

PASSWORD



The El Paso County Historical Society

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El Paso, Texas

Fall, 1982

PASSWORD

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Early El Paso Churches

by
William I. Latham

Everyone knows that the railroads came to El Paso in 1881. But how many know that churches came to El Paso—at least two church buildings and three churches organized—in 1882?

We know that the Catholic influence in this part of the nation dates back to the days of the early Spanish explorers, when priests came with their parties. The Spanish were seeking gold; the priests wanted to Christianize the Indians who inhabited the region.

Our historians like to think that Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca and his three companions came this way. But there is little proof that they ever explored the Rio Grande further north than its juncture with the Conchos. So history in this area begins with the visit by Francisco Sánchez, who was an old soldier nicknamed Chamuscado (singed or scorched one); another soldier, Pedro de Bustamante; three Franciscans, Augustin Rodríguez, Francisco López and Juan de Santa María; and an armed escort of eight soldiers. In 1581 they came to this valley, noting especially that the area below the present city of El Paso was “suitable for ranches and the cultivation of anything that might be desired.” Later, the expedition split up. Father Juan was killed; the others stayed behind in New Mexico, where they later were killed. Chamuscado and his band of soldiers started back to Mexico, but the leader died on the way. The others reached safety in San Bartolomé.

Other expeditions came north, but it was Don Juan de Oñate in 1598 who finally brought organization. He stopped here, claimed this region for the king of Spain, and on May 4, 1598, crossed the Rio Grande going north into New Mexico.

It was not until 1659 that the Franciscan—García de San Francisco y Zuniga—build a church in El Paso del Norte (present Ciudad Juárez) and established a town. In 1668 the church, which still stands, was completed.

But Juárez was only a stopping place on the long road from Mexico to Santa Fe. In 1680 the Pueblo and Tigua Indians of New Mexico

This article is based on the lecture given by William I. Latham, past president of the Historical Society, at the May quarterly meeting. He had conducted on the previous day a Society-sponsored workshop in church history, organized because of the number of El Paso churches which are marking their 100th anniversaries during the 1980s.



In this 1893 photo a parade moving east on San Antonio Street passes the triangular park where the preachin' tent was used by Christian denominations in 1881-82 while their respective churches were being built. The City Hall was built there in 1899 and it is now City Hall Park. (Photo Courtesy M.G. McKinney)

revolted against their Spanish masters and drove them southward into El Paso del Norte. There were some 2,500 Spanish-speaking refugees and 300 Indians in the group which arrived. They soon spread up and down the valley on the south bank of the river, and the mission settlements of Ysleta, Socorro, San Lorenzo and Senecú were established. In 1692-93 the new governor of New Mexico, Diego José Vargas, reconquered the province but many of the refugees, including the Indians, never went back north. A hundred years later, in 1780, San Elizario was established as a military post with a small chapel.

In 1821 Mexico became independent of Spain. In 1836 Texas fought Mexico and became independent, and in 1845 Texas joined the United States as the 28th state.

The United States and Mexico went to war in 1848, a conflict which the United States won. The Rio Grande, under the Treaty of Hidalgo, became the boundary line between the two nations. As a result of floods, the river had shifted and Ysleta and Socorro were now on the

Early El Paso Churches

north bank in the United States.

At the time of the Civil War in the United States, the years 1861-65, there was no village of any size on the north bank in this are. There were five small settlements: Frontera, Magoffinsville, Stephenson's Ranch, Hart's Mill and Franklin on the north bank and El Paso del Norte on the south. After the war ended, people began to return to this area. There were few roads and strong Indian opposition, but they came back.

In 1870 the Rev. Joseph Wilkins Tays, an Episcopal priest, started a small church in El Paso. A depression in 1873, the opening of the Union Pacific in Utah, and the movement of people away from El Paso, now a small settlement on the north bank, took members from this congregation and in 1875 he, too, left El Paso. He returned in 1881 and built a church and a rectory at 212 North Mesa Street. It was completed in 1882.

In 1881 the residents of El Paso (the town known as Franklin before the Civil War) were holding religious services in a "preachin' tent" located about where the small City Hall Park is now. That year the railroads came and, with them, many families—not adventurers, gamblers and loose women—who flocked to El Paso. The married women, many with small children, demanded two things of their men: churches and schools. The school came in the fall of 1881, although it lasted only a few months, and the churches soon after.

Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church South had its beginnings with the arrival in El Paso on March 9, 1881, of the Rev. J.R. Carter and his wife. Meeting in the old Masonic temple, an adobe building at Mesa and San Antonio streets, they organized a Sunday School. On Thanksgiving Day, 1881, the Methodists formally laid the cornerstone for their building at Texas and Stanton streets and held Christmas services in the unfinished church. It was completed a few weeks later, with the dedication ceremony held on January 29, 1882. This culminated the work of early Methodist missionaries who had visited the area in the early 1850s.

Two weeks after the opening of that church, Parson Tays preached the first sermon in his new Episcopal church building, which was named for St. Clement. The windows had not yet arrived from San Francisco in time for that historic occasion.

Then came the Presbyterians. The Rev. John A. Merrill had been sent to El Paso to organize a Presbyterian church, with that action taking place on April 16, 1882. He had planned to hold services in the

William I. Latham

“preachin’ tent” but Trinity Methodist offered its building. The speaker did not show up because his train was late, but the organization was completed anyhow. In 1883 the Presbyterians started construction of their church, located on Myrtle Avenue across from the Courthouse.

Another Methodist church, the First Methodist Church North, was organized in 1886. Its first building was located on Myrtle Avenue at Ochoa. This group first met in a skating rink and then in the Courthouse. In 1979 the two earliest Methodist churches merged as Trinity-First United Methodist Church.

The First Baptist Church was organized on September 3, 1882. The first meeting of Baptists had been held in the home of Major and Mrs.

The first building erected by a church congregation was Trinity Methodist Episcopal South, for which the cornerstone was laid November 24, 1881. (Photo courtesy M.G. McKinney)





The original Church of St. Clement, Episcopal, was erected in 1882 near present 212 North Mesa Street. This was the second church building in El Paso. (Photo courtesy M.G. McKinney)

W.F. Fewel a week earlier. The Rev. George W. Baines, Jr., a great-uncle of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, was the organizer. He served as pastor until 1889. The church was a mission for five years, then became an independent church in 1887. Ministers from four other local churches joined in a jubilee service to mark the event.

An amusing story is told about the first convert to the Baptist church, August Furman. In February, 1883, he was baptized by immersion in the Rio Grande while hundreds watched from the river bank. "It was pretty much a carnival scene," reported a local newspaper. But in 1884 word reached his fellow Baptists that Brother Furman was not behaving. A committee was appointed to investigate. A full discussion was held when Furman was accused of drinking, using profanity, and threatening to kill a man. Thus their first convert was excluded from membership by the Baptists.

Another Baptist missionary, the Rev. H.W. Read, was active in the church and became the first church clerk. He had been a missionary in New Mexico in the early 1850s and had started Baptist work there, had



The First Baptist Church, fifth built in El Paso, was originally at the intersection of Magoffin (left) and San Antonio Streets with the front entrance of Magoffin. (Photo courtesy M.G. McKinney)

served as a chaplain in the Union forces in the Civil War, had been sent by President Abraham Lincoln to organize the Arizona Territory (carrying a large amount of gold in his saddlebags), and had come to El Paso from the Nevada Territory. But Read had made history in Franklin in 1851, as the first non-Catholic to preach a sermon in the area. That year, while serving in New Mexico, he came to visit "El Paso" (now Juárez). He described the village of Franklin, on the north bank of the river, as a military post commanded by Major Jefferson

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Van Horne. He was impressed by the Mexican community across the river. On his return to Franklin, he was asked by Major Van Horne to hold a religious service. He described it in his diary:

Having returned from El Passo (sic) a day or two since, Major Van Horne made arrangements for a public service in the military plaza (there being no house large enough) and I gladly embraced the opportunity of unfurling the banner of the cross for the first time in this place. The assembly was large and consisted of all officers and men (two companies), American and Mexican citizens from both sides of the river. It was an interesting and, I trust, profitable season.

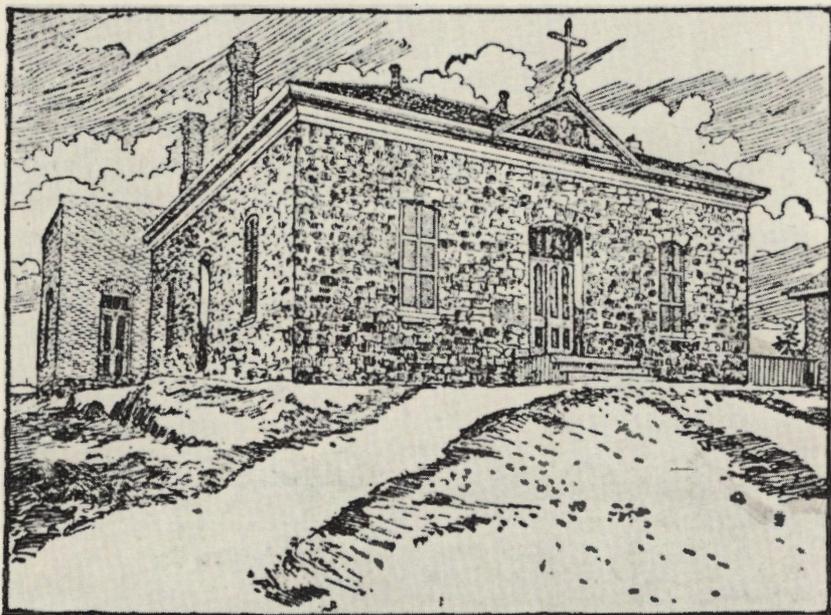
Now I don't know about other churches, but in the Baptist church we sometimes have disagreements. Brother Baines and Brother Read had a falling out over the way he was keeping the church minutes, and in 1887 a showdown came between the two. I have checked the church minutes in detail and find them excellent, although Brother Read did sometimes insert his own ideas. He was quite upset the day the new church building was dedicated in 1885. Dr. O.C. Pope, speaker that day and a missionary of note in Baptist circles, lighted a cigar at the conclusion of the morning service. Again, that evening he did the same as the service ended.

Brother Read wrote in the minutes: "This has been a most eventful day." He did not make clear whether he was referring to Dr. Pope's dedicated services or his cigar smoking, however.

Brother Baines had his way, and Brother Read was removed as church clerk, but continued his membership and worked with a Mexican congregation.

In 1881 Jesuits from New Mexico arrived to serve the Catholic missions in the Lower Valley. With the coming of the railroads, the town of El Paso soon outstripped Ysleta, Socorro and San Elizario in population. Before the railroads came, El Paso's Catholics met in the school house, the Central Hotel or the homes of members. Some took the primitive ferry across the Rio Grande to Paso del Norte. In the nearby settlement of Concordia, a chapel, San Jose de Concordia el Alto, had been built around 1850. In 1872 French curates at Ysleta saw to the renovation of this chapel.

The Jesuits constructed a chapel, St. Mary's, on North Oregon Street with the foundation laid on August 18, 1882. The chapel was completed by November 30, and on Christmas Day the first mass was read



The first Roman Catholic church to be built in what was then El Paso was St. Mary's Chapel, erected in 1883 on North Oregon near Wyoming. It was the third church building to be completed. (Photo courtesy M. G. McKinney)

in the first Catholic church in early El Paso.

During the 1950s El Paso's boundaries were expanded from an area of 29 square miles to 114.8 square miles. The annexed areas included Ysleta, giving El Paso claim to having one of Texas' oldest churches. The mission at Ysleta dates from October 12, 1680, when mass was said and a provisional church was erected. The present mission, burned by a fire in 1907, was rebuilt the following year and retained the walls of the 1740-44 structure.

Another old church now within the city limits in the Lower Valley was, like that at Concordia, started by the Rev. Ramón Ortiz, vicar of Juárez, in the 1850s. It is San José de los Ranchos at 8100 San José Road, where the old church is now the pastor's residence.

In 1892 construction was begun on two more Catholic churches. Sacred Heart at 600 South Oregon Street was completed in April, 1893, with the first mass read on April 30. Immaculate Conception at 118 North Campbell Street was blessed on June 11, 1893. San Jose del Río in Smelertown, opened on December 25, 1892, was one of the oldest churches in the then suburban area of El Paso before it was destroyed

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by fire in 1946. Located at the Smelter, it was rebuilt as San José de Cristo Rey on the west side of the highway. Father Lourdes F. Costa, pastor of this church, was responsible for the erection of the statue of Christ by sculptor Urbici Soler on Mt. Cristo Rey.

Another Catholic chapel of interest was Nuestra Señora de la Luz (Our Lady of Light), built in 1904 by Mexicans on the mesa overlooking the city. They had moved from the valley to escape floods along the Rio Grande. El Pasoans called the area Stormsville and in 1928 it was developed as a subdivision, now known as the Rim Road area. The people relocated and moved their church to Delta Street where it still stands.

The Catholic Diocese of El Paso has known changes, too. At first El Paso was under Guadalajara until 1620, then under Durango until 1872, then under the bishop of Tucson until 1892, then under the bishop of Dallas until El Paso received its own bishop when the diocese was organized on February 14, 1915.

Now, by years, let me mention briefly some of the other churches which came into being in El Paso before 1900:

In 1884 two churches were organized by the Negro community. The first one was Visitors Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, which met in various rented spaces until it erected an adobe building at 408 South Florence Street in 1899. Then came the Second Baptist Church whose first location was in a frame building at Mesa (then Utah) and Fourth. In 1907 the church was relocated at its present site, Second and Virginia streets.

The First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was founded in 1885 through the efforts of a blacksmith, Philip Miner, who had moved to town two years earlier. The congregation met first in a small adobe building at First and Stanton, then in the district courtroom, and later on Stanton Street in a building that was also the post office, and finally in a paint shop on Stanton. Their first real church was built in 1896 at 109 Myrtle Avenue and the first salaried minister was the Rev. Francis Brunner. By 1904 there were 250 members when a new building was erected at 500 North Oregon. The present location in the 900 block of Arizona dates from the late 1950s.

Other churches organized in the 1880s and 1890s that were listed in city directories of that period include: Mexican Methodist Episcopal South at Stanton and Fourth Streets, Mexican Methodist Episcopal North at Oregon and Sixth, St. John's Baptist at 606 South Stanton, Baptist Chinese Mission at 412 San Antonio, First Congregational at

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410 North Mesa, and Salvation Army on Stanton between Myrtle and Texas.

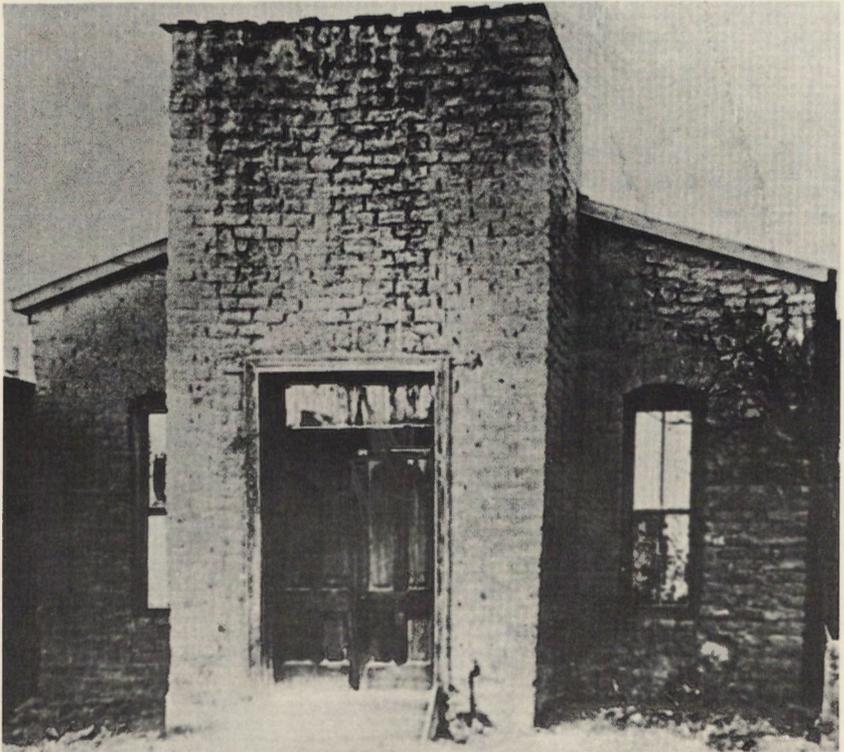
The Baptist Chinese Mission was opened as early as 1886, but apparently its development was slow until the 1930s when regular educational programs were undertaken with the help of the First Baptist Church. The mission at 2030 Grant Avenue was opened in 1951 and gained church status in 1964.

The first detachment of Salvation Army officers arrived in El Paso in February, 1899, with the intention of organizing a corps in El Paso and branches in outlying villages. By 1902 regular street gatherings were being held and weekly services were scheduled the following year in the county jail.

In 1896 a group of Christian Scientists organized to hold meetings in the Sheldon Hotel. In 1910 they constructed a building at Stanton and Montana.

In 1898 the Lutherans organized and met in the First Methodist Church. A building site was given to the church at 1109 East San Antonio Street. In 1922 that church, Zion Lutheran, moved to 2800 Pershing Drive, where it is today.

This adobe building was the original Visitors Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, erected in 1899 at 408 South Florence Street as the second church in the community for pioneer Negro worshipers. (Photo courtesy M.G. McKinney)





The original First Presbyterian Church, fourth church built in El Paso, stood at 119 Myrtle Avenue near the present northeast corner of Kansas and Myrtle. (Photo courtesy M.G. McKinney)

Let me mention briefly our Jewish brethren.

There were Jews here when the town was called Franklin. By 1887 there was a Jewish colony, as such, but no synagogue. In 1887 the Mount Sinai Association was organized. The cornerstone for the first synagogue, at the corner of Oregon and Boulevard (now Yandell), was laid in 1898. The pastor of the First Methodist Church read the scripture; the pastor of First Presbyterian, the Rev. W. Moore, delivered the fellowship address; and the rector of St. Clement's, the Rev. Cabell Martin, gave the benediction.

Congregation B'nai Zion organized in 1900. Its first synagogue was built in 1912 at 902 North El Paso Street.

In 1907 the Presbyterian Church sold its original building and its members were invited to hold services in Temple Mount Sinai while awaiting completion of a new building, just as the Presbyterians had allowed the Jewish congregation to meet in their church before their first temple was built.

In 1916 Temple Mount Sinai moved to a new building at Montana

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The first Jewish house of worship in El Paso was Temple Mount Sinai, erected in 1898 at North Oregon and Yandell. (Photo courtesy M.G. McKinney)

Early El Paso Churches

and Oregon and in 1926 B'nai Zion relocated at Mesa and Cliff. The new Temple Mount Sinai at 4408 North Stanton was occupied in 1962 and today B'nai Zion is planning a new synagogue in the Coronado Country Club area.

The Mormons first came to El Paso in 1897, but a ward was not organized until after Pancho Villa closed down the Mormon colony at Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, in 1914 during the Mexican Revolution.

I hope I have not overlooked anyone. Every year I find more material about early day churches in El Paso, and if I have made any mistakes, I apologize.

Through the years our ministers, our priests, our rabbis have led El Pasoans in the fight for the betterment of mankind. And a little story about a boxing event in 1896 illustrates this best of all.

In 1892 Bob Fitzsimmons, an Australian blacksmith, knocked out Peter Maher, another heavyweight. Fitz decided he was ready to challenge Gentleman Jim Corbett for the heavyweight title of the world. Dan Stuart, a promoter, began to make plans to hold the match in Texas, one of the few states without a prize-fight law. Governor Charles A. Culberson, however, called a special session of the Legislature and made prize-fighting illegal in the state. So Hot Springs, Arkansas, was chosen for the fight and the governor there had the fighters arrested when they arrived.

Corbett, however, was not too much interested in defending his title and offered to vacate it to the winner of a match between Maher and a fighter named O'Donnell. Maher won. Now Stuart had everything ready for the title fight between Fitzsimmons and Maher. But where to hold it?

El Paso businessmen wired Stuart an offer of a \$6,000 bonus if he would hold it in the El Paso area. The town was far from Texas justice, Mexico was across a narrow watercourse, New Mexico an hour away and Arizona overnight. By keeping the location of the fight secret until the last minute, Stuart figured he could protect himself from injunctions, the law and irate citizens. So El Paso was selected and the fight was set for February 14, 1896.

Fitzsimmons arrived on New Year's Day and set up his training camp in Juarez. Maher came on January 11 and went to Las Cruces to train. Stuart arrived February 9.

The purse was announced as \$10,000. Four other fights were to follow the big match, three of them for world titles.

Troubles developed. Captain John R. Hughes, Texas Ranger chief at

William I. Latham

Ysleta, was instructed not to allow the fight. The governor of Arizona alerted the state militia in case the fight were moved there, and Governor Miguel Ahumada of Chihuahua sent 150 cavalymen to Juárez to keep Stuart out of Mexico.

And four El Paso ministers — led by Pastor L.R. Millican of the First Baptist Church — united to oppose the fight. They saw prize-fighting as “primitive, brutal, unrefined.” Stuart paid no attention to their opposition.

First Christian Church was built in 1896 at 109 Myrtle Avenue as the seventh church in the frontier city.

(Photo courtesy M.G. McKinney)



Early El Paso Churches



The original site of Zion Lutheran Church was this building at 1111 San Antonio Street, which still stands. At the time it was erected in 1900, the church was called the German Evangelical Lutheran Church. (Photo by M.G. McKinney)

The four ministers published a statement in the *Daily Herald*, pointing out that Fitzsimmons had killed a man in New York while only in training. It was signed by Leander R. Millican, a range-riding preacher who had once been a deputy sheriff; Adolph Hoffman of the First Methodist Church; Samuel K. Hallam of the Christian Church; and Charles J. Oxley of Trinity Methodist. The ministers thought Stuart planned to move the fight to New Mexico and asked the governor there to stop it. He said he was willing but had no power to do so. Then they wired Washington and Congress, under pressure from Delegate Tom Catron, prohibited the fight and President signed the measure.

El Paso's City Council passed a resolution censuring Governor Culberson for his action and the ministers adopted their own resolution condemning the council for its action. The ministers went on to point out that business houses and saloons were violating the law by staying open on Sundays, that games and races were charging admission on Sundays, and that gambling houses were running day and night.

On the morning of February 14 Stuart postponed the fight. Maher had gotten some New Mexico dust in his eyes and could not see. He reset the date for February 24, but the other fighters on the bill were starting to leave town.

Judge Roy Bean, the "Law West of the Pecos," stepped in on February 21 to invite Stuart to bring his fight to Langry and the promoter accepted.

Maher and Fitzsimmons actually met in a ring set up on a sandbar near the Mexican side of the Rio Grande, some 400 miles below El Paso. The audience of 300 fans stirred in anticipation as the first round began. Then, to their dismay, Fitzsimmons knocked out Maher in less than two minutes.

Back in El Paso, the ministers had gathered around themselves a group that hoped to influence local conditions. Calling themselves the reformers, they failed to sway the vote in the county election and the following year they lost the municipal election.

In time, however, the reforms advocated by these early church leaders came to pass and El Paso was finally cleaned up.

So, on this note, I end my short history of early day churches in El Paso. I commend Commander Millard McKinney for preparing for the History Museum display the finest collection of photos of early El Paso churches I have ever seen.

*“Old Nighthawk”
and the Pass of the North
by
Wayne R. Austerman*

El Paso, like so many other frontier border towns of the mid-1800s, attracted a host of unique and colorful characters. They were the type of men who were often described as “citizens with the bark on,” and they clustered together among the adobes at the foot of the Franklins like so many vagrant clumps of sagebrush cast against a wall by the desert wind. Few of them could match the exploits and talents of the man who first appeared in the valley settlements in the spring of 1861. Bethel Coopwood arrived just in time to play a part not only in the westernmost campaign of the Civil War, but also in some of the other stirring events that followed in a watershed decade of El Paso’s history.

The pilgrim wind had blown from many quarters before it finally carried Coopwood to the Pass, and often enough he had sent the acrid tang of powder smoke curling ahead of him on it. By the time he reached the border he was certainly no stranger to a fight, and he pitched into the war with a relish that seemed strange for a man who had made his living in a court of law.

Born in Lawrence County, Alabama on May 1, 1828, Bethel Coopwood resided for a time in Mississippi before moving to Texas in 1843. Three years later he was living in Tyler County, and on October 23, 1847, he enlisted in Captain John A. Veatch’s Company D of the 2nd Texas Mounted Volunteers. The regiment was commanded by a future state governor, Peter Hansborough Bell.¹

The young adventurer had joined the volunteers to fight Mexicans, but his company spent its term of service skirmishing with the Indians on the Rio Grande near Laredo. After eleven months of this duty Coopwood and his comrades were mustered out on September 20, 1848, and he returned home to Tyler County. He began studying law and acquired a fluent command of Spanish that served him well in later years. At some point during his education he became a convert to Mormonism and journeyed north to Utah Territory. Coopwood was

Dr. Austerman, a history professor, is a frequent contributor to *Password*, and a past recipient of the Eugene O. Porter Award.

Wayne R. Austerman

soon disillusioned by life in the new Zion and got into trouble with the church's elders over a doctrinal dispute. He led a company of fellow dissenters out from the colony only a few steps ahead of some angry orthodox gunmen.²

Coopwood traveled west to California and established a law practice in Los Angeles County in 1854. Three years later he took part in the capture of the notorious bandit, Juan Flores, and subsequently moved to San Bernardino, where he continued his law practice and speculated in land. His business interests prospered, and in June, 1859, he married Josephine De la Montaigne Woodward, an emigrant from New Jersey. Nine months later she bore him the first of fourteen children, a son, Bethel Jr.

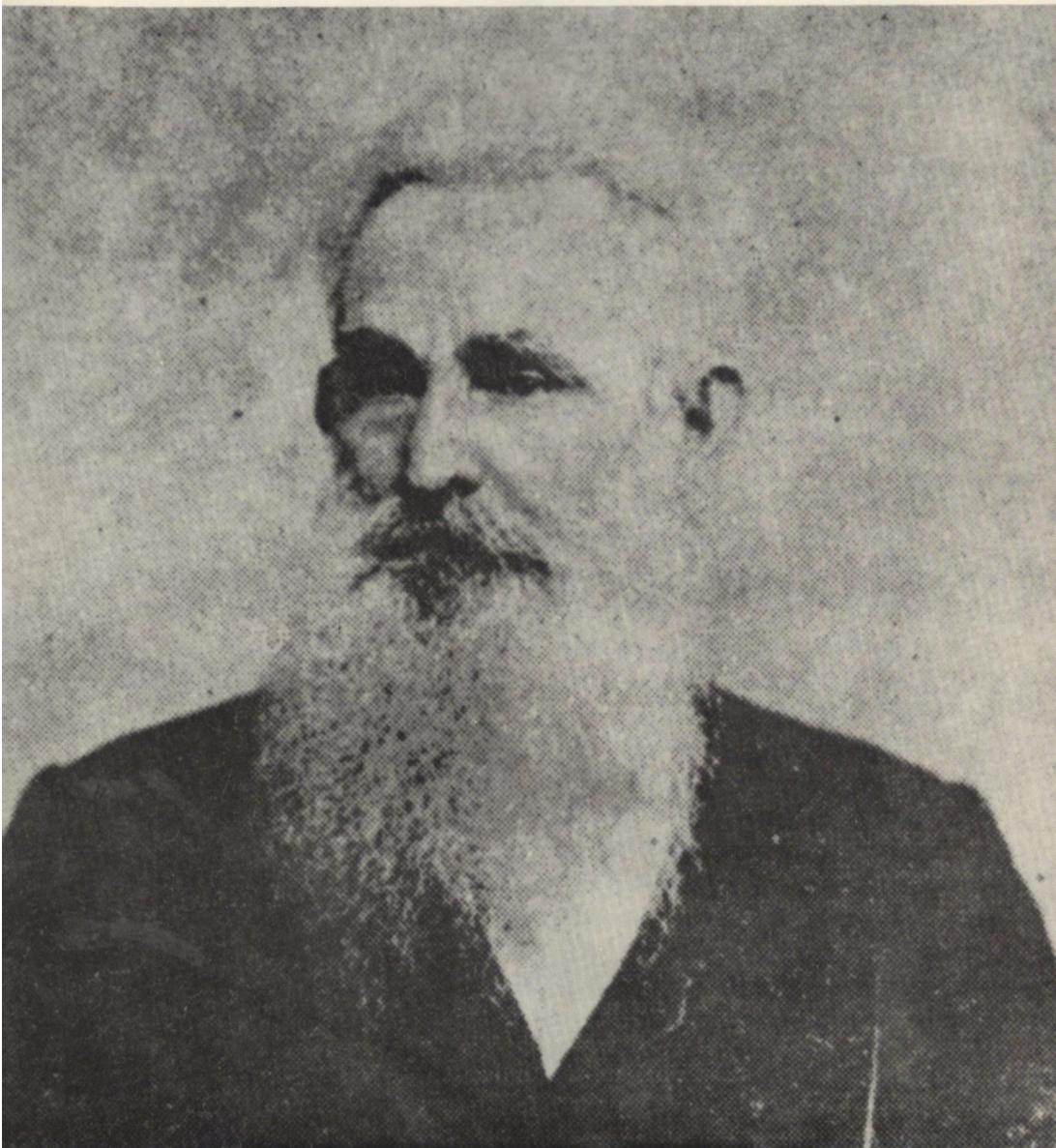
Life was anything but tranquil for Coopwood in San Bernardino. His two brothers, Ben and Davis, joined him in California, and the trio was never out of trouble for long. Bethel served as assistant county district attorney, a position that was bound to earn him a few enemies. The situation was not made any easier by the hulking presence of Ben Coopwood. He was a pugnacious sort, and often declared that "I was born a warrior and peace troubles my mind." To emphasize this point he habitually carried two revolvers thrust into his trouser pockets.³

The volatile atmosphere of frontier California soon gave all the Coopwoods a chance to burn some powder. In 1859 a feud erupted between two local political factions and a gun battle followed. Bethel caught a bullet in the shoulder during the melee. Not long afterward he exchanged angry words with a rival attorney in court and made the mistake of threatening him with a sling-shot. His opponent sent a pistol ball through his leg before Coopwood could find a pebble, leaving him with a permanent limp. Their clients subsequently settled the case by fighting a duel with rifles at forty paces.⁴

By that time Coopwood had acquired a good many enemies, and one night they attempted to ambush him and his brothers as they entered a public meeting. There was a flurry of pistol shots, and Ben killed three of the assailants with as many bullets. The rest of them fled from the hall. Bethel must have wondered if his wife would be a widow before they had celebrated their second anniversary.

When the secession crisis occurred, the Coopwood brothers joined a band of fellow Southerners and left California for Texas, arriving sometime prior to the actual outbreak of war. Secession fever had already swept through El Paso, and the Anglo population was receptive to Coopwood's call for the organization of a volunteer force.

"Old Nighthawk"



Bethel Coopwood

Dubbed the "San Elizario Spy Company," it gained its first recruits as early as April 1, when young Enrique B. D'Hamel took the oath at El Paso. D'Hamel described his comrades as "Texas backwoodsmen, ranchers and cowboys who knew the country from San Antonio to Santa Fe, and from mountain to mountain on both sides of the Rio Grande River. Most of the men has been Indian fighters." Coopwood's first sergeant, a former United States regular named James H. Coulter, drilled some discipline into this roughhewn crew, and before long the company numbered 51 men who were ready to follow Coopwood's guidon against the Yankees.⁵

That spring there was a series of harassing raids directed against the Union garrison of Fort Fillmore, New Mexico, by the El Pasoans. Trooper D'Hamel recalled an April descent on the post's stock herd that netted a large number of animals for the Confederates. On June 18 the Texans stole upriver again to stage a similar raid that carried off 41 horses and mules from within sight of the fort's flagpole. These were small affairs at best, but they gave the volunteers confidence in themselves and their leader. By the time Lieutenant Colonel John R. Baylor arrived at the Pass in mid-July with the 2nd Regiment of Texas Mounted Rifles, Coopwood's men were ready to see some genuine fighting.⁶

The San Elizario Spy Company was officially mustered into Confederate service at Fort Bliss on July 11, 1861. It was bound to Baylor's command for a term of twelve months. That day marked the start of a long and arduous campaign for the Pasaños, as Baylor was preparing to march up the Rio Grande and seize New Mexico for the South. Over the next ten months Coopwood would lose at least a quarter of his company to wounds and disease.⁷

The Spy Company was immediately sent westward to scout the region for Union activity and rally the pro-Southern settlers in the few scattered settlements. In mid-July Coopwood appeared at the mining community of Pinos Altos and exhorted the residents to march east and join Baylor. There was a great deal of bitter discussion among the miners after he departed, with Union sentiment still running strong among many of them. Thomas J. Mastin formed the secessionists into a military company of some 61 men, calling them the "Arizona Guards," and assuming command of the unit on July 18. Within a week they had ridden east to join the Confederates.⁸

By July 25 Baylor had led his small force upriver to occupy Mesilla. He deployed his men in the town to deal with an expected attack from

"Old Nighthawk"

Fort Fillmore. That afternoon Major Isaac Lynde of the 7th U.S. Infantry sortied from the post with 380 men and four howitzers to deal with the rebels. He crossed the river southeast of Mesilla and advanced on Baylor's troops, demanding their immediate and unconditional surrender. The Confederate officer informed Lynde that if he wanted the town he would have to fight for it.

Coopwood's men had already returned from their scouting mission, and Baylor kept them mounted while the rest of his force fought on foot. The Spy Company helped to create a ruse that confused Lynde as he prepared to attack the outnumbered Texans. The *Mesilla Times* gleefully recounted how "Capt. Coopwood's company had been continually employed in deploying among the houses and corrals, first appearing mounted and then on foot, and appearing in many different directions. This and other movements, and the appearance of men far and near, at many different points, succeeded in greatly deceiving the enemy as to our real force."⁹

The Union attack proved to be a half-hearted effort at best, and after the nervous Lynde suffered a few casualties he hastily retreated back to Fort Fillmore. On July 27 the garrison set fire to the post and Lynde led it out on a retreat to Fort Stanton, over 140 miles to the northeast. The regiment skirted the Texans' position and struck out for the Organ Mountains. The intense heat of the day punished the Union infantrymen as they struggled to keep their baggage and supply wagons moving over the rough trail, and before long their canteens were empty.

As they approached San Augustin Pass they met a small cavalry detachment that had been sent south from Fort Craig under the command of Captain Alfred Gibbs. By this time Lynde's force was exhausted and strung out over several miles of desert trail with little discipline or organization remaining. Off to the southwest rose a pillar of dust, marking Baylor's pursuit as it gained on the fleeing Federals.¹⁰

Major Lynde took a small party of men and rode on through the pass to reach San Augustin Springs. Two dozen of the soldiers collapsed in exhaustion at the waterholes and could not be revived. The rest of the detachment followed Lynde as he returned to the main column with all the water he could carry. In the meantime Baylor had closed on the Union force's rear and firing had broken out. Lynde sent Captain Gibbs and his cavalry to organize a delaying action while the rest of the command was taken through the pass.

Nothing went right for Lynde that day. While the Confederates at-

tacked the frazzled tail of the column, Baylor took Captain Peter Hardeman's Company A of the Mounted Rifles and Coopwood's men east through a shortcut in the mountains to reach San Augustine Springs shortly after Lynde had departed to rejoin his troops. The Texans quickly captured the soldiers resting there. Coopwood's troopers gleefully buckled on their cartridge boxes and seized their prisoners' new Springfield rifled-muskets to replace their own motley collection of shotguns and squirrel rifles.

Swinging back to the west, Baylor and his escort rejoined the fighting against the enemy's rearguard. Hardeman and Coopwood swept forward, their Springfields crackling. After Coopwood's men took a position that allowed them to enfilade Gibbs' cavalry from the flank the Union line collapsed. By that evening Lynde and about 500 of his men had surrendered to the Texans. The San Elizario Spy Company could claim a good share of the credit for Baylor's victory.¹¹

With all of New Mexico south of Fort Craig cleared of Union forces, Baylor formally took possession of what was called the "Territory of Arizona," decreeing that it encompassed all of modern New Mexico and Arizona below the 34th parallel. As military governor he assigned part of the responsibility for patrolling this huge expanse of desert and mountains to Coopwood's company.

After paroling Lynde's force and securing Fort Fillmore, Baylor learned that the garrisons of Fort Buchanan and Fort Breckinridge, posts to the west, had earlier been ordered to join Lynde on the Rio Grande. Four companies of the 1st U.S. Dragoons under Captain Isaiah N. Moore could be expected in the vicinity of Mesilla at any time. Baylor moved upriver along the western bank and took station at the hamlet of Picacho to await the approach of this new threat. While at Picacho he met another party of Southerners who were headed east from California. It was led by General Albert Sidney Johnston, who had just resigned his commission in the United States Army to offer his services to the Confederacy.¹²

At Baylor's insistence Johnston tarried long enough to assume temporary command of the Mounted Rifles and organize an outpost line to give warning of Moore's approach. He sent Coopwood's company forward to scout the country toward the Mimbres and Gila rivers. The old Butterfield Trail stretched before them, its length dotted with the ruins of stage stations that had been destroyed by a wave of Apache raids that spring. At Goodstight Station, 38 miles west of Picacho, Coopwood met another small party of men from Pinos Altos. Among them was a

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former employee of the mail company, James H. Tevis. Tevis had recently escaped from the Apache chieftain Cochise's hand. During his captivity he had been forced to watch while two companions had been suspended head-down over an open fire and died in agony.¹³

Tevis happily enlisted in Coopwood's company, for he had passed the scene of another recent killing only a few days before while traversing the narrow pass of Cooke's Canyon. No white men, Union or Confederate, were safe in that country unless they traveled in large groups.

With their new recruits as guides, the scouts pressed westward, finally locating Moore's cavalry on the Mimbres, and shadowing it as it moved toward the Rio Grande. Coopwood reported to Johnston that the Federals were apparently unaware of Lynde's defeat and marched along without any great concern for their security. Moore went into camp at Cooke's Spring, only 52 miles from Picacho, and Johnston knew that with Coopwood watching them they could not move farther east without being detected.

The Northerners might have advanced into an ambush had not a courier slipped past Coopwood's patrols on the night of August 6 and warned Moore of Lynde's capture. The dragoons quickly burned their supply wagons and swung off to the northeast, marching fast to bypass Johnston's men at Picacho and reach Fort Craig on the river above. Coopwood's company was not strong enough to contest Moore's larger force, and while the warning was carried back to Picacho, the Texans' cavalry mounts were too worn out with hard service to permit them to move ahead of the Yankees and cut them off west of the Rio Grande.¹⁴

On August 8 Johnston relinquished command to Baylor and continued on his journey east to assume leadership of the Confederate forces in Tennessee. The Texan's final period in charge was to be short-lived, for on July 8 the Confederate government had ordered Brigadier General Henry H. Sibley to proceed from Richmond to San Antonio, where he would fit out a major expeditionary force to drive the remaining Union troops from the Southwest. Until Sibley and his new army arrived Baylor could only conduct a campaign of small-scale harassment against Union Colonel Edward R.S. Canby, who was organizing his command at his headquarters in Santa Fe.

One of Canby's earliest actions following the Lynde debacle was to order the reinforcement of Fort Craig, the Union bastion on the river, 117 miles north of Mesilla. With the earlier abandonment of Fort Stanton, this post was the only surviving Federal strongpoint south of Albuquerque. Any Confederate advance up the Rio Grande would have to

contend with its garrison.¹⁵

Baylor was alert to Canby's actions, and he established an outpost at Robledo, twelve miles north of Doña Ana. Coopwood's company was stationed there with instructions to reconnoiter upriver toward Fort Craig. The lawyer turned cavalryman was as aggressive in the field as he had been at the bar. On August 21 the Spy Company fought a skirmish with some Union troops and New Mexico militiamen who were collecting cattle to drive north to Fort Craig. The Confederates drove off the foragers after an exchange of fire. Only one of Coopwood's men was injured. Corporal D'Hamel took a .58 caliber rifle bullet in his left arm.¹⁶

During this same period Coopwood was leading a scout along the Jornada del Muerto above Doña Ana, probing the area between the river and the landmark of Point of Rocks. He captured three Mexicans in the river bottoms near the abandoned pre-war post of Fort Thorn. They were carrying dispatches to the commander at Fort Craig. The documents had been written by John Marshall and Jake Applezoller, two Mesilla Unionists.

When Coopwood reported his findings to Baylor the two spies were arrested and brought to Doña Ana for interrogation and trial. Found guilty of espionage, they were sentenced to be hung. Baylor hoped simply to terrorize the men into revealing everything they knew about Union intelligence operations, but the hangman was a bit too enthusiastic and only Applezoller survived the ordeal. He was imprisoned and the terrified Mexican couriers were released unharmed. Coopwood's vigilance had destroyed an important source of information for Canby.¹⁷

The Spy Company's saddles never grew cold. On September 18 Baylor ordered the scouts to ride upriver and investigate reports of Union activity below Fort Craig. Coopwood departed Camp Robledo on the 22nd with a force of 112 men drawn from his own unit and Company B and E of the Mounted Rifles. He had received intelligence on the occupation of Canāda Alamosa, a small hamlet about 35 miles south of Fort Craig, and wished to slip in between this new outpost and the main garrison.

Just before dawn on the 25th the Texans encircled the camp of Captain John H. Minks and charged with a yell. There was a brief spattering of rifle fire in the darkness and then Coopwood withdrew. Mink's men were badly shaken by the unexpected attack, but he rallied them, sent a courier off to Fort Craig, and then led a patrol into the village in

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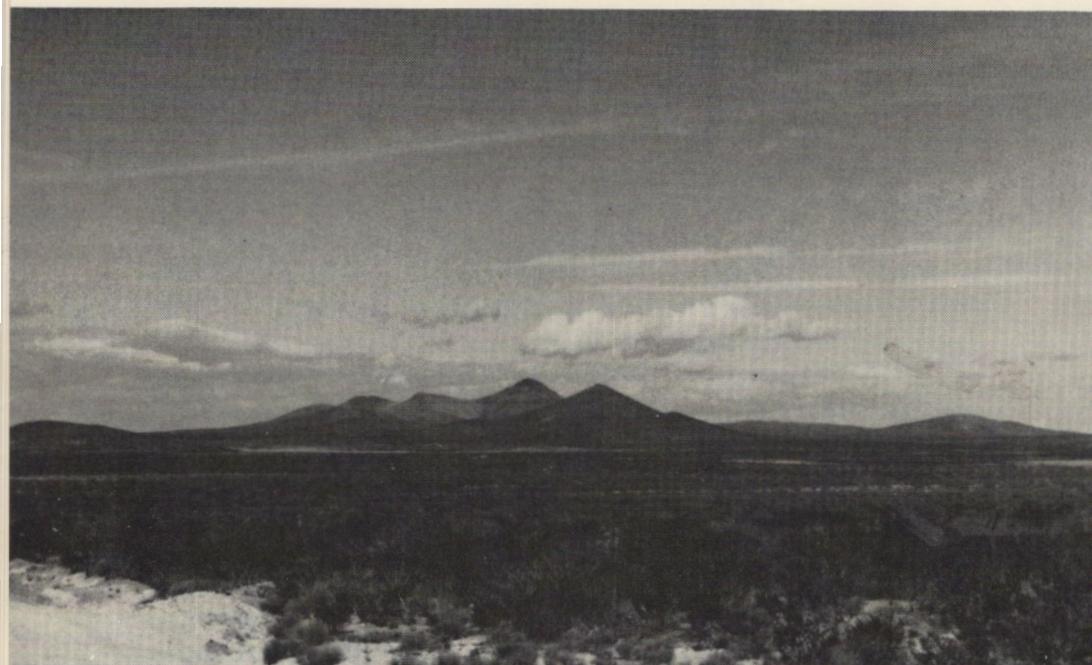
search of the raiders. Finding no rebels, he set fire to the jacales to deny their use as cover to the enemy. It was a mistake, for the leaping flames silhouetted his men against them, making them perfect targets. The Texans opened fire with what Minks called "pretty smark musketry."¹⁸ Coopwood positioned his force on a piece of high ground to the north that overlooked both Mink's camp and his route of retreat to Fort Craig. As the Confederates prepared to mount another charge the beleaguered captain surrendered his 25 men. Four other soldiers lay dead in that smoky dawn. Coopwood's losses had been limited to "one excellent horse killed."

All of the Union troops were paroled and released except for Minks, a sergeant, and a badly wounded lieutenant. After assembling all the wagons and stock in the camp, Coopwood started back for Camp Robledo. His bold stroke on the very doorstep of Unionist New Mexico brought a quick response.

Minks' courier had reached Fort Craig and his request for aid was answered by Captain R.M. Morris and three companies of the 3rd Cavalry. The blue riders pressed downriver at a grim pace, reaching Cañada Alamosa on the afternoon of that same day. They were joined there by Captain Santiago Hubbell's militia company. Together they could mount 101 men for the continued pursuit of the rebels. Leaving a small guard behind at the village, Morris trailed his quarry southward, catching up with the Southerners early the next morning.¹⁹

Coopwood had encamped in a swampy patch of bosque by the river, taking advantage of its natural cover and restricted avenues of approach. The Yankees deployed in a wide skirmish line some distance away from the Texans. Coopwood's troops realized that the range was too great for accurate shooting and saved the loads in their Springfields. The Union soldiers blazed away at the tangle of brush and sandy hummocks. "After about an hour's firing," D'Hamel wrote of the enemy, "they found that they were wasting their ammunition, but in the meantime we discovered that about 30 head of our mules and horses had been wounded in the legs, hence we killed the poor beasts, and formed breastworks of their dead bodies and waited for the advance, but they did not make the charge we expected."²⁰

The Federals tried to outflank Coopwood, but he quickly shifted his men to meet their movement, and, as he later reported, "the principal portion of the battle was fought with the enemy's force formed in two lines, forming the angle of a square, and my forces formed the same way inside of theirs, my lines being much the shorter." After two hours



Point of Rocks on the Jornada del Muerto.
(Photo courtesy the author)

of heavy fighting Morris' men began running low on ammunition, and he ordered a withdrawal, hoping to lure Coopwood out into the open. When the Confederates stood fast Morris gave up and staged a full-scale retreat. Coopwood remained in camp until ten o'clock the next morning, waiting for the enemy to mount another attack, but by that time the Yankees were well upriver. The Texans had suffered two killed and eight wounded. Morris reported six men wounded among his three companies. Coopwood was immensely proud of his soldiers, reporting to Baylor that "I have not witnessed such a display of manly courage and perfect order during my experience in wars. Each officer and man conducted himself as though he thought the destinies of himself and his country were depending upon his action on that occasion. The wounded would not even utter a cry, lest it would be injurious to the cause...I cannot with words express the esteem I have for all who were with me."²¹

Following this action the Spy Company remained in camp at Robledo, engaging in a number of minor actions against the Indians and Mexican outlaws. The details of these encounters went unrecord-

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ed, but Coopwood's nocturnal forays against the Apaches led an admiring reporter for the *San Antonio Herald* to recount that the tribesmen called him "Old Nighthawk."²²

In mid-December General Sibley arrived at Fort Bliss, and by the next month most of his force had followed him west from San Antonio. Coopwood's Spies now belonged to the newly-christened "Army of New Mexico," a doomed legion of some 2,300 men. Coopwood himself, along with several of his men, was not on hand to meet the new commander. They were confined to the hospital in Doña Ana with smallpox. It was not until early in February that the captain had recuperated enough to resume duty.

On February 7 the lead elements of Sibley's force marched north from old Fort Thorn, 40 miles above Mesilla. A week later the entire army was marshalled on the Rio Grande, a few miles below Fort Craig. The San Elizario Spy Company went with the command, now a part of a battalion led by Major Charles L. Pyron of Baylor's Mounted Rifles. Coopwood and several other men remained behind with their illnesses.²³

Colonel Canby had come south to assume personal command at Fort Craig over a strong but unreliable force composed in large part of local militia companies. When Canby refused to give battle Sibley decided to cross the river at Valverde ford, six miles north of the post. On the 21st Pyron's companies approached the river to find part of the Union army waiting for them. A major battle erupted, lasting until that afternoon, when a cavalry charge broke through the Federal line and triggered a rout. The Spy Company suffered two men killed and four wounded in the day's action.²⁴

Since Canby refused to surrender Fort Craig, Sibley decided simply to keep moving north and bypass the post, as he had no artillery heavy enough to breach its fortifications in a prolonged siege. On March 2 the Southerners seized the Union supply depot at Albuquerque, but found that most of its contents had been destroyed before their arrival. At Canby's orders the defending forces there and at Santa Fe had withdrawn eastward to Fort Union. By the 13th Pyron's battalion had hoisted the Confederate flag over the main plaza in Santa Fe. He quickly led on to scout the road toward Fort Union, clashing with a force of Colorado Volunteers on March 26 in the narrow defile of Apache Canyon, and retreating to its western end to await reinforcement. Two days later the spearhead of Sibley's army advanced through the canyon to suffer a stinging defeat in the confused battle at Glorieta

Pass.²⁵

While the Texans were stalled to the northeast in their drive on Fort Union, things began happening again on a large scale to the south. Late in March Coopwood had taken a small detachment and ridden upriver from Doña Ana carrying dispatches for Sibley. He reached Albuquerque on April 1, arriving there to find the town garrisoned by Captain William P. Hardeman's Company A of the 4th Mounted Rifles and Captain James Walker's Company D of the 2nd Regiment. They were supported by a battery of four cannon.

Coopwood had slipped by Fort Craig on his way north by blazing a trail through the San Mateo Mountains to the west of the river. The cutoff began at Cañada Alamosa and looped off through the high country for over a hundred miles before rejoining the river road near La Joya. This piece of plainscraft would later prove valuable to the army.²⁶

On the same day that Coopwood reached Albuquerque Colonel Canby marched north from Fort Craig with 1,200 men and four guns to strike at Sibley's rear. En route he learned of the Confederate repulse at Glorieta and determined to trap the Confederates between the two resurgent Union forces.

Canby arrived at Albuquerque on April 8 and deployed for an assault on the garrison. The small force of 200 Texans put up such a spirited show of defense that after some desultory shelling Canby decided the town was too strongly held to be taken by attack and withdrew several miles before going into camp. The next day he probed Hardeman's lines again and Coopwood's troopers saw some sharp skirmishing and artillery fire before the Federals drew back once more. That night Canby quietly skirted the town, marching east to rendezvous with a force from Fort Union. On April 13 the two armies met and prepared to wheel around for a final blow at the rebels.²⁷

Sibley's army had reached Albuquerque on the 10th and proceeded downriver in retreat, its commander having realized that he could no longer sustain his offensive in northern New Mexico against the superior Federal forces that now confronted him. The Texans had reached Peralta when Canby's 2,400 men caught up with them on the morning of April 16. There was a great deal of cannon fire and some long-range skirmishing, but the Confederates held a strong defensive position and Canby let them withdraw across the river to the west bank without serious interference.

The next evening Sibley held a council of war with his officers as

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they watched Canby's campfires flickering across the narrow span of the Rio Grande. The Southerners realized that Fort Craig, 70 miles below, was still strongly held by a force of volunteers led by Colonel Kit Carson. If Carson blocked their path along the river he might gain enough time for Canby to cross over and trap the Confederates between their two commands. Sibley's men were hungry, tired, and low on ammunition. The only solution was to bypass Fort Craig, and Captain Bethel Coopwood was detailed to guide the stricken army through the mountains to safety.²⁸

The next eight days were a nightmare for the exhausted troops. The rough track of the bypass toiled through the jagged ranges and twisting canyons that dominated an arid wilderness. It was particularly hard on Coopwood and the cavalry, for both advance scouts and a rear guard had to be furnished by the mounted troops. Wagons and cannon were abandoned, sick men were left behind, and scores of draft animals died in the traces as both water and forage gave out. Packs of wolves were seen dogging the army's trail as it struggled southward. On April 24 the column's head reached the Rio Grande at Sheep Canyon, about five miles below Alamosa. One disgusted soldier remarked that "he'd rather fight 20 Yankees than to try another one of Coopwood's cutoffs."²⁹

Despite the hardship and suffering the detour had achieved its purpose. Sibley's weakened army had escaped a possibly fatal trap and successfully eluded pursuit. Canby had not cared to battle the mountains and went into camp at Fort Craig when he realized that the rebels had stolen a march on him.

The Army of New Mexico straggled downriver to Mesilla and El Paso. Sibley had led 2,515 men north with him. Barely 1,800 returned to Fort Bliss that bitter May. Early in the month reports reached the Pass of a strong Union force that was headed east from California to invade Texas. Knowing that he could not deal with the combined strength of Canby and this new Federal army, Sibley issued orders to begin another retreat all the way back to San Antonio. Coopwood and his men joined the 2nd Regiment of Mounted Rifles as it trekked back through the ashes of a Southern dream. When the San Elizario Spy Company held its last formation in Bexar, only 40 out of a total of 69 men on its muster roll were present to draw their pay. They had much to be proud of, for even in defeat they had left a bright record of gallant service.³⁰

Bethel Coopwood's immediate activities remain undocumented. He reportedly remained in the service until 1863. A local newspaper stated

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that he had been given authority to raise a battalion of partisan rangers, but evidently little came of this plan. At the war's end he refused to take an oath of loyalty to the Union and fled to Coahuila, Mexico, where he established a ranch.³¹

By February, 1866, the adventurer was back in San Antonio to sponsor a new enterprise. The *Daily Herald* reported that he proposed to open a freight line to El Paso and Chihuahua, informing the local merchants, "Here is a chance to make a fortune in six months' time." A later advertisement announced the beginning of a mail and passenger service for Guaymas, Sonora, and Los Angeles, California via El Paso and Mesilla. Through passage on the line cost \$200, and Coopwood assured travelers that "the employees of the train will be well armed, and a sufficient number to give perfect protection against Indians."³²

Coopwood's authority for carrying the mail was questionable at best. There is no surviving record of a government contract in his name, and a defiant ex-Confederate was hardly the most likely candidate to receive such patronage. Despite a lack of official sanction, Coopwood's coaches readied for the trail, and their boots were soon filled with correspondence for El Paso.

Even more curious circumstances surrounded his freight service. Not only mules, but camels as well were to be employed on the road for Chihuahua. One student of Coopwood's career has stated that he captured the bactrians from a Union army detachment that he met on the route between California and Texas. The camels were sent to Mexico under brother Ben's care while Bethel continued on to El Paso and involvement in the war.³³

The story of the camels remains obscure and confused. In late June, 1866, several of the beasts had appeared in Coopwood's corral at San Antonio. He had arranged a partnership with the Rev. Velie C. Ostrom to use them on another freight line that served Laredo and Mexico City. Banditry forced the venture out of business, and on April 27, 1867, Coopwood and the minister dissolved the partnership by dividing the herd of 57 camels at the Hacienda de Hermanas in Coahuila. Some of the camels were later sold to passing circuses, but in the mid-1880s Coopwood still kept a herd on his ranch near Austin.³⁴

Whatever the details behind his acquisition of the animals, they remained a secondary concern for Coopwood as he concentrated on starting his mail service. The promised links to Guaymas and Los Angeles were dependent upon other contractors, and he had no control over them, but on April 21 the first westbound mail left San Antonio

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with an escort of 40 armed men. The party was led by Captain Theodore A. Wilson and Samuel R. Miller. It did not have an easy passage.³⁵

The cloud of outriders that cantered along with the coach kept the road free of any threat until after they crossed the Pecos at Fort Lancaster. When the expressmen reached the old pre-war relay station at Escondido Springs they were met by the Mescalero chieftain Espejo, his lieutenant, José Cigarito, and over a hundred warriors. Wilson quickly took refuge on a hillside overlooking the springs and formed his men for a defense of the coach. Guard Robert M. Keating recalled that the Texans were carrying some of the new Spencer and Henry repeating rifles, arms unfamiliar to the Apaches. When Espejo launched his attack, the warriors melted away like grease on a hot axle as the whites poured rapid volleys into their midst. Startled by the defenders' firepower, Espejo drew back and kept them surrounded for two days before finally giving up the siege. The mail reached El Paso safely on May 6, and its citizens celebrated their first regular communication with the east in nearly four years.³⁶

It took some time for the first eastbound mail to be organized, and other coaches followed from San Antonio that month and the next. Captain James Holliday finally brought the El Paso mail into Bexar on June 29 after a quiet journey. The party that followed him was less fortunate.³⁷

Tom Davis, a man relatively new to the frontier, took the mail south from El Paso on July 1. Six days later he was near the eastern end of Limpia Canyon in the Davis Mountains when Espejo's band attacked and pursued the small escort all the way into the ruins of Barilla Station. For almost twelve hours the Apaches battled the Texans in the narrow side canyon, killing or capturing all of their mounts. Davis was badly wounded in the leg, while two other men suffered lesser injuries. As night fell Davis sent his six companions off to slip past the Indians in the darkness. He remained behind to hold their attention in case the attack was renewed. The men made good their escape and walked all the way into Comanche Springs, where they hid among the ruins of Fort Stockton until the next coach from the east came along. It took them back to San Antonio with their grim story, and the mail waited until a stronger party could be assembled to try the run to the west.³⁸

Robert M. Keating went with the next escort. When they reached Barilla Springs, they found the wrecked coach. The mail bags were still intact. Keating saw what remained of Davis. "He had shot himself as

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the Indians were coming up to scalp him," the guard judged. "We found the top of his head and part of his body and buried it." The next coach down from El Paso met them on the road and Keating sent the San Antonio mail with it as they hurried on to the Rio Grande.³⁹

Coopwood took such losses without faltering. He doubled his guards but kept the schedule intact. On August 19 he announced a new weekly service from both ends of the line. Another Indian fight took place that September near Escondido Springs, but Captain James Holliday brought the coach through without loss.⁴⁰

The service continued into November, 1866, without interruption. Coopwood then began transferring the line's management to Frederick A. Sawyer, a member of the established east Texas stage company of Sawyer, Risher, and Hall. Sawyer had obtained an official government contract to carry the mail on the El Paso route, and Coopwood had no choice but to sell out to him after only eight months in the business. He had learned that the rewards were sparse and the risks high in running an express service, but the momentum he had imparted to it insured that the mail line would continue to the west.⁴¹

Coopwood resumed his long neglected law practice, and engaged in a number of business pursuits in Texas and Mexico. He established another home in Eagle Pass, and participated in local politics as a "good, sound conservative Democrat." In later years Judge Coopwood moved his family to Austin and became one of the founders of the Texas State Historical Association, authoring several articles for its quarterly journal. He died in Austin on December 26, 1907, at the age of 79.⁴²

Bethel Coopwood's associations with El Paso had been relatively brief but intense. He had led its men into battle throughout the sere basins and ranges of New Mexico, winning his company an enviable reputation for aggressiveness and vigilance. At this best in adversity, Coopwood's skill as a plainsman had served his army well and saved it from probable destruction during Sibley's grim retreat down the Rio Grande.

In the years immediately after the war his mail line had restored regular commercial transportation between the Pass and its sister settlements, ending a long isolation and aiding in setting back in motion the flow of trade and travel that meant so much to the border community's survival. If he sometimes seemed to have an affinity for losing causes like the Confederacy and camel freight trains, he also possessed in abundance the ambition and optimism that so characterized many

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of the makers of the modern Southwest.

For Bethel Coopwood the game was part of the prize and any well-fought contest was a personal victory. Like his brother, Ben, he was a born warrior, but no enemy or obstacle ever succeeded in troubling his adventuresome soul. Whether it was in the blaze of musketry at Cañada Alamosa or the clink of trace chains on a Concord coach, Coopwood heard the anthem of the great hopes and brave ambitions that had carried so many others like him to the Pass of the North.

NOTES

1. Walter P. Webb (ed.). *The Handbook of Texas* (2 Vols., Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1952), I, 409-10; Martin H. Hall, *The Confederate Army of New Mexico* (Austin: Presidial Press, 1978), 345-50.
2. *Ibid.*; Chris Emmett, *Texas Camel Tales* (Austin: Steck-Vaughn Company, 1969), 128-32.
3. Hall, *Army of New Mexico*, 345-50; Emmett, *Tales*, 129-34, 152-53.
4. *Ibid.*, 152-55.
5. Enrique B. D'Hamel, *The Adventures of a Tenderfoot* (Waco: n.p., 1914), 8-9; Marcus J. Wright (comp.), *Texas in the War 1861-1865* (Hillsboro, Texas: Hill Junior College Press, 1965), 62, 64; "Days of Civil War," *El Paso Herald*, November 16, 1901; Hall, *Army of New Mexico*, 345-50.
6. D'Hamel, *Adventures*, 8; *Los Angeles Star*, August 3, 1861, citing the *Mesilla Times*, n.d.; W.W. Mills to John S. Watts, Mesilla, New Mexico, June 23, 1861; Colonel E.R.S. Canby to Assistant Adjutant General, Santa Fe, New Mexico, June 30, 1861; Lieutenant A.L. Anderson to Acting Assistant Adjutant General, Santa Fe, New Mexico, June 30, 1861, in Horn and Wallace (eds.), *Confederate Victories in the Southwest—Prelude to Defeat* (Albuquerque: Horn and Wallace, 1961), 65-66, 71. This volume consists of extracts from the official government history, *The War of the Rebellion A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1889).
7. Hall, *Army of New Mexico*, 345-50; George H. Pettis, "The Confederate Invasion of New Mexico and Arizona;" Latham Anderson, "Canby's Service in the New Mexican Campaign;" A.W. Evans, "Canby at Valverde;" T.T. Teel, "Sibley's New Mexican Campaign Its Objects and the Causes of its Failure," in *North to Antietam: Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (4 Vols., New York: Castle Books, 1956), II, 103-11, 697-700.
8. Hall, *Army of New Mexico*, 368; Virginia C. Roberts, "Jack Pennington in Early Arizona," *Arizona and the West*, XXIII, No. 4 (Winter, 1981), 327; Hatie M. Anderson (ed.), "With the Confederates in New Mexico during the Civil War—Memoirs of Hank Smith," *Panhandle Plains Historical Review*, II (1929), 70-71. Mastin's company was not officially mustered into the Confederate service until early August.
9. "Sketch of the Career of General John R. Baylor," *El Paso Herald*, November 9, 1901; Martin H. Hall, "The Skirmish at Mesilla," *Arizona and the West*, I, No. 4 (Winter, 1959), 343-51; C.C. Smith (ed.), "Some of Granville H. Oury's Part in Southwestern History," *Arizona Historical Review*, IV, No. 2 (July 1931), 19-22; *Mesilla Times*, July 29, 1861.
10. Hall, *Army of New Mexico*, 21; Jerry Don Thompson, *Colonel John Robert Baylor: Texas Indian Fighter and Confederate Soldier* (Hillsboro, Texas: Hill Junior College Press, 1971), 28-40.
11. *Ibid.*, 41-44; *El Paso Herald*, November 9, 1901; D'Hamel, *Adventures*, 10-12.
12. Thompson, *Baylor*, 44-48; Martin H. Hall, "Albert Sidney Johnston's First Confederate Command," *The McNeese Review*, XIII (1962), 3-12.
13. Lieutenant Colonel John R. Baylor to Captain T.A. Washington, Dona Ana,

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- Arizona, September 21, 1861, in Horn and Wallace, *Confederate Victories*, 36; *Mesilla Times*, August 10, 1861; *New Orleans Picayune*, September 5, 1861; Anderson, "Memoirs," 80-88; Roberts, "Jack Pennington," 327; Stanley F. Crochiola, *The Civil War in New Mexico* (Denver: The World Press, Incorporated, 1960), 144, 211, 217-18; James H. Tevis, *Arizona in the '50s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1954), 217-31. Goodstight Station was located 38 miles west of Picacho, and fourteen miles east of Cooke's Spring. Roscoe and Margaret Conkling, *The Butterfield Overland Mail 1857-1869* (3 Vols., Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1947), II, 111-13.
14. Tevis, *Arizona*, 230-31; Thompson, *Baylor*, 45; Hall, "First Command," 3-12.
 15. Thompson, *Baylor*, 45-50.
 16. *Ibid.*; D'Hamel, *Adventures*, 12.
 17. Anderson, "Memoirs," 89-90. This incident is not mentioned in Baylor's published correspondence.
 18. Colonel E.R.S. Canby to Assistant Adjutant General, Santa Fe, New Mexico, October 4, 1861; Captain John H. Minks to Colonel E.R.S. Canby, Doña Ana, New Mexico, September 29, 1861; Captain R.M. Morris to Captain H.R. Selden, Fort Craig, New Mexico, September 29, 1861; Lieutenant Colonel John R. Baylor to General Earl Van Dorn, Fort Bliss, Texas, October 1, 1861; Captain Bethel Coopwood to Lieutenant Colonel John R. Baylor, Dona Ana, Arizona, September 29, 1861, in Horn and Wallace, *Confederate Victories*, 43-49; Crochiola, *New Mexico*, 231-35; D'Hamel, *Adventures*, 14-16.
 19. *Ibid.*
 20. *Ibid.*
 21. Coopwood to Baylor, *Confederate Victories*, 48-49.
 22. *San Antonio Herald*, September 12, 1862.
 23. Hall, *Army of New Mexico*, 346.
 24. *Ibid.*, Martin H. Hall, *Sibley's New Mexico Campaign* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1960), 83-102.
 25. *Ibid.*, 104-60.
 26. Hall, *Army of New Mexico*, 33-35; *Sibley's Campaign*, 172.
 27. *Ibid.*, 172-75.
 28. *Ibid.*, 175-90.
 29. *Ibid.*, 190-201; *Army of New Mexico*, 36-40; Theophilus Noel, *A Campaign from Santa Fe to the Mississippi* (Houston: Stagecoach Press, 1961), 48.
 30. Hall, *Army of New Mexico*, 37, 346-51.
 31. Webb, *Handbook of Texas*, I, 409-10; Emmett, *Camel Tales*, 157, 193; *San Antonio Herald*, September 12, 1862.
 32. *Ibid.*, February 2, 20, 1866.
 33. Emmett, *Camel Tales*, 153-200; "Camel Trains Once Trod Texas Frontier Trails," *Austin American*, June 4, 1953; Frank X. Tolbert, "On 'War Surplus' Camels at Verde," *Dallas News*, April 3, 1961, "About a Journey in Camel Canyon," *Dallas News*, August 17, 1970.
 34. Emmett, *Camel Tales*, 192-206; *San Antonio Daily Herald*, March 20, June 21, 1866; *San Antonio Daily Express*, December 23, 1868; *Austin Democratic Statesman*, March 5, June 28, 1873.
 35. *San Antonio Daily Herald*, May 4, 1866; *Biographical and Historical Sketchbook of the Pioneers Association of El Paso County, Texas*, Undated manuscript in the Southwestern Collection, University of Texas at El Paso Library, 18-19; C.G. Raht, *The Romance of Davis Mountains and Big Bend Country* (Odessa, Texas: The Rahtbooks Company, 1963), 155-56; Barry Scobee, *Fort Davis Texas 1583-1960* (El Paso: Hill Printing Company, 1963), 53. Scobee and Raht erred in linking Coopwood's operation to that of his successor, Ben Ficklin.
 36. *Sketchbook*, 18-19; *Santa Fe Weekly Gazette*, May 19, 1866.
 37. *San Antonio Daily Herald*, May 4, June 10, 19, 1866.
 38. *Ibid.*, July 20, 22, 24, 1866; *Galveston News*, July 26, 1866; *Sketchbook*, 18-19; Raht, *Romance*, 156-57; Scobee, *Fort Davis*, 54.
 39. *Sketchbook*, 18-19.
 40. *San Antonio Daily Herald*, August 19, September 19, 1866. A westbound mail left town on August 15. See the *Herald*, August 16, 1866.
 41. *Ibid.*, May 1, October 21, November 11, 27, 1866.
 42. Webb, *Handbook of Texas*, I, 409-10; *Austin Democratic Statesman*, July 15, 1873, December 29, 1907.



This photo, made about 1896, shows Mrs. Joseph Magoffin in front of the Magoffin Home, 1120 Magoffin Avenue.

(Photo courtesy M.G. McKinney)

Heritage Homes of El Paso *by* *Harriot Howze Jones*

THE MAGOFFIN HOMESTEAD

This, the second oldest home in El Paso, has been described several times in various publications, including *Password* (Vol. XI No. 2, Summer 1966), but not as one of the series of Heritage Homes, and there have been many changes since 1966. (The oldest house was built in 1850 by Simeon Hart; it is now the Hacienda Cafe.)

The Magoffin Homestead, an adobe hacienda, was built in 1875 by Joseph Magoffin. At that time it occupied four-and-a-half acres of land. Today, however, on one-and-a-half acres, it is dwarfed by a high-rise apartment behind it and is surrounded on three sides by low-rent bungalows for the aged. Yet the house still has a feeling of seclusion, and it echoes to the music of long past festivities when dashing

Harriot Howze Jones

young officers from Fort Bliss, spurs clanking on their heels, danced with the belles of El Paso.

The house has known births and deaths, wedding parties and children's laughter, joy and sorrow. For some 40 years it was the social center of El Paso for the Army and civilians, for travelers passing to and from Santa Fe and California. A member of the family still resides in the homestead, although it is no longer a private home, but a State Historic Site.

The first Magoffin to come to El Paso was James Wiley Magoffin. He established a trading post and hacienda in 1848 near the river, at what is now identified by a plaque at the corner of Magoffin and Willow streets. This settlement was known as Magoffinsville. There had been several small military encampments near El Paso, but the first to be named Fort Bliss was constructed at Magoffinsville in 1854. The Rio Grande has had a habit of meandering, and later it encroached on the little army post, which was moved to higher ground at Concordia. In 1948 a replica of the original Fort Bliss was erected on the present Fort Bliss, built of adobe like the original. This is a museum, well worth visiting, containing many old army relics.

Joseph Magoffin, son of James Wiley Magoffin, after being educated in Kentucky and St. Louis, returned in 1856 to live with his family until joining the Confederate forces in 1861. He returned to El Paso in the late sixties. He, his wife and small son were then the only representatives of the family in El Paso. Joseph Magoffin soon became a leading figure in the small village. He was one of the incorporators of the City of El Paso in 1873, served as mayor four times, was collector of Customs several times between 1871 and 1901, helped to establish the State National Bank, and was its first vice president.

When Joseph Magoffin died in 1923, the house was left to his daughter, Josephine. She had married Lieutenant William J. Glasgow in 1896. When Glasgow retired as a brigadier general in 1927, they came back to live in the homestead with their daughter, Octavia, who still lives there. There were three Glasgow sons: Joseph, William James Jr. and Edward. A second daughter, Harriet, was married to Harry A. Lucker, whom she met while visiting her brother, Lieutenant William J. Glasgow Jr., in China where he was stationed. The three Lucker children were born in Tientsin. Harriet became ill and returned to the homestead, where she died a year or two later. The Lucker children were reared by their grandparents and "Tia" Octavia. The children are: Dr. William Glasgow Lucker, teaching psychology at the Univer-

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sity of Texas at El Paso; Josephine Lucker, who is a Maryknoll nun (Sister William Joseph) serving as a missionary sister in Africa; and Harry A. Lucker Jr., an officer in the Ordnance Corps, U.S. Army.

General Glasgow lived to the ripe old age of 101. For several years he was the oldest living graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., and was much honored by graduates and cadets of the academy. He died in 1967, and his wife a year later. Miss Octavia continued to live in the homestead. In 1976 it was sold to the State of Texas with the proviso that Miss Glasgow be permitted to live in part of the house for her lifetime. It is now known as "Magoffin Home State Historic Site." Eric Brown is superintendent. The home is open to the public Wednesday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The admission fee is 50 cents for adults and 25 cents for children, with special rates for institutions.

The Magoffin Homestead is built in the Mexican fashion of adobe. It

*The Magoffin Home as seen from an upper floor of Sun Towers apartment building, looking northwest toward Mount Cristo Rey.
(Photo courtesy M.G. McKinney)*



Harriot Howze Jones

is a one-story building with fourteen rooms. The exterior walls are four feet thick and the interior partitions measure two-and-a-half feet. The ceilings are fourteen feet high. The floors, beams and woodwork are of hand-hewn wood brought by wagons from Mescalero in the Sacramento Mountains, about 100 miles to the north. The foot-thick roof is adobe covered with some waterproof material. It was necessary to have beams every two feet to hold up this great weight. The windows are very tall, casement type, with wide window sills where one may sit, or where blooming plants are kept. There is no furnace in the house, but in every room there is a fireplace which originally burned wood; now they have gas logs. In almost every home in El Paso now there is some form of air conditioning, but this old house, with its high ceilings and thick walls, never had any. The nights are usually cool in El Paso and in the morning the shutters were closed to keep out the sun. The dim interior retained the coolness of the night before.

The front of the house measures 105 feet long. The adobe has been stuccoed and, where the shapes of the adobe bricks show through, a faint line has been drawn around the forms. The main hall or sala runs the depth of the house, with squares of colored glass framing the double front and back doors. The front door opens onto a tree-lined walk leading to Magoffin Avenue. The back door opens onto the patio, which is surrounded on three sides by the house.

The furnishings date, in some cases, from the time of the original owner. Among these are a dining table, which with all its leaves can seat 26, and a magnificent square piano and stool. In one bedroom there is a set which was awarded a prize at an exhibition in New Orleans many years ago. It consists of a huge bed of mahogany with a canopy which reaches to the fourteen-foot ceiling; a pier glass (tall standing mirror), dressers, and a wash stand of mahogany with pink marble tops. Three of Mrs. Glasgow's five children were born on that bed, as she would return to her home when her husband was in some outlandish post with few amenities. There are many interesting furnishings, carved tables and settees, old and modern, Victorian tables and chairs, several rockers. There are Chinese rugs as well as Persian ones. The Glasgows lived all over the world during the general's Army career and collected many beautiful and interesting house furnishings.

During the years that General and Mrs. Glasgow lived in the house, there were many paintings on the walls. Two were very valuable. One was of James Wiley Magoffin as a handsome young man, and one of John Russell Bartlett. Bartlett, a scientist and artist, was appointed by

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President John Tyler in 1850, with his Mexican counterpart and some 100 others (engineers, surveyors, secretaries, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, shoemakers, butchers, etc.), to delineate the entire border from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean. The chief artist of the commission was Henry C. Pratt, who painted these two portraits. At present neither portrait is on view. Miss Glasgow donated one to a museum and the other is being cleaned.

When the homestead became a State Historic Site, all the window frames and doors were replaced, as through the years the wood had dried and cracked or rotted. The house was painted inside and out, with all cracks repaired. The floors were oiled and refinished. Miss Glasgow was allotted three small rooms and bath plus the dining room and kitchen as her living quarters. There is an outside door to the kitchen, so she is quite apart from the museum area. Furniture has been rearranged, to some extent, and the grounds are attractively kept up.

In Joseph Magoffin's day there was an acequia (irrigation canal) in back of the house and a fine orchard extending some way to the west. When the acequia was moved to Eighth Street, the orchard was doomed and the land was sold for dwellings. Joseph Magoffin once owned extensive tracts of land which are now downtown El Paso. He sold a good deal of this land for as little as one dollar an acre, "to make a town," as he put it. Magoffin, Allen Blacker and Samuel Schutz are credited as the three incorporators of the City of El Paso on June 18, 1873.

Historical Notes

The annual Tour of Homes will be held from 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday, October 13, in Sunset Heights. Janet Brockmoller and her group of volunteers have arranged an especially interesting group of homes for the tour, which is the major fund-raising activity for the Historical Society.

The Texas State Historical Association is preparing a revised edition of *The Handbook of Texas* with new entries on significant cultural, physical and historical aspects of the state. The six-volume revision is expected to be complete for the 1995 sesquicentennial celebration of Texas' annexation. The book first appeared 30 years ago.

The El Paso County Historical Commission invited Society members to attend a workshop on historical research August 17-19 at the Old El Paso Room of State National Bank.

Millard McKinney is enlisting the support of members to serve on the Society's Speakers' Bureau which will fill requests from local organizations.

The Museum of History scheduled an August 21 opening for a new exhibit centered on one of El Paso's major industries, bootmaking and saddlery. The new show was scheduled to coincide with the Society's August 22 quarterly meeting.

Nominations have been invited by September 15 for the Hall of Honor selections. The Society will honor one living and one deceased El Pasoan at the annual banquet in the fall. Nominations are to be sent to Chairman, Hall of Honor Selections Committee, El Paso County Historical Society, P.O. Box 28, El Paso, TX 79940.

The Historical Society was granted a 90-day extension from the May expiration of its contract with the City of El Paso as support organization for the Museum of History. The board has held several special meetings on the question. A poll of members indicated that the majority responding are in favor of continuing the Society's role with the Museum. No board vote was taken at the July meeting, but time was provided by President James M. Day for considerable discussion.

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In a special meeting on June 10, the board heard Dr. Martin Rice, coordinator of the City's Office of Historic Preservation, explain that the City Council had given him one week to raise \$4,500 to complete funding for his office for fiscal year 1983, which begins September 1, 1982. Without that funding, he said, the office would be closed. Dr. Rice asked the Society to provide the funds as a short-term, interest-free loan to his office, with the likelihood that private funding might be found to repay the loan totally or in part. The board voted to provide the total amount needed as a gift if further funds are not forthcoming.

Harriot Howze Jones, whose articles about local homes have been a *Password* tradition for many years, has decided to discontinue her "Heritage Homes" series. Her research on important homes and her editing of the 1973 book, *El Paso - A Centennial Portrait*, are among her many outstanding contributions to the Society. She and her husband, Col. (USA-ret) H. Crampton Jones, have devoted countless hours to the furtherance of the Society's goals.

A Los Angeles member, Leon A. Rosenfield Jr., wrote regarding Mrs. Jones' column in the Spring issue. "The home was originally built for E.D. Lachman, who was a close friend of my family. Mr. and Mrs. Lachman and their children, two boys and a girl, were stalked by tragedy. He was drowned when he turned his touring car over in the Rio Grande along the old Smelter road. shortly thereafter Mrs. Lachman and the youngsters moved to San Francisco where, sometime later, she died after jumping out a hotel window. The home is indeed a beautiful one and it was nice to re-make its acquaintance!"

Robert N. Mullin of South Laguna, California, a charter member of the Society, died there June 27. He grew up in El Paso, had a career as an oil company official, and retired from Gulf Oil in 1958. He was a contributor to *Password* and wrote and edited several books about Southwestern history.

New members of the Historical Society are Mr. and Mrs. Harry W. Clark, Linda I. Heagy, Julia M. Jenkins, Mr. and Mrs. James E. Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Moore, Mr. and Mrs. Gus P. Portillo, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Ulmer, Edith Weaver, Douglas College Library of New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada; and the Army Air Defense Center Directorate of Engineering, Housing and Environmental Protection, Fort Bliss.

A Sad Day for El Paso

by
Hesper MacMillen

Sunday, August 14, 1910, was a bright, sunny day and mother, father, my four sisters and myself, the only boy, were finishing breakfast. We were planning to attend church that day. Father was called to the phone and when he returned, he seemed a bit excited. His friend had informed him that there was a very big fire downtown. Dad wanted to know if we were interested in going to see the fire and we all said that we surely would like to go. Father thought that we would not "backslide" too much if we skipped church that day, so we left to see the excitement.

The fire was the most spectacular one any of us had ever seen. It was the Buckler Building at the corner of Mesa Avenue and Texas Street and the structure was completely in flames with some of the walls still standing when we arrived. The lower floor of the three-story building was occupied by Calisher's Department Store and the American National Bank. The upper floors were occupied by the Knights of Pythias and other offices.

I think there must have been half the population of the city at the fire and the crowd seemed spellbound as it watched the destruction of this once beautiful building. It was an awesome sight, especially for us kids. The fire had completely gutted the building and by that time, most of the walls had fallen. The south wall was still standing with the heavy cornice at the top.

There were three firemen near the doorway in the south wall playing a hose into the interior. We hadn't thought of the possibility of the wall falling, but there were those that did. The mayor of El Paso, W.F. Robinson, was one who thought of that possibility. He realized the potential danger to the three firemen and he went over to warn them of their peril. He was just starting back when the wall buckled and tons of brick smashed into the retreating mayor and firemen—they left too late.

There was an instant of shocked silence, then in unison the spectators

Several of Mr. MacMillen's articles have won honors in the Historical Memories contests of past years. He now lives in California.



This photo was taken several hours after the dramatic fire which destroyed the Buckler Building, northwest corner of Mesa and Texas, on August 14, 1910. The building's south wall, along Texas Street, collapsed on three firemen and Mayor W.F. Robinson, killing one fireman, Todd Ware, and the mayor. (Photo courtesy M.G. McKinney)

emitted a low, agonized, spontaneous moan. What a terrible catastrophe for anyone to witness, and what a profound effect it had on us kids! My two youngest sisters started crying and mother was attempting to comfort them. She had a handkerchief over her eyes and she must have shed some tears also. I know I didn't cry, but there was a terrible lump in my throat. A woman near where we were standing fainted and this caused more confusion. We were all in shock to see for the first time what was violent, tragic death.

The rescue attempt was started immediately and we watched for a short time, but on mother's urging we left for home. It was best.

We found out later that when the victims were dug out of the fallen brick and debris the mayor and one fireman, Todd Ware, were dead. It was reported that almost every bone in the mayor's body had been broken. The two other firemen, Dave Sullivan and William Robinson, were severely injured, but were expected to live.

El Paso went into a period of mourning for the heroic mayor who gave his life attempting to save those of the others, and for the fireman, Todd Ware.

It was a sad day for El Paso.

Book Reviews

MEXICO AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR by T.G. Powell.
Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981.

An unfortunate, but all too common, practice of professional historians is to take up a zestful episode from the past and reduce it to a dry-as-dust recitation in the name of objectivity. Among the latest examples of this exercise is *Mexico and the Spanish Civil War* by T.G. Powell.

One can hardly imagine a time or circumstance more heavily laden with drama and raw emotion than the decade of the 1930s. Against the backdrop of the Great Depression and mounting international tensions, governments in two hemispheres launched innovative programs ranging from the relatively mild New Deal to the excesses of European Fascism and Communism. At some debatable point in between stood future allies Cárdenas Mexico and the Spanish Republic, struggling with monumental issues of land reform, civilian control of the military, and church-state relations.

Almost none of that fervor is transmitted to the pages of this book, intended by the author to fill a gap in Mexican historiography "accurately" and "fairly." This appears to mean stripping the narrative of any semblance of literary style in favor of a plodding prose which dictates that commendation and condemnation be ladled out in equal portions. It evidently means seizing on alleged errors by spokesmen and writers in order to belabor less than major points.

As example, Powell assaults a 25-year-old statement of Lois Smith that 150 Mexicans fought for the Spanish Republic. Citing the questionable radical artist David Siqueiros, he proclaims the figure to be understated by 180. He fills eleven pages to demonstrate that the leading Mexican newspapers were merely pro-Franco, rather than pro-Fascist, as charged by a Spanish diplomat. Inexplicably, the author attaches an exclamation point to Manuel Avila Camacho's much-publicized profession of Catholicism.

Such attention to minutiae beclouds the fact that the writer reveals less than promised. Much of the book deals with the relationship of Lázaro Cárdenas to the Republican exiles, the subject of several published works, and familiar domestic pressures on the Mexican president. The heretofore missing element in the story, the actual Mexican aid to the Republic, is capsuled into one chapter and informs neither on volume nor impact.

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While such frailties are undoubtedly rooted in a paucity of sources, less understandable is the sketchy treatment accorded the Republic and its policies. Surprisingly overlooked in the bibliography are the creditable accounts of Gerald Brenan and David T. Cattell.

The author devotes considerable space to deflating the myth of the "pristine" Spanish Republic. Pristine it was not, but most of its problems resulted directly from republican institutions and the opportunity given partisans of all persuasions to mix in. In the final analysis the Republic was elected and Franco wasn't; the Republicans stood off the legions of Hitler and Mussolini with only minimal Soviet and Mexican aid; and most of the world timidly watched the rehearsal for world war. As myths go, it hasn't yet been replaced by a better one.

*University of Houston-
Downtown College.*

GARNA L. CHRISTIAN

TEXAS LAWYER by J.F. Hulse. El Paso: Mangan Books. \$24.95.

El Paso in 1889, was a two-fisted, gun-slinging, hard-drinking yet unique and interesting city standing on the north bank of the Rio Grande at the Pass of the North.

It was to this spot that "Will" Burges came from his birthplace in Seguin, Texas, to escape from the asthma that had plagued him since childhood. He had just received his law degree from the University of Texas.

He immediately settled into the practice of law and soon became outstanding—professionally, socially and culturally. It was not long before his tremendous ability at the bar garnered to him any of the more prominent cases to be tried. He was an eloquent orator, forceful and persuasive and with his facts so marshalled that he never hesitated in his arguments. People listened. He was employed shortly after his arrival in El Paso on some business for the First National Bank and soon became its regular counsel.

The author has outlined in detail most of the cases with which Mr. Burges was most prominently identified. Chief among these, and possibly the most interesting, are the Henry Ward Beecher episode; the Richardson-Mason-Harle extradition case (the case of the Lost Record); the hat full of diamonds case, which involved some curious dealings with the Immigration Service and the Chinese Exclusion cases.

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In 1917, Burges joined with S.S. Gregory, prominent attorney of Chicago, in the law firm known as Gregory, Burges and McNabb. He was affiliated with this firm in Chicago for approximately 20 months and collected some handsome fees for his efforts. Possibly the most noteworthy of his Chicago transactions, however, was his acquisition of the fabulous John Henry Wrenn Library for the University of Texas for the sum of \$225,000, offered through the generosity of Major George W. Littlefield. Burges was a connoisseur of fine books and himself possessed an enviable collection, which filled the entire basement area of his home on Montana Street.

He was forced to leave Chicago because of the rigors of the climate which disturbed his asthma. He returned to El Paso where he resumed his place in the law firm of Turney, Burges, Culwell, Holliday and Pollard.

Burges soon became involved in the IWW when a strike was called in 1917. This involvement and the Bisbee deportation, which was a part of it, occupied a great many months in settlement and involved Burges' "Law of Necessity" which he so effectively used as a "clincher" in the case.

There followed the Yates Oil Field Cases, a litigation involving millions, the Ateca Case, which concerned suitcases crammed with \$750,000, and the Jimmie Allred Antitrust Case.

Burges was married to Anna Pollard, whom he first saw in her brother's ice cream parlor. Their meeting was eventually effected at the bullring in Juárez. It was love at first sight. Their home was a haven of gentility, comfort and hospitality. This reviewer recalls with delight many happy hours around their festive board. When Mrs. Burges telephoned to invite one to dinner she always said, "If you want a cocktail, have it before you leave home, because we do not serve liquor." They had a Chinese cook, who had adopted the name of Tom Simpson. He was a small Chinese and he would come to the table groaning under the weight of huge platters of roast or fowl. When he passed the second round, if one did not help one's self to as much, or more, than the first time, Tom would look doleful and say, "You no likee Tom's cooking." It was at this table that my husband and I first met Chris Fox, then Sheriff. To Ohioans, a Texas Sheriff was an awesome figure!

J.F. Huise, author of this comprehensive biography, is himself a prominent member of the El Paso Bar. Probably as eloquent oratorically as his subject, he is more gentle in his approach. The book is beautifully

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written and matters that might well be dull otherwise, sing along the pages under Mr. Hulse's able pen. He has indeed indited a "can't put it down" volume. The book is beautifully put together under Frank Mangan's superior guidance and the editing is superb.

El Paso

MARY ELLEN PORTER

LOUIS FELSENTHAL, CITIZEN SOLDIER OF TERRITORIAL NEW MEXICO by Jacqueline Dorgan Meketa. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, \$15.95/\$8.95.

There are more unknown historical figures in the American Southwest than authors so that the recent effort of the New Mexico author, Jacqueline Dorgan Meketa is welcome indeed. Jacqueline Dorgan Meketa has researched the career of Louis Felsenthal, a citizen-soldier, who up to her contribution has been obscure.

Mrs. Meketa has intelligently utilized the information that she garnered as co-author with her husband, in writing "One Blanket and Ten Day Rations," a history of the First Infantry, New Mexico Volunteers in Arizona. Very adeptly, she has used the Felsenthal biography to paint a picture of New Mexico from 1832 to 1909. To do this is good history recording.

The author has an interesting writing style, but this opens up another question, the question of whether an author should assemble the facts with or without personal embellishment. Jacob R. Marcus, the dean of American Jewish Historians writes:

....The fact scrubbed clean is more eternal than perfumed and rouged words. The historian's desk is an altar on which he must sacrifice his most cherished prejudices....

Many writers do use "rouge and perfume" in order to make the copy more readable. Meketa's work brings this issue before us once more. Should the historian color his words, to make the material more readable or should he be strictly factual; "scrubbed clean"? This is one of the differences between the European trained historian and the contemporary western writer. This is not Meketa's dilemma alone. Many of us follow the "colorful" pattern. If we do so are we as objective as the physical scientist whose objectivity we seek to emulate? Another question which is not restricted to the author of Louis Felsenthal's life is the

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question of documentation. When a writer, for example, refers to a reference already found in the notes by a previous investigator, it should behoove this writer to credit the writer who made the discovery as well as the source material itself. This rule followed in the physical sciences should be followed in the social sciences as well. Could you call this an ethical question?

But let us return to the book as a whole. It is readable. With the qualifications I have stated it is an accurate account. It is a gift to the treasure house of Southwest history.

El Paso

FLOYD S. FIERMAN

Book Notes

by
Mary Ellen Porter

Forging the Copper Collar. Arizona's Labor Management War, 1901-1921. James Byrkit. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. \$24.95.

The story of the Bisbee Deportation of 1917—a famous vigilante action to expel the IWW's from Arizona copper mines. A vivid picture of a bygone era, involving years of research. Presents the turbulence of the era and the political heritage of the state.

American Labor in the Southwest. The First 100 Years. James C. Foster, Ed. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. \$18.50.

Fourteen articles which outline the impact of the labor movement on the development of the West. The book is organized into five sections and progresses from miners (as much a part of the early West as cowboys) to the appearance of the IWW; to farm workers who came West during the Great Depression; and finally the challenges inherited from these farm workers by the Mexican workers. Western labor is now being given its deserved treatment because, as the author observes, the wage worker outlasted the cowboy.

A Lighthearted Look at the Roadrunner. Chuck Waggin. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. \$3.95, paper.

The author, a Southwestern illustrator, shares observations and knowledge of the "critter" known as "paisano" to Mexicans. Informative and entertaining. Roadrunners have eyelashes, can run 15 miles per hour by actual clocking and have an appetite for lizards. Charming text and humorous sketches.

Bilingualism in the Southwest. Second Edition. Paul Turner, Ed. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. \$9.95, paper.

This new edition reflects recent research in language acquisition and considers current controversial issues. Contributions concerning consequences of early bilingualism in development and personality, linguistic deficiencies with bilingualism, social cues and choice of language use in a Chicano community.

Johnny Christmas. Forrester Blake. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. \$6.95.

A novel about one of the best of the mountain men. Exciting adventure story set in the 1830s and 1840s on the Texas plains, the Central Rocky Mountains of Northern New Mexico, southern California and the Spanish Trail to California. Originally published in 1948, it received enthusiastic praise. A wonderfully good western.

It is not the policy of this column to review novels, but the growing interest in "mountain men" made such mention seem noteworthy.

Knights of the Green Cloth. The Saga of the Frontier Gamblers. Robert K. DeArment. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. \$17.50.

Frontier gamblers were first introduced to the American public when a number of them became folk heroes and were interviewed in the popular press. The author seeks to separate fact from fiction, myth from reality, conserving the long-vanished and almost forgotten frontier gamblers who plied their trade in every settlement from Mexico to the Klondike. It is also the story of the Good Guys, the Bad Guys, their women, wives and mistresses. Honestly and refreshingly presented.

Book Notes

Many Strange Characters. Montana Frontier Tales. James Willard Schultz. Eugene Lee Silliman, Ed. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. \$10.95.

The author is noted for his successful and dramatic presentation of the Blackfoot Indians. He is less well known for his white friends of frontier days. He mentally stored these anecdotes and here recalls some of the stories. Schultz recounts the touching saga of mule skinner Charles Buckman and his death at the hands of the Nez Percé during their retreat in 1877. The volume contains episodes of Chouteau County sheriff Johnny J. Healy; Schultz' fellow frontiersmen and mountain guide, William Weaver tells of a narrow escape from Indians and grizzly bears; Thomas Faval tells of a starvation winter in the Canadian wilderness; and a long-time friend of the author recounts the tragic conclusion to the efforts of three woodsmen to earn a livelihood cutting cord wood for the Missouri steamboats in the early 1870s. The reader is given a glimpse of the bizarre and the mundane in the lives of men who played "their hands in the last deal of the Western frontier."

Deep Enough. Frank A. Crompton. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. \$16.95.

Frank Crompton's memoirs of the wild West and his youth in the mining camps. In the lingo of the mines "deep enough" means "I don't care" or "I've had it," anything one did not like. Crompton was trapped for ten days in a collapsed mine shaft; he was in San Francisco at the time of the great earthquake; and in Ludlow, Colorado, during the Ludlow Massacre. He lived among the desert rats in Death Valley. Many adventures, camaradie, novelty and humor makes fiction seem pale. The reader shares the adventures, hardships and fun that Frank Crompton experienced between the ages of sixteen and 30. The author later gave up mining and turned to other branches of engineering. He spent many years in Asia and Central America and retired in 1954 after serving as a consultant to President Syngman Rhee of Korea.

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