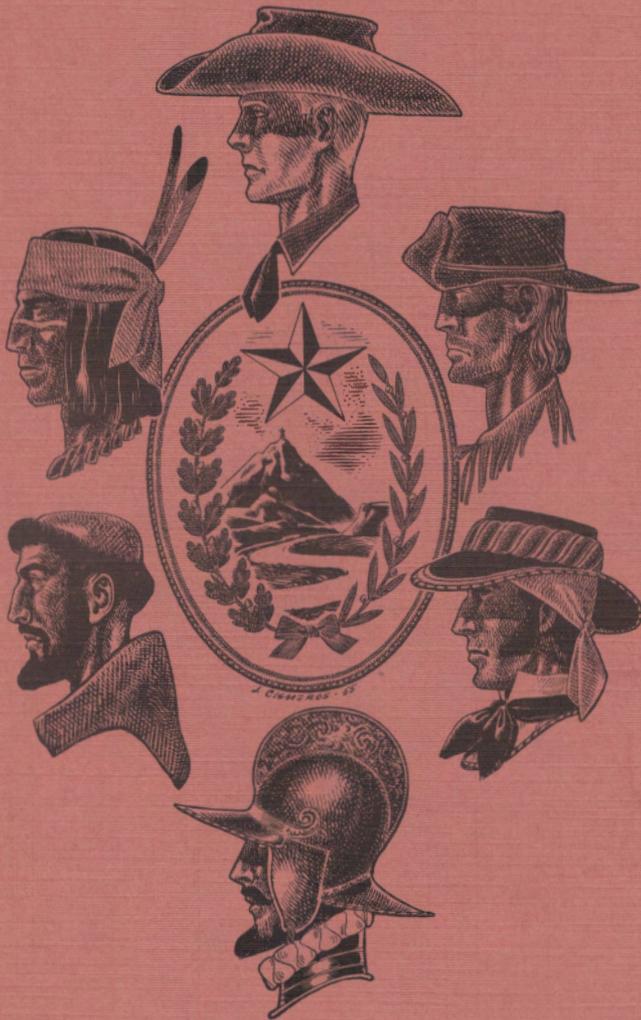


PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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PASSWORD

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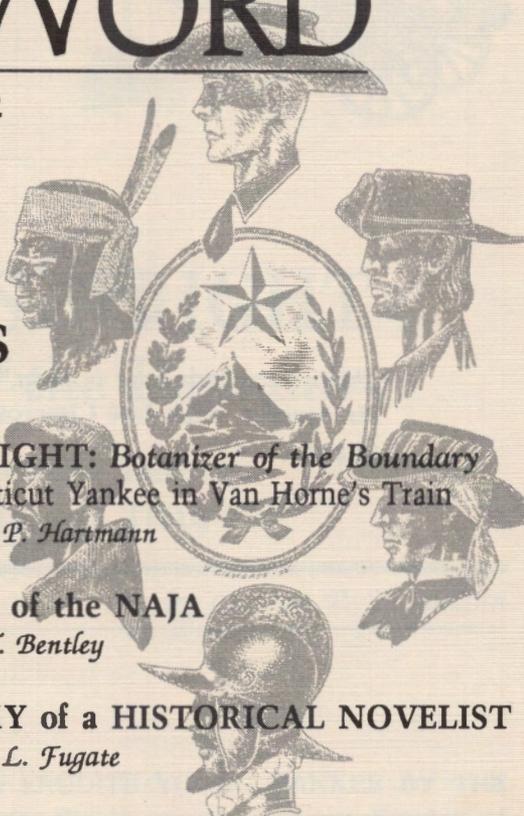
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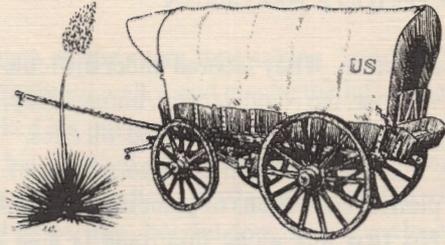


This issue's "title-page insignia," a drawing by the distinguished artist José Cisneros, depicts a military wagon, c. 1850

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CHARLES WRIGHT

Botanizer of the Boundary

PART 1: A Connecticut Yankee In Van Horne's Train

by Clinton P. Hartmann

IN 1837, AN ERUDITE YOUNG YANKEE BY THE name of Charles Wright arrived in the new Republic of Texas. A graduate of Yale University, he had recently been earning his living as a private tutor in Mississippi and was now making his way as an itinerant teacher and surveyor, meanwhile pursuing his chief interest as an amateur botanist. He began collecting specimens of plant life and recording in detail his observations. A few years later, in 1844, his collections caught the attention of Dr. Asa Gray, the renowned Harvard botanist, and from then until Wright's death in 1885 the two men were collaborators and friends.

Wright was not the only naturalist gleaning the scientific fields of the newly-acquired territories following the Mexican War; one need only to glance through the prolific investigations of Samuel W. Geiser, including his *Naturalists of the Frontier*, to realize that many men, some well-educated and some self-taught, added in Texas alone, immense knowledge to the field of the natural sciences—geology, zoology, botany, paleontology,

and so on. They labored under difficult-to-imagine conditions, battling the weather, the rough terrain, bureaucracy, poor transportation, and in general the absence of the civilized niceties.

Among these trail blazers, Charles Wright is best remembered for his pioneer collections of plant life gathered between San Antonio and El Paso. His first trek along this route is also important because it was made in company with the military troops of Major Jefferson Van Horne, who established the "Post Opposite El Paso" after the Mexican War. Throughout this long trip, Wright penned letters to his mentor, Dr. Gray, and fortunately many of these letters survive. They tell us much about Charles Wright himself, and they also add to our knowledge of Van Horne's historic journey to the western tip of Texas in 1849.

Not long after his arrival in Texas in 1837, Wright expanded his search for botanical knowledge into central and southeast Texas—from Columbus to La Grange and thence to Austin, San Marcos, New Braunfels, Austin, and San Antonio. During this time he became aware that there was a market, though limited, for his plant specimens in eastern universities and scientific institutions. A few collectors were already sending their discoveries to centers of learning—among them John J. Audubon, Jean Louis Berlandier, Jacob Boll, Thomas Drummond, Adolphus Wislizenus (the endangered El Paso "barrel cactus" bears his name), and Frederick Jakob Lindheimer, sometimes known as the Father of Texas Botany, who resided in New Braunfels, "organized the flora of Texas into a system," and later became a close and professional friend of Wright.

Little in the background of Wright indicated that one day he would become one of the "foremost" contributors to this field of knowledge. Born to James and Abigail Wright on October 29, 1811, in Wethersfield, Connecticut, he was reared on a small farm in the strictest sense of the "Puritan ethic." He attended the local grammar school, where one of his teachers was a graduate of Yale, only fifty miles distant. In 1831, after passing the entrance examinations, he matriculated at Yale. A diligent student, he graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1835, having completed a classical course of study that included Greek and Latin, rhetoric, metaphysics, religion, ethics, logic, mathematics, and natural sciences. Remembered as

Clinton P. Hartmann is an educator and a researcher/writer on El Paso-area history. After his retirement several years ago as a history teacher and supervisor with the El Paso Independent Schools, he became Principal of Lydia Patterson Institute, from which position he retired this June. A contributor to the Handbook of Texas and the author of many Passport articles and book reviews, he also serves this journal as its Assistant Editor.

a "shy, diffident lad," he spent much of his spare time taking "rambles" into the surrounding woods. These solitary walks, and maybe the influence of one of his science teachers, sparked his interest in botany and the natural environment. Perhaps because of his physical appearance—not handsome, of a short stature, and with a slight visual handicap (unflatteringly referred to as a "squint")—he shunned social gatherings, but did develop a few close friends. He remained a bachelor throughout his life. Today we might call him a "loner."

Just before Wright's graduation, the president of Yale offered him a tutorial job in the home of a well-to-do Natchez, Mississippi, planter. Wright gladly accepted and by October, 1835, was on a steamer heading for that city. He remained in the planter's employ until mid-1837, when the financial panic left his employer in ruin and Wright without a job.

Undoubtedly, Wright caught the "Texas fever" following the Declaration of Independence by Texas from Mexico. He crossed into the new Republic and settled along the Neches River, where (in the words of Dr. Gray, written many years later) "he occupied himself with land-surveying, explored the surrounding country, learned to dress deer-skins after the manner of the Indians, and to make moccassins and leggins...." All these experiences stood Wright in good stead for the years ahead.

By 1844 Wright was living in a settlement known as Town Bluff, Liberty County, deep in the piney woods of East Texas. Collecting plants and classifying them (to the best of his knowledge), he created a small herbarium. In that same year, Wright began corresponding with Dr. Gray, and in a letter of March, 1845, he accepted Gray's invitation to send collections of plant specimens to Harvard. "According to my ability," he wrote, "I am ready to contribute my aid towards the advancement of any scientific undertaking," adding that he had "made a small collection from a very limited section of country" and that "you shall have the whole budget by the first favorable opportunity." The amateur botanist closed his letter with a humorous note on mail delivery in "this Republic": "It would give me great pleasure to hear from you often, but I hardly know what instructions to give you relative to this direction of your letters. I know the liability of miscarriage attending letters in passing from the States to this Republic.... I will not request you to write but should you do so, direct to Columbus Colorado County and if they cross the Sabine, that Scylla and Charybdis of shipwrecked letters, they will probably find out my whereabouts."

During the academic year 1846-1847, Wright devoted himself to full-time teaching at Ruterville College, the first Protestant and Methodist

college in Texas, which had opened its doors in 1840. A local newspaper carried a notice upon Wright's appointment "that young men who may desire to study surveying, geology, or botany will have the opportunity of accompanying one of the tutors on short excursions for the purpose of learning these sciences practically as well as theoretically." Samuel W. Geiser credits Wright's work at Rutersville as representing "some of the first science field work done in the schools of Texas." Wright then spent the following year in the village of La Grange, seven miles from the college, as a private tutor.

Whether Wright continued sending specimens to Harvard during these two years is not known, for there is no extant correspondence. It may be assumed, however, that he did—as indicated in a letter he wrote to Dr. Gray on July 8, 1848: "I start on Monday next for the Rio Grande at the solicitation of Dr. [John A.] Veatch who commands a company at one of the military stations on that river.... He offers me a clerkship in his company during the remainder of the term of service which expires on the 23rd of Oct.... I will have plenty of time to make botanical excursions but I fear I shall have to start without my [magnifying] glass which I have been so long impatiently waiting for."

His next letter to Dr. Gray, dated July 21, is headed "Eagle Pass Rio Grande": "I arrived here day before yesterday and...a few very short walks have shown me many new plants of which I send you some specimens." A postscript to this letter reveals that Dr. Gray had earlier proposed a wider field of operations for Wright's plant-collecting endeavors: "...if we agree that I go to Santa Fe would it not be a good plan for me to come and spend the winter with you [at Harvard] and assist you in studying and arranging my collections or would I freeze up to an icicle." (Wright was alluding to the fact that he had been living in the South for thirteen years.)

Wright's letter of September 20 shows that Gray approved the "good plan." "I am now fully resolved," the letter reads, "to embrace your proposition and hurry on to the North with the least possible delay...." Wright was as good as his word—considering the travel conditions of the time. Two months later, in the latter part of November, he arrived at his Connecticut home. He spent the next six months there and at Cambridge, where he assisted Dr. Gray in organizing his early Texas collections.

Meanwhile, the United States, from its "Mexican Cession," had acquired over one-half million square miles of territory, and was faced with the monumental task of surveying the "New West" and defining its boundaries with Mexico. The ways in which that task was accomplished—

with special emphasis on Wright's contributions to it—are clarified by Elizabeth A. Shaw of the Harvard University Herbaria in her publication *Charles Wright on the Boundary, 1849-1852*, (Cambridge, England: Chadwyk-Healey, Ltd., 1987):

...there was in the newly acquired West a period of survey and exploration unequalled in our history....

These surveys yielded during the 1850's volume after volume on every aspect of the West, including...its botany. The reports which made known the botany of the new West were based on collections made by a handful of men, the surgeons, surveyors, and "naturalists" with the expeditions, commemorated now by the many species which bear their names as epithets—"wrightii," "bigelowii," parryi, "schottii," and so on.

Interesting and important collections had come earlier from the West...but the collections which marked the start of this decade, with its outpouring of information on the West, were those of Charles Wright.

In 1849 Dr. Gray found the opportunity to get Wright into "the botanically unknown southern Rockies." Through the Secretary of War, he was able to secure permission for Wright to accompany "a large supply train and party of infantry" which was "to move in the spring of 1849 to El Paso." The El Paso of that day was El Paso del Norte, across the Rio Grande in Mexico. The supply train would head for a string of settlements on the left bank, or American side of the river, including Benjamin Franklin Coons' hacienda, Magoffinsville, Ysleta, Socorro, the Presidio of San Elizario, and (farther upstream) the headquarters of T. Frank White, located at a place called Frontera.

Wright completed his assignment as curator at Harvard in February, 1849, returned to Wethersfield to "make his portfolios and presses," and around April 1 left New York for Galveston, where he arrived on the 28th. From there he proceeded to Austin, stopping briefly in Rutersville. He reached Austin on May 26 and sent a "progress report" to Dr. Gray, a report that tells us much about travel conditions at that time. Upon his arrival in Galveston, he "took the first boat for Houston, where, "Unable to transport my baggage by stage I put it on a road wagon, (unfortunately) overloaded and with a weak team. By a blunder of the driver he started on the wrong road and one as bad as roads ever get to be. The result was that he was obliged to hire himself hauled out of the mud into the right road and on that we had divers unloadings and reloadings.... I footed it through mud and water and had a fair chance to botanize." The letter then informs Dr. Gray that "on Monday next or soon thereafter a wagon will start for San Antonio and the quartermaster, a Mr. Chapman has promised me transportation, " that "I have a letter to Gen [William Selby] Harney

[commander of the 2nd Dragoons in San Antonio] which will secure me transportation if not subsistence to El Paso," and that "The train will leave San Antonio 1st (June) prox and...will be three months on the route—200 mi per month—ample leisure to botanize by the way."

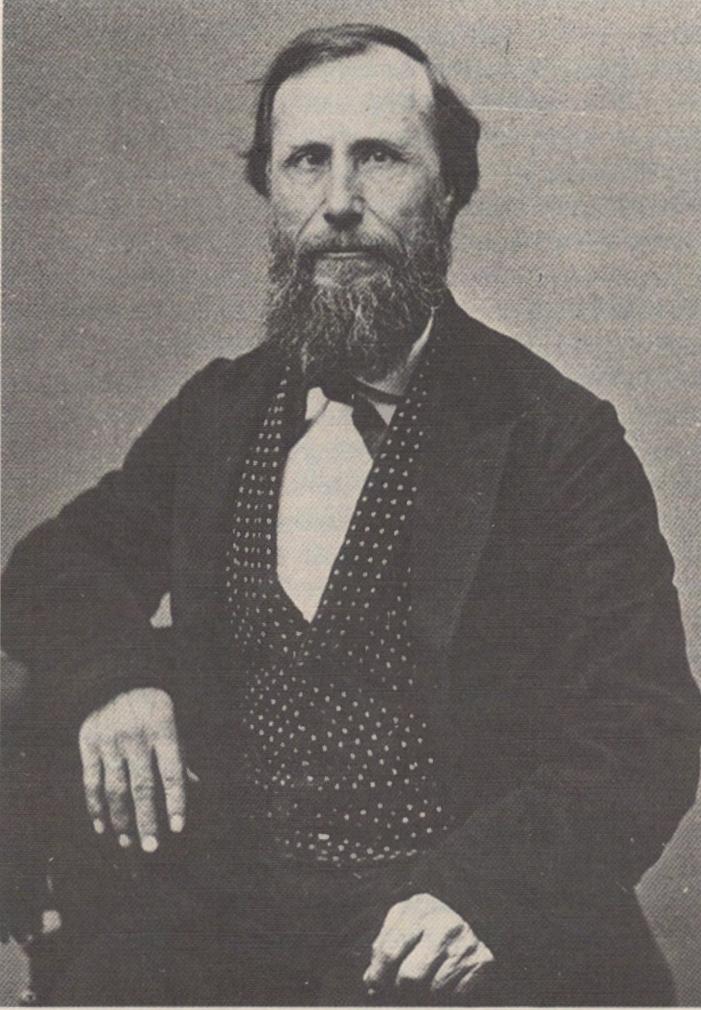
Continuing this letter, Wright asked Dr. Gray to send him some books, a subscription to the *Scientific American*, and also more paper, his supply having been "considerably damaged and diminished...by abrasion when wet in loading and unloading..." Nor did Wright neglect to remark on the voyage from New York to Galveston: "I was considerably reduced by hard fare on shipboard.... Our accommodations were execrable. I could go steerage passage with ten times as much comfort." And speaking of the "fare on shipboard," Wright concluded his "report" with the statement that "I may have to lay in provisions at San Antonio to El Paso and join some of the messes of privates unless some of the officers should take a liking to me."

As things turned out, however, Wright had no opportunity "to lay in provisions." He did not arrive in San Antonio until May 31, and the wagon train was on the point of departure. At the ready were 275 wagons, 263 military personnel, 2500 head of beef, mules, and horses, and—in addition—an unknown number of emigrants heading for the California gold fields. The enormous task of organizing the train had been accomplished under the direction of Major Van Horne. Charles Wright (botanical "envoy" from Harvard University) promptly discovered that he was only one of a milling throng waiting for final instructions and, furthermore, that he was not high on Van Horne's list of priorities.

In haste, he explained the situation to Dr. Gray: "I have put my baggage on one of the Army waggons with that of my good friend Dr. Baker whom I fortunately met here.... I shall start after the train this evening and I shall try to get something to eat out of somebody...." But how to get a handout "this evening" was merely Wright's immediate problem. In this same letter of May 31, he expressed his enormous concern about subsistence and travel accommodations for the long "three months on the route" which loomed before him. So worried was he that he made a desperate (and quite futile) plea for help: "Now can not you get a special order from the head of the Commissary Department to furnish me with support and transportation.... The officers all express a desire to serve me but at the same time they have no authority without assuming responsibility which they are unwilling to do.... I am soon to be outside the boundaries of civilization." And then the letter concludes: "I am rejoiced that I am in time, late as it is, to go with the train.... There is still some Cholera

here and the weather is getting very hot.... I must start this evening & walk 15 miles to overtake my waggon—not a very pleasant evening walk either in prospect or in execution.”

The next letter to Dr. Gray, written just two days later, on June 2, at Quihi (near Castroville, twenty-five miles west of San Antonio), begins, “I wrote to you so recently that if I were not full I would keep silence. But the steam is so high that if I do not blow off fearful consequences may



Charles Wright, “Botanizer of the Boundary,” who traveled with Major Jefferson Van Horne’s military wagon train from San Antonio to the El Paso Valley in the summer of 1849. (The photograph appears here with the permission of The Botany Libraries, Harvard University.)

follow." And "blow off" he did. First, there was the weather: "Yesterday morning we had a violent norther cold and accompanied with rain after which and when ready to start my baggage, papers, etc. was distributed about into three or four waggons.... This morning about daylight we had another [rainstorm] more severe accompanied with hail. My collections were nearly all wet and I had not time to dry them so they will be much damaged. My paper is nearly all wet...." Then there were the various officials who disdained his work and, indeed, resented his very presence: "The officers care nothing about my affairs. Waggoners have a little curiosity to gratify by looking on while I change my plants and care no more about it or rather would be pleased if they were sunk in the river and their load would be lightened...." And finally there was the daily- and nightly-struggle for mere survival: "I have money in my pocket but it does me no good. I can buy nothing with it. I sit uninvited and see others eating and it is a severe trial to my feelings to thrust myself among them. They have their rations and often none to spare and how I am to get to El Paso I know not.... You wrote to me of working like a dog.... Then call your situation dog-paradise and mine hog-paradise and ass-paradise combined and you may realize my situation-sleep all night if you can in the rain.... I have been vexed enough to cry or swear when thinking that I have the pleasing prospect of being dependent...on a parcel of men who call me a fool and wish me at the bottom of the sea."

By June 18, the wagon train had reached the Leona River (a few miles south of present-day Uvalde) and the site of Fort Inge, which had been established there in March of that year. That same day Wright dispatched another letter to Dr. Gray, its tone and content quite different from his "blow-off" of June 2: "Now...I have the insurance from Maj. Van Horne...that I shall have all the facilities which he has in his power to grant.... I board with one of the messes-but Dr. Baker [later identified as the surgeon of the train] and myself have the possession of one waggon to ourselves.... My list of specimens now sums up to 450 all collected on ground before traversed." (He is referring to Wool's road from San Antonio to Presidio, near Eagle Pass.) And so well disposed was he at this time that he could look ahead with confidence: "Now we shall diverge from the old beaten track and traverse a country unexplored by botanists.... Tomorrow we...steer for the head of the Leona-then westward towards the Nueces & so on to the Las Moras [springs and creek named for the mulberry trees abounding there near present-day Brackettville]."

On July 2, Wright's letter is headed "Camp on the San Pedro," an early name for the Devil's River. Logistically this cannot be correct for the

wagon train at this time had not even reached the San Felipe Springs (near present Del Rio), and the Devil's River lies beyond. The conclusion must be drawn that this letter was written from "Arroyo Pedro," east of Del Rio. Wright had now been traveling with the wagon train for a month. And as we read his letters, it becomes clear that his spirits rose and fell in direct proportion to the ease or difficulty of doing his work. In this letter he decried the "indifference and even petty spite shown me and my pursuits by the head wagonmaster of the train in which I have been thrown...and the want of interest shown by the Quartermaster himself..." (He is referring to Captain S. W. French, who was actually the Assistant Quartermaster.) Further, he assigned considerable blame to "Maj. Van Horn [sic] and Maj. Henry," who "did nothing except promise me transportation. Left thus to the tender mercies of the Quartermaster & Waggonmaster, my baggage has been at one time or another in well nigh a dozen different waggons and sometimes scattered about in five or six—one ream of paper here and another there, my trunk in a third and my press in a fourth. Whenever Capt. French Q. M. gets in an ill humor he begins to grumble about the weakness of his teams and the transportation of botanists trunks...." In spite of which vicissitudes, the work went forth: "My numbered list of specimens and seeds now runs up to nearly six hundred and most of them splendid such as would do your eyes good to look at."

The next letter, dated July 10, 1849 (written from San Felipe Springs, at present day Del Rio), states that the train had been halted for four days, Major Van Horne having gone ahead on about July 8 with a small group of road builders and engineers to reconnoiter the route north along the Devil's River, leaving Captain French behind in command of the main part of the wagon train. By now, though, we are pleased to learn, Captain French "is somewhat interested in the collection of curious plants and in science generally when they do not thwart his pecuniary interest."

When the wagon train began to move, it traversed some of the most difficult terrain on its route. Crossing the Devil's River several times, it made its way laboriously up to the headwaters near the present town of Juno. The government report later submitted by Captain French—the very same who often incurred the wrath of the conscientious botanizer—provides a good description of the train's passage from "the San Felipe to the San Pedro": "the country becomes more elevated, inclining to a high plain, far below which, in a deep, rugged canyon, the waters of the [San Pedro] find an outlet into the Rio Grande. The descent into the river is made through crooked ravines that required much labor to make them passable."

On July 31 the train reached the head of the "summer" fork on the

Devil's River, and Wright took time to pen a letter to Dr. Gray: "We make slow progress having made but little over one hundred miles per month. We are now about two hundred & twenty-five miles...beyond San Antonio and for the last fifty miles have been traversing a hilly country and one very interesting to botanize. I have had a good opportunity of securing everything in flower & fruit owing to our slow movements and long delays at several encampments."

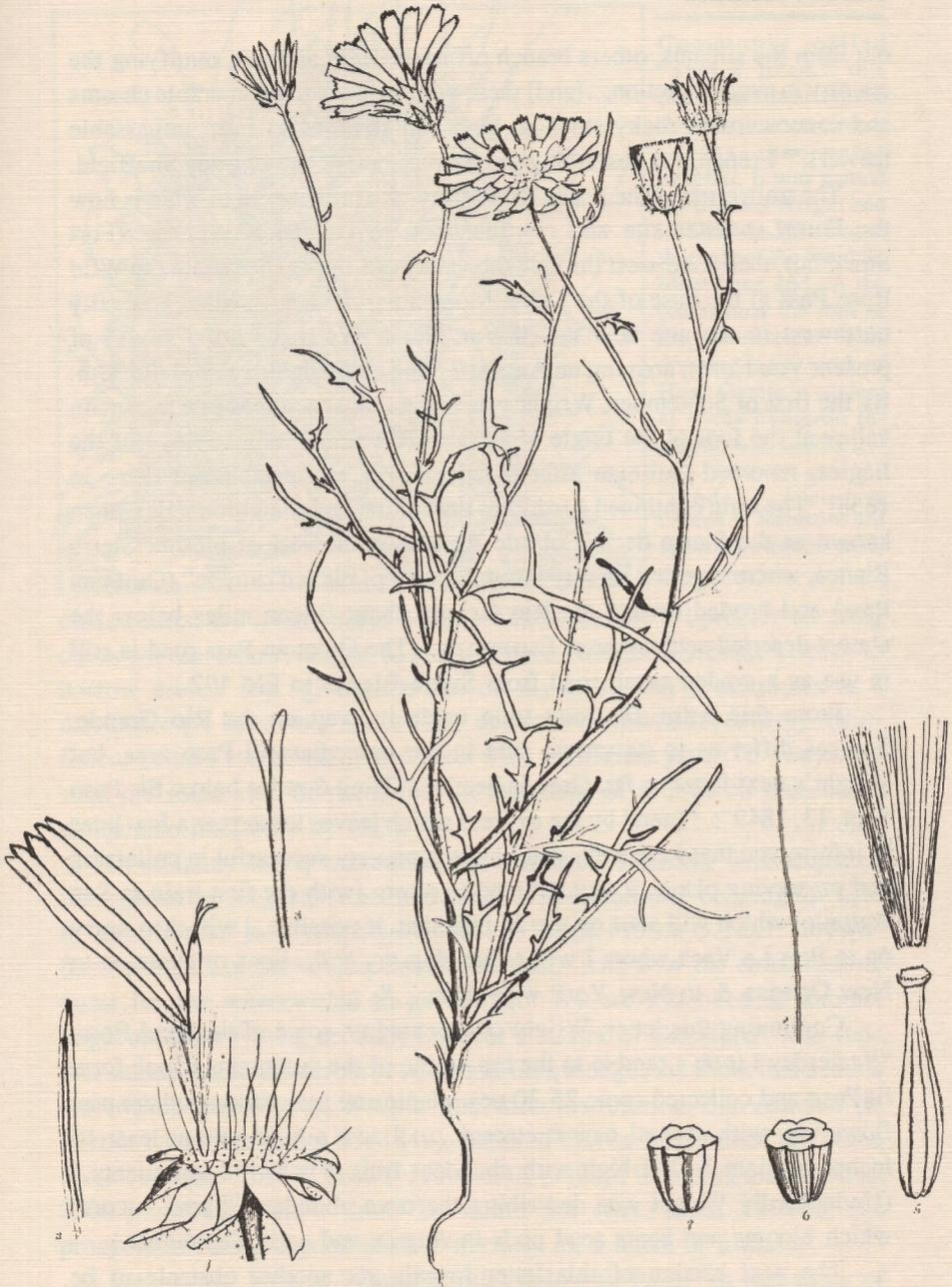
Delays on the trek were inevitable, caused occasionally by inclement weather and more frequently by the construction of grades so that the wagons could negotiate the hills and ravines. The troops that were sent ahead to do this construction were called "fatigue" units.

The "long delays" may have favored botanizing, but the Connecticut Yankee in Van Horne's train was feeling demeaned by new developments: "I was thrown by Gen. Harney into the Commissary train and here I met with but little sympathy. I was kindly received by Maj. Van Horne and Maj. Henry but I am separated from them often as many as twenty or thirty miles. For one month I boarded with one of the messes since which I have been obliged to cook for my victuals. Just think of that, Doctor—a literary and College larn't man turning cook for a living. Well it's some consolation to think that when I get out of this scrape I'll not get into exactly such another...."

The letter of July 31 ends with a few words about his limited finances (a frequent theme throughout his letters) and his unlimited devotion to duty: "Provisions are now getting scarce and can not be bought so I save my money—when I get to El Paso I may have to pay enough in one day to board me in Boston a week.... I don't eat the bread of idleness & have frequently heard the remark as I passed a company of men at play or sitting in conversation 'that is a mighty industrious man.'"

On August 2nd Wright became ill, suffering from an attack of malaria, and was incapacitated for at least ten days. In a letter dated December, 1849, after he had returned to San Antonio, Wright explained: "I was taken sick on Devil's River and [Dr. Baker] prescribed for me.... He almost strangled me by a new fashioned way of giving me quinine.... I attributed my sickness to excessive labor & a little imprudence. I had botanized all the earlier part of the day before we left Devil's River. I then took my clothes through the process of ablution and then cooked till late in the night.... The next day fever came on & continued for five or six days...." (Wright's field notes indicate this gap in his collection efforts.)

From Captain French's report, the caravan crossed what appeared to be a "vast, level, unbroken plain; but such is not the case: valleys extend



A drawing of *Calycoseris Wrightii*, which appears on page 104 of Asa Gray's *Plantae Wrightianae*. Described as "abundant" in the "Stony hills around El Paso," the plant was named for Charles Wright. A specimen of the plant was one of the hundreds of plant-samples collected by Wright in 1849 from the El Paso area and sent to Harvard University. (Courtesy Dr. Richard Worthington, Department of Botany, The University of Texas at El Paso)

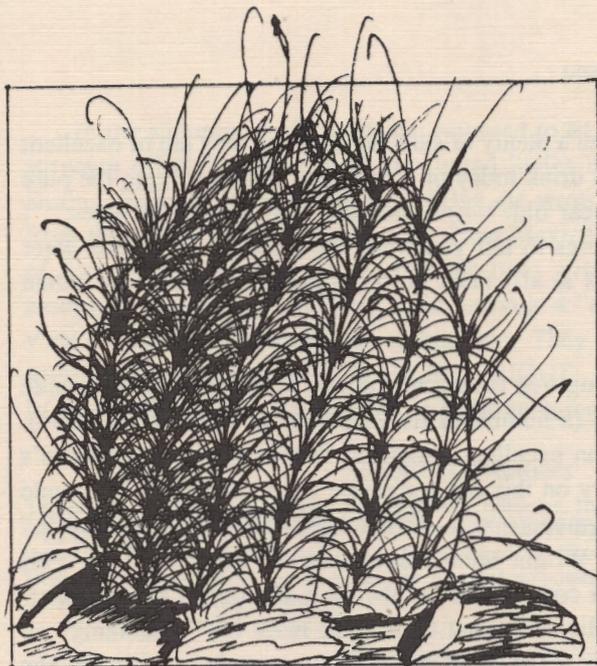
out from the streams, others branch off to the right and left, ramifying the country in every direction...[and] these valleys head in innumerable chasms and canons...with rocky sides so high and steep as to form impassable barriers." French was describing the country east of present-day Sheffield.

The train crossed the Pecos River forty-one miles north of what is now the Fort Lancaster site and continued on to Comanche Springs (Fort Stockton), then southwest through the valley of Limpia Creek into the Wild Rose Pass at the base of the Davis Mountains. It then traveled generally northwest to the site now called Van Horne Wells, or Lobo (south of present Van Horn), arriving on August 27 and camping there until the 30th. By the first of September, Wright was collecting specimens in a mountain valley at the foot of the Eagle Mountains (the northernmost range of the Eagles, renamed Quitman after a federal fort was established there in 1858). The train continued northwest toward the Quitman Mountains (then known as the Sierra de la Cola de Aguila), southwest of present Sierra Blanca, where it pulled its way through "a deep, rugged canyon" (Quitman Pass) and headed toward the Rio Grande about fifteen miles below the almost deserted settlement of Esperanza. (The Quitman Pass road is still in use as a graded ranch road from Sierra Blanca to FM 192.)

From this point, the long train made its way up the Rio Grande. Sources differ as to its arrival date in the immediate El Paso area, but Wright's next letter to Dr. Gray is headed "Camp 6 miles below El Paso Sept. 13, 1849": "I send by the express which leaves tomorrow a few lines to inform you that I am well—that I have been very successful in collecting and preserving plants & that I intend to return (with the first train to San Antonio) which will start on the 25 inst—that, if possible, I will then hurry on to Port La Vaca where I will either ship my collections or come on to New Orleans & to New York with them...."

Continuing this letter, Wright commented on some of the local flora: "Yesterday I took a ramble to the top of one of the mountains which form El Paso and collected some 25-30 new plants and saw various others past flowering, with several new cactaceae.... I saw a huge one at least 18 inches in diam & 2 ft high with abundant fruit of which I saw plenty." (Undoubtedly Wright was describing the once abundant "barrel cactus" which blooms and bears seed pods in August and early September.)

The next section of this letter reveals yet another obstacle to be surmounted: the financing of the return trip. It begins on a seemingly positive note ("Major Van Horn assures me that I shall have free transportation to the Pecos"), then spells out the projected heavy expense for the next phase of the journey ("from there I shall have to obtain it from



Commonly called "Turk's Head," this plant has the scientific designation *ancistrocactus uncinatus wrightii*. It was named for Charles Wright and is "widely distributed throughout the Franklin Mountains and on the plains near the foot of the mountains." The drawing is the work of Hugo Garcia, a student at Lydia Patterson Institute, who used a living plant as his "model." (Courtesy Clinton P. Hartmann and Lydia Patterson Institute)

citizen carts, and it may prove a heavy bill, especially if I procure as many cactaceae as I now design to do"), details Wright's present efforts to borrow money (by "giving...a lien on my collection"), continues to a disclosure ("I have only about forty dollars which will be entirely insufficient to take me home"), and ends with a diffident plea ("if you could send me some kind of remittance in the shape of a draft on somebody, collectable [sic] only by me").

In so many ways, we realize, the dedicated botanizer was subjected throughout the long trip (forth and back) to humiliations: begging for food in "the messes," justifying his existence to "Capt. French Q. M.," "thrown" from one part of the wagon train to another. And now the embarrassing quest for the wherewithal to get home. We are reminded of another impecunious traveling scholar, Chaucer's "Clerk of Oxenford" who rode that skinny nag to Canterbury. Matter of fact, though, the Clerk had a much easier time than Charles Wright, who, after his return to San Antonio (in a letter dated November 25, 1849), declared that he had walked the entire distance to and from El Paso ("1300 miles, perhaps including all ramblins, 2500") and that "Next time" he would not start "afoot...without the prospect of riding a good deal of the way on a horse or a mule."

Meanwhile, back at "Camp 6 miles below El Paso," in that letter of September 13, Wright turned from the subject of his lean purse to the more pleasant one of the bountiful harvest in the El Paso Valley: "We get plenty of fruit (I have foundered on it) peaches, pears, quinces, indifferent apples, melons, immense onions and the finest grapes I ever saw—I have counted

120 to the bunch & seen a plenty of such bundles and they are of excellent flavor. I helped too to drink today of a couple of bottles of vino the pure juice of the grape—a year old.” And then this long letter concludes: “I have a great many things to tell you when we meet which I must defer now as this (if it goes at all) must go on horseback through an Indian country 640 miles....”

Throughout the long trek from San Antonio to El Paso, Wright made scrupulous field notes (a numbered list of plants as he collected them). These notes provide an excellent annotated “calendar” of Van Horne’s route. The initial entry on this list pertaining to the El Paso-Rio Grande Valley reads, “1165—hymenopappus—40-50 mi below El Paso—Sept 6 1849.” This notation places Wright somewhere between Esperanza and Fort Hancock (non-existent communities at the time, of course) near present-day FM Road 192. His additional field notes mark his “botanizing” up the valley day by day. On September 12 he recorded a fern on the “mountain side near El Paso.” On September 13 he collected over forty different specimens and wrote the letter from “Camp 6 miles below El Paso.” During the next three days he identified ten different species of cacti. From September 17 to October 6, he gathered other specimens in the vicinity of San Elizario; on October 6 and 7, a few from near Socorro and “Isletta”; and from October 8 to 11, he was back again in the “mountains, hills, ravines” and the “mountain summits” near El Paso. In all he had collected almost two hundred specimens in the El Paso vicinity.

On October 12, Wright joined a train of 25 wagons and 25 men under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Joseph E. Johnston that was returning to San Antonio by way of the Guadalupe Mountains, then southeast down the Pecos River to Horsehead Crossing. The train continued on to Comanche Springs and from there to San Antonio via Fredericksburg. He arrived in San Antonio on November 23 and two days later wrote to Dr. Gray: “I returned to this place...ragged, dirty & probably lousy & with a few dollars in my pocket.... We were on the road 42 days [a far cry from the 104 on the outbound journey].... I think my plants are in good condition—the numbered list runs up to 1400.”

Charles Wright had now concluded his 1300-mile trek, leaving a “rich” botanical collection still being referred to and written about. In 1850, Dr. Asa Gray published a “memoir” or botanical description of many plants in Wright’s collection, generally referred to as “*Plantae Wrightianae*, Part I.” The most recent treatment of Wright’s work appeared in 1987 as a doctoral dissertation by Elizabeth A. Shaw of Harvard University.

In the summer of 1851, Wright returned to El Paso as a botanist and surveyor officially attached to the United States Boundary Commission. During the subsequent winter and spring, he wrote letters from Frontera, from the copper mines at Santa Rita, New Mexico, and from the vicinity of San Elizario. These letters, like the ones written during his "walk" alongside Van Horne's military train, provide a "close-up and personal" view of conditions in the region at that time. They constitute the principal source material of Part II of CHARLES WRIGHT: BOTANIZER OF THE BOUNDARY, which will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Password*. ☆

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author expresses his gratitude to The Botany Libraries, Harvard University, for granting permission to quote from the correspondence of Charles Wright to Dr. Asa Gray during the years 1845 through 1849 and also to Dr. Elizabeth A. Shaw of the Harvard University Herbaria for bringing to his attention her doctoral dissertation, *Charles Wright on the Boundary, 1849-1852*, published in 1987.

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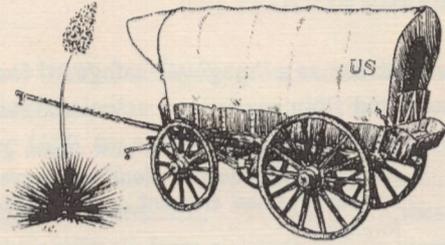
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WHAT'S IN A NAME

It may interest *Password* readers to know that the spirit of Caesar Augustus hovers along the local stretch of the Rio Grande, specifically in the community of Zaragoza, a municipal section of the *Municipio de Juárez*. The community was founded by the decree of October 1, 1862, by Hispanic families from Ysleta whose properties had been lost during the settlement of the United States-Mexican border and who sought to establish land holdings in Mexican territory. It was named for General Ignacio Zaragoza, the commander of the Eastern Forces which repelled the French assault on Puebla in the famous *Cinco de Mayo* victory in 1862.

The General's surname, Zaragoza, suggests that some of his remote ancestors may have lived in or near the town of Zaragoza, Spain, capital of the province of Zaragoza (and formerly of the kingdom of Aragón). Called Salduba by its Celtiberian founders before the Roman conquest in 25 B.C., the town was made a *colonia* (military garrison) by ancient Rome's first Emperor, Caesar Augustus. It was renamed Caesarea Augusta or Caesaraugusta, from which evolved the Spanish word *Zaragoza*.

—information provided by W. H. Timmons, Professor Emeritus of History, The University of Texas at El Paso, and by R. L. Reid, Professor of History, Baylor University.



On the TRAIL of the NAJA

by Mark T. Bentley

IN DECEMBER OF 1969, AS A COLD WINTER STORM was slowly approaching the El Paso region, a local rancher recovering a stray calf happened on a relic of a crescent-shaped brass talisman. Originally part of the trappings of a horse, this amulet was intended to prevent harm to the animal. A few years later, in 1975, a similar find in the Sacramento Mountains was recorded by archaeologists during a reconnaissance survey.¹ Although the name for this crescent-shaped ornament may be unfamiliar to many, it is frequently seen in the desert Southwest. It is called a "naja" or "najahe" by the Navajo.

While the word is Navajo and the *naja* itself a prominent feature of Navajo jewelry, the decorative object is derived from a crescent-shaped amulet which originated on the other side of the world and which in centuries past was believed to insure good health and fertility to human beings and animals alike. The earliest evidence of the use of the crescent-shaped decoration appears in North Africa in the ancient Mesopotamian kingdoms. By the fourteenth century B. C., the Egyptians were adorning their effigies of kings, queens, and deities with the crescent symbol.² During the time of the pharaohs, the crescent represented fertility and everlasting life.³

Its use as a "magical" safeguard for horses, according to one writer, stemmed from mythology associated with the moon:

This worship of the new moon gradually developed into that of Asarte—the Goddess of Hunting—always connected with the horse. Her symbol was the crescent... Many horses wear a crescent on their foreheads.⁴

Many, many centuries after its possible origin in moon worship, the crescent-shaped amulet found its way to Europe, brought to that continent by the Moors, a mixture of African peoples who in A. D. 711 crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and entered the Iberian Peninsula.⁵ At that time the crescent symbol was almost unknown outside the Moorish sphere of influence, although crescents have been documented in Celtic, Etruscan, and Roman burials. It can be said with certainty that among the customs carried into Spain by the Moors was the use of the crescent talisman in the form of "face-brass."⁶

Later, as Spain conquered the New World, its culture and history influenced the Americas. The introduction of the horse and its associated bridle trappings are but two examples of this influence.



CRETE



ROME



SERBIA



SPAIN
(New World)

Examples of European brass amulets. The specimen from (New World) Spain is similar to the one found in 1969 on the former San Andres Salt Trail. (Courtesy Mark T. Bentley)

To explain the presence of a brass crescent-shaped object at the place where it was found by the rancher in 1969, we need to review some of the happenings that were occurring in the area in former centu-

Mark T. Bentley is a University of Texas at El Paso research archaeologist with the Cultural Resource Management Program at Fort Bliss. His interests include the documentation of human adaptation in the El Paso region from the Late Prehistoric to the Early Historic periods.

ries. From the 1620s to the early 1880s, nomadic groups of Gila and Mescalero Apache frequently attacked wayfarers on the established Spanish trails of the Southwest. During 1659, for example, merchants and their military escorts traveling along the Camino Real between Santa Fe and the villa of Chihuahua were regularly ambushed.⁷ To ward off these marauders, as well as to protect their animals from sickness and accident, the Spanish escorts made the crescent-shaped talisman a crucial part of the horses' trappings.

As already stated, the remnant of the brass crescent found in 1969 on the (former) San Andres Salt Trail had been part of a horse's harness. The earliest possible date that such an ornament could have been dropped in this particular area is 1647, when this branch trail from the Camino Real at present-day El Paso headed northward to the rich salt harvests in the north Tularosa Basin.⁸ The latest date that can conservatively be assigned to the presence of such a harness decoration at this place would be the latter decades of the nineteenth century, when the inhabitants of New Mexico lost interest in copper and brass items of adornment. Although these metals were very malleable and often easily obtained from American and Mexican coins and discarded cartridge casings, they had one aesthetic drawback: they readily tarnish. After the 1860s, silver became easier to obtain and brass lost popularity. Silver was also relatively inexpensive. The materials found in early silver jewelry that was made in New Mexico include fine silver, sterling silver, and coin silver (from both American and Mexican coins), and at that time, it was not uncommon for restaurant silverware to be converted into the highly-prized artifacts of adornment coveted by today's collectors.

The shift from the use of brass and copper to silver in the smithing of decorative objects, together with the known date of the earliest travel along the salt trail branching off from the Camino Real at the Pass, strongly indicates that the brass harness-deco-



An example of a late-nineteenth century horse bridle with naja attached. (Courtesy Mark T. Bentley)



Late-nineteenth-century photograph of a Navajo silversmith with his tools and wares. Note the naja pendant necklace he wears. (Courtesy Mark T. Bentley)

ration remnant discovered on that wintry night in 1969 dates somewhere between 1647 and 1870. (Purists might prefer the dates 1647-1821, for after 1821 the local salt caravans did not have Spanish military escorts.)

The mystique of the crescent has vanished from the local scene...along with the Spaniards and their horses and the marauding Apache, but the distinctive crescent-shaped ornament persistently remains. Now called a *naja*, it is the prominent centerpiece of the traditional Navajo "squash blossom" necklace.

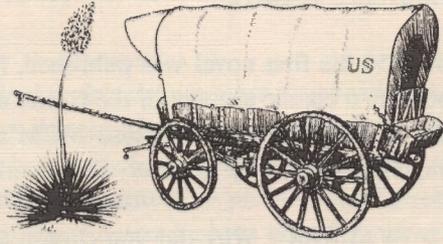
As to the adoption by the Navajos of the crescent design, it may be surmised, first of all, that these native people were as attracted to the shape and beauty of the pendant worn on the foreheads of the Spaniards' horses as they were to the strength and usefulness of the horses themselves. And, in the second place, it is known that the Indians in what is now the American Southwest were introduced to blacksmithing techniques by simply observing and helping Spanish smiths. By the 1860s (and possibly much earlier), the trade of blacksmithing had been taught to a limited number of the Navajo and Pueblo people.⁹ In the beginning, the metals most often used by the Indian smiths were brass and copper. However, newspaper articles in 1863 and 1864 indicate that the Navajos were making bridles of iron and, at times, of silver.

The remnant of a brass harness-decoration found by the El Paso-area rancher in 1969 serves to remind us not only of the immemorial crescent fetish, but also—and very importantly—of the long trail that leads from the ancients of North Africa to the Navajos of the American Southwest. ☆

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2. Christine Desroches-Noblecourt, *Tutankhamen—Life and Death of a Pharaoh* (London:

Notes continued on page 99...



The ANATOMY of a HISTORICAL NOVELIST

by Francis L. Fugate

Will Henry on old El Paso in *Seven Men at Mimbres Springs*: "The place was an irrigated paradise within a purgatory of prickly pear."

IN 1983 DALE L. WALKER, ONE OF THE NATION'S leading critics of Western Literature and now Director of Texas Western Press, received an assignment: To compile and edit a collection of essays and stories by Will Henry. That assignment resulted in *Will Henry's West*,¹ a study of the myth and reality of the Old West. But of more importance, it burgeoned into a friendship that resulted in a study of the driving force behind one of the nation's prime historical novelists. "For more than a decade, one of my Saturday morning privileges was to phone up Will Henry and talk books," said Walker.

Henry Wilson Allen was born in 1912 in Kansas City, Missouri. His father was an oral surgeon who lived long enough to see several of his son's books published, although he did not read them. As Dale Walker learned, his father "believed Henry would eventually come to his senses and take a job on the *Kansas City Star* and amount to something."

Instead, in 1932 Henry went to Hollywood and got a job walking polo ponies for Walt Disney, Darryl Zanuck, and Will Rogers. Two years later he became a writer in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's short-subjects department.

In 1950 his first novel was published, *No Survivors*, a book destined to become a classic account of the Custer massacre. It was published under the name Will Henry because MGM's contract claimed ownership of anything written by a writer while working on their lot.

WALKER: Why did you choose to write a Western novel?

ALLEN: *I didn't know I had until after No Survivors came out. I thought I was outward bound to literary knighthood with the Great American Novel; then I learned that the reviewing press had relegated my mighty Custer novel to the lowly genre of Western.*

WALKER: Lowly?

ALLEN: *Please understand I employ the word "lowly" not in any pejorative sense. I have spent my life trying to write Western novels that would elevate the category, as indeed have an honorable company of others in this Western writing brother- and sisterhood. But the Western is still sniffed at by the critical media. The only people who disagree are the millions of readers around the world.*

At the time of his death in 1991, Henry Wilson Allen left a legacy of fifty-four books under the pseudonyms Will Henry (the name he preferred) and Clay Fisher. During his writing life, Will Henry subscribed to the thesis propounded by Kenneth Roberts in *I Wanted to Write*—that historical novelists must know more history than historians:

An historian can state that an army has provisions for only fifteen days; then coolly permit that army to exist twice that length of time without explaining the miracle. A novelist must find out how the army escaped starvation, and explain it to the complete satisfaction of the reader. Otherwise his story doesn't, as the saying goes, hold water. Each omission is a hole in his tale. Most histories are filled with holes and leak like sieves.²

Will Henry abhorred even a pinhole in the factual fabric of his work. He explained his stand on the subject to Dale Walker.

"I expect the historical Western to entertain before it educates. But once the history is brought into the story, then that history must not be violated. The writer may neither add to it, nor take away from it. He may use it but must honor it. Building his fictional tale around the real events

Francis L. Fugate, a friend of the late Will Henry, is a past president of Western Writers of America and a recipient of the prestigious Golden Spur Award from that organization.

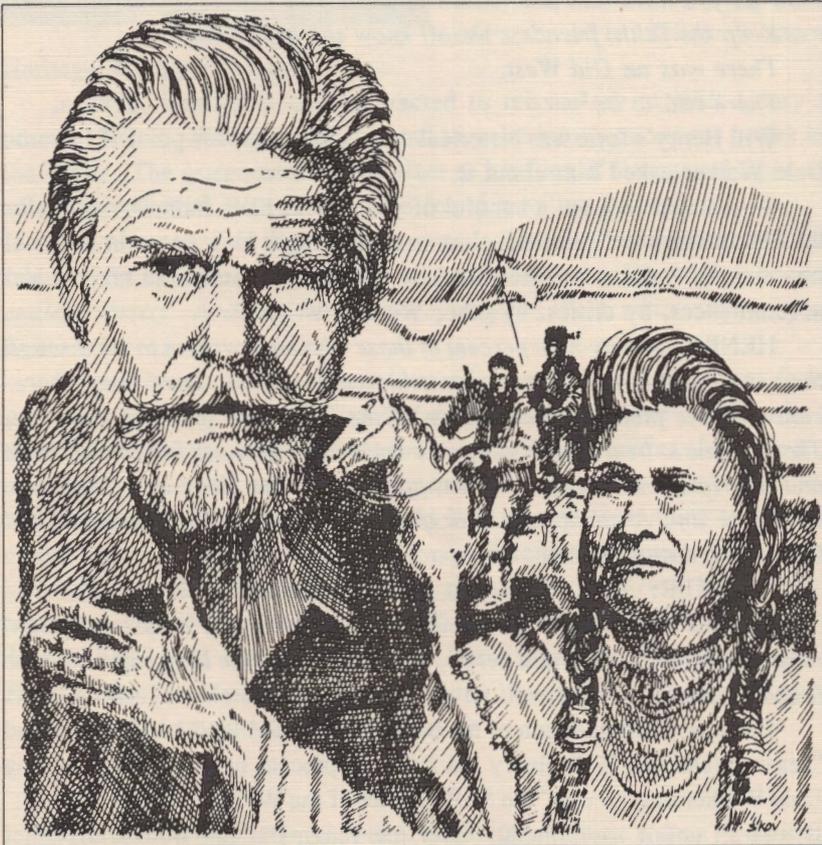
never licenses the author to alter those events.

*"There has been more historical revisionist nonsense practiced in the good name of The Western Story than in almost any other form of the American novel. History that is bent and shaped, reshaped actually, to fit any author's plotline, or political persuasion, or philosophical pitch, is the most tawdry of literature frauds. I detest it above all other wrongs in Western writing."*³

Will Henry read little Western fiction. He preferred to read and reread and reread such books as the Lewis and Clark journals, soaking up the facts which would become the warp and weave of his fiction.

And where did his passion for the West come from?

Will Henry spent his boyhood in Kansas City, "springboard of the



A likeness of Will Henry/Clay Fisher (Henry Wilson Allen), the illustration (© 1928) by Army Skov, from *Will Henry* by Robert L. Gale, Boise State University, Boise, Idaho. (Courtesy Francis L. Fugate)

American West since Lewis and Clark.... I had to discover the Trans-Mississippi 'great Western' frontier opening outward toward the sun from the spout of its funnel which was, behold! our own Westport Landing, since become Kansas City, Missouri."⁴ As he would later explain his passion:

No Old West you say?

Listen to the cowbell. Smell the cedar incense on the wind. Hear the axblade sing. Hark to the rider talking down his cattle.

The Old West lives in untold legions of human hearts and minds.

Let it stay there.

Don't ever change it. Cherish its myth, remember its legend, write down its folklore. Guard it, defend it, keep it safe, that you may pass it on in your own time as something you want your child to have and to know as you have had and known it, unspoiled and as a true believer.

Keep the faith, friends; we all know the real truth.

There was an Old West.

There had to be.⁵

Will Henry's forte was historical novels from the viewpoint of Indians. Dale Walker asked him about it:

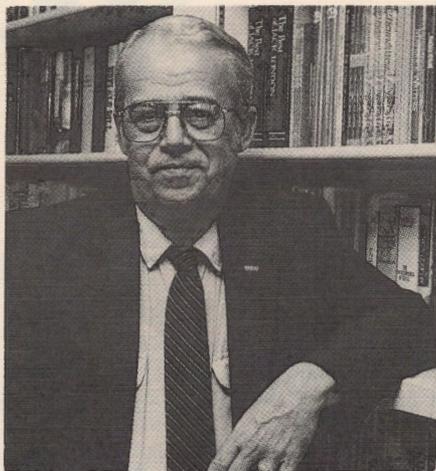
WALKER: All but a handful of your books have Indians, especially the Plains tribes and Apaches, close to center stage. How has your fictional treatment of Indians been received by your Native American readers and acquaintances, by critics, by other Western writers?

HENRY: *Ninety-nine percent of those who have written to me through the years, Indian or white or any other color of skin, have been appreciative of the picture I have drawn of the horseback tribes of the West. There seems to be a reader hunger to know more of those famed old chiefs and warriors and warrior-women, particularly the Sioux and Cheyenne, the Crow and Arapaho, the Blackfoot and Mandan, the Shoshone and Gros Ventre and Pawnee, the Apache—well, all of them.*

WALKER: How would you like to be remembered?

HENRY: *If I could stir the heart and memory of only one Indian, returning him his pride and heritage of honor, then the long ride will have found its proper ending, will have found what it set out to seek: justice.*

Because of comparison of his books sales with blood-and-thunder and "sexy" Westerns, Will Henry tended to deprecate his own work, telling Dale Walker that he was "the Snail-Darter of the Western Writing World." It was an unfair assessment. Over the years, Bantam Books, his chief paperback publisher, sold fifteen million copies of his books; eight were made into movies. His peers in Western Writers of America voted him five Golden Spur awards and the coveted "Saddlemans" award for overall



Dale L. Walker, Director of Texas Western Press, editor of *Will Henry's West* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1984), and author of Introductions to the 1990 Bantam Books reissue of ten Will Henry novels. (Photo courtesy Texas Western Press)

contributions to the American West. *From Where the Sun Now Stands* was judged one of the twenty-five best Western novels of all time. In 1970 he received the Outstanding Service Award from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, and in 1972 the Western

Heritage Wrangler Award.

In 1990, Bantam Books contracted to reissue ten of Will Henry's novels. Dale L. Walker was delegated to write introductions for books in the series. The assignment sent Walker to his files of letters and tapes of conversations with Will Henry. He found a telling passage:

"I do love the Old West and the grand silences of vast oceans of land islanded by mesas and mountains, shored by deserts of utter beauty and endless variety. And I do love the people of the West, white and red and brown.

"If you love a thing and are born of minstrel blood and gypsy foot, you write songs of that love, even if disguised as Western novels. So I write my little songs, and my little circle of reader-romantics cheer me on, and that's about the way it is going to end."

It ended on October 16, 1991, as Will Henry capitulated to a two-month battle with pneumonia and its complications. Lovers of Western historical novels are left with a fitting memorial to Henry Wilson Allen, better known as Will Henry and Clay Fisher—a series of ten "little songs": *Journey to Shiloh*; *Pillars of the Sky*; *From Where the Sun Now Stands*; *The Gates of the Mountains*; *No Survivors*; *Alias Butch Cassidy*; *Chiricahua*; *I, Tom Horn*; and *Yellow Hair*. ☆

NOTES

1. Will Henry, *Will Henry's West*, ed., Dale L. Walker (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1984).
2. Kenneth Roberts, *I Wanted to Write* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1949), 186-187.
3. Dale L. Walker, "Introduction," *Will Henry's West*, xx-xxi.
4. Henry, 2.
5. *Ibid.*, 4-5.

THE COLUMBIAN QUINCENTENARY

El Paso Documentary III

Ysleta: The Oldest Town in Texas



by W. H. Timmons

Editor's Note: W. H. Timmons, Professor Emeritus of History at The University of Texas at El Paso and the author of the prize-winning book *El Paso: A Borderlands History* (Texas Western Press, 1990), has prepared this article as the third in a series in observance of the Columbian Quincentenary marking the 500th anniversary of Columbus' discovery, which at length resulted in two and a half centuries of Spanish rule in the American Southwest. Reproduced, opposite, is a page from a census for the Pueblo of Corpus Christi de la Ysleta del Sur, dated September 11, 1684, Provincias Internas, Vol. 37, The University of Texas at El Paso Library, MF 478, Roll 18.

DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD SPAIN ESTABLISHED three important institutions on the northern frontiers—the mission, the *presidio*, and the *pueblo* (town or community). While the mission and the *presidio* have received most of the attention in the historiography of the Spanish colonial period, the *pueblo* played a role of far greater significance. As the nucleus of the Spanish frontier experience, it provided a settlement base which usually outlived both the mission and the *presidio*. Missions became churches, *presidios* became towns, but *pueblos* remained municipalities, whether villages, towns, or cities. Spanish settlers in the *pueblos* brought the rudiments of European civilization to the frontiers of North America and the Southwest—language, culture, social customs, traditions, religion, working habits, crops, and livestock.

Each of the three frontier institutions played roles of importance in the El Paso region. While the mission and the *presidio* were usually the first institutions to be established, in at least one instance the *pueblo* preceded the other two. This was the Pueblo of Corpus Christi de la Ysleta del Sur, founded in 1682 on the south bank of the Rio Grande.

In 1680 the Pueblo Indian Revolt in New Mexico drove Spanish and Tigua refugees southward to the Pass of the North, where at a campsite known as Santísimo Sacramento near present-day Ysleta on October 12, 1680, they celebrated the first Catholic Mass on soil that eventually became a part of Texas. There followed a year or more of uncertainty in the selection of permanent sites, but according to a document dated February, 1682, some nine settlements were listed, including one consisting of Spanish and

- 173 50 1200
- En este Pueblo de Coayup Christi & La Yleta En onze
 dias del mes de Sep. de mill seiscientos ochenta y quatro años
 D. N. P. Juan Rodriguez de la Valle Procurador Gen.
 del Sr. Reyno Encumbrado de la Orden de su M. C. P. Juan
 nador y Cap. Gen. D. N. Domingo Sisonza Perez de Cruzate
 vino a este dicho pueblo con dos testigos de mi auctoridad y hizo
 la Yleta en las facades de los Voz. q. En el Verdad q. es como sigue
 familia de Cap. Joseph. Vellez Xizon que con sta de diez peaso
 nes no tiene Valim. ni milga por la Vazon a Nueva Sta de Vestuario
 deo por la falta de agua como es constante; El Vestuario muy
 Indesente casi en carnes
 tiene el dho dos Caualllos y silla Arcabuz espada y daga
 familia de Cap. Pedro Lopez mederos q. contra de siete
 personas no tiene Valim. ni milga por la Vazon a Nueva Sta de Vestuario
 ynda sentes el dho y sumugay los demas en carnes; tiene un cauallor
 y silla Arcabuz y espada y daga
 familia de Cap. Diego de Luna q. contra de cinco personas
 no tiene Valim. ni no tiene Valim. sino es el que adouieren
 una poca de leche que sacan de unas Cabras que tienen q. son veinte
 milga no la tiene por la Vazon a Nueva Sta; tiene seis Caualllos y
 Cabuz y silla y daga; El Vestuario los Vnos con alg. de denia o
 dos Votos y los Criados Encarnes
 familia de Domingo Lupan q. contra de ocho personas sembro
 una millga de q. solo veinte fanegas de mais de Vestuario con al
 guna de denia; tiene seis Caualllos y silla Arcabuz y daga
 familia de Apolinax Martin q. contra de diez personas Pobres
 y solemnidad
 familia de Juana de Juan Vuda q. contra de diez personas Pobres y
 solemnidad
 familia de Salvador Romero q. contra de quatro personas no tiene
 Valim. ni milga por que andubo fuera de se gair en buca de
 ouy de uso de Vestuario con el Pan con al q. de denia tiene un cauallor
 y silla Arcabuz

Tiguas named the Pueblo of Santísimo de Corpus Christi de la Ysleta.

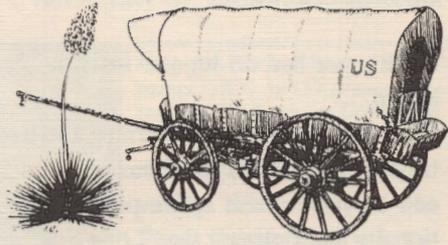
The outbreak of hostilities by various Indians, including the Tiguas, kept meager Spanish forces on the defensive until the *presidio* of El Paso del Norte suppressed the revolt and restored order. A census taken in September, 1684, indicated that there had been a fifty per cent reduction in the total population of the El Paso area since October, 1680—a stark reminder that Indian wars, desertions, and starvation had taken their toll. For the Pueblo of Corpus Christi de la Ysleta, the names of twenty-one Spanish families, or 188 persons were listed. The Tiguas were excluded from the census in accordance with official Spanish policy (which remained in effect until the mid-eighteenth century).

In the eighteenth century the Pueblo of Corpus Christi de la Ysleta became a mixed community of Spanish, mestizos, Christianized Tiguas, and mission Tiguas, who lived and worked under the supervision of the Franciscans at the mission San Antonio de la Ysleta, built in 1691. By the late eighteenth century the total population of the community was 363, the Tiguas comprising about sixty-five percent. Most adult males were farm workers, reflecting the agricultural character of the economy. In 1821 the entire American Southwest came under Mexican rule, and Ysleta's population by 1841 was 731, involving 456 Mexicans and 275 Tiguas.

In the 1829-1831 period, the capricious Rio Grande formed a new channel south of Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario, placing these Mexican settlements on what amounted to an island. Following the Mexican-American War, the boundary between Mexico and the United States was fixed at the Rio Grande, thus leaving the Pueblo of Corpus Christi de la Ysleta on the American and Texas side. Since that time the Pueblo of Ysleta, founded in 1682, has stoutly defended its claim to being the oldest European settlement within the present boundaries of Texas. Thus, Texas history begins in El Paso, and El Paso history begins in its Lower Valley along the Mission Trail. ☆

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HERALDRY of the TEXAS RANGERS

by George E. Virgines

Editor's note: The following article appeared originally in the October-December, 1991, issue of the Quarterly of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION AND CENTER FOR OUTLAW AND LAWMAN HISTORY, an organization in affiliation with the University of Wyoming, Laramie. It is reprinted here with the permission of both the Quarterly and the author.



IN 1973, ONE OF THE MOST LEGENDARY OF LAW enforcement agencies celebrated its Sesquicentennial Anniversary, 1823-1973: The Texas Rangers. The saga of these colorful apostles of law and order parallels the history of Texas.

Some of the never-to-be-forgotten names on the Ranger roster are John C. Hays, John B. Jones, Ben McCulloch, Bigfoot Wallace, L. H. McNelly, Rip Ford, James Gillett, John Hughes, Bill McDonald, William W. Sterling, and Frank Hamer, to name just a very few.

Throughout the history of the Texas Rangers, one identifying factor was the badge that adorned the Ranger's shirt or vest. The design has changed with the varied history of the force.

The Congress of the Republic of Texas commissioned John C. Hayes as the first captain and commander of the Texas Rangers. In the beginning,

the Ranger had no regular insignia, no rank, no regular uniform, and no badge.

Little is known concerning the badge the Ranger first wore and how it originated. One story has it that a Ranger took a Mexican silver coin and carved from it a five-pointed star cut out of a circle (the star traditionally symbolizing the "Lone Star" of Texas). The idea caught on, and before long, many Rangers adopted a similar design using the Mexican silver coin. From July 1, 1870, to April, 1873, the period known as the carpetbag era, the Rangers wore a shield-type badge of silver color adorned with the words "State Police" and "Texas," a raised five-point star in the middle of the badge, and, at the bottom, the officer's number in copper. As first organized, the State Police had a cadre of four captains, eight lieutenants, twenty sergeants, and 125 privates. Also, every local peace officer was enrolled as a member. In addition, this force could enroll anybody and charge him double and more for his equipment. For a badge worth one dollar, the recruit was charged three dollars for the honor of belonging to this police force. Some of the numbers noted on existing badges are 118, 181, 282, and the highest, 365. It is presumed, therefore, that a great number of these badges were issued. How many have survived is unknown.

From 1877 to well after the turn of the century, the Ranger organization faced many difficulties, mainly because of its involvement with politics. In fact, it came close to being abolished.

In 1930, the Texas Legislature enacted a law creating the State Highway Patrol and placed the Texas Rangers under the Texas Highway Department. At that time, the Rangers wore gray uniforms and black boots. Their badges were specified by law as "diamond shaped." This badge had the familiar star and circle design in the center and was also engraved with the words "Texas State Highway Patrol" and the officer's number.

The badges supposedly representing the Rangers had been distributed freely over the years. It has been estimated that by 1935 more than three thousand badges had been given away, mostly as tokens of honorary membership, to friends of state officials and to famous personalities. Kate Smith, the singing star, was made an honorary Texas Ranger, as was also Will Rogers. Tom Mix, the Western movie star, is alleged to have been

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Original "Texas State Police" badge (1870-1873). (Photo courtesy Sgt. Tal Kanigher Collection)

a Ranger. Further complicating the record of the Texas Ranger badges is the evidence that many "Honorary Rangers" may have had their badges made up to suit their individual fancy.

A large number of Texas Ranger badges dating to the late 1920s and early 1930s have been found in every style, shape, form, and material. Other than

the familiar coin-type of cutout star and circle, there have been noted the manufactured cutout star and circle, usually nickel-plated; the cutout star and shield; the shield with a spread eagle across the top; and plain stars of five and six points with and without ball tips. There are also variations in designation, such as "Texas State Ranger," "Texas Ranger Force," "State Ranger Texas," "Ranger Force Texas," "Texas Ranging Company," and, of course, "Dept. of Public Safety-Texas Rangers."

The Ranger has always been proud of his badge, often having personal badges made up to decorate his gun grips or belt buckle or tie-tac and as a wallet or lapel badge, all in miniature size.

In an interview, an oldtime Ranger said that in the first decade of this century the official Ranger badge was a five-point star and marked "Texas Ranger" with a number on it. He also stated that many Rangers did not wear their badges at this time in belief that the badge sometimes made them a shooting target. Another story by a retired Ranger is that in the 1920s and 1930s several of the Rangers bought badges for fifty cents apiece in one of several Fort Worth pawn shops. These shops, claimed the retired Ranger, would display badges of all types and designs in their windows. He added, however, that most of the Rangers bought their badges directly from the Simmange Badge Company of San Antonio.

On August 10, 1935, an act of the legislature created the Texas Department of Public Safety. The Texas Rangers and the Texas Highway

Patrol were placed under his department. The result was the establishment of a new "Ranger Force" minus political tampering. In time, it also resulted in a new badge that was worn by Rangers and highway patrolmen alike. This new badge—almost round in shape—bore the words "Dept. of Public Safety" at the top and "Texas Rangers" at the bottom. The center of the badge featured the five-point star inscribed with the rank of the wearer. In the spaces between the points of the star appeared the letters "T-E-X-A-S."

In 1957, a new badge was issued which was a circle-type solid badge with the same lettering but in royal blue enamel and with the background in gold or silver, depending upon the wearer's rank. The five-point star in the center and the letters "T-E-X-A-S" were also gold or silver with a royal blue background. This was known as the "Blue-Badge" and was worn until 1962. Many Rangers called this a "Cracker-Jack" badge and did not like to wear it—with the result that a large number of privately-made badges were worn at this time.

Through the years, most Rangers favored the traditional and original coin-cutout-star-and-circle-type badge regardless of what type badge was officially decreed.

In October, 1962, Colonel Homer Garrison, Jr., Director of the Texas Department of Public Safety and Chief of the Texas Rangers, announced that the Texas Rangers were once again going to have a badge change, back to the original design of the coin cutout star and circle from a Mexican five-peso silver coin, the badge worn and made popular by their predecessors during the frontier years. At that time, each member of the Texas Rangers force was issued a replica of the historic original badge. Although there were only sixty-two Rangers at that time, Colonel Garrison had at least one hundred Mexican silver peso coins made into badges. They were all hand-crafted, engraved, and each just a bit different. Across the top of the circle appeared the words "Dept. of Public Safety" and at the bottom, the words "Texas Rangers." Artistic scrolls decorated the sides, and

"Special" ranger badge made from a twenty-dollar gold piece. (Photo courtesy George E. Virgines)





The first "Department of Public Safety Texas Ranger" badge. This pattern was used from 1940 to 1957. The badge pictured was worn by Captain A. Y. Allee. (Photo by Don Graff, courtesy Robert W. Stephens, Dallas, Texas)

in the center was engraved either the wearer's rank or company designation. (A, B, C, D, E, or F).

By 1970, the Rangers force was increased to more than one hundred, and because the men were transferred from time to time

to various other of the six companies, another change was instituted in the markings of the badges. They are still made from Mexican coins in the same type, but the abbreviation "Co." and the Company letter are omitted.

In spite of the fact that the Department of Public Safety now issues the type badges most favored by the Rangers, the members still continue to have their own custom-made badges handcrafted by jewelers and silversmiths from gold and silver coins, and engraved with their names. They also decorate their equipment with the ranger symbol.

Some badges can be found marked "Special Texas Ranger," indicating the issuing of "Special" commissions to ex-Rangers or retired Rangers, of course, without pay. One of the purposes of this practice is to allow the former Ranger to go armed—advisable, because many enemies may have been made during their service.

An interesting event in the history of the Texas Ranger badge occurred in 1958, when the Texas Law Enforcement Foundation at Fort Worth held a fund-raising, \$50-a-plate dinner honoring the Texas Rangers. To commemorate the occasion, a special medal was designed. It was a large (two-and-one-half inches round), heavy bronze medallion, a truly artistic memento. On one of its sides, along the circumference of the medal, is inscribed "T. L. E. F. Banquet Fort Worth, Texas 1958"—this entry attractively punctuated with five-pointed stars. In the center appears a replica of the original-style Texas Ranger's badge and, immediately below, the words "Old Ranger Badge Hand-Cut From Silver Coin." On the reverse side are the words "Texas Law Enforcement Foundation" and a depiction of the "scales of justice." These medallions were never sold except to persons who paid for the banquet.

The Texas Ranger badge has been publicized in many ways. For



A heavy bronze medallion designed to commemorate a special fund-raising \$50-a-plate banquet held in Fort Worth by the Texas Law Enforcement Foundation in 1958. Approximately two-and-one-half inches in diameter, the medallion was issued only to persons attending the banquet. (Photo courtesy George E. Virgines)

example, the badge was featured on August 8, 1981, in Ripley's "Believe It Or Not" as not being standardized but carved to the wearer's own taste. Perhaps the largest rendition of the Ranger's

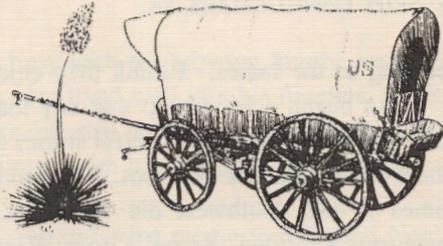
badge is located at the new Texas Ranger Hall of Fame in Waco. It is so large, in fact, that it covers the whole ceiling of the exhibition hall.

The Texas Rangers of today are not required to purchase their badges. Upon receiving a commission, the Ranger is issued a badge along with other necessary equipment. These badges, as a long-standing policy, are strictly in the hands of the commissioned Rangers.

The Texas Ranger badge has become a symbol of this world-famed law enforcement agency. The modern Ranger wears the famous star-in-a-circle badge as proudly as the colorful and traditional legendary Texas Ranger who preceded him. ☆

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A BOY'S VIEW of EL PASO, 1888-1889

*by R. Noel Longumare, Sr.
with Joanne D. Ivey*

Introduction *by Joanne D. Ivey*

ROBERT NOEL LONGUEMARE, SR., WAS EIGHTY-one years old when I first met him in 1961. My husband, who had known him since childhood, introduced us after church one Sunday morning. A small but sturdy-looking elderly man dressed in a three-piece suit, he tipped his hat, bowed over my hand, and called me "Miss Joanne." As we chatted, I realized that I was in the presence of a special individual, but more than that, I was in the presence of another time, another era, another way of life. Maybe it was his way of speaking, his manners, or just the fact that he, unlike the others who milled around us, was not in a hurry to rush on to the next event in his life. That event, as a matter of fact, turned out to be a leisurely lunch at Carmen's Cafe on Alameda Avenue in El Paso's Lower Valley. As the waitress hovered around to refill his teacup time after time, we learned that lunch at Carmen's was part of his regular routine. Everyone claimed they could set their watches by his arrival and leavetaking each day... accompanied by many gracious expressions of thanks, tipping of his hat, and

bowing to the ladies. I think they enjoyed his old-time manners, too.

We began a friendship that day that would last until the end of his life. As he shared the wonderful stories of his early life, the idea of putting them down on paper took root. We couldn't let all those memories of early times in the Southwest die with him. Our co-authored, book-length manuscript entitled "Kernal's Boys: Recollections by the Rio Grande" was the product of that idea. It covers the period from 1880 to 1910, and it chronicles the vividly-remembered first thirty years of Mr. Longuemare's life. His memories carried him back to Socorro, New Mexico, where he had spent his early childhood, then to the burgeoning town of El Paso, where he arrived at the age of eight in 1888, and forward to the turn-of-the-century decades when he grew to manhood and found a place among the bright young businessmen in the thriving border city.

As we continued to meet and write the story, Mr. Longuemare unearthed old scrapbooks kept by his father, Confederate Colonel Charles Longuemare, a mining engineer from Missouri who prospected in the Black Range of New Mexico in the 1870s and early 1880s and who was also one of the most popular journalists in the Territory, writing under the name of "Kernal." Sometimes the "Kernal" was referred to as the "Professor," for he was a well-educated, cultured gentleman, an accomplished pianist, and a former schoolmaster. We perused the dusty old volumes of the Kernal's own newspaper, *The Bullion*, a mining journal which had flourished in Socorro, New Mexico, from 1883 to 1888 and then in El Paso from 1888 to 1893.* The place of publication changed because in that year of 1888 Charles Longuemare moved his family—and his newspaper—from Socorro (where "the big boom was over") to El Paso, which he felt "had great possibilities."

"Kernal's Boys" are Noel ("Nogie" in those days) and his brother Carl, just one year older. Their adventures form a Southwestern tale akin to those of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn.

After many hours of storytelling, listening, writing, correcting, and reading over rough copy, Mr. Longuemare and I finished the manuscript

*Editor's note: See Dorothy Durham Hale, "The Bullion of Charles Longuemare," *Password*, XXXI, 3 (Fall, 1986), 137.

Joanne Dwyer Ivey, a "transplanted New Englander," came to El Paso in 1960 as a teacher for the Catholic Diocese. She holds a B. A. in English from the College of Mount St. Vincent, Riverdale, New York. She and her husband, lower valley farmer Jim Ivey, live in Clint, Texas., on the farm where they have reared their seven children. She has served as a religious educator in several local parishes, is director of Centro Santa Fe ministry to the poor in Ysleta, and was the producer and co-host of a local Catholic television series from 1980 through 1984.

in its present form. I became very busy with my growing family, and my dear friend grew weaker with time. He lived well into his nineties, a full life indeed. And part of its fullness can still be appreciated and enjoyed, even by those who were not acquainted with him, through his "Recollections by the Rio Grande."

With great pleasure, therefore, and in loving memory of Robert Noel Longuemare, Sr., "Miss Joanne" offers excerpts from his "Recollections" which provide in vivid detail. . .

A Boy's View of El Paso, 1888-1889

The greatest single factor in the sudden decrease in Socorro's population was the construction of the Smelter in El Paso, Texas. The competition was too much for the Billings Smelter, the largest single employer in Socorro. Smelter employees were soon traveling El Pasoward. Even Gustav Billings' nephews, Justus and Clemence Jungk, became employees of the larger Smelting Works in Texas, bringing to the newer plant brilliant, shrewd, and highly experienced management.

Papa was never one to be left behind. He had been in El Paso enough times to see that the dusty little cowtown in a forgotten corner of Texas had great possibilities. It would have the biggest most centrally-located smelter in the Southwest; the railroads were already streaming in to make it a natural crossroads; the men he had met in the town of about five thousand souls were confidently investing in new business.

The decision made, Papa wasted no time in arranging to move the *Bullion* to its new home. Only a month was missed during the transition, for the next *Bullion* appeared on June 26, 1888, published at 318 San Antonio Street, El Paso, Texas.

The family remained in Socorro until my father had his business affairs running smoothly in El Paso. Then, at the end of August, [my half-sister] Lucille and [my brother] Carl joined Papa. They helped him choose our new house, and soon the three sent word that all was ready. On a warm September morning [in 1888], Mama packed us all off to the railroad depot—six-month-old Leontine, four-year-old Marie, and me, feeling quite a man at the ripe old age of eight.

We found seats in the musty car, and soon we began to move. One hundred eighty-nine miles and eight hours later, the train pulled into the Santa Fe Depot on Sixth Street in El Paso. Papa, Lucille, and Carl were waiting for us. The depot seemed enormous. People dressed in fancy clothes milled about; ragged vendors hawked their wares to the travelers

waiting for the Denver train. Hack drivers vied for passengers.

In a great stentorian voice, a big negro man announced, "Vahn-dohm Ho-tel! Vahn-dohm Ho-tel!" Blue Wilson was tough competition for the other hack drivers; no doubt many visitors decided on the Vendome because they simply couldn't hear any other name. But one other driver stood out, too. A little gray-haired man with a lively twinkle in his Irish-blue eyes, spotted us and hurried over.

"Hey, there, Professor, I'm savin' the hack for you...so this is the family, well, well, well..."

"This is Mike Brannigan," Papa said. "We'll take his hack."

Leaving the Depot, we drove one block north and turned east in front of the biggest store I'd ever seen. It was called Ketelsen and Degetau, the largest merchandising company in this part of the country at the time, dealers in everything from pins to plows. Another turn to the north, and on up South El Paso Street we jogged. With its smooth caliche topping and board sidewalks, the street looked to me like a grand boulevard. Cottonwood, chinaberry, and pear trees lined the sides, small irrigation trenches running alongside. On our right was a skyscraper four stories high, the brand new Sheldon Block, bright red brick with spanking white trim. The main business district surrounded us, all kinds of shops and offices. Squarely facing us at the end of the street was a large white building with great plaster arches decorating the front.

"The Grand Central Hotel," Papa answered my breathless question. We turned east in front of the fascinating arches into St. Louis Street [now Mills Avenue] and then another lovely vision sprang up...a large park on the left. Everything was fresh and green; the grass (we had never seen Bermuda grass before) was an exquisite emerald carpet; a low white fence made from four-inch pipes connected with chains surrounded the whole park and little iron gates formed entrances at regular intervals. A sparkling white bandstand stood in the very center. It was San Jacinto Plaza. Speechless, I listened to my father point out different landmarks.

"That hotel just east of the park is the Vendome. Look down there to your right and you'll see the top of City Hall. Great big place. Campbell Street coming up in a minute. Our house is on North Campbell."

Mike Brannigan turned the hack to the left, and we traveled north for a few blocks. Standing a half mile or more apart, the homes we passed looked to me like so many country estates. Down many side streets, there wasn't a house in sight. We crossed the Southern Pacific railroad tracks and pulled up in front of a long brick rowhouse.

"Here we are," boomed Papa. "Here's your new home." The house

was one of four or five apartments in the row, recently built by Gaston and Newell, local businessmen who also owned a grocery store on the corner of Utah [now Mesa] and San Antonio Streets, where Mama would do her shopping.

The next morning, Carl and I were up early, he, anxious to display his knowledge of life in this strange new town, and I, a willing and open-mouthed audience of one. The desert air was already hot when we burst out of the house, and the sun shimmered down whiter and brighter than it ever had in the New Mexico hills.

Nodding towards the north, Carl said, "That's Boulevard Street up there." It wasn't a "Boulevard" at all. It was a narrow dirt road running east from the end of our rowhouse. There were no houses along it, and it looked like this was the end of town. (In later years, it was renamed Yandell Boulevard.) Directly in front of our house, which faced east, were empty lots, but in the distance I could see a few figures moving about.

"Are there any houses out there?"

I asked

"That's where the dugouts are."

"Dugouts?"

"Yeah. I've never been out there, but some of the boys have. There're some people that live in caves or something like that."

And Carl was right. A big arroyo ran down from the large mesa on the

The inseparable Longuemare boys as they appeared soon after their arrival in El Paso in 1888, Noel on the left, Carl on the right. (Photo courtesy Joanne D. Ivey)



north side of town southward to the flatland where the Southern Pacific railroad had built a roundhouse, about four blocks east of our house on Campbell Street. The arroyo was fairly deep, and along its walls some of the poorer families had dug good-sized caves, reinforcing the walls with rough timbers and protecting themselves against the harsh southwestern winds with make-shift lean-to's and mats.

In the months that followed, Carl and I explored our new territory. Our world, we discovered, was bounded by the muddy banks of the Rio Grande on south and west, by the rocky cliffs of the Franklin Mountains on the north, and on the east by brush-covered bosque. The world was an exciting place the year I was eight in 'eighty-eight'.

Early autumn was fast approaching, yet no one had mentioned anything about school. Content to ignore the subject, neither Carl nor I ventured to remind anyone that we were of an age meriting some interest as to our scholastic condition. However, we were not fully convinced that the matter had been forgotten. Sure enough, Papa greeted us one morning with a twinkle in his eye that belied his solemn face.

"Well, boys, I suppose you're worried about your schooling, eh? Don't worry any more; everything's been arranged. I know how anxious you are to be back at your numbers and letters! You'll be glad to know, just for your convenience, a schoolhouse is even now being delivered to the corner of our block."

We couldn't rush out fast enough to see this great event. There, less than a block away, a work crew of men and mules was, indeed, "delivering" a small frame building. The schoolhouse-to-be rested atop some logs supported by the beds of two large wagons. With much shouting and waving, the workmen positioned the wagons just where the school would stand, then carefully began to ease them out from under. We boys spent the better part of the morning watching the great proceedings. Of course the City hadn't moved the school there specifically for us, as Papa would have had us believe, but after our long session as sidewalk foremen, it did seem to be ours in a special way.

A few days later, the institution of education was ready. We trotted off to the one-room school each morning to relearn everything we'd forgotten during the long summer. Miss Purleigh was our teacher, a slim, pretty woman who walked down from the little cottage where she lived alone up near the mesa. She drilled us relentlessly, determined that we would not disgrace her when we were finally found worthy to proceed to Miss Florence Thornton over at the Central School.

One by one we began to find our kindred spirits among the neighborhood boys. Of course Carl and I were inseparable, and early during our residence on North Campbell Street, we became a trio when we met a handsome and irresistible young lad named Don Smith. He lived in a large two-story, gabled house a mile or so away on a hill, at the west end of Boulevard, with his parents, identical twin brothers Nelson and Ferman, and a sister, Miss Beulah. Don was a good comrade and the three of us enjoyed many adventures together.

Looking for something to do one warm fall day after school, we wandered downtown, past the ladies rocking on the front porch of the Pierson Hotel, past the green plaza, past the new *Bullion* office on San Francisco Street. We ambled along El Paso Street for a while; long strings of quail hung in front of the butcher shops; the spicy scent of apples drifted out from the grocers; a piano tinkled somewhere deep inside the W.G. Walz Company. We craned out necks to see if there were any pigeons up under the cornice of the St. Charles Hotel. Jimmy Hagan's mother ran the place, and he'd introduced us to the sport of catching pigeons in the crawl space between the hotel's roof and the big cornices above. The space was just too shallow for flying, and once the birds got in there they were easy marks for small nimble boys. The Chinese restaurants paid us for them. Carl shot a rock up into the cornice-space of the St. Charles just as Mrs. Hagan appeared at the main door. In silent, mutual understanding we scampered back up the street, ducking into the cool shadows of the Myar Opera House's elegant awning.

Recovering from that little scare, we walked to the big sandhill at the end of Santa Fe Street, which was being broken down so the street could be extended north and which (according to Don) "used to be some kind of old burial ground." As we poked around in the sand and brush, we found a human skull.

"Let's take it down to Mr. Driscoll," Don suggested; "maybe he'll buy it."

Mr. Driscoll was the pharmacist in a drugstore in the Sheldon Block and the closest thing to an archaeologist we could locate on short notice. Turning the skull around carefully in his hands, he proclaimed it a lovely specimen and purchased it (and any spells attached, we hoped) for fifteen cents. Intoxicated with the thought of so much cash, we let Don persuade us to spend it on forbidden fruit: namely, cigarettes. Halfway through my first smoke, I began to feel quite strange. Soon I recognized the feeling; I retched all the way home. When we reached the house, Papa was just

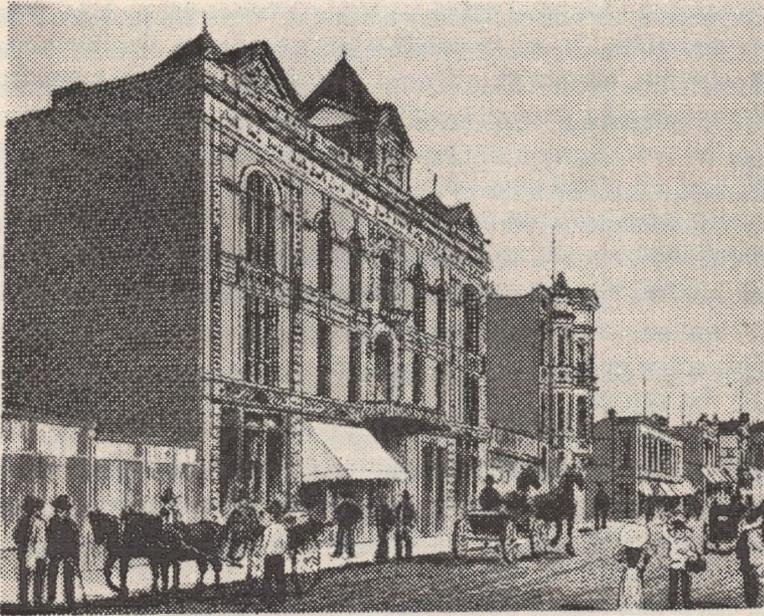
coming in. He sniffed delicately, held his nose, rolled those black French eyes skyward, and passed us by. He knew from the look of us that any sermon on the evils of tobacco for young boys would be superfluous. We had learned our lesson firsthand.

Not long after my arrival in El Paso, Carl and I discovered Rand's Grove. The El Paso version of the Old Swimmin' Hole was there, where the river formed a deeper-than-usual little bend only about one hundred yards away from the railroad tracks. On a hot day there were always several bare-skinned swimmers cooling off. It was there that Norvel Rand saved Bob Krakauer's life one time. Norvel was a handsome boy, very athletic, one of the best swimmers in town. The whole family was handsome, as a matter of fact. Major Rand was a dapper little man, a typical Southern gentleman, and his wife was a big, beautiful woman. They had two sons, Will, tall and dark, and Norvel, a blonde. Their three daughters were among the prettiest girls in El Paso; I can still see them, all decked out in their fine dresses and large leghorn hats, riding on the little mule car driven down San Antonio Street by old Mr. Miller. The car served as the only public transportation we had, and the seats were sideways so the passengers faced either side of the street. To see the Rand girls go by was like watching a beautiful painting pass.

There were about fifty boys swimming at the Grove one day when Krakauer, out in midstream, got a cramp and called for help. Norvel jumped in and pulled him out, gave him artificial respiration, and saved his life. Mr. Krakauer gave Norvel a fifty-dollar gold watch in gratitude.

One day that fall Carl and I woke to a great commotion which seemed to be coming from the empty lot across the street. Bang...thud...bang... It sounded as if someone were driving stakes into the ground. Someone was. Running to the window, we saw a big negro man and a couple of boys busily working at erecting a tent house there. It didn't take us long to hop into our clothes and meet our neighbors. Their name was Clements. John Clements, the father, was a barber and a very articulate man who later became famous throughout El Paso for his speeches on civil rights. It was my first experience with a negro family, and it was a fine one. We boys became quite friendly with Lewis, one of the sons, and the whole family became very popular and prominent citizens.

We were beginning to feel like El Pasoans. But sadness struck our family in February of 1889, when baby Leontine died. She wasn't quite a year old when Mama kissed the little cheek for the last time, the tiny box was closed, and we made the sad journey from the old Rock Chapel on Oregon Street out the long, winding trail to Concordia Cemetery.



Myar Opera House, El Paso's early center for the performing arts. Located on South El Paso Street, it opened on December 15, 1887, and was destroyed by fire on November 4, 1905. This illustration taken from Cleofas Calleros' *El Paso...Then and Now* (El Paso: American Printing Company, 1954), originated as a photo by Ward Brothers of Columbus, Ohio. The photo was then "photo-viewed" in Germany—retouched with such details as parasols for the ladies and derby hats for the gentlemen. The large building to the right of the Opera House was the St. Charles Hotel. (Courtesy Margarita Calleros-Blanco)

In the fall of 1889, we moved into a pretty little white cottage on San Antonio Street, in the city's nicest residential section of the time. When people speak of the great "sin town" that El Paso was in the 1880s, I think of that peaceful street with its neat, well-kept houses and yards; of the fine families who lived there, working hard to make a living and build a city. Of course we had the other element, too: the gamblers, the women who kept houses of ill repute down on South Utah Street, the sporting men hanging around the saloons, even a few gunmen. But those characters kept to themselves and were far outnumbered—and ultimately outlasted—by decent citizens.

San Antonio Street was a wonderful place to live. Along with Magoffin Avenue, a block to the north, and a very short street called Olive cutting between the two, it was the nucleus of a kind of gathering of families from the Old South. W. H. Austin's house, a big brick duplex,

stood on the south side of San Antonio and St. Vrain Street, where a little acacia crossed under a wooden sidewalk and ran on down to Magoffin's orchard. Olive Street slanted off from San Antonio on the north side and ended in the orchard. Right across from Austin's house was the home of Major W. J. Fewel, whose children were Chris, Edgar, and Della. Miss Della kept a buckskin horse of a pretty lemon color in a pasture just west of the house. Captain Charles Davis and his family (children Lamar, Alice, and Charlie) lived in a large strawberry-colored frame house across the street from the Fewels. Captain T. J. Bell and his family lived next door.

There were a number of vacant lots on Olive in those days, and then the big adobe wall around the Magoffins' orchard. The Magoffin homestead, the first great house in El Paso, with its rambling adobe walls, extensive gardens, and orchard, was a landmark even then. My sister Lucille and Josie Magoffin became great friends. Carl and I enjoyed many a good session of teasing as the girls prepared excitedly for this or that social event. The balls at Fort Bliss were favorites, of course.

Past the Magoffin place Homan Miles lived, then nothing but the dirt trail that in time became Cotton Street. Past that lay the bosque and Rand's place. Magoffin Avenue, running in front of the old homestead, was just about the swankiest street in town, I guess. E. V. Berrien lived there, and Zeke Newman had a big two-story house. The Krakauer home was on Magoffin. (Krakauer, Moye, and Zork was the biggest hardware store in town.) Right across the alley lived Mr. Barrett, who ran a meat market. He kept a yard full of hunting dogs and liked to go hunting for coyotes out where Loretto High School now stands.

But San Antonio was my favorite. Oh, to be able to stroll one more time down that shady, quiet road on the way back from some adventure in Rand's Grove! Across the single Texas Pacific track we'd come by Orville Wheeler's grand house and continue on past Sam Hing's show-place. Hing was a Chinese who had made a fortune in the construction of the Mexican Central Railroad, and he lived like a king in the beautiful mansion. There was only one other house on the block where Hing's house stood, a small one inhabited by little Mrs. Wishey. On the corner across from her house was the Bascomb family; he was a railroad conductor. Then came Dr. Sowers (another Socorro emigrant); then the De Fontaine place with its big bay window and fancy cupola; and next in line, the home of Mrs. Montague, who had a school for girls. Between the Montague house and ours was a big three-story affair where three families lived.

On the other side of our cottage was a vast empty lot covered with brush and cottonwood trees. It ended at St. Vrain Street, where the Austin

house stood on the southwest corner. Judge Kneeland lived across the street from us in one of the prettiest houses in the city, set among lovely trees and flowers. His daughters, Miss Eva, Miss Lucy, and Miss Kye, were beauties. His sons were Will and Ed. There was a big birthday party in their backyard once. Miss Eva had a squirrel in one of those little cages with a revolving wheel. It was the hit of the day. During the party some prankster opened the cage. What a scramble! Boys in Sunday best, girls in their daintiest party dresses: we dashed about the yard and scaled the great cottonwood trees in mad pursuit of the frightened creature. But it had tasted freedom, and we never did catch up with it.

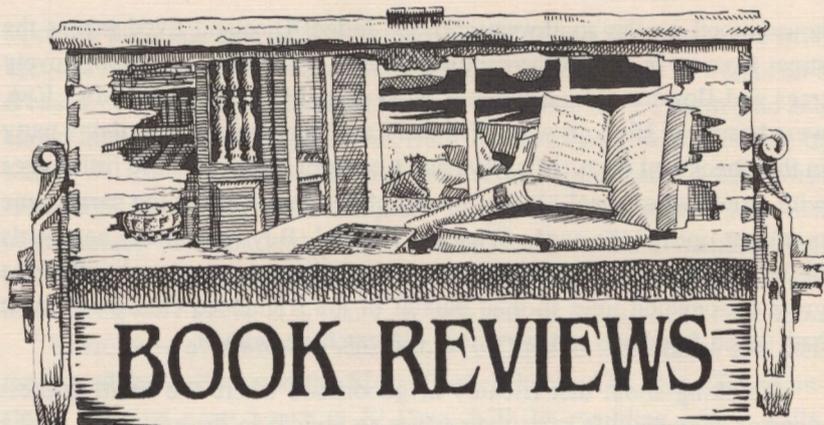
Thinking about that friendly neighborhood where the small impressions of everyday life print themselves so vividly in the mind of a young boy, I see snatches of my life then as if they were scenes in some startlingly-familiar motion picture. And I know that even in the reputedly wild west town of the late 1880s we boys and girls grew up in as homey an atmosphere as could be found anywhere in the country. ☆

THE TRAIL OF THE NAJA...continued

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VAYA CON DIOS...

Your editor regretfully announces the resignation from the *Pass-word* staff of Sheryl S. Montgomery, who has served as the journal's graphic artist since the summer of 1988. Mrs. Montgomery is moving to Midland, Texas, where her husband, Malcolm, has been transferred. The editorial board and the editor express their appreciation for her excellent work and extend best wishes to her and her family as they depart for their new home.



JORNADA DEL MUERTO: A PAGEANT OF THE DESERT by Brodie Crouch. Spokane: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1989, \$28.50

The Jornada del Muerto ("Journey of Death") was an ominous ninety-mile stretch of desert trail serving as a shortcut on the *Camino Real* between New Spain and Santa Fe. Now, under the scholarly guidance of author Brodie Crouch, the four-centuries history of the Jornada spreads out before us "in living episodes, colorful yet often painful."

About thirty miles north of present-day Las Cruces one of two routes was available to be chosen by the northbound traveler; one followed the Rio Grande, and the other continued due north. The route along the river afforded access to water and grass but was longer and more difficult to negotiate because of so many canyons and steep slopes lying west of the Caballo and Fray Cristobal mountain ranges. The more direct route over the Jornada was relatively flat and much easier to traverse but devoid of water and grass in any substantial amounts and also was a hangout for hostile Apaches. (To aid the reader, the author provides an excellent reference map at the front of his book).

The derivation of the name *Jornada del Muerto* has always been somewhat mysterious. Certainly the term was not initiated in any recent time because the earliest travelers, the Spanish, referred to this section by that name in their journals. The author discusses several possible origins of the name in some detail but was unable to reach a final conclusion: "The name has outlived the story of its origin."

In 1598 Juan de Oñate wrote in his journal about the difficulties of travel as he took his caravan across the Jornada; his is the first authentic account available. After that time, many travelers wrote about the harshness of conditions in crossing this desert waste. Notable among these were Santa Fe trader Josiah Gregg (mid-1800s) and Susan Magoffin (1846), a nineteen-year-old bride, whose diary of the journey across the Jornada was

unlikely to attract interest in other young ladies for making the trip.

Many nineteenth-century travelers, such as Zebulon M. Pike, considered the Jornada an essential segment of the Santa Fe Trail for trade between Missouri and Chihuahua. Eugene Manlove Rhodes is described as "an unofficial press agent for the Jornada." He lived much of his life in the area, and his writings are filled with stories about incidents of life in this desert section during the turn-of-the-century decades.

Attractively designed, well documented, and written in a lively, engaging style, Brodie Crouch's *Jornada del Muerto* offers valuable information and enjoyable reading to both history scholars and history buffs. It deserves a prominent place in any library of literature related to the history of the Southwest.

HENRY D. GARRETT, M. D.

El Paso



IN SEARCH OF COLUMBUS: The Sources of the First Voyage
by David Henige. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press,
1991, \$24.95

In this new interpretation of *Columbiana*, David Henige not only presents an erudite study of the documentary sources for the Discovery, but also effectively collates the divergent views of scholars past and present regarding the Admiral of the Ocean Sea's first landfall. Chief among the sources studied is the *diario*, or journal, purportedly transcribed by Fray Bartolomé de las Casas in the sixteenth century from a copy of Columbus's ship's log. The other major sources which Dr. Henige (who is African Studies Bibliographer at the University of Wisconsin) subjects to his scholarly scrutiny are Las Casas' *Historia de las Indias* and Ferdinand Columbus's biography of his famous father, first published in an Italian translation from the Spanish in 1571.

Dr. Henige's textual analysis of the *diario* along with his thorough examination of the debates that have swirled about it since its discovery in 1791 leads to his conclusion that traditional acceptance of Watlings Island (San Salvador) in the Bahamas as the site of Columbus's first landing in the New World must be questioned. He shows why historians and scholars have argued for some dozen different locations. Interestingly, he espouses no one of them, leaving the reader to decide.

In Search of Columbus is an almost flawless compendium of scholarly detail—perhaps too much so to hold the interest of the reader who is content with knowing simply that "in fourteen hundred ninety-two Columbus sailed the ocean blue." But for serious students of the Age of Discovery and the man who inaugurated it, this book is a valuable and important

addition to the studies in that particular field of history.

ROBERT L. TAPPAN, Ph. D.

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MARY DONOHO: New First Lady of the Santa Fe Trail by Marian Meyer. Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, \$19.95/\$9.95

Mary Donoho (1807-1880) came over the Santa Fe Trail from Missouri in 1833, which makes her the earliest known Anglo female on the trail. Previously that distinction was accorded Susan Shelby Magoffin, who came to Santa Fe in 1846, some thirteen years later.

It is now clear that some women from Mexico had been on the Santa Fe Trail from west to east even earlier than Donoho's east-to-west caravan and that other Anglo women had also crossed the plains to Santa Fe prior to Magoffin. Marian Meyer's research thus adds to the information about the Santa Fe Trail, which became a National Historic Trail in 1987, and to the dramatic events of the western frontier.

Mary Donoho and her husband, William, operated a small hotel in Santa Fe, presumably on the site of the present-day La Fonda. A daughter less than a year old had come over the Trail with them, and their second daughter, Harriet, born in 1835, was the earliest known white child born in Santa Fe. The Donohos left Santa Fe following the violent uprising against Governor Albino Perez in August, 1837.

When the Donoho family went back to Missouri, they took with them two Anglo women who had been captured by Comanches and eventually ransomed by William Donoho, who in his role as a trader was also responsible for rescuing another white woman the Indians were using as a slave. The accounts given of Indian brutality against the whites are horrific. To today's reader, it seems sadly ironic that shortly after these rescues the Donohos moved to Clarksville, Texas, taking with them black slaves they had inherited in Missouri.

William Donoho died in 1845, leaving Mary a widow with five children aged twelve years to fifteen months. Mary lived another thirty-five years and became wealthy by managing her hotel in Clarksville and other properties in the Red River Valley.

Meyer gives credit to family descendants and to other researchers and librarians in compiling her research, and the book reminds us again of the importance of history, memories, and a sense of the lives lived before us.

LOIS MARCHINO

Department of English, The University of Texas at El Paso

FOR A COWBOY HAS TO SING by Jim Bob Tinsley. Orlando: University of Central Florida Press, 1991, \$39.95

Although he certainly did not plan it that way, Marty Robbins' musical saga "El Paso," written in 1957, proved to be the final revel of a glorious heyday of musical adoration for the man on horseback. That era extended from "Cheyenne," written in 1905, until "El Paso"—with such as "Ragtime Cow Boy Joe" and "Riders in the Sky" included between. These favorites are presented with their lyrics and musical scores and, best of all, with the stories of how they came to be. Curious facts abound. For example, the man who wrote "Mexicali Rose" ran for vice president of the United States. A high-school student wrote the words for "When It's Springtime in the Rockies." The two composers who wrote "The Hills of Old Wyoming" had never been to Wyoming.

Author Tinsley was a working cowboy in Arizona and Florida. His singing career began in 1935 on WWNC radio in Asheville, North Carolina. He has performed with such notables as Gene Autry, he has appeared on Grand Ole Opry, and he was the second inductee into the National Cowboy Song and Poetry Hall of Fame. In 1943 he sang a duet with Sir Winston Churchill during the Casablanca Conference in North Africa; the song was "You Are My Sunshine."

This handsome volume—its Foreword written by Roy Rogers and Dale Evans—reproduces the original sheet music for all sixty songs and contains color facsimiles of the sheet music covers, as well as photographs of the composers and an index to help one get around in the book.

FRANCIS L. FUGATE

Member, Western Writers of America



EATING UP THE SANTA FE TRAIL, by Sam'l P. Arnold. Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1990, \$12.95

Sam Arnold has operated a restaurant in a replica of Bent's Fort in Colorado, has hosted a public television program on traditional regional cooking ("Frying Pans West"), and has written about this specialty for books and periodicals. His latest book offers an overview of his tastes in history and food.

Arnold doesn't list just the ingredients and directions for his recipes; he tells us how the chile pepper gets hot, cautions of the right gunpowder to put in Injun Whiskey (the modern type can kill you), and quotes Susan McGoffin on her first encounter with Mexican cooking.

His chapters center on topics suggested by the development of the Santa Fe Trail, a focus of the westward movement from 1821 to 1870.

Thus we find recipes brought by fur traders, the military, Indians, Spaniards, Mexicans, and other groups whose influence was felt in this area.

Arnold offers many surprises along the way. For example, fry bread, considered part of the Plains Indian heritage, is among fried foods that were unknown to the Indians until the white man introduced metal kettles. "It's one 'white-eyes' food that has become part of Indian life," he notes.

At the end, the author cautions: "remember, recipes are like roadmaps—how you travel and where you end up depends on you."

NANCY HAMILTON

Immediate Past President, Western Writers of America



ABRAHAM CHAVEZ: EL PASO'S MAESTRO by Neal Weaver.
El Paso: The Musical Friends of the Maestro, 1992, \$50/\$15

In the thinking of many El Paso citizens, Abraham Chavez has attained the standing of a cult personality. I remember being told as a student at the old Morehead grade school and at El Paso High School that I, too, could make something of myself if I only followed the example of Abe Chavez. To many of his teachers, Abe was a "local boy who had made good." My brother Dan, who was a year ahead of Abe in school, remembers Abe as a slim youngster who could "tear hell out of a violin" especially when he played "The Hot Canary" at school assemblies. I grew up thinking that Abraham Chavez represented both "Music" and "Success."

This volume on Abraham's life, therefore, attracted my attention. Written by a close associate of his in commemoration of the Maestro's retirement from his longtime position as the Conductor of the El Paso Symphony Orchestra, it is definitely a "puff piece" chronicling all of the Maestro's successes and attainments to the exclusion of anything that might be considered negative. It thus offers only a peek at half a life. No musician can extract from music and a company of musicians the passion and grandeur that I have heard Abe bring forth on numerous occasions, without some sorrow, some difficulty in his life, which he overcame.

This lack may be attributed to the amount of space devoted to the actual telling of Abe's story. Of the 128 pages in the book, nine are devoted to introductory material; four to an index (a plus); thirty-two to a "Program Collection"; three to a Chronology; fifteen to other program samples; nine to full-page photos; and some thirteen pages to other photos. Together with one blank page, these leave only about sixty pages for text. What we are left with is an expanded souvenir. It is hoped that in the future we will have a definitive biography of this outstanding El Paso musician.

DAMON GARBERN

Performer, PRO MUSICA El Paso

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