

# PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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# PASSWORD

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# THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by FRED J. MORTON

OUR ORGANIZATION has been blessed in the past with fine leaders and workers. The task of the present officers and directors is to continue their good works, preserve the status quo where desirable and add to the means of obtaining our purposes wherever possible.

Our most important project of the coming year will be to conclude successfully the Engine No. 1 drive sparked by our society and supported by many. Under the able leadership of our immediate past president, Colonel H. Crampton Jones and with the energetic and ingenious work of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, the fund has recently reached \$16,000.00 in cash or pledges out of a total goal of \$25,000.00. We must succeed in housing this great relic of our history ("The Engine that settled the West") or lose it to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D. C. With substantial funds already raised, we really have no alternative but to finish the job. With your help we can do so.

Another situation of immediate need for attention is our own financial status. Although the society is not by any means unable to meet its current obligations, we will have to change the trend of the last few years to avoid facing such a problem. Very simply stated, our set (or growing) expenses have exceeded our income from membership dues for some time. One of the biggest villains in this losing battle with inflation is our great source of pride—THE PASSWORD. Although our dues have never been more than \$5.00 since our founding over a dozen years ago, costs have gone up in every respect—paper, printing, photographs, and even postage. I feel a slight raise in dues will be welcomed by the membership rather than face any drastic reduction in THE PASSWORD. No one regrets bringing this unpleasant news to the membership more than I, but it has to be faced. I am sure that most of the members have shared my feeling in the past that receipt of the PASSWORD for only \$5.00 was too good to be true. Unfortunately, the figures now show that feeling to have been well founded in reality.

Although I would like to see us really commence an organized project for a permanent location of our own, we have enough to do in the way

of fund raising for the coming year without attempting that. We will nevertheless maintain the hope for such a facility and the prayers for an "angel" or two to locate and pay for one.

We will continue the activities of the past which have brought us satisfaction and fulfillment of our purposes, such as the Hall of Honor, quarterly meetings, taping of interviews of history-makers, etc.

My only suggestion as an activity of the society which needs more emphasis would be to sponsor additional means of recording significant events of the present-history as it is being made now. These events may seem unimportant to us while we live them or witness them, but our successors would appreciate our making an accurate record of certain things that are going on around us now. Although we need to be selective in so doing, I feel we could well include in the *PASSWORD* an annual article on an event deemed by a knowledgeable committee as the most significant of the past year.

My hope is to further the good deeds of the past and hopefully progress toward new successes in fulfillment of our ever present purposes. Our Society, with the largest membership in Texas and such fields to work in, can accomplish much.

# PERSHING'S AIR ARM IN MEXICO

by HALDEEN BRADY

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Brady, in his recently published book, *Pershing's Mission in Mexico* (reviewed in the Winter, 1966 issue of *PASSWORD*), noted that the Pershing expedition "marked the beginning of the Air Arm" of the United States Army. Your editor, thinking that a story of the first air arm would be of topical interest to the members of the Society, asked Dr. Brady to prepare such a paper. He kindly agreed to do so provided your editor would write a short introduction. Dr. Brady obtained his material for the article from the *Pershing Papers* in the Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress.]

## INTRODUCTION

AMERICA'S LARGE AND POWERFUL Air Force of today had its beginning on August 1, 1907 when the Aeronautical Division was organized within the Signal Corps of the United States Army. The Division consisted of one officer and two enlisted men. A year later the first plane was purchased from the Wright Brothers for \$25,000. (Incidentally, this first plane achieved an average speed of forty-two and one-half miles an hour.) Then, in 1911, Congress appropriated \$125,000 for the purchase of aeronautical equipment for use in training and reconnaissance. Also in 1911 the Aeronautical Division sponsored an aviation school at College Park, Maryland, where experiments in flight photography and machine-gun firing were conducted. In February, 1913, however, the personnel of the school were moved to Texas City, Texas. Also, similar schools were established about the same time in the Philippine Islands, in Hawaii and at North Island, near San Diego, California. The Aeronautical Division continued to grow. As of August 14, 1913, the number of personnel had increased to sixteen pilots and eight student pilots and the number of planes to seventeen.

Meanwhile, on May 5, 1913, the 1st Aero Squadron, the first tactical air unit in United States History, was organized at Texas City. It was this squadron that was assigned to General Pershing's Punitive Expedition. The orders, dated March 12, 1916, provided that the squadron should proceed immediately to Columbus, New Mexico.

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The 1st Aero Squadron, commanded by Captain B. D. Foulois, arrived at Columbus on March 15. The eight planes did not have the complement of men necessary for best efficiency nor was the equipment in proper condition to begin a task never tried before. They were rickety, nearly at the end of their service, inadequately powered for work at the altitudes

in Chihuahua, and did not have sufficient carrying capacity. In addition, they lacked half of their authorized truck transport. Tools and repair parts for proper maintenance were not complete and had to be cannibalized from other planes when they became disabled. With this dubious posture, United States military aviation made its combat debut. On March 16, 1916, the first reconnaissance flight was made into Mexico by Captains T. F. Dodd (pilot) and B. D. Foulois (observer) in Aeroplane Number 44.

Three days later the Squadron proceeded to Casas Grandes, Chihuahua. General Pershing, now located at Nueva Casas Grandes, desired to place it in immediate service. But the planes, which left Columbus at 5:15 p.m., had tough luck. While in flight, one aeroplane developed motor trouble and returned to Columbus. Of the other seven, four landed at Ascención, because of darkness; and of the remaining three, one landed at Ojo Caliente and incurred slight damage, another at Janos, and the last at Pearson, where it was wrecked in landing.

The next day, March 20th, the four pilots who managed to remain together flew to Casas Grandes. Then the pilot who first returned to Columbus and the one who landed at Janos also arrived. The pilot forced down at Ojo Caliente spent several days repairing his machine but eventually reached headquarters. The pilot who wrecked his ship at Pearson reached Casas Grandes on foot.

Later, on March 20, Captains Foulois and Dodd endeavored to locate troops moving south, in the vicinity of Cumbre Pass and toward Lake Babicora. The mission entailed a penetration to the heart of the Sierra Madre mountains. Upon flying only twenty-five miles south, the officers met violent air currents. The underpowered airship (No. 44) could not overcome the obstacle of the 10,000 foot mountains. The mission failed. Plane No. 43, piloted by Lt. T. S. Bowen, struck a whirlwind while landing that completely wrecked the machine. Lt. Bowen received a broken nose and minor injuries. At day's end, only six of the original eight aeroplanes remained operational.

The assignment for March 21 was to determine the geographical position of Colonel Irwin's command. Again Captains Foulois and Dodd (in No. 44) undertook the mission. Locating the unit at Galeana, they landed there and sought out the regimental commander, Colonel James B. Irwin. Enroute to home base, the two airmen also performed another function, the delivery of a message to Colonel Irwin's outpost command located near Colonel George A. Dodd's regiment. On their return to headquarters afterwards, Captains Foulois and T. F. Dodd sent Colonel Irwin six trucks of needed supplies.

The first of two missions assigned on March 22nd involved an ob-

server-pilot team, Lieutenants I. A. Rader and W. G. Kilner, in Number 42, and Lt. J. E. Carberry piloting Number 45. The objective was to contact Colonel Dodd in the Galeana valley. The aviators located this command, landed, and reported to Colonel Dodd. The successful airmen then flew to Colonia Dublán with reports for General Pershing.

The second mission, which failed sought to contact American troops traveling south on the Mexican Northwestern Railroad. Pilots Capt. Dodd in Number 44 and Lt. C. G. Chapman in Number 53 again attempted to penetrate the Sierra Madre mountains. Lt. A. R. Christy assisted Capt. Dodd as an observer. As before, the machines encountered winds of unusual intensity, so constantly veering in direction that the planes unintentionally pushed deep into the mountains, at times being buffeted to within twenty feet of the tree-tops. Only with great skill and courage did the aviators regain altitude enough to save themselves and their machines and to return to Dublán. Afterwards, the Squadron Commander recommended to General Pershing that new and more powerful equipment be purchased to satisfy the military requirements. Incidentally, in an attempt to salvage parts from Number 41 on this same date a detachment attracted gunfire from Mexicans near Pearson.

On March 23rd, the Squadron received orders to communicate again with Colonel Dodd's unit. Pilots Christy, Carberry, and Chapman (in Numbers 44, 45, 53) flew to the Galeana valley, landed near El Valle, and reported to Colonel Dodd. Due to severe weather (high winds, dust, and snow) they were temporarily unable to fly back, as planned, to Dublán.

In an attempt to improve air operations, Captain Foulois, the Squadron Commander, submitted four plans to Pershing on March 30th:

*Plan I:* Use all squadron facilities for maintaining aerial communications between Columbus, Casas Grandes, El Valle, and Namiquipa; communicate between other points by other means.

*Plan II:* Maintain aerial communications between Casas Grandes, El Valle, Namiquipa, and points south, only.

*Plan III:* 1. When uninterrupted radio contact between Namiquipa and Casas Grandes becomes effective, discontinue aeroplane service between these two points except in emergencies. 2. Use aeroplanes between Namiquipa and El Valle only if other means of communication fail. 3. Concentrate Squadron efforts for daily communication between Namiquipa and advance troops south of Namiquipa.

*Plan IV:* When the enemy is contacted, send every available aeroplane to the front for observation and reconnaissance of the enemy.

General Pershing approved Plan III on April 1st and put it into immediate action.

During the period from March 24th to April 4th, the Squadron flew 79 sorties, mostly carrying mail dispatches. On March 28th, Lt. Chapman flew Number 53 southeast from El Valle to a distance of 110 miles.

The Squadron moved its headquarters to San Geronimo on April 5th. In addition to seven flights for mail and dispatches, the aviators set out to find Colonel William C. Brown's unit, somewhere near San Antonio. Capt. Foulois, who took off in Number 43 with Lt. H. A. Dargue at the controls, located the troops and obtained Colonel Brown's report for the Division Commander.

On April 6th, during routine operations, Number 44 suffered much damage as it landed at San Geronimo. Salvaging what little they could, Squadron personnel destroyed the rest of the inoperative machine.

A major incident occurred on the 7th of April when two planes left San Geronimo with identical dispatches for Mr. Marvin H. Letcher, American Consul at the capital, Chihuahua City. Both flights arrived at the destination simultaneously, exciting the Mexican populace. Number 43 (Lt. Dargue, pilot, and Capt. Foulois, observer) landed south of the capital city; Number 45 (Lt. Carberry, pilot, and Capt. Dodd, observer) north of it.

Later, as he took off to join Lt. Carberry, Lt. Dargue drew fire from four mounted *rurales*. When Capt. Foulois intervened in order to stop the firing, a Mexican officer from Chihuahua City promptly arrested him. As soon as he could, the arrested captain sent word to the American Consul about the plight of his men and aeroplanes.

Somewhat later, the prisoner Foulois established communication with Colonel Miranda, Chief of Staff to General Gutierrez, Military Governor of Chihuahua, who freed him.

After his release, Capt. Foulois asked for and received the assistance of a Mexican guard on the two planes. Going to the field where the planes were, Foulois found Lt. Dargue but not Capt. Dodd. Lt. Dargue said that after he landed near Dodd's Number 45, he was told that the Captain had gone into Chihuahua City to deliver his set of the identical American dispatches to Consul Letcher. He also said that a large, hostile crowd of Mexican natives had collected around his machine to handle its stick and pry about its mechanisms. Captain Foulois, fearing that the Mexican mob might disconnect the motor or wreck the equipment completely, ordered the two pilots to fly their planes about six miles to the American Smelter and Refining Company. Lt. Carberry in Number 45 made it safely; but Lt. Dargue, who escaped in a shower of mob-thrown stones, flew only a short space before his slipstream tore loose the top section of the fuselage and damaged the stabilizer. He then made an

immediate landing and alone held off the angry rabble of Chihuahuenses until arrival of the Mexican guard secured by Foulois.

The Squadron spent the period from April 8th to 14th in routine operations. On a reconnaissance flight to Chihuahua City, the motor failed in Number 43 (pilot Lt. Dargue; observer Capt. R. E. Willis). The plane shattered on landing. Lt. Dargue had no injury, but Capt. Willis found himself pinned under the plane. He sustained a severe scalp wound and bruised legs and ankles. Both officers underwent a physical ordeal in walking sixty-five miles to the nearest Chihuahuan base at San Antonio. The blistering trek, made without food or water, required two full days.

Finally, on April 20th, commanders of the only two remaining craft of the original eight drew orders to return to Columbus for new equipment. For the ensuing ten months, indeed until the end of the Expedition in February, 1917, Squadron leaders tested various types of newly-arriving aeroplanes, whenever possible, in vigorous tactical operations. They met and solved constant problems with defective propellers, motor parts, and airframe construction. The propellers cracked and split in the high, arid climate; but the aviators soon solved this by using wood seasoned in the vicinity. In addition to testing planes both north and south of the international boundary, the Squadron performed extensive experiments with automatic cameras that later proved to be of tremendous value in aero reconnaissance.

The combat debut of 1916 was unpretentious, but in the immensity of a desert and mountain laboratory the air arm gained necessary experience. General Pershing, who sincerely appreciated the hardships of these pioneer operations, acclaimed the fliers. He cited in particular the mortal risks they took while flying through mountains, into deep canyons, and over rugged pinnacles.

## SAN ELIZARIO—BOWER OF EDEN

by EUGENE O. PORTER

TWENTY-ODD MILES down the Río Grande from El Paso lies the picturesque and historic village of San Elizario,<sup>1</sup> Texas. It was first introduced to the Anglo-American community of the eastern seaboard in 1810 by Zebulon Pike. It was not a fancy or elaborate introduction. Rather it was like the introduction by a pompous relative of a country cousin twice removed. Nevertheless the reading public of the seventeen states which then composed the federal union was made acquainted with a small presidial village on the romantic Río Grande<sup>2</sup> in far-off New Spain.

Zebulon Montgomery Pike, a lieutenant of the 6th United States Infantry, was a seasoned explorer when he visited the Southwest. He had spent the years 1805-1806 searching for the source of the Mississippi River. Upon his return to civilization he and twenty-two enlisted men were ordered to explore the country of the Red and Arkansas rivers and to establish friendly relations with the Indians in that area. The promoter of this western expedition was not President Jefferson, as in the case of Lewis and Clark, but General James Wilkinson, commander of the United States Army, a "tarnished warrior" whose public career has been described as "without parallel in American annals."<sup>3</sup>

General Wilkinson is supposed to have advised Pike to be very cautious as he approached the Spanish border. But Pike's idea of the Spanish border seems to have been a little peculiar. He built a fort not on the eastern or American side of the Red River but five miles up a western branch. There he raised the Stars and Stripes.<sup>4</sup> Later he claimed that he was lost but the facts scream out that he was a spy, as the Spaniards claimed him to be. And as a spy he was one of the most successful in the annals of the spying profession. He and his party were soon discovered, as he had planned, and given a guided tour through the northern provinces of New Spain, the very area he was under orders to "spy out." He was taken first to Santa Fe in the province of New Mexico. From there he was led by military escort down the Río Grande to Paso del Norte,<sup>5</sup> to San Elizario and thence to the city of Chihuahua. There he was released. He crossed northern Mexico and traveled through Texas to Louisiana. From there he hurried to Philadelphia where, in 1810, he published a narrative of his explorations.<sup>6</sup>

In his comments about San Elizario, Pike noted that he was accompanied from Paso del Norte to San Elizario by the Lieutenant-Governor of New Mexico, by a brother of the Governor and by a vicar.<sup>7</sup> At the time the captain of the presidio was in Chihuahua but "his lady and sis-

ter," Pike stated, "entertained us in a very elegant and hospitable manner." In his journal under "*Mar. 26th*" [1807] Pike wrote: "Divine service was performed in the morning, in the garrison, at which all the troops attended under arms. At one part of the mass, they present arms; at another, sink to one knee and rest the muzzle of the gun on the ground, in signification of their submission to their divine master."<sup>8</sup>

Pike's narrative proved to be a landmark of outstanding importance in the history of the Southwest. It aroused at once in those who read his book a desire for profit and a yearning for romantic adventure — two strands which are interwoven throughout the whole history of this region. As Robert Duffus pointed out: "Pike described no land of dreams. He gave statistics. He mentioned the fact that high grade imported cloth sold in Santa Fe for between \$20 and \$35 a yard, linen for \$4 a yard and other dry goods in proportion. Traders who had access to New England textiles watered at the mouth at such prices."<sup>9</sup> And thus from Pike's statistics was born eventually the Santa Fe trail.

Long before the Santa Fe trail was opened, however, extensive trade had developed between New Mexico and Chihuahua, Sonora and Sinaloa. For greater safety the merchants grouped themselves into caravans. These traveled down the river from Santa Fe through Paso del Norte and later, after the founding of San Elizario, through that village where they left the river and struck out across the desert for Chihuahua City. A caravan generally consisted of an "immense wagon train" manned by three hundred men, with an escort of from fifty to a hundred dragoons. Oftimes herds of cattle and sheep running into the thousands accompanied the wagons. According to Pike the goods carried included dressed deer skins, some furs, buffalo robes, salt, wrought copper vessels and tobacco. Incidentally, New Mexico of all the provinces of New Spain had the exclusive right to cultivate tobacco. In return for the good sent south New Mexico received dry-goods, arms, steel, ammunition and other commodities.<sup>10</sup>

As the years passed other Americans found their way into the Río Grande valley. Anglo-American occupation came, however, as a direct result of three movements which touched the area because it occupied a position at the intersection of two important natural lines of communication. The first of these movements was the development of trade between the United States and the interior of Mexico by way of Santa Fe and Chihuahua, the route mentioned above; the second was the war with Mexico; and the third was the discovery of gold in California.<sup>11</sup> Of course, many of the men brought to this region by these movements were birds of passage and contributed nothing to the valley's growth. But some remained while others left accounts of their experiences and observations

which continue to delight historians as well as laymen with the verbal pictures of a past that no longer exists.

One of the birds of passage was George Ruxton, an Englishman, who visited this area in the early autumn of 1846. He had traveled from south to north, "through the whole of the Republic of Mexico, a distance of nearly two thousand miles, and," according to him, had been "thrown among the people of every rank, class, and station."<sup>12</sup> In his book which was published in New York in 1850 he described the Río Grande valley immediately south of Paso del Norte as follows: "The present settlement is scattered for about fifteen miles along the right bank [of the river] and contains five or six thousand inhabitants. The village . . . of [Paso del Norte] is situated at the head of the valley and at the other extremity is the presidio of San Elizario. Between the two is a continued line of adobe houses, with their plots of garden and vineyard. The farms seldom contain more than twenty acres."<sup>13</sup>

After crossing the sands of the Chihuahua desert the Río Grande valley must have seemed like a mirage or an oasis to Ruxton for he twice mentioned the trees. He spoke of the "well-timbered bottom" and again: "The river bottom is timbered with cotton-woods, which extend a few hundred yards on each side [of] the banks." He also mentioned the "wine of excellent flavor." And "the women of the country," he wrote, "for kindness of heart and many sterling qualities, are an ornament to their sex, and to any nation."<sup>14</sup>

Ruxton had not yet completed his tour of Mexico when President Polk got his long-wished-for war. Almost immediately American troops began pouring into the Southwest. Santa Fe and northern New Mexico were quickly occupied without bloodshed. In December, 1846, Colonel Alexander Doniphan with a regiment of less than two companies of Missouri artillery and two of infantry began the southward march in three columns by way of the *Jornada del Muerto*. The command reassembled on the 22nd just south of Doña Ana. Three days later, on Christmas, Doniphan and his small army of perhaps five hundred effectives successfully met the Mexican army in the Battle of Brazito in what has proved to be the only battle ever fought in the Southwest between American and foreign troops. Doniphan continued his march southward and occupied Paso del Norte without opposition on December 27th.<sup>15</sup>

Doniphan and his men rested in Paso del Norte until February when they renewed their southward march towards Chihuahua. A contingent moved into the presidio of San Elizario on the heels of the retreating Mexican troops. Fortunately for the historian, some of Doniphan's men left for posterity their impressions of the presidial village. George Rutledge Gibson, for instance, noted that the "town has nothing about it

different from other small places except a fort, [which is] capable of accomodating a large force and is really a strong place, the walls being both high and thick. The church is in the inside and is rather better furnished than similar buildings, but is on the gold and tinsel order."<sup>16</sup> Another soldier later wrote that "this fort has, evidently, been once very strong and covers more than eight acres of ground. It encloses within its walls a pretty church."<sup>17</sup>

Evidently the inevitable camp followers were unable or unwilling to accompany the retreating Mexican troops because Gibson noted that "like all hangers-on of armies and troops, the people are a low and vile set addicted to dissipation, extravagance, and vice in all their shapes." Gibson, it would seem, was not impressed with anything Mexican but one thing he did seem to like. This consisted of "little rolls of a preparation of meal, butter and *chile colorado* which," Gibson ventured, "is a great dish throughout Mexico. It is cooked," he added, "by boiling, and we found them palatable and better than other things on the tables of the country."<sup>18</sup>

The war with Mexico ended on February 2, 1848, with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Among several other provisions the treaty established the Río Grande as the dividing line between Texas and Mexico. The Río Grande, however, has an unsavory reputation for truth and veracity. Some time previous to the signing of the treaty this "unstable and unreliable" stream literally "picked up its bed and walked."<sup>19</sup> The result was that at the time of the treaty San Elizario along with her sister vilages of Socorro and Ysleta were no longer attached to Mexico. Rather, the vilages were on an island—*La Isla*—with the main stream separating the island from Mexico, thus placing the island with its inhabitants in Texas. San Elizario now lay on one of the main routes to California and thus hundreds of 49ers on their way to the gold fields passed through the town.

Gold was first discovered in California in January, 1848. It was not until early fall, however, that fantastic rumors reached the east and it was not until December that President Polk in his annual state of the union message to congress confirmed the discovery. In his address the President recommended the establishment of a branch mint at San Francisco. Later, at the White House, he displayed specimens of California gold ore. This was too much. The gold fever became epidemic and even serious-minded people began considering a trip to the gold mines. The burning question of the day became: "What is the best route to California?"<sup>20</sup>

So intense and wide-spread was the demand for knowledge of the best route to California that the federal government during the next two years

felt forced to send out no fewer than twelve exploring parties to search for the best routes of travel across west Texas alone.<sup>21</sup> From these surveys came forth four main southern roads to the gold field—1) from Ft. Smith to Santa Fe and down the Río Grande to El Paso; 2) from Ft. Smith through northern Texas to El Paso; 3) from San Antonio and Austin to El Paso by way of Fredericksburg, called the “Emigrant” or “Upper El Paso Road”; and 4) from Corpus Christi and Port Lavaca through San Antonio to El Paso, striking the Río Grande at San Elizario, called the “Military” or “Lower El Paso Road.”<sup>22</sup> This last-named was the only road to pass through San Elizario. Incidentally, most of the 49ers or Argonauts<sup>23</sup> as they were more often called, journeyed to California by the northern route by way of the Platte River, the South Pass, and the Humboldt River.

Meanwhile, before the government surveys were completed, thousands started westward for the reputed riches. Some went as individuals, some formed partnerships, and some joined groups “especially organized to make the California trip and to engage in mining as a cooperative enterprise.” One such group was the Frémont Association of New York which Robert Eccleston and his brother Edward joined in the spring of 1849. Robert, a lad of nineteen, kept a diary in which he recorded the details of his trip from Texas to California. Of San Elizario he wrote:

“The houses are built of mud & rough timber. The walls are not exactly plumb, but they are just as comfortable inside as if they were. The walls are about 10 ft. high & the houses contain but one story. Their fences are also made of mud, about four ft. high, & then taper to a point. The general appearance of the houses & fences is that of free stone, although the mud is hardly dark enough. The windows of the aristocracy are sometimes ornamented with carved wood grating, &. Trees loaded with fruit might be seen in every garden, & baskets of the same at nearly every door. .... I noticed a few handsome signorinas who were variously employed in carrying water in large earthen globes on their heads, or baskets of fruit, or picking fruit, &.”

In his diary Eccleston also stated that he “did not alight” as he passed through San Elizario, it being his “turn to stay near [the] wagons.” But for one who did not “alight,” Eccleston saw a lot of things to write about. He noted, for instance, that the “men dress generally in white domestic muslin. Their pants are tight around the thighs but widen as they hang down the leg. Their shirt or coat, whichever it may be called, is of the same stuff & made something like our shirts, having, however, wider sleeves and not being open at the side. Their hats are generally of different kind of straw with wide leaves. Those that can afford better clothes dress more like us, having regular coats. The women dress much like

Americans, . . . . The skirts of their dresses seem to be separate from the body, & something of a different color, white, blue, &. The smaller children are nearly naked."<sup>24</sup>

Another Argonaut, Cornelius C. Cox, a native Ohioan and an adopted Texan, spoke of the valley in which Paso del Norte and San Elizario "are situated" as "truly refreshing to the weary traveler of the plains—indeed the . . . delicious fruits and luxuriant appearances of every thing around makes one almost feel that he is transported to the bowers of Eden." Cox also wrote of the "corn, wheat, beans, vegetables, & fruits of every variety." And he added that "great care and attention is paid to the culture of the grape and considerable wine is manufactured."<sup>25</sup>

Two Argonauts, Thomas B. and Joseph G. Eastland, father and son, of Tennessee, wrote letters and also kept diaries describing their trip to California by way of West Texas. They left Nashville on April 21, 1849, and arrived at Paso del Norte in September. In a letter dated September 11th the elder Eastland gave his wife an excellent description of this area. He noted that "on La Isla, a very fertile island a few miles below [Paso del Norte], some 25 miles in length and from 8 to 10 broad . . . there is evidence of great productiveness—the vineyards are loaded with grapes, of the most delicious flavor, and the fruit trees (planted without any regard of order, and taken no care of) groaning under the weight of their burthens—the principal productions of the soil are corn, wheat, grapes, peaches, apricots, apples, pears, quinces, onions, pepper, &."

Most of Eastland's descriptions of the lushness and beauty of the valley vary little from those of other travelers. In one instance, however, he varied greatly—his description of the women. He wrote that he had "not observed even a passable face, compared with our American women beauties—I have looked in vain for those 'dark liquid eyes,' 'long silken eye lashes,' and 'fawn like figures' some travelers talk of—no such thing in these diggings—all poetry."<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, Gibson, mentioned above, wrote that "the women were all neatly dressed and some fine, and presented as good an appearance as we usually have in 'the States.'"<sup>27</sup> And Cox, also mentioned above, "found them kind [,] warm hearted and generous, even to a fault."<sup>28</sup> Perhaps Eastland was trying to convince his wife that she need not fear his straying into strange pastures.

Of the government survey teams the best known today, possibly, is that of John Russell Bartlett who at the time was the United States Border Commissioner. In his personal narrative which was published in two volumes in 1854, Bartlett wrote: "About ten miles below [Paso del Norte] is an island some twenty miles in length; it is one of the most fertile spots in the whole valley, and has been cultivated since the first settlement of the country. On this island, which belongs to the United States, are the

towns of Isleta, Socorro, and San Eleazario, chiefly inhabited by Mexicans. Of these San Eleazario is the larger [*sic*] and was the old Presidio or military post of the frontier. It contains many respectable families and some few Americans. It is now the county seat. The church and presidio are in a ruined state; they were, nevertheless, occupied by our troops for a couple of years after the Mexican War.<sup>29</sup>

Another government survey team was headed by William Henry Chase Whiting, a graduate of West Point in 1845. After serving as an assistant engineer at Forts Pickens, McRae, and Barrancas, he was placed in charge of an expedition in 1849 to locate a route for military and commercial purposes between San Antonio and El Paso. In his report he wrote of "the little town of San Elizario." "The houses," he noted, "were relieved by the green luxuriance of the fruit trees of the north—pears, peaches, apricots, plums, grew in endless profusion. Vineyards, neatly pruned and walled about, appeared side by side with fresh green wheat fields." Continuing, Whiting stated that "the people were polite and attentive. From them I purchased some eggs and milk, a luxury to us. Their price was four eggs for a picayune; small loaves of excellent wheat bread they sold at a picayune apiece."<sup>30</sup>

Still another survey team, directed by Major William H. Emory, chief astronomer and surveyor, arrived at the Pass of the North in November, 1851. His crew numbered "one hundred and upwards." Emory sent Lt. Nathaniel Michler with a small party to Fort Duncan, near Eagle Pass; another group was assigned to survey the country immediately south of El Paso, between San Ignacio and Paso del Norte; while Lt. W. F. Smith of the topographical corps, established an observatory at San Elizario to determine the longitude. Emory set up his headquarters at Frontera.<sup>31</sup>

Other visitors to San Elizario in the 1850's included the Camel Corps of the United States Army, a Methodist bishop, his wife and daughter, and Albert D. Richardson, later a war correspondent and a prisoner-of-war of the Confederates. The Camel Corps arrived in San Elizario at noon on July 23, 1857, "hungry and tired." The men passed the day "pleasantly at the house of Mr. Ford." Meanwhile the "inhabitants came over the river, which is about 4 feet deep at the fording place, in crowds to see the camels. They came in all costumes, on all kinds of animals, and other conveyances, and in every variety of shape and size."<sup>32</sup>

The Methodist bishop George Foster Pierce visited San Elizario in 1859. He was going by stagecoach to California to assume his ministerial duties. Bishop Pierce wrote that his party arrived in San Elizario in the morning after traveling five hundred miles without seeing a human habitation. San Elizario, he described as "an old Mexican village, with a few Pueblo Indians scattered around." He added that "some Americans, too,

have found their way out here." In fact, his host for breakfast was "an American and his wife a Mexican." Bishop Pierce tasted of the wine and found it excellent—"far superior to my uncultivated taste," he wrote, "to most of the European brands."<sup>33</sup>

Richardson also visited San Elizario in 1859. He described the valley as "essentially un-American as India and China." The women he pictured as having "beautiful, luminous eyes, and . . . a grace of motion rarely seen in their English sisters." The men he described as "a wine connoisseur, a dancer and a walking cigar manufactory. While earnestly talking, he produced a square bit of corn-husk or paper from one of his pockets, a box of fine-cut tobacco from another, and rolls up and lights a cigar without once looking at it."

Richardson was especially taken with the wine of the area. This he praised in Biblical terms: "The wine though a little heavy," he wrote, "is rich and unctious. I do not covet my Mexican neighbor's house, nor his wife, his man-servant nor his maid-servant, his ox, nor his ass; but I confess to twinges of envy that he can enjoy throughout the years the growing vintage of [La Isla]."<sup>34</sup>

This unstinted praise of Elysian San Elizario is common to all those who left written descriptions of the town—all, that is, except one. This was James Campbell who, in 1853, drove more than one thousand head of cattle and horses from Eagle Pass to San Diego, California. He stated that San Elizario "should have been dedicated to San Diablo as the streets were so crooked and so full of mud holes."<sup>35</sup>

In conclusion it should be noted that before the Civil War Anglo-Americans of the north and east had acquired accurate information about the rivers, mountains, canyons and prairies of the great Southwest. The prospective gold seeker, the land-hungry pioneer, the profit-seeking merchant, or the adventurous soldier could travel to his respective destination with greater ease and safety. West Texas was not longer a *terra incognita*. And San Elizario, the largest settlement in West Texas, with a population of approximately one thousand (El Paso, 300), the seat of the recently organized El Paso County, was on its way to becoming the regional metropolis. But such was not to be. With the coming of the railroads in 1881 the former presidial village was by-passed in favor of El Paso. Thus San Elizario, isolated, slipped back into the stream of historical anonymity—a picturesque little village with ruins of a civilization that is gone forever.

#### REFERENCES

1. San Elizario has been spelt variously as "San Elceario," "Elizario," "Eleazario," and, in the Spanish sources, "Eleceario." In the following pages it will always be given its present spelling, "San Elizario."

2. The Río Grande was originally called "Río del Norte." Later it was called "Río Bravo" and sometimes "Río Bravo del Norte." Since 1848 it has been known as the "Río Grande" to Anglo-Americans and "Río Bravo" to Mexicans. In the following pages it will always be called "Río Grande."
3. Milo M. Quaife, ed., *The Southwestern Expedition of Zebulon M. Pike* (no publisher data), xiii.
4. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico 1530-1888* (San Francisco, 1889), 293.
5. Juárez, the city today directly opposite El Paso, Texas, was first founded as a mission and named "Villa de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe del Paso del Norte y de los Manos." Its name was officially changed to Juárez on September 16, 1882, by an act of the Chihuahua State Legislature. Previous to the name change it was called "Paso del Norte," "El Paso," and "El Paso del Norte." In order to avoid confusion it will always be referred to in the following pages as "Paso del Norte" and the Texan city as El Paso.

Some of the early documents refer to Paso del Norte as "Guadalupe" because of its original name, given above.

6. An English edition of the narrative with a few verbal corrections was published in London in 1811 and a French translation was published under the title of *Voyage au Nouveau Mexique* in Paris in 1812.
7. Colonel Joaquin del Real Alencaster, more often written, except in New Mexico, Alencastre, served as governor of New Mexico from 1805 to 1812.—Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico*, 284.
8. Elliott Coues, ed., *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike* (New York, 1896, 2 vols.) 11, 648-49.
9. Robert Luther Duffus, *The Santa Fe Trail* (New York, 1930), 53. Duffus quotes from Coues, *The Expedition of Pike*.
10. Coues, *The Expedition of Pike*, 11, 739-40.

It is interesting to note what Coues wrote about El Paso, Texas, seventy years ago: "The celebrated place which our friend has been conducted by his friends, the enemy, must not be confounded with *our little town of El Paso, Texas*. This grew up yesterday, so to speak; . . . But aside from any of the political affairs which spoil the complexion of the maps, El Paso is one of the most remarkable positions in North America, unique in some respects. With regard to the tide of immigration which set westward by southern lines of travel to California of the forty-niners, it is comparable with that place by which, from time immemorial, the nations have passed from Asia into Europe along what has been fitly styled the 'highway of the world.' But El Paso is not only a half-way house from the Gulf of Mexico to that of California; it is the continental cross-roads. For the ebb and flow of human tides set with conflicting currents, north and south, long before the first page of American history was traced, and will continue forever in motion by El Paso."—*Ibid.*, 11,641. *Italics* original.

11. Grace Long, *The Anglo-American Occupation of the El Paso District* (unpublished master's thesis, University of Texas, 1931), 43.
12. George F. Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains* (New York, 1848), iv.
13. *Ibid.*, 170-71.
14. *Ibid.*, 168, 170-71.
15. George Ruhlen, "Brazito—The Only Battle in the Southwest Between American and Foreign Troops," *PASSWORD*, 11, No. 1 (February, 1957), 4-13.

- 16 George Rutledge Gibson, *Journal of a Soldier Under Kearny and Doniphan 1846-1847*, ed. by Ralph P. Bieber (Glendale, Cal., 1935), 326-27.
17. *Ibid.*, 326, fn434.
18. *Ibid.*, 326-27. Evidently Gibson did not get the complete recipe. There is no such dish known in Mexico today. Without *chile* it could have been *masa*. With *chile* but with meat added and steamed, not boiled, in corn husks it would have been *tamales*.
19. Owen White, *Out of the Desert: The Historical Romance of El Paso* (El Paso, 1923), 53.

There is some evidence that the river changed its course, thus creating "the Island," in 1838. Just when the old river (*Río Viejo*) dried up, thus attaching the island to the north shore is not known. Evidence of the old bed can still be seen.

20. Mabelle Eppard Martin, "California Migrant Roads Through Texas," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, xxviii, No. 4 (April, 1925), 287.
21. A. B. Bender, "Opening Routes Across West Texas," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, xxxvii, No. 2 (October, 1933), 132.
22. Martin, "California Migrant Roads Through Texas," *loc. cit.*, 288.
23. The Argonauts had a folk-hero named Joe Bowers. A stanza taken from a ballad honoring Bowers goes as follows:

My name it is Joe Bowers  
I've got a brother Ike;  
I'm bound for Californy  
And I'm all the way from Pike.

This was in reference to Pike County, Missouri. From this ballad Missourians came to be called "Pikes" and then "Pikers."—William Elsey Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition and the Conquest of New Mexico and California* (Topeka, Kansas, 1907), 7.

Another Argonaut song included the following stanza: "The days of old, the days of gold, the days of Forty-nine."—Benjamin Butler Harris, *The Gila Trail: The Texas Argonauts and the California Gold Rush*, ed. by Richard H. Dillon (Norman, Okla., 1960), 29.

24. George P. Hammond and Edward H. Hoover, eds., *Overland to California on the Southwestern Trail, 1849: Diary of Robert Eccleston* (University of California Press, 1950), 132-33.
25. Mabelle Eppard Martin, ed., "From Texas to California in 1849, Diary of C. C. Cox," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, xxix, No. 2 (October, 1925), 36, 130. *Italics* added.
26. Dorothy H. Higgins, ed., "To California Through Texas and Mexico: The Diary and Letters of Thomas B. Eastland and Joseph G. Eastland, His Son," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, xviii, No. 2 (June, 1939), 127.
27. Gibson, *Journal of a Soldier*, 375.
28. Martin, "Diary of C. C. Cox," *loc. cit.*, 131.
29. John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonorro, and Chihuahua, Connected with the United States and Mexican Boundary Commission During the Years 1850, '51, '52, and '53* (New York, 1854, 2 vols.), 1, 193-94.

Some writers are of the opinion that the American troops despoiled the fort before they withdrew in 1851. This could be true but it is very doubtful when one remembers that Fort Quitman, situated on the east bank of the Río Grande in the southwest corner of the present Hudspeth County, Texas, "melted down" in eighteen months

# GAMBLING IN EL PASO

by J. D. PONDER

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article was taken from the *El Paso Morning Times* for July 29, 1917. The *Times* was then owned by Juan Hart, and J. D. Ponder served as City Editor. Now deceased, Mr. Ponder was the father of Dan Ponder, the late mayor of El Paso, and of Hart and Jack.]

THERE WAS A TIME when El Paso was in truth the Monte Carlo of America. In forty-nine and fifty there was some gambling in San Francisco, but the owners of the gambling houses kept the limit down so that a player could not win more than \$2,500 on the turn of a card. The roof, so to speak, was built down close over the game. But in El Paso the roofs were often taken off to accommodate the players. During 1888 and until the fall of 1894 the old Gem, Wigwam, and Cactus frequently lifted the roof to accommodate plungers who sought to win a fortune suddenly.

Those were the days when Ed and John Bradley were running the Cactus, afterwards the Astor House, McLean and Eggers the Wigwam, and Look, Taylor and Morehouse the Gem.

Ed Bradley now resides in New York, owns a fine racing stable, a yacht and has been patronizing north pole searchers. He equipped Dr. Cook for his last expedition to the north pole. The Bradleys were sons of one of the oldest aristocratic families of South Carolina and were aristocrats from the soles of their shapely boots to the scalplocks of their wavy brown hair. The war had left their family paupers, but poverty failed to humble the two boys. They were Beau Brummels of the west and were intolerant of shabbily dressed men.

M. F. McLean and Theo Eggers have both passed into the shadows of eternity. McLean made a reputation as a fearless gunman at Dodge City in its wildest days. He had fought beside Bat Masterson and Luke Short. George Look died in El Paso a few days ago and John Taylor and W. A. Morehouse are living quiet lives in California.

When these men were running their palatial gambling houses in El Paso this town was the mecca of the adventurous spirits of the green cloth in every section of the country. Even Mexico City sent its most daring plungers to the El Paso gambling houses. In December the fiesta of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Juárez offered an excuse to many tourists from the north, east, south and west to journey to El Paso. The fiesta was nothing more than a gambling debauch with bull fighting on the side. The crowds at these fiestas represented different centuries. The haughty Spanish *hidalgo*, with a sword swinging at his side, stood at the same roulette table with the race track tout from Saratoga; the rollicking Mex-

ican *caballero* from the ranch placed his bet beside that of the deacon's daughter from Boston; the Texas cowboy and the dark-eyed *señorita* from Zacatecas laughingly lost their coin on the same throw at the dice table, while the modern captain of American industry from the east, the stoical Indian from the mountains, the almond-eyed son of Confucius and the "tailor-made" cigarette-smoking dude from New York sat shoulder to shoulder around the same faro game and in their respective vocabularies applauded or cursed the turn of the cards. It was a cosmopolitan grouping of all nationalities.

The people who came here to gamble gambled and those who came to see the sights of the fiesta were caught in the vortex of the gambling stream, hesitated, surrendered and also gambled. The wooing of the goddess of luck seemed irresistible. Those who found the stakes too small at the fiesta, where every device known to the gambling world was in operation, returned to the American side of the river and patronized the El Paso gambling houses. In each of the three largest houses was one table upon which was stacked bankrolls ranging from \$10,000 to \$20,000 each, and a player who could show \$10,000 and asked for the limit to be raised, was usually informed that the roof was off and he could go to it. Such privilege, however, was not accorded the men with only \$500 to play. Gamblers are superstitious about the luck of a man with a small bankroll.

One night in 1893, when the fiesta was in bloom in Juárez, J. H. Hampson, who had made a fortune in building railroads in Mexico, entered the Wigwam and, going to the roulette table, began playing five and ten dollar gold pieces on the numbers. Luck went against him so stubbornly that in an hour or less he had lost \$1,700. Walking into the bar where McLean was entertaining a champagne party, with Theo Eggers behind the bar, Hampson said:

"Mac, if you boys want me to play your roulette wheel, lift the limit and give me a chance."

"Why, the limit is off, Joe, and you can name it; but while I am still able to buy, let's have a bottle of wine," was McLean's reply.

They had their drink and Hampson returned to the wheel and began playing \$20 gold pieces on the numbers, and some times he would make it \$40 and \$60. As the game pays 35 for one, when Hampson won a \$20 bet, he would get \$700; \$1,400 for \$40, and \$2,100 for \$60. It was too stiff for Eggers, who put on his coat and went home, expecting to find himself broke next morning, as Hampson had struck a winning streak.

The news quickly spread that Joe Hampson was playing a limitless game at the Wigwam and in a short time that place was packed with

players who had come from the other gambling houses. A cousin of Lord Beresford stepped into the game long enough to lose \$1,200 in a short time and then dropped out.

At 1 o'clock in the morning Hampson was \$18,000 ahead of the house and still winning. At that hour he stopped long enough to order wine for the crowd and to drink half a pint himself. Then luck seemed to desert him and when he quit the game at four o'clock in the morning he had lost just \$3,800 to the house.

The old-time cattlemen of the west were not strong on faro and roulette. They preferred a game of poker, where they could bet on what they held and could occasionally run a stiff bluff, making a pair of deuces win a big pot from three kings. In 1889 and 1890 some stiff games were played in the basement of the old Grand Central hotel.

One night at about 10 o'clock the writer dropped in at the Grand Central in search of news and was informed by Sam Lee that the biggest game ever was in progress in the basement, so the writer went down to the basement and was admitted by J. H. Milliken, a mining man who made the Grand Central his headquarters. There were five men playing. They were Ben Schuster, of El Paso; a champagne salesman from New Orleans; Ed Smith, a cattleman from Deming; a Mr. Carrolson, also a cattleman, from Pecos; and J. H. Hampson, from Mexico. There was probably \$25,000 on the table in money and checks.

The game was for table stakes and the ante was \$5. Both of the cattlemen had each from 15 to 20 cars of steers here with them. The pots ranged in value from \$100 to \$1,000 and one of them went up to \$12,000.

A jackpot had been made by everybody passing. The next deal the first man to the left of the dealer, who happened to be the champagne salesman, opened the pot for \$25 and all came in. After the draw the champagne man passed and Ben Schuster bet \$50. The next two men saw the bet and Smith, who was dealing, raised it \$150. Mr. Champagne and Ben Schuster dropped out, leaving Hampson, Carrolson and Smith to fight it out. After standing several big raises, Hampson threw down his cards.

Thence on to the finish it was a battle royal between the two cattlemen. After pushing in all his money, Smith, who had drawn three cards, while Carrolson drew two, said:

"Carrolson, are you willing to bet some cattle?"

"I'll go you a small herd," replied the Pecos man.

"Then I raise you a carload of steers, and my steers will run about 18 to the car," was Smith's challenge.

The Pecos man hesitated for a moment. "Ed, I am not going to lay down this hand and probably I am a fool for calling you, but you are

called with another carload of steers," said Carrolson as he laid his hand face up on the table. It showed three queens and a pair of sevens.

"I was confident I had you," remarked Smith as he displayed four nines.

One of the players did some figuring and announced that the pot, including the two carloads of steers, amounted to a little over \$12,000. But Smith did not keep all the money, for the game went on and I learned next day that the Pecos man got some revenge before the night blazed into day.

There were a number of interesting characters to be found gambling for a living in El Paso in the early days. John and Ed Bradley were the most conspicuous of the group. They were intelligent young men who never mingled with the crowd, but were inclined to exclusiveness. They were both athletes, splendid specimens of physical manhood, standing about 5 feet 8 inches and weighing about 165 pounds, and with graceful, erect carriage. Both were expert horsemen and crack shots with pistol or rifle. During the years spent in El Paso neither of the brothers ever had a serious quarrel with any one. Neither of them drank. No one was known ever to have insulted one of them, due probably to the fact that for all their uniformly courteous manner, bad men could read in the steady grey eyes the warning, "Don't try anything." John Bradley had made some reputation as a hunter of big game. He was ahead of Colonel Roosevelt in the wilds of Africa. He went from El Paso to New York and was associated with Canfield in the ownership of the big gambling resorts in New York and Saratoga. He also built the palatial gambling hall at Palm Beach, Florida.

"Dago Joe," now known to the business men of Albuquerque as Joe Barnett, was another unique character in El Paso's sporting circle. The first time I saw Barnett he was playing a violin in the old Mint saloon and gambling house in 1889. He was playing the violin because he loved it and he was a master of that instrument, and while he did not seek contributions, he never refused the shower of quarters, halves, and dollars rained upon him whenever and wherever he played.

No one seemed to know where Dago Joe came from or when he came. The gamblers named him Dago Joe and that was what he was called by everyone. He was a rosy-cheeked, black-eyed youth with a most engaging smile. But he was an inveterate gambler, and whenever he struck a streak of luck he made the dealers nervous with his bold plays for he frequently made big "killings" at the faro table. If \$100 was every cent he had on earth he would bet every cent of it on one turn and beg permission to put it on one card. In the middle nineties Joe left El Paso and located

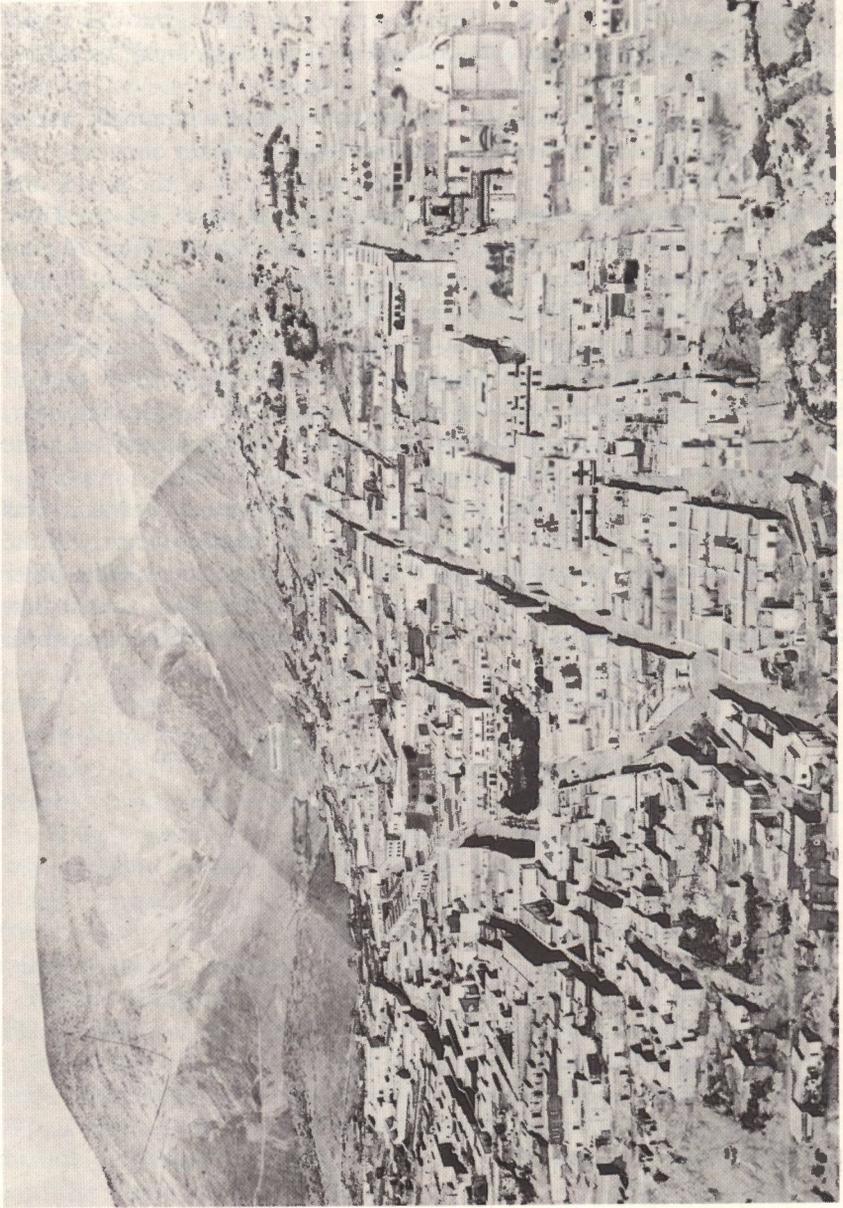
in Albuquerque, where he went into business and is now one of the big property owners of that town.

Then there was Phil Ramone, known to everybody as "The Mysterious Jew." He collected a living from the gambling tables, but was a very conservative player and positively refused to "crowd his luck," as he put it.

Henry was a fiend for statistics and dates. Without a moment's hesitation he could give the correct date of the birth and death of every president and the date of any great catastrophe in any part of the world, and he was a walking encyclopedia of statistics of all kinds. No one knew where Phil came from or whither he was going. He departed from El Paso as unostentatiously as he came, and only a few days ago Park Pitman informed me that Phil Ramone was in Phoenix.

In those old days gambling was, by common consent, accepted as one of the legitimate industries of the town. But while the business men of the community mingled with the gamblers on terms of social intimacy, the line of demarkation was strictly drawn when the families of the same business men appeared on the scene.

Luis Terrazas, Jr., of Chihuahua, eldest son of General Terrazas, was one of the boldest plungers visiting El Paso. His favorite place was the Gem and when he entered the place and began gambling all the other tables were deserted for the dashing young Mexican either won or lost a few thousand dollars in a few minutes. But he and his father are worth a story in themselves.



REAL DE CATORCE IN 1898

## BOOK REVIEWS

## REAL DE CATORCE. THE INCREDIBLE CITY

by Lucy H. Wallace

(Mission, Texas: Amigo Enterprises, 1965. \$5.00)

Occasionally a book is published that has tremendous impact upon those dedicated to a certain field of historical interest. Such a book is *Real de Catorce—The Incredible City*.

High on the peaks in the western part of the mountainous state of San Luis Potosí, near the ancient city of Matehuala, lies Real de Catorce—incredible city of paradoxes.

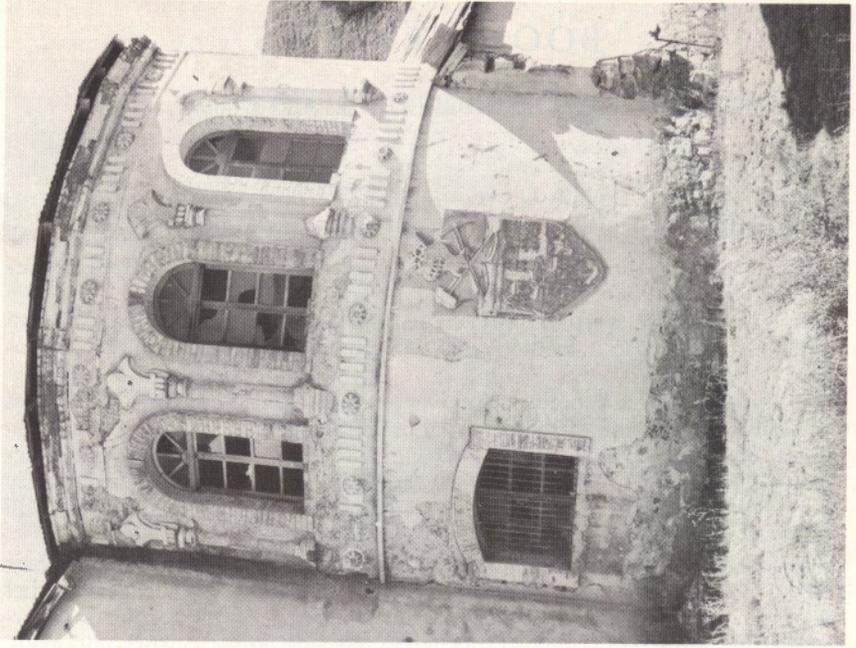
Records on file in the city's archives indicate that Real de Catorce was established at the time of the first rich ore strikes in 1773. It grew to a population of 25,000 when at its peak as one of the richest silver producing sections in New Spain. Today, but 600 residents remain, clinging tenaciously to the belief that *mañana* the mines will re-open and glory and riches will return to Catorce.

Spaniards who came to Catorce as mine owners, engineers and their *peones*, brought with them their own unique culture. Magnificent churches and public buildings were erected and mansions of regal splendor, surrounded by terraced gardens and ornamented with iron lacework and grills, elaborately carved facades, stained glass windows and other distinctive touches that echoed the Spanish influence in architecture. Great balls were held and fiestas enlivened the holidays. In 1910, however, because of the Revolution, the mines were closed and the owners either abandoned their mansions or left them with caretakers and departed.

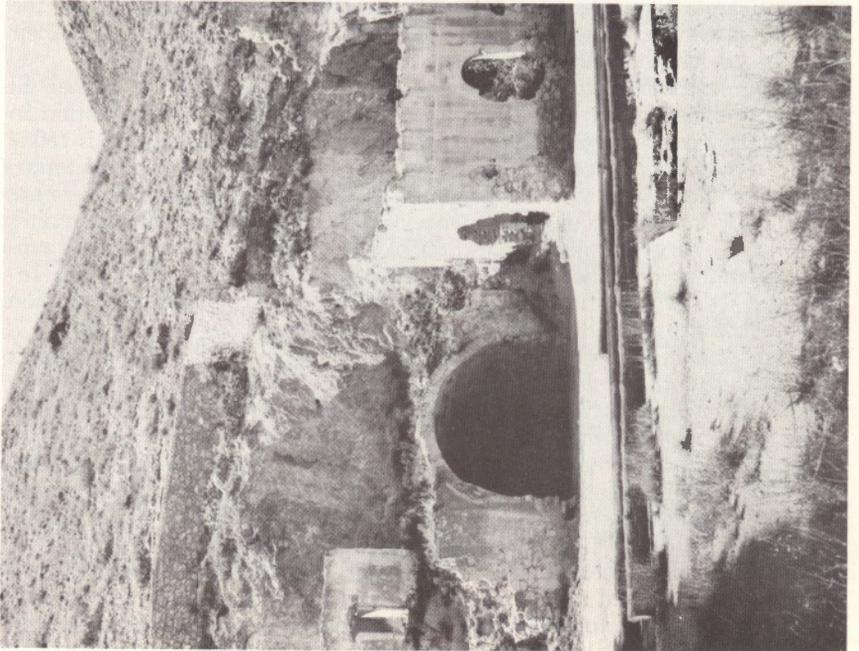
One of the most unique features of Real de Catorce is the tunnel, El Ogarrio, through which one enters the city. Cut through the mountain in 1901 for a narrow gauge railroad to transport the ores, the tunnel is today Catorce's best link with the world of reality. Carved into the wall of a portion of the tunnel is a small and jewel-like chapel, where fresh flowers are placed daily in memory of miners who lost their lives within the mountain's heart. One emerges from the darkness of the tunnel into the brilliant sunlight of another day and time. Thus one captures his first view of the Incredible City. The patina of antiquity covers its buildings and an evocation of the brooding past hovers about it.

The city's name adds to the sense of mystery and intrigue which surrounds it. Legend has it, the author explains, that the *Catorce* (fourteen) derives from fourteen bandits who hid out in the mountains to waylay cart trains bearing the rich ore: the *Real* (royal) was added when the King of Spain claimed his royal percentage from the mines. The Spanish word *real*, however, has other meanings and this reviewer prefers to advance the personal interpretation that the name *Real de Catorce* means *Camp of the Fourteen* (bandits).

Lucy H. Wallace is a newspaper woman and free-lance photographer-writer who has resided on the Mexico-United States border for many years. The magnificent photographs and graphic narrative which comprise this



*A ghostly bit of Old Spain*



*Ogarrio Tunnel (built 1901) entrance to Real de Catorce*

"word and picture" story of an incredible, still living ghost town, form, in the opinion of the reviewer, one of the finest books of its kind yet to be published.

—MARY ELLEN B. PORTER

## THE CLOUD-CLIMBING RAILROAD

by Dorothy Jensen Neal

(Alamogordo: Alamogordo Printing Co., 1966. \$6.00. Paper, \$2.50)

This charmingly-titled little book will delight the hearts of those who have been privileged to travel over the cloud-climbing route; and of those who, like this reviewer, have beheld its present-day ruin and wondered.

Actually, it is the much-needed story of thirty-two miles of railroad built into the Sacramento mountains far enough to reach and transport timber for ties for the main line road then under construction. From Alamogordo to Russia it climbed a mile into the clouds. One of the paradoxes of mountain railroads is clearly illustrated in the names of the line, originally "The El Paso and Northeastern Railroad" later changed to "The El Paso and Southwestern Railroad"—mute testimony to the horseshoe and corkscrew nature of its meanderings!

Mrs. Neal's book has added immeasurably to the socio-economic history of the Southwest, since the story of the railroad of necessity relates of the founding of Alamogordo, the lumber industry, activities of the two hotels and the baby sanitarium at Cloudcroft, the vast farming operations along the route and the tourist and excursion trades which the road fostered.

Those readers interested primarily in railroad history will marvel at the industry of Charles Bishop Eddy in building and expanding the system. Lovers of adventure and suspense will find it a-plenty in frequent and unscheduled log car slides, derailments on high trestles and the unusual and terrifying happenings at the switchback.

*Cloud-Climbing Railroad* is written in the easy, graceful style introduced by the author in her first book, *Captive Mountain Waters*. It is beautifully designed by William A. Dunn in consultation with Carl Hertzog. Numerous photographs from various collections, an index and more than adequate drawings and maps add to the facility of reading.

*El Paso, Texas*

—MARY ELLEN B. PORTER

## NEWS FROM FORT CRAIG, NEW MEXICO, 1863: *Civil War Letters of Andrew Ryan, with the First California Volunteers* Introduction and notes by Ernest Marchand

(Santa Fe, New Mexico: The Stagecoach Press, 1966. \$6.50).

The seventeen letters herein reproduced and edited are part of a large collection of the correspondence of the family of William Ryan (1793-1871) and his wife Catherine Jones Ryan (1793-1856), written over a period of seventy-five years, from 1835 to 1910. Andrew Ryan, the writer of these letters, was the third son and the eighth of eleven children of William and Catherine. He was born in Pennsylvania but followed his two brothers, Simeon and Corydon, to California in 1852.

When the Civil War broke out Andrew enlisted in the First Regiment of the California Volunteers. The Californians reached the Río Grande too

late to engage the Confederate troops who had already returned to Texas. Thus Ryan's Company E was assigned garrison duty at Fort Craig, New Mexico. It was at Fort Craig from February, 1863 to July, 1864 that Ryan wrote his letters home. They tell of the California Column's march from the Pacific coast to Yuma and through Arizona to New Mexico. They mention the Oatman massacre, tell of the battle with the Indians at Apache Pass in July, 1862, and give details of marches and the boredom of garrison life.

It is true as Dr. Marchand notes in his introduction that "Ryan's letters add nothing to what is known of large military and political events." They do, however, have the interest of any first-hand account of participation in far-off events and they manage to convey some sense of what it was like to tramp weary miles over deserts, to stagnate in garrison life, and to wait for the mail and letters from home.

All in all the book is not only interesting but it is also beautifully designed and printed. Since it is a limited edition it should become a collector's item.

*University of Texas at El Paso*

EUGENE O. PORTER

## BOOK NOTICES

Two recently published books should receive mention in *PASSWORD*, one because of its author as well as for the quality of the work and the other because of its contents. The first is *The Story of the Spanish-American War*. Its author, Colonel Red Reeder, is well-known in El Paso where he has a number of West Point classmates. Although a boy's book and written for the juvenile "American Military History Series," it makes excellent reading for adults. Your editor found it as interesting and as complete as the older and now out-of-print *The Martial Spirit* by Walter Millis. The book was published by Duell, Sloan and Pearce and sells for \$4.50.

Colonel Reeder, by the way, is the author of twenty-three books and joint author with his sister Nardi Reeder Champion of two books. His first book, *The MacKenzie Raid* which became the basis for a tv series, was reviewed in the *first* issue of *PASSWORD*, February, 1956.

The other book is *The Discovery of New Mexico, 1580-1594*. It is under the joint authorship of George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey and is published by the University of New Mexico Press. It tells the story of the five lesser-known expeditions that entered New Mexico between the famous expeditions of Coronado in 1540 and of Oñate in 1598. This invaluable work includes an historical introduction of sixty-three pages and complete English translations of thirty-seven documents on the expeditions such as orders, diaries, letters, and accounts.

The book sells for \$12.50, postpaid, and may be purchased from Jack D. Rittenhouse, P. O. Box 921, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

## HISTORICAL NOTES

One of the mystery women of the Southwest was known as the "Great Western." Adolph Wislizenus who wrote *Memoirs of a Tour to Northern Mexico*, published in 1848 as U. S. Senate Document No. 26, met her in Mexico. In his *Memoirs* he stated: "I stopped for some hours in the hotel

of the 'Great Western,' kept by the celebrated *vivandière*, honored with that *nom de Guerre*, and whose fearless behavior during the battle of Buena Vista was highly praised; she dressed many wounded soldiers on that day, and even carried them out of the thickest fight."

Recently Dr. Rex W. Strickland, Professor of History at the University of Texas at El Paso, unearthed some further information concerning this unusual woman. According to Dr. Strickland, the federal census of 1860 listed her as living in Socorro, New Mexico, under the name of Sarah Burgett, also spelled Bourgett, which is very likely the correct spelling. She was born in Clay County, Tennessee and early became a camp follower. She went to Mexico with Taylor's army in that capacity. She arrived in El Paso, Texas (then called Franklin) in April, 1849 and operated a restaurant in Coon's compound. After a year at the Pass she moved to Socorro where she married a dragoon named Albert Bauman. From Socorro she moved to Yuma, Arizona, very likely because her husband was transferred. There she died sometime in the 1860's and was buried in the military cemetery at Yuma. When the waters of the Colorado began washing away the cemetery, her body, along with the others interred there, were transferred to the old presidio in San Francisco.

Her nickname, taken from the steamship *Great Western* which was launched in 1838 for service with Europe, was appropriate, as she was a large hulk of a woman—six feet four inches in height and weighing well over two hundred pounds.

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The Rockefeller Foundation appointed Abraham Flexner in 1909 to make a study and appraisal of medical schools in America. His findings were published the following year in a book entitled: *Medical Education in the United States and Canada*. In his chapter on Texas he noted that the population of the state was 3,780,574 and that the number of physicians was 5789, making a ratio of 1:653. At the time there were four medical schools in the state—Baylor University College of Medicine (Dallas), Ft. Worth University Medical Department, Southwestern University Medical College (Georgetown), and the University of Texas, Department of Medicine (Galveston). Entrance requirements were practically non-existent. With one exception, for instance, the only requirement was "a three-year high school course or its equivalent" but few applicants, Flexner noted, were turned away if they possessed the entrance fees. The one exception was the University of Texas where a high school diploma was demanded. Such low standards were not unusual, however, but typical throughout the United States and Canada.

The following figures taken from Flexner should prove interesting:

University	When organized	Enrollment	Teaching Staff
Baylor	1900	53	29
Ft. Worth	1894	100	47
Southwestern	1903	68	32
U. of Texas	1891	206	26

It should be noted that all members of the teaching staff were practicing physicians.

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## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

FRED J. MORTON was born in El Paso, the son of Lawyer Rad Morton. He was graduated from El Paso High School, Texas Western College where he was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity, and from the University of Texas Law School.

Upon passing the bar exam he served as Law Clerk for Judge R. E. Thomason and then as Assistant United States Attorney. Presently he is the United States Commissioner for the Western District.

DR. HALDEEN BRADDY, a frequent contributor to *PASSWORD*, is Professor of English at the University of Texas at El Paso. A voluminous writer, he has achieved recognition for his scholarship in four highly specialized fields of knowledge—Chaucer, Shakespeare, Poe and Villa.

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## IN MEMORIAM

(A CORRECTION)

*Mr. Tom B. Newman*

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