foot ceiling. At various times during the General's Army career it was not feasible for his family to be with him, and at such times Mrs. Glasgow would bring the children back to the homestead to live for a while. Two of her five children were born there. The bed is part of a set, with pier-glass, rose-colored marble-topped dressers and wash stand, which was

awarded first prize in an exhibition in New Orleans many years ago. In the living room is a massive square piano, with a square stool covered in red velvet. There are many carved pieces old and new, Victorian chairs and tables, and several comfortable rockers. These blend charmingly with modern couches; Persian rugs with Chinese ones. One could wander for hours looking at all the interesting objects, and one wonders if the hundreds of books in the library have ever been catalogued.

Across the patio from the main part of the house is a building containing three or four rooms which were once used by servants. These were turned over to the grandchildren when Harriet Glasgow Lucker died and the children were brought up by their grandparents and their "Tia" Octavia. Now all grown up, the grandchildren still use these rooms when they come to visit the old homestead. The grandchildren who were reared in the house are: Josephine Lucker, who is now Sister William Joseph, of the Maryknoll Order, serving as principal of the Rosary Girl's School in Tanzania, East Africa; William Glasgow Lucker, who is studying for his Ph.D. in psychology in Nashville; and Captain Harry A. Lucker, U. S. Army. In one of these rooms is a ten-foot high pair of elephant's tusks and several fine animal heads bagged by Captain Lucker while on safari. He is a crack shot.

An *acequia* (irrigation canal) used to run back of the house, and there was a fine orchard, extending some way to the west. When the *acequia* was moved to Eighth Street the orchard was doomed and the land sold for dwellings.

Joseph Magoffin once owned extensive tracts of land which are now downtown El Paso. He sold a great deal of this land for as little as one dollar an acre "to make a town," as he put it. Joseph Magoffin, Allen Blacker and Samuel Schutz are credited as the three incorporators of the city of El Paso on June 18, 1873.

With no hotels and few dwellings, before the railroads came, the homestead was naturally a center of hospitality. The marriage of Josephine Magoffin and Second Lieutenant William J. Glasgow in 1896 cemented the friendship between the officers at Fort Bliss and the Magoffin clan. El Paso has always been known as an "Army Town." Many, many of El Paso's fairest maidens have "joined the Army" by marriage, and after their husbands retired, returned with them to El Paso to live. Officers have always been entertained in the homestead, as they had been at Magoffinsville at an earlier time. It is too bad that a guest book has not been kept, as one would see in it names such as Hugh L. Scott, Robert L. Howze, John J. Pershing,

Hamilton S. Hawkins, John Homer, and dozens, yes, scores of officers from lieutenants to generals and their families who have enjoyed the hospitality of the homestead and whose names have become household words wherever the Army is known. In addition one would see the names of judges, congressmen, diplomats and other important public servants.

As noted above, Joseph Magoffin built the homestead in 1875, and lived in it until his death in 1923. He left it to his daughter, Josephine Magoffin Glasgow, and upon the General's retirement in 1927 they came back to live in it.

The Army tradition has been continued by two Glasgow sons. Joseph Magoffin Glasgow was graduated from West Point in the class of 1918. Retired now, he lives in El Paso. His son is presently serving in the Air Force. William J. Glasgow, Jr., was graduated from West Point in the class of 1927. Unhappily, he died in 1947 while on General MacArthur's staff in Japan. Another son, Edward J. Glasgow, a civilian, lives in Nashville. He visits frequently.

General and Mrs. Glasgow and their daughter, Octavia, are steeped in the history and traditions of the old homestead and El Paso. Friends who feel privileged to call are given a warm welcome. Each time they are told or shown something of interest, and leave feeling that they have dipped into the history of old El Paso.

THE FOURTH IN EL PASO—1895

an. by EUGENE O. PORTER

[EDITOR'S NOTE: This anonymous article was taken from the July 5, 1895 issue of the *El Paso Herald*.]

The rooster crows with bustin' throat,
The coming of the morn
When Uncle Sam, to all the world,
Yelled, "Gents! you bet I'm born!"

"HURRAY for the spang dangled stanner, and long may she fumigate!" cried John Phoenix Squibob¹ in an ecstasy of patriotism; and yesterday was the day in which this sentiment was echoed and re-echoed from Puget Sound to the bay of Fundy, and from the cigar factories of Key West to Winnipeg. Yesterday was the day in which the American eagle soared and shrieked from freedom's heights, "Aint I some!" And the happy American freeman yelled back enthusiastically, "You air pumpkins!"

El Paso people thought it was decidedly pumpkins from the going down of the sun Wednesday night to long after the setting of the same last night. For thirty-six whole hours it was fizz, whizz, bang, bung, bong, boom, crack, racketty-bang crack rash, rush, roar and so forth and so forth: or words to that effect. El Paso people for the time being cast aside the pall of tough times, hardship and deprivation,² and celebrated as never before the anniversary of the day when the United States declared it's political independence of great Britain.

The city council had justly decided that if the Chinese in this country were allowed to celebrate their festival days with pyrotechnic displays, American citizens should certainly in their own land be permitted to celebrate the natal day of American independence. So everybody went at it hammer and tongs, and the racket that followed "was enough to wake the dead." And the beauty of it was that there were no fires in town in consequence of this unrestrained liberty. Business houses and private residences were attractively decorated both with the national colors and with colored lanterns, or as the latter would have been called back in colonial times, "lanthorns;" while effervescent youth in all degrees of patriotic whoop 'er up, kept the red, white and blue pot a-boiling in truly commendable style.

The setting of the sun Wednesday was fitly marked by the march-

ing of the battalion of McGinty³ artillery up from Lawrence's warehouse with the Schutz six pounder⁴ brass cannon, to McGinty headquarters. The gun was placed, and about four pounds of powder rammed home. "Better move that popgun from in front of these glass windows," suggested Charlie Bayney. The chief of artillery scratched his chin for the fraction of a second and thought it might possibly be just as well. So the gun was shifted to west of the corner, and then it was "Let her go Galligher!" well, Galligher did go, and that entire part of the city thought an earthquake had fetched loose. Crash went the large panes of glass in the Mexican school house,⁵ while two panes went by the board in the assay office,⁶ and windows in Mexican houses over the S. P. track looked as though lightning had struck them. Even down town, in the English kitchen,⁷ for instance, the dishes rattled in harmonic sympathy on the tables, and one man was so startled that he dropped a whole omlet he was eating, on the floor. There was no further cannonading in that quarter; and for the time, a calm, cool and more or less philosophical reflection over bills for damages took the place of patriotic ardor. Later, a team of large horses was sent for from the transfer stables⁸ to haul that 1,500 pound outfit to the top of McGinty hill⁹ where the gun's mouth being elevated in the air like a mortar, the shock was sent upwards towards the moon with the certain knowledge that any damage done up there would not be likely to result in any bills for repairs.

In the mean time there was a full fledged fourth of July pyrotechnic chorus going on over town, and all ideas of sleep were banished. The concert at the McGinty gardens¹⁰ was given by the band as advertised, where a large and appreciative audience listened to a good program well rendered. The band is steadily increasing in proficiency, and the character of its concert programs is being raised nearer to the standard of the noted bands that are traveling about the country.

At midnight's solemn hour when church yards yawn and graves give up their dead, "the Schutz cannon¹¹ was started into full action, other cannon and anvils about town were brought into play, and such a din started that the dead aforesaid were too scared to come up out of their graves when the latter yawned for their ghastly denizens to git a skeletonized move on 'em. At day break, the continued firing split the McGinty cannon support and the firing party took a rest. "As morn came on apace," flags were flung to the breeze and "the day was ushered in with joy," as it were, or words to that effect. The special events of the day were the parade of the fire department, the baseball match at Sportsman's park,¹² and the bicycle races in the afternoon.

The parade of the El Paso Fire Department was the event of the morning, and the rapidity with which the boys responded, justly won the encomiums of the spectators. The procession started out from the city hall about 9 o'clock in the following order: The McGinty band,¹³ James Watts drum major, W. R. Brown band master, twenty-eight musicians; eight carriages containing guests and local municipal and fire department officials, viz., President Julian, Aldermen Stewart, O'Keefe, Clifford, Kachler, Davis and Roberts; General Canedo, governor of Sinaloa, Collector Bauche, Collector Davis, Dr. Yandell; Jefe Politico Joaquin Alvarez, Consul Jose Zayas, Luis Zayas, Señores M. Y. Feria, Melchor Calderon, Espiridion Provencio, Alexandro N. Daguerre. Alderman Whitmore of El Paso was with his fire company, and Alderman Schutz was with the McGinty band.

Then came the unmounted firemen, eighty all told, in their attractive uniforms, followed by the hook and ladder truck, the hose carriage and the steamer carrying six men, the apparatus being attractively decorated with the national colors. The line of march was up El Paso street to Oregon, thence to Wyoming street to Mesa Avenue, down Mesa to San Antonio to Myrtle street, to Campbell, then on San Antonio street to the court house where the musicians pulled up under the trees and wiped away with their handkerchiefs the small cataracts of perspiration that rolled down from under their caps. The procession proper ended at this point, and the fire apparatus returned to the city hall in preparation for the contest.

All was expectancy, and the crowd looked anxiously at the clock in the county building as the hands pointed at 10:40 A.M., and the city hall bell rang out an alarm. President Julian, Chief Powers, Secretary Kiefer, and several citizens held watches while the regular committee, Sr. Bauche as referee, with Messrs. Neff and Yandell, watched carefully with the official time pieces in their hands. According to Chief Powers' watch where the *Herald* reporter stood, the steamer came around the corner first in just one minute as Mounted Officer Archer dashed ahead on his horse to clear the streets. The hose carriage followed five seconds later and the truck was five seconds behind the carriage. "To a man up a tree," it did look as though the steamer and hose companies were doing their best to shut out the truck which was getting to the front in fine shape, and the roadway was blocked where it is claimed the truck should have had one side of the roadway clear. The Steamer took up one side of the railway track and the hose carriage took the other, thus compelling the truck to fall behind.

The truck, however, had a clear swing at the division of the streets,

and the way the outfit flew up Myrtle street would have made a New York or Chicago fireman throw up his hat in approval. According to the official time the truck stopped opposite the Central school house¹⁴ and ran up the extension ladder and had a man at the top in two minutes and 30 seconds from the tap of the bell that sent the apparatus flying out of the city hall. The steamer hooked on to the plug at the corner of South Campbell and San Antonio streets, and hose company Number 2 had their line laid to the Central school house corner, and water through the nozzle ten seconds later, or two minutes and forty seconds from the tap of the bell. The steamer men claimed, and it seemed to be agreed that they had water through their engine in less than the time the Hooks made in hoisting their ladders. But then the Hose company and the steamer company were working together and the accomplishment of the two jointly was taken together in the official count. The hose immediately back of the nozzle held by the pipe men of Number 2 burst shortly after the full stream had been turned on, and a number of spectators were "wet down." The water was then turned off, and the hose reeled up.

The band after playing a selection on the court house green, marched to the city hall, where the fire department and the Mexican officials from Juárez were gathered. Speeches were in order, and Collector Bauche for the visitors thanked the El Paso fire department for the courteous way in which they had been treated, and expressed their appreciation of the rapidity with which the department had responded to the call. Señor Bauche also stated again the thanks of the officials on the other side for the kindly aid that had been extended to Juárez on the occasion of the recent fire and hoped that the bond of friendship between the two cities would become stronger as time progressed. He spoke also for general and governor Cenedo of Sinaloa, as the latter desired to express his thanks toward his entertainers, the El Paso fire department, and the pleasure he had enjoyed with the other Mexican visitors in the festivities of the day. The remarks of the collector were translated into English by Mr. Hart of the *Times*. President Julian of the department replied in a courtly vein, stating his gratification at the fact that the Mexican gentlemen had enjoyed themselves, and that the El Paso fire department would at any time be glad to respond to a call from the other side to save life or property. He was also gratified to see that the friendship between the two cities was becoming closer and stronger.

Colonel Neff announced that the victory of the day lay with the hook and ladder company, and was presented with a broom by "Dad" Spencer in token of the victory. The colonel promised to try real hard

and keep things clean with it, and then cheers were given for the victors and for the vanquished. S. H. Buchanan took occasion to say that while the hook and hose company Number 2 were being remembered, it was only fair to remember also that the other hose companies were ever on hand to aid in the preservation of property, and the other companies were remembered in the distribution of cheers. Jefe Politico Alvarez made an excellent speech of congratulation and remarked the character of the day as respected particularly by the Mexican people. Several selections were played by the band, and the gathering adjourned.

It was the intention to have the McGinty band give a concert in the evening on the plaza so the Messrs. Edgar, Shelton, and Earle worked from 11 A.M. to one P.M., to secure the requisite subscription to cover the cost to the band of turning out. But as most of the stores were closed, the solicitors came short; and then the musicians were all tired out, anyway, so the concert was postponed until Sunday. An effort was made to bring down the garrison band, but owing to the lateness of the application, the band could not be gotten together in time, and the attempt was given up.

N O T E S

1. John Phoenix Squibob was a nationally known humorist before the Civil War. He was born George Horatio Derby in Massachusetts in 1823. An honor graduate of the United States Military Academy, he distinguished himself in the Mexican War. Later he wrote humorous sketches for the *San Diego* (California) *Herald*. General W. T. Sherman brought the sketches to the attention of an eastern publisher and he printed them into a volume. Derby wrote under the names of John Phoenix and John Phoenix Squibob. He died in 1861. —See Rex W. Strickland, *Six Who Came to El Paso: Pioneers of the 1840's* (TWC Press: Southwestern Studies, Vol. I. No. 3 (Fall, 1963), 43, fn 29.
2. This is in reference to the economic depression, sometimes called the Panic of 1893, which gripped the United States from 1893 to 1896.
3. This was the famous McGinty Club which may have had its beginning in the summer of 1889. The idea for the club was advanced by a group of young musicians who used Dan Reckhart's assaying office as a sort of loafing place to smoke, drink beer, sing and gossip. Even Reckhart could not give a definite date for the club's founding. At any rate the name was taken from a popular song of the day, "Down Went McGinty." The club passed out of existence in 1900. —All material on the McGinty Club, its headquarters, etc., was taken from Nadine Hale Prestwood, *The Social Life and Customs of the People of El Paso, 1848-1910* (Master's Thesis, Texas Western College, 1949), 59-74.
4. The Schutz cannon was also known as the McGinty cannon. It was acquired when Dan Reckhart found it in a warehouse and persuaded its owners, Samuel and Joseph Schutz, to give it to the McGinty Club.

5. The 1895 census lists the "Mexican Preparatory School." It was under the principalship of W. H. T. Lopez and was located between Chihuahua and León streets.
6. The assay office (see above, fn 3), operated by Heckelmann and Reckhart, was located at 100 South Chihuahua and San Antonio Streets.
7. The English Kitchen, a Chinese restaurant, was located in 1895 at 106 East San Antonio Street where McKee's Prescription Pharmacy is now located. The proprietor was Mr. Yee Num. —Information furnished by Mr. Chris P. Fox.
8. Transfer stables were livery stables. As all transfer companies in El Paso also operated livery stables, the name transfer came into common use.
9. McGinty Hill, so-named because the Club's cannon was fired from there, was actually a sand dune in front of where the Union Depot now stands. As Sunset Heights was then a part of the surrounding desert, it was included in the "Hill."
10. McGinty gardens, also Mesa gardens, was a frame pavilion located near the top of McGinty hill in Sunset Heights, just south of the present home of Mrs. Jane Perrenon on West Yandell Street.
11. See above, footnote 4.
12. Sportsman's park was on the south side of the street across from the present KROD TV - Radio Station. —Information furnished by Dr. Rex W. Strickland.
13. The McGinty band made its first appearance on March 17, 1892. The uniforms were dark green trimmed in gold and the high hats had "McGinty" written across them.
14. Central School was located on the corner of Myrtle Avenue and Campbell Street where the Shrine Temple now stands. It was the first building in El Paso constructed as a school. In 1895 Mr. G. P. Putnam was superintendent of schools. The census for that year shows a city-wide enrollment of 1150. —Information furnished by Mr. Chris P. Fox.



A WESTERN PANORAMA 1849 - 1875

— the travels, writings and influence of J. ROSS BROWNE on the Pacific Coast, and in Texas, Nevada, Arizona and Baja California, as the first Mining Commissioner, and Minister to China.

by David Michael Goodman

(Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1966. \$11.00.)

David Michael Goodman has written a most interesting and thorough biography of J. Ross Browne's career as a public servant. But this volume is actually much more than the usual plodding, scholarly endeavor to catalogue the activities of a man who exercised some degree of influence on the history of the West. It is instead a well-written study of J. Ross Browne the writer and lecturer, the pioneer traveler and adventurer, the federal commissioner, and the artist.

A *Western Panorama* has a unique appeal to varied types of readers. For the serious student of the Far West Mr. Goodman has included heavy documentation and an impressive bibliography. Yet for the reader whose interest is avocational, Mr. Goodman incorporates a delightful narrative style. The only prerequisite for the enjoyment of this work is an appreciation of good writing.

The author introduces his study with the details of Browne's preparation for his career up to the time of his appointment as a lieutenant in the United States Revenue Marine. Then he traces Browne's career from his first assignment on the West coast through his job as official reporter for the California Constitutional Convention of 1849 up to the publication of his final report in 1868. Browne's service as Minister to China is described only as it applies to this partial biography. Browne's range of travel during his twenty years of Federal service is much too wide to be systematically listed here.

However, such extensive travels are but a small part of Browne's career. And to fail to mention Browne's other activities is to neglect an essential part of this interesting story. Besides being a loyal Federal employee Browne was a talented writer and artist. Mr. Goodman proves conclusively that Browne's recognition as a writer came immediately after his first publication and continued throughout his career. Both professionally and privately Browne commented meaningfully on his times and his surroundings. In his official reports, his magazine articles and his private correspondence Browne always displayed a thorough understanding of the events and problems occurring around him. Furthermore, his proposed

solutions for those problems were often in advance of current thought. Also included in the book are maps, sketches made by Browne during his travels, and an illustration of a report by Browne on revenue matters.

Mr. Goodman has proved beyond doubt John Ross Browne's impact on the western frontier and has provided interesting reading in the process. Throughout, Browne is portrayed as a courageous, honest public servant who constantly placed duty above all else. Such a work is an important accomplishment for a serious writer at any time and this is no exception. *A Western Panorama* should be read by professional and lay historians alike for it can serve each of them with equal utility.

El Paso, Texas

— KENNETH A. GOLDBLATT

THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT

by *W. Eugene Hollon*

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1966. \$6.00.)

A brave man is needed to label some 30% of conterminous United States as desert. Professor Hollon is such a brave man, but he also is a competent historian and hence makes exceptions and modifications. He recognizes that some parts of the seventeen states which he treats are not desert by any definition, and that varying rainfall moves some other areas in and out of the desert classification.

A history of a region of deficient rainfall is a new project in American history and hence presents hitherto unsolved problems of presentation. Approximately half the book is devoted to quite well known developments such as exploration, fur trading, missionary work, the cattle business, and mining. Most of this presentation gives relatively little attention to the influence of climate. The other half of the book centers on the importance of the lack of water to the whites who occupied the dry country. The main contribution of the book is its account of the efforts to obtain, divide, and utilize water after about 1890; included is an analysis of recent political attitudes within the area.

Hollon is much impressed by the tendency toward political conservatism, with frequently expressed hatred of regimentation by the federal government, while at the same time westerners realize that they are particularly dependent upon federal spending, and work frantically to obtain further appropriations. What he does not say, but undoubtedly knows, is that this type of logical inconsistency is by no means limited to the West and Westerners.

As to the future of the area, Hollon is certain that it will never have the

concentration of population and industry of some other parts of the nation. The possibilities of irrigation and of power production are limited. Prosperity will depend heavily on federal spending, partly for installations such as army bases, air bases, and missile sites, and partly for national forests, parks, and other recreation areas. In fact much of the country can and should be preserved as recreation areas for people from more thickly settled regions. While Hollon gives no historical account of the growth of the tourist business he is clear as to its importance both at present and in the future.

The whole appearance of the book is attractive. Oxford University Press has done a good job, including the pictures. The writing is clear and interesting, so that the 253 pages of text read rapidly and pleasantly.

Texas Western College

— ROBERT E. RIEGEL

EAGLE PASS OR LIFE ON THE BORDER

by Mrs. William L. Cazneau (*Cora Montgomery*), edited, with an Introduction by Robert Crawford Cotner

(Austin, Texas: The Pemberton Press, 1966. \$7.50.)

Nine years ago our Society had the pleasure of hearing a talk by Society member Edward S. Wallace on his recently published book, *Destiny and Glory*. (The book was reviewed by Dr. John P. Bloom, then of the History Department of Texas Western College, in *PASSWORD*, Vol. II, No. 2 [November, 1957], 129-30.) Mr. Wallace spent much of the evening discussing his first chapter which was a diverting pursuit of Jane Maria McManus Storms Cazneau (Mrs. William L. Cazneau) who as an author used the pen name Cora Montgomery. This reviewer mentions this instance only because Mrs. Cazneau or Miss Montgomery, if you wish, is the author of the book herein reviewed.

This woman of many names and interests was one of the most unusual and interesting female characters of her pre-Civil War generation. Aaron Burr, in a letter to a friend, called her "A Lady" with "courage, stability and perseverance," a young woman with "an established character for integrity," and Burr pledged himself "for her good faith and her candor." An ex-president of Texas, Mirabeau B. Lamar, dedicated his *Verse Memorials* to her, "the wife of my best and long-cherished friend, General Cazneau."

But enough of the author. As for her book, this has become a minor classic. It is more than a description of Eagle Pass, as its title implies. It is a personal memoir and historical essay on life in South and Southwest

Texas before the Civil War. There are chapters on Indianola, San Antonio and other towns, on family life, Indian warfare, Lynch Law, the False Wife and the True Southern System. As would be expected, the author's personality predominates throughout the book. Always it is Mrs. Cazneau who is speaking.

The book was first published in 1852 and has been out of print for more than a century. It now commands a high price on the rare book market. This new edition is edited with an excellent historical introduction by Dr. Robert Crawford Cotner of The University of Texas. Both the editor and the publisher have performed an outstanding service to book lovers, and their joint effort is deserving of a wide circulation.

Texas Western College

— EUGENE O. PORTER

SOUTHWESTERN ART, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring, 1966)

(Austin, Texas: The Pemberton Press. \$6.00 annually.)

This is the first time that a magazine has been reviewed in *PASSWORD* but then this is the first time that a magazine of this nature, scope and merit has come to our attention. Described as "A Journal Devoted to Recognition of the Arts in the West and Southwest," this 92-page, profusely illustrated quarterly is edited and published by John H. Jenkins. He is ably assisted by Associate Editor Mallory B. Randle and Contributing Editors Peter Hurd, Dewey Bradford, D. L. Weismann, and John L. McCarty. The attractive cover features in color Melvin C. Warren's oil painting entitled "Heading for Higher Ground" which is currently on exhibit in the Country Store Gallery in Austin.

Perhaps a listing of the articles along with the names of their authors will give one a better appreciation of *Southwestern Art*. These include: "The Beginning of Southwestern Painting" by Dr. Terence Grieder; "Frederic Remington's Studio" by Dr. Harold McCracken; "The College as Model" by Dr. Donald L. Weismann; "Charles M. Russell's Early Days" by Finck David; "Countdown at Canaveral" by Peter Hurd; "Melvin Warren's Old West" by John H. Jenkins; and "Texas Muralists of the PWAP" by Mallory B. Randle. Dr. Grieder's article, incidentally, describes and interprets the estimated 8,000-year-old paintings found along the Río Grande and its tributaries the Devil's and the Pecos, in Val Verde County in Western Texas, West of Del Rio.

Two worthwhile features of the quarterly are the book reviews and notices and the Museum and Gallery Calendar. Among the forty-two books reviewed or mentioned are: *American Indian Arts: A Way of Life*;

Audubon and the West; Navaho Weaving: Its Technic and its History; and Religious Architecture of New Mexico in the Colonial Period and Since the American Occupation. The Calendar lists the museums and galleries in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

Those interested not only in the art of the Southwest but also in the history will find *Southwestern Art* indispensable.

Texas Western College

— EUGENE O. PORTER



A VISIT TO CHIHUAHUA

Our President, Col. H. Crampton Jones, accompanied by Mrs. Jones, attended the installation of officers and the celebration of the twenty-eighth anniversary of the founding of the Sociedad Chihuahuense de Estudios Históricos this past February in Chihuahua City. The meeting was held in the Hotel Palacio Hilton. Honored guests in addition to Col. and Mrs. Jones included General Práxedes Giner Duran, Governor of the State of Chihuahua; Señor Ramiro Valles Ortega, Mayor of the City of Chihuahua; General Tiburcio Garza Zamora, Commandant of the 5th Military Zone; and Lt. Governor Vicente Grajeda Pedrueza.

Before leaving El Paso Col. and Mrs. Jones were appointed the "official representatives of the Municipal Government of the City of El Paso" by Mayor Judson F. Williams, and in the name of the Mayor presented Señor Mayor Ramiro Valles with a key symbolizing the hospitality of the City of El Paso.

During the course of the installation banquet Col. Jones was called upon for a few remarks. According to the Chihuahua City *Norte* of February 17, 1966 (as translated by Mary Ellen B. Porter), "Col. Jones gave an eloquent address, speaking in excellent Spanish, during which he gave out some very witty appraisals of the outstanding qualities which he admired in the Mexican as compared to the Anglo American. Col. Jones said that he appreciated the friendly, kindly expression of the Mexican, his zest for life, his innate hospitality and his knack for gentlemanliness which is manifested in all his actions; that his [Col. Jones] greatest desire would be that the Anglo American might attain these Mexican characteristics by means of closer, cordial relations between the two cities; that he will consider the El Paso County Historical Society a friendly link of cultural union between the cities since both groups pursue the same goals. He pled for a wholesome understanding and offered to act as intermediary to bring about these noble principles."

VISIT RETURNED

A delegation from the Chihuahua Society visited the spring meeting of the El Paso Historical Society. The group included the following: Señor Antonio Flores Diego, the newly installed president of the Chihuahua Society, and his daughter Señorita Irma Graciela Flores Diego; Professor Felix Allard; Señor and Señora Juan Holguin and their daughter Susi; Señor Daniel Cueto, Señor Carlos Herrera and Señora Dolores Orrantia

de Herrera, all from Chihuahua City, and Señor Fernando Borreguera of Juárez.

Col. and Mrs. Jones entertained the visitors along with the officers of the El Paso Historical Society at a reception in the Jones home preceeding the Society's meeting. Mayor and Mrs. Judson F. Williams were honored guests at the reception where the mayor presented Señor Flores Diego with a certificate of honorary citizenship of El Paso.

Señor Flores, incidentally, is the author of an interesting article, "Locomotora Número 625," published in *Boletín* (Tomo II, No. 7, January-June, 1965), the official publication of the Chihuahua Society. Engine No. 625 is similar to El Paso's "old Number 1." Señor Flores has kindly consented to our translating the article and publishing it in a future issue of *PASSWORD*.

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Juan Holguin Lujan, Secretary of the Chihuahua Historical Society, wrote a letter of appreciation in the name of Señor Antonio Flores Diego, the society's president, to the El Paso Society for the kindness shown at the April meeting. The letter read in part:

We have the honor of informing you that during our meeting on the 18th of this month (April) we gave a detailed account of the visit which our delegation had the pleasure of making to your El Paso County Historical Society on April 7th. Our members were much impressed by the manner in which you carried on your work of historical research, with the quality of the work presented and with the valuable human relations and enthusiasm displayed at your meeting.

We informed them especially of the fine attention which made our stay most agreeable and pleasant, and of the fine reception by which we were honored in the home of Colonel Jones, at which we were served a buffet luncheon and during which we had the opportunity of meeting members of the Board of Directors, the mayor of the City of El Paso and other distinguished persons. We consider that these contacts are of inestimable benefit to our two societies since in our historical research we ought to have access to documents, archives, and the experience of our common past, and we are obligated to pass on our knowledge with strict attention to the true facts. In behalf of our membership we desire to express our very sincere gratitude for your many attentions and we desire also to reiterate our cordial invitation for you to honor us with a visit, and we remind you that our meetings are on the third Monday of each month. Please kindly give us notice of your anticipated kind visit.

El Paso is to be honored on October 13-15, when the WESTERN HISTORY ASSOCIATION holds its sixth annual conference at the Hotel Cortez. The purpose of the Association as stated in its constitution is "to promote the study of the American West in all its varied aspects."

The membership chairman of the Association, Dr. Richard A. Bartlett, well expresses this purpose in a circular letter which we reproduce in part:

Dear Friend of History:

Now the West is different!

Where once two tracks in the sage marked the passage of prairie schooners and Concord coaches, today four-lane highways provide traction for GMC's and Fords. Up on the knolls where eagles perched in search of prey, TV transmission towers now stand in incongruous arrogance. The wide land is broken by pipelines, endless barbed-wire fences, dams and irrigation ditches, high voltage wires, and sprawling suburbia. Even the crystal-clear air is tarnished by noxious fumes from cars and factories.

What frightens us is how rapidly this change has taken place. Less than a generation ago man could obtain a bleached bison skull, buy an old Colt .45 for a song, and perhaps find a Concord coach or a covered wagon off in a corner of a rancher's barn. He could see Indians in real tipis. An 'art' connoisseur could still contemplate the purchase of a barroom nude — until his wife intervened.

Today all of these are collector's items. We pause and take more pictures of them than we should, for tomorrow they may be gone.

And with the change has come sadness — a piquant sadness. For the OLD WEST, in its simplicity, its virile, tough, funny, crude, human and solid American style, is the best and most warmly remembered part of our nation's childhood. True, the real OLD WEST is no more, but as a warm memory it will remain, and its contribution to the nation's character cannot be overestimated.

It was this cherished memory that drew a group of dedicated people to Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 1961. They wanted to discuss the OLD WEST, how its true history could be preserved. From this meeting emerged the Western History Association. In rapid progression a quarterly magazine, *The American West*, was founded, annual conferences were held, and now the *WHA Newsletter* is getting under way. The members' interests run the spectrum of Western history, culture, and society. From striking farmers of the 1930's to Spanish conquistadors, from Mark Twain's short stories to Remington's paintings, the *WHA* expresses interest.

Very sincerely yours,

(signed) RICHARD A. BARTLETT

Membership in the Association is \$7.50 per calendar year; Sustaining membership, \$15; Patron, \$100 or more a year; Life, \$150; and student membership if endorsed by a faculty member is \$4 annually.

Anyone interested in a membership should write to Dr. Bartlett at Florida State University, Tallahassee, 32303; or to

DR. JOHN PORTER BLOOM, *Secretary--Treasurer*
Western History Association
3401 Slade Court
Falls Church, Virginia 22042 or

contact your editor, Dr. Eugene O. Porter, who is the local member of the Membership Committee.

Incidentally, the Association's quarterly, *The American West*, is among the best of all historical journals. It might also be interesting to note that it is exchanged with *PASSWORD*.



HARRIOT HOWZE JONES is an Army daughter from three generations. Her great-grandfather, Hamilton Smith Hawkins, was an Army surgeon from 1824 to 1847; her grandfather, Hamilton Smith Hawkins, Jr., commanded old Fort Bliss at Hart's Mill, 1884-85. It was he who later led the charge up San Juan Hill. "Teddy" Roosevelt led his Rough Riders up Kettle Hill, but a reporter made the error in names. Her father, Robert Lee Howze, commanded Fort Bliss, 1919-1925, and her uncle, Hamilton Smith Hawkins III, commanded Fort Bliss, 1936-37. She met her husband, Colonel H.

Crampton Jones, at Fort Bliss and they were married in 1920. After many years of travel in the Army they returned, on Colonel Jones' retirement in 1954, to live in El Paso.

The friendship between the Magoffin-Glasgow and Hawkins-Howze-Jones families goes far back. Anne Hawkins (Howze) and Josie Magoffin (Glasgow) used to play together as children in El Paso. General Glasgow was a cadet at West Point when General Hawkins was Commandant of Cadets. General Glasgow told Mrs. Jones: "I used to dance with your pretty mother at Cadet Hops."

Mrs. Jones is a painter. Several of her paintings have been reproduced on greeting cards, among them a scene of the Cadet Chapel at West Point and four El Paso scenes. She is the editor of *The Record*, the magazine of the National Society of Arts and Letters and is the Regional Vice-President elect of N.S.A.L. Her biography appears in the third edition of *Who's Who of American Women*.

DR. ROBERT E. RIEGEL is H. Y. Benedict Professor of History at Texas Western College. His Ph.D. is from the University of Wisconsin, and he came to T.W.C. in 1964 after retiring from Dartmouth College. He has also taught at the Universities of Wisconsin, California (Berkeley), and Missouri, and at Columbia University. His main specialties are American social history and the American West. His publications in western history include a standard text (*America Moves West*, now in its fourth edition), a history of western railroads, and numerous articles.

KENNETH A. GOLDBLATT is a graduate student in history at Texas Western.

