

# PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Volume 52, No. 1 · El Paso, Texas · Spring, 2007

THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Corporate Sponsors

*We appreciate the support of our business and professional sponsors  
and we encourage our readers to patronize these businesses.*

**AINSA HUTSON LLP**

5809 Acacia Circle, El Paso, TX 79912  
915-845-5300

**BUTTERWORTH & MACIAS**

John Butterworth, CPA  
600 Sunland Park Drive  
Building Two, Suite 300  
El Paso, TX 79912  
915-584-6000

**CHARLOTTE'S INC.**

5411 North Mesa, El Paso, TX 79912  
915-581-1111

**CURREY ADKINS**

6633 North Mesa, Suite 605  
El Paso, TX 79912  
915-833-6604

**DELGADO, ACOSTA,  
SPENCER, LINEBARGER,  
HEARD, PEREZ, LLP.**

215 North Stanton, El Paso, TX 79901  
915-545-5481

**DE LA VEGA GROUP**

3629 Beverly Drive, Dallas, TX 75205

**EL PASO COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**

P.O. Box 272, El Paso, TX 79943  
915-533-4020

**ENTROS, OSG**

200 Bartlett, Suite A  
El Paso, TX 79912

**GADDY CONSTRUCTION  
COMPANY**

5875 Cromo Drive, Suite 100  
El Paso, TX 79912  
915-581-3966

**GORMAN MOISTURE  
PROTECTION, INC.**

2115 East Missouri  
El Paso, TX 79903  
915-542-1974

**TRAVIS C. JOHNSON, ATTORNEY**

Chase Tower, Suite 1600  
201 East Main Drive  
El Paso, TX 79901  
915-532-1497

**KASCO VENTURES, INC.**

1600 E. Fourth Avenue  
El Paso, TX 79901  
915-544-1210

**KEMP SMITH LAW FIRM**

221 North Kansas, Suite 1700  
El Paso, TX 79901-1441  
915-533-4424

**LAND AMERICA LAWYERS TITLE**

301 East Yandell  
El Paso, TX 79902  
915-543-7600

**LIFT TRUCK SERVICES**

10016 Odessa, El Paso, TX 79924  
915-775-2018

**DENISE K. MANKIN**

Freelance Graphic Artist  
5459 Soledad Lane, El Paso, TX 79932  
915-587-0548

**MARTIN FUNERAL HOME, INC.**

3839 Montana Avenue  
El Paso, TX 79903  
915-566-3955

**MIMCO, INC.**

Meyer Marcus/Robert Ayoub  
6500 Montana, El Paso, TX 79925  
915-779-6500

**MITHOFF BURTON PARTNERS**

4105 Rio Bravo, Suite 100  
El Paso, TX 79902  
915-544-9400

**ENRIQUE MORENO,  
ATTORNEY AT LAW**

701 Magoffin Avenue  
El Paso, TX 79901  
915-533-9977

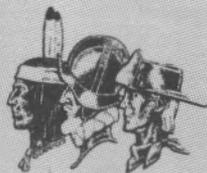
**NILAND COMPANY**

320 North Clark Drive  
El Paso, TX 79905  
915-799-1405

**OESTE HOMES  
CUSTOM BUILDERS**

465-D North Resler, El Paso, TX 79912  
915-581-6303

*Continued on inside back cover.*



**Marilyn C. Gross**  
*Editor*

**Richard Field**  
**Leigh Aldaco**  
*Associate Editors*

**Richard Baquera**  
*Book Review Editor*

**Editorial Board**

J. Morgan Broadus  
Elizabeth Ferguson  
Clinton Hartmann  
Douglas Meed  
Leon Metz  
Harvey Plaut  
Mary Ann Plaut  
Carol Price Miller  
Claudia Rivers

**Honorary  
Board Member**

Mrs. John J. Middagh

**Graphic Artist**

Denise K. Mankin

**Historical  
Society Logo**

José Cisneros

# PASSWORD

VOLUME 52, NO. 1  
SPRING, 2007  
EL PASO, TEXAS



## CONTENTS

<b>Revolutionary El Paso: 1910-1917 .....</b>	<b>3</b>
MARDEE de WETTER	
<b>El Paso's Midwinter Carnival .....</b>	<b>19</b>
CAROL PRICE MILLER	
<b>Ten Years on the Trail of a Colossus .....</b>	<b>29</b>
NICHOLAS P. HOUSER	
<b>Civil War Hispanics: The Other Side of the Story .....</b>	<b>38</b>
JOSÉ L. GONZÁLEZ	
<b>Book Review .....</b>	<b>50</b>
ALBERT BURNHAM	
<i>Old Guns and Whispering Ghosts: Tales and Twists of the Old West,</i> by Jesse L. "Wolf" Hardin.	

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



*Mardee Belding de Wetter  
Photo courtesy El Paso Community Foundation.  
Christ Chavez, photographer.*

**This article is being printed as it was in 1958.  
Only the placement of the footnotes has been altered.**

*All photos in this publication not otherwise credited are from  
the archives of the El Paso County Historical Society.*

© 2007 The El Paso County Historical Society, El Paso, Texas  
The El Paso County Historical Society disclaims responsibility  
for the statements and opinions of the contributors.

Entered as periodical mail at El Paso, Texas



# Revolutionary El Paso: 1910-1917

By Mardee Belding de Wetter



I maintain that never was there such a colorful, romantic, noble and foolish period as the first revolution in northern Mexico. Juárez and El Paso formed the center of it.<sup>1</sup> El Paso in 1910 (population 39,279) had a rough, tough, exciting atmosphere of border life where, if there were no revolutions to sustain excitement, there was always a cattleman's convention. "For El Paso was then the drinkingest town on the border, a reputation it held until prohibition."<sup>2</sup>

As El Pasoans entered the year 1910 they were totally unaware of the trouble that was brewing south of their river. No mention was made of Mexican affairs; the papers were filled with national and international happenings, murders, and advertisements.<sup>3</sup> The usual Sunday crowd went to the races in Juárez, the chief transportation being the street cars which left San Jacinto Plaza every ten minutes for the grandstand. Not until January 15th was there a hint of revolution and that was probably overlooked by a majority of the people. The notice merely stated that Don Francisco Madero, a Mexican capitalist, was leading an opposition party against the revered Porfirio Díaz. Señor Madero had been making campaign speeches in Chihuahua against Díaz' reelection. When prevented from continuing his campaign he left Chihuahua for El Paso where he obtained apartments at the Sheldon Hotel. There he gave a statement to El Paso reporters: "Personally," he said, "we have not been harmed by Díaz, and we think that he has used his great power with much moderation, but we want full political liberty as guaranteed by the Constitution."

Madero remained in El Paso only a day and the memory of him disappeared with his leaving. El Paso was more interested in the Pinchot-Ballinger national forest scandal and in the fact that

"Bird Men Will Fly In Los Angeles Meet." Important events were taking place in a hurried world. Mark Twain died on April 22 and Haley's Comet was soon to flash across the heavens. El Pasoans read avidly in Collier's Weekly the article about General Benjamin Johannes Viljoen, a valley resident, and the Times noted that:

In January, 1910, Benjamin Johannes Viljoen, formerly second in command of the armed forces of the Transvaal Republic, but lately a prosperous American ranchman, appeared in the Third Judicial Court of New Mexico at Las Cruces and received the papers which admitted him to full citizenship of the United States. The soldier was overcome with emotion when Federal Judge Frank Parker warmly congratulated him upon the fact that he was the first Boer to become an American citizen. With tears running down his bronzed cheeks, Viljoen made those about him a stirring little speech in which he declared that for seven years he had been a man without a country.

Yet very soon Viljoen's soldier blood would involve him in the affairs of still another country—in the revolution of Mexico.

Meanwhile, Mexico was preparing for her Centennial Celebration of Independence. Even so, the first revolt was brewing. An uprising occurred in Yucatan and thousands of insurgents sacked the town of Valladolid, killing scores of people. The cause of the trouble was the dissatisfaction among the Indians over the action of government officials regarding land. The revolt was easily quelled and seemed to portend nothing serious. The civic-minded El Pasoans were naturally more concerned about the construction of Elephant Butte Dam which had recently gotten under way.

Francisco Madero almost immediately after the Yucatan uprising (about which he knew nothing) found himself in jail in San Luis Potosi. Held as a formal prisoner he refused defense, saying he "had no faith in justice." He remained in jail until his escape after Díaz' reelection. Díaz, meanwhile, was having further difficulties. The second whiff of revolutionary activity came from the northern part of Sonora. An uprising there began against the federal government and the arms for the revolt were obtained from across the border. President Díaz urged the United States to guard her frontier and to fulfill her international obligations, but the United States was slow in taking action and did not send troops to the border at all during the year 1910.<sup>4</sup>

Regardless of these auguries of revolution, Díaz was triumphantly elected president on June 27 by a large majority vote in all parts of the Republic. From a censor-bound Mexico came no reports of disturbances anywhere. The anti-reelectionist party, with a jailed candidate, received about two per cent of the votes.

El Paso and the United States accepted the reelection of Díaz as a matter of course and once more turned their disinterested backs on Mexico in order to watch more closely the travels of Teddy Roosevelt through Africa to Khartoum, and then to Rome, Vienna, London, and finally to New York City where Cornelius Vanderbilt arranged a festive reception for him.

The United States with its usual finesse in Mexican affairs began sending American Commissioners to Mexico City for the Centennial Celebration in September. According to the *El Paso Times*,

General Harrison Gray Otis, the well known editor of the Los Angeles Times, was a passenger on Train No. 10, from Los Angeles last night (August 31) on his way to Mexico City to discharge his duties as Commissioner from the United States to the Mexican Centennial 'I'm out for a good time,' he admitted frankly, 'All I've got to do according to instructions is to extend the glad hand to the president of Mexico and all of his people.

The bluff, jovial *gringo* neighbor was going to Mexico. Representatives of every nation were there and towns throughout the republic were decorated for the gala event. Juárez put on its best appearance and at sunrise on September 14 its bells rang out to proclaim the opening of the grand fiesta. The climax of the celebration came two days later and Mexico was filled (so came reports from the capitol) with "Viva Díaz! Viva Hidalgo! Viva Mexico!" The City of Juárez proudly unveiled its new statue of its hero, Benito Juárez.\* All was froth and gaiety, north and south.

The much feted American commissioners returned home with stories of enough glitter to last for generations. But in less than two months came outbursts of hatred for the *gringos*. Mexico City resembled an armed camp after much anti-American and anti-government rioting. There was more rioting in Guadalajara.

---

\*President Díaz laid the cornerstone of the \$125,000 monument on October 15, 1909, when he came to the border to meet President Taft (Editor's note.)

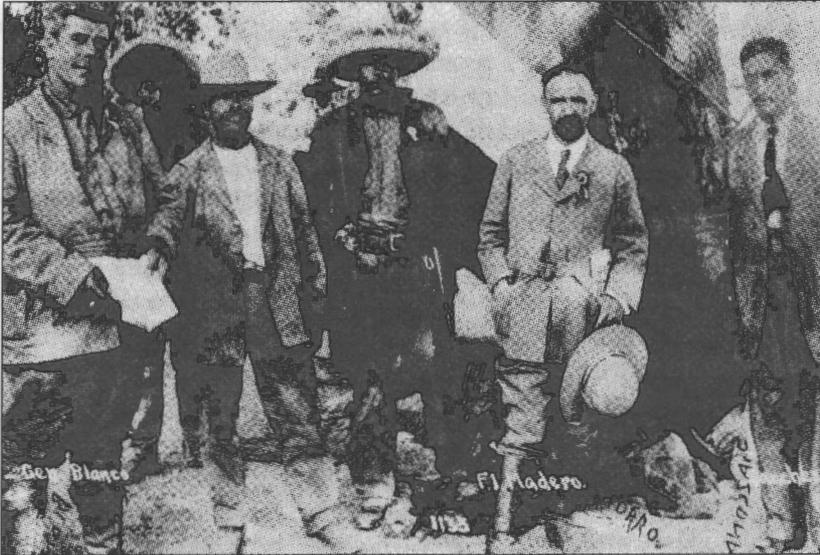
The superficial cause of the disturbances was a misunderstanding. In Rock Springs, Texas, a Mexican had been lynched for killing an Anglo woman. The Mexicans became incensed and began their anti-American demonstrations. Actually, the alleged Mexican was a *New Mexican*, but this slight difference could not stop the trouble. It was reported that "armed Mexicans (were) marching on the town of Rock Springs. "But," the *Times* noted, "the ranchmen of that section are typical West Texans, and will be able to give a good account of themselves in any contingency that may arise." The opinion West Texans held of themselves was always high.

News of other revolutionary activity continued to reach El Paso:

A general rising along the border from Nogales, Arizona, to Brownsville, Texas was set for Sunday, November 20, . . . . According to Federal officers here the revolutionary propaganda is: the release of all political prisoners; the welcoming of all political exiles; the establishment of popular government; the capture of all customs houses; the removal from office of Díaz and his adherents.

Finally the reports of a forthcoming uprising were given authenticity by Francisco Madero in San Antonio: "A revolution in Mexico is inevitable," he stated. "It may not break loose today, tomorrow or next week, but it is bound to come." People might then have laughed at this frail little man but they would not scoff for long, for soon the *Maderistas* were fighting the Federals in the state of Chihuahua with some success. Porfirio Díaz, on the day before his inauguration, said that he would lead his Federals in battle as soon as five thousand rebels were in the field. "I shall be there," he announced, "as I have ever been at the head of my troops." But Porfirio Díaz was eighty.

In El Paso there was much surreptitious activity. On November 24 about one hundred and fifty boxes of thirty-thirty Winchester cartridges were found in the Union Station by John W. Mershon, the day policeman. The night before, several Mexicans were seen loitering around the station on San Francisco Street. But when they were searched and found to possess nothing suspicious they were ordered to leave. This was the first evidence that smuggling had begun. Nevertheless, El Pasoans had no fears, for Texas Rangers patrolled the river.



*Francisco Madero, second from right.*

"From the beginning it was evident that the heaviest fighting would be along the northern border and that the state of Chihuahua would become the storm center of the revolution."<sup>5</sup> Abraham González, provisional governor of Chihuahua, came to El Paso to take charge of the revolutionary activities. Associated with him in the formation of the *Madero junta* in El Paso were Braulio Hernandez, a former college professor and a dreamer; Federico González-Garza, a bright young lawyer, Alberto Fuentes, a graduate of an American University; and Castula Herrera, a very fine, practical man credited with firing the first shot of the revolution. Offices for the *junta* were established on the fifth floor of the Caples Building.<sup>6</sup> The *junta* had many friends in El Paso, Dr. Bush noted:

I can recall only two (Americans) who were not friendly to the Revolution. Old General Anson Mills, who served as a Federal officer in the Civil War and opposed all rebellions, was very insulting to a brother of Madero's. The other was a Jewish merchant who owned a store in Chihuahua. He figured the revolution would fail and he wanted to be on the winning side.<sup>7</sup>

But no *gringo* in Mexico could be on the "winning side."

Americans below the border now began to fear the unstable conditions that existed and on December 2 Mr. U. Mallory Turner, an employee of the Mexican Northwestern Railway at Pearson,

Chihuahua, stated that about three hundred American women and children had left Pearson and Madera for El Paso to await the re-establishment of peace. Then followed El Paso's first war scare. Reports arrived of large groups of Madero's *insurrectos* around Juárez. Three days before Christmas a *ranchero* who lived about three miles above the El Paso Brick Works, opposite the El Paso Smelter, reported to officials at Juárez that a body of three hundred armed men was in the hills outside the city. The next day orders were received in Juárez to furnish a rifle and full belt of ammunition to each man in every saloon and to others who might be relied upon to defend the city. Several hundred El Pasoans spent the night watching for something to happen.

El Paso, meanwhile, began filling up with a large number of deputy United States Marshals who walked the streets with a mysterious air. They were searching for the meeting places of the numerous Mexican *insurrectos* reported organizing in the city and thereby violating United States neutrality laws. El Paso was full of political refugees from the regime of Díaz and consequently it was difficult to determine who were conspirators.

Yet even with such intense activity the Foreign Relations Papers of the United States for 1910 contained no reference to revolutionary Mexico. According to the State papers there existed only cordial relations between the two countries and all that happened of importance was the Centennial Celebration.<sup>8</sup> The succeeding year was to prove that the celebration had been the concluding glory of Porfirio Díaz.

It was in 1911 that El Paso achieved its first revolutionary importance. The city became the hotbed of activity, since Juárez was the largest port of entry on the Mexican border and its capture was essential to the revolutionists. On January 1 circulars printed in El Paso were distributed in the streets of Juárez, calling upon Mexicans to sacrifice their last drop of blood in a supreme effort for liberty or death. "The circulars were printed on yellow paper in red ink and recited that for the last thirty years the Mexican government had been in the hands of usurpers."

Reports of *insurrectos* surrounding Juárez continued to reach the papers. Nevertheless, on January 3 the *Times* reported that "all was quiet on the Rio Grande last night including . . . Juárez . . . The mounted policemen in Juárez were suffering with the cold and were more busily engaged in keeping the hoods of their over-

coats about their heads than in watching for elusive *insurrectos*." The whole state of Chihuahua, under the governorship of Alberto Terrazas, was watching for *insurrectos*. Governor Terrazas stated that the bands of men who were fighting the government were mostly outlaws and that their complete subjection was inevitable. But this surety was soon removed.

Meanwhile, the United States Secret Service officials in El Paso were not idle in their search for revolutionary plotters but these neutrality-law-breakers proved very elusive. They constantly shifted their meeting places to avoid being caught and continued their work of spreading revolutionary literature. These men were not entirely welcome in El Paso. As Tom Lea said:

There were many Mexican spies in El Paso working for various factions. Also there were the refugees. Most of the men refugees were cowards who would not fight. These people set up myriads of little Mexican newspapers in the south of the town. Their circulation was in Chihuahuita.[sic] They wrote terrible things about the United States and yet they enjoyed American security.<sup>9</sup>

Rumors of advancing bands of *insurrectos* continued to spread and Juárez prepared for a seige. General Juan Navarro, a veteran soldier, was placed in command of Federal headquarters in Juárez. Federal troops were camped on the river across from Washington Park. Reinforcements for the Juárez garrison arrived—two hundred cavalymen and their women, the camp followers, who were nearly all barefooted and nearly all carrying infants in their arms. Correspondingly, as Juárez bulged with soldiers, the civilian population began to migrate en masse to El Paso to stay with friends and relatives. El Paso boomed.

The Federal Government became alarmed over the border situation and continued to ask the United States for effective patrol of the boundary. The Mexican Secret Service reported to the United States Secret Service that forty armed men had crossed the river into Mexico a few miles below El Paso to join the *insurrectos* and that more were planning to do so. Smuggling, too, was a problem. The Mexican Central passenger train that left the Union Station at six forty-five p.m. on January 28, arrived in Juárez where it was searched. As soon as the train stopped at the Mexican Central Depot, Mexican Secret Service officials looked under the car "Sagamore" and found four cases of ammunition. It was Mexican ammunition, labeled in Spanish, and the secret service

men seemed to know exactly where it was. Much speculation followed in El Paso, for it seemed to be an attempt by the Mexican agents to make a reputation for themselves.

Be that as it may, the United States endeavored to comply with Mexico's requests. The Secretary of War issued orders to triple the number of soldiers guarding the border and the Secretary of the Treasury authorized the Collector of Customs at El Paso to appoint ten additional deputies. At the same time Major Nathan Lapowski, commanding the Second Battalion, Fourth Infantry, Texas National Guard, received notice from Sheriff Peyton J. Edwards to have his forces in readiness to cooperate with the sheriff's office in case of eventualities. And the number of soldiers on guard on the American side of the international bridge was increased by forty men.

Much more serious trouble than smuggling now faced the border, however. Passengers on a Mexican train reported that twenty-three miles below Juárez they had passed Pascual Orozco, the insurgent chief from the Guerrero district, and that his troops numbering 1,500 men were engaged in unloading horses and a carload of dynamite in preparation for their march on Juárez. Consequently "Colonel R. G. Martinez ordered everything in Juárez closed in the way of keno games, dance halls and saloons. A large crowd of Americans who were attending the various places made a rush for the street cars." At the same time the Banco Minero and the branch bank of the Banco Nacional were moved to El Paso where they continued to transact business. Their cash reserves were deposited in El Paso banks. The Juárez post office was likewise moved to El Paso.

Meanwhile, on February 3, announcement was made by Señor Abraham González that he had engaged Dr. I. J. Bush to organize a hospital corps and establish a hospital for the care of the revolutionists. Of this Dr. Bush later wrote:

About daylight February 3, 1911, Abraham González roused me out of bed and told me that a courier had made his way through the Federal lines with a message from Pascual Orozco who was at Samalayuca, twenty-five miles south of Juárez. He had fought a battle at Sierra Mojino Ranch and wanted a doctor to treat the wounded.<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Bush established his *insurrecto* hospital at 410 South Campbell Street where he treated many of the wounded rebels. He also trained a number of Mexican girls to be nurses.

The following day, February 4, the United States Consulate in Juárez reported that notice had been received from Pascual Orozco that he would attack the city within twenty-four hours. Immediately several hundred young men fled to El Paso because they feared that the authorities would impress them into service. But Orozco did not attack. Instead, Juárez was reinforced with Federal troops. But El Pasoans did not know of the changed situation and by eight a.m. on February 6 thousands of people had made their way to the tops of tall buildings and to the Franklin and Krazy Kat mountains. When no battle took place, "the disappointment of the public was something tremendous."

El Paso, with a swol[l]en population estimated at sixty-five thousand, watched and listened. Mexican Federal infantry patrolled the border. They kept a sharp lookout and in the still night air their cry of "*sentinela alerta*" could be clearly heard across the Rio Grande. Orozco, meanwhile, moved north and located his camp on the Mexican bank of the river opposite the El Paso Smelter where it was in full view of El Paso. Immediately *insurrecto* sympathizers flocked to the river and, until stopped by American authorities, threw silver dollars across to the Orozco troops. Within a few days, however, Orozco moved his camp down the Rio Grande to Guadalupe, thirty-five miles south of Juárez, and for a little while at least excitement abated in El Paso.

Now for the first time El Paso felt the pinch of the revolution. The smelter officials announced that the smelter would have to close within five days unless a supply of ore was received from Mexico. The smelter received eighty percent of its ore from that country but it had not received so much as a ton in five weeks. If the smelter closed, several hundred men would be thrown out of work.

But El Paso made the most of what she had. Newspaper men from all over the country flocked to her. The Sheldon Hotel became their headquarters as it was also the headquarters for the United States Secret Service, *insurrecto* officers, and others interested in the revolution. The revolutionary *junta* in El Paso was besieged by soldiers of fortune. Among the newcomers were Willis E. Taylor of Redlands, California; General Benjamin Viljoen,

mentioned above; A. W. Lewis, a Canadian captain of artillery in the Boer War; the "Triplets," Mahoney, McDonald, and Charpentier, Irish, Scotch, and French, respectively; Guiseppe Garibaldi, grandson of "Red Shirt" Garibaldi; and "Death Valley Slim" from Arizona. Anglo volunteers of lesser importance were organized into

*They had so many patrons in one evening that they had to turn away more than five hundred. The proceeds were to be used for Red Cross doctors and nurses for the insurrectos in Mexico. Colonel Pascual Orozco also visited the city and almost started a riot. When he emerged from a restaurant on San Antonio Street where he had been dining, he was recognized by a crowd which enthusiastically surrounded him.*

"El Falange de los Extranjeros." At the same time the ladies of the Mexican colony opened a restaurant on San Antonio Street, serving Mexican national dishes. They had so many patrons in one evening that they had to turn away more than five hundred. The proceeds were to be used for Red Cross doctors and nurses for the *insurrectos* in Mexico. Colonel Pascual Orozco also visited the city and almost started a riot. When he emerged from a restaurant on San Antonio Street where he had been dining, he was recognized by a crowd which enthusiastically surrounded him. He had come to El Paso, he said, to spend a few luxurious hours.

But all was not going well with the *insurrectos*. Madero was defeated at Casas Grandes and with the remnants of his army joined Guiseppe Garibaldi's battalion at Bauché. The combined forces marched up the Rio Grande and camped opposite El Paso where Orozco had camped in February. The camp was not more than a mile from the Federal *cuartel* in Juárez but it was not molested by Federal troops.

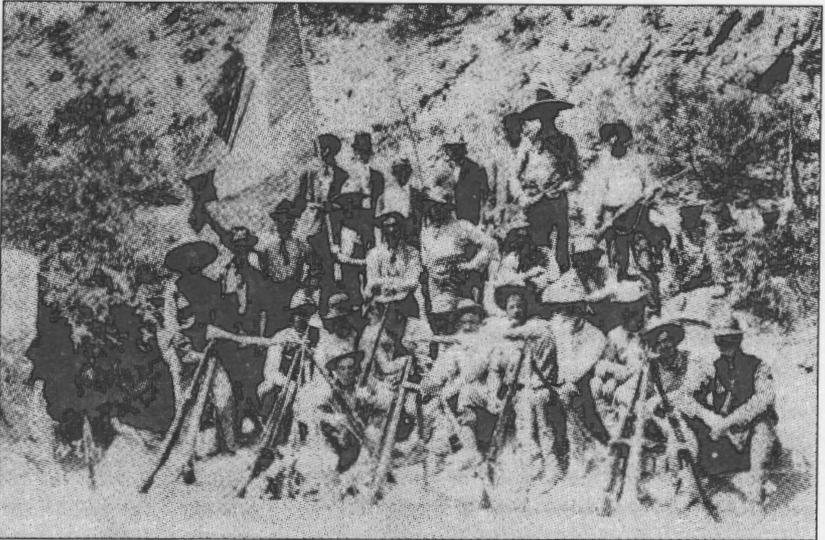
It was at this time that a famous revolutionist made his first appearance on the Rio Grande. "Major Francisco Villa, in command of seven hundred *insurrectos*, one hundred of them mounted, arrived at Madero's camp." W. H. Fryer was at the camp at the time and he later described the "motley crew" as "walking commissaries." Mr. Fryer stopped to talk with one of the men who was scooping

water from the river to make coffee. He asked if the water was not dirty and the man replied, "If I drink much of this I'll have a 'dobe brick in my stomach."<sup>11</sup> Thousands of El Pasoans visited Madero's camp to take pictures of the mustachioed warriors. El Paso merchants used the presence of the troops to advertise their goods. One advertisement read: "Whether bloodshed or peace in Mexico we don't know; we hope for the best. We do know that the Bazaar has revolutionized the clothing business in El Paso."

On April 23 the El Paso *junta* announced that a five-day armistice to discuss peace was to begin that day at noon. Señor Don Venustiano Carranza, provisional governor of Coahuila, arrived from San Antonio to take part in the conference, and Abraham González arrived shortly thereafter. To celebrate the armistice a concert was given by the Madero army band and several hundred armed *insurrectos* were in attendance as were also Francisco and Raoul Madero, Colonel Garibaldi, Pascual Orozco, Francisco (Pancho) Villa, General Blanco and many other officers of lesser importance. There was also a number of El Pasoans present. Between the Madero camp and the smelter was a swinging foot bridge belonging to the brick plant. United States soldiers were stationed at each end of the bridge to check the crowd and to prevent too great a strain on the structure.

When the armistice came to an end without a satisfactory understanding, a five-day extension was agreed upon. During this time *insurrecto* officers were allowed in El Paso on pass. This was excellent for business and Chihuahuita[sic] was crowded until a late hour each night with *insurrectos* buying khaki campaign uniforms, underwear, and shoes. The men, however, showed no inclination to discard their large sombreros for American hats. It was estimated some five hundred men outfitted themselves in one day. While the men were enjoying their shopping in El Paso, the peace commission continues in session. According to the *Times*:

A prettier or more picturesque spot for holding the Mexican peace conference than the one selected opposite Hart's Mill could not have been found elsewhere on the border. It is a miniature valley carpeted with green grass and shaded by a luxuriant growth of cottonwood trees. The restless murmuring waters of the Rio Grande rushing over Hart's dam, sweep along at the foot of the valley, lying within the shadow of Orozco Hill. The place will hereafter be known as Peace Grove.



*The Foreign Legion. (Blumenthal Collection—Courtesy El Paso Times.)*

The *insurrectos* presented their demands to the Federal negotiators. These included participation in government affairs, representation in the cabinet, and twelve state governors to be chosen from *Maderistas*. Although the demands do not seem radical, they were rejected. Madero then demanded the resignation of President Díaz. Díaz agreed to resign but insisted that he remain in office until the peace had been restored. This the *Maderistas* refused to accept and the conference became deadlocked. Both sides then prepared for all out war. And the first objective of the war was Juárez.

The battle of Juárez began very suddenly and without the knowledge of the Federals, El Pasoans, or Francisco Madero. Against Madero's orders a fairly large body of *insurrectos* attacked the border city. The group was led by Pancho Villa and Pascual Orozco and was joined by most of the foreign legion. The *insurrectos* followed the irrigation ditch leading into Juárez and thus were not detected by General Navarro's men. The rebels fell upon the Federals and by the afternoon of May 8 began a general assault on the city. On the second day the battle was fought almost entirely in the center of the city and by nightfall the rebels held all of Juárez except the bull ring, the *cuartel*, and the church. On the third day the rebels captured all of Juárez and General Navarro surrendered with five hundred men. Colonel Garibaldi received Navarro's sword.<sup>12</sup>

The casualties for a Mexican battle were heavy. About fifty Federals and fifteen *insurrectos* were killed. Among the dead was Colonel Tamborrel, one of Navarro's officers. The day before the battle he had called Madero's men a "bunch of cowards" and they had not forgot. After the battle he was found lying on a bed in a hotel with his hands tied behind him and a bullet hole through his head. Above the bed on which he lay was a large picture of Porfirio Díaz.<sup>13</sup>

The *insurrectos* also sought to kill General Navarro but Madero, realizing Navarro's danger, gave him permission to leave for El Paso. The general gave his word of honor he would return to Mexico to stand trial when Madero called him. Navarro then plunged his horse into the Rio Grande and escaped. No one knew his whereabouts until Editor T. G. Turner was called to the phone at the *Herald* and a voice said: "This is A. Schwartz speaking. General Navarro is here and he asks me to tell you to please come to see him. He is in Chinaware in the basement." Turner went to the Popular Dry Goods Store and arranged for Navarro to enter Hotel Dieu under an assumed name where he remained as a patient until the feeling against him had subsided.<sup>14</sup>

Immediately after the battle El Pasoans surged to Juárez. The street cars resumed service and carried loads of sightseers. A large ad appeared in the *Times* "When you go to Juárez today things of interest are to be seen now that the town is in the possession of the *insurrectos*." El Paso physicians went for a different reason, to care for the wounded. Much amputation work was done without anesthetics. The stoicism of the *mestizo* who held out a finger to be amputated and, biting his collar, did not whimper, was not an unusual story. The bravery of the Mexicans was supreme. They knew how to die. As the rebels brought in their prisoners to be shot the doomed men shouted to the last, "Viva Don Porfirio Díaz!"

The news of Madero's victory reached Mexico City where it was received with open enthusiasm. Cheers for Madero rang out and the people demanded Díaz' resignation. On May 15 a confer-

*The stoicism of the mestizo who held out a finger to be amputated and, biting his collar, did not whimper, was not an unusual story. The bravery of the Mexicans was supreme. They knew how to die.*

ence was held across from the El Paso smelter between representatives of the Díaz government and those of Madero. A protocol of peace was drafted and signed on May 21. Díaz agreed to resign within two weeks. Francisco de la Barra\* was to serve as interim president and his cabinet was to be filled with *Maderistas*. Madero bade his army farewell in Juárez and left for Mexico City. On May 26 ex-president Díaz left the capitol for Vera Cruz where a French cruiser awaited to take him to France.

After Madero left for Mexico City a plot to assassinate him was discovered by General Viljoen. A Boer named Villiers was arrested on the charge of conspiracy, indicted, and released on bond. Little was actually known of the plot except that it was instigated by three *científico*\* agents in El Paso and that Orozco and Villa were used as tools.

The *científicos* endeavored to implant suspicions of Madero in the minds of these two chieftains and almost succeeded. The plot was the first against Madero and it failed.<sup>15</sup>

With the coming of peace the citizens of El Paso realized the great service the newspapermen had performed for their city. El Paso was now a widely publicized spot, known all over the United States and, in fact throughout the world. To show the city's appreciation the Chamber of Commerce gave a banquet at the Hotel Sheldon for the correspondents.<sup>16</sup>

Another pleasant prospect for El Pasoans was the arrival of the Fourth United States Cavalry. Hopes were beginning to bud that Fort Bliss might be made a regimental post. A few months later their dream seemed near fulfillment when Secretary of War Henry Stimson said, "El Paso is a highly strategic point."

It was inevitable that commercialism should raise its head to take advantage of El Paso's unusual relation to the revolution. The A. D. Foster Company manufactured revolutionary spoons which sold for two dollars and fifty cents each. There was the Madero spoon, Blue Whistler spoon, Juárez spoon, McGinty Cannon in

---

\**De la Barra* was identified with the Díaz regime and, although he admitted into his cabinet some *Maderistas*, he retained the Díaz bureaucracy and army and attempted to disband the revolutionary troops. (Editor's note.)

\**Científicos* was the term adopted by the "insiders" of Díaz' government, because they claimed to be scientists in government. Their enemies claimed they were scientists only in graft and scoffingly called them "cien tísicos," the "hundred consumptives," (Editor's note.)

Action at Ojinaga spoon, and the Orozco spoon. They proved to be very popular,

But the peace that had come to Mexico was an uneasy one and was not to last for long; but it was peace nevertheless. Díaz had been overthrown and the Electoral College on October 16 had elected Madero president and Pino Suarez vice-president. Then in December the peace was threatened. El Pasoans learned that Bernado Reyes, a supporter of Díaz, was heading a counter-revolution and had organized a *junta* in their city, and that the *junta* had deposited seventy thousand dollars in an El Paso bank. But the threat to the peace was soon ended, at least temporarily. Fourteen *Reyistas* were arrested and a carload of thirty-three rifles shipped from Chicago was confiscated. Reyes himself was captured in Mexico by Madero's troops and placed in prison in Mexico City.

Thus ended the eventful year of 1911, a year of intense excitement for border residents who were beginning to realize the potency of Mexico's upheaval. "It has not ended," they told themselves, as they looked forward to a prosperous and exciting New Year.

[To be continued.]

---

**MARDEE BELDING de WETTER**, a native El Pasoan, is a graduate of Texas Western College where she received both her bachelor's and master's degrees. She is the descendant of men whose names are part of our history and who contributed much to El Paso. She is the daughter of the late C. D. Belding who made many contributions of time, effort, and money to the development of Texas Western College, and the granddaughter of Dr. Henry Safford who came to El Paso in 1898 to serve as the physician at the Smelter which had been founded by his uncle, Robert Towne.

While at Texas Western College, Mardee wrote "Revolutionary El Paso: 1910-1917," her master's thesis. It is that which was printed in *Password* in 1958 and is being reprinted now. It has been used as a prime source for much of the material subsequently written about the Mexican Revolution. She has also written an historical biography of Judge Sinclair David Gervais of the Republic of Texas; three books of poetry: *The Sand Glass*, *The Sand Writer*, and *The Sand Castle*; as well as an historical biography, *Incognito, An Affair of Honor*. She has also just completed the *History of the Episcopal Church of St. Clement*.

The parents of three sons, Mardee and her husband, the late Peter de Wetter, former mayor of the city of El Paso, traveled extensively. They were involved in many philanthropic, educational, and social activities in this city. She developed the docent program at the Museum of Art, and, with her husband, provided many enhancements to the University of Texas at El Paso. They endowed a chair in Creative Writing, established a Scholarship Fund, and a Library Fund Endowment. The Alumni Center and Administrative Annex is named for Peter and Mardee de Wetter.

A dramatic presentation entitled "Written in Sand" was presented in March 2007 at the Plaza Theater through the auspices of the El Paso Community Foundation. It is based on the material in her three books of poetry and was a one-woman play most capably acted by Jayne H. Adame.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Timothy G. Turner, *Bullets, Bottles and Gardenias* (Dallas, 1925), 23.
2. Turner 84.
3. *El Paso Morning Times*, January 1-9, 1910. Much of the material for this paper was taken from the *El Paso Times* (1910-1917) and the *El Paso Herald* (1913-1916). To save space only authorities other than newspapers will be cited.
4. Fred Rippy, *The United States and Mexico* (New York, 1931), 333.
5. I. J. Bush, *Gringo Doctor* (Caldwell, Utah, 1939), 162-3.
6. Bush, 163.
7. Bush, 167.
8. *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*. 1910, (Washington 1915). 712-6.
9. Interview with Tom Lea, March 7, 1945. Mr. Lea was a prominent lawyer and mayor of El Paso from 1915 to 1917. Chihuahuaita (Little Chihuahua) was the name given to that section of El Paso inhabited exclusively by Mexicans. It is now known as "South of town."
10. Bush, *Gringo Doctor*, 171.
11. Interview with W. H. Fryer, November 9, 1945. Mr. Fryer has been a well-known attorney in El Paso for many years.
12. Bush, *Gringo Doctor*, 210. Garibaldi wore a special plushy hat which became very popular in El Paso. It was known as the "Garibaldi hat."
13. Interview with Mr. Fryer, November 9, 1945.
14. Turner, *Bullets, Bottles and Gardenias*, 68-70.
15. Carlo de Fornaro, *Carranza and Mexico* (New York, 1915) 56, 132-4.
16. Turner, *Bullets, Bottles and Gardenias*, 70.



# El Paso's Midwinter Carnival

By Carol Price Miller



Long before El Paso's Sun Carnival, there was the Midwinter Carnival. The *El Paso Herald* on October 10, 1901, carried an advertisement for the Buttermilk Cafe at 813 North Oregon Street and one for the Grand Auction Sale of Superb Furniture at 101 Myrtle Street. On the same

page was announced a newly formed Executive Committee to plan a "Sunshine in January" carnival. This festival was going to make El Paso a favorite of tourists who would flock to the Southwest in the cold month of January to enjoy fun and warm weather. Only a city in the southwestern desert could make all the plans this committee was making without a worry about tons of rain or snow and ice getting in the way, or so they thought.

On October 10th the *Herald* also announced that an official souvenir button had been chosen for this carnival. Five thousand buttons would be sold for twenty-five cents each. They would show a bird's eye view of El Paso and its mountains with the words "Sunshine in January" and "El Paso Midwinter Carnival" stamped on it. The design was created by Mr. Lockwood, the committee secretary. Others on that early committee included Frank Coles, H. B. Charman, T. M. Wingo, A. H. Richards, and Judge Harper. Meeting at their headquarters in the Hotel Sheldon, they went on to plan a flower parade as a prominent feature for this year. Then they appointed a committee to create the queen's contest and coronation to accompany the flower parade. The Midwinter Carnival would be advertised at the Albuquerque Fair and elsewhere with posters. "Sunshine in January" will be a household word this year predicted the newspaper.

Almost two weeks later on October 22, 1901, more carnival plans were announced by the carnival committee. Great events

were being considered: a midway, a motion picture place, a Swiss village, a "Mystic Maze," fire dancers, "Streets of Cairo" and then, a new idea announced on November 22nd, a miniature train on a track. Additionally, a Carnival Ball would be held at the Sheldon. On November 17th the *Herald* pointed out that "The El Paso Midwinter Carnival is being more extensively advertised than any other carnival" adding that thousands of four-color lithographs had been printed to advertise it, and engraved invitations were being sent to prominent persons. Tuttle Paint and Glass and other stores ran notices about the Midwinter Carnival in their newspaper ads, expecting great sales.

The Carnival was held January 12th through the 19th. The official program was published on the front page of the *Herald* for January 12th (which cost \$7 a year for the subscription). The paper stated that during the coming week, the Winter Carnival would allow no masks or costumes—possibly an allusion to the New Orleans Mardi Gras, which had begun in 1872—because El Paso did not want to encourage "crooks and sneak thieves." Therefore, no disguises. The Midway on North Oregon Street featured an electric fountain, a high diver, a trick bicyclist, a spiral tower, a German village, a fire dancer, snake charmer, a flying lady, the smallest pony, a passion play, a Turkish theater, a Mexican village and restaurant, and a display of President McKinley's funeral pictures. There would also be a bullfight in Juárez and concerts on the Plaza. The cold wind was easily ignored with so much to be seen and done. El Paso was the place to be that week in January.

On Wednesday, January 16th, the Midwinter Carnival opened, according the *Officially Announced Programme*, with a grand demonstration of booming cannons, ringing of bells throughout the city, blowing of steam whistles, playing of bands, and "pandemonium generally." The Midway shows included the Electric Theater, the Electric Fountain, a Trip to the Orient, a Volcano Eruption on Mount Franklin, a stock exhibit, parades, band concerts; and on the platform, the Ossified Man, Turtle George, and the Largest Living Snake in the world.

At 8 p.m. the Grand Coronation took place; Claire Kelly was Carnival Queen and Maids of Honor included Leila Trumbull, Irma Shutz, Florence Beak, Mable James, Gertrude Catlin, Ehphrasey Sweeney, Margaret Martin, Margaret Ainsa, Helen Brady, Maria Pronseco, Guadalupe Alvarez, and Maria Thacker. A chorus of

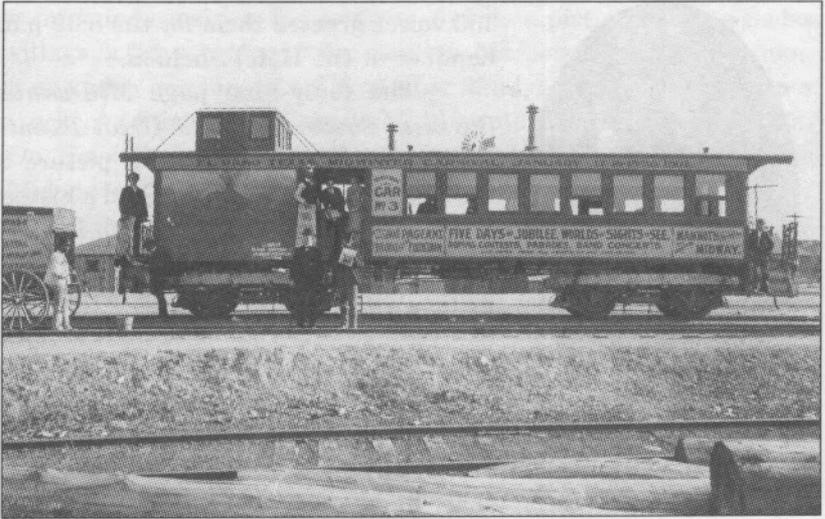


*The first Midwinter  
Carnival Queen,  
Claire Kelly*

100 voices greeted them for the 8:30 p.m. banquet at the Hotel Sheldon.

The forty-nine page *Mid-winter Carnival Souvenir (for the Great Twentieth Century Event)* showed a picture of the new City Hall and contained a history of the city written by Ernest E. Russell, secretary of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce. Although El Paso as a city was less than twenty years old, he reminded, "civilized man" had been here before the Pilgrims came to New England. The first railroad reached El Paso in May, 1881, followed by four others. Then recently two short lines were built out from El Paso: the "White Oaks" going northeast to timber country and the Sierra Madre Line, running southwest 150 miles to the grazing and mineral districts of Chihuahua and Sonora, Mexico. From a population in 1880 of less than 800, El Paso had grown to over 10,000 names in the city directory by 1901, and had a dozen churches and a public school system ranking among the best in the state. He said "one needs only a ten-minute walk to get to Sunset Heights at the edge of town." Among the companies listed as supporters of the Midwinter Carnival were Goodman Produce company, which wholesaled Mexican chili, beans, grapes, oranges, hats, and other Mexican products; the Charles R. Henderson company, funeral directors and embalmers; the El Paso Meat Market, whose proprietor H. C. Myers also raised high grade cattle; the Silver King Cafe and caterers, proprietors Joe Stein and Oscar Uhlig; the Hotel Orndorff, Charles DeGroff, proprietor; Early's Second Hand Store, on El Paso Street like several of the others; C. L. Ervin, second hand dealers of furniture, etc., on East Overland; and the Acme saloon on San Antonio Street.

At 10 a.m. on Friday, January 18th, the flower parade was to begin. "It is important to start on the dot" the front page of the *Herald* announced the day before. "All vehicles must be on the corner of Santa Fe and Overland at 9 a.m." and, bragged the paper, "the parade will rival in beauty and novelty all the other parades of other cities that have gone before." Of course, it would take some doing to rival the Tournament of Roses Parade which had begun twelve years before in 1890 in Pasadena, California. The



*Passenger train which brought visitors to the Winter Carnival.*

richly decorated carriages of El Pasoans charmed the many thousands of visitors who had arrived on the train to see the Winter Carnival. At the same time, at the corner of El Paso and San Antonio streets, a high wire aerial act, some jugglers, and a baby elephant attracted attention. At Oregon and Mesa, the Ferris wheel entertained people, and on St. Louis Street near Oregon, the miniature railway was on display. At the end of the week the Winter Carnival was deemed a success, in spite of some bouts of cold weather.

The next fall, on November 15, 1902, it was announced in the *Herald* that new plans were being made for the Midwinter Carnival for January 1903: the Queen's Ball would be modeled after the New Orleans Ball; it would be to El Paso what the Charity Ball was to New York. The idea was causing a "flutter" in social circles; ladies who would be patronesses were named. The Woman's Club Art Department met that same month to make plans for a mid-winter art exhibit that could be tied-in with this carnival. And again, a miners' drilling contest was planned for the Plaza. The Gaskill Mundy Carnival Company was thanked for promising to furnish the show for the midway on Myrtle and Campbell streets, which would include a trained dog and pony, acrobats and high wire acts, jugglers, snake charmers, and the elephant.

On January 12, 1903, with the announcement that the Franklin-to-El Paso Electric Railway would be building a Highland Park addition, the *Herald* again posted the program for El Paso's Mid-

winter Carnival on the front page; one week of events were planned, many of them street festival events, including the midway with rows of electric lights, glass blowers, animal acts, and other carnival attractions and activities. Concerts were again presented at Myar's Opera House. More than 11,000 people came to El Paso by train for the carnival. The El Paso and Southwestern Railway was reported to be very crowded with carnival visitors coming to the El Paso celebration and shopping occasion. All the downtown stores posted sales and special items. "A great week of bargains at the stores," said the *Herald*. And again, no masks allowed; also, no trashy confetti, or so announced the El Paso Winter Carnival Association from its new headquarters on the first floor of City Hall. Also, reminded the *Herald*, there were sixteen days left to pay the poll tax of \$1.00, and the excursion train to Deming was leaving at 9 a.m. to view available lots for sale.

Parades were planned for every day of the week. Band parades, civic parades, military parades—but no flower parade. Possibly it was found that flowers were hard to obtain in January. Flowers for El Paso were not forgotten however and much later, in 1953 the Fiesta de las Flores was begun by LULAC, the League of United Latin American Citizens, and it had a parade.

Unfortunately, on Wednesday January 14th, 1903, two days into the carnival, cold and bad weather forced the canceling of some events and sunshine was anxiously awaited. On Tuesday evening a cold wind had

come up which brought snow on Wednesday morning. Some of the carnival was postponed to the next week, the week after "Sunshine in January" week. It actually had more sunshine, not less, but was still too cold. For those who braved the deepening cold after sundown, the midway even had electric lights. The Queen's Ball and Coronation were held at the Washington Park Pavilion, but snows disrupted this event as well. Those early El Pasoans may have decided there was no escaping January's bad weather, even in this city. The next winter there was no mention of having another Midwinter Carnival.

But festival in January was not dead.

*Parades were planned for every day of the week. Band parades, civic parades, military parades—but no flower parade. Possibly it was found that flowers were hard to obtain in January.*

In 1904 a smaller event, the January Jubilee was held, with a parade, a midway, bicycle acts, and more concerts at the Myar Opera House. The official program for the Jubilee was posted on January 18th on the front page of the *Herald*, which had a circulation of 4,200 at that time. The program and schedule featured the opera company and an advertisement for the Popular, "El Paso's fastest growing store." It is hard to find good weather in January though, and there was no mention of a carnival or jubilee in 1905, 1906, 1907, or 1908, but still the idea did not die and would not die. Finally the present-day Sun Carnival was born in the 1940s. The idea of having an art show with the carnival began much earlier, however.

On November 3, 1909, the El Paso Fair and Exposition was held at the fairgrounds with weather guaranteed to be not so cold as in January. The "Event for Which the Entire Southwest Has Waited" included an art exhibit as well as trotting races, baseball, mining exhibits, a dog show, and the Nat Reiss Great Carnival. Thousands of visitors were in El Paso "being entertained most royally." The art show, produced by the Woman's Club Art Committee in the Fine Arts Hall, received a "good response from local oil and watercolor painters" with Fred J. Feldman in charge of the exhibit. Miss Jennie Potter had painted flowers of Texas and New Mexico; Mrs. L. H. Yale showed six pen and ink humorous sketches; Mrs. C. J. Logan showed Indian huts and villages; beautiful watercolor paintings were shown by Mrs. Miles Murray, Miss Lenoir Martin, and Miss Delia Muller.

A scandal developed however—"Nudes in Art Too Much for El Paso" announced the *Herald*. Pictures of nude women by their painter, Mrs. F. O. Chipps, who taught art at the Hotel Hermes, apparently shocked too many people and she had to remove them from the art and textile hall at the Fair. "Too many children were pointing and saying 'Look, Mama! Those ladies don't have any clothes on!' And too many young women and military men were leaving the hall blushing," scolded the paper. Mrs. Chipps was disappointed and remarked that those same pictures had been displayed in the hotel and none of the hotel guests complained. Art, at least some of it, was catching on and the next El Paso Fair and Exposition, on October 29, 1910, had a small art show planned by the Art Club, which was also organized to work towards an art institute for the city as well as to prepare for the Fair and Expositi-

tion exhibit. There was no scandal during this show, and the weather in October was found to be very pleasant in El Paso for outdoor shows. The Curb Art Shows, which began in the 1930s, on the lawn of the downtown library and at San Jacinto Plaza, traditionally have been held in October, as well as many other outdoor art shows in El Paso.

In 1916, El Paso was still trying to host a regional fair. This particular exposition was again held in October, with a slightly different name. Artist Ruth Augur in her art column for the *El Paso Herald-Post* wrote "Excellent Showing by Women on Exhibition at the Tri State Annual Exposition in El Paso." The art show, in the lobby of the Chamber of Commerce, included painters Mrs. Frank Seamon, Kate Krause, and Emma Giddings. The exposition also featured mining events and contests, prize winning cattle, the latest in plows and farming equipment, and, still a novelty, automobiles.

Beginning in 1936 El Paso's Winter Carnival was resurrected and renamed the Sun Carnival. Held on New Years' day it was proud to have an art exhibit, a tradition that has lasted more than sixty years. Perhaps even a few nudes were allowed by then. A parade was inevitable; after all, El Paso does have many nice days for parades. Almost 100,000 people lined the streets to view the first Sun Carnival's four-mile-long parade. "A Mardi Gras spirit was everywhere. Crowds were in a holiday mood" cheered the *El Paso Herald-Post*. President Lazaro Cardenas of Mexico sent his ninety member band to play in the parade.\* Inevitably the celebration of the Sun Carnival was moved to Thanksgiving day in 1978. January, our harshest month, does not seem to be the best time to have carnivals or festivals or expositions in El Paso.



---

\*Article by Edgar Roman "Sun Carnival 1936 Style" *Borderlands: An El Paso Community College Local History Project*, September 13, 2006.

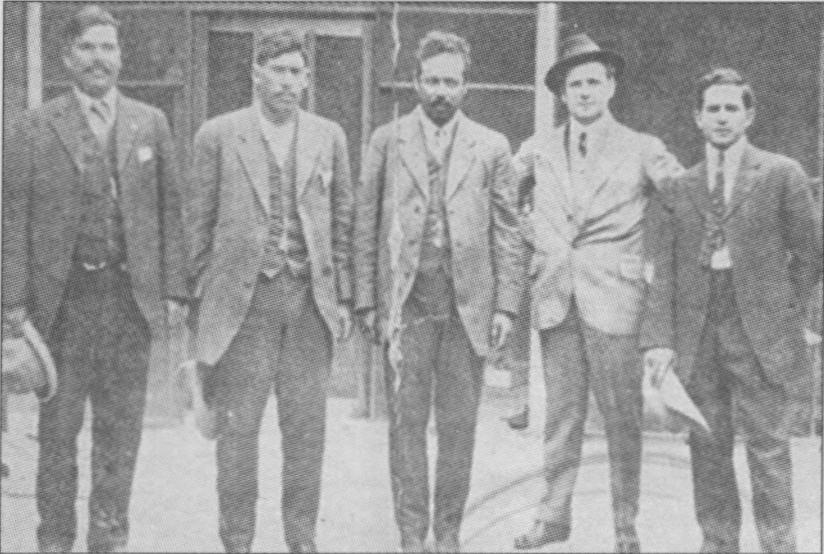


Corrections for the article  
 “And Starring Charles A. Pryor as Himself”

In the article, published in the Winter 2006 issue of *Password*, Vol. 51, No. 4, the picture of the poster was inadvertently omitted from the article. Below is the poster which should have accompanied the article.

*All images for this article were provided by the author.*





The correct cutline for this photo should read:

*General Villa, center, with officers of his army and Dr. Charles A. Pryor, President of the El Paso Feature Film Company, second from the right.*

The subject of this article will be featured in a forthcoming segment of the popular television series *History Detectives* which will air during the coming season.

Mr. Sharp's biography should have read:

**ROBERT L. SHARP** is retired from a New York bank in Asia, including postings in Manila, Hong Kong, and Tokyo, where he was also active in community affairs as chairman of Nishimachi International School and president of the American Chamber of Commerce. In recent years he has served as an advisor to several companies and organizations in respect to their Asian interests, and currently serves on the board of the Japan American Society of Southern California and is a member of the Pacific Council for International Policy. He is an alumnus of San Jose State University, and has a graduate degree from *Universidad de las Americas* in Mexico City. He and his Canadian wife have six children, one of which discovered and is the owner of the Mexican Revolution posters.





*John Houser stands on scaffold with nearly completed enlargement.  
All photos courtesy of author.*



# Ten Years on the Trail of a Colossus

By Nicholas P. Houser



It has been a long ride for sculptor John Sherrill Houser, who ten years ago began the Don Juan de Oñate statue, now known as "The Equestrian." This colossal sculpture was, in the broad scheme of the XII Travelers Memorial, designed as an icon for the early Spanish colonial period

1598 to 1680.

The City of El Paso commissioned the first two monuments on February 3, 1992. The contract with the artist specified that the monuments must be at least one and one-half times life-size, but could be "enhanced" provided the sculptor raised additional funds. This was the "Achilles heel" and the secret behind the world's largest equestrian bronze which would be four and one-half times life-size.<sup>1</sup> This marked the beginning of a decade-long incredible journey.

In 1993, an independent XII Travelers non-profit board was established for the raising of funds and for promotional purposes. In September 1996, the first bronze statue in the XII Travelers series, a 14-foot high, twice life-size, "Fray Garcia de San Francisco, Founder of the Pass of the North, 1659" was installed in the heart of downtown El Paso. This success eased the project into its next phase.

That fall, the city selected Don Juan de Oñate as the subject for the second monument and John traveled to Spain on a research trip to gather historical data. In Madrid he was hosted by Don Manuel Gullon y de Oñate and together they journeyed to the Basque country to visit Pueblo Onati, the natal town of Don Juan's father, Cristobal de Oñate. The town's coat of arms was later incorporated into the breastplate on the monument. Before

departing from Spain, John also modeled a portrait, a bust, of Manuel, who is a descendant of Don Juan, to use as a reference for the colossal head of the monument. Despite Oñate's historical prominence as "the Father of New Mexico" and "the Founder of the Camino Real" there are no known likenesses.

After this fruitful visit, John returned to El Paso where he discovered in the Mesilla valley, a handsome Andalusian stallion, Helicon, who became the inspiration for his big horse. John had already determined to give El Paso not only a beautiful sculpture commemorating the region's early history but also a work of unique size. In 1997, the city approved the concept maquette, the small scale model, and creation of the colossal horse began.

Finding a stable for the thirty-six-foot horse was more difficult than anticipated because John needed an enlarging studio with a forty-foot ceiling and a consistent north light. When the search seemed hopeless, his good friend, Julián Martínez, Mexico's renowned monumental sculptor, suggested that he bring the project to Mexico City, where a foundry had offered to build for John a studio that would match his specifications.

John decided to take the project south. He packed his van with supplies, including the clay maquette, and together with his son, Ethan Taliesin Houser, who later became the project's associate sculptor, headed down the Pan American Highway. A few days later, as dawn was breaking, their vehicle was struck by a red semi truck roaring along at fifty miles per hour. Fortunately, John, Ethan, and the truck driver escaped injury but the van was totaled. Frantically, John searched the wreckage for his precious passenger. The clay maquette, entombed in a mountain of protective foam, miraculously emerged unscathed.

John's long-sought enlarging studio was finally begun in Atizapan de Zaragoza, a small industrial pueblo a few miles north of Mexico City. But its construction was fraught with problems and delays. Finally, the XII Travelers recognized that their only recourse was legal action. During the long ordeal, the sculptor continued to refine the small maquette in a makeshift studio that was periodically flooded by torrential summer rains, forcing him to take refuge on chairs and tables where he continued to work amid the claps of thunder.

The lawsuit was still unresolved when John and Ethan were ready to begin enlarging the full-scale model. Studio construction

was also at a standstill with little more to show than a concrete floor and shoulder-high walls. Against all odds and under the open sky, exposed to the wind and the dust—and the rain and the mud—the sculptor and his crew began the tedious and exacting process of enlarging. The conditions were daunting for even such fierce determination, and much of the work had to be redone later with the consequent loss of many valuable months.

However, in spite of the deplorable work environment, John, Ethan, and three experienced Mexican enlargers were successful in beginning construction of the giant armature-endoskeleton, composed of huge steel I-beams and some seventy horizontal cross-sections welded into place one above the other. It was an enormous task, and when completed, the rearing horse appeared for the first time before the sculptor and his crew as a gigantic rebar structure soaring to the rooftop and vaguely reminiscent of the Eiffel Tower.

The enlarging process took almost eight years to complete. Referring to the building of the armature, John said, "Our greatest challenge was enlarging the small maquette to the full-size scale model by a linear factor of thirteen or 2,000 times the volume. It was necessary to take very precise measurements for even small errors would become monumental when magnified to such a colossal scale."

Seven months after the legal battle began, it was finally resolved giving John and the XII Travelers "legal occupancy" and the right "to complete the studio at their expense." The XII Travelers volunteers met this challenge successfully and the work was freed to begin in earnest.

A rotating platform, twenty-feet in diameter and capable of bearing the twenty-ton estimated weight of the enlargement was

*The enlarging process took almost eight years to complete. Referring to the building of the armature, John said, "Our greatest challenge was enlarging the small maquette to the full-size scale model by a linear factor of thirteen or 2,000 times the volume. It was necessary to take very precise measurements for even small errors would become monumental when magnified to such a colossal scale."*

built on a circular steel rail, and on this platform the over-hanging bulk of the horse's body was supported by three long steel pipes. As the giant horse and rider took form, every now and then, a visitor would enter the studio, gaze-up at the towering enlargement, and ask with a smirk, "How do you plan to get that darn thing out?" John would patiently reply that the simple solution was "molds." Thus, the colossal horse did, in fact exit through the small side-door—but in pieces.

Most of the of the modeling on the horse was done *in situ*, directly in plaster, from thirty-foot high scaffolding towers. The two gigantic heads, however, were modeled at floor level in



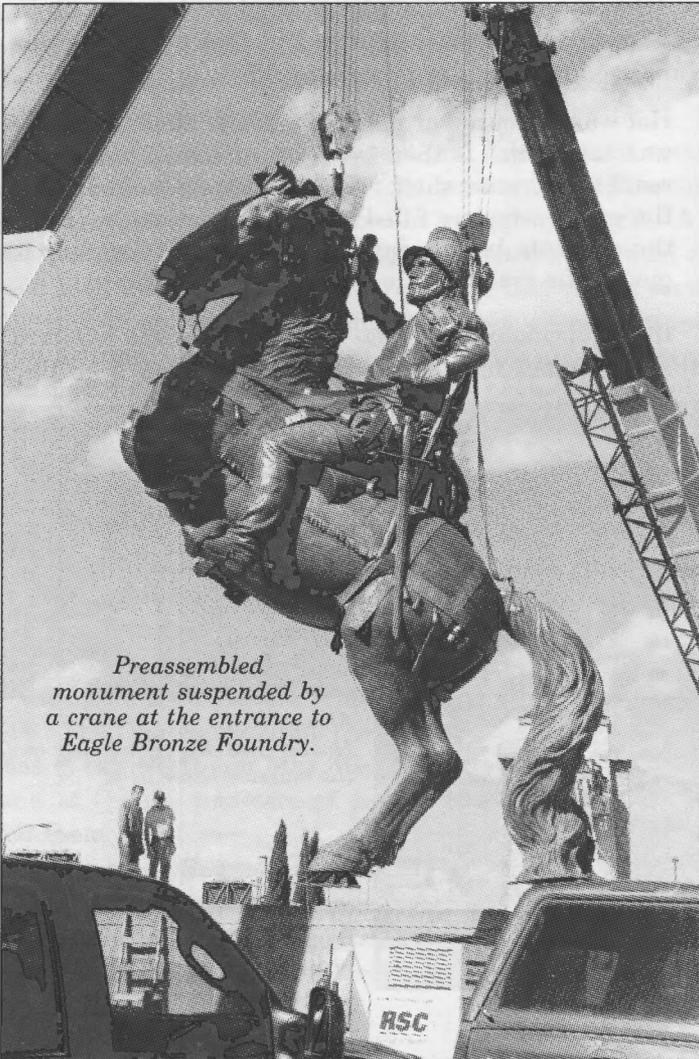
*At left:  
Ethan Taliesin Houser  
models the intricate  
helmet design.*

*Below:  
John Houser with  
Ann and Sonny  
Brown at enlarging  
studio. Maquette  
is in front of the  
enlargement.*



plastacine which allowed a more accessible and subtle treatment of form. A giant mirror was mounted on one side of the horse's head so that the sculptors could simultaneously see the opposite view and maintain symmetry in their work.

Colossal sculpture requires distance for proper viewing, and a balcony at the back of the studio offered the necessary perspective to study the monument's progress. Slowly the horse was turned on its platform revealing the effect of the modeling in a changing light. But it was still a "giant in a shoe box" and the horse's rump and the front legs cleared the opposite walls with only two inches to spare. Moreover, there was no room for the tail, which had to be modeled apart for later attachment.

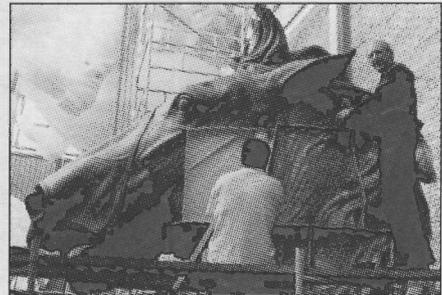
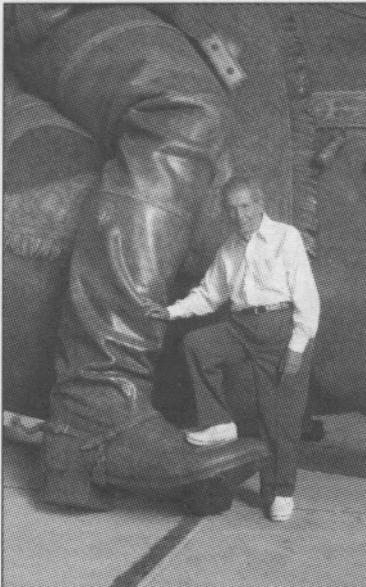


In addition to participating in every aspect of the monument's development, Ethan Taliesin created original versions of 16th century Spanish renaissance ornamentation for the horse's tack and also modeled some wonderfully free bas-reliefs on the sides of Oñate's helmet. The designs were borrowed from intaglio drawings of a helmet that probably belonged to one of Oñate's men and is now on display in the Museum of the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Because of deadline pressure, the mold-making process began as soon as was possible. As soon as the molds of one area were completed, they were shipped immediately to the foundry. A total of nearly 500 molds traveled in increments over Oñate's Camino Real from the enlarging studio to Shidoni Foundry in Tesuque, New Mexico. The bronze casting alone took over two-years. John summarized the foundry process in this way:

Hot wax is poured or painted into the molds to create a wax cast which is then invested, or coated, with a fire-resistant ceramic shell. The wax is then melted out and the empty shell is filled with molten bronze. Finally the separate bronze castings are welded together like pieces of a giant puzzle to resurrect the original.

In the spring of 2006, the giant sections and assorted pieces of the monument in progress were transferred from Shidoni to



*Above:  
Houser and Miguel making molds of  
the massive horse head.*

*At left:  
Artist José Cisneros standing in front  
of boot in storage hanger.*

the Eagle Bronze Foundry in Lander, Wyoming for assembly, chasing, and patina.<sup>2</sup> The internal steel armature supporting the long axis of the horse's body—from neck to rump—resembled the trunk of a giant sequoia. The huge castings, thus reinforced, were tack-welded together for a test-run. They rolled out of the monument shop on steel rails into the open air under a canopy of blue sky where a crane hoisted the bronze horse into its rearing position. There the monument stood gleaming in the sunlight where it met the world for the first time. It was a red-letter day for the sculpture, the foundry, the sculptor, the XII Travelers, the local citizens, and the invited press.

But, alas and alack, one small piece was missing. Incredibly it was found a short time later among the 500 molds that had been returned to El Paso. John had the "lost" mold shipped to Lander overnight where it was cast in bronze and added to complete the pre-assembled monument.

The statue was then taken apart and five gigantic sections were loaded onto flatbed trucks for transport to the El Paso International Airport where it was stored in hanger number 7. A few months later, in October 2006, the Eagle Bronze monument crew returned to El Paso where they removed the giant bronze sections from the hanger and the—almost intact—colossus was transported the short distance to the monument site near the airport entrance. An eight-foot high concrete base had already been constructed and was awaiting the arrival of its occupant. Two tall cranes raised the lofty equestrian bronze onto its throne where it was bolted to steel supports anchored deep in the foundation. Later, the horse's front legs and tail were attached. The installation took one week.

The dedication and unveiling of the installed monument is scheduled for April 21, 2007—408 years after the arrival of Don Juan de Oñate and his colonists at San Elizario, near El Paso, where they held their historic Thanksgiving celebration on April 28, 1598. The Oñate expedition then crossed the Rio Grande near the Pass of the North, on May 4th, en route to New Mexico and the land of Cibola, unaware of the hardship and conflict that awaited them.

The legacy of Spanish colonization is controversial, as all such endeavors have been throughout the history of the world. Sadly, the evolution of society is often the result of conflict, we have only to recall our nation's expansion through "Manifest Destiny,"

the bloody consolidation of national states out of local kingdoms in northern Europe, or the incursion of Greece by the invading tribes that laid the foundations of western civilization.

In 2003, nearly ten-years after the city commissioned the "Oñate" statue, it was renamed by the city council out of concern for the colonizer's brutal, retaliatory actions against Acoma Pueblo—and eighty-two years of early Spanish colonial history vanished. At least, for the foreseeable future, the world's largest equestrian bronze will be known anonymously as "The Equestrian."

Out of such conflict and assimilation has come the rich legacy of our region, which encompasses Native American and Spanish culture. Today we celebrate this cultural *mestizaje*<sup>3</sup> even as we mourn its price. "The Equestrian," named or nameless, still represents the first wave of Hispanic immigration into the southwest that lit the lamp of a new era.



*John S. Houser and Ethan Taliesin Houser celebrate the final installation of "The Equestrian" in El Paso, Texas.*

**JOHN S. HOUSER** maintains a studio in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Ethan Taliesin, his son, has a studio in Mexico City. The author, Nicholas P. Houser is the brother of the sculptor. He is an anthropologist and historian, and project historian and member of the XII Travelers Board. He is editor of the Board's website <<http://www.12travelers.org>> that describes the memorial and contains historical information for students, historians, and the public.

The artists are grateful for and indebted to the general public who showed their support over the many years. There were many donors to this project: The XII Travelers Board raised over 1.3 million dollars (63% of the total) from the private sector, in addition, more than \$100,000.00 was generated as in-kind contributions. The Robert E. and Evelyn McKee Foundation, the major philanthropic sponsor, donated over \$400,000.00. A special plaque, dedicating the monument in their honor, will be mounted on the statue's base. At a crucial moment the Department of Aviation of the City of El Paso generously allocated \$700,000.00 of airport private revenue funds for the completion of the monument. The monument involves no taxpayer money.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. World records are notoriously short and difficult to confirm. Although we have found some close seconds in reference to size of our monument, nothing so far has come to light to topple El Paso's claim, which is now being investigated by The Guinness Book of World Records.
2. Chasing is an important part of the finishing process after a work has been cast in bronze. Chasing is the refining of a bronze cast and includes smoothing the surfaces and edges. This also applies to a large bronze which is cast in many sections so that the work can be properly welded or joined.
3. This is a term acceptable to historians that defines the racial mixing primarily between the Native American and Spaniard, thus the word mestizo for an individual of both races. It is used here as a cultural term, that is, the blending of cultures.





# Civil War Hispanics: The Other Side of the Story

By José L. González



In June 1997, a letter to the editor of a magazine for United States Civil War reenactors claimed that allowing certain ethnic groups, including Mexicans, to participate in Civil War reenactments was not doing a favor to the hobby of reenacting because these people were not involved in “our” Civil War. Having knowledge to the contrary, I felt obligated to offer a rebuttal. The satisfaction of having done so, however, soon dwindled as I realized that certainly there had to be untold numbers of history enthusiasts, perhaps even budding scholars, who had little, if any, knowledge about the role of Hispanics in the great conflict officially known as The War of the Rebellion. The quest to correct some widely-held misconceptions was clearly laid out for me.

On a national level, the Hispanic contribution was in no way limited only to those of Mexican ancestry. It has been documented that a broad socioeconomic spectrum of both southern and northern Hispanics were swept up by the war. Tracing their roots to Spain, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other parts of Latin America, Hispanics, too, endured the hardships of war beside Billy Yank and Johnny Reb. One Alabama company, known as the Spanish Guards, was composed exclusively of soldiers with Spanish surnames, many making the ultimate sacrifice in protecting Mobile which claimed the unit as its home guard.<sup>1</sup> Two regiments—Alabama’s 55th Infantry which saw service in the Vicksburg, Atlanta, and Nashville campaigns, and Florida’s 2nd Infantry which fought at Antietam and Gettysburg—also included a number of Hispanic soldiers. *Tejanos*, or Texan-Mexicans, from the

San Antonio, Texas area served in the Sixth Texas Infantry attached to Gen. Hiram B. Granbury's Brigade of Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne's Division in the Army of the Tennessee, and saw considerable action in many eastern campaigns. Among their acknowledged leaders were men named Antonio Bustillos and Eugenio Navarro.<sup>2</sup>

## LOS TEJANOS

Equal in significance is the fact that almost a thousand *Tejanos* and Mexican Nationals served the Stars and Stripes in units such as Adrian J. Vidal's Partisan Rangers, guerillas operating from Mexico and along the lower Nueces River, and in the First and Second Regiments of the Texas Union Cavalry.<sup>3</sup> A burning resentment had developed for what Hispanics perceived as a growing Anglo-Texan political and economic dominance. This plus the feelings that Anglo land barons, attorneys, and politicians had used the United States' legal system to cheat them of valuable lands became the principal reasons for enlistment in and/or alignment with Union forces. As for the Confederacy, one of the more famous regiments was the Thirty-third Texas Cavalry, a predominantly *Tejano* unit under the command of Col. Santos Benavides from Laredo, Texas whose brothers and brother-in-law were his immediate subordinates. The record of this regiment's border defense stands as a testament of its loyalty both to Benavides and to the cause he espoused.<sup>4</sup>

Along the United States/Texas-Mexico border, Union commanders hoped to secure the Rio Grande. Their plan was to mount an expedition large enough to march north along the Rio Grande from the Gulf Coast and join forces with Union troops protecting the Territory of New Mexico after the forced departure of Sibley's forces in mid-1862. Union General James H. Carlton's California Column, marching south from the Territory, could cross into Mexico through El Paso, obtain needed provisions from various sources, march to Piedras Negras, and cross into Eagle Pass, Texas. The Column would then march toward San Antonio and join the northbound Union troops. The plan never materialized, due in no small part to supply problems with Mexican sources, continuous Indian fighting responsibilities, and a growing logistical problem of guarding and feeding over 6000 Navajo Indians already captured in the Territory. Whether previously designed or not, the proverbial "Plan B" was implemented and resulted in Union in-

cursions into Texas by the First and Second Texas Cavalry Regiments which conducted "vicious, no-holds-barred guerilla war" operations deep into the Nueces country.<sup>5</sup>

On 13 May 1865, more than a month after Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House, Federal and Confederate troops met at Palmito (Palmetto) Ranch, sixteen miles east of Brownsville, Texas. Union troops, hoping to take possession of Brownsville, were routed by a Confederate force intent on fighting to the last man despite widespread rumors being circulated about the sur-

*As years went by, many Tejanos who fought for the Stars and Stripes became United States citizens. Most were urged to do so by radical Republicans who recognized the Mexican vote as a means to help keep their political dominance in Austin.*

render of the South. *Tejanos* fought on both sides at this last battle of the Civil War. Ironically, the Confederacy won its last victory at this remote location, so far away from the eastern theater where the war had ended in Southern defeat.

The Confederate command in Brownsville, realizing the end was near, began to disintegrate. The once-proud soldiers, many in rags and hungry beyond belief, began to desert and make their way home.<sup>6</sup>

The ever-loyal Benavides, bound and determined to keep his regiment free from anarchic dissolution as in Brownsville, made plans through his brothers and brother-in-law to protect the interests of the government and his soldiers. He ordered his officers to maintain order and to ensure that civilians would not be victimized by his soldiers returning home. Benavides returned to his Laredo home to prepare for a new way of life under the watchful eye of federal troops. The end of the war had come to Santos Benavides and Texas. *Tejanos* had been among the first to fight for the Confederacy and were among the last to surrender, and even in defeat a sense of dignity and honor abounded.<sup>7</sup>

As years went by, many *Tejanos* who fought for the Stars and Stripes became United States citizens. Most were urged to do so by radical Republicans who recognized the Mexican vote as a means to help keep their political dominance in Austin. A number of ex-Confederates and organizations such as the Ku Klux

Klan attempted to stop the naturalization process, but the Brownsville Loyal League, 200 Veterans of the Texas Union Army, banded together and assured applicants they would use all means possible to protect those seeking United States citizenship. During and in the years after Reconstruction, most veterans gained little benefit from their service in the Union Army. They lived out their simple lives as they had before the war, mostly in the small villages and towns along the Rio Grande, still suppressed economically and politically by a system that denied them equality.<sup>8</sup>

### THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST

Texas' role in the early 1860s impacted the American Southwest region since its actions prior to seceding officially from the Union set in motion certain military organizational plans. These resulted in the enlistment of men to create units such as Lieutenant Colonel John Robert Baylor's 2nd Texas Mounted Rifles, whose muster rolls contain as many as 134 Hispanic names, which would eventually be attached to Brigadier General Henry Hopkins Sibley's Confederate Army of New Mexico, the Sibley Brigade.<sup>9</sup> Extensive research by Dr. Jerry D. Thompson documents the fact that approximately 9,900 citizens specifically of Mexican descent served during the war. An estimated half of this number was provided by the Territory of New Mexico whose inhabitants had only recently become citizens of the United States with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848.<sup>10</sup>

In 1861, the population of the Territory of New Mexico, excluding Indians, was approximately 80,000 of which the great majority were natives of Hispanic descent. The Territory housed a highly stratified society consisting of a small wealthy Hispanic class, *los ricos*, who shared social, economic, and political power with the wealthier members within the Anglo community. Most New Mexicans were the illiterate and poor, *los pobres*, who lived and worked in rural villages or large ranches—similar to other societies, many were held in debt peonage by wealthy landowners.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, then Territorial Governor Abraham Rencher had assured government officials in Washington that all was quiet and tranquil in New Mexico—its people more concerned about protection from Indians than events in the eastern part of the country. Henry Connelly succeeded Rencher and continually emphasized his belief that native New Mexicans would remain loyal. A dissenting opinion, however, came from

Colonel Edward R. S. Canby who assumed command of the Department of New Mexico in June, 1861. He judged Hispanics as apathetic and questioned not only their military competency but their commitment as well. His belief was that they could be used only as Indian fighters or as auxiliary personnel for Army Regulars but never to repel an invasion by Confederate forces. He stated, "The Mexican people had no affection for the institutions of the United States and, indeed, exhibited hatred for Americans."<sup>11</sup> His statement is perhaps based on the fact that his efforts to raise two regiments of territorial volunteers progressed slowly, and that special concessions had to be made for Hispanic families because the men refused to enlist until they received assurances that their families would be cared for. Another obstacle in the recruitment efforts was the lack of funds to pay recruits, although by the early part of 1862, the Territory's volunteer forces would number approximately 2,800, most of them Hispanics. For many, the chief reason to enlist was the promise of a soldier's pay and bounties. For others, military service meant an escape from peonage. Some joined simply because the economic and political leaders from their communities enlisted and by paternalistic tradition they, too, were obligated to follow. For still others, such as Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Chaves and Captain Rafael Chácon, the reason was patriotism. For the majority, however, it was pure and simple hatred for Texans and their invasion in 1841 which gave birth to strong bitterness and contempt for anything Texan.<sup>12</sup>

The Territory's active involvement in the Civil War began with Lieutenant Colonel John Robert Baylor's invasion in July, 1861. Residents of Mesilla in southern New Mexico, dissatisfied with what they perceived as neglect on the part of the northern part of the Territory, welcomed the invading Texas Mounted Rifles and, in fact, declared for the Confederacy. While support for Baylor and the Confederacy came largely from the Anglo community, it should be noted that a small number of Hispanics joined Baylor's army and two were appointed as officers.<sup>13</sup> Several months ahead of General Sibley's march north from San Antonio, Baylor established a command post in Mesilla, making it the capital of the newly formed Confederate Territory of Arizona. From there, Texas mounted riflemen were sent on probative missions westward into present-day Arizona and north to reconnoiter federal positions and strengths. Sibley's New Mexico Campaign had

begun, albeit without his authority and/or presence. Union Colonel Canby's volunteers would soon be tested—his allegations would be proven correct or discredited.

As soldiers, native New Mexicans experienced a multitude of frustrations after joining the volunteers. The first of these was a language barrier. Even though Spanish-speaking officers were appointed, confusion was inevitable in an army that was not bilingual. Ethnic jealousies, prejudices, and a lack of the care promised for the enlisted men's families, followed closely by the government's inability to pay on a regular basis, ranked high on the list of reasons for poor attitudes. Adding further to the declining discipline and low morale were poor training, inferior equipment, and the government's purchase of the men's personal horses at below cost when the units were transformed from cavalry to infantry units.<sup>14</sup> To protest the disparity practiced by the federal government, Captain Rafael Chacón of 1st New Mexico Volunteers, whose men had provided their own animals and equipment upon enlistment, communicated to his regimental commander:

I am entirely mounted and have, as the colonel knows, performed mounted service for which my men received no pay and my horses no forage. My horses are dying from a want of protection . . . and from starvation. The men were led to think previously that they would be paid for them and that their animals would be employed by the government. With these considerations before my eyes I ask the colonel . . . that we may enjoy equal rights with others.<sup>15</sup>

Other noted Hispanic officers were Captains Francisco González and Julian Espinosa, both from the 1st New Mexico Volunteers, who lost significant monetary investments in their units' horses. As a result of the government's directives, their animals were confiscated with minimal remuneration for their owners. Years later, Espinosa's descendants still spoke of the great financial losses he had experienced as a reward for his patriotism to his new nation and its government.<sup>16</sup> The army's indifference to rectifying the problem was yet another insult against a people who cherished honor and loyalty.

Last but not least, these new soldiers, who themselves and their ancestors had fought Indians for over 300 years, were about to be introduced to a new kind of warfare. The enemy would not be using the guerrilla tactics of the crafty Indians, but instead

would be a trained force armed with awesome weapons and numbers, led by military strategists, and fighting for a cause the New Mexican neither understood nor in which he wanted to participate.<sup>17</sup> In spite of these hurdles, Governor Connelly reported that as the Texan army advanced into the Territory, a total of 3,500 volunteers from New Mexico, excluding militia and independent companies, were in active service and ready to meet the enemy.<sup>18</sup>

On 21 February 1862, Confederate and Union forces met at the north end of the Mesa del Contadero where the Valverde ford would have allowed Confederate forces to bypass General Canby and his forces from Fort Craig, cross the Rio Grande, and continue their trek northward. Captain Chacón and his men were among the first Union troops to engage the enemy and at the end of the day would be among the last to retreat to the walls and the apparent safety of Fort Craig.<sup>19</sup> The first major battle of the New Mexico Campaign, where it was reported that Sibley had 2,500 men while Canby had 3,810 under arms, was a day-long fierce battle which resulted in a Confederate victory after Union forces retreated. Canby's subsequent assessment of the loss clearly placed the blame on the refusal of one of the volunteer regiments to cross the river in support of Captain Alexander McRae's battery, a criticism supported by Canby's staff and others in command positions. Governor Connelly's report, however, differed from Canby's in that McRae's battery was overrun because regular troops failed to charge the enemy as ordered, and when volunteers saw this, they simply followed the example of the regulars. Both regulars and volunteers left the field of battle. A further statement by Union Colonel Benjamin S. Roberts held Major Thomas Duncan responsible for the day's misfortunes because he and his regular troops failed to occupy and hold a wooded area at the crossing.<sup>20</sup> For some members of Company A, 3rd New Mexico Volunteers, terrified at the sight of "onrushing Texans and heavy shell and canister fire," terror turned to panic and they fell back, causing the left side to weaken and collapse. A sizeable fraction of the battalion, however, both volunteers and regulars alike, rushed forward to defend the battery—in the end the effort was in vain.<sup>21</sup>

In Canby's report to Washington, he stated that his *regular* army:

was greatly outnumbered by the enemy and that the battle was fought . . . with no assistance from the militia and but little from the volunteers, who would not obey

orders or obeyed them too late to be of any service . . . [and that] large numbers of the militia and volunteers have deserted, but this adds to rather than diminishes our strength.<sup>22</sup>

Canby's allegations, perceived now as misleading and unfair, gave credibility to rumors, innuendos, accusations, and exaggerations which continued to cloud the true picture of that day's events and wrongfully dishonored many of the native soldiers who there after became the perfect scapegoats. The errors and failures of some would become a blanket indictment, and native soldiers would be labeled as the ultimate cause of the defeat.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, testimony from participants that day points to the fact that many felt that the retreat was premature and that the loss that day was due to command mismanagement once Canby arrived and assumed control on the battlefield. Union Lieutenant William W. Mills' account "supports the position that Canby, rather than the indicted New Mexicans, was responsible for the outcome of the Battle of Valverde" and "that if Col. Roberts had been left to carry out his plans that day Valverde would have been a Union victory and the campaign closed."<sup>24</sup> Canby continued his indiscriminate campaign against native New Mexicans by repeatedly writing to fellow officers that Mexican troops could not be trusted and no reliance was to be placed on these "except for garrisons or for partisan operations." The acting inspector-general's report of 28 February echoed Canby's allegation which punished the volunteers because "no dependence whatever can be placed on the natives; they are worse than useless . . ." The stigma of cowardice and uselessness would stick, and for years afterward distorted accusations against the Territory's volunteers were repeatedly leveled by Anglo pens.<sup>25</sup>

*The Civil War of the United States brought to New Mexicans a systematized method of warfare as strange to them as their language was to the regular soldiers. For centuries Spanish-speaking settlers had fought Utes, Navajos, Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches.*

The Civil War of the United States brought to New Mexicans a systematized method of warfare as strange to them as their language was to the regular soldiers. For centuries Spanish-

speaking settlers had fought Utes, Navajos, Kiowas, Comanches, and Apaches. They had done so alone since Mexico had been too busy with problems of its own to equip and train a frontier army and too concerned for its own safety to allow development of a citizens' army. New Mexicans were frontier fighters accustomed to fighting Indians—cowards did not hold and protect the settlements against marauders for centuries and still survive. They had also marched against Texans in 1841 and prepared to resist Kearny in 1846, but in neither case was there any type of engagement or battle. Post Civil War history, however, would dismiss the Hispanic New Mexican so that many believed that the Territory was thereafter protected solely by the California Column Volunteers. Once again, it was a matter of language because all reports were written in English. Much of the story of New Mexico was recorded by people still obsessed with the United States–Mexico war and, motivated by prejudice and bigotry, these people sought to “paint them [New Mexicans] as peons, unprincipled, lazy, cowardly, cheats, robbers, ignorant and stupid. True, they lacked schools and learning, but they had natural ability.”<sup>26</sup>

Since the arbitrary imposition of United States citizenship upon the Mexican populace of the Territory, neither respect nor consideration had been accorded them in any way, shape, or form by Americans of European extraction. As members of the Territory's volunteer military, these Hispanics found themselves treated with contempt by the regulars; despite this, the overwhelming majority showed extraordinary bravery and loyalty at Valverde and beyond. Men like Captain Rafael Chacón surely must have been disheartened and greatly insulted to be labeled or stigmatized by Canby and so many others.<sup>27</sup>

The records of the National Archives show that New Mexico volunteers were active from 1861 to 1867, fighting Indians; guarding caravans; building military posts, roads, and fences; and providing manpower for tasks such as cutting timber, rock, hay, and making adobe bricks.<sup>28</sup> Once a post was built, they and the California Column volunteers would garrison it and live in a state of preparedness, guarding against any Confederate re-invasion or Indian depredations. In the end, however, as Professor Darlis Miller writes, “the most important influence of the Civil War on the lives of many Hispanics was that it brought economic prosperity and full-time employment and, to the dismay of the *ricos*,

the destruction of American slavery brought in its wake the legal end to peonage."<sup>29</sup>

In his memoirs written some years later, Rafael Chacón wrote, in connection with the conclusion of the Texan invasion,

. . . a sentiment of pride for my race makes me note a reflection on their martial character. Since Spanish colonization, this nation of New Mexico endured an unequal struggle against the savage nations that surrounded it, without rudiments, without resources, without assistance of any kind from capitals of the ruling countries. They have fought and died, always with the faith that it was necessary for them to defend their hearths. Obligated by circumstances always to defend themselves with weapons, in the country and in the villages, like the Roman populace in primitive times, they soon raised among their sons a populace of soldiers by nature intelligent, intrepid, valiant, and lovers of their country and of their liberty. The New Mexicans, raised in the use of arms from their childhood, did not know what fear was and God grant that those in whose hands our destiny has fallen will begin someday to appreciate their beautiful qualities and temperaments.<sup>30</sup>

Chacón's sentiments can just as easily be attributed to Mexican Texans who also joined to serve on either side of the Civil War for reasons known now only to them but speculated upon by others over the recent past. The end result was essentially the same in New Mexico as in Texas, with little if any respect gained by the majority of them for their own and their family's sacrifices. History in this respect would sadly remain unchanged for generations to come.

While this episode was not of their making, Hispanics' military service was of their choosing based on promises made as well as feelings of responsibility, obligation, and loyalty toward their benefactors and/or nation. The contributions made by this ethnic group—honor, loyalty, courage, pride, and commitment—can no longer be excluded from its well-deserved place in American history.

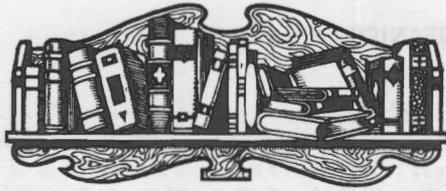
**JOSÉ L. GONZÁLEZ** is a native El Pasoan who received his B.A. in history in 1970 and his M.E. in 1974, both from the University of Texas at El Paso. He worked as a teacher and counselor at El Paso's Cathedral High School, his alma mater, until 2003 when he relocated with his wife to San Antonio where he works as a high school administrator. He and his wife are both actively involved in Civil War reenacting with special emphasis on the war in the Southwest. They also participate in living history events at various Texas forts where they educate school children and adults about Hispanic contributions during that period. Mr. González is a member of the El Paso County Historical Society, both the New Mexico and Texas historical societies, and four reenacting groups.

### ENDNOTES

1. Valdez, Joyce. "Hispanic Soldiers Played a Notable Role in the Civil War." *Hispanic*, May 2001.
2. Thompson, Jerry D. *Vaqueros in Blue and Gray*. 2nd ed. (Austin, TX: State House Press, 2000) 26. Margaret Donsbach, "The Third Texas Itch." *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Vol. XLI, No. 7, 2003, 48. "In addition to the Anglo-Texans who made up most of the (Third Texas) regiment, there was also a company of German-Texans from the town of New Braunfels, and a company of Hispanic men, generally referred to as 'Mexicans,' though their families had probably lived in Texas longer than those of the Anglos or Germans."
3. Thompson, *Vaqueros*, ix-x, and 81.
4. Thompson, Jerry D. *Mexican Texans in the Union Army*. 1st ed. (El Paso, TX: Texas Western Press, Southwestern Studies No. 78) vii-ix.
5. Thompson, *Vaqueros*, 97-98.
6. Thompson, *Vaqueros*, 123-124.
7. Thompson, *Vaqueros*, 124-125.
8. Thompson, *Mexican Texans*, 37-38.
9. Thompson, *Vaqueros*, 130-198. Hall, Martin Hardwick *The Confederate Army of New Mexico*. 1st ed. (Austin, TX: Presidial Press, 1978) 295-350.
10. Thompson, *Vaqueros*, 5-6.
11. Miller, Darlis. "Hispanos and The Civil War in New Mexico: A Reconsideration." *New Mexico Historical Review*, April 1979, 105-106.
12. Miller. . . 107-108 and Thompson, *Vaqueros*, 6-7.
13. Miller. . . 107.
14. Miller. . . 109-110 and Thompson, *Vaqueros*, 6-7.
15. Meketa, Jacqueline Dorgan. *Legacy of Honor. The Life of Rafael Chacón. A Nineteenth Century New Mexican*. 2nd ed. (Las Cruces, NM: Yucca Tree Press, 2000) 135-136.

16. Meketa. . . 142-143.
17. Meketa. . . 124.
18. Meketa. . . 26.
19. Meketa. . . . 163-164.
20. Miller. . . 113.
21. Taylor, John McClellan, *Bloody Valverde. A Civil War Battle on the Rio Grande. February 21, 1862.* 1st ed. (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1995) 87.
22. Meketa. . . 175-176.
23. Meketa. . . 164.
24. Meketa, Charles & Jacqueline. "Heroes or Cowards? A New Look at the Role of Native New Mexicans and the Battle of Valverde." *New Mexico Historical Review*, January 1987, 35-38.
25. Meketa, *Legacy.* . . 180-181.
26. Stanley, F. *The Civil War in New Mexico.* 1st ed. (Denver, CO: World Press, 1960) 387-388.
27. Meketa. . . 164-165.
28. Stanley, xi.
29. Miller. . . 116-117.
30. Meketa, *Legacy.* . . 185-186.





## Book Reviews

***Old Guns and Whispering Ghosts: Tales and Twists of the Old West.* By Jesse L. "Wolf" Hardin. Boise, Idaho, Shoot Magazine, 2006. Hardback \$39.95.**

Quite frankly, I never thought I would read a book about guns regarding their philosophical and, maybe even, spiritual aspects. That all changed when I read *Old Guns and Whispering Ghosts: Tales and Twists Of The Old West* by Jesse L. "Wolf" Hardin of New Mexico. The book is a compilation of stories regarding certain individuals, events, and guns, some famous, or, perhaps, infamous, while others are more obscure, of the American West. But the book is more than just a narrative of these things. It is, more properly, a philosophical treatise of those individuals, events, and guns, and how they helped shape, and were, in turn, shaped by the vast expanse of the great American western frontier.

When searching the internet for more information on Jesse Hardin, I discovered he was part of a movement called "Anima." According to the group's website, "The word Anima . . . is derived from the ancient Latin animus meaning 'breath,' 'spirit,' and 'courage,'" and "is simply the vital force connecting and animating all things." The actual "practice of Anima, then is being—ever more consciously and courageously—an intentional participant in the unending process of healing, awakening and enlivening." In the website's introduction, it is stated that "Anima becomes a way of life . . . living every moment of our lives consciously, deliberately, purposefully and fully" ([www.animacenter.org](http://www.animacenter.org)). In his book Hardin uses this philosophy to write about the interrelationship between people, nature, and guns. The best examples of this involve the chapters on those famous western personalities Annie Oakley, William "Buffalo Bill" Cody, Theodore Roosevelt, Ben Lilly, Pancho Villa, and Elfego Baca. Hardin's description of these people is more than just a standard biography. Hardin analyzes them describing how they are affected by their surroundings, and how this, plus guns, helped influence their paths in life.

The book is beautifully written especially Hardin's descriptions of nature. The best example of this is from chapter fourteen, "The Vintage Hunt." Hardin writes, "You stand still for a moment or two, giddy with the feeling of being awash in millions of acres of national forest. . . . On either side of you orange and purple volcanic mountains thrust upwards from a primeval sea bed studded with prehistoric shells and mysterious fossils. Climbing upwards again the cactus and sage slowly transition to pinon, oak and juniper, which in turn give

way to lofty ponderosa pines and then shimmering white barked aspen" (p. 211). A truly magnificent description! My favorite sentence of the whole book is in the same chapter. Hardin combines his philosophizing with a personal point of view when he states, "Every one of us exists at the expense of other beings, and even the gun-abhorring vegetarian is the cause of other species' deaths: the vegetables ripped up from the ground in their prime, the plants denied a chance to mature and seed" (p. 219). Absolutely great writing!

The book is rife with photos. Some are period pieces from the American West while others were shot by the author using his family and friends as models holding guns, many of which are from his personal collection. Also included in the book is a plethora of gorgeous drawings done by Hardin. The photos and drawings are excellent additions to the narrative.

The book has many exceptional moments, but there are some shortcomings. In the acknowledgments, Hardin refers to an appendix of addresses and websites, yet there is no appendix, nor is there an index. Some factual errors stand out. In the caption to a drawing on page forty, the author Hardin has pistolero turned lawyer John Wesley Hardin being killed by "George" Selman instead of John Selman. On the next page, the author writes that J. W. Hardin was shot down "On the afternoon of August 18, 1895. . . ." (p. 41). As we here in the Sun City know, El Paso's adopted son was murdered the NIGHT of August 19, 1895. When discussing Theodore Roosevelt, Hardin mentions the "terrorist strike on the U.S.S. Maine in Havana Harbor" and how, in response, the future president raised "a volunteer brigade" to fight in the Spanish-American War (p. 184). According to the latest research that I found, the battleship U.S.S. Maine was not destroyed by a terrorist attack, but by an internal explosion in one of the ship's coal bunkers and/or the ammunition magazine; and TR's Rough Riders was a cavalry REGIMENT, not a brigade. In the chapter describing Pancho Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico on March 9, 1916 (not "March 19, 1916," [p. 206] as Hardin writes), Hardin claims that this was "the first time since the British sacked the White House during the War of 1812, the United States of America has been invaded" (p. 189). This event occurred August 1814. Five months later, in January 1815, the British invaded the state of Louisiana in an attempt to capture New Orleans, but were destroyed by an American army led by General Andrew Jackson.

Overall, *Old Guns and Whispering Ghosts: Tales and Twists of the Old West* is a magnificent read for anyone interested the Wild West, guns, nature, and philosophy. It is an eclectic adventure through one of the most colorful periods of American history.

ALBERT BURNHAM  
Department of History  
El Paso Community College



## OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 2007 THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President	Jack W. Niland
1st Vice-President	William (Bill) Hooten
2nd Vice-President	Lillian Crouch
3rd Vice-President	Mary Jo Melby
Recording Secretary	Patty Bruce
Corresponding Secretary	Sandy Gibson
Treasurer	John B. Butterworth, CPA
Historian	Magda C. Flores
Membership & Membership Directory	Leigh Aldaco
Research Center: Curator	Patricia Worthington

### MEMBERS EX-OFFICIO

Editor, PASSWORD	Marilyn C. Gross
Editor, EL CONQUISTADOR	Pat Worthington
Program Chair	Mary Jo Melby
Immediate Past President	Mike Hutson

### DIRECTORS

#### 2005-2007

William (Bill) Hooten  
Elizabeth Johnson  
Jack Maxon  
Mary Jo Melby  
Susan Goodman  
Novick  
Rose Peinado  
Dr. John Wilbanks

#### 2006-2008

Dr. Charles Ambler  
Larry Baumgarten  
Robert E. Bean  
Magda C. Flores  
Charles Gaddy  
John Hansen  
Enrique Medrano

#### 2007-2009

John Broaddus  
Dr. Ann Gabbert  
Harris Hatfield  
Carol Miller  
Amy Paschich  
Dr. Tony Payan  
Jim Tritton

**ALL PAST PRESIDENTS ARE HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS**

THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
**Corporate Sponsors**

*Continued from inside front cover.*

**PDX PRINTING**

100 Porfirio Diaz, El Paso, TX 79902  
915-544-6688

**PERSPECTIVA**

7380 Remcon Circle,  
El Paso, TX 79912  
915-833-2488

**HELPS DODGE  
REFINING CORP**

Box 20001, El Paso, TX 79998  
915-778-9881

**POE FOUNDATION, INC.**

1490 Lee Trevino, El Paso, TX 79936

**PRICE'S CREAMERIES**

c/o GENE CARREJO  
600 North Piedras, El Paso, TX 79903  
915-565-2711

**SCOTT, HULSE, MARSHALL,  
FEUILLE, FINGER &  
THURMOND, ATTORNEYS**

1100 Chase Tower  
201 East Main Drive  
El Paso, TX 79915  
915-533-2493

**SUNSETS WEST, INC.**

Tony & Jason Salazar  
210 Los Mochis Avenue  
Canutillo, TX 79835  
915-877-5355

**WELLS FARGO BANK  
TEXAS, N.A.**

221 North Kansas, El Paso, TX 79901  
915-532-9922

Books for review should be sent to:

**Richard Baquera, Book Review Editor**

El Paso Community College-Valle Verde • 919 Hunter Drive • El Paso, Texas 79915

For information concerning the submission of an article to **PASSWORD**, please contact:

**Marilyn Gross, Editor**

5133 Orleans Avenue • El Paso, Texas 79924  
(915) 755-7329 • E-mail: mcgross@prodigy.net

There is no stipend for any article published in **PASSWORD** which does not guarantee publication of articles or reviews submitted. **PASSWORD** also reserves the right to edit any material published. Unless special arrangements are made, all articles and book reviews become the property of the Society. Those articles that are published are copyrighted by **PASSWORD**.

The per-copy price of **PASSWORD** is \$12.00 for copies from 1980 to the present.

The price of copies of **PASSWORD** from 1956 to 1979 is \$15.00.

Cost of postage and handling is \$2.00 for one issue, \$1.00 for each additional issue.

**Correspondence regarding back numbers, defective copies,  
and changes of address should be addressed to:**

**Membership Secretary, El Paso County Historical Society,  
P.O. Box 28, El Paso, Texas 79940.**

**Society Membership of \$45.00 per year includes a subscription to  
PASSWORD and EL CONQUISTADOR.**

**Society Headquarters:**

The Burges House • 603 W. Yandell • El Paso, Texas 79902 • (915) 533-3603

**PASSWORD** (ISSN 0031-2738) is published quarterly by

**THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 603 W. Yandell, El Paso, Texas 79902**

Periodicals Postage Paid at El Paso, Texas

**POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:**

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