

Southwesterner In Focus
DIRECTOR OF U.T. EL PASO'S
PLANT LIKE BREAD—CRUSTY,
SOFT AND SALTY
EPT Sundial 12/14/69

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When he was 16, Hollenshead was construction superintendent for Standard Oil in the state of Louisiana, supervising 155 workmen in the construction of all power plants, barracks, and homes in the oil fields. His schooling wasn't neglected during this time, however, for his mother and father tutored him at home in math, history, English, and Latin. When the principal offered him two years credit if he would enroll in high school, Hollenshead did so, and graduated in two years. He then went back to work in the oil fields to help finance college educations for two of his sisters.

He got his own college education too, at Trinity University. Indicative of his time budgeting abilities is a run-down of his senior year achievements: carried five courses; was president of the student body; captain of the football team; president of Blue Key honorary society; part-time high school teacher of history and economics. At the top

of the list should be the fact that he got married during that year. He earned his B.S. degree in math in 1930 after which he became teacher and athletic coach in a Sugarland, Tex., high school.



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"Huey Long was a good friend to my father, my brothers, and to me," says Hollenshead. "The governor wanted me to leave Ganado and enter politics in Louisiana. We talked about it in a hotel room in Baton Rouge. I declined the offer, but I was the first person to hear the song he had just composed and which he used in his political career. It was entitled 'Every Man A King.'" Hollenshead continues, "It reflected Long's belief that

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After his discharge, he became deputy superintendent of schools in El Paso for nine colorful, noteworthy years. As a man with definite ideas and no hesitancy whatsoever in expressing his opinions, he created quite a stir in some community and academic circles and in the process illustrated the fact that such a post did not necessarily have to be a dull, cut-and-dried, routine affair.

“I had a little trouble with the school board on a few occasions,” he dryly comments. “One time the members, in obviously perturbed frames of mind, appeared in my office. I dosed the doors, sat down behind my roll-top desk, informed them that as long as the job was mine, I would run things as I saw fit. I then invited any of them who disagreed to take off their coats and we’d have at it. There were no takers.”

On another occasion, a law suit was scheduled to be filed against him because of certain disciplinary methods adopted by him concerning the children of some of the school board members. “I let it be known that I planned to file a countersuit and the whole matter was dropped,” he says.

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By the time he resigned in 1955, Hollenshead had left in his wake an administrative record which earned him some enemies, an abundance of friends, and a markedly non-apathetic atmosphere in the public school system. “I left with no animosity,” he remarks.

The next few years were spent in managing what he calls his “mill,” the actual title of which was the Crawford Sash and Door Co. He also dabbled in insurance and other business fields and once again was asked to enter the political arena, this time by a group of local citizens.

BECAME CANDIDATE

The April, 1957, election for mayor of El Paso was just 72 hours away when Hollenshead agreed to run as a write-in candidate for El Paso’s top post, with the stipulation that he would not have to campaign. However, his participation in the election, even as a non-campaigning write-in candidate, was irritating to those in the other political camp and particularly to the late Ed Pooley, then editor of the El Paso Herald-Post. “I received phone calls instructing me in no uncertain terms to withdraw,” recalls Hollenshead. His bland, unruffled reply was: “Of course I won’t withdraw. I want to have a little fun out of this thing.” Final tally of the election showed 16,895 votes for the winning candidate, Raymond Telles; 8,787 for write-in candidate Hollenshead. He comments: “The Telles brothers are still friends of mine.”

In 1960 Hollenshead became director of personnel at Texas Western College and had the opportunity to implement his interest in

young people. "In three months I spent most of my time beating the bushes throughout this city lining up jobs for 133 students," he explains. Then he was offered the position of director of the college's physical plant, accepted it, and has since been ensconced in an unadorned but comfortable office in a large building at the southwest end of the campus.

His office is the focal point from which he directs 120 employes in their various jobs of repairs and maintenance of all buildings and grounds at the University. Hollenshead himself spends little time in his office, most of the time he's checking jobs, or crews, or future repairs in the various buildings on campus.

The Physical Plant building contains much more than offices. A quick tour of the entire structure reveals huge rooms, some of them well-equipped carpentry shops (part of his staff builds furniture, shelves, and other necessary equipment for the university.) Other rooms are gigantic storage areas for such supplies as paper towels, mops, brooms, soaps, and garbage cans, each item neatly stashed in its proper place, for the director runs a tight ship.

Although somewhat removed from classroom activity, Hollenshead (or "Holly" as many call him) keeps in touch with the students through the Work-Study program, by conversing with those who are in Bell Hall dormitory cafeteria when he has coffee there each day at 6 a.m., and at the Health Service and in the dormitories which are a part of his daily rounds.

"Ninety-nine per cent of the young people today are as levelheaded as those who were attending college when I was a student," he comments. "You'll very seldom find one with whom you can't sit down and talk, be-

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