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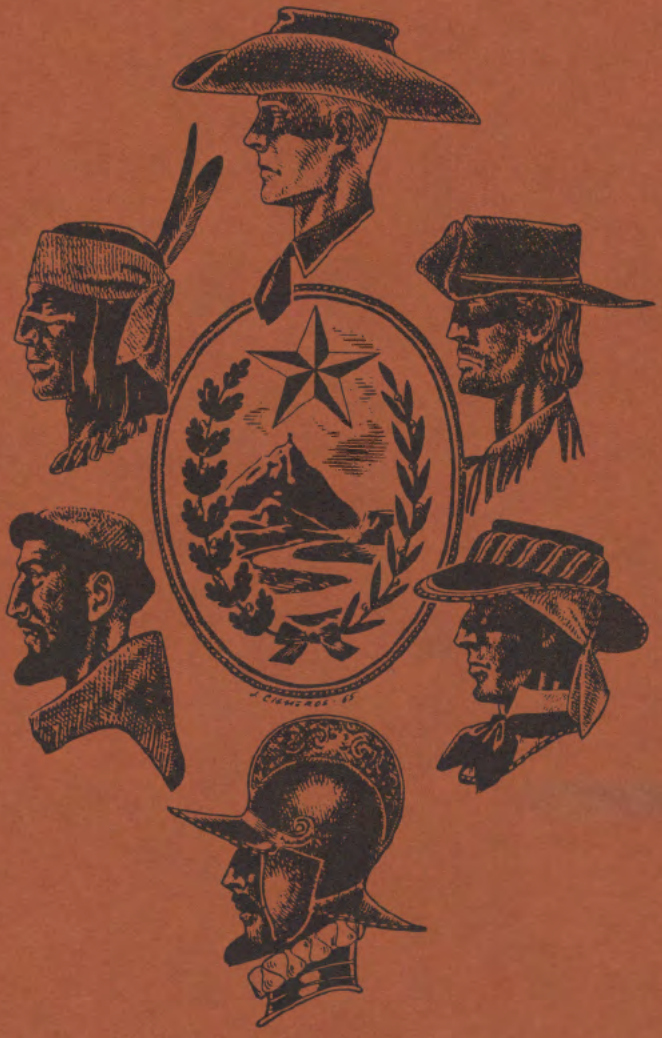

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CONTENTS

ARTICLES APPEARING IN THIS JOURNAL ARE ABSTRACTED AND INDEXED IN HISTORICAL ABSTRACTS and AMERICA: HISTORY AND LIFE

This issue of PASSWORD
is dedicated to the memory of

James Milton Day

June 7, 1931—May 2, 2005

Texan
teacher
writer
archivist
editor
father
trouble-shooter
organizer
mentor

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James M. Day, 1931–2005
Photo courtesy of Mrs. James M. Day.

One of the Good Guys

By Leon C. Metz

I'm not exactly sure where and when I met James Milton Day, but it had to have been nearly forty years ago, and probably at the Texas State Archives in Austin where he was curator. Then again, perhaps we met at some historical meeting. No doubt I needed information of some sort, perhaps on a gunfighter, or court case, or historical event. James Day knew where to look. Further, he was a scholarly writer of considerable fame—or, as I used to say—"notoriety," a word we often used to refer to each other in later years as we sat across a lunch table in El Paso and passed friendly verbal jabs back and forth. Jim was known as a writer and a scholar not only state wide but across the country and overseas, and deservedly so.

James Day and I were buddies and associates for nearly half a century. While the rest of the world frequently referred to him as Dr. Day, his friends, of which I was one, never called him anything other than "Jim," while he usually called me "Metz."

James Milton Day, a sixth generation Texan, was born in Brownwood in June, 1931. He graduated from Brownwood High School in 1950, from Tarleton State College in 1952, from the University of Texas at Austin in 1954 with a B.A. in English and with an M.A. in history in 1958. He was awarded a Ph.D. from Baylor University in 1967. He served as a lieutenant with the 39th Infantry Division at Fort Benning during the Korean Conflict. Following his military service, he taught at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas; and at Howard County Junior College in Big Spring, Texas.

On September 1, 1958, James Day became a part time assistant to Dr. Dorman Winfrey, Director of the Texas State Archives in Austin. While most writers have never heard of the "Texas

Indian Papers," researchers in this field owe to James Day a thunderous vote of appreciation for his years in the late 1950s and early 1960s of organizing and making those papers available to scholars and researchers around the world. After completing the final Volume 4 in 1960, Jim was promoted from a part time assistant to Texas State archivist. He served as state archivist until 1967.

During this period Jim compiled and edited a book of Texas archival maps. He also pulled together the proceedings of the Texas legislature during the Civil War, then edited two volumes of the Texas Post Office Papers which were created during the Republic of Texas era. Around this time, or perhaps earlier, Jim married, the marriage producing two fine sons, James M. Day, Jr. and Joseph C. Day. Both attended their father's El Paso funeral, and both spoke eloquently and lovingly of their recollections.

James Day has published many articles and books on Texas. Among them are: *Captain Clint Peoples: Texas Ranger: Fifty Years A Lawman*; *Mules, Mines & Me in Mexico, 1895-1932*; *Soldiers of Texas; Black Beans and Goose Quills*; *Literature of the Texas Mier Expedition*; *The Texas Almanac: 1857-1883*; *A Compendium of Texas History*; *Paul Horgan*; *The Indian Papers of Texas and the Southwest*; *Maps of Texas: 1527-1900*; *Six Missions of Texas*; and the Austin chapter of *Capitols of Texas*.

He produced volumes of the proceedings of the Texas legislature during the Civil War and edited two volumes of the Texas Post Office Papers during the Republic of Texas era. He had extensive editing experience with the Texas State Library, *Texana*, Texas Military History, Texas Western Press, Steck-Vaughn Company, and *Password*. He has shelves of books which he wrote or to which he contributed. Most of his books were published by Texas Western Press in El Paso, the Texian Press, or by the Steck Vaughn Company. He edited regularly for the Texas State Library and the Steck-Vaughn Publishing Company utilized his talents in producing and editing seventeen books under the generic title of Southwest Life and Literature Series. These items would still be just a dream were it not for James Day.

In September of 1967, he joined the English faculty at the University of Texas at El Paso. He served as chairman of the Faculty Senate, 1980-1981; director of the El Paso Centennial Museum, 1980-1987; and chairman of the University Heritage

Commission. James Day served as editor of Texas Western Press at Texas Western College, now the University of Texas at El Paso. He retired in January 1991 as Professor Emeritus, and was grand marshal of commencement at his retirement.

After his retirement, he did not sit back to rest. He served as a part-time instructor of English at El Paso Community College while he also served as president of the El Paso County Historical Society, West Texas Historical Association, the Lighthouse for the Blind, the Visiting Nurses Association, the Southwestern American Literature Association, and the Texas Folklore Society. As president of the El Paso County Historical Society during 1982-83, he negotiated with Jane Burges Perrenot for the gift of her home at 603 West Yandell Drive. The Burges House is now the Society's official headquarters and office.

From 1995 to 1997 he served as editor of *Password*. None of the contents of that journal left his desk without his guidance and approval. Jim loved the *Password*.

From 1987 until his death, Jim Day served as executive administrator of the Mary L. Peyton Foundation which distributed enormous amounts of money to needy and worthy individuals and organizations. He was also an active member of many other civic organizations which he served on boards or committees. He was elected to the position of sheriff of the El Paso Corral of Westerners, and under his leadership it became one of the more active Corrals. Busy to the last, James Day was still serving the Corral of the Westerners as "deputy" and was president of the El Paso Pioneers Association at the time of his death.

Until his death, James Day was an active member of the Rotary as well as the First Baptist Church. He was the first board president of the Christian Women's Job Corps. A Master Mason for fifty years, he belonged to Fraternity Lodge #1111 at the time of his death. He was a 32° KCCH Scottish Rite Mason and a Past Master of the Texas Masons Lodge of Research, an endowed lifetime member. He was a life member of the Texas Permian Historical Society and a member of the Mountain-Plains Museum Association. He was a board member of the Volar CIL, and he was a member of the El Paso Genealogical Society, and the Sons of the American Revolution. He was the founding president of the El Paso Chapter Number 44 of the Sons of the Republic of Texas.

His recognitions include the C. S. Hammond Award, American Library Association, 1965; the Jefferson Davis Medal, United Daughters of the Confederacy; the Eugene O. Porter Award, El Paso County Historical Society; the Southwest Book Award, Border Regional Library Association; and the Knights of the Order of San Jacinto, the highest honor bestowed by the Sons of the Republic of Texas. He appeared in *Who's Who in America, 43rd Edition* and later editions. He was elected a Fellow in the Texas State Historical Association as well as in the Texas State Genealogical Society.

James Day and I melded quickly and became friends largely because of history: El Paso and Southwest history. His knowledge, education, and writing skills far surpassed mine, but he shared his expertise joyfully and easily. During the years following my acceptance as university archivist at the University of Texas at El Paso, I could count on Jim for expert guidance and advice. He and I occasionally traveled south into Mexico, seeking old records, documents, and photographs in Chihuahua, Sonora, and Durango. His Spanish, like mine, was pitiful, but we had fun, and we did our job. He was a great traveling companion.

Perhaps six weeks before he died, Jim—who had been ailing for the last few years—called and asked if we could have lunch, something we had been doing on a fairly regular basis. That call, although outwardly normal gave me an uneasy feeling. So I drove to pick him up, sensing an unspoken reason for this meeting on his part other than hunger or just needing to get away from his ever-present work. I was right, although I could not prove it by anything he said. The meal and the conversation went as usual, but I retained that feeling—actually a fear—that he was trying to tell me something without telling me anything. And I somehow hesitated to probe, although I did "beat around the bush." Jim and I left the restaurant that afternoon, and I still had that uneasy suspicion that I would never see him again.

He died within the month.

Jim worked diligently at any project that he undertook, but his greatest love was for teaching. He was not an "easy" teacher, but he was a good teacher, one who was admired and respected by his students. Not many days before his death he was heard

to say proudly that he had graded all his finals for the course he had just finished teaching at El Paso Community College, Valle Verde Campus.

He leaves unfinished two projects which had consumed much of his spare time: a book-length biography of Texas Ranger Captain John R. Hughes, and the editing and annotating of the book *Gringo Doctor*, by Ira Bush who was involved in the Mexican Revolution.

I shall miss James Day and all of his history—local, regional, and national. And I shall miss his talents. He was an outstanding historian, teacher, and an excellent speaker who in many respects never received the true measure of the recognition and honor he deserved.

James M. Day was interred at Fort Bliss National Cemetery and is survived by his wife, Felipa Castillo Day, his sons by his previous marriage; James Milton Day, Jr. of San Antonio, Texas, his wife Jennifer and children Megan, Michelle, and Dakota; and Joseph C. Day of Wimberly, Texas; his stepdaughter, Leslie Jimenez Mayol of Tampa Florida, and stepson Jesus Aaron Jimenez of El Paso.

James Milton Day was one of a kind—and he was my friend.

Jim Day

By Nancy Hamilton

My list of "things to do" for May 2 included "Call Jim Day about Pioneers meeting." He was president of the Pioneers Association of El Paso County, of which I am secretary-treasurer. I needed to remind him that we are required to have a board meeting in May of each year. Then Marilyn Gross called with the bad news. Jim had died several hours earlier, leaving a huge gap in the lives of his many friends.

I spent the rest of the morning notifying the members of the University of Texas at El Paso Heritage Commission, which Jim had chaired in its infancy. The commission's thirty members are alumni and retired faculty and staff of the University of Texas at El Paso. As volunteers, they have since 1994 maintained a small museum that preserves the history of the University. Its roots are in the small group of faculty and staff members Jim led in the early 1980s.

Typically, he accepted a remarkable challenge at that time when then University President Haskell Monroe asked the commission to bring into being ceremonial banners and regalia for use at convocations, commencements, and similar occasions. The items included banners for the University, the graduate school, and the six academic colleges, plus a large mace to be carried at the head of processions and chains of office for the president and the vice-president.

Jim had presented those items during a formal ceremony during the Four Centuries '81 Convocation held February 19, 1981. Heritage House has a tape of that event, and I had been reviewing it only a few days earlier, timing it for the person who will transfer the tape to DVD. There was James M. Day, professor of English, in his cap and gown reflecting his doctorate from Baylor University and also wearing the figurative hats of chairman of the Heritage Commission and head of the Faculty Senate.

In answering the challenge to provide the banners and regalia, he had demonstrated his typical tendency to take on huge jobs that anyone else might have shunned. And during those early '80s years, he did a lot of that. For example, the Faculty Senate, whose members represent the various academic departments of the University, had been in a kind of disarray in the late 1970s when some of its members rebelled against University President Arleigh B. Templeton. Dr. Templeton had taken the presidency at the behest of the Board of Regents in a time of financial stress, the need for more buildings, and other adversities. When he had to trim faculty in some departments, the reaction was unfavorable and there are some still on board who resent his term in office. But James Day was willing to head up the Faculty Senate and try to get it moving again. He even got the faculty and staff together to put on a talent show—a memorable occasion.

Then there was the El Paso Centennial Museum, built on the campus in 1936 as part of the city's observance of the state's 100th anniversary. In 1979 it had undergone an extensive renovation, the first since it was built, plus an extensive addition. Rex Gerald, who had directed the museum and won for it accreditation over a period of years, was looking forward to a grand reopening. But Rex became ill and Governor Bill Clements exercised his line-item veto on operating funds for museums at all state universities.

James Day accepted the directorship on a part-time basis, also continuing to teach English. With the help of gift funds, a curator was hired and, with volunteer help, the museum's holdings, which had been stored throughout the campus, went back home and volunteers managed to open the facility for a few hours each week. But they lost their accreditation for lack of operating funds, until the next Legislature restored them.

The early 1980s were a busy time for James Day. Not only was he dealing with the problems mentioned above, but he served as president of the El Paso County Historical Society from 1981 through 1983. I was already editing *Password* as the last unpaid editor when he took the presidency, and he asked me to continue. At the time I was working in the University's news service for his good friend, Dale Walker. Actually, I can't remember how I met Jim but it must have been through Dale, although we worked together for the Historical Society and in the El Paso Corral of Westerners over the years. That was a rocky time for me as editor.

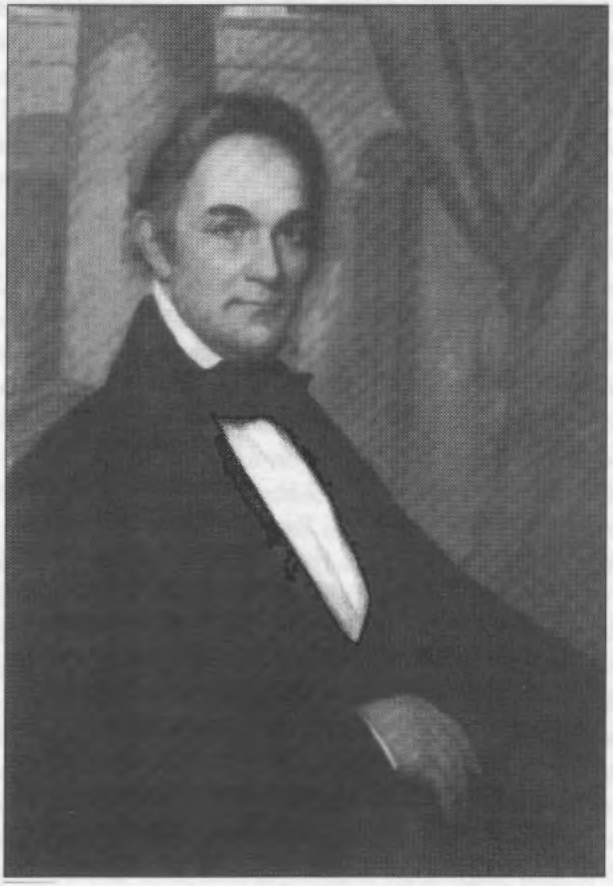
The printer changed from hot type to cold type without telling me, and the man who had always helped cover my printing-related mistakes was no longer there. I produced a funny-looking issue with type lopping over the end of the page, not realizing the change in printing method, but Jim never chastised me for it. I resigned and was succeeded by his English Department colleague, Lil Collingwood.

One of the most significant of his friendships while president of El Paso County Historical Society was with Jane Burges Perrenot. Jim, as former Texas State Archivist, had a larger view than most of us of the potential for historic activities in El Paso. The El Paso Museum of History, on the far east side of town, had for some time been storing Historical Society materials in a back room, but needed the space and did not want to renew its contract. Jim wanted to find a permanent home for the Society where researchers could peruse the photos and manuscripts, and where special activities could be scheduled. Fortunately, Mrs. Perrenot agreed in 1981 to give her home, now known as Burges House (for her father, Richard Burges), to the Historical Society upon her death, which occurred in 1986. By the time this gift was completed, many had forgotten Jim's role in seeing that it came about.

Of course, he contributed many articles to *Password*, two on one of his favorite topics, the Texas Rangers, plus book reviews, and was always available to speak at meetings of the New Mexico Historical Association, the Westerners, and other local, state, and national organizations dedicated to history. At the time of his passing he had been assembling material for several books, one on a Ranger and one on John W. "Cap" Kidd, the first dean of engineering at the School of Mines, now the University of Texas at El Paso.

A few years ago the Pioneers Association of El Paso County, organized in 1904 and nearing the end of its run, called on Jim Day to become president and straighten out various problems. He willingly accepted the challenge, as he had always done for worthy causes. At last year's meeting, he pointed the way. This year, we wanted to "tie up" loose ends and needed to have him call the annual May meeting in order to do so. He had laid the groundwork for us, and this year we were to consider several solutions. As the agenda items were considered, the discussion was expected to be be prefaced many times with: "Jim Day suggested we...."

His wise counsel and outstanding leadership will be sorely missed.



James Wiley Magoffin

Photos in this article courtesy of Magoffin Home State Historic Site.

The Marriages of James Wiley Magoffin

By Dr. Rick Hendricks

Editor's Note: Answering a telephone call from Dr.Rick Hendricks, I learned that he was finishing research on James Wiley Magoffin. My response "Oh, wonderful, he's my favorite hero" was met with a very pregnant pause which I noted—but barely—and quickly dismissed. Rick quietly told me that he had been doing research in the Durango and Chihuahua archives and had made some interesting discoveries. He hoped that the devotees of James Wiley Magoffin would not be too disturbed by his findings.

He asked for a meeting with Mary Kay Shannon, who is the Site Superintendent at the Magoffin Home State Historic Site and the local expert on the Magoffins. Mary Kay and I sat quietly amazed as he disclosed his new material. She divulged that her research had uncovered some voids in the history of James Wiley Magoffin—some events and occurrences for which she could not logically account.

Dr. Hendricks has opened new doors through which students of local history must walk in order to unravel the threads of this wonderful story.

Although this article shows that "my hero," who to me has always been the acme of perfection, was very human and sometimes showed his "feet of clay," this article must be published in the interest of advancing new research and retaining honesty in scholarship, history, and publishing.

Foreword

For years I have sought better understanding of María Gertrudis Magoffin's kinship to the Veramendí family of San Antonio de Bexar. There always seemed to be a missing link, a discrepancy. Historians have directly and indirectly implied that it was the Veramendí connection that contributed the respect and success of James Wiley Magoffin in Mexico. Yet, there has always be a vagueness about her first husband.

In this article Dr. Hendricks clearly identifies Gertrudis' family and that of her first husband. He examines the often quoted sources and the accuracy of the information. He then presents new information from the Durango Cathedral Archives. The result sheds an entirely new perspective on the marriage of James Wiley and Gertrudis Magoffin. The information provides a window into the private life and the loves of this amazing family. The success and lasting influence of the Magoffins in the Southwest was built on a commitment to each other and the respect they earned in their own right, in their own time.

What follows is a story that even their son, Joseph Magoffin, may not have known; this is a well researched and documented love story.

Mary Kay Shannon
Site Superintendent, Magoffin Home State Historic Site

The First Marriage: To Gertrudis Valdez

In the long-awaited biography of James Wiley Magoffin, El Paso's most prominent pioneer, author W.H. Timmons stated that

> [Magoffin's] marriage in 1834 to María Gertrudis de los Santos Valdez de Veramendi [sic] daughter of the prominent and influential family of San Antonio de Béjar, gave him additional status. Her brother, Gabriel Valdez, was a trader on the Santa Fe Trail, and her cousin, Manuel Armijo, was a rich, self-made merchant from Albuquerque who became governor of New Mexico.[1]

Timmons's sources for this information about Magoffin's first wife were Rex Strickland's *Six Who Came to El Paso: Pioneers of the 1840s* and Stella M. Drumm's *Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico: Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin, 1846-1847.*[2]

Strickland indicated that

> The myth-makers have obscured one facet of Magoffin's life by insisting that this wife was from Chihuahua. Actually María Gertrudis de los Santos Valdez de Veramendí was a native of San Antonio, Texas. Born in 1808, she was the eldest daughter of Nicholas Valdez and Juana Almondrain. Apparently she was married the first time to a cadet member of the Varamendí family a sur-

> mise that opens an intriguing possibility, for her first husband might have been a younger brother of Governor Veramendí, in which case María Gertrudis Valdez was an aunt by marriage of Ursula Veramendí de Bowie. Many of the leading families of San Antonio fled to Monclova and Saltillo in 1832 to escape the cholera (the Veramendí and Valdez families were originally from Saltillo). Whether she was a widow before she left San Antonio or whether widowed by the plague, María Gertrudis met and married "Don Santiago" in old Saltillo in 1834.[3]

Strickland came by some of his information from a work written by Frederick Charles Chabot entitled *With the Makers of San Antonio* and some information—apparently—by historical flight of fancy.[4] Chabot (1891-1943) was a native of San Antonio who had had a career in the United States diplomatic service marked by conflict with his superiors and a less than stellar job performance. He is best known as the author of several books on Texas history.[5] Chabot, who stated that most of the genealogical information he provided came from Catholic Church records, indicated that Gertrudis de los Santos was born in 1806, the first of seven children.[6] Chabot does not explicitly link the Valdez and Veramendí surnames; rather he indicates that Tomás Valdez was said to be a member of Governor Veramendí's staff, whereas Strickland uses the combined surname.[7]

Timmons cited the 1926 edition of Drumm's work, which contained the fact that Gabriel Valdez was the brother of Gertrudis but other pieces of information came from Howard R. Lamar's foreword to the 1962 edition.[8] Lamar stated that

> In 1830 James further entrenched himself in the economic and social life of the northern provinces by marrying Dona [sic] Maria Gertrudes Valdez de Beremende, who came from a prominent Chihuahua family. Her brother, Gabriel Valdez, was also a Mexican trader on the Santa Fe Trail, and her cousin, Manuel Armijo, was a rich, self-made merchant from Albuquerque who was soon to be governor of New Mexico.[9]

Lamar's source of information about Magoffin's wife was a 1948 article in the El Paso *Herald-Post*.[10]

María Gertrudis de los Santos Valdez de Veramendí

Based on the facts and conjectures presented in these sources one could conclude that Magoffin's first wife, María Gertrudis de los Santos Valdez de Veramendí, was a native of either San Antonio de Béjar, where she had been born to Nicolás Valdez and Juana Almondrain in 1808, or Chihuahua, where she was the member of a prominent family. She and Magoffin had married either in 1830, presumably in Chihuahua, or in 1834 in Saltillo. Her first husband could have been related to the governor of *Texas y Coahuila*, which would have made her the aunt of Jim Bowie's wife. Her brother was a merchant on the Santa Fe Trail, and her cousin was the future governor of New Mexico.

Given the uncertainty of the basic biographical facts of her life, the usually definitive *Handbook of Texas* took an understandably cautious approach with María Gertrudis. In the entry on James Wiley Magoffin, one finds this statement regarding his first wife: "He married the widow María Gertrudis Valdez de Veramendí, a San Antonio native, in Saltillo in 1834."[11]

The recent discovery of a document in the microfilm collection of the Durango Cathedral Archive housed in the Archives and Special Collections Department of New Mexico State University Library, sheds light on the lives of James and María Gertrudis and helps clarify her heretofore confused biography. On 5 March 1839, don Santiago Magoffin and Gertrudis Valdez appeared before the curate and vicar *in capite* of Chihuahua, Father Juan José Baca, and the notary public, Juan José Rodela, to ask to be married.[12] Magoffin, who spoke for himself and his intended, stated that he was a native of Harrisburg in the State of Kentucky in the

United States of the North. He wished to wed María Gertrudis Valdez, a native of San Antonio de Béjar, aged twenty-six.[13] She had lived in Chihuahua for six years and was widowed from her first husband, Marcos Farías. There is no indication that the couple had any children.

The couple asked to be excused from the publication of the banns as required by the Council of Trent. Banns of marriage constituted the ecclesiastical announcement of the names of a couple planning to wed. The purpose of publicly proclaiming the couple's intent was to uncover any impediments to the union. Magoffin offered three reasons why a dispensation from banns should be granted: first, they were unable to obtain proof that they were free to marry from their places of origin because the distances were too great; second, they were both from illustrious and honorable families whose comportment had been, and continued to be, well known; third, unfortunately, for a long time they had been involved in an illicit relationship that had caused a public scandal because so many people knew of their situation. To have the banns proclaimed publicly would be embarrassing, especially since Magoffin had been named honorary consul of the United States. Finally, Magoffin expressed his sincere desire to receive the waters of Christian baptism before marrying.[14]

In concluding his petition to Father Baca, Magoffin made a rather surprising admission, given what is known of the status of Valdez's family. His prospective bride was, in the words of the petition, "*una pobre*," and Magoffin was a man "*de caudal.*"[15] She was poor, and he was wealthy. He wished to protect her because it was his way of demonstrating the mutual love they shared.

The couple presented a supporting document, a certification from fray Juan José Pérez, the Franciscan priest in charge of the vice-parish of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Conchos. On 3 March 1839, fray Juan José attested to the fact that among the parish record books was one of 112 pages bound in leather. On the verso of page 101 he found the following entry:

> In this vice-parish of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Conchos on 11 July 1838, I buried in the cemetery of Todos Santos, the cadaver of José Marcos Farías whom the Apaches killed on the fifth of the same month at the place called Tarcircitos in the company of Ángel Baca and another individual. By error he was buried in that place.[16]

When Father Baca examined him, Magoffin did not take an oath because he was not a Christian, as he had previously confessed.[17] He did, however, promise to tell the truth. He stated that he was thirty-nine years old and the son of don Bereah [Beriah] Magoffin and doña Juana McAafa [McAfee]. He had been a resident and merchant of Chihuahua for six years but had known his intended for thirteen years. Valdez stated that her name was María Gertrudis and that her parents were don Tomás Valdez and doña Josefa Almondarain.[18] Interestingly, she made no use of the Veramendí surname, which so many authors have ascribed to her. Gertrudis stated that she had also been a resident of Chihuahua for six years and repeated the fact that she and James had known each other for thirteen years.[19] The clear implication is that James and Gertrudis had met by 1826, a time in which he was just beginning to establish himself in the Matamoros trade.[20]

The first witness regarding the couple's fitness to marry was don José Blanco [Joseph White?], age fifty, a native of Natchez, Mississippi.[21] He stated that he was a Roman Catholic and had known Magoffin since he was in his country. Blanco added that he had known Gertrudis for six years. Carlos Macrey [Charles McCray] stated that he was fifty-four and a native of San Francisco, Louisiana.[22] He had been living in Chihuahua for six years and had met Magoffin in the United States. He had known Gertrudis for four years. Finally, Juan [John] Patton testified that he was thirty-nine years old and a native of Nashville, Tennessee. [23] He had known Magoffin for a long time and knew that he was from a distinguished family in his native land. He had known Gertrudis for four years. None of the witnesses knew of any reason why Santiago and Gertrudis should not wed.

Father Baca was in total agreement. In his report to church authorities in Durango, he stated that he believed their testimony and that of the witnesses they provided.[24] Moreover, he stated that in the time he had known them, their behavior had been exemplary. He also knew that behind the closed doors of their home, day after day they prayed the Rosary and performed other religious acts. That they had allowed their illicit relationship to become public knowledge did not mean they were unworthy of the bishop's pity, and their honorable comportment earned them the dispensation they requested.

On 18 March the governors of the Diocese of Durango, José Tomás Rivera and Juan Rafael Rascón, acting in the absence of

the bishop, José Antonio de Zubiría, granted the requested dispensation to wed without having the banns proclaimed.[25] They stipulated, however, that before the marriage could take place, Magoffin would have to be baptized a Roman Catholic after first renouncing any protestant faith to which he might belong. In this opinion, the vicar-general, Dr. Juan Bautista Guevara, concurred. For her part, Gertrudis was dispensed from providing information from her place of birth, but she was required to hear three masses to the Holy Trinity, pray three rosaries of five mysteries for the needs of the Church and peace of the republic, with the circumstance that the masses were to be in addition to the two masses the couple was to attend together and Rosaries beyond the two that the couple was to pray together. They could say their prayers in their own home. Barring any unforeseen impediment, Father Baca could perform the marriage ceremony of Santiago and Gertrudis. Upon receipt of the paperwork from Durango, Baca was to investigate whether either party had been involved in a crime. He had failed to do this previously. Further, he was to separate the couple until such time as their marriage had taken place.

What might under different circumstances have been the social event of that year or many a year in Chihuahua's high society, was probably a quiet ceremony performed in Magoffin's home. This explains why a thorough search of extant marriage records for the Sagrario Parish in Chihuahua reveals no entry for Santiago Magoffin and Gertrudis Valdez.[26] In any event, the marriage could not have taken place until 31 March or some time after, for on that date Magoffin was baptized into the Roman Catholic faith in Chihuahua.[27] Assuming that the separation of the couple mandated by Church officials in Durango was put into effect, they were certainly together by late December 1839. This is because Santiago Agapito Cosme Magoffin Valdez, the first child born to them as man and wife in the eyes of the Church, was christened in Chihuahua some nine months later on 27 September 1840, having been born on the twentieth.[28] Attesting to James' position in the community was the stature of the child's godparents—Commandant General and Governor of the Department of Chihuahua, Francisco García Conde, and his wife, Concepción Humana. Their second child, María Gertrudis Petra de Jesús, was born on 23 October 1842 and baptized in Chihuahua on the twenty-seventh.[29] Once again Governor García Conde and his wife stood as godparents.

One important implication of these facts is that the generally

accepted dates for the birth of the other children of James and Gertrudis is more difficult to establish in the documentary record.[30] The traditional date of birth for the eldest, Samuel, is 1835.[31] Then came Josephine in 1836; Annette, for whom no date has been determined; Joseph in 1837; Ursula—again no date; Angela, also no date; Santiago Cosme, born in 1840 who was previously unknown; and Gertrudis born in 1842 who did not survive infancy. Assuming these dates to be correct, it would seem logical that Annette was a twin of either Josephine or Joseph.

Gertrudis and Dolores had a sister, who had been born in Monclova in present-day Coahuila. This indicates that some time after Gertrudis was born, the family had relocated—at least temporarily—to Monclova. The sister, Teresa, married Nicolás Flores who was the son of Gaspar Flores and María Luisa Pérez, in San Antonio on 6 May 1830.[32] According to Chabot, their other siblings were: Anita, who may have been the twin to Gertrudis; María, who became an Ursuline nun in San Antonio; Gabriel; Carmen, who married Isaac Lighter; and Luis.[33]

Numerous sources indicate that Gertrudis died and was buried in Independence, Missouri in January 1845.[34] It is unclear when Dolores, or Lolita, as she was known, became a part of the Magoffin household, but it is known that the younger girls, Annette, Angela, and Gertrudis, were placed in the care of their maternal aunts.[35]

The Second Marriage: To Dolores Valdez

Much less information about Magoffin's second marriage has come to light. According to Chabot, Dolores was the eighth child of Tomás Valdez and Josefa Almondrain[36] The only known contemporary source for the wedding of Magoffin to his sister-in-law, Dolores Valdez, is a brief mention in the 19 September 1850 issue of the *Western Texan*, a San Antonio newspaper. An unsigned column contributed by a roving reporter, which ran on the second page of the paper stated that

> [James] McGuffin, the well known Santa Fe . . . . was married to Miss Dolores Valdes, ... 17th August by Chief Justice Hoppin, ... a very elegant entertainment given to his bride at his fine new house.[37]

Thus, at present, it seems that James and Dolores wed in a civil ceremony conducted by Chief Justice Charles Hoppin in the newly constructed home at Magoffinsville. No records of civil marriages from such an early date survive.

This picture is identified in the Magoffin Home archives as "unknown woman," but those who have researched the Magoffins identify her as Dolores Valdez.

According to Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church, James and Dolores were related by first-degree affinity, which was a diriment impediment, a circumstance that renders a marriage void from the beginning.[38] Moreover, their situation was complicated by the fact that they had undergone a civil wedding and presumably had carnal relations. The Church could and frequently did grant dispensations from such impediments since they arose from ecclesiastical law rather than divine law. The authority to grant a dispensation of a first-degree impediment resulting from lawful

intercourse, that is, James's carnal relations with his first wife brought about an affinal relationship with her sister.[39]

According to the Church, James and Dolores were not even married. When he and Dolores consummated their union, he committed the sin of having intercourse with a direct blood-relative of the first degree. In order to obtain a dispensation, someone—it needed not have been James or even been done at his request—had to make a petition called a *supplica* that was forwarded through the ordinary on to Congregation of Propaganda Fide in Rome.[40] In all probability, Father Ramón Ortiz, curate of El Paso, initiated the process of soliciting a dispensation on behalf of James and Dolores through Bishop Zubiría in Durango. Although Pope Pius IX had created the Vicariate Apostolic of New Mexico on 19 July 1850 and appointed Father Jean Baptiste Lamy to read it. Lamy, however, did not arrive in New Mexico until the summer of 1851.[41]

Although the text of the *supplica* forwarded to Rome has not surfaced, an unsigned draft in Latin has. Remarkably, the petition came almost three full years after the civil ceremony. The document, dated 22 April 1853 in Durango, requests a dispensation from an impediment in the first degree of affinity for Jacobus Magofin, an Anglo-American living in El Paso who was baptized a Catholic and married in his first marriage under the rites of the Catholic Church.[42] There is no mention of Dolores by name; rather the *supplica* states that Magoffin intends to marry an individual to whom he is related in a prohibited degree, thus emphasizing the view that he alone had committed the sin in question. In an audience on 19 June 1853, Pope Pius IX granted Magoffin the requested dispensation. Almost a year passed before the paperwork made its way back from the Vatican to El Paso by way of Durango. On 11 May 1854, Father Ortiz acknowledged receipt of the "Señor Magoffin" dispensation, noting that he must inform him of the result.[43]

There was no Catholic church in what would become present-day El Paso in 1850. The first chapel, San José de Concordia el Alto, was not constructed until 1859 at Hugh Stephenson's ranch on the current site of Concordia Cemetery.[44] A careful search of sacramental records for the neighboring churches revealed that the marriage was not celebrated at Socorro, Ysleta, or San Elizario.[45] Although Fathers Ortiz and Antonio Severo Borrajo, as well as fray Andres de Jesús Camacho tended to keep rather disorderly records for these communities, interfiling marriages,

baptisms, and burials, record of this union does not appear to be among them. No record for their marriage is to be found in the records of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Juárez, which are very complete and orderly for the period.[46] It seems as though the records for Magoffin's second marriage met a similar fate as his first, although for very different reasons. In 1839 James and Gertrudis sought to avoid undue attention to their marriage because of their fear of public scandal, and their wedding was not recorded in the church in Chihuahua. In 1854 James and Dolores probably wed in a private ceremony because they had already celebrated their union in 1850 with ***the*** social event of that and many a year in the growing El Paso area, and their marriage was not recorded in any of the area churches.

Conclusions

Recent discoveries in the microfilm collection of the Durango Cathedral Archive in the Archives and Special Collections Department of New Mexico State University Library have significantly advanced the historiography of the family of James Wiley Magoffin, particularly with regard to his two marriages. Information that James and his first wife, Gertrudis Valdez, provided in their petition to Catholic clergymen in Chihuahua in early March 1839 establishes that they had been engaged in an extramarital relationship for many years and that they had met as early as 1826, when she would have been only thirteen, according to the age she provided. Documents they submitted with their petition proved that Gertrudis was married to José Marcos Farías until his death in July 1838. Then, six months to the day after Farías' death, James and Gertrudis submitted their request to wed, just half of the traditional year-long period of mourning for a deceased spouse.

Given the family tradition that James and Gertrudis married in 1834 in Saltillo, it seems plausible that James and Gertrudis had fallen in love and begun to live together by that date if not before. This notion is further reinforced by the birth of Samuel in 1835. The fact that both indicated that they arrived in Chihuahua during the same year suggests that they may have arrived together and set up their household. Their desire to keep secret their church wedding may have been motivated as much by the fear of scandalizing those who knew they were not married as by a wish to keep alive the pretense that they were already married.

Gertrudis and her first husband, José Marcos, must have been estranged for years. It seems inconceivable that James and Gertrudis could have carried on a love affair that resulted in the birth of numerous offspring had she been living with her husband. Cultural mores of the time and place would have made such a situation impossible. That Gertrudis was described as "poor" suggests that she had taken nothing or had little left in the way of financial resources from her union with Farías.

The discovery of a papal dispensation granted in 1853 by Pope Pius IX proves that the civil union of James and Dolores before Chief Justice Hoppin in 1850 was not recognized by the Church, and that Father Ramón Ortiz, either on his own initiative or at the request of James or Dolores, began the lengthy process of securing a dispensation of diriment impediment of first-degree affinity for James so that he could marry Dolores. This dispensation arrived in El Paso in 1854. Despite the completeness of area church archives for the years in question, no record of the celebration of the rite of marriage for this couple has surfaced. Because they had been living together as man and wife for almost four years, it would seem that they had had a private ceremony, perhaps in their home.

James Magoffin, Gertrudis, and Dolores Valdez, and their children were part of a remarkable bicultural and binational family. James found something so special about the Valdez women that he risked public scandal and Church disapproval to be with the women he loved.

James was perhaps the leading El Paso pioneer and his son, Joseph Magoffin, became one of leading figures in the community for which he served four terms as mayor, occupied a number of other important city and county offices over the years, and was one of the founders of State National Bank of which he was vice-president for forty years.[47] Given the strength of Magoffin family tradition, and the fact that Joseph was only two years old when his parents married, it is unlikely that he ever knew the true story of their love and life in Chihuahua.

DR. RICK HENDRICKS has written, edited, co–written, and co–edited numerous books and articles on the history of the Spanish colonial and Mexican periods in New Mexico, as well as the colonial era in Spain. His particular interest is the history of southern New Mexico in the colonial era, centered in the greater El Paso area. He has worked for twenty years at the University of New Mexico where he is an editor on the Vargas project. Among other projects, he edited the guide to the microfilm collection of the Durango Cathedral Archives at New Mexico State University, has done research and writing for a study of early mining at Santa Rita, and for several books which include topics such as Indian land tenure in New Mexico, the witches of Abiquiu, wine in colonial El Paso, and the religious history of the southwest borderlands in the mid-to-late 19th century.

Dr. Hendricks collaborated with W. H. Timmons to write the book *San Elizario: From Spanish Presidio to Texas County Seat.* Among the many books he has edited is *New Mexico prenuptial investigations from the Archivos Históricos del Arzobispade de Durango, 1760-1799.* He was the recipient of the Eugene O. Porter Award, awarded by the El Paso County Historical Society in 2000 for his article "The Camino Real at the Pass: the Economy and Political Structure of the Paso Del Norte Area in the 18th century."

Dr. Hendricks is presently the editor of the *Southern New Mexico Historical Review,* the journal of the Doña Ana County Historical Society.

ENDNOTES

1. W. H. Timmons, *James Wiley Magoffin: Don Santiago—El Paso Pioneer*, Southwestern Studies, 106 (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1999), 20.
2. Timmons, Magoffin, 111 n.17; Rex Strickland, *Six Who Came to El Paso: Pioneers of the 1840s,* Southwestern Studies, 3 (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1963), 27; and Stella M. Drumm, *Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico: Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin, 1846-1847* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), xix-xx.
3. Strickland, *Six Who Came*, 44 n.49.
4. Frederick C. Chabot, *With the Makers of San Antonio* (San Antonio: Artes Gráficas, 1937).
5. Handbook of Texas Online, s.v. "Chabot, Frederick Charles," http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/CC/fch1.html (accessed 8 February 2005).
6. Chabot gives Gertrudis parents as Tomás Valdez and Josefa Amondarain where Strickland incorrectly gives them as Nicholas and Juana. Chabot, *With the Makers of San Antonio*, 55-56.
7. Chabot. 54.
8. Drumm, *Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico*, 146.
9. Howard R. Lamar, "Foreword," in Drumm, *Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico*, xx, n. 21.
10. The centennial of Ft. Bliss in 1948 sparked renewed interest in the role the Magoffin family played in the early history of the base. The competing newspaper also ran an article on the Magoffins that quotes from John

Russell Bartlett's *Personal narrative of explorations and incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua, connected with the United States and Mexican Boundary Commission, during the years 1850, '51, '52, and '53* (1854) but does not provide any information about Gertrudis. Ollie P. Lansden, "Fort Bliss Social Life Marked from Early Days," *El Paso Times Herald-Post*, 4 November 1948, 7.

11. Handbook of Texas Online, s.v. "MAGOFFIN, JAMES WILEY," http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/MM/fma13.html (accessed February 8, 2005).
12. Santiago Magoffin and Gertrudis Valdez, Petition, Chihuahua, 5 March 1839, Archivos Históricos del Arzobispado de Durango, Mexico, microfilm, Archives and Special Collections Department, New Mexico State University Library, Las Cruces, New Mexico (AHAD)-397, frame (f.) 257, in Marriage investigations of Santiago Magoffin and Gertrudis Valdez, Chihuahua and Durango, 5-19 March 1839.
13. This would mean that Gertrudis was born in 1813, whereas Chabot stated that she was born in 1806. Strickland, citing Chabot, misstates the date as 1808. Strickland, *Six Who Came*, 27; Chabot, *With the Makers of San Antonio*, 55-56.
14. Magoffin gave false testimony that he was a Roman Catholic in 1837 when he was a witness during the premarital investigations of Francisco Hauffen, a professor of medicine and native of Prussia, and María Amada Moulia, a native of the island of Santo Domingo. Marriage investigation of Francisco Hauffen and María Amada Moulia, Chihuahua, 28 October 1837, AHAD-531, f. 253-54.
15. Ibid.
16. Fray Juan José Pérez, Certification, Conchos, 3 March 1839, AHAD-397, f. 256.
17. Santiago Magoffin, Statement, Chihuahua, 5 March 1839, AHAD-397, f. 258.
18. In her statement, Gertrudis' mother's surname is given as Almondarain. A far more common spelling in the Spanish-speaking world is Amondarain. Gertrudis Valdez, Statement, Chihuahua, 5 March 1839, AHAD-397, f. 258.
19. Ibid.
20. Timmons, *James Wiley Magoffin*, 13-21.
21. José Blanco, Statement, Chihuahua, 5 March 1839, AHAD-397, f. 258.
22. Carlos Macrey, Statement, Chihuahua, 5 March 1839, AHAD-397, f. 258-59. The town developed in the early 1800s as "La Villa de San Francisco" is now known by the name St. Francisville.
23. Juan Patton, Statement, Chihuahua, 5 March 1839, AHAD-397, f. 259.
24. Juan José Baca, Report, Chihuahua, 5 March 1839, AHAD-397, f. 259-60.
25. José Tomás Rivera and Juan Rafael Rascón, Dispensations, Durango, 18 March 1839, AHAD-397, f. 260-62.
26. Marriages, El Sagrario, Chihauhua, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), Family History Center, Las Cruces, New Mexico, microfilm, 0162690, 0162692.

27. Baptism of Santiago Magoffin, El Sagrario, Chihuahua, 31 March 1839, LDS 0162667.
28. Baptism of Santiago Agapito Cosme Magoffin Valdez, El Sagrario, Chihuahua, 27 September 1840, LDS 0162667.
29. Baptism of María Gertrudis Petra de Jesús Magoffin Valdez, El Sagrario, Chihuahua, 27 October 1842, LDS 0162667.
30. Handbook of Texas Online, s.v. "MAGOFFIN, JOSEPH," http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/MM/fma14.html (accessed 10 February 2005); and http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/park/magoffin/ (accessed 11 February 2005).
31. Mary Kay Shannon, Site Manager the Magoffin Home State Historic Site, personal communication, 22 February 2005.
32. Marriage of Nicolás Flores and Teresa Valdez, San Antonio, 6 May 1830, San Antonio Cathedral, LDS 0025448.
33. Chabot stated that Gertrudis had a daughter named Anita who married Joe Dwyer. The child was actually named Annette Magoffin. Annette married Joseph Dwyer around 4 September 1862 in San Antonio. Entry for 5 October 1862, Diary of Anita Dwyer Withers, Diary, 1860-1865, electronic edition, http://docsouth.unc.edu/withers/whiters.html (accessed 6 April 2005); and Chabot, *With the Makers of San Antonio*, 56.
34. Timmons, *James Wiley Magoffin*, 29.
35. Ibid.
36. Chabot, *With the Makers of San Antonio*, 56.
37. The copy is torn. Unsigned column, page 2, column 2, *Western Texan* (San Antonio) 19 September 1850, Barker Collection, University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas as Austin. Thanks to Adán Benavides for kindly providing me with a copy of this item.
38. Catholic Encyclopedia, s.v. "Affinity (in Canon Law)," http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/ (accessed 25 February 2005).
39. Catholic Encyclopedia, s.v. "Dispensations," http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/ (accessed 25 February 2005).
40. Ibid.
41. Paul Horgan, *Lamy of Santa Fe: His Life and Times* (New York : Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975), 73.
42. Draft of a supplica on behalf of Jacobus Magofin, Durango, 22 April 1853, AHAD-313, f. 606-607.
43. Ramón Ortiz to Dr. José Antonio Zubiría, El Paso, 11 May 1854, AHAD-315, f. 277-81.
44. Handbook of Texas Online, s.v. "EL PASO, CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF," http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/EE/ice1.html (accessed February 10, 2005).
45. Socorro, Parish registers, 1840-1862, 0025372; San Elizario Marriages, 1845-1956, 25370; and Ysleta, Baptisms, marriages, and burials, 1845-1858, 0025532 LDS.
46. Ciudad Juárez, Marriages, 1804-1857, 1156615 LDS.
47. Handbook of Texas Online, s.v. "MAGOFFIN, JOSEPH."

James Milton Day: Boss, Teacher, Friend

By Lucy Fischer-West

I was Lucy Lara Fischer then, 18 years old, a fresh graduate from Lydia Patterson Institute. I grew up in the *Barrio del Diablo* close to the border, in a house sparse of furniture but full of the books my father had collected during his lifetime. It was a given that I would go to college. When I sought financial aid at Texas Western College, Col. John Evans sent me to the English Department to James Milton Day to interview for a work study job. When James peered at me over his rimless glasses, I was petrified.

He was kind and patient with me on that first day, but didn't ask me too many questions about my skills. Instead, he gave me three yellow legal-sized sheets of paper filled with his nearly illegible, left-handed scribbles and sent me home with the assignment to type them. He'd come to El Paso to take a job teaching literature but I would come to know him more as an historian and a researcher. It took me a while to type it all out on my old manual Olivetti, but I did it. I also went to the Encyclopedia Britannica when I couldn't decipher a date and found a year that didn't look at all like the handwriting, so, figuring that the encyclopedia probably had it right, I typed it in.

The next day, James hired me. Not only could I read his writing, but I turned out to be a researcher too. Never mind that the date he had was the right one and the encyclopedia was wrong. He'd come here after being Texas state archivist so he really knew his dates. Thus began a relationship that spanned thirty-eight years.

In the time I worked for him, he taught me how to file, organize, and hunt for facts. I knew the library inside out and became well-versed in Texas history. Outside the office, he was generous

to a fault with his time and energy. When my 1960 Ford Falcon needed work, he fixed it for me. I learned which tools he needed for what job and became his "swamper" on big repair jobs—like the time my transmission fell out on the corner of Cotton and Texas Streets. There was a time when I knew nearly enough to do my own tune-ups, thanks to him. I certainly knew how to tinker with a quirky solenoid to get my car started when it died, which was often.

James M. Day. Photo courtesy of Mrs. James M. Day.

After my father died and his turn-of-the-century barrister's bookcases needed refinishing before I brought them home, James taught me how to do that too. In my dining room sits my father's desk that James and I took apart piece by piece and rebuilt. I can assure you that it will never fall apart.

I continued to do writing projects with James long after I graduated. My IBM Selectric learned the rhythms of the patterns of his writing. His paragraphs frequently ended with short, concise sentences. When we indexed *Mules, Mines, & Me in Mexico, 1895-1932*, we worked through thousands of slips of paper scattered over a mammoth table in Worrell Hall, and made up categories that had us in hysterics. For scholarship's sake, we took out the entry labeled "exploding mules" but the temptation was great to leave it in.

When he got tired of wrestling with the editing changes requested for *Captain Clint Peoples: Texas Ranger*, he turned over the project for me to finish. Such was James' faith in what he had taught me. Unlike the college students who knew him only in the classroom, I was more fortunate. From researching and editing to mechanics and furniture refinishing, the knowledge James shared took a lifetime to impart and will forever stay with me.

Sara's First Dinner Party

or "Ah, to be young again!"

By Frank G. McKnight

Most everyone knows that my wife, Sara is a "party animal" —always has been—she would rather give a party than almost anything else. I'd like to tell about the first party she gave after we were married on December 26, 1946. We returned from our honeymoon in New Orleans to live in a four-room adobe house on one of Charlie Deerman's farms a few miles west of Canutillo. The accommodations included a nice chicken yard and hen house.

Sara soon learned that a farm family was moving and that there was a chicken flock for sale at the price of one dollar per bird. She wanted to go into the egg business and purchased twenty hens and two roosters. She was soon driving to El Paso three or four times a week to sell eggs to our parents and friends.

At that time, Charlie Deerman was paying me the princely wage of $35 per week. We could afford to belong to the El Paso Country Club where Sara was taking golf lessons once a week. Incidentally the dues were $17.00 a month in 1947.

A few weeks into the egg business, Sara remarked that the roosters were very mean to the hens and asked me if they were necessary to have eggs. You understand that in the spring of 1946 Sara had obtained a bachelor of arts degree from Hollins College in Virginia, having majored in biology. I told her the roosters were not necessary for eggs but were necessary if she wanted chicks. She determined that she wanted the roosters eliminated.

Pam Lowery and Eddie Feuille were engaged to be married in the spring and Sara decided that a party for them could well include the roosters. Our house had a large screened porch at the

front which would accommodate a fair number of people. Since the weather was still cold, I covered the screen with tarpaulins and borrowed two folding tables and twenty chairs from my Mom.

A couple of days before the party, Sara suggested that I kill the roosters. I did so early in the morning and took them to the kitchen. I asked if Sara could handle them from that point on. Her "Yes" was a bit weak and it matched the very funny look in her eye. Deerman's foreman picked me up and off we went to work about 7:00 a.m.

A couple of hours later we were changing fields and I asked the foreman if it would be OK to stop by my house to see if Sara needed any help. She had successfully plucked the roosters and was holding one of them by newspaper wrapped feet and trying to dress him with a wooden spoon. Her frustration was indicted by the tears rolling down her cheeks. I took over, chopped the scaly feet off and dressed both birds. Sara allowed that she could do the rest.

Sara decided on a menu of chicken spaghetti, green salad, and hot buttered rolls. *Fannie Farmer's Cookbook* suggested sliced chicken. Sara thought sliced rooster would be a suitable substitute, not realizing that the birds had to be boiled for hours before they were tender enough to be sliced. By that time, the meat had fallen off the bones and was nothing but strings.

In order to economize with the party expenses, we decided to serve punch spiked with Juárez rum, which was then selling for about $1.25 a quart. In addition to Pam and Eddie, our party was also attended by Betty and Bob Hoover, Barbara Jean and Joe Tooley, Nancy and Buddy Roderick, Betty and Ben Mason, Sugar Goodman and Mary Austin and Bill Hooten. During the cocktail hour, I noticed that two of the men made a few trips to their cars —I guessed that they made those trips in order to imbibe some thing a little better than our rum punch. The party was a great success but it should be noted that one could hardly tell the difference between the chicken and spaghetti.

That they remained our friends is a tribute to the fortitude of the young set in El Paso in the forties.

Food Between the Waters

By Lucy Fischer-West

Whatever time of the day it was, whether you were walking, skipping, or rollerskating up and down my street in El Paso in the mid-1950s and 1960s, the aromas wafting out of most homes were unmistakably Mexican. Freshly rinsed rice hitting hot skillets sizzled; *comino*- and *cilantro*-seasoned *caldo de res* was a weekly staple; *menudo* with its dried oregano and freshly chopped onions was the Saturday or Sunday special; and when you smelled *caldo de pollo* you knew someone was sick. There was a *molino de nixtamal* within walking distance if you had a craving to make *gorditas* or your own *tortillas de maíz*. You got the *masa* to make *tamales* for Christmas from the same place. It was in my mother's kitchen in that small adobe home that I learned to cook—there where she passed down to me her knowledge of foods and herbs; there she fed my body and nurtured my soul.

The house I grew up in sits on a former riverbed. Paisano Drive, the main thoroughfare to go downtown, and the site of the river's old channel, was the first street beyond ours, the last street before the fence separating El Paso from Juárez. The Rio Grande had changed course several times over the years. Those occurrences flooded the poorest parts of the city, particularly the Segundo Barrio, and wreaked havoc with international boundaries. In time, a concrete channel contained the Rio Grande, and the Chamizal Treaty resolved the issue of where the border lay. A park with rolling hills of grass came to commemorate the peaceful settlement, but most of the time I lived in that house, the desert beyond the fence was our only vista. The Franklin Canal behind our house carried the river's water from the base of Mount Cristo

Rey down the valley to feed the farmers' cotton and chili crops. The fertile riverbed we lived on explains why everything my mother planted grew. From the trees beside the house she picked peaches, apricots, plums, and apples. All of these had sprouted from seeds or pits she had nonchalantly tossed out. Against the wall of the canal she built a raised bed to grow vegetables. What time she didn't spend on the garden, she spent inside, mostly in the kitchen because she loved to cook.

The kitchen was about eight feet square and on the east side of the house. Outside, between it and the chain link fence, there was just enough space to walk sideways while holding your breath. One day when I came home from school she was standing inside the sink, with chalk and yardstick in hand, marking an outline on the wall where she intended to put a window. There would be nothing to see from this window save the neighbor's back screen door. Even so, my mother wanted light in the room where she spent so much time. The house may not have been very big, and it lacked many creature comforts, but it was solid, built in the early 1930s. Keeping her property in Juárez in rentable condition had taught her a lot about home repairs, but when it came to knocking a sizable hole in an outer wall, I had to wonder whether she really knew what she was doing. She did. She was never one to wait for things to be done for her, and she had the guts to attempt practically anything that needed doing around the house. After outlining the space, she got a chisel and a hammer and dug deeper and deeper, following the adobe lines. Someone with more strength would have probably taken a crowbar or sledgehammer and saved some time, but she knew what she was capable of doing. From time to time, she'd use a small pick, like one that miners use. As she took out chunks, she put them on the counter for me to carry out to the yard when I got home. Somewhere along the line, an itinerant worker happened by and she hired him to help her frame the hole with two-by-fours and put in a casement window. That is how there came to be light in our kitchen.

My father took no interest in home projects, but he was accustomed to my mother's. When he bought the house, its kitchen had no cabinets. My mother bought them, one at a time, from the Union Furniture store downtown. They were metal, plain white, and heavy. She chiseled into the adobe and secured a two-by-four at the height she wanted to hang them and did it, once again, with

whatever help happened by. Once they were securely hung, she and I took a long walk to the neighborhood Winn's about a mile and a half away, where I got to select the decals to dress them up. She let me place the decals wherever I thought they should go. Such a smart woman my mother was, in so many ways. I was invested in all her projects, so proud when we finished one, always looking forward to the next.

After she got through paying for the cabinets, she bought a kitchen table, red and gray, with a faux marble Formica top and chrome frame all around. The matching red chairs had a marble design on their vinyl seats. That table and a freestanding cabinet were her work spaces. The purchase of the gas stove came next, one with an oven on top and storage on the bottom. That stove, kept painstakingly clean, was a source of pride for her. My mother knew exactly how it was put together, took it apart on a regular basis, and cleaned every bit of it until it shone. Eventually she replaced the sink, since she had put in a few dents and knocked out a few chips when she opened up the wall above it.

Resurrecting the tastes, sounds, sights, smells, and feel of my mother's kitchen doesn't take much effort. The small kitchen was devoid of many gadgets to help her cook, but her solid metal, heavy-ribbed, glass-container Oster blender got daily use. It whizzed through the fresh tomatoes and garlic that were the basis for so much of what she cooked. She chopped onions expertly and without tears, frequently singing or whistling as she worked. The memories of my mother's kitchen date back half a century and are a vivid, continuing source of pleasure for me. The aroma of the garlic, the sizzle of a pureed tomato mixture hitting the hot cast-iron skillet in which she had browned her rice—these, happily, I can replicate in my own kitchen, whose drawers hold a gadget for every task imaginable.

Three times a day we sat down together for meals. Most of the time she didn't set the table but just casually flung the utensils on it. My father often said that if he ever opened up a restaurant, he would love for her to cook, but her waitressing skills left a lot to be desired. He was meticulous about his eating habits; my mother was just the opposite. She would scoop up food with her hot—often burnt crisp—tortillas and rarely used utensils except for soups. She rarely finished a meal without finding an excuse to lick her fingers.

My first recollection of cooking is of being lifted onto a step stool by my mother so that I was waist high to the stove top. There sat a *comal*, a flat, round, cast-iron griddle with a handle, always ready to heat *tortillas* for at least two of the three meals. On days when she was not too harried, those *tortillas* did not come out of a plastic bag from the corner grocery store, but rather were hand-patted from lime-soaked, finely ground *nixtamal*. I would get a child-sized ball of *masa* to pat out my own less-than perfect *tortillas de maíz*. Occasionally, my mother would use either a wooden or cast aluminum tortilla press lined with wax paper to speed up the corn tortilla-making process. I had a smaller version of hers.

It goes without saying that our mainstay foods were Mexican. I've eaten corn tortillas since my four front teeth came together to bite into them. There is something ineffably elemental about the aroma of a freshly made *tortilla de maíz* browning on cast iron. That aroma of the earth's corn cooking on the fiery hot metal evokes memories of a treasured childhood in the kitchen working beside my mother. For her flour tortillas, she would use a red-handled rolling pin that she found at the old *Mercado Cuauhtémoc* across the border in Juárez. I had a child-sized rolling pin with which to turn my portion of flour dough into a lopsided *tortilla de harina*. Proudly I watched over our tortillas, mashing down both my mother's and mine when they puffed up. I developed a healthy respect for the hot *comal* on which I placed my creations, both corn and flour.

If there is another aroma that takes me instantly to the kitchen on the riverbed, it is pinto beans simmering in a clay pot. My mother's *olla de barro*, which I still have, has a reddish-brown glaze, with designs painted in cream and dark green. I wouldn't know how to cook beans in anything else. That John liked her *frijoles de la olla*, beans straight out of the pot, was probably one of the reasons that she came to like him as fast as she did, even though she objected strongly to our marriage. I never could understand why he would want to put salt pork or a chunk of bacon in the beans, except that it was a tradition in his Southern family. My mother's beans never had anything except a good amount of garlic and salt. They were a staple of our diet, along with Mexican rice garnished with canned carrot cubes and peas.

Not all of her dishes were so simple. On her stove, over an open burner, my mother toasted *chiles verdes*, then wrapped them in a

cool, moist cotton towel. At the table she would peel and de-seed them, then fill them with cheese or ground meat. With her bent-tined wooden-handled fork and shallow bowl, she produced a rhythmic, musical clinking that turned two egg whites into a mountain of froth. After adding the egg yolks, she dipped the flour-dredged chilies in the fluffy eggs and fried them. In a process that seemed like magic to me, she transformed those skin-scorched wrinkled green chilies into plump, flavorful *chiles rellenos*. Her sauce was simple: garlic, sliced onion, and pureed, simmered fresh tomatoes, which she drizzled on top. Invariably, my fair-skinned German father would get the hottest one on the plate, and even though his ears would turn bright red and his forehead would break out in perspiration, he wouldn't trade his *chile relleno* for another that might be milder. Even today, my efforts with the wooden-handled fork are a dismal failure, the egg whites rising for an instant and then going limp in the bowl. Only in my mother's hand was that fork ever magic.

We crossed from one of the river's banks to the other to get the food to prepare in my mother's kitchen. It was a good thing that we lived in a neighborhood where the basics were available within walking distance, because my mother never learned to drive. But with her roots so strongly embedded in Juárez across the border, and my grandmother still in residence there, all the vegetables we used, and a lot of canned goods, beef, fish, and cheese, as well as herbs, medicinal and culinary, we brought across week after week. We carried groceries first in sturdy hand-woven dyed hemp bags and later, with the advent of plastic, in bright plaid mesh bags. The rituals connected with our finding the *materias primas* for food preparation were an adventure. It was a hunting and gathering expedition.

The walking required in our Saturday trips totaled at least four miles. We started at the far end of downtown, at the *Mercado Cuauhtémoc* beside the *Misión de Guadalupe*, where we shopped for vegetables and herbs. The endless array of produce, sold by merchants of every age, was a palette of rich reds, varying yellows and oranges, and multiple shades of green. The merchants' calls in the market were as colorful: "*Marchantita, marchantita, venga. Aqui tengo ricos tomates, aguacates, calabacitas. Andele, pruebe este melon jugocito y dulcecito. Andele, llevese estas tortillitas recien hechecitas.*" It will lose something in translation, but it goes something like this: "Lady, Lady, here. I have delicious to-

matoes, avocados, zucchini. Come, taste this juicy, sweet cantaloupe. Take some of these freshly patted tortillas." For cooking, she bought *hojas de laurel*, *orégano*, *canela entera*, and *cominos*—bay leaves, oregano, cinnamon, and cumin—a few kilograms at a time, in *alcatraces*, small squares of newspaper shaped into cones and folded at the top. We always got chamomile and spearmint to keep on hand for sleeplessness or stomachaches. And because my mother was as much a nurturer of the soul as the body, she bought an occasional jasmine plant, which she would carefully take out of the coffee can it was planted in with just enough soil to protect the roots, cradle it in a small plastic bag or a newspaper *alcatraz*, and tuck it carefully in her purse, or sometimes even her bosom, to smuggle across the border. These plants would flourish under her care, and the aroma of jasmine blossoms mingled with cooking food to fill our small house.

After I started driving, she got more brazen with her smuggling. I thought for sure I was going to have my car confiscated when she bought a canary to bring home one summer. Right before we got to the inspection station, she tucked the paper bag under the seat. The claustrophobic bird poked through one of the air holes, got loose, and the next thing I knew, I felt his feathers on my feet. When the customs official asked what we were bringing across, I recited the litany—tomatoes, onions, cheese, bananas, papaya, avocados without the pits. I guess I must have looked honest, although I was terrified. Fortunately the bird had enough sense to sit still and not go flying into the inspector's face. My heart skipped a few beats during that escapade, and we never tried anything that bold again.

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Our load from the *Mercado Cuauhtémoc* in hand, we trudged another three-quarters of a mile downhill to La Florida, a Chinese-owned grocery store and butcher shop where we bought beef. The store was a long corridor, with the butchers' area in the back. The area was small, with three chopping blocks and an ample supply

of sharp knives in several sizes to cut through the quarters of beef hanging from well-worn hooks. Chava, the butcher, was quite fond of my mother. As a matter of fact, everyone she ever encountered on our shopping outings developed a fondness for her. Anyway, she would ask Chava for a kilo of this or that and he would raise an eyebrow ever so subtly to tell her whether or not she should stick to her order, suggesting other cuts that were fresher. Subtlety was called for, because from the end of the corridor, perched on a tall stool, the owner kept a watchful eye on all the goings-on. Whatever she bought in the way of canned goods and sugar was always rewarded with a *pilón,* a little something extra thrown in for regular customers. Another perk from the store owner was the yearly calendar at Epiphany, one with all the saints' days indicated, and illustrated with a scantily dressed Aztec maiden about to be sacrificed, or perhaps rescued, by a handsome, muscular warrior.

If we were out of cheese, it took another mile to get to the only one she would use, at the *Mercado Juárez.* For enchiladas and chiles rellenos, we bought cheese made by the German Mennonite community near Casas Grandes, Chihuahua. For the sheer delicious pleasure of it, we bought *azaderos,* thin hand-swirled tortilla-shaped cheese, brought from Villa Ahumada, a small town 180 kilometers from Juárez. The *azaderos* from Villa Ahumada have a texture unlike any other and make mouth-watering quesadillas. Sometimes not all of them made it home. To give us energy for the return journey, we often slapped one on a fresh hot tortilla with a little salt we carried with us and part of a scooped-out avocado. Throughout my childhood, I do not remember ever getting anything in El Paso that we could purchase in Juárez. Beyond saving her money, the trips enabled my mother to immerse me in the world in which she had grown up and the culture she held so dear.

Once home, my mother would slice onions and toss them into a hot cast-iron skillet. While they browned, she would season thin slices of filet, which she cooked just long enough to leave them pink and juicy. Removing the meat and onions, she laid in fresh tortillas to soak up the juice. She called this dish *carne aventada*—tossed meat—and served it with some of the avocados and fresh jalapeño chilies we had bought at the market. It is still one of my favorite meals, although I don't alternate a bite of raw jalapeño with a bite of a beef-filled tortilla as she did.

The strong aroma of *caldo de pollo*—chicken soup—wafting out of any house on our block was a strong indicator that someone

was sick. For her *caldo*, my mother boiled the chicken with garlic cloves, onion, and bay leaves, skimming it as necessary. When the chicken was tender, she added carrots, potatoes, zucchini, cabbage, and corn, usually in that order, the hardest vegetables first. Adding fresh cilantro at the end gave the *caldo de pollo* a little color and surely speeded up recovery. Smelling *caldo de pollo* coming from a neighbor's house was a signal to check to see who was ailing. Even on our limited income, my mother would bake something, then put it in a basket lined with a clean, well-ironed—usually hand-embroidered—cup towel and send me to deliver it while it was still warm. Sometimes she came along to see if she could offer any assistance to the family. Baskets, as well as pots and pans, circulated up and down our block, were never returned empty, and gave all the women who were lucky enough to stay home with their children ample opportunities to visit.

In our predominantly Roman Catholic neighborhood, you knew when it was Friday because households smelled of fish. And if you somehow missed seeing foreheads marked with crosses from Ash Wednesday, the forty days of mostly meatless foods left no doubt that it was the Lenten season. Even though our household was half Baptist and half Unitarian, the kitchen was all Mexican Roman Catholic. On the shopping trips to Juárez we added a stop at the fish market, buying whole fish when my mother's pocketbook allowed, or fish heads for soup when it did not. At either market we bought *chacales*, cracked corn to cook with onions, garlic and chile colorado, and sprinkled with a little cheese; *lentejas*, lentils that my mother would turn into a very soupy soup and serve with chopped raw onions, fresh cilantro, and diced hard-boiled eggs; and *camarones secos*—dried shrimp—which she would combine with whipped eggs and a bit of flour to make *tortitas de camarones con tomate*—shrimp patties with tomato sauce. The Friday fish days were topped off with *capirotada*, Mexican bread pudding of as many variations as there are cooks. My mother's had *francesitos*—French rolls—toasted, then layered and drenched with *almibar de piloncillo*—syrup made from dark brown sugar that came in solid cones and had to be wrapped in a towel and hit with a hammer to break it up before being melted over a low flame—each layer sprinkled with whatever nuts she had in the house, plus raisins, cheese, sometimes coconut, and topped with *grajeas*—colored sugar sprinkles for the final garnish. Seasoned

with cinnamon and cloves, melding with the brown sugar and the other ingredients, capirotada baking in the oven was as much a treat to smell as it was to eat.

For me, the Lenten season did not mean being deprived of meat, but rather being treated to foods not prepared the rest of the year. Typically the word *tamalada* evokes the happy image of women who come together to share in the making of tamales for big family gatherings at either Christmas or New Years. As the only child of a mother whose sisters did not like the kitchen, the *tamaladas* I remember were not gatherings filled with raucous laughter and bustling, but quiet, intensive collaborations with my mother. Instead of one joyous day of tasks split among many, it was two or three days of chores divided between just the two of us.

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It started with soaking the corn shucks and then cleaning them, which was my responsibility even when I was too small to reach the sink without a step stool. My mother cooked the pork, shredded it, and made the chili the day before the assembly; while it was cooking, she washed the pots that had grown dusty from lack of use since the year before, laundered the towels that she was to spread over the tamales to aid in the steaming process, and laid out all her utensils in the manner of a surgeon preparing for an operation.

The day before cooking day, usually several days before Christmas, we would either walk a mile or two to the neighborhood *molino de nixtamal* or take the bus downtown and at the same time shop for other groceries needed, mostly at the Canton Grocery Store, which would deliver whatever we bought. The *molino* downtown had a gleaming light blue chrome grinder. It was operated by a tiny woman who, even in her youth, had difficulty transporting the buckets of lime-soaked corn from the back room to the grinder. She emptied the buckets, flipped the switch, and knelt at the end of the chute, waiting to test the coarseness and moisture of the *masa*. She would make any adjustments necessary, finish

grinding, wrap the twenty or thirty pounds of masa in butcher paper, and send us on our way with a *pilón* of finely ground *masa* for making *champurrado*, a corn and chocolate hot drink seasoned with stick cinnamon and cloves that accompanied the meal.

Once home, we divided the *masa* into manageable piles, added Snow Cap lard, seasonings, and baking powder, then kneaded it and kneaded it until it was fluffy enough and light enough that a drop of *masa* plunked in a glass of water came floating to the top. With everything arranged efficiently, we would take a moist, clean corn shuck, spread a thin layer of masa on it, put a generous dollop of prepared meat in the center, fold the sides in toward the center, fold the tail in the opposite direction of the seam, and arrange the *tamales* around a cone in a dark blue speckled enamel canning pot. After filling the pot, my mother would cover the *tamales* with several clean towels and pour a liter of boiling water in the pot, just enough to steam them. In about an hour, the *tamales* were ready to eat; some were kept on hand for holiday visitors. Mr. and Mrs. White two doors down always got a dozen.

After Johnny came into our family, he took part in all of the *tamal*-making rituals, including putting chili or *masa* on each other's noses when we spread it on the countless shucks. Whatever *tamales* didn't get eaten over the holidays were frozen for future meals. One of the hardest things to do after my mother died was to eat the Ziploc bag full of the last *tamales* she and Johnny and I had made together. Over the years that we all cooked together, Johnny developed a love for the kitchen, a fine-tuned sense of taste, and a respect for the rituals connected to our meal preparation.

Some of the day-to-day dishes my mother cooked were not what you would call epicurean cuisine, but it was all comfort food. For breakfast she often cooked oatmeal, and purposely let it stick to the pan to scorch for me. I have yet to find a pan that will burn oatmeal (yes! truly burn—so delicious, as long as you don't scrape too much off the bottom) to my satisfaction. When she didn't do that, she made *huevos con tortillitas*—small squares of *tortilla* fried until crisp, with an egg or two scrambled into it, seasoned with salsa. On Sundays we usually had bacon with Aunt Jemima pancakes smothered in dark Karo syrup, or *huevos con chorizo*. When I came home from school for lunch, we had *fideo, sopa de estrellitas*, or some other kind of soup. For supper it was a piece of beef, pork, chicken, or fish, and the two vegetables, one green, one yellow, as prescribed by the food pyramid of the era. A lot of

the vegetables came from cans; after all, we could not carry enough on Saturday to last the whole week. For variety she would sauté slivered almonds in with the green beans, or throw in a scrambled egg. She made elbow macaroni with ketchup or enhanced a couple of cans of Campbell's Pork & Beans with sliced wieners; our biscuits always popped out of cans. Her desserts consisted of Jell-O with whatever kind of canned fruit she had in the pantry, using their juice instead of water to make the gelatin. If she was too busy to make dessert, Libby's canned fruit cocktail in a little Pyrex bowl would suffice.

Two men infiltrated my mother's Mexican kitchen. One lived in the house; the other one merely visited from time to time, peddling his wares. My father was easily pleased with everything my mother cooked, and although he loved her Mexican food, she often tried her hand at some of the German dishes he liked. There were always potatoes fixed in some manner or another for him, usually to go with pork, his favorite meat. When she could find pig's knuckles at the nearby Big 8, he considered it a delicacy, particularly if she had the sauerkraut to go with them. Those bones glistened when he got through with them, but he never picked them up with his hands. Given a choice of sauces for his mashed potatoes, he would pick not a gravy made from the drippings in the meat pot, but the same sautéed onion and fresh tomato sauce my mother fixed for the *chiles rellenos* that she cooked regularly. Up until the day he died, when my mother put a plate of food on the table before him, my father kissed her hands.

The other man was Morton Kolleeny. He worked for the Watkins Company, which has been in existence since 1868. In my child's eye I can still see him—tall with broad shoulders, possessing an abundance of dark brown hair, and wearing horn-rimmed glasses that set off his dark eyes. I cannot tell you how often he came to the neighborhood, but I do remember that not many people on the block encouraged him to visit regularly, either because the women in other kitchens were less adventurous than my mother or because money was more scarce than at our house. Like the rural peddler in a wagon laden with treasures, he came with a car full of everything a well-equipped pantry could ever hope for —spices, extracts, prepared mixes for lemon meringue pie and chocolate and banana pudding. And cookbooks.

In my mother's kitchen there were only two cookbooks: the *Watkins Cookbook* and the *Watkins Salad Book*, purchased for

$2.00 and $1.50 respectively, sometime in the late 1950s. Published in 1948 and 1946, and in my possession still, their pages are spotted and splattered, as all well-loved cookbooks should be. In those cookbooks she found ideas for all the potluck suppers we attended at *Primera Iglesia Bautista Mexicana*. My signature cookie is a variation of a recipe found in the Watkins Cookbook. To be historically accurate, it should be made with Watkins vanilla extract, which had a trial mark on the back of the bottle that indicated that if you were displeased with the flavor by the time you got it to that point of emptiness, Watkins would refund your money. Watkins still makes great vanilla, but they no longer adhere to their trial-mark guarantee.

Morton Kolleeny's intrusion into my mother's Mexican kitchen was a mixed blessing. To be sure, it lent greater variety to her cooking, but her thrown-together meals were not only tastier than those with artificial flavors and ready-made mixes but seemed to emanate from her hands in the same way my grandmother's meals and her grandmother's before hers did. Time spent in my mother's kitchen instilled in me a love for cooking. When I miss my mother most, I cook *huevos con tortillitas*. A fresh *azadero* melted between two fresh *tortillas* with a little *aguacate* on the side is a feast for my palate as well as my memory. I share meals, both simple and elaborate with friends and strangers in my house, just as my mother did in our kitchen between the waters of the Rio Grande.

"Food Between the Waters" is one chapter in the memoir *Child of Many Rivers: Journeys to and from the Rio Grande* to be released in July 2005. Reprinted by permission from Texas Tech University Press, 800-832-4042.

LUCY FISCHER-WEST was born in the Catskill Mountains, but was raised in El Paso, the only child of a Mexican mother and a German father whose paths crossed in a Juárez bullring in 1946. Her pieces have appeared in *Border Senses*, in the latest two publications of the Texas Folklore Society, and in Writer's AudioShop *The Best of Texas Folklore*. In her years of freelance manuscript preparation and editing, she worked with C.L. Sonnichsen and James M. Day, both of whom encouraged her to find her voice and tell her stories.

Emigrated to Another Star

Sometime in 1995, I learned that James Day was to become editor of *Password.* Having retired from a long career in education, I was anxious to try something new. I knew Dr. Day through the El Paso Corral of the Westerners and had been impressed with the talks he gave for which he seemed never to need notes.

I volunteered to help. My historical qualifications were not too impressive, but he accepted my offer quickly when he learned that I could type, had a few computer skills, and had deciphered the writing of students for many years. And thereby began the acquisition of knowledge for my "new career."

I soon received a phone call which told me that James was in the hospital and that he wanted to see me. His words were ominous—"Well, you wanted to learn. You will------- I'm out of it for a while-------it's all yours for this issue." By the time I finished typing, James was at home.

After reviewing the material, he sent me back to my computer many times to make changes. I made change after change until he would approve the material. My education had been greatly enhanced by the time he was satisfied.

From then on I heard a lot of "You know better than that," "Is that what you learned?" "Take it back and do it again," "It's passable, but I'm sure that you can do better."

He was a demanding teacher, a good teacher—his lessons have stayed with me.

He was the resource on which I could depend.

His passing leaves a big hollow in my life.

Farewell—associate, friend, teacher, mentor.

Marilyn Gross

No Housing Available

By Dorothy N. Elder

My family first came to El Paso in 1941 via the United States Army. We came from Fort Clark, Texas, where my Father had been stationed for fourteen years in the 5th Cavalry. It was an early frontier fort which was home to the 5th Cavalry for twenty-one years. In 1941 the 5th was transferred to Fort Bliss. And, to our chagrin, there was no housing available on post. We found housing in a red brick house at 2208 Magoffin, which Mother said was "military housing."

Mother enrolled me in San Jacinto School. I found I was the only child in my class who did not speak Spanish. I was an outcast. Not only would the children not play with me, they would not sit with me at lunch and I had to eat lunch alone! I went home crying that day and told Mother I would not go back because no one liked me. Apparently, some of the other military kids had similar experiences because when Mother called Fort Bliss, she was told that they were working on a plan to have us kids bused to a school nearer Fort Bliss that was more "culturally balanced." However, it "would take some time to arrange."

A few days later, as my brothers and I were playing outside our apartment, Miss Swan, the principal of Crockett School drove by. When she saw children playing outside on a school day, she stopped and knocked on our door. She asked Mother, "Why aren't these children in school?" Mother explained the situation. Miss Swan said, "No need to wait for Fort Bliss, put these children on the street car and send them to me at Crockett." The next day that is just what my Mother did.

During 1941 and 1942 we rode the street car to Crockett and I remember how much fun it was. In 1943 housing became available for my family on post and we moved to Fort Bliss, quarters

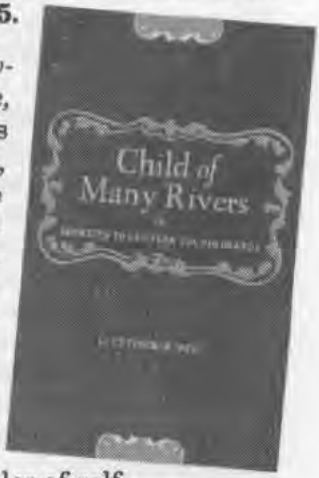
number 843. We still attended Crockett but this time we went to Crockett on a bus supplied by Fort Bliss.

After my sister was born in September 1943, we left El Paso and did not return until after the war in 1946, again to find no housing available, but that is another story.

Errata: *On page 35 of volume 50, No. 1, Spring 2005, the program coordinator is named as Mr. Shipman. It should have read Mrs. Shipman.*

Book Reviews

CHILD OF MANY RIVERS: JOURNEYS TO AND FROM THE RIO GRANDE by Lucy Fischer-West. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2005. Hardcover, $21.95.



Lucy Fischer-West's *Child of Many Rivers: Journeys to and from the Rio Grande,* adds to the growing body of literary voices emerging from the border region of El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua. The uniqueness of Fischer-West's voice is found in her ability to represent the Rio Grande as a source that unites people rather than as a divide that separates two nations. Her story celebrates the rich complexity a bicultural, bilingual, and in her case, international life offers. While one can easily place *Child of Many Rivers* within the genre of border memoirs, Fischer-West's tales of self-discovery rejects the confinements of any one literary boundary. The literary elements of memoir, travelogue, history, and folklore come together to pave the joumey from a sheltered childhood in El Paso's *Barrio del Diablo* to a woman's emotional and spiritual awakening by the sacred river Ganges of India.

From my perspective as a professor of Chicana/o literature and Mexican-American folklore whose focus is primarily on women's voices, I find the central point of the river, rather than the border, to be the most quintessential contribution *Child of Many Rivers* offers its readers. The rivers carry the substance that for Fischer-West connects histories, memories, and people who in turn define her ever-flowing sense of self. The opening sentences of the prologue beautifully draw such connections: "I grew up believing I was a child of this river, the Rio Grande, *el Rio Bravo*, the bold, wild, restless. Its nature complemented my own" (1). River imagery weaves in and out through the seven chapters following the prologue. From Germany's river Elbe to India's sacred river Ganges, water's symbolic and actual nurturing nature speaks to the power of the human spirit to transcend borders of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, and language. A river's vibrant, turbulent or serene

course and the people and places associated with it come to life not only by Fischer-West's wonderful narrative, but also with the pictures included in each chapter. They offer a visual enhancement to how *Child of Many Rivers* honors the events and people who have challenged and enriched the narrator's life.

Numerous important women's border memoirs like Norma Cantú's *Canícula,* Pat Mora's *House of Houses,* Gloria Lopez-Stafford's *A Place in El Paso,* Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderland/La Frontera* explore the implications of living at the cultural, social, and economic crossroads formed by a border life. These books draw attention to the very concept of the border and the love-hate relationship this existence can often create. Without dismissing the painful and conflicting relationships many people do experience living on the border as candidly depicted in the above-mentioned books, Fischer-West's rivers flow, change direction, make connections and bring people together.

I am not suggesting that Fischer-West experiences no moments of tremendous pain. Yet the source of such pain is not caused by international politics but by the conflicts of human emotions. Two particular moments come to mind. One is at the end of chapter two, "Barefoot in the *Conchos,*" the other is in chapter six, "Friends and Strangers by the River Clyde." The first one shows a daughter feeling her mother's last rays of warmth in her hands before the final Winter comes:

> Before we could pick her up she lost consciousness, and I had to decide whether or not to have her connected to a respirator. On the way out the door I grabbed the tape she often played of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons.* To have connected her to any machine would have gone against what promises I had made to her. John, Johnny and I held her and let the tape run until she drew her last breath and Winter came to an end. (65)

The second moment comes after describing a head-on collision while traveling with her husband and son on a winding Scottish road. The severity of the accident was such that both husband, John, and son Johnny, had to be hospitalized for several weeks in different hospitals, one specializing in children.

> When the sun set and darkness overtook me on my walks alone back and forth between the hospitals, sometimes the River Clyde became taunting. I wondered why I had ever wanted to come to Scotland. This river was anything but life giving. When black clouds hung especially low and the icy rain was especially numbing, I im-

> agined the Clyde swallowing me whole, sparing me from hospitals and pain and problems yet to solve. So focused was I on taking care of John and Johnny that I never had the energy or time to shed tears. (119)

This passage facilitates a critical feminist discussion on the social role of a wife and mother as caretaker of others, often at the cost of the self.

Child of Many Rivers falls neither into the trope of victimization nor romanticization and idealism of a woman's life experiences. The first four chapters introduce Fischer-West's parents and her formative years growing in El Paso and Ciudad Juárez. The difference between her parents, a "peaceful philosopher" father "content in his own world" and "a fiery mover and shaker" mother "always wanting to make life better. . . " (47), allows her to approach life with a spirited pragmatic idealism. The last three chapters reflect Fischer-West's own critical reflection on the meaning of the events that took place in the formative years of her life. Careful analyses from these three chapters bring to the forefront issues of spirituality, the cosmos, and of the significance of learning to seize the moment—a concept that in the Western world we are slow to comprehend.

Child of Many Rivers goes beyond a self-indulgent exploration of Fischer-West's own life. In it, she offers her readers a historical glimpse that spans from 1891 to the present, that travels from Germany, to Mexico, to the United States, to Scotland, to France, to India, and back to El Paso, Texas. The Mexican Revolution, World War II and the Great Depression are presented not as historical facts but touch on the effects those events had on simple ordinary people: a grandfather, a mother, a father. In it we see how El Paso/Ciudad Juárez border life has changed, in terms of immigration politics, schooling, shopping, and the negotiating of family ties on both sides of the border.

The interconnections of events and people that shape Fischer-West's life open the door for readers to embark on a self-reflective journey of our own history, memory, and sense of self, thus embracing our uniqueness and the wonder that is life. Many of us might not have the opportunity to fly over Mt. Everest or meet a spiritual being as was Mother Teresa, two of Fischer-West's life experiences. We can, however, apply the lessons she learned from these events: to hold on, as she says, to "the joyful and purely restorative powers of wonder," (173) and to live life as Mother Teresa did, doing "ordinary things with extraordinary love." (170).

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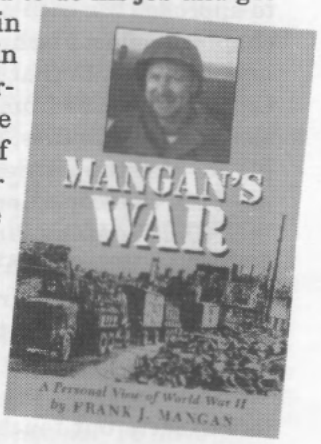
MANGAN'S WAR: A PERSONAL VIEW OF WORLD WAR II, by Frank J. Mangan. El Paso: Mangan Books, 2003. 194 pages, 27 photographs and 8 illustrations.

Frank J. Mangan, a native of El Paso, is a publisher and CEO of Mangan Books of El Paso. Mangan has written five other books, including *El Paso in Pictures, Bordertown, Bordertown Revisited, The Pipeliners,* and *Ruidoso Country.* These books are all primarily of local interest. His latest book, however, is of general interest anywhere in the United States, and probably in England, France and Germany as well. Anyone with an interest in World War II, especially in the lives and experiences of the "average GI" will find this book entertaining and informative. This is not the story of a great military leader or an intrepid hero. It is the story of an ordinary guy who simply wanted to do his job and get home as soon as possible, while remaining in one piece. As Mangan himself explains in his introduction, *Mangan's War* is not a thoroughly researched study of the events of the war, nor is it a study of the vicissitudes of military life in time of war. *Mangan's War* is simply the memoirs of a young man whose plans and ambitions were interrupted by the most destructive war in history. If there is a point to the author's story, it is simply that the war was a universally miserable experience, occasional pleasant encounters notwithstanding.



There are twenty-seven chapters in this book, none of which exceeds ten pages in length. Each chapter relates to a single experience in the war. For example, chapter 2 deals with the community of Zephyrhills and its relationship to the military personnel stationed at the air base there while chapter 3 deals with Mangan's difficulties crossing the North Atlantic on the Stirling Castle, a passenger ship that had been converted to carry troops. Each chapter is fast paced, uncomplicated, and entertaining, making the book an easy read. The short chapters provide a plethora of good stopping places for those who like to read during breaks, on coffee breaks, or in other environments where interruptions are likely to be plentiful.

This book relates the experiences of a "rear-echelon" soldier as he remembers them some sixty-plus years later. Mangan located the letters that he wrote home during the war, saved for him by his mother, and decided to try to put them together in a way

that tells his story. When he entered the service, the army sent Mangan to combat photography school where he learned the trade. When he graduated from photography school he reported to his first station in Zephyrhills, Florida. There he joined the 10th Fighter Squadron, then flying P-40 fighters. The squadron had no need for photographers so Mangan became an armorer, receiving on-the-job training from other members of the squadron. Later, when his squadron went to England, where it received P-47 Thunderbolt fighter aircraft, and later France and Germany, Mangan served double duty as both an armorer and as a photo technician.

Mangan tried to relate the situation of his squadron to the bigger picture of European Theater operations in order to give the reader a clearer understanding of events. Chapter 8, for example, discusses the Saint-Lo offensive and the bombing and strafing of allied forces by the Eighth Air Force. While Mangan did do some research he lists a number of references in the back of the book under the title of "Sources" (p. 196) his book is based almost entirely on his letters and his own memories of events that happened over sixty years ago. Sometimes memory does fail, especially after so many years. Mangan refers indirectly to the attempt to take Arnhem-Operation Market Garden stating that after allied forces won that battle his unit moved. Allied forces did not win that battle, Arnhem was not taken, and British forces suffered staggering losses in that fight. In chapter 25 Mangan has himself arriving at Camp New York near Reims a week before he left his air base in Mannheim, Germany.

But these lapses in memory do not detract from the story because it is the story of the average GI, not a history of the war. Mangan succeeds very nicely in portraying the sociological and psychological effects of the war on the average soldier who came home and tried to pick up where he left off. This book enables the reader to understand what the war was like for, and what it did to, not only Mangan, but to thousands of young men just like him.

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