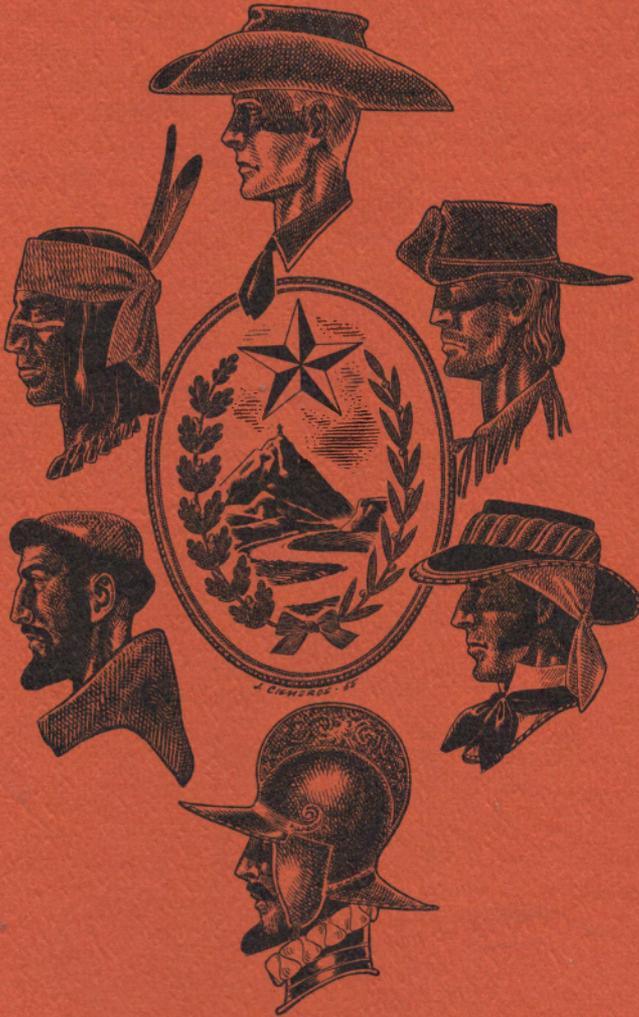


PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. XX, No. 3

EL PASO, TEXAS

FALL, 1975

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VOL. XX, No. 3

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CONTENTS

THE KIDNAPPING OF LITTLE PHIL	99
<i>by Art Leibson</i>	
AN EARLY TRIP TO ELEPHANT BUTTE	111
<i>by Patrick Rand</i>	
MY LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE MESILLA TIMES	117
<i>by Rex W. Strickland</i>	
HISTORICAL NOTES . . . GIVE-A-DAM JONES PROTESTS HIS DOG TAX	128
EUGENE O. PORTER MEMORIAL AWARD	129
HERITAGE HOMES OF EL PASO . . . THE HARVEY HACIENDA . . .	131
<i>by Harriot Howze Jones</i>	
SOUTHWEST ARCHIVES . . . RECORDS OF THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY, U-T EL PASO	133
<i>by Lillian Collingwood</i>	
BOOK REVIEWS	135
<i>Bode, Home and Other Moments</i> <i>Mueller, Restless River</i>	
ACTIVITIES OF YOUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY	137
CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE	139

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THE KIDNAPPING OF LITTLE PHIL

by ART LEIBSON

(Adapted from a forthcoming biography of Sam Dreben, "The Fighting Jew.")

One of the most bizarre kidnapping plots ever devised had its origin in El Paso and came very close to tragedy at the hands of a howling lynch-minded mob in Juarez.

On the night of June 18, 1921, Little Phil Alguin, bootlegger, gambler, narcotics pusher, and a three-time loser for armed robbery, shot and killed Los Angeles Detective John J. Fitzgerald. Police Chief Louis D. Oaks was to have led a raid on Alguin's suspected hideout but he was taken suddenly ill and in his place he sent Fitzgerald, whose testimony had resulted in the little gangster's last conviction.

Five men were found in the house but Alguin was not among them. They were locked up and Fitzgerald and a narcotics agent were waiting when Little Phil rang the doorbell. The detective opened the door and was met by gunfire. He died forty minutes later.

The slaying of a policeman, a close personal friend of Chief Oaks, led to a nationwide manhunt for Alguin. He had commandeered a street car in making his getaway and shot an innocent bystander, for no other reason than to get a hat to replace one he had lost. It would make him too conspicuous, he said later, to be seen running around without a hat.

Before the search was ended, Oaks would travel more than nine thousand miles and spend over six thousand dollars running down leads. Several times Alguin would be traced to a city and the local police would close in fast only to find he had moved on. In South Dakota he joined the Bailey & Hudson Circus, working for two months as a clown, until his Latin temper got him into a fight with a roustabout and he decided it was time to move on again. The trail led to Baltimore and Chicago as the relentless search continued.

Little Phil was born in Arizona and his real name was Benito Baca. He had used several aliases, acquiring the "Little Phil" nickname shortly before leaving Morenci for California, where he quickly moved up in gangland ranks around Los Angeles. He had spent much time in El Paso and in Juarez, working for a time as a caddy at the El Paso Country Club. Settling down in Juarez, after the Fitzgerald killing, he was confident of his security and openly boasted of how he had shot his way out of an ambush. He had escaped, he told his admiring listeners, from a cordon of five to ten detectives, depending upon his mood when telling the story.

Relations were badly strained between Mexico and the United States. Mexicans were nursing a deep resentment against their northern neighbor for several reasons. There had been the landing of Marines at Vera Cruz, the invasion by troops under General John J. Pershing looking for Pancho Villa, and the fact that the United States would not recognize the current regime in the Mexican political merry-go-round. In that atmosphere

there could be no asking to extradite the pint-sized *bandido* who was living in Juarez with a chorus girl. Although there was an easy liaison between police on both sides of the border, Alguin's presence was still unknown to the authorities. Several times he crossed the Rio Grande looking for entertainment, openly sneering at the five thousand dollar reward posted by the City of Los Angeles and the fact that his picture was plastered prominently on every police bulletin board. Then he made a serious mistake.

On September 15, 1922, three men were seen passing the time shooting at tin cans in El Paso's Upper Valley, near the brick plant located across the river in New Mexico. Shortly afterward, William L. Benton, secretary and paymaster for the brick company, drove up with the plant payroll, something over fourteen hundred dollars. He had to leave his car to cross on a foot bridge and as he slowed to a stop the waiting men, wearing handkerchief masks, approached with drawn guns. Benton tried to drive off, as two shots were fired, but his car hit a soft shoulder in making a turn and rolled over. Surrounded by guns, he climbed out as one of the men moved into the car to grab the money. Then the trio raced for Mexico, closely followed by a posse quickly alerted by the gunfire.

From the description given by Benton, there was a quick round-up by Juarez police. Alguin was among those grabbed and he had been questioned and released. In the meantime El Paso police had found fingerprints on Benton's car. The Bureau of Identification checked them out and found a set matching those of the cop-killer.

A rush call went out to Chief Oaks and he grabbed the first train to El Paso where he learned that Alguin was comfortably beyond extradition. Oaks' frustration had been aggravated by a letter received from the gangster soon after leaving the West Coast on a freight train.

"I shot Fitzgerald," he had written. "Do not hunt me any more. My life is worthless. If you keep hunting me I'll kill all the officers and I'll be gone. Fitzgerald was a crooked officer. That's why I killed him." He made no mention of why he had shot Frank Rudeen, the stranger whose hat Alguin had snatched from the dying man's head.

Oaks summoned a council of war, calling in El Paso's top police officers—and Sam Dreben. Dreben had fought up and down Mexico as a soldier of fortune and had worked briefly for the Mexican Secret Service. He had been one of the most decorated heroes of World War I, serving as first sergeant in the El Paso company organized under the command of Major Richard F. Burges. Sam was widely known, in press dispatches, as *The Fighting Jew*, because of legends that had sprung up around his career in the army and as a mercenary. General Pershing was to call him the bravest man and one of the finest soldiers he had ever known. Sam would be a valuable man in any decision to be made in an effort to get



Sam Dreben, one of the most decorated heroes of World War I, serving under Major Richard F. Burges, is shown with the French Croix de Guerre and other decorations. The picture is inscribed to his friend Elbert (Bud) Flanagan, still in El Paso and employed at Zork Hardware Company for the past 62 years.

tising by the medical profession. And there would be no questions asked when a stranger opened an office and announced he was a newly-arrived doctor.

The plastic surgeon, the advertisements would say, guaranteed removal of tattoos. If Alguin took the bait he would be put under chloroform for the "operation" and in that condition would be rushed across the Santa Fe Street bridge to El Paso, apparently a passed-out drunk among roistering companions. With the El Paso and Los Angeles police chiefs in the party there would be no trouble with federal authorities at the bridge. It was a long chance, a wild scheme, but one worth trying.

A San Antonio detective, J. H. Kelly, who had served with Dreben in Mexico but was a stranger to the border, was enlisted to play the role of the surgeon. He looked the part and after he was selected he was given a short course in acting the role by Dr. R. H. Ellis who had refused to become part of the scheme himself. He provided Kelly with anesthetic and hypodermic, carefully instructing him in their use, adding other

Little Phil back in the hands of the El Paso and Los Angeles Police.

It was Dreben who proposed the fanciful plot to kidnap Little Phil. He only may have been thinking out loud when he offered his plan but the others agreed to give it a try. Sam had learned from his Juarez contacts that Alguin was highly sensitive about a tell-tale tattoo on his lower right arm. It was a flower superimposed with the words "Arizona Phil," a dead giveaway since the description was on the "wanted flyer" posted in every major American police station. He had tried several times to find a doctor who could remove the tattoo without scarring him too badly.

Sam laid out his crazy scheme. A man posing as a doctor would open an office in Juarez as a specialist in plastic surgery. Advertisements would be placed in the newspapers, there being no squeamishness below the border on adver-

supplies to dress up the medical office. A diploma was obtained and framed, to hang in the waiting room.

The office was rented and equipped. Kelly was ready to do business. He was fluent in both the Spanish language and the more colorful border idiom. Dr. Kelly sat down to wait. Patients came in, but none fitted the description of Little Phil. They were informed that the new doctor was swamped with business and were given appointments for weeks ahead.

Alguin's response to the advertisements was more immediate than the cabal had hoped for. Calling on the doctor he bared his arm with the embarrassing design. Could the tattoo really be removed, as the doctor claimed, without leaving a trace? Kelly examined it critically under a magnifying glass, asking a few professional questions. Would the patient be willing to undergo the complete anesthetic it would take for the surgery that might require some skin transplant?

Little Phil's wariness made him hold back. Where would the operation take place? Kelly blandly suggested a hospital, or his own office, well aware that his patient would never consent to being hospitalized. Alguin suggested his own home. Would that be suitable?

Kelly hesitated, then quoted a fee high enough to remove any question as to his experience in the profession. Alguin readily agreed, made an advance payment, and it was decided to set up the operation for the following afternoon.

Kelly reported back to the delighted plotters. The long chance was working. Each member of the group was carefully rehearsed as to his role. When Doctor Kelly arrived at the house at 110 Second Liberty Street, two blocks from the Juarez jail, three men would be waiting in a car parked down the street. They were Dreben, Detective Chief Claud Smith, Chief Oaks, and C. C. Harvey, a chauffeur. Further down the street a second car was loaded with shock troops, a back-up force.

The script called for Kelly to signal when Alguin was safely under the anesthetic. He would spit out the window. With that it should be simple to carry out the patient, stagger boisterously as he was loaded into the car, as though a drinking party was breaking up, and drive across the bridge to El Paso.

On the day selected for the "operation" the El Paso newspapers were loaded with stories telling of Dreben's role in saving the Juarez garrison a day earlier from an incipient revolt, recruiting and arming a civilian force that roused the rebels. Not until later would it be learned that he was deep in the Alguin conspiracy at the time, that his counterrevolutionary activity was only an interlude.

An unexpected hitch brought a delay in the script. The "doctor" had not been told about Alguin's girl friend who insisted on being present for the operation. She shrugged off a suggestion that the blood might be too

much for her delicate nature.

Kelly was thinking fast as he laid out his assortment of gleaming knives and probes and loaded the hypodermic needle, injecting it sufficiently into Alguin's arm. The display, along with Kelly's graphic description in Spanish of the coming surgical cutting, was having its effect. The girl paled and began sweating heavily. Kelly piled it on while waiting for the chloroform to have its desired reaction, a deep deep sleep for the patient. He suggested that the girl might be given something to steady her nerves. She readily agreed.

What he gave her was a powerful mickey, enough to take care of a horse, Kelly said later, and in very few minutes she was otherwise occupied and safely out of the way. But the anesthetic was not having its effect on a patient subconsciously fighting against sleep, and Kelly was afraid that a stronger dosage would be lethal. They wanted Little Phil alive. The doctor sat down to wait.

Outside, Dreben and company were becoming nervous as time passed slowly. Sam cautiously approached and entered the house and Kelly whispered that he had given Alguin all the dope he dared. The patient was groggy but still slightly conscious.

"All right. We'll take him anyway," Sam decided, signaling to the waiting Oaks and Smith. They rushed into the room and hustled the half-dressed patient to the sidewalk. They had the cop-killer and in a few minutes he would be safely in the El Paso jail. Then Alguin, apparently revived by the fresh air, began to yell and fight off his captors. Sam later said it was like trying to hold a wildcat by the tail.

Screaming that the gringos were kidnapping him and wanted to kill him, Phil soon had a crowd of Mexicans rushing to his side. Alguin was popular in his neighborhood and he soon became the center piece in a tug-of-war as the Americans tried desperately to hold onto Alguin and at the same time fight off the crowd. They managed to get their man into the car and Harvey started for the bridge, but the alarm had been sounded and someone telephoned to the guards at the bridge. There the car was blocked.

The battle cry was taken up as another mob surrounded the car, but Sam, Smith and Harvey were overpowered, placed under arrest, and marched to the city jail. Chief Oaks, watching Alguin escape just a few yards away from where El Paso officers were ready to grab him, managed to fight his way through the crowd and reached safety, bleeding and with his shirt hanging in shreds. "Doctor" Kelly, apparently, also made his way to the American side.

Alguin gave his own version of the incident. Interviewed in the Juarez Liberty Hospital by H. W. Bierhorst, an El Paso Times reporter who later became managing editor, this was his published story:

SMITH, DREBEN HELD IN JUAREZ

EL PASO HERALD
TUESDAY 3 OCT. 1922

EL PASO OFFICERS REMAIN IN JAIL; MOB THREATENING

Plot To Kidnap Benito Baca Uncovered As "Little Phil" Awakes; El Paso Detective Captain and Two Friends Are Detained In Juarez Jail.

WHAT is said to be the "inside" story of an attempt to "slanghai" Benito Baca, or Little Phil Olguin, in Juarez Monday night, leaked out through several sources Tuesday.

On Baca's arm is a tattoo mark, "Arizona Phil". This mark is said to be the same as that on the arm of the man who killed detective Sgt. J. J. Fitzgerald, of Los Angeles, so Baca wants it off.

It was arranged for a doctor to remove the tattoo from Baca's arm. The "doctor" said he would have to have help, so called in an American "doctor." All was arranged for administering of the anesthetic.

The "doctor" failed to put the patient to sleep sound enough, but thought he was sound asleep, so three other persons, said to be Americans, tried to carry him out of the building.

Began
"at 8

air, he

FOUR OFFICERS FROM EL PASO GIVEN GUARDS

El Paso detectives J. J. Coleman, Frank Burns, Joe Block and Juan P. ... escorted by ... from

The attempted kidnaping of Little Phil was headline news in El Paso. Above is the HERALD account.

"Some gray-haired man stuck his head in the door and said in English 'Is he asleep yet?' The way he talks I am wise right away. Then I pretend I'm asleep and wait until we get out to the street where there is always a crowd before I put up my battle." Once the kidnapers had him inside the car, Alguin said, they pistol-whipped him to the floor in the back seat.

While the three men were being herded off to jail, trailed by a taunting and screaming mob, Chief Oaks was trying to explain his apparent desertion by saying he was confident the Juarez police were protecting the others, a wild exaggeration. They were being pounded, grabbed, threatened and spit on by the crowd that grew noisier and more dangerous as the three-block march ended in a jail cell. Dreben said a one-

eyed Mexican, even bigger than the *juramentado* who had lunged at him during his army service in the Philippines, kept at his heels, urging a lynching party. Crowds had quickly lined the street, as though appearing for a parade. Ropes were found and carried in the procession. It all had something of the color of the entry of the bull into the ring of the nearby *Plaza del Toros*.

With the mob hammering at the prison gates, word was sent to General Juan J. Mendez, the garrison commander who had been rescued by Dreben's quick action a day earlier. Help was needed immediately. The handful of jailors could not long hold off the mob screaming for blood. Every available soldier was armed and rushed to the jail, standing guard with fixed bayonets until the threatening crescendo abated and the grumbling crowd subsided and dispersed. They were assured the prisoners would be treated to justice, Mexican style, and the implication satisfied them.

Inflammatory Juarez newspapers took up the outraged cry against the unpardonable affront to native pride. Editorials reminded the public of the Americans' haughty attitude toward their *presidente*, Alvaro Obregon, the deaths in Vera Cruz. The press assured swift dealing with the kidnappers, insisting they would be executed within a week. Nothing less could satisfy the clamor.

Inside the jail, where the men were being held *incommunicado*, Detective Chief Smith had a private worry. He recognized among the prisoners some men he had arrested in El Paso. They were huddling and pointing in his direction. Smith was placed in solitary confinement until he could be shot with the others. The public would not be cheated by vengeful fellow prisoners.

Feeling ran high on both sides of the Rio Grande as top headlines followed the story. The U. S. Army quickly sealed off the border on the El Paso side. Rescue efforts were being mobilized. General Mendez increased his around-the-clock guard at the jail as Oscar Harper, U. S. vice-consul in Juarez, appealed to Washington for official help. He was joined by El Paso Mayor Charlie Davis, calling for military intervention, by the governor of Texas, senators and congressmen.

Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes coolly replied that there could be no representations of any kind from the State Department since the United States did not recognize the existing Mexican government. Any rescue operation would have to look closer to home for help in a situation that was growing more desperate by the hour, the Juarez press fanning the flames. A battery of lawyers went into action led by Mason Pollard, a member of Major Burges' firm. El Paso newspapers were warning of an impending execution and an extra edition was on the streets announcing that the men would die the next day after a kangaroo court trial.

General John L. Hines, Army chief of staff, was passing through El Paso on an inspection trip. He read the headlines and quickly dropped off the train.

"My God!" he exploded. "We can't let them shoot Sam Dreben! He is the bravest man the Jewish race has produced since the time of Joshua!" The general joined the rescue party that was now zeroing in on Juarez Judge Felipe Rodriguez, a reasonable and courageous man whose son is now an El Paso district judge and whose grandson is county attorney. Felipe Rodriguez was their last hope as the clock began ticking off the few remaining hours.

Judge Rodriguez agreed to reduce the charges against the men to a misdemeanor and accept bond of a thousand dollars each for Sam and Chief Smith, five hundred dollars for their chauffeur, Harvey. Word of the negotiations had spread, however, and the temperature of the Juarez citizenry was rising again. Getting the men out of jail and safely back to El Paso posed a serious problem. Mayor Davis sent off a telegram to U. S. Representative Claude Hudspeth, serving the West Texas district in Washington:

"Claud Smith, Sam Dreben and C. C. Harvey are in jail in Juarez and about to be released by the court. Mob is formed outside of court to do violence to these men. We are apprehensive they might be murdered. Consul John Dye has demanded protection to the middle of the bridge. However, want matter immediately laid before the proper department in Washington. They are charged with disturbing the peace by fighting."

Major Burges, interested primarily in his ex-first sergeant, and undoubtedly remembering the two times Dreben had saved the major's life in France, had arranged to have Sam released. He met with a stubborn refusal.

"No, I'll stick with the boys," was the message he sent back to Burges. "We went into this thing together and one way or another we'll go out together."

Judge Rodriguez, who lived in El Paso while serving the Juarez court, was well aware of the calculated risk he was taking in authorizing the release of the men. His son remembers the tension and the 24-hour guard posted at the home for weeks after the trio were released. Forfeiture of the bonds did nothing to relieve the tension as Americans stayed away from Juarez, held back by the army posted at the bridges. Those who were stranded in Juarez hid out until the storm would abate.

Hours ahead of the expected execution, with a heavy guard thrown around them, the three men entered a car driven by Pollard, led and followed by police cars and a detachment from the Juarez garrison, and crossed the bridge. They were met by a cheering crowd and newsmen clamored for interviews. Sam Dreben was asked to describe his experience in jail.

"Well," he drawled in a voice still thickened by his Russian accent, "The first day wasn't so bad. You see, it was Yom Kippur and I would have fasted anyway." Sam had his own Yom Kippur war.

Alguin, by now something of a local hero, was feeling even more secure from capture after the kidnap that failed. He was swaggering as he talked with newsmen, his tiny mustache bristling with indignation. He pointed to fourteen head wounds he said were received while his assailants were trying to beat him into submission.

"I'm just too smart for these hick cops," he was quoted as saying. "I've beaten them twice and I can do it again. Of course I croaked Fitzgerald. He was a rotten detective anyhow. He doubled-crossed me for a lousy couple of dollars and he got what was coming to him."

But while the runty gangster was strutting, the Mexican government was mobilizing against him, extending an olive branch to its northern neighbor despite recent abuses. The gesture undoubtedly helped bring about a U. S. recognition of the Obregon administration in 1923.

As an American citizen Alguin had no legal claim to protection from Mexico City, it was decided, and he would have to be deported. Private sources also were active, ready to arrange a horse trade that would allow the surrender of Little Phil in exchange for the return of a Mexican national held in a U. S. jail. There are two versions of the negotiations.

According to one report a Mrs. Kathryn Uribe, former Ziegfeld Follies girl who also had been on the stage with Al Jolson, claimed credit for the eviction of Alguin. The dark-eyed beauty had married the black sheep son of a wealthy and influential Mexican family and the couple had been living in Los Angeles. There her husband and his brother had been arrested on an auto theft charge.

The woman tearfully offered U. S. police a secret deal—Heriberto Uribe for Phil Alguin. The price was dirt cheap and Chief Oaks would have agreed readily—except that Alguin was already on his way to Chihuahua and Mexico City. That brings up the second version, a more likely account.

Florencio de la Vega, sitting in an El Paso jail, was wanted in Mexico on a charge of murdering a relative of General Plutarco Elias Calles at Agua Prieta, in the State of Sonora. He would be the price for getting Alguin out of Mexico and into the hands of Yankee authorities. It is a matter of record that after being held in the El Paso jail since November 12, 1922, de la Vega was suddenly taken out of his cell and escorted to the middle of the bridge on the following January 17th and surrendered to Mexican immigration officials there. He was never heard from again.

Alguin was not too unhappy when told that Mexico intended to deport him to Guatemala. He hated leaving the gang he had recruited on the border but he would be safer than in Mexico, being that much further away from the border. He had become too well known, his face appearing

in newspapers all over the United States, and that tempting reward was still dangling back in Los Angeles. He jauntily stepped onto the deck of a ship taking him out of Vera Cruz, the "Freeport Sulphur," a tanker. On board ship he was chained to a bunk and guarded by Lee Manning, a U. S. immigration inspector who had been given leave of absence from the service to avoid embarrassing it while watching over his prisoner.

Apparently neither the name of the ship nor the American guard at first aroused any suspicions in the dapper little fugitive, but he soon realized he had been victimized.

"This smells like the United States," he told Manning as the tanker approached port, "and I haven't a cold in my head either." As he was hauled up on deck in the Freeport bay, he broke into eloquently bilingual cursing, but he quickly regained his humor as he saw the extent of the armed guard lined up by Chief Oaks, waiting to take him back to Los Angeles. He smirked over the elaborate plans to assure his return, even if Alguin's gang should blow up the train in a rescue effort. Oaks was happy. The manhunt was ended.

Alguin talked freely to Houston newsmen from the cell where he was heavily guarded overnight, and in the El Paso jail where he spent another night on the cautious trip west. The delays were part of a plan to avoid any desperate effort to take the prisoner from the train. Again reporters were shown the scars on his head.

"They don't look so bad," Alguin told them, "but I'll never be able to part my hair in the middle again."

In El Paso the party picked up Chief Smith. He had taken a leave of absence from the El Paso Department and, as a reward for his part in the kidnapping fiasco, he was made chief of the Venice, California, police department. Oaks also offered any job on his own staff to Sam, who turned him down. The aging warrior was through with violence. Besides, he said, he deserved no reward for doing only whatever he could for his country at a time when it called upon his services. Sam was a 150 per cent American, as he had once been described, although he was nineteen when he first saw his adopted homeland.

There would be no reward for anyone in the return of Alguin. Chief Oaks announced that the five thousand dollar offer posted by the Los Angeles City Council for Alguin's capture had expired some time previously.

On April 30, 1923, Alguin went on trial in the Superior Court of Los Angeles for the Fitzgerald murder. He was quickly convicted and given a life sentence. Six months later he made a desperate attempt to escape from Folsom prison, slipping into a trolley bucket, a hundred feet above ground, in an effort to cross the American River. He and a companion were caught and returned.



The Adventurers Club of El Paso met in the old Sheldon Hotel in the years, 1920-23. Left to right, back row, Bob Dorman; Otis Aultman, renowned El Paso photographer; Sam Dreben, Bertram B. Caddle, McDonald or McLaughlin; Front row: Timothy G. Turner, Jack Newman, Edward (Tex) O'Reilly, L. M. Shadbolt (?).

(Reproduced by M. G. McKinney)

Hauled into court a second time for the "hat slaying," as the press leaped upon the designation, a mistrial resulted. Tried again, he was given a second life sentence in 1936. Spending twenty-six years in Folsom, Little Phil was released on parole after he agreed to leave the country and stay away. On July 7, 1953, having served half of his fifty-six years in prison, Alguin was escorted to the border near San Diego and freed, to disappear finally into the Mexican interior. It is puzzling that Mexico, having once expelled the American citizen, known for his deadly violence, should have allowed him to re-enter the country, one of many enigmas that crop up from time to time along the border.

It would be years, after Alguin's convictions, before the Los Angeles police could relax their vigilance against known members of his gang. Oaks found an anonymous note waiting for him when he returned to the coast with his prisoner:

"You think you are one brave guy to tote a poor bird back to Los Angeles to his framed-up death. But, oh boy, when we cash in five of your dirty cur dogs, called by the papers 'police,' it will be different. We'll be glad to join them in hell, and you too, if we get half a chance.

"So if one or more of your dicks is punctured some night just tell yourself you are the cause of it. You just started something for yourself, old kid. *Adios, poco tiempo mio combatti!*"

There soon were some unsolved cop-killings in Los Angeles but police were never able to determine that they stemmed from the threats by friends of Benito Baca, alias Little Phil Alguin, alias Arizona Phil Olguin, alias Holguin, alias Holquin, ad infinitum.

Back in El Paso, Sam Dreben was telling and retelling the story of the snatch that failed.

"Never again! I'm through," he insisted, solemnly raising a right hand that held a beaker of Madero brandy. This time, though he did not realize it, he meant what he said. The tired fighting man was hanging up his gloves forever.

In August, 1849, the population of El Paso was swelled by some 4,000 travelers in from 1,200 to 1,500 wagons, most of them headed for California and the gold rush.

—Rex W. Strickland, *Six Who Came to El Paso*
El Paso, Texas Western Press, 1963.

Joe Evans, long known in El Paso as a cowboy philosopher and pioneer of cowboy camp meetings, is known to cattle range historians as the cowboy who finally captured "Old Rud", an outlaw cow, at least twenty six years old, who had not been in the roundup for ten years. The story of old Rud's capture is told in J. Frank Dobie's *The Longhorns*, illustrated by El Paso's Tom Lea.

An El Paso law firm was wiped out in a few seconds on May 31, 1929, when a 64 year old Spaniard, Jose Marin, walked into the law office of Lyons and Oppenheimer and killed both Frank J. Lyons and Herbert D. Oppenheimer. The killer later committed suicide in the El Paso County jail.

—William J. Hooten, *Fifty Two Years a Newsmen*
El Paso, Texas Western Press, 1974.

AN EARLY TRIP TO ELEPHANT BUTTE

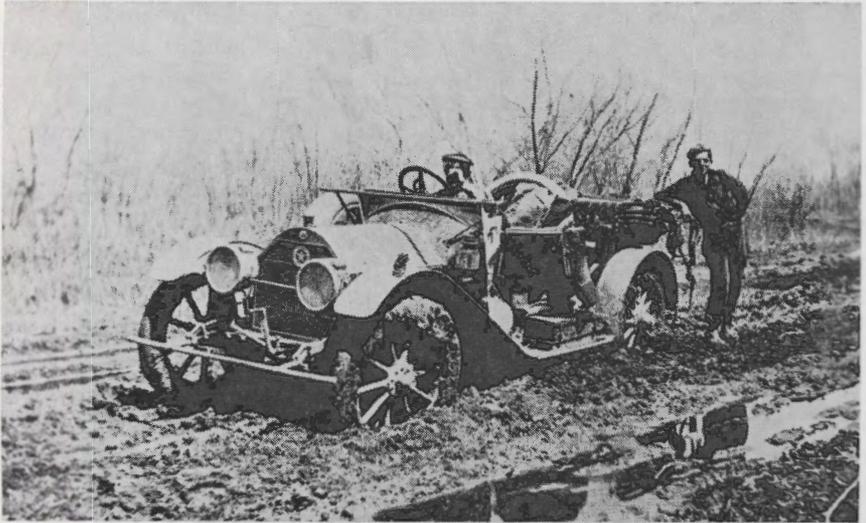
by PATRICK RAND

As reports on the status of construction at the Elephant Butte Dam¹ project trickled into the city, the more curious and courageous citizens of El Paso began attempting the trip to the dam by automobile, still a piece of machinery relatively unknown to the general public. The El Paso Automobile Club, which reported the comings and goings of its members on their various expeditions, announced that Dr. Alice Merchant² and her party, in a Chalmers '30' with Clarence Rand at the wheel, had driven to Palomas Springs³ and had seen the construction of the dam as they passed. In a letter to C. B. Stevens, the president of the El Paso Automobile Club, Clarence Rand wrote: "Be sure and boost the 'Dam Road'. We came up in a day and the road is simply grand. It is about 135 miles and the sight is worth five of the trips. We hit the dam about 9 o'clock at night and they were working full blast by electric light. The run can be made from El Paso in about eight hours or a little less. In Cruces⁴, at the Borderland Garage, you can get full directions. If you wish a brief map, I have sent one to my father."⁵

It had been reported three weeks earlier that Clarence's father, W. J. Rand⁶, had planned a trip to Cloudcroft⁷ and would probably go on to Roswell⁸ the same day. He thought the Cloudcroft trip would be a good one and well worth trying. Later reports of heavy rains in the mountains, however, made the condition of the road highly questionable, and so the decision was made to postpone the Cloudcroft journey and make the trip to the dam instead.

On Saturday, June 14, 1913, W. J. Rand, together with Harry Oldham⁹ and C. A. Brann¹⁰, left El Paso from in front of the Sheldon Hotel¹¹ at exactly 6:10 in the morning in Rand's Chalmers 40-horsepower automobile. On the way to Las Cruces they logged the road and had to make several corrections to the original log being used as a guide. They covered the distance to Anthony¹² in just 40 minutes and then came to a two and one-half mile stretch of sand and dust that was so deep the car could hardly run through it without skidding, and they were forced to slow down.

At Las Cruces, they stopped and got five gallons of gasoline, but didn't even have to add any oil, which came as quite a surprise. They had trouble in finding the way out of town and spent some time searching for the right place to get onto the Organ road but, once it was found, they were able to get up to speeds of 25 and 30 miles an hour since the road was "as solid as a city street", although there were a few sandy places along the way.



W. J. Rand in Chalmers 40-horsepower automobile, on "road" to Elephant Butte Dam, June 14, 1913.

(from Rand family album, copied by C. E. Waterhouse)

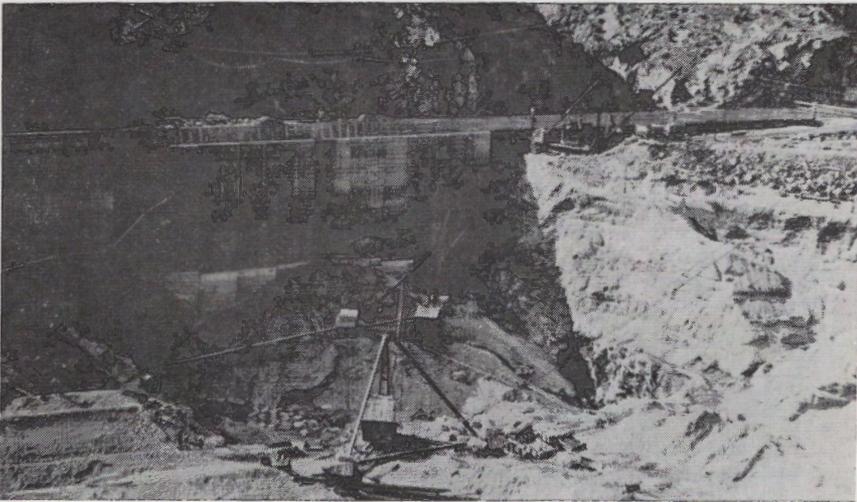
The road remained in fairly good condition until they came to a dirt tank where a deep, muddy wash made passage quite difficult. At this point, they had to open and close several gates, which took time, and cattle frequently crossed right in their path, forcing them to slow down or stop completely. The road in many places had been tramped out by the cattle, and they had to locate tire marks made by previous autos in order to continue. At Red Lake, the trail was completely obliterated by the animals but, after some searching with the aid of a log given to Rand by R. H. Rinehart¹³, they were able to find the road and resume their journey.

Cutter¹⁴ was reached at noon but, since they were unable to find a place in which to eat, they continued on, going by way of Engle¹⁵ rather than by the direct route to the dam, as it was reported to be the better road, and also because they wanted to get some lunch there, since it was past dinner time at the dam. At Engle, which was reached at 12:26 p.m., the speedometer indicated 112.3 miles from El Paso.

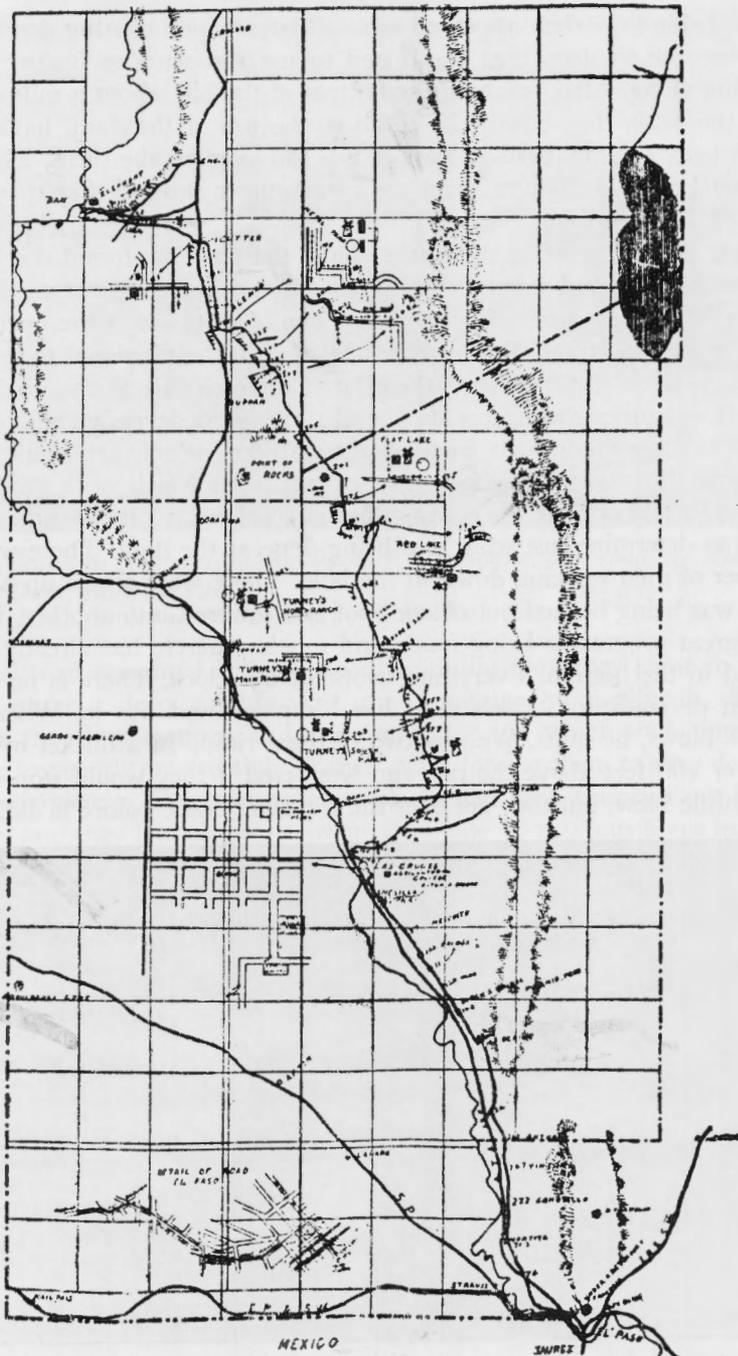
After a leisurely lunch, they left Engle at 2:10 p.m. for the dam, logging the road all the way, since no record was given on the map, and they believed that others might want to make the trip this way. In the 14 miles from Engle to the dam, the Santa Fe railroad tracks were crossed five times—twice within only one-tenth of a mile. As they neared the dam, the road began a steady climb up a large hill and became quite rocky in places as it approached the top, from which the workmen in the

hollow behind the dam appeared as small boys. Upon starting down, the road became so steep that Rand had to use the gears as brakes while crawling along. After reaching the bottom of the hill, about a mile down from the peak, they began the climb to the top of the dam, having to switch back at times because the car was too long for the turns. The top was reached at 3:30 p.m., and the speedometer showed that they had traveled 125.8 miles.

With one of the office men as a guide, the travelers found the hotel, parked the car, and started touring the site with their cameras. Brann wrote: "The most wonderful thing any one of us saw was the operation of the traveling cranes. We watched the men in the pit signal to boys in pilot houses on the bluff and these latter gave signals to the engineers who sit up under the towers on the hill and work levers eight hours a day. They have gongs in each of these towers which are worked by electricity. The boys in the pilot houses pull ropes which work similar to telegraphy and operate the gongs."¹⁶ Brann continued: "It was impossible for us to determine just what was being done at the dam. There were a number of men working down in the hole. There were others up above. Rock was being hoisted out of one spot and lowered into another. However, great progress is being made and much concrete has already been poured in the bottom. Everything works like a clock. There is no commotion or confusion. Each man has his place and fills it. When the whistle blows, he quits. We saw two of them riding in a bucket in mid-air over 100 feet above the pit, and wondered if they would stop when the whistle blew, but they got over the traveling crane before it did."¹⁷



Upstream view of Elephant Butte Dam under construction, June 14, 1913. (W. J. Rand, from Rand family album, copied by C. E. Waterhouse.)



The map that guided W. J. Rand over a series of ranch roads and trails from Las Cruces to Elephant Butte Dam, as published on the Automobile Page of the EL PASO HERALD, June 14, 1913.

The three men stayed at the dam until 6:30, when they returned to the hotel for supper. After eating, Oldham, having been bitten by the auto bug, asked Rand to show him what a carburetor looked like. On lifting the hood, Rand discovered the fuel pump had become disconnected but, fortunately, he was able to repair it for the next day's trip back. After fixing the car, the men walked back to the dam to see the progress of the work at night. Brann again wrote: "We could see the electric lights which made it light in the hole, but no such work can be done at night as in the daytime. The traveling cranes are fitted with lights that look like the evil eye staring out in the night, while searchlights are operating from the hill. They were doing some hoisting and the men used lanterns to signal to the boys in the watch towers. The Rio Grande, flowing angrily along through the spillway and onto its bed below, looked like a wide stretch of white sand in the moonlight from where we stood on the bluff near the rock crusher."¹⁸

The men retired early for the night and slept soundly until about 5 o'clock on Sunday morning. As they were paying for their accommodations and preparing for the return trip, the thought struck them to try for a record of actual driving time from the dam back to El Paso. As they began their record-setting return, the times were carefully logged by Brann. They left the office building at the damsite at exactly six o'clock that morning and, at 6:45, arrived at Engle, 14 miles away, where they stopped for breakfast. After their meal, the men left Engle at 7:45 and arrived at Cutter at 7:58. By 11:10 they were in Las Cruces, where 15 minutes were spent getting gasoline. Vado¹⁹ was reached at 12:05 p.m., Berino²⁰ at 12:15 and Anthony at 12:42. They arrived at the El Paso city limits at one o'clock and the car was pulled to a stop in front of the Mills Building²¹ on Pioneer Plaza²², 124.8 miles from the dam, at exactly 1:08 p.m. Sunday afternoon. Brann wrote: "From Elephant Butte to El Paso in just five hours and 53 minutes—and we didn't even get a puncture!"²³

FOOTNOTES

1. Elephant Butte Dam is part of the Rio Grande power and irrigation project near Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. The dam, which is of the concrete gravity type, is 301 feet high and 1,674 feet wide. It gets its name from a nearby mound, which is shaped like the head and back of an elephant. Behind the dam is a reservoir 45 miles long and about $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles wide. Elephant Butte Dam was authorized by Congress in 1907 and completed in 1916. T. W. Mermel, *The World Book Encyclopedia* (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, 1968) Vol. 6, pp 180-181.
2. Dr. Alice G. Merchant was an El Paso physician, the widow of W. B. Merchant, who resided at 800 North Virginia Street. *Worley's Directory of El Paso, Texas* (Dallas: John F. Worley Directory Company, 1913) p 411.
3. Las Palomas or Palomas Springs is a town 7 miles south of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. Natives and Indians made pilgrimages in order to be benefited by the remedial natural springs there. T. M. Pearce, ed., *New Mexico Place Names*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1965) p 85.
4. Las Cruces, Spanish name for "the crosses", is the county seat of Dona Ana County, New Mexico. It is located 45 miles north of El Paso. *Ibid*, pp 84-85.

5. *El Paso Herald*, June 14, 1913, p 4D.
6. William J. Rand was superintendent of the Texas Bitulithic Company, an El Paso paving concern that placed the first paving in El Paso. He resided at 712 Upson Avenue. *Worley's Directory*, p 477.
7. Cloudcroft is a town on New Mexico Highway 83 in the Sacramento Mountains about 100 miles north of El Paso. The name is descriptive of its location among the clouds at an altitude of 8,640 feet. Pearce, p. 37.
8. Roswell is about 200 miles from El Paso, 7 miles west of the junction of the Pecos and Hondo rivers. It is the site of the New Mexico Military Institute. *Ibid*, p. 138.
9. Harry L. Oldham was assistant city clerk for El Paso. He lived at 1411 North Campbell Street. *Worley's Directory*, p. 444.
10. Charles A. Brann was a reporter for the El Paso Herald. He lived at 504 Upson. *Ibid*, p. 174.
11. The Sheldon Hotel, located on Pioneer Plaza at Mills and North Oregon streets (present location of the Plaza Hotel), was operated by the Orndorff Hotel Corporation. The manager was Burt Orndorff. *Ibid*, p. 331.
12. Anthony is on U. S. Highway 80-85, twenty miles north of El Paso on the Texas-New Mexico border. Pearce, p. 8.
13. Robert H. Rinehart was an El Paso real estate man with offices at 207 Mills Building. He resided at 325 Prospect. *Worley's Directory*, p. 486.
14. Cutter is a small community located 14 miles southeast of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. Pearce, p. 44.
15. Engle is on New Mexico Highway 52 at a junction with the Santa Fe Railroad 9 miles east of the Elephant Butte reservoir. *Ibid*, p. 54.
16. *El Paso Herald*, June 16, 1913, p. 7.
17. *Ibid*.
18. *Ibid*
19. Vado, Spanish for "ford", is a farming community on U. S. Highway 80 15 miles southeast of Las Cruces, New Mexico. Pearce, p. 174.
20. Berino is a town on U. S. Highway 80 nineteen miles southeast of Las Cruces. It was formerly the town of Cottonwood on the route of the Butterfield Overland Mail. *Ibid*, p. 15.
21. The Mills Building, built by General Anson Mills, is located at the northwest corner of North Oregon and Pioneer Plaza in El Paso. *Worley's Directory*, p. 416.
22. Pioneer Plaza began at the intersection of San Francisco and South El Paso streets and extended east to North Oregon Street opposite Mills. It was formerly known as Little Plaza. *Ibid*, p. 104.
23. *El Paso Herald*, June 16, 1913, p. 7.

Inflation note: In 1903 Halstead's Lunchroom proclaimed their Merchant's Lunch to be "one of the finest ever served in El Paso for 15 cents." It was quite a meal:

Soup	Vegetables
Prime Rib Roast	
Beef Stew and Potatoes	
Roast Mutton	
Brown Sweet Potatoes	
Italian Spaghetti.	

—Bryan Wells Brown, *Boyhood in Early El Paso—1903*.
 PASSWORD, v. XV, 52

MY LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE MESILLA TIMES

by REX W. STRICKLAND

Two requisites for successful historical research are curiosity and chance good fortune: the first stimulates the adrenalin and the second favors fools. So it was with my discovery of the extant copies of the *Mesilla Times*. In 1960 I was researching a facet of early El Paso history and found that Colonel John R. Baylor had killed the editor of the *Times* on the streets of Mesilla in December, 1861; *ergo*, if an editor, then a newspaper. Perhaps, I reasoned, the most obvious place to make inquiry about a frontier newspaper would be the locale of its origin and so it proved. In a manner which I do not recall I learned that Chester Linscheid, then librarian at New Mexico State College (now New Mexico State University), had discovered and reproduced some twenty issues of the frontier journal. A journey up the sun lit valley to Las Cruces, a cordial welcome by Linscheid, a peek at the photostatic copies and I fell in love with the *Mesilla Times*.

That fall, if tricky memory does not fail me, I began a search for the existing original copies and located them scattered, one here and two there, from the Bancroft and the Huntington libraries to the Library of Congress,¹ the New York Historical Society Library and points between. In all, I recovered nineteen copies, photostats, of course. Of these, I had seen only one original copy (June 30, 1861), property of the University of Texas at El Paso until the aforesaid Dame Good Fortune strode in from the wings.

In some way, again unrecollected, I found that Bredett Murray, co-editor of the *Times*, had established the first newspaper in Denison, Texas, in 1872. To one born in Grayson County, Texas, the next step was clear: I wrote the editor of the Denison *Herald* asking if Bredett Murray had founded the *Herald*; no, he answered—the *Herald* had bought out his interest in the Denison *News* in 1881. Further he could not say concerning the printer's career, but why not contact his descendants, suggesting the name of a grandson in Richardson, Texas to whom I might make inquiry. This gentleman was unable to assist me in my pursuit of his grandfather's activity but his cousin, Florence McDonald, he asserted, was the historian of the family. She lived in Las Vegas, Nevada. Another letter and a long wait and then I reached the end of the rainbow. A gracious letter arrived with a fragmented copy of the *Mesilla Times*, October 17, 1861, a picture of Murray in his old age, and a biographical sketch, written by his daughter, Dulce Murray, in 1926.² But more interestingly, the letter informed me that she also had in her possession a picture of Murray made in 1860 by a process that involved a glass plate. "I will gladly lend it to you if you think it will be of any use to you."

She had been told in Las Vegas that the glass plate picture could not

be reproduced on photographic paper; I assured my friend that I was quite sure George Schalkhauser, then engaged in printing the Aultman Collection from glass plates for our local libraries, would be able to effect the transfer most satisfactorily.³ Time lapsed, holidays and academic affairs intervened until late in January, 1962, I received this gracious letter

Now that the Christmas rush is over and the mail is lighter I'll attempt to send you my precious pictures of my Grandfather and Great-uncle, Mr. B. C. Murray and Dr. L. S. Owings, resp.

It is my hope that a successful reproduction can be made of each

P. S. Thought you might be interested in this old Map. If so, have it photostated and return.⁴

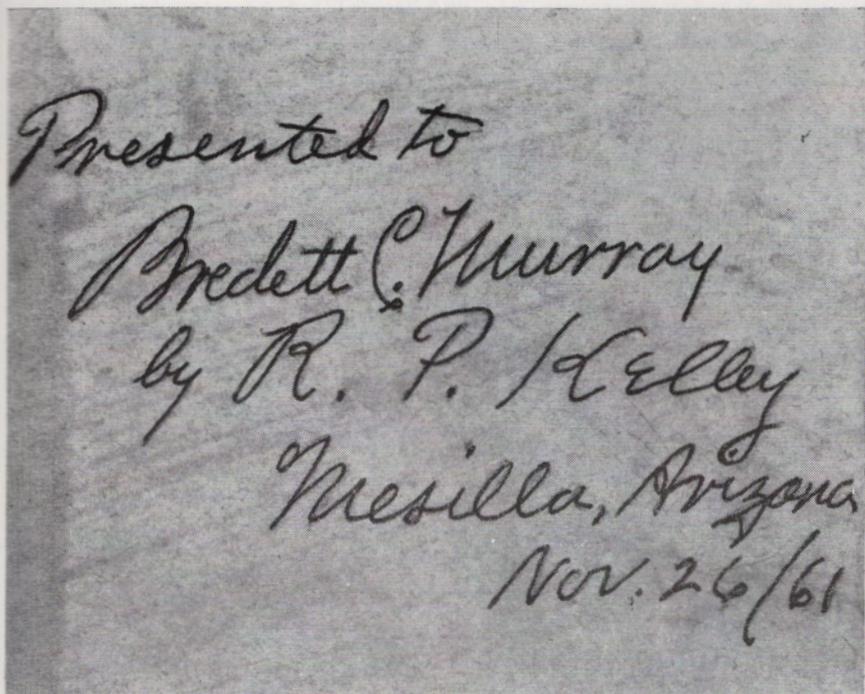
The package, so eagerly awaited, arrived on the morning of January 31;⁵ it contained not one but two pictures of L. S. Owings, one of young Bredett Murray and the R. P. Kelley's Map of the Territory of Arizona,



Robert P. Kelley's map of the Arizona Territory, presented to Bredett C. Murray during the Civil War. See autographed jacket on following page.

one of the rarest examples of American cartography.⁶ It carries this inscription written in pencil, "Presented to Bredett C. Murray by R. P.

Kelley, Nov. 26/61." This may well be the only extant autograph of the senior editor of the *Mesilla Times*.



Presented to
Fredett C. Murray
by R. P. Kelley
Mesilla, Arizona
Nov. 26/61

The various mechanics of reproduction were set in motion: the issue of the *Times* was photostated; George Schalkhauser made gloss prints of the portraits; Lyman Dutton's ingenuity devised a metal plate from which the map was reproduced with amazing fidelity. In accordance with my promises I returned the original copy of the *Times* and a photostat of each item (newspaper, pictures and map) to Mrs. McDonald with the admonition that she acknowledge their receipt and the request that she confirm her Las Vegas address before I committed the priceless portraits and map to the mail. Call my caution a premonition, if you will, but the answer which I sought never came; she, I am afraid, had passed from earth. But her kindness had increased my collection of *Mesilla Times* photostats to twenty.

But Dame Good Fortune had one more gift for her humble solicitor. Some one—could it have been Linscheid?—informed me that R. P. Kelley's granddaughter-in-law, Mrs. Ralph P. (Ruby) Kelley, Senior, a resident of San Antonio, had two copies of the *Times*. The hint was correct: she had the issues of April 13, 1861, and January 1, 1862.⁷ In time, in keeping with her promise, she sent me the photostats of both copies.⁸ Now my store had grown to twenty-two. Mrs. Kelley, who got

her information from her father-in-law in his old age, supplied me with the bulk of the data I have concerning R. P. Kelley, the editor. This twice repeated story mixes fact and legend but some essential sources come through. She wrote

According to the information I have, Robert Kelley was born in Kentucky. He came to San Antonio around 1850 and married a San Antonio girl, Jane Lyons . . . the daughter of Dr. K. D. Lyons . . . He (Kelley) went west to make a survey of Arizona when it was to be admitted as a territory. During that time his wife was staying in Missouri and Homer, Ill.⁹



BREDETT CORYDON MURRAY,
editor of the Mesilla Times

to Mesilla. The Kelley family traditions maintain that most of his estate was misappropriated by his executor, D. W. Hughes, a cousin, who "after (he) got through, less than a \$100.00 was sent to the widow." She sold her Texas land at fifty cents per acre and took in sewing to raise her three small children. "Later she married a man named Roberts, who supplied meat to the Army in Santa Fe."¹⁰

In another letter, Ruby Kelley shed light upon a frontier tragedy related in the *Times* issue of April 13, 1861.

. . . It also has an account of another cousin, named Hagger, who was massacred. Grandpa Kelley had his body preserved to ship home, but the war intervened, and they were buried together in the Masonic Cemetery in Las Cruces.¹¹

With the acquisition of the two photostats from Mrs. Kelley my store of the *Mesilla Times* numbered twenty-two facsimiles. They made up a sizeable bundle, measuring overall thirty inches in length, twenty-four inches in width and near a foot in depth. The stack rested on top of a

file cabinet in my office in the Liberal Arts Building at the University of Texas at El Paso in company with Xerox reproductions of the tax rolls of El Paso County, 1854-1860 and 1866-1872, an even more bulky package. During the years when I had these rare documents in my custody my office was a mecca for scholars of repute (I remember Davis Weber, Boyd Finch and Leland Sonnichsen as examples) who consulted both series profitably. The primary interest of visiting historians was the *Times*, a veritable treasure trove of data touching affairs New Mexican in the early 1860's. The tax rolls were no less attractive to students of life at El Paso during the war and reconstruction period.

When I retired from my activities at the University in July, 1967, I transferred the collection to the college library and until sometime in the autumn of that year it remained in the microfilm room settled comfortably on a file in the rear. Then one day it disappeared, just that, disappeared. And to this day its departure remains a deep mystery. The loss of the photostats obtained from the national depositories was serious enough in light of the time and expense involved in their acquisition but not irreparable—they can be reproduced. But the numbers furnished by Mrs. McDonald and Mrs. Kelley are lost, I am afraid, beyond hope of recovery. All that remains of the issue of October 17, 1861, supplied by Mrs. McDonald, is an almost illegible microfilm.

Newspapers published far from Mesilla, notably in Texas and California, gleaned items from the *Times* for their exchange columns. The most valuable collection of this borrowed material is found in the Sacramento *Daily Union*, Supplement, September 9, 1861, page 2, columns 1 and 2. The articles were reproduced verbatim from the Mesilla *Times* of July 27, August 3 and 10, 1861, neither of the last two issues is known to be extant. Dramatically the reprints tell the story of the invasion of the Mesilla valley by John R. Baylor's Texans, the evacuation of Fort Fillmore by the Federal troops and their surrender at the San Augustine Pass. No less impressive is the account, contemporary, of the massacre of Emmett Mills and his companions at Cooke's Peak.

While the last surviving issue of the *Times* is that of January 15, 1862, in the New York Historical Society Library, exchange items in the *Alamo Express* (San Antonio) show that Murray continued its publication until about the middle of February. However, it seems from volume and issue notations that the weekly editions were published intermittently in the fall of 1861 with a hiatus of several weeks in October and November. No doubt this lapse was due to the scarcity of newsprint in war times. Indeed, the difficulties of printing a gazette on the frontier during the years of hostility boggles the mind.

To read the Mesilla *Times* is to transport one into another time and place. The adobe town with its dusty, narrow streets trampled by the

overflow of invading volunteers; the passage of wagons and coaches bearing the freight of goods and men; the violent partisanship and explosive emotions of men engaged in the disruption of the social fabric—all combined to provide a unique backdrop for a bizarre and turbulent fifteen months in the history of a small but significant portion of the frontier. During its existence the newspaper was called upon to record a gold strike (at Pinos Altos), the secession of a territory from the Union, a campaign of a war, the killing of one of its editors, Robert P. Kelley, by a high ranking Confederate officer and numerous Indian forays and depredations.

All these experiences and more I have been permitted to share vicariously, of course, with pioneers of a border town and frontier village. To name them here would serve no useful purpose; most of them are remembered because Bredett Murray and Robert P. Kelley set their names and deeds in type and pressed them on the bits and scraps of paper they were able to freight from distant San Antonio in the war decade.

Extant Copies of the *Mesilla Times*

1860:

October 18 (I:1)

Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley
University of Texas Library, Austin

October 25 (I:2)

Huntington Library, San Marino, California

November 1 (I:3)

Huntington Library

1861:

February 23 (I:19)

National Archives, General Services Administration
Washington, D. C.

March 2 (I:20)

National Archives

March 16 (I:22)

National Archives

March 30 (I:24)

National Archives

April 13 (I:26)

Mrs. Ralph P. Kelley, San Antonio, Texas

May 11 (I:30)

New York Public Library, New York, N. Y.
Griggs Restaurant and Museum, Canutillo, Texas

May 17 (I:31)

National Archives

- June 1 (I:33)
National Archives
- June 8 (I:33)
National Archives
- June 15 (I:35)
National Archives
- June 30 (I:37)
University of Texas, El Paso
- July 20 (I:40)
El Paso Museum of Art
- July 27 (I:41)
Texas State Library, Archives Division, Austin, Texas
- August 17 (I:44)
University of Texas Library, Austin
- October 15 (I: ?)
Mrs. L. J. McDonald, Las Vegas, Nevada
- December 19 (II:4)
Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, Las Cruces, N. M.

1862

- January 1 (II:6)
Mrs. Ralph P. Kelley, San Antonio, Texas
- January 8 (II:7)
University of Texas Library, Austin
- January 15 (II:8)
New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W,
New York, N. Y.

The Huntington Library has a copy of the Mesilla *Miner*, June 9, 1860. This paper called a speciman or prospectus was designed to test the public's reaction.

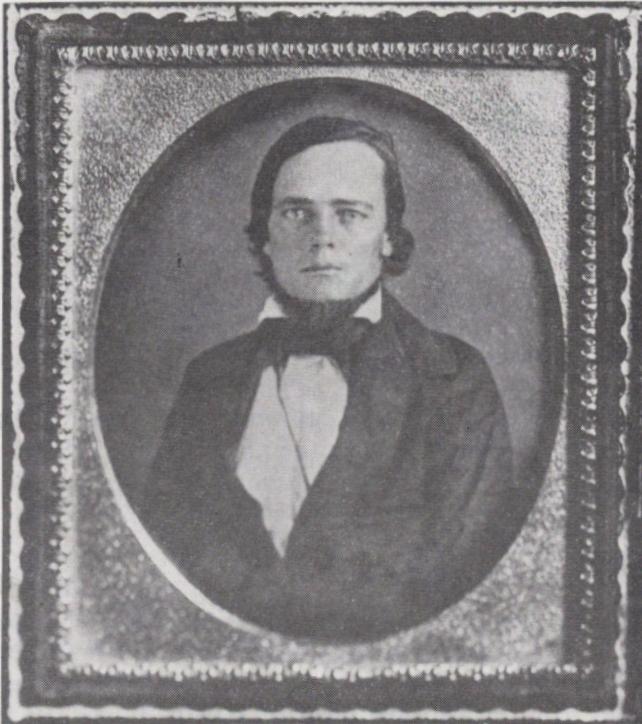
REFERENCES

1. These copies have since been moved to the National Archives, General Services Administration.
2. Mrs. L. J. McDonald, Las Vegas, Nevada, to Rex W. Strickland, October 2, 1961. The biography of Bredett C. Murray, as read by Dulce Murray to the Red River Historical Society, Sherman, Texas, December 11, 1926, follows:

Bredett Corydon Murray, the subject of this sketch, was born in Allegan, Michigan, January 14, 1837, the year his native state was admitted to the Union. He was the only child of Edwin A. and Roxana West Murray. His father was a joiner by trade and much of the inside finishing work of the early home in Allegan is his handiwork. His mother was a lineal descendant of Miles Standish. He entered the printing office of Elisha Basset, a cousin of his mother, at the age of thirteen years. He graduated from the Allegan Seminary and a business college in Kalamazoo, Michigan. After graduation he held a clerical position in the Recorder's Office in Kalamazoo.

He was fond of travel and adventure, and when a lad of about seventeen, he volunteered to carry the mail, horseback, from Allegan to Lansing, the Capitol, to relieve the regular carrier. It was a lonesome ride through miles of country with no sign of human habitation. One trip was enough.

At the age of twenty years he left Michigan and went by way of New Orleans (in this city he did reportorial work for sometime) to San Antonio, Texas. Here he became associated with Dr. L. S. Owings in the merchantile business. Later, when Dr. Owings was appointed Governor of the Territory of New Mexico, (in reality 'Provisional Governor of the Confederate Territory of Arizona'. RWS). Mr. Murray purchased a printing plant and freighted it by wagon train from San Antonio to Mesilla and established the Mesilla Times. At the outbreak of the Civil



*Lewis S. Owings, Provisional Governor of
the Confederate Territory of Arizona*

War when it became apparent the Mission would fall into the hands of the Federal troops he buried his plant for safekeeping. After the evacuation of the troops he resurrected the plant and resumed business at the old stand. The adobe office of the Mesilla Times was in a state of perfect preservation as late as the Fall of 1919.

Soon after the beginning of hostilities between the North and the South he assisted in mobilizing a regiment of cavalry in the vicinity of Mesilla and served throughout the duration of the war on the side of the Confederacy. It was this company which preserved order in San Antonio and vicinity after the surrender until the arrival of the Federal troops to take charge.

At one time during the war he was compelled to swim the Rio Grande; at another time he and two or three companions became separated from their command—had been hiding in the brush for several days and were without food, when they saw a commissary train approaching. Not knowing whether friend or foe, they resolved to reach it and ask for food. As the famished men staggered into the road the negro driver jumped from his seat and ran, believing them to be ghosts, as they had been given up for dead. The train proved to be their own commissary.

After the close of the war he remained in San Antonio and became identified with the San Antonio Express. In that city he was united in marriage, October 7, 1866, with Miss Florence Amanda Swisher, a grandniece of Milton and Monroe Swisher, pioneer Texans—a distant cousin of General Sam Houston and a sister-in-law of Governor L. S. Owings, the latter being the first mayor of Denison in 1873 to 1875. Five children were born to this union, four daughters and one son. One daughter dying in 1903.

In 1868 he went to Topeka, Kansas and for a while was employed as compositor on the Topeka Commonwealth. Not liking that cold climate he again returned to Texas, taking up residence in Austin where he, Mr. Charles Deffenbach, Mr. John McWinn and another man bought the plant of a defunct Republican paper—changing its politics and gave it the name of *The Democratic Statesman*, on July 26, 1871. This was during the administration of Governor E. J. Davis, referred to by the Texans in those days as the Carpetbag Executive and against whom he wielded his pen unceasingly to the end that THAT gentleman was retired to civil life by an overwhelming majority.

In the Fall of 1872, having disposed of his interests in Austin, he came with his family (only the first daughter at that time, the other four children being born in Denison)—to Denison, The Gate City, more often referred to as the "Infant Wonder" where he established the *Denison Daily News* in a small room built of unseasoned upright boards in the 300 block, Skiddy street, now Chestnut Street. About the only equipment he had was a few fonts of type and a Washington hand press. The family was domiciled in a tent at the corner of Austin and Morgan Street. Later a two room dwelling was built on the corner of Rusk Avenue and Morgan Street. This was added to as the family increased and was the home place for over thirty years when it was destroyed by fire of an incendiary

origin, after a hard fought battle of a political nature in the Spring of 1907. The homestead was then moved to 1031 West Main Street.

On December 27, 1872, the first issue of the Weekly News was printed and this was followed on February 22, 1873 by the publication of the Daily News and for eight years the Daily News never failed to get to the patrons in time for breakfast. Mr. Murray never left the plant until the last paper was off the press ready for the carrier. I say "carrier" advisedly, as one was sufficient for the circulation of that early paper and the editor and the printer's devil, alias the carrier, were the whole force.

In 1876 the two story brick building at 112 West Main Street was erected and the plant of the Daily News was removed to the second story and enlarged both as to equipment and force — a City Editor being added—the devil being promoted to pressman and a new devil was installed. In 1881 Mr. Murray sold the circulation of the News to the proprietors of the Herald and devoted his time to job printing which included posters and show printing. It was about this time he established the Murray Power Printing Plant, one of the leading printing houses of the Southwest, and specialized in theatrical and billboard printing receiving and filling orders from St. Louis and Kansas City to Houston, Galveston and San Antonio. In the Spring of 1883 he began the publication of the Sunday Gazetteer, which was referred to by the newsboys as "Your Sunday Glass of Beer," a very significant name in those days. This paper made its regular weekly visit not only to the local patrons and nearby towns but across the continent to California—and across the oceans to foreign countries—China, Germany, France and England until in 1913 he sold the plant to Mr. J. E. Wall and retired from active newspaper work. At the earnest solicitation of the new purchaser, he edited a column of "Reminiscences of Early Days" each week up to within a few weeks of his death, which occurred at the family home February 6, 1924, at the age of 87 years. His entire life was devoted to the upbuilding and betterment of the community in which he lived.

He was a tireless reader and a student. Even as a boy a book was his greatest treasure and he would find something to trade for one he had never seen before, thinking it rare or out of the ordinary, and this hobby of book collecting remained with him through life. He amassed an extensive library, his books covering a large range of subjects, many of them rare and valuable, especially so to the book lover and student. His short-hand library is believed to be the largest privately owned collection in the State. In recognition of his work along this line he was awarded a medal and life membership certificate in the Willis Byrom Club of the Gregg System.

Mr. Murray was active in organizing the Texas Press Association, was a charter member, and remained an active member as long as he con-

tinued in business. As a member of the Typographical Union he held a working card as long as he lived, attending its meetings regularly. He was a member of the Confederate Veteran's Camp, the Sons of Confederate Veterans named their Camp in his honor.

Early in the history of the City of Denison he was elected to the City Council and was untiring in his efforts to quell disorder and rid the city of vice. He always kept the pages of his paper clean, refusing to print objectionable matters of any kind; advertisements or otherwise. His columns were always open for the discussion of legitimate questions. He was always ready with his time, his space and an open pocket book to further the best interests of his home town and adopted state and equally as ready and fearless in denouncing wrong and mismanagement in high places.

He was of a quiet, retiring disposition, loving home life and his books.

His wife died in 1894 and he never remarried. He was a man among men, a representative citizen and a gentleman.

By his daughter,

Miss Dulce Murray.

(REFERENCES . . . CONTINUED)

3. Strickland to McDonald, October 25, 1961.
4. McDonald to Strickland, January 24, 1962.
5. Strickland to McDonald, January 31, 1962.
6. Facsimile copies of this map are available; they were made by offset from a copper plate.
7. Mrs. R. P. Kelley, Sr., to Rex Strickland, January 16, 1961.
8. Mrs. R. P. Kelley, Sr., to Strickland, February 20, 1961.
9. Kelley to Strickland, January 16, 1961.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Kelley to Strickland, February 20, 1961.

HISTORICAL NOTES

GIVE-A-DAM JONES PROTESTS HIS DOG TAX.

One of the "characters" around El Paso in the 90's was a man who called himself "Give-a-Dam" Jones. The official minutes of the City of El Paso, Book I, page 449, solemnly records the following protest, presented to the Council in August, 1896.

To the Hon. Mayor and City Council,
El Paso, Texas
Gentlemen:

The undersigned petitioner represents, that he is an honest, law-abiding and industrious citizen of this municipality; That he has voted early at all of the many elections, both city and county; That he always pays his dog-tax promptly, and his debts whenever he can, and he therefore asks and has every reason to expect, at least, the cold and calm and dispassionate attention of your Honorable Body.

Your petitioner further represents; that on the 30th day of the beautiful month of May, last past, under and by reason of a certain proclamation of the Hon. R. F. Campbell, Mayor of the City of El Paso, duly published and spread broadcast in one of the many valuable dailies with which our city is infested, [he] did pay in good and lawful money of the realm, to the City Tax Collector the sum of two American silver dollars, for dog license Number 480, issued for his one male dog, Rex, known and beloved as a good and well behaved canine.

And he further represents that he paid his said dog tax promptly and with joy in his heart, unsuspectingly, of the dark crime of June the 5th following, when the Republican party demonetized the revenue on dog taxes, by reason of a certain act of the City Council of June 5th, A. D. 1896, on which the tax on said male dog was reduced to One American Silver Dollar per year, for the same identical year that I in my unsophisticated innocence have already paid Two American Silver Dollars.

Your petitioner further represents that he was born in Kansas, grew to manhood in Arkansas, and has lived many years in Texas; That he has never tackled a church fair, or a shell game, nor tried to enforce the Sunday laws in this City, and that he is getting too old to be thus buncoed by a City Council or any other grasping monopoly. Such games may be worked on the representatives of the Effete East, but not on the denizens of the Wooly West.

Your petitioner further represents; That he is a lineal descendant of John Paul Jones, And I never gave up the ship, nor do I give up my hard earned dollars for fun. And I can see Why our City script is only worth 80 cents on the dollar, as you allow those who come last in paying their taxes to receive a rebate of 50% as a reward for delinquency.

Now, therefore I consider this Act of your Honorable Body to be as

dark a crime on the dog proprietors of this city as was the foisting of Cleveland and Carlisle bond issue on the people, and I pray relief from said unjust, exhorbitant, and unlawful taxation and ask the return of said extra dollar thus taxed in excess, as with said piece of money I can refresh myself some twenty times.

And your petitioner will ever prey, &c &c,

Yours (till next election)

(Signed) C. J. Jones.

Alias Give-a-Dam.

The minutes show that the City Council ordered the Assessor and Collector to refund the excess payment to all dog owners who had paid their taxes prior to the passage of the new ordinance.

The El Paso upper valley has some historic names for some of its principal streets and roads—Frontera Drive for the settlement of Frontera, established by Frank White, on the banks of the Rio Grande in 1848—Emory Way for Major W. H. Emory, Boundary Commissioner who helped to establish the border in the upper valley between the United States and Mexico—and Doniphan Drive for Colonel Alexander Doniphan who led his Missouri volunteers down the Rio Grande and into El Paso following their victory at the Battle of Brazito, 36 miles up the valley, on Christmas Day, 1846.

Langtry, Texas, was *not* named for Lily Langtry, the Jersey Lily, as claimed by Judge Roy Bean, but for a section foreman on the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway.

—PASSWORD, v. I, p144

EUGENE O. PORTER MEMORIAL AWARD

The Editorial Board of *Password* has set \$100 as the amount to be paid annually to the writer of the best article in each volume of *Password*, beginning with the current volume. The fund is to be sustained by contributions to the Society in memory of Dr. Porter, who edited this publication for its first nineteen volumes. Further contributions are encouraged, and may be sent to El Paso County Historical Society, Box 28, El Paso Texas, designated for Eugene O. Porter Memorial Fund.

HERITAGE HOMES OF EL PASO

by HARRIOT HOWZE JONES

THE HARVEY HACIENDA

The handsome hacienda at 3100 Gold Avenue was built in 1928-29 for Mr. and Mrs. Paul Harvey by Mabel C. Welch.



Paul and Kay Harvey residence, 3100 Gold Avenue

(Photo by M. G. McKinney)

Mabel Welch is a remarkable woman, and it is of interest to learn something about her. This is a time when much is heard about "Woman's Lib," and women demanding equal rights and opportunities, but this woman has been building houses in El Paso since 1927, over eight hundred of them, mostly in Spanish style. The designs and specifications are her own. She is architect, contractor and builder, and has always bossed the job from the ground up. These accomplishments have usually been associated entirely with men.

Mabel Welch, (nee Vanderburg) was born in Longtown, Mississippi, but went to De Kalb, Texas with her parents in 1899, where she grew up and met and married Malcolm H. Welch. They were married in 1915 and came to El Paso in 1916. As "M. H. Welch, General Contracting and Building Company" they started, in 1919, to build houses in El Paso. Malcolm Welch preferred to construct only one story houses, and always of dark brick, though his wife urged him to let her design in the Spanish style. Mrs. Welch had degrees in Architecture, and became a Fellow, F.A.R.A., so she helped her husband with designs and learned from him the practical side of building. When a bungalow was finished, if it had not already been sold, Mrs. Welch furnished and decorated it, and they would move into it. Within two or three months it was usually sold, complete with furnishings, and the

Welchs moved into a newly constructed house. This went on for about four years, and over twenty houses were built, furnished, occupied and then sold!

Malcolm Welch died in 1927. The M. H. Welch, General Contracting and Building Company continued, with Mabel Welch at the helm. She had studied in southern California with George Washington Smith, considered to be the foremost authority on Spanish architecture, and in late 1927 she built her first house of Spanish style, at 2905 Wheeling Avenue. During the administration of R. E. Sherman as Mayor, Don Thompson, one of the Aldermen, at a banquet at the Cortez Hotel, gave a speech and in it gave Mabel Welch full credit for changing the architecture of El Paso. Before the coming of the colorful Spanish houses 85% of the homes in El Paso were red or brown brick, as were business buildings. The building for the A. B. Poe Automobile business, which she built in 1936, was among the first buildings done in the Spanish style.

To return to the handsome hacienda of the Harveys—(or the hacienda of the handsome Harveys) it was built in 1928-29 by M. H. Welch, General Contractor. Malcolm Welch had died but the name of the firm continued, and Mabel Welch was the firm. Mrs. Welch has revealed details about the construction. It was built to look *aged*. The house is on one floor, with basement, but at the north end there is a small second story over the garage for servants' quarters.

The walls of the building are of kiln-fired brick. The exterior walls are two feet thick, with a four inch air space in the center. The interior walls are from 12 to 18 inches thick. The exterior walls had bricks laid in an irregular fashion, to appear patched, and in some places were patched with roofing tile. The walls were given a coat of white water paint, then rubbed with a rough textured material which took the paint off in places, leaving a weathered and aged appearance. The interior walls were plastered, then an adobe finish was applied by hand, using rubber gloves. The roof is of kiln-dried hand made clay tile. To give the aged and patched appearance the tile is set in cement in thickness from three to five tiles, with each row of tiles crooked and irregular. To hold this great weight the structural timber of the roof has three times the strength specifications of that for a regular tile roof. The ornamental iron and grill work was buried in strong wood ashes for three weeks to give the rusted-from-age appearance.

One enters a small patio through a little blue gate. This gate was made from spindles of a stair case from the Pierson Hotel. The massive door is sheltered by a stoop, which is framed by brown, carved wood timbers. On one side of the door is a small leaded glass window. There is an entrance hall. The dining room is on the left. The hall continues to the right leading to the four bedrooms.

The living room is on a lower level than the rest of the house. All the floors in the house are made of twelve inch square red tiles. The living room area measures 18 by 30 feet, with walls measuring ten feet to the crowning course of the brick walls. The ceiling height continues with exposed beams which follow the roof line to the 14 by 22 inch beam which forms the supporting roof ridge. These beams were used on the first vehicular bridge across the Rio Grande at the Santa Fe Street Crossing built by Zach T. White in 1892. Mrs. Harvey is a daughter of Zach White. The bridge was replaced by a concrete one in 1929, and the Harveys were able to secure this old timber to use in their house, which was being built at the time. All the

wood in the house came from this old bridge. The heads of the two Harvey children are carved on the largest beam and there are over 200 other designs, carved and subtly tinted, on all the beams. This work was done by Mexican artisans. There is a fireplace, above which hangs a large painting of the Immaculate Conception, rather reminiscent of Murillo. This is very old Mexican Colonial Art. Set in high, near the crowning course of the brick wall on either side of the chimney, are three 14 by 20 inch glass panels. They illuminate the decorated ceiling beams. This feature is characteristic of the Mexican Town House architecture. Two double doors lead onto a loggia. This has been glassed in and has become the main sitting room. It overlooks a large walled patio.

Paul Harvey was born in what was then Indian Territory, but is now Miami, Oklahoma.

He came to El Paso with his parents in 1910. His father, Charles M. Harvey, had mining interests and in El Paso became a banker. Paul Harvey attended Princeton University and the University of Arizona. In 1921 he married Katherine Taliaferro White, a native El Pasoan. The young Harveys lived for seven years at the Hotel Paso del Norte, built by Zach White. Mr. Harvey became manager of the hotel. He is involved with many business enterprises, including three banks, and is on the board of directors of several companies.

The Harveys have two children: Paul Jr. and Katherine (Mrs. Frank Fullerton); they have three grandchildren.

SOUTHWEST ARCHIVES

"Generous Contributions to Our Welfare": The Records of the Women's Auxiliary
of The University of Texas at El Paso

by LILLIAN COLLINGWOOD

It was the autumn of the academic year 1923-1924. The little School of Mines which The University of Texas had located in El Paso some nine years previously was struggling to keep alive: it had enrolled only 86 students that September; its limited curriculum just wasn't attracting the local young people. Mrs. Seamon, the wife of the School's Professor Frank H. Seamon, was worried: she felt that if enrollment didn't increase The University would simply close the School at El Paso and offer mining courses at Austin. And she didn't want that to happen. El Paso was a growing city; its future depended upon the quality of higher education which its young people could obtain. Many of those young people could not afford to go away to college; others didn't want to leave home for additional education. Here was a college, and here were some young people. How to bring the two together: that was the problem. She believed that the School needed to expand its curriculum, improve its physical facilities, build its faculty. And she also believed that the people of El Paso would have to inspire those modifications, for the University Administration in Austin was just too remote. Somehow local Town and local Gown would have to work together for their mutual benefit.

And in Mrs. Seamon's mind an idea took root—one that actually had been planted during the previous summer during a visit to Nashville: she had heard about an organization of Nashville women, who devoted themselves to lending aid and support to (their local) Vanderbilt University. That's it, reasoned Mrs. Seamon: an association of El Paso women who would promote, support, aid and abet the little School on the hill, which School, in turn, would promote, support, aid and abet the future of El Paso.

In a "Recollection" written in 1955, Mrs. Seamon states that she worked all that fall and winter on this project, that the women of El Paso were very receptive to the idea, and that by February she had "lined up" some one hundred women to support the cause of higher education in El Paso. Thus began what was to become one of the most valuable and productive organizations in El Paso, the organization known today as The Women's Auxiliary of The University of Texas at El Paso.

Last February the Women's Auxiliary presented its files to The University of Texas at El Paso Library. These files (which include neat scrapbooks of newspaper clippings, the minutes of several early-day meetings, sequences of official correspondence, hand-written "memoirs" and "recollections," copies of speeches delivered on special occasions, financial records, and other assorted papers) constitute not only a "live" chronicle of the Auxiliary's activities, but also (because of the nature of those activities) a running commentary on the development of a university and the growth of a city.

The minutes of the organizational meeting record that it took place on March 8, 1924, in the home of Mrs. W. R. Brown, that Judge Ballard Coldwell, the guest speaker, spoke to the women present about the value of such an organization, that Mrs. W. D. Greet (Mrs. Seamon's sister) presented "an attractive musical program," that officers were elected (President, Mrs. A. P. Averill; First Vice-President, Mrs. Robert McAfee; Second Vice-

President, Mrs. A. P. Coles; Third Vice-President, Mrs. Joseph F. Williams; Treasurer, Mrs. Maurice Schwartz; Secretary, Mrs. James A. Pickett), that dues were set at \$1.00 per year, and that a committee was appointed to prepare the by-laws and the constitution.

From the beginning, the records show, the Auxiliary was primarily interested in fund-raising projects (the types of which reflect the changing tastes throughout the years—Mahjong parties in the 20's, bazaars in the '30's, silver teas in the 40's, style shows in the 50's). The membership was unencumbered by theoretical aims, visions of greatness, or educational philosophy. The women simply saw that the "boys at the school" (all 86 of them) and the faculty needed a few things—like a tennis court and maybe a place to eat lunch and some social life and more spectators at the football games. They got busy and raised money, the amount of which increased each year. And they spent the money in practical ways: that first year, the Auxiliary provided the materials for the boys to finish the tennis court they had started; later, the women furnished a "lounge" (the initial Student Union?); around the tiny campus they planted trees and enhanced the beauty of the rocky, dramatic setting; they offered their socially exclusive Toltec Club to the students for their dances; they bought uniforms for the band which began to be formed in the late 20's; they even paid the salary of the band instructor. Meanwhile the local girls were eyeing the increasingly attractive School on the hill (and the boys as well, no doubt). As girls sought admission in greater numbers than the few in previous years, the curriculum had to be expanded (more English courses, art, history, foreign languages). The School turned into a College. The Auxiliary financed a "Girls' Building" (a sort of rock hut where the girls could change and shower in connection with their P.E. courses); it presented silver trophies to girls who won debating contests (Speech had been added to the curriculum); it set up a loan fund for students ("we charge no interest; it is purely a gift to the students from the Women's Auxiliary"); in the late '40's, under the administration of Texas Western College President W. H. Elkins, it instituted a scholarship fund which throughout the subsequent years has provided many a West Texas girl with the means for higher education.

A series of letters exchanged during the months of December, 1933, through February, 1934, shows that the Auxiliary's principal project that year was the provision of a cafeteria where students and faculty could eat lunch. One of these letters is worth noting. Dated February 15, 1934, it is addressed to Mrs. T. W. Lanier, who was president of the Auxiliary at the time, and it is from the "Secretary to the Faculty," who expresses the faculty's gratitude for "the new cafeteria" and for "your very generous contributions to our welfare." The "Secretary to the Faculty" that year was a new arrival on campus, a young man who had recently received his Ph.D. from Harvard University, one C. L. Sonnicksen. The College was building its faculty.

Space does not permit a cataloguing of the "generous contributions to our welfare"—the welfare of both Gown and Town—which the Auxiliary has made in these fifty-one years of its active work. Suffice it to say that it has vigorously, consistently, and splendidly contributed to "our welfare"—and that the record of these contributions is now available to historians, scholars, undergraduates, and all other interested persons.

BOOK REVIEWS

HOME AND OTHER MOMENTS

by ELROY BODE

(El Paso: Texas Western Press, University of Texas at El Paso, \$8.00)

"Home and Other Moments" is the fourth of Elroy Bode's spectacular volumes of vignettes, recollections, memories and musings concerning his own "huge, private involvement with life."

The book is divided into two main sections: "Sketches and Stories," and "Commentary and Criticism." Each of the two sections is more complexly sub-divided into areas that include such titles as "Home," "El Paso," "Losers," "Moments," "The Land," "Reporting," "Reviews," and "Last Moments."

As in his other books, Mr. Bode demonstrates in "Home and Other Moments" that in his rambles through life he sees everything, misses nothing. And he tells about it in words that sing across the pages like music. He chooses these words as a composer might select notes for a concerto. The results are prose-poems so lovely and nostalgic as to bring tears to the heart.

Particularly soul-warming are Mr. Bode's memories of childhood: "that prairie in which all my wildflowers grew." These experiences are those which could be recalled by anyone—typical of growing up, yet so lyrically described that the reader might have difficulty dredging them up from his own prosaic nostalgia.

Equally charming are the sketches on El Paso and Juarez which, because of familiarity perhaps, are particularly enchanting to the local reader.

In his sketches on "Losers," Bode describes the Steinbeckian bums in the plaza, the hangers-on at the Rescue Mission, characters in the "Happy Hour Lounge" and other easily recognizable types. One shares their despair, smells their filth, suffers their agonies.

Included in the volume are reviews of books by two Texas writers, Larry McMurtry ("The Last Picture Show", "Moving On") and Willie Morris ("North Toward Home", "The Last of the Southern Girls"); also, reviews of two books by Carlos Castaneda ("The Teachings of Don Juan," "Journey to Ixtlan"). Mr. Bode is an analytical and critical reviewer, whose observations might escape a less perceptive reader.

The chapter on "Essays" includes two for which Mr. Bode received the Stanley Walker Award for journalism from the Texas Institute of Letters. These are "The Making of a Legend," the story of Amado Muro, and "Requiem for a WASP," the chronicle of the transformation of Austin High School from a "snob" institution of the 40's to its present-day status as largely Mexican-American in enrollment.

It was the essay entitled "The World on its Own Terms, a Brief for Miller, Simenon and Steinbeck," however, which engendered the greatest interest for this reviewer. Bode describes these writers as world famous, yet ignored by "the makers of literary fashion in the United States today." He "goes to bat in their behalf—in hopes that even such brief attention might start to fill the vacuum of neglect." In so doing, he subconsciously describes his own work.

Of Henry Miller he writes ". . . with his facile use of the language, his wide-ranging mind, his tolerance of the world as it actually exists . . . he is an important writer to know. He is, quite simply, an education—a torch that you pick up and become illumined by."

Of Georges Simenon: "... his books are arrow flights. They leap forward without pretense . . . they hum with the distinctive tone of their carefully tailored feathers, they follow unerringly their predetermined arc over specially chosen ground . . ."

Of John Steinbeck: "... he wrote as a man whose sentences are connective tissues which subtly tie the blood stream of his books with the blood stream of your own experience and which thus manage to transmit that rarest of rare gifts: a literature as believable as life."

These quotations describe more accurately than any reviewer could, the writing of Elroy Bode!

The book is charmingly illustrated throughout with line drawings by El Paso artist Samuel Sanchez and beautifully designed by Evan Haywood Antone, Director of the Texas Western Press. Other books by Elroy Bode are "Texas Sketchbook I," "Texas Sketchbook II," and "Alone in the World Looking."

El Paso, Texas

MARY ELLEN B. PORTER

RESTLESS RIVER

International Law and the Behavior of the Rio Grande

by JERRY E. MUELLER

Texas Western Press, \$5 in softcover; \$8 in hardcover

Few rivers have been more written about than the Rio Grande. Yet the hard facts about its processes, its explorations, its meanders, its dams, its controversies, have been largely ignored. Most books have concentrated on its romance.

Mueller has taken a different approach to the river and has outlined its history particularly through its legal and political involvements. He explains how the river came to be accepted as the boundary, and he discusses the hardships, frustrations and successes of John R. Bartlett and William Emory, the first American boundary commissioners (1850-55).

Most of us accept the river as a boundary and think that's all there is to it. But what happens if the channel changes quickly? or gradually? How do you define "quick" and "gradual?" Is the center of the stream to be the actual boundary line? How is the water to be divided, and its quality controlled? Where is the border when the stream runs dry? Who pays for the dams, and who determines how much water will be released and when?

The author is a former U. T. El Paso professor now working at the Department of Geography in The University of Texas at Austin. He devoted a full decade to this study, and it touches on every significant decision and treaty affecting the river: from the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the subsequent Gadsden Purchase to the Chamizal judgments of the Kennedy-Johnson administration and the November, 1970, treaty regarding the Presidio-Ojinaga tracts.

Restless River deals not so much in the problems and discussions of diplomats and commissioners, as it does in the twists and turns of the stream. The author gives us a lot of geology, and numerous charts and maps. The appendix is particularly good as it copies in full some of the more significant treaties. This rather small 155 page book is a quick reference work and guide, and as such it is the most valuable and informative publication of its kind in print.

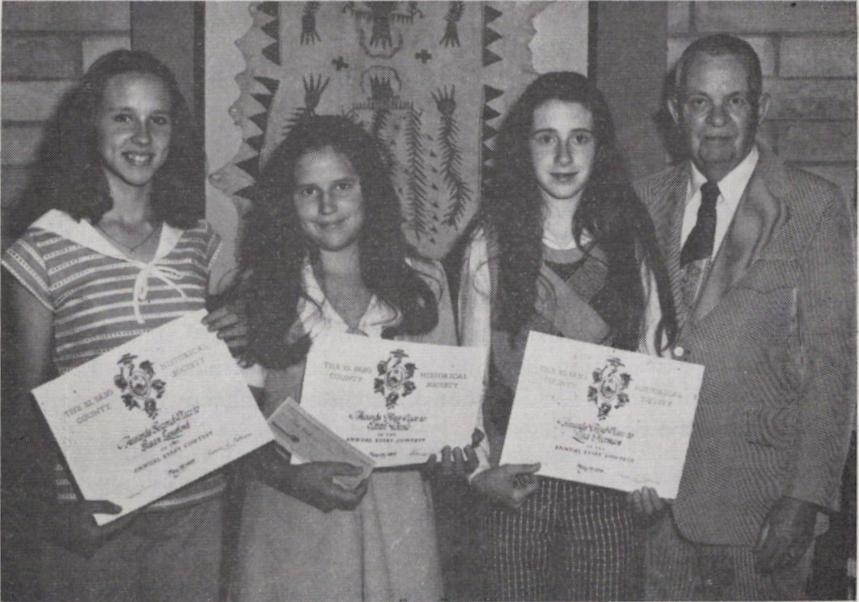
University of Texas at El Paso

—LEON C. METZ

ACTIVITIES OF YOUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society's annual picnic was held Thursday, August 28, in the pavilion at McKelligon Canyon. Members and guests enjoyed an old fashioned picnic, western music, and the featured talk by Dr. Rex Gerald, Curator of the El Paso Centennial Museum on "Episodes from our Spanish Historical Heritage." In a nearby side canyon, members could see the new amphitheater, under construction, at which the annual historical drama of El Paso del Norte will be presented, beginning in 1976.

FRANK W. GORMAN MEMORIAL ESSAY CONTEST



Winners of the annual Frank W. Gorman Memorial Essay Contest, for Seventh Graders, were announced at the May meeting of the Society. Left to right are: Susan Langford, 2nd place, Radford School; Edith Towle, 1st place, Blessed Sacrament School; Lisa Furman, 3rd place, Morehead School, and Lt. Col. (USA-Ret.) Bertram C. Wright, Chairman of Historical Essay Committee.

(Photo by M. G. McKinney)

* * *

The Society has set a goal of 1,500 new members for the annual membership drive, beginning October 15. A highlight of the membership drive will be an exhibit of historical Currier and Ives original prints, November 30 through December, at the Chamizal Memorial. Membership Chairman James Peak arranged with C. W. Wakefield, a member of the Society, and Andrew J. Boudreaux, Manager of Travelers Insurance Company of El Paso, to secure the exhibit from the Travelers home office in Hartford, Connecticut.

October 15 is the deadline for submission of entries in the Historical Memories Contest. Details were announced in the August CONQUISTADOR. Manuscripts should be sent to Historical Memories Contest, El Paso County Historical Society, Post Office Box 28, El Paso, Texas 79940.

* * *

The annual Hall of Honor Banquet, honoring two new members of the Society's Hall of Honor, will be held November 9, Sunday at the El Paso Country Club. Mrs. Philip Bethune is Banquet Chairman, and Ellis O. Mayfield is Chairman of the Selection Committee to choose two honorees, one living and one deceased.

* * *

The annual business meeting of the El Paso County Historical Society will be held at the Plaza Theater, 7:30 P.M., Thursday, October 30. Officers will be nominated and elected for the 1976 year.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

ART LEIBSON, well known as a veteran reporter and book-page editor for the *El Paso Times*, is also a member of the El Paso Bar Association, and holds a doctorate from the law school of De Paul University.

DR. REX W. STRICKLAND, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Texas at El Paso, is a recognized authority on the Civil War and ante-bellum history of the El Paso Southwest. He is the author of *Six Who Came to El Paso*, and editor of the landmark re-publication of *Forty Years at El Paso*, by W. W. Mills.

PATRICK RAND is a partner in the architectural firm of Carroll, Daeuble, DuSang and Rand, and is a member of the El Paso County Historical Society Board of Directors. His father, W. J. Rand, a pioneer El Paso business man, is the central figure of this issue's article.

MARY ELLEN B. PORTER, has been an outstanding book-reviewer during twenty years of *Password* history, and was an able assistant to her husband, the late Dr. Eugene O. Porter during his nineteen years of editorship. She is a member of your Historical Society Board of Directors and of *Password's* editorial board.

LEON C. METZ, with the University of Texas at El Paso Library, is noted as a chronicler of the "gun-slinging" era of Southwestern history. His works include *John Selman, Texas Gunfighter*; *Dallas Stoudenmire: El Paso Marshal*; and *Pat Garrett, The Story of a Western Lawman*. He is a past president of your Historical Society and is Book Editor of the *El Paso Times*. He is currently engaged in his own study of the wandering Rio Grande and its border problems.

SOUTHWESTERN BOOK NOTES

May 1, 1976, has been set by Texas Western Press as the deadline for receiving entries for the C. L. Sonnichsen Publication Award. A special fund established by alumni and friends, to honor Dr. C. L. Sonnichsen, Professor of English at the University of Texas at El Paso from 1931 to 1972, provides a \$500 award to the author of the best manuscript which deals with Southwestern History, Art, or Culture. Manuscripts must be non-fiction, from one hundred to two hundred pages of text. Texas Western Press will publish the book as one of its 1976-77 titles.

