

PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Volume 47, No. 2 • El Paso, Texas • Summer, 2002

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VOLUME 47, NO. 2
SUMMER, 2002
EL PASO, TEXAS



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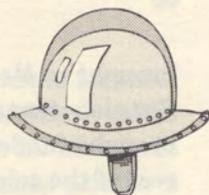


"El Adelantado Don Juan de Oñate, c. 1598" by internationally renowned El Paso artist José Cisneros. The drawing from Mr. Cisneros' book Riders Across the Centuries (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1984) is reproduced here with the permission of the artist and Texas Western Press. Courtesy El Paso County Historical Society.

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Entered as periodical mail at El Paso, Texas



The Legacy of Don Juan de Oñate

By George D. Torok



In 1595, don Juan de Oñate, who was born in Zacatecas and whose wife was the granddaughter of Hernando Cortes and the great-granddaughter of Montezuma, was awarded the royal contract to establish a new colony.

His charge was to extend the continent's first *camino real* hundreds of miles north and to develop mining, missions, agriculture, and settlements on the frontier. He foresaw a burgeoning new colony in the north, a "new" Mexico. Oñate spent years planning and preparing for the venture and by the time he and his colonists departed in January of 1598 they were one of the best provisioned expeditions of the Spanish colonial era. They had settlers, soldiers, missionaries, government officials, laborers, livestock, equipment, supplies, luxuries; all of the basic elements of Spanish culture.

As the Oñate expedition moved north along the trail, it brought an entirely new way of life to the region. Although many settlers were disappointed with New Mexico, and it never produced the great riches they had hoped for, they soon adapted to conditions in the north and began creating a new Spanish colony. They changed settlement and cultivation systems, brought a new religion and language, crops, livestock, and technology. While colonists later adopted some of the Native-American practices, the colonial culture of New Mexico was clearly Hispanic and it dramatically transformed the region. Once New Mexico was established, Oñate's Camino Real became the main link between Mexico City and the frontier. For the next two hundred twenty years it served as the lifeline of the colony continuing to bring north Spanish settlers, customs, products, and culture.¹

A royal inspector, Juan de Frías Salazar, carefully inventoried the expedition leaving us a detailed account of what was

brought to New Mexico. With this inventory we can see how the Spanish transplanted much of their culture in the north and brought fundamental changes to the Rio Grande region. For the rest of the colonial era, travelers and caravans continued to bring Spanish goods and culture north along the trail. This material culture has helped shape much of the culture of the American Southwest today.²

Like the network of roads that covered the ancient Roman world, Spanish *caminos reales* were designed to connect the furthest reaches of the empire. As the Spanish had conquered the Aztecs and began colonizing Mexico, they forged a royal road that led west from Mexico City. In the 1540s the road turned north toward Zacatecas, a great silver mining center and by the 1580s, it reached the Santa Bárbara mining district, near modern-day Parral, Chihuahua. This camino real, that eventually connected Mexico City with Santa Fe, became the longest, most extensive, and the most historic of the royal roads in the Americas. Oñate extended it six hundred miles north and the trail became known as the *Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*, the Royal Road to the Interior. Oñate's most important long-term contribution was not the establishment of a new colony, but instead the opening of this major transportation corridor that would bring an entirely new way of life to the region.³

Don Juan de Oñate

Although the Spanish had explored the northern Rio Grande Valley for decades, they did not attempt to colonize until the late sixteenth century. In September 1595, the colonial government chose don Juan de Oñate, a wealthy nobleman from Zacatecas, to lead the effort. He spent two years organizing a massive expedition that included soldiers, their wives and children, Native Americans, missionaries, and servants. More than eighty carts and wagons, thousands of head of livestock, and 500 people formed a caravan train that often spread more than two miles.⁴

The Oñate expedition left Santa Bárbara in January 1598 but instead of following the Conchos River to the Rio Grande, it headed north through the Chihuahua Desert. For three months they walked through the dry desolate landscape, enduring many hardships. Suffering from thirst and exhaustion, they finally reached the banks of the Rio Grande on April 20th, somewhere near

present-day San Elizario, Texas. In order to give thanks for their survival, and to prepare for the long journey ahead, Oñate called for a celebration. The Spanish, joined by local Manso Indians, held a great feast. The missionaries held a Catholic mass and in a ceremony called "La Toma," Don Juan de Oñate formally claimed the land for Spain. This celebration of the First Thanksgiving took place in an area that today is the United States—twenty-three years before the Pilgrim feast at Plymouth, Massachusetts. A few days later the colonists, rested and inspired, resumed the journey. They crossed the river just north of today's downtown El Paso and continued along the east bank of the Rio Grande.⁵

For eight months the colonists blazed a trail north, often following well-worn Native American trails. They finally settled where the Rio Grande meets the Rio Chama. Indian resistance, disappointment with the New Mexican lands, and dissent among the colonists plagued the expedition for ten years. It was not until 1609 with the founding of the Villa Real de Santa Fe by Oñate's successor Governor Pedro de Peralta that New Mexico became a permanent settlement. Santa Fe became the northern terminus of the Camino Real. By then the trail had become a regular route, covering a distance of more than 1,500 miles. During the eleven year period between the departure of the Oñate expedition and the founding of Santa Fe, the colonists had already begun to create a new way of life in the north. This way of life continued to be influenced and developed by travelers who made their way along Oñate's Camino Real for the remainder of the colonial period.

During the eleven year period between the departure of the Oñate expedition and the founding of Santa Fe, the colonists had already begun to create a new way of life in the north.

Language and Place Names

One of the first changes the Spanish brought to the region was a change of language and the re-naming of places along the Camino Real. No doubt all of these sites were known by different names to the Native Americans, but unlike many place names in the interior of Mexico, these existing Indian names were soon forgotten. In fact few were even recorded. Indigenous place names were replaced with Spanish names, names that have survived for centuries and continue to be the used today.⁶

In some cases, it was an event that prompted a name. When Pedro Robledo, a sixty year old native of Toledo, Spain died on the trail, he was buried at a spot that became known as Paraje de Robledo. Today, Robledo Mountain, north of present-day Doña Ana, overlooks the site. When the expedition was in desperate need of water and a small dog helped them locate a spring, the site was named Ojo de Perrillo, the "spring of the little dog." And of course don Juan de Oñate called the site where his caravan crossed the Rio Grande "el paso," which later became El Paso del Norte, present-day Ciudad Juárez.⁷

Later Spanish travelers and settlers continued to name places along the Camino Real. As haciendas were established, prominent family names such as Tomé, Los Lunas, or Valencia became the names of settlements. Missionaries added religious names along the trail: San Antonio, Socorro, and San Diego. *Parajes*, or campsites, were named for wildlife, landscape features, or vegetation. Although many of these campsites were abandoned in time, the names continue to be used today: Las Nutrias, the beavers; Las Tusas, the prairie dogs; or La Joyita, the little basin. A wealth of Spanish place names line the highways of our region: San Marcial, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Doña Ana. And of course our city takes its name from the same Oñate reference, becoming known in the 1850s as American El Paso.⁸

Missions

Another major change that the Spanish brought along the Camino Real was the establishment of missions and the conversion of Indians to Catholicism. In applying for the contract to colonize the "new" Mexico, Oñate noted his family's many charitable contributions and their close relationship with the Catholic church. As the expedition made its way north, Franciscan missionaries brought the Catholic religion to New Mexico. They converted Native Americans, settled them in missions, organized them as laborers and taxpayers, and developed agriculture and crafts. After the establishment of Santa Fe, scattered mission settlements were founded up and down the Rio Grande. By the early years of the seventeenth century, missionaries were living in the Pass of the North, working with the local Suma and Manso populations. Indian religions were suppressed. Conversion, or at least the appearance of conversion, became mandatory. The mission system provided much more than simply a change of religion.

It was designed to make Native Americans "Spanish" and force them to adopt a Spanish lifestyle.⁹

Spanish missions also served as campsites on the Camino Real. Travelers faced many hardships as they crossed hundreds of miles of open desert lands with few sources of food or water. Only an occasional spring provided relief. Good campsites where travelers could find water, rest their animals, or spend the night at missions or haciendas, were few and far between. In the early seventeenth century, the Spanish began organizing regular caravans that kept the mission system and the entire province of New Mexico alive for many generations. Caravans brought settlers, news, information, supplies, agricultural goods, tools, and church ornaments north along the trail. In time, commercial travelers joined caravans bringing to New Mexico an even greater variety of goods, many originating in Europe and the Far East. Many missions became well-known campsites and later developed as settlements and towns.

Horses and Livestock

The Spanish introduced the horse to New Mexico. Although horses had been brought by earlier explorers, it was the hundreds of horses of the Oñate expedition that helped develop an entirely new lifestyle along the Rio Grande. These were fine Spanish horses of Arabian origin and were known for their speed, stamina, and instinct. They soon revolutionized travel, trade, communications, and agriculture in New Mexico.

The horse contributed to the development of *haciendas*, based on a Spanish system of land and labor. The *hacienda* made use of the horse in the grazing and herding of livestock. This system survived the Spanish colonial era, continued in the Mexican era, and provided a base for much of the Anglo-American ranching system of the nineteenth century. *Vaqueros*, common laborers on horseback, developed many of the methods and traditions that later became associated with the cowboy culture of the American Southwest.¹⁰

The Indian population readily adapted to the use of the horse. Native-Americans were trained as teamsters and herders, becoming a part of the vaquero tradition. By the 1610s, stray and stolen horses were making their way into Native American communities outside of Spanish control. By the 1650s, the horse was being used by Indians to fight the Spanish and other tribes. As the horse

spread throughout the west it completely transformed some Native American communities. Plains Indians were able to wander through much larger areas and roam further in their hunts. Some Native Americans, such as the Apache, used the horse to develop

an effective method of raiding and plundering settlements in New Mexico. Despite many efforts by Spanish, Mexican, and American officials, Apache and Comanche raids remained a problem well into the late nineteenth century.¹¹

An entire Spanish equestrian tradition was carried into New Mexico along Oñate's Camino Real. In Spain, the man on a horse had a unique status which symbolized wealth, political, and military power. Portraits of officials in Spain and the New World often depicted prominent men on horseback. Local *hacienda* owners developed the *charro* tradition providing a foundation for the Anglo-American cowboy tradition, and much of the ranching heritage of the American west. El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juárez,

Chihuahua both have lively rodeo and *charreada* competitions, an outgrowth of skills mastered by *vaqueros*, *charros*, and cowboys over the past four hundred years.¹²

Ranching and Agriculture

The Oñate expedition introduced many European domestic animals and crops bringing an entirely new agricultural economy to the north. Haciendas along the Rio Grande soon had large herds of horses, cattle, and sheep. The Spanish also brought dogs, cats, donkeys, oxen, mules, goats, pigs, and chickens.¹³ Cattle, especially a breed known as the Black Andalusian, a native of southern Spain, were common. Spotted cattle, a mixture of some of the original breeds, also became common along the Rio Grande.¹⁴

One of the more important introductions was a sheep known as the *churro*. The *churro* were common to southern Spain and had a history dating back to the time of the Romans. They adapted well to regions that were more arid and thrived in the grasslands of the New World. *Churro* produced a coarse wool that could

Plains Indians were able to wander through much larger areas and roam further in their hunts. Some Native Americans, such as the Apache, used the horse to develop an effective method of raiding and plundering settlements in New Mexico.

be hand-processed and used for textile production. They also provided a flavorful meat that became quite popular among colonial New Mexico residents. The *churro* was tough; it could survive drought and be driven for days on trails with little need for water. *Churro* became an important export of the New Mexico colony providing meat and wool for mining districts in the south. Later in the 19th century they were driven west to feed miners during the California gold rush.¹⁵

The Spanish brought European crops north along the Camino Real. Wheat became a common grain in New Mexico replacing corn as the main ingredient in tortillas. They brought fruit trees to produce apricots, apples, cherries, peaches, pears, and plums. They also attempted to cultivate European cantaloupe and watermelon. European grapes filled the many vineyards of the Rio Grande area and were used to produce fine wines and brandies. Along with common Spanish vegetables, grains, and fruits, indigenous products were brought up the Camino Real from the interior of Mexico and became an important part of the New Mexican diet. These products included tomatoes, chiles, squash, and new varieties of corn. In fact the Spanish influence on agriculture was so overwhelming that, over time, some Native Americans accepted these as native foods of their own and incorporated them in their ceremonies and rituals.¹⁶

The Spanish introduced new European agricultural systems to New Mexico. Iron tools and crop rotation made farming more productive. *Acequias*, or irrigation ditches, watered the farmlands. Oñate's Camino Real provided an excellent means of distributing and marketing these goods, spreading new food styles throughout the region.

Iron, Tools, Technology

One of the greatest advantages that the Spanish had in colonizing the Americas was advanced technology. Although Native Americans smelted copper and gold, they had not yet developed iron implements. The Oñate expedition brought Spanish weapons—guns, swords, and explosives—that allowed them to subdue large populations forcibly and gave them a powerful psychological advantage over their enemies.¹⁷ Armor provided protection against these same enemies. They also brought the iron tools that changed agriculture and developed new trades in the colony. Horseshoes, mining tools, plowshares, hoes, saws, and sickles became common.

Iron and steel kitchenware was used in colonial homes. Iron crosses, grilles, and railings became common Spanish features of colonial buildings. The Oñate expedition brought north a large amount of smithing equipment and forged tools, and blacksmiths played a critical role in the development of the new colony. Like the horse, much of this technology made its way far into remote areas where Native Americans had little, if any, contact with the Spanish.¹⁸

One of the most important technologies brought by the Spanish was the wheeled-vehicle. The use of carts, wagons, and beasts-of-burden to transport people and supplies along the trail revolutionized life in the Rio Grande area. Wheeled-vehicle transportation made caravan traffic a regular feature of life along the Rio Grande well into the nineteenth century.

Luxuries and Novelties

The Spanish also introduced many luxury items and novelties to New Mexico. Many of these came from foreign trade. The Salazar inspection lists many objects including glass beads, mirrors, scissors, knives, necklaces, earrings, dyes, ointments, aromatic substances, textiles, and clothing. In fact Oñate's expedition of 1598 was one of the best provisioned for barter and trade with Native American communities.¹⁹

Education and Expertise

The Spanish also brought European knowledge and training to New Mexico. There was a wide variety of written material and the libraries of some settlers contained religious works, historical accounts, and classical studies. By the early eighteenth century, a few learned men were regularly educating colonial children. The trail also brought to the north skilled professionals, people trained in fields such as medicine and dentistry.²⁰

Disease

As the New Mexico colony developed in the seventeenth century and travel and trade became more common, the Camino Real sometimes became a main conduit of disease and epidemics. At least twenty major epidemics are noted in New Mexican church records occurring from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. Small-pox, measles, and cholera that were brought north along the trail had the biggest impact. The ravaging effect of diseases on the

Native-American populations has been well-documented, but they also impacted Spanish and mestizo settlers and travelers, especially in the mid-eighteenth century. Infectious diseases such as typhoid, malaria, and dysentery also made their way along the trail. Of course these diseases were not deliberately transported north but arrived unintentionally. Some were brought by contact with travelers, others arrived through textiles, utensils, or water. The contamination of a small water supply at a *paraje*, could affect caravans, merchants, missionaries, and settlers who would carry it throughout the region.

Fortunately, the Camino Real also provided a pathway for the treatments, cures, and preventions of diseases. Regular medical supplies were brought to settlements along the trail in the colonial era. European treatments supplemented those available in Native-American communities. Caravans probably brought illnesses and treatments to many communities at the same time. By the early years of the nineteenth century, small pox vaccines were available in New Mexico.²¹

Design

As the Oñate expedition paved the way for Spanish settlement, it also help lay a foundation for the modern cities of the Southwest. The Spanish built villas, presidios, and missions, relying on urban plans and designs that had been common in Spain for centuries. Spanish law guided the founding of new townsites and specified how those towns were to be constructed. A rectangular plaza was at the center of a settlement with government buildings and churches on its sides. Straight streets formed a grid from the plaza where commercial and residential buildings were placed. Away from the plaza there were private fields, cultivated lands, and common properties. Walls were usually built around presidios and frontier settlements.²²

Water was regulated by Spanish custom. Although there had been some irrigation in Pueblo settlements, the Spanish replaced these systems with their own. They built *acequias*, or irrigation ditches, that channeled water to surrounding farmlands. Farmland in long rectangular lots provided contact with this irrigation system.

Spanish building designs soon replaced Native American styles. Mission churches, plazas, and street grids came north along the trail. Adobe buildings blended Arabic, Spanish, and Indian styles

and became the standard form of construction and the basis of much of the "Southwest" style of architecture today. The plazas in Ciudad Juárez and San Elizario still reflect these traditional designs.²³

In sum, Juan de Oñate's Camino Real transformed everyday life along the Rio Grande. His colonizing expedition of 1598 brought not only settlers, but a dynamic Spanish lifestyle to the north. New Mexico became Hispanic, and Native American customs and practices were quickly replaced with those of the Spanish. Although Oñate did not achieve his goal of creating a great prosperous colony in the north, he did open an important transportation corridor that brought elements of Hispanic and Mexican culture north for more than two hundred years. Although the trail is now often obscured, its powerful influence is not. The people, customs, economy, language, and traditions of today's American Southwest were all dramatically influenced by the *Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*, Oñate's most powerful legacy.

GEORGE D. TOROK, who earned his Ph.D. at the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1991, teaches history at El Paso Community College. He has worked at community and four-year colleges in New York, Texas, and Kentucky where he wrote a guidebook to Kentucky coal mining towns. He has written and presented numerous works on local history, and has produced curriculum materials for several school districts. He is currently finishing a manuscript on the Camino Real for the heritage booklet series produced by the El Paso Community Foundation. A weekly television series, *Along the Rio Grande* is hosted by Dr. Torok and presented on EPIC-TV. For the next two years he will be conducting an historical markers project through a National Endowment for the Humanities grant. He will be working with honors students. Dr. Torok and his wife, Blanca, live in El Paso where they enjoy photography and exploring the borderlands of the American Southwest. They also count world travel among their hobbies.

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This bio of J. Hal Gambrell was inadvertently omitted from the article printed in the last issue.

Born in February of 1920 in El Paso, Texas **James Halbert Gambrell Jr.**, identified as Hal Gambrell, the author of *THE FALL GUY* in the last issue of *PASSWORD*, attended Crockett School and Austin High School. He also attended New Mexico Military Institute in 1937. He graduated from junior college in 1939 with a reserve commission as a 2nd lieutenant in the cavalry. Hal attended Texas A & M where he studied animal husbandry and range management before being called to active duty. He was a member of the 10th Cavalry in North Africa, the 1st Armored Division in Italy and the 3rd Infantry Division in France for which he was awarded three purple hearts and four battle stars. He later served in Korea where he earned four additional battle stars. He attended New Mexico A & M and retired as a lieutenant colonel in 1966. Living in El Paso since 1966, he has been a member and elected officer of the El Paso County Sheriff's Posse, Kiwanis, National Association of Cavalrymen, and of the local Del Norte Chapter of United States Cavalry.



The Discovery of Family Papers Near Hidalgo del Parral: The Hyslop-Beckmann Papers, 1896-1938



By James M. Day



It was late in August of 1968 and we were proceeding from Hidalgo del Parral to San Francisco del Oro, two mining centers in the state of Chihuahua. The transportation was my old 1960 Chevrolet half-ton pickup with camper, which had a bed over the cab. With me was John Oliver West, of the English Department at the University of Texas at El Paso. This was his trip—he had a grant to study the oral tradition of the legendary Pancho Villa. Thus were provided the funds for the two week jaunt that took us on a swing from El Paso to Ciudad Chihuahua, Hidalgo del Parral, Torreon, Durango, across the Sierra Madres to Mazatlan and up the west coast of Mexico to Guaymas, Hermosillo, and Nogales and then back to El Paso.

John had roped me in on the trip at just the right time. My pickup was primed to go to Glacier National Park for two weeks. I had taught all summer and had saved my money. Then, in Brownwood, my eldest son had a fender bender with a man I knew. I called the man, asked him if it were my son's fault, and when he said "yes," I sent him my Glacier Park money to pay the damages. John caught me broke with two idle weeks ahead of me. Convincing me to join him was an easy task.

We stopped wherever night and fatigue found us and we slept in the camper. Using the small butane stove, we ate in the

camper or in cafes as we wished. The second night out I parked in a pasture. About 4 a.m. we felt a bumping against the pickup. We were wakened suddenly thinking *banditos* had us, only to discover that we had parked in a trail that was a cow path—the “*banditos*” were merely cattle on their way to water. We moved the truck out of their way and continued our sleep until dawn.

Along the way John used a cassette tape recorder to conduct interviews about Villa. At Parral, he interviewed the groundskeeper at the cemetery where Villa is buried. John was particularly interested in learning about the depredations on Villa's grave and stories about the removal of Villa's head. After a day of interviews in Parral and a good night's sleep in a park, we headed for San Francisco del Oro about mid-morning. Three roads meet in a Y leading from Parral to San Francisco del Oro and Santa Barbara. We chose the road to San Francisco del Oro.

Just around a curve San Francisco de Oro was revealed in all its glory—that deserted mansion that was not quite a castle. Forsaken, abandoned, in ruins—it was still eye catching. We stopped to look around. Over the entry was engraved “Hacienda de Santiago.” Inside, the floor was covered with papers and everything was littered with human and animal waste. Looking through and under the waste could be seen little gems of history.

The papers concerned mining and supplies, and people and social events. My archival blood ran high and the archivist's instinct told me these had to be saved—to be preserved. They had a story to tell. John also had a preservation streak. As we read, we kept seeing the names Beckmann and Hyslop. We determined to make the effort to save them, so we turned back to Parral. There, the librarian at the Biblioteca Benjamin Franklin told us of Josefina Beckmann, who lived not far away. Josefina took our phone call and consented to see us.

Her home was built around a patio and it was here that we sat to talk. John, fluent in Spanish, did the talking. Josefina Beckmann was receptive to pursuing the idea of preserving the papers at the University of Texas at El Paso. She called her cousin, James Hyslop, who lived at a hotel in Parral who also consented to see us. We were in his sitting room in the hotel as John explained our mission. James Hyslop was reserved and said he would give it thought. I left my card and we went on our way.

San Francisco del Oro was delightful, as was the rest of the trip, although it was not uneventful—the camper floor caught fire between Mazatlan and Guaymas, but that is another story. September came, school resumed, and classes began. About six weeks later I received a letter from James Hyslop which said that the University could retrieve the papers. That led to my second visit to Parral that year.

I took Mr. Hyslop's letter to Baxter Polk, the university librarian, who authorized the journey to get the papers. Leon Metz was at that time the university archivist and the logical choice to make the trip. So on a fall morning in late October, Metz and I filled his Dodge station wagon with empty boxes and set off for Parral.

The Parral trip passed quickly as we talked history and other things. Leon and I have been acquainted since the early 1960's when he was researching his first book on John Selman. We met at the state archives when I was director there. Time passed quickly—that is until we reached Delicias and the Conchos River. As we drove past Ciudad Chihuahua, dark clouds were gathering to the west above the Sierra Madres, and rain fell our way. At Delicias, the Conchos River was swollen and the road was closed. This had happened before, and while it may have been a challenge, it was not a deterrent. The Mexicans had a way of dealing with the problem. They placed boards—heavy planks—along the rails on the railroad bridge and sent vehicular traffic across. Leon was such a superb driver that we crossed, slowly, without incident. Thus, instead of staying the night at Delicias, we went on to Hidalgo de Parral just after dark and checked into a motel. Unfamiliar with the expectations of the owner of the motel, Leon did not park the car in the proper place. Just as he was getting ready for bed, he had to go out to move it—and that too is another story.

Early morning found us at Hacienda de Santiago. We wore gloves as we eagerly dug into the rubble for the papers. We put every scrap we could recover into the boxes and loaded them

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into the station wagon. When we went back through Delicias there was no need to traverse the makeshift arrangements at the railroad bridge because the flood had receded. My association with these papers ended as we entered El Paso that evening: Leon took them directly to the archives at the University of Texas at El Paso.

I visited the archives from time to time to talk to Leon and his assistant, Simeon (Bud) Newman. It fell to Bud and some student assistants to clean and arrange the papers. They were organized into four boxes labeled "Hyslop-Beckmann Family Papers," Accession number 890 (MS211)." The collection encompasses the years 1896 to 1938. In cleaning, the staff used a calcium carbonate solution to remove animal refuse. It caused some of the

The papers are excellently preserved—except for the few white ones—and they tell the story of a family, the Hyslops, as they intermarried with the Beckmann's and produced real Mexicans. The Hyslops were English and the Beckmann's were German.

ink to run and turn the paper white. The papers thus treated can be read, but the user will come away with white hands. Fortunately, only a few of the papers were treated with this compound. In later years, when Bud Newman was asked what percentage of solution was used, he replied, "a handful of calcium carbonate and a sink full of water."

Later the papers were catalogued by Alicia B. Castelli and Alvaro Porrás Trejo. Angela Marquez did the editing. The papers are excellently preserved—except for the few white ones—and they tell the story of a family, the Hyslops, as they intermarried with the Beckmann's and produced real Mexicans. The Hyslops were English and the Beckmann's were German. One of the interesting aspects told by the papers is what the family did during World War I

in the support given the Allies through the Canadian government by their activities both in recruitment and in raising money. The family lived at Hacienda de Santiago and had mining interests at San Francisco del Oro, which was owned by a London Corporation.

The patriarch, James E. Hyslop, was born on November 7, 1865. He came to Parral about 1900 as general manager for the

San Francisco del Oro, Ltd. He married the daughter of William Beckmann, who owned mining property around Parral. At Hacienda de Santiago, Hyslop conducted extensive farming and ranching activities in addition to his mining interests. My father would have described him as "a man of many means and functions." The Hyslops and Beckmanns have an outstanding legacy in Mexico. It pleases me that their story is partly preserved in their papers at the University of Texas at El Paso and that I was involved in that preservation.

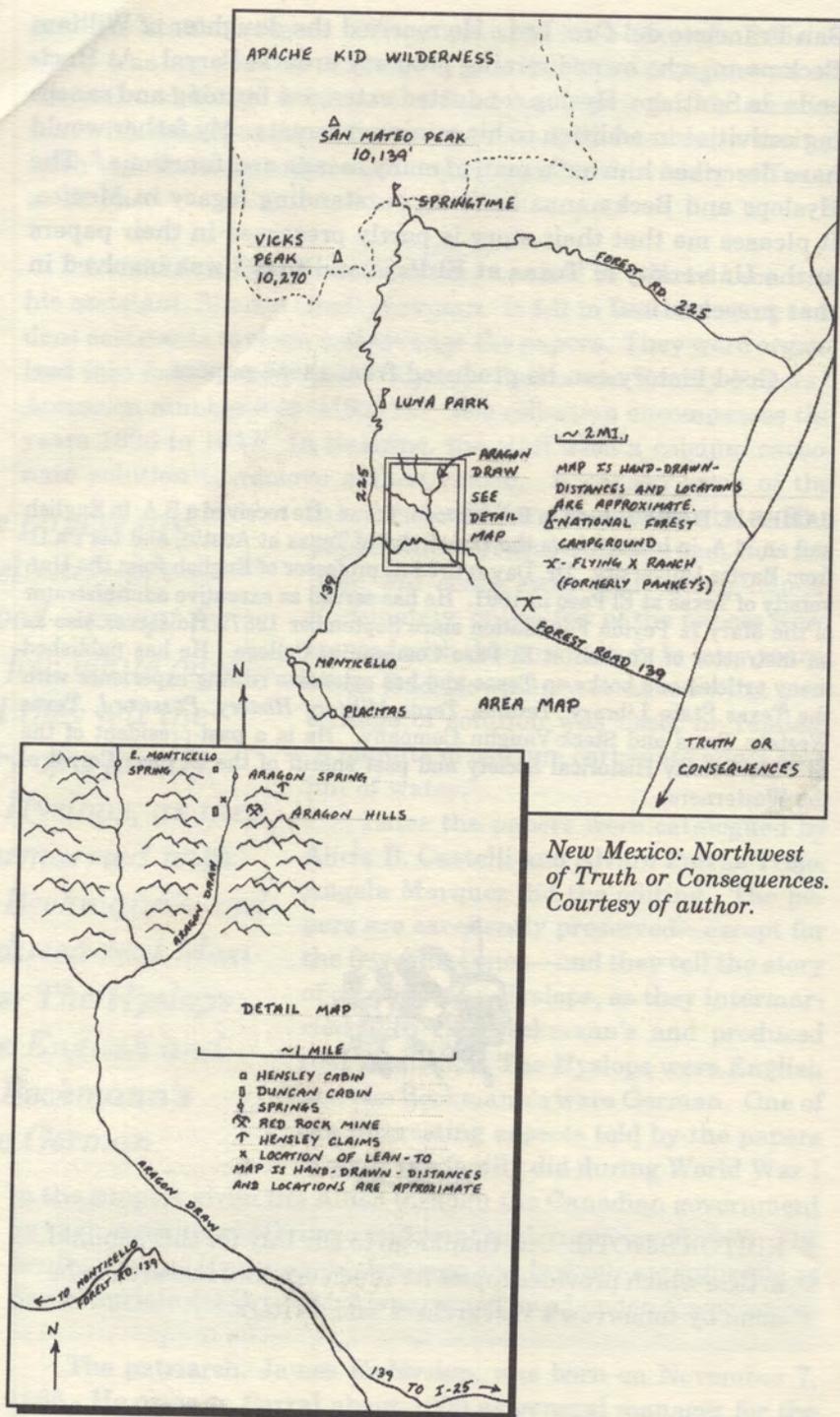
Good history can be produced from those papers.

JAMES M. DAY was born in Brownwood, Texas. He received a B.A. in English and an M.A. in history from the University of Texas at Austin, and his Ph.D. from Baylor University. Dr. Day retired as professor of English from the University of Texas at El Paso in 1991. He has served as executive administrator of the Mary L. Peyton Foundation since September 1987. He serves also as an instructor of English at El Paso Community College. He has published many articles and books on Texas and has extensive editing experience with the Texas State Library, *Texana*, *Texas Military History*, *Password*, Texas Western Press and Steck-Vaughn Company. He is a past-president of the El Paso County Historical Society and past sheriff of the El Paso Corral of the Westerners.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Our thanks go to Dr. Day for this seminal article which provides topics for much original research to be done by tomorrow's researchers and writers.

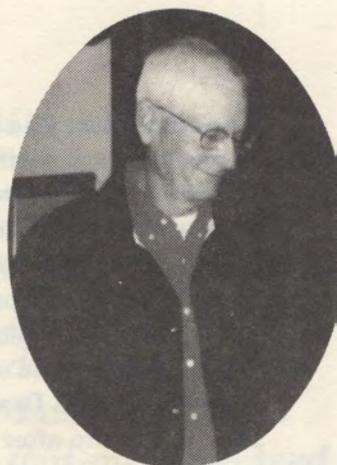




New Mexico: Northwest
of Truth or Consequences.
Courtesy of author.

Recollections of Aragon Draw

By Philip L. Duncan



Editor's note: The article which was the recipient of the second place award in the Historical Memories Contest sponsored by the El Paso County Historical Society was written by the author of this article. Because it had previously been published in the January 2002 issue of the Southern New Mexico Historical Review, it was deemed wiser to ask the author for another article which he graciously provided. Both articles are excerpts from an unpublished manuscript written by Mr. Duncan.



ucked into an isolated canyon near Animas Peak in the San Mateos Mountains northwest of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, lies Aragon Draw, the repository of the wonderful memories of my youth. Summer and Christmas vacations and most weekends from 1954 to 1966 were devoted to prospecting and mining ventures in those mountains which were in what was then part of the Coronado National Forest.

In 1955, my parents, Rushford and Clara Duncan, formed a partnership with a man who had a gold and silver mining claim in the San Mateo Mountains. Daddy agreed to do all of the labor and they would then share any profits on the claim which they called Red Rock. That claim was on the west slope of Aragon Hill overlooking a canyon called Aragon Draw. My parents also staked out other claims of their own in the same area.

From 1955 to 1961, our shelter on Aragon Draw consisted of a permanent lean-to with a large rock fireplace in its north "wall." In 1961, my parents, my brother Stanley with his wife Doris and their young daughter Angie, built a small, one-room cabin. That cabin was our shelter until my father's death in 1967.

Our place had its contingent of dogs—we had five, and all of our dogs had their own personal houses on our mining trips. Daddy cut squares of plywood just larger than the dog. In the plywood he cut a door and then attached canvas to the plywood. The houses, which we called “pup tents” could be set up, then collapsed and transported.

When we blasted at our mining claims on the side of Aragon Hill, Daddy would set long fuses to give us plenty of time to drive down to Aragon Draw before the explosion. One day we had gotten down to camp after lighting fuses, when for some reason Popeye, a dalmatian-hound mix and my favorite, decided to go back to the mine. Daddy was furious because, although we were calling him back, Popeye kept right on going straight for the mine. Popeye was almost to the mine entrance when the dynamite went off. He was peppered with rocks and gravel but not seriously injured. His hearing probably wasn't very good after that! That incident was the last straw for my father—I don't think he ever spoke to Popeye again. In 1966, when I joined the United States Air Force, Mother wrote to tell me that Daddy gave Popeye away the day I left for basic training. Mother always said that Popeye got the better end of the deal—she often saw Popeye riding proudly in the front seat of a Cadillac with his new owners.

Marianne Burluson and I started dating in 1963 when we were both students at Texas Western College, now the University of Texas at El Paso. By that time the Duncan family had built the cabin on the east slope of a hill overlooking Aragon Draw. The cabin was very basic—doors hinged horizontally to interior studs folded down to serve as beds, a wood-burning cookstove, a rock fireplace, a sink with water fed by a gravity system from a barrel on the hill above the cabin, an old wooden ice box, a table and chairs, and Coleman lanterns for light.

Since the Duncan family had spent weekends and holidays for more than five years in that cold lean-to, we saw a cabin with a stove and fireplace as a palace. I often told Marianne stories about that beautiful cabin in the mountains. She wanted to see it. Daddy said it would be O.K. to invite Marianne to spend a weekend with us at the mine. As we rode in the back of my father's pickup over the isolated primitive road up Aragon Draw, I think Marianne began to realize that her vision of a cabin in the mountains was quite different from our reality. She visualized a not-

so-rustic cabin in the tall, cool pines of resorts like Cloudcroft or Ruidoso, New Mexico. I don't think she realized that our cabin was in a high-desert terrain of rocks and desert vegetation. There were a few scattered trees like pinon, juniper, cedar, live oak, and an occasional ponderosa pine. The closest thing to a forest was the grove of cottonwoods around the stock tanks at Aragon Spring. I don't think that I had mentioned to Marianne that the old miners, Arch and Ed Hensley, living in a tiny sheepherder's cabin on a hill above Aragon Spring, were the closest neighbors, or that the next closest neighbors were miles away on primitive roads. I know that I "failed" to mention that the only plumbing was the gravity system in the kitchen sink. Other "accommodations" were lacking. My father later built an out-house to stop some of Mother's complaints, but when Marianne visited our cabin it was truly "one-room and a path."

Marianne—to this day—says that she didn't sleep at all that entire weekend at the cabin. She thought there were rattlesnakes in her sleeping bag and she was afraid to move because she might agitate them. Marianne married me in 1967 even though, she says, we were the craziest family she ever met. She still talks about my father's odd habit of driving vehicles almost straight up the sides of mountains. All of these things seemed normal to me—they were a way of life in our family. Marianne never went back to the cabin on Aragon Draw and says she doesn't intend to.

My trips with my family on mining expeditions ended with my enlistment in the Air Force in 1966. My father's death in 1967 ended the family trips. It would be seven years before I returned to Aragon Draw.

Our son Corby, born in 1969, Marianne, and I moved back to El Paso and I completed my Air Force enlistment in 1970. Marianne was a teacher in the Ysleta Independent School District and I started teaching in the El Paso Independent School District in 1971. My mother had moved from El Paso to Odessa after my father's death and little thought was given to our mining claims in the San Mateo Mountains or to our little cabin on Aragon Draw.

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Ed Hensley took care of our cabin and had kept up the annual assessment work on our mining claims, but no one in the Duncan family had used the cabin since 1967 and none of us was interested in mining. I decided that I would like to get the old wooden ice box and the wood-burning cookstove from our cabin before someone else took over our mining claims and moved in. I enlisted the help of two friends to make the trip in April of 1973. We located Arch and Ed's small house in Truth or Consequences where we discussed old times on Aragon Draw, and Ed gave me the key to the Duncan cabin. That was the last time I would see or hear from Arch and Ed Hensley.

The road we were on had not been there when I was going to the mine regularly in the 1950's and 1960's. I was really afraid that we were lost and were not going to find the cabin.

We drove up to the cabin. On the surface, everything on Aragon Draw seemed to be the same as it had been but there was a difference—an emotional difference. The Hensleys and the Duncans were gone: there was an emptiness about it.

We loaded the ice box into the Suburban but decided that detaching the stove from the stovepipe was too much work and that the stove was too heavy anyway. Today I regret the decision about leaving the stove. The ice box still resides in our living room in El Paso.

It would again be seven years before I returned to Aragon Draw. My co-worker Danny, my eleven year old son Corby, our dog Q'ie and I headed for the San Mateo Mountains in August of 1980. My memory of the roads in the San Mateos was slipping. I drove onto a road that went around the east side of Aragon Hill instead of the west side and up Aragon Draw. The road we were on had not been there when I was going to the mine regularly in the 1950's and 1960's. I was really afraid that we were lost and were not going to find the cabin. Then we topped a hill and I spotted the Hensley cabin. We were coming into Aragon Draw from the North instead of from the South.

There were derricks, large trucks, and mining equipment all over what had been the Hensley claim. There were also signs posted in Aragon Draw all the way down to our old cabin—ARAGON MINING COMPANY—KEEP OUT! There were all these signs and mining equipment but, strangely, there were no people around.

I looked through the windows of our old cabin. The wood-burning cookstove was gone. The cabin had been sheet rocked and partitioned inside. Water lines had been run from Aragon Spring to the cabin. The Duncan cabin now had real running water. From the cabin we climbed up the slope to the old Red Rock claim. No work had been done there since 1967 and except for erosion filling in parts of the mine, it looked the same. As we drove down Aragon Draw on our way out, I didn't realize that I wouldn't be back until the year 2001.

Before I knew it twenty-one years had passed and I was retired from teaching. I longed to go back and see if the Duncan and Hensley cabins were still there on Aragon Draw. I mentioned this to another friend, Carlton, and we with Didjeridu, my dog, headed for Aragon Draw early in the morning of March 15, 2001. Since I had not been to the cabin in twenty-one years and didn't know the status of the old primitive road up Aragon Draw, I decided to park my truck just off forest road 139 and hike the approximately two miles up Aragon Draw. The gentle hike up the Draw turned out to be an adventure, and not so gentle. Twenty-one years and a faulty memory played tricks on me. I took us up the wrong branch of Aragon Draw. We were one draw too far west and only after we were a good distance up the wrong draw, did I realize my mistake.

There was a mountain between us and Aragon Draw, in fact, it was the mountain where the Duncan cabin was located. There was only one problem—we were on the west slope, the cabin was on the east slope. I suggested that we back-track to the correct branch of Aragon Draw. Carlton, however, suggested that we could follow a deer trail across the mountain. He said that since deer follow a horizontal rather than a vertical route, it would be easy enough. Carlton found what he considered a sufficiently horizontal deer trail. I said, "I hope this trail was made by elderly deer." Didjeridu didn't care which trail we took. She was having a great time—ranging out fifty yards on all sides of us—investigating everything she could find.

We finally crested a saddle and descended into Aragon Draw—there it was—the Duncan cabin. I thought about my father, Rushford Duncan, who passed away in March of 1967. Those thirty-four years had just slipped by. This time there were no "keep out" signs posted as there had been in 1980. The cabin was in disrepair. The door and part of the window on the south end were boarded

over. There was a bullet hole in the east wall. The bullet had come through from inside the cabin. Is there a story there? Probably just a drunk deer hunter, I answered my own thoughts. Rocks were falling out of the chimney and the roof line on the north end. A sluice box had been built at the southwest corner. There had been an unsuccessful or at least uncompleted attempt at adding rock veneer on the east wall to make it match the fireplace on the north end. There was a horseshoe nailed to the east wall and above it was written "The Swainson's Place." A twinge inside me said, "No, this is the Duncan cabin."

The cabin I saw in 2001 was much smaller than I remembered. The door was not locked, but we respected what was now someone else's cabin and didn't go in. We did look through the windows. The kitchen sink was gone, as well as some of the partitions I had seen in 1980. Inside was a plastic lawn chair that didn't fit the rustic atmosphere. There were some folded cots in the corner and some firewood stacked neatly by the fireplace. Someone was using the cabin, maybe the Swainsons, maybe hunters during deer season. I had mixed emotions, but was glad the cabin was still standing and being used.

We took some pictures at the cabin and then hiked up Aragon Draw toward the spring. I had told Carlton about Aragon Spring, the stock tanks, and the cottonwoods. The cottonwoods were still there although they looked stressed, but the tanks were gone, and there were no signs of the water that had been so plentiful in the past. We went up the hill to the Hensley cabin. I thought about summer evenings in the 1950's and 1960's when the Duncans would sit outside the cabin and visit with Arch, Ed, and their dogs, Shorty and Monk. I could almost hear Arch asking Monk if he was hungry, whereupon Arch would get his Springfield and shoot a rabbit for Monk's supper.

Carlton saw signs posted above the cabin to the north. They marked private property north and national forest south. Today's maps also show private property north of the Hensley cabin. I don't think it was private property when Arch and Ed lived there—were some changes made in the time period when gold reached eight hundred dollars an ounce? If so, who made those changes?

After taking pictures, we went across Aragon Draw and climbed Aragon Hill to the Red Rock claim. Signs of our road to the diggings had all but vanished. Nature is also reclaiming the Red

Rock mine. In the 1960's we could walk into the diggings standing up. Didjeridu went in, but Carlton and I would have had to crawl. We chose not to.

Daddy had left stacks of sand bags at the mine filled with our best ore samples. He had planned on high-grading that ore. In 1973 those sacks were there undisturbed. In 1980, the sand bags were still there, although the ones at the top of the stack were starting to rot and spill their contents, but the ones in the lower levels were still intact. With all the keep out signs in 1980, I didn't touch any of the bags. On this trip, I had brought a pan and water and had planned to pan some of the samples, but the sand bags were nowhere in sight. I don't know if, in the intervening years, they had rotted completely, if erosion had covered them, or if someone else had hauled them out. I suspect the latter.

After we took more pictures, we descended into Aragon Draw and started the walk back to the truck. All along the sides of the hills bordering the draw there were boundary markers for claims. We spotted the center marker in Aragon Draw. At first we thought it was a bee trap. It was a metal stake with a small plastic container attached. The claim papers were inside the plastic container. When we had claims on Aragon Draw, center markers were made of stacked rock monuments.

In those days, the middle of the stack of rocks contained a Prince Albert tobacco can with the claim papers inside the can. I miss the rock monuments and Prince Albert cans.

The papers in the center marker described the Lohr/Morrow placer mining claim. The papers said that it was formerly the Swainson placer mining claim. Swainson was the name on the wall by the door of the cabin. Now I understood the sluice box at the cabin and the lack of new diggings on the hillsides. Placer mining involves panning sand and gravel from a creek bed, or running it through a sluice box with water in hopes of finding gold nuggets. It doesn't require blasting and digging into the

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bedrock layers. Placer mining does require a considerable amount of water. Since Aragon Spring was dry, I wondered if anyone was still actively prospecting the area.

The walk back to the truck was uneventful, except for Didjeridu who was tired and no longer running in circles. She was apparently too tired to go under the barbed wire, but she got her second wind when she spotted some cows. She was immediately off on the chase. When instead of turning to run, the cows turned to face her, she slammed on the brakes. She walked slowly back to us with her tail down and a guilty look on her face. Her actions reminded me of another disobedient dog on Aragon Draw—Popeye.

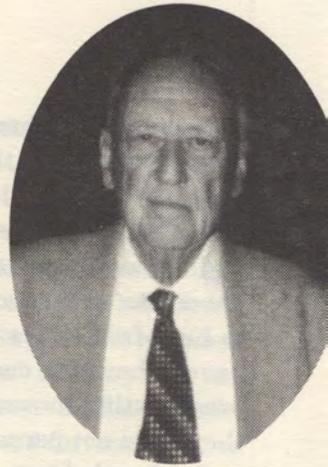
As we drove back to El Paso, I thought about past experiences on Aragon Draw. I wanted to go back to Aragon Draw again. I wondered if it would be another twenty-one years before I do.

PHILIP L. DUNCAN was born in Phillips, Texas and grew up in Odessa and El Paso. He graduated from Burges High School and earned his bachelor's degree in education at the University of Texas at El Paso. He was a teacher and coach in El Paso from which he retired in 1997. His wife, the former Marianne Burleson, retired from teaching in Ysleta. His son Corby is a teacher as is his daughter-in-law, Julia. He counts among his hobbies golf, fishing, hunting, camping, painting and writing.



Fragments from Memory: Vignettes from Long Ago

Editor's Note: The following two articles shared the third place in the Historical Memories contest for 2002, sponsored by the El Paso County Historical Society.



*John A. Ferguson, Sr.
Photo courtesy of El Paso
County Historical Society.*

Pastimes of the 1920s

By John A. Ferguson, Sr.



was graduated from El Paso High School in 1931, thus the 1920s marked my school years. The recollections herein are mine with a few details gleaned from the memories of friends.

The first memory is the making of crystal radio sets by the boys of the neighborhood. They would ask me to get a crystal from my father's downtown assay office, the Critchett & Ferguson, Custom Assay Office. The perfect crystal would be a half-inch square crystal of galena, a form of the mineral lead. I did not pursue the "pastime" of gaining knowledge about radio. It was easier to listen to radio at home. In 1921 elaborate shortwave radio sets were on the market, but they were very expensive. Youngsters could only afford the crystal sets.

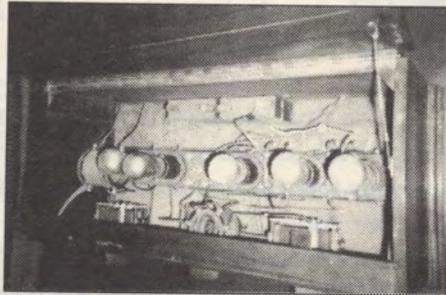
At the Ferguson home there was a beautiful cabinet radio model with three dials, two of them for tuning. It was placed on the shelf of the bay window in our home at 1312 East Rio Grande Street. The cabinet was 9 x 11 x 25 inches, and the aerial consisted of two thin wires strung high in the attic under the high pitch-

ed roof. My father, George Ferguson, was the radio operator. While listening to the radio I did arithmetic problems at the dining room table, and Grace, my sister; sat in the Morris chair and read a book, her constant pastime. Our father recorded, with pencil and logbook those stations that he heard, sometimes using ear-phones to understand the faint ones on the air. It was exciting to hear from cities as far away as Des Moines, Iowa. He didn't have to have the ear phones to hear Del Rio or Clint, Texas as the broadcasting towers were in Mexico. So powerful were they that they were not permitted in the United States. Dr. Brinkley came on loud and clear—as loud as our singing at the piano.

To enjoy early short-wave at its finest, my father and I, on Saturday afternoons would go to the Critchett house at 1515 Montana Street, a block away. In 1904, at the time that it was built by the Critchetts, this was the house on Montana Street that was the furthest east from downtown. Today it is the office of Oaxaca, Bernal & Associates, Attorneys. There, on a table next to the dining room table O.A. Critchett, my father's business partner, operated his sophisticated units of short-wave radio while his friends listened. "Critch" had played football for the University of Michigan in the 1890s which may have explained the great interest. With the men all gathered around the radio, it was convenient for my aunt, Belle C. Critchett, my father's sister, to serve refreshments. It was college football, all afternoon! Radio reception at 1515 Montana was great, because of the elaborate equipment, such as a speaker in the form of an ear tube with a thirty-inch square front, and the tube winding down smaller in the back. "Critch" logged stations from around the world.



Postal Radio Corporation, shortwave radio, ca. 1923. Pictured below, inside of cabinet. Photos courtesy of author.



In 1925 the family Christmas present from my father was a Victrola record player. In the years after that, until 1930, somebody would get a "phonograph record" for a Christmas or birthday present. Today, there is a nice collection of records, of entertainment renditions of the 1920s—and the Victrola. It was bought at TriState Music Company, where KTSM started to broadcast, hence the letters TSM in KTSM. Our Victrola was the smallest table model produced in the "Roaring Twenties." It was put to use by Grace's teenage friends for dancing at the house on Rio Grande. She was four years older than I, so I had the good fortune to learn to dance when I was eleven years old. We rolled back the rugs and the party was on. About 1927, the Charleston was introduced, and that's when we were really in good form.

Julia and Ruth Ceil North, our cousins, lived at 1412 East Nevada Street, and had in their home the largest of the floor model Victrola phonographs. Another record player of the time was the Pathe which played only Pathe records with its diamond needle head. However, this needle was interchangeable with a steel needle head, giving it the versatility to play the Victrola, or other records as well. Music was on the phonograph records: radios were not used for appreciation of fine music or dancing.



Victrola record player, ca. 1923. Photo courtesy of author.

In those days, there were teenage clubs, not gangs. One of the girls' clubs at El Paso High School had members who are still life-long friends. The boys had the Owl Club and the Caballeros, and formed friendships which have continued for years. These clubs would sponsor dances at places like the El Paso Country Club, the Women's Club of El Paso, the Scottish Rite Cathedral which was the home of the Dimboola Masonic group, and others. Of course, in most homes, ours included, friends entertained small dance groups—the guests not necessarily paired off. Some were associated with groups from schools, churches, and other organizations. There would be intermingling among the groups at special occasion parties such as halloween, valentine's, and school dances—an example of the camaraderie among the teenagers.

The local radio stations had a variety of entertaining programs. There were serials, like "Amos and Andy." We often listened with a friend or two, because it was more fun to enjoy the stories and philosophies with someone else. The radios, those that were not short-wave, were either tabletop models, or fine cabinet floor consoles. Montgomery Ward had in its catalogue Silvertone bargains. Falco radio had a ten inch portable. The Fergusons had a table top Silvertone and the shortwave set.



Silvertone radio, ca. 1926. Pictured below, inside back of cabinet. Photo courtesy of author.



We would go to the movies. About two blocks from my home in the middle of the 1100 block of Yandell Boulevard there was the open air "Garden Theater." The special event on a summer night was the grocery give-away. We had to watch the billboard advertising when we passed the theater on the street car—we had to see what night would be grocery give-away night. Usually, the only warning would be the words "grocery give-away tonight" on the billboard. Word would spread, and most of the neighborhood families would be there. The big feature—the giving of groceries at the end of the show—was a result of drawing numbers to match the patrons' tickets—a lottery! One night, Grace won a gallon of ice cream. Of course, her friends walked home with her to help eat the strawberry "Velvet Ice Cream."

The downtown movie houses held "bank night." The Ellanay was on South El Paso Street, next to the Paso Del Norte Hotel. A block farther down the street was the Palace, and then in the next block the Colon with Spanish movies sometimes. The Wigwam was a half-block away on San Antonio Street. At the Plaza next to the White House Department Store, the line for patrons of bank night would form with the queue extending around the White

House and the Mills Building and on up Oregon Street. Often there was lottery money that would not be claimed—sometimes \$100, sometimes \$200. It would carry over to the next night and produce a bigger “bank” the next night. As I remember, “bank night” at the Plaza was usually Tuesday night, with the exciting announcement coming over the radio that bank night would take place in about an hour. That gave time enough for anyone to get in the car and drive downtown and buy a “winning” ticket for the sizable prizes offered. Because there were no radios in cars—people had to be at home to hear the announcement. The other theater downtown, the Crawford, in the Angelus Hotel on Mesa at Main Street, held the bank night feature more often, and without radio warnings, but the tickets were cheaper. A downtown event, in connection with the movies, was that sometimes on summer afternoons, the teenage girls would meet friends on the mezzanine of the White House Department Store, have luncheon at the Mills Confectionary, and enjoy a matinee movie at the Plaza Theater, all in the same downtown block.

Road shows, vaudeville, and opera came to El Paso at the Texas Grand Theater on Texas Street at Campbell Street. Appearing here were a great variety of entertainers to include Billy Sunday, the evangelist, and one I especially remember, Harry Lauder, the songster, who came from Scotland. The traveling Callis-Baker professional theatrical group came and stayed at the Texas Grand for the season. They gave weekly performances of plays and musical shows and local talent—teenagers—were hired to be a part of the show. When the company went broke, a few of the stars of the show went to Hollywood, and later we saw them in the movies. One of the talented actresses became the beloved drama teacher, Lucia Hutchins, at El Paso High School.

Liberty Hall, which was a part of the 1920's County Court-house building, was a source of entertainment for many events. When the evangelist, Gypsy Smith, came, Joe Evans, a prominent

That gave time enough for anyone to get in the car and drive downtown and buy a “winning” ticket for the sizable prizes offered. Because there were no radios in cars—people had to be at home to hear the announcement.

cattleman, rode his horse down the aisle to the stage as a Christian witness. Wrestling and boxing matches were also presented at Liberty Hall—there was no Colosseum.

The few El Paso elementary schools had no adequate auditorium, so special events of the combined schools were held in the auditorium of Liberty Hall, such as gymnastic exhibitions and music and art memory contests in which paintings were shown on a screen and the students would identify the paintings and the painters. Most of the time, Liberty Hall booked the fine arts events, such as the pianist Paderewski, at a time when he was Prime Minister of Poland. Paderewski, in appreciation for his fine reception in El Paso, gave to the El Paso people his Steinway piano, which still may be at El Paso High School.

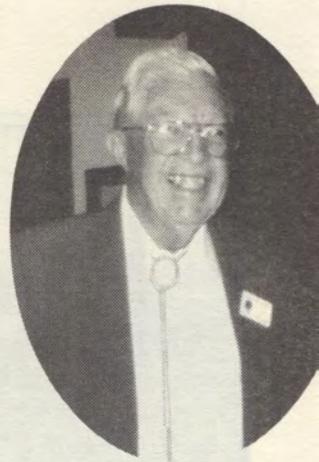
The memories are many: going fishing in the drainage ditch at Anthony, Texas, or baseball at Dudley field, reputed to be a Trost design. To go bird hunting, one need only go to the end of the Smelertown streetcar line at Mr. E.M. Bray's Smelter Store, then hike the arroyos beyond the El Paso Portland Cement Company—all the way up to the present-day Quail Hollow—appropriately named—business area. Another memory was to hike from Golden Hill at the present-day "Pill Hill" Medical Center, then have a sack lunch at the Palisades canyon beyond Crazy Cat mountain.

Such were some of the varied pastimes, the simple pleasures, and the entertainments of the 1920s—different, yet similar to those of today.

JOHN A. "JACK" FERGUSON, SR. is a native El Pasoan and a graduate of the Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy, 1936, in Mining and Metallurgical Engineering. His engineering career allowed him to remain in El Paso, where he was a staff engineer with the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States Section; and later became a consulting engineer with Protrans Consultants of El Paso. Mr. Ferguson presented the course "Pass of the North" to the Center for Lifelong Learning Center at the University of Texas at El Paso, Department of Continuing Education. He currently serves as a substitute teacher with the El Paso Independent School District. He published "Ownership of International Waters," United States Water Resources Bulletin, February 1971.

Growing Up in the Ascarate Area: Reminiscences

By Lyle Hosmer



Lyle Hosmer.
Photo courtesy of El Paso
County Historical Society.



We arrived in El Paso in January 1933 and spent our first night at Camp Deluxe at Alameda and Collingsworth Road. Rooms with two beds rented for \$1.00 a night. In the 1930's, Highway 80, Alameda Avenue, was known as the "Broadway of America." It was an all-paved route from Savannah, Georgia to San Diego, California and went right through El Paso. Alameda Avenue was "tourist court row" in El Paso, and a careful look at the structures on today's Alameda Avenue will show that some of the old buildings are still standing.

El Paso Drive, which follows the Franklin Canal, had been the first "US 80." In the 1930's Alameda Avenue, the new "US 80," was straightened and made a divided four lane highway which followed the trolley line through Ascarate. Traffic drove about forty miles per hour and there was still some burro and horse traffic.



Wagon on Alameda Street, ca. 1933. Photo courtesy of author.



Man on donkey on Alameda Street, ca. 1933. Photo courtesy of author.

In 1934, my Dad decided to buy a house on Collingsworth Street where cows, chickens, and horses were allowed. My Dad sold milk and I delivered it on my bicycle. The price of the house was “right”—\$2,350 for a three-bedroom stucco on a half acre lot with irrigation, but we could not get a clear title as this was the “banco” area, a very small disputed area claimed by Mexico between Aubrey and Collingsworth streets. It seems the Rio Grande ran across Alameda and north of Cooley School prior to the 1920’s. The house had been built in the mid-twenties and was one of only five that survived the flood of 1925. We finally got a clear title when the river was straightened in 1936. I remember that I watched the flood in September of 1941 while I stood on the levee at the end of Glenwood and wondered if the levee would hold. During that wet fall, the spillway at Elephant Butte overflowed for the first time and the flood went into downtown Las Cruces.

My parents operated Camp Franklin at Alameda and Pendell Road in 1936. We had a Texaco gas station, where we sold three grades of gasoline—white “Indian Gas,” bronze “Fire Chief,” and red “Sky Chief,” all of which I pumped with a hand pump—there were no electric pumps. As I recall, prices were seventeen, nineteen, and twenty-one cents a gallon. In those days a customer had better ask for even gallons, as it would be difficult to pump a dollars worth. We had some modern rooms with bath for \$1.50 a night. We also offered cabins without a bath for \$1.00 a night. A central restroom graced the back of the gas station and sanitary facilities were completed by a sink and small cook stove in each cabin.



Hosmer gas station at Camp Franklin, ca. 1936. Photo courtesy of author.

During the depression the Civilian Conservation Corps erected a camp on what is now Ascarate Park and they started building the lake and the park at Ascarate. The CCC and WPA, the Work Projects Administration, also removed the cottonwood trees in the lower valley and replaced them with what was thought to be a superior tree, the Chinese elm.

The Park electric streetcar ran almost to what is now Fox Plaza until after World War II. We used to ride the streetcar for six cents down Alameda and Myrtle Street to San Jacinto Plaza. You could transfer and ride out Yandell and Copia to Fort Bliss.

In the 1940's Del Camino Motel was the second largest motel in America and one of the finest.

I was a school patrol boy in 1939 and 1940 at Winchester Cooley School. A push button light was installed, as traffic went pretty fast on US 80, Alameda Boulevard. Captain Allen Falby of the Highway Patrol would come by most days during lunch hour and talk to us. We reported license numbers of violators and Capt. Falby sent them warning letters. Keep in mind there was no Interstate 10 so all traffic to Fort Worth and Dallas used US 80. As I drive Alameda today, I can see that it has lost some of the "charm" it had when it was "The Broadway of America."

On December 7, 1941, Jack Caldarella rode his motorcycle through the neighborhood to tell everyone that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. We spent the rest of the day around the radio listening to every word.

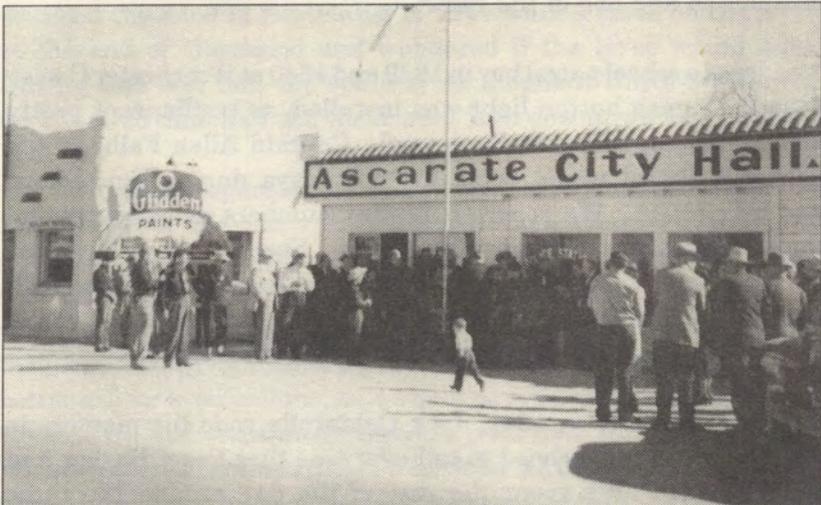


*Flag raising, ca. 1941.
Photo courtesy of author.*

In 1948 and 1949 Ascarate was a separate town. We incorporated to keep El Paso from annexing us and raising taxes. Ascarate encompassed the area from Concepcion and Alameda on the west and the railroad tracks on the north, to Ascarate Park on the east to the river on the South. Delta and Paisano Streets did not exist and there was not much south of Auburn and Geiger Roads except bosque. What is now Fox Plaza area was then a big farm. The only thing between El Paso city limits at Concepcion and Buena

Vista was a fruit and vegetable stand run by the Shicji Family. The town of Ascarate disincorporated and later became part of El Paso.

I was the first draftee from El Paso County in the Korean Conflict. My picture appeared in the *Herald Post* as the recipient of that honor, which in itself is not unusual. What was unusual



Ascarate City Hall, ca. 1949. Photo courtesy of author.

was that they pictured me with a photo of Wanda Turner in my hand—thus was announced our engagement! And on the front page of the newspaper!

I really enjoyed our Lower Valley in those days. I'm not sure that the progress of the last seventy years has improved it.

LYLE HOSMER was born in Welshford, Ohio in 1925. As was usual in those days, he was born at home. What was unusual for those times is that he was delivered by a female doctor. When he was in the second grade, his brother was diagnosed with tuberculosis and the family moved to El Paso in 1933. Lyle graduated from Ysleta High School in 1944 and attended the College of Mines, now the University of Texas at El Paso and worked for Sears Roebuck. Drafted during the Korean Conflict in 1950, he was sent to Germany. He was married that same year to Wanda Turner. Discharged from the army in 1952, he returned to Sears from which he retired in 1987. Lyle is active in the El Paso Rose Society and is a consulting rosarian for the American Rose Society. He assists at the Municipal Rose Garden on Copia. He is also a member of the El Paso County Historical Society and of the Burges Commission. Both Lyle and Wanda are active in the Order of Eastern Star in El Paso and Ruidoso. They have three children, six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.



Men gathered at Ascarate City Hall, ca. 1949. Photo courtesy of author.



How Shakespeare, New Mexico Got Its Last Name

By Paxton Price



In 1850s the place was called Mexican Springs. An animal watering hole, it was an alternate stop on the San Diego Mail and then was used as a stage stop by the Butterfield Stage Line on its way to California. Thus it by-passed the high mountain ranges to the north. As a place in the Pyramid Mountains which were really just low hills, and only a few miles south of what would become Lordsburg and just east of the Arizona border, the place had a second name of Grant. That name was given it by the National Mail and Transportation Company. In 1872 the roadside stop had a third name—Ralston. It had an amazing frontier history composed more of legend than any other historic place in New Mexico. To believe or not to believe—some reported facts about the place are entirely *questionable; some are creatively surprising.*

In the year of 1867 when Grant received its name, “Uncle” John Evenson was sent to reopen the Butterfield Station, and took up permanent residence there where he lived an audacious life. In 1870 W. D. Brown, a government surveyor, passed through Grant on his way to California and picked up a piece of silver “float.” When he arrived in San Francisco he showed the silver specimen to a bank owner, a wealthy former mine owner from the Comstock mining region named William C. Ralston. The latter became excited by seeing the specimen which was assayed as having a very rich potential for mining. Ralston asked Brown where he had found the specimen, and when he was told, Mr. Ralston packed his bag immediately and went to New Mexico. There Ralston bought up existing mining claims and staked out a few more. After he completed his quick analysis he was prepared to

return to San Francisco. He renamed the place Ralston.

Gossip about the new mining area resulted in making it the mecca for the unoccupied prospectors and miners in the southwest. A tent city blossomed like wild flowers in Spring. Several permanent adobe buildings were erected on the make-believe streets of Ralston. The new village absorbed 174 industrious people and a few crude bars developed. But the newcomers who ran into Ralston's claims were quickly disillusioned and soon left for Pinos Altos and Silver City where brags about new discoveries had more substance. Old-timers were not fooled by Ralston's claims.

Ralston, back home on the coast, was busy with floating a big stock scheme for selling Ralston mining claims. He called the scheme the Hardpending Company and tried to sell the stock shares in London and on the Continent. Total shares were valued at \$1.75 Million. However, the ores dug up in Ralston were low-grade metal specimens and were discovered only in spots. Consequently it took only one year to realize that the grand mineral scheme was empty. The stock shares were disappointedly false.

Ralston, the settlement, was due to change. In the next year of 1872, judging by the record, the history of the next event in town is unbelievable, but some bought into the new report. Two old prospectors named Philip Arnold and John Slack showed up in Ralston's bank with a leather bag of diamonds and a request for a safe place to keep them. They were seen by Ralston who asked Tiffany jewelers to evaluate the stones. Tiffany reported that the jewels were real and worth a good sum of money. Ralston was reported to have been shocked to learn that his failed mining place in New Mexico was the site where the jewels were found. To verify the story of the two old miners, a mining expert was sent to New Mexico. He returned with the report that some diamonds had truly been found in Ralston. Ralston went into immediate action and founded another stock scheme. It was called the San Fran-

Ralston was reported to have been shocked to learn that his failed mining place in New Mexico was the site where the jewels were found. To verify the story of the two old miners, a mining expert was sent to New Mexico. He returned with the report that some diamonds had truly been found in Ralston.

cisco and New York Mining and Commercial Company, and it offered ten million dollars worth of stock.

The news about the new strike in Ralston was broadcast and the town was soon revived. Arnold and Slack were requested to show up and give those who were interested some idea as to where to look for the gems. Unfortunately Arnold and Slack had disappeared. Even so, the town grew and saloons were the most frequent building to spring up. Some rowdy behavior, also sprang up—involving the newcomers.

Finally, a geologist examined the reported diamond field and found one. Under his magnifying glass he found lapidary marks on the stone he picked up which indicated that it was a fraud! The hoax emptied Ralston again, and the author of one or two scams was bankrupt, his bank went under, and his mining claims were practically worthless. He committed suicide in 1875 by drowning in San Francisco Bay.

In 1872 the Englishmen Colonel John Boyle and his brother came to Ralston from St. Louis. Since they knew the past history of the mining site to which they had come, they re-named Ralston and it became Shakespeare. Their company was known as the Shakespeare Mining Company and the main street, such as it was, was called Avon Avenue. The Boyles set out to re-organize the community and erected a new adobe hotel. They named it The Stratford, in honor of the birthplace of the original dramatist.

The Boyles re-prospected the twice-gone over mineral field and ended up with three promising mining sites while the New Haven Company operated the others that were active. The regenerated camp grew and reached the unexpected size of 3,000 people. In 1880 the camp was favored with the establishment of the *Miners' Monthly*, A newspaper that lasted only one year. Grown-up Shakespeare gradually slimmed down in numbers leaving some boisterous and rowdy types. Two locals were guilty of breaking the rules of behavior of western society were hung by the justice of peace. The hanging took place in one of the local hotels. Russian Bill was one of the culprits; Sandy King was the other. Russian Bill was swinging because he had stolen a horse. Sandy King was called by the justice of the peace as "nothing but a nuisance." A story about Russian Bill was soon broadcast: his mother had written a letter from Russia inquiring about her son's welfare and health. The justice of the peace responded that her son had died recently—of a throat disease.

However, that was not the end of Shakespeare. In 1907 local nearby mines named Valendon were re-opened and Shakespeare underwent the indignity of having a railroad spur from Lordsburg laid down Avon Avenue to reach the revived mines in Valendon. This revival was short lived.

In 1935 John and Rita Hill purchased the town and buildings for a ranch. They maintained the buildings to the best of their ability. Currently, Shakespeare is a tourist stop operated by the daughter of the Hills, Janaloo, and her husband, Manny Hough. They have many tall tales to tell. It is still on the map.

PAXTON PRICE, the author of he recently published *Pioneers of the Mesilla Valley*, is a retired executive and Army officer. He spent his boyhood in Doña Ana County, attending public schools there. He attended New Mexico Military Institute and graduated from George Peabody College in Tennessee. Price who now resides in Las Vegas, New Mexico, completed his graduate work at Columbia University.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *In 1970 Shakespeare, New Mexico was declared a National Historic Site. Although Shakespeare suffered a devastating fire in recent years, it is still in operation as a tourist stop with tours led by Janaloo and Manny Hough.*





Book Reviews

BENIGNA'S CHIMAYÓ: CUENTOS FROM THE OLD PLAZA. Don J. Usner. Translated by Stella Chávez Usner and Carole Usner-Hunt, and illustrated by Arturo Usner Chávez. Santa Fe: N.M. Museum of New Mexico Press, 2001. 153 pp. Illustrations, photographs. \$39.95, \$19.95, ISBN 0-89013-382-4.

Benigna's Chimayó is not a scholarly work, nor is it intended to be. Rather, it is the tribute of the author and his family to his grandmother, Benigna Ortega Chávez: her storytelling talent and the cuentos, or children's stories, she told. At 103 years of age, Benigna is the last of Chimayó's residents to remember and, until late in her life, to retell the stories that she had learned from her parents, family members, and other town elders early in the twentieth century. In transcribing, rewriting, and publishing Benigna's cuentos in English and "the New Mexico dialect of Spanish" (9), Usner, with the aid of his mother, brother, and sisters, preserves a remnant of Hispanic New Mexico's oral tradition and broadens his readers' understanding of the storyteller's dynamic role in influencing individual and cultural identity. In sharing these *cuentos* with a wider audience, Usner hopes, too, that they will be told anew into the present century.

The fourteen tales in *Benigna's Chimayó* include "Pascual Ranchero," "Fearless John" ("Juan Sin Miedo"), "The Knight of the Feather" ("El Caballero de la Pluma") and "Foolish John" ("Juan Tonto"). Like folktales found worldwide, these stories feature quirky characters—men and women, boys and girls—who, being neither formally educated nor well-to-do, dream of wealth and life-long happiness with beautiful spouses. "Foolish John," for instance, is the story of a poor and lazy man who, by happenstance, comes into money, is questioned by his king, pretends to be a thief, is doubted and challenged, overcomes his languor, outwits his doubter (the king), marries a princess and lives "happily ever after" (81). Like "Juan Tonto," each *cuento* is a story of struggle, wit, perseverance and triumph that "filled [a young Usner] with wonder and laughter" as well as "subtly conveyed a set of morals, ideals, and values" (16). Thankfully, Usner leaves each story's lesson for the reader to perceive.

Benigna's Chimayó is more than simply a book of folktales, however: it is about storytelling as well. Usner recognized that Benigna's successful storytelling involved three elements: storyline, storytelling craft, and context—the place and time where and when the storytelling occurred. Chimayó, the town where Benigna was born and

continues to live, is for Usner the backdrop for the *cuentos*, the setting in which he imagined the stories transpiring. To illustrate this, Usner framed each story with anecdotes representing the situations and places in Chimayó that prompted Benigna to tell these stories to her grandchildren. In doing so, the book shows that these stories are not—nor ever were—static. They are dynamic, ever-evolving creations shaped as much by storyline as by the situation which prompted the telling of the story—where it was told and to whom. This is why Usner retells these stories in his own as well as his grandmother's words. As he explained: "She never told a story the same way twice; each one was a spontaneous re-creation" in which she "would digress, embellish, [and] pause to make a point" (18). Usner embraced that same creativity in rewriting these stories initially transcribed by his mother. "I've made my presentation of these *cuentos* true to Grandma's delivery but have added my own interpretations and colored them with my memories where I felt it appropriate" (19). In short, he became the storyteller crafting the stories for a new audience, just as his grandmother and those before her had altered details to keep the stories "vibrant and accessible for new generations" (19).

By way of introduction to these stories, Usner provided a brief historical sketch of Hispanic New Mexico's oral tradition, the origin of these *cuentos* (Medieval Spain) and their value and decline in response to societal and familial change triggered by the cash economy's transformation of Hispanic New Mexico's "simple agrarian existence" (14) during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Men's long absences while they worked in Colorado mines, for instance, increased women's workloads at home. Both factors, Usner maintains, contributed to weaken traditional storytelling practices. For scholars, Usner's historical sketch is *Benigna Chimayó's* weakest element because he did not provide external evidence or cite references to support his contention that these *cuentos* came to Chimayó from Medieval Spain. Do these stories have antecedents? Have there been other versions recorded elsewhere in the Spanish-speaking world? Similarly, he does not draw on other studies of Hispanic New Mexico's oral tradition to support his reasons for its decline. Internal evidence, such as archaisms and the reference to Moors in "Juan Burumbete," do lend credence to Usner's claim that these stories were brought to the New World from sixteenth and seventeenth century Spain. By itself, however, internal evidence is not enough to determine definitively the origin of these *cuentos*. It is for historians and other folklorists to study these stories and their origins in greater detail.

This weakness is minor in comparison to *Benigna's Chimayó's* delightfully accomplished principle goal: preserving and sharing the folktales Benigna told in English and her native Spanish, which captures the local color, lingering sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish vocabulary, the language's natural flow and the stories' authenticity. As Usner explained, these *cuentos* don't belong to any

individual in the long line of people that transmitted them from generation to generation. They belong to this place and its idiosyncratic human community, which embraces many people and many years" (152). Presenting these *cuentos* in this way saves them for us all to savor and gives us the chance to experience Benigna's gift to her grandson: belief "in magic, faith, and the ultimate vindication of all that is good" (16).

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TEXAS FLAGS. By Robert Maberry, Jr. Foreword by Peter C. Marzio. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2001. In association with the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. 166 pp. + Notes, Bibliography, Index. \$50.00 Cloth. ISBN I58544-151-1.

Flags are one of the most recognizable icons of national or regional identity. Texas' identity is so closely tied to its flag that it's also known as the "Lone Star" state. It is difficult not to recognize that flag and think of Texas. "Today, the Lone Star Flag is the physical embodiment of the myths of Texas," the author writes. That particular flag, however, is only the most recognizable of several—or many, as the author's research discovered—flags or banners that have been associated with the various nations, individuals, and associations in Texas history. Some are more well known than others but all have a place in the vexillological history of Texas

This study began as a catalog for an exhibit of several Texas flags at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston for which the author was guest curator. Research, however, led to a much broader, more comprehensive treatment of the flags of Texas history, their symbols, and their relationship to the state's history. This book is the first attempt to do so since the 1936 Texas Centennial. "It is by no means meant as a complete guide to Texas flags," cautions the author. The present study is limited to the formative years of Texas history—what Maberry calls, the "heroic age." It is the period, notes the author, "when designs were evolving and flags were not only symbols, as they are today, but served practical functions as well." Consequently, flags carried by Texas military forces and by troops associated with the state predominate. The museum exhibit includes flags used in World War II but Maberry chose to end this study with the passage of the 1933 law that reestablished the "Texian" flag as the state's official flag. Practically all the flags discussed in the book are reproduced in color; many in their present state.

What the author has produced is much more than a recapitulation of the familiar "six flags" concept. He explains that even those familiar six flags aren't always the historically correct ones actually used on the Spanish or Mexican frontier. Where possible he has looked at original letterhead stationery or contemporary drawings that feature a flag in order to authenticate which specific flag was being used.

One of the more enduring stories about historic Texas flags is the one about which flag flew over the Alamo at the time of the attack by Santa Anna's army. Many histories and accounts assert that the defenders of the Alamo flew a Mexican flag with the date "1824" under the central "serpent and cactus" seal. This was to indicate that the Texans supported the 1824 federal Mexican constitution and opposed Santa Anna's new centralist regime. Maberry notes that recent writers have pointed out that it was "highly unlikely that the Alamo defenders would have fought and died under this flag." Speculation now is that either a tricolor flag representing the state of Coahuila y Tejas flew over the Alamo because one contemporary sketch of the old mission depicts that flag, or that the true flag over the Alamo was the "design and colors of the American republic" because by that time the Texians had declared independence. His chapter on the development of a "Texas flag" also dispels some myths. He asserts that the accepted story of how the Lone Star Flag came to be is also not exactly true. There was any number of unusual designs and sizes for early Texas flags—many were simply variations on the United States stars and stripes. For the statehood era, there is a long discussion and depiction of the many flags used by Texas troops during the Civil War. One final chapter is devoted to a catalog of the flags in the museum exhibition. These are reproduced in their present condition—some in tatters and others in faded colors.

It occurs to me that this study represents the convergence of a museum wanting to exhibit these icons of Texas history meeting a historian with tremendous interest in and extensive knowledge of the topic. For us the pleasant result is this scholarly and informative study. Hopefully, it will lead to a renewed interest in saving these symbols before they disappear.

RICHARD BAQUERA
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Book Notes

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The following are books received by PASSWORD which will not be formally reviewed or books that I have come across which I believe PASSWORD readers will find interesting and might want to read and/or purchase. Some of them were published three to four years ago but should still be available. Included is a short description of each. Finally, I have included some works of fiction, as I sometimes find novels, especially historical novels, which I think might also be of interest. There is no particular order to the list, I just included them as I found them in my library.

RICHARD BAQUERA

Book Review Editor, *Password*

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF PANCHO VILLA. By Friedrich Katz. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, ISBN 0-8047-3045-8, Cloth. ISBN 0-8047-3046-6, hardcover \$86.00, paper, \$23.00.

Consider this: 818 pages of text, sixteen pages of an appendix, seventy-two pages of notes; and forty-three pages of archival sources and bibliography. I had intended to review this book for *Password* when it was originally published, but so much time was spent in the reading that I never got around to the actual review. I won't say much except that anyone with any interest in Pancho Villa will want to have this book—period. It is the last word on the subject and will no doubt be the definitive work. While Friedrich Katz has written other works on Mexico, *The Secret War in Mexico* for example, this piece of work is the culmination of his many years of study of the man who has been clouded in myth and legend, and who for many—especially in the Southwest—is the symbol of the Mexican Revolution of 1910. Here is presented almost more than you ever wanted to know or needed to know about Villa, who was born Doroteo Arango. It is difficult to begin any type of critical review. Understand that although this is not a history of the revolution, familiarity with the basic history of the 1910 revolution will allow one to follow this book more easily.

I was curious about how Villa was able to gather such loyalty and support—and how he could appear to be down and finally defeated but retreat to his homeland and re-emerge time after time to threaten



his enemies again. Buy it and read it. Don't think about how many hundreds of pages are still to be read; the first hundred or so are the most difficult—after that you'll be hooked.

RICHARD BAQUERA

HAUNTED TEXAS VACATIONS: THE COMPLETE GHOSTLY GUIDE. By Lisa Farwell. Englewood, CO: Westcliffe Publishers, 2000. ISBN 1-56579-383-8. Paper, \$19.95.

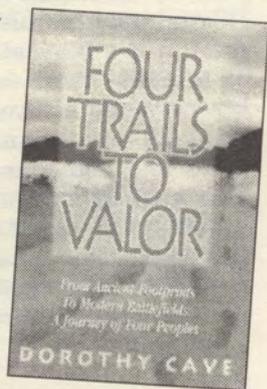
Austin resident and president of the Capital City Ghost Research Society, Lisa Farwell, has compiled a list of more than one hundred fifty haunted Texas vacation destinations, "from old hotels in Austin to spooky cemeteries in the North Texas Prairie." If you are interested, the Camino Real Hotel in El Paso is said to house a sad spirit in its basement. El Paso High School's auditorium and a fourth floor classroom are haunted by cheering crowds, footsteps, and rustling feet. A young woman who jumped to her death from the fourth floor classroom in the 1930s is said to haunt the school still. And one of El Paso's oldest buildings, the Magoffin Home is said to be haunted as well. If this interests you then this is the book to purchase—you could plan your next vacation around these state-wide sites.



—R.B.

FOUR TRAILS TO VALOR, FROM ANCIENT FOOTPRINTS TO MODERN BATTLEFIELDS: A JOURNEY OF FOUR PEOPLES. By Dorothy Cave. Las Cruces, NM: Yucca Tree Press, 1998. ISBN 1-881325-22-9. Cloth, \$24.95.

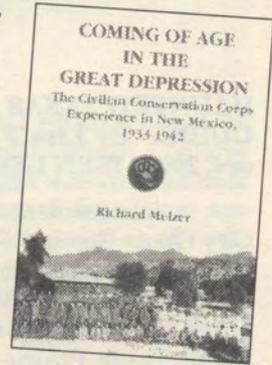
This book looks at the three ethnic groups which make New Mexico culture what it is. From the perspective of World War II, four young men from New Mexico "shaped by their culture and religion . . . face separation from home and family, peril and imprisonment." But the valor, the author argues, comes from the strength each received from his own particular society or culture. "In the end each man's trail winds back to the wombland" the author explains, "back to his origins, back to his family, back to Earth, Sky, Water." An interesting way to study the impact of war on people.



—R.B.

COMING OF AGE IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION: THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS EXPERIENCE IN NEW MEXICO, 1933-1942. By Richard Melzer. Las Cruces, NM: Yucca Tree Press, 2000. ISBN 1-881325-41-5. Cloth, \$25.00.

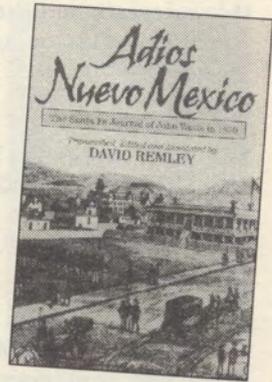
Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal included many programs designed to fight the Great Depression by creating jobs. Many consider the Civilian Conservation Corps, familiarly known simply as CCC, to be among the most successful of all New Deal anti-depression plans. Using many oral history interviews as well as CCC camp newspapers, unpublished memoirs, etc., Professor Melzer of the University of New Mexico's Valencia campus has written a compelling account of the camps in New Mexico which is all the more valuable because it's told from the perspective of many who lived the experience.



—R.B.

ADIOS NUEVO MEXICO: THE SANTA FE JOURNAL OF JOHN WATTS IN 1859. Transcribed, Edited and Annotated by David Remley. Las Cruces, NM: Yucca Tree Press, 1999. ISBN 1-881325-29-6. Cloth, \$24.95.

This is an interesting journal written by a teenage boy from Bloomington, Indiana who was sent to New Mexico to improve his health. He was in New Mexico in the years just preceding the Civil War, from 1858-1859. As Remley puts it, "homesick for his family in Indiana, [Watts] occupies his time by keeping a journal." It is a fascinating glimpse of New Mexico in 1859—more so because it is seen from the viewpoint of a young man. We have many memoirs and reminiscences of the more famous and notorious of New Mexico history. This account is valuable because it is life as seen by a nineteen year old. Almost as fascinating is the story of how this journal seems accidentally but happily to have survived until today. Interesting photographs of contemporary New Mexico sites help connect names with some of the faces and places.



—R.B.

BELL RANCH: CATTLE RANCHING IN THE SOUTHWEST, 1824-1947. By David Remley. Revised Edition. Las Cruces, NM: Yucca Tree Press, 2000. ISBN 1-881326-42-3. Paper.

Revised and updated edition of a well-researched and valuable history of the large ranch located along the Canadian River northwest of Tucumcari, New Mexico. Using a large collection of Bell Ranch documents, the author succeeds in bringing to life, "the people who lived on the Bell and gives us a glimpse of the day-to-day activities of these stalwarts who chose to live isolated on this vast cattle ranch." It is a valuable book for anyone interested not only in ranching, but in land grants, New Mexico, and the history of the West.

—R.B.

THE VILLISTA PRISONERS OF 1916-1917. By James W. Hurst. Las Cruces, NM: Yucca Tree Press, 2000. ISBN 1-881325-44-X. Paper, \$12.00.

James W. Hurst, Emeritus Professor of History at Joliet Junior College in Illinois, has written a short monograph about a subject of which, I dare say, few of us were aware. After the Villa raid on Columbus in March, 1916, seven Villista raiders were captured. In October, 1916, nineteen Villistas captured by the Pershing Punitive Expedition were brought back to face justice in the United States. Using resources which include transcripts, Hurst writes about the trials, sentencing, and eventual execution of some of these Villistas. What makes the narrative more intriguing is the fact that it involves pleas by some Americans for leniency and questions about the treatment of these men while in prison.

—R.B.



EDITOR'S NOTE: *Mr. Baquera, who is a voracious reader, had produced so many "BOOK NOTES" that they cannot all be published at one time. They will be included on an occasional basis. You will recognize the BOOK NOTES because they are not as lengthy and detailed as a book review, but they contain enough of the "flavor" of the book to pique your interest.*





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PASSWORD (ISSN 0031-2738) is published quarterly by
THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 603 W. Yandell, El Paso, Texas 79902

Periodicals Postage Paid at El Paso, Texas

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