

PASSWORD



THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOL. XXVIII, NO. 2 • EL PASO, TEXAS • SUMMER, 1983



PASSWORD

LILLIAN COLLINGWOOD, *Editor*

Editorial Board: Conrey Bryson, Nancy Hamilton,
Mrs. Eugene O. Porter, Leon Metz, Mrs. John J. Middagh
Millard G. McKinney, Morgan Broaddus, Billie Etheridge
Graphics: Vicki Trego

Correspondence regarding articles for *PASSWORD* may be directed
to the editor at 5159 Sterling Place, El Paso, TX 79932.

The per-copy price of *PASSWORD* is \$4.

Correspondence regarding back numbers of *PASSWORD* should be addressed
to Corresponding Secretary, El Paso County Historical Society,
Post Office Box 28, El Paso, TX 79940.

PASSWORD (ISSN 0031-2738) is published quarterly
by THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
Post Office Box 28, El Paso, TX 79940. Membership of \$15.00 per year
includes a subscription to *PASSWORD*.

Second-class postage paid at El Paso, Texas.

Postmaster: Send address changes to:
Password, The El Paso County Historical Society,
Post Office Box 28, El Paso, TX 79940.

PASSWORD

(ISSN 0031-2738)

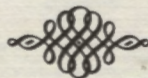
Vol. XXVIII, No. 2 El Paso, Texas Summer, 1983

CONTENTS

- Eugene Cunningham and the El Paso Southwest 47
by Carol Ann Price
- East Meets West: El Pasoans of Chinese Descent 58
by Willard G. Books
- The Times—One Hundred Years Ago 67
by Jay Smith
- El Paso County Historical Commission 71
by Catherine Kistenmacher
- Recuerdos 74
by Gerald X. Fitzgerald
- Museum Notes 80
by Barbara J. Ardu
- Activities of the Society 82
- Book Reviews 85
- Luckingham, *The Urban Southwest*
 Adams, Ed., *Peeks at the Past: Personal Memories of Ninety-Eight Persons*
- Vinson and Kirkpatrick, eds., *Twentieth Century Western Writers*
- Weigle and Flore, *Santa Fe and Taos: The Writer's Era, 1916-1941* and Reeve, *Santa Fe and Taos 1898-1942, An American Cultural Center*
- Keleher, *Turmoil in New Mexico*
- Stoddard and others, eds., *Borderlands Sourcebook: A Guide to the Literature on Northern New Mexico and the American Southwest*
- Booknotes 94
by Mary Ellen Porter
-
-

IN MEMORIAM

Mabel Grace Bennett
John B. Clifford
LaVelle Clifford
Leon C. Gillespie
Eloise Knotts Gorman (L)
Mary R. Schumaker
Lt. Colonel (U.S.A. Ret.) Charles F. Smith
Lewis L. Waugh



Copyright 1983
by 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 Second Class Mail
at El Paso, Texas

EUGENE CUNNINGHAM AND THE EL PASO SOUTHWEST

by
Carol Ann Price

Those who wrote good Western fiction were often as restless, colorful, and raw as the West itself. Certainly Eugene Cunningham was one such writer who lived what he wrote, and he had no patience with anyone who would write about the frontier if it wasn't already in his soul. Raised in Texas on a ranch near the Fort Worth cattle markets, he began the life of an adventurer early. At age 16 he tried to talk Captain Bill McDonald of the Texas Rangers into letting him join:

He rejected me for the Rangers that day, I recall. And my father laughed and reminded him that some boys not so very much older had made good rangers.¹

That was in 1911. Not to let one small rejection get in his way, by 1913 Gene was in the Navy. Throughout the Mexican campaign, 1915-1917, and the First World War in Europe, and with the Asiatic, Pacific, and Atlantic fleets, Gene Cunningham adventured from port to port. He had started writing by 1914, and the next year he began contributing Naval adventure and sea stories to British and American magazines like *Argosy*, *True*, *Naval Tales*, and *Adventure Magazine*, usually employing pseudonyms. He was a yeoman then and, being literary, worked often as a ship's clerk.² Years later, he told of once finding a punctuation mistake while typing for the admiral, and correcting it. Called on the carpet, he stood "MOST militarily at MOST attention," knees knocking, and lied: "I made a mistake," he stammered, and "had just not noticed that goddam comma..." He "did NOT tell the admiral it was unnecessary."³

Before leaving the Navy, Cunningham returned to the Southwest to work in local recruiting offices—on San Antonio Street in El Paso, as well as in Roswell, Deming, Lordsburg, Silver City, Albuquerque, and Tucumcari. Until then, in 1918, the fiction he had written had been about adventures upon the sea. Now he "loafed" around New

Carol Ann Price, the 1981 recipient of the Eugene O. Porter Memorial Award for her article "Early El Paso Artists—1900-1940," is the editor of *Artbeat*, the monthly newspaper published by El Paso Arts Alliance, and she frequently serves as a part-time instructor of English at The University of Texas at El Paso.

Mexico and West Texas whenever possible, developing a strong interest in the lore, and then writing Western stories and biographies.⁴ The old Southwest came alive under his pen, as when he wrote about the salt wars:

Today, the salt lakes lie as they did then, over in the blue haze against the Guadalupe. But, standing in the sleepy plaza of the village—talking, perhaps, to a brown-faced man who bears the name of one of those in the mob or combating it—it is hard to picture that December day of 50 years ago.

The golden cottonwoods are here, as then; blackbirds swarm and plunge now, as then; the yellow December sunlight yet gilds the gray-brown adobes; but that sudden staccato clatter is the exhaust of a Ford, not a string of shots fired in the famous war for salt.⁵

Out of the Navy by 1919, but back in South and Central America as correspondent for *Wide World Magazine*, Cunningham spent his days writing travel and political articles from Costa Rica to Guatemala.⁶ He walked through Central America, viewing firsthand the Nicaraguan Revolution, finding material for his adventure stories. In Guatemala he fell in with General Lee Christmas, soldier of fortune, getting to know him and hearing lots of his yarns of adventure in Central America. General Christmas was, he says, "No longer the swaggering, hard-drinking soldier...possessed of almost limitless powers in the land. But still the twin Lugars sagged on his hips and he sat habitually with his back to something solid."⁷ Of course lots of ideas came to Gene from this association; two of his earliest novels, *Redshirts of Destiny* and *Trail of the Macaw*, had a Texas-born soldier of fortune in Central America as the hero.

Returning to the states in the early 1920s, our author lived in San Francisco for a few years and then came back to El Paso, settling down on Wheeling Street with his young wife and little daughter, and trying to make a go of writing. He was also holding down a couple of jobs—just in case. He daily rode the Highland Park trolley to and from his office at the J. R. Moffatt Advertising Agency in the Mills Building, the first advertising agency in El Paso.⁸ He also worked with *The El Paso Times* as book editor, reviewing mostly his own books—and those of other writers of Westerns. Fellow newsman William J. Hooten remembers Gene as "a very fine

Eugene Cunningham

author in his own right.”⁹

Cunningham lived in the El Paso Southwest until the early 1940s, during which time he wrote dozens of novels, scores of short stories, and also his massive biographical work *Triggerometry: A Gallery of Gunfighters*. There is considerable evidence that the El Paso region served his talents well—providing him with abundant raw material for characters, settings, situations, dialogue. And sometimes it offered him live instances of the naked violence of the old West. For even as late as the 1920s and '30s there persisted in El Paso an atmosphere of the town's wild early days—due largely, no doubt, to the border setting which, according to C. L. Sonnichsen, generated “a



Eugene Cunningham in El Paso in 1935
(Photo from *El Paso Times*, courtesy M. G. McKinney)

continuous battle of wits as well as occasional bursts of gunfire; the rum-runners and dispensers of narcotics were forever thinking up new dodges and devices for fooling the lawmen.”¹⁰ Often lawmen made raids from one side of the river to the other to capture an escaped outlaw or two who considered themselves safe on the other side of the border. Or sometimes friends of outlaws crossed over to help them out of jail—forcibly, if necessary, one jump ahead of the Mexican Federales. Then the Juarez insurrection got things really hopping. It was a spectacle for all to behold. Everyone on the El Paso side of the Rio Grande watched from viewpoints like Rim Road, the Sun Bowl mountains, the top of downtown buildings, or from behind barricades in the streets down near the Bridge, often having to dodge stray bullets. Newsmen from all over the country were in town to cover the action, some of them venturing out once in a while to watch from the roof of the Times building, which—by the way—still has bullet holes in its elevator shaft to celebrate the occasion.”

And it wasn't just the border interactions that fanned the embers

of El Paso's old-times lawlessness. Even though the city was on its way toward becoming an aviation center (inspired by the 1927 visit of Charles Lindbergh), it was nevertheless the scene of a shoot-em-up in broad daylight in 1928. City Hall was rocked by gunfire from a disgruntled politician, angry that he hadn't been elected mayor, who decided to have a real showdown.¹² And on another occasion, Gene Cunningham himself saw a man shot down on the streets in the daytime, by someone with a palmed derringer.¹³

It is very likely that a major attraction of the El Paso area to Cunningham was the "living color" presence of its rough-and-tumble earlier period. The author felt strongly that Westerns should project authenticity—in geography, historical facts, characterizations, episodes:

I believe that historical figures in novels must be left in their real characters and in their known places. When Corle wrote his Billy the Kid novel he insisted that poetic license entitled him to put Billy anywhere he chose, doing anything the plot required. My contention is, this is fantasy, fairy tale, not historical fiction.¹⁴

Gene Cunningham was so scrupulous in his research and so committed to verisimilitude in his fiction that he has been called "a historian of the Old West." Many years after Cunningham left El Paso, Dr. Haldeen Braddy, at the time Professor of English at The University of Texas at El Paso, said that Cunningham's diligence in searching out real happenings had earned him a reputation as an expert on Southwest history. Jay Dawson, late of the Cross Nursery, Upper Valley, cited many cases when the facts he told Gene about his family and their ranch found a way into Gene's stories.¹⁵ When not writing genuine biographies of local heroes, Cunningham was putting those people into novels, rivaling Zane Gray as a prolific writer of Western adventures.

The Lincoln County War shows up often in his books, for example. "I took the exact map of an area," he once explained, "and then renamed every spot; renamed those cowboy warriors and the other real figures tall and short; added men and women of Texas and New Mexico known all my life; used all I had learned of novel-building to produce a balanced, closely-knit novel of action. Best of all—wherever those fierce...riders raced through 'The Territory,' I was seeing the real Southwest and painting it with every local color I

could manage."¹⁶ *Diamond River Man* is a retelling of part of this New Mexico episode, with fictionalized setting and all its characters renamed. As one reviewer said, "Cunningham knows the locality in which he stages his stories, he knows the people he puts into his stories, he is familiar with their lingo, and he slings it with ease and fluency."¹⁷

Gene knew his characters because "there to tell us were the actors themselves, one man and woman leading to another," and he lived at the right time to follow up on that belief: he could ask the old-timers who were still around what really happened. "There are old men yet alive," he said as late as 1941, "who squint across the mists of a long half-century and...mutter a name in their beards and recount the old legends."¹⁸ So he would weave his real characters and real events into a neatly contrived plot—and presto, there would be another book!

He told of once meeting a novelist who disdainfully told Gene that he himself didn't write Westerns. "I said fairly gently," wrote Cunningham later, "neither do I...I write *SOUTHWESTERNS*...a very different thing; and I write correctly out of ignorance, having lived there and knowing nothing but what is REAL."¹⁹ Not wanting his historical fiction to be treated lightly, he said, "I refuse to have my writings classed as trash—another Western—horse opera—too many people in actual events are there, affectionately treated."²⁰ To write authentic Southwestern novels, believed Cunningham, the author had to be of the Southwest—had to have it in his blood.

As Conrey Bryson, Sam Young, and other El Paso acquaintances noticed, Gene Cunningham was a very systematic writer also. He kept maps and charts on his walls to plot the movement of his stories, and also kept lists of Christian names from A to Z, for characters in his stories. He used about four main plots for his novels, Mr. Young remembers, changing names and situations in each so as to provide new stories. One plot, developed for his earlier stories of revolution in Central America, was about a stranger who comes to a territory to find it upset by two warring factions trying to get control. Another plot, used with his "Territory" stories, has the hero, a naive and innocent young man caught up with an outlaw gang, wrongly arrested and dishonored, finally proving himself in the end. The third plot comes straight from the streets of El Paso—the Town Marshal plot, based loosely on the story of Dallas Stoudenmire. Here the story opens on a town run wild, with the local sheriff's



A portrait of Eugene Cunningham which appeared in the El Paso Times on March 16, 1935

office demoralized; the hero rides in to take over the law of the town, is resisted and attacked by local gangs of outlaws and cattle rustlers, faces many saloon and dance hall shootouts and close shaves, cleans up the town finally, and of course wins the prettiest girl.²¹

His fourth plot centered on his heroes the Texas Rangers. A Lone Ranger moves in to clean up a large territory overrun by outlaws. (If the territory is too large, with too many outlaws, the hero might call in a friend, another Ranger, but just to have someone to talk to.) *Buckaroo*, one of Cunningham's best novels, is built on this plot. After finally incarcerating all the outlaws in the local jail, the hero-Ranger "went to breakfast. He was conscious of being a figure noted everywhere. It worried him not at all. He was used to it. From Tascosa on the far Canadian, to Brownsville at the Rio Grande's mouth, he had walked on the streets of fifty towns with the people staring at him and saying to themselves: 'There's a Ranger...' "²²

Cunningham's Rangers worked hard "learnin' outlaws that court law can take the place of six-shooter-em-in-the-back-law."²³ And they always delivered their man:

...the companies rode back and forth across the wildest sections of Texas, waging war against entrenched and far-flung outlawry that had mocked and flouted every judge but 'Old Judge Colt.' Never numerous, the Rangers ignored odds. They arrested their men, or killed their men, or saw them 'buy a trunk' and vanish over the Texas line in a high cloud of dust.²⁴

Two of Gene Cunningham's real Ranger friends were John R. Hughes and James B. Gillett. He wrote their colorful lives into *Trigernometry*, along with biographies of many other famous lawmen and outlaws; and then he put these same people, in disguise, into his novels. That is why Eugene Manlove Rhodes could say, "It is hard to find a single one of his novels that is not worth reading—and the list is long. One of the qualities that makes them great is the development of the characters with a fine precision that is all too seldom seen"; and W. H. Hutchinson, another fellow writer of Western lore, could add that "the nuances and subtleties of shading in Cunningham's characterizations" were rare.²⁵

Heroes and bad men lived again in Eugene Cunningham's novels—and also in his major biographical work of the Southwest.

Writing in *Triggernometry* of local heroes like Sheriff Dallas Stoudenmire, Rangers Hughes and Gillett, and other Western gunfighters, Cunningham found that he had to make a distinction between the terms "gunfighter" and "gunman." The gunfighter was the good guy, like the Texas Ranger, and the "gunman" was the bad guy, not necessarily skilled with a gun, but who used it for his own evil deeds, ignoring the code of the true gunfighter, and often as not waiting for a chance to shoot his adversary in the back rather than square off with him in a fair fight. Both good and bad together he classed under the general term of "gunslinger."²⁶ Most writers, including writers of TV Westerns, have followed this same pattern of terminology. In the back pages *Triggernometry* is another lesson for readers—and viewers—of Westerns, a section called "Leather Slapping as a Fine Art," which describes many of the types of holsters and belts used by gunslingers, as well as fast-draw techniques and other gun tricks. This study of gunslinging as an art includes explanations of outlaws' tricks, like the "border shuffle" and the "road agent's spin," as well as lawmen's inventions for catching the outlaws, such as Sheriff Jim Gillett's gun vest and the "buscadero" gun belt developed by El Pasoan Sam Myers and adapted for the use of the Texas Rangers.²⁷

During this period of Cunningham's great productivity, the Depression had hit El Paso. But Gene was prospering. He acquired a new car (a Willis-Knight) and also a new house that Sam Young had built up on Cumberland. His Mills Building office was a friendly oasis to which were dispatched gunny sacks of contraband Juarez whiskey for the relief of Prohibition-dry throats. It is reported that the ladies in the Christian Science Reading Room adjoining his office heard many songs not found in their hymnals.²⁸ In the afternoons, he could usually be found sitting around the Paso del Norte Hotel coffeeshop conversing with older El Pasoans, like ex-Rangers Gillett and Hughes, as well as Tio Sam Myers, George Coe, Ed McGivern, A. B. Fall, and Captain Bill McDonald, about the old days when these adventurers were in the business of making Southwestern history.

Meanwhile, he continued working for *The El Paso Times* until 1936, writing the column called "Glancing Through the New Books," glancing mostly through the new books of his fellow writers of Westerns and, of course, giving his own books lots of coverage. Perhaps because he pushed the books of his favorite writers so

determindly, to the exclusion of many of the other more "eastern" books, Cunningham became embroiled in a situation that led to his leaving the *Times*. Laura Scott Meyers, book editor of the *Herald-Post*, let the publishing companies back east know that her column was trying to do a conscientious job on all the new books, not just Westerns. Dr. Sonnichsen brought this out in public one day at a literary meeting, one that Dorrance Roderick, the owner of the newspaper, happened to be attending. The upshot was that Cunningham fired off some harsh words to Sonnichsen and Meyers, quit the *Times*, and went to work for the *New Mexico Magazine* as book editor of the "Southwestern Bookshelf," holding that position until 1942.²⁹

One of Gene's first articles for *New Mexico Magazine* was about his favorite hobby—collecting cowboy songs. Apparently he pursued this hobby with some dedication and became rather an expert on cowboy songs in both English and Spanish. In his *Trigger-nometry* chapter on outlaw Sam Bass, he annotated "The Ballad of Sam Bass," pointing out which parts were purely rhetoric and which were grounded in fact.³⁰ He also sprinkled cowboy songs liberally through his fiction, adding color and authenticity. A good example of this practice may be observed in *The Ranger Way*, which features the character "Singin' Shelly Raines," who sings his way across the Southwest as he chases outlaws. "The cowboy had a wide repertoire," Cunningham said in his *New Mexico Magazine* article "Songs of the Range." When "jogging across wide distances, sitting about the campfire, or riding slowly around the bedded herd, he threw back his head and began to sing.... And if his songs were crude, as he was a crude and elementary creature, they were again like him, vigorous and always alive."³¹

Gene Cunningham and his family left the Southwest in 1942 and moved to the San Francisco area. He continued writing until shortly before his death in 1957, but not at the rapid pace he had maintained while living in El Paso. We learn from his letters to W. H. Hutchinson, which form part of the Hutchinson collection in The University of Texas at El Paso archives (and which were garnered for the library by Leon Metz) that he slowed way down on writing "Southwesterns" and turned to new areas. He worked with Hutchinson, editing the works of Eugene Manlove Rhodes for publication after Rhodes' death. He was also ghostwriting for political speeches on occasion, as well as writing screenplays for the early days of

television. "Wagon Train" used many of his plots and stories. His letters from California to Arizona and New Mexico friends, which he wrote prolifically whenever he could find scratch paper to write on the back of, showed him to be in poor health a lot of the time, and didn't mention much new writing in the way of Southwestern historical fiction, with the notable exception of *Riding Gun*, published in 1956, the last and one of his best novels, which had been stewing in his mind for many years.³²

It is obvious that Eugene Cunningham was fascinated by the frontier Southwest, which had all but vanished before his time: He was fascinated, we infer from his plots, by the enormous challenge it posed: to create order out of disorder, to substitute law for lawlessness. It is equally obvious that El Paso of the 1930s, with its lingering wisps of frontier gunsmoke and its loquacious old-timers, was warmly hospitable to Gene's literary interests. Not once, not twice, but again and again and over again, he used the lively history, the colorful characters, the picturesque scenery of the El Paso Southwest to body forth his vision of what had been REAL during that dangerous time. ☆

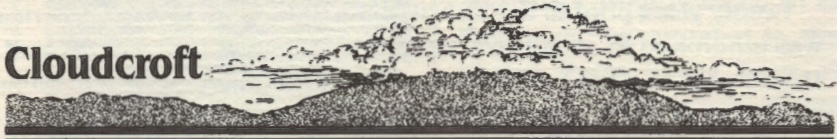
NOTES

1. Eugene Cunningham, *Triggernometry: A Gallery of Gunfighters* (Caldwell: The Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1941), 315-316.
2. "Cunningham, Eugene." *Who's Who in America* article, *El Paso Times* records ca. 1937; and Personal Interview with Chester Chope, August 3, 1978.
3. Eugene Cunningham, Letter to W. H. Hutchinson, February 2, 1955, W. H. Hutchinson papers, Southwest Collection, The University of Texas at El Paso Library.
4. Eugene Cunningham, "Better than Cibolo," *New Mexico Magazine* 35 (February, 1957), 46; Chope, personal interview, August 3, 1978.
5. Eugene Cunningham, "Salt," *Frontier Times* 7 (January, 1930), 158.
6. "Cunningham, Eugene." *Who's Who in America*, 22 ed. (1942-43); and Eugene Cunningham, *Famous in the West* (El Paso: Hicks Hayward Company), overleaf.
7. Cunningham, *Triggernometry*, 411.
8. Howard Newton, telephone interview, April 10, 1979; and Carl Hertzog, personal interview, August 2, 1978.
9. William J. Hooten, telephone interview, August 6, 1978.
10. C. L. Sonnichsen, "El Paso from War to Depression," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 74 (April, 1971), 364, 365.
11. William J. Hooten, *Fifty-two Years a Newsmen* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1974), 17-46, 56; John Middagh, *Frontier Newspaper: The El Paso Times* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1953), 256-262.
12. Middagh, *Frontier Newspaper*, passim; and personal interview with William J. Hooten, August 6, 1978.
13. Cunningham, *Triggernometry*, 436, 437.
14. Cunningham, "Better than Cibolo," 47.
15. Haldeen Braddy, letter, January 26, 1979; Jay Dawson, personal interviews, July 24, 1978; January 6, 1979.
16. Cunningham, "Better than Cibolo," 47.
17. Hilton R. Greer, "Trail of the Macaw," review, *Dallas Journal*, ca. 1936.
18. Cunningham, *Triggernometry*, 14. A. B. Fall and others had recounted to him the story of A. J. Fountain and son, murdered at White Sands, which he promptly put into his book *Spiderweb Trail*. "And old Fall," Cunningham later wrote,

Eugene Cunningham

- "reading the magazine novelette that contained much of the same material, met me on the street and shook his head reprovingly: and they say you write FICTION—dear me...." (*Better than Cibolo*, 46).
19. Cunningham, letter to W. H. Hutchinson, February 20, 1956.
20. Cunningham, "Better than Cibolo," 47.
21. Sam Young, personal interview, August 9, 1978; and Cunningham, *Diamond River Man, Texas Triggers, Texas Sheriff* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934, 1935, 1936), passim; *Diamond River Man*, according to Hutchinson, *Another Verdict for Oliver Lee* (Clarendon Press, 1965) 18, is the story of Billy the Kid and the Lincoln County War.
22. Cunningham, *Buckaroo* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933), 58.
23. *Ibid.*, 67.
24. *Ibid.*, Eugene Manlove Rhodes' preface.
25. W. H. Hutchinson, "Virgins, Villains, & Varmints," ed., *The Rhodes Reader: Stories of Virgins, Villains & Varmints by Eugene Manlove Rhodes* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), xviii. (Continued on page 66.)

Cloudcroft



yesterday the big pines
at Cloudcroft made me think
of hiding from you,

the kids, the multiversity
of rabbits, goldfish, dogs, etc.
and i hid briefly

behind one symbolic Douglas fir.
while trampling heavily
under the Cloudcroft evergreens

i thought also
of hiding from my job
at the university

without diversity,
and looking down i found
one perfect aspen

walking stick still green
and cut to my proportions
which are average.

ah, yesterday
under the Cloudcroft clouds
the smoke from your burritos

found me,
my head unhinged and floating
in a universe

of pine cones,
needles turning into soil,
children growing,

blue jays, money
needed to repair the brakes
and i crashed down

dramatically
into your warm glen.

—by Joseph Somoza
(from *Olive Women*)

(reprinted with permission of the author)

Joseph Somoza, a member of the English faculty at New Mexico State University since 1973, is the author of several published poems and volumes of poetry, and he is also poetry editor of the magazine *Puerto del Sol*.

EAST MEETS WEST: EL PASOANS OF CHINESE DESCENT

by
Willard G. Books

In the year 1880, El Paso had a population of 736. On May 19, 1881, that population suddenly swelled to 1,500. The reason: the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad which linked El Paso to the West Coast. Among those who chugged their way into El Paso in 1881 was a new people, at least to El Pasoans: the Chinese.

Twenty years prior to the arrival of the Chinese in El Paso, America was embroiled in a civil war. When the smoke of that war cleared, the struggling young country faced a new problem: a critical labor shortage. In the southern states, laborers were needed in the cotton fields to replace the emancipated blacks. They were also needed in the "full steam ahead" railroad industry which had suffered a temporary setback during the Civil War. One answer to this labor shortage was to recruit Chinese who had immigrated from China as early as 1849, lured to the West Coast by the discovery of gold.

It was the railroad which brought the first Chinese to Texas. However, they did not come directly from the West Coast, but from St. Louis, to which city they had migrated in search of the profits of the "white gold"—cotton. In 1869, 300 Chinese coolies, led by General John G. Walker, left St. Louis aboard the steamer *Mississippi*, bound for the Brazos Valley in Texas.¹

Historian Edward J. M. Rhoads, in charting the Chinese development in Texas from 1860 through 1970, records 25 Chinese residing in the Lone Star State in 1870 and 136 in 1880. His table, compiled from figures gathered from the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, does not show any Chinese living in El Paso until 1890 (225) even though they had arrived in the border town in 1881. The subsequent ten-year census lists show 336 Chinese in El Paso in 1900; 253 in 1910; 137 in 1920, 181 in 1930; 213 in 1940; 245 in 1950; 285 in 1960; and 332 in 1970.² The United States Bureau of Census has not yet released data for 1980. However, according to the El Paso Planning Department, 536

Willard G. Books is Director of Student Publications at The University of Texas at El Paso, where he is also working toward a Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies. This article is adapted from a paper originally submitted to Sociology Professor Ellwyn R. Stoddard as part of the requirements for a graduate course entitled "Southwestern Cultures."



Chew Din, El Paso resident since 1915, and a young friend, six-year-old Neal Quon (Photo courtesy Willard G. Books)

persons of Chinese descent were living in El Paso County in 1980.

The original goal of many of the Chinese who immigrated to the United States was to return to China with the money they had earned. Such was the case of Chew Din (at 93 the second oldest resident of Chinese ancestry currently living in El Paso), who immigrated to the United States in the hope of earning enough money for his own survival and that of his family left behind in Canton, China. Arriving in El Paso in 1915, Din did not live in the Chinese Colony but on a farm where he worked as a laborer

for \$2 a week. A year after his arrival, he was drafted into the United States Army and served as a waiter in a mess hall with the World War I occupation troops in Germany. Upon receiving an honorable discharge, Din returned to El Paso and in 1924 opened the Chew Din grocery store. It took Din 16 years to earn enough money to bring his wife and daughter to El Paso in 1940. Although Din had no formal education, he notes with pride that all three of his children are college educated.

In her master's thesis entitled "History of Chinese in El Paso," Nancy Farrar describes the first Chinese arrivals in El Paso as "illiterate with little, if any, education." According to both Rhoads and Farrar, the "pig-tailed Chinese" who arrived with the Southern Pacific Railroad worked in occupations they knew best: hand-laundries, restaurants, hotels, and truck farming. The hand-laundry business was the occupation most pursued by the Chinese as it was considered women's work by the Anglos and, in early times, was not regarded as a threat to the white wage earners. Of the 18 hand-laundries in El Paso in 1889, all were owned and operated by Chinese. In 1907, 13 of the 15 hand-laundries were operated by Chinese.

According to Noon Pon, now a prosperous El Paso businessman, the days of the Chinese hand-laundries are long past. Today, to his knowledge, there are no Chinese laundries in El Paso. He estimates that over 85% of the El Pasoans of Chinese descent engage in white-collar occupations. Some are university professors, doctors, accountants, attorneys; others are realtors, stock brokers, bankers, executives with utility companies, grocery store owners, and proprietors of some of the best restaurants in El Paso.

Attorney David Chew is typical of the successful Chinese professional man in El Paso today. The son of Wellington Chew, who was born in Juarez in 1921 and whose parents had immigrated to Mexico from China, Attorney Chew is Chinese only by ancestry. He chuckled when he had to admit that he can not speak the Chinese language (he is learning Spanish along with his young son) and that he knows nothing about the history of the Chinese in El Paso except as regards his own family (his father owned the first Chinese grocery store located in El Paso's North Chinatown).

El Paso's Chinatown saw its beginning in the 1880s. The early Chinese arrivals in El Paso, like their counterparts in other American cities and towns, encountered open hostility, a fact that encouraged them to form a colony for their mutual comfort and protection. That colony in El Paso extended from St. Louis (now Mills) Street, south to Fourth Street and from Stanton to El Paso Streets—an area of about 18 square blocks. The area was a honey-comb of underground passages, believed by some historians to have been used for hiding "mail order" brides and the illegal aliens who were smuggled into the country from Mexico. Early Chinatown was made up mostly of men, those who had immigrated to the new country to work on the railroads, in the cotton fields, and in the truck-farming industry. Census records show only one Chinese woman residing in El Paso in 1883. In 1916, of the 143 Chinese listed as El Paso residents, only four were women.

Although the Chinese were actively recruited as laborers and even praised as "the best, cheapest and most reliable laborers ever known" (*Galveston News*), on the whole they were treated badly. Many died and were buried in the railroad beds they helped to lay. Often they were beaten by Anglos and Mexicans alike.

One Chinese worker was murdered near the Pecos River, and when the incident came to trial Judge Roy Bean delivered the opinion that there was no law in Texas against 'killing

a Chinaman. There were other dangers. On December 31, 1881, a roving band of Apache Indians encountered a surveying crew of 11 Chinese at Eagle Pass and killed them all.³

Chinese were identified in newspapers as the "offals of China," "miserable yellow imbecile dwarfs," "imported heathen." In 1889 the El Paso daily *Herald* complained: "An indulgent public has permitted the pig tails to corner the laundry business in the city." The *Herald* ran an advertisement for a restaurant which read: "The best 35¢ meals in the city - No Chinese Employed." Sentiment seems to have changed a little by 1891 when the *Herald* wrote: "In El Paso the Chinese as a rule is a peaceful citizen, obeying laws as far as he can understand them and engages in occupations which least compete with white labor."⁴

This statement reflects an apprehension which had long pre-occupied Americans regarding the impact of a Chinese work force. In 1868, the United States and China had signed a treaty to protect the flow of immigration at a time when Americans were accusing Chinese of unfair competition in business, of lowering wages, and of immoral and unsanitary habits. In 1870, during an economic depression, Chinese were victims of mob violence. The economic threat, real or imagined, was followed by a nation-wide "Yellow Peril" scare (the threatened expansion of the Oriental people as magnified in the western imagination). The demand by Westerners that the immigration of Orientals be halted prompted Congress to pass the first of a series of Oriental Exclusion Acts in 1882. This immigration restriction, as it related to the Chinese, was not lifted until 1943 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt recognized the patriotism of the American Chinese during World War II.

El Pasoans felt the effect of low-wage Chinese laborers, and they voiced resentment over the Chinese hand-laundry monopoly, but other problems caused an uproar in the early 1880s: the opium dens and gambling halls located in the Chinatown area. Farrar wrote that El Paso's Chinatown was "regarded by many El Pasoans as a 'peril of evil' of gambling joints, opium dens, hatchet men, tong wars, unsanitary conditions and Chinese laundries." The El Paso City Council on March 19, 1882, passed an ordinance to "prohibit the excessive use of opium in the city of El Paso." Ordinances were also passed banning gambling in the Chinese colony; but apparently

they had little effect, as the *Herald*, on January 17, 1889, ran an editorial stating that El Paso was the "Chinese mecca of the Southwest."

As sentiment to prevent the immigration of the Chinese into El Paso and Texas mounted, another problem, perhaps more serious than opium dens and laundry monopolies, caused concern in El Paso: the lucrative business of smuggling Chinese into the United States through Mexico. The smuggling of illegal Chinese aliens apparently caused the Chinese population to increase to 836 in Texas in 1900 (336 in El Paso). Historians, including Farrar, have written about an alleged tunnel, built under the Rio Grande River, used for the purpose of smuggling Chinese "mail order" brides and other illegals into the United States. The tunnel was supposed to have run from Juarez, Mexico, to Sunset Heights (Yandell and Prospect Streets) in El Paso.

The oriental Exclusion Act, combined with a crack-down on Chinese aliens illegally being smuggled into the United States through Mexico, caused more discrimination against Chinese. Many, even though in the United States legally, were deported for lack of evidence of residency. One of the few El Pasoans to come to the aid of the Chinese in the late 1880s and early 1890s was Attorney William H. Burges. In *Texas Lawyer: the Life of William H. Burges*, author J. F. Hulse tells about Burges representing many Chinese who faced deportation. In the somewhat humorous case of Wu Li Chew (circa 1890), Burges' defendant claimed that he has been born in San Francisco in 1850. The district attorney dug into the San Francisco census records of 1850 and informed the judge that only four Chinese women had lived there at the time. The district attorney argued that "it appears improbable that he (Wu Li Chew) was born in San Francisco." The court responded: "It just took one Chinese woman to be the defendant's mother and you have proved one of those four Chinese women was his mother. Now, unless you have something else to offer, the court will enter judgment for the defendant." (The court ruled in favor of Wu Li Chew.)⁵

Farrar dates the start of the decline of the Chinese colony in El Paso as 1917. She lists several contributing factors: the American punitive expedition into Mexico by Brigadier General John J. Pershing, the introduction of steam laundries which forced the Chinese out of the hand-laundry business, the outlawing of gambling in El Paso, and the continued shortage of Chinese women. The latter fact

encouraged intermarriages, mostly with Mexicans, and these mixed-race families no longer retained the Chinese customs.

The notorious Pancho Villa had an interesting side effect on the flow of Chinese into the United States. During the period when Villa was carrying on his attacks into the United States, hundreds of Chinese were living in border cities in Mexico awaiting the opportunity to enter the United States. In 1916, when "Black Jack" Pershing entered Mexico in search of Villa, the Chinese people helped him with "candy, cigarettes and services not usually offered to troops in enemy territory..General Pershing and his men returned 11 months after an unsuccessful pursuit of Villa. Among the 2,700 refugees following the expedition back to the Unites States were 527 Chinese."⁶

In gratitude for the help of the Chinese, some of whom even fought with the American troops, General Pershing petitioned Congress to grant an exception to the Exclusion Act of 1882 to the



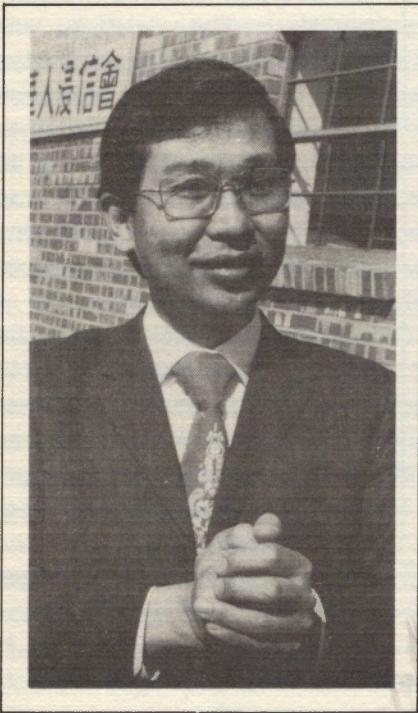
Noon Pon, El Paso businessman and current president of the El Paso Chinese Benevolent Society (Photo courtesy Willard G. Books)

Chinese who had helped his expedition. The petition was granted. Fearful of retaliation by Villa, 400 of those who were allowed to immigrate from Mexico followed Pershing to San Antonio. The others, and including some who were living in El Paso at the time, moved away from the border city.

With the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943 and with the arrival of Chinese women after World War II, the Chinese colony was no longer needed as a haven for refugees in El Paso.

Two organizations credited with keeping the Chinese culture and heritage alive in El Paso are the Chinese Benevolent Society and the Baptist Church. The Benevolent Society, in existence for over 50 years, was founded by the Chinese to provide relief for needy Chinese. "During the Great Depression, all Chinese were provided for; no El Paso Chinese

were placed on welfare rolls.” Noon Pon, current president of the El Paso Chinese Benevolent Society, says the Society today functions primarily as a social-cultural organization. He explains that outside of an occasional transient Chinese person requiring help there is little call for charitable works among El Paso’s Chinese-American population, which is stable and secure. The Society’s present-day responsibilities, he continues, include the planning and arranging for traditional festivities, such as the New Year’s celebrations. Pon describes these as quite different from the exploding firecrackers and mechanical toys, which were employed to chase away evil spirits. Nowadays, he explains, the evil spirits are all dispatched on Halloween, an American custom celebrated by Chinese-American children. And the traditional Chinese dress at New Year’s, he adds, has bowed to Western styles: in keeping with the reserved character of the event, the man wears business suits and the ladies wear evening dresses.



The Reverend Isaac L. Chan, D.D., Pastor of the Grant Avenue Baptist Church (Photo courtesy Willard G. Books)

The Christian church’s involvement with the El Paso Chinese can be dated as far back as 1898, when the Baptist Church started a mission for the Chinese. The first mission lasted but two years, and it was not revived until 1935, when a Chinese couple, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Garbern, reported 32 Chinese boys and girls learning the philosophy of Confucius, the art and history of China, and the Cantonese dialect. From the Garbern home, the mission moved to the basement of the First Baptist Church and then, in 1951, to the new Baptist Mission church located at 2030 Grant Avenue, the present location of the Grant Avenue Baptist Church.

In 1969, the church voted in favor of having English spoken



True
Happiness

A cover design on a responsive-reading leaflet used at the Grant Avenue Baptist Church (Courtesy Grant Avenue Baptist Church)

in all services. The Chinese language was not part of the regular services again until August of 1982, when the Reverend Issac Chan was called to serve the church. Pastor Chan, his wife and three children immigrated to the United States from Hong Kong in 1980. Pastor Chan says he was called to the Grant Avenue Baptist Church primarily because he is fluent in the Chinese language. He preaches in the Cantonese dialect each Sunday, to the enjoyment of the older Chinese people especially. The younger generation receives the message of his sermons through an interpreter. And, again, children are being offered the opportunity to learn the Chinese language and the culture of their ancestors.

Although the Grant Avenue Baptist Church is not operated exclusively for Chinese-Americans, most of its members are of Chinese ancestry. A Chinese custom—that of a hand wave and a broad smile—is observed as a welcome to visitors.

With the exception of several students at The University of Texas at El Paso, there are no Chinese living in El Paso today, only El Pasoans of Chinese descent. They appreciate their rich heritage, but on the whole they do not cling to their ancestry and do not actively foster the Chinese culture to a large degree. They are Americans. ☆

NOTES

1. William T. Field Jr., *The Chinese Texans* (San Antonio: The University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures at San Antonio, 1978), 5.
2. Edward J. M. Rhoads, "The Chinese in Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 81 (July, 1977), 5, 11.
3. Field, *The Chinese Texans*, 5-6.
4. Nancy Farrar, *The Chinese in El Paso* (Monograph No. 33, Southwestern Studies), (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1972), 15-16.
5. J. F. Hulse, Texas Lawyer: *The Life of William H. Burges* (El Paso: Mangan Books, 1982), 88-89.
6. Field, *The Chinese Texans*, 14.
7. *Ibid.*, 9.



Cunningham...from page 57.

26. Cunningham, *Triggernometry*, 1-11.
27. *Ibid.*, 414-439.
28. Hutchinson, *Another Verdict for Oliver Lee*, 18-19.
29. Mrs. Max Ray Call, telephone interview, November 10, 1980; also letter received from Charles Leland Sonnichsen, July 26, 1978; and Laura Scott Meyers, telephone interview, August 2, 1978.
30. Cunningham, *Triggernometry*, 288-297.
31. Cunningham, "Songs of the Range," *New Mexico Magazine*, 14 (February, 1936), 12, 13.
32. Cleveland Cunningham, letter of November 13, 1980; Mrs. Max Ray Call, telephone interview, November 10, 1980; and Eugene Cunningham, letters to W. H. Hutchinson, The University of Texas at El Paso archives, *passim*.

THE TIMES— ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

by
Jay Smith

This column is written from information published in the *El Paso Daily Times* during the second quarter of 1883. El Paso—it called itself the Gate City—had grown from a village of 700 people to a town of 4,000 residents in the very short period which had elapsed since the arrival of the railroads in 1881. Although aware of the problems connected with its exploding population, El Paso took pride in its achievements and assets: its mule-driven streetcar that ran across the river to the Mexican town of Paso del Norte, its new water works, and the nearby army post, Ft. Bliss, located on the river by Hart's Mill.

There was one big newspaper story during this quarter. On April 14, at about 4:00 in the morning, a fire started in the rear of Williamson's drug emporium on El Paso street. Aided by a high wind, it spread rapidly. The volunteer fire department worked valiantly, but before it was over the entire west side of one block had burned. Pete Kern's jewelry store was looted, but much of the jewelry was later recovered in Mexico. No lives were lost. One quotation is worthy of note: "The stove-pipe water works (water pipes) were won't to be a joke in El Paso. They will be no more. Their stove-pipes sent streams of water over the roofs of every burning building."

The following are selected short excerpts from the *Times*.

April 11th

"With the building boom which has set in El Paso the sooner the grade of the streets is determined the better. Just now the whole thing is guess work, the only graded street in the city being El Paso street."

April 12th

"Mrs. Ben Schuster had the misfortune to fall from her buggy last evening and hurt her ankle severely."

April 13th

"In conversation with Acting City Marshall Comstock yesterday, that

Jay Smith is the editor of two local publications, the Society's newsletter *El Conquistador* and the El Paso Corral of Westerners' *Buffalo Chip Gazette*. He will continue to author "The Times—One Hundred Years Ago," which will appear as a regular feature in each issue of *Password*.

gentleman informed the reporter that the opium dens were fast becoming a curse to the young men and boys of the city who frequent them with impetunity as there is no ordinance making it an offense..."

April 14th

"Among the passengers arriving here last night from the west was Brigadier General George Crook, commanding the Department of Arizona. The general was accompanied by Capt. G.P. Fiebirger and Lieut. J.G. Bourke of his staff."

April 19th

"The road from Fort Bliss to El Paso, for which an appropriation of \$5,500 was made by Congress, is being rapidly pushed forward."

April 25th

"In the course of a brief stroll yesterday afternoon, in the neighborhood of the *Times* office, we counted 23 buildings just finished or in course of erection."

April 27th

"In the Military Division of the Missouri, under General Sheridan, is the largest army system in the world...(on the average) one soldier guards 1,700 people against 17 warlike savages, and paces a beat of 200 square miles..."

May 1st

"Some idiot has telegraphed all over the state that 'the Mexicans have been damming the Rio Grande under the guns of Fort Bliss and carrying all the water to the Mexican side.' The facts are that the Mexicans have only exercised a legal right which belongs to them, and that an 11 inch pipe and the natural seepage supplies us with all the water we want in El Paso. Last week the water works pumped 1,100,000 gallons into our reservoirs which certainly does not look like a water famine."

May 2nd

"A lamp should be kept lighted where the excavations for new buildings are being made. As things stand now, passengers coming from the depot on a dark night are liable to break their necks."

May 4th

"Three drunks and one vagrant were fined in the Mayor's Court yesterday morning."

May 10th

"With the growth of the city a new official map of El Paso has become absolutely necessary. The Hart map is incorrect in many particulars, and contains a number of errors. As there is no provision likely to be made by the Council, a number of property owners are endeavoring to raise, by private subscription, the necessary funds to have a thoroughly good map of the city made by the City Engineer."

"There was quite an excitement yesterday among El Paso canines. The ordinance providing that all dogs should be licensed and tagged was vigorously enforced. The marshall has provided himself with an army of juvenile deputies, who rounded up every untagged dog they found, and yelping and howling confined him in the pound. The boys were paid ten cents apiece for every dog they captured...If anyone has lost a valuable dog he is likely to find him at the pound, and can recover possession on the payment of \$3.00...the ordinance has for its object not so much to make revenue for the city as to clear it of the miserable...curs that encumber our streets.

May 11th

"Tom Miller's team ran away yesterday afternoon. The colored man fought bravely, but the team was too strong for him."

"Lieutenant Hayes, from the post came in last evening to go and play a game of billiards, left his horse, a splendid animal worth \$250 standing hitched outside the adobe building. While he was absent some one took the horse and rode over into Mexico. Although every effort is being made on both sides to recover the horse up to an early hour this morning they have been without effect. Little hope of its recovery is entertained officially."

May 13th

"The woman whose wild and foolish cries alarmed all the inhabitants of El Paso and San Antonio streets at an early hour yesterday morning, had a narrow escape from being placed in the cooler, and may thank her husband she did not get there."

"Lieutenant Hayes gets his horse back. The thief is caught in old Mexico and turned over without extradition. James Bohead, recently out of jail, had rode the horse over the river and into the mountains, where he found a mescal camp and filled up with the

stimulant. He rode into Paso del Norte where he was at once arrested..."

May 20th

"Quite an excitement in front of the Central Hotel caused by a government ambulance running into a hack and taking one wheel off. Uncle Sam can stand it."

May 23rd

"The only excitement we noticed in the stock market today was the sale of two burros, the entire assets of a disgusted prospector."

June 12th

"The Southern Pacific are using Mexican laborers in place of Chinese to a great extent. A gang of Mexicans are worked at the yard in this place."

(Continued on page 96.)

SOUTHWEST COOKERY OF OLD

The following recipes were submitted to *Password* by Nancy Hamilton. They are taken from a nineteenth-century cookbook which belonged to Mrs. Hamilton's grandmother, Mrs. R. E. Miller, who used the recipes frequently at the turn of the century in her home in Pecos, Texas.

RABBIT SOUP

Sometimes rabbits or hares will be found very tough. They can then be made into soup that is excellent. Crack the bones of two rabbits and boil with one pound of ham or salt pork cut up small. Chop three small onions and put in, with a bunch of sweet herbs. Stew in three quarts of water slowly for three hours. Season and strain. Thicken slightly with browned flour, wet with cold water. Add tablespoon of catsup and teaspoon of Worcestershire or some other kind of sauce.

SYLLABUB

Put one pint-cream in a custard-kettle. Stir it one way gently until it thickens, and add, while stirring, four tablespoons powdered sugar, juice of two lemons, grated rind of one lemon, and the stiffly-beaten whites of two eggs. Serve in glasses, and leave some of the syllabub to whisk into froth for tops of glasses.

EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

 by 
Catherine Kistenmacher

It's easy to understand why everyone gets the El Paso County Historical *Commission* and The El Paso County Historical *Society* confused. It's mainly because there is just one word that is different in their titles, but that one word says it all. Whereas the *Commission* consists of 33 members appointed by the County Judge and the County Commissioners, the *Society* consists of many hundreds of members who voluntarily join because of their interest in the El Paso Southwest. The purpose the *Commission* is to institute and carry out a continuing survey of El Paso County in order to determine the existence of historical buildings and other historical sites, private collections of historical memorabilia, and other historical features within the County, while the purpose of the *Society* is to promote and engage in research of the history of the El Paso area, to publish the important findings, and to preserve valuable relics.

The members of the Commission, an arm of the Texas Historical Commission, are selected for their interest in and dedication to the history of El Paso County, and the membership list includes homemakers, authors, historians, librarians, publishers, and preservationists. They are appointed in January during odd-numbered years for a two-year period, and may succeed themselves.

The El Paso County Historical Commission meets at noon on the second Monday of each month at Gillespie's Empire Club, and the meetings are open to the public. A variety of programs relating to history are presented following each business meeting. The program for April of this year was a lecture and a slide show demonstration given by Dr. W. H. Timmons entitled "Why Are We Texas?" He detailed the different maps which were presented to the United States Senate in 1850 as proposed by Senators Thomas Hart Benton, Henry Foote, Henry Clay, John Bell, and James Pierce. The map which was finally chosen was the one drawn by Senator Pierce of Maryland, making the state of Texas the largest in the United States

Catherine Kistenmacher, chairman of the El Paso County Historical Commission, and former member of the Mission Heritage Association, has been vitally interested in El Paso's history for many years.

(until the annexation of Alaska) and giving it the peculiar configuration of a panhandle and a piece jutting to a fine point in the distinct westernmost corner of the state, which is occupied by El Paso County. The fixation of the Texas boundary was part of the Compromise of 1850. The May program was given by Dr. Rex Gerald on the archeological dig which he conducted last summer at Socorro, with the help of several students of The University of Texas at El Paso. The June program was presented by Dr. Martin E. Rice, Coordinator of the Office of Historic Preservation for the City of El Paso, and featured a lecture and scale model of the Arts Block proposed for downtown El Paso.

The El Paso County Historical Commission is a governmental agency funded by the County Government, and it is the official agency responsible for the placing of Texas Historical Markers within the County. Each building or site submitted for consideration for a state marker must be carefully researched and the findings presented to the County Commission, which assists with preparing a written narrative. This preliminary narrative is then sent with the proper fee to the Director of Research at the Texas Historical Commission in Austin. The THC further researches the proposal, and a sample narrative is then mailed to the sponsor, as well as the County Commission. After approval by both parties, the marker is cast in aluminum and shipped to the markers chairman in El Paso. Special ceremonies are then planned for the plaque's dedication.

Several Texas Historical markers which were dedicated during this past year include Radford school at 2001 Radford Street, El Paso High School at 1600 N. Virginia, the Magoffin Homestead at 1120 Magoffin Avenue, the site of Camp Concordia and Fort Bliss at Lincoln Center on Durazno Avenue, Old Main Building on the campus of The University of Texas at El Paso, the (Dr. Stephen T.) Turner Home at 1301 Montana Avenue, and El Paso's Union Passenger Station.

This year the Commission assisted El Paso officials and members of Trinity-First United Methodist Church in dedicating a marker on April 24 on the southwest corner of Texas and Stanton streets, the site of El Paso's first church building. The structure, long since demolished, was the sanctuary of Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which officially opened its doors on January 29, 1882. Several other markers scheduled for dedication during 1983

Historical Commission



A drawing of Socorro Mission, one of the illustrations in a leaflet prepared by the El Paso County Historical Commission and El Paso County Commissioners' Court

include the American Bank of Commerce building, Guardian Angel Catholic Church, First Presbyterian Church, First Baptist Church, Valley Congregational Church, Tornillo, Magoffinsville, San Elizario, Scottish Rite Temple, Pro Cathedral Church of St. Clement, and the old Singer Building.

During the summer months the Commission conducts an annual tour of downtown El Paso in order to acquaint El Paso's present-day citizens with El Paso's citizens of yesteryear and the events that shaped their lives in a bustling—and sometimes lawless—frontier town. Historian and author Leon Metz will conduct the 1983 tour. This year the Commission plans to add to its agenda two separate tours— the Segundo Barrio and Concordia Cemetery.

Other accomplishments of the Commission include a folder published in 1981 which lists the Historic Markers, Memorials, and Plaques in El Paso County. Copies of the folder (currently being updated) are given to interested groups and tourists. Another folder is being prepared by Frank Mangan which will include narratives and pictures on El Paso's many historic sites and buildings.

The El Paso County Historical Commission keeps its members busy learning about and interpreting El Paso's rich historical past and preserving it for future generations—discharging, in short, the responsibilities conferred upon it by the government of El Paso County. ☆

RECUERDOS

by

Gerald X. Fitzgerald

When I was six years old, my mother, sister, and I came to El Paso from Parral as refugees from the Mexican Revolution. The Sierra Madres in 1911 were a hot bed of revolutionary activity and banditry, and the company my father worked for felt that dependents of the employees would be safer in El Paso than in Parral, Madera, Chihuahua, and other spots in the Sierras. It wasn't the last time we were to land in El Paso as refugees, but I have a clear recollection of that visit. I remember that we stayed at the Grand Hotel because the other, larger, more fashionable hotels—the Sheldon, Orndorff, and St. Regis—were full when we arrived in El Paso.

We stayed for four or five weeks that time, and I vividly remember my mother taking my sister and me all over town. The trolleys went just about any place you wanted to go: Ft. Bliss, Government Hill, Highland Park, Washington Park, Sunset Heights, Arizona Street, the smelter, Second Ward (as it was called then), and of course Juarez.

My mother was a confirmed shutterbug. She not only wanted to see everything, she wanted to shoot pictures of everything. Needless to say, there wasn't much of El Paso that we didn't see, and we even took a couple of trips out of town—one to Tucson to visit friends, and another to Las Cruces just to break the monotony. They were train trips, the only way to go in those days. We also went to stage shows that came to the Crawford and Texas Grand Theaters.

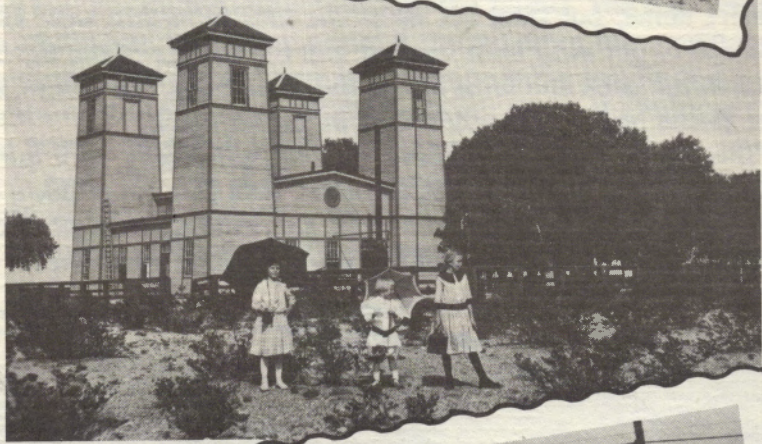
During those years of revolution, there were several times that the company sent us to El Paso. We just about made the rounds of the hotels. Once we stayed at the Sheldon, twice at the Orndorff. The Orndorff was my favorite. There you could leave your room, go out on the proticos that faced the street and watch the passing

Gerald X. Fitzgerald has lived in El Paso for the past ten years. He is an active member of the El Paso Archaeological Society and is editor of that organization's journal, *The Artifact*. He played an important part in the planning and implementing of the Wilderness Park Museum.

*On opposite page: Snapshots from the albums compiled by Mr. Fitzgerald's mother
Top: an army truck transport encampment located at the northeast corner of Cotton and Arizona streets, c 1916-1918*

Center: E.P. and S.W. Pumping Plant on west side of Ft. Bliss south of the present Pershing Gate, c 1915

Bottom: Houston Park, taken from Yandell looking north, c 1915 (Photos courtesy Gerald X. Fitzgerald)



scene. Just across the street was the Plaza and the alligator pond. Watching the alligators was endless fun, and there were numerous large trees where the birds flitted about and sang their songs.

In Mexico, we lived much of our time in Madera, where tall pines grew right down to our backyard. El Paso was starkly different. Here, the mountains seemed rocky and barren—more like Parral, but Parral was not nearly so much home as Madera was. Also at Madera, we always had horses. My sister and I could gallop about the big meadow or go for a ride to any of the mountain streams not too far away. The Franklins didn't look too promising. In some ways, though, we felt at home in El Paso. There were lots of Mexicans. We were used to playing with Mexican kids and their language was our own, so in that respect we didn't feel like strangers. No, El Paso wasn't home, but then not all of the kids in Mexico were lucky enough to get away from the fear and the danger of the fighting that swept back and forth across the mountains, the valleys, and the plains of the battle-torn land we called home.

The tumult of the revolution reached Juarez only once during our stays in El Paso. On that occasion, Villa had swept down out of the Sierras to lay siege to Juarez. Excitement ran high, and El Pasoans lined up at every vantage point to watch the battle for the



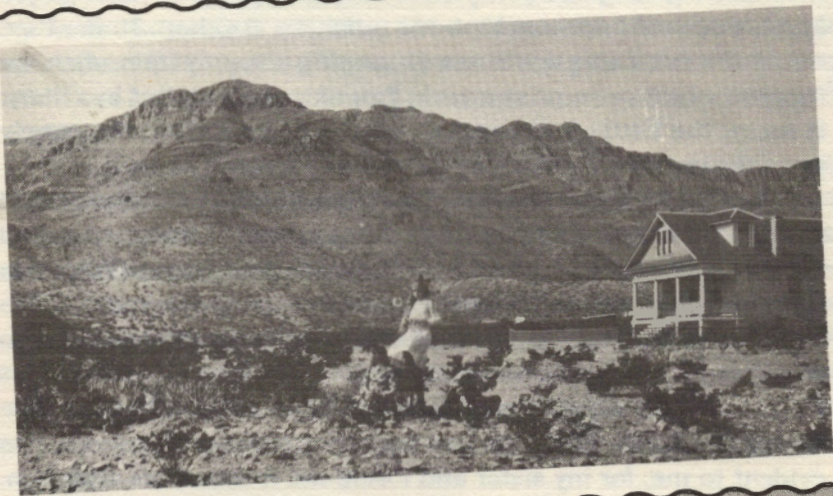
Washington Park, c 1915

Recuerdos

city of the pass. We took it all in stride. It was old hat to us, for in the past we hadn't always been able to reach the security of El Paso before the fighting started.

Those were the days of Madero, Huerta, De la Huerta, Villa, Zapata, Carranza, Orozco, Obregon, and Calles. Days of turmoil mixed with the happiness that only a child can know. The happiness of being alive, seeing new places, new things. During the times when peace prevailed, we had traveled by train to many places in Mexico and also in the United States, where we visited with relatives. And in the times of turmoil, we excitedly watched the Armies of the North come and go, or we were making hurried trips to El Paso.

Once on our way to El Paso from Madera we got as far as the Cumbre Tunnel only to find that a rebel force had torn up the tracks and had dynamited the entrance to the tunnel. The train backed up all the way to Madera, where it started down the mountain to Chihuahua. We arrived there in time to be in the middle of a battle for the control of the city. We did make our way to the Mexican Central Station, and after much waiting we were once more on our way to El Paso. The rest of the trip was uneventful. In those days the Mexican trains crossed the river and pulled into the Union Station in El Paso. We arrived safe and sound.



The Fitzgerald house on Hamilton Street, c 1915

It was on that trip that we went to a Chinese restaurant on Oregon Street for dinner. Suddenly, my mother gave a little cry of amazement. There in front of us was the Chinese cook who had worked for us in Mexico, the poor fellow we kids had teased about his pigtails. During one of the stormy periods, he had left and had never returned. I guess one or two battles were enough for him. But of course, unlike my father, he didn't have a good, high-paying job to keep him tied to Mexico.

My most poignant memory connected with those stays in El Paso revolves around a long-time friend of my parents, one Enrique O. (I deliberately avoid his surname out of respect for his relatives, who are my friends and who would resent my opening old sores.) Enrique was a fairly tall, handsome, well educated man from an upper-crust Mexican family. Nonetheless, he had chosen to throw in his lot with Pancho Villa. My mother always thought he was foolish to do so. However, his friendship with Villa was strong and continued until Enrique's death.

During those years when Villa was a military figure to contend with, Enrique spent most of his time on mysterious trips to the United States. Long years afterward, my father told me that Enrique was a supply officer for Villa and that his many trips were for the purpose of procuring arms for the Army of the North. Enrique was not a fighting man. Only once do I know of his being engaged in a battle, and I am sure that was purely by accident. Somewhere near Babicora, Enrique was accompanying a supply train when the Federales made a surprise attack. From his sparse notes in a diary, it seems the battle that ensued was a real beauty, but the supply train did get through with most of its cargo intact.

It was through my parents' close friendship with Enrique that I saw Villa the first time. Much to the surprise of my mother and father, Enrique, in company with Villa, came to our house in Madera late one afternoon. Both were weary from a long march with Villa's troops, who were camped on the outskirts of town. My mother, who was always hospitable, insisted they stay for dinner. Thus it was that I found myself sitting at the same table with the famous Centaur of the North. That Villa had a real fondness for children seems evident to me, for my sister and I were the focus of his attention. He patted us and talked to us much of the time. I well remember his gentleness and the wonderful smile he bestowed on us.

I saw Villa briefly twice more, once in Chihuahua and once in

Parral, and again I saw that glorious smile. My mother for years afterward was always reminding me that Villa was a ruthless man full of hate. I am sure she was right, but childhood impressions are hard to shake. I still think of him at times as a kindly, gentle person. Nevertheless, I am confident that hatred was Villa's undoing. The enemies he made as he campaigned and the cruelties he was guilty of came back to haunt him on the streets of Parral when he was ambushed.

Enrique, too, was a victim of the hatreds that festered during those tempestuous times. Villa's star was declining soon after his triumphant entry into Mexico City. There was a falling out between him and the Sonora gang. And it was my mother's contention that the Sonora gang was responsible for Enrique's death, which occurred while we were living in a rented house on Hamilton Street, way out in the far northeast of El Paso with big open spaces between there and downtown.

Enrique came to El Paso and stayed with us for a few days. His plans were as usual quite vague. He was going to make a stop in Arizona and then proceed to California. He did get as far as Tucson. We learned by way of a letter from a hospital nurse that he had died of poisoning. On his death bed he had asked her to notify us and to send his belongings to us. Later we learned from a friend of his, who was also a Villista and a compatriot, that Enrique had gone to Tucson to try to intercept a shipment of arms to Obregon and divert it to the Villa forces. That information strengthened my mother's belief that the Sonora gang was responsible for Enrique's death.

Over the long years I have spent away from El Paso, I had forgotten much about the city that was our refuge during those years of intermittent exile, but going through my mother's pictures has brought back a flood of memories—memories of Mexico as it was, of Villa's ragtag army marching along the lonely roads, of some of those battles we saw when we didn't escape in time; memories of El Paso as it was back in those days; memories of the Sierra Madres, the mother mountains that nurtured my younger years. I'm glad my mother was a shutterbug. ☆





Part of the "Glass from 'Glass Hill'" special exhibit shown throughout the spring of this year at the El Paso Museum of History (Photo courtesy El Paso Museum of History)

MUSEUM NOTES

by

Barbara J. Ardus

The latest addition to the permanent exhibits at the El Paso Museum of History is a "Period Room," located at the far end of the east gallery. This corner will be used to display furniture from the collections on a rotating basis. Currently a bedroom set from the 1880s is being shown with the accessories from the Late Victorian and Edwardian periods.

Recent acquisitions include a copy of Joe Zihlman's Cowboy Boot catalog and related materials (Joe Zihlman was a long-time local bootmaker whose tools are on display in the west gallery), and an etched lance head found in California.

Bill Latham, Jack Redman, Barbara Rees, and Bruce Crippen are

Barbara J. Ardus is curator of the El Paso Museum of History, located at 12901 Gateway West.


working with the Museum curator on an American Association for State and Local History independent study course entitled "Documents: Interpretation and Exhibition." The course is designed to teach both museum professionals and volunteers how to care for documents properly and how to select and interpret them in an exhibition. Among other assignments, the course requires the students to actually develop such a display, which the group will do using material from the Society's collection. Topic possibilities include the following: historic photographs from the Pioneer Society, Hall of Honor recipients, the Sun Carnival, the Taft-Diaz visit.

The Museum will be participating in both the Rotary Trade Fair and the El Paso Festival this year. Its exhibit will focus on Hispanic styles of ornamentation and will feature, among other items, one of a pair of carved leather *botas de ala* (leggings), the lance head mentioned above, a highly decorated cruciform stirrup, and the Museum's collection of *peinetas* (Spanish combs).


One of the most popular displays for both children and adults is the chuck wagon box used as a "touch" area. The items in this box can be picked up, put on, or otherwise handled so as to give visitors an idea of how the past actually felt. We would like to expand this educational service, and we encourage our visitors' ideas and suggestions. We are also seeking information on an inexpensive source for a bridle headstall and reins (we have several bits) as well as a stereoscope for use in the display. And we would greatly welcome a donation to the Museum of an S. D. Myers saddle or other example of his leather work. The Museum has a large oil portrait of Tio Sam hanging in the hall, but nary an object or photograph to help explain to out-of-town visitors who he was.

"Glass from 'Glass Hill' " is the title of the Museum's spring exhibit. Bottles found at the Piedras Street dump (now located in Mexico) and dating from about 1880 to 1910 are on display. The exhibition includes glass containers for such popular early El Paso consumer goods as bitters and other patent medicines, condiment and preserve jars, ink pots, and bottles which once held locally-produced beverages. The bottles are currently on loan, and there is a possibility that some of them may become part of the permanent collections.

The El Paso Museum of History is open six days a week—on Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00 until 5:00 and on Sunday from 1:00 until 5:00. There is no admission charge. ☆



ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY



The *Password* editorial board, in an unprecedented action, has named tie winners for the 1982 Eugene O. Porter Memorial Award: "The Merchants and the Military," by Dr. William H. Timmons (Summer) and " 'Old Nighthawk' and the Pass of the North," by Dr. Wayne R. Austerman (Fall). The prize money of \$100 has been divided equally between the two winners. Other articles commended by the editorial board were "Contemporary Civil-Rights Issues as Affected by Events in El Paso," by Conrey Bryson (Spring); "Parker Burnham, An Expressman of Old El Paso," by Dr. Austerman (Spring); "Ben Williams, Lawman," by Dr. Robert A. Suhler (Spring); "El Paso Sharps," by Dr. Austerman (Summer); "Early El Paso Churches," by William I. Latham (Fall); and "Water in the Courts," by Conrey Bryson (Winter).

The Eugene O. Porter Memorial Award, given each year in recognition of the best article to appear in *Password*, was established in memory of the late Dr. Porter, who was *Password* editor for the first 19 years of the journal's existence. It is financed by gifts to the Society. Tax-deductible contributions may be made to the fund c/o The El Paso County Historical Society, P.O. Box 28, El Paso, Texas 79940.

At the February 27, 1983, quarterly meeting of the Society, President Day presented Certificates of Commendation for Exemplary Service Toward the Goals of the El Paso County Historical Society to the following people: El Paso Museum of History docents Janet Brockmoller, Fay Bryson, Conrey Bryson, Bruce Crippin, Vincent Lockhart, Margaret Mathis, Jack Redman, William Roberson, Jay Smith, Vince Weaver; to Barbara Arduis, Curator of the El Paso Museum of History; to Becky Garrett for inspiring the "Bird's Eye View of El Paso" fund-raising project and to that project's publicity and sales chairmen Frank Mangan and Millard McKinney respectively; to Jackie Borrett for her work on the 1982 Hall of Honor banquet; and to Nancy Hamilton and Bud Newman for their publication contributions.

Society member Leon Metz is the recipient of an outstanding honor. His 1982 publication *Fort Bliss* (reviewed by Conrey Bryson in the Spring 1982 issue of *Password*) has been judged by the Texas Historical Commission as the state's best regional history publica-

Activities of the Society

tion of 1982. Two other Society members made significant contributions to *Ft. Bliss*: Frank Mangan, whose Mangan Press of El Paso published the book, and Millard G. McKinney, who provided numerous historic photographs which handsomely illustrate the author's narrative.

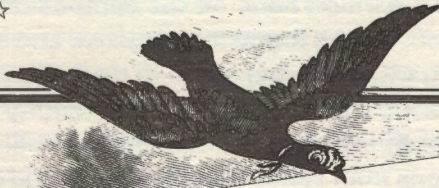
On May 9, El Paso was fortunate to host a regional workshop (one of eight held throughout the state during late April and much of May) sponsored by the Texas Association of Museums, the Texas Historical Commission, and the Texas Committee for the Humanities. Several members of the Society attended the workshop, which took place in the Union Suite on the campus of The University of Texas at El Paso, and all found it instructive and stimulating. This workshop, along with the other seven in the series, constituted the first step in the Texas Sesquicentennial Community History Project. It was conducted by several well known museum directors, consultants, and historians from various parts of Texas and New Mexico.

The 1982 Historical Memories Contest, though delayed somewhat by unavoidable circumstances, was very successful. It elicited 37 essays, each one offering a valuable perspective on some aspect of local history. At the Society's monthly board meeting on May 3,



Winners of the 1982 Historical Memories Contest
Seated, Salvador Ballinas, First Prize; standing (l to r), Dr. H. D. Garrett, Second Prize; Jewell Samples, Third Prize; Rosemary Fryer, Honorable Mention; Themis M. Peinado, Honorable Mention; Dr. James M. Day, Society President, who made the presentations (Photo by James W. Ward)

Dr. Kenneth Shover, chairman of the 1982 Contest, announced the winners, and Dr. Day presented the awards and certificates. First Place (\$100) was awarded to Salvador Ballinas for his essay "The View from the Second Ward." Second Place (\$50) went to Dr. H. D. Garrett for "El Paso City-County Hosptial," and Third Place to Jewel Samples for "Schoolmarm of All Trades." Certificates of Honorable Mention were given to Mrs. Themis M. Peinado for "Memories from the Past" and to Rosemary T. Fryer for "I Danced With a Giant!" The contest judges were Nancy Hamilton, Marjorie Heyser, and Leon Metz. The winning essays will be published in future issues of *Password*. ☆



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Dr. W. H. Timmons, Professor Emeritus of History at The University of Texas at El Paso, has been appointed to a state-wide screening committee which will accept nominations for the purpose of selecting the 25 most important Texans of all times.

Criteria for selection of the twenty-five are as follows:

1. Only persons who were residents of the state, the Republic, or the area within the present geographical boundaries of Texas are to be considered for nomination.
2. The individual's impact on Texas must have come before 1970.
3. No living Texans are to be nominated.

Nominations must be submitted before November 30, 1983. They may be submitted to the Texas State Historical Association, 2/306 Richardson Hall, University Station, Austin, Texas 78712, or to Dr. Timmons, Department of History, The University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, Texas 79968.



THE URBAN SOUTHWEST by Bradford Luckingham. El Paso: Texas Western Press. \$10./\$15.

This is a "profile history" of the four major cities of the Southwest: Albuquerque, El Paso, Phoenix, and Tucson. It is a study which is long overdue, for those metropolitan areas have much in common, even though they are in three different states and practice rivalry more often than they enjoy cooperation. The fact remains that all four cities can learn from both the accomplishments and the mistakes of each other.

The author, Bradford Luckingham, is a professor of history at Arizona State University, which assisted and encouraged him in this study, one which is carefully organized and objectively written. Wisely, he has presented his material chronologically—treating initially the years before the railroads and then examining the development of each of the four cities since 1880 in two-decade periods. Interestingly enough, the cities experienced trends of growth and economic development which follow parallel patterns. El Paso's position was dominant from 1880 until the mid-1940s because of its being a railroad center while the others were basically "one-railroad" towns. Yet in the booming post-World War II years, "Phoenix promoters worked diligently to attract clean industry, and as they succeeded in making the city the manufacturing center of the Southwest, regional rivals fell far behind. At the same time, El Paso, Albuquerque, and Tucson enjoyed economic growth, even though it was on a lesser scale." Today, Phoenix ranks highest in population (663,510) while El Paso is second (314,070), followed by Tucson (265,660) and Albuquerque (262,199). All four are architecturally attractive, as the book's numerous photographs show, but all four have problems of downtown renovation, urban sprawl, traffic, pollution, and crime. All have become major markets in the desert Southwest.

Our identity is shared and defined in this book, one which has been attractively designed and carefully produced by Texas Western Press.

EVAN HAYWOOD ANTONE

The University of Texas at El Paso



PEEKS AT THE PAST: Personal Memories of Ninety-Eight Persons. Compiled and edited by Verdon R. Adams. El Paso: Private Pringing, Verdon R. Adams, \$8.50

El Pasoan Verdon R. Adams had a bright idea: he would ask his friends and relatives (later, mere acquaintances and even strangers) to write down a memory—something exciting perhaps, or humorous, frightening, joyful, painful, or absurd. The result of his idea is a collection of 98 “peeks at the past”—brief memoirs which command the reader’s absorbed attention and which, not surprisingly, record no small amount of “grass-roots” history.

In time, these memories collectively span the first seven or so decades of the twentieth century. In space, they cover almost the entire globe—from Tsingtoa, China, to Melvern, Kansas; from “a ranch about fifty miles south of Ft. Worth” to the heather fields of Ireland; from the quiet banks of Alaska’s Little Moose River to Chicago’s rowdy Near North Side; from the blood-drenched soil of Bataan to the snowbound sweep of North Dakota.

And the remembered experiences—arranged in delightfully random order—are as varied as the times and places of their occurrences. *El Paso Times* columnist Ed Foster takes us back to a “little frame church house” in Koshkonong, Missouri, where the “Pentacostals sang gospel hymns with an exuberance to raise the rafters” and where he, aged seven, suffered “the foreboding conviction that if I did not answer that tugging at my heart by Jesus Christ I would lose my soul and burn forever.” Paul Hardin becomes again a World War II soldier stationed in the “beautifully secluded little spot of Yakutat, Alaska,” where he watches, “a sunset and sunrise at the same time.” Dr. Joseph Ray, former President of The University of Texas at El Paso, relives the summer of 1927, when he hitch-hiked the roads and hoboed the rails from Kentucky to California. Fay Gardner (Mrs. Conrey) Bryson recalls her childhood in North Carolina, highlighting her recollection with a poignant

description of the profound grief expressed by "Uncle Henry," an elderly black friend, when he talked about the most painful experience of his long-ago boyhood: his "mother, in chains and tied to a cart, her baby on her lap, and the cart...pulling her away."

And there are plenty of reminiscences about the El Paso area too. Venerable Chris Fox takes us back to 1902 and profiles a certain Joe Luna, El Paso candy vendor, who bowed to the town's emerging sanitation-consciousness by using his goat tail brush "to sweep away the gathering flies" from his penny pieces of delicious *melcoche* before selling the candy to the children. Maybelle Long lets us share her excitement as she and her fellow first-graders at San Jacinto School line up on the sidewalk to catch a glimpse of President Taft. Carmen Loera transports us to Parral, Mexico, where chance created her unforgettable "Moment in Time": November 16, 1929, the date her father (company doctor for the San Francisco Mines of Mexico, Ltd.) was murdered by a militant labor organizer. L. R. Willard ("the oldest retired Southern Pacific engineer living in El Paso") details the operation of the switchback railroad which ran between Alamogordo and Cloudcroft in the 1930s. Here also is Dr. C. L. Sonnichsen, who describes his arrival in El Paso from Harvard in 1931, his first impression of the Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy as "about the bleakest place I have ever seen," and his subsequent joyful career as researcher, teacher, and writer on the life and literature of the Southwest.

Doc Sonnichsen concludes his sketch with these words: "I like to think that I have done some service in putting together a few chapters of Southwestern history which would otherwise have been lost for want of somebody to ask questions before it was too late." Verdon R. Adams has also served the cause of "grass-roots" history by offering this articulate record of 98 abiding memories.

LILLIAN COLLINGWOOD
El Paso



TWENTIETH CENTURY WESTERN WRITERS, Edited by James Vinson and D.L. Kirkpatrick. Detroit: Gale Research Co., \$80

I had some vague knowledge of this book being prepared when, in 1981, James Vinson of St. James Publishers in England asked me to contribute some essays on Western writers to a reference work

he was editing. I selected my subjects from a long list of names and wrote on James Oliver Curwood, William R. Cox, Peter Germano ("Barry Cord") and Giles Tippet, sent them to Vinson and forgot about the project until I was asked to review the book for *Password*.

(It turns out that some other El Pasoans have contributed to it too: Leon Metz, John O. West and C.L. Sonnichsen, the latter also contributing an interesting Preface to the book.)

The entire undertaking is mind-boggling. There are over 300 authors covered in these 941 pages and they are covered in a detail never seen before. A typical entry occupies 3-4 pages of close type: an opening paragraph of general biography (including such details as home address and author's agent), a bibliography of novels, short story collections, uncollected short stories, and other publications; location of manuscript collection; a bit of autobiography in which the writer typically explains his history, how he became a writer and what his work means from his juncture; a critical essay of 500-600 words by a critic, scholar or professional writer, placing the subject author in perspective, pin-pointing strengths, weaknesses, and recurring themes, and examining specific works in detail.

By "Western Writers," the editors mean, for the most part, Western *fiction* writers, although there is a scattering of poets, dramatists and writers of juvenile books represented.

There are some weaknesses in this work, to be sure, and chief among them appears to be the odd and unexplained criteria employed in the selection of the writers included. One encounters writers like E.L. Doctorow and James Michener, for example, whose track records as Western writers consist of one novel each—good novels, to be sure, but only one each. On the other hand, Gordon D. Shirreffs, author of 50 or more Western novels and among the most significant Western writers living today, is not included in this book at all. Wayne Overholser is covered, yet his son Stephen, a fine young novelist with several books to his credit, is absent—along with such important writers as Jerry Ashabrunner ("Dan Kirby"), Robert Vaughan Bell, Tim Champlin, Will C. Knott, Lew Lacy, Mel Marshall, Kay McDonald, Luran Paine (perhaps the most prolific Western writer living), Jory Sherman, Max Von Kreisler, and Jack Zavada, to name a few.

The absence of a writer of the stature of Shirreffs elevates this criticism of the book beyond the trivial and raises bothersome ques-

tions about the selection process.

There is also a distressing lack of consistency in the alphabetical listing of the authors covered. Peter Germano is listed under "Barry Cord," his best-known penname, yet Henry Wilson Allen is listed under "Allen" rather than "Will Henry" or "Clay Fisher"—the two names by which he is universally known and under which 99% of his work has been published.

But, looking beyond these faults, clear as they are, *Twentieth Century Western Writers* remains the most ambitious and important reference work available on this subject and, considering that every good library in the country will need to shelve a copy of it, perhaps Gale Research will revise the book in subsequent editions and make it even more valuable than it already is.

DALE L. WALKER

El Paso



SANTA FE AND TAOS: THE WRITERS' ERA, 1916-1941 by Marta Weigle and Kyle Fiore. Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, \$15.95.

SANTA FE AND TAOS 1898-1942, AN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER by Kay Aiken Reeve. El Paso: Texas Western Press, \$4.

Although D.H. Lawrence spent only eighteen months at Taos and called the town "so much artistic beer," he is among top literary figures of the past who had a role in making the Santa Fe-Taos area a world-renowned artistic center. He and his wife Frieda arrived with Mabel Dodge Sterne and Tony Luhan, who during the 1920s encouraged many top writers to come to Taos. The Lawrences were houseguests of poet Witter Bynner whose books would include one about them.

Through the 1920s the area changed from a health resort for tuberculars to a haven for writers and artists who enjoyed not only the picturesque setting but also the multicultural atmosphere. Among the prominent authors who came there were Mary Austin, Lynn Riggs, Spud Johnson, Willa Cather, and many more. Some paid shorter visits: Carl Sandburg, Stanley Vestal, Vachel Lindsay.

In the book by Weigle and Fiore, it is pointed out that Roberta Robey started Santa Fe's first bookstore in the early 20s at Healy's Stationery Store. She then opened La Villagra Bookshop in 1927,

still a going business, and Healy's continued to sell books. Bookish people, then as now, tended to gravitate to the bookstores to meet their friends.

The book about writers also takes up the New Mexico Federal Writers' Project of the 1930s, for which Ina Sizer Cassidy was state director. Publications and other projects were undertaken to provide artists and writers of the area an outlet for their work.

Marta Weigle is an Associate Professor of Anthropology, English and American studies, at the University of New Mexico, and Kyle Fiore was a doctoral candidate there when the book came out last summer.

A broader scope is taken by Kay Aiken Reeve in the monograph describing Santa Fe and Taos as cultural centers. This is No. 67 in the Southwestern Studies Series of Texas Western Press. The author, who received her Ph.D. at Texas A&M and taught history there, looks at artists as well as writers.

The tri-cultural characteristics of the towns, she found, led to their development as cultural centers. "The vitality of the native peoples combined with the relatively slow rate of Anglo immigration into the region to create there a unique society. In Santa Fe and Taos three contrasting but complementary cultures blended and yet maintained their separate identities." The "western" atmosphere also was influential, she found. "Both towns were marked by a casual style and relaxed pace of daily living.... For some artists it proved an additional artistic influence through association with and interest in the animals. Writers, too, found stimulation in their contact with the cowboy ballad."

Both books offer photographs and bibliographic material. The Weigle-Fiore book has a lengthy directory of New Mexico writers from the period covered.

NANCY HAMILTON
El Paso



TURMOIL IN NEW MEXICO by William A. Keleher. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, \$19.95 / \$9.95

This is the second reprint recently of the works of outstanding New Mexico historian William A. Keleher. In the Winter 1982 issue, *Password* reviewed his *Violence in Lincoln County*; now comes his

earlier work *Turmoil in New Mexico*, and the praise given the other volume can be repeated for this one.

While it may be an exaggeration to call the book "indispensable" to the southwest historian, *Turmoil in New Mexico* is nevertheless one of the most useful books he could own. It touches upon the history of El Paso in great detail in many respects. It contains rich evidence from contemporaneous sources about the work of James Wiley Magoffin in helping to secure the peaceful conquest of New Mexico by General Kearny's forces in 1846. It covers the occupation of El Paso by Colonel Doniphan's Missouri volunteers following the skirmish known as the Battle of Brazito on Christmas day of that same year (although the battle itself is described in a footnote).

Keleher's footnotes are famous. In this book there are 384 of them in 93 pages of fine print. They are not called "footnotes" or "references," but "Notes and Profiles." The reader inclined to skip footnotes will miss a great deal of valuable information.

Turmoil is divided into four sections. Book One is entitled "General Kearny Comes to Santa Fe"; Book Two, "The Confederates Invade New Mexico"; Book Three, "Carleton's California Column"; and Book Four, "The Long Walk," which fills nearly half of the extensive volume and which tells the story of the military action against New Mexico's Indians, the Navajos and the Apaches.

General James H. Carleton, a questionable hero of Book Three, turns out to be a villain in Book Four. The author obviously has deep feelings regarding the cruelty and injustice of transporting the Indians to a distant and unyielding federal enclosure at Bosque Redondo. Today we might call it a concentration camp. It all came about, Keleher says, because the soldiers under Carleton had driven the Confederates from the state and were hungry for action. Carleton was able to satisfy that hunger in a campaign against the Navajos and Apaches. Militarily, it seemed to be a great success: "Within one year, Carleton had proved that the Navajos were not invincible, but could be ferreted out from their most remote mountain hideouts.... He demonstrated that they could be starved into submission and forced to surrender and that they could be held prisoners on a Pecos River reformatory four hundred miles from their homeland."

The section on the Confederate Invasion of New Mexico pictures that campaign as more important than many people supposed. The

action at Val Verde was a major battle, and the Confederates gained control of both Albuquerque and Santa Fe before the campaign fizzled out for lack of supplies. The account of the cannon captured at Val Verde, however, sheds no new light and only adds confusion to the origin of El Paso's famed "McGinty Cannon," now proudly treasured at Eastwood High School.

Even in this ponderous work there are notable omissions. Only one sentence, for example, and that in a footnote, is devoted to the Mormon Battalion, five hundred men who marched from Council Bluffs, Iowa, to the Pacific Coast to help Kearny in his conquest of New Mexico and California. But this is nitpicking. *Turmoil in New Mexico* is a priceless reference work.

CONREY BRYSON

El Paso



BORDERLANDS SOURCEBOOK: A GUIDE TO THE LITERATURE ON NORTHERN MEXICO AND THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST edited by Ellwyn R. Stoddard, Richard L. Nostrand, and Johathan P. West. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, \$48.50.

Approximately 42 million people live and work alongside the United States-Mexico border, and serious studies of their culture and heritage are just now being started. Ellwyn R. Stoddard, Professor of Sociology at The University of Texas at El Paso, many years ago almost singlehandedly organized a consortium of experts known as the Borderlands Scholars. Their purpose was to pool their knowledge, share their expertise, cooperate in research projects, get to know one another, and find out what was taking place in conjunction with their respective disciplines. The first magnificent fruit of all this is the *Borderlands Sourcebook*.

Virtually every aspect of the border is investigated by approximately fifty scholars. They dig into past and present history, culture, economics, drug traffic, industry, business, tourism, labor, mining, illegal aliens, law enforcement, education, religion, water and health. The versatile Stoddard gives an overview of the borderlands, plus additional essays about migration, immigration, Black and Oriental Americans, and health and health care. Howard Applegate, Professor of Civil Engineering at The University of Texas

Book Reviews

at El Paso and resident expert on border pollution, comments on solid waste, chemicals, and agricultural dilemmas. He defines municipal sewage as "the greatest single source of water pollution in the borderlands and the greatest remaining untapped water source."

Mark Simmons, well-known New Mexico historian, writes about New Mexico and Colorado history, while Oscar Martinez, Director of Border Studies at The University of Texas at El Paso, focuses on scholars who have devoted their careers to an understanding of border cities.

Dilmus James, Professor of Economics and Finance at The University of Texas at El Paso, provides an essay on trade and merchandising, and co-authors another on border tourism. There is even a fine article on Mexican sources, an evaluation by a Wyoming professor about where to go and what to expect when seeking Mexican research materials.

Some of the essays are technical, including charts and graphs (almost all have maps), some concentrate on putting across a point of view, while others evaluate various resource materials. The final 150 pages contain an annotated bibliography of all works (books, articles, dissertations, theses) which pertain, even tenuously, to this 1800-mile strip of narrow, complex real estate upon which we live.

This hefty (445-pages), oversize book is the most valuable border-reference in existence.

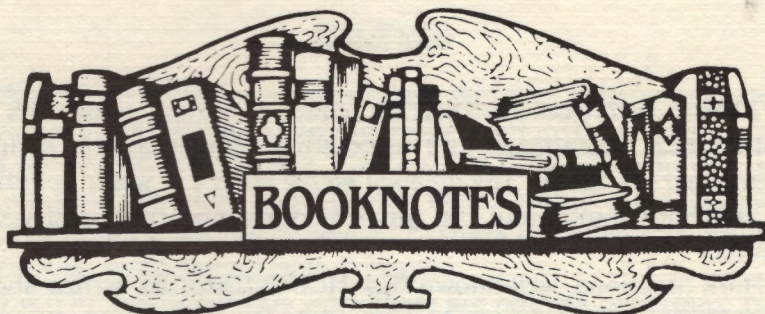
LEON METZ
El Paso

Reprinted in the March, 1983, issue of the *Texas National Dispatch* (The Newspaper of the Texas 186 Sesquicentennial Commission) is the following item:

DEATH BY KISSING

A nurse at Middlesex Hospital, lately died in consequence of having kissed a patient who was suffering under a violent fever. Kissing is a dangerous thing for females to meddle with under any circumstances.

Matagorda (Texas) Bulletin
August 2, 1838



by
Mary Ellen Porter

The University of Arizona Press has recently issued a new edition of El Pasoan Dale Walker's *Buckey O'Neill: The Story of a Rough Rider* (\$9.50). Originally published by Madrona Press, Austin, Texas, under the title *Death Was the Black Horse*, the book combines biography and history in a fast-moving narrative of O'Neill's checkered career (gambling-hall dealer, editor, self-proclaimed lawyer, sheriff, fire fighter, soldier) in the Arizona Territory. Laden with bizarre and "hairy" episodes, the story achieves considerable strength through understatement, wry humor, and a steadfast refusal on Walker's part to make the hero "bigger than life." The original edition was reviewed by Art Leibson in the Spring 1975 issue of *Password*.


Two books dealing with Mormon history were published this spring by the University of Utah Press. Harold Schindler's *Orin Porter Rockwell: Man of God, Son of Thunder* (\$30) strips away the whitewash and scrapes off the ugly rumors which have long clung to the controversial Rockwell, a devoted bodyguard of both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. Mr. Schindler deals forthrightly with the persistent charge that Rockwell was a vicious murderer of scores of innocent people—and presents an unbiased account of an area of American history that has long been marred by partisanship. *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout* (\$40), edited by Juanita Brooks, is especially valuable in that Hosea Stout, unlike many Mormon diarists, held positions of responsibility in church, civic, and governmental organizations. As such, he was able to observe and record events of great importance. He was perhaps not so colorful as some diarists; but he made daily entries, he was given to great accuracy and honesty, and he was a keen observer. His diary, accordingly, in the words of L. Dale Morgan, is "one of the most magnificent windows upon Mormon history ever opened."

From Creative Publishing Company (College Station, Texas) comes a reprint of Al Sorenson's *Hands Up!* (\$24.95), which is described as the first book written about Sam Bass and his gang. The story begins with the robbery, covers the pursuit of the six robbers and ends with the deaths of Joel Collins, Bill Heffridge, and Jim Berry, three members of the gang. Bibliophile Ramon Adams lists the book as "exceeding rare" and states that copies of the original edition are virtually impossible to acquire. Also from Creative Publishing comes *The O.K. Corral Inquest* (paper, \$9.95; cloth \$19.95; leatherbound editor's edition, \$75), by Alfred E. Turner. The book presents, for the first time, the complete testimonies of those who participated in and witnessed the coroner's inquest and the month-long hearing that followed the Wells Spicer Hearing. The manuscript is based on the transcription of court records made in 1930 by Pat Hayhurst. Among those giving testimony were Wyatt Earp, Virgil Earp, Ike Clanton, Johnny Behan, Billy Claiborne, R. F. Coleman, and Robert Hatch. The book is recommended by the American Library Association.

Three recent issues in the Southwest Studies Series published by Texas Western Press (each priced at \$4) demonstrate the ongoing excellence and comprehensiveness of that Series. Readers interested in matters concerning the Mexico-United States boundary will enjoy *The Zona Libre, 1858-1905: A Problem in American Diplomacy*, by Samuel E. Bell and James Smallwood. Eighty pages in length, the monograph explores the important economic and social repercussions emanating from the establishment of the Free Zone, which was intended to rectify divergent economic conditions existing on opposite sides of the border; and it highlights the diplomatic machinations that transpired in each of the countries. Students and readers interested in our nation's westward expansion as it operated in the Southwest will appreciate Larry M. Beachum's *William Becknell, Father of the Santa Fe Trade*, a comprehensive account of Becknell's life and experiences as a mounted ranger, settler, trapper, politician, fort builder, and trader, whose ingenuity and daring led to the addition of an important route on the Santa Fe Trail. And for those who like sociological subjects, the Series offers Rebecca McDowell Craver's *The Impact of Intimacy: Mexican-Anglo Inter-marriage in New Mexico, 1821-1846*. Graced with a frontispiece illustration by Jose Cisneros, this study clarifies the high incidence of intermarriage

between Anglo newcomers and Mexican women during the specified period; and in examining the motives and implications of those marriages, it reveals much about New Mexican frontier society.

Three attractive little books were brought out not long ago by the Museum of New Mexico Press, located at Santa Fe—each one presenting a “museum” site in New Mexico. **Palace of the Governors** (\$2.25), by J. K. Shishkin, is a compact history of the oldest public building in the United States, built in 1610. The narrative tells of the intriguing architecture of this still-used structure and describes the colorful and fascinating stream of people and events bound up with its history. **Rouge. Being an Account of the Life and High Times of Stephen W. Dorsey, United States Senator and New Mexico Cattle Baron with Sundry Particulars on the Illustrious Dorsey Mansion** (\$3.95), by Thomas J. Caperton, tells the story of one of the west’s most outlandish characters: Stephen W. Dorsey—cattle barron, industrial and mining speculator, dabbler in politics, and bon vivant. It also relates “some sundry particulars” of his mansion at Mountain Springs, Colfax County, New Mexico, which possessed a wine cellar, a billiard room, museum, sportsman’s lodge, and art furnishings from around the world. **Fort Seldon, New Mexico** (\$1.95), by Timothy Cohrs, describes that small fort located on the banks of the Rio Grande, eighteen miles north of Las Cruces, and founded in 1865 to protect the citizens of the Mesilla Valley from attacks by hostile Apaches. The work also recounts the excitement, monotony, and “pleasures” of Army garrison life during the Indian War.



The Times...from page 70.

June 28th

“There are several dudes in town. It only requires a walking cane and the hair parted in the middle to constitute one of these curiosities.”

June 30th

“Dr. Harland’s celebrated hypodermic medicated vapor bath for the cure of rheumatism, neuralgia and kindred diseases is being shown to our physicians and citizens by Drs. Towns and Offutt. Call at the California hotel and see it.” ☆

❧ **Officers and Directors 1983** ❧
THE EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

<i>President</i>	Dr. James M. Day
<i>First Vice President</i>	Ross O. Borrett
<i>Second Vice President</i>	Mrs. Charles H. Dodson, Jr.
<i>Third Vice President</i>	Colbert Coldwell
<i>Recording Secretary</i>	Mrs. Leroy Mathis
<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	Mrs. Hans E. Brockmoller
<i>Treasurer</i>	Freeman Harris
<i>Membership Secretary</i>	Mrs. R.W. Rees
<i>Curator</i>	William I. Latham
<i>Historian</i>	Jack D. Redman
<i>Directors Ex-Officio</i>	Leonard P. Sipiora
	Barbara J. Arduis
<i>Editor PASSWORD</i>	Lillian Collingwood
<i>Editor EL CONQUISTADOR</i>	Jay Smith

❧ **DIRECTORS** ❧

All Past Presidents are Honorary Directors

1981-83

Frank J. Mangán
 Mrs. Philip H. Bethune
 Mrs. Robert Heyser
 Patrick Rand
 Leon Metz
 Mrs. Henry Horwitz
 Mrs. Samuel Sanchez Sr.

1982-84

Newcomb Brunner
 Col. (Ret) James Ward
 Francis Fugate
 Betty Ligon
 Herbert Marsh Jr.
 Dr. Kenneth B. Shover
 Col. (Ret) Vincent M. Lockhart

1983-85

Dwight M. Deter
 Nathan Goldman
 Mrs. P.A. Loiselle
 Mrs. Richmond McCarty
 Mrs. William A. Burgett
 Samuel Sanchez Sr.
 George R. Yelderman

❧ **BOARD OF TRUSTEES** ❧

Frank Feuille III
 Chris P. Fox
 Paul Harvey Sr.
 Fred Hervey
 Mrs. Dexter Mapel Sr.

George Matkin
 Mrs. Ruth Rawlings Mott
 Mrs. Willard W. Schuessler
 Mrs. L.A. Velarde
 Hon. Richard C. White