

PASSWORD



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Remember When?

EL PASO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SALARY SCHEDULE
for
Nine Months' Classroom Teachers
as adopted by the
El Paso Board of Education February, 1957

BACHELOR'S DEGREE		MASTER'S DEGREE	
Experience	Salary	Experience	Salary
0	\$3649	0	\$3874
1	3749	1	3974
2	3849	2	4074
3	3949	3	4174
4	4049	4	4274
5	4149	5	4374
6	4249	6	4474
7	4324	7	4549
8	4399	8	4624
9	4474	9	4699
10	4549	10	4774
11	4624	11	4849
12	4699	12	4924
13	4724	13	4999
14	4749	14	5074
15	4774	15	5149
16	4799	16	5224
17	4824	17	5299
18	4849	18	5374
		19	5449
		20	5524
		21	5599
		22	5674
		23	5749
		24	5824

*Teachers Pay Scale,
El Paso Public Schools, 1957.*

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President's Message - Carolyn Breck



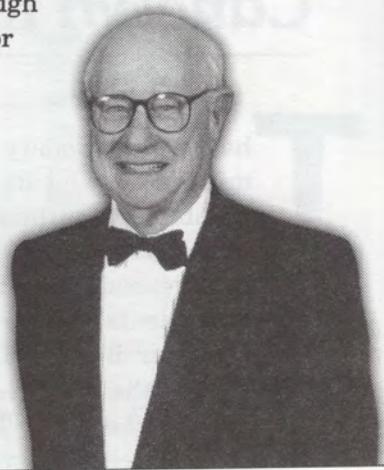
The El Paso County Historical Society enters into the new millennium and its forty-seventh year with activities and events that continue to promote historical awareness in our community. Our organization, almost 900 members strong, is totally dependent on volunteers who so willingly give of their time and talents to carry out our purposes: our officers and board members; our Burges House Commission; our Research Center curator and the dedicated workers; our program, publicity, and membership chairmen; Tour of Homes and Hall of Honor chairmen; our contest chairmen; and the editors of our publications and all the hundreds of individuals who support our activities and events by their willingness to serve. We extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to one of our outstanding volunteers, Frank McKnight, who so ably served as president for the past two years.

During the recent History Day activities at the University of Texas at El Paso I participated as a judge for the junior and senior performance contests. What a thrill to see the results of the study done by and the development of these young minds as they accurately presented historic events and personalities. I was very much impressed with their knowledge and creativity: they made history come alive, and that's what we are all about.

We can all help make history live. Do you have a friend who would enjoy the benefits of membership in El Paso County Historical Society? Do you have a little extra time to help file and sort at the Jane Burges Perrenot Research Center? Do you have some books, photos, or papers you'd like to donate to our Center? Would you like to make a contribution as a memorial or as a gift

to the Society? Would you like to hear interesting historic presentations at our quarterly meetings? We need your support and your participation. We continue to find new ways to make history live by improving the physical facility of Burges House, by developing our website www.elpasohistory.com, and by expanding our business and life memberships.

I look forward to working with all of you, those who live in historic neighborhoods and those who work to preserve our rich historic heritage in so many ways through school projects, city sponsored events, or other historic organizations. We have much to share!



Message of Past President, Frank McKnight

1998-2000

Tonight we add two outstanding men to the Hall of Honor of the El Paso County Historical Society. We also pay tribute to Louise Schuessler who passed away a month ago. Louise was a driving force in organizing the Society and served as its first president. In 1979 she was the living recipient of the Hall of Honor.

The El Paso County Historical Society is completing its 46th year and is entering the twenty-first century with enthusiasm and lofty ambitions. The Society is housed in delightful surroundings in Burges House, which was bequeathed to us by Jane Burges Perrenot in 1986. Some very determined ladies, dragging a few reluctant men behind them, raised and spent almost a hundred thousand dollars restoring the house to its present prime condition and maintaining it. Lea Vail, chairman of the Burges House Commission, reports that from twelve hundred to two thousand persons visit this recorded Texas historic landmark house each year.

One of the prime objectives of our Society is to gather and record historical documents and photographs. The Jane Burges Perrenot Historical Research Center, headed by curator Barbara Rees, assisted by a few faithful volunteers, has over 16,000 items including photos and 300 books entered into the Society's computers. A student or researcher can enter a name into the computer and be told where the name appears in our data files, perhaps in an historical document, newspaper clipping, or photograph. The Research Center is presently open on Tuesday of each week.

The Society's main source of income is derived from the annual membership payments of our regular members, from business and professional members, and from the interest we receive on the funds of our life members. We also receive memorial contributions and the profits from the annual Tour of Homes. We again wish to thank Chairman Carolyn Ponsford and the Rim Road home owners who so graciously opened their homes for this event.

The Society takes great pride in its two quarterly publications, *Password*, edited by Marilyn Gross, and *El Conquistador*, edited by Pat Worthington. We also carry on our mission of preserving El Paso's past through the Frank W. Gorman Memorial Historical Essay Contest, the Karl P. and Helen P. Goodman Memorial Awards, by a photography competition, and by opening Burges House for a Christmas reception.

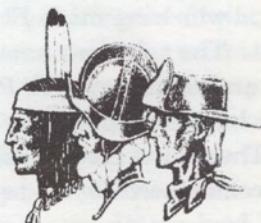
There are specific criteria for the selection of Hall of Honor selectees: they must be men or women of character, vision, courage, and creative spirit who have lived in what is presently El Paso County. They must have consistently done the unusual which deserves to be recorded or have created that which deserves to be read, heard, or seen, and who have made El Paso County better for their having lived in it. The selectees must have influenced over a period of years the course of history of El Paso County, or by their singular achievements have brought honor and recognition to the El Paso community. They must have directed us toward worthy goals and merit being remembered by all as an exemplary guide to our future.

I would like to express the Society's deep gratitude to J. Sam Moore, Chairman of the Hall of Honor selections committee. We also greatly appreciate his donation to the Society by providing us with copies of Owen P. White's article on El Paso with an introduction by Cynthia Farah which was published in the Summer

edition of Password in 1991. Our thanks also go to Nancy Wyler, chairman of tonight's dinner and her assistants and members of her committee.

A number of relatives of tonight's honorees are present. Representing the Owen Payne White family are Oliver Osborn, the nephew of tonight's honoree; Paul White Osborn, Oliver Osborn's son and the great nephew of the honoree; and Rebecca Shatto, the first cousin twice removed of the honoree, and her husband Jim. Those with a Southern heritage should understand the "twice removed" qualification.

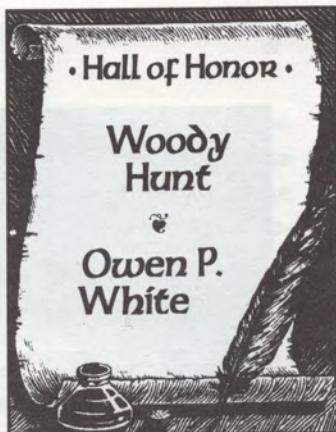
Representing Woody Hunt's family are his wife Gayle, his mother and father, Dorothy and Jack Hunt; his brother Mike and wife Norma; his mother in law, Lauretta Greve; Woody's sister Camille Robison from Alexandria, Louisiana; his uncle Kelly Hunt and Laurette Hunt; his nephew Christopher Hunt and wife Stacy; and Stacy's mother Judy Crumley; Woody's sons Marcus from San Francisco and Joshua from Southern Methodist University.



**• Hall of Honor •
2000**

Woody Hunt

**By Diana Natalicio,
President, The University
of Texas at El Paso**

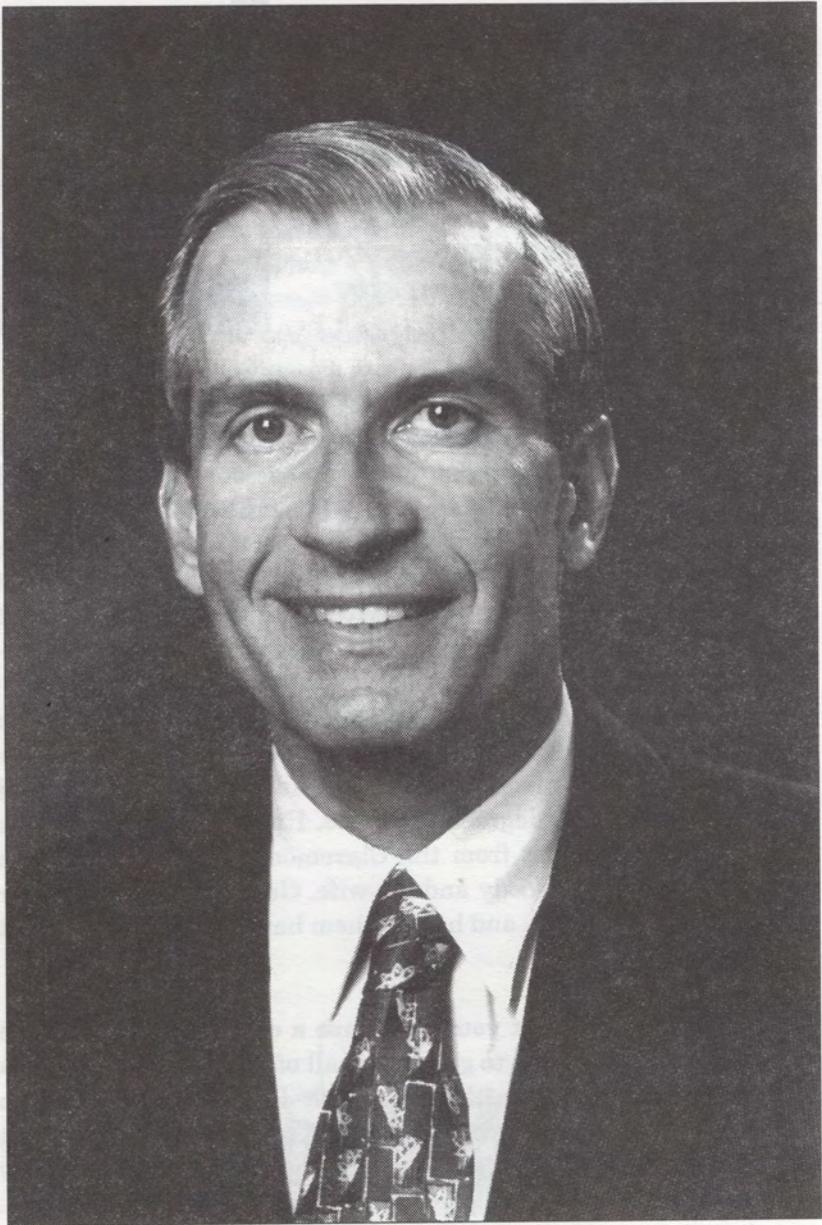


I am deeply honored to have been invited to introduce Woody Hunt to you this evening. He is an extraordinarily talented individual who understands that we all have a responsibility to contribute to the human and economic development of our society, re-investing the opportunities and benefits that each of us has been privileged to receive. Woody's generous commitment of time, financial resources, and expertise to a variety of community, regional, and state issues serves as a model for all of us.

A life-long resident of El Paso, Woody graduated from Ysleta High School and attended the University of Texas at El Paso before transferring to the University of Texas at Austin, where he received his B.B.A. and M.B.A. degrees in finance. He also earned a master's degree in management from the Claremont Graduate School in California in 1989. Woody and his wife, Gayle, have raised their five children in El Paso, and both of them have a deep commitment to this region.

Woody has said that you must have a clear vision—you need to know where you want to go, so that all of the decisions that you make will be consistent with your vision. I recall that Yogi Berra once said something similar—"You've got to be careful if you don't know where you're going, 'cause you might not get there." Woody always knows where he is going, and exactly how to get there.

As chairman and chief executive officer of the Hunt Building Corporation, Woody has used imagination, hard work, and dedication to build a successful company that has become the nation's largest builder of military housing. In addition, Woody generously shares his business and management skills with the state and



Woody Hunt

Photo courtesy of the Hunt Building Corporation

local boards of Chase Bank of Texas. He has also served on the Board of Visitors of the M. D. Anderson Cancer Center and of the University of Texas at Austin's McDonald Observatory, and is the past chairman of the Board of the Paso del Norte Health Foundation. He is a member of the Governor's Business Council, the Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce Foundation, and the YWCA of El Paso Foundation.

Woody has worked hard to understand the assets and challenges presented by this community. He does his homework. He has carefully analyzed what needs to be done to strengthen El Paso in those areas vital to our future, especially in the area of education. He understands that the educational attainment of all El Pasoans must improve if we are to be competitive in the 21st century. He is not content merely to understand; he provides the vision and leadership required to act on that understanding.

Last year, Woody played a key role in establishing the El Paso Leadership and Research Council. As the first chair of this group of El Paso chief executive officers, he provided direction for their work in addressing the key issues in the development of El Paso's future. Woody was named the 1999 El Pasoan of the Year by El Paso Inc., and a year ago he received the *Gran Paseño Award*, the highest honor that the University of Texas at El Paso bestows upon friends of the university. His commitment to higher education runs deep. He has served on the Development Board of the University at El Paso and is a former member of the Claremont Graduate School Board of Visitors. The Cimarron Foundation, which he and Gayle established in 1987, has supported a variety of programs and initiatives at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Woody has always conducted his business and civic endeavors quietly, but his low-profile days appear to be over. With service on numerous local, regional, and state boards and commissions, he is now recognized across the state of Texas.

Woody's appointment by Governor George W. Bush to the University of Texas Board of Regents in 1999 gave El Paso representation on that body for the first time in forty-two years. This appointment enables him to share his knowledge and analytical skills with his fellow board members, to the benefit of the tax-payers of the state of Texas and future generations of Texans.

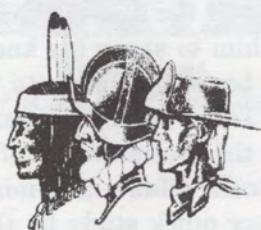
Woody serves on three committees of the Board of Regents: academic affairs, business affairs, and minority and women's issues. Known as a very quick study by the staff and his fellow

board members, he was also asked to chair an ad hoc committee on long-range planning to examine the mission and role of Texas higher education in the 21st century, a robust assignment for a freshman regent.

Perhaps most important to all of us in El Paso is Woody's ability to communicate this region's perspective on a variety of statewide issues in higher education, and to place this region's challenges within a statewide context:

- That 9 of 10 future Texans will be minorities, and 7 of the 9 will be Hispanic;
- That educational attainment is lowest among Hispanics, the fastest growing segment of the State's population;
- That the State's future economic development and our quality of life will depend on raising the educational level of all Texans;
- That the University of Texas at El Paso has achieved national recognition because it has been successful in achieving excellence while maintaining its strong commitment to access to higher education for traditionally underserved populations.

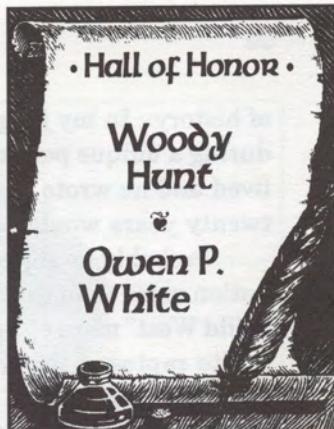
Woody, all of us at the University of Texas at El Paso are grateful to you for your willingness to devote your time and talents to the important issues facing higher education in Texas. All of us in the El Paso community are fortunate indeed that you have maintained your commitment to this region and worked so hard to ensure its brighter future. We applaud your many accomplishments, and we take great pride in the statewide leadership role that you are playing. Thank you for serving as an outstanding representative of the best that El Paso has to offer.



• Hall of Honor •
2000

The Saga of Owen P. White 1879-1946

By Leon C. Metz



I consider myself lucky to have arrived in El Paso during the early 1950s at such an historically dynamic time. The town was awash with historians. C. L. Sonnichsen became my mentor, and I knew well such individuals as Haldeen Braddy, Eugene Porter, John Middagh, Rex Strickland and Rex Gerald, Tom Lea, Morgan Broaddus, Rabbi Fierman. The list goes on and on, and it seems unfair to identify so few and leave out so many.

But I believe that none of us, except perhaps, Dr. Sonnichsen, ever met Owen Payne White. I had the privilege, however, of meeting some of Owen's descendants who were in El Paso and I recall talking briefly with some of them, although I must apologize because the years have treated unkindly my ability to recall yesterday's names.

It was Owen White who in many respects set the standard for my own historical writing, although White's writing and White's research were different from the historical writing and research of today. Today's writers and historians use newspapers, court records, old letters, journals, documents, diaries, directories, old-timer interviews—whatever we can find. We write stuffy prose, and we support our conclusions with equally stuffy items called footnotes. Thus a writer's ranking by his scholarly peers in today's world is often judged not so much by what he says or writes, but by the number of "ibids" at the foot of the page, and the completeness of his bibliography.

Owen White avoided all this—not that he would have used it anyway—because Owen wrote from the viewpoint of a reporter, a reporter on the scene with a sense of flair combined with a sense

of history. In my judgment, Owen White recognized that he lived during a unique period of time both for himself and for El Paso. He lived and he wrote about a moment of transition that in less than twenty years would have passed, never to return.

Probably no series of events has enthralled the world's imagination more than the "American Wild West," and nowhere was the "Wild West" more epitomized than in the El Paso Southwest. Owen White captured the transition from adobe to brick, from ox carts and wagon trains to railroads, from Spanish to English, from lamplight to electricity, from rural to transcontinental, from a sleepy hamlet to a crossroads of America, from the peso to the dollar, from rotgut to Jack Daniels, from trails to streets, from one-room buildings to substantial hotels, from praying in tents to praying in church, from rolling dice on blankets to rolling dice on polished tables, from bathing in the river or irrigation ditch to bathing in a tub, from death by tuberculosis to death by gunfire.

Add all this together and what Owen White chronicled most was the "American Wild West," and in this case, to be specific, the El Paso "Wild West." As much as any other writer, he made the "Wild West" popular and understandable in human terms. He, more than any other writer, made the two words, El Paso, not only nationally famous, but internationally known.

Owen Payne White, a son of Dr. Alward and Katherine Payne White, was born in El Paso on June 9, 1879, two years before the arrival of the railroads. He graduated from El Paso High School in 1896, and briefly attended the University of Texas at Austin in 1898. He studied law at New York University, and during World War I became a sergeant while serving in a medical unit.

On January 22, 1920 he married Hazel Harvey and during that same year went to work as a columnist for the *El Paso Herald*. His first book, *Out of The Desert*, a history of El Paso, was published in 1923. H. L. Mencken, editor of the *American Mercury*, thought it a great book. It received an excellent review in the *New York Times*, and later White was asked by that newspaper to cover the election and inauguration of "Ma" Ferguson, the first woman governor of Texas. White accepted, and did such an outstanding job that the *New York Times* hired him as a reporter and columnist. In 1925 White moved to Cutchogue, Long Island, where he lived until his death, although he often visited in El Paso. He continued



*Owen P. White
Photo courtesy of Research Center,
El Paso County Historical Society*

to write books: among them two of my favorites, *Them Was the Days* (1925) and *Trigger Fingers* (1926). His other books were *Lead and Likker* (1932), *My Texas Tis of Thee* (1936), *Texas: An Informal Biography* (1945), and two collections of verse: *Southwestern Ballads* (1922) and *Just Me and Other Poems* (1924). When he died in New York on December 7, 1946, he was working on a book called *Western Trails*.

Collier's magazine hired White in 1926, and he worked for *Collier's* until 1940 as a staff writer and associate editor. At Colliers he became one of the nation's best known political critics, drawing fire in particular from Rentfro Creager, a Republican national committeeman from Texas, and Texas' Lieutenant Governor, Walter Woodul. Creager succeeded in getting a chapter about him deleted from White's book, *The Autobiography of A Durable Sinner*, which was published in 1942.

Nearly all of White's books about the American West were in many respects essentially biographies of El Paso, histories if you will. In writing about El Paso, Owen White had an advantage that no other historian since has shared. He was born and raised here. He grew up during one of El Paso's most colorful and flamboyant periods. Although he was only two in 1881 when the "Four Dead in Five Seconds" gun battle took place on El Paso Street, he had access to people who had been involved in the fray when he wrote about it. He was able to talk to eyewitnesses, to politicians, to newspaper reporters, to lawmen, and to saloon owners as well as to descendants of those involved.

Owen was also a renaissance man—renaissance in the sense that he was someone interested in practically every aspect of human nature, whether it be politics, religion, business, professional, or personal. For instance, one of his books is *A Frontier Mother*, published in 1929. In spite of its title it also furnished brief but detailed information about the father who was a physician as well as a government man. Nevertheless, White's *A Frontier Mother* could just as well have applied to all mothers, past and present, who share a universal story of coping with what most of us would call the tribulations of life.

In *A Frontier Mother* he wrote, "I was born in a one-room, one-story, adobe house. It had a nice dirt floor, a roof of the same God-given material, one door, and one window with no glass in it, but

the room was handsomely furnished with period furniture, made by hand from dry-goods boxes." White closed by noting that

entirely apart from the fact that she was our mother, we looked upon her as the most remarkable woman in the world. We couldn't help it. She could do anything from solving the toughest problems in geometry, to saddling a bronc or filing down a trigger pull. Thus by brushing all the little obstacles out of our way she made life easier for us. But now as I write, twenty-six years after her death, I can see the real reason for my intense admiration for my mother. It was not because she could do everything, but because she understood everything.

Owen White said he was present—an urchin on the street—when Constable John Selman killed gunfighter John Wesley Hardin on August 19, 1895 at the Acme Saloon on what is now the northwest corner of Mesa and San Antonio streets. In those days John Selman was known to almost everybody as Uncle John, and Owen White was no different. I might point out that now it is popular to cast Uncle John Selman in the heavy role whereas John Wesley Hardin is usually treated much more sympathetically. However, Owen White had the advantage of recognizing and on occasion speaking to both individuals—although not at the same time. There is no question that the teenager Owen White found Selman a much more likable and affable individual. Hardin was obviously not as approachable.

Of all of Owen's books, his *Out of the Desert*, published in 1923, is my favorite. Owen White was in his early forties when he wrote it. He subtitled the book, *The Historical Romance of El Paso*, and he noted in his introduction that

an enormous amount of activity had been crowded into a short period of time, and an empire within an empire has suddenly sprung up out of the desert. At the center of this empire, El Paso stood as a magnificent monument to those few people who took the pioneer's chance and laid the foundation for all of the development which we see around us, and of which we are so proud.

If everyone who lives here took the Owen White approach, El Paso would be emulated all over the continent as one of the great cities in this country.

But Owen did have his shortcomings, and in one respect he reminded me of me. I recall Doc Sonnichsen once giving me that "Sonnichsen" look, saying in the process,

Leon, one of your major historical problems is that you take the expression "begin at the beginning," much too liberally. If you were going to write a history of Fabens, for instance, you would probably open it with God creating the earth, and Noah building the Ark.

So I understand Owen White. I understand why he felt compelled to open his history of El Paso, his *Out of the Desert* book, by beginning the narrative with Cabeza de Vaca who probably never got closer to this area than the Big Bend. White's history devotes dozens of pages to the settlement of Juarez and the coming Pueblo Revolt which took place in northern New Mexico. Finally, nearly a third of the way through the manuscript, he places El Paso on the north bank of the Rio Grande and we start our progress from there.

Still, to me, White's *Out of the Desert*, all of its 445 pages, tells the story of early El Paso. And I find it interesting, even touching, to know that while any publisher in the country would have jumped at a chance at this book, White chose the McMath Company, an El Paso publisher. McMath did an excellent job.

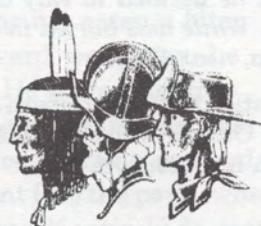
And while I might reiterate that gunfighters consume a significant portion of this history, they are not the core. The core of the book delves into the lives of the ordinary men and women who laid out the streets, organized the churches, started the utility companies, opened legitimate theaters as well as businesses, and put politics on a sound and productive footing. The final part of *Out of the Desert* consists of a series of excellent brief biographies about those El Pasoans about whom we now rarely hear or read much, but who at one time were the movers and shakers and developers of this land where we live.

I wish I could have known Owen White, although through his writings I feel that I do. I envision him as an amiable, warm, and receptive man, a witty sometimes salty individual with a flair for words and expressions. Although Owen White's work reminds me of the work of C. L. Sonnichsen, to a large extent these two people wrote about very different El Paso eras.

In closing, I do not know where the spirits of Sonnichsen and Owen White now dwell, but I have a hunch that they spend a lot

of time sitting at the same table or leaning against the same bar, telling the same awful jokes, comparing mutual notes, discussing their research projects, and occasionally arguing trivia until the early hours of the morning. Both Owen Payne White and Charles L. Sonnichsen were to a certain extent folksy writers with folksy personalities, but they were not ordinary men; they were driven individuals.

Historians of today, folks like myself, tend to stand on the shoulders of these giants, often doing little more than reinforcing and broadening their facts, their arguments, and their conclusions. I've heard it said often that people like John Wesley Hardin, Pat Garrett, and Billy the Kid are my heroes, but that's not true. People like C. L. Sonnichsen and Owen Payne White are my heroes. They paved the way. I just follow in their footsteps, and hope that I shall somehow do as well.



*Comments from "El Paso's Durable Sinner" by Carl Hertzog
in Password Vol. XXV (summer 1980). 68-70*

"The book was an immediate success. The first printing sold out in a few weeks and a second edition was on the press. Naturally there were criticisms. The nit-pickers pointed out errors in historic facts, but the biggest noise came from those whose toes were stepped on. Owen was already exercising his ability to uncover questionable motivations, a perception that later served him well on the staff of a major national magazine.





A Letter from the Past

from Owen P. White

This letter, dated June 30, 1931, was sent to Leigh White Osborn, the sister of Owen White, who wrote it following the death of their brother, Alward in Shafter, Texas. At the time Owen was living in New York City. Upon hearing that his brother had had a stroke, he immediately departed by train for Shafter.

Alward White, who grew up in El Paso, was the company doctor for the American Smelting and Refining Company's silver mines located between Shafter and Presidio in Texas. When the mines closed in approximately 1925, he decided to stay on and take care of the remaining settlers. Dr. White was buried in a "sand hills" cemetery at the foot of Mt. Cibola, near Shafter.

We express our appreciation to Oliver Osborn of Lake Jackson, Texas, the son of Leigh White Osborn who sent this letter from the family archives for publication in *Password*. Ed.

Tuesday afternoon.

Dear Leigh:

I am going to begin at the beginning. I wired you yesterday that we had reached Marfa O.K. and on the train I also wrote you a letter in which I told you that Alward's wife is the granddaughter of a Virginia hero of mine.

At Marfa we were met by quite a number of people, including Dr. Brown and Kate and in no time we were on our way down here. The same ambulance that had carried Alward away from Shafter brought him back here and when we arrived we found that his operating room was a bower of flowers—potted plants—and that the whole town was waiting for us. We got in about six o'clock and within half an hour the thing I had dreaded began to happen. But it wasn't dreadful!

The mourners came, they stayed all night; they were served with coffee and sandwiches, but, due more to my presence than anything else I think, there wasn't a single hysterical case. Geniveve was especially brave. On the way down on the train she had told me that she had promised Alward before they left Shafter that she would have *bastante valor*. She had it. It's customary for the bereaved Mexican woman to make a scene but she didn't make any. She was as quiet and self contained as a woman could be.

The terribly pathetic thing came about nine o'clock. I've heard of such things but have never seen it before. For several years Alward has had a brindle bull dog for a constant companion. The night Alward was taken sick that dog was in the room. While Alward was in his greatest agony the dog kept licking his hand, and after Alward was taken away the dog went back into the room and crawled under the bed. From that moment to this he has not eaten a bite. During the time Alward was away, he never left the house. He stayed either in the bedroom or in the office, but as soon as we got here, and he heard Geniveve's voice he came out and jumped on her. Then, not seeing Doc, he went into the patio, where there is a garden and lay down to grieve himself entirely do death. He is actually doing it. We've done all we can to make him take an interest. Last night one of the men from the engineer's camp and I poured three ounces of castor oil down his throat in the hope that it would stir him up. It had no effect and this morning the poor animal, with a broken heart, is still in the patio resisting everything we can do to make him get well. I'll let you know later how he comes out.

As I have said most of the watchers stayed all night. They had the candles burning here in the room with Doc and at about two o'clock I went to bed. When I got up at seven and had breakfast they were still here and at ten thirty we had the services.

They were wonderful, and, as I told Kate Adams, because she and the Doctor came down here, I wish you had been here. It would have given you a new understanding. It gave me one. Yesterday afternoon I found out that the people wanted to have a service here and that the Catholic Priest, Father Elias, wanted to conduct

They were wonderful, and as I told Kate Adams, because she and the Doctor came down here, I wish you had been here. It would have given you a new understanding.

It gave me one.

it. He lives in Presidio but was here at eight o'clock and when I went to get him and told him that Alward was not a Catholic and could not be buried in his church he got up, put his hand on my shoulder and said: "He can be buried in this THIS church, because, I want to say that as long as I have lived I have never known a better man." He said a lot more at that time that is too long to go into now and so finally it was agreed that a service would be had.

The church was packed; some kind of a ceremony, in Latin and with choral responses was held and then Padre Elias came down to the altar rail and paid Alward the most beautiful tribute I have ever listened to. If the Pope should ever find out what that priest said he would cut his head off in a second. It amounted to this. That *faith* made no difference; it was what a man did that counted and that not only in Shafter, but from one end of his entire parish to the other. Alward had, for eighteen years been looked upon as the one man to whom any poor Mexican could go without fear, and ask for help. The man was eloquent. What he said came right out of his heart, and an hour or two later, after we had come back from the cemetery, when he came to see me here at the house, he repeated it all to me. He said

It doesn't make any difference to me that Doctor White was not a Catholic. That hasn't anything to do with it. He has helped the Mexican people in this country more than [any] man who has ever lived here. Why when the mines closed, and business stopped, and the *pobres* had to leave, he GAVE them tires and gas and oil and would accept no pay for it. Then only last week he drove clear to Presidio to see a sick woman whose husband offered him three dollars—his last three dollars—for having come. 'No,' said the Doctor, 'keep it and spend it for food for her. She needs it more than I do.' And that is the spirit of God, and my Church will never be closed to a man who has that in him.

It was all beautiful. Even this. Alward's "children," of course were here and I spoke to them several times last night, but this morning I entirely forgot to make arrangements for a car for them. But Geniveve thought of it just as we were leaving the house and had it attended to. They got in a fine big car and then everybody in Shafter as well as a lot of people from both Marfa and Presidio went both to the church and the cemetery. On the way to the cemetery probably fifty bareheaded men walked along beside the hearse.

If when I die, such a sincere tribute is ever paid to me as was paid to Alward here today, even though it was by humble people, I will be happy.

Of course this has all come upon me as a terrible strain. I left New York only six days ago and in that time see what has happened. I should be a wreck but I'm not. On the contrary I'm just tired, and everything has quieted down now, and as I have fixed up Alward's office for an office for myself. I am going to begin in earnest in the morning to try to straighten out this mass of detail. I am going to see his "children" in the morning and immediately after that will start in to settle things. Am afraid it will take a week to go through all that is here piled on his desk and I want to see ALL of it. Consequently you needn't expect another letter as long as this for several days. I'll write short ones though and I think Kate Brown is also going to write you from Marfa—I think she and the Doctor are coming back by here later in the afternoon.

Don't worry about me. I'm all right. Love.

Owen



*From Cynthia Farah's introduction to "El Paso" by
Owen P. White in Password Vol. XXXVI (summer 1991). 55*

.... Owen Payne White was indeed an El Pasoan and a professional writer. In fact, he was the first El Pasoan to establish a national reputation as a writer. Some contend that he "laid the foundation for a regional literature in the El Paso Southwest." While others deride his reputation as a historian who embellished the truth. The fact remains, however, that he witnessed the growth of El Paso during its formative years and made a living writing nine books about that history. Further, his unique perspective on the gun fighters, the politicians, and assorted misfits of the Southwest resulted in his articles being published in the *New York Times*, *The American Mercury*, and *Harper's* and led to a thirteen-year career as associate editor of *Collier's* magazine.





Within forty-eight hours, El Paso lost two
of its distinguished and celebrated citizens:
the artist Tom Lea, and
Gerry Fitzgerald, an archeologist.

We were fortunate in that both men
lived into their ninth decade—
Lea was ninety-three:
Fitzgerald was ninety-five.

Password notes with a deep sense of loss
the passing of these two illustrious men.
We honor them and the contributions
that they have made to our
corner of the world.



Thomas Calloway "Tom" Lea

July 11, 1907 -
January 29, 2001



Tom Lea was born at Hotel Dieu in El Paso on July 11, 1907, the son of Tom Lea and Zola Utt. Young Tom and his brothers Joe and Dick were the sons of a well-known El Paso attorney who was also the mayor of El Paso from 1915 to 1917. While attending El Paso High School he came under the influence of two important educators: Gertrude Evans, an accomplished artist, and Jeannie M. Frank, a writer who taught English and literature. At the age of seventeen Tom made his way north to enroll at the Art Institute of Chicago: he had already decided to become a good artist. By the time he made his way back to the southwest he had married his wife Nancy. They resided in Santa Fe where they had built a one-room adobe on a hill. Nancy became ill and died in El Paso in 1936—the same year in which Tom lost both his mother and grandmother. In that year also, he opened his studio in the Mills Building. He went on to become a nationally known muralist; an illustrator of books, among them those of J. Frank Dobie; he was also an illustrator for the *Saturday Evening Post*; a collaborator with Carl Hertzog in the design and production of books; and an eminent easel painter, a novelist, and an historian.



Tom Lea at his easel.

During World War II he was a war correspondent and artist for *Life Magazine*, a job for which he spent time on many fronts—even landing with the First Marines in the battle for Peleliu.

After the war, he turned his attention to easel painting and to writing. It was at this time that he produced the magnificent *Sarah in the Summertime*, which hangs in the living room of the Lea home. He collaborated with Urbici Soler—Lea painted a portrait of Soler while Soler produced a bronze bust of Lea. It was also at this time that he developed an interest in cattle specifically in fighting bulls. This interest culminated in his novel "*The Brave Bulls*" which brought him a new career—that of significant novelist.

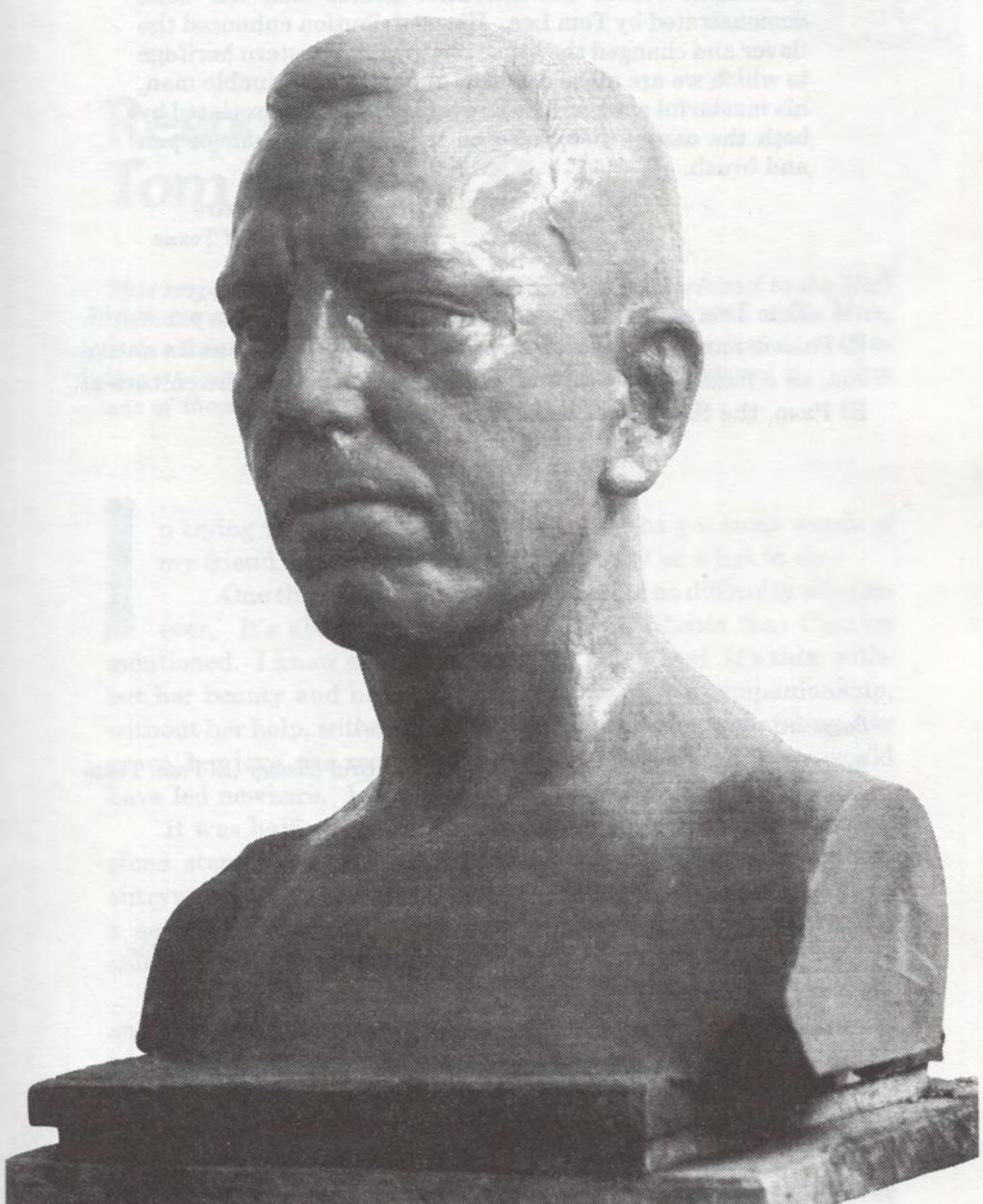
In 1975 the El Paso County Historical Society inducted Tom Lea in its Hall of Honor. Charles H. Leavell, a friend of long standing, presented the tribute to Lea which told of Lea's early years as well as his long list of accomplishments. Part of his presentation consisted of statements by those who knew Tom Lea. Two of those statements are reprinted here:

The most obvious, but one of the less important, fact about Tom Lea is that he is a genius. He is also a great man, a citizen of our whole world, and a truly great human being. By his talents and his understanding he has encouraged countless people to know the past, to be aware of a vital present, and to hope for the future. In return for all the good he has done we can give him only the simplest of gifts, our deep and steadfast gratitude. . . .

— Dr. Harry Ransom
of the University of Texas



Tom and Sarah Lea with his painting "Sarah in the Summertime."



Tom Lea by Urbici Soler, El Paso, 1946.

Photo courtesy Paul Dean Daniggelis.

Reprinted from *Password*, Vol. XXXI, no. 4, Winter 1986.

Few men in the history of the arts have approached the undeniable visual and narrative genius that has been demonstrated by Tom Lea. His contribution enhanced the flavor and changed the atmosphere of the western heritage to which we are all so devoted. A gentle and humble man, his masterful work will be forever loved and appreciated by both the casual historian and the serious scholar of pen and brush.

— Chancellor Le Maistre
of the University of Texas

Tom Lea was an important part of the American art world. El Paso is most fortunate to be able to claim Tom Lea as its native son, as a friend to many, and as an integral part of the culture of El Paso, the Southwest, and the United States..

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The photos that accompany this article were provided by the Research Center, El Paso County Historical Society.





Response by Tom Lea - 1975

This response was made by Tom Lea when he was elected to the Hall of Honor of the El Paso County Historical Society in 1975. Leon Metz, in his column of February 5, 2001 in El Paso Times has referred to this as "possibly the best acceptance speech I ever listened to during one of those banquets."

In trying to make a worthy response to the generous words of my friend, it's hard to know what to say or what to do—

One thing—to begin with—presents no difficulty whatsoever. It's about that young lady from Illinois that Charles mentioned. I know exactly what to say about her! It's this: without her beauty and her intelligence, without her companionship, without her help, without her approbation, her understanding, her grace, her love, the road I have traveled through the years would have led nowhere. I thank my Sarah for everything.

It was half a century ago, when I walked alone up the gray stone steps between the massive bronze guardian lions to the entryway of the Art Institute in the heart of a huge strange city, a seventeen-year-old kid hungry with a voracious appetite to learn the art of painting.

To report to you now: I am still studying it. I still struggle and hope for improvement. I am still trying to learn, whether it be standing before an easel with a brush in my hand, or standing before a typewriter with an idea in my head.

For more than fifty years now I have pursued a kind of gripping work that has no end, a work that can never be finally accomplished or called finished, a work that I find myself never able to do as well as it demands to be done, a work that requires every part of my mind and soul and energy and time, a work that remains, and will remain until the moment I draw my last breath,

mystery and adventure: trying to delineate *the mystery* and *the adventure* of *being alive*, of waking up in the morning and opening my eyes to partake of the miracles of just being there to see it!

Of course my view of our world and that miracle of being present in it, alive, has been essentially shaped by the place on earth I see it from. I think often of the relationship it seems to me spiritual that exists between a man and the place on earth which he *knows inwardly*, as home. D. H. Lawrence wrote of it thus:

Every people is polarized in some particular locality, some home or homeland, and every great era of civilization seems to be the expression of a particular continent or continent region, as well as of the people concerned. There is, no doubt, some peculiar potentiality attaching to every region of the earth's surface, over and above the indisputable facts of climate and geological condition. There is some subtle magnetic or vital influence in every specific locality. . . .

I like to consider that some such inherent influence does indeed bond me to a particular piece of the continent, that under that influence I still live and work under the brow of old Mount Franklin here at the Pass of the North. I know that if any man observes and delineates the character of any piece of any continent with enough insight and enough skill, in words or in pictures, his work will be recognized not only within his region but beyond it, and take its place, according to its merit, world wide.

I cherish, beyond power of words or pictures, the exact place whence I observe daily the miracle of light and of life around me. I take pleasure in being able to tell you exactly, even when not asked, the precise terrestrial position of the house and headquarters for work where Sarah and I live. We're at thirty-one degrees, forty-seven minutes, thirty seconds north latitude and 106 degrees, twenty-seven minutes and thirty seconds longitude west of the Greenwich meridian—with the great space of all the world for studio walls and the whole vault of the heavens for skylight.

It's a very good location.

And I am a singularly fortunate man, doing the work I love so much, at the place I love so much, midst the people I love so much.

I give my thanks with this voice tonight, though my gratitude is not utterable.

Gerald Xavier “Gerry” Fitzgerald

February 14, 1905 -
January 30, 2001



Photo courtesy of El Paso Archaeology Society

Gerald Xavier Fitzgerald was born on February 14, 1905 and spent his childhood in Madero, Chihuahua. When he was ten years old, the Mexican Revolution forced the family to leave Mexico. His father, an engineer, and his mother who was a photographer, had both “gone through high school,” and his mother was an avid reader of Charles Dickens. They had “a library that didn’t end,” but unfortunately part of the library was burned by the rebels.

When they moved to El Paso, Gerry was put into the second grade because they thought he was “a little Mexican boy who couldn’t speak English.” This incensed his mother who was educated—unusual for the time, even more so because she was half Indian. In order to get him into the third grade she then presented the birth certificate of an older brother who had died.

Gerry’s maternal grandfather was a Linape and Creek who had been sent to Haskell Institute where did so well that he got a full scholarship to Chicago College. His maternal grandmother was of Scotch descent combined with a little English and Choctaw. Gerry was about one-fourth Indian: Creek, Choctaw, and Linape. He was seventeen when his grandfather—from whom he acquired his Indian beliefs—died. Jerry believed in the spirit world, not the white man’s God: he believed in the good life and was himself a good person.

Gerry led a remarkable life: he was an investigative reporter, writing about abuses to Mexicans and hobos; he was stunt man in Hollywood and a screenwriter; and he described his friend Katherine Hepburn as “a lady to the core.” He also took care of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lion; talked with birds, skunks, cats, and



Gerry (at right) as a very young man in Mexico. Photo courtesy of El Paso Archaeological Society.

other animals; was a labor union organizer; and a suffragist. Gerry had a big part in the establishment of El Paso's Wilderness Museum. He designed the scenery which was painted by Bill Rakocy and his students, and which served as back drops for some of the exhibits there. He was invited to join the American Academy for the Advancement of Science, and took graduate courses at the University of California at Los Angeles where he completed his course work but never completed his dissertation.

He became a passionate advocate of El Paso's natural resources and El Paso's destiny. He said "What other city has a mountain for a centerpiece, part of its city limits is desert, part mountain, part lush valley, and what other city has lithium in its water? Its location is unique. What other city sits where two



Bill Rakocy and Gerry Fitzgerald with unidentified friend at Wilderness Museum in 1976. Photo by Prince McKenzie, courtesy of El Paso Archaeology Society.



Gerry and John Green at the Wilderness Museum. Photo courtesy of El Paso Archaeology Society.

He was stoical and philosophical about his health and physically fit—"climbing the mountains like a goat"—into his eighties.

One of his last trips was to *Cañyon de los Monos* near Casas Grandes. The walk was "a mile or so in and out" which he walked slowly, taking pictures along the way. He faced a longhorn cow and took a picture of it, while others cowered. Gerry was fearless in his advocacy and not afraid of anything connected to nature. His Irish blood showed up in his feistiness and quick temper. The longer he lived in his beloved El Paso with Millie in their wonderful adobe house next to the Franklin Mountains, the more his Indian-ness became evident. Toward the end, he talked a lot about the Great Spirit.

Gerry's Irish father may account for his combative nature. There are many things that his friends admired about Gerry such as his fighting spirit and his willingness to jump into a fight to save any part of the natural environment surrounding El Paso, which he took to his heart like a mother to her child. His love of nature came from his Indian heritage. He communed with animals, especially cats—thus his care for the MGM "Lion that Roared."

Gerry loved El Paso and Mexico equally. He always felt there were ancient ties between Mexico and the American Southwest, that the Pass of the North was an important conduit for cross-cultural communication. He saw El Paso and Juarez as one community—Gerry never cared about boundaries and prejudice, a characteristic probably inherited from his mother. He described

countries and three states come together in one place? If you look at a highway map, all roads in the Southwest lead to El Paso."

Gerry revealed his Indian heritage and beliefs to his closest friends over the years. This explained a lot about him. He was in tune with nature—fiercely protective of animals and mountains and plants. He was equally protective of women, and his love for his wife Millie and hers for him were evident in their daily lives.

that lady as "...the most unprejudiced person I ever met." He could become incensed if he thought someone was being prejudiced or unfair. He liked El Paso because it was a city that is "blended" and has relatively little prejudice. He fought fiercely for the rights of women—his mother was suffragette—and his labor union was the first one to admit a woman carpenter. He counted among his friends blacks, the Hopi, Mexicans, other Native Americans—and women.

Gerry was asked recently what he considered his top accomplishments. He said, with tears in his eyes, his marriage to Millie—"I loved that woman!" He also mentioned his work at the University of California at Los Angeles, writing the dissertation on Navajo social change, and being asked to join the American Academy of Sciences, in which he retained his membership for forty years. He named his attempts spearheading the fight to save the Franklin Mountains, with Mike Bilbo. He was irritated that no one had ever acknowledged Mike's contribution.

In describing Gerry, the word that comes to mind is passion. He had a passion for learning, a passion against injustice, a passionate love of El Paso, and a passionate curiosity. The next word that comes to mind is contentment. Although this may seem contradictory, Gerry was a contented person. He was contented in his marriage to Millie, he was contented in the house he built and he was contented with nature. For many, going to Gerry and Millie's house was like returning home. There was a certain peace there, with the cats going in and out like silent moving shadows. Gerry loved animals. In his backyard was a roadrunner that followed him when he fed the birds and that sat on his outdoor table while Gerry talked to him. He had a skunk that played tag with his cats—



Gerry and his wife Millie in the gift shop at Wilderness Museum. Photo courtesy of El Paso Archaeology Society.

"until some neighbor complained!" Gerry exclaimed. He had a snake that entered the house and departed at will, and recently, his cat brought him a mouse as a present, but it got away. "It's somewhere in the house," he added. Animals came to Gerry because he loved animals as well as plants—he had over thirty varieties of cactus in his yard—he just loved nature.

His friends will miss the lively conversations, the railings at political stupidity, his passionate defense of the Franklin Mountains, and El Paso's proper place in the universe. They will miss his hospitality, his reminiscing of the long, active life he had led, his undeviating common sense on the things that mattered, his quick laughter, the twinkle in his eye for the ladies and his flirtations. Most of all, those who knew Gerry will miss his love of life.

A poem written by Gerry when he was young best reveals the spirit that defined Gerry to all who knew him.

There is a certain joy in living
That we gain from day to day
A certain sort of happiness in wondering
What is going to come our way.

Of course, it may be Fate has written
What is to be, and what is not,
But ours is the joy of fitting
Our own lives to the plot.

There is a pleasure in the reading
Of our life's storybook each day
Which we only get by giving
The very best that's in us
As we travel on our way

Farewell, Gerry. Keep in touch.

Based on a tribute written by Kay Sutherland and presented by Marguerite Davis at the memorial service on February 18, 2001.

DR. KAY SUTHERLAND is a cultural anthropologist who discovered rock art—with the help of Gerry and The El Paso Archaeological Society—while teaching at El Paso Community College from 1971 to 1978. Her friendship with Gerry and Mildred Fitzgerald, as with all who met them, was fueled and solidified by their warm and welcoming hospitality over thirty-two years. She currently is director of The Rain House, a non-profit educational organization dedicated to the indigenous interpretation of rock art and she teaches at St. Edwards's University in Austin, Texas.

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Dad Lea, Attorney and Mayor

By Sarah D. Lea

The line of men named Thomas Calloway Lea stretches back in our history. Tom Lea the artist was named Thomas Calloway, his father was also named Thomas Calloway, and so was his grandfather. The "Dad Lea" about whom this story was written, is the father of the artist.

Dad Lea was born on a farm in Jackson County, near Independence, Missouri, on October 29, 1877. His father Thomas Calloway Lea, had a medical degree from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, but never practiced medicine. He is supposed to have served a short time in General Price's army during the Civil War. After the death of his father, he lost interest in medicine and studied surveying with a government land agent and civil engineer. He became the official surveyor of Jackson County. When asked why he had deserted his medical career for a career in surveying, the elder Lea said "he would rather make a mistake above ground than below."

Dad's mother, Amanda Rose, was born in Kentucky in 1847. She had three children two boys and a girl. Tom was the youngest. Amanda Rose died when Tom was four years old, and the children were boarded out to neighbors when their father went on prolonged surveying trips.

Young Tom Lea was a bright student who graduated from High School when he was seventeen. He wanted to be a lawyer, and read law in the office of Albert Ott, a friend of his father's. After graduation from High School he went to Kansas City, where he worked as a cub reporter in the night courts for the *Kansas City Star* while he attended law school during the day.

During the Spanish-American War Tom joined a volunteer Missouri Regiment. When he received his orders, and dressed for the first time in his military uniform, he went out to the farm to say goodbye. His father was sitting on the front gallery of the farmhouse when he saw a man coming up the front steps. The older Tom reached for the shotgun that he always kept near. He recognized his son, and said bitterly, "I never thought I'd see a son of mine in that G—d— Union blue." Young Tom was ordered with his unit to Falls Church, Virginia. The war was over before he had orders to go to Cuba, and he returned to Kansas City to take up his

When he arrived at Alamogordo he discovered that his wallet was missing, and decided that he had inadvertently dropped it when he made his stop out in the brush. The conductor of a freight train at Alamogordo kindly let the young man board the caboose of a train headed for El Paso.

decided that he had inadvertently dropped it when he made his stop out in the brush. The conductor of a freight train at Alamogordo kindly let the young man board the caboose of a train headed for El Paso.

He arrived there with one dollar in his pocket, and he was hungry. He found a cafe run by Mr. Uhlig where he had a big steak dinner which cost seventy-five cents. He had eaten, but had no place to stay, so he pawned his watch which his father had given

law studies. He graduated from the Kansas City School of Law and received his license to practice.

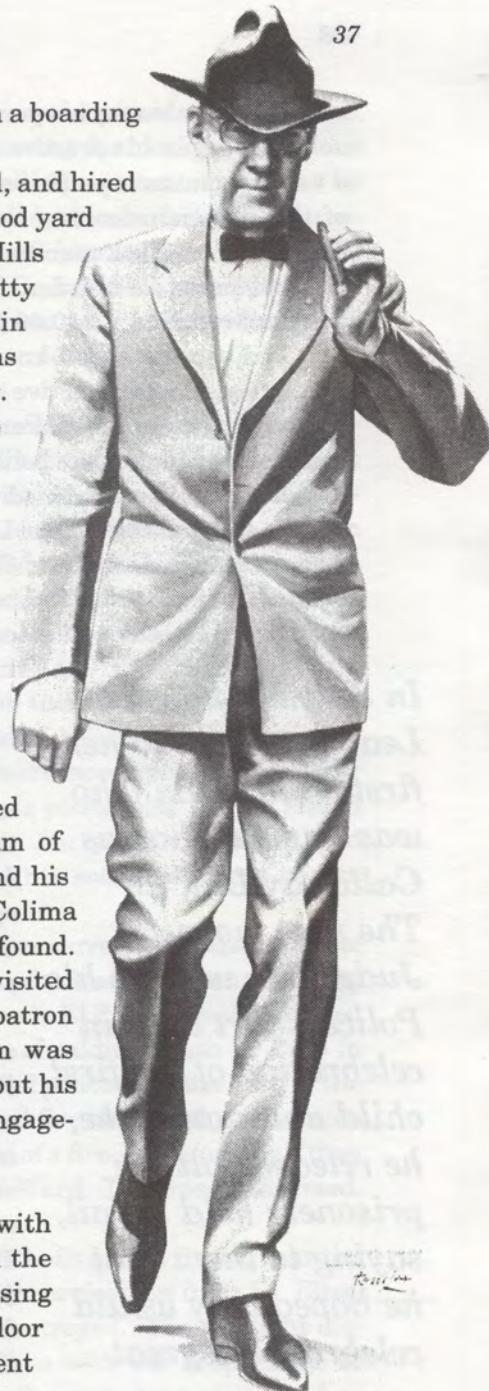
He then went to visit his relatives in New Mexico. After the Civil War some of his family had left Missouri for New Mexico where they had established a cattle operation. It was a lively place for a young man from Missouri. He rode half-broken horses, and borrowed a rifle with which he was very successful at deer hunting. When it was time for him to move on, his original intention was to go to Green Junction, Colorado. His Uncle Alfred had been there and had suggested that it was a good place for a beginning lawyer. Young Lea took the stage at Roswell which would take him to Alamogordo. The driver of the stage made a comfort stop for his passengers. Lea took advantage of this stop. When he arrived at Alamogordo he discovered that his wallet was missing, and de-

him, and had enough money to live in a boarding house while he hunted for a job.

Mr. Stackhouse ran a wood yard, and hired young Lea as a bill collector. The wood yard was on the corner of what is now Mills and Campbell Streets. Lea saw a pretty girl coming from high school dressed in a bright red jacket with gold buttons in double file down the front. Mr. Stackhouse told him that she was the daughter of old Joe Utt and that she attended the Baptist Sunday school. Lea met her at the Baptist Church, courted her, and became engaged to her. This was in the year 1901.

At that time Lea met a cordial young Mexican whose father was one of President Porfirio Diaz' *rurales*. Through the auspices of his friend's father, the two young men made a trip into Mexico that lasted for over a year. Lea had the dream of finding a gold or silver mine. He and his friend rode horseback all the way to Colima in search of treasure that they never found. Returning north the two horsemen visited a big hacienda. The daughter of the patron was very attractive and young Tom was tempted to make his life in Mexico, but his conscience reminded him of his engagement to Miss Zola Utt.

He returned to El Paso and, with borrowed money, set up an office in the Caples Building. He had an amusing story to tell about the tenant next door to him. One summer day when the rent collector came to collect the rent, Tom told him he was sorry but he couldn't pay until fall. "That won't do!" the collector said, "Fall never pays!" The ten-



Mayor Tom Lea.
Drawing by Tom Lea
provided through the
courtesy of Sarah D. Lea.

ant next door was a lawyer—A. B. Fall.

Lea began his practice and it was soon apparent that he was a very good attorney. He began appearing in the courts. Lea told of the first murder case he ever tried as an attorney for the defendant. A black man had killed a Mexican in a barroom fight, and was jailed for murder. Dad's client was acquitted and released. Dad received a \$10.00 fee for his services.

Lea became a well-known figure in the El Paso Bar Association. He also became active in the Masonic Order, and soon achieved prominence in the El Paso Democratic Committee. In 1905 he was elected judge of the police court, and in 1906, he married Miss Zola Utt and honeymooned in Long Beach, California.

In July of 1907, Zola Lea gave birth to her first child a son who was named Thomas Calloway Lea, Jr. The next morning Judge Lea went to his Police Court and, in celebration of his first child and namesake, he released all the prisoners held in jail,

saying to them that he hoped they would celebrate the great occasion. In 1911 the Leas had a second son, Joe Edward.

In July of 1907, Zola Lea gave birth to her first child a son who was named Thomas Calloway Lea, Jr. The next morning Judge Lea went to his Police Court and, in celebration of his first child and namesake, he released all the prisoners held in jail, saying to them that he hoped they would celebrate the great occasion.

Dad's friends, after his two years as a Police Court judge, began to talk of the young lawyer as a candidate in the forthcoming race for Mayor of El Paso against C. E. Kelly, the incumbent and the political leader of the time. The young candidate was without funds to run a campaign, and Charles Moorhead and O. T. Bassett co-signed a note for \$285, which was Lea's total campaign expenditure. There was a heated political fight. Lea won by some 1200 votes and was serenaded at dawn on the morning after the election. His son, Tom, then aged eight, remembers the delightful sound of music in front of the family residence at 1316 East Nevada Street.

This was the time of the Mexican Revolution and border troubles occupied a great part of the new mayor's attention. He was acting as Victoriano Huerta's attorney

at the time when Huerta, a refugee from the presidency of Mexico, died in El Paso. Lea also was the attorney for blocking violations of the neutrality laws, which included importation of weapons by the *Revolutionarios* to Mexico. He had had an unfriendly encounter with Pancho Villa, and had ordered him to leave the American side of the river. Villa's wife, Luz Corral Villa, was later jailed for neutrality violation, engendering strong enmity between the two men.

In 1916 a Preparedness Day parade nearly saw the assassination of Mayor Lea as he marched down San Antonio Street. An assassin with a Mannlicher rifle with Maxim silencer was apprehended and jailed. Lea began receiving numerous written threats to his life. Villa had had printed a placard in Spanish offering \$1000 in gold for the "capture dead or alive of Mayor Lea." Lea had called Villa "a saddle-colored s--- - b---." By this time the Leas had moved to their new house at 1400 East Nevada. For a few months it was deemed necessary to have a police guard for twenty-four hours a day at the house. Lea's two little boys, who were threatened with kidnapping, were accompanied to Lamar School and brought home each day by a police escort. This armed protection lasted for several months. For years afterward, Dad Lea carried a pistol when he visited his sons, leaving it on the mantel during the visit.

Another incident of near-violence occurred when the bodies of twenty-three American mining men who had been murdered by Villa's forces were brought from Mexico to El Paso. A mob gathered on Overland Street with the purpose of raiding south El Paso in retaliation. Mayor Lea, with his chief of police, and the head of the fire department stood with a connected fire hose on the south side of Oregon Street and warned the crowd of a fire-hose-dousing if they moved any further toward the Second Ward. The crowd dispersed.

A busy red light district had been built on 9th Street near the river which was patronized mainly by servicemen from Ft. Bliss. Mayor Lea had the jerry-built cribs destroyed. The red light district was thus eradicated from El Paso with the cooperation of the long-time friend of the mayor, General John J. Pershing, commander of Fort Bliss.

The mayor was active in acquiring water rights for city water from the Hueco Bolson. He conferred with the railroad authorities

about depressing the tracks through the downtown part of the city. The railroad agreed to pay half the cost if the city would supply the rest of the funds. Citizens' votes defeated the bond issue, and the tracks were not depressed until many years later.

Lea's administration made many friends and supporters and brought forth in the public press such expressions of approval as a poem by A. S. Harvey of which I will quote the last two stanzas:

For two good years we've heard the cheers
From El Paso to the sea
And you can bet you'll never get
A better mayor than Tom Lea
He goes out today, but he's going to stay
In the town by the Rio Grande
And between us two, I will say to you
He is every inch a man.
Strange things are done 'neath the boiling sun
By the politicians bold
The desert trails have the secret tales
That would make your blood run cold.
The western lights have seen great sights
But the greatest they ever did see
Was two years ago in El Paso
When we elected old Tom Lea.

The next few years marked his busiest practice as a defense lawyer in the courts of West Texas and New Mexico—from much-publicized murder trials to defense for petty thievery. His name as a lawyer became familiar. He had learned Spanish from his years on the border and his life in Mexico, and he spoke it well. His emotional appeals to juries caused one judge to comment that Lea was the only man he'd seen in court who could "make a Mexican sheepherder cry." In his emotion some of his more cynical friends called Lea "Old Chief Rain-in-the-Face."

Lea made a second attempt to join the army after his term as mayor was completed and when World War I was declared. He was sent to camp at Leon Springs, Texas for officers' training. He recounted the days of being trained to be a "pilot"—he was always being told to "pilot" here and "pilot" there. When the Armistice was signed, Lea, for a second time, missed service in the field.

Richard Calvin, the Lea's third son, was born in 1927.

Dad Lea was never much of a church-goer. Zola wanted him to go to the Baptist Church, and finally persuaded him to do so. The day they went, his gun "accidentally" slid down the aisle and landed in front of the preacher. There was some discussion of the incident among the members of the family.

The successful firm of Lea, McGrady, Thomason, and Edwards was dissolved in 1936. The firm had the reputation of doing team work. Ewing Thomason said that

Lea was an expert jury picker, and opened the argument to the jury. He cried if he considered it necessary. I always closed the argument and gave the jury the 'rousements.' McGrady and Edwards would sit by like a couple of wise owls, whispering to us to stay in the record and preserve all legal points in case of appeal.

Gideon McGrady retired, citing his age, and partner Ewing Thomason became involved in politics. Lea and Edwards remained. The depression came in the early 1930s, and there were hard times for several years.

The Mexican Revolution was terminated and, for some unknown reason, attorney Lea destroyed his papers relating to those times. His partner, Eugene Edwards, did find one paper, written by one of Villa's staff, which stated that for \$25,000 Villa had postponed his attack on Presidio until an *El Paso Times* reporter could get there to cover the story.

In 1936 Lea's beloved wife Zola died of cancer—her mother, who was also living at the house on Nevada Street, died, and his daughter-in-law, Tom Jr.'s wife, also died after a long illness. The elder Lea was left alone to raise his son, Richard, who was nine years old.

In 1939, Lea married a widow, Rosita Partida Archer, who, with her daughter Bertha, helped to make Lea's last years happier.

When World War II came along, Lea was too old to serve his country in the field. He nailed an American flag to the front eave

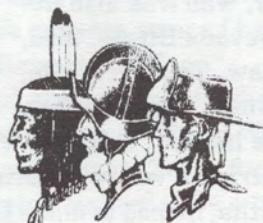
*Dad Lea was never
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and landed in front
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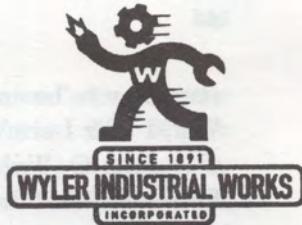
of his house and declared that the flag would stay in place until the day the Japanese surrendered. Attorney Lea died in August, 1945, four days before the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. The flag was still there on the day of his funeral, and was taken down later by his three sons.

Based on a talk given by Sarah D. Lea at a meeting of Las Comadres on October 7, 2000. Permission to publish approved by Mrs. Lea and by the president of Las Comadres, Gertrude "Sugar" Goodman.

This article was submitted to Password by Mrs. Lea a few weeks before the death of her husband, Tom Lea.

SARAH DIGHTON LEA was born in Monticello, Illinois. She came to El Paso to visit a lifelong friend, met Tom Lea, and married him in 1938. She was invited to join the Junior League and so started her civic work. She was very active in civic activities and became president of the Junior League, Family Service, United Way, and the YWCA. The administrative offices of the YWCA were named for her. Her honors include the Hannah Solomon Award from the National council of Jewish Women, an award from LULAC, and from the National Conference of Christians and Jews. She served on numerous boards of directors, including MBank of El Paso the Lee and Beulah Moor Childrens' Home. Her hobbies include golf and bridge.





A Bicycle Shop that Made Good

Wyler Industrial Works, Inc.

By James W. Gibson

As the railroads pushed south and west, they descended on El Paso, bringing with them people, progress, the need for goods, and all the trappings of an expanding society. In the very early 1880s, a man named Oliver Dutton, a machinist by trade, owned and operated a bicycle shop, in what is now South El Paso.¹

Shortly after Dutton arrived in El Paso, he became aware of a need for spare parts, especially machined brass parts. He looked toward that need and converted the bicycle shop to an "Electrical and Machine Company" which was located on the corner of East Overland and San Antonio Streets. Early records tell us that in 1900 he renamed it "El Paso Novelty Company" and he moved this newly named company to 114 South Stanton street in 1906. As an example of the specialized work that they did, the company sculpted a statue of a black boy which they called "El Negrito." This statue stood at the Plaza de Armas in Juarez until 1911.²

In 1906, Dutton and a group of El Paso business men³ established "Union Iron and Brass Works" at Sixth and South Park Streets. This was an outgrowth of the El Paso Novelty Works. The cornerstone of the Union Iron and Brass Works was the brass foundry, which was one of the few, if not the only one of its kind, west of the Mississippi River. For the next four years, Union Iron and Brass Works supplied the railroads with their metal goods. In 1907, this unique business had moved to a former livery stable on the northeast corner of South Virginia and Sixth Streets, a site now designated as 714 South Virginia Street. The same brick building today houses the sales and engineering department of Wyler Industrial Works, Inc. Union Iron and Brass, with thirty-three employ-

ees, grew to be one of the major employers of El Paso in the pre-World War I era.

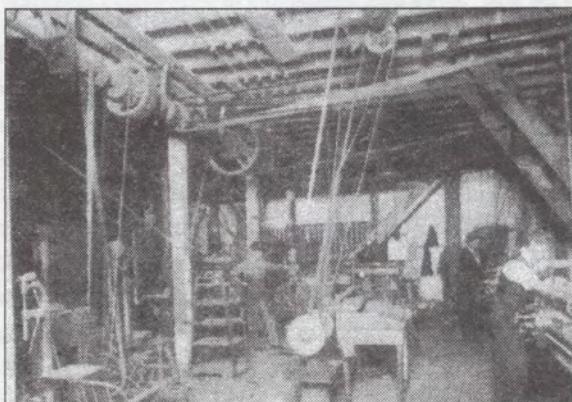
John O. Wyler was a long time molder and machinist in El Paso. In 1911 he and another machinist and boiler maker, J.

*It was also in
1923 that Wyler
changed the name
of the company to
Wyler Industrial
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company for only
one year until his
untimely death
in 1924.*

Frank Baumgarten, joined the staff of Union Iron and Brass Works. After two years, they gained control of the company and renamed it "Baumgarten and Wyler" and operated it as a foundry and machine works and continued in business until 1923.

In that year, John Wyler, his brother, Otto, and another machinist, Harvey A. Wilson, purchased the company. It was also in 1923 that Wyler changed the name of the company to Wyler Industrial Works. He ran the company for only one year until his untimely death in 1924.⁴ Harvey A. Wilson became the sole owner at that time.

Harvey Wilson had served his apprenticeship in the R. Hoe Company of New York, a company noted for its manufacture of printing presses which were so important to that era. When his apprentice training was completed, Wilson and a fellow machinist started west to continue their trade. They "rode the rails" to Topeka, Kansas, dodging railroad "bulls," as railroad detectives were known. Wilson went to work for the Atchison, Topeka, and the Santa Fe, the railroad which lent its name to a well-known song many years later. He arrived in El Paso in 1907, where his first employment was with the Southern Pacific Railroad. In 1911, Wilson moved his



*Machine and
Boiler Room. From
Hudspeth's 1921
City Directory.*

toolbox to Baumgarten and Wyler where he eventually became the owner and operator of the Wyler Industrial Works. Mr. Wilson proved to be a man with very high standards and principles. In 1929, during the depression, he suffered a severe financial set back, as did many other businessmen, and became encumbered to several El Paso businesses. Rather than throwing up his hands and declaring bankruptcy, he spent the next fifteen years paying back every cent he owed and kept Wyler Industrial Works afloat.

Until 1946, Wyler Industrial Works conducted business at 714 South Virginia Street in a building that was rented from a Dallas lawyer who wanted to sell the property. It was not convenient, however, for Mr. Wilson to buy it at that time. The Wyler company rented the lot across the street and erected an Armco steel building at 802 South Virginia Street. This is the old McNutt Oil Company property where oil products were stored. This building still stands there and is a Wyler warehouse. In 1953, Lawrence P. Berry, better known as "Paul," and his wife, Pat, leased Wyler from Harvey Wilson. Later, in 1954, they bought the company and incorporated it, becoming known as Wyler Industrial Works, Inc. Harvey A. Wilson died on February 13, 1962 at the age of 84.⁵

Paul Berry is a native El Pasoan, who was born in 1923 on Texas Street and graduated from Austin High School in 1941. During his school years, he worked at several "after school jobs." One of these jobs was bagging and delivering groceries at Caldarella's Market at Magoffin and Alameda Street. The building is still there but the business long ago moved away. In 1942, with World War II in full swing and after a year of college at Texas College of



Wyler's early conveyance for distribution of goods. Courtesy of the author.

Mines, now the University of Texas at El Paso, his country called. Like so many other young men and women of that time, Berry "stepped forward" and joined the United States Marine Corps. After boot camp and further training, he was ordered to the Pacific area of operations. There, he served with the 4th Marine Division

*Today, Wyler
Industrial Works
has grown into a
major industrial
service capable of
designing, manu-
facturing, and
installing the
widest variety
of industrial
equipment.*

which engaged the Japanese, on Roi Numar, an island in the Kwajalein Island group. Mr. Berry next participated in the capture of Saipan and Tinian, where he was wounded. After a time of recuperation he helped overcome the Japanese on Iwo Jima, where he was again wounded. As the war slowly came to an end and while Berry was recovering from his wounds, the war ended suddenly. In 1946, Paul Berry was discharged from the Marine Corps. He returned to El Paso and went to work for Mr. Wilson and Wyler Industrial Works, as head bookkeeper and supervisor. At the time of Berry's hiring in 1946, Wyler had five employees.

Berry and the former June Patricia Tilton of Medicine Lodge, Kansas were married in 1949. At this time, Wyler was still located at 802 South Virginia Street. Several pieces of property in that same area have been purchased and the company offices are now located at 711 South Saint Vrain. This was the location of the Armco Steel Buildings company offices prior to that time.

Paul and Pat Berry and their five children are strong supporters of El Paso and the surrounding communities. Their son, Curtis Berry, is now the president of Wyler, where he carries on the Wyler tradition. Today, Wyler Industrial Works has grown into a major industrial service capable of designing, manufacturing, and installing the widest variety of industrial equipment. Their work force includes over eighty trained personnel who cover many manufacturing services required by the business community.



Newer transporation.
Courtesy of the
author.

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER JAMES W. GIBSON United States Navy (Ret.) was the Officer in Charge of Navy Recruiting for southwestern Texas and southeast New Mexico from 1972-1974. After retiring from the Navy, Mr. Gibson remained in El Paso until 1977, when he and his wife, Mary Lou, moved to northern California. They have continued their contact with El Paso through friends and many visits to the area over the years. In recent years, Gibson, has taken an active interest in the history of the El Paso/Juarez area. He is a member of the El Paso County Historical Society.

ENDNOTES

1. *El Paso Times*, July 1981.
2. Metz, Leon. *El Paso Guided Through Time*. (El Paso, Texas: Mangan Books, 1999) 155.
3. William J. Harris, W. E. Anderson, Joseph G. House, and Alfred Courchesne.
4. *El Paso Times*, October 5, 1924. 6.
5. *El Paso Herald Post*, February 13, 1962.



Book Reviews

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN WEST: A CENTURY OF SHORT STORIES edited by Bruce A. Glasrud and Laurie Champion. Boulder, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 2000. 463 pp. ISBN 0-87081-559-8. \$29.95.

The African American West: A Century of Short Stories, edited by Professor Bruce A. Glasrud and Laurie Champion, is an excellent compilation of the creative outpourings of many seminal and cogent black writers of the 20th century. The standouts, of course, are W. E. B. Du Bois, Ralph Ellison, Langston Hughes, Terry McMillan, Walter Mosley, and Frank Yerby, but the collateral writers are notables among the rising artists or previously little known authors deserving much more attention now. Professor Glasrud and Champion are very clear in their purpose. These are short stories written "about the West," defined as "those states one removed westward from the Mississippi River, although more generally as any state west of the Mississippi." Defining the African American short story genre for the purposes of their publication, the editors are not limited to black writers alone. Glasrud and Champion state that a selection "would be one wherein the point-of-view of an African American or if the main character is an African American." Factoring in other appropriate variables of time, space, and poignancy, Glasrud and Champion provide a book of significance and one, hopefully, to bring fuller attention to the African American experience in the West and why it must be explored with greater interest and detail.

The reader will marvel over the stories of the black experience in Texas: Du Bois, "Jesus Christ In Texas"; Pickens, "Jim Crow In Texas"; Ntozake Shange, "Ridin' the Moon in Texas"; and Reginald McKnight, "The Kind of Light That Shines on Texas." Other stories pointing us to the vastly beautiful and eerie spaciousness of black life stretched out on the wings of its faith and culture in the West are William H. Lewis, "The Trip Back From Whidbey"; Wanda Coleman, "The Friday Night Shift at the Taco House Blues (Wah-Wah)"; and Nick Aaron Ford, "Let the Church Roll On." In the stories, one finds the age-old problems of bigotry and attempted spirit-killing attacks,



but the stories capture many different kinds of human experiences and emotions as African Americans face the protean West and carve out their space.

As Joyce Carol Thomas, one of the contributors to the volume, writes in her story on the "Young Reverend Zelma Lee Moses": the "sisters of the skillet" were instructed to "put a little more sage in that corn bread," and to "make that dumpling plumper than that." The Right Rev. Moses herself intoned in the closing church song, "Lord, just a little mercy's all I need." Hers is a recognizable black supplication voiced fully in a West of promises and problems for African Americans. If blacks did not find full freedom there, they, for the most part, found a place to be left alone. To glimpse this West and not be pulled into the fulsome discourse on its African American experience will be impossible—thanks to books like the one Glasrud and Champion have given us, and we are prompted to acknowledge that there is a region with many more rich, revealing, and riveting tales and truths yet to be told.

As scholars and fiction writers boldly take-up the challenges of exploring and explaining the many aspects of the black American experience in the West, they perforce will have to move haltingly over the terrain for there is much to see. Glasrud and Champion, through their work, have done this with the discerning and appreciative eyes of scholars, and they invite us to see the richness and vastness of the black experience of the West. Given their success with this volume of short stories, the editors will undoubtedly turn in the near future to the pleasant assignment of focusing on the many indigenous, but to date, unheralded black writers of the West; those, in other words, who claim the West more fundamentally as their place of work, habitat, or inspiration. In the search for that talent, we may find more of those regional writers listening with ears cupped and exploring with verve the important "lower frequencies" of which the great Oklahoma novelist Ralph Ellison spoke.

Maceo Crenshaw Dailey, Jr., Ph. D.
Director, African American Studies
University of Texas at El Paso

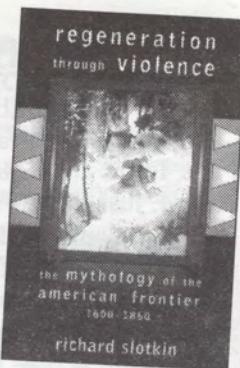
REGENERATION THROUGH VIOLENCE: The Mythology of the American Frontier 1600-1860 by Richard Slotkin. University of Oklahoma Press. Norman. 2000. 680 pages. \$24.95. Paperback.

This is a reprint of the first of a planned trilogy of Professor Slotkin's massive work on the events; religious, cultural, and historical, that shaped the mythology of the American West. When first published in 1973, it was a winner of the Albert J. Beveridge Award and a National Book Award finalist. In this book, Slotkin attempts to demonstrate how the attitudes and traditions that shape American culture evolved from the social and psychological anxieties of European settlers struggling in a strange new world to settle the land while driving out the Indians and displacing the Indian culture. To understand Americans and how their culture evolved, Slotkin writes:

The mythology of a nation is the intelligible mask of that enigma called the 'national character.' Through myths the psychology and world view of our cultural ancestors are transmitted to modern descendants, in such a way and with such power that our perception of contemporary reality and our ability to function in the world are directly, often tragically affected.

Slotkin examines the literature of the early Puritans from the seventeenth century to the mystique of the Daniel Boone tales of the eighteenth and on to the Leatherstocking novels of James Fenimore Cooper during the early nineteenth century in tracing the development of frontier mythology. He emphasizes that while American colonists transformed the virgin wilderness into a land rich in civilized abundance, they did it by reverting to the same degree of barbarism that they reviled in Native Americans. The Puritan captivity narratives of early New England were used, he states, as a method of expressing the theme that submission to capture was an act of faith and a way of exorcizing the sins of the settlers who had regenerated the land through violence.

Emphasizing the dark side of early American settlements, Slotkin believes that during the countless Indian wars the frontiersmen rationalized their killing by affirming that this violence resulted in the regeneration of the land leading to the biblical ideal of "A City on a Hill." He traces the shift in the Daniel Boone literature from reality



to mythology as it adapted to the economic and cultural needs of the different regions of the country.

Regeneration through Violence is an absorbing work of psychological interpretations of both the development of American literature and history. In a doom-like conclusion, Slotkin seems to reflect that our modern polity is no more than a

Warfare between man and nature, between race and race, exalted as a kind of heroic ideal; the piles of wrecked and rusted cars, heaped like Tartar pyramids of death-cracked, weather-browned, rain-rotten skulls, to signify our passage through the land.

A word of caution—this is a book that will be appreciated mostly by serious students of mythology, sociology, and the psychological factors influencing the development of American literature. It is written in a more pedagogical than popular writing style.

Professor Slotkin is the Olin Professor of English and former director of American Studies at Wesleyan University. The other books in the trilogy are *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800-1890* and *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America*, both published by the University of Oklahoma Press.

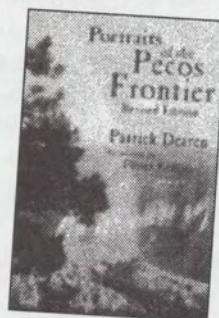
Douglas V. Meed
Round Rock, Texas

Douglas V. Meed is the author of five books on Texas and southwestern border history. His latest book is Texas Ranger Johnny Klevenhagen, published by Republic of Texas Press.

PORTRAITS OF THE PECOS FRONTIER, rev. ed., by Patrick Dearen. Forward by Elmer Kelton. Lubbock, Texas Tech University Press, 1999. xvi + 358 pp. Illustrations, appendix, maps, notes, index. ISBN: 0-89672-411-0. \$19.95 paper.

Portraits of the Pecos Frontier describes the history of West Texas, specifically the "Pecos frontier," which stretches east to west, north to south from roughly San Angelo to El Paso and Andrews to the Rio Grande, respectively. It is a vast land larger than most states and, contrary to the perceptions of outsiders, equally diverse and replete with contrasts such as wind and sun-scorched desert crowned by densely forested mountains, including Texas' tallest, Guadalupe Peak, and large cities separated by seemingly limitless expanses of rangeland.

Although faced with the "impossible task" (p. xiii) of describing a region "too varied and emotional for one person—artist or writer—



ever to capture fully" (p. xiii-xiv), West Texas native Patrick Dearen nevertheless, interviewed, researched, and wrote about the "intriguing individuals and their folklore, forgotten sites and their legends, and hidden places" (xiv) that gave rise to and continue to mold the region's unique character: Will Sublett and his lost gold mine, spirits, untrammeled wilderness, cowboys, the frontier military, oil field workers, illegal immigrants, and hoboes. The resultant book is less historical narrative, in the conventional sense, than historical essays united by, Dearen hoped, a common place and, more specifically, by peoples' effort to make a living from a harsh, water-scarce land typically dismissed by academics as marginal.

Written for a general audience with little or no knowledge of the Trans-Pecos region, *Portraits of the Pecos Frontier* provides fascinating reading that will introduce readers to both the land's rugged expanses and some of the region's more unique places and inhabitants. When Dearen wrote about the Pecos frontier's overlooked people and places, such as "Camp Elizabeth," he added snippets of local color to the region's frequently generalized history, yet he glossed over or neglected many of the wide-ranging social, political, and economic events, such as Indian removal, oil exploration and development, that unified the people and places in the "Pecos frontier." In doing so, Dearen failed to negate the persistent myth of the Pecos frontier's marginality.

More than any other single factor, the brevity of most of Dearen's vignettes undercut his attempt to evoke effectively and to show regional identity, if not unity, as is achieved in less sweeping and romanticized regional histories such as Kenneth B. Ragsdale's *Big Bend Country: Land of the Unexpected* (Texas A&M University Press, 1998). For example, essays like "Derricks and Gushers," which discussed the life of former cable tool driller Bill Allman, ultimately revealed little of historical significance. Such vignettes, instead, hinted at the larger stories that needed to be told in order to come to a basic understanding of the region's natural and human history and its relevance to contemporary American society and life. As a result of this omission, *Portraits of the Pecos Frontier* will be of only passing interest and use to historians and serious students of the region's history.

Mr. Fred MacVaughn
Carlsbad, N.M.

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