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Brazito Schoolhouse – Musket balls and canister shot, possibly dating back to the Mexican-American War have been found east of this building. Photo by Enrique Vasquez

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Brazito Remembered One Hundred Fifty Years Ago: Another Look

By Enrique Tamez Vasquez

The battles of the Mexican-American War have long been studied and analyzed by students and historians alike. There is, however, one battle known as the Battle of Brazito or Temascalitos, that is sometimes overlooked. No monuments or markers designate the exact site of the battle. No grave markers indicate the location of the Mexican dead. The Brazito battlefield has eluded historians and treasure hunters for years. No historian has ever been able to present a balanced account as to what really happened at Brazito on December 25, 1846.

Over one hundred fifty years ago the American armies swarmed over the Southwest to conquer Mexico and seize the southwest territories of Texas, New Mexico, Arizòna and California. In the case of *El Paso del Norte,* present-day *Ciudad Juárez,* and the surrounding communities, the American invasion came swiftly, like a strong northern wind that comes without warning and envelops everything in its path. Although the people of Chihuahua knew of the coming invasion by United States troops, they were not prepared to meet the bold and determined Missouri Volunteers on the fields and lowlands at a place called Brazito, which lies somewhere near present day Mesquite, New Mexico, near the old Brazito Schoolhouse.

During the summer of 1846 rumors of an American invasion were quite common. The communities of El Paso, Ysleta, San Lorenzo, Senecú, San Elizario and Socorro began to mobilize national guard forces in the summer and fall of 1846.[1] It was reasoned that if the Americans invaded Chihuahua, they would be confronted north of *El Paso del Norte* on the road to Santa Fé.

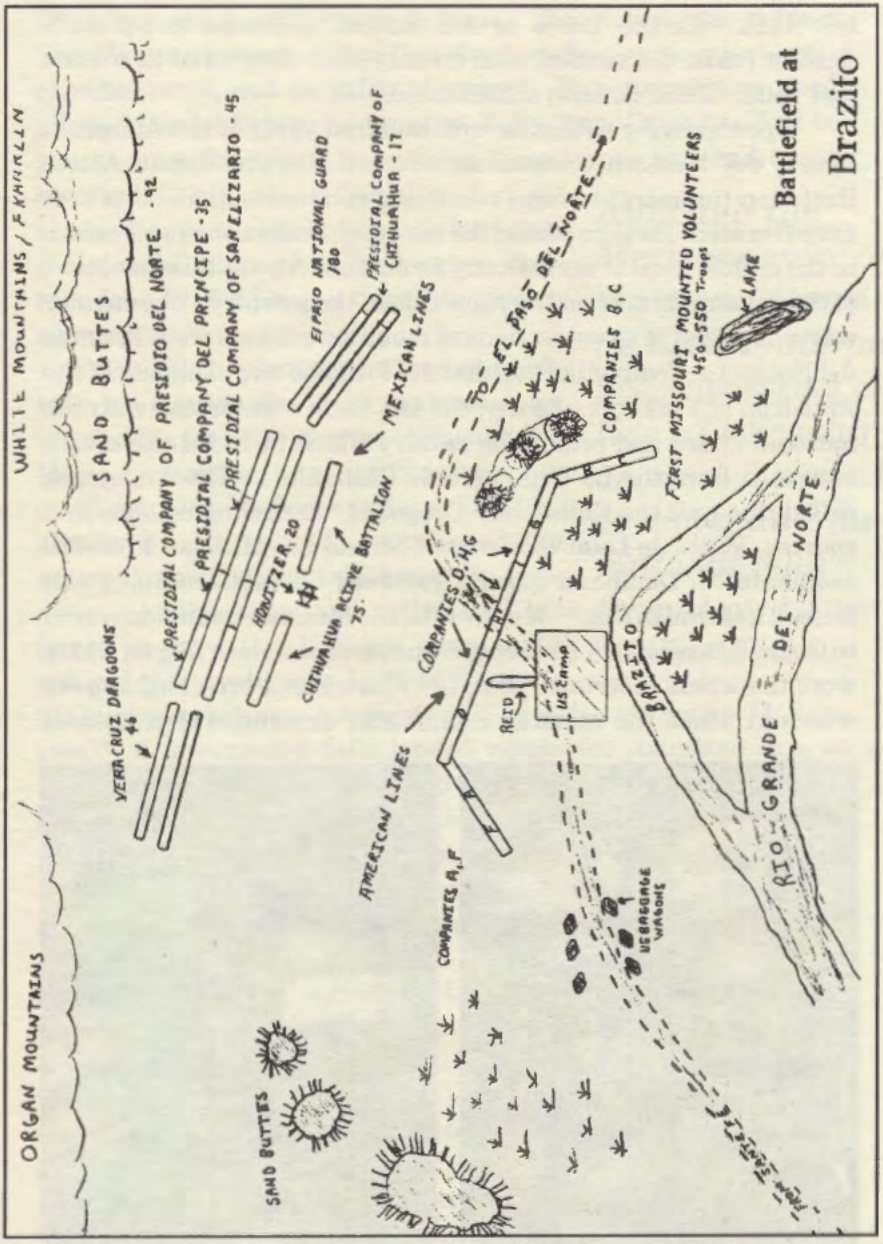
The Mexican-American War began in the summer of 1846, and by August, Santa Fé was occupied by American forces.[2] After the American occupation of Santa Fé was complete, U.S. forces began to move on *El Paso del Norte,* via the Chihuahua-Santa Fé Trail in the late fall of 1846.

On Christmas day in 1846 the 1st Regiment of Missouri Mounted Volunteers led by Colonel Alexander W. Doniphan confronted a Mexican force north of what is now El Paso in the vicinity the old Brazito schoolhouse located about two and one half miles north of present-day Mesquite, New Mexico.[3] The battle took place on a sloped plain, surrounded by sand buttes, mesquite, chaparral, and sage brush.[4] This battle is significant because it opened northern Mexico to invasion during the Mexican War,[5] and it resupplied Doniphan's forces with captured weapons, provisions, and munitions.[6] The Mexicans had orders to prevent the capture of *El Paso del Norte* for the Mexicans knew that Doniphan planned to use El Paso as a winter quarters and a resupply point.[7]

On the 25th of December 1846, Doniphan set up camp on the banks of the Rio Grande at Brazito which was called Temascalitos by the Mexicans.[8] The men of the Missouri Regiment began to spread out to look for wood, lost mounts, and forage. Sometime after 2:00 pm, someone noticed that a large cloud of dust could be seen in the direction of *El Paso del Norte.* Not more than fifteen minutes had passed when a messenger from the advance guard arrived and reported that a large Mexican force was approaching.[9]

Squadron Commander Antonio Ponce de Leon headed the Mexican force comprised of one brass howitzer, eighty infantry soldiers from the Active Battalion of Chihuahua, twenty to twenty-one artillery men, forty-six dragoons from the Cavalry Squadron of Veracruz, seventeen soldiers from the Presidial Company of Chihuahua, forty five soldiers from the Presidial Company of San Elizario, ninety-two soldiers from Presidio del Norte, thirty-five soldiers from the La Compañia Presidial del Principe and one hundred eighty National Guard from the *El Paso del Norte* area. Altogether, Ponce de Leon had approximately five hundred men.[10] Of these, at least four hundred were mounted according to *El Faro,* the official newspaper of the state of Chihuahua.[11]

The Mexican column traveled from *El Paso del Norte* to Temascalitos. The route taken would have put them east of the present-day Highway 478 and just south of the old Brazito schoolhouse. A large dunal formation may have existed on the Mexican

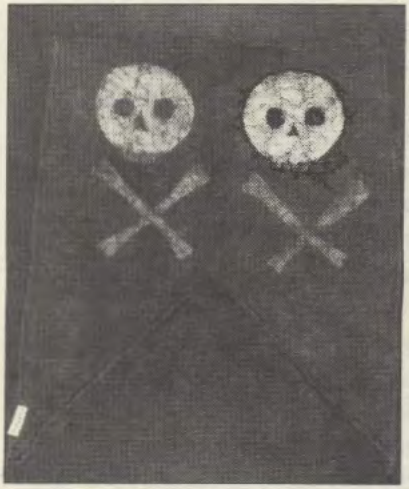


Battlefield at Brazito

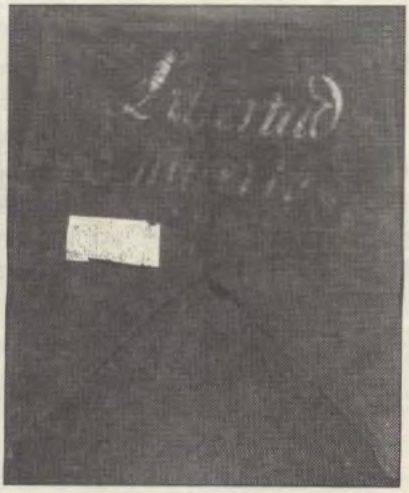
Drawn by the author, Enrique T. Vasquez.
Not drawn to scale.

left flank. In the 1930s or 40s human skeletons mixed with musket parts, old saddles, and swords were discovered in a dune just south of the Brazito schoolhouse.[12]

Upon arriving within several hundred yards of the American forces, the Mexican commander ordered the Chihuahua Active Battalion (infantry) to form two firing sections comprised of seventy-five men. He then placed the howitzer, manned by twelve men, in the middle front of the infantry formation. Also at this time, part of the cavalry formed on the right side of the infantry. The cavalry was comprised of three sections of mounted soldiers from Presidio del Norte, La Compañia Presidial del Principe and elements of the squadron of Veracruz. Lastly, the left flank was formed with the national guard and remaining cavalry which included the seventeen men from the La Compañia de Chihuahua. The Americans called this unit the Chihuahua Dragoons. According to American sources, Ponce de Leon was located behind the Mexican Presidial companies.[13] Doniphan quickly gathered his scattered men and formed a skirmish line.[14] Meanwhile, the Mexican commander sent to Colonel Doniphan a messenger who carried a black flag on which were the words *Libertad o Muerte.* There was a brief exchange of words in which the Mexican commander demanded that Colonel



Mexican War Pennant: side one: Twin skull and cross bones; paint on cotton by, c. 1846. Obj 467. Courtesy Missouri Historical Society Museum Collections, St. Louis.



Mexican War Pennant: side two: "Libertad o muerte?"; paint on cotton by, c. 1846. Obj 468. Courtesy Missouri Historical Society Museum Collections, St. Louis.

Doniphan speak with Ponce de Leon. The Missourians refused. The Mexican cursed, stated that they would give no quarter and expected none, and he galloped away.[15] This exchange of words allowed Doniphan time to organize.[16] By then, Doniphan had begun to form five separate sections, three in one line and two in the rear.[17] Altogether Doniphan had assembled approximately five hundred men out of eight companies. In the rear, Captain John W. Reid began to gather mounted troopers.[18]

Although the Mexicans were on the move, Ponce de Leon could not keep his forces on line. The cavalry on his left ceased to move, and the national guard formation began to slow down.

Since the messenger had not succeeded in his mission, the Mexican commander ordered his forces to charge. Although the Mexicans were on the move, Ponce de Leon could not keep his forces on line. The cavalry on his left ceased to move, and the national guard formation began to slow down. At this time, and without all his forces on line, the Mexican commander ordered three volleys to be fired from the Chihuahuan infantry howitzer, and presidial company El Principe.[19] A few musket balls landed within the American line, so Doniphan ordered his men to lie in the prone position and hold their fire until the Mexicans were within "sixty paces."[20] Also, at this time the Veracruz Dragoons broke from the Mexican formation and attacked the American left. Upon seeing this, Doniphan quickly formed an elbow on the American left.[21] The Veracruz Dragoons penetrated the thick thorn bushes and the sand hills. Once in the clear, the American left elbow fired at the Veracruz Dragoons which then tried to attack the American wagon trains located at the left rear.[22] Several soldiers and civilian wagoneers rushed to the defense of the wagons, and the Veracruz Dragoons were met with another deadly volley. Captain Reid with sixteen to twenty mounted troopers attacked the remaining Veracruz Dragoons.[23]

As the Veracruz Dragoons tried to outflank the Americans, Ponce De Leon went forward of his troops and tried to keep them in line, but he did not succeed.[24] With Mexican forces closing quickly and the Americans taking casualties, the order was given for the Americans to fire.[25] At this time, when several elements of the Mexican cavalry began to break off, Ponce De Leon was hit. Captain Rafael Carabajal then took command. Becoming aware that some

of his forces had begun to retreat, Ponce De Leon left the battlefield to try to remuster his men.[26] With Mexican forces leaving the battlefield, Lieutenant Luis Valdez, Sub-Lieutenants Jesus Portillo, Jose Maria Escobar, Luis Ponce, Jose Maria Zubia, and Sergeant Jesus Horcusitas with sixty men continued to fire and close on the Americans. However, by this time, the El Paso National Guard completely broke formation, and ran in retreat.[27]

Years after the battle, Francisco Polanco, who was a fifteen-year-old from Chihuahua in 1846, told this story. Polanco was one of the National Guard who supported the left and center. He was conscripted into the National Guard near Chihuahua City. He wrote "It was all the same all the way up the trail...the Mexican army with its *pobre voluntarios* (poor volunteers), without uniforms, just old clothes from the fields, marched to the rear." Francisco Polanco said he tried to fight well although he was full of fear.[28] Remaining Mexican cavalry elements tried to flank the American right but were slowed by the thick vegetation.[29]

During the last minutes of battle, American soldiers of H company under Sergeant Calaway seized the Mexican howitzer. Lieutenant C. H. Kribben and a file of soldiers manned the captured gun.[30] It is believed that a Mexican woman was killed during the capture of the Mexican howitzer, however, her body was said to have been carried off. Another woman may have been killed while riding away after the battle. It appears possible that Mexican women followed Ponce de Leon's column.[31] In the minutes following the initial Mexican retreat, a small number of Mexican soldiers tried to regroup behind a small hill, perhaps a dune, located on the Mexican left.[32] Lastly, Captain Reid and Captain David Waldo, accompanied by sixty men, chased the remaining Mexicans

San Elizario – Location of the Presidio of San Elizario. All that remains is this granite marker located several yards from the Mission of San Elizario. Photo by Enrique Vasquez

off the field.[33] Ponce de Leon's proud army left behind dead bodies and abandoned property. Doniphan's soldiers carried off serapes, beads, little crosses, wine jugs, weapons, trinkets, and a Mexican dragoon cap.[34]

The Battle of Brazito lasted only thirty or forty minutes, and at the end, the Mexicans scattered in different directions trying to make their way to Chihuahua. Some of the wounded were taken to the Presidio of San Elizario and treated there.[35] Other Mexican officials fled to the town of Carrizal.[36] Some of the wounded remained in *El Paso del Norte* and its surrounding communities.[37] Still others were not so lucky, several Mexicans were killed and buried on the battlefield.[38] Mexican dead were also left at the Mexican base camp near the dam at the site of the present-day La Hacienda Cafe, formerly Hart's Mill in El Paso, Texas. The dead may also have included at least two women.

Other Mexican soldiers, who fled into the mountains, might have been killed by Apaches. A group of Apaches witnessed the Battle of Brazito according to *El Faro*[39] and because they approved of the American war on the Mexicans, they may have taken part in the killing. One chief was quoted as saying: "You have taken New Mexico and soon will take California; go, then, take Chihuahua, Durango, Sonora. We will help you . . . the Mexicans are rascals; we hate and kill them all."[40] The exact numbers of the casualties for both sides vary.[41]

On the 27th of December, a civilian delegation lead by the Spaniard Francisco Velarde surrendered.[42] The Americans entered *El Paso del Norte* without encountering further resistance. Once in the town, the Americans detained the priest Ramon Ortiz and Prefecto Romulo Barela for possible espionage.[43]

There were several reasons for the failure of the Mexicans at Brazito. Technology, unity of command, different commanders, lack of mass, and improper reconnaissance are some of those reasons.

In reference to technology, the Mexicans were armed with smooth bore muskets which could not shoot as far as the American Mississippi rifles. The Mexican dragoons were armed with swords, lances and perhaps muzzle-loading, smooth bore pistols and carbines which were sawed off Brown Bess muskets.[44] Also, the Mexican Veracruz Dragoons were outgunned because the American mounted troopers were armed with six-shooters and rifled

carbines.[45] Furthermore, according to the muster rosters of July 1846, about half of the El Paso National Guard was armed with bows and arrows.[46] Superior fire power helped the Americans win.

During this battle, the Mexicans had poor unity of command. The Veracruz Dragoons took off on their own without orders from the Mexican commanders, and the National Guard unit broke away from the main attack. Elements of the mounted presidial soldiers deviated from the main attack and tried to flank the Americans. Furthermore, Ponce de Leon's orders were not clearly understood, and as a result he could not keep his units aligned. The Mexican units involved did not exercise unity of effort.[47]

In addition to a lack of unity of command, the Mexican force was under different commanders throughout the brief campaign. The original commander of the Mexican forces was Colonel Gabino Cuilty, who fell gravely ill before the Battle of Brazito.[48] This in turnleft Lieutenant Colonel Luis Vidal as the commander of all the forces at *El Paso del Norte.* Luis Vidal also fell ill and the Mexican forces were commanded for a time by Colonel Agapito Alvo of the El Paso National Guard.[49] However, the tactical command fell on Squadron Commander Antonio Ponce De Leon, who was in turn wounded during the Battle of Brazito. After Ponce de Leon left the field wounded, Captain Rafael Carabajal took command of the remaining Mexican forces.[50]

In addition to a lack of unity of command, the Mexican force was under different commanders throughout the brief campaign.

The Mexicans did not mass all their combat power for the battle. For instance, they brought only one field piece to the battle.[51] After the battle, another Mexican cannon was recovered at the Presidio of San Elizario,[52] and, according to one Mexican account, the Mexicans had at least four cannon which they had brought from the city of Chihuahua under the command of Colonel Cuilty.[53] Moreover, the Mexicans did not commit all their forces in the battle. They left some men outside *El Paso del Norte* near present day La Hacienda Cafe.[54] Total Mexican forces numbered about twelve hundred prior to the battle.[55] That the cavalry was divided when it should have been massed was another error.[56]

In addition, the Mexicans failed at Brazito because they did not perform an accurate reconnaissance. They believed that the Americans numbered between two hundred fifty and three hun-

dred fifty men.[57] A Mexican reconnaissance element made up of twenty-four civilians and six soldiers observed the American forces as they arrived at Doña Ana. José Maria Garcia, a civilian who was part of the reconnaissance party, reported that the Americans numbered about two hundred fifty. Garcia also reported that perhaps six men belonging to the Mexican party had been killed and another six had been captured. Another Mexican citizen by the name of José Calixto Porras, who was traveling through *Doña Ana,* reported the American presence as numbering about three hundred.[58] The Mexicans had orders not to attack a force greater than four hundred men.[59] According to one American commander, about five hundred fifty men were engaged and stragglers were still arriving during the battle.[60]

The Mexican army had several opportunities to defeat the American army at Brazito, but they failed to take advantage. They could have defended their fortified camp located near the dam adjacent to present day La Hacienda Cafe. In addition, the Mexicans could have massed their cavalry and attacked the American wagons. In contrast, the Americans committed some mistakes: camping in with the river to their backs and in leaving the supply wagons unguarded. However, the Americans remained calm under fire. So, it seems that unity of command, technological advantage, tactics, discipline, mass of fire power, and morale helped the Americans win on that fateful Christmas day in 1846.

The Mexican military forces which participated in the Battle of *Brazito* included the following units:

UNIT	TROOPS
Active Battalion from Chihuahua	80
Artillery	21
Squadron of Veracruz	46
Company of Chihuahua	17
Company of San Elizario	45
Company of Presidio del Norte"	92
Company of "del Principe"	35
National Guard from El Paso area	180[61]

By February 28th, the Mexican military forces of Chihuahua were defeated by Alexander Doniphan and his regiment at the Battle of Sacramento. After the Battle of Sacramento, Americans recovered the black flag with cross bones, which was displayed at Brazito.[62] On March 2nd, 1847 American military forces occupied Chihuahua City. During the latter part of 1847 Ameri-

Vado Hill, Vado, New Mexico – It was believed for many years that the Battle of Brazito had been fought near Vado Hill. However, recent research by the United States Park Service seems to indicate otherwise. Photo by Enrique Vasquez

can soldiers occupying New Mexico collected equipment that belonged to the presidios of Chihuahua. American troops also gathered crops and seeds.[63]

On February 2nd 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, officially ending the Mexican American War. Even so, hostilities in Chihuahua continued until the summer of 1848. An American general, Sterling Price, invaded Chihuahua during the first part of that year. General Price stopped his hostile activity only after being ordered to do so by his superior.[64] During Sterling Price's invasion, the town of Rosales was taken after a short battle in March of 1848.

As a result of Doniphan's actions at Brazito and the conclusion of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the *El Paso del Norte* area lost several of its communities. San Elizario, Socorro and Ysleta became part of the United States in 1849. On the 7th of January 1849, the *Jefe Politico* of Canton Bravos reported that American soldiers had occupied the communities of San Elizario, Soccorro and Ysleta.[65] Also, the colony of Doña Ana was annexed by the United States. The inhabitants of Doña Ana would later form the town of present day Mesilla. This left the Mexican border region southeast of El Paso totally unpopulated on the southern bank of the Rio Grande. As a result of the Mexican War, the towns of Guadalupe, San Ignacio, present day Praxedis G. Guerrero, the military colony of *El Paso del Norte,* also called San Joaquin, and present day Barreales were formed.[66]

In conclusion, the Battle of Brazito may never be fully recognized for several reasons. Among them, the actual battle site has never been precisely identified because no large scale test digs of the Vado and Mesquite areas have been performed. In addition, Mexican sources have been overlooked, mistranslated, or lost. Further, according to an account that appeared in *El Faro* on 16 January, 1847, Doniphan seized the Mexican military records belonging to the Presidial Company of San Elizario. Unfortunately, the Chihuahuan military records burned during a fire in 1940.

Perhaps further research into the municipal records of Carrizal, Chihuahua City, Presidio del Norte, present day Ojinaga might yield further information regarding the battle. A close inspection of San Elizario's church records might also yield some information. Perhaps writings or correspondence left by Father Ramon Ortiz could also help locate the mass grave of the Mexican dead at Brazito. The Chihuahuan land acquisition records of the Spanish and Mexican period have not been fully studied in reference to Brazito. Furthermore, neither the 1834 map of Chihuahua nor the maps of the early Mexican period have been fully studied.

A Mexican researcher, Martin Gonzalez, and a local treasure hunter whose last name is Nelson related that no detailed research of this geographical area has ever been conducted using the Spanish archives in Sevilla. In addition, no historians have tried to locate the descendants of those who participated in the battle. Those people might have some informative and interesting stories to tell. Finally, local treasure hunters have long said that a detailed Spanish map with triangulated polar coordinates of this area exists, but it is in the hands of a Missouri treasure hunter.

Editor's note: Enrique Vasquez indicates that further research is being done on this battlefield as this is published.

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El Paso's Lost Colony

By Albert Quillin

I am sure that most Texas historians, and that includes El Pasoans, would be greatly surprised if they were to learn that a colony of Missourians settled a few miles upriver from downtown El Paso at the same time when Stephen F. Austin began settling his colony in southeastern Texas. Nevertheless, it is true. There are several reasons for this well kept secret.

First, I doubt that one could find a mention of their departure in any contemporary Missouri newspaper. Those newspapers did not print stories about people leaving Missouri for other areas because they were trying to entice more settlers to settle in Missouri.

Secondly, the leader of the colony had his name Mexicanized in both speech and print. His name was John Heath and for Spanish speaking persons, spelling John Heath is a problem. Their John is Juan, and the closest way approximation to the sound of Heath is achieved with the spelling Gid. So Juan Gid was born, and thus he remains today in most records.

The third reason that the colony is lost to history is that most of its members left the area within a year or two. At least one did not leave–he was killed by Apache Indians. And that partially explains why the colony was wanted here in the first place–to kill Apaches or be killed in that effort.

To understand what happened to the Heath colony one must know about the situation of the national government of Mexico, and have several all-important dates in mind.

In 1810 Mexico began its revolution against Spain. Eleven years later, in September, 1821, Agustín de Iturbide led victorious Mexican troops into Mexico City and became head of the Mexican government. He was not satisfied with being a mere president or chief of state, and on May 19, 1822 he was proclaimed Agustín I, Emperor of Mexico. This did not sit well with other

Mexican leaders, and in December 1822, Antonio López de Santa Anna led a revolt against the Emperor. On March 19, 1823 Iturbide abdicated and went to Italy. He did not stay there. On May 11, 1824 he landed at Soto la Marina, Tamaulipas, which is about one hundred forty miles south of Brownsville, Texas. He was soon captured and on July 14, 1824 he was shot at Padilla, Tamaulipas.

On January 4, 1823, more than two months before his abdication, Iturbide signed a permit for Stephen F. Austin to bring a colony of Americans to settle in Texas. The new regime in Mexico did not interfere with Austin's permit, but Heath's colony received different treatment.

John G. Heath was a Missouri lawyer, doctor, surveyor, merchant, and salt manufacturer. He was probably a native of New York state, although a granddaughter said many years later he was a Pennsylvania German. Born about 1775, he had moved to Spanish Louisiana, now Missouri, by 1800. In St. Charles County, Missouri on July 5, 1814 he married Hester McDowell, who was at times also shown in records as Hetty Esther, or Easter Heath. They were the parents of five children: Robert John, Elizabeth, Harriet, Joseph M., and Margaret, who was born after their return to Missouri.

John G. Heath had three known brothers, Robert Adams Heath, Moses Heath, and Thomas Jefferson Heath.

On May 12, 1822 Governor Alexander McNair of the new state of Missouri issued a passport to Dr. John G. Heath for the purpose of visiting Mexico. Where he visited in Mexico is not known, but his passport was copied in Spanish at El Paso del Norte on December 22, 1822. He may have visited Mexico City as later developments indicate he was a friend of the personal physician of Emperor Iturbide.

Many years later, on January 9, 1893, the heirs of John G. Heath filed suit in the Court of Private Claims in Santa Fé, New Mexico, to regain title to his land grant. The suit is styled "J.B. Cessna, et al, versus the United States of America, et al" and the petition states:

> On or about December 7, 1822, John Heath, alias Juan Gid, addressed a petition to the Emperor of Mexico.... requesting a grant to the lands and properties hereinafter mentioned and described.
>
> .... on the third day of April 1823 said John Heath... applied to the Ayuntamiento of El Paso [similar to our

county commissioners' court] in the present state of Chihuahua in Mexico to know what had been done with the petition which he had forwarded to the said Emperor through the former ayuntamiento of the said town; whereupon he was informed that no reply had been received from the same.

On the seventh day of April, 1823 John Heath renewed his petition for the same land, proposing to bring in thirty families of Catholic Christians, among them mechanics, blacksmiths, armorers, silver-smiths, carpenters, tailors, shoemakers, surgeons and doctors, and to establish a hospital with the accompanying drug store.... He also proposed to establish a wholesale warehouse, cultivate the land, and grow livestock.

. . . . on the said seventh day of April, 1823 an order was made in the ayuntamiento at the town hall of El Paso aforementioned reciting that the said petition had been presented and that the same was granted by that body.

. . . . afterwards, on the seventeenth day of April, AD 1823, the commission appointed by the decrees of said Ayuntamiento, consisting of four individuals, for the purpose of executing the papers in the case, having accepted the charge, proceeded to the place, where, in accordance with instructions, taking the head of the Bracito *acequia* for the central point of the estate, to be given in possession to the said Juan Gid, the said Gid in sign of possession, with an axe cut the bark of two cottonwood trees, and where the wood of the trees was exposed wrote thereon 'Hazda de Dn. Juan Gid,' and the year on both trees. The commission being then present as well as the said Juan Gid, they appointed two surveyors, who promised to perform with fidelity the duties of their appointment. They were furnished with and received an iron chain in good condition, which being measured contained eleven varas of the geometric feet.... varas of thirty six inches, not thirty three inches....as required by the colonization law; that immediately thereafter the first survey was commenced about one o'clock in the afternoon, toward the north, having ascertained the point of commencement with perfect reliability, the same having been determined by an Anglo-American mathematician William Box who took the courses with a compass, concluding the measurement at four o'clock on the same evening, upon a hill, it being in line a land mark, a cross, was placed, at the foot of which Juan Gid buried a stone with his name and the date written there-

> on and which stone was acknowledged by him to be his legal boundary, and to be the full measurement of two and a half leagues of five thousand varas from the center; turning to the east.

Today, the head of the Brazito *acequia* would be about five miles south-southeast of Las Cruces, New Mexico; the northward measurement they made ended about three miles northeast of Las Cruces. The surveyors turned eastward for two and one-half leagues, thence southward for five leagues, and thence westward for five leagues, thence northward for five leagues, and thence eastward for two and one-half leagues. This square tract of land is now entirely within the state of New Mexico. Each side measured 14.2 miles. The southeast corner of the tract, which is the point nearest to present El Paso, Texas, was described in the original Spanish document as being *"en frente del último de la sierra del Passo que le Nombran puerto de Alamitos"* [in front of the last hill of the El Paso Mountains that is called Pass of the Poplars]. El Paso Mountains are today called the Franklin Mountains and the city of El Paso surrounds all but the very northern part of these mountains. Poplar Pass is across the state line in New Mexico.

The center of the grant, the head of the Brazito *acequia* or canal, lies about five miles southeast of Las Cruces at a place long known to conquistadores, Indians, merchants and other travelers as the *Paraje de Brazitos* [campground of the arms of the river]. It was in a bend of the Rio Grande where wood and water were available. For some years prior to Heath's attempt, other people had tried to settle there but the Apaches had always driven them out. This area was in the route the Indians used in their annual trips southward to conduct raids into populated Mexican areas for the purpose of harvesting Mexican livestock and children. For centuries the Spaniards had closely controlled the ownership and usage of firearms by the populace and this had made the rural areas almost defenseless against the annual raids of the Comanche and Apache tribes. It is believed that the principal reason the El Paso del Norte leaders desired a colony of Americans in the Brazito area was that they would protect the town and its environs from these raids.

After the governing body of the El Paso del Norte district made its grant to Heath, the Governor of New Mexico in Santa Fe was advised of the action by a letter dated April 26, 1823. For some reason, the governor and his staff were averse to making the grant

to North Americans, and on June 19, 1823 they nullified the action of the *El Paso del Norte Ayunamiento,* and ordered that Heath be so notified. By this time, however, Heath was en route to Missouri to settle his affairs there, recruit settlers, and obtain the necessary supplies. It was said that a messenger had been sent to Missouri to advise Heath, but that the colonists had left Missouri before the messenger arrived.

Sometime after May 1, 1824, John Heath completed his preparations to leave Missouri. At Old Franklin, Howard County, Missouri he loaded approximately six flat boats with agricultural equipment, a printing press, assorted supplies of many kinds, household equipment, and some thirty families of about one hundred fifty people. They pushed out into the current of the Missouri river and floated downstream. Stops were made in Gasconade County and at the mouth of Femosage Creek in St. Charles County, Missouri.

On June 19, 1894 James Bryan of Nevada, Vernon county, Missouri made a deposition in the *Cessna vs. United States* case. His comments, in an edited form, were:

> My name is James Bryan, my age is eighty-eight, and I was born July 29, 1806, son of Jonathan Bryan. From 1822 to 1825 I lived in St. Charles County, Missouri about twenty five miles west of St Charles and five or six miles from the Missouri river.
>
> I knew John G. Heath very well. He was a great friend of my father's. Heath was very prominent, influential, and wealthy. He was a member of the first constitutional convention of Missouri in 1820, and was often talked of as a candidate for governor but he would not take the position. In 1824 Heath organized a company at Old Franklin to go with him to Mexico and settle on land granted to him by that government. They came down the river in six or eight boats and stopped at the mouth of Femosage Creek where they stayed a day or two to take on provisions. Heath, his wife, and children stopped one night at my father's.
>
> There was a large company with him, one hundred and fifty, at least, most of them from Old Franklin which was one hundred and fifty miles from where I lived. One from there was a man by the name of _____ Batties [Sylvester Pattie] with his wife and several children.
>
> A number of our neighbors joined Heath and went with him to Mexico. Jacob Dust [Durst, Darst] and

Charles McLain went. Abraham Dust with a family of ten or twelve including six or eight boys, and Adam Zumwalt and a large family also went. Heath and his wife and four children, maybe more, went. His oldest boy was named Robert.

Zumalt [sic] and Abraham Dust and families did not return. They stayed in Texas. Jacob Dust came back, stayed a while, then he and his family went back to Texas. He was the Lieutenant Dust killed in one of the Mexican massacres in Texas. When Charlie McLain left I got a fine stallion from him, McClain [sic] returned in about two years and got the horse back.

I saw them all on the boat. There must have been over thirty families. Heath and most of the others returned in about two years. They were driven off."

I first knew John Heath about 1812. He had a number of farms in St. Charles County, several houses and lots in St. Charles, several Spanish grants in St. Charles County, a valuable farm or ranch near Herman, Missouri, and Heath's salt springs were very valuable. He had a seventeen hundred acre tract at the mouth of the Vaus River. His brother Robert was a partner in some of the above.

Another deposition which adds some light to the departure from Missouri is that of Major Horatio H. Hughes, made at New Franklin, Howard County, Missouri, on January 19, 1894. In condensed form he said:

My age is eighty two. I have lived in Howard county since 1820, except when I was in the army. I knew Dr. Heath in 1822,1823, and 1824. He went to Mexico in 1821 or 1822, and returned in 1823 or 1824 for the purpose of getting up a company to go with him to Mexico to settle upon and establish a colony on a tract of land near El Paso that was granted to him by the Mexican government. Dr. Heath was here in the latter part of the year 1823 and I think the company left for Mexico in the spring or summer of 1824.

I remember selling them a load of flour. My father at that time owned a mill and a distillery, and I took a load of flour and sold it to Dr. Heath. I knew Arthur Sherman, William Stewart, and Moses Heath. They went to Mexico with the colony. Moses was a brother to John G. Heath.

Heath and some of the others who went with him returned in a year or two. They said when they got to

Mexico the revolutionary forces had been successful in overthrowing Iturbide's government under which the grant to Heath had been made. They said the revolutionary government would not let them occupy or cultivate the land granted to Heath, wouldn't let them remain and settle there, and drove them off under the penalty of imprisonment or death. They stayed during part of the year 1824 and 1825 and did all on their part to fulfill Heath's contract, but the authorities then in power would not let them remain. They returned without any property, and said everything had been taken from them in their driving Heath and his party out of the country.

As to the cost to Heath of this venture, it was over sixty or seventy thousand dollars. I served in the Iowa War, was a major in the Florida War, a captain in the Mexican War, and for four years a major in the War of the Rebellion, and I am well aware of the costs of moving people from one place to another.

I am acquainted with the Bracito tract of land northwest of El Paso. In 1846 and 1847 I was a captain in Colonel Doniphan's Regiment of Missouri Volunteers. We fought a battle on the Bracito tract. We drove the Mexicans back into El Paso and from there to Chiwawa [Chihuahua City].

After completing their purchase of supplies and the loading of passengers at near present-day Weldon Springs, Missouri, the colonists floated down the Missouri to where that river meets the Mississippi River just north of St. Louis. They floated down the Mississippi to New Orleans. There they disembarked and disposed of their flatboats.

At New Orleans the group chartered a ship and they sailed for Mexico, landing at the port then known as Soto La Marina, Tamaulipas. On July 16, 1894, at the United States consulate in Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas, a slightly confused Señora Magdalena Galván de Carrasco recounted her seventy-year-old remembrances: "I first saw Dr. Heath or Juan Gid in Soto La Marina. I don't remember if they were going to or coming from the United States. I saw him and others first in 1824 and last about the first of 1825, but I can't be certain."

In *Cessna vs. United States* is to be found an affidavit of Robert J. Heath dated May 19, 1882, aged sixty-seven, son of John G. Heath, deceased, and resident of Shreveport, Louisiana. He stated: "The grant known as the Bracito Grant was centered on

a small island in the Rio Grande about thirty miles above El Paso . . . .We passed into Mexico at Soto La Marina . . . ."

From Soto La Marina, Tamaulipas, the company traveled northwesterly some nine hundred miles to reach El Paso del Norte, Chihuahua. This must have taken them six or seven weeks.

If Doctor Heath's company left Franklin, Missouri about May 15, 1824 and spent three months on the Missouri River, the Mississippi River, the Gulf of Mexico, and the overland route across northern Mexico, they would have arrived at their destination about August 15, 1824 or perhaps, a few days later. The *Cessna vs. United States* file we find a deposition of Gregorio Herrera, taken at the American Consulate in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua on August 2, 1894. He said:

> My name is Gregorio Herrera and I was born in El Paso del Norte. My age is eighty-one years and four months. I knew Juan Gid. In 1822, 1823, and 1824 I saw him frequently in El Paso. I saw him in Bracito on land granted him by the Mexican government. I was then eleven years old and was with my father Jose Herrera and my uncle Cerciano Avilez [Crescenciano Áviles]. Heath did not stay there long. He was run off by the new government. Heath, his family, and others lived on the grant in 1824. He left southward for Chihuahua and Soto La Marina.

On August 3, 1894, at the American Consulate in Ciudad Juarez, William Price Cooper, made a deposition. He was one of the very first Anglo-American settlers in this area and his statement is quite informative as to himself, Dr. Heath, and to the results of the expulsion of the colony. Cooper stated:

> My name is Price Cooper, my age is eighty-two, and I reside in Ysleta, Texas. I was born in northern Pennsylvania near the New York line. I left there as a child, was in Illinois a few years, and I first came to El Paso del Norte when I was about ten or eleven years old. I settled in Ysleta in 1834 or 1835. For ten or eleven years before that I was a pedlar in Santa Fe, El Paso del Norte, Ysleta, Chihuahua, and Mexico City. From 1823 I traveled with my brother Richard Cooper between Santa Fe and El Paso del Norte as a silk and goods pedlar.
>
> I first saw Dr. John G. Heath in 1822 or 1823 at El Paso del Norte and later at Brazito. He was of medium size, light or sandy complexion, a little taller than aver-

> age, a lawyer and a doctor. In 1824 at Brazito he was with his wife and four or five children and some two hundred others. His oldest child was a boy about my age. They stayed on the grant a short while but were driven off after the death of Iturbide.
>
> I heard Ponce de Leon and Mariano Barrelo [also Varela] say they regretted driving Heath off.

Juan Mariá Ponce de Leon and his son-in-law, Mariano Varela, were large landowners and entrepreneurs in the El Paso del Norte area. Two years after "they drove Heath off" Ponce de Leon was granted the land now occupied by downtown El Paso, Texas. For years the Spaniards had been unable to settle permanently the outlying areas between Mesilla, New Mexico and San Elizario, Texas, as the Apaches constantly drove the Spaniards off. In fact, the raids did not cease until some sixty years after Dr. Heath's colony was ejected. It is understandable that "Ponce de Leon and Mariano Barrelo regretted driving Heath off."

The *Cessna vs. United States* depositions contain an item which should pique the interest of many western buffs. The item is not complete and the transcribed notes, some in longhand and some typed, contain many misspellings of names. The typed deposition of James Bryan says: "They came down the Missouri River in six or eight flatboats and stopped at the mouth of Femosage Creek. . . . Heath had a large company with him. . . . most from Old Franklin. One from there was a man by the name of _____Batties, his wife, and several children."

Could that have been Sylvester Pattie and his family, which included a son, James Ohio Pattie? Most seem to believe Pattie came into New Mexico from the north and he may have, but this author has seen no proof of that. In 1819 Sylveste Pattie was a neighbor of Heath in Gasconade County Missouri. Sylvester Pattie and his son took over the operation of the *Santa Rita del Cobre* copper mine near Silver City, New Mexico, which is about 150 miles northwest of El Paso. He operated the mine for two years, using his company of trappers as protection against the Indians. Did the Patties come with Heath, return to Missouri, and come back to New Mexico in 1825?

The first part of the story of the John Heath colony may be discerned by study of a document found in the Gasconade County, Missouri Will Book A. This document is the will of Robert Adams Heath, brother of John G. Heath, and it says:

In the name of God Amen. I, Robert Adams Heath of the state of Missouri in the United States of North America now embarking at the port of Tampico in the republic of Mexico being of sound mind and health and memory make this my last will and testament hereby revoking all previous wills grants or bequests as respects my earthly estate which I own this day. I will and wish to dispose of it as follows, to wit, first that my executors pay all my debts that I may owe without regard to priority. Second that after the discharge of all debts and demands against my estate my property real and personal equally divided between the four children of my brother John G. Heath of the state of Tamaulipas in the republic of Mexico that is to say Robert John Heath, Elizabeth [Heath], Harriet Heath and Joseph M. Heath the sons and daughters now and being of the said John G. Heath that in case one or more of the said children shall die before they arrive at full age or marry so as to enable them by and under this will I desire that the survivor or survivors shall receive and enjoy the portion of the deceased and in case of the decease of all of said children before they come into possession of my said estate I will that it all pass to and be possessed and be enjoyed by my said brother John G. Heath and in case of his decease before he shall be so possessed I will that my said estate be possessed and enjoyed by my brothers Moses and Thomas Jefferson Heath in equal shares fourth I nominate and appoint George Collins of St. Charles in the State of Missouri my executor–In testimony whereof I set my hand and seal in the presence of the subscribing witnesses.

Witnesses....
B. Quarles
Thomas Roddick
H. B. Coffee
J. G. Heath

Robert Adams Heath *(seal)*

American Consulate
Tampico April 4th, 1825

Before me George Robertson, Consul of the United States of America for Tampico and its dependencies, came Robert Adams Heath and acknowledged the preceding document to be his own free act and deed. In witness whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name and date above mentioned.

Recorded Book A p. 132
George R. Robertson, Consul

The foregoing document was filed in Gasconade County, Missouri April 24, 1843. The executor named therein refused to serve and letters testamentary were granted to John G. Heath. The clerk made certain errors in transcribing the original document. The "four children of John G. Heath" were Robert John Heath, Elizabeth Heath, Harriet Heath and Joseph M. Heath, and the witnesses were B. Quarles, Thomas Reddick, H. B. Chaffee, and J. G. Heath.

Thus it appears that the Heath colonists remained on his grant some six months, left El Paso del Norte in early March 1825 for Parral, Torreon, Saltillo, Monterrey, and Soto La Marina, traveled down the coast of Mexico to Tampico so as to better obtain passage to New Orleans, and from there they returned to Missouri.

Why Stephen F. Austin was allowed to continue the development of his colony and John G. Heath was not remains a question. Austin's grant was made by Iturbide and the new regime did not annul the action. Heath's grant was made by the authorities in El Paso del Norte nineteen days after Iturbide's fall in Mexico City, and the change in government was always given as the reason for Heath's ejection.

The only obvious differences are demographical. For two hundred years the Spaniards had been unable to settle southeast Texas, and North American settlers who might control the Indians were welcome. Conversely, there were far larger settlements of Spaniards in El Paso del Norte, Santa Fé, and several other New Mexico towns. Many citizens of El Paso del Norte had for two or three decades tried unsuccessfully to settle the area between El Paso del Norte and present day Las Cruces.

Even though they had always been driven off by Indians, and for many years continued to be driven off, some of the citizens of El Paso wanted to continue their efforts and they objected to having Anglo-Americans on land they considered rightfully theirs. Perhaps that is what Ponce de Leon and Mariano Varela meant when they said that they regretted driving Heath off. It is not unreasonable to assume there was some local political pressure applied. There was almost no one in southeast Texas to apply such pressure.

It is of some interest that one Hugh Stephenson bought part of the Brazito grant in 1851 from the heirs of Juan Antonio Garcia. Actually there were two Brazito grants, one to John G. Heath and one to Juan Antonio Garcia. They partially overlapped. In 1823 both John G. Heath and Hugh Stephenson were in Franklin, Missouri, and both arrived in El Paso del Norte probably in August,

1824. After that date Stephenson lived for a number of years in the Bracito area, later moving to Concordia, which is in present day El Paso, Texas. Though the dates and locations seem to indicate that Hugh Stephenson was a member of the Heath party, no proof of this has been found.

The court of Private Land Claims in Santa Fé, New Mexico ruled against J. B. Cessna and the Heath heirs. On February 21, 1898 that finding was confirmed by the Supreme Court of the United States.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Chaffee, H. B.—Called H. B. Coffee on a copy of Robert Adams Heath's will which he witnessed in Tampico, Mexico April 4, 1825. While this places him in close association in Mexico with members of Heath's party, nothing more is known about him. He was possibly one of Heath's company.

Cooper, William Price—Born in Pennsylvania about 1812, he began peddling merchandise between Santa Fé, New Mexico and Chihuahua, Mexico when he was about ten or eleven years old, accompanied by his brother Richard Cooper. He settled in Ysleta in 1834-1835, and was described as "small, round-faced, red-faced, dark complected and heavy set." He had a son, James Cooper. He did not come to this area with John G. Heath.

Darst, Abraham—Also called Abraham Durst and Dust, was born in 1786, son of David and Rosetta Durst. An 1894 affidavit states that Jacob Dust and Abraham Dust with a family of ten or twelve, including six or eight boys, joined the Heath company at the mouth of Femosage Creek on the Missouri River in St. Charles County, Missouri. He did not return to Missouri, but stayed in Texas. On May 6, 1831 he received title to one league of land in the Stephen F. Austin colony in southeastern Texas. He married Tabitha Callaway, daughter of Flanders Callaway and Jemima Boone and granddaughter of Daniel Boone. Tabitha Callaway Darst was born in Fayette County, Kentucky December 1, 1792 and died in St. Charles County, Missouri in 1818. Warren County, Missouri Probate Court records contain the will of Flanders Callaway was signed December 14, 1824. It mentions as legatees Lorena, Mary, Edmond, Patrick, and John Darst, "heirs of Tabitha Darst formerly the wife of Abraham Darst. The above legatees as I believe reside in the province of Texas." Thus, the "family of ten or twelve" must refer to the children of both Jacob and Abraham Darst. The latter died at Diamond's Mound, Brazoria County, Texas in 1833.

Darst, Edmond or Edward—Son of Abraham Darst and a member of Heath's company. On August 27, 1846 he received from

the Texas Adjutant General a bounty warrant for 320 acres for military service from March 1 to June 1, 1836. He received a donation certificate from the Adjutant General on the same day for 640 acres for being in the Battle of San Jacinto.

Darst, Emery H.—Born in Missouri in 1814, died near Richmond, Texas in 1880. Served in the Texas Revolution and was at the Battle of San Jacinto. As he lived in the same area of Texas with the other Darsts, and served in the Texas Revolution with them, he was no doubt one of "the ten or twelve children of Jacob and Abraham Darst" who left Missouri with the Heath Colony in 1824. As Flanders Callaway's will does not mention him as an heir of Tabitha Darst, Emery would appear to have been a son of Jacob Darst who died at the Alamo; however, an omission in the will is possible.

Darst, Jacob O.—Also called Durst and Dust. Joined the Heath company at Femosage Creek on the Missouri River in St. Charles County, Missouri in 1824. A deposition made in 1894 by James Bryan stated that "Jacob Dust came back to Missouri, stayed awhile, then he and his family went to Texas. He was the Lieutenant Dust killed in one of the Mexican massacres in Texas." On December 16, 1839, the heirs of Jacob Durst received a bounty warrant for 960 acres from the Texas Secretary of War for military service from February 24, 1835 to March 6, 1836 when he was killed at the Alamo. On the same day his heirs received a donation certificate for 640 acres from the Secretary of War for his having fallen at the Alamo.

Darst, John—Son of Abraham Darst and member of Heath's company.

Darst, Lorena—Daughter of Abraham Darst and member of Heath's company.

Darst, Mary—Daughter of Abrahm Darst and member of Heath's company.

Darst, Patrick E.—Son of Abraham Darst and member of Heath's company. On June 5, 1841 he received a bounty warrant from the Texas Secretary of War for 320 acres for military service from March 1 to May 29, 1836. He received a donation certificate on August 27, 1846 from the Adjutant General for being in the Siege of Bexar.

Darst, Tabitha—Wife of Abraham Darst and daughter of Flanders Callaway and Jemima Boone, and granddaughter of Daniel Boone. She was deceased when her father made his will on December 18, 1824. Thus, she was probably not a member of Heath's company.

Heath, Elizabeth—Daughter of John G. Heath. She accompanied her parents to the Brazito Grant. In 1836 in Cooper County,

Missouri, she married William S. Sherman, and they produced seven children.

Heath, Harriet—Daughter of John G. Heath. She accompanied her parents to the Grant. She married Samuel Guyler, also known as Samuel Guier, Guiler, and Gower.

Heath, Hester McDowell—Wife of John G. Heath, whom she married in St. Charles County, Missouri on July 5, 1814. She was a member of the Heath company in Mexico, with four of her five children. She died, probably in Gasconade County, Missouri, after 1825 and before 1840. Some early records show her as Hetty, Esther, and Easter Heath or Hath.

Heath, John G.—A native of the state of New York, the 1840 federal census of Gasconade County, Missouri shows him then aged sixty to seventy and a widower. He was in the St. Charles District of Upper Spanish Louisiana by the year 1800 when he purchased property from his brother, Robert Adams Heath. He was said to have been fluent in English, Greek, Latin, French, and Spanish. Influential and wealthy for his time, he was a doctor, lawyer, merchant, farmer, large landowner, and he owned and operated a salt manufacturing business in Saline County, Missouri. In St. Charles County on July 5, 1814, he married Hester (Hetty, Esther, Easter) McDowell. They had five known children: Robert John, Elizabeth, Harriet, Joseph M., and Margaret, the latter being born after their return to Missouri from Mexico in 1825. All were members of the Catholic faith and the children were educated in the St. Charles Catholic Convent. John G. Heath died in Gasconade County, Missouri between August 18, 1846, on which date he signed a note, and May 19, 1847, as on the latter date his son, Robert J. Heath, was appointed administrator of the estate.

Heath, Joseph M.—Son of John G. Heath, member of the Heath colony in Mexico.

Heath, Margaret G.—Daughter of John G. Heath, born after the return of the family from Mexico. On July 23, 1848 in Gasconade County, Missouri, she married James Edsell.

Heath, Moses B.—Younger brother of John G. Heath, and a member of the Heath company in Mexico. On January 8, 1826, in Cooper County, Missouri, he married Delila Moon.

Heath, Robert Adams—Brother of John G. Heath and member of Heath's colony in Mexico. He was in St Charles District, Upper Spanish Louisiana by 1800. On April 4, 1825, while en route back to Missouri from El Paso del Norte he, his brother John G., and others stopped at the American Consulate in Tampico and there Robert Adams Heath made his will. There is no indication in the will that he had a wife or children of his own. His estate was to go to the children of his brother, John

G. Heath. Secondary legatees were his brothers John G. Heath, Moses Heath, and Thomas Jefferson Heath. He named as executor George Collins of St Charles County, Missouri. In 1830 the George Collins who resided in Montgomery County, Missouri was then between 50 and 60 years of age. In 1840 George Collins, who resided in Warren County, Missouri, was between the ages of 60 and 70 years. The will of Robert A. Heath was presented for probate in Gasconade County, Missouri on April 24, 1843 but George Collins declined the executorship. The next day, April 25, 1843, John G. Heath was appointed administrator with will attached.

Heath, Robert John—Son of John G. Heath and member of the Brazito Colony. He was born in Missouri about 1815 and he died in San Antonio, Texas in 1885 or 1886. About 1840 he married a Miss Best, sister of John Best, in Missouri. They had one son, Johnnie. Robert's wife died about 1843. On May 19, 1847 in Gasconade County, Missouri, he was appointed administrator of his father's estate. Robert J. then married Sarah Ann Dyer. They had a daughter, Eliza, born about 1857, who married M. A. Bibb. Robert John enlisted in the Confederate Army and Eliza Heath Bibb later stated that Union soldiers burned their home in Gasconade County, forcing her and her mother to flee across the Missouri River. Sarah Ann Dyer Heath died in 1863. While stationed in Union Parish, Louisiana in 1864 he met a woman whose first name was Frances J. and they were married in 1865. She survived him.

Heath, Thomas Jefferson—Brother of John G. Heath. No record that he came to Mexico.

McLain (McClain), Charles—Of St. Charles County, Missouri and a member of Heath's colony.

Pattie, Sylvester—In the testimony found in *Cessna vs. United States,* it was stated that one "Betties with his wife and children" came down the Missouri River from Franklin, Missouri with the Heath colonists. No such name has been found in this research. One Sylvester Pattie and his son, James Ohio Pattie, were in New Mexico shortly after the Heath company arrived. Sylvester was listed on the tax list for 1819 for Gasconade County, Missouri, where John Heath lived. Some maintain, however, that the Patties came to New Mexico from the north, in which case the name Batties would not refer to Sylvester Pattie. Sylvester Pattie died in a Mexican prison in San Diego, California in 1828.

Quarles, B.—One of the witnesses to the will of Robert A. Heath, made at the American Consulate in Tampico in 1825. Likely he was one of Heath's colonists but no substantiating record has been found.

Reddick, Thomas F.—One of the witnesses to the will of Robert A. Heath in Tampico, Mexico, in 1825. His name was transcribed as Roddick and on another document as Reddick. The 1843 inventory of the estate of Robert Adams Heath in Gasconade County, Missouri lists a deed for land which had been originally patented to T. F. Reddick. Thus, Thomas F. Reddick was undoubtedly a member of the colony.

Sherman, Arthur—Probably of Howard County, Missouri. He was a member of Heath's colony.

Stephenson, Hugh—He was a member of Heath's colony unless some incredible coincidences occurred. In 1823 he and John G. Heath were in Franklin, Missouri. The next year, probably in August, 1824, both were on or near the Brazito grant and Stephenson continued to live there for a number of years. A few years after his arrival, he married Juana Azcárate, whose father owned land in the Cordova Island area of present El Paso, Texas and, in the 1840's he established Concordia. His ranch was adjacent thereto. About the time he founded the Rancho Concordia he purchased part of the area granted to Heath in 1823. He died, on October 11, 1870, at La Mesa, New Mexico. Stephenson, in addition to his ranching interests, had various business interests, including a silver mine in the Organ Mountains east of his Brazito land. He was one of El Paso's most important founding fathers. To the best of the author's knowledge, this is the first time anyone has ventured an explanation of how and why he came to El Paso.

After World War II the residents of that area founded and maintained there for several years the town of Ascarate.

Stewart, William—Probably of Howard County, Missouri. He was member of Heath's colony.

Zumwalt, Adam Jr.—From St. Charles County, Missouri. He brought a large family with him in Heath's group of colonists, and was reported to have stayed in Texas. The name does not occur in the El Paso area, but is found in 1830 in the Green DeWitt Colony of southeastern Texas. In St. Charles County, Missouri on May 6, 1813 Adam Zumalt [sic] married Nancy Caton and this may have been the Adam Zumwalt of the Heath Colony. The DeWitt Colony records show that Adam Zumwalt, Jr., with nine in his family, arrived in that colony on May 22, 1830 and on August 11, 1831 he received title to land on the San Marcos River above Gonzales, Texas. He later received title to land on the Guadalupe River.

Arkansas-born ALBERT QUILLIN came to the Texas border with the United States Border Patrol in 1940. He was retired in 1970 and has resided in El Paso since 1955.

Eugene O. Porter Award

The Eugene O. Porter Memorial Award for the year 1997 was presented to Raul R. Reyes for his article "The Santa Isabel Episode, January 10, 1916: Ethnic Repercussions in El Paso and Ciudad Juárez" which appeared in the summer 1997 issue of Password.

Mr. Reyes currently teaches United States history as an adjunct professor at El Paso Community College, at which he first was a student. In 1995, he earned his Bachelor of Arts in history graduating cum laude from the University of Texas at El Paso. He completed his postgraduate work at the same university and was awarded the distinction of graduate school banner-bearer in May, 1997. He shares his life with the former Margarita Silva and their eight-year-old daughter, Brooke. Together with his *compañera* of nineteen years, they have shared may joyful and sad moments. Among his highest successes, he treasures his family life as a father to Brooke and Clifford, their twelve-year-old son who was drowned on July 4, 1995. He works to keep alive his son's memory through his work as a student, a scholar, a writer, a teacher, and a mentor—a father figure.

The Eugene O. Porter Memorial Award was created in 1975 in memory of the founder of Password who also served as its editor for 19 years. This award is given annually to the author of the article judged best by the Editorial Board of Password. The first recipient of this award was the late Dr. Rex E. Gerald. It has since been awarded to a long list of eminent writers, to which we now add the name of Raul R. Reyes.

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Down the Santa Fe Trail and Into Mexico: 1846-1847

Susan Shelby Magoffin

By M. C. Gross

The Mexican-American War drew the attention of the young nation to new lands and peoples. Stories are told about the men who participated—the generals, the soldiers, and the frontiersmen who were a part of the Army of the West. It is forgotten that women played a part in this war also. The lives of the women who stayed behind to tend the flocks, the fields, and the children were very much altered by the fact that their men were fighting far from home. There were Mexican women on the battlefield at Brazito,[1] there were laundresses with the military units, and there were women whose homes were in that territory trampled by the warring factions. And there was one young woman who arrived in Santa Fe just after the city had passed from Mexican to American control, who wandered across the battlefield at Brazito days after the battle, who passed four weeks in the city of *El Paso del Norte,* the present *Ciudad Juárez,* in most precarious times, and who traveled through Mexico behind Doniphan's conquering forces.

Although she was not the first American woman to travel over the Santa Fe Trail, Susan Magoffin was the first who kept a journal—a journal which became one of the prime sources of information about The Trail. True, Josiah Gregg had written about the Santa Fe Trail in his landmark book *Commerce of the Prairies,*[2] but Susan Magoffin gave to her account a slant that was absent from Gregg's book. Her descriptions of the women and the children she saw from her carriage,[3] her observations of the Indian mother who washed herself and her child in the stream thirty minutes after its birth,[4] and her vivid descriptions of the people with whom she stayed and the activities in which she engaged while in *El Paso del*

Norte[5] give an insight that could not be achieved by any number of soldiers' musings or detailed and Spartan military reports. The pages of her diary also show a courageous young lady who accepted the rigors of an arduous trip with a sense of humor and an ability to surmount the trials of a trip by wagon across the unpeopled, undeveloped, and uncivilized frontier. Her references to religion show that God was at the forefront of her thoughts.

It was 1846, a crucial year in American history. In May, Congress had declared war on Mexico, and in June, Susan Shelby Magoffin departed Independence, Missouri, on what would be a continuation of her wedding trip. It became, however, the first documented travel on the Santa Fe Trail to be undertaken by an Anglo-American woman.

Susan, the eighteen-year-old daughter of a distinguished Kentucky family, had been married for six months to Samuel Magoffin, also a member of an illustrious Kentucky family. She began writing the second volume of her diary, most of which was to become *El Diario de Doña Susanita Magoffin.*[6]

Despite a childhood of wealth and ease as a member of the "aristocracy" of the young nation, Susan proved to be courageous, intelligent, observant, and compassionate. She had a vicarious knowledge of the "West," having read Gregg's book *Commerce of the Prairies,* and her interest had been piqued by her acquaintance with Samuel Magoffin, the Santa Fe trader. Her honeymoon had been spent in the "markets" of New York and Philadelphia, and gaily she faced the journey on the Santa Fe Trail with trunks of "the latest fashions," with great love for her husband, and with the suspicion that she was pregnant.

Had Susan truly been a "spoiled darling," she would probably not have begun the journey, and certainly after the loss of her child at Bent's Fort, she would have given thought to abandoning the uncomfortable and perilous trek. Knowing the importance of the undertaking to her husband, and suspecting the depth of the involvement of Sam's older brother James Wiley Magoffin in the diplomatic negotiations of the time, Susan bore the hardships of the journey and of a new marriage without complaint. True, Susan was allowed to travel "in style": she had her own carriage, a tent, a maid, two servant boys, her pet greyhound, and, according to Howard Lamar,[7] "an overindulgent husband." She was still a flesh-and-blood woman, subject not only to the aches and pains of bumping over wagon trails but also to the ills and dangers which accompany

Illustration by the author

a pregnancy and the fears and uncertainties that accompany a first pregnancy.

A careful reading of her diary discloses a Susan Magoffin who had many admirable qualities which she revealed in the brief passages of her journal. In pre-Freudian 1846, a lady, even a married lady, did not allow herself any overt expression of her emotions. Although her emotions were carefully reined, she was sensitive and perceptive and aware of all that happened around her. Some of what she observed was in opposition to her background and training, but rarely did she express more than mild annoyance.

The attitude with which Susan accepted the lack of comfort in everything throughout her travels, including her living quarters, is to be admired. The dirt-floored house in Santa Fe in which she spent five or six weeks was far removed, in facilities as well as distance, from her family home, Arcadia. So too was the house in San Gabriel where she lay ill with "fever" for three weeks. After the punishing trip through the Jornada del Muerto, she lived in the comparative comfort in "El Passo" [sic] with the family of the Reverend Ramon Ortiz who was at that time held prisoner by Doniphan's troops. At the same time, her brother-in-law, James, was being held prisoner by the Mexicans. In what Susan described in most complimentary terms as comfortable houses, the Magoffins lived for four weeks in *El Paso del Norte.* Susan thoroughly enjoyed her acquaintance with the Mexican ladies and spoke admiringly of their manners, their customs, and the way they reared their children. She enjoyed exchanging recipes with these ladies and allowed them to take two or three of her dresses so that they could "copy" them. She described their homes and their gardens and orchards with much admiration, and she commended all facets of life as she found it in *El Paso del Norte.*

Generally looking on the bright side, Susan's ability to overlook undesirable qualities in others must have been of great mag-

nitude. In his book, *The Santa Fe Trail,* R. L. Duffus says "Two American officers in uniform called on her and made love to her while drunk,"[8] but Susan reports only:

> Lieuts. Warner & Hammond[9] called since tea to bid us goodbye. . . . The latter, (I do not mean to slander him at all) has taken a little more of "the ingredient" than he can well bear. He constantly talked of the American women . . . said he had written to his wife all about me. . . . talked of his "angel baby". . . . flew again to what he had written his wife of me, and ran on at such a rage I absolutely became frightened, and giving *Mi alma* the *nod, turned him over* and commenced a conversation with Warner. How he happened to be in such a fix tonight, is strange, for he is a most perfect gentleman when sober.[10]

In her closing sentence, Susan reveals her ability to overlook the distressing element of character that Lieutenant Hammond displayed. The Santa Fe Trail and the city of Santa Fe were a small world in 1846 and young American ladies were uncommon, indeed, rare, so it is not surprising that all those who could would visit with Susan whenever possible.

Although Susan's somewhat sheltered life had not prepared her for some of the coarseness and the primitive conditions to which she would be exposed, she tolerated them with equanimity. One of her earliest observations concerns the profanity of the wagon drivers: "It is disagreeable to hear so much swearing: the animals are unruly 'tis true and worries the patience of their drivers, but I scarcely think they need to be so profane."[11] Knowing that she could do nothing to stop the delivery of the words, she must have found a way to avoid the assault on her eardrums, for she dwelt no further on the subject. She was, however, a little less composed on viewing the inhabitants of a village near San Miguel. "It is truly shocking to my modesty to pass such places with gentlemen," wrote Susan.[12]

> The women slap about with their arms and necks bare, perhaps their bosoms exposed (and they are none of the prettiest or whitest) if they are about to cross the little creek that is near all the villages, regardless of those about them, they pull their dresses, which in the first place but little more than cover their calves—up above their knees and paddle through the water like ducks, sloshing and spattering every thing about them . . . and

> it is repulsive to see the children running about perfectly naked, or if they have on a chimese [sic] it is in such ribbands [sic] it had better be off at once.[13]

Her closing statement to this entry states, "I am constrained to keep my veil drawn closely over my face all the time to protect my blushes." She thereby presents a picture of a properly modest young lady of the mid-nineteenth century.

Also among Susan's qualities is her quiet courage as displayed by her calm acceptance of whatever the situation brings and her accommodation to it. During the stay at Bent's Fort, Susan suffered the tragic spontaneous abortion of her first pregnancy. Her description of this misfortune aptly displays her stoic acceptance of those facets of life which she could not avoid: "In a few short months I should have been a happy mother and made the heart of a father glad, but the ruling hand of a mighty Providence has interposed and by an abortion deprived us of the hope, the fond hope of mortals! But with the affliction he does not leave us comfortless!"[14]

Only once does Susan abandon her calm acceptance of the existing situation, and that in circumstances which would have reduced a lesser woman to hysterics. While in their tent, the sides of which had been rolled up to admit air, Susan and Samuel were surrounded by the local people who fingered all the materials and objects within reach, including Susan's dress. Her journal entry begins: "*Mirable Dictu,* how these people annoy me. This whole afternoon I have been sitting here, an object of curiosity to them."[15] Her reaction seems unusual only because, for Susan, any negative reaction is unusual.

Although Susan's descriptions of scenic beauty may have borrowed the style of authors she had read,[16] the expressions of her sense of humor were original with her. That sense of humor would spurt forth in situations that were peculiarly "Susan." Not many would have written:

> . . . this required some two hours time, and as usual the villagers collected to see the curiosity, and I did think the Mexicans were as void of refinement, judgement &c. as the dumb animals 'till I heard one of them say *bonita muchachita!* And now I have reason and certainly a good one, for changing my opinion; they are certainly a very *quick and intelligent people.*[17]

During her residence in Santa Fe, Susan entertained in as much the manner of the "grande dame" as circumstances would

allow. She was most chagrined when, while entertaining guests, the rain began to pour through the roof causing General Stephen Watts Kearny to demonstrate "a very ceremonious jump and an inquiring glance to know the meaning of that!"[11] Susan wrote of how she and her guests remained calmly in the *sala,* dodging the streams of water. It is noteworthy that not only did she retain, but could express, her sense of humor.

Among her many enviable characteristics was Susan's ability to see the good in people. That a very young bride, reared in the luxury of a country estate could even notice the efforts of her servants is to be noted.

Among her many enviable characteristics was Susan's ability to see the good in people. That a very young bride, reared in the luxury of a country estate could even notice the efforts of her servants is to be noted. The fact that Susan expressed appreciation of her servants, rather than petulance with them in the difficult situations in which they all shared, is commendable. Equally commendable are her expressions of concern and affection for the families with whom the Magoffins lived while they were in *El Paso del Norte.* The families of Don Agapito and the Reverend Ramon Ortiz were, of course, Mexican, and might have been inimical to the interests of the Magoffins since both the Americans and the Mexicans had imprisoned a prominent man from the opposite side—the Mexicans held James Magoffin and the Americans held the Reverend Ortiz. These families proved however, to be friendly and hospitable, and did all in their power to entertain the Magoffins in as cordial a manner as possible. That she could harbor thoughts of amiability and genuine fondness at a time when hopes for their safety as well as for their future rested on a slim strand of rumor says much for the disposition of Susan Shelby Magoffin.

There were moments when Susan was displeased with her husband, but she shows her displeasure only in her method of addressing him. She usually refers to him as *Mi alma,* but, when she is disturbed, she refers to him as Mr. Magoffin. Nor did she give indication of any real disagreement with him. If she felt any, she did not confide it to her journal. Only once did she show mild disagreement and that was the result of a divergence in life styles. Since Susan's training in her religion was not the same as Samuel's, his practice of "trading" during all seven days of the

week caused Susan some distress, but here again, since she could not hope to "reform" Samuel, she simply endured his Sunday trading with a prayer for his salvation.

Susan exhibited amazing discipline in her lack of expression of homesickness or loneliness. Not only was Susan's life completely devoid of the youthful female companionship to which she must have ben accustomed, but also devoid of any knowledge of her family, for communication between Kentucky and "the West" was most inadequate. Although she does not dwell on the fact that months pass without communication from home, Susan does allow the burden of her loneliness to erupt in her journal entry written in Monterrey.

> I do wish I could have a letter from home: how lonely it is, week after week and month after month, and I hear nothing more than if I never belonged to their numbers. 'Twould indeed give new energy to my being to hear from them, quite a new creature I should feel but as it is I am perfectly isolated.[19]

How mild an expression for a young bride far from home caught in enemy territory during hostilities, and far removed from other ladies who spoke her language!

Susan possessed, among her other characteristics, a steadfast patriotism. Her love for her native land was best expressed when the wagon-train crossed the border from United States territory to what was then Mexican territory:

> The crossing of the Arkansas was an event in my life I have never met with before; the separating me from my own dear native land. That which I love and honour as truly as any whole-souled son or daughter of the fair and happy America. . . . ever did. Perhaps I have left it for not only the first, but the last time. Maybe I am never to behold its bright and sunny landscape, its happy people, my countrymen, again....[20]

It was this feeling, so much a part of her, that she transmitted in her relations with those people whom she met, for, while Susan left the machinations of international affairs to the men, she certainly gave a splendid performance as an ambassador of good-will. On every side she was admired and loved by those who had contact with her. Not only did she show an understanding of the people around her who were, in essence, the enemy, but Susan was able also to put aside the feelings of animosity that she might have harbored.

She saw the Mexican people only as individual human beings and she related to their individual traits and qualities.

It was more than patriotic fervor that emanated from the writer of *El Diario* however. There was evidenced a high degree of piety, and the religious reverence of Susan Shelby Magoffin is probably the most obvious element in her journal. From her very first "Sabbath on the plains" to her last journal entry made on a Sunday, Susan gives thought to the Sabbath under conditions in which there is no way of differentiating one day from another. While she decried the fact that Samuel, the soldiers, and the Mexicans seemed not to observe the Sabbath, she fulfilled her obligations as best she could. Her description of her observance of the Sabbath near Pawnee Fork is typical:

> The Sabbath on the Plains is not altogether without reverence. Everything is perfectly calm. The blustering, swearing teamsters remembering the duty they owe to their Maker, have thrown aside their abusive language, and are singing the hymns perhaps that were taught by a good pious Mother. The little birds are all quiet and reverential in their songs. And nothing seems disposed to mar that calm, serene silence prevailing over the land. We have not the ringing of church bells, or the privilege of attending public worship, it is true, but we have ample time, sufficient reason &c. For thinking on the great wisdom of our Creator, for praising him within ourselves entirely at our command so manly blessings; in giving us health, minds free from care, the means of knowing and learning his wise designs, &c.[21]

Although Susan was reared in the strict Presbyterian tradition she often attended the Catholic mass. Beginning in Santa Fe, and continuing throughout the remainder of her journey, Susan looked on her attendance at mass as attendance in a house of worship. She dwelt not on the denomination. In situations in which many young brides might bemoan the fate which brought them to the adversity of travel in the Southwest, Susan found solace in her religion. Of Susan's innermost thoughts and feelings, only those that are religious are allotted space in her journal, and she often goes to great lengths to express her piety.

Those were danger-laden times in which they traveled into Mexico, and in the course of which they tarried in *El Passo* for four weeks, never knowing what fate lay just ahead of them. When they arrived in Chihuahua, they found that Doniphan had already

arrived. Susan also found, much to her chagrin, that Doniphan's Missouri Volunteers, although good fighters, were not good victors. They took over some of the homes for their quarters, even keeping their horses inside the houses. They bathed in the public drinking fountains and removed the bark from the beautiful trees of the *alameda* [public walk].

During the course of her travel to and residences in Chihuahua, Saltillo and Monterrey, Susan uttered not a complaint. It was not until she, once again pregnant and uncomfortable, arrived in Mier, from which the Magoffins embarked for Camargo and home, that Susan gave voice to a genuine complaint.

> Such a place this is! . . .the most miserable hole imaginable; impossible to get a house, we are stowed away in a room with a family of men, women and children. The town is in confusion. Last night a band of robbers entered, shot down a sentinel, rode through the plaza, hitched up and drove off five wagons loaded with merchandise. . . . our bed is here on the *sala* floor, two or three beds in the room are filled . . . our trunk piled up serving as a screen between us and they. . . there is no door shut between us, and it is all as *common as one room* . . . "[22]

Considering the hardships involved, Susan's fortitude and courage, her unflagging religious reverence, and her devotion to her husband, mark her as a young lady of rare character, one who, had her diary been made public sooner, might today be as important a part of our historical literature as Betsy Ross.

Susan kept her journal not to be published, but probably with the thought that it might some day be read to members of the family. Her love of the beauties of nature, her admiration of the people she met, her respect, admiration, and love for her husband, and her devotion to God gleam from the pages of Susan's diary.

El Diario de Doña Susanita Magoffin covers a period of time and a part of the country most important to the growth and development of the United States, although her writings are not a preeminent literary achievement. Susan Magoffin wrote for those who would already have an interest in her through kinship, thus she needed only to state absolute fact, as she knew it, and to chronicle the events of the day as she saw them happening or as she heard about them. She wrote not to interest the reading public, but to inform her family.

Nonetheless, she documented some of the most important history in our country. Bernard De Voto refers to *El Diario* as a "prime source"[23] of historical information of that vital time and place. She met and became acquainted with almost all the men who became important in any of several different fields; Gregg and Cooke, Harmony and Aull, Bent and Fremont, Emory and Kearny, and Armijo and Ortiz. Susan was also acquainted with names which today are reflected in the Southwest and its history; Bliss, Doniphan, Bent, Dr. Masure, John Potts, Connelly, Leitensdorfer, Generals Price, Scott, Taylor and Glasgow, whose connection with the Magoffins remains to this day.

Had Susan not made that daring and adventurous trip down the Santa Fe Trail, the knowledge of the Southwest would be incomplete. Susan Magoffin's travel on the Santa Fe Trail left a picture of life in the Southwest in 1846-1847 that added much to historical lore.

M. C. GROSS, a former New Englander who now claims El Paso as her home, was introduced to Susan Magoffin by Dr. C. L. Sonnichsen. She earned a Masters degree at the Unviersity of Texas at El Paso and spent many years as an educator in Massachusetts, Alabama, and El Paso.

NOTES

1. Enrique T. Vasquez, "The Mexican Army's Actions at Brazito," *Password* 1998:2.
2. Josiah Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies* (New York: Henry G. Langley, 1887).
3. Magoffin, Susan Shelby, *Down the Santa Fe Trail and Into Mexico: The Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin, 1846-1847* Edited by Stella Drumm (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926) 92,95,98.
4. Magoffin 68.
5. Magoffin 205-210.
6. Howard Lamar, Foreword, Magoffin xvn.
7. Howard Lamar, Foreword, Magoffin xvn.
8. R. L. Duffus, *The Santa Fe Trail* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1930) 167.
9. Lieutenants William Horace Warner and Thomas Clark Hammond.
10. Magoffin 146.
11. Magoffin 2-3.
12. Magoffin 95.
13. Magoffin 95.
14. Magoffin 67.
15. Magoffin 159.
16. Lamar, Magoffin xvn.
17. Magoffin 98.
18. Magoffin 140.
19. Magoffin 236.
20. Magoffin 72.
21. Magoffin 48.
22. Magoffin 259-260.
23. Bernard DeVoto, *The Year of Decision: 1846* (Boston, Little Brown and Company, 1945) 511.

Unidentified Photographs

Your El Paso County Historical Society has a number of photographs that are unidentified. Can you identify any of the people, the places, or the time of any of these photos.

If you can provide us with any identifications please call: the Burges House 533-3603; or the editor of *Password,* Marilyn Gross at 755-7329; or write the Editor, Password, P.O. Box 28, El Paso, TX 79940. Be sure that you specify to which picture you refer and which figure you are identifying.

This was a very distinguished gentleman. Was he your father? Your uncle? Your neighbor? [A]

There are nine children and one adult in this photo. Were you one of these children? Do you know any of these children? [B]

There are seven distinguished gentlemen here. The center image has what appears to be an arrow on his forehead. Note bulges on right-hand side of some coats! Who are these men? [C]

There are five beautiful young ladies here. Is one of them you? [D]

Barbara Rees, the curator of The Jane Perrenot Historical Research Center, and her staff thank you!

Book Reviews

MASSACRE ON THE LORDSBURG ROAD: A TRAGEDY OF THE APACHE WARS by Marc Simmons. College Station: Texas A&M University Press. $27.95.

THE INDIAN TRAIL: THE COMPLETE STORY OF THE WARREN WAGON TRAIN MASSACRE AND THE FALL OF THE KIOWA NATION by Charles M. Robinson III. Spokane: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1997. $27.50.

Massacre! Massacre in different places and different times is the subject of these two recently released Western histories. Massacre! Indian massacre. Massacre in New Mexico. Massacre in Texas. In Simmons' massacre, three persons – a family – were involved in a deadly 1883 confrontation with Apaches. Seven teamsters fell to an attack by Kiowas in Robinson's 1871 incident.

Neither was a massacre on the order of Fetterman or Custer where scores of soldiers met defeat by Northern Plains Indians. Even though massacre is the underlying theme to both books, it perhaps is incorrectly applied in contemporary perspective on the historical events chronicled by these authors. The word "massacre" is a stereotypical negative with which those to whom it is credited–the Native American–might disagree. The mayhem they perpetrated in these two incidents was not driven by psychopathic sanguinity but rather by ageless cultural behavior and instincts for survival. Yet in the nineteenth century context of these two events, the white perspective certainly was one of massacre and one that, in both instances, strained even sympathetic attitudes toward Native Americans.

Robinson, recognized for his 1993 history of Ranald Mackenzie, chronicles the events leading up to and following the May 18, 1871, incident in which Kiowas, including Satanta and Big Tree, reluctantly heeded the prophesy of tribal seer Maman-ti to let their first target of opportunity pass an ambuscade site and instead attack the supply train belonging to Henry Warren of Weatherford, Texas. Robinson uses this "massacre," in which ten wagons were looted and destroyed and more than half of their twelve-man crew killed, to analyze the broader issues of military, state and federal government Indian policy and inter-tribal factionalism. (The first target of opportunity allowed to pass by the Kiowas, interestingly, was none other than Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman, who was on an inspection tour of frontier military posts.) The attack on the Warren train is not

an ambiguous incident in Western history. The subsequent trial of Satanta and Big Tree by a Texas civilian court, their conviction on charges of raiding the wagon train and their imprisonment by the state at Huntsville is a factor somewhat unique in the annals of Western history. Although Robinson covers ground explored by other historians, he offers fresh perspective, particularly as it can be squeezed from the limited record of Native American viewpoint. He highlights, for instance, the cultural chasms that led Kiowas and others assigned to Indian Territory agencies to view Texans to the south as Tejanos rather than as Americans to whom conditions of pre-existing treaties with the United States also applied. The Kiowas remained confused as to why their continuation of historical raiding upon the Texans, upon whom they had warred in times dating back to Spanish, Mexican and independent rule, caused such consternation with the U.S. military and Washington treaty-makers.

While a valuable resource in the study of the American West, Robinson's history is far less compelling reading than that offered by Simmons, who long has attracted a popular following of readers through his weekly historical newspaper columns. While Robinson picks over earlier explored ground, Simmons cultivates a fertile topic that has lived long in New Mexico legend and myth, but which has until now not been thoroughly explored. Simmons succeeds in this effort, partly due, as he humbly explains, to luck that led him to McComas family descendants who shared both documents and oral recollection of the tragedy that befell this prominent family on the road between Silver City and Lordsburg. The simultaneous chance discovery of the McComas probate file in the Grant County, New Mexico, Courthouse further enhanced Simmons' opportunity to follow through new documentation a trail untraveled for more than one hundred years. In this instance, the uncovering of the story is equally as interesting as the story itself.

While Robinson follows a traditional chronological approach in his history – one that doesn't reach the subject of its title until the fourth chapter – Simmons weaves a much more intriguing narrative that engrossingly explains to the reader what compelled Judge Hamilton McComas, his wife Juniata and their six-year-old son Charley to their fateful encounter with a Chiricahua Apache raiding party led by Chato during an era in which most Americans naively considered the conquest of the West complete and the Indian wars ended. Students of New Mexico history have long recited the tragedy of the McComas' deaths and the unsubstantiated legends that young Charley lived on in captivity, even to the point of being a border-raiding renegade well into the twentieth century. With Simmons' effort, much of the myth is clarified or discounted, yet like any good historical tale of the West, mystery in the McComas' affair remains, perhaps awaiting another stroke of Simmons' luck.

Both of these books are worthy additions to the Western historiography, but most particularly Simmons' work on the McComas family, which goes to the heart of real people who might otherwise be lost to time.

JOHN R. MOORE
Wumpka, Alabama

TEXAS PAST: ENDURING LEGACY by Andrew Sansom. Photographs by Wyman Meinzer. Austin: Texas Parks and Wildlife Press, 1997. Distributed by University of Texas Press. Hard Cover, $39.95.

For those aficionados of coffee-table books, *Texas Past* is a must. The photographs by Wyman Meinzer are eye-catching and "Today's Texas Cowboy," could be easily mistaken for a western painting. Unfortunately, in the photograph on page 32, the San Elizario church looks as though a rainstorm had just ruined a fresh coat of paint on its façade. But the subjects of most of the photographs are what Texans, from pre-historic times to the near past, have handcrafted and built: petroglyphs, tools, burial mounds, ships, and a proliferation of buildings, including missions, churches, homes, forts, and offices, both private and public. They all speak to the needs and desires of people to express themselves as individuals or as communities.

Many of the buildings and sites depicted are under the supervision of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department of which the author, Andrew Sansom, is Executive Director.

The accompanying text provides some historical background for most of the sites shown in the photographs. Chronologically arranged, it begins with the ancients who left traces of their ways of life depicted artistically on rock walls in cave overhangs and in tools and weapons crafted from razor-sharp flint. The narrative continues with the entrance of the Europeans, beginning with the Spanish and the French. Clear photographs which add a new perspective to Texas history show the remains of La Salle's ship, "La Belle," in the process of reconstruction after its recent discovery off the Texas coast. The remainder of the text substantially follows a traditional textbook pattern, recounting conflicts between the various immigrants and the Native Americans, the fight for independence from Mexico, statehood, etc. through the Texas Centennial in 1936.

One of the most poignant bits of history that is recounted is told in connection with the restoration of the State Cemetery in Austin. When the renowned Congresswoman and distinguished political science professor, Barbara Jordan, was being laid to rest in the cemetery, construction work was still underway and barricades blocked the site. When the workers saw the great number of the capital's African-American population standing silently behind the barricades, they removed them and allowed everyone access to Ms. Jordan's burial site.

More careful editing would have spelled Neil Armstrong's name correctly, and eliminated the lapses into the use of the personal pronoun throughout the text. As a half-century resident of El Paso, this reviewer would have included the Magoffin Home, a 19th Century example of the use of adobe as a building medium. Perhaps the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department might consider appointing a Trans-Pecos resident to its Commission, thereby avoiding such omissions.

CLINTON P. HARTMANN
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VALLEY OF SHINING STONE, THE STORY OF ABIQUIU by Lesley Poling-Kempes. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997. $50.00 cloth, $24.95 paper.

Most of us know Abiquiu as the small village just west of the highway between Santa Fe and Taos, the place where Georgia O'Keeffe made her home in New Mexico. But centuries before O'Keeffe lived and painted there, Abiquiu was an Indian pueblo and an Hispanic village. In her book Valley of Shining Stone, The Story of Abiquiu Lesley Poling-Kempes gives readers not only the history of the village but of the entire Piedra Lumbre basin, approximately 2500 square miles of high desert plateau along the Chama River in northwest New Mexico. Translated, Piedra Lumbre means Shining Stone, hence the title.

The author is a writer who has lived in Abiquiu for over twenty-five years. Although Poling-Kempes includes a complete bibliography of secondary sources as well as citations, the book is not intended to be scholarly. As the back cover acknowledges, it is meant for travelers, history buffs and general readers.

Originally Abiquiu was an Indian community, home to ancient pueblo peoples. Following the Anasazi occupation, the village was inhabited primarily by genizaros, Indians of mixed tribal derivation, most of whom were adopted as slaves in Spanish colonial households. Over time the two cultures, Indian and Spanish, merged. The author explains that the village name Abiquiu is in all probability a Spanish mispronouncement of a Tewa word.

Sheep and cattle were the mainstays of the economy, and Abiquiu was also an important center of the slave trade. A leading citizen of the nineteenth century was slave trader José Maria Chavez. His substantial home on the northeast corner of the Abiquiu plaza included a room without windows, called the Ute Room, where Chavez held captive Indians awaiting their fate. According to author Poling-Kempes, this room was renamed the Indian Room when the house became the property of painter O'Keeffe.

In the early 1900's northern New Mexico began to attract American and European anthropologists, archaeologists, artists, and writers, as well as east coast socialites. Author Poling-Kempes mentions

some of the Anglos who achieved prominence in their newly adopted homeland, and she tells of the friendships among such well-known figures as Mary Cabot Wheelwright, Adolph Bandelier, Mabel Dodge Lujan, Mary Austin, and Willa Cather.

It was Boston socialite Carol Stanley who "discovered" the Piedra Lumbre basin. Fascinating indeed is the story of her Southwestern adventures, how on a pack trip she met a local wrangler who was her tour guide and during the three-week journey, the two fell in love and married. She and her wrangler husband established a dude ranch north of Espanola, and in the 1920s Stanley acquired nearby property known as Rancho de los Brujos, or Ghost Ranch, which soon became ranch headquarters.

In the 1930's, Harvard-educated Arthur Pack, a conservationist, publisher, and heir to a timber fortune, brought his family to Ghost Ranch to spend a summer with his friend Carol Stanley, by then a divorcée. Eventually Pack purchased the Ghost Ranch's 32,168 acres from Stanley.

It was the summer of 1934 when the area's most famous immigrant, Georgia O'Keeffe arrived, and the book offers engaging anecdotes about the contentious relationship between Pack and "the ornery artist." O'Keeffe persuaded Pack to sell his small adobe house on Ghost Ranch to her in 1940, and they remained neighbors for nearly two decades. O'Keeffe went on to purchase a second, larger home on the Abiquiu plaza, the old adobe hacienda that once belonged to slave trader Chavez, and that house became her primary residence.

Lesley Poling-Kempes brings the story of the Piedra Lumbre valley up to the present, including the twentieth century developments that have brought vast change: the birth of the scientific community at Los Alamos during World War II and the damming of the Chama River and creation of the Abiquiu Reservoir in the 1960s.

Today tens of thousands of visitors travel to Abiquiu and the surrounding area. They come to tour the O'Keeffe home, engage in outdoor activities at the reservoir, and to visit the Ghost Ranch Living Museum. During the last ten years an influx of urban refugees from New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles has tripled the population of Abiquiu. The author expresses the hope that tourists and the newly arrived immigrants do not alter the beauty and isolation of the high desert plateau and that residents, old and new, Hispanic and Anglo, will manage to retain some of the valley's historic traditions.

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