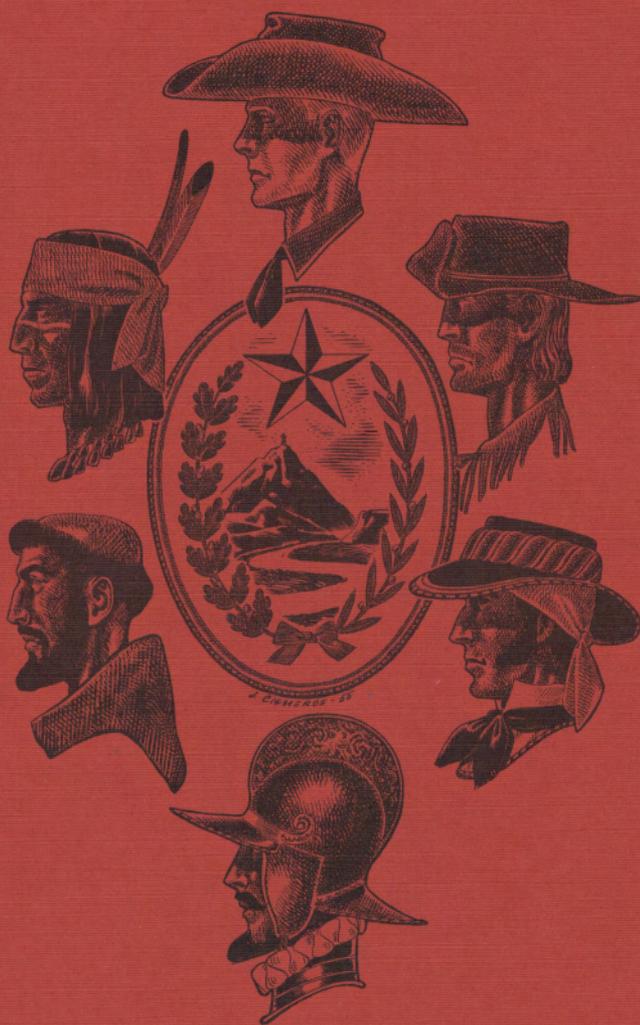


PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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PASSWORD

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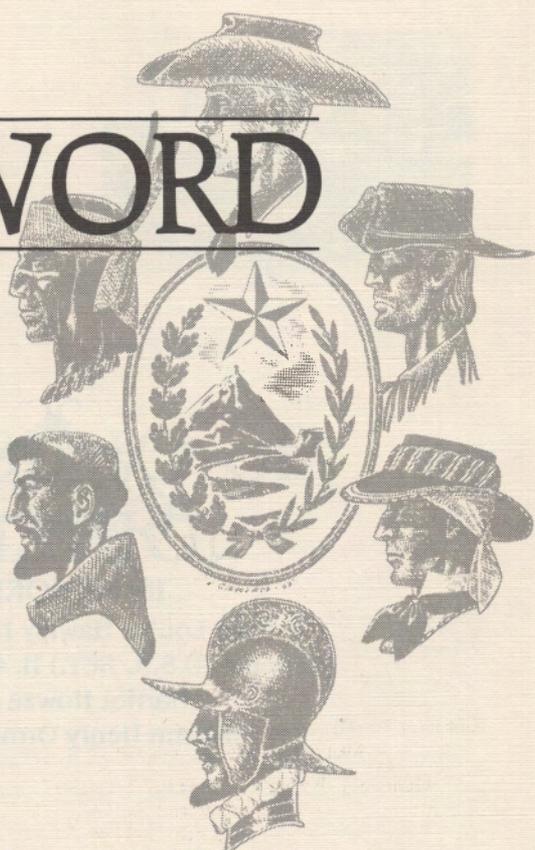
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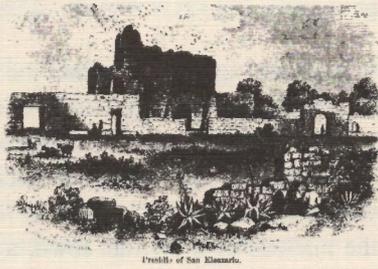
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Presidio of San Elizario.

The PRESIDIO of SAN ELIZARIO, 1789-1851

by *W. H. Timmons*

JN THIS COMING YEAR OF 1989 SAN ELIZARIO, Texas, will be celebrating its bicentennial. It will mark the two hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Presidio of San Elizario near the present location of the town which proudly bears that historic name. The bicentennial celebration dates from February 14, 1789 when Diego de Borica, in compliance with instructions from his superior, Commandant General Teodoro de Croix, ordered the removal of the Presidio of San Elizario upriver thirty-seven miles to the hacienda of Tiburcios, approximating the present site of San Elizario, Texas. This action had become necessary to provide the river settlements of San Lorenzo, Senecú, Ysleta, and Socorro with better protection from the hostile Apaches following the removal of the Presidio of El Paso del Norte to Carrizal in 1773. Construction of the new Presidio of San Elizario

This issue's title-page insignia is a reproduction of a drawing entitled "Presidio of San Eleazario" which appears in Volume I of John Russell Bartlett's Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents (New York: Appleton & Company, 1854).

was already under way when the removal order was issued, so that most of the facility was apparently completed by 1792.¹

The presidio, like the mission, was a Spanish frontier institution of great historic significance. Basically, the presidio was a garrisoned fort with a military mission, but as Max L. Moorhead points out, it became the nucleus of a civilian town, a market for the produce of neighboring farms and ranches, and an agency for an Indian reservation.²

Most late-18th-century frontier presidios were built on a rectangular plan enclosed by thick adobe walls with one or two bastions or towers at the corners. Within the perimeter enclosure were guardhouses, officers' quarters, soldiers' barracks, plazas, corrals, storerooms, and a chapel. The standard complement, as prescribed in Spain's Royal Regulations of 1772, was a captain, one or two lieutenants, ensign, chaplain, and forty-three soldiers, including a sergeant and two corporals, plus ten Indian scouts. There was a graduated pay scale, the annual salary being 3000 pesos for captain and 290 pesos for a soldier.³

In the first decade of the 19th century a new development emerged on the northern frontier, in addition to the perennial Apache problem, that gave Spanish officials great concern—namely, the Anglo-American intrusion on Spanish New Mexico. With the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803, the United States touched on Spanish territory at the Rocky Mountains, though the exact boundary, including the status of Texas, remained indefinite until resolved by treaty in 1819. In 1807 Zebulon Montgomery Pike, a United States Army captain, was arrested by Spanish officials on the headwaters of the Rio Grande above Santa Fe and charged with entering Spanish territory illegally. Pike was brought to the El Paso area under heavy guard in March, 1807, and was taken to the Presidio of San Elizario. Here he remained for three days, took note of the hospitality of the people and the productivity of the area, and was then escorted to Chihuahua for questioning. Although Pike's papers were confiscated, he managed to hide his journal, which he later published in Philadelphia after his release. Pike's comments regarding the commercial opportunities to be found in Spanish New Mexico received considerable attention in the United States.⁴

A number of other Anglo-Americans were soon reported in New Mexico, proof that their appearances were not isolated cases but rather the

Dr. W. H. Timmons, *Professor Emeritus of History at The University of Texas at El Paso*, is the author of several articles which have appeared in *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*. His recently-completed book on the history of the El Paso area will be published this year by *Texas Western Press*.

beginning of a significant trend—the Anglo-American advance into Spanish New Mexico. By 1810, Spanish officials in New Mexico were thoroughly aroused, and Anglo-American traders arriving in Santa Fe in increasing numbers faced arrest, imprisonment, and confiscation of their merchandise. When a party of seven men from the upper Louisiana Territory arrived in Santa Fe in 1810, their goods were confiscated, and they were sent to the Presidio of San Elizario for a two-year confinement. A larger party in 1812 suffered the same fate.⁵

The revolutionary movement of Miguel Hidalgo in Mexico in 1810 with its defiant cry of “Death to the *Gachupines* [the Spaniards]” soon brought forth retaliatory measures from Spanish officials. Brigadier Nemesio Salcedo, commandant of the Western Interior Provinces with headquarters in Chihuahua, organized civic militias and a Junta de Seguridad, or committee of surveillance, to bring charges against those suspected of insurgent sympathies. In El Paso del Norte he created the “Patriots of Ferdinand VII,” popularly referred to as “the fernandinos,” to take action against those suspected of disloyalty. In New Mexico the Presidio of Santa Fe was entrusted with the defense of the province against any and all potential enemies, whether hostile Indian groups, insurgent sympathizers, or Anglo-Americans. The Presidio of San Elizario was to be maintained at full strength to keep the communication lines open between Chihuahua and Santa Fe, and to support the Santa Fe garrison with soldiers, arms, horses, and supplies should the need arise.⁶

After the defeat of insurgent forces in Mexico and the restoration of Spanish rule in 1815, frontier officials in Chihuahua and New Mexico were now free to concentrate on the problem which they had come to view with considerable concern—namely, the increasing intrusion of “the perfidious Anglo-Americans” on Spanish territory. The strengthening of the Presidio of Santa Fe and the civic militias of New Mexico became a first priority, with the Presidio of San Elizario being assigned the task of providing the New Mexico garrisons with as much assistance as possible. Named captain of the presidio in 1815 was Isidro Rey, a military and administrative official with a long record of dedicated service in New Mexico and El Paso del Norte. He established a military escort known as the New Mexico Detachment, whose function was to convoy food, clothing, arms, and ammunition to the New Mexico garrisons as needed. Documents in the manuscript collection known as the Spanish Archives of New Mexico indicate that a San Elizario presidial escort made one expedition per year to New Mexico in the period from 1818 to 1821, conveying shipments of food—wheat, corn, mutton, and sugar; clothing—jackets, shirts, and shoes;

and soap and gunpowder. During this three-year period these provisions were carried to San Fernando, Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Taos.⁷

A principal Santa Fe official involved in this supply operations was Don Pedro de Armendariz, a high-ranking administrator who had formerly been a first lieutenant at the Presidio of San Elizario. Interested in New Mexico's economic development as well as its defense, Armendariz in 1819 and 1820 obtained two large land grants, known as the Valverde and San Cristóbal tracts just south of Socorro at the northern edge of the Jornada del Muerto on the main route from San Elizario to Santa Fe. Although this fertile valley sustained a population increase for a while, repeated Indian attacks forced its abandonment following considerable loss of life and property. An interesting letter written by Armendariz to the governor of New Mexico, Facundo Melgares, dated November 1, 1821, refers to a shipment of goods to the post of Valverde from the Presidio of San Elizario, an indication of the special relationship between the presidio and the outposts of New Mexico that existed during the Mexican movement for independence, particularly after 1815.⁸

Mexican independence was established in 1821, not by a social revolutionary such as Miguel Hidalgo, but by an astute army officer named Agustín de Iturbide, who initiated a conservative movement to liberate Mexico from the liberal government in Spain. After a brief rule by Iturbide, Mexico became a federal republic under the Constitution of 1824. The six El Paso settlements—El Paso del Norte, San Lorenzo, Senecú, Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario—became a part of the state of Chihuahua. El Paso del Norte was accorded *villa* status with its own *ayuntamiento*, or municipal council, controlled by the landowning and mercantile aristocracy.⁹

Named captain of the Presidio of San Elizario in 1821 was José Antonio de Arce, who quickly enlisted the support of the *ayuntamiento* to retain the presidio system introduced by Spain and to maintain the local presidio at full strength to protect the settlers against Apache raids. In the early 1830s it had a complement of one captain, one first lieutenant, two second lieutenants, one chaplain, one armorer, three sergeants, one bugler, six corporals, and eighty soldiers.¹⁰

By the middle 1830s the El Paso settlements were facing a far more formidable problem than the Apaches—namely the “perfidious Texans.” As monthly reports of the revolutionary activities of the Texas colonists were received from Chihuahua, Mexican officials repeatedly called upon the people to sustain the Mexican troops fighting on the Texas frontier. Jubilation over the fall of the Alamo was short-lived with the receipt of news of the defeat of General Antonio López de Santa Anna at San Jacinto,

his capture, and his signing of the Treaty of Velasco of May 14, 1836, that called for a cessation of hostilities and a withdrawal of all Mexican forces from Texas beyond the Rio Grande.¹¹

The establishment of an independent Texas republic naturally was ominous news for Mexican officials in Chihuahua and El Paso del Norte, where there was no denying the conviction that New Mexico would be Texas' next target. Whether the Presidio of San Elizario would be able to defend the El Paso area should New Mexico fall to the invading force was a matter of great concern to Mexican officials. According to an 1836 document, the presidio, under the command of Captain José Ignacio Ronquillo, was composed of sixty-five officers and soldiers, its military equipment consisting of guns, lances, bows and arrows, cartridges, stones, and mounts.¹²

In 1841 news was received of the ill-fated Texan-Santa Fe Expedition, a project initiated by President Mirabeau B. Lamar to extend the Republic of Texas to the Pacific. Regarded by Mexicans as a foreign invasion of Mexican soil, it was ample proof, the Mexicans insisted, of Texas' territorial designs. Should Mexico fail to stop the United States in Texas, exclaimed a Chihuahua newspaper, then an immense new frontier would be open to the Americans, a new religion would be established upon Mexican soil, and her citizens would be "sold like beasts" because "their color was not as white as that of their conquerors."¹³

As has been noted, the presidio provided the nucleus for the development of a civilian town, with the result that San Elizario's population increased from 432 in 1833 to 1,018 in 1841. During that time the capricious Rio Grande formed a new channel south of Yselta, Socorro, and San Elizario, thus placing them on what amounted to an island some twenty miles in length and two to four miles in width. Agriculture was the principal industry on "the Island," as it was called, supplemented by the Chihuahua trade along the historic Camino Real, a natural extension of the Santa Fe trade with Missouri that began in the 1820s. Most heads of families in the town were farm workers; the two-room adobe structure was the pattern; living conditions were primitive; and poverty was widespread.¹⁴

The threat of war between the United States and Mexico became increasingly more imminent following the annexation of Texas in March, 1845, so that with the outbreak of hostilities on the lower Rio Grande, the United States declared war against Mexico in May, 1846. By August of that year Santa Fe was in American hands, and Chihuahua officials proceeded to make all possible preparations for the defense of El Paso del

Norte "to prevent the soil of Chihuahua from being trampled upon by American forces."¹⁵

A Mexican force and an army of Missouri volunteers commanded by Colonel Alexander Doniphan clashed at the Battle of Brazito some twenty-eight miles northwest of El Paso del Norte on December 25, 1846. Doniphan's volunteers routed the Mexicans in about thirty minutes, and two days later entered El Paso del Norte, where they remained for a month. On December 30, two officers in Doniphan's army, Major William Gilpin and Captain John W. Reid, visited San Elizario. They found the garrison deserted, but concluded that a large force had been stationed there prior to the battle. A number of bloody bandages were discovered, indicating that Mexicans wounded in battle had received medical attention in the old presidio. One cannon and some ammunition were found buried in the sand.¹⁶

Local historians will be forever grateful to the two officers who took time to sketch a diagram of the presidio. Although there was some deterioration, the walls were still standing, and the buildings were comparatively intact. Roscoe and Margaret Conkling have included a copy of the diagram as Plate 50 in Volume III of their classic, *The Butterfield Overland Mail, 1857-1869*, and have written the following description of the presidio:

The outside walls inclosed a tract approximately twelve hundred feet square, and so laid out that their angles corresponded to the four cardinal points. An inner walled inclosure, rectangular in shape, contained the officers' quarters, barracks, a large chapel, a magazine and other buildings. The stables were in what might be termed the bailey between the inner and outer walls. Watch towers were attached to the inner walls. There were but two entrances into the inclosures. Both walls built of large adobes were over four feet in thickness and probably not less than eighteen feet in height. The buildings were all constructed of the same materials. Altogether the presidio was a unique and impregnable fortress, and its preservation would have been of incalculable value historically.¹⁷

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of February 2, 1848, officially ending the war between the United States and Mexico, provided that the Rio Grande was to be an international boundary between the two nations up to the point where the river struck the southern boundary of New Mexico. All territory north of the river, including the three settlements on "the Island," thus became a part of the United States. By the end of the year the California gold rush had begun, bringing in overnight hordes of discharged soldiers, outlaws, wife deserters, debtors, and characters larger than life, transforming the sleepy little community of El Paso del Norte

into a bustling, brawling frontier crossroads.¹⁸

Already there were a number of compelling reasons for establishing a military post on the Rio Grande—the defense of the new boundary, the protection of the new settlements north of the river against Apache attacks, and the maintenance of law and order. At length, on September 8, 1849, six companies of infantry arrived from San Antonio under the command of Major Jefferson Van Horne. Two companies were stationed at the old Presidio of San Elizario, while the other four were established across the river from El Paso del Norte on Benjamin F. Coon's ranch on what Van Horne named the Post Opposite El Paso, New Mexico.¹⁹

Van Horne believed that the old presidio could be repaired and rebuilt at little expense. With a few adjacent buildings which could be rented or bought on moderate terms, he pointed out, the presidio could be made to quarter four or even six companies. Wood was plentiful, grazing was good, and the people, he said, were orderly and well behaved. Finally, he pointed out that if troops were stationed at the old presidio, they would be removed from the wretched hordes of gamblers, drunkards, and desperadoes in El Paso del Norte.²⁰

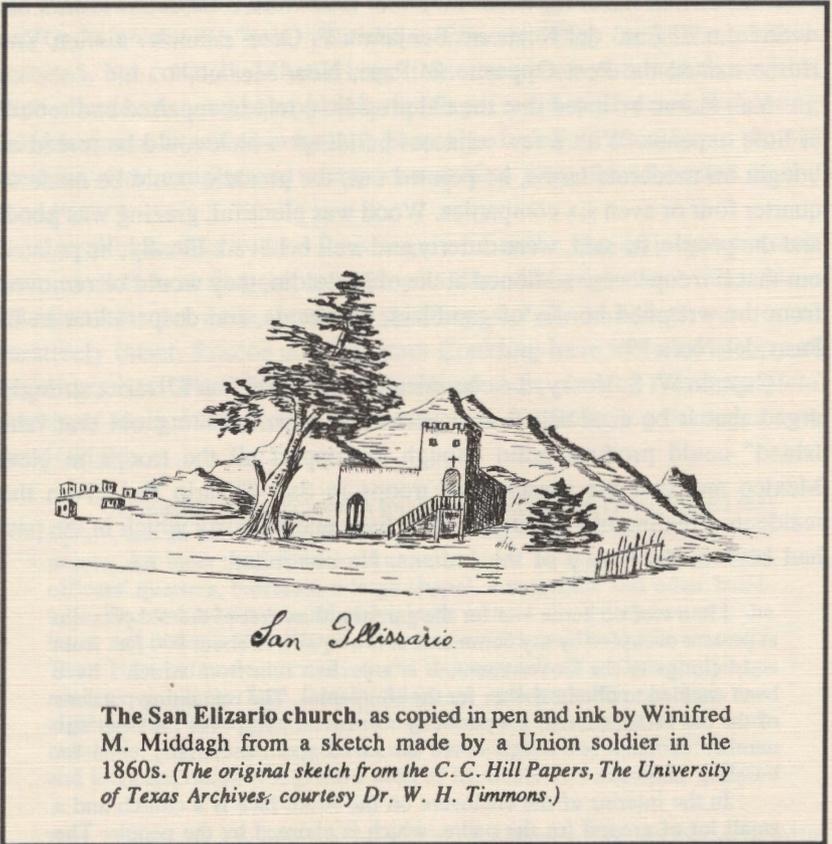
Captain W. S. Henry, the commanding officer at San Elizario, strongly urged that it be established as a permanent post, pointing out that "the Island" could produce grain enough to support all the troops in New Mexico and that the presence of troops in San Elizario had given the residents a feeling of security for their lives and property which in the past had been at the mercy of the Indians. He continued:

I know of no better site for the garrison than that of the old presidio at present occupied by my command. It is a square of about 800 feet front and belongs to the Government. It is a perfect ruin from which I have been enabled to obtain shelter for the companies. The remaining portions of the old establishment are perfectly worthless, except for the immense number of "adobes" which could be saved and beneficially used for building purposes.

In the interior of the enclosure on the south face is a church and a small lot of ground for the padre, which is claimed by the people. The church I think will soon fall down. There is sufficient ground for all purposes to build a neat and pretty garrison for two companies.²¹

Captain Henry then went on to point out a number of additional advantages—ample ground for gardens, the availability of materials which could be used to fill up the present grounds and elevate the surface a few feet to provide drainage, the "admirable" soil for the manufacture of brick, and the existing irrigation ditches which could provide an adequate supply of water. Moreover, he said, there were enough "adobes" on hand to build

another church for the people, as well as timbered land for a supply of wood. A portable grist mill could be brought in, he added, so that the companies could buy their own wheat and grind their own flour. Above all, he concluded, since the Indians were mounted, horses should be brought in, and all pistols should be *revolvers*, as they were the only arms adequate for the pursuit of Indians.²²



In spite of Captain Henry's numerous arguments in favor of the old presidio, the military authorities ruled that its facilities were too limited to accommodate six companies as a permanent garrison. The two companies remained at the old presidio until 1851, when all troops were removed from the El Paso area. Meanwhile, the County of El Paso was established in March, 1850, with San Elizario as the county seat. John Russell Bartlett, the boundary commissioner, visited the town in 1851 and found the

presidio and church in a ruined condition. By that time the residents of the town had dismantled the presidial walls and damaged the other buildings in order to obtain adobes to construct or improve their own residences. In an effort to save at least some of the buildings, the Texas Legislature passed an act on December 13, 1851, deeding to the County of El Paso for county purposes a tract of land where the old presidio and other buildings were located, but just how much was saved, of course, remains unknown. Hopefully, some of the adobes were used by the parishioners of San Elizario in the building of a new church, a sketch of which was done by a Union soldier in the 1860s, and was recently found in the C. C. Hill Papers, in the University of Texas Archives.²³

Today, the Presidio of San Elizario is gone, but the peaceful picturesque plaza in San Elizario serves as a reminder of its historic presidio period from 1789 to 1851. Happy birthday, San Elizario! ☆

NOTES

1. This important document, known as the Removal Order of the Presidio of San Elizario, is in the Archivos del Ayuntamiento de Ciudad Juárez (or Juárez Archives), UTEP Library, MF 495, Reel 1, Frame 188. Professor Eugene O. Porter first found the document, published it in his *San Elizario—A History* (Austin, 1973), but misread the date, which should be 1789 instead of 1780. San Elizario is named for St. Elzear, one of its patron saints. At least half a dozen different spellings of San Elizario are to be found in the Spanish and Mexican documents, none of which the first Anglo-Americans in the area could handle, so they simplified it to San Elizario. The El Paso area's first presidio, named Nuestra Señora del Pilar y Glorioso San José, was to be built in 1683 at a site believed to be near present day San Elizario. It is doubtful, however, that it was ever constructed in this location. In the following year it was built near the Guadalupe mission and came to be known as the Presidio of El Paso del Norte. Here it remained until 1773 when it was moved to Carrizal.
2. Max L. Moorhead, *The Presidio Bastion of the Spanish Borderlands* (Norman, 1975), 4. See also Odie B. Faulk, "The Presidio: Fortress or Farce?" *Journal of the West*, VIII (January, 1969), 22-28, which argues that the presidio was an adequate defensive measure, but had numerous shortcomings as an offensive weapon.
3. Moorhead, *The Presidio*, 166-167; Rex E. Gerald, *Spanish Presidios of the Late Eighteenth Century in Northern New Spain* (Santa Fe, 1968), 25-27; Sidney B. Brinckerhoff and Odie B. Faulk, eds., *Lancers for the King* (Phoenix, 1965), 17.
4. Donald Jackson, ed., *The Journal of Zebulon Pike* (2 vols.: Norman, 1966), I, 409-410.
5. Max L. Moorhead, *New Mexico's Royal Road* (Norman, 1958), 69.
6. Francisco R. Almada, *Resumen de Historia del Estado de Chihuahua* (México 1955), 149-150.
7. Ysidro Rey to Sr. Teniente Coronel Gobernador Interino del Nuevo México, San Elzeario, August 30, 1815, Spanish Archives of New Mexico, The University of Texas at El Paso Library, MF 454, Reel 18, Frame 239; see also Receipts for Supplies from San Elzeario Detachment in New Mexico, Albuquerque, November 3, 1818, *ibid.*, Reel 19, Frame 431.

(Notes continued on page 141)



CONVENTION NOTES:

TSHA



The 92nd annual meeting of the Texas State Historical Association was held in Austin on March 3-5, 1988. Commemorating the centennial of the birth of two of its former members and revered citizens of the state, J. Frank Dobie and Walter Prescott Webb, the meeting was sprinkled with nostalgia. Two friends of Dobie, John Henry Faulk and Senator Ralph Yarborough, both distinguished in their own right, reminisced by way of anecdotes and personal recollections on how the cowboy/scholar had affected their lives. Former students of Dr. Webb, in particular Betty Brooke (Eakle) Dobkins and Dr. Joe B. Franz, lovingly remembered the facets of Dr. Webb's personal and professional life.

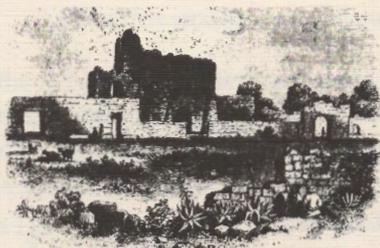
About 150 persons attended the ever-popular auction of Texana, dedicated to the two honorees this year, and many first editions of their works were on bid. Some of the rarer items began at \$2000. Additionally there was a new feature, the silent auction: items were displayed for the length of the meeting, during which time bidders left notes stating their bid price on particular items; at the end of the meeting, the highest bidder for each item became its proud owner.

Two section meetings held interest for Paséños. One was "The Mexican Revolution and the U. S. Military Buildup on the Rio Grande," a slide presentation, unique in that the slides were made from contemporaneous postcards distributed during the revolutionary period. Frank N. Samponaro of The University of the Permian Basin made the presentation. The other meeting featured Calvin W. Hines, Stephen F. Austin State University, who recounted interviews conducted by him more than two decades ago with veterans of Pershing's punitive expedition.

Last but not least, the assemblage was reminded that the target date (1995) for the publication of the six-volume *The Handbook of Texas* is drawing near. Dr. W. H. Timmons, Professor Emeritus of History at The University of Texas at El Paso, is the regional advisor for the El Paso area. Financial aid is welcome toward the publication of this respected reference, and contributions may be sent to Texas State Historical Association, 306 Sid Richardson Hall, University Station, Austin, Texas 78712.

—Clinton P. Hartmann





Fronts of San Elizabeto.

• PERSONALITIES AT THE PASS •

DYNAMIC MRS. FRANK

*Pioneer Teacher,
Pioneer Historian*

by Martha Patterson Peterson

*... a Yes-sayer to life because so much . . . seen
and heard says YES. . . . Hills and canyons, yucca
and cottonwood, the old ox-wagons, the new plan
propellers, barns and packrats, blue stemmed grass,
. . . strong and bad men, and clean and bold dream-
ers; these . . . and generations past and present.*

—Carl Sandburg

A

ND TRULY A YES-SAYER TO LIFE WAS *SHE*
—Mrs. Jeanie MacCallum Frank. Ever since she came
a Transplanted Scot to our Southwest.

Might say that Mrs. Frank, El Paso High School teacher from 1903 to 1940, was born in the lap o' luxury—a sixteen-room hoose (house), with some seven very Presbyterian servants, a yacht, fine carriage and horses. Born Jeanie MacCallum Hay February 3, 1868, Londonderry, Ireland. To Scottish parents. The Scotchiest of the Scotch. A Yes-sayer she was from her little Victorian girlhood; educated in her much-touted Scottish schools, and—at age 18—a graduate with an M.A. from the University of Glasgow.

Her Grandpapá Hay, a Grand Old Highlander, and Papá Hay had been buyers and exporters of grain to all parts of the world, shipping their cargo

in their own bottoms (ships). For a time *very* prosperous. Then tough times; next, the total collapse of the business. When Jeanie got her M.A. diploma, Papá said when he kissed her, "Thank God! *You* are provided for." And teach right off she did in a Scottish border village school, her first stint at earning her living.

In a year or so, she and her family leave for the U. S. of A., "the *Hope* of all who lose their money 'at home.'" Eventually (circa 1886), they find themselves in Kansas City. Then, in 1903, she settled in El Paso, Texas, where she "was elected to teach English in the High School," later to become head of the English Department. In all, thirty-six years in the El Paso school system, where thousands of schoolagers were her pupils.

Come with me if you will—back to the momentous years of 1916-17—when the beautiful, brand-spanking-new, Trost-architected El Paso High School first opened its massive front doors to students. A senior at the time, and with a hep-step, I am hot-footing it eagerly down the hall to get to my seat in Mrs. Frank's Composition class. There she is, her "Jeanie light-brown hair" pompadoured, the back twisted into a sort of knot, little wisps of hair falling to her neck as she gesticulates.

As I remember her, she is in her usual "uniform"—fresh white blouse and long, long black skirt. I think she never sat down at her desk. For she paces one side of the room to the other, book in hand. Maybe reciting something of Bobby Burns, or reading a bit of "Tam o' Shanter." Her sparkling, keen eyes seeing all she needs to see.

Now she may be reminiscing as to her talk with Sir Thomas Lipton, who scrambled from the slums to become *somebody*. Or of her meeting Lord Tennyson, son of the great Poet-Laureate of England. Or of when Grandpapá MacCallum conversed with Sir Walter Scott. Then there was the time when Mamá's great uncle Malcolm MacCallum was made a knight. Seems when he knelt to receive the honor . . . splitting his fashionably-tight trousers. Or she might switch to her new love, her adopted Southwest, telling of the bloodiest battle New Mexico ever saw, Acoma, the sky city.

Oh, I could go on and on with stories she very likely might have told us. No, sir-ree, nobody ever went to sleep in Mrs. Frank's classes.

The Fundamentals of Good Grammar, of course, were foremost with her in her English classes—conjunctions, punctuations, troublesome verbs, agreement of subject and predicate. And in Comp classes, how she detested

Martha Patterson Peterson, a frequent contributor of articles to *Password* is also the author of *Once Upon a Morning: Seven Decades of Versification (El Paso: Mangan Books, 1985)*.

the redundant and the trite! All this in her very own Scottish b-r-r. A very pronounced accent, delightful to hear and ever remembered.

I go back now to the years before she came to be a part of our city. And all I know, for a great part, is what I gather from poring over the newspapers, plus people-talks, and what I glean as I read over Mrs. Frank's two grade-school textbooks—these with forewords respectively by Superintendent of Schools A. H. Hughey and R. R. J. (so signed). I take it El Paso High School Principal R. R. Jones. Who else? These schoolbooks: histories of the Southwest for young students. And I also get to know Mrs. Frank by living her Yes-sayer life right along with her, in her autobiography, *Now I Can Tell It All*, written when she was about 80. (So vividly told it is, I call it her Animated Autobio.) It is dedicated to the "'Old Boys and Girls' of Our First Big High School."

In this Autobio, she describes, first, her childhood in "'derry" and her schooling in Scotland, then brings the family to Kansas City. Several years of teaching there for her. After a few beaus, she was a Yes-sayer to a

marriage proposal by a Canadian-born druggist, Sam Gilbert Frank; eventually the mother of two daughters, Ailsa and Mona. The Franks' first years: affluence in the pharmacy business. Feeling "flush," they make a voyage via Canada to Scotland. In Canada she meets his "cousins by the dozens"; in her homeland he meets her "cousins by the dozens." And Sam *would* go swimming in Loch Lomond. In November, mind you! She making herself comfortable on its "bonnie, bonnie banks."

Returning to America, and to Chicago in particular, her husband (often called "Doctor") has his eye out to providing again for his family in comfort and in style.

He finds a good "buy" in an established money-maker of a drugstore. For several years, wonderfully good times for the family of four. Then disaster:

There was a very bad Depression after the World's Fair in 1893. Sam



Jeanie MacCallum Hay, c. 1872
(Photo courtesy Jean Mary Orme-Johnson)

MARTHA PATTERSON PETERSON

had a wretched experience with a drunken, unreliable partner; so he lost all the money, the store and everything we had in the world... . But he never spoke of his troubles, even to me . . . but how he must have brooded. I found him dead on the living room couch, January 4, 1897.

Sam had died of cerebral hemorrhage. "So ended my happiness and love." Twenty-eight years old she was, and two young children to bring up. "And I had twenty-eight cents in the world!"

Somehow she and the girls made it back to Kansas City. There she taught in a select school for girls, "The Young Ladies College." Sixty-five dollars per month!

Several years after Sam's death she was persuaded with very glowing letters from an old Scottish beau to go to Australia and marry him. But the marriage proved to be an unhappy one. So back to the U. S. A. she came with her two girls. This time to live in El Paso, where her brother Malcolm Hay was employed at the American Smelter and Refining Company. Here in El Paso, too, she chooses to take back her former name of "Frank."

So began her teaching career in "our town"—and experiences numerous. Plus extracurriculars.

Southwestern PAGEANTRY, she wrote. This idea of pageantry came about because of her receiving (or not *personally* receiving) her diploma from the University of Glasgow. For, as mentioned before, straightway after earning her degree she was away teaching. It was her mother (in daughter's place) who had stepped up to receive the hard-won M.A. Coolly, impersonally, said diploma was handed over to her mother. No pomp. No circumstance. No fanfare. And her class only the second one ever to allow women students through the University's venerable gates. And Jeanie had been one of the first of WOMEN to be recognized by the University as "having brains, too."

Wrote Mrs. Frank many years later: "I was so enthusiastic about the wealth of history that I discovered in the Southwest, that I proposed to the 'powers that be' to substitute for the old 'set' commencements—plays, historical pageants, presenting southwestern life." Seems the powers heartily approved, "so I wrote and staged a Southwestern Pageant of History dating back to Prehistoric Days. We gave it in our first real city Theatre, and had not only to repeat it four times, but to ask the police to help to restrain the crowds. Our commencements from then on were very spectacular, and were often held in our fine, new stadium which seated 10,000 people."

She kept on writing passionately of the land she loved, going back

directly to sources for her facts. She tells of the first pageant ever to be staged in what is now the United States. A Comedia. Presented April 30, 1598. The stage artist was God. Cast of characters included the Spaniards of Oñate's expedition. The author, Captain Farfan de los Godos. The play staged to celebrate a great event, the arrival of the Oñate Expedition at the Rio Grande del Norte.

Then for the Texas Centennial, 1936, her most tremendous production of all. Seven episodes! In her Animated Autbio she tells about it:

I went back to the coming of the First White Man to the U. S. A., Cabeza de Vaca. In fact, I went back further, as Southwest history had so fascinated me. This production was held in our spacious, fine stadium (later named R. R. Jones Stadium). It was set right in the hills of Texas. Fortunately, the big U. S. Army fort near our city, freely let us have... up to 1,000 men and officers. Cowmen (ex-pupils) brought small herds of cattle and many horsemen.

Later, in 1941, another extravaganza, *I Am an American*, written and produced by Mrs. Frank, was held in Liberty Hall.

What a wealth of southwestern history lies hidden away in old issues of El Paso newspapers, which published several series of Mrs. Frank's articles circa mid-20s. "Dusting the Covers of Southwestern History" was the title of the series she first wrote. This followed by the series "Americans in the Making." Charming and heartfelt. And yet another: "Beginnings of Southwestern History," column-filling stories, many with an eye-catching headline: "Father Garces, An Early Arizona Martyr: How He Dared Death to Spread the Gospel"; "Blood of the Southwestern Martyrs Shed in Saving Souls of the Indians"; "Storming the City Halfway to the Sky"; "First Navy Ever Launched in America"; and "Are We Americans Sixth Tenant-Race of the Southwest, and Who Will Succeed Us?"

Serving as historical advisor to the Chamber of Commerce, circa 1941, Mrs. Frank began a long series of romantic narrative articles in the *Times* called "Where the Centuries Meet." Besides having delved deeply into authentic sources for facts, she also had visited the scenes of many of her stories, compelled to walk the ground where the ancients trod.

A letter writer to the February, 1988, issue of *American Heritage* declares that "a good historian can empathize with people across the ages" and ideally should possess "the novelist's gift for the thumbnail sketch of character, dramatic setting of mood and . . . the historian's ability to summarize events." Over and over again, Mrs. Frank demonstrated these qualities. An example. In her *History of the District of El Paso in Texas and New Mexico: A Reader for Boys and Girls*, she presents one Captain

Luís de Velasco, who served in Oñate's 1598 Expedition. "This young Spanish dandy," writes Mrs. Frank, "had a suit of rose satin; one of purple Castilian cloth; one of beautiful Chinese flowered silk, and another of blue Italian velvet. . . ." Plus more elaborate getup: "four saddles of blue flowered Spanish cloth bound with Cordovan leather, three suits of armor for himself and three suits of armor for his horses." Not to mention such niceties as bedstead, mattress, coverlets, sheets, pillow cases, etc. Mrs. Frank notes that "this does not sound very much like fighting equipment with which to conquer savages," adding that "Maybe Captain de Velasco hoped to dazzle the inhabitants of the unknown northern land into defeat." Turns out it was he himself who suffered defeat: "Ruined in fortune" and "disappointed with the northern country, . . . he withdrew from the expedition . . ." How's that for empathy, thumbnail characterization, "dramatic setting," and a neat summary of events?

For all her dramatic flair and narrative skill, Mrs. Frank—let it be emphasized—never distorted the facts. Case in point. In that same *History of the District of El Paso, etc.*, we meet another sixteenth-century Spanish *caballero*, Captain Gaspar de Villagrà, who answered Don Juan de Oñate's call for cavaliers to join his expedition to the north in 1598. Describing Villagrà as "of the best type to answer the call," Mrs. Frank explains that he came from a family of soldiers, that he had been "educated in one of the big Spanish universities," and that he became the historian of the expedition. And what a historian! His chronicle recorded the hazards, victories, frustrations, and triumphs of the expedition—and it was written in verse. An epic poem, it turned out to be. Titled *Historia de la Nueva México*, it was (writes Mrs. Frank) "the first published history of any American region." And she even quotes (in English translation) the poem's opening lines, which show praise and devotion to the leader, Oñate (and also an acquaintance with *The Iliad*): "Of arms I sing, and of that heroic son/ Of his wondrous deeds and of victories won."

By a marvelous coincidence, the April 1988 issue of *New Mexico Magazine* carries an article backing up Mrs. Frank's "Villagrà." Headlined "Epic poem by New Mexico explorer tells country's first historical saga," the article states that Villagrà's *Historia de la Nueva México* was published in Alcalá, Spain, in 1610. And it goes on:

The author, Captain Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà, . . . belonged to an illustrious family from northern Castile in Spain. He was . . . a well educated man, acute observer and sensitive artist. He found time, amid the hardships of the [Oñate 1598] expedition to listen to poetic inspirations and created a beautiful and interesting work in the form of a long epic poem.

At the end of this article the author quotes the American historian F. W. Hodge as saying, "Villagr 's *Historia* may claim the distinction of being the first published history of any American commonwealth."

As to Mrs. Frank's own travels, she could easily say with Lord Tennyson: "For always traveling with a hungry heart,/ Much have I seen and known." What to do those long, hot summers? Well—*travel*. But with what for wherewithal? She had her goal; all she needed was the gold to go on. Self-confident, she thought it out. She would rent out her home. Prompting, no doubt, a quotation from another English poet (William Blake): "Bring me my chariots of fire!"

At first her "chariots" were trains (chair-cars) carrying her and her little daughters back to Kansas City to visit her family. Then once to New York to take a course in (of all things) Scottish Literature! Other times, highly diverting treks to California. Some summers, might be, her "chariots" the canyon-climbing trains chugging up to Cloudcroft.

As to automobile travel. In her car (driven by a former student and friend) she made two more trips to the Golden State. Returning home from one of these, she experienced her first Southwest "flash flood": "My car disappeared downstream among other wreckage, never any good afterwards."

With barely enough "gold" to reach home, often she would go back to teaching with ten cents left after the "canny squeezing" of her dollars. But with her getup, gumption and know-how, and relying on her good Scottish sense, she always made the grade.

Later her "chariots" turned out to be ocean-going liners. For she had so yearned to go back to the Old Country. Naturally she decided to *go*. But—HOW? Her resourcefulness showed the way. She organized a group of youths (principally girls) and prepared them for touring Europe. "I began in my senior classes, but I was *very* careful in my selection. I was not going to have our trip spoiled by flirtatious girls or youths who 'looked upon the wine when it was red.'"

Her first group, a huge success with fourteen goers. They went by way of Toronto, Canada, to France, England, Brussels, Venice. Swimming in Venice. A fine dance at the Lido, her girls dancing with the courteous and attractive Italian officers. Mannerly: "My friends and I wish to thank you—" In Paris, the Folies Bergere: "Not any worse from the moral and spectacular view than we would have seen in New York." In Old World Oberammergau: the Passion Play.

Four more of these trips in all. Frances Earle Brown tells of her aunt, Josephine Marr Witherspoon, a member of one such tour group. Also, as

a 1922 graduation present Lillian Harms (Munro) went on a delightfully adventuresome tour abroad. Mrs. Frank as chaperon. "Not one to mince words," says Lillian, "she called a spade a spade."

Besides praise unlimited by her former pupils in English Grammar and Lit classes, she was termed other things. "Opinionated," for example. "If she was that, we need more like her," declares painter-author Tom Lea, a former student of hers at EPHS. Tom also feels a lifelong indebtedness to her for his training in basic good grammar. And yes, he did take part in one of her stadium pageants, was in a mob scene, an Indian, just a plain Indian. Might I add, probably feathers and all!

Gladys Fox (Mrs. Chris) tells of how one of Mrs. Frank's daughters gently scolded her mother for letting her clothes closet door stay open. "Oh, Mother, it has such a *careless* look." Mrs. Frank with one of her usual peppery comebacks: "But it has such a *hospitable* look." And you can also bet she stuck to her "opinionated" policies as to pupil-behavior. Keith Teague Chapman (Mrs. Roy), Mrs. Frank's granddaughter, tells of how Mrs. Frank taught manners as well as English literature. She considered it unladylike and ungentlemanlylike to chew gum in class. She let the pupils know she disapproved of such and warned them: if the chewer kept on chewing, she would direct said chewer to stick the gum on his (her) nose, and then to stand with nose gum-stuck to the blackboard.

A year or so before the death of Chris P. Fox, longtime and beloved "Mr. El Paso," *The El Paso Times* published an article about him. An excerpt:

He walked barefoot in the dusty streets to school because the gravel-and-tar sidewalks were too hot. One afternoon his favorite teacher, Mrs. Jeanie M. Frank, sent him home with a note of dismissal, advising his parents he could return to school when he could arrive on time, properly attired, with his homework done and with a proper attitude toward teachers.

Of all Shakespearean plays, Mrs. Frank had an extra fondness for *Macbeth*. No wonder! Scotchy! And she insisted on verve and action in the play's production. Winifred Middagh and Eloise Nagley remember with enjoyment *Macbeth* "a la Mrs. Frank." Action and verve—YES! Yet, Mrs. Frank had her limits. She was not pleased when some boy went overboard in a too vociferously orated, "Out, damned spot."

Other voices were heard that she had her "favorites." Now, I'm asking you, is there a teacher who would *not* have a kindly and prideful interest in students who did their durndest to live up to her expectations? And were her expectations ever high! Sky high! Mary Louise Carey (Mrs. Vernus),



Jeanie MacCallum Hay Frank, c. 1915
(Photo courtesy Keith Teague Chapman)

in the English grammar class, soon found out, "If you didn't make it, you *didn't* make it."

Said Jean Mary Orme-Johnson, another of Mrs. Frank's granddaughters: "My grandmother would leave her home on Galloway Street at 5:30 in the morning, make for El Paso High via shortcut and ravines and grease-wooded gullies. She would pass by what is now the Tennis Club, would make her way through Stormsville (at times the police watching out for her). Thus she would show up early to tutor any behind-class pupils who would be there to meet her." So it was that she treated her "favorites."

Albert Schwartz, class of '36, spoke of his five young boy cousins who left Hungary just before Hitler took over; how they landed in Juarez. They needed a tutor to give them English lessons. What to do? Albert calls on his former English teacher and friend, our Mrs. Frank, for help. He gets it. Might say that she included among her "favorites" newly-arrived refugees from Hitlerism.

A *Herald-Post* article mentioned Mrs. Frank as "One of those grand school teachers who could cut with a word or look." By such she might have been dubbed one with more than a "wee bit o' tartness" But I would put it like this: Her tongue though tart, / Not so her heart. As many attest. This from Harrison Hughey (son of A. H. Hughey):

When I was just a little kid, she (from one of her Scotland trips) brought back to me a sort of flat beret. Banded—and a bright, *bright* plaid. Called a tam o' shanter, as I remember it. Scared, I never had the courage to wear it; bad enough to be the principal's son—but to wear that tam. I would be called an oddball, for sure.

As for Mrs. Frank—a great respect. She was prolific in her writing—enthusiastic; wasn't afraid of anything or anybody; not afraid to pass judgment; not afraid to speak out; inspired kids 'pulling the best out of them.'

Fourteen hundred appreciative students, on her 70th birthday, February 3, 1938, gathered to celebrate the occasion. Flustered, flabbergasted by such limelight, Mrs. Frank "lapsed into *bad* grammar, declaring, 'this isn't ME.'" And how she was teased by her admiring well-wishers. But somehow, at this point, she just didn't care! That was Mrs. F.

It was about in that same year that an article in the *Herald-Post* announced:

Mrs. Jeanie M. Frank, head of the English department of El Paso High School, is listed in the recently published volume No. 2 of *American Women*, the official Who's Who among the Women of the Nation.

Can't you just imagine her agreeing with Walt Whitman's "Oh to die, advancing on." Her scintillating, adventurous spirit seeming never to die out. And to top it all, Superintendent Hughey had called her "one of the 'immortals' of the school system."

Yet, she did retire in 1940 after her long years of teaching—"youth in the classroom, and youth in her heart." And the flame still burning bright, she advances on to her study of astronomy, her writing of stories, her cooking and gardening. This all in her dream home, 1711 N. Kansas Street, living with her daughter Ailsa and son-in-law Clyde Teague, the home having been built by them right on the edge of the Rim—El Paso and Mexico and the valley spread out below.

Oh yes, she was ever a Yes-sayer with drive and dynamism. Not only a teacher, but a respected historian, mountain climber and explorer, counselor and tutor, traveler, writer, radio personality (for a time she did a series titled "Frank Speech" on-KTSM radio), mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. A Great Lady!

The last line of her autobiography: "Cá (be careful) canny with your love, and with your money."☆

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INTERVIEWS. WHO'S WHO AND WHAT HELPERS

Frances Earle Brown, Hilliard Bryan, Conrey Bryson, Mary Louise Carey, Mary Cook Cashon, Lucita Escajeda Flores, Gladys Lundy Fox, Rosemary Fryer, Robert Jackson Gilbert, Gertrude (Sugar) Goodman, Leonard A. Goodman, Sr., Joyce Graves, Nancy Miller Hamilton, Mary Jackson Hellums, Grace Hawkins Hill, Harrison Hughey, Anne Word Kelly, Elizabeth Hooks Kelly, Tom Lea, Colonel John Luscombe, Frank and Judy Mangan, Hattie Patterson McKean, Frances Merbeth, Winifred McVey Middagh, Bertha Watson Middleton, Romaine Roche Mounce, Lillian Harms Munro, Eloise Baldwin Nagley, Robert Oliver, Rosa Patterson Oliver, Sophie Palafox, Sue Jackson Polk, Elizabeth Watson Rempe, Albert Schwartz, Helen Sepulveda, Eugene Thurston, Dr. W. H. Timmons, Hazel Wells, Karl O. Wyler

MARTHA PATTERSON PETERSON

AND VERY SPECIAL THANKS

to: **Kelth Teague Chapman** and **Jean Mary Orme-Johnson**, Mrs. Frank's granddaughters
and to: **Mary Sarber** and the El Paso Public Library.



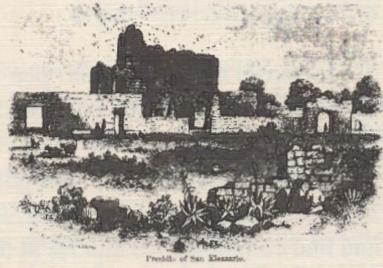
THE NEW NEWS ABOUT THE OLD NEWS

Password has carried the regular feature "Our Town—One Century Ago" since the Fall 1984 issue. Authored by **Art Leibson**, retired El Paso newspaperman and present weekly columnist for the *El Paso Times*, the "Our Town" segments have provided *Password* readers with lively reports on El Paso happenings during each calendar quarter of the mid-to-late 1880s.

Now, Mr. Leibson announces his resignation as the author of the "Our Town" series, and it is with great regret that the editorial board accepts his decision. The board members take this opportunity to thank Mr. Leibson for his interesting, well-researched, and thoughtful "Our Town" articles. Separately and all together, they form a valuable contribution to the record of El Paso's history.

The editorial board is pleased to announce that **Damon Garbern**, former English teacher and currently Vocal Music Supervisor in the El Paso Public Schools, will continue the quarterly reports of El Paso doings as published in the local newspapers of one hundred years ago. His series of articles, perhaps under a different title, will begin in the Winter 1988 issue.





Front of San Juanito

"PEN PICTURES" of EL PASO: *The Letters of Rudolph Eickemeyer, 1893*

by Emilia Gay Griffith Means

AMONG THE HEALTH-SEEKERS WHO VISITED El Paso in the early part of 1893 was one Rudolph Eickemeyer from Yonkers, New York. Accompanied by his son Carl (who would later achieve fame as the author of *Over the Great Navajo Trail*), Eickemeyer arrived in El Paso in early February and stayed until mid-April. He then moved on to Santa Fe, where he remained until the end of May. During these four months, he wrote a series of letters to a friend¹ in Yonkers, each letter a virtual "pen picture" of a scene or an experience that was meaningful to him. After his return to Yonkers, he allowed his letters to be collected into a volume which was published in 1894 under the title *Letters from the Southwest*, the volume handsomely illustrated with several drawings by E. W. Deming, the author's nephew and a resident of Santa Fe.²

Eickemeyer was not a professional writer, but he was an enthusiastic tourist who greatly enjoyed describing his observations and his opinions

of the places he visited. His "pen pictures" of El Paso reveal many details of the town as it was in 1893, and they also offer an interesting judgment of it by an outsider.

Rudolph Eickemeyer was 61 years old when he visited El Paso. He had been born in Altenbamberg, Bavaria, Germany, on October 31, 1831, and had completed his studies at the Darmstadt Polytechnic Institute at the age of 17. In 1850, he had emigrated to the United States, his English vocabulary consisting of fewer than a dozen words at the time.³ Four years later he settled in Yonkers, where the manufacture of wool hats was the chief industry. He opened a small machine-repair shop, and very soon he began to give serious attention to the improvement of the crude mechanical appliances used in the manufacture of hats. Between the years 1865 and 1869 he gradually revolutionized the hatmaking industry throughout the world by the invention of a series of machines. Later, he applied his mechanical talents to the other fields, and by the 1880s his hat-machinery factory had been largely converted into a prosperous electric plant and laboratory. All told, Eickemeyer secured approximately 150 patents in the United States and abroad. In 1892 his plant and laboratory were consolidated with the General Electric Company.⁴ Now Rudolph Eickemeyer was free to travel in pursuit of a climate where he could repair his health—and turn his attention to a leisurely observation of new places.

He began his trip to the Southwest in early January of 1893, traveling first to Atlanta, Georgia, where he reported eight inches of snow, the snow continuing through the "Sunny South" as he journeyed on to New Orleans. "Our search after sunshine, so far, had not been a success," he wrote.⁵ He and Carl spent several days in New Orleans, where "what amused me more than anything else is that everyone we met insisted that we must see the burying grounds." He saw them in due course and admitted that they were interesting, "all the *burials* . . . above ground in sepulchral structures highly ornate." "But," he added, "to send a visitor who has left home to restore his health, all over the city to see how New Orleans takes care of its dead, did not strike me as a very judicious move."⁶

Departing New Orleans, Eickemeyer and Carl traveled to San Antonio. And that city, too, was a disappointment: "The fog and smoke that characterized New Orleans was only a little less dense in San Antonio, and as it did not agree with me, we partly concluded to go to Southern California." However, before completing their plans, the Eickmeyers

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heard about a place called El Paso, someone recommending it as "an agreeable region." Whereupon, wrote Eickemeyer, Carl referred to an encyclopedia and reported that it described El Paso as "a town on the border of Mexico, having forty-five hundred inhabitants, half of whom were barbarous natives." Apparently the encyclopedia entry intrigued the Eickemeyers, for "On the strength of this description we bought our tickets, and after a ride of twenty-four hours through a real desert, our train following the picturesque cañon of the Rio Grande a good part of the way, we landed here."⁷

Rudolph Eickemeyer, Yonkers inventor and businessman, who spent the spring of 1893 in El Paso. (Photo from *The History of Yonkers*, New York by Charles E. Allison, 1984 reprint by Harbor Hill Books, Harrison, New York. Courtesy of the publisher)



And "here" they were to stay for almost three months. Rudolph Eickemeyer's long trek through snow and "sepulchral structures" and "fog and smoke" had brought him somewhat accidentally to the sunshine he was seeking. At the end of his visit, he would summarize his stay in El Paso: "When I landed in El Paso . . . I was an invalid. On leaving El Paso I can conscientiously recommend it to anyone who, like myself, wants rest and sunshine in the winter, a dry atmosphere, and pure, clear air. Should I ever want to emigrate again and bask in the sunshine of a health giving climate, I will make a bee-line for North Pass City, in Texas, knowing that I shall not be disappointed."⁸

Almost immediately after his arrival, Eickemeyer began to explore the town. He walked through its sunlit streets, rode its mule-driven trolley, visited its schools, noted its large number of revolver-carrying citizens, sat in the plaza, talked with strangers. He investigated, observed, listened. And he described. In letter after letter, he fleshed the scenes, the people, the pastimes, the way of life as he encountered it in the "agreeable region" of the Pass.

His letters take the reader everywhere—to “Uncle Sam’s Weather Bureau,” located on the top floor of “the highest building in town”;* to the fire department, where he had the misfortune to find a “roasted Chinaman on exhibition”; to the “Horse Restaurant,” the “corral” where “rangers” kept their mules, horses, and wagons while in town; to Juarez, where he witnessed a cock fight (“I don’t . . . want to see another”), and to the gaudy saloons on El Paso Street.

Eickemeyer’s “pen pictures” of El Paso begin substantially with his presentation of the San Jacinto Plaza in the heart of downtown: a lively place constantly bustling with passersby and perpetually filled with drifters, tourists, and citizens resting on its tree-shaded benches. He described the Plaza as “a sort of park covering four squares” with a fountain in the center and a sign on one side which read, “Don’t disturb the alligators.” For several days, he thought the sign was a joke, for he saw no alligators. Finally, though, he observed two alligators basking in the sun, each one about four feet long.⁹ He watched them for hours and detected no more movement than the winking of one eye. All would be serene in the Plaza, he reported, until “some dog gets into their neighborhood, and then the whole crowd of people . . . watch with a great deal of interest to see what may take place if the poor dog gets too close to the front end of the alligator.” He likened the spectacle to “a performance on the tight-rope so dangerous that the spectators may expect to see a neck broken at any time.”¹⁰

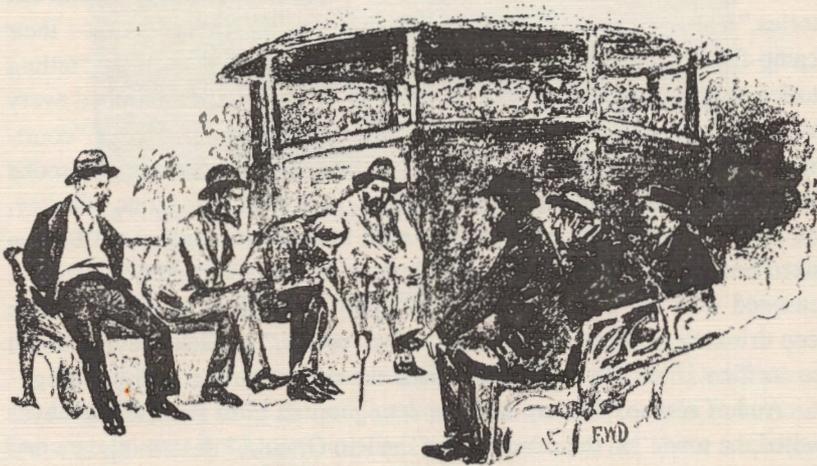
Eickemeyer’s “pen pictures” also include descriptions of the many people who daily sat around the Plaza and engaged in “endless” discussions. Most of these people, he attested, were “transients”—some from the North, others from the East, and “a good many from New Mexico.” He devoted rather lengthy passages to two of these Plaza-loungers who were given to making large pronouncements on national and world affairs: “our Frenchman,” who “knows all the past and present European politics, and lays down with absolute certainty the future of the European states” and “an Irishman who knows all about . . . American matters.”¹¹

From the Plaza, Eickemeyer takes the reader on a tour of the saloons, the most fashionable of which were located on El Paso Street. And properly so, he concluded: this “is the leading business street” and “the saloons

**Editor’s note:* According to the United States Weather Bureau records, El Paso’s Weather Station was located in Rooms 122 and 124 of the Sheldon Building at the time of Eickemeyer’s visit. However, it is possible that the weather-measuring instruments had been moved as early as the spring of 1893 to the tower of the as yet unfinished Federal Building, which was “the highest building in town.”

constitute the principal business" of the town. He estimated that there were "about twenty saloons" in El Paso at the time and hastened to add that they were "carved and gilded . . . in first-class style," not at all like "the ordinary kinds of places where a man takes a drink." He further observed that "to almost every saloon" was "attached a regular outfit" for games of chance and that the names of these establishments were "simply grand": the "Drawing Room," the "White House," the "Jewel," and so on. He visited the "Jewel" ("the most stylish of the gambling-houses"), describing its bar as "about forty feet in length" and "embellished with statuary—lacking the conventional fig leaf." Adjacent to the bar was another room "filled with . . . Chinamen, Mexicans, negroes of all shades and colors, a few cowboys, and some business men" variously engaged in roulette and faro. "Of course, I did not stay long," he added. "It takes time to get used to such things."¹²

Eickemeyer and his son stayed at the Vendome Hotel¹³ throughout their visit in El Paso. He found the "house" not worth describing, being "as much like other country hotels as one egg is like another." But the



This drawing by E. W. Deming, one of the illustrations in Eickemeyer's *Letters from the Southwest*, depicts the "transients" who in the spring of 1893 gathered daily near the bandstand in the San Jacinto Plaza and engaged in "endless" discussions. (Reproduced with permission of the DeGolyer Library, Southern Methodist University)

residents of the hotel fascinated him. One of them, "a gentleman, formerly from Kingston, N. Y.," proclaimed impressive credentials: he had been with the original party of "Californian Forty-niners," having "landed there ("I think he said") "with the first lot by way of Panama"; he had also been "in Nevada during the time when Mark Twain ran a store in Carson City"; further, he "knows every man, woman, and child that ever lived on the Pacific Slope"; and he was presently in El Paso seeking a buyer for his "gold mine" which he had discovered "sixty miles from here." Another "old resident" at the Vendome was the "judge" (he had registered as a lawyer from Louisiana), who "gets acquainted with new-comers quicker than anyone else," "takes parties of three over to the bar" and from there to a "little room" where "a social game is played." According to all reports, added Eickemeyer, the "judge" "usually wins." There was also a "gentleman from Kentucky"—a claim which Eickemeyer did not doubt, for the "gentleman" was "thoroughly posted on horses" and "all kinds of drinks." Additionally there were "every day, new faces." One day it might be "an English lord and his family"; another day, "a Scotch laird . . . with his daughter."¹⁴

Eickemeyer discovered that in the El Paso of 1893 the Civil War was still raging—after a fashion. He reported that there were "two kinds of Grand Army Posts, the Gray and the Blue," each one having its "camp-fire" where the loyal members "light their pipes" and "sit around and tell stories." During one week of Eickemeyer's visit the two posts held their "camp-fires" on the same evening. The "blues" were peacefully "telling stories of Sheridan's ride" when the "rebels" appeared and "marched every man of them as prisoners to the Confederate headquarters." Here a "court-martial" was formed and "the helpless captives were condemned to smoke Confederate tobacco out of corn-cob pipes, to drink Confederate whiskey, and to eat Confederate beans (not the mild kind so well known as 'Boston baked beans', but that horrid species known around here as the . . . *frijole*, seasoned with red pepper [to such an extent] that the poor victim has to keep drinking in sheer self-defense." The "rebels," as Eickemeyer related the incident, held the "prisoners" until the early hours of the morning.¹⁵

And of course, like any self-respecting tourist in El Paso, Eickemeyer visited the town "on the other side of the Rio Grande," describing in some detail the crossing:

Juarez is . . . connected with El Paso by streetcars which pass over the river on two bridges. Going in one direction, they pass over the lower, returning, after a long detour through Juarez, over the upper bridge back to El Paso. As soon as the first bridge is crossed the car is stopped, and a Mexican custom-house officer passes through to inspect passengers and

baggage. With his broad *sombrero* trimmed with gold and silver braid, his short jacket and tight pantaloons, a cartridge-belt around his loins, and a silver-plated revolver in his belt, he looks like a robber in a Bowery theatre melodrama. He rings the bell as he steps off of the rear platform, and away we go at full mule-speed into Juarez.¹⁶

When his visit drew to a close and the time arrived for his departure from El Paso, Rudolph Eickemeyer confessed that "I had a feeling as if I was going away from a dear friend. Many of the guests from the hotel and some of the citizens came to the depot to say good-by, and the leave-taking, hand-shaking, and wishes for good health and happiness, mutually expressed, were as hearty and sincere as if we had lived together for a lifetime"¹⁷



An engraving of the Hotel Vendome, reprinted from *Guide to El Paso, Texas: A Complete History of the City and Review of its Business*, which was published in El Paso by McKie and Edwardy c. 1887. (Courtesy Southwest Collection, El Paso Public Library)

Rudolph Eickemeyer never returned to El Paso. He died on January 25, 1895,¹⁸ shortly after the publication of his *Letters from the Southwest*. Fortunately, that book contains his "pen pictures" of El Paso, and those "pictures" provide an entertaining and informative commentary on the town as his delighted eyes beheld it in the spring of 1893. To this man who had spent his entire adulthood in a populous industrial city on the Hudson River, the frontier town of El Paso on the "picturesque . . . Rio Grande" was colorful and invigorating—a mecca for health-seekers, a splen-

dor of sunshine and "pure, clear air," a magnet for adventurers, a dazzle of saloons and gambling parlors, a rainbow of ethnic groups. And it became—in the space of his single short visit—"a dear friend."☆

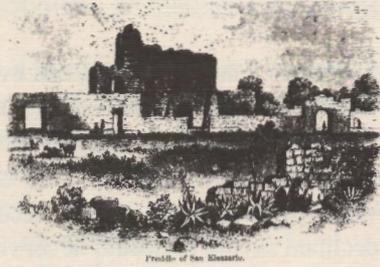
NOTES

1. The first letter is addressed "My Dear Mr. Gorton." Very likely this was Charles E. Gorton, who had been appointed Superintendent of the Yonkers Public Schools on October 9, 1883. Charles Elmer Allison, *The History of Yonkers* (New York: 1896). This book may be found in the Genealogy Room, Dallas Public Library.
2. Rudolph Eickemeyer, *Letters from the Southwest* (New York: 1894), 7.
3. Allison, 185.
4. Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: 1930), 59-60.
5. Eickemeyer, 6.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, 7.
8. *Ibid.*, 69-70.
9. Supposedly six baby alligators had been shipped by way of the Texas and Pacific Railway to El Paso by a fun-loving Louisianian to a friend, A. Munsenberger, who was in the mining business. The alligators were presented to C. R. Morehead, Mayor of El Paso, as a zoological gift in 1890. See "The 'Gators' Were a Gag," *Texas and Pacific Railway Topics*, XI (September, 1965), 11-13.
10. Eickemeyer, 8; 24-25.
11. *Ibid.*, 41-42.
12. *Ibid.*, 10-12.
13. The Hotel Vendome was located on the site now occupied by the Cortez Building. Originally called the Parker House, it was built in 1881. The building was purchased in 1899 by Mr. and Mrs. Charles DeGroff and, after extensive remodeling, was renamed Hotel Ormdorff. In 1925 it was razed to make room for the new Ormdorff Hotel, later to become the Hussmann Hotel, then the Cortez Hotel, and (in 1984) an office building. (See *Password*, XVIII, No. 1, 6-8, and also XXVIII, No. 3, 119-124.) The Hotel Vendome was advertised in the El Paso newspapers of 1893 as having "passenger elevators, electric lights, large airy rooms with hot and cold water, porcelain lined bathtubs and even its own dairy." The proprietor was John Friedenbloom.
14. Eickemeyer, 36-37.
15. *Ibid.*, 52-53. During the period of Eickemeyer's visit, two of these friendly confrontations were reported in the *El Paso Herald*—one in the issue of March 10, the other in the issue of April 19.
16. *Ibid.*, 16-17.
17. *Ibid.*, 69.
18. Johnson and Malone, 60.



WHAT'S IN A NAME

Putnam School, which opened in 1959, was named for El Paso's third superintendent of schools, Gerrie Price Putnam, who served from 1894-1908.



Ruins of San Juan

• A TIME TO REMEMBER •

"ROUGHING IT" THROUGH the CAVES

by Ed F. Imle

THE DATE WAS JULY 9, 1925. THE PLACE WAS southeastern New Mexico. And probably it was a typical summer day in that part of the country—hot and dry and ablaze with sunshine. I say "probably" because I spent about eleven hours of that day deep underground, where the sun does not penetrate and where the temperature holds steady at 56 degrees. On that day—a very memorable one for me and not at all typical—I made my first trip through Carlsbad Caverns.

I was traveling with a party of about 45 people ranging in ages from 18 to 65, all of us from the Lower Rio Grande Valley. We were on a journey to view irrigation projects and to look over possible dam sites on the Rio Grande. We visited Carlsbad on our return trip to the valley, arriving in

The photograph which appears "screened" on page 140 was taken by Mickey Cochran, a student at The University of Texas at El Paso, and was published originally in The Pass (Summer, 1988). It pictures the "Giant Dome" in Carlsbad and it is reprinted here with the permission of Mr. Cochran and The Pass.

the town on July 8. I spent that evening in the home of Chris Walters, my father's cousin, who had settled near Carlsbad in the early 1900s. Chris knew all the area surrounding the Caverns, having hunted in the vicinity many times. He had seen the entrance to the Caverns but had never ventured in. I urged him to accompany our party the next day, but he declined saying he would never risk going into a "hole" like that with the ever-present danger of the roof falling in. A number of other Carlsbad residents apparently felt the same way he did. It was the old story, I guess, of a place not being without honor save in its own region.

After spending the night of July 8 camping out near the town of Carlsbad, we left at dawn the next morning and drove over a trail via the Black River Village and the small valley lying between the present El Paso-Carlsbad highway and the mesa where the entrance to the Caverns is located. We parked our cars at the foot of the mesa and then climbed the steep and very rocky bluff.

Our chief guide into the Caverns was none other than Jim White, the first extensive explorer of the caves. He had with him several assistants, as well as a National Park Service employee who was not too well acquainted with the Caverns, having been on the job only a few months. Carlsbad Cave (as it was called at that time) had been designated a National Monument in October of 1923, but we soon saw that no improvements had yet been made to facilitate its enjoyment by visitors—no steps, no guard rails, no paths. Also accompanying us was Ray V. Davis, a Carlsbad photographer who had made the first photographs of the Caverns in about 1920 and who was seizing this opportunity to take additional pictures.

At the entrance to the Caverns, we listened to instructions and admonitions from Mr. White and the government man. Finally at about seven o'clock, we entered the enormous "hole" in the side of the bluff and picked our way through loose rocks, sliding most of the way down the sharp incline. Occasionally there was a piece of wire or rope fastened to a boulder which we could grab to slow a too-rapid descent. When we reached the floor of the entrance, we were amazed at the great contrast between the light at the mouth of the cave above us and the blackness of the Caverns below us. Some of us began to wonder whether we wanted to venture any farther.

But Mr. White, his helpers, and the government man had come prepared. They had several gasoline lanterns which they now proceeded

Ed F. Imle, a resident of El Paso since 1930, is a retired educator. He served the Ysleta School District as a teacher and for many years as the Principal of Ascarate Elementary School.

to light, a number of flashlights, and a good-sized roll of magnesium "wire." The latter, when ignited from time to time, would enable us to see the formations deep within the caves, as well as the vastness of the various chambers, especially the largest chamber of all, which they called "The Big Room." Our guides also carried several ropes—just in case someone might fall into a cavity—and some first-aid equipment.

With lanterns lighted, we proceeded to follow "make-believe" paths which Mr. White had roughed out, being careful to keep in line, for we had been warned that to stray right or left might result in injury, or, worse yet, a dropping-out-of-sight. As we made our way through the chain of caves, there were huge boulders we had to slide under or clamber over, steep passages which we could negotiate only by the help of crude wire or rope ladders, and "crevices" we had to step across very carefully. All of this required time, and one of Jim's men had to be at such places with his lantern lest someone slip and fall. (By now, Mr. White was "Jim" to all of us.) Fortunately, in spite of all the hazards, I do not recall a single

injury other than some skinned knees, elbows, and shins. But I am certain that many of us had black-and-blue bruises from having "sat down" too hard on some of the rocks along the way.

At one place deep within the Caverns, Jim showed us a place where he had found the bones of a man along with some bits of clothing. No one knows who the man was or how he got there, but it was presumed that he was a soldier, for the clothing bits seemed to be from a military uniform. He could have been hiding from Indians and become lost, or he might have been a deserter who lost his way after straying too deeply into the cave. Whether he starved to death or died of injuries from an arrow, a gunshot, or a fall in the cave, no one will ever know. But it must



Jim White, the first extensive explorer of Carlsbad Caverns and the guide for the Lower Rio Grande Valley group who toured the Caverns on July 9, 1925. Photo from *One Man's Dream* by Ruth Cair (New York: Pageant Press, 1957), reprinted with permission of Jim White, Jr., Carlsbad, New Mexico.

have been a lonely and fearsome time for him.

After going for some distance, we could no longer see the faint light which marked the direction of the cavern mouth. Except for the feeble pools of light cast by the gasoline lanterns, we were surrounded by complete darkness. And on a few occasions the lanterns were extinguished so that we could get the "feel" of the darkness. It was a pitch-blackness such as we had never before "seen"—so dense and "substantial" that we felt we should be able to reach out and touch it.

It wasn't until we reached the inner chambers with their high ceilings that the magnesium flares were used. Then it was that we got glimpses of the fantastically beautiful forms and shapes and the delicate pastel colors all around and above us—the gigantic stalagmites thrusting upward from the rocky floor, the multitude of "icicles" suspended from the ceiling in "frozen" majesty, the gleaming "castles" brushed with frail pink and tender yellow, the "satin draperies" shimmering in titanic grandeur. We stood transfixed in silent, reverent awe to behold such incredible beauty spring forth from the ebony deep. The flares did not last long, and as they faded and the blackness closed in again on our physical sight, we still retained in our minds and spirits the wonders we had just witnessed. It was then that someone began singing "Rock of Ages," and we all joined in, for we felt touched by the presence of something Eternal. Flares were lighted several times as we made our way through the caves, and each time, the glimpse of spectacular beauty was indelibly etched in the mind's eye.

We had lunch in the Big Room sitting around on the various formations, each of us having brought his own "brown bag." At that time it was not forbidden to climb on the formations, but we couldn't do much climbing as they were so steep and slick—and, besides, we didn't want to stray too far beyond our brave little circle of lantern light. While we were permitted to walk on the formations, we were asked not to carry off any souvenirs. Even at this early date, the protection of this "holy place" was being pledged.

After lunch it was time to head back toward the entrance. Our watches told us that it was already mid-afternoon, and we wanted to make the drive to our campsite in daylight. We had the same rough going on the return as on our journey in—picking our way along the primitive trails, stumbling over the rocks, finding precarious toe-holds on the steep inclines, inching through the narrow passages, crawling around the boulders. And this time, uphill most of the way.

We reached the entrance at about six o'clock, having spent about eleven hours in total darkness except for our lanterns and the occasional

magnesium flares. It was still very light outside—almost blindingly so, and the July evening seemed unbearably hot after the coolness of the caves. We were tired and yet exhilarated, our only disappointment being that we didn't get to see the flights of the bats. Our arrival and departure times did not coincide with those of these creatures. But we did see plenty of bats clinging to the cavern walls and ceiling not too far from the entrance.

Since that long-ago day, I have made four additional trips through the Caverns, each one more comfortable and more "streamlined" than the one before—what with the many improvements that have steadily taken place over the years: the smooth approach to the entrance from the nearby, spacious parking lot and, inside the caves, the paved paths, the dramatic lighting throughout the chambers, a lunchroom with tables and benches and friendly service, and "all modern conveniences." To say nothing of the elevators which plunge you to the Big Room in a twinkling and transport you up again after a leisurely walk to view the sights. These improvements are desirable, I suppose, and most of them are necessary for reasons of safety and in order to handle efficiently the throngs of tourists. But I wouldn't take anything for my experience of "roughing it" through the caves in 1925.

It was a great privilege to make that long, hazardous hike to, and from, the inner chambers—and so to appreciate the immensity of Carlsbad Caverns, which are as large, I'm sure, as those "caverns measureless to man" that Coleridge visions in his poem "Kubla Khan." And it was also a privilege to feel the "weight" of primeval blackness which yields its treasures in rare moments of magnesium light. These treasures have remained vivid in my mind just as I beheld them sixty-three years ago in the dark surround of the Big Room. ☆



THE PRESIDIO OF SAN ELIZARIO, 1788-1851 . . . from page 115

8. Pedro Armendariz to Sr. Teniente Coronel y Gobernador Don Facundo Melgares, Santa Fe, November 1, 1821, *ibid.*, Reel 20, Frame 982; Robert W. Frazer, *Forts and Supplies The Role of the Army in the Economy of the Southwest, 1846-1861* (Albuquerque, 1983), 209; Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *The Spanish Archives of New Mexico* (2 vols.: Cedar Rapids, 1914), I, 354-355.
9. W. H. Timmons, "The El Paso Area in the Mexican Period, 1821-1848," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXXXIV (July, 1980), 2-3.
10. José Antonio de Arce to the Ayuntamiento del Paso, April 1, 1823, Juárez Archives, Reel 2, Frame 90; J. A. de Escudero, *Noticias Estadísticas del Estado de Chihuahua* (Mexico, 1834), 57.

(Notes continued on next page)

11. See copy of *El Noticioso de Chihuahua*, dated April 1, 1836, in Juárez Archives, Reel 35, Frame 037.
12. Complement of the Compañía Urbana Cavallería de San Elizario, November, 1836, *ibid.*, Reel 6, no frame number.
13. Quoted in Gene M. Brack, *Mexico Views Manifest Destiny, 1821-1846* (Albuquerque, 1975), 99.
14. Census of El Paso Area for 1833, Juárez Archives, Reel 4, Frame 144; W. H. Timmons, Lucy F. West, Mary Sarber, eds., *Census of 1841 for Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario* (El Paso, 1988), Historical Introduction, iv-vi.
15. Sebastián Bermúdez to the governor of Chihuahua, August 25, 1846, in José M. Ponce de León, ed., *Reseñas Históricas del Estado de Chihuahua* (Chihuahua, 1910), 332-333.
16. William Elsey Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition* (Kansas City, 1907), 384; J. J. Bowden, *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants in the Chihuahuan Acquisition* (El Paso, 1971), 157.
17. Roscoe P. Conkling and Margaret B. Conkling, *The Butterfield Overland Mail, 1857-1869* (3 vols.: Glendale, 1947) II, 51-52.
18. W. H. Timmons, "American El Paso: the Formative Years, 1848-1854," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXXXVII, No. 1 (July, 1983), 1-2.
19. *Ibid.*, 3.
20. W. H. Timmons, "The Merchants and the Military, 1849-1854," *Password*, XXVII, No. 2 (Summer, 1982), 54.
21. W. S. Henry to Assistant Adjutant General, 9th Military Department, Presidio of San Elizario, February 20, 1850, Office of the Commissary General and Office of the Quartermaster General, National Archives (microfilm; Sate Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico), Reel 1.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Timmons, "American El Paso," 16-18; John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents* (2 vols.: Chicago, 1965), I, 193-194; Bowden, *Spanish and*



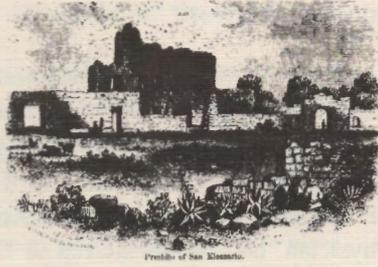
"ORPHAN TRAIN" RIDERS

The Orphan Train Heritage Society of America, Inc., is conducting a search for "Orphan Train" riders, especially those now living in Texas or who were brought to Texas.

Between 1854 and 1929, over 150,000 orphaned, abandoned and homeless children were taken out of the institutions of New York City and transported by trains to rural America. At stops along the way, the children were lined up on railway station platforms and at churches, schools, and opera houses so that local residents could look them over and perhaps choose a child to take into their homes. Those not chosen were loaded back on the train, traveling to the next stop where the entire procedure was repeated.

According to a New York Children's Aid Society report, Texas had received 1,527 of these children by 1910. The "Orphan Trains" ceased in 1929, when Federal child welfare laws were enacted.

Password readers are invited to share any information they may have about Orphan Train riders. They may communicate with Mary Ellen Johnson, Orphan Train Heritage Society of America, Route 4, Box 565, Springdale, Arkansas 72764.



"GUARDIAN of the CITY'S HEALTH"

John W. Tappan, M.D.

by Robert L. Tappan

ONE DAY IN JANUARY OF THE YEAR 1907 the following notice appeared in the *El Paso Herald*:

Dr. J. W. Tappan, Acting Assistant Surgeon of the Marine Hospital Service, arrived in El Paso last night from New York, to take charge of the duties in connection with the local immigration service, relieving Dr. E. Sinks.

Thus began my father's professional association with El Paso, an association which was to continue until his death nearly thirty-three years later. His duties (first as Surgeon in the United States Public Health Service, then as El Paso City Physician, and still later as Director of the El Paso City-County Health Unit) brought him into intimate contact with nearly every public health problem experienced by the people of this city and county during those three decades. Among these problems, two major crises stand out: the typhus fever epidemic of 1915-1917 and the influenza catastrophe of 1918 shadowing the conclusion of the First World War.

Born in 1867 in Ogden, Kansas, John Wilson Tappan began his United States Public Health Service career, after graduation from the Medical Department of the University of Virginia in 1898, in the immigrant wards of Long Island College Hospital of Brooklyn, New York. After four years of service at that hospital as Acting Assistant Surgeon and Resident Physician, he was transferred to Ellis Island in 1903 for duty related to the medical inspection of immigrants. Both work experiences especially qualified him in general medicine, obstetrics, and the diagnosis of communicable diseases.

In 1910, three years after his arrival in El Paso, Dr. Tappan was given an assignment in addition to his immigration duties. He was detailed as Quarantine Officer of the Port of El Paso. This involved his meeting all trains from the interior of Mexico in order to prevent the entry of smallpox into the United States and to vaccinate against that disease. The fact that smallpox, which in earlier years was a perennial scourge, did not become a serious problem in the El Paso area attested to the success of that policy. What did become a menace to the area and to the United States several years later, however, was the introduction of typhus fever from Mexico between the years 1915 and 1917. During this period about 150 cases were reported in Texas, of which 125 occurred in El Paso.

Since lice are the agents which transmit the micro-organism causing typhus fever, the Public Health Service, perhaps somewhat belatedly, recognized the need to establish delousing plants along the Texas-Mexico border. Such a plant was not opened in El Paso until January 1, 1917. (Previously, the disinfection of aliens entering the United States at El Paso had been attempted in Juarez under the supervision of the Service in a rented building.) Unfortunately, the dread disease had already reached epidemic proportions, claiming among its many victims a Public Health Service employee, an Immigration Service inspector, and the City Health Officer of El Paso, Dr. W. C. Klutz.

On January 6, 1917, the mayor of El Paso wrote a letter to my father, addressing him as "My Dear Doctor":

As you know, the city of El Paso has suffered the loss of her city physician, Dr. W. C. Klutz. And I desire on behalf of the city to thank you and all other physicians who attended him . . . during his illness.

Dr. Klutz had yet approximately four months to serve and on behalf of myself and the city council, I hereby tender you the position of city

Dr. Robert L. Tappan holds the Ph.D. degree in Spanish from Tulane University. He is retired from the Modern Languages Department of the University of Texas at El Paso and is active in local theater productions.

physician. We feel that you are peculiarly fitted for this work by reason of your long years of service here under the government, and we take pleasure in paying you a tribute for the work that you have done in conjunction with Dr. Klutz in the situation that has confronted us for the past year.

I sincerely trust that you can obtain from the Surgeon General permission to accept this for four months without losing either your seniority or place in El Paso. We will deeply appreciate an answer from you just as soon as you can get in touch with Surgeon General Blue.

Assuring you of our deep appreciation of your work . . . , I beg to remain

Yours very truly,
TOM LEA, Mayor

The outcome of the mayor's request was told some days later in the following newspaper account:

Dr. J. W. Tappan, of the United States Public Health Service, was recently named as city health officer of El Paso for the unexpired term of Dr. W. C. Klutz, who died a martyr to typhus fever.... Official notification has just been received from Surgeon General Rubert Blue, of the United States Public Health Service, granting Dr. Tappan leave for four months, in order that he may take the place.

On April 3, 1917, the *El Paso Morning Times*, in reporting that Dr. Tappan had been ordered by the United States government to return to his duties with the Public Health Service, stated that "since his appointment Dr. Tappan has been on the job as guardian of the city's health day and night. He has put into effect a number of plans which have resulted in the betterment of conditions in the Chihuahuita vicinity of the city. Dr. Tappan believes that it is impossible for disease to exist in a clean city and his efforts have been devoted to the promotion of sanitary conditions." According to another news article which appeared during his short tenure as city physician (actually three months), "Dr. Tappan completed the campaign to rid the city of typhus, which had reached a serious stage." Among the various measures which contributed to such changes were new ordinances passed by the City Council regulating tenements and lodging houses and requiring improved hygienic conditions regarding the sale and delivery of milk throughout the city.

Mayor Tom Lea took note of these facts in a letter published in the *El Paso Herald* on April 11, 1917, in which he expressed the appreciation of the members of the City Council, the people of El Paso and of himself personally to Dr. Tappan for the successful tour of duty which the surgeon had completed. The letter said in part: "The work of Dr. Tappan, who understood the sanitary conditions of the city, has been of incalculable

benefit to the city, not only by decreasing disease but by requesting the passage of new ordinances which, if enforced by the incoming administration, will materially decrease disease in future and have a most excellent effect on the city."

On October 2, 1913, Dr. Tappan had married Marion Frances Weil, who had come to El Paso the year before as City Librarian when Maud Durlin resigned that position to marry John K. ("Patsy") Sullivan. The Durlins and the Weils had been friends in Wisconsin before Maud came to El Paso, and in fact Maud Durlin had recommended Marion to be her successor. Many years later, after my father's death in 1939, my mother went back to work in the El Paso Public Library under her old friend, Maud Durlin Sullivan, who had returned to her former position as City Librarian. Among other duties during her second tenure, my mother supervised the establishment of the El Paso Public Library's first three branch libraries: Alamito, Tays, and Memorial Park.

With the entry of the United States into the First World War, concentrations of troops in training at Fort Bliss grew, as did the incidence of venereal diseases among both the military and civilian populations. (The newspapers never specified these diseases nor even used the word "venereal," preferring the euphemism "diseases incident to the social evil.") In January of 1918, with cooperation between the Public Health Service and the Red Cross, Dr. Tappan organized the Venereal Disease Clinic, which later was transferred to the jurisdiction of the city and county of El Paso.

Also, 1918 was the year of the great influenza epidemic which enveloped much of the world as the war drew to its conclusion. Local news stories of those times reveal that El Paso bore its share of that catastrophe, as does a letter written by my father to his colleague Dr. T. J. McCamant, who was serving with the American army in France. In that letter Dr. Tappan tells how Aoy School was turned into a Red Cross hospital to meet the demands for space to care for the huge numbers of influenza victims.* Schools were closed and a ban was placed on all public meetings, allowing no more than twenty-five persons to congregate in one place. Merchants who owned large stores and motion picture operators naturally objected loudly, but Mayor Charles Davis, the City Council, and the Board of Health stood firm as of October 27, when Dr. Tappan declared that "the epidemic is abating, but has not abated sufficiently to allow reopening." Still, according to a report in the *El Paso Morning Times* of October 24, El Paso's

*Editor's note: See Password, Vol. XXVIII, No. 3, p. 117.

record was better than Chicago's, attributable to the fact that "Chicago was slow to curb public gatherings and establish a partial quarantine."



Dr. John W. Tappan with his family, c. 1921. *L. to r.*, son John (who died in 1925) and son David (now a retired insurance agent who resides in El Paso); wife, Marion Frances (who died in 1959); and daughter, Marion (later Mrs. Kenneth L. Rice of El Paso and now deceased.) Robert, the Tappans' youngest son—and the author of this article—was not yet born. (Photo courtesy Dr. Robert L. Tappan)

During this same era of World War I, Dr. Tappan, in addition to supervising the various agencies of the United States Public Health Service, handled the work of the Veterans' Bureau in the El Paso area until 1922, when that work was taken over by the United States Veterans' Administration.

With the eventual end of the influenza epidemic, El Paso's next significant health problem was a mosquito plague. Throughout 1921 and

1922, the local newspapers blazoned the "BAD NEWS ABOUT MOSQUITOS" (to quote a representative headline) and described the proposed plans for attacking the plague—as this typical headline indicates: "DR. TAPPAN OUTLINES FIGHT ON MOSQUITOES." Beyond the mere nuisance factor of these pests, they posed a real danger to the population, for both the malaria and the yellow fever mosquitoes were present in the area. My father and other officials recommended various measures to eliminate the problem—among them, lowering the river bed and draining marsh and seepage areas; properly screening doors and windows in all homes and other buildings; destroying weeds and oiling stagnant pools where mosquitoes bred; fumigating buildings by burning sulphur; and rubbing camphor, oil of pennyroyal, peppermint, lemon juice or vinegar on the body or pillow at night. As El Paso moved on through the twenties, the joint efforts of city and county and Juarez officials, following United States Public Health Service guidelines, won the mosquito war.

In previous years Dr. Tappan had made inspection trips along the border with the object of standardizing procedures relative to quarantine and the examination of aliens. The need for more frequent inspection led to his appointment on April 4, 1924, as supervisor of the Texas-Mexico border. On September 10 of that year this supervision was extended to include the entire United States-Mexico border. He was also placed in charge of the anti-yellow fever work on the Texas-Mexico border, which had formerly been directed by a Public Health Service sanitary engineer.

On June 1, 1926, Dr. Tappan was assigned to duty as medical officer in charge of the United States Marine Hospital at Fort Stanton, New Mexico, where at that time United States merchant seamen were treated for all forms of tuberculosis.** Prior to his departure to Fort Stanton, Mayor H. P. Jackson and the City Council of El Paso adopted a resolution dated April 14, 1926, which expressed "to Dr. Tappan our great appreciation of his long, unselfish, untiring and valuable service to our City as well as for his high qualities of citizenship in all relations and our sincere regret that his public duties call him to another station away from El Paso." The resolution further declared "that the cordial interest and best wishes of the people of El Paso will follow [Dr. Tappan] to his new station."

Dr. Tappan's tour of duty at Fort Stanton ended when he was assigned as commanding officer of the San Diego Quarantine Station at Point Loma, California, reporting for duty on December 9, 1929. At that post one of his chief duties was to board ocean liners coming into the Port of San Diego

**Editor's note: See Password, Vol. XXX, No. 3, p. 131.

in order to examine passengers for communicable diseases and to impose quarantine when necessary. He also supervised the fumigation of commercial vessels entering the port. This was his last station as an officer of the United States Public Health Service. In the summer of 1933 at the age of 65 he was retired from the Service and returned to El Paso to accept the position of Assistant Director of the newly formed City-County Health Unit.

When Dr. T. J. McCamant resigned as Director of the El Paso City-County Health Unit in December, 1936, Dr. Tappan was appointed by the City Council and the County Commissioners Court to that position for a term of two years. During the first six months of his tenure, El Paso experienced a flurry of influenza cases, which, fortunately, never reached epidemic proportions; a mild epidemic of scarlet fever among school and pre-school children; and a mysterious outbreak of spinal meningitis which resulted in several fatalities. None of these situations was confined to El Paso but existed to some degree throughout the Southwest. As these problems subsided, a new one loomed on the scene: in the summer of 1937 the city's water supply was found to contain a high bacteria count, possibly responsible for a higher than usual rate of diarrhea and enteritis. These two illnesses were reportedly the main causes of infant deaths in El Paso at that time, a situation which was largely remedied when the city fathers, following recommendations of Dr. Tappan and sanitary engineers, installed up-to-date purification equipment for the municipal water system.

In the days before the Salk vaccine conquered polio—indeed, before any of today's wonder drugs which came out of World War II virtually eliminated many former scourges—El Paso along with the rest of the nation periodically suffered the ravages of that crippling disease. A story in the *El Paso Herald-Post* of September 30, 1937, reveals that El Pasoans were alarmed over the number of local cases of "infantile paralysis," as it was popularly known. The article stated that since the first of the year seven cases, resulting in three deaths, had been reported to the Health Unit, and it quoted Dr. Tappan's recommendations to the public for minimizing the risk of contracting the disease. These included avoidance of public gatherings, maintaining personal and environmental cleanliness, pasteurization or boiling of milk, avoidance of "kissing, handshaking, etc., and all contact with persons outside your own home," as well as keeping physically fit by proper diet and elimination, getting enough fresh air and avoiding fatigue. With no known cure for polio and no vaccine against it, preventive medicine was the only way to fight this and other dread diseases to which we hardly give a thought today.

Dr. Tappan's war on syphilis, begun in 1918, never ceased. As reported by the *El Paso Herald-Post* on October 20, 1937, he declared that a "clinic on wheels" would be a great advantage in the campaign against syphilis (by now the newspapers actually printed the word) and other venereal diseases. His latest request for state funds for such a traveling clinic to be used in the valleys had been turned down, and it was impossible to finance such a clinic from local appropriations.

I have no records to indicate whether or not my father was successful in implementing such a project to carry the battle into three counties (El Paso, Hudspeth, and Culberson) which were under his jurisdiction. In any case, his zeal seems to have been shared by Mayor Marvin A. Harlan, who, in announcing plans to eradicate venereal diseases in El Paso, declared: "My idea is to conduct a campaign of education, prevention and control. I want to follow the example of Surgeon General Parran of the U. S. Public Health Service and bring syphilis into the open. We must end this hypocrisy and call social diseases by their real names." Naturally, my father was "glad to see the laity taking an interest in such a campaign."

The year 1938 was a hard one for Dr. Tappan. The City-County Health Unit became a political football, which made his job extremely frustrating. Having suffered a heart attack in the summer of 1935, he found it increasingly difficult to perform his duties with maximum efficiency, and although the political problems were in time resolved, his declining health forced him to submit his resignation in September, four months short of completing his term. Mayor Harlan, regretfully accepting it, expressed to my father on behalf of the Mayor and Council "our sincere appreciation for the splendid work you have done to protect the health of the people of our city." On September 13, the Commissioners Court passed a resolution ordering that Dr. Tappan, having "contributed greatly to the public welfare and health of this community and [having] splendidly performed his arduous duties, be thanked for his fine service to El Paso County." One year later, on September 2, 1939, Dr. Tappan died.

For three decades, except for the seven years at Fort Stanton and at San Diego, my father was indeed a vigilant guardian of health in El Paso, a guardian who was also a warrior actively engaged in battles against one enemy after another: smallpox, typhus fever, venereal disease, influenza, a mosquito plague fraught with the danger of malaria and yellow fever, spinal meningitis, scarlet fever, and the dread "infantile paralysis." I am proud to describe the work and the achievements of my father, Dr. John Wilson Tappan, who "contributed greatly to the public welfare and health of . . . El Paso County." ☆



HISPANIC ARIZONA, 1536-1856

by James E. Officer

Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, \$45

In his "Prologue," the author informs us that "this modest volume" is a product of "nearly thirty years of digging through basic source material from a variety of public archives and private collections, published works, and transcribed comments of members of old Sonoran families who today live on both sides of the border between the United States and Mexico."

Professor Officer writes clearly and directly, with no pretense and with a gentle humor, and in that sense only this might be called a "modest volume," but the reader understands quickly that this is one of those basic works which "scholars would first consult" in its field, as David Weber, *Borderlands* authority and former Chairman of History at SMU, said of it. The "nearly thirty years of digging" is certainly believable: the bibliography is probably definitive.

The book could well have borne a different title, something like: *Sonora, New Spain's Northernmost Frontier: 1536-1856*. Such a title would perhaps not grab the attention of the readership the author had in mind, but it would reflect the material he deals with and the emphasis he gives it. "Arizona" turns out to be really only relevant as the name of *part* of the territory *after* the period with which this book is concerned.

The author makes it emphatically clear that contrary to myth Arizona was *not* once "covered with prosperous Spanish missions and settlements abandoned because of Apache raids," and in fact informs that "at its pre-Anglo peak, probably reached around 1820, Arizona's Hispanic population was barely over 1,000. . . ."

BOOK REVIEWS

The book also makes plain that the Apaches were an obstacle that the Spanish (and the Mexicans after them) were never able, or willing to devote the resources to overcome. (One is reminded of the chapter devoted to this subject in Webb's *Great Plains*.) However, this book also shows, as Webb does not, that the Anglos did no better when they first ran into the Apaches, and in fact learned a great deal from experienced Mexican officers.

Not only Borderlands scholars but interested "amateurs" will find their knowledge of an important segment of Southwestern history greatly enhanced by this book, and they will find the reading a pleasant experience, increased in your reviewer's opinion by the attention the press obviously paid to making this important book also a handsome one.

RAY PAST

Professor Emeritus of Linguistics, The University of Texas at El Paso



BORDER FURY: A PICTURE POSTCARD RECORD OF MEXICO'S REVOLUTION AND U. S. WAR PREPAREDNESS, 1910-1917

by Paul J. Vanderwood and Frank N. Samponaro

Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, \$27.50

Any of us interested in historic photographs of El Paso have seen postcards of the Mexican Revolution, many of which originated here. The militarily active years of the Revolution coincided with the Golden Era of the postcard, when new technology made the printing of real photo postcards easy and inexpensive, and the fad of collecting postcards created a booming market. Hundreds of thousands of such postcards were sold, and many have survived.

Historians Paul J. Vanderwood and Frank N. Samponaro have studied hundreds of these cards, including the sizeable collection of the El Paso Public Library, and in *Border Fury* they have used what they saw to interpret north-of-the-border reaction to what was happening in Mexico. Many postcards were purchased by U. S. soldiers and national guardsmen to be mailed to friends and family, sometimes with pungent comments added. By studying both the fronts and backs of these cards, the authors have arrived at some conclusions and raised many questions about the effect of the Revolution on the border and on American observers.

The text is interesting and authoritative—good background on the

Revolution, on real photo postcards, on photographer and entrepreneur W. H. Horne of El Paso, and on the U. S. soldier's life in camp—but it is the more than two hundred photographs and their informative captions which are the heart of the book. Here we see presidents, generals, common soldiers of several armies, refugees interned at Fort Bliss, American soldiers in the streets of Vera Cruz, Mexican women accompanying their men to war, and the newfangled machines being tried out by the U. S. Army. In retrospect we can see that it was a strange period for the United States, when the policy of isolationism was breaking down and the country was being drawn into the European war. Military activities on the border provided an opportunity for soldiers and officers to gain experience which later stood them and the country in good stead.

Border Fury is a panoramic view of a Revolution as it looked from the sidelines, a viewpoint almost as excitingly presented in this book as that enjoyed by the many El Pasoans who crowded rooftops and other vantage points along the Rio Grande to get a firsthand look at battles in C. Juárez. In other words, almost as good as being there.

MARY A. SARBER

Coordinator, Main Library, El Paso Public Library.



MAVERICK TOWN: THE STORY OF OLD TASCOSA

by *John L. McCarty*; foreword by *C. L. Sonnichsen*

Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, \$10.95

Any western historian, layman or academic, who has missed this work during any of its five editions must immediately lay a hand on it, and read about the rapid rise and fall, over just a 25-year span, of this intriguing town that was once the muscle of the entire Panhandle. Today it is nothing, totally non-existent, but from 1874 to 1899 Tascosa operated as the greatest town of the open range, with all of the strong personalities, conflict, and violence that would be incumbent upon such a place. Every type of wild west conflict imaginable existed there in reality, and was usually settled the old fashioned way. The little cattlemen vs. the big cattlemen, the cattlemen vs. the nesters, the original Mexican settlers vs. the Anglo invaders, the cowboys vs. the big outfits—all were a vivid part of the short history of old Tascosa.

BOOK REVIEWS

A highly visible thread of southwest history is also tied into Tascosa by means of Garrett and the Kid. It seems the Kid and some of his friends played more than a small part in rustling activities in the region for awhile and that Garrett was called upon by the local cattlemen's association to work on the situation. A good number of the group that accompanied Garrett in his final chase and trackdown of the Kid were Tascosa men, who had as big a stake in the Kid's demise as Lincoln County did.

Two particular chapters of the book, one on "The Coming of Barbed Wire" and the other on "How a Town Dies," evoke some genuine heartfelt emotion from the reader, as they obviously did for the author. The chapter on the barbed wire recounts how its inventors brought it to the Tascosa open range for its first big-time test. The result was that it worked all too well. The other remarkable chapter recounts how both man-made and natural factors can combine to make a lively town abruptly disappear.

The legacy of Tascosa was a labor of love for McCarty, an Amarillo newsman and "grassroots historian." When such a man puts so much care into preserving the town's story, the result is a work that will survive. Indeed, for forty years now, it has endured the passage of a lot of literary time to become a classic.

HERB MARSH, JR.
El Paso



PILGRIM IN THE SUN: A SOUTHWESTERN OMNIBUS

by C. L. Sonnichsen

El Paso: Texas Western Press, \$25./\$15

C. L. Sonnichsen came to El Paso in 1931 to teach English at the Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy. President John G. Barry informed him that he was to teach a course in "Life and Literature of the Southwest." Sonnichsen told the president that he knew nothing of the subject and did not propose to learn. However, as Sonnichsen put it, "Barry was a man of powerful will."

Preparation for the course embarked Sonnichsen upon a lifetime of research and investigation: "Groaning and protesting, I blazed this new trail and regional history soon became my major interest." His course was one of the most popular on the campus, and he himself developed into a

"grassroots historian." He became an ardent student of the literature of the West and an energetic reporter as he circulated over the Southwest quizzing people about their pasts, their communities, and their ancestors.

Pilgrim in the Sun, Sonnichsen's twenty-fifth book, spreads a delectable smorgasbord gathered from his wanderings about the Southwest. Among "Extraordinary People," he includes Roy Bean, Colonel W. C. Greene, Tom Jeffords, Baldy Russell, and a charming drifter named Smoky Downing whom he met in Douglas, Wyoming. "Life in Southwestern Cities" includes El Paso (Six-Shooter Capital) and Tucson, replete with renegades and desperadoes. And "Blood on the Typewriter" offers a goodly rasher of the feuds which have intrigued Sonnichsen for many years.

Chapters entitled "The Ambivalent Apache" and "The Remodeling of Geronimo" tell how a reversal of opinions in regard to "Our Red Brothers" has taken place over the years. "Our pioneer ancestors would never have believed it, but there it is." He also examines humorous fiction of the American West, and the volume is topped off with "New Frontiers," a study of the impact of White Sands Missile Range and the detonation of the first A-Bomb on ranching in the Tularosa Basin, the "Last of the Frontier West."

Over these delectables is a generous sprinkling of comments about the author's experiences during his research and writing, along with wry portrayals of his dealings with publishers. No Sonnichsen collection will be complete without *Pilgrim in the Sun*.

FRANCIS L. FUGATE
El Paso



THE JOURNEY OF FRAY MARCOS DE NIZA

by Cleve Hallenbeck; introduction by David J. Weber; illustrations by José Cisneros; original book design (1949) by J. Carl Hertzog.

Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, \$29.95

Oh, how I wish I had a copy of the original Hallenbeck/Cisneros/Hertzog edition of Marcos de Niza's journey! Winner of the Texas Institute of Letters awards for "Best Illustrations by a Texas Artist" for Cisneros, best translation for Hallenbeck, and best book design for Hertzog, it was entered into the ranks of the Fifty Books of the Year 1949 of the American

Institute of Graphic Arts as a result of Carl's painstaking work and careful design. the book is a true jewel—but this edition surpasses the earlier work in several ways.

Carl Hertzog was frequently heard to say, "Perfection is no trifle, but trifles make perfection." The same painstaking care marks this labor of love by historian David J. Weber. He sought out all existing information on the original production of the book, interviewed and corresponded with a host of folks who had memories of the process, including Vivian Hertzog, and wove it all into a fascinating introduction. He relates Hertzog's search for the right paper and type to give the quality of a sixteenth-century book—even having much of the book reset when the right type was finally found.

The present book includes other things not in the original: a previously unpublished (in this country) Spanish version of the Jesuit friar's relation (the version which Hallenbeck translated for the 1949 edition); three new interpretations of the key figures by José Cisneros, a Cisneros portrait of Hertzog, and a new appreciation of the work (including critical comments by J. Frank Dobie and other scholarly specialists). Best of all, of course, is that the original book—design, typography, illustrations and all—is reproduced in facsimile.

Scholars still battle over whether the friar deliberately lied when he claimed to have seen the first of the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola, noting that he did not enter the city to examine it since he was afraid he might not be able to return to deliver the report of his findings. Although Hallenbeck calls Fray Marcos "The Lying Monk," the *Relación* certainly altered the course of history, spurring exploration of the area now known as the Southwest, with many an expedition seeking riches because of Fray Marcos de Niza's account. ". . . at some distance a valley farther below, very green and of very good land. . . . I was informed that in it is much gold."

The efforts of David J. Weber, the Southern Methodist University Press, and all concerned deserve highest praise. The additions are worthy company for the 1949 treasure created by Hallenbeck, Cisneros, and Hertzog.

JOHN O. WEST

Professor of English, The University of Texas at El Paso



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