

PASSWORD



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REUNION PIONEER'S ASSOCIATION AT WASHINGTON PARK

*Please turn to page 89 for associated article,
"W. Floyd Payne—Dynamo Pioneer 1861-1948"*

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Patton at front of Fort Bliss quarters.

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The Pattons: George Patton and his wife Beatrice at Fort Bliss

By John A. Hamilton



he history of El Paso is a rich mosaic of personalities, all of whom made their mark here. El Paso has been a magnet for famous people and has seemed to attract people who were, are, or will be famous. Many captains of industry, icons of government, and great military

leaders have had their names associated with this city at one time or another. All of them, individually and collectively, provide us with a window into the past.

Two of the more interesting people to pass through El Paso were George Smith Patton Jr., commander of the Third Army during World War II, and his wife Beatrice. Examining the tenure of George and Beatrice Patton reveals a link to the past and gives us another look at the El Paso that was. Why write about them? Because their comparatively short time here opens a window into life in the area of Fort Bliss in 1915, and the living conditions that existed here at that time. Their experiences here also resemble the life that young officers and their families experience today in a time of war.

Second Lieutenant George Patton, United States Army, arrived at Union Station in September 1915. He was already an accomplished officer and was fairly well-known in the cavalry having graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1909. Patton was forty-third in a class of 106, although he had to repeat his plebe year, having failed mathematics. Immediately following graduation, he married Beatrice Ayer, the daughter of a well-to-do Massachusetts family. He was physical-

ly fit, having participated in the 1912 Olympic Games where he placed fifth in the military pentathlon: cross-country running, steeplechase, pistol shooting, swimming, and fencing. Patton had attended the French fencing school at Saumur, and was subsequently designated the army's first Master of the Sword. He had completed the course work at the Mounted Service School at Fort Riley, Kansas and he was the designer of the Army's standard cavalry saber which was adopted and issued as the M1913 model. He had published an illustrated manual of instruction for the new saber, "The Diary of the Instructor in Swordsmanship." Beyond these accomplishments, he was looking for action, and he found it at Fort Bliss during the border troubles.

Ironically, while he was in Saumur and at Fort Riley, his assigned regiment was at Fort Bliss. Post returns from October 1913 show that 2nd Lieutenant George Patton was assigned to Troop A, 15th Cavalry Regiment as of October 28, 1913. However, the record also reflects that he was on detached service to the Mounted Service School at Fort Riley, Kansas from November 14, 1913. So, although he was assigned to his regiment in 1913, he did not actually join the regiment until almost two years later.¹

As his training at Fort Riley drew to a close, Patton learned that the 15th Cavalry Regiment would soon be deploying to the Philippine Islands for constabulary duty after the Insurrection. Things were quiet in the islands at that time, but there was action elsewhere. Patton was determined to find it.

He and Beatrice took a two and a half month leave from Fort Riley and went to her family's estate in Pride's Crossing, Massachusetts. Patton left Beatrice and their two daughters, Beatrice, called Little Bee, and Ruth Ellen, in Pride's Crossing while he went to Washington to lobby for a transfer. He got it: an assignment to the 8th Cavalry Regiment, returning from the Philippines to Fort Bliss, Texas. No record exists as to how Patton managed this. His old friend and mentor from West Point, Captain Charles P. Summerall, was working in the War Department at the time and may have helped. At any rate, Patton was on his way to his new assignment at the historical post, there to write his own pages of history.

The days that followed his assignment orders were standard routine for the Patton family as it is for army families today: go back to Fort Riley, pack the household goods, and prepare to move to the new post. Patton was unsure of the availability of suitable

quarters, so he shipped everything "C.O.D" to to his father in Lake Vineyard, California. Then George and Beatrice drove to California in his automobile, arriving after several days, dusty, and exhausted. A few weeks later, George and Beatrice took the train to El Paso. Patton detrained in El Paso on September 15, 1915, and Beatrice went on to Pride's Crossing and their daughters.

Patton reported to Fort Bliss on La Noria Mesa to confront considerable uncertainty. First, he discovered that his new regiment, the 8th Cavalry, had not yet redeployed from the Philippine Islands and was not due to arrive until September 25th. He had his trunks brought up on the rough dirt road, and at first could find no one to whom to report nor to tell him what was expected of him. When he finally located headquarters and someone to whom to report, he discovered to his dismay that he was to be examined immediately before a board of officers for promotion to first lieutenant. On **that** very day! This of course was contingent upon whether or not a board could be convened. He immediately wired the War Department, and to his relief received a five-week postponement.

Patton was quartered on the post, which rose from the treeless, arid mesa in the shadow of the Franklin Mountains. Patton described the post in a letter to Beatrice on September 18: "This post is not much to look at, the officers' houses are small and not well made and the stables are of wood but new as are the quarters."² In a later letter to his father, he wrote, "[This is] not a bad place but quite new looking. Most of the buildings have been erected within the year. And the U.S. certainly got stung on them, too. They are poorly made. The stables are of wood and are regular fire traps."³

Patton moved in with a fellow junior officer, Captain George Kirkpatrick who was housed in quarters #6 on Sheridan Road, a newer bungalow built in 1914. The address of those quarters today is 236 Sheridan Road, and they still stand. Quarters were sometimes designated as bachelor officer billets, which seems to be the case here. Captain Kirkpatrick had hired a Chinese cook, which made life a little more comfortable. Another junior officer, 2nd Lieutenant Thomas Rees, was quartered there as well.

Patton soon learned that he would be serving with an old friend and mentor from Fort Sheridan, Illinois, Major Francis Cutler Marshall. He also met his squadron commander, Major George

Langhorne. These two officers would mentor Patton and serve on his examining board. Therefore, he plunged into studying for his examination for promotion. He studied tactics, cavalry drill, and field service regulations. He also had some leisure time which he filled by helping Major Langhorne organize a polo team. Patton was promptly unhorsed in his first match, demonstrating that polo was an aggressive and dangerous sport. All of the old polo

fields on Fort Bliss are named for officers who died playing the sport.

The regiment arrived, and was immediately dispersed to patrol duty along the border. Patton was assigned to D Troop, and A and D Troops were ordered to Sierra Blanca. Their mission was two-fold: to guard the railroad line between El Paso and Sierra Blanca and to patrol the border south of Sierra Blanca. With two troops in Sierra Blanca, one could be out on patrol and the other could rest and refit in town. It took three days to reach the little village of Finlay, moving everything via horse, including supply wagons. One day after that, the troops reached Sierra Blanca.

Sierra Blanca was a frontier town at that time, composed of twenty houses, a saloon, and a hotel. The

town's population consisted of ranchers and other colorful figures. Patton could not have been more excited. There was the prospect of action, plus the atmosphere of the wild, wild West. In an October 20 letter to Beatrice, Patton wrote, "This is the funniest place I have ever seen. It is supposed to be very tough and at least half the men wear boots and spurs and carry guns."⁴ Patton settled into quarters in Sierra Blanca with Major Langhorne. "We have a three room house and a stable and a garage so are very comfortable . . . I would not miss this for the world. I guess there are few places like it left."⁵ He met the town marshal, Dave Allison, who appeared white-haired and saintly. But Allison was a fighter. He and a posse had recently confronted the Mexican revolutionary

Patton was assigned to D Troop, and A and D Troops were ordered to Sierra Blanca. Their mission was two-fold: to guard the railroad line between El Paso and Sierra Blanca and to patrol the border south of Sierra Blanca. With two troops in Sierra Blanca, one could be out on patrol and the other could rest and refit in town.

Pascual Orozco and a group of his followers south of Sierra Blanca, killing them all. This enhanced Patton's expectation of action. Patton quickly got to know everyone in town, and they accepted him as one of them.

Patton was quickly dispatched to the border on a patrol. There were no roads, so the cavalry troopers picked their way on narrow paths. They inspected two outposts on the Rio Grande, thirty miles from Sierra Blanca. In the process, Patton went hunting for wild game with varying results. His description of the river sounds much as it looks today:

The Rio Grande is very narrow and shallow at that point not over thirty yards wide and with heavy bushes on both banks. And many ponds on our side [sic]. That night we slept on the ground taking off only our boots. It was quite cold but we were comfortable . . . It is the most desolate country you ever saw. Rocks and thorny bushes."⁶

Patton led a number of patrols, studied for his promotion exam, and danced with the local girls in town. He passed his exam for first lieutenant handily. This meant that if a position for first lieutenant opened in his old regiment in the Philippines, he could be ordered to move there. So, he must have held his breath against that possibility.

Patton made a few trips back to El Paso, and shopped while he was there. "I spent most of the day at the gun store, got a new rifle and two pretty carved leather holsters As Capt. Kirk's [Patrick's] house is closed I have been staying here [at the Hotel Paso del Norte] and ordering full course dinners which I eat in lonely grandeur."⁷ Patton's loneliness in his letters, coupled with a few references about meeting local girls, probably induced Beatrice to leave the comforts of Pride's Crossing and join him for a visit. One of his letters naively made reference to his meeting with a local cowgirl, who was quite taken with him. He wrote Beatrice about this, saying that this "shows that I am a social success though from the talk of here she is of easy conquest. Very easy!"⁸ Patton must have seemed to be getting feisty, and he was told he would get no leave at Christmas—Beatrice arrived by train shortly after Thanksgiving. Patton, in Major Langhorne's automobile, met her and escorted her to Sierra Blanca. They lived briefly with Langhorne until they found suitable housing else-

where in town. No pictures exist of their house, except for a small painting in the railroad station museum in Sierra Blanca today.

Beatrice set about serving as the dutiful Army wife and, like Patton, made friends about town very quickly. She was admired as the elegant lady from back east that she was. The wife of the saloon owner, Mrs. Van Buren Hogan, took Beatrice under her wing and suggested she could sleep in the saloon on Saturday night. The saloon had brick walls, and would protect Beatrice from stray bullets from the gunfire of intoxicated cowboys. The town sheriff was also very impressed with her, and suggested that she get Patton to resign from the Army, take up residence in Sierra Blanca, and help him run a health spa at the local hot springs. All was not good the entire time, however. After one particularly brutal West Texas dust storm, Beatrice, the stalwart wife, cried and told George she wished he would resign from the Army.

One singular event occurred that would provoke Patton to make a personal acquisition that would mark his personality for the rest of his life: his pistol accidentally discharged. There are two stories. One is that, returning from a horse patrol, Patton dismounted and stamped the dirt from his boot. He may previously have altered the pistol so that it had a hairtrigger. "The jolt of his foot jarred the hammer, causing it to snap against a cartridge. Fortunately, the wound was slight and we are told that he was more angry with himself for his carelessness than hurt."⁹

The other story is more colorful. One night in Sierra Blanca, George and Beatrice went to dinner with local businessmen.

Suddenly, during after dinner coffee, a gun went off. Instantly, the lights went out, Ma [Beatrice] was grabbed by a strong hand and dragged under the table, and there she found the rest of the party. After a decent interval, and no more shots, the party disentangled and surfaced . . . it appeared that he [Patton] had tried wearing his pistol in his trouser fly—the way the local gunmen did when dressed up for an occasion—and that in sitting down or moving around he had somehow triggered it off and it had shot a hole right through his trouser leg and into the floor.¹⁰

On returning to El Paso at the end of the year, Patton visited the Shelton Payne Arms Company and ordered a silver-plated Colt .45 1873 model Peacemaker, equipped with ivory grips. It ar-



Patton in Mexico

rived on March 4, 1916 and cost Patton \$50. The pistol had been engraved. "It is believed that Payne had this especially done for Patton. . . . Patton may have been familiar with the work of this particular artisan and preferred it over factory engraving."¹¹ Patton would carry this pistol the rest of his life, using it in the shoot-out with Villistas in Mexico. It is clearly seen in many pictures of him as a general during World War II.

When they left Sierra Blanca at the end of 1915, the town gave them a big party at a private home. At that point, Beatrice had finally decided that Fort Bliss was a suitable place to live with her babies, and Patton applied for quarters on the post. Patton moved onto Fort Bliss, and at the end of January Beatrice took the train to Pride's Crossing to fetch their two young daughters. Patton wrote his Aunt Nannie in California with the news. He said that he thought "that we will get a quite a large house at [Fort] Bliss. This is fine news as we feared that we would draw only a two-room one. We are now enjoying our weekly dust storm so things are pretty bad."¹² A photograph taken at the time shows Patton standing in front of what is now 222 Sheridan Road, with a lady on the porch holding the younger daughter, Ruth Ellen.¹³ This would have been more than adequate for a second lieutenant with three dependents, so Patton was indeed fortunate. Patton wrote his father in California to ship the household goods, and Mr. Patton showed up to help George move in.

In those days, many officers employed servants, and Patton looked for a Chinese servant to no avail. Instead, he wired his mother-in-law, Mrs. Ayer, to send a maid named Julia Gould from Pride's Crossing. Pending her arrival, Patton hired a soldier's wife to clean the house for \$17 a month. Laundry was extra.¹⁴ Beatrice and the children arrived in early February, and Patton's father left for home. The Pattons then settled into life on Fort

Bliss, but not without some strife. Beatrice was not satisfied with the cleaning, so she dismissed the soldier's wife and cleaned the house herself. Presumably, Julia's arrival made things better. A short time after that, another servant, Katherine Breen, arrived from Massachusetts to help Beatrice with the children.

A month later, the 13th Cavalry Regiment in Columbus fought off the Villista raid, and the possibility of war arose. Patton heard of this only days after the raid, and was petrified that he would not be able to go. His regiment was still engaged in border patrol

Later that evening, Patton called on Pershing in his quarters and reaffirmed his desire to go. Some stories assert that Patton sat on Pershing's doorstep until Pershing agreed to take him, and there is one story that Patton slept in the hall of Pershing's quarters until Pershing assented.

duties to the east. However, his regimental commander was overweight. Patton knew that Brigadier General John J. Pershing, the commander of the impending expedition, was a stickler for physical fitness and would not take anyone who was not fit for a difficult campaign.

Patton was serving as the Officer of the Day on March 12, 1916, three days after the raid, when he heard the news that his regiment was not to go on the Punitive Expedition. He immediately approached his former troop commander, Captain Barnhardt, who was now the regimental adjutant, asking to be referred to General Pershing. Patton then went to see Major John L. Hines, the man who would be Pershing's adjutant general on the expedition and asked

to go. Then he did the same thing with Pershing's senior aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Martin C. Shallenberger. In the late afternoon, General Pershing called Patton into the office of the OD, the officer of the day. Pershing chatted for a moment, and agreed to take Patton along if he could. Later that evening, Patton called on Pershing in his quarters and reaffirmed his desire to go. Some stories assert that Patton sat on Pershing's doorstep until Pershing agreed to take him, and there is one story that Patton slept in the hall of Pershing's quarters until Pershing assented. This is unlikely, but Patton certainly had made a name for himself on post, and Pershing surely knew of Patton's background and duty performance.

There was another reason that Pershing knew Patton. Shortly after Patton moved into quarters, his sister Anita joined the Pattons, for an extended visit. Tall and blonde, Nita Patton made a hit with the bachelor officers on post. And one of the most eligible was John J. Pershing. Recently widowed, Pershing was alone. Nita met Pershing at one of the social affairs, and Pershing took a liking to her, although she was twenty-eight years old and he was fifty-five. Nita Patton filled a void in Pershing's life. Pershing fulfilled Nita's vision of what her husband should be, a knight in shining armor. They became close.

On the morning of March 13, Pershing telephoned Patton and asked how soon he could be ready to go. Patton replied that he was ready immediately, having packed the night before. Pershing appointed him as an additional aide, substituting for Lieutenant James Lawton Collins, who was his junior aide but was temporarily absent. Patton then broke the news to Beatrice, who "acted fine and did not cry or anything."¹⁵ They left that day for Columbus, Patton going ahead to the train to oversee the loading of the general's personal property and horses and to divert the press from the general. Pershing arrived at Union Station by car, accompanied by Nita who came to see them off. So Patton once again managed to position himself for action. He would understudy Pershing during the campaign, and even earn a name for himself at San Miguelito Ranch in an engagement with one of Pancho Villa's lieutenants that would make the national news.

Beatrice stayed on in quarters with the little girls and Nita, who remained for months to lend support to Beatrice and to stay close to what Pershing was doing in Mexico. Beatrice had grown to like the post, finding the climate good—except for the dust storms, of course—and the post sufficient. In a letter to her mother she wrote that Patton's service in Mexico would constitute foreign service, so they might stay at Fort Bliss for some time. "I think if we are to stay in the U.S.A. at all I would rather be here myself, as the cavalry will probably be on or near the border for some time and this is undoubtedly the best border station."¹⁶

Housekeeping on Fort Bliss was presumably tolerable, despite the absence of trees and amenities that exist on the post today. Julia, the maid, surely made life a little easier, and Beatrice took up gardening around the quarters. Nita's presence also helped, as she gave Beatrice much moral support and staved off the loneli-

ness that Army wives feel when their husbands are deployed and in danger. Beatrice's letters were upbeat, and they showed that she was coping well.

I went to the market this A.M. and think of this. They had: red cherries, black cherries, raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, watermelons, cantaloupes, nutmegs (melons), pineapples, coconuts, loganberries, dewberries, black figs, apples, oranges, grapefruits, limes, lemons, plums, peaches and vegetables accordingly. This is certainly a fine place to keep house in."¹⁷

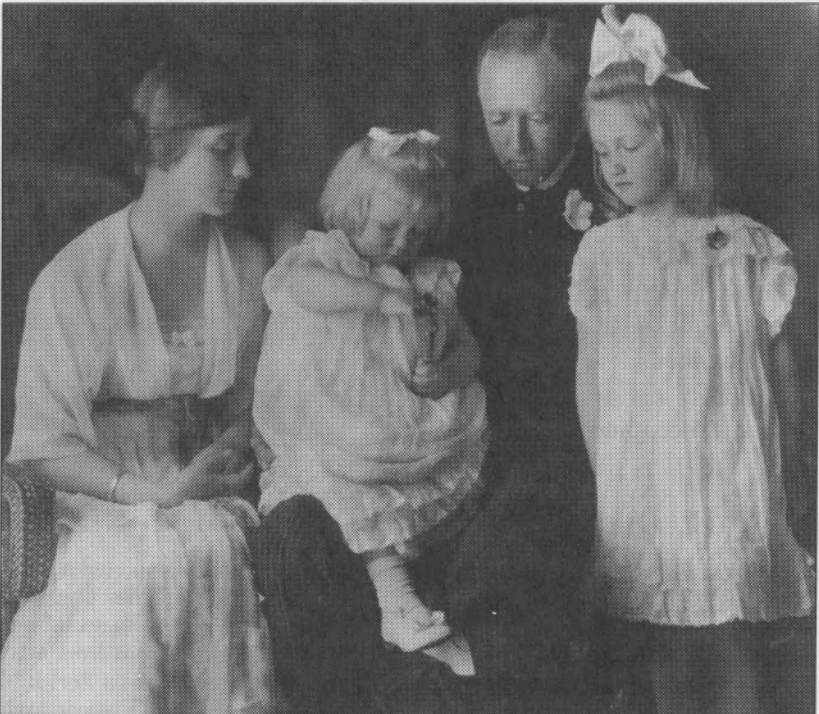
At some point, the Pattons were able to hire a Chinese house-boy, who mystified Beatrice one evening when he said he had done everything except "feed the bugs." It took a few minutes for Beatrice to figure out that he had not spread roach poison. At another point, Beatrice decided to keep a cow in the side yard in order to have fresh milk for the children. Colonel Rhodes' wife in the big house next door agreed to this as long as the milk was shared. One day this led to excitement when Ruth Ellen, about three years old, wandered off after some cows that passed by the quarters on the parade field.

Three cows, attended by a sort of collie dog, came across the yard, and I knew immediately that if I could just put my hand on them, I could bring them to Ma. I waited until Bee was down by the garbage cans, and then I sneaked off the porch, across the road, following them. I must have known I was being bad, because I glanced up at the windows of the quarters opposite, and saw what looked like two little lights twinkling through the lace curtains on the stair window. It was lucky for me that those little lights happened to be the reflection of Colonel Rhodes' spectacles as he came down the stairs; because when the hew and cry began for a lost child some time later, he remembered that he had seen a very small person in a brown suit heading "that-a-way." They found me quite a long way off on the prairie. The cattle were still in sight, and I was still intent on bringing them home to Ma.¹⁸

In Mexico, Patton busied himself with headquarters activities: censor officer; producer of notes, studies, and reports for the staff; overseer of orderlies, guides, baggage handlers, and security personnel; as well as assistant to the intelligence officer. He was

also Pershing's confidante, riding with him and learning from him. He studied Pershing closely: his habits, his methods, his style of leadership, and his procedures with his staff and his subordinate commanders. In August, he managed a short vacation to Columbus, meeting Beatrice there. Nita came as well, to see Pershing. Then Beatrice and Nita closed up the house and went to California to help Patton's father with his campaign for the United States Senate.

In October, Patton, accident-prone as always, was burned about his head and face by an exploding gasoline lantern. He was evacuated to Columbus by truck, and then by train to Fort Bliss. He was given a medical furlough, and traveled to California to be with Beatrice and to recuperate. He returned in November and stayed a short time on post, then joined Pershing in Mexico again on November 13. By this time, the troops were in bivouac at Colonia Dublan, so Patton trained, inspected, and hunted. On February 1, 1917 he was assigned to the 7th Cavalry regiment. Pershing rated him highly on his performance appraisal, but Patton was disappointed to learn that Pershing did not rate him



The Patton Family, 1918

as an aide-de-camp. When the Punitive Expedition withdrew from Mexico in February 1917, Patton came out with them. On February 27, he assumed command of Troop A, 7th Cavalry.

Pershing took leave, and visited the Patton family in California. While there, he became engaged to marry Nita. They would never marry, however. After the Great War, Pershing got cold feet. On a visit to London, Nita broke the engagement. Neither she nor Pershing ever married.

Patton's time at Fort Bliss was drawing to a close. A letter to his father on April 11 said that Beatrice and he were preparing to go east to Pride's Crossing, because Beatrice's father was ill with pneumonia. The return address on this letter was 3915 Mountain Avenue in El Paso. No home exists at this address today. Perhaps the Pattons were "bumped" out of their quarters by an officer who was more senior. By April 23, they were in Pride's Crossing. From there, Patton joined Pershing's staff once again to go to Europe to fight the Great War, World War I.

The Pattons did return to Fort Bliss, many years later. When Patton commanded the 5th Cavalry Regiment at Fort Clark, Texas, the family returned in 1938 for the 1st Cavalry Division's horsemanship competitions on Fort Bliss. There are pictures of Little Bee and Ruth Ellen, grown up and jumping their horses on Smith Bliss Field. It must have been a fond visit.

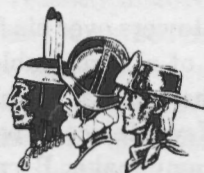
Like others who passed through Fort Bliss, the Pattons left their mark. Their experiences here were good, and Patton learned lessons that would stand him well for the remainder of his career. Beatrice's legacy of grace and warm and friendly hospitality in what could sometimes be trying conditions remain as an ideal to be emulated.

Both sets of quarters, 222 and 236 Sheridan, still stand and are still occupied by army officers.

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3. Blumenson, p. 295.
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6. Letter, George to Beatrice, October 26, 1915, quoted in Blumenson, p. 300.
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8. Letter, George to Beatrice, November 11, 1915, quoted in *Patton: A Genius for War* by Carlo D'Este, (Harper Collins Publishers, New York, 1995), p. 159.
9. Milton F. Perry and Barbara W. Parke, *Patton and His Pistols* (The Telegraph Press, Harrisburg, Pa., 1957), p. 2.
10. Ruth Ellen Patton Totten, *The Button Box: A Daughter's Loving Memory of Mrs. George S. Patton* (University of Missouri Press, Columbia, Missouri, 2005), p. 104.
11. Perry and Parke, *Patton and His Pistols*, p. 44.
12. Blumenson, *The Patton Papers, 1885-1940*, p. 310.
13. Ellsworth, Sheila A., Principle Investigator, *Inventory and Evaluation of Historic Structures and Landscapes at Fort Bliss, Texas, Volume I*, U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratories, Tri-Services Cultural Resources Research Center, Champaign, Illinois, September 1997, Buildings 222 and 236.
14. Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, p. 310.
15. Blumenson, p. 320.
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A Lost Chapter in the Ecclesiastical History of San Elizario, Texas: Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez

By Rick Hendricks



Seasonal flooding, which was the life blood of El Paso's Lower Valley for centuries, bringing effluvium to enrich the area soils also brought destruction. In particular, flooding washed away much of the documentary record of the ecclesiastical history of San Elizario. When Dr.

W. H. Timmons and I began the research that eventually became our book, *San Elizario: Spanish Presidio to Texas County Seat*, we were keenly aware that we could not provide an adequate picture of the history of the Church in the community.¹ Recent research in the microfilm collection of the Durango Cathedral Archive housed in the Archives and Special Collections Department of New Mexico State University Library, has made it possible to remedy this situation, at least in part. Of particular note is the discovery that the individual who was arguably the most important Franciscan in this region in the Spanish colonial period, and without doubt the leading figure in the eighteenth century, fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez, ended his remarkable career in the mission field in San Elizario.²

Father Domínguez towers over his fellow Franciscans for two reasons: his leadership of a remarkable expedition of discovery and his authorship of the seminal historical work on the Church in eighteenth-century New Mexico. Together with fray Silvestre Vélez de Escalante, the map maker Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco,

and seven other individuals, fray Francisco Atanasio departed Santa Fe in July 1776 in search of a road to Monterey in Alta California. Over the course of five months, this intrepid band of ten traveled more than two thousand miles overland through southern Colorado into Utah almost as far as the shores of Great Salt Lake thence back through eastern Arizona. According to Father Domínguez, they covered 590 leagues, or some eighteen hundred miles.³ It has been noted that Father Domínguez and Vélez de Escalante were pursuing similar military and diplomatic aims as was the more celebrated Lewis and Clark expedition a quarter of century later.⁴ Domínguez had been sent to New Mexico as canonical visitor charged with the task of conducting an inspection of the province and preparing "a detailed report on both the spiritual and economic status of the New Mexico missions." This brief was in addition to his responsibilities as an explorer.⁵ This report, which was ably translated and annotated by Eleanor B. Adams and fray Angélico Chávez as *The Missions of New Mexico in 1776* is to eighteenth-century New Mexico what fray Alonso de Benavides's *Memorial of 1630* was to the seventeenth century.⁶

According to information he provided, Father Domínguez was born in Mexico City on 2 May 1739.⁷ He entered the Franciscan order about 1757 at age seventeen or eighteen. In 1772 he was in Veracruz and described as being thirty-two years old, having been in the Franciscan Order for fifteen years.⁸ Fray Francisco Atanasio arrived in El Paso on 4 September 1775.⁹ In 1777, after he returned from his trip through the Great Basin, Domínguez was elected *custos* or custodian of the Custody of Saint Paul, which was the name by which Franciscan New Mexico was known within the Order. He took up residence in El Paso, which was the custody's headquarters at the time. Adams and Chávez, and others after their example, stated that Domínguez remained in El Paso in 1778 by which time another *custos* had replaced him and that provincial records in Mexico City indicated that he was assigned to Carrizal Presidio shortly. Moreover, other provincial records placed him at Zia, Jemez, Santa Ana, and Isleta at various times in the late 1780s and early 1790.¹⁰ Many recently discovered documents establish that fray Francisco Atanasio remained in the greater El Paso area and continued to exercise the office of *custos* into the 1780s.

By 1776, the year after Domínguez arrived in El Paso, *Bachiller* José Félix Vergara was serving as chaplain of San Elizario Presidio, which at the time was located in the area of present-day

El Porvenir, Chihuahua.¹¹ Father Vergara served from 1776 until 1781.¹² Fray José Rafael Aguirre followed Father Vergara as chaplain of San Elizario.¹³ On 25 October 1783, Father Domínguez, became chaplain at Carrizal.¹⁴ Over the course of the next eight years, three months, and three days he ministered to the needs of the presidial troops there as well as in the community that grew around the garrison. Then, on 28 December 1792, Domínguez took up the post of chaplain of Janos Presidio.¹⁵ While serving at Janos, fray Francisco Atanasio occasionally traveled to nearby San Buenaventura Presidio to assist when the local chaplain was infirm or had to be away from his flock.¹⁶

In June 1794 Father Aguirre petitioned fray José Joaquín Granados y Gálvez, the bishop of Durango, and Commandant General Pedro de Nava for permission to retire as chaplain of the San Elizario Presidio,¹⁷ which had relocated upriver to Los Tiburcios in 1789.¹⁸ Father Aguirre, in contrast to most priests who sought to serve in San Elizario because of its climate, complained that his poor health was exacerbated by the cold weather at San Elizario Presidio at Los Tiburcios.¹⁹ In response, Nava told him to make his request of the bishop of Durango. Aguirre complied only to learn that Bishop Granados y Gálvez had died before his petition was acted on.²⁰ His recourse to the Vacant See [a bishopric with no sitting bishop] produced no answer, so he repeated his request in February 1795.²¹

Nava forwarded Father Aguirre's request to Durango and noted that the chaplain was more than sixty years old and in broken health.²² According to fray José Rafael, he was sixty-three years old and had been a Franciscan for forty-eight years. The time had come "To listen with more intent, mature reflection the voice of Saint Paul to the Hebrews: *quod autem antiquatur et senescit prope interitum est.*"²³

Nava mentioned that fray José Ruiz de Salamanca was in Chihuahua without any post, having arrived with four others in 1794 to fill troop chaplaincies. Ruiz de Salamanca was a Discalced Franciscan from the Province of San Diego in Mexico City who followed the austere reforms of San Pedro de Alcántara as was Father Aguirre.²⁴ All Franciscans in New Spain except the Discalced or Alcantarines were Observants (*regularis observantiae* or Regular Observance), which is one of the two branches of the Order of Friars Minor, the other being Conventuals. Observants

on the northern frontier wore a blue habit, the color of denim, while the Discalced (*strictoris observantiae*, or of the stricter Observance) wore a light brown habit.²⁵

Ruiz de Salamanca and his four companions had remained since their arrival, drawing salaries with nothing to do. This circumstance was because of royal orders that directed that members of regular orders who departed their home provinces to serve in the mission field were to be paid from the day they left. Seeking to alleviate this unnecessary burden on the royal treasury, Nava sought the approval of the dean and *cabildo* to post Father Ruiz de Salamanca to San Elizario. Apparently a decision in the affirmative was reached in short order, for a reply dated 24 February indicated that the requested title was being sent.

The Father Guardian of the Convento de San Francisco in Chihuahua, fray José Moreno Campos, provided background information of fray José, whom he had met in Placencia, Spain in 1774.²⁶ At the time Ruiz de Salamanca was the *comisario* or agent of the Venerable Third Order of St. Francis, performing his duty to the satisfaction of his superiors. He had permission to hear confessions in the Bishoprics of Placencia, Ávila, and Archbishopric of Toledo. He had come to America in 1792 and had obtained license to hear confessions in the Bishoprics of Puebla, Valladolid, and Durango.²⁷

Writing from Janos to the Minister Provincial of the Holy Gospel Province in Mexico City, fray Martín Francisco Cruzealegui, in May 1795, Father Domínguez penned what Adams and Chávez considered a "pathetic letter" in which he requested that he be given the "status and exemptions of definitor" in the 1796 chapter meeting in recognition of his long years of service.²⁸ Domínguez was using the term definitor (*definidor*) to refer to a member of the four-man advisory council of a *custos*. The position implied a measure of stature, and fray Francisco Atanasio certainly thought he was entitled to such an honorific, whether he was asking actually to fill such a position is less clear. Adams and Chávez also concluded that his only reward was permanent exile to the northernmost limits of the Province of the Holy Gospel and deprivation of any chance for further advancement in the Order and the Church.²⁹ This observation seems odd in light of documents that provide information of the final years of his life and indicate that he was a highly respected missionary. There is also no indication in the decade that remained of his life that he ever attempted to return to Mexico City or sought advancement. To the contrary,

he seemed determined to find a post to his liking on the frontier and continued to perform his duties and deal with matters peculiar to military chaplains. In 1798 Domínguez queried the bishop on matters relating to the rights and responsibilities of priests regarding the marriage of soldiers who are temporarily stationed at a presidio and wish to marry a local woman. At issue were whether such marriages should take place at all and which priest, the presidial chaplain or the priest of the couples respective home parishes, should receive the required emoluments.³⁰

As a matter of course when there was a change in bishops, Father Domínguez sent to Bishop Olivares y Benito the licenses to carry out his priestly functions, which he had received from Bishop Macarulla. This letter is representative of a tendency that became ever more pronounced as fray Francisco Atanasio aged—the inability to write straight across the page.

That same year in San Elizario, Father Ruiz de Salamanca was called on to investigate an attempt to end the marriage of María Francisca Brígida Ronquillo and José Escajeda. María Francisca's mother, Gertrudis Díaz, alleged that her daughter's husband was impotent and for that reason, the couple could not live together as man and wife. Chaplain Ruiz de Salamanca investigated the matter with the surgeon of the Royal Hospital of Chihuahua. This unnamed doctor must have had occasion to examine Escajeda because he provided certifications that Gertrudis's accusations were false. A subsequent note indicated that the couple had reunited in apparent wedded bliss.³¹

In Janos Father Domínguez was involved in similar priestly functions. In March 1800 he asked the bishop for special authority to bless a chapel in the newly constructed public cemetery at the church in Janos. Captain José Manuel de Ochoa and his troops, as well as the local citizenry, had requested that fray Francisco Atanasio say mass for the dead on the days which the bishop had designated. The bishop duly honored Dominguez's request.³² As a matter of course when there was a change in bishops, Father Domínguez sent to Bishop Olivares y Benito the licenses to carry out his priestly functions, which he had received from Bishop

Macarulla. This letter is representative of a tendency that became ever more pronounced as fray Francisco Atanasio aged—the inability to write straight across the page.³³

At some point in 1800, Father Domínguez was asked to investigate the conduct of Father José Ignacio Suárez, a secular priest assigned to El Paso. Given the distance between Janos and El Paso, Domínguez commissioned fray Diego Muñoz Jurado, minister of Senecú, to investigate Suárez's conduct and his ability to interact well with the other Franciscans in the El Paso area. Domínguez conveyed this information to the secretary of the Diocese of Durango, *Bachiller* José Aguilar. Domínguez's letter provides evidence of a close personal friendship between the two men. Although some amount of fawning language might be expected from a parish priest communicating with his prelate, Domínguez's way of addressing Aguilar hints at real sincerity beneath the effusive words of the closing of this letter:

I am nothing, worthless, but my uselessness will never be an obstacle to serve my Aguilar however he wants, pleases, and orders his most grateful brother, dutiful chaplain, and acknowledged friend who kisses your hand.³⁴

Domínguez closed a postscript to the same letter saying, "Adios brother of my heart, your *Negro*" that is, slave. As it happened, Father Suárez expressed his lack of confidence in Father Muñoz Jurado. Most probably he did not want a Franciscan to investigate his behavior.³⁵

Father Suárez had begun to minister in El Paso toward the end of June 1798. One of the first steps he took was to prohibit Matachines dances inside the church, Indian dances and plays in the cemetery, and the practice of taking the saints to profane fiestas. This provoked a bitter reaction on the part of the citizenry who hurled such epithets at him as "crazy," "idiot," and "drunk." By the end of 1801, Father Suárez had had enough and asked Bishop Olivares y Benito to replace him.³⁶ The citizens were dissatisfied with Father Muñoz Jurado's report and considered it a whitewash in support of a fellow clergyman. They saw the whole matter differently and repeatedly charged Suárez with failure to perform his priestly duties. Among the most serious complaints, a group of citizens alleged that Father Suárez had refused to hear

the confessions of a number of individuals who were gravely ill with typhus.³⁷ Clearly this priest and this community were ill-suited to each other.

In January 1801 Father Ruiz de Salamanca requested permission to retire, citing his poor health.³⁸ By February 1801 the word was out that the chaplain of San Elizario Presidio had petitioned to retire. Fray José Bravo, who was familiar with the area, having served in Ysleta in the 1790s, requested that he be named to the impending vacancy.³⁹ He was not unhappy at his current post with the flying company of San Carlos de Parras [a mobile cavalry unit with no fixed headquarters], but he fondly recalled the climate and water of the El Paso area and feared that eventually his outfit would move to a place much less suited to his tastes.

In April the matter of the behavior of Father Suárez in El Paso surfaced again. The Commander of the General Command, Field Marshall Pedro de Nava, suggested that Father Ruiz de Salamanca from San Elizario would be better suited to look into the Suárez question. He would know the character of the people who had been complaining about their priest whereas the other candidate, a diocesan clergyman named José Antonio Portocarrero, would not.⁴⁰ Father Ruiz de Salamanca reiterated his request to retire in late April, which had not been acted upon since he submitted his initial plea in January.⁴¹ In May Father José Antonio Portocarrero petitioned the bishop to be named as the replacement for Father Ruiz de Salamanca. Portocarrero hoped to relocate in order to leave the noxious climate of Carrizal for San Elizario in an effort to recover his health. Moreover, he was certain that there would be more possibilities in San Elizario for him to earn enough money to provide more adequately for his parents who were living in considerable need.⁴² In June an obviously ailing Father Ruiz de Salamanca scratched a weak signature on a letter to Dr. Francisco Fernández Valentín in Durango. He had been unable to carry out properly the commission given him, presumably the investigation into the behavior of Father Suárez. He was very ill and insistent that the commission be given to another.⁴³

On 1 September 1801, Father Domínguez directed a letter to his friend, Father Aguilar, in Durango.⁴⁴ He indicated that he had heard that Father Ruiz de Salamanca was retiring and asked Aguilar to do everything he could to see that Domínguez was named to fill the vacancy. He knew that such a move would be a spiritual and a physical benefit for him. Domínguez also noted that fray

Juan José Pérez was disposed to occupy his post at Janos as soon as he recovered from his illness. At the time he was in Chihuahua seeking medical attention, and Domínguez was taking care of his parishioners at the San Buenaventura Presidio. The following February, Father Domínguez informed Aguilar that he had learned that Father Ruiz de Salamanca was returning to the Franciscan Province of San Diego because of his illness, reminding him of his letter of 1 September.⁴⁵

The bishop had other ideas. On 16 February he proposed that fray Jerónimo de Riega be named chaplain of San Elizario Presidio.⁴⁶ He was one of the Franciscans who had come from Spain of whom nine had been assigned to New Mexico. Because there was a lot of turnover among the missionaries of New Mexico, a number having requested permission to return to their provinces, Commandant General Nava was uncertain whether all the vacant posts would be filled. Therefore he declined to issue the title of chaplain of San Elizario Presidio to Father Riega.

A tormented Ruiz de Salamanca begged permission to retire to Socorro in March. Pitifully, he said that he could not stand it any longer and had lost the use of his hands and feet. It was necessary for someone else to dress him in his habit.⁴⁷ The final blow was that he had lost most of his sight. Even with his glasses he could only sign his name with difficulty. Perhaps in Socorro he would recover. His aim was to go to the baths at Ojo Caliente in May, even if he had to travel by *carreta*. He asked that his wish be forwarded to fray Rafael Benavides who was serving at Socorro. Ruiz de Salamanca asked that he be allowed to live in the church and would relinquish the obventions from the citizens and Indians to Father Benavides since he had no right to it.

Nava informed the bishop that all of the new Franciscans destined for the New Mexico mission field had posts to fill.⁴⁸ This meant that the bishop's nomination of Father Riega, which Nava had previously denied, could definitively not be put into effect. Father Ruiz de Salamanca's pleas to be replaced had reached Commandant General Nava, and he reacted by suggesting that Father Domínguez, whom he described as "priest of exemplar conduct" should be given the chaplaincy of San Elizario Presidio. This would permit the aged Franciscan, in the words of Nava, "to live some time longer and keep him from seeking the retirement that is his right because of his longstanding merit." If the bishop was in agreement with Nava's proposition, the commandant

general would expedite the title of chaplain for Domínguez. Given that Janos was exposed on the frontier, Nava wanted the bishop to propose a replacement for fray Francisco Atanasio as soon as possible because there was no priest nearby to take charge of the post.

Fray Tomás del Pino, interim chaplain of the Fourth Flying Company, wrote to Nava in early June that he had learned of the death of fray Antonio Garrido.⁴⁹ Del Pino had taken over for Garrido on an interim basis on orders from the commandant general until his illness was cured. This had not happened and Del Pino asked to be named chaplain of the Fourth Cuartel de San Pablo. He indicated that he had the strength to serve the flying company and a love of service of the King. Father Tomás's request met with approval at the headquarters of the General Command.⁵⁰ On the day after he received the petition from Del Pino, Nava wrote Bishop Olivares y Benito informing him of the situation. As was his practice, he told the bishop that he would issue the appropriate title to Del Pino as soon as he had an affirmative response. By acting quickly, the troops and citizens of San Pablo would not suffer from the lack of a priest.

Father Del Pino wrote to the bishop with disturbing news in late July 1802. Because of the death of Father Garrido, many parishioners had not fulfilled their annual obligation to go to confession and take communion.

Father Del Pino wrote to the bishop with disturbing news in late July 1802.⁵¹ Because of the death of Father Garrido, many parishioners had not fulfilled their annual obligation to go to confession and take communion. Fray Tomás lacked authority to grant absolution to the laggard and obstinate individuals and asked the bishop to confer it on him. Otherwise, he would have to continue to turn away the people who, as penitents, prostrated themselves at his feet as a result of his daily ministry.

In early September Nava forwarded to the bishop an official communication from José Joaquín de Ugarte, the commandant of San Elizario Presidio, to the effect that the presidio was suffering from an absence of spiritual nourishment arising from the illness of Father Ruiz de Salamanca.⁵² Given that Bishop Olivares y Benito had agreed on 25 May with Nava's choice of Domínguez as chaplain of San Elizario, the time

had come to put the transfer into effect. With that in mind, Nava stated that he was notifying the Franciscan provincial of Zacatecas that he was to tell the bishop who would be assigned to Janos to replace fray Francisco Atanasio. Ugarte's letter indicated that Ruiz de Salamanca was so ill and aged that he could not perform his priestly functions, thus most citizens who died did so without the benefit of confession. This situation had left the community disconsolate.⁵³

On 28 September the bishop had recommended that Father Del Pino be named chaplain of the Fourth Flying Company.⁵⁴ On 4 October Nava complied with the bishop's wishes and dispatched Del Pino's title. This choice echoed the opinion of the provincial of Zacatecas. Two days later, on the night of 30 September, a very ill Father Ruiz de Salamanca directed that he be taken to El Paso.⁵⁵ When Father José Serapion Prado stopped by to visit him, Ruiz de Salamanca told him that he wanted to be in El Paso because he would be more comfortable there, spiritually and temporally. Prado administered to Ruiz de Salamanca all the Holy Sacraments and remained at his bedside until 4 October, the Feast of St. Francis of Asissi, the founder of his order. Then, at 11:40 at night, fray José Ruiz de Salamanca "delivered his soul into the hands of Our Creator, the fine disposition of this priest leaving me much comforted." Father Prado immediately informed the commandant that he would take responsibility for the spiritual needs of San Elizario Presidio. Ugarte responded that he would be unable to pay him any salary because the commandant general had declared that no stipend was to be paid to anyone serving in a presidio *ad interim*. To this Prado replied that his only concern was the good of the souls of the people, and that, should they seek him out, he would offer what remedy he could. To that end he had directed his assistant priest to go to San Elizario to say Mass on feast days and whenever else he was needed. He stated that he had made this decision because San Elizario was but six leagues from El Paso, and he was the nearest ecclesiastical judge.

Father Del Pino's future took an unexpected turn in January 1803 when fray Tomás, citing ill health and having been in serious decline for the last month, requested permission to resign as interim chaplain of the Fourth Flying Company. He wished to return to his province or wherever his prelates deemed it best to send him.⁵⁶ Nemesio Salcedo, the new commandant general, in-

formed the bishop that Father Del Pino had submitted his formal resignation as chaplain of the Fourth Flying Company and requested another priest be proposed to fill the vacancy that would result once the resignation was accepted.⁵⁷ Salcedo wrote to the bishop in early January 1803 stating that his predecessor had requested nine Franciscan missionaries from the Holy Gospel Province in Mexico City be sent to New Mexico.⁵⁸ This request was made on the assumption that there were posts for each one to fill. This communication also betrays what appears to be a clear reluctance to have Father Domínguez take up the post at San Elizario, based perhaps on knowledge of the venerable Franciscan's advanced age and state of health. Whatever the cause for the seeming apprehension of the bishop, it manifested itself in suggesting alternatives to the appointment of Domínguez. In spite of the fact that he had agreed with Nava in May 1802 to have Domínguez move from Janos to San Elizario, seven months later the move had not yet taken place. Moreover, on 4 January 1803 the Bishop Olivares y Benito proposed that one of the soon-to-arrive Franciscans, fray Antonio Molina, be named chaplain of San Elizario Presidio. Salcedo was not pleased with the notion of Molina being a presidial chaplain. He had shown no inclination to serve such a post. Because Father Molina was due in Chihuahua, Salcedo would explore the matter with him. Should Molina prove amenable, Salcedo would assign him to Janos Presidio, which fray Francisco Atanasio would be vacating to move to San Elizario. Finally, Salcedo thanked the bishop for agreeing to have fray José Mariano Montes become chaplain at Carrizal Presidio.

On 7 February Father Del Pino wrote to the bishop asking that his resignation be rescinded.⁵⁹ He had resigned because of poor health, but he had recovered and wanted to continue in his present post, which he had served *ad interim* for tenth months. If a replacement had already been named, he wanted to be considered for the chaplaincy of San Elizario, Guajoquilla, or Janos Presidios. On 28 February Bishop Olivares y Benito came around to the position that Salcedo and Nava before him had been advocating—he proposed Domínguez as chaplain of San Elizario Presidio.⁶⁰ On 7 March Commandant General Salcedo issued the corresponding title, along with that of the Janos to fray Agustín Gómez Platón, and that of the Fourth Flying Company to fray Ignacio Vásquez. Father Domínguez was in San Buenaventura again in April when he wrote to the bishop on some routine matters

relating to marriage investigations.⁶¹ He mentioned that he was leaving for San Elizario as soon as Father Gómez Platón arrived in Janos.

Father Del Pino's attempts to secure a post took another unexpected twist when fray Ignacio Vázquez, who had been named to replace him in March, died.⁶² Upon Vázquez's death, Del Pino again petitioned to be named chaplain of the Fourth Flying Company. He repeated the sentiments he expressed in 1802 following the death of Father Garrido, noting that many parishioners had not fulfilled their annual obligation to go to confession and take communion because Del Pino lacked authority to grant them absolution.⁶³

It is unclear when Father Domínguez arrived in San Elizario, other than it was sometime after April, but he was there 30 December 1803.⁶⁴ On that date, fray Jacome González wrote to Father Aguilar in Durango to request the chaplaincy of the presidio. Fray Francisco Atanasio was prostrate in bed, in the gruesome words of his fellow priest, "his genitals rotten, sixty-four years of age, unable to administer the Holy Sacraments, not even to say Mass, and that it is his pleasure to be allowed to retire to Janos and have me confirmed in this chaplaincy."⁶⁵ From this remove, it is impossible to say what illness is suggested by the symptoms that Father González described or even what he meant by his choice of words. Perhaps fray Francisco Atanasio's was suffering from an advanced malignancy or severe bacterial infection.

Fray Jacome remained in San Elizario where he got caught up in a question of honor that resulted in a bitter fight with Pedro de Olave y Ozaeta, the schoolmaster of San Elizario.⁶⁶ The two men got into a public dispute over some small bottles that Olave was to have had delivered from Chihuahua to Father González. When the Franciscan confronted the educator about his missing bottles, González insulted Olave in front of all the parishioners as they left church services. On 2 November Father Del Pino petitioned to be named chaplain of San Elizario Presidio to replace the late Father Francisco Atanasio, which indicates that word of his death traveled fast.⁶⁷ Bishop Olivares y Benito issued the title as chaplain *ad interim* of San Elizario to Del Pino and of the Fourth Flying Company to fray Jacome on 4 December; Commandant General Salcedo approved Del Pino's appointment on 4 January 1805 but declined to accept González.⁶⁸ Instead he

was to continue on to the unstated destination to which he was headed when Father Domínguez's illness prompted him to stay in San Elizario. Apparently he had been on his way to the Real of San Lorenzo in the El Paso area, for he was serving there when the dementia from which he suffered became so severe he had to be replaced.⁶⁹

The details of Father Domínguez final days come from a letter that fray Jacome González wrote to the bishop at the end of November 1804.⁷⁰ When he was passing through San Elizario in December of the previous year on his way south from Santa Ana Pueblo where he had been serving, he tarried at the request of Domínguez.⁷¹ He proposed to resign the chaplaincy, which he did in January 1804. Fray Francisco Atanasio remained bedridden and gravely ill while fray Jacome carried out the priestly duties of presidial chaplain. The meager information fray Jacome provided makes it appear that Father Domínguez had fallen ill fairly soon after arriving in San Elizario. From the time the two met at the end of 1803 until mid-October 1804 fray Francisco Atanasio was too ill to get out of bed. By January of 1804 he was almost certainly aware that he was dying. At that time he proposed giving up his post, and he wanted to return to Janos, where he had served more than nine years, his longest tenure in a long career.

During that ten-month period, Father González received no stipend other than food until March. From that point on he got the meager amount of twenty pesos a month until Father Domínguez's death on 16 October 1804. González requested of the bishop as he had of the commandant general, that he be given a salary postdated to 16 October because he "was a poor Franciscan priest, homeless in this land, with no knowledge, no clothing, no food, far from Mexico City with no possibility of traveling to my province."⁷²

In late March, Father Prado informed Father Aguilar that he was departing for Santa Rita del Cobre on 16 April. Upon his return he was planning to leave El Paso for Cosihuiríachic and Papigochic. With Aguilar's approval, he was going to leave the mission of El Paso in the hands of fray Rafael Benavides.⁷³ The copper mining district at Santa Rita in present-day southwestern New Mexico was, in the colonial period, something of a jurisdictional oddity. As far as civil and military administration, Santa Rita was under the purview of the commander of Janos Presidio. Ecclesiastical authority was a more confused matter. In the ab-

sence of a resident priest or church, residents traveled to El Paso or Janos for confessions and tended to go to Janos for marriages and baptisms. The mine operators also provided for travel expenses for priests from either location to go to Santa Rita from time to time to hold church services under a tree and catch up the people on rites that needed to be performed.⁷⁴

At the end of April Father Prado informed the bishop that he had dispatched his assistant priest, José Antonio Ulibarrí to serve on an interim basis at Carrizal.⁷⁵ He had done this solely to carry out the bishop's orders. As he had written on previous occasions, there was too much work in El Paso for one priest, especially since he was getting up in years and his health was not the best. Another priest should be sent out to take charge of El Paso. It would be prudent as well to assign Prado to San Elizario, to which he had ministered when Father Ruiz de Salamanca died, and Father González should go to serve in Carrizal. This would permit Ulibarrí to return to assist in El Paso. Father José Serafión also conveyed the sad news that Father Domínguez had died. As a result, fray Jacome was filling in without enjoying any salary. In order to fulfill the obligation to the communities of the area, Father Ulibarrí was urgently needed.

Father Del Pino finally got his wish and became chaplain of San Elizario Presidio and held the post for twenty years. Fray Tomás was still serving at San Elizario in May 1826 when the commandant of the presidial company, José María de Arce, forwarded the Franciscan's service record to diocesan authorities in Durango. It seems likely that he was seeking a new posting.⁷⁶ By early 1829 he was assigned to the Tarahumara mission of San Juan Bautista de Tonachi in the State of Chihuahua.⁷⁷ He was still serving there in April 1833.⁷⁸

This review of the final years of fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez and the priests who served in San Elizario demonstrates that it was a much sought after post. The fact that this most venerable of Franciscans came to spend his tragic final days in the small community that was emerging in the shadows of the presidio walls is a fact worth celebrating, and a previously unknown story in the ecclesiastical history of the Church in the Southwest that can now be told. Also of interest is the presence of Franciscans from the Discalced Province of San Diego in the persons of fray José Rafael Aguirre and fray José Ruiz de Salamanca

in service as military chaplains in presidios of Nueva Vizcaya. Nothing can ever replace the documentary heritage of San Elizario that failed to survive the vicissitudes of time and chance that led to the destruction of so many church records. Still, this chapter of that history, however lacking in detail, is lost no more.

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

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

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

ENDNOTES

1. Rick Hendricks and W.H. Timmons, *San Elizario: Spanish Presidio to Texas County Seat* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1998).
2. Throughout this article, the modern spelling, *San Elizario*, is employed. This is thought to be a corruption by English speakers of the Spanish San Elceario. Hendricks and Timmons, *San Elizario*, 123 n. 2.
3. Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez to José Aguilar, Janos, 28 January 1801, AHAD-205, f. 34-35
4. The classic account of the so-called Domínguez-Escalante Expedition is Herbert Eugene Bolton, trans, and ed., *Pageant in the Wilderness: The Story of the Escalante Expedition to the Interior Basin, 1776, Including the Diary and Itinerary of Father Escalante* (Salt Lake City: Utah State

- Historical Society, 1950). A revised reconstruction of the route is found in Walter Briggs, *Without Noise of Arms: The 1776 Domínguez-Escalante Search for a Route from Santa Fe to Monterey* (Flagstaff, Ariz.: Northland Press, 1976), 3, 38. For a more recent account of the expedition with alternative routes and additional information, see Angélico Chávez, trans., Ted J. Warner, ed. with a foreword by Robert Himmerich y Valencia, *The Domínguez-Escalante Journal: Their Expedition through Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico in 1776* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1995).
5. Eleanor B. Adams and Fray Angélico Chávez, *The Missions of New Mexico in 1776: A Description by Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez with other Contemporary Documents* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press), xv; Fray Alonso de Benavides's *Memorial of 1630.6*
 6. There are several editions of Benavides' work. Frederick Webb Hodge, George P. Hamond, and Agapito Rey, eds. and trans. Hammond, *Fray Alonso de Benavides' Revised Memorial of 1634; With Numerous Supplementary Documents Elaborately Annotated* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1945); Mrs. Edward E. Ayer, transl., Frederick Webb Hodge and Charles Fletcher Lummis, annots., *The Memorial of Fray Alonso de Benavides, 1630* (Albuquerque: Horn and Wallace, 1965); and Baker H. Morrow, trans. and ed., *A Harvest of Reluctant Souls: The Memorial of Fray Alonso de Benavides, 1630* (Niwot, Co.: University Press of Colorado, 1996).
 7. Domínguez to Aguilar, Janos, 28 January 1801.
 8. Adams and Chávez, *Missions of New Mexico*, xiv.
 9. *Ibid.*, xv; Domínguez to Aguilar, Janos, 28 January 1801.
 10. Adams and Chávez, *Missions of New Mexico*, xviii.
 11. Hendricks and Timmons, *San Elizario*, 16.
 12. Father Vergara was misidentified as a Franciscan in Rick Hendricks, ed., John B. Colligan, comp., *New Mexico Prenuptial Investigations From the Archivos Históricos del Arzobispado de Durango, Vol. 1, 1760-99* (Las Cruces: Rio Grande Historical Collections, New Mexico State University Library, 1996), 20 (hereinafter AHAD); Marriage investigations of Juan Andrés Sisneros y María Catarina Vigil, San Elizario and Chihuahua, 1 July 16 August 1781, AHAD-91, f. 495-500.
 13. File related to the resignation of fray José Rafael Aguirre from the chaplaincy of San Elizario Presidio and appointment of fray José Ruiz de Salamanca, San Ecleario, Chihuahua, and Durango, 2 June-15 November 1794, AHAD-200, f. 388-402.
 14. Domínguez to Aguilar, Janos, 28 January 1801.
 15. *Ibid.*
 16. "The Baptismal Book of the Presidio of San Buenaventura, 1775-1802," transcribed by Rick Hendricks, 1994, Diocesan Center, El Paso, Texas.
 17. Fray José Rafael Aguirre to fray José Joaquín Granados y Gálvez, San Elizario, 22 June 1794, AHAD-200, f. 389; and Fray José Rafael Aguirre to Pedro de Nava, San Elizario, 2 February 1795, AHAD-188, f. 218.

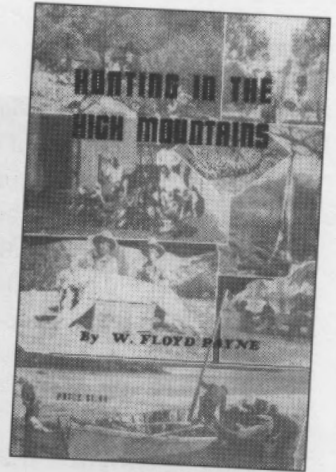
18. Hendricks and Timmons, *San Elizario*, 15.
19. Aguirre to Granados y Gálvez, 22 June 1794.
20. Bishop Granados y Gálvez died on 19 August 1794, <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org> accessed on 6 February 2005.
21. Aguirre to Nava, San Elizario, 2 February 1795.
22. Pedro de Nava to the Dean and Cabildo of the Cathedral of Durango, Chihuahua, 7 February 1795, AHAD-188, f. 221-22.
23. (Now that which decayeth and waxeth old [is] ready to vanish away.) From the ninth chapter of Hebrews, King James version of the Bible) Cited in Fray José Rafael Aguirre to the Dean and Cabildo of the Cathedral of Durango, San Elizario Presidio, 28 October 1794, AHAD-200, f. 398.
24. Father Ruiz de Salamanca observed that he and Father Aguirre were from the same province, presumably San Diego in Mexico City. Fray José Ruiz de Salamanca to Bishop Granados y Gálvez, Chihuahua, 7 August 1794, AHAD-200, f. 392.
25. "Franciscans," <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online> accessed on 7 February 2005.
26. Father Moreno Campos came to New Spain in 1777. Mission of Observant Franciscans going to the Holy Gospel Province, 17 December 1777, Archivo General de Indias, Contratación, 5546; and fray Antonio Moreno Campos to the Dean and Cabildo of the Cathedral of Durango, Chihuahua, 30 October 1794, AHAD-200, f. 396-97.
27. The Franciscan mission from Spain to New Spain included several priests who served in New Mexico including fray Isidro Cadelo and fray José Benito Pereiro. Franciscan Mission to New Spain, 1792, Archivo General de Indias, México, 2739.
28. Adams and Chávez, *Missions of New Mexico*, xviii, 302.
29. *Ibid.*, xviii.
30. Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Janos Presidio, 2 September 1798, AHAD-198, f. 23-24.
31. Fray José Ruiz de Salamanca, Report on the matrimonial difficulties of María Francisca Brígida Ronquillo and José Escajeda, San Elizario 2 October 1798, AHAD-198, f. 69-73.
32. Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Janos, 2 March 1800, AHAD-204, f. 109-110.
33. Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Janos, 1 May 1800, AHAD-204, f. 119.
34. Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez to José Aguilar, Janos, 30 October 1800 AHAD-203, f. 260-61; Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez to José Aguilar, Janos, 9 November 1800, AHAD-203, f. 255.
35. Fray Diego Muñoz Jurado to fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez, Senecu, 31 October 1800, AHAD-203, f. 258-59.
36. José Ignacio Suárez to Dr. Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, El Paso, 29 December 1801, AHAD-205, f. 143-44.

37. Citizens of El Paso to [Pedro Millán Rodríguez], El Paso, [1801], AHAD-205, f. 143-44.
38. Fray José Ruiz de Salamanca to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, San Elizario, 30 April 1801, AHAD-204, f. 754-55.
39. Fray José Bravo to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, San Jerónimo, 19 February 1801, AHAD-205, f. 427. On Bravo's service in Ysleta see Rex Gerald.
40. Pedro de Nava a Dr. Francisco Fernández Valentín, Chihuahua, 28 April 1801, AHAD-205, f. 176.
41. Fray José Ruiz de Salamanca to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, San Elizario, 30 April 1801, AHAD-204, f. 754-55.
42. José Antonio Portocarrero to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Carrizal, 9 May 1801, AHAD-204, f. 758-59.
43. Fray José Ruiz de Salamanca to Dr. Francisco Fernández Valentín, San Elizario, 30 June 1801, AaHAD-205, f. 262-63.
44. Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez to José Aguilar, Janos, 1 September 1801, AHAD-205, f. 91-92.
45. Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez to José Aguilar, Janos, 1 February 1802, AHAD-206, f. 254-55.
46. Pedro de Nava to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Chihuahua, 22 February 1802, AHAD-206, f. 368.
47. Copy of fray José Ruiz de Salamanca to Pedro de Nava, San Elizario, 31 March 1802, AHAD-206, f. 384-85.
48. Pedro de Nava to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Chihuahua, 12 May 1802, AHAD-206, f. 382-83.
49. Fray Tomás del Pino a Pedro de Nava, Cuartel de San Pablo, 1 June 1802, AHAD-206, f. 392.
50. Pedro de Nava to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Chihuahua, 2 June 1802, AHAD-206, f. 393.
51. Fray Tomás del Pino to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, San Pablo, 30 July 1802, AHAD-208, f. 546-47.
52. Pedro de Nava to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Chihuahua, 9 September 1802, AHAD-206, 395-96.
53. Copy of José Joaquín de Ugarte to Pedro de Nava, San Elizario, 31 August 1802, AHAD-206, f. 397.
54. Pedro de Nava to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Chihuahua, 4 October 1802, AHAD-206, f. 398-99.
55. José Serapión Prado to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, El Paso, 12 October 1802, AHAD-208, f. 594-95.
56. Fray Tomás del Pino to Pedro de Nava, Cuartel de San Pablo, 3 January 1803, AHAD-209, f. 225-26.
57. Nemesio Salcedo to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Chihuahua, 10 January, 1803, AHAD-209, f. 35.

58. Nemesio Salcedo to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Chihuahua, 11 January 1803, AHAD-209, f. 31-32.
59. Fray Tomás del Pino to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Cuartel de San Pablo, 7 February 1803, AHAD-209, f. 263-64.
60. Nemesio Salcedo to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Chihuahua, 7 March, 1803, AHAD-209, f. 20.
61. Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, San Buenaventura Presidio, 18 April 1803, AHAD-209, f. 230-31.
62. Fray Tomás del Pino to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Cuartel de San Pablo, 5 June 1803, AHAD-209, f. 204.
63. Fray Tomás del Pino to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Cuartel de San Pablo, 5 June 1803, AHAD-209, f. 205-206.
64. Fray Jacome González to José Aguilar, San Elizario, 24 January 1804, AHAD-210, f. 638-39.
65. *Ibid.*
66. File of allegations against fray Jacome González, San Elizario and Durango, 30 December 1804–27 February 1805, AHAD-212, f. 687-710.
67. Fray Tomás del Pino to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Cuartel de San Pablo, 2 November 1804, AHAD-210, f. 757.
68. Nemesio Salcedo to Dr. Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, Chihuahua, 4 January 1805, AHAD-212, f. 709.
69. José Serapión Prado to Dr. Francisco Gabriel Olivares y Benito, El Paso, 30 August 1810, AHAD-512, f. 588-89.
70. Fray Jacome González to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, San Elizario, 30 November 1804, AHAD-210, f. 807-808.
71. González served for part of 1802 and 1803 in Santa Ana. Fray Angélico Chávez, *Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, 1678-1900* (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1957), 248.
72. *Ibid.*
73. Fray José Serapión Prado to José Aguilar, El Paso, 30 March 1805, AHAD-212, 113-14.
74. Rick Hendricks, "Spanish Colonial Mining in Southern New Mexico: A Spanish to English Translation of Documents Relating to El Paso, the Organ Mountains, and Santa Rita del Cobre," *The Mining History Journal* (1999): 156, 159-60.
75. Fray José Serapión Prado to Dr. Francisco Gabriel de Olivares y Benito, El Paso, 29 April 1805, AHAD-210, f. 688-89.
76. José María Arce to the Governors of the Diocese of Durango, San Elizario, 22 May 1826, AHAD-257, f. 787.
77. Fray Tomás del Pino to José Antonio Laureano de Zubiría, San Juan Bautista de Tonachi, 18 May 1832, AHAD-535, f. 322-23.
78. Fray Tomás del Pino to José Antonio Laureano de Zubiría, San Juan Bautista de Tonachi, 29 April 1833, AHAD-514, f. 727-28.

W. Floyd Payne- Dynamo Pioneer 1861-1948

By Oliver Osborn



In September 17, 1861, Walker Floyd Payne, the youngest of six children, was born to David Hamilton Payne and Eliza Ann Pace Payne in Petersburg, Virginia. At the age of ten, Floyd Payne migrated with his family to Greeley, Colorado where they would occupy a land grant and establish a town site. Making a living in Colorado was difficult so Floyd became a traveling salesman. One of the places to which his selling took him was El Paso, and it was while stopping in El Paso to see his sister that he became enthusiastic over its business opportunities. In 1886 he persuaded his mother and all his brothers and sisters to move to the city that held such promise. In the same year he married Lena Allen of Denver, Colorado. Of the three children born to them, their daughter Carolyn died in the 1919 flu epidemic, and a son, Floyd Jr. died in infancy. A second daughter, Mary Virginia, survived.

Their original two-story home at 507 Myrtle Avenue was constructed of brick made by one of his companies. The building served for some years as a law office. After the death of his wife, Mr. Payne married a second time in 1922 to Nellie Kit Faulkner. Floyd Payne died in 1948 at the age of 86.

In persuading his family to remove to El Paso, W. Floyd Payne brought to us two people who became prominent in our history. Floyd's older sister Katherine married Dr. Alward White and they settled in El Paso in 1879 where Dr. White became one of El Paso's first doctors. Floyd's favorite nephew was Owen P. White, well known American author of the early twentieth century. Owen White's first book, *Out of the Desert—the Historical Romance of El Paso*, which has been a prime source of material for many authors, contains considerable biographical material on Floyd

Payne. In this book he points out how Floyd released an inexhaustible supply of energy into all aspects of early El Paso—business, political, social, and religious.

Floyd Payne became a highly respected businessman with a lifelong goal to make El Paso grow. He worked to promote the Denver and El Paso Railroad Line, and to start a foundry in El Paso. He also helped to develop the Elephant Butte Irrigation Project. He signed with the El Paso Valley Water Users Association to farm a full 5,000 acres.

During the 1890's Floyd served on the Vestry of St. Clement's Episcopal Church. The diary of Mayo Cabell Martin, rector of St. Clement's, showed a number of references to Floyd and Lena Payne. One, dated July 14, 1896, read: "Floyd came by the rectory riding a tandem bicycle. He took Mrs. Martin riding, then gave me a ride too." Mr. Payne often dropped by the rectory and shared his wild game of doves, ducks, and deer with the Martins.

He was also active in local politics and community service. He served on the school board, and was twice elected and served as alderman from 1894 to 1898. At this time he unsuccessfully worked against gambling when the first crusade against that evil was made. He also served as president of the El Paso Benevolent Hospital Association that was later to become a part of Providence Hospital.

His business ventures are almost too numerous to mention. They included the organization of the McCutchen-Payne Company, dealers in wholesale grain, flour and hay, located at the corner of Chihuahua and Second Streets; the Payne-Badger Fuel Company; the Two Republics Oil Company in 1901; the East El Paso Town Company 1902; the Sheldon-Payne Arms Company which dealt in hunting and fishing equipment; the Vinton Brick and Tile Company; the El Paso Land and Improvement Company; and the Rio Grande Irrigated Land Company. This company owned 2,000 acres of land south of Tornillo and near the now nearly deserted town of Alamo Alto. He helped start the El Paso Ice and Refrigerator Company, the Beehive Grocery, the El Paso Dairy, and in 1906 the Purity Baking Co. He built and co-owned the Hotel Angelus. Later in life he developed the W. F. Payne Real Estate Exchange where his motto was "We sell the earth—both improved and unimproved."

Floyd Payne was a tireless worker in the social activities of El Paso. He was founder and first president of a businessmen's organization known as the Franklin Club. He was president of the



The Border Wheelmen, the city's first bicycle club.

El Paso Social Club for three terms, president of the El Paso Country Club for two terms, president of the memorable Toltec Club for two terms, and president of the West Ysleta Country Club. He was organizer and president of the El Paso Athletic Club and the Border Wheelmen, the city's first bicycle club. He brought the first tandem bicycle to El Paso and also promoted the first international bicycle race which was held in Juárez in early 1896.

He was a member of the men's dinner club of St. Clement's known as the Ormsbee Club. At one meeting of this club on February 28, 1938, he had as his guests twenty-one "rootstock" El Pasoans who totaled an aggregate of 950 years of residence. They are listed in descending order of the date of their arrival in El Paso: J. V. Sweeny, Dr. H. E. Stevenson, Charles Davis, Lamar Davis, Maury E. Edwards, J. H. Pollard, E. B. Shelton, A. P. Coles, Richard Burges, Frank Coles, G. P. Putnam, Tom A. Courcheshe, Winchester Cooley, Otis C. Coles, T. M. Wingo, W. D. Wise, Judge P. R. Price, Lee Burdick, R. W. Mafee, and Frank McQuatters. The guest speaker was Maury Kemp. In his biography, the Rev. Uncle Bert, B. M. G. Williams, one time head of Purity Baking Company, considered "Uncle Floyd" one of his most cherished friends.

When El Paso's mule car was replaced with electric streetcars in 1902, Uncle Floyd, as I referred to him, was given the old No. 1 mule car in recognition of his assistance in getting street franchises for the electric car. He placed it in his backyard as a playhouse for his daughter, Carolyn. Many years later he gave this car to the city. It was placed in Cleveland Square near the El Paso Public Library with "Mandy the Mule" hitched to it. It is now in storage awaiting the completion of the new library and museum.

Floyd Payne had owned a sporting goods store and he was an avid hunter and fisherman. In the early 1900s he made a memorable hunting trip to the Davis Mountains. It was hosted by the Evans family of Valentine. On this trip many deer and antelope were killed and it was also confirmed that bears were still living in Texas at this time. Floyd vividly described this trip in a small book entitled *Hunting in the High Mountains*.

As a boy and as a young man I remember sitting in Uncle Floyd's office surrounded by his hunting and fishing trophies. His office was a spacious room attached to the side of his home at 1020 Montana Street. Uncle Floyd sat with his back to a large roll-top desk and faced me across a table covered with many papers. His walls sprouted a six-foot tarpon as well as trophy mule deer heads with individualist racks. One deer head had forty-nine points.

I remember Uncle Floyd as a gracious, patient, and sometimes indulgent great uncle. When I was at home on a Christmas visit from Texas A & M in 1935, I borrowed one of his rifles so that a friend and I could hunt together. During the hunt I fell and broke the gun's stock. Uncle Floyd's reaction was minimal, he said "a gun can always be repaired."

Uncle Floyd was generous with his family. Evergreen Cemetery boasts two sections owned by Floyd Payne. In one section, buried near Uncle Floyd are his first wife, daughter, and granddaughter, his second wife Nell, and also his sister and brother-in-law. The second section he reserved for other members of his family and close friends. My mother and father are buried there. It seems fitting that the beautiful bronze statue of a giant elk at the entrance of Evergreen stands guard over this portion of the Cemetery.

Uncle Floyd was indeed one of those who made a difference—an important figure in the progress and history of El Paso.

All images are from the book Hunting in the High Mountains, a book self-published by W. Floyd Payne. These are published with the permission of the author, Oliver Osborn.

OLIVER OSBORN is a native El Pasoan. He grew up in El Paso, a city which is the repository of many of his childhood and youthful memories. See the article "Them Was the Days: A Teenager on the Streets of Juárez During the 30s" published in *Password*, vol. 49, 2004 for some of his activities. He attended Austin High School and earned a degree in chemical engineering at Texas A & M University. He made his career with The Dow Chemical Company at Freeport, Texas. He makes his home now in Lake Jackson, Texas.



El Paso: A Hodge-Podge of Memories

By Martha McCourt



Coldwell School and Austin High School chum of mine, Billy Ruth Warren Needham, recently sent to me volume 49, number 2, Summer 2004 edition of *Password*. I was delighted to see names from my far distant past in El Paso of the '50s, as well as the 40's and the 30's. I found myself remembering my old El Paso homes and friends.

In 1929 my father, Arthur Ransford Fletcher, was a Southwest geologist and mining engineer who worked in South America, in Mexico, and in the Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona areas. He decided to move our family from Torreon, Mexico to El Paso, because my older sister Katherine was ready to begin school. My parents bought a house at 3120 Federal Street. This area had been predominantly desert in the early twenties. We later moved to a developing area called Government Hill. Nearby was Fort Bliss and a mile or two from that was a "speak-easy" in a two-story building whose first floor was submerged two thirds of the way into a small hill. The second story or main floor, was the entertainment area; the lower submerged floor with windows held the illegal liquor side of the entertainments that El Paso and Fort Bliss people had enjoyed during World War I. One block from this establishment was a series of apartments called the Ida Wales Apartments that had inexpensive rooms where service men could entertain friends or ladies of the evening.

Also, in this area, during the "Roaring Twenties" there was a very large mansion surrounded by a wrought iron fence that may have belonged to a banker or someone of wealth prior to the "Crash of 1929." With the advent of the Great Depression, it was sold to the Catholic Church probably for back taxes and it became

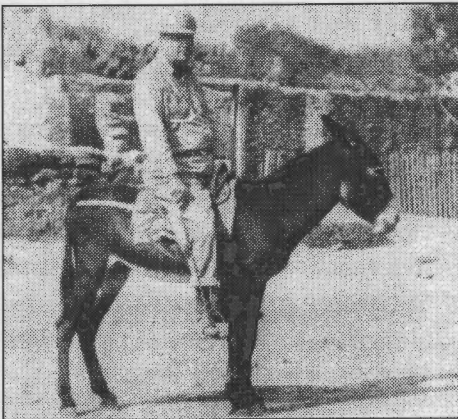
a monastery.¹ Although this was the “end of town,” people began building nice homes and then, of course, schools came to the area. Unfortunately, during the depression years many of these big homes were deserted—people simply left them empty and moved away. I remember my mother buying many of them for back taxes and sprucing them up for rentals during the late 1930’s.

In 1936, when my parents bought the old long-since-deserted speak-easy, they made major remodeling changes. The old house was stucco with red tile and the back gardens were contained by large rock walls with three arched gates. The Ida Wales apartments also had a new owner and had been spruced up during World War II to serve as housing for the families of the service men who were stationed at Fort Bliss.

With the advent of the building of Coldwell School, the area developed into another suburb of eastern El Paso and the city seemed to expand in all directions. After World War II, there was the building boom of the 1950’s and ’60s and the old home town was hardly recognizable.

The highway department decided to create a large international freeway that took out our old home and many other of the expensive homes in the area. My mother did not mind losing the lovely home as much as she was distressed at seeing the eighty-year-old mulberry tree in our backyard die from lack of water while the highway was under construction. The area I once knew and loved is now only a freeway.

My father was a renowned geologist and expert at finding zinc and silver for both the United States and Mexico. He was, in



The Miner and His Mule, from
Paint Jobs and Tune Ups.

the early 60s, considered by many as the world’s leading authority on limestone formations. He graduated from Stanford in the “Earthquake Class” of 1906 with a Phi Beta Kappa key in English Literature. He decided that literature was not the path on which he could make much money, so took his masters in geology and mining engineering at

Columbia University in New York. He sailed with the geodetic survey ship that made the first maps of the Philippine Islands, Guam, and others in the Pacific. He had sugar holdings in Cuba before the crash of 1929, and he married my Iowa-born mother, Anna Marie Bruff, in Cochabamba, Bolivia in 1921.

Fletcher was once captured in the Chihuahua desert by Pancho Villa's men who wanted to kill him for his burro and meager mining gear. However, he shared a cigar and rum with the

bandit and they exchanged humorous stories of life in the wilderness and by morning, Villa released him and his burro to make his way back to Parral, Mexico where his mining friends lived. My father enjoyed writing verse; he said it was mentally stimulating and his love for the English language is found in three books of poems, *The Hidden Hemisphere*, *Paint Jobs and Tune Ups*, and *Poems by a Mining Engineer*.

In El Paso, when my father was at home, my parents entertained a large group of international friends. When I was at home from the University of Wisconsin early in the summer of 1945, he was entertaining local friends and a scientist from Los Alamos, New Mexico who was very excited about the future of a new kind of energy. I asked my Dad who were the two men sitting on our front steps. He said they were government men who accompanied the scientists whenever they left the New Mexico site. That summer, I was counseling at the Girl Scout "survivor" Camp Mary White in the wilds of New Mexico—you could get to it only by horseback or in a jeep from Cloudcroft. There had been a severe drought that year of 1945 and the ranger came through to tell us that we could not have any outdoor fires. We had heard a strange and very loud noise that morning that we thought might have been an earthquake. We asked him what that loud "whump" was, and he said he thought it was probably an airplane gasoline



The Urbane Mr. Fletcher, from
The Hidden Hemisphere.

dump that must have exploded somewhere. It turned out to be the first atomic bomb test at White Sands. There were a series of accidents that summer and the Girl Scouts later closed the camp.

I also remember during the 1930s and 1940s, our relations with our sister city Juárez had been cheerful and pleasant—and safe. When I visited El Paso in the 1960s and 1970s, there was a marked change—gone were the alligators in the plaza—gone were the pleasant and safe feelings. Both cities seemed to be protecting themselves from “gang mentality” often leading to open hostilities. Many old friends had moved far from the downtown area—some preferring to commute many miles into town rather than live in the inner city. However, this was probably a sign of the times, and has now, probably become better.

In reading *Password*,² I found the Gillett name and those of Judy and Frank Mangan, and I remember those families living near our Federal Street home. We all attended Austin High School during World War II.

After fifty-four years in the Northwest, I returned for a visit to El Paso for Austin High’s fiftieth reunion. The “Down the Valley” Country Club—the big band, the singers, and a lot of old jitter-bugging and swing music of the past—four of our happiest memories. It was wonderful to see how well most of my old school chums had turned out!

MARTHA McCOURT grew up in El Paso and attended Crockett and Coldwell Elementary Schools and attended Austin High School during World War II. She attended the University of Wisconsin from which she graduated *cum laude* with a B.A. in English literature. She taught at Zavala School and in 1949 married James Earl McCourt who was a native of Wisconsin and who had been a member of the storied United States Army 42nd Rainbow division during World War II.

She has a brother, Ransford Fletcher and a sister Anna Katherine. Having moved to the Pacific Northwest after she married in 1949, Mrs. McCourt has lived in Oregon or Washington during the past fifty-four years. Mr. McCourt passed away in 1997. She was a writer for many west coast newspapers and developed an interest in geneology. She created and collaborated with noted genealogists to produce three genealogies printed in limited editions: the descendants of James McCourt, the descendants of the Reverend John Smith, and the descendants of Henry Luce.

NOTES

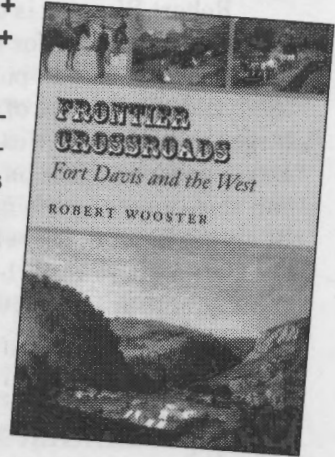
1. Presently 4601 Hastings, St. Anthony’s Seminary. See *Password*, Volume 48, n. 4, p. 204
2. *Password*, Volume 49, p. 76 and 81.



Book Reviews

FRONTIER CROSSROADS. FORT DAVIS AND THE WEST, Robert Wooster. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2006. Cloth, \$24.95. 142 PP. + Appendices + Notes + Bibliography + Index. ISBN 1-58544-475-8.

The national transportation/highway system has by-passed the more mountainous areas of the lower trans-Pecos area of Texas so that only those who consciously take the roads that way make it to the Fort Davis/Alpine/Marfa area. One hundred fifty years ago, however, the area around what became Fort Davis was the crossroads—and at the cross-hairs—of the military and transportation problems of the Southwest.



Early Spanish explorers had generally avoided the area north of the Rio Grande now known as the Big Bend—preferring instead to go up the Rio Conchos to the Junta de los Rios and then turning left, northwest, following the Rio Grande to Paso del Norte and points to the north. As early as the late 1600s, the native Jumanos had appealed to the Spanish for help against the encroaching Apaches. So the area had already experienced a prequel of the struggles to come.

Two important 19th century developments led to the establishment of Fort Davis: the discovery of gold in California in early 1848, and the inability of either Mexico or the United States to control the marauding Apaches who used the area as a direct invasion route to raids in Mexico. I don't know that the period of 1846–48 was as important since it determined only whether it would be Texans or Americans who would have to address those problems.

Named for Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, the military post was established in the fall of 1854. It's location was determined by the availability of water, forage, and a healthy climate. It was to become the main component in the army's trans-Pecos

defensive line against Indian raiders and a source of protection for travelers along the San Antonio–El Paso–Arizona routes. Despite logistical, military, and political obstacles, the outpost persevered until the summer of 1891.

The story of how Fort Davis became the “Frontier Crossroads” is the story of the people who made it their home, office, or place of business. It is the soldiers, their families, civilians, businessmen and women, and others who actually brought it to life.

Robert Wooster is the ideal choice to write this tale. He wrote a history of the fort for the National Park Service in 1990 and has written about Indian policy and in “Soldiers, Sutlers, and Settlers” analyzed that aspect of the military frontier. He understands the larger military, political, and economic problems with which Fort Davis’s commanders had to grapple. More importantly, the author can scrutinize the life and tribulations of the soldiers and settlers in a very candid, knowledgeable, and sympathetic manner.

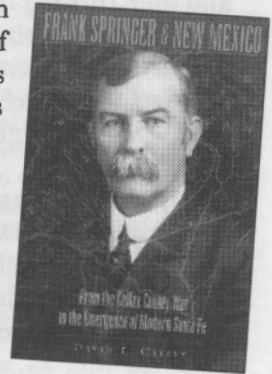
It’s a short work but an important one—well-written, entertaining, and informative—I highly recommend this book.

Richard Baquera,
El Paso Community College

FRANK SPRINGER AND NEW MEXICO: FROM THE COLFAX COUNTY WAR TO THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN SANTA FE by David L. Caffey. College Station: Texas A&M University Press 2006. 280 pages, 28 photographs.

Frank Springer, born in Wapello, Iowa, in 1848, graduated from the State University of Iowa in 1867 with a degree in philosophy. As part of his course of study, he pursued his growing interest in science. Rejecting the possibility of a career in science, he then began to read law in the office of Henry Strong in Burlington. He also took a formal year of study in law at the university.

In 1873, at the age of twenty-four, Springer crossed Raton Pass into New Mexico where he had accepted a job as lawyer for the Maxwell Land Grant and Railway Company. As legal counsel for the Maxwell company, Springer squared off against the “Santa Fe Ring” and landed in the middle of the Colfax County War. Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell had come into possession of an enormous land grant initially issued to Carlos Beaubien and Guadalupe Miranda in 1841 by authority of Manuel Armijo, governor of New



Mexico. The land speculators who made up the Santa Fe Ring and many families living on grant lands bitterly opposed confirmation of the Maxwell grant, which was said to extend to nearly two million acres in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. In 1887 Springer successfully argued the Maxwell Land Grant's case before the United States Supreme Court, which established title to 1.7 million acres of land. Springer's action before the highest court in the land confirmed his reputation as a brilliant lawyer and keen legal mind.

Springer's outstanding legal career was only one facet of a remarkably complex individual. He became president of the Maxwell company and reorganized its pursuits in cattle ranching, mining, timber, and irrigation in the areas. Beyond his business activities Springer was active in fostering the educational system in New Mexico. He was one of the most resolute supporters of New Mexico Normal University in Las Vegas, which at one time was considered one of the finest schools for teacher education in the United States. Springer served as president of the board of regents until being forced out, a victim of local politics. Despite his harsh treatment, he remained a supporter of the school, which eventually became New Mexico Highlands University.

Springer was instrumental in the establishment of the Museum of New Mexico and involved in the creation of the School of American Archaeology in Santa Fe, now known as the School of American Research. Perhaps his most lasting mark on Santa Fe, however, was the influence he exerted over the architectural style that came to dominate the city.

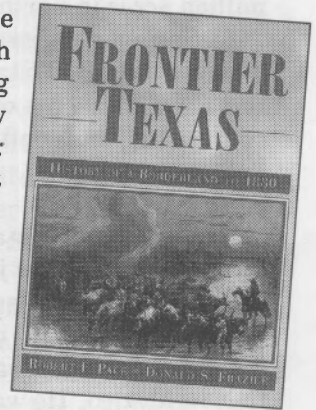
As if all this were not enough, there was yet another side to Frank Springer. Working with Charles Wachsmuth, his colleague in Iowa, Springer gathered the world's largest collection of the fossils referred to as crinoids. His writings, written alone and with Wachsmuth, garnered for Springer an international reputation as a paleontologist that persists to this day. His collection is still housed in the National Museum of Natural History in Washington.

Exhaustively researched and engagingly written, Caffey's biography of Frank Springer is one of the finest books to be written on this period of New Mexico history in many years.

Rick Hendricks
New Mexico State University

FRONTIER TEXAS: HISTORY OF A BORDERLAND TO 1880. By Robert F. Pace and Donald S. Frazier. Abilene, Texas: State House Press, McMurry University. \$17.95.

Ever since I moved to the great Lone Star state of Texas from the frozen North Star state of Minnesota, I have been trying constantly to learn more about the history of the former. The book *Frontier Texas: History of a Borderland to 1880* by Robert F. Pace and Donald S. Frazier proved to be a great help in furthering my knowledge of the twenty-eighth state. The first thing I read on the book's front cover flap was that the book dealt with an area called "the West Texas frontier." Having lived in Texas for only nineteen months, I thought the book would be covering, among other things, the El Paso region where I live. However, according to the book's press release, the West Texas frontier "encompasses the region stretching from Fort Worth to the Caprock, and from Palo Duro Canyon to the San Saba River, with Abilene located near the geographical center." Well, this transplanted northerner learned something right there—"West Texas" was not the area I thought it was. Of course, in all fairness, according to some maps in college-level history textbooks, El Paso is not even a part of Texas.



The authors trace the various groups that lived in and controlled the region including the Jumano, Apache, and Comanche Indian tribes; the Spanish; the Republic of Texas; the United States Army; buffalo hunters; cattlemen; businesses; families; towns; and, finally, how technology came to dominate the region. Woven into this narrative are interesting, even fascinating, historical accounts of famous, and not so famous incidents that occurred in the area, and individuals who lived there. One such incident discussed is, perhaps, the single greatest gun shot in the history of the American West. In late June 1874, about three hundred Indian warriors led by Quanah Parker attacked twenty-eight hunters and merchants at Adobe Walls near the present-day town of Borger. During the fight, which lasted several days, Billy Dixon shot and killed with his Sharps rifle a warrior on a hill about one mile away.

Included at the beginning of each chapter is a map to which I referred constantly when reading the chapter and thus, these maps were an immense help. However, in the two chapters dealing with the establishment of forts by the United States Army in the region, I found that I needed a more detailed map than those

in the book. It was then that I remembered a brochure I picked up at the Texas Travel Information Center in Anthony titled "Texas Forts Trail Region." The brochure covered the exact same region as the book and the brochure's detailed map was invaluable in helping me follow the narrative. I also was aided by the book *Encyclopedia of Indian Wars: Western Battles and Skirmishes, 1850-1890* by Gregory Michno to learn more about the various Indian fights discussed in *Frontier Texas*.

While reading the book, keep in mind that it is, apparently, a companion book to the Frontier Texas and Buffalo Gap Historic Village interactive historical attraction in Abilene. Illustrations of some of the book's characters are captioned with "as portrayed at Frontier Texas."

Overall, *Frontier Texas* is an excellent general history of the geographical area it covers. It definitely kept my interest and I enjoyed all the stories and characters. As an El Pasoan, my only criticism of the book is the definition of "West Texas." As what do the people in Abilene refer to the area that is west of them?

Albert Burnham
Department of History
El Paso Community College



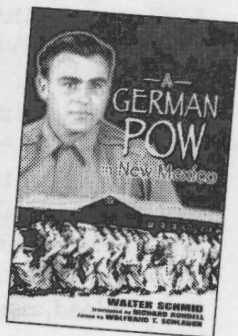
Book Notes



Book Notes by Richard Baquera, Book Review Editor

A GERMAN POW IN NEW MEXICO. By Walter Schmid. Translated by Richard Rundell. Edited by Wolfgang T. Schlauch. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005. 131 PP. + Appendices + Bibliography. Cloth, \$24.95. ISBN 0-8263-3355-9. Published in cooperation with the Historical Society of New Mexico.

Recent commemorations of the fiftieth and now, sixtieth, anniversary of the end of World War II and completion of the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. have led to the publication of numerous books and accounts, oral histories, and such from that period. Residents of the Middle Rio Grande Valley—Las Cruces to El Paso, though probably more accurately Hatch to Fort Hancock—who lived



through that conflict at home will recall that at one point prisoners of war, P.O.Ws, were used as agricultural workers in the area. My mother and her family remember the German P.O.Ws who used to pick cotton in the Ysleta area.

Walter Schmid, a German Army draftee from Stuttgart, was one of those P.O.Ws. Captured in North Africa as a consequence of the Allied victory there, he was transported across Africa, through New York and eventually to Oklahoma, where he spent a year, and finally to Las Cruces, New Mexico. He was there when the war ended.

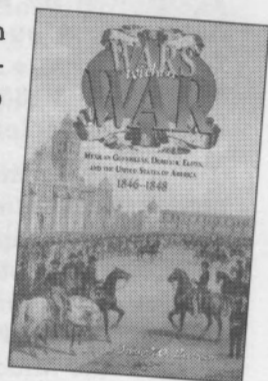
This book is actually a condensed or brief English edition of a longer memoir published in Germany in the year 2000. For this edition, the editors have chosen to focus more on Schmid's memories while in the United States and less on his training and North African recollections. The memoir is based on a war-time diary Walter Schmid kept and on the letters he wrote home to his wife.

Schmid's memoir is a history from the other side—from a perspective not usually available. As such, it makes for appealing reading. But the book's value is greater due to Schlauch's editing. An introductory essay and introductory essays for each chapter are excellent in placing the experiences and contributions of these P.O.Ws in perspective. The appendices include payroll records and other documents which chronicle the camp lives of these men.

WARS WITHIN WAR: MEXICAN GUERRILLAS, DOMESTIC ELITES, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, 1846-1848. By Irving W. Levinson. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 2005. 121 PP. + Appendix + Notes + Bibliography. Cloth, \$29.95. ISBN 0-87565-302-2.

Since accomplishing its independence in 1821, Mexico had not really enjoyed the domestic tranquility necessary for a new nation to grow and mature. On one front, Spain was [however feebly] attempting to re-conquer its lost territories. Worse still, was the internal strife that became a hallmark of Mexican history well into the 20th Century.

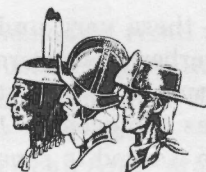
Three centuries of colonial rule left a legacy of a socially fragmented society. Until late in the Spanish era, the minority group of *gachupines* and *criollos* dominated the caste majority. Indeed, Miguel Hidalgo's *grito* of September 16, 1810 had



special resonance with these very underprivileged, margined caste groups. These reverberations were not lost on the privileged classes who were determined to keep their position and power. When independence was achieved in 1821, it was conservative elements in Mexico who wanted to separate from what they considered was a "liberal" Spain. The wealthy, the politically and militarily powerful, and the Charles Wachsmuth clergy resolutely fought to keep their status in the new nation. And so it was that in the 1840s, when "elements of that national elite turned to the U.S. Army for both armaments and manpower to confront these domestic challenges to their authority . . . and by . . . forcing Mexico's government to abandon any further resistance to the U.S. these guerrillas changed the course of the war and Mexican history."(xv)

Levinson's "Wars within War" focuses on this Mexican civil struggle as it had evolved by the 1840s. It is not a study of the United States war with Mexico but it is an interesting and intriguing glimpse of an aspect of that conflict which needed to be explored.





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