

PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Volume 43, No. 4 • El Paso, Texas • Winter, 1998

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Membership Secretary, El Paso County Historical Society, P.O. Box 28, El Paso, Texas 79940.
Society Membership of \$25.00 per year includes a subscription to **PASSWORD**.

PASSWORD (ISSN 0031-3738) is published quarterly by
THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 603 W. Yandell, El Paso, Texas 79902

Periodicals Postage Paid at El Paso, Texas

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

PASSWORD
The El Paso County Historical Society
P.O. Box 28
El Paso, Texas 79940

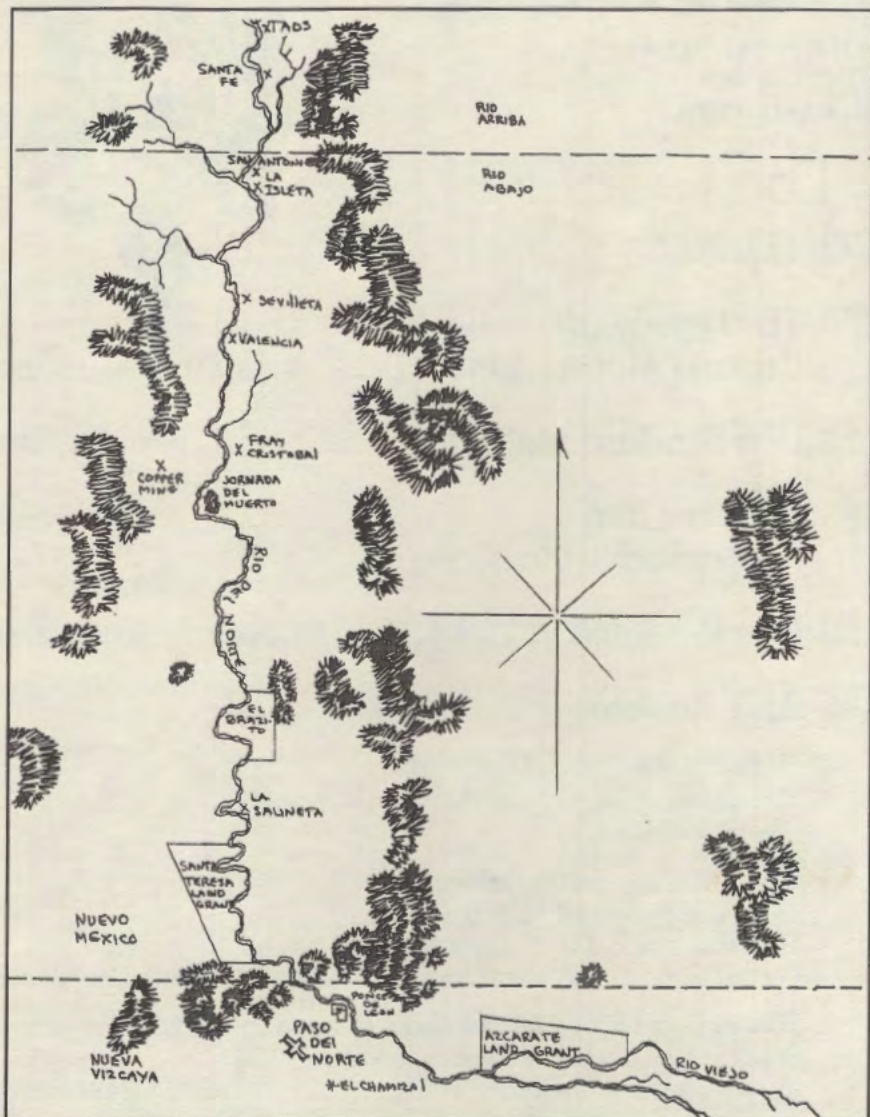
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This map shows the general location of the different land grants and places mentioned in the text. Drawn by the author.

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Entered as Periodicals Mail at El Paso, Texas



The Legacy of Captain Alonso García I

By Victor M. Guzman Garcia

With the zeal of celebrating the first 400 years of Juan de Oñate's journey to New Mexico came the realization that there was a possibility that some of my ancestors had participated in that same journey. Hours of research showed only that there were no Guzmans to be found in that research, and the only four Garcia soldiers under Oñate could not be conclusively related to the Garcia clan that I sought. The paternal side of the family did not arrive in this area until the time of the Mexican Revolution in the 1910's. However, it has been documented that the Garcias on the maternal side of the family arrived in this area over 360 years ago.

Captain Alonso Garcia I, the progenitor of this clan, was born in Zacatecas, Mexico in 1627. That is all that is known about him prior to his passing through this area about 1640 on his way to Santa Fe in the northern province of *Nuevo Mexico*.¹ During this time, this area was inhabited by only a few Manso Indians in their *rancherías* (small ranch houses) and a few Jesuit friars.² Upon reaching Santa Fe and becoming part of the civil and political system, Garcia quickly rose through the ranks and by 1660, at the age of thirty-three, Alonso Garcia was the owner of the *Estancia de San Antonio*. This land grant was about twenty leagues south of Santa Fe in the Rio Abajo District.³ Described in historic archives as having a good physique, partly gray hair, protruding eyes, and an aquiline nose, Alonso was married to Teresa Varela, the daughter of a very prominent New Mexico family.⁴ By 1667, Garcia had become captain of the militia, and soon was assigned the positions of lieutenant-governor and *maestre de campo* (field-grade officer) of the Rio Abajo District under Governor Antonio de Otermin. Another title that he held concurrently was that of *alcalde* of Sandia.⁵

Although he was a very wealthy man by the late 1670's, things were to change drastically for him, his family, and all of the other Spaniards of the entire province of New Mexico. On August 10, 1680, a massive and well organized revolt by the oppressed Pueblo Indians was initiated in the town of Taos in the Rio Arriba District.⁶ The attacks against the priests and civilians were mercilessly ferocious. Entire families were annihilated, the churches were burned and desecrated, and the priests were killed; livestock was stolen and the fields and homes were burned. The lieutenant-governor of the Rio Arriba, Pedro de Leyva, lost his wife and four adult children to the massacre.⁷ As the rebellion expanded into the town of Santa Fe, Governor Otermin barricaded approximately a thousand citizens and a few rations and animals within the walls of the Governor's Palace. Here, they would endure a ten day siege. Otermin immediately sent messengers south to Captain Alonso Garcia requesting military support. Unfortunately, the messengers never reached the captain.⁸ The enraged Indians circled the compound continuously, shouting and singing that the god of the Spaniards, their father, was dead, and that Mary, their mother and the saints were mere pieces of rotten wood and were all dead, but that the god of the Indians lived!⁹

Captain Alonso Garcia also had his own troubles. Realizing what was happening, he barricaded himself and his six children at his hacienda for several days,¹⁰ but at the first opportunity, Garcia and his family escaped south to Isleta Pueblo. At Isleta, about 1,500 other settlers were waiting for his leadership. Dismal reports from the north gave him reason to believe that an attempt to rescue those in Santa Fe would prove futile. Garcia stated that "Since I have received no reports of other atrocities in the kingdom," and that "it was generally reported that the Señor Governor and Captain-General Otermin was dead, the Rio Abajo leaders should assemble and state their opinions of the situation."¹¹ The decision to retreat immediately toward *El Paso del Norte* with the hopes of encountering the supply wagons coming from Mexico City was finally made by Captain Garcia in collaboration with his other captains: Jose Tellez Jiron, Fernando Duran y Chavez, Juan Dominguez de Mendoza and others.¹² Ragged, hungry, and barefoot, the fleeing group, led by Captain Garcia, finally reached the *paraje* (campsite) called Fray Cristobal which is located south of San Antonio de Senecú at the entrance to the Jornada del Muerto.

On August 20, hostilities subsided in Santa Fe, and the next day, the surviving 1,000 Spaniards from the northern district were allowed to leave the capital and the country. Reports from the south indicated that all were lost in the Rio Abajo District.¹³ Otermin's group, on their way south, witnessed the result and gruesome extent of the rebellion. They saw many dead and tortured bodies and burned churches and homes along the valley of the *Rio del Norte*.¹⁴

On September 6, the Garcia party was reached by a detachment of Otermin's soldiers who had strict orders to find and bring Captain Garcia to the Governor.¹⁵ Upon presenting himself to Otermin at the *Rancho de San Francisco de Valencia*, he was arrested and charged with desertion.¹⁶ To his surprise, the group from Santa Fe had survived and was very much alive! Expecting trouble, Garcia had prepared and brought with him a sheaf of affidavits and depositions to prove his good faith and provide the rationale for his decisions. He explained that he had never received any of Otermin's messages from Santa Fe, but that he had also tried to get his own messengers through to the capital. Captain Garcia's well prepared defense was readily accepted and consequently he was allowed to resume his leadership that same day.¹⁷

Governor Otermin and Captain Garcia eventually regrouped at Fray Cristobal and proceeded to the next *paraje* called *La Salineta*. This campsite was roughly four leagues north of *El Paso del Norte*. Although the trip had already taken them about forty-five days, they were to stay here from September 18th to October 9th in 1680. These refugees had no official permission to enter the town of *El Paso del Norte* which was under the jurisdiction of *Nueva Vizcaya*.¹⁸ Under Governor Otermin, a decision was to be made whether to try to undertake an immediate reconquest of the lost province or to wait for a more favorable opportunity. Captain Alonso Garcia was the greatest opponent to the immediate reconquest under the present conditions.¹⁹ A muster was taken at that time and it showed that most of the refugees were very ill-equipped, hungry, weak, sick, and totally discouraged. This inventory also established that twenty-one priests and about 380 Spaniards had been killed by the insurgents in this rebellion.²⁰ Unfortunately, Alonso Garcia also included in this inventory the death of his son Lazaro who had been killed by an Indian arrow. He added that with him were his three other sons, two daughters and their husbands, and twelve of their family members. In addition to these,

he brought his twenty-two servants, eighty horses, and five mules.²¹ A total of 317 Indians from the Isleta Pueblo also arrived with Garcia's group.²²

From *La Salineta*, Otermin, Francisco Gomez Robledo, Captain Alonso Garcia, and twelve other men rode toward *El Paso del Norte* to look for the much needed supply wagons of Father Francisco Ayeta, the father-quartermaster and supplier for the missions of New Mexico.²³ They finally found Father Ayeta in the area of what was to become Hart's Mill on the Rio del Norte.²⁴ Although the refugees were soon resupplied, many of the them unlawfully left the camp and went further south into Mexico. Soon after, the rest of the desolate refugees were moved into the small town of *El Paso del Norte*. Although several attempts were later made to reconquer the lost province, the final reconquest would not be successful until twelve years later.

At *El Paso del Norte*, the homeless refugees were to suffer several more hardships during and after their resettlement. They were faced with lengthy droughts, shortages of food and water, and with such low morale that it moved them to present several petitions for the abandonment of the town. Constant Indian attacks culminated in another disastrous revolt in 1684.²⁵ From the newly formed Presidio at *Paso del Norte*, Captain Alonso Garcia was very active pursuing various insubordinate Indians under the new governor, Cruzate.²⁶ Until 1681, Captain Garcia still held his old titles as lieutenant-governor and *maestre de campo*.²⁷ Under this authority, he was very instrumental in establishing the pueblos of *El Real de San Pedro de Alcantara*, *El Real del Santisimo Sacramento*, and for Spaniards only, *El Real de San Lorenzo*. All of these pueblos were originally within two leagues of each other in the valley of the *Rio del Norte*.²⁸

The family of Captain Alonso Garcia I was later to flourish, prosper, and proliferate throughout this valley. It was here that his children added the "de Noriega" name for the next two generations. This is believed to have been done as a tribute to their grandparents.²⁹ One of his daughters, Josefa Garcia de Noriega, was married to Alonso Real de Aguilar, the Secretary of Government and War for Governor Diego de Vargas. They returned with de Vargas for the reconquest in 1692.³⁰ His other daughter, Juana Garcia de Noriega, married the very successful Antonio Dominguez de Mendoza, military commander of the *Presidio del Paso*. Antonio Dominguez and Juana Garcia also returned with de Vargas in

1692.³¹ Antonio Dominguez had replaced Captain Alonso Garcia I as lieutenant-governor and *maestre de campo*, but he too was soon replaced by Garcia's son, Captain Alonso Garcia de Noriega II.³²

Alonso Garcia de Noriega II was born in 1650 and also took part in the reconquest with de Vargas as *sargento mayor* and interpreter. Before the reconquest, he was the *aguacil mayor* (chief constable) of the *cabildo* (town council) of *El Paso del Norte* and was also involved in defensive operations against the Manso, Suma, and Apache Indians in the El Paso, Janos, and Casas Grandes areas.³³ His wife, Ana Jorge de Vera, died in El Paso. After his return to Santa Fe, he married Maria Luisa de Godinez. On his last trip to Santa Fe from El Paso in 1696, Captain Garcia II was killed in an Apache attack at the *Paraje de Agua Escondida* and was buried in Sevilleta.³⁴ He had four sons in Santa Fe: Luis, Vicente, Tomas, and Alonso III. Tomas married Juana Hurtado in Bernalillo in 1705 and together they moved south to claim their grandfather's old land grant. They were one of the original twelve charter families which founded the town of *San Francisco Xavier de Alburquerque* in 1706. Their daughter Francisca, the first-born citizen of Albuquerque, was duly recorded in the church records.³⁵ Alonso Garcia I's other son, Juan Antonio also served as captain during the reconquest attempts with Governor Cruzate. In 1635, during one of these attempts, his group had discovered a copper mine just west of what is now Engle, New Mexico and he was awarded part of it. Captain Juan was also married twice, and he too returned for the final reconquest as *alcalde ordinario* (civil magistrate) with Governor Diego de Vargas. Juan Antonio Garcia had six sons and two daughters, Maria Josefa Garcia de Noriega and Antonia Garcia de Noriega. Although not much is known about Juan Francisco or Ygnacio, his son Joseph was killed in a Manso Indian raid in September 16, 1772.³⁶

Captain Juan's other son, Juan Antonio Garcia de Noriega, who had married Manuela Montoya in 1774, became a very successful and wealthy landowner in the El Paso and Mesilla Valleys. One of the parcels of land that he owned was situated between the two *caballerias* belonging to Juan Maria Ponce de Leon and the old Brusuela's Land Grant north of *El Paso del Norte*. The greater part of his landholdings was the Brazito Land Grant. This tract of land on a bend of the *Rio del Norte* was about thirty-three miles north of *El Paso del Norte*. *El Bracito* had been a favorite campsite for travelers for many centuries. As a retired lieutenant

of the El Paso Militia Dragoons, Juan Antonio petitioned the Governor of New Mexico for this land grant in 1805. Although his agreement included the building of a house and corrals, the cultivating of the soil, and the maintaining of a small militia, his main interest was in the excavating of a rich silver mine on the northern part of this 14,000 acre tract. Apache hostilities had been largely subdued by his agreement to trade corn for peace.³⁷

In 1816, the Mesilla Valley was infested by a great invasion of hungry locusts that destroyed all of the cultivated fields. Don Juan who had lived amicably with the Apaches in this location for many years, is quoted as explaining that

The chiefs of the Apaches have told me that the next year they desire to have their lands planted, if said settlement is established, aided by the citizens of El Paso and the new settlers. I will plant their lands so as to keep them more quiet.³⁸

Acknowledging his success, the *Ayuntamiento of El Paso del Norte* finally recommended on June 29, 1819, that he be granted ownership of the Brazito Land Grant.³⁹ However, the Apaches soon turned against Garcia and drove him and all of his settlers from the valley. He moved back to *El Paso del Norte*, allowing a Missouri investor, John Heath, to try his luck on that property. A misunderstanding and changes in the laws of the newly formed Mexican government caused the cancellation of this "Heath Grant." Shortly thereafter, in 1823, Lieutenant-Governor Jose Ordaz proceeded to finalize the Brazito Grant for Juan Antonio Garcia de Noriega, who returned to rebuild houses, cultivate the land, and to work his silver mine. He was also successful in making peace again with the Apaches. Unfortunately, shortly after he died in 1828, peace with the Indians was again lost and the Brazito settlement was abandoned. In 1849, Juan Maria Ponce de Leon, the *jefe political* of the Distrito Bravos, certified that

Don Juan Garcia, almost at his expense, kept the Apaches at peace and rendered other useful services to travelers and even to the entire nation until the savages, by their insurrections and hostilities, forced him to withdraw from place; the land itself proves that it has been cultivated as it is crossed by acequias. Some of the land is irrigated and the ruins still exist.⁷⁴¹

In the 1850's, Bishop Jean Lamy of Santa Fe, wrote of having seen the abandoned and ruined homes around this area that were destroyed "by the Apache raiders who swept down from their heights and canyons in the Sierra Blanca and who still must be watched for by anyone traveling that way."⁴² In 1851, the heirs of Juan Antonio Garcia sold two-thirds of the grant for \$1,000 to Hugh Stephenson, a Kentucky merchant. In 1854, the Garcias sold the other one-third, including the silver mine, to the same Hugh Stephenson.⁴³

During that same time, Francisco Mariano Garcia de Noriega, the grandson of Alonso Garcia I, and the brother of Juan Antonio, was working on his own land grant of about 10,000 acres known as the Santa Teresa Land Grant. This land grant was located about seven miles northwest of *El Paso del Norte*. Initially conveyed to Francisco about 1790 by the lieutenant-governor of *Nueva Vizcaya*, the tract was known as *El Rancho de Santa Teresa*. When United States Army Major Zebulon M. Pike was being transferred to Mexico City under Spanish guard in 1807, he was quartered at the home of Don Francisco. Pike wrote that this land was used primarily as pasturage for Mr. Garcia's extensive herds of cattle and sheep. Francisco Garcia continued living on this land until 1822 when the Apaches forced him to abandon his settlement temporarily.⁴⁴ The daughter of the well-known Martin Amador of Las Cruces, Mrs. Clotilde Terrazas, said of her great-grandfather: ". . . Don Francisco was a multimillionaire. He was the godfather of Hugh Stephenson."⁴⁵ Francisco Garcia de Noriega died in 1840 and under Mexican law, a one-half interest of the Santa Teresa Land Grant passed to his five children. The other one-half was inherited by his widow Josefa Horcasitas Garcia, the daughter of a prominent military commander from the presidio of El Paso. Jose Maria Garcia, the eldest son, reoccupied the land immediately.

In 1846, this location may have given him an advantage for the reconnaissance of the advancing American forces under Colonel Alexander Doniphan. It was Garcia's report that alerted the Mexican militia of the approaching Missourians. The greatly underestimated number of approaching Americans that he gave to the Mexicans may have hurt whatever chances the Mexican army had for a successful attack.⁴⁶ His ranch was captured by the American forces and was used as living quarters for the soldiers. However, after their departure, it was noticed that several things were missing, and that among those missing articles were the

title papers to the Santa Teresa Land Grant. Because the original title in the archives of the *ayuntamiento* in *El Paso del Norte* had been destroyed by the invading American Army, proof of ownership was to be very difficult after the war. After much investigation and many testimonials by local citizens, a new decree for Garcia's title which reaffirmed ownership to the heirs of Don Francisco Garcia de Noriega was issued by the Mexican government in 1853.⁴⁷

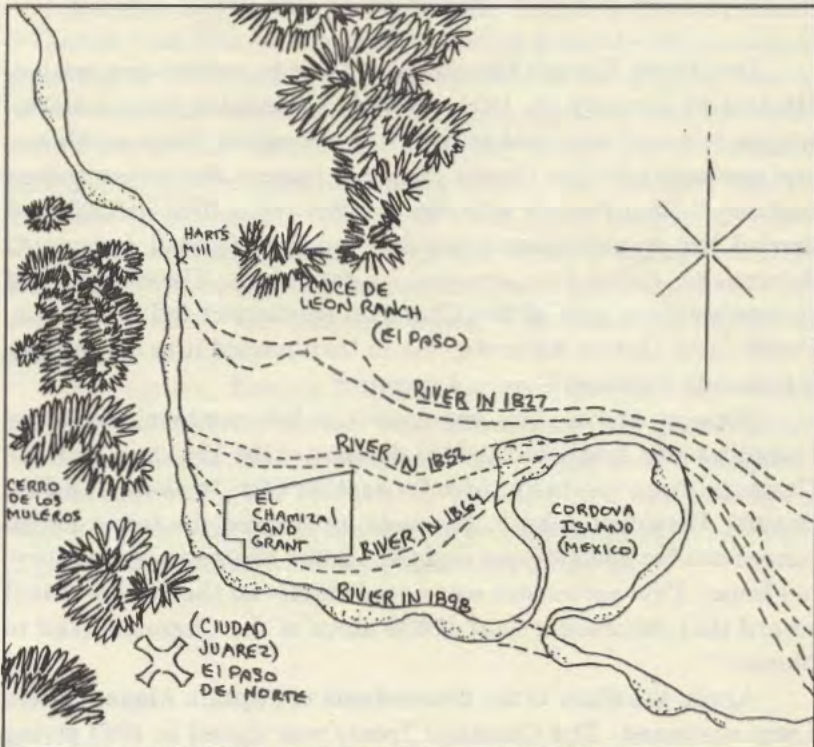
Francisco had had six sons and a daughter named Guadalupe Garcia who married Agapito Albo, a very well known military and political leader, who was one of the commanders of the Mexican forces against Doniphan's invading army.⁴⁸ Don Agapito had also been one of the original seven legislators for the newly established Mexican territory of New Mexico between 1822 and 1824.⁴⁹ In 1827 he was the presiding *alcalde* who awarded to Juan Maria Ponce de Leon his well-known land grant north of the Rio Grande in what today is downtown El Paso, Texas.⁵⁰ Susan Shelby Magoffin wrote in her diary of the hospitality and congeniality of "... Don Agapita [sic], an old Gauchupine. . . ."⁵¹

Jesus Garcia, one of the sons of Don Francisco, married Emilia Amador, daughter of Martin Amador of Las Cruces. Still, another son, Fernando Garcia Horcasitas, was *alcalde* for *El Paso del Norte* at one time. A third son of Francisco, Pedro Garcia Horcasitas, was the father of Pedro Ygnacio Garcia del Barrio. It was this Pedro who rocked the El Paso area with a political tremor that lasted for nearly one hundred years

Pedro Ygnacio Garcia del Barrio was the owner of the Chamizal Land Grant. He was born on October 23, 1847 during the Mexican-American War. In 1866, after his grandfather's death, he received the title to an old 1818 Spanish land grant from his mother's father, Lorenzo del Barrio.⁵² Pedro later married Beatriz Azcarate, the daughter of Geronimo Azcarate, whose father, Juan Azcarate, was the owner of the Azcarate Land Grant in El Paso, Texas as well as many other land holdings in Paso del Norte, Janos, and Casas Grandes, and mining interests in Corralitos, Chihuahua.⁵³

After a great flood in 1864, Don Pedro's land was eroded by the unpredictable torrents of the Rio Grande. In 1866, Pedro Garcia and other concerned Mexican landowners held audience with President Benito Juarez during his exile in *El Paso del Norte*. A letter of concern was forwarded to the American government through the Mexican consulate in Washington D.C. The only re-

sult of this communication was a clarified definition for an international boundary.⁵⁴ Another great flood in 1873 further degraded his land by moving the riverbed further south. This action prompted Mr. Garcia to issue another written claim against the American government. This claim, however, was also not considered by the American courts. In the meanwhile, land speculators were quickly moving onto his land and claiming ownership rights under the Law of Accretion. (This international law automatically gives rights of ownership to the landowner of an opposite riverbank property when the river of demarcation slowly moves its banks to such a degree that it takes land from one owner and gives it to another on the opposite side of the river.) The value of the Chamizal was quickly increasing as the incorporation of El Paso, Texas was preparing the city for the coming of railroads. Beatriz Garcia Guzman, recalls hearing that her grandfather, Don Pedro, tried repeatedly to farm his land on the north side of the river, but he was continuously threatened and driven off at gunpoint.⁵⁵



Drawn by the author.

After the International Boundary Commission was reestablished in 1889, Don Pedro realized that he now had an official forum that could hear and decide his claim. By this time, most of the other landowners of this area had been bought out, chased away, or had simply given up their claims. The only claimant who did not leave and who would not sell, according to land speculator William J. Warder, was the owner of the Garcia claim.⁵⁶ Pedro Y. Garcia was a city councilman and a lower court judge in the newly named Ciudad Juarez and because of this political experience, he was confident of winning his claim in a court battle. In 1895, the International Boundary Commission convened, but after many testimonials, the commission decided that it was not merely a case of an individual citizen claiming his 4.7 acres of disputed land, but rather that it was a bigger international case in which the Republic of Mexico was claiming over six hundred acres of what was considered American soil!⁵⁷ This issue became known as The Chamizal Case, Number 4. This question was consequently tabled by the commission until an arbitration tribunal could meet at a later date to decide the case.

Don Pedro Ygnacio Garcia did not live to see the case settled. He died on January 16, 1911. Exactly six months later, an arbitration tribunal awarded most of the Chamizal claim to Mexico and made way for the Garcia family to recover the property they had lost.⁵⁸ Don Pedro's wife, Beatriz Azcarate, died in 1925 and deeded her property, including her ranch in Ciudad Juarez, *El Azcarateño*, to her four sons and six daughters. The challenge of recovering their part of the Chamizal settlement fell to her son, Pedro Jesus Garcia Azcarate. He in turn passed it to his brother Raymundo Santiago Garcia Azcarate.⁵⁹

Because Anson Mills, the American International Boundary Commissioner, had dissented the decision of the 1911 tribunal, the Chamizal issue was to continue for another fifty-two years! In July of 1963, President John F. Kennedy announced the terms for an agreement between Mexico and the United States to the century-old issue. This agreement was based chiefly on the 1911 tribunal award that returned a total of 630 acres of the Chamizal land to Mexico.⁶⁰

Again, the claim of the descendants of Captain Alonso Garcia I was sustained. The Chamizal Treaty was signed in 1963 giving due compensation to all legitimate Chamizal property owners on

the American side. However, the original and only claimants in Mexico, the Garcia family, were never compensated as mandated by the terms of the Chamizal Treaty.⁶¹

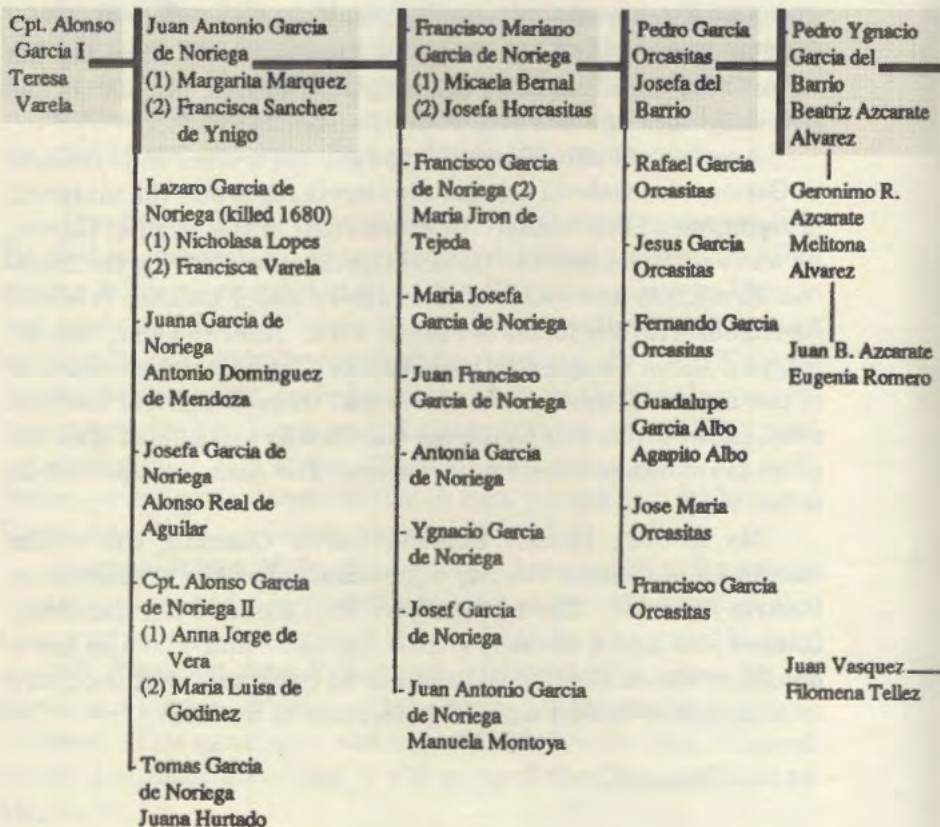
Don Raymundo Garcia, a very wealthy and politically prominent businessman, was the co-owner of Cervecería Juárez S.A. and the manager of the El Paso and Juárez Traction Company—the international trolley company. For many years, he served both cities with his brokerage and forwarding agency and as the organizer and first manager of the Juárez office of the El Paso Electric Company. Don Raymundo also served as Mexican consul to the Republic of Guatemala. Unable to achieve closure to the family's Chamizal claim before he died in 1972, he passed the task to the next Garcia, his son, Pedro Nestor Garcia Martinez.

Using his own great political clout as a former state legislator, federal congressman, city alderman, and as former Mayor of Ciudad Juárez (1953-55), Pedro N. Garcia is still pursuing his claim to the Chamizal Land Grant against Mexico. Mr. Garcia has five daughters and one son, Pedro Ramon Garcia.⁶²

Another of Pedro Ygnacio's sons and the brother of Raymundo S. Garcia, was Gabriel Guadalupe Garcia Azcarate, the maternal grandfather of this author. Characteristic of the original Garcia, he was very independent. Gabriel Garcia served during the Mexican Revolution as captain of the cavalry under Colonel Trinidad Rodriguez with the forces of Pancho Villa. After the war, Gabriel married Maria Vasquez Tellez of El Paso, Texas, the grandmother of the author of this article. They had three daughters and two sons, one of whom was Geronimo Garcia who was named after his great-grandfather Geronimo Azcarate. The name was passed on to his son.

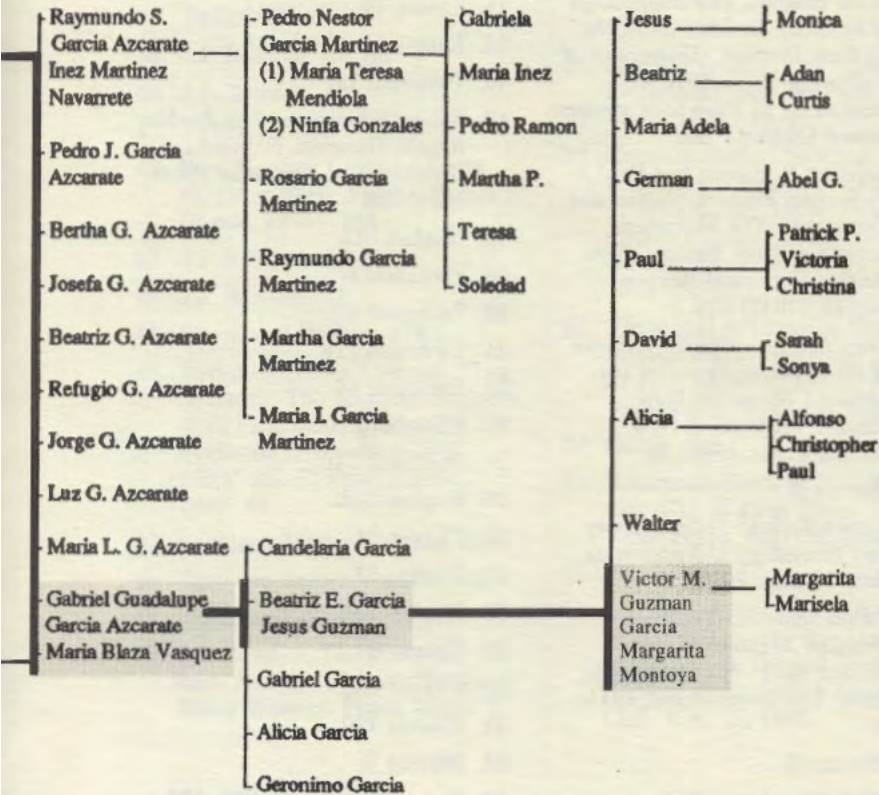
My mother, Beatriz Eugenia Garcia Guzman, one of the daughters of Gabriel Garcia, was named after her grandmother Beatriz Azcarate. She in turn gave the name to her daughter. Gabriel also had a son who shared his name and who also has a daughter named Beatriz. It seems to be customary in this culture to pass names down from one generation to the next.

Many centuries have passed since the original Garcias came to this valley. Like many other original New Mexico families, the Garcias left Mexico for the promises of Santa Fe where they secured land grants, established their *ranchos*, and married their neighbors. These families with names like Chavez, Baca, Montoya, Jimenez, Trujillo, and Tellez were given out in the Revolt of 1680 by the people they had enslaved and settled in the towns of Ysleta, Socorro, San Elizario, Senecú, and San Lorenzo. Many of these old family names and descendents are still found in this area, and like the Garcias, some of their ancestors also returned with Diego de Vargas to reestablish themselves in Santa Fe.



This chart shows the line of descendance from Captain Alonzo Garcia I to the generation of the author. Follow the heavy line.

From the capital, these families, particularly the Garcias, helped establish New Mexico towns with names like Albuquerque, Socorro, Los Garcias, Las Vegas, and La Luz. Others eventually went west to Arizona and Nevada, and to search for gold in California. Although other Garcia families have arrived in this area from other parts of the world, it is understandable that many of today's Garcias found here and throughout New Mexico are descendents of the original Garcias. The legacy of my great-great-great-great grandfather, Captain Alonso Garcia I, continues into another generation and another century.

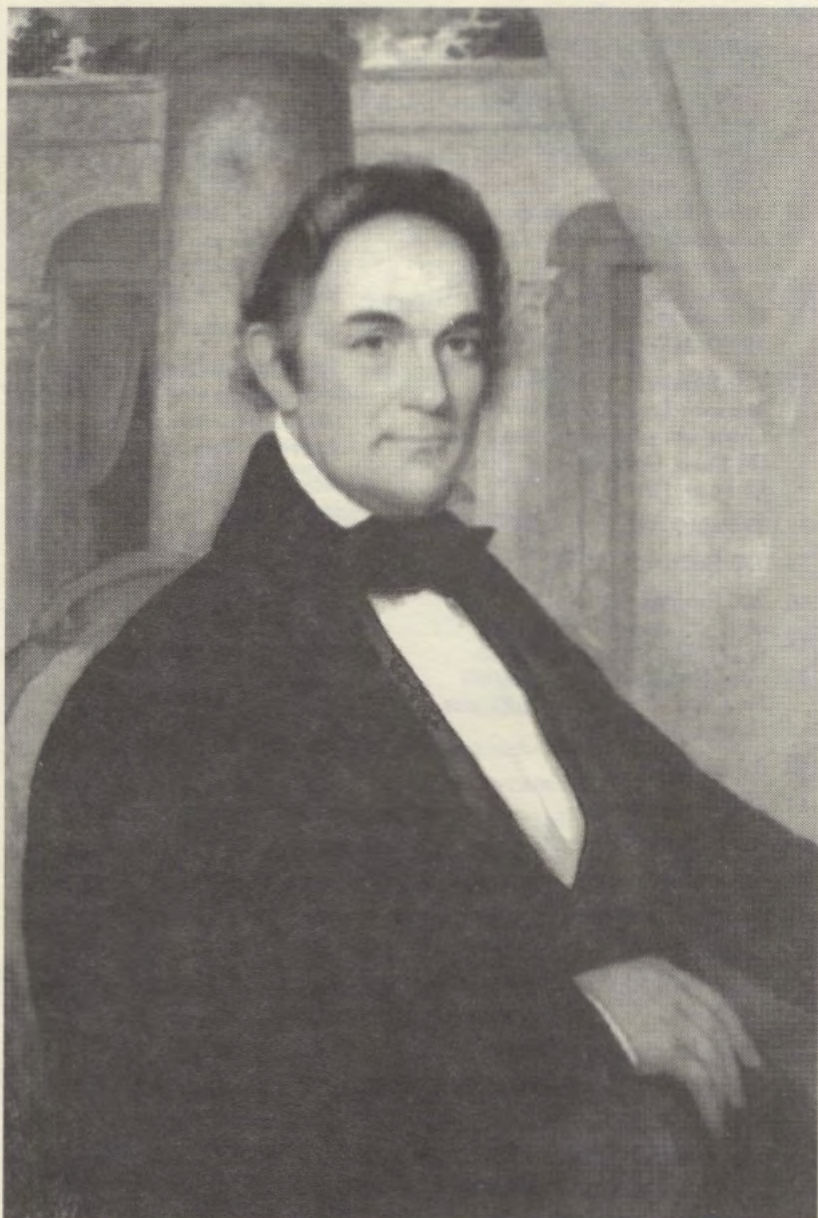


VICTOR M. GUZMAN GARCIA is a life-long resident of El Paso. He is a graduate of Jefferson High School and attended the University of Texas at El Paso. He has become interested in the history of his family, beginning with family stories and culminating with an extensive collection of documentary evidence which he used in this article. He is married to the former Margarita Montoya, they have two daughters, Margarita and Marisela. Victor is currently working on a book on the subject of the Chamizal.

NOTES

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*James Wiley Magoffin
from the Magoffin home, photo by M. Brian Gross*



Don Santiago Magoffin

By Bob Miles

As he watched the waves break on the sandy shores of Matagorda Bay, James Wiley Magoffin noted once more how the colors of earth, the sea and the sky all seemed to blend together into a hazy gray that stretched away to the eastern horizon. It was a sharp contrast to the vivid greens of the Kentucky home he had left but weeks before bound for Mexico and adventure.

It was good to be young in a young nation where all things seemed possible. He had joined a group of other adventurous young merchants and sailed out of New Orleans headed south to fortune and fame, only to be shipwrecked on this uninhabited Texas shore, hardly an auspicious beginning for a young man just setting out to seek his future. Walking back toward the piles of salvaged goods that formed a crude barricade for the stranded party, James once more felt the anxiety to be underway again, little realizing just how far his quest would take him from the fertile lands of his home.

The novelty of the shipwreck was growing thin. Most of the cargo had been salvaged and food was plentiful along the Gulf shore. Except for the possibility of attack by the hostile, cannibalistic Karankawa Indians, there was little danger. He noted the laxness of the guard as he approached the camp and an idea began to form.

One of the members of the group had a number of wax figures of famous historical characters which he planned to exhibit in Mexico. These, James proposed, should stand their turn at watch. When the owner protested that the hot Texas sun would melt his means of livelihood, it was agreed that the wax heroes would stand guard at night, with a live watch commander to "receive their report."

James' blue eyes still sparkled as he told Texas Ranger Captain George W. Baylor, some 40 years later, of how Napoleon and Caesar watched inland while Lord Nelson kept an eye to seaward.¹

The castaways were soon rescued by a coastal schooner and sailed to Matamoros. From there, James made his way to Saltillo and began his long career as merchant and diplomat. He found Mexico and its people to his liking and his natural charm and ready Irish wit made him popular with the Mexican people, who soon dubbed him *Don Santiago*.

James was born in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, in 1799. His father, Beriah Magoffin, had immigrated from Ireland, and his mother, Jane MacAfee was also Irish. He had three sisters and six brothers, one of whom, also named Beriah, served as governor of Kentucky.² Exactly when James Magoffin went to Mexico is unclear, it is believed to have been about 1824.

In Saltillo, James served as United States consul, a post frequently held by American merchants in those times. Some sources say he moved to Chihuahua City to avoid Santa Ana's forces which were moving northward to attempt to quell the rebellious Texians in 1835, but there is evidence that he was already in that city and doing quite well there. A letter dated 1832 written from Chihuahua to his brother Samuel in Matamoros requests that Samuel send him a "barrel of Tenerife wine, a barrel of French brandy, 50 boxes of sardines and a phaeton carriage."³

Documents in the Chihuahua archives indicate that James was quite active in the business, political and social affairs there in the late 1830's and early 1840's. He was engaged in a number of business and mining activities with other American traders and adventurers and appears to have served on the Chihuahua *ayuntamiento* or municipal government, indicating that he had become a Mexican citizen.

It was in Chihuahua, about 1830, that James also took a wife. She was Maria Gertrudis de los Santos Valdez de Veremendi of San Antonio. Apparently she was the widowed aunt of Texas hero James Bowie's wife, Ursula. Other sources indicate that James and Maria Gertrudis were married in Saltillo in 1834. Whichever was correct, James' new family connections and his natural abilities enabled him to prosper. By the 1830's, he was increasingly engaged in the growing Santa Fe-Chihuahua trade with his brothers Samuel and William and his brother-in-law Gabriel Valdez.

With James handling most of the Mexican end of the business, they were active in both retail and wholesale trade, they operated one or more stores, and did some profitable card playing as well.

By this time, traders had already glutted the limited markets of northern New Mexico and were pushing southward to Chihuahua, following the old Spanish *Camino Real* through *El Paso del Norte*. Edward J. Glasgow, a contemporary of the Magoffins (and whose son would later marry James' granddaughter) recalled details of the New Mexico and Chihuahua trade in a letter dated November 2, 1906:

"... the goods dealt in were largely of brown and bleached cotton manufactures and printed cottons of calico—some few silk goods and woolen cloth and cashimeres [sic] were included and the usual assortment of articles sold in dry goods stores, but the great bulk of the trade was in cotton goods. Up to the time of our war with Mexico these goods were sent in steamboats to Independence, Mo., and there loaded in wagons of large size and generally drawn by eight or Ten [sic] mules—oxen were occasionally used but mules were preferred, being faster and better able to live on the short grass of the plains, to endure fatigue and the long stretches where water was not available. No white people lived on the road between Independence and Las Vegas, New Mexico—the plains were occupied by many tribes of Indians, Pawnees, Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Comanches, Kiowas, Utes—buffalo and antelope were plentiful and the chief subsistence for the traders and Indians. In New Mexico and Chihuahua the Apaches roamed and constant vigilance was necessary to protect the traders mules, there and on the plains, from Indian thieving. In New Mexico the trade was mostly in the hands of Mexicans. In Chihuahua there were also several Mexicans, and among the Americans engaged in the regular trade were James and Sam Magoffin, Frank Macmanus [sic], Connelly and Glasgow and Owens and Aull."⁴

In addition to the goods mentioned by Glasgow, thread, ribbons, canned goods, and English and American manufactured goods were also popular, but nearly everything for which there might be a market found its way down the trail. Even empty whiskey bottles sold for more in Santa Fe than the full ones cost



*Maria Gertrudis de los
Santos Valdez de Veremendi
from the Magoffin home, photo
by M. Brian Gross*

other hazards, they also faced the less dramatic equally frustrating obstacles of glutted markets and ever present red tape and regulations of a fickle Mexican bureaucracy.

Mexican frontier customs houses required the trader to obtain, at the very least, a *guia* or clearance of mercantile passport; a *fractura* or invoice, and a *toraquia* or certificate showing that the goods were legally entered into the country, with their required duty fees.⁵ *Mordida*, literally "bite"; figuratively "bribe," if not required, was usually advisable to expedite matters. The squalling of the *carretas*, the two-wheeled ox carts, were about the only things that moved past 17th century Mexican officials without some form of "grease." Goods were usually inspected at each settlement the traders passed through and should the trader attempt to bypass inspection points, smuggled goods were promptly confiscated.

In 1839, New Mexico Governor Manuel Armijo imposed a \$500 per wagon tax on each American wagon entering Santa Fe. This led to the development of larger wagons to enable the traders to carry more goods per wagon. The huge Murphy wagons, capable of carrying up to 7,000 pounds of merchandise, were one answer to Armijo's tax.⁶

With his Mexican connections, James Wiley Magoffin most likely was able to cut through much of the red tape, or at least be

in Missouri, a fact which undoubtedly delighted the rugged teamsters.

On the return trip, the United States traders carried mostly Mexican silver coins which were sewn into large rawhide bags. The wet rawhide dried and shrunk to form parcels too heavy and bulky to be easily stolen. At the end of the trip, the bags were opened with an ax. Burros and mules were also popular trade items, leading to the development of the famed Missouri mule.

While the traders faced Indians, floods, prairie fires and

certain the *mordida* was placed in the proper hands. An example of the trust granted the Magoffins is the fact that Samuel Magoffin carried the annual payroll to the Mexican garrison in Santa Fe in 1842.

Records do not indicate that the Magoffins were involved in any way in the Texas Revolution, but in 1841, they did give aid to the imprisoned members of the ill-fated Texian-Santa Fe Expedition which had sought unsuccessfully to enforce the new Republic's claim to eastern New Mexico. While the surviving members of the party were held in Chihuahua en route to Perote prison, James' two sons took food to the men.⁷

Despite the acceptance of the Magoffins in Mexico, growing hostilities between the United States and Mexico made their situation increasingly more difficult. When Mexican President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna imposed an embargo on American trade in 1842, James moved with his family to a farm near Independence, Missouri, where he raised mules. By 1844 Santa Anna had been exiled to Cuba and the trade embargo had been lifted, and James once more sent his wagons into Mexico.

In 1845, when Maria Gertrudis Magoffin died, the two oldest daughters were placed in the Visitation Convent in Saint Louis, while the two youngest daughters were left in the care of their Aunt Dolores, whom James would later marry. The two boys, Samuel and Joseph, accompanied their father on a business trip through several major Eastern cities, then were left in the care of their uncle Beriah at a private school in Lexington, Kentucky. James and Maria Gertrudis had had six children: Joseph, who would later serve as mayor of El Paso; Samuel, who died in Louisiana during the War Between the States; Annette later married Joseph Dwyer of San Antonio; Josephine married Charles Richardson; Ursula, died at an early age at Magoffinsville, and Angela, who also died as a child, but at the Visitation Convent in Saint Louis, Missouri.⁸

The following year, James made a trip to Chihuahua, returning with \$40,000. As he was preparing for another trip south, he received a letter from Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton, whom he had met during his 1845 trip east. The senator asked James to meet with him in Washington, D.C. In that city, James met with Senator Benton and President James K. Polk. James was asked to use his knowledge and influence of Mexico and its people to assist the United States Army moving toward New Mexi-

co under Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny.⁹ Apparently he was to operate under a colonel's commission. At some point, he was also appointed brigadier general of the Texas State Militia by Texas Governor Elisha Marshall Pease.¹⁰

James found Colonel Kearny and the army encamped at Bent's Fort on July 26, 1846. He presented himself to Kearny, along with a letter of introduction from Secretary of War William L. Marcy in which Marcy had written of Magoffin "Considering

Arriving there, James presented a letter from Kearny to New Mexico Governor Manuel Armijo who was said by some sources to have been a relative of his late wife. The letter assured Armijo that the American forces intended only to occupy the territory annexed with Texas east of the Rio Grande and desired no hostilities.

his intelligence, his credit with the people and his business capacity, it is believed he will give important information and make arrangements to furnish your troops with abundant supplies in New Mexico."

Also at Bent's Fort was Samuel, James' brother, and Samuel's new bride, Susan Shelby Magoffin, who was the first American woman to leave a record of the journey along the Santa Fe-Chihuahua Trail. With them also was a caravan of traders headed south.

On August 1st, James accompanied Capt. Phillip St. George Cook and twelve dragoons into Santa Fe. Arriving there, James presented a letter from Kearny to New Mexico Governor Manuel Armijo who was said by some sources to have been a relative of his late wife. The letter assured Armijo that the American forces intended only to occupy the territory annexed with Texas east of the Rio Grande and desired no hostilities. There is a strong possibility that a later meeting was held with Armijo. There are also unconfirmed reports that

money changed hands to assure the governor's cooperation.

Armijo's second-in-command, Colonel Diego Archuleta, was less inclined to allow the Americans to proceed unopposed, but was convinced that the land west of the river would not be occupied. Armijo fled south and the United States army entered Santa Fe unopposed on August 18th. After a jubilant meal of oysters and champagne with Samuel and Susan on the last day of August 1846, James set out for El Paso del Norte and the city of Chihuahua in

an attempt to secure the surrender of those Mexican towns before the approach of the United States Army.

En route, he was attacked by Apaches, losing his wagon, team, and all his gear, but escaping with his life. Making his way to the small community of *Doña Ana*, he reoutfitted and continued down the Rio Grande to *El Paso del Norte*. There, however, he received a less than cordial welcome and was imprisoned. Only his friendly contacts in Mexico kept him from being executed.

He was sent to Chihuahua City and to other locations in Mexico and held prisoner for the remainder of the war. At one point, he received a letter from Kearney congratulating him on his role in the Santa Fe campaign. Had the Mexican authorities been aware contents of the letter, James would undoubtedly have been executed, but the officer in charge gave him the letter unopened and allowed him to burn it after he had read it.

Upon his release from prison in Mexico, James went to Washington, D.C., in an attempt to obtain compensation for his expenses and losses during the war. He finally was given a settlement of \$30,000, although he had claimed \$50,000. After his trip to Washington, James returned to Independence and organized another wagon train for Chihuahua. Upon reaching *El Paso del Norte*, however, he learned the duties and imports were now prohibitive and he settled instead on the American side of the river. Here, a few miles east of present downtown El Paso, James established a *hacienda* and trading center. The discovery of gold in California led to a stampede of gold seekers headed west. Many passed through James' settlement, known as Magoffinsville, and he prospered.

A number of other settlements soon grew on the United States side of the Rio Grande at the ancient Pass of the North. In addition to Magoffinsville, there was Frontera, Simeon Hart's Mill, Benjamin Franklin Coons' Franklin and Hugh Stephenson's Concordia Ranch. James prospered, continuing to be active in trade with Chihuahua. He maintained supply trains from Indianola, Texas, he farmed, operated his store and, for a brief and unsuccessful time, engaged in the salt trade which led to what has been called the Magoffin Salt War (not to be confused with the later Salt War).

In 1853, James was taking salt from the Salina de San Andres in New Mexico, claiming title to these salt beds despite the New Mexican tradition of free use of the salt. In January 1854, James

heard that a salt-gathering expedition was going to the area and requested that El Paso Sheriff William Ford enforce his claim to the salt. A posse was formed, consisting of seventeen Americans, one Englishman, ten Latin Americans, a howitzer and plenty of "Pass whiskey." The New Mexicans at first merely laughed at the attempt to serve them with a warrant, until the cannon was fired. The New Mexico party fled, leaving their carts behind. Consequent legal action on the part of New Mexico led to the return of the oxen, restitution by James, and an end to his salt business.¹¹

A year later, James loaned money to the famed frontiersman Henry Skillman so that he could continue his contract for delivery of the mail. Skillman mortgaged "100 mules and four carriages which are now being used in the conveying of the mail from San Antonio to Santa Fe," a post office draft for the \$7,000 due on his government mail contract, and he sold James a house and lot that he owned at Concordia.¹²

Many visitors wrote of the grand hospitality of James Wiley Magoffin. Among them was John Russell Bartlett, United States Boundary Commissioner, who visited and headquartered at the Magoffin hacienda in 1851, and was royally entertained and supplied from the Magoffin warehouses.

Bartlett described the settlement in 1852 as "... the principal settlement. . . . It consists of a square around which are substantial



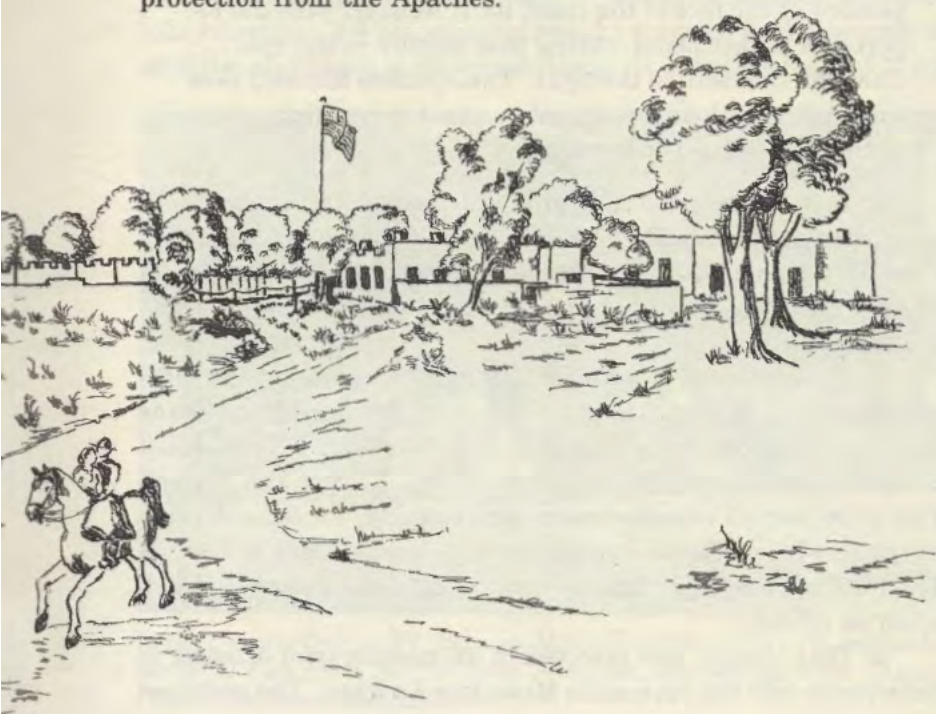
*Fort Bliss at Magoffinsville.
Adapted from a pencil sketch
made in 1868 by H. Stieffel,
Co.K. 5th U.S. Infantry.
Courtesy El Paso County
Historical Society Archives.*

adobe buildings of a better description than usual, embracing some six or eight large stores and warehouses, well filled with merchandise."¹³

Ten years later, a young Confederate Lieutenant George W. Baylor was stationed at Magoffinsville and recalled

"A fine grove of alamos surrounded the houses A sward under grateful shade of the alamos of green alfalfa, made it like an oasis in the desert surrounding it. Within the patio of the family home grew lovely flowers, and during the grape season every morning a peon brought from across the Grande a great basket of the luscious El Paso grapes, cold from the night air, and sweet as honey. These and all other fruits were placed on a large table in the patio, and everybody helped himself the first thing in the morning. We surely did enjoy it. . . ."¹⁴

Apache depredations, however, took much of James' livestock, even from within 150 yards of his house. In 1854, the army came back to El Paso after a three year absence, and established a post at Magoffinsville, leasing the facilities from James and providing protection from the Apaches.



Sometime during this period, on a trip north from El Paso, James had another adventure he later related to Baylor. They had stopped for lunch and to water their stock along the banks of the Rio Grande en route to Las Cruces. As they started back up the bank to the wagon, they saw

. . . about 25 Apaches had taken possession of his ambulance and were helping themselves to everything portable—harnesses blankets, grub, and among other things a stovepipe beaver hat. . . . There was nothing to do but watch them, as they were too numerous to be attacked. . . . The Indians soon had out the judge's [Baylor referred to James as Judge Magoffin] brown jug and emptied it. On further search they brought out a basket of the best brand of champagne from under the seat This discovery brought from them a whoop of joy, the brown jug having already made them hilarious. They had out several bottles and went to work industriously to get out the corks. As it was hot, and the champagne well shaken up, it was naturally in a very highly explosive condition. The first one who got the wire cut and the cork nearly out must have had it pointed at the face of the chief, for it went off with the report of a pocket pistol, taking that worthy in the eye. . . . That one shot settled the fight. The Apaches tumbled over each other in their terror and dropped everything, stampeding like a herd of mustangs.¹⁵

In 1852, James hosted a group, described as "a mixture of visionaries and fortune hunters drawn . . . by the drum-beating of Senator Thomas Rusk," to discuss and plan a railroad across Texas.¹⁶ However, it would be nearly thirty years before railroads would reach the Pass.

James continued to prosper, adding the supply of the military to his list of enterprises. Then even the frontier of Texas heard the echos of the shots fired at Fort Sumter and Texas voted to join the Confederacy in February of 1861. James and Simeon Hart were named commissioners for receiving the federal property at Fort Bliss. These supplies served General Henry H. Sibley's New Mexico campaign, which James' sons, Joseph and Samuel, joined as officers.

In 1861, James was involved in an unsuccessful attempt to make peace with the yet hostile Mescalero Apaches. The postmas-

ter and sutler at Fort Davis, Patrick McCarthy, had persuaded Mescalero leader Nicolas to meet with Lieutenant Colonel John R. Baylor, commander of the Confederate Second Texas Mounted Rifles, in El Paso. Traveling to Fort Bliss by stagecoach, McCarthy and Nicholas were royally entertained by James and Lt. Col. Baylor, (who was not noted for his friendliness to the Apaches), at a formal banquet complete with flowery speeches and promises of peace. En route back to Fort Davis, as McCarthy dozed in his seat, Nicholas grabbed the Irishman's pistols from their holsters and leapt from the coach, disappearing into the night near Barrel Springs. The hostilities continued.¹⁷

Following the Southern loss at Glorieta near Santa Fe, the Confederates withdrew to San Antonio. James, Joseph and Samuel went with them after James had sent his wife across the river to Mexico. James was appointed a captain and served as assistant commissary of subsistence for Texas. He also served in the Confederate legislature of Texas as a state senator for El Paso and Presidio counties. His sons both became majors in the Confederate army: Samuel died in Louisiana while Joseph survived the war and became a prominent civic leader in El Paso.

With the defeat of the South, James found himself in a perilous situation. All his property lost, he traveled to Washington to seek the assistance of old friends there. It is said he refused to ask



Officer's quarters on Ft. Bliss at Magoffinsville with wife and baby seated. Photo from the National Archives, courtesy El Paso County Historical Society Archives.

pardon because he felt he had done nothing for which to be pardoned. He was not successful and returned to San Antonio. Provisional Governor Andrew Jackson Hamilton assumed that James had received the amnesty he sought and commissioned him to re-establish order and the county government in El Paso. The commander at Fort Bliss, however, refused to recognize his authority.

James once more returned to San Antonio and then to Washington to attempt again to regain his property and gain amnesty. On this trip, he took Mrs. Simeon Hart and her family to New York to meet her husband. This time, with the help of old friends in high places, James was granted amnesty. Shortly after his return to San Antonio however, he died of dropsy (edema) on September 29, 1868, at the home of his daughter Annette and her husband Joseph Dwyer. He was buried there on the Dwyer Rancho. The year before, the Rio Grande had flooded and Magoffinsville had been completely destroyed.¹⁸

So ends the tale of one of El Paso's first and most distinguished citizens, James Wiley Magoffin—*Don Santiago*—a man who was perhaps best summarized by an editorial in the September 10, 1862, *Austin State Gazette*: "We like all men who have about them the remains of boyishness; whose hearts are young; whose sympathies are easily aroused and whose affections never grow cold and selfish. May the General, who we proclaim to be the Pickwick of the Southwest, and therefore the Pickwick *par excellence* of the world, live and laugh a thousand years."

ROBERT W. "BOB" MILES, SR. was born in Marfa, Texas and attended schools in Alpine, Fort Davis, and El Paso. He earned a B.A. in journalism and an M.A. in history from The University of Texas at El Paso. He was a reporter for the *El Paso Times* and served as a staff writer for the *Pipelinier*, the house organ for El Paso Natural Gas Company. Bob Miles was one of the founding members of the El Paso Corral of the Westerners. He was the first park superintendent at the Magoffin Home State Historical Site. He also served at Hueco Tanks State Historical Park and at Balmorhea State Park. He retired recently from state service and is doing free-lance writing.

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One Weekend in 1944

By Mardee Belding de W etter

With great care my father, Charles Belding, saved enough gas coupons to provide for a driving trip from El Paso to the Hondo Valley in New Mexico. America had reached the decisive days of the Second World War. Everyone felt a personal involvement and commitment. Previous to this time two southwestern artists had responded by becoming correspondents for *Life Magazine*, but on that weekend in 1944 both of them, Peter Hurd and Tom Lea, had returned from their journeys to the peacefulness of home.

My father had known Peter Hurd years before. Like him, he had grown up in Roswell, New Mexico, graduating from Roswell High School in time to go to college at Valparaiso University in Indiana, and thence to the U.S. Navy as an ensign. Charles Belding knew the Hondo Valley well, had picked apples at the Coe Ranch, climbed Old Baldy, and always afterward yearned for his boyhood days. As an El Pasoan in later years, he came to know Tom Lea, an artist whom he revered, both for his unique talent and for his character.

It seemed natural, therefore, that Charles Belding should arrange a weekend meeting of his two friends at the Sentinel Ranch at San Patricio where Peter and his wife, Henriette Wyeth, lived. When the red Chevrolet had been filled with the cherished gasoline, my father and my mother, Betty Safford Belding, Tom and his wife, Sarah Lea, and I drove slowly up the road through the Tularosa Basin to spend the night at the Hurds' ranch. Along the way we passed a convoy of German prisoners. I do not know where they were being held, but I remember the intensity of my feeling.



*Left to right: Tom Lea, Sarah Lea, Henriette Hurd, Peter Hurd.
Photo courtesy of author*

The ranch, where a polo game was in process on a rough field, seemed as remote from the world as one could get. Peter Hurd had traveled from this place across North Africa where he drew pen and ink sketches of fez-wearing natives. He had continued around the world on assignments by Daniel Longwell of *Life Magazine*, sketching and painting whatever scenes he encountered. Tom Lea, meanwhile, had sailed on a destroyer, the World War I *Schenck*, in the perilous North Atlantic, and had flown the Hump to Chungking. He had written *A Grizzly from the Coral Sea* about life and death in the war in the Pacific. Still ahead of him lay the beach at Peleliu.

My father had a proprietary interest in the old *Schenck* as he had been aboard her during the World War I when she was commissioned. He, too, had faced the hazards of war. I, as an anxious young bride, bore my own burden that June as my soldier husband, Peter de Wetter, was then, after D-Day, somewhere in the European theater of war.

During the year before, Peter Hurd had painted a watercolor of the view down the Hondo Valley toward a small adjacent red-roofed building. Across the bottom of the painting he had inscrib-

ed the words, "To Mardee and Peter de Wetter from Peter Hurd, 1943." It had been our wedding present.

The house at Sentinel Ranch lay in a hollow with the rounded green hills rising above it. The scent of the hills sifted onto the verandah. That weekend refreshed us all. Since then the fame and talent of the artists have become legendary. Their biographies tell their stories, yet that shared respite from the war was caught by my father's black and white camera: Tom and Sarah Lea and Peter and Henriette Hurd. That tranquil time has endured throughout my life as a memory of peace and joy and hope in the midst of appalling strife and the terror of war.

MARDEE BELDING DE WETTER is a native El Pasoan, the daughter of Charles and Betty Belding, has a long interest in history. She has a Master of Arts in history from the University of Texas at El Paso and has written and illustrated 3 books of poetry. Portions of her Master's thesis entitled "Revolutionary El Paso, 1910-1917" have been published in *Password*. Her family has been in El Paso since the late 1880s when her grandfather, Dr. Henry Safford, arrived in El Paso to serve as the physician at the Smelter which had been founded by his uncle, Robert Towne. Mardee and her husband Peter, who was El Paso's mayor from 1969 to 1971, are charter and life members of the El Paso County Historical Society. Mardee is also a member of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.





Book Reviews

DONIPHAN'S EXPEDITION: AN ACCOUNT OF THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO by John Taylor Hughes. Introduction by Joseph G. Dawson III. College Station, Texas A&M University Press, 1997. xv + 224 pp. Line drawings, maps. \$16.95, paper.

THE MEXICAN WAR CORRESPONDENCE OF RICHARD SMITH ELLIOTT by Richard Smith Elliott. Edited and Annotated by Mark L. Gardner and Marc Simmons. Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1997. xi + 292 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95, cloth.

In 1845, the United States annexed the Republic of Texas despite Mexico's legitimate claims to the territory. Mexico viewed this brash step by the American government, combined with the deployment of American troops into the disputed region, as an act of war. Shortly thereafter, a skirmish ensued and James Polk, the president of the United States, called for volunteer soldiers to rectify the dubious claim that "American blood had been shed on the American soil." The young nation responded enthusiastically and over 50,000 volunteers enlisted in the military. The two books to be reviewed are both first hand accounts written by soldiers in the Army of the West; yet, each paints a very different picture of volunteer service and southwestern cultures.

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the war, John Taylor Hughes' *Doniphan's Expedition* has been re-issued with a new, informative introduction. Unfortunately, this edition lacks an index. Originally written in 1847, this comprehensive account of the conquest of Mexico is a worthwhile and interesting addition to the war's collection of primary sources. Like many of the volunteers, Hughes relished the opportunities for adventure and glory that the war offered. So confident was he of achieving success, that, prior to marching to Mexico, Hughes announced his plans to write this book. His education and background in teaching facilitated this immense project, though it is apparent that he was appealing to American sentiment when writing this account. Likewise, Hughes appears to have been writing with the aim of validating the efforts of the Army of the West, which received significantly less attention than the army that captured Mexico City.

Writing in the ornate style of the period, Hughes enthusiastically describes Doniphan's march from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas to Santa Fe, through El Paso to Chihuahua City, and finally back home via New Orleans. An astute observer of both the inner-workings of the army

and the geography of the land, Hughes engages the reader with great details on his travels over some of the roughest terrain in North America. This was an amazing feat considering that troops were routinely on half-rations and both men and animals suffered from lack of water and supplies. However, as a portrayer of cultures, Hughes lacked both sophistication and understanding as he accepted the common racial sentiments of the age. Though occasionally demonstrating great insight on the plight of the Indians of the Southwest, Hughes regarded Mexicans and their culture as inferior.

Perhaps the book's greatest contribution is its reflection of 19th century social values. Hughes strongly adhered to the common belief in the superiority of American republican institutions and its military, while he was also a spirited supporter of the nation's "Manifest Destiny." These nationalistic beliefs are used to justify the American conquest and are brazenly apparent in his descriptions of the Battle of Brazito, near El Paso, and the Battle of Sacramento, outside Chihuahua City. Hughes's descriptions also exude an extreme positivity regarding the soldiers, the outcome of the war, the commanding officers, and, more generally, toward his nation's future. This overly enthusiastic, indiscriminating point of view, even when describing the worst circumstances, became tiresome to this reviewer. Moreover, Hughes constantly compares Doniphan to many of history's great military leaders, while never questioning his actions or the benefits of conquering Chihuahua City. This romantic portrayal surely provided a solid foundation for historical novelists and entertained the American reader. This reader however, was left wondering why the author felt so compelled at the end of the book to explain the beneficial results of Doniphan's expedition.

Like Hughes, Richard Smith Elliott was a volunteer from Missouri. Prior to his service in the military, Elliott worked as a printer, a newspaper editor, a lawyer, a clerk in the Treasury Department, and finally as an Indian agent. Both educated and ethical, Elliott was disappointed with the "government's lack of 'common sense' in its handling of his (Indian) charges as well as its disregard for their rights." Elliott resigned his position when he accompanied a delegation of Pottawatomies to Washington to negotiate a treaty. As their guide and advisor, Elliott had directly disobeyed an order of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. When war was declared, Elliott was struggling as a lawyer in St. Louis and gratefully allowed these national events to intrude upon his impoverished law practice. As an Indian agent, Elliott, under the pen name "John Brown," often acted as a correspondent for the *National Intelligencer*. This practice continued during the Mexican-American War as Elliott became St. Louis' primary correspondent in the *Reveille*, and perhaps one of the nation's earliest war correspondents. His letters and literary sketches have been judiciously assembled and edited in *The Mexican War Correspondence of Richard Smith Elliott*.

Editors Mark Gardner and Marc Simmons, in their thoughtful introduction, provide an excellent context for the narrative that follows. Like John Hughes, Richard Elliott traveled from Fort

Leavenworth, through the vast American plains, and into Santa Fe. When Kearney left to conquer California and Doniphan proceeded to Chihuahua, Elliott fell ill and stayed in Santa Fe. Consequently he missed the opportunity to play a hero's role at Brazito, at Sacramento, or in the bloody Taos revolt. However, Elliott's "John Brown" became St. Louis' favorite contributor and his experiences provide modern-day readers with an excellent account of life in New Mexico during the United States military occupation. Enhanced by his intelligence, humor, sarcasm, humility, respect for both Indians and Mexicans, insightful cultural analysis, and awareness of journalistic responsibilities, Elliott's letters provide few generalizations on foreign cultures and more criticism of the conquering nation.

Elliott rarely minced words, nor did he rely on "romance or fancy" to exaggerate his descriptions of life in New Mexico. He showed a great interest in learning the Spanish language, in promoting friendship, and in understanding the cultures of the Southwest, all in order to be able to do a better job of describing the Southwest for his readers in St. Louis. Realizing the folly of his actions as a volunteer soldier, Elliott maintained a refreshing sense of humor in his descriptions until the last months of his tenure. As he slowly acknowledged the curse of American occupation of New Mexico on both the conquerors and the conquered, the outspoken Elliott gradually gave way to pessimism. Though he never questioned legitimacy of the the war, he began harshly criticizing the way it was conducted. Contrary to Hughes's account, Elliott writes that no beneficial results were attained by Doniphan's conquest of Chihuahua and he states that Doniphan had put his men in unnecessary peril. Before Elliott was released from service, he had become so thoroughly disgusted with volunteer service that he claimed that the incompetence of his commanders had brought great dishonor upon the American soldiers.

Both of these unique personal accounts, though differing in tone and purpose, provide excellent examinations of the Mexican-American war for military and cultural historians. While opening a window into American social attitudes of the 1840s and the nation's hopes for attaining its "Manifest Destiny," these primary sources also reveal the desire of many 19th century Americans to realize the greatness their revolutionary forefathers achieved both on the battlefield and in the name of democracy. Readers of *Password* will enjoy these differing perspectives on the region's cultures and on El Paso's significance as a center for trade and communication, particularly as they highlight the unfulfilled promises made by the American conquerors in the Southwest. Finally, while *Doniphan's Expedition* and *The Mexican War Correspondence of Richard Smith Elliott* stress that the war couldn't have been won without volunteer soldiers, the question remains as to whether the war could have been won without Doniphan's conquest of Chihuahua. As Richard Elliot stated, "the truth of history is its rarest charm."

— Brad Cartwright, History
University of Texas at El Paso

CULTURES ACROSS BORDERS: MEXICAN IMMIGRATION AND POPULAR CULTURE by David R. Maciel and Maria Herrera-Sobek, eds. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998. 258 pages plus index. ISBN: 0-8165-1832-7/0-8165-1833-5. \$40.00 cloth; \$16.95 paper.

The publication of *Culture Across Borders: Mexican Immigration and Popular Culture*, a collection of multidisciplinary essays edited by Chicano scholars David R. Maciel and Maria Herrera-Sobek, comes at a critical period. Immigration policies and immigrants themselves have come under constant attack in recent years. The anti-immigrant atmosphere is fueled by legislative debates over the rights of immigrants, both documented and undocumented, to the "American Dream." It is incited by political rhetoric which blames immigrants for unemployment and economic problems. And it is infused with our fear of the future. This scenario is not new, however. As several of the essays point out, immigrants "are usually rediscovered during adverse economic times and blamed as the major cause of the problem." This collection of six essays also "rediscovers" immigrants but from a very different perspective. Rather than problems or burdens, the writers in *Culture Across Borders* focus on immigrants as shapers and producers of culture. The historians, literary critics, art historians, political scientists and other scholars explore the influence of immigrants and immigration in creating culture through the lenses of visual art, music, film, literature, and humor or "jokelore" as well as political organizing. Despite the diversity of disciplines and approaches, a common thread weaves throughout the book—an understanding that popular culture is inherently political in its call for social justice and human rights for Mexican immigrants.

Culture Across Borders draws on the work of both established scholars and young academics in exploring "the cultural production of Chicano and Mexicano intellectuals/artists... In the first chapter, historians Juan Gómez-Quiñones and David R. Maciel place immigration within the global context of international capitalism. Their essay reviews the responses, including self-help groups and unionization, of Mexican immigrants to the "internationalization of labor." With the introduction by Maciel and Herrera-Sobek, this chapter places the works that follow in a larger, historical context. The remaining five chapters delve into what is more obviously "cultural production," the creation of what is alternately labeled "folklore, popular culture, and mass culture." While Alberto Ledesma explores the ways in which the immigrant voice within Chicano/Mexicano narratives "redefine[s] the American experience." Victor Alejandro Sorrell investigates the ways in which artists have used language and images to convey the immigration experience. David Maciel and Maria Rosa Garcia-Acevedo look at films on both sides of the border, arguing that film allows audiences to learn "more of the two countries' attitudes, public opinion, and political climate. . . than about the actual immigrant experience..." Maria Herrera-Sobek's exploration of films uses the metaphor of "corrido as hypertext" to explore the ways in which corridos, ballads, serve as "founts of information" for the audience.

In perhaps one of the most engaging essays, José R. Reyna and Maria Herrera-Sobek probe into what they argue has become the "most popular genre" of folklore among Chicanos—the joke. Their analysis of "jokelore" reveals the complexity of immigrant/ Chicano relations. Reyna and Herrera-Sobek analyze jokes which immigrants tell about themselves and their contact with Anglo-Americans and Anglo-American society as well as jokes which Chicanos tell about immigrants. It is perhaps in this study of jokelore that we come closest to viewing cultural production by immigrants themselves, an activity that reveals the creative spirit of many immigrants.

Culture Across Borders is the first collection of essays organized around the theme of cultural production and Mexican immigration. As the editors conclude in their introductory essay, *Culture Across Borders* "is a first step." As such, this collection of essays warrants a noteworthy place in the literature on Mexican immigration. Perhaps because of its interdisciplinary nature, however, the collection is uneven. Each specialization has its own buzzwords, its own language, and this often inhibits the flow of the book. At times, the writing seems geared for specialists within each field, making it less accessible to the general reader. Yet, *Culture Across Borders* is worth examining. Each essay in this unique collection offers interesting and sometimes exciting insights into the ways which immigrants and immigration have influenced and shaped popular culture on both sides of the border.

— Ms. Yolanda Chávez Leyva, Division
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MAKING PEACE WITH COCHISE: THE 1872 JOURNAL OF CAPTAIN JOSEPH ALTON SLADEN. Joseph Alton Sladen. Edited by Edwin R. Sweeney. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997.

A most disturbing chapter in the history of the American West is that which recounts the Indian wars of the 1800s. Interest in this period of our history continues to be intense. Students of western history focus much of their attention on these late 19th Century decades, asking questions, criticizing United States government actions, searching for explanations, but usually coming away from their studies with a sense of incomplete understanding.

Discovering the "truth" in historical events can be frustrating, especially when some of the participants in a particular episode leave no written record for historians to trace. Often the only way to gain a balanced understanding of such historical events is through the examination of more than one account of the incidents under investigation.

The publication of Joseph Alton Sladen's journal provides new insight into the 1872 journey to find the Chiricahua Apache Chief Cochise, hidden somewhere in his southern Arizona stronghold. After twelve years of war, United States Army General Oliver Otis Howard, acting as peace commissioner, set out to find the elusive Indian leader.

Sladen was a medical doctor and a member of the general's staff.

The ultimate meeting of these leaders and the resulting Howard-Cochise treaty brought peace to southern Arizona but not an end to the Indian wars. Much of the detail about this historic meeting can be found in Sladen's journal. Captain Sladen's account differs from that of General Howard's recollections as found in various books and letters. Howard gives a complete chronology of events but his views of Cochise and his people are intolerant and often are flawed by his personal bias. On the other hand, Sladen's conclusions about the Apache people seem more objective.

In the past Sladen's journal in manuscript form has been used by historians. They found it to be an interesting first person account of the peace-making process as conducted by Howard but also valued Sladen's keen observations of Apache culture and life in the Apache camp. His sense of humor and of acceptance becomes apparent in entries such as one which recounted the nocturnal movements of Apache children as they slipped under the blankets on a cold September night and slept with the military travelers, cozy and warm.

Sladen found himself in unique circumstances. He understood the historical importance of the expedition and his personal contact with Howard. He was a tolerant man and a good observer. His background as a student of medicine did not necessarily prepare him for his experiences with other cultures but he was prepared to evaluate human behavior and human interactions. Thus, he makes pithy observations about Cochise the "honored patriarch" but autocratic leader past his prime and Howard, the "Christian general," who believed he was doing God's will and therefore concluded that all would be correctly resolved in the end.

The journal descriptions of the geography encountered during the expedition reminded this reviewer of a personal trek through the land of the Apaches when as a graduate student in the 1970s, I sought to "find" the historical Cochise. It appears that many geographical features and environmental elements have remained unchanged through the past century. Then, as now, travelers must be guided by landmarks and their compass, with no trails or roads to follow. Sladen states in 1872, "The ride was long, hot, tiresome, and monotonous." I concur.

A number of illuminating photographs of the daunting Arizona terrain and of historic site remains are included in the publication. A map tracing the route taken by the Howard-Sladen expedition, marking the various camp sites, is very helpful. Also included is an appendix which outlines the chronology of the expedition.

Editor Sweeney provides the reader with extensive explanatory notes, a good bibliography, and an introduction that places the journal in proper perspective. A foreword by a Sladen descendent outlines the continuing military tradition carried on by the Sladen family.

Captain Sladen, approached by a newspaper editor in the early 1890s for an account of the expedition, responded that he could not "give him anything that would be of the slightest interest to the reading public. . . ." I believe today's reading public would disagree.

The edited publication of Sladen's journal will be of interest to specialists as well as to general readers and students interested in Cochise, the Apache Indians, and the United States Indian Wars of the 19th Century. The account might not answer all the questions or provide all of the explanations about this series of events, but it does provide one additional piece of the puzzle of the history of western America.

— Ms. Sharon Bollinger, History
El Paso Community College

HOME COUNTRY: AN ELROY BODE READER by Elroy Bode.
El Paso: Texas Western Press 1997. 400 pp. \$30.00, ISBN 0-87404-244-5.

"Everything is of value simply because it is—," Bode claims in *Home Country*, his recently published eighth book, "it exists in the magic of its own incomprehensible being. Bums, babies, trees, filling stations, grass—all exist, and thus all are worthy of your interest, reflection, and bewilderment." The commonplace is miraculous. Bode writes directly and with simple, homespun tales, anecdotes, and ruminations about his life, people he has known and the Texas landscape. In spite of *Home Country's* appealing simplicity, though, Bode's writing leaves me feeling indifferent, neither liking nor disdaining his "sketches."

For years, readers and critics have longed to classify Bode's writing, and as I too discovered, it defies easy labeling. However, when a book is 400 pages long, as is *Home Country*, the question invariably becomes: What does it add up to? In this case, it adds up to an intensely personal melange, like a diary. Bode's writings—his self-defined "sketches" which Texas Western Press touts as "a craft he has developed to a fine art"—add up to what journalist Brian Woolley called a "spiritual autobiography."

While the book as a whole has unity, the book's selections—some reprinted from earlier books, some printed in book form for the first time—create neither an endearing nor a lasting impression of Bode's life or epiphanies. I am not claiming that Bode's writing does not succeed at all. Taken individually, the lyrical pieces fashioned around tightly structured and recognizable emotional centers, like poems, work best, for they affect me emotionally. They involve me and let me share, for example, in the childish pleasure and joyful accomplishment of killing flies in his grandmother's ranch house. Bode's more narrative pieces, such as "A Trip South," similarly pique my intellectual curiosity. Most selections, however, are banal or episodic; they are personal reminiscences which, like personal journals, keep me at a safe, arms-length distance rather than invite my curiosity. Reading these selections becomes, after a time, more laborious than enjoyable.

Bode's language, which I have heard praised as a hidden Texas treasure, lacks the imagistic power and originality to make up for the slack. Most often, Bode's prose comes across as too plain, constrained, and unimaginative. Like Henry David Thoreau, Ralph

Waldo Emerson, Wallace Stegner, and other literary naturalists/philosophers, Bode turns to the land for salvation and rejuvenation. "Sometimes I believe that the most rewarding activity for me is just to walk along, putting one foot in front of the other, feeling the earth—the sun at my back water at my side, a breeze in my face. Just that: mobile, independent, a survivor of things past, unaware of things future: a human, 'lost in the stars,' moving along in the ageless human way beneath the trees." Not surprising is Bode's admission that the land of West Texas drew him to El Paso, where he has lived for the past thirty years. Less surprising still is Bode's conclusion that the land and cultural environment shape people's lives as much as and more than people shape nature and culture.

Every so often, his "sketches" contain eye-catching turns of phrase such as in the excerpt just quoted. The shortness of many pieces however, foils their effectiveness, for Bode's writing lacks enough substance to create a lasting feeling. In some pieces, especially those about Juarez, Mexico, and Mexicans, I am put off and suspicious more than absorbed and accepting. "Morning and Life" and "Irmalinda," for instance, seem to embrace an aloofness and disassociation in conflict with their alleged sensitivity to and portrayal of the "real" Mexican—a disturbing weakness in the writing of someone who has lived nearly 30 years along the border.

What is most appealing about *Home Country* is the simplicity, or more precisely, the easy-going, relaxed tone of Bode's writing. "I am content to sit beside the chicken house," he writes, "and blend into the morning: to be as a post is, as grass is." Nothing is hurried. A tender sensibility infuses most selections, for Bode is content and apparently at ease with his life, his past and surroundings—the themes that appear again and again throughout the "sketches."

Bode's "urge to explore life.... to know the depths of myself and my surroundings"—is a fine and admirable ambition, yes, but despite my admiration, I can not help but feel that his writing is too personal and private and, consequently, often incomplete and inaccessible. I feel left out. I can see the hilly central Texas landscape, I can feel the expansive and open El Paso desert. Bode's emotional glimpses, however, fail to hold my attention. Sadly, his "sketches" leave me feeling dissatisfied. His studied and casual reflection is as elusively open and as deceptively simple as the desert landscape. More remains hidden than is revealed, and while this is the desert's strength, it is Bode's greatest weakness.

"It is only through imaginative perception that we ever change mere facts into understandings," Bode concludes in one selection, yet in his own writing he never makes those imaginative leaps. Only with his simplicity does he challenge perception and defy the rushed world of 20th-century American society. Be still, he advises, hear the birds, watch the children, enjoy, for one day we all will be gone.

— Fred MacVaughn, History
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