

# PASS-WORD



OF THE

EL PASO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# PASS-WORD

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# PASS - WORD

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## MAJOR McMULLEN'S INVASION OF MEXICO

by C. L. Sonnichsen

In 1861 and 1862 the Civil War was fought in miniature in New Mexico and West Texas.<sup>1</sup> No battles were joined in the immediate vicinity of El Paso, but everybody on both sides of the river lived for almost two years in daily expectation of battle, murder, and sudden death. There was even an international episode which threatened for a short time to cause trouble between the United States and Mexico.<sup>2</sup>

The small population of El Paso, Texas, then known as Franklin, overflowed with loyalty to the Southern cause. The citizens gave Colonel John R. Baylor an enthusiastic welcome in July of 1861 when he rode in from San Antonio at the head of the Second Regiment of Texas Mounted Rifles. A number of them joined him when, a year later, the defeated Confederates passed through on their long retreat.<sup>3</sup> The few who remained fled to El Paso, Mexico (now Juarez), as the Missouri and California volunteers moved in and took over. Ben Dowell (Franklin's first postmaster), J. S. Gillett, and Brad Daily were the most prominent of the refugees. They spent their time spying on the Yankees and trying to promote a return of the Southern forces.

Into this tense situation stepped Major William McMullen of the first Regiment of California Volunteers, a brave and patriotic soldier who seems always to have had his good intentions neutralized by a natural talent for getting himself into hot water. He had started his military career as a private in the war against Mexico, joined the California Column as a captain, and attained his majority before the Californians reached the Rio Grande.<sup>4</sup> His new status seems to have impressed him deeply.

<sup>1</sup>*War of the Rebellion Records*, Series I, IV, 1 ff. The best account of the campaign from the Union point of view is A. A. Hayes' "The New Mexican Campaign of 1862," *Magazine of American History*, Feb., 1866, XV, 171-184. Colonel Daniel Connor gives a condensed account in *Password*, Aug., 1955, I, 90-98.

<sup>2</sup>William Gillett Ritch, governor of New Mexico ad interim in 1875, copied the correspondence regarding this episode. His collection was eventually acquired by the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, Cal. The material is used by permission of the officials of the Library.

<sup>3</sup>Owen White, *Out of the Desert* (El Paso: The McMath Co., 1924), 75-76.

<sup>4</sup>McMullen was born in Brooklyn, New York, March 4, 1827, got some elementary schooling, and went off at the age of twenty to fight in the Mexican War. In January, 1849, three months after his discharge, he was headed for the California gold fields by way of Cape Horn. For a year and a half he dug for gold—then bought a printing office and began publishing the *Amador Dispatch*. On August 16, 1861, he was mustered into service as captain of Company C, First Regiment of Infantry, California Volunteers (W. G. Ritch, "Notes Concerning the Career of William McMullen," Ritch Collection No. 1411).

On Dec. 1, 1862, he arrived at Franklin to take charge of the local garrison and found everything in a state of confusion.

"The Texans living in El Paso [Juarez] are organized," he reported to his commanding officer on the day of his arrival, "with the intention of attacking this place and preventing the destruction of property on the approach of the enemy. Skillman<sup>5</sup> was . . . last seen below San Elizario apparently greatly elated and he promised to be back in a few days . . . One thousand Texans are said to be at Horse Head crossing under command of \_\_\_\_\_ Scurry. There are many other rumors too ridiculous to mention . . . It is my intention to leave here with Cos D & K Wednesday morning for San Elizario to prevent the removal of Grain into Mexico. I have no doubt that the first point of attack is intended at Franklin."<sup>6</sup>

Colonel J. R. West's reply to this report, written at Mesilla two days later, shows how seriously the Union officers regarded the possibility of a Confederate riposte: "Occupy your men with throwing up some temporary defenses, loop holing houses, getting ready to lay waste so that if the enemy should come upon you suddenly, you will be quite ready to act."<sup>7</sup>

By December 5 McMullen had set up his headquarters at San Elizario, where he began picking up rumors which made it difficult for him to remain calm. One story said that two Tigua Indians from Ysleta, Simon and Bernardo Holguin, had been employed by Ben Dowell *et al* to follow a scouting party under Captain N. J. Pishon and spy on its movements. Indignantly McMullen dashed across the river and presented himself at the door of José María Uranga, top official of El Paso, Mexico.

Uranga listened courteously to the Union officer's protests and promised to do what he could. He would arrest any enemies of the United States whose infidelity could be proved, he said, and offered to keep a party of scouts at San Ignacio, some miles down the river, to intercept any bands of Confederates who might approach from the east. McMullen had to thank him for these kind words, but was by no means satisfied. He wrote to Colonel West after the interview: "I believe he is honest in the expression, but we are well aware that he lacks the energy to prevent communication, and the decision to drive out or surrender the renegade scoundrels in El Paso . . . Baylor was reported at Devil's River with 7,000 men . . . Captain Hardeman . . . is reported as going

<sup>5</sup>Captain Henry Skillman, noted Indian fighter, tried to keep communications open between San Antonio and West Texas. He was killed in April, 1864, by Union soldiers (White, *op. cit.*, 80).

<sup>6</sup>McMullen to West, Dec. 1, 1862, Ritch Collection No. 1165.

<sup>7</sup>West to McMullen, Dec. 2, 1862, Ritch Collection No. 1166.

up the Pecos to Horse Head crossing with 2000 men and this can be relied upon as Skillman's report to a friend. He also stated that he had the names of the Rebels in El Paso and they would all join his company as soon as an opportunity offered.<sup>8</sup>

Distrustful of Uranga and convinced that the Southern sympathizers on the other side of the river were preparing to attack him, McMullen took a rash step. He ordered an invasion of Mexico. This lawless act was immediately brought to the attention of Uranga, who now took his turn at making a strong protest:

Republic of Mexico  
Office of the Jefe Politico  
District of the Bravo

This office has been informed by Mr. Oran Lowry that a picket of soldiers of your command has been camped at the place called Loma Colorada on the right banks of the Rio Grande, and eight more soldiers have been stationed at Loma Blanca, also on the right bank of the said river, each with the object of detaining and seizing strangers on the road which passes these two places. If this act, Major, has actually been done, there is no doubt that, without your knowledge, international rights have

been violated and treaties existing between the two nations have been broken. This office cannot be persuaded and does not believe that such measures have been carried out with your consent, much less by your order. I likewise hope that they will not be repeated, but will not fail to give account of them to the Supreme Government or to take the precautions which the circumstances may require.

This occasion enables me to offer you my earnest good wishes and regards.

God and Reformation, Dec. 24, 1862.

José Ma Uranga<sup>9</sup>

McMullen immediately flung a belligerent answer back at him, laying the blame for what happened on Uranga himself:

Jose Ma Uranga  
Prefect of Dist of Bravos

Sir

Your communication dated at El Paso Mexico Decr 24th 1862 has been received, and in reply to your enquiry into the truth of a report, "That a picquet of Soldiers" belonging to *my* command "were stationed on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande"; I have to say that it does not astonish me that you are surprised to hear of such a proceeding on my

<sup>8</sup>McMullen to West, Dec. 6, 1862, Ritch Collection No. 1168.

<sup>9</sup>José María Uranga to McMullen, Dec. 24, 1862, Ritch Collection No. 1173.

part; when I take into consideration the injustices practiced by the Mexican authorities, in permitting the *avowed* enemies of the United States Government to establish an outpost in the town of El Paso, from which to send out Mexican and Indian spies to learn the strength and movements of U S troops in New Mexico and Texas, with open and direct communication through Mexican territory to the Head Quarters of the army who are endeavoring to overthrow the Government . . . .

Your information is partly correct. A picquet of eight men was stationed on the River—on the Mexican side—opposite this town for 24 hours; with my knowledge and by my order, viz 23rd inst. for the purpose of apprehending eight Americans who I expected to follow Capt. Gellett, who left Guadalupe on the evening of the 22nd; *with a pass from the Prefect of the Dist of Bravos* for 20 men although he had but 12, this was my sole object. No Mexican citizen was disturbed or molested in any manner, and as soon as I became satisfied the party would not follow I withdrew the guards—

I assure you that I entertain the most friendly regard for Mexico and am desirous of preserving the most intimate relations between our respective Governments, and while the Mexican authorities evince the slightest disposition to observe Treaty stipulations, I shall scrupulously avoid giving cause for offence; yet my sense of duty to my Government will not permit Mexican soil to shield our enemies when protected by Mexican authority in violating international obligations.

I have the honor to offer you my utmost consideration & regards—  
Your obt Svt

Wm McMullen  
Maj 1st Inft U.S.  
Cal Vols  
Comg<sup>10</sup>

Uranga received this bristling statement a few hours after it was written and was shocked by McMullen's bad manners. It took him four days to formulate a reply. What he produced was a somewhat wordy but extremely reasonable defense of his position.

In the first place I should say that you are not accurate in describing as unjustifiable the practice of admitting to this town all inhabitants of the world without investigating their opinions regarding the conflict in the United States or any other. The same is done in the United States, and of this I could give you various examples. And in the second place if such people on their own responsibility and without giving notice to the authorities send mail, emissaries, or messages anywhere, in what way can this *jefatura* be held responsible? Have they not liberty to do these things so long as they respect the laws of the country in which they are living?

<sup>10</sup>McMullen to Uranga, Dec. 25, 1862, Ritch Collection No. 1174.

In admitting in your note that it was with your knowledge and by your order that a picket of soldiers was stationed on Mexican soil with the object you mention, are you not confessing that you have violated international obligations in a manner which cannot be denied? If this *jefatura* did grant a pass into the interior of the Republic to Don Juan Guillett—not to Captain Gillette—because we did not know until now that he holds such a title, do you believe we have violated our treaties? . . . This *jefatura* . . . tries to comply with them without permitting violation of the right of asylum which every citizen in the world is guaranteed (indeed, the constitution guarantees it), observing all and each of the international agreements.<sup>11</sup>

By now McMullen had cooled off enough to worry lest the whirlwind he had raised should grow into a tempest. He realized that his side of the story must reach headquarters before any other if he wished to avoid trouble, and on Jan. 16 he wrote to J. R. West, now a general, offering "some justification of what might otherwise appear a reckless disregard of international rights."

At the time the Rebels were driven from this District about 20 men mostly old residents of this neighborhood crossed over into El Paso Mexico and there remained very quietly until the latter part of October; when feeling secure from any molestation by United States troops they publicly avowed their intention of joining the rebel force which was expected from Texas . . .

About the middle of Novr a notorious character named Skillman arrived in El Paso and reported the enemy in large force within ten days march of El Paso. The people of Ysleta Socorro and San Elizario became so much alarmed that a majority of them crossed over into Mexico and the Rebels in El Paso threatened an attack upon the town of Franklin (or El Paso) Texas . . . I had every reason to believe that the enemy would be permitted to advance as far as El Paso without resistance on the part of the Mexican authorities. This would have compelled me to fall back and defend the town of Franklin & the post at Harts Mills without being able to offer any opposition to the advance of the enemy.

It would also have enabled them to occupy a position where they might with an inferior force effectually cut off my communications with Headqrs if I attempted to defend the post—I did not feel disposed to submit to this, and accordingly determined to oppose any force advancing, on either side of the river, with which I might successfully cope—I expected the Rebels in El Paso to leave the town in small squads, and to unite at Guadalupe or San Ignacio; then to pass down the Mexican side of the Rio Grande and join Skillman—

I made arrangements to capture them below that point; but the first squad became apprehensive and took the road to Chihuahua; the

<sup>11</sup>Uranga to McMullen, Dec. 29, 1862, Ritch Collection No. 1175.



others concluded not to follow. I can only regret that I allowed the scoundrels to escape . . . . The course of the Mexicans may justly be attributed to their exposed condition, and a knowledge from former aggressions that neither personal nor international rights would be respected by the Rebels should they again obtain possession of this section—I could not permit these considerations to weigh with me, where the danger was so imminent or the chances so hazardous—Hoping the Genl may consider my action justified by the circumstances—I remain

Respectfully your Obt Svt<sup>12</sup>  
Wm McMullen

McMullen need not have worried. West accepted his version of the story without question and gave no credit at all to the patience and reasonableness of the Mexican authorities which certainly contributed in keeping this affair from going any farther. In reply to McMullen's explanation he wrote:

Dear Major

You did perfectly right and your straightforward letter to the prefect will be too much for Mexican Diplomacy, I think—

Yours truly  
J. R. West<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup>McMullen to West, Jan. 16, 1863, Ritch Collection No. 1187.

<sup>13</sup>West to McMullen, Jan., 1863, Ritch Collection No. 1168. McMullen went on to live out a brief but turbulent life. In March, 1863, he was reprimanded by West for inattention to his duty as commander of the post at Mesilla. A violent quarrel followed which had to be straightened out by General Carleton (Ritch Collection No. 1232 ff.). In October of 1863 McMullen, now a Lieutenant Colonel in command at Fort Union, was again given a bad report by an inspector and the fireworks started up again (Ritch Collection Nos. 1523-28). He was discharged on Aug. 14, 1864 (Ritch Collection No. 1411), engaged in "surveying and refining," turned down a commission in the Mexican army, and died at Watrous, New Mexico on Oct. 23, 1880 (*Daily New Mexican*, Oct. 30, 1880).

THE WORLD  
 WAS THEIR OYSTER—  
 FINE EATING IN EARLY EL PASO

. . . . . by Helen Whitner Somerville

*Bon appetit!* Good appetite! A toast to the health of one's fellow man. It is a wish that one's fellow man may have an appetite. It is a wish that one's fellow man may enjoy his food and drink.

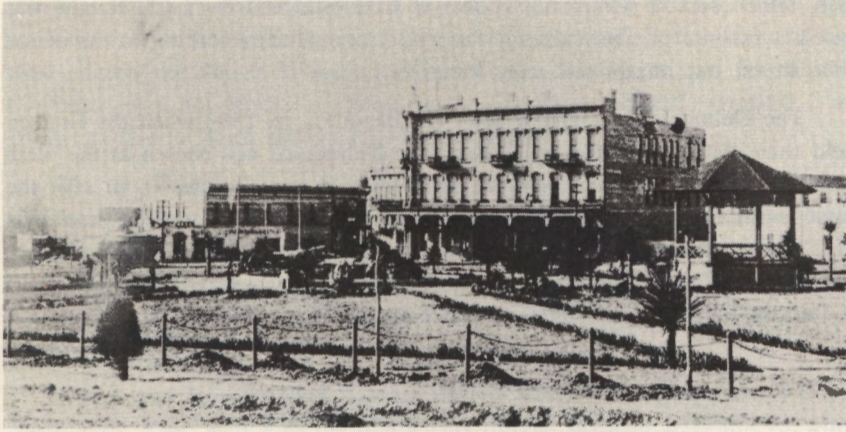
The good old days in El Paso were wonderful. The citizens who came here to make their home enriched their desert village. They had no great wealth, yet there was enchantment, romance, and freedom for all, the atmosphere of gracious living.

In whatever situation man is found his progress in civilization can be measured by the degree of refinement he has attained in the art of gastronomy. Old El Paso offered its citizenry ample evidence of accomplishment and a wide variety of choice. Epicureanly the restaurants were foremost. They were a place fit for dining a lady grandly; and they offered imported delicacies. The victuals of the restaurants were good and their hosts cheerful.

It was at the new French Restaurant in 1884 that Monsieur Adolfe Menjou was the congenial host. This restaurant later became "The Delmonico," but it still carried the name of French Restaurant. It was located on El Paso Street. A typical dinner menu read:

	Soup	
	Consomme	Brunoise
	Hors D'oeuvre	
Fish	Casburgo a la Riche	
	Entrees	
	Escallopes of Veal, Milanaise	
	Ham Aux Espinards Champagne	
	Beef Braise With Mushrooms	
	Roast	
	Beef	Mutton
	Vegetables	
	Corn Panache	Potatoes
	Salad	
	Lettuce	
	Dessert	
	Pudding, Louis XVI	
	Assorted Pies and Cakes	
Coffee	Tea	Milk <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>El Paso Times, February 13, 1887.



Grand Central Hotel in the 1890's, taken from across the San Jacinto Plaza.

Every week The Delmonico ran a small newspaper ad which showed the quality and variety of its "Plats du Jour," the basis of the restaurant's fame:

"The Delmonico"

French Restaurant

Plats Du Jour

Sunday:	Catellettes Mouton Milanaise
Monday:	Escalopes a la Tartare
Tuesday:	Boeuf a la Mode
Wednesday:	Tripe a la Mode de Caen
Thursday:	Poulet a la Francaise
Friday:	Bacalao a la Viscaiana
Saturday:	Choucroute

Breakfast to Order

Lunch 12 to 2 o'clock

Dinner 5 o'clock, 50 cents

Elegant Service<sup>2</sup>

This was truly a French menu. The French restaurateur who improvised this menu was a person who knew both his French and his patrons. For the uninitiated it translated as follows: Catellettes mouton Milanaise, mutton cutlets; Escaloppes a la Tartare, scallops with Tartar Sauce; Tuesday's Boeuf a la mode, a beef pot roast which had been larded before brazing and simmered with vegetables included in the sauce; Tripe a la mode Caen, tripe cooked as was the custom of cooking tripe in Caen, Normandy, a province in France; Poulet a la Francaise, chicken in the French manner. Friday was fish day, so Bacalao was on the menu. This glamorous fish serving originated as a Cuban

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, January 22, 1887.

dish, which became commonly known as Cod fish. Saturday's Choucroute was surely a favorite of many a man, correctly pronounced, according to the menu, shoo kroot, but interpreted sauer kraut.

The Delmonico was also a place for banquets. In 1888 when the firemen held their state convention in El Paso, the Delmonico was chosen as the place for the closing event, the banquet. Even then it was the custom to save the most lavish entertainment for the last occasion at a convention. The proprietor of Delmonico's at this time was Monsieur G. Lemaire, another Frenchman. The menu of this banquet was truly traditional of an excellent restaurateur. It follows:

#### Menu

Sea Turtle Soup                      Sauterne  
Red Snapper, Mayonnaise Sauce  
Zanfandel  
"Our Lone Star State"—John Julian  
Pates a la Monglas  
Ham, Saucisson de Lyon  
Head Cheese Galatine a la gelee  
French Style Buffalo Tongue Ecarlate  
Rouge Et Noir Champagne  
"Our Firemen Visitors,"—J. F. Crosby  
Turkey, Cranberry Sauce, Beef Tenderloin  
French Green Peas  
Lettuce Salad  
Croquettes of Potatoes, Beets  
Imperial Champagne  
"Our Ladies"—S. H. Buchanan  
Ice Creams, Fruits, Cakes, Nuts  
Cafe Noir<sup>3</sup>

The "French Style Buffalo Tongue Ecarlate" shows the originality of the chef. He did not claim that the buffalo tongue was French, only that it was prepared in French style, Ecarlate.

First in point of frequency of visitation were the many saloons. The Old Cabinet, or Miller's Place, advertised a hot merchant lunch from eleven to two o'clock every day. It also specialized in cold dishes: pickled lamb's tongue, imported sausage, pigs' feet in gelee, boiled eastern ham, hard boiled eggs, pickled herrings, imported Swiss cheese, caviar, and sardines. Ice cold Lemp's beer, fine wines, and cigars were a specialty of Miller's Place.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, May 12, 1888.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, August 28, 1893.

The Scooner Sal Saloon ran an advertisement in the *El Paso Times*, advertising free lunch with Lemp's beer and all kinds of fine liquors. In the same edition the Ranch Saloon advertised oysters, one dozen raw for twenty-five cents, or a hot lunch for fifteen cents. The Senate Saloon advertised Blue Point and Saddle Rock oysters on the half shell.<sup>5</sup>

The St. Julian Saloon specialized in articles which were not obtainable elsewhere in town. Here one might choose from imported Swiss, Kummel Hand, or Limburger Cheese. With the cheeses one was served Dusseldorf Mustard. Melcher Holland Herring and Cervelat Sausage were always included with the lunch. The Sherry, Port, Rhine, and Claret bore the labels of European wineries.<sup>6</sup>

Houch and Dieter were wholesale dealers in domestic and imported wines and liquors. They were also the sole agents for the William J. Temps Brewing Company of St. Louis, and Pabst Brewing Company of Milwaukee. R. F. Johnson had the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Association agency. Pabst and Budweiser were shipped in kegs. The bars served beer in glasses or glass steins as one chose.<sup>7</sup>

Businessmen often patronized the saloons for lunch, while often they enjoyed the same menu and beer at their homes with their families. Servants were often sent to the saloon to pick up the lunch and a pail of beer as they drove the horse and buggy to bring the head of the household home for lunch.<sup>8</sup>

El Paso Street was the leading business street; the most important hotels and saloons were built around the Plaza. Each hotel had its own bar-room. The Hotel Vendome was built on a corner facing the Plaza. Rudolf Eickemeyer described the Vendome as follows:

The bar-room is located on the corner of St. Louis Street, and the bar is presided over by Mr. Potter of Texas, assisted by a gentleman of colored persuasion who does the rough work (cleaning the glasses, wiping off the counter, and so forth) while Mr. Potter dispenses the drinks with gentlemanly politeness.

I have studied the drinks carefully, and can recommend Mr. Potter's specialties. He brews a milk punch unsurpassed in my experience. Adjoining the bar-room proper is another room, which serves as a sort of sitting-

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, November 26, 1893.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, May 19, 1884.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, June 16, 21, 1893.

<sup>8</sup>Interview with Mrs. Ben Levy, April 3, 1956. Mrs. Levy was the daughter of Maurice Ullman. Mrs. Ullman and the children came to El Paso from San Francisco in 1881. Mr. Ullman had come earlier and had built a large home before his family arrived. Mrs. Levy resides at 1001 East Robinson Boulevard, El Paso.

room for those who want to have the time extended during which the cooling drinks pass the lips. In one corner of this room is a little closet or small room, partitioned off for those guests who enjoy a little private game of cards.<sup>9</sup>

Continuing, Mr. Eickemeyer wrote:

Now when I speak of saloons, don't imagine that they are the ordinary kind of places where a man takes a drink. Oh, no! They are carved and gilded and everything is first-class style, and their names are simply grand. There is the "Drawing Room," the "White House," and the "Jewel," the "Tepee," and the "Sachem."

We had learned that the "Jewel" was the most stylish of the gambling-houses, and so we dropped in there first. The "bar" is about forty feet in length, and gotten up "regardless" as the boys say. This "bar," ornamented and embellished with statuary—lacking the conventional fig-leaf—is on the left; and at the end is a black-walnut partition carved in the highest style of art. We passed through the door, and entered a room filled with a promiscuous crowd. There were Chinamen, Mexicans (real "Greasers"), Negroes of all shades and colors, a few cowboys, and some business men.<sup>10</sup>

The Jewel was no less surprising than the Gem, which was managed by George Look and J. J. Taylor. The entrance to the Gem was on the most popular street, El Paso. It was a large building combining a saloon, restaurant, theatre, and club rooms or gaming rooms. The *El Paso Times* carried the following description of the Gem:<sup>11</sup>

Upon entering the wide doors the stranger cannot but view the fixtures of the saloon. They are all of solid black walnut, and the ornaments are of the finest. Back of the bar are three immense solid French plate glass mirrors. These are relieved by three beautiful solid walnut cornices. In these cornices are the three famous "Nathan" vases of solid bronze, weighing 150 lbs. each. The vases have quite a history. They were purchased in Paris by a rich New Yorker named Nathan for \$2,200. Mr. Nathan was mysteriously murdered in his office. His works of art were sold at public auction. The vases were sold to Sam Schutz of this city, who in turn sold them to George Look and J. J. Taylor.

The entrance to the club rooms is from the saloon. As the stranger passes through swinging doors into the vast room, he sees what appears to him to be a perfect bee hive. On every side are seen gaming tables of every description, faro, roulette, monte, "craps;" in fact the speculator has his choice. The Gem club rooms have aptly been termed "The Monte Carlo of the West." They are beautifully fitted up, neatly arranged and run in the most business-like manner.

<sup>9</sup>Rudolf Eickemeyer, *Letters from the Southwest* (New York: 1894) 35-6.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>11</sup>January 27, 1891.



Hotel Vendome at Mills and Mesa streets where the Hotel Cortez now stands. When this picture was taken in 1909 it was known as the Hotel Orndorff, Mr. and Mrs. Chas. De Groff, Proprietors.

From the club rooms one entered the Gem Theatre which specialized in variety shows. Here gentlemen could drink the famous W. H. McBrayer brand of whiskey, eat in the small restaurant, and also see the show.

The hotels were the center of social dining. Banquets were held at the hotels and also families often went there to dine. There were French chefs in El Paso. Some of these fabulous chefs, like other men in the town who judged people for what they themselves were, did not ever tell their real names. These men were not questioned. A very famous chef who also took time to act as a caterer for some of the ladies when they entertained in their homes, was respectfully called Monsieur Petit, although he weighed over two hundred pounds. The *bon vivants* of this era were not questioned when they produced their gustatory delights.<sup>12</sup>

The culinary arts of the chefs as they were advertised in the columns of the newspaper were enough to make one's mouth water. The husbands were impelled to celebrate special family days where the tradition of good dining was a practice accompanied by soft music from an orchestra.

<sup>12</sup>Interview with Mr. Julius Berg, May 10, 1956. Anecdotes from his father, Mr. Sol I. Berg.

The popular host at Hotel Vendome published the following Thanksgiving Dinner menu:

Oysters  
Matagorda Bay  
Soup  
Green Turtle      Printaniere Royal  
Celery      Sliced Tomatoes      Olives  
Fish  
Salmon      Trout, a la Chambord  
Potatoes Parisienne  
Hors D'Oeuvre  
Small Patties a la Mazarin  
Leg of Mutton, Caper Sauce  
Entrees  
Sweet Breads, Larded, Aux Petits Pois  
Salmi of Teal Ducks, a la Perigeaux  
Queen Fritters, a la Victoria  
Roast  
Prime of Kansas Beef with Natural Juice  
Turkey Hens with Dressing, Cranberry Sauce  
Hot Roman Punch  
Game  
Black Bear, Sauce Marinade  
Russian Salad  
Cold  
Mayonnaise of Lobster      Chicken Salad  
Vegetables  
Mashed Potatoes      Cauliflower in Cream  
Sweet Potatoes      Asparagus en Branche  
Pastry  
Mince Pie      Lemon Meringue Pie  
Queen Pudding      Madeira Wine Sauce  
Strawberry Short Cake      Angels Food  
Whipped Cream      Cinnamon Jelly Roll  
White Mountain Cake      New York Cake  
Chocolate Layer Cake      White Jelly Roll  
Delmonico Ice Cream      Macedoin Jelly  
Dessert  
Raisins, Muscat Grapes, Apples  
Oranges      Assorted Nuts  
Edam Cheese      American Cheese  
French Coffee<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup>El Paso Times, November 28, 1891.



The hotel prices ranged from two dollars fifty cents to four dollars fifty cents, depending on the location of the room, whether a room was with bath or was a suite. Day board was ten dollars a week, single meals fifty cents.<sup>14</sup>

For dining at home there was no dearth of choice. Staple groceries were bought in large amounts. Poultry and game were not priced by the pound but by the fowl. The following shows the quantity of food and their retail prices available to early El Pasoans:<sup>15</sup>

### HOME MARKET REPORT

Office of the Daily Times

Wednesday, April 30, 1884

The following are today's retail prices:

#### *Flour and Feed*

Kansas, 50 lb. sacks	\$ 4.50
Pride of Denver, 50 lb. sacks	4.00
Ysleta, 50 lb. sacks	4.00
Buckwheat flour, pr. 100 lbs.	10.00
Meal, white and yellow, pr. 100 lbs.	3.00
Beans, white and pink, pr. 100 lbs.	6.00
Beans, Mexican, pr. 100 lbs.	6.00

#### *Bacon, Salt Meat, Lard*

Hams, sugar cured, pr. lb.	.18
Breakfast Bacon, pr. lb.	.18
Bacon sides, pr. lb.	.15
Dried Beef, pr. lb.	.25
Lard, 2 lb. pails, pr. lb.	.20
Lard, 50 lb. pails, pr. lb.	.13

#### *Fresh Meats*

Porterhouse Steak, pr. lb.	.20
Sirloin Steak, pr. lb.	.175
Round Steak, pr. lb.	.125
Beef Roast, pr. lb.	.125
Beef Roast, fore quarter, pr. lb.	.10
Beef Roast, hind quarter, pr. lb.	.125
Pork Chops, pr. lb.	.18
Pork Tenderloin, pr. lb.	.20
Pork Sausage, pr. lb.	.20
Mutton Chops, pr. lb.	.125
Mutton, half or whole, pr. lb.	.11
Corned Beef, pr. lb.	.125
Pigs Feet, pickled, pr. kit	2.25
Tripe, pr. lb.	.20

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, December 2, 1891; November 17, 1894.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, April 30, 1884.

	<i>Oysters</i>	
N. Y. Counts, per can		1.00
Extra Select, per can		.75
	<i>Fish</i>	
San Francisco Salmon, pr. lb.		.20
San Francisco Flounders, pr. lb.		.20
San Francisco Smelts, pr. lb.		.20
Rio Grande "trout" pr. lb.		.15
	<i>Poultry and Game</i>	
Chickens, live each		.70
Chickens, live per dozen		6.00
Chickens, dressed, pr. lb.		.20
Ducks, wild, each		.50
Turkeys, live, each		2.00
Turkeys, dressed, pr. lb.		.25
	<i>Eggs</i>	
State, pr. dozen		.25
Ranch, pr. dozen		.25
	<i>Butter</i>	
California roll, pr. 2 lb. roll		.85
Kansas City Dairy, pr. 2 lb. roll		.75
	<i>Cheese</i>	
Creamery, pr. lb.		.25
	<i>Dried Fruits</i>	
Apples, evaporated, pr. lb.	20 a	.25
Pears, pr. lb.		.25
Peaches, pr. lb.	25 a	.40
Prunes, pr. lb.		.30
Figs, pr. lb.		.25
	<i>Fresh Vegetables</i>	
Potatoes, pr. lb.		.03
Potatoes, sweet, pr. lb.		.04
Onions, pr. lb.		.03
Tomatoes, pr. lb.		.15
Celery, pr. dozen		2.00
Cabbage, pr. lb.		.07
Cauliflower, pr. lb.		.15

As one can readily see, gastronomically the El Paso pioneers fared well. They truly knew the meaning of *Salud y pesetas y tiempo para gastarlas*—Health and wealth and the time to spend them.

# THE BATTLE OF BRAZITO— WHERE WAS IT FOUGHT?

by George Ruhlen

## PART TWO OF TWO PARTS

In the first part of this article we discussed the battle of Brazito. We shall now attempt to fix the exact spot where it was fought. However, before comparing locations of the battle site as given by several participants, it is proper to consider their probable validity. The Mexican account is of primary value because of its reference to the site as near "Los Temasclitos."<sup>1</sup> It is also probably correct as to the Mexican strength since Ponce's superior officer would know as well as Ponce the strength of the advance guard.

The accounts written by American participants are noteworthy in that all of them were written by men of above the average education for the times,<sup>2</sup> are singularly the same even down to details, and at least one of them, Hughes' journal, was kept for the expressed purpose of providing material for a history of the Missouri regiment. Doniphan's official report to the Adjutant General of the Army was not made until March 4, 1847, at Chihuahua, and agrees with other accounts, but does not give the distance marched from Doña Ana to the battle, merely stating that it occurred about three o'clock in the afternoon. Years later, on August 5, 1880, in an interview at Santa Fé, Doniphan stated that the advance guard had reached an arm of the river known as the "Bracito," thirty-five miles north of El Paso. Gilpin, one of the battalion commanders, in a speech at Jefferson City on August 10, 1847, said the command camped at Brazito after marches of 18 and 19 miles from Doña Ana. He also gave the distance between Doña Ana and El Paso as eighty miles, whereas in fact it is about fifty-five miles by the route traveled. Hughes' notes give this distance as sixty-one miles, and also provide a valuable sketch of the battleground and its significant terrain features. It is not known how long after the battle the sketch was drawn, nor is a scale shown, but veterans quite often retain a very vivid recollection of the land forms of a battleground, especially if, as in this case, they participated in only one other battle—at the Sacramento River just

<sup>1</sup>See George Ruhlen, "Brazito—The Only Battle in the Southwest Between American and Foreign Troops," *PASS-WORD*, 11-11.

<sup>2</sup>George R. Gibson, for instance, whose "Journal of a Soldier under Kearny and Doniphan," was edited by Ralph P. Bieber and published in *Marching with the Army of the West* (Glendale, Calif., 1935), was a newspaper editor before and after his service and edited the first English-speaking newspaper printed in the Southwest, the *Santa Fe Republican*.



north of Chihuahua City. Accounts of participants which appeared in newspapers two or three months later described the action, but add little to its specific location.<sup>3</sup> All published historical narratives other than the ones named above are based on these accounts and consequently add little to them other than inaccurate details.<sup>4</sup>

Travelers who passed over the battlefield a few months or years afterward did not know the exact location. Nor could it be ascertained from the ground, as all descriptions agree that the battle occurred on a flat, unmarked plain near the river with chaparral nearby, a description which would fit nearly any location between the pass and Doña Ana in those days. Susan Magoffin's diary entry shows that she actually rode over the field, but unfortunately gives no details other than that after camping ten miles south of Doña Ana, the next day she "nooned it at Brasito" and then continued

<sup>3</sup>The first newspaper accounts apparently stemmed from Lt. Kribben's unofficial report of December 26, 1847, to his commander of the artillery battalion, Major Meriwether L. Clark (son of the famous explorer). This account subsequently appeared in the *Weekly Reveille* (St. Louis, Mo.), March 1, 1847, as well as in the *St. Louis Republican*, February 26, 1847, and repeated by the *New York Tribune*, March 7, 1847. See Gibson, *loc. cit.*, 303; and Las Cruces [New Mexico] *Sun-News*, October 9, 1949.

<sup>4</sup>One account states that Doniphan ordered his cavalry and artillery to fire. Technically there was no cavalry in the United States Army until 1855; and Doniphan had no artillery. Its absence after he occupied Paso del Norte was the primary reason for his delay in marching on Chihuahua. It did not arrive until February 1, 1847, after having been used in quelling the Taos Revolt of early 1847.

on to camp about ten miles north of "La Laguna, simply a salt pond."<sup>5</sup> Ruxton stopped at Brazito a month before the battle and says this was the location but he could have made such a statement only by assuming from the name of the battle that it occurred there.<sup>6</sup> Bartlett mentions only that after leaving Fort Fillmore, he stopped at the battlefield, which was unmarked and in an open plain.<sup>7</sup> Read mentions camping 15 miles south of Doña Ana and the next morning, after a two and a half hour drive in a light carriage, passing the Brazito battlefield.<sup>8</sup> The latter two accounts, however, are evidence that the location was an appreciable distance south of Fort Fillmore.

If the distance marched on successive days as given by participants are plotted, an interesting pattern evolves. Referring to the accompanying map, point (1) is the plot based on Hughes' total distance or 33 miles from Doña Ana.<sup>9</sup> If this is given equal credence with his statement that the next day's march [December 26th] was 15 miles, then this latter camp would be at the very entrance to the pass by the present site of the electric power station; but also he says that this same spot was not reached until the 27th after the column had marched five miles from the camp of the 26th.<sup>10</sup> Hence (1) is apparently too far down river. However, by plotting 20 miles back from the north entrance to the gorge, a definitely known position, point (2) would indicate the battlefield. Point (3) is obtained from Doniphan's interview in 1880.<sup>11</sup> Point (4) is based on Gilpin's speech;<sup>12</sup> the comments on (1) which compare the marches of the 26th and 27th also apply to this location. Point (5) is derived from Edwards' journal entries which refer to camping *just beyond* Doña Ana on the 19th, moving camp 12 miles on the 20th, moving one mile on the 24th to join the camp of the main body, and then marching 12 miles to camp on the 25th—a total of 25 or 26 miles from Doña Ana.<sup>13</sup> The description of the camp on the 20th affords additional evidence. Edwards states that the place was where the river made "such a deviation from its course as to sweep the foot of the bluff and cause the road to run a short distance over the sand hills," and just at this bend there was a fine piece of

<sup>5</sup>Susan Magoffin, *Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico*, ed. by Stella Drum (New Haven, 1926,) journal entries for February 12 and 13, 1847.

<sup>6</sup>George F. Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains* (London, 1849), 170.

<sup>7</sup>John R. Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua* (London, 1854), 395.

<sup>8</sup>Lansing B. Bloom, "The Rev. Hiram Walter Read, Baptist Missionary to New Mexico," *New Mexico Historical Review*, XVII, 2, 138.

<sup>9</sup>William E. Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition* (Topeka, Kansas, 1907), 369-70. 15 miles on the 24th, and 18 on the 25th.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 88.

<sup>11</sup>35 miles north of modern El Paso. *Ibid.*, 589.

<sup>12</sup>37 miles from Dona Ana. *Ibid.*, 595.

<sup>13</sup>Marcellus B. Edwards, "Journal," in Bieber, *op. cit.*, 223, 224, 227, 228.

timber under the bluff.<sup>14</sup> Hughes says Edwards' company proceeded 12 miles below Doña Ana and encamped on the outskirts of a forest on a point of hills which commanded the Chihuahua road. This location falls on a point of hills three miles southeast of Mesilla Park, New Mexico, on US 80 and approximately one half mile to the northeast of the highway.<sup>15</sup> Hughes refers to the main body's camp of the 24th as being on the river.<sup>16</sup> If the advance guard camp of the 20th is correctly located, this would place the camp of the 24th four miles southeast of Mesilla Park and between Highway 80 and the edge of the bottom land to the east, or almost on the site of old Fort Fillmore. Minor details which tend to substantiate this site are Edwards' and Hughes' reports that a Mexican spy was shot about a mile from the camp on the 20th<sup>17</sup> and mention by Edwards and Gibson of finding the body of a Mexican at the campsite of the 24th.<sup>18</sup> Twelve miles from this campsite is the plotted location marked (5). Point (6) is the plot from Richardson's account of marching 12 miles on the 25th from his previous camp to the Bracito. As he was in the same company as Edwards, the plots are the same.<sup>19</sup> Point (7) is based on Read's visit. On March 24, 1851, he camped 15 miles from Doña Ana and the following day, after a drive of three and a half hours, passed the Brazito battlefield. Read does not state whether he paused on the way or his rate of travel; hence the two positions shown are based on average continuous rates of march of 3 and 4 miles per hour, respectively. Points (8) and (9) are taken from Bancroft's histories and are only general statements of location based on American and Mexican sources.<sup>20</sup> Points (10) and (11) are also general locations, the former by P. M. Baldwin<sup>21</sup> and the latter attributed to M. L. Crimmins who made a study of early American forts and skirmishes in New Mexico and Texas.<sup>22</sup> Point (12) is based on a reported opinion of F. M. Gallaher which he in turn based on the discovery of military relics including a 3.61-inch cannon ball.<sup>23</sup> As the only artillery piece used in

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, 220.

<sup>15</sup>Connelly, *op. cit.*, 369. William A. Keleher, *Turmoil in New Mexico* (Santa Fe, 1952), 196n mentions that a grove of cottonwoods stood between Ft. Fillmore and the Rio Grande. Captain Pope's map of the Las Cruces vicinity in 1854 shows the river swinging into the sand bluffs and the road at that time, cutting across a nose of the hills  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles southeast of Las Cruces, or three miles southeast of present Mesilla Park.

<sup>16</sup>Connelly, *op. cit.*

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, Edwards, *loc. cit.*, 225.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 228. Gibson, *loc. cit.*, 299, "bodies of two Mexicans, and as we supposed one American."

<sup>19</sup>Connelly, *op. cit.*, 372n.

<sup>20</sup>Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas* (San Francisco, 1889), 607.

<sup>21</sup>P. M. Baldwin, "A Short History of the Mesilla Valley," *New Mexico Historical Review*, XIII, 3, 317.

<sup>22</sup>"News on Bitter Brazito Battle Slow Traveling," Las Cruces [New Mexico] *Sun-News*, October 9, 1949.

<sup>23</sup>*Idem.*

the Brazito battle was an antiquated weapon used by the Mexicans, which was reported as firing slugs and bits of metal, the 3.61-inch ball probably came from another engagement, possibly the Civil War skirmish near Fillmore and Mesilla on July 25, 1861. Point (13) is based on Gibson's account in which he tells of advancing on the 24th twelve miles from the previous camp near Doña Ana to the "Deadman's Camp"; then making camp the following day in an open river bottom 14 miles further.<sup>24</sup> He also corroborates Hughes' statement that camp on the 26th was made 15 miles from El Paso [Hughes' figures are 13 miles] at "Lagunita."<sup>25</sup>

An examination of the plots shows that half of the 13 lie within an area of two miles northwest of Berino to two miles southeast, and, further, that these plots are derived from primary sources in most instances. In comparing the terrain in that vicinity with Hughes' sketch of the battle, the following significant features should be noted: the pass between the two mountain ranges, the sand buttes to the right of the Mexican battle line which are not shown as a line of buttes as are those behind and to the left of the line, and the bend of the river with its two channels forming the "brazito." Edwards states that a reconnaissance at the end of the battle revealed many of the Mexicans retreating towards a mountain gap about ten miles to the east of the field of battle.<sup>26</sup> Anthony Pass or, as it used to be called, "Puerto de los Alamitos," answers this description and is the only such pass between El Paso and San Augustine Pass through the Organ Mountains.

The sand buttes offer one of the most significant clues. Conkling states that the isolated group of round-topped hills two miles northeast of Vado [which the USGS map labels "Vado Hill"] were known to old inhabitants as "Los Temascalitos," probably from their resemblance to the oven-shaped Indian sweat-bath houses known as "temescals."<sup>27</sup> Conkling's opinion that the battle took place slightly north of Vado is based on stories he heard of relics being collected in an area about a half mile northwest of the buttes, although he himself apparently did not examine this area closely. Griggs quotes a letter from an old inhabitant of Chihuahua, Z. Terrazas, which states that the Mexican-American battle of 1847 [*sic*] was fought at Temascalitos and not at Brazito and that the local natives should know the names of their localities better than strange foreigners unfamiliar with the country.<sup>28</sup> Mexican historical

<sup>24</sup>Gibson, *loc. cit.*, 299-300.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 310. Unfortunately, no distances are given in the Mexican account for their movements on the 24th and 25th.

<sup>26</sup>Edwards, *loc. cit.*, 234.

<sup>27</sup>Roscoe P. and Margaret B. Conkling, *The Butterfield Overland Mail, 1857-1869* (Glendale, Calif., 1947), 94-5.

<sup>28</sup>George Griggs, *History of the Mesilla Valley* (Las Cruces, New Mexico, 1930).

accounts of the engagement refer to it as the Battle of Los Temascalitos. Gibson states that it was thus called by the Mexican participants, and Ponce de Leon's report states that his first information of the location of the American column was at the place called Los Temascalitos. Since this information was received while he was on the march and before he observed his enemy, and as the Missourians were marching to the south, a logical inference is that the campsite of the Americans was at least opposite Los Temascalitos, or Vado Hill, and in all probability slightly south of that spot. Such a location falls within an area of about two miles to the northwest of present Berino.

An examination of the river trace reconstructed on modern maps from the Emory Boundary Commission shows four places where the river bends markedly to the east between Mesilla Park and the Texas state line. All are sufficiently prominent to indicate that these are not minor meanderings due to annual floods. One lies approximately opposite the site of old Fort Fillmore; another a mile southeast of Mesquite; one just above and another just below modern Berino. The first can be rejected as no report places the battle site that far north and there is sufficient evidence that in this area camp was made on the 24th. The second large bend to the south would roughly fit the description of the river course at the battlefield but, if the previous evidence of march distances and the relation of Vado Hill and also the pass to the east to the battleground are duly considered, this location appears doubtful. The bend a mile and a half northwest of Berino and the one a mile southeast of that village are consistent with the three independent conditions of march distances, terrain and river course. The northernmost lies opposite the arroyo up which the old train to *Puerto los Alamitos* ran, as does the road today. Looking up this arroyo from the flat river bottom it does appear to be a gap between the hills, especially to one unacquainted with the terrain between the Organ and Franklin Mountains.

Several accounts tell of camping at a small salt pond on the 26th. Gibson states it was 15 miles from Paso del Norte, Hughes that it was five miles from the pass whence it was eight miles to Paso del Norte—a total of 13 miles. The three marches found  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles, respectively, northwest of the junction of alternate US 80 and US 80 fall within this distance as scaled over the route that Doniphan's men followed.<sup>29</sup> On the 29th Doniphan was met at the entrance to the gorge five miles from his camp of the 26th.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup>This area is a very old campsite or *paraje*, being mentioned as *La Salineta* in 1680 by Governor Otermin and situated about 12 miles from Guadalupe Mission (in center of modern Juarez). Charles W. Hackett, *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians and Otermin's Attempted Reconquest, 1680-1682* (Albuquerque, 1942), 129. The name occurs often in accounts of journeys from that time on and on maps as late as 1857.

<sup>30</sup>Connelly, *op. cit.*, 88.



By back plotting, the camp can be located in the area on the small salt pond  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the highway junction and adjacent to present Montoyo. Again back plotting from this salt pond the distance of the march of the 26th, stated by Hughes as 15 miles, the camp on the 25th falls on the river bend a mile and a half northwest of Berino. If this same distance is scaled from the southernmost of the three ponds, the plot lies just west of Berino but still close to the same river bend.

Is this bend then the "brazito" long known as a campsite and caravan stop? Probably not. The location of the area known as Brazito can be deduced from many sources. Some of these are: "the arm of the river for which the Brazito Grant was named and which extended to the east in about the middle of the grant" [grant boundaries are shown on map];<sup>31</sup> several military and emigrant-trail maps of a hundred years ago show Fort Fillmore and Bracito almost adjacent; the journal of Amangual in 1808 shows he camped at Bracito approximately 37 miles from the lower ford of the river at Paso del Norte which would place his camp between Mesquite and old Fort Fillmore;<sup>32</sup> and an old archive listing stopping places on the *Camino Real* (Santa Fé-Chihuahua Trail) shows Bracito 18 miles from Doña Ana and 33 miles from El Paso del Norte—this would place Bracito at the bend, adjacent to Mesquite.<sup>33</sup> In general, the evidence is that Bracito was upstream from the battle site, being either the bend near old Fort Fillmore or possibly the one near Mesquite.<sup>34</sup>

Why then was the battle so named if it did not take place at the Brazito or Bracito? Being strangers, Doniphan and his men could have mistaken the bend by their camp on the 25th for the famed Bracito, or have named the battle for the nearest known terrain feature in an area devoid of singular land marks. A significant statement bearing on the naming of the battle is given by Gibson, who states that on the morning of the 25th "after a march of fourteen miles we struck *another* bend in the river where it was intended

<sup>31</sup>Bloom, *loc. cit.* Grant originally made to Juan Antonio García in 1818, later bought or given to Hugh Stephenson (upper two-thirds of original grant), an early Mesilla Valley pioneer, who operated a smelter near present village of Las Tortugas adjacent to Mesilla Park.

<sup>32</sup>*Diary of the Francisco Amangual Expedition in 1808*, tr. by John V. Haggard (MS. in Barker Texas History Center, Library, U. of Texas, Austin).

<sup>33</sup>Ralph E. Twitchess, *Diary of Anza's Expedition to the Moquis in 1780* (History Society of New Mexico publication No. 21, 1918), 24n. The name of the camp site or *paraje* known as Doña Ana is also very old, being used at least as early as 1682. See Hackett, *op. cit.*, 365.

<sup>34</sup>The map of the *Camino Real* with its *parajes* as reconstructed by Cleve Hallenbeck, *Land of the Conquistadores* (Caldwell, Idaho, 1950) shows Brazitos as a few miles northwest of Mesquite. Map of the caravan routes, between the United States and Mexico, circa 1840, in José Agustín de Escudera, *Noticias Historicas de Chihuahua*, shows Bracito about 30 miles, in a straight line northwest of the upper ford by Paso del Norte. This places Brazito in the near vicinity of old Fort Fillmore.

to camp."<sup>35</sup> Recalling the deduced location of the camp on the 24th, this statement would place the camp of the 25th near the Mesquite river bend. He also states that the battle "was immediately called the 'Battle of Bracito,' that being the name of the bend *just above us.*"<sup>36</sup> And remember also that only to Americans is it known as the battle of Brazito.

A summation of the evidence available from the many sources referred to in this study shows that distances from known points as given by and corroborated by credible statements place the battle area in the vicinity of Berino and not a few miles north of Brazito school as is commonly accepted and so marked. The sketch map in Hughes' account and the Mexican terminology of Los Temascalitos compares favorably with a location between Vado and Berino. The river survey made but a few years after the battle substantiates the participants' description of the battlefield as does the relative position of the pass to the east. It seems probable that the American name given the battle was either derived from a mistaken location or from the name of the nearest known landmark. Of the two bends—or little arms—of the river near Berino, the one a mile and a half to the northwest more closely meets the geographical conditions of the battle site.

Based on several years of intermittent study of the Brazito battlefield, it is the author's considered opinion that its most probable location is about 600 yards to the northeast of a point on US Highway 80 two miles northwest of the intersection of that highway with the road leading to Berino.

Perhaps sources unknown now will cause a reevaluation of this opinion—perhaps some day a suitable marker will commemorate the true location of the battle of Brazito—the only battle in the entire area known as the Southwest in which American troops met those of another nation.

<sup>35</sup>Gibson, *loc. cit.*, 300.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 309.

EL PASO  
AS SEEN BY  
FANNY CHAMBERS GOOCH

. . . . . by Chester Hall Chambers

Fanny Chambers was born in Hillsboro, Scott County, Mississippi, in 1842. While in her 'teens she went to live with her brother Lem in Weatherford, Texas, and thence after a few years moved with Lem to Waco where he opened a general mercantile store. Reared during the turbulent years of the Civil War, Fanny developed into an adventurous woman of independent mind and spirit. At a time when it was generally believed a woman's place was in the home, Fanny traveled far and wide. She made the grand tour of Europe and attended school in France. She traveled extensively in Mexico and also lived in that country for a number of years. She came to love Mexico and the Mexican people and she expressed her love in the delightful story, *Christmas in Old Mexico*. She published her last book in 1910. It was a story of the Mier Expedition<sup>1</sup> and was titled *The Boy Captive*.

It is somewhat difficult to follow the career of Fanny Chambers because she married three times. Her first husband, named Gooch, died, and a few years later she married a man named Iglehart. Upon his death she married Dr. Richard H. L. Bibb, whom she divorced. She then resumed the name of Gooch under which she wrote her first book. However, the other two books, mentioned above, were published under the name of Fanny Chambers G. Iglehart. For some unknown reason Fanny tried to forget her marriage to Bibb. She never used his name after their separation nor did she ever mention him in any of her correspondence. Bibb, on the other hand, seems to have loved her dearly. The following letter written by Dr. Bibb to Lem Chambers shows the love and respect he held for her and gives a clue to the cause of their separation:

<sup>1</sup>The Mier Expedition took place in 1842 when 300 Texans under the command of Colonel W. S. Fisher marched to Mier. "There, after a desperate battle with General Ampudia, they surrendered on December 26. Then followed their march as prisoners into Mexico, their break for liberty, their recapture, and the drawing of the black beans to determine which of their number should compose the one tenth to be shot." See Rupert Norval Richardson, *Texas the Lone Star State* (New York: 1943), 163. The El Paso Public Library has a copy of *The Boy Captive*. [Editor's note.]

Saltillo, Mex.  
Dec 25th 1882

Mr. Lem Chambers  
Waco, Tx

My dear Sir:—

With deep humiliation and, an inexpressible mortification, I write you this letter.

First: To inform you, that your sister and I have separated, she leaving this place for your sister Minnie's, on the 15th of this month, and

Second: To ask of you, and of your family should occasion present, to receive her with open arms, warm and loving hearts, such as she, as a sister, has a right to expect, from her brothers and sisters, and,

Third: That you will accept and believe as *true*, for the time at least, and that she has told or will tell you, *all that is true*, whatever she may tell you concerning the causes which led to our separation, because you know as well as I do, that your sister possesses some of the highest, loftiest, brightest, best, and most loveable attributes with which God ever animated or adorned the heart or character of woman, and

Third [*sic*]: and for me, that you do not *condemn me unheard*, nor convict me of being the heinous, the drunken, jealous, midnight assassin, and prostitute and defamer of your sister's good name and character, as I have already been portrayed in some of the Texas Newspapers, by partisan reporters, simply because it is a fact that I did shoot Mr. Gray at night, and on your sister's account, until you have heard the evidence on both sides, a part of which is in her own handwriting, another part in her own sworn declarations, and oral testimony, signed and delivered by her and which is being developed during my trial, now in progress, and which evidence, let the verdict of the court be what it may be, I intend to have translated to english, properly authenticated, and placed in the hands of each member of our families. This I think, is just to us both, and that it is no more than we both have a right to ask and expect, because you know full well, that no one, not informed in some other way, of all the facts and circumstances as they exist in the premises, be he never so wise nor never so just, can come to a just and correct conclusion as to the guilt or innocence of either the one or the other, by any other process, at present known to human ingenuity.

I would write to you more fully, but I am too much bowed and weighed down with this great load of grief, and besides, I would greatly prefer for you to be informed as already indicated.

Wishing the compliments of the season for you and yours, and to each a long, a happy and a prosperous life, I am,

Very truly and respectfully

My dear Sir

(s) Richard H. L. Bibb<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Bibb was acquitted of the murder charge.

It was in either 1884 or 1885 that Fanny Chambers Gooch visited El Paso on her way to Mexico. Her travels resulted in her first book which she named *Face to Face with the Mexicans: The Domestic Life, Educational, Social, and Business Way, State-manship and Literature, Legendary and General History of the Mexican people, as Seen and Studied by an American Woman during Seven Years of Inter-course with Them*. The book has 200 illustrations including auto-graphed pictures of President Porfirio Diaz and his wife Carmen R. de Diaz. There is a letter from Diaz dated April 1, 1886, and addressed to "The Estimable Señora Fanny Cham-bers Gooch." The book was pub-lished in New York in 1887 by Fords, Howard & Hulbert.



86 Austin Street, Waco, Texas, where Fanny Chambers lived with her brother. This picture was taken in 1888.

In the preface Mrs. Gooch writes: "At El Paso I was the recipient of many gracious attentions from Mr. R. F. Campbell and family and Mrs. Fannie D. Porter and family. To Major Joseph Magoffin<sup>3</sup> and family I am especially indebted for unbounded hospitality and assistance on my journey both in going and returning. Major Magoffin presented me to Señor J. Escobar, Mexican Consul, and together they rendered me invaluable aid by having circulars printed, stating my object and commending me to the Mexican people. Señor Escobar also gave me letters of introduction to Señor Mariscal, Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs, and anticipated every need in my introduction at the capital."

In Chapter V which is titled "From Border to Capital Along the Mexican Central," Mrs. Gooch described the border cities: "The location of El Paso, . . . is in every way desirable, being the connecting point of the Mexican Central with the railways of the United States. Five connecting lines of railway enter the city: the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio; the Southern Pacific;

<sup>3</sup>Major Magoffin at the time was Collector of Customs at El Paso. [Editor's note.]

the Texas Pacific; the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe, with good prospects for another.<sup>4</sup> There is no doubt that it will be a great railroad center and distribution point for the Southwest.

"The town hugs the river closely and nestles snugly in a fertile valley, perhaps fifty miles long, in which, where irrigating facilities are obtained, wheat and corn are produced in great abundance. Its altitude is about three thousand feet above sea level, and the climate bears a strong resemblance to that of the table-lands of Mexico. The same irrigating ditches, lined on either side by stately cotton-wood trees, are serving the same purpose as when first constructed by the Jesuit missionaries, more than three hundred years ago. A circle of mountains to the north and east affords protection to the city from the sharp, penetrating winds that sweep over Texas from the plains of Kansas.

"El Paso can boast of excellent hotels, the best being the Grand Central,<sup>5</sup> and the possession of the only international street railway bridge in the world; also an interesting old church about three hundred years old.<sup>6</sup> The greatest drawbacks, as a place of residence, are the clouds and columns of dust that for a great part of the year drive through the streets, entering the houses, and penetrating every nook and cranny.

"The old town of Paso del Norte<sup>7</sup> is the Mexican El Paso, as Nuevo Laredo is the Mexican Laredo. Each one is a necessary complement of the other. Paso del Norte has, however, great advantage in point of age, having been founded about the year 1680.<sup>8</sup> The town to-day bears the imprint of all Mexican architecture. The cathedral,<sup>9</sup> once a stately and imposing structure, even now, when bereft of the greater part of its interior adornment, speaks volumes of the lapse and the inroads of time. The nave, chancel, altar, and ceiling bear traces of the exquisite and masterly workmanship, but tell a mournful tale of decay and faded grandeur.

"The country for perhaps two hundred miles on the west side of the Rio

<sup>4</sup>Evidently the author had in mind either the El Paso and North Eastern or the Mexican North Western, both lines being completed into El Paso by the turn of the century. [Editor's note.]

<sup>5</sup>For a picture of the Grand Central, see above, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup>Mrs. Gooch was confused. There was no church of that age in El Paso, Texas. [Editor's note.]

<sup>7</sup>The name "Paso del Norte" was changed to Ciudad Juarez on September 16, 1882, by an act of the Chihuahua State Legislature. Texans continued for a few years after the name change to refer to it as "Old El Paso." [Editor's note.]

<sup>8</sup>The "Villa de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe del Paso del Norte y de los Manos" was founded on December 8, 1659. [Editor's note.]

<sup>9</sup>The church in Juarez is not now nor has it ever been a cathedral. [Editor's note.]



El Paso Street in 1879, five years before Fanny Chambers Gooch visited the city. The site on the extreme right of the picture is now occupied by the Pay-less Drug Store.

Bravo<sup>10</sup> is but a counterpart of its neighbor, on the east or Texas side, for the same distance. Chihuahua, the first city on the Mexican Central, has become a prominent point for mining operations, and probably a large number of Americans are congregated there than at any place outside the capital. It has a fine climate, is situated in a beautiful and fertile valley, with all the accessories of a healthful and thrifty population. One hundred years ago, however, Chihuahua was larger than New York; to-day the population does not exceed thirty thousand.<sup>11</sup> But it still has the beautiful cathedral and ancient aqueduct, and must always be important as a mining center. A branch of the Mexican mint is also established there."

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Fanny Chambers died on October 10, 1931. She is buried in Austin, Texas.

<sup>10</sup>The Rio Bravo was originally named Rio del Norte. Later it became the Rio Bravo or the Rio Bravo del Norte. Since 1848 it has been known as the Rio Grande to Americans and the Rio Bravo to Mexicans. [Editor's note.]

<sup>11</sup>The 1957 population of the city of Chihuahua is approximately 65,000. [Editor's note.]

# BOOK REVIEWS

## A CENTURY OF FREEMASONRY IN EL PASO

. . . . . by John W. Denny

(El Paso: Publication Committee Scottish Rite Bodies. *Texas Western College Studies in Regional History*, 1956. \$5.00)

This interesting and valuable book is more than a mere history of El Paso Lodge No. 130, A. F. & A. M. It is, rather, "a solid contribution to the history of the establishment of an Anglo-American community at the historic crossroads." The pioneers who established the first Masonic Lodge also established the first city and county governments and maintained the defense of the frontier. And through the passing years they have been the leaders in the community.

In a larger sense the book is a merited but belated inquiry into one facet of the American scene, the Masonic impact upon our society. Dr. Rex W. Strickland emphasizes this important fact in his introduction to the book. He writes: "The full story of the American frontier can never be written until it takes into account the social institutions that have bound men together into common purposes." Many studies have been made of frontier socio-economic groups such as religious bodies, trading companies, immigration societies, etc., but this is one of the first to be made of a little known institution, the fraternity of Ancient and Accepted Freemasons.

The "substantial basis" for the present study was a Master's thesis prepared by Major Denny for the history faculty of Texas Western College. It was written under the direction of Dr. Strickland, Chairman of the Department of History. "The typographical layout," according to Dr. Strickland "owes its balance and clarity to the advice of Carl Hertzog, who gave generously of his time in working out the design." Dr. Sam D. Myres, Jr., Lecturer in Government at TWC, "spent hours in editorial routine and proof-reading." And the printer of PASS-WORD, Jack Guynes, "whose company made the book, went beyond the call of professional duty to see that it meet the standards of its editors." Publication was made possible by the patronage of Mr. Charles R. Loomis, 33°. For this reason the book is called the "Patron's Edition."

Major John W. Denny is to be highly commended for the completeness of his research and for the lucid style in which he presents his findings. He has given us a worthy volume for the first in a projected series of *Texas Western College Studies in Regional History*. The proposed second volume is a history of the Bench and Bar of El Paso by Morgan Broaddus who, like Major Denny, is an instructor in history at TWC.

Eugene O. Porter

*Texas Western College*



## CAP MOSSMAN, LAST OF THE GREAT COWMEN

*by Frazier Hunt*

(New York: Hastings House, 1951, \$3.75)

Last summer in Roswell died one of the most colorful figures of the range cattle period in American history. Cap Mossman in his eighty-four years spanned most of the map between America's two coasts and between southern Chihuahua and the Canadian border. His activities were similarly broad.

In this volume Frazier Hunt neatly accomplishes two things: he makes his central figure come thunderingly alive: he makes his story, true as it is, as dramatic and action-packed as any fictional western romance. Mr. Hunt had a good subject.

Cap Mossman's story is largely that of the ranching industry in the American West from 1882 to the near-present. Burt Mossman punched cattle, managed ranches, owned his own spread, fattened cows for the market, personally fought the rustlers when civil authority proved absent (or weak). In addition, he headed a company of Arizona Rangers, almost single-handedly brought the Mexican renegade, Agustin Chacon, to justice, enjoyed a tight poker game even when he lost, fathered a family, and played practical jokes on his friends. The same steely character that helped him subdue Chacon served him well in badgering that irascible Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes, when the latter was about to push through a disastrous move against the cattlemen of Dakota.

This book is captivating as a portrait of a strong personality, but its references to life in El Paso increase its local significance. One episode will show this: One night at the Sheldon Hotel, Mossman engaged B. A. Packard, Albert B. Fall, and Pat Garrett (of Billy the Kid fame) in a poker game. As Hunt describes the occasion, "it was Cap's night to howl. He touched Fall for \$700 and Pat Garrett for \$400. Fall left the game but backed Garrett, and Cap was glad to see the lanky sheriff win back his losses. This was not the prey he was after. He poured it on Pack. He'd win with better hands, and then he'd run him out of the betting and swoop in the pot with a small pair—and let Pack see what a bluffer he was. In the end he tapped the banker (from Douglas) for close to \$2,000. It took his cash and a check for \$1400 to settle his losses."

The next morning Mrs. Packard arrived in El Paso. " 'Dixie' Packard was a charming and gay lady, and Cap was extremely fond of her, and he delighted

to needle her rather tight-fisted husband for his small economies in such matters as flowers and the little generous impulses that women dote on.

"Early the next morning after the big game Cap called up the Keyser flower-shop, where he was well known . . .

"I want you to send some flowers right away to Mrs. B. A. Packard's room in the Sheldon Hotel,' Cap ordered.

"How many do you want, Captain Mossman?' the proprietor asked.

"How many you got?"

"A flower-shop full.'

"Send 'em all,' Cap roared through the telephone. 'Send every damn thing you got in the shop.'

"Within an hour the room was banked with enough flowers to suit the funeral of a Chicago gangster. And when Mrs. Packard arrived she fairly gasped. She could not remember Pack ever sending her so much as a posy of violets.

"Why, Daddy,' she gushed, 'I never knew you to buy flowers for me before.'

"Old Pack was a bit non-plussed. But finally he grinned and remarked, 'Guess I paid for 'em, all right. It's that g.d. Mossman.

"Cap did not mind in the least paying the bill for \$1300."

*Cap Mossman, Last of the Great Cowmen*, abounds in such scenes. Mossman typifies his world and his period. Edna Ferber, if she could throttle her propaganda impulses, should make a novel about him.

Joseph Leach

*Texas Western College*

# CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. C. L. Sonnichsen is a native of Iowa, a graduate of the University of Minnesota, and has his doctor's degree from Harvard. He is Professor of English and Chairman of the Department at Texas Western College. His major interest is in the history, folklore and literature of the Southwest.

He is a fellow of the Texas State Historical Society and a past president of the Texas Folklore Society. In 1948 he traveled through the cattle country on a Rockefeller fellowship gathering material for a book on the contemporary cattleman. In the summer of 1955 he was given a grant by the Henry E. Huntington Library to do work on the Mescalero Apaches.

His major publications include *Billy King's Tombstone*; *Roy Bean, Law West of the Pecos*; *Cowboys and Cattle Kings*; *I'll Die Before I'll Run*; *Alias Billy the Kid*; *Ten Texas Feuds* (spring, 1957); and *The Mescaleros* (just completed).



DR. C. L. SONNICHSEN

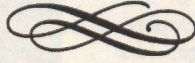
Mrs. Helen Whitener, Somerville was born in Texarkana, Texas. She was graduated from Mary Hardin Baylor, Belton, Texas, with a B.A. degree and received her M.A. degree from Texas Western College in August, 1956. This article was taken from a seminar in history written for Dr. Rex W. Strickland.

Mrs. Somerville resides at 701 East Blanchard Street, El Paso, Texas. She is a teacher of home-bound children for the Ysleta Public Schools.



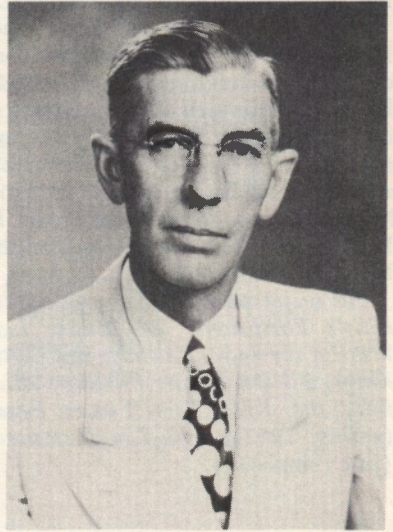
MRS. HELEN WHITENER  
SOMERVILLE

Colonel George Ruhlen, it will be remembered, is the author of the excellent article "Brazito—The Only Battle in the Southwest Between American and Foreign Troops" in the February, 1957, issue of PASS-WORD. For a picture and biographical sketch see that issue. Incidentally, Col. Ruhlen was graduated from West Point in 1935, not 1936.



Colonel Chester Hall Chambers, U.S.A. (Ret.) was born in Abilene, Texas, in 1899. In 1903 he moved with his parents to Sulphur, Oklahoma, when that state was Indian Territory. He later returned to Texas and was graduated from Texas A. & M. College. Upon receiving his degree he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He retired from the army in 1946 and resides with his wife at 3831 Jackson, El Paso.

Colonel Chambers is the great nephew of Fanny Chambers Gooch and the proud possessor of Mrs. Gooch's unusual and interesting volume, *Face to Face with the Mexicans*.



COLONEL  
CHESTER HALL CHAMBERS



Dr. Eugene O. Porter is Professor of History and Chairman of the Inter-Department of Inter-American affairs at Texas Western College.

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Dr. Joseph Leach is professor of English at Texas Western. Readers of PASS-WORD will be happy to learn that Dr. Leach is writing the feature article for the November issue of the magazine, a story of the Butterfield Stage Line.

# HISTORICAL NOTES

A letter from Colonel George Ruhlen is of sufficient importance to be included in HISTORICAL NOTES. Col. Ruhlen writes: "During the course of field explorations in connection with studying the Brazito battlefield site I considered it necessary to locate and then verify on the ground the locations of the international boundary marker established by the Bartlett survey and also old Fort Fillmore. It may be of interest to know that they still exist although very faintly.

"The boundary marker lies on the west side of the Rio Grande approximately opposite Dona Ana in latitude 32 degrees and 22 minutes about 500 yards west of the road from Picacho to Dona Ana on the west side of the river. Its location was restituted to a modern USGS map and on a rocky mesa a circle of rocks about 10 feet in diameter and about a foot high was found. It was obviously manmade and in a relatively inaccessible plot of ground. The surrounding terrain was practically identical with a sketch in Bartlett's *Personal Narrative*. The repudiation by all other members of the Boundary Commission of the agreement Bartlett made with the Mexican Commissioner, General Conde, as to the location of the boundary, led indirectly to the negotiations which culminated in the Gadsden Purchase.

"The location of old Fort Fillmore was restituted from Emory's boundary map and also from a map made by Capt. Pope of the Las Cruces area in 1854. The plan of the post was known from the Pope map and also from M. H. Thomlinson's article, "Border Outpost," in the *New Mexico Historical Review*, May, 1946. Reconnaissance on horse with Tom Burchell located lines of old bricks, stone, and some metal which traced the outline faintly on the ground. It can be found by turning to the east off US 80 two miles northwest of Brazito School on to a dirt road, proceeding to the foot of the sand hills about a mile away, and then walking 400 yards northeast. A small wash runs through the middle of the site of which scarcely a vestige now remains.

"Both the Fillmore site and the Bartlett monument should be appropriately marked on the site and by signs on the highway. Their deterioration during even five years was quite marked. Soon all trace will be gone."

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## ERRATA

In PASS-WORD, 11, (February, 1957), page 8, lines 6 and 8, for Guilty, read Culty; page 15, line 29, for Andress, read Andreas; and page 17, line 12, for Winne, read Kinne.

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According to *The Cattleman*, February, 1956, "the station which the Butterfield line built in El Paso was the largest and best-equipped on the whole route. Located at Overland, Oregon and El Paso streets, it was made of adobe, Mexican style, and was the most impressive building in town. With its dining and sleeping rooms, offices, corrals, well, tank, and shops for blacksmith, wheelwright, and harness repairmen, it spread over two acres."

### ON THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME "ARIZONA"

Several guesses are extant as to the origin of the name of our forty-eighth state. Some are based on the native tongues while similar derivations are from the Spanish. Among the former are: "ari, 'maiden,' and zon, 'valley,' from the Pima; ara and sunea or urnia, 'the son's beloved,' from the Mojave; ari, 'few' and zoni, 'fountains'; ari, 'beautiful,' and the Spanish zona; *Arizuma*, Aztec for 'silver-bearing'; *Arezuma*, an Aztec queen; *Arizunna*, 'the beautiful'; *Arizonia*, the maiden queen or goddess who by immaculate conception gave being to the Zuñi Indians; also the meaning of 'little creek' is given."

Among the guesses based on Spanish derivations are: "arrezafe, a country covered with brushwood; *árida zona*, an arid zone or region; and *narizona*, a big-nosed woman." See Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico* (San Francisco, 1889), 521n.

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According to *History News*, XII, 4 (February, 1957), "Volume 22 in the University of Oklahoma's *American Exploration and Travel series* is a manuscript that waited nearly half a century for publications: Daniel Ellis Connor's *Joseph Reddeford Walker and the Arizona Adventure* (\$5.00). Now edited by Donald J. Berthrong and Odessa Davenport, this volume provides new information on the last years of the life of one of the 'Mountain Men,' and throws much light on early Arizona history."

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