

PASSWORD



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WESTERN AMERICA is one of the most interesting subjects of study the modern world has seen. There has been nothing in the past resembling its growth, and probably there will be nothing in the future. For the West is the most American part of America; that is to say, the part where those features which distinguish America from Europe come out in the strongest relief.

—Lord Bryce

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MY FATHER—
MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT LEE HOWZE,
U. S. ARMY

by HARRIOT HOWZE JONES

I SUPPOSE TO EVERY CHILD his or her father is an "unforgettable character" and mine, to me, is no exception. He was quite tall, about six feet, carried himself erect, had rather large ears and the same hairline when he died that he had as a young man. He had a very firm, tight mouth, but the kindest blue eyes in the world. His three children were a bit in awe of him. He expected instant obedience, absolute truth, cleanliness, good marks in school and if we failed in any of these attributes we were made to regret it—promptly. He was exacting in his military life, too. He could be severe beyond imagining to any soldier or officer under his command who was slack in his work, but efficient men adored serving under him. If he directed that a job be done, he would not interfere in the carrying out of the task. All he required was the proper result, the method he left to the man whom he had ordered to do it. And he never failed to give praise and credit when it was due.

At one time in the 1920's the powers that be decided the army was too large and wanted to get rid of a number of officers. To encourage them to retire they were offered a six month's pay gratuity but when not enough took advantage of this offer, the "Class B Board" was put into effect. This was a tragic thing, in many cases. The War Department went through all the Efficiency Reports on file, dating back many years. When they came upon an adverse report the luckless officer was called before the Board. I may say that no officer was ever called before the Board because of any report made by my father. He handled discipline in his own fashion. He felt that often a young man might make a fool of himself after first joining the army, by running into debt or failing in many ways to perform his full duty. Such a miscreant would be called into the general's office and given the full treatment of sarcasm and contempt and upbraiding, but ending with a ray of hope that the youngster would "shape up" and that he would be watched closely to see that he did. But his faults were not put down on paper to rise and haunt him years later when he had become a good officer. The man might hate my father for a long time but later he would realize what had been done for him.

I recall that during the B Board days an officer who had served under my father wrote him that he had been called up before the Board. There is a regulation in the Service that when an officer has to have rations or materials he must get three bids from competitive firms and buy from the lowest bidder, consistent with quality. This officer in question was in

Mexico, chasing Villa. He needed forage for his horses and mules and, being far from any large place, could not possibly get three bids. Thus he bought the hay and grain from the only trader available and for this technical infraction of the rules, years previously, he was called before the dread B Board. My father investigated the affair fully and made a report. Not only did the officer "beat the Board" but he received a commendation for initiative. Dad showed Mother and me a letter from the officer he had helped. He had written: "If the gates of Hell had opened and let me out I could not be more grateful, my General, than I am to you today."

Dad was born on a small farm in Texas, near the town of Overton. His father had been a captain in the Confederate Army and when he returned from the war he named his next son Robert E. Lee. Dad dropped the "E" later. His mother, it would appear from photographs, was a tall, stately, sad-faced woman. She bore eleven children, my father being number five. She lost two daughters in infancy and a son aged twenty-two. Life must have been hard after the Civil War, with little money, but my grandparents managed to educate their children well, five daughters, even, attended college, which was very unusual in the 1870's and '80's. Two of the sons became doctors.

When Dad was fourteen or fifteen his father told him that a good many people in the surrounding country owed him money, that there was little hope of getting it back, that for his summer project Robert could take the wagon and mule and go around and try to collect the money, and that he could keep all he collected. Surprisingly he managed to get several hundred dollars. His father asked what he planned to do with it and Robert replied: "I am going on a trip to New York." This was quite an adventure for a young country boy and I imagine that his mother had qualms about it, but through the Methodist minister they learned of an inexpensive but respectable hotel in the eastern city and off he went on the "steam cars" with several changes to make.

The naive lad waited hopefully the first night in the big city for the gong to ring for the evening meal which, of course, it never did, so he had no supper. Every day he would board a street car, probably a horse-drawn one in those days, and ride to the end of the line and then back to his starting point. Then he would take a ride in another direction and back. Thus he saw a great deal of the city with no chance of getting lost. Someone suggested that he take the Day Line boat for an excursion to West Point. He did not know what West Point was, but he followed the advice. He was thrilled watching the cadets parade at the Military Academy, and he wandered all over the post, admiring the buildings and the marvelous views of the Hudson and the mountains. When he returned

home from his travels he told his parents he wanted to enter West Point as a cadet.

Dad was graduated from West Point in the class of 1888, as a lieutenant of cavalry. He was sent out west for station, and on January 1, 1891 was awarded the coveted Congressional Medal of Honor for gallantry in repulsing an attack of Sioux Indians and saving his command without the loss of a single man. I have only lately read an account of the battle in an old book. Dad was a very poor story-teller. When we children would ask him to tell of his exploits, such as the winning of the Medal of Honor, his rescue of Gilmore and party of the Navy and 1500 Spanish prisoners in the Philippines, the record ride he and his squadron made in Mexico (75 miles in 24 hours, a record never equaled in U.S. Cavalry history), he would hem and haw and finally say: "After overcoming almost insurmountable difficulties we finally attained our objective"—certainly not a very thrilling description!

Dad was a very positive, often stern character. He married the best possible wife for him. Mother was pretty, often charming, witty, clever and knew how to manage her husband whom she adored. In fact, they adored each other. Letters from Dad to Mother when he so often had to be away from her due to military service, are very solicitous of his family's welfare and tenderly passionate. But he had to feel that he was boss. Mother would sometimes ask for the use of the official car to take her somewhere and Dad would say: "Now, Nannie, you know it is not for personal use." Or she would ask for extra money for something he considered an extravagance and he would give a positive "No" and stride off across the parade ground to his office. In about ten minutes the phone would ring and one of us children would say: "That's Daddy, you win again, Mom!" And sure enough we could hear his strong voice: "Well, if you REALLY think . . ."

Unlike the popular concept of a rough, tough army officer, my father was not at all a profane man and he had a great distaste for profanity in others. Sometimes when we were traveling or on other occasions when we children were out of sorts and fussy he would say with firmness: "Now let's take a brace on ourselves and all be happy, dammit!" But his usual fierce epithet was "RATS!" and if said loudly enough it served.

Dad used to scold us for mistakes and say: "I never make mistakes." So we impudently called him "Sheriff" for the Sheriff of Nottingham, in the light opera Robin Hood who sang: "I never once have made one mistake, I'd like to, for variety's sake." Mother thought she had caught him in a mistake once when they were on a short motor trip and had spent the night at a friend's house. The next morning she was looking around the room to be sure that all was packed when she spied a gold

pocket watch on the dresser. Smiling to herself she put the watch in her purse intending to wait for some hours before teasing him about leaving it. Fortunately she couldn't wait and in about twenty minutes she asked him the time and to her horror he pulled out his watch and told her. She had stolen her host's watch and they had to drive back to return it. Being human, of course, he DID make mistakes. The most costly ones were buying stocks of gold mines and oil wells, something he was unable to resist. Mother used to threaten to paper the parlor walls with the worthless certificates.

Dad served with distinction during the Philippine Insurrection, recusing Lt. Gilmore of the Navy and twenty-six in his party who had been captured. My father and his men suffered incredible hardships trailing through the jungles, building crude rafts to get across rivers. They almost starved, having only a little rice, sugar cane and berries to eat. Their shoes wore out and they wrapped their feet in rags torn from their trousers. It rained a lot so sleeping in damp clothes was frightful. Often they traveled by night and would get some sleep in the sun if there was any. For his exploit Dad was personally thanked by the Secretary of War and he was cited for a second Medal of Honor, but it was not customary for more than one to be given. Instead, he was promoted to temporary brigadier general.

The above all happened in 1900. In 1903, shortly after the birth of his first son, a fellow officer who had been in the Philippines during the Insurrection, accused my father of having tortured prisoners. This was a frightful charge and my father took the only course open to him to clear his name—he demanded to be court-martialed. This meant that he had to leave his family again to return to the scene of the alleged offense. There were huge headlines in the American papers which made life very trying for Mother but her faith in her husband never wavered. Not only was my father cleared of the charges, but he was also commended by the court for his justice and integrity. The man who had brought the charges was not even reprimanded. Years later the War Department wrote my father that the son of his accuser was slated for appointment to the general staff and father was asked if he had any objections. Mother asked Dad what he intended to do about it and he laughed and said: "I have nothing against the son. Of course, he is acceptable to me." I wonder how the father felt.

The then Captain Howze with the temporary rank of Lt. Colonel was sent as Commandant of Cadets at the Military Academy in 1906 by President Theodore Roosevelt with whom Dad had served in Cuba. Incidentally, in his book, *The Rough Riders*, Roosevelt had written: "Howze, than whom no more gallant officer fought in the war against

Spain." Dad was really sent to West Point to stamp out hazing which had gotten out of hand. A certain amount of "ragging," "bracing," and such nonsense as making plebes sing the laundry list to the tune of "The Merry Widow Waltz" was tolerated but making a plebe run up and down stairs until exhausted, making him squat on his heels, called "sitting on infinity" until he fainted could not be tolerated. Dad stopped all of these practices by meting out severe punishment and even dismissal from the Corps when the offense was serious. Consequently he was not very popular with the Corps. One day at noon he stepped into the mess hall, as was his practice. A recent order of his was not to the liking of the cadets, so at a pre-arranged signal all the cadets who had just been served their meal, ceased their eating and talking and sat with their eyes on their plates. The Corps was "silencing" their Commandant. It was a mistake on their part. Dad glanced rapidly around the large hall and shouted: "ATTENTION! RISE! As you gentlemen have finished your dinner you may march back to your barracks." They never tried that again.

Dad had served in Puerto Rico and at Ft. Oglethorpe, Georgia. He was Chief of Staff to General Edwards in Boston, then at Ft. Bliss, Texas and as a brigadier general, temporary major general, he took the 38th Division to Europe during World War I. He commanded the 3rd Division during the occupation of Germany. Next came Ft. Bliss and there in 1920 he organized the 1st Cavalry Division. Long since horses have been eliminated from our army but the 1st Division keeps its proud name. It fought gallantly in World War II in New Guinea, Bismark, Leyte, Luzon and Manila. It also fought in Korea and is now in Vietnam. It is Flying Cavalry now, using helicopters instead of horses.

While Dad commanded the Border good relations between Mexico and the United States reached a new high. He held that command for six years. When he was given his permanent promotion to major general, the Chambers of Commerce of El Paso and Juárez caused two silver dollars and two silver pesos to be melted and cast into four stars for the general to wear, a fine gesture of amity between the two countries.

I was born in 1899 while my father was fighting in the Philippines. He never saw me until I could walk and talk. I was the first child and I was sure a disappointment, being a girl, but later came two fine sons—Robert Lee, Jr., who was graduated from West Point in 1925 and, like his father, became a major general, and Hamilton Hawkins, who was graduated from West Point in 1930 and eventually wore four stars on each shoulder—a full general. His last command before retirement was that of United Nations Commander in Korea.

Because my father was so often away during my childhood—strike duty in Colorado, maneuvers, in the Philippines, chasing Villa, World War I, I was much closer to my mother than to Dad. Actually, it was not until I was eighteen that we became pals, at Ft. Bliss. Though I admired and loved him, I did not know him very well. Dad liked to have me ride with him every morning, early. I had a date almost every evening and would wake to my father's shouting up the stairs: "Harri—OT! Aren't you up yet? The horses will be here in a minute!" I would struggle into my riding clothes and stumble down the stairs. At the foot stood our dear cook, Nettie, with a glass of milk for me. By the time I drank it the horses would be at the door.

Dad rode a fine large roan stallion, Altarec. From riding so many years at the trot in the cavalry, and in those early days a man was not allowed to post at the trot, Dad hated that gait. He always rode at a canter or what he called a fox-trot which he taught the horse to do. It was faster than a walk, but not quite so fast as a slow-trot. This made things difficult for me, the aide and the orderly who always rode along. If we walked our horses Dad would call: "What's the matter? Can't you keep up?" And if we went at a slow-trot we would get ahead, which Dad, of course, would not tolerate. Hence our progress was a jiggly series of having to hurry or pull up, until Dad would put Altarec into a fine canter, then we could all keep in our places. Mine was beside Dad and we would have some good confidential chats while riding, especially at a canter. We talked, or mainly he did, of manners, morals and life in general, and he made many observations about my beaux. In my day few young people "went steady." They had dates with many of the opposite sex and it was a lot more fun. My husband says he thinks one of the reasons I married him was that Dad said to me: "That Major Jones is the wheel-horse of the 82nd [Field Artillery]."

When we came to where the troops were, Dad and the aide would ride up and observe their maneuvers and talk to the commander. I kept back, with my mare Peggy pawing the sand or nibbling at any stray green grass or bush she could find. Soon we would continue our ride. It was such fun. Out on the desert and often at a canter we would dash around sand hills which we called boondox, with the horses changing leads at every turn. Sometimes a young coyote would appear and we would chase it for a long way, as if on a fox hunt. The clear, crisp, early morning air, the cloud shadows on the mountains, soft sand underfoot, all made for delightful rides. Usually I would ride again in the late afternoon with a young officer, but I treasure most the memories of riding beside my father who sat erect and noble looking on his great stallion—a typical, fine, old-time cavalry officer.

My splendid father died in 1926 at the age of sixty-two, following a gall bladder operation. The rigors of his service to his country must have contributed to his inability to recover from what was termed a "successful" operation. He had suffered near starvation in the Philippines; he had had malaria and two seiges of typhoid fever. Long after his death his government honored him by giving his name to Camp Howze, Texas, and to the Army Transport *General R. E. Howze* during World War II. Howze Field is at West Point, Howze stadium at Ft. Bliss and Howze Street in El Paso. Not long ago Camp Howze was dedicated in Korea where his beloved 1st Cavalry Division was serving.

Robert Lee Howze was born a Southerner, his father having been in the Confederate Army. His family had suffered from the effects of the Civil War, but it was not until I met some of his relatives, long after his death, that I ever associated him with the South, that I ever thought about "Southerners" and "Yankees." My father was neither a "Southerner" nor a "Yankee." He was an American, a proud one and the West Point Motto of DUTY-HONOR-COUNTRY was his all his life.

The west is that part of the country which is always just a little bit beyond where one happens to live.

—*Sir Alfred Maurice Low*

To the average Britisher, western America represented something fresh and crisp, a place to rebuild shattered hopes, a land of opportunity for all, and above all, a place where individual effort was rewarded without regard to family origins or social status.

—*Robert G. Athearn*

"My friend," said I, drawing him aside, "I don't want to be inquisitive, but what might you do when you're home?"

"I'm a younger son," said he.

—"The Remittance Man" in *Arizona Nights*
by Stewart Edward White

AGRICULTURE IN THE EL PASO VALLEY: 1870-1914

by HELEN ORNDORFF

[EDITOR'S NOTE: this is a continuation of the article, "Agriculture in the El Paso Valley: 1821-1870," published in the Winter, 1966 issue of *PASSWORD*. It is the fifth article in the series on the development of agriculture in the El Paso Valley. See "Editor's Note" which prefaced the article in the Winter, 1965, issue for the titles, volumes and issue numbers of the previous articles.]

SOON AFTER THE CIVIL WAR Anglo-Americans began to come in increasing numbers to the El Paso Valley. The American village of Franklin grew steadily and in 1873 was incorporated as the City of El Paso.¹ At that time the city council drafted ordinances² and assessed taxes³ for improving, maintaining, and controlling the city *acequias*. But even though the area had grown, it had not yet reached the point of economic self-sufficiency. The extent of agricultural development in the valley on the American side of the river was still far less than that below El Paso del Norte. In 1872, for instance, only one and a half square miles of land were being cultivated at El Paso. Fourteen miles down the river, at Ysleta, about five square miles were under cultivation while farther down, at Socorro and at San Elizario a total of eight square miles were under cultivation. In all, fewer than nine thousand acres were being cultivated in the El Paso Valley on the American side of the Río Grande. The population of these towns was almost entirely Mexican, with only four or five Anglo-American farmers. Beyond the farming areas stretched a "barren waste for miles where a few jack rabbits and horned frogs" struggled for existence.⁴ Home consumption, counting Fort Bliss, exceeded the agricultural production; consequently, much of the food supplies were imported from El Paso del Norte.⁵

The farming area in the valley on the Mexican side already far exceeded that on the American side, continued to increase. By 1872 El Paso del Norte had a population of 10,000. Below that city was a solid mass of cultivated land stretching down the river for ten miles and varying in width from six to ten miles.⁶ Various kinds of vegetables, fruits, and grains were grown in profusion. Cereals, especially several varieties of wheat, attained the greatest perfection.⁷

The import and export business in the district of El Paso del Norte had become very important as early as 1871. The medium of exchange was United States currency. Below is a list of the main articles exported, with their market values:

Sheep	\$ 1.25 per head	Beans	1.50 per bushel
Brood Mares	20.00 per head	Wheat flour	6.00 per hundred
Cattle		Bran	1.00 per hundred
	12.00 to 18.00 per head	Cheese	.15 to .18 per pound
Wool	.10 per pound	Potatoes	.10 per pound
Native wine	1.50 per gallon	Tobacco	.18 per pound
Whiskey	2.00 per gallon	Lard	.20 per pound
Wheat	1.00 per bushel	Eggs	.18 to .20 a dozen
Corn	.75 per bushel	Chickens	.25 to .37 each

Curiously, the area was famous for its wine, but very little was exported, most of it being consumed in Mexico.⁸ Corn, wheat, onions, and in particular beef cattle were shipped on contract to Fort Bliss to sustain the troops. For example, Ernest Augustino, living in El Paso del Norte, shipped 800,000 pounds of corn to Fort Bliss on a contract that ran from July 1, 1871, to June 30, 1873.⁹

From descriptions given of these excellent products grown in El Paso del Norte and the valley below, there is little wonder that the United States Army stationed at Fort Bliss consumed them in huge quantities. The onion, which had become known as the "El Paso" onion, attained an immense size and a delightfully mild flavor. It was predicted that there would undoubtedly be a great market for these in the United States when the "beautiful but isolated country" had railway connections to the commercial world.¹⁰ In 1872, William M. Pierson, United States Vice-Consul, stationed at El Paso del Norte, foreseeing this great market, sent specimens of the onions and dried fruit of extra large size, to Washington, D. C., for inspection. The "El Paso" onion sold for \$2.00 a hundred pounds, dried peaches for 12¢ a pound, and dried grapes for 15¢ a pound.¹¹

The "El Paso" onion often weighed from three to four pounds, and the yield to the acre was tremendous. This was very likely due to the fertility of the soil and also to the manner in which the onions were cared for. The seeds were planted in light, rich soil in hot houses during the winter season. In the early spring when the stem or stalk was near the size of a goose quill, the young shoots were transplanted in rows eighteen inches apart and within the rows eight inches from each other. The onions were transplanted as soon as possible, for they had to develop during the hot weather. The onion plants were kept free from weeds. After the bulb had formed and had attained the size of a half dollar, the dirt was taken away gently from the top of the bulb with a suitable tool, leaving the plant exposed to the sun. When the bulb was the size of a dollar, nearly all of the onion was exposed to the sun as it continued to grow to an enormous size. The "El Paso" onion seeds were purchased by traders for

three dollars per pound and were sold at Austin, Galveston, and San Antonio for from five to ten dollars per pound.¹²

In addition to the onion, the Mission grape continued to attract national attention because of its wonderful flavor and because of its particular adaptability to the area.¹³ Throughout the years the Mexicans had developed an excellent system of caring for the grapes. The vines were not staked or tailed.¹⁴ They came "boldly forth without any crutch to lean upon," and were ranked "among the sturdy little trees of the world."¹⁵ The vines were trimmed close during the spring and threw out shoots from the stump, near which the fruit hung. With tedious labor, the farmers kept all weeds from around the vines. During the winter the vines were covered with straw, which was removed in the spring after danger of frost was over. The vineyards were inundated with irrigation water early in the spring. With this diligent care, the grapes came to maturity in July but were not always harvested at this time.¹⁶ Oftentimes they were allowed to hang on the vine until October, "when they attained a syrup-like sweetness."¹⁷ Three-year-old vineyards produced a small quantity of grapes, with a half crop being produced in the fourth year, three-fourths a crop in the fifth year, and a full crop in the sixth year. The common wine yield was 250 gallons to the acre.¹⁸

The primitive method of making wine from the Mission grapes at El Paso del Norte is interesting. The manufacturer provided himself with a sufficient quantity of raw hide sacks, formed by fastening the outer edge of a large green hide to a square frame made of round poles, the hide hanging down in a sack form. The sack was then allowed to dry in the sun until it attained an iron-like hardness. A set of tramping pans eight inches deep and large enough to fit over the mount of the raw hide sacks was made by drawing a piece of green hide over a square box. The outer edge of the hide was then lashed to a square frame made of round poles. After the tramping pan dried, it was removed from the box and the bottom was perforated with holes to allow the juice to escape, when tramped, into the main sack below. Forked poles were then set vertically in the ground floor of the wine house, across which were placed horizontally two poles resting in the fork of the vertical poles. The main wine sack was suspended upon these poles, and the tramping pan was placed over the mouth of the wine sack, after which it was filled with grapes.¹⁹ To extract the juice the grapes were "trodden by the naked feet of men."²⁰

The juice, fresh from the press, was poured into barrels, where it was allowed to remain ten days for hot fermentation, after which time it was drawn off, leaving the settlings on the bottom. After this the juice was allowed to remain in barrels for sixty days, when it was drained again in a cool state. Thirty days from the second drawing, it was ready for

use—a wine made from the pure juice of the grapes, receiving no doctoring nor scientific manipulation.²¹

As crude as the method used in making wine, were the tools which the Mexicans used in farming. Their implements had been used by their forefathers during the time of the early Spanish occupation of the area and continued to be used until as late as 1889 and in some areas, even later.²² For instance, their plow was made entirely of wood. A long beam or pole extended from the plow between the oxen team to the yoke to which it was lashed in the middle with strips of rawhide. The yoke was a straight pole with notches underneath to fit over the animal's neck. It was fastened to the horns of the oxen with the "ever requisite and all useful rawhide."²³ The goad, used to spur the oxen on, was a straight light-weight pole with a pointed ten-penny nail inserted in the end. This constituted "a full rig" to turn the fertile soil "without even one centesimal of iron in the whole structure, except the pointed nail in the end of the goad," which was "used as an incentive to the ox to perform the requisite speed."²⁴ One Mexican held the plow handle, while another usually walked ahead leading the oxen.²⁵ The plow cut furrows about five inches wide and left the ground with the appearance of fields that had been harrowed.²⁶ With no additional work, the farmer was then ready to sow his seed by hand. The hoe, spade, and the wooden plow were the main implements used by the primitive people living at El Paso del Norte and in the valley below. The mower, reaper, thrasher, cultivator, steel mole-board plow, harrow, cradle, scythe, hay rake, and steel pitch fork were unknown "in this isolated but exceedingly productive valley."²⁷

The farm cart, usually pulled by two oxen teams, likewise, was constructed entirely of wood. The middle section of the wheel was fashioned from a cottonwood log eighteen to twenty inches in diameter, the builder patiently carving each section. The framework of the cart was made from round poles, while the sides and ends of the bed were completed by lashing smaller poles to the main framework with rawhide. The tongue of the cart was firmly fastened to the yoke with the never-failing rawhide. The farmer was then "ready to enter into extensive commerce on the broad and sandy plains with the aid of neither iron nor steel, except his pocket knife and frying pan."²⁸

Since there was a scarcity of timber in the country from which fence posts could be made, the fields in the El Paso Valley were fenced with adobe bricks. For the protection of the crops, the cattle were herded in the day time but at night were put into pens.²⁹ The tame grasses were unknown at that time in the valley. Wild grass, which grew luxuriantly in the table land and in the foothills under the mountains, was used as a substitute. The farmers cut the grass with a hoe, raked it with their fingers and loaded and unloaded it with their bare hands.³⁰

Primitive back-breaking labor was the lot of these people along the Río Grande in the 1870's, yet they were content and happy. "Today" was their only concern; the man who contemplated the "morrow" was "considered crazy beyond all reach of hellebore."³¹ Satisfied with little, they were content to eat beans and peppers for their meals; hence, these were grown extensively.³²

The increased population in the El Paso area meant that more of the precious water must be taken from the river, both for domestic purposes and for irrigating the small farms, gardens, vineyards, and orchards. The old irrigation ditches within the village of El Paso, one probably dug in 1827 and the other in 1848, no longer satisfied the needs for farming. This shortage of water was made even more acute, beginning in the 1870's, by a number of factors. To mention only a few, after the Denver and Río Grande Railroad was completed in the early 1870's across the San Luís Valley in the upper reaches of the Río Grande, settlers in that region constructed an extensive system of canals and ditches for farming. This resulted in much more water, which hitherto had flowed down stream to the farmers in New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico, being taken from the river.³³

Another factor was the amount of rainfall. During all the seventies the annual rainfall in the El Paso area, as well as in the Southwest in general, was below normal, which added to the seriousness of the situation. For a period of four years, from 1880 to 1884, in the El Paso area the annual precipitation exceeded the mean. However, from 1885 to 1901, although there were occasional years in which the precipitation was above normal, it was generally less than normal.³⁴ While one must not overlook the benefits derived from rainfall in the El Paso region, at the same time too much emphasis must not be placed upon it, as the average annual rainfall is only about nine inches. Agriculture in the El Paso Valley has always depended more on the amount of water available for irrigation flowing down the river from watershed areas in New Mexico and Colorado. Before the construction of Elephant Butte Dam, when rainfall was heavy in the watershed areas, or when the snow in those areas melted rapidly, the water rushed down the Río Grande past the El Paso Valley in great quantities. The farmers, able to use only a certain amount at a time, must have looked pensively at the flood water that they could have used to great advantage during the growing seasons. Be that as it may, as a result of all these factors, from the early 1870's and continuing until after the completion of Elephant Butte Dam, drought conditions and water shortages in the river caused considerable distress in the El Paso Valley.³⁵

Growing out of the water shortage and somewhat disturbing the outlook for agriculture in the El Paso region was a long period of strife over

the equitable distribution of the waters of the Río Grande between the Americans on one side and the Mexicans on the other. The matter assumed national importance in 1878 when a board was appointed by the Federal government to investigate reports that Mexican citizens across the river from San Elizario, Texas, had participated in an outbreak of lawlessness in the United States known as the Salt War. Among other things included in the report of this board, was the danger of discord between the United States and Mexico over the use of the waters of the Río Grande for irrigation.³⁶ In the El Paso Valley on the left side of the Río Grande alone the future of 279 farms, totaling 14,024 acres (in the year 1880) were at stake. Farm lands that later were to sell for more than \$1,000 an acre then sold for as little as a dollar per acre.³⁷ So great was their predicament that in 1880 the farmers of San Elizario, Texas, in a petition to the county judge of El Paso County, asked for relief from taxes for that year and for the previous year because a lack of water in the river had resulted in crop failures. The situation emphasized the necessity for control over the Río Grande to insure an equitable distribution of its waters.³⁸

Such was the situation in the area in 1881 when the railroads first came to El Paso. No longer would the town be only an overnight stop on the Overland Trail. Now it would be the connecting link between the East and the West and the North and the South.³⁹ Meanwhile the advertising program initiated by the Texas and Pacific Company, long before it began service to El Paso in 1882, helped to draw a number of Anglo-American farmers to the area. This railroad company, beginning in 1881, periodically published a "Homeseekers' Guide," which was distributed throughout the North and the East, inviting settlers to this rich territory. Like other railroads, it operated an immigrant car, offering special rates and sleeping facilities, so that prospective settlers could stay a few days in one spot and look over the land. According to the railroads the land proved desirable, for few persons bought return tickets.⁴⁰ Moreover, El Paso's strategic location assured its continued growth as one of the key cities of the nation. Newspapers, a bank, and numerous other enterprises were founded. Within a few months the population increased from 800 to 1,500.⁴¹

The farmers in the vicinity of El Paso and El Paso del Norte likewise looked forward to the coming of rail service. They believed that the railroads would enable them to engage in farming on a large-scale basis. But such proved illusory in the first few years after the coming of the roads. This was due largely to the fact that there was not an ample supply of water in the river for extensive farming and also to the fact that railroads lacked refrigerated cars and thus perishable products could not

be shipped.⁴² In this situation the farmers began to raise more grain which could be easily transported. Furthermore, a good market for wheat existed in 1881; it readily brought one dollar per bushel. Accordingly, wheat was planted on large areas of land on which fruit had formerly been produced.⁴³

Although the Río Grande was becoming less and less dependable as a source of water, the agricultural picture was not entirely gloomy. For a while each season there was enough water flowing down the Río Grande to satisfy the people. In fact, there were occasional years in which floods did considerable damage throughout the El Paso Valley. One time, at least, the extent of flood damage to farm crops caused the farmers to petition the county for relief from taxes because of too much water.⁴⁴ On the other hand, laudatory descriptions of farm products grown in the El Paso Valley in the occasional wet years interspersing the drought are prevalent. For instance, the rainfall for the year 1881 was 18.17 inches, far above normal. *The El Paso Herald* boasted in that year that Dolores Apodaca of El Paso had a pear tree three feet in diameter and that Maximo Aranda had one fifty feet tall, ten feet in circumference, and with branches extending twenty feet from the trunk in any direction. The paper further added that Aranda's tree was "capable of supplying the largest city in Texas with a sufficiency of fruit for its entire population."⁴⁵ One man had sent to different state fairs "pears weighing one and a half pounds, onions of six pounds, and beets up to twenty-eight pounds."⁴⁶

By 1888 the El Paso Valley had evolved from a fruit and vegetable region to a region where grains were supreme. In El Paso County grains were grown on about eighty-five per cent of the cultivated land, while fruits were grown on about fifteen per cent, and vegetables on only a nominal per cent of the cultivated area. The Second Annual Report of the Agricultural Bureau of the Department of Agriculture, Insurance, Statistics, and History, for the years 1888-1889, vividly portrayed the completion of the cycle, and at the same time gave an excellent summary of farming conditions in the county. It reads in part:⁴⁷

Produce and Value of Field Crops for 1888

<i>Crop</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Product</i>	<i>Value</i>
Corn, bushels	4,345	86,900	\$ 64,425
Wheat, bushels	3,834	76,680	57,510
Oats, bushels	1,165	29,125	17,465
Barley, bushels	1,495	44,850	22,425
Sweet Potatoes, bushels	200	11,445	14,022
Alfalfa	1,445	11,815	18,150
	12,484		\$194,007

Fruits and Garden-Acres in peaches 48, value \$1,423; in apples 64, value \$1,725; in plums 7, value \$170; in pears 48, value \$940; in melons 83, value \$3,342; in garden 1,978, value \$6,609; number of grape vines 70,230, value \$16,440.

At the time the report was made, there were 1,260 farms in El Paso County. Only sixty-eight of these were under lease by the owners. A total of seventy-six farm laborers, who received an average wage of twenty dollars per month, were employed.⁴⁸

The 70,230 grape vines referred to in the report were grown on approximately seventy acres. In those days an acre would produce a thousand good vines.⁴⁹ Therefore, the report must not be construed to mean that great quantities of grapes were grown in the El Paso Valley on the American side. An examination of the records reveals that frequent mention is made of grape culture on the Mexican side of the river. The argument was often used, however, by El Paso boosters that the famous Mission grapes could be grown successfully in the area, yet the fact was that few grapes of this variety were grown on the American side. These reports refer only to the "capabilities" and the "adaptabilities" for the grape culture on the American side.⁵⁰ As late as 1886, the *El Paso City Directory*, in an appeal to induce farmers to settle in the region reported:

We no longer hesitate to say to the intending immigrant that these pages are dedicated to him. Those experienced in the cultivation of the vine report that all the conditions of the soil, the humidity and the temperature, are united to produce the grape in the greatest perfection.⁵¹

However, the farmers on the American side of the valley produced other varieties of grapes. In 1888, for instance, a group of growers exhibited thirteen varieties for display at a Dallas exposition. In addition, they exhibited forty-two kinds of apples as well as quinces which weighed nineteen to twenty ounces each. The El Paso products won several blue ribbons, whereupon the *Dallas News* quoted the exhibitors as proclaiming that "our soil will grow anything."⁵²

All of the boasts pertaining to agriculture during this period were not confined to the El Paso Valley on the American side, however. Splendid results were obtained from tilling the soil in the valley on the Mexican side of the river. Apples, pears, peaches, plums, apricots, and quince, as well as all kinds of vegetables, of the finest quality and largest size were produced in abundance during the intermittently wet years. The Mission grape, which the wealthier farmers grew extensively, was produced to the greatest perfection, being free from blight diseases of every kind. (One acre, with one thousand vines, was worth a thousand dollars in 1886). Over ten thousand baskets were shipped to eastern markets for table use alone, while much wine of a superior quality was also produced.⁵³ In 1886 and for several years thereafter, during the three-month harvest

season of the Mission grapes at least three carloads crossed each day from Juárez to the American side for shipment to various points in the United States, particularly to New Orleans and to New York. Dr. E. W. Alexander owned the largest vineyards, which were situated on the site where the Mexican Agricultural College at present is located. No refrigeration was used in shipping; however, it is very likely that most of the grapes were shipped after September, during cooler weather.⁵⁴ El Pasoans traveling to New York City and to other points in the United States brought back information of having seen the Mission or "El Paso" grape advertised and displayed in various fruit stores.⁵⁵

After the turn of the century, the Mission grape was no longer an important crop in the El Paso Valley. Perhaps this was due partly to the drought which had been so severe that the young vines were almost entirely destroyed.⁵⁶ George Bovee, long-time observer of valley conditions, believed that this was the reason. Mrs. George Pendell, a frequent visitor to Ciudad Juárez during the time these grapes were diminishing, said that it could have been the result of too little water in the dry years, or too much water during the occasional wet years. The present head of the Department of Agriculture in Ciudad Juárez, Manuel Alcazar, believes that late frosts coming in April and occasionally in May for several consecutive years had much to do with their disappearance. Some, unthinkingly, blame it on prohibition in the United States; however, when prohibition came very few grapes of this variety were being grown. Others say that the growing of grains proved more valuable than grape culture. Probably it was a combination of factors, the economic factor, no doubt, figuring most prominently. The coming of the railroads, it is known, made it possible to ship grains, whereupon they quickly took the place of fruits, no doubt, including the Mission grape.

In 1882 the name of El Paso del Norte was changed to Ciudad Juárez by the Chihuahua State Legislature.⁵⁷ The population of the village increased from 7,000 in 1886⁵⁸ to 12,000 in 1889.⁵⁹ The native population was employed mostly in the cultivation of the soil. In fact, the city had progressed, no doubt, largely because of the coming of the railroads, to the extent that the rude plows of their forefathers had been discarded and replaced by modern American implements.⁶⁰

By this time the seasons of drought and the water shortage had become of such frequent occurrence as to cause serious alarm to the people of the valley. The occasional floods also caused distress and heavy agricultural losses. In 1888, the City Council of El Paso, in seeking a solution to these problems, went to Anson Mills, who had surveyed and made a map of the City of El Paso in 1859, for advice. Mills recommended that

a storage dam be built three miles above El Paso. But Mesilla Valley residents were not enthusiastic about a dam below their farms, especially since the reservoir would flood valuable lands. Therefore, the idea of a dam at this location was given up for a more favorable site at Elephant Butte. Mexico made it a three-cornered dispute by protesting against the diversion of water by the Americans from the international stream. Farmers on the Mexican side complained that they were being ruined by a lack of water, and Mexico entered claim for damages. The matter went into litigation, which delayed the completion of the dam at Elephant Butte until 1916.⁶¹

Meanwhile local newspapers continued to boast that the El Paso Valley had "fine soil equal to any in the world."⁶² Nevertheless, the soil was practically worthless without water. From July 28 to September 7, 1895, *The El Paso Times*, by running daily articles, emphasized the need for a local dam at El Paso. The editor quoted the report of the state engineer of Colorado, which said that over three hundred ditches in that state alone took water from the Río Grande. The last article in the series warned that the depletion of the flow of the river in the driest part of the year had been great enough to destroy most of the growing annuals and the younger vines and fruit trees, and unless corrected in some way would "eventuate in the total destruction of the agricultural interests of the entire section."⁶³

In the meantime, the intervening floods which came in the occasional "wet years" were a menace. The year 1897 was an exception in that the precipitation greatly exceeded the norm.⁶⁴ In that year, beginning on May 10, came the Río Grande flood, which paralyzed for three weeks the cities of El Paso and Ciudad Juárez and the valleys below and resulted in the Cordova Island Cut-Off.⁶⁵ Throughout the flood, canal banks, levees, and headgates broke; scores of homes were inundated, making it necessary to evacuate thousands of people. By June 3 there had been a gradual recession of the river, exposing barren mudholes where homes and farmlands had stood. Many crops on some of the most productive farm lands in the valley were lost. The flood emphasized the need for the dam.⁶⁶

To relieve the drought situation, various experiments were tried. G. R. Dyrenforth of the Department of Agriculture sent scientists to El Paso to supervise tests which he hoped would cause rain to fall. He had observed that during the Civil War heavy cannonading was often followed by rain. His theory was that the explosion induced the moisture in the air to condense and to fall as rain. On April 18, 1891, a ballon filled with oxyhydrogen, an explosive, was sent up from Mount Franklin to bom-

bard the sky. The cannons, aimed at the sky, went off from dawn until sundown with roars that shook El Paso below. Large quantities of dynamite and oxygen gas were touched off. To some religious groups who were shocked at the General's presumption, he replied: "You bore into the earth for water, and I bore into the clouds. What's the difference?"⁶⁷ A local newspaper predicted that, as a result of the experiment, rain would fall. "But alas! No rain appeared, only clouds the size of a sombrero."⁶⁸

Efforts were made to irrigate farm lands by pumping the underground water that lay from twenty to fifty feet below the surface. On June 8, 1901, the *El Paso Herald* published an article in which Frederick H. Newell, hydrographer for the United States Geological Survey, was quoted concerning the possibilities of irrigating the valley land by pumping the underground water. Articles appeared in the newspapers telling of the virtues and advantages of pumps over the old system of dependence upon the river or on rainfall. The impression was created that there was an inexhaustible supply of water as "an immense underground river, four miles wide and some sixty feet deep flowing under the valley," adding that it was, in reality, the Río Grande, which had "sunk beneath the surface of the soil."⁶⁹

No doubt encouraged by the newspaper articles, J. A. Smith, owner of a farm about six miles east of El Paso and manager of the El Paso Dairy Company, installed a pumping plant on the dairy farm in June, 1902. This pump was capable of irrigating a hundred acres.⁷⁰ By the end of the year several other Anglo-American farmers had installed pumps.⁷¹ But the pumping equipment was too expensive for the average Mexican farmer who was accustomed to trading a day of work for enough water to irrigate an acre of land.⁷² Juan Fulano, who was not mechanically inclined or endowed with the requisites to purchase equipment of this kind, could look on wistfully but not for long. He "cast his eye in the direction of the sunset," for he had heard of jobs in California that paid seventy-five cents a day.⁷³

Thus, the prolonged shortage of water in the Río Grande had a great deal to do in bringing about a new phase in farming in the El Paso Valley. Until near the end of the century, the farmers in the El Paso Valley, including those on the American side, were predominantly Mexican. But by 1902 most Mexican farmers on the American side, perhaps exasperated by the drought and the water shortage, were forsaking their farms to find jobs elsewhere.⁷⁴ They were, no doubt, too weary to heed the frequent predictions that "irrigation will make the valley blossom as a rose."⁷⁵

Doubtless, somewhat encouraged by five consecutive years, 1902 to 1906, inclusive, in which the rainfall was above normal, and particularly

because they were willing to wait for the benefits to be derived after the construction of Elephant Butte Dam, Anglo-American farmers began coming in, thus taking the place of the departing Mexicans.⁷⁶

However, the Mexican farmers were leaving faster than they were being replaced. Therefore, beginning in 1903 there was an organized effort to attract farmers to the El Paso Valley. In 1906 the Chamber of Commerce had a fair to display valley products.⁷⁷ To encourage the farmers, there was formed in 1909 the "Southwestern Federation for Protection to Get More Extensive Market for Products." This was followed by the Fruit and Truck Association in 1913 and, later, by other associations.⁷⁸

This advertising program to attract settlers to the El Paso Valley had far reaching results. Adding color and humor to the valley agricultural picture was the once promising ostrich farm industry. In 1911 the demand for ostrich plumes for ladies' hats and showgirls' costumes caused Mr. T. W. Kemp, from Manchester, England, to stock a farm, located in the present vicinity of Ascarate, with ten fine pairs of ostrich. Commercially the "stupid critters" were worth more than horses, with an average selling price of five hundred dollars per head.⁷⁹ Baby chicks were worth twenty-five dollars each. The birds were described as being hearty, with a life span of about seventy-five years, and capable of kicking strong enough "to put a man completely out of business."⁸⁰ They ate alfalfa chiefly. However, the industry "became just another chapter in history" when women's taste in hats changed.⁸¹

By 1907 Congress had finally authorized the building of the dam at Elephant Butte, and the farmers were assured of a plentiful water supply. In the meantime, while they waited for the dam to be built, the farmers continued to coax water through the old canal system. Their combined efforts resulted in 40,316 acres on the American side alone in the El Paso Valley being under cultivation and ready to receive the benefits of the dam once it was completed. One reason that the farmers were able to cultivate additional land was the fact that they were planting more alfalfa, which by this time consumed sixty-five per cent of the irrigated acreage. The roots of alfalfa penetrated to a depth as great as thirteen feet, receiving moisture farther under the soil, thereby showing great adaptability to the dry climate. Twenty per cent of the remaining acreage was planted in corn and *frijoles*, ten per cent in wheat, and five per cent was given to orchards, gardens, and vineyards. However, even though the annual rainfall for 1910 was above normal, yet the growing season was dry and the total agricultural yield throughout the El Paso Valley was approximately twenty-five per cent less than that of 1909.⁸² In 1912 there was less water in the river, and the rainfall was below normal. In 1913 about a third, or 13,000 of the irrigable acres, was under

cultivation. But the farmers did not have long to wait for the benefits of irrigation, for a certain amount of water was stored in 1915 and was released when it interfered with the construction of the dam.⁸³

Since 1914 was the last year in which farming was practiced in the El Paso Valley without stored water from the dam, below is shown a table prepared for that year, listing the total irrigable acres, the number of acres devoted to the various crops, and their total value:⁸⁴

<i>Crop</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Total Value</i>
Alfalfa	5,772	\$217,604
Apples	4	841
Barley	29	526
Beans	1	1,152
Cantaloupes	30	(No market-not harvested)
Chili	40	7,200
Corn	567	8,672
Garden Tracts	1,048	157,200
Oats	37	587
Onions	35	4,830
Pasture	145	1,450
Pears	75	12,304
Peaches	5	4,560
Sorghum Grain	54	1,323
Sorghum Hay	152	2,128
Sweet Potatoes	60	3,600
Vineyards	8	1,920
Watermelons	60	3,624
Wheat	400	5,400
	8,522	\$434,921

The completion of Elephant Butte Dam brought about a great transformation in agriculture in the El Paso Valley. During the next half a century the small farms will be consolidated into gigantic enterprises, making use of powerful and expensive machinery. Thus a new order was dawning and this new order was to bring prosperity to the valley on both sides of the Río Grande.

R E F E R E N C E S

1. *Minutes of the City Council, Book A*, August 13, 1873, 79.
2. *Ibid.*, August 25, 1873, 93.
3. *Ibid.*, October 23, 1873.
4. *Despatches from United States Consuls in Ciudad Juárez, January 16, 1871-December 31, 1883*. Report No. 95, November 26, 1872, William M. Pierson, Vice-Consul, to Assistant Secretary of State.
5. *Idem.*
6. *Idem.*

7. *Ibid.*, Report No. 94, November 15, 1872.
 8. *Ibid.*, Report No. 10, October 5, 1871.
 9. *Ibid.*, Report No. 81, October 13, 1872.
 10. *Ibid.*, Report No. 80, October 19, 1872.
 11. *Ibid.*, (Number of report not shown), October 27, 1872.
 12. *Ibid.*, Report No. 97, November 26, 1872.
 13. *Ibid.*, Report No. 113, March 3, 1873.
 14. "Parson's Progress to California," *The Quarterly*, Historical Society of Southern California, June-September, 1939, XXI, No.'s 2, 3, 45.
 15. *Despatches from United States Consuls in Ciudad Juárez, January 16, 1871-December 13, 1883*. Report No. 113, March 3, 1873.
 16. "Parson's Progress to California," *The Quarterly*, Historical Society of Southern California, June-September, 1939, XXI, No.'s 2, 3, 45.
 17. *The El Paso Times*, April 29, 1956, citing *The Herald Post*, September 14, 1882.
 18. *Despatches from United States Consuls in Ciudad Juárez, January 16, 1871-December 31, 1883*. Report No. 101, November 30, 1872.
 19. *Idem*.
 20. "Parson's Progress to California," *The Quarterly*, Historical Society of Southern California, June-September, 1939, XXI, No.'s 2, 3, 45.
 21. *Despatches from United States Consuls in Ciudad Juárez, January 16, 1871-December 31, 1883*. Report No. 101, November 30, 1872.
 22. *Ibid.*, Report No. 115, March 11, 1873.
- Also, Interview with George Bovee, El Paso Valley farmer, and President, Buford Operating Company, Socorro, Texas.
23. *Despatches from United States Consuls in Ciudad Juárez, January 16, 1887-December 31, 1883*. Report No. 115, March 11, 1873.
 24. *Idem*.
 25. "Parson's Progress to California," *The Quarterly*, Historical Society of Southern California, June-September, 1939, XXI, No.'s 2, 3, 45.
 26. *Despatches from United States Consuls in Ciudad Juárez, January 16, 1871-December 31, 1883*. Report No. 115, March 11, 1873.
 27. *Idem*
 28. *Ibid.*, Report No. 94, November 15, 1872.
 29. *Idem*.
 30. *Ibid.*, Report No. 155, March 11, 1883.
 31. *Idem*. "Hellebore" is a medicinal herb of the crowfoot family.
 32. *Idem*. Although peppers were spoken of as a relish, yet they entered "largely into every dish on their table except coffee;" they were stewed, baked, fried, and cooked in every manner. (*Ibid.*)
 33. *Department of State Proceedings of the International (Water) Boundary Commission, United States and Mexico, II*, 286-296.
 34. *Ground-Water Resources of the El Paso Area, Texas* (United States Department of the Interior, Geological Survey Water Supply Paper No. 919), 8-9.
 35. *The El Paso Times*, April 29, 1956.
 36. *El Paso Troubles in Texas*, Executive Document No. 93, Forty-fifth Congress, Second Session, 18.
 37. *The El Paso Times*, April 29, 1956.
 38. Charles A. Timm, *The International (Water) Boundary Commission, United States and Mexico*, 178.

County Judge H. C. Cook referred the matter of relief for taxes to Governor O. M. Roberts, explaining that the shortage of water was because of heavy irrigation from the river in New Mexico and in Colorado, and the use of the water by the Mexicans across the river. It was contended that the Mexicans oftentimes diverted the entire flow into their canal by means of a diversion dam a mile and a half north of El Paso.

Governor Roberts passed the matter to the Secretary of State at Washington, D. C. He, in turn, corresponded with the Mexican Minister who, four years later, replied that the shortage of water was caused by the dryness of the season. (*Ibid.*, 178).

39. *The El Paso Times*, April 29, 1956.
 40. *Ibid.*, May 1, 1956.
 41. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1956.
 42. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1956.
 43. *The El Paso Herald*, October 5, 1881.
 44. *The El Paso Times*, December 22, 1884.
 45. *Ibid.*, Citing *The El Paso Herald*, October 5, 1881.
 46. *The El Paso Times*, April 20, 1956, citing *The El Paso Herald*, October 5, 1881.
 47. *Historical and Descriptive Review of El Paso and Her Industries, Commerce, Trade, and Manufactures, Business and Transportation Facilities* (The Trade and Commerce Publishing Company, 1890), 27-31.
 48. *Ibid.*, 27-31.
 49. *Ibid.*, 31.
 50. *The Anglo-American Occupation of the El Paso District* (Master's thesis, Texas Western College, El Paso), 133-34.
 51. *El Paso City Directory*, 1886, 20.
 52. *The El Paso Times*, April 29, 1956.
 53. *Despatches from United States Consuls in Ciudad Juárez, January 2, 1885-November 12, 1888*. Report No. 64, February 21, 1886, J. Harvey Bingham, Vice-Consul, to the Assistant Secretary of State.
 54. Interview with George Bovee, El Paso Valley farmer and President of the Buford Operating Company (Cotton gin), January 5, 1957.
- Although Mr. Bovee was eighty-five years of age, his memory was remarkable. He came to El Paso in 1886 at the age of fifteen. In addition to the two capacities shown above in which Mr. Bovee serves, he was for years a professional sports writer. He is now Chairman of the Recreation Board of El Paso, which position he has held for the past nine years. He is also President of the Socorro School Board, Socorro, Texas.
55. Interview with George Bovee, January 5, 1957.
- Interview with Mrs. Malcolm Webb, one of the former owners of Webb's Nurseries, El Paso, Texas, February 6, 1957.
56. *The El Paso Times*, April 29, 1956.
 57. *Despatches from United States Consuls in Ciudad Juárez, January 22, 1885-November 12, 1888*. (Introduction).
 58. *Ibid.*, Report No. 74, February 21, 1886.
 59. *Ibid.*, Report No. 35, March 22, 1889.
 60. *Idem*.
 61. Paul L. Haney, *The International Controversy Over the Waters of the Río Grande* (Master's Thesis, Texas Western College Library, El Paso, Texas), *Passim*.
 62. *The El Paso Times*, September 7, 1895.
 63. *Ibid.*, July 28 to September 6, 1895; April 29, 1956.
 64. *Ground-Water Resources of the El Paso Area, Texas*, United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey Water-Supply Paper No. 919, 9.
 65. *The El Paso Times*, April 29, 1956.
 66. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1956.
 67. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1956.
 68. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1956. Before their departure, the scientists were guests at a banquet given in their honor by the McGinty Club, famed pioneer social organization. There were food, refreshments, speeches, and toasts. When Professor Ellis, head of the group of scientists, responded to the toast, there came the deluge. Two barrels of water, which had been placed on the rafters above, were emptied on the rain makers, soaking them to the skin. See *Ibid.*, April 20, 1956.
 69. *The El Paso Herald*, June 30, 1902; September 23, 1902; October 12, 1902.

Also, *The El Paso Times*, April 29, 1956.

70. *The El Paso Herald*, June 28, 1902; November 4, 1902.

71. *Ibid.*, October 24, 1902; November 4, 1902.

72. *Ibid.*, Industrial and Investment Edition, May, 1903.

73. *Ibid.*, May, 1903.

74. *Ibid.*, May, 1903.

75. *The Texas and Pacific Quarterly*, last quarter, 1898.

76. *The El Paso Herald*, Industrial and Investment Edition, May, 1903.

77. *The El Paso Times*, April 29, 1956.

78. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1956.

These several organizations finally evolved into the now well-known El Paso Valley Cotton Association. The purpose of the organization is to act as the voice of the farmers in all matters, legislative and otherwise.

79. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1956.

80. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1956.

81. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1956; September 30, 1911.

The ostrich population in this United States in 1911 was about 7,500, which produced only two and a half per cent of America's needs for plumes.

82. *Centennial Program for El Paso County Centennial*, 1950. (El Paso Public Library, El Paso, Texas).

83. Interview with T. H. Moser, Assistant Project Manager, Río Grande Project, United States Bureau of Reclamation, El Paso, Texas, April 7, 1957.

84. *Annual Crop Report, 1914*, United States Bureau of Reclamation, United States Court House, El Paso, Texas.

There was a sharp decrease in the number of acres cultivated in that year.

THE SOUTHWEST OSTRICH FARM OF OLD EL PASO

by PETER WILLIAM EVELER

IN THE NARROW PASS between the Franklin Mountains and the Sierra Madre Mountains of Old Mexico many, many years ago a sleepy little town was born. On the banks of the Río Grande the first adobe homes were built after the Mexican war, and the town was chartered as a city in 1873. In the hundred or more years since the first settlement, El Paso has played an important part in history because of its location on the border, on the river, and in the pass. But besides the events one finds in history books, the real story of El Paso is in the lives of the people who have lived here in the past and who helped make El Paso the great city it is today. One such story I want to tell you now.

By 1910 El Paso had grown into a modern city of 39,000 inhabitants. In 1911 three men bought a large piece of farmland in the lower valley. One of them was Sig N. Schwabe, the second, a Mr. Lemley, but I could not find any record of the third. The land was "but two miles beyond the Washington Park car terminus, on the south side of the country road—Texas-Alameda." Every day I pass this way on my bicycle going to school, and it is less than a mile from my home. I was really surprised to learn that in the early 1900's, this land was the home of the Southwest Ostrich Farm!

Mr. Schwabe and his partner hired a Mr. T. W. Kemp who had come from England and who had raised ostriches before. They started off with 10 pairs of ostriches and high hopes.

Everyone who knew these men has told me that they were sharp businessmen, but they were always doing something unusual. Well, ostriches in El Paso seem unusual enough to me!

But in 1911 ostrich plumes were all the rage for fashionable ladies, and they sold for \$350 a pound on the London market. The prospects for a fine new local industry looked promising. Ostriches grazed on alfalfa which was cheap at that time. They were very hardy, lived up to 75 years, and multiplied rapidly. They had two settings a year of 12 to 15 eggs with 75% reaching maturity. An adult was worth \$500 and a newly hatched chick \$25. The birds did very well in the fine El Paso climate, and things were going so well by 1913 that a big party was held in the St. Regis Hotel to celebrate the success of the venture.

The ostriches were described as being stupid birds, very low in intelligence. They had very long muscular featherless legs and could kick like

a Missouri mule—only they kicked forward rather than back. They could run up to 30 mph. Once a cock and hen mated they stayed mated for the rest of their lives. The hen would scoop out a nest in the ground and lay 12 to 15 eggs; then she would start setting. She would set by day and the cock by night. Whenever the hen didn't come on time to relieve him, the cock would go find her and give her a sound thrashing.

Women's taste in fashion changed before long, however, and the great ostrich raising enterprise of the Southwest became just another interesting side-light in history. I have been told that some of the ostriches ended up at the Washington Park Zoo, and the land was later sold to a man who took up dairying, a much more dependable product than ostrich feathers for fickle fashions.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

Richardson, Texas, *The Lone Star State*.

World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. IV.

The El Paso Times, April 29, 1956; June 21, 1965; June 24, 1965.

Interviews with Mr. Gene Carpenter, Mr. Noel Longuemare, Mrs. Julius Ratermann, Mr. Laurence Stevens, and Mr. and Mrs. Walter Vetter.

THE CHISHOLM TRAIL was not a single line, like an interstate highway, except through Indian Territory, where it pretty well followed the line of today's Highway 81. The Chisholm Trail, as T. C. Richardson of Dallas has forever branded it, "originated wherever a herd was shaped up and ended wherever a market was found." The Trail was almost a state of mind, or at the most a direction pointing to the North Star. It started in Brownsville, it started at Laredo, it started at Houston, it started at Jacksboro; it started on the Río Grande, the Nueces, the Medina, the Frio, the Lampasas, the Leon, no river at all, or an unlikely Buffalo Bayou, with its intimations of things French and Louisianan. As far as Texas was concerned, only this fact was certain: it fit into a general road running north from San Antonio through Austin, Waco, and Fort Worth; and it crossed at Red River Station, opposite the red bluffs of Oklahoma.

—JOE B. FRANTZ in *The American West*

HISTORY—WRITING CONTEST

For the past six years the Society has sponsored each May a history-writing contest for seventh graders in the public and parochial schools of El Paso. The prizes are \$75 for first place, \$50 for second and \$25 for third. In addition, the winning paper is published in *PASSWORD*. In this year's contest the names of the winners along with the titles of their articles, the names of their schools and other data are as follows:

First place: Peter William Eveler, "The Southwest Ostrich Farm of Old El Paso"—Our Lady of the Valley School. Peter is the thirteen-year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Peter V. Eveler of 8026 San Jose Rd. He stated that his maternal uncle, Dr. William J. Reynolds, Jr., gave him the idea for his paper but that several persons helped greatly in furnishing source material. These he lists in his bibliography.

Second place: Linda Stowe, "A Rare Woman—The Story of Callie Griffin"—Scotsdale School. Miss Stowe is the thirteen-year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter H. Stowe of 10029 Cork Rd. Linda wishes to thank her history teacher, Mrs. Lunnenfeld, for encouraging her to compete in the contest.

Third place: Maria Guadalupe (Lupe) Sanchez, "First Settlement in El Paso"—Lamar School. Miss Sanchez is the fourteen-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alfredo Sanchez of 713 East Overland Street. Lupe wishes to thank her English teacher, Mr. Flores, for encouraging her to write the article.

PLEASE NOTE

Membership dues increased

Because of the great increase in the cost of printing the SOCIETY has found it necessary to increase the annual dues.

Beginning in 1968 the dues will be

\$7.50

JUST INTERESTING

As in all cities, El Paso's thoroughfares are classified as streets, avenues, boulevards, roads, etc. The following data gives the classification of the thoroughfares along with the number of each, as of July 1, 1967.

Drives	604	Lanes	149
Streets	556	Loops	10
Avenues	426	Terraces	5
Roads	381	Trails	3
Boulevards	10	Caminos	5
Circles	91	Strip	1
Courts	209	Squares	2
Places	179	Ridge	1
Ways	166	Alleys	35

BOOK REVIEWS

FAREWELL TO TEXAS: A VANISHING WILDERNESS

by *William O. Douglas*

(New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967, \$6.95)

Natives of Texas may begin this book with a feeling of trepidation that something fearful is happening to their great State. They will be right—although the title may be somewhat misleading. Actually Mr. Douglas is making an eloquent plea for the preservation of the Lone Star wildernesses, many of which are disappearing.

Readers who think of Texas as a land of boundless desert will be startled to read of the thousands of acres of forest, of gorges 2,000 feet deep, of towering mountains, majestic waterfalls and of the fabulous flora and fauna to be found in these areas. Despite the fact that conservationists are more and more raising their voices in Texas and that Texans have a love of beauty and a pride in their State, forces are working which threaten to reduce these natural treasures to the "status of Naboth's vineyard."

The despoilers of the rich wildernesses of Texas are many and varied: Federal agencies that build needless dams which drown out bottomlands rich in archaeology and history; stockmen who have laid the land waste by overgrazing; oil companies whose operations cause salt water to spread into fresh-water bayous and destroy wildlife; ranchers who war constantly against the bald eagle; lumber barons who in many instances cut timber solely to defeat efforts to set some of these forests aside for sanctuaries. "There are no public lands in Texas," the author points out. "They are all private . . . And private ownership in Texas often lacks a conscience."

Mr. Douglas writes in a compelling and authoritative manner in describing the wonders of such areas as the Big Thicket, Capote Falls, The Big Bend, Canyons of the Rio Grande, the Guadalupe and the McKittrick Canyons. He has studied and traveled these parts from boundary to boundary and his knowledge of geology, archaeology, botany, zoology and history is amazing. He pleads in a most convincing way for the preservation of these natural wonders and warns that we must say farewell to Texas "unless the dedicated minority receives an overwhelming mandate from the people."

El Paso, Texas

—MARY ELLEN B. PORTER

VAN DORN: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A CONFEDERATE GEN'L

by *Robert G. Hartzel*

(Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, \$8.95)

This book, according to the author, was conceived in the belief that "a study of military figures of secondary importance will shed considerable light on the scenes of action in which they participate." This is a story, therefore, of one of the lesser figures who, like others both North and South, seemed to lack the ability to win. The Civil War was one of frustrated hopes and more commanders belonged to this group than to the elite few who continually rode and fought to fame and victory.

Earl Van Dorn, a West Point graduate, was a Mississippian by birth. He fought in Taylor's army which invaded Mexico and later served with distinction under General Scott. In fact, he was one of the most decorated

American officers to serve in the Mexican War. Following the war he served with the newly organized Second Cavalry against the trans-Mississippi Indians, being stationed at several places in Texas, including Fort Belknap on the Brazos and Camp Colorado. Naturally great feats were expected of him when the South seceded but, although he rose to the grade of major general in the Confederate Army, he failed miserably as a field commander.

General Van Dorn did not live to see the end of the war but was murdered in 1863 under circumstances which even today are not fully known. It is generally believed, however, that he was killed by an outraged husband for having made successful onslaughts in the wife's boudoir.

The author is Professor of History and Chairman of the Department at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. During World War II he served for four years with paratroops. After the war he attended Vanderbilt University where he received his three academic degrees.

Dr. Hartze has written an excellent and important book. All Civil War buffs will want it as will those Texans who are interested in the ante-bellum history of their state. In addition the book is beautifully designed and printed. It is a credit to the book-maker's art.

University of Texas at El Paso

—EUGENE O. PORTER

HANDBOOK—ARCHIVAL AND MANUSCRIPT DEPOSITORIES

Compiled by James M. Day, ass't'd by Donna Yarbrough

(Austin: Texas Library and Historical Commission, Monograph 5)

This is an attempt by the Texas State Library and Historical Commission, with financial assistance from the Federal Library Service, to improve library service in all sizes of communities. In other words, the Texas Commission hopes to help alleviate, to a small degree at least, the problems facing the untrained librarian and to provide tools whereby all citizens can avail themselves of library resources within the State.

In addition to the "Preface," the Table of Contents includes "Institutions Not Reporting," "Institutions Reporting no Archival Holdings," and "Institutions Reporting Archival Holdings." One example, the University of Texas at El Paso (listed as Texas Western College), may suffice to illustrate the completeness of this last category.

Following the name of the "agency," the reader is made acquainted with the days and hours the library is open; the number of professional and non-professional employees; amount and kind of reproduction equipment; "Type of Holdings" which include manuscripts, archives, photographs" and their availability to the public; and the "Content of Holdings" as, in the case of UT-El Paso, "Juarez (Chih., Mexico) municipal archives dating back to the 18th century and running through 1900 on microfilm, one set available for loan. Hidalgo del Parral archives, dated 1631-1821 on microfilm, will lend on inter-library loan on limited basis; Aultman collection of photographs of early El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico."

It is needless to add that this *Handbook* is a very valuable tool for the researcher in Texas history.

—EUGENE O. PORTER

A PICTURE—HISTORY OF THE PASS OF THE NORTH

by Sam Hill Ray, S. J.

(El Paso: Commercial Printing Co., Distributed by the author, 602 S. Oregon Street, \$1.50)

This is the most delightful and informative book on El Paso and the surrounding area to be published in a long, long time. The author has collected scores and scores of photographs and drawings, some never before published, and with one picture to a page has given a commentary of the subject's history. To give one example, on page 49 there is a picture of "The Oldest Home in El Paso." It shows a small adobe "shack" with a woman entering the front door, thus cleverly giving the correct impression that the house is occupied. The commentary under the picture reads: "What is left of the Lozano family home at 321 Chelsa Street. It was built in the early 1800's. The picture was taken in 1967."

Not all the pictures are old. There are, for instance, pictures of such modern structures as Hotel Paso del Norte, Hotel Cortez, the new bank buildings and the R. E. Thomason and Hotel Dieu hospitals. Incidentally, one learns that there are thirteen hospitals in El Paso. Altogether there are nearly two hundred pictures. The book is further enhanced by a very complete index.

Every El Pasoan interested in his city should have a copy of this beautiful and interesting historical guide. It might be added that it will make an excellent gift for out-of-town friends.

Other books by the author include *Chaplain Afloat and Ashore*, *Laugh*, *Mother's Southern Recipes* and *Border Tales*.

—EUGENE O. PORTER

BOOK NOTICES

RECENTLY PUBLISHED BOOKS OF INTEREST
TO SOCIETY MEMBERS

Pedro Vial and the Roads to Santa Fe (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, \$8.95). By Noel M. Loomis and Abraham P. Nasatir.

Pioneer Forts of the West (Superior Publishing Co., Seattle, \$12.95). By Herbert M. Hart.

Print in a Wild Land (Doubleday, New York, \$5.95). By John Myers.

Red Man's Trail (Naylor Co., San Antonio, \$3.95). By Louis Thomas Jones.

The Rocky Mountain West in 1867 (University of Nebraska, Lincoln, \$5.50). By Louis L. Simonin.

Tales From the Big Thicket (University of Texas, Austin, \$6.75). Ed. by Francis E. Abernethy.

Three Years Among the Indians and Mexicans (Citadel Press, New York, \$6.00). By General Thomas James, ed. by Milo Milton Quaife.

The Trans-Mississippi West, 1803-1853: A History of Its Acquisition and Settlement (Russell & Russell, New York, \$12.50). By Cardinal Leonidas Goodwin.

CONTRIBUTORS to this ISSUE

HARRIOT HOWZE JONES will be remembered by readers of *PASSWORD* for her charming story, "The Magoffin Homestead," Volume XI, No. 2 (Summer, 1966). An Army brat, Mrs. Jones is the wife of Colonel H. Crampton Jones, USA (Ret.). For more information and a photograph see page 84 of the above-cited issue.

HELEN ORNDORFF is too well-known to readers of *PASSWORD* to warrant an extended introduction. This article, like her previous ones, was taken from her Master's thesis at the University of Texas at El Paso. For a photograph and further personal data see *PASSWORD*, Vol. IV, No. 2 (April, 1959), 85.

AN EXPRESSION OF REGRET

The Society greatly regrets the resignation of Dr. Carl Hertzog as *Design Editor* of *PASSWORD*.

It was Dr. Hertzog who made *PASSWORD* "a thing of beauty." It was Dr. Hertzog through his artistry and and boundless efforts who made *PASSWORD* internationally known. But poor health and an increased work load at the University of Texas at El Paso where Dr. Hertzog is Director of the Press, makes his resignation necessary.

THE EL PASO FOOT-BALL TEAM, composed of "the strongest players in town," played the New Mexico Agricultural College team at Mesilla on Thanksgiving, 1894. The El Paso team was composed of the following players: McCoy, center; Stevenson, left guard; Herbert, right guard; Berliner, right tackle; Dourgh, left tackle; Smith, N., right end; Smith, F., left end; Beckham, quarter; Gasser, left half-back; Neff, full back; Edwards, right half-back.

The game was awarded to New Mexico when the El Paso team refused to continue play after the referee ruled Red Herbert out of the game because he slugged one of the college boys.

—*El Paso Daily Times*
December 1, 1894

